

*Ninth Annual Meeting of the*

❧ **MUSIC THEORY SOCIETY OF THE MID-ATLANTIC** ❧

*George Washington University, Washington, D.C.*

*Friday and Saturday March 18–19, 2011*

**ABSTRACTS**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 18**

**12:00–2:00 Graduate Student Workshop: Data Mining in the Bach Chorales**

Ian Quinn, Yale University

**2:15–3:45 Organizational Hierarchy in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Music**

Vincent Benitez, Penn State University, Chair

**“Neither Tonal or Atonal”?: A Statistical Root-Motion Analysis of Ligeti’s Late Triadic Works**

*Kris Shaffer, Yale University*

A number of works from the latter part of György Ligeti’s career are saturated by major and minor triads and other tertian harmonies. Ligeti claims that such structures are “neither ‘avant-garde’ nor ‘traditional,’ neither tonal nor atonal,” and analysts commonly characterize these pieces as making use of the “vocabulary” but not the “syntax” of tonal music. The most prolific of these analysts refers to Ligeti’s triads as “context-free atonal harmony . . . without a sense of harmonic function or a sense of history.” However, to date, no detailed analysis of Ligeti’s triadic sequences has been presented in support of these claims.

This paper presents an analysis of Ligeti’s six most heavily triadic movements from the late 1970s to the end of his career—*Hungarian Rock* (1978), *Passacaglia ungherese* (1978), “Fanfares” (Étude no. 4 for piano, 1985), and the last three movements of *Sippal, dobbal, nádihegedüvel* (2000). Computer software designed by the author is used to analyze the root-progression intervals of Ligeti’s harmonic sequences and compare the results to the corresponding statistical properties of two tonal corpora—J.S. Bach’s chorales and a collection of seventy representative pop/rock songs. The results of this analysis suggest that Ligeti’s triadic sequences contain meaningful syntactic structures that reflect a consciousness—and an influence—of historical tonal-harmonic practices.

## **A Voicing-Centered Approach to Additive Harmony in the French Impressionist Repertoire**

*Damian Blättler, Yale University*

This paper presents a voicing-centered model of chord structure and function for additive harmonic structures in the French Impressionist repertoire. In giving pitch-space voicing a foundational role, the model corrects the widely acknowledged but as-of-yet-unaddressed inability of the conventional extended-triad model to (a) explain how chords are constructed and (b) describe how those pitch combinations function in context. This project also enriches the narrative of the development of Western tonal language in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most research on this process details how innovation within certain horizontal-domain constraints allowed for the incorporation into tonal contexts of new harmonic successions; this paper demonstrates that a similar process can be read in the vertical domain, wherein adherence to certain *vertical*-domain constraints (e.g. skeletal chord voicings derived from common-practice chords, and generalized principles of consonant, “chordable” pitch combination) allowed for the incorporation into tonal contexts of new *chords*.

The model consists of two parts. The first part concerns chord construction, and draws on music cognition research and several set-theoretical mechanisms to formulate a list of constraints on voicing; this list pares down the entire set of possible pitch-space chords into a set congruent with the range of verticalities found in the French Impressionist repertoire. The second part describes the “tonal plausibilities” of that set of verticalities – the ways in which skeletal portions of chords allow novel pitch formations to access common-practice listening habits. Analytic examples are taken from the music of Chabrier, Debussy, Koechlin, Ravel, and Satie.

## **Organizational Strategies in Selected Large-Scale Works of Claude Debussy**

*Gregory J. Marion, University of Saskatchewan*

The paper scrutinizes the different approaches Debussy adopted with respect to organizational strategies in his orchestral and in his chamber works—distinct genres largely representative of unique phases of Debussy’s compositional career. I make the point that while these organizational strategies are applied in homogeneous ways among the orchestral works from *Nocturnes* (1897-99) through *Images* (1905-13), other organizational strategies resonate in the late chamber pieces: the *Cello Sonata* (1915); the *Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp* (1915-16); and the *Violin Sonata* (1916-18). Methodological approaches adopted from Pierre Boulez address the triple concern of unity, individuality, and interrelationship among Debussy’s orchestral works, where the concept of “coherence” as a large-scale unifier stands in the place of “cohesion.” In the three late sonatas, however, complex organizational strategies often radiate outward from a particular nodal point—shaping the perception of earlier and later moments in those works.

**4:00–5:00 Schenkerian Disjunction and Linkage**  
Rachel Bergman, George Mason University, Chair

**Potential Energy and Melodic Disjunction in a Brahms Intermezzo**  
*Melissa Hoag, Oakland University*

Despite its serene character, subtle conflict is introduced even in the earliest measures of Brahms's Intermezzo, op.116/6, which feature a series of descending motions presented in the upper voice countered by rising chromatic lines in the inner voice. Disruptions of varying degrees of subtlety accrue significance as the first part of the Intermezzo unfolds. This paper examines the multiple disruptions occurring throughout op. 116/6 through voice-leading analysis and identification of several melodic disjunctions, a concept explicated in Hoag 2011.

Two principal disruptions arise in the A section, both of which result in the implication of  $\hat{5}$  in the upper voice; fulfillment of this implication, despite its strength, is purposefully avoided. The first disruption is initiated by a neighboring motion (B-C#) in the upper voice that fails to resolve as a typical neighbor tone would; retrospectively, this C# can be heard as displaying a sort of potential energy whose kinetic ambitions are fulfilled only gradually. The second disruption results in an even stronger implication of  $\hat{5}$  in the upper voice, as well as a compelling implication of  $\hat{8}$ —an implication which is also avoided for the duration of the A section. These abandoned trajectories resonate beyond the otherwise tonally closed A section, and through enlargement of a foreground motive from the opening of the Intermezzo, the work's coda fulfills not only the basic requirement of tonal closure, but also the linear trajectories begun in the A section.

**A Framework for Describing Linkage Technique in Tonal Music**  
*Michael Baker, University of Kentucky*

Investigation into motivic relationships in Schenker's view of musical structure have generally focused on motivic parallelisms, where a motive is expressed on two or more structural levels. However, Schenker also discussed another type of motivic device in his writings called Knüpftechnik or "linkage technique," a situation in which a new musical phrase or section takes as its initial idea the end of the immediately preceding one and then continues independently. Whereas the concept of motivic parallelism has been widely discussed in the Schenkerian literature, linkage technique has largely escaped analytical curiosity, with very little of a systematic demonstration of the multitude of ways in which this phenomenon can occur in tonal music.

This paper examines Schenker's concept of linkage technique using a nine-fold framework that simultaneously tracks relationships in pitch and rhythm between different motive-forms. While the framework is concerned primarily with pitch and rhythmic aspects of motivic connections, composers often draw upon changes in dynamics, articulation, and instrumentation, which can either support or compete with the linkage technique. The resulting competition between parameters often intensifies the distinct sense of motivic repetition despite large-scale sectional change characteristic of linkage technique in tonal music.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19**

**9:00–10:30 Pathways Though Pitch and Pitch-class Space in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Music**

Jonathan Kochavi, Swarthmore College, Chair

**Nonatonic Collections, Intersections, Systems, and Towers: the Pitch Structure of Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony**

*Cameron Logan, University of Connecticut*

Attempts to analyze the Fourth Symphony of Ralph Vaughan Williams often follow a method proposed by the composer himself. In his program note, Vaughan Williams describes the two main motives which open the symphony and then points out the transformations and recurrences of these motives throughout the four movements. Lionel Pike successfully applies this method of close motivic analysis into a unified view of the symphony. In particular, Pike shows how the first motive projects a long-range scheme of pitch centrality and how a union of the Lydian and the Phrygian mode explains much of the pitch materials. While the use of modal elements is certainly familiar in the music of Vaughan Williams, a growing number of scholars, including Walter Aaron Clark, Anthony Barone, and David Manning, suggest that the octatonic collection plays an important role in structuring the composer's modernist output, of which the Fourth Symphony is a well-known exemplar.

This paper explores the possibility that pitch organization in the Fourth Symphony may be better explained by utilizing a symmetrical scale far less familiar than the octatonic. The scale is set-class 9-12, the nonatonic scale. After discussing its peculiar structure, the potential for the nonatonic collection to project a network of harmonic moves between otherwise unrelated tonal regions is explained. To conclude, the paper demonstrates how the nonatonic collection is the ideal structure for explaining the Fourth Symphony's large-scale tonal relationships as well as local harmonic events and pitch constructions.

**Modeling Melody and Harmony: Cyclic Unfolding in Ginastera's String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2**

*David Sommerville, Nazareth College of Rochester*

Despite its richness, presence in the recital and concert hall, amenity to established analytic avenues, and its potential to support new directions in music-theoretic research, the music of Alberto Ginastera has received relatively little attention among the music theory community. In general, his music is regarded from one of two broad perspectives: either 1) its relationship with Argentine nationalism or 2) its tonal orientation. The former perspective considers his career based on the presence or absence of nationalistic traits, while the latter evaluates it from a more music-theoretical standpoint. Both models privilege the composer's *First String Quartet* (1948) and the *Second String Quartet* (1958) as critical agents of stylistic change, yet neither has received significant attention among scholars engaging the repertoire. This paper considers the two quartets in the context of these two views then develops an analytical methodology designed to integrate the surface symmetry and cyclic symmetrical pc collections (octatonic, whole tone) into the larger context of methodology fundamentally rooted in the interval cycle-based theory of

George Perle and its interaction with transformational and set-theory. After establishing and developing the necessary analytic machinery and terminology for fruitful analysis of Ginastera's quartets, the paper ends with the consideration of related questions about this wider application.

### **Gauges of Tonality and Pitch Space Paradox in Elliott Smith's "Everything Means Nothing to Me"**

***Rob Schultz, University of Massachusetts Amherst***

In his groundbreaking article on 19<sup>th</sup>-century enharmonicism, Daniel Harrison (2002) discusses two opposing poles of musical experience. The first is claimed for Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic philosopher who observed that one cannot step into the same river twice. The second is that of Plato, who famously posited the existence of universal forms. Citing music theory's longstanding preference for the latter with respect to tonal and harmonic structure, Harrison instead adopts the former, and invokes the tonally unconformed Riemannian *tonnetz* as a particularly effective apparatus in this regard.

When we fix our analytical gaze upon the tonal realm of 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century pop and rock music, however, the Heraclitean position appears to dramatically decrease, rather than increase in relevance. The repetitive formal structures that characterize the vast majority of this repertoire compress an abundance of thematic and tonal recurrence into a comparatively miniscule span of time. These conditions hardly seem capable of sustaining the extended tonal journeys that any reasonable analytical summoning of Heraclitus all but demands.

In this paper, however, I argue for the existence of at least one noteworthy exception: American singer-songwriter Elliott Smith's (1969–2002) haunting song "Everything Means Nothing to Me" (*Figure 8*, 2000). Despite its brevity and relatively conventional formal design, the song's tonal structure masterfully exploits the Heraclitean/Platonic paradox in various ways. I therefore put forth an interpretation that incorporates both perspectives (following Brower (2008)), and ultimately provides a richer, more meaningful account of this remarkable song.

### **10:45–11:45 Pedagogy—Old and New**

Mark Janello, Peabody Conservatory (of the Johns Hopkins University), Chair

### **Toward a First-Semester Curriculum in Figured Bass Theory at the Keyboard**

***Dan Prindle, University of Massachusetts Amherst***

In the literature on music theory pedagogy, it is a widely cited problem that harmony texts and curricula frequently emphasize the labeling of sonorities, rather than emphasizing the voice-leading connections between those sonorities. Figured bass realization at the keyboard, a significant pedagogical tool for some of the greatest composers of the Baroque era and beyond, offers a way to teach basic voice-leading relationships without recourse to such concepts as chords, inversions, roman numerals, or theories of harmonic function. Following Schenker, scholars such as Forte, Rothgeb, Karpinski, and White have noted that students, in order to better understand the complex interaction between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of music, should be taught to understand voice leading before any harmonic labeling system is introduced. To that end, this paper proposes a first-semester curriculum in figured bass realization at the

keyboard that can be taught prior to any harmonic theory. Selected examples from Handel, Heinichen, C.P.E. Bach, and many others, along with a variety of idiomatic harmonic progressions, are assembled into a logical succession that provide a basis for instructing students in figured bass.

**Shapey's Worksheet as a Pedagogical Resource**  
*Christian Carey, Westminster Choir College of Rider University*

From 1981 until his death in 2002, Ralph Shapey repeatedly employed serial procedures in his compositions. Rather than using a 12X12 matrix, Shapey employed a 6X12 array he called the Mother Lode Worksheet. Patrick Finley has pointed out the worksheet's connection to common practice tonality; principally in its voice leading and in Shapey's use of it to derive unorthodox non-tonal yet regularly articulated cadences. Joseph Straus accentuates the 12-tone aspects of its design, delineating its partitioning into tetrachords and the array's near symmetry. Thus, the Mother Lode bears out Shapey's own statements about his compositional practice combining both "radical" (12-tone) and "traditional" (tonal) elements.

After several decades of teaching at the University of Chicago, Shapey created a primer outlining his approach to composition pedagogy. *The Basic Course in Music Composition* doesn't employ the Mother Lode Worksheet. But many of its approaches to manipulating both pitch and rhythm reflect the construction and deployment of the Mother Lode.

Given its flexibility, the worksheet can be a useful pedagogical resource in a variety of contexts. This paper explores three brief lesson ideas that employ the worksheet. It's presented alongside exercises from the *Basic Course* in a composition class, in a theory lecture discussing serial transformations and post-tonal voice leading, and in an applied composition lesson as an example of a compositional space and an entry point for a student to learn to organize precompositional materials in a "worksheet" format.

**1:15–2:45     **Keynote, Prof. Ian Quinn, Yale University****  
What Counts When You're Counting Notes?

**3:00–4:00     **Compositional Process in C.P.E. Bach, Haydn, Beethoven****  
Suhne Ahn, Peabody Conservatory (of the Johns Hopkins University), Chair

**Innovation and Improvisation: Beethoven's Sketches for the first movement of Op. 31, No.1**  
*Brian Moseley, Furman University and the CUNY Graduate Center*

By most accounts Beethoven's Op. 31 piano sonatas represent something entirely new in his oeuvre and a critical moment in the genre. As a group they display a conceptual leap and a spirit of innovation. For this reason, Beethoven's sketches for the sonatas—most of which exist in their entirety—are particularly interesting. In the case of the "Tempest" sonata, for instance, Beethoven's only sketch for the first movement is so extraordinary that it seems to represent a "concentrated shorthand" for the finished movement (Gülke).

A similar sketch exists for the first movement of Op. 31, no.1, though this sketch problematizes the notion that Beethoven wrote these sonatas with their innovations in mind. The sketches for this movement, which I examine in this presentation, show that Beethoven often forgot, rejected, or simply abandoned many of the sonata's most audacious features: the puzzling opening rhythm is sketched and then forgotten, only to reemerge later. Similarly, the bold modulation to the major mediant is foreshadowed in the sketches, but ultimately abandoned, only to appear in the first edition. My presentation promotes understanding Beethoven's sketches for this movement as a "battlefield" where the improvisatory process of sketching leads the composer toward the finished product rather than preconceived notions of innovation. In order to illuminate this process, I examine the sketches from a variety of analytical perspectives: form, phrase and melodic construction, and voice-leading.

**Storm and Stress, Form and Process: Compositional Strategies in Haydn's and C.P.E. Bach's Symphonies of the Early 1770's**  
*Jason D. Yust, University of Alabama*

The early 1770s were a moment of enthusiastic experimentation with the musical expression of extreme emotions, what is sometimes referred to as music's *Sturm und Drang* period. This paper examines two intensely dramatic minor key finales from that period: no. 5 of Bach's symphonies for Baron von SWEITEN (Wq. 182) and Haydn's no. 44 "Trauersymphonie."

Following Janet Schmalfeldt, I interpret the pieces with a hybrid analytic method combining the form-functional analysis of William Caplin with Schenkerian analysis. A Schenkerian reading can be summarized by identifying the basic linear process associated with each formal unit. Formal units can be self-contained, initiating and completing a linear process within the unit, or structurally incomplete and continuous with other formal units. The hybrid method highlights the hierarchical and partially recursive aspects of both theories. Haydn's finale uses similar formal structures, expressed through similar means, at different levels, and also uses hidden repetition in its tonal structure.

Bach's and Haydn's finales exhibit the same overall formal scheme: an expanded parallel binary form, which is unusual in Haydn's oeuvre but common in Bach's. Unlike Bach, Haydn restates the main theme at the beginning of the second part in an unflinchingly developmental mode, a feature that is well captured by Caplin's theory. This suggests that Haydn (unlike Bach) views the parallel binary as a variant of sonata form, in which, using Caplin's term, the large-scale functions of development and recapitulation are *fused*.

**4:00–5:00 Upbeat and DownBeat**

Fernando Benadon, American University, Chair

**Hypermeter, Metrical Dissonance, and Metrical Ambiguity in the Waltzes of Joseph Lanner**

*Jeffrey Schaeffer, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music*

This paper examines cases of hypermetrical continuity and ambiguity and selected waltz sets of Joseph Lanner. Instances of hypermetrical tension often occurs as one dance ends and the next begins. The approach taken in this paper considers metrical dissonance and metrical ambiguity.

Joseph Lanner's waltz sets (a series of waltzes to be played continuously, often with a final movement that summarizes the previous waltzes in each set) were created for balls and masques as social dances. In order for Waltz sets to be played continuously, a duple hypermeter must be present throughout. Lanner creates musical interest by playing with our expectations of hypermeter through altering our perception of weak and strong beats. He does this in several ways: he may delete a measure in order to create two strong or two weak beats in a row; he may also compose a passage that is heavily reliant on hemiola to distort our perception of triple meter (Krebs' concept of subliminal dissonance); additionally, his use of displacement dissonance can occur through the shifting of barlines; and he may incorporate direct dissonance (often times having a possible 4/4 or 3/2 meter on top of the notated 3/4 meter). Lanner's mastery of these dissonances allows each instance to be a temporary phenomenon that creates tension and gives pleasure to the dancers, and ultimately gives way to the original duple hypermeter.

**Functional Ambivalence of Dave Brubeck's "Chorale"**

*Vasil A. Cvetkov, Louisiana State University*

Dave Brubeck, well-known jazz pianist and composer, is an emblematic figure in American music. The analysis of his work within the context of the historical tradition and continuity demonstrates the sizable impact of his ideas on the contemporary music as a whole. The specific purpose of this study is to analyze the compositional style of Dave Brubeck by using the Chorale movement from his *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata*. In order to achieve this I will consider the form and its development in Brubeck's composition from an analytical perspective, by using selected sketches of the Chorale movement. Also, I intend to compare the various versions and transcriptions of the work and to classify the melodic, and harmonic, themes and motives present in the original structure of this piece. Analyses of Brubeck's works have been published, but no studies of any depth offer observations on the stylistic attributes of the Chorale movement. This investigation of a unique work from Brubeck's highly varied output should shed considerable light on his eclectic style and clarify his assimilation and adaptation of the often-noted classical tendencies in his music. By doing so, it may spark the curiosity of a new generation in Brubeck's compositional technique.

