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Aspects of style in selected works by Takashi Yoshimatsu.

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ASPECTS OF FORM IN SELECTED WORKS BY TAKASHI YOSHIMATSU

By

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By the following Thesis Committee:

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother

Amy Ranee Hatton

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ABSTRACT

ASPECTS OF STYLE IN SELECTED WORKS BY TAKASHI YOSHIMATSU

K. Alex Hatton

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The music of Takashi Yoshimatsu is united by a strong continuity of style that acts as a kind of musical signature. This thesis offers an introduction to understanding this musical style by exploring the relationship between Japan and Western classical music, presenting analyses of four contrasting compositions, and offering potential areas for further research. Some of the recurring characteristics of Yoshimatsu's style include the use of extended harmony, modes, large melodic intervals, and the reuse of musical material. These characteristics are explored at length in the analyses of *Pleiades Dances IX*, *And Birds are Still…*, *Memo Flora*, and *Cyber Bird*.

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OVERVIEW

Composers often face the complex task of finding their own voice or style with little instruction on what this really means. A composer's style is influenced by various factors such as the music they have listened to, the language they speak, the culture they grew up in, their music education, and their philosophical views on music. This list could likely be continued indefinitely. Once these factors have been determined, a new question arises: "What are the musical ideas that make a composer's style consistent with itself?" This is the question I am most interested in, especially in the case of Takashi Yoshimatsu's music.

My thesis explores many facets of Takashi Yoshimatsu's musical style by presenting analyses of selected works from his repertoire and examining the relationship between Yoshimatsu's compositions and jazz, traditional Japanese music, and Japanese commercial music. This paper is structured into six chapters: an introduction, analyses of four compositions, and a conclusion. Each chapter is distinct and acts as a miniature paper.

The introductory chapter provides a background on Western music in Japan and Takashi Yoshimatsu's compositional influences. This section draws on extensive scholarship concerning Japan's history with Western music from the 16th century to today and sets the context for the following chapters.

The second chapter is an analysis of *Pleiades Dances IX*. These seven short pieces for solo piano are the most recent of Yoshimatsu's works discussed in this paper, and they offer a succinct overview of many compositional techniques and stylistic tendencies that have been continually employed by Yoshimatsu throughout his career. In this chapter, I introduce my methodology for analyzing Yoshimatsu's musical style before delving deeper into each technique individually in subsequent chapters.

After presenting an analysis of *Pleiades Dances,* a piece that utilizes a wide variety of techniques that make up Yoshimatsu's characteristic sound in the form of short piano pieces, I explore these techniques with more detail in the next three chapters. Each chapter centers on a single long-form composition with a focus on a more specific subset of the previously discussed techniques. These compositions include *And Birds are Still…* for string orchestra, a piano concerto titled *Memo Flora,* and an alto saxophone concerto titled *Cyber Bird.* While melody and harmony are the central topics, I also touch on ideas such as rhythm, instrumentation, and orchestration when they contribute to a deeper understanding of the melody and/or harmony.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

Takashi Yoshimatsu is a Japanese neo-romantic composer with a large catalog of music and a uniquely consistent style. An important aspect of this style is Yoshimatsu's fusion of Western classical conventions with elements of traditional Japanese music. Yoshimatsu was born in Tokyo, Japan in 1953 and became fascinated by jazz and progressive rock in the 1970s. He made a name for himself with his serialist composition *Threnody to Toki* in 1981, but he then abandoned atonal composition in favor of a neo-romantic approach to tonality.[1]

This chapter begins by providing historical background on traditional Japanese music and Japan's relationship with Western music using articles such as "Aesthetics in the Traditional Music of Japan" by Akira Tamba, "Collections of Western Music in Japan: An Introduction" by Masakata Kanazawa and Yasuko Todo from *Fontes Artis Musicae* and "音楽 Ongaku, Onkyō/Music, Sound" by Hosokawa. I then explore Yoshimatsu's personal history with Western music using information provided in an email correspondence between him and myself. Lastly, the contents of the chapter become more focused on Japan's introduction to Western pop music and jazz referencing articles such as "Some Aspects of Japanese Popular Music" by Kitagaawa Junko.

[1]Takashi Yoshimatsu, "Profile," Accessed September 23, 2023, http://yoshim.music.coocan.jp/.

To understand Yoshimatsu's compositional style, it is important to have a general background on traditional Japanese music and Japan's relationship with Western music. In the article "Aesthetics in the Traditional Music of Japan," Akira Tamba provides a summary of different genres of traditional Japanese music saying that traditional Japanese music "...depends not on the composer but on the rules of a long-established musical genre and is consequently not subject to the variations brought about by the aesthetic outlook of an individual."[2]

Tamba begins by describing two genres of music adopted by the aristocracy of the 9th and 10th centuries CE: the Shômyô, a Buddhist liturgical chant, and the Gagaku, instrumental music accompanied by songs and dance. Both of these forms of music were imported from other Asian countries. Tamba then mentions a form of traditional Japanese music that became popular among the lower class in the 13th century called the Heikyoku which was a narration accompanied by the biwa, a Japanese four-stringed lute.

The Nô was a form of traditional Japanese music that originated as a form of folk entertainment, but it was later revised into a dramatic form in the 14th century that appealed to the ruling military class. In the 16th century, many new musical genres developed including Kabuki, a theatrical art form featuring singing and dancing; the Satsuma-biwa, a narration accompanied by biwa; vocal pieces accompanied by the shamisen; and solo pieces for instruments such as the shakuhachi and the koto. Tamba emphasizes the fact that traditional Japanese music was deeply rooted in Japan's sociopolitical structure.[3]

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[2] Akira Tamba. "Aesthetics in the Traditional Music of Japan," *The World of Music* 18, no. 2 (1976): 4.

[3] Tamba, "Aesthetics," 5, 6.

Despite the differences between the various forms of traditional Japanese music, there are many similarities that can be seen throughout all of these genres. Some of these similarities include a ritual-like quality, a static quality, composition based on short patterns, and vocal and instrumental technique. When referring to the ritual-like aspects of traditional Japanese music, Tamba says, "When attending a Gagaku or a Nô performance we are fascinated by the manner in which the musicians and the actors play their parts, for they seem to be enacting a ceremony in which every single detail is fixed."[4]

The article, "Collections of Western Music in Japan: An Introduction" by Masakata Kanazawa and Yasuko Todo provides a thorough introduction to this relationship and touches on the cultivation of Western music in Japan and the definitional discrepancy concerning the Japanese word for music, *ongaku*.

Japan's first interaction with Western music occurred in 1549 when a Spanish Jesuit missionary named Francisco de Xavier arrived and requested that current political leaders support Christianity. This led to the formation of a choir in Oita of the Kyushu district and Christian liturgical music being taught at a school in Kyushu by the year 1605. Seventeenth-century Japan's relationship with Christianity did not last long however, as Christianity was prohibited by the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1612. Japan was reintroduced to Western music following the Meiji Restoration when the government began to invite leaders of military bands from Europe and the United States from 1868 to 1884. This led to music education being implemented in elementary schools in 1880.[5]

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[4] Tamba, "Aesthetics," 7, 8.

[5] Masakata Kanazawa and Yasuko Todo. "Collections of Western Music in Japan: An Introduction," *Fontes Artis Musicae* 56, no. 3 (2009): 283.

In the section of the article, “Important Issues Today,” Masakata Kanazawa and Yasuko Todo state, “It should be kept in mind that today for most Japanese people, the category ‘music’ refers to ‘Western music,’ excluding traditional Japanese music. This situation poses a definitional problem today when many Japanese composers write music using Japanese traditional instruments but with compositional techniques associated with the conventions of European art music; such compositions are, despite their cross-breeding, regarded as ‘Western music’ in Japan.”[6] When Kanazawa and Yasuko discuss the “the category ‘music’,” they are likely referring to the Japanese word, “Ongaku.”

The concept of “Ongaku” relates strongly to the music of Takashi Yoshimatsu. As Kanazawa and Yasuko mention, modern Japanese composers often use elements of traditional Japanese music in a more Western classical style. This perfectly describes Yoshimatsu’s approach to composition. Despite using elements of traditional Japanese music, Yoshimatsu’s compositions would be considered a form of “Ongaku”. Much of Yoshimatsu’s music, including his *Pleiades Dances*, is published by a corporation called Ongaku No Tomo Sha.

The word, “Ongaku”, is discussed in significantly more detail in an article titled “音楽 Ongaku, Onkyō/Music, Sound” by Hosokawa Shūhei. Shūhei goes in depth in describing the lexical history of the word and the transformation of its meaning. Finally, Shūhei mentions that some contemporary artists prefer to use the more general word *onkyō* instead of *ongaku*, even ending the introduction by saying, “Following an

[6] Kanazawa, “Collections of Western Music,” 284.

examination of the semantic formation and transformation of *ongaku* in the process of modernization, I will thus examine the circumstances of its annihilation."[7]

Ongaku is used in modern Japan to refer specifically to Western music or music that follows Western music conventions. "Ongaku" is rarely used to describe Japanese classical music. Shūhei states, "Like many non-European cultures, before contact with the West, Japan had no all-embracing term referring to any humanly organized sound…."[8] Shūhei goes on to mention that Japanese music was traditionally referred to using specific genre names.

Because the word *ongaku* refers explicitly to Western music, it ended up taking on elite connotations. This eventually led to composers such as Tōru Takemitsu opting to use the word *onkyō* which more generally refers to sound. Some use the word *onkyō* to refer to compositions that prioritize texture over structure.[9]

Takashi Yoshimatsu often implements elements of traditional Japanese music into his compositions in the form of scales, tunings, and instrumentation, but his compositions still follow many Western music conventions, especially in terms of harmony and formal structure. Because of this, the word *ongaku* would be more fitting in reference to his music than the more general term *onkyō*.

In Fall 2023, I emailed Yoshimatsu's management team to inquire about having a few questions answered for my thesis. A management team representative responded, and

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[7] Hosokawa Shūhei. "音楽 Ongaku, Onkyō/Music, Sound." *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 25 (2013): 9–10. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43945378.

[8] Shūhei, "Ongaku, Onkyō," 9.

[9] Shūhei, "Ongaku, Onkyō," 12, 16.

I promptly compiled some of the questions I had written in my notes and sent them to the representative. I later received an email containing Yoshimatsu's answers to my questions.

In one of my questions, I asked about Yoshimatsu's approach to harmony saying, "Through listening to and studying your music, it has become clear that your approach to harmony is a very distinct and characteristic one. I would argue that many current composers try to emulate that sound, either through direct inspiration from your music or inspiration from your predecessors. I am curious if you can provide insight on where your approach to harmony comes from." In Yoshimatsu's response, he mentioned listening to The Beatles and other pop music from the 1960s and playing in progressive rock and jazz-rock groups that used Japanese instruments in the 1970s.[10] Not only does Yoshimatsu's experience in rock and jazz-rock groups provide insight into his approach to harmony, but it also can be seen as a predecessor to his approach to instrumentation where he sometimes uses traditional Japanese instruments in a more Western classical context.

"Some Aspects of Japanese Popular Music" by Kitagawa Junko discusses the developments of Japanese popular music from roughly 1960 to 1990. Regarding this development, Junko states, "Firstly, there was a change of musical idiom in the 1960s. Secondly, there was a change in the reception of popular music in the 1970s. More recently there has been a change in young people's musical behaviour."[11]

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[10] Takashi Yoshimatsu, email message to author, August 1, 2023.

[11] Kitagawa Junko. "Some Aspects of Japanese Popular Music." *Popular Music* 10, no. 3 (1991): 305. http://www.jstor.org/stable/853148.

Before 1960, Japanese popular music featured pentatonic melodies, contained a fixed-verse form, and was often sung using a vocal technique known as "yuri" or "kobushi" which is derived from traditional Japanese music. This style remained mostly consistent until the 1960s when Western pop music genres such as rock and roll and jazz started to have a significant impact on Japanese pop music. Lyrical content mostly remained the same while songwriters' approaches to tonality began to change with songs featuring tonal harmonies and Western diatonic scales.[12]

Junko uses the song "Ue o muite arukô" often called "Sukiyaki" in other countries, as an example of the shift in tonality that occurred in the 1960s. The song still features prominent use of a pentatonic scale, but it also includes a brief moment of modal mixture, a consistent rhythmic pulse, and abandons the fixed-verse form. This song also features elements of jazz like a swung rhythmic feel and a jazz band instrumentation made up of drumset, bass, strings, horns, and marimba.

While songwriters continued with the same approach to writing lyrics in the 1960s, this was not the case in the 1970s. Junko mentions that sound-oriented listening became popular among the youth where less importance was put on the meaning of lyrics. Junko uses the Japanese rock band, "Southern All Stars", to support this idea saying, "'Katte ni Sindobaddo' (Pleasingly, Sindbad the Sailor) (1978) was the debut record of the *Southern All Stars*, and the title and lyrics of the song were almost meaningless."

It is important to note that acknowledging Western music's influence on Japanese composers is not equivalent to claiming that Japanese composers only mimic Western

[12] Junko, "Some Aspects," 306.

music. Although many modern Japanese composers write using Western classical conventions, the implementation of traditional Japanese musical elements along with other influences stemming from Japanese culture has led to the development of a uniquely Japanese approach to classical music composition.

CHAPTER 2: *PLEIADES DANCES IX*

Takashi Yoshimatsu's *Pleiades Dances* is a set of nine suites written between 1986 and 2001 containing seven short pieces each written for solo piano. Throughout these suites, Yoshimatsu provides a large array of contrasting pieces that include irregular meter, changing meter, pandiatonic harmony, modal harmony, and many other unique musical components. Each piece has a fresh and distinctive sound world. The suites that comprise Yoshimatsu's *Pleiades Dances* are not without continuity, however, as there are many recurring musical ideas present in Yoshimatsu's composition that help give the work an identifiable sound.

Yoshimatsu uses numerous melodic and harmonic ideas in multiple instances throughout *Pleiades Dances.* An analysis of the seven pieces found in the ninth suite makes this especially clear. This final suite in the series was written in 2001 and contains a sound world that is representative of Yoshimatsu's *Pleiades Dances* as a whole. In this chapter, I discuss Yoshimatsu's use of extended harmony, modal harmony, open voicing, large melodic intervals, and pentatonic scales.

In instances in the ninth suite Yoshimatsu uses extended harmony, and this ends up becoming a key harmonic feature in analyzing the work. Yoshimatsu certainly uses triadic harmony in all seven pieces of the ninth book, but it is the seventh chords, ninth chords, and eleventh chords that really give these compositions their distinctness.

Pleiades Dances IX

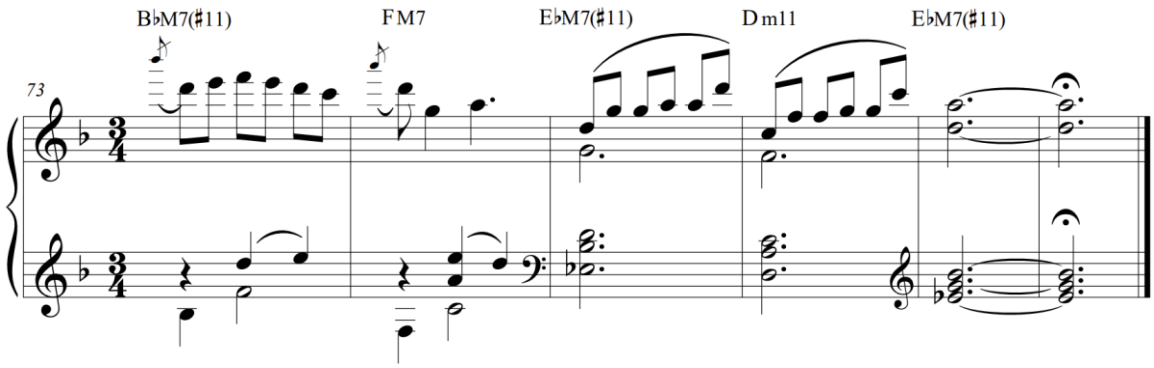
1. Supple Prelude – ca. 1:10
2. Little Crystal Romance – ca. 2:30
3. Waltz in Obtuse Angle – ca. 1:40
4. Lullaby in the Celestial Night – ca. 3:30
5. Romance on a Parabola – ca. 1:40
6. Arabesque in Dream – ca. 2:10
7. Landscape of Finale – ca. 1:40

Example 2.1: Order of pieces in *Pleiades Dances IX* and their durations

Yoshimatsu's use of extended harmony is reminiscent of modal jazz where modes are often represented as vertical chords rather than horizontal passages that tonicize a particular mode. A Cm6 chord is an example of a chord used in jazz that evokes the sound of the dorian mode. It is made up of a C minor triad with the added ♮6th which is dorian's defining scale degree.

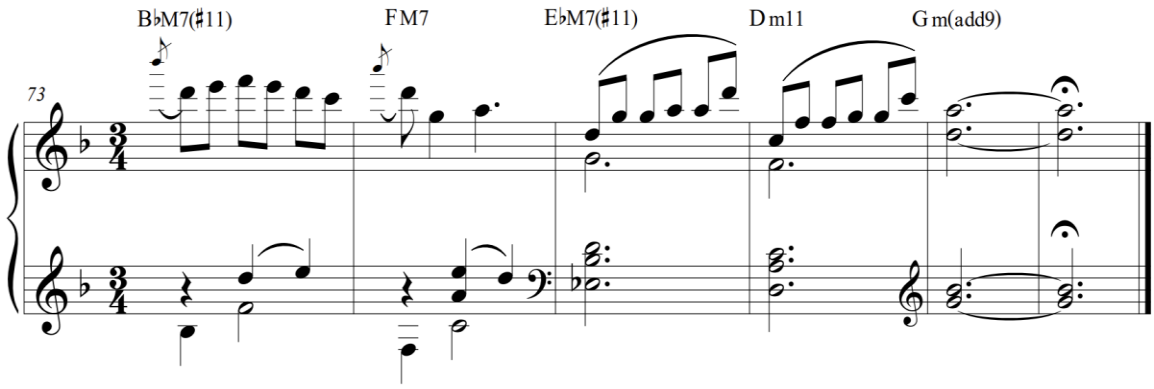
Ron Miller's book *Modal Jazz: Composition and Harmony Volume 1* is an educational resource for jazz musicians concerning modal jazz composition. In the third chapter, Miller provides a list of chords and chord symbols that can be used to represent each of the diatonic modes. For example, when discussing dorian, Miller mentions the chords Dm13, Dm6/9, and Bm7(♮6). He also lists "So What" by Miles Davis as an example of a piece of music that uses some of these chords.[13]

[13] Miller, Ron. *Modal Jazz: Composition and Harmony Volume 1*. Advance Music, 1996: 22-24.



Example 2.2: Measures 73–78 of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night"

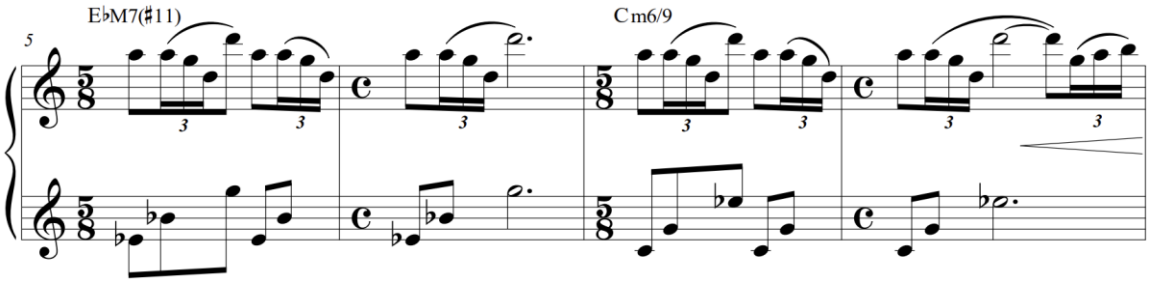
Example 2.2 shows the ending of the fourth piece in the suite, "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" where the last chord found in mm. 77–78 is an E♭M7(♯11) chord. Consider an alternative ending to this piece that uses the E♭M7(♯11) chord in m. 75 and the Dm11 chord in m. 76 to resolve to a G minor chord as seen in Example 3. Even when keeping the A5 in the top staff, this would have given the ending of the piece a more concrete resolution. Instead, Yoshimatsu returns to the E♭M7(♯11) which can be seen as a VI^7 chord in G minor or a IV^7 chord in B♭ major.



Example 2.3: An alternate, more conclusive ending of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night"

The major seventh alone—E♭4 to D5—adds a kind of sweet and melancholy quality to this final chord. Including the pitch D in this E♭ chord is like adding a G minor triad to the E♭ triad. The resulting sound is somewhere in between the unresolved quality of the E♭ triad and the more concrete, dark tone of a G minor triad.

Finally, the last chord also includes the pitch A5 which is found an 11th above the bass note. This is representative of Yoshimatsu's use of modal harmony. While the ending of this piece is not firmly in the key of E♭, the A evokes a strong sense of the lydian mode. An A♮ is expected as the fourth scale degree in E♭ lydian, and this is exactly what is found in the E♭M7(♯11) chord at the end of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night."



Example 2.4: Measures 5–8 of "Little Crystal Romance"

Lydian chords like E♭M7(♯11) can be found throughout all of Yoshimatsu's music. In fact, this same chord is seen in another one of the seven pieces in *Pleiades Dances IX*. Example 2.4 displays mm. 5–8 of the second piece in *Pleiades Dances IX*, "Little Crystal Romance." In this particular instance, the melody in the top staff helps establish the modal sound along with the accompaniment in the bottom staff. Isolating the music in the bottom staff reveals two measures of an arpeggiated E♭ triad and two measures of an arpeggiated Cm triad.

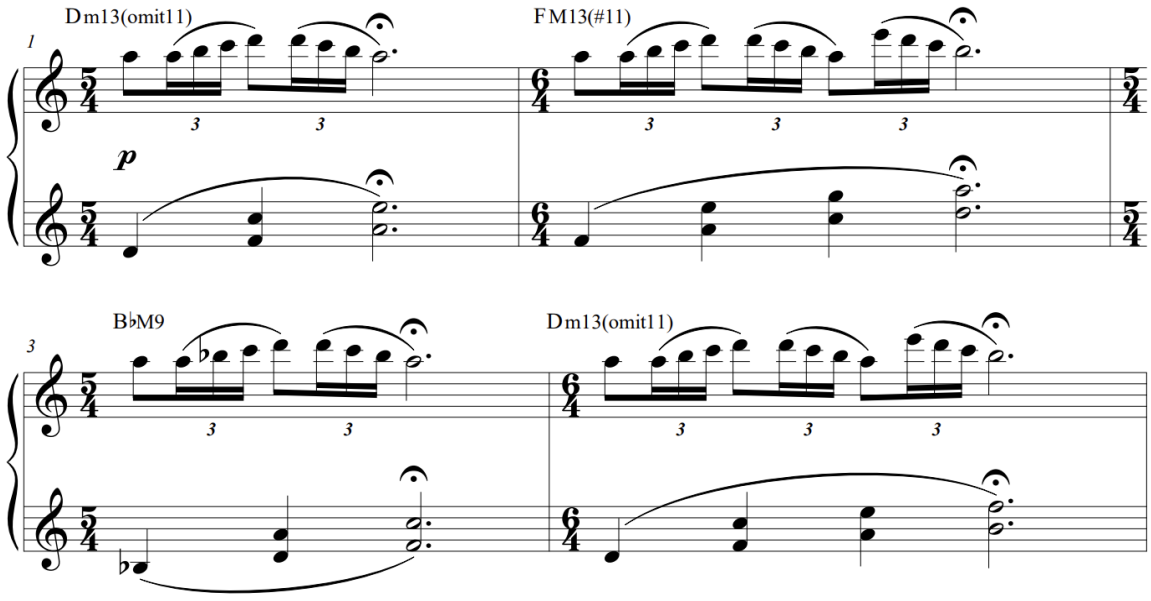
The triads in the bottom staff alone do not evoke the sound of any particular mode at all. The E♭ triad could represent any of the major modes while the Cm triad could represent any of the minor modes. Looking at all four measures together provides more context if assuming that the modes represented in these four measures use the same collection of pitches. The chords, E♭ and Cm, could represent the relationship between ionian and aeolian or the relationship between lydian and dorian.

Considering the melody, shown in the top staff, provides more context for these chords. This melody primarily uses just three pitch classes: A, G, and D. G is already present in the E♭ triad in mm. 5–6, but adding the remaining A and D gives the sound of an E♭M7(♯11); this is the same chord found at the end of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" in the form of a block chord. The pitch G is also already present in the Cm triad in mm. 7–8. Adding the pitches A and D turns the Cm triad into a Cm6/9 chord. In both E♭M7(♯11) and Cm6/9, it is the A that evokes a modal sound.

The fact that the E♭M7(♯11) chord appears in multiple pieces throughout *Pleiades Dances IX* is most likely due to a combination of style and coincidence as opposed to a kind of musical motive. After analyzing a large portion of Yoshimatu's music, it becomes clear that he uses lydian chords like E♭M7(♯11) often even outside of *Pleiades Dances*. The fact that the same chord type is used with the same root in these two instances is more likely coincidental.

The E♭M7(♯11) chord in Example 2.2 and the E♭M7(♯11) chord in Example 2.4 are voiced very similarly but not the same. This slight difference does not necessarily mean that there is no motivic connection between the two, but there is another possibility

that lies in the compositional process. Yoshimatsu likely composes with the aid of a piano considering that much of his music is very piano-centric. When composing using an instrument like a piano, muscle memory becomes an important factor in the resulting composition causing composers to play similar types of chords and chord voicings when improvising. This is another possible explanation concerning the two occurrences of E♭M7(♯11) in separate instances.

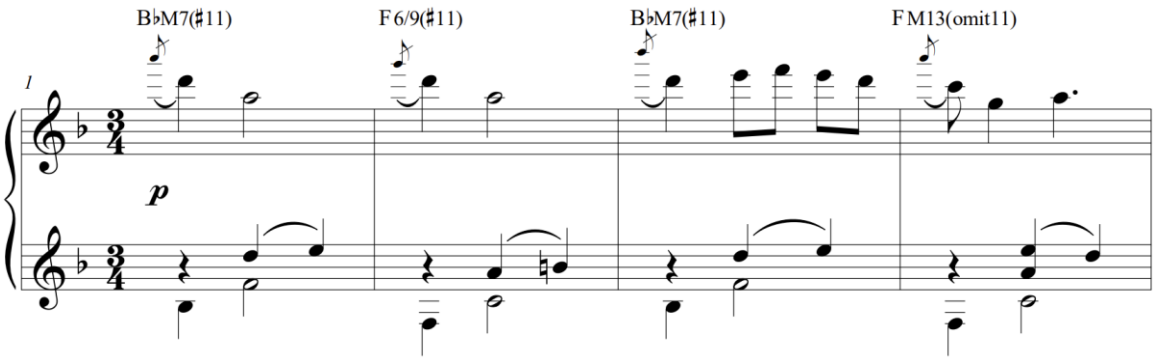


Example 2.5: Measures 1–4 of "Little Crystal Romance"

Measures 1–4 of "Little Crystal Romance" also present an interesting use of modality. The accompaniment in the bottom staff begins by establishing a tonality centered on the pitch D in m. 1. At the same time, the melody in the top staff uses notes from the upper tetrachord of D dorian. In this instance, B♮ is the most important pitch in establishing the sense of dorian. The chord created by the material in this measure can be labeled as Dm13(omit11).

The harmony of the second measure is less clear, but all of the pitches of the first measure are still present with an added G5 in the left hand and a bass of F. Because the bass moves from D4 to F4 from m. 1 to m. 2, m. 2 can be seen locally as a movement to F lydian with B♮ acting as the fourth scale degree. That being said, this is an instance in which an aspect of piano performance can change the analysis of m. 2 altogether. If the pianist holds the sustain pedal through mm. 1–2, the D4 initially presented on beat 1 of m. 1 would continue to sustain through m. 2. In this case, m. 2 would simply be a continuation of D dorian.

Measure 4 offers a brief contrast in tonality. The melody in the top staff acts as a pivot where the same musical line is repeated while altering the B♮ to B♭. The accompaniment in the bottom staff moves down a 3rd to an arpeggiation of B♭M9. The lack of a fourth scale degree in B♭M9 makes the mode somewhat ambiguous, so it could be heard as either B♭ ionian or B♭ lydian. However, because the latest form of E was an E♮ rather than an E♭, it is likely that the listener will be more inclined to hear the mode of m. 3 as B♭ lydian. The relationship between the opening D dorian and m. 3's B♭M9 is similar to that of D aeolian and B♭ lydian, so the chord in m. 3 can be analyzed as a borrowed chord from D aeolian.



Example 2.6: Measures 1–4 of “Lullaby in the Celestial Night”

Example 2.6 shows the first four measures of “Lullaby in the Celestial Night”. The harmony of this section alternates between B♭ and F chords with various extensions. It is the first two chords that are of the most interest when considering Yoshimatsu’s use of modes. This excerpt begins with a B♭M7(♯11) chord which establishes a lydian tonality. This is followed by a type of F chord. As m. 2 begins, the listener is presented with an F6/9 chord on beats 1 and 2. As mentioned before, a major chord without a fourth scale degree could be heard as ionian or lydian. This chord also happens to lack a seventh scale degree which adds mixolydian to the list of potential modes. Because m. 1 contains B♭ and E♮, it is likely that the listener will assume the F chord in m. 2 is the tonic chord in B♭ ionian. However, this turns out not to be the case as B♮ is finally introduced on beat 3 of m. 2 assuring the listener that this chord was actually a move to F lydian.

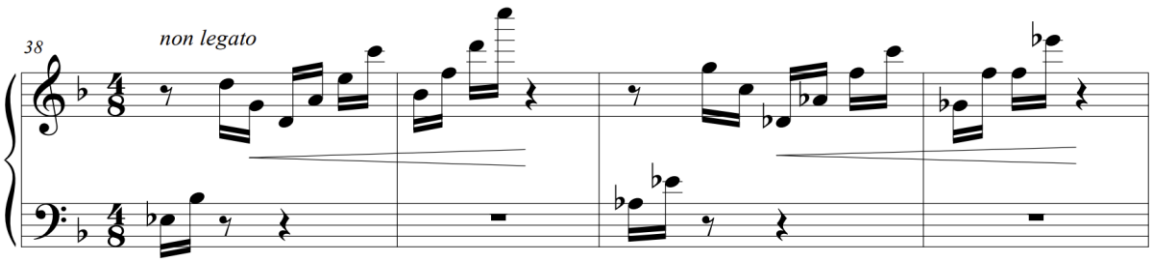
Modes in *Pleiades Dances IX*

	Ionian	Dorian	Phrygian	Lydian	Mixolydian	Aeolian	Locrian
1. Supple Prelude	✓			✓	✓		
2. Little Crystal Romance		✓		✓			
3. Waltz in Obtuse Angle		✓		✓			
4. Lullaby in the Celestial Night	✓	✓		✓		✓	
5. Romance on a Parabola	✓			✓			
6. Arabesque in Dream	✓	✓		✓	✓		
7. Landscape of Finale				✓	✓		

Example 2.7: Modes used in *Pleiades Dances IX*

The table in Example 2.7 displays the modes that are used in each of the seven pieces in *Pleiades Dances IX*. When examining the modes used throughout this suite, it becomes clear that the seven diatonic modes are not used equally. For example, lydian is used in all seven pieces while phrygian and locrian are not used at all. Dorian and ionian are the next most prominent modes after lydian, each appearing in four out of the seven pieces.

Another harmonic feature found in Yoshimatsu's *Pleiades Dances* is the use of open harmonic voicing. This same excerpt from "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" clearly demonstrates Yoshimatsu's use of open voicing by featuring chords that are voiced over the span of about an eleventh in the arpeggiating accompaniment in the bottom staff. When including the melody in the top staff, the range becomes even larger.



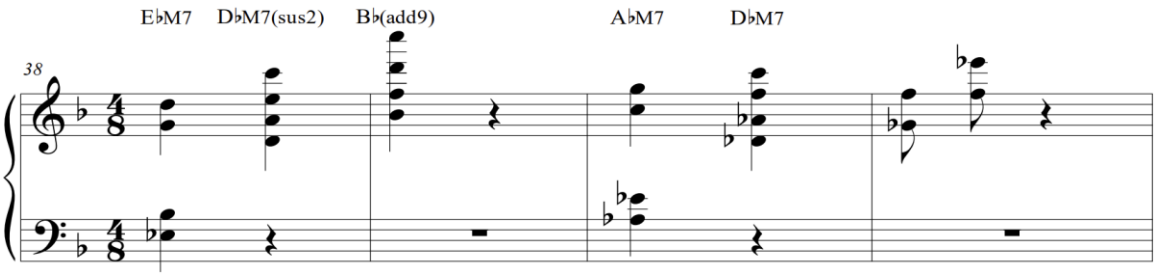
Example 2.8: Measures 38–41 of “Waltz in Obtuse Angle”

The examples used previously to discuss Yoshimatsu’s use of modes have all had a relatively simple texture made up of a clearly defined melody and an accompanimental line in a lower register. Example 2.8 is an excerpt in which the distinction between melody and accompaniment becomes less clear. The music from mm. 38–41 is made up of a single line with melodic and accompanimental qualities. Melodically, mm. 38–41 feature a disjunct monophonic line separated by a quarter rest into two gestures. The monophonic nature of this excerpt is its most distinctive melodic quality. This line also includes elements of accompanimental music like consistent rhythmic values and arpeggiation. This accompanimental idea without a melody layered on top is reminiscent of a vamp; it is accompanimental in nature without actually supporting a separate melodic line.

The arpeggiation in Example 2.8 also creates a sense of harmony. Because of the varying intervals between pitches and the consistent rhythm, it can be difficult to decide which pitches belong to a single harmonic sonority. It is perhaps best to instead determine which pitches do not belong to the same harmonic sonority. The first obvious point of separation is the quarter rest on beat 3 of m. 39. This leads to the conclusion that mm. 38–39 and mm. 40–41 do not belong to the same harmonic sonority.

Another clue about the underlying harmonic rhythm is the E♮5 on beat 4 in the top staff of m. 38. This pitch would clash against the E♭3 on beat 1 in the bottom staff if the entirety of m. 38 was considered a single harmonic sonority. This leads to the hypothesis that the harmonic sonority changes at least every two beats. This hypothesis is supported by the contour of the line. All ascending lines begin on either beat 1 or beat 3 creating a

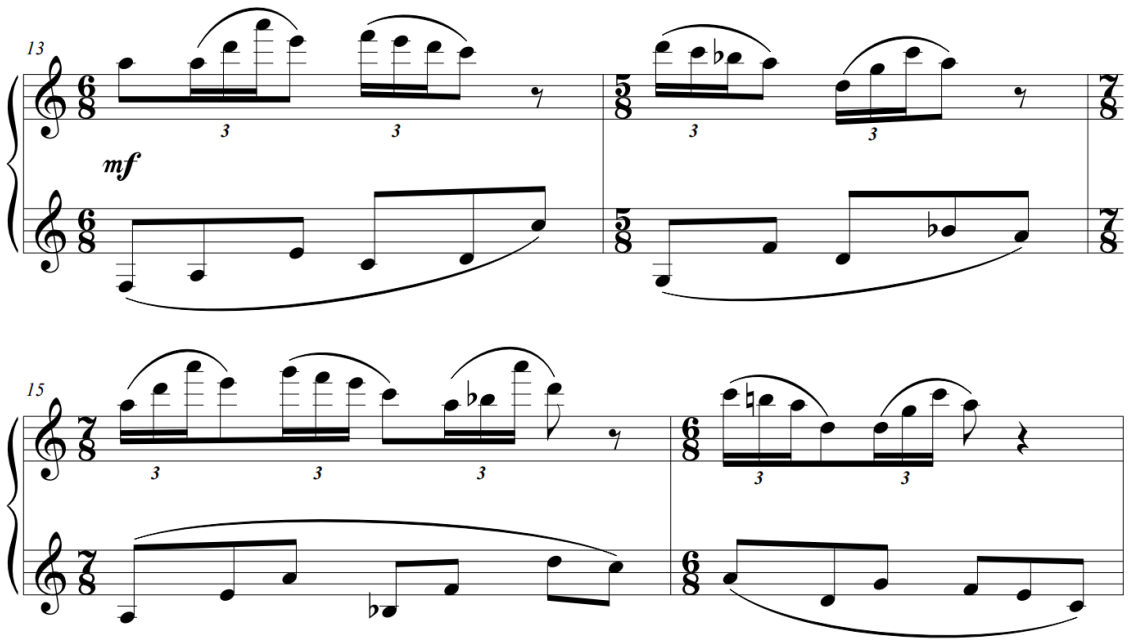
sense that the pitch found at these moments is the bass of its own chord. Analyzing this passage using a quarter-note harmonic rhythm reveals a progression of triads with various extensions with open voicing.



Example 2.9: Harmonic reduction of mm. 38–41 of "Waltz in Obtuse Angle"

The harmony implied by m. 41 is different from the previous four measures in a couple of ways: there are only three different pitches present, and these pitches do not form a clear chord. In Example 2.9, I have analyzed m. 41 as two harmonic 7ths separated by the repetition of the pitch F5. Four out of five of the preceding chords include a pitch a 7th above the bass, so analyzing m. 41 as two separate chords that include a 7th above the bass is most consistent with the rest of the passage.

The harmonic reduction shown in Example 2.9 also makes it clear that the chords implied by this monophonic line use open voicing. The intervals between consecutive pitches within a harmonic sonority are all a perfect 5th or larger. When including the intervals between harmonic sonorities, consecutive pitches are all a perfect 4th or larger, aside from the unison in m. 41. The sense of openness created by open voicings is furthered by Yoshimatsu's use of large intervals in melodies.



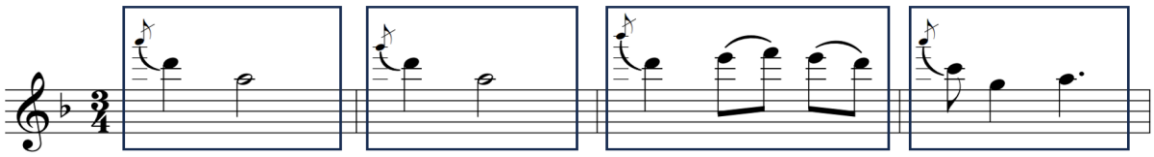
Example 2.10: Measures 13–16 of "Little Crystal Romance"

Example 2.10 includes mm. 13–16 of "Little Crystal Romance." This is a moment that demonstrates Yoshimatsu using large intervals within his melodies. The melody of this section can be seen in the top staff. Throughout this short excerpt, Yoshimatsu uses many melodic 4ths and 5ths which can be found in each of these four measures. He also uses a 7th at the end of m. 15. The accompaniment found in the bottom staff is made up of 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, 6ths, and 7ths. It is worth noting that there is also a melodic element to the accompaniment due to the fact that not all notes of the accompaniment are chord tones. The music in the bottom staff is still fundamentally accompanimental however because it plays a supporting role to the music in the top staff. All of these examples add to the feeling of openness seen previously through the use of open harmony.

The most important intervals to recognize when analyzing Yoshimatsu's melodic writing are the ones within melodic gestures. The interval between the last pitch of a

gesture and the first pitch of another can be seen more significantly as a register shift than a melodic interval. The register shifts may end up being an important component of Yoshimatsu's style, but they occupy a different role than melodic intervals. Therefore, these two types of intervals must be examined separately when performing a careful analysis.

The distinction of only analyzing intervals within melodic gestures makes the analytical process more complex than it may seem on the surface. This process requires that the melodic material for every moment of a piece be determined and then divided discretely into separate gestures. Intricacies in texture can make it difficult to determine exactly what portion of the music is inherently melodic at any given time, and it can also be difficult to determine exactly where one gesture ends and another begins at times. In the case of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night," the key to resolving both problems lies in Yoshimatsu's use of repetition.

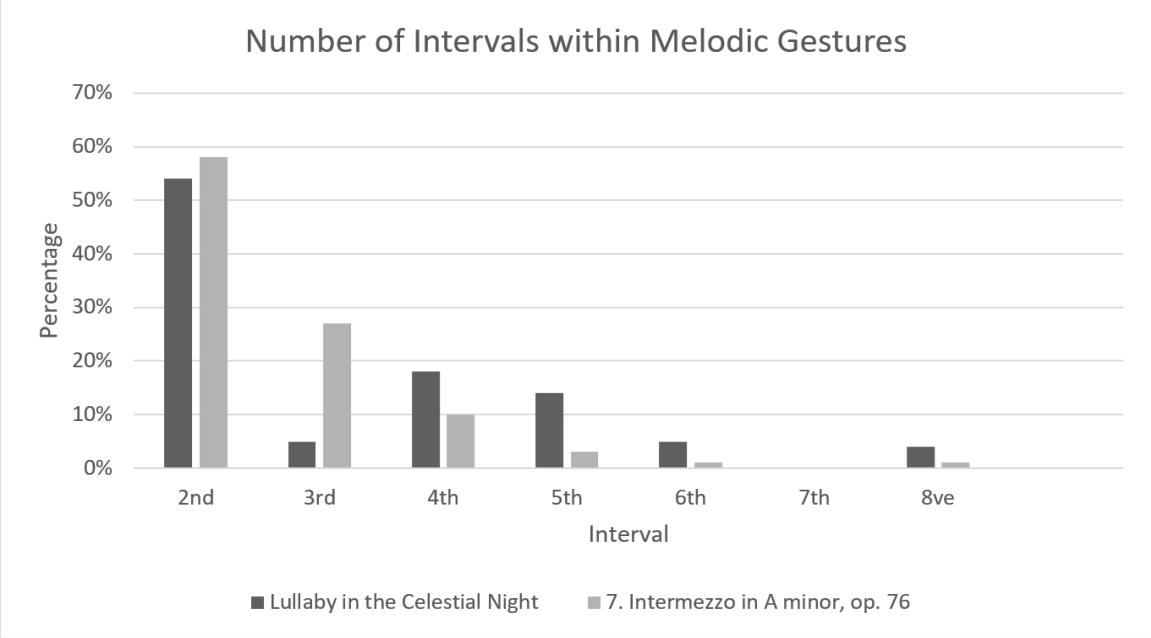


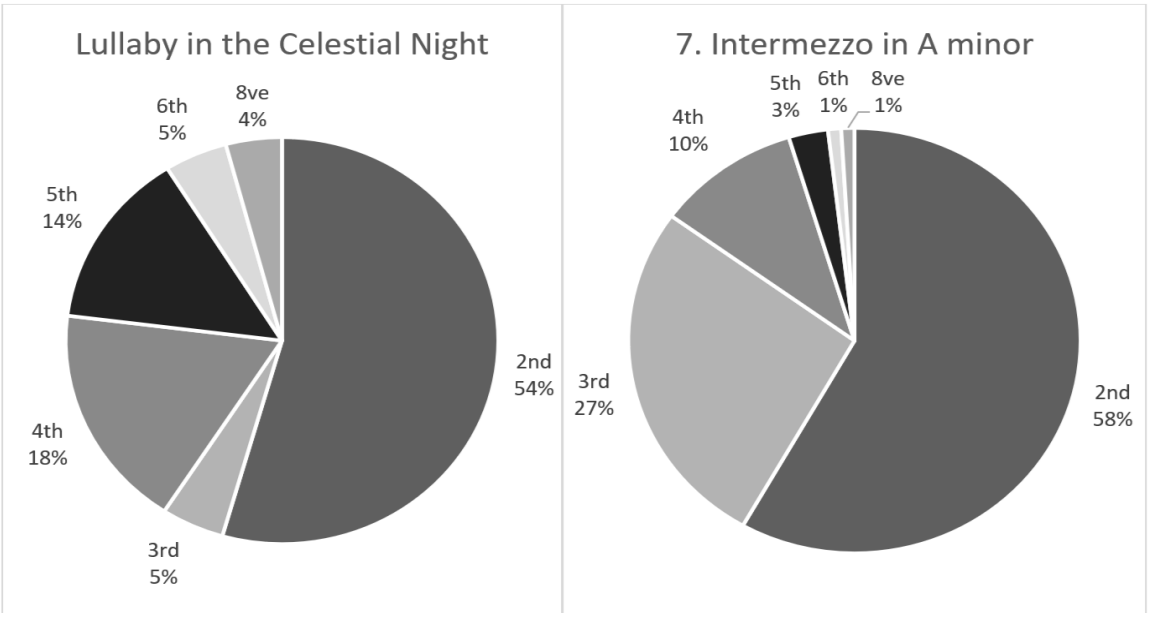
Example 2.11: Melodic gestures in mm. 1–4 of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night"

Example 2.11 shows mm. 1–4 of "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" divided into four melodic gestures. Measure 1 is a complete descending gesture made up of a grace note, a quarter note, and a half note. It is impossible to know if the melodic gesture in m. 1 has ended until examining m. 2. Measure 2 begins with the same melodic idea with a slight pitch alteration on the grace note. The fact that m. 2 uses the same contour and rhythm as m. 1 makes it clear that it is a second iteration of the first gesture.

Measure 3 is less clear because of the change in rhythm on beats 2 and 3, but it can be deduced that the second gesture has ended by the first beat of m. 3 because m. 3 begins the same way as the previous two iterations of the opening gesture. Finally, m. 4 introduces another variation of the opening gesture.

As an example, by separating mm. 1–2 into two separate gestures, I am claiming that the interval found between the A5 half note in m. 1 and the G6 grace note in m. 2 is not as melodically meaningful as the interval found between the two consecutive pitches within a gesture. Including these register shifts between gestures in my data would have increased the number of large intervals, but the differing significance of the intervals found within gestures and between gestures would require them to be counted separately.





Example 2.12: Comparison of the percentage of intervals between consecutive pitches within melodic gestures in Yoshimatsu's "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" and the seventh piece in Brahms's *Acht Klavierstücke op. 76.*

Example 2.12 shows a comparison of intervals between consecutive pitches within melodic gestures in "Lullaby in the Celestial Night." These intervals are limited to

just 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, 6ths, 7ths, and octaves. Intervals larger than an octave did not appear within melodic gestures in the selections examined. Compound intervals between successive pitches are most often found in accompanimental lines and between melodic gestures.

Perfect unisons were not included because they are fundamentally different from other intervals in that they represent a repetition of a pitch. In my initial analysis of melodic intervals, I instinctively skipped over the perfect unisons within melodic phrases without realizing that I had done so. This led me to question whether perfect unisons held the same significance as other intervals or if they should be classified separately. I concluded that the idea of pitch repetition would not provide much insight into the examination of melodic movement. Like the intervals between melodic gestures, perfect unisons would have to be considered differently than the other intervals when representing them in the form of a graph.

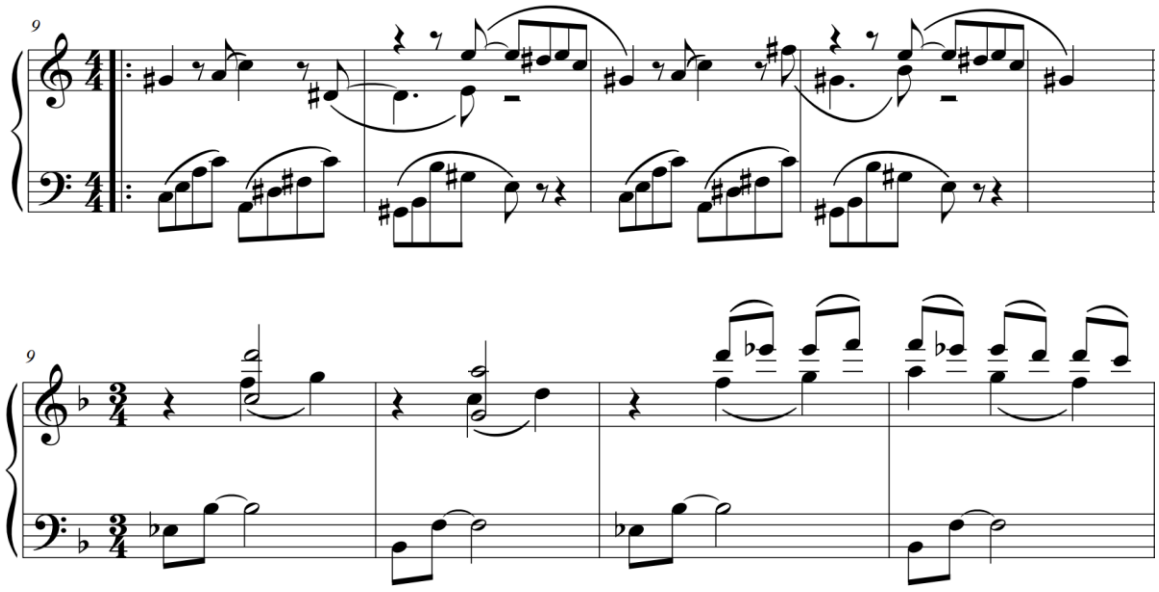
Yoshimatsu's use of larger intervals tends to be more frequent in pieces in a slower tempo like "Lullaby in the Celestial Night," so a slow piano piece by Johannes Brahms was chosen as a point of comparison. The music of Yoshimatsu and Brahms is written in a romantic style containing musical attributes such as expressive melodies, dynamic contrast, and rubato. Furthermore, *Acht Klavierstücke op. 76* is also a suite for solo piano containing short contrasting pieces.

Yoshimatsu's "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" and Intermezzo in A minor, #7 from Brahms's *Acht Klavierstücke op. 76,* are different lengths and contain a different number of intervals within melodic gestures, so the number of an individual interval is

represented as a percentage of all of the intervals in the piece to make for a clearer, more accurate comparison.

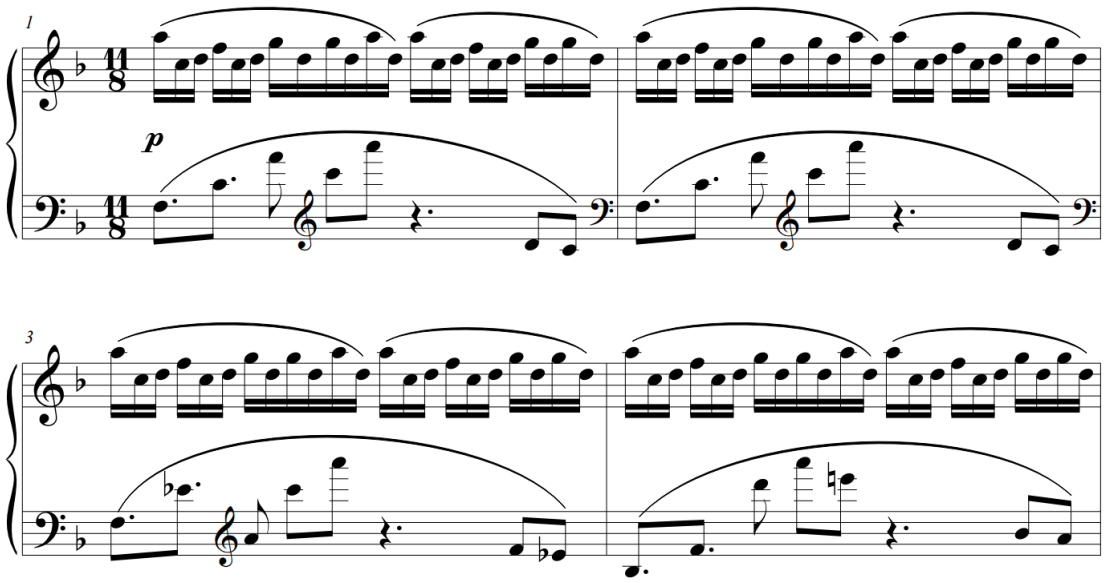
The most notable differences between the data sets of Yoshimatsu's "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" and Intermezzo in A minor are the number of 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths. Thirds made up a much more significant portion of the intervals counted in Intermezzo in A minor than "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" representing 27% of all of the intervals within melodic gestures. Only 5% of the melodic intervals in "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" were 3rds.

Where Brahms uses melodic 3rds, Yoshimatsu seems to gravitate more towards melodic 4ths and 5ths which together make up a total of 32% of the melodic intervals in "Lullaby in the Celestial Night". The combined total of 4ths and 5ths in Intermezzo in A minor represents only 13% of the melodic intervals. Brahms's use of 3rds and Yoshimatsu's use of 4ths and 5ths can also be seen in chord voicings throughout their compositions.



Example 2.13: Measures 9–13 of Brahms (top) and mm. 9–12 of Yoshimatsu (bottom)

Finally, the usage of 6ths and octaves had the smallest difference. The 6ths and octaves in “Lullaby in the Celestial Night” made up 5% and 4% of the total melodic intervals respectively versus Intermezzo in A minor’s 1% each. There are noticeably more 6ths and octaves in “Lullaby in the Celestial Night”, but the difference is not as significant as the 4ths and 5ths.



Example 2.14: Measures 1–4 of “Arabesque in Dream”

In mm. 1–4 of “Arabesque in Dream”, Yoshimatsu uses notes from the major pentatonic scale in the top staff. The presence of this pentatonic scale relates to the ideas of Yoshimatsu’s use of openness and modes. The most commonly used major pentatonic scale is constructed without half-steps and with a minor third between the third scale degree and the fifth scale degree as well as the sixth scale degree and the upper octave. Yoshimatsu can move seamlessly between the major modes using the pentatonic scale as an anchor due to the absence of a fourth scale degree and a seventh scale degree in the pentatonic scale. The major pentatonic scale acts as a subset of the notes found in the major modes.

In “Arabesque in Dream” Yoshimatsu shifts back and forth between F ionian and B♭ lydian by making use of a repeated pentatonic pattern. An E♭ is introduced in m. 3 which when combined with the F pentatonic scale in the top staff and the bass pitch of F3 in the bottom staff evokes the sound of F mixolydian. The F pentatonic scale pattern in

the top staff continues into m. 4 where the bass note shifts to B♭3 and an E♮ is introduced causing a tonal shift to B♭ lydian.

The analysis presented in this chapter is primarily focused on self-contained melodic and harmonic ideas in a set of short pieces, but Yoshimatsu's approach to melody and harmony also relates to other musical ideas such as rhythm, form, and orchestration. The following chapters will build on the ideas introduced in my analysis of *Pleiades Dances IX*; as these chapters concern longer pieces, the analysis will take a more big-picture approach than previously employed. Chapter 3 concerns the relationships between melody, harmony, and form in *And Birds are Still…*, Chapter 4 discusses Yoshimatsu's reuse of musical material through an analysis of *Memo Flora*, and Chapter 5 explores the combination of jazz and contemporary classical music in *Cyber Bird*.

CHAPTER 3: *AND BIRDS ARE STILL…*

And Birds are Still… was composed in 1997 and had its premiere in the form of a studio recording by the Manchester Camerata conducted by Yukio Fujioka. The album featuring this recording is titled *Yoshimatsu: Memo Flora*, named after the largest piece on the album in terms of length and instrumentation, *Memo Flora* concerto.[14]

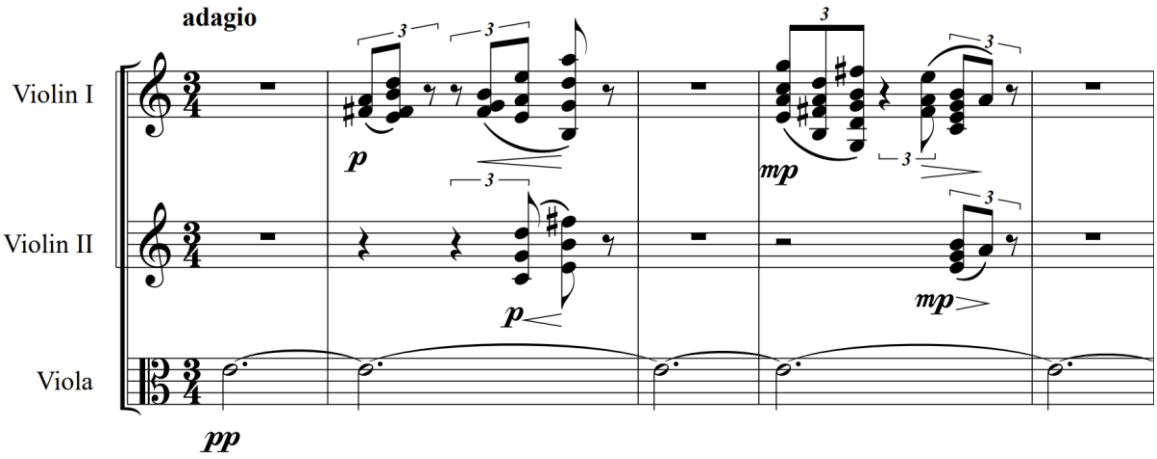
And Birds are Still… features many of the same qualities present in *Pleiades Dances.* It creates a feeling of openness through its chord voicings, extended harmony, and implications of multiple modes of the major scale. In this chapter, I discuss how melody and harmony relate to the form of the composition by exploring the development of harmonic rhythm, melodic gestures, harmonic content, and accompanimental patterns.

Classification of melody becomes a more difficult topic in the analysis of *And Birds are Still…* than in *Pleiades Dances IX. And Birds are Still…* features a more complex texture partly due to the larger instrumentation. The texture can rarely be summarized as simply melody and accompaniment. Instead, it is more fruitful to consider individual lines as having either accompanimental or melodic qualities. When discussing how melody relates to the overall form, all lines exhibiting melodic characteristics will be considered.

And Birds are Still… places more musical importance on conveying an extra-musical idea than the pieces found in *Pleiades Dances IX.* The musical representation of

[14] Takashi Yoshimatsu, *Yoshimatsu: Memo Flora*, Chandos Records, 1998.

the title primarily takes the form of textures conveying stillness and references to birdsong. Yoshimatsu's use of texture to convey a feeling of stillness can be seen in the opening section of the composition pictured below in a condensed format.



Example 3.1: Condensed Score of Measures 1–5 of *And Birds are Still…*

And Birds are Still… begins with a sustained E4 in the violas that provides a backdrop for the sporadic melodic gestures in the violins and eventually cellos. Both the sustained pedal and the scattered melodic gestures contribute to the idea of stillness conveyed in the title; this stillness appears musically as a lack of movement. In the case of the violas, this lack of movement presents itself literally as a sustained pitch. The sporadic melodic gestures in the violins provide more movement, but this allows for the stillness to be highlighted further between gestures. The idea of stillness is evident as the violas present the sustained E4 in m. 1 alone, but the introduction of a short, moving melodic gesture provides a point of contrast for the sustained pitch to feel even more motionless in m. 3.

These textural representations of stillness contribute to the form of *And Birds are Still…* as well. The piece begins and ends with a similar texture, but the amount of

stillness portrayed by the texture differs throughout the middle section of the composition. These changes in texture come in the form of varied harmonic rhythm and the frequency and density of melodic gestures.

Form	A									
Tempo	Adagio		poco più mosso	Andante tranquillo	Moderato					
Measures	1–7	8	9–13	14–28	29–30	31–32	33–34	35–36	37–38	39–42
Harmony	Em11	CM7/E	Em11	Em11	CM9(♯11)	Am13	GM9(♯11)	Em11	CM9(♯11)	Am13
Mode	Aeolian	Aeolian	Aeolian	Aeolian	Lydian	Dorian	Lydian	Ambiguous	Lydian	Dorian

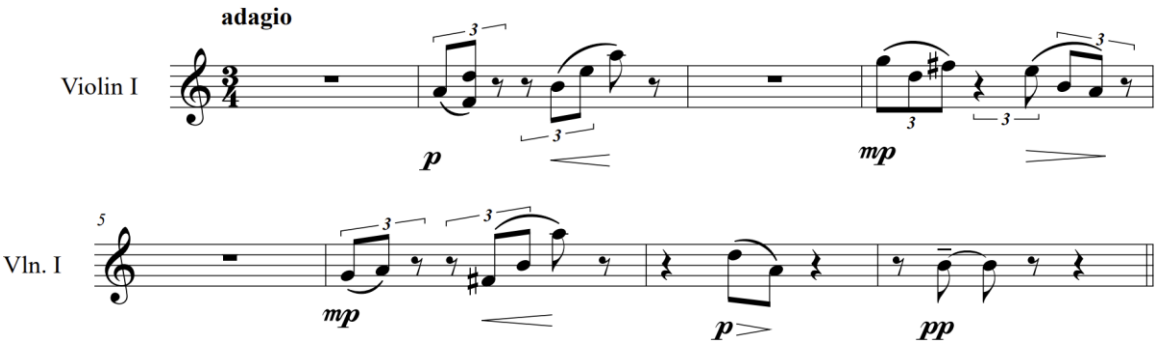
B									
Andante tranquillo				poco più mosso		più mosso		Adagio amabile	
43–46	47–50	51–54	55–56	57–60	61–64	65–68	69–72	73–76	77
Em13	CM9(♯11)	Am13	GM9(♯11)	Em13	CM9(♯11)	Am13	GM9	Em11	CM9(♯11)
Dorian	Lydian	Dorian	Lydian	Dorian	Lydian	Dorian	Ambiguous	Aeolian	Lydian

						A’		
					Moderato	Tempo I		
78	79–80	81	82	83–84	85–102	103–106	107–110	111–115
Am13	GM11	Em11	CM9(♯11)	Am13	GM9(♯11)	CM9(♯11)	Em11	Em11
Dorian	Ionian	Aeolian	Lydian	Dorian	Lydian	Lydian	Aeolian	Aeolian

Example 3.2: Form Diagram of *And Birds are Still…*

And Birds are Still… is in ternary form being made up of an A section, a B section, and a modified and shortened A' section. Variance in harmonic rhythm can be seen in Example 3.2 by comparing how many measures each chord is sustained. For example, the chords from mm. 29–38 last for two measures each while the chords from mm. 43–54 last for four measures each. In the A section, the harmonic rhythm starts slow but becomes much faster at m. 29. Section B starts with a relatively consistent harmonic rhythm of four measures per chord. Other than the shortened GM9(♯11) from mm. 55–56, this harmonic rhythm stays consistent until m. 77, where it becomes faster before

sustaining the final GM9(♯11) of the section from mm. 85–102. The final A' section returns to a harmonic rhythm of about four measures per chord.



Example 3.3: Measures 1–8 of the Violin I part of *And Birds are Still…*

Many of the scattered melodic gestures found throughout *And Birds are Still…* share characteristics with birdsong; these characteristics can be seen in mm. 1–8 of the violin part as shown in Example 3.3. One aspect of these melodic gestures that alludes to the idea of birdsong is their sporadic nature. These melodic gestures are somewhat disjunct in terms of time, pitch, and dynamics which causes them to sound more natural and less artificial.

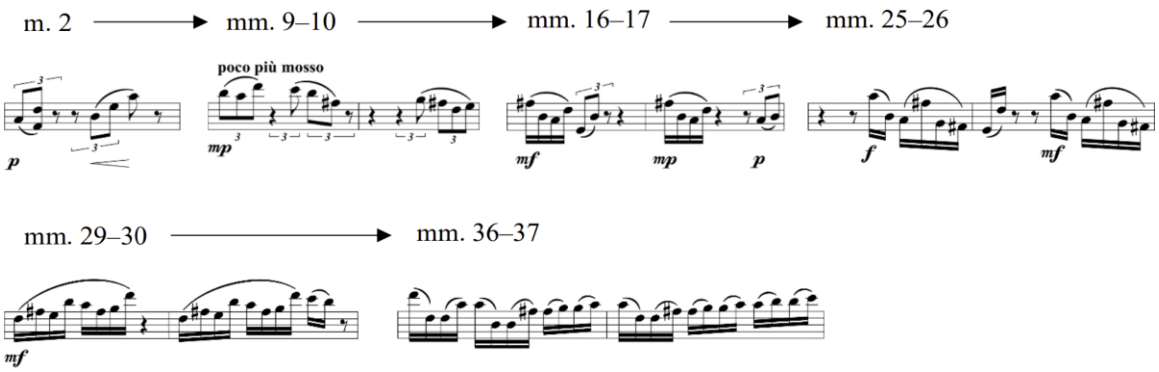
Each of these melodic gestures is notated in triplet eighth notes until m. 6, but the differing lengths of gestures and space between gestures create a more sporadic rhythmic feel. Most melodic gestures in this passage are divided into groups of two or three aside from the final single note, and perhaps most importantly, there is not a consistent pattern of groupings.

The space between gestures ranges from ⅔ of a beat to 4 ½ beats. Because the accompanying texture consists of a single sustained pitch in the viola parts, the space between gestures represents a lack of movement in the overall textures rather than a

specifically timed series of rests. In other words, it would be very difficult for a listener to discern any kind of consistent pulse.

The analysis of *Pleiades Dances IX* in Chapter 2 demonstrated Yoshimatsu's use of large intervals within melodic gestures. Large intervals are especially apparent within the melodic gestures of *And Birds are Still…* where the large intervals contribute to the disjunct nature of these gestures. Measures 1–8 of the Violin I part feature many perfect fourths.

Finally, the dynamics also show a disjunct quality. Most gestures in this passage are played at different dynamics. For example, the first melodic gesture in m. 2 is marked *piano* while the first melodic gesture of m. 4 is marked *mezzopiano.* The subtle difference between these two dynamics contributes to the overall disjunct quality of the gestures. Furthermore, the second gesture of m. 2 is marked with a crescendo while the second gesture of m. 4 is marked with a diminuendo. Throughout mm. 1–8, crescendos accompany ascending gestures while diminuendos accompany descending gestures.

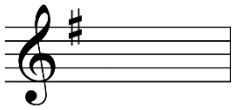
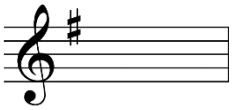
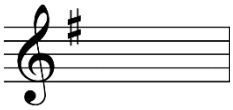
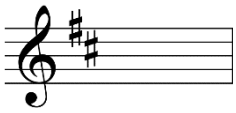


Example 3.4: Development of melodic gestures from m. 1–42 of *And Birds are Still…* as seen in the Violin I part.

Like the harmonic rhythm discussed previously, these melodic gestures also have an important relationship to the form of *And Birds are Still…* This relationship primarily comes in the form of varying rhythmic values, differing lengths of gestures, and space between gestures. The development of melodic gestures throughout the A section can be seen in Example 3.4. The melodic gestures from mm. 1–12 are made up of triplet eighth notes and occasionally straight eighth notes. In m. 16, sixteenth notes are introduced in the violin parts. From mm. 16–27, both sixteenth notes and triplet eighth notes are used in the melodic lines. Starting in m. 29, only sixteenth notes are used in the melodic lines.

As the rhythmic values decrease, the lengths of gestures increase. In the opening section starting at m. 2, the melodic gestures are divided into groups of two and three. Measure 10 is the first moment that features a four-note-long melodic gesture, and m. 25 features an eight-note-long gesture. As the length of melodic gestures increases, the space between melodic gestures decreases. The lengths of melodic gestures continue to increase until m. 36 where the section culminates in a continuous stream of sixteenth notes. This moment also represents a point where the space between gestures goes from very short to nonexistent.

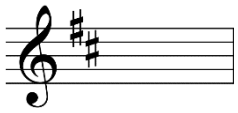
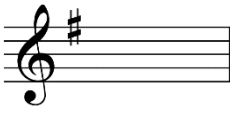
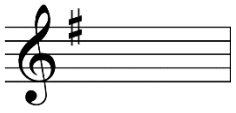
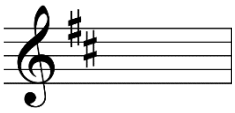
The B section of *And Birds are Still…* begins in m. 43 after the continuous stream of sixteenth notes abruptly drops out at m. 41 leaving only a held Am7 chord in the cello parts that fades into m. 42. At m. 42, a solo violin introduces the pitch D6 to the chord, and this pitch sustains through the start of the B section in m. 43. The B section is unique because of its differences in modes and texture as well as its departure from the motivic material of the A section.

Measures 14–28	Measures 29–30	Measures 31–32	Measures 33–34
Em11	CM9(♯13)	Am6	GM9(♯13)
E Aeolian	C Lydian	A Dorian	G Lydian
			

Example 3.5: Chord and Mode analysis of mm. 14–34 of *And Birds are Still…*

And Birds are Still… revolves around a four-chord progression made up of Em, CM, Am, and GM, each with various chordal extensions. Example 3.5 shows the first statement of the full chord progression, seen here as Em11, CM9(♯13), Am6, and GM9(♯13). The Em11 chord spans from mm. 14–28 and uses notes from E aeolian. This is followed by the CM9(♯13) which sustains through mm. 29 and 30 and represents C lydian. The C3 in the basses at m. 29 moves down to an A2 in m. 31 creating an Am6 that lasts from mm. 31-32 which features notes from A dorian. Finally, The A2 in the basses steps down to a G2 while the pitch classes B, D, F♯, A, and C♯ are introduced in the violins to culminate in a GM9(♯13) invoking the sound of G lydian.

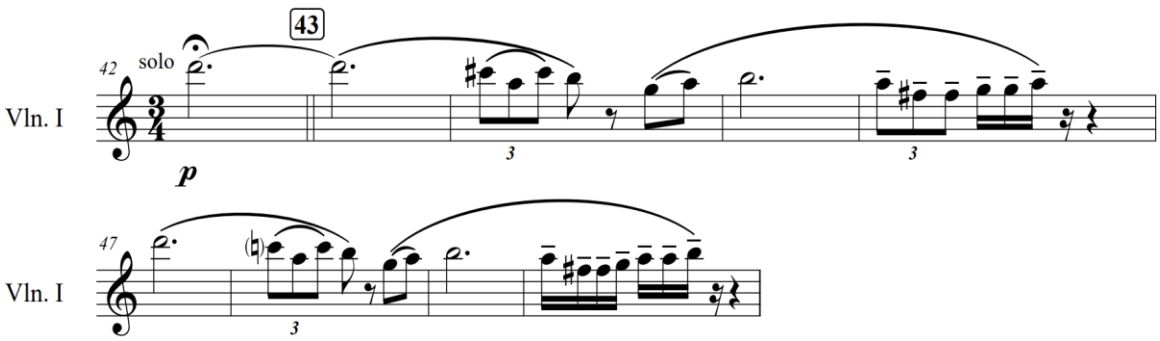
Yoshimatsu begins this progression by using modes from a shared parent scale, E aeolian, but introducing a C♯ over the GM9 chord creates an unexpected modal shift using notes from B aeolian instead. This progression is repeated until the end of the A section where it is left unresolved, ending on the Am6 chord instead of continuing to the GM9(♯13).

Measures 43–46	Measures 47–50	Measures 51–54	Measures 55–56
Em6	CM9(♯13)	Am6	GM9(♯13)
E Dorian	C Lydian	A Dorian	G Lydian
			

Example 3.6: Chord and Mode analysis of mm. 43–56 of *And Birds are Still…*

As seen in Example 3.6, this four-chord progression is also utilized throughout the B section of *And Birds are Still…* with one subtle but important change: the first chord in the progression is now Em6 instead of Em11, invoking the sound of E dorian rather than E aeolian. This causes the shift to the CM9(♯13) chord in m. 47 to take on a different character due to it belonging to a different parent scale. The absence of Em11 also means the absence of any use of the aeolian mode in the progression. It is important to note that the C♯ found in the Em6 chord is not a new pitch altogether at this point in the piece as it was used previously as part of the GM9(♯13) chord, but this does represent the first time that C♯ has been used as part of the general E minor harmony.

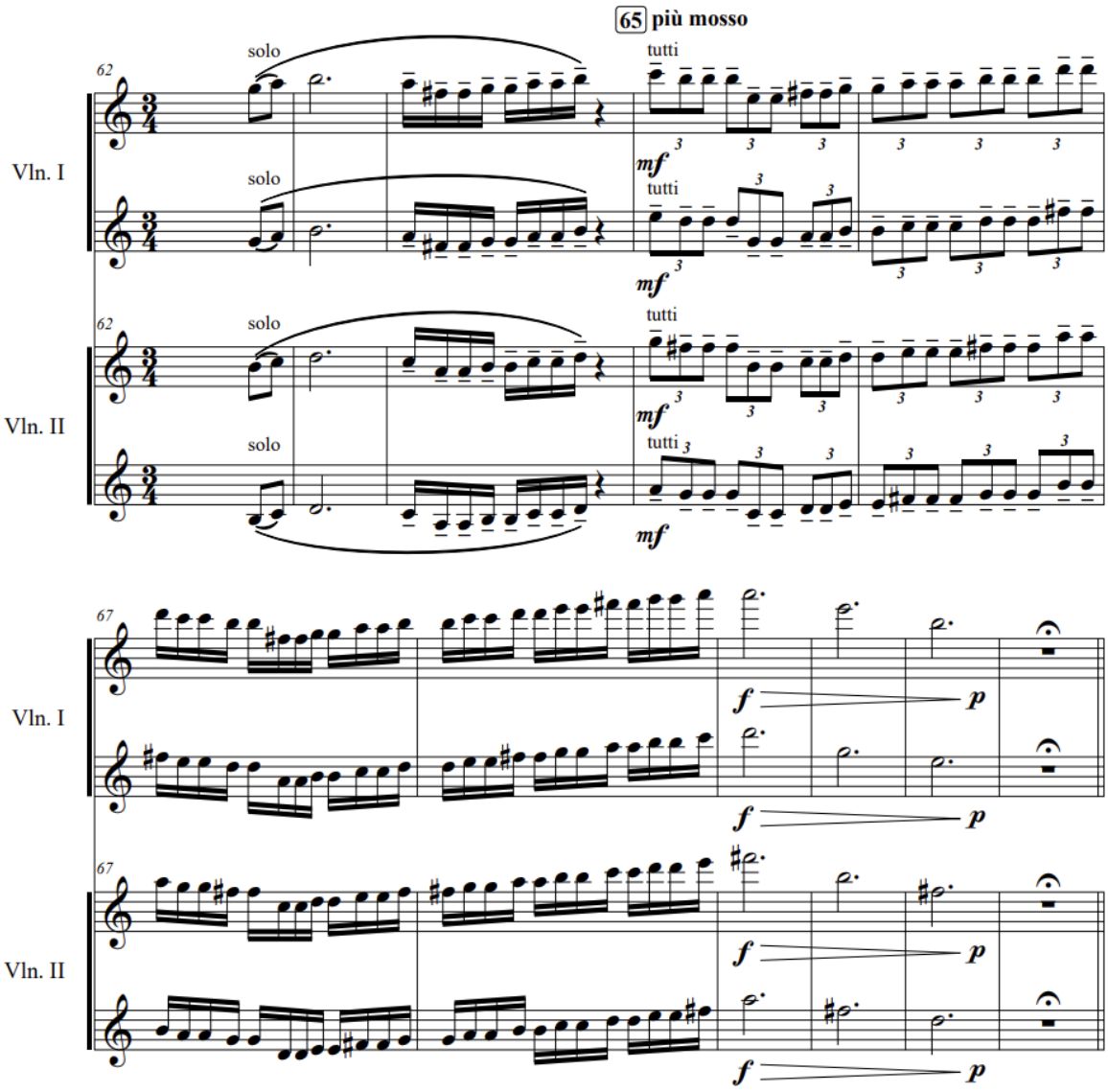
The use of E dorian in place of E aeolian lasts for two full cycles of the four-chord progression spanning from mm. 43–72. At m. 73, the progression restarts with the return of E aeolian. This tonal shift can make it seem like the piece has begun a modified recapitulation of the opening section, but the reappearance of the B section's theme over the final GM9(♯13) in m. 85 reveals otherwise. Furthermore, the return of melodic material, textural techniques, and the tempo from the A section in m. 103 provides a much better case for this moment being the start of a new section.



Example 3.7: Measures 42–50 of the Violin I part of *And Birds are Still…*

As discussed earlier in the section concerning texture's role in conveying the concept of stillness, the melodic material of the A section does not consist of a traditional, singable melody, but is instead made up of short, birdsong-like gestures that become faster, longer, and more frequent as the A section goes on. The B section on the other hand begins with a lyrical, melodic line played by a solo violin. This can be seen in Example 3.7.

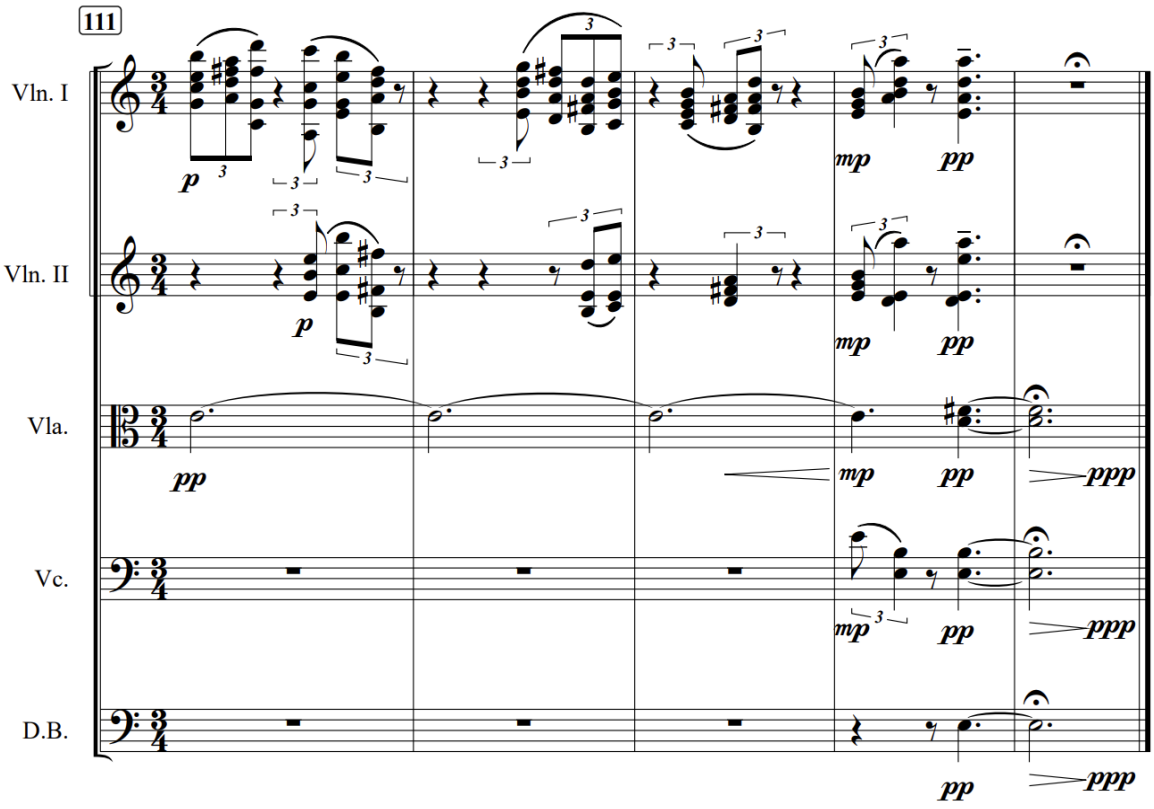
The melody found in the violin I part of m. 43 contains aspects of the opening gestures such as the inclusion of eighth notes, borrowed triplet eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, but the sparser texture, longer note values, and contour of the phrases give this line a uniquely melodic quality. The sparse accompanimental texture made up of solo violin II, solo viola, and solo cello provides support for the single melodic line while being minimal enough to make the violin I line stand out as a melody. The use of dotted half notes within the melodic phrases of the violin I provides a contrast in rhythm which contributes to the melodic quality of the line. Finally, the contour of the melody is much less disjunct than the melodic gestures found in the A section of the piece, giving the line a more lyrical quality.



Example 3.8: Measures 62–72 of the Violin parts of *And Birds are Still…*

After the initial presentation of the melody starting in m. 43, the texture slowly builds as more soloists join in both melodic and accompanimental roles. This culminates in the full string sections entering once again in m. 65 where a brief buildup reminiscent of the one at the end of the A section occurs. In this buildup, the violins switch from playing melodic material to playing a stream of triplet eighth notes in m. 65 which quickly turns into a stream of sixteenth notes in m. 67.

The overall B section of the piece contains one final subsection before returning to the musical ideas presented at the beginning of the composition in the form of an A' section. In this subsection, the texture once again becomes sparser as the same soloists from the beginning of the B section play once more, and new musical material is presented. Much of the musical material in this section has characteristics of both melody and accompaniment. The violin II part contains a two-measure repeating phrase in three-part harmony while the violin I part contains longer phrases made up of notes that last for four beats creating a hemiola effect. This subsection lasts until m. 85 where the full string sections enter and the main theme of the B section returns. The B section ends using a very similar buildup to the one found in mm. 63–72.

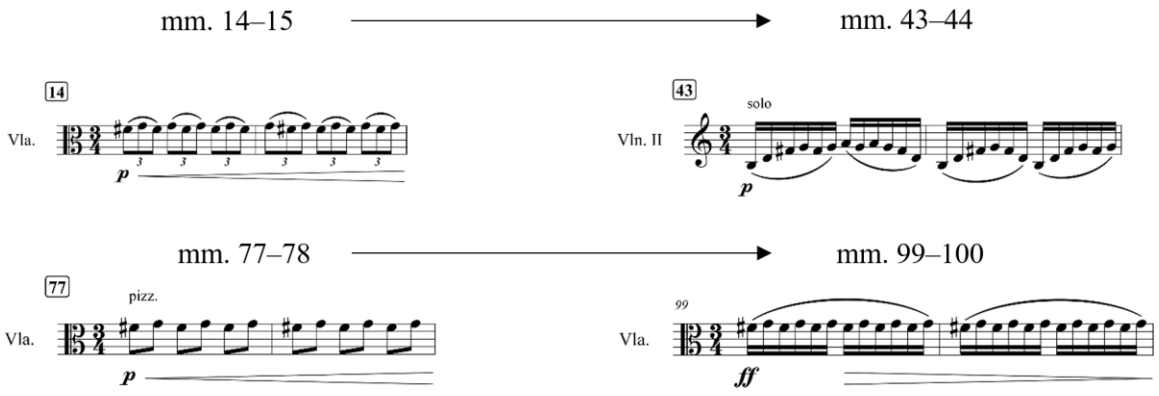


Example 3.9: Condensed score of mm. 111–115 of *And Birds are Still…*

In mm. 99–102, the violins abruptly drop out, the basses and cellos gradually fade out, and the violas soften in volume and sustain into the final A' section. The melodic material in mm. 103–114 is nearly identical to that of mm. 1–12 of the A section. As seen in Example 3.9, the piece ends with the chord played on the second half of beat 2 of m. 114 in the violas, cellos, and basses sustaining into m. 115 where it gradually fades throughout a fermata.

The development of accompanimental material in *And Birds are Still…* interacts with the form in similar ways to the development of melodic material while being a little less involved. The accompanimental material in *And Birds are Still…* is primarily made up of sustained chords and ostinati. The sustained chords serve to provide a harmonic foundation, and the ostinati provide a rhythmic counterpoint to the melody that often complicates the rhythmic feel of a section and obscures the meter.

Sustained chords can be found throughout the entirety of *And Birds are Still…* As mentioned when discussing harmonic rhythm, these sustained chords move at different rates and help represent different levels of stillness to aid in creating a sense of form. The sustained chords are also seen orchestrated in different sections and at various levels of density. Despite the changes in harmonic rhythm and texture, the presence of sustained chords throughout the composition gives the piece a sense of cohesiveness.



Example 3.10: Development of Accompanimental Ostinati in mm. 14–100 of *And Birds are Still…*

Example 3.10 shows how the accompanimental ostinati develop chronologically throughout *And Birds are Still…* Measure 14 is the first moment where a non-sustained accompanimental idea is introduced. Here, the violas present a triplet eighth-note ostinato that provides support for the melodic gestures of this section. This ostinato is made up of an oscillation between F♯4 and G4. Repeating these two pitches as part of a triplet pattern creates a feeling of metric dissonance. This dissonance is furthered by the fact that the violin I part includes many sixteenth notes as part of its melodic gestures in mm. 16–40 which creates a polyrhythm with the viola part.

This triplet eighth-note ostinato continues with small variations throughout the A section of the composition. As the texture becomes sparser to support the solo violin melody at m. 43, the accompaniment is reduced to sustained chords in the viola part and cello part and a new ostinato in the violin II part. This new ostinato once again creates a feeling of metric dissonance as the notes are now divided into groups of six sixteenth notes while the melody remains in 3/4.

In m. 77, the viola part includes a significant variation on the ostinato of the A section. This new version of the original ostinato retains the oscillation between F♯4 and G4, but it now adheres to the 3/4 meter by using simple eighth notes instead of compound eighth notes. As the ostinato begins to fit more with meter, the sustained chords do the opposite spanning throughout four beats creating a hemiola against the 3/4 meter.

Finally, the B section ends in mm. 99–102 with an ostinato that shares qualities with the first two ostinati. This ostinato combines the oscillation between F♯4 and G4 from the original pattern with the repeating groups of 6 sixteenth notes of the second pattern. The rhythm does not create as much of a sense of metric dissonance as seen previously because of the absence of rhythm in the other parts. The composition ends with a return to a simple accompaniment made up of long sustained chords.

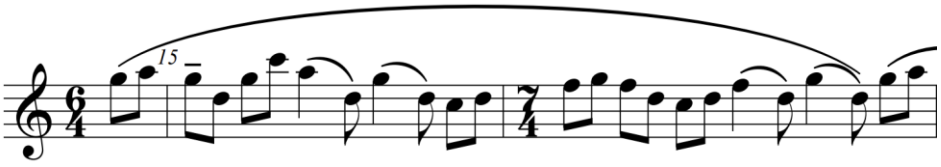
When organizing a chapter, it is often my goal to use commonalities between analytical ideas to organize sections by using a shared quality to pivot from idea to idea. Structuring this chapter on melody and harmony in *And Birds are Still…* presented a unique challenge in that there is a complex web of connections between each musical idea in the composition. For example, I chose to discuss harmonic rhythm as part of my view on Yoshimatsu's musical representation of stillness, but I could have easily included this as part of the section exploring harmonic content.

In this view, the challenges I faced when organizing this chapter stem from the very thing that gives this composition a sense of continuity. The melodic ideas do not exist independently of the accompanimental ideas, and the harmony does not exist independently of the harmonic rhythm. All of these musical components interact with each other to give *And Birds are Still…* a clear sense of form and continuity.

CHAPTER 4: MEMO FLORA

Memo Flora is a piano concerto written in 1997 for pianist Kyoko Tabe. It was first performed in 1998 by Kyoko Tabe and the Manchester Camerata conducted by Sachio Fujioka. *Memo Flora* is made up of numerous recurring themes and motives that give the concerto a sense of continuity, but many of the musical ideas throughout the composition also relate to Yoshimatsu's other works. This chapter will focus on *Memo Flora*'s recurring melodic and harmonic ideas and how they relate to musical material from *Pleiades Dances IX* and *And Birds are Still…*

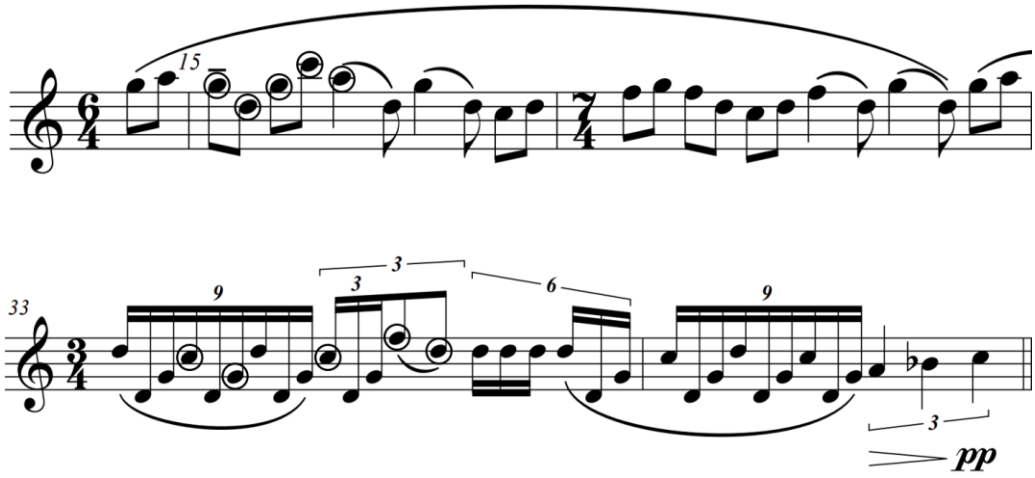
It is important to note that although this chapter is placed after the chapters concerning *Pleiades Dances IX* and *And Birds are Still…*, *Memo Flora* was composed a year before *And Birds are Still…* and four years before *Pleiades Dances IX*. If the similarities between *Memo Flora* and the previously discussed compositions were the result of a conscious decision by Yoshimatsu, it would be *Pleiades Dances IX* and *And Birds are Still…* that borrowed from *Memo Flora*.



Example 4.1: Main theme as seen in mm. 15–16 of *Memo Flora* Movement I

Example 4.1 shows the two-measure theme that is introduced in m. 15 of movement I. The pitches present in this theme are derived from the F major pentatonic

scale, and the melody itself contains a variety of intervals. This relates to the feeling of openness that is often present in Yoshimatsu's music and was first discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Like the use of the pentatonic scale in "Arabesque in Dream" from *Pleiades Dances IX*, this pentatonic melody is recontextualized through the lenses of different modes as the harmony in the accompaniment shifts. For example, when accompanied by the E♭M7 chord in m. 28, the melody takes on a lydian flavor because of the presence of A♮. This is followed by a Cm7 chord in m. 30 which recontextualizes the melody into C dorian with A♮ being the deciding factor once again.

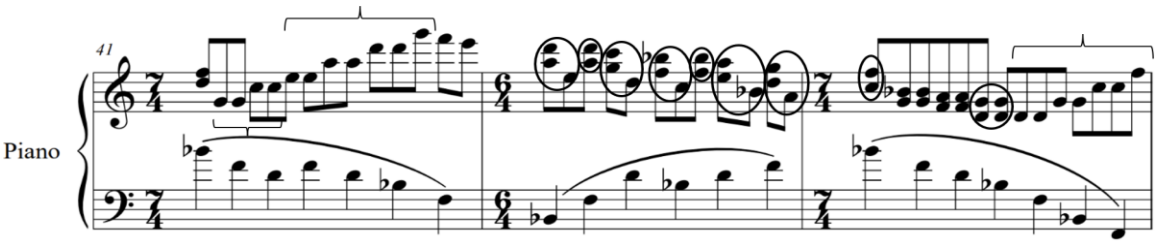


Example 4.2: Comparison of the theme of Movement I at m. 15 (top) and its variation in Movement II at m. 33 (bottom)

This short theme becomes the basis for the rest of the first movement, and aspects of the theme can be seen in the subsequent movements. An example of this theme in Movement II is the reference m. 33 where the piano plays a brief melodic idea that stems from pitches found in Movement I's theme. Example 4.2 shows how m. 33 of Movement II relates to m. 15 of Movement I where the circled pitches in the bottom of the example

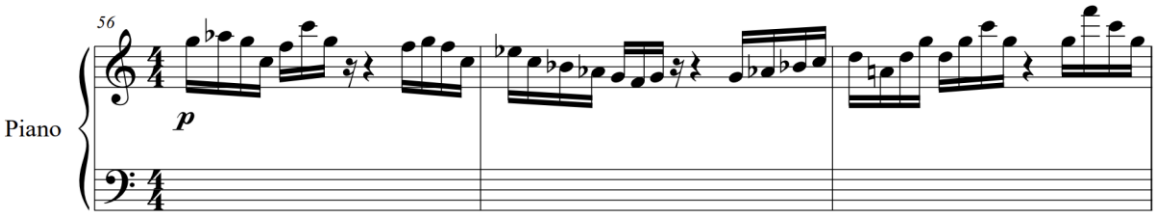
represent a transposition of the circled pitches in the top of the example. Adding the circled pitches of either the top line or the bottom line together results in a motive made up of scale degrees $\hat{2}$, $\hat{6}$, $\hat{2}$, $\hat{5}$, and $\hat{3}$ in F major pentatonic and B♭ Major pentatonic respectively.

The perfect 4ths that are present in the melody of Movement I are an important aspect of both the recognizability of the melody and the various motives that stem from the melody. As seen in Chapter 2, perfect fourths and perfect fifths were an important aspect of Yoshimatsu's style in the context of *Pleiades Dances IX*, and *Memo Flora* is not an exception. These perfect intervals play an integral part in all three movements.



Example 4.3: Annotated piano part at mm. 41–43 of Movement I

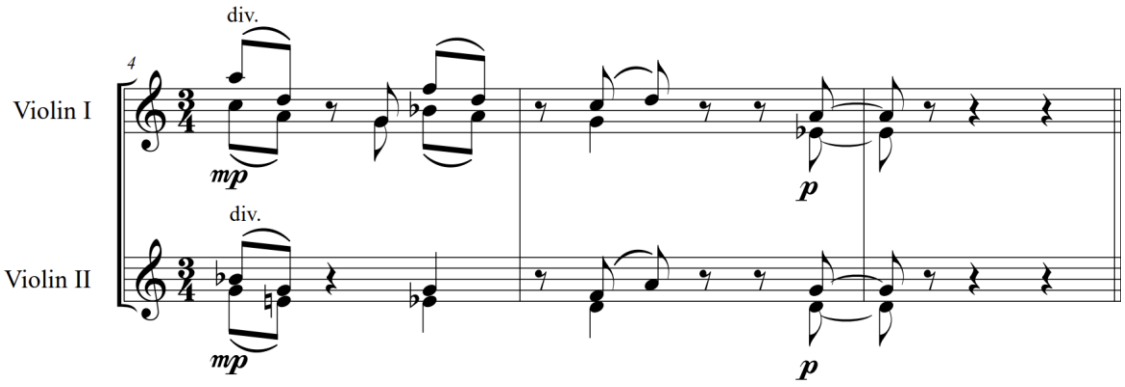
Example 4.3 shows a moment where Yoshimatsu's use of perfect 4ths as a motivic device is especially clear. The musical material in the top staff uses perfect 4ths melodically and harmonically. The bracketed pitches represent the use of melodic 4ths, and the circled pitches represent harmonic 4ths. All of the melodic 4ths are perfect 4ths and most of the harmonic 4ths are perfect 4ths, but there is one augmented 4th in m. 42 between E5 and B♭4. These two pitches do not occur at the same point in time, but they are part of a broken quartal triad. The fact that the triad is broken into two parts gives it a melodic quality on top of its harmonic quality.



Example 4.4: Piano part at mm. 56–58 of Movement I

Example 4.4 shows the piano part at mm. 56–58 of Movement I where the texture changes to a monophonic piano line accompanied by a repeated two-chord progression in the strings. This disjunct piano line builds on the melodic 4ths motive of 41–43 and includes increasingly large intervals as the section develops. An example of melodic perfect 4ths can be seen in beats 1 and 2 of m. 58. In this particular moment, each beat can also be seen as an arpeggiation of a quartal triad.

The texture and style of the piano part at this moment create a melodic line that is very similar to the disjunct piano line found in mm. 38–41 of "Waltz in Obtuse Angle" from *Pleiades Dances IX*. Like in *Pleiades Dances IX*, this piano line is monophonic, uses large intervals, and contains aspects of melody and accompaniment. However, some differences between the two include the longer duration of the melody and the presence of a string accompaniment in Movement I of *Memo Flora.*



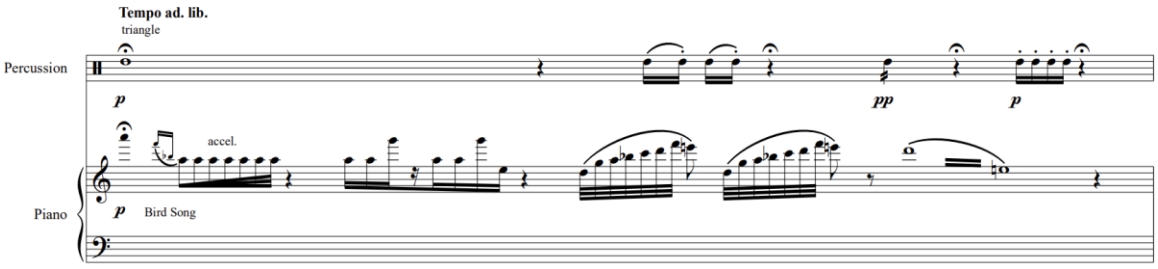
Example 4.5: Violin parts at mm. 4–6 of Movement II

Movement II of *Memo Flora* begins with a brief introduction of part of this movement's theme in the piano part. This is immediately followed by a kind of response from the violins in mm. 4–6. At this moment, the piano has dropped out leaving only the violins with melodic material. This melodic material can be seen in Example 4.5.

The melodic gestures in the violin parts of mm. 4–6 are very similar to the opening gestures of *And Birds are Still…* Both compositions include sigh-like gestures that start with a relatively open voicing and resolve into a more dissonant chord cluster. Furthermore, the introduction of *And Birds are Still…* also ends with a softer, single chord.

When this type of melodic gesture returns in mm. 10–12, the phrase is altered to include triplets which creates an overall faster melodic line with more pitches. This mirrors the development of the melodic gestures in the A section of *And Birds are Still…* where shorter note values are used and gestures become longer and denser as the section continues.

A difference between this moment in *Memo Flora* and the A section of *And Birds are Still…* can be seen in the way that the accompaniment interacts with the melody. In *And Birds are Still…*, the accompaniment was primarily made up of sustained chords which was one of the characteristics that contributed to the composition's sense of stillness. In Movement II of *Memo Flora*, although the violas and cellos accompany the piano melody with sustained chords, the accompaniment becomes more active when melodic material is played by the violins.



Example 4.6: Percussion and piano parts at m. 50 of Movement II

The similarities between Movement II of *Memo Flora* and *And Birds are Still…* continue with the flexible material of m. 50. The percussion and piano parts can be seen in Example 4.6. This moment is notated without a time signature, and the performers are instructed to play at their own tempo. This moment also represents a point where the string texture is reduced to just one player per part.

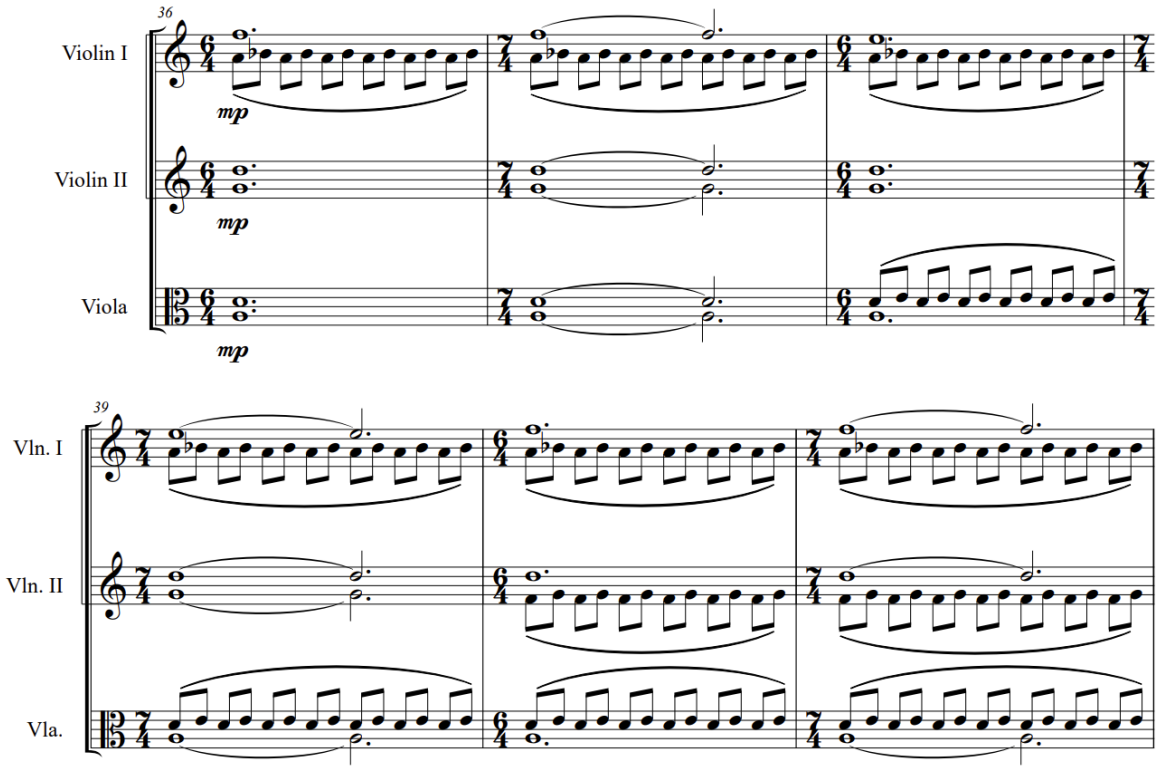
The first similarity to *And Birds are Still…* is the use of sporadic, disjunct gestures. The score even includes a reference to bird song in the piano part. The actual application of the sporadic gestures is slightly different from *And Birds are Still…* however. In *And Birds are Still…* each individual gesture is less active than they are in this moment of *Memo Flora*. The short, slow gestures of *And Birds are Still…* were more appropriate for conveying the stillness mentioned in the title.

Both m. 50 of Movement II of *Memo Flora* and the introduction of *And Birds are Still…* lack a clearly identifiable pulse. In *Memo Flora,* m. 50 is notated as an indeterminate section where the tempo is left up to each individual performer. Furthermore, the rhythmic values found in any individual part are varied enough that a pulse would be difficult to identify even with a steady tempo. On the other hand, *And Birds are Still…* is notated with a time signature and a relatively consistent but rubato

tempo. However, the use of varied rhythmic values and obscuring of beats makes it difficult to identify a consistent pulse.

Other similarities to *And Birds are Still…* in *Memo Flora* come in the form of accompaniment and harmony. Movement I begins with a sustained D4 in the viola part which acts as an introduction for the melodic material in the piano part and a foundation for the rest of the accompanimental material in this opening section. As this section develops, other sustained voices are added in the string parts both above and below the initial sustained D4 in the violas. The entrances of these additional pitches are staggered, so the slow and sustained quality of the accompaniment as a whole is maintained.

The sustained D4 in the viola part of *Memo Flora* is very similar to the sustained E4 in the viola part of *And Birds are Still…* Both pitches act as tonic and provide an introduction before the melodic material enters in their respective compositions. A difference between the two is that in *And Birds are Still…*, the sustained pitch in the violas remains the only sustained pitch of the accompaniment in the introduction before the accompaniment develops to include more rhythmic variety as opposed to *Memo Flora*'s gradual addition of more sustained pitches. This could once again be attributed to the conveying of stillness in *And Birds are Still…*



Example 4.7: Violin and viola parts at mm. 36–41 of Movement I

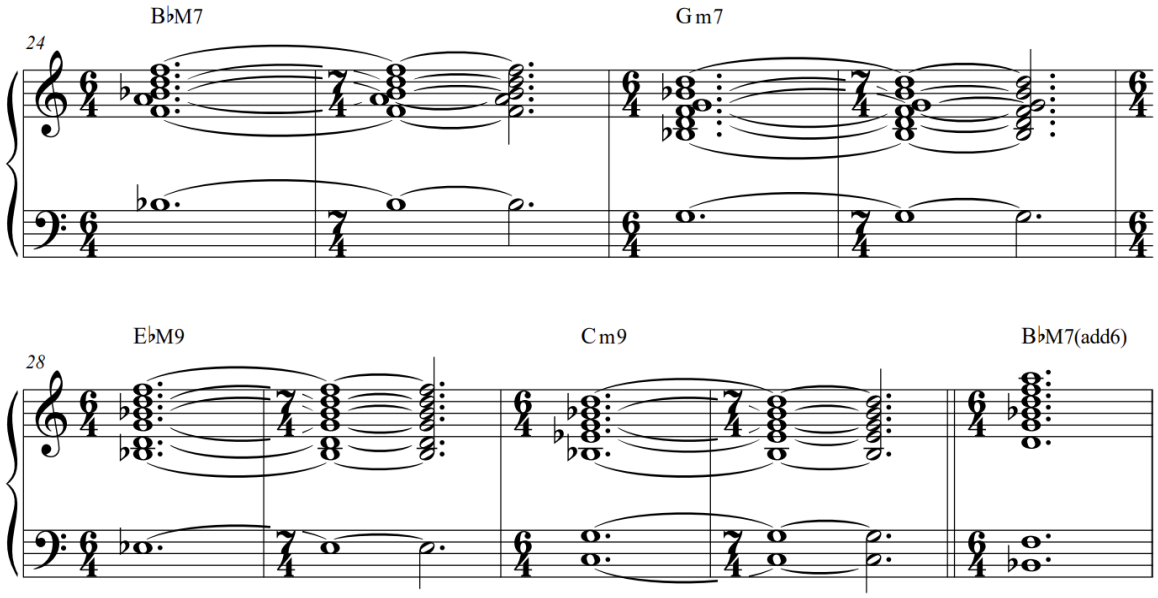
Example 4.7 begins with m. 36 which represents the moment in Movement I where the accompanimental material develops beyond just long, sustained chords. Here, a new accompanimental pattern is introduced in the violin I part made up of an oscillation between two pitches separated by a 2nd. As this section develops, the sustained pitches in the other voices gradually join violin I with the oscillating accompanimental pattern. When this happens the sustained pitch becomes one of the two pitches of the oscillating pattern which results in oscillation between different pitches between voices. For example, the pattern in the violin I part oscillates between A4 and B♭4 while the pattern in the viola part starts at m. 38 oscillates between D4 and E4.

This oscillating accompanimental pattern is nearly the same as the one introduced at m. 14 of *And Birds are Still…* The primary differences are the beat groupings and the

way the pitches themselves relate to the key. In *Memo Flora*, the two-note oscillation occurs throughout a single beat. This represents an agreement between the way that the accompaniment's rhythm is perceived and the way that it is notated. Conversely, the two-note oscillation at m. 14 of *And Birds are Still…* makes up only ⅔ of a beat. This creates a rhythmic dissonance against the notated meter.

The first major difference concerning scale degrees is that m. 36 of Movement I of *Memo Flora* is in a major key while m. 14 of *And Birds are Still…* is in a minor key. The oscillation between F♯4 and G4 in the viola part at m. 14 of *And Birds are Still…* is a movement between scale degrees $\hat{2}$ and $\hat{3}$ in E minor. While there are multiple oscillating accompanimental patterns from mm. 36–41 that move between different pitches a 2nd apart, the pattern in the violin I part that begins this section oscillates between A4 and B♭4 which represents a movement between scale degrees $\hat{7}$ and $\hat{1}$ in the key of B♭ major. While these are different scale degrees with respect to each of their keys, they have a relative major/minor relationship. Scale degrees $\hat{2}$ and $\hat{3}$ in E minor represent the same pitches as scale degrees $\hat{7}$ and $\hat{1}$ in G major while scale degrees $\hat{7}$ and $\hat{1}$ in B♭ major represent the same pitches as scale degrees $\hat{2}$ and $\hat{3}$ in G minor.

Yoshimatsu uses a consistent harmonic language throughout much of his repertoire, and *Memo Flora* follows this trend. As discussed in the previous chapters, Yoshimatsu's harmony often makes use of extended chords that invoke the sound of a particular mode. He seems to favor modes such as ionian, aeolian, lydian, and dorian, and he often highlights the relative relationship between lydian and dorian in his music.



Example 4.8: Harmonic reduction of mm. 24–32 of Movement I

Example 4.8 represents the chords presented in mm. 24–32 of Movement I as block chords. The roots of the first four chords in this progression are related by 3rds, and the root of the last chord returns to B♭. Furthermore, these chords all belong to the key of B♭ major making this a fully diatonic chord progression. B♭M7 and Gm7 do not evoke the sound of a particular mode because they lack the major modes' defining scale degrees and the minor modes' defining scale degrees respectively. The same is true of the E♭M9 chord and the Cm9 chord when viewing the accompaniment in isolation, but the A♮ in the melody projects a lydian quality on the E♭M9 chord and a dorian quality on the Cm9 chord.

And Birds are Still…

Measures 24–25	Measures 26–27	Measures 28–29	Measures 30–31
Em11	CM9(♯13)	Am6	GM9(♯13)
E Aeolian	C Lydian	A Dorian	G Lydian
G: vi	G: IV	G: ii	G: I

Memo Flora

Measures 14–28	Measures 29–30	Measures 31–32	Measures 33–34
B♭M7	Gm7	E♭M9	Cm9
Major Mode	Minor Mode	E♭ Lydian	C Dorian
B♭: I	B♭: vi	B♭: IV	B♭: ii

Example 4.9: Comparison of chord progressions in mm. 24–31 of Movement I of *Memo Flora* and mm. 14–34 of *And Birds are Still…*

This progression has an interesting relationship with the repeating four-chord progression that makes up *And Birds are Still…* On the surface, it seems that these are different chord progressions; they are in different keys and have a slightly different intervallic relationship. However, it is important to note that the progression in *Memo Flora* does loop back around to the B♭M7 chord, and the progression in *And Birds are Still…* loops continuously throughout the entire composition. The chord roots of both progressions contain the same intervals, but they occur in a different order. For example,

if the progression found in *And Birds are Still…* started with the second chord and continued from there, the roots and foundational triads would be the same as those in *Memo Flora.*

Some of the differences include the fact that *And Birds are Still…* places more emphasis on E minor as tonic than G major and *And Birds are Still…* includes more chord tones. The emphasis on E minor as tonic differentiates the two progressions, but it does not discount the relationship between the two. Whether the similarities were intentional or a product of Yoshimatsu's general musical taste, the similarities are a real aspect of the music that can provide valuable insight into Yoshimatsu's style.

The topic of reusing musical motives and themes in different compositions is an interesting one. On one hand, there can be a tendency to view it as uninspired or lacking creativity, but on the other hand, avoiding the reuse of musical ideas limits a composer's options and restricts creativity. Reusing motives and themes is not inherently good or bad, but it does have advantages and disadvantages.

One advantage of allowing the reuse of motives and themes in different compositions is the increased possibilities for creativity. It might not be possible to write a single, cohesive composition that includes all of the desired variations of a theme or motive. A single theme can have a different meaning depending on how it is contextualized within a piece. Furthermore, the application of a theme or motive can be affected by the time in which the composer is writing.

Memo Flora was written in 1997 while *Pleiades Dances IX* was written in 2003. In the six years between the two, Yoshimatsu may have had ideas that he did not consider when writing *Memo Flora*. However, this does not discount the original composition as

inauthentic. It simply provides an additional perspective on the themes and motives originally written for *Memo Flora*.

Finally, the reuse of themes and motives can serve a dramatic or emotional purpose. Being familiar with the composition in which a theme originates provides a unique perspective when hearing it recalled in a new piece. This could conjure up images of an extramusical idea associated with the original piece or it could encourage the listener to recount the emotions that they associate with the original composition.

The familiarity of a motive can also have negative effects depending on the listener's attitude about the original composition. If a listener dislikes the original piece, they are likely to bring biases into their perception of a composition that shares its themes and motives. Additionally, the association with extramusical ideas that stem from the original composition's narrative may not be desired by the composer. The composer may want to recontextualize a theme or motive without the baggage of its original context.

Yoshimatsu's reuse of musical material unifies his musical catalog into a cohesive style. This cohesion sometimes results in a lack of variance, but this is not necessarily a bad outcome. In the case of Yoshimatsu, a balance is struck between continuity of style and diversity of material.

CHAPTER 5: *CYBER BIRD*

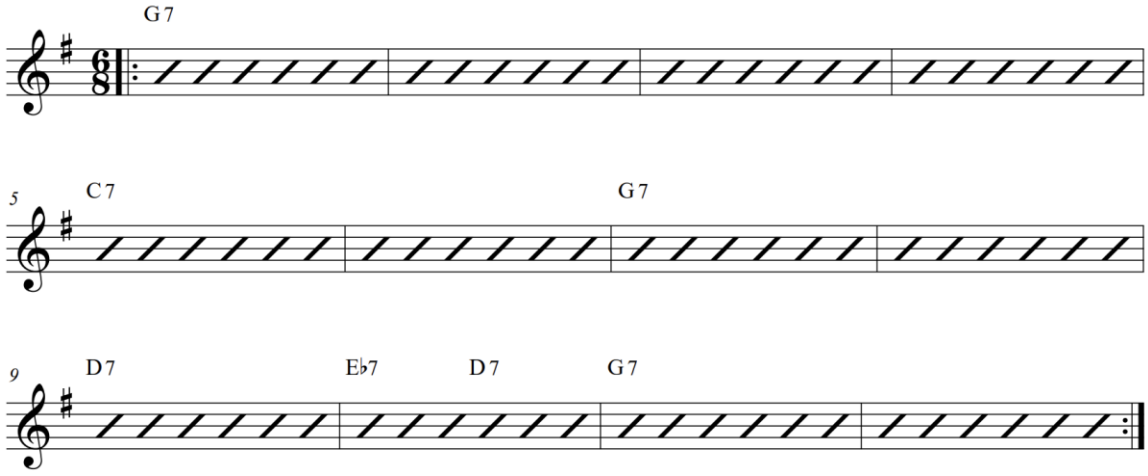
Cyber Bird is a concerto for alto saxophone composed in 1994 for saxophonist Nobuya Sugawa. The instrumentation features alto saxophone, piano, solo percussion, and orchestra. When performing this piece, the alto saxophonist, pianist, and solo percussionist perform in front of the rest of the orchestra resulting in a kind of chamber ensemble or jazz combo with orchestral accompaniment.

Cyber Bird was composed three years after Yoshimatsu's *Fuzzy Bird* sonata for alto saxophone. Many musical ideas from *Fuzzy Bird* are expanded upon or reimagined in *Cyber Bird*. While the reuse of musical material in *Cyber Bird* is not the primary focus of this chapter, examples of this will be mentioned throughout as they become relevant. The primary goal of this chapter is to analyze the relationship between jazz and Yoshimatsu's usual neo-romantic style.

The influence of jazz on Takashi Yoshimatsu's music takes a very literal form in *Cyber Bird* as Yoshimatsu uses elements of both the blues and contemporary classical composition. Throughout the piece, Yoshimatsu interweaves these two genres in various ways by combining jazz harmony, texture, and performance practice with his own neo-romantic style. In doing this, he creates a unique and engaging work that expands upon his signature style.

Yoshimatsu's use of musical ideas pertaining to modal jazz is a topic that was discussed in the previous chapters, but *Cyber Bird* highlights a different jazz influence in the form of the blues. The blues plays an important part in the characterization of *Cyber*

Bird. Its influence is most explicit in the first movement, but there are elements of the blues in all three movements.



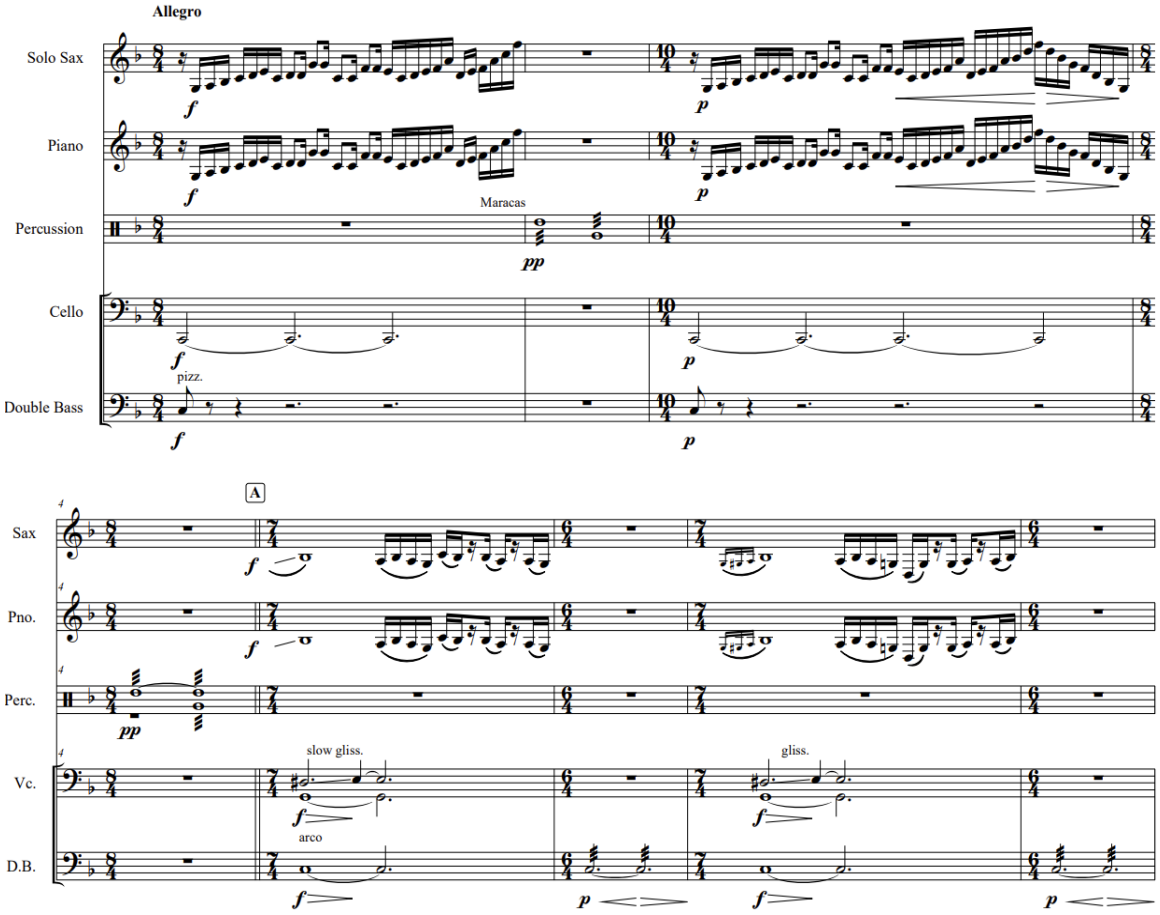
Example 5.1: 12-bar blues as seen in the head of Miles Davis's "All Blues"

Example 5.1 shows the chord progression that accompanies the main tune in Miles Davis's "All Blues" from the album *Kind of Blue.* This chord progression is a variation of the 12-bar blues, a standard chord progression found in countless blues songs. In the *Grove Music Online* article "Blues", Elijah Wald states "The most limited definition of blues is as a specific sequence of chords, the '12-bar blues,' which consists of four measures of the tonic (I), two measures of the subdominant (IV), two of the tonic, one of the dominant seventh (V7), one of the subdominant, and two of the tonic."[15]

In the blues, the tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords are often all played as major-minor 7th chords. This can be seen in Example 34 where Miles Davis uses the chords G7, C7, and D7 in the key of G major. In this chapter, the label major-minor 7th

[15] Elijah Wald. "Blues," *Grove Music Online*. 10 July 2012; accessed 18 February 2024.

will be used for chords made up of a root, major 3rd, perfect 5th, and minor 7th that do not have a dominant function.



Example 5.2: Condensed C score of mm. 1–8 of Movement I

The first movement of *Cyber Bird* is centered on a tonic major-minor 7th chord that is repeated and embellished throughout. The first appearance of this C7 chord in full is on beat 4 of m. 5 where the low strings create a C major triad while the alto saxophone and piano sustain a B♭3. A tonic major-minor 7th chord evokes the sound of the mixolydian mode. The mixolydian mode can also be seen prevalently in mm. 1 and 3 where the cello sustains a C2 while the alto saxophone and piano play a melodic line using pitches from C mixolydian.

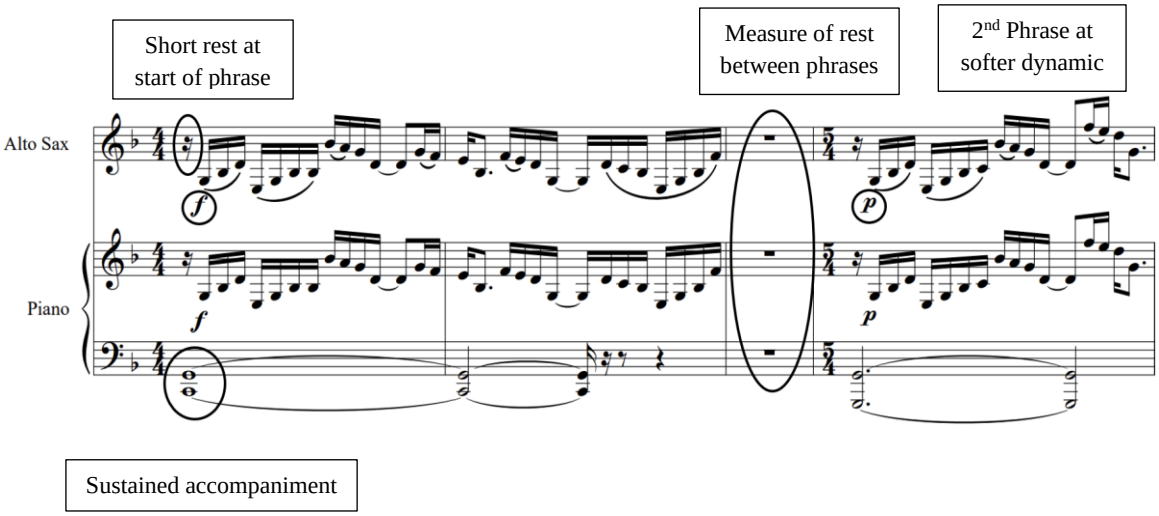
Another important aspect of jazz harmony that Yoshimatsu utilizes is the concept of blue notes. When discussing the history of blue notes in the *Grove Music Online* article "Blue Note", Gerhard Kubik states, "It was already observed in the 1920s that blues and jazz singers, as well as instrumentalists, tend to present the 3rd and 7th, sometimes also the 5th degree in a diatonic framework by pitch values a semitone lower, often with microtonal fluctuations." He also adds that "The intonation, often with glides and considerable melisma, sometimes deviates by microtonal values from the standard tunings of the guitar or the piano."[16]

The influence of blue notes can also be seen in Example 5.2 in both the alto saxophone part and the cello part at m. 5. At this moment, the alto saxophone scoops into the B♭3 which acts as the lowered 7th scale degree in the key of C. This B♭3 acts as a blue note and as the 7th scale degree in C mixolydian. At the same time, the cello begins on the lowered 3rd scale degree and slides up a semitone to the 3rd scale degree of C mixolydian. These scoops and glissandos can be seen throughout *Cyber Bird.*

While the first eight measures alone draw inspiration from numerous ideas related to the blues, the melodic line presented by the alto saxophone and piano is more consistent with Yoshimatsu's signature neo-romantic style. The combination of the alto saxophone and piano playing this opening melodic line in unison results in a unique timbre that makes up a significant part of the melody's character. The fast attacks of the hammers striking the strings of the piano give the line an energetic, percussive quality

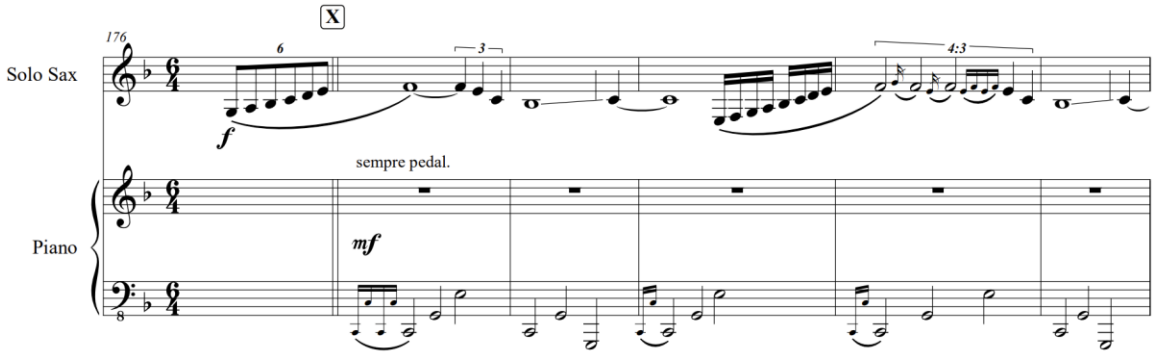
[16] Gerhard Kubik, "Blue note," *Grove Music Online*, 11 Feb. 2013; Accessed 18 February 2024.

that enhances the rhythmic feel of the passage. It is also worth noting that this passage shares many similarities with the opening of Yoshimatsu's *Fuzzy Bird* sonata.



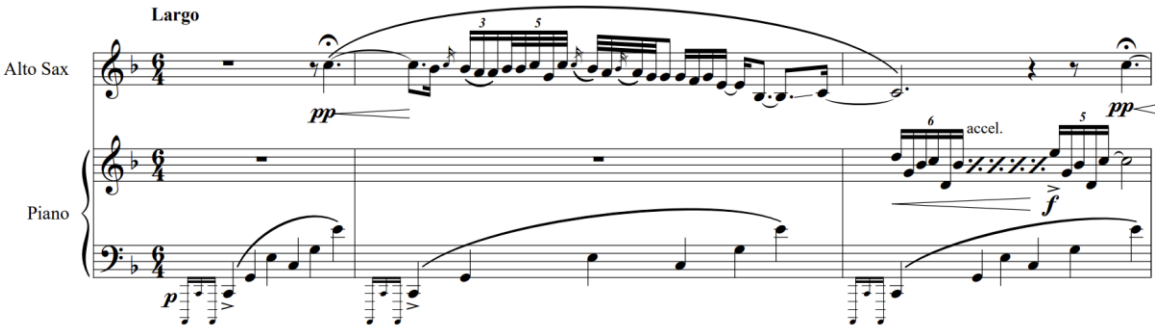
Example 5.3: Annotated score of mm. 1–4 of *Fuzzy Bird:* Movement I

Example 5.3 highlights some of the similarities between the opening of *Fuzzy Bird* and the opening of *Cyber Bird.* One similarity is the texture where the alto saxophone and piano play a melodic line in unison. In both instances, this melodic line starts with a sixteenth rest and is made up of a string of sixteenth notes. They are also both accompanied by sustained pitches, or a single sustained pitch in the case of *Cyber Bird,* and imply the C mixolydian mode with a sustained C2 in the lower voices. In both instances, the first statement and the second statement of the theme are separated by a measure of rest. In *Fuzzy Bird,* this measure of rest is completely silent while the measure of rest in the alto saxophone and piano of *Cyber Bird* features an interjection from the solo percussionist. The final similarity between the two openings is the presentation of the theme at a *forte* dynamic followed by a presentation at a softer *piano* dynamic.



Example 5.4: Alto saxophone and piano parts at mm. 176–181 of *Cyber Bird:* Movement

Example 5.4 pictures another example of a blue note being used as part of a significant motive. At this moment, the texture thins to just saxophone, piano, percussion, and strings as this new theme in the saxophone part is introduced. Tension begins to build as the theme is repeated at increasingly high pitch levels while the texture gradually builds beneath it culminating in a climax at m. 198. The B♭3 at m. 178 acts as a blue note that slides up to C4, using the relationship between the subtonic and tonic in the blues. This B♭3 is also once again harmonized by a C major chord in the accompaniment.



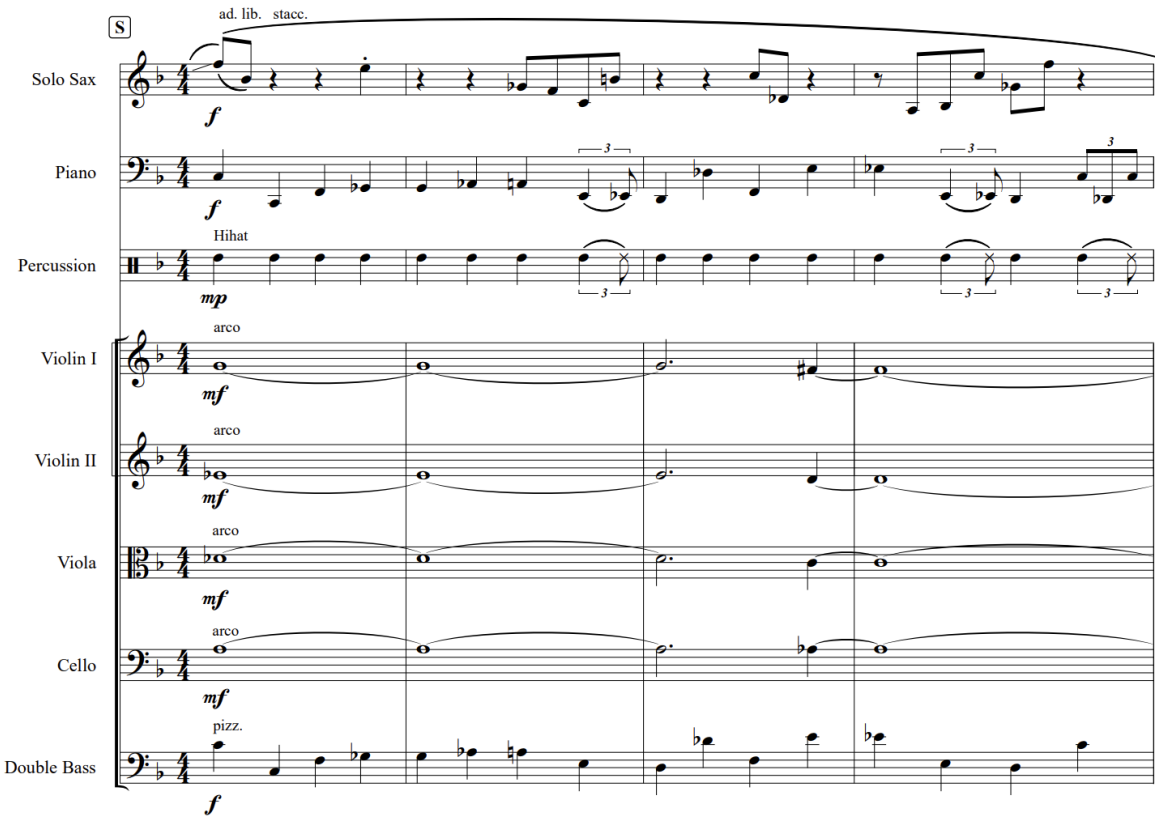
Example 5.5: Score of mm. 1–3 of *Fuzzy Bird:* Movement II

This theme is also derived from a theme from the *Fuzzy Bird* sonata. Example 5.5 shows the beginning of the second movement of *Fuzzy Bird.* Both themes include an accompaniment consisting of octave grace notes followed by the pitches C2, G2, and E3

and a repeated melodic gesture in the alto saxophone that ends with a glissando from B♭3 to C4. A notable difference is that the repeated melodic gesture in *Fuzzy Bird* is not used to intensify or to culminate in a climax. It is instead used as an introduction to the middle slow movement of the sonata and stays relatively soft throughout. This is an example of Yoshimatsu recontextualizing a musical idea rather than reusing a musical idea to fulfill the same purpose.

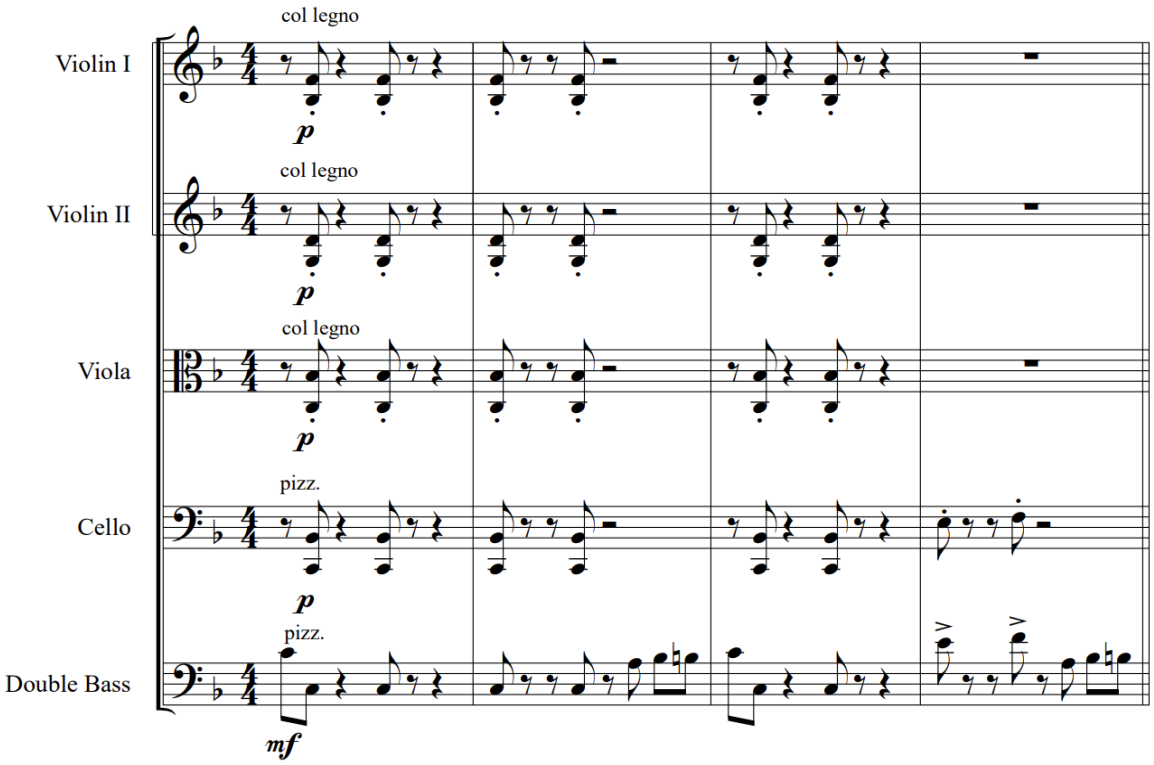
The inspiration of jazz and more specifically the blues on *Cyber Bird* can also be seen in Yoshimatsu's use of texture. An important part of a jazz band or even a jazz combo is the rhythm section. In *Cyber Bird,* Yoshimatsu uses textural techniques inspired by jazz rhythm sections' frequent use of walking bass and comping. Gunther Schuller defines walking bass as "...a line played pizzicato on a double bass in regular crotchets in 4/4 metre, the notes usually moving stepwise or in intervallic patterns not restricted to the main pitches of the harmony."[17]

[17] Gunther Schuller. "Walking bass," *Grove Music Online,* 2001; Accessed 19 February 2024.



Example 5.6: Condensed score of mm. 133–136 of *Cyber Bird:* Movement I

Example 5.6 shows a moment in the first movement of *Cyber Bird* that features a clear use of a walking bass in the double bass and piano parts. The double bass part is made up of a string of pizzicato quarter notes accompanying swing rhythms in the alto saxophone, piano, and solo percussion parts. This particular walking bass also features chromaticism reminiscent of the blue notes discussed previously. The walking bass in the piano part is mostly the same as the one in the double bass part with a few embellishments.



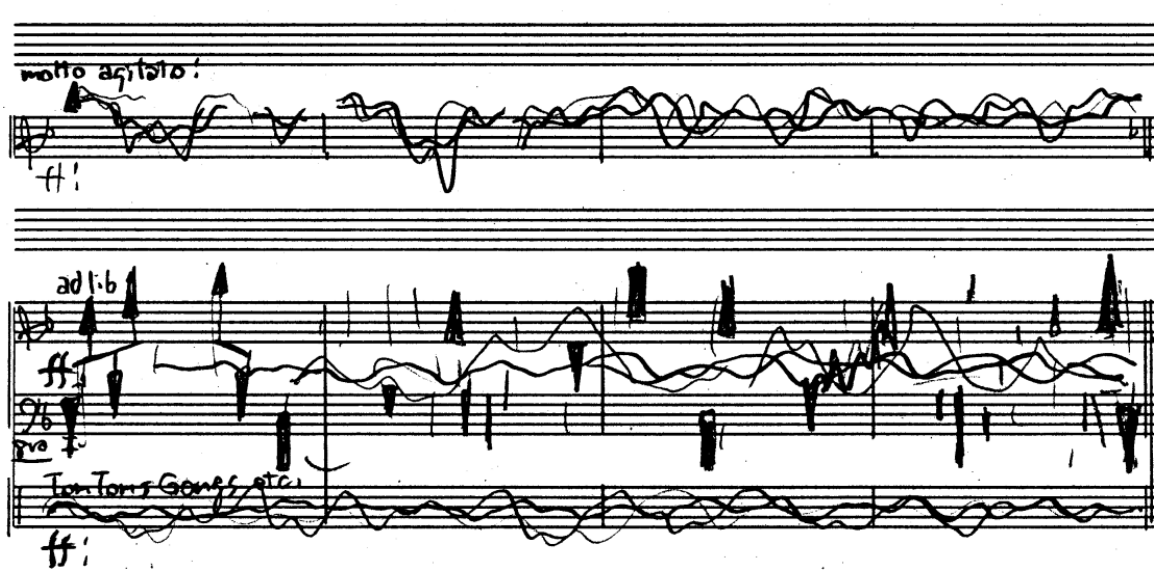
Example 5.7: String parts at mm. 129–132 of *Cyber Bird:* Movement I

Robert Witmer defines comping in jazz as "[providing] a chordal accompaniment for a soloist; the word derives from "accompany" (or perhaps "complement"). Pianists, in particular, are said to comp when they improvise a rhythmically varied but essentially nonmelodic chordal backing."[18] Example 5.7 shows a passage in the first movement of *Cyber Bird* where the string section fills the role of the rhythm section by comping on a C11 chord. This C11 chord is another variation of the original C7 chord presented at the beginning of the movement.

One of the most important aspects of jazz that has not been discussed yet is the culture of improvisation. In *Grove Music Online*'s article on improvisation, Barry Kernfeld states, "Almost all styles of jazz leave some room for improvisation – whether a

[18] Robert Witmer, "Comp," *Grove Music Online*. 2003; Accessed 19 February 2024.

single chorus or other short passage during which a soloist may improvise over an accompaniment, a sequence of choruses for different soloists, or the entire piece after the statement of a theme – and some jazz is spontaneously created without the use of a predetermined framework."[19] Yoshimatsu uses improvisation in various ways throughout all three movements of *Cyber Bird.* These instances of improvisation borrow elements from both jazz improvisation and the more contemporary classical concepts of indeterminacy.



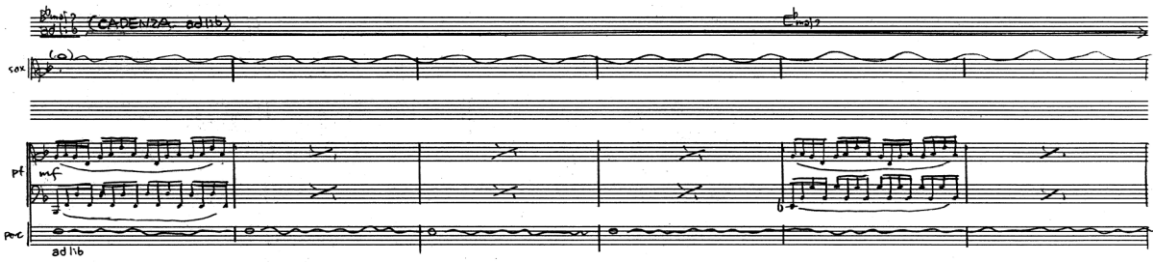
Example 5.8: Excerpt of mm. 151–154 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement I from the original score.[20]

Example 5.8 shows mm. 151–154 of the first movement of *Cyber Bird.* At this moment, the trio of alto saxophone, piano, and solo percussion is provided with non-

[19] Barry Kernfeld, "Improvisation," *Grove Music Online*. 2001; Accessed 19 February 2024.

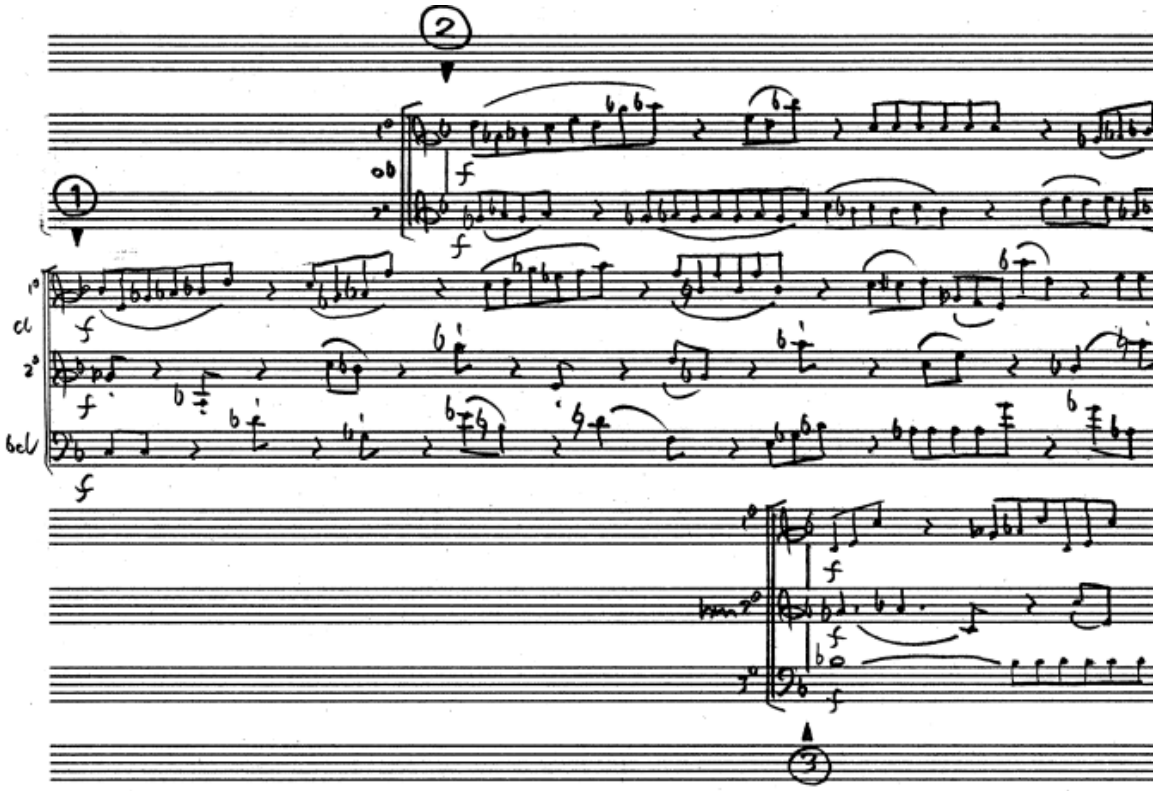
[20] This example pictures the original score to maintain the artistic expression of the non-traditional notation.

traditional notation and instructed to improvise. The notation found in this section is rooted more in contemporary classical composition than in jazz, but the instrumentation and context of the piece still convey qualities of jazz improvisation. Of all of the examples of indeterminacy in Yoshimatsu's *Cyber Bird*, this section gives the performers the most freedom.



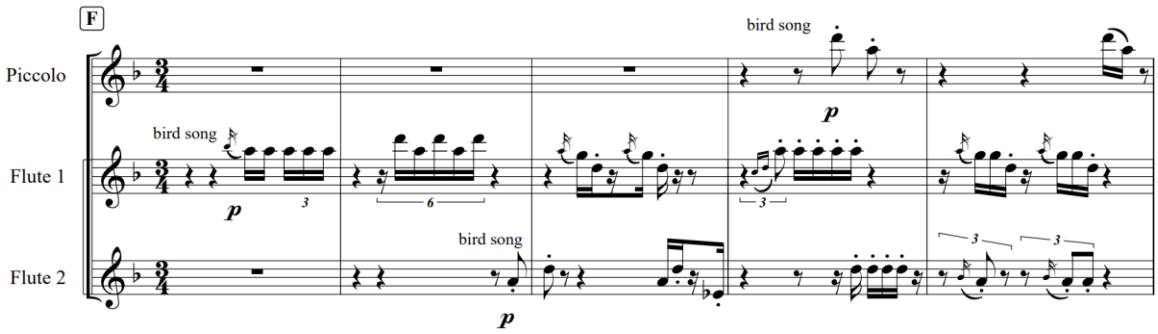
Example 5.9: Alto saxophone, piano, and solo percussion parts at mm. 146–151 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement III

Example 5.9 shows a contrasting form of improvisation in the third movement of *Cyber Bird.* Here, the pianist plays a repeated sixteenth-note ostinato while the alto saxophonist and solo percussionist improvise over a chord progression that oscillates between B♭M7 and E♭M7. The presence of a chord progression and chord symbols above the alto saxophone part imply a type of improvisation that is more similar to jazz improvisation. While the musical material that is played in this section is ultimately up to the performer, the existence of more information in the score regarding pitch material makes this example more predetermined than the previous passage.



Example 5.10: Oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, and horn parts at m. 159 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement I

Example 5.10 is an instance where Yoshimatsu uses indeterminacy. The pitch material, approximate rhythms, and phrasing are all provided for the performers in this instance, but the tempo is left to the performer's discretion. This is the most predetermined example of indeterminacy thus far, but it still retains an element of improvisation. This could be likened to a jazz chart in which a melody is fully notated, but the performer has the freedom to embellish it and reinterpret the rhythms.

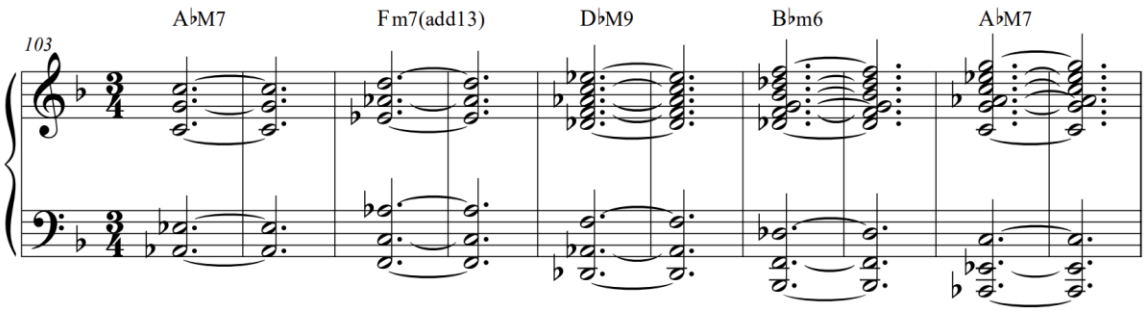


Example 5.11: Piccolo and flute parts at mm. 57–61 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement II

In Example 5.11, pitch, rhythms, and tempo are provided to the performer. However, this passage of music shares similarities with the previous example. The sporadic nature of the gesture frequency, gesture lengths, and rhythms create a kind of illusion of indeterminacy where the music's sense of meter and pulse is obscured. This is similar to how Yoshimatsu represents bird song in *And Birds are Still…* and *Memo Flora.*

In addition to Yoshimatsu's use of elements of jazz, many aspects of *Cyber Bird* build on the ideas discussed in the previous chapters regarding Yoshimatsu's stylistic tendencies. Some of the ideas that have already been mentioned throughout include the modal sound created by the use of mixolydian in the first movement and the use of indeterminacy and bird song in the first and second movements.

There are also moments throughout the three movements of *Cyber Bird* where Yoshimatsu uses extended chords evoking the sounds of the dorian and lydian modes and develops motives built around perfect intervals. Additionally, there are moments that feature musical material that would later be adapted for some of the previously discussed compositions like *And Birds are Still…* and *Memo Flora*.



Example 5.12: Harmonic reduction of string parts at mm. 103–112 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement II

Example 5.12 illustrates Yoshimatsu's use of extended harmony and modal harmony in the second movement of *Cyber Bird.* Movement II contrasts the pervasive major-minor 7th chords of Movement I with Yoshimatsu's more signature major 7th chords and minor 7th chords. Additionally, the Fm7(add13) and B♭m6 chords in Example 45 evoke the sound of F dorian and B♭ dorian respectively. It is also worthwhile to note that the specific chord progression seen in Example 45 is yet another variation on the chord progression at mm. 24–31 of *And Birds are Still…* and mm. 14–28 of *Memo Flora.*

And Birds are Still…

Measures 24–25	Measures 26–27	Measures 28–29	Measures 30–31
Em11	CM9(♯13)	Am6	GM9(♯13)
E Aeolian	C Lydian	A Dorian	G Lydian
G: vi	G: IV	G: ii	G: I

Memo Flora

Measures 14–28	Measures 29–30	Measures 31–32	Measures 33–34
B♭M7	Gm7	E♭M9	Cm9
Major Mode	Minor Mode	E♭ Lydian	C Dorian
B♭: I	B♭: vi	B♭: IV	B♭: ii

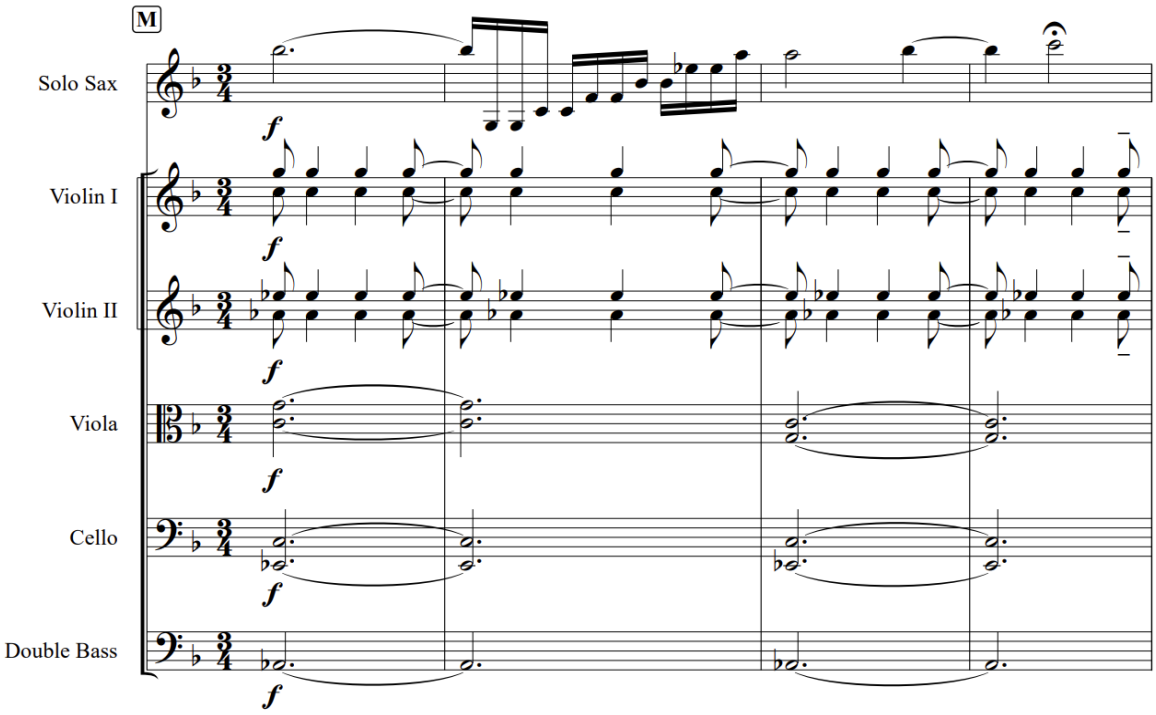
Cyber Bird

Measures 103–104	Measures 105–106	Measures 107–108	Measures 109–110
A♭M7	Fm7(add13)	D♭M9	B♭m9
Major Mode	F Dorian	D♭ Lydian	B♭ Dorian
A♭: I	A♭: vi	A♭: IV	A♭: ii

Example 5.13: Comparison of chord progressions in mm. 24–31 of Movement I of *Memo Flora*, mm. 14–34 of *And Birds are Still…*, and mm. 103–110 of Movement II of *Cyber Bird*

Example 5.13 builds on the chart originally presented in Example 4.9. The chord progression as seen in *Cyber Bird* lines up directly with the chords used in *Memo Flora.*

The main differences are the key, harmonic rhythm, and additional chord tone in mm. 105–106 of *Cyber Bird*. Because of the similarities between the progression in *Memo Flora* and *Cyber Bird,* the relationship between *And Birds are Still…* and *Memo Flora* is also shared between *And Birds are Still…* and *Cyber Bird.*



Example 5.14: Solo saxophone and string parts at mm. 111–114 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement II

Chapter 2's discussion of large melodic intervals within phrases in *Pleiades Dances IX* mentioned that the interval of a 4th—usually a perfect fourth but not always—plays an important role in Yoshimatsu's melodic writing. This is supported by the melodic writing in *Cyber Bird* where a particular motive used throughout the three movements is made up of a sequence of melodic 4ths. Example 5.14 pictures one of the most striking appearances of this motive.

Measure 112 of *Cyber Bird*: Movement II features a sequence of melodic 4ths in the alto saxophone part that ranges from G3 to A5. This melodic gesture is accompanied by an A♭M7 chord in the strings. The gesture itself is primarily made up of perfect 4ths resulting in pitches that fit in both A♭ ionian and A♭ lydian. However, the last interval in the gesture is an augmented 4th between E♭5 and A5. This results in a striking dissonance created by an A5 being played as part of the accompanying A♭M7 chord. In m. 113, the A5 resolves to a much more consonant B♭5.

Cyber Bird is a work that combines elements of jazz and contemporary classical music while still acting as a cohesive piece within Yoshimatsu's musical catalog. Its use of jazz harmony, textures, and performance practices in an orchestral setting is interesting on its own, but the composition really shines when it highlights the commonalities between jazz and contemporary classical music through the use of various forms of improvisation. Finally, the dialogue between these two genres occurs within a framework that fits cohesively within Yoshimatsu's signature style.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The analyses of *Pleiades Dances IX*, *And Birds are Still…*, *Memo Flora*, and *Cyber Bird* presented in this thesis only just begin to highlight the many important aspects of Takashi Yoshimatsu's style. This small selection of works composed within a relatively short period was chosen because each piece demonstrates a particular facet of Yoshimatsu's style in a manner that is clear and abundant, but it is certainly not completely comprehensive of Yoshimatsu's musical catalog. This chapter summarizes the ideas discussed in the first five chapters and provides a brief look into the potential for future research of Yoshimatsu's music.

Chapter 1 provides context for the rest of this thesis by discussing Japan's relationship with Western music and how it influenced Takashi Yoshimatsu's musical style. This discussion includes examinations of Japan's introduction to Western music in the 16th century, the Japanese word "Ongaku" and its association with Western music, and Yoshimatsu's musical upbringing. It was stated that pop and jazz music played an important role in the development of Yoshimatsu's style, and this influence can be seen prominently throughout the analyses that follow.

The influence of jazz on Yoshimatsu's music is explored at length in Chapter 5's analysis of *Cyber Bird*. The influence of jazz on *Cyber Bird* is very literal. Yoshimatsu uses elements of jazz to allude directly to the genre, and Chapter 5 explores these ideas by discussing Yoshimatsu's use of jazz harmony, texture, and performance practice.

Although it may be more subtle, elements of jazz are also present in Yoshimatsu's other compositions.

Yoshimatsu frequently employs extended chords and modal harmony which are two harmonic ideas that are also featured prominently in jazz repertoire. Extended chords often evoke the sound of a particular mode by including an 11th and/or 13th above the root. In the case of Yoshimatsu's music, lydian and dorian are some of the more frequently used modes. The use of modes in a harmonic context is seen in all of the pieces analyzed in this thesis: *Pleiades Dances IX*, *And Birds are Still…*, *Memo Flora*, and *Cyber Bird*. The relevance of modal harmony was most prevalent when analyzing *Pleiades Dances IX* in Chapter 2 and *And Birds are Still…* in Chapter 3.

Texture becomes an important topic when examining Yoshimatsu's use of melodic writing and accompanimental writing. Chapter 2 featured a discussion about some musical lines exhibiting both melodic and accompanimental qualities. These textural ideas were revisited when discussing the development of melodic motivic material and accompanimental motivic material in Chapter 3's analysis of *And Birds are Still…* An examination of the development of motivic material leads to a deeper understanding of the ternary form and the unique characteristics of each section.

Large melodic intervals are a hallmark of Yoshimatsu's melodic writing. Chapter 2 included an examination of the frequency in appearance of different melodic intervals using "Lullaby in the Celestial Night" from *Pleiades Dances IX* as an example. It was concluded that melodic 4ths and 5ths made up about 32% of the intervals within melodic phrases. The prevalent usage of melodic 4ths and 5ths was seen in the following chapters as well. An important motive found throughout *Cyber Bird* is made up of a sequence of

ascending, melodic 4ths. This was explored at the end of Chapter 5 where it was also stated that the motive primarily featured perfect 4ths but occasionally included augmented 4ths.

Finally, the reuse of musical material is an important aspect of Yoshimatsu's repertoire. Chapter 4's analysis of *Memo Flora* provided examples of material that was previously seen when analyzing *Pleiades Dances IX* and *And Birds are Still…* Furthermore, the chord progression used throughout *And Birds are Still…* and in parts of *Memo Flora* also made an appearance in Movement II of *Cyber Bird.* When discussing this topic in Chapter 4, it was argued that Yoshimatsu's reusing of musical material strikes a balance between continuity of style and diversity of material.

As mentioned previously, this thesis provides a foundation for the study of Yoshimatsu's musical style, but there are plenty of opportunities for further research. Though Yoshimatsu's catalog makes up a cohesive musical language, there are also many points of contrast throughout his extensive repertoire. Furthermore, the focus of this thesis is Yoshimatsu's use of recurring melodic and harmonic concepts, but many other musical ideas could be analyzed and discussed even concerning the pieces considered in this thesis. I present a few of these ideas in the following paragraphs.

Pleiades Dances IX, And Birds are Still…, Memo Flora, and *Cyber Bird* were all composed over the span of seven years. Further research should be done concerning the music composed in the earlier and later periods of Yoshimatsu's career. While all of Yoshimatsu's neo-romantic music is written in a consistent musical style, it would be fruitful to examine the development of this musical style over a larger period of time.

In Chapter 1, it was briefly mentioned that Yoshimatsu began composing in a serialist style before abandoning this compositional approach in favor of a neo-romantic style. This represents a relatively sudden shift in musical style that differs from the gradual development in style that would be seen when examining Yoshimatsu's full catalog of neo-romantic music. Rather than comparing the differences between Yoshimatsu's serialist music and neo-romantic music, it would be interesting to instead examine the aspects of musical style that remain consistent across the two genres.

U-Getsu-Fu op.11 1980 Shakuhachi and 17-gen	**Yume-Awase, Yume-Tagae (Within Dreams Without Dreams)** op.74 1998 20-gen, clarinet, violin & cello
Soh-Gyo-Fu op.26 1986 Shakuhachi and 20-gen	**Within Dreams Without Dreams** op.74a 1999 20-gen, with 7 Japanese instruments
MIROKU effect op.33 1987 11 Japanese instruments (yoko-bue, 3 shakuhachi, shamisen, biwa, 2 koto, 17-gen koto, 2 percussion) and string orchestra	**Within Dreams Without Dreams** op.74b 2002 20-gen, with chamber orchestra (clarinet, percussion, and strings)
Sui-Gen-Fu op.38 1989 Shakuhachi and 13-gen	**Subaru** op.78 1999 20-string koto
Moyura op.41 1990 20-string koto	**Yume-Yurara-ni... (Wavering Dreams)** op.86 2001 Harp, sho, and shakuhachi
Nabari op.54 1992 17-string koto (or 20-gen)	**Wavering Dreams** op.86a 2002 Shakuhachi, sho, and 20-gen x2
GAGAKU "Tori-Yume-no-Mai (Bird Dream Dance)" op.69 1997 GAGAKU ensemble (6 yoko-bue, 3 hichiriki, 6 sho, biwa, koto, 20-gen, 3 percussion)	**Hoshi-Yume-no-Mai (Stellar Dream Dances)** op.89 2002 Japanese instruments ensemble (yoko-bue, 2 shakuhachi, shamisen, biwa, sho, hichi-riki, 13-gen koto, 20-gen koto, 17-gen koto, taiko & percussion)

Example 6.1: List of compositions for traditional Japanese instruments and their instrumentations[21]

Finally, an important part of Yoshimatsu's repertoire that was not covered in the preceding analyses is his works for traditional Japanese instruments. Yoshimatsu has written several works that use traditional Japanese instruments in a more Western classical context. For example, *Nabari* is a composition for 17-string koto that takes a Western-classical approach to musical form. In the program notes, Yoshimatsu states,

[21] Some compositions include options for different instrumentation. These are labeled using an opus number and a lowercase letter denoting subsequent instrumentations in chronological order.

"'Nabari' in obsolete Japanese means 'to hide away'. It is composed of three parts, lento-allegro-lento… ."

This three-movement form differs from traditional Japanese music in that the latter often has a static quality that does not include development in the same way that Western classical music does. As mentioned in Chapter 1, traditional Japanese compositions often prioritize texture over structuring of time. While *Nabari* is much more traditional than Yoshimatsu's compositions for piano or orchestra, the use of structure is much more rooted in a Western classical tradition.

Yoshimatsu's approach to composition is also heavily influenced by the instrument itself. In *Nabari,* Yoshimatsu writes for the 17-string koto in a way that utilizes the instrument's unique capabilities and incorporates elements of traditional koto performance. Doing this results in a sound that is quite different from many of his other compositions. This approach to composition remains true in Yoshimatsu's other works for traditional Japanese instruments as well.

Yume-Awase, Yume-Tagae is a composition that combines the sound of traditional Japanese instruments with Western instruments. It is written for 20-string koto, clarinet, violin, and cello. This combination of instruments results in an interesting dialogue where the traditional Japanese instruments inform the musical material of the Western instruments and vice versa. Because of this, *Yume-Awase, Yume-Tagae* sits stylistically somewhere between *Nabari* and Yoshimatsu's works for instruments of Western origin.

A final point of interest when discussing Yoshimatsu's use of traditional Japanese instruments is his repurposing of a piano composition for koto. *Subaru* is a reworked version of *Pleiades Dances VIII* for 20-string koto, and the title is the Japanese name for

the star cluster known in the West as the Pleiades. Because the source material was composed for piano, *Subaru* is most stylistically similar to Yoshimatsu's compositions for Western instruments.

These are just a few of the many potential areas for further research and analysis of Takashi Yoshimatsu's music. The compositions explored in this paper provide a solid introduction to Yoshimatsu's music, but it should be made clear that the style that permeates throughout his extensive repertoire cannot be fully understood through analyses of only four compositions. Furthermore, numerous other Japanese composers are continuing to make important contributions to instrumental music composition through contemporary classical music, anime music, video game music, and other musical media. The impact of the music by these composers is widespread, and I hope the scholarship on this music continues to grow.

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