

ANALYSIS OF A RECITAL: A REPORT ON FOUR SAXOPHONE WORKS BY  
PAUL-AGRICOLE GÉNIN, FERNANDE DECRUCK, IDA GOTKOVSKY, AND LUCIANO  
BERIO INSPIRED BY FOUR IMPORTANT SAXOPHONE FIGURES: ADOLPHE SAX,  
MARCEL MULE, DANIEL DEFFAYET, AND CLAUDE DELANGLE.

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## Abstract

In 1838, Belgian instrument maker Adolphe Sax created the saxophone. The saxophone was officially patented on June 24, 1846. Sax became the first Professor of Saxophone at the Conservatoire de Paris. This conservatoire has been and continues to be a historically important school of music in Europe. There have been four saxophone professors at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris since the instrument's creation. These professors include: Adolphe Sax (1814-1894), Marcel Mule (1901-2001), Daniel Deffayet (1922-2002), and Claude Delangle (born 1957). Each instructor has championed the saxophone to new heights by refining pedagogical approaches and by advocating for the creation of new saxophone compositions. The music examined in this document represents pieces composed for each of the four saxophone professors who have taught at the Conservatoire de Paris. Paul-Agricole Génin's composition *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour saxophone alto et piano* was inspired by Adolphe Sax, Fernande Decruck composed *Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano (1943)* for Marcel Mule, Ida Gotkovsky wrote *Variations pathétiques: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano (1980)* for Daniel Deffayet, and *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone (1980)* by Luciano Berio was dedicated to Claude Delangle. All of these pieces demonstrate how composers continually strive to expand the boundaries of the skilled saxophonists' musical style, technical facility, and overall flexibility on the saxophone. This master's report, presented as extended program notes, includes biographical information about the composers, a historical and stylistic overview of the selected compositions, and a harmonic and formal analysis of the music with respect to performance considerations.

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## Preface

The saxophone was invented in 1838 by the Belgian-born instrument maker Adolphe Sax (1814-1894). A fifteen-year patent for the instrument was granted in 1846. Composers and performers alike admired the saxophone's tonal compass and the quality and boundless variety of tonal nuances. Many preferred the sound of the saxophone over other musical instruments of the time. The saxophone's rise in popularity eventually led to its addition to the syllabus of the Paris Conservatoire under Sax himself in 1857.<sup>1</sup> There have been only four saxophone professors at the Paris Conservatoire since its invention. Each professor has championed the saxophone to new heights during his tenure at this historically important conservatoire. The pieces included in this document are related in significant ways to each of the four saxophone professors associated with this institution.

Adolphe Sax held the position of Professor of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire from 1857 to 1870. During this time, Paul-Agricole Génin (1832-1903) wrote his opus 15 *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano*. This work is not specifically dedicated to Sax himself on the manuscript, however, it was written after the composer learned of Adolphe Sax's promotion of the saxophone. The piece is featured on Claude Delangle's *Historic Saxophone* CD; a disk including works written for and published by Adolphe Sax.<sup>2</sup>

The saxophone class at the Paris Conservatoire began under the direction of Marcel Mule (1901-2001) in 1941. Mule was one of the most highly regarded saxophone performers and pedagogues of his time. He was a member of France's most prestigious military band, *la Musique de la Garde Republicaine*, and the founder of what would become known as the *Marcel Mule Saxophone Quartet*. Mule was also an active soloist throughout Europe and made a historic appearance as soloist with the Boston Symphony on a twelve-concert tour in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sadie, Stanley, and John Tyrrell. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. No. 22. New York: Grove, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Delangle, Claude, et al. *Historic saxophone*. Åkersberga, Sweden: BIS, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Rousseau, Eugene. *Le Maitre est mort, mais le saxophone vive*. DornPublications.

<http://www.dornpub.com/saxophonejournal/marcelmule.html>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

Spanish composer Fernande Decruck composed *Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano* for Marcel Mule in 1943.<sup>4</sup> This work never reached the standard saxophone repertoire, however, it does showcase virtuosic passages that would have highlighted Marcel Mule's impressive technical abilities.

Marcel Mule retired from the Conservatoire in 1968. He was succeeded by his student Daniel Deffayet (1922-2002). Deffayet began private instruction with Mule in 1938 and then studied under his tutelage at the Paris Conservatoire in 1942. Similar to Mule, Deffayet was in high demand as a solo and chamber musician, and founded the *Quatour de saxophones Daniel Deffayet* which performed for 35 years before disbanding. Deffayet may be heard on a number of historical recordings featuring solo saxophone works.<sup>5</sup> In 1980, Ida Gotkovsky composed *Variations pathétiques: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano* for Daniel Deffayet to be used as the Morceau de Concours de Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. Graduating saxophonists were required to perform Gotkovsky's work as part of a final exam and competition. Daniel Deffayet retired from the Paris Conservatoire in 1988. His successor would become the fourth saxophone instructor at this institution since the instrument's invention.

Claude Delangle (born 1957) was appointed Professor of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire in 1988. Delangle is known as a soloist, researcher, and pedagogue. He makes frequent solo and chamber music appearances across the globe and may be heard on many professional recordings. The tradition of excellence in the saxophone class at the Paris Conservatoire has continued under Delangle's direction.<sup>6</sup> It is through Claude Delangle's performance career that composer Luciano Berio became acquainted with the saxophone. Berio was so pleased with the saxophone's capabilities that he rewrote both *Sequenzas VII* and *IX* for saxophones.<sup>7</sup> *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone* will be discussed in this document.

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<sup>4</sup> Cain, Joren. *Rediscovering Fernande Decruck's Sonate En Ut# Pour Saxophone Alto (Ou Alto) Et Orchestre A Performance Analysis*. 2010. <<http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc28401>>.

<sup>5</sup> *BIOGRAFÍA - DANIEL DEFFAYET INGLES*. Adolphesax.com. <http://www.adolphesax.com/index.php/en/articulos-sp-1223929573/193-biografia-daniel-deffayet-ingles>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

<sup>6</sup> Delangle, Claude. *Claude Delangle*. <http://www.sax-delangle.com>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

<sup>7</sup> Patmore, David. "Berio, Luciano." In *Naxos Music Library*. <http://ksu.naxosmusiclibrary.com.er.lib.k-state.edu/composer/btm.asp?composerid=23443>. (accessed February 17th, 2014)

# CHAPTER 1 - Paul-Agricole Génin's *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano*

## Paul-Agricole Génin

Flute virtuoso and composer Paul-Agricole Génin (1832-1903) was born in Avignon in Southeastern France. His career as a musician centered primarily in Paris, where he held the principal flute position in the Orchestre de Vichy at the Théâtre Italien.<sup>8</sup> A majority of Génin's compositions were for flute, and he is credited with writing approximately 80 compositions for the instrument. His most popular work, *Le Carnival de Venise pour flute et piano, Op. 14 (1872)*, is a brilliant and virtuosic piece that is popular among flutists today. It is the popularity of his *Opus 14* that prompted Génin to compose *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour saxophone alto et piano*.<sup>9</sup>

### *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano*

*Variations sur un theme espagnol* is part of Paul-Agricole Génin's *Six Morceaux, Op. 15*.<sup>10</sup> The date of composition is not found on the score. However, it is safe to assume that the composition date is sometime between the years 1872 and 1873 since *Variations sur un theme espagnol* was written after Génin's *Le Carnival de Venise* became popular. *Variations sur un theme espagnol* is written in two distinct parts; Theme and Variations, Boléro. The total performance length of this work is approximately four minutes in duration.

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<sup>8</sup> Grauwels, Marc, et al. *French flute favourites*. [Place of publication not identified]: Naxos, 2002.

<http://www.naxosmusiclibrary.com>

<sup>9</sup> Beier, Mikael, et al. *Flute quartets*. [Denmark]: Danacord, 2009.

<[http://library.stanford.edu/naxos\\_id=DACOCD675-676](http://library.stanford.edu/naxos_id=DACOCD675-676)>

<sup>10</sup> Génin, Paul Agricole. *Variations sur un thème espagnol: pour saxophone alto et piano*. Paris: G. Billaudot, 2000.



## *Harmonic Structure*

Génin's Theme and Variations contains harmonic variation in addition to melodic variation. The harmonic language accompanying the original theme is simple and includes the tonic, dominant, and subdominant chords in G minor. The harmonic language remains the same for the first variation. However, the accompaniment pattern expands from three note chords to four note chords. Variation two incorporates diminished seventh chords that provide harmonic variation in addition to melodic variation (see Figure 1.2). Figure 1.2 shows the accompaniment patterns of variation two expanding from four note chords to five note chords.

**Figure 1.2 - Variation 2 from *Variation sur un theme espagnol* (mm. 50-52)**

The image shows a musical score for Variation 2 from *Variation sur un theme espagnol*, measures 50-52. The score is written for piano and consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top for the melody, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is G minor (one flat). The melody features a series of eighth-note triplets. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. Below the piano part, three chord symbols are indicated:  $vii^{\circ} 4/3$  under the first measure,  $V7$  under the second measure, and  $i$  under the third measure.

The harmonic structure of the Boléro supports the rough form label of ABA' with a Development after B, and is presented in the key of E-flat major. There are many tonal areas within E-flat major that are explored in the Boléro. These tonal exchanges coincide with changes in the formal structure (see Table 1). This relates to the changing lyrics or dance steps in the performance of a traditional Boléro.

**Table 1 - Tonal areas (in relation to E-flat Major) in the Boléro from *Variations sur un theme espagnol*.**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Tonal Area</b>
A	mm. 1-8	I
	mm. 9-16 (transition)	vi - IV
B	mm. 17-24	IV
	mm. 15-28 (transition)	vi
Development	mm. 29-32	V
	mm. 33-36	ii
	mm. 37-40	V
	mm. 41-49	vi-IV-V
A'	mm. 50-57	I
	mm. 58-79 (Coda)	V-I

### ***Rhythmic and Melodic Variety***

Rhythmic and melodic variation in *Variations sur un theme espagnol* function together in many ways. The first variation utilizes rhythmic and melodic exchanges in order for the saxophonist to become both soloist and accompanist. The rhythmic units incorporated in the theme expand to sixteenth notes. Melodic variation occurs as the theme is presented in the upper sixteenth notes and as a pedal tone in the lower sixteenth notes (see Figure 1.3). This type of variation allows the saxophonist to play the theme while also accompanying himself/herself with a pedal tone.

**Figure 1.3 - Variation 1 from *Variation sur un theme espagnol* (mm. 32-34)**



The rhythmic and melodic conversation in the next variation intertwines with the harmonic differences already discussed in order to create an overall thicker texture (see Figure 1.2). Rhythmic additions include sixteenth note triplets presented in the melody. Melodic decoration is also present as the range of the melody expands from the saxophone's low to high range. This creates a new, more brilliant character to the music.

The rhythmic and melodic components of Génin's Boléro reflect many components of a traditional Boléro. A Boléro oftentimes includes guitar and tambourine.<sup>13</sup> The accompaniment in Génin's Boléro includes rhythmic punctuation in the left hand of the piano (see Figure 1.4). This rhythmic punctuation is found throughout and is representative of a tambourine.

The melody transforms in a manner that is reminiscent of the variety of dance steps incorporated within a traditional Boléro. The two primary stylistic characters represented in the melody include connected articulations and detached articulations (see Figures 1.4 and 1.5). The detached character is frequently used to signify a new section. The two transitions and the end of the Development all contain the detached melodic line (see Table 1).

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<sup>13</sup> Kahl, Willi and Israel J. Katz. "Bolero." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03444>. (accessed February 18, 2014)



**Figure 1.4 - Rhythmic punctuation and connected melodic lines in Boléro from *Variations sur un theme espagnol* (mm. 1-2)**



**Figure 1.5 - Detached melodic line in Boléro from *Variations sur un theme espagnol* (mm. 9-12)**



### ***Performance Considerations***

The primary performance consideration for the Theme and Variations of *Variations sur un theme espagnol* is the integrity of the melodic theme. The melodic material in each variation is constructed around characteristics exhibited by the original theme. These bits of material nestled in each variation need to be accentuated or brought “to the fore” in order to create a connection between the theme and each variation. The saxophonist should clearly articulate each upper sixteenth note of the first variation in order to recall the melody. A slight accent may also be added to assist the listener in identifying the theme. The theme is not as evident in the second variation. The saxophonist should phrase toward any fragments of the original melody.

It is important for the saxophonist to commit to the contrasting articulation styles. A performer devotedly executing each articulation style highlights the contrasting “dance steps”

that are present in a Boléro. Excitement may be added at the end of the piece by performing the penultimate note up one octave and the final note up two octaves.

## ***CHAPTER 2 - Fernande Decruck's Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano***

### **Fernande Decruck**

Fernande Decruck (1896-1954 ) was born in Gaillac, France. She was the daughter of a local merchant and began her musical study on the piano at age eight. Decruck was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire in 1918 as a composition and organ student. Xavier Leroux and Jean Gallon were her harmony instructors, and Gabriel Fauré was the Director of the Conservatoire.<sup>14</sup>

While at the Paris Conservatoire, Fernande met Maurice Decruck, a saxophonist, clarinetist, and double-bassist who later became a music publisher. Fernande and Maurice Decruck married in 1924. The Decrucks had two children; Jeannine Decruck was born in 1925 and Michel Deruck was born in 1926. The family moved to the United States in 1928.<sup>15</sup>

Maurice Decruck auditioned for and won a double-bass position with the New York Philharmonic shortly after arriving to the United States. He eventually made a name for himself as an accomplished saxophonist after performing pieces such as Maurice Ravel's *Boléro* and Modest Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* with the New York Philharmonic. Maurice Decruck suffered a debilitating accident in 1932 that left one hand immobile. He immediately returned to Paris to begin his music publishing company, *Les Editions de Paris*. His wife and children returned the following year. Maurice Decruck's publishing company was modest in size. He published his wife's compositions in addition to popular music.<sup>16</sup>

Fernande Decruck composed over 40 works for the saxophone during her lifetime. Unfortunately, many of these works were lost or forgotten after her death.<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to

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<sup>14</sup> Cain, Joren. *Rediscovering Fernande Decruck's Sonate En Ut# Pour Saxophone Alto (Ou Alto) Et Orchestre A Performance Analysis*. 2010. <<http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc28401>>

<sup>15</sup> Cain, 10.

<sup>16</sup> Cain 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Duo Gaulin-Riverin, Jean Matitia, Fernande Breilh-Decruck, Paul Creston, William Albright, Ida Gotkovsky, Rudy Wiedoeft, and Piet Swerts. *Brilliance*. [Montréal]: Analekta, 2011.

note that while Maurice Decruck made a name for himself as an accomplished saxophonist, his name is not listed as the dedicatee on any of Fernande Decruck's saxophone compositions. Fernande Decruck dedicated all of her saxophone compositions to Marcel Mule. Her saxophone compositions include *Danses autour du monde for alto saxophone and piano* (1943), *Pièces françaises for alto saxophone and piano* (1943), and *Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano* (1943).<sup>18</sup>

Maurice and Fernande Decruck divorced in 1950 after years of separation. Fernande suffered her first stroke after playing the organ at a midnight mass in 1952 and, in 1954, passed away from a stroke. Many of her saxophone works were forgotten after her death as newer, more “musically risky” works overshadowed her own in the rapidly growing saxophone repertoire.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano***

Decruck composed an alternate solo part for viola for *Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano*, perhaps due to a possible general lack of awareness of the saxophone at the time of composition. The viola would have been a more familiar instrument with a range similar to that of the alto saxophone. The score for *Sonata in C-Sharp* contains the viola line, not the saxophone line. This is reflected in the musical examples cited in this document. There are discrepancies between the saxophone part and the viola part. Information regarding discrepancies may be found in Joren Cain's “Rediscovering Fernande Decruck's Sonate En Ut# Pour Saxophone Alto (Ou Alto) Et Orchestre A Performance Analysis”.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Romantic Qualities***

Fernande Decruck's *Sonata in C-Sharp* exhibits many Romantic musical qualities. Romanticism in music does not have one clear definition. The Romantic Movement began as a literary movement in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Romantic ideas and characteristics soon spread to other arts such as painting and music. A general definition of Romanticism in music includes music with emotional and picturesque expression that is more important than formal or structural

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<sup>18</sup> Cain 19.

<sup>19</sup> Cain 12-13.

<sup>20</sup> Cain, Joren. *Rediscovering Fernande Decruck's Sonate En Ut# Pour Saxophone Alto (Ou Alto) Et Orchestre A Performance Analysis*. 2010. <<http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc28401>>

considerations.<sup>21</sup> Fernande Decruck prepares the performers and listeners for a Romantic work by excluding any labels of major or minor modes from the *Sonata*'s title (*Sonata in C-Sharp*). This frees the music from traditional tonal expectations.<sup>22</sup> There are many other Romantic music qualities that are present in *Sonata in C-Sharp*. These qualities will be discussed as they relate to the following sections.

### ***Title Definitions and Formal Structure***

#### **I. *Trés modéré, expressif***

The title of the first movement of *Sonata in C-Sharp* translates to “very moderate, expressive.”<sup>23</sup> The expressive qualities present in the first movement relate to dynamics and tempo fluctuations. These qualities create a highly Romantic style within the music. In the first four bars of the saxophone part alone, the dynamic range encompasses piano to fortissimo. There are also frequent accelerandos and ritardandos throughout the movement that capture the Romantic spirit. The saxophonist can take musical risks in regards to dynamics and tempos in order to convey a Romantic interpretation.

*Trés modéré, expressif* follows a rough Sonata-Allegro form (see Table 2). The melodic content of the movement follows this formal outline as is evident in the three distinct sections. The final section outlines a direct return to the music of the beginning.

**Table 2 - Formal sections of "I. Très modéré, expressif" from *Sonata in C-sharp***

<b>Section</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<i>Introduction</i>	1-6
<i>Exposition</i>	7-36
<i>Development</i>	37-69
<i>Recapitulation</i>	70-91

The Sonata-Allegro form is also supported by the changing tonal centers within the movement. The Exposition and Recapitulation have two key changes each. However, the

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<sup>21</sup> "Romantic(ism)." *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 2nd ed. rev. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e8648>. (accessed April 5, 2014)

<sup>22</sup> Cain 12-13.

<sup>23</sup> Dolmetsch Online. "Music Dictionary". <http://www.dolmetsch.com/index.htm>. (accesses April 6th, 2014)

Development contains three key changes along with the introduction of new melodic material. Decruck intentionally abandons traditional tonality, but the key changes still create a sense of harmonic direction within the music. The Development is not only identified by key changes but also by tempo changes. Decruck notates “poco stringendo” meaning “accelerating” in measures 37-40.<sup>24</sup> The Development concludes at measure 70 with the notation “ad libitum” meaning “at one’s discretion.”<sup>25</sup>

## ***II. Noel***

The title of the second movement, “Noel”, is French for “Christmas”. The term Noel is also used in music to describe any song, dance, or carol relating to Christmas. Music associated with a Noel is typically simple in nature.<sup>26</sup> Decruck’s use of a solo, unaccompanied saxophone line at the beginning of the movement is an example of this simplicity. The piano dynamic level and the narrow range of the melody, which spans the interval of a minor sixth, support this idea. The solo line is also rhythmically inactive and is comprised of quarter notes and eighth notes with the exception of four sixteenth notes.

Decruck uses a traditional ABA form in “Noel” (see Table 3). Section B portrays a reserved quality similar to section A. The range of the melody in section B spans two and a half octaves. The dynamics notated suggest dynamic swells that follow the contour of the melodic line. A reserved quality can be maintained with a conservative approach to dynamic swells in softer sections of the music.

**Table 3 - Formal section of “II. Noel” from *Sonata in C-Sharp***

Sections	A		B	A
	a	b		a'
Measures	mm. 1-24	mm. 25-36	mm. 37-91	mm. 92-109

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<sup>24</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

<sup>25</sup> Dolmetsch Online

<sup>26</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

### III. Fileuse

The programmatic implication associated with the title of the third movement is another instance of a Romantic style. “Fileuse” is a French word meaning “spinner.”<sup>27</sup> “Spinner” refers to a person who spins thread at a spinning machine. The action of spinning recalls a circular image. The third movement musically highlights the circular characteristics associated with a spinner.

Fernande Decruck achieves a sense of “roundness” in *Fileuse* with the melodic line and the formal structure. The melodic line is comprised of constant and connected sixteenth notes that exhibit a perpetual motion quality (see Figure 2.1). The melodic line extends above and below a central pitch before returning to the beginning pitch. Sixteenth notes are continuous throughout the entire movement with the exceptions of mm. 81-85 and mm. 114-120.

Figure 2.1 – “III. Fileuse” from *Sonata in C-Sharp for Alto Saxophone and Piano* (mm. 47-50)

The image shows a musical score for measures 47-50 of the third movement, "Fileuse". The score is written for Alto Saxophone and Piano. The Alto Saxophone part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower two staves. The key signature is C major (one sharp, F#). The time signature is 3/4. The Alto Saxophone part begins with a circled measure number 25. The music features a melodic line of constant sixteenth notes, with some measures containing sixteenth-note runs. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated figures. The word "expressif/espressivo" is written below the saxophone staff, with an arrow pointing to a specific measure. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The form of the movement may roughly be labeled ABCABD, where C and D are transitions and coda material respectively. This form follows the pattern of “roundness” by returning to both sections A and B. The two instances that do not contain consecutive sixteenth notes (as discussed previously) coincide with a transition and the coda. This suggests a mental image of a circle that has reached “full swing”.

<sup>27</sup> Google. “Google Translate”. <http://translate.google.com>. (accessed April 6th, 2014)

#### IV. Nocturne et Rondel

A “Nocturne” is a piece suggesting nighttime. Nocturnes are usually quiet and meditative in character.<sup>28</sup> Decruck creates a distant and isolated sense at the beginning with a solo saxophone line at pianissimo supported by a sparse piano accompaniment (see Figure 2.2). The quiet saxophone line and sparse accompaniment create an introverted character that is reminiscent of night or nocturnal music. It is worth noting that the viola part in the score is written to be performed muted. This provides the saxophonist with an appropriate aural model.

Figure 2.2 - Opening of "IV. Nocturne et Rondel" from *Sonata in C-sharp* (mm. 1-4)

Calme, très modéré /  $\text{♩} = 54$   
Calmo, molto moderato

(\*) (percussion)  $p$

34 (solo horn)

8

ppp

The form of the “Nocturne” is ABA. The outer A sections are more introverted in quality. These are the sections that show the viola part notated as muted in the score. The B section is more active dynamically and texturally. The dynamic range expands from piano to forte in the span of five beats. This occurs in measures 15-17. The texture thickens as accompanimental patterns showcase less transparent chords and more technically active rhythms. Measures 15-23 highlight these changes in the accompaniment. This blossoming creates a nice contrast with the outer, more muted sections. The volume and textural growth is short in duration but important in foreshadowing the music that will follow in the Rondo.

<sup>28</sup> Maurice J.E. Brown and Kenneth L. Hamilton. "Nocturne." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20012>. (accessed April 7, 2014)



The second section of the final movement is the Rondo. A Rondo is a musical design that consists of a series of sections, the first of which recurs (normally in the home key) between subsidiary sections.<sup>29</sup> Decruck structures the Rondo roughly as ABACA/Coda. The A section does not always return in the same key. Instead, section A always begins with a rhythmically driven sixteenth note pattern (see Figure 2.3). There is also a short transition between the “Nocturne” and the “Rondo”.

**Figure 2.3 – Opening of section A in "Rondel" from *Sonata in C-sharp* (mm. 47-50)**



### ***Tonal Color Nuances***

Expressiveness is one of the building blocks for Romantic music. One way that a performer can add expressive traits to music is through careful consideration and planning with respect to tonal color nuances. These nuances occur mainly through vibrato selection and alternate fingering selections for the saxophonist.

#### ***I. Très modéré, expressif***

The first movement includes instances where minimal to no vibrato is an effective color. Two passages where no vibrato is beneficial are measures 12-14 and measures 70-72. A saxophonist performing these passages without the use of vibrato compliments the soft dynamic levels and less active rhythms.

In contrast, there are instances where incorporating vibrato is highly effective. Measure 15 and measures 76-78 are examples of this. Both passages feature sustained high tones in the saxophone part at a dynamic level of forte. Incorporating vibrato adds brilliance to the sound.

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<sup>29</sup> Malcolm S. Cole. "Rondo." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>. (accessed April 7, 2014)

## ***II. Noel***

“Noel” is a fitting movement to utilize alternate fingerings in order to achieve a blended tone color which is appropriate for the elegant character associated with the title. The saxophone is a tube that changes lengths as various keys are depressed. The tone becomes fuller with more keys depressed, and thinner with less keys depressed. Some passages may be executed using short tube fingerings versus long tube fingerings. All written D’s, E-flat’s, and E’s which appear in the A sections of “Noel” can be performed using these short tube options. Utilizing these fingerings will create a more homogenous sound in the saxophone line. These short tube options are generally more in tune at softer levels. This assists the saxophonist with tuning, because intonation tendencies on the saxophone dictate that the pitch will rise at softer levels.

## ***III. Fileuse***

A saxophonist’s use of short tube fingerings in the third movement promotes a homogenous tone quality. These fingering patterns can prevent tonal accents from occurring, as a saxophonist is no longer shifting between short and long tube fingerings. These options also assist with technical fluidity. Side keys create less contrary motion between notes which assists the saxophonist with faster tempo considerations.

## ***IV. Nocturne et Rondel***

The character of the “Nocturne” in the final movement can reference the composer’s use of the muted viola part in the score. Muted viola creates a sound that is almost transparent in color. The saxophonist can apply this to his/her performance by using minimal or no vibrato and maintaining a soft dynamic level.

The “Rondo” is opposite in character from the “Nocturne”. Vibrato should be incorporated more consistently in the “Rondo” in order to accentuate the varying dynamic shifts within the music. Short tube fingerings are not practical in most passages of this section. The louder dynamic level is not appropriate for side keys as the tone can be strident in quality.

## CHAPTER 3 - Ida Gotkovsky's *Variations pathétiques: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano*

### Ida Gotkovsky

French composer Ida-Rose Esther Gotkovsky (born 1933) is daughter of violinist Jacques Gotkovsky and sister of violinist Neil Gotkovsky. Ida Gotkovsky was a student at the Paris Conservatoire under the instruction of Ciampi, Hugon, N. Gallon, Tony Aubin, Olivier Messiaen, and Nadia Boulanger.<sup>30</sup> Her compositional output includes chamber, symphonic, instrumental, vocal, and lyrical music.<sup>31</sup> Gotkovsky is quoted as stating “The saxophone is an admirable instrument, a source of prolific inspiration with dazzling possibilities.”<sup>32</sup>

Ida Gotkovsky won six prestigious first prize awards, including *Prix Blumenthal* (1958), *Prix Padeloup* (1959), *Prix de Composition Concours International de Divonne les Bains* (1961), *Médaille de la Ville de Paris* (1963), *Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris* (1966), and *Prix Lily Boulanger* (1967).<sup>33</sup> Gotkovsky is also one of only two composers who has been honored by multiple saxophone *Solo de Concours* commissions.<sup>34</sup> The *Solo de Concours* is a final exam and competition held each year at the Paris Conservatoire. Saxophone compositions by Ida Gotkovsky include: *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* (1966), *Brilliance for Alto Saxophone and Piano* (1974), *Eolienne for Alto Saxophone and Harp* (1976), *Variations pathétiques for Alto Saxophone and Piano* (1980), and *Quator de Saxophones* (1983).<sup>35</sup> She also utilizes saxophones in her orchestral works. These works include *Le Réver de Maker* (1964), *Concerto pour Orchestre* (1970), and *Poém lyrique* (1982).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cohen, Aaron I. *International Encyclopedia of Women Composers*. New York: Bowker, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> Gotkovsky, Ida. *Gérard Billaudot Éditeur Composer Biography*.

<http://www.billaudot.com/en/composer.php?p=Ida&n=Gotkovsky>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

<sup>32</sup> Gee, Harry. "The Clarinet and Saxophone Music of Ida Gotkovsky." *NACWPI Journal* 32-3 (1984): 29-32.

<sup>33</sup> Cohen 190.

<sup>34</sup> Carroll, Kenneth Don. *The Influence of Olivier Messiaen on Brilliance and the Concerto Pour Saxophone-Alto Et Orchestre by Ida Gotkovsky: An Analytical Study*. Thesis (D.M.A.)--University of Georgia, 1992.

<sup>35</sup> Gotkovsky, Ida. *Ida Gotkovsky*. <http://www.gotkovsky.com>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

<sup>36</sup> Carroll 11.

## ***Variations pathétiques: pour Saxophone Alto et Piano***

Ida Gotkovsky's *Variations pathétiques* was originally conceived for alto saxophone and strings in 1980. Gotkovsky created a piano reduction of the work, which is the orchestration discussed in this document. The work was dedicated to Daniel Deffayet, Professor of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire at the time. Deffayet chose movements one, two, and five to be used for the saxophone *Solo de Concours* in June 1980.<sup>37</sup> *Variations pathétiques* has been recorded on two commercially available records: "Memories of Dinant" with Otis Murphy on saxophone and Haruko Suzuki on piano, and "Saxophone" with André Buen on saxophone and the composer, Ida Gotkovsky, on piano.<sup>38</sup>

Gotkovsky explains that the word "pathétiques" is used in its fullest context to mean passion, force of power, tenderness, and delicateness. When asked why she wrote *Variations pathétiques for Alto Saxophone and Strings*, Gotkovsky answered, "To include the saxophone in the repertoire of the orchestra; it is a way to impose and defend it and to enrich its own repertoire."<sup>39</sup> Gotkovsky also made remarks about each of the work's movements on her website, which will be addressed in the following discussions. The saxophone notation examples presented in this analysis are in written pitch. *Variations pathétiques* is approximately 28 minutes in duration.

### ***Musical Characters***

*Variations pathétiques* is a programmatic piece of music. The title refers to variations in moods or emotions.<sup>40</sup> Gotkovsky portrays these moods by incorporating a variety of musical styles into *Variations pathétiques*. An understanding of the different musical characters is essential to a performer's ability to thoughtfully and effectively execute the music.

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<sup>37</sup> Gee 30.

<sup>38</sup> Gotkovsky. *Ida Gotkovsky*. <http://www.gotkovsky.com>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

<sup>39</sup> Gee 30.

<sup>40</sup> Gotkovsky, Ida. *Ida Gotkovsky*. <http://www.gotkovsky.com>. (accessed February 15th, 2014)

## I. *Déclamando con passion*

The first variation is associated with a declarative and recitative character. The title translates to “Declamatory with passion.”<sup>41</sup> The music supports the title with recitative-like sections that feature a conversational quality between the saxophone part and the piano part. The declamatory nature of the music emerges as each instrument is notated at a forte dynamic level. This creates a sense of purpose behind the “conversation” that occurs in the variation. Gotkovsky herself wrote that “*Déclamando con passion*” is a melodic variation of phrasing and power.<sup>42</sup>

## II. *Prestissimo - Leggerissimo*

Gotkovsky invokes a frantic quality in the second movement with the inclusion of technically demanding passages with quick tempo markings. “*Prestissimo - Leggerissimo*” means “as quick and light as possible.”<sup>43</sup> The saxophonist showcases the light quality of the music in the opening phrase with a passage of rapid eighth notes that is notated to be clearly articulated (see Figure 3.1). This phrase recurs frequently, and it is always written at a soft dynamic level and with a detached articulation style.

Figure 3.1 - Opening of "II. *Prestissimo - Leggerissimo*" from *Variations Pathétiques* (mm. 1-5)

The image shows a musical score for Saxophone Alto Mi and Piano. The Saxophone part is in the upper staff, marked *pp* and *Misterioso*. The Piano part is in the lower staff, marked *pp*, *Misterioso*, and *molto legato-leggiero*. Both parts feature rapid eighth notes. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of five measures.

<sup>41</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

<sup>42</sup> Gee 30.

<sup>43</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

Gotkovsky states that the second variation is a variation of clarity and opposition.<sup>44</sup> A type of opposition that Gotkovsky highlights is articulation opposition. Gotkovsky presents new melodic material as long durations and connected articulations (see Figure 3.2). The connected articulation markings of this material oppose the detached markings associated with the previous music. The dynamic marking of fortissimo also opposes section A, which is indicated to be performed at a pianissimo level.

**Figure 3.2 - Connected phrase in "II. Prestissimo - Leggierissimo" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 40-51)**

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is for a saxophone and the bottom staff is for piano. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The score includes various articulation and dynamic markings such as 'Ped.', 'Dolce', 'ff (sost)', 'malto', 'legato', and 'dim'. The piano part features a 'malto' marking in the first few measures. The saxophone part features a 'Dolce' marking in a box and 'ff (sost)' markings. The score is labeled 'G-3107-B' at the bottom.

The clarity that occurs in “Prestissimo - Leggierissimo” relates to the formal structure and the articulation markings. The second movement is constructed in a rough Rondo form (see Tble 4, page 23). The various articulation styles and dynamic levels that define each section create an easily distinguishable form. There is also articulation clarity present in the first section as the saxophonist is required to execute passages of rapid eighth notes in a detached fashion.

<sup>44</sup> Gee 30.

### **III. Lento - Rubato**

The third variation portrays an inward and contemplative character. The title suggests a slow tempo that warrants pacing liberties. Gotkovsky uses this variation to explore untraditional pairings between melodic range and dynamic levels.<sup>45</sup> The saxophonist shifts registers frequently and executes large leaps, all at soft dynamic levels (see Figure 3.3). Performing the large leaps and register shifts at soft dynamic levels may appear counterintuitive to the performer and listener. This adds to the contemplative quality of the music.

**Figure 3.3 - Register shifts and large leaps in “III. Lento - Rubato” from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 61-66)**

The musical score for 'III. Lento - Rubato' from *Variations pathétiques* (measures 61-66) is presented in two staves. The upper staff is for the saxophone, and the lower staff is for the piano. The saxophone part begins with a melodic line in the middle register, marked *pp* and *ad libitum*. It features several large leaps and register shifts. A first ending, marked with a box 'D', leads to a section marked *pp cantabile*. The piano accompaniment provides a soft, thin accompaniment, marked *pp*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

### **IV. Rapido - molto - legato - leggiero**

The fourth variation, “Rapido - molto - legato - leggiero,” depicts a fast and transparent melodic line.<sup>46</sup> The title means “very rapid, connected, and light.” These descriptors are showcased in the opening phrase. The saxophonist performs a very connected sixteenth note line while the pianist provides a soft, thin accompaniment that is derived from the interval of an octave.

### **V. Con simplicità - anima**

Variation five is not complex in melodic construction compared to the previous movements.<sup>47</sup> The title “Con simplicità - anima” translates from French as “with simplicity -

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<sup>45</sup> Gee 30.

<sup>46</sup> Gee 30.

<sup>47</sup> Gee 30.

soul.”<sup>48</sup> Melodic lines retain a sense of simplicity through pitch range and rhythm. The melodies in the fifth variation are constructed within a narrow pitch range. Section A spans the range of a perfect fourth, and section B, introduced in measure twenty nine, spans the range of a major seventh (see Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4 – Section B of "V. Con semplicità - anima" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 28-33)**



The elegant quality of the melody is reinforced by the composer’s use of soft dynamic levels and light accompaniment textures. Figure 3.4 shows the melody presented at the dynamic level of piano. The texture of the accompaniment supporting this melody has a transparent quality portrayed by the single note treble clef line. Chords in the accompaniment outline perfect intervals, which add an open quality of sound to the texture.

### ***VI. Prestissimo con fuoco***

Gotkovsky describes the character of the final variation as a whirlwind of fire.<sup>49</sup> The title translates to “very quick with fire (passion).”<sup>50</sup> This imagery is clearly highlighted in the active

<sup>48</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

<sup>49</sup> Gee 30.



melodic and rhythmic movement of the music. The highly active musical content presented at the beginning suggests that “fuoco” is interpreted as meaning “fire.” However, the meaning of “fuoco” changes to represent “passion” at the conclusion of the movement as Gotkovsky recalls the dramatic and declamatory character of the first variation.

### ***Formal Structure***

Gotkovsky utilizes many recognizable formal structures in *Variations pathétiques*. The forms are not strictly traditional but do contain distinct, organized sections. The form of each variation compliments the mood evoked. An understanding of the form assists performers in conveying the appropriate musical style.

#### ***I. Déclamando con passion***

The first variation represents an approximate AA'B structure. The persistent use of the A section recalls a declamatory mode of speaking. A saxophone cadenza concludes each A section. The cadenzas are technically demanding and rhythmically brilliant. These could be analogous to an intense and focused energy that exists in “declamatory” speaking.

#### ***II. Prestissimo - Leggierissimo***

“Prestissimo - leggierissimo” is structured as a nontraditional Rondo (see Table 4). The sections of the second variation are defined by articulation styles, dynamic levels, and melodic content. Opposition of dynamics and articulations exists within each section. Section A has a soft, light, and detached musical character. B opposes A with a loud and connected melodic idea, while section C provides further contrast with a soft and connected quality. The primary section, A, does not recur as an exact repetition. Instead, the consistent quick and detached style of the A music denotes the return of A.

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<sup>50</sup> Dolmetsch Online.

**Table 4 - Formal structure of "II. Prestissimo - Leggerissimo" from *Variations pathétiques***

Measures	Section	Dynamics	Articulation
mm. 1-41	A	Pianissimo	Light, detached
mm. 42-53	B	Fortissimo	Legato, slurred
mm. 54-103	A	Piano	Light, detached
mm. 104-125	C	Pianissimo	Legato, slurred
mm. 126-166	A	Pianissimo	Light, detached
mm. 167-176	B	Mezzo forte	Legato, slurred
mm. 177-236	A (Coda)	Forte	Light, detached

### ***III. Lento - Rubato***

The formal structure of “Lento - Rubato” is a rough ABACA (see Table 5). Section A recalls the contemplative qualities associated with this variation. The accompaniment texture is thinly textured and is presented in a conversational manner with the saxophone line. Slight tempo fluctuations add to the overall flexibility of the music. Sections B and C contrast section A by featuring thicker, more supportive accompaniment textures and fewer opportunities for tempo fluctuations.

**Table 5 - Formal structure of "III. Lento - Rubato" from *Variations pathétiques***

Measures	Sections
mm. 1-28	A
mm. 29-48	B
mm. 49-64	A'
mm. 65-82	C
mm. 83-108	A''

### ***IV. Rapido - molto - legato - leggiero***

The fourth variation is constructed in an ABA form with substantial transitions between sections (see Table 6). The B section is substantial in length, however, this form is an appropriate label due to the short duration of the entire variation. The A sections features linear melodic lines

in the saxophone part while B showcases frequent melodic leaps. The two transition sections include quasi cadenza material. These cadenzas indicate a slowing in tempo that provides aural relaxation for the listener amidst a whirlwind of notes.

**Table 6 - Formal structure of "IV. Rapido - molto- - legato - leggiero" from *Variations pathétiques***

Measures	Sections
mm. 1-14	A
mm. 15-55	B
mm. 56-65	A'

#### ***V. Con simplicità - anima***

The fifth variation is arranged in an ABA form. The melodic ideas presented in each section are short in duration and not rhythmically active. Gotkovsky reverses the musical roles of the instruments in section B to create musical contrast. The pianist is now the soloist and the saxophonist is now the accompanist.

#### ***VI. Prestissimo con fuoco***

The final variation is cumulative in nature. Melodic material is based on musical styles from previous variations (see Table 7). This suggests a form that resembles ABABAC, where the formal sections are defined by musical style rather than melodic or harmonic material. The cumulative effect of the final variation is similar to what might be heard at the conclusion of a declamatory speech.

**Table 7 - Variation/Character Implications in "VI. Prestissimo con fuoco" from *Variations pathétiques***

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Character Implications from Variation:</b>
mm. 1-58	4
mm. 59-83	2
mm. 84-98	4
mm. 99-105	2
mm. 106-128	4 (2)
mm. 129-162	1

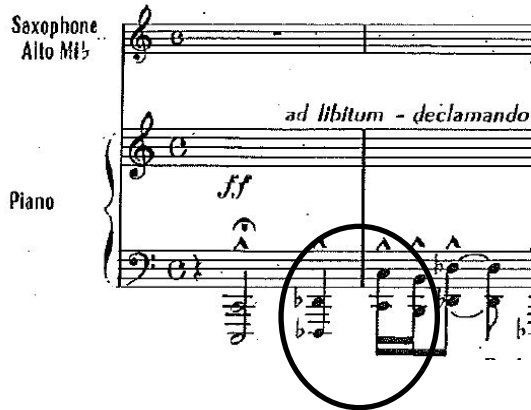
### ***Melodic Construction***

Gotkovsky utilizes three primary compositional techniques to construct melodic material in *Variations pathétiques*. One technique is octave displacement. Octave displacement adds a unique expressive dimension to the melodic lines. Many of the melodic lines feature leaps of large intervals that evoke a grandiose and impressive quality. Careful examination of these lines reveals that Gotkovsky is actually constructing melodies with small intervals that are displaced by octaves. Gotkovsky also incorporates compositional techniques including interval expansion/contraction and interval emphasis. An understanding of interval relationships can provide performers with a means to identifying appropriate goal tones within phrases.

#### ***I. Déclamando con passion***

Gotkovsky uses octave displacement to add interest to stepwise lines throughout the first variation. The opening motive, presented by the piano, is an example (see Figure 3.5). This line contains a leap of a major seventh, however, rearranging the pitches into one octave shows a stepwise line. The saxophone part mimics the octave displacement for the same purpose (see Figures 3.6). The performers should emphasize these larger intervals to add melodic interest and phrasing direction. The declamatory style of the first variation allows for pacing liberties.

**Figure 3.5 - Opening Motive of "I. Déclamando con passion" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 1-2)**



**Figure 3.6 - Opening Saxophone Statement of "I. Déclamando con passion" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 5-11)**



## ***II. Prestissimo - Leggerissimo***

Gotkovsky utilized octave displacement and interval emphasis to construct most of the melodic material of the second variation. The opening melody of section A contains octave displacement similar to the previous variation. The octave displacement is abandoned in the B section as the line becomes more stepwise. Melodic material in section C is constructed by emphasizing an interval of a third. Measures 106-122 feature a melodic line that is constructed upon successive thirds. The effect is similar to arpeggiation.

## ***III. Lento - Rubato***

The third variation contains the first prominent use of melodic construction through diminishing intervals, while still incorporating octave displacement (see Figure 3.7). The top tones of each octave figure can serve as goal tones with respect to phrasing. Pacing liberties are

appropriate in preparing these goal tones. Pacing liberties are also appropriate, and notated, through the section of diminishing intervals. The quickening and eventual relaxation in tempo draws the listener's attention to the diminishing intervals showcased in each repetition of section A.

**Figure 3.7 - Opening of "III. Lento - Rubato" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 1-12)**

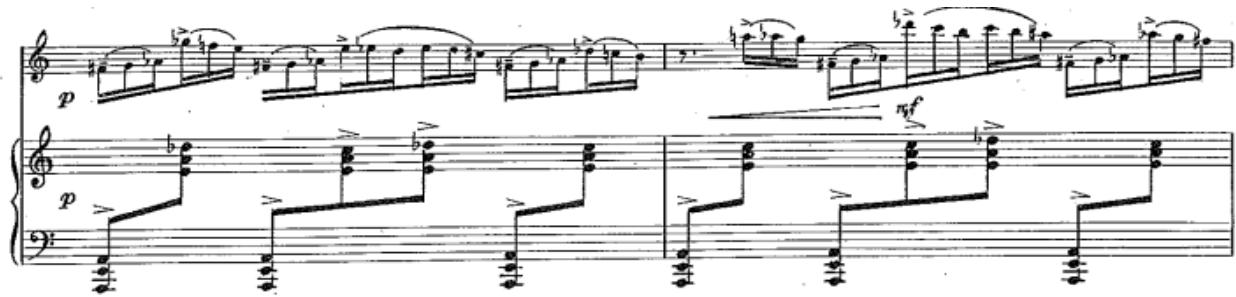
The musical score for the opening of "III. Lento - Rubato" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 1-12) is presented in two systems. The first system features the Saxophone Alto Mi♭ part in the upper staff, marked *p* *Dolce - eleganza*, and the Piano part in the lower staves. The Piano part includes multiple *Ped.* markings. The second system continues the Saxophone part with the vocal line *gen - do* and includes *Rit* and *a 1<sup>o</sup>* markings. The Piano part continues with *Ped.* markings.

#### ***IV. Rapido - molto - legato - leggiro***

Interval expansion and contraction in the fourth variation are executed in a manner that is unique to the work up to this point in the music. The beginning showcases interval expansion, however, it does not utilize alternating high and low tones. Instead, the melodic line, which is a constant stream of sixteenth notes, grows from revolving around one note to rising and falling within multiple octaves. This melodic shape is analogous to a wave. The opening is a wave that has a short wave height. The wave height becomes larger as the music progresses.

Gotkovsky uses interval contraction in section B (see Figure 3.8). The contracting intervals are highlighted in the first notes of each three note grouping. The notes that follow are secondary to the first notes, similar to ornamental figures. Section B contains the only instances of interval contraction in this variation.

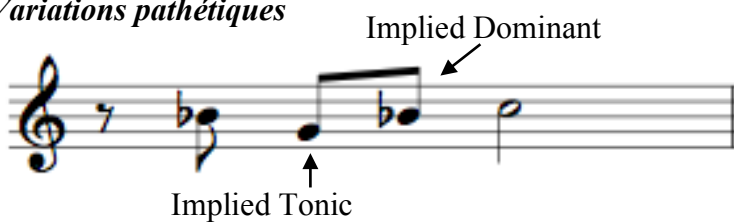
**Figure 3.8 - Interval Contraction in "IV. Rapido - molto - legato - leggero" from *Variations pathétiques* (mm. 25-26)**



**V. *Con simplicitá - anima***

Gotkovsky recognizes the fifth variation by her use of the minor third. The minor third is used to create an implied tonal center. The bottom note of this interval is the implied tonic. The top note acts as an implied dominant (see Figure 3.9). The implied dominant frequently resolves to the suggested tonic, sometimes with passing tones present.

**Figure 3.9 - Tonal Center Created with Minor Thirds in "V. *Con simplicitá - anima*" from *Variations pathétiques***



**VI. *Prestissimo con fuoco***

The final variation utilizes a combination of all interval relationships discussed in this section. This is similar to the collective qualities of the formal structure. However, no one interval technique is predominant. It is interesting to note that the final section (mm. 129-162) recalls the material of the first variation.

## CHAPTER 4 - Luciano Berio's *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone*

### Luciano Berio

Italian born composer Luciano Berio (1925-2003) was one of the most prolific composers of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in Oneglia, he was surrounded by music at an early age. His father and grandfather were both church organists. Berio studied piano, however, an injury from the army stifled his hopes of becoming a concert pianist.<sup>51</sup> He married singer Cathy Berberian in 1951.<sup>52</sup>

Berio made a name for himself as a master of the avant-garde. In addition, he was an innovator in the use of electronics in music. Berio was a student at the Conservatorio di Milano from 1946-1954. Luciano's musical studies included counterpoint under Giulio Cesare Paribeni, composition under Giorgio Ghedini, and conducting under Antonino Votto and Carlo Maria Giulini. He then traveled to Tanglewood, Massachusetts in 1952 to study serialism under Luigi Dallapiccola. This trip was made possible after Berio was awarded the *Koussevitzky Foundation Scholarship*. Berio worked extensively in both Europe and in the United States. Teaching opportunities in the United States included Mills College in Oakland, California, Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the Julliard School of Music in New York City.<sup>53</sup> Berio spent time working in England, Germany, and France, in particular.

Luciano Berio studied electronics and digital sound in addition to composition. French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez worked closely with Berio to establish the IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique) in 1972. Berio served as Director for IRCAM's electro-acoustic division from 1972-1980.

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<sup>51</sup> Osmond-Smith, David. "Berio, Luciano." In *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02815>. (accessed February 17th, 2014)

<sup>52</sup> Patmore, David. *Naxos Music Library: Luciano Berio*. <http://ksu.naxosmusiclibrary.com.er.lib.k-state.edu/composer/btm.asp?composerid=23443>. (accessed February 17th, 2014)

<sup>53</sup> Patmore.



## *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone*

The *Sequenza* series is one of Luciano Berio's most well-known compositional outputs from his lifetime. He composed a total of 14 *sequenzas* over 38 years. Each *sequenza* is a solo work designed to push the technical and harmonic limits of the selected instrument for which it was written. Performing any *sequenza* can be a large task since melodic and harmonic material may be difficult to understand if not studied carefully. Berio himself stated that his "*Sequenzas* are always written with this sort of interpreter in mind, whose virtuosity is, above all, a virtuosity of knowledge."<sup>54</sup>

*Sequenza IX* was first composed as a work for solo clarinet in 1980; however, Berio immediately made a version of this work for saxophonist Claude Delangle.<sup>55</sup> Relevancy as an original work for saxophone is supported by the fact that the composer published the work. The alto saxophone *sequenza* is typically referred to as *Sequenza IXb*, however, this is not the title found on the printed score (the clarinet *sequenza* is typically referred to as *Sequenza IXa*). Berio simply titles the work *Sequenza IX per saxofono contralto*. Works completed by Berio at this time include 'Chemins V' (1979-1980), *Sequenza IXa* and *Sequenza IXb* (1980), and *La vera storia* (1977-1981).<sup>56</sup> *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone* is a 13 minute work which tests the saxophonist's technical facility, tonal flexibility, and overall physical and mental stamina.

### *Formal Structure*

Understanding the formal structure of *Sequenza IX* is vital to effectively conveying coherent, musical phrases throughout the piece. Melodic, rhythmic, and tone color concepts are explored in *Sequenza IX*. Berio structures the piece around pitch set manipulation. The following proposed formal table should be considered a rough outline and is not strict in construction (see Table 8).

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<sup>54</sup> Berio, Luciano. *Luciano Berio: Two Interviews*. New York: Marion Boyars Rizzoli, 1985.

<sup>55</sup> Patmore, David. "Berio, Luciano." In *Naxos Music Library*. <http://ksu.naxosmusiclibrary.com.er.lib.k-state.edu/composer/btm.asp?composerid=23443>. (accessed February 17th, 2014)

<sup>56</sup> Halfyard, Janet K. *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007.

**Table 8 - Rough Formal Structure of *Sequenza IX***

Section	Rehearsal Letters
Introduction	Beginning-A
Exposition	A-C
Rhythmic Development	C-E
Melodic Development	E-H
Tone Color Development	H-N
New Material	N-Y
Coda	Y-End

### *Pitch Sets*

Berio uses two pitch groups as the foundation for the melodic material in *Sequenza IX* (see Figure 4.1).<sup>57</sup> These groupings are not tonal centers. They are building blocks for melodic growth. Berio does not always present these groups as an exact repetition, however, he clearly derives the entire piece from these two pitch sets.

**Figure 4.1 - *Sequenza for Alto Saxophone* pitch sets 1 and 2**



Both groups are presented in the Introduction (see Figure 4.2). Pitch group two is first presented as a grace note figure. A slower, freer tempo is suggested for this group of grace notes in order to achieve tonal clarity on each note during the first statement of the second pitch group. The Exposition features many repetitions of each pitch group. Berio incorporates this repetition as a way to familiarize the listener with the pitch sets before the Development begins.

<sup>57</sup> Halfyard, Janet K. *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007.

Figure 4.2 - Introduction of *Sequenza IX* for Alto Saxophone

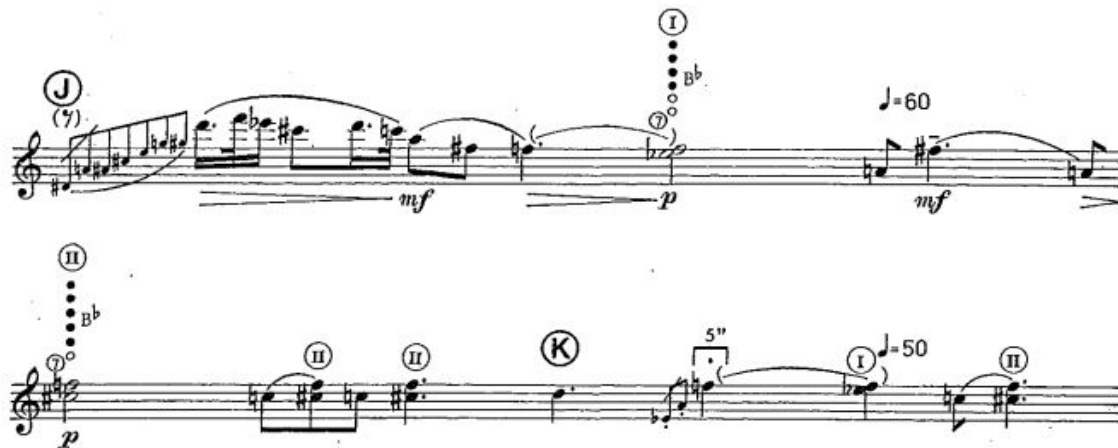
Rhythmic development begins at letter C. Berio continues to utilize both pitch groups, however, the first pitch group is more prevalent melodically. Rhythmic patterns become increasingly more active. A climax culminates at letter E with a chromatic scale pattern which is to be performed as fast as possible.

Berio presents both pitch sets during the Melodic Development one measure after letter E. The notes of both pitch groups are incorporated in the opening figure. Berio continues to combine select pitches from each group to create new melodic ideas in this section. The Melodic Development is halted at times as one pitch is articulated successively for a short duration. These repeated tone “transitions” eventually lead to the beginning of the Tone Color Development. It is interesting to note that each occurrence of repeated tones in the transition is part of pitch set 2 with the exception of one instance four systems after letter F.

Berio’s use of extended techniques is explored in the Tone Color Development. He utilizes quarter tones and multiphonics (more than one pitch sounding simultaneously) to explore various tone color nuances. Quarter tones are featured at the beginning of this section. The saxophonist is given multiple alternate fingering options that are utilized in quick succession to create slight tonal color shifts based off of one fundamental pitch. This effect relates to the single, repeated, articulated pitches found in the Melodic Development.

Berio incorporates multiphonics in an attempt to combine pitches from both pitch sets to create new tone colors (see Figure 4.3). Multiphonics are produced on the saxophone through the use of special fingerings and air stream manipulations. Berio notates the special fingerings in the musical score. The saxophonist must experiment with using the proper amount of air and air pressure needed to produce the multiphonics.

Figure 4.3 - Page 6, systems 4 and 5 of *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone*



Berio utilizes the entire chromatic octave (both pitch sets) at letter N. However, he excludes certain pitches from each set at times, suggesting the presence of subsets. Letter S is an example of one such subset. Here, Berio incorporates only the four initial notes of the first pitch set. This subset is utilized almost exclusively until letter T.

Fragments of both old and new material are presented in the Coda. The final figure recalls the two pitch groups and rhythmic patterns heard in the Introduction (see Figure 4.4). The recollection of introductory material creates a sense of musical “roundness”.

Figure 4.4 - Page 10, last system of *Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone*



### *Vibrato Considerations*

Vibrato use is a debatable topic in *Sequenza IX*. This work was originally written for clarinet and then adapted for the alto saxophone by the composer. Clarinetists traditionally use limited vibrato (or none at all). However, as *Sequenza IX* is an original work for saxophone as well, it would be characteristic for a saxophonist to consider incorporating vibrato in meaningful ways.

Creating a plan for vibrato use is part of the phrase mapping process. An effective approach to vibrato for the entire piece is to employ little or no vibrato in the outer sections and to reserve vibrato for the middle, more energetic sections. The soft, reserved quality of the Introduction is strengthened by the absence of vibrato. Minimal vibrato can be introduced in the Exposition as a way to energize sustained pitches. The written F notated at forte after letter A is an example of a note that warrants a performer's consideration of incorporating vibrato. Not using vibrato on this high note may result in a strident tone quality. The Development, high in energy, can be enhanced through more frequent use of vibrato on sustained pitches. There are many markings of fortissimo in the Development. Incorporating vibrato on notes marked at fortissimo provides a unique, brilliant quality to the saxophone tone.

Vibrato integration should begin to fade as the piece reaches its conclusion. There are many instances of successive, high, sustained pitches from letters R to Y. Varying vibrato depth and incorporation provides tone color interest. The saxophonist should experiment with vibrato treatment of these pitches to make a vibrato plan. One option for vibrato treatment is to utilize a wider vibrato depth at louder moments and a narrower vibrato depth at softer moments. A saxophonist terminating the use of vibrato in the Coda recalls the more intimate qualities of the Introduction.

## **Conclusion**

The four Professors of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire influenced the creation of new music for the instrument. Each of the works discussed in this document presents unique challenges to performers. They demonstrate that composers are constantly showcasing the saxophone's musical versatility and flexibility with respect to extended techniques, tone color nuances, and dynamic range. A saxophonist's understanding of each piece's formal, melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic structure contributes to an overall effective performance of the music.

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# Appendix A - Program

MASTER OF MUSIC RECITAL

**Christopher Gugel, Saxophone**

**Assisted by**

**Amanda Arrington, Piano**

PROGRAM

Sonata in C#

*Trés modéré, expressif*

*Noel*

*Fileuse*

*Nocturne et Rondel*

Fernande Decruck

(1896-1954)

Sequenza IX for Alto Saxophone

Luciano Berio

(1925-2003)

Variations sur un Thème Espagnol

Paul-Agricole Génin

(1832-1903)

INTERMISSION

Variations Pathétiques

*Declamando con passione*

*Prestissimo - Leggierissimo*

*Lento - Rubato*

*Rapido - molto - legato - leggiero*

*Con simplicitá - anima*

*Prestissimo con fuoco*

Ida Gotkovsky

(b. 1933)

**Sunday, September 22, 2013**

**3:00 p.m.**

**All Faiths Chapel**