VOICE, ITINERANT, AND *AIR:* A PERFORMANCE AND

ANALYTICAL GUIDE TO THE SOLO FLUTE WORKS

OF TORU TAKEMITSU

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BY

ELIZABETH A. ROBINSON

DISSERTATION ADVISORS: DR. MIHOKO WATANABE AND

DR. LINDA POHLY

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

In the late 20th and early 21st century, the music world became accustomed to ethnic, cultural, and geographic synthesis of style and technique. This blending of sounds and influences is clearly seen in the evolution of Toru Takemitsu's compositional style, and is particularly evident in three of his works for solo flute: *Voice, Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi*, and *Air.* These works provide both quality and interesting repertoire for the flutist and further insight into how composers draw on a multitude of musical and philosophical influences.

While it is possible to create a convincing performance of one piece without familiarity with the other two, or with the rest of Takemitsu's output, the pieces are so interconnected in philosophy, and in compositional style, that it is necessary for a flutist to become familiar with all three in order to form a true understanding of an individual work.

I have chosen to research this topic in part to expand the body of knowledge in the flute community, and in part to reflect my own interest in the works of Toru Takemitsu. This interest developed while living in the Bay Area, where Pacific Rim culture thrives,

and interest in Takemitsu's writing is high. As a flutist interested in performing

unfamiliar repertoire, particularly repertoire containing extended techniques, I found

these works to be particularly daunting. Through this dissertation, I hope to create a

framework for understanding Takemitsu's pieces, in order to help them become a staple

of the flute repertoire.

<div align="center">Background and Purpose</div>

Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996) traveled a path that could be considered unique,

even among 20th-century composers. He began his career as a little-known, self-educated

composer from a country that was not widely considered a source of significant influence

on Western classical music. His initial works made use of modern techniques inherited

from the French school. As his writing matured, his style became more individualized,

incorporating more and more of his own Japanese heritage. This combination of styles

put him on the map as one of the first prominent Asian composers to achieve

international significance. Throughout his career, Takemitsu's works came to rely heavily

on the flute, which the composer felt was naturally suited to portraying his Japanese

heritage.

Takemitsu did not study music in a traditional Western curriculum, as was the

case with many composers of the 20th century. Instead of pursuing a degree in

composition or performance, Takemitsu was self-taught. While he did have occasional

private instruction, his primary method of study was the transcription of works by noted

composers. One composer he copied extensively was Claude Debussy, whose

compositional style was later reflected in Takemitsu's works. Takemitsu biographer Peter

Burt points to these transcriptions as the source of a handful of Debussy quotes in

Takemitsu's later writings.[1] The style of his mature writings has been frequently compared to the Impressionistic works of Debussy, which is especially evident in the metric organization and harmonies.

In early adulthood, Takemitsu became associated with two Japanese music groups. The first was the New Composition Group**,** or *Shin-sakkyokuha*, which provided a vehicle for the first performances of Takemitsu's works. It was during his association with these composers that he began studying with Yasuji Kiyose, his first and only private teacher. Takemitsu separated himself from this group, and from Kiyose, joining the Experimental Workshop, or *Jikken Kobo*. The *Jikken Kobo* included composers, musicians, artists, poets, philosophers, and writers. Many of the members of this group had no formal training in their respective field, and were decidedly uninterested in nationalistic performances, which further appealed to the young Takemitsu.[2]

The *Jikken Kobo'*s main musical goal was to move beyond the German compositional style, which dominated music schools in Japan in the 1940s. As a result, they were interested in contemporary techniques and styles that were gaining popularity in France. Through this group, Takemitsu was introduced to the most avante-garde electronic music, as well as the newest works of Olivier Messiaen. During his time with this group he made the acquaintance of Shuzo Takiguchi, a Japanese poet and a leading member of the *Jikken Kobo*. Takiguchi was likely responsible for immersing Takemitsu in the world of French arts. French favorites of Takiguchi, and eventually of Takemitsu,

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[1] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001), 221.

[2] Burt, 39.

included symbolist painters, writers, and poets, as well as the existential philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), whose writings fascinated Takemitsu for the remainder of his life.[3]

As a young composer in the *Jikken Kobo*, Takemitsu also met Isamu Noguchi, a Japanese artist, sculptor, and architect. Noguchi's contribution to Takemitsu's composition was two-fold, as he introduced Takemitsu to the aesthetics that inspired Japanese gardens, and to philosophies about art and nature that appear more and more frequently in the composer's late works. *And I Knew 'twas Wind…* and *Air* both dwell on Takemitsu's belief that wind related to human thought.

After Noguchi's death in 1989, Takemitsu completed a piece for solo flute dedicated to Noguchi, entitled *Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi.* Though the title does not directly invoke air, the word itinerant literally means traveling from place to place. It can refer to a nomadic person, but is also commonly used to refer to a wandering wind. Additionally, Takemitsu's writings indicate that he considered this to be among his wind pieces, and in this case, the wind was searching for identity, a concept the composer felt paralleled his friend's life.[4]

Influenced by both Western contemporary and Japanese traditional music, Takemitsu established a language of his own, "exemplifying the coexistence of

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[3] Timothy Koonzin, "Toru Takemitsu and the Unity of Opposites," *College Music Symposium* 30, no. 11 (1990): 40.

[4] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 220.

assimilation and individuality."[5] Throughout his career, Takemitsu enjoyed international

recognition through performances of his works by major artists and ensembles, including

several New York Philharmonic premieres led by his friend Seiji Ozawa, as well as Peter

Serkin. Most of his works were published by Editions Salabert (Paris) and Schott Japan.

In addition, he was made an honorary member of the American Academy and Institute of

Arts and Letters in 1984, and he received several awards from European and Japanese

governments.

These awards were accompanied by a career that included visiting professorships

at Yale University, in 1975, and the University of California at San Diego, in 1981. In

Japan, he founded and organized an annual contemporary music festival called "Music

Today," which allowed composers and critics from around the world to participate in

experimental music demonstrations.

Takemitsu authored a large body of works about music, literature, philosophy,

other forms of art, and the sources that inspired his creativity. His topics included

Japanese and French poetry, paintings, personal ideas about nature, and his philosophical

beliefs and experiences. These beliefs often served as the framework for his writings; the

flute works to be discussed herein are no exception.

In both his literary writing and musical composition, Takemitsu's language often

makes use of symbolism. This was the subject of Noriko Ohtake's writings about the

works of Takemitsu, and it played a large role in the interpretation of *Voice, Itinerant*,

and *Air.* This focus on symbolism also reflected Japanese culture, in which "both artistic

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[5] Noriko Ohtake, "Creative Sources for the Music of Toru Takemitsu" (DMA Diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1990), 1.

and practical communications are ambiguous."[6] The Japanese language, both spoken and written, relies heavily on imagery. Takemitsu's works were often written with multiple layerings of meaning, leading Takemitsu scholars to accept this vagueness as the basis of his aesthetic.

The three solo flute works that are the focus of this study are each an example of this blended approach. *Voice* (1971) combines elements of traditional Japanese theater with lines from a poem by Shuzo Takiguchi, in both French and English, and implies the use of a traditional Japanese flute. There is uncertainty as to which flute Takemitsu intended to imitate, but the score indicates a *Noh* flute. There will be more discussion of this issue in the chapter about *Voice* that follows.

Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi (1989) was intended as an homage to Takemitsu's friend, Isamu Noguchi. The juxtaposition of Western music with an imitation of Japanese-style flute was intended to imitate his friend's struggle for a cross-cultural identity. In this instance, Takemitsu chose to imitate the sound and style of the *shakuhachi* flute. Additionally, as noted above, Takemitsu often linked the concept of human thought with wind, an idea he developed early in his life.

The final flute work, *Air* (1995), juxtaposes the composer's life-long interest in the natural elements, as indicated by the title, with traditional Baroque airs. This work is also structured around two pitch-class sets that appeared in several of Takemitsu's late works, making use of pentatonic and octatonic scales.

This dissertation seeks to create an informed guide to understanding Takemitsu's works for solo flute, through an examination of common traits in the three solo works:

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[6] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss., 2.

Voice, Itinerant, and *Air*. I have examined these traits with the hope of creating a more comprehensive understanding of the works individually, and as a sub-grouping of Takemitsu's compositional output – in this case, works for solo flute. These works share common qualities influenced by Japanese aesthetics: *ma* (which translated into English refers to space, or silence), hollow-tone trills and multiphonics, and a layering of several nonmusical programmatic inspirations. These elements appear in each of the three works, though Takemitsu's approach to incorporating them is significantly different in each piece. I also place these works in the context of his overall evolution of style as a composer.

<div align="center">Definitions</div>

1. *ma* space, or silence

    Ma is a Japanese concept of space, or silence. Often in Takemitsu's music, a characteristic pattern of musical action and rest contributes to the internal shape of a musical gesture. Phrases are created through varied texture. This involves a blend of sustained sound that fades into silence; the silence is often ended by growing from a very soft sound into a more clearly audible dynamic. As shifting timbres fade into the surrounding silence, performer and listener are united in what Tim Koonzin, a Takemitsu scholar, refers to as "the simple act of listening."[7] To heighten the effect, Takemitsu would often approach extended periods of rest with instructions of *diminuendo*, or *niente*, in order to have the effect of merging sound with silence, and merging them again as the performer re-entered after these silences. Dana Wilson refers to this blending of textures

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[7] Timothy Koonzin, "Traversing Distances: Pitch Organization, Gesture, and Imagery," *Contemporary Music Review* 21, no. 4 (2002): 18.

as the "fade-in and fade-out" technique.[8] This technique helps Takemitsu to create his

musical impressions of wind, air, and the more complex philosophical concepts he wishes

to depict through his music. It draws attention to the ebb and flow of sound.

More importantly, *ma* differs from the Western concept of rest as a silence, in that

it is situational and therefore cannot be strictly measured. The sound and the silent space

that follows it are considered equal, and must be held in balance. Though Takemitsu

employs rests to indicate *ma*, the markings are indicated like *fermatas*, and subject to the

performer's interpretation. To create appropriate *ma* for a given piece, the performer must

take into account the performance venue and the way that it absorbs sound. Similarly, to

create balance, the performer must give *ma* the same intensity as the sound that leads to

it; if a phrase ends at its peak, the following moment of *ma* must allow the sound to

completely dissipate in order to create good *ma*, or balance.

While it may be argued that this concept exists in Western music as *rubato*, or in

the space at the close of a work, Western music tends to focus on stretching moments of

sound creation, as in *rubato*. A pause at the end of the work allows for a moment of

reflection, and comes close to the Japanese idea of *ma,* but Japanese space can occur

within a piece, between phrases, while the Western idea tends to occur only at the end of

a work.

2. hollow tones or hollow-tone trills

Some contemporary flutists refer to pitches that use non-standard fingerings to

shade the pitch as hollow tones. Trills between different colorings of the same note do not

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[8] Dana Wilson, "The Role of Texture in Selected Works of Toru Takemitsu" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1992), 118.

use the natural fingerings, or accepted alternate fingerings that create approximations of the actual pitch. Instead, the shaded tones are used as the basis for the trills for coloristic effect; for the purpose of this dissertation, I am referring to these as hollow-tone trills.[9] Hollow tones do not create the usually attendant overtone series, and group series of non-standard fingerings and trills allows Takemitsu to create *portamenti* between pitches a half step or more apart on a woodwind instrument that does not generally support wide *portamenti*. The hollow-tone pitches also allow Takemitsu to alter the colorings of pitches as they are repeated throughout the context of a work.

3. multiphonics

A multiphonic is an extended technique in instrumental music in which a monophonic instrument (one which generally produces only one note at a time) is made to produce several notes at once. Multiphonics in wind music are primarily a 20th-century technique, first explicitly required in the *Sequenza* for solo flute by Luciano Berio and *Proporzioni* for solo flute by Franco Evangelisti, though the brass technique of singing while playing has been known since the 18th century.

4. *Noh* theater and music

Noh theater is a traditional Japanese genre of theater. There are several divisions of plot, all of which center around the interaction of a human and a spirit. Stories are generally historic in nature, and the exclusively male actors frequently wear masks bearing a fixed facial expression.

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[9] Robert Dick, *Tone Development Through Extended Techniques* (St. Louis, MO: Multiple Breath Music Co., 1986), 36.

Noh music employs four instruments: two hand drums, another drum played with a stick, and a transverse bamboo flute. These instruments support a singer and sometimes a chorus, which sing chant. The *Noh* flute is played in both congruent and non-congruent rhythmic styles in entrance music and instrumental dances. In non-congruent segments, the flute plays set patterns improvisationally. It also plays in free rhythm (*ashirai*) along with the chanted text to heighten or expand emotion. The melody of the flute and chanting have no specific pitch relationship, though they often have similar melodic contours. [10]

Takemitsu drew from this tradition of theater and music in *Voice,* suggested by the text that references a spirit, which is a common theme in some types of *Noh* theater. He also suggests *Noh* music through the use of sound effects for the Western flute, particularly the articulation style, which may have been intended to invoke the *Noh* flute.[11]

5. whistle tones

The flute whistle tone, also known as the flageolet, is produced by blowing very gently across the embouchure hole. These sounds are also called whisper tones. Any standard fingering can be used, but low-octave fingerings enable the flutist to produce the harmonic series throughout the flute range.[12]

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[10]Tatsuo Minagawa, "Japanese *Noh* Music," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1957): 185.

[11]Wilson, 225.

[12]Dick, 26.

6. sea motive

In the early 1980s, Takemitsu was inspired by the imagery in James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, and he began using a three-note ascending motive E-flat, E, and A in many works that he associated with water. In Western musical tradition, when E-flat is read in the German pronunciation, it is read as "S." When joined with the other pitches, this produces the English word sea.[13]

Takemitsu employed the sea motive in his duo for alto flute and guitar, *Toward the Sea,* and in his and trio for flute, harp, and viola, *And I Knew 'twas Wind ….* The same motive can be found in some of his orchestral works,[14] and may have been used as a linking device in his final work for solo flute, *Air.* This link will be discussed in the analysis of *Air* that follows.

Review of Literature

It has become increasingly commonplace to examine the works of composers who combine both Western and Asian styles. These studies frequently group works by a common theme, such as Linda Hsiu-Chuan Sung's examination of Takemitsu's harp writing, Dana Wilson's examination of texture in the works of Takemitsu, or In-Sung Kim's dissertation examining elements of Asian music in works for solo flute by three different Asian composers.

Regarding Takemitsu's solo flute works, there has been some attempt to analyze and understand *Voice.* Dana Wilson and In-Sung Kim both address Takemitsu's use of

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[13] James Siddons, *Toru Takemitsu: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 19.

[14] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 221.

Shuzo Takiguchi's poem as the programmatic inspiration for *Voice.* Both believe that

Takemitsu was inspired by *Noh* theater and its emphasis on the spirit world, as well as the

Japanese style of flute playing. Here, the two sources differ, in that Wilson believes *Voice*

relates the playing style to Japanese *shakuhachi* playing.[15] Kim believes it to have been

inspired by the *Noh* flute, which would have accompanied the *Noh* theater.[16] My research

supports In-Sung Kim's assertion that *Voice* was inspired by *Noh* flute rather than

shakuhachi, and that Wilson misunderstood, or was unaware, of the distinction between

shakuhachi and *Noh* flute playing.

  Wilson, Kim, and Takemitsu scholar Peter Burt agreed that Takemitsu likely drew

from Bruno Bartolozzi's *New Sounds for Woodwinds* when composing *Voice.* The

authors indicated that, during the time Takemitsu was composing, the book was relatively

new, and one of the only such items available to Takemitsu at the time. *Voice* only

contains multiphonics listed by Bartolozzi.

  In contrast, relatively little has been written about Takemitsu's final work, *Air*,

with the exception of a superficial analysis done by Tim Koonzin.[17] Koonzin drew

attention to the pitch-class sets that are used as the basis for the first and third sections of

the work, and commented that the pitch-class sets in the middle, contrasting section, are

complementary.

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[15] Wilson, 224.

[16] In-Sung Kim, "Use of East Asian Traditional Flute Techniques in Works by Chou Wen-chung, Isang Yun, and Toru Takemitsu" (DMA diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2004), 55.

[17] Tim Koonzin, "Traversing the Distance," 18.

Shuri Okajima began to address the use of two pitch-class groups as the primary basis for *And I Knew 'twas Wind ....* [18] Okajima reflected Burt's assertion that the "sea" motive is structurally significant in Takemitsu's works and especially in the trio.[19] None of the authors note that the pitch-class sets identified as the basis for the trio are three-note groupings that can be found within *Air*'s five-note groupings, sets 5-33 and 5-16. It may also be noteworthy, and will be addressed within the scope of this study, that a motive using the same pitches as the "sea" motive is employed in *Air*, though an additional pitch is added.

Aside from the partial analysis by Koonzin, discussion of *Air* is limited to Takemitsu's initial conception of the piece; it began existence as a sketch for a flute concerto. James Siddons commented briefly on *Air,* indicating it was Takemitsu's final work. Peter Burt makes a short reference to *Air* as part of a larger point about the borrowing of material, citing that Takemitsu might have intended the material from *Air* for a work that was not completed at the time of the composer's death.[20] There has been minimal attempt to understand the piece as an individual unit, or as it relates to the other works for solo flute.

Itinerant has had an even smaller place in existing literature. Takemitsu discusses the work briefly in *Confronting Silence*, focusing on his dedication of the work to his

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[18] Shuri Okajima, "A Comparison Between the Two Works for Flute, Viola, and Harp," (DMA diss., University of Arizona, 2007), 99.

[19] Burt, 221.

[20] Burt, 218.

friend, Isamu Noguchi, and his feeling of kinship with the man.[21] The piece is intended to mirror Takemitsu's perception of Noguchi in life, searching for his individual identity between European and Japanese traditions. It has not been compared to other pieces in Takemitsu's catalog.[22]

The limited available information about *Air* and *Itinerant* seems to necessitate a more careful look at each of the works. Perhaps the best way to begin an examination of each is by relating each to Takemitsu's larger catalog of works, via the examination of his compositional style, to one another via their common musical traits, and to Takemitsu's *Voice*.

Takemitsu used several interrelated devices. The most prominent is *ma*, or musical space, which was outlined most thoroughly by Dana Wilson, but is also discussed in some detail by Peter Burt and James Siddons. In-Sung Kim discusses hollow-tone trills in the most detail, though Wilson references the *portamento* in *Voice* and mentions that Takemitsu would have invented new fingerings to alter the color of pitches in the *portamento*. Takemitsu employs similar techniques in *Itinerant*, and to a lesser extent *Air,* but they were not addressed by any of the authors when discussing Takemitsu's hollow tones.

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[21] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings* trans. and ed. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glenn Glasow (Lanham, Maryland: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 69.

[22] Noriko Ohtake, *Creative Sources for the Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1993), 119.

Similarly, Wilson, and to some extent, Kim and Burt, make mention of the multiphonics employed in *Voice* to imitate the *Noh* or *shakuhachi* flutes, respectively.[23] In *Confronting Silence*, Takemitsu mentions the parallel of *Itinerant* and Noguchi's involvement in the Japanese arts traditions. However, he does not expressly state that the multiphonics were intended to imitate a traditional Japanese flute.

In addition to composing, Takemitsu was a prolific author of articles and essays about music. *Confronting Silence* is a collection of essays by the composer, discussing his philosophies about music, about international identity, and some of the philosophical topics his works are based on.[24] Takemitsu's essays *Sound, Measuring with Silence,* and his series of essays entitled *Nature and Music*, discuss Takemitsu's beliefs about *ma* and his interest in Japanese gardens as an extension of the musical world.[25] These essays are not available in English, but are discussed at length in Noriko Ohtake's dissertation and book, *Creative Sources in the Music of Toru Takemitsu.*

Takemitsu's employment of the Japanese flute sound is discussed repeatedly in his *Confronting Silence.* Tim Koonzin links the Japanese flute sound to Takemitsu's efforts to incorporate philosophical and spiritual concepts into his works. This is reflected in the discussions of Isamu Noguchi's life, which Takemitsu cites as his inspiration for *Itinerant,* and for the French poem by Shuzo Takiguchi that serves as the basis for *Voice.* Burt indicates that *Air* was inspired by the element of nature, as in several of his larger

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[23] Burt does not compare this use to a Japanese flute, but references Takemitsu's familiarity with the Bartolozzi text.

[24] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings* trans. and ed. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glenn Glasow (Lanham, Maryland: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 60.

[25] Ohtake, *Creative Sources*, 18 and 32.

works (*And I Knew 'twas Wind…, Toward the Sea*, etc.), but also references Baroque style of writing a song-like instrumental composition. Each of the flute works was built around this philosophical framework, as suggested by Koonzin, and elaborated by Noriko Ohtake.

<div align="center">Goals</div>

My research demonstrates that, while the structure of the three solo works varies, the pieces are related by Takemitsu's writing for the flute. Further, I illustrate the way each employs the common threads of hollow tones and multiphonics, *ma*, and programmatic layering. The similarity of usage has been examined, tying the three works together more closely.

My research supplements the existing analyses of *Voice* by comparing the compositional processes in varying contexts. Preliminary examination of literature discussing traits of *Voice*, as well as an examination of the scores of *Air* and *Itinerant,* revealed that traits identified by Wilson, Kim, and to a lesser degree, by Linda Sung in her analysis of Takemitsu's harp works,[26] are unifying traits among the flute works. This has become particularly evident after examining the three works for solo flute. My dissertation seeks to draw attention to these musical features in *Itinerant* and *Air,* and it also endeavors to identify these qualities as unifying features of the three solo flute works, creating a sense that they are, in fact, interrelated by devices that are unique to Takemitsu's writing.

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[26] Several of these works also employ the flute.

Methodology and Organization

The organization of my dissertation was loosely based on In-Sung Kim's analysis of East Asian traditional flute techniques in works by three Asian composers. Kim established the traditional elements of the three cultures she had chosen to examine and followed these elements with an analytical discussion of each of the three chosen works. She then discussed the works in relationship to the traditional elements established in the beginning. In lieu of traditional Asian elements, my dissertation seeks to establish the basic elements of Takemitsu's compositional style. I will discuss elements of his catalog, covering works in each of his experimental phases, and focusing on works that incorporate significant use of the flute. I discuss common elements of his flute writing, and then I examine each of the flute works with those qualities in mind.

In the early 21st century, Takemitsu is not considered a member of the main Western musical canon. As a result, I begin with a basic outline of his musical background. Chapter 2 discusses major events in the composer's musical evolution, beginning with a biography and influences on his musical style.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of Takemitsu's compositional style, through an examination of Takemitsu's larger catalog of works and incorporating a work from each stylistic period or focus of the composer's career. I develop this musical timeline from basic biographies about the composer, and through an overview study of works exhibiting techniques Takemitsu experimented with throughout his career. I place an emphasis on the final decades of his productivity, on works employing the flute, in order to highlight common aspects of his flute writing.

 Chapter 4 is divided into three sections, focusing on each of the three solo flute works (*Voice*, *Itinerant,* and *Air).* Each subsection begins with an examination of the work's structure. In the case of *Voice* and *Itinerant*, this is essentially a division of the work into structural sections. For *Air,* structural sections are delineated by pitch content; this has been addressed in its analysis.

 Voice (1971) incorporates text, and is based on traditional Japanese flutes. The text is discussed briefly, and then I discuss the Japanese *shakuhachi* flute versus the *Noh* flute, attempting to establish the *Noh* flute as the primary inspiration. *Itinerant* (1989) is analyzed, with some emphasis on the use of multiphonics and other extended flute techniques. Some discussion of the *shakuhachi* flute as an inspiration is incorporated. In the case of *Air* (1995), which is based largely on pitch-class sets, the pitch-class sets are identified, and their usage throughout the work is discussed in more detail.

 Each piece also employs *ma*, a Japanese concept of space. This element of space was frequently used by Takemitsu to delineate sections or phrases. This approach to the analysis will be drawn from Dana Wilson's work with *Voice,* but will also be applied to *Itinerant* and *Air,* which Wilson did not address.

 Each section will address the use of multiphonic and microtonal effects in each of the works. These effects were outlined by both In-Sung Kim and Linda Sung. Because Kim only addressed one of Takemitsu's works, and Sung focused on chamber, rather than solo works, they were unable to compare the usage of multiphonic and microtonal effects (hollow-tones) across several pieces. These qualities evolved into standard devices in Takemitsu's flute writing, though the use of multiphonics becomes less and less prominent as his style evolved.

Throughout Takemitsu's career, he made a habit of combining non-musical inspirations as a basis for his loosely programmatic writing. Each section addresses the programmatic inspirations for its respective work, as indicated in articles by the composer, or based on interviews with the composer. All programmatic inspirations under discussion will be those acknowledged by the composer, or discussed as common themes of his works by Noriko Ohtake, who studied Takemitsu's aesthetics extensively.

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY, INSPIRATIONS, AND INFLUENCES

Toru Takemitsu was born in Tokyo in 1930. He grew to maturity during World

War II, when the highly nationalistic Japanese government had banned all performances

of the European enemy's music.[27] His early childhood was spent in China, where his

father, Takeo Takemitsu, was employed. In China, Takeo was permitted to play jazz

records at home, and he also won first prize at a competition for imitating bird calls.

Most importantly, however, Takeo Takemitsu was a passionate *shakuhachi* flute

enthusiast, exposing his son to countless hours of the traditional Japanese flute.[28] In

addition to using *shakuhachi* flutes in his later works, the younger Takemitsu also

imitated its sounds, as well as passages from early jazz, in his compositions.

Takemitsu returned to Japan at the age of seven, in order to attend a Japanese

school. After his father's death in 1938, Takemitsu lived with an aunt who performed as

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[27] During the time period between World Wars I and II, France would have been considered a political enemy; performance of French music was banned.

[28] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001), 21.

a *koto* player.[29] Biographers have suggested that Takemitsu's unhappy memories of this time were so closely associated with the *koto* music in his aunt's home, it may have influenced his feelings about traditional Japanese music. In adult life, particularly early in his career, Takemitsu repeatedly expressed distaste for traditional elements of Japanese music.[30]

In accordance with Japanese law, Takemitsu entered into the Japanese military at age fourteen, in 1944. Though he loathed his time in the military, it was not without musical benefit. Takemitsu often told the story of his first encounter with French art music. During his military service, another officer took a group of young servicemen to the back of the barracks where he played a recording of Josephine Baker performing a French chanson, *Parlez-moi d'amour*.[31] This early experience was among the first in Takemitsu's life-long association with French music.

When the war ended, at age sixteen, Takemitsu rejected further academic studies and decided to become a composer. During this period, he struggled with the perception of Japanese culture in other societies. In interviews and articles, Takemitsu described the memory of seeing his music for sale in Paris. On the record jacket, there was a picture of Mount Fuji and a *geisha* girl. The combination caused Takemitsu to feel a mixture of shame and embarrassment at being associated with the "natural beauty" of Japan.[32]

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[29] The *koto* is a stringed Japanese instrument, similar to the Western lute.

[30] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 22.

[31] Noriko Ohtake, *Creative Sources for the Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1993), 2.

For Takemitsu, this memory seemed to embody the struggle that he, as a young composer, felt while searching for his own musical identity. This distaste for foreign interpretations of Japanese music was combined with his exposure to Western culture through scores, broadcasts, recordings, and movies. The result was that Takemitsu distanced himself from traditional Japanese music.[33]

For nearly fifteen years, Takemitsu modeled his works after Western music and art. Yet when some of his earliest experiments with composition yielded a pentatonic work, *Kaheki (Conduit),* Takemitsu was so horrified to discover the nationalistic Japanese element of a pentatonic scale in his writing that he destroyed the piece.[34] During this time, he sought to avoid all Japanese elements, instead exploring compositional methods and traits of the works of Claude Debussy and Olivier Messiaen. Instead of traditional study, Takemitsu studied the scores of many other modern composers. It was not until the 1960s, when Takemitsu was introduced to John Cage, that he began to gradually rediscover and accept Japanese music.

Noriko Ohtake credited Takemitsu's return to an interest in Japanese aesthetics with his attendance of a performance of *Bunraku* puppet theater. These performances involved multi-person puppet teams manipulating large, heavily detailed puppets. More importantly for Takemitsu, the puppet performances are accompanied by a spoken line, a Japanese lute called the *shamisen*, and occasionally *taiko* drumming. While watching

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[32] Noriko Ohtake, "Creative Sources for the Music of Toru Takemitsu" (DMA Diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1990), 7.

[33] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss., 7.

[34] Burt, 24.

these performances, he "[recognized] the splendor of traditional Japanese music."[35] This rediscovery of Japan's artistic heritage, combined with his exposure to John Cage, and the use of Japanese elements by many of his contemporaries, resulted in several works for orchestra and traditional Japanese instruments, as Takemitsu explored the concept of "self" versus "other."[36] This juxtaposition of concepts - such as self and other, east and west, new and old - became a reoccurring theme through most of Takemitsu's life. He considered these concepts to be an important component of his musical aesthetic.[37]

As the sources for inspiration became more complex, Takemitsu's writing style evolved from the avant-garde of the *Jikken Kobo* to a slightly more tonal style, in order to accommodate his increased use of Japanese elements. By the 1970s, his writing had become increasingly tonal and had begun to strongly resemble the scores of Debussy, which he had studied as a young composer. The similarities are particularly evident in Takemitsu's orchestral works, leading some authors to refer to the 1970s as Takemitsu's Debussy period.[38]

Takemitsu adopted the non-functional harmonies that characterized Debussy's works, using static blocks of sound and key areas with tonal centers, rather than the traditional dominant-to-tonic movement. This is especially evident in his trio *And I*

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[35] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss., 8

[36] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings* trans. and ed. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glenn Glasow (Lanham, Maryland: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 60.

[37] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence,* 60.

[38] Burt, 14.

Knew 'twas Wind ... , for which he also borrowed the instrumentation from Debussy's *Sonate* for flute, harp, and viola.

Additionally, Takemitsu's late works were typically written without meter, which he alternates with episodes of prescribed meter. These rapidly changing meters include time signatures like 4/4 and 3/4, and also 1/4 and 3.5/4, in order to disrupt any sense of metric regularity. Such metric shifts can be found in the works of Debussy, although they are also prevalent in works by Messiaen and many other 20th-century composers that would have been familiar to Takemitsu.

<div align="center">Influences</div>

The *Bunraku* puppetry performance that Takemitsu attended in the late 1960s awakened his awareness of the presence of Japan, or his homeland, in him. His perception of Japanese tradition became, in his mature style, a key aspect of his individuality as a composer. While many composers focus on the difference between Western and non-Western traditions, Takemitsu sought to blend them together, citing both as having an equal impact on his musical productivity. Ohtake wrote, "Takemitsu [had] always been unrestrictedly absorbent of influences from both Western and non-Western approaches."[39] The search for a balance between the two sometimes caused him to have shifts in his identity, or search for a stronger foundation for an identity, but the searching did not stop him from continuing to compose. In the case of *Itinerant*, Takemitsu addressed the search for identity through music; the search served as a programmatic inspiration for the work.

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[39] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 11

East and West

Takemitsu is traditionally viewed as the composer who bridged the East and West, or Japan and the West. Takemitsu explored these themes in his essay "Sound of East, Sound of West."[40] He believed that the two cultures were in opposition to one another. "It must be said that in principle and construction, Western and Japanese music are fundamentally different, separated by a distance I find overwhelming …."[41] He believed that the fundamental principles of organization, symmetry, and control that governed Western music were at odds with the more nature-oriented, less rigidly structured Japanese tradition.

When he started to rediscover Japanese music in the 1960s, he experimented with the *biwa* and *shakuhachi* in film scores, and then began exploring them as parts of more traditional concert works. Through this exploration, Takemitsu came to believe that Japanese people, by nature, do not perceive musical sounds as abstract objects, but as extensions of nature. This was supported by some research of the 1970s and 1980s, which suggested right and left brain perception of sound varied between Japanese and Western cultures.[42] While recent research indicates that issues related to brain hemisphere and perception are much more complex than thought three decades ago, it is

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[40] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence,* 59.

[41] Alison Tokito. "Australia as Takemitsu's 'Other,'" in *A Way a Lone: Writings on Toru Takemitsu,* eds. Hugh de Ferranti and Yoko Narazaki (Japan: Academia Musica Ltd., 2002), 10.

[42] Tandanobu Tsunoda, "Japanese Music," *Eureka* (A Japanese Art Magazine), VII, no. 1 (January 1975), 148-155, quoted in Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss., 86.

plausible that Takemitsu's beliefs about Japanese and Western audiences were shaped by the information of the day.[43]

Additionally, sound separates itself from silent space. This space, called *ma,* is understood by the Japanese as having life of its own, and containing an infinite number of sounds. To recognize *ma* is to acknowledge sounds; actual sounds do not rank as superior to silence. Furthermore, since each sound terminates itself by being complete, a logical linkage of sounds in unattainable. Instead, *ma* constitutes the spatial relationships between sounds. A Japanese performer listens to the vibrant *ma* in which unintentional placements of sound are created.[44]

Takemitsu's awareness of these aspects of sound, which was first stimulated by his contact with French Impressionist music, continued to develop with his increasing use of tone color. Because Takemitsu focused his attention on the spatial aspect of music, at times his scores seem to lack a formal structure. The spatial aspect, however, springs directly from traditional Japanese musical aesthetics. The titles of his compositions, which often use words such as tree, water, or the name of a season, convey a strong sense of visual awareness, often of nature. The metaphor Takemitsu often used when talking about his musical aesthetics was *kaiyu-shiki,* a style of Japanese garden design.

In the *kaiyu-shiki*, no detail may dominate over any other. The garden, or the musical work, is also not designed to be viewed from the outside, but experienced by

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[43] Terence Hines, "Left Brain/Right Brain Mythology and Implications for Management and Training," *The Academy of Management Review* 12, no. 4 (Oct., 1987), 600.

[44] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 53.

walking through it. According to Japanese philosophies, the process of moving through the garden blends space and time. Perceiving the blend of space and time is necessary in order to understand the garden; Takemitsu linked this perception and experience to understanding his own music.

In this way, Takemitsu believed that the organization of time in his mature-period music was also typically Japanese. Particularly in the works of the 1970s, he more heavily emphasized his use of color. Each work also became self-referential, referring back to previous motivic, textural, or silence occurrences within the work, or to occurrences in previous works by Takemitsu. The texture of many works is sparse, but in other works, sound colors strongly recall the harmonic ideas of French Impressionism.[45] These ideas continued to mature through the 1960s and 70s as a personal variation on Japanese concepts of the relationship between the individual and the world.[46]

Takemitsu was largely self-taught as a composer, but he considered Claude Debussy to be his mentor. He admired Debussy's use of colors, of light and shadow, and what he called the pan focus, or many focal points of sound in Debussy's works.[47] In an article translated by Ohtake, Takemitsu writes of his admiration for the way that

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[45] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 19.

[46] Luciana Galliano. "The Roaring Epoch: Works of the 1950s-1960s," in *A Way a Lone: Writings on Toru Takemitsu,* eds. Hugh de Ferranti and Yoko Narazaki (Japan: Academia Musica Ltd., 2002), 24-25.

[47] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 19.

Debussy "combined several things at the same time."[48] He admired this technique

because of its difference from the German focus on a tightness of structure and the focus

on a single melodic idea. Debussy, in contrast, sought "many points of focus and many

gradations of color," which both composers found to be highly important.[49]

There was also an influence from Olivier Messiaen on Takemitsu. He became

familiar with Messiaen's piano music in the 1950s, through his involvement with both of

the Japanese new music organizations.[50] In an interview translated by Noriko Ohtake,

the composer attributes Messiaen's piano works with his wanting to become a

composer.[51] Takemitsu particularly admired Messiaen's use of nature sounds in his

music, though Takemitsu did not imitate the sounds directly. "Takemitsu perceived

musical sounds as a continuation of natural sounds …. His music [was] only a part of the

'stream of sounds' which surrounded him."[52]

Takemitsu credited many American composers with influencing his

compositions. This was not always intentional study, as with the Debussy scores:

Takemitsu studied scores of American music at the Tokyo Center for Information and

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[48] Ibid., 19.

[49] Toru Takemitsu, "Contemporary Music in Japan," *Perspectives of New Music* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1989), 209.

[50] The Jikken Kobo later went on to arrange the Japanese premieres of several of Messiaen's works, including *Quatour le fin de temps*.

[51] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 15.

[52] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 16.

Education.[53] He also listened to the American radio network. Takemitsu cited an affinity

for Aaron Copland and for John Cage, both of whom he eventually met.

John Cage was very interested in the philosophy of Zen through the Zen master

Daisetsu Suzuki. Takemitsu credited his association with Cage as helping him recognize

the value of Japanese tradition, ending his previous avoidance of Japanese culture.

Ohtake references Cage's fascination with mushrooms, which he believed were symbols

of possibility, mysteriousness, and unconventionality. Similarly, Takemitsu spoke of

how a single entity should never be tied to fixed ideas.[54] This thinking might explain the

assignation of multiple meanings to a single object, as becomes a theme with

Takemitsu's music.

Takemitsu's close relationship with Cage inspired Takemitsu to seek more

interaction among artists. While it is possible to argue that Takemitsu was already

familiar with the interplay of music, literature, and stage drama from his associations

with the *Jikken Kobo*, it was during his time in the *Jikken Kobo* that he met Shuzo

Takiguchi, whose poetry appears in *Voice.* Takiguchi introduced him to the poetry of

Emily Dickinson, which, with its emphasis on nature as well as fragmented repetition,

became literary inspirations for many of Takemitsu's works, such as the trio *And I Knew*

'twas Wind …. It was also during this time that Takemitsu met Isamu Noguchi, with

whom he carried on life-long conversations about the quest for identity as an

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[53] This group was established by the American Army after World War II.

[54] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 18.

international artist. Noguchi introduced Takemitsu to concepts behind Japanese gardening, which in turn influenced Takemitsu's music.

Takemitsu's association with Yasuji Kiyose was the closest he came to a having composition instructor. The two discussed art rather than participating in traditional composition lessons. Takemitsu admired Kiyose's ability to reflect his personality. Kiyose emphasized rhythmic characteristics within a limited range of notes and incidental chromaticism; this became a primary feature of Takemitsu's works during the last decades of his life. Kiyose's realism also affected Takemitsu's relationship to music, leading the composer to believe that if music did not, in some way, reflect reality, it would become dispensible.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

In summary, Takemitsu's composition was shaped by musical influences from his early life. This included the presence of *shakuchachi* and *biwa* music in his childhood homes, as well as the interest in nature and bird-calls instilled by his father.

In addition to these more traditional Japanese sounds, Takemitsu was exposed to French chanson during his time in the Japanese military. This was followed by his exposure to contemporary French music while he was involved with the members of the *Jikken Kobo.* Members of the *Jikken Kobo* introduced Takemitsu to the works of Messiaen, and Takemitsu spent many years transcribing the works of Claude Debussy. Takemitsu met John Cage, who introduced Takemitsu to Zen philosophies, and reacquainted him with the sounds of Eastern music.

Because of this variety of influences, Takemitsu's style came to be characterized by non-functional harmonies, static blocks of sound, and key areas with tonal centers.

Additionally, his works came to be characterized by the use of metric irregularity, either through unusual meters or alternating more typical meters.

Takemitsu found influence in cultures of both the East and the West. The juxtaposition of these cultures, and their approaches toward music, led Takemitsu to combine traditional Japanese instruments with Western instruments. Rather than organizing his works in traditional Western forms, Takemitsu sought to musically imitate elements of the natural world through the use of *ma*, which he used as both a structural device and as a balance to sound.

These concepts, combined with Takemitsu's philosophical beliefs, and with his interest in literature, shaped Takemitsu's style. Elements of literary influence, *ma*, metric irregularity, and the Impressionistic influence of Debussy, can be found in the works to be discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

TAKEMITSU'S MUSIC AND MUSICAL TRAITS

Takemitsu's catalog of works exhibits experimentation with many different styles of the 20th century. His early works use pentatonic scales and hint at a Japanese sound that reflected his involvement with the semi-nationalistic *Shin-sakkyokuha.* Following his departure from this group, and his involvement with the *Jikken Kobo*, Takemitsu experimenting with many 20th century movements, including *musique concrete,* works with dramatic media, serialism, graphic scores, prepared piano, and indeterminacy. This chapter provides a chronological examination of his experimentation with these styles, as well as his development of a personal musical style.

Beginning in the 1960s, Takemitsu began to develop his own musical language, building on the philosophical concepts borrowed first from the *Jikken Kobo*, and then from John Cage. As he became more confident with this language, he included more elements of Japanese traditional music, beginning with traditional instruments such at the *biwa* and *shakuhachi*. Though he continued to use traditional instruments on occasion,

this led to Takemitsu's mature musical style, which required imitation of sounds from traditional Japanese instruments, played on classical Western instruments.

The earliest surviving work, *Romance* (1949), for piano, used what was to become a trademark of Takemitsu's style: literal repetition of whole passages. The work is dedicated to Yasuji Kiyose, and relies heavily on pentatonic scales and "Japanese sounding musical material," despite the composer's lingering distaste for traditional Japanese style.[55]

Membership in the *Jikken Kobo* coincided with Takemitsu's experimentation with *musique concrète*, or manipulation of recorded music. *Uninterrupted Rest* (1952), and later *Sky, Horse, and Death* (1958) were Takemitsu's earliest tape pieces.

Requiem (1957) for string orchestra earned the composer recognition when Igor Stravinsky visited Japan, but is without a particular stylistic reference. The piece is a one-movement work with three main sections that are asymmetrical in length. All musical material is derived from a single theme, which changes from one section to the next. Barlines and tempi are clearly marked, but frequent tempo changes and the use of irregular meters, when combined with the irregular structure of the piece, create the sensation of an erratic beat. This was typical of Takemitsu's style at the time. The writing was characterized by lengthy, uninterrupted arches, and by the density of texture.[56]

Requiem was based on church modes. Takemitsu became familiar with church modes during the American military occupation when he heard jazz music on the

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[55]Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001)*,* 26.

[56] These traits become apparent in *Air*, late in the composer's life.

American Armed Forces Radio.[57] Takemitsu later discovered Messiaen's concept of

modes of limited transposition, but this would have occurred after the completion of

Requiem. Stravinsky heard *Requiem* while visiting Japan several years later and was so

impressed with the work that he asked to meet Takemitsu personally.[58] This meeting

helped Takemitsu to establish a name outside of Japan, especially in the U.S., where Seiji

Ozawa later had the work performed by the New York Philharmonic strings.

This piece was "odd for Takemitsu's youthful stage," but it was unlikely that

Takemitsu expected the work to be heard.[59] In this stage of his career, Takemitsu's works

were seldom performed publicly. It was among his earliest experimentations in

composition and was written at a rate of one to two measures per day, while Takemitsu

was in extremely poor health. In "Awakening of Music," translated by Noriko Ohtake,

Takemitsu discusses how, during the completion stage of *Requiem,* he became aware of

dualities in the real world between life and death, self and others, indivudal and the

whole, and the traditions of East and West.[60] In addition to being one of Takemitsu's

earliest performed works, this piece, and Takemitsu's commentary about it, demonstrated

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[57] Luciana Galliano. "The roaring epoch: works of the 1950s-1960s," in *A Way a Lone: Writings on Toru Takemitsu,* eds. Hugh de Ferranti and Yoko Narazaki (Japan: Academia Musica Ltd., 2002), 22.

[58] Takemitsu was not an admirer of Stravinsky's works, though he did acknowledge interest in the composer's orchestration.

[59] Noriko Ohtake, *Creative Sources for the Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1993), 12.

[60] Toru Takemitsu, *Ongaku o Yobisamasu mono* "Awakening of Music," (Tokyo: Shincho Sha, 1980), 58-59, quoted in in Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss*.,* 24.

his propensity for duality of meaning and for exploring philosophical concepts through his music.

 Masque for two flutes was completed in 1959 for the Karuizawa Festival. Program notes indicate that the title refers directly to the masks worn by *Noh* actors playing female characters.[61] Like many of his later chamber works, the piece was not intended to be played with a strong sense of meter, but one event at a time. The brief quarter-tone *glissandi* in the score may have been a foreshadowing of his experimentation with Japanese instrumental effects.[62]

 Masques is built on serial techniques and combined Japanese effects with modern Western compositional techniques. Material from both flute lines appeared in multiple locations, using retrograde and inversion relationships. Takemitsu briefly explored relationships between the hexachords of his chosen row in the first movement; the second was more freely composed.[63]

 Sacrifice came from a trilogy of pieces for a similar instrumentation.[64] *Ring* was written in 1961 for flute, terz guitar, and lute, and *Valeria* (1965) for two piccolos, violin, cello, guitar, and electric organ. *Sacrifice* was described by the composer as portraying an individual and meditative rite, in a similar mood to the opening of Stravinsky's *Rite of*

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[61] Burt*,* 63**.**

[62] Burt*,* 63; these glissandi can be found in extended forms in *Voice* and *Itinerant,* both of which reference the sound of the *Noh* flute that would have accompanied the *Noh* theater that *Masques* references.

[63] Burt, 64.

[64] In this case, alto flute, lute, and vibraphone.

Spring. This connection to Stravinsky, and by association, the European modern style, was conveyed through delicate sound colors and a style of writing that became increasingly important in Takemitsu's music. This was characterized by the use of isolated sounds to convey a mood of solitary meditation.

In 1960, Takemitsu's *Water Music* was premiered by the *Shin-sakkyokuha,* the first of two new music groups in which Takemitsu participated. The piece included recorded sounds of a water hydrant, of liquid dripping from a teapot into a bucket, and the sounds of a well. Takemitsu organized the sounds around a rhythmic structure.[65]

In the 1960s, some of Takemitsu's Japanese colleagues were beginning to explore traditional instruments as media for contemporary expression. This, in addition to his friendship with John Cage, may have given Takemitsu reason to reconsider his distaste for traditional Japanese elements. Reference to elements of *Noh* performance appeared in the program notes for *Masque* in 1959. To this end, Takemitsu grew increasingly influenced by the works of John Cage after 1960.

As noted above, *Ring, Sacrifice,* and *Valeria* are a trilogy of pieces Takemitsu began in 1961. The works are aleatoric in nature and loosely based on Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung.* The title also comes from four techniques that Takemitsu borrowed from John Cage, and spent several years exploring: retrograde, inversion, noise, and general theme. By using the first letter of each technique, Takemitsu could create the acronym "ring," which served both as a title and as a reference to another musical work.[66]

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[65] Galliano, 26.

[66] Burt, 93.

Ring was written in four sections without any tempo, dynamic, or articulation marking, to be played in any order; this reflects his use of aleatoric writing. Each instrument (flute, terz guitar, and lute) reads in either direction around the ring, applying changes in tempo and pitch at any moment. *Sacrifices* added a second lute to the instrumentation of flute, terz guitar, and lute. This work anticipated some of his later flute works, where barlines were removed to give the performers more freedom. Instead, he indicated lengths of time for each musical moment. *Valeria* was a revision of an earlier work entitled *Sonant* (1965) for violin, cello guitar, two flutes, and bandoneons. In *Valeria,* Takemitsu replaced bandoneons with an electric organ and the flutes with piccolos. In the second version, Takemitsu gave each instrument a different time and pulsation. Within a bigger cycle, the sounds intermingle with each other.

Corona for Pianists (1962), for one or more pianists, most reflects Cage's aesthetic of the time because it combines aleatoric writing and graphic scores. The five parts were created in collaboration with the graphic artist Kohei Sugiura; they are a series of circular patterns printed on interlocking cards. The circular pattern can also be found in the graphic score of *Ring. Corona for Pianists* also began to show Takemitsu's preference for philosophical descriptions, as it was titled, "an etude for perceiving one note as a complete entity, full of life."[67] While *Corona* is frequently discussed by musicologists, the work does not seem to be representative of Takemitsu's style.[68]

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[67] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 94.

[68] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 94.

In March of 1964, Takemitsu spent three weeks with Cage and other American composers at a musical conference in Honolulu. During this period, Cage was exploring the use of I Ching as a basis for his compositions. He was also heavily influenced by Zen ideas about the independence of a single sound or unstructured events; these helped Takemitsu come to terms with the task of finding a place for traditional musical elements in his own work. The following statement appears in many writings about Takemitsu's musical development, "… in my own life … I struggled to avoid being 'Japanese,' to avoid 'Japanese' qualities. It was largely through my contact with John Cage that I came to recognize the value of my own tradition."[69]

Takemitsu gradually came to terms with his national identity; he experimented with traditional timbres and instruments in his film music during the early part of the decade. In 1966, his major musical innovation was to write concert works for two traditional Japanese instruments. The *biwa,* a Japanese lute*,* and the *shakuhachi*, a traditional Japanese bamboo flute, had been prevalent in his film scores before this time. *Eclipse,* and later the more well-known *November Steps,* featured soloists on both instruments set against an orchestra, and earned Takemitsu recognition throughout the United States and Europe.[70]

Prior to these works, Takemitsu did not make use of musical elements from Japanese culture. The presence of the *biwa* and *shakuhachi* was not significant. Instead, it

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[69] Hugh de Ferranti. "Takemitsu's *biwa,"* in *A Way a Lone: Writings on Toru Takemitsu,* eds. Hugh de Ferranti and Yoko Narazaki (Japan: Academia Musica Ltd., 2002), 51.

[70] *November Steps* was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic for its 125th Anniversary.

was the effect the use of the *biwa* and *shakuhachi* had on Takemitsu's orchestral writing.[71] Prior to *November Steps* (1967) Takemitsu had written in a conventional orchestral style. He commented that the composer "should not be occupied … [by blending] traditional Japanese instruments with an orchestra …. Though through juxtaposition, it is the difference between the two that should be emphasized."[72] Takemitsu stated further, "The tight ensemble playing of the Western orchestra … and the densities of the orchestral textures are in stark contrast to the delicate and transparent sounds of the Japanese instruments."[73]

This work was among the first Takemitsu wrote that sought to find a stream of sound.[74] Rather than focus on the structure of a concerto, Takemitsu sought to make alternating short or long notes on the *shakuhachi* points of focus. This was both modeled on his association with the research of Junzo Kwada and his admiration of Debussy's multiple points of focus in music. Takemitsu likely borrowed this trait from Debussy; while writing *November Steps,* he was also spending a great deal of time studying *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, *Jeux,* and Debussy's other orchestral works.

The new writing was characterized by the elimination of the lower middle register, and an emphasis on a more brilliant upper register. This put more emphasis on the rate of decay and the difference in decay rates throughout the orchestra. The music

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[71] Richard Toop, "Takemitsu and the avante-garde," in *A Way a Lone: Writings on Toru Takemitsu,* eds. Hugh de Ferranti and Yoko Narazaki (Japan: Academia Musica Ltd., 2002), 7.

[72] Ibid., 8.

[73] Galliano, 36.

[74] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* 16.

was full of bright, sharp sounds produced on instruments one might expect to be low and sonorous. In *November Steps* this involved the use of gongs and tam-tams struck with wooden and metal rods, and stinging harp sonorities produced on low notes with the fingernails.

The combination of traditional Japanese instruments and orchestra was not a lasting trend in Takemitsu's works. He wrote a third piece incorporating the instruments.[75] The changes to his orchestral style, however, remained for the rest of his career. The final piece was *Autumn,* completed in 1973.

Eucalypts I (1970) combined flute, oboe, harp, and string orchestra. This work combines Takemitsu's earlier experimentation with octatonic and whole-tone scales set [7-33] with the influence of Luciano Berio's *Sequenza* series. The individual solo parts are linked harmonically, but are musically independent, as in his earlier *November Steps.* This represented some of his early inclusion of extended instrumental techniques, beginning first with a series of different fingerings for the same oboe pitch.[76] This work was likely his first use of material from Bruno Bartolozzi's 1967 *New Sounds for Woodwinds*, which also served as a resource for *Voice* in 1971.

Takemitsu's *Quatrain* (1975) was modeled after Messiaen's *Quatour pour la fin du temps,* and Takemitsu borrowed the same instrumentation (clarinet, violin, cello, and piano). In 1952, the *Jikken Kobo* had introduced this work to the Japanese public as a

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[76] This technique would later become central to his flute works; this is especially apparent in *Voice* and in *Itinerant.*

model of Western music; Takemitsu would likely have studied the work intensively during this time.[77]

By the late 1970s, Takemitsu's reputation had grown enough that he was frequently interacting with the preeminent musicians of the day. Many works of this era moved away from the techniques he borrowed from other composers,[78] but were accompanied by dedications to these musicians. *Bryce* (1976) was one such piece. Written for flute, two harps, marimba, and percussion, the work was for the son of Robin Engelman, a Canadian percussionist. Takemitsu inscribed "B-flat-C-E" into the work to represent the boy's first name, Bryce.[79] Like German-school composers, Takemitsu experimented with initialing works, though he did not give them a personal autograph, but instead spelled out subjects he felt were relevant to the music.

In *Bryce,* Takemitsu also began to demonstrate the free-form structure that characterized the last two decades of his career. In order to avoid a complete lack of structure, Takemitsu began to employ clear sections of musical material, indicating pauses between the major segments of the work. This feature became a unifying feature of Takemitsu's works, and is especially prevalent in his chamber and solo works.[80]

Toward the Sea I (1981) was originally written for alto flute and guitar. The composer later transcribed the work for alto flute and string orchestra, titled *Toward the*

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[77] Burt, 41.

[78] Serialism, graphic scores, etc.

[79] Burt, 142.

[80] Ibid., 142.

Sea II, and alto flute and harp, titled *Toward the Sea III.* This work began without a tonal focus, but ends with an emphasis on F Major/D minor. This sort of gradual move to a tonal area also came to characterize Takemitsu's later works, as did the initialing of his sea motive - pitches E-flat, E, and A - particularly in works with water-related titles.[81]

By the time of *Toward the Sea,* Takemitsu had solidified his technique of writing for the Western flute. The alto flute part in this work makes use of multiphonic trills and other extended techniques. In several instances, the flutist is instructed to gradually bring in an octave harmonic by over-blowing the instrument. This effect becomes important in later flute works, though Takemitsu no longer focuses on the octave, but begins to employ multiphonics and harmonic pitches.

Rain Spell (1982) for flute, clarinet, harp, piano, and vibraphone, continues the trend of using extended techniques, as well as multiphonic and harmonic fingerings of pitches, which were not yet typical in works of the 20th century, particularly those with a chamber-music setting.

I Hear the Water Dreaming (1987), for flute and orchestra, contains two programmatic references. During the 1980s, Takemitsu became more and more interested in multiple themes. Water and dreaming were both concepts that interested the composer, and which he linked together.[82] Both are represented in this work, as is the fade-in technique, in which the flute creates sound from silence, often playing a zig-zag pattern.[83]

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[81] Burt*,* 179.

[82] Peter Burt cites the essay of French novelist Gason Bachelard, *L'Eau et les rêves* and *Finnegan's Wake* by James Joyce.

[83] Burt*,* 193.

This piece also includes the [7-33] pitch-class set; the sets based on the pitch

relationships of set-33 became the focal point of his other element-based flute work, *Air.*

 I Hear Water Dreaming and the 1980 work *Far Calls, Coming, far!*, for violin

and orchestra, both employ the sea motive. In *Far Calls,* the motive is expanded to

include a series of thirds: E-flat, E, A, C-sharp, F, and A-flat. Inversions of the motive

also appear, using the pitches A-flat, G, D, B-flat, F-sharp, and E-flat. This demonstrates

Takemitsu's increasing interest in initialing works, particularly with the sea motive.[84]

 And I Knew 'twas Wind …, for flute harp and viola (1992), shared thematic

material with several other works from the 1990s. The title was borrowed from a poem of

Emily Dickinson by the same name, and the work employs the sea motive. Additionally,

this work is a tribute to the scores of Debussy that Takemitsu studied in his youth; the

instrumentation was borrowed directly from Debussy's *Sonate* for the same

instrumentation. His writing for the flute contained *glissandi* and hollow-tone trills

similar to Takemitsu's earlier works for flute.

 Comme la sculpture de Mirô for flute harp and orchestra was commissioned by

the BBC and left unfinished when Takemitsu died in 1996. Peter Burt has speculated that

Air, Takemitsu's final work, was originally conceived as a sketch for the solo flute part of

this concerto. *Air* was then given to Aurele Nicolet, the flutist with whom Takemitsu

worked for most of his career, in honor of Nicolet's seventieth birthday.

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[84] Burt*,* 195.

Common Traits in Takemitsu's Music

Toru Takemitsu wrote several solo and chamber works for the flute, that he believed best reflected the natural world, which was his primary inspiration. The flute also provided a wide range of tone colors and alternate fingers, which allowed for subtle coloring of phrases and individual notes. As a result, the flute was capable of creating a sound similar to the traditional bamboo flutes of Japan.

The flute was an important wind instrument in the French tradition. Takemitsu's main influences are generally considered to be Debussy and Messiaen, from whom Takemitsu inherited his tendency to use floating, static harmonies.[85] Those who explain the nonfunctional harmonies and irregular meters as result of Takemitsu's early studies of the works of Claude Debussy, cite quotations of *La Mer* and the *Sonate* for flute, harp, and viola that appear throughout Takemitsu's compositional output. Most noteably, Takemitsu modeled an entire work, the trio titled *And I Knew 'twas Wind…*, on Debussy's *Sonate*, using Debussy's instrumentation of flute, harp, and viola.

Figure 1 shows the parallel instrumentation of alto flute, harp, and viola. It also demonstrates Takemitsu's use of irregular meters. The time signature 4.5/4 conceals the pulse of the work, disrupting any sense of metric regularity. Measure 113 also exhibits Takemitsu's use of semi-tone fingerings for pitches, altering the timbre and pitch; the non-traditional fingerings can be seen over the G-sharp and the E-flat trill of the final measure.

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[85] Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu,* 32.

Figure 1: Takemitsu, *And I Knew 'twas Wind…,* mm. 111-113

Irregular rhythmic patterns, alternating meters, or music entirely without meter, are characteristic of Takemitsu's works. These rapidly changing meters include traditional time signatures like 4/4 and 3/4, but also 1/4 and 3.5/4, in order to disrupt any sense of metric regularity.

Takemitsu adopted the non-functional harmonies that characterized both Debussy and Satie, instead using static blocks of sound and key areas with tonal centers, rather than the traditional dominant-to-tonic movement. Also of interest were extended passages of *glissandi* that use non-standard fingerings and trills between different colorings of the same note. These hollow tones do not create the concomitant overtone series. Figure 2 indicates the composer's notational system for hollow tones.

The figure indicates that C is sustained; the composer has indicated three different fingering systems for C, to be played one after another. Each fingering colors the C a

little differently, gradually raising the pitch to the natural fingering of C the composer
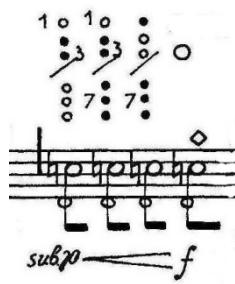
indicates for the fourth pitch.

Figure 2: Takemitsu, *Voice*, pg. 1, system 6

Often in Takemitsu's music, a pattern of action and rest contributes to the shape of a

musical gesture. Phrases are created and balanced by a blend in a varied texture of

sustained sound, ringing out, and fall away toward an enriching silence. As shifting

timbres fade into the surrounding silence, performer and listener are united in the "simple

act of listening."[86] To heighten the effect, Takemitsu often approached extended periods

of rest with instructions of *diminuendo*, or *niente*, in order to have the effect of merging

sound with silence, and merging them again as the performer re-entered after these rests.

This gesture and fade-out helped Takemitsu to create his musical impressions of wind,

air, and the more complex philosophical concepts he wished to depict through his music.

It drew attention to the ebb and flow of sound. This can be demonstrated clearly in the

opening phrase of *Air,* as discussed in Chapter 4.

Smaller instances of rest are used to punctuate phrases within a work. Between

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[86] Timothy Koonzin, "Traversing Distances: Pitch Organization, Gesture, and Imagery," *Contemporary Music Review* 21, no. 4 (1990)**:** 18.

phrases, Takemitsu commonly employs a maximum use of space, an entire measure of rest. Takemitsu referred to this aspect of his writings as *ma.* The *ma* is meant to be a tangible element in the piece, long-sustained flute sounds breaking up the barriers between silences, sometimes fading into a full measure of rest as in mm. 21-22 of *Air*. Similar uses of *ma* can be found in both *Voice* and *Itinerant,* though in *Air* Takemitsu's use of space was so extensive that it should be considered one of the motivic elements of the work.

His larger gestures involved a motion in which fully chromatic textures move toward harmonic references, without resorting to traditional harmonic progressions. Pitches were emphasized to create a sense of tonic, but the tonic was generally not reinforced by a dominant. Instead, they were approached chromatically or by fourth. In this way, over the span of the gesture, recurring motives gradually reveal the harmonic source from which they derive. As recurring motives pass through varying harmonic areas, the composer created an expressive motion that Koonzin described as being "unified in its … clarity and powerful in its ambiguity."[87] This can be most clearly demonstrated by the unifying motive found in *Air.*

<div align="center">Nature in Music: Ma</div>

Takemitsu was inspired by nature on a number of levels. His composition titles often reflected natural themes, such as *Seasons, Tree Line*, *Toward the Sea.* This is readily apparent in *Air,* and implied in his use of *Itinerant*, which is a word often associated with searching and wind.

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[87] Koonzin, "Traversing Distances," 18.

Takemitsu made use of the concept of the Japanese garden, where many different natural materials such as water, plants, rocks, and moss co-exist in harmony. This was considered an important philosophical basis for his music, which came from his association with the artist, architect, and gardener Isamu Noguchi. The composer took the concept past natural phenomena, but choosing interpret it as life itself, including civilization and human behavior.[88]

Takemitsu wrote a collection of essays entitled *Nature and Music* (1962), which were translated and interpreted by Noriko Ohtake. Ohtake explained that these essays showed the different implications of the word nature. Takemitsu compared the condition of urban life with modern music, focusing on the loss of natural balance that "makes life seem active but weakens inner structure."[89] As with life, for music to achieve harmony and balance, Takemitsu believed it must be more than functional. He felt that most contemporary music in his age excluded nature, to its detriment.[90]

In his music, Takemitsu did not seek to recreate an image of natural settings, but he did want to connect his works to reality. He hoped that his music would blend well with the ambient noise around it, rather than excluding the sounds of the surroundings. This references a cultural anthropologist Junzo Kawada, who wrote extensively about the

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[88] Ohtake, *Creative Sources,* diss., 32.

[89] Ibid., 32.

[90] Ibid., 32.

performance of Mozart's works in the wilds of Africa, where they were out of harmony with their surroundings.[91]

This meant that, rather than ignoring the decaying sound of a final note, Takemitsu sought to incorporate that fade into the fades notated in the score. In this way, the end or beginning of a sound was extended beyond the written page and into the space occupied by the performer and audience.

Like Cage before him, Takemitsu felt sound should be liberated from schematic rules in order to have a real existence by itself. Takemitsu equated death with the most profound form of silence. He placed great emphasis on the balance of sound and silence, choosing sound to interrupt, rather than improve upon, the silence. Arhythmically placed rests in a schematic plan abandoned the true value of music. He wrote that people originally created music by the enunciation of sound because of their fear of death/silence. The addition of too many sounds became unnatural, which he believed to be the case in most Western music. Silence or death was unavoidable, and the construction of music in standardized forms sought to avoid the inclusion of silence or death. Takemitsu believed this to be a futile and unnatural struggle.

Takemitsu believed music would always be overcome by nature; the duty of the composer was to encourage, or allow this, by seeking unity with the sounds. Because of this belief, he saw no need for musical structure; it only satisfied the appearance of order. The breathing or enunciation of a sound became part of the bigger realm of nature.

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[91] Toru Takemitsu and Junzo Kawada, *Oto, Kotoba, Ningen (Sound, Word, Man)* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980), 72-73, in Ohtake, *Creative Sources*, diss., 34.

Takemitsu translated this into practical use. In many of his works, particularly for chamber groups or solo instruments, *ma* is employed as a structural device. While Takemitsu did seek some amount of control over the amount or length of *ma* employed, the use of a written rest was functional rather than metric.

As smaller phrases are divided by Takemitsu's brief indications of *ma*, larger groups of phrases and entire sections of melodic material are separated by more significant indications of *ma.* Takemitsu implied differentiations between smaller values of *ma* and larger values of *ma* through notation, though the use of standardized rest values is solely for the functional purposes. In the case of *Voice* and *Itinerant,* neither work is metered, and neither has actual bar-lines; the rest values are used as a suggestion for the amount of space between phrases. Again, this depends on whether the *ma* is used to separate a phrase, or intended to give space between musical sections.

The notation guide and performance instructions for both *Voice* and *Itinerant* further indicate that Takemitsu did not intend for the rests to be metric. Both contain symbols that Takemitsu uses in addition to the standard notation for a *fermata*, in order to differentiate between a short breath, a short pause, and a very long pause.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Beginning in the 1960s, Takemitsu experimented with different compositional styles. The *Jikken Kobo* exposed him to *musique concrete,* works with dramatic media, and serialism. Through his friendship with John Cage, Takemitsu became interested in graphic scores, prepared piano, and elements of indeterminacy.

As the composer grew more confident with these elements, he introduced Japanese elements to his works. The earliest example of Japanese-sounding material appeared in Takemitsu's writings in 1949, in his piano work, *Romance.*

Takemitsu's works make heavy use of the Western flute. One such example, *Masques*, is an example of Takemitsu's serial experimentation. He later abandoned such an extremely regimented style of composition in favor of using smaller pitch-class sets as the basis for his flute works.

These works for the Western flute also involve aleatoric elements. Takemitsu's *Ring, Sacrifice,* and *Valeria* are written sectionally. In *Ring,* the performer has the option of choosing what order the sections will be played. *Sacrifices* removes barlines to give each of the performers more freedom when relating the parts. This freedom appears in many of the solo flute works, and becomes a hallmark of his flute writing.

After *Requiem for Strings* had helped Takemitsu achieve a more international reputation, the piece *November Steps* (1967) included the Japanese *biwa* and *shakuhachi* with a traditional orchestra. When writing for these instruments and orchestra, Takemitsu discovered another element that became relevant to his solo flute writing: he began to emphasize the varying rates of decay in orchestral instruments. The gradual cessation of sound is a central element to each of the solo flute pieces.

It is also noteworthy that the flute pieces tend to imitate effects created by the *shakuhachi* and *Noh* flutes. While he was writing for a different instrument, the Western flute, Takemitsu clearly had the sounds of Japanese instruments in mind when writing. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4, as will musical themes that became common in his works.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOLO FLUTE WORKS

Voice

In 1970, Takemitsu wrote *Eucalypts I* for flutist Aurele Nicolete, oboist Heinz Holliger, and harpist Ursula Holliger. Following this piece, Takemitsu wrote solo pieces for each of the performers; for Nicolet, he completed *Voice* in 1971.

This piece followed the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka, Japan, where Takemitsu had served as the music director along with Stravinsky and Stockhausen. During this period, Takemitsu had become extremely interested in European experimental techniques. Takemitsu drew from Bruno Bartolozzi's *New Sounds for Woodwinds* when composing *Voice.* It was a recent text, first printed in 1967, and it would have been one of the only such items available to Takemitsu at the time. *Voice* only contains multiphonics listed by Bartolozzi, suggesting he used the text as a resource.

Another important element of the work was instrumental theater. In *Voice,* the composer sought to unite the performer with the instrument. The performer must deliver a spoken text, speak into the instrument, hum, shout, sing, growl, and click the tongue,

blending the voice and the sound of the flute. At other times, Takemitsu sought to create

a distinction between the sound of the voice and the sound of the flute, separating spoken

syllables and traditional flute sounds. This was combined with conventional extended

flute techniques such as key tapping and a wide variety of articulations, in order to create

a wide range of sounds and textures all related to the single source.

For the spoken text of *Voice,* Takemitsu drew verses from a poem by Shuzo

Takiguchi, *Handmade Proverbs.* The lines are heard first in French, and then in English.

> *Qui va la? Qui que tu sois, parle transparence!*
> *Who goes there? Speak, transparnce, whoever you are!*[92]

By incorporating the spoken word, Takemitsu displayed not only new aural possibilities

for the flute, but attempted to capture certain gestures and articulations of traditional

Japanese flutes. Sources differ as to which flute he used for inspiration.

Shakuhachi vs. *Noh* Flutes

Dana Wilson indicates that the *shakuhachi* was the basis for *Voice*, comparing

Voice to his double concerto, *November Steps*, which was for *shakuhachi* and *biwa*.[93]

Wilson draws this conclusion based on the subtle phrase endings, microtonal

progressions, and the varied tone color attained by "brusque dynamic changes."[94]

Works for a solo *shakuhachi* flute are typically free metered and without strict

rhythmic groupings. Wilson attributed the accenting attacks without tonguing and the

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[92] Toru Takemitsu, *Voice* (Paris: Editions Salabert, 1988).

[93] Dana Wilson, "The Role of Texture in Selected Works of Toru Takemitsu" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1992), 224.

[94] Wilson, 224.

changing of timbre on a single repeated pitch to the *shakuhachi* style of playing.[95] The

hollow tones ascend or descend in pitch rapidly and dramatically, often through the use

of a wide, pitch-bending vibrato. This was frequently paired with multiphonics or flutter-

tonguing, and chromatic *glissandi* and trills in order to evoke *shakuhachi* music.

In-Sung Kim attributed these same qualities to Takemitsu's familiarity with *Noh*

theater, and the *Noh* flute that would have accompanied these performances. This

correlates to the performance instructions included in the score. Takemitsu instructs the

flutist to growl, hum, whisper, and sing into the instrument in order to produce a "strong

accent without tonguing a Japanese *Noh* flute." *Noh* flute performances do not include

growling, humming, whispering, or singing, but are characterized by powerfully accented

first articulations.

Kim conceded some influence of *shakuhachi* flute in *Voice.* In the *shakuhachi*

tradition, more attention is paid to the process of bending sounds than to stable pitches,

because the music is not based on the harmonic system. The *shakuhachi* flute has five

holes, which produce five tones (approximately D, F, G, A, and D), but other tones are

available through half-holing and pitch bending, in conjunction with a change in the

embouchure. A *shakuhachi* player demonstrates virtuosity in the areas of pitch inflection

and vibrato. Kim differentiates between pitch inflection, which does not involve a finger-

change, and *glissando*, which does.

The trait that Wilson does not account for, and which Takemitsu does not employ,

is what makes the primary difference between *shakuhachi* and *Noh* flute playing

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[95] I refer to these changes as hollow tones or hollow-tone trills.

techniques: vibrato. *Shakuhachi* performance employs a system of *meri* and *kari.*[96] *Meri* is a technique of lowering the pitch of a note by physically changing the angle of the air into the flute, or by blowing less forcefully into the instrument. *Kari* is both a note and a technique of raising a pitch through physically raising the airstream in relationship to the flute. These pitch-bends are performed in tandem with one of four categories of vibrato; again, it is through vibrato that a *shakuhachi* performer demonstrates virtuosity. A *Noh* flutist will alter and bend pitches, but without employing the heavy and widely varying kind of vibrato expected from a *shakuhachi* flutist.

In *Voice,* Takemitsu employs several instances in which pitches are generally bent down, while ascending is generally concealed by *glissandi,* in order to cover a wider span of pitches. These are all accomplished without any indication of a changing vibrato from Takemitsu, suggesting that he did want the pitch bending of a Japanese flute, but did not have the *shakuhachi*'s elaborate vibrato in mind. Instead, as indicated in the notation instructions, Takemitsu indicates a symbol that should mimic the hard articulation style of a *Noh* flute.

The final section of *Voice* has a simpler texture than the previous sections, so Kim postulates that the flutist could use the *shakuhachi'*s unique vibrato for almost every note in the section. She indicates that vibrato is the "most distinctive feature of [*shakuhachi*] performance."[97] The irregular vibrato and breathy sound must be properly used to imitate

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[96] Jeffrey Lependorf, "Contemporary Notation for Shauhachi: A Primer for Composers," *Perspectives of New Music* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1989), 232.

[97] In-Sung Kim, "Use of East Asian Traditional Flute Techniques in Works by Chou Wen-chung, Isang Yun, and Toru Takemitsu" (DMA diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2004), 55.

traditional Japanese flutes."[98] She fails to account for the fact that a *shakuhachi* notation

would indicate which style of vibrato the composer wanted, if, in fact, he had *shakuhachi*

vibrato in mind.

It seems likely that Wilson was unaware of the difference between *shakuhachi*

and *Noh* flutes; while observations about the techniques of playing a *shakuhachi* flute are

accurate, similar statements can be made about the *Noh* flute. The *Noh* flute also plays in

free rhythm, accompanied by chanted text to heighten or expand emotion. The melody of

the flute has no specific pitch relationship with the melody of the chanting, although there

are some similarities in the general melodic contours of the two. In many segments of

Noh theater, the flute improvises around set patterns. This parallels the uneven phrases

that Wilson observes, which are incorrectly attributed to *shakuchachi* flute.

A difference between *shakuhachi* and *Noh* flute performance is likely what

attracted Takemitsu to their use, and what made *Noh* flute most appropriate for use in

Voice. In *Noh* drama, a poetic narrative is presented through chanting and dancing to the

accompaniment of an instrumental ensemble. All aspects of the drama, including singing

and dancing, as well as the entrance and exit of the actors, are presented in one or two

acts. The drama seeks to synthesize literature, dance, music, and theater, in such a way

that it is difficult to separate the elements from one another.

In *Noh* drama, the flute is intended to play at times with the *Noh* actor, and at

times separately; the flute improvises around a melody that, in turn, weaves in and out of

an unrelated melody or text as part of the performance. As *Voice* unfolds, the interplay of

the flute and the spoken poetry lines seems to support Takemitsu's assertion that the flute

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[98] Kim, 55.

should be played in a sharply articulated style, as with the *Noh* flute.

Form in *Voice*

Takemitsu does not literally recycle motivic material in *Voice,* which makes division of the work into sections a challenge. It seems most logical to divide the work into sections based on the placement of text. In-Sung Kim divided *Voice* into five main sections: A, B, A', and two different combinations of material from A and B. In-Sung Kim designates the form as ABA'B+A, and A+B.[99]

The first (A) section was designated as the first two systems, punctuated by the first line of the French poem, *Qui va la?* This was also punctuated by a breathy and forceful attack, in the *Noh* flute style, as indicated by Takemitsu. The flute makes frequent dynamic changes with microtonal shifts.

The second (B) section covers the third to fifth systems. The B section has no text, and the mood changes to a less forceful, more introspective feeling. Takemitsu increases the extremity of dynamic changes and continues usage of the extended techniques.

The third section (A') covers the sixth system and the first three systems of the second page. This outgoing (A') section also includes the text: *Qui va la? Qui que tu sois, Parle, transparence!* The fourth section (B+A) covers the fourth through sixth systems of page two and the first of page three. This compound section does not include text, but the performer adds his or her voice by shouting, crying, and growling into the instrument. The performer vocalizes the syllable, "Da!" which may be intended to invoke a Japanese

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[99] Kim, 53.

syllable of emphasis, similar to a spoken exclamation point.[100]

The final section (A+B) covers the end of page three's first system to the end of the piece. This section shows clear melodic gesture with consistent dynamic direction. This section also includes the English translation of the text, *Who goes there? Speak, transparence, whoever you are!* Kim points out that by whispering the words instead of speaking them loudly, the performer has brought back the introspective feeling of the B section.[101]

Each of these sections is demarcated by a sustained silence. Wilson addresses these silences in the assessment of Takemitsu's works. *Fermatas* delineate the sections of the work, and, when paired with the increasing frequency of the vocal interjections, creates a "large scale acceleration."[102]

Wilson divides the work into three main sections. The first section is labeled an introduction, and ends with the *fermata* after the first text interjection, *Qui va la?* This coincides with Kim's initial A section - that Wilson calls an introduction - is closed out by a silence, or *fermata.* Wilson and Kim also agree on the second section, focusing on the instrumental activity between the third and sixth stanzas of the work. Kim does not indicate that the triple-*piano* marking at the beginning of the sixth stanza is the end of the B section, but Wilson clarifies that the silence, which is followed by a second interjection of text.

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[100] This is according to a translation done by Dr. Mihoko Watanabe during a flute lesson at Ball State University in the Spring of 2009.

[101] Kim, 52.

[102] Wilson, 226.

Wilson does not address the material between the sixth stanza of page one and fourth stanza of page two. Wilson indicates that the second half of the work begins here, with "an instrumental development section of great activity."[103] This section ends with another *fermata* at the top of page three, also where Kim has indicated the fourth section.

While each author labels the section differently, it seems the two are in agreement as to the general structure of the work. Wilson points out the structural function of the text; the recapitulation occurs with the Takiguchi lines in English, rather than the French of the initial statements.[104] Kim gives general stanza lines and Wilson attempts to indicate measure numbers[105] but they seem to agree on general divisions. There are bar-lines, but not clearly marked measure numbers, so there are issues with both labeling systems. Wilson's analysis is useful in the incorporation of *fermatas* as structural divisions, and some mention of the meaning of text in two languages. Kim seems to agree with this, though it is never addressed specifically.

Additionally, Wilson addresses pitch content, pointing out that the pitch choices are not limited to motivic or scalar considerations. Instead, Takemitsu uses, in the busiest sections of the work, all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale, and pairs this with the use of quarter-tones and *glissandi* and *tremolos* to further conceal any tonal aspects of the work.[106]

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[103] Wilson, 226.

[104] Wilson, 228.

[106] Wilson, 228.

Ma* in *Voice

Takemitsu made use of the Japanese concept of *ma* in his composition. According to his musical philosophies, silence had a value equivalent to sound and therefore is not a pause or rest, which Takemitsu equated to the absence of sound. According to Takemitsu's writings, silence was as important as the sound itself, a reverberation in the sense of an overtone, or resonance.

Figures 3 displays the lengths of *fermatas* that Takemitsu *Voice*. Figure 3 begins with the standard *fermata* marking. This is used in contrast with the second marking, which indicates a shorter pause than a *fermata,* but one longer than the third option - an in-context breath. The chart goes on to detail marking for *accelerando* and *ritardando*, which the composer uses in a manner similar to a phrase marking, and instead of the written-out instructions.

ⓓ — *Timing (tempo)*

Proportional notation is used in which absolute durations and rhythmic values are not given precisely but are suggested by relative durations. One bar should last about 4 1/2 seconds.

⌒	*Very long pause.*
⊓	*Short pause.*
V	*Short breath.*
⌐⟶	*Accelerando.*

Figure 3: Takemitsu, *Voice*, performance guide

Kim and Wilson agreed that the large phrases in *Voice* are separated by instances of *ma,* in addition to the interjections of text. The second stanza draws to completion with a *descrescendo* from a *mezzo forte* to *pianissimo*. The *pianissimo* marking was printed with a *fermata* overhead, which was Takemitsu's indication for a very long silence. This

separates the phrase of the first section from the beginning of the next section of melodic material, as seen in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Takemitsu, *Voice*, page 1, stanza 2

Figure 5 illustrates the final moments of the second section, which Kim called B. It was not separated from the third section by an indication of *ma,* but Takemitsu does employ the fade-out technique, as described by Wilson. The fifth stanza closes with a sustained *piano* pitch that fades into an indication for a triple *piano*, approaching silence, if not actually creating it.

Figure 5: Takemitsu, *Voice*, page 1, stanza 5

The third section draws to a close with another sustained pitch, this time accompanied by the last statement of Takiguchi's French text. *Qui va la? Qui que tu sois, parle, transparence!* is to be spoken into the flute. This technique does not allow for as much depth of sound as from traditional pitch-creation, and ends the phrase, as well as

section, with another gradual transition to silence. Here, Takemitsu placed the *fermata*,

his longest indication of silence, between the stanzas, which is the most powerful

indication of *ma* contained in the piece.

Wilson and Kim agreed that the active passage of instrumental techniques begin

on the tenth stanza serves as a transition or developmental section in the work. This

bridges the section of the work in which Takiguchi's poem is set in French and the

section where the text appears in English. Additionally, the extended techniques call for

repeated instances of non-traditional pitches; these are not instances of hollow-tone trills,

where the same pitch is manipulated for several seconds. Rather, non-traditional

fingerings are indicated, in order to alter the timbre of the pitch being played.

These altered pitches were paired with repeated uses of *accelerando* and flutter-

tongue, and a call for shouting from the performer. The syllables indicated by Takemitsu

were not English or French, and were not drawn from the Takiguchi poem. It is possible

that they are, instead, drawn from Takemitsu's native Japanese. The syllable "da" serves

as an exclamation or indication of intensity in the speaker.[107] The syllable is spoken three

times, and followed by a call for the flutist to growl while performing a *glissando*

gesture, and several harmonics. This serves as the peak of the flute-only section, which is

closed by a lengthy indication for *ma* at the top of the third page. Spatially, this rest was

given more emphasis than any of the previous instances; the half barlines that Takemitsu

employed to organize the pages split this *fermata* from any of the musical material before

or after it.

It is interesting to note that this use of *ma* is not approached by an extreme

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[107] Watanabe interview, Spring 2009.

crescendo, as in the other examples of structural *ma.* There is a *mezzo fort*e indication that is followed by a *descrescendo* mark, but Takemitsu does not indicate that the dynamic level should return to a *pianissimo* or a *niente*. This is one of the few instances in which the listener is not prepared for silence by the gradual fade-out discussed by Wilson.

The final section, beginning with the last note of the first stanza on page three, is not punctuated by instances of *ma.* Instead, Takemitsu slowed the note-values, and extends the value of pitches as they appear. There is a moment of louder dynamic on each stanza, but the majority of the musical material is presented at a softer dynamic level, giving the final section a subdued feeling. Even the spoken material, presented on the fourth stanza of page three, is given the instruction of "whisper."[108] This lowering of the dynamic level prepares the listener for the final fade-out of the work, and follows Takemitsu's philosophy about the inevitable approach of sound to silence. As the final section draws near a close, the intensity of sound fades until the close of the work, or what Takemitsu called the death of sound. This is the final spoken phrase of the piece, "Whoever you are."[109] The last whisper then begins the ultimate use of *ma,* the end of the work.

Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi

Toru Takemitsu's *Itinerant, In Memory of Isamu Noguchi* was written to mourn the death of his friend Noguchi, the sculptor. Noguchi's work as a philosopher and his multi-cultural heritage lead to his forward-thinking attitude, viewing the world as a single

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[108] Toru Takemitsu, *Voice* (Paris: Editions Salabert, 2001), 3.

[109] Ibid.*,* 3.

large community, rather than hundreds of smaller ones. Takemitsu once referred to Noguchi as the "intuitive precursor of the . . . one-town world man," which may have inspired Takemitsu's own desire to become an international, rather than national figure in the composing world.[110]

Isamu Noguchi was a sculptor, designer, architect, and craftsman. Throughout his life he struggled to see, alter, and recreate his natural surroundings. In keeping with traditions of Japanese gardening, he sought to transform existing spaces to show the natural beauty each location had always possessed. Noguchi believed that, through sculpture and architecture, one could better understand mankind's struggle with nature. The search for understanding brings together his many and varied works, and was the basis of the philosophical discussions between Noguchi and Takemitsu.

Isamu Noguchi

Noguchi was born Isamu Gilmour in Los Angeles in 1904 to Leonie Gilmour, an Irish-American teacher and editor, and Yone Noguchi, a Japanese poet. It is the cultural divide between his parents, between Eastern and Western culture, between two distinct histories of art and thought that would engage him his entire life. This difference between Eastern and Western arts was also a subject that interested Takemitsu.

In 1906, Noguchi's mother took him to Japan, where he attended Japanese and Jesuit schools. While in Japan, Noguchi gained an appreciation for its landscape, architecture and craftsmanship; this appreciation was what he later passed on to his friend the composer.

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[110] Toru Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence: Selected Writings,* trans. and ed. Yoshiko Kakudo and Glenn Glasow (Lanham, Maryland: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), 59.

After high school Noguchi enrolled in Columbia University to study medicine, while at the same time taking sculpture classes on the Lower East Side. He eventually came to realize that art, not medicine, was his true calling. He left school and found a studio where he could sculpt full-time. While in Manhattan he became acquainted with the work of the Surrealists and with contemporary abstract sculpture.

Returning to New York in 1929, Noguchi found little acceptance for his abstract sculptures. His sculpted portraits, however, earned him not only a new degree of recognition, but a living as well. Among his early patrons were the composer George Gershwin. While these commissions increased his popularity, the work seemed stifling, and in the thirties he moved to Mexico City to work on a large three-dimensional mural with the painter Diego Rivera. While not his own work, the mural was closer in scale to the large pieces he longed to create. His work in Mexico City eventually won him the opportunity to create the entrance to the Associated Press building in New York. With this, Noguchi was able to work on a large-scale project of his own.

After World War II, Noguchi returned to Japan and found a community of young artists eager to take part in the optimism of his new ideas, the *Jikken Kobo*. This was the group that introduced him to Toru Takemitsu. While involved with the *Jikken Kobo*, he continued to make individual sculptures, but was also given the opportunity to work on larger site-specific pieces. Among these were gardens and fountains that combined his interests in sculpture and architecture, and which he discussed frequently with his new composer friend. For Noguchi, and on some level for Takemitsu, Noguchi's return to Japan was both a personal and political bridge bringing together two cultures that had recently been at war.

While his proposal for the Hiroshima Monument was not accepted, his involvement in the cultural exchange between Japan and America was important. For Noguchi, Japan was both his past and his future, providing him with a history of craftsmanship as well as aesthetic inspiration. He would return there constantly throughout his life to work, study, and live.

Despite his constant relocation and private temperament, Noguchi found a place among the pioneering generation of modern artists. He was inspired by and collaborated with many of the inventive American architects, choreographers, and painters of his time. With his long-time friend, Buckminster Fuller, he constructed models, planned outdoor projects, and investigated the ways in which people live and thrive in their environments. By creating sets for the choreographers Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and George Ballenchine, he continued this investigation. He was well respected by many artists, including Frida Kahlo, Arshille Gorky, and Willem de Kooning, but never belonged to any movement or school.

Noguchi died in December of 1988 at the age of 84. New York is still home to the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum. On the other side of the world, his work site in Japan is a preserved record of his creative process. He designed and created gardens in Paris, Jerusalem, and New York, and outdoor sculptures and environments in seventeen American cities.

Noguchi's Influence on Takemitsu

In keeping with traditions of Japanese gardening, Noguchi sought to transform existing spaces to show the natural beauty each location had always possessed. He believed that through sculpture and architecture, one could better understand mankind's

struggle with nature. Takemitsu translated this to music as a struggle between silence and sound, or a fight to organize the natural element of sound into unnatural traditional Western forms.

Takemitsu and Noguchi were both interested in exploring the difference between Eastern and Western arts. For Noguchi, this had to do with his dual heritage, while Takemitsu sought to become and internationally known composer who happened to be from Japan, rather than a Japanese composer. The two artists related to one another through this struggle, searching for an independent identity that allowed for both their Japanese heritage, while still permitting the influence of Noguchi's literal European/American heritage and Takemitsu's figurative French art-music heritage.

Often, *ma* is approached gradually. Indications for dynamics prior to each instance of *ma* often include a *descrescendo* into an extremely soft dynamic. The end of each instance of *ma* occurs in a similar fashion; they are generally followed by a *piano* or *pianissimo* marking that *crescendoes* into a louder dynamic for the peak of each musical idea. This provides each musical phrase with a shape that fades into sound, and then out of it, from each instance of *ma.*

Ma in *Itinerant*

Figure 6, taken from the performance guide to *Itinerant,* does not give an elaborate indication, but seems to draw from familiarity with *Voice.* The squared *fermata* indication is used for a short pause, and a double-ringed *fermata* is used to indicate a pause longer than a traditional *fermata.* In this work, Takemitsu forgoes the shorter breaths and pauses that are available in the texture of *Voice.*
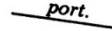
NOTATION:

⊓ ⌒ ⌒̑   = Pauses of increasing duration (fermata: short, long, very long)

＿／   = accelerando

⎾＼   = ritardando

＿*port.*＿   = Make portamento

Figure 6: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, performance guide

Structure in *Itinerant*

Like *Voice, Itinerant* is unmetered, constructed with a series of short, gesture-based motives separated by varying degrees of rest. Material is typically presented in phrases made up of two sections. These sections were separated by a small amount of *ma*, and when the phrase is complete, they are followed by a larger period of *ma*.

The motives do not appear to be based on a pentatonic scale; each motivic section focuses heavily on the whole step combined with a leap, generally an imperfect fourth or diminished fifth. To transition from one phrase to the next, Takemitsu relies on extreme contrasts of both register and dynamic, as can be seen in Figure 7. The rest is approached with instructions of *niente* from a B in the middle of the staff. After a moderately sized example of *ma* indicated by the two dotted-eighth rests, the flute re-enters a major-seventh higher, on the B-flat above the staff. Takemitsu makes the choice to notate both pitches as B and B-flat, suggesting the altered octave relationship, rather than a C-flat or A-sharp to emphasize the seventh relationship. This entry contrasts in register, but builds from the *niente* with a small *crescendo* from *pianissimo*.

As in Figure 7, *Itinerant* is structured around intervals that are traditionally perfect in quality. Takemitsu alters each of these intervals, focusing primarily on the

diminished or augmented fourth. These intervals are sometimes written as diminished

fifths. The first and final pitches spell a fourth, separated by register, between the pitches

F and B-flat. The first phrase begins on an F, and also ends a fourth away, on B.

Figure 7: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 3, stanza 2

Between phrases, Takemitsu frequently emphasizes a whole or half step separated

by register; this is sometimes a half step, but more often, is a whole step, as in the main

movement of the phrase. The first full phrase ends on the second stanza with the pitch B.

This is followed by a B-flat an octave above, which begins the second full phrase. The

second phrase ends with an indication of longest value of *ma*, but in the phrase-echo that

follows, the final pitch is a C, a whole step above the starting pitch. Content between

these half and whole steps contains frequent emphasis on the altered fourth/fifth

relationship, as outlined by the larger phrase-sections. Individual sections outline the step

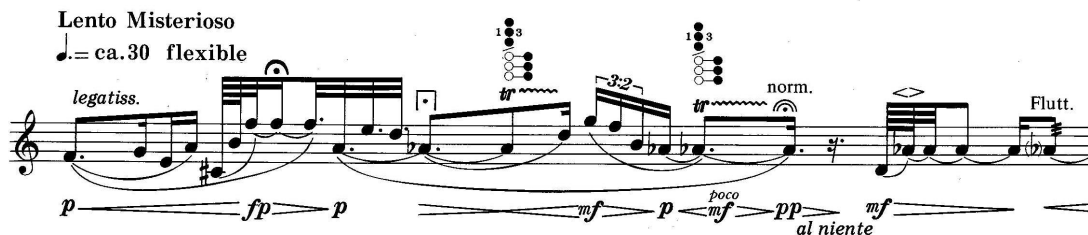relationship. Figure 8 illustrates the opening pitch of the piece.

Figure 8: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 3, stanza 1

Figure 9 shows the final pitches of the first section, or large phrase of *Itinerant.* The final pitch of the phrase is E-flat, which is a whole step lower than the initial pitch of the piece. It is interesting to note that this E-flat is approached by a B, an augmented fifth; this is in keeping with Takemitsu's interest in the altered fourth/fifth relationship.

Figure 9: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 4, stanza 1

There does not appear to be an emphasis on traditional form in *Itinerant.* This is in keeping with his use of the elements as a programmatic inspiration; Takemitsu and his friend Noguchi each like to compare their respective art to nature. In his writings, Takemitsu references human thought and wind, linking the wandering path that each tended to take.[111] Because this work was written in memory of his friend, Takemitsu

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[111] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence,* 69.

intended the piece to represent his friend's search for identity, which he acknowledged as "[significant] beyond the searching of a specific individual … For us it may be called a symbol."[112] This symbol, for Takemitsu, represented the quest for an identity independent of a single nationality, and that was his inspiration for *Itinerant.*

In keeping with his natural musical aesthetics, and in memory of his friend, a rigid formal structure would not fit. Though Takemitsu does not reuse melodic material, he creates continuity through other means. Phrases are uneven in length, sometimes relating to phrases before and after through pitch content, but more often possessing no obvious relationship. Pitch content does not appear to have been chosen based on pitch class sets or serial devices, but rather to support movement through Takemitsu's emphasized intervals.

Itinerant is divided into six sections by Takemitsu's medium-length *ma.* The first section ends with the completion of the first stanza on page four; a sustained E-flat is given the longest *fermata,* and also a *descrescendo* from a *pianissimo* marking. (See Figure 10.) This is in keeping with the fade-out technique Wilson described in *Voice,* approaching the silence with a preparation. The first phrase section contains three larger phrase groupings, each of which has at least two smaller sections, separated by *ma* without a *fermata* of any length. The pitches relate to one another through Takemitsu's favored intervals, emphasizing the fourth and the whole step separated by register; this is supported by the movement from the first pitch to the last of the phrase, which are a whole step apart.

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[112] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence,* 70.

The second section begins in the second stanza of page four, with the marking "Calm."[113] This change of mood provides contrast from the first section. The sections are separated by a fourth, from A-flat to E-flat, as shown in Figure 10. This section is characterized by more extreme dynamic contrasts, moving from *pianissimo* to a *sforzando-fortissimo* marking several times. In this second section, Takemitsu also begins to make more heavy use of hollow-tone trills, creating small-scale *portamenti* between pitches, and often following these *portamenti* with multiphonics. The phrase ends with a *portamento* from A to G-sharp, thus ending the section on the same enharmonic pitch it began. Figure 10 shows the opening phrase of the section, as well as the movement away from it, to a major seventh separated by register, again spelled as a diminished octave.
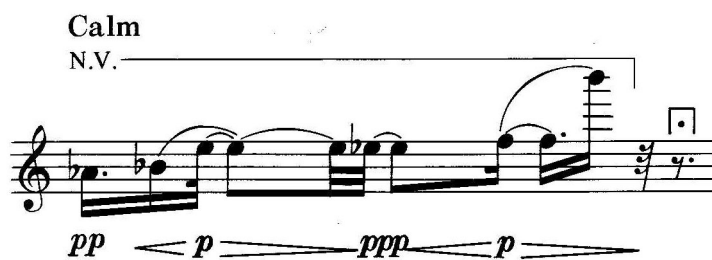
Figure 10: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 4, stanza 2

Figure 11 shows the end of the section, which has returned to the original pitch level, and ends on a G-sharp, rather than the opening A-flat.

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[113] Toru Takemitsu, *Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi* (Tokyo: Schott Music Co., Ltd., 1989), 4.
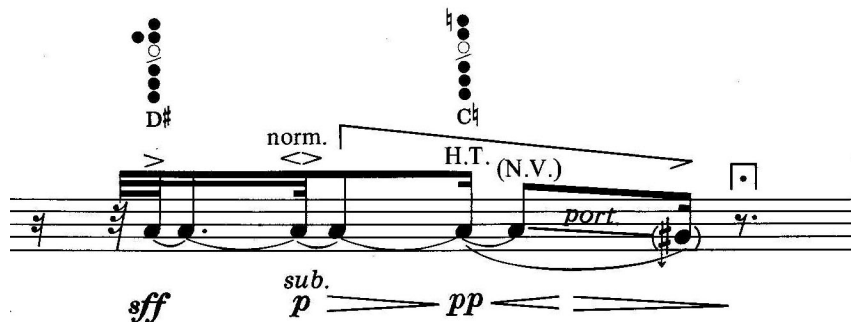
Figure 11: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 4, stanza 4

The third section begins on the fifth stanza of page four, on a D, which leads to the E beginning the fourth section on the fifth stanza of page four. In reality, the third and fourth sections can be combined into a transitional passage to the fifth and sixth sections, which close out the piece, but are being counted as smaller sections for the sake of consistency. Each of these sections is separated by a rest with a *fermata* of medium length, indicating Takemitsu wanted the material to be separated from the surrounding material. As with the earlier sections, phrases are typically divided into two sections by brief periods of rest.

The fifth section, begins on the second stanza of page five, with a slide from E to D, followed by a flourish to a *niente* passage. In this section, Takemitsu also introduces a new extended technique, the whistle tone. This passage contains several *fermata* on pitches, and one example of the extended *glissando* using hollow-tone fingerings. This occurs at the beginning of the first stanza of page six, traveling the distance between B-flat and G-sharp, before a brief rest and a flourish that begins on the G-sharp.

Figure 12 shows the alternate fingering for E, which helps to blend more easily

into the D that follows it, particularly if the performer *crescendos* in a manner that lends to sharpness on the D.

Figure 12: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 5, stanza 2

Figures 13 and 14 show the final two stanzas, in which the flute plays the full range of the instrument, from low C to the highest B-flat. Rather than ending the work in a fade-out, as with the other solo flute works, Takemitsu indicates that the final pitch should be held and played with a *crescendo*. I believe may have been intended to indicate Noguchi's searching spirit being released from his body.
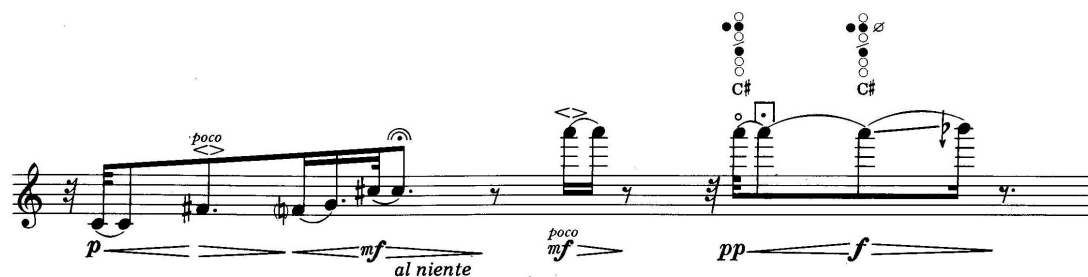
Figure 13: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 6, stanza 2

Figure 14: Takemitsu, *Itinerant,* page 6, stanza 3

Extended Techniques in *Itinerant*

Takemitsu combined traditional Japanese instruments with Western instruments in works such as *November Steps* and frequently refers to water in a number of compositions, as in *I Hear the Water Dreaming* for flute and orchestra. Many of the effects employed in *Itinerant* are produced through contemporary multiphonics and other techniques, intended to resemble traditional Japanese instruments. These characteristics include the connection with nature; the extremely slow pace; the economy of material; the significance of *ma*; and the artistic ideal of concentration, stillness, and sensitivity for both those who play and those who listen.

Like *Voice, Itinerant* is unmetered, consisting of a series of short, gesture-based motives separated by varying degrees of rest. Material is typically presented in two sections separated by an indication of short *ma*, followed by a larger period of *ma* and two more sections of material. While the motives do not appear to be based on a pentatonic scale, each motivic section focuses heavily on the whole step combined with a leap, generally an imperfect fourth or diminished fifth. To transition from one phrase to the next, Takemitsu relies on extreme contrasts of both register and dynamic. Figure 15

shows the transition from a phrase ending on a high A to a moment of *ma*, which is answered by the lowest E in the flute range. These two phrases are another fourth, separated by register. In this case, Takemitsu has not altered the fourth, though it is interesting to note that the E moves immediately to a heavily accented, *forte* B-flat, which is a diminished fifth from the E. (It could also be read enharmonically as a step separated by registerfrom the previous A, which was another interval that interested Takemitsu in this work.)
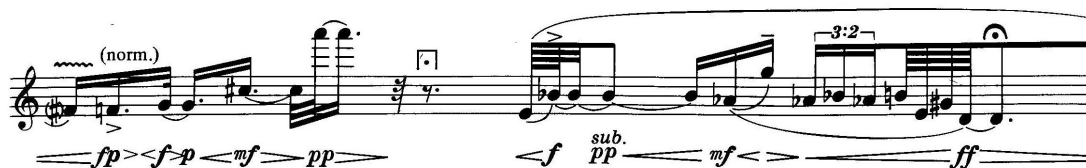
Figure 15: Takemitsu, *Itinerant,* page 5, stanza 1

In most cases, the interval between small phrases derives from the linear motion of the phrase. These build into larger units of compound melody linked by imperfect fourths, or, more frequently, whole steps separated by register. Figure 16 shows a whole step separated by register between the D in the staff that ends the phrase, and the low C *sforzando piano* that opens the subsequent phrase. Note that Takemitsu has given an indication of an extremely long *fermata* and "much air pressure" for a more shocking contrast in dynamics and to emphasize the whole step between phrases, in contrast with the *portamento* that conceals the whole step between E and D within the first phrase.[114]

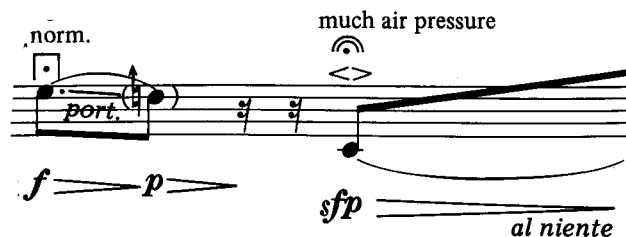[114] Toru Takemitsu, *Itinerant: In Memory of Isamu Noguchi* (Tokyo: Schott Music Co. Ltd., 1989), 3.

Figure 16: Takemitsu, *Itinerant*, page 3, stanza 4

To ornament these basic units, Takemitsu employs a series of extended techniques. As in *Voice,* multiphonics punctuate peaks of phrases, combining pitches from previous phrases. Extensive use of hollow-tone pitches appears, as well, allowing the composer to focus for longer periods on the same pitch. Hollow tones simultaneously recall the pitch-bending effects of Japanese *shakuchachi* flutes.

In addition to the techniques Takemitsu had used previously in *Voice,* he experimented with whistle tones in *Itinerant*. Figure 17 shows the notation for a whistle tone, in which the flutist blows more lightly across the tone-hole to create a very soft, tea-kettle-like sound on the required pitch. These whistle tones appear just before the final climax of the work, creating the most drastic dynamic contrast in the piece.
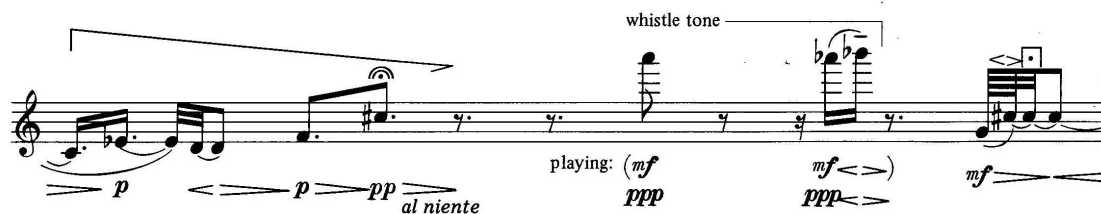
Figure 17: Takemitsu, *Itinerant,* page 5, stanza 3

Another similarity between *Itinerant* and *Voice* is the use of *portamento,* sliding from one pitch into the next, as in traditional works for the *shakuhachi* flute. In both works, Takemitsu sometimes accomplishes this move by stating the natural note, ornamenting it with several of his hollow-tone versions, and then sliding to a note a half step above or below the original pitch. Figure 18 shows the half-step *portamento* is followed by a sustained A.

Figure 18: Takemitsu, *Itinerant,* page 4, stanza 4

While the effect fits with the generally non-diatonic, primal feel of *Voice,* Takemitsu chose to ornament the *portamento* by overlaying a hollow-tone trill, concealing much of the pitch bend, as shown in Figure 19. The flutist plays from an F to an A, with instructions to bend the pitch in each step and half step between. Takemitsu further conceals the bending by indicating trills between the pitches G and A.

Figure 19: Takemitsu, *Voice,* page 1, stanza 2

Despite *Itinerant's* more Western approach to tonality, here he leaves the *portamento*

bare, in order to further emphasize their connection to nature. Takemitsu believed that in

nature, there is no division between tonic and dominant or between pitches; he wanted his

music to be free of "trite" rules that led to the tonic/dominant hierarchy.[115] By concealing

the movement between pitches with a slide, he felt music would reflect a more natural

element.

In any cross-cultural consideration, the process of examining other musical

traditions can produce new insights about one's own music. In these pieces, the music is a

reflection of ancient traditions, interpreted through modern technique.

Air

Works of Takemitsu's late period include more use of tonal reference than *Voice*

or *Itinerant*. As Takemitsu neared the end his of his life, he began to demonstrate more

and more of another counter-modernistic tendency with increased emphasis on

melody.[116] As with the earlier works, melody in this piece is represented by four

reoccurring motivic devices. His last completed score, *Air*, could be interpreted as

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[115] Takemitsu, *Confronting Silence,* 4.

[116] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001), 218.

meaning either the performer's breath, or the formal equivalent of an aria. Given

Takemitsu's affinity for multiple interpretations and inspirations, it is likely that both had

some relationship to his selection of title.

Ma in *Air*

As was demonstrated in *Voice,* Takemitsu's music contained a pattern of action

and rest contributed to the internal dynamic shape of the musical gesture. Throughout

Air, long, arched phrases find rest in sustained notes, which fade into silence. These

gestures group to form larger time spans of sound that diminish in variances of decaying

sound. While the device was used to divide thematic ideas in *Voice,* Takemitsu uses *ma*

on a much smaller scale in *Air. Ma* is used to divide the second section from the first and

third, and is also used to divide the two pitch-class sets that make up the outer sections so

that they never overlap. It is worth noting that, while *Air* does employ different lengths

of *ma*, Takemitsu relies very heavily on standard notation, so the lengths of *ma* are

indicated by traditionally notated rests. The lengths of these rests are often so detailed

that literal observation of them is impractical, as is demonstrated in *Air*. Similarly, exact

observation of the highly specific rhythms is also impractical.

When considered with the use of *ma* in *Voice* and *Itinerant,* it seems likely that

the sixty-fourth rest written in m. forty-nine was intended as a quick breath. The sixty-

fourth followed by a quarter rest was an extension of the *descrescendo* on beat two, and a

long pause before beginning a new phrase in m. 50. The thirty-second rest in beat three

of m. 51 is likely another quick breath, written to fit the traditional notation of the work.

Takemitsu employs *ma*, in varying lengths. However, in *Air,* he is less particular

with instructions to fade out gradually. Instead, Takemitsu frequently wrote rests of

varying length to encourage longer and shorter amounts of pause between phrases, accompanied by *descrescendos* and extreme shifts in dynamic and frequent use of *niente* that help to create the fade. By using notation, rather than written instructions, Takemitsu took steps to organize the work in a more traditional manner; this is the most Western of the three flute solos.
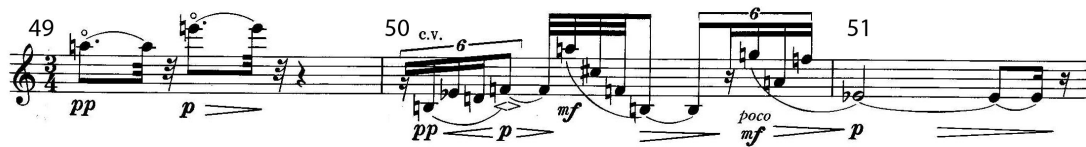
Figure 20: Takemitsu*, Air,* mm. 49-51

Motivic Devices and Structure in *Air*

Four main motivic elements are used throughout the piece, in varying combinations. These motivic elements were notated *ma*, the interval of a fourth, as shown in the opening pitches of Figure 21, and in Figure 22. Figure 21 also demonstrates the pattern of threes, in measure one, and on the second beat of m. three. The final motive, long-short patterns, is demonstrated in the sustained A leading to the triplet pattern of m. 1, or the sustained pitch that begins m. 2, leading to shorter pitches at the end of beat 2 and beat 3.

Figure 21: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 1-3

The interval of a fourth/fifth is a focus, reminiscent of *Itinerant.* The most frequently used fourth is E-A, which were the primary pitches used in the *Itinerant*. In *Air,* the fourth can be augmented or diminished, so sometimes the E or the A is altered. Figure 22 shows this altered relationship between the pitches E and A, and also B and E-flat.

Figure 22: Takemitsu, *Air,* m. 23

Given the prevalence of the sea motive in Takemitsu's work, and that both E and A are present in the natural form of that motive, I am inclined to grant significance to the choice of E and A specifically for *Air.* It was used in the reappearing motive that first occurs in m. 1, shown in Figure 21.

These pitches span the space between ascending slurs in m.10-11, as shown in Figure 23.
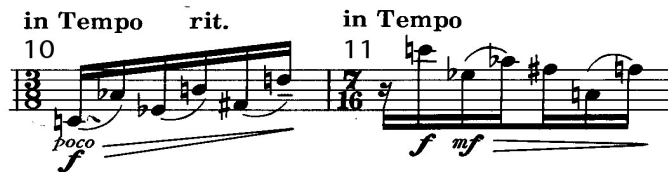

Figure 23: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 10-11

Figure 24 shows the same pitches are inverted to a fifth for the opening of the second section, in m. 23.

Figure 24: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 23-25

Figure 25 shows how the fourth motive was often combined with the pattern of threes that was Takemitsu's third motivic idea. This occurs in patterns of threes in m. 17, and was the first eighth of beat two in m. 18. The second set of triplets emphasizes a movement from B to F, employing the modified fourth that interests Takemitsu.

Figure 25: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 17-18

The remaining element is the use of sustained notes for contrast with sixteenth notes. Dotted half notes, as in the opening measure, as well as tied half notes in m. 6 and m. 21, and other tied quarter notes in mm. 24, 35, 46, etc., provided different degrees of contrast, and are often paired with varying degrees of silence to further contrast the phrases.

The smaller phrase arches exist within the framework of key area arches, moving toward an emphasis on a certain pitch. In the opening section, this is A, which moves to another pitch; in the opening phrase, G-sharp, and back to the original pitch, A. This is demonstrated in the opening phrase of *Air,* shown in Figure 26. The pitch content leads

from the opening A to a major seventh higher, G-sharp, but eventually returns to the

opening A to create a phrase-arch that can be paralleled on the structural level.

Figure 26: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 1-3

This nearly symmetrical movement occurs in both the opening and second sections. On

an even larger scale, the initial passage emphasizes A, while the middle section moves

away, centering only several pitches, but emphasizing B most heavily, before returning to

A in the closing section. This creates an arched phrase as a part of a larger sectional arch,

which, in turn, is part of the largest formal arch of the work.

Figure 27 shows the first three notes of the piece, which appear at various points

throughout each section, form set class (026).

Figure 27: Takemitsu, *Air,* m. 1

This set was often employed by Takemitsu to construct principle motives that could

alternate between octatonic and whole-tone regions. As with the earlier trio *And I Knew*

'twas Wind…, pitches forming set (026) were drawn from larger sets that Takemitsu

alternates, shifting between five-member octatonic and whole-tone sets. The order in which the three-pitch sets occurs changes, sometimes cycling through the same circular motion that Takemitsu indicated, in his earlier work, he believed imitated the circular path of wind.[117]

In the opening section of *Air*, the pitches used are A, E-flat, and C-sharp. Figure 28 shows how the A, E-flat, and C-sharp can be interpreted as part of set [5-16], and the second measure statement of [5-33].[118] Each of the pitches appears in the third measure's movement from [5-33] back to [5-16]. Thus, the three pitches can occur in both sets, and are employed as a link the two pitch-class sets.

Figure 28: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 1-3

While the two are linked by overlapping pitches, Takemitsu often opts to separate the two by rests and his fade technique, creating a juxtaposition of commonality and separation.

Set 3 (01347), [5-16], indicates the octatonic collection used in measure 1. Set (02468), [5-33], indicates the whole-tone collection used in m. 2, and in a second form in

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[117] Shuri Okajima, "A Comparison Between the Two Works for Flute, Viola, and Harp by Toru Takemitsu and Claude Debussy: Influences on Takemitsu and Similarities Between the Two Composers" (DMA diss., University of Arizona, 2007), 58.

[118] Timothy Koonzin, "Traversing Distances: Pitch Organization, Gesture, and Imagery," *Contemporary Music Review* 21, no. 4 (2002): 18.

m. 3.[119] Measures 4-6 return to the octatonic collection. Measure 7 employs set [5-16] in a new pattern of sixteenth notes, creating the contour of a small arch. The contour, as well as the sixteenth-based bursts, are both used again in mm. 44-45. Measure 8 employs (02368), a slight variation on the (02468), set [5-33]. One might argue that the 3 was intended as a reference to, or combination of, a pitch from [5-16] to better link the two.

Takemitsu employed this set in two forms to increase pitch-class saturation before returning to a variant of the opening. The only time he exceeds the boundaries of the whole-tone and octatonic sets in a significant way, he does so with the A-E-flat motion in m. 14. This emphasized step of a fourth is an example of Takemitsu's choice to recombine two of his four motivic elements, the fourth, in this case, a perfect fourth, and the sustained note values.

The ascending motion through A-major triads in m. 1 is balanced with descent in the following measure, offsetting the tonal reference by beginning again on an E-flat in m. 3. The motive that begins in m. 3, as well as the motive that closes m. 4, reoccur several times throughout this initial passage, taking the listener to away from, and then back to the pitch A. Measure 7 seems to be preparing for different material, but this does not happen. Instead, Takemitsu returns to an augmented version of m. 3 in m. 9. Measures 10 -11 imitate the contour, but on different pitches, shifting the emphasis to E-flat, which eventually tonicizes an A-flat in m. 14. Material from m. 3 is brought back in identical rhythms in m. 15. Measure 16 has a similar contour to m. 2, which is quoted directly in m. 17, followed by four more measures of exact quotation. A bar of *ma* separates this opening passage from the second material group.

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[119] Ibid.,18.

In contrast with the E-A movement in the first section (seen previously in Figure 28), the second section is characterized by movement between B and F. Figure 29 shows this B to F movement of a fifth, which could be interpreted as an inversion of the fourth that characterizes the outer sections. The opening gesture is reminiscent of the material in m. 3, leading to a sustained F, and then to a sustained B.
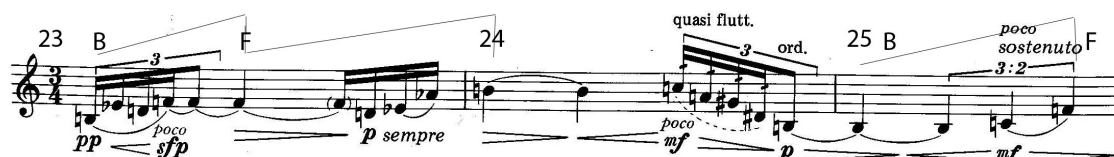

Figure 29: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 23-25

Material in Figure 29 invokes the triplet figure from m. 4, this time leading to the A and G-sharp to A alternations of the first section, which are led away to an unexpected C in m. 31. Triplet leaps of a fourth are meant to invoke the return to opening material, again leading to a B emphasis in mm. 33-36, which is separated by another bar of *ma*.

Measure 37 begins with the fourth motive, suggesting a return to opening material, but slides back into a section emphasizing B, and then C-sharp. Four bursts of sextuplet sixteenth notes, each containing mostly pitches from the opening material, are separated from one another using more *ma*, before two more emphases on fourths, also separated from the other gestures with silence, and followed by a decorated repetition of the material that opened the second section, again emphasizing B, but cadencing on E-flat. A second emphasis on the B triad occurs in mm. 52-54, closing this time on an A-flat/G-sharp and a bar of silence. The contour from mm. 55-61 is extremely reminiscent of mm. 1-6, centering around B and F instead of the opening A, and ended with another

measure of silence before m. 62 and m. 63 reference mm. 7-8's gesture, ending with an emphasis on the pitch E. E remains the central pitch until m. 71, making use of material from m. 44 and m. 52, before cadencing again on E.

Figure 30 shows m.72, which begins with another E moving downward, in what gives the impression of a return to opening material. The contour of m. 73 is meant to reference m. 3, but by m. 74, there is an emphasis on F. Measure 75 begins again on E, using intervals from the opening bar and ending on an unexpected C. Rhythms and pitches in m. 76 suggest a return to the material from m. 52, but are combined with the G-sharp-to-C motion of mm. 44 and 65, which lead into pitch material from the opening section in mm. 72-79. The imminent return of opening material becomes apparent in m. 80, when pitches have returned to those from sets [5-16] and [5-33], in rhythms and patterns invoking the opening material. A direct restatement begins in m. 83, making only minor alterations to the original rhythms.

Figure 30: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 72-79

The material of the opening passage is approached in reverse, beginning clearly in m. 83. Figure 31 shows mm. 19-22, the balance point of the arch-phrase.

Figure 31: Takemitsu, *Air,* mm. 19-21

This contrasts with the material in Figure 32, where the E-E-flat-C-sharp motive from the opening passage returns in m. 84, also signaling a return to the emphasis of the pitch A. This statement is repeated in varying rhythm, leading to a brief emphasis on E-flat in m. 88, which returns to emphasizing A in m. 89, hinting at the passage from m. 3, m. 15, and m. 18. This motion away from A is repeated three times, rhythmically altered and expanded each time, before returning to an A that fades into a silence barrier at the end of m. 92. An exact repetition of mm. 1-6 occurs from m. 93 through m. 98, signaling the completion of the arch form.

Figure 32: Takemitsu, *Air*, mm. 84-92

When compared with *Itinerant* and *Voice,* one cannot help but notice that Takemitsu's use of repetition in the later work has become more literal and more conventionally ordered. In *Air,* the motive in m. 4 becomes a reoccurring feature in the first section of the piece, which is alluded to in the second section (m. 39, especially), and is used to signal a return to previously heard material in m. 57. As I have demonstrated, there are variances between the first and third sections of *Air,* but the relationship is much closer than the relationship between A and B sections within *And I Knew 'twas Wind….* The use of a traditional arch form, as opposed to the detailed program notes provided for *Toward the Sea,* suggests that Takemitsu intended for his use of motivic relations to be more clear to the listener. Similarly, with this last work, it is possible that Takemitsu did not intend any extra-musical associations with the score. However, when considering the

variety of extra-musical inspirations in Takemitsu's compositions prior to *Air,* it seems

more probable that the extra-musical associations still existed, but that Takemitsu

intended for the more conventional approach to pitch-class selections (whole-tone and

octatonic sets), motivic relationships (unifying intervals), and clearly related sections.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation seeks to create an informed guide to understanding Takemitsu's

works for solo flute through an examination of common traits in the three solo works:

Voice, Itinerant, and *Air*. I have examined these traits with the hope of creating a more

comprehensive understanding of the works individually, and as a sub-grouping of

Takemitsu's compositional output – in this case, works for solo flute. These works share

common qualities influenced by Western and Japanese aesthetics: *ma*, hollow-tone trills

and multiphonics, and a layering of several nonmusical programmatic inspirations.

These elements appear in each of the three works, though Takemitsu's approach to

incorporating them is significantly different in each piece. I have also sought to place

these works in the overall context of Takemitsu's evolution as a composer.

In most of his works from the 1960s onward, Takemitsu creates the impression

of free-form composition. In order to give some shape or order to these works,

Takemitsu uses *ma* to delineate sections of the work. In *Voice,* this was aided by the use

of text; the language of the text, as well as the indicated length of *ma* divided the work into five larger sections. These sections were related by similar shared material.

Similar divisions occur in *Itinerant,* though there are fewer motivic relationships between sections. *Itinerant*'s phrases tend to exist in two sections, each separated by a short rest, without the indication of a *fermata*. Larger sections are divided by the *fermata* that Takemitsu uses to indicate a rest of medium length.

Air employs *ma* to separate motivic material. Because the pitch material in this work is organized by pitch-class sets, Takemitsu employs extremely short rests or brief *ma* to separate the [5-16] and [5-33] pitch-class sets. The two never exist within the same division of musical material; in this way, they are separated, much like the pairs of phrase sections found in *Itinerant.*

Each of the works employs microtones, multiphonics, and hollow-tone trills to various degrees, in order to blur the tonality or to *glissando* between two neighboring and important pitches. The final work, *Air,* uses the fewest instances of pitch bending and multiphonics, focusing on the pitch content of the two pitch-class sets that compromise the work. *Itinerant* and *Voice,* however, seek to imitate the Japanese *Noh* and *shakuhachi* flutes. In order to accomplish this, Takemitsu employs *glissandi* between pitches, achieving the gradual shift through a series of non-traditional fingerings that create quarter-tone shadings of the indicated pitch. Multiphonics have a similar effect, imitating the over-blowing that characterizes the styles of both instruments. Takemitsu borrowed the multiphonic and hollow-tone fingerings from a Bruno Bartolozzi text with which Takemitsu was familiar.

According to interviews with Takemitsu and articles that he authored, the composer favored multiple interpretations of single words, concepts, or meanings. The inspirations for his musical works were often similarly layered; this can be demonstrated in his orchestral or chamber works, as with *And I Knew 'twas Wind ...* and *Rain Tree.* This was also the case with each of his works for solo flute.

This information is relevant to any flutist seeking to perform a work by Takemitsu, solo or otherwise, in order to create a more informed, effective performance. Without a greater context, the use of multiphonics or pitch-bends may be relegated to the category of special effects; an informed performance recognizes that these pitch bends are, in some instances, intended to recreate the sounds of Japanese flutes. In other cases, the pitch bend is intended to further conceal any hints of a tonal center. Similarly, knowing that these components are integral to Takemitsu's vision of the piece, the performer can emphasize the *glissandi* and other non-traditional effects called for in the score.

Recognizing the consistent use of *ma* as a philosophical concept first, and a structural device second, gives the performer freedom to treat it as a device rather than a typical Western rest. Where Takemitsu has written a rest, he intends that the performer to allow sound to die away completely (in the larger instances of *ma*), or to give the sound just a bit of fade-time in the smaller instances of *ma.* The notation in *Air* suggests rigid, literally interpreted rest markings, which could be easily misunderstood without the appropriate background information. The notation systems vary because Takemitsu intended for *Air* to become part of a larger ensemble work, and not because the space should be interpreted differently.

Without understanding that *ma* is intended to be a balance of space and sound, a performer cannot hope to create an effective performance. In instances approached with a fade into silence, it is appropriate for the *ma* to be short, in balance to the intensity that approached it. In instances approached with a *crescendo* or build-up, the *ma* should balance that *crescendo* with an equally intense, or lengthy silence.

Similarly, the programmatic background of these works is useful in creating a more idiomatic mood for each piece. Takemitsu had many concepts that held special meaning throughout his compositional output; he was particularly fond of the elements air and water, and equated those to human thought and life. The implication of wind in a piece dedicated to his friend Isamu Noguchi brings a new level of searching to *Itinerant,* beyond the comments Takemitsu has made about the parallels between the piece and the man. Further appreciating Takemitsu's use of musical signals, such as the sea motive, or whole-tone and pentatonic scales to imply water, give additional layers of meaning, especially to *Air.*

Suggestions for Further Study

While this is the first study to apply research and analysis concerning *Voice* to the other two solo works, *Itinerant* and *Air,* both would benefit from a more thorough individual analysis, particularly dealing with pitch content. Timothy Koonzin has begun an analysis of the pitch-class sets in *Air*, observing that several of the chosen sets were characteristic of Takemitsu. It seems likely that similar patterns would appear in *Itinerant.*

Similarly, it would be useful to take the criteria of *ma,* multiphonics and hollow-tone trills, and the layering of non-musical programs into Takemitsu's other works. As

observed in Chapter 3, Takemitsu's output included a large body of chamber pieces that feature the flute; it stands to reason that his approach to the instrument evolved in these works, over the course of his career. It would be useful to create a timeline of how and when Takemitsu developed his approach to the flute, and to discover if there were additionally idiosyncracies associated with his ensemble writing.

While examining Takemitsu's flute writing, differences in his notation style became apparent. I suspect that his notation of meter, and to an extent, his writing of meter, becomes less free as the number of performing instruments increases. The writing in his duo for alto flute and guitar, *Toward the Sea* more closely resembles *Voice* and *Itinerant.* The score for the trio *And I Knew 'Twas Wind…,* however, appears to be more structured, as in *Air*, which was intended as a sketch for a concerto. Is this coincidence, or did Takemitsu's style vary along with the size of the performing ensemble? Was it functional, or were there non-musical philosophies that lead to this kind of writing?

Finally, in earlier writings, Noriko Ohtake suggested that Takemitsu completed a fourth, unpublished work for solo flute. This fourth piece is not available to the public, but if that were to change, it would be interesting to contrast this work with the existing three pieces for solo flute.

Conclusion

As a flutist interested in new and unfamiliar repertoire, particularly pieces containing extended techniques, I found these works to be particularly daunting to approach. The score for *Voice,* which is the most commonly performed of Takemitsu's flute works, contains so many extended techniques and new notations for those techniques that it barely resembles a Western music score. It is tempting to dismiss

Itinerant as a work that imitates Japanese flutes, and which has no other purpose. *Air* has measure upon measure of highly specific rhythms, followed by what appear to be entire empty measures without purpose. When combined with the hollow-tone fingerings, which are not even standard within the world of extended techniques, the works seem unapproachable.

It was not until I began comparing these works with one another that I began to appreciate how truly interrelated they are, to each other, and to Takemitsu's chamber works for flute. Through examination of the solo flute pieces, I hope to create a better framework for understanding them. Comparing the pieces to one another gives them a musical and historical context. Much like studying the biography and works of Haydn or Beethoven provide a basis for understanding their piano or violin sonatas, familiarity with other flute works in Takemitsu's catalog gives their individual qualities a more specific purpose or meaning. It is unrealistic to think that any flutist hoping to perform *Voice*, *Itinerant,* or *Air* should become an expert in the works of Toru Takemitsu, but by creating a basic foundation of knowledge, it is my hope that these works will seem less intimidating and, as a result, more approachable from a performance standpoint.

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