

THE STRING MUSIC OF IANCU DUMITRESCU:
REFLECTIONS ON MUSICAL PHENOMENOLOGY

by

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ABSTRACT

Romanian composer Iancu Dumitrescu began writing music in the late 1960s and early 1970s and has enjoyed a successful career in his home country, albeit one with limited exposure in the English-speaking world. The collapse of communism and the fall of the Romanian regime in 1989 sparked a new and revitalized era in Dumitrescu's career that has culminated in numerous features in prominent music magazines such as *Musicworks* and *The Wire*. Until now, however, there has been no serious analysis of Dumitrescu's music and his philosophically inspired techniques of composition.

Often described as a member of the Romanian spectral school alongside the likes of Horatiu Radulescu and Octavian Nemescu, Dumitrescu is also known for his interest in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. In this thesis I analyze two of Iancu Dumitrescu's chamber works for strings, *Alternances (1&2)* (1967) and *Movemur et Sumus (3)* (1977). Using perception based approaches to analysis pioneered by theorists Thomas Clifton, Judith Lochhead, Rosemary Mountain and Dennis Smalley, I demonstrate the mechanisms of Dumitrescu's personal brand of spectralism and texturalism. These methods of analysis have their own roots in phenomenology and are particularly useful in the analysis of modern electroacoustic and textural music such as Dumitrescu's. In the course of this analysis I also draw on Jean-Jacques Nattiez's semiological framework of the tripartition in order to illustrate the important influence on Dumitrescu's music made by his exposure to music by Western composers like Karlheinz Stockhausen and phenomenological studies with conductor Sergiu Celibidache. Finally, I make the case that the key to analyzing the music of contemporary composers lies in crafting specific toolsets for specific problems. In this case, it was Dumitrescu's self-professed interest in phenomenology spurred my investigation of the phenomenological analytical techniques that provided the key to understanding his music.

As part of my research for this thesis I also conducted an interview with Dumitrescu via e-mail in which he revealed previously unpublished information concerning his life, compositional techniques, and the philosophical foundations of his music. This interview and the scores of the two works under discussion are included as appendices.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the era of reconstruction that followed the Second World War, European art music flourished during a golden age of modernism. The Darmstadt School of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Boulez, Luigi Nono, Luciano Berio, Bruno Maderna, and others pushed boundaries and produced a challenging new repertoire at a furiously productive pace. They were matched only by the work of Eastern European composers such as György Ligeti, Sofia Gubaidulina, György Kurtag, Alfred Schnittke, Witold Lutoslawski, and many others who either emigrated to the West or chose to stay and enjoy the liberalization and improved freedom of expression that followed Joseph Stalin's death in 1953. Drawing on the work of their elders while attempting to distance themselves from the ideologies and consequences of the 1930s and 1940s, modern composers explored new worlds of sound. The twelve-tone method formulated by Arnold Schoenberg and expounded upon by his disciples Anton Webern and Alban Berg gave rise to the strictures of integral serialism. The vibrant approaches to colour and timbre in Olivier Messiaen and Edgar Varèse's music inspired a new attitude towards the sonic building blocks of music and led to an ascendancy of sound and texture themselves as compositional materials. Finally, the advances in electronic sound synthesis, magnetic tape, and microphone and speaker technologies as well as the pioneering works of Varèse and the *musique concrète* of Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry evolved into the dedicated disciplines of electronic and electro-acoustic music. State-of-the-art studios were established at major universities and radio stations all across Europe. From this already diverse milieu, the music of the late 20th century would proliferate amongst innumerable regional, aesthetic, and individual styles and genres including French *musique spectrale*, Romanian spectralism, repetitive minimalism, holy minimalism, the new complexity, the new simplicity, as well as post-modern styles incorporating influences from all manner of folk, classical, and popular musics.¹

Due to this diversification of musical style in Western art music, the task of

¹ For a more complete discussion of the proliferation of styles after 1945 see: Paul Griffiths *Modern Music and After* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) and Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (London: Harper Collins' Publishers, 2009).

analysis has become increasingly complex. While in the past there was likely to be some stylistic consensus between contemporaries – Beethoven and Schubert for example – the same cannot be said for the music of many late 20th-century composers. The bombastic complexity of Boulez's Second Piano Sonata (1947-1948) has little in common with the passionately devoted meditations of Henryk Górecki's Symphony No. 3 (1976) or conceptual works of Stockhausen's *Aus den sieben Tagen* (1968). While the technique of harmonic analysis and the frameworks of various instrumental forms are useful tools for approaching the music written by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and countless other composers, there is no magic key that will unlock the secrets of John Cage, Brian Ferneyhough, and Arvo Pärt. Even the analysis of works by a composer nominally associated with an established style may require specialized tools. While Tristan Murail undoubtedly belongs to the French *musique spectrale* school, his work *Mémoire/Erosion* (1976) – based on the deconstruction and distortion of a French horn excerpt by the rest of the ensemble – is constructed on a very different premise than Gérard Grisey's *Partiels* (1975) – a kind of instrumental synthesis modelled on an original recording of a trombone. One may find a wide range of compositional techniques, each crafted specifically for the task at hand and each requiring its own method of analysis, within the oeuvre of a single composer. The analyst of modern music is faced with a unique problem: not only are the harmonic and formal principles of the past no longer applicable, but in many cases it is not clear which new analytical techniques may be appropriate for a given piece. In light of this problem, it becomes necessary for analysts to define carefully both their theoretical framework and analytical tool set.

In the course of my research, I came across this very problem in my attempts to analyze the highly individual music of the Romanian spectral composer Iancu Dumitrescu (b. 1944). In my analysis, I will demonstrate how an analyst may construct a specific toolset for the analysis of the unique musical language and contextual circumstances of a modern composer. Though he has only recently come to the attention of the English-speaking world, Dumitrescu has crafted a complex and rich oeuvre over the course of the last forty-five years. His unique compositional style and deep engagement with the phenomenological philosophy of the twentieth century has resulted

in musical works that defy conventional analysis by the mathematical models of the IRCAM spectralists and Darmstadt serialists. Instead, Dumitrescu's work is best understood in the context of his exposure to the Western European art music of the 1960s and the phenomenological philosophy that had such a profound impact on his life and work. Working from this perspective I will demonstrate the relationship between the mechanics of Dumitrescu's music and phenomenology and chart the evolution of his mature phenomenological style and the reciprocal relationship between his musical interests and philosophical pursuits. I will analyze two of Dumitrescu's chamber works for strings: *Alternances (1&2)* (1967-1968) and *Movemur et Sumus (3)* (1977). I have purposefully chosen these two works because of their related instrumentation, similar length and scope, and because their dates of composition are ideal for tracing a trajectory of Dumitrescu's career. *Alternances (1&2)* is representative of his time spent studying both classical and modern works as a student while *Movemur et Sumus (3)* reflects the developments he made through his study of phenomenology during the 1970s and paved the way towards the more recent period of his career and the beginnings of his international success.

Iancu Dumitrescu was born in 1944 in the midst of the chaos and turmoil of the expansionist and ideological war between Nazi Germany and the USSR. During the war, Romania was pressured from both sides and fought for both the Axis and the Soviets under the leadership of fascist Ion Antonescu (1882-1946) and later King Michael I (b. 1921). As the war's front ebbed and flowed back and forth across their nation, the Romanian people were repeatedly subjected to the most brutal abuses of both the communists and fascists. Following the war, the nation found itself ruled by a Soviet occupation and eventually a series of communist governments that culminated in the Stalinist regime and self-created personality cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918-1989). In short, during the fifty years that followed the outbreak of the Second World War, the Romanian people were subjected to a series of repressive and totalitarian regimes and suffered through the Holocaust and war as well as the purges and ideological persecutions that came with Stalinism. In 1949, as a young child of four, Dumitrescu witnessed the arrest of his father, a philosopher, for ideological reasons. His father was held in a state

prison until the death of Stalin in 1953, causing what he described as “[...] tragic consequences for the entire family.”² Though he exhibited an early interest in philosophy and the library of his father, the long imprisonment by the Stalinists made the elder Dumitrescu wary of encouraging his son to follow that path of study. Instead, his father suggested that he pursue music. In Dumitrescu's own words, his father thought that “[m]anipulating musical sounds seemed far less dangerous than using words and ideas.”³ Little could his father have known that by the time he reached adulthood, Iancu Dumitrescu would be embracing the musical avant-garde and returning to the philosophy that interested him as a youth. In the end, it was the brutal communism in Romania that both threatened Dumitrescu's development and forged his indomitable spirit and dedication to modern music during his studies and the first two decades of his career as a composer.

The Two Works

Alternances (1&2) was composed shortly after Dumitrescu earned his MA in Composition at the National Conservatory in Bucharest.⁴ During his studies, Dumitrescu was exposed to the music of Western European modernists for the first time, and this music had a profound impact on the young composer. Despite the institutional censorship and repression imposed by the Communist Party of Romania, headed first by Gheorghe Georghiu-Dej and later by Nicolae Ceaușescu, Dumitrescu and his colleagues found inspiration in the work spilling forth from the Darmstadt Summer Courses and other Western European composers. Dumitrescu sums up the spirit of the time in an inspiring passage from an interview with Gilles Peyret and Serge Leroy:

The musics of Stockhausen, Boulez, Nono, Messiaen, Berio, being prohibited, circulated clandestinely, from one hand to another, as copies of tapes which had become almost unlistenable. But the imagination continued to hear what, in fact, did not exist any more for the ears. The spirit of modernism, of new worlds,

2 Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

3 Ibid.

4 Tim Hodgkinson, “In the Land of the Ninth Sky: Ana-Maria Avram and Iancu Dumitrescu,” *Musicworks* 71 (Summer, 1998): 12.

being beyond these deformed, hoarse, grating sounds[...]⁵

Inspired by these works, Dumitrescu composed his string quartet as one of the earliest works which he acknowledges as part of his oeuvre and for which there is a commercially available recording.⁶ Dumitrescu has told me that he does not consider *Alternances (1&2)* to be a work in his mature spectral style and that it was composed before his exposure to phenomenology through Celibidache.⁷ To be sure, the influence of Dumitrescu's exposure to music by composers like Boulez, Stockhausen, and Nono is evident in his early works and they do not lend a spectral impression. Dumitrescu plays with the structural pitch organization of serialism and his textural and sonorous timbral explorations echo those of Stockhausen and his contemporaries. However, as I shall show in my analysis, there are elements that are extremely idiosyncratic to Dumitrescu's own method and his early works are by no means derivative or exercises in pastiche. Additionally, the emphasis on texture and Dumitrescu's cited influences do betray common ancestry between these early works and more explicit spectralism and provide an important link in the chain.

In addition to musical influences from Western Europe, the extreme political and cultural climate in Romania during Dumitrescu's youth played a formative roll. While the death of Stalin in 1953 resulted in a degree of Soviet liberalization under his successor Nikita Krushchev, Romania's government, ruled by the Romanian Communist Party, maintained a large degree of political independence. The result was that the repressive Stalinist policies of General Secretary Gheorghe Georghiu-Dej remained firmly in place until his death in 1965 and the consolidation of party power by his successor Nicolae Ceaușescu.⁸ Dumitrescu has described this toxic intellectual environment as follows:

It is hard to express what 'real communism' meant, ... People were led by

5 Iancu Dumitrescu (ed.), *Acousmatic Provoker* (London: Edition Modern & ReR MegaCorp, 2002): 9.

6 The only other recorded works of that era are a suite of piano works titled *Diachronies I, II, and III* (1967) and a clarinet solo, *Métamorphoses* (1968). Currently *Diachronies (III)* is the only work besides *Alternances (1&2)* that is commercially available on a recording. See Ana-Maria Avram and Iancu Dumitrescu, "Diachronies (III)," *Ana-Maria Avram: Iancu Dumitrescu*, Monica Timofticiuc, piano. ED.MN 1017, 2001. Compact Disc.

7 Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

8 For an excellent account of Gheorghiu-Dej's rise to power and rule, see Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).

incompetent men – insensitive to truth – who tried to impose their failings as laws. From this came fraudulent and aberrant behaviour that had consequences in all areas of Romanian life.⁹

These consequences were disturbing and brutal in their scope. Artists, philosophers, civil servants, ideologues, politicians, and many others perceived as enemies of the state were arrested and either executed or sentenced to terms in labour and concentration camps similar to the Soviet Gulags.¹⁰ Dumitrescu himself underwent scrutiny by the state-sponsored Romanian Composers' Union who censored his work and kept it from performance and publication. In an interview with Tim Hodgkinson he revealed that he “[...] was constantly criticized by the official Union of Composers, the Stalinists, the people who pretended to be influenced by folk music – but not real folk music, a kind of banalized, reduced version.”¹¹ Given these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the score to *Alternances (1&2)* did not appear in a commercially published form. Given the modernist tendencies exhibited in the work, it is remarkable that it was performed and preserved at all and that Dumitrescu was not persecuted by the state for his work.

During the early 1970s, Dumitrescu's musical language developed in parallel with his philosophical pursuits. Already interested in philosophy, his studies with Romanian conductor and philosopher Sergiu Celibidache launched him into a serious study of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology. Although phenomenology has developed along many different paths, Husserl's original inquiries stemmed from the most basic of problems: how can we know that what we believe we know is true? Can I really know that the image and experience of a chair that I hold in my mind corresponds accurately to an object that exists in a transcendent reality beyond myself?¹² Husserl recognized that the difficulty with this critique of knowledge lay in the pattern of falling back upon the immanent mind to answer questions about transcendent qualities.¹³ It was after studying these philosophical principles that Dumitrescu set about composing the second work that

9 Philip Clark, “Unstable Molecule,” *The Wire* 308 (Oct., 2009): 33.

10 Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 36, 67, 73; Steven D. Roper, *Romania: The Unfinished Revolution* (Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000): 23, 34.

11 Hodgkinson, “Land of the Ninth Sky,” 16.

12 Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, translated by Willian P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964): 14-15.

13 *Ibid.*, 15-16.

I will analyze: *Movemur et Sumus (3)* (1977). Written for solo viola, it is one of a number of works for string instruments titled either *Movemur et Sumus* or some variation on the title *Movemur* (including for example: *Movemur (V)* (1978) for double bass, *Perspectives au Movemur* (1979) for string quartet, and *Au Dela de Movemur* (1991) for string orchestra). Dumitrescu's titles for the pieces are unconventional and sometimes difficult to follow as he seems to often revisit the works on the occasion of new performances and recordings; *Movemur et Sumus (3)* is sometimes also referred to simply as *Movemur (III)*. In any case, all but the large orchestral *Movemur* works were composed during the late 1970s and form the largest portion of the works that Dumitrescu composed during the years immediately after he studied phenomenology with Sergiu Celibidache. The series of pieces are musically related and all consist of careful and meditative explorations of the open strings of the orchestral string family and the harmonic possibilities that can be unlocked through careful manipulations of bow technique and light harmonic fingering. The pieces frequently take the form of a series of long single open string drones interspersed and overlaid with unstable and ephemeral passages of high pitched harmonic material as Dumitrescu explores the range of the instruments at his disposal.

Julian Anderson has described spectral music as a broad trend within modern music and notes that it is the latest in a long line of western musics that attempt to associate musical practice with natural laws concerning sound and acoustics.¹⁴ With their emphasis on the natural acoustic and resonant properties of the instruments and strings, the *Movemur* family of works are properly spectral in nature. As I will show in my analysis, Dumitrescu's spectral style as exemplified in these works demonstrates the influences of both his study of Husserl and phenomenology as well as his earlier musical influences, including the sonic and timbral explorations of Karlheinz Stockhausen in works such as *Mantra* (1970), *Mikrophonie I* (1964) and *Stimmung* (1968).

In my analysis of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* I will also examine the impact that working in close collaboration with his performers has had on Dumitrescu's work by

14 Julian Anderson, "A Provisional History of Spectral Music," *Contemporary Music Review* 19:2 (2000): 8-9.

comparing a number of different recordings of the work by violist Cornelia Petroiu, a member of the Hyperion Ensemble. The Hyperion Ensemble, founded in 1976, comprises musicians who are highly dedicated to pioneering new and exciting music. The group was founded by Dumitrescu and his wife Ana-Maria Avram and continues to perform today under their direction. Practically speaking, the self-created infrastructure of the Hyperion Ensemble provided Dumitrescu with an important laboratory for the development of his compositions. With his own workshop, he no longer had to go through the Stalinists channels and their corrupt Composer's Union in order to see and hear a work in its realized form.¹⁵ Working with his ensemble also led to a very close relationship between Dumitrescu and his performers that has characterized his working method to this day and shaped his view of the nature of the musical work.

During the composition process, Dumitrescu often works directly with the musicians who perform and record his work, and in my analysis of *Movemur et Sumus* (3) I will show how this special relationship with his performers shapes the scores and performances of Dumitrescu's music. Dumitrescu frequently uses idiosyncratic notations to indicate specific instrumental techniques and intended effects. He frequently drafts his scores in such a manner that the visual presentation may indicate the physical actions of the performer while only hinting at the full sonic potential. In some cases he supplements this tablature approach with a second staff that shows an approximation of the desired sounding result. This kind of writing can only be arrived at by close work with musicians who are willing to share an intimate and intuitive understanding of their instruments. The scores featuring these atypical notation techniques are also often lacking in notes to the performer or written instructions on how to execute the work. The lack of written directions is a result of Dumitrescu working with his performers directly before performances and recordings, a lack which does call into question the potential legacy of his music and its capacity to spread beyond his immediate sphere of influence. Finally, many of Dumitrescu's works show an openness to improvisation and to a relatively fluid

15 Clark, "Unstable Molecule," 37 where Ana-Maria Avram states, "During the 1980s censorship was still operating efficiently in literature, cinema and in the visual arts, [...] In music to even be allowed to have your music played, the score had to be submitted to the Symphonic Bureau of the Composer's Union jury, who could refuse permission – even a verdict. [...] Therefore Hyperion has been essential to the development of our music [...]."

definition of the work. Repeat performances of a work, even by the same performer, tend to differ in marked ways and many of the notations that Dumitrescu uses indicate only approximate results or unstable and unpredictable sounds. By investigating Dumitrescu's understanding of the work, I will demonstrate that his close collaboration with performers has instilled a sense of mutual trust in which both parties feel comfortable with the kinds of interpretative variations that result from these circumstances.

* * *

These two works by Dumitrescu are undoubtedly modernist and experimental, but while his style is influenced by the Western European composers he heard during his studies, his use of phenomenological techniques is highly individual and his works possess their own repertoire of techniques, textures, and forms. The analytical approach to this highly original music must embrace both the technical analytical tools commonly applied in music theory as well as a semiotic and philosophical approach that accounts for the importance of Dumitrescu's extramusical interests. To this end I have elected to use the theories of semiologist Jean-Jacques Nattiez and philosophers Thomas Clifton and Roman Ingarden to supplement the analytical techniques of music theorists Judith Lochhead, Dennis Smalley, and Rosemary Mountain. I have also conducted an extensive interview with Dumitrescu concerning the importance of his philosophical ideas and influences and his ideas concerning music. I will draw on this material in the course of my analysis and have also included the complete transcript as appendix B for future reference. By approaching Dumitrescu's music from both an analytical and philosophical stance, I will demonstrate how analysts can construct a unique analytical paradigm that addresses the problems posed by a highly individual body of modern music. Jean-Jacques Nattiez has noted that “In practice, analysis operates on the basis of fuzzy and ill-defined terminology [...]”, a vagueness I will work to avoid by examining the philosophical and musical theories that are central to my understanding of Dumitrescu's work.¹⁶

¹⁶ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990): 159.

In the following chapter I will establish my theoretical framework and examine the perception based and phenomenological analytic techniques of Clifton, Lochhead, and others. In the second chapter I will proceed with a complete analysis of Dumitrescu's early string quartet *Alternances (1&2)*. I will then analyze Dumitrescu's mature, spectral work *Movemur et Sumus (3)* in depth to demonstrate the evolution in his style. Finally I will offer my concluding remarks and suggestions for future goals in the study of Dumitrescu's music and legacy.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Analytical Tools

Iancu Dumitrescu has repeatedly cited phenomenology as an important contributor to his compositional technique. He was first introduced to the philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger by his mentor the Romanian conductor and philosopher Sergiu Celibidache. Best known for his work with the Berlin Philharmonic and the radio orchestras in a number of cities including Stockholm and Paris, he later accepted a post as conductor of the Bucharest Philharmonic during the 1970s and 1980s. Celibidache was also a fervent student of continental philosophy and Zen Buddhism and these studies informed his approach to conducting and interpretation. Celibidache's eccentric personality and refusal to release recordings during his lifetime limited the extent of his fame, but he has been posthumously recognized as an important European conductor.¹ Describing the important role that phenomenology and this mentorship with Celibidache played as inspiration for his work and escape from the oppression of day to day life under a communist dictatorship, Dumitrescu observes that:

He appeared in my life when I was near failure. I was overwhelmed by the system, feeling stuck in a limited space from which I couldn't advance. I lacked oxygen. Celibidache gave me the confidence of self-improvement that moved me beyond the hostile environment. He taught me how to control and direct my sonic experiences, how to focus my imagination and organize my endeavours to reach my artistic goals through musical phenomenology. As mathematics and architecture were Xenakis's engine of creation, phenomenology became how I could envisage a set of sonic events. It gave me a coherent musical doctrine[...]²

However, phenomenology is a multifaceted and complex school of philosophy, and further explanation is required in order to reveal which aspects of Husserl's thought Dumitrescu adheres to. Even with an understanding of Husserl's phenomenology, the question still remains whether or how these influences may have left audible traces in Dumitrescu's music. The work of semiologist and music theorist Jean-Jacques Nattiez provides a useful framework for understanding the complexities of composition, inspiration, and musical meaning. His observations on creativity, musical meaning,

1 "Sergiu Celibidache, Romanian Composer and Conductor, 84," obituary in *The New York Times*, August 16, 1996.

2 Philip Clark, "Unstable Molecule," *The Wire* 308 (Oct., 2009): 34.

analysis, and reception are well suited to illuminating the web of relations between philosophy and music. Finally, I will build upon this general theoretical framework by introducing the practical analytical approaches of music theorists Thomas Clifton, Judith Lochhead, Dennis Smalley, and Rosemary Mountain that I will use as inspiration for my own two analytical chapters that follow.

As discussed in the introduction, Husserl was initially concerned with the question of how we can know what we believe we know, to be true. Recognizing that earlier attempts to answer that question by Descartes and his followers invariably fell back upon the introduction of God into the argument or a circular reasoning where our immanent knowledge was forced to answer questions concerning transcendent subject matter, Husserl instead focused on the question of how we experience phenomena.³ He argued that all consciousness is the intentional (directed) consciousness of an object that is physical (a football), mind-dependent (the idea of the football), or intentionally-inexistent (the hypothetical football is a specific entity and more than the mere idea of the football, but it is not a real physical object). Working from this assumption, he developed his phenomenology as a study of the qualities and statuses of things as they exist as phenomena for consciousness. He was not concerned with how a physical object might exist transcendentally, but with what it must be in order to be the intentioned object of consciousness.⁴ As an example, Husserl does not inquire about the specific objective qualities of an object such as a football, but rather what parameters it must possess in order for it to be seen (eg. shape, size, colour) or to be felt (eg. texture, shape, weight) and how these parameters structure our experience of the football.

Because of the emphasis placed on directed consciousness, phenomenology can also be described as a science of the cognition of experience. Husserl's method for investigating the essential parameters of a given experience involves a pair of reductions. The phenomenological reduction and the eidetic reduction are mental exercises that attempt to reduce the object of one's consciousness to its most basic essences. The phenomenological reduction consists of bracketing off the experience of the object from

3 Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, translated by Willian P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964): 22-24.

4 *Ibid.*, 29-31.

all attitudes concerning the real existence and function of an object.⁵ Forget that the ball is a real object that is thrown, tossed, carried, and kicked in a game and attempt to experience it purely as a visual, tactile, or fragrant phenomenon. Once this is accomplished the philosopher can turn to the eidetic reduction to attempt to determine which parameters of that experience are essential to its identity.⁶ The texture of a football may not be one of its essential characteristics as it can be fabricated from a number of different materials, but perhaps the football's shape is essential. Husserl's final step in the phenomenological method is to attempt to reconstruct how the mind synthesizes the complete experience of the football, beginning from the most basic essences arrived at during the reductions. The ultimate goal of these analyses is that by practicing the phenomenological method, it is possible to develop a knowledge of some general essences that are both immanent (they are how we cognize the many objects of our experience) as well as transcendent (they are also immanent and essential qualities of the object of our experience).⁷ In other words, the experience of the brownness of a brown football reveals a general intuitive understanding of brownness that is also invoked in the perception of the brownness of a brown leather belt. As phenomenology evolved in Husserl's own writings and in the writings of his followers like Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty it has challenged certain difficulties in Husserl's early work. These include the sometimes implied independence of the mind from the body and the phenomenological method's reliance on intuition and the assumption of reachable universal and simple qualities in lieu of infinite complexity. However, Husserl's early iteration of the phenomenological method summarized above continues to serve as an excellent introduction to some of the core beliefs, goals, and methods of the school of thought.⁸

5 Ibid., 31-32.

6 Ibid., 41-42.

7 Ibid., 44-46.

8 For this early phenomenology and an account of its evolution, see: Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*; Edmund Husserl, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology: From the Lectures, Winter Semester, 1910-1911*, translated by Ingo Farin and James G. Hart (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer, 2006) and Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

The Semiology of Jean-Jacques Nattiez

Nattiez's greatest achievement as a musical theorist and philosopher is his formulation of what he describes as a semiology of music. His book *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music* is perhaps his most important work in this regard. A culmination of his thinking, it has enjoyed broad dissemination in both its original French edition (1987) and its English publication (1990). In the English edition, prepared by Carolyn Abbate, Nattiez takes the opportunity to refine some of his ideas on what a semiology of music might look like and it is his most current and most complete book length study on the subject.⁹ The book is comprehensive in scope, containing an overview and meditation on many traditional musical definitions often taken for granted, and also providing a critique of traditional analytical practices. In *Music and Discourse*, Nattiez presents a comprehensive example of what a semiology of music might look like. While his musical semiology does not adhere to traditional models of semiology that focus explicitly on the direct communication of meaning through language, it lends itself well to the study of music. For Nattiez, semiology is not merely the study of communication and he does not limit the sign to the traditional definition of a sound-object and a concept to which it refers, as posited by Ferdinand de Saussure.¹⁰ Nor does Nattiez adhere to later models of semiology that attempt to model meaning and representation as a uni-directional activity in which a producer transmits a message to a receiver.¹¹ For Nattiez, semiology is purely the study of signs and the ways by which they give rise to the meanings associated with them. He writes, "However we conceive of it, it is the study of the specificity of the function of symbolic forms, and the phenomenon of

9 *Music and Discourse* is not Nattiez's most recent book, but it is the most focused on the broader questions of musical semiology. His other more recent works such as *The Battle of Chronos and Orpheus* and *Wagner Androgyne* are more narrow studies, focused on particular figures and repertoires. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Wagner Androgyne*, translated by Stewart Spencer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *The Battle of Chronos and Orpheus: Essays in Applied Musical Semiology*, translated by Jonathan Dunsby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

10 Nattiez, *Music and Discourse*, 4 and 15; Ferdinand Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, translated by W. Baskin (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1977).

11 *Ibid.*, 16.

'referring' to which they give rise."¹² The distinction between semiology as a study of communication and Nattiez's more organic model of emergent meaning seems subtle at first, but becomes increasingly clear as he addresses the phenomenon of meaning.

For Nattiez, meaning or the referring of signs does not take place as a directional process of communication. Instead meaning arises when a symbol or sign is related to other signs within a potentially infinite web of connections. To establish this concept he draws on Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of the interpretant, an entity which arises in the mind of an individual as that thing to which a sign refers.¹³ The catch is that the interpretant is itself a sign which derives its own meaning from further objects in a complexity of meaning that stretches *ad infinitum*.¹⁴ Nattiez illustrates the nature of interpretants with the example of the meaning of happiness. We possess an instant and intuitive understanding of what happiness is, but if we are asked to define happiness by another individual, we are forced to fall back on other signs, other words with potentially fuzzy meanings. Furthermore, the other signs chosen to define happiness will depend on the personal experiences and convictions of the individual questioned.¹⁵ Meaning, then, arises when the understanding of an object is placed against a horizon of other interpretations.¹⁶ This idea of the horizon is closely related to analogous ideas concerning truth and measure in Heidegger's writings, though Nattiez does not address this connection.¹⁷ While it would be easy to despair in the face of a theory that seems to ascribe no certain meaning to anything, he rightfully chooses to view this as an opportunity to study how meaning arises within this web of interpretants.

The central tenet of Nattiez's semiology of music and the key to understanding the means by which meaning arises lies in a fluid structure called the tripartition, a concept which he inherits and expands upon from his teacher Jean Molino.¹⁸ This structure consists of three regions – two that consist of processes and one that is a trace or record –

12 Ibid., 15.

13 Ibid., 5.

14 Ibid., 6.

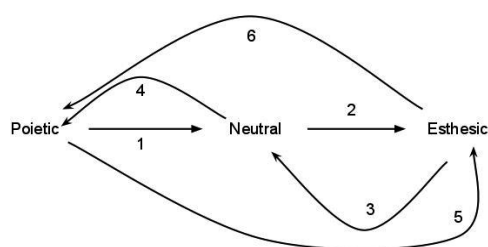
15 Ibid., 7.

16 Ibid., 9-10.

17 Joseph J. Kockelmans, *Martin Heidegger: A First Introduction to His Philosophy* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1965): 48-49, 160.

18 Ibid., 16-17.

that Molino and Nattiez identify as important domains of activity in the synthesis of meaning. They are the poietic (the realm of creative activity), the neutral level (the produced work itself), and the esthetic (the realm of reception and interpretation).¹⁹ However, the three divisions do not necessarily give rise to meaning in a purely teleological, one-way manner (eg. *creation begets work begets reception*). Rather, the three act upon each other continuously and in varying manners, as I show in the diagram prepared below:



Examples:

1. Creative act begets neutral level.
2. Neutral level spurs interpretative act.
3. Interpretative act shapes neutral level.
4. Medium of neutral level directs creative act.
5. Creative act has direct impact on reception.
6. Interpretation of the creative act.

Figure 1.1: Nattiez's Tripartition

Nattiez acknowledges that these discrete levels are not fixed, and that depending on the circumstance the esthetic can entail a creative act and the poietic may involve a degree of interpretation.

Nattiez has been criticized by a number of reviewers for his use of a trace or neutral level, often identified as the score in the case of music. They argue that in truth there can be no purely objective and neutral level of analysis and that it is a fallacy for Nattiez to identify one.²⁰ This criticism stems from a misinterpretation or shallow reading of his central arguments. While it is true that Nattiez does sometimes identify the neutral level within the score, he is also openly critical of a purely structuralist approach to musical analysis that disregards the historical and cultural context of a work, a technique

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

²⁰ See, for example, Robert Samuels, "Review of *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*," *Tempo* New Series 178 (Sep., 1991): 39-40 and Don Keefer, "Review of *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 51:1 (Winter, 1993): 91-92.

that he describes as antiquated.²¹ Throughout the book he also refers to the neutral level as immanent structure and as the description of that structure.²² The neutral level refers equally well to the particular acoustic sounds which give rise to music. Nattiez explicitly addresses this when he notes that transcription and description after the fact qualify as neutral traces in the same manner as a score produced by a composer.²³ While it would be fair to ask whether this kind of activity constitutes the esthetic level, he refutes this, arguing that even a reading of a score is an interpretive activity, but that the result becomes a neutral level in relation to our further analysis of poietic and esthetic categories based on that description.²⁴ Furthermore, he notes that while the neutral level or immanent detail is always a starting point (how can we analyze something which does not exist?), it is limited in its utility because of the complexities associated with methodology in the observation of that structure and with the many possible categories of meaning. Nattiez provides the hypothetical situation in which two cultures independently produce music that is structurally identical and yet fulfills very different cultural functions and gives rise to very different meaning.²⁵ Given these points, the criticisms levelled against the dependency of his theory on a neutral level that some feel does not exist are at best the result of misreadings and at worst the *reductio ad absurdum* of those who rail against any method that works with structural analysis. While one might dispute the objective value of a score or of immanent musical structure in an analysis, one cannot deny that there is something present. In any case, it is valuable to recognize what Nattiez's tripartition does offer: an attempt to critique all one-dimensional analyses as insufficient and to embrace all parameters of creation, immanent structure, and reception when attempting to discuss musical meaning. His most important observation is simply to recognize that these levels exist and that any analysis possesses its own symbolic nature arrived at through an almost infinite number of choices and interpretants surrounding the object of study and the analyst's personal experience. Analysts always take stances, and

21 Nattiez, *Music and Discourse*, 28.

22 Ibid., ix, 12, 65.

23 Ibid., 73.

24 Ibid., 82.

25 Ibid., 65.

he refers to these stances as analytical situations.²⁶

Nattiez's ideas are particularly well suited to the analysis of music which is also associated with extramusical subject matter. The use of the tripartition and the analysis of how meaning arises among its different levels will be particularly valuable for me as I attempt to identify aspects of Dumitrescu's musical language with his interests in phenomenological philosophy. Nattiez's non-linear model of musical meaning is also well suited to establishing reciprocal relationships between the poietic, neutral, and esthetic levels. This model can best account for the development of Dumitrescu's compositional technique. His exposure to phenomenology did not result in a drastic and radical split between an old style and a new; instead, phenomenology reinforced certain aspects of his practice that already existed, in addition to inspiring new developments.

The Phenomenological Approaches of Thomas Clifton and Judith Lochhead

While Nattiez's theoretical framework is conceptually useful, it does not provide the tools that are necessary for the practical work of musical analysis. For these techniques, I turn to the work of phenomenologically inclined analysts such as Thomas Clifton, Rosemary Mountain, Judith Lochhead, and Dennis Smalley. Because much of Dumitrescu's work was composed under the influence of phenomenology and because much of his music is explicitly textural and meditative in nature, it is necessary to complement traditional score work with a perceptual approach. When a work's form is dictated more by the shifting of large-scale textures rather than conventional pitch or harmonic pattern and manipulation, the score itself is insufficient. In these cases, it is often better to turn first to the ear to provide broader analytical observations which may then be elaborated through score work. The groundwork for this kind of analysis was established in 1983 in Thomas Clifton's groundbreaking *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology*.²⁷ His proposal for a phenomenology of music was later taken up

²⁶ Ibid.,135.

²⁷ Thomas Clifton, *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

and expanded on by important theorists such as David Lewin.²⁸ Clifton recognized that a phenomenology of music was needed as the solution to the problems posed by the analysis of modern music. He wrote in the preface to *Music as Heard* that:

...a phenomenological attitude can describe the newer music more faithfully than methods which rely on the existence of a score printed in traditional notation ... In addition, contemporary composers write 'phenomenological' music in their efforts to present musical essences – movement, shape, duration, succession, color, play, and feelings – without cluttering their pieces with such literary imports as plot (theme), character development (thematic manipulation), and structure (beginning, middle, and end).²⁹

This brief passage deftly sums up the challenges of modern musical analysis, and although he was likely not aware of his work, it is also an apt description of Iancu Dumitrescu's music. Clifton argues that the only convincing answer to the question of what music actually *is*, is that it is a human experience that is directed and tied to meaning. This definition of music is similar to those of both Nattiez and Roman Ingarden and I will explore this line of thinking further in the following chapter. For now, suffice it to say that this assumption gives rise to Clifton's assertion that if music exists as a phenomenon in our experience, then phenomenology (the science of phenomena) is the perfect tool to analyze it. In his book, he draws on a variety of phenomenological thought including Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty and avoids in-depth discussions of the disagreements between those thinkers, focusing instead on the central tenets and assumptions that are common to what is broadly accepted as phenomenology.

In charting out a new method of musical analysis, Clifton breaks from tradition in two important ways. First, rather than describing what might be thought of as objective facts, a phenomenological analysis aims to reveal the essences of a work. Essences, in the phenomenological understanding of the word, are those aspects of an object that lie at the base of its identity. They are the things that make an object recognizable as the object it is within our experience.³⁰ Secondly, he argues that the aim of an analysis is to demonstrate *an* or *some* essences of a work, rather than *the* essence.³¹ Clifton pre-emptively counters

28 David Lewin, "Music Theory, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception," *Music Perception: an Interdisciplinary Journal* 3:4 (Summer, 1986): 327-392.

29 Clifton, *Music as Heard*, x.

30 Ibid., 9.

31 Ibid., 19.

arguments that his work is overly subjective with points that should be familiar to any student of phenomenology. He argues that intuitive knowledge or knowing is undervalued and misunderstood by the scientific mindset. Rather than subjective description consisting of individuals mapping their own feelings or ideas onto that which is described, it is instead the act of choosing a descriptive term that we know is only an approximation to describe an intuitive knowing that the phenomenon conjures within us.³² The fact that we do this and that we debate which approximations are most accurate or closest to the truth indicates that there is in fact a truth towards which our approximations tend and that rather than being objective or subjective, truth is relational. In other words, the truth is the hub at which our approximations meet.³³ Furthermore, this is decidedly different from the objectivist model of subjectivity (the mapping of a personal viewpoint onto the observed) in that it arises not from descriptive metaphor, but from what Heidegger would call being-in-the-world-with. When I describe a passage of music as lachrymose, I am not merely projecting my past experiences onto music, describing the effect the music has on me or suggesting that the music is itself weepy. Instead, I am arriving at an understanding of an essence that both the music and lachrymose possess within themselves and for which the term I have chosen is but a fuzzy and inaccurate approximation.³⁴ Clifton writes, “[...] one experiences essences in individuals only to the extent that something more than just the individual is experienced.”³⁵ While this philosophizing may seem murky, he does expand on these ideas and the works of philosophers to formulate a mindset and framework for the analysis of actual, sounding music.

Clifton bases his analytical framework on the assumption that music, best understood as a directed human experience, is more than a relic (score or recording) and more than acoustic sound; it requires an observer. In his attempt to describe this experience, he decides on three domains that require the attention of an analyst. These backgrounds of experience are the building blocks that form our experience of performed

32 Ibid., 14.

33 Ibid., 17.

34 Ibid., 47.

35 Ibid., 15.

music as a whole and they consist of musical time, musical space, and of human feeling and intuition.³⁶ The experience of musical time revolves around a recognition that our experience of time is shaped by the music. For the listener, time is something that unfolds within the music, not a medium within which music unfolds. He describes musical time as forming “[...] a kind of parenthesis in world time.”³⁷ When considering musical time he draws on Husserl's understanding of the experience of time in which the experience of the present is comprised of retention of past events and a protention (anticipation) of an expected future that each interact with a real now. Put more simply, our experience of the present in ever fleeting music is always coloured by what has just passed and what we anticipate will come.³⁸

Clifton's understanding of musical space is likewise atypical in that he does not consider it merely an empty medium. For him, musical space is not an acoustical space as can be analyzed with spectrographs and other tools, instead it is the means by which things are organized or placed and it includes both the juxtaposition of musical objects as well as texture (including tone quality, pitch, duration, register, intensity) and tactile qualities ('coarse', 'jagged', etc.).³⁹ Space also includes the more familiar use of the term texture in modern music, as the synthesis of a single large sound or musically significant object from a group of smaller elements.⁴⁰ His final realm of experience is that of human acts of feeling and intuition and he recognizes that “[...] music is not an autonomous appearance, but the outcome of a collaboration between a person, and real or imagined sounds.”⁴¹ This realm of experience accounts for, amongst other things, the importance of ritual and play in music. Play is particularly relevant to the analysis of *Alternances (I&2)*, as he defines musical play as the activity that takes place when a composer incorporates characteristics that do not belong to a conventional style, structure, or practice while still adhering to, commenting on, or returning in the end to that conventional style, structure or practice. He notes that this *ludus tonalis* can dramatize the

36 Ibid., 65, 70, 76.

37 Ibid., 14.

38 Ibid., 65.

39 Ibid., 69-70.

40 Ibid., 156.

41 Ibid., 70.

music, lend the music meaning, and give rise to individual style within a genre or historical style.⁴² As I will show in my analysis, Dumitrescu uses this kind of play when he engages with the rigorous serialist tools of the western composers who inspired him.

Around the time Clifton published *Music as Heard*, Judith Lochhead was completing her Ph.D dissertation on phenomenology and musical analysis, and she has since published extensively on the topic.⁴³ Her approach is heavily indebted to Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger and the assumption that individuals exist in-the-world and that their experiences are embodied ones. She views any notion of a mind/body split or claims of objectivity as inaccurate assessments of reality and argues that even the results of the scientific method are perceived and experienced through the human body of the researcher.⁴⁴ Her sentiment is echoed by American philosopher Mark Johnson who makes the convincing argument that rationality and knowledge are constructed through a bottom-up process by which our experience through our body actively shapes the activity of our mind. This throws into question the objectivist assumption that our mind organizes and observes an essentially passive reality and perceptual experience.⁴⁵

Lochhead's actual analytical approach has come to rely heavily on experiential evidence. In her 2006 article "How Does It Work?": Challenges to Analytic Explanation," she draws on the work of Joan Scott and the kind of embodiment philosophy discussed above to establish that in reality, any analysis is the attempt to explain the experience of the analyst.⁴⁶ This encompasses even the most purely score-based work, as the score is still an object which is experienced. However, as Lochhead notes, the most interesting possibilities that arise from this conclusion are those relating some genres of modern music, which are not adequately represented in their visual form.⁴⁷ Her method for analyzing this kind of music is to create what she calls 'maps' of a work that, although

42 Ibid., 211.

43 Judith Lochhead, "The Temporal Structure of Recent Music: A Phenomenological Investigation" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1982).

44 Judith Lochhead, "How Does it Work?": Challenges to Analytic Explanation," *Music Theory Spectrum* 28:2 (Autumn, 2006): 239.

45 Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987): XIX, XXXV-XXXVI, 206-207.

46 Lochhead, "How Does it Work?," 238.

47 Ibid., 239.

they may contain no musical notation, function in a similar manner to Schenkerian graphs. Both offer a single visual representation of how an individual has perceived the work to function.⁴⁸ Lochhead's 'maps' vary in approach and are often drafted to meet a specific need. They include both descriptive representations that may show such things as the flow of time, vertical organization, or key moments of tension, release, and return, and explanatory maps that may chart development, narratives, or relationships between elements observed in descriptive maps. Lochhead's graphics are an excellent example of what Nattiez would describe as a transcribed neutral level as discussed above and will serve as a model for my analyses of form.

The Perceptual Analysis of Rosemary Mountain and Dennis Smalley

The school of analysis that relies on the researcher's experience of music and visual or verbal description of sound has proliferated since the 1980s. While not all of these authors have acknowledged phenomenology as an important influence, their conclusions often bear striking similarity to those of the phenomenologists. Whether it turns out that the influence of phenomenology has trickled down or if both phenomenological analysis and these other approaches are separate manifestations of the shifts in modern music has yet to be seen. What is clear is that these approaches to music theory share many ideas. Two other theorists who have particularly influenced my approach to analysis are Rosemary Mountain and Dennis Smalley. In her article "Time and Texture in Lutoslawski's Concerto for Orchestra and Ligeti's Chamber Concerto" Mountain provides an excellent example of how perceptual information can be translated from the ethereal realm of the analyst's experience into a concrete set of diagrams and explicative text in order to present a clear and decisive analysis.⁴⁹ Mountain's analysis of Ligeti and Lutoslawski's dense and challenging works is based on the identification of distinct textures as musical units from which the music's form is derived. Her method of

48 Ibid., 206, 241.

49 Rosemary Mountain, "Time and Texture in Lutoslawski's Concerto for Orchestra and Ligeti's Chamber Concerto," *Ex Tempore: A Journal of Compositional and Theoretical Research in Music* 7:1 (Summer, 1994). Archived online at <http://www.ex-tempore.org/mtn/mtn.htm>.

drawing out diagrams of each texture is remarkably similar to Lochhead's, and although she does not acknowledge the influence of phenomenology, some of her arguments touch on similar issues. In her discussion of periodicity within a texture as one of its defining characteristics she asserts that our recognition and response to periodicity is rooted in our experience of our bodies and their mechanisms, such as the heartbeat and respiration.⁵⁰ This sense of embodiment can be seen throughout phenomenological thought. In addition to a certain periodicity, the other defining elements of musical textures within a piece include the means by which they occupy musical space and time. She considers both the inner quality of a texture, including its density, its range, its rate of activity or change as well as its relationship to larger musical forms and other musical objects including stratification within the piece, alternation with other textures, and the means by which it is modified and transformed. Mountain's conceptions of musical space are similar to those advocated by both Clifton and Denis Smalley.

In Denis Smalley's article "Spectromorphology: Explaining Sound-Shapes," he addresses the analysis of electro-acoustic music, for which there is often no score at all. He notes as well that his theories apply to modern music created in the wake of electro-acoustic music that does not utilize melody, periodic rhythm, or even pitch as a characteristic parameter. He writes that in these cases "[...] spectromorphology provides a tool set for discussing musical experience."⁵¹ Smalley notes that even though many modern instrumental works are presented in score, the score itself is often an extremely poor representation of the music as it is experienced aurally.⁵² His solution to this problem is spectromorphology, which centres around a reduced, focused listening. While he locates the inspiration for this method in electro-acoustic acousmatic music, his technique of repeated, detailed listening that attempts to remove any source associations from the perceived sounds is very phenomenological. It is an excellent example of getting "back to the things themselves" as Husserl might say. In his focused listening Smalley seeks to discover and describe the intrinsic qualities of sound objects and their transformations throughout a work, qualities such as energy, directionality or lack

50 Ibid.

51 Denis Smalley, "Spectromorphology: Explaining Sound-Shapes," *Organized Sound* 2:2 (1997): 107.

52 Ibid., 109.

thereof, texture, gesture and motion, growth and decay, and spectral or acoustic space. He then suggests that an effective way of discussing these parameters when describing a passage of music is to relate them to tactile or physical experience, such as 'ascent', 'descent', 'spin', 'dilation', 'contraction', 'throw', 'rise', 'flow', 'streaming', 'flocking', and so on.⁵³ Smalley is primarily interested in the relationships between musical objects and the movements and transformations that those objects undergo.

Smalley and Mountain's approaches to analysis are similar in spirit to Lochhead's. Their emphasis is on the role of the analyst as a listener and the centrality and value that ought to be placed on sounding music. By using gestural descriptions that relate to physical experience, Smalley is also echoing the thinking of Mark Johnson on the embodied mind. In my analyses of Dumitrescu's works, this focus on music as it is heard is crucial. It is not only in step with the phenomenological intentions of Dumitrescu as composer, but also a practical necessity. His lack of clear notes to the performer, tablature style notations, and openness to variation and malleability within his works means that the score is never a complete representation. His work can only be adequately deciphered and digested as an auditory experience with the score as a sort of road map or point of reference. My analyses will therefore consider Dumitrescu's works both as meaning-laden manifestations of his philosophical and musical studies as well as structured acoustic experiences. These two realms will intersect throughout my analyses of the two works for strings as I use a combination of traditional score work, aural observations and transcriptions made by following the perceptual and experiential models of Lochhead, Mountain, and Smalley, and conclusions drawing on the philosophy of Nattiez, Clifton, and Ingarden. In each of my analyses it will be my goal to uncover the mechanics of the work, evidence of Dumitrescu's evolving style, and the traces of Dumitrescu's philosophical interests.

⁵³ Ibid., 111, 116-118.

Chapter 3: Analysis of *Alternances (1&2)*

The two chamber works that I will analyze both bear evidence of Dumitrescu's stylistic evolution. The first of these works, *Alternances (1&2)* for string quartet, is a textural piece that follows a simple form. It exhibits many early iterations of themes and techniques that become important to Dumitrescu's compositional work in his later career and sheds light on the importance of his early musical influences in shaping his fully spectral and phenomenological style. It serves as a straightforward example of how both score work and experienced based analytical tools can be utilized to analyze the individual styles of modern composers and uncover the complex webs of meaning that surround their work. As one of his earliest works, *Alternances (1&2)* is also an excellent introduction to Dumitrescu's unique compositional tendencies at an embryonic stage, before his writing diverged more sharply from the serialists and texturalists of the 1960s in his more complex works of the 1970s and 1980s.

The two-movement work is scored for a traditional string quartet and lasts roughly fourteen minutes. The first movement is entirely scored and makes up the bulk of the piece, while the second, subtitled *Memorial*, appears as a page of excerpts from the first. In the second movement, performers improvise by selecting various excerpts on the fly. Dumitrescu describes the movement: “[...] musicians choose from the previous formulas and play them independently. It's like a disintegration/deconstruction/memory of the previous movement.”¹ The score provided by the composer (fig. 2.1) is a self-published affair, produced with digital notation software as an update of the original. As far as I can discern, the original was never formally published and the work remains a self-published affair today.² The score is presented as a series of boxes, physically separated from one another on the page and each containing a conventional staff with the music for a timed portion of the work. In many ways, the visual presentation of the work

1 Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

2 The only commercially available recording that I was able to locate is on a compact disc released by Dumitrescu's own record label, Edition Modern. Here it appears under a slightly modified title from that on the actual score.
Iancu Dumitrescu, “Memorial/Alternances,” *Iancu Dumitrescu*, Quatuor Philharmonia. ED.MN 1005, 1993. Compact Disc.

is similar to the full score presentation of Witold Lutoslawski's *String Quartet* (1964).³ Within many of Dumitrescu's boxes there is no clear indication of meter, measure, or any other other method of coordination between players aside from the approximate visual proportions. However, the transitions between separate boxes do seem to be important moments when the ensemble members should align.

The figure displays three musical staves for Violin I, Violin II, and Viola/Vcello. The top staff is labeled "Arco Normale" and features a dynamic range from *p* to *f*, with a 9'' box and a 6'' box. The middle staff is labeled "RAPIDO" and features a dynamic range from *ppp* to *sfz*, with a 45'' box and a "Da Capo Simile" instruction. The bottom staff is labeled "DINAMICO" and features a dynamic range from *pppp* to *sfz*, with a 9'' box and various performance instructions like "pizz", "Arco", and "gliss".

Figure 2.1: Page 4 of *Alternances* (1&2)⁴

As I will show in my analysis, these boxed gestures are an integral aspect of the work and are closely tied to its form. Because there are no measure numbers I have chosen to use timings and to number the boxes as points of reference. All timings refer to the recording

3 Lutoslawski's quartet was initially published only as four instrumental parts, but he later produced a complete score in which the four parts are presented in parallel as a series of separate boxed entities called mobiles. Steven Stucky, *Lutoslawski and His Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 86-87.

4 Unfortunately the poor visual quality of the scores presented here is consistent with the quality of the digital copies provided by Dumitrescu.

on the compact disc *Galaxy* released on Dumitrescu's own label Edition Modern.⁵ My rehearsal numbers or box numbers are simply a numbering of the boxed gestures that appear on the score. Each visually separated box receives its own number from one to twenty-two. These divisions are not arbitrary as they reflect Dumitrescu's visual presentation of the music and also serve to mark out the form of the work in an intuitive and effective way.

The title of the work, *Alternances*, alludes to the primary mechanism of the work's form. The first movement consists of a sequence of alternations between two distinct textures that I will refer to as texture A and texture B and each box on the page generally (though not always) contains only one of the textures. In lieu of recognizable melodic or harmonic recurrences, each of these textures contains an inner world of motion and set of parameters that renders it identifiable and recognizable as a cohesive whole. I will demonstrate how these two textures contribute to the macro form of the work, and conduct a more in-depth analysis of the micro world in which the characteristics of textures A and B are generated.

The alternating form of *Alternances (1&2)* is clear upon repeated listenings, and, inspired by the techniques of Judith Lochhead, I have based my analysis upon a perceptual mapping of the work. Rosemary Mountain argues that some of the definitive characteristics of a musical texture include a degree of periodicity or repetition and a collective effect whereby the acoustic products of multiple sources coalesce into something that is perceived as a whole.⁶ Expanding on this idea, I define a musical texture as a collective acoustic whole comprised of composite parts, none of which are perceptible as an independent musical object in the same way a melody might be. Additionally, a texture must possess a set of defining musical characteristics, tendencies, or parameters that allow it to retain its identity through repetitions and some degree of internal variation or development. When thinking about what kind of listening experience suggests a musical texture, it is helpful to remember Karlheinz Stockhausen's anecdote

5 Dumitrescu, "Memorial/Alternances," *Iancu Dumitrescu*.

6 Rosemary Mountain, "Time and Texture in Lutoslawski's Concerto for Orchestra and Ligeti's Chamber Concerto," *Ex Tempore: A Journal of Compositional and Theoretical Research in Music* 7:1 (Summer, 1994). Archived online at <http://www.ex-tempore.org/mtn/mtn.htm>.

about a composition assignment he submitted to his instructor at the University of Köln:

I had composed very many notes in a small amount of time and he said, ‘Who is going to hear that? Who can hear these notes? You don’t control what you are writing. You see what is the point in writing notes if the people can’t hear them?’ And I said, ‘I don’t want you to count them.’⁷

In my analysis I will engage in some counting, but the important thing to note is that this hyper-attentive analysis of the inner structure of a texture is not how it is generally perceived in listening.

Before presenting the larger form of the work I will give a general impression of the musical characteristics that lend distinct identities to textures A and B. Texture A is internally active and full of brief isolated attacks that bear no clear relation to one another; it overwhelmingly consists of wide interval leaps of 7ths, 9ths, 14ths, and 16ths, and it lacks a sense of centre or direction. Conversely, texture B is most often focused within a small range, producing a cluster effect, and it contains fewer attacks. This focus imparts a sense of a collected sound around a centre that moves towards a goal. To make an analogy, texture A is like the spray of a large number of tiny droplets from a shower head while texture B is more akin to the steady stream from a hose. The graph in figure 2.2 shows the alternating pattern of the work with texture A indicated by a circle and texture B by a square. Also provided are the timings on the recording and the box numbers I have assigned to the portions of the score included in that alternation. I have represented the second movement at the end with a third shape. As a result of its recycling of earlier materials and its improvised construction, this movement contains musical elements of both texture A and texture B in a completely blended form.

⁷ Barrie Gavin (producer), *Tuning In*. BBC, 1981. Documentary film archived at http://www.ubu.com/film/stockhausen_tuning.html

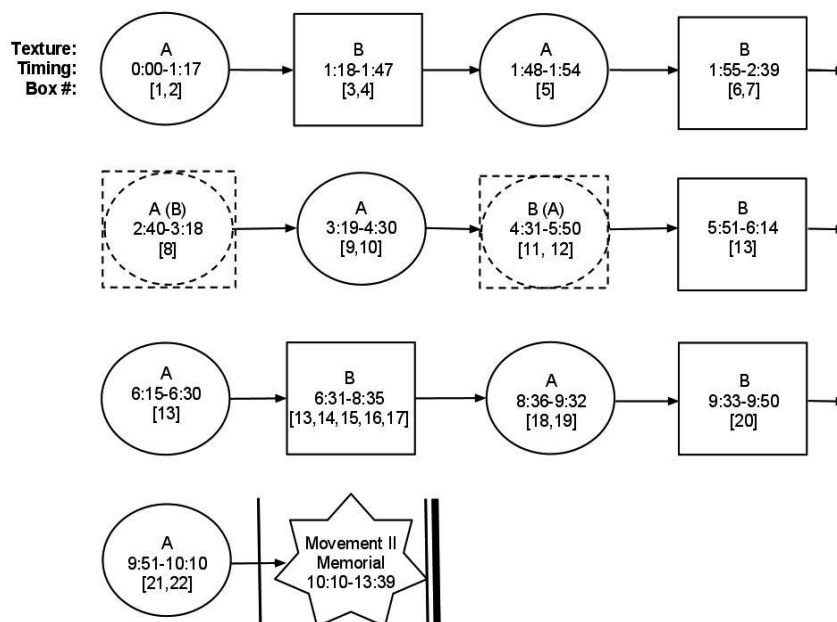


Figure 2.2: *Alternances (1&2)* Macro Form

While the form is simple, it is also effective and easily perceptible upon repeated listenings, and contains a fair degree of subtlety and play. The alternating textures seldom appear for equal durations, yet the piece is distributed roughly equally between the textures with a slight preference for texture B. Texture A is articulated for just short of five minutes while texture B appears during just slightly more than five minutes of music. While these timings refer to only one specific realization of the work they would seem to be representative proportions given that texture A accounts for eleven of the score's boxes while texture B claims twelve.⁸ The aural experience of this alternating form is striking. While the alternations between textures are often abrupt and marked by a pause or a sudden and strong contrasting musical gesture, the move between boxes of the same texture within an alternation is generally continuous and much more subtle. However, in a number of instances Dumitrescu creates formal ambiguity by blending the qualities of the two textures together. In each case one of the texture's character remains dominant, but it is flavoured by the tendencies of the other. It is these internal variations that keep the piece fresh and interesting and avoids the repetitious and pedantic nature that could

⁸ Box thirteen contains inner alternation between the textures and increase the total count to 23.

arise from a work so simple in form. This kind of variation also helps to bridge the abrupt changes between textures and serves as transitional material. In order to discuss these variations in further detail, it is first necessary to define each of the textures more completely. For each of the textures I have identified a number of aspects of perceptual and technical characteristics that can be perceived in both the score and listening experience of this work.

Texture A

Texture A possesses a scattered and unfocused character. It is defined by a lack of a centre, a lack of direction or development, and comprises predominately wide intervals. These observations demand some sort of elaboration and I will analyze multiple passages to demonstrate these characteristics more clearly. The box that I have numbered one provides an example of the texture as it first appears at the beginning of the work, whereas box eight demonstrates how it appears later in the piece after undergoing a number of transformations. By analyzing box number eight and a number of other excerpts, I will demonstrate how certain characteristics of texture A remain constant throughout Dumitrescu's processes of variation and transformation.

Box number one contains only a single brief line of music which Dumitrescu indicates should be repeated five times before moving on. In performance these five repetitions take a total of only forty-five seconds, or nine seconds each. This brief fragment contains ninety-seven individual notes and ninety-three intervals, which given the leaping ranges, crossing voices, and brief *pizzicato* durations form little that could be recognized as a melodic strand or motif. In other words, the listener is presented with a disorienting pace of more than 500 seemingly unrelated attacks per minute. The net effect of all this activity is ultimately obscuring and gives rise to the overall texture itself. With individual lines and acoustic origins obscured, the listener's perspective shifts up a level to that of a single unified texture. When we stare into the desert we do not perceive the infinite number of grains of sand, but rather a single ocean of it. This poses an especially interesting paradox when we take into account the repetition or periodicity that Mountain

calls attention to. Despite the internal flurry of action and energy, this texture is in fact a very static one. It does not change perceptibly over the forty-five seconds that Dumitrescu presents it to his audience. Although there is a *crescendo* and *accelerando* within each repeat, it never actually seems to arrive anywhere. Instead, the texture seems to ebb and flow like the tide, constantly changing and yet forever fixed within a certain range of motion.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is marked 'TREPIDANDO (irregolare)' and 'mp pizz Accelerando e Crescendo' leading to 'ff'. A 25-second interval is indicated. The score ends with 'Da Capo Simile' and '(Attacca)' for each instrument.

Figure 2.3: Box #1

This distinct texture then recurs throughout the piece in a number of slight transformations and variations. For example, box one flows seamlessly into box two which presents an almost identical texture save for the addition of quick glissandi on a handful of the *pizzicato* attacks. It then recurs in box five where the texture is enhanced with some ricocheting *getatto* gestures and the addition of brief bowed attacks. These gestures and bowed pitches do not serve a teleological function by driving the music forward or entering into any clear dialogue with other voices, but instead serve to further obfuscate the dense and fragmented texture.

I have modelled the perceptual experience of listening to this passage in terms of musical space to illustrate the nature of texture A. The following diagram (fig. 2.4) presents the listener's experience of musical space and time of gesture A in box one as a three-dimensional cube. By musical time I do not mean the literal measure of seconds which the texture occupies in the work, but the experience the listener has of the musical

present. This is an experience that Thomas Clifton, expounding on Husserl, argues is forever coloured by our knowledge of the past and our expectations of the future.⁹ Accordingly the musical present is a complex perceptual experience and the organization of sound events in the diagram should not be construed to imply any sort of ordering. Likewise, by musical space I am consciously using an imprecise metaphor to describe something that is very much real. As Thomas Clifton argues, space is not merely a playing field upon which objects are ordered – like a soundstage for example – but rather the means or capacity by which those things are placed and arranged. We experience this abstract sort of space through our own understandings of space garnered through the experiences of our bodies.¹⁰

In *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*, Mark Johnson argues for a similar understanding of metaphor. Using the example of 'force' he demonstrates that we are able to understand a plethora of seemingly unrelated metaphorical meanings by consistently falling back on a pre-conceptual knowledge acquired through bodily experience.¹¹ So again, in this diagram, the placement of sound objects do not literally represent musical characteristics such as high-pitched, low-pitched, distant, near, quiet, or loud of any particular passage. Instead what I have tried to represent is a snapshot of the general experience of listening to this texture. The arrow moving through the cube and marked by the ear represents the listener's perceptual position and the erupting star shapes represent sonic events. In the case of texture A, these events are the *pizzicato* notes performed by the string players in box one. What the diagram shows is that this texture or musical space has no centre and that individual sonic events do not progress, develop, or connect to one another. Instead the experience of listening to the texture is one of the listener being the centre and moving through a field of a numerous tiny objects. It is the larger field and not the objects themselves that constitute the listening experience, something akin to the disorienting effect the crew of the Millennium Falcon might have felt as they navigated an asteroid field in *The Empire*

9 Thomas Clifton, *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): 65.

10 Ibid., 70.

11 Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987): 14-15.

Strikes Back.

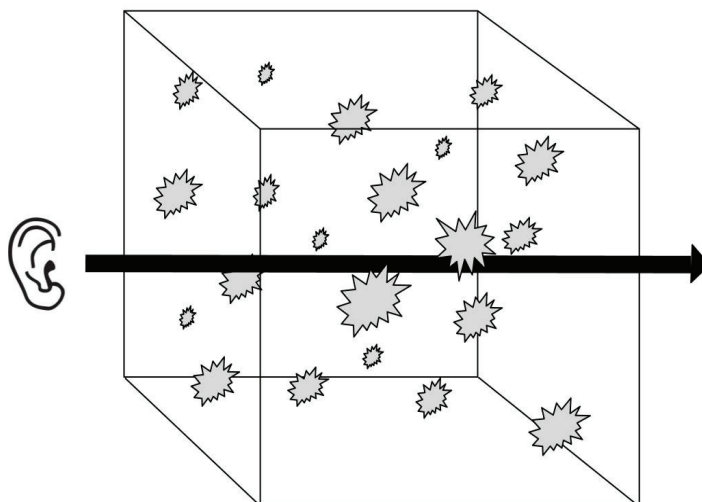


Figure 2.4: Texture A

The other main defining feature of texture A lies in its use of certain intervals and interval patterns. Box one (fig. 2.3) contains an overwhelming predominance of interval-classes (hereafter IC) 0, 1, and 2. Of ninety-three total intervals, a mere four do not belong to those classes. A further breakdown shows that of the remaining eighty-nine, a full fifty are IC1.¹² Given the wide ranges already established, we can see that the texture is comprised primarily of leaps of 7ths, 9ths, 14ths, and 16ths. Compare this to the passage in box eight (fig. 2.5). Here the texture is transformed by a number of timbral changes including the switch to *arco* attacks, a change in the overall dynamic envelope, and the use of sustained pitches. However, a quick look at the interval content will show the passage's rootedness in texture A. Taking into account the material up until the *flautando* marking, there are a total of seventy-seven intervals. While only sixty-four of those intervals belong to IC0, IC1, and IC2, a full fifty-six are interval-class IC1.¹³ This passage also preserves the wide ranging leaps of the work's opening.

¹² There are a total of 14xIC0, 50xIC1, 25xIC2, 2xIC3, 1xIC4, 1xIC5.

¹³ 77 intervals distributed as 1xIC0, 56xIC1, 7xIC2, 2xIC3, 4xIC4, 5xIC5, 2xIC6.

The image shows a musical score for Box #8, consisting of four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Cello (Vc). Above the staves, there are dynamic markings: *ff*, *p*, and *f*. A graphic notation element at the top indicates a 9-measure interval followed by a 6-measure interval. The score includes performance instructions such as "Arco Normale", "sulla Tastiera", "flautando", and "poco agitato". The music features complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic changes, with some sections marked with *sfz*.

Figure 2.5: Box #8

A final point of interest in texture A is Dumitrescu's use of pseudo-serialist techniques. As a testament to the importance that the work of composers like Stockhausen played in Dumitrescu's education, he makes use of pitch ordering and manipulation in a markedly individual way. Texture A never seems to use a full twelve-tone row, but he does use recurring pitch-class patterns and techniques like retrograde and inversion. However, he plays with them and alters them in seemingly intuitive or arbitrary ways. For example, in box nine (fig. 2.6) violin I plays the pitch-class set [9,8,+,+,7,8,9,+,+] while violin II and the cello play the retrograde [+,+,9,8,7,+,+,8,9].¹⁴ Meanwhile, Dumitrescu breaks this pattern in the viola with the line [9,8,+,+,7,6,0,+,+]. This line is closely related to the violin I part, but shifts arbitrarily midway through, breaking what would seem to be a clear staggered orchestration of a line and its retrograde. This kind of play with musical systems, what Clifton refers to as *ludus tonalis*, features throughout the work and even at this early stage seems to indicate a shift towards the intuitive and impressionistic in Dumitrescu's compositional style.

¹⁴ Indeterminate pitches shown as +.

The image shows a musical score for Box #9, consisting of four staves: Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Ve. The tempo is marked 'RAPIDO'. Above the staves, there are several dynamic markings: 'Arco', 'pp', 'p', 'mf', 'f', 'Lento', and 'Arco agitato'. A double-headed arrow at the top right indicates a duration of 45 seconds. Each staff ends with a 'Da Capo Simile' instruction and a repeat sign.

Figure 2.6: Box #9

Dumitrescu's use of these serialist techniques is interesting because it shows that although he was highly influenced by the Darmstadt school, he was already developing his own voice in this early works. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the defining qualities of these textures cannot be reduced to pitch collections or intervallic tendencies. The broader characteristics of large leaps, lack of centre or direction, fragmentary nature, and the sense of a collective field are far more central to their identities. The iteration of texture A that occurs late in the piece in box twenty-two (fig. 2.7) drives this point home.

The image shows a musical score for Box #22, consisting of four staves. Above the staves, there are dynamic markings: 'f', 'mf', 'mp', and 'pp'. A double-headed arrow at the top indicates a duration of 15 seconds. Each staff begins with a 'pizz' (pizzicato) marking. The notation consists of rhythmic patterns with stems and flags, but no specific pitch names are written.

Figure 2.7: Box #22

In this excerpt, Dumitrescu abandons fixed pitches altogether. Instead he relies on

approximate visual representations of *pizzicato* attacks. The relative nature of this notation is so extreme that he even omits clefs at the beginning of the staves. However, what is retained is the visual impact of the score that is strikingly similar to boxes one and eight (fig. 2.3, 2.5), a consistent dynamic envelope that is the opposite and hence forms a set of bookends with box one, and the implication of wide ranging leaps of a 7th or greater. In a way, this box is a distillation of texture A down to its essential characteristics. It exemplifies those characteristics that texture A, in any of its iterations, must possess to maintain its identity and sheds any superfluous elaboration or variation on the surface level. Husserl, in describing his eidetic reduction, used the example of wax to establish that the most obvious aspects of an object are not necessarily those that form its essence. Wax is still wax after it has melted, though its colour, texture, and form might have changed.¹⁵ Had it been written at the time, Husserl might well have used Dumitrescu's music to illustrate the same point. Many of the surface details of a texture that might normally draw an analyst's attention, such as the specific pitch organization, orchestration, dynamics, or contour, are actually less important to the continued identity of the texture throughout the piece. Instead it is a more basic character that defines the texture and makes it malleable enough to retain its identity throughout differing forms. This connection is remarkable given that Dumitrescu had not yet begun his study of phenomenology with Sergiu Celibidache, but it is partially explained by the generally phenomenological character of modern and textural music that was observed by Clifton. In any case, it is not the only aspect of *Alternances (1&2)* that seems to prophesy his future musical and philosophical development.

Texture B

Texture B has a markedly different character from texture A. Where I have shown that texture A is unfocused, non-directional, wide in range, and a kind of statistical field, texture B is narrower in range and yet focused, denser, and has a slower rate of internal activity juxtaposed with a more prominent teleological character. Box number three is the

¹⁵ Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, translated by Willian P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964): XVII-XVIII.

first appearance of texture B in the work and exemplifies its nature:

The image shows a musical score for Box #3, consisting of four staves: Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vc. Above the staves, there are dynamic markings: *pp*, *f*, and *mp*. A box labeled "25" is positioned above the Vln I staff. The score includes performance instructions such as *sfz subito pp*, *sfz mp*, and *sfz mp*. The notation features double stops that slide outwards and then return to the original cluster, with some notes being staggered in the second half of the passage.

Figure 2.8: Box #3

This brief passage opens with a forceful and concerted cluster of double stops ranging from D5 in the first violin to A-flat4 in the cello. The double stops then slide outwards together before returning to the original cluster. In the second half of the passage, the double stops have been spaced out somewhat and enter in staggered succession. What is striking about this passage in juxtaposition to texture A is the sense of uniform purpose amongst the players and the development of the texture. In the first half of the passage, the listener hears a single intense cluster attacked, stretched, and restored. In the second half when the voices spread out it creates an echo or canon effect between the staggered voices; each of them performing the same gesture on different pitch levels.

Another extremely pure iteration of the B texture occurs much later in the piece during box fourteen (fig. 2.9). Here the four instrumentalists enter with staggered dyad *sfz* attacks that immediately begin expanding outwards. Their starting pitches once again form a tight cluster ranging over a tritone. The cluster remains dense as each instrument begins to slide outward and expand its range, inevitably crossing the opening pitches of other players. Similar presentations of texture B in its basic state occur in boxes six and twenty.

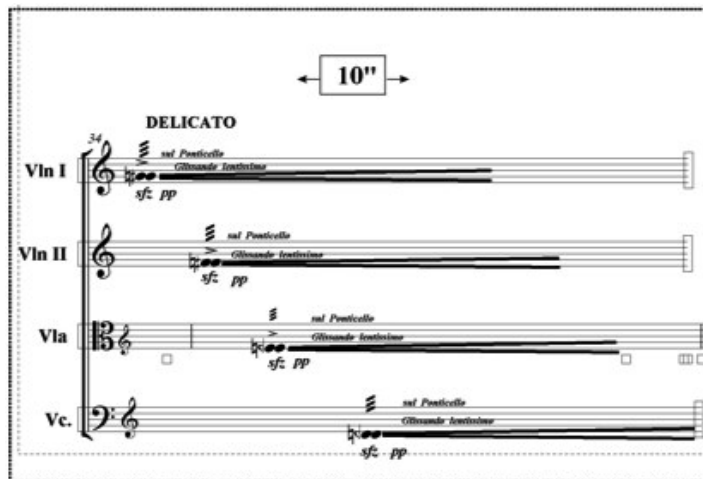


Figure 2.9: Box #14

The diagram below (fig. 2.10) demonstrates the different character of texture B from that of texture A from a perceptual stance. This diagram follows the same model of the diagram prepared for texture A and attempts to present a snapshot of the listening experience that texture B gives rise to. Once again, the dark arrow departing from the ear symbol represents the listener's perspective which enters from outside the box while the larger arrow within the modelled space represents the sound events of the texture itself. In this case it is immediately evident that the space is far less crowded. The straight arrow represents the focused and unified nature of texture B and the fact that the texture itself evolves and changes through the listener's experience of it. The momentum and directional energy of this texture is juxtaposed with the smattering of isolated events in texture A. Likewise, the spiralling of the listener's arrow around the texture represents a different listener perspective. Rather than moving through a disorienting but relatively unchanging field of sound as in the case of texture A, here the listener observes a moving, evolving entity from the outside.

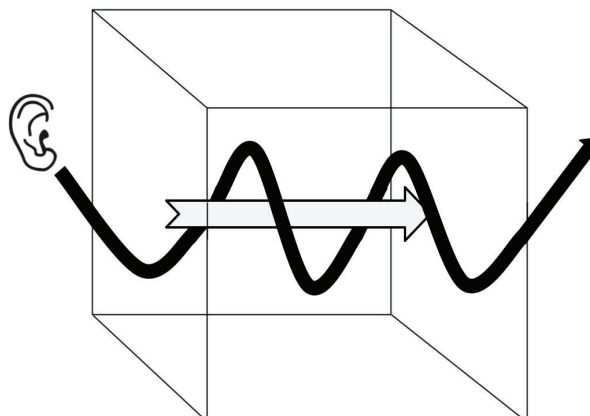


Figure 2.10: Texture B

Further analysis of how Dumitrescu varies this texture throughout the piece will reveal more about its essential nature. For example, in box eight Dumitrescu presents a passage that shares the interval qualities, wide ranges, and lack of connectedness of texture A but with the more focused sustain and bowing techniques of texture B. This mutation of one texture by the qualities of another is just one of the ways that Dumitrescu varies the quality of a texture within a given passage. Just as he casts texture A through the lense of texture B in box eight, Dumitrescu also transforms texture B according to aspects of texture A in boxes eleven and twelve. In box eleven (fig. 2.11) the four players meander within a prolonged tone cluster of *flautando* harmonics to create an ethereal and faint cloud of sound.

CALMO, POETICO, IMPROVISANDO

LEGIERO ← 20" → ← 2" →

The musical score for Box #11 is arranged in four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Cello (Vc.). Each staff begins with a 'Combinazione' section, indicated by a bracket and a 20-second duration. This is followed by a 'Flautando' section, indicated by a bracket and a 2-second duration. The 'Flautando' section is marked '(Pausa)'. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'LEGIERO'.

Figure 2.11: Box #11

This passage blends aspects of both texture A and texture B in a much more explicit way than box eight mentioned earlier. It lacks the vitality and directionality that I have associated with texture B, and there seems to be far less emphasis on ensemble coordination than box three. Instead it establishes a statistical field typical of texture A. The range of the passage, however, only comprises a tritone and so it takes place within the compressed range typical of texture B. There is also the use of the instruction *pausa* throughout this middle section of the work that creates both destinations for the passages and a larger rhythm as the ensemble moves through boxes eleven and twelve. Dumitrescu is intentionally blending what are otherwise two distinct textures. We see this technique at work if we look again to box eight (fig. 2.5). I have identified this as a transitional box (note the lack of a repeat) that blurs characteristics between the two textures. These changes include the switch to a complete homogenous *arco* texture, a change in the dynamic envelope, a more explicit use of sustained pitches, and a definite sense of

direction and development. These changes are characteristic of texture B. The passage opens with a somewhat chaotic smattering of pitches over a wide range that instantly evokes texture A. This chaotic opening is quickly subdued in its intensity by a uniform move through a *decrescendo* and *crescendo* that leads firmly into a clustered, close-ranged passage. The uniform development and motion from one event towards another and the lack of a repeat gives the complete passage the teleological bent of texture B, though the greater part of the passage's duration consists of material more reminiscent of texture A. These blendings in boxes eight, eleven, and twelve function transitionally between alternations in the piece's form, but they also serve a larger symbolic function in the meta-plan of the work. They foreshadow the second movement of *Alternances (1&2)*, which is subtitled "Memorial" and requires that individual players choose at their own discretion from a number of boxes and excerpts drawn from the first movement. This improvisational approach inevitably leads to situations where some ensemble members choose excerpts that exemplify texture A while others make selections more readily identified as texture B. In this larger scheme, the blending of textures within the first movement of the work is a fascinating forerunner of things to come.

Second Movement

Having established the form and textures of the first movement, it is worth exploring how Dumitrescu transforms them fully in the final minutes of the work. The 'memorial' of the second movement follows immediately on the heels of the first with no obvious break. The seventeen boxed musical excerpts that Dumitrescu scatters across the page are all drawn from the first movement and are connected by solid lines to a point in the centre of the page. The performers are left to pick and choose from the excerpts presented to create a unique mash-up of the work's materials for each performance and the result is a completely different kind of listening experience. Not only is the movement much shorter than the main trunk of the piece, but it is also formally ambiguous and eliminates the clear distinctions between textures experienced in the first movement. In place of the clear transitions between textures the listener is more likely to encounter a

continuous stream of music as the instruments move between boxes at their own uncoordinated pace. The result is a very different experience of blending and layering of textures that is nonetheless conceptually related to the transformations of boxes eight, eleven, and twelve during the first movement. Instead of subtle transformations of one texture according to the properties of another, the music consists of textures that are literally superimposed upon one another. This repurposing of earlier material is not a whimsical addition or afterthought; it poses questions about the very nature of composition and the classical work.

The title “Memorial” and the visual presentation of the movement hold symbolic significance. The shorter duration and scrambled and unordered nature of the performance of somewhat familiar material presents an almost confused and corrupted snapshot of the original work. This is the memory or mental playback of the work that audience members might retain at a later time. While they are unable to recall and piece together the form and order of textures or even a complete texture itself, they will have snippets of the original performance (isolated musical excerpts that continue to run in loops) repeating in their mind. Some of the passages of the opening movement are even completely omitted, lost to the decay of time and memory. The scattered layout of excerpts across the page reflects this imagery as well. Each of the excerpts is placed out of order and around the centre of the page. Lines connect them to an empty centre as if to suggest that each excerpt that a performer chooses is part of and points towards a greater whole. However, that whole is not to be seen here, only glimpsed as a number of overlapping and confused fragments. Dumitrescu further explores these themes about the musical work, the perception of the audience, and the role of the performer in his later works following his studies of phenomenology.

* * *

Alternances (1&2) is built upon a deceptively simple form. Dumitrescu drew on both his influences and his own predilections and style to craft a world of nuance and meaning from the alternation of his two opening textures. In many ways, Dumitrescu's

approaches to pitch organization, textural composition, and development and variation are a reflection of his unique circumstances. Isolated by both geographical and political boundaries, Dumitrescu nonetheless engaged with the techniques of the Western European composers that he so admired during the 1960s. Yet the work does not give the impression of pastiche or mimicry, instead it is full of the first signs of personal signatures and characteristics that became important to Dumitrescu's compositional approach later in his career. His methods of bending and breaking the systematic pitch organization of serialist music, his intuitive recognition and use of the essential characteristics of textures, and his openness to improvisation and a certain degree of indeterminacy all point the way forward to his explicitly phenomenological work.

Dumitrescu sometimes describes his mature work as instrumental acousmatic music and he links this explicitly to his interest in phenomenology.¹⁶ The act of listening to pure sounds as such is analogous to the phenomenological reductions that seek to get back to pure phenomena themselves. Nattiez identifies Pierre Schaeffer's *écoute réduite*, which he first first described in his *Traité des objets musicaux*, as a compositional process used to reach an understanding of the essential character of a sound.¹⁷ This is the same process by which Dumitrescu begins the composition of his mature instrumental works. *Alternances (1&2)* is an early application of these acousmatic interests in Dumitrescu's work and show that he already had a taste for these techniques before his study of phenomenology. The two textures that Dumitrescu creates are both explicitly acousmatic. Both the diffusion of instrumental identities and sound sources into the chaos of texture A and the subsuming of those identities into the unified clusters of texture B result in a masking of sound sources. While we are likely aware that the performers form a string quartet, there are many moments where the listener cannot identify individual instrumental lines. Indeed, it is unlikely that listeners would even attempt to listen in that manner. This philosophical connection is the same one that Clifton observed in a more general and vague way when he noted that modern music is somehow more

¹⁶ He goes so far as to name his book of compiled interviews *Acousmatic Provoker*.

¹⁷ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990): 93 and 95.

phenomenological.¹⁸ Dumitrescu's interests in the music coming out of Western Europe at the time predisposed him to the phenomenologically tinged music he would explore during the 1970s.

Finally, elements of Dumitrescu's later interest in the 'relative stability' and identity of the work and of the nature of music itself are seen in *Alternances (1&2)*. When describing his compositional method Dumitrescu asserts:

[t]here is definitely not the idea of perfecting something, of making the sounds fixed and perfect for all time. The point is to find out how they can be different every time, but in exactly the way that is right for that particular time. So the final stability [of the work] is a relative one.¹⁹

He has also declared that “[s]ound by itself is still not yet music, [...] Of course, you can't imagine music without sound, but to attempt music you need to transcend reality [...] to obtain this genuine state.”²⁰ Dumitrescu's use of indeterminate pitch notation, unmarked meter or rhythm within textures, and his call for the performers to improvise texture selections during the final minutes of the work demonstrates an early understanding of the work as something that is somewhat fluid or malleable between performances. His method of varying the details of textures while maintaining their total identities shows another early use of only relatively stable musical objects. An intuitive understanding of the relative stability is a necessary prerequisite to composing with textural blocks. As Rosemary Mountain observed, most textures to which we assign a continuous identity do not exhibit strict periodicity, but rather exist within a usual range of motion.²¹ It is the choices that composers make within this range of motion that, beyond the creation of the original textures, give a piece its interest and character and allow them to make their own intuitive, aesthetic, and expressive mark on the work. This range of motion concept is taken to the extreme in the second movement where the form of every performance is improvised within the fixed context of instrumentation and basic materials. As I will argue in my analysis of his later work *Movemur et Sumus (3)* (1977) for solo viola, these meditations on the ontology of the work and of music are important considerations in his

18 Clifton, *Music as Heard*, X.

19 Tim Hodgkinson, “In the Land of the Ninth Sky: Ana-Maria Avram and Iancu Dumitrescu,” *Musicworks* No. 71 (Summer, 1998): 17.

20 Philip Clark, “Unstable Molecule,” *The Wire* 308 (Oct., 2009): 34.

21 Mountain, “Time and Texture”.

compositional approach. Dumitrescu's views on the work and music and the ways that these beliefs are reflected in his compositions bear the marks of his philosophical studies.

Chapter 4: *Movemur et Sumus (3)* and the Ontology of the Work

The decade that passed between the composition of *Alternances (1&2)* and *Movemur et Sumus (3)* for solo viola was filled with developments that resulted in major shifts in Dumitrescu's writing. In 1972 Dumitrescu attended a performance by the Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra under Sergiu Celibidache's direction and he was deeply inspired, though the two were not properly introduced at that point.¹ A year later in 1973 Dumitrescu began to study both phenomenology and Zen Buddhism seriously with Celibidache, and those ideas ultimately shaped his music in a profound way.² Dumitrescu's study of phenomenology provided him with a conceptual framework for approaching sound and music, and the reductions of Husserl's phenomenological method became a generative source for compositional material and formal conceptions.³ Another important development in Dumitrescu's life occurred when Dumitrescu founded his experimental Hyperion Ensemble in 1976. This small ensemble, comprised of friends and colleagues of Dumitrescu and his wife Ana-Maria, began performing a breadth of contemporary Romanian music around Europe and the world, giving life to obscure music that might otherwise have remained unknown. Equally as important, the ensemble served – and continues to serve – as a research laboratory and workshop for Dumitrescu that allowed him to develop his works and to hear them performed. Significantly, the Hyperion Ensemble allowed Dumitrescu and his colleagues to hear and to share the sonic results of their experimentation and writing without the restraints imposed by Stalinist institutions and censorship.⁴ This dependence on self-generated infrastructure shaped Dumitrescu's method of working directly with the future performers of his works as well as his predilection for writing works for small chamber groups and soloists.

Movemur et Sumus (3) demonstrates many traits of Dumitrescu's development as a philosopher and composer during the first half of the 1970s. The work is scored for solo viola and like all of the *Movemur* family of works it consists of a series of harmonic and

1 Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

2 Tim Hodgkinson, "In the Land of the Ninth Sky: Ana-Maria Avram and Iancu Dumitrescu," *Musicworks* 71 (Summer, 1998): 12.

3 Philip Clark, "Unstable Molecule," *The Wire* 308 (Oct., 2009): 34.

4 *Ibid.*, 37.

timbral explorations of the featured instrument. Like all of the *Movemur* works for string instruments, *Movemur et Sumus (3)* makes prominent use of an innovative articulation that Dumitrescu developed with his performers. The performer pushes down with only half the normal pressure with the fingering hand while bowing over the bridge. The result is an unstable tone that oscillates unpredictably between the sound of the open string, the sound of the fingered pitch, and high harmonics.⁵ Throughout the score Dumitrescu presents two staves labelled *effetto* and *positione*. The lower staff, *positione*, functions as a kind of tabulature that indicates on which string and at what position the instrument is to be fingered. The upper staff, *effetto*, displays what ought to be heard if the position instructions are followed. He describes this approach as follows:

Usually, I even make two staves. One with the traditional notation, if I can call it like that, and a range with the position and a description, for strings, for example, indicating how the fingers are put, where it is necessary to push. [...] I note each position (real notes). For example we have position A, on the G string, but with playing with the bow '*sul ponticello*', very near the bridge, with a specific pressure [...] it sounds very different.⁶

In the case of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, the upper staff shows the melodic contours of the harmonics in an extremely high register, but as a consequence of the unstable nature of the technique, the absolute pitches are unspecified. In practice, what is heard in performance is something in between the two different staves. At times only one or the other of the original fingered pitches and the resulting effect is audible while at others there is a multiphonic effect where the open string and elements of the fingered notes and harmonics combine in a complex timbre. While many of these fragile sounds are unpredictable and vary from performance to performance, the sequence of drone strings and short melodic fragments that create them are fixed in the score. As the work unfolds, Dumitrescu presents long sections of this technique, each focused on one of the viola's strings. The composition is meditative and ruminative, some passages lasting for minutes as the performer works his or her way through a series of drones and half-fingered harmonics on a single string.

5 E-mail correspondence with Cornelia Petroiu, January 12th, 2011.

6 Iancu Dumitrescu, editor, *Acousmatic Provoker* (London: Edition Modern and ReR Megacorp, 2002): 71.

In my analysis I will be working from the score as well as three different recordings by a single performer. Romanian violist Cornelia Petroiu performs regularly with Dumitrescu's Hyperion ensemble and she is the performer of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* on the compact disc released by Dumitrescu's imprint Edition Modern in 2003.⁷ In addition to the Edition Modern recording, I will be working with a 2005 recording made by Petroiu, released in 2007, and a 2011 performance that was videotaped and uploaded to youtube.com.⁸ Each of these performances varies in length with the 2003 Edition Modern recording clocking in at 10:45, the 2005 recording at 9:25, and the YouTube performance at 6:32. While each of these performances follow Dumitrescu's score closely, they display variations in timing and tempo, ornamentation and phrasing, and in the extent to which the performer adds to and improvises upon the material in Dumitrescu's score. Dumitrescu has discussed this nature of his work before, referring to it as a “relative stability”.⁹

By analyzing the three different performances of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* I will show how Dumitrescu's mature compositional attitude, which regards the work as finished and possessing a constant identity and yet existing as a somewhat malleable entity, stems from his continued work in textural music and phenomenology. First I will analyze the piece and show how its form and content are analogous to both the phenomenological reduction of Husserl and his followers and the textural approaches of Stockhausen and the spectralists who followed in his footsteps. I will then compare similarities and differences amongst the performances to demonstrate what Dumitrescu calls 'relative stability' and explore the implications of these findings as they regard phenomenology and the ontological status of the musical work and of music itself. Finally, I will consider in further detail the importance of the performer in Dumitrescu's working method and the essential role that the performer plays in the realization of these works.

7 Iancu Dumitrescu, “Movemur et Sumus (3),” *Ana-Maria Avram - Iancu Dumitrescu*, Cornelia Petroiu, viola. ED.MN 1018, 2003. Compact Disc.

8 Iancu Dumitrescu, “Movemur et Sumus (3),” *Mirabila Viola*, Cornelia Petroiu, viola. Nova Musica A0003, 2007. Compact Disc; Iancu Dumitrescu, “Movemur et Sumus (3),” live performance in Winter/Spring 2011. Uploaded to www.youtube.com on April 6th, 2011. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evfby_JsOzI.

9 Hodgkinson, “Land of the Ninth Sky,” 17.

Preliminary Analysis of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*

The score for *Movemur et Sumus (3)* is six pages long with two systems per page. There is no meter, tempo, or timing suggested and the lone instruction concerning the character of the work is a large and exclamatory '*ESTATICO IMPROVISANDO*' that appears above the opening gestures. The work is to sound spontaneous and improvisational, not structured. Aside from a number of brief pauses, *fermatas*, and breath marks there are no obvious structural indicators in the score, only a series of drones interspersed with short melodic gestures. The following excerpt from page two (fig. 3.1) is representative of the material that appears throughout the work. This passage demonstrates the open string drones as well as the melodic figurations that occur on the drone string using the half-touch fingering technique developed by Dumitrescu and his performers. Note that the upper staff shows the desired acoustic effect and the droning open strings are shown at actual pitch while the harmonic results of the melodic figurations often appear in inversion and at unspecified pitch levels. The inverted mirroring effect is the result of an acoustic property of stringed instruments whereby the lowest pitched natural harmonic (the first overtone of the open string) actually occurs at the mid-point of the string length and the harmonics then become higher in pitch as the fingered harmonic node moves closer to either end. This effect is readily observed in the technique of artificial harmonics where the string player reduces the distance between the fretted or stopped finger and the touched finger to raise the resulting harmonic pitch. This passage with its alternating low drones and harmonic figurations is representative of the score as a whole. Long passages of these drones accompanied by melodic fragments played up and down a single string occur before a passage concludes with a marked *pausa* and the music begins once again on a new string.

Figure 3.1: Excerpt of Page 2

The process of elaborating material on a single string at a time dictates the work's form and the method of its unfolding. Dumitrescu opens the work with a lengthy passage of material on the lowest string of the viola, the C-string. He then slowly moves to each higher string in succession. Material on the G-string is introduced at the beginning of page two (fig. 3.1), the D-string on page four, and finally the A-string on page five. The transparent formal structure and methodical expansion across the instrument's range, along with the unmetered improvisatory style of the work, provide an experience analogous to that of listening to Arabic classical musicians gradually and systemically working their way through the range of a maqam during an improvisation.¹⁰ The diagram below (fig. 3.2) demonstrates this form in more detail by showing the order in which Dumitrescu focuses in on a single string. The section markings are my own formal divisions while the page numbers correspond to those in the score provided in the appendix. The methodical form also reveals a possible early manifestation of spectral modulation. Spectral modulation is a tool that Dumitrescu describes as analogous to the technique of common-tone modulation found in 18th- and 19th-century Western music.¹¹ It consists of movement between subsequent fundamentals that share common overtones.

¹⁰ A maqam is a mode and melody type in Arabic classical music that defines both the pitches available to a musician as well as characteristic melodic formulations. In Arabic improvisation, particular emphasis is given to the methodical movement up and down the maqam while focusing on each tone as a temporary tonic.

¹¹ Dumitrescu, *Acousmatic Provoker*, 23.

In Dumitrescu's own words, “ [...] they produce a enharmony of partials. Thus, the ninth harmonic of a spectrum can be found like the seventh harmonic of another, or like the third of a different fundamental.”¹² Though the techniques and notations that Dumitrescu uses in *Movemur et Sumus (3)* are not stable or specific enough to examine scientifically whether this technique is in use, I believe that the methodical movement through fifth related strings shows a common concern for the organic and spectral nature of the work. 'Spectral modulation' is above all an attempt to derive a structural logic from the basic sound materials of a work and thus to achieve a high degree of organicism while maintaining a link to the natural laws that govern sound. Dumitrescu's use of the fifth relations achieves these requirements in a less technically specific way as he touches on the close harmonic and spectral relationship shared by pitches that are a fifth apart, as well as the physical construction and tuning of the viola itself.

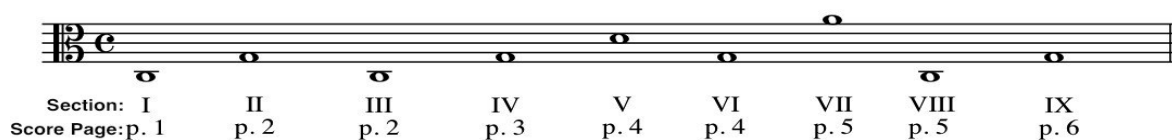


Figure 3.2: Fundamental String Progression in *Movemur et Sumus (3)*

I will use the form outlined above as a frame of reference throughout my discussion of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, though it is not the most remarkable aspect of the work. In the intervening years between the composition of *Alternances (1&2)* and *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, Dumitrescu's composing underwent a shift in focus. The simple methodical form of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* is the mark of a composer who is primarily concerned with the exploration of sound and spectra and for whom formal structure takes a back seat. In *Alternances (1&2)* the form itself gave the work an internal logic and was the poetic focus of the work. By the time Dumitrescu composed *Movemur et Sumus (3)* a decade later, the locus of meaning had shifted from the form to the musical materials themselves. The slow unfolding of the work, the meditative treatment of sound, and the rich timbral effects are the central interest and they represent an amplification of earlier musical interests in texturalism through his interest in phenomenology.

¹² Ibid., 23.

From Formalism to Pure Sound Phenomena

In interviews, Dumitrescu has repeatedly pointed to the music of Karlheinz Stockhausen as a formative influence.¹³ Stockhausen's music is often cited as an example of the rigorous serialism that came out of Darmstadt during the 1950s and 1960s, but his work as a serialist forms only a small portion of his prolific and lifelong output. Stockhausen wrote music in as diverse a range of styles as one could imagine and he did so to critical acclaim. As early as *Kreuzspiel* (1951), Stockhausen was devising his own creative systems of composition that were only vaguely related to the tone-row serialism of the Second Viennese School. His pioneering work in electronic music and studio techniques through the 1950s and '60s paved the way for the rise of both that specific medium and composing with textural sonic blocks for other forces. It was these studio electroacoustic discoveries that particularly drove Stockhausen's interest in the inner worlds of activity in sound. Studying additive synthesis, in which complex timbres are constructed from the most basic constituent sound waves, ultimately influenced his later instrumental works and crossover works for electronics and live performers. During the 1960s Stockhausen wrote a number of works that demonstrated his new approach. Written in 1964, *Mikrophonie I* was the result of Stockhausen's increasing fascination with the complex timbres of the tam-tam. He experimented extensively and discovered a number of desired sound qualities that are produced by two performers and recorded by microphone. The microphones are routed directly into filters that another two performers use to isolate certain portions of the timbres before directing them through a quadrophonic speaker array. The microphone and filters serve as instruments in their own right, used to closely examine the sound created by the tam-tam. Stockhausen followed this work with *Stimmung* in 1968, which calls for six vocalists to sing carefully selected syllables in just-intonation through microphones. He chose his texts and syllables to facilitate overtone singing, a technique where certain overtones in the voice are emphasized and strengthened so they sound as if they were independent, almost whistle-like tones. Both *Mikrophonie I* and *Stimmung* exhibit a fascination with a microscopic

¹³ Ibid., 9, 18, 95.

examination of sound and timbre, a holistic and organic approach to composition that he would explore in his later formula music. Works such as *Mantra* (1970) and his opera cycle *Licht* (1977-2003) display a high degree of internal logic that is rooted in an extremely fine examination of the most basic materials. At one point Stockhausen observed that “[...] what is most important to me is the transformation of a sound by slowing it down, sometimes extremely, so that the inner of sound [*sic*] becomes a conceivable rhythm. And then even slow it down more, so that this rhythm becomes a large form, with sections.”¹⁴ Along with the texturalism of Ligeti and others, this emphasis that Stockhausen placed on the inner life of sounds paved the way for the intense acoustic scrutiny of the French spectralists Gérard Grisey and Tristan Murail and the work of Romanian spectralists like Dumitrescu.

While discussing how he sets about composing a new work, Dumitrescu has invoked a technique similar to the microscopic examinations of Stockhausen. Describing his method as musical phenomenology, Dumitrescu states that “Huge and directed concentration is needed on what can be a tiny surface of sound.”¹⁵ He elaborates elsewhere: “I start by exploring sound. I try to eliminate everything that is around, to isolate a very small world.”¹⁶ Recognizing his influences he acknowledged that “[t]his is what Stockhausen was doing in the '60s [...]”, clearly demonstrating a knowledge of and affinity for Stockhausen's experimentalism.¹⁷ In addition to the texturalism of the 1960s, this kind of focused listening also shares many common traits with Husserl's phenomenological method and reductions. Dumitrescu's intense and focused listening is the kind that opens up the complex inner world of sounds. In one interview he describes the life cycle of a sound object, “A sound is a being which is born, develops and dies, while transforming its qualities, its colours, its form, its micro-harmonic components; it is in a perpetual and essential becoming.”¹⁸ Through his practice of a technique of extremely focused and reduced listening that emphasizes the microscopic characteristics

14 Iara Lee, “Interview with Karlheinz Stockhausen,” January 1999, archived at <http://www.furious.com/perfect/stockhauseninterview.html>, accessed Dec. 8 2011.

15 Clark, “Unstable Molecule,” 34.

16 Hodgkinson, “Land of the Ninth Sky,” 16.

17 Dumitrescu, *Acousmatic Provoker*, 95.

18 *Ibid.*, 28.

of a sound over its functional syntax, Dumitrescu's bowed open string on the viola becomes much more than just a sustained pitch. Dumitrescu and his performers create a sound that listeners' are able to enjoy as a complex entity comprising the quality of attack, sustain, decay, and release and allow their ears to tease apart the many different and constantly shifting overtones that comprise a single timbre. The internal evolution and change in the sound comes to the forefront in his mature music.

This emphasis on the inner world and evolution of sound is evident in the performance of Dumitrescu's music in the opening of section II of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* (fig. 3.1). In this passage Dumitrescu first introduces material on the G string and there are a number of sustained notes on both harmonics and the open string. On the Edition Modern recording, this passage runs from 1:55 to 2:16 and the vitality and life cycle of each sustained pitch is particularly pronounced.¹⁹ The three open string drones in this passage are marked with dramatic *crescendos* and *decrescendos* and the bowing instructions *sonoro*, *poco sonoro*, and *molto sonoro* that impart a sense of motion and even acceleration to what otherwise appear to be stable tones on the score. As one listens to the passage in question it is striking how the changes in dynamics coupled with the unstable harmonic nature of bowing over the bridge cause these sustained open strings to take on a complex timbre and evolutionary course. Each of these drones begins as a fairly narrow and focused tone which opens up as bow pressure and speed varies slightly and unleashes a varying array of higher partials. The process of revealing the wide field of harmonic possibilities of each drone through the use of sustain and varying dynamics and articulation markings occurs in a similar manner throughout the piece so that the droning open string tones become at least as rich, interesting, and active as the brief melodic formulations that intersperse them.

Dumitrescu's approach to focused listening and the removal of functional harmonic or melodic concerns from a sound are rooted in Husserl's approach to all phenomena. The main technique of the phenomenological reduction involves the bracketing of a phenomenon from external associations and prior knowledge. A phenomenon is simply what we find manifest as the object of our sensation, perception,

¹⁹ Dumitrescu, "Movemur et Sumus (3)."

or emotion. It is that thing, not physical, transcendent, or objectively real, towards which our consciousness is directed or intended and that comprises our experience. The bracketing process is the act of removing all external associations from our knowledge of that phenomenon. Supposing the phenomenon under investigation were the bowed open string of the viola, things to be consciously bracketed out might include the knowledge of the instrument and mechanical action that produces such a sound, the knowledge that the sound is part of a musical work and was preceded by a different note, and even the knowledge that the sound comprises a physical wave moving through local space before striking our ears.

The aim of this bracketing is to approach the actual nature of the phenomenon and to attempt to see it for what it really is. Without proceeding further into the phenomenological method and attempting to identify the essence of a phenomenon and analyze or reconstruct how that phenomenon is constructed in our experience, it is already clear that the simple bracketing process itself holds immense value for a composer. The bracketed-out data of the source instrument, the mechanics of sound production, and the musical syntax comprise some of the central concerns in many listeners' habitual approaches to sound and music. By pushing those momentarily to the side, it is possible to reach new depths of knowledge concerning what are actually the most immediate qualities of the sound. This process opens up the rich inner life of a single sound so that the listener becomes increasingly aware of the spectral space it occupies, the evolution over its duration, and the kind of tactile and physical qualities and textures discussed by Thomas Clifton and spectromorphologists like Dennis Smalley.²⁰ In short, the phenomenological reduction proves to be an invaluable tool to any composer who privileges texture, spectrum, and pure sonic experience over structuralism. With this in mind it is no coincidence that textural and electroacoustic composers like Stockhausen and Ligeti and particularly the electronic music pioneer Pierre Schaeffer developed similar approaches to listening and sound generation.

Pierre Schaeffer's theories concerning listening and the sonorous object are

²⁰ Thomas Clifton, *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): 70; Denis Smalley, "Spectromorphology: Explaining Sound-Shapes," *Organized Sound* 2:2 (1997): 107-108.

particularly relevant to tracing the parallels between the phenomenological reduction and the musical thought of the European avant-garde. Best known as one of the innovators of electroacoustic music in the 1940s through his work in *musique-concrète*, Schaeffer pioneered the use of what was then a new and exciting technology: magnetic tape. He conceived his new genre as a complete re-imagining of music as something composed in the studio using the prerecorded sounds of mundane life, a music whose basic parameters were not pitch, meter, and harmony, but rather those sounds of the concrete world. Along with his colleague Pierre Henry, Schaeffer spent the 1950s expanding on these early experiments and theorizing his new method, which gave rise to his magnum opus, the *Traité des objets musicaux*, first published in 1966. This vast treatise contains Schaeffer's collected views on composition, *musique-concrète*, musical sound, and listening.

One of the most influential theories that Schaeffer developed during his work with *musique-concrète* was the observation that technology had enabled a massive proliferation in possibility for acousmatic sound and music. The term acousmatic is derived from Ancient Greek and Schaeffer acquired it from the story of Pythagoras's pupils who sat behind a screen while he lectured so that they would not be distracted by his physical presence. In Schaeffer's terminology, acousmatic music or sound refers to sound that the listener hears without knowing its physical origin. Schaeffer argued that by removing the visual and conceptual information that we normally associate with sound, we would then be able to focus more clearly on a sound-object's inherent character. His treatment of the acousmatic as both a compositional tool to re-imagine sound and as a mode of listening that could refocus listeners' attention was particularly important to the composers and students of textural and electronic music during the 1950s and 1960s. In the chapter titled "Acousmatics," Schaeffer linked the acousmatic directly to the rise in recording and play-back technology.²¹ He wrote that:

For the traditional musician and for the acoustician, an important aspect of the recognition of sounds is the identification of the sonorous sources. When the latter are effectuated without the support of vision, musical conditioning is unsettled.

²¹ Pierre Schaeffer, "Acousmatics," In *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, edited by Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2007): 76-81.

Often in surprise, sometimes uncertain, we will discover that much of what we thought was heard was in reality only seen, and explicated, through the context.²²

Schaeffer observes that recording technology has made this kind of listening increasingly accessible. By permitting repeated listening to exact reproductions of an original sound removed from its physical source, recordings provide the opportunity to gradually block out external associations and study our perceptions of a sound. By observing how our attention is drawn to different aspects of the repeated sound object we can ultimately study the mode of our perception of said objects.²³ It is no accident that this mode of 'pure listening' shares many characteristics of Husserl's phenomenological bracketing. In the original French, Schaeffer refers to a form of pure bracketed listening as an '*écoute réduite*'. Jean-Jacques Nattiez has observed that this evocation of a reduction process is no accident and directly compares Schaeffer's listening technique to the methods of phenomenology.²⁴ Brian Kane has also explored the explicit connections between phenomenology and Schaeffer's methodology. In his article "*L'Objet Sonore Maintenant: Pierre Schaeffer, Sound Objects and the Phenomenological Reduction*" he demonstrates that Schaeffer was deeply indebted to the phenomenological thought of Husserl. Just as Husserl used his reductions and techniques of variation to reach the essence of an intentional object, Schaeffer did the same with his modes of listening.²⁵

Tellingly, later in his career Dumitrescu has, in addition to the monikers of 'spectral' and 'phenomenological', also described his music as a kind of instrumental 'acousmatic', echoing Schaeffer's use of the term.²⁶ Just as Helmut Lachenmann has appropriated the label 'musique concrète' to describe his own acoustic instrumental writing style, Dumitrescu has noted the important shared heritage between Schaeffer's acousmatic and phenomenological listening in the description of his own approach. Dumitrescu's acousmatic tendencies were already manifest in his writing at the earliest

22 Ibid., 78.

23 Ibid., 78.

24 Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990): 93.

25 Brian Kane, "*L'Objet sonore Maintenant: Pierre Schaeffer, Sound Objects, and the Phenomenological Reduction*," *Organized Sound* 12:1 (2007): 15-16, 19.

26 Clark, "Unstable Molecule," 34. and in the title and throughout much of the contents of Dumitrescu, *Acousmatic Provoker*.

stages, but his engagement with phenomenology and later musical developments further strengthened them in a kind of creative feedback loop in which the multiple levels of Nattiez's tripartition acted upon one another to reinforce certain interests and tendencies. The parallelism of phenomenology and Schaeffer's theories of perception provided a particularly convenient lexicon for Dumitrescu for the simple fact that far more musicians and critics are likely to be familiar with the work of Schaeffer than with the specifics of Husserl or Heidegger.

Moving from the style of his early, pre-spectral works, including *Alternances (1&2)*, into his more developed musical language of the 1970s Dumitrescu progressively moved away from purely formal and structural considerations towards an engagement with sound itself. This spectral approach to sound so changed his music that in contrast to *Alternances (1&2)*, *Movemur et Sumus (3)* possesses an almost incidental form. That is to say, the series of individually articulated strings was not likely the starting point for Dumitrescu's composition, but rather the result of his inquiry into the acoustic world and natural resonances of the viola itself. Beginning in 1973, Dumitrescu's study of phenomenology, Schaeffer's ideas of the acousmatic and the sound object (themselves derived from phenomenological thought), and the influential texturalism of Stockhausen and others coalesced into a mutually reinforcing web of inspirations that shifted Dumitrescu's focus from the purely structural toward the philosophical and contemplative.

While the explicit masking of an instrumental sound source found in acousmatic music is difficult to achieve in a work for a solo instrument, Dumitrescu does include passages in *Movemur et Sumus (3)* crafted from textural soundscapes that are much richer and varied than one would typically find in a solo string work. One such excerpt comprises the entirety of section VII on the A string. On the Edition Modern recording this passage comprises about a minute (5:32-6:30) and the broad textures that Dumitrescu and Petriou coax from the viola bring to mind the possibilities of electro-acoustic studio work.²⁷ Section VII is marked with faint dynamics, never venturing louder than *mezzo-forté (mf)* and predominately hovering in the *pianississimo (ppp)* to *piano (p)* range.

²⁷ Dumitrescu, "Movemur et Sumus (3)."

These faint dynamics combine with the use of the *movemur* technique of half-stopped fingerings to create a multi-tiered texture. Throughout the passage, the listener is presented with a soundstage comprising three simultaneous sound objects. The scratching and whispering sounds of the bow rubbing against the strings, audible at such low dynamic markings, create a broad and unfocused background, evocative of static or white noise. Meanwhile, the faint droning of the string's fundamental pitch cuts in and out sporadically as the finger pressure applied to the string oscillates over a threshold sporadically muting it. This drone creates a constant focused pitch that grounds the passage its own harmonic field. Finally, hovering above both the background wash and the fundamental drone are the fragile melodic figurations of touched harmonics. These almost whistle or sine tone like melodies form an ethereal foreground, a solo fantasy against a droning accompaniment. The sum of these elements is a rich and complex texture, and although that texture is comprised of numerous sounds that belong squarely to the viola, the totality of the passage becomes something more.

Dumitrescu's Phenomenological Conception of Music and The Work

Dumitrescu's study of phenomenology did not only help propel his music into a new spectral paradigm in which form comes second to sound and intuition trumps system, it also altered his approach to the very ontology of the work and of music itself. The manner in which 'the work' – as we understand it in the Western classical tradition – and 'music' exist in the world are things that most people take for granted. In truth, though we might seldom think about such things; the simple questions 'what is the work?' and 'what is music?' are not so easily answered. When discussing a Mozart piano sonata, is the subject of discourse the sheet music with its specifications of pitch, rhythm, and harmony, or is it a performance? Or perhaps an idealized hypothetical performance that matches the score perfectly, or the sum total of numerous performances? In many cases, the question 'what is K. 570?' may point to an answer that we feel we know intuitively, but upon deliberation find difficult to articulate. Equally befuddling is the question of how music itself might be defined. Is it merely any sounding human activity intended as

such, or must it meet certain technical criteria? Must it be intended as music to qualify? Is it the sounding performance, or is it the theories and systems that lay lurking in the background? Upon reflection, none of these suggestions should seem sufficient, and yet we still possess some intuitive comprehension of what music is. We know it when we see it. Philosophers, composers, and theorists have grappled with these questions as they pertain to their work, but they seem to have become particularly relevant during the post-war period.²⁸ The developments in recording, electronic music, percussive and un-pitched sounds, unstructured improvisation, and compositions that might assume a different form at each performance (eg. some of Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke*) muddied the already difficult questions while simultaneously bringing them to the fore. Dumitrescu's mature music and his commentary on that music in interviews both demonstrate a clear concern and engagement with these questions. His views on the nature of the work and of music and their manifestations in his work are derived from his study of phenomenology. I will demonstrate and explain Dumitrescu's understanding of the ontology of the work and the nature of music before providing a comparative analysis of three performances of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* that shows how these ideas are manifest in his writing.

Dumitrescu has described his works as possessing what he calls a relative stability. He says that while composing, he is not striving towards “the idea of perfecting something, of making the sounds fixed and perfect for all time. The point is to find out how they can be different every time, but in exactly the way that is right for that particular time.”²⁹ To delve further into how and why Dumitrescu views the work as something that is at once a continuous identifiable object and also 'different every time' it is important to consider his views on music itself. “Music, a temporal art, is in itself a tragic one, when about 'stability'. Music dies with its last sounds and starts again with the first one. Even the tempo, the length, always differ.”³⁰ His assertion that music only truly exists while it is being performed (or played back) is an important one and highlights the

28 Other 20th-century composers whose works and philosophies directly challenge traditional conceptions of the work through their use of improvisation, graphic notation, modular forms, and other techniques include John Cage, La Monte Young and the Theatre of Eternal Music, Earle Brown, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez.

29 Hodgkinson, “Land of the Ninth Sky,” 17.

30 Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

ephemeral and fleeting nature of the art form. It also implies that music only exists while it is experienced as such. Dumitrescu confirms this view when he states that “[m]usic even doesn't exist on paper! [...] Music is just an experience that has to be lived. A trajectory that has to be walked.”³¹ Going even further, he argues that music is not even the difference between sound and notes on a page, but something more: “Sound by itself is still not yet music, [...] Of course, you can't imagine music without sound, but to attempt music you need to transcend reality through a volatile, superior reality, filled with new meanings and directions.”³² Dumitrescu's discussion of experience and transcendence as central to the being of music brings us back once again to his very personal application of phenomenological philosophy to music. For Husserl, phenomenology was a science of experience and a means of achieving a kind of immanent transcendence through the study of directed consciousness. As transcendent transcendence (a pure, unfiltered knowledge of that external object) was impossible for Husserl, so too the true knowing of music itself seems beyond reach and an impossibility for Dumitrescu. From this philosophical outlook, it is only possible to know music as an experience, as something fleeting and never permanent. Thomas Clifton shares similar views concerning the ontological nature of music itself. He writes “[...] music is not an autonomous appearance, but the outcome of a collaboration between a person, and real or imagined sounds.”³³ For music to 'happen', it requires a listener to direct his consciousness toward and construct it from the sound-objects that are perceived to comprise it. Taking a cue from Heidegger, Clifton notes that to experience is to be in the world with something else; it requires dialogue.³⁴

Understanding Dumitrescu's conception of music as human experience opens his notion of the relatively stable work to further investigation. The defining characteristic of Dumitrescu's 'work' is one of stable identity in the face of variation and emendation in production and the variety of individual experiences implied by his phenomenological model of music. In that sense, the work can be said to lie beyond any particular

31 Ibid.

32 Clark, “Unstable Molecule,” 34.

33 Clifton, *Music as Heard*, 74.

34 Ibid., 47.

performance or experience of the composition. Nattiez shares this sentiment. He notes that the musical work is not defined by any one manifestation or any single level of his tripartition.³⁵ The musical score is not the work, the performance is not the work, the listener's experience is not the work. The work cannot be deduced by studying acts of conception or recording and notation (the poietic), nor can it be found in the resulting score or recording (the neutral) or performative or interpretative acts (the esthetic). Instead, glimpses of the work can be seen distributed throughout these three levels (hence Nattiez's assertion that one-dimensional analyses are less than valuable) and can be described as a horizon against which all possible poietic and esthetic acts and their neutral traces stand.³⁶ In the course of arriving at this conclusion, Nattiez draws heavily on aesthetician and philosopher Roman Ingarden. A phenomenologist himself, Ingarden spent his career obsessively trying to pin down the ontological nature of different forms of art. Though he was particularly concerned with literature, he also turned his eye towards the musical work in his book *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*.³⁷ Following a series of familiar arguments that refute conceptions of the work as performance, as ideal object, as notation, or as a mental or subjective entity, he arrives at his conclusion:

The work itself remains like an ideal boundary at which the composer's intentional conjectures of creative acts and the listeners' acts of perception aim. [...] At that ideal boundary, the work remains one and the same in contrast to the many concretions in specific performances [...]³⁸

The work, he argues, can never be fully reached. Instead, through understanding and interpreting the manifestations of a work (analysis of the score and the acoustic reality of performances) we can shorten the gap between ourselves and the full reality of the musical work itself.³⁹ The roots of Dumitrescu, Nattiez, and Ingarden's conceptions of the work are easily traced back to phenomenology's earliest proponents: Edmund Husserl and his protégé Martin Heidegger.

35 Nattiez, *Music and Discourse*, 29, 32.

36 Ibid., 70.

37 Roman Ingarden, *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*, translated by Adam Czerniawski (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1986).

38 Ibid., 119.

39 Ibid., 118.

In Husserl's phenomenology, he makes prominent use of the terms 'adumbrations' and 'determinable X'. Adumbrations are perhaps best understood as small slices of perception, the most basic unit of experience that allows us to structure and comprehend the world and reality. These adumbrations are immanent to us, they are our own perceptions and the link between ourselves and the world of which we are a part. Individually, they are also limited and one-dimensional, mere moments of perception and experience that can never sufficiently grant us access to the larger picture.⁴⁰ The larger picture, the specific object (physical or otherwise) that our adumbrations are viewings of is what Husserl refers to as the determinable X. He argues that the determinable X is the point of unity, an object of and a necessary condition for our observations and descriptions.⁴¹ A common and illustrative example involves our viewing of a house. As we walk around the outside of the house and then through the inside, we witness countless partial perspectives of the home. None of these partial perspectives reveal the house in its entirety and yet they are each of an object to which we unconsciously attribute a persistent identity, our determinable X, 'the house'.⁴² For Husserl, this is the principle mechanism by which we experience reality and by breaking down that persistent identity and returning to the basic sensations themselves through the reductions, phenomenology holds the key to revealing the process of an otherwise unconscious behaviour.

The trope that includes the varying expressions like slices of a whole, realizations against a horizon of potentialities, and a nexus for seemingly divergent meanings, is common to phenomenological thinking and is also seen in the work of Martin Heidegger before Ingarden, Dumitrescu, and Nattiez's musings on the nature of the musical work. Heidegger's philosophy follows a different line of inquisition from that of Husserl. He is less concerned with the processes of bracketing and with understanding the essences of things, instead he is primarily interested in the nature and modes of being and beings, and how they and the world fit together.⁴³ He argues that since we can only know the things

40 Edmund Husserl, *Ideas I*, translated by F. Kersten (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983): 9, 91.

41 Ibid., 314-315.

42 Example originally from Brian Kane, "Excavating Lewin's 'Phenomenology,'" *Music Theory Spectrum* 33:1 (Spring, 2011): 29.

43 The natures of being, be-ing, and Being and their relationship to Dasein and the world form a complex

beyond ourselves through our own being, we cannot view them directly. Our experience of everything that we know to be in the world with us is mediated by our own modes of existence. Thus the many possible interpretations of the true meaning or nature of any single other entity are all the acts of individuals reaching out towards and trying to reveal something just beyond their grasp. The different approximations that we use to describe something that we experience in the world with us only reveal slices of the truth and furthermore, only in the presence of human perspective can the truth be said to exist.⁴⁴ Clifton reiterates these views in *Music as Heard* when he argues that the very act of arguing over a description means that there is and must be a truth towards which our argued approximations tend. He makes the important distinction that this phenomenological understanding of the truth is not a recourse to relativism or utterly subjective, but relational. The truth lies at the hub at which the spokes of our different attempted approaches connect.⁴⁵ It is easy to see how this common phenomenological allegory of a hidden ground or nexus is manifest in Nattiez and Ingarden's understanding of the work as a horizon and Dumitrescu's view of it as a something that is forever in flux and yet maintains a persistent identity. To demonstrate how this phenomenological attitude influenced Dumitrescu's mature spectral works, I will perform a comparative analysis of three performances of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* to demonstrate the musical means by which a work that is in many ways unfixed can retain its identity over time.

Comparative Analysis of Three Performances

The three recordings of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* I will examine are all performed by Romanian violist Cornelia Petroiu. Ms. Petroiu is a member of Dumitrescu's Hyperion Ensemble and a successful violist in both Romania and more generally in Europe.⁴⁶ Two

discussion in the work of Heidegger and there is not room at hand to discuss them fully. See Joseph Kockelmans, *Martin Heidegger: A First Introduction to His Philosophy* (Pittsburg, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1965).

44 Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *Basic Writings*, edited by David Krell (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993): 317-318; Eugene Francis Kaelin, *Heidegger's Being and Time: A Reading for Readers* (Gainesville, Fla: University Presses of Florida, 1988): 146.

45 Clifton, *Music as Heard*, 17.

46 Cornelia Petroiu's personal website, accessible at <http://petroiu.org/bio/>.

of her performances of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* are studio recordings, one for release on Iancu Dumitrescu's own label Edition Modern and one for her own release *Mirabila Viola*, while the third is a videotaped live performance.⁴⁷ The first compact disc recording was produced directly with Dumitrescu himself and released on his record label Edition Modern in 2003 and the second recording was produced in 2005 by Ms. Petroiu herself for her 2007 compact disc "Mirabila Viola".⁴⁸ The final recording was performed live and videotaped in 2011. While *Movemur et Sumus (3)* was composed in 1977, Dumitrescu has since rededicated the work to Cornelia Petroiu and she has become the principal performer of the piece.⁴⁹ Due to the close relationship between Dumitrescu and his performers this dedication and status grants Petroiu a status of caretaker and propagator of the work, at least into the near future. In many ways this close composer-performer relationship is necessitated by the idiosyncratic nature of Dumitrescu's notation and the demanding artistic and technical challenges of his music. To demonstrate how such a composer-performer/caretaker relationship can impact the legacy of a composer's work, it is worth considering the close collaboration that existed between Karlheinz Stockhausen and flautist Kathinka Pasveer. After dedicating herself to the olympian task of learning and interpreting some of Stockhausen's most demanding compositions during the 1980s, Pasveer in turn took on the mission of teaching the interpretation and performance of his works. Since Stockhausen's death in 2007, Pasveer has been an important figure in the preservation and proliferation of his work and legacy. It is distinctly possible that the current members of the Hyperion Ensemble and soloist performers of Dumitrescu's work will eventually become the teachers and preservers of his music. Given that their interpretations of his work, derived in part from the close relationship that they share with the composer, will perhaps someday become the model, it lends a further urgency to the need to address such recordings as Petroiu's in analyses of Dumitrescu's work. In my own analysis, I will compare the timings, formal proportions, use of effects and ornamentation, and improvisational additions of Petroiu's three performances to

47 ED.MN 1018, 2003; Nova Musica A0003, 2007; Dumitrescu and Petroiu, YouTube, 2011.

48 ED.MN 1018, 2003; Nova Musica A0003, 2007.

49 Personal e-mail correspondence with Cornelia Petroiu, January 12th, 2011. Also see the score in Appendix B which includes the amended dedication.

demonstrate both the variable elements of the work and a remarkably consistent core material that combine to give the work its relative stability.

At first glance, the three recordings seem quite different. Merely considering the length shows that the longest performance, the Edition Modern recording at 10'44", is nearly double the length of the shortest, the youtube video that lasts only 6'43". The three recordings also demonstrate very distinctive audio production values. The Edition Modern recording is clear, punchy, and present, while Petroiu's personal recording incorporates a digital reverb effect and is aurally marked as a studio product. Meanwhile, the youtube video is of course a live performance and comes with all the associated crowd noises, such as coughing, shuffling of feet, and light banging of chairs. Furthermore, and probably more importantly, the musical and technical stylings of Petroiu vary between performances, as one would expect they would given their dispersion over the better part of a decade. The Edition Modern performance is longest partly by virtue of its slow tempo, and partly because of the extensive improvised passages that Petroiu inserts into the piece. The following passage (fig. 3.3, 3.4) that begins at the end of page five and carries over onto page six, comprises the final passage centred on the droning C string (in my diagram it is labelled VIII). In the "Mirabila Viola" recording Petroiu spends about a minute on this passage (7:02-8:08) while on the Edition Modern recording, she spends more than two minutes (6:34-8:40). This discrepancy is the result of an extended improvisation during the opening section of the passage on the Edition Modern disc (fig. 3.3). In this passage, Petroiu takes the notated drones as a point of departure and expands on them, violently and rapidly plucking and bowing the open C string for what seems like a disproportionately lengthy passage before emerging on the other side when she arrives at the top of page six (fig. 3.4). On the same recording, she similarly extends the final section IX on the G string beyond the dimensions presented both in the score and the other performances. This improvisatory elaboration on the notated material is less present on the "Mirabila Viola" recording and utterly absent from the live performance on YouTube. This general observation on the relative degree of added material extends to the entire work. Throughout the Edition Modern recording, Petroiu freely adds *glissandi*, *pizzicati*, and repetitions of short

passages, while the other two performances follow the score much more closely. This is not to say that the later two recordings do not deviate from the score at all, but their divergences are less radical and more consistent between the two performances. Some of these variations also seem to serve structural functions, as I will show below.

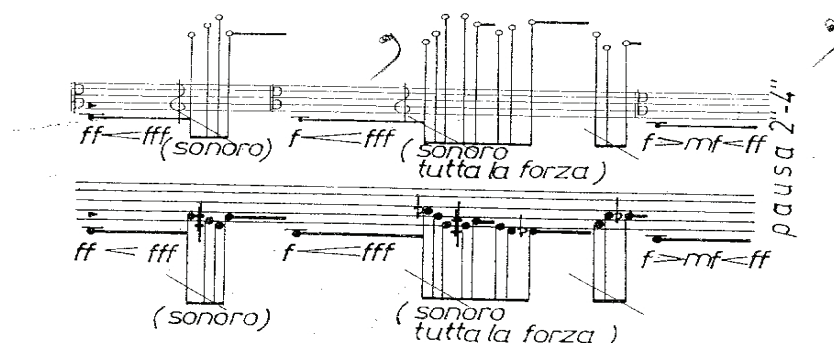


Figure 3.3: Excerpt of Page 5

Figure 3.4: Excerpt of Page 6

As I demonstrated near the beginning of this chapter, the basic formal components of *Movetur et Sumus* (3) are a series of drones on fundamental strings (C-G-C-G-D-G-A-C-G) above which the meditative and spectral harmonic elaborations are based (fig. 3.2). In order to demonstrate the variance in Petroiu's performance practice, I have modelled the changes between drone strings on two graphs. The first shows a timeline of the three performances that illustrates their comparative lengths and the position of each string change within the form. (fig. 3.5). For example, the first fundamental of the ED.MN 1018 recording lasts about 115 seconds. The second graph showcases the relative proportions of each performance in percentage (fig. 3.6). For instance, the same

passage comprises 17.9% of the Edition Modern recording, and a much greater 20.9% of Petroiu's recording for her own compact disc. These two graphs contain valuable information about the formal structure of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, as well as Dumitrescu's conception of his works and how they should be performed.

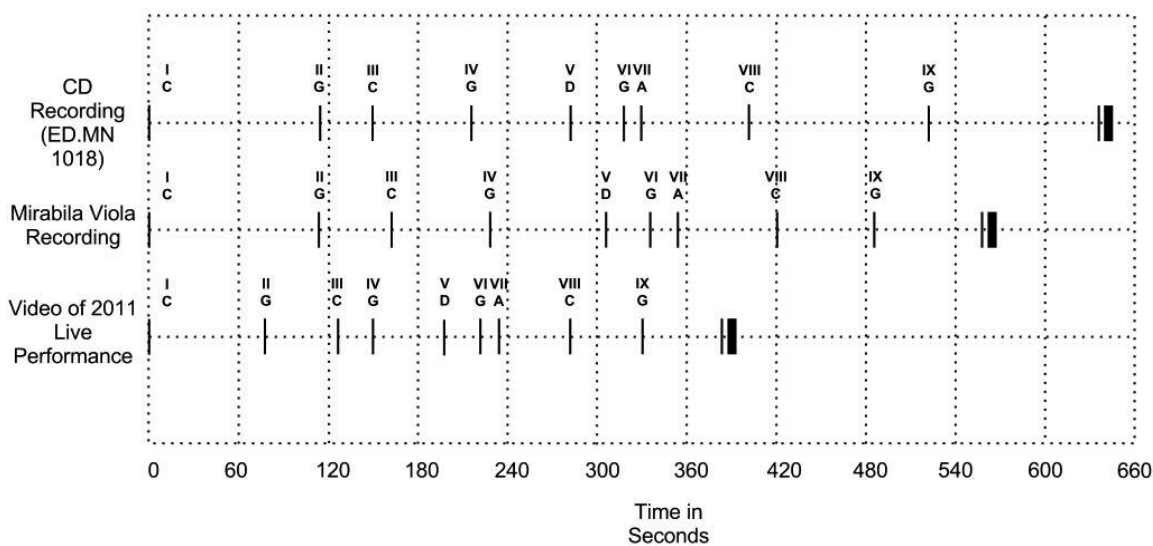


Figure 3.5: Timeline of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* Performances

Section:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
CD Recording (ED.MN 1018)	17.9%	5.4%	10.2%	9.8%	6.7%	1.6%	9.6%	19.7%	19.3%
Mirabila Viola Recording	20.9%	7.4%	12.4%	12.7%	6.4%	2.1%	12.7%	11.7%	13.6%
Video of 2011 Live Performance	19.9%	11.7%	6.4%	13.2%	5.4%	3.0%	13.2%	11.5%	15.6%

Figure 3.6: Proportions of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* Fundamentals by Performance; Rounded to the Nearest Tenth

What is most striking is how proportionately consistent the three performances of the work are. Barring the major improvisatory breaks of the Edition Modern recording discussed above, the sections are, with few exceptions, within a narrow range. While this

would be generally expected of a piece such as a Mozart Sonata, for example, which contains precise, relative timings in the form of rhythmic notation, it seems more exceptional in a work such as *Movemur et Sumus* (3), which contains no meter, and only visually spaced durations. Furthermore, the beginnings and ends of these passages are frequently and consistently marked by Petroiu's additions to the score. Take for example the opening of section VIII on the C string on page five (fig. 3.3). In all three performances, Petroiu articulates this opening with *pizzicati* with a violent attack, a gesture that is not included in the score. Likewise, as she moves from drone V on the D string to drone VI on the G string at the bottom of page four (fig. 3.7), Petroiu inserts popping left-hand *pizzicati* with dramatic downward slides following the breath mark. Similar unmarked gestures incorporating slides and *pizzicati* occur at the beginnings of sections I and II in each of the performances. Given the consistency of these additions and the close proportions of all the performances, and particularly between Petroiu's personal recording and the YouTube performance, we can conclude that the study of performance has revealed something intrinsic and important to the work. Her performance embellishments are sign posts that reveal the transition points in the form.

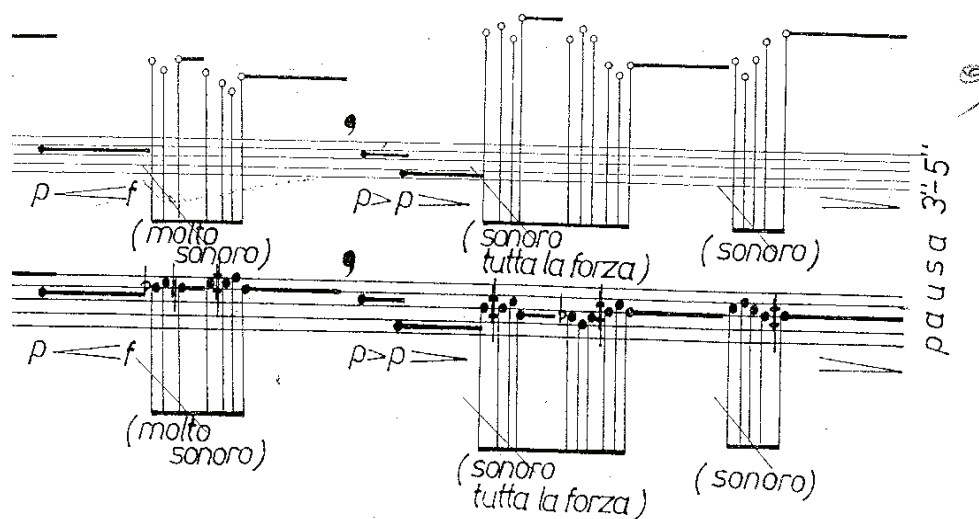


Figure 3.7: Excerpt from Page 4 Showing Transition from Section V to Section VI

Given Dumitrescu's phenomenological attitude towards sound and perception, it is

unlikely that this formal structure was the impetus behind the work's construction, but it exists nonetheless. It arises organically from Dumitrescu's methodical and successive exploration of strings and his spectral ideas. The consistency of Petroiu's added gestures at the transition points in this form indicate that she too is aware of them. Given how close Dumitrescu keeps his performers and how directly he works with them, I argue that these additions are at the very least approved by Dumitrescu, if not suggested by him. Surely as the composer of the work and the owner of the record label, he would not have allowed such a recording to be released commercially unless he at least recognized and agreed with Petroiu's formal deductions and elaborative interpretation. The significant discrepancy concerning the presence and lengths of the improvisatory sections that seemed to become less prominent with each successive recording can also be attributed to this close relationship. By continuing to work in a close and artistically symbiotic relationship, Dumitrescu and Petroiu have allowed *Movemur et Sumus (3)* space to evolve. By not producing an overly dictatorial score and by valuing the input of his performers, Dumitrescu has avoided his work becoming a dead piece of paper. Instead its existence is more similar to that of a folk piece or tradition, something which changes over time and repeated elaboration and yet retains its identity. Each performance is undeniably a valuable version of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, but no single attempt reveals the totality of that work, only possibilities. In this sense, *Movemur et Sumus (3)* presents itself to us as a paradox, finished and yet still a work-in-progress. This openness is hinted at by the form of the work itself, which begins on the C string and after working its way through the full range of the instrument returns to the C string, only to shift upwards to the G string in the final moments, posing the question of whether or not the work truly ends. As I have shown, it both is and is not, an attitude that can only be understood by an appeal to Dumitrescu's phenomenological worldview.

* * *

When I questioned Dumitrescu on the 'relative stability' of his work and its connection to phenomenology and folk tradition, his response confirmed my suspicions:

Your question got, finally to the crucial problem of music, and that's important. Because of this 'elasticity', this relativity, music needs phenomenology, so it could be coordinated and understood by its inner essence. That's crucial. Otherwise everything is indefinite, all ambition [...]. [...] Music doesn't even exist on paper! But it is the vivid dimension which this poor sheet of paper can obtain. [...] All folk music is oral. But not only. Oral doesn't mean something non-structured, improvised, lacking a musical thought, on the contrary! Partially exact, but only partially.⁵⁰

Accordingly, the importance of phenomenology to Dumitrescu's understanding of music and composition can not be underestimated or dismissed. The phenomenological conception of the work outlined above is crucial to understanding his output. Without it, a composer would not view his work as a finished and persistent entity while simultaneously allowing such a high degree of variation and evolution of the performance practice. Without such a firm philosophical framework, such a work might even be rightfully deemed a failure in its lack of specificity. Musically, both the incidental formal aspects of the piece as highlighted in Petroiu's playing and the general character of the work as meditative are essential elements that help in the preservation of this persistent identity while allowing the high degree of variation in tempo, decoration, production, and elaboration. Though discussing a work of literature, Jean-Jacques Nattiez provides a useful analogy for the multiplicity of possible interpretations, performances, and readings (or listenings) of a work. Commenting on the commercial success of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, he writes that “[...] the ordinary reader can be satisfied by the detective story, the intellectual is receptive to nods in the direction of Aristotle and Dante and is not averse to indulging in an allusion to Conan Doyle, the medievalist finds specialist learning in it, while the classicist can delight in a quotation on every page.”⁵¹ Each reading presents a certain sliver of the truth of the total work.

Comparing this work to *Alternances (1&2)*, the evolution is clear. *Movemur et Sumus (3)* contains none of the pseudo-serialist atonality of Dumitrescu's work, nor any of the fractured and abrupt transitions or diffuse and chaotic textures. These have been replaced with continuity, melodic contours that seem more modal than atonal, and a

⁵⁰ Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu. See Appendix A for full transcripts.

⁵¹ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *The Battle of Chronos and Orpheus: Essays in Applied Musical Semiology*, translated by Jonathan Dunsby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): 274.

simple and evident formal logic resulting from his sonic and harmonic explorations. What remains of Dumitrescu's earlier style is his fascination with sonority, timbre, and texture as well as his flirtations with improvisation and idiosyncratic notations that leave large amounts of detail to the performer's imagination. These elements are exaggerated by his study of phenomenology in the interim and result in a work that possesses a particular 'relative stability' and the potential for an evolving performance tradition. While it is difficult to imagine how this performance practice might develop and alter the work in the future, there are analogous traditions in other genres that demonstrate how significantly *Movemur et Sumus (3)* might change over time. In his discussion of the jazz standard *'Round Midnight*, José Bowen argues that in certain repertoires the living tradition of interpretation becomes part of the work itself.⁵² He cites *'Round Midnight* as an example, noting that the introduction to the standard was not originally part of the composition, but was incorporated into the copyrighted leadsheet following its popularization by trumpeter Dizzie Gillespie.⁵³ The modern performance of classical opera is another genre rife with traditions that become canon, as the finest nuances are passed from teacher to student and notated or recorded.⁵⁴ While modern performances of *The Magic Flute* or *I've Got Rhythm* might differ drastically from their historical precedents, few would deny that they are still the same works. It seems likely to me that such a tradition of performance will spring up around and evolve from the renditions of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* by Cornelia Petroiu, enabled by Dumitrescu's personal conceptions of the work and the role of the notated score.

52 José A. Bowen, "The History of Remembered Innovation: Tradition and Its Role in the Relationship Between Musical Works and Their Performances," *The Journal of Musicology* 11:2 (Spring, 1993): 149.

53 Ibid., 154.

54 Ibid., 160.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

My aim in analyzing the music and theories of Iancu Dumitrescu has been two-fold. As I have demonstrated an evolution in Dumitrescu's compositional style that arose from reciprocally reinforcing interests in textural and experimental music and phenomenological philosophy, I have also shown how an analyst can approach the diversity of modern music by constructing a personalized toolset from divergent sources. Perhaps more importantly, as a consequence of this study and the accompanying interview in Appendix B, I hope to have drawn attention to the captivating work of a composer who has yet to receive his due share of attention in the English-speaking world.

Dumitrescu's music does not conform neatly to the mathematical and structuralist models of the Darmstadt serialists or the acoustically exacting work of the French spectralists and this makes it challenging to analyze. By approaching his work with Nattiez's tripartition in mind, however, I have been able to identify and utilize important portions of the web of meaning (interpretants) that surrounds Dumitrescu's work in the poietic, neutral, and esthetic realms. By establishing the importance of phenomenological philosophy in Dumitrescu's mature compositional process and uncovering his most important musical influences, namely Stockhausen and his contemporaries, I have been able to focus my analysis on locating those components of his music that seemed particularly textural or phenomenological and trace their development from a pre-phenomenological work to a work composed after his study with Sergiu Celibidache. Looking to the work of theorists such as Thomas Clifton, Judith Lochhead, and Roman Ingarden, who have used phenomenological attitudes in their conceptualizations of music and methods of analysis, has provided me with a vocabulary and tool set for identifying, presenting, and discussing these musical parameters. These tools have allowed me to observe that there were certain common musical strains in Dumitrescu's pre- and post-phenomenological compositions *Alternances (1&2)* and *Movemur et Sumus (3)* that seemed to become amplified following his exposure to phenomenology, as well as a broader shift in direction in his compositional style. Based on these observations and on the inherently phenomenological content of texturalism and the acousmatic thought of Pierre Schaeffer

and his colleagues observed by Nattiez, Kane, Clifton, and others, I concluded that Dumitrescu's interest in philosophy and phenomenological modes of music-making predisposed him to accept a vision of music based wholly on the philosophy of Husserl and his protégés. In turn, his exploration of these philosophical works further focused and intensified the musical elements of his work that might be said to possess a phenomenological character. It is not that Dumitrescu necessarily set out to write music that *portrays* phenomenological ideas, but that a variety of formative influences inspired him to write with a musical language that retains traces of phenomenological thought.

Dumitrescu's connection to phenomenology is important to consider because it explicitly highlights an oft obscured connection between phenomenological thinking and modern music and art. As Clifton observed, there is just something inherently phenomenological about much modern music.¹ The abandonment of abstract and theoretical structures such as melodic phrasing, form, and functional harmony in favour of colour, texture, timbre, soundscape, and un-pitched noise represents a shift towards the visceral. The value placed on purely sensory based enjoyment of rich and diverse sound could not be more distinct from previous conceptions of music that recognized orchestration and timbre as secondary to form, harmony, and melody. Even the structurally exacting works of composers like Boulez possess an oftentimes brutal physicality that is lacking from all but the most extreme classical examples. His piano sonatas would not be as recognizable if transcribed to other instruments as a Bach fugue might be.

The roots of the shift to a more carnal and nuanced understanding of the wide breadth of sounds and their inherent value, above and beyond their relation to a specific harmony or melodic phrase, is multifaceted and complex. However, one important contribution is a general shift in intellectual attitudes following the advent of phenomenology. As I showed in my analysis of *Movemur et Sumus (3)*, Pierre Schaeffer was directly influenced by phenomenology, and in turn his own work influenced a younger generation of composers who established texturalism, electronic music, and

¹ Thomas Clifton, *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): x.

eventually spectralism as major stylistic movements in modern music. Those influenced by the work of Schaeffer and the 1950s and 1960s modernists included Dumitrescu. However, where others attributed the genesis of their styles to musical influences and technological opportunity, Dumitrescu explicitly retraced the connections to philosophy. He followed the trickling stream of influence back to its source in the works of Husserl, and as an influential figure himself Dumitrescu can shed light on those origins to a younger generation of theorists, critics, composers, and performers. Along with the phenomenological theories of Lochhead, Clifton, and others, Dumitrescu's work provides an opportunity for contemporary audiences to rediscover one of the formative influences on the music they hold dear and his continuing and varied career shows the range of possibility that such a philosophical framework can provide.

Following *Movemur et Sumus 3*, Dumitrescu composed a large number of works for strings in an ever-developing style. In later works such as *Holzwege* (1987), named for the text by Heidegger, Dumitrescu calls upon the player to perform many more extreme instrumental techniques, including detuning the instrument's strings and following extremely specific bowing instructions including the prominent use of *sul tasto* and *ricochet*. In many ways the music becomes increasingly percussive, maintaining the use of drone strings and harmonic spectrums while adding a great deal of timbral variety. Moving into the later era of his career, during the 1980s and 1990s, electroacoustic sound sources also become increasingly prominent in Dumitrescu's music. Many of his more recent major works, including *Zoom* (1991), *Galaxy* (1993), *Ouranos (I-II)* (1997), and *Numérologie Secrète (I+II)* (2002), have been scored for combinations of computer electronics, pre-recorded tape, and chamber ensembles. Though it is beyond the scope of this research, it would be useful to proceed further with this work and ask if or how Dumitrescu's continued involvement with phenomenology and the European avant-garde has influenced the evolution of his music since the composition of *Movemur et Sumus (3)* in the 1970s.

Following the overthrow and subsequent execution of Ceaușescu in 1989, Dumitrescu and Romania have experienced a revitalized relationship with Western Europe. He now performs regularly in Europe, the Middle East, and North America with

Ana-Maria Avram and his ensemble the Hyperion Ensemble. Dumitrescu and Avram were featured as composers-in-residence at Harvard University in 2010 and made multiple performances around New England, while in 2011 their multi-city festival Spectrum XXI featured performances in London, Paris, Berlin, and Bucharest and was met with positive reviews.² Likewise, the freedom of post-Ceaușescu Romania has allowed Dumitrescu to access and collaborate with Western European and North American composers and performers. During the 1990s Dumitrescu began a series of collaborations with the English composers and performers Tim Hodgkinson and Chris Cutler. The compact disc *Musique Action '98* captures one of the concerts during which the Hyperion Ensemble performed new works by Dumitrescu, Avram, Cutler, and Hodgkinson.³ Increased access to fellow artists, performance opportunities, and facilities and resources has surely impacted Dumitrescu's musical language and working method.

While international performances and recent features in popular magazines like *The Wire* have raised Dumitrescu's profile in the English-speaking world, there has still been a dearth of scholarly attention dedicated to the composer. Following the death of Horatiu Radulescu in 2008, Dumitrescu has become the most internationally recognizable representative of the Romanian spectral and avant-garde style. The fact that his accomplishments have reached as far as Radulescu's, who worked in Paris for most of his life, is all the more remarkable given the extreme circumstances of his career. Dumitrescu's decision to remain in Romania while others fled could easily have ended in a career spent languishing in isolation. Only his unshakeable conviction and dedication to the composition and performance of new music and his sheer tenacity in the face of adversity has allowed him to overcome institutions of censorship and an anti-intellectual political atmosphere in order to succeed and reach an international audience. Along with luminaries like John Cage, La Monte Young, and Karlheinz Stockhausen, Dumitrescu is also one of the few serious composers of art music to reach out and directly influence the

2 For example: Liam Cagney, "Structure and Freedom!: Works by Dumitrescu and Avram," review of the final 2011 Spectrum XXI Concert in London on November 23rd, 2011. Accessed at <http://www.musicalcriticism.com/concerts/jerwood-spectrum-1111.shtml>.

3 Iancu Dumitrescu, Ana-Maria Avram, Chris Cutler, and Tim Hodgkinson, *Musique Action '98*, Hyperion Ensemble. ReR Megacorp ReR DACH1, 1999.

realm of popular music in their own lifetimes.⁴ I was only made aware of Dumitrescu's music after reading a 2009 interview with American experimental heavy metal band Sunn O))), In the interview, guitarist Stephen O'Malley cites Dumitrescu's music and philosophy as a major influence on the arrangement and aesthetic of their album *Monolith's and Dimensions*.⁵ The album signalled a major shift in sound for the band and was met with resounding critical success. Since that interview O'Malley has collaborated with Dumitrescu on a number of occasions, including a series of three performances in Israel during January, 2011. Given the success and high profile of *Monolith's and Dimensions*, Sunn O))), and Stephen O'Malley as a solo artist, it seems likely that Dumitrescu's sounds and ideas will continue to proliferate amongst a much wider audience than just aficionados of Romanian spectralism.

I have included my interview with Iancu Dumitrescu as a complete transcript in Appendix B. The interview was conducted over a series of e-mails during 2011, though most of his answers were provided in a single communication during December. I have chosen to leave Dumitrescu's answers in their unedited form, as I feel that his idiomatic language communicates an element of his worldview and philosophical outlook. It is my intention that this interview will constitute a useful resource for those who wish to study Dumitrescu's music and ideas. I also encourage those with an interest to contact Dumitrescu directly. While his Edition Modern recordings are readily available through a number of mail order outlets and internet shops, his scores can be extremely difficult to find. Both Iancu Dumitrescu and Ana-Maria Avram were extremely helpful in providing digitized scores and encouraged me immensely with my research. The passion they possess for their music and their dedication to the continuing prosperity of modern art music is immediately apparent and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for

4 I am referring here to the famous anecdote recounting the influence of Karlheinz Stockhausen on the Beatle's use of tape and electro-acoustic techniques and his likeness on the album cover of their album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Additionally, the highly influential punk and rock group Sonic Youth have performed portions of John Cage's with Stockhausen and their tape work and Sonic Youth who have performed Cage works, most notably on their 1999 album *Sonic Youth: Goodbye 20th Century* (SYR4, 1999). Perhaps even more directly, La Monte Young's collaborations with violist and rock musician John Cale as part of the Theatre of Eternal Music had reaching impacts on Cale's drone and noise contributions to Lou Reed's band The Velvet Underground.

5 Joseph Stannard, "Sunn O))) : Black Monk Time," *The Wire* 302 (April, 2009): 46.

their encouragement and cooperation. Let us hope that the academic community will take it upon themselves to give Dumitrescu's life and music the attention they deserve.

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Appendix A: Interview with Iancu Dumitrescu

The following interview with Iancu Dumitrescu was conducted by e-mail during 2011 and I received his final responses on December 17th, 2011. English is not Dumitrescu's native tongue, but rather than edit his answers extensively I have chosen to preserve his language largely intact. I feel his manner of speech communicates something about his personal beliefs and musical tendencies. I have only fixed obvious typos and omissions of punctuation. All changes are indicated by square brackets.

Phenomenology and Celibidache:

RK: In previous interviews you have discussed the important role that Sergiu Celibidache and the philosophy of phenomenology played in your musical development. Could you describe how you met Celibidache, what your relationship was like, and what sort of things he taught you?

ID: Usually in life you're in search for things you miss. On the other side you acknowledge yourself in what you find as being unattainable. In the very case, what I missed was a transcendental dimension of the art – a feature I thought was lost forever in the case of new music. My unfulfillments, and my doubts concerning musical creation of that time drove me towards Celibidache as to an absolute model, even supposed as being impenetrable, but broad-minded, difficult to determine[,] but at the same time tolerant, well, to [sum it up], an almost mythical personality, focusing the general attention.

Beyond all that, Celibidache reached in this supposed dialogue with me (even I wasn't yet prepared to completely understand him) with answers and solutions so many, so unpredictable and in the same time so obvious and natural that, of course I can't really resume their complete circumstances. Celibidache expressed himself; he perforated like an other-time Indian guru. Giving absolute verdicts. Incontestable. Provocative.

My primordial query, to which I was in search for an answer was, probably the following: With only calculations and abstract thoughts, using the computers (at the time

only at the very beginnings) until when is it possible to endlessly continue to produce a pure intellectual music? Artificial and schematic.

Was it possible to conceive a completely “objective” and let’s say scientific, mathematical art? On the other side, – the opposite option, was it possible to conceive, nowadays, a composition so called romantic, or neo-classical, retrospective, conform[ing] to the will of your heart, as a freely singing bird on a branch, with no contingency with the deep, complex and plurivalent intellectual concerns of the present? The accents, the wonders and doubts of the modern thought, without any concern about the pulse of the life, about the whole speculative and philosophical context, the psychological one, the scientific one, as an absolutely necessary synchronicity, absolutely necessary and crucial for our time?

How can we “tune” ourselves all together with the other levels of knowledge: physics, biology, informatics, aesthetics, with account of all technological realities, increasingly complex and sophisticated, which surrounds us?

Therefore how can we evolve without this obsession of maladjustment and refuse that avant-garde expressed so obvious[ly], and which all contemporary music had[,] and persisted on having, in disagreement with the audience, and how can we avoid, both this harmful epigonism which already begun to infest the outlook in composition at that time.

I realised that I lacked a doctrine, a philosophy, an aesthetics which could bring me back to the non-alienated territory of the modern art of my time. Alienation generally rejected both by the audience and the musicians. A dialectical yet unsolved situation in the music of that time, which seems to me alienated. Was it really an issue? A possible balance between the most cutting-edge modernism, which I was already able to foresee, and the essential eternity of mankind?

That doesn’t mean that, on my side, I didn’t wonder myself about the possible connections between mathematics and music, for example, the numeric functions, [then] the set theory, the prime numbers series, the Fibonacci one, [*sectio aurea*], the graphs, the informatics and more recently cybernetics, the acoustics, the programming systems, the fractals... I had direct access to one of my ancestors, thinker Pius Servien, to Matila Ghyka. I recall myself with Pius Servien in a familiar relationship, not only in a very high

aesthetical complicity. He was among the very first founders of the aesthetics based on mathematical grounds, with later Birkhoff and Matila Ghyka, the latter also a Romanian, as well as Stephane Lupasco.^[1] Very Interesting, Lupasco's philosophy! Those concerns about the micro universe of the sub-atomic complex... All those things were very useful for me, for my musical thought, but also, for example, for my way of scoring. I forgot to evoke the aspects of technical and geometrical design (drawing). But all that, not as a primordial target, but as elements, elaborated, in a wider synthesis, to forge a new expression, a more subtle face and in the same time maybe a more concessive way to afford the music of our time. To achieve this musical synthesis, emerged from many different sources, I spent decades, but the very leap was given to me by the means of phenomenology. Emerson was so right: justifications don't persuade anybody. That is the very problem of art. Not the theories. Nor philosophies, logics or mathematics you're utilizing. In the case of music, I can firmly assert: the listener should be tingled, surprised by the falling into nothingness. Rapidly and subtly chased from reality and banality, even unsparingly, and surprised by newness he never felt yet. Th[e]n driven through a self-retrieval in this new context. But this is a yet unwritten aesthetic puzzle.

The artist apprehends at least an asset of the mind of his time, I would say a metaphysical one, because it imposes in a natural way. The "fashion" has always an inner necessity, imposed from upward and independent of our will – that you can't avoid. I thought I was obliged to an "interpretation" of all those new trends, actually very divergent and almost opposed in an obvious and explicit way.

Nothing from the turmoil of my time was indifferent for me.

Without any feeling for those new magnetic spheres, the composition teachers from the musical academies focused, unfortunately (even with best intention as I presume) fundamentally mistaking by their lack of inspiration – they focused by only the musical writing, that's all. Even about classical or modern one. But does the "écriture" [embrace] all? Why music if not to express an inner necessity, an existential,

1 [George David Birkhoff was an American mathematician with interests in philosophy and aesthetics while Matila Ghyka and Stephane Lupasco were both 20th Century Romanian philosophers.]

philosophical one, sort of fusion of the whole surrounding us? The problem of the truthfulness remains, therefore, the main problem to solve in art.

To get back, Celibidache offered me an incomparable vision. He proposed to me a yet unknown world. All of which was unfathomable, unconcrete, uncommon, fabulous, intuitive, began to be possible. Celibidache had a genius for the absolute modernity, incomparable, proposing unglimped revelations, an abyssal dimension of the newness, a renovation of avant-garde, but not in its break with tradition but in a natural fusion with the past, with the history of humankind, as a necessary evolution, a necessary becoming. It was actually just the phenomenological point of view. Celibidache is the only authentic phenomenologist in music. He applied the theory, the Husserlian method to the sound, to music, extracting all the essence, enhancing all its benefits. Why did he succeed? Because he combined a theoretical and analytical philosophical consciousness of the highest level (he had a Ph.D in aesthetics and another in mathematics, by the way) with an enormous musical talent. This combination between the genial practitioner and the speculative theoretical thinker conferred him the aura of a true guru.

That's why – I have to say it – composition is not only a matter of craftsmanship. In other words it doesn't include only the technique to make scores. Notes, sounds, rhythms, polyphonies, orchestrations, etc. All that Celibidache had obtained with his own reflections on the matter that was connected to phenomenology.

I found myself launched with all my being, in a compulsory way, through phenomenology. After few years of exercises and meditation, phenomenology, as an applied method, became a second nature for me. All problems found a natural, spontaneous solution.

Composition is above all a matter of reflection, of artistic necessity of expression. It's the will and the power to assert something. Why practise composition if you don't need to express anything? Composition is dream but also reality. Nothing mimetic, but an election between many possibilities – Denken and UnDenken. Finally[,] not only a problem of style, but of life itself. The need for music is a complex one, connected to the deeper, archetypal necessities of man. That's why I can assert that, touching the primordial fibre of the sound, to the very archetype of listening, and to the acoustics of

the Universe, I could touch, convince the listener from everywhere. I made an art without borders but not theoretical, artificial, but only true, by means of Husserl's phenomenology. What I try to find, and often I don't in today's composition, is... true life. The listener doesn't find himself in this artistic phenomenon. Today's art doesn't engage, nor overwhelm him. He desperately looks for truthfulness and life, but, being often cheated he does it with suspicion, from an almost adverse position, or even with an unconditioned dismissal[al]. That because he seldom found the truth, the rich one, holistic. He found all that less and less. For example, [if] you listen the second piano sonata by Boulez, the result is a magnificent elucubration, but inaccessible, because it is cold, remote, as an absolute icy handbook. Only one example without any polemic intention. Because it expresses a general problem, very actual, which disconnected the audience from new music, but not forever, I hope. This disengagement happened not because new music is "experimental" or "difficult" or "hermetical", but because it is false hermetical, playing on an un-lived reality. The audience can be intelligent, speculative, and demanding, in search for an art where everything could be experimented, but with the only condition to be fresh and genuine, not a dry handbook about how to completely desiccate the very sources of music.

The post-Weberian composers didn't succeed in living the dodecaphony at the intensity and the fervour of its original miracle. Schoenberg, Berg and above all, Webern created an absolute novelty, which, after WW2 was continued in a really epigonic perspective.

The integral serialism, a very restrictive recipe, actually, artificial and monotone, if applied per se, in a demonstrative, dogmatical way, was in fact a withdrawal from the innovative ideals of its creators.

Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, not only they burst artistically the entire combustion of their style, but they also rapidly evolved, compared with their epigones.

It is very probable that history, quite recent as we can notice, took some heretical paths on a particular moment. Today we can free our spirits in order to suppose it. But, anyway, this dogmatic period, exclusivist, abounding of discriminations and artistic reclusion on the field of new music brought quite a lot of damage to its comprehension.

If Var[è]se and somehow Messiaen didn't exist, as well as a few of Stockhausen's finest moments and, of course Scelsis's music a posteriori discovered, or on another perspective Lutoslawski or even the beginnings of Penderecki, we would talk only about epigones.

Wh[a]t I mean, fury, anger, it's the very thing I miss, everywhere I look. Everywhere only surrogates! Fakes sold as great moments of art.

But let's get back to your question about Celibidache. My master gave me for the first time a philosophical, existential answer, but also a method, a technical one, to all those modern [torments] (which I have only one word to catch them: inauthenticity).

Gradually I realised not only my own deadlock but I also foresaw a possible output through the light. With absolute modesty, because I didn't think myself really able to produce such a provocative evolution. What I was searching, actually was the very deepness of the matters, as they really are. A doctrine, a working method, a practice which progressively became essential. Otherwise I felt once more confused.

Evidently, at the beginning I learned composition in a professional way[,] step by step, guided systematically by [a] few real masters of the musical writing from Romania. In the same time, advancing, I became one of their defender[s]. I started to write reviews, a combative and sharp critic and I witnessed for their thoughts. I did it constantly, uncompromisingly and radical[ly], I think, irritating as much as possible the musical milieu, this group of composers already mummified. This attitude put me in a difficult situation, quite dangerous for my career, but that was the only one I could honestly have.

Quite fast I begin to understand two very important things. On one side that rigidity is unacceptable. Nowadays musical writing is, in itself, so complicated and theoretically emphasized – I mean without a rapid practical issue (compared, for example, with the scoring of a [Beethoven] piano sonata). It needs a very long period of elaboration, in which things don't belong anymore, or very little, to the very first impulse. Things become more and more complicated, the calculations turn into a goal per se, but a mandatory one. This sequence of efforts, at least for me, appeared as being in a disagreement with the starting point. Followed by other purely intellectual strategies, hence the creation itself begins to be only a purely rational strategy.

On the other side, complications, the scoring beyond any limit, obviously for aesthetical reasons, the score begins often unreadable for the player. Difficult to be deciphered, difficult to understand. With an artistic meaning very limited, and those impoverished, by the very so numerous aberrant details [once] imposed. So things become more and more a torture for both the players and the audience.

What benefit from such a conceptual effort, to reach the finest details, the best precision and concentration in writing, but with a final result which cannot be but only a fake, a fabricated, untrue one, and a general refusal – from the players, the conductors, the music lovers.

I obviously had to drive myself through different perspectives[.]

Actually, composition is an area of non-disownment. You have to persist in being yourself from the beginning to the end. That's why the foresight of a new attitude offered to me almost spontaneously.

I wonder and ask you on my side, why did we reach today this generalized deadlock in creation if not because of this critical confusion? From maintaining this generalized ignorance? The confusion between the very problems of music and the score which became more and more the only target? Why, until recently we still had so many great composers: Xenakis, Ligeti, Boulez, Stockhausen, Lachenmann, Feldman, Radulescu, Nono, Berio, Cage etc... but today the number of the ones which could be called as real personalities, is so reduced? Actually we are facing a terrible impoverishment of our musical universe.

I had the chance – because it's about chance, to bear in a family of intellectuals. My father was an excellent teacher of philosophy, my mom a mathematician. Despite lots of difficulties aris[ing] in political circumstances, when I began to think and read books, I was only surrounded by books of philosophy, psychology, physics or history. I all mixed them up, with an enormous thirst of knowledge. But since, philosophy, aesthetics, history, art history became for me a necessity of vital importance, in which I found my suggestions, answers, questions, discoveries. When discontented by what I thought as being my poor achievements in composition (actually quite excellent, which I recall

today with nostalgia and full satisfaction) I found the answers in only my readings. I had need of producing a doctrine, to possess a truth of my own, and only mine.

I struggled to acquire... my own originality in this context. Originality which had to be clarified, analysed, and finally fully realised in composition, on paper.

As I see you're very interested by details, I can tell you more: I possessed lots of philosophical concepts. From all, the Husserl's phenomenology seemed to me the only one allowing me to widen my musical horizons. It was objective, transcendent, a science in the same time perfectly adaptable, for us as musicians to our relationship with sound. I noticed it already from Celibidache's many interviews, press statements... Celi had systematic studies of philosophy, with a Ph.D in Berlin. He could be considered an authority in that realm. My first opinions concerning phenomenology, very unyielding, seemed very solid to me. I ultimately discovered the philosophers' stone, which could drive me in composition.

But only after the concrete meeting of Celibidache, after extensive discussions, when we[,] extended and exalted[ly,] talked on the subject (the very first time in an open space, surrounded by an audience of around 200 people) I realized how wrong, mechanical and actually inadequate were my knowledge. I considered myself, sincerely, yet a phenomenologist. I was actually an ignorant, I honestly confess. I read all I could find, from original texts but also many interesting comments, made by important thinkers, which explained in an analytical way all the features of Husserlian thinking. I had also long talks with my father on the matter.

At the time of my first contacts with the genial conductor Celibidache, even I completely retrieved myself in those concepts, I nevertheless missed a crucial thing.

The encounter of the Master was, for me, more than essential. For my theoretical clarification but also because I had the occasion to see, at work, a phenomenologist, a genius, who based his musical convictions on those conceptions. I have to emphasise that Husserl's theory is implicitly also a method, which doesn't diminish its prestige, on the contrary. Philosophical conceptions are, in modest intellectual environment, as studying objects, per se, without any concrete target, actually useless. In the case of Husserl, it's

about the opposite. That's why so many applications in fine arts, poetry, history, medicine probably, and so on.

Adapted and applied to music, phenomenology could be really understood in a direct contact with Celibidache, the musician. The Husserlian point of view met, by a lucky chance the genial musician and the theoretical thinker which could really get benefit from it, understanding its importance and possible issues. My position, from this point of view is infinitely more modest, consisting in adapting, applying phenomenology to the act of composition. The thing which prepare[s] and directs the action of composing[.]

RK: Do you feel that the music you wrote before meeting Celibidache and the music that you wrote afterward belong to two different styles, or do you see your later music as a natural development of the earlier style?

ID: Interesting question. Indeed, the answer could bring something relevant under discussion. The composition I made before, as well as the one I made after meeting Celi, even somehow very different, has the same inner meta-structure. I could say I found what I wanted to look for. I was forced to find myself, to discover myself in what I was doing. What I sought for finding. But, certainly, without the help of phenomenology I couldn't evolve in the direction I did. Couldn't come to the same conclusions, couldn't have found the required justifications for such a courageous freedom. I became phenomenologist because I required its problematic. What I wished to express in music was so fragile and genuine, implicitly so difficult to control, so diaphanous that all my technical means I used (in a more or less classical approach) became for me insufficient. And still is.

I needed self-assurance. In a similar way, sculptor Constantin Brancusi left us an aphorism: be free like a god and work like a slave. It's about this kind of freedom. I can also add that it's also a matter of a spiritual affiliation, a refusal of mechanical thought and an access to something new, incomprehensible before.

Therefore it's about the connection with a spiritual, cultural background.

We belong to a time and space with its transcendent determinations. This is a crucial problem. We moved away from those incontestable verities. If we cannot face this reality, we keep on remaining mechanical, limited, meaningless. Even computers will exceed our musical capabilities. What is to be done? The musical composition should then keep its starting determinisms, as every aesthetical expression. Starting from a contemplation of the inner being of the creator having something to express. Composition that limits to a manufacture, as today, pushed the art from an ontological principle, absolutely necessary, to a mackle, a single use object. The sacralization of the dead thinking, a false one, off course, pushed us without having noticed it through the death of contemporary music. (In its classical meaning). A death we celebrate every day. But the problem of music, today, doesn't comes from the inability of musical writing to face the new challenges of the living music (the only one that finally counts). In my case, I strongly refuse all canned food not yet sold in a supermarket. The problem is somewhere else: to modify the way of scoring is an inner necessity. To enrich its graphical dimension, to attend to organize it in a new order, as much consensual as possible. In order to regain the freedom, the genuine, by means of the written sign. The creation of new, necessary codes and symbols. Nothing more false than the appeal to a tradition. Tradition doesn't exist. That is, not because I'm among those which refuse to compose a music based on it. But in a similar way as an accurate memory doesn't exist. We always lose something. Actually we only have a relative space of all those things. Music lives in this constant relativity.

What I propose in fact is just to come back to the renewal, to the genuine, to revelations, much more important than the memory of our experiences, the dead museum of our experiences. The stock of all the musical issues we can find in our libraries wouldn't make us to advance at all. Than what to do? Just to try to renew our experiences, to deepen the original aspects, with unique value for us, things so ancient and archaic that we can call them really sacred. I don't mean mystically, on the contrary. I mean just the uncommon which makes the very sacrality of art. No prejudices about means, obviously, the computer has its place here as well, A Romanian critic had once the wonderful idea to call a book "the morning of the poets". I would add a single [word].

Early morning, the d[a]wn. Hope you understand my metaphor. I propose to look for the openness offered once by Zarlino, or Pythagoras – to refer to some of the most ancient ones, uncompromised by unsuccessful results. I'm afraid you can't stay away for those things when you cho[o]se to practice the art of sound. From the very beginning you have to discover what interests you most of all, what works for you, what is convenient for you but also what delimits you not only from others but also from your artificial behaviours.

I once beg[a]n from this perspective. To meditate and listen with a Pythagorean ear. I was probably constrained by my own situation in Romania, where I found at the beginning as in front of a compact wall, beyond which I couldn't advance. The western culture, so magnificent, exhausted any thought of a new musical renewal. Things seemed so clear, eternal, obvious, that I couldn't anyway jump upon. It was the very deadlock of contemporary music, its fatality[.]

I threw up all what I had written. In a way they were merely promises more than achievements. Even so, few things, still provokes [for] me a real nostalgia. But my rebellion against memory was so huge that, for some time, which seems to me infinite, I only meditated, read and listened.

RK: What philosophers and texts would you say are particularly important to your understanding and application of [...] phenomenology and why?

ID: Husserl.

RK: You have described your approach to composing as focusing in on a single sound and eliminating distractions so that you can come to a full and clear understanding of it. You then worry afterwards about organizing things into a formal framework. Would you say that your approach is analogous to the phenomenological reduction discussed by Husserl and his disciples?

ID: To analyze can [...] sometimes also be harmful. Explanations also. It's difficult to say. Phenomenology is a method, supposing a kind of radicalism. It offers an access to the

true, to a precise projection, a direction, concerning the subtlest and the most complex aspects of the art. Phenomenology offers you the golden proportion of every point. You have only to train yourself and work with it. Then, after months or years, when you live and meditate as a phenomenologist, all becomes possible in the most spontaneous way.

RK: Do you feel that the slow and deliberate elaborations on simple gestures and the transformations and processes in the forms of your compositions are also related to your interest in phenomenology?

ID: Definitely. All the elaborations are connected to phenomenology. Forms also. Forms in music don't exist per se, like lifeless schemas. They are aspects of logics, of the particular, specific logic of music. But a new sonic material, phenomenologically discovered imposes new forms, also phenomenologically foreseen. The matter itself generates its own aggregation state, every time the result is a new chemical precipitate.

RK: I'm thinking, for example, of works like *Movemur et Sumus (III)*, *Holzwege*, and *Au Dela de Movemur* where you spend large amounts of time exploring the potential of a single string or single bowing technique before slowly transforming it into something else or onto additional strings. The experience of a stimuli or phenomenon coming into being seems very important to both your music and to phenomenology.

ID: Only phenomenology offers me the capacity of concentration, as in yoga, to direct my attention to a unique point. In one single sound, but making it living in time. Music is an experience, and always was, in real time, of the sound, of the combination of different sounds. Music doesn't [exist] only that a new living experience, which happens, has to be lived. From simple to complex. The contemplation almost unusual of a – to say so – single sound, that all is due to phenomenology. Which is direction. Concentration, elimination of epiphenomena. It's about the proportion of transformations, of abandons, of additions, but can be also the fact of giving them up. Imposing [on] you to retrace from the beginning a path. Phenomenology chains you, tightens you to a logical course,

but in the same time liberates you through a new choice, which obviously follows its own trajectory which chains you once more.

But, by phenomenology I also accessed an infinitely wider idea: the archetypal music and sound. I mean the trans-historical sound, archaic, primitive, the natural sound, succulent, barbarian (no pejorative connotations), this multi-dimensional sound, connected to the Cosmos. Phenomenology allowed me the access of those universal sources and models, trans-geographical, a-temporal. I would say transcendent in a Husserlian connotation. By the “noematic” access to sound, I could imagine a music suspended out of time and space, primordial and original, sort of “new universalism”. Beyond artificiality, subjective attitudes, arbitrary and whims, sort of objective projection of permanency and globalism.

RK: I’ve seen you mention both Orphism and eastern philosophy in other interviews. Could you briefly describe the importance of these philosophies to your work? Do you feel they have something in common with phenomenology? Orpheus is described as a Thracian and from the same region as modern Romania, does this regional affinity have any importance to you?

ID: There is a lot to say about that. The Orphic myth is about magic, about the subtle force of music. A subtle, initiatic force, which has to be practiced in order to be rewarding. The Orphic [hymn] dislocates rocks and mountains, speaks with wild animals, etc. It’s about adapting art to an entire WHOLE, to the cosmos, as well as to the interiority. But this is also the phenomenological problem. Husserl insists on the transcendental problem. Which isn’t a matter of mystics. It’s a transcendence of physics. The Thracian God is Orpheus, with a phenomenological anamnesis of Orphic archetypes we are aware of[;] I had a premonition – a relative one, of course – a sort of Orphism proper to Romanians. Romanians have a huge folk music. Bela Bartok, born here in Romania and whose musical material, musical themes of his own compositions are 70-80% Romanian, collected and recorded on wax cylinders more than 25000 Romanian folk songs. Passionate by the matter, at the end of one of the five volumes he makes a

statistical synthesis[;] based on a very detailed analysis, he indicates what I called the “idiom of Romanian music” discerning between incipit-formulas, middle formulas or figures and ending figures typical in Romanian traditional music. In this way, Bartok left us an x-ray of this “idiom”. He also x-rayed the musical form of “Cantec lung”, the modality of “parlando rubato”, as Romanian musical archetypes. These are very interesting scientific aspects. This anthropologic area between the Carpathian mountains and Danube river is the bearer of a very rich hand of diverse folklore, with huge implications in 20th[-]century music. For example, Gyorgy Ligeti, who studied for many years in Cluj and Bucharest composition, but also musical folklore, transcribed a lot of folk music and in his youth composed a splendid “Romanian Concert for Orchestra”[.] Aside [from] Bartok, Kodaly also used Romanian music in the major part of his composition. Kurtag also wrote, very recently a magnificent cantata on Romanian folk themes collected by Bartok. Iannis Xenakis was also born in Romania. All those great artists were Romanian citizens as well as their ancestors and declared as one their spiritual sources in Romanian musical culture. At least to say about Enescu. Therefore a bunch of the most important names among this fantastic generation of composers of the 20th and 21st centuries were in contact with this anthropologic traditional musical. If we may also add here Horatio Radulescu, Ana-Maria Avram, or even myself , but also our very remarkable maestros [...] (Aurel Stroe, Anatol Vieru, Stefan Niculescu, Tiberiu Olah) you definitely should listen [to a] few of their music to realise the quality of their creation, personalities at the highest European level, which could fulfil by only their work a whole chapter of avant-garde music.

As a phenomenologist I realised that this cultural space has a particular, distinct musical idiom, as well as the level of folk music but the conceptual music also. This sonic idiom has obvious similarities with the spoken language, which is a socio-natural and socio-cultural phenomenon, spatially and temporally determined.

You ask if there is any connection with my musical conception? I couldn't say it doesn't. This multitude of composers with important contributions in the recent history of music incited me to some reflections, with no definitive conclusions actually.

Working with Performers and the Stability of the Work:

RK: In other interviews you have said that you are interested in working with the individual character that performers bring to the performance of a work. I can also see this in the way that you include improvisando instructions in your scores and in the comments and recordings of performers like Cornelia Petroiu who often varies slightly from the notes you've written on the score. Do you view the composition as a work ? something that is finished when it leaves your pen and can only then be interpreted ? or do you believe that the performer is something of a co-author?

ID: Obviously, composition as a work. But a new music needs also a new scoring. It means a development on both levels[.] I mainly reject the definition of "improvisation" also evoked in connection with my music. Even I don't confer a pejorative meaning to this term. But any scoring can't [represent] more than it is. Gustav Mahler said once that "in a score you can find all, less the essential." Than every core supposes its free dimension. But it is not about a phenomenological freedom, oriented, directed. New music is a music of freedom, of a different way of assuming the written text. The oral dimension of music remains, as yesterday, a directly transmitted art, by a directly communicated tradition. We, besides, benefit today of the CD, the movie, which are also different way[s] of notation, of witnessing. But, beyond scores, music lives by its interpreters. Some of them more gifted, others less... There are also peculiar, genial exceptions, when the score is invested by an unbelievable dimension as always in the music history. Beethoven's symphonies, the music of Brahms, Mahler, Wagner, as we listen them today, we owe to some gigantic conductors and players who inaugurate them by a fantastic work, inspiration and power of invention. Only if you don't practise music you can't guess how important things like bowing, articulations, vibrato or non vibrato details, are. How [...] meaningful the peculiar sonority of each orchestral group is, depending of each composer. How important different musical editions are. Besides, so many fundamental works remained uncompleted, unfinished, let's say open scores.

On the other side interpreters can't be treated as slaves, used as bloody automatons. Scores are just ideal proposals. Possible to be realised only in about fifty per cent in integrum. That's the destiny of art, of music in particular. We have to accept that challenge or give up. Music is the most versatile, thing, under all conjectures and temporal variations. That's why somebody who thinks that under the Appassionata's score you'll find one single sonata, is an absolute ignorant. There are as many versions, valuable, as pianists. In the case of a new, and let's say experimental music, things become even more volatile, unreliable, blurry, exposed almost untreatably to disintegration, atomisation. All the problems arising becoming innumerable straightaway. The presence of the composer as a conductor is more than needed. The composer may be and has to be his own interpreter.

RK: You lead your own ensemble and you obviously work very closely with your performers. Could you briefly describe how you compose for the ensemble or for a soloist that you have in mind. Do you spend time workshopping instrumental techniques with the performer, and if so do you find that your performers often present you with sounds and ideas that lead you to a piece you may never have thought of before? Do you find yourself often pushing the performers beyond what they imagined they could play by presenting them with challenging and unconventional ideas of your own?

ID: Yes! The task is huge and the results not always comparable. Unfortunately the unedited aspects of composition can't be assimilated and kept only in memory. It's a Sisyphean work, starting always from the beginning, every day. In composition you are cursed to always commence. It's always a risked alpinism. That's why new generations don't allow themselves anymore the luxury of a really prospective endeavour. Or the one of a possible dreaming, fundamentally innovative. That's why the new, idealistic thinking is actually suspended, abandoned. Practical reasons, commercial ones reign over all our musical actions. Musical criticism has also, [doesn't] it, a deplorable role, indulging the conceptual laziness, the aesthetic promiscuity, the mimetism, the lack of originality, the soft thinking. Despite all that, the Latin proverb still remains valuable: "ars longa, vita

brevis.” If that could be understood, at least! Something valuable could remain from what I try to express, but I’m very sceptical about. Because nobody seems to try to understand something from this “theory of musical relativity”. This world was perverted to virtuosity, facility, so-called perfection (which obviously doesn’t exist) to the idea of super production, to happy-end. Or the living music, in its oral relativity is only an essay, an attempt to reach the absolute. These endeavours, even unsuccessful have their miracle. From the greatest failures the most important innovations of the future can eventually arise. The necessary ones. But the option of the establishment, is always the wrong one. They always chose the fake, against the real, they need fixed, mechanical things against real, absolute adventure, against the fluidity of the authentic thinking, generated by a living, unpredictable art.

The art, by definition, is the shortest way through freedom! That’s mainly the reason we need it.

In the very moment, instantaneously, we can detach ourselves from the quotidian reality, from the stressing, anxious banality. We have to win our freedom. But only in this elevated and courageous way, otherwise we need drugs. But we cannot obtain transcendence – freedom is a form of transcendence – if we just dream about conserved recipes ready made. Even my best friends, the most precious, to not speak about my irreducible enemies[,] don’t understand that the double measure of the truthfulness and the artistic artefact can’t be combined in the same alloy.

One of my best friends, a great musical pundit and supporter of my music for decades until very recently, but also now, asked me in the interval of a concert, why did I combine in my later works computer sound and instrumental music, because the computer is... a tool of capitalism! A strong argument, obviously, isn’t it? I tried to formulate an answer, actually, being scandalised by this matter [...] he attempted, even in a friendly way, to my freedom of decision, and this is absolutely unacceptable. What was pitiful was not the disappointing [attitude] of my friend but his lack of understanding about the way in which musical creation works, even if this creation was a real necessity for him.

Another friend thought that it was a matter of lack of rehearsals when, in a concert- as music took an inappropriate direction, I was forced to stop it, to make a few minutes break, all that in order to [...] handle things from the beginning. But this kind of thing happens often. It happened to me even [during] my very first concert with a symphony orchestra. A great conductor and a prestigious orchestra had to stop everything for about 40 seconds only because, due to an inner pressure of music, in the first bars the general sound was too strong and too intense for the huge following crescendo, which had to arrive to an overwhelming climax. Nothing could be repaired, because of this very fast evolution the musicians engaged into from the very beginning. No other solution than a new beginning. I can't tell you what a fantastic proof of authenticity and what a beneficial effect this difficult decision created for the orchestra, obliged to assume at a different level the proposed musical debate. So, when you can't deal with the arising incongruities, better to stop and propose a new beginning. Oh, what a catastrophe? So what? Where is the catastrophe? To continue in a wrong direction would be a greater one.

Why do I evoke all that? To explain for the ones thinking they are called to give final judgements on music, that all the energies, in music have, up to a point, an incontrollable aspect. A relative one. A score – as full of details as imaginable – can't avoid this uncontrollable dimension. Can you imagine that a well known music, such as – let's say - the Tristan overture, is always in danger to disintegrate, despite a tradition, and innumerable rehearsals? Honegger used to say that many ships, sailing on the tormented and perilous oceans are moving perfectly conversely. He was referring to music, [of] course. Even only the tempo, the speed of the music creates irreducible controversy among so called experts. But our audience, devoted to experimental music – even intelligent and open-minded, but who refuses in essence the classical repertory, when listening to an experimental concert, ignoring so many details and aspects! considers the music it listens to, as an immutable thing. Then I have to come back, and say again that an understanding of this situation can't come from elsewhere than phenomenology.

RK: You have discussed the idea of relative stability in interviews before. I am reminded of Karlheinz Stockhausen's ideas about statistical composition and the music of composers like Gyorgy Ligeti, where a texture can vary constantly but still be identified as a single and continuous object for formal purposes so long as the variance is within a reasonable and defined range of motion. Do you think this way about texture in your work, or differently?

ID: Absolutely right. “Relative stability” is elegantly and well said. Music, a temporal art, is in itself a tragic one, when about “stability.” Music dies with its last sounds and starts again with the first one. Even the tempo, the length, always differ. (You should try to compare different versions of the same symphony, then wonder how such differences are possible)[.] But still you can’t repeat it twice identically. There are no two identical measures. The same great soloist can’t play the same fragment identically. What’s the rule of such an art? Only if you situate yourself inside you can appreciate it properly. Celibidache is the only one who found a logical explanation about that. Nobody, from outside shouldn’t express about such a complicated phenomenon. As for the so[-]called critics, which very highly roused and completely out of the question decide the good and the bad in complete ignorance. Without any intuition about the matter. But that’s completely peripheral.

Your question got, finally to the crucial problem of music, and that’s important. Because of this “elasticity”, this relativity, music needs phenomenology, could be coordinated and understood in its inner essence. That’s crucial. Otherwise everything is indefinite, all ambition, all analysis is useless.

There is a phenomenology of the compositional act. Music isn’t “elastic” in a score. There, everything is rigorously static, lifeless, with no aura. We deal with a code, or a complex combination of codes, which have to be decrypted. It's a hermeneutics, where a lot of cultural aspects are in play. On the other side, aside of the score, music is always elastic. Music even doesn’t exist on paper! But it’s the vivid dimension which this poor sheet of paper can obtain. Music is just an experience that has to be lived. A

trajectory that has to be walked. There is also another side, the phenomenology of perception, hence of the listening.

The first one is about imagining a composition, its conception, its inspiration (but who still speaks today about inspiration!) then about its gradual fixing by the act of scoring, by eventually its computer-assisted components, etc. To write ten minutes of music could take a year or two. How do you expect somebody to be capable to remember in all this interval, all the details of the project? This elaboration is infinite. It also has a lot of arbitrary aspects. Someone untrained and unaccomplished gives his pitiful opinion about such a hard work which takes so much time. Is that acceptable?

The second aspect is about assuming all the details in the moment of the concert. When everything external, but also everything which accounts for the ideal profile of the music – the score, the explanations, the PA, the electronics – all those given aspects have to find their proportion. They are energies correctable during the temporal evolution, they can – and have to be – adjusted in each moment in order that, finally, letting the music to become true. Not once, any of the profiles taken by the works doesn't represent the very reality of the music. There is no perfect version. Only their integration, if it could be done, it would represent the ideal of all versions. Only phenomenology – which assumes the rectification of all determinations – external and internal – of the music, in real time, assuming the problem of authenticity, therefore [...] (but not of the perfection, reported to the score!) can give an acceptable answer and solution.

The third stage – the phenomenology of perception – puts the problem of the reception, of understanding. This is each time different. It is subjective, distinct, in connection with the anterior experiences and even the moods of the listener, etc. How is it possible to deal with so many irreducible inconsistencies? I always wonder, during rehearsals and concerts, when I notice that, even one moment is well realised, the next is a failure, partially or totally. Hence this feeling of a “tragic secret” in music. Next time, next performance, things can happen inversely: the beginning occurred imperfectly, but the continuation was absolutely convincing. I say “occurred” because things happen, independent of our willing, in an [a] priorism of the instant. And that even – and you maybe can imagine –how strong is the will to succeed. In a classical symphony, one

hundred musicians and the conductor create an energy which could move the mountains.

What is the explanation, then for such a liability?

Even things are like that, still, not so often but still, there are rare and blessed moments. They don't suppose any extra commitment, compared with the unrealised ones. Sometimes still, all the details, all the propositions, from the beginning at the end, acquire an ideal shape. All the symphonic ensemble transcended. Because this noetic condition and state of mind that Husserl writes, happens sometimes and when it happens, has a fantastic capacity of cohesion.

Then we can obtain in music the so desired Unity. The transcendence (after Husserl). Husserl is not an idealistic, but a realistic philosopher.

In that privileged, blessed moment we can rise over deadlocks, dangers, incapacities. And, as by wonder, all the internal and external conditions become possible, despite all impediments.

RK: You have mentioned before that you consider some of your music to be like instrumental acousmatic music. Could you describe this a little more? And does it have any relation for you to what Helmut Lachenmann calls his instrumental musique concrete?

ID: No connection with Lache[n]mann. Incidentally, the direct contact with his music happened in London, in 1997, in a concert proposed by a huge, a fantastically talented conductor Ilan Volkov, with the London Sinfonietta. They played in the same concert Lachenmann's and my music too.

Concerning acousmatic music, it's a completely different thing. What I mean by acousmatics when acoustical instruments are (the only) involved, has an abyssal, a transcendent and a metaphoric dimension which I can't discover in Lachenmann's approach, neither in his explanations. And I'm not at all concerned by this attitude which is completely non-phenomenological. The only similar aspect, if we can say so, is the fact that, using unconventional instrumental techniques, classical instruments are required to obtain unexpectedly and different timbres. But this is a very exterior aspect. The spiritual

aspects are but completely different. I'm not looking, by that means for a musique concrète – but for just music, or if I can paraphrase the expression, for a musique transfigurée.

Life in Romania as an Influence:

RK: You have lived through some very turbulent times in Romania. Could you speak briefly about what your childhood and education was like in Romania after the Second World War and if you feel this has influenced your musical interests at all? How did you come to music as your career and profession?

ID: I think I often spoke about this aspect of my life. And I don't believe that, apart from a biographic and anecdotic importance, it has a theoretical importance. Only a moral example, eventually.

Around four, probably in 1949 I witnessed the general search and arresting of my father with tragic consequences for the entire family. Three years of kept into custody without any awareness from the family, until the death of Stalin, that was unforgettable and with consequences for all my life. (My father was a philosopher and I grew up surrounded by books, in which I, later, always found my inspiration). When my father came home back, his life experience concerning what were the implication of the epoch for an intellectual operating with speech and writing changed completely his former convictions. Particularly concerning my future education. So, as he discovered I manifested some musical talents (he was also playing violin and had a pedagogic wide experience, therefore he was able to realize if I presented or not enough musical aptitudes for engaging myself in a musical profession), he strongly insisted that I should study music: Manipulating musical sounds seemed far less dangerous than using words and ideas.

So I began to study piano, and around eighteen I chose composition. But my father was wrong, because from the very beginning of my scholarship in composition I accompanied my activity as a composer with the one of musical reviewer and journalist. It was a very important challenge. I was trying, under difficult conditions, to engage my

writing through the construction of an axiological, selective dimension of the Romanian musical culture of that time. I wrote permanent editorials for important cultural magazines and newspapers such as “Luceafarul”, “România Literara”, than Radio broadcastings, articles in “Scânteia tineretului”, “România libera”, “Saptamâna Culturala” etc. In 1967 I was awarded with the prize for journalism of the Luceafarul magazine for my “originality and sharpness”. In the same dreadful period – by its harsh ideological limitations, its dogmatism and sclerosis the musicological interventions I was permanently making quickly attracted the attention. In the same time, maybe you can imagine that even the composers which I promoted (they were generally young but still much older than I was) considered me too juvenile for what they considered as a too daring and sententious attitude.

But it was necessary to reject to any risk the cultural repression. Firstly by drawing attention to other aesthetic attitudes, other names, and the marginalized ones – against those became the taboos, the untouchable "skills" of the time. It was necessary to propose another professional ethics, a new elite, imposing a new generation of composers. Thus, disarticulating one week after another the Establishment of the time, I became the official choice of the attacks, controversies, and charges in the official press, but could not be silenced. But that was also an obligation for me as a composer. As I was sustaining the new modern wave in Romanian composition, a really bright generation I already spoke about, and so I felt obliged in my own work, to do more, to be more radical, to go farther than them. I probably would have done much less as a composer without this sharp attitude as a musical critic, which strongly engaged me.

RK: In other interviews you have described how difficult it was to have access to resources and performance opportunities as a young composer. Do you feel that this led you to create your own infrastructure (Hyperion and Edition Modern) and so also indirectly influenced the way that you compose for musicians you know closely or work with regularly?

ID: Hyperion and Edition Modern are two very different things. Well... basically, and very generally you could say that the reasons I created both of them was the lack of opportunities. But it's a reductionist point of view.

First of all, I inaugurate the Hyperion Ensemble – a group of interpreters but also of composers animated by new ideas, composers of my own generation, it was not only for presenting my own music, but to emphasize a new aspect, a new trend in Romanian music, connected to natural resonance, overtones, or archetypes. And one of my aims was to rely this modern attitude with the immemorial tradition, with Byzantine music and traditional Romanian music. This was a good point not only for the censorship, but also for the audience. This parallel was always present, with this very old musical culture – still alive by the way (Byzantine and folk music were not a matter of the museum in Romania, but a part of everyday life). But the aesthetical attitude and the approach of those very old music were radical, very modern, very experimental, so it was not difficult for the audience to understand the modern music I presented through those traditional musics, and vice versa.

Only much later, when the group of composers I gathered together changed their musical endeavour through a more traditional, less courageous musical attitude, that I abandoned them little by little in favour of younger, more radical people that I chose to support.

As for Edition modern... at the time I already had editors, but I didn't want to depend anymore of their caprices. One of the most absurd and unfair whim was the refusal of Robert Zank – RZ Edition, to release CDs at the time, he was completely stubborn and radically against, and he dared to interdict me to release anything other than LPs. So despite all this nonsense, I chose to release myself my work on CDs. To express my own musical evolution. Taking my own risks. Today you can't anymore be accompanied by anybody, as yesterday. The era of great editors – partners of radical and revolutionary musicians of their time – is gone forever.

RK: The topic of folk music has come up in a number of interviews and Ana-Maria has mentioned the importance of folk music to your work, in particular the use of certain techniques like heterophony. Do you feel that your music will live on and evolve as a

tradition as it passes through the hands of different performers and how do you see your role as composer in that situation?

ID: Folk music was important and meaningful at the beginning of my engagement towards spectral – or proto-spectral music. I already said that my aim was the discovery of a new avant-garde, a new way – different from structuralist music which I respected and admired but I felt like a deadlock already, in the '60s.

Romania has, more than other countries in Europe, a traditional music, which is preponderant, made with a sonic material derived from the harmonic series, or even using concretely overtones. Otherways my reference to traditional folk heritage had, from the beginning, a similar attitude (of abstractization, generalization) with the way Brancusi referred to traditional Romanian heritage. Concerning heterophony – which is a very large paradigm – it is a necessity when using a spectral material, I believe. Harmony is inappropriate, polyphony would be a fake, only monody, homophony and heterophony are organic. Off course, things are complex, have and needs to be complex, you can have a polyphony as a number of different layers using heterophonic proceedings inside each other... for example.

RK: Do you feel that the legacy of folk music has also influenced your openness to performer interpretation and the idea of a fluid or relatively stable compositions?

ID: Of course. All folk music is oral. But not only. Oral doesn't mean something non-structured, improvised, lacking a musical thought, on the contrary! Partially exact, but only partially. Music is, I repeat, not only an audible phenomenon.. Like the spoken language, as Chomsky would say, the structure, the logics, are problems of super-consciousness, The coherency can't exist outside of a paradigm, which is a given one. We bore with it, as well as with the meanings. Only when alienated we became incoherent, with no logical succession. When about music, things are slightly different. Music is not a language. There is no reference in the semiotic triangle, for musical objects. But still, the same laws of coherence, of logical succession exists. They are strong and remnant, Even

the arbitrary, the perfect improvisation, happens always after the well known paradigm. Even we try to get rid of it, sometimes. It's more innate than any spoken grammar.

Alternances (1&2)

RK: Could you briefly explain the second movement of *Alternances (1&2)*?

ID: This part is called "Memorial," which means that, indeed, musicians choose from the previous formulas and play them independently. It's like a disintegration/deconstruction and memory of the previous movement. In principle I do not have any other comments to make, so musicians should be free, while understanding the spirit of this freedom.

RK: Do you consider *Alternances (1&2)* to be a mature spectral work?

ID: It's not spectral music yet, of course.

Appendix B: Scores for *Alternances (1&2)* and *Movemur et Sumus (3)*¹

¹ Many of the pages of these scores appear to be low quality scans and they are not always clear. This is the condition in which they were provided to me and I have reproduced them faithfully here.

Alternances (1&2)

IANCU DUMITRESCU
(Bucharest - 1957)

ALTERNANCES (1 & 2)

music for string quartet

TREMENDANDO (inspiratory)

mp
pizz
Accelerando e Crescendo
ff

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

← 25" →

ff

mp
pizz
Dim. Capotasto
Sforzato

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Vc.

← 20" →

2

pp *f* *mp*

ritardando
ritardando larghetto

Vln I *sfz subito pp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp*

Vln II *sfz subito pp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp*

Vla *sfz subito pp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp*

Vc. *sfz subito pp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp* *sfz mp*

25

Rapido

pp *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *pp*

pizz arco
A A F G
pizz guitar
arco
pizz arco
A A D A
pizz guitar

5

REPETTA QUANTO ELETTRONICI

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

arco
pizz

Vln I *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vln II *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vla *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

5

Arco Normale

9'' 6''

Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vc.

p *ff*

con sord.
rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

RAPIDO

45''

Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vc.

p *ff*

con sord.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

DINAMICO

9''

Percussion
Arco and Cembalo

p *pp* *ppp* *ff* *fz*

con sord.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

rit.
rit.
rit.
rit.

8

CALMO, POETICO, IMPROVISANDO

LEGERO 20" 15" 2"

Violin I
Cembalo
Flautando
(Pausa)
Flautando

Violin II
Cembalo
Flautando
(Pausa)
Flautando

Viola
Cembalo
Flautando
(Pausa)
Flautando

Violoncello
Cembalo
Flautando
(Pausa)
Flautando

25"

LEGERO
CALMO, POETICO, IMPROVVISANDO

The musical score is arranged in four systems, one for each instrument: Violin I (Vn I), Violin II (Vn II), Viola (Vn), and Violoncello (Vc). Each system consists of two staves of music. The first staff in each system is marked 'Crescendo' and the second 'Flautando'. The dynamics are indicated as 'ppp' at the beginning and end of each system. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

AGITATO *pp* Continuo

20 ← 20" →

30

Vln I (sul G) (Tutte le Corde)
Cilindro rapido Tremolo

Vln II (sul D) (Tutte le Corde)
Cilindro rapido Tremolo

Vla (sul G) (Tutte le Corde)
Cilindro rapido Tremolo

Vc. (sul D) (Tutte le Corde)
Cilindro rapido Tremolo

8" →

35

Vln I (simile) *ben f* Arco pesante (irregolare)

Vln II (simile) *ff* Arco fisso molto agitato

Vla (simile) *ff* Arco fisso molto agitato

Vc. (simile) *ff* Arco fisso molto agitato

15" →

subito *pp* (tempo normale)

subito *pp* (tempo normale)

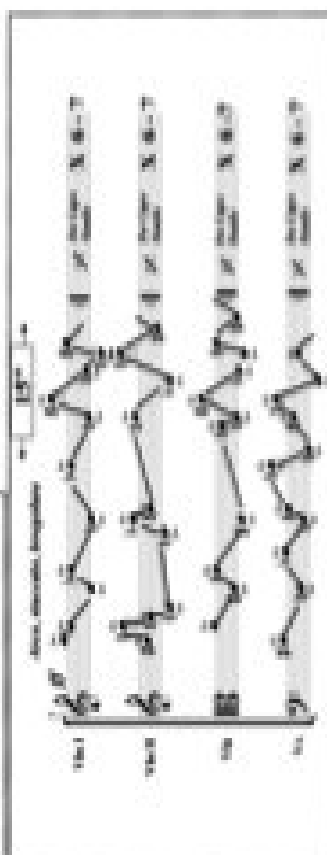
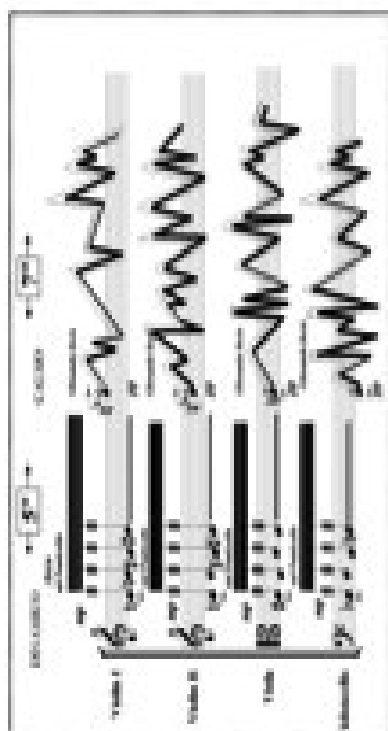
subito *pp* (tempo normale)

subito *pp* (tempo normale)

ben f

The image shows a musical score for a string ensemble. It is divided into two systems. The first system, starting at measure 30, is marked 'AGITATO' and 'pp Continuo'. It features four staves: Violin I (sul G), Violin II (sul D), Viola (sul G), and Violoncello (sul D). Each staff contains a dense, irregular tremolo pattern. A horizontal double-headed arrow above the staves indicates a width of 20 inches. The second system, starting at measure 35, is marked 'ben f'. It features the same four staves. The Violin I and II parts are marked 'Arco pesante (irregolare)', while the Viola and Cello parts are marked 'Arco fisso molto agitato'. A horizontal double-headed arrow above the staves indicates a width of 8 inches. The system concludes with four staves, each marked 'subito pp (tempo normale)', indicating a sudden change to piano dynamics and a return to normal tempo. A final 'ben f' marking is present at the bottom right of the page.

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc.). Each instrument part is written on a five-line staff. Above each staff, there are performance instructions and dynamic markings. The instructions include "picciolato continuo" (pizzicato continuo), "Arco" (arco), and "ritmo sul ponte" (rhythm on the bridge). The dynamic markings are *pp* (pianissimo) and *ff* (fortissimo). There are also two boxes with arrows indicating dimensions: a box labeled "4''" and another labeled "1''". The score is enclosed in a dashed-line border.



11

Tutti in Forza

arco poco 1/8mo
arco poco 1/4mo
arco poco 1/8mo
arco poco 1/4mo

ff

Trepidando

arco
pizz
arco
arco 1/8mo

ff

Da Capo
Stabile

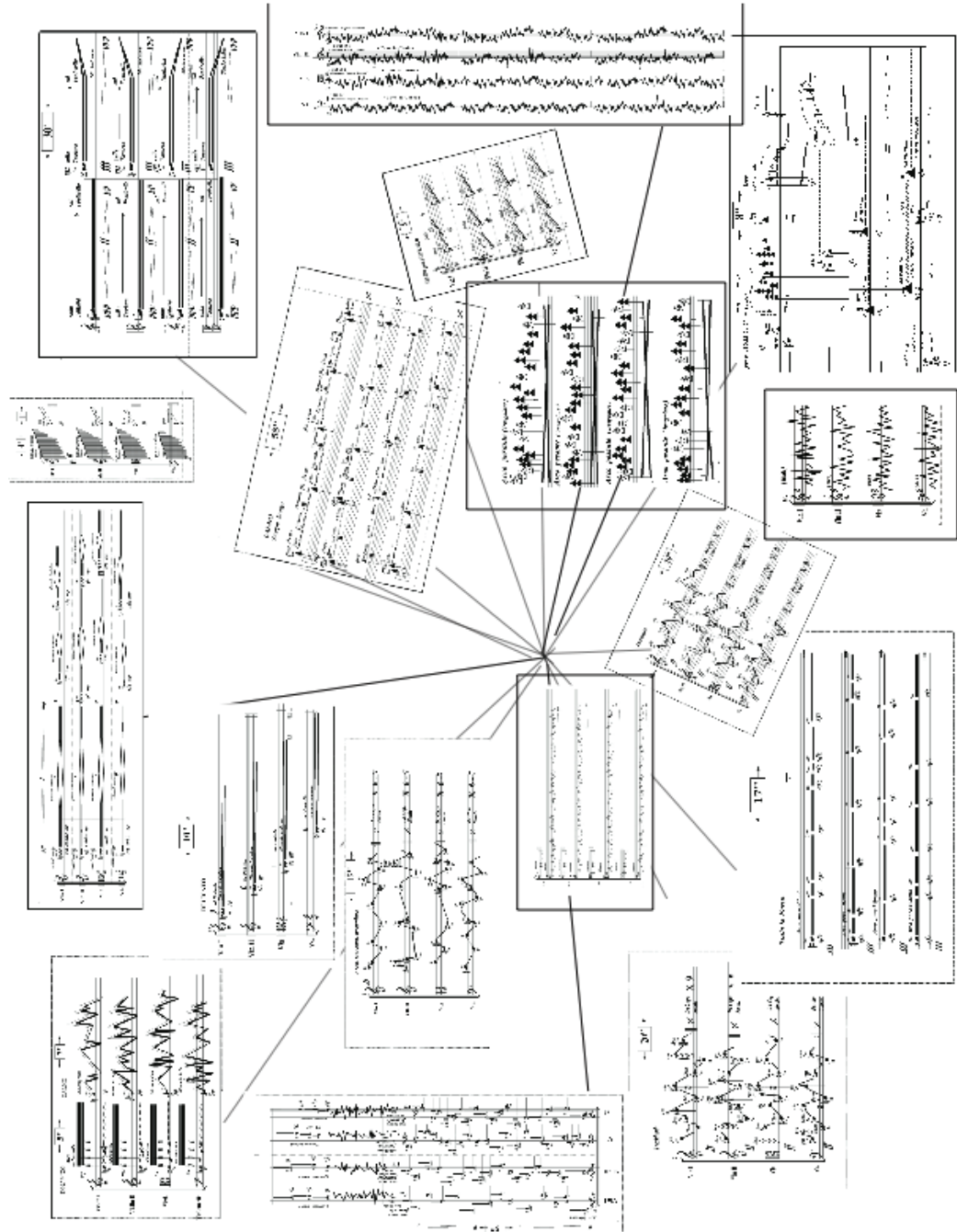
15''

mf
pp

pizz
arco
arco 1/8mo

14''

pizz
arco
arco 1/8mo



The image displays a musical score for guitar, consisting of two systems of staves. The notation includes various dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *mp*, *f*, *mf*, and *p*, along with performance instructions like *efetto*, *posizione*, *ben sonoro*, *molto sonoro*, *sonoro*, *molto*, *ben*, *sonoro tutta la forza*, and *pausa 3"-5"*. The score is written in a style typical of classical guitar notation, with multiple staves per system and detailed articulation.

efatto
positional (sonoro) (molto sonoro)
p (sonoro) p (molto sonoro)
mf (molto sonoro) mf (molto sonoro)
ff (ben sonoro) ff (ben sonoro)
mp (sonoro) mf (sonoro) p (sonoro) f (sonoro)
poco sonoro (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (sonoro) tutta la forza (sonoro)
ff (sonoro) ff (sonoro) tutta la forza (sonoro) (sonoro)
poco sonoro (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
mf (molto sonoro) mf (molto sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
du (poco sonoro) du (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
mp (poco sonoro) mp (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
ppp (poco sonoro) ppp (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
infinitum (poco sonoro) infinitum (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
ppp (poco sonoro) ppp (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)
ppp (poco sonoro) ppp (poco sonoro) (sonoro) (ben sonoro) (sonoro) (poco sonoro) (poco sonoro)

pausa 2"-4"