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# Program Notes for A Graduate Piano Recital

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PROGRAM NOTES FOR A GRADUATE PIANO RECITAL

by

Jenny Kirby

B.M., Truman State University, 2013

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
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PROGRAM NOTES FOR A GRADUATE PIANO RECITAL

By

Jenny Kirby

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

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in the field of Music

Approved by:

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Graduate School  
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

JENNY KIRBY, for the Master of Music degree in MUSIC, presented on MAY 8, 2015, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: PROGRAM NOTES FOR A GRADUATE PIANO RECITAL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Yuko Kato

The objective of this research paper is to provide extended program notes to the Graduate Recital of Jenny Kirby, presented on May 8, 2015. The following pieces were performed: Franz Schubert's *Sonata in A minor, D. 845* (1825), Alexander Scriabin's *Five Preludes, Op. 74* (1914), J.S Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in G major, BWV 884* (1724), and Igor Stravinsky's *Trois Mouvements de Pétroushka* (1921).

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## CHAPTER 1

## FRANZ SCHUBERT: PIANO SONATA IN A MINOR, D. 845

Schubert was one of the most prolific composers of his time. Among his many compositions, he contributed twenty-two compositions to the genre of piano sonatas. Composed in 1825, his piano sonata in A minor, D. 845 is of particular importance due to the fact that it is one of only three piano sonatas that were published during his lifetime, along with D major (D. 850 c. 1825) and G major (D. 894 c. 1826).<sup>1</sup> It is also described as “the best-known sonata during his lifetime.”<sup>2</sup> Considered as one of his mature works, this large scale sonata is in four movements with these four different forms: sonata-allegro, theme and variations, scherzo and trio, and rondo.

The first movement begins *moderato* and *pianissimo*. The exposition is set by two contrasting themes (Figures 1 and 2). The meditative first theme uses A minor arpeggios to establish the key. The second theme is in its relative key, C major, with a livelier character. The exposition concludes in the dominant key, and motives from the two themes are used to modulate through the development section. Schubert especially makes frequent usage of the motivic element of the first theme to build intensity throughout the development. After going through various key sequences, the recapitulation occurs, albeit unclear in its exact beginnings. One could argue that recapitulation starts at the pickup to m. 146, where the motive of the first theme appears in the minor vi (Figure 3). Others might prefer the pickup to m.152 where the motive appears back in its tonic key. This ambiguity to the recapitulation is prevalent in many of

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<sup>1</sup> F.E. Kirby, *Music for Piano: A Short History* (Cambridge: Amadeus Press LLC, 1995), 143.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Hinson, *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 695.



Schubert's larger works such as his string quartets, symphonies, and piano sonatas.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1: 1<sup>st</sup> mvmt, mm. 1-6, beginning of first theme

Figure 2: 1<sup>st</sup> mvmt, mm. 40-44, beginning of second theme

Figure 3: 1<sup>st</sup> mvmt, mm. 141-152, beginning of recapitulation

The second movement takes the form of theme and variations, a rare occurrence among his works. Contrasting with the generally heavy atmosphere of the first movement, the second

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Coren, "Ambiguity in Schubert's Recapitulations," *The Musical Quarterly* vol. 60, no. 4 (Oct., 1974), <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 1, 2016), 570.

movement takes a more light-hearted approach. The theme is in C major with two ideas, each with its own repeat. It is followed by a total of five continuous variations with these key schemes: C major (1<sup>st</sup> var.), C major (2<sup>nd</sup> var.), C minor (3<sup>rd</sup> var.), A-flat major (4<sup>th</sup> var.), and C major (5<sup>th</sup> var.). Schubert's choices for the different keys are characteristic of his compositions, for example, using a parallel key relationship (C major/C minor) between the second and third variations. The theme can be challenging for the performer to bring out as it is presented in the middle voice in the introduction and in some of the later variations as well. In the first variation, performers should be aware that there is a suggestion of an additional four measures in the second half of the theme, starting at m. 44 (Figure 4). The reason is that the second phrase is incomplete without the supplementary measures, making the first variation four measures shorter than the rest.<sup>4</sup> However, other evidence suggests that the shortened presentation of the theme in the first variation could be the result of a musical choice, mainly through the examination of the manuscript printed in 1826.<sup>5</sup> Either way, a performer can find the additional four measures in the editorial comments of the Henle edition of Schubert sonatas and make a choice for his or her performance.

Figure 4: 2<sup>nd</sup> mvmt, mm.41-45



The third movement is in the form of scherzo and trio, a typical treatment of a middle movement of a sonata. In this distinct form, Schubert denotes highly detailed articulation

<sup>4</sup> David Goldberger, "An Unexpected New Source," *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* vol. 6, no. 1 (Summer, 1982), <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 1, 2016), 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

especially in treatment of the theme of the scherzo. The opening motive in the first phrase is slurred and then followed by a staccato in the subsequent measures. The repetition of the motive in m. 5 however has the addition of an accent on the downbeat without the staccato in the following group (Figure 5). The placement of his slurs adds further instruction due to its unconventional pattern that ties over the bar line rather than being divided by the measure. Naturally, stronger emphasis is put on the upbeat of a previous measure rather than the downbeat of the next. As the piece progresses, some of his phrases are differentiated with *portato* markings, making the third movement the most meticulous in articulation out of the four.

Figure 5: 3<sup>rd</sup> mvmt, mm.1-9

The musical score for measures 1-9 of the 3rd movement is presented in a grand staff. The tempo is marked 'Allegro vivace'. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. A crescendo (*cresc.*) is indicated over the first five measures, leading to a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The music features various articulations, including slurs and accents, and includes fingerings such as 3, 2, 1, 5, and 3. The bass line consists of eighth notes and chords, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 9.

The last movement, marked *allegro vivace*, is in rondo form. The lively *vivace* cannot be immediately felt, however, since all of the opening is to be played *legato* (marked *legato* on score) and *pianissimo* in irregular phrase groups. It becomes more obvious in the following B section with a sudden *forte*. There are many elements of surprise throughout the piece, with the last return of the A section taking form in D minor instead of the expected A minor. The transitions are bold and dramatic; rapid crescendos and sudden changes to parallel keys add to its intensity. Brilliantly decorated with fast octave leaps and trills, this concluding movement is technically challenging compared to his other works. Because his works are well known for their lyricism, not technique, the rondo offers a side of Schubert that is infrequently heard.

## CHAPTER 2

## ALEXANDER SCRIBIN: FIVE PRELUDES, OP. 74

Scriabin is a significant composer in piano repertoire. Like Chopin, he composed mainly for the piano with the exception of orchestral works. In addition, he expanded the genres championed by Chopin such as études, fantasies, impromptus, mazurkas, nocturnes, preludes, sonatas, and waltzes. While Chopin's works maintain their stylistic consistency, Scriabin's works gradually depart from the conventional harmonic language, ultimately employing nontraditional scales as their framework. Written in 1914, the five preludes represent Scriabin's third compositional period, the most radical out of the three where he experimented with unusual scales and dissonances.<sup>6</sup>

Educated at the Moscow Conservatory from 1882 to 1892, Scriabin represents a unique perspective of the Western tradition of romanticism as the only Russian representative.<sup>7</sup> He is also exceptional in that he integrates his philosophy to his music, especially his fascination with Mysticism, a spiritual concept of realizing one's inner self.<sup>8</sup> His preludes embody his effort to express this idea and his "search for harmonic complexes that would reflect unheard sonorities."<sup>9</sup> Scriabin utilizes compositional tools such as the octatonic scale and self-identifying chords such as the Mystic Chord to achieve this sonority.<sup>10</sup>

The musical language of Op. 74 cannot be strictly labeled atonal. Scriabin often sets an anchor for the listener to feel the tonal center and manipulates the tritone intervals to give a sense of arrival without the traditional methods of closure. Throughout the set, the chosen moods are

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<sup>6</sup> Kirby, *Music for Piano: A Short History*, 320.

<sup>7</sup> Boris de Schloezer, *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 327.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 326.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>10</sup> Chia-Lun Chang, "Five Preludes Opus 74 by Alexander Scriabin: the Mystic Chord as Basis for New Means of Harmonic Progression" (D.M.A diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2006), <http://lib.utexas.edu> (accessed May 1, 2016), 18.

collectively in a similar realm, from heartbreaking, contemplative to indecisive. Even in the more active preludes, the overall unsettled, dark mood sets the atmosphere.

The expression marks of the first prelude, *Douloureux déchirant*, not only set the mood of the first prelude but serve as a precursor to the rest of the set as well. Meaning “painful and heartbreaking”, each succeeding chord feels unresolved and dissonant, avoiding resolution of the built up tension. The heartbreak can be felt in the beginning chromatic motive (Figure 6), composed of the tritone bass (B#, F#), an interval of perfect fourth (E, A) and a major third (C#, E#). This initial chord bears resemblance to Scriabin’s Mystic Chord, a well-used compositional tool that contains “eighth-to-fourteenth partials of C (omitting the twelfth), which are arranged in ascending fourths, thus, C-F#-Bb-E-A-D”.<sup>11</sup> (Figure 7)

Figure 6: 1<sup>st</sup> prelude, mm.1-2



Figure 7: Mystic Chord



These two chords both contain tritone elements, an interval which Scriabin used frequently to avoid tonal resolution. The following chart (Figure 8) demonstrates how a tritone substitute can alter its resolution:

<sup>11</sup> Kirby, *Music for Piano: A Short History*, 31.

Figure 8: “Alternative cadential harmonizations of the tritone”<sup>12</sup>

The first group (mm. 1-2) shows B $\flat$  resolving up as a leading tone, and F $\flat$  resolving down as the seventh of the bass note G. The second group (mm. 3-4) switches the function, with B $\flat$  as the seventh and the enharmonically spelled F (E $\sharp$ ) as the leading tone, resulting in an inward motion towards to F $\sharp$  major triad. The third group (mm. 5-6) shows alternate spelling of the second group. This potential in a tritone interval is used to increase the number of possibilities of resolutions, helping to create an atmosphere without confining it to the traditional tonal harmony.

The second prelude, marked *Très lent, contemplatif* has a slow, ostinato bass throughout the piece. The tritone elements can again be found here (Figure 9).

Figure 9: 2<sup>nd</sup> prelude, mm. 1-4

The two alternating perfect 5ths in an eighth-note pattern have tritone relationships in their respective voices, C $\sharp$  leading to G, and F $\sharp$  to C $\flat$ . While the intervallic structure varies as

<sup>12</sup> Richard Taruskin, "Chapter 4 Extinguishing the “Petty ‘I’ ” (Transcendentalism, I)," in *Music in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, n.d.), <http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com> (accessed May 1, 2016).

the piece progresses, the strong foundation on the F# bass remains unchanged. The character between the first and second prelude is similar – these tie together as the passive and meditative set, a contrast to the more energetic third prelude.

Two contrasting statements make up the structure of the third prelude, *Allegro drammatico*. The beginning statement presents a succession of rising motives with a building *crescendo*, or in Scriabin's own words, "rises to a cry."<sup>13</sup> The second statement is a long descending line, in a solo voice in the right hand, supported by a clustered tritone chord in the bass. The two statements then reappear a tritone lower, resulting in binary form, ABA'B'. Scriabin is extremely strict with this structure, presenting an exact transposition of A and B as A' and B'. The only additional material can be found at the end, with the two measures of codetta. The third prelude therefore is understandably described by others as "meticulously planned, (and) it does not seem to allow for any alterations."<sup>14</sup>

Besides the distinct tempo difference from the previous two, the third prelude is unique in its treatment of the tritone. Here, its usage is macroscopic, applying large-scale tritone relationships. The following graph (Figure 10) delineates the tritones within the motives.

Figure 10: 3rd prelude mm. 1-7

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<sup>13</sup> Simon Nicholls, liner notes to *Cinq préludes, Op 74*, Piers Lane, Hyperion Records CDH55450, CD 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Chia-Lun Chang, "Five Preludes Opus 74 by Alexander Scriabin: the Mystic Chord as Basis for New Means of Harmonic Progression", 30.

Scriabin continues past the dramatic interruption of the third prelude to return to the mysterious atmosphere of the set with the fourth prelude, *Lent, vague, indécis*. The ambiguity derives from the unsettling qualities of the melody line and the unclear tonal centers of the supporting chords. Often, the soprano line has a half step dissonance with its harmony as indicated in Figure 11. Although the conflict is displaced by an octave or more, the tension can be felt.

Figure 11: 4<sup>th</sup> prelude mm. 1-2 with displaced half steps

Figure 12: 4<sup>th</sup> prelude mm. 21-24



There is a slight change to the final chord as compared to the beginning. Both opening and closing chords share common tones C-C#-E-A, or a stack of A minor and A major triad. The arrangement of the triads is inverted, the first with A major on bottom and A minor on top, and the final chord vice versa.

The final prelude concludes the set with a contrasting fast movement. Similar to the third prelude, the form is binary with two contrasting phrases. Scriabin also transposes the motives by a tritone interval here, now in a downward motion. Another tritone relationship exists in the bass, in beat 3 of m. 1 and in beat 1 of m. 2. This is the result of the upward movement of the top note of the perfect fourth interval by a half step, from B $\flat$  to B $\natural$ .

Figure 13: 5<sup>th</sup> prelude mm. 1-2

Bearing the directions *Fier, belliqueux*, or proud, warlike, Scriabin uses rhythmic irregularity to express these emotions. Of the five preludes, this one is the most aggressive, with the bass notes punctuating the beats like a war drum. The use of five note groupings in the left hand in m. 2 portrays turbulence in the warlike atmosphere. In some ways, it is reminiscent of Chopin's rhythmic divisions, especially with Scriabin's widely ranged descending scalar passages.

## CHAPTER 3

## J.S BACH: PRELUDE AND FUGUE IN G MAJOR, BWV 884

Compiled during J.S Bach's appointment as the Cantor and Director of Music in Leipzig in 1724, the second book of preludes and fugues, like the first book, explores all key areas. The prelude and fugue in G major, BWV 884, like many of Bach's compositions, features perpetual motion. The constant flow of sixteenth note divisions are rarely interrupted. One can imagine a harpsichord as its original medium for the prelude, with continuous, rapid sixteenth notes in both hands.

The prelude is organized into two halves, with each part repeated. There are four reoccurring figures: the first motive with layered eighth note and sixteenth note combinations, mm. 1-7, the transition material at m.8, the sequence down with the mixture of rhythmic materials, mm. 9-11, and end material at mm. 15-16 where the constant motion is briefly paused at beat two of m. 15 and beat 1 of m. 16 (Figure 14). The first part arrives at the half cadence at the end of m.16 and the second part begins in its dominant key in D. The prelude concludes with  $vii^{\circ}7-V7-I$  cadence with the same concluding material from the first section.

The prelude has an energetic, joyous character and the fugue continues this mood. In three voices, the subject starts in its tonic key of G in the soprano voice (Figure 15). Its answer begins in the alto line at m.8 and the final entrance begins in the bass at m. 15. The countersubjects are also introduced, one beginning in m. 8 and the second in m. 16. The first countersubject is repeated in its simplified form in m. 14, a measure before the second countersubject entrance. Throughout this fugue, the first countersubject is always in an altered form, sometimes having a different rhythmic pattern (m. 33) or a displacement between the voices (m. 40). The last time the first countersubject appears is in mm. 65-70 in the bass line. It's

the most manipulated among the repeated occurrences, having only the character of the descending line and emphasis on the beats 1 and 3.

After the subject has been stated in all three voices in the exposition, two episodes occur, each using a different contrapuntal technique of imitation and sequence.<sup>15</sup> Two complete repetitions of the subject with its countersubjects occur at m. 33 and m. 40, both times in a minor key. With recitative-like figures leading up to the final section, the codetta contains the full statement of the subject, now in the alto voice with an octave lower than its original entrance in the beginning (Figure 16).

Figure 14: prelude, mm. 1-16

The image displays a musical score for the prelude, measures 1 through 16. It is written in G major and 3/4 time. The score is presented in four systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system (measures 1-4) features a descending eighth-note subject in the treble and a supporting bass line. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a 'Transition' section in the treble. The third system (measures 9-12) continues the subject and bass line. The fourth system (measures 13-16) concludes the prelude. Blue annotations include brackets grouping measures, a circled measure 15, and a circled measure 16. Handwritten notes '1st phase' and '2nd phase' are visible in the first two systems.

<sup>15</sup> Ebenezer Prout, *Analysis of J.S. Bach's Forty-Eight Fugues* (London: E. Ashdown, 1910), 75.

Figure 15: fugue, mm. 1-18 with subject and countersubjects

Figure 15 shows the first 18 measures of a fugue. The score is in 3/8 time and D major. It features three voices: the subject (measures 1-5), the first countersubject (measures 6-10), and the second countersubject (measures 11-15). The subject is marked with a green box '1'. The first countersubject is marked with an orange box '2'. The second countersubject is marked with a green box '3'. Measure numbers 1, 5, 10, and 15 are indicated below the staves.

Figure 16: fugue, mm. 61-72

Figure 16 shows measures 61-72 of a fugue. The score is in 3/8 time and D major. It features three voices. A black arrow points to a specific measure in the upper voice at measure 65. Measure numbers 65 and 70 are indicated below the staves.

## CHAPTER 4

## IGOR STRAVINSKY: TROIS MOUVEMENTS DE PÉTROUCHKA

Composed in 1921, *Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka* is a piano transcription of the ballet *Pétrouchka* by Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971). The ballet itself was composed in 1910-11 and was later revised in 1947 with slightly different scoring. From Stravinsky's early compositional period, *Pétrouchka* is the second ballet from his works, between *The Firebird* (1909-10) and *The Rite of Spring* (1911-13).

The origin of the ballet can be traced to Stravinsky's meeting with the famous impresario Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929) in Clarens, Switzerland in 1910, following their huge success of *The Firebird*. Diaghilev had come for the sketches of *The Rite of Spring* but was pleasantly surprised by the idea of *Pétrouchka*, "a puppet, suddenly endowed with life, exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of *arpeggi*."<sup>16</sup> The story was further enhanced by the set designer and scenario writer Alexandre Benois (1870-1928) who thought the puppet's "coming to life should be accompanied by suffering."<sup>17</sup>

A combined product of Stravinsky, Diaghilev, and Benois, the storyline of *Pétrouchka* is a fairy tale gone wrong. Depicted by four tableaux, the four main characters are the three puppets, Pétrouchka, the Ballerina, the Moor, and the Magician who brings them to life. The puppets are introduced to the public at the Shrovetide fair, or Mardi Gras. They showcase their charms through Russian dance, revealing the personalities of the puppets. Pétrouchka is clumsy and child-like, contrasting to the Ballerina's perfect elegance. The Moor is strong and handsome. When the three puppets' dance is over, the scene quickly changes to Pétrouchka being kicked

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<sup>16</sup> Charles Hamm, "The Genesis of Petrushka," in *Petrushka*, ed. Charles Hamm. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967), 5.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

into his room. Despite his joyous dance at the festival, Pétrouchka is unhappy and pathetic. He hates his life and the Magician. The only love he feels is ruined when he scares off the Ballerina. The third scene is even more bleak; the Ballerina falls for the Moor and Pétrouchka tries to fight the obviously stronger Moor. The last tableau brings the scene back to the Shrovetide fair, now nighttime, when the festivities are interrupted by the three puppets rushing out to the crowd. Pétrouchka is chased by the Moor and is slain by the his sword. This upsets the crowd but the Magician calms them down by reminding them that he is just a puppet. When everything fades and the Magician is dragging Pétrouchka's body, the ghost of Pétrouchka appears, mocking the Magician.

The transition of the ballet to the solo piano transcription, *Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka*, was an adaptive process. The piano duet and Pianola version of *Pétrouchka* had been written by 1918, both including modifications to the score. Sources such as the sketch for the piano version in the Library of Congress indicate that Stravinsky drew from the previously existing sketches of *Pétrouchka* to complete the solo version in 1921.<sup>18</sup>

During this transformation, the pianist Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982) is thought to be credited for translating many of the orchestral gestures to the pianistic language. In his autobiography *My Many Years*, Rubinstein recalls teaching Stravinsky pedaling techniques to enhance a part of *Pétrouchka* which made Stravinsky declare that he would write a sonata based of *Pétrouchka* for Rubinstein.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, in 1921 the *Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka* was published with the dedication, "to Arthur Rubinstein."<sup>20</sup>

The premiere of the work took place one year after its publication in Paris on December

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<sup>18</sup> Charles Joseph, *Stravinsky and the Piano* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1983), 141.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Rimm, *Twentieth-Century Piano Classics* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1999), 3.

26, 1922.<sup>21</sup> However, it was not Rubinstein who performed it. Instead, French pianist Jean Wiener (1896-1982) played the *Trois mouvements*, despite Stravinsky's warning against the technically demanding piece. As for Rubinstein, there is no recording of him playing the *Trois mouvements*, much like the previously written *Rag Time*, Stravinsky's solo piano transcription also inspired by Rubinstein. Some accounts do exist of Rubinstein including the piece in his recital repertoire. For example, his performance of the piece at the Sydney Town Hall in 1937 was described by one critic as a "barbaric frenzy."<sup>22</sup>

As title indicates, *Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka* includes just three out of the four segments in the orchestra version: Russian dance, Pétrouchka's room, and the Shrovetide fair.

1. *Danse russe* (Russian dance)

In the context of the storyline, this takes place at the very end of the festival in the first tableau. It begins the three puppets' dance in a lively duple meter. With the average duration of just three minutes, this movement can stand by itself as an encore and has been concertized by many virtuosos including Maurizio Pollini, Alexis Wiessenberg, and Yuja Wang.

In ternary form, the opening is percussive in nature, utilizing massive chords on the white keys with the tempo *allegro giusto*. Lively in character, Stravinsky utilizes duple meter with detached bass chords to establish the dance-like mood. This is contrasted briefly at the section at m.59 in A major. In this particular melody, Stravinsky refers to a song for St. John's Eve, a religious festival at the time of the June solstice.<sup>23</sup> Comparing the two tunes, one can see that Stravinsky kept the distinct rhythmic character of the tune as well as the irregularity of the

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<sup>21</sup> Charles Joseph, *Stravinsky and the Piano* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1983), 139.

<sup>22</sup> "Rubinstein", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, September 8, 1937,12.

<sup>23</sup> Frederick W. Sternfeld, "Some Russian Folk Songs in Stravinsky's Petrouchka," in *Petrushka*, ed. Charles Hamm. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967), 208.

structural phrase (Figures 17 and 18). His use of folk festival tunes appears again throughout this work.

With the rapid octave passages and wide leaps in the left hand, one must consider technique within the context of one's stamina. At moments, the music's forward, driving motion can get away from the performer's control, resulting in loss of pacing and thus creating tension in the hands. In the technical aspect, this piece must be approached cautiously.

Figure 17: 1<sup>st</sup> mvmt, mm. 57-65

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system consists of a treble and bass staff. A green oval highlights a melodic line in the treble staff. The second system also consists of a treble and bass staff, with another green oval highlighting a similar melodic line. Performance markings include 'm.dr.', 'm.g.', and 'etc. simile'.

Figure 18: Song for St. John's Eve<sup>24</sup>

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a vocal piece. The first system has the lyrics "I am run - ning, run - ning in the sun - shine". The second system has the lyrics "through the har - vest field run - ning I reach a shrine".

<sup>24</sup> Frederick W. Sternfeld, "Some Russian Folk Songs in Stravinsky's Petrouchka," 209.



## 2. *Chez Pétrouchka* (Pétrouchka's Room)

This is the most colorful out of the three movements as well as being the most literal transcription of the ballet. Many different colors of solo instruments are illustrated in an improvisatory manner, making more room for *rubato*. This is also where, in both the orchestral and piano versions, the “Pétrouchka chord”<sup>25</sup> is introduced, a F# major chord stacked with a C major chord (Figure 19). The two triads share no common tones, an intentional choice made by Stravinsky. The bitonality of the two distant major chords which creates dissonance, represents the hidden sides of the puppet's life.<sup>26</sup>

Figure 19: 2<sup>nd</sup> mvmt, mm. 7-12



The second movement can be described as violent, and highly emotional. At moments, Pétrouchka enjoys the simplicity of being a puppet with plain, sweet melodies. Yet the opening conflict of the two chords returns multiple times throughout the piece, each time with more tension.

In this arrangement of the second movement, Stravinsky provides a measure-to-measure transcription without any cuts. The one exception is made in the *cadenza*, where he expands the original measures played by a solo clarinet. He repeats the phrase in the solo piano version and also makes it idiomatic to the piano, adding harmonic punctuations throughout the *cadenza*.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Taruskin, "Chez Pétrouchka- Harmony and Tonality "chez" Stravinsky", p.269, 19th-Century Music, vol. 10, no. 3, (n.d.), <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 1, 2016), pp. 265-286.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Taruskin. "Chapter 3 Aristocratic Maximalism." in *Music in the Early Twentieth Century*, Oxford University Press. (New York, USA, n.d.), <http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com> (accessed May 1, 2016).

### 3. *La semaine grasse* (Shrovetide fair)

Perhaps the most difficult of the three, the last movement demands much technique for the entire time without rest. The transcription differs greatly to the original ballet. Many scenes are jumbled together. In contrast to the ballet, where we experience moments of silence following Pétrouchka's death, the piano transcription condenses the gap and crescendos into the final chord.

Besides the obvious challenge of technique, the performer must consider different aspects of musicianship in order to make this set successful. Because it is programmatic, much of it depends on how colorful and descriptive the performer can paint the scenes. Otherwise, it is easy to sound unorganized and messy. Bringing out the different colors of the instrumentation is also important, especially in the third movement.

Due to such difficulties, *Trois mouvements de Pétrouchka* is not often heard live in concert halls. Even Rubinstein found the arrangement hard to approach. However, Stravinsky told him to “make whatever changes he saw fit in order to render it playable without having to retard the dynamic progress of the piece.”<sup>27</sup> Whether this exclusively applies to Rubinstein or to future pianists as well is debatable. Either way, the performance of this piece could bring vitality to the concert program and bring not only a sense of technical accomplishment to the performer but the satisfaction of musical storytelling as well.

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<sup>27</sup> Harvey Sachs, *Rubinstein: A Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1995), 199.

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