The Flute Music of Franco Donatoni: A Performance Guide

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THE FLUTE MUSIC OF FRANCO DONATONI: A PERFORMANCE GUIDE

By

Farah M. Zolghadr

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

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The purpose of this doctoral essay is to create a performer's guide for two pieces by Italian composer Franco Donatoni: *Fili for Flute and Piano* (1981) and *Midi: due pezzi per flauto* (1989). Despite being one of the most prolific composers of music in the mid- to late-twentieth century, Franco Donatoni has been largely overlooked by both scholars and performers. This is especially true in the United States, where Donatoni’s flute music is not well known. 

This doctoral essay includes a brief biography of Franco Donatoni as well as detailed analysis and performance suggestions for *Fili* and *Midi.* Theoretical, technical, as well as stylistic issues are addressed in depth. Through this essay, Donatoni’s flute music will become more accessible to the performer, leading to more performances of these works.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Franco Donatoni (1927-2000) is considered one of the premier Italian composers of the twentieth century. His works show influences from a wide circle of composers including Igor Stravinsky, Bela Bartók, John Cage, and Pierre Boulez. He composed in several different styles throughout his career but always maintained a unique, avant-garde approach. He was fascinated by the idea of fragments. One of his chamber works, *Etwas ruhiger im Ausdruck*, is entirely based on eight measures from Arnold Schoenberg’s *Fünf Orchesterstücke, op. 23*.

Works by Donatoni have been performed by the world’s most famous orchestras, yet many American musicians have never heard of the composer. Even more amazingly, Donatoni composed a large number of pieces that include flute, piccolo, alto flute, or recorder, yet these works are rarely performed. In my opinion, there are several reasons why this has occurred. Perhaps most importantly, information about Donatoni is scarce and what is available is in French or Italian. Many of the scores for Donatoni’s works are not readily available in the United States. Some are available through collegiate interlibrary loan services, but it is difficult to purchase these items. For those people who
may be familiar with the works, there are no present sources that include analyses of the works or performance-practice suggestions. Although there are some recordings of a select few works by Donatoni, many flutists may not be familiar with the recordings, since they are difficult to find. These issues often deter flutists from pursuing the works.

The present doctoral essay will focus on the flute music of Franco Donatoni and serve as a resource for flutists interested in performing his music in a concert setting. Although the main purpose of the essay is not a biographical account of Donatoni’s life, biographical information will be included that is relevant to the works discussed, as well as more general information on Donatoni’s compositional influences, so that flutists and non-flutists can have an English-language resource about the composer. This biographical information would be an appropriate resource for program notes and research papers about the composer. The main component of the essay will be a discussion of two of Donatoni’s solo works that include flute. The discussion will include analysis geared toward performance, as well as performance suggestions. The main goal of the proposal is to make the music as accessible as possible for flutists, so that Donatoni’s music may become more widespread and well known.

Because of the large number of Donatoni’s works that include flute or piccolo, it is impossible to discuss all such works in this doctoral essay. Therefore, criteria were put in place to determine which pieces were to be studied. First, the piece must have flute as a main component. Any piece
that has the voice, string instruments or percussion (excluding piano) as a main component will not be included. Finally, only pieces that include C flute will be included (no piccolo, alto flute, baroque flute, or recorder). Two pieces will be included in this essay: Fili: per flauto e pianoforte, and Midi: due pezzi per flauto. These are the only two flute works Donatoni composed for these specific genres.

Because of the limited resources currently available on Franco Donatoni, there are no sources that discuss these works in detail. Some interviews with Donatoni do mention the works to be discussed in this essay, but not in relation to performance practice. There are two main dissertations available on the music of Donatoni. One discusses two of the composer’s early works and the other takes an analytical approach to his works, but neither specifically discusses the works included in this essay. The latter dissertation will be used as a reference for appropriate analytical techniques for Donatoni’s works. This dissertation, as well as Donatoni’s own writings about his compositional aesthetic, will be discussed further in the literature review that follows.

The main purpose of this essay is to provide an analysis of specific works by Franco Donatoni that will be easy for musicians to understand and directly related to performance. There will be extensive discussion of performance-practice elements appropriate for his music. It is my hope that through this essay Donatoni’s works will become better known in the flute community and will be performed with more frequency than they currently are. Flutists are always looking for more sources of contemporary flute music, and Donatoni’s compositional voice should be heard more frequently than it currently is.
Literature Review

Despite Franco Donatoni’s status as one of the most important Italian composers of the late twentieth century, a relatively small number of written works discuss his life and compositions. Three books, penned by Donatoni himself, offer the most insight into his compositional process and aesthetic. *Antecedent x: sulle difficoltà del comporre* (1980), *In-oltre* (1988), and *Questo* (1970) each discuss the philosophical aspects of composition and music.¹ The three books each show slightly new and evolving views on the craft and Donatoni’s impetus for composition. The books do not discuss the pieces of this essay in detail, but they do serve as a resource for understanding Donatoni’s thoughts behind composing music.

The most important biographical resource on Franco Donatoni is *Donatoni* by Enzo Restagno.² The book is in three main parts: an interview with Franco Donatoni that serves as an autobiography, a set of essays by other authors on the composer’s musical output, and discussion by prominent contemporary composers of Donatoni’s oeuvre. In the interview section, several of the pieces in this essay are discussed, although not in depth. This section is of most value to this essay in its biographical information as well as for information regarding events surrounding the composition of these specific pieces. The essays on


Donatoni’s works do not specifically discuss the two in this doctoral essay, but the approach to analysis and discussion is an important reference for the discussion that will take place in this essay. The book also contains the most comprehensive works catalog, discography, and bibliography available.

Another significant biographical source is *Franco Donatoni* by Gabriella Mazzola Nangeroni. Her book is part of a larger series dedicated to important composers of the twentieth century. Nangeroni combines quoted statements by Donatoni with her own prose for an interesting biographical narrative. The second half of the book is dedicated to a chronological discussion of Donatoni’s works in broad strokes. There is a cursory discussion of *Fili* that would be a good introduction to the piece and its background. The book is in Italian, however, so this may be a challenge. Included in the front of the book is a chart listing Donatoni’s compositions compared with important cultural and societal events. Even if the language barrier is an issue, this chart is helpful to put Donatoni’s life and music in a larger context.³

Alain Poirier’s article “Trajectoires” divides Donatoni’s output into four distinct periods. Not only are these periods chronological, but they also correspond to different compositional inspirations and models. The final period of composition (1972-present) ends up being longer than the author perhaps originally anticipated. At the time Poirier wrote this article in 1986, this time period represented only 14 years. Therefore, extending Donatoni’s final compositional

period to his death results in an excessively long fourth period of composition, one that could be divided further. Both *Fili* and *Midi* are part of this final period of composition. The article was written before the composition of *Midi* and *Fili* is also not discussed. Written in French, this article details similarities between works of the same compositional period, something that would be helpful to a performer.⁴

Donatoni is interviewed in several books and articles, discussing in depth his life and compositional style. In *Composer to Composer: Conversations about Contemporary Music*, Andrew Ford interviews several living composers to discuss their life and works.⁵ Although the interview is relatively brief, one can see the way that Donatoni views himself and his works. He also discusses his inspiration for some specific pieces, although none that will appear in this essay. Of most importance is Donatoni’s explanation of his relationship with the composers of Darmstadt, including John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen. It is through this discussion that one can see the varied influences on Donatoni’s music and how he forged his own path of composition. Donatoni is included in Salvatore Enrico Failla’s book *Musicisti italiani d’Oggi* with several Italian composers active in the 1980’s. These interviews took place in 1983-1984, while Donatoni was in his most active period of composition. In addition to discussing some of his works (*Fili* is mentioned briefly), Donatoni clarifies the compositional

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aesthetics he discusses in his book *Questo* as well as comments on some other composers of the time.\(^6\)

Maria Rosa De Luca’s book, *Impronte sul Novecento: Berio, Clementi, Donatoni, Scelsi*, offers an interesting approach to Donatoni’s music.\(^7\) In the chapter dedicated to his compositions, the author compares Donatoni’s work to American jazz music from around the same period. This approach to explaining Donatoni’s complex music could potentially be useful in the forthcoming dissertation.

Several works discuss Donatoni within the larger context of Italian composers of the twentieth century. *Italian 20th Century Music: The Quest for Modernity* by Michael D. Webb serves as a general overview of Donatoni’s life and music and does not discuss the works of this essay in any detail. Since it is the newest book available that discusses the composer, it contains the most up-to-date information.\(^8\) In *Aforismi sul novecento musicale*, Gianfranco Zàccaro explores Donatoni’s place among other great Italian contemporary composers like Luigi Nono and Luciano Berio. The short entry for Donatoni does not mention any of the works in this essay, but does reference the aesthetic influence of Boulez and Stockhausen on Donatoni’s compositional style. His evident bias

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against Donatoni gives another perspective on the composer’s music and aesthetics.⁹

There are two major dissertations that deal with the works of Franco Donatoni. One, “Preserving the Fragment: Techniques and Traits of Franco Donatoni’s Joyous Period (1977 to 2000),” is a main resource for this essay for the analytical techniques that are most appropriate for Donatoni’s works.¹⁰ In this dissertation, Bradley David Decker explores several works from the same time period as those that are included in this essay. His emphasis on the fragment and its development throughout the work is crucial to the understanding of Donatoni’s compositional process. Decker’s approach will be tailored to the performer, since some of the concepts in his dissertation are written with a music theorist or composer in mind and are overly complicated for the purposes of this essay.

Although it does not deal directly with the works of this essay, “Aleatory and Serialism in Two Early Works of Franco Donatoni” by Yotam Moshe Haber discusses the influence of John Cage and Arnold Schoenberg on Donatoni’s early works.¹¹

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There are only a few journal articles that deal directly with Franco Donatoni’s music. The earliest, “The New Music in Italy,” briefly discusses Donatoni’s music before 1965.\(^{12}\) Mario Bortolotto and William C. Holmes compare the music to the post-Romantics in Italy of the time and find little to no connection. The article highlights the innovative way that Donatoni approaches composition from an aesthetic standpoint and also his lack of adherence to conventions of the time, something that several “avant-garde” composers had in common.

Michael Gorodecki’s article, “Who’s Pulling the Strings? Michael Gorodecki Introduces the Music of Franco Donatoni,” discusses Donatoni’s compositional process in depth.\(^{13}\) There is a brief analysis of *Nidi: due pezzi per ottavino*. Gorodecki uses the term “codes” to describe the way that Donatoni develops the fragment in his works. The influence of Bartók on Donatoni’s approach to composition is also described in moderate detail. The analytical approach shown in this article will be an important framework for this essay.

The main source material for this essay is the scores themselves. There will be two pieces discussed in this essay: *Fili: Per flauto e pianoforte* and *Midi:*

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Due pezzi per flauto. Both of these scores are published by Ricordi and will be referenced extensively in the performance guide portions of this essay.

Both Fili and Midi have available recordings that are helpful resources for analysis and performance practice. Italian flutist Roberto Fabbriciani has recorded the definitive versions of several of Donatoni’s works. He has recorded Fili and Midi in Italian Flute XX, and Flute XXth Century, Vol. 2 respectively. His recordings demonstrate an attention to detail that is extremely important in contemporary music. Fabbriciani’s recording of Midi is currently the only one widely available.

Ensemble 2e2m has recorded Fili as part of a larger recording of Donatoni’s music. In 1988, the ensemble recorded Fili on its album Franco Donatoni. Both of these recordings are not as polished as the Fabbriciani ones, mainly due to the age of the recordings and liberties taken with performance indications on the scores.

Because of the limited resources available on Donatoni and Fili and Midi specifically, the essay is a much-needed addition to the research medium. The specific flute works that will be discussed have not yet been discussed in detail. There is a lack of resources for the performer on composers of contemporary music and the forthcoming essay will help fill that current void. By making the

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14 Franco Donatoni, Fili: Per flauto e pianoforte (Milano: Ricordi, 1983); Franco Donatoni, Midi: Due pezzi per flauto (Milano: Ricordi, 1989).


16 Ensemble 2e2m, Franco Donatoni, SDA 58126, 1991.
music and composer more accessible to the average flutist, there is an increased chance that performers will choose to perform Donatoni’s works, perhaps making them a standard part of the contemporary music repertoire.

**Method**

The method section of this doctoral essay consists of a more in-depth presentation of the specific research to be completed by the author, as well as the method in which this research will be completed. In a previous section of this essay, a brief explanation was given regarding the rationale for choosing two pieces from Franco Donatoni’s *oeuvre* for further study. It is important to note that the two pieces selected represent the purest representation of the flute music of the composer, without the added issues of orchestral writing, vocal performance techniques, percussion performance practices and opera-like staging elements.

The first piece that is included in the essay is *Fili: Per flauto e pianoforte*. Although there are several reasons that the piece was included in the essay, most important is the compositional techniques employed by Donatoni. In contrast to *Midi*, where a motivic approach is used, this piece uses variation techniques linked together by the pitch material. The piece is largely pointillistic with a great deal of interplay between the flute and piano. The music gains intensity throughout until the flute emerges with extremely virtuosic playing, with Donatoni experimenting with dynamic and technical extremes of the instrument.
The are several reasons that *Midi: due pezzi per flauto* has been included in this essay. The work is relatively short (around eight minutes), and in two sections. Donatoni uses limited pitch material in several sections of the work. The piece lends itself to discussion of specific flute-related performance techniques such as the execution of mordents and trills and flutter tonguing.

In selecting the pieces for this essay, it was important to find links to existing genres of flute music. *Midi* serves to represent the tradition of music for flute alone that has been in place since the Baroque period. *Fili* lends itself to comparisons with the sonata and its evolution to present-day contemporary repertoire. Both of these genres is extremely important to the flute repertoire.

There are two main components to the research that are included in this doctoral essay: biographical information about the composer and issues relating to performance of the applicable works. The biographical information comes from two main sources: biographies on the composer and interviews with the composer, previously discussed in the literature review section of this essay. These materials are primarily in French and Italian, creating a potential hinderance for non-French and Italian speakers. The author of this essay has translated pertinent portions of the text.

The second component of the essay includes analyses of selected works as well as performance-practice elements. The analysis is geared toward the performer, not the music theorist or composer. Main motives and melodic material are identified, as well as their development throughout the work. Formal structures are identified and discussed. Special attention is given to the time
signatures and metronome markings of the works, as these are not usually expressed in a standard manner. The flute parts are analyzed in more depth, with special attention given to passages that utilize extended techniques as well as virtuosic passages. Suggestions are given to the performer regarding execution of the passages. In the discussion of *Fili*, balance, timbre, and interplay of musical elements between the performers is discussed.
CHAPTER 2

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF FRANCO DONATONI

Born in Verona on June 9, 1927, Franco Donatoni’s love for music was cultivated at a very early age. Donatoni explains that he was introduced to the music of Rossini and Puccini while still in his mother’s womb.\(^{17}\) The future composer was interested in music from an early age and had just begun to study violin when World War II broke out and ravaged the Veneto, a northern region in Italy. Donatoni was intrigued by military bands, and especially the trombone and tuba.\(^{18}\) It was not until the age of nineteen, after the war ended, that he saw his first live concert. Because of the limited resources in Verona, Donatoni resorted to copying music by Bach and Mozart to learn composition. His father was against full-time music study, so Donatoni got a degree in accounting after two years at the university.\(^{19}\) A chance meeting with Bruno Maderna gave Donatoni the encouragement he needed to continue with composition with vigor. Soon after the two met, Donatoni convinced his father to let him transfer to the Milan

\(^{17}\) Nangeroni 29.

\(^{18}\) Restagno 9.

\(^{19}\) Nangeroni 30.
Conservatory, where he could flourish and grow as a composer. One of his teachers convinced him to transfer to the Bologna Conservatory, one of the most prestigious schools in Italy.\textsuperscript{20}

From 1954-1961, Donatoni regularly attended the Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music. It was there that he became friends with John Cage, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and fellow Venetian composer Luigi Nono.\textsuperscript{21} Donatoni soaked up the different styles and aesthetics that Darmstadt had to offer. The influence of these composers can be seen in Donatoni’s works, although he combined them in a new and different way to form his own style. Throughout his time at Darmstadt, Donatoni did not participate in the politicized rhetoric for which other composers, such as Luigi Nono, were known. Although Donatoni spoke in depth about his beliefs with regard to many areas of life, he does not discuss politics specifically. This is not necessarily to mean that he was apolitical, but it does reflect the tumultuous political and social climate in which he grew up,

Donatoni dabbled in several different compositional styles from 1950-1972. While at Darmstadt, his compositions were influenced strongly by Stravinsky and Webern. Donatoni seemed poised at this point to emerge as a leading figure in the next generation of Italian composers. Between 1957 and 1962, Donatoni's output represented a more structural aesthetic, focused on sound and timbre. The influence of Stockhausen is evident in the compositions

\textsuperscript{20} Restagno 13.

\textsuperscript{21} Nangeroni 31.
from this period. Alain Poivier calls the period between 1962-1972 Donatoni’s “negative” period. Here, he explored the chamber group as well as the aesthetic of John Cage. Donatoni later decided that a more measured approach to Cage’s ideas fit with his style. The stage and theatre became an important part of his work during this period.\textsuperscript{22}

Throughout the 1960’s, Donatoni struggled with depression. This made composition impossible by 1972. This deep depression was likely exacerbated by the death of his mother, who had inspired him musically from a very young age. Donatoni ceased composing between 1973-1975. Donatoni was incapacitated not only musically, but physically as well.\textsuperscript{23} Inspired by the death of his mentor, Bruno Maderna, the 1975 work \textit{Duo pour Bruno} represents Donatoni’s emergence from this deep depression. The dual structure of the work with regard to dynamics represents the darkness and the light in Donatoni and, more generally, society.\textsuperscript{24} From this dark period, Donatoni began to compose in a more “joyous” style (a term coined by Donatoni himself). Donatoni’s compositions were the product of the interplay of fragments as well as the juxtaposition of disparate elements. The influence of Bach from Donatoni’s early musical life can be seen in his inventive use of contrapuntal technique. Donatoni reused material from his own pieces throughout this time.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{22} Poivier 70.

\textsuperscript{23} Nangeroni 32.

\textsuperscript{24} Restagno 36.

\textsuperscript{25} Decker 9.
In this final period of composition, Donatoni wrote a prolific number of compositions for chamber ensembles, orchestra, solo instruments, as well as theatrical productions. Donatoni experimented with jazz in *Hot* (1989), a composition for chamber ensemble. He also composed works for solo instruments that expanded the unique timbral qualities of each instrument, while proving to be a challenge for all but the most virtuosic performers. His final pieces were exercises in construction, codes, and the relationship between motives and themes. His magnum opus for the human voice, *In cauda*, was completed in 1991. The power of the human voice was something that Donatoni had not fully explored to that point.\(^{26}\) Donatoni continued to compose at a relatively fast pace until his death in 2000 in Milan. His final piece was completed on his deathbed with the help of his assistants and dedicated to his students.\(^{27}\)


CHAPTER 3

FILI FOR FLUTE AND PIANO

Background

Written in 1981 as a result of a commission from the Centro Internazionale Promozione Attività Musicali (CIPAM), Fili for Flute and Piano is the only work Franco Donatoni composed for a wind instrument and piano. The piece is dedicated to the contemporary Italian flutist Roberto Fabbriciani, who previously worked with Donatoni during the composition of his solo piccolo piece, Nidi. The piece is also dedicated to Carlo Alberto Neri, who founded CIPAM, an Italian cultural group that promotes national composers through commissions, premieres, and music festivals. Fili was premiered on October 7, 1981, as part of the Venice Biennale. Roberto Fabbriciani participated in the premiere performance, as well as pianist Antonello Neri.\(^{28}\)

Since most of Donatoni’s output during this time consisted of works for solo instruments and larger chamber works, Fili is an important addition to the composer’s oeuvre. Fili can be considered Donatoni’s twentieth-century reworking of the traditional “sonata”. The work is in one continuous movement with no formal breaks or divisions. The separate sections in the work are articulated primarily by textural and pitch material changes, with little transitional material. Both the flute and piano parts are challenging due to the interplay

between the parts as well as the rhythmic precision required of each performer. The title *Fili* translates most traditionally into “threads,” but can also mean “wires,” “edges,” or “blades.” The title can be seen as reference to the interwoven flute and piano parts as well as to the abrupt textural and thematic changes throughout the work.

This piece would be difficult for all but the most advanced college undergraduate flute performance majors and more appropriate for those studying at a graduate level or beyond. For the purposes of this doctoral essay, the piece will be divided into sections based on identifiable characteristics. As the piece progresses, the sectional divisions become blurred as several elements from previous sections are combined. Throughout this analysis, the flute part will be discussed in detail with less attention given to the piano part, which includes techniques and characteristics outside of the scope of this essay. The main performance practice suggestions will be limited to the flute part.

**Section 1: Measures 1-29**

The tempo indicated at the beginning of the piece is quarter note equals 66 bpm. In the brief notes about this piece, Donatoni writes that the metronome markings are purely for guidance. Although a certain amount of flexibility can be taken, it is important to realize that the tempo changes must still be in the same ratio as written. Each of the tempos in the piece has a common factor of 11 (66,
Therefore, the original 6:8:4 tempo ratio should be kept even if a slightly slower or faster tempo is taken in the beginning. The starting tempo should not exceed the indicated tempo, otherwise later elements in the piece may not be executed cleanly.

The piece begins with the piano alone, setting up the pointillistic texture that dominates this section. The piano has a dynamic of *mezzo forte*, which contrasts with the flute which enters in measure 3 at *pianissimo*. The difference in dynamics should not be a balance issue between the two instruments, since the flute and piano alternate statements. It is important in performance for the piano to maintain a very short articulation throughout this first section so that there is no overlap that would cover up the sound of the flute. This becomes especially important when the piano is marked with staccato and tenuto simultaneously. Example 3.1 is an example of this type of texture. Because of the difference in dynamic level, the piano should execute this articulation shorter than would perhaps be appropriate in other situations.

Although the staccato articulation is consistent for the flute in this first section (except for the last two notes, which can be seen as a transition to the next section), the execution of the passage is not simple. First, a distinction must be made between the grace notes and the main notes that follow. There are several ways that this figure can be interpreted. It is important to remember that there is no slur between the grace notes and the corresponding main notes in this section so both notes should be articulated. The grace note should be played
as close to the main note as possible, still allowing for a small amount of space between the notes so that the second articulation will be crisp.

Example 3.1 Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 8-10.

The performer should use a double-tongue articulation for these two notes so that the figure can be executed cleanly. Both notes should be played at the same *pianissimo* dynamic. If the grace note is played softer than the main note, the main note will sound accented and this will distract from the overall effect. By notating the figure this way, Donatoni implies that the grace note is of equal importance to the main note.

In this first section, the rhythmic subdivision alternates from sixteenth notes to quintuplets every other beat. In practicing this section, both performers should be very exact in their subdivision. As the section progresses, it becomes increasingly important that each performer is placing the notes as exactly as possible, since the parts are playing different individual sixteenth and quintuplet notes in the beat. This practice exercise can be done together or as part of individual practice. To assist in the alternation of subdivisions, the performers can
isolate the two different subdivisions and practice them independently of each other. In Example 3.2, the sixteenth-note subdivisions are isolated.

Example 3.2. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 8-10. Sixteenth-note subdivision isolated.

The rests are still intact in between, allowing for consistent counting on alternating beats. A metronome should be used throughout this exercise, starting with a sixteenth-note subdivision, moving to an eighth note subdivision and then the quarter note beat only. For the quintuple beats, the exercise starts with the quintuplet subdivision, then moving directly to the quarter note beat.

The pitch material for the flute is limited in this first section. Donatoni uses six out of the twelve chromatic notes in the first thirty measures of the piece: Bb, A, E, G#/Ab, F, G. Often, notes in the flute part are a semitone apart. For the first twenty measures, the flute is in the middle range of the instrument. The piano is in a similar range, leading one to believe that Donatoni intended for the flute to
begin the piece within the sound of the piano, emerging from that sound as the piece progresses. Example 3.3 shows where the flute begins its extension into a higher register in measure 20.

Example 3.3. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 19-21.

Since the natural tendency of the flute is for higher notes to be louder, it is of special importance to keep the overall dynamic level at *pianissimo*. As seen in Example 3.3, the piano also begins to play *mezzo forte*, accented staccato notes in these measures. Although these accented notes will be more prominent on the piano, it is important that the flutist not inadvertently accent or emphasize the notes in a higher range or play louder overall in response to this articulation and dynamic change. Both the dynamic level and short articulation established at the beginning of the piece should remain constant in the flute until the second section begins.
Section 2: Measures 30-46

The second section differs from the first in rhythmic interest, the increased number of pitches used, and the variety of articulation. Beats two and three of measure 29 serve as a transition to the second section. Rhythmically, the subdivision switches from the quintuplet to the thirty-second note. This change is first seen in the transitional material of measure 29, with a syncopated eighth note figure in the flute. The piano continues with punctuating sixteenth notes, also found in the last three measures of the previous section. Example 3.4 shows how Donatoni builds upon these transitional beats to move into the second section.

In the flute part specifically, Donatoni begins with a single eighth note rhythm (m. 29), then adds thirty-second notes in front of the eighth notes in the measures that follow. He alternates a group of short notes with a single eighth note giving this passage a certain instability. The placement of eighth notes on different sixteenth note subdivisions of the beat, creates a syncopated feel. Rhythmic exactitude is important here because there is a tendency to rush the shorter notes in anticipation of the eighth notes. This will result in the eighth note becoming longer than is indicated or the overall tempo of the section accelerating in a way that is not ideal. One way to combat this problem is to write a cue in the flute part where the piano and flute play simultaneously. Making sure that those specific places are together throughout this section will give both players anchor points on which to rely for accuracy.
In regard to pitch material in this section, Donatoni gradually introduces the remaining six pitches of the chromatic scale. By the end of the section, all pitches are used. The emphasis on the half step continues, often with two pairs of half steps (not necessarily sequential) in one set of consecutive sixteenth notes. It becomes increasingly important in this section for the performer to remember that the accidentals apply only to the note that follows. It would be helpful to mark the notes in which the accidental does not carry through.
Another important quality to highlight in the flute part is the difference in articulation. The alternation of staccato sixteenth-note groups with a single tenuto eighth note gives this section a feeling of continuity. Because of the relatively fast tempo for the sixteenth notes, they should be articulated lightly with separation between the notes. The best way to achieve the desired style is to move the tongue as little as possible, while focusing on keeping the tongue relaxed so that there is not an accent on the front of the sixteenth notes. Each group should move naturally to the tenuto eighth note by using phrasing and air, not by compressing the groupings. There is also a natural tendency to over-emphasize the eighth note because of its tenuto marking. While some weight may be ideal in some situations, in this work, because of the tempo and overall forward momentum, the tenuto should be interpreted as an indication to play the note for its full value and not an indication of a heavier attack.

The interaction between the flute and piano also creates a new challenge in this section. Instead of largely alternating between parts, Donatoni overlaps the two voices with a little more rhythmic interest in the flute. The second section is articulated in large part by this textural change, as well as the piano’s dynamic, indicated on the score in measure 29 as *ppp, sempre*. The flute remains at a *mf* dynamic, as indicated at the beginning of the piece. Without this dynamic change, one could assume by the rhythmic layering and texture that the parts have equal importance. Donatoni emphasizes the accompanimental role of the piano with this relatively wide dynamic difference. The piano part is more
pointilistic in character than the flute part, so it is important that the piano punctuations have sharp attack in contrast to the tenuto eighth notes in the flute.

**Section 3: Measures 47-64**

Section 3 builds upon Section 2 by using several of the same concepts with a different overall dynamic shape and articulation. Donatoni’s deliberate use of dynamics and articulation gives the section its unique phrasing. For the first time in the work, he explicitly indicates phrasing in the flute part using crescendos. As seen in Example 3.5, the length of crescendo varies throughout the section.

Example 3.5. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 49-50.

There are several potential issues in the flute part throughout this section. First is the amount of dynamic increase for each crescendo and if that amount should vary. Theoretically, there are two different ways to approach this issue:
one is to have the same starting and ending dynamic for each crescendo. The second approach is to vary the ending dynamic according to the length of the crescendo. Although both are feasible, the second option is a more realistic approach, especially considering the relatively fast tempo. It would be difficult to achieve a piano – forte dynamic change in five notes (as seen in measure 49).

There is also the tendency to add additional phrasing to this section. For instance, an overarching dynamic phrasing could be implemented to this section. While this may add a different musical dimension, Donatoni’s compositional aesthetic suggests that a more static texture is what he desired. The flute part evokes a sense of longing, always returning to the piano dynamic. Even in the next section, the dynamic level moves slightly to mezzo piano. It is not until later in the piece that louder dynamics are indicated. Therefore, the performer should highlight the tension caused by the phrasing and use it to allow the piece to evolve more slowly than if additional phrasing was added.

The third section also introduces the slur for the first time in the work. Both the flute and piano parts incorporate slurs of varying length, staccato sixteenth notes, and tenuto eighth notes (a remnant of the previous section). The addition of slurs adds another challenge for the flute: how to execute the groupings so that the intervals remain intact. For the most part, the slurred groupings are moving from a lower range to a higher one, corresponding to the crescendo. This is relatively idiomatic for the flute. There is often a lower note in the grouping, creating a u-shape. In Example 3.5, two general shapes can be seen. The first grouping in measure 49 is the easiest for the flute to execute because the range
corresponds exactly to the dynamic change. Measure 50 shows the u-shaped grouping. In this case, the lower notes should be played a little louder than indicated so that the overall dynamic change will be heard.

Texturally, the piano continues to have a more active role. While the flute has crescendos throughout this section, the piano remains at a piano dynamic. Because of the intricacies of the two parts, it would be helpful to practice this section at a comfortable tempo, significantly slower than performance tempo. When the parts have been coordinated, the tempo can gradually increase. This will greatly help when putting the piece together during performance.

**Section 4: Measures 65-75**

This section builds upon the texture of the previous section by creating a new sound characterized by slurs throughout and legato articulation. Donatoni indicates that the piano should play legato, *il piu possibile*. In this section, the piano should attempt to play as legato as the flute, which is a challenge. The piano and flute parts are texturally homogeneous for the first time in the piece, giving this section a new sound. Several things contribute to the calmer texture of this section. First, the *mezzo piano* dynamic contrasts with the crescendos prevalent in the flute part in Section 3. There are no staccato notes in this section. Donatoni gradually phases the staccato articulation out: in the first section, all notes are short, while in the fourth section, all notes are slurred in the flute part. In contrast to previous sections, note durations are significantly longer.
As seen in Example 3.6, the first quarter note of the piece is introduced in measure 66.

Example 3.6, Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 65-67.

This elongation of note values gives the section a sense of a slower tempo. It is important, however, that both performers continue to subdivide internally. This will keep the tempo steady despite the longer note values. The sense of syncopation should also be brought out. Although there is no specific indication for use of vibrato in the flute, a nuanced used of vibrato can help to
bring out the syncopated rhythms and tied notes. For instance, in measure 67, a slightly wider vibrato should be used at the ends of the tied notes to emphasize the rhythmic interest.

The grace note appears for the first time in this section. In the flute, there is an accent on each grace note, while in the piano there is no marking. Because there are relatively few rests in this section in the flute part, the accented grace note serves to delineate the lyrical phrases. It is important to remember that there is not a tenuto mark on the grace notes, so the notes should not be elongated in any way; rather, the accent should be achieved through a harder attack on the beginning of the grace note. In instances where there is not a rest before the grace note, a small amount of separation before the next phrase will help the grace note to be heard. For instance, in measure 66, a small amount of separation is ideal between the first and second beats. It would also be appropriate to take a breath in this place to set up the next phrase. However, in general, breaths should be limited in this section to the sixteenth-note rests so as to keep the overall lyricism intact.

Donatoni limits the pitch material in both parts. He uses only six pitches of the chromatic scale: E, F, G, Ab, A, Bb. These pitches are the same that were used in the first section. Generally, the flute part is contained within the notes of the staff, although Donatoni does not strictly adhere to this. The restricted pitch material is another way that Donatoni creates a static texture. This return to the original pitch material of the piece gives the sense of continuity as well as a broader sectional division. The concept of a larger section is reinforced by the
tutti rest in measure 75. Both parts have a decrescendo in measure 75, leading to a quarter-note rest for both parts on beat three. Ideally, the quarter-note tutti rest would be exactly in time, however, in performance, the performers may need time to regroup and start the next section together. The last beat of measure 75 can be elongated slightly if necessary to facilitate a precise entrance. Also, since the next section is markedly different in texture and mood, this short pause will also set up this change for the audience.

One of the potential issues with this section is the notation of slurs. As seen in Example 3.6, the slur marking moves through the staff, making it difficult to comprehend. The best way to see the slurs is to write them above the flute part. A colored pencil would be a helpful tool – the performer can use a contrasting color to highlight the slurs and also distinguish them from ties.

**Section 5: Measures 76-90**

Section 5 is a dramatic departure from the previous section. Donatoni uses texture and dynamics to demonstrate contrast both between Sections 4 and 5 and within Section 5 itself. Texturally, the piano returns to an accompanimental role. The rhythmic interest in the flute contrasts with pianissimo interjections in the piano. The piano has staccato articulation throughout this section, while the flute’s articulation alternates between staccato and accented staccato. Texturally, the section intensifies through measures 82-84 (where the flute has the most rhythmic activity) and then gradually lessens in intensity. The piano’s dynamics
correspond to this intensification with a *mezzo forte marking* notated in mm. 82-85.

The idea of contrast permeates the flute part as well. Donatoni utilizes dynamics, articulation, and range to create two distinct voices. Measure 78 is an example of this combination of elements.

Example 3.7. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, m. 78.

The concept of two separate voices in this section is bolstered by the use of different-facing note stems, a visual representation of the different in range between the two voices. Voice 1 has downward facing note stems. In the flute, Voice 1 is characterized by *fortissimo* dynamics, accented staccato articulation and range above the staff. There are groupings of two to four notes, often alternating with Voice 2. The shape of the individual groupings remains consistent throughout this section. They generally move from a lower range to a
higher one, utilizing half steps, whole steps, and arpeggios. The piano accompaniment corresponds to this voice. The piano interjections occur on the first note of the grouping. Visually, one can see the relationship between the piano and Voice 1 in the flute by noticing that the note stem direction is the same in both parts. Voice 2 in the flute is unaccompanied by the piano. The articulation is staccato (no accent) and the dynamic is pianissimo. The range is limited to D-B in the staff, with most of the pitches centered around Eb-G. In contrast to the groupings in Voice 1, Voice 2 consists of single pitches with rests preceding and following the note. The stems of these notes point upward.

Unlike some other sections of this work, the flute part is largely idiomatic. The dynamics correspond to the normal tendencies of the flute. The performer should aim to conceptualize the two voices in a way that brings out the inherent stylistic differences. One way is to think of Voice 1 as “heavy and aggressive” and Voice 2 as “light and bouncy.” Voice 2 can be played a little louder than the pianissimo indicated in other sections because it will already sound softer because of the range as well as the contrasting Voice 1 part. There is also an absence of piano accompaniment. These notes must be heard clearly in order for the audience to perceive the overall effect.

As with previous sections, both performers’ internal subdivision is key. For this section specifically, rehearsal at a much slower tempo with a metronome on the sixteenth-note subdivision is the best way to reinforce the rhythmic complexity in both parts. The piano and Voice 1 in the flute can also be extracted
in rehearsal to align the rhythms. Example 3.8 shows this technique using measure 78.

Example 3.8. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, m. 78. Voice 1 material and piano.

An ideal starting tempo for this exercise is sixteenth note equals 132. That is exactly half of the performance tempo. After the Voice 1 material is comfortable at the starting tempo, the flutist should add the Voice 2 material. From there, the tempo can be moved up gradually until performance tempo is reached.

**Sections 6a and 6b: Measures 91-100, 101-119**

The next section of *Fili* builds upon the contrasting ideas of Section 5. The larger Section 6 (mm. 91-119) has been broken down into two subsections based on the types of contrasting voices used, although the overarching concept of
these two sections is consistent. Section 6a consists of Voice 2 material in the flute from the previous section and new Voice 1 material. Example 3.9 shows the juxtaposition of these voices.

Example 3.9. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, m. 93.

Voice 1 consists of groups of three to six notes with tutti rhythm in the flute and piano. The groupings in both voices are slurred and at a *forte* dynamic. The general shape of the groupings is the same in both parts. The slurred groupings are marked *flatterzunge* (flutter tongue) in the flute. For the flutist, there can be difficulty in executing the flutter tongue under the slur with relatively large intervals. To facilitate execution, the flutist should first practice the groupings without flutter tongue. This will ensure that all pitches are correct and that the intervals sound with ease. When doing this initial practice, an open and relaxed will result in the clearest flutter tongue and prevent overexertion. Special care must be taken to relax into the lower notes and not push or force. This relaxation
is a crucial element when adding the flutter tongue. When the groupings have become comfortable, the flutter tongue can be added, making sure the support and air stream remain constant. A common problem when flutter tonguing is a delayed start after an attack. To minimize this problem, I recommend starting the note without a tongue articulation. Allow the flutter tongue to begin slightly before the air stream is engaged. Then use a breath attack instead of a traditional articulation syllable to begin the grouping. This will result in the flutter tongue starting at the same time as the pitch itself.

Measures 101-103 consist of transitional material in the flute. This is the first time in the work that the flute plays alone for several measures. These three measures set up the next section with regard to dynamics, pitch material, and the use of voices.

Example 3.10. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 103-104.
Donatoni’s dynamics in the transitional section are *ppp*. The flute’s dynamic marking gradually increases throughout this section until measure 115, where it appears as *forte*. This light, staccato texture has roots in the Voice 2 material of the previous two sections. Although the pitches and range have changed, the style should remain constant. The pitch material is centered around D⁶. The grace-note figure seen in measure 103 occurs several times between mm. 103-109. As in previous sections, it is important to keep a light, unaccented articulation where indicated to contrast with other material in the flute.

Although the opposite-facing note stems have been eliminated for this section, Donatoni is clearly continuing with the two voice alternation that was previously introduced. The Voice 1 material has changed again from the previous two sections. The flute has two note slurred groupings with *sforzando* markings on the first notes of the groups. The piano has simultaneous attacks with the *sforzando* flute notes. The piano has an accompanimental role. As subsection 6b continues, Donatoni blurs the distinction between the two voices. Between measures 109-118, the dynamic level increases incrementally in the flute part which heightens the rhythmic intensity moving into the next section at measure 119. The groupings in the flute become closer together with very few staccato notes in between. At the same time, the piano accompaniment figure becomes more frequent. The flute part builds to a domination of Voice 1 material seen in measure 118. In measure 118, directly before the next section, the flute has one final staccato note, the only remnant of the Voice 2 material from the previous sections.
As this subsection evolves, the interpretation of the *sforzando* marking becomes increasingly important. Because of the tempo and short note length, the performer should conceptualize the marking as a short *decrescendo* over the grouping. This concept is shown visually in Example 3.12. This slight change will help the performer to execute Donatoni’s marking in the most efficient way possible.

Sections 7a and 7b: Measures 119-133, 134-140

There are several characteristics that distinguish the beginning of Section 7a from Section 6. For the first time since the beginning of the piece, Donatoni has indicated a tempo change. The tempo increases from quarter note = 66 to quarter note = 88. This tempo change is best realized as a changing relationship in note values. Any specified note value is equal directly before and after the indicated tempo increase. By using a simple ratio of the tempi, one can see that there is a simplified ratio of 3:4. Therefore, three notes of a certain value will be equal in time to four notes of that same value after the tempo change. Donatoni sets up this nicely with three thirty-second notes in the flute and a dotted sixteenth note in the piano (both of which are the same duration). After the tempo change, this will equal four thirty-second notes or two sixteenth notes. In measure 119 (Example 3.13), both the flute and piano have a sixteenth note rest and the piano has six sixteenth notes that follow. To achieve the tempo change, both players should shift their internal pulse directly before the tempo change so that the three thirty-second notes now correspond to the subdivided beat. Then, after the tempo change, the flute and piano will come in on the “and” of the new subdivided pulse, with the piano taking the lead in the new tempo. Throughout this entire section, the flute should rely on the piano for a continued sense of pulse. This section continues with the *forte* dynamic set up in the previous section, although the flute texture and phrasing have changed dramatically.

In contrast to Section 4, where both the flute and piano have similar legato material, Donatoni contrasts the flute material with accented staccato sixteenth notes in the piano. The piano notes not only serve as a solid source of subdivision throughout, but also interrupt the melodic material in the flute, eventually taking over as the dominant texture in Section 7b. A sense of forward motion is important in the flute. Donatoni gradually adds sixteenth notes in the flute, which increases the intensity into the next section as well. Although this section is notated *forte* throughout, the flute should shape the melodic material into smaller phrases, with some additional dynamic contrast. This will give the melodic material more interest and preserve the flutist's energy. Most importantly, the phrasing should move toward the high A♭ at the end of measure 126. The dynamic climax in measures 126-127 can then be used to propel the rest of the section forward by using aggressive accents in the flute. Overall, the
vibrato should become wider until Section 7b. Even though accents in the flute become increasingly prevalent, they should not interrupt the longer phrasing of the section. Because of tied notes, there will be a tendency to attack the accented notes late. A small amount of separation before the accented notes will not only emphasize the accent in the flute but will also prevent late entrances and tempo discrepancies between the flute and piano. As seen in Example 3.14, the piano material will cover up a slight break before accented notes in the flute.

Section 7b results from the evolution of flute material in Section 7a. The piano remains consistent in overall texture and timbre. The flute now joins the piano in a tutti rhythm, with the addition of grace notes. The sixteenth note is the dominant rhythm in both parts. Both parts have the same aggressive accented staccato articulation. The flute is marked at a slightly higher dynamic than the piano. It is likely that Donatoni realized the inherent attack and dynamic discrepancies between the two instruments and wanted the two instruments to sound as similar as possible, therefore increasing the dynamic of the flute. The range difference between the two voices in this section is visually represented by opposite-facing note stems. Ignoring the grace notes, which always have upward-pointing note stems, the downward-facing note stems correspond to notes above the staff and the upward-facing note stems correspond to notes in the staff.
It would be helpful to extract the two voices in this section and practice them separately, keeping the overall rhythm intact. Example 3.15 shows this technique. The first line of Example 3.15 shows the flute part in mm. 134-135 as written. The second line has extracted the material of Voice 1 (notes with downward-facing stems plus corresponding grace notes). Rests have been inserted in place of Voice 2 material (notes with upward-facing stems plus corresponding grace notes). The same technique for the Voice 2 material can be seen in line 3. As with previous sections, practicing at slower tempi will also help this section. The goal is to have all notes in the flute sound equally forceful and with the same emphasis. With the range disparity, this is difficult. Isolating the two voices is the easiest way to achieve this.

As seen in the figure above, the grace notes are included at all stages of practice, especially at slower tempi. Inclusion of grace notes in this process is the only way that the grace notes will be a cohesive part of the section. With regards to articulation, the same aggressive articulation that will eventually be used should also be maintained while practicing at slower tempi. Overall, the slower tempo will necessitate an articulation that sounds shorter but is the same length as will be used at performance tempo. Keep the attack the same while adjusting the space between notes as the tempo increases or decreases during practice sessions. The grace notes should be articulated with precision and exactness, taking care to place them as close to the following note as possible.
Sections 8a and 8b: Measures 141-148, 149-156

The beginning of Section 8a is signified by a return to the original tempo, soft dynamics in both the flute and piano, and a similar flute and piano texture that characterized the beginning of the piece. This transition is seen in Example 3.16.

Example 3.16. Franco Donatoni, *Fili*, mm. 140-141.

Unlike the previous tempo change, there is not a simple ratio of notes that can be used, since there is a rest directly before the tempo change followed by new material in measure 141. Although it could be possible to create a complicated ratio, it is most effective to take a different approach to this tempo change. The flute has the sole responsibility of setting the new tempo and clearly communicating it to the pianist. Since the first 119 measures of the piece are in the same tempo as this section, the tempo should be remembered easily. The flutist should take a slight amount of time, thinking of the internal subdivision
previously established. Then a combination of physical cues as well as a slight emphasis on the first note of beat 2 should be used to communicate the original tempo to the pianist. With some rehearsal, the two parts will become more secure.

A short amount of additional time before the new section begins will not only help to define the new tempo, but will also help to set up the new dynamic level. The flute is marked *pianissimo* throughout this section. The wide range of pitches used in the flute can make this section difficult. The naturally loudest notes in this section are the highest ones on the flute. The dynamic for the entire section should be based on the relative dynamic of those loudest notes. This will probably result in other notes being played at a slightly louder dynamic to create an overall equal dynamic level. In this section, it is advisable to play the whole section at a dynamic that corresponds to the softest possible volume for the highest pitches instead of allowing those pitches to stick out.

The articulation markings in this section are similar to earlier sections of the piece. The flute and piano have light, staccato sixteenth notes with interspersed two note slur groupings. A potential issue with this type of articulation scheme is that the slurred groupings can easily be rushed in the flute and piano. As with many sections of this piece, continued rehearsal at slow tempi as well as a confident grasp of internal subdivision will combat this potential problem. The alternation of material in the flute and piano can create additional issues with regard to dynamics and articulation. Not only is this alternation difficult with regard to rhythm but it also can highlight any articulation disparities.
In measure 145, the two parts begin to overlap as the rhythmic intensity increases in the flute. The piano material becomes more consolidated in pitch and texture as the section comes to a close. In measures 146-147 the piano pitches are limited to C#, D, Eb, and F# in the right hand and D in the left hand. The piano has trills for the first time in the piece in measure 148 as well as a decrescendo to *niente* (nothing). This allows the flute material to emerge as the more dominant voice leading into the next section.

Section 8b (m.149) begins with a *forte* dynamic in both the flute and piano, followed by a decrescendo over one beat to *pianissimo*. Example 3.17 shows the general shape of this figure in the flute and piano, using the first measure of Section 8b as a reference. The previous rhythmic complexities are no longer present in the flute part. Although the flute and piano parts do not share a tutti rhythm, the *forte* attacks are together throughout this section. The flutist should cue the *forte* attacks both with an audible breath as well as a physical motion to ensure the attacks are together. The first issue is how to treat the decrescendo on the B quarter note in the flute. This particular pitch is sensitive to dynamic change, so the note must be supported as the decrescendo is executed. The best way to interpret the decrescendo is to think of it as an elongated accent. With the tenuto marking indicated combined with the decrescendo, Donatoni’s intention is to create a sense of decay rather than an abrupt dynamic change. Also, the bulk of the dynamic change should occur toward the end of the quarter note. This will also prevent the note from becoming flat while trying to execute the dynamic change.
As in the previous section, the overall *pianissimo* dynamic should be measured by the softest comfortable dynamic for the highest pitches (in Example 3.17, this would be the F#). A sense of relaxation into the decrescendo and the notes that follow will also prevent unintended accents on the first thirty-second note of each group.

From mm. 149-156, beat 1, Donatoni uses four pitches in the thirty-second notes in the flute: C#, D, D#/Eb, F#. These are the same four pitches first introduced in the piano in measures 146-147. The piano continues to utilize these pitches with the addition of the note B. This repetition of pitch material includes the use of different octaves as well as large intervals between pitches in the flute. Donatoni abandons this pitch limitation at the end of measure 156.
Section 9: Measures 156-185

At the end of measure 156, Donatoni introduces an undulating series of arpeggios in the flute and piano that returns throughout this section. For the purposes of this section, this recurring element will be referred to as the “wave figure.” The wave figure and contrasting material are shown in Example 3.18. Each occurrence of the wave figure is *forte* with *sforzandos* at the summit and valley of each figure in the flute. The *sforzandos* also correspond to where the slur is broken and the phrase is rearticulated. Despite the *sforzando* articulations indicated, the overall execution of the wave figure should be as smooth as possible. Because of the relatively fast tempo at which this figure is performed, there cannot be a space before the *sforzando* articulation. The *sforzando* note itself should have a heavy attack to distinguish the note from what comes before and after. To keep the entire figure *forte*, the flutist should envision a crescendo as the figure moves down in pitch and relax slightly when the pitches are higher. Not only will this bring out the lower notes which are naturally softer, but it will also allow the performer to conserve air at the top of the wave figure. For the longer wave figures, taking several breaths before the figure starts will ensure there is enough air to execute the passage. Breaking the passage to take a breath is not ideal. If endurance is an issue in these passages, it will help to begin by playing the passage at a comfortable dynamic – one that encompasses the entire phrase without a breath.
Then, it is possible to increase the dynamics gradually while focusing on conserving air, especially on the higher notes. As mentioned previously, taking more quick breaths in the rests before the wave figure will also help.

The wave figure in the flute is interspersed with pointilistic material centered around C. This material is staccato, light, and piano. In measures 158-167, Donatoni uses mordents and inverted mordents on staccato sixteenth notes. This contrasting material can also be seen in Example 3.18. The half-step mordent and inverted mordent alternate. Keeping the fingers relaxed is the best way to execute these embellishments quickly and accurately. In measure 168, Donatoni introduces the trill for the first time in the flute. The note that should be trilled to is always indicated in parentheses next to the note. This notation can be seen in Example 3.19.

Donatoni also uses a wavy line over the duration of the note to be trilled. As with the mordents, the dynamics are soft, ranging from *p* to *ppp*. The main note in the trill should be emphasized, especially at the soft dynamics indicated. Many of the trills indicated in this section are from C to D♭. Instead of using the first finger on the left hand to trill, the C# trill key is preferred. This fingering will allow for trills that are even, fast, and in tune, especially at such soft dynamics. In measure 168, Donatoni also reintroduces the grace note figure seen in Section 6b, now using the pitch C instead of D. The soft dynamic indicated necessitates a very light articulation and the close placement of the grace note to the following thirty-second note.

At the end of this section, Donatoni combines the wave figure and contrasting material. He first hints at this combination in measures 176 and 178 with the introduction of slurred grace notes that resemble the pitches of the wave figure. Donatoni indicates the duration of the three grace notes in measure 178, a thirty-second note each, the same duration as the pitches in the wave figure.
Also, the grace-note figure in that measure is marked forte with a very quick decrescendo that resembles an accent. In measure 184, the contrasting material is combined further, as shown in Example 3.20.

Example 3.20. Franco Donatoni, Fili, mm. 183, pickup -184.

This combined material is marked forte and should be played with excitement in order to contrast with measure 185 and the material in the next section. Although the dynamic level is louder, the fingers should remain relaxed on the trill so that it sounds effortless. Although the placement of the indications are a bit unclear in the part, the sforzandos after the trills should be articulated in the same manner as before.

**Section 10: Measures 186-214**

The piano returns to an accompanimental role in section 10, while the flute part contains most of the rhythmic and melodic interest. The piano part consists of two main elements: scalar figures and dyads that accompany the flute part. The scalar figures in the piano occur for the most part when the flute is not playing. In mm. 211-214, at the end of this section, the scalar passages overlap with the flute part. The dyads in the piano mainyl correspond to notes of the
same duration (eighth and dotted sixteenth notes) in the flute part. Donatoni emphasizes the notes that should be attacked together with a vertical dotted line between the flute and piano parts.

The mordent and inverted mordent from the previous section have a prominent role in the flute part in section 10. To further explore the flute part in this section, mm. 186-192 is shown in Example 3.21. The melodic and rhythmic framework shown in Example 3.21 repeats in mm. 194 and 201, although the exact pitches, rhythm, and dynamic scheme changes. Example 3.21 is the first statement of this framework. Donatoni uses the mordent and inverted mordent to create a modified chromatic scale, starting on different pitches. Like the previous section, the mordent and inverted mordent each represent motion a half step from the note written. Even though there are different accidentals that correspond to the mordent and inverted mordent, the result is always a half step above or below the note. Also, the mordent and inverted mordent alternate throughout this section, just like the previous section. In Example 3.21, these added notes from the mordents and inverted mordents are the missing pitches in the chromatic scale that begins on G and ends on the E above the staff. Although the piano remains at a soft dynamic throughout this section, the flute has crescendi as well as terraced dynamics that correspond to the scalar figure. As seen in Example 3.21, the first statement of the chromatic scalar figure starts at a pianissimo dynamic. Each statement begins at a dynamic level one higher than the previous level.

In Example 3.21, the final level indicated is *mezzo forte*, but the dynamic level does eventually grow to *forte* in measure 209. There are two ways to interpret the dynamic indications in this section: one is to have an overall gradual crescendo from *pianissimo* to *mezzo forte* throughout the passage while the other is to crescendo to a louder dynamic than the next one indicated and then decrease the dynamic level where the new dynamic is marked. Because of the ascending nature of the line as well as the natural dynamic tendencies of the flute, the second option is most effective. Each crescendo should be interpreted as rising to a *forte* or loudest comfortable dynamic. Then, when the scale starts again with a new dynamic, the performer should move to that lower dynamic, keeping in mind that the dynamic level of the beginning of each scale should
increase. The last measure of Example 3.21 (m. 192) contains a brief figure in
the flute that is modified in m. 200 (not shown). Both times, this figure occurs
after the scalar figure ends. This figure serves to bring the dynamic level back to
pianissimo in preparation for the next scalar figure entrance.

Because of the wide range of dynamics in this section, many of which take
place over a short duration, there may be some challenges with regard to
articulation in the flute. There must be a distinction between the notes with
mordents/inverted mordents and the staccato thirty-second notes. Although there
is not a tenuto marking on the pitches with mordents/inverted mordents, they
should be played at full value to emphasize the articulation difference with the
staccato thirty-second notes. Playing them at full value will also give more time to
the principal note so that it is heard clearly, even at the relatively fast tempo.
Giving these notes full value will also allow for the maximum amount of
crescendo possible within the context of the scalar figure. For the staccato thirty-
second notes, the articulation should remain light, especially as the dynamic level
rises. There may be a tendency to over-articulate the staccato notes as the
dynamic level rises, but this will surely lead to tempo fluctuation. A double-tongue
articulation will be less difficult and also less percussive at faster tempi. In each
instance, the staccato notes should lead to the longer notes. It is helpful to
envision these staccato notes as pickups to the long notes. Conceptualizing in
notes in this way, coupled with a light articulation, will give the scalar figures the
momentum and excitement needed to move into the next section.
Measures 211-214 (including the pickup figure in the flute) combine the scalar passages in the flute with the chromatic scales in the piano from earlier in the section. In the flute, the rhythmic activity increases, gradually moving from the original scalar figure to new material. The general dynamic scheme remains the same, yet has been compressed so that each statement in the flute begins at a soft (ppp, pp, or p) dynamic and ends at forte within approximately three beats. Despite this change in the flute, the piano part remains at a very soft dynamic.

Section 11: Measures 215-222

Section 11 features many of the elements introduced in previous sections: trills, mordents, inverted mordents, and complex rhythms in both the flute and piano. The section begins with a tempo change from quarter note equals 66 to quarter note equals 44. Using the same technique described for previous tempo changes in this piece, the ratio of 66:44 can be simplified into 3:2. For notes of the same duration, three notes in the original tempo will equal the duration of two notes in the new tempo. Example 3.22 shows the beginning of Section 11, where the tempo change occurs. Although the tempo change is indicated at the beginning of measure 215, I recommend moving it to beat 2 of that measure. The main reason is that this is where the ratio between note values is the easiest to execute. The first two note values in the flute and piano are dotted eighth notes, which equal three sixteenth notes. The next note (which is tied to the previous note) is a quarter note, which equals four sixteenth notes.
As mentioned above, the ideal ratio is 3:2, which can easily be achieved between the first and second beats of measure 215. The sixteenth subdivision should already be established internally in measure 214. The subdivision continues throughout the measure, feeling the dotted eighth note as the pulse. On the quarter note on beat 2 of measure 215, the pulse remains the same but now two sixteenth notes fit in that duration of time. At the tempo change, the dotted eighth note equals the eighth note. A visual representation of this technique is shown in Example 3.23. Although the flute part is shown in Example 3.23, both the flute and piano should count this transition in the same manner.

The flute and left hand of the piano have a nearly tutti melodic line from mm. 215-217, where the parts begin to vary. The two parts have the same pitches starting two octaves apart. As with previous sections, Donatoni indicates the starting dynamic level for the flute one level higher than the piano (*piano* versus *pianissimo*), probably to ensure that the piano will not overpower the flute in its middle register. At this soft dynamic, it is important to keep a sense of relative calm, despite the embellishments in both parts. In measure 217, the flute part starts to become more active while the left hand of the piano has more rests. Donatoni achieves this texture by adding thirty-second notes in the flute part. The dominant note value by the end of this section is the thirty-second note. The left hand of the piano becomes increasingly pointilistic, while the right hand of the piano remains texturally consistent throughout this section.

The importance of internal subdivision has been stressed throughout the discussion of this piece. This section in particular must have a strong sense of the sixteenth note because of the complex syncopated and tied rhythms. This section can be difficult to coordinate as the flute and left hand piano parts pull
apart rhythmically. When starting to learn the flute part, it is important to practice the entire section slowly, with the sixteenth note subdivision on the metronome. A good starting tempo is one half the ideal performance tempo, or sixteenth note equals 88. It is important to play the entire section at this tempo, even those parts that are easier rhythmically. This type of practice will also help solidify the tempo change at the beginning of the section. Perhaps the most difficult part of this section is reading the notation. As the section progresses and more embellishments are added with shorter note values, each measure becomes more compact and more difficult to discern what is written. Practicing at significantly slower tempi than indicated also ensures that the performer can read all the details in the music and execute them, without the added difficulty of a faster tempo. A starting tempo should be slow enough to allow the performer to execute all elements of the music from the first practice session. Unlike other sections, the trills in this section are always to a half step above the main note. Also, there are only mordents in this section (no inverted mordents). All the mordents embellish the principal note by one half step higher than the written note. Remembering these two constants will help, especially as each measure gets more crowded visually.

**Section 12: Measure 223-end**

The last section of *Fili* showcases the flute, especially its light, quick articulation and ability to move nimbly between intervals. The pitches are limited in the flute part, although in a different way than previous sections. Donatoni
limits the use of specific pitches by octave so that the pitch only appears in that octave during this section. All of the pitches the flute plays in this section are used in the final grace note scale at the end of the work. The first two measures of this section are shown in Example 3.24.


Although the pitches are limited, there is not a discernable pattern to the use of pitches. Also, the piano part does not adhere to the same pitch rules as the flute. If the pitches are placed in order, there is a pattern of half steps that emerges. The order of notes from the flute part from lowest to highest pitch is: G#, C#, E, G, C, Eb, F#, and B. Looking at the distance between consecutive pitches, the following pattern of half steps is seen: 5 3 3 5 3 3 5. Donatoni strays from this group of notes when he adds mordents and inverted mordents in measure 239. The embellishments include notes not in the original group. His use of mordents and inverted mordents do correspond to specific pitches and octaves, however. Mordents are used on lower pitches (G#, C#, E, G), while inverted mordents are used on higher pitches from the group (C, Eb, F#, B).
Each set of pitches also includes a minor triad plus a perfect fourth and spans a major seventh interval (G#-G and C-B).

The large-scale dynamic scheme in this section is a crescendo from mm. 223-249. In the flute, the dynamics increase by step in each of the following measures: 224, 225, 228, 232, 238, and 248. Half of the crescendo is written in the first part of this section, from mm. 224-232. Therefore, it is important to pace the crescendo so that there is still room for growth from mm. 238-249, where the dynamic moves only from *forte* to *fortissimo*. Additionally, a dramatic dynamic change must be heard in the last beat of measure 248 as well at the last scale of the piece. To achieve this, it is important to begin the crescendo from a slightly lower dynamic level so that the overall effect is heightened.

With regard to articulation, the staccato thirty-second notes should be light, as described in other sections. In measure 239, when the mordent and inverted mordents first appear, a distinction must be made between the staccato notes, full-length embellished notes, and accented staccato notes. Since the accented staccato notes always occur after a rest, there is some additional time to attack them with a more percussive articulation. To accentuate the dotted sixteenth notes, it is helpful to imagine a tenuto mark so that they are played at full value. The three different articulation types in the flute part are shown in Example 3.25.

The final measure of the piece is a cadenza for the flute. Marked *il più veloce possibile*, the flute has grace notes that have slashes through each note – indicating that each note should be played twice. Donatoni also marks a double accent on each articulated note. The articulated notes should be played as fast as possible, with a very short, percussive articulation. Double tonguing is the most effective way to execute this articulation. It is not necessary to emphasize the second syllable of the double tongue articulation, however. That will slow down the articulation as well as be more taxing for the flutist. In addition to the articulated notes, there are also groups of slurred grace notes. These notes should also be played as fast as possible, without the double attack on each note. These slurred groups correspond to notes in the piano. Donatoni has indicated this with a dotted line between the parts. He also sets up the slurred groups with a breath mark in the flute before and after each slurred group. Although the breath may not be necessary in each instance, the space is necessary to line up the flute and piano parts. In addition, the flutist should give a visual cue so that these parts line up. The most important cue is at the very end of the piece, where the last grace note in the flute and piano should align. Not
only will a visual cue be necessary but also the final note should be played with a little more length so that the piece ends conclusively. The final group of grace notes ends with a high D in the flute, a note that needs a lot of support and air. Because of the crescendo and high last note, a breath can be taken before the last group of grace notes, making a break after the last trill. Also, the crescendo should be pushed back until the last two or three notes so that the crescendo is heard more clearly.
CHAPTER FOUR

MIDI: DUE PEZZI PER FLAUTO

Background

*Midi: due pezzi per flauto* was composed in 1989 for Italian (contemporary) flutist Roberto Fabbriciani. Franco Donatoni composed six works that year, three of which were for solo instruments. This piece is the only one Donatoni wrote for solo C flute, although he did compose pieces for alto flute, recorder, and piccolo. Roberto Fabbriciani premiered *Midi* on September 27, 1989 at the Festival Antidogma Musica in Turin, Italy. 

Although several of Donatoni’s works were performed at this festival since its founding in 1978, *Midi* was the only one of Donatoni’s pieces that had its world premiere there.

The Italian word *Midi* refers to something of mid or medium length, often a skirt. Although Donatoni did not specifically mention why he chose this title, there are several reasons that come to mind. First, the duration of the piece is around eight minutes, a somewhat “medium” length piece. The tempi for both pieces (66 and 69 bpm, respectively) are not extremely slow or fast. There are no difficult

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extended techniques in this piece, only embellishments that are standard by the early twentieth century. The two movements are of similar length and difficulty.

As with *Fili*, this piece is most appropriate for only the most advanced college undergraduates and beyond. This piece in particular is difficult because of the lack of barlines, measures, explicit meter, and time signatures. This work requires a significant time commitment as well as an attention to detail. Because of the inherent rhythmic complexity as well as the lack of barlines and traditional meter, *Midi* may not be a good choice as a first foray into contemporary music. This work will be treated in the same way as *Fili*, with both movements divided into sections based on shared characteristics. Because of the lack of measures, the start of each section will be notated in an appendix. Further musical examples will be used throughout the text. It will be most beneficial to locate the beginning of each section and indicate it on a score for reference purposes. Each piece will be discussed in order.

**Piece 1, Section 1**

The first aspect of *Midi* that is difficult for the performer is the lack of barlines or consistent meter. Rather than trying to fit Donatoni’s notation into a traditional beat system (by marking each full beat on the score, for instance), consider that the relationship between notes is the most important rhythmic concept. By using this framework, the emphasis switches from the beat and

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*Musical examples from *Midi*:
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meter to keeping the note length relationships constant throughout and also recognizing the importance of note groupings. In the first section (which is the first three staves of the score, not including the last statement at the end of the third staff), all the rests equal a thirty-second note. Each rest in this section should therefore have the same duration. These rests are also used to separate the different material in the flute. Therefore, the rest should be clear enough for the listener to recognize the space between disparate statements.

Donatoni also indicates his musical intent by grouping notes in a very specific way. Many of the thirty-second notes in this section lead to a longer note. Although it is important to keep the overall relationship of note values intact, the gesture is paramount. Example 4.1 shows the grouping of notes at the beginning of the second staff.


From the way that Donatoni notates the thirty-second notes, it is implied that he is more concerned with the groupings rather than a strict adherence to an imaginary meter or beat pattern. Of course, the thirty-second notes should be in the proper relationship with the longer notes of this section, but there is a distinct
difference in the perceived rhythm among the different sets of thirty-second notes. The first set in Example 4.1 is a quintuplet grouping leading to the trilled dotted eighth note. The next set of four thirty-second notes is the same duration as the tied eighth note that precedes it. After the thirty-second note rest, there is another eighth note duration (a dotted sixteenth note plus a thirty-second note equals an eighth note), followed by another set of four thirty-second notes. Finally, there is what looks like a triplet in between two more thirty-second note rests. Even though the subdivision stays the same throughout, Donatoni notates these different groupings so that the larger pulse appears to change.

Looking closely at the score, there are some additional indications with regard to phrasing that one can glean from the notation. Each trill indicated in this first section leads directly to the next grouping, without a rest in between. This notation reinforces the idea that any breaks in phrasing should be limited to rests. As in *Fili*, the trill-to note is indicated in parentheses next to the principal note. As with any trill, the important note is the principal note, not the trill-to note. Holding the principal note at the end of the trill will aid the execution of the thirty-second note groups after the trill. The middle part of the trill should be executed as fast as possible. In the second half of Section 1, the trills are phased out in favor of mordents and inverted mordents. In contrast to *Fili*, where there were accidentals to indicate to which pitch the mordent or inverted mordent should embellish, Donatoni states at the bottom of the first page of the score that the mordents and inverted mordents should always be a half-step from the principal note. The
mordents and inverted mordents should always be played on the beat and as quickly as possible.

As this section progresses, there are more rests and a fragmented style emerges. Although the flutist will not need to take a breath during each one of the rests indicated, it is important to recognize and execute these rests as part of the music, instead of thinking of the rest as an absence of musical content. In *Midi* especially, one can see the influence of John Cage’s views on sound and silence: that the silence (rests) are as important to the piece as the sound (notes) is. The increased number of rests toward the end of Section 1 is how Donatoni sets up the next section. In the absence of dynamic change (the beginning of the piece is labeled *sempre, ppp*) or a change in register, the motion toward Section 2 imitates a drive to the cadence, although at the end of Section 1, there is no tonal or harmonic cadence in the traditional sense.

In addition to the slurs discussed above, there are few articulation markings in this section. The only articulation marking used is a tenuto, which is primarily seen in the second half of Section 1. An example of this is seen in Example 4.2.

Throughout Section 1, the tenuto notes are not slurred and have either a mordent or inverted mordent on the note. All except one of the tenuto notes are sixteenth notes. In Example 4.2 specifically, the tenuto and non-tenuto notes are adjacent to each other. This implies that a recognizable difference must be made and that it is not only an articulation but also an indication of length. The tenuto notes should be played with a weight on the front of the note and a slightly longer length. It is not necessary, however, to play each tenuto note with the same exact length. Some notes may need to be played longer to compensate for the delay in sound inherent in the low register (i.e.: low D and C#).

**Section 2**

Section 2 expands upon the slurred thirty-second note groupings in Section 1, adding repeated staccato thirty-second notes as contrasting material. At the beginning of this section, the staccato notes are in combination with slurred notes. Example 4.3 shows the beginning of Section 2.

Although there is a written indication at the beginning of the piece that accidentals only apply to the note they follow, the staccato repeated notes in this section are an exception to the rule. The accidental applies to all of the repeated pitches, not just the first one, with no other pitches in between. Roberto Fabbriciani’s performs this passage with repeated accidentals in *Flute XXth Century, Vol. 2*. Since the piece was composed for him, it is reasonable that Donatoni intended the accidentals to apply to repeated notes in this section. An example of this are the C#'s at the end of the first grouping in Example 4.3.

The individual note groups are barred together, an indication of how Donatoni intended this section to be played. Again, a traditional meter or beat pattern cannot easily be superimposed on this section, so smaller groupings are the key for a successful execution. In both the slurred and staccato notes, some natural groupings can be seen. For instance, in the first grouping of Example 4.3, there are nine thirty-second notes under the slur. These nine notes can be grouped 3+3+3. This makes most sense when looking at the pitches as well as considering what is easiest for the performer to execute. There are also six staccato notes that can be grouped 2+2+2 when the pitches are considered. The entire grouping (of both slurred and staccato notes) can be seen as a rhythmic pattern of 3+3+3+2+2+2. This first grouping of Example 4.3 can be seen in Example 4.4, rewritten with this rhythmic grouping in mind.

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Making smaller groupings within the larger statements is the best way to execute the pitches within the groups as well as keeping the thirty-second notes equal. Each statement can be easily divided into smaller groups of three and two. There is often a tendency to rush slurred notes as well as repeated notes, both of which are in this section. It is not recommended to include the thirty-second note rests in these groupings as this may create the sensation of syncopation and more complex rhythmic groupings.

Like Section 1, Section 2 is to be played *sempre ppp*. There are no additional dynamic indications notated in this section. In this section especially, it may be difficult to play at an extremely soft dynamic, especially considering the staccato articulations and widening pitch range. Considering that this piece is for flute alone, the emphasis should be on playing a soft, yet comfortable dynamic level that stays relatively the same until a dynamic difference is indicated. If the dynamic level is too soft, some pitches may not speak and the articulation will not be as crisp as is needed for the staccato notes. A natural increase in dynamic level is expected as the flute goes higher in range and does not necessarily have
to be avoided. Rather, the focus should remain on keeping the overall dynamic level soft and avoiding any drastic dynamic changes.

Section 3

The first half of Section 3 combines three distinct elements: 1) descending, slurred group of thirty-second notes; 2) a sixteenth note with mordent/inverted mordent; and 3) a thirty-second note-sixteenth rhythm with a tenuto sixteenth note. Each of these elements is seen at the beginning of Section 3 (Example 4.5).


At the beginning of Section 3, Donatoni writes the first dynamic marking since the beginning of the piece. This decrescendo appears with every group of descending thirty-second notes throughout this section. From the first instance of this figure, the beginning of the grouping should be played at a louder dynamic, so that the decrescendo is audible. The overall shape should be exaggerated so that the difference between Section 2 and 3 is accentuated. The end of the
decrescendo can be softer than the overall soft dynamic established in the first two sections of the work. This will heighten the effect.

Next, in Example 4.5, there is a sixteenth note with a mordent. Throughout this section, mordents and inverted mordents are both used to embellish sixteenth notes. These sixteenth notes should be held full value, not only so that the principal note of the mordent/inverted mordent can be heard clearly, but also to distinguish the durational value from the thirty-second notes that precede it. This note is followed by a recurring rhythmic figure: a staccato thirty-second note followed by a tenuto sixteenth note. Donatoni emphasizes the contrast idea by using different note lengths and articulations in the short rhythmic motives. The staccato note must be played short, with space before the next note. Accents should be avoided because they will cause the note to be longer in length and stick out from the overall texture. The tenuto sixteenth note should be played slightly longer than full value so that there is definite contrast between those notes, thirty-second notes, and sixteenth notes without tenuto markings. The tenuto notes should lead into the note that follows without a break. Adjoining tenuto sixteenth notes should have the same length. Donatoni combines these basic elements in different ways throughout the first half of this section, but the disparate properties of each element should remain the same as described above.

The varied elements of the first half of the section give way to a pointillistic texture of thirty-second notes in the middle of staff 10. Example 4.6 shows the beginning of this new texture.

![Musical notation](image)

The vast majority of the notes are staccato thirty-second notes. These notes should be played light and without emphasis on specific pitches. There are slurred pairs with a crescendo or decrescendo interspersed with the staccato thirty-second notes. Also in Example 4.6, the fifth and sixth notes are slurred, with a crescendo indicated. Similar two-note groups are seen in the second half of Section 3. Each time, the notes are an octave apart. When the second note is higher than the first, there is a crescendo written. When the second note is lower than the first, there is a decrescendo. Since the notated dynamics correspond to the natural dynamic tendencies of the flute, there is no need to make an overly dramatic dynamic change, nor is there enough time to do so. There is not a staccato on the second of the slurred notes, meaning that the second note should not be clipped and there should not be additional space between the second slurred note and the note that follows. Since there are numerous rests in between sets of notes, breaths should be limited to rests only. There are thirty-second, sixteenth, and dotted sixteenth rests in this section. The longer value rests are ideal for breathing.
Section 4

The material in Section 4 is a distinct departure from the end of Section 3. The section begins with an ascending scalar figure leading to two tenuto sixteenth notes. There are relatively few staccato notes and rests in this section compared to the previous section. Except for the notes under slurs, the thirty-second notes in this passage are marked staccato, while the sixteenth and dotted sixteenth notes are tenuto. Donatoni uses articulation and the lack of rests to give this section longer phrases as well as a textural continuity. To further explore the material in this section, Example 4.7 shows two statements from the end of staff 12.


First, the ascending scalar material resembles a chromatic scale, yet there is at least one missing pitch in each instance. In the second slurred group of Example 4.7, that pitch is D#/Eb. Interestingly, there is the span of a major seventh between the first pitch of the scalar figure and the first tenuto sixteenth note after the figure. All but one figure spans this interval – that one spans a diminished seventh. Donatoni explores the octave and the seventh throughout
this section, an outgrowth of the octave two-note groups from Section 3. One can see the emphasis on the octave in the grace notes that precede the scalar figure and also in the consecutive two-note, slurred groups starting in staff 13. An example of the grace note figure is seen in Example 4.8.

Example 4.8, Franco Donatoni, *Midi*, staff 11.

In Section 3, the decrescendo was the main dynamic indication while the crescendo is used exclusively in Section 4 and with a higher frequency than the decrescendos in Section 3. There are no other dynamic indications in this section, leading to a bit of ambiguity with regard to the overall dynamic intention. Example 4.9 shows the way Donatoni uses the crescendo in this section at the end of Section 4. By the end of this section, Donatoni uses crescendos on every statement that is framed by rests. Looking ahead to the beginning of Section 5, there is a dynamic written: *(ppp)*. This indication is very important for a couple of reasons. One, it serves to reestablish the dynamic indicated at the beginning of the work. Because it is in parentheses, it also means that Donatoni is giving a reminder of the dynamic level, and that this same level should apply overall to the material in Section 4.
Therefore, the crescendos in Section 4 should be seen as a rise from this very soft dynamic level that has been consistent to this point. The dynamic level should return to the same soft dynamic at the beginning of each crescendo, and in other passages where there is no specific dynamic indication. The amount of crescendo should not be consistent and should vary according to the size of the crescendo notated. Also, more crescendo would be appropriate as the section comes to a close (Example 4.9) so that the end of Section 4 serves as a climax and contrasts with the next section which remains at ppp throughout.

Donatoni also introduces grace notes for the first time in this section. As mentioned previously, grace notes are usually an octave from the main note, although this is not always the case. The grace notes follow a tenuto sixteenth note, making their execution somewhat difficult. Instead of creating a space between the tenuto sixteenth note and the grace note, a slightly harder articulation should be used so that the note is heard clearly. Because of the short length of the grace notes, they will naturally not sound as loud as the tenuto sixteenth notes, so they will not stick out too much from the texture unless an
inordinate amount of space is made. The grace notes should also be in proportion dynamically, especially when there are crescendos indicated.

**Section 5**

Section 5 returns to the soft dynamics established in the first sections of the work. The texture is a dramatic change from Section 4. With the exception of one thirty-second note rest in the middle of this short section, the section is dominated by slurred groupings of thirty-second notes. Example 4.10 shows the beginning of the last staff on the first page.


![Example 4.10, Franco Donatoni, Midi, staff 15.](image)

The beginning of each slurred group has a tenuto on the first thirty-second note. Even though the dynamic level is *ppp* throughout, the beginning of each group should be emphasized with a slightly heavier articulation. At this tempo, it is not ideal to elongate the first note, since that will disrupt the flow of the thirty-second notes. Ideally, there should be only one breath at the thirty-second note rest in the middle of the last staff on the first page. If an additional breath is needed, one can be taken before the low A on the first staff of the third page or...
the low A on the second staff. Keeping the dynamic level soft will conserve air. Extra support should be used to execute the higher notes in the passage.

Donatoni favors three pairs of pitches (and their respective enharmonic spellings) in this section: Bb/B; Eb/E; and G/G#. He combines these pitches to create broken arpeggios in the first part of this section. The different combinations of these pitches result in the first hints of tonality in the work. Although their use is not traditional, the sequence of pitches form all four types of triads and highlight the major and minor third. In the second half of this section, the arpeggios are replaced by almost complete chromatic groups with wave-like motion. Just as in Sections 3 and 4, there are one or two pitches missing in each group so it is not exactly chromatic, but the intent is still clear to the audience. Throughout this section, the larger slurred groupings can be divided into smaller parts, as described in Section 2.

Section 6

Donatoni sets up the beginning of Section 6 with the longest duration of rests so far in the piece. The two dotted eighth note rests represent the halfway point of this first movement of the work. After the flowing style of Section 5, Section 6 has a pointilistic insistency that has not been seen in any other section. After the first three thirty-second notes (which have a crescendo), Donatoni returns to the ppp dynamics that dominated the first half of the movement. The bulk of the new, insistent style should come from the treatment of the staccato articulation. Instead of the previously used light staccato articulation, a slightly
more biting version can be used. This will also help to set up the contrast between staccato thirty-second notes and the sixteenth notes with mordents and inverted mordents starting on the fourth staff of page 3. These two elements are shown in Example 4.11.


Donatoni keeps the articulation consistent through this section, with staccato markings on all thirty-second notes and no articulation markings on the sixteenth notes. Unlike the sixteenths in other sections of the work, there are no tenuto markings. These notes should be played full value so that the mordent/inverted mordent can be cleanly executed. Playing these notes at full value will also create contrast between the sixteenth and thirty-second notes in between (as seen in the middle part of Example 4.11). The performer should resist the tendency to accent the sixteenth notes, which may inadvertently occur when trying to execute the mordent/inverted mordent on the beat.

Despite the contrasts in articulation and note length, the dynamic level remains constant. With the large pitch range in this section, keeping the overall dynamic level soft can be a challenge. The best way to approach this issue is to
take the naturally loudest parts of the section and find what the softest possible level is that they can be played (and still executed with confidence). The naturally loudest parts in this section are the ones with the longest duration and highest pitch. As mentioned earlier in the discussion of this piece, this level will be different for each person. Once the “ppp” dynamic is established for the loudest parts of the section, the entire section can then be related to that specific dynamic. Often, the lower pitches will need to be played slightly louder for balance purposes. Playing the section at a slightly louder but consistent dynamic will actually sound softer to the listener. This same technique can be used not only for Donatoni’s works, but also for any work where the dynamic level has to remain consistent despite textural, range, and articulation changes.

Section 7

Section 7 is by far the largest section of the first piece. Although there are many different elements in this section, the unifying factor is a large-scale crescendo to fortissimo and decrescendo back to ppp. This is the first time in the work that Donatoni has notated dynamics other than ppp. There are clear intentions with each of the crescendos and decrescendos, with the amount of dynamic change notated. By looking at this section, one can see how the dynamic intention is quite different than in Sections 3 or 4. Previously, the main intent was to keep a similar dynamic level overall, while here, Donatoni obviously intends significant change. The bulk of the crescendo occurs on trills with relatively long note lengths, as seen in Example 4.12.

It is important to recognize exactly where the crescendos are located. The notation indicates that there should be an incremental change in dynamics, which occurs on the trill. In between these crescendos, there should not be an additional crescendo or dynamic inflection. Because of the longer note values, there can be a tendency to slow down the tempo. In this section especially, the performer’s internal subdivision is key to relating this section to those that come before and after it.

The decrescendos in this section are treated in a similar fashion as the crescendos described above. For the decrescendos, however, the main dynamic decrease is found in groups of slurred thirty-second notes. Two of these groups can be seen in Example 4.13. The material shown in Example 4.13 is from the middle of staff 8. The two groups shown do not have embellishments, although other groups are flutter tongued. The same grouping method described in section two can be used here as well to divide the groups of thirty-second notes into smaller parts.
As with the crescendos, it is important to follow the dynamic indications carefully so that the amount of decrescendo is incremental. There may also be a tendency for the notes to sound flat as both the dynamic level decreases and the notes are in a lower range. Air support is crucial in order to combat this potential problem.

Donatoni also uses the decrescendo as an extended accent figure in this section. Example 4.14 shows a series of these figures.
From the frequency and placement of these decrescendos, one can see how they have a different intention than the other decrescendos in the section. Also, a similar use of crescendos was seen in Section 4, where it was established that an overall dynamic change is not the intention. Each trill should begin around a *mezzo forte* dynamic level and become as soft as possible in an eighth-note duration. There should be no breaks between trills and no breath until the next rest (which is after the chain of trills is completed). The tenuto mark on the beginning of each trill indicates increased weight at the beginning of each trill on the principal note.

The flutter tonguing groups in this section present a special challenge. First, as the dynamics and pitch decrease in each group, the flutter tongue articulation will seem louder than the actual tone or center of each note. In general, less flutter tongue is needed when there is a softer dynamic. Keeping the air constant as the pitch moves downward will make sure that the flutter tongue stays consistent through the entire duration of the slur. Also, starting the flutter tongue a little before beginning the pitch itself will assist response issues as the initial dynamic level increases (e.g.: the group at the end of staff 8). This same technique can be used at the end of the work, when the flutter tongue articulation is used in the low register.

The final third of Section 7, starting at the beginning of staff 9, combines several features from previous sections of the piece. The dynamic returns to *ppp* with staccato groupings of thirty-second notes paired with a two-note motive (*E-F*) that happens four times. Example 4.15 shows two of the four complete pairs.
Each of the four thirty-second note groups has ten pitches. The pitches remain the same in each iteration, except that the first pitch becomes the final one in the second group, transposed by an octave. In Example 4.15 the first pitch is a low C. In the second grouping, C is now the final pitch and the second pitch of the first grouping (D) is now the first pitch of the second grouping. The two-note motive in between (E–F) remains the same. Each of the thirty-second note groupings should be played with a light staccato articulation with a forward intention, moving to the sixteenth notes. The thirty-second note groupings at the end of this section (staff 11) should be played in the same manner with motion toward the rest.

Section 8

Donatoni abruptly changes style and texture in the last section of the first piece of *Midi*. The dynamic level remains at the very soft dynamic heard throughout the entire piece. Slurs and variants of legato articulation replace the staccato articulation from the end of Section 7. Example 4.16 shows the end of
staff 12 into staff 13, where three of the four different articulations in this section can be seen.


The slur marking is the most self-explanatory of the three shown above. The first staff of Section 8 (staff 12) contains slurs as well as tenuto markings on individual notes with a duration sixteenth note or longer. The tenuto notes should be played full value. One can conceptualize that these tenuto notes are similar to bowing technique for string instruments. This becomes especially helpful for two tenuto sixteenth notes in a row. Each note represents one motion of the hypothetical bow, with the same separation that would occur if playing the notes on a string instrument. The air should remain consistent throughout the note and lead into the next note without stopping the forward motion. In staff 13, the slur markings on thirty-second notes are replaced with staccato-tenuto markings. This marking denotes a separation between notes as well as a slight emphasis. Again, these thirty-second notes should lead to the longer notes that follow. The ultimate goal is a recognizable contrast between the articulations, so a consistent approach is best throughout this section. Finally, at the end of staff 14, the flutter
tongue articulation is reintroduced. These thirty-second notes are in groups of two or three pitches. Because of the soft dynamic, the flutter tongue must be gentle and may need to start before the note itself (as described in Section 7). With these groups, the gesture is most important and some minute dynamic change is appropriate in this musical context.

In addition to the relatively limited articulations used in this section, the pitches are limited as well. The range of pitches in this section is from D-D♭ (the minor seventh is highlighted again) in the lowest octave of the flute. Each chromatic pitch in between is used several times. There is distinct conjunct motion that distinguishes this last section from previous material in the piece. The limited number of pitches and conjunct motion, combined with the small number of rests in this section, gives the final section continuity and a sense of fading into the infinite. Because of this, the performer should take care to avoid unnecessary and distracting emphasis on single notes or groups of notes. Through adding rests and fragmenting motivic material, Donatoni integrates a sense of gradual ritard so additional tempo fluctuation is not needed and should be avoided. To keep the sense of calm after the piece is finished, the performer should refrain from moving after playing the last note until the ambient sound has completely dissipated. Although the two pieces are not attacca, having a short amount of time between them will set up the contrast between the end of the first piece and the beginning of the second. A brief pause between pieces will also keep the attention of the audience, which may wane with excessive time between pieces and noise from page turning.
Piece 2, Section 1

One of the most important reasons for limiting the amount of time between the two pieces is the sharp contrast between the end of the first piece and the beginning of the second. Example 4.17 shows the beginning of Piece 2.


The starting dynamic is *forte, sempre*. Remaining at a *forte* dynamic throughout has its own unique challenges that differ from the dynamic issues in the first piece. First, it is important to note that there are louder dynamics than *forte* in the second piece. Therefore, the goal should not be to play as loud as possible in this first section, but to play at a comfortably loud dynamic that can be sustained through the complete range of the flute. This “comfortably loud” dynamic is similar to the *ppp* dynamic in the first piece in that the dynamic level is found by relating the most naturally soft notes and finding the loudest dynamic level for those notes. Each of the statements in Example 4.17 would be relatively easy to play at a *forte*dynamic, since the notes are mostly in the upper range of the flute. Starting at a slightly softer dynamic so that the entire section is
relatively *forte*, without the higher notes sticking out, will actually make the section seem louder to the listener.

The wide interval between grace notes and principal notes in this first section makes it especially difficult to achieve a cohesive dynamic level. This range disparity also can prove difficult to execute with short note durations. The interval between the grace notes and the main notes is a major seventh throughout Section 1. A practice technique that may be helpful is to isolate this particular interval and use it as a long tone exercise. Example 4.18 is a potential version of this exercise.


Example 4.18 uses the same intervals from the beginning of Section 1. Both the grace note and principal note have relative values consistent with those in the work. Although Example 4.18 is slurred, this exercise should also be articulated in the same manner as the work, with the first note played staccato and the second note played tenuto. This exercise will help the performer to center more easily the pitches despite the large and awkward interval between
them. The tempo on this exercise should increase until it approaches performance tempo.

The idea of contrast further permeates this first section through the articulation used. Each of the grace notes is marked with a staccato, while each of the sixteenth notes is marked tenuto. Both of these articulations have been explored in depth in the first piece of this work. In this section specifically, the grace notes should be long enough that the pitch can be heard. Although there should be some space between the grace note and principal note, the grace note should naturally lead to the principal note and not be treated as separate. The tenuto sixteenth note should be played at full value, not elongated or over-emphasized. When a grace note follows the tenuto sixteenth note, there should be a minimal break between the two.

As with all of Donatoni’s works, the importance of internal subdivision is evident. Section 1 has varied rest duration and constant note duration. Each of the rests is easily divided into sixteenth notes, which is the main subdivision for this section. As with the first piece, the emphasis is on relative note durations and not the creation of larger beats or a superimposed meter. Although the initial tempo indication of quarter note equals 69 bpm may not seem fast, the short note durations make the eventual performance tempo quite difficult. Roberto Fabbriciani performs this piece at quarter note equals 60 bpm, which is a more reasonable goal. ³²

Section 2

Section 2 begins with a flurry of thirty-second notes and a dramatic style change from Section 1. Similar material to the “wave figure” from *Fili* returns in this section, the beginning of which is shown in Example 4.19.


The performer should use a biting staccato articulation to grab the listener’s attention. This staccato is different from the light staccato described in the first piece of *Midi*. Since the staccato articulation is used only when the flute is moving up in range, this is where much of the forward motion of this section has to occur. Using the air, the articulation can remain constant while still giving the thirty-second notes a directional quality. The staccato notes should lead to the apex of the grouping, where the slur begins. A natural crescendo will also help enhance phrasing. The slurred thirty-second notes correspond to the downward moving portions of the modified wave figure. The beginning of the slur is marked with an accent, which not only separates the two types of articulation from each other, but also emphasizes the apex of each figure. The accented notes must be executed by note length and attack alone, since it is not ideal to create space before the accent itself. Keeping the air directed downward
throughout the slurred thirty-second notes will give those notes intention as well as create a small crescendo. This crescendo will actually give the impression of remaining at a *forte* dynamic as the notes move lower in pitch. As seen in the last group of Example 4.19, when the direction changes in the middle of a group from downward to upward, the last note under the slur has a staccato. These notes should be played short, with the same style as the staccato notes at the beginning of the section.

This section is the first time in *Midi* that the *martellato* articulation is used. This can be seen in Example 4.19 on the dotted quarter note. This articulation choice is a bit confusing since it usually refers to a string or piano technique. One can assume that Donatoni is using it to distinguish the desired articulation from the accent. With an accent, there is a necessary amount of dynamic change, often taking the form of a short decrescendo on longer note values. By using the *martellato* articulation, Donatoni indicates a defined, hard attack but no dynamic change on the duration of the held note. By keeping the dynamic level constant, the next entrance on either staccato or slurred notes is more dramatic and unexpected.

The major seventh continues to have an important role in Section 2, although it is a bit camouflaged. Looking at the first group in Example 4.19, one can see that the interval between the first note and the first slurred note is a major seventh (B-Bb). In the final group, the first and last notes of the slurred portion is also a major seventh (Ab-A). Although this does not remain consistent
throughout the section, it is very prevalent. Example 4.20 contains material from the middle of staff 7.

Example 4.20, Franco Donatoni, *Midi*, staff 7.\(^{33}\)

Both the first staccato group (A-Ab) and the slurred portion of the second group (C-C#) encompass a major seventh. In addition, the first staccato group is repeated verbatim several times throughout the section, both by itself and as part of larger figures. Some examples include the middle of staff 8, end of staff 9, and middle of staff 11 (joined with slurred thirty-second notes). This pattern repetition gives the section a small amount of continuity, despite the very fragmented texture.

**Section 3**

In Section 3, there are the first dynamic indications since the *forte, sempre* at the beginning of the work. There are two main ideas in this section: accented staccato thirty-second notes at a *fortissimo* dynamic and tenuto eighth and dotted

\(^{33}\) Note: the manuscript shows the slur starting on the high B natural in the excerpt shown. This is the only instance where the slur does not begin on the highest note of the group. Therefore, I believe this is an error in the part.
eighth notes at a *pianissimo* dynamic. Example 4.21 shows both ideas from the beginning of staff 14.


The accented staccato notes should be played as loudly as possible, with a clear articulation for each note. These notes are in the high range of the flute, so there should not be a problem achieving a powerful sound. Keeping the air direction pointed downward will help prevent the pitch from becoming excessively sharp. This will also prevent the notes from cracking when an aggressive attack is used. The pitches used for the thirty-second notes are limited to C, C#, D, F, and Bb until the beginning of staff 3 on the first page. Donatoni then gradually adds pitches until all twelve chromatic pitches are used.

The second main idea in this section consists of tenuto notes of an eighth, dotted eighth, or double dotted eighth duration. These tenuto notes form a chain of notes separated by a very soft articulation. The pitches are in the staff, in a lower range for the flute. In contrast to the previously discussed material in Section 3, the dynamic is *pianissimo*. In Example 4.21, one can see that some of
the notes are embellished with mordents and inverted mordents. As previously discussed, these should always move to the note one half step above or below the written pitch. The mordent/inverted mordent does not need to be emphasized and care should be taken to keep the entire chain of tenuto notes at the same soft dynamic. There may be a tendency to over-articulate these embellished notes. An “n” articulation at the beginning of each tenuto note will give the least amount of discernable attack while still distinguishing the notes from each other. The same care should be taken when the notes are embellished with trills (starting in staff 15).

Toward the end of Section 3, the two ideas begin to mesh and become indiscernible. At the end of staff 4, page 5, the final set of tenuto notes are taken over by accented staccato thirty-second notes. In staff 6, when the tenuto notes return (with sixteenth and thirty-second note durations added to the original durations), they are now marked fff. The thirty-second notes are still marked with an accented staccato, the only remnant of the previous idea. The pitches for these notes are limited to C, C#, E, F, Bb, B. With the addition of the B, these are the same pitches Donatoni used at the beginning of the section for the thirty-second notes.

Although subdivision is important throughout this work, it is especially important in this section. The varying durations make it easy to lose the internal subdivision that should remain constant. There are both sixteenth and thirty-second note rests that can be easily confused because of the manuscript style of notation. Repetitive slow practice will help reinforce the rhythm as well as give
the performer a chance to read each rest and note carefully before playing the piece at performance tempo.

**Section 4**

Section 4 begins with new material incorporating flutter tonguing, not seen since the first piece of this work. At first, it appears that this section is not related to what came before it, but this is not the case. In fact, the same contrasting elements are highlighted in a new way. The tenuto notes associated with a *pianissimo* dynamic in Section 3 are replaced by slurred groups of flutter tongued thirty-second notes at a *ppp* dynamic in Section 4. One group of flutter tongued notes is shown in Example 4.22.


![Example 4.22](image)

The goal remains the same for this material as in the previous section: to keep the dynamics low, in spite of the flutter-tongue articulation. This is more difficult than it may seem. The flutter tongue can become overpowering in the lower register, even more so with *ppp* dynamics. To be successful, the performer should focus on keeping the throat relaxed, almost as if there is an urge to yawn.
Then, the flutter tongue articulation will begin naturally and without strain. Because of the interruption in air stream that is inherent when executing the flutter tongue, additional support is necessary so that the flutter tongue does not start and stop during the slurred group. With practice, flutter tonguing endurance and control will increase, but only with a relaxed approach.

In addition to the flutter tongued material, the accented staccato thirty-second notes return from the previous section, this time at a fff dynamic and accompanied by grace notes. The first instance of this material is shown in Example 4.23.


In Example 4.23, one can see how Donatoni combines these two separate ideas, interspersing the fff material with the ppp material. The grace notes should be placed as close to the principal note as possible. The exact placement will depend on the performer’s ability to execute the often wide, slurred intervals between the grace notes and the main notes. The pitches for the fff material are limited to C, C#, E, and Bb, with C the most common pitch for the grace notes. In
general, it is important to remember that this material is an effect and should be
played as such, with emphasis on the overarching gesture.

**Section 5**

Section 5 is a return to the pointilistic texture from the beginning of the
piece. The thirty-second note continues as the main element, leaving behind the
tenuto and flutter-tongued elements that served as contrast in previous sections.
In this section, the thirty-second notes alone are a source of dynamic and
articulation contrast. The two styles of thirty-second notes from the middle of staff
14 are shown in Example 4.24.


The **fff** thirty-second notes at the beginning of Example 4.24 are accented,
while the **ppp** thirty-second notes are marked staccato. In contrast to other
sections, where the staccato articulation was combined with a loud dynamic, this
staccato should be played with a light articulation to emphasize the soft dynamic.
Because of the extremely soft dynamics indicated, the notes have the tendency
to speak late. To combat this, the air stream should be engaged internally before
attacking the note. Using a breath attack will also help the note speak more precisely. Most importantly, the dynamics used should be a level at which all notes can be heard equally and the performer is confident that the notes will speak. The beginning of Example 4.24 shows the fff material from this section, characterized by accents. These notes should have a strong, even attack that still allows the performer to keep the tempo steady. For both types of thirty-second notes, a double tongue articulation will be the easiest to execute at performance tempo.

The main pitches used in the final section are outlined in the last gesture of the piece: E, B, C#, G#, C, D, G, Bb. The low E is used six times in Section 5 with gradually increasing note lengths (from a thirty-second note to a double dotted eighth note) and dynamic level (from pppp to mezzo forte). In the last staff, Donatoni uses trills as well as the martellato articulation to increase energy and momentum leading into the final gesture of the work, which should be played with a dramatic flair. Although the final crescendo to ffff is written after the grace-note group, the final note should be held only slightly longer than written to account for the tie marked from the final Bb. Because the note will ring in the performance space, the performer should remain still until the note dies away, adding to the dramatic nature of this final gesture.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINAL REMARKS

*Fili* and *Midi* are unique additions to the flute repertoire. Each piece explores the idea of contrast in various ways: dynamics, articulation, phrasing, range, and timbre. In the process of learning each work, the performer expands his or her concept of extremes, without the added difficulty of extended techniques. Although rhythmically complex, the repetitive element in both pieces makes it relatively accessible to the audience, which can easily grasp recurring thematic and motivic material. Both pieces are relatively short in length, making them effective additions to collegiate and professional recital programs.

Although Franco Donatoni composed several works that feature the flute in a prominent role, he is a relatively unknown contemporary composer. By writing this doctoral essay, the writer hopes that more flutists will become familiar with the composer and his works and that *Fili* and *Midi* will eventually become part of the standard contemporary flute repertoire. The performance concepts in this doctoral essay can easily be applied to the flute in of Donatoni’s works, and to a larger extent, the performance of contemporary music. It is hoped that this resource will be valuable for flutists as they explore the music of Franco Donatoni.
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APPENDIX A

SECTIONAL DIVISIONS IN MIDI: DUE PEZZI PER FLAUTO

This appendix contains the first identifiable material from each section of *Midi*. Each section is labeled with the page number, section number, and staff number where it appears in this format: x:x:x. For instance, the musical example for the start of Section 2 in piece 1 would look like this: 2:2:3 (meaning page 2, Section 2, staff 3).

Piece 1

Example A.1. 2:1:1

Example A.2. 2:2:3

Example A.3. 2:3:8

Example A.4. 2:4:11

Example A.5. 2:5:14

Example A.6. 3:6:3
Example A.7. 3:7:5

Example A.8. 3:8:12

Example A.9. 4:1:1

Example A.10. 4:2:4

Example A.11. 4:3:13

Example A.12. 5:4:7

Example A.13. 5:5:12

Piece 2