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Terra Mirabilis: A Composition for Symphony Orchestra in Three Movements

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

TERRA MIRABILIS: A COMPOSITION FOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
IN THREE MOVEMENTS

By

Sofia Kraevska

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
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TERRA MIRABILIS: A COMPOSITION FOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
IN THREE MOVEMENTS

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Terra Mirabilis is a three-movement musical composition for symphony orchestra with piano solo inspired by natural landscapes photographed by the composer. The three movement composition and its corresponding landscapes portray three times of a day: early morning (I. The Mists), evening (II. Oceanus), and late night (III. Nocturne). Each chapter is devoted to the discussion of one movement, wherein overall concept and form are addressed, followed by detailed analyses of harmonic structure, motivic and thematic development, orchestration, and representational elements. As a complement to the score and the text, a CD-R audio recording of orchestral mock-ups accompanies this dissertation.
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INTRODUCTION

Ever since I began to study music I was profoundly moved by its representational and programmatic aspects. More than likely, this fascination arose through my early exposure to Romantic orchestral works in my birthplace of L’viv, Ukraine, where I also developed a strong interest in works inspired by nature.

I always felt a sense of wonder when observing the natural world—mellifluous birdsongs echoing through mist-covered mountains, trees lilting to the rhythms of the wind, snow glistening in the moonlight, clouds transforming in shape and color as the sun sets—there is something very intimate and primal in a desire to capture the essence of one’s surroundings and translate that natural impetus into a work of art. Contemplation of the beauty of nature evoked profound aesthetic experiences within me, which in turn inspired the creation of Terra Mirabilis (Earth of Wonders).

Music, the most ephemeral of all arts, presents unique opportunities to the composer, who must rely on instinct, intuition and the “inner ear” to create a work. The challenge remains giving form to inspiration in the realm of sound, which cannot be seen or touched. So much depends on the delicate balance of imagination, craft and logic, as well as the ability to surprise oneself and the audience. For these reasons, musical composition is often difficult to explain and rationalize. For a composer it is a journey in self-discovery and a quest for artistic fulfillment, while searching for new means of expression.

Terra Mirabilis is a three-movement work for symphony orchestra with piano solo based on three landscapes that I photographed over the past three years. The images are included at the beginning of each chapter because they represent an integral part of
my creative inspiration for the work. As for the title, *Terra Mirabilis*, there are several possible meanings extant in Latin: “Earth of wonders,” “wonderful land,” and even “wonderland.” I prefer the translation “Earth of wonders” due to its inherent inclusivity.

The total length of the work is about nineteen minutes, and the movements are ordered as follows: *The Mists, Oceanus, and Nocturne*. While this work is scored for symphony orchestra, the instrumentation varies slightly from movement to movement. For instance, I chose to minimize the use of brass instruments in *The Mists* in order to focus on the strings and woodwinds. However, brass is used extensively in *Oceanus*. While the celesta plays an important role in *Nocturne*, illuminating the piano part, it fades into the background in *The Mists* and is entirely omitted in *Oceanus*. Moreover, the piano appears as both a solo instrument and a background color in each movement, with *Oceanus* and *Nocturne* allowing for more freedom and panache. Despite the fact that the piano is meant to be placed at the front of the orchestra, I did not conceive this work as a piano concerto, but rather as a hybrid symphonic work inspired by the likes of Olivier Messiaen’s *From Canyons to the Stars* and Alexander Scriabin’s *Prometheus*.

*Terra Mirabilis* was written over the course of one year. Though I had already produced sketches of *The Mists* and *Oceanus*, I decided to complete *Nocturne* first, since the music flowed with ease. After having conducted and recorded a reading of *Nocturne* with the University of Miami Frost Symphony Orchestra in May of 2008, I continued writing *The Mists*, followed lastly by *Oceanus*. Of the three movements, *The Mists* took the greatest amount of time to complete. This movement posed a particular compositional challenge due to the fact that it is based on segments of an older chamber piece, and much effort was devoted here to structural reworking, motivic development
and orchestration. It should be noted that the order of movements in *Terra Mirabilis* does not reflect the chronological completion of each piece, though the chosen order (*The Mists, Oceanus, and Nocturne*) represents a journey from nostalgia to happiness, past to present, and morning to nightfall.

Choosing a representational work certainly shaped the compositional process underlying *Terra Mirabilis*. In contrast to a highly defined system of symbolic musical/visual representation, *Terra Mirabilis* suggested to me a liberal approach to musical/visual symbolism, which in turn gave impetus to a creative process fueled by abstract emotional and sonorous impressions. This enabled me to focus on the creation of specific moods via harmonic and orchestral colors, textures and melodic lines.

*Terra Mirabilis* has allowed me to synthesize and utilize a variety of musical devices that have only been present to a small degree in my previous works. While much of my recent compositional output displays stylistic characteristics of Neo-romanticism, I have also embraced the post-atonal freedoms of neo-tonality and pluralism.¹ *Terra Mirabilis* has challenged me to explore the simultaneous use of modal, chromatic and folk-music resources, as well as modern dissonance influenced by Igor Stravinsky and Olivier Messiaen.

Throughout this doctoral degree, I have endeavored to expand the scope of my works, exploring a bolder use of dissonance while employing more contrapuntal techniques. My style has evolved through the experiences of academic study, teaching

¹ Neo-romanticism, a trend that emerged in the last three decades of twentieth-century music, involved a return to triadic harmony and traditional tonal style. Neo-tonality refers to tonal music in which a tonal center is established by non-traditional tertian and/or non-tertian means. Pluralism refers to a late twentieth-century trend which explores the simultaneous use of varying musical styles in one composition.
theory and twentieth-century techniques and listening to jazz. Over the last three years I worked toward achieving greater rhythmic, harmonic and melodic freedom, as well as letting the music “breathe.” Curiously, this new musical consciousness was inspired by my discovery of the works of the Art Nouveau masters, notably Alphonse Mucha and Rene Lalique, who drew their decorative inspiration from the forms of nature. While I am a melodist at heart, I have made much effort to focus on the creation of atmosphere and color in Terra Mirabilis. With this in mind, I hope to have achieved more homogeneity within each movement; furthermore, the unity of the three movements is manifest through various harmonic and orchestral concepts, which shall be revealed in the following chapters.

Each of the following chapters is devoted to the discussion of one movement of Terra Mirabilis. In each chapter, overall concept and form are addressed, followed by harmony, motivic/thematic development, orchestration and representational aspects. Discussion and analysis of each subsequent movement follow the same topical order.

Attached to this dissertation is an audio recording of the orchestral mock-ups of all three movements of Terra Mirabilis in CD-R format. The recording was produced using the notation program Finale 2008 in conjunction with Garritan Personal Orchestra sample library and Wavelab, an audio editing and mastering program for Windows. Learning how to use these three programs has proven to be a very useful tool in the realization of this work.

---

2 Art Nouveau was a European decorative style that originated in Paris during the 1880s and derived its inspiration from Oriental art and nature. The aesthetics of Art Nouveau focused on creating refined sinuous lines, the use of new mixtures of materials and depicting the female form, along with the elements of flora and fauna in meticulous detail. Art Nouveau is also characterized by an extremely refined craftsmanship, emblematic in the works of such masters as Rene Lalique, Georges Fouquet and Alphonse Mucha.
Current sample libraries enable composers to produce realistic approximations of their works, in contrast to the poor MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) reproductions of the recent past. It is often difficult and costly to produce recordings with live musicians, especially those requiring a full orchestra. Finale incorporates a useful tool named “Human Playback,” which accurately interprets most markings entered into the digital score (e.g. dynamics, expressions, accents, tempo related indications, and recognition of common techniques like glissando, arco, pizzicato, harmonics, etc.). However, there are limits to creation of mock-up recordings. For instance, modern graphic and aleatoric scores and those with extensive use of extended instrumental techniques are still virtually impossible to program (e.g. Krzysztof Penderecki’s Threnody for the victims of Hiroshima). The importance of having audio recordings of one’s works cannot be stressed enough in our changing world of music, where they serve a multitude of purposes. Over the past decade, the expansion of the Internet enabled composers to have access to a limitless channel for communication with musicians all over the world, and mockup recordings have gained importance in facilitating communication between composers and musicians. Other than self-promotional purposes, such recordings are helpful time-saving tools in preparation for live performances, where they enable performers and conductors to more quickly grasp the general concepts of works. Readers should find the accompanying mockups helpful in complementing and reinforcing the text.
METHOD

Due to the highly abstract nature of transforming creative thought into music, dissecting the act of composition remains a personal enigma for many composers, who arrive at their means in different ways—often caught in an aesthetic struggle between the desire to experiment and the need to exercise restraint. While a handful of composers are able to crystallize the totality of a concept prior to the act of notation (i.e. Mozartian style), others work tirelessly sketching and reworking ideas until they are able to achieve a clear vision, and only then do they proceed to write out the work (i.e. Beethovenian style). My compositional approach most often fluctuates between these two extremes. Since early childhood I have had absolute pitch, along with the ability to hear melodies, harmonies and instrumental colors clearly in my mind. As a result, I often develop musical concepts in my “inner ear,” either at random, or upon contemplating diverse sources of inspiration. In most cases, this process is involuntary; nevertheless, the process of notating music (either traditionally on score paper, or through the [modern] use of a computer notation program like Finale) often proves to be more laborious and logic-driven.

Moving away from the piano as my primary compositional tool over the last few years allowed me to adopt a more extensive approach to composition that involves sketching melodies and harmonies with and without the piano, orchestrating in a way that is not limited by one’s ability to play harmonies and contrapuntal lines at the piano, and exploiting the full range of the orchestra through part-based, linear writing. While some works begin with harmonic ideas, others are first inspired by a melody; likewise, the most
appropriate orchestration can be immediately clear to the composer, or obtainable only through trial-and-error experimentation. Ideally, the work in its totality is clearly defined both emotionally and intellectually prior to notation, rendering itself to paper in an effortlessly stream-of-consciousness manner (ex. Nocturne).

In my experience, the most substantial musical concepts spring from meaningful visual and/or emotional stimuli, as is the case with Terra Mirabilis. The images that inspired this work possessed these strong evocative qualities, which in turn suggested specific moods and orchestral colors that defined each movement, and shaped the overall formal direction of the work.
Chapter 1

TERRA MIRABILIS: I. THE MISTS

A walk in a forest engulfed by the morning mists inspired the first movement of Terra Mirabilis. This picture was taken in Roswell, Georgia in January of 2008. Strangely enough, the experience of the serene beauty of this place also stirred unexpected nostalgia for my homeland, Ukraine.

In essence, my compositional approach for this movement is derived from the intent to reconcile my experience in Georgia with distant memories. The duality of these recollections led me to create two main sections in The Mists. The first section utilizes...
motivic development, while the second is based on a melody from my early childhood, allowing me to infuse the music with more personal symbolism.

The orchestral instrumentation is as follows: in the woodwind choir, piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets in B♭, bass clarinet and two bassoons; in the brass choir, four French horns, and two trumpets in C; in the percussion section, piano and celesta; and in the string section, harp, violin I, violin II, violas, violoncellos and contrabasses. The approximate performance time is 7 minutes.

The overall design of The Mists is a modified sonata form. Table 1.1 contains a complete sectional analysis of the movement.

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<td>A 1 A section developed, Motive A developed</td>
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<td>G♭ Maj/F Min/ A♭ Min/ A♭ Min/ E diminished scale D♭/B♭ Maj</td>
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| Section       | Description                                                                 | Measures | Key
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------
| Antecedent    | Verse 2, developed                                                           | 65-76    | B♭ Major 
|               | Consequent Refrain, developed                                                | 77-86    | G Maj/E Maj/ B♭ Major 
| DEVELOPMENT   | Section I Extension                                                          | 87-93    | F♯ Maj/G♭, Maj/ B Min 
|               | developed, Motive A used in the accompaniment                               |          |      
|               | A1 development                                                              | 94-111   | F♯ Maj/G♭, Maj/ F♯ Min B Min/ D Maj F♯ Min B Min/ F♯ Maj 
|               | Verse material developed                                                    | 112-122  | D Major 
|               | Refrain material developed                                                  | 123-130  | B Dorian, F♯ Major 
|               | Transition 1 (see mm.11-20)                                                 | 131-140  | E Maj/chromatic succession of chords leads to B♭ Maj/ G Maj/ E Maj / F♯ Maj 

In order to fulfill the artistic goals of the movement, a more liberal approach was adopted, altering the traditional sonata form and exploring predominantly tertian and chromatic sectional relations. The Exposition follows the traditional binary structure of sonata form (see Sections I and II in Table 1.1 above), though it differs from sonata form in terms of key relationships between the two primary thematic areas (instead of the usual tonic/dominant relationship, Sections I and II relate by the interval of a major third).
The primary thematic materials are restated and developed within the Exposition, before the Development section.

In the Development, segments of Sections I and II are elaborated on, albeit out of order. Transition 1 is brought back as a possible Recapitulation, but it is brief and serves to launch an unexpectedly dynamic Coda, where Section I materials undergo an exultant transformation. Due to the absence of a true Recapitulation in *The Mists*, the musical dialogue progresses toward the climax in the Coda without repeating the primary melodic materials from the Exposition. Through the use of this modified sonata form, I hope to achieve a fluidity of musical thought as the work unfolds and establish a continuity of emotional development within *The Mists*.

The large-scale harmonic layout of this movement reveals predominantly tertian and chromatic relationships within both major sectional subdivisions and sub-sections. These relationships are utilized to challenge the aural expectations within the musical flow as well as to create opportunities for smooth voice-leading and common-tone harmonic movement. Moreover, continuous use of unresolved sonorities plays a significant role in the portrayal of *The Mists*’ nostalgic atmosphere.

Root-position chord voicings are intentionally avoided in measures 1-4, where the key area of G♭ major is implied. Moreover, a dissonant G Mixolydian motif is juxtaposed here to create harmonic interest and weaken the sense of tonicization of G♭. After a brief departure into G♯ minor, a coloristic chord progression leads to the return of Motive A in F♯/G♭ major, where previous materials are slightly elaborated. Example 1.1 presents a more detailed harmonic analysis and orchestral reduction of this chord.
progression and reveals chromatic, common-tone and tertian relationships in voice-leading.

Example 1.1. Kraevska, *The Mists, Coloristic Chord Progression, mm.16-20*

![Example 1.1. Kraevska, *The Mists, Coloristic Chord Progression, mm.16-20*](image)

From this point, a new transition establishes the mood for Section II of the Exposition, outlining the sonorities of the E diminished (octatonic) scale, juxtaposed with D♭ major and B♭ diminished scales. Section II reveals contrasting harmonic and melodic content, as well as a slower harmonic rhythm, exploring B♭ Phrygian and B♭ major scales. It should be noted that the terminology “Verse” and “Refrain” in Table 1.1 refer to a Carpathian lullaby, though the lyrics are omitted.

The Development section is approached by a plagal cadence from B major to F♯/G♭. At this point an implied “home key” of G♭ major is clearly but briefly stated while A1 material undergoes transformation and expansion and Section II materials modulate to D major, B Dorian and F♯. Transition 1 then returns with the coloristic chord progression from Section I that prepared the statement of Motif A in the key of G♭. However, it now serves to launch the Coda with a sequence of minor-third mediant
modulations: B♭ major-G major-E major (see Ex.1.2), which proceeds to C major over E pedal in measure 141, and rests on C major in measure 145. This is an inversion of the dominant seventh chord outline found in both coloristic chord successions (see Ex. 1.1 and 1.2) and serves to symbolically announce a resolution.

Example 1.2. Kraevska, *The Mists, Coloristic Chord Progression, mm.136-141*

Harmonically, the Coda displays triadic modal mixtures, shifting between the new key of C major and E major—a non-diatonic mediant relationship at the interval of a major 3rd. It then progresses from E major to C♯ minor and then D♯ major before the final resolution to E major in an imperfect VI-I cadence.

*The Mists* utilizes a variety of motivic and melodic resources. Through a progressive expansion of the smallest motives introduced at the beginning of the movement, the greatest amount of compositional materials is generated. The opening intervals of an ascending perfect fourth and a descending perfect fifth serve as an accompaniment in several sections, creating and resolving dissonance (compare Example 1.3 with measures 28-30 in piano and woodwinds). Moreover, the descending interval
of a minor second is a recurring melodic element throughout the movement, appearing in both the foreground and the background. An example of this motive is illustrated in Example 1.4 below, where it is extended and inverted to form new materials.


The opening motives presented in measures 1-4 and 4-5 of *The Mists* fuse together at the Coda to form a prominent theme during the climax of the movement, as is shown in Example 1.5, first trumpet part:
In contrast to the predominantly motivic content of Section I, Section II features a folk melody from Ukraine as seen in Example 1.6. As mentioned before, I have known this melody, a lullaby, for many years, and transcribed it from memory for use in this composition. Its origins lie in Western Ukraine and the tune was passed down to me through my grandmother Sofia Tytar.

Flute and piccolo play the melody in measures 40-58 before handing it off to oboe and trumpet in measures 59-62. While the melody itself does not undergo a dramatic transformation, some of its components are used in the derivation of accompanying materials (see the descending octave figure in piano, mm. 65-74, 94-96, 112-116).
Overall, two contrasting sections were created, one motivic and one melodic. The motivic sections correspond with chromatic harmony, and the melodic with a more simple modal setting. To create unity among sections, a transcription of a birdcall was employed (see Example 1.7). This rhythmic motive appears in measures 17-20 in the piccolo and celesta; measures 67-68 in celesta alone; measures 99-100 in the piano; measures 121-122, 129-130 and 137, in both piano and celesta.

Example 1.7. Kraevska, *The Mists*, Birdcall Transcription, m.17-19, *piccolo*

The general rhythmic organization of *The Mists* stems from an effort to create flowing melodic lines and change the character of the music when needed. One example of mixed meter is found in measures 6-15: 5/4, 4/4, 5/4, 4/4, 4/4, 3/4, 3/4, 3/4, 2/4, 3/4. Slight rhythmic variations are employed here to develop themes, and asymmetric meters are used to give resilience to the metric flow of the music. On a larger scale, Section I is laid out in metric combinations of 4/4 and 5/4, whereas Section II centers on alternating 2/4 and 3/4 measures, creating larger patterns of 4/4, 5/4 and 6/4. The metric pulse is kept evenly flowing in Section II, since it is based on a lullaby melody. While most of the movement proceeds at a lilting pace, there is a surprising change of tempo and meter at the Coda, where motivic cells from Section I accelerate toward the end in a metrically stable stretto-like manner.
The choice of instruments within a symphony orchestra allows for a great variety of instrumental color combinations. I chose to include harp, piano and celesta in The Mists after hearing the effective use of these instruments in Ottorino Respighi’s Pines of Rome, I Pini de Gianicolo. The combination of these three instruments in The Mists creates a soothing timbral palette that suits the ephemeral nature of this work. I also experimented with a similar chord voicing found in the last three measures of Respighi’s work, where sustained strings are stacked in intervals of fifths and fourths (see mm.106-126). It should be noted that the use of compound fifths in the strings creates a particularly sonorous and full effect in unison due to the natural tuning and sympathetic vibrations of these instruments.

My artistic goals in orchestrating this movement included finding the means of creating a variety of textures and colors while avoiding overtly dark tones; thus the exclusion of low brass. A clear contrast in the instrumentation can be seen in a comparison of the beginning of Section II with the Coda. For instance, the introduction to Section II materials demanded a delicate setting, which was provided by the use of harp harmonics set against an oboe melody doubled at unison by the flute to temper any nasal qualities of its tone. Pizzicato strings, quiet legato piano lines and clarinets doubled at an octave led to delicate layering of string trills and more harp harmonics underneath the doubled flute/piccolo lullaby melody. In contrast, the Coda provides an example of bright, full sonorities, with woodwind arpeggios doubled by the strings and the bright

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melodic line of the trumpet doubled by octaves in the piano, lending the movement a sense of triumphant conclusion.

The representational goals for The Mists included portraying the idyllic atmosphere of Plate 1. In addition, the emotional journey from longing to consolation, and ultimately exaltation, is reflected in Sections I, II and the Coda respectively. It is the composer’s opinion that Plate 1—the image of a forest veiled in mist—suggests specific orchestral colors, including harp, delicate woodwinds and fragile string tremolos, which are all present in Section I of the Exposition.

The symbolic use of orchestration, melody, and harmony reinforces the representational elements of the music. For instance, the lullaby’s melody is given to the flute in the soprano range of the human voice, which approximates a mother’s singing. Lastly, the flute is representative of the Carpathian region of Ukraine, where similar woodwind instruments/recorders are prevalent, and the choice of this specific folk song holds deep personal meaning to the composer.
Chapter 2

TERRA MIRABILIS: II. OCEANUS

Movement two of Terra Mirabilis, Oceanus, is inspired by mankind’s eternal muse, the sea. Living so close to the ocean in Miami for seven years and visiting the clear blue waters of the Atlantic occasionally at Singer Island, Florida, I became more attached to the ocean recently than ever before, and this piece represents my newfound fascination and appreciation for its power and beauty. Originally, Oceanus was written as a one-minute piano etude, but upon further consideration I decided to expand the timbral scope of the piece and write it instead for symphony orchestra with piano solo.
When it comes to music dedicated to the sea, one has little choice but to rest on the shoulders of giants like Claude Debussy (*La Mer*) and Maurice Ravel (*Une Barque Sur L’Ocean*). Many other masterworks stand as models for the modern composer. However, there are more personal interpretations of the subject to be explored, and *Oceanus* is my humble contribution to this musical idiom.

*Oceanus* is scored for piano and symphony orchestra with the following instrumentation: in the woodwind choir, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets in B♭, bass clarinet and two bassoons; in the brass choir, four French horns, two trumpets in C, two tenor trombones, bass trombone and tuba; in the percussion section, timpani, tam-tam, suspended cymbals; and in the string choir, harp, violins I and II, violas, celli and contrabasses. The approximate performance time of the movement is 5 minutes.

A detailed analysis of the form of *Oceanus* can be found below, including sectional subdivisions, corresponding measure numbers, and key centers/modal centers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Subsections</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Keys/Modal Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. A</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>B♭, Minor melodic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>B♭, Minor melodic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>B♭, Min, F♯ Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>A Minor/F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>C13th, add. 6♭, F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1 development</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>G Maj 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. B</td>
<td><em>Piu Mosso</em></td>
<td>Ocean Music 1</td>
<td>20-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brass rhythmic motif in the first two measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.1 reveals the movement’s seven-part sectional form, wherein each section falls under the respective subheading of either A (Theme 1) or B (“Ocean Music”).

While Theme 1 develops significantly throughout the piece, the “Ocean music” theme
always returns in the same key and with fewer alterations, thus alluding to the traditional ABACABA *Rondo* form. However, the music unfolds in such a manner that the nebulous Section I serves as an introduction to the “Ocean Music” of Section II and the Coda-like Section VII brings the movement to a restful conclusion. In essence, the form of this movement incorporates elements of *Rondo* as well as Theme and Variation.

In terms of harmonic language, *Oceanus* was conceived as a tonal work. To clarify the movement’s general harmonic direction, Table 2.2 presents a comprehensive harmonic reduction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Section I</th>
<th>Section II</th>
<th>Section III</th>
<th>Section IV</th>
<th>Section V</th>
<th>Section VI</th>
<th>Section VII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Areas</td>
<td>b♭—G</td>
<td>C—B♭</td>
<td>B♭</td>
<td>C—f♯</td>
<td>f—e—G6—C</td>
<td>C—A dim</td>
<td>A—G♭6—e♭—G♭6—G♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The structure of *Oceanus* intentionally obscures functional harmonic relationships; for example, Section I establishes B♭ minor as tonic, but the movement ends in G♭ major, the sub-mediant of B♭. Moreover, Sections I and V are related to each other as tonic and minor dominant (B♭ minor—F minor), while Sections II and V/Transition (C—G) and III and V (B♭—F) are literally tonic and dominant. Still, none of these relationships are enhanced by adjacent tonicizing cadences. Perhaps the clearest
example of a cadence in this movement occurs in the Transition from Section I to II, where G7♯9 prepares the arrival of C major. Though weakened by modal mixture, this passage stands as the only prominent cadential gesture of the piece. A perfect cadence is avoided in the Transition to Section VI (mm.85-89), where G⁶ triads alternate with pivotal E minor triads (I⁶—vi in G major) before proceeding to C major via a iii—V⁶—I progression.

The prominent use of parallel motion (see Ex.2.2 and 2.5) in Oceanus entails root-position dominant sevenths as well as altered sevenths moving up or down by the interval of a minor third. Exploring such parallel relationships allowed changes in harmonic direction when needed, without traditional functional expectations. In contrast to the other movements of Terra Mirabilis, Oceanus makes considerable use of parallel diminished relationships.

During the compositional process, I formulated a set of goals for thematic and motivic development, separating the musical ideas into variable (A/Theme 1) and fixed (B/“Ocean Music”) groups to create greater sectional contrast. Consequently, sections A and B became defined by motifs and melodies, respectively. While this approach partially echoes the structural concepts of the previous movement, The Mists, Oceanus incorporates shorter melodies in the B section and refrains from presenting a complete transformation of all of the A materials in its dramatic Coda.

Examples 2.1-2.4 show the development of Theme 1. As the movement progresses, the concise Theme 1 unfolds and expands in scope with each recurrent statement in Sections I, III and V. Theme 1 transforms by means of rhythmic variation,
fragmentation, repetition, expansion and modulation. Theme 2 (see Ex.2.6), along with the rest of the B section, returns in progressively shorter segments throughout the piece.

Example 2.1. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Theme 1 in development*

mm.3-5, Horn in F 1

mm.11-13, Horn in F 3, C Trumpet 1

mm.16-20, piano reduction
retaining in each statement only its first four measures (labeled as “Ocean Music”).

These four measures undergo comparatively minor changes in each recurrence (see mm. 20-39 (Section II), 48-58 (Section IV) and 93-97 (Section VI) for a comparison). It should be noted that Section II contains two themes, which do not undergo any development. Theme 2 (Ex.2.6) appears in measures 24-30 and 52-58, while Theme 3 (Ex.2.7) never returns.

Example 2.2. Kraevska, *Oceanus, piano reduction, Theme 1 transformation in mm.40-48*
Example 2.3. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Theme 1 variation 1, mm.59-65*

Example 2.4. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Theme 1 variation 2, mm.70-82*
Example 2.5. Kraevska, *Oceanus, piano reduction, mm.90-92*

Parallel V7#9 chords moving up by minor thirds

Example 2.6. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Theme 2, mm.24-30*

Theme 2

Legato simile
Example 2.7. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Theme 3, mm.31-39*

Theme 1 transforms as the movement develops (see Ex.2.1-2.4), mostly through the use of rhythmic and metric variation, which invariably extends or reduces phrase length. Furthermore, the creative use of mixed meters allows for phrase groupings of different lengths to symbolically portray the varying periodicity of ocean waves. These groupings emerged in the early stages of composition. An example of such a grouping is provided in Table 2.3, where Section II materials are summarized according to sub-sections, quarter-note metric patterns and length in terms of measures and beats.

Table 2.3. Kraevska, *Oceanus, Quarter-note Pulse in Phrase Groupings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section (phrase)</th>
<th>Ocean music a</th>
<th>Ocean music b</th>
<th>Theme 2</th>
<th>Theme 2 Ext.</th>
<th>Theme 3 a</th>
<th>Theme 3 b</th>
<th>Theme 3 Ext.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure numbers</td>
<td>20 21 22 23</td>
<td>24 25 26 27</td>
<td>28 29 30</td>
<td>31 32 33</td>
<td>34 35</td>
<td>36 37 38 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter note meter</td>
<td>4 3 4 4 3 3 3</td>
<td>3 3 3 3 3 3 4</td>
<td>3 3 3 3 3 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of mm.</td>
<td>2 2 4 3</td>
<td>3 3 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of beats</td>
<td>7 8 13</td>
<td>9 10 6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My orchestrational approach to *Oceanus* was shaped in part by the piece’s representational implications. In contrast to the delicate *Nocturne*, *Oceanus* employs a darker instrumental color palette to more effectively embody the subject pictured in Plate 2. Consequently, trombones, tuba and tam-tam are included to enhance the darker end of the sonic spectrum, while brighter instruments like the celesta and triangle are *tacit*. Some examples of orchestration techniques in *Oceanus* include the occasional isolation of instrumental choirs to exploit their inherent sonic properties and the distribution of melodic/harmonic segments to modify sound quality. Each recurring “Ocean Music” episode contains subtle variations in orchestration, adding more instruments in each instance to augment volume/loudness. In general, varying the timbral palette proved to be an effective tool for generating contrast as well as facilitating thematic development in Sections III and V. Examples of varying instrumentation include the following: measures 16-20 (Transition) contain no woodwinds—only brass chords juxtaposed with strings; “Ocean Music” features brass tutti, sustained low strings, and no woodwinds; Theme 2 displays minimal use of woodwinds, which are introduced in descending chromatic lines, and Theme 3 (mm. 31-33) presents increased use of woodwinds in accompanying figures with fast repeated notes in the oboes and clarinets. The texture gradually thins out after measures 34-47, where piccolo doubles the piano melody at an octave and sustained string sonorities are paired with woodwinds, delicate harp counter-lines and occasional ascending passages in the piano. In measures 41-47 the brass and low woodwinds are completely omitted, giving way to a mellifluous woodwind and string passage before the return of “Ocean music” in measure 48.
As mentioned previously, lower brass (trombones and tuba) are included in *Oceanus*, adding a more sonorous low end to the characteristic timbre of the brass choir and further defining the somber and majestic character of the piece. Melodic solo passages reveal a more versatile approach to the use of the brass choir in measures 2-5 (horns), measures 11-13 (horns and trumpet), measures 28-30, 36-39, and 58-63 (trumpet), measures 16-20 (brass tutti). Idiomatic gestures such as trombone slides in measures 2 and 20-21, as well as a brass rhythmic motif in Sections II, IV, VI and short repeated-note figures in measures 64-66 take advantage of the instruments’ special characteristics. In addition, muted trumpets are used once to color a sustained chord in measure 23.

The harp functions in its most characteristic orchestral role in *Oceanus*, providing dramatic *glissandi* to accentuate the effect of the “ocean waves” (see mm.10-12, 18-20, 33, 48-49, 52-53, 58-59 and 99-105). To a lesser extent, it provides an added color to bass lines (mm. 3-8) and a general background color in measures 40-46 and 67-68. Unlike the previous movement, the harp doubles the melody only once, in measures 73-77 (Theme 1, variation 2).

In the percussion section, coloristic effects are achieved through the occasional use of the tam-tam, in conjunction with timpani rolls—a powerfully resonant percussive combination that boosts overall chordal resonance and reinforces the “wave peaks” of “Ocean Music” sections. In addition, suspended cymbal rolls provide further enhancement to the recurring “ocean wave” gestures.

In the strings, *pizzicato* (mm. 58-72, 91-93), *glissando* (mm. 1-4, 33) and *tremolo* (mm. 34, 48, 93) techniques are used to color bass lines, sustained sonorities and
chromatic passages. An interesting example of *pizzicato* double basses playing in unison with short repeated cello notes can be seen in measures 59-65, where both basses and celli reinforce low-register piano octaves in the impetuous *Poco agitato* variation of Theme 1.

The piano begins to assume the role of a true soloist in *Oceanus*, carrying the main themes while enjoying occasional bravura displays. Personally, I learned a great deal about the distribution of melodic lines in virtuosic piano settings from Maurice Ravel’s *Gaspard de la Nuit* and Olivier Messiaen’s etude *Reflets dans le Vent*, both of which I had studied at the Schola Cantorum in Paris with Jean-Paul Sevilla and Jacques Bernier. In both works, the composers ingeniously weave themes into a complex texture of fast-moving notes by means of displaced accents that often require switching hands and a great deal of hand coordination. While Ravel deliberately composed *Gaspard de la Nuit* to be as technically challenging as possible, my intentions for *Oceanus* were appreciably less masochistic; at any rate, I attempt to portray the subject in an adventurous manner—departing from the style of my earlier piano works, while integrating the instrument into a vibrant orchestral setting.

Loose symbolism characterizes the representational elements of *Oceanus*. Many of these elements can be found in the specific use of instruments; for example, the frequent use of low brass and percussion in the low register allude to darkness, while ascending harp glissandi and arpeggiated piano figures symbolically depict the play of the ocean waves upon the shore. Harmonically, diminished sonorities enhance the concept of darkness and parallel harmonic motion alludes to the water’s mutable properties.
Chapter 3

TERRA MIRABILIS: III. NOCTURNE


Watching the Perseids meteor shower late at night on Singer Island, Florida inspired me to write Nocturne (2007). At the time my boyfriend (now my husband) Scott Routenberg and I were admiring the natural beauty of the beach at night and the surreal environment around us, which was peculiarly quiet. It seemed as though the world was standing still, and above us in the starry night sky, the Perseid meteorites silently glided across the heavens like phantasmagoric celestial beacons. The supernatural memories of that night translate into this loosely “programmatic” piece, which displays several contemporary and extended instrumental techniques, swells of dissonant harmonic
clusters that resolve to various consonances (similar to Olivier Messiaen’s Turangalîla Symphonie: The Garden of Love’s Sleep and From Canyons to the Stars) and intimations of jazz and the blues—a dedication to my husband Scott, who is a professional jazz composer and pianist.

The instrumentation is as follows: in the woodwind choir, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets in B♭, bass clarinet and two bassoons; in the brass choir, four horns; in the percussion section, suspended cymbals, triangle, piano and celesta; in the string choir, harp, violins I and II, violas, celli and contrabasses. The approximate performance time of Nocturne is 7 minutes.

The formal structure of Nocturne is best described as a complex binary form. This form results from the distribution of five different sub-sections into two meta-sections—A, B and a Coda. To clarify this point, brief transitory materials are omitted from the following formal reduction, and letter names are ascribed to each section. Table 3.1 reveals a ternary sub-structure in Section I, an approximate palindromic structure of CDEEDC between Section II and the Coda, and the connective succession of BCD present in Sections I and II. Moreover, there is a loose inverse relationship between the very beginning of the piece and the ending, visible in the following sectional reduction: ABC-CA. It should also be noted that each section (A, B, C, D and E) occurs exactly three times, though the respective orders of appearance vary arbitrarily. One might infer from this hidden structural organization that Nocturne holds some veiled references to the trinity or triadic representationalism, or to the three-dimensional nature of space; however, the movement was not conceived with this sort of symbolism in mind.
Table 3.1. Kraevska, *Nocturne, Formal/Sectional Reduction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction=A</th>
<th>Chorale =B</th>
<th>Theme 1=C</th>
<th>Shooting Star=D</th>
<th>Theme 2=E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### SECTION I

A B C D A B

### SECTION II

E B C D E E D

### CLOSING SECTION

C A

Below is a more complete analysis of the movement in terms of sectional subdivisions, measure numbers and key centers/modal centers.

Table 3.2. Kraevska, *Nocturne, Form*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Subsections</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Keys/Modal Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. (Simple time)</td>
<td>Introduction, string harmonic glissandi</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>C Lydian dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorale, low Strings, pno.cel. hp.</td>
<td>3-10</td>
<td>Parallel chromatic triads C-A-B♭-D♯-F-E-F♯-D-A-C-G-F♯-C-F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>11-17</td>
<td>C blues, piano solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition/extension</td>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>C Maj/ F# woodwind triplets and quintuplet motifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shooting star #1</td>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>Downward chromatic gliss., cluster chord to B♭7 3♯ inv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modified chorale</td>
<td>25-31</td>
<td>Parallel chromatic triads, C-A-B♭-D-F♯-F♯-G♯-D-B-C-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmonic glissandi</td>
<td>30-31</td>
<td>A Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>32-33</td>
<td>F♯ pedal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Theme/Variation</td>
<td>Time Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. (Compound time, mixtures)</td>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>34-44</td>
<td>B Maj#5/F♯ pedal/mixture of simple &amp; compound meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodwind motif, staccato triplets</td>
<td>37-39</td>
<td>G♯ Major 2nd inv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorale retrograde, simple time</td>
<td>45-52</td>
<td>Strings harmonic gliss. on C, piano triplets F♯-C-F♯-G-C-A- D♯-F♯-E-F-D♯-B♭-A-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1 variation, simple &amp; compound time</td>
<td>53-56</td>
<td>E “blues” (♯9, ♭9, ♭5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shooting star #2</td>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>Downward chromatic glissandi, D7, ends with triplets, B♭+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition, simple time</td>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>A♭6, G♯ 2nd inv., B 2nd inv., G♯, A7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 2, piano variation, simple &amp; compound time</td>
<td>63-68</td>
<td>B Maj#5 to A 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>69-70</td>
<td>A 9 to F♯6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 2, piano solo variation, faster piano accompaniment</td>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>D♯ Maj#5/F, F♯/A, D♭/F (mm.75-76 triplets in woodwinds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extension, descending triads, triplets</td>
<td>80-81</td>
<td>Theme 2 and Chorale materials, A octatonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition, fast ascending piano lines derived from fragmented chorale</td>
<td>82-83</td>
<td>C Maj ∆5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shooting star #3</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>Ends on A7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Closing section</td>
<td>Chorale derivative</td>
<td>87-93</td>
<td>B♭ harmonic arpeggio, piano, Lydian dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>94-103</td>
<td>C Maj#5 ornamented with quintuplet arpeggios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>String harmonic glissandi</td>
<td>104-106</td>
<td>String harmonic glissandi sul C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reasoning behind Nocturne’s cyclical formal organization reflects my desire to create a chain-like order of events to form a more unified musical fabric. This structural approach is clearly visible above in Table 3.1.

On a larger scale, the sectional formations ABCDA and EBCDE represent the core of the movement’s binary structure. A more detailed sectional analysis of Nocturne reveals the function and development of each of its five components as the movement unfolds.

At the beginning of the movement, the string harmonic glissandi serve to establish an atmosphere of wide open space. The glissandi change keys throughout the piece; they are played in C (mm. 1-4), A (mm. 30-31), B♭ (piano, mm. 89-93), and again in C (mm.104-106), where the glissandi are fragmented before their final statement in measures 111-114.

The Chorale is composed of parallel major triads in an open three-note voicing with major tenths in the outer voices. It transforms slightly in each recurring statement. At the Chorale’s second appearance in measures 25-31, five of the eight original measures are restated, of which the first three chords are unaltered and the remaining
chords are transposed a minor second lower. The last beat of measure 27 contains the
only minor triad of the sequence, positioned a minor second higher than the original
chord (compare Example 3.1 with mm. 25-31). The third statement of the Chorale in
measures 45-52 is a retrograde of the original, but rhythmically altered. Moreover,
fragments of Chorale-derived materials appear in measures 75-76, 82-84, 87-93 and 104-
107.

Example 3.1. Kraevska, *Nocturne, Chorale*

In its first statement (mm.11-17), Theme 1 reinforces the serene mood of the
Chorale (see Example 3.2). The harmonic complexity of this passage is constructed from
a modal mixture of C major and C blues scales. Theme 1 mimics the sound of a jazz
piano combo in its second appearance (mm. 34-44), where it is accompanied by pizzicato
basses, suspended cymbal hits and the delicate celesta, which doubles the piano at the
octave. Here, the theme is transposed to E major/blues; it also changes character through
the use of rapidly changing meters, and a freer and more improvisatory style. The last
statement of Theme 1 (mm.94-106) returns to its original harmonic setting—it also
resembles the first statement in character. Additionally, the melodic materials are now fragmented and dispersed over a longer period to form the closing statement.

Example 3.2. Kraevska, Nocturne, Theme 1, Harmonic Analysis, mm.11-17

In terms of orchestral gestures, the downward chromatic glissandi (“shooting stars”) appear randomly placed in both sections, but are in fact paired with Theme 1 twice in the same order and once in retrograde (see mm. 22-24, 57-59 and 84-86). Moreover,
each consecutive glissando is scored a half step higher than its predecessor and the last

*glissando* forms the climactic peak of the movement.

Measures 34-43, which constitute Theme 2 over an F♯ pedal point (see Ex. 3.3),

reveal a poignant melody based on the mode B Ionian ♯6 (B-D♯-E-F♯-G-A♯), a
derivative of the colorful harmonic major scale. While Themes 1 and 2 differ in melodic
contour, they display a similar asymmetric antecedent-consequent structure, wherein a
three-measure segment is expanded and elaborated after the repetition of its last measure.

Fragmentation is featured as an important developmental element in both thematic
instances. The melody labeled “Theme 2” spans eleven measures (mm. 34-44) at first; its
initial variation (mm. 63-69) compresses the melody to just seven measures, where it is
accompanied by a jazz-influenced instrumentation of pizzicato double basses, cymbal
hits, and sustained chords in the horns and strings.

Ex.3.3. Kraevska, *Nocturne, Theme 2, mm.34-43*
In its second variation (mm. 71-80), Theme 2 modulates to D♭ harmonic major and expands the scope of the melody with sustained chordal accompaniment, allowing the piano to dominate the foreground texture.

The harmonic progression of *Nocturne* is driven by chromatic and tritone relationships among the fifteen sub-sections of the movement, with only two tertian exceptions. The following harmonic reduction provides a clearer view of these relationships: C blues/C minor pentatonic—C/F♯—C—A—F♯—B/F♯—F♯—C—E blues—B—B♭—C—B♭ Lydian dominant—C—D♭ Lydian—C Lydian—C Mixolydian

The harmony here also provides an interesting point of observation in measures 38-39, where the chromatic melodic approach (F♯-F-E-F♯) to B major/D♯ (add6) shifts in a parallel fashion to C♯ major/E♯ (add6) and resolves unexpectedly to F major 7th (add9) on the third beat of measure 39. This progression continues unexpectedly to B♭7 in third inversion and “resolves” to a B6/4 (add 6, 9) chord on the third beat of measure 40 (see Example 3.4 below). I took inspiration from Olivier Messiaen’s *Turangalîla-Symphonie, VI. Garden of Love’s Sleep*, where the composer often resolves dissonant chords to major triads with added sixths, thus creating a sense of suspended continuity in the music.

*Example 3.4. Kraevska, Nocturne, Harmonic Progression, mm.38-41*
As mentioned previously, the melodic materials for this movement are predominantly modal. The decision to incorporate modal mixture in Nocturne (see Ex. 3.2 and 3.3) emerged naturally from my search for a more flexible harmonic palette. In order to better define subsections, distinct melodies are stressed more than motifs.

The following techniques constitute my developmental approach for Nocturne: repetition of five established sub-sections, varying orchestration, and the use of melodic and rhythmic variation to generate movement and build musical momentum.

Some of the most important tools for achieving flexible phrasing in Nocturne are rhythm and meter. The effort to both create the stretching of time in our perception and produce interest in the music manifests itself in the varying phrase lengths and sub-sections. Mixed meter and rapidly changing time signatures proved indispensible as vehicles for sinuous melodic development. The use of these elements reveals an absence of regular pulse in the melodic flow; as an example, compare the meditative Theme 1 (Ex. 3.2) with its more active and rhythmically bold transformation in measures 53-56 (piano, celesta and contrabass are juxtaposed in a way that obscures the metric pulse within the changing meters). Similarly, Theme 2 (Ex. 3.3) undergoes variation in measures 63-69 and 71-74, where simple and compound meters alternate to frame an improvisatory piano part.

The need to create some representational aspects in the music guided my choice of instrumentation for Nocturne. While this movement was not conceived with a highly symbolic system of representation, certain elements of the seascape pictured in Plate 3 are reflected in the music. The instrumentation of Nocturne intentionally omits the regular members of the brass choir other than four French horns, due to the horns’ superb
ability to blend with woodwinds and strings—this orchestrational choice also facilitates a more homogenous sound when necessary. In the percussion section, the softness of suspended cymbal rolls played with timpani sticks creates a spatial atmosphere and alludes to the waves caressing the shoreline (mm.1-10). The brightness of triangle accents serves to highlight the underlying harmony; moreover, triangle tremolos paired with celesta glissandi depict the light of the falling meteorites in the night sky (mm.18-19, 22). Open-string harmonic glissandi provide one example of coloristic instrumental techniques used in this movement. I became intrigued with this special effect after hearing its use in the first movement of Igor Stravinsky’s *The Firebird Suite* and the eighth movement of Olivier Messiaen’s *From Canyons to the Stars*. Both composers utilize the harmonic glissando only briefly in the upper strings: Stravinsky fashions a very brief moment of exquisite beauty without repeating the effect—in *The Firebird* it is bowed on the D string (“sul D”). Messiaen, on the other hand, uses A and E string glissandi to create an ephemeral background for recurring sections within the movement. In Messiaen’s case, the effect is very subtle. I chose to assign a more prominent role to this extended technique by repeating it several times throughout *Nocturne* and orchestrating it in the lower strings for added volume and resonance. In addition, this technique is echoed *ad libitum* in the piano part on B♭ as an arpeggiated “artificial” harmonic series.

The changing instrumental settings of the Chorale statements reveal a coloristic approach to orchestration. For instance, at the beginning of the piece, the piano melody is doubled at the unison by harp harmonics and octaves in celesta, accompanied by
suspended cymbal swells and harmonic glissandi in the strings. In the second Chorale 
statement, (mm. 25-31), harp harmonics are replaced with a horn (II) melody. Cymbal 
swells are absent here and the harmonic glissandi occur only at the end. In its retrograde 
statement in measures 45-52, the chorale is scored for lower woodwinds and brass and 
the first violins are added to the melodic line. The harmonic glissandi occur only in the 
first three measures and arpeggiated piano lines emerge in measures 48-50 for the first 
time in the movement.

The piano plays an important role in Nocturne. Like the second movement, 
Nocturne places the piano predominantly in the foreground as a soloist. In most sections 
the piano is featured as the melodic voice with the exception of Theme 2, where it shifts 
into the background, allowing the celesta to dominate along with the first violins, flute 
and piccolo. In addition, the piano pairs with celesta during the Chorale statements, 
“Shooting Star” gestures, portions of Theme 1 (mm. 15-17, 98-100) and Theme 2, 
Variation 2 (mm. 77-81). In contrast to Oceanus, this movement aspires less to virtuosity 
in the piano part. Nevertheless, it demands a certain technical ease and musicality from 
the soloist. I relied on my own knowledge of piano repertoire to compose readily 
playable parts for the piano and celesta, both of which require attention to performance 
details like hand coordination, pedaling and possible fingerings.
CLOSING REMARKS

The following concluding remarks address additional unifying elements among the three movements of *Terra Mirabilis*. However imperceptible to the listener, a symbolic chain of connection is established between movements I and II, and movements II and III. For example, *The Mists* and *Oceanus* share a nearly identical chord progression and an identical bass line, in the same key, both based on non-diatonic minor third relationships (see *The Mists*, mm.72-75, and Ex.2.2, the first four measures only). In addition, Alexander Scriabin’s “mystic chord” is quoted in measure 2 of *Oceanus* as well as measure 21 of *Nocturne*. Lastly, the arpeggiated piano figures at the end of *Oceanus* foreshadow the ascending harmonic glissandi found at the beginning and throughout *Nocturne*.

As a matter of note, Scriabin’s “mystic chord,” composed of the pitches C, F♯, B♭, E, A, and D, is constructed from rising fourths in the following sequence: C—F♯ (augmented fourth); F♯—B♭ (diminished fourth); B♭—E (augmented fourth); E—A (perfect fourth) and A—D (perfect fourth). When arranged in scalar form, the pitches C, D, E, F♯, A, and B♭ resemble a whole-tone scale, with the exception of an A instead of an A♭, or a Lydian-dominant scale with an omitted 5th. With the addition of the 5th, the pitches C, E, G (the 5th), B♭, D, F♯, A, in ascending order, form a “dominant thirteenth” with a raised eleventh (F♯). The characteristic sound of the chord possesses suspended tonal qualities because of the prevailing quartal harmonies that render its functional resolution ambiguous in the traditional sense. The “mystic chord” appears in Scriabin’s
later works, notably *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire*, where the composer uses the chord and its variations as a pitch source for both the melodic and harmonic materials in the piece as well as a kind of artificial tonic. In the case of *Terra Mirabilis*, this sonority appears only as a symbolic reference to the mysteries of nature in *Oceanus* and *Nocturne*.\(^4\)

Thematic and motivic materials vary in style and character as *Terra Mirabilis* unfolds, becoming increasingly angular and less “vocal.” While much attention is given to motivic development in *The Mists* and *Oceanus*, broader themes prevail in *Nocturne*, dominating the musical texture.

The role of piano evolves throughout *Terra Mirabilis*, gaining more importance as the movements progress. While it is introduced as a mere background color in the delicate palette of *The Mists*, the piano gradually assumes the function of a true virtuoso soloist in *Oceanus* and *Nocturne*.

REFERENCES

Books


Scores


Sound Recordings


APPENDIX: FULL SCORES
I. The Mists

Conductor Score: Concert
Andante (♩ = c. 72)

Sofia Kraevska

©2008
II. OCEANUS

Conductor Score: Concert

Andante (♩ = c' 66)  Sofia Kraevska

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Picc.
Fl. 1, 2
Ob. 1, 2
B♭ Cl. 1, 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1, 2

Hns. 1, 3
Hns. 2, 4
C Tpt. 1, 2
Tbn.
B. Tbn.
Tuba

Timp.
T.T.

Sns. Cym.

Hp.

Psn.

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
III. Nocturne

Conductor Score: Concert
Adagio $\approx 60$ Dolce

Sofia Kraevska

PICCOLO

FLUTES 1, 2

OBOES 1, 2

CLARINETS IN B♭ 1, 2

BASS CLARINET

BASSOONS 1, 2

HORNS IN F 1, 3

HORNS IN F 2, 4

With Timpani Sticks

TIMPANI

TRIANGLE

HARP

PIANO

CELESTA

VIOLIN I

VIOLIN II

VIOLA

CELLO

CONTRA-BASS

Molto Legato

PP Con Pedale