STRAVINSKY, *SEPTET* (1953)

OVERVIEW & BACKGROUND

• transitional work
  –displays aspects of both neo-classicism and serialism

• three movements:
  1) Movement I (basically sonata form)
  2) Passacaglia (a sort of theme and variations)
  3) Gigue (a double fugue)

• composed soon after the *Cantata*, a work which employs numerous contrapuntal techniques

• instrumentation similar to Schoenberg's *Suite*, op. 29
  –Schoenberg: Clarinets (E-flat, B-flat, Bass), Violin, Viola, Cello, & Piano
  –Stravinsky: Clarinet in A, Horn (F), Bassoon, Violin, Viola, Cello, & Piano

• formal structure similar to Schoenberg's *Suite*, op. 29
  –last two movements of each are a theme w/variations and a gigue

• theme of Passacaglia and Gigue is a 16-note theme
  –strikingly similar to the 12-tone row from Schoenberg's *Wind Quintet*, op. 26

• first piece by Stravinsky to dispose of key signatures
  –first movement, at least partially, uses key signatures in a final nod to tonality

STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS

• highly contrapuntal, especially in the third movement
  –themes appear in prime form, inversions, retrogrades, and retrograde-inversions
  –metrical variation and displacement of augmented and diminuted themes
  –imitative, if not canonic or fugal

• strong rhythmic profile to themes
  –rhythms help define thematic content
  –great variety of rhythmic structures and values between sections and instruments
  –rhythms often take precedence over any specific register, timbre, or pitch

• centricity
  –sounds almost tonal at times, yet functional harmony is mostly avoided
  –pitch organization focuses around a pitch center, often {A}
  –often uses "cadences" on goal chords, i.e. "poles of attraction"

• heterophony
  –consistent use of multiple themes subject to various transformations

Stravinsky's *Septet* (1953)

STRUCTURE

Movement I
- sonata form
- pitch centricity (A major/minor)
- changing use of key signatures
- metric displacement (see m. 5)
- cellular technique
- non-serial

Reh. No.	Section	Characteristics
opening	Exposition	Clarinet theme w/ "tonal" augmentations in Horn and Bn
1		E minor; inversion of theme in upper strings
2		white-note counterpoint (A major)
3		chromatic transition
4	Development	thematic deconstruction; imitative texture; P_0 in Cl & Vln
5		episodic
6		P_0 in Bn & Vcl w/Cl in 3rds
7	Pedal	Ab major
8		stretto sequence of perfect fifths; "non-periodic" cadence
9	Recapitulation	repeats opening
10		Reh. #1 down a M2
11		Reh. #2 down a M2 (white-note counterpoint in G major)
12		Reh. #3 down a M2
13	Coda	transitional
14		thematic augmentation; heterophony

Movement II, Passacaglia
- theme and variations (in arch form?)
- 16-note theme based on 8 unique pitch classes
- many phrases seem to begin in E minor and move to A major
- exploration of timbre and register with rhythmic unity
- pseudo-serial

Reh. No.	Section	Passacaglia	Characteristics
opening	Theme	shared	*Klangfarbenmelodie*
15	Var. 1	Cello & Piano	2-pt cpt in Cl & Bn; offset canon in Horn
16	Var. 2	Cello	diminution canons in upper voices
17	Var. 3	Cello & Violin	sequence of canons in piano (P, I, R, RI)
18	Var. 4	Cello & Piano	2-pt cpt in Cl & Bn;
19	Var. 5	Bassoon & Piano	fragmentation
20	Var. 6	Winds	rhythmic variations
21	Var. 7	Cello & Piano	2-pt cpt in Cl & Bn; canons in upper voices
22	Var. 8	shared	P, I, and RI in various voices; heterophony
23	Var. 9	shared	repeats opening texture (*Klangfarbenmelodie*)

Stravinsky's *Septet* (1953)

Movement III, Gigue
• double fugue (based on the ground bass from the Passacaglia)
• theme provides rhythmic ostinato
• "rows" as a collection of pitches akin to a scale
• serial

Reh. No.	Section	Entrances	Row Form
opening	Exposition 1	Viola	P_4
24		Violin	P_{11}
25		Cello	P_4
26	Episode	Viola	P_9
27		Viola	P_{11}
28		Cello	P_9
29		Violin	P_6
30	Transition		
31	Cadence		B major (V/V?)
32	Exposition 2	Piano (RH)	P_4
33		Horn	$Aug(P_{11})$
34		Piano (LH)	P_4
35		Clarinet	$Aug(P_4)$
36	Episode	Piano (LH)	P_{11}
37		Horn Bassoon	P_9 P_2
38	Pedal		
39	Cadence		B major
40	Exposition 3	Viola	I_6
41		Violin	I_{11}
42		Cello	I_6
43	Episode		
44		Cello	I_{11}
45		Violin	I_6
46	Episode		
47		Viola	I_{11}
48	Transition		
49	Cadence		B major (dom7?)
50	Exposition 4	Piano (RH) Horn	I_6 $Aug(I_2)$
51		Clarinet Piano (RH)	$Aug(I_8)$ I_{11}
52		Piano (LH)	I_6
53		Clarinet	$Aug(R(I_9))$
54		Bassoon	$Aug(I_2)$
55		Piano (LH)	I_{11}
56		Piano (RH)	I_6
57	Episode		
58		Clarinet Bassoon	$Aug(P_8)$ $Aug(P_4)$
59	Transition		
60	Cadence		A major (+ extras)

SCORES

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                REF: M722 .S365 op. 29 1954
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        Boosey & Hawkes, 1953.
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RECORDINGS

Stravinsky, Igor. *Septet.* Detroit Chamber Winds and Friends. *Instrumental music: Selections.*
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Schoenberg, Arnold. *Suite, op. 29*. Ensemble InterContemporain. *Schoenberg: Suite, Verklärte*
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Stravinsky's *Septet*
(1953)

Trevor de Clercq
MUY590 Bullard
07/11/07

Example 1a: opening theme (mvmt 1)

Example 1b: thematic transformation ~ inversional
(mvmt 1, development)
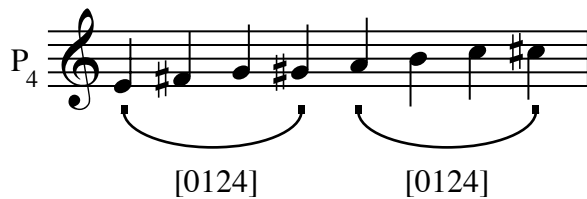
Example 2a: 16-note theme (Passacaglia & Gigue)

P_4

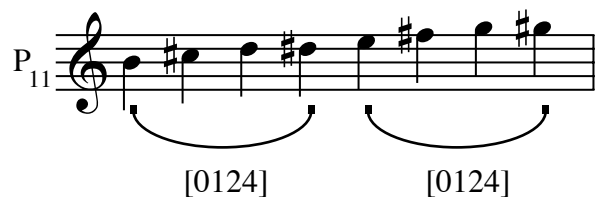Example 2b: 16-note theme (showing similarity to opening theme in Ex. 1a)

P_9

Example 2c: 16-note theme, inversion

I_6

Example 3a: Stravinsky's "Row"

P_4

[0124]   [0124]

Example 3b: Stravinsky's "Row" up a fifth

P_{11}

[0124]   [0124]

Example 4a: 12-tone row from Schoenberg's *Wind Quintet*, op. 26

P_3

Example 4b: Schoenberg's row (showing similarity to Stravinsky's 16-note theme)

I_3