

Pitch organization in Monologue 1 from Leonidas Sakellarides' Six Monologues

Leonidas Sakellarides (1978)

In a few steps, we will analyze the pitch organization of this melody from Sakellarides' Monologues for solo flute (1).

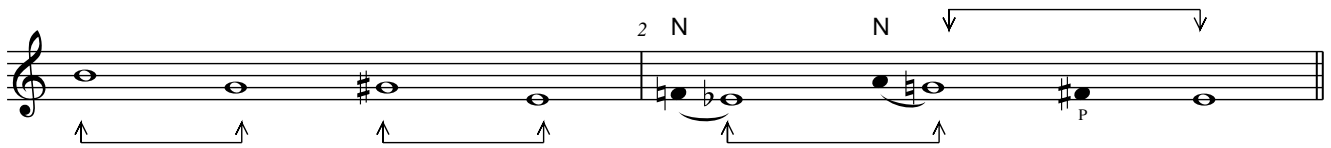
Step 1: notate the closing tones of the (sub)phrases

Notice that these closing tone always have a relatively long duration and are always followed by a rest.

The closing tones are a prolongation of the third interval E G, diminished by tone Eb. Register change is applied. This will be clear when the tones are presented in a one octave register. In addition, one could interpret these tones as part of a chain of thirds:

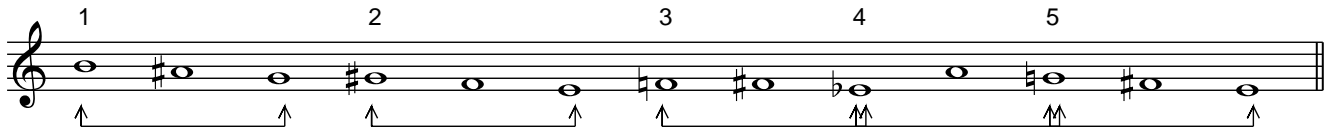
Step 2: add the first tones of the (sub)phrases

A notation without register change shows a diminution of a chain of third intervals by neighbour and passing tones:



Step 3: look at cells at macro level

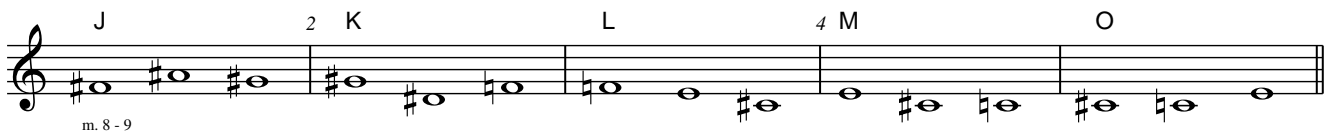
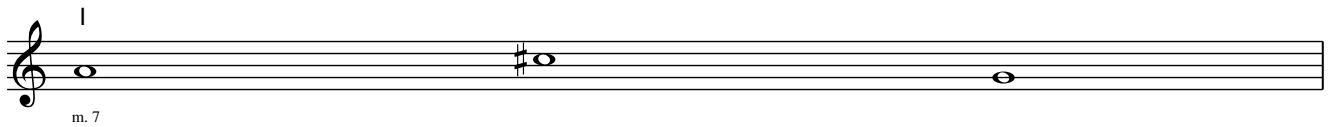
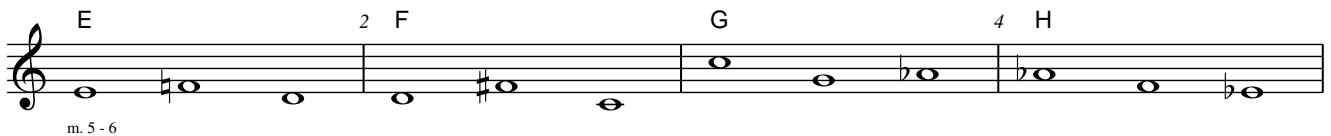
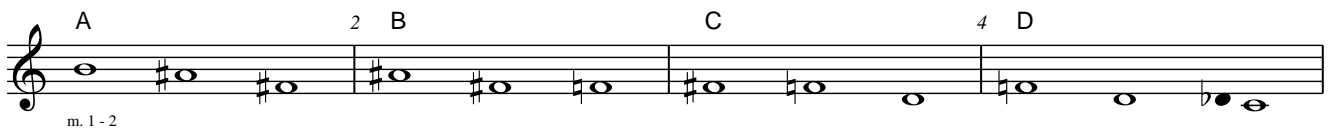
A question is how the distance between first and last tone are filled in. And related to this question: can specific diminutions (again at macro level) be discovered? Have a look at the next example.



Five cells with progressions of -enharmonically- the intervals second and third can be discerned. Or put in another way: each cell consist of a third interval, diminished with a second.

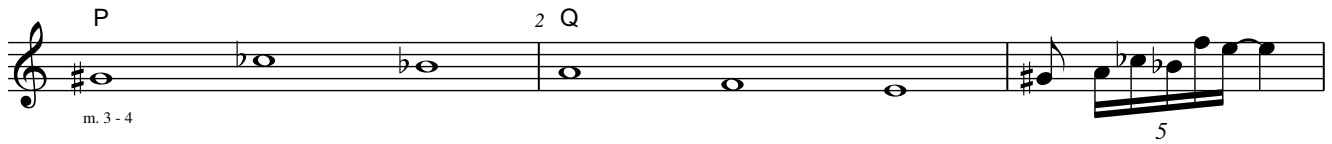
Step 4: look at cells at micro level (motives)

Now we know the main tones of the monologue melody, we can try to describe the diminutions on micro level. It seems that all diminutions consist of cells of the intervals second and third. The next example show them all, except measure 4.



Notice that all cells have a tone or tones in common, i.e. an overlapping strategy.

Measure 4 is exceptional while showing a combination of merging cells, shifting the original positions of tones.

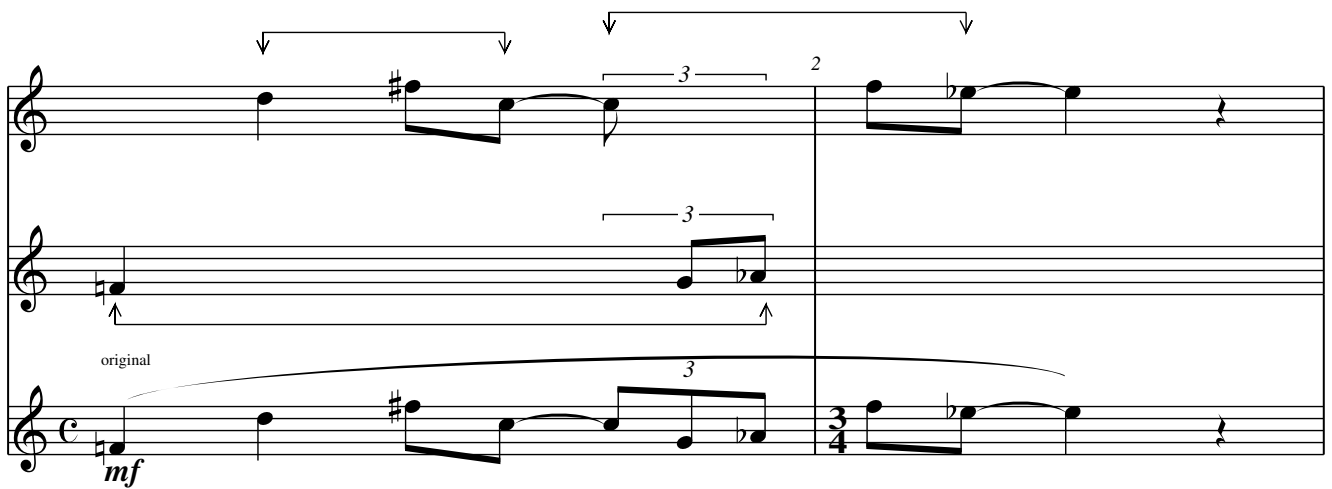


Step 5: look at cells at several layers

In step 4 we discovered overlapping cells in succession. In one part music of ten a contrapuntal play between a lower and a higher voice emerge. Have a look at the last phrase, where this technique is quite easily to recognize.



Measure 5-6 can also be seen as built with two layers.



Measure 2-3 shows an interesting layer technique in order to connect two phrases.

Measure 4-5, 6-7 and 7-8 show the same layer technique where pitch seems to be controlled. Pars pro toto measure 7-8.

Conclusion

The melody of Sakellarides' first monologue seems to be constructed by an easy threechord progression of the intervals second and third. A more precise description is the interval third is always accompanied by the interval second: either the first tone or the last tone has a interval of a second relation to the third tone. In other words: the interval third is diminished by another, say neighbour tone.

This progression idea has been worked out on macro, meso and micro level, i.e. on structural (main tones), line (layer) and motivic level. In addition, the connection between phrases could also be described by this progression.

Footnote

(1) The sheet music of Leonidas Sakellarides' Six Monologues can be found on www.imslp.org

About the author:

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