Subsets of 5-21: [1,4,5,8,9]

4-7
[4,5,8,9]
4-17
[1,4,5,8]
4-19
[9,1,4,5] [1,5,8,9]
4-20
[8,9,1,4]

3-3
[1,4,5] [4,5,8] [5,8,9]
3-4
[4,5,9] [8,9,1] [4,8,9]
3-11
[1,4,8] [1,5,8] [9,1,4]
3-12
[9,1,5]

Fünf Orchesterstücke

I

Vorgefühle

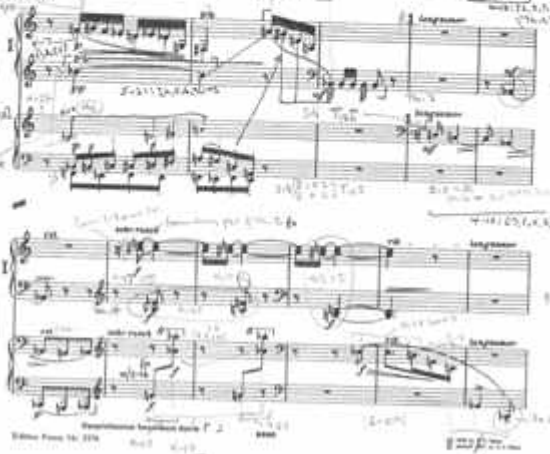
Arnold Schönberg, Op. 16

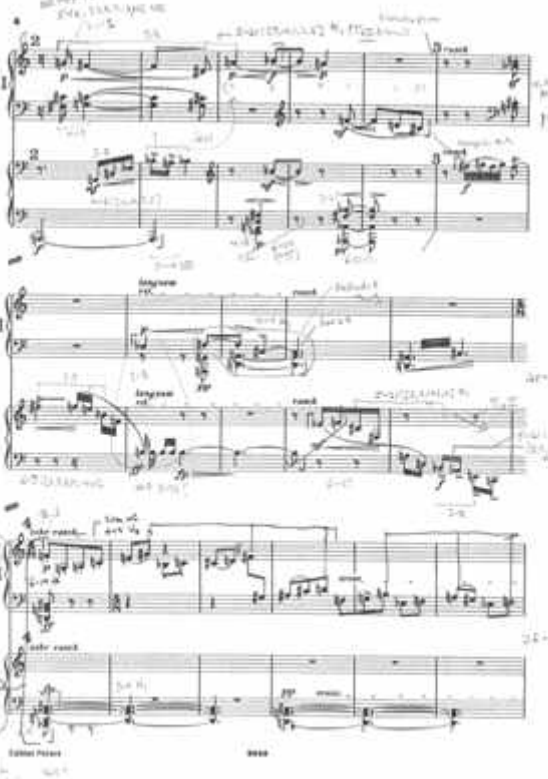
Sehr rasch

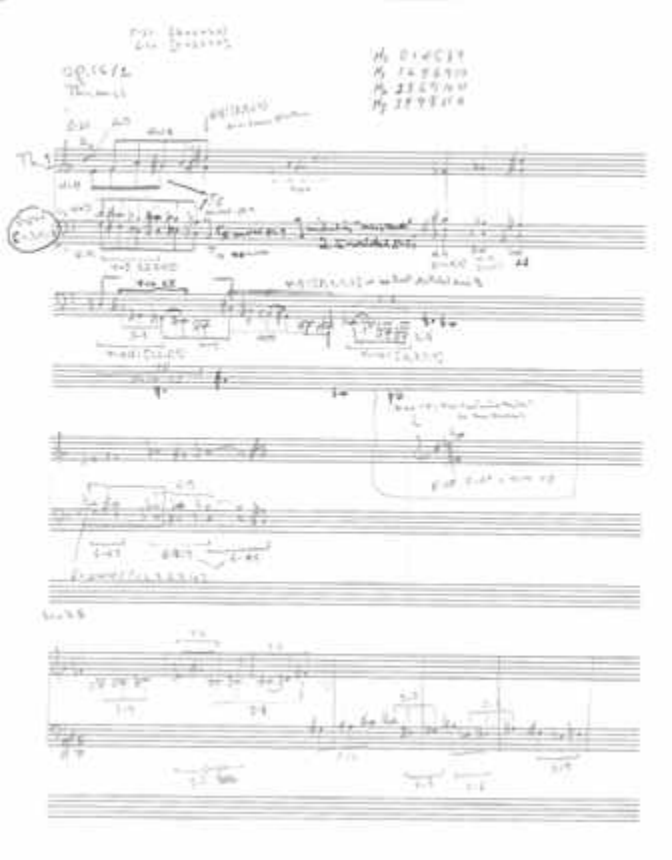
Pianoforte I

Sehr rasch

Pianoforte II







Opus 16/I

Notes on thematic figures

Fig. 1 shows the opening theme in full notation (a) and with analytical interpretation (b). The latter identifies pentad 5-21, a subset of Hexatonic 6-20 H0, as the thematic set in the descant, and beams two interlocking tetrachords that prove to be of special significance virtually immediately in the analysis of the full theme. I refer to the two parallel linear forms of 4-7 shown in Fig. 1 at c, which are quasi-contour inversions of the descant theme. Had these been true inversions the full theme would have presented a triple hexatonic cycle (cite Cohn) in the form of three contrapuntal lines. My reading here is reductive, relegating the fourth notes of the parallel lines to the status of upper adjacencies (N), to reveal the basic parallel forms of 4-7, which relate to the descant theme as T5 and T10. (If the adjacencies are offered full membership in the lower-voice lines, two forms of octatonic tetrachord 4-3 emerge; thus, I leave open the possibility of that reading.)

It will be recalled that neither 5-21 nor its mother hexachord 6-20 contain any instances of ic2 or ic6. Therefore the occurrence of those intervals ("major second" and "tritone") remove the music from the hexatonic sphere. This is what happens almost immediately at the onset, in the sixteen-note descending figure in the lower register shown in full notation and with analytical interpretation in Fig. 2. This "free," cadenza-like line begins by imitating the D-C# dyad of the middle voice in bar 1, the latter note of which is the headnote of a form of trichord 3-8 , the main component of the second theme (bars 7-9). The last note of 3-8, F, becomes the headnote of a form of 4-7, and the tailnote of 4-7, C#, becomes the headnote of 4-8, whose beamed constituents exclude two passing notes to reveal that 4-8 here is identical in pitch-class content to the final vertical of Theme 1: (8,9,1,2). This extraordinary, improvisation-like configuration ends with tetrachord 4-16, whose first dyad, Eb-D, refers to the lower voice in bars 2-3, while Eb-A-G form trichord 3-8, yet another foreshadowing of the appearance of Theme 2 in bar 7. (Fig.).

Before Theme 2 arrives, however, Schoenberg composes the three-bar development of Theme 1 shown in Fig. 3. I will describe its two components separately, beginning with the two lines in contrary motion. The thirty-second notes of the upper line present an embellished form of 4-7, beamed on Fig. 4, against which the sixteenth-note triplets of the lower line

unfold an embellished form of 4-19. Thus the tetrachordal subsets of thematic 5-21 shown in Fig. 1, 4-7 and 4-19 are combined here, creating a complete form of hexatonic 6-20 in its H1 arrangement. The second component or stratum of the passage consists of the Bb-C trill and the notated slower moving trill-like dyad F-Eb, which form 4-23. Together, these motions produce two intervals of class 5: Bb-Eb and F-C, and thus can be seen to relate to the fifths in the lower voices of bars 1-3, the accompaniment to the melodic 5-21 theme. Termination of this remarkable passage occurs at the end of bar 5 with the thirty-second note figure that descends to Bb in bar 6. Embedded in this figure is a form of 3-8: (g#-d-Bb), an inversion of Theme 2, which is about to appear in bar 7 (Fig.). The pitch-class connection of the two forms of 3-8 is very close, since they share two A very close connection obtains between the two forms of 3-8: they share two pitch-classes, represented by G#/Ab and D, the headnote and tailnote of Theme. 2.

BEGIN WITH THEME 2 BAR 7

4-23 in the Lentchang movement of the Second Quartet