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TONAL-CENTRIC SECTIONAL TERNARY DESIGN AND MESSIAEN-DERIVED POST-TONAL PROCEDURES IN TORU TAKEMITSU'S *RAIN TREE SKETCH II*

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Abstract
This paper interrogates the nexus of large-scale form, local motivic design, and harmonic organization in Tōru Takemitsu's "Rain Tree Sketch II" (1992), a memorial work for Olivier Messiaen that absorbs and transforms salient aspects of the dedicatee's compositional practice. Proceeding from the ostensibly diffuse surface, the study demonstrates that the piece articulates a rigorously coordinated simple, sectional ternary design whose global framework is underpinned by clearly profiled phrases, contrasting and parallel periods, and cadential phrase groups, frequently mediated by elision. At the foreground, the analysis traces how registral deployment and recurring cadential gestures, especially a single tone-centric orientation even as the work deploys post-tonal materials and their chromatic complement. The "A" sections are shown to synthesize triadic, tertian sonorities with flexible pitch-set usage, privileging singable melodic contours and functionally intelligible bass progressions over strict transformational operations. By contrast, the "B" section functions as a textural and harmonic disjunction, recasting the material into polyphonic terms, new sonorities, and systematically exploiting Messiaen's Mode 2 while strategically suppressing the tonic pitch. The study further situates Takemitsu's deployment of Messiaen's "modes of limited transposition" and use of rhythms with added or subtracted values within a broader discourse on temporality that generates a perception of suspended,

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"atemporal" flow. "Rain Tree Sketch II" thereby emerges as a paradigmatic late-style work in which Takemitsu mobilizes inherited tonal, formal, and motivic archetypes in dialectical interaction with post-tonal collections and Messiaen-derived techniques, producing a memorial idiom that is at once referential and idiosyncratically personal.

Keywords
Music theory, Modern music, Piano music, Toru Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch II

Introduction

1.1 Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996) composed his final work for solo piano, *Rain Tree Sketch II* (1992), as an explicit memorial to Olivier Messiaen, the French composer, musicologist, ornithologist, and Holocaust survivor whose music and thought exerted a formative influence on Takemitsu from his youth onward.[5] Within this programmatic miniature, Takemitsu's idiosyncratic attachment to nature, his complex negotiations with questions of cultural identity and nationalism, and his longstanding fascination with timbre and resonance coalesce in a musical language that remains unmistakably his own even as it bears the trace of Messiaen's techniques and aesthetics. The present study takes as its point of departure the hypothesis that *Rain Tree Sketch II* functions not merely as an occasional homage but as a condensed site in which Takemitsu's late style and his dialogue with Messiaen are mutually illuminated, thereby offering a privileged lens through which to consider issues of form, harmonic organization, and temporality in late-twentieth-century piano repertoire.

1.2 Central to this inquiry is the observation that *Rain Tree Sketch II achieves* a striking degree of formal lucidity while operating decisively within a post-tonal harmonic environment. Analysts have repeatedly construed the piece as articulating a ternary (A–B–A or A–B–A′) design whose outer sections frame a contrasting "Joyful" middle, and within which phrase groupings and cadential articulations can be inferred with considerable clarity despite the absence of conventional meter signatures and double-bar demarcations.[2] Within this framework, motivic recurrence, registral design, and dynamic contour assume the role traditionally occupied by tonal-functional syntax: they delineate points of initiation, climax, and closure; they signal returns and transformations; and they enable listeners to apprehend continuity and large-scale return as functions of patterned gesture rather than predictable progressions of harmonic function. In this respect, the work calls into question any

[5] Takemitsu, Tōru.

residual assumption that post-tonal music must necessarily sacrifice formal intelligibility in pursuit of harmonic novelty, instead demonstrating how structural articulation can be secured through carefully choreographed distributions of material in time.

1.3 At the same time, *Rain Tree Sketch II* offers a compelling model of how heterogeneous harmonic resources can be integrated into a single, coherent idiom that is neither strictly systematic nor loosely eclectic. The piece draws upon set-theoretical collections, octatonic and other symmetrical scales—including Messiaen's Mode 2—alongside vestigial triadic sonorities and singable melodic contours, yet Takemitsu resists subjecting these materials to exhaustive combinatorial or serial procedures, thereby preserving a sense of spontaneity and contingency in the unfolding of sonorities. The recurrence of particular pitch-class collections and their associated coloristic "fingerprints" ensures that the harmonic language remains recognizably unified, while the friction between familiar triadic references and more saturated post-tonal aggregates sustains a productive tension between "old" and "new." Situated at the intersection of memorial intent, formal clarity, and a refined post-tonal palette, Rain Tree Sketch II thus frames the act of listening—to harmony, to resonance, to silence—as a form of remembrance, and it is this convergence of structural and commemorative concerns that the ensuing analysis seeks to elucidate in detail.

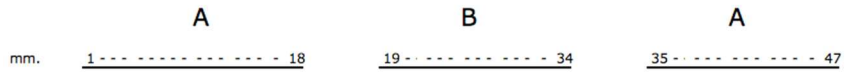
Body

2.1 Though Takemitsu incorporates no double bars in the score, clear demarcations can be identified via the score itself. Even before an apposite analysis of the music is instigated, hints of the formal design can be discerned. There are three occasions on the printed score where the composer uses descriptive, even emotive, terms and these occasions hint at the formal demarcations by indicating contrasting moods: "Celestially Light" (m.1), "Joyful" (m.19), and "Celestially Light" indicated on the score a second time (m.35). (As the available score is without measure numbers, I have added them to the score attached [see appendix] and in the examples used throughout this paper. Where Takemitsu used dashed vertical lines to divide measures, I have enumerated these using lower-case letters. E.g. mm.30a, 30b, and 30c). Although Takemitsu indicates descriptive terms within the score, these descriptive terms accompany tempo change markings, these tempo change indications by themselves would not be evidence enough to satisfy sectional boundaries: changes in tempo, clearly indicated in the score, occur *virtually every other measure* throughout the piece. Identifying cohesive devices as well as detecting

similar and contrasting musical elements will not only elucidate the formal design but will justify any initial suspicions of a tripartite formal design based on Takemitsu's use of emotive, descriptive terms.

2.2 "Key" and specific musical material will be discussed below, but it is worth noting at this point that the piece is constructed using tertian structures, traditional triads, set theory, and is grounded not only on the pitch "D" but also on a subset of a pitch collection belonging to an exotic scale which itself is based on the pitch "D."

2.3 Further investigation of the music itself indeed justifies a tripartite formal design: the piece is Ternary.

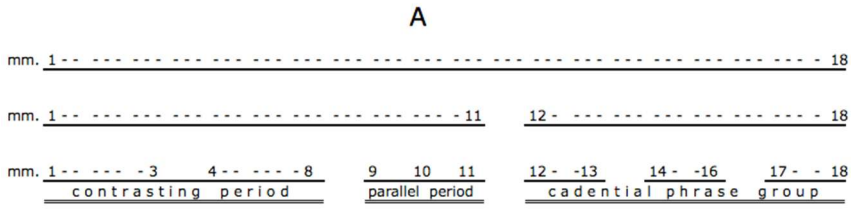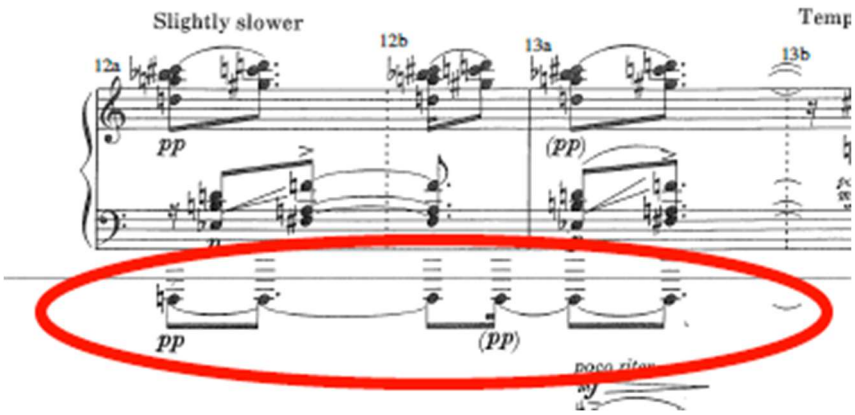


(Example no. 1 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 1-47)

In this large-scale view, the evidence for Ternary design lies in the contrasting second section as much as the "A" sections. This middle section centered in a new "key" (the "A" sections are centered on "D" and the "B" section is not) and it instigates new melodic material (discussed below) as well as presenting a new texture. Thus, the "B" section creates contrast with its surrounding "A" sections. The return of the "A" section is a true recapitulation and states the opening section in its entirety and the only modification is truncation of the length of the cadential phrase group. More specifically, the overarching formal plan is that of sectional Ternary as opposed to continuous Ternary. Where continuous Ternary closes the first section with a cadence in a key other than the tonic and continues the new key in the "B" section, the sectional form generally cadences on the tonic at the end of the first section and begins the second section in a new key. Although the "B" section of the continuous Ternary usually ends with a cadence on the tonic, and the sectional Ternary tends to end the second section on the overall key of the B (not the tonic), the presence of a strong closing cadential phrase group in the "B" section adds evidence for a sectional design. Further designation can be made by assigning this piece the formal description of Simple Ternary as opposed to Compound Ternary: in Compound Ternary, each of the three major sections is itself Ternary (A = aba; B = cdc; A = aba).

2.4 Within each major section of *Rain Tree Sketch II* there is a smaller yet clear formal design. The first section, the "A" section, encompasses the first eighteen measures. The "A" section is itself, in an overall sense, is comprised of two sections: a busy but lyrical section presented in upper

registers (the left hand is notated in the treble clef and does not reach below the D below middle C until the tenth measure) which is succeeded by a cadential phrase group featuring many ritenutos as well as virtual stops and starts. On a more detailed level and with further investigation, there is evidence that the "A" section consists of three sections: two periods, one contrasting and the other parallel, followed by a cadential phrase group.


A
mm. 1 - - -
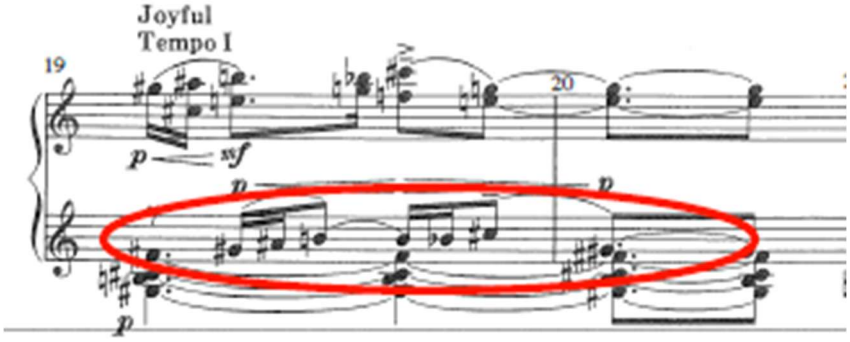


(Example no. 4- Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 12a-13b)

The contrasting period, mm. 1-8, begins with the presentation of material (mm. 1-3) followed by a complimentary repetition (mm. 4-8) with the material in the first two measures being similar but presented approximately a third lower in measures 4-5. Though the contours of the melody and the accompanying figures remain virtually the same in mm. 4-5, this is not a literal sequence, though it acts as one, for the reason that some of the pitches are transposed a down a minor 3rd while others pitches are transposed a major 3rd lower, a tritone lower, a half-step etc. This initial period closes with a strong cadence (see above example mm. 10) and measure 11 acts as a cadential extension—the addition of material beyond the point at which a cadence is expected—thus the strong cadence, filling out of the missing bass register, decrescendo, delineate this (mm. 1-11) from the next period.

2.5 Measures 12-18 make up the next section within the overall "A" section with mm. 12-18 comprising a cadential phrase group. At this point, measures 12-13, an elision takes place thereby blurring the line between the cadence, which closes the two periods, and the third section.

2.6 While the "A" section is presented in virtual homophonic texture, where homorhythm dominates the section with occasional stretto utterances between the voices (hands) and only the uppermost pitches of the right hand act as a melody, the "B" section maintains its textbook function: contrast. This contrasting second section (mm. 19-34) departs from the D-centered opening section by the mere omission of the note D in its first three measures (mm. 19-21) and by any appearances of the note D being buried in the vertical sonorities or by its presentation on a quick, unaccented beat until the last 8th note of measure 23. The "B" section also brings a new texture: polyphony. It is only here, beginning in measure 19

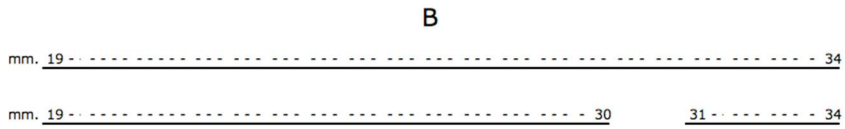
and enduring throughout the section, that a true, independent 2nd voice is established.



(Example no. 5 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 19-20)

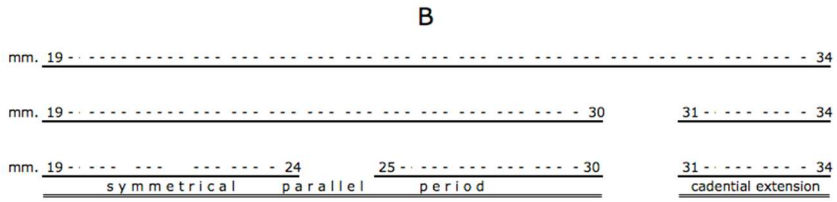
This 2nd voice is a stretto entrance and is virtually and answer, presented one octave lower, to the material stated in the upper-most voice stated an 8th note earlier. The "B" section does not entirely depart from the previous section as it maintains some of its homophonic characteristic only at this time by long, sustained chords in the lower-most voice which act as accompaniment to the movement of the essentially two-voice polyphony above it. With the middle section of sectional forms, such as the scherzo, the minuet, and others, being deemed a "trio" and with "trio" also meaning written for or sounding in three voices, justification for identifying this contrasting "B" section as a trio exists.

2.7 The "B" section, just as with the "A" section, can be further divided into two smaller sections, mm. 19-10 and mm. 31-34, with the 2nd section acting as a cadential extension bringing the first section to a strong close.



(Example no. 6 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 19-34)

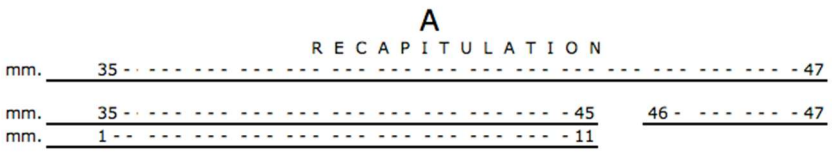
Just as with the "A" section, these middle-ground, two sections can be further broken down into yet smaller units.



(Example no. 7 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 19-34)

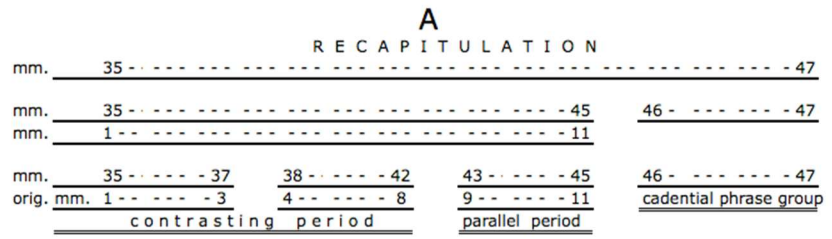
The "B" section opens with a symmetrical, parallel period where the phrases are the same length and containing virtually the same material as well as each containing the now familiar cadential device of the presentation of the low D (5 ledger lines below the bass staff). Measures 25-30 differ from the first phrase by the interpolation of material during sustained moments. Measures 31-34, with mm. 31-32 being literally repeated in mm. 33-34, act a cadential extension by a literal slowing down of the tempo, via the indication of "tempo II," and by virtual slowing down the music by means of the omission of the interpolating device used to fill any sustained moments in the measures the preceding measures (25-30).

2.8 The third section of the Ternary design, mm. 35-47, is indeed a literal recapitulation of the initial "A" section (I have indicated the measure numbers of the initial "A" section just below the numbers describing this final section).



(Example no. 8 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 35-47)
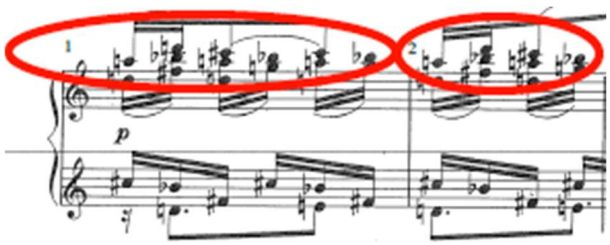
Again, just as with the "A" and "B" sections, this middle-ground view can be further broken down into smaller units.



(Example no. 9 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 35-47)

Here, in the final section of the Ternary formal plan, rather than keeping the 7-measure cadential phrase group that closes the original "A" section, Takemitsu opts for a shorter 2-measure cadential phrase group. Though shorter here in the final "A" section, the ending remains satisfying. The familiar cadential devices abound in the final measures: low D is heard, here three times (m.44, m46, 47) as well as the now familiar slowing down of the music. Three sustained, low D's convincingly create conclusiveness with the last being voiced without interruption from any upper voices.

2.9 *Rain Tree Sketch II* is clearly centered on the pitch D. Evidence for this can be seen by its being situated in two of the most prominent positions in orchestration: the highest and lowest notes sounded. In the first two measures, until the lone utterance of the major third above D (the symbol ^ followed by a number [e.g. ^1] will be used in this paper to denote scale tones as they relate to the D major scale: e.g. ^5 = the note "A" and ^b7 = "C natural") on the last 8th note, D is presented as both the highest and lowest note. More evidence reinforces the note D as tonic by examining the melody. The note D is approached by an ascending perfect 4th from ^5 in the upper-most voice and left by descending step to the leading tone which in turn, via registration, leads back to ^1 after the ^5 is voiced. To further reinforce D as the principal tone, a familiar Western common practice device of ^5 preceding ^1 in the melody is utilized as well as the use of ^7 as a leading tone. This is evidenced from the outset: this melodic, pitch-centering device is immediately repeated after first being stated.



(Example no. 10 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars1-2)

The lowest voice in the opening material provides further evidence of tonality and a D-centric piece by its beginning on D (^1) before leaving and returning by step then immediately leaving and returning to ^1 by step again (mm. 1-2). Then, after two scalar ascents (mm. 4-5) which ultimately lead to ^1, the important tonal bass function is continued with the appearance of ^5 being sounded as the lowest pitch thusfar before the
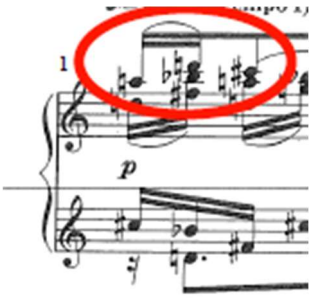
return of ^1 in the familiar middle range (heard twice) before its ultimate appearance as ^1 five ledger lines below the bass staff in measure 10. Thus, a functionally tonal bass voice is created: ^1 ^2 ^1 ^2 ^1 ^b7 ^1 ^6 ^7 ^6 ^7 ^5 ^1 ^1 ^1. Consequently, a clear I V I is created (mm. 1-11).

2.10 The cadential phrase group of the "A" section (mm. 12-18) features clear characteristics of tonal design with D assuming the principal positions. Here ^1 is virtually the lowest sounding note throughout this section with the upper-most notes moving to ^1 by step (Right hand: mm. 12-13a and 17-18a. Left hand: m.16a) and by "step" via octave displacement (thereby adhering to ^7 to ^1) in the left hand in measure 14a. ^1 is approached by ascending perfect 4th in the right hand in measures 14 and 16.

2.11 It is precisely that ^1 does *not* appear in the prominent registral positions of highest and lowest as well as not being prepared via perfect 4th or ascending leading tone that give the "B" section its important contrast. It is also the obvious absence of the pitch D in the opening of this contrasting section, a section that is characteristically defined by its departure from tonic, which lends further evidence for a tonality based on D. In this middle section of the Ternary form, it is not until the cadence in m.30 and the succeeding cadential extension (mm. 31-34) that ^1 once again is made important via registration: ^1 is the highest note in m. 30a, the lowest in 30b, the highest then the lowest in the beginning of 31a, and the highest then the lowest in the beginning of 33.

2.12 ^1 once again assumes prominence via registration, scalar preparation, and ascending leaps of a perfect 4th from ^5 to ^1 in the recapitulation (mm. 35-47).
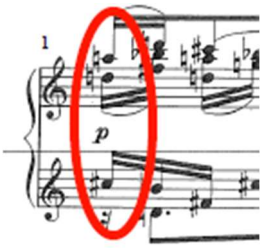
2.13 The principal motives of the work offer further evidence for tonality and Ternary design. Already mentioned are the scalar preparations of ^1 as well as the ascending leap of a perfect 4th from ^5 to ^1 but the motives of the piece do not end with these melodic devices. In fact, it can be argued that Takemitsu used the melodic, horizontal relationship (^5 - ^1 - ^7 [A – D – C#])



(Example no. 11 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bar1)

to generate vertical sonorities and relationships which act as important motives themselves.

(the opening measure)



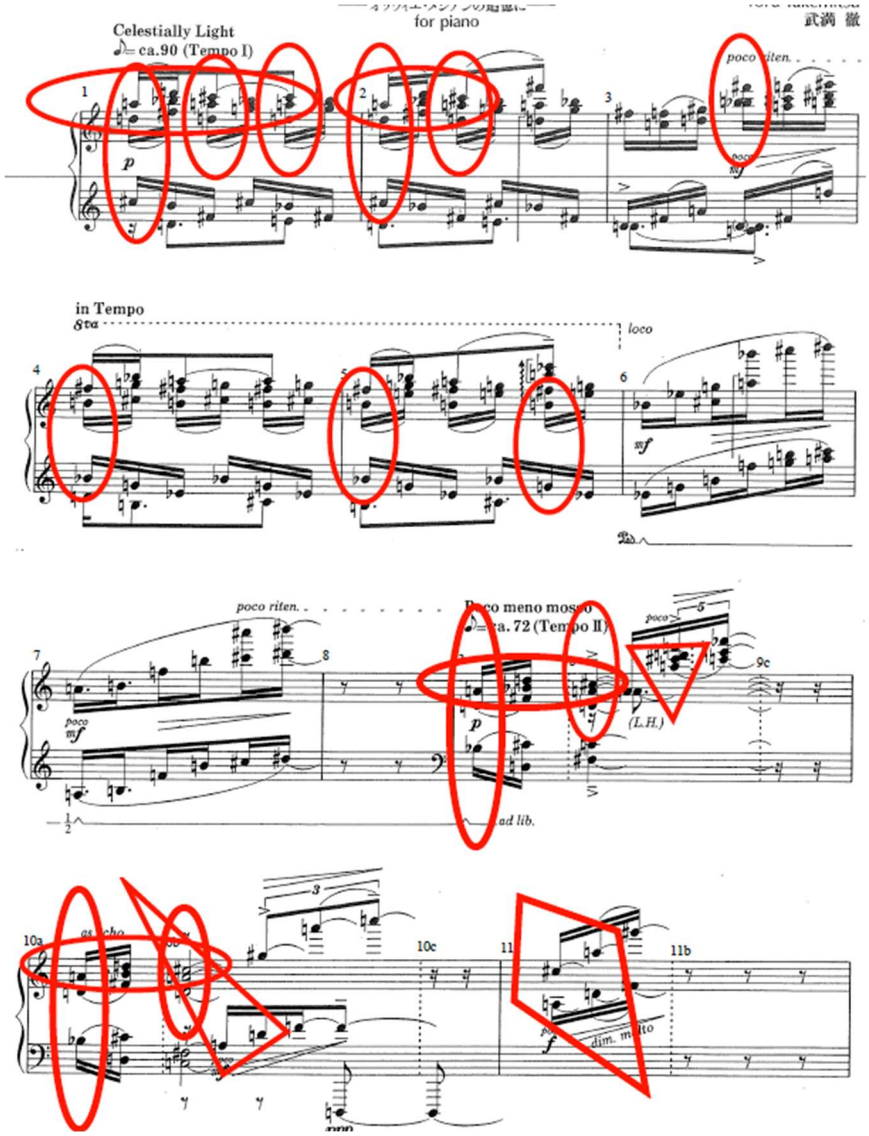
(Example no. 12 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bar 1)

2.14 This (^5 - ^1 - ^7 [A – D – C#]) comprises the pitch set (0 1 5) and is used both horizontally and vertically (see above) and occurs throughout the "A" sections of the piece.



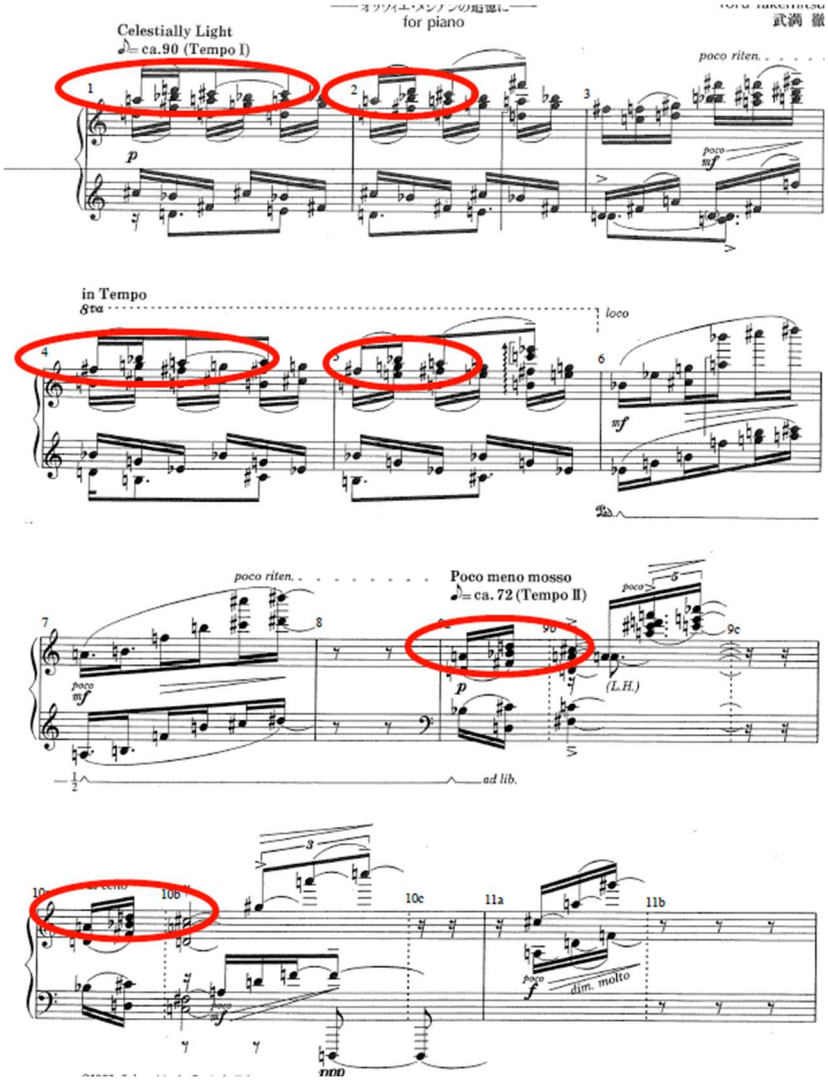
= (0 1 5)

(Example no. 13 – description of nomenclature used and pitch set)
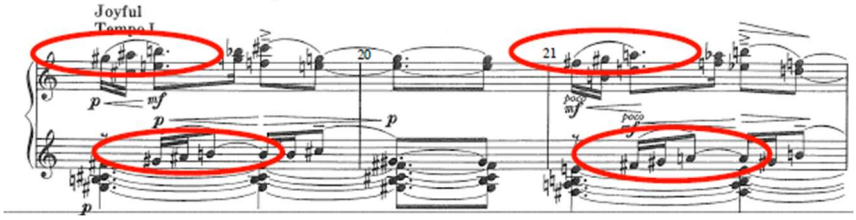


(Example no. 14 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 1-11b)

Thus, the principal melodic motive of the "A" section is the horizontal presentation of A – D – C#. Although this constitutes the pitch set (0 1 5), it is the easily recognizable contour of this melody, reinforced by its orchestration—in the upper-most sounding voice of the moment—that further gives cohesion to the "A" sections. That is, a note followed by a small ascending leap and then followed by a descending step is a variation of the principal motive and even though it may not be a strict transposition of the adjacency interval series (AIS) of the original presentation, it nonetheless acts as a principal motive.
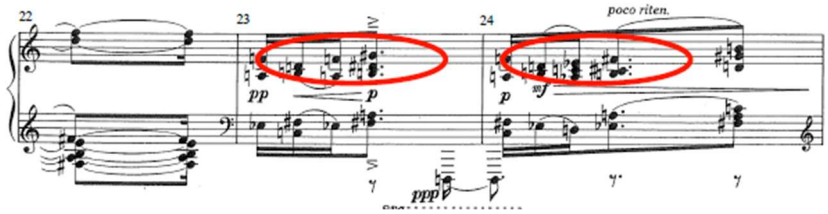


(Example no. 15 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 1-11b)

2.15 The principal motive in the "B" section is the scalar figure which is first presented as G# - A# - B (mm. 19-20) and then transposed down a major 2nd in the succeeding two measures.



(Example no. 16 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 19-21)

As with the preceding section, the same applies here to the principal motive: although not a strict transposition of the adjacent interval series AIS, the clearly discernible contour plays an important melodic role and acts as a cohesive device in the middle section as it is easily heard via its registral placement and stretto entrances.



(Example no. 17 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 22-24)

2.16 The recapitulation brings back the important ^5 - ^1 - ^7 motive as shown earlier.

2.17 It is worth noting that these motives, pitch sets, and pitch collections (to be discussed below) are not manipulated by the habitual methods usually associated with pieces utilizing pitch set theory. That is, there is no abundance of important presentations of (0 1 5) transposed to different pitch classes: (0 1 5) virtually always appears as the notes D, C#, A. This adds gravity and more evidence for tonality to the piece.

2.18 Even though the pitch set (0 1 5) occurs in the piece, it is not prominent enough state that it is the critical organizing device (see examples above) for the piece in its entirety. Adherence to a strict pitch set or sets do not appear to be the only cohesive, compositional device. Takemitsu is also basing tonality and centricity on pitch collections. Specifically, in the first measure, the aggregate pitch collection comprises an exotic 7-note scale: the D harmonic major scale (D E F# G A Bb C#). The prime form of this collection is (0 1 3 4 6 8 9) and although the collection plays a pivotal role, it is not via strict adherence to set theory as regularly manipulated. In fact, a survey of the disparate pitch collections of the opening of the "A" section reveal the lack of devotion to a single, or even a few, pitch sets:

2.19 Disparate aggregates per measure within the contrasting period of the "A" section:
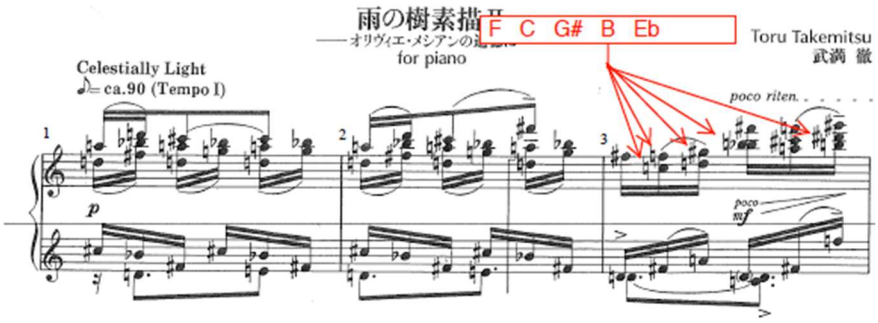
m. 3	D Eb F F# G# A Bb B C C#	(0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10)
m.4	D Eb F# G A Bb B C#	(0 1 2 4 5 6 8 9)
m.5	Eb F G A Bb B C#	(0 1 2 4 6 8 10)
m.7	Eb F A B C#	(0 2 4 6 8)

m.9a	A D F# Bb C#	(0 1 4 5 8)
m.9b	D E F F# G# A Bb C C#	(0 1 2 4 5 6 8 10)
m.10	D F F# G G# A Bb C C#	(0 1 2 3 4 5 7 8 9)
m.11	D F G# A C#	(0 1 4 7 8)

It may be more beneficial to view the pitches exploited through the lens of the opening measures. In measures 1-5 there is an abundance of tertian structure, specifically triads. Keeping in mind that the composer is firmly establishing the pitch D as central, the pitches that accompany the D prove to be important and how they are presented help give the piece its programmatically appropriate nature. The strident and disconcerting characteristics of "modern" pieces are, for the most part, missing: angular, disjointed melodies are abandoned in favor of sing-able melodies; easily identifiable triads, rather than being shunned, are embraced and copious; discordant vertical sonorities are eschewed and many traditional chords and extended chords are utilized. In the opening two measures there is an F# major triad presented as an ostinato in a middle voice which becomes a D major triad in the same voice in measure 3 which in turn becomes an Eb major triad in measures 4 and 5.

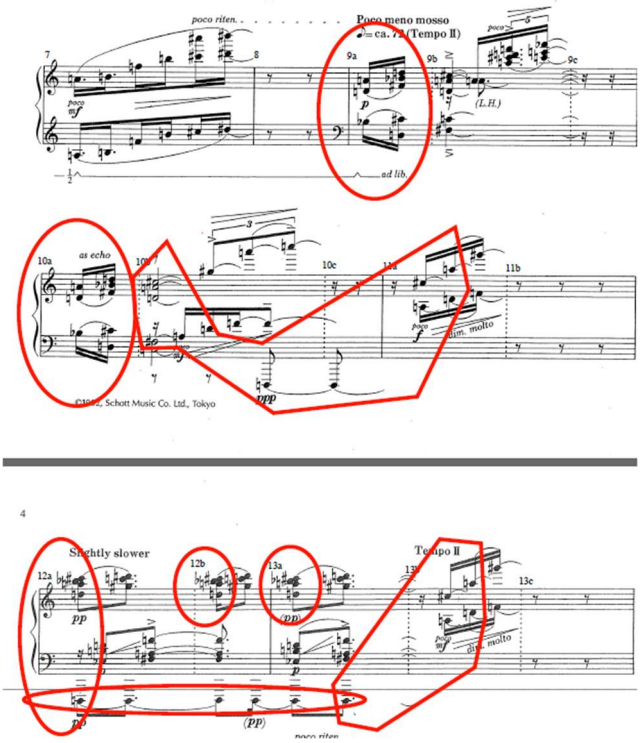
2.20 One of the criticisms of set theory and dodecaphonic music is worth noting: major and minor triads are virtually never heard, even in their inversions, as being equivalent, yet set theory abstracts both of these to the pitch set (0 3 7). Takemitsu seems to be outwardly espousing the use of tonality, triads, tertian, quartal, and other "backward looking" harmonic language devices (I am speaking of this piece alone) and they saturate the piece—not as abstractions and presentations of (1 3 7) but of genuine-sounding triads.

2.21 A case can be made that the fundamental harmonic language is the establishment of the seven notes comprising D harmonic major and then the intrusion of the compliment set (Eb F G# Bb C)—which is (0 2 4 7 9) in its prime form—which, now taken as a whole, constitute the complete chromatic scale. Below illustrates one example of the intrusion of these pitches on the established D harmonic major.



(Example no. 18 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 1-3)

That D harmonic major plays a fundamental role in establishing tonality can be seen by its placement in the cadential positions—and always in "root position." Below is the cadence of the contrasting period and the elision into the first measures of the cadential extension. Note the "root position" and the prominence of D F# Bb C# which is a distillation of the two pitches that give D its "major" sound as well as the two pitches that give the "harmonic major" its characteristic sound. The composer has abstracted the aggregate of D harmonic major to its most basic pitches and then used these to establish strong cadences.



(Example no. 19 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars –13c)

2.22 Although 4ths and 5ths can be found in the "A" sections, it is in the "B" section that 4ths come to the fore. From the outset of the middle section, there is a new texture as well as a new harmonic region. The chord in the left hand on the downbeat of measure 19 is most often identified as a quartal structure with one note being displaced by an octave ensuring that the pianist can play all four pitches with the left hand alone. Significantly, this contrasting section begins on the tritone of the previous section, where the previous section is primarily centered on ^1 and this new "B" section notably begins with the absence of ^1. (^1 = the note "D"). The material that is interpolated into the second phrase of the symmetrical period at measure 26 lends further evidence that the composer is using pitch collections without adhering to strict pitch set manipulations. The aggregate of this material is symmetrical alternating half-whole octatonic scale built on the leading tone of the piece, C#, and is voiced in pairs of tritones with the first pair a major 3rd apart, the 2nd pair a perfect 4th apart, and the 3rd pair a major 7th apart. This aggregate is related to measure 23 where the entire pitch collection is an octatonic (half-whole) scale built on ^1. Here, in measure 23, the tritone plays an important role as the first three lowest sounding notes are paired with a tritone above it. The first three 16th notes of measure 24 also constitute the octatonic scale built on ^1. The prime form of the symmetrical alternating octatonic scale is (0 1 3 4 6 7 9 10). Measure 29a retains this pitch set (built on D) as well as the tritones in the lowest voice and measure 30a is also half-whole octatonic built on ^1 as well as 30b until the last 16th note which consists of a tritone (Bb and E) from the octatonic collection in measure 26 which built on the leading tone, C#. The material comprising the cadential extension of the "B" section, measures 31-34, is drawn from the octatonic collection built on the tonic pitch (only the single utterance of C# in 31b and again in 34b does not belong to this aggregate).

2.23 The inclusion of the symmetrical alternating half-whole octatonic scale hints at Takemitsu's reverence for Olivier Messiaen. The octatonic scale is one of Messiaen's "modes of limited transposition": Mode 2. With so much of the "B" section deriving from Mode 2, it is fair to ask: does this mode or any of the other modes of limited transposition occur in the "A" sections? The answer is, no. As noted above,

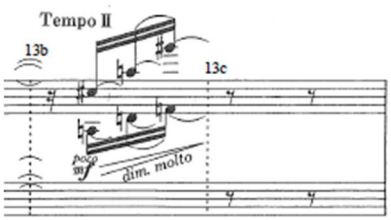
2.24 Disparate aggregates per measure within the contrasting period of the "A" section:

m. 3	D Eb F F# G# A Bb B C C#	(0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10)
m.4	D Eb F# G A Bb B C#	(0 1 2 4 5 6 8 9)
m.5	Eb F G A Bb B C#	(0 1 2 4 6 8 10)
m.7	Eb F A B C#	(0 2 4 6 8)

m.9a	A D F# Bb C#	(0 1 4 5 8)
m.9b	D E F F# G# A Bb C C#	(0 1 2 4 5 6 8 10)
m.10	D F F# G G# A Bb C C#	(0 1 2 3 4 5 7 8 9)
m.11	D F G# A C#	(0 1 4 7 8)

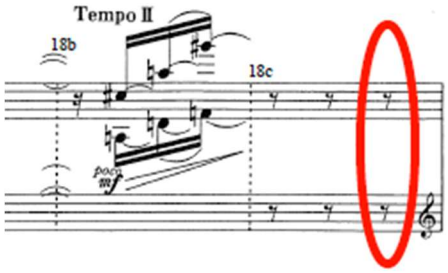
scrutiny of these collections reveal that none fit any of Messiaen's modes. There are many instances of fractions of modes but no complete presentations of any of the modes. Examining the first seven measures may suffice as an example. The first collection encountered after the opening D harmonic major region, is D Eb F F# G# A Bb B C C# and this can be reorganized to match only the first half of 10-note, Mode 7 (constructed Half Half Half Whole Half): C C# D Eb F F#. The pitches G# and Bb that are heard in measure 3 are not part of Mode 7. Starting the mode with G# will not result in any match, in any transposition, of Mode 7. A similar situation occurs in the next measure (m.4) where C# D Eb F# G indeed do constitute the first half of Mode 4 but the remaining pitches do not integrate into the mode. Measure 5 comes closer as the aggregate comprises Mode 2 (half-whole octatonic built on Eb) but the pitch "B," which plays an important role as it is the lowest note, occurs on a strong beat, and is a pedal point in the right hand, does not belong to Mode 2. Measure 6 can be interpreted as Mode 1 (whole tone scale) if only the left hand is taken into consideration. Here Mode 2 would be built on the important ^5 scale degree of the piece but the aggregate, but keeping in mind that the hands are homorhythmic thus presenting simultaneous pitches, the pitch collection does not conform to Mode 1. Measure 7 is perhaps the closest in the "A" sections to adhering to one mode: Mode 1 built on ^5. However, this 6-note scale is missing its 6th pitch (G). This is the only time that the aggregate adheres to a mode in the "A" sections and the omission of one of the pitches is indeed one of the manipulations allowed by Messiaen.

2.25 Modes of limited transposition are not the only aspect of the piece that relate to its subtitle, "In Memoriam Olivier Messiaen." There is the absence of "time": there is no steady pulse in this piece. Another aspect in *Rain Tree Sketch II* that relates to Messiaen's work is Takemitsu's use of rhythms with added (or subtracted) values in which a short value is added by means of a note, rest, or dot. One example of Takemitsu's use an additive rhythm is measure 13c where the figure
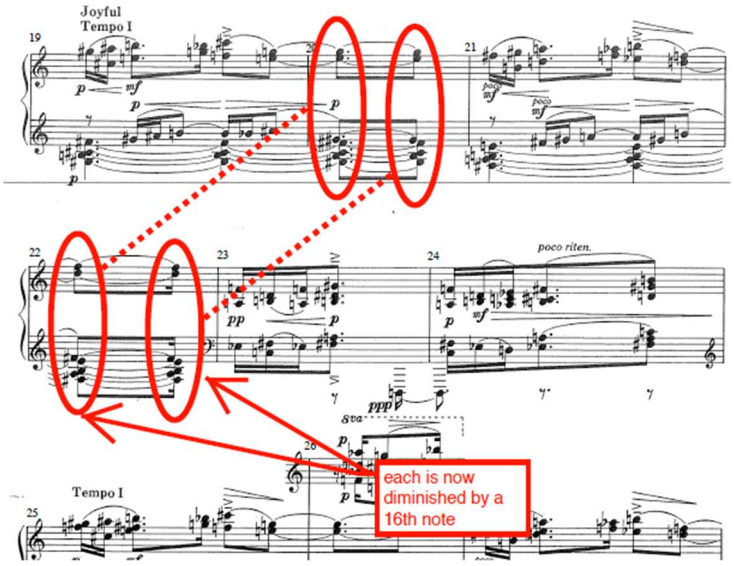


(Example no. 20 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 13b)

is extended by an 8th note rest.



(Example no. 21 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars18b-18c)

An example of the compser's use of a diminished rhythm occurs in the sequencing of measures 19-21 with 21-22 where the notes are reduced by a 16th note.



(Example no. 22 - Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch, Bars 19-25)

The same diminishing of the rhythm occurs in measure 28. The rhythm in measure 28 is shortened by a 16th note when compared to m. 26 where the rhythm originated.

2.26 Other occurrences of added rhythms occur in measure 24 where an 8th note is added at the end of the measure to the rhythm that is repeated: its original is in m. 23. The left hand chords in measure 13a are extended by a 16th note in m. 31. The upper-most notes in measure 13b

are delayed by two 16th note triplets in 31b. In measure 46, the upper-most notes in measure 13b are delayed even further: three 16th notes.

2.27 The delaying of notes via a short note value is another device the composer uses and measure illustrate this device: the low D which precedes measure by a 16th note is delayed by an 8th note, thus entering on the second 16th note in measure 31 and similarly in measure 46.

Conclusions

3.1 Takemitsu's *Rain Tree Sketch II* may thus be understood as a paradigmatic instance of late-twentieth-century piano writing in which formal lucidity and post-tonal harmonic practice are not opposing values but mutually reinforcing dimensions of a single compositional project. The work's articulated ternary design, undergirded by clearly inferable phrase structures and cadential articulations, demonstrates that large- and small-scale coherence can be achieved without recourse to conventional barline demarcations or tonal-functional syntax, and thereby challenges any lingering assumption that post-tonal music must eschew traditional notions of form.[6] Within this framework, motivic recurrence, registral design, and dynamic contour function as primary carriers of structural information, such that the listener's perception of continuity and return is secured through the patterned disposition of gestures in time rather than through the predictable succession of harmonic functions.

3.2 At the same time, the piece offers a compelling model of how diverse harmonic resources—set-theoretical collections, octatonic materials, triadic residues, and chromatic aggregates—can be woven into a single, highly personal idiom that is neither doctrinaire nor eclectic in any superficial sense. By refusing to subject his materials to systematic combinatorial exploitation, Takemitsu preserves a sense of spontaneity and contingency in the unfolding of sonorities, yet the recurrence of specific collections and their associated coloristic fingerprints ensures that the harmonic language remains recognizably "of a piece." The resultant tension between "old" and "new," between triadic singability and post-tonal saturation, is not resolved but productively sustained, so that the listener is continually invited to hear familiar tonal references refracted through an environment shaped by Messiaen's modes, Debussyian color, and Takemitsu's own sensitivity to timbre and resonance.

3.3 Finally, *Rain Tree Sketch II* emerges as both a deeply personal memorial to Olivier Messiaen and a concentrated summation of

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[6] Takemitsu, Tōru.

Takemitsu's mature aesthetic preoccupations, particularly his cultivation of silence, decay, and what he elsewhere describes as the "sea of sound." The integration of Messiaen's modes of limited transposition and rhythms with added values into a texture punctuated by carefully staged silences produces a temporal experience in which linear progression yields to suspended, contemplative time—an experience that aligns with Takemitsu's longstanding engagement with Japanese concepts of *ma* and with his fascination for the lingering resonance of sound after attack. In this convergence of memorial intent, formal clarity, and post-tonal refinement, *Rain Tree Sketch II* not only honors a revered mentor but also inscribes itself as a quietly radical contribution to the piano repertoire, one in which the act of listening—to harmony, to resonance, to silence—becomes tantamount to an act of remembrance.

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