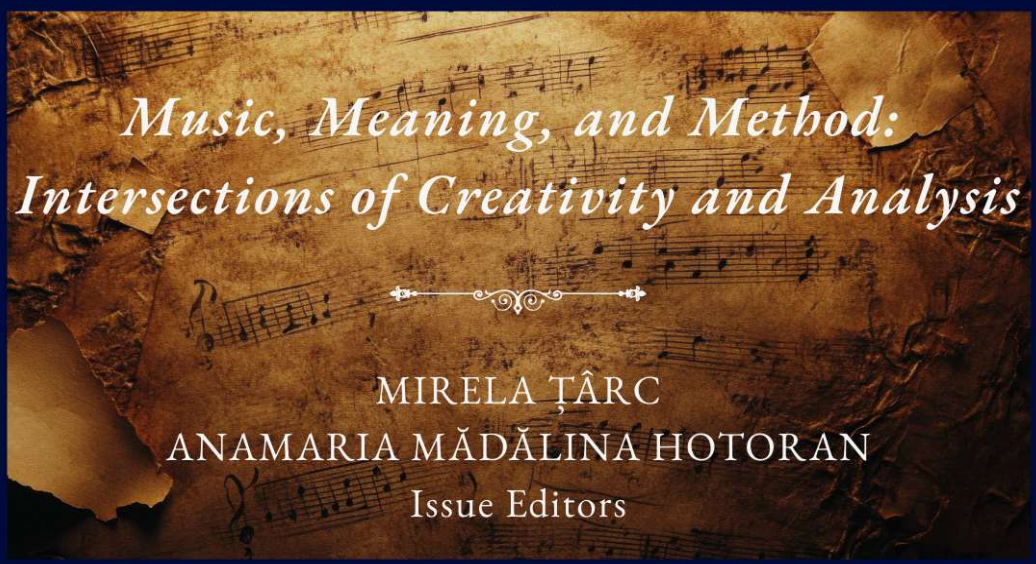
Musica Academica

SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1/2025



UNIVERSITATEA DIN ORADEA
ROMÂNIA

ISSN: 3061-5364
ISSN ONLINE: 3090-9902
ISSN-l: 3061-5364

Musica Academica

Scientific Journal

Volume 2, Issue 1/2025

Music, Meaning, and Method: Intersections of Creativity and Analysis

Issue Editors:
Mirela Ţârc
Anamaria Mădălina Hotoran

Musicological research journal affiliated with the
Doctoral School of Interdisciplinary Studies
within the University of Oradea, Romania

Cover designer: A. Mădălina Hotoran

MUSICA ACADEMICA
Volume 2, Issue 1/2025
Published online: 2025.12.12
Issue DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1

Music, Meaning, and Method:
Intersections of Creativity and Analysis

CONTENTS

Musica Academica
Volume 2. Issue 1 (2025): 6-38
DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1.01

INSIDE THE COMPOSING PROCESS: THE MEANINGS OF CREATIVE STAGES AND THEIR INTERCONNECTIONS

JURGITA VALČIKAITĖ-ŠIDLAUSKIENĖ

PhD Student,
Lithuanian Culture Research Institute[1]
jurgitavalcikaite@gmail.com

Abstract
This article focuses on the process of musical composition and the avenues for identifying distinct stages within the context of 20th-century theories of creativity and the creative process (e.g., Wallas, 1926; Rossman, 1931; Osborn, 1952; Koberg and Bagnall, 1971; Fritz, 1991) The possibility of segmenting the composition process into phases is considered, the analytical basis of which is thestudy of precompositional (sketch) material. The expression of creative thought is inherently dependent on the individuality of the creator; thus, universally applying existing models of creativity is limited by the risk of subjective interpretation, particularly when relying on the specific sequence of stages proposed by any one theory. Given that most theories of the creative process are formulated based on research in psychology, philosophy, and related fields, they often exhibit recurring structural and conceptual patterns. I propose a combination of these models as a potential means of identifying compositional phases that directly correlate with the creative evolution of a selected composer's work.

Keywords
music, creativity, process, compositional phases, sketches.

Introduction

Understanding the creative process (or processes) and identifying internal mechanisms remains a complex challenge within the discourse of

[1] Saltoniškių g. 58, Vilnius, 08105 Vilniaus m. sav., Lithuania

musicology. The concept of process (from the Latin *processus* – "a moving forward") refers to a dynamic phenomenon, characterized as a sequence of actions or a progression of states connected by causal relationships. However, segmentation of the process as a creative act – differentiating phases or stages, which would clarify what occurred, when, and how in the course of composing music – remains a largely unresolved issue. There is a lack of research that directly addresses such questions, and the majority of studies involving the key concepts of *creativity* and *process* have been conducted in the fields of psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, and the social sciences. Meanwhile, the individualized nature of creative expression requires a continual reconsideration of the analytical tools.

For decades the creative process has been a widely discussed phenomenon in academic literature, prompting researchers to schematize the logic of distinct stages (or phases) of creativity and define their functional meaning. However, the specific challenges posed by individual disciplines – such as musical composition – reveal atypical sequences of creative actions that do not fit neatly within the frameworks of established theories of the creative process.

Creativity is a topic of interest across various disciplines, including the philosophy of art, aesthetics, psychology, sociology, and education. Its definition develops based on the unique characteristics of the fields in which creative activity occurs. Generally, creativity can be understood as the result of an individual's intentional effort. This involves the ability to transform one's knowledge and experiences into an artifact or intersubjective text that others can perceive. In this context, creativity is the act of bringing something new into existence. However, culturally embedded experiences and elements of musical tradition continue to shape a composer's relationship with their work. Some scholars suggest that this relationship can be viewed as a *recombination of associative elements*.[2] Composer and musicologist Zvonimir Nagy focuses on the psychological origins of musical creativity. In his book *Embodiment of Musical Creativity: The Cognitive and Performative Causality of Musical Composition,* Nagy emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary research of the composition process. According to the author, the connections between psychology and neuroscience play a crucial role in analyzing the compositional practices of individual composers. Nagy defines the embodiment (composition) of musical thought as *cognitive and performative causality*, arguing for the elements of creative

[2] Sarnoff A. Mednick, "The Associative Basis of the Creative Process," *Psychological Review* 69, no. 3 (May 1962): 229, https://doi.org/10.1037/h0048850.

associations found in the person and works of each composer: “whose associations become the foundation for an understanding of embodied creativity.”[3]

There are similarities in the thought of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947), who describes creativity as a fundamental metaphysical principle responsible for the emergence of novelty: “Creativity is the principle of novelty. An actual occasion is a novel entity diverse from any entity in the 'many' which it unifies.”[4] In this quote Whitehead portrays creation as the realization of potential – the fusion of actual facts and ideal forms into a new reality. In other words, creativity is a structural feature of being that encompasses the realities of the past. According to the philosopher, the world is composed not of static objects but of actions and processes – these are genuine yet fleeting moments of becoming.[5]

A connection can be made with the definition of *bisociation*, conceptualized by Arthur Koestler in 1977.[6] In his exploration of the nature of creativity, Koestler defines it as an *act of bisociation.*[7] According to the author, creativity involves the intersection of distinct conceptual spaces defined by codes and matrices – where *code* represents a fixed, habitual element of skill or behavior, and *matrix* refers to its variable component.[8] In his article *Bisociation of Artistic and Academic Approaches in Problem-Based Projects*, Falk Heinrich notes that Koestler metaphorically employs the notion of play as a space of possibilities constrained by rules. “This allows him to theoretically play with the possibility of new emergent conceptual spaces or conceptualisations.”[9]

---

[3] Zvonimir Nagy, *Embodiment of Musical Creativity: The Cognitive and Performative Causality of Musical Composition*, 1st ed. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2016).

[4] Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978), 21.

[5] George R. Lucas, "Alfred North Whitehead," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019), edited by Edward N. Zalta, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/whitehead/.

[6] Arthur Koestler, *The Truth of Imagination* (London: Hutchinson, 1977).

[7] Bisociation – the simultaneous mental association of an idea or object with two fields ordinarily not regarded as related. “Bisociation,” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, accessed June 12, 2025, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bisociation

[8] Koestler, *The Truth of Imagination*, 40.

[9] Falk Heinrich, “Bisociation of Artistic and Academic Approaches in Problem-Based Projects,” *Journal of Problem Based Learning in Higher Education* 6, no. 1 (2018): 88–105, https://doi.org/10.5278/ojs.jpblhe.v6i1.1949.

This theoretical discourse on creativity and creative thinking resonates with the practices of composers who emphasize the rational foundations of creativity. In their work, one can identify the associative elements and recombinations described by Nagy – such as basic structures, cells, modes, series, and so forth – as well as causal relationships that function as expressions of compositional strategies or methods (e.g., Iannis Xenakis's stochastic composition, John Cage's chance operations). Inevitably, past experiences and knowledge permeate both unified (e.g., atonal and serial systems) and/or highly individualized compositional methods (e.g., Cornelius Cardew's graphic scores, Rytis Mažulis, Harry Patch's microtuning systems, spectralism, La Monte Young's sustained tones), thereby producing what we recognize as a new musical work. These practices embody the essence of creativity as defined by the aforementioned scholars. As Arnold Schoenberg stated, "Without organization music would be an amorphous mass, as unintelligible as an essay without punctuation, or as disconnected as a conversation which leaps purposelessly from one subject to another. The chief requirements for the creation of a comprehensible form are logic and coherence. The presentation, development and interconnection of ideas must be based on relationship. Ideas must be differentiated according to their importance and function." [10]

For these reasons, musical creation – characterized by clear, rational structure and logically conceived architectonics – proves to be the most adaptable to theoretical interpretations of the stages in the creative process.

1. Analytical Object

Precomposition (from Latin *pre-* before, *compositio* – arrangement, assembly) refers to the activation of creative thought within the material of a specific art form and the strategic transformation of ideas into artistic substance. In music, precomposition may involve the planning of elements for the future work, such as sketches of generative material (e.g., *Grundgestalt* in Schönberg's terms, or *pitch cell* and *rhythmic cell* according to Réti), harmonic conceptions, compositional techniques, formal logic, hypotheses of space-time structure, fragments of literary text, symbolic associations, form schemes, and more. Creative ideas are often expressed verbally – through the writing down of thoughts, notes, associations, references to sources, etc. – and are collectively referred to as *sketches*. As Friedemann Sallis states, sketches offer the public a new

[10] Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang, with the collaboration of Leonard Stein (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 1.

path of approach to the composer and his music.[11] On a basic level, the study of sketches suggests a linear process through which a composer, artist, or writer moves from initial ideas to an overall draft (outline), eventually arriving at a finished result – the final version (*Fassung letzter Hand* in German). Nevertheless, in most cases, the creative process is significantly more complex, resembling a web of interrelationships rather than a straightforward and linear path.[12] Due to the diversity of compositional techniques and the originality of precompositional material used by composers, several analytical challenges persist. Dave Headlam (1994) points out that precompositional material is often used to reveal connections between sketches and the final version of a musical work. However, according to the author, using sketches to support the analysis of the finished composition should be regarded as methodologically less sound when compared to a systematic investigation of all possible relationships between sketches and the final work. [13] Although similar use of sketches appear in numerous studies (e.g., Sallis, 2015; Hall, 2004; Headlam, 1994), the use of sketches in the analysis of tonal music remains a matter of scholarly debate. The primary reason lies in the wide range of methods and techniques employed by composers, along with varying strategies of idea development. These factors continue to obscure the terminology used to describe the content and structural components of precompositional material. Sketches function as *mnemonic* devices (from the Greek *mneme*, meaning "memory") and are typically intended to preserve thoughts or ideas that are difficult to retain in memory with precision.

Although sketch studies often serve primarily as epistolary material for reconstructing compositional technique or even aspects of a composer's biography, a rich corpus of such documents in singular cases offers opportunities for more diverse analytical approaches. This includes the possibility of reconstructing the creative process itself, tracing its genesis and uncovering not only the compositional layers of individual works but also the retrospective formation of the piece. This allows for a clearer understanding of the development and evolution of creative thought, and it serves as a primary means to explore the extent to which

---

[11] Friedemann Sallis, *Music Sketches*, Cambridge Introductions to Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 2.

[12] *Ibidem. 33-34.*

[13] David Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis: Berg's Twelve-Tone Music," *College Music Symposium* 33/34 (1993–1994): 160, accessed July 1, 2025, https://symposium.music.org/index.php/33-34/item/2104-sketch-study-and-analysis-bergs-twelve-tone-music.

early, unrefined precompositional material relates to the final product, the completed work. [14]

The shifting phases of precomposition present the central analytical challenge in studies that take sketches as their primary object of inquiry. Within the framework of established creativity process theories, it remains challenging to identify which features or types of precompositional material can be evaluated as distinctive (i.e., differential) components of the creative process. Existing studies tend to classify sketches based on characteristic signifiers, such as tables, graphs, drawings, and harmonic structures, but these analyses mainly focus on revealing the features of compositional technique. In contrast, from the perspective of the creative process itself, no clearly defined criteria exist for interpreting the meanings of different elements found in precompositional material and their significance for the development of creative thought. Such interpretative links become possible only through the application of combinations of existing theories of creativity. Erkki Huovinen[15] discusses this very prospect, arguing that theoretical eclecticism and revisionism in musical practices may provide a deeper understanding of the processual aspect of music composition.

2. Projection of the Idea

In studies of the creative process[16], the most attention is devoted to the initial moment of creation. It is important to note, however, that the boundaries of the creative beginning and end are themselves subjects of separate scholarly debates and investigations, as their identification is closely linked not only to the individuality of the creator but also to the evaluations of the surrounding environment (i.e., society), as well as to the performance, interpretation, and continued life of the work. For this reason, I focus specifically on the technological aspect – the evolution of the composition from its initial sketches to the final score.

---

[14] Ian Bent, "The 'Compositional Process' in Music Theory 1713–1850," *Music Analysis* 3, no. 1 (1984): 54–55.

[15] Erkki Huovinen, "Theories of Creativity in Music: Students' Theory Appraisal and Argumentation," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (March 25, 2021), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.612739.

[16] Graham Wallas (1926); Joseph Rossman (1931); Alfred Einstein (1939); Alex Osborn (1953); Joseph Kerman (1970); Michael Koberg and James Bagnall (1971); Marha Hyde (1977, 1980, etc.); Ian Bent (1984); Scott Isaksen and Donald Trefflinger (1985); Barry Cooper (1990 m.); William Kinderman (1991); Robert Fritz (1991); Sidney J. Parnes (1992); Paul Plsek (1996); Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1996); Joseph Auner (2005); Jean-Baptiste Thiebaut (2010); Guerino Mazzola, Joomi Park and Florian Thalmann (2012); Patricia Hall, Friedemann Sallis (2004, 2015); Sigitas Mickis (2017); Daniel L. Nevels (2018) and others.

Authors who emphasize systemic thinking define the creative point of departure in various ways: as *preparation* (by Wallas, 1926), *observation* (by Rosmann, 1931, and Koberg & Bagnall, 1971), *analysis* (by Bandrowski, 1985), *exploration* (by Kratus, 1989), or *conception* (by Fritz, 1991), among others. In contrast, the actual birth of an idea is often identified only in the second or third stages of these models. From a broader perspective – what could be termed the *golden ratio* – the idea emerges as the culmination of directed, conscious preparation, involving the accumulation of both material and knowledge. Therefore, the moment of *illumination* (in Wallas's terms) or the "arrival of the muse" should be understood not as a spontaneous miracle but as the result of prior knowledge, preparation, and work.[17] This contrasts with earlier scholars of the creative process, who often ascribed a foundational role to the moment of invention or idea-generation, positioning it as the primary stage in the creative continuum. [18]

The term *idea* (from the Greek *idea* – concept, image)[19] is defined as a plan, thought, or proposal; an image or impression arising from the surrounding environment and existing knowledge; an opinion or point of view; or a goal, or a more complex expression of feeling. In any case, ideas do not emerge *ex nihilo*. [20] Both etymologically and epistemologically, an idea is projected based on one's own and others' prior experiences, involving questioning, hypothesizing, and conducting relevant environmental investigations. Once a point of departure or core[21] is selected and the idea matures, methods of its realization are sought, the best solution is chosen, and it undergoes reflection. In other words, the formation of an ideational core enables the transition to the physical-psychological creative process. The segmentation of this latter process is

[17] Jane Piirto, "The Creative Process as Creators Practice It: A View of Creativity With Emphasis on What Creators Really Do," in *Perspectives in Gifted Education: Creativity*, vol. 5, ed. N. L. Hafenstein, K. Haines, and B. Cramond (Denver: Institute for the Development of Gifted Education, Ricks Center for Gifted Children, University of Denver, 2009), 50.

[18] In 1713, Johann Mattheson presents the first structural model of music composition, in which, based on the principles of rhetoric, the author distinguishes three structural elements of the music composition process: *Inventio* (invention), *Elaboratio* (elaboration),and *Executio* (execution, performance). Johann Mattheson, *Das Neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (Hamburg: B. Schiller, 1713),10.

[19] *Idea* – In Oxford learner dictionary: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/idea

[20] From Latin *Ex nihilo* – from or out of nothing. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "ex nihilo," accessed June 30, 2025, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ex%20nihilo.

[21] The definition proposed by the author of this article.

inseparable from the creator's personality, education, and other circumstances, yet essential components or phases within which micro-creative processes occur remain constant.[22] Such invariant macro-components or processes can be traced back to the theory of Johann Mattheson from the 18th century. In his *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (1713), Mattheson, drawing upon rhetorical principles, identified three structural elements of the musical composition process: *Inventio* (invention), *Elaboratio* (elaboration), and *Executio* (execution, performance).[23] These three macro-phases, analogous to Plato's procedural triad,[24] encompass the entire framework of the creative process and are indispensable for the completion of any creative act. It is noteworthy that Mattheson designates the first stage as *inventio*, without accounting for preliminary steps leading up to this moment. This logical sequence may have been informed by two factors: (1) the limited psychological knowledge aimed at analyzing creative thinking at the time, and (2) belief that the creative process begins only once the idea or the core of the future work is in place.

Heinrich Christoph Koch, in his *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (1787), further developed Mattheson's rhetoric-based theory between 1782 and 1793, bringing it closer to music by creating a pedagogy that addressed the aspects – *Beyspiele* – and processes of composition. Koch utilized Johann Georg Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (1774) schematic model, which was adapted from universal methodologies employed by ancient philosophers.[25] Sulzer translated the Latin concepts into German and applied them to the practice of musical composition and analysis, formulating the German triad as *Anlage* ("plan") – *Ausführung* ("execution") – *Ausarbeitung* ("elaboration"). Unlike Mattheson, Koch emphasized

[22] Based on the 16th-century theories of Nikolaus Listenius. He was one of the first music theorists who, in his work *Musica* (1537), distinguished the creative process and the musical work from the performance of the work. He called the creative process and the musical work *musica poetica*, and the performance of the work *musica practica*. Listenius defined the composer's task as the creation of a perfect and complete work — *opus perfectum et absolutum*. Michael Chanan, *Musica Practica: The Social Practice of Western Music from Gregorian Chant to Postmodernism*(London: Verso, 1994), 73.

[23] Mattheson, *Das Neu-eröffnete Orchestre,* 10.

[24] ἰδέα (idéa) – "idea," "form," the ideal prototype, the unchanging essence; ὕλη (hylē) – "matter," "material," chaotic, ever-changing potential; ψυχή (psychḗ) or δημιουργός (dēmiourgós) – "soul" or "Demiurge" (creator, craftsman) who shapes matter according to ideas.

[25] Lat. *Inventio* – the discovery of the main idea; *Dispositio* – the arrangement (of material); *Elaboratio* – the development (or refinement); *Decoratio* – the embellishment (or ornamentation).

thematicism[26] as fundamental to achieving the primary compositional purpose.[27] Koch characterizes the musical work's plan (*Anlage*) as "the fundamental compositional ideas interconnected and presented to the composer as a coherent whole, together with its principal harmonic properties." [28] Ultimately, ideas must appear in the only possible (perfect) order. Once this order is constructed, the composer must use their ability to think harmoniously when creating a melody and to experiment rationally.[29] Since the work organically unfolds from the concentrated ideational material modeled in the precomposition phase, the *Anlage* stage involves anticipating the totality and the main parts that form it – the generative potentials of the compositional material.

Thus, the projection of the idea – regardless of definitional variations – becomes a fundamental question concerning what we consider the creative process and at which point we mark its inception. This problematic "knot" marks an important divergence among scholars investigating the creative process, as they identify the moment of beginning differently. However, such disparity represents a natural expression of differing perceptions of the phenomenon. Within the field of compositional practice, the moments of idea genesis are often differentiated not only across various composers' methodologies but also within the creative trajectories of particular works.

In the second half of the 20th century, Italian-American psychiatrist Silvano Arieti systematized eight previously known models[30] of the creative thinking process in his seminal work, *Creativity: The Magic Synthesis*.[31] It is important to note, however, that some scholars reject the notion that creativity can be adequately explained as a linear sequence of model-based steps. Psychologist William Vinacke[32] for instance, argued that creative thinking does not conform to the principles of modeling.

---

[26] Koch: "Thema is in Töne gefährte Affekt oder Carakter" – „A theme is an affect or character conveyed through tones.

[27] In his research, Koch aimed to investigate three key aspects: the highest function of art, the fundamental aesthetic properties of composition, and, most importantly, the conditions under which a composition must emerge in order to fulfil the purpose of art. Natasha Kovaleff Baker, *The Aesthetic Theories of Heinrich Christoph Koch* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), 183.

[28] The structure of the *Anlage* includes a melodic-motivic substance—*thematicism*—that generates the primary material and serves the expression of emotion.

[29] Kovaleff Baker, *The Aesthetic Theories of Heinrich Christoph Koch*, 186.

[30] The authors: G. Wallas (1926), J. Rossman (1931), J. Taylor (1959), M. Stein (1967, 1974), A. Koestler (1964), A. Oborn (1952), J.P. Guilford (1950).

[31] Silvano Arieti, *Creativity: The Magical Synthesis* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

[32] William E. Vinacke, *The Psychology of Thinking* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953), 77.

Representatives of Gestalt philosophy expressed similar views. Max Wertheimer[33] conceptualized the process of creative thought as an integrated stream of thinking, incompatible with rigid segmentation. According to him, the creative process progresses from a structurally unstable and unsatisfactory situation (S1) toward a state that represents a solution or resolution (S2). The distance between these two points (from S1 to S2) is filled with elements prompted by constructive and productive thinking – elements whose structural coherence becomes apparent only in retrospect, upon viewing the process as a whole. This notion of cognitive "distance" or "gap" directly corresponds to what we might understand in compositional terms as the transition from sketches and drafts to the completed manuscript. Wertheimer also suggests that the movement from S1 to S2 often begins in reverse, as the thinker imaginatively projects potential relational links between a hypothesized outcome (S2) and the initial, unstable point of origin (S1).[34] This backward search for coherence often leads to moments of illumination, or the so-called Gestalt *"a-ha"* moment (Ger. *Aha-Erlebnis*), associated with the emergence of insight.

Gestalt theorists further posited that problem-solving involves qualitatively distinct phases: (1) the discovery of a principle or core idea (functional phase), and (2) the verification and realization of that idea (executive phase). Creative, constructive thinking is therefore understood as problem-solving, where the segmentation into discrete stages remains closely tied to a concrete goal – in this case, the musical work itself. The realization of such a work typically emerges from a drive toward resolution, the overcoming of a creative obstacle, or the selection among possible alternatives.[35] Although Wertheimer critiques the segmentation of the creative process – especially attempts to reduce creativity to a linear chain of discrete actions – the dual structure of idea generation and realization nonetheless implicitly supports a conception of creativity as a systematic and structured act.

At the end of the 20th century, Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi[36] defined creativity through a triadic model that can be

[33] Max Wertheimer, *Productive Thinking* (New York: Harper, 1945), 7–8.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] Raimondas Kaffemanas, *Mąstymo psichologija* (Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, 2001), 79–83.

[36] Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), 156.

interpreted similarly to Mattheson's compositional framework.[37] The model consists of three components: *domain*, *field*, and *individual*. For the result to be significant within its domain, it must meet two criteria: (1) it must be new and unique; (2) it must be original and anomalous.[38] The *domain* designates the discipline, set of symbolic rules and procedures, an area of knowledge or sphere of influence – or even an emergent, yet-to-be-defined idea or creative core – that informs the completed work. The *field* can be understood as a subset of the domain and represents the specific context in which the creative output is evaluated.[39] Within this narrower framework, the creative core emerges during a dynamic phase of the process and assumes its final form only once the product is realized. This model reveals a connection between divergent and convergent thinking: divergence generates novelty (the idea itself), while convergence brings about originality through the rational development of that idea.[40] Such cognitive structuring is identifiable in compositional practice. Lithuanian composer Sigitas Mickis emphasizes the importance of this perspective: "Describing the specificity of creativity is part of a broader scholarly debate concerning the specificity of creativity research itself (i.e., which areas are generalizable and which require domain-specific specialization)—the so-called 'creativity–domain problem'." [41]

Some theorists, propose a component mechanism instead of a phase-based model. Psychologists Mark A. Runco and Ivonne Chand[42] propose a *Two-Tier Model of Creative Thinking*, in which the *first tier* identifies three core skills that govern the creative process: *problem finding* (including identification, definition, etc.), *ideation* (fluency, originality, flexibility of ideas, etc.), and *evaluation* (critical reflection).[43] The *second tier* represents *supporting processes*, namely the creator's knowledge and motivation, both of which are highly dependent

[37] Similarities can also be seen in Teresa M. Amabile's (1993) Componential Model of Creativity (see: Teresa M. Amabile, "What Does a Theory of Creativity Require?" *Psychological Inquiry* 4, no. 3 (1993): 179–181).

[38] Daniel L. Nevels, "Music Software in the Compositional Learning Process," Graduate Theses and Dissertations (2018), 8.

[39] *Ibid.,* 9.

[40] Leif Runar Forsth, *Naujas praktinis mąstymas* (Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2014), 22-25.

[41] Sigitas Mickis, "Kūrybingumo fenomeno muzikos kompozicijoje tyrimo teorinis modelis," *Lietuvos muzikologija* 8 (2017): 48.

[42] Mark A. Runco and Ishwar Chand, "Cognition and Creativity," *Educational Psychology Review* 7, no. 1 (1995): 243.

[43] Guerino Mazzola, Jinghui Park, and Fabio Thalmann, *Musical Creativity: Strategies and Tools in Composition and Improvisation* (Computational Music Science) (Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 142–143.

on the factors of the first tier. It is important to note that following the principle of duality the authors further subdivide these components into smaller segments, which in content resemble other models that aim to segment the creative process. A central focus of the theory is *ideation*, which, in their model, occupies a *key structural position*. This term encompasses not only the generation of an idea that becomes the core of the creative work but also the concept, structure, and essential operational dimensions of creativity. The Runco/Chand model is particularly notable in that it presents *ideation* as the central axis of the entire creative process, one that is subject to opposing forces throughout. In other words, *ideation* is not a fixed element, but rather a dynamic component that shifts and evolves during creative activity.

In the second half of the 20th century, scholars turned their attention to the popular seven-step model of creative thinking proposed by Alex Osborn[44], the originator of the widely known technique of *brainstorming.*[45] This model introduces a theory of balance between analysis and imagination. Although Osborn's ideas are somewhat distant from the specific domain of musical creativity, it is important to highlight the sequence of steps he proposes, which correlates with the stages of musical composition. In Osborn's model, primary emphasis is placed on *orientation*, or the anticipation of a problem. In the context of this study, the musical work serves as a creative goal. While this first step does not yet fulfill the function of a fully formed idea (Osborn labels idea generation as the third step in his model), a clear orientation or envisioned outcome (the composition as the final product) acts as a germinal strategic impulse. Upon this foundation, and with the aid of analysis (the second step in Osborn's sequence), the core of the idea (or ideas) is cultivated.[46] In this respect, Osborn's insights are more closely aligned with earlier research that identifies the beginning of the creative process as the formation of the initial idea.

Among scholars who identify the beginning of the creative process with *preparation* (by Wallas, 1926; Taylor, 2014), *exploration* (by Kratus, 1989), or *analysis* and *conception* (by Barron, 1988; Fritz, 1991;

[44] Alex F. Osborn, *Applied Imagination* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953).

[45] *Brainstorming* is one of the active methods for generating ideas, with its rules and principles established by Osborn (1948). While brainstorming is typically conducted in groups to facilitate collective idea generation, there are variations of the method that apply clear guidelines for individual problem-solving as well. It is noteworthy that Osborn conceived the concept of a purposeful idea both in his notion of "alternative selection" and through the development of brainstorming rules as a structured tool to facilitate this process.

[46] Osborn, *Applied Imagination*, 36-48.

Koberg & Bagnall, 1971; Bandrowski, 1985), this initial phase consistently occupies the primary position. Most models of creative thinking developed after 1926 are, in many respects, variations of sociologist and psychologist Graham Wallas's foundational framework, which – despite widespread use – has not been fundamentally redefined in terms of how the creative process is segmented. For this reason, Wallas's model serves in this study as a conceptual invariant from which alternative models of the creative process can be examined. In his 1926 book *The Art of Thought*, Wallas introduced one of the earliest and still most widely cited models of creative thinking. Synthesizing insights from scientists and observations on the process of problem-solving and creativity[47], Wallas proposed a four-stage model:

Preparation – The creator actively prepares to solve a problem by consciously investigating its dimensions.

Incubation – The problem shifts into the subconscious, where the solution begins to develop beyond conscious awareness.

Illumination – Also referred to as insight or creative breakthrough, this is the moment when the solution or idea emerges from the subconscious into consciousness.

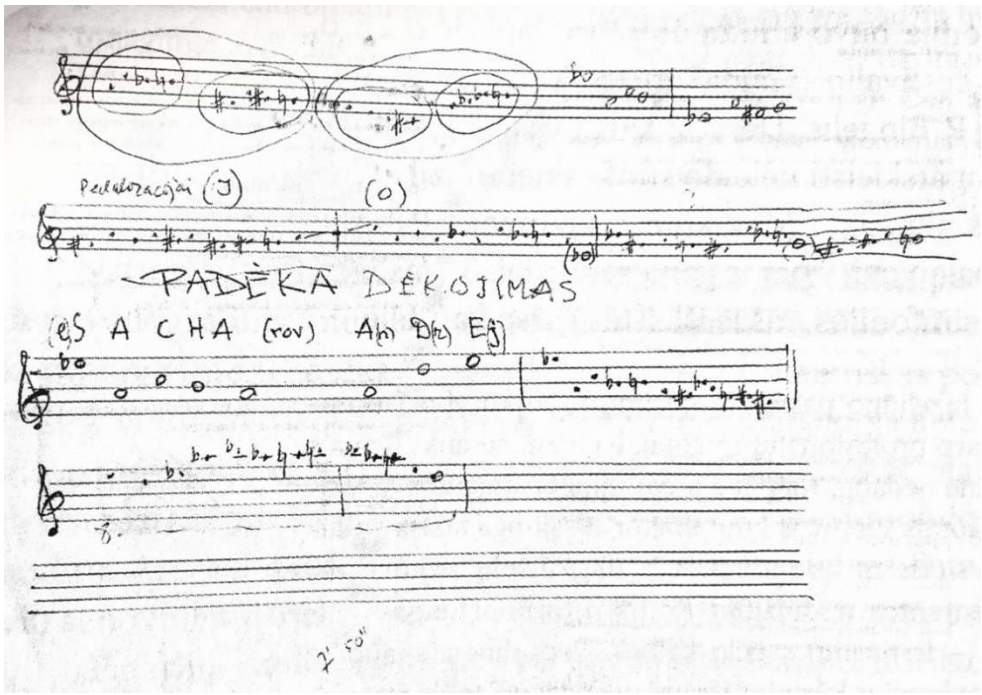
Verification – The idea is tested, developed, and applied in a concrete context.

In this framework, the creative idea corresponds to the third stage – *illumination*, positioning it near the end of the creative sequence. This segmentation implies that a significant part of the creative process belongs to the first three stages, which involve both conscious and unconscious cognitive activity. The *preparation* phase is an extended period of intentional engagement during which the creator formulates a strategy or plan for implementing a potential outcome. Although no tangible idea may yet exist at this point, this phase includes goal setting, question formulation, hypothesis development, task planning, knowledge gathering, fact collection, and experimentation with various elements to identify promising configurations. [48]

[47] In the context of the concepts used by the author, problem-solving is equivalent to creative thinking. Applying this theory within musicology contexts, the concept of a problem—as an active notion—is replaced by the definition of a musical work**.**

[48] Graham Wallas, *The Art of Thought* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1926), 133–135.

In the context of musical composition, the preparation phase corresponds to the composer's earliest creative notations – initial sketches and conceptual cues for the future work. These may range from abstract sources of inspiration to detailed schematic drafts through which the composer begins to shape the core compositional material (e.g., Example No.1).



Example no. 1 – Julius Juzeliūnas' "Gratitude" (lit. Dėkojimas) – precompositional material. Modal structures (from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, F.260-84).

This stage represents a period of deliberate effort and convergent thinking. Many researchers emphasize that formulating the problem is often more important than solving it.[49] In this regard, analyst Steven H. Kim notes that the problem or objective must be both difficult and complex. According to Kim, creative thinking is provoked by confronting a challenge or problem. More specifically, creativity cannot occur within a "comfortable" environment – a condition that renders the widely discussed concept of "creative struggle" a tangible and real phenomenon.[50]

[49] Donald E. Papalia, Carol J. Camp, and Ruth Duskin Feldman, *Adult Development and Aging* (New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1996), 56.

[50] Steven H. Kim, *Essence of Creativity: A Guide to Tackling Difficult Problems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 42–45.

Similarly, psychologist Ellis Paul Torrance conceptualizes creative thinking as a process in which (1) ambiguities, problems, gaps in information, and unusual or unexpected phenomena are sought out (in the context of music composition—original and conceptual ideas); (2) hypotheses are formulated and questions posed, such as exploring methods for realizing an idea, by developing technological or compositional approaches (e.g., in serialist practices, the creation of functional tone rows); (3) the proposed hypotheses or assumptions are evaluated and tested, which in music may include the testing of constructive elements, their variational potential, and, if necessary, the revision or repetition of decision-making processes; (4) the results are presented (completion of the musical composition).[51] Torrance notably identifies Wallas's earlier four-stage model as the foundation for many contemporary creative thinking models. Indeed, most other widely known theories of the creative process tend to replicate the structure of Wallas's framework, often with only minor modifications or additions (e.g., Koberg & Bagnall, 1981; Bandrowski, 1985; Barron, 1988; Kratus, 1989; Fritz, 1991; Parnes, Isaksen & Treffinger, 1992, among others). The inclusion of an *incubation* phase and the element of sudden *illumination* in this popular model offers insight into the interrelation between creative and critical thinking. The fact that Wallas's model begins with intentional *preparation* and ends with critical evaluation (*verification*) suggests that creative and analytical thinking complement one another. As Torrance notes: "Creative thinkers verify and evaluate, but they expect surprises[52] and therefore avoid evaluating too early." [53]

Although some models of the creative process[54] define creativity as a mysterious[55] or miraculous phenomenon, dominant theories increasingly attribute the emergence of new ideas to conscious efforts to balance analysis and imagination. This notion is supported by the work of constructivist composers of the dodecaphonic system (e.g., Schönberg, Berg, Webern), whose compositional thinking was grounded in a rational, logical, and combinatorial 12-tone structure (the series). Joseph

[51] Ellis Paul Torrance, "The Nature of Creativity as Manifest in Its Testing," in *The Nature of Creativity*, ed. Robert J. Sternberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 50.

[52] As early as the 18th century, Heinrich Christoph Koch asserted that the final refinement of a work of art is determined by contingent (or incidental) values.

[53] Torrance, E.P. "The Nature of Creativity as Manifest in Its Testing", 52.

[54] In the eighteenth century, Heinrich Christoph Koch emphasized the aspect of Genialität—which he equated with the concept of a „Wunder" (miracle)—as one of the essential conditions for attaining the ultimate purpose of art.

[55]Kovaleff Baker, *The Aesthetic Theories of Heinrich Christoph Koch*, 183.

Rossman[56], conducted a large-scale survey involving 710 inventors and creators, examining the stages of their creative processes and extended Wallas's original four-stage model into a more detailed seven-step framework: (1) observation of needs and difficulties (problem identification); (2) analysis of the need (problem analysis); (3) investigation of all available information (information gathering); (4) formulation of all objective solutions (solution generation); (5) critical evaluation of these solutions (solution evaluation); (6) emergence of the new idea or invention (idea/invention generation); (7) experimentation and refinement (testing and implementation). Regardless of how finely the creative process is segmented, a clear trend emerges: a substantial preparatory phase typically precedes the moment of idea generation. In the context of musical creativity, this preparatory phase may be understood as *precomposition* – a stage distinct from the act of composition itself (which assumes a clear concept and execution plan). Between these two phases lies what Wallas describes as the *incubation* stage, in which accumulated knowledge and experience begin to operate at the unconscious level. Wallas also uses the terms "subconscious" and "fringe-conscious" to refer to this transitional cognitive space.[57] The *incubation* phase allows the creator to synthesize prior knowledge and collected materials, refine key conceptual elements, and discard irrelevant informational residue.[58] This stage serves as a transitional bridge leading to the emergence of the creative idea. Based on the findings of the aforementioned theorists, precomposition in music can be identified or classified using well-known models of the creative process. Although most of these models were not developed initially with musical composition in mind, there are clear functional parallels, for instance, between the preparatory work undertaken before writing a literary text and that of composing music. Such parallels provide a theoretical basis for integrating general creativity theories into the discourse on musical creativity.

Music, as one of the most expressive forms of human creative activity, provides a compelling testing ground for general theories of creativity. However, research into musical creativity is often conducted within disciplinary silos, somewhat isolated from broader frameworks of creative cognition and process theory. Of course, in music, the projection of an anticipated result is inseparable from the work itself, which acts as

[56] Joseph Rossman, *The Psychology of the Inventor* (Washington, DC: Inventor's Publishing, 1931), 77.

[57] Wallas, *The Art of Thought* ,140.

[58] *Ibid.,* 141.

an expression of individual identity. Diverse examples of creative practice suggest that the most objective way to examine the creative processes of composers is through a synthesis of multiple theoretical frameworks. When comparing the creative tendencies of the 19th and 20th centuries, it becomes evident that not only the character of creativity but also the nature of the compositional process itself has undergone significant transformation. As a result, the phases and internal structure of the creative process become dynamic and variable elements – a process within a process.

3. Realization of the Idea

A frequently emphasized position in creativity research is that a formulated concept, often built upon an original and flexible operational idea, develops through a process of systematic and sustained work. However, this phase of the creative process often overlaps with another critical stage – *verification*, as described by Wallas. In this phase, the idea is expanded, tested, and evaluated in terms of its validity, and analyzed to determine whether the anticipated outcome aligns with the initial artistic or conceptual goal. Decisions and discoveries made during this phase are supported by discipline-specific or interdisciplinary knowledge. As in the initial phase, this work may occur on a conscious cognitive level, or in a combined mode, where the conceptual foundations of the idea are developed through practical experimentation. In the case of composers, this often involves the fixation of primary compositional material – harmony, rhythm, formal architecture, and so forth – with a clearly defined logical-conceptual projection of the final artistic result.[59] The act of self-evaluation carried out by the creator may be likened to Koberg and Bagnall's *selection* phase, in which the rotation and testing of ideas are emphasized. While, at least in theory, the *verification* stage involves only minor corrections that do not significantly alter the overall structure of the work, in practice, radical changes may still occur. For instance, psychologist Romanas Kafemannas proposes a distinct strategy for addressing problems that may arise specifically during the *verification* phase. He divides this stage into four sub-stages: *Preparation* – identifying a problem or a gap; *Data analysis* – determining what must or could be changed and proposing a hypothesis; *Solution* – planning a course of action, choosing a method, and seeking a resolution; *Evaluation of the solution* – testing whether the chosen solution confirms the initial hypothesis. Kafemannas also incorporates the *incubation* phase and *insight* into this model, suggesting that creative verification cannot be

[59] Sallis, *Music Sketches*, 132-133.

reduced to purely rational procedures alone.[60] That said, the microprocesses of *verification* can best be observed through the analysis of precompositional materials. Meanwhile, external evaluation is essential not only for the creator but also for the creative work itself. This stage often determines the lasting artistic value and cultural impact of a composition within the broader context of creative activity, specifically in this case – music. Such evaluation is influenced by temporal, cultural, social, and economic factors, which collectively shape the work's significance and relevance within its historical and artistic context.[61]

The realization of a formed idea is expressed through various processes. Drawing on established models of the creative process, the idea is implemented through execution (*Ausführung*) and elaboration (*Ausarbeitung*), as defined by Koch (1787), that is, through practical action or sustained work that enacts the conceptual plan developed during earlier phases (see Bandrowski, 1985; Koberg & Bagnall, 1971). From a psychological perspective, this stage is shaped by several key factors, including motivation, the structural properties of the idea, and most importantly, self-analysis, evaluation, or verification. Suppose the idea serves as the central anchor of the creative process. In that case, the stages both preceding and following its emergence constitute a network of influences, insights, strategies, and individual modes of creative behavior, the specifics of which vary widely from case to case. As is often emphasized, "A composition is first born in the mind. And for it to mature [...] an impulse is needed – a point of contact with life, with people." [62]

Graham Wallas wrote: "I shall not [...] deal at any length with the stage of Preparation. It includes the whole process of intellectual education. Men have known for thousands of years that conscious effort and its resulting habits can be used to improve the thought-process of young persons, and have formulated for that purpose an elaborate art of education."[63] In this light, *preparation* fundamentally refers to the acquired capacity to work with material, to understand and manipulate the principles of musical composition, and, through a

[60] Kaffemanas, *Mąstymo psichologija,* 82.

[61] Robert S. Albert and Mark A. Runco, "A History of Research on Creativity," in *Handbook of Creativity*, ed. Robert J. Sternberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 16–36, 52.

[62] Julius Juzeliūnas, „Julius Juzeliūnas apie save, jauno žmogaus savarankiškumą ir muzikos prasmę. Pokalbis su Dalia Kairaityte," in *Julius Juzeliūnas. Straipsniai. Kalbos. Pokalbiai. Amžininkų atsiminimai*, ed. Algirdas Jonas Ambrazas (Kaunas: Spindulys, 2002), 327.

[63] Wallas, *The Art of Thought*, 82-83.

narrowing of focus, to select and generate new or transformed material for a particular work. Lithuanian composer Justina Repečkaitė describes her process as follows: "When compositing I find it important to refine the material. I often rewrite my musical systems until I have learned them by heart, streamline them into a 'musical key' in visual form, and only then do I begin notating the score."[64] Repečkaitė's reflection resonates with Wallas's notion that during the preparation phase, the mind seeks to refine and select ideas, while the verification phase reenacts this filtering process. The composer's mind, working within a relatively narrow field of already refined elements, applies nearly the same logical principles to consciously control verification as those used to direct preparation. Without these phases and their mutual interactions artistic work can be composed.[65] By contrast, *illumination* is a *flash*[66] – the moment of an idea's emergence, which, in terms of measurable time, is the result of long, often unsuccessful and preliminary attempts. It represents the sudden crystallization of prior effort, emerging unexpectedly as a culmination of complex mental activity.

The analytical writings, compositions, and the preference for rational construction in the work of American composer Milton Babbitt demonstrate a conceptual approach that is broadly analogous to the German term *Aufbau*, meaning construction or structured building. Musicologist Zachary Bernstein, who has extensively studied Babbitt's oeuvre, argues that the composer's analytical practice reveals a concentrated focus on fixed motivic patterns. As in *Aufbau*, the construction process proposed in Babbitt's writings is typically hierarchical, whereby unprocessed surface-level data are progressively integrated into increasingly complex structures.[67] The combination of these abilities, their positioning within musical material, and their manifestation across the temporal dimension of a composition result in what we understand as the creative process.

As noted by various scholars, musical composition continues to be studied without explicit information or links to cognitive processes, and as a result composers' creative processes are largely disembodied. When

---

[64] O. Jamalavičiūtė, „Justina Repečkaitė: ‚Muzikos rašymas – kaip kodavimas'," *Muzikos antena*, June 21, 2018, accessed June 6, 2025, https://muzikosantena.lt/2018/06/21/justina-repeckaite-muzikos-rasymas-kaip-kodavimas/.

[65] Wallas, *The Art of Thought* ,81.

[66] *Ibid.,* 94.

[67] Christian Damböck, ed., *Influences on the Aufbau*, Vienna Circle Institute Yearbook 18 (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 55.

musical composition is examined in isolation from the mental faculties that underpin all other forms of human thought, the possibility of understanding creativity at a fundamental level is effectively excluded.[68] Consequently, the eclecticism that emerges from broader efforts in music research to engage with creativity theories often results in both theoretical vagueness and inconsistency in the selection and application of frameworks. Theoretical skepticism, in turn, appears to foster premature conclusions or dismisses the potential for engaging with and adapting existing models. Nevertheless, the analysis of the creative process cannot rely exclusively on empirical studies, particularly when the aim is to assess case-specific creative modifications during the realization stage (i.e., the *verification* stage). Authors of differing theoretical models propose heterogeneous definitions for evaluation, iteration, and selection within the compositional realization process. For this reason, the theoretical frameworks I reference in this study are not adopted as prescriptive visions of creative outcomes, but rather as methodological guides that enable an objective analysis of creative processes. This stance aligns with the perspective of Erkki Huovinen, who, in his study "Theories of Creativity in Music: Students' Theory Appraisal and Argumentation"[69], critically engages with the challenges of applying creativity theories in musicological research. According to Huovinen, the scholarly resistance to general theories of creativity often reflects a deep-seated disciplinary concern. On the one hand, general creativity theories are sometimes viewed as overly focused on cognitive mechanisms or as being unjustifiably rooted in a modernist conception of individual innovation. On the other hand, some scholars may perceive themselves as defending against universalizing tendencies and culturally blind science. This kind of epistemological commitment can be challenging to reconcile with the apparent generality of creativity theories. From this perspective, creativity may seem simultaneously too narrow and too broad to be meaningfully examined under unified theoretical models.[70]

---

[68] José L. Besada, Anne-Sylvie Barthel-Calvet, and Cristóbal Pagán Cánovas, "Gearing Time Toward Musical Creativity: Conceptual Integration and Material Anchoring in Xenakis' *Psappha*," *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2021): 32, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.611316. 32

[69] Erkki Huovinen, "Theories of Creativity in Music: Students' Theory Appraisal and Argumentation," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (March 25, 2021), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.612739.

[70] *Ibid., 87-88.*

4. Adaptation of Creative Process Models in Composition

The expression of creative thought is inherently bound to the individuality of the composer. Consequently, no general model of creativity can be applied in its original form, particularly regarding the sequence of process stages as proposed by any one theorist. However, a close examination of major theories reveals shared denominators and supplemental elements that allow us to map temporal stages of the compositional process onto phases identified in studies of specific authors, works, or creative outputs. To construct a flexible and adaptive model, it is essential to distinguish between *Invariant macro-phases*—those stages common to most creativity models and *Variable, conditional (micro) phases*—contingent elements that may vary depending on the compositional context.

These intersection points and unique theoretical aspects reveal key methodological challenges. Firstly, many models resist functional assessment. Secondly, each model features phase structures that are inherently indeterminate and cannot always be fully described or operationalized. Finally, in real-world compositional practice, it is often difficult to model a sequential flow from initial idea to concrete decisions. As Tom Ritchey has emphasized, without monitoring, it becomes impossible to control outcomes or scientifically reconstruct the creative flow.[71] "Every synthesis is built upon the results of a preceding analysis, and every analysis requires a subsequent synthesis in order to verify and correct its results."[72] However, while analysis and synthesis provide a methodological backbone, they lack the quantitative differentiation needed to account for the variable-rich creative phases of various models. Problem spaces may be framed in terms of quantitatively undefined variables and conditions. Likewise, these many-sided variables can be synthesized into configurations—well-defined relational structures that reflect the decision-making "spaces" composers navigate.

In this approach, the compositional process is organized into *macro-phases*, each containing *micro-phases*—discrete subprocesses that encode specific variables. Crucially, *macro-phases* are not necessarily of greater extent; instead, they denote stability and structural prominence within the overall creative timeline. Depending on the content of precompositional material and the interplay of models, the number and

---

[71] Tom Ritchey, "General Morphological Analysis: A General Method for Non-Quantified Modelling," adapted from a paper presented at the 16th Euro Conference on Operational Analysis, Brussels, July 1998, 2.

[72] Tom Ritchey, "Outline for a Morphology of Modelling Methods: Contribution to a General Theory of Modelling," *Acta Morphologica Generalis* 1, no. 1 (2012): 15, https://www.swemorph.com/amg/html/amg-1-1/amg-1-1.html.

order of phases are potentially unlimited. By relinquishing the constraint of fitting analysis into a single theoretical model, we gain the capacity to develop customized compositional process models attuned to individual composers or specific works, and accurately identify the distinctive features of a composer's creative flow.

To facilitate this adaptation and synthesis of creativity models, this study employs morphological analysis, originally introduced by Fritz Zwicky in 1942. This method enables the systematic enumeration and exploration of all potential modifications within a given problem-solution complex. Morphological analysis eliminates blind variant searches. By constructing a morphological "box" – an inclusive container encompassing all functional attributes (in this case, all possible definitions of process phases and their enactments) – we can synthesize multiple creativity models. The resulting variable matrix provides a toolkit for analyzing musical precompositional material through the lens of *macro-* and *micro-phases* defined in this study. As Ritchey explained: "Essentially, general morphological analysis (GMA) is a method for identifying and investigating the total set of possible relationships or 'configurations' contained in a given problem complex. In this sense, it is closely related to typology analysis, although GMA is more generalized in form and has far broader applications."[73]

Since any action unfolds within the dimension of time, this movement is most effectively visualized along a horizontal axis in a three-dimensional system. Within this temporal horizon, the stages of well-known creative-process models, when dynamically deconstructed, enable the expansion of phase variants to an indeterminate number. However, to simplify the phase selection process and apply segments of different theories to individual case studies, a reduction of phases is necessary.

As noted, creative process models and their phase variations generate a wide range of possibilities. Graham Wallas, who laid the theoretical groundwork for creativity in the early 20th century, divided the creative process into four *macro-phases* in his 1926 model: *Preparation*, *Incubation*, *Illumination*, and *Verification*. These phases recur in all subsequent models and are therefore adopted here as core *macro-phases*. Despite varying definitions, the phases across different theories remain similar, with only minor variations in content. This commonality allows us to identify shared denominators, typologize creative phases by their nature and significance, or – using a

[73] Ritchey, "General Morphological Analysis. A general method for non-quantified modelling", 3.

morphological analysis perspective – to include an analysis–synthesis moment, which serves to reduce the set of possible phases.

Although the creative process begins at the mental level, prior to any material inscription of ideas in precompositional documents, this phase cannot be empirically identified or typologized. Nevertheless, some theorists explicitly acknowledge this as a *pre-preparatory* mental phase: *observation of a need* (Rossman 1931), *orientation* (Osborn 1952), *objective finding* (Parnes, Isaksen & Treffinger 1992), *problem finding* (Runco & Chand 2012), *formation of the idea* (Jarmalavičiūtė 2020). Each author positions the onset of the creative process within a non-material realm, consistently marking the moment of goal/need identification or decision to create. We can therefore interpret this as the *pre-preparatory* phase.

Since Wallas's model and its phases are used in this study as macro-phases—immutable determinants of the creative process – later theories and their phases are reduced according to the logical structure of Wallas's model. The selection of creative-process theories I discuss in this paper reflects their predominance in the academic literature. A visual representation of each theory's functional phases is provided in Table 1.

As can be seen from the creative process models presented in Table 1, a total of 72 hypothetical phases of the creative process emerge. In the reduced version presented below, this number is brought down to 35. The zero and fifth phases represent stages outside the boundaries of those typically documented in precompositional material, while the first through third macro-phases, each containing 7–8 micro-phases, correspond to clearly identifiable stages within the precompositional domain. By contrast, the fourth phase, *verification*, pertains to the compositional phase proper, in which tangible musical fragments begin to take shape and are ultimately integrated into the final manuscript of the work. Although Wallas's four-phase model appears in virtually every scholarly discussion of musical composition, it is important to recognize that the theoretical identification of phases may be conditional in specific cases and may not conform to the sequence proposed by the original model. Each composer's creative process individually determines the configuration of macro-phases, their micro-variants, and their relative proportions within the combinatorial model. The reduction of multiple models eliminates redundant, overlapping, or semantically identical phases. Nevertheless, it enables the construction of a flexible, highly adaptive model tailored to the creative process of an individual composer – or even a specific work – without restricting analysis to any one established theory. It is crucial to acknowledge that the individual

characteristics of a composer’s creativity necessitate a differentiated phase structure.

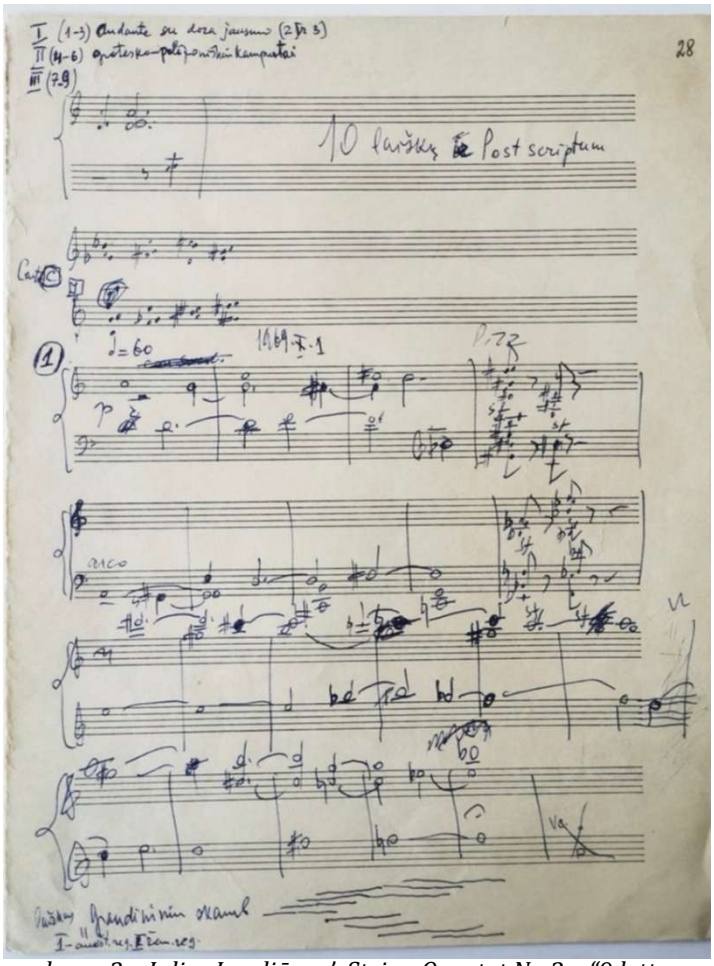
Classical theories of creativity										
Mattheson 1713		**Inventio**		**Elaboratio**					**Executio**	
Mattheson 1739		**Inventio**		**Dispositio**	**Elaboratio**	**Decoratio**			**Executio**	
Koch 1802		**Anlage**		*(Structure)*	**Ausführung**	**Ausarbeitung**				
20th century theories										
Wallas 1926		**Preparation** (definition of issue, observation, and study		**Incubation** (laying the issue aside for a time)	**Illumination** (the moment when a new idea finally emerges	**Verification** (checking it out)				
Rosmann 1931	Observation of a need or aficulty/ Analysis of the need	A survey of all available information	Formulation of all objective solutions	A critical analysis of these solutions for their advantages and disadvantages	The birth of the new idea - the invention	Experimentation to test out the most promising solution, and the selection and perfection of the final embodiment				
Osborn 1952	Orientation: pointing up the problem	Preparation: gathering pertinent data	Analysis: breaking down the relevant material	Ideation: piling up alternatives by way of ideas	Incubation: letting up, to invite illuanination	Synthesis: putting the pieces together	Evaluation: judging the resulting ideas			
Koberg/Bagnall 1981	Accept the situation (as a challenge)	Analyze (to discover the "world of the proble")	Define (the main issues and goals)	Ideate (to generate options)	Select (to choose among options)	Implement (to give physical form to the idea)	Evaluate (to review and plan again)			
Bandrowski 1985		Analysis - standart planning, insight development	Creativity - creative leaps, strategic connections	Judgment - concept building, critical judgment	Planning - action planning, creative contingency planning	Action - flexible implementation, monitoring results				
Barron 1988		Conception (in a prepared mind)		Gestation (time, intricately coordinated)		Parturation (suffering to be born, emergence to light)			Bringing up the baby (further period of development)	
Kratus 1989		Exploration		Development		Repetition			Silence	
Fritz 1991		Conception		Vision	Current reality	Take action	Adjust, learn, evaluate	Building momentum	Completion	Living with your creation
Parness/Isaksen/ Treffinger 1992	Objective finding	Fact finding		Problem finding	Idea finding	Solution finding			Acceptance finding	
Cropley 2000		Preparation - perceiving or identifying a problem	Information - learning more about the subject of the problem, accessing relevant information	Incubation - thinking divergently about the problem, making new links and associations	Illumination - becoming aware of a novel possibility, a solution or interpretation	Verification - checking and evaluating the novel outcome	Commuication - displaying the novel outcome to other's and getting feedback	Validation - the creative outcome is judged in terms of its relevance and effectiveness by judges		
Kilgour 2006		Problem difinition		Idea generation and creative techniques	Internal evaluation and refinement	Idea expression				
Runco/Chand 2012	Problem finding	Ideation				Evaluation				
Jarmalaviciute 2020	Formation of an idea	Research		Sketching	Conception	Score	Editing		Performance	

Table no. 1. Summary of creativity process models (J. Valčikaitė-Šidlauskienė)

The analytical framework presented here – built on combinatory models of creativity theories – is illustrated through a case study of Lithuanian composer Julius Juzeliūnas (1916–2001)[74] and his *String*

[74] Julius Juzeliūnas (1916–2001) was one of the most prominent Lithuanian composers of the 20th century, as well as a long-standing composition pedagogue who nurtured several generations of Lithuanian composers. He developed and refined his own compositional system, fundamentally grounded in extensive studies of Lithuanian folk music. By analyzing characteristic intonational cells and pivotal tones,

Quartet No. 3: 9 Letters and Post Scriptum (1969).[75]

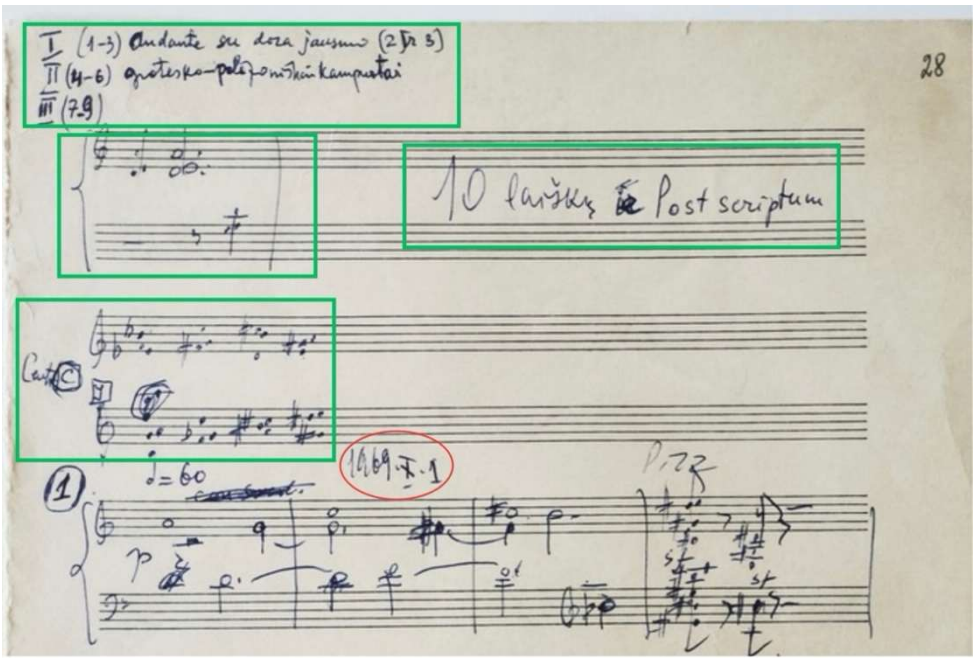


Example no. 2 – Julius Juzeliūnas' String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – manuscript (from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, F.260-91).

and by uncovering their complex systems of recurrence and interrelation, Juzeliūnas formulated a unique modality-based harmonic system. This theoretical framework was later consolidated in his monograph *On the Structure of the Chord* (*Akordo sandaros klausimu*, 1972), which served as the basis for his postdoctoral dissertation.

[75] Juzeliūnas's oeuvre presents a particularly valuable case for studies of the compositional process. On the one hand, his creative method was explicitly conceptualized in his aforementioned habilitation work; on the other, a substantial archival corpus—including manuscripts, sketches, and other materials related to his compositional activity—has been preserved, allowing researchers to trace the genesis and development of his finished works. These documents are held in the Lithuanian Literature and Art Archive (LLMA, F.260).

Analyzing the compositional sketch, two crucial indicators emerge at the outset: a formal designation – namely, the title, which encapsulates the structural content of the work – and a clearly articulated three-part division, each part comprising three smaller segments, which the composer identifies as "letters." Additionally, a harmonic plan is presented, serving as the principal operational and connective framework for the entire musical material. These segments are marked in green (e.g., no. 3):

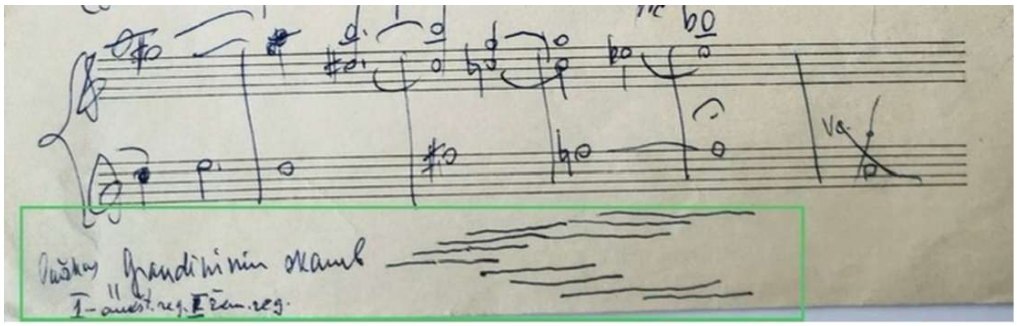


Example no. 3 – Julius Juzeliūnas String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – manuscript fragment (from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, F.260-91).

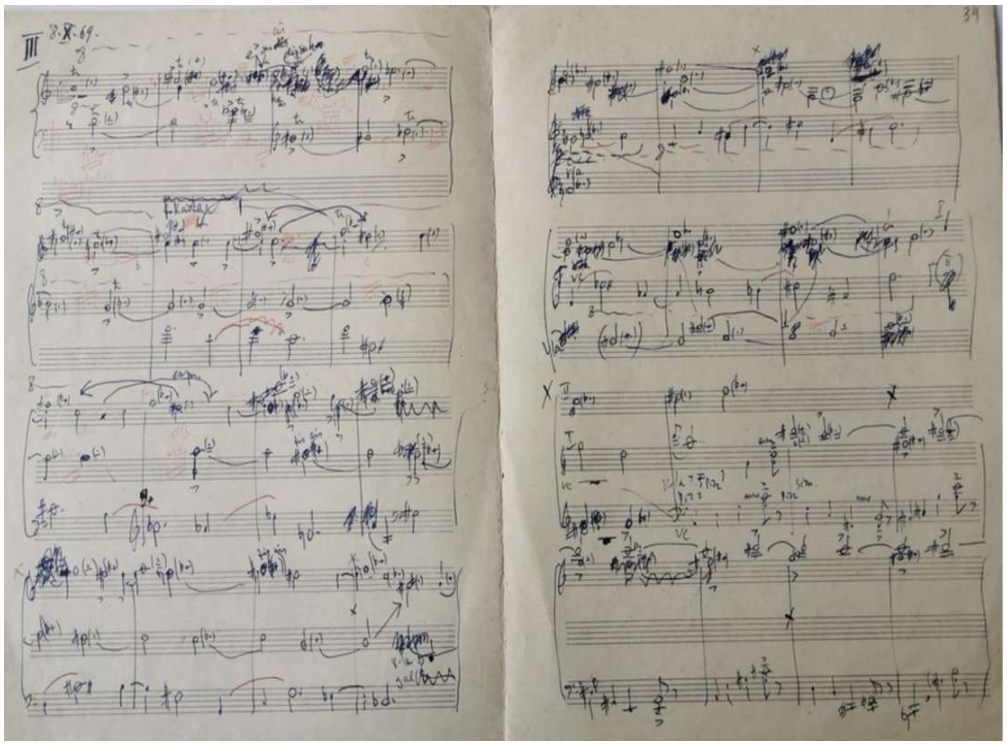
At first, the seemingly laconic notations in the sketch immediately provide an answer to one of the most crucial questions within theories of the creative process – namely, the moment of the idea. Referring to the phase definitions presented in the aforementioned models, it becomes evident that in the creative process of this composition, the idea and concept (clearly marked even before any musical material is written down) constitute the initial phase. Prior to the formation of the concept, it is likely that some form of *preparation* occurred, although the possibility of a sudden creative breakthrough cannot be excluded. However, the primary constructive and preparatory material of the piece – the harmonic cells – is indicated only later in the sketch. This suggests that the

phase of *preparation* followed the moment of the idea's emergence (or, to use Wallas's terminology, came after *illumination*).

Following the initial compositional fragments, the composer marks a visual representation of the structural progression of the piece at the bottom of the sketch (e.g., no. 4):



Example no. 4 – Julius Juzeliūnas' String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – manuscript fragment (from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, F.260-91).



Example no. 5 – Julius Juzeliūnas' String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – manuscript fragment (from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art, F.260-91).

The subsequent content of the sketch consists of a relatively continuous draft of the entire composition, featuring detailed time markings and revisions (e.g., no. 5). From an analytical and processual perspective, this systematic act of composing may be aligned with the *verification* phase during which the composer realizes (notates) the refined material, simultaneously evaluating and modifying it. Looking more closely, one can also identify smaller *micro-phases* (or sub-processes), which, depending on their definition, closely resemble the notations found in the precompositional material. For example, this could correspond to the *repetition* phase proposed by Kratus (1989). In the sketch, it is evident that the composer rewrote the final section twice. Although the harmonical content remained the same, he altered the rhythmic values and expressive means in the second version.

The following diagram summarizes the entire precompositional material of the work in a chronological framework (fig. no. 1):

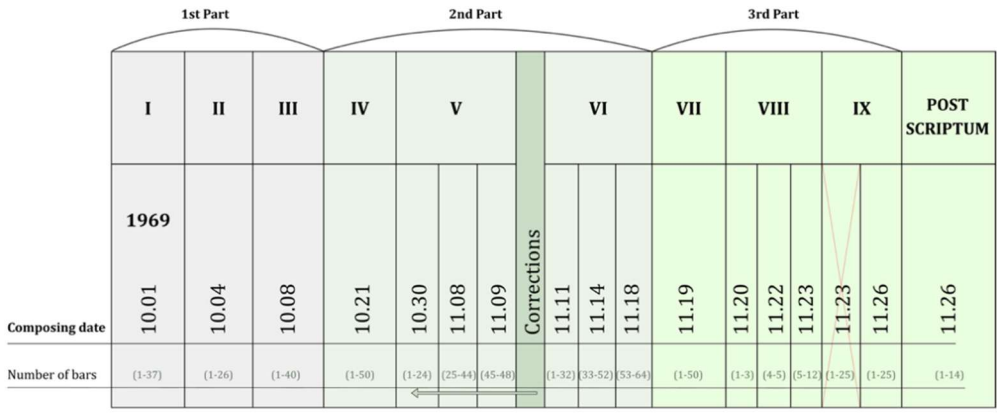


Figure no. 1 – Julius Juzeliūnas' String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – chronological compositional scheme (J.Valčikaitė-Šidlauskienė)

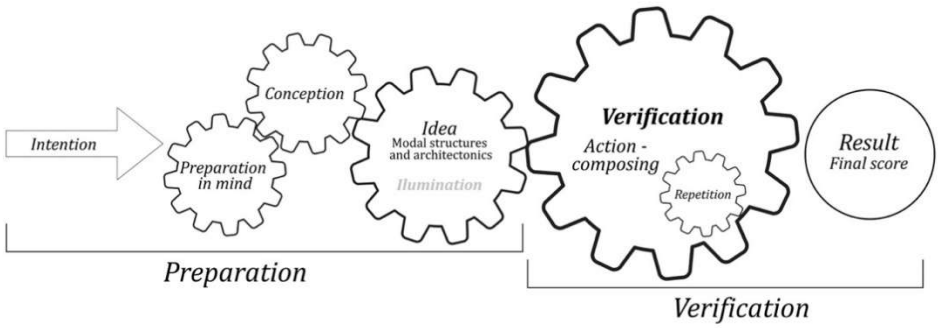


Figure No. 2 – Julius Juzeliūnas' String Quartet No.3 – "9 letters and Post Scriptum" (lit. "9 laiškai ir Post Scriptum) – scheme of the compositional process (J.Valčikaitė-Šidlauskienė)

When observing the sketch from a broader analytical distance, the following creative process scheme emerges (fig. no. 2): *preparation* (including *micro-processes* such as *mental preparation* and *conception*); *illumination*; and *verification* (including the *micro-phase* of *repetition*).

As this example illustrates, we are faced with the *proportionality paradox* when analyzing the composition process. The content of precompositional materials does not correspond to the sequential logic of compositional stages as defined by the theories discussed. Although preparation and subsequent phases are considered the most significant and extensive in creative-thinking models, reconstructing the actual compositional process reveals only the "tip of the iceberg." We cannot estimate the duration of the *pre-preparatory* phase – mental precomposition – because the methodology discussed here relies solely on material evidence (precompositional documents, correspondence, etc.). Only in cases where the composer is living and willing to share detailed insights into their creative process can more be known. Nevertheless, despite the proportional paradox, each phase of the creative process is equally important. Following causal logic, no step can occur without its predecessor. These initial stages represent a period of deliberate effort and convergent thinking, in which problem formulation often outweighs the final solution, the piece itself. For this reason, when retrospectively modeling the compositional process, even the most minute sketch fragments may indicate significant creative transitions and should be considered independent phases in their own right. The most challenging task in theoretical discourse regarding the creative process lies in the *verification* phase. In musicological analysis, the essence of compositional phases lies within the evolving musical text, in the deep layers of the new work, and in the stages of generation and refinement. This is echoed by Rudolph Réti (1951)[76], whose analytical model centers on the concept of the work as a unified organism. Viewing composition as a linear process, Réti posited that creativity begins with

[76] Among Rudolph Réti's most significant theoretical contributions are the following works: *The Thematic Process in Music* (1951), *Tonal Space* (1958), and *Thematic Patterns in Sonatas of Beethoven* (1967).

the emergence of one or more foundational cells or motives, whose evolution, transformation, and combinatory reorganization drive the development of the complete work.

However, such analytical reconstruction – grounded in existing process theories – is virtually impossible because most creative-thinking models are based on general knowledge and research in psychology, philosophy, and related fields, rather than on the specific elements of musical composition. For these reasons, any model of musical composition must be augmented with clearly defined procedural or technological *verification* phases that provide concrete functional definitions to otherwise theoretical – and often abstract – stages and eliminate the possibility of subjective interpretation. Addressing this gap is a task requiring a dedicated study, which is the focus of my ongoing research.

Conclusions

The investigation of the creative process within musicological discourse remains a complex and methodologically constrained field, one in which the success of any analysis is highly dependent on the specific attributes of the subject under scrutiny – namely, the detail and completeness of precompositional materials (such as sketches, manuscripts, and other documents), and the traceability of their chronological progression. When examining a musical work through the lens of creative process theories, the theoretical eclecticism inherent in this domain may lead to an impasse, wherein the chosen model compels the researcher to interpret the work exclusively within the framework of that particular theory. For this reason, the models of the creative process I discuss in this article (ranging from Wallas, 1926 to Jarmalavičiūtė, 2020) are not presented as universally applicable methodologies but rather as orientational tools – heuristic frameworks to aid, not to constrain, the analytical process.

Given that precompositional materials are inherently unique – both in the case of individual composers and individual works – analyses grounded in a single theoretical model necessarily risk a degree of subjectivity. However, by employing combinations of existing models, flexibly interpreting their stage definitions, and avoiding strict adherence to any prescribed sequence of creative phases, it is possible to identify emergent creative patterns within musical works and to distinguish their most critical developmental stages.

From an analytical perspective, the essence of compositional phases lies in the deeper structural layers of the work itself – in the processes of generation and maturation. Within the context of creative process theories, these stages are typically framed as part of

the *verification* phase. However, this phase must be enriched by the introduction of new, operationally defined concepts capable of identifying emerging micro-processes during composition and of articulating the fundamental mechanisms underlying the genesis of a musical work.

Finally, such studies should not be absolutized or treated as incontestable frameworks. To date, few investigations have approached musical works of this nature with the methodological rigor necessary to produce fundamental insights into compositional process. Nevertheless, the combinatory application of multiple creative process models makes it possible to formulate differentiated analytical models for each composer – or even for each work. When applied to a suitably documented case, such an approach may reveal recurrent creative tendencies, the repetition of which provides the basis for broader scholarly discussion and further inquiry into the conceptualization of compositional model structures.

Bibliography

"Bisociation." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster. Accessed June 30, 2025. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bisociation.

Agon, Carlos, Moreno Andreatta, Gérard Assayag, and Stéphan Schaub. "Formal Aspects of Iannis Xenakis' 'Symbolic Music': A Computer-Aided Exploration of Compositional Processes." *Journal of New Music Research* 33, no. 2 (2004): 145–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/0929821042000226744.

Albert, Robert S., and Mark A. Runco. "A History of Research on Creativity." In *Handbook of Creativity*, edited by Robert J. Sternberg, 16–36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Amabile, Teresa M. "What Does a Theory of Creativity Require?" *Psychological Inquiry* 4, no. 3 (1993): 179–81.

Arieti, Silvano. *Creativity: The Magical Synthesis*. New York: Basic Books, 1976.

Bent, Ian. "The 'Compositional Process' in Music Theory 1713–1850." *Music Analysis* 3, no. 1 (1984): 29–55.

Besada, José L., Anne-Sylvie Barthel-Calvet, and Cristóbal Pagán Cánovas. "Gearing Time Toward Musical Creativity: Conceptual Integration and Material Anchoring in Xenakis' *Psappha*." *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2021): art. 611316. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.611316.

Chanan, Michael. *Musica Practica: The Social Practice of Western Music from Gregorian Chant to Postmodernism*. London: Verso, 1994.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

Damböck, Christian, ed. *Influences on the Aufbau*. Vienna Circle Institute Yearbook 18. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016.

Forsth, Leif Runar. *Naujas praktinis mąstymas*. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2014.

Headlam, David. "Sketch Study and Analysis: Berg's Twelve-Tone Music." *College Music Symposium* 33/34 (1993–94): 153–67. Accessed June 1, 2025. https://symposium.music.org/index.php/33-34/item/2104-sketch-study-and-analysis-bergs-twelve-tone-music.

Heinrich, Falk. "Bisociation of Artistic and Academic Approaches in Problem-Based Projects." *Journal of Problem Based Learning in Higher Education* 6, no. 1 (2018): 88–105. https://doi.org/10.5278/ojs.jpblhe.v6i1.1949.

Huovinen, Erkki. "Theories of Creativity in Music: Students' Theory Appraisal and Argumentation." *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (March 25, 2021). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.612739.

Jamalavičiūtė, O. "Justina Repečkaitė: 'Muzikos rašymas – kaip kodavimas'." *Muzikos antena*, June 21, 2018. Accessed June 6, 2025. https://muzikosantena.lt/2018/06/21/justina-repeckaite-muzikos-rasymas-kaip-kodavimas/.

Kaffemanas, Raimondas. *Mąstymo psichologija*. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, 2001.

Kim, Steven H. *Essence of Creativity: A Guide to Tackling Difficult Problems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Koch, Heinrich Christoph. *Musikalisches Lexikon*. Frankfurt am Main: August Hermann der Jüngere, 1802.

Koestler, Arthur. *The Truth of Imagination*. London: Hutchinson, 1977.

Kovaleff Baker, Natasha. *The Aesthetic Theories of Heinrich Christoph Koch*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.

Lucas, George R. "Alfred North Whitehead." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019), edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed June 26, 2025. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/whitehead/.

Mattheson, Johann. *Das Neu-eröffnete Orchestre*. Hamburg: B. Schiller, 1713.

Mazzola, Guerino, Joomi Park, and Florian Thalmann. *Musical Creativity: Strategies and Tools in Composition and Improvisation (Computational Music Science)*. Heidelberg: Springer, 2012.

Mednick, Sarnoff A. "The Associative Basis of the Creative Process." *Psychological Review* 69, no. 3 (May 1962): 220–32. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0048850.

Mickis, Sigitas. "Kūrybingumo fenomeno muzikos kompozicijoje tyrimo teorinis modelis." *Lietuvos muzikologija* 18 (2017): 46–62.

Nagy, Zvonimir. "The Apperception of Musical Creativity: Performance as Ritual, Composition as Self Realization." *Creativity Research Journal* 27, no. 1 (2015): 68–75. https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2014.961784.

Nevels, Daniel L. "Music Software in the Compositional Learning Process." *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*, 2018.

Osborn, Alex F. *Applied Imagination*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.

Papalia, Diane E., Cameron J. Camp, and Ruth Duskin Feldman. *Adult Development and Aging*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1996.

Piirto, Jane. "The Creative Process as Creators Practice It: A View of Creativity With Emphasis on What Creators Really Do." In *Perspectives in Gifted Education: Creativity*, vol. 5, edited by N. L. Hafenstein, K. Haines, and B. Cramond. Denver: Institute for the Development of Gifted Education, Ricks Center for Gifted Children, University of Denver, 2009.

Ritchey, Tom. "General Morphological Analysis: A General Method for Non-Quantified Modelling." Adapted from a paper presented at the 16th Euro Conference on Operational Analysis, Brussels, July 1998. Accessed June 9, 2025. https://www.swemorph.com/pdf/gma.pdf.

Ritchey, Tom. "Outline for a Morphology of Modelling Methods: Contribution to a General Theory of Modelling." *Acta Morphologica Generalis* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–20. https://www.swemorph.com/amg/html/amg-1-1/amg-1-1.html.

Rossman, Joseph. *The Psychology of the Inventor*. Washington, DC: Inventor's Publishing, 1931.

Runco, Mark A.,and Ivonne Chand. "Cognition and Creativity." *Educational Psychology Review* 7, no. 3 (September 1995): 243–67. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02213373.

Schoenberg, Arnold. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Edited by Gerald Strang, with the collaboration of Leonard Stein. London: Faber and Faber, 1967.

ScienceDirect Topics. "Geneplore Model." *Elsevier*. Accessed June 26, 2025. https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/geneplore-model.

Sulzer, Johann Georg. *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*. Leipzig: Verlag von Georg Joachim Göschen, 1774.

Torrance, Ellis Paul. "The Nature of Creativity as Manifest in Its Testing." In *The Nature of Creativity*, edited by Robert J. Sternberg, 43–75. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Vinacke, William E. *The Psychology of Thinking*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953.

Wallas, Graham. *The Art of Thought*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1926.

Wertheimer, Max. *Productive Thinking*. New York: Harper, 1945.

Whitehead, Alfred North. *Process and Reality*. Edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne. New York: Free Press, 1978.

Musica Academica
Volume 2. Issue 1 (2025): 39-54
DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1.02

RESONANT NARRATIVES: THE POWER OF HYBRID COMPOSITION

JESSICA O'DONOGHUE

PhD Student in Composition,
The University of Sydney
(Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Australia)[77]
jnew5647@uni.sydney.edu.au

Abstract

This research explores the transformative potential of hybrid composition as a vehicle for compelling storytelling in 21st-century opera and vocal music. By integrating diverse musical languages—from Western classical traditions to experimental and popular forms—it investigates how stylistic and cultural hybridity can deepen emotional resonance and expand narrative possibilities. At the heart of this inquiry is the belief that genre-fluid composition invites heightened listening, where familiar expectations are disrupted in service of empathy, insight, and emotional impact. Drawing on theoretical frameworks by scholars such as Nigel Fabb and David Huron, who emphasize the roles of expectation and surprise in affective response, this study proposes that musical hybridity can amplify intensity and render complex or confronting narratives more accessible.

The research is undertaken through a triadic lens: composer, performer, and scholar. This intersectional perspective foregrounds the multiplicity of voices—personal, cultural, and artistic—that shape the creative process, and it reflects on how collaborative devising, improvisation, and studio-based techniques contribute to a more porous and dynamic compositional practice.

As a case study, my original chamber opera 'Menarche' is examined. The work investigates intergenerational trauma and the female body through layered vocal textures, extended techniques, and improvisation within notated frameworks. Fusing music, text, performance, and design, 'Menarche' constructs an immersive storytelling environment that exemplifies the emotional and conceptual power of hybrid operatic form.

---

[77] 1 Conservatorium Rd, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia

Keywords
Hybrid Composition, *Contemporary Opera*, *Performer–Composer Practice*, *Multidisciplinary Storytelling*, *Music and Narrative*

Introduction

Passionate about connection and impact through storytelling, my research investigates how hybrid approaches to 21st-century vocal composition and staged dramatic works might most effectively bring chosen narratives to life—particularly those that engage with challenging themes such as mental illness and trauma.

This investigation is rooted in the theories of 'Permissions'[78] and 'Affordances'[79]. As a singer, performer, and composer who has worked across a broad range of genres—including traditional opera, new music, experimental pop, early music, jazz, and musical theatre—I am interested in exploring multiplicity in terms of musical style, compositional technique, and creative perspective.

Through the creation of three major compositional works, I will be striving to answer the following questions:

1. How might a hybrid approach to composition, including the use of contemporary production techniques and values, expand the sonic possibilities available to me and in turn, invigorate the art of storytelling?

2. How might a hybrid approach to composition create strong emotional responses by both disarming and surprising an audience?

3. How might multiple perspectives – as both composer and performer – mutually inform each discipline resulting in a more cohesive and thorough creative process?

1. The essence of hybridity: a conceptual and creative framework

At the core of my research is the concept of hybrid approaches to composition. The term hybrid, along with eclecticism, fusion, polystylism and collage, all have various connotations, and depending on the source can be both positive and negative[80]. Schnittke's essays on Polystylism go some way in defining various hybrid approaches[81], and Jeremy Mayall

[78] Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

[79] Gibson, Eleanor Jack, and Anne Danielson Pick. *An Ecological Approach to Perceptual Learning and Development.* Paperback. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

[80] Furxer, George. "Between Musical Chairs: A Case Study in Eclecticism". Sydney Conservatorium of MusicThe University of Sydney, 2022.

[81] Alfred Schnittke, Alexander Ivashkin, and J. D. Goodliffe, *Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music*, A Schnittke reader, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

uses culinary examples when describing different terminology. Eclecticism is a tossed salad with random ingredients thrown together, easily separated out again. Where hybridity is more a stew with the different ingredients fused together, unable to be separated without destroying the dish[82].

While the words used by various sources vary, they are largely framed within contexts of traditional music history, used to describe a practice where materials are borrowed, juxtaposed or 'played with from afar'[83] as a means for innovation or rebellion against certain genre boundaries or expectations, particularly in relation to the term 'postmodernism'[84]. In my research, I'm interested in exploring hybridity in relation to 'enablement and inspiration'[85], 'permissions'[86] and 'affordances'[87], defining a 'primary practice'[88] of personal curation guided by the given narrative and context of the work (Art Song, Choral work, or Chamber Opera). As such, I have 'permission'[89] to choose various combinations of compositional techniques and musical styles to invigorate a narrative while exploiting my own 'affordances'[90] of a dynamic and multifaceted composer/performer perspective across a range of musical genres and styles.

I am exploring hybridity in the following areas:

---

[82] Mayall, Jeremy. "Cross-Genre Hybridity in Composition: A Systematic Method." *Organised sound: an international journal of music technology* 21, no. 1 (2016): 30-39.

[83] Emmerson, Simon. "Where Next? New Music, New Musicology." Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2007 Electroacoustic Music Studies Network Conference, 2007.

[84] Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

[85] Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

[86] Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

[87] Gibson, Eleanor Jack, and Anne Danielson Pick. *An Ecological Approach to Perceptual Learning and Development.* Paperback. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

[88] Emmerson, Simon. "Where Next? New Music, New Musicology." Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2007 Electroacoustic Music Studies Network Conference, 2007.

[89] Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017.

[90] Gibson, Eleanor Jack, and Anne Danielson Pick. *An Ecological Approach to Perceptual Learning and Development.* Paperback. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

1. 1. Hybrid Styles

As my career has traversed a wide range of different musical styles, I have gained a deep respect and passion for many different types of music. Different genres offer different strengths and when aiming for the most effective way to bring to life a narrative, I look for the strongest musical characteristics to achieve that, regardless of genre.

Unlike the more traditional approaches to hybridity and eclecticism mentioned above, my intention is to harness multiple musical styles in an authentic way to benefit completely from each genre. As such, I am not aiming to be merely influenced by various styles as with Schnittke's definition of eclecticism[91]. An example of this is Karen Tanaka's 'Techno Etudes'[92] for piano which incorporates key elements from techno including rhythm and speed, but which has no actual technology, drums or other authentic techno elements, resulting in a purely acoustic piano piece inspired by techno. Rather, I am aiming to seamlessly blend authentic elements from multiple genres, as in Missy Mazzoli's 'Vespers for a New Dark Age: I. Wayward Free Radical Dreams'[93] where she combines strings and woodwinds with synthesisers, drum kit and contemporary pop sounding vocals and lyrics, resulting in a convincing form of self-expression through personal curation, as opposed to any kind of statement on hybridity as a shocking or innovative musical movement.

1. 2. Hybrid Techniques

Each genre has its distinct sound, characteristics, and associated compositional techniques. Navigating multiple genres requires using various methods, from programs like Logic Pro and Ableton Live to traditional notation and Sibelius. These varied techniques can powerfully enhance the portrayal of a narrative in different ways. In my exploration, I'll combine and leverage these methods, seeking to amplify the sense of multiplicity in my compositions and draw essential elements from each genre using their authentic techniques.

1. 3. Hybrid Perspectives

The composer has immense ability to create an impactful work that combines text and music to bring to life a narrative in a musical work through the craft of composition. So too the performer, as interpreter and

---

[91] Alfred Schnittke, Alexander Ivashkin, and J. D. Goodliffe, *Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music*, A Schnittke reader, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

[92] Tanaka, Karen. *Techno Etudes.* Track #1 on 'Amsterdam x Tokyo', Spotify, 2000.

[93] Mazzoli, Missy. *'Vespers for a New Dark Age: I. Wayward Free Radical Dreams'*. Track #1 on 'Vespers for a New Dark Age', Spotify, 2015.

deliverer of the narrative and music, plays a major role and can have significant power over how a musical work impacts an audience. It serves to reason then that creating a work as both the performer and composer, where each role influences the other in a fluid way, enhances the art of storytelling by harnessing a double lens, elevating my ability to effectively bring to life a narrative through increased insights.

2. The power of hybridity: affective and narrative functions

This section explores the affective and narrative functions enabled by hybrid compositional approaches, focusing on three key capacities: the ability to surprise, to disarm, and to expand sonic possibility. These capacities are examined here as core affordances of hybridity, offering powerful tools for audience engagement and emotional impact. They also serve as the practical and conceptual bridge to the compositional methodologies employed in my case study of *Menarche*, discussed in the following section.

2. 1. Ability to Surprise

The foundation for this idea is suggested by Nigel Fabb and David Huron's research into strong emotional responses garnered from surprise[94]. Fabb and Huron conclude that in order to surprise, an expectation needs to be established[95]. Considering this, hybrid approaches to composition where boundaries are constantly crossed, offers immense ability to utilise the element of surprise by establishing one style or genre expectation, then introducing a seemingly unrelated sound or style. In my research I will explore various ways of doing this, including gradual transitions and sudden ones, obvious and more subtle ways, to see how each approach might invigorate the narrative in different ways.

2. 2. Ability to Disarm

As a singer, performer and composer, audience connection is central to my craft. I seek interactive exchanges over distant presentations, employing hybrid compositional methods that encourage listeners' openness and willingness to emotionally engage.

---

[94] Fabb, Nigel, and Jstor. *A Theory of Thrills, Sublime and Epiphany in Literature.* Anthem Studies in Bibliotherapy and Well-Being. London: Anthem Press, 2022.

[95] Huron, David Brian, and Inc ebrary. "Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation." In *A Bradford book.* 1st pbk. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006.

Utilising hooks and riffs[96] with tools like Logic Pro and Ableton Live have been effective in establishing firm connections by fostering expectation and familiarity.

I'm delving into the use of 'kitsch'[97] as a potent vehicle for storytelling, especially for narratives that deal with challenging and taboo themes such as serious forms of mental illness. Kitsch, used as a concept rather than a stylistic characteristic, allows me to establish a deceptive sense of safety, setting the stage for stark contrasts between narrative and music that underscore the gravity of a story.

Exploration of rhythm and groove is another dimension of my work in disarming. I am intrigued by the visceral power to elicit physical responses, beyond the auditory to the tactile realm, ensuring an embodied experience.

2. 3. Expanded Sonic Possibilities

Employing a hybrid approach to composition significantly expands the scope of sonic possibilities when seeking to bring to life a narrative through music and sound. In addition to the endless possible styles, instrumentations and compositional approaches of a hybrid practice within traditional compositional contexts, methods such as contemporary production techniques offer further opportunities in terms of manipulating, distorting and/or affecting the sounds either in a live or pre-recorded environment. The personal curation of these sounds and/or methods is always informed by the chosen narrative and aims to authentically harness various styles and approaches for their unique storytelling potential.

3. Methodology and case study: *MENARCHE*

This research is grounded in practice-based enquiry, with a focus on how hybrid compositional approaches can invigorate storytelling—particularly within narratives that engage with complex, taboo, or emotionally charged themes such as mental illness, menstruation, intergenerational trauma, shame, and violence against women.

Through the composition and staging of three major original works, this study explores the aesthetic, narrative, and emotional potential of hybrid techniques, including the integration of traditionally notated

[96] Byron, Tim, and Jadey O'Regan. *Hooks in Popular Music.* Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2022.

[97] Ngai, Sianne. "Our Aesthetic Categories." *PMLA* 125, no. 4 (2010): 948-58.

forms, improvisation, and contemporary production tools. This section focuses on one of these works, *Menarche*, as a primary case study.

3. 1. *Menarche* (Chamber Opera)

Menarche is a 20-minute chamber opera featuring an original libretto by Rebecca Duke and Karina Young. It is scored for five female solo voices, a female trio (SSA), mixed ensemble (SSAATTBB), chamber orchestra, and improvised drum kit. The work premiered at the Parade Theatre in Sydney, Australia, on Monday 28 October 2024. It was performed by students from the Opera School and Contemporary Chamber Orchestra at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, in collaboration with writers, designers, and production teams from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). The production was directed by renowned Australian opera director Lindy Hume.

Image no. 1 – 'Menarche', Scene 1, photo credit Jacqui Manning

Through a dynamic blend of fully notated composition and improvisation, *Menarche* explores the tension between feminine freedom and patriarchal constraint. Its hybrid musical language—combining traditional scoring with improvised gestures, extended vocal techniques, and contemporary production methods—was crafted to deepen narrative impact and engage the audience through emotional immediacy. These compositional choices were informed by a desire to disarm and surprise the listener, creating space for deeper connection to the opera's themes.

At the heart of *Menarche* is a return to the Divine Feminine and a re-engagement with cyclical knowledge—both physiological and spiritual.

The opera foregrounds the symbolism of cycles: of menstruation, of nature, and of ancestral transmission. It addresses the weight of stigma, shame, and taboo passed from mother to daughter, society to women, and peers to girls. Through its sonic, narrative, and visual language, the work challenges reductive stereotypes, confronts the cultural silence around female experience, and calls out the normalisation of violence against women. Ultimately, *Menarche* seeks to reverse intergenerational trauma by re-storying these experiences as sources of power, reclamation, and transformation.

3. 2. Expanded Sonic Possibilities

One of the key innovations in *Menarche* is the integration of an improvised drum kit into a fully scored orchestral setting. This deliberate juxtaposition of structured and free elements mirrors the opera's central theme: the intuitive, feminine spirit struggling against the confines of a rigid, patriarchal system.

This tension is amplified through the use of contemporary production techniques. Pre-recorded, spatialised spoken word fragments act as internal monologues, disrupting the operatic flow and blurring narrative time and identity.

Image no. 2 – 'Menarche', Scene 1, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 1 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 1, time marker 0:17 – 1:29, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=l7nRDILJLuvvqVNR&t=17

Over the course of the opera, the drum kit evolves from a pulsing, jazz-influenced palette to a more aggressive, electronically processed sound world. This sonic transformation reflects the protagonist's emotional arc—from suppression and shame to resistance and reclamation.

Digital effects such as delay and reverb on acoustic instruments further evoke the presence of the Divine Feminine—distant, ancestral, and otherworldly.

Image no. 3 – 'Menarche', Scene 3, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 2 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 3, time marker 13:30 – 14:14, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=S9qDmBFeK3GqLMUL&t=809

3. 3. Disarm

In *Menarche*, the drum kit plays a key role in disarming the audience through rhythm and groove. At key moments, steady rhythmic patterns provide a sense of grounding, inviting a more embodied and receptive listening state. In a work that often explores discomfort and vulnerability, rhythm becomes a subtle form of reassurance.

Image no. 4 – 'Menarche', Scene 2, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 3 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 2, time marker 8:52 – 10:40, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=d14jrJSHhle2VCUo&t=532

Recurring motifs—like the *moon theme* and the *empowerment mantra*—also serve to disarm through familiarity. These hooks return throughout the opera, each time slightly transformed, offering emotional continuity and anchoring. The full empowerment mantra is withheld until the final scene, when all the women sing it together in a cyclical round—marking a moment of collective reclamation.

Image no. 5 – 'Menarche', Scene 2, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 4 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 2, time marker 20:22 – 21:40, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=Lmf35TzO3yZDhOcj&t=1221

3. 4. Surprise

Surprise plays a crucial role in shaping the audience's emotional response. The improvised drum kit itself is an immediate disruptor of operatic expectation. While often used to establish rhythmic stability, it is equally capable of unsettling—interrupting grooves and destabilising pulse to introduce tension and disorientation.

Image no. 6 – 'Menarche', Scene 2, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 5 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 1, time marker 3:49 – 4:15, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=FXmbS57trvMEYc-c&t=229

Image no. 7 – 'Menarche', Scene 3, photo credit Jacqui Manning
Musical example no. 6 – Jessica O'Donoghue, 'Menarche', Scene 2, time marker 16:46 – 17:20, https://youtu.be/ehbubRrFMK8?si=AkMS2NegBacuspmT&t=1005

Surprise is also heightened through digital interventions. Spatialised, pre-recorded voices interrupt the musical texture at emotionally charged moments—such as scenes of shame and ridicule—mirroring psychological rupture and triggering visceral audience responses.

Conclusion

Through hybrid approaches to composition, this research aims to contribute meaningfully to the evolution of opera in Australia—and beyond—by creating new works that reinvigorate the art of storytelling. By disarming and surprising audiences, hybrid composition opens up new emotional pathways, inviting deeper connection and sustained engagement with the operatic form.

This study positions hybridity not only as an aesthetic strategy but as a compositional methodology—one that embraces multiplicity across style, technique, and artistic perspective. By integrating traditionally notated music with improvisation, digital production tools, and the embodied knowledge of the performer-composer, a new creative language emerges: one that is flexible, affective, and uniquely capable of holding complex, challenging narratives.

Menarche serves as a case study in how hybridity can expand sonic possibility and disrupt inherited conventions in order to confront stigma, reverse trauma, and centre the female experience. The work demonstrates how hybrid practices can be used not only to amplify voice, but to reclaim agency—both artistically and thematically.

Ultimately, I advocate for a reimagining of opera as a multidimensional space—fluid in form, inclusive in content, and responsive to the lived experiences of today. In this space, performers can embody evolving narratives, audiences can engage viscerally and intellectually, and opera itself can continue to transform as a living, breathing art form.

Bibliography

Texts

Adorno, Theodor W. *Aesthetic Theory.* A&C Black, 1997.

Adorno, Theodor W. *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture.* Psychology Press, 2001.

Albrecht, Michael. "Eklektik: Eine Begriffsgeschichte Mit Hinweisen Auf Die Philosophie-Und Wissenschaftsgeschichte." (1994).

Alcalde, Bruno. "Mixture Strategies: An Analytical Framework for Musical Hybridity." *Music Theory Online* 28, no. 1 (2022).

Alcalde, Bruno. "Mixture Strategies: An Analytical Framework for Musical Hybridity." *Music Theory Online* 28, no. 1 (2022).

Balan, Mihaela-Georgiana. "Polystylism in the Context of Postmodern Music. Alfred Schnittke's Concerti Grossi." *Artes. Journal of musicology*, no. 23 (2021): 148-64.

Bartleet, Brydie-Leigh, Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Carolyn Ellis, and ProQuest. *Music Autoethnographies: Making Autoethnography Sing: Making Music Personal.* Bowen Hills, Qld: Australian Academic Press, 2010.

Best, Susan. "Conceptual Art and After: The Rise of the Interesting." *Art Monthly Australasia*, no. 311 (2018): 26-29.

Borgdorff, Henk. *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia.* Leiden University Press, 2012.

Broch, Hermann. "Notes on the Problem of Kitsch." (1950).

Bull, Anna and Scharff, Christina. "Classical music as genre: hierarchies of value within freelance classical musicians' discourses," *The European Journal of Cultural Studies.*, *24*(3), (2021): 673-689.

Bull, Anna and Upso. *Class, Control, and Classical Music.* Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2019.

Bull, Anna, Christina Scharff, and Laudan Nooshin. *Voices for Change in the Classical Music Profession: New Ideas for Tackling Inequalities and Exclusions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2023.

Byron, Tim, and Jadey O'Regan. *Hooks in Popular Music.* Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2022.

Calinescu, Matei. "Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism." (1987).

Clarke, Eric F. and Doffman, Mark. *Distributed Creativity: Collaboration and Improvisation in Contemporary Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Cooper, Robert. "Notes on Organizational Kitsch." Paper presented at the Conference on Aspects of Organization, University of Lancaster, 1986.

Eco, Umberto. "The Structure of Bad Taste." *The open work* (1989): 180-216.

Emmerson, Simon. "Where Next? New Music, New Musicology." Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2007 Electroacoustic Music Studies Network Conference, 2007.

Fabb, Nigel. *A Theory of Thrills, Sublime and Epiphany in Literature*. London: Anthem Press, 2022.

Fenton-Miller, Solomon. *Compositional Strategies in Alfred Schnittke's Early Polystylism.* The University of Iowa, 2016.

Friedländer, Saul. *Reflections on Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death.* Yale Univ. Press, 2020.

Gibson, Eleanor Jack, and Anne Danielson Pick. *An Ecological Approach to Perceptual Learning and Development.* Paperback. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Giesz, Ludwig. "Phänomenologie Des Kitsches." In *Phänomenologie Des Kitsches*: Brill Fink, 1975.

Glyde-Bates, Alexander. "Critiquing Classical Kitsch: A Portfolio of Compositions That Critique the 'Popular Classics' of Western Art Music." University of Southampton, 2017.

Greenberg, Clement. "Avantgarde Und Kitsch." (1939).

Hancox, Donna. *The Revolution in Transmedia Storytelling through Place: Pervasive, Ambient and Situated.* Routledge, 2021.

Hansen, Kai Arne, Eirik Askerøi, and Freya Jarman. *Popular Musicology and Identity: Essays in Honour of Stan Hawkins.* Routledge, 2020.

Herrington, Tony. *Epiphanies: Life-changing Encounters With Music*. London: Stronge Attractor Press, 2015.

Huebner, Steven. "Ravel's Tzigane: Artful Mask or Kitsch?". *Twentieth-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (2020): 63-86.

Huron, David. *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation*. London: MIT Press, 2006.

Jaunslaviete, Baiba. "The Theory of Polystylism as a Tool for Analysis of Contemporary Music in the Postsoviet Cultural Space: Some Terminological Aspects." *Rasprave: Časopis Instituta za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje* 44, no. 2 (2018): 455-65.

Juslin, Patrik N., Patrik N. Juslin, and John A. Sloboda. *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research.* Series in Affective Science. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Kulka, Thomas. *Kitsch and Art.* Penn State Press, 2015.

Lehmann, Irene and Palme, Pia. *Sounding Fragilities. An Anthology*. Wolke, 2022.

Levy, Robert I, Pierre Heyman, and University Of Chicago Press. *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands*. Chicago; London: University Of Chicago Press, 2005.

Linstead, Stephen. "Organizational Kitsch." *Organization* 9, no. 4 (2002): 657-82.

Lior and Westlake, Nigel. Spotify, *Compassion* (2013)

Magarotto, Matteo. "The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory. Oxford Handbooks." JSTOR, 2015.

Mayall, Jeremy. "Cross-Genre Hybridity in Composition: A Systematic Method." *Organised sound: an international journal of music technology* 21, no. 1 (2016): 30-39.

Minahan, Stella. *The Aesthetic Turn in Management.* Routledge, 2017.

Molitor, Claudia, and Thor Magnusson. "Curating Experience: Composition as Cultural Technology–a Conversation." *Journal of New Music Research* 50, no. 2 (2021): 184-89.

Mould, Stephen. *Curating Opera: Reinventing the Past Through Museums of Opera and Art*. London: Routledge, 2021.

Ngai, Sianne. "Our Aesthetic Categories." *PMLA* 125, no. 4 (2010): 948-58.

Ngai, Sianne. *Theory of the Gimmick: Aesthetic Judgment and Capitalist Form.* Harvard University Press, 2020.

Ngai, Sianne. *Ugly Feelings.* Harvard University Press, 2004.

Penner, Nina. *Storytelling in Opera and Musical Theater*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020.

Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. "The Yellow Wallpaper." Toronto Metropolitan University, 2022.

Reid, Anna, Peres Da Costa, Neal and Carrigan, Jeanell. *Creative Research in Music: Informed Practice, Innovation and Transcendence*. Routledge, 2020.

Rentfrow, Peter J., Goldberg, Lewis R., & Levitin, Daniel J. "The structure of musical preferences: A five-factor model," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 100*(6), (2011): 1139–1157.

Ross, Andrew. *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture.* Routledge, 2016.

Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017.

Ryynanen, Max, and Eret Talviste. "Longing for a Place That Does Not Exist: The Importance of Kitsch for the Estonian Singing Revolution." *Journal of Baltic Studies* (2023): 1-17.

Ryynänen, Max. "Kitsch Happens. On the Kitsch Experience of Nature." *Espes* 8, no. 2 (2019): 10-16.

Schnittke, Alfred. *A Schnittke Reader.* Indiana University Press, 2002.

Simon, Gregory M. "Shame, Knowing, and Anthropology: On Robert I. Levy and the Study of Emotion", *Ethos*, *33*(4), (2005): 493–498.

Sontag, Susan. *Against Interpretation: And Other Essays.* Vol. 52: Macmillan, 2001.

Stępień, Justyna. *Redefining Kitsch and Camp in Literature and Culture.* Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014.

Streeten, Nicola, and Nicola Streeten. "2000–2019: A Change of Attitude." *UK Feminist Cartoons and Comics: A Critical Survey* (2020): 207-55.

Sunderland, Naomi, Dan Bendrups, Natalie Lewandowski, and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet. *Music, Health and Wellbeing: Exploring Music for Health Equity and Social Justice.*

Throop, C. Jason. "Hypocognition, a "Sense of the Uncanny," and the Anthropology of Ambiguity: Reflections on Robert I. Levy's Contribution to Theories of Experience in Anthropology", *Ethos*, *33*(4), (2005): 499–511.

Wanke, Riccardo D. *Sound in the Ecstatic-Materialist Perspective on Experimental Music.* Routledge Research in Music Series. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2022.

Wanke, Riccardo. "The Emergence of an Ecstatic-Materialist Perspective as a Cross-Genre Tendency in Experimental Music." [In English]. *Organised Sound* 22, no. 3 (Dec 2017 2017-11-29 2017): 428-36.

Wanke, Riccardo. "A Cross-Genre Study of the (Ec)Static Perspective of Today's Music," *Organised Sound 20*, no. 03 (2015): 331–39. doi:10.1017/S1355771815000266.

Webb, John. "Schnittke in Context." *Tempo*, no. 182 (1992): 19-22.

Wlodarski, Amy Lynn. "George Rochberg's Road to Ars Combinatoria, 1943–63." *Journal of the Society for American Music* 12, no. 2 (2018): 119-50.

Young, Rob, Wire The, Rob Young, and ProQuest. *Undercurrents: The Hidden Wiring of Modern Music.* 1st ed. London, England. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Continuum International Publishing Group ProQuest Ebook Central, 2002.
Zentner, Marcel, Grandjean, Didier, and Scherer, Klaus R. "Emotions evoked by the sound of music: Characterization, classification, and measurement", *Emotion, 8*(4), (2008): 494–521.

Music and Scores

Adams, John. *Doctor Atomic* (2005)
Belling, Huw. *Fumeblind Oracle* (2021)
Belling, Huw. *Victory Over the Sun* (2016)
Björk. Spotify, *Utopia* (2017)
Björk. Spotify, *Vulnicura* (2015)
Camille. Spotify, *Ilo VeyouI* (2011)
Camille. Spotify, *Le fil* (2005)
Camille. Spotify, *Ouï* (2017)
Collier, Jacob. Spotify, *Djesse Vol. 3* (2020)
Francesconi, Luca. *Quartett* (2011)
Golijov, Osvaldo. *Ainadamar* (2003)
Mazzoli, Missy. Spotify, *A Thousand Tongues* (2021)
Mazzoli, Missy. Spotify, *Vespers for a New Dark Age: I. Wayward Free Radical Dreams* (2015)
Muhly, Nico, Dessner, Bryce, McAlister, James and Stevens, Sufjan. Spotify, *Planetarium* (2017)
O'Donoghue, Jessica. *Menarche* (2024)
Reich, Steve. *The Cave* (1993)
Reich, Steve. *Three Tales* (2002)
Saariaho, Kaija. *Innocence* (2011)
Serret, Veronique. Spotify, *Prima Volta* (2022)
Symonds, Jack. *Shape of the Earth* (2018)
Venables, Philip. *4.48 Psychosis* (2016)
Yun, Du. Spotify, *A Cockroach's Tarantella* (2020)
Yun, Du. Spotify, *Angel's Bone* (2017)

Musica Academica
Volume 2. Issue 1 (2025): 55-81
DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1.03

BELLS AND BELL-RINGING: THE UNIQUENESS OF RACHMANINOFF'S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

MARTINA KAMENSKA

PhD Student in Musicology,
Slovak Academy of Sciences[98]
martina.kamenska@savba.sk

Abstract
Bells hold a prominent place in Sergei Rachmaninoff's musical legacy. Throughout his career, bells grew from an inspirational source into one of the most distinctive characteristic features of his unique style, and largely defined his compositional thinking. From Rachmaninoff's student period pieces through the last opus of his oeuvre, bells and bell-ringing are present in various ways, in all components of his musical language, and to such an extent that it constitutes the fundamental essence of his creative identity. The main objective of this study is to introduce this specific phenomenon while pointing out its importance in the context of the composer's work. The article discusses specific examples of bell imitations in Rachmaninoff's compositions, outlines their contexts, and presents which components of the musical structure were most influenced by bell-ringing.

Keywords
Bells, bell-ringing, compositional thinking, musical legacy, Sergei Rachmaninoff

Introduction

The priority of my paper was to examine the works of Sergei Rachmaninoff in order to confirm the theory that the phenomenon of bell-ringing constitutes one of the fundamental constants of his individual musical language.

Through a detailed study of the preserved correspondence and published reminiscences of the composer, I pointed out the main

[98] Štefánikova 898/49, 811 04 Staré Mesto, Slovakia

attributes forming his compositional style. I also focused on the study of the historical development and typology of bells, mapped the traditions of bell-ringing, and explored the genesis of bell sonority in Russian art music.

The main section is devoted to bells and bell-ringing in Rachmaninoff's works. I assessed the components of the musical structure of Rachmaninoff's works that were most influenced by the bells and highlighted the most striking examples of compositions with bell-ringing imitation, as well as their contexts.

On the basis of research and musical analysis of Rachmaninoff's works, I can conclude that bell-ringing as a dominating sonic specificity manifested itself in his compositional legacy in an exceptionally strong way and on various levels.

In the first case, it is part of the musical plot of a work where the imitation of bell-ringing is used consciously and purposefully (e.g. *Suite Op. 5, The Bells Op. 35*). In the second case, bell-ringing is (often subconsciously) implemented into the compositional structure, where the individual components of the music are influenced by the sonority of the bells (e.g. Preludes and Etudes-Tableaux). The presence of bell-ringing in Rachmaninoff's music has both acoustic qualities and thus creates a characteristic sound environment (base) of the composition, but at the same time it can have symbolic connotations and represent a sounding image (while not being a symbol per se[99]).

In Rachmaninoff's music, the line between conscious and subconscious use of bell-ringing is very thin. This is evidenced by the frequent identity of the musical material of compositions with a plot that includes bell-ringing (conscious presence of bells) with that of compositions whose bell-ringing content was not intended by the composer (subconscious presence of bells). It is possible to conclude this through a two-stage comparative analysis. First, I searched for an exact match between the sound of the Orthodox bell-ringing and the compositions with plot of bell-ringing. I then compared the musical structure of the compositions of conscious bell-ringing with those of subconscious presence of bells.

Bell Typology and the Orthodox Bell-ringing

Since the 16th century, the Orthodox tradition has been using the so-called " yazychnyy" (yazyk = clapper) principle of bell-ringing. One bell-ringer operates several bells at once with both hands and feet by means of ropes tied to the clapper of the bell. The basis of the Orthodox tradition

[99] A symbol gives us a specific meaning, while an image only gives us an indirect (metaphorical) one.

is rhythmic bell-ringing within a specific tempo and character. The bells inside an Orthodox bell tower are divided into three groups: *zazvonnye* (small), *podzvonnye* (medium) and *blagovestniki* (large), with one bell ringer able to operate all the bells using a distinctive bell-ringing technique.

The small bells are operated by the bell-ringer's right hand. Depending on the region a bell tower may have two (Rostov), three (in the north) or four (Lavra) bells. The most widespread type is the one with three bells. In the case of the small bells, their name ("zazvonnye kolokola") suggests their purpose; the bell-ringer uses them to perform the most interesting motivic variations to attract the listener's attention.

The medium bells ("podzvonnye kolokola") are usually attached to the bell-ringer's desk by chains and are operated with the bell-ringer's left hand. The number of medium-sized bells can vary. While between four and six is the standard amount, some bell towers can have up to fifteen medium-sized bells, contributing to the overall richness of the bell set.

The large bells ("blagovestniki", meaning "blessing bells" in Russian) are operated with the bell-ringer's right foot by means of pedals. This groups mostly includes bells of over six tons whose tongue is too difficult to be set in motion by the bell-ringer's hand. Bell towers can have up to five large bells, but those weighing more than ten tons are rung separately by another bell ringer.

There are four main types of canonical bell-ringing: *blagovest, trezvon, perebor and perezvon.*

Blagovest - regular strikes (one at a time) on a large bell (*blagovestnik*).

Perebor – funeral bell. The entire group of bells is rung by successive strikes on each bell from the smallest to the largest, followed by a single strike on all of them at once.

Perezvon – a sad or celebratory type of bell-ringing. It is performed by successive strikes on each bell from the largest to the smallest.

Trezvon – several simultaneously sounding bells. They come in several variations depending on the tradition.

Other methods also used in worship in addition to those mentioned above are *vodosviatnyi perezvon*, *zvon v dvoi* and *krasnyi zvon*.

Vodosviatnyi perezvon (on the occasion of the sanctification of water) – successive strikes from the largest bell to the smallest one with seven strikes on each.

Zvon v dvoi (Ringing on two) – in this case, only two bells are rung: the Lenten bell and the small bell. At first, the bells are rung one at a time in alteration, with one simultaneous strike on both at the end.

Krasnyi zvon – this term refers to the practice of bell-ringing all available bells in cathedrals and monasteries (especially with a large number of big bells). This type of bell-ringing typically involves multiple bell ringers—usually five or more—working together to produce a grand, full-bodied sound.

The delivery of bell-ringing also includes an introduction to the bell-ringing and an ending (in other words, an introduction and a coda).

Apart from being an essential part of the Orthodox worship, bells were also used to summon folk gatherings called the "veche" (*vechevoi* bell) and to express joy or sorrow. Bell-ringing often accompanied the everyday life of ordinary people. For example, a joyful and solemn bell-ringing on all the bells (trezvon) was used to celebrate victory over the enemy and the return of the regiment from the battlefield. Bell-ringing also served as navigation for pilgrims who got lost in bad weather, and it could also signal danger or misfortune. This led to the emergence of various types of bell-ringing outside the church tradition. A particularly important type of bell-ringing in the secular tradition is the alarm bell-ringing called *nabat*. This bell-ringing is characteristic for the continuous frequent striking of a large bell used as a warning signal in the event of fire, flood, rebellion, invasion or other human catastrophe.[100]

Bells in Russian art music

Russian composers realised the artistic and aesthetic value of Orthodox bell-ringing a long time ago. The bell-ringing tradition had a significant influence on the formation of the Russian school and presented an integral attribute of the development of Russian art music in general. Similar to folk songs, elements of folk dances and church chants, bell-ringing organically became part of composed music. As an inseparable part of everyday life in Russian towns and villages, church bells have had an intense influence on the thinking and creative work of every artist since childhood. Russian composers and musicologists repeatedly mentioned bells in their recollections of musical impressions from their childhood. Boris Asafiev said: „The rhythmicity of bell-ringing belongs to the category of impressions instilled in our consciousness from early childhood.*"*[101]

---

[100] I. M. Drozdikhin, *Uchebnoye posobiye dlya zvonarey khramov I monastyrey.* (Moscow: Masterskaya Il'I Drozdikhina, 2017)

[101] V. Kovalyv, *Razdaysya, blagovestnyy zvon (Kolokola v istorii kul'tury). (*Minsk, 2003), 103.

Music critic Vladimir Stasov commented on multiple musical compositions with these words: „The bells are ringing again! The Russian school cannot live without them.“[102]

In his notes, Mikhail Glinka himself described the role of the Orthodox bell-ringing in shaping his musical world by saying:„Musical talent at that time was expressed by an affection for bell- ringing (trezvon). I eagerly listened to those piercing sounds and skillfully imitated them on two copper bowls. Whenever I was ill, people brought little bells into my room to console me.“[103]

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov said the following about his compositional work:„Here comes the bell-ringing once again! So many times and in so many different forms have I reproduced by instrumentation this irreplaceable phenomenon of ancient Russian life that has survived to our times.“[104]

The sonic aspect of bells played a significant role in the development of the instrumentation and timbre of Russian music. It also influenced the structure of the musical works and the compositional style of various composers.

The first to incorporate bell-ringing into musical composition was Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka. His opera A *Life for the Tsar (Ivan Susanin)* was the first to use Orthodox bell-ringing in art music. They appear in the final, climactic scene of the opera. Glinka emphasised the importance of this scene through the synchronous overlap of different layers of Orthodox bell-ringing, the parts of the orchestra and the choir.

Orthodox bell-ringing took firm root in the life work of composers of the Russian school, and to this day it is often used as the main idea of a composition, to characterize a particularly important image of the stage action, or to embody the mental state of a hero. Examples include works such as *Prince Igor (*A. Borodin*), The Maid of Pskov, The Tale of Tsar Saltan, The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya (*N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov*), The Oprichnik, Overture 1812 (*P.I. Tchaikovsky*), Boris Godunov (*M.P. Mussorgsky*).* Authentic church bells were installed in several theaters (e.g. the *Bolshoi Theatre* in Moscow and the *Mariinsky Theatre* in Saint Petersburg) because of the production of this opera.

It should be noted that the notation of Orthodox bell-ringing in an orchestral score is never written out precisely, but rather indicated either rhythmically or verbally. The notation signals the presence of bell-ringing,

---

[102] Ibid., 104.

[103] M. I. Glinka, *Zapiski.* (Moscow, 1953), 23.

[104] N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, *Letopis' moyey muzykal'noy zhizni.* (Moscow, 1955), 480.

but does not define the actual relationships between the bells. Sometimes the moment of onset is indicated simply by words, e. g. "begin the bell-ringing", "ring to raise alarm" "funeral peal", etc.

In addition to using real Orthodox bells, composers also implemented stylisations of bell-ringing in their compositional work. The first composer to imitate bells in his work thus become the founder of the imitative tradition was Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky. In his opera *Boris Godunov (in the Coronation Scene)*, he specifically imitated the bells of Ivan the Great, using two chords (Ab7 and D7) as the basis of the imitation. This was a rather unusual technique for his time, not only because the chords themselves are spaced apart at the interval of a tritone (Ab to D), but the structure of all of the chords also includes a tritone, resulting in a characteristic dissonance.

Among the masters in creating bell effects through orchestral instrumentation were M. P. Mussorgsky (*Overture to the opera Khovanshchina*) and N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov (*Russian Easter Festival Overture: Overture on Liturgical Themes*). The imitation of bell sonorities on the piano is also present in the works of several Russian composers (Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, Borodin, and others).

Bells in the works of Sergei Rachmaninoff

Rachmaninoff's musical work is usually seen within the context of his influence on cultural history, but to understand his compositional legacy more deeply it is useful to raise the opposite question of how the culture he grew up and worked in influenced the composer himself, beginning with his early compositional experiences.

His musical thinking can therefore be better understood through the spheres he was attached to from his early childhood and which he later directly implemented in his compositions. Among the strongest influences that shaped Rachmaninoff's compositional style, the Old Russian liturgical chants and the tradition of Orthodox bell-ringing must be mentioned first. These influences appeared, either directly or indirectly, throughout all creative periods of Rachmaninoff's career, gradually evolving into a coherent musical language.

Rachmaninoff's grandmother had a great influence on the development of his musical talent and his development into a composer. Sofia Butakova had an excellent knowledge of the Old Russian church music and was considered an undisputed authority in this field. The young Rachmaninoff often attended services with her in Saint Petersburg, where he was captivated by the choral chants which he would immediately play on the piano upon his arrival home from the church. Rachmaninoff was

equally impressed by Velikiy Novgorod,[105] rich in historic cathedrals and monasteries, where he spent the summer of 1883 with his grandmother at the age of ten. Her house was often visited by famous masters of the Novgorod church singing and Orthodox bell-ringing. A particularly valuable guest at Sofia Butakova's house was a renowned church bell virtuoso, known as "Yegorka the Bell-ringer", whom Rachmaninoff knew very well and from whom he learned a lot of valuable knowledge about bell-ringing. The next two summers (1883 and 1884) were the happiest periods of Rachmaninoff's childhood. It was then that, under the influence of the daily bell-ringing of the Novgorod church bells and choral singing, Rachmaninoff's desire to compose his own music first surfaced.[106] In Novgorod and Saint Petersburg, the young composer had the opportunity to become familiar with the three main types of church singing (original compositions, harmonisation of monophonic ceremonial chants and authentic liturgical singing). Subsequently, after moving to Moscow in 1885, he expanded his knowledge of choral church singing traditions.[107] In the academic year 1890/91, Rachmaninoff took a course in the history of church music at the conservatory under S.V. Smolensky, an eminent scholar of Old Russian liturgical chants.[108] Rachmaninoff, having become familiar with church singing and absorbing inspiration from this music at an early age, wrote the following in 1935:„The choir really made me joyful as they performed a variety of my favorite church chants. They sing sacred music well!"[109]

A close friend of Rachmaninoff, composer Alexander Goedicke, wrote in his memoirs:

> Rachmaninoff was very fond of church singing and often, even during the winter, he would get up at seven o'clock in the morning, hire a coachman while it was still dark, and go (in most cases) to Andronikov Monastery in Taganka region, where he would listen for

[105] The Novgorod region, after the disintegration of Kievan Rus, persisted in preserving and continuing the age-old traditions of Old Russian singing culture. Its own artistic style developed long ago, which was particularly evident in the peculiar structure of the chants, in the peculiarity of the form and in the high mastery of the Novgorod bell-ringers.

[106] V. Bryantseva, *S. V. Rachmaninov.* (Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozitor, 1976), 163-166.

[107] V. Sokolova, *Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff.* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1984), 57.

[108] Smolensky was the director of the Moscow Synodal School of Church Singing, a musicologist and pedagogue. Among his contemporaries, he passionately promoted the revival of the Orthodox singing tradition and the creation of works drawing musical material from authentic ancient chants.

[109] Z. Apetyan, *Vospominaniya o Rakhmaninove.* (Moscow: GMI, 1961), 11-12.

> hours to the ancient austere chants from the octoechos, interpreted by the monks in parallel fifths.[110]

Sergei Rachmaninoff's interest in the melodies of liturgical chants which he knew from his childhood intensified over time, but he was much more impressed by the bell-ringer's interpretative mastery. It was his affection for the phenomenon of Orthodox bell-ringing that largely defined his compositional style.

The Influence of Bells on the Structure of Rachmaninoff's Compositions

Through a detailed analysis of specific compositions in a chronological sequence, I have concluded that the bell-like quality in Rachmaninoff's compositional legacy was particularly evident. From his student compositions to the last opus of his oeuvre, bells and bell-ringing are present in different variations and to such a high extent that they appear to constitute the most characteristic feature of Rachmaninoff's compositional language. The presence of this sound specificity can be felt in all components (rhythmicity, melodicity, harmony, instrumentation, timbre, texture, the overal compositional structure) of the musical language.

Rhythmicity

The rhythmic structure of many of Rachmaninoff's compositions was created through the implementation of bell rhythms and their variations. Entire complexes emerged and formed the basis of the musical structure – an ostinato-like pulsation in long rhythmic values (imitation of the blagovest) and a rhythmic-melodic motivic structure in short rhythmic values of various irregular syncopated forms of a dance-like character (imitation of the zazvonnye bells and podzvonnye bells). The ambivalence of the bell rhythmic motifs was used to bring contrast and enhance the musical plot, and their fusion was often exploited in the climactic sections.

The first composition in which Sergei Rachmaninoff imitated the sound of bells was his early *Nocturne in C minor No. 3*, composed in the winter of 1888. Right at the beginning of the piece, the composer clearly outlined a sonic image of bell-ringing, whose rhythmic structure corresponds to the bell patterns of the Moscow tradition (Figure No. 1). At the same time, it correlates with the musical material of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Easter Overture*, which also features a bell theme (Figure No.

[110] Z. Apetyan, *Literaturnoye naslediye.* (Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozitor, 1980), 64-65.

3). The composer himself described this theme as “a sonic reproduction of joyful, almost dance-like bell-ringing.”

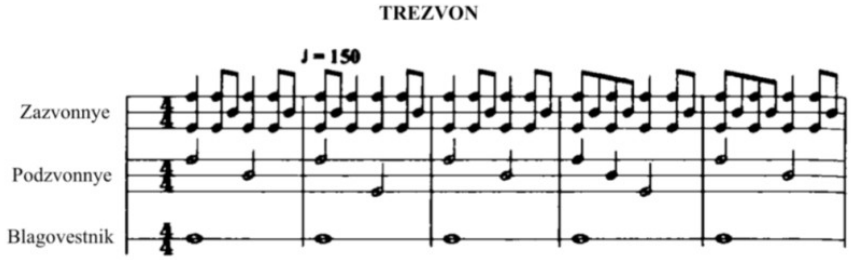


Figure 1: Ortodox bell-ringing – Trezvon

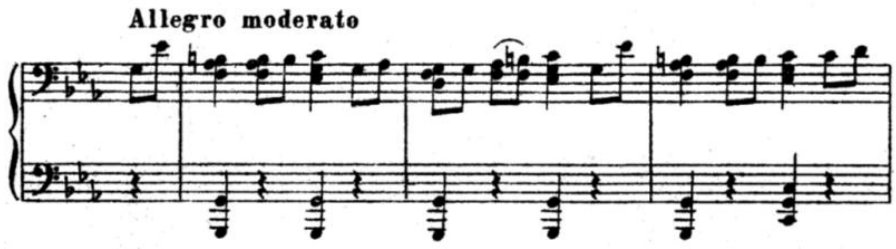


Figure 2: Rachmaninoff – Nocturne C minor, No. 3 (1888)

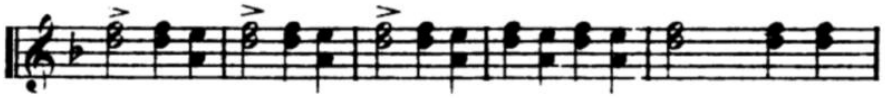


Figure 3: Rimsky-Korsakov – Easter Overture (section from letter H, clarinet part)

Melodicity

The *cantabile* character of the melodies is the solid foundation of Rachmaninoff's compositional style of one of its most prominent features. Many of the themes in Rachmaninoff's compositions were influenced by the sound of Old Russian chants and are closely linked to the bells intonations. These influences are greatly reflected in the character of the motifs that form the main melodic line in the compositions. They often consist of a continuous chain of variants of one and the same motivic nucleus in different sonorities. This is a key principle of melodic development in the composer's work, which, apart from Russian folk song, has its origins primarily in the Old Russian church singing. The roots of melodic variation in the thematic areas of Rachmaninoff's compositions can be traced down mainly to liturgical chants. The predominance of second, third and fourth interval relations in the motivic-thematic structure also comes from these. However, the same relations are also inherent to the melodic structure of the bell-ringing. The links between the Old Russian melodies and bell-ringing intonations are the result of

their simultaneous historical development. In Rachmaninoff's melodic structures, bell-like melodicism is present in the form of short motifs of a narrow ambitus, ostinato melodic intervals or a stepwise motion of harmonically sounding intervals, which create a characteristic effect of bell-like oscillations.

Among the most striking pieces of the opus is *Moment musical in E minor, Op. 16 No. 4*, which, in addition to its ostinato-based *nabat* motif in the main theme (a leap from the note B to the consonant third E–G), features in its episodic sections an intriguing bell-like sonority. This effect is achieved through the alternation of upper and lower voices, thus evoking the sounds of overtones and undertones of bell-ringing (Figure No. 4).

Rachmaninoff had already imitated this style of bell-ringing in his student composition *Fugue in D minor* (1891), whose complete form was long considered lost. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the missing pages were rediscovered by Moscow musicologist V. Antipov (Figure No. 5).

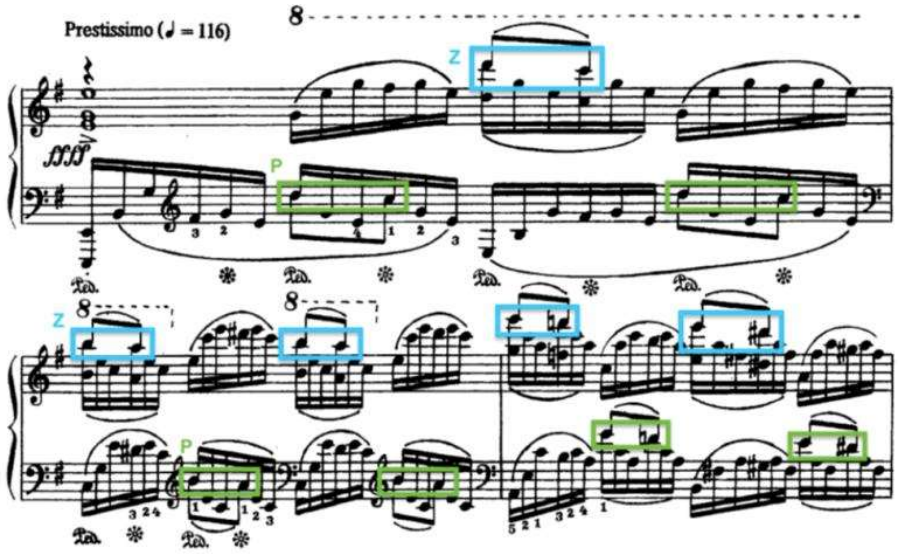


Figure 4: Rachmaninoff – Moment musical E minor, Op. 16. No. 4

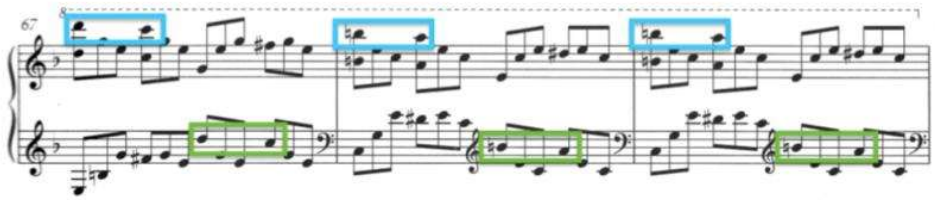


Figure 5: Rachmaninoff – Fugue D minor (1891)

Harmony

The main role of harmony in the context of bell sonority is to reproduce the aliquot complexes that are characteristic especially of the massive sound of the blagovest, but also of the simultaneous sound of several groups of bells within the trezvon. Since clusters were not commonly used in composition during Rachmaninoff´s lifetime, to imitate the characteristic sonority the composer opted for complex chromatic harmonies and chordal structures of both tertian (all types of seventh chords) and other interval construction (with an added second, a sixth, an alternating seventh, etc.), which have a purely sonic significance and fulfil a sonoric function in the composition. Rachmaninoff illustrated the dissonant sound of the bells by implementing specific aliquots through of a characteristic technique present in all works with the imitation of the blagovest. This technique involved combining unrelated chords that share a common tone (most often in the bass, exceptionally in the upper voices), which often produced a sequence of chords of peculiar construction with atypical interrelationships, e.g. a secondary dominant seventh chord to the Phrygian or to the 7th natural degree.

This stems from the fact that Rachmaninoff did not conceptualise the resulting chords in the context of functional harmony, but in the context of timbre and sonority of the chords. Therefore, chromatically progressive lines emerge in the middle voices of the superstructure consonants to the lower common tone. Another characteristic phenomenon is also the position of the musical material on the subdominant plane within the above progression, which in many cases is based on the function of the bass ostinato tone itself. A specific compositional technique arises when the ostinato bass line is made up of two tones. The organization of the remaining musical material is then modified based on the progression of the bass line.

An ideal example of the imitation of bell-like overtone complexes through harmonic structures and progressions is the coda of the *Prelude in C-sharp minor* (Figure No. 6). Its musical material closely resembles the bell imitation found in the piano transcription of the *Coronation Scene* from Modest Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov* (Figure No. 7).

The coda's musical material, built on the subdominant level, consists of several layers. The bass line is rendered in doubled octaves in the lowest register, aiming to evoke the sonority of the largest and deepest-sounding *blagovestnik* bells. The upper voices follow a chordal progression (derived from a common bass tone), imitating the polyphonic

and overtone-rich resonance of mid-sized bells. The coda concludes with a final "strike of all the bells" in the form of a tonic triad in C-sharp minor.

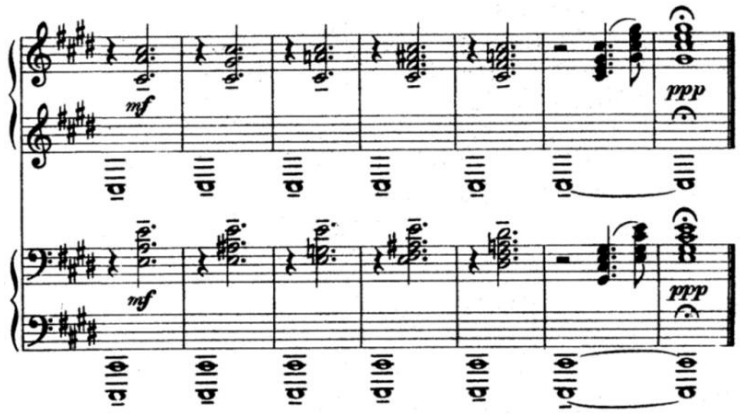


Figure 6: Rachmaninoff – Prelude C sharp minor, Op. 3. No 2. (coda)

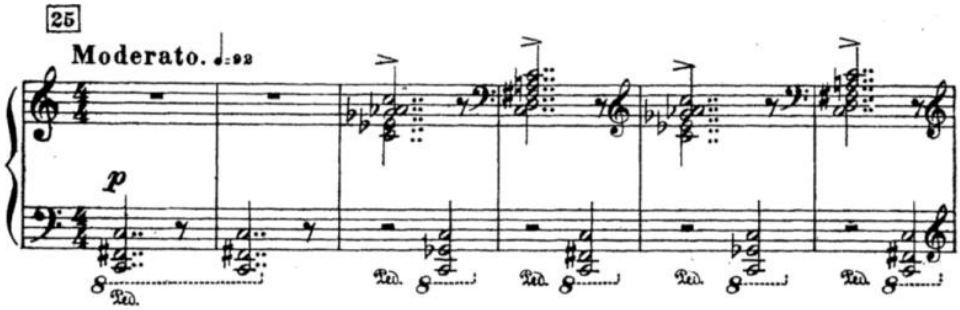


Figure 7: Mussorgsky – Coronation Scene from the opera Boris Godunov (piano transcription)

Instrumentation

The stylization of bell-ringing on orchestral instruments was used to achieve the timbre of different types of bells, ranging from all groups of Orthodox bells, through alarm bell-ringing, to the sonority of small bells. The imitation of large bells (blagovestniki) is based on the use of musical instruments such as double basses, low-register brass instruments (which give the impression of a metallic sound), also various percussion instruments (of a rumbling sound) such as cymbals, gongs, tam-tam. The bell-ringing of the melodic bells is reproduced by bell-ringing wind instruments of high registers (piccolo, flute), as well as harp, piano, celesta and last but not least instruments of typical sonorities such as glockenspiel, tubular bells or sleigh bells.

Although latent stages of bell sonorities can already be found in Rachmaninoff's first symphonic attempt—his one-movement *Youth Symphony in D minor* from 1891—it is more appropriate, from the

perspective of orchestral instrumentation, to consider the climactic movements of his full four-movement *Symphony No. 1 in D minor, Op. 13* (composed a few years later in 1895) as a mature example of bell imitation.

Right from the opening climactic section of the first movement, beginning at the *Più vivo* marking, the main theme starts to develop into a polyphonic peak that imitates a powerful *trezvon* (a rich, multi-layered bell peal). In the central bell-themed climax of the first movement—starting at the *Maestoso* section—the musical structure imitating bell-ringing no longer absorbs the main theme as it did in the *Più vivo* section. Instead, the ostinato bell-ringing of the *zazvonnye* bells, composed of two rhythmically distinct layers (Layer 1 – piccolo, flute, and oboe parts; Layer 2 – clarinet, bassoon, and French horn parts), is now subordinated to a new thematic sonority.

This new sound takes the form of a separate melodic line representing the *podzvonnye* (lower) bells, performed by trombones and tuba. Episodically interwoven into the flowing musical narrative—evoking the heavy tolling of the *trezvon*—are motifs of the alarm-like *nabat* bell, carried by the trumpet section.

Figure 8: Rachmaninoff – Symphony in D minor No. 1, Op. 13, first movement, Maestoso section

Timbre

Rachmaninoff's implementation of bell-like sounds is not limited to his piano compositions. The sonority of bell-ringing naturally permeated his

choral works, where it acquired quite a unique tone color. The composer made use of all voices and by grouping, juxtaposing, dividing and joining individual parts, he achieved new specific sonic effects, of which the atypical ones that deserve special attention are the bell-ringing effects.

At the beginning of 1915, Rachmaninoff composed a magnificent work for mixed a cappella choir — *Vsenoshchnoye bdeniye*, Op. 37 — which he dedicated to the memory of his teacher Stepan Smolensky. The use of bell-like sonorities is incorporated into nearly every movement of the *Vsenoshchnoye bdeniye*. However, the most striking example appears in the seventh movement of the cycle, *Shestopsalmiye*. The even tolling of bells is imitated at the opening of the piece through the tenor voices (Figure No. 9). Rachmaninoff employs the same approach to bell imitation in the twelfth movement, *Slavosloviye velikoye* (Figure No. 10).

In the introduction to *Shestopsalmiye*, two distinct lines can be identified that imitate the bell-ringing of two mid-range melodic bells (*podzvonnye*). The first tenor represents a smaller bell, with a melody that moves stepwise both downward and upward (E♭–D–C–D). The second tenor portrays a larger bell, and its line incorporates not only stepwise motion but also a fourth-leap at the beginning of the motif (C–G–A♭–B♭).

An especially interesting element that enhances the impression of bell-ringing is the phrasing of this passage. Rachmaninoff divides the flowing tenor line, written in half-note values, into phrased groupings (3–2–2–2–4), which results in a subtle shift of perceived accents and creates associations with the characteristic rhythmic pattern of bell peals.

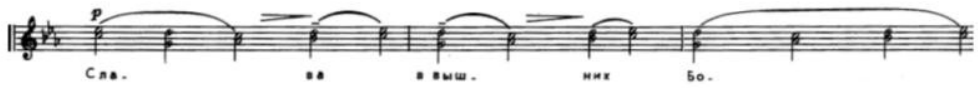


Figure 9: Rachmaninoff – Shestopsalmiye*, Op. 37 No. 7 (tenor part, bars 1–2)*

Figure 10: Rachmaninoff – Slavosloviye velikoye*, Op. 37 No. 12 (tenor part, bars 4–5)*

Gradually, to the sound of the *podzvonnye* (lower) bells, the *zazvonnye* (upper) bells are added, which the composer imitates using triads that alternate between the soprano and tenor voices. While the regular repetition of a major triad (A♭ major), played twice in half-note values, represents shorter, more precise bell strikes, the minor triad (C minor) in the tenor captures the realistic sound of a bell along with its

characteristic resonance. Rachmaninoff expresses this resonance by elongating the rhythmic values of the chord tones and adding an extra melodic note, B♭.

In the following bars, the bell motif is freely repeated. In the soprano, the major triad (E♭ major) sounds twice, while in the tenor, a minor triad (G minor) appears, enriched with two harmonically resonant major thirds: A♭–C and B♭–D.

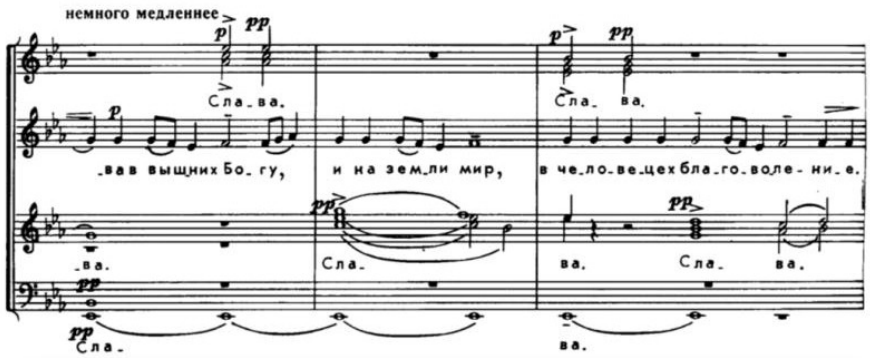


Figure 11: Rachmaninoff – Shestopsalmiye*, Op. 37 No. 7 (imitation of the alternation of upper and lower bells)*

From the pair of triads A♭ major and C minor, a *trezvon* climax later emerges.

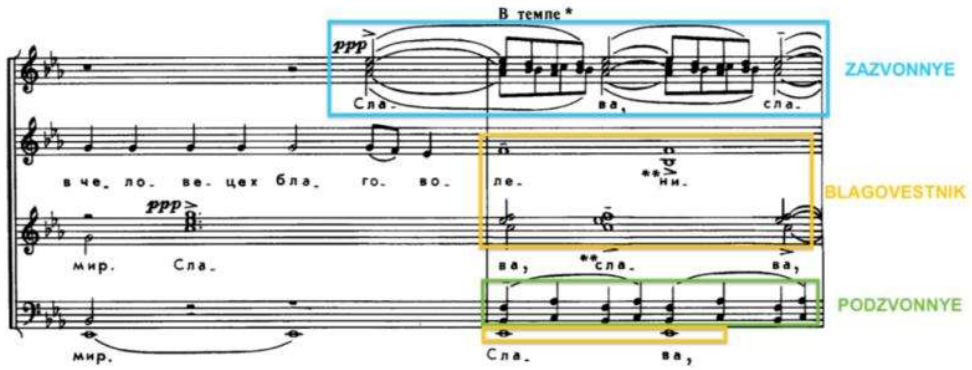


Figure 12: Rachmaninoff – Shestopsalmiye*, Op. 37 No. 7 (trezvon climax)*

Other methods of creating bell-ringing effects in *Vsenoshchnoye bdeniye*, Op. 37, include:

1. the movement of voices based on the rhythmic pattern of *zazvonnye* (upper) bells.

Figure 13: Rachmaninoff – Khvalite imya Gospodne*, Op. 37 No. 8, soprano part from bar 9 (rhythmic pattern of upper bells, 1st variant)*

2. the effect of bell-like swaying, achieved through ostinato motion of the voices in stepwise (second) intervals.

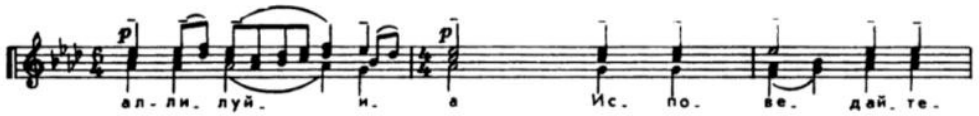


Figure 14: Rachmaninoff – Khvalite imya Gospodne*, Op. 37 No. 8, soprano part from bar 21 (rhythmic pattern of upper bells, 2nd variant)*

Texture

Through the analysis (especially of piano works), I found that the organization of the musical material is often based on the layers of the individual bell groups. The texture usually includes three voice lines, imitating the trezvon of all bells: the lower line of the blagovestnik, the middle line of the podzvonnye, and the upper line of the zazvonnye. In some cases, I found modified variants of the trezvon texture: either just two lines, but in a sonically thickened form, or three traditional lines supplemented by an additional layer of nabat bell-ringing, funeral perebor or podduzhnyy bell and sleigh bells. The overlapping and combination of different bell layers is also very common, usually allowing the composer to achieve a climax in the musical plot.

One of the most vivid pieces of the opus is the *Étude in E-flat major, Op. 33 No. 7*, which the composer described as a "fairground scene." The musical content is set in a festive atmosphere and portrays authentic traditions, which Rachmaninoff expressed through folk-like melodic writing combined with the bell-ringing of celebratory bells.

The initial fragment of the bell motif appears as an opening fanfare, which gradually unfolds and grows into a jubilant *trezvon*—the climax of the piece (Molto marcato section). The coda of the *Étude in E-flat major* is also built on a multi-layered texture that depicts the pealing of all the bells.

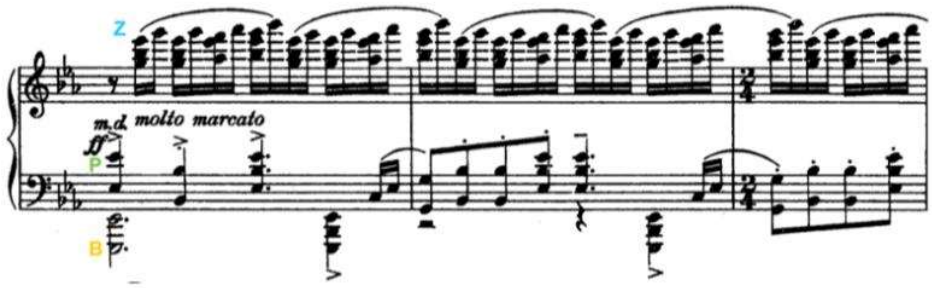


Figure 15: Rachmaninoff – Étude in E-flat major, Op. 33 No. 7
(Molto marcato section depicting a festive trezvon)

The overall compositional structure

The stylization of the bell-ringing plays an important role in the context of the overall structure of the composition. The most striking uses of bell sonorities are found in the introductions, climactic sections and codas, with a different way of conveying the different bell-ringing characters for each of these. The introductory sections are often characteristic for the reproduction of the sonic aspect of the bell-ringing, its aliquot complexes and specific timbre (e.g. Piano Concerto for C Minor Piano No. 2, Op. 18). In the developmental sections, the influence of the sonority of the bells on the syntactic structures and on the character of the melodic line is most evident. The climactic sections are almost always made up of massive trezvon bell-ringing with a polyphonic treatment of the musical material. The concluding sections use one of these methods or their combinations.

Imitation of Bells in Rachmaninoff's Composition

Before arriving in Lebedyn, where Rachmaninoff composed bell-inspired composition in 1893, he visited his grandmother in Velikiy Novgorod after they had not seen each other for a few years. Returning to his childhood home, Rachmaninoff´s compositional ideas became infused with his childhood memories as he revived a source of inspiration once born in the local environment. Incited by the resonant bell-ringing of Novgorod's church bells, Rachmaninoff created new "bell-like musical pictures" - Suite for Two Pianos No. 1, Op. 5.[111] The general concept of the work is based on the depictions of individual episodes in a person's life (youthful dreams, moments of love, experiences of grief, holiday celebrations). The

[111] V. Bryantseva, *S. V. Rachmaninov, 67.*

cycle is also unified by a characteristic descending motif consisting of four notes. In the first movements (*Barcarolle - The night…the love…*) it appears episodically, in the last movements (*The Tears - Easter*[112]) it fills the entire musical structure together with the sound of the church bells. In the third movement, the composer imitates mournful bell-ringing and in the final movement festive bell-ringing. Both the *Tears* and *Easter* movements are echoes Rachmaninoff's memories, depicting contrasting images of life at his time. Rachmaninoff explains the context of composing the third movement himself:

> One of my fondest childhood recollections is associated with the four notes of the great bells in the St. Sophia Cathedral of Novgorod, which I often heard when my grandmother took me to town on church festival days. The bellringers were artists. The four notes were a theme that recurred again and again, four silvery weeping notes, veiled in an everchanging accompaniment woven around them. I always associated the idea of tears with them. Many years later I composed a Suite for two pianos, in four movements, each developing a poetic motto. For the third movement, prefaced by Tiutchev's poem, „Tears", I knew at once the ideal theme - and the cathedral bells of Novgorod sang again.[113]

In the movement *Tears*, Rachmaninoff did not resort to organising the musical material in a way that would only portray the sonic side of the church bell-ringing trezvon. The "four silvery weeping tones" (B - A - G - Eb), based on the statements of the local bell-ringers, most likely belonged to the middle melodic bells of Novgorod Cathedral. The tones of the bell motif are constantly heard in a rhythmically strict and free melodically varying ostinato, which, in according to the Rachmaninoff himself, is surrounded by a constantly changing accompaniment. The supporting melody undergoes various transformations within the movement. In some sections, it sounds doubled or has its diatonic sequence saturated with chromaticisms. Only the rhythm of the motif remains unchanged throughout the musical piece and progresses smoothly in the same manner, albeit within an ever-changing texture. This multi-layered background of melodically and harmonically saturated figurations merges into a massive bell-ringing, creating the climax of the piece.

Not only do the bells create a specific timbral element in this composition, but they also fulfill a figurative and symbolic function.

---

[112] Title in Russian: Svetlyy prazdnik.

[113] S. Bertensson, *Sergei Rachmaninoff. A lifetime in music*. (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 184.

Similarly to the bell-ringing (the precursor to the unrest in the *Coronation scene of Boris* from Mussorgsky's opera or the alarm bell-ringing in the finale of the first act of Alexander Borodin's opera *Prince Igor)*, in Suite Op. 5 the bells express sorrowful feelings and, with their descending melodic progression depict falling human tears. While earlier composers mostly imitated a mighty celebratory or alarm bell-ringing in their compositions, Rachmaninoff also depicts the melodic aspect of the bells and thus gives the bell-ringing an unusually singing character. Rachmaninoff's "Novgorod bells theme" is no longer presented merely as a bell-like harmonic structure (e.g. as in Mussorgsky's composition), but as a melodic line growing out of mournful intonations. The lament of the bell, forming the main theme of the composition, is also the supporting element of further musical development, to which the other accompanying motifs are subordinated. The musical plot of the piece is first concentrated on the ostinato motif itself for a long time. Subsequently, its main intervals (especially the interval of the tritone Eb-A, creating a peculiar tension in the motif) form the motivic core of the harmonically condensed progression of the middle section. The ostinato melody of the opening disappears in the complex harmony which brings on the climactic tension. The melodic and figurative development of the theme intensifies (no longer slow dripping tears but a strong flowing stream).

The musical progression of the third movement of the Suite Op. 5 is based on a free ostinato development of the descending motif of the "weeping bells", sounding simultaneously with the accompanying voices which also have a bell-ringing character. After a climactic build-up to the mighty bell-ringing of all the bells of the Orthodox bell tower, the melodic theme returns at the end of the piece, leading up to the final coda.

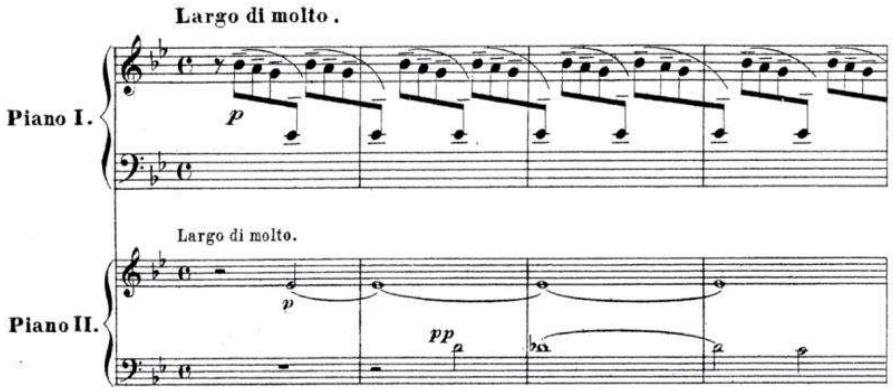


Figure 10: Rachmaninoff – Suite for Two Pianos No. 1 op. 5, movement III: "Tears" (the Novgorod bell theme)

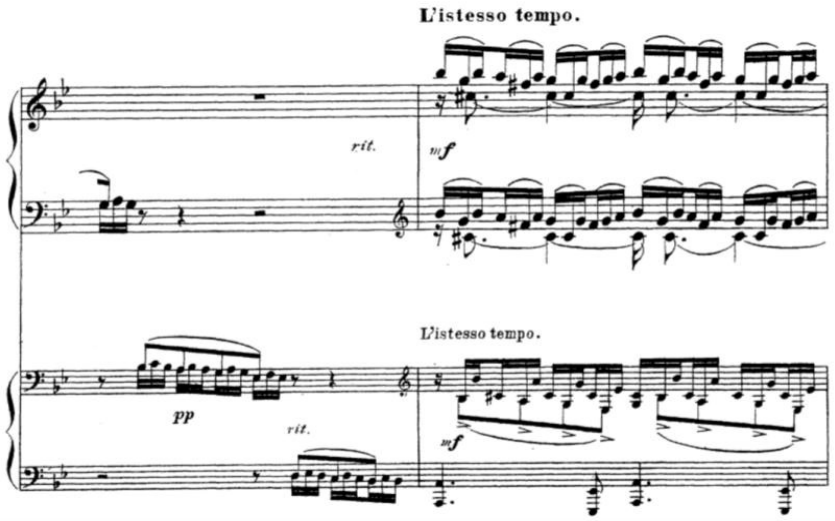


Figure 11: Rachmaninoff – Suite for Two Pianos No. 1 op. 5, movement III: "Tears" (a contrasting section imitating trezvon)

In the finale of Suite Op. 5 (*Easter*), the soundscape of the festive Easter bell-ringing is presented in drastic contrast to the previous third movement. In addition to the characteristic rhythmicity in the first piano part, the introduction also explores non-standard bell material. Indeed, the second piano part is based on a contrasting variant of the introduction and depicts a typical conclusion to the bell-ringing.

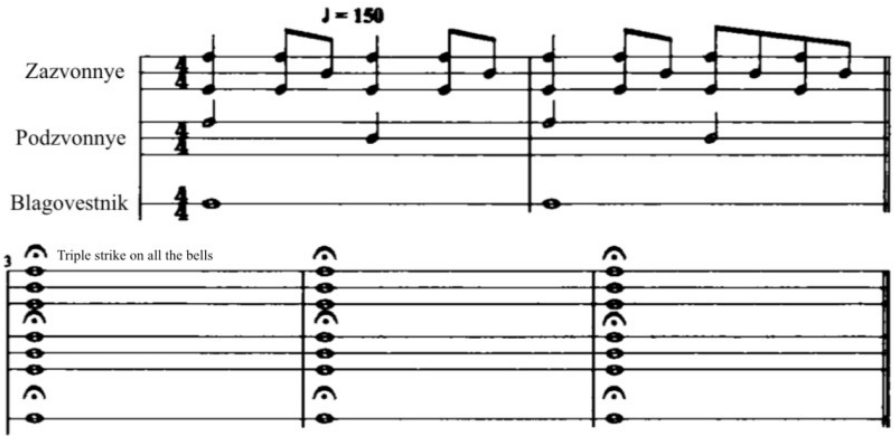


Figure 16: The closing section of a bell-ringing performance

The coda is imitated initially by a descending motion of harmonically sounding minor thirds (C-Eb), then perfect fifths (D-A / G-D / E-B), and culminating in a characteristic "strike on all the bells", in the form of a threefold repetition of a half-diminished seventh chord in first inversion (C - G - A - Eb).

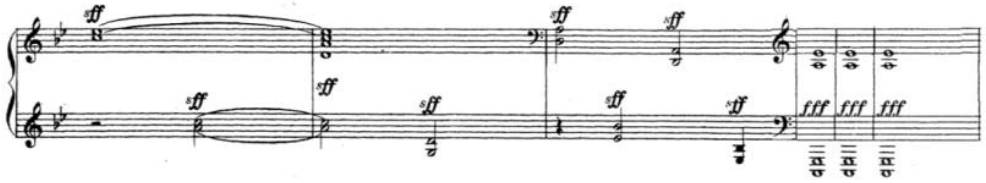


Figure 12: Rachmaninoff – Suite for Two Pianos No. 1 op. 5, movement IV "Easter" (Introduction)

A hint of the rhythmic structure of the main ostinato theme, imitating the continuous bell-ringing of small bells, is already present in Rachmaninoff's student composition, Nocturne in C minor (1888). The young Rachmaninoff captured the rhythmic dance intonations of the Orthodox bell-ringing in a very similar way to how they were set to music half a year later in Rimsky-Korsakov's eponymous work *Easter Overture*[114]. Rimsky-Korsakov described the Russian Orthodox bell-ringing he set to music as instrumental church dance music, which much corresponds with the character of the last movement of Rachmaninoff's Suite Op. 5. By 1893 Rachmaninoff was already well acquainted with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Svetlyy prazdnik* and in composing music with the same theme he also made use of the *paskhal'nyy* (Easter) liturgical lament *Khristos voskres* (Christ is Risen.)

When Rimsky-Korsakov first heard Rachmaninoff's Suite for Two Pianos, Op. 5 in January 1985, he commented on it with these words: "Everything is good, but at the end, when the melody of "Khristos voskres" comes in, it would be better to introduce it on its own first, and add the bells only the second time through."[115]

However, Sergei Rachmaninoff (as he later recalled) shrugged his shoulders with a youthful self-confidence and answered: "And why so? After all, in real life, this theme always appears simultaneously with the sound of the bells!" – and he did not change a single note.[116]

While Rimsky-Korsakov's extensive work *Svetlyy prazdnik*, filled with numerous quotations from the psalms of the Gospel, presents a

[114] Title in Russian: Svetlyy prazdnik.
[115] Z. Apetyan, Vospominaniya o Rakhmaninove, 221.
[116] Ibid., 221.

detailed musical picture of the Easter service, in Rachmaninoff's musical plan, built on only four verses by A. S. Khomyakov, an ostinato dance bell melody figures as a motivic core, melodically more developed and tonally tenser.

Rachmaninoff's *Svetlyy prazdnik* (*Easter* movement) exploits two lines of musical development. The first is the transformation of the trichordal motif (G – A – Eb) with the striking interval of a tritone, which was part of the theme (the lamentation of the bell) in the third movement titled *Tears* (see Figure 10). The aforementioned moving rhythmic motif, introduced in high octaves, imitates the sound of the smallest belfry bells (zazvonnye) and creates the so-called bell-ringing of a small trezvon (see Figure 13).

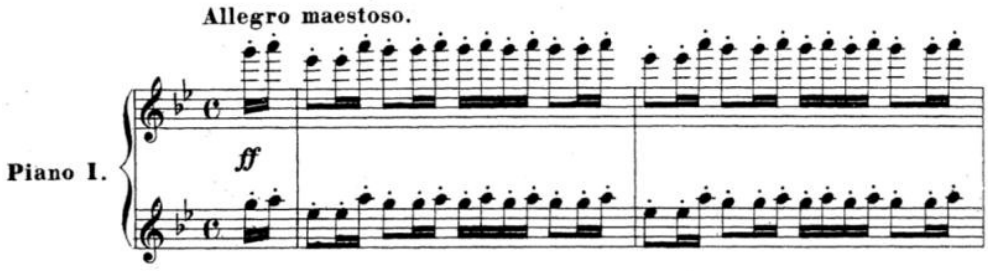


Figure 13: Rachmaninoff – Suite for Two Pianos No. 1 op. 5, movement IV (first piano part)

The second line is based on the oscillating repetition of the dominant-seventh chord in first inversion (E-G-A-C#) and of the half-diminished seventh chord in second inversion (Eb-G-A-C), which alternate with the fifths (A-E) and (C-G) in the lower voices (see Figure 14). They imitate the strikes of the big bells so-called *blagovestniki*, with the motifs of the small trezvon bell-ringing above.

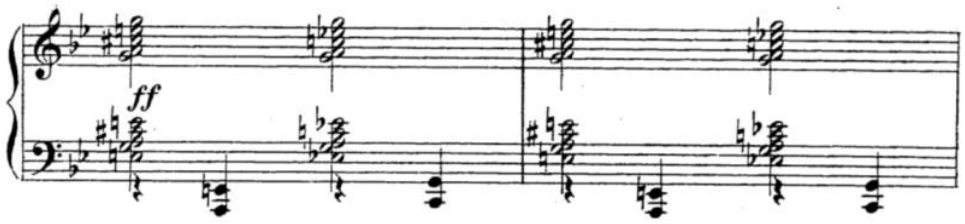


Figure 14: Rachmaninoff - Easter (op. 5), imitation of blagovest (second piano part)

The ostinato theme of the small trezvon gradually completely merges into the layers of the large trezvon. Pitches G and A, most frequently repeated in the first melodic theme of the small bells, are also present in the chordal structure of the second harmonic theme of the large bells. Later, however, they stand out as a separate ostinato theme in the middle voice, depicting the sound of medium melodic bells (podzvonnye), while the ostinating seventh chords take over the role of the larger bells (blagovestniki). In two sections of the finale (before and after the middle episode of the movement which presents a choral arrangement of the liturgical chant *Khristos voskres*), Rachmaninoff masterfully depicts all the layers of the Orthodox bell-ringing.

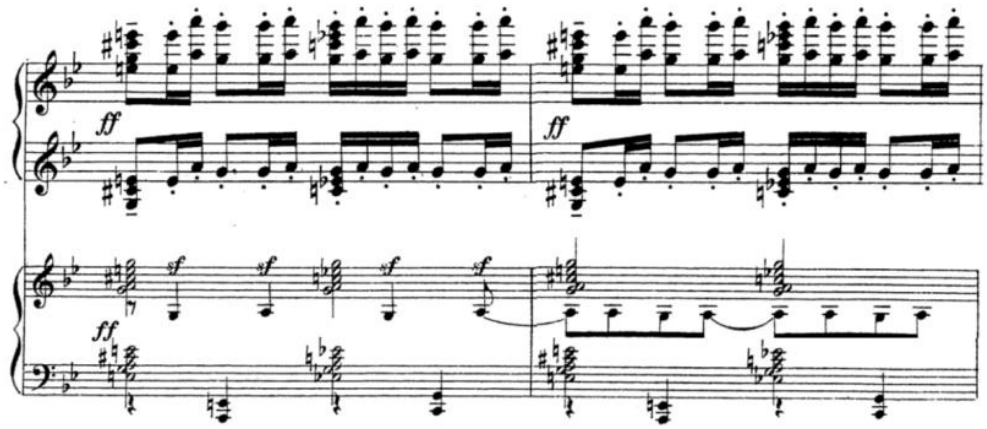


Figure 15: Rachmaninoff – Easter (op. 5), the onset of the podzvonnye in the second piano part (middle voice, pitches G-A)

Choral symphony *The Bells op. 35* is considered to be Rachmaninoff's most important work due to its content. At the same time, it is considered the final and most complex culmination of the phenomenon of bells in the composer's life work. Rachmaninoff explains the context of composing this work with the following words:

> The impetus for composing "The Bells" was unusual. In the previous summer, I sketched out the scheme of a symphony. Suddenly, one day I unexpectedly received an anonymous letter asking me to read Balmont's translation of a wonderful poem (The Bells) by Edgar Allan Poe, which is perfect for a musical setting and should particularly interest me. I read the poem attached to the letter and immediately decided to write a four-movement symphony based on

> its verses. I worked on this composition with passionate fervor and it is my most favorite of all.[117]

The form and instrumentation was based on the content of the poem and the composer's intention to depict (according to the template) the life of a person through various types of bell-ringing. Setting a poem with a specific theme to music allowed Rachmaninoff to use his imagination in the context of implementing variants of his most favourite source of musical inspiration – the sonority of bells.

E. A. Poe's poem is divided into four stanzas, which allows for a certain analogy with the four-movement sonata form. The second movement *Lento* (wedding bell-ringing) can be understood as the slow movement of the sonata cycle, the third movement (nabat) as the scherzo dance movement, and Rachmaninoff himself found justification for the funeral finale (funeral bell) in Tchaikovsky's Symphony in B minor (*Pathetic*), which concluded with a mournful Adagio. Only the shortest movement of all, the dancelike character of the opening movement *Allegro ma non tanto* does not quite conform to the traditional sonata-allegro form. Rachmaninoff thus creates a certain modified cycle without the traditional allegro movement and with two differing scherzo movements.

The orchestration of *The Bells* is monumental. Rachmaninoff uses a great variety of musical instruments such as harp, celesta, piano, organ, a diverse section of percussion instruments, but also choir and vocal soloists: a tenor in the first movement, a dramatic soprano in the second movement, and a baritone in the finale.

In *The Bells op. 35* Rachmaninoff takes the listener on a journey through human life with its various chapters from carefree youth to death, each being associated with a different type of bell-ringing in the composition. The specific sonority gives every movement a different character, but all are characteristic for their independence and unity of mood without major internal contrasts.

The first movement, Allegro ma non tanto, moves forward very quickly compared to the other movements. Its musical progression, resembling the sound of a speeding sleigh (a typical troika), paints a picture of a peaceful youth full of joyful days and life's dreams. The predominance of the high register in the strings and woodwinds, together with the abundance of bell-ringing timbres and the almost complete absence of brass, lends a characteristic lightness to the orchestra's sound. The combination of the characteristic rhythmicity, the timbre of the flutes,

---

[117] O. Riesemann*, Rachmaninoff's Recollections. (*New York: Routledge, 2015), 170-171.

the soft tones of the celesta and the harmonies of the harp quite faithfully conveys the silvery color of the sub-arch bells and sleigh bells. Particularly noteworthy is the middle section of the first movement (Meno mosso), which presents a poetic image of dreaming. The lullaby theme recurs regularly in the various humming vocal parts (sung with closed mouth), doubled first in the horn and oboe part and then in pianissimo in the viola part. Against this backdrop, the harp, piano and con sordino trumpets bring in echoes of the bell-ringing of the church bells. Unexpectedly, motifs anticipating the mournful finale (the descending melodic line of the first violins in C sharp minor) begin to emerge towards the end of the work. The fast movement of the sleigh, imitated by the music, leads to a powerful but brief climax (*Meno mosso, Maestoso*), in which all the various timbres of the orchestra merge into a joyous and jubilant sounding trezvon.

The second movement, *Lento,* is filled with the bell-ringing of the wedding bells. Its main theme grows out of a short motif that appears to imitate the slow movement of the ringing bells in pianissimo. In the smoothly developing movement, the new features of the composer's compositional thought clearly stand out, with his characteristic sense of subtle nuance and impressions of musical mysticism and mystery. In the heavy bell strikes (blocked major seventh chords in third inversion on the downbeat, with a rhythmic figure of ostinating sixteenth-notes hovering above), one can detect a solemn, but also distinctly sombre character. The sense of free-flowing movement is enhanced by a constantly changing tonal plan with unexpected enharmonic relationships, chromatic dips in the melody, density of texture or the presence of multiple motivic lines. The long-coming, gradually receding climax at the end of the first section (the only place in the entire movement where a full *tutti* is heard) is developed into a dynamic diminution that spans throughout the middle section and the repetition. The repetition is heard in a much-abbreviated form and features again the bell-ringing of the church bells announcing the wedding. Together with the middle section, they give way in duration to the first section - the climax thus occurs at just about the point of the golden section.

In the third movement, Presto, the composer paints a picture of a catastrophe where all human dreams, hopes and expectations are shattered. This was typical of Russian art of the pre-revolutionary years, and expressed in various ways in the works of many authors. Rachmaninoff employs the strained bell-ringing of the nabat, initially heard only from a distance, but gradually approaching, accompanied by a powerful rumbling that grows in intensity. The expressiveness of this movement is extremely concentrated. The choral part lacks melodic

themes, with the chromatic progressions in the different voices changing into one solid powerful cry. The complex harmonic layers take on a purely sonic significance. The important attribute of harmony here is not the functional relationships between chords or the logic of the tonal plan, but the overall character and coloring of the larger sound complexes. A prime example is the structure of the musical material in the opening of the third movement, based on the repetition of a sequence of three chords - diminished VI (D-F-Ab), major IV (Bb-D-F) and minor I (F-Ab-C). Due to the speed of the alternation, the above chord sequence is aurally perceived as one complex harmonic unit - like the fluctuating mass of bell-ringing. Following this section, the organization of the musical material varies as different chordal structures are layered on top of each other or played simultaneously. On top of that, a sensitive note (E) is also added in the bass, which gives this complex a peculiar instability of sound. The same purely sonic effect is created in the tremolo strings in the low register, also progressing in repeating triads.

The last movement, *Lento lugubre*, is a mournful epilogue, a prayer over the sufferer who has fallen asleep forever. The funereal mood is created through the incessant bell-ringing of the funeral bell, imitated by the unchanging regular rhythm, harmonies with heavy and deep basses and the constantly repeated descending melody in the top voice. The finale reflects a sense of fear of death, but at the same time a kind of mockery of a man's fate, which Rachmaninoff expressed through a reminiscence of the dreaming theme from the first movement, presented in a distorted, parodic form. The lento lugubre is rounded off with an unusually fine ending in a major key. The singing lyrical theme in unisono of violins, violas and cellos ascends to the high registers as if symbolizing the ascent of the departed soul to heaven.

Conclusion

The sonic characteristics of bells represent the most distinctive timbre aspect of art in cultures with an Orthodox bell-ringing tradition. The specific sound environment of everyday life in Orthodox towns and villages has been a source of inspiration for many authors. In particular, it has had a great influence on Russian composed music and has been interwoven into the content concept of many operatic and instrumental works by Russian composers.

The sound of bells has a special place in the works of Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninoff. Throughout his career, bells grew from an inspirational source into one of the most distinctive characteristic features of his unique style, and largely defined his compositional

thinking. The sonic aspect of bell-ringing penetrated the structure of the musical material and the compositional organisation of Rachmaninoff´s works, and became an important building principle. This is particularly demonstrated in his small-form piano works, where the process of the formation of a new hierarchy of forming elements and the parallel process of innovation of the piano texture through the imitation of bell-ringing can be traced.

The aim of this paper was to draw attention to the phenomenon of bells in the works of Sergei Rachmaninoff and, above all, to add to the ongoing research, which has so far dealt with the issue only partially. The results may also inspire further research into other characteristic features of the composer's musical language, especially folk and church tunes, which are present in Rachmaninoff's works and can be analytically elaborated.

Bibliography

Apetyan, Z. *Vospominaniya o Rakhmaninove.* Moscow: GMI, 1961.
Apetyan, Z. *Literaturnoye naslediye.* Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozitor, 1980.
Bertensson, S. *Sergei Rachmaninoff. A lifetime in music.* New York: New York University Press, 1956.
Bryantseva, V. *S. V. Rachmaninov.* Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozito, 1976.
Drozdikhin, I. *Uchebnoye posobiye dlya zvonarey khramov I monastyrey.* Moscow: Masterskaya Il'I Drozdikhina, 2017.
Glinka, M. *Zapiski.* Moscow, 1953.
Kovalyv, V. *Razdaysya, blagovestnyy zvon (Kolokola v istorii kul'tury).* Minsk, 2003.
Riesemann, O. *Rachmaninoff's Recollections.* New York: Routledge, 2015.
Rimsky-Korsakov, N. *Letopis' moyey muzykal'noy zhizni.* Moscow, 1955.
Sokolova, O. *Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff.* Moscow: Muzyka, 1984.

This article is the outcome of the implementation of the Identity and Memory in Twentieth-Century Music: Metamorphoses and Interactions (No. 2/0127/24) project, supported by the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Institute of Musicology of the SAS, 2024–2027.

Musica Academica
Volume 2. Issue 1 (2025): 82-102
DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1.04

MUSORGSKIJ'S SENSORY JOURNEY: *PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION* AS A KINAESTHETIC MUSICAL EKPHRASIS

SERENA ALLEGRA

PhD Student,
Università degli Studi di Milano[118]
Università degli Studi di Messina (Italy)[119]
serena.allegra@unimi.it

Abstract
This study investigates Modest Musorgskij's Pictures at an Exhibition as a paradigm of musical ekphrasis, focusing on how the work evokes sensory and bodily experiences beyond mere visual representation. Unlike visual arts, music suggests imagery without explicitly denoting it, allowing listeners to engage with art through an embodied, rather than solely auditory, perception.

By extending Gibson's concept of affordance to the musical domain, it is explored how sound offers action possibilities" that transcend passive contemplation, activating sensory-motor dynamics in the listener. This interaction involves kinaesthetic imagery, which enables a physical experience of music even without overt physical action. Neuroscientific studies support this view, documenting the activation of motor and premotor areas of the brain during musical listening.

The analysis of the pictures reveals how Musorgskij, through percussive textures, articulated dynamics, and complex rhythmic patterns, transforms the exhibition visitor into a physical and empathetic participant, inducing a corporeal and cognitive journey. Musorgskij's work is a process of sensory-motor mediation in which music embodies and transmits complex perceptive and emotional experiences.

Keywords
Musorgskij, Musical Ekphrasis, Embodied Cognition, Kinaesthetic imagery

---

[118] Via Festa del Perdono, 7, 20122 Milano MI, Italy
[119] Viale Ferdinando Stagno d'Alcontres, 5, 98166 Messina ME, Italy

Introduction

The objective of this study is to delve into the inherently corporeal and multisensory essence of the musical encounter, transcending the conventional passive notion of auditory reception to adopt an approach that is firmly embedded in Gibson's notion of affordance. Music, it can be argued, functions not only as an aesthetic object, but also as a medium that activates profound and embodied responses in the listener. These responses involve the listener's motor memory, emotions, and imagination. Empirical evidence from research in the domain of embodied music cognition has demonstrated that the structural components of musical language, including rhythm, dynamics, and melody, induce motor activations even in the absence of physical movement. This phenomenon is closely associated with kinaesthetic imagery. This perspective is corroborated by numerous empirical studies in the domain of cognitive neuroscience, which underscore the activation of motor and premotor areas of the brain during music listening, even in subjects devoid of specific training. In this context, Modest Musorgskij's *Pictures at an Exhibition* serves as a prime example of kinesthetic musical ekphrasis, a work that, through its abundance of physical impulses and the robust gestural characterization of the pieces, guides the listener on a physical and emotional journey.

The ensuing discourse will be organized in the following manner. Section 2 will delve into the notion of musical affordance and kinaesthetic imagery, thereby delineating the theoretical framework of reference. Subsequently, a comprehensive analysis of each painting will be conducted, commencing with the first *Promenade* and culminating in *The Great Gate of Kiev*. This analysis will explore how Musorgskij's distinctive compositional elements elicit bodily and sensory responses in both listeners and performers, thereby transforming observers into physical and empathetic participants (section 3). The role of the performer's body as an instrument of expressive mediation will also be discussed. This phenomenon can be interpreted as a manifestation of a multisensory communication paradigm that transcends mere representation, thereby becoming a process of sensorimotor mediation. In this context, music assumes an active role in engendering an integrated and profound aesthetic experience.

1. Theoretical framework: musical affordances, kinaesthetic imagery, and embodied listening

In the context of music listening, the concept of affordance is crucial to understanding the sound experience as a dynamic and embodied

interaction between the subject and the acoustic environment. The term was originally proposed by Gibson[120] in the field of ecological psychology. It refers to the possibilities for action offered by an environment in relation to the organism's perceptual-motor skills. When applied to the domain of music, the concept of affordance enables us to transcend a passive conception of listening, thereby reconfiguring it as an active, situated, and corporeal process. In this paradigm, sound is perceived as an invitation to respond through potential patterns of action. Music thus becomes not only an aesthetic entity to be contemplated, but also a medium through which the listener activates sensory and motor dynamics. The listener projects tensions, gestures, and bodily trajectories into the sound flow[121].

It is not merely a matter of organized sound; rather, it is a complex sensory phenomenon that stimulates the creation of bridges between different modes of perception, mediated by imagery. This phenomenon is capable of compensating for missing or integrated information[122]. In particular, kinaesthetic imagery[123] facilitates the embodiment of auditory phenomena, thereby allowing for the experience of sound as bodily movement, independent of physical action. Kinaesthetic imagery is not merely a replication of learned movements: rather, it is a dynamic and intrinsic perception that underlies the embodied meaning of music, thereby facilitating emotional and visceral responses[124].

Research in the domain of embodied music cognition has demonstrated that the structural components of musical language, including rhythm, dynamics, melodic progression, and timbral articulation, generate affordances that elicit motor activation, even in the

---

[120] James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception: Classic Edition* (Hove: Psychology Press, 2014).

[121] David Menin and Andrea Schiavio, "Rethinking Musical Affordances," *AVANT* 3, no. 2 (2012): 202–215; Joel Krueger, "Doing Things with Music," *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2011): 1–22; Rolf Inge Godøy, *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

[122] Bence Nanay, "Multimodal Mental Imagery," *Cortex* 105 (August 2018): 125–134, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cortex.2017.07.006.

[123] Jin Hyun Kim, "Kinaesthetic Musical Imagery Underlying Music Cognition," in *Music and Mental Imagery*, ed. by Rolf Godøy and Alexander Refsum Jensenius (New York: Routledge, 2022), 54–63.

[124] Daniel Müllensiefen, Bruno Gingras, Jason Musil, and Lauren Stewart, "The Musicality of Non-Musicians: An Index for Assessing Musical Sophistication in the General Population," *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 2 (2014): e89642, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0089642.

absence of physical movement[125]. This process can be observed in automatic responses such as foot tapping, body swaying, or the tendency to imagine performative gestures consistent with musical development. Such reactions cannot be considered epiphenomena; rather, they constitute concrete manifestations of the listener's embodied participation.

When an audience member experiences this profound level of engagement with a musical composition, allowing the music to resonate deeply within them, it is referred to as empathic listening[126]. This concept encompasses motor empathy, a term coined by Reybrouck [127] to describe the sensation of being profoundly affected by music, often in response to specific, emotionally significant passages within a composition. This concept is distinct from pure imagination: during particularly engaging listening, it is possible that by closing one's eyes or daydreaming, one may imagine oneself elsewhere, visualizing images in a nearly dreamlike dimension. However, the concept of extension that is the focus of this investigation does not concern this mode. Instead, it concerns purely motor sensations that lack a visual or imaginatively rich counterpart. When engaging in musical extensions, individuals do not visualize themselves in other locations or dream of performing tasks differently from their current activities. Instead, they simply modify their perception of the moment.

This perspective is corroborated by the findings of cognitive neuroscience, which have documented the activation of the motor and premotor areas of the brain during music listening. Research in the domain of functional imaging (fMRI) and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) has demonstrated that the perception of rhythmic and temporal structures activates brain circuits that overlap with those involved in the planning and execution of actual movement[128]. This phenomenon has also been observed in subjects lacking specialized musical training, suggesting that the tendency to experience kinaesthetic

---

[125] Marc Leman, *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

[126] Joel Krueger, "Affordances and the Musically Extended Mind," *Frontiers in Psychology* 5 (2014): 1093.

[127] Mark Reybrouck, "Musical Sense-Making and the Concept of Affordance: An Ecosemiotic and Experiential Approach," *Biosemiotics* 5, no. 3 (2012): 391–409.

[128] Robert J. Zatorre, Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia Penhune, "When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory–Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8, no. 7 (2007): 547–558; Jessica Adrienne Grahn and Matthew Brett, "Rhythm and Beat Perception in Motor Areas of the Brain," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 19, no. 5 (2007): 893–906.

imagery may represent a universal aspect of musical cognition. The imagination of sound gestures, in particular, involves the activation of implicit bodily representations that allow the listener to move with the music in a virtual way[129].

Kinaesthetic imagery can therefore be conceptualized as an embodied response to musical affordances, a form of imagined choreography that facilitates navigation of sound space through simulated motor patterns. Consequently, listening evolves into a multisensory and intermodal phenomenon, wherein auditory perception, physical movement, and emotional response are intricately intertwined.

Within this framework, the concept of ekphrasis is fundamental to understanding how music can engage with other art forms. Originally a rhetorical figure, ekphrasis has been defined by James Heffernan[130] as the verbal representation of a visual representation — essentially, a vivid description of an artwork aimed at conveying its visual and emotional impact through language. This interaction between visual and verbal media highlights the complex semiotic exchange in artistic translation, where language seeks not only to depict but to evoke the sensory experience of viewing art[131]. In music, ekphrasis takes a particularly nuanced form: unlike literature, music lacks direct denotative power and cannot represent visual content literally. Instead, it suggests atmospheres, emotions, and narratives, functioning as a form of intersemiotic translation that re-presents an existing artwork through sound[132].

This distinction between program music and musical ekphrasis is crucial: while program music constructs autonomous imaginative content, musical ekphrasis engages directly with a specific, pre-existing artistic object, attempting to capture its stylistic, formal, or emotive characteristics in sonic form. In this sense, ekphrasis in music is not merely inspired by an artwork but acts as a mediating process that translates and transforms visual experience into embodied sonic narrative. Musorgskij's *Pictures at an Exhibition* exemplifies this approach by musically rendering not only Hartmann's paintings but the embodied aesthetic experience of the exhibition itself, producing a multisensory,

---

[129] Jens Haueisen and Thomas R. Knösche, "Involuntary Motor Activity in Pianists Evoked by Music Perception," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 13, no. 6 (2001): 786–792.

[130] James A. Heffernan, *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[131] Andrea Battistini, "Denotazione, metafora e connotazione tra ekphrasis e mélophrasis," *Musica Docta* 10 (2020): 65–75.

[132] Siglind Bruhn, "A Concert of Paintings: 'Musical Ekphrasis' in the Twentieth Century," *Poetics Today* 22, no. 3 (2001): 551–605.

kinaesthetic musical ekphrasis that invites the listener into a richly embodied journey through the art[133].

2. Attending the exposition: the pictures

In this section, an analysis of Musorgskij's Pictures at an Exhibition will be conducted through the medium of kinaesthetic imagery. This approach enables an exploration of the work not solely as an auditory experience, but also as a genuine physical and emotional journey. From this perspective, the listener (and the performer) does not merely decode sounds or perceive musical structures, but rather experiences the gestures, weights, tensions, and postures that the music evokes internally. Musorgskij's piano compositions, while frequently characterized by a lack of refinement and polish that is typical of Western-style virtuosic brilliance, exhibit a richness in physical impulses that demand the engagement of motor memory and kinesthetic awareness of the body. Each picture, in its unique style and distinctive character, offers a particular quality of movement, whether it be the solemn and rhythmic progress of the Promenade, the weary and subdued gait of the oxen in Bydło, the nervous leaping of *Limoges*, the destructive and hammering force of *Baba-Yaga*, or the monumental grandiloquence of the *Great Gate of Kiev*. The body is not merely a means of execution; it is also a site of embodied understanding of music. The gesture, whether imagined or enacted, functions as a vehicle of meaning.

This approach enables the conveyance of the sensory and psychological intricacies inherent in each painting, thereby facilitating a multisensory experience. Kinaesthetic imagery facilitates an understanding of Musorgskij's ability to transform exhibition visitors into physical and empathetic participants, capable of experiencing the fatigue, lightness, irony, or solemnity of the auditory experience within themselves. Far from being a rudimentary compilation of descriptive pieces, Pictures at an Exhibition evolves into an immersive musical landscape, constructed through the synergy between musical gesture and bodily imagination.

2. 1. Promenade I

The piece commences with the initial Promenade, which is characterized by a pace that mirrors the cadence of leisurely strides, thus establishing an ambiance of tranquil movement. The initial indication “allegro giusto,

[133] Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Peter Dayan, *Music Writing Literature: From Sand via Debussy to Derrida* (London: Routledge, 2017).

nel modo russico, senza allegrezza ma poco sostenuto"[134] offers insight into the anticipated outcome of the performance and its intended effect on the listener. "Allegro" signifies the necessity of maintaining a consistent tempo during performance, while "giusto" serves as an adjective intended to mitigate the propulsive nature of "Allegro," thereby ensuring that the performer does not exceed the speed conceived by the composer, thus completely undermining the intended meaning of the piece. The term "nel modo russico" conveys the expectation that the performer should execute all notes in accordance with Russian musical taste, characterized by a vertical sound, resulting in a percussive and less legato execution, in stark contrast to the Western musical tradition, which, in total antithesis, favors a soft and legato sound.

To this end, the composer places dashes in the opening notes to indicate this meaning. The phrase "senza allegria" (without joy) is a further invitation to moderate the speed of the allegro. This phrase can also be understood as a moderator of sound, so that one is not led into the error of believing that "vertical sound" is synonymous with "very loud sound." Finally, "poco sostenuto" is the final warning aimed at cautioning the performer against the risk of slowing down excessively. This suggests that the composer intended for the promenade to be performed in a strict manner, its solemnity, justified by the grandeur of the exhibition of paintings, must not be accelerated to the point of evoking a sense of joy. When executed with precision, the promenade has the capacity to facilitate the listener's immersion in this multisensory experience, characterized by auditory and rhythmic elements that enable the perception of the act of walking and the ambience of solemnity interwoven with relaxation.

The term "attacca" is also employed by other composers, including Beethoven, at the conclusion of the second movement of the piano sonata op.57 (*Appassionata*). The term's purpose is to signify the continuation of the musical piece without interruption, seamlessly transitioning into the subsequent section. Consequently, the piano performance must continue beyond the final B-flat major chord, as if the word "corona" were present. This is essential to create the desired effect of surprise that the visitor to the exhibition/listener experiences when seeing/hearing the first painting.

[134] "Allegro giusto, in the Russian manner, without cheerfulness, but slightly sustained".

2. 2. Gnomus

The initial scene is entitled *Gnomus*, which portrays an ominous creature that abruptly thrusts the viewer into a grotesque and unsettling realm. From the outset, the audience is confronted with a novel physicality and an unparalleled manner of traversing the spatial realm. Gnomus is characterized by its awkward, abrupt, and sudden movements, which are translated into musical expression through the use of contrasting rhythms, frequent pauses and resumptions, and a dynamic that oscillates between extremes, ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo in rapid succession. The resultant movement is characterized by a sense of fragmentation, uncertainty, and unease. The subject portrayed in the original painting, as described by Montagu-Nathan[135], was a toy nutcracker designed for the artists' club Christmas tree. This inanimate object was transformed by Musorgskij into a living character, capable of moving in the sound space. As Russ[136] observes, we are not faced with a static image, but rather the visualization of a scene: The character known as Gnomus is brought to life, and proceeds to move, stumble, and breathe heavily.

The gnome's clumsiness and malevolence are conveyed through distinct auditory expressions, such as the accentuated sound of his limping steps, clearly discernible in bars 40-43. Additionally, an undulating and uncertain movement emerges in bars 44-46, further enhancing the musical portrayal. The subject's gait is characterized by intermittent stumbles, exemplified by the instances in bars 8 and 27, articulated through rapid staccatos. In bar 47, an angry gesture (in *ff*) explodes, recurring cyclically throughout the piece, always after a pause that seems to correspond to a moment when Gnomus stops to catch his breath. This is succeeded by slow chromatic descents, which accurately depict the auditory experience of the gnome's movement. A pivotal component in achieving this effect is the resonance pedal, which enables the sounds to resonate without diminishing their intensity, thereby generating a tapestry of dissonant frequencies that evokes a sense of profound discomfort and distress in the listener.

The piece's culmination is marked by a significant degree of technical complexity for the piano. Subsequent to the instruction *poco a poco accelerando*[137], a rapid succession of ascending and descending

---

[135] Montagu Montagu-Nathan, "New Light on Moussorgsky's 'Pictures'," *The Monthly Musical Record* 48, no. 106 (May 1917).

[136] Michael Russ, "Returning to the Exhibition: Musorgskij's *Pictures* Reconsidered," *Music in Art* 39, no. 1–2 (2014): 215–236

[137] *gradually accelerating*

chromatic sextuplets commences, necessitating the maintenance of a swift tempo while ensuring the precise execution of every note. The final segment of the piece is characterized by a frenzied rush, as if Gnomus, perceiving that his actions are being observed, endeavors to evade capture with abrupt acceleration, yet he maintains his haphazard, fragmented manner throughout. The use of ascending and descending scales, laden with dissonance, serves to underscore the chaos of the protagonist's escape, culminating in a sense of unresolved unease that pervades the scene.

In *Gnomus*, Musorgskij presents an embodied aesthetic experience, whereby the character is not only perceived through visual and auditory senses, but also through visceral and sensorimotor responses. Moreover, as with the subsequent images, it is not necessary to be familiar with the image of the picture in order to perceive these sensorimotor states; these are perceptible even without awareness of the image portrayed, which only provides the visual counterpart. This does not imply that the knowledge of the pictures is without value; rather, it signifies that the sensorimotor experience can occur in the absence of visual simulation among the involved sensory modalities.

2. 3. Promenade II and Vecchio castello

Following the second Promenade, which is more intimate and collected than the first, Musorgskij's musical journey leads the listener to a suspended, melancholic sound space, where a troubadour sings in front of the ruins of a medieval manor: *Il vecchio castello* (*The old castle*). In this instance, the music functions not merely as a description of an image, but rather as an activator of a physical and sensory experience in the listener, thereby engendering an emotional response through sound.

The experience of sensations such as emptiness, loneliness, and melancholy is not merely a matter of evocation; rather, it is a phenomenon that is inherently embodied and expressed through the physical experience of the individual. The initial chord progression, initiated by the first chord, constitutes a perfect fifth interval between the root and the dominant, excluding the presence of the modal third. This absence generates a sensation of harmonic desolation, characterized by a static, weary interval that persists in a medium-low register, as if suspended in time. This harmonic tension is characterized by its insidious onset, gradually manifesting as a pervasive heaviness within the body. From the silence, a melodic line emerges, characterized by its timidness, fragility, and profound significance. The register in which it is performed immediately suggests a guitar, the instrument traditionally associated

with the troubadour, yet the voice that performs it also possesses the capacity to sing of pain, in a manner reminiscent of historical troubadours. The bass line introduces a G-sharp pedal, which remains constant but does not dominate the sound. This subdued and repeated auditory phenomenon can be conceptualized as a weak, fatigued heartbeat, its vividness accentuated by the ternary figuration of the rhythm. The auditory perception of a decelerating heartbeat, perceived as if with reluctance, is reflected in the listener's body, evoking an immediate and visceral emotional response.

2. 4. Promenade III and Tuileries

A notable distinction emerges in the third movement when compared to the preceding Promenade. This transformation in character is abrupt and occurs exclusively within the final two measures. It is as if Musorgskij were suddenly attracted by another image, thus interrupting not only his perambulation through the exhibition, but also his impression of the previous image.

The emotional corporeality is thus transformed into that of the experience of the subsequent painting, Tuileries, where the tone undergoes a radical change. In this scene, the music serves as a medium for articulating the dynamic actions of a group of children engaged in physical activity within a designated outdoor space. The children, depicted as running and engaged in play, are met with intervention from nannies who, through physical pursuit, offer disciplinary guidance and provide care. However, it must be noted that the piece's effectiveness extends beyond mere sound mimesis. The sounds of children's laughter, the gentle or authoritarian attention of the nannies, the energy of play, and the contrast between freedom and rules, between caprice and order, are all artfully rendered through the dynamics, articulation, and rapidity of the changes in phrase. These elements evoke not only sounds but also gestures, postures, and muscular tension, as if the viewer were running, stumbling, and being reprimanded.

The Tuileries scene swiftly immerses the viewer in a vibrant auditory and kinetic environment, portraying a park alive with the energy of children engaged in playful activities. These children, observed by their nannies, engage in a range of behaviors, including active movement, pursuits, verbal exchanges, and teasing. The nannies' interventions, characterized by a blend of affection and firmness, serve to regulate the children's activities and maintain order within the scene.

The score demands that the performer enter and draw the listener into the children's play through rapid staccatos, alternating between light

timbres and sweeter colors, sudden impulses, and cantabile lines. The carefree energy of children's play is translated into a musical physiology, made up of short, articulated gestures, tensions, and releases that bring every fragment of the writing to life.

The initial section of the composition necessitates a high degree of delicacy and precision from the pianist. From the second bar onwards, the musician must execute staccato passages with the weaker fingers of the hand, a move that can easily result in a sound that is either too loud or too weak, thereby compromising clarity and articulation. Body control is paramount in this context. Through the cultivation of awareness regarding weight distribution, digit position, and micro-articulation, the episode's playful character is preserved.

The detached quatrains symbolize the children's spontaneous discourse and their rapid exchange of ideas, while the legato in pairs per bar (bars 14–22) articulates the nannies' gentle reprimands, calling the children back to order. A meticulous approach to articulation and phrasing is not merely a matter of interpretation; it necessitates a precise organization of one's body. For instance, the execution of credible legato in the presence of repeated notes or technically challenging passages, such as the transition from F to E♯, necessitates the implementation of double escapement and techniques such as sliding legato. These techniques transform each passage into a meticulously choreographed series of hand movements, underscoring the complexity and nuance of musical expression. In addition, individuals with small or medium-sized hands must completely rethink the distribution between their right and left hands to execute double stops. This seemingly simple gesture, if performed with tension, can disrupt the fluidity of the piece. The work evokes a shared bodily memory of play, capriccio, and chaotic yet lively movement. Childhood is evoked in every fragment of the piece through embodied actions, albeit in a diffuse manner.

2. 5. Bydło

The childlike, playful lightness of Tuileries is abruptly interrupted by the fourth piece. Bydło. The transition is abrupt and palpable, as if the music abruptly immerses the listener, causing a sensation of weight. Bydło is a scene replete with multisensory suggestions, a sonic representation that, rather than narrating a story, engenders sensations of weight, slowness, breathlessness, and fatigue.

The scene under consideration depicts a Polish cart pulled by oxen, submerged in mud, advancing with considerable exertion. However, it must be noted that this visual depiction merely serves as the initial point

of departure. From the outset, the auditory experience engenders a physical response in the listener, characterized by a deliberate and methodical progression. The persistent, resonant chords that define the tempo serve as a metaphorical representation of the forces that impede movement, akin to the impact of hooves penetrating the soil. This auditory metaphor demands a high degree of physical mastery from the performer, who must meticulously calibrate their exertion to convey the nuances of inertia and resistance. The effect is one of embodiment: the observer feels pulled along, involved in the effort, as if their own body were being put under strain. Musorgskij's work does not merely present a scene; rather, it engenders a shared experience of profound suffering. In this musical piece, every movement becomes a physical gesture. The responsive chords are akin to muscles tensing, and the sighs in the high notes evoke a gasp that seems to rise in the throat. And when, with no warning, the sound becomes lighter, it appears as if the animals (and human observers) find the strength to raise their heads and look beyond the mud, perhaps in search of a relief that never arrives.

In its specific historical and cultural context, the concept of animal fatigue assumes an additional layer of significance, serving as a metaphor for the human condition, particularly in the context of Russia's subjugation under the autocratic rule of the tsar. This heaviness, once confined to the physical realm, has now expanded to encompass the social, political, and collective dimensions of existence. The concept of slowness evolves into a metaphor for oppression, with the pace of the oxen serving as a symbol of human subjugation, pulled by forces that transcend their own volition.

At the interpretative level, the performance of Bydło has given rise to ongoing debates, precisely because its execution entails choices that extend beyond the mere score, encompassing the sensory and bodily dimensions of auditory perception. In Musorgskij's autograph, the beginning is marked fortissimo—a choice that conveys an imposing and proximate presence, as if the cart were in front of us. In contrast, many subsequent editions (including Ravel's renowned orchestration) commence the piece *piano*, suggesting a distant cart that gradually approaches and then dissipates. Both versions evoke divergent spatial movements, yet both invariably entail embodied paths. In the first, the subject perceives the weight upon their person; in the second, the subject is overwhelmed by a presence that becomes increasingly proximate, engaging, and all-encompassing.

The tempo, indicated as 2/4 and described as moderate, is also open to interpretation. According to the notation, one might perceive a binary

beat, slow but regular. However, some pianists opt to interpret the piece as if it were in 4/4 time, attributing a slow beat to each eighth note. The inquiry posed is not solely of a metrical nature; rather, it is inherently kinesthetic in essence, addressing the manner in which the human body perceives and experiences time. This phenomenon can be likened to an internal rhythm that manifests through indicators such as accelerated respiration, the exertion of joint tension, and the sensation of weight upon the shoulders.

In the performance of Bydło, as in its listening, the body is involved in every bar. The performer is called upon to bow to the gravity of the sound, to make the slowness felt without succumbing to staticity, and to give life to a movement of effort and resistance. Conversely, the listener becomes immersed in this sensory experience, where music transcends the mere auditory perception and becomes a shared bodily act.

2. 6. Promenade IV and Balet nevylupivshikhsya ptentsov (Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks)

The transition from the fourth Promenade to the fifth scene, the *Balet nevylupivshikhsya ptentsov*, is characterized by a light and brilliant quality, yet it is not without ambiguity. The high register from which this promenade commences appears to direct the listener toward the lively and frenetic chirping of the subsequent scene. However, the interpretation of the octave sign, which is inconsistently present across the various editions, and Musorgskij's original writing, which has been altered by arbitrary revisions, complicate the interpretation of the passage. Upon the conclusion of the promenade, the piece transitions into the core of the ballet, drawing inspiration from Hartmann's design for the show *Trilbi*. In this segment, the dancers, attired as chicks, execute their movements while remaining confined within the confines of their shells. The auditory experience of the newly emerged avian subjects is characterized by a series of percussive vocalizations, including rapid trills, trills, and sobbing articulations, which are audibly discernible and serve to communicate the subject's physical state and behavior. The performer is tasked with replicating the fragile, humorous, and tender movements of the chicks through concise, agile, yet meticulous gestures, executed in a *pianissimo* that precludes any hesitation.

The persistent low dynamics symbolize a genuine physical challenge: performing rapid, articulated passages while adhering to the limitations of the piano necessitates a nuanced equilibrium between tension and relaxation. The accents, which are articulated almost concurrently with the fundamental note, are not merely embellishments;

rather, they constitute micro-explosions of motor energy. These accents manifest as diminutive pecks or imperceptibly subtle leaps within the auditory fabric, thereby expressing the nascent vitality of the music. In this context, the quality of the gesture assumes paramount importance. Delicacy, far from signifying weakness, embodies a sophisticated command of the minutest muscular movements of the fingers, in conjunction with the meticulous distribution of the arm's weight.

In the musical passages spanning from bars 23 to 30, the sustained trills performed by the right hand of the instrument appear to induce a physical vibration in the air, reminiscent of an avian species' initial attempts to take flight. This auditory-visual metaphor can be likened to the flapping of wings, characterized by an initial hesitation, yet ultimately decisive in nature. Concurrently, the left hand performs a repetitive pattern on the tonic note, akin to a physical anchor that imbues the composition with stability and weight, despite the apparent lightness.

A structural analysis of the piece reveals its resemblance to a minuet, as indicated by the presence of a two-part trio, a repeat sign, and a coda. However, it is the physical movement it implies that truly brings the form to life. The second phrase, characterized by ascending thirds on the upbeat in the right hand and an ascending line in the left, evokes the coordinated momentum of two legs, a continuous oscillation that propels the gesture forward and guides its expressive flow.

In this context, the utilization of the 1C pedal does not primarily serve to sustain the dynamics; rather, it imbues the sound with a sense of softness and opacity, thereby transforming it into a muffled vibration, akin to a sound passing through a shell. The auditory experience, in this context, is analogous to the process of hatching, characterized by its diminutive and meticulously regulated nature. It is not yet fully developed, yet it is replete with latent energy.

2. 7. Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuÿle

In the sixth tableau Musorgskij contrasts two opposing figures: “a rich Jew in a fur hat” and “a poor Jew”. the two bodies are revealed through sound in a melodic exchange that can be considered a dialogue. The musical composition of the affluent Jew, characterized by precise triplets, sustained notes, and deliberate pauses, enforces a stringent and authoritative stance, a steadfast and measured bodily command. The sound is characterized by its harsh, cold, and imposing qualities, featuring a compact hand, a low wrist, and sharp articulation. This sonic presence imposes itself in space, making a unambiguous gesture. In contrast, the portrayal of the poor Jew is characterized by two distinct bodily

incarnations. The initial incarnation is characterized by a tender and subdued demeanor, where the gesture recedes, the sound acquiesces, and a sense of sadness emerges, evoking the oppression and fatigue experienced by the common man under the oppressive regime of the tsar. Conversely, the second incarnation is marked by a more petulant and irritating figure, with a nervous and fractured movement, nearly a spasm, that disrupts the tranquility and imposes itself insistently. This auditory confrontation evolves into a tangible physical interaction, wherein each character is brought to life through the interplay of tension between the two, manifested in their vocalizations and physical expressions. These elements are then transposed into musical form, providing a medium for the articulation of their dynamic relationship. The progressive overlapping of voices contributes to the audience's ability to perceive the intensity of the conflict. This is facilitated by the acceleration of breathing, the growing tension in the torso and hands, and finally the energetic closure of the rich Jew who "has the last word," sealed by a firm and heavy gesture that closes the scene.

2. 8. Promenade V and Limoges. La marché (La grande nouvelle)

The promenade that introduces the *Limoges* picture appears only in the original version, leading some to consider it superfluous. However, it contains subtle variations that justify its inclusion, both physically and mentally extending the sensation of walking. The *Limoges* movement is an explosion of kinetic energy: it depicts a quarrel between women at the marketplace and is built upon a rapid flick of the palm, a *staccato* gesture that demands extreme precision and finely calibrated physical control. This motion must be executed with great speed and minimal force, yet it requires meticulous accuracy. Such precision is achieved through the active engagement of the hand and the passive involvement of the arm and forearm, which together provide the appropriate degree of resistance. If the technique is not properly executed, fatigue sets in quickly, resulting in a loss of sonic brilliance.

The initial stage of mastering the palm-bounce technique involves isolating finger movements, followed by the integration of rhythmic motion at the wrist. This process demands heightened awareness of bodily sensations and continuous adjustment. The effectiveness of this passage depends not only on technical accuracy but also on the performer's ability to facilitate the flow of energy, avoiding excessive muscular tension that could compromise both the sound quality and the vivid, caricatural expressiveness of the scene. As is often the case in

Musorgskij's work, the composer does not limit himself to the mere depiction of a scene; rather, he animates it for both performer and listener.

We are thus thrust into a musical environment that becomes a theatrical stage at the bustling heart of the marketplace—an energetic, exuberant scene that transcends visual representation. Musorgskij enlivens it through a corporeal dialogue of timbres, gestures, and dynamics. Set within a ternary scherzo form (ABA′) with introduction and coda, the composer transforms the women's chatter into embodied movement, assigning the performer's hands and wrists the task of evoking high-pitched voices, stylized sudden gestures, silences, and abrupt resumptions. In section A, the articulation is highly detailed: dynamics fluctuate between *mezzo forte* and *fortissimo*, while sixteenth notes alternate between staccato and legato in variable groupings. The resulting rhythms evoke the stammering, accusations, whispers, and laughter of the women.

Section B, tonally unstable between E♭ and D major, heightens the sense of confusion through shifting chromatic modules, as the hands pursue each other in overlapping exchanges that recall a theatrical quarrel. The climax arrives in unison and *fortissimo*, a muscular sonic block that marks the argumentative peak.

The return of the A′ section concludes with a suspended dominant chord, repeated an uncertain gesture, as if someone has suddenly stopped speaking. Without pause, the coda begins: less animated but still capricious, with increasingly shorter note values and a hammered texture, as if the women were hurriedly closing their stalls and shouting while fleeing the marketplace.

The listener, enveloped in this sonic instability, perceives the rush of adrenaline, the accelerated heartbeat, the frantic motion.

2. 9. Catcombae (sepulcrum romanum) - cum mortuis in lingua mortua

Following the corporeal and pulsating frenzy of *Limoges*, the entry into *Catacombae – cum mortuis in lingua mortua* marks an abrupt sensory and motor rupture: the body is arrested, stiffened, as if seized by a sudden gust of icy wind.

The musical contrast is both perceptual and physical: we move from the vibrant chatter of the marketplace to a spectral landscape, where the piano's raw percussiveness immediately ushers us into a world of stone, silence, and death. The static chords, laden with fermatas and heavy silences, strike the listener's body like blows, each sound a weighted drop, each chord a footstep echoing through a damp, ancient void. The

percussive quality evokes the sound of displaced stones, disturbed tombs, and distant echoes and each pause is a suspended breath. The second part introduces a profound internal shift: the atmosphere becomes more intimate, rarefied, and physically unsettling. Tension transfers to the right hand, which must produce a faint, tightly controlled *tremolo*, almost imperceptible, yet pulsing like a hidden heartbeat. The thumb-fifth finger alternation becomes an exercise in fine motor control, in micro-movement, where every involved muscle is reduced to the bare minimum required to sustain the vibration. This tremolo is a subtle presence, akin to the dim glow of the lantern that, in the symbolic narrative of Hartmann's painting, he carries with him through the darkness of death. Meanwhile, the left hand advances cautiously, with symmetrical, measured notes that evoke slow and uncertain footsteps—bodily gestures of restraint, as one might adopt when entering a sacred or unfamiliar space.

At this point, the *Promenade* theme re-emerges, but it is stripped of its usual rhythmic framework, suspended in a dilated, timeless atmosphere. It now evokes an inner journey rather than a physical one. The entire body of the performer must follow this transformation, wherein the use of the *una corda* pedal is essential: it alters the timbre, muffles the sound, enveloping it like a sonic mist, contributing to the sense of contact with the beyond. In this fusion of sonic material and bodily gesture, the music comes to embody death itself.

The movement concludes with a shift to the major mode which, though subtle, conveys a faint impulse of hope, as if death were traversed by a distant yet tangible light. It is the body of the visitor, now profoundly transformed, that carries this light within, preparing to emerge from the darkness of the catacombs with newfound awareness.

2. 10. Baba Yaga

The penultimate movement, *The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga)*, projects both listener and performer into a sonic vortex of malevolence and chaos. Inspired by a pencil sketch by Hartmann for a decorative clock in Russian style depicting the witch Baba-Yaga, Musorgskij departs radically from the object's static nature (as he had done in *Gnomus*) to animate the monstrous figure that inhabits it: a mythological creature who moves about in a hut perched on chicken legs. To bring this image to life, the composer employs doubled, tripled, and quadrupled unisons, percussive effects, dissonant harmonies, and an irregular rhythmic structure that alternates strong and weak accents in constant tension.

The opening, marked *fortissimo*, immediately introduces the scene's ferocity with devastating physical impact, where the musical gesture becomes fully incarnated. The right-hand tremolo, evocative of the witch's sinister mutterings during her incantations, is this time fully notated and must be executed with precision yet extreme lightness, conjuring the dark and insidious aura of the protagonist. This is not an oppressive sound, but a malevolent whisper: the performer must maintain a relaxed wrist, relying on the delicate interplay of thumb and pinky to construct this unsettling texture.

The sonic imagery grows increasingly frenzied, culminating in a terrifying climax that reaches its apex with a *fortissimo* followed by a hammered *sforzato* on octaves, almost representing the moment in which Baba-Yaga revels in the success of her malicious intentions. The final section, a sudden return of the opening material, does not introduce new thematic elements, as though the witch, in her cyclical reappearance, remains unchanged in her violence, leaving the listener with an embodied, lingering sense of danger, disorder, and unrestrained fury that permeates the entire piece.

The technical demands on the pianist are extreme, particularly in the palm-executed octaves, which must be played with both power and precision. These gestures require not muscular rigidity, but a fully conscious physical engagement, strength grounded in bodily awareness rather than force.

2. 11. The great gate of Kiev

The tumultuous conclusion of the preceding movement flows seamlessly into the final piece, *The Great Gate of Kiev*, in which Musorgskij triumphantly celebrates the Russian national spirit and pays homage to the memory of his friend Hartmann. The architectural design that inspired the piece, envisioned as a monumental city gate crowned with a church, was intended to replace the ancient wooden gates of the city of Kiev, embodying ideals of grandeur, strength, and sacredness.

The movement opens with massive chords that evoke the solidity of stone and a sense of monumental stability. Each attack physically recalls the force required to carve sound into space, as though the pianist were actively participating in the architectural construction of the gate itself. Although the *alla breve* indication suggests a binary metric division, some performers opt for a slower tempo, interpreting it in four to enhance the sense of grandeur. However, this approach risks transforming solemnity into stasis. An *embodied* approach instead suggests a two-beat measure that preserves rhythmic flow and vitality without compromising

ceremonial impact. The kinetic energy is thus contained within a broad yet fluid gesture, allowing for sustained and controlled bodily tension.

The tolling of bells, evoked through regular strokes and harmonic resonances, amplifies the sacred atmosphere, while the principal theme, inspired by a Russian Orthodox hymn, introduces an element of inner devotion that transfigures the musical experience into an embodied prayer. The final appearance of the *Promenade*, seamlessly integrated into the heart of the movement, seals the journey of the exhibition's visitor, now transformed by the sonic and spiritual voyage undertaken through the suite.

Thus, in an explosion of sound and meaning, *The Great Gate of Kiev* concludes with a visionary depiction of a heroic and immortal Russia.

Conclusion

The analysis of *Pictures at an Exhibition* through the lens of kinaesthetic imagery reveals that Musorgskij does not merely offer a pictorial translation into music, but rather constructs a deeply embodied and multisensory experience. The composition functions as a device that—through specific musical affordances such as percussive textures, nuanced dynamics, and complex rhythmic patterns—elicits in the listener an internalized perception of movement and space. In this sense, listening becomes an active and participatory process, in which the body, though physically still, responds implicitly to the motor stimuli evoked by the music.

This embodied dimension of musical experience serves as a bridge between the composer's creative subjectivity and the listener's perceptual engagement, producing a form of sensory sharing that transcends mere visual or narrative representation. The listener is not positioned as an external observer but is drawn into a full corporeal and cognitive traversal of the imagined space, where movement and spatial perception are internalized as foundational components of aesthetic experience.

In conclusion, *Pictures at an Exhibition* stands as an exemplary paradigm of musical ekphrasis that extends beyond iconic evocation, articulating itself as a form of embodied communication. Musorgskij succeeds in translating lived experience into sound, transforming it into a perceptual journey that engages motor memory, emotion, and imagination. The work thus emerges not merely as an artistic transposition but as a process of sensori-motor mediation, in which music plays an active role in shaping an integrated and multisensory aesthetic experience.

Such an approach contributes to a broader understanding of the expressive potential of musical ekphrasis and of the ways in which music can embody and convey complex perceptual and emotional experiences.

Bibliography

Battistini, Andrea. "Denotazione, metafora e connotazione tra ekphrasis e mélophrasis." *Musica Docta* 10, pp. 65–75. 2020.

Bruhn, Siglind. "A Concert of Paintings: 'Musical Ekphrasis' in the Twentieth Century." *Poetics Today* 22, no. 3, pp. 551–605. 2001.

Dahlhaus, Carl. *The Idea of Absolute Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1991

Dayan, Peter. *Music Writing Literature: From Sand via Debussy to Derrida*. London: Routledge. 2017

Gibson, James Jerome. *The ecological approach to visual perception: classic edition*. New York: Psychology press, 2014.

Godøy, Rolf Inge. *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*. New York: Routledge, 2010

Grahn, Jessica Adrienne, and Brett, Matthew. "Rhythm and Beat Perception in Motor Areas of the Brain." *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 19, no. 5, pp. 893–906. 2007

Haueisen, Jens, and Thomas R. Knösche. "Involuntary Motor Activity in Pianists Evoked by Music Perception." *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 13, no. 6 pp. 786–792. 2001

Heffernan, James A. *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2004

Kim Jin Hyun, *Kinaesthetic Musical Imagery Underlying Music Cognition*, in *Music and Mental Imagery*, Routledge, pp. 54-63. 2022.

Kramer, Lawrence. *The Thought of Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2016

Krueger, Joel. "Affordances and the Musically Extended Mind." *Frontiers in Psychology* 5: 1093. 2014.

Krueger, Joel. "Doing Things with Music." *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 10, no. 1, pp. 1–22. 2011

Leman, Marc. *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

Menin, David, and Andrea Schiavio. "Rethinking Musical Affordances." *AVANT* 3, no. 2, pp. 202–215. 2012.

Montagu-Nathan, Montagu. "New Light on Musorgskij's 'Pictures'." *The Monthly Musical Record*, XLVIII. 106 May 1917.

Müllensiefen Daniel, Gingras Bruno, Musil Jason, Stewart Lauren. "The Musicality of Non-Musicians: An Index for Assessing Musical Sophistication in the General Population." *PLoS ONE* 9, 2, e89642, 2014, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0089642.

Nanay, Bence. “Multimodal mental imagery”, *Cortex*, Aug,105, pp.125-134. doi: 10.1016/j.cortex.2017.07.006. 2018

Reybrouck, Mark. “Musical sense-making and the concept of affordance: an ecosemiotic and experiential approach”, *Biosemiotics*, 5, 3, pp. 391-409. 2012.

Russ, Michael. “Returning to the Exhibition: Musorgskij’s Pictures Reconsidered.” *Music in Art*, 39.1-2, pp. 215-236. 2014

Zatorre, Robert J., Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia Penhune. “When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory–Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production.” *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8, no. 7, pp. 547–558. 2007.

Musica Academica
Volume 2. Issue 1 (2025): 103-119
DOI: 10.61215/MA.2025.vol.2.iss.1.05

TRACING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHENKERIAN STUDIES IN JAPAN: A CHRONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS FROM INTRODUCTION TO EXPANSION

PENG ZIXUAN

Academic Research Coordinator at Okayama University (Japan)[138]
PhD, Kyushu University, Graduate School of Design[139]
pzx621@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examines the development of Schenkerian studies in Japan through a chronological analysis, tracing its introduction to the present. It explores the initial reception, key figures in its dissemination, major scholarly contributions, and periods of heightened research activity. Through comprehensive literature review of major Japanese academic databases, four distinct developmental stages are identified: initial exposure (1920s–1930s), characterized by brief mentions in translated works and academic publications; growing references (1940s–1950s), marked by increased citations in music periodicals; increasing academic engagement (1960s–1980s), evidenced by the emergence of university research bulletins and the first conference presentations focused on examinations of Schenkerian concepts; and expansion and diversification (1990s–present), distinguished by growth in publications of Schenkerian research and translation of Schenker's works. Furthermore, the analysis revealed a distinctive characteristic: the spreading of Schenkerian theory in Japan has been closely linked to Beethoven studies. This connection is evident in multiple sources, including Tamura's 1924 publication, Futami Kohei's 1948 article, and a series of Japanese translations and studies of Schenker's analyses of Beethoven's works (2000, 2010, 2012, etc.). The Beethoven connection suggests a bidirectional relationship: Japanese scholars employed his works as familiar entry points through which Schenker's complex theoretical concepts could be made more accessible to local audiences. Conversely, the adoption of Schenkerian methods has enriched Japanese Beethoven scholarship by providing a rigorous analytical framework that yields deeper insights into

[138] 1 Chome-1-1 Tsushimanaka, Kita Ward, Okayama, 700-8530, Japan
[139] 4-9-1 Shiobaru, Minamiku, Fukuoka, 815-8540, JAPAN

Beethoven's compositional structure and technique. Further research will examine additional sources and contexts to deepen the understanding of this interrelation.

Keywords
Heinrich Schenker, Schenkerian studies in Japan, Dissemination and reception of Schenkerian theory, Chronological analysis, Beethoven connection

Introduction

This study examines the development of Schenkerian studies in Japan through chronological analysis, focusing on its initial introduction, key disseminators, significant contributions, and periods of increased research activity.

In the context of this study, the term "Schenkerian studies" refers broadly to research related to the work of Austrian theorist Heinrich Schenker. While encompassing historical perspectives, pedagogical approaches, and other areas, the core of Schenkerian studies lies in Schenkerian theory itself. Pioneered by Schenker, this theoretical framework offers a systematic method for analyzing tonal music by uncovering its underlying hierarchical structure—that is, how musical events unfold from foreground to background. Much like an architect perceives the structural framework beneath a building's surface, Schenkerian analysis reveals how diverse musical elements interact across multiple structural levels to create coherent works. Initially developed in German-speaking countries in the early 20th century, Schenkerian studies were largely disseminated through the work of European émigré scholars in the United States, particularly during the political upheavals of the 1930s in Germany. This transatlantic transmission established the field as a prominent force within English-speaking music-theoretical circles, especially in North America. With the increasing enrichment of academic contributions, it achieved global recognition, expanding its research scope and theoretical influence.

While the field has remained highly influential in English-language scholarship and has gained more traction in German-speaking regions, its reception elsewhere varies widely. In particular, engagement with the field in other linguistic and geographical settings—such as some French-speaking regions and non-Western settings like Japan—shows comparatively less engagement. The reasons for this disparity, whether due to limited documentation or the complex interplay of cultural and academic factors, have yet to be fully clarified. To better understand the field's global reach, further investigation is needed into the reception and development of Schenkerian studies in these lesser-documented contexts. This research explores the development of Schenkerian studies in Japan

to provide a broader understanding of its evolution and reception.

Based on observations, the past two decades have seen Schenkerian theory establish a presence in Japanese music scholarship, albeit not yet widespread. This is evidenced by the availability of translations, academic publications, research programs, the emergence of a scholarly community, and its inclusion in some university music theory curricula (e.g., Tokyo University of the Arts, Kyushu University, Tamagawa University, etc.).

Regarding academic publications, Japanese scholars have engaged with Schenkerian studies from various perspectives, ranging from aesthetic analyses of Schenker's musical philosophy (e.g., Kimura, 2003; Nishida, 2009; Wada, 2009), to studies on its pedagogical implications (e.g., Hayakawa, 2015, 2016), and research on analytical methodologies (e.g., Mikami, 2016; Narimiya, 2023). These academic activities demonstrate the establishment of this field in Japan. Nevertheless, the current literature lacks a detailed analysis of Schenkerian studies in Japan, including the historical development, current state, and future directions, highlighting the need for further research. For example, several important questions remain unanswered:

- When and how was Schenkerian theory first introduced to Japan?
- Who were the key individuals or institutions involved in its dissemination?
- What significant milestones and academic achievements shaped its development?
- During which periods did research activity increase?

The limited existing scholarship on these questions motivates this study.

This study employed a comprehensive literature review methodology, examining major Japanese academic databases—including CiNii Research[140], J-STAGE[141], NDL Digital Collections (National Diet

[140] CiNii Research. National Institute of Informatics, https://cir.nii.ac.jp/articles (The final viewed date for all citation links in this study is June 28, 2025.)

"CiNii Research (Discovery Platform)." National Institute of Informatics, https://rcos.nii.ac.jp/en/service/research/

"CiNii - About CiNii." NII Support. National Institute of Informatics, https://support.nii.ac.jp/en

[141] J-STAGE. Japan Science and Technology Agency, https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/

"J-STAGE Data." Registry of Research Data Repositories, https://www.re3data.org/repository/r3d100013677

Library Digital Collections)[142], NDL Search (National Diet LibrarySearch)[143],and KAKENHI (Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research)[144]—using keywords related to Schenker, such as ハインリヒ・シェンカー (Heinrich Schenker), H. シェンカー (H. Schenker), シェンカー (Schenker), and シェンケリアン／シェンカリアン (Schenkerian). The review encompassed a wide range of sources relevant to the dissemination of Schenkerian studies in Japan, including I. Translated Works, II. Scholarly Publications, III. Non-scholarly Publications (see Table no. 1).

I. Translated Works	This category encompasses books and significant texts translated from other languages into Japanese, including translations of Schenker's original writings as well as works by other Schenkerian scholars. These translations play a crucial role in the dissemination of Schenkerian theory within the Japanese academic community.
II. Scholarly Publications	This category consists of original peer-reviewed publications issued by academic institutions, professional societies, or scholarly associations. It contains monographs, book chapters or sections, doctoral dissertations, research bulletins, journal articles (articles in peer-reviewed journals), conference proceedings, and research findings reports. These scholarly outputs form the core of academic discourse on Schenkerian theory in Japan.
III. Non-scholarly Publications	This category comprises publications issued by arts and cultural organizations and music-related corporations. It includes magazines and other periodicals that feature articles, interviews, news, and reviews related to music. While these publications cater to a general audience rather than strictly academic researchers, they provide valuable insights into the broader reception and understanding of Schenkerian theory in Japan.

Table no. 1 – Data Categories

Through this analysis, four distinct stages in the spread of Schenkerian studies in Japan are identified, each characterized by specific

---

142 National Diet Library Digital Collections. National Diet Library, https://dl.ndl.go.jp/en/
"National Diet Library Digital Collections." University of Tokyo Library System, https://www.lib.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/library/contents/database/328

143 "National Diet Library (NDL)." University College Cork, https://libguides.ucc.ie/ndl.
"Free Data Service." National Diet Library, https://www.ndl.go.jp/en/dlib/standards/opendataset/index.html
National Diet Library Search. National Diet Library, https://ndlsearch.ndl.go.jp/en/
"NDL Search." Kyushu University Library, https://www.lib.kyushu-u.ac.jp/en/databases/ndlsearch

144 "KAKEN: Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research." National Institute of Informatics, https://kaken.nii.ac.jp/en/index/.

scholarly contributions, key figures, and institutional developments that shaped its progression.

1. Initial Exposure (1920s–1930s)

The investigation indicates that the introduction of Schenkerian theory to Japan dates back to the 1920s, primarily through books that introduced or translated Western music theory. References to Schenker's ideas during this period were rare and typically appeared in footnotes, bibliographies, or brief citations within broader musical discussions. Terms such as 'Heinrich Schenker,' 'H. Schenker,' or 'Schenkerian theory' both in Japanese and German or English sporadically appeared in such publications. While these mentions were limited and not detailed, they mark the first recorded mentions of Schenkerian thought in Japanese scholarship.

One of the earliest recorded mentions of Schenker's work in Japanese academic literature can be traced to Tamura Hirosada's (1924) book (pages II–IX)[145] on *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (ベートヴェンの「第九ジュムフォニー」), published to commemorate the symphony's first performance in Ueno, Japan, on November 29, 1924, and to honor the musicians involved.

In this publication, Tamura referenced numerous musicological works on Beethoven and his Ninth Symphony, including Schenker's (1912) analysis of *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (*Beethovens Neunte Sinfonie*), which is listed in the bibliography on page II. Tamura's writing, particularly between pages IV and IX, demonstrates a basic understanding of Schenker's analytical approach. Tamura critically engages with Schenker's ideas, recognizing his contributions while also addressing certain disagreements and uncertainties. However, Tamura's analysis primarily focuses on the symphony's structural aspects rather than providing an exhaustive explanation of Schenker's theory. Nevertheless, it is remarkable for reflecting his ability to critically engage with Schenker's original German texts. To fully assess his familiarity with the Schenkerian method, further examination of his work or additional historical sources would be required

Another early document stems from Yamane Ginji's Japanese

[145] In this study, Japanese names are presented in the traditional order of family name followed by given name (e.g., Tamura Hirosada). This contrasts with the Western convention of given name before family name. The traditional Japanese name order has been maintained to respect cultural norms and to ensure consistency when referring to Japanese scholars and sources. For bibliographic clarity, Japanese authors are introduced with their full names upon first citation, with subsequent references following standard citation formats.

translation (*和声学・第1巻*, 1929) of Arnold Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony* (*Harmonielehre, Volume 1*, 1911). In a footnote (p. 231), Schoenberg briefly mentions Schenker's ideas on bass line progression and cites Schenker's *New Musical Theories and Fantasies* (*Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien*, 1906–1935), noting that similar concepts were used in their teaching. However, this reference was limited to terminology rather than providing any substantial explanation of Schenker's methods.

In the 1930s, references to Schenker continued to appear in books translating or introducing foreign music theory, although they were still relatively uncommon. These works mostly just briefly cited or made mention of Schenker's name and works, without going into detail.

Examples of translated publications referencing Schenker include Sato Eiji's translation (*音楽大系第6：ピアノの技巧 音楽的芸術作品の精神から説くピアノ弾奏の技巧*, 1934: 30, 135, 178) of Kurt Schubert's *The Technique of Piano Playing from the Spirit of the Musical Masterpiece* (*Die Technik des Klavierspiels aus dem Geiste des musikalischen Kunstwerkes*, 1931) and Katayama Toshihiko's translation (*ベートーヴェンの生涯*, 1938) of Romain Rolland's *The Life of Beethoven* (*Vie de Beethoven*, 1903), both references Schenker's name in (frame 111).

Beyond translated publications, Schenker was also referenced in original works edited by Japanese academic institutions. For instance, *he Science of Life and Mind: Series Vol. 7* (*生活と精神の科学：叢書 第7巻*,1935: 86, 246), co-edited by the Psychology Laboratory at Tohoku Imperial University, contains references to Schenker. Additionally, the the *Catalogue of the Kyushu Imperial University Library 1933–1935* (1937: 35) lists Schenker's complete edition of Beethoven's piano sonatas in its section on Beethoven-related catalog.

2. Growing References (1940s–1950s)

In the 1940s, the reception of Schenker's theory in Japan expanded with the rise of music periodicals, especially magazines. Notable among these were *Ongaku no Tomo* (*音楽の友/Friend of Music*, 1941–), *Philharmony* (*フィルハーモニー*, 1946–), *Ongaku Geijutsu* (*音樂藝術・音楽芸術/Music Arts*, 1946–1998).[146] While a few articles included more concrete references to Schenker, most still offered only brief mentions or citations.

[146] These magazines featured articles mentioning Schenker and his theories. For example, *Ongaku no Tomo*: 1953 (Mar, Sep); 1955 (Mar); 1956 (Jan), *Philharmony*: 1948 (Mar); 1952 (Mar); 1953 (Dec); 1954 (May); 1955 (Oct), *Ongaku Geijutsu*: 1948 (Jan); 1952 (May); 1954 (Jan); 1955 (Aug); 1956 (Jan).

The earliest magazine reference to 'Schenker' appears in Futami Kohei's article "Beethoven Literature" (ベートーヴェン文献) in *Ongaku Geijutsu* (Vol. 6, Issue 1, January 1948: 59–77). Although available information online indicates that the article cites Tamura's 1924 book, its full content remains inaccessible as the magazine can only be viewed on-site at the National Diet Library.

Another early magazine reference appears in Nomura Yoshio's article "On the Interpretation of Beethoven's Missa Solemnis" (ベートーヴェンのミサ・ソレムニスの解釋について) in *Philharmony* (Vol. 20, Issue 3, March 1948: 3). Nomura positions Schenker alongside August Halm and Ernst Kurth as a master of contemporary music aesthetics, emphasizing Schenker's distinctive analytical method, which uncovers deeper compositional elements such as tension and release.

Along with magazines, mentions of Schenker continue to appear consistently in books. For example, original works include Sakka Keisei's *Beethoven's Life* (*ベートーヴェンの生涯*, 1942: 544) and Nagahiro Toshio's *Music Theory Notes* (*音楽論ノート*, 1947: 70, 122).

During the 1950s, music magazines increasingly featured articles mentioning or introducing Schenker and his theories, serving as essential platforms for spreading Schenkerian thought in Japan. Within these articles, it is subtly apparent that Schenker's contributions to music analysis and aesthetics were gaining recognition and being discussed alongside influential theorists like Halm. However, these discussions remained limited and did not permeate mainstream academic discourse.

Give specific examples, Tanimura Akira's article "On Several Key Concepts in Mersmann's Music Aesthetics" (メルスマンの音樂美學に於ける若干の主要概念について) in *Philharmony* (Vol. 25, Issue 3, March 1953: 38, 39, 44). In this article, Tanimura positions Schenker alongside Halm, Kurth, and Mersmann as key contributors to early 20th-century energetic theory in music aesthetics, while acknowledging their distinct approaches. Similarly, in the book *Musical Aesthetics* (*音楽美学*, 1953: 38, 47, 88) written by Nomura Yoshio, Schenker is recognized as a pioneer in music aesthetics alongside Halm. This reflects the growing acknowledgment among Japanese scholars of Schenker's influence on contemporary approaches to music aesthetics.

Additional references to Schenker appear in both original and translated books, such as Irino Yoshiro and Shibata Minao's original work *Chronology of Music History* (*音楽史年表*, 1954: 268); Kakeyi Junji's translation (*ベートーヴェン：生涯–作品とその特質*, 1955: 11, 17, 22, 26, 32, 36, 71) of Walter Riezler's *Beethoven: With an Introduction by*

Wilhelm Furtwängler (1951), Tsuji Shoichi and Yamane's translation (*バッハ[上]*, 1955) of Albert Schweitzer's *J.S. Bach: Volume 1* (1905). In these instances, however, Schenker's presence remains relatively inconspicuous, appearing mainly in bibliographies or through brief mentions rather than as a central focus of discussion.

3. Increasing Academic Engagement and In-depth Studies (1960s–1980s)

In the 1960s, mentions of Schenker's theory began appearing in university research bulletins. The earliest examples can be found in publications by Musashino Academia Musicae. Munakata Kei's (Dec 1962: 32, 35) article "Transformation of Coordinate System in New Music" (新音楽における座標系の変換) cited Schenker's concepts of hierarchical structure and tonal balance, briefly noting his ideas on voice-leading and harmony. In his other article (March 1964) "Methodological Examination on Analysis of Music Form" (音楽形式解析の方法論的考察), provides a more detailed treatment of Schenkerian theory. In discussing new perspectives on form analysis, Munakata examines key Schenkerian concepts including the Ursatz, hierarchical layers, voice-leading, and tonal coherence. While these article references to Schenker's approach support typically broader discussions rather than offering focused analysis, they indicate a growing recognition of his contributions.

During the 1970s, university research bulletins featured an increasing number of articles that referenced Schenker's theory. Although limited, this growing presence in publications signaled a gradual spread of his theories within Japanese academia. Examples include Kawahara Hiroshi (1972: 135) and Harada Hiroshi (1972: 146, 150) in Hiroshima University's bulletins, as well as Shina Masami (1978: 54) in Fukushima University's bulletins.

Furthermore, in the 1970s, translations of Schenker's works started to emerge, most notably in 1979. That year, Noguchi Aiko and Tamemoto Akiko published a Japanese translation (*ハイドンの装飾音：シェンカーの提言からの展開*) of *A Contribution to the Study of Ornamentation* (*Ein Beitrag zur Ornamentik*, 1908), introducing Schenker's insights on ornamentation in tonal music. In the same year, Tamemoto also translated Schenker's editorial work on Ph.E. Bach's *Klavierwerke* I and II (1903). These translations primarily focused on his early analytical work on classical compositions rather than his major theoretical writings (e.g. *Harmony* 1906; *Counterpoint* 1910, 1922; *Free Composition*, 1935). However, their publication has the potential to pave the way for greater accessibility of Schenker's theories among Japanese scholars and

increased academic engagement.

In the 1980s, academic research focusing on Schenker's theory emerged. Hashimoto Hitoshi's 1987 conference presentation, "Considerations on the Fundamental Concepts of Schenkerian Theory" (シェンカー学説の基礎的概念に関する考察), presented at the Japanese Society for Aesthetics, examined key Schenkerian principles (). In his analysis, Hashimoto critically addressed concerns such as the perceived arbitrariness of the Ursatz and the lack of a sufficiently articulated analytical methodology.

An additional point is that from the 1960s through the 1980s, references to Schenker's theory still appear many times in Japanese music magazines. Coverage appeared in *Ongaku no Tomo* (1966, Oct), *Ongaku Geijutsu* (1967, Mar; 1972, Apr; 1977, Nov), *Philharmony* (1970, Apr), and *Musica Nova* (ムジカノーヴァ, 1970–) (1973, Nov; 1976, Dec; 1980, Jun; 1987, Oct).

4. Expansion and Diversification (1990s–present)

From the 1990s onward, Schenker-related research began appearing in Japan almost annually, reflecting the growing prominence of Schenkerian theory in Japanese music scholarship. This trend is particularly evident in the notable rise in academic papers, both in peer-reviewed journals and university publications, even though the overall volume of research remained modest. Examples include Hashimoto Hitoshi's (1994) paper "Schenker's Music Theory as A Theory of Auditory Style: Overcoming the Opposition Between Subject and Object" (聴覚様式論としてのシェンカー音楽論) published in *Jinbun Ronkyu*: The journal of the Literary Association of Kwansei Gakuin University, and Kimura Naohiro's (1995) paper "The Utility of Musical Analysis: Around Adorno's Understanding of Schenker" (音楽分析の効用：アドルノのシェンカー理解をめぐって) published in *Aesthetics Review*: Aesthetics and Arts Society of Kwansei Gakuin University.

The growing recognition of Schenker-related research is also reflected in its inclusion in a wider range of Japanese musicological writings. For instance, some books on Western music now include chapters on Schenker. A notable example is the 1997 book, *Symphony of Spirit and Music: The Flow of Western Music Aesthetics* (*精神と音楽の交響：西洋音楽美学の流れ*), which includes a chapter by Shidehara Imamichi titled 'Living Music Theory: Schenker's Musicology in Free Composition' (生の音楽理論：シェンカーの『自由作法』における音楽論). This chapter examines the fundamental worldview underpinning

Schenker's theoretical framework (p. 328).

Moreover, since the 1990s, the emergence of funded research projects related to Schenkerian studies further reflects the field's gradual expansion into richer and more varied forms of scholarship in Japan. One of the earliest examples is Naohiro Kimura's (1999–2000) project, "A Historical Study of Musical Thought on 'Klangfarbenmelodie (Tone Color Melody)' in the 20th Century: 'Color' and 'Line' as Topos" (20世紀における「音色旋律」の音楽思想史的研究：トポスとしての「色」と「線」), funded by JSPS KAKENHI Grants-in-Aid.

The 2000s saw a significant expansion and diversification of Schenkerian studies in Japan, reflected in a broader range of topics, approaches, and publication types. This period witnessed not only an increase in translations of Schenker's major works but also the emergence of doctoral dissertations, journal articles, and research reports.

Among the translated works, several major contributions stand out. One is Noguchi Takeo's Japanese translation (*ベートーヴェン：第5交響曲の分析*, 2000) of Schenker's *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* (*Beethovens Fünfte Sinfonie*, 1925), which marked the first Japanese translation of Schenker's symphonic analysis and facilitated deeper engagement with his structural approach to symphonic works. The other is Nishida Hiroko's (2009) doctoral dissertation, *Reconstructing the Image of Heinrich Schenker: Hermeneutics, Narratology, and Melodic Theory* (*ハインリヒ・シェンカー像の再構築：解釈学，物語論，旋律論*), published by Tokyo University of the Arts, which is the first doctoral dissertation in Japan to examine Schenker's theories in depth. In addition, there has been a proliferation of publications in research findings reports, conference proceedings, and academic papers. Instead of mentioning Schenker and his theories in a limited way, as in the early periods, these publications discuss it as a central focus.

The 2010s to the present have seen two major developments. The first was the incremental translation activity of Schenker's works (see Table no. 2). In particular, Schenker's interpretations of Beethoven's piano sonatas were translated and published by different scholars in various years.

Publication Year	Bibliography of Translated Works in Original Language	English Translation (If there is no English title, the translation by the present authors is added, as indicated with
2018	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 窪田亘弘, 高木義之 [訳], 野口剛夫 [監訳・解説] 2018『ハインリヒ・シェンカーの言葉』東京：音と言葉社	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Kubota Nobuhiro, Takagi Yoshiyuki (Trans.) & Noguchi Takeo (Supervising Trans. and Commentary). 2018. *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik: ein Jahrbuch(1925–30)*. Tokyo: Oto to Kotoba Sha.
2015	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 西田紘子, 堀朋平 [訳] 2015『ベートーヴェンのピアノ・ソナタ第28番 op.101 批判校訂版：分析・演奏・文献』東京：音楽之友社	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Nishida Hiroko, & Hori Tomohei (Trans.). 2015. *Die letzen Fünf Sonaten von Beethoven: Kritische Ausgabe mit Einführung und Erläuterung von Heinrich Schenker Sonate E dur Op.109*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2015	アンリ・ゴナール[著], 藤田茂 [訳] 2015「シェンカーの理論とシェーンベルクの理論」『調性音楽を読む本：理論・方法・分析から』 95–99, 東京：音楽之友社	Henri Gonnard (Author), Fujita Shigeru (Trans.). 2015. "Schenker's and Schoenberg's Theories (Translated by the authors)," *Introduction à La Musique Tonale : Perspectives Théoriques, Méthodologiques, et Analytiques*, 95–99. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2014	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 山田三香, 西田紘子, 沼口隆 [訳] 2014『ベートーヴェンのピアノ・ソナタ第32番 op.111：批判校訂版：分析・演奏・文献』東京：音楽之友社.	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Yamada Mika, Nishida Hiroko, & Numaguchi Takashi (Trans.). 2014. *Die letzten fünf Sonaten von Beethoven: Kritische Ausgabe mit Einführung und Erläuterung von Heinrich Schenker Sonate c moll Op.111*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2013	アレン・キャドウォーラダー, デイヴィッド・ガニェ[著], 角倉一朗 [訳] 2013『調性音楽のシェンカー分析』東京：音楽之友社	Allen Cadwallader & David Gagné (Author), Sumikura Ichiro (Trans.). 2013. *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2013	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 山田三香, 西田紘子, 沼口隆 [訳] 2013『ベートーヴェンのピアノ・ソナタ第31番 op.110 批判校訂版：分析・演奏・文献』東京：音楽之友社.	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Yamada Mika, Nishida Hiroko, & Numaguchi Takashi (Trans.). 2013. *Die letzten fünf Sonaten von Beethoven: Kritische Ausgabe mit Einführung und Erläuterung von Heinrich Schenker Sonate As dur Op.110*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2012	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 山田三香, 西田紘子, 沼口隆 [訳] 2012『ベートーヴェンのピアノ・ソナタ第30番 op.109 批判校訂版：分析・演奏・文献』東京：音楽之友社.	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Yamada Mikako, Nishida Hiroko, & Numaguchi Takeshi (Trans.). 2012. *Die letzen Fünf Sonaten von Beethoven: Kritische Ausgabe mit Einführung und Erläuterung von Heinrich Schenker Sonate E dur Op.109*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2010	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 西田紘子, 沼口隆 [訳] 2010『ベートーヴェンの第9交響曲：分析・演奏・文献』東京：音楽之友社	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Nishida Hiroko, & Numaguchi Takeshi (Trans.). 2010. *Beethovens Neunte Sinfonie*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
2000	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 野口剛夫 [訳] 2000『ベートーヴェン：第5交響曲の分析』東京：音楽之友社	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Noguchi Takeo (Trans.). 2000. *Beethovens fünfte Sinfonie*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
1979	Ph.E. バッハ[著], ハインリヒ・シェンカー[編], 為本章子 [訳] 1979『クラヴィーア曲集Ⅰ Ⅱ』東京：音楽之友社	Ph.E. Bach (Music), Heinrich Schenker (Ed.), Tamemoto Akiko (Trans.). 1979. *Klavierwerke I & II*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.
1979	ハインリヒ・シェンカー[著], 野口愛子, 為本章子 [訳] 1979『古典ピアノ装飾音奏法』東京：音楽之友社	Heinrich Schenker (Author), Noguchi Aiko, & Tamemoto Akiko (Trans.). 1979. *Ein Beitrag zur Ornamentik*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha.

Table no. 2 – Translated Works on Schenkerian Studies

Another notable example is the publication of a translation guide to Schenkerian analysis in 2013: Sumikura Ichiro's translation (*調性音楽のシェンカー分析*, 2013) of Cadwallader and Gagné's *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*. Previously, there had been no detailed and systematic translations introducing Schenkerian analysis. The appearance of this translation was potentially instrumental in integrating Schenkerian analysis into Japanese music education and in applying pedagogical resources for this analytical method.

Subsequently, in 2018, Kubota Nobuhiro, Takagi Yoshiyuki, and Noguchi Takeo published a Japanese translation (*ハインリヒ・シェンカーの言葉*) of *The Masterwork in Music* (*Das Meisterwerk in der Musik: Ein Jahrbuch, 1925–1930*), a collection of Schenker's philosophical reflections. As Noguchi notes (pp. 7–8), this translation sought to present Schenker beyond his role as a music analyst, making his ideas accessible to a broader audience, including non-musicians. This publication embodies a crucial

development in the evolution of Schenkerian studies, serving as both a bridge between technical analysis and intellectual discourse and a recognition of the philosophical foundations underlying Schenker's analytical methods.

The second major progression was the release of the first original Japanese monograph on Schenkerian thought by Nishida (2018), titled *Heinrich Schenker's Musical Thought: Beyond Musical Analysis* (*ハインリヒ・シェンカーの音楽思想：楽曲分析を超えて*). This monograph examined Schenker's ideas through multiple lenses—hermeneutic, narratological, and melodic—while situating his theoretical contributions within the history of Western music theory. Through its original interpretations, the work enriched scholarly understanding of Schenker's theoretical foundations.

Summary

Over time, Schenkerian theory in Japan has evolved from a niche topic to a maturating field that garners substantial scholarly engagement, generating an expanding body of academic work. The literature review reveals that Schenkerian theory in Japan progressed through several distinct developmental stages: initial exposure (1920s–1930s), characterized by brief mentions in translated works and academic publications; growing references (1940s–1950s), marked by increased citations in music periodicals; increasing academic engagement (1960s–1980s), evidenced by the emergence of university research bulletins and the first focused examinations of Schenkerian concepts; and expansion and diversification (1990s–present), distinguished by growth in publications of Schenkerian research and translation. This progression demonstrates the gradual establishment of Schenkerian studies as a recognized field within Japanese music scholarship.

By analysis of this process, a noteworthy feature reveals that the dissemination of Schenkerian theory in Japan has been closely tied to Beethoven studies. This connection is evident from the earliest instances: Tamura's (1924) publication referenced Schenker's analysis of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony coinciding with the symphony's first performance in Japan, and the earliest magazine mention of Schenker is found in Futami Kohei's (1948) article "Beethoven Literature" (ベートーヴェン文献). Even as Schenkerian studies in Japan grew more diverse, the connection to Beethoven remained strong, particularly through translations. These include Katayama Toshihiko's (1938) and Kakeyi Junji's (1955) translations of texts on Beethoven that referenced Schenker, as well as direct translations of Schenker's writings on Beethoven.

Examples contain Noguchi Takeo's translation (*ベートーヴェン：第5交響曲の分析*, 2000) of *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* (*Beethovens Fünfte Sinfonie*, 1925) and Nishida and Numaguchi's translation (*ベートーヴェンの第9交響曲：分析・演奏・文献*, 2010) of *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (*Beethovens Neunte Sinfonie*, 1912). From 2012 to 2015, Nishida, Numaguchi, Yamada Mikako, and Hori Tomohei published translations and analyses of Schenker's *Die letzten fünf Sonaten von Beethoven* (*Beethoven's Last Five Piano Sonatas*, 1913–1921), covering Op. 109 (1913), Op. 110 (1914), Op. 111 (1916), and Op. 101 (1921).[147] These translations consistently emphasized Schenkerian analysis of Beethoven's masterworks, with a focus on his symphonies and sonatas.

Not only that, but the Beethoven-Schenker connection appears across various academic formats. In doctoral dissertations, it features in works like Wada Kohei's (2012) *Heinrich Schenker's Thoughts on Piano Performance* (*ハインリヒ・シェンカーのピアノ演奏論*). In research bulletins, Mikami Jiro's (2016) article "A Comprehension of Music through Schenkerian Analysis" (シェンカー分析による楽曲の把握の様相について) examines Schenkerian analytical methods through Beethoven's "Bagatelle Op. 119, No. 1." Research findings reports, such as Nishida's (2011–2012) study "The Genealogy of the Interpretation and Performance of Beethoven's Works in Modern Germany: A Case Study of his Late Piano Sonatas" (近代ドイツにおけるベートーヴェン作品の解釈と演奏の系譜：後期ピアノ・ソナタを例に), further demonstrate this connection.

The consistent Beethoven connection suggests that Japanese scholars used Beethoven's works as a familiar bridge to introduce Schenkerian theory. This approach likely made the complex theory more accessible to Japanese audiences already familiar with Beethoven. On the other hand, the influence of Schenkerian theory on Japanese scholarship can be seen in how it expanded the analytical toolkit for Beethoven studies. By providing an additional methodological framework, Schenkerian analysis enabled Japanese scholars to develop more comprehensive interpretations of Beethoven's works, adding a new dimension to their understanding of his compositional techniques.

To strengthen this analysis, it opens up several important areas for future research:

1) Explicitly stating what this Beethoven-centric reception suggests about Japanese musical scholarship.

[147] In consideration of the inordinate length of the original Japanese titles, they have been omitted here.

2) Analyzing whether this focus on Beethoven has enhanced or potentially limited the development of Schenkerian studies in Japan.

3) Comparing this development pattern with Schenkerian reception in other non-Western contexts.

These research directions would contribute to our understanding of how Schenkerian theory has been adapted and integrated into Japanese musical scholarship and its implications for the global study of Schenkerian theory.

Bibliography

Japanese-Language Works

Apel, Willi. *Historical Anthology of Music*. Translated by Hattori Kozo. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1957.

Badura-Skoda, Eva, and Paul Badura-Skoda. *Mozart-Interpretation (Interpreting Mozart on the Keyboard)*. Translated by Watanabe Mamoru. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1963.

Cooper, G. Wallace, and Leonard B. Meyer. *Rhythmic Structures in Music*. Translated by Tokumaru Yoshihiko. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1968.

Cox, Cathy. "On Schenkerian Theory and the Education of Tonal Music Analysis." *Studies in Art Education Research: Bulletin of Tamagawa University College of Arts* (2017): 49–57.

Fujinaga, Takashi, supervisor, Nobuko Uchida, Kazuo Shigemasu, and Kenji Sugiyama, eds. *The Latest Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2013.

Harada, Hiroshi. "A Study on Ornamentation in 18th Century Music: Focusing on the Appoggiatura." *Bulletin of the Faculty of School Education, Hiroshima University* 4, no. 20 (1972): 145–151.

Hayakawa, Junko. "Music Analysis for Non-music Majors: An Inquiry on Reductive Analysis." *Journal of The Human Development Research, Minamikyushu University* 5 (2015): 63–76.

Hayakawa, Junko. "Musical Analysis for Enhancing Piano Performance: An Attempt by Reductive Analysis." *Bulletin of the National Association of College Music Education* 27 (2016): 11–20.

Irino, Yoshiro, and Minao Shibata. *Chronology of Music History*. Tokyo: Sogensha, 1954.

Iwai, Hiroyuki. "Joseph Haydn's String Quartets (1)." *Bulletin of Musashino Academia Musicae* 1 (1962): 41–68.

Kawahara, Hiroshi. "An Analytical Study among Music Education Studies: The Means of Modulation in Music in the Diatonic Age 2." *Bulletin of the Faculty of School Education, Hiroshima University* 4, no. 20 (1972): 133–144.

Kimura, Naohiro. "Contrapuntal Visions as Aesthetics of Performance (1): On Heinrich Schenker's Theory of Performance." *The Journal of the Clinical*

Research Center for Child Development and Educational Practices, Iwate University Faculty of Education 3 (2004): 13–33.

Kimura, Naohiro. "On the Concept of 'Freedom' in Heinrich Schenker's Music Theory." *The Annual Report of the Faculty of Education at Iwate University* 63 (2004): 29–49.

Kubota, Keiichi. *History of Musical Analysis: From Musica Poetica to Schenkerian Analysis*. Tokyo: Shunju-sha, 2020.

Kubota, Keiichi. "The History of Musical Analysis: From Musica Poetica to Schenkerian Analysis." *Kunitachi College of Music Journal* 55 (2021): 277–281.

Kuniyasu, Yo. "Schenker's Interpretation of Beethoven: In Relation to Contemporary Musical Aesthetics." *Philharmony, NHK Symphony Orchestra* 42, no. 4 (1970): 18–27.

Kyushu Imperial University Library. *Catalogue of the Kyushu Imperial University Library 1933–1935*. Fukuoka: Kyushu Imperial University, 1937.

Mikami, Jiro. "A Comprehension of Music through Schenkerian Analysis." *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education, Nagasaki University* 82, no. 2 (2016): 123–132.

Moser, Hans Joachim. *Musikästhetik (Musical Aesthetics)*. Translated by Hashimoto Seiji. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1965.

Munakata, Kei. "Methodological Examination on Analysis of Music Form." *Bulletin o Musashino Academia Musicae* 2 (1964): 37–67.

Munakata, Kei. "Transformation of Coordinate System in New Music." *Bulletin of Musashino Academia Musicae* 1 (1962): 26–40.

Nagahiro, Toshio. *Music Theory Notes*. Osaka: Zen-Nihon Shobo, 1947.

Narumiya, Hokuto. "Ambiguous Harmony in Brahms Op. 119-1 (2): An Analysis Utilizing Schenkerian Theory." *Bulletin of Musashino Academia Musicae* 54 (2023): 69–91.

Nishida, Hiroko. *Heinrich Schenker's Musical Thought: Beyond Musical Analysis*. Fukuoka: Kyushu University, 2018.

Nishida, Hiroko. Review of *Explorations in Schenkerian Analysis*, edited by David Beach and Su Yin Mak. *ONGAKUGAKU: Journal of the Musicological Society of Japan* 63, no. 2 (2017): 157–158.

Nomura, Yoshio. *History of Music as Intellectual History: Music in European Culture (Musurgia Series)*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1956.

Nomura, Yoshio. *Musical Aesthetics: Ongaku Bunko*. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1953.

Nomura, Yoshio. "On the Interpretation of Beethoven's Missa Solemnis." *Philharmony, Tokyo: NHK Symphony Orchestra* 20, no. 3 (1948).

Numaguchi, Takashi. Review of *Heinrich Schenker's Musical Thought: Beyond Musical Analysis*, by Hiroko Nishida. *Ongakugaku: Journal of the Musicological Society of Japan* 65, no. 1 (2019): 54–55.

Onishi, Hideaki. Review of *Analysis of Tonal Music*, by Allen Cadwallader and David Gagné, translated by Ichiro Sumikura. *ONGAKUGAKU: Journal of the Musicological Society of Japan* 60, no. 1 (2014): 109–111.

Riezler, Walter. *Beethoven: With an Introduction by Wilhelm Furtwängler*. Translated by Kakeyi Junji. Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1955.
Rolland, Romain. *Vie de Beethoven*. Translated by Katayama Toshihiko. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1938.
Sakka, Keisei. *Beethoven's Life*. Tokyo: Sanseido, 1942.
Schönberg, Arnold. *Harmonielehre*, Volume 1. Translated by Yamane Ginji. Tokyo: "Translation for the Reader" Sha, 1929.
Schubert, Kurt. *Die Technik des Klavierspiels aus dem Geiste des musikalischen Kunstwerkes*. Translated and annotated by Tanabe Hisao. Tokyo: Ongaku Shobo, 1934.
Schweitzer, Albert. *J.S. Bach*, Volume 1. Translated by Tsuji Shoichi and Yamane Ginji. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1955.
Shina, Masami. "A Study of Some Characteristics in Chopin's Harmony 1: Non–harmonic Tones." *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education, Fukushima University* 30, no. 2 (1978): 53–62.
Tanimura, Akira. "On Some Major Concepts in Mersmann's Musical Aesthetics." *Philharmony, Tokyo: NHK Symphony Orchestra* 25, no. 3 (1953).
Tohoku Imperial University Psychology Laboratory, ed. *The Science of Life and Mind: Series Vol. 7*. Tokyo: Toen Shobo, 1935.
Wada, Kohei. "A Study on Heinrich Schenker's 'Theory of Piano Performance'." *Music Research: Graduate School Annual Report, Kunitachi College of Music* 21 (2009): 141–156.
Yamada, Ryota, Shinji Kusumoto, Yoshiki Higo, and Shinsuke Matsumoto. "Survey of Function Point Studies Using Systematic Literature Review." *The Institute of Electronics, Information and Communication Engineers* J103-D, no. 3 (2020): 144–158.

English-Language Works

Beach, David. *Advanced Schenkerian Analysis: Perspectives on Phrase Rhythm, Motive, and Form*. New York: Routledge, 2012.
Beach, David. *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.
Beach, David. "The Current State of Schenkerian Research." *Acta Musicologica* 57, no. 2 (1985): 275–307.
Beach, David, and Su Yin Mak, eds. *Explorations in Schenkerian Analysis*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016.
Berry, David Carson. "Schenkerian Theory in the United States: A Review of Its Establishment and a Survey of Current Research Topics." *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 2, no. 2–3 (2003): 101–137.
Cadwallader, Allen. *Trends in Schenkerian Research*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1990.
Cadwallader, Allen, Karen M. Bottge, and Oliver Schwab-Felisch. *New Horizons in Schenkerian Research*. New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2022.

Drabkin, William. "Heinrich Schenker." In *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, edited by Thomas Christensen, 812–843. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Martin, Nathan John. "Toward a 'Global' History of Music Theory." *Journal of Music Theory* 66, no. 2 (2022): 147–187.

Peng, Zixuan. "Exploring the Pedagogical Potential of Schenkerian Analysis in Japan: A Case Study on Teaching with Schenkerian Graphs." *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences* 22, no. 6 (2024): 44–54.

Digital Collections and Research Databases

Bent, Ian, William Drabkin, et al. "Schenker Documents Online." Accessed June 28, 2025. http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org/index.html.

Japan Science and Technology Agency. "J-STAGE." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/.

Kyushu University Library. "NDL Search." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://www.lib.kyushu-u.ac.jp/en/databases/ndlsearch.

National Diet Library. "Free Data Service." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://www.ndl.go.jp/en/dlib/standards/opendataset/index.html.

National Diet Library. "National Diet Library Digital Collections." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://dl.ndl.go.jp/en/.

National Diet Library. "National Diet Library Search." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://ndlsearch.ndl.go.jp/en/.

National Institute of Informatics. "CiNii - About CiNii." NII Support. Accessed June 28, 2025. https://support.nii.ac.jp/en.

National Institute of Informatics. "CiNii Research." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://cir.nii.ac.jp/articles.

National Institute of Informatics. "CiNii Research (Discovery Platform)." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://rcos.nii.ac.jp/en/service/research/.

National Institute of Informatics. "KAKEN: Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://support.nii.ac.jp/en/kaken/howtouse.

Registry of Research Data Repositories. "J-STAGE Data." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://www.re3data.org/repository/r3d100013677.

University College Cork. "National Diet Library (NDL)." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://libguides.ucc.ie/ndl.

University of Tokyo Library System. "National Diet Library Digital Collections." Accessed June 28, 2025. https://www.lib.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/library/contents/database/328

Contributors' Biographical Notes

Jurgita Valčikaitė-Šidlauskienė (b. 1993), 2012 graduated from Šiauliai Saulius Sondeckis Arts Gymnasium. 2016 she obtained a bachelor's degree in music theory and criticism at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater, 2018 – Master's degree. From 2020 is studying in the joint doctoral program in art history of the Lithuanian Cultural Research Institute, the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater, and the Vilnius Academy of Arts. Research interests – the process of composing music.

The musicologist prepared a monograph on Lithuanian opera soloist Nijolė Ambrazaitytė (Nijolė Ambrazaitytė. An Extraordinary Voice. 2018 Lithuanian Independence Act Signatories Club, ISBN 978-609-95899-4-7), pays a lot of attention to music critics, attends international conferences, and is a well-known director of cultural projects in northern Lithuania.

Jessica O'Donoghue is a genre-defying artist, composer, and director whose career bridges opera, pop, jazz, and experimental music. With a Bachelor of Music from the University of Sydney, she is currently pursuing a PhD in Composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where her research focuses on hybrid composition and narrative in contemporary vocal music. Jessica's career as a performer includes Young Artist residencies at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden (London) and Opera Queensland. She is now a principal artist with both Sydney Chamber Opera and The Song Company, where she also serves as Co-Artistic Director.

As a composer, Jessica's work has been widely recognised for its innovation and emotional depth. Her chamber operas *Running Man* and *Menarche* explore themes of mental health and inter-generational trauma through genre-fluid, multidisciplinary approaches. Her solo album *Rise Up* was a finalist for 'Vocal Album of the Year' at the 2022 Progspace Awards. She is the recipient of an APRA/AMCOS Art Music Award and a Fellowship from the Australian Institute of Music for her outstanding contribution to the arts. Jessica has presented at the MSA Annual Conference and is a published writer in *The Australian* and *ADSR Zine*, advocating for bold evolution in the operatic and vocal landscapes.

Martina Kamenska is a doctoral student in Musicology at the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Her PhD research focuses on the influence of bell sonority on the structure of musical material under the working title "Structural, acoustic and historical contexts of the use of bells in European music of the 20th century

Serena Allegra is a PhD student in *Image, Language, Figure: Forms and Modes of Mediation* – curriculum *Philosophy of Language* (National Interest Doctoral Programme) – at the University of Milan (Department of Philosophy "Piero Martinetti") and the University of Messina (Department of Cognitive, Psychological, Pedagogical Sciences and Cultural Studies), Italy. She is a tenured teacher of humanities at an Italian state high school and collaborates with the Ente Autonomo Regionale Teatro di Messina. She holds Master's degrees in Classical Tradition, Pedagogy, Cognitive Sciences, Performing Arts, and Theory of Communication (University of Messina), in Musicology (*Alma Mater Studiorum* – University of Bologna), and in Classical Singing (*F. Cilea* Conservatory of Music, Reggio Calabria).She is a member of the Early Career Researchers' Group (ECRG), the European Society of Aesthetics (ESA), the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music (ESCOM), the Royal Musical Association Music and Philosophy Study Group (MPSG), and the International Society for the Philosophy of the Sciences of the Mind (ISPSM). Her research focuses on the application of cognitive science, neuroscience, and media studies to musicology and the aesthetics of music. Recent publications include *Algorithms, AI and music composition: When can musical creativity be considered pop?*, in «Scenari», 21 (2024), and *Lo ferm voler ch'el cor m'intra*, in «Mantichora», 14 (2024).

Peng Zixuan earned her Ph.D. from Kyushu University with a dissertation titled "Exploring the Landscape and Prospects of Schenkerian Studies in Japan: Research Themes Analysis and Case Studies." She is investigating the dissemination, reception, and adoption of Schenkerian studies in Asia, particularly in Japan and China.

Her primary research areas include musicology, music education, and music culture. Specifically, she has conducted research on themes including "improving the quality of music education and solving practical challenges in educational contexts," "developing intercultural competence across multiple ethnicities and nations using music as a bridge," and "examining how the arts can contribute to social and regional cultural development and the formation of inclusive societies."

Beyond her specialization in music, Peng has pursued interdisciplinary research across the humanities and social sciences, exploring topics such as supporting individuals with mental and physical challenges through artistic activities. During 2023–2025, she was affiliated with the Faculty of Education at Ehime University, where she specialized in special needs education and participated in managing initiatives focused on lifelong learning support for individuals with disabilities. She designed and facilitated workshops that incorporated various art forms including music, painting, and handicrafts.

Currently, she serves as an Academic Research Coordinator at Okayama University, Japan.

University of Oradea Publishing House
Cod 410087, Str. Universității, Nr. 1, Oradea
Jud. Bihor, România
Phone/Fax. +40 259 408 627
E-mail: editura@uoradea.ro
Web:
https://www.uoradea.ro/Editura+Universitatii+din+Oradea

ISSN: 3061-5364
ISSN ONLINE: 3090-9902
ISSN-l: 3061-5364