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Scholarly Program Notes to Accompany a Graduate Flute Recital

Alex Carpenter
alexandra.jochum@siu.edu

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SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES TO ACCOMPANY A GRADUATE FLUTE RECITAL

by

Alexandra Carpenter

B.M., Hardin-Simmons University, 2014

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music

School of Music
in the Graduate School
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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

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for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the field of Flute Performance

Approved by:

Douglas Worthen, Chair

Christopher Walczak

Eric Mandat

Graduate School
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TITLE: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES TO ACCOMPANY A GRADUATE FLUTE RECITAL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Douglas Worthen

The purpose of this paper is to provide scholarly program notes for a graduate flute recital performed on April 21, 2018. The composers and pieces examined in this paper are respectively Gabriel Fauré's *Fantaisie*, Op. 79, Mario Pilati's *Sonata* for flute and pianoforte, Otar Taktakishvili's *Sonata* for flute piano, and Edgard Varèse's *Density 21.5*. Each chapter provides a brief biographical section and an analysis with performance practice commentary.

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CHAPTER 1

FANTASIE, OP. 79 BY GABRIEL FAURÉ

Gabriel Fauré, born in 1845, was a French composer, keyboardist, and educator. He was nine years of age when he began his music studies at the Ecole Niedermeyer in Paris where he remained for eleven years. After leaving the conservatory he served as organist and choral director at various churches throughout France. He enlisted in the first light infantry regiment of the Imperial Guard to fight in the Franco-Prussian War in which he took part in the action to raise the siege in Paris. He was discharged at the end of the war in March of 1871.

After a battle with depression in the 1880's, Fauré reached a turning point in his life and career. In 1896 he became chief organist at the Madeleine and succeeded Jules Massenet as the composition instructor at the Paris Conservatory. Some of his more notable students during that time include Maurice Ravel, Florent Schmitt, Charles Koechlin, and Nadia Boulanger.

Fauré's *Fantaisie* for flute and piano has become a staple in the flute repertoire. Written in 1898 for the *Concours de flute* competition held annually at the Paris Conservatory, *Fantaisie* is, in the composer's words, a test "on matters of phrasing, expression, tone control, and virtuosity."¹ Another piece titled *Morceaus de Concour*, essentially a sight-reading examination, was written for the same competition to be played in tandem with *Fantaisie*. The winner of the competition, Gaston Blanquart, was a student of the flute instructor at the Paris Conservatory Paul Taffanel. Blanquart premiered the piece on July 28, 1898. In a letter from Fauré to Saint-Saëns, Fauré wrote about the flute piece, "...I have written the competition flute piece...and I

¹ Annette Oppermann, *Preface*, accessed April 7, 2018.
<http://www.henle.de/media/foreword/0580.pdf>

can't remember anything at all that has given me so much trouble!"²

The *andantino* section of the *Fantaisie* is characterized by an evolving melody and an obfuscated key area through the use of 'blue notes' and unexpected harmony. The opening A section is formally obscure, establishing an imitated melodic motive in favor of clear phrase structure. The initial melodic line established by the flute in mm. 2-4 is varied throughout the opening section by manipulation of contour, inversion of rhythm, and pitch-transposition.

FIGURE 1: Melodic development in A section³



The first variation, given in m. 5, is chromatically transposed a whole step down. The second variation is presented with an embellished contour at the original pitch level. At the reprise of the opening material in m. 25, the melody is again embellished, this time with passing tones and added chord tones. As the variations evolve, the extended and unexpected harmonies emerge. The E^{7b9} chord in m. 15, the first extended chord of the piece, has many peculiarities about it and blurs the tonality. As a chord demanding resolution, it suspends our anticipation due

² Gabriel Fauré: *A Life in Letters*, trans. J. Barrie Jones (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1998), 91.

³ Gabriel Fauré, *Fantaisie*, Op. 79

to its dominant quality and a dissonant minor ninth. The chord of “resolution” ($G^{\#o7}$) does not release the harmonic tension and in fact is part of a chain of suspended resolutions. The blending of A and E minor in these same measures creates an ambiguous key area anticipating later clarity.

FIGURE 2: Key obfuscation through unexpected harmony

mm. 14-19

The musical score for measures 14-19 is presented in a grand staff format. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 2/4. The score consists of seven measures, each containing a complex chord and a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The chords are: Am/C, B7, E7b9, G#o7, F/A, B7, and C7/Bb. The melody is characterized by a strong downbeat in each measure, with the first note of each measure being an eighth note anacrusis.

The *allegro* section has the character of a scherzo with what some refer to as “contrived pyrotechnics,” which serves as the ‘virtuosity’ section of the exam and is pieced together with two new ideas – a rhythmic ‘ah-ha’ motive and a simple eight bar melody. Some materials in the *allegro* are derived from the previous section. Despite the sheer number of sixteenth notes in the small amount of time required to perform the piece, the music is exceptionally idiomatic for flute and makes learning the piece both challenging and enjoyable.

The ‘ah-ha’ motive is characterized by an eighth-note anacrusis into a strong downbeat; it is then followed by another anacrusis into two measures which complete the initial statement of the melody. It is used six times throughout the piece and never used the same way twice. The figure below demonstrates all the different ways in which the melody has been altered.

FIGURE 3: Melodic development in B section

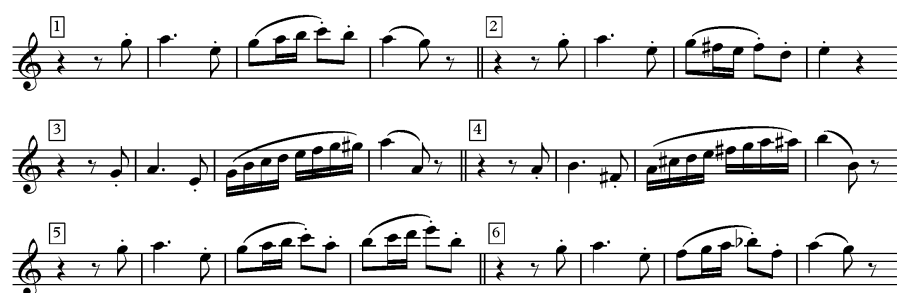


TABLE 1: Explanation of Variations of ‘Ah-ha’ Melody

22	Inversion of contour in third and fourth measures Intervallic differences in third measures beat two – from half step to minor third
33	One octave lower Added sixteenth notes to third measure, implying A minor
44	Minor seventh lower (whole step up from previous statement) Added sixteenth notes to third measure, implying B minor
55	Reiterated third measure statement in fourth measures Changed interval on beat two of third measure
66	Third measure is a whole step down, except for upbeat of beat two, in which there is an intervallic difference as well

The other, more lyrical melody is first presented in the flute at the anacrusis to m. 118. It is repeated two more times in the flute and once in the piano with extensive repetition of various melodic fragments and at different rhythmic and transposition levels. The flute begins its “tour de force” with a grand show of arpeggios, chromatic runs, and compound melodies as the piano’s takes the melodic motive to the forefront of the texture. The melody from the previous

FIGURE 4: A section melody when presented in B section



andantino section presents itself periodically in the *allegro* section, most notably in the first half. At mm. 88-91 and 97-100, this melody has been rhythmically altered and only the first half of the motive is heard.

FIGURE 5: Final two measures (mm. 249-250)



The scherzo nature of the piece is expressed through drastic changes in dynamics, key areas, and accompaniment patterns. Additionally, some famous performers such as Emmanuel Pahud⁴ and Claudio Barile⁵ add a humorous diminuendo in the penultimate measure of the entire

⁴ Emmanuel Pahud – Topic, *Fantaisie, Op. 79 (version for flute and piano)*, YouTube video, 4:45, February 6, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKC8Ivr6rfg>.

⁵ Claudio Barile, *Gabriel Fauré, Fantaisie for Flute Op. 79, Andantino, Allegro* Claudio Barile Vivianan Lazzarín. YouTube video, 7:01, August 5, 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1tyXw8y7hc>.

piece to a soft high note. This, accompanied by the non-dominant functioning D⁷ chord prior to the final resolution, creates an unexpected and quirky ending. Although effective for a more scherzo-like approach to the performance, this interpretation may not be congruent with the mood that the composer had in mind. These contest pieces were designed as displays of virtuosity and would most likely would have ended loudly to emphasize the final note.

CHAPTER 2

SONATA FOR FLUTE AND PIANOFORTE BY MARIO PILATI

Mario Pilati was an Italian composer and critic during the early twentieth century. Born in Naples in 1903, he died only 35 years later before the outbreak of World War II after falling ill. He began his musical education at the Naples Conservatory studying composition with A. Savasta after which he immediately began teaching. Pilati was professor of composition at the Liceo Musicale in Cagliari from 1924-1926, Milan Conservatory from 1926-1930, and finally at the Conservatory in Naples from 1930-1933⁶. He was also an active music critic for newspapers and journals such as the *Rassegna Musicale*.

His *Sonata per Flauto e Pianoforte* was written in 1926 while he was at the Liceo Musicale. The header of the score contains this dedication: “alla Signora Elizabeth S. Coolidge con vivissima riconoscenza”⁷ which translates “to Mrs. Elizabeth S. Coolidge with deep gratitude.” Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge was an American music patron who lived from 1864-1953. Her largest contribution to music is her Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation created in 1925. She entrusted a large sum of money to the Library of Congress to fund music festivals, concerts, offer and award prizes for any original compositions premiered there in public, and further the purpose of musicology.⁸ Mario Pilati was commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation and in 1927 received the Coolidge prize for his flute sonata.

The flute sonata presents an atypical formal organization and reveals various

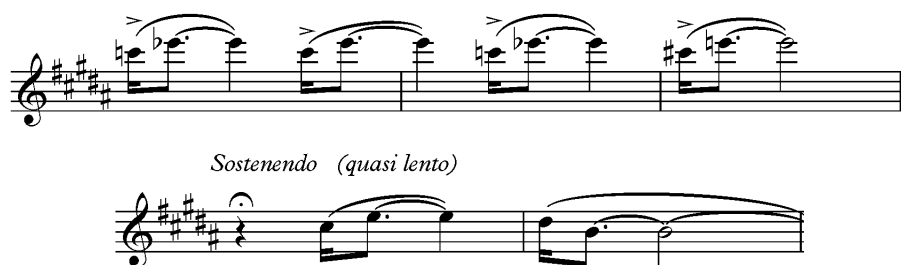
⁶ Antonio Trudu, *Pilati, Mario*, Grove Music Online, last modified January 31, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.21758>.

⁷ Mario Pilati, *Sonata per Flauto e Pianoforte* (Rome: Accademia Italiana del Flauto, 1995).

⁸ Gustave Reese and Cyrilla Barr, *Coolidge, Elizabeth (Penn) Sprague*, Grove Music Online, accessed April 7, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.06403>.

impressionist techniques, although a programmatic element which embodies an impression of something is absent, favoring an absolute musical nature closer to sonata form. As Ian Denley said: "...although this work has the formal title of *Sonata* with an apparent key centre of B major, it is really a rather free structure, replete with disconnected motifs. The sound world is reminiscent of Ravel, Gaubert and Sancan, so there are plenty of opportunities for colour, but it is an extremely challenging, virtuosic work, with a piano accompaniment decidedly not for the faint-hearted."⁹ All three movements lack a clear formal foundation (two of which are through-composed) but the developmental nature of his melodies and his blurred tonalities keeps the listener grounded.

FIGURE 6: INITIAL DECLARATIVE AND SWEET FIGURES¹⁰



A rhythmic motive is established in the first movement and is developed across the two other movements. A declarative sixteenth-dotted-eighth figure is used at the climactic point from mm. 69-76 in the piano and imitated in the flute; it is used again in a sweeter tone

⁹ Ian Denley, "Reviews: Mario Pilati: Sonata for flute and piano," *Pan: The Flute Magazine*, (June 2007): 76.

¹⁰ Mario Pilati, *Sonata per Flauto e Pianoforte* (Rome: Accademia Italiana del Flauto, 1995).

during the *Sostenendo* section from mm. 98-104. Two notable characteristics of this figure are the rhythmic ratio of 1:3 and the different moods created in the individual instances. There is a hint of this figure near the end of the movement, but the intervallic relationship and functionality is inconsistent with all other instances, so it will not be discussed here.

Although the key signature implies either B major or G# minor, this movement functions more consistently with pitch centers of F# and E, and at times utilizes the OCT₁₂ collection for its pitch material. An F# pitch center is felt initially in the soft pastoral melody which begins at

FIGURE 7: F# PITCH CENTER (M. 26)

The image shows a musical score for the first measure of a piece. The key signature is B major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 5/4. The flute part (top staff) begins with an F# note. The piano accompaniment (middle and bottom staves) features a sustained F# in the left hand, indicated by a pedal symbol. The right hand of the piano has a sustained F# in the middle register.

m. 26. The first pitch in the flute is an F# and the left hand of the piano has a pedal F# for the majority of this statement until m. 41 at the tempo change. The fourteen measures beginning at m. 77 contain only F#'s and E's across three octaves in the flute, occasionally replacing the F#'s with upper neighbor tones such as G in mm. 80-83 and A \flat in mm. 88-90. The use of F# and E as centric is also found at the end of the movement in the flute line; other than C# and D# in mm. 151-153, the last notes the flute plays are a repeated low-register E and F#.

Pilati transitions from the E-F# duality to the OCT₁₂ collection through the use of a sustained E₄ in the low flute and a pedal E₁ in the low piano beginning in m. 105, using E as a

common tone. Although the octatonic collection was explored earlier in m. 59, the scale crystallizes in m. 128 with the unaccompanied flute rising in register through each iteration of the scale, traversing a minor ninth, diminished eleventh, and perfect twelfth.

In the second movement the figure containing the 1:3 ratio is altered as the ratio becomes 3:1, displacing the stress from the sixteenth note to the dotted eighth note. The figure is then used to explore the previously established moods of the first movement. It is worth mentioning that the opening rhythmic figure in the flute at the beginning of the movement is the inverted 1:3 figure, which technically makes it the first instance. However, the stepwise motion (rather than a skip) and lack of rhythmic repetition makes this moment less impacting as establishing motivic continuity between movements. In m. 28 of the scherzo section, the first audibly explicit moment of the “declarative figure” (discussed above) is shown in this movement. Here, it is presented at a higher pitch level and at half the rhythmic length (although duration does not sound affected due to tempo discrepancies between movements). This presentation of the figure is reminiscent of the first movement’s declaratory moment at m. 69 with the heightened dynamics and register.

FIGURE 8: DECLARATIVE AND SWEET FIGURES, MVT. II (MM. 30-32)



Another figure, identical in only pitch-class content, is presented directly after the declarative figure in mm. 32-44 in both the flute and piano. It has been lowered in register by two octaves and has been respelled enharmonically. This statement is at a much lower dynamic and in a lower register than the declarative statement discussed previously, reminiscent of the “sweet tone” (discussed above) figure from the first movement. The motivic continuity in this

movement is reinforced by saturation of the rhythmic motive heard in the scherzo section and also by preservation of interval content during the presentation of the mood figures.

Just as pitch centers E and F# were established in the first movement, a similar situation takes place in the second movement; C# and D# are the new pitch centers, preserving the whole-step duality from the first movement. C# dorian can be inferred from the key signature and the repeated low register C# in the piano until the key change in m. 15, at which point a character change occurs in mood and bass motion. A circle of fourths sequence going from B \flat to E \flat to A \flat begins a chromatic exploration, away from any sense of key. One could argue that the sequence actually extends to the second beat of m. 25 on the C# in the left hand. It is the enharmonic equivalent of D \flat and would bring the sequence around to the established pitch center. The next scherzo section is characterized by a sequence of fully-diminished seventh chords beginning on beat 3 of m. 25, assisted by a chromatically ascending bass line building up to an E, an upper neighbor of D#. As it winds down into the next section the bass line moves back down through B and A to C# again. The final two notes of the movement, which are used to link the second and third via *attacca*, are C# and D#.

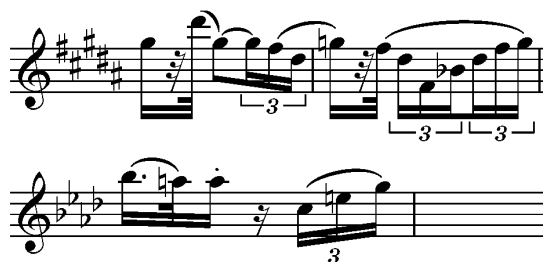
FIGURE 9: FINAL FLUTE C# AND D# (M. 42)



The 1:3/3:1 ratio in the final movement is less convincing – other than the obvious dance meter comparison of 3:1 styles such as waltzes or minuets which are happening in this

movement – and more difficult to hear than in the previous movements, but yet present due to the number of iterations. In the third movement, we hear an instance of the 3:1 ratio figure in measures 13-16. We are more convinced of its importance when we hear it very clearly in m. 21.

FIGURE 10: FIGURE REMNANTS, MVT. III (MM. 13-14 & 133)



We hear it again in m. 133 at the start of the cadenza section, but this time much more similar to the initial declaratory style of the first movement. The rhythmic length has been halved again, with the same aural implications as before, but transposed three semitones lower. This is interesting because the transposition of a minor third grows out of the interval of a minor third contained within motive itself. Whether Pilati intended to “compose out” the motive is unknown, but worth mentioning, since his peers were often jealous of his abilities and tease him about his natural talent as a composer.¹¹

¹¹ Naxos, Mario Pilati, accessed April 8, 2018, https://www.naxos.com/person/Mario_Pilati/19227.htm.

CHAPTER 3

SONATA FOR FLUTE AND PIANO BY OTAR TAKTAKISHVILI

Otar Taktakishvili is mostly known in Eastern Europe but his name has made its way across the Atlantic through the popularity of his flute sonata. He was born in Tiflis, Georgia in 1924, which is also where he spent his conservatory years studying composition with Sergei Barkhudarian. While at the conservatory he entered into a contest for a newly composed national anthem for Georgia and won. It remained the Georgian nation anthem until 1991. From then on, his popularity grew in that region of Europe.

After graduating from the conservatory, he began teaching counterpoint and orchestration as well as experimenting with composing larger forms such as his symphonic poem *Samgori* (1950) and his piano concerto (1951). After this period his compositional output slowed down due to the increase in the “privileged ranks of those Soviet composers who travel, usually in delegations, as representatives of their country’s culture.”¹²

His position as composer was so integrated with the government that, along with composing, he served as deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and of the Georgian SSR. He was also a member of the Presidium of the International Music Council of UNESCO, Minister of Culture of Georgia (for nearly thirty years), chairman of the Georgian Composers’ Union, and secretary and board member of the USSR Composers’ Union.¹³

His flute sonata was written during his ‘privileged’ years, which also occurred during the

¹² Stanley D. Krebs, “Otar Taktakishvili” in *Soviet Composers and the Development of Soviet Music*, (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970): 300.

¹³ Evgeny Machavariani and Gulbat Toradze, “Taktakishvili, Otar,” Grove Music Online, Last modified January 31, 2014. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.siu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27406>.

Zhdanov Doctrine or Zhdanovshchina. The Social Realism movement in the USSR at that time created a divide in composers between the compliers of the governmental wishes and the modernists seen as conformists with the Revolution. Taktakishvili evaded persecution from Andrey Zhdanov by adhering to the creative requests of the “Resolution on Music” issued by the Communist Party in 1948. Since his compositional output decreased at that time, he wasn’t targeted like the ‘Big Four’ who were summoned to hearings. “This resolution decreed that Soviet composers henceforth favor vocal music over instrumental; program music over ‘absolute’; shun the use of modernistic techniques that shut out nonprofessional listeners; make liberal use of folklore; and actually emulate the styles of the great Russian composers of the nineteenth century.”¹⁴

Written in 1966, Taktakishvili’s *Sonata* for flute and piano upholds those decrees. Formally, the piece adheres to the typical expectations of a sonata; the first movement is in sonata form, the second a simple ternary, and the finale a rondo. Harmonically, the piece evades notions of ‘modernism’ by use of simple harmonies and clearly defined key areas. It is melodically simple and contains elements of Georgian folk melodies.

The first movement, *allegro cantabile*, contains four melodic/motivic ideas that are heard throughout the movement. The first and second themes from the A section of the exposition are both introduced by the flute; first in m. 7 and then at rehearsal B. The next two themes, which function as transitional material for later use in the development section, are also introduced by the flute; the first is the falling triplet figure eight measures before rehearsal C and the second is the measure-long motive that is repeated beginning at rehearsal C. These four themes create the foundation for the development section.

¹⁴ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press):

FIGURE 11: MELODIC/MOTIVIC IDEAS¹⁵

Figure 11 consists of four musical staves, each labeled with a number in a box. Staff 1 shows a melodic line in treble clef with a slur over a group of notes and a fermata. Staff 2 shows a melodic line in treble clef with accents and slurs. Staff 3 shows a triplet of eighth notes. Staff 4 shows a melodic line in treble clef with a slur and a triplet of eighth notes.

In the development section, which begins at rehearsal D, each theme is explored through variation techniques such as inversion and transposition. The first theme is presented at rehearsal D in the flute, but at a different transposition level and with a contrasting contour as compared to the original statement. It is during this statement that a variation of the triplets is introduced, this time adding a lower neighbor tone and accelerating in rhythm, creating a quintuplet turn in the music. This turn is discussed later in the development section analysis. Four measures before rehearsal E, the second theme begins its development, ending at rehearsal F. These statements contain changes in pitch and timbre. The first sixteen bars split the phrases in half between the

¹⁵ Otar Taktakishvili, *Sonata for Flute and Piano* (New York: Associated Music Publishers Inc., 1977).

piano and flute. The second sixteen bars contain the melody in the piano in octaves with a repetitive flute line. The initial statement of the second theme begins on G5, but in the development section, its first variation begins on B \flat 4 and the second on E \flat 2 and E \flat 6.

FIGURE 12: DEVELOPMENT OF MELODIES 1 & 2

It is at this point in the development where new melodies are introduced and the connection to previously established themes is less obvious. The quintuplet turn at the beginning of the development, mentioned earlier, is explored and used as a sequential device to traverse the recently descended octave back up to D \flat 6 through quartal and chromatic motion. The second theme returns at rehearsal K at C6 in the flute. The third and fourth themes are presented at rehearsal L, also at different transposition levels. It is interesting that at each rehearsal mark from H-K, there is a half-step descent in the flute, climbing back down to the tonic in the movement's overall key. The recapitulation is unique in that two of the four motivic themes are not present, and the coda is only six measures long. Additionally, the second melodic theme is played on the

piano instead of the solo instrument.

FIGURE 13: DECENDING FIFTHS PATTERN, MVT. II



The second movement adheres to the “vocal over instrumental” clause from the Resolution on Music with its simple heterophonic texture, clearly defined formal structures, and the use of the title ‘Aria’ – possibly a quote from a Caucasian folksong or lullaby. This movement is much less technically ambitious than the previous and following movements while it explores a chromatic median key relationship. Each formal section contains three phrases, each eight bars in length, with a four-bar transition leading into the recapitulation. The A section begins in A minor and modulates to C minor through the circle of fifths in the bass. The middle B section, in C minor at rehearsal A and C# minor at rehearsal B, explores new melodic ideas and harmonies without affecting the accompaniment pattern or compromising the established aesthetic.

FIGURE 14: MELODIC RETURN DISCREPENCIES



In the recapitulation, the first two measures of the initial statement of the opening theme have been altered. The second melody has been entirely left out, and the first half of the third melody is presented an octave higher. The deviations continue with an extended phrase rising in

register up to a high A6 climax in the flute. These alterations make the previously stated material less recognizable, obfuscating to some degree the classical function of a recapitulation.

FIGURE 15: THEMES, MVT. III

Figure 15 displays three musical themes labeled A, B, and C. Theme A is in 6/8 time, Theme B is in 6/8 time, and Theme C is in 2/4 time. Each theme is presented on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

The final movement is a quirky rondo with another atypical recapitulation. It presents long melodic statements lasting at least sixteen bars each, distinct melodies specifically dedicated to the function of transition, and a C section which is in drastic contrast from a standpoint of key, tempo, and meter. The formal outline below displays how and where the three contrasting themes are used; this does not include the transitional melodies previously mentioned, which are distinctly different from the main themes.

Section:	Intro	A	B	A	C	A'	Coda
Measures:	1-4	5-C	C-E	E-G	G-L	L-N	N-end
Themes:		Theme 1 and Subordinate Theme 1	Theme 2 and Subordinate Theme 2	Theme 1 and Altered Subordinate Theme 1	Theme 3	Theme 1 and Theme 2	New material

Although an abundance of musical material abounds, thematic development throughout the movement is minimal. Due to the lengthy durations of the melodic ideas, even a moderate

amount of development would have been excessive. In the closing section, what may have been lost from any lack of development is regained through dexterous, technically adventurous passages in the flute, such as a three-octave articulated chromatic ascent (with a hiccup six measures before the end) from low C4 all the way to the final high C7 which end the piece.

CHAPTER 4

DENSITY 21.5 BY EDGARD VARÈSE

Edgard Varèse was a French-born American composer who was recognized for his profound innovations in the composition world by the early twenty-first century. Born in December of 1885, Varèse originally studied mathematics and engineering, not music. Despite this, he went to Paris to study with Roussel, Bordes, and d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum.

Several years later, after moving to Berlin and then back to Paris in 1915, Varèse made his pilgrimage to the United States. It was during this time he founded several groups, most notably the International Composer's Guild in 1921 and the Pan American Association of Composers in 1928, both formed to promote contemporary and experimental musical works. In 1928 he made an extended trip back to Paris, during which he wrote the infamous *Density 21.5*.

1935 ushered in a period of depression for Varèse. “‘The situation really seemed hopeless,’ he told a friend, ‘I’m afraid I developed a very negative attitude toward the entire musical situation....The frustration of having my music ignored was only part of it.’”¹⁶ He went on to talk about his troubles receiving funding for his new music projects involving electronic instruments. In 1932 he contacted Dr. Fletcher at the Bell Telephone Company as well as Henry Allen Moe of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation regarding funding for a new instrument in which he was interested: the dynaphone. The dynaphone, introduced to him by René Bertrand, was an instrument similar to the theremin. He was denied funding by both parties.

Density 21.5 was written in 1936 per the request of Georges Barrère for the inauguration

¹⁶ Jonathan W. Bernard, *The Music of Edgard Varese*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987.

of his new platinum flute made by William S. Haynes. This platinum flute informs the piece's title (the density of platinum being 21.45 grams per cubic centimeter). According to the New York Flute Club, of which Haynes was president for twenty-four years, this was the first platinum flute made in the United States. That same year, *Density 21.5* was premiered at Carnegie Hall by Barrère. There have been rumors that the work was not in fact premiered on the platinum flute, but these claims have not been substantiated.¹⁷

FIGURE 16 & TABLE 3: OPENING MELODY, MM. 1-3¹⁸



Pitch:	F-E	E-F#	F#-C#	C#-G
Ordered pitch-class interval:	-1	+2	-/+5	+6

Density 21.5 is an exploration of a single melodic line through variations in pitch-class interval, transposition, and rhythm. As the melody evolves through the piece, the interval content and contour are constantly transforming with each reiteration, yet the transitions are smooth and the motive is always recognizable by its retained similarities, mainly contour and rhythm.

¹⁷ <https://www.fluteland.com/board/viewtopic.php?t=5926>

¹⁸ Edgard Varèse, *Density 21.5*, (New York: Colfranc Music Publishing Corporation, 1966).

FIGURE 17 & TABLE 4: SECOND MELODY, MM. 15-16



Pitch:	E-D#	D#-F	D#-E	E-F#	F#-E#
Ordered pitch-class interval:	-1	+/-3	+1	+2	-1 (-13)

In the second melodic variation at m. 15, the starting pitch is transposed up eleven semitones (a major seventh) and the general interval sizes have decreased, with the exception of the very last interval which more than doubles the original statement's final leap. The two-sixteenths-eighth note figure from the first measure of the piece and again in m. 15 nicely associate the two melodies aurally.

FIGURE 18 & TABLE 5: THIRD MELODY, MM. 42-44



Pitch:	F#-E#	E#-G	G-D	D-A \flat
Ordered pitch-class interval:	-1	+2	-5	+6

The third and final melodic instance shares the same interval content as the original statement but transposed up by one semitone. The rhythmic difference in this passage is undeniable, yet just two measures before it, the first three notes are presented in the exact same fashion as the initial statement. It is interesting to isolate the initial pitches of each melodic variation, which structurally articulate (over time) the first three pitches of the piece. There are

other instances of similar intervallic or rhythmic identifiers implying the original melody which will not be discussed in detail here; these occurrences function as motivic development rather than as clear and formal articulations of the transforming melody.

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VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Alexandra Carpenter

jochum.alex@gmail.com

Hardin-Simmons University

Bachelor of Music, Flute Performance and Music Theory, 2014

Research Paper Title:

Scholarly Program Notes to Accompany a Graduate Flute Recital

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