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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Rite of Spring: An Original Solo Piano Transcription of Stravinsky's 1913 Ballet
with Annotations and Historical Notes

A dissertation in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Musical Arts

in

Contemporary Music Performance

by

William Norman Fried

Committee in charge:

Professor Aleck Karis, Chair
Professor Anthony Burr
Professor William A O'Brien
Professor Donald Rutherford
Professor Jane Stevens

2011

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2011

DEDICATION

To my piano teachers, across what approaches three decades: Naomi, for bribing me with coloring books to entice practicing; Roz, for showing me the meaning of real work; Arlene, for her patience with a moody undergraduate, and giving me a needed push out the door after graduation; Steve, for introducing me to the twentieth century; and finally Aleck, for guiding me through this latest period of considerable maturing as a musician. And of course to my wife Ana, for her continued love, patience, and support.

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In addition to the general debt the author bears towards persons acknowledged in the dedication, this specific work has benefited from contributions by a number of individuals. Recognition here of their contributions is loosely chronological.

The initial inspiration for a solo piano version of *The Rite* arose from a preparation of a two piano version of the piece, based on Stravinsky's four-hand/two piano ballet reduction, with pianist Yvonne Lee. The rehearsals and subsequent performance took place in the fall of 2003, as part of a chamber music class at the New England Conservatory, and were coached by Alexander Korsantia, who in particular stressed the importance of judiciously supplementing the rather bare piano reduction with material from the full score. My thanks to both for a fruitful and stimulating collaboration.

Also many thanks to Anthony Burr, whose seminar in the fall of 2007 became the impetus for attacking in earnest what had previously been little more than the object of tinkering on my part. His patience, encouragement, and insight, particularly during those early stages, were critical in jumpstarting the project.

And finally thanks to Aleck Karis for making available the breadth of his pianistic experience during my time at UCSD. The lessons learned—both on *The Rite* and elsewhere—made all the difference.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Rite of Spring: An Original Solo Piano Transcription of Stravinsky's 1913 Ballet
with Annotations and Historical Notes

by

William Norman Fried

Doctor of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music Performance

University of California, San Diego, 2011

Professor Aleck Karis, Chair

Despite a century of notoriety and several published solo piano arrangements, *The Rite of Spring* remains relatively unperformed as a piano piece. Though a number of contributing factors exist—perceived unsuitability for arrangement, decline of the piano transcription tradition, compartmentalization of classical music culture—significant deficiencies in the available transcriptions, with respect to factors ranging from playability to completeness, are largely to blame. Drawing on Stravinsky's

orchestral score and four-hand arrangement, this work presents an original transcription of *The Rite of Spring*, using the nineteenth century virtuoso tradition as model. Annotations discuss transcriptive devices, resolution of manuscript irregularities, and comparison with previous published versions.

Introduction

The piano transcription today exists largely as an artifact of a bygone era. Mass reproduction, enabled by advances in recording technology, has shifted default modes of musical engagement from live performance towards far more economical record broadcast. If the piano transcription was once a disseminating force, transporting orchestral music to the home, it has since been replaced, in the name of expediency, by far more efficient disseminators: the radio broadcast, the record player, and their descendents. Nor is the concert hall a safe refuge, itself under siege by the same forces that have rendered the transcription obsolescent as disseminator of orchestral repertoire.

Fortunately, an audience takes many shapes, and an art form rendered unnecessary in one capacity can still perform yeoman service in another. While an unfortunate consequence of recent developments in mass media has been a shift towards, and even expectation of, passivity as the default engagement with a variety of activities, from music to sports, active practitioners, here in the form of the musicians themselves, remain a more specialized audience for whom the piano transcription holds interest. While the piano transcription may have outlived its usefulness as disseminator, in its other evolving capacities—pedagogical tool, creative outlet, critical commentary—it continues to be relevant.

The transcription's pedagogical uses have historically revolved around the teaching of orchestration, harmony, and counterpoint. Wagner once claimed his best

composition lesson came transcribing Beethoven's Ninth for the piano, and Brahms made an early living transcribing orchestral music for piano duet.¹ These continue to be its uses, despite changes in both compositional pedagogy and practice.

Furthermore, the process of transcription can shed invaluable light on particulars of various instrumental media. Yet to today's pianist, its true lessons may well exist in the creative process itself, and the breaking down of professional compartmentalization that has become so much a part of classical music culture. For this pianist in particular, it has become a small way of resisting the oft-lamented museum culture of classical music today, wherein the musicians, in Taruskin's phrase, have become "the curators of their heritage, not its proprietors."² In this regard, the process itself has been its own reward, though not without unexpected boons to general performance as well.

¹ Thomas Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Summer, 1999), 267-8.

² Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 170.

Chapter 1: Reduction

There are nearly as many types of transcription as there is music to transcribe, but one attempt at categorization will be essayed here: between the *productive* and the *reductive*. The distinction relates to the media undergoing arrangement, both of the original and the transcription, and hints at the creative process involved. Briefly, the *productive* transcription transfers music from a position of less instrumental means to one of greater means, while the *reductive* transcription does the reverse. Thus by this definition, an orchestrated piano piece would be *productive* while the piano arrangement of a symphony would be *reductive*. Examples in the former category include Brahms' and Busoni's transcriptions of the Bach D minor solo violin Chaconne, while Liszt's transcription of Schumann's song Widmung would fall into the latter.

The distinction works well enough if limited to the purely quantitative (number of musicians, for example), but flounders grappling with qualitative measurements. The Chaconne example is illustrative: for all the ease with which the piano represents complex harmony and counterpoint, it cannot hope to reproduce the dynamic and timbral control exerted by a violinist on a single held note. Conversely, for all the myriad color in the orchestral palette, a full orchestra could not duplicate the peculiar resonance created by a piano with pedal depressed. To entertain qualitative distinctions is to enter treacherous ideological terrain indeed.

Yet for all its pitfalls and ideological difficulties, there remains something undeniably intuitive about the *productive/reductive* distinction. Both Brahms' and Busoni's Chaconnes involve the addition of notes—quite a few of them; a piano arrangement of a symphony inevitably leaves notes out. The creative processes involved seem almost irreconcilably at odds. And whatever the merits of the distinction between *productive* and *reductive*, it is difficult imagining what follows, a solo piano transcription of *The Rite of Spring*, as anything other than reductive: *reductio ad absurdum*, it might be argued.

This represents the main difficulty in this undertaking, and for transcriptions of this type: the preponderance of musical material. There is no question of adding, only of taking out, of rearranging, of prioritizing amongst a multiplicity of voices and parts demanding attention. Even the daunting task of portraying widely varying orchestral color pales in comparison: judicious voicing can account for it where possible, to the limits the instrument will allow, and the rest must be left to imagination. The real issue is inevitably one of numbers. So much of the musical drama of *The Rite* involves gradual intensification: a slow but inexorable buildup, voices piled one atop the other, until the collective has reached a fevered pitch. The effect is suggestive of Boulez's famous idealization of music-making a half-century later: magic and collective hysteria.

How to make it all work on the piano? Where to go, once barely a third of the way through the buildup, with the majority of entrances yet to come, covering even those few parts pushes the limits of playability? The comical image conjured is one of

the pianist as a kind of jocolator—part minstrel, part juggler, part sleight-of-hand magician—managing the chaos where possible and struggling to maintain the illusion otherwise.

Confronted with these problems, the solution of omission is an appealing—and often necessary—one. At the extreme is abridgement, which, intimations of capitulation notwithstanding, takes the concept of reduction to its natural conclusion. Stravinsky himself provides a viable model with *Trois mouvements de Petrouchka*, a virtuoso piano suite transcribed from select movements of his previous ballet. Following his example with an excerpted suite from *The Rite* seems logical, with the ancillary benefit of a credible rationale for omitting pianistically awkward or otherwise unwieldy sections (“The Procession of the Oldest and Wisest One” and “The Dancing Out of the Earth” come to mind). Moreover, the narrative of the ballet, a loose unfolding of scenes of pagan ritual, seems naturally predisposed to abridgment. Particularly given the full ballet’s length, increased versatility in concert programming allowed by an abridged version would be desirable.

Yet there are reasons to resist relegating so much of the work to the cutting room floor. Stravinsky’s uncanny knack for judging duration of musical material is one. Then there is the self-same narrative whose abstraction was cited as rationale for abridgement. The various episodes, if relatively unrelated, nevertheless unfold organically, a process reflected dramatically as well as musically. Few movements have satisfactory endings: they conclude abruptly, or are interrupted by the following one, or merge seamlessly into the next. At the extreme is the “Ritual of the Two Rival

Tribes,” which ends amorphously, the theme of the “Oldest and Wisest One” making an appearance near the end. The patriarch’s music, though submerged at first, continues persistently, gathering in force and intensity until it has drowned out all others, at which point the new movement begins. Yet for all intents and purposes, the initial moment of the new movement, marked *attaca*, could well occur any number of bars earlier or later, or not at all (and be considered a part of the old movement). If anything, the effect for the listener is of the new movement beginning *at the same time* the previous one is unfolding, the two musics vying for attention amidst an increasingly cacophonous texture. Choosing “splice points,” in the parlance of recording, is neither easy nor necessarily desirable; omitting one movement: impossible, short of radically recomposing the piece.

Thus the decision to transcribe the ballet in its entirety. The decision was no easy one, and various factors—particularly versatility in programming and some unevenness in the current transcription—continue to recommend an abridged version. Nor can the work, as it currently stands, be easily excerpted, despite a nominal division into movements. It exists much as the orchestral version does: a thirty-minute suite in two halves. While the musical material of *The Rite* may well lend itself to an excerpted suite, in the mold of Stravinsky’s *Trois Movements de Petrouchka*, such a work would be of a separate piece entirely.

Chapter 2: Arrangement

Stravinsky

The primary source for any piano transcription of this type is inevitably the full orchestral score. This proves problematic in the current case, as efforts to prepare an authoritative version of *The Rite* are complicated by discrepancies between published versions, an inevitable result of a century of performance practice, error, and revision. Nor can more recent revisions necessarily claim authority over older versions. Simple discrepancies between Stravinsky's four-hand/two piano and full orchestral scores (likely attributable to transposition error in the latter) have, in at least one case, resulted in incomplete corrections of the full score and—astoundingly—further revision of the piano reduction to reflect this change. The curious result is an error introduced into the—previously correct—piano reduction to reflect an incomplete correction of the full score.

Score irregularities in *The Rite* are well documented,³ and are here discussed only when directly pertinent to the construction of a solo piano arrangement. A careful study of score discrepancies and their resolution is an instructive reminder of the outsized importance of Stravinsky's own piano reduction amongst the various versions. Given Stravinsky's predilection for composing at the piano,⁴ this is hardly

³ See Louis Cyr, "Writing *The Rite* Right," *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, Musician, and Modernist*, Ed. Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 157-173.

⁴ See Louis Andriessen and Elmer Schönberger, *The Appolonian Clockwork*, Jeff Hamburg, trans. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 145-9.

surprising, yet it suggests that the piano reduction, for all of its myriad problems, may at times be as near a conduit to the composer's intentions as any version of the full score.

Stravinsky refrained from transcribing any part of *The Rite* for piano solo, unlike *Petrushka*. His reasons for so favoring the latter are likely tied to that ballet's genesis: initially conceived as a piano concerto, the piano increasingly took a backseat role as the piece metamorphosed into orchestral ballet suite. By the 1911 premiere, the piano remained a featured soloist in only two movements, the "Russian Dance" and "Chez Petrouchka." Not surprisingly, of the three movements Stravinsky eventually transcribed, the first two are those very movements; only the third, the "Shrovetide Fair," transcribes an orchestral movement in which the piano plays an insignificant role.⁵

While no extant version of *The Rite* for solo piano exist in the composer's hand, either in sketch or final version, Stravinsky did arrange *The Rite* for two players, either performed as a four-hand duet, or on two pianos. The ambiguity of purpose is evident from the title of the Dover reprint of the American edition: *Petrushka and The Rite of Spring for Piano Four-Hands or Two Pianos*; and is likely intentional, advertising the versatility of the arrangement. This duality of purpose is nonetheless unusual and problematic. While execution of any four-hand piano arrangement on two pianos is of course possible, the two media at times recommend different

⁵ Roger Trent Nohl, *The Musical Textures of Stravinsky's "Three Movements of Petrouchka, for Piano:" A Comparative Study of the Transcriptions with Other Versions of Petrouchka* (DMA diss., Ohio State University, 1978), 16.

compositional approaches. Most obvious is the assignation of parts between players: the four-hand piano piece necessitates a division of keyboard into top and bottom halves; the two-piano piece knows no such limitation and suggests a division of labor based on material rather than register. Commercial advantages notwithstanding, the potential danger of Stravinsky's flexibility is a piece that is unsatisfactory in either medium.

An illustrative example of this drawback (see figures 2.1 and 2.2) can be found in the opening measures of the "Ritual of Abduction." Tremolos in the upper strings and sustained notes in the horns provide a constant texture and C7 middle-register harmony, which forms the backdrop for a succession of musical events: off-the-beat timpani strokes, a rapid melodic figure in the upper winds. In Stravinsky's piano reduction, this is effected by a transfer of the tremolo material: awkward but unavoidable, to accommodate the necessary division of parts based on register. Thus at the outset, the (low) timpani notes are covered by the *secondo* player, whilst the *primo* player maintains the tremolo; then the *secondo* player continues the tremolo while the *primo* player covers the upper winds. In the split-second interim, the *primo* player must imperceptibly hand off the tremolo to the *secondo* player: no easy feat, but unavoidable given the single piano limitation.

On two pianos the situation is eased considerably. There is no potential traffic jam in the center of the keyboard, but nor is there necessarily a need for a transfer in the first place. A single player can easily maintain the tremolo while the other covers first timpani, then upper winds, avoiding potential irregularity risked by a hand-off of

This musical score is a four-hand/two piano reduction of the opening of "The Ritual of Abduction". It consists of two systems. The first system has two staves labeled "Piano". The upper staff contains a complex texture of chords and moving lines, marked with a forte *f* dynamic. The lower staff is mostly silent, with a few notes appearing in the second measure, marked with a forte *f* dynamic and a slur with a "2" above it. The second system also has two staves. The upper staff is labeled "Pno." and contains a melodic line with a forte *f* dynamic, marked with a slur and a "3" above it. The lower staff is labeled "Pno." and contains a complex texture of chords and moving lines, marked with a forte *f* dynamic. A dashed line with "8va" above it spans across the staves. The system ends with "Etc." and a first ending bracket.

Figure 2.1: Opening measures of "The Ritual of Abduction" as they appear in Stravinsky's four-hand/two piano reduction

This musical score shows an idealized division of the opening measures of "The Ritual of Abduction" between two pianos. It consists of two systems. The first system has two staves labeled "Piano". The upper staff contains a complex texture of chords and moving lines, marked with a forte *f* dynamic. The lower staff is mostly silent, with a few notes appearing in the second measure, marked with a forte *f* dynamic and a slur with a "2" above it. The second system also has two staves. The upper staff is labeled "Pno." and contains a complex texture of chords and moving lines, marked with a forte *f* dynamic. The lower staff is labeled "Pno." and contains a melodic line with a forte *f* dynamic, marked with a slur and a "3" above it. A dashed line with "8va" above it spans across the staves. The system ends with "Etc." and a first ending bracket.

Figure 2.2: Opening measures of "The Ritual of Abduction" as they would appear with an idealized division of material between two pianos

the constant texture. Nor is this occurrence unique in the score; other such examples can easily be found. While this does not necessarily render Stravinsky's reduction useless as a guide for two-piano performance, it suggests a certain reevaluation of parts and judicious supplementation from the full score, which, it should be noted, are in the best tradition of both piano transcription and two-piano collaboration in any case.

No doubt the original purpose of Stravinsky's reduction was to facilitate ballet rehearsals without full orchestra, a hypothesis furthered by the relatively simple nature of the transcription (ballet accompanists generally sight-read their parts). For the project of creating a *solo* piano transcription, Stravinsky's four-hand/two-piano version is useful in two capacities: (1) the reduction aids in resolving score irregularities and questionable notes in the full score, particularly those suspiciously suggestive of transposition error (see pages 21 and 87 for examples), and (2) more importantly, it offers an invaluable glimpse into how Stravinsky imagined various orchestral passages at the piano.

Subsequent versions

A number of solo piano arrangements of *The Rite* have been made over the years,⁶ and given the work's notoriety, it is reasonable to assume that more will follow. The impossibility of achieving anything approaching literal reduction, an inevitable result of the richness of orchestral writing, has allowed for wide variety

⁶ In addition to the two featured below, at least two others have been made recently. A recording of a transcription by pianist Serhiy Salov was released in 2010; a review by James Manheim can be found at: <<http://www.allmusic.com/album/the-sacred-spring-of-slavs-w208548/review>>. A 2009 performance by pianist Mikael Oganessian of his transcription can be found at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCvXqkf0NHM>> (for part 1).

amongst versions. Hard choices imposed by necessity are the mother of pianistic invention, and transcription decisions involve intensely personal choices informed by factors ranging from musical taste to hand size. The result is a rich tradition in the very best sense.

Few of these transcriptions are widely available, and only two—to this author's knowledge—have been published: a 1975 version by Sam Raphling, and a 1985 version by Vladimir Leyetchkiss. It is possible that authors (possibly performing virtuosos) are loath to reveal their secrets, or that publishers are reluctant to gamble on a project that (a) will inevitably have a small market (those able to play it will as likely be motivated to make their own), and (b) will invariably have to compete with other published versions. Coupled with the transcription's obsolescence as disseminator of orchestral repertoire, it is perhaps a wonder that there are as many as two, published and available.

The 1975 Raphling transcription is published by Lyra Music Company, which, from its website, appears to be a small independent publisher primarily concerned with the dissemination of harp music. Though Raphling's *Rite* is available for purchase (for \$25) on the site as of this writing, what credibly appears to be a facsimile can be found on a number of other sites for free (www.scribd.com, www.vkgfx.com). An otherwise blank page following the title page claims a Carnegie Hall premiere (November 19, 1979) and subsequent recording (RCA). An informal search of

internet videos confirms that this version has in fact been performed at least one other time as well.⁷

The 1985 Leyetchkiss transcription published by G. Schirmer is by far the most widely available print score, though it has—to the author's knowledge—yet to be performed. A cursory glance suggests a reason: the score is reminiscent of Czerny's transcriptions of Beethoven's symphonies, which prompted the following criticism from Louis Köhler in 1853:

Czerny packed both hands full, so that very often the possibility of making single tones and voices prominent ceases; indeed in the light-winged scherzos he frequently leads on a dance of leaping hands full of chord, in a manner that is absolutely impractical; for even with the correct execution of a master's hand, the inward and essential character of the music is not always presentable.

Moreover, Czerny always brings into play the entire surface of the keyboard, from the lowest to the highest tones; hence there is an end to all alternation of coloring; a continual screaming discant tortures the nerve of hearing, beside falsely representing the orchestral effect. For Beethoven does not continually employ the high violin registers nor half a dozen of never resting piccolos.⁸

It is possible that the Leyetchkiss version was intended as a study score, and not necessarily a guide to performance—though the fact that the writing consistently hovers at the periphery of theoretical playability suggests otherwise. Regardless of intended purpose, real or imagined, the two published versions illustrate alternate approaches—some viable, others less so—to the many problems of transcription with

⁷ In 2002, by Daniel Rivera; see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Wau1Y2AcN4>

⁸ Quoted in Christensen, 269.

which the current arrangement grapples. They are cited when appropriate, particularly when they present feasible alternatives to the current transcription.

Though Raphling and Leyecktkiss are frequently cited in the following chapter, and their differences with the current version discussed, neither served as a source for the new transcription. It was in every way made independently from them: at no point in the construction of the new transcription did the author consult either older version, whether in the form of score or recorded performance; and only after the current version was completed, performed, and recorded, did the author consult the two previous arrangements, and this with the specific objective of composing this prose companion. Nor has the new transcription been amended as of this writing, despite some appealing solutions found in both: that was not deemed the point of this exercise. Since the initial performances and recording, the author has begun to experiment with various attractive alternatives the two sometimes provide, with an eye towards future performances; these are not, however, reflected in the current score.

One final comment: despite much ink spilled here, the importance of the various artistic and editorial decisions that make up an arrangement is perhaps somewhat overstated. Personal experience from undertaking the project has suggested that the choice of one figuration over another is less important than its successful realization at the piano—the skill of the pianist at least as important as the quality of the arrangement. This may seem a trivial observation, but nonetheless deserving of attention. At its best, the performing of the arrangement becomes an inseparable part of the transcription process, each informing the other in a constantly reinforcing

process, a fact illustrated by its absence in the Leyehtkiss version: likely conceived apart from the requirements of performance and lacking the valuable symbiotic relationship between the two, the result is a version as unpianistic as it is unplayable. Taken as a whole, the process has much to recommend to it, requiring a demanding fusion of creative energy and pianistic know-how.

Chapter 3: Transcription

The body of this work is the transcription itself. Its organization has taken a page out of the old Alfred Cortot study editions of Chopin. Each movement is presented separately, preceded by a discussion of its particular problems and the solutions devised to meet them. The introductory text deals with matters of a general nature, as well as discussion relating to more specific items requiring involved treatment. Items requiring less prose and/or relating to minutiae are compiled in annotations; to avoid cluttering the score itself with copious footnotes (à la Cortot), these annotations appear as endnotes, following each movement where warranted.

I. A Kiss of the Earth

Introduction

A naturalistic portrayal of spring seems to be the opening movement's programmatic role, particularly as it relates to the act of rising, of waking after a long winter. Within a musical representation of the ancient/pagan world, it is particularly effective as an Act of Creation—a depiction of Genesis, or the Dawn of Time, as it were. The staggered entrances create a Bolero-style general trajectory of gradual layered increase—in volume, complexity, and numbers—a trajectory recurring frequently in the ballet. Yet unlike the buildups that follow, there is no sense of driving inevitability, the inexorable tattoo of instruments working in rhythmic and harmonic concert. Instead, individuation of voices is privileged, and all musical

means conscripted to that effect: widely varying orchestral color, rhythmic differentiation, polytonality. No surprise that wind instruments, particularly those with characteristically “cutting” timbres (the piccolo clarinet, for example) are prominently featured, and the recreation of this colorful polyphony presents one of the main challenges to pianistic realization. Ironically, execution of the passage is aided by its—admittedly difficult—polyrhythmic and polytonal nature, which provides a clear path towards differentiation of voice on an instrument otherwise unable to achieve timbral variety (i.e., the piano). The effect is mostly coloristic: a gradually unfolding cacophony of seemingly unrelated voices that approaches zoo-like proportions, before a dramatic cutoff that introduces the entrance of the augur and young men. Despite being one of the more difficult to transcribe, the movement remains one of the most satisfying to play.

The transcription as a whole, but this movement in particular, bears heavy debt to the piano music of Claude Debussy, especially his two books of Preludes (1909-10 and 1912-13), which form a veritable compendium of pianistic resources. Here, the model was Debussy’s treatment of the piano in *Puck’s Dance*, an exquisite miniature whose frolicking depiction of a Pan-like woodland figure parallels the setting of *The Rite*. The many voices and figurations in *Puck* suggest a kaleidoscope of orchestral colors, a work virtually screaming to be orchestrated, and as such demands of the pianist the utmost imagination in execution. Yet for all its tantalizingly suggestive colors, *Puck* remains at its core a piano piece, relying heavily on the resources of the instrument (the pedal in particular). With *The Rite*, the process is more or less in

reverse, the aim to accommodate the colors of Stravinsky's orchestration within the pianistic resources available. If the process of performing *Puck* is one of orchestrating at the keyboard, of imagining an endless palate of colors and realizing it by any means available, the process of transcribing *The Rite* involves finding the pianistic resources to enable that situation.

That said: the two remain noticeably discrete pieces, much of where they differ involving Stravinsky's embrace of dissonance, discord, and cacophony at a level far beyond that which Debussy tolerated. Dissonance is a default state in *The Rite*, so much so that even traditionally consonant intervals are re-contextualized to sound dissonant. For an example, one need look no further than the first coincidence of voices, the horn entrance in the famous opening bassoon solo: despite coinciding with an A in the bassoon, the horn's C# clashes with our memory of a previous C \natural in the bassoon solo, such that even the otherwise consonant minor sixth between the two is made to sound dissonant (despite the occasional simultaneity of C \natural and C#, the effect of dissonance is largely due to the memory of C \natural caused by repeated iterations).

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Bassoon and Horn in F. The Bassoon part is in 4/4 time, marked 'a piacere', and features a melodic line with triplets and a quintuplet. The Horn in F part enters in the second measure with a melodic line marked 'mp'. Brackets and arrows highlight the dissonance between the instruments. Specifically, a bracket connects the A in the bassoon to the C# in the horn, and another bracket connects the C# in the horn to a previous C natural in the bassoon. Arrows point from the C# in the horn to the C natural in the bassoon, indicating the clash.

Figure 3.1: Opening measures of *The Rite*: in brackets are the coincidences of bassoon and horn on minor sixth, now re-contextualized to sound dissonant; arrows show the C# in the horn clashing with the memory of previous C \natural in the bassoon

This is not to say that Debussy avoided contextualized dissonance, and to the contrary, he employs this same technique (on the identical interval, not less) in the very opening of *Puck*. A catchy, Pan-like tune in F dorian is suddenly interrupted by a short fanfare, whose C ♭ clashes with our memory of the many C ♮s in the tune.

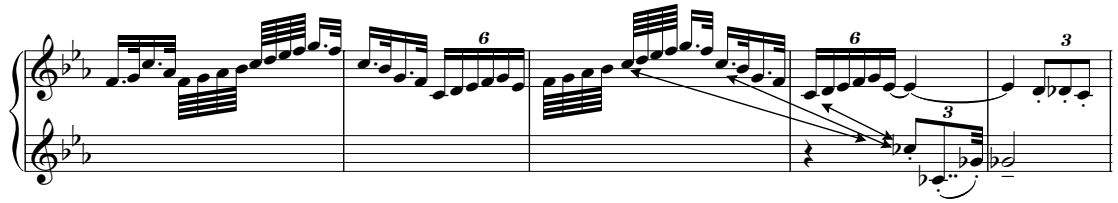


Figure 3.2: Measures 3-7 of *Puck's Dance*: entrance of C ♭ s in the left hand clash with memory of previous C ♮s in the right hand

Yet despite the obvious similarities to the opening of *The Rite*, the differences are unmistakable: for all that the left hand entrance in *Puck* is jarring, the moment is fleeting, the listener soon taken to other lush pastures and left scratching his head, wondering if the dissonance had been half imagined all along. This serves a dual role: besides functioning as an elegant if surprising point of modulation, the introduction of the left hand in a clashing key area helps clarify the (imagined) orchestration of the passage: perhaps Puck's dancing flute melody has been interrupted by the call of a muted trumpet. Had the two voices been in the same harmonic mode, it is unlikely that any pianistic voicing tricks could differentiate the two so colorfully. Yet the notion of the two voices continuing to cohabit the same space, clashing as each proceeds indifferent of the other, does not exist in Debussy as it does in Stravinsky.

This represents an important distinction between *Puck* and the introduction of *The Rite*: the normally dissonant in Debussy is presented in such a way as to sound

consonant, while in Stravinsky it is the reverse. As perceived consonance and dissonance are largely a matter of degree, this may well represent a surface distinction rather than fundamental difference, yet it remains an audible one nonetheless. On a practical level, this distinction requires a careful use of pedal in the Stravinsky, balancing the often competing aims of clarifying continually clashing harmonies (less pedal) while creating an “orchestral,” larger-than-life palate (generally requiring more pedal).

The opening movement’s main pianistic attraction is the challenge of rendering the wide variety of orchestral timbres at the piano, demanding extremes in voicing technique; the main difficulty comes when numbers force compromise. This happens quite soon, given that many of the instrumental solos are particularly involved; and it becomes especially problematic during the final nine bars of the buildup, a veritable zoo of discrete, competing voices. These nine measures are especially difficult as they demand hard choices and significant omission, and despite the passage’s recommending the use of the full range of pianistic resources at the outset, it nevertheless requires an intensification be effected as well. Compounding the difficulty is a bass ostinato figure, requiring the full attention of the left hand to realize properly. Its location in the bass renders noticeable even a partial omission, and thus the decision to maintain it throughout, despite necessitating coverage of all other voices *by the right hand alone*. Among the remaining voices, the inevitable choices of omission were accomplished by the creation of a hierarchy favoring the most prominent voices (the piccolo clarinet at one end, flutes at the other), prioritizing those

voices at the top of the list, and accommodating others where feasible. Particular attention was given to including as many different harmonic modes as possible. It should be noted that neither Raphling's nor Lyecktkiss' solutions opt to maintain the bass ostinato, in order to cover a wider variety of voices: Raphling's solution maintains a certain consistency by gradually moving up in register; Lyecktkiss,' while undeniably in the spirit of zoo-like chaos, seems manifestly impossible to play.

The image displays two musical staves, labeled 'Piano' and 'Pno.', with various annotations and arrows indicating the arrangement and prioritization of material. The score is in 2/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture with many triplets and sixteenth notes.

Annotations include:

- Piccolo clarinet (and sometimes flute copies pattern): always maintained** (with arrows pointing to specific melodic lines in the upper register).
- Contrabassoon ostinato: always maintained** (with an arrow pointing to the bass line).
- Clarinets: maintained when possible, omitted when necessary** (with arrows pointing to specific melodic lines).
- Oboe/piccolo trombone countermelody to piccolo clarinet: maintained where possible** (with an arrow pointing to a line in the upper register).
- Composite of flute background: covered in absence of other voices** (with an arrow pointing to a line in the upper register).
- Reiteration of piccolo clarinet line** (with an arrow pointing to a line in the upper register).
- English horn** (with an arrow pointing to a line in the upper register).
- Clarinets: filled in where space allows** (with arrows pointing to various lines in the upper register).
- Clarinet fragment** (with an arrow pointing to a specific line in the upper register).
- Etc.** (at the end of the score).

Figure 3.3: Opening measures of first movement climax in the current transcription: arrows illustrate arrangement/prioritization of material

A postscript for antiquarians: the final iteration of the bassoon solo is the subject of a peculiar manuscript irregularity alluded to briefly in the previous chapter. The final two notes appear a major third lower in the original edition of the full score than in Stravinsky's four-hand/two-piano reduction. The figure's otherwise

consistency at its every iteration, and the incongruity of the new lowered pitches within the passage's tonal framework, suggest a copying error (possibly from translating treble to tenor clef for the bassoonist). Furthermore, the two pitches were corrected in a later revision, yet the note at the end of the tie was overlooked, resulting in a new instruction for the bassoon soloist: cut off the A \flat by dropping a minor third to the F (now F natural because the flat to which it had been tied was corrected). Difficulties of execution notwithstanding, it is notable that conductors such as Monteux, Ansermet, Boulez, and Stravinsky himself instructed the bassoonist to omit the F. Yet in 1968, the piano reduction was corrected to reflect the full score, and now instructs the pianist to cut off the A \flat by dropping a minor third.⁶ The current solo piano arrangement ignores this "correction," omitting the F.

The image shows a musical score for a bassoon solo, presented as a four-hand/two-piano reduction. It consists of two systems of piano staves. The top system is labeled 'Tempo I' and features a complex melodic line with ties and a fermata. The bottom system is also labeled 'Tempo I' and features a simpler accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'mf' and 'mp', and a trill marked 'tr'. The piece ends with 'Etc.'

Figure 3.4: Final iteration of bassoon solo as it originally appears in Stravinsky's four-hand/two-piano reduction

⁶ See Cyr, 157-8. Figures 3.3-3.6 were constructed from a similar diagram appearing on page 158 in Cyr's text. Note that this change was not necessarily widely circulated: given that the original piano reduction is in the public domain, the most widely available and economical scores are reprints—essentially facsimiles—of this original, and thus do not contain the "correction."



Figure 3.5: Final iteration of bassoon solo as it originally appears in Stravinsky's full score; arrows show transposition error



Figure 3.6: Final iteration of bassoon solo as it originally appears in a correction to the full score; arrows show corrected and overlooked pitches

Figure 3.7 shows a four-hand/piano reduction of the bassoon solo. It consists of two staves for the right and left hands. The tempo is marked "Tempo I". The right hand part is in 2/4 time and contains a five-measure rest followed by a quarter note. An arrow points to the note at the end of the rest, labeled "Error introduced". The left hand part is in 2/4 time and contains a five-measure rest followed by a quarter note. The dynamic marking "mp" is present.

Figure 3.7: Final iteration of bassoon solo in "corrected" four-hand/two-piano reduction; arrow shows error introduced

Figure 3.8 shows the same four-hand/piano reduction as in Figure 3.7. The right hand part is in 2/4 time and contains a five-measure rest followed by a quarter note. The left hand part is in 2/4 time and contains a five-measure rest followed by a quarter note. The dynamic marking "mp" is present.

Figure 3.8: Passage as it appears in current solo piano transcription: reflects original, uncorrected four-hand/two-piano reduction

A Kiss of the Earth

Stravinsky - Fried

Lento $\text{♩} = 50$ **3** Introduction **5**

Piano *a piacere*

mp **3** *p*

Pno. *poco accelerando* **3** *a tempo* **3**

Pno. *accelerando* *p espressivo* **3** **6** *a tempo* **5**

Pno. **14** *mf* **3** **3** **3** **3** **6**

Pno. **18** **3** **6** *tr* *mp* **6** *tr*

Pno. **21** *tr* **3** *tr* **6** *tr* **3** **6**

Piano score for measures 24-25. Measure 24 features sixteenth-note runs in the right hand with a sixteenth-note triplet in the left hand, marked with a trill. Measure 25 begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a trill in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand.

Piano score for measures 26-28. Measure 26 continues with sixteenth-note runs in the right hand and a trill in the left hand. Measure 27 features a trill in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 28 includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand.

Piano score for measures 29-31. Measure 29 features a triplet in the right hand and a quintuplet in the left hand. Measure 30 includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 31 features a septuplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand.

Piano score for measures 32-36. Measure 32 is marked *pp* and includes a *legato* marking with a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measures 33-36 feature various triplet patterns in both hands and a trill in measure 34.

Piano score for measures 37-40. Measure 37 features a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 38 includes a nonuplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 39 features a *mf* dynamic and includes a sextuplet in the right hand and a sextuplet in the left hand. Measure 40 includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand.

Piano score for measures 41-44. Measure 41 features a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 42 includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 43 features a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand. Measure 44 includes a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand.

45 *solo* *mf*

Pno.

49

Pno.

51 *mf* *sopra*

Pno.

53 *ff*

Pno.

55 *tr* *ff*

Pno.

64

Pno.

6 6 5 5

Detailed description: This system contains measures 64 through 67. The right hand features a melodic line with a sixteenth-note triplet in measure 64, followed by eighth-note patterns in measures 65 and 66, and a sixteenth-note triplet in measure 67. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. Fingering numbers 6 and 5 are indicated for the right hand.

65

Pno.

Tempo I

6 6

Detailed description: This system contains measures 65 through 67. Measure 65 continues the eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand. Measure 66 has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand. Measure 67 is marked 'Tempo I' and features a melodic line with a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand. The left hand has a whole rest.

68

Pno.

mp

5 3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 68 through 71. Measure 68 has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand and a whole rest in the left hand. Measure 69 has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand and an eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand. Measure 70 has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand and an eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand. Measure 71 has a sixteenth-note triplet in the right hand and an eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand. The dynamic marking *mp* is present.

72

Pno.

p

attaca

Detailed description: This system contains measures 72 through 75. Measure 72 has a whole rest in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. Measure 73 has a half note in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. Measure 74 has a half note in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. Measure 75 has a half note in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. The dynamic marking *p* is present, and the section ends with the instruction *attaca*.

Notes to A Kiss of the Earth: Introduction

Measure 26: In Stravinsky's full score, the top-voice accompanying figure occurs in the previous measure. Nevertheless, this erroneous placement is not without some claim to legitimacy: Stravinsky's four-hand reduction reproduces this as given here, a full measure late (notated in an *ossia* staff as optional/impossible to realize material often is in a transcription). Though possibly a copying error on Stravinsky's part, this shift allows the accompaniment figure to be played (in the previous measure it would be impossible to include), and was thus retained here.

Measures 35-38: Execution of the passage is considerably simplified by taking the top line with the left hand, thus covering all duple lines with the left, the triplet with the right. Thanks to Aleck Karis for this observation.

Measures 52-56: The ease with which the bass flute passage can be recreated at the piano is a testament to Stravinsky's *modus operandi* of composing at the keyboard. In particular, the various figurations' compatibility with the right hand suggests that Stravinsky worked the part out with that extremity; with the left hand, the passage becomes thorny indeed. Despite this difficulty, both Raphling and Leyeckkiss notate it for the left hand (as their staff placement and fingering confirms), essentially asking the pianist to muscle through it. While this is no doubt in keeping with the line's placement as bottom voice, it ignores the obvious solution: cross the hands! Any increase in difficulty in the top (easier) voice is more than made up for by the ease with which the bottom can now be realized.

The Augurs of Spring/Dances of the Young Girls

The movement consists of two relatively discrete sections: (1) a thumping dance—featuring the famous “Stravinsky chord”—of the young men consulting the augur; and (2) the entrance of the young girls, and the collective dances that prologue the wife-abduction ritual of the subsequent movement. Both present transcriptive problems similar to that of the opening movement, particularly with respect to a piling on of voices, but in both new cases these occur within a context of audibly far greater rhythmic homogeneity. Separated as they are by a grand pause, they can be considered more or less separately.

The first section is characterized by a texture generated by constant iterations of the “Stravinsky chord;” a texture which, excepting four measures near the outset and a nineteen-measure stretch later on, continues throughout. The eight-note chord combines E major (bottom) and E \flat 7 major (top) harmonies, involves only a single doubled pitch (octave E’s in the left hand), and requires both hands to play. This poses no problem by itself, until the entrances of other voices require the attention of one or both hands. Thus the main difficulty involves managing the other voices as they enter and exit, while maintaining the illusion that the chord continues unabated throughout.



Figure 3.9: The eight-note "Stravinsky chord" requires both hands to execute at the piano

The obvious solution is to revoice the chord: create a new condensed configuration of notes drawn from both E major and E \flat 7 major that can be covered by a single hand. This solution is at least partly inadequate, however, for the simple reason that the “Stravinsky chord” derives its particular sound from far more than simply a combination of tonalities: its identity depends on those particular notes in that specific configuration. It may be fair to say that the timbral qualities of the chord are at least as important as its harmonic constituents, or that the former are important only as far as they satisfy the latter. It is the particular thumping sound of the augurs’ dance (or the illusion of it) that must be continued, here with a single hand alone. Maintenance of this timbral consistency was deemed so important that during the early stages of transcription, a left arm cluster covering more or less the range of the chord (elbow on the low E, fingertips on the high E \flat) was seriously considered for passages where the right hand is called elsewhere; and it was only abandoned once it became clear that the cluster could not consistently reproduce the sound of the chord, or even approach it enough to justify the inherent difficulty of the gesture.

Both Raphling and Lyecktkiss opt for similar solutions involving the repetition of an abridged version of the Stravinsky chord in its upper register, containing the notes of the E \flat 7 chord on top, with a lone E natural in the bass to stand in for the bottom half. This configuration has the added benefit of enabling the inclusion (via the left thumb) of a small ostinato figure covered by the English horn. In both versions, the left hand plays this chord while the right covers instrumental

entrances in the upper register. Leyeckkiss characteristically attempts to have things both ways by handing off the upper part of the Stravinsky chord to the right hand when the upper (melodic) voices are close enough to allow it, in order to jump down briefly with the left and catch the lower part of the Stravinsky chord. This ambitious solution appears playable, if awkward. However, the sudden inclusion of a heavy bass chord in alternate measures will surely be noticeable in performance, and seems contrary to the spirit of the passage: the primary goal should be the preservation of an illusion of continuity; disruption of this continuity because a few extra notes can briefly be added does not seem warranted. Nevertheless, note that in both versions a premium is placed on the maintenance of a consistent left hand texture where possible, even at the expense of loss of sonority in the ostinato: the reasoning is probably that (1) the ear will be distracted by the entrance of new material and not notice the change, and (2) the memory from so many previous iterations of the full chord will allow the ear to imperceptibly fill in the blanks. These seem to be reasonable assumptions.

The current transcription takes a slightly different approach, however. The eight-note Stravinsky chord is divided into five abridged versions, each a possible collection of four adjacent notes from the original chord. The left hand travels up and down the Stravinsky chord in these four-note-chord increments. This solution has the advantage of maintaining all notes from the Stravinsky chord in their original places, though at the expense of consistency between adjacent iterations (also lost is the English horn ostinato, but as a rather incidental part of the texture, it will not be

missed, its pitches already contained within the Stravinsky chord). The reasoning here is that the change from chord to chord is not especially noticeable, particularly when the ear is be drawn to “events” in the right hand, and that the added harmonic richness from the staggered use of the entire chord is worth a slight inconsistency between adjacent chords in the texture. While a novel one, the present solution cannot necessarily claim superiority over the others; all versions provide varying approaches for maintaining the same auditory illusion.

The image shows a musical score for Piano, consisting of two staves. The left hand (bass clef) plays a complex, rhythmic accompaniment of chords, while the right hand (treble clef) plays a melodic line. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (sf, sf, mf, ff), articulation (accents), and phrasing (slurs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat major), and the time signature is 2/4. The passage ends with 'Etc.' on the right side.

Figure 3.10: Passage shows staggered use of various abbreviated Stravinsky chords to accommodate the left hand alone

Although difficulties are similar in the second half of the movement, matters are complicated by the far greater numbers involved, particularly as the music reaches its climax. Whereas in the first half, the challenge involves maintaining the illusion of a constant texture while covering occasional soloistic passages, in the second half it is a matter of navigating a gradual layering of voices until a state of near-pandemonium is reached. In this respect, the challenge is similar to that encountered in the opening movement, with some important differences: (1) here the majority of instrumental figures are less soloistic, more textural; (2) there are many more of them; and (3) they combine within a context of far greater rhythmic and harmonic unity.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for an orchestra. The instruments listed on the left are Flute, Bassoon, Horn in F, Violin I, Violin I (labeled 'Etc.'), Violin II, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of two flats. The Flute and Bassoon parts show a melodic line with a trill. The Horn in F part has a melodic line. The Violin I part has a melodic line. The Violin II part has a constant trill. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a constant trill. The score illustrates the challenge of maintaining constant trills in the bassoons and solo violins when solo voices enter.

Figure 3.11: An excerpted passage from the full score illustrates the problem: how to continue the ostinati once solo voices enter? Note that this diagram presents a slightly simplified version of the full score, with some redundant voices omitted. Furthermore, for ease of reading, in this and subsequent figures all instruments have been transposed and are notated as C instruments.

Managing constant trills in the bassoons and solo violins (and an accompanying col legno ostinato in lower strings), proved to be one of the section's greatest challenges. The trills begin early on and continue nearly to the end, providing a sheen of color that forms a backdrop to the whole. This is a particularly effective device, both in orchestration and at the piano. The issue from the pianist's point of view is that trills require a commitment of fingers disproportionate to their importance, and their maintenance becomes problematic once accompanied by a multiplicity of material. Thus, if maintaining the trill early on is a simple matter, the situation becomes increasingly untenable once melodic voices enter. The objective is to maintain the *illusion* that the trill continues unchanged once solo voices enter (when maintaining the trill in actuality becomes manifestly impossible), until such a time that

a preponderance of voices has: (1) made even such half-measures impossible, and (2) created such a mass of sound that a trill submerged in the texture would not be heard in any case. Or to state the problem differently, how to gradually phase out the trills so that their eventual disappearance goes unnoticed? The question prompted discovery of one of the more surprising solutions of the whole transcription, as successful in its execution as it is elegant in its simplicity.

Piano

cantabile

Light off-beat repetition of trill notes maintains illusion of trill continuity

Etc.

Figure 3.12: Solo piano realization makes use of off-beat repetition of trill pitches to maintain illusion of trill continuity

The solution involves a neat bit of sleight-of-hand. Once the right hand (previously covering the trill) is called on to play a melodic line, the left must take over the trill while simultaneously continuing its eighth-note ostinato figure. Both cannot be continued as written, and the eighth-note figure, being more prominent, is not subject to abridgement. It is the trill that must undergo transformation. The *illusion* of the trill, however, can be maintained: by lightly depressing together with the thumb both trill notes on the sixteenth note off-beats of the ostinato, so that the pitches sound softly, as if in the background, in the “spaces.” The off-beat inclusion of the trill pitches, and the pulsing of the ostinato (all blended with a bit of half-peddaling), provide enough semblance of the previous texture (with trill intact) that, coupled with the fact that the listener’s attention is diverted *at that very moment* to the

entering melody, the transition will be nearly seamless. In magician's parlance, the melody and ostinato provide the misdirection that makes the illusion successful.

The horn entrance in measure 119 marks one of the single most powerful moments of the entire ballet. By this point, every other instrument has entered, contributing varied figures to an interlocking texture: a rising and falling eighth note pattern alternating between cellos and basses; eighth-note ostinati in violins, trombones, and timpani; trills in bassoons and clarinets; sustained notes in bass clarinets. The melodic theme of the young girls has been passed around and now resides as a kind of ostinato in the highest voices, the flutes, while the other instruments provide support beneath. Above all, the orchestra sounds like a living, breathing thing: a pulsating, throbbing force of nature. The entrance of the horns (and three cellos) on a long, slow theme derived from the dancing flute melody, emerging as if from below, is one of the moments that inspired this entire transcription project.

It is also a nightmare to arrange for solo piano, made the worse by the transcriber's attachment to it. With only the smallest fraction re-creatable by a single pianist, Stravinsky's own four-hand reduction in the end became the indispensable guide through the wilderness, with modification to accommodate a single set of hands. Thus, the walking bass line was simplified into a single chord to be iterated by the left hand at spaces within the horn melody, the eighth-note ostinato replaced by a similar one higher up (itself a transposed viola line) that could be covered by the right thumb whilst the rest of the hand covered the flute melody. To the author, the arrangement seems to best manage those elements most important to the passage: the interplay

between horn and flute melodies, maintenance of harmonic richness throughout all registers, and a pulsating rhythmic quality. Nonetheless, there remains wide variety amongst possibilities, and both Raphling and Leyehtkiss present alternative approaches.

Piano

Piano

Etc.

Figure 3.13: Passage with climactic horn entrance in Stravinsky's four-hand/two-piano reduction

Flute counter melody

Piano

Modification of a composite viola line: meant to stand in for multiple omitted ostinati

Primary voice: horn (and solo cello) melody

Reduction of bass line pitches iterated in spaces between horn melody

Etc.

Figure 3.14: Passage with climactic horn entrance in the solo piano transcription

The Augurs of Spring/Dances of the Young Girls

Tempo Giusto

Piano

f

l.h. sfz chords 8vb.

7

Pno.

meno f

12

Pno.

f

sf sf

18

Pno.

mf

ff

p

tr

24

Pno.

sf

ff

sf

29

Pno.

ff

Pno.

33 (8) 3 3 3 *f*

Pno.

39 *marcato e sempre mf*
p subito

Pno.

45 *f* *p* *f*

Pno.

51 *p* *f*

Pno.

57 *p* *f*

Pno.

63 *piu f*

70 *allargando* *ff* *ff pesante* *ff* *mf* *8va* *6*

76 *f*

81 *p subito* *tr*

89 *cantabile*

93 *8va* *tr*

99 *mf* *3* *3* *3* *3* *p*

106

Pno.

111

Pno.

114

Pno.

119

Pno.

125

Pno.

132

Pno.

p subito e crescendo

137

Pno.

mf

142

Pno.

sf

146

Piano score for measures 146-150. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The left hand has a bass line with slurs and accents. A dynamic marking *subito mp e crescendo al fine* is present.

151

Piano score for measures 151-157. The right hand has a complex melodic line with many slurs. The left hand has a bass line with slurs and accents.

158

Piano score for measures 158-163. The right hand has a complex melodic line with many slurs. The left hand has a bass line with slurs and accents.

164

Piano score for measures 164-169. The right hand has a complex melodic line with many slurs. The left hand has a bass line with slurs and accents. Dynamic markings *sfz* are present.

Notes to The Augurs of Spring, Dances of the Young Girls

Measures 3 and following: Performing the left-hand portion of the accented chords 8vb emphasizes the accents while not significantly altering the perceived harmonic continuity from accented to non-accented chord, and vice versa.

Measures 9-12: As odd as this passage appears, it is simply an amalgamation of three voices (bassoon composite, horn, and cello), renoted for ease of execution at the piano, as the following two figures illustrate:

Figure 3.15: Measures 9-12 of The Augurs in the full score

Figure 3.16: Measures 9-12 of The Augurs in the solo piano transcription

Measures 43-61: For clarity, the solo voice is set in a separate stave, despite considerable overlap of pitches with the ostinato chord. Judicious voicing is necessary to differentiate this line.

Measures 141-148: The offbeat cluster effected by the right thumb is a version of the earlier trill illusion (measures 89 and following) discussed in the text.

Ritual of Abduction

The challenge here is one that by now is all too familiar: maintaining a background texture unchanged—or in its absence, the illusion of such continuity—when entrances of other musical “events” demand the attention of one or both hands. In this case, the texture is a mixture of tremolo and long held notes, maintained by different instruments at different times. The particular character of this texture, combined with the movement’s relatively slow harmonic motion, invites a certain pianistic modification of the material (arpeggiation of figures and so forth), perhaps more so than in any other movement of the ballet (elsewhere, the specificity of melodic material complicates such pianistic modification of Stravinsky’s figurations). This combined with the multiplicity of parts, the sheer “busyness” of the movement, and the impossibility of anything approaching literal reduction, have ensured wide variety amongst transcriptions.

The current transcription uses Stravinsky’s four-hand reduction as a guide to pianistic execution of the tremolo figure. In Stravinsky’s version, a single player performs the six-note tremolo by rapidly alternating three-note chords.

The image shows a musical score for Piano, consisting of four staves. The top two staves are grouped under a brace labeled 'Piano' and represent the right hand. The bottom two staves are grouped under a brace labeled 'Piano' and represent the left hand. The music is in 9/8 time and has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The right hand part features a tremolo figure consisting of six-note chords (triads) alternating rapidly. The left hand part consists of a single sustained chord, likely a triad, held throughout the fragment. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the beginning of the right hand part.

Figure 3.17: Fragment of Ritual of Abduction in Stravinsky's four-hand/two piano reduction illustrating tremolo figure

This requires the use of two hands to accomplish, and in the transcription is used in the absence of other material; when other voices make this impossible, a reconfigured one-hand version is used. Though the hand's five fingers require the bottom note be omitted in these cases, the omitted pitch is reactivated whenever possible.

Ossia staff shows simplified version (omitting reiterations of the low C)

Piano

f Full, two-hand tremolo figure in absence of other material

Abridged, one-hand tremolo figure, low C omitted

Strong octave Cs in bass (captured with pedal) help maintain pitch presence later

Timpani

Woodwinds

Pno.

Abridged, one-hand tremolo figure, low C omitted

Tremolo passed from right to left hand

Figure 3.18: Opening measures of *Ritual of Abduction* in solo piano transcription, illustrating management of tremolo in presence of additional material

The bass octave C's, played by the left hand at the outset, are an important feature of this auditory illusion. Though absent in *Raphling*, *Leychtkiss* and even Stravinsky's own reduction, they are an important addition here, for the following

reasons: (1) they are present in the full score, covered by timpani and low strings, (2) they help provide a strong initial attack (as in the full score: quite a few instruments provide an initial attack but do not sustain), and (3) they help to sustain a C pitch presence, which will degrade considerably once events—first in the timpani, later in the winds—require this pitch be omitted from the tremolo (to accommodate a single hand). This illustrates the type of pianistic addition that can often be of tremendous benefit to the transcription.

As a general rule, the current arrangement strives to maintain consistency (where possible) amongst tremolos in order to provide a certain unity to the movement. Thus, when multiple textures have forced major omissions, tremolo-like figures are given preference. The richness of orchestration in this movement requires significant omission and creative reconfiguration, hence the wide variety among transcriptions; as the minutiae of these devices is not particularly of a general nature, instances worthy of note are treated in the annotations.

Ritual of Abduction

Presto $\text{♩} = 132$
Ossia

The score is written for piano (Piano/Pno.) in 8/8 time. It begins with a tempo marking of Presto and a metronome indication of 132 quarter notes per minute. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The first system shows the piano accompaniment with a forte (f) dynamic. The ossia section, indicated by a dashed line, starts at measure 3 and continues through measure 5. The score includes various musical notations such as chords, arpeggios, and fingerings (e.g., 2, 1, 2). The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Piano

f

3

8^{va}

Pno.

5

6

Pno.

7

Pno.

2 2 2 2 2

etc.

9

Pno.

11

Pno.

13

Pno.

15

Pno.

17

Pno.

19

Pno.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 20-21. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 6/8 time signature. It features a complex, rhythmic melody with many accidentals. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a simpler, more melodic line with fewer accidentals. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 22-23. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the complex melody from the previous system. The lower staff features a more active bass line with some chords and a melodic line. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 24-25. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melody with some chords. The lower staff has a more active bass line with some chords and a melodic line. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 25-26. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melody with some chords. The lower staff has a more active bass line with some chords and a melodic line. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 26-27. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melody with some chords. The lower staff has a more active bass line with some chords and a melodic line. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 27-28. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melody with some chords. The lower staff has a more active bass line with some chords and a melodic line. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 28-29. Measure 28 features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a melodic line. Measure 29 continues the piece with similar textures.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 30-31. Measure 30 shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. Measure 31 includes a dynamic marking of *8^{va}* (octave) and a 7/8 time signature.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 32-35. Measure 32 has a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 7/8 time signature. Measures 33-35 show various time signatures including 3/4, 6/8, and 2/4.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 36-38. Measure 36 has a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. Measure 37 has a 3/4 time signature. Measure 38 has a 9/8 time signature and includes dynamic markings of *p* and *mf*.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 39-40. Measure 39 has a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. Measure 40 has a 6/8 time signature.

Pno.

Musical notation for measures 41-43. Measure 41 has a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. Measure 42 has a 6/8 time signature. Measure 43 has a 6/8 time signature and includes a *crescendo* marking.

42

Pno.

43

Pno.

45

Pno.

gliss. With palm

48

Pno.

With palm

52

Pno.

With palm

f

55

Pno.

57

Pno.

60

Pno.

63

Pno.

66

Pno.

Notes to Ritual of Abduction

Measures 2 and following: Unison timpani and bass drum strokes are here represented by a single (lower) note rather than an octave unison (which, as a more literal translation, is found in Raphling, Leyeckkiss, and Stravinsky). A low-register single note is more percussive, the octave more pianistic, hence the choice of the former in this instance.

Measures 9-10: Descending thirty-second notes in the right hand simulate flutter tongue in the upper woodwinds and glissandi in four violins. Obviously nothing close to all of the notes in the full score (the instruments combined create rapid, chromatically descending dominant seventh chords) could be covered; notes were chosen beginning with the arrival chord in measure 11 and counting backwards, moving up a half step chromatically at every eighth-note beat.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, labeled 'Piano', features a right hand with a rapid, chromatically descending sequence of chords in the upper register, and a left hand with a bass line. Annotations with arrows point to the right hand's chords, stating 'Parallel chords descend by half step'. Another annotation points to the final chord, stating 'Penultimate chord 1/2 step above arrival chord'. The second system, labeled 'Pno.', shows a right hand with a triplet of chords labeled 'Arrival chord' and a left hand with a bass line. The piece concludes with 'Etc.'.

Figure 3.19: Excerpt from the Ritual of Abduction illustrates simulation of flutter tongue figure in upper instruments

Measures 14-15: In Stravinsky's full score, the alternating horn call and woodwind figure overlap only once, on the second large beat of measure 15. Executing both together at this moment while maintaining the integrity of the tremolo is clearly impossible with a single set of hands. The omission of one voice in this instance is the obvious solution, yet the transcription makes use of an alternative: the horn call is shifted forward a single eighth-note beat, allowing it to be played in its entirety in the space between woodwind figures. This temporal displacement allows the horn call to be heard in full, without compromising the integrity of the figure itself.

Unison not practical in performance

Piano

Horn call placement in full score

Etc.

Figure 3.20: Horn call placement as it would appear without temporal shift

Horn call shifted 1 8th note beat to left: allows it to be played in full

Piano

Etc.

Figure 3.21: Horn call placement shifted in transcription to accommodate the full figure; notation can be simplified here as well

Measures 24-29: These six measures contain far more material than could possibly be covered by a single pianist. Raphling, Leyehtkiss, and Stravinsky all adopt a similar approach: the right hand plays a tremolo figure, the left a kind of eighth-note walking bass (present in some form in a number of instruments). Nevertheless, this omits particularly prominent orchestral voices, especially the trombone (a kind of repeated accent of a single chord) and the rapidly rising and falling clarinet scales (heard in the trombone's absence); while the walking bass line is barely heard. The current transcription's solution is illustrated in figure 3.21. The successive increases of scalar figures are designed to give the impression of growth, accomplished in the full score by the adding of instruments.

Figure 3.22: Measures 24-29 of the Ritual of Abduction,
annotated to illustrate instrumental sources

Constant tremolo maintained by either:

Right hand alone

Both hands together

Larger tremolo chords to simulate trombone accents

Scalar figures increase in range (downward) at each iteration to give impression of growth

The image displays a musical score for Piano and Pno. (Piano) in 6/8 time. The score is divided into three systems, each showing a different technique for maintaining a constant tremolo. The first system is for Piano and is annotated with 'Right hand alone' and 'Both hands together'. The second system is for Pno. and is annotated with 'Larger tremolo chords to simulate trombone accents'. The third system is also for Pno. and is annotated with 'Scalar figures increase in range (downward) at each iteration to give impression of growth'. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings.

Measures 46 and 49: In the full score this dramatic cutoff event exists as a unison low F between timpani, cellos, and basses. Lyecktkiss transcribes this literally as an octave, Raphling as a major seventh (possibly to give it a percussive "bite"), and Stravinsky as an octave with grace note pickups for both top and bottom notes. Here the part is scored for a short cluster glissando (with the palm) ending on a six-note cluster voiced to the F on top, which seems to the author to best recreate the drama of the event while preserving somewhat of the note's pitch content.

Measures 47-8 and 50-3: Surprisingly, no other version (Stravinsky's included) transcribes the chords note for note, opting instead for various simplified (and, in the author's opinion, unnecessarily impoverished) versions. Yet literal translation is eminently possible, as the current transcription illustrates, and with practice results in a far richer, more satisfying passage.

Spring Rounds

Movements up to this point have required significant reworking of material to arrange for solo piano; Spring Rounds, the “slow” movement of the first half, is a departure in this respect. With a few notable exceptions—introductory and closing material, piccolo/piccolo clarinet trill entrance in measure 20, climactic tutti, the coda—the movement can largely be transcribed “as is,” resulting in a certain conformity amongst arrangements.

The introductory and closing sections in particular present challenges that have resulted in differing solutions. A small ensemble of mostly upper winds—flutes and clarinets—presents a melodic line, reminiscent of a child’s play tune, in double octaves, set amidst a backdrop of E ♭ -F trills across several octaves—a kind of “invitation to the dance.” Excepting a slight variation in melody and a re-voicing of instruments, the closing section mimics this configuration. Despite the relative paucity of material, executing the passage is complicated by two factors: (1) the two-octave range between instruments doubling the melody (each requiring one hand) and (2) the presence of trills which, as indicated earlier, requires a disproportionately high commitment of the fingers.

Literal reduction is rendered unfeasible by the presence of the trill in three octaves (clearly impossible), and various configurations were attempted before the current one. Attempts to compromise the melodic figure (by omitting either top or bottom voice) were quickly abandoned: the composite sound of the play-tune sounding in two voices, two octaves apart, has an archaic quality that suffers

Figure 3.23: Opening voices to Spring Rounds, divided by type and register: all three transcriptions maintain both melodic voices; Raphling uses bottom trill, Leyecktkiss the top and bottom, the current one the middle

significantly when reduced to a single voice. What remains concerns the trill, deciding in which (and in how many) of the three octaves to reproduce it. Not surprisingly, the two published versions preserve the melody intact, but differ amongst each other (and the current one) as to the placement of the trill: Raphling has the trill in the lower octave, played by thumb and second finger of the left hand, Leyecktkiss doubles the trill in top and bottom octaves, and the current version preserves the trill in the middle octave only. This has the advantage of offsetting the trill from the melodic lines and activating the middle octave, but it is difficult to execute, particularly for pianists with small hands. The difficulty of the right hand part, trilling with thumb and first finger while playing a melodic line an octave (and sometimes more) above, may require compromise in terms of speed and virtuosity of the trill, but the resulting

richness (and the fact that dedicated practice can largely mitigate the extent of compromise) seems well worth the effort. It is notable that Stravinsky's four-hand version opts for this very configuration, albeit shared between two players.

Spring Rounds

Tranquillo ♩ = 108

Piano

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

25

Pno.

29

Pno.

33

Pno.

37

Pno.

40

Pno.

corni

Vivo ♩ = 160

42

Piano score for measures 42-44. The music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *sf* and *sf sf*.

45

Piano score for measures 45-47. The music changes to 3/4 time. The right hand has a melodic line with quarter notes and rests, while the left hand plays eighth notes. A *ff* dynamic marking is present.

48

Piano score for measures 48-50. The music is in 3/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand plays eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *sf* and *sf sf*.

51

Piano score for measures 51-55. The music is in 3/4 time. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand plays eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *sf* and *p*.

56

Piano score for measures 56-59. The music is in 6/8 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand plays eighth notes. A *(tr)* marking is present.

Ritual of the Two Rival Tribes

The characteristic dissonance of this movement is largely due to unison melodic figures harmonized in clashing modalities (minor/major) across registers—the competing tribes, as it were. Since this polytonality is a programmatic as well as musical device, the current transcription prioritizes those voices highlighting it when a superfluity of material in the full score necessitates omission. This has resulted in a spare, angular, and often harshly dissonant arrangement, in stark contrast to the lushness of the previous movements. The harshness and savagery only increases with the entrance of the “Oldest and Wisest One,” whose processional gradually overwhelms the music of the tribes. In particular, these two movements (like the one that follows) lack the sophistication and refinement of the others. This is not necessarily to be avoided, particularly given the ballet’s subject, but on a purely pianistic level these three movements seem less successful than the others. During the planning process, they were deemed prime candidates for omission, until concerns for completeness rendered the issue moot.

A major artistic decision concerns whether to include or omit the bass drum strokes (as clusters at the very bottom of the piano) that accompany the “Oldest and Wisest One’s” entrance. The strokes occur every third beat, creating an interesting polyrhythmic structure when coinciding with the patriarch’s music (itself periodic, but with a much longer cycle), and continue throughout the Oldest and Wisest One movement proper, where they are joined by a number of other percussion instruments playing regular, if different, rhythms. The material of that movement renders

coverage of even the bass drum, much less any of the others, impossible. This puts to question the desirability of including the bass drum at the patriarch's entrance in the "Rival Tribes," given that: (1) maintenance of the line will not be possible in following movement, and (2) the "Oldest and Wisest One" movement must come across as an intensification of the previous material, which seems incompatible with the sudden dropping out of the lowest voice. Nevertheless, the bass drum was preserved in the end of the "Rival Tribes" for the following reasons: (1) that passage is noticeably improved by its inclusion, which serves to both create increased rhythmic complexity and activate the low register; and (2) at the outset of the "Oldest One" movement, the ostinato material drops noticeably in register (keeping the lower register in play). Nevertheless there is a strong argument for omitting the bass drum altogether on the grounds that its later removal is incompatible with a progressive intensification. Surprisingly, among versions discussed here, only Leyecktkiss' (which generally errs on the side of completeness) omits the bass drum altogether.

The image shows a musical score for Piano, divided into two sections: "End of the Ritual of the Two Rival Tribes" and "Beginning of The Procession of Oldest and Wisest One".

- End of the Ritual of the Two Rival Tribes:** The piano part features a complex, rhythmic ostinato in the bass register. The bass drum part has two notes, each marked with an upward-pointing arrow and the label "Bass drum".
- Drop in bass ostinato:** An arrow points from this label to the transition point between the two sections.
- Beginning of The Procession of Oldest and Wisest One:** The piano part continues with a different ostinato, marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The bass drum part is empty, with the label "Bass drum omitted" below it.

Figure 3.24: Transition between the Ritual of the Two Rival Tribes and The Procession of the Oldest and Wisest One

Ritual of the Two Rival Tribes

Molto allegro $\text{♩} = 168$

The musical score is written for piano and consists of six systems of music. The first system begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a tempo of *Molto allegro* with a quarter note equal to 168 beats per minute. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 5/4. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. The second system continues the piece with similar rhythmic complexity. The third system includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. The fourth system features a dense texture of sixteenth notes in the right hand. The fifth system continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The sixth system concludes the piece with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. The score is written in a grand staff format, with the right hand on the upper staff and the left hand on the lower staff.

28

Musical score for measures 28-31. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

32

Musical score for measures 32-34. Treble clef, 6/4 time signature change. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

35

Musical score for measures 35-37. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A "cresc." marking is present in the bass line.

38

Musical score for measures 38-42. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings "f marcattissimo" and "ff" are present.

43

Musical score for measures 43-48. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature change. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings "meno f" and "ff" are present.

49

Musical score for measures 49-54. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature change. Features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and slurs. Bass clef has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A "gliss." marking is present in the treble line.

56 (8)

Musical score for measures 56-60. Measure 56 is marked with a circled 8. The piece is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand plays a steady bass line of quarter notes. A first ending bracket is shown above measure 60.

61

ff sempre

Musical score for measures 61-65. Measure 61 is marked with *ff sempre*. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, while the left hand continues with a bass line of quarter notes. A first ending bracket is shown above measure 65.

66

Musical score for measures 66-70. The right hand features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets of eighth notes. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes.

71

Musical score for measures 71-75. Measure 71 is marked with a circled 3. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, while the left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes. A first ending bracket is shown above measure 75.

Procession of the Oldest and Wisest One

Essentially a continuation of the previous movement, the patriarch's procession is accompanied by music of a grating harshness and dissonance hitherto unheard in the ballet. The whole acts as a kind of inevitably advancing pandemonium prefacing the first act's ritual climax, the elder's "kiss of the earth."

Figure 3.25: Composite of various ostinati in the Procession of the Oldest and Wisest One: (1) upper instruments, second half only; (2) weak-beat oboes/horns/etc., whole movement; (3) horn fanfare, whole movement; (4) procession theme, whole movement; (5) moving bass line, varies but present whole movement

Reproduction at the piano is unfortunately a process of judicious prioritization and ruthless omission, particularly for the eight measures of *tutti* that preface the Grand Pause. The rapid eighth-note pulse of low winds, low strings, and percussion is indispensable as a texture, providing the necessary pulsating backdrop, low-register presence, and variegated harmonic background caused by a constant revoicing of a few dissonant chords; at all times it is maintained here in some form by the left hand. The tubas' repeated iterations of the elder's theme are also too central to omit. The remaining candidates for omission or abridgement are: an occasional horn fanfare, iterated at regular intervals throughout; a rapid two-note figure on weak beats in the oboes and two horns; and shrill quarter notes and trills once the upper instruments

enter at the *tutti*. Of these, the current transcription omits the two-note figure in favor of the more prominent (if less regular) horn fanfare in the first half; after which the horns give way to the upper winds' and strings' shrill quarter note chords in the *tutti*.

This configuration (except for the preference of horn fanfare over oboe figure in the first half) largely follows Stravinsky's four-hand version, though this necessitates the sharing of the tubas' melodic line (the elder's theme) between the hands. The arrived-at solution, though awkward in the extreme, mitigates the main challenge—voicing an inner line within a dense polytonal texture—with a configuration that allows the prominent notes to be consistently covered by the two thumbs. This significantly eases the burden of their exposure, and suggests a practice routine involving a staggered, displaced attack, to emphasize the melody.

Nevertheless, the nature of the material seems to conspire to make any solution at least partially unsatisfactory. The existence of a wide range of possibilities is attested to by how widely Raphling's and Leyechtkiss' versions differ from the current one and from each other. Raphling strips the passage to its bare essentials in the name of playability (even reducing the variegated pulsing texture to a spare, unchanging ostinato). Leyechtkiss impressively attempts to cram in as much as possible despite the extreme difficulty that execution of the necessary voicing would pose in practice: in particular, the elder's theme, already submerged in the middle of the texture, is no longer doubled in octaves, rendering expectations of its prominence unrealistic. The current version attempts to maintain a middle ground: playable, yet harmonically rich and rhythmically exciting.

Procession of the Oldest and Wisest One

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of seven systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system is marked with a measure number of 5. The third system is marked with a measure number of 9. The fourth system is marked with a measure number of 13 and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The fifth system is marked with a measure number of 15. The sixth system is marked with a measure number of 17. The seventh system is marked with a measure number of 19 and concludes with a fermata and the word *lunga* (long).

The Kiss of the Earth/The Dancing Out of the Earth

After an eerie calm accompanying the elder's ritual kiss, the act closes with a wild stomping dance. Translating the multilayered orchestration to the piano presents many of the same problems as the previous movement, but here the current version takes a different tack: material is reduced to its simplest state—its bare bones. Thus the places where it departs from *Raphling* or *Leyechtkiss* generally involve the omission or simplification of material. The prominence of repeated notes in the figurations is to blame, which, as is true for trills, demand a disproportionate attention of the fingers. In execution they suffer considerably when the hand is impeded, but are brilliant when clean and rapid. This reasoning was then applied to the movement as a whole: portraying the pandemonium will be better accomplished through simple materials that allow for easy execution—at breakneck speed. This marks the one spot in the ballet where the velocity (made possible by simplicity) is privileged over completeness (and the far more important accompanying harmonic richness), but the nature of the passage suggests that the music is best served by such prioritization.

Management of the layered material beginning at the *subito piano* (measure 29) and continuing to the end is the movement's main difficulty. At the outset of this section, there are two types of material, arranged more or less according to register, rhythmic figure, and harmonic mode: (1) an eighth-note bass ostinato on a whole tone scale with C pedal point, and (2) a triplet figure in the middle register in Bb minor. At measure 35, a trombone entrance on repeated Fs initiates a third type of figure: rapid sixteenth repeated notes and scalar figures in F dorian in the upper instruments. The

necessity of maintaining an unbroken bass ostinato in the left hand requires the other two figures be shared by the right. Given the nature of the material, the hand is able to cover only one figure at a time (a 4:3 polyrhythm at rapid tempo is impossible in practice, even in spots where the hand's stretch might make it physically possible).

The image shows a musical score for 'The Dancing Out of the Earth' in 3/4 time. It consists of three staves. The top staff, labeled 'Fast repeated notes (never played)', shows a sequence of sixteenth notes. The middle staff, labeled 'Fast scalar passage (always played)', shows a scalar passage. The bottom staff, labeled 'Triplet figure (default figure in absence of fast scalar passage)', shows a triplet figure. Arrows indicate the relationship between the original material and the resulting right hand passage.

Figure 3.26: Hierarchization of material in *The Dancing Out of the Earth*: on top is the sixteenth note line, on bottom the triplet line; in the middle is the resulting right hand passage in the solo piano transcription

Thus the arbitrary (but necessary) hierarchization of material: (1) sixteenth-note scalar figures, (2) triplet figures, and (3) sixteenth-note repeated notes. In practice, this translates to the following: the right hand begins with the triplet figure until the first sixteenth-note scale, at which time the triplet is abandoned for the duration of the scale. When the sixteenth-note voice once again comes to rest on a repeated note, it is then abandoned and the triplets resumed. The resulting omission of all repeated sixteenth notes is rationalized by two circumstances: (1) the triplet figure already contains stretches with repeated notes, and (2) scalar figures can be executed

more rapidly than repeated notes (allowing for a faster tempo). This compromise also allows both harmonic areas to be more or less equally represented. When a figure is presented in multiple lines (in fourths or fifths, as higher voices enter), the uppermost line is always played. As is self-evident, only a fraction of the multitude can be played at any moment; it is the movement's effect, an impression of tribal bedlam following the elder's kiss, that must be relayed, and this seems best realized by a spare transcription that facilitates a rapid and virtuosic rendition.

The Kiss of the Earth / The Dancing out of the Earth

← ♩ = ♩ → (Doppio movimento)

Prestissimo ♩ = 186

Musical score for measures 1-6. The piece is in 4/4 time and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass line features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. At measure 5, the dynamic shifts to *ppp*. At measure 6, the time signature changes to 3/4, and the dynamic is *p*. A glissando is indicated with the instruction "with palm" and a *mf* dynamic.

Musical score for measures 7-11. The piece continues in 3/4 time with a *sfz sempre* dynamic. The right hand features chords and a quintuplet (5) in measure 9, followed by a triplet (3) in measure 10. A glissando is marked at the end of measure 11.

Musical score for measures 12-17. The piece continues in 3/4 time. A glissando is marked at the beginning of measure 12. The right hand features chords and triplets (3) in measures 14, 15, and 16.

Musical score for measures 18-22. The piece continues in 3/4 time. The right hand features chords and triplets (3) in measures 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22. Glissandos are marked at the end of measures 19, 21, and 22.

Musical score for measures 23-27. The piece continues in 3/4 time. The right hand features chords and triplets (3) in measures 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27.

29

p subito

3 3 3

34

38

42

46

50

54

Musical notation for measures 54-57. The right hand features a continuous eighth-note arpeggiated pattern. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a melodic line.

58

Musical notation for measures 58-60. Measure 58 continues the previous texture. Measure 59 includes a glissando instruction "gliss. with palm" and a dynamic marking "ff sempre". Measure 60 features a whole-note chord in the right hand.

61

Musical notation for measures 61-64. The right hand plays a series of whole-note chords, while the left hand continues with the eighth-note accompaniment.

Notes to The Kiss of the Earth, The Dancing Out of the Earth

Measures 7 and following: The left hand part, a reduction of the bass instruments' ostinato, is Stravinsky's own from the four-hand reduction. Leyehtkiss and Raphling both use more elaborate (and difficult) versions of this figure.

Measure 11: The target tempo for which this transcription aims does not allow for a more elaborate arpeggio figure representative of those in the orchestral score. The author's previous experience with palm glissandi (playing Stockhausen's Klavierstück X) is the source of these (and other palm glissando) markings. Nevertheless, the palm glissando is not to every pianist's liking, and an analogous figure can easily be substituted.

Measures 59 and following: The return of accented chords in the final six measures requires the upper moving lines be abandoned altogether.

II. The Exalted Sacrifice

Introduction

The rather lengthy introduction to the second half of the ballet consists of two relatively discrete sections. The first presents an eerie tableau reminiscent of the swaying bodies of Ravel's *Le gibet*. Relentlessly steady chords hang as if suspended over long slow chords below, and form an unsettling backdrop to the entrance of a new theme in the uppermost instruments: this is the first appearance of the young girls' "mystic circle" theme, whose later iterations reach mantra-like proportions in the following movement. Clashing key areas are juxtaposed—D minor (long chords and mystic theme) and D# minor (swaying chords)—giving the whole an unsettling, eerie dissonance, as if produced from out-of-tune, archaic instruments. The slow march to which this tableau gives way is no less unsettling or relentless. A trombone duet (later taken up by other instruments) provides the foreground, while various instrumental entrances on short rhythmic figures create an interlocking background that grows in density. But for all its slow intensification, the rhythmic tattoo remains surprisingly detached, a march to nowhere, that cuts off as abruptly as the chaos of the opening movement. It is as if Stravinsky composed inevitability itself—a march as relentless as it is indifferent—as preface to the violent drama that follows.

The major difficulty in the first half involves managing its three components: long bass chords, swaying eighth-note chords, and mystic circle theme. This is not so much a notational difficulty (with few omissions, it can be presented as is) as it is a difficulty for performance, namely effecting simultaneities in the three voices in a way

that allows for a clear differentiation between them, all the while not compromising the sense of rhythmic inexorability. This would be manifestly impossible at places where the necessary extremes in voicing require a staggered attack, except for the fact that it is the *perception* of rhythmic continuity that is needed, not its actuality. Ironically, this perception of steadiness is achieved precisely by a distortion of it, namely a slight hesitation after a simultaneity requiring staggered attack. Of paramount importance is resistance to the natural urge to “make up” the time taken by the staggered attack, which only gives the impression of *unsteadiness*, of rushing. This is very much in opposition to the idea of rubato, which requires any time taken be given back. Here there is no question of giving back: the staggered chord takes more time, after which normal time resumes. Though the staggered chord feels very much like a temporal anomaly to the performer (at least at first), the resulting effect to the listener is one of rhythmic continuity.

Simultaneities in the march, though no less difficult, no longer require temporal distortion: extreme voicing and some careful omission are enough. Surprisingly, both Raphling and Leyehtkiss omit the foreground duet altogether once the background material becomes dense, perhaps taking a page from Stravinsky’s four-hand version, which astoundingly omits this duet as well. Yet maintaining all significant parts is possible, as the current version demonstrates, and the resulting richness is well worth the extra awkwardness. Moreover, various tricks exist to facilitate voicing, as for example when a foreground note coincides with triplet chords in the background: omitting the first of the left hand (only) triplet chords allows the

foreground note to sound unimpeded, while the following two iterations of the chord mask the initial one's absence.

The Exalted Sacrifice

Largo. ♩=48

Introduction

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. Each system contains a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Largo' with a quarter note equal to 48 beats per minute. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano) at the beginning and 'mf' (mezzo-forte) starting at measure 7. The score features complex chordal textures with many accidentals and some melodic lines in the right hand. Measure numbers 4, 7, 10, and 13 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

17

Musical score for measures 17-20. The system consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 2/4 time. Measure 17 has a whole note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 18 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 19 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 20 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass.

21

Musical score for measures 21-24. The system consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 2/4 time. Measure 21 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 22 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 23 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 24 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass.

26

Musical score for measures 26-29. The system consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 2/4 time. Measure 26 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 27 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 28 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 29 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass.

30

Musical score for measures 30-32. The system consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 2/4 time. Measure 30 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 31 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 32 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass.

33

Musical score for measures 33-35. The system consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in 2/4 time. Measure 33 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 34 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass. Measure 35 has a half note chord in the treble and a half note chord in the bass.

35

Musical notation for measures 35-36. Measure 35 features a bass line with three triplet chords. Measure 36 shows a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment.

37

Musical notation for measures 37-38. Measure 37 has a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment. Measure 38 features a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment.

39

Musical notation for measures 39-40. Measure 39 features a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment. Measure 40 has a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment.

40

Musical notation for measures 40-41. Measure 40 features a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment. Measure 41 has a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment.

41

Musical notation for measures 41-42. Measure 41 features a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment. Measure 42 has a treble line with a melodic line and a bass line with a steady accompaniment.

43

Musical score for measures 43-46. The piece is in a minor key with a 3/4 time signature. Measures 43-44 feature a complex texture with multiple sixteenth-note chords in the right hand and a bass line with eighth notes. Measures 45-46 continue this texture with some melodic movement in the right hand.

45

Musical score for measures 45-46. This system shows the continuation of the piece from the previous system, with similar chordal textures and melodic lines.

47

depress silently before pedal release

Musical score for measures 47-50. Measures 47-48 continue the previous texture. Measures 49-50 feature a change in texture, with sustained chords in the right hand and a bass line. A performance instruction "depress silently before pedal release" is placed above the right-hand notes in measures 49 and 50.

51

Musical score for measures 51-53. Measures 51-52 feature a change in texture with sustained chords in the right hand and a bass line. Measure 53 continues this texture.

54

Musical score for measures 54-56. Measures 54-55 feature a change in texture with sustained chords in the right hand and a bass line. Measure 56 continues this texture.

Mystic Circle of the Young Girls

Stravinsky's stage directions at the close of the previous movement suggest a nighttime setting for this and subsequent scenes, in contrast to the daytime rituals of the ballet's first half. Appropriate to its depiction of sacred nighttime ritual, the music has an introverted quality as yet unheard in the ballet. Yet the sense of anticipation derived from rhythmic inexorability continues unabated. Rather than releasing the tension of the introductory march, this movement builds upon it.

Much like its counterpart "slow movement" in the first half, the "Mystic Circle" can largely be transcribed literally, with pianistically satisfying results. Management of the trill and tremolo beginning in measure 9 presents the greatest technical challenge to realization, and accounts for the majority of differences between versions. The difficulty is twofold: (1) the presence of a trill (requiring disproportionate finger commitment), and (2) the close registral proximity of the voices, often to the point of sharing pitches. Yet Stravinsky's orchestral voicing can be more or less preserved throughout, as the current transcription illustrates.

What appears to be a notational irregularity in the orchestral score occurs near the conclusion of this movement. The top voice of a sequence of minor triads suddenly jumps a diminished fourth in the full score (sounding a shrill major seventh above the triads' bass), but continues a perfect fifth above the bass in the piano reduction. As Cyr has noted, the fact that this discrepancy coincides with the very moment the top line is taken over by the piccolo trumpet suggests a transposition error, as if Stravinsky had forgotten to notate the passage for a D trumpet in lieu of the

usual Bb. That no one (Stravinsky included) noticed or corrected this oversight until 1967 (and that even then the correction was initially reflected in few post-1968 recordings) is a testament to the inherent dissonance in *The Rite*.⁷ In this case, Stravinsky's piano reduction was untouched and serves as guide for the current version.

⁷ See Cyr, 163-4.

Mystic Circle of the Young Girls

Andante con moto ♩=60

Piano *p*

5

Pno.

9 **Più mosso.** ♩=80

Pno. *fp* *pp* *poco* *meno pp*

cantabile p

17

Pno. *sempre pp* *cant. mf*

23

Pno. *mf* *mf* *p*

28

Pno.

32

Pno.

36

Pno.

40

Pno.

43

Pno.

46

Pno.

49

Pno.

sfz

p

52

Pno.

55

Pno.

poco a poco accelerando e cresc.

58

Pno.

ff

59

Pno.

f ben marcato e pesante

$\text{♩} = 120$

The Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One

After a gradual buildup of tension over the previous two movements, “Naming and Honoring” provides release in the form of a minute and a half of mixed-meter chaos. This is one of the most technically difficult movements of the ballet to execute at the piano, and presents the transcriber with a stark choice: playability on the one hand, and harmonic richness on the other.

The major choice involves managing a rapid alternation of events between registers: bass instrument and percussion strokes, and dissonant, full orchestral chords in the middle and upper registers. Recreation of the orchestral tutti chords in all their harsh glory recommends the use of both hands, yet this presents a significant difficulty: the left hand must now constantly alternate between low and middle register at breakneck speed. Thus while theoretically possible, rapidity and accuracy will be inevitable casualties of this fuller arrangement (figure 3.27). On the other hand, simplifying the orchestral chords for the right hand alone eases things considerably, and allows for far more rapid, easy, and virtuosic execution—yet the resulting chords are at best a poor simulacrum of their former selves (figure 3.28). The intractability of this dilemma is reflected in the diversity of solutions in other versions.

Raphling opts for a compromise: the left hand contributes to the tutti chords (albeit in limited fashion) while omitting the final low stroke (a double bass and timpani unison in the full score). Leyechtkiss maintains all of the low notes, requiring constant left hand leaps (as a rule Leyechtkiss never seems to avoid leaps, even when they are manifestly unnecessary), though he simplifies the left-hand chords,

presumably to facilitate execution. The current version requires the leaps as well, privileging richness over playability, quantity of sound over accuracy.

Full orchestral chord, requires both hands

8va

Piano

Left hand

Figure 3.27: Ambitious arrangement of measure from The Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One: left hand is forced to constantly leap between registers

Piano

Figure 3.28: More simplified arrangement of identical measure from The Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One: absence of left hand leaping allows for rapid and easy execution

Additionally, the current version differs from the other two in one fundamental respect: register. Whereas both Raphling and Leychtkiss transcriptions reproduce the

pitches in the same registers in which they exist in the full score, the current version transcribes the orchestral chords one octave higher than they appear in the full score, and the timpani strokes two octaves lower than they appear (effectively the lowest note on the piano). The general rationale is simple: since the piano offers greater registral range than the full orchestra, the exploitation of that space is in keeping with the particulars of that medium. In this specific case, two factors in particular informed this modification: (1) the higher register for the chords better approximates the biting timbre of the dissonant orchestral chords, and (2) the lowest notes on the piano better approximate the sounds of timpani (and low percussion in general) than the octave in which they are notated. This of course increases the passage's difficulty (the leaps are all the greater), but the resulting sound (even with frequent wrong notes in the bass) is justification enough. Note that a similar registral shift (though without the lowered timpani note) can be found in Stravinsky's four-hand version.

The Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One

Vivo

The musical score is written for piano and consists of four systems of music. Each system contains a grand staff with a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The first system is marked 'Vivo' and 'f' (forte). It features eighth-note patterns in the right hand, often marked with an '8va' (octave) and a bracket. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment. The second system begins at measure 5 and includes a 'quasi glissando' in the right hand. The third system begins at measure 8 and includes a 'quasi glissando' in the right hand. The fourth system begins at measure 10 and includes a 'quasi glissando' in the right hand. The score is filled with complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and various rests.

8^{va}

f

8^{va}

8^{va}

5

8^{va}

8^{va}

6

6

quasi glissando

8

6

6

6

3

3

quasi glissando

10

8^{va}

6

quasi glissando

13

Musical score for measures 13-15. The system consists of two staves. Measure 13 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 7/4 time signature. The right hand has a whole note chord, and the left hand has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 14 changes to a 6/8 time signature and features a *ff* dynamic marking. Measure 15 returns to a 7/4 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measure 15.

16

Musical score for measures 16-18. The system consists of two staves. Measure 16 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 6/8 time signature. The right hand has a whole note chord, and the left hand has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 17 changes to a 7/4 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. Measure 18 returns to a 6/8 time signature. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measures 17 and 18.

19

Musical score for measures 19-21. The system consists of two staves. Measure 19 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 7/8 time signature. The right hand has a whole note chord, and the left hand has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 20 changes to a 6/8 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. Measure 21 changes to a 3/4 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measures 19 and 20. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measure 21. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measure 21. A 7 is written below the left hand in measure 21.

22

Musical score for measures 22-24. The system consists of two staves. Measure 22 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 3/4 time signature. The right hand has a whole note chord, and the left hand has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 23 changes to a 4/4 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. Measure 24 changes to a 3/4 time signature and features a *f* dynamic marking. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measures 22 and 23. An 8va bracket is present above the right hand in measure 24. A 7 is written below the left hand in measure 23. A 7 is written below the left hand in measure 24.

26 (8) 8va

p subito *f*

30 (8)

p subito *f*

34

poco a poco cresc.

37

f subito *mf* *f*

41 *allargando*

f subito *mf* *f* *fff*

a tempo

45 *sempre f*

48

51

55

Notes to The Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One

Measures 3 and 48: A more complete chord is possible with both hands, though this requires the left hand to leap rapidly between registers. While the general approach to this movement has been to privilege richness and completeness over ease of execution, here the added benefit of a larger, more complete chord is less obvious. Particularly given the difficult leaps in the surrounding material, in this instance giving the left hand a deserved rest was deemed worth the small sacrifice in notes.

Measures 9, 12, and 45: The left hand has many options in the final beat of this measure, and nearly all versions opt for a continuation of the triplet voice of the previous beat(s), which does in fact continue in the full score. However, in the author's opinion, the figure chosen here, a modification of a horn glissando in the full score, seems best to create momentum for the arrival in the following measure.

Evocation of the Ancestors

The programmatic function of this movement is simple: a brief series of fanfares heralds the entrance of the Ancestors to witness the Chosen One's impending sacrifice. Also straightforward is the translation of musical material to the piano, the majority of discrepancies amongst versions accounted for by: (1) various voicing configurations of the alternating fanfare chords (a surfeit of voices across registers in the full score renders literal translation to the piano impossible); (2) the choice of whether and how to include additional accented chords in the strings and bass instruments during the fanfare; and (3) possible solutions for managing the final measure, a bridge to the following movement.

Figure 3.29 compares the various solo piano solutions with Stravinsky's full score and four-hand reduction. The configuration of the current version is ambitious, taking full advantage of the transcriber's large hands, and a modified version (such as presented in Raphling or Leyecktkiss) may be necessary for pianists with smaller extremities. The bass notes of the occasional accented chords (the other notes overlap with the fanfare chords) are included in this version as well (as they are in Leyecktkiss though not Raphling), covered by the left hand. This requires omission of the left-hand portion of the fanfare chords at those specific times in favor of a bass octave, though the added sound of the bass octave, coupled with the previous iterations of the full fanfare chord (now thoroughly imbedded in the listener's ear), go far to obscure such omission. Far more relevant to the pianist are the difficult leaps that execution of

the passage now requires. Here, as before, the resulting richness was considered worth the added difficulty.

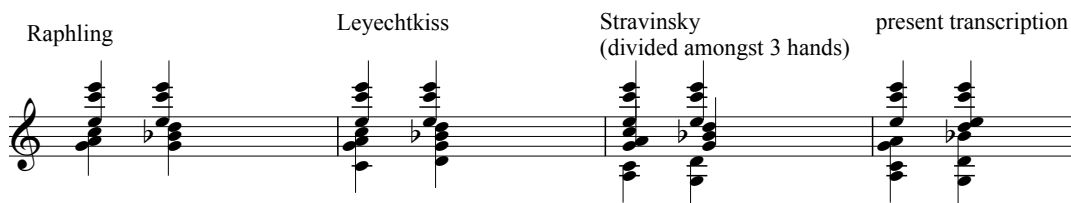


Figure 3.29: Comparison of various chord voicings for Evocation of the Ancestors

Figure 3.30: Excerpt from Evocation of the Ancestors shows omitted chords to allow for bass octaves

Finally, concerning the final-measure's bridge to the following movement, the score provides two alternatives: one with percussion and one without. Omitting percussion allows a richer downward gesture (here a composite of the notes of various simultaneous voices), and is the one the author has so far favored in performance. Nevertheless, the other approach is equally viable.

Evocation of the Ancestors

The musical score for "Evocation of the Ancestors" is written in 3/2 time and consists of five systems of piano and bass staves. The piece begins with a piano introduction marked *8^{vb}*. The first system (measures 1-7) features a piano part with *fff* dynamics and a bass part with *ff* dynamics. The second system (measures 8-13) includes a treble staff with *fff* and *pp* dynamics, and a bass part with *fff* dynamics. The third system (measures 14-21) is primarily piano, with *ff* dynamics in the bass. The fourth system (measures 22-28) features a treble staff with *pp* and *fff* dynamics, and a bass part with *ppp* dynamics. The fifth system (measures 29-35) is primarily piano, with *pp* dynamics in the bass. The score includes various articulations such as accents, slurs, and dynamic hairpins, along with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

37

Musical score for measures 37-40. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measures 37-39 feature a bass line with a low register indicated by an *8va* marking. The right hand plays chords and melodic fragments. Measure 40 features a melodic line in the right hand with *fff* and *ff* dynamics.

Lento ♩ = 52

41

Musical score for measures 41-44. The tempo is marked *Lento* with a quarter note equal to 52 beats per minute. Measure 41 has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 42 contains a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 43 has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 44 features a melodic line in the right hand with a *5* fingering. Below the main score, there is an alternative percussion part labeled "alt. with perc." and a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Ritual Action of the Ancestors

Like its counterpart in the first act, the penultimate movement's music suggests a kind of processional. Here as before, dramatic action revolves around the tribe's most venerable, though this time the music is, for the most part, far more eerie and subdued. Stravinsky's technique is one that by now is quite familiar: a long, slow intensification of gradually layered voices until the composite has reached a fevered pitch. Yet here the tension is particularly palpable, the sense of anticipation perhaps greater than at any earlier point in the ballet. The initial buildup is so expertly managed that by the threshold of the first (smaller) climax, the feeling of baited-breath expectation has become unbearable. Nor does the requisite opening of the floodgates necessarily mitigate the tension, and the music finally recedes in much the same way it entered. In addition to the technical hurdles facing transcription is the difficulty of successfully recreating this dramatic moment at the piano.

A particularly successful point of departure from both Raphling and Leyehtkiss (and Stravinsky's four-hand reduction) was the choice to transcribe the timpani strokes a full two octaves below where they appear in the orchestral score (effectively the lowest B ♭ on the piano). This translation of percussion to the bottom of the piano is nothing new and appears in various movements (from the Ritual of the Tribes to the Naming and Honoring of the Chosen One), yet here the results are surprisingly successful. Particularly with just the right use of half pedaling, repeated activation of this low pitch creates a kind of misty sheen over the whole, while the three other voices nonetheless remain clearly discrete. This illustrates one of the great

benefits of this process of transcription: a working model so far removed from the piano demands a constant reimagining of the instrument's resources, and the process can at times lead to something quite special and unique.

A four-bar section at measure 30 represents perhaps the greatest departure from source material in this entire transcription. The passage in question is the first climactic moment of the movement, occurring after a particularly lengthy and tension-filled buildup; the departure involves the translation of the primary melodic voice from the top register (oboes and horns 1 and 3) to the bottom. Such a re-voicing of material is not one to be undertaken lightly, particularly in places of harmonic stasis (such as this) where voicing particulars accrue added importance. Nevertheless, such a modification was deemed necessary to satisfy the dramatic requirements of the passage (outlined above), in this case a further intensification of already busy material. The solution presented is well worth considering, as it illustrates a fundamental difference between orchestra and piano, and as such suggests a powerful resource for the latter.

To a certain degree, a listener's experience of the volume resources of the piano vis-à-vis the orchestra is largely dependent on register. The piano's characteristic strong attack and rapid decay puts it at significant disadvantage with respect to sustaining power, and this general lack of sustain is particularly acute in the upper register (sonic decay in the top strings is so rapid that it is not even considered worthwhile to provide the top few octaves with dampers on most pianos). What the piano lacks in sustain, however, it makes up with in harmonic resonance, but this is far

more pronounced in the lower register. Thus orchestral passages involving intensifications fashioned from the bottom up (as many in *The Rite* are) are particularly problematic to piano transcription; they make perfect sense in the context of the full orchestra, but not on the piano, where a natural intensification best occurs downwards.

Figure 3.31 displays a kind of orchestral reduction that groups voices based on type of material rather than instrument: bass instruments effect the kind of constant eighth-note pulse that continues unabated in some form throughout the movement, and gives it its primitive, tribal sound; second violins, second flutes, and clarinets play sixteenth notes, a continuation of a single previous line branched into two discrete ones; first violins and first flutes effect an intensification of the second violin and second flute line; trombones play two alternating chromatically descending lines, in quarter notes; and finally, the primary theme played in the oboes and horns. The twofold difficulty: how to transcribe all of this, and make it sound like an intensification of the previous section (itself already quite busy).

Figure 3.32 shows the same passage in Stravinsky's ballet rehearsal score, which appears to have been transcribed from the orchestral one as literally as possible (note that the *ossia*-staff sextuplets are not expected to be played). While this solution is available to two players, it is clear that anything approaching this arrangement would be impossible for a single pianist. Furthermore, it does not effect the intensification in such a way that makes effective use of the instrument.

This musical score is an orchestral sketch for the first climax of 'Ritual of the Ancestor'. It is written in 6/8 time and features six staves. The top staff is for 1st Violins and 1st Flutes, containing a dense, continuous sixteenth-note texture with a '6' (fingerings) marking below it. The second staff is for Oboe and Horn, with a melodic line. The third staff is for Trombones, with a simple melodic line. The fourth staff is for 2nd Violins and 2nd Flutes, with a rhythmic accompaniment. The fifth staff is for Clarinets, with a melodic line. The bottom staff is for Bass instruments, with a rhythmic accompaniment.

Figure 3.31: Orchestral sketch of excerpt from *Ritual of the Ancestor's* first climax; instruments have been grouped according to type of musical material

This musical score is a four-hand/two-piano reduction of the first climax of 'Ritual of the Ancestor'. It is written in 6/8 time and features four staves. The top two staves are for the right hand of the piano, with the upper staff containing the dense sixteenth-note texture and the lower staff containing a melodic line. The bottom two staves are for the left hand of the piano, with the upper staff containing a rhythmic accompaniment and the lower staff containing a simple melodic line. The '6' (fingerings) marking is present in the top staff.

Figure 3.32: Excerpt from *Ritual of the Ancestor's* first climax in Stravinsky's four-hand/two-piano reduction

Finally, figure 3.33 shows the current version's solo piano solution. The theme has been moved from the top and appears in the bass, in octaves. The right hand plays a combination of the two sixteenth-note lines, an octave higher than in

Stravinsky's two-player version. The eighth notes in the bass, regrettably, are omitted, though the off-beat timpani strokes are played when possible (when the left hand does not need to play a melodic note), primarily to reactivate the bottom of the keyboard as before. By contrast, both Leyechtkiss and Raphling opt for a solution preserving the theme in octaves on top, and a version of the eighth-note ostinato in the bass.

The image shows a musical score for piano solo, consisting of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a complex, rhythmic melody with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The middle staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with eighth notes and chords. The bottom staff is labeled 'Optional timpani' and contains a simple eighth-note ostinato pattern. The score is marked with a '3' at the beginning, indicating a triplet or a three-measure rest.

Figure 3.33: Excerpt from *Ritual of the Ancestor's* first climax rearranged for solo piano

Ritual Action of the Ancestors

Lento (♩=52)

Piano *molto ritmico e sempre p*

p *sim.*

una corde

5

Pno.

8

Pno.

11

Pno.

14

Pno.

lugubre

tre corde

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems. The first system is for the piano, marked 'Lento (♩=52)' and 'molto ritmico e sempre p'. It features a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The right hand has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes marked 'p' and 'sim.'. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The instruction 'una corde' is written below the first system. The second system is for the piano, marked 'Pno.', and starts at measure 5. It continues the accompaniment and adds a melodic line in the right hand with triplets. The third system is for the piano, marked 'Pno.', and starts at measure 8. It continues the accompaniment and adds a melodic line in the right hand with triplets. The fourth system is for the piano, marked 'Pno.', and starts at measure 11. It continues the accompaniment and adds a melodic line in the right hand with triplets. The fifth system is for the piano, marked 'Pno.', and starts at measure 14. It changes to a 3/4 time signature and is marked 'lugubre'. The right hand has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, and the left hand has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The instruction 'tre corde' is written below the fifth system.

Piano score system 1, measures 34-37. The system is in 3/4 time and features complex chordal textures with triplets. Dynamics include *p* and *f*.

Piano score system 2, measures 38-41. The system continues the complex chordal textures with triplets. Dynamics include *f*.

Piano score system 3, measures 42-46. The system continues the complex chordal textures with triplets. Dynamics include *f*.

Piano score system 4, measures 47-50. The system features a *ff* dynamic and includes a key signature change to two flats.

Piano score system 5, measures 51-53. The system continues the complex chordal textures with triplets. Dynamics include *f*.

Piano score system 6, measures 54-56. The system features a *f* dynamic and includes a key signature change to one flat.

56

Pno.

58

Pno.

61

Pno.

63

Pno.

66

Pno.

Sacrificial Dance

The climactic sacrifice juxtaposes three types of musical material, arranged roughly in A-B-A-C-A form. The “A” sections are characterized by a rhythmic yet jagged, unpredictable alternation of high and low events; the “B” section by a relentless ostinato reminiscent of the “tribal” music of the previous movement; and the “C” section by a building cacophony of drumming and competing fanfares. Each is suggestive of a particular dramatic scene: the sacrificial victim’s weird, disjointed dance; the mercilessly unrelenting rituals of the elders; and a general tribal pandemonium anticipating the climactic act. Though presented successively in a kind of classical form, the cinematic (i.e., transition-free) nature of the shifts suggests scenes unfolding simultaneously, in the manner of a three-ring circus, the music visiting each in turn. The increased rapidity at which scenes shift as the end approaches also suggests this type of dramatic approach, illustrated by the following more detailed formal diagram:

A	B	A	C	A	C	A
short	long	identical to 1 st iteration, transposed down ½ step	moderate length	fragment	shorter than previously, intensified	long, added material, intensification to climax

Figure 3.34: Formal diagram of the Sacrificial Dance

The first two iterations of “A” material are identical, except for the second being transposed down a half step. The peculiar geography of the keyboard makes this change significant for the pianist, though in this case it had no effect on the

resulting transcription (excepting the transposition, both were arranged identically). Nevertheless, the first iteration is considerably easier to execute cleanly than the second.

In both iterations, transposition was considerably eased by the fact that nearly all voices can be translated to the piano and covered by a single pianist without significant omission. While the expected result is a certain conformity amongst versions, the current arrangement differs from the other two in one significant respect: where possible, to eliminate some left hand jumping, the right hand is called to cover the whole orchestral chord. This takes advantage of the transcriber's large hand, as it requires that the thumb cover a three-note cluster. While accuracy may be an occasional casualty (all three of the thumb's notes may not always speak), the advantages of the configuration are twofold: (1) it is less taxing for the left hand, and (2) reducing the jumping increases the likelihood that the (arguably more important) low pitches are played clearly and accurately.

Cluster captured with right thumb to free left hand

Left hand has extra beat to travel to low pitch

Left hand has no need to jump

Figure 3.35: Excerpt of *Sacrificial Dance* illustrates chord reconfiguration to ease left hand jumping

A final difference between the current version's realization of this passage and those of the other two is the result of a particularly intractable manuscript discrepancy. The difficulty in resolving the manuscript issue comes from the fact that it is not clearly traceable to transposition error: the instrument in question is the timpani, at issue the configuration of timpani strokes (and rests) in the spaces between orchestral chords. Three discrete versions exist: the 1913 original (published in 1922), a 1930 version (Boosey & Hawkes), and Stravinsky's 1943 revision (Associated Music Publishers). While Stravinsky's 1943 version employs a different rhythmic notation from the other two, the instructions to the players, though visually different, are the same; ignoring the notational dissimilarity, this one most closely resembles the 1913 original (excepting a single omitted timpani stroke). The 1930 version, however, differs significantly from the other two. The relevant passage is illustrated in figure 3.36.

Louis Cyr⁸ details the various solutions timpanists have employed (both with and without Stravinsky's approval). The issue is nevertheless straightforward, the decision between two equally credible versions. In the current transcription it was resolved by the transcriber's musical preference: the configuration in the 1913 original better interchanges timpani strokes and rests, giving the passage a more irregular quality—thus the preference for it here over the 1930 version. While the ease of execution this presents over the 1930 version (fewer consecutive left hand leaps) is not inconsiderable, this practical consideration was not by itself a decisive factor. Finally,

⁸ See pages 165-9. Figure 3.35 is adapted from Cyr's diagram, on pages 166-7.

it is notable that, as suggested above, both Leyeckiss and Raphling opt for the 1930 configuration.

Figure 3.36: Comparison of timpani part between 1913 and 1930 versions
(piano reduction of orchestral score)

1913 / 1922

1930

15

The “B” section is nearly long enough to be considered a discrete movement in its own right, and revisits the kind of slow, layered buildup so frequently used in the ballet. The anticipation created from irregularly spaced ostinato bass chords (in groups of one, two, or three) is palpable, and continues until the tension is nigh unbearable. The passage does not pose any particularly difficult challenges to transcription: literal recreation is opted for where possible, and when a surfeit of material renders that impossible, the clear hierarchy of foreground-background amongst voices provides obvious candidates for omission.

Nor does the “C” section pose particular problems of transcription, despite the no fewer than three discrete types of material—in three discrete tonal areas—competing in an increasingly cacophonous texture. The solution is one of necessity: the left hand must cover the bass ostinato (in the full score a series of interlocking figures passed around between bass instruments and percussion), while the right hand manages the competing fanfares. The details are in the right hand voicing configuration, here chosen to highlight the contrast of clashing tonal areas of the two fanfares.

30 $\leftarrow \text{♩} = \text{♩} \rightarrow$
Pno. *p subito*

38

45 *f* *gliss.*

51 *p*

59 *f* *ff*

67

74 Pno. *5*

79 Pno.

83 Pno. *fff*

88 Pno. *p subito*

95 Pno. *5*

101 Pno. *fppresc.* *f* *gliss* *5* *4* *3* *2* *3* *1* *4* *3* *2* *3*

Detailed description: This page of a piano score contains six systems of music, each labeled 'Pno.' on the left. The first system (measures 74-78) features a complex texture with multiple layers of chords and arpeggios, marked with a '5' above the right hand. The second system (measures 79-82) continues with dense chordal textures. The third system (measures 83-87) shows a transition to a 2/8 time signature and includes a fortissimo (*fff*) dynamic marking. The fourth system (measures 88-94) is marked *p subito* and features a 4/8 time signature. The fifth system (measures 95-100) includes a '5' above the right hand and a 3/8 time signature. The sixth system (measures 101-105) begins with *fppresc.* and *f* dynamics, followed by a *gliss* marking and various fingering numbers (5, 4, 3, 2, 3, 1, 4, 3, 2, 3) above the right hand.

106

Pno.

110

Pno.

cresc.

sfz

sempre sfz

113

Pno.

8^{ub}

118

Pno.

ff

8^{va}

8^{ub}

123

Pno.

ff

8^{ub}

8^{va}

8^{ub}

128

Pno.

8^{ub}

132 Pno.

136 Pno.

139 Pno.

142 Pno.

144 Pno.

146 Pno.

148 Pno.

(8)

150

Pno.

sfz

(8)

152

Pno.

ff maestoso

(8)

157

Pno.

ff cresc.

(8)

162

Pno.

sfz sfz

(8)

167

Pno.

piu f

(8)

172

Pno.

ff sempre

8^{va}

3

3

(8)

177

Pno.

(8).....

182

Pno.

(8).....

186

Pno.

(8).....

189

Pno.

(8).....

193

Pno.

pp

(8).....

197

Pno.

202

Pno.

207

Pno.

f subito *p* *f subito*

211

Pno.

215

Pno.

ff *sfz* *p*

220

Pno.

ff *sfz* *p*

226

Pno.

ff sfz p

232

Pno.

ff sfz simile

238

Pno.

poco a poco crescendo sino al fine

243

Pno.

249

Pno.

acceler.

8^{va}

251

Pno.

Tempo lunga ad lib. gliss. p non cresc. sfz

8^{va}

8^{va}

8^{va}

8^{va}

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