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# IDA GOTKOVSKY'S SAXOPHONE WORKS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF *BRILLANCE*, *VARIATIONS PATHÉTIQUES*, AND *INCANDESCENCE*

BY

SCOTT PATRICK AUGUSTINE

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Music
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Doctoral Committee:

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## ABSTRACT

French composer Ida Gotkovsky has written prolifically for the saxophone. Born in 1933, she attended the Paris Conservatory and studied with two of the most celebrated composer-pedagogues of the twentieth century, Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992) and Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979). Gotkovsky became an ambassador of French music across the world and is most recognized for her music for wind band and wind instruments. While many saxophonists know of her music, research on her compositions for the instrument is scarce despite the extensive number of these works written during the late twentieth century. Gotkovsky represents a synthesis of her teachers' approach to composition and the compositional traditions of the Paris Conservatory in the formation of her unique musical language and handling of melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, form, and style. By observing these musical properties and qualities found within Gotkovsky's music, the compositional influence of her teachers at the Paris Conservatory, and musical attributes within the French tradition, this paper offers a comparative study of her compositional style for the saxophone across her works *Brillance* (1974), *Variations Pathétiques* (1980), and *Incandescence* (2011). Additionally, an intertextual method will be used to identify and connect instances whereby Gotkovsky borrows materials from her previous pieces and places them within new contexts. This project thus provides a clearer understanding of her approach to composing for the saxophone for the benefit of both the performer and the listener.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Ida Gotkovsky (b. 1933) delivers a musical credo that is arguably the clearest expression of her thoughts on her craft: "Creating a universal work and ensuring the unity of musical expression throughout all time, via a contemporary language with vigorous structures."[1] This encapsulates her thoughts on ideas of artistic universality and helps to explain her treatment of melodic expression, adherence to formal structures, and the method of self-borrowing throughout her works. For the avid listener of her music, this notion creates both a timeline and an infinity, informing how her music has transformed over time.

"Oeuvre" (both in French and English) can refer to both a body of works as well as a singular work.[2] Analyzing Gotkovsky's career in this collective sense, along with her pursuit of "the unity of musical expression throughout all time," reveals a sense that Gotkovsky seeks to add on to and take part in a higher musical journey that transcends time and affects the listener regardless of when a piece of music was written. Her credo also informs her practice of self-borrowing and reinforces unity in the entirety of her works, linking a singular musical expression across many places and times. These ideas of infinite musical expression and musical heritage were instilled in Gotkovsky by her teachers Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992) and Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979) as will be discussed.

The other aspects of Gotkovsky's credo speak to the means by which she approaches universal musical expression. Messiaen's innovations in melodic and rhythmic structuring, which Gotkovsky has mastered and developed in her own way, provide the vehicle of achieving

[1] Ida Gotkovsky, "Biographie," accessed May 10, 2021, http://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_biographie-Ida_Gotkovsky.html. In its original French: "Creer une oeuvre universelle et assurer par un langage contemporain, aux structures vigoureuses, l'unite de l'expression musicale a travers tous les temps."

[2] Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "oeuvre," accessed February 27, 2022, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oeuvre.

a “contemporary musical language.” Gotkovsky argues that the role of the composer is “writing structured music that is accessible and moving.”[3] Here, she is referring to the “vigorous structures” from her credo and their facilitation of accessibility and furnishing of artistry. These structures point to her compositional restrictions as well as the traditional forms in which she places her works, informed by the influences of her French musical heritage and Boulanger’s rigorous training in Western classical “masterworks.” Gotkovsky can therefore be viewed as both a fusion of her teachers and an evolution of their ideals.

This paper will use the ideological framework of Gotkovsky’s credo, the musical influences of her teachers, the attributes of the French tradition, and her method of self-borrowing to establish a greater understanding of her compositional style and approach to the saxophone through a comparison of melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, form, and style found within three of her important works for the instrument: *Brillance* (1974), *Variations Pathétiques* (1980), and *Incandescence* (2011).

Gotkovsky writes with a particular interest in the saxophone. For her, it is “an admirable instrument, a source of prolific inspiration with dazzling possibilities.”[4] In her *Variations Pathétiques*, arguably one of her most seminal works for the saxophone, she states that it was written “to include the saxophone in the repertoire of the orchestra; it is a way to impose and defend it and to enrich its own repertoire.”[5] Having been a lecturer at the Paris Conservatory, she knew, wrote for, and was in contact with many pioneers of the instrument, such as Marcel Mule (1901–2001), professor of saxophone at the Paris Conservatory from 1942 until 1967, Daniel

[3] Gotkovsky, “Press,” See 1991-2000, extract from the Journal de la CMF, interview with Guy Dangain. https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1991-2000.html
[4] Patricia Surman, "Ida Gotkovsky," (Grove Music Online, October 29, 2020), https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-90000341874.
[5] Ibid.

Deffayet (1922–2002), who succeeded Mule from 1968 until 1988, and Jean-Marie Londeix (b.1932), professor of the Conservatories of Dijon and Bordeaux. Many of her saxophone works were written as competition pieces for European conservatories and festivals, giving those composed between the 1960s and 1980s an air of high technical and expressive proficiency. Composer Henri Büsser (1872–1973) describes her music as "clear, direct music, the ideas flowing naturally … composition is very refined and the instrumentation is rich and colorful."[6] Unfortunately, her works have not yet received an appropriate amount of scholarly attention relative to her musical output as compared with other twentieth-century composers who wrote a great deal for the saxophone such as Pierre-Max Dubois (1930–1995) or Eugene Bozza (1905–1991). This paper serves to address this lacuna regarding her compositional style and treatment of the saxophone.

## PROJECT SCOPE

Contextualization for the saxophonist, by way of comparing Gotkovsky's saxophone music, will be provided to offer a greater understanding of her compositional style. The pieces discussed in this paper were written across fifty years, allowing an assessment of her approach to the saxophone and how it has changed over time. For example, the use of altissimo, the extended upper range of the saxophone, was not embraced by Gotkovsky until 1979 with her *Eolienne*.[7] The latter was itself adapted from an original version for the flute and was further integrated and explored in her *Variations Pathétiques* (1980), written for that year's "solo de concours" or end of year instrumental class competition. Due to the intertextual nature of her writing, chiefly the method of borrowing ideas from her own compositions and transplanting them across her body

[6] Ibid.
[7] Ida Gotkovsky, *Eolienne pour Saxophone et Harpe* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 1983).

of works, this paper alludes to other important works, both for saxophone as well as for other instruments. In doing so, the saxophonist is given informed insight to approach her music in a thoughtful and active manner.

This paper contributes to a broader understanding of Gotkovsky's self-borrowing as a compositional practice by interrogating prominent examples in *Brillance, Variations Pathétiques,* and *Incandescence.* Their importance lies not only in sonic material but also in stylistic considerations. Links are also made in highlighting how Gotkovsky uses similar wording in movement names and stylistic markings, as well as more apparent transplantation of materials. In some cases, she reuses entire movements from one setting to another. This creates a timelessness in her music and speaks to her philosophical pursuit of "a universal work."[8] A multitude of instruments and voices are thus given the opportunity to experience her music in their own way and, at the same time, the works are transformed by this fact. Two works with the same material might sound similar, but they are not the same experience for the listener as the settings are slightly different. Timbral differences also abound that demonstrate a deliberate choice to breathe new life into repurposed melodies or expressive gestures across her music. Gotkovsky tends to these similarities by adjusting them to fit within the idiosyncrasies of each instrument, further altering the experience. By including these cross-instrumental comparisons, this paper will present unique findings that address questions raised in scholarship to date about Gotkovsky's music, such as sounding out stylistic devices and applying the perspective of intertextuality to her oeuvre.

This comparative study evaluates the impact of Gotkovsky's musical influences to attain a more comprehensive grasp of her compositional style. A set of letters between Ida Gotkovsky

[8] Gotkovsky, "Biographie," accessed May 10, 2021, http://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_biographie-Ida_Gotkovsky.html.

and her teacher Nadia Boulanger (from 1956–1978) corresponds with the time that she left the Paris Conservatory as a student through to the year before Boulanger's death. These letters reveal a relationship built on Gotkovsky's deep admiration and respect for Boulanger during the student's formative years.[9] She held Boulanger in loving regard, inviting her to concerts featuring her own music and expressing her willingness to visit with Boulanger when time permitted. Boulanger impressed a demanding work ethic upon her students, focusing on the masterpieces of Western art music for a true understanding of their musical heritage before developing their individual voices.[10]

Olivier Messiaen's influence on Gotkovsky will also be investigated as his compositional innovations were crucial to her musical lexicon. Messiaen's modes of limited transposition can be found throughout Gotkovsky's music as the primary source for her melodic and harmonic generation. These modes allow her to access unique material as they did for Messiaen, in which he succeeded "putting wheels of color in opposition, into interweaving rainbows, finding complementary colors in music."[11] Additionally, Messiaen's concepts of rhythm and time from sources outside of Western art music as well as inspiration from Gregorian plainchant pervade Gotkovsky's musical language. The ability to identify Messiaen's influences is thus important in recognizing the materials that Gotkovsky uses in her treatment of melody, harmony, and rhythm.

Along with understanding Boulanger's and Messiaen's influences, an acknowledgement of the French tradition and how it fuses the classical tradition with experimentation is useful in unpacking Gotkovsky's compositional approach. Paris was an epicenter of European musical

[9] "Dix lettres de Ida Gotkovsky à Nadia Boulanger, 1956–1978." Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, NLA-73 (98-107), trans. Catherine Kelly in David Wacyk's "Powerful Structures."
[10] "How Nadia Boulanger Raised a Generation of Composers," YouTube video, 23:48, posted by "Inside the Score," December 18, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCGLeOMYcQM.
[11] Carla Huston Bell, *Olivier Messiaen* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), 29.

ingenuity and scholarship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Composers from across the continent sought to make their living in this cosmopolitan city which upheld the arts as a pillar of cultural fortitude. The Paris Conservatory became a home to older traditions carried forth from Italian conservatories by way of figures such as Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842) who became the Conservatory's director in 1822. Cherubini helped institute curricula involving solfege, keyboard realization, and compositional rules to set high standards for young musicians, aspects that were taught well into the twentieth century by the likes of Boulanger.[12] Composers such as Claude Debussy (1862–1918) and Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) learned and studied these methods, adjusting them for their own compositional styles. Gotkovsky, a student of the Conservatory for fourteen years who won multiple prizes from the institution, would have been well versed in these traditions and, like Ravel and Debussy, responded to them in conjunction with the forces of modernism and experimentalism of the early twentieth century. She credits her teachers with giving her the space to flourish as a student, stating that "I was fortunate to have outstanding teachers for whom only the truth of the written page counted. I think, in all modesty, that only the work must prevail and not the person."[13] Gotkovsky held her professors in great esteem, especially Boulanger and Messiaen, distilling their influence in creating her own unique compositional voice.

[12] "Partimento - Training the Maestri," YouTube video, 25:57, posted by "Early Music Sources," January 11, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fED17Td8heA.
[13] Gotkovsky, "Press," See 2001–2010, Christine Bergna, "Une vie dédiée à la composition," Journal de la CMF, July 2010. (Translated by David Wacyk) https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-2001-2010.html.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While information on Gotkovsky is comparatively scarce in contrast to other notable composers who contributed much to the saxophone repertory in the twentieth century, a small number of important studies have been conducted on Gotkovsky's music, primarily concerned with her wind band and instrumental music. Most references to her can be found in scholarly dissertations and theses, especially from the past twenty years, as well as snippets in journal articles, book chapters, and in encyclopedias and bibliographies regarding women composers.

The first meaningful study of her music for the saxophone is a dissertation from 1992 by Kenneth Carroll. Carroll's research draws heavily upon Messiaen's influence on Gotkovsky, arguing that this exposure led to her melodic and rhythmic language. It is a theoretical analysis of both *Brillance* and the *Concerto pour Saxophone-Alto et Orchestre*, with an in-depth analysis of Gotkovsky's use of Messiaen's modes of limited transposition and ideas on rhythm that he taught at the Paris Conservatory and expounded in his treatises.[14] Messiaen adapted his views on rhythm from multiple sources, as is discussed later, and Gotkovsky infuses her music with concepts that Messiaen favored, such as additive rhythm, rhythmic pedals (ostinato), and frequent meter changes. Since then, further scholarship has been conducted on her instrumental music and wind music in general, but a gap still exists in understanding her approach to the saxophone and how she uses the instrument with regard to style and color.

Stephen Hunter's dissertation is based on finding intertextual meaning in Gotkovsky's music, through which he highlights her compositional style of extensive self-borrowing. As a trombonist, his focus draws from examples of melodic and textural self-borrowing that relate to

[14] Kenneth Carroll, "The Influence of Olivier Messiaen on *Brillance* and the *Concerto pour Saxophone-Alto et Orchestre* by Ida Gotkovsky: An Analytical Study" (PhD thesis, The University of Georgia, 1992), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

her *Concerto pour Trombone*.[15] Hunter works from an intertextual approach and reveals additional evidence relating to the ways in which Gotkovsky draws from previous material scattered between her wind band, chamber, and solo repertoire.

David Wacyk offers a theoretical analysis of her wind band music and her approach to that medium, bringing attention to Gotkovsky's French musical heritage and her compositional style. He also provides the most extensive research on her life and career to date, while pointing to the ways in which she contends with the infinite in her music.[16] Amanda Heim offers an analysis of Gotkovsky's *Quatuor de Saxophones* (1983) from a post-tonal lens,[17] while David Cook has analyzed her *Sonate pour Clarinette Solo* (1986), exploring Gotkovsky's use of Messiaen's modes of limited transposition in conjunction with forming traditional large and small-scale structures.[18] These dissertations strictly focus on Gotkovsky's music while other resources, such as composer databases and encyclopedias, either contain one of her works with an accompanying analysis or simply mention her in passing.

Both Idit Shner and Patricia Surman have focused on Gotkovsky's *Eolienne pour Flute et Harpe*. Shner's research includes *Eolienne* in its arranged version for saxophone in her investigation of music for saxophone and harp, highlighting the way Gotkovsky uses both instruments compared to other composers' approaches to the instrumental pairing.[19] Surman focuses exclusively on *Eolienne* in its original format for flute and harp as her analysis of

[15] Stephen Hunter, "The Instrumental Music of Ida Gotkovsky: Finding Intertextual Meaning" (DMA diss. University of North Texas, 2010), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
[16] David Wacyk, "Powerful Structures: The Wind Music of Ida Gotkovsky in Theory and Practice" (DMA diss. University of Maryland, 2019).
[17] Amanda Heim, "Using Post-Tonal Analytical Techniques for a Better Performance of Ida Gotkovsky's *Quatuor de Saxophones*" (DMA diss. University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2011).
[18] David Hong Ya Cook, "Formal Delineation via Modes of Limited Transposition in Ida Gotkovsky's Sonata for Solo Clarinet" (Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2017).
[19] Idit Shner, "Music for Saxophone and Harp: An Investigation of the Development of the Genre with an Annotated Bibliography" (DMA diss. University of North Texas, 2007).

Gotkovsky's musical language is geared towards performers.[20] Nancy Sanders includes Gotkovsky's *Concerto pour Clarinette et Orchestre* in her paper on clarinet concerti written by women of the twentieth century.[21] Through this she provides an overview of Gotkovsky's compositional style and approach to the concerto form.

Damien Sagrillo has written a number of papers on Gotkovsky's life and music. His essay in the *Oberschützen Congress Report* for 2010 explores her musical upbringing and analyzes her treatment of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form in three of her works for wind band. In highlighting areas for further research, Sagrillo recommends a focus on Gotkovsky's stylistic devices in relation to her cultural and musical environment, as well as a call to assign her the "position she deserves in French music of the 20th century."[22]

While many resources pertaining to Gotkovsky are out of print or less easily available, resources like Gotkovsky.com remain a trove of information on the composer. Managed by her son, Etienne Guillou-Gotkovsky, the website acts as a personal archive in its preservation and dissemination of Gotkovsky's life and music. It contains a catalog of her oeuvre, some of her own philosophies on music, and a great deal of press that spans her entire career.[23] These newspaper reviews and journal interviews allow a window into her personal and professional life and how she was received in the late twentieth century. Whereas many encyclopedias and musical anthologies fail to mention her, Jean-Marie Londeix's cataloging of saxophone music

[20] Patricia Jovanna Surman, "Ida Gotkovsky's *Eolienne pour Flute et Harpe* in Theory and Practice: A Critical Analysis" (DMA diss. University of North Texas, 2010).
[21] Nancy King Sanders, "A Woman's Voice: The Clarinet Concerti of Musgrave, Hoover, and Gotkovsky" (DMA diss. University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 1994).
[22] Damien Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky: Her Life and Style Illustrated in Three Compositions for Wind Band," in *Kongressbericht Oberschützen, Osterreich 2010*, edited by Bernhard Habla (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2012), 287.
[23] Gotkovsky, "Une Vie, Une Oeuvre." https://www.gotkovsky.com/index.html

has also been a resource that gives Gotkovsky her due credit as a significant composer of the twentieth century.[24]

The present paper addresses the lacuna concerning Gotkovsky's treatment of the saxophone and the changes that have occurred in her writing for the instrument across a span of fifty years. The aforementioned scholars have certainly addressed significant aspects of her broader musical language from use of the modes of limited transposition and rhythmic complexity to more focused examples of self-borrowing and the notions of "infinity" that pervade her writing. Carroll's dissertation was the last successful attempt to delve into Gotkovsky's works specifically for the saxophone, and his objective was to argue for the significant degree of influence that Messiaen had on her compositional style. The analyses in this paper, however, synthesize the information from these broader studies to date to illuminate how *Brillance*, *Variations Pathétiques*, and *Incandescence* are structured as well as how the pieces impact Gotkovsky's musical canon.

[24] Londeix, *150 Years of Music for Saxophone* (Cherry Hill: Roncorp Inc., 1994), 104.

## CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF IDA GOTKOVSKY'S LIFE AND INFLUENCES

Born on August 26, 1933 in Calais, France, Ida Rose-Esther Gotkovsky grew up in a most musical family. Her father, Jacques Gotkovsky, emigrated from Odessa, Ukraine, to France in 1917. He was a self-taught violinist and provided for his family through performing with such orchestras as the Orchestre Pasdeloup, as well as giving private lessons. He was also a member of the commercially recorded Loewenguth Quartet.[25] Jacques married Ida's mother, Christine Eliasen of Norway, in 1927. She taught and played piano, often performing alongside Jacques. The couple raised their family on a small village farm, encouraging them to sing and play music together.[26]

All four of her siblings played instruments, with her brother Ivar, a pianist, and sister Nell, a violinist, becoming professional musicians who performed and recorded together. Ida began composing at the age of eight and entered the Paris Conservatory a couple of years after. She even began teaching private piano lessons at the age of eleven.[27] Gotkovsky studied harmony and analysis with Messiaen and Georges Hugon (1904–1980), counterpoint and fugue with Noël Gallon (1891–1966), composition with Nadia Boulanger and Tony Aubin (1907–1981), and solfège and ear training with Alice Pelliot (1877–1971).[28]

Gotkovsky studied at the Paris Conservatory for fourteen years before beginning to create a name for herself as an established composer. She won a number of prizes which helped launch her career: First prize in composition at the conservatory in 1956, the Blumenthal Prize in 1958, the Divonne International Competition in 1961, and the heralded Grand Prize of the City of Paris

[25] Damien Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky," *Music Education and Gender Research: Lexicon and Multimedia Presentations*, University of Music and Theater Hamburg, published on June 5, 2009, https://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/old/A_lexartikel/lexartikel.php%3Fid=gotk1933.html.
[26] Dorothy Stowe, "Virtuoso Violinist Comes to Y. to Start a Simpler Life," Deseret News, October 21, 1990, https://www.deseret.com/1990/10/21/18887137/virtuoso-violinist-comes-to-y-to-start-a-simpler-life.
[27] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky."
[28] Ibid.

in 1966 for her opera, *La Reve de Makar*. When asked about her success in composing as a woman in France, Gotkovsky simply responded that "when the music is good, there is no longer a distinction between male and female composers. People became aware of me and my works, I was commissioned to compose – that's all."[29]

Gotkovsky's modesty seems to have transferred to other aspects of her life. She never accepted a full professorship at the Conservatory, rather seeking a career as a freelance composer, though she was a lecturer at the institution until 1998.[30] Even as a skilled pianist, she prefers to compose in silence to engage her imagination. This is why she chose to live outside of the bustling city where nature and solitude facilitated an effective writing process.[31] An interviewer once remarked that Gotkovsky "draws an inexhaustible source of inspiration from nature, and that is why she is so attached to this village, to this forest, that she would not leave for anything in the world because she could not write anywhere else."[32]

Despite this self-imposed separation from metropolitan centers, Gotkovsky boasts a considerable number of national and international commissions. Among her instrumental works, no fewer than five were commissioned for the concours at the Paris Conservatory alone, two of which were written for the saxophone (*Concerto* and *Variations Pathétiques*).[33] Radio France also commissioned her for their program in the 1950s and much of her body of works for wind band and chamber music commenced in 1960 with her *Symphony for 80 Wind Instruments*.[34]

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[29] Gotkovsky, "Press," See 1961–1970, Die Rheinpfalz, May 17, 1968, (Translated by David Wacyk) https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1961-1970.html.
[30] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky: Her Life and Style," 288.
[31] Ibid, 288.
[32] Gotkovsky, "Press," see 1971–1980, Cle de Sol et Cle des Champs by Nicole Bennezon, (Translated by David Wacyk) https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1971-1980.html.
[33] Surman, "Ida Gotkovsky."
[34] Gotkovsky, "Catalog of Works," https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_catalogue/orchestre_harmonie.html.

INFLUENCES

> Down the centuries you find some masterpieces which differ superficially but are similar in the thought they express, in the thoughts they evoke in the listener. This constant return to the past or projection forward transcending centuries seems to me a very important teaching perspective, and after the Debussy which follows the Gregorian [plainchant], I go on to Josquin des Prés. I find they go together very well. – Nadia Boulanger[35]

Nadia Boulanger was arguably one of the most influential musical pedagogues of the twentieth century. In her class at the Fontainebleau School, and eventually the Paris Conservatory, students from across the world sought Boulanger's tutelage including, among hundreds of students, Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, and Quincy Jones. Her lasting impression on students was that of a rigorous work ethic which would lead them to discover their inner artistry and unique voice. This was achieved only after laborious studies of their musical heritage. The quote above exemplifies Boulanger's eclecticism in what she considers "masterworks," showing how the past illuminates the present as well as how the present illuminates the past through shared human expressions.[36] We can hear this resonate in Gotkovsky's music as the foundation of her credo, tying "vigorous structures" with a "contemporary language" that "unite[s] musical expression throughout all time."

Rather than forcing her students into one traditional style, Boulanger encouraged her students to seek out their own interests and to develop them to the highest degree. Her goal was to "awaken [her] students' curiosity, and then show them how to satisfy that curiosity. [Her] personal opinion is not what matter[ed], it ha[d] no importance whatsoever."[37] This is evident in the multitude of styles that came from the students who journeyed far to study with her. At the

[35] Bruno Monsaingeon, *Mademoiselle: Conversations with Nadia Boulanger*, trans. Robyn Marsack (Manchester: Carcanet Press Limited, 1985), 67.
[36] Inside the Score, "Nadia Boulanger."
[37] Jerome Spycket, *Nadia Boulanger*, trans. M.M. Shriver (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 53.

Paris Conservatory "she had a fanatically loyal following. Most of her students kept in close contact with her and came to see her regularly."[38] Gotkovsky is a perfect example of a student of Boulanger who, even many years after graduation, continued to seek guidance and mentorship from the Mademoiselle. In an October 1963 letter, Gotkovsky writes:

> Allow me, if you please, to let you know that Saturday, my Scherzo for Orchestra will be performed at the Concert Referendum Pasdeloup. Knowing how precious is your time, I will not give myself the liberty to ask you to come to hear it, but simply to tell you how, dear Mademoiselle, your insightful kindness is dear to my heart and fills me with joy… for I doubt myself a lot. Pardon me, dear Mademoiselle, to write these words so directly, and please believe in my very deep and affectionate admiration.[39]

Although Gotkovsky might have only studied with Boulanger for a short time, the impression she left was extremely impactful. This is apparent in Gotkovsky's music, not only in her handling of traditional forms but in her discovery and acceptance of her own personal compositional language.

Olivier Messiaen was another one of the leading pedagogues of the twentieth century who both directly and indirectly shaped a diverse range of musicians through his compositional innovations. His *Traité* (Treatise)[40] and *Technique de Mon Langage Musical* (The Technique of My Musical Language)[41] have been major influences on composers during and after his lifetime. Messiaen was particularly proud of his special sessions on rhythm that he conceived for his students at the Paris Conservatory.[42] He relied upon rhythms that could not be "forced into a normal binary or ternary meter… metrical regularity indicated a lack of rhythm."[43] This kind of

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[38] Ibid, 131-132.
[39] Translated in Wacyk, "Powerful Structures," 97. For more contextualization on the "Dix Lettres," see appendix 1 in Wacyk's "Powerful Structures."
[40] Olivier Messiaen, *Traité de Rythme, de Couleur, et d'Ornithologie* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1949–1992).
[41] Olivier Messiean, *Technique de Mon Langage Musical* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1944).
[42] Jean Boivin, "Musical analysis according to Messiaen: a critical view of a most original approach," in *Messiaen: Music, Art and Literature*, 137-157. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 149.
[43] Ibid, 150.

novelty can be found in Gotkovsky's own appetite for regularly altering meters, especially in her faster passages.

The dominance of melodic and rhythmic invention remained crucial in Messiaen's teachings, and he drew from such diverse sources as Gregorian plainchant, Indian talas, Andean folk songs, Balinese gamelan, and Japanese *nō* theater. Similar to Boulanger, his analysis classes involved diving into scores of both the present and the past to discern the greatest musical expression. Messiaen had a "marked preference for French composers [due to] their harmonic richness, exotic modes, colorful orchestration and rhythmic and melodic resourcefulness. In other words, a modern approach to composition," regardless of the century in which a work was written.[44] Gotkovsky also represents a modern approach, synthesizing the influence of her teachers and French predecessors in her combination of accessibility and individual voice.

Color was a major fixation for Messiaen as well, which translates into Gotkovsky's choice of timbral and registral options for the saxophone. On Messiaen's obsession with color, Boivin writes:

> Chords, in their various transpositions, were spontaneously described as very precisely colored and shaded. As a French composer, Messiaen inherited a long tradition of modal preferences and an essentially non-dialectic conception of harmony, more static and sensuous than that of the Germanic school, [which] partly explains why vertical aggregates were often regarded by Messiaen as isolated resonant objects rather than as elements of a functional syntax, fueled by triadic dissonances and their expected resolution. This immediately singled him out, as did his preoccupation with color, light, and resonance.[45]

Gotkovsky writes harmonies in this vein of "isolated resonant objects" which function in their own way in spite of functional harmony or atonality. Her harmonies tend to be static as they

[44] Ibid, 140.
[45] Ibid, 141.

insist on a specific sonic experience for the listener. For Messiaen, color was deeply linked to his perception of sound in which he imagined a spectrum of possible colors for each sound complex. Many ascribe this to synesthesia, a neurological condition in which the stimulation of one sensory pathway prompts the automatic and involuntary stimulation of another. Messiaen considered himself to be synesthetic although in his late life insisted otherwise. Regardless, "he thought that color was important, and that the word related to a panoply of specific identifiable sound-color relationships rather than being a vague shorthand used to describe any music with timbral variety."[46] Gotkovsky has excelled in her own orchestration of new colors and arrangements of timbre, especially in the combinations possible in wind band music. Likewise, in homogenous settings such as the saxophone quartet, she achieves an array of colors when moving instruments in homophony. The student and teacher also share a particular fondness for light and its derivatives of sheen and fire, evident in Gotkovsky's naming of her works such as *Brillance, Incandescence, Gold and Light, Poem of Fire, Brilliant Symphony,* and *Golden Symphony.*

Another method of Messiaen's preference for a modern approach is found in his creation of the modes of limited transposition (see Appendix 1). These are symmetrical scales because they divide equally at the octave and are synthetic as they are made up of units of the same intervals. The modes are able to be transposed a limited number of times before different transpositions begin to have the same collection of pitches as a previous transposition. They provide a set of limitations but have multiple tonal implications depending on the notes within a given mode. For example, a mode might contain the pitch ingredients for tertian harmonies as well as added chords. Like Messiaen, Gotkovsky uses the modes of limited transposition as her

[46] Christopher Dingle *The Life of Messiaen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 163.

palette of colors for melodic and harmonic purposes. Rather than using a mode as a whole, she often accesses sets of pitches within a given mode, "resembl[ing] Messiaen's tendency to employ select pitches from a mode as opposed to using the mode in its entirety."[47] She even borrows notes from other transpositions to invite a greater degree of chromaticism.

As Gotkovsky was a student at the Paris Conservatory before Messiaen's appointment to the institution, she might not have taken a class with him until her final year. She is confirmed to have been in at least one of his courses on musical philosophy in 1955 (see Figure 2.1).[48] Despite this limited time, the exposure to Messiaen's ideas fundamentally shaped Gotkovsky's musical language.

**1955-1956 — Philosophie musicale**

| | |
|---|---|
| AMY, Gilbert | 1er prix |
| ANCELIN, Pierre | |
| BELL, John (Britannique) | 2e accessit [nouvel élève] |
| CARSON, Philip | [en congé militaire] |
| CHARLES, Daniel | 1er prix [nouvel élève] |
| CHARPENTIER, Jacques | 1er prix |
| COLLE, Josèphe | [nouvelle élève] |
| CORNER, Philip (Américain) | 2e accessit [nouvel élève] |
| DUBBS, Marcelle | [nouvelle élève] |
| FOWLER, James Roger (Britannique) | [nouvel élève] |
| GOEHR, Alexander (Britannique) | [nouvel élève] |
| GOTKOWSKY, Ida | [nouvelle élève] |
| GRIMBERT, Jacques | 1er accessit |
| HUMBERT, Gilbert | 1er accessit [nouvel élève] |
| LOVANO-SCHLEGEL, Marguerite | 2e accessit |
| LUTZ, Roland | 1er accessit [nouvel élève] |
| MENGÉ, Pierre-Yves | 1er prix [nouvel élève] |
| MORENÇON, Charles | 1er prix |
| NORMAND, Jean-Jacques | [nouvel élève] |
| RAPAPORT, Eveline | [nouvelle élève] |
| TREMBLAY, Gilles (Canadien) | |

**Figure 2.1** Gotkovsky's appearance as "new student" in Messiaen's Musical Philosophy course, spelled as "Gotkowsky."

[47] Cook, "Formal Delineation," 9.
[48] Jean Boivin, *La Classe de Messiaen*, (Paris: Christian Bourgois Éditeur, 1995), 418.

A common thread throughout Gotkovsky's influences is the French tradition. While not all-encompassing and was experienced differently for each student who passed through the Paris Conservatory, the French tradition in the twentieth century was a dichotomy of conservatism and experimentation. When asked about her teachers, Gotkovsky says she was "a student of Tony Aubin, Noël Gallon, and George Hugon, I belong to the French school, the ideal synthesis of musical art."[49] Her use of "synthesis" is important as she views the French tradition as an amalgamation of multiple sources rather than a single dogma. The three teachers Gotkovsky mentioned, as well as Boulanger and Messiaen, were all students of Paul Dukas (1865–1935) who himself played a significant role in shaping the music scenes of Western Europe during his lifetime as a composer, pedagogue, and music critic. His music "reveals a stylistic individuality and modern aesthetic tendencies combined with a deep respect for classical form."[50] This combination represents itself in varying degrees in the students of Dukas, with Messiaen displaying an overtly modern approach while Aubin maintained a certain level of conservatism. Gotkovsky's compositional style can therefore be viewed as a unification, a synthesis, of multiple influences.

[49] David Wacyk, (trans. In "Powerful Structures"), 15.
[50] Manuela Schwartz and G.W. Hopkins. "Dukas, Paul," *Grove Music Online* (2001) accessed March 11, 2022. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000008282.

OVERVIEW OF GOTKOVSKY'S SAXOPHONE WORKS

The purpose of the following table is to illuminate the importance Gotkovsky places on the saxophone. Due to the discrepancies in dates in catalogs appearing on Gotkovsky's website as compared to those published by Billaudot, and in anthologies and published scores, this table abides by the earliest dates provided. For example, one major discrepancy is found for *Variations Pathétiques*, which was dedicated to Daniel Deffayet for the 1980 solo de concours at the Paris Conservatory. That date appears in the score as well, though other catalogs use 1983, especially when referring to the version with orchestra. Another inconsistency is found on Gotkovsky's website for her work *Inventions pour saxophone baryton et piano*, for which one catalog uses 1970 while another catalog on the website uses 1988.[51]

| Title | Year | Publisher |
|---|---|---|
| *Concerto pour Saxophone-Alto et Orchestre* | 1966 | Transatlantiques |
| *Inventions* | 1970/1988 | Ida Gotkovsky |
| *Brillance* | 1974 | Billaudot |
| *Eolienne pour Saxophone et Harpe* | 1979 | Billaudot |
| *Variations Pathétiques* | 1980 | Billaudot |
| *Quatuor de Saxophones* | 1983 | Billaudot |
| *Trio Lyrique pour Violin, Saxophone, et Piano* | 1984 | Billaudot |
| *Golden Symphonie* (12 saxophones) | 1991 | Billaudot |
| *Incandescence* | 2011 | Resolute |

**Table 2.2** List of works for saxophone

With an already admirable list of works written for or adapted to the saxophone, Gotkovsky also placed the saxophone in some of her works for orchestra and the operatic stage.

| Title | Year | Publisher |
|---|---|---|
| *La Reve de Makar* | 1964 | Billaudot |
| *Concerto pour Orchestre* | 1970 | Ida Gotkovsky |
| *Poeme Lyrique* | 1982 | Billaudot |

**Table 2.3** works for orchestra/opera including saxophone

[51] Ida Gotkovsky, "Catalog." See "Downloadable catalog." https://www.gotkovsky.com/Ida_Gotkovsky_PDF/catalogGotkovsky.pdf

Her inspiration in embracing the saxophone most likely came from her experiences at the Paris Conservatory:

> "Our teachers and masters whom I admired kept telling us, 'hear the sounds of each instrument, it is not a question of coming only to the classes of which you belong but also of listening to the neighboring classes'. It is true that having a curious mind can only be a factor of enrichment. So I went to all the classes […]"[52]

Having been a student and lecturer at the Paris Conservatory at the same time as Marcel Mule and Daniel Deffayet's saxophone classes, she would have likely been familiar with and understood the saxophone's technical and lyrical capabilities, as evidenced in her treatment of the instrument. The number of works she has produced for the saxophone is certainly testament to her proclivity for it and it is thus regrettable that musicians and scholars alike have not taken greater note of her work.

[52] Gotkovsky, "Press," See 1991-2000, extract from the CMF Journal. https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1991-2000.html

## CHAPTER 3: COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

### TITLES AND WORDING

"Self-borrowing" (or sometimes "self-referencing"), while not unique to Gotkovsky, is one of her primary compositional tools. Borrowing from oneself and from the works of other composers has been a cornerstone of Western art music and is ubiquitous throughout the musical canon as we know it today. Such examples can be found in the parody masses of the sixteenth century in their use of pre-existing melodic material as well as the widespread quotation of the Dies Irae motif in contexts of death. The scholar Peter Burkholder asserts that "self-borrowing represents new extensions for musical ideas already worked with, demonstrating both the unrealized potential in the material and the skill of the composer."[53] Hunter introduces the literary concept of intertextuality with regard to Gotkovsky as the interconnection between works of music, arguing that "an intertextual approach focuses on the listener."[54] Gotkovsky's method of self-borrowing throughout her music solicits a similar approach in both performing her music and informing an audience. This paper will thus provide an intertextual approach while examining her compositional style.

Intertextuality plays a major role in Gotkovsky's "creation of a universal work." It grants her a unique compositional voice and codifies her works into her own canon. Listeners are able to form connections between her pieces which increases the music's accessibility. In her credo, Gotkovsky expresses a desire to "ensure the unity of musical expression throughout all time," and it is through intertextuality that her oeuvre becomes a microcosm of this ideal. Not only is she reaching to the past through the observance of traditional forms and living in the present by

[53] J. Peter Burkholder, "Borrowing," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed February 21, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.52918.
[54] Stephen Hunter, "The Instrumental Music of Ida Gotkovsky: Finding Intertextual Meaning" (DMA diss. University of North Texas, 2010), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, 2.

adopting a contemporary musical language, but the expression that she writes into her music is similar throughout her body of works, whether it be sweet, passionate, mysterious, or joyful. These characters become embodiments of human expression that Gotkovsky uses as compositional tools across her music.

Besides writing with similar materials, Gotkovsky uses titles and wording to connect similar characters or expressions throughout her music. Many of Gotkovsky's works are written in absolute terms, like concerto, quartet, presto, and andante, which describe the actual setting and format of the given piece or movement. Other titles evoke more programmatic settings, like *Poem of Fire*, *Gold and Light*, and *Brillance*, which inspire the listener's imagination. Then there are titles that are caught in between these two poles with words that suggest a certain expression or feeling. These encompass the majority of her movement titles and expressive markings such as "Lyrique," used to indicate sustains in a song-like manner, "Linéaire" which defines a simple, quicker moving melody which takes precedence over other materials, and "Misterioso" which describes music that is brooding and unsettled. Gotkovsky often uses a combination of the aforementioned examples as titles, movement names, and markings attached to a given phrase in a piece.

Of the three pieces being discussed, *Brillance* is the most descriptive in its movement names. By contrast, *Variations Pathétiques* contains tempo and stylistic descriptors at the beginning of each movement. In *Incandescence*, there is a return of movement titles, such as "Lyrique," "Andante," and "Final," which are similar but not as illustrative as *Brillance's* movements: "Déclamé" (declamatory), "Désinvolte," "Dolcissimo" (very sweetly), and "Final." Although the movements of *Variations Pathétiques* and *Incandescence* lack the verbiage of *Brillance* and exist as their own specific characters, we can glean from *Brillance* similar stylistic

attitudes of sweetness, mystery, and liveliness by applying the lens of intertextuality and connecting Gotkovsky's use of style across these works.

One distinct instance of Gotkovsky directly borrowing previous material and placing it within new contexts can be found in the scherzo melody of *Brillance II*, *Variations Pathétiques II*, and *Incandescence III*. The following examples display Gotkovsky's use of this scherzo melody in a 5/8 time signature (see Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). The first example is taken from the second movement of *Brillance*, titled "Désinvolte," which translates to English as "flippant" or "jaunty," with panache. In each of the aforementioned movements, the asymmetrical measures are implanted within symmetrically barred sections, giving these sections an off-kilter feel as they subvert expectations of where the beat will fall. Another aspect that enables an air of uncertainty is the diminished melodic structure within the 5/8 sections as the momentum skips forward. There are also dramatic dynamic changes between piano and forte, further stirring the emotional drive of these areas before climactic moments of sustain. Afterwards in each piece, Gotkovsky shifts ideas to something new, marking the end of these sensational builds. This is but one manifestation of borrowing with regard to style and material between Gotkovsky's pieces as more examples will be exhibited within the case studies, beginning with *Brillance*.

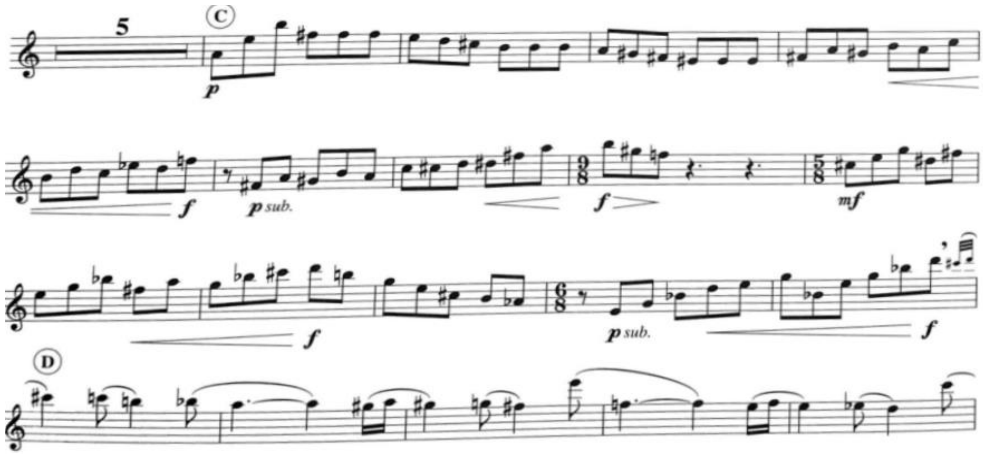



**Figure 3.1** *Brillance, II*. "Désinvolte," letters C–D.[55]

[55] Ida Gotkovsky, *Brillance* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 1974).

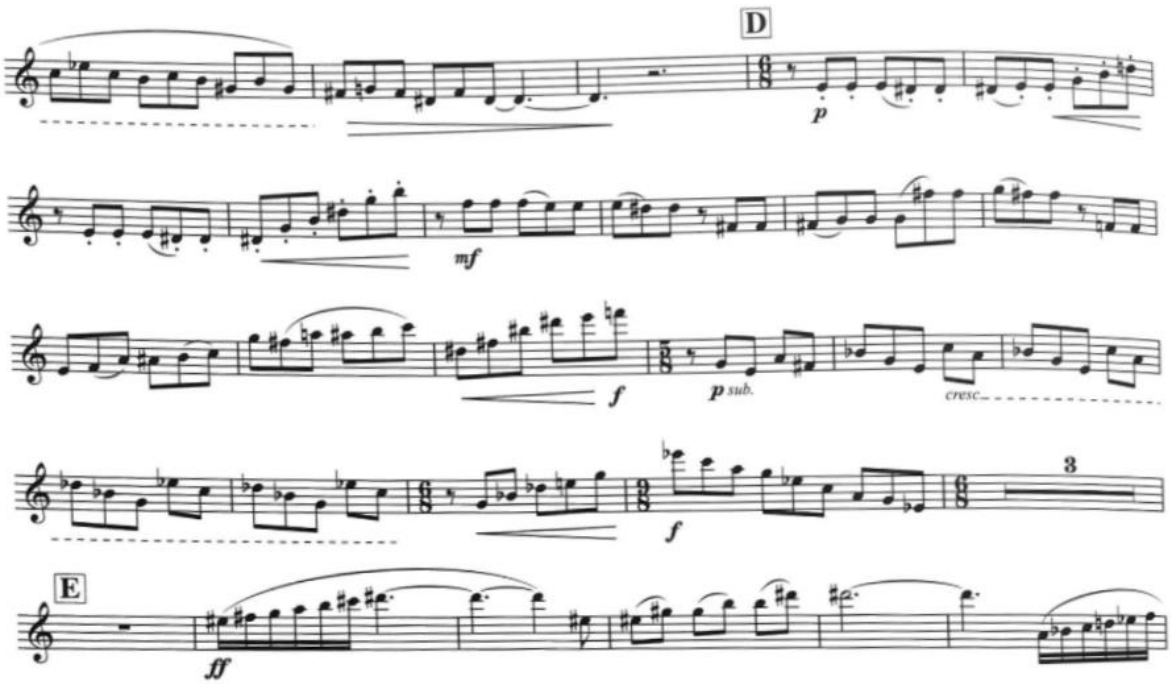



**Figure 3.2** *Variations Pathétiques, II*. "Prestissimo-Leggierissimo," letters D–E.[56]

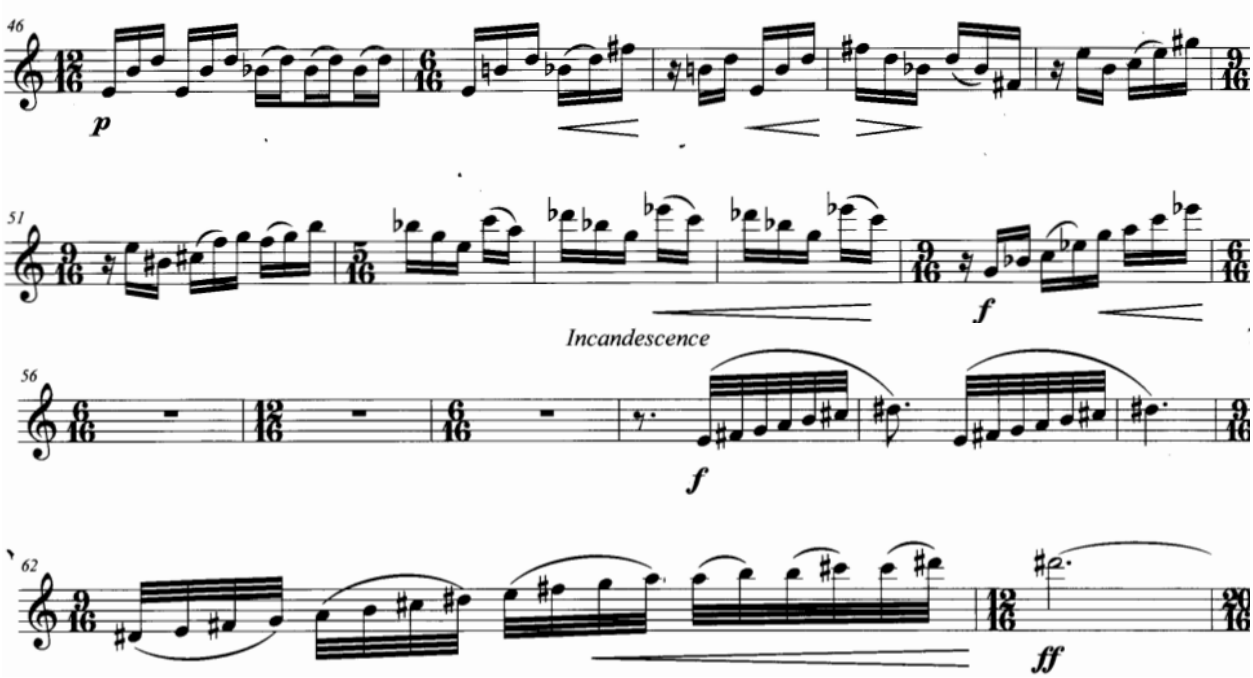



**Figure 3.3** *Incandescence, III*. "Final," mm. 46–63.[57]

[56] Ida Gotkovsky, *Variations Pathétiques* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 1980).
[57] Ida Gotkovsky, *Incandescence* (Marquette, MI: Resolute Music Publications, 2014). Used with permission of Resolute Music Publications.

CASE STUDY ONE: *BRILLANCE*

Written in 1974 for the solo de concours at the Conservatory of Brussels, *Brillance* is perhaps Gotkovsky's most well-known work. One notable point of connection is found in two advocates of her music, Francois Daneels (1921–2010) and Norbert Nozy (b. 1952). *Brillance* was dedicated to Daneels, who was the professor of saxophone at the Brussels Conservatory from 1954 to 1981. Nozy was a prodigious student of Daneels, and he excelled both as a saxophonist and conductor. Nozy has since become a champion of her music for wind band, recording her works on four separate albums, both as the artistic director of the Belgian Guides and as a saxophone soloist.[58] Daneels brought Gotkovsky's works abroad, performing her *Concerto pour Saxophone et Orchestre* with the Fort Worth Symphony in 1977.[59]

*Brillance* is written in four movements, titled "Déclamé," "Désinvolte," "Dolcissimo," and "Final." It is the second work Gotkovsky wrote for the saxophone, preceded by the *Concerto* from 1966, also written as a competition piece. In describing *Brillance,* Gotkovsky states:

> I-"Déclamé": Takes place in a style of great lyrical improvisation.
> II-"Désinvolte": Fleeting, humorous, the extremely fast theme alternates with the piano in bouncing detaché and pianissimo.
> III-"Dolcissimo": Linear, this movement of atmosphere where the colors of timbre which follow one another are very expressive in an extreme delicacy.
> IV-"Final": Virtuosity, rhythm and dynamism dominate this Final. All the difficulties of the saxophone are present there. After an impetuous dialogue, the work ends in strength and joy.[60]

[58] Norbert Nozy, "Discography," accessed February 10, 2022, http://www.nozynorbert.be/index.php?page=musiques
[59] Ida Gotkovsky, "Press," 1971–1980, https://gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1971-1980.html
[60] Ida Gotkovsky, "Files/Work Sheets." See *Brillance,* https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_fiches_des_oeuvres/ff_brillans.html

Melody

Gotkovsky utilizes a declarative melodic style in the first movement of *Brillance*, *Variations Pathétiques*, and *Incandescence*. While the saxophone was born in Belgium, French military bands adopted it to serve as an intermediary between the power of the brass instruments and technical capabilities of the woodwind instruments. By the time Gotkovsky entered the Paris Conservatory in 1943, the saxophone had already been in France for a hundred years, distinctly used as an exploration of color and its ability to project whether it be in the orchestra, military band, or big band. The saxophone had also recovered its position at the Paris Conservatory the year prior to Gotkovsky's entrance, with Marcel Mule being designated to restart the saxophone class after its seventy-year hiatus. While Gotkovsky does not use the terms "déclamé" and "declamando" exclusively for saxophone, she uses them to name the first movements of *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques* and places "declamando" as a stylistic marking in the first movement of *Incandescence*. In doing so, she reveals her attitude towards the saxophone's dramatic capabilities as well as her taste for how best to employ the instrument in a chamber setting.

Since the publication of her *Concerto pour Saxophone-alto et Orchestre* in 1966, Gotkovsky's use of sustains in the saxophone part has risen significantly. The *Concerto* features very minimal sustains, favoring more technical prowess instead. By contrast, the openings of *Brillance, Variations Pathétiques*, and *Incandescence* are defined by the notable use of sustains with the saxophone marked "sonorous" on its entrance in *Brillance*. This highlights a shift in Gotkovsky's writing for saxophone since the *Concerto*, with technique now submitting as embellishment for the instrument's rich sound. In "Déclamé" the purpose of the technical lines is to carry the listener back to the goal of these sustains. They also inform the beginning's marking

of "quasi recitativo" as well as Gotkovsky's own description of the movement being in the style of great lyrical improvisation.

Carroll identifies the third mode of limited transposition as the musical source for *Brillance*.[61] This third mode houses four separate transpositions each with nine pitches, providing Gotkovsky with a rich foundation of pitch and intervallic materials (see Figure 3.4). Each mode employs a multitude of half-steps and tritones, providing a means of attaining chromaticism. Rather than using a mode in its entirety, Gotkovsky's "use of modal subsets resembles Messiaen's tendency to employ select pitches from a given mode."[62] This is evident in the opening of *Brillance* in which the piano begins in the fourth transposition of mode three with the added pitch of C while the saxophone undergoes a series of pitches from the first, second, and third transpositions (see Figure 3.5). Gotkovsky also "borrows material from other active transpositions,"[63] as seen in the occurrence of the saxophone's F# during the first beat of the third measure which is borrowed from the piano's sustained A. The piano then responds with the same pattern of the third mode with the saxophone sustaining a low D.

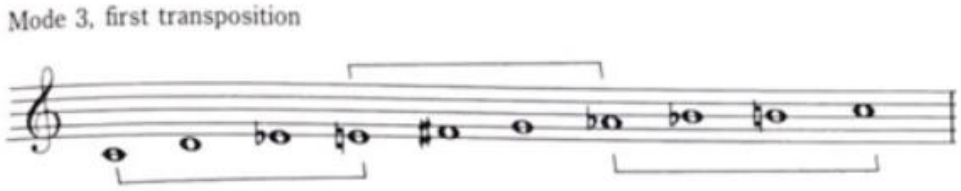



**Figure 3.4** mode three in the first transposition

[61] Kenneth Carroll, "The Influence of Olivier Messiaen on *Brillance* and the *Concerto pour Saxophone-Alto et Orchestre* by Ida Gotkovsky: An Analytical Study" (PhD thesis, The University of Georgia, 1992), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, 45.
[62] Cook, "Formal Delineation," 9.
[63] Carroll, "The Influence of Olivier Messiaen," 45.

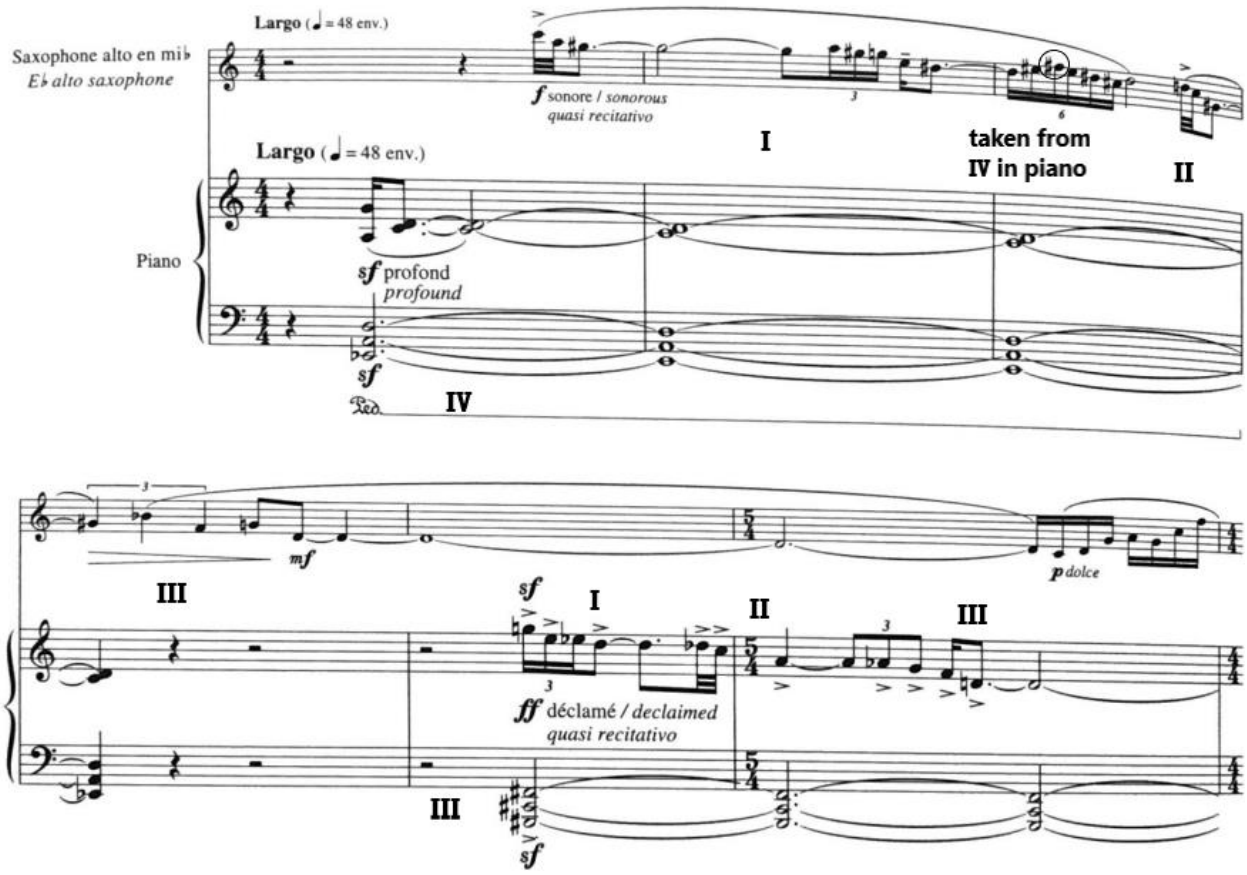



**Figure 3.5** use of mode three transpositions at the beginning of "Déclamé," mm. 1–6. Mode three transpositions provided as roman numerals.

Gotkovsky's specific use of melodic intervals evokes a sense of obscurity in the middle section. To this end, half-steps and tritones make up almost every interval at letter B. Paired with a looming crescendo and repetitive rhythmic alternation, the energy grows ever more intense until the half-steps are inverted to major sevenths. The piano's melody remains in the first transposition of the third mode as it spans multiple octaves in a slow descent.

Throughout this opening movement, Gotkovsky continually develops an intensity through a hierarchy of melodic changes. The saxophone begins on its written C in its first iteration of the recurring declamatory melody, then ascends to an Eb in measure eight, and up a half-step to E in measure fifteen, wavering between the notes in the instrument's highest regular range of E, F, and Gb as shown in Figure 3.5 before moving into a brief cadenza-like section.

The saxophone becomes stuck in the half-step between its E and F until finally reaching F# and the return of the melody at the end of the movement (see Figure 3.6). Here we see Gotkovsky's reliance on the upper register of the saxophone to achieve a high degree of intensity and specific brilliant timbre.

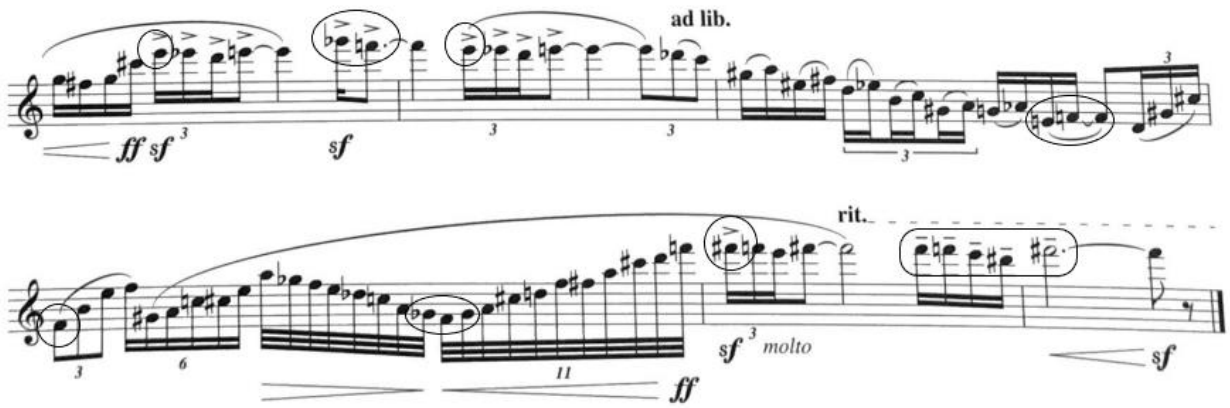



**Figure 3.6** melodic progression and recurrence of the saxophone's written E, F, and F#, *Brillance*, mm. 16–21.

As discussed previously, and in accordance with Gotkovsky's description of the second movement, "Désinvolte" is humorous with a carefree character. Stylistic similarities abound between this movement, the second movement of *Variations Pathétiques*, and the third movement of *Incandescence*. The melody is very active in the beginning before Gotkovsky initiates a highly chromatic sustained melody with dramatic leaps of a major seventh, one of Gotkovsky's signature intervals used to an even greater extent in *Variations Pathétiques* and *Incandescence*. This sustained melody returns at letter D and is extended to produce transformation rather than exact repetition. (see Figure 3.7).

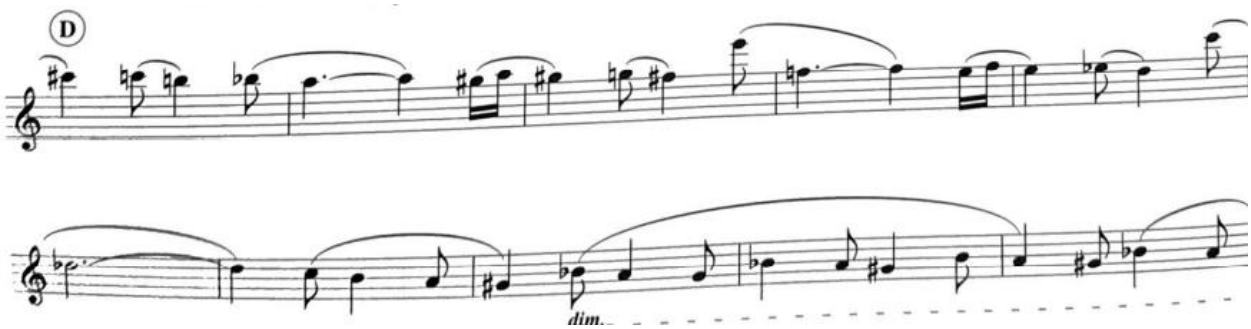



**Figure 3.7** sustained melody in "Désinvolte," further developed from letter B, mm. 49–58.

A melody similar to the buoyant opening is introduced at measure 35 beginning with quintal leaps before becoming more chromatic. Gotkovsky uses a similar motion in the "Scherzo" movement of her *Quatuor de Saxophones* (1983) (see Figure 3.9). There are many parallels between "Désinvolte" and the fourth movement of Gotkovsky's *Quatuor de Saxophones* titled "Scherzo." The two movements share a "bouncing detaché" style, imitative qualities, and approach to chromaticism.

The piano imitates the saxophone in a close canon of one beat at letter C, copying the saxophone's pitches. "Désinvolte" reveals its highly contrapuntal nature in this section. Where the saxophone and piano are moving in the same zig-zag direction at the fourth and fifth measures of letter C, the voices are at an interval of a sixth apart (see Figure 3.8). Gotkovsky demonstrates her mastery of counterpoint in scherzo melody of the 5/8 measures, placing the piano's left hand and the saxophone in an upward direction while the piano's right hand moves downward. Every vertical alignment and horizontal grouping in these measures either outlines or suggests diminished chords. Letter C is characterized by cohesion in starting within quintal harmonies, traversing through chromaticism, and moving to a diminished quality in an unsettled 5/8 section before launching into the sustained melody of letter D.

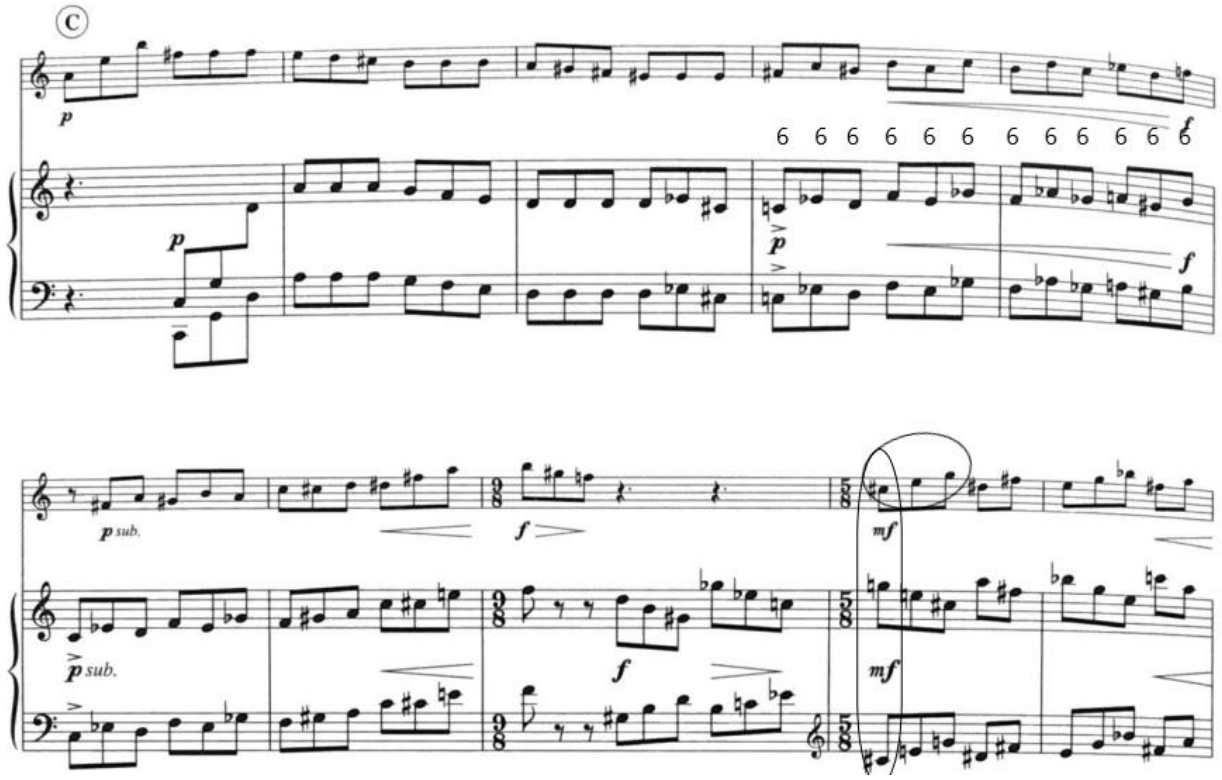


**Figure 3.8** examples of close canon, first species counterpoint at an interval of a sixth, and diminished quality in *Brillance* "Désinvolte," mm. 35–44.

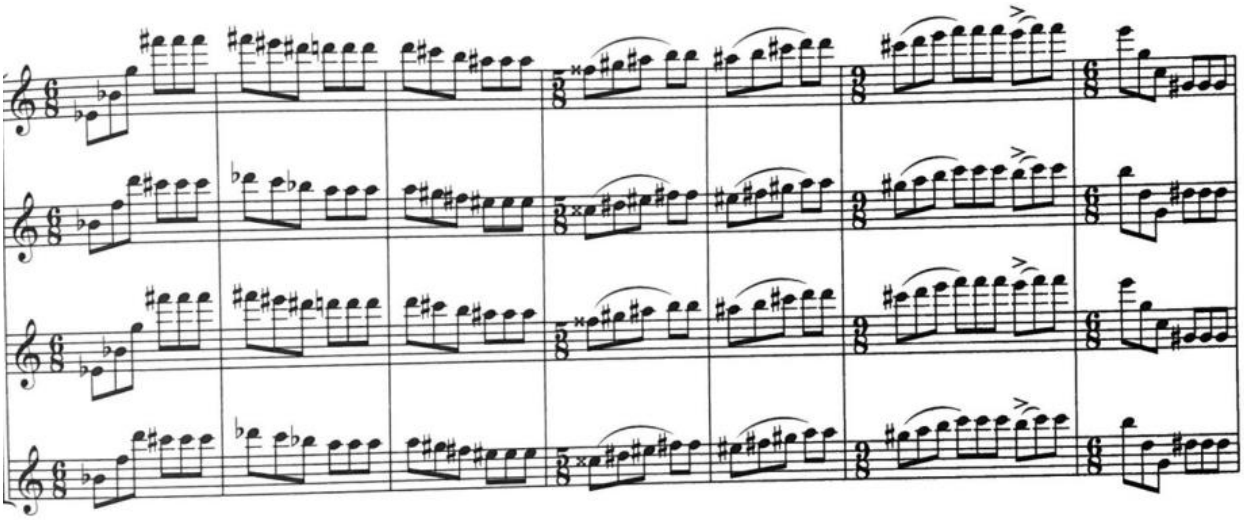


**Figure 3.9** similar melodic treatment to *Brillance* in *Quatuor de Saxophones* "Scherzo," mm. 180–186.[64]

Leading to letter G, Gotkovsky uses a treatment of melody that will return in *Variations Pathétiques* and the *Quatuor de Saxophones.* The saxophone is marked "molto espressivo e

[64] Ida Gotkovsky, *Quatuor de Saxophones* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 1988).

sostenuto" in a lush melody beginning in its upper register as the piano undergoes a series of cluster-chord planing to support the saxophone's movement. Again, at letter G the descending melody now begins a whole step higher (see Figure 3.10).


**Figure 3.10** molto espressivo melody in "Désinvolte," mm. 80–86.

At this climax, Gotkovsky again places the saxophone on sustains in the upper register at its written E. Just like the previous sustained melodies, Gotkovsky favors the major seventh leap, this time ascending rather than descending. Once more, the detaché style returns to close out the movement with a hushed energy.

The third movement of *Brillance*, "Dolcissimo," contains an instance in which Gotkovsky transfers much of the melody, accompanying material, and dolce style over to another of her works. Harry Gee identifies this transfer to the first movement of Gotkovsky's work for clarinet, *Images de Norvège* (1980).[65] Both movements begin with the piano in an ostinato as the soloist enters one measure later with a simple melody. The "Dolcissimo" movement is marked "molto dolce" while the movement for clarinet titled "Calme" marks the piano in a "dolcissimo" style. Many similarities can be found at the beginning with both saxophone and clarinet establishing the melody, undergoing an agitated section, and reaching a sustained note in both of the instruments' high registers before moving into an ad libitum passage (see Figures 3.11 and 3.12). The ending of both movements involves the soloists in a three-note pickup gesture to the final whole note at a soft volume.

[65] Ida Gotkovsky, "Press," See 1981-1990, Harry Gee "The Clarinet and Saxophone Music of Ida Gotkovsky," in NAWCPI Journal, Spring 1984.

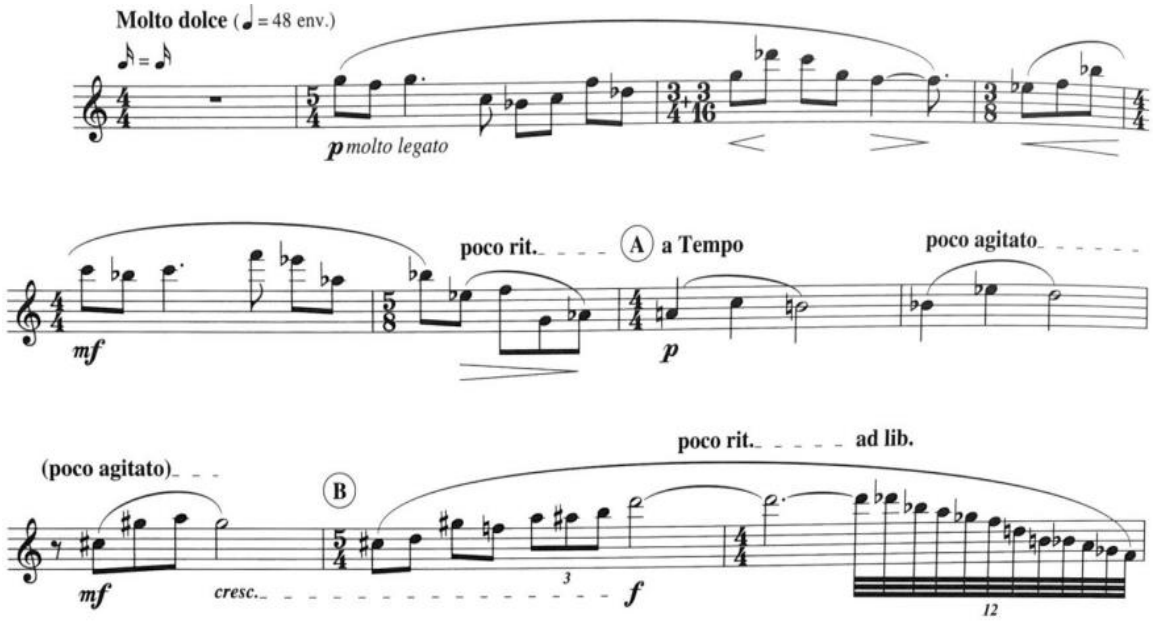



**Figure 3.11** similarities between soloist parts in *Images de Norvège* and *Brillance III* in "Dolcissimo," mm. 1–11.

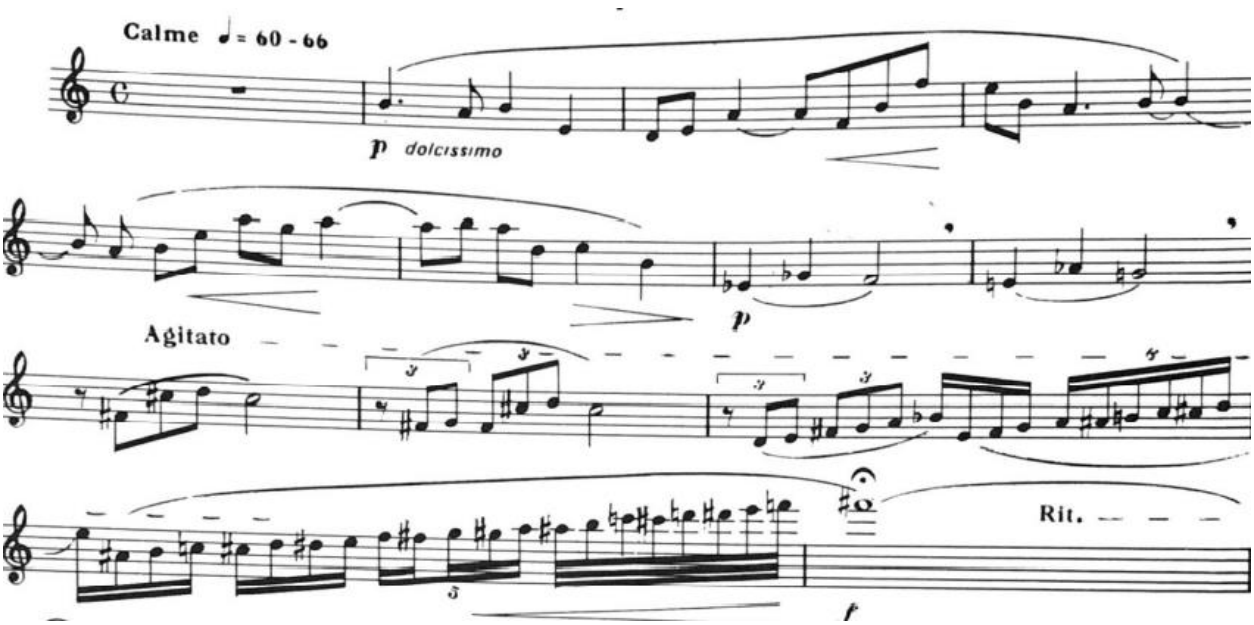



**Figure 3.12** similarities between soloist parts in *Brillance III* and *Images de Norvège I* in "Calme," mm. 1–13.

Gotkovsky describes "Dolcissimo" as linear, distinguished by the way she weaves the two voices in simple but delicate counterpoint. Her treatment of melody is similar to two movements named "Linéaire" in her *Variations Concertantes* for bassoon and piano and her *Quatuor de Saxophones*. As well as sharing a name, those two movements also share the same

simple melody and handling of counterpoint between voices. The melody in "Dolcissimo" is much slower and simpler, built off an eighth note value.

The delicate sensibility of this movement is found in both voices' placement in the mid-upper range, before an agitato begins and lowers both instrumental ranges. The left hand of the piano shifts from occupying a role of syncopation to droning a low-register descent while the saxophone travels upward to its high register D. This is another instance of Gotkovsky utilizing the saxophone's upper range for moments of intensity. The saxophone undergoes an ad libitum passage before bringing us from the previous high D up a half-step to D# for the movement's early climax (see Figure 3.13). Here, Gotkovsky calls attention to her treatment of range and melody across a longer line, as she sustains the saxophone's D, interrupts it with technical material, and then moves to the high sustained D#. This note is embellished by a momentary E a half-step above to bring even more chromaticism and tension into the mix.

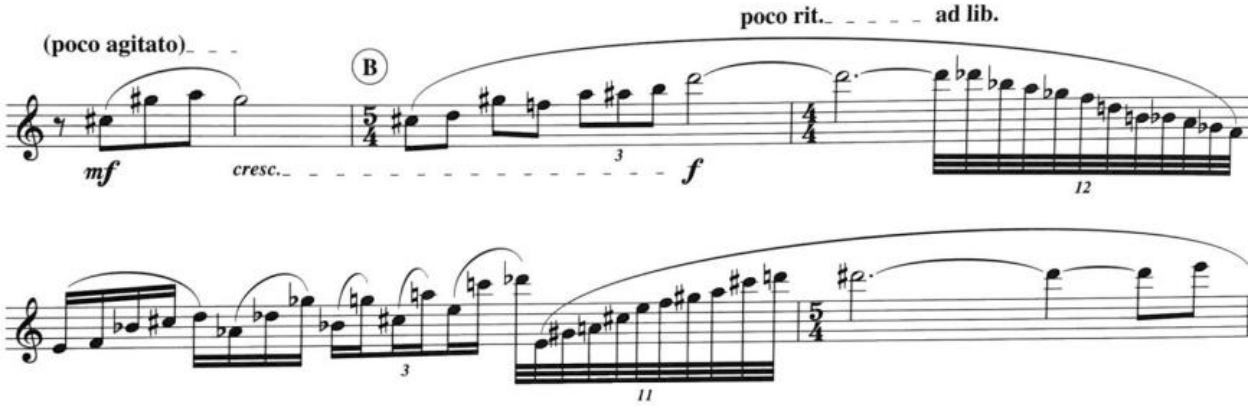



**Figure 3.13** chromaticism in the high register in *Brillance* "Dolcissimo," mm. 9–13.

Movement four, "Final," is marked at a prestissimo tempo with "strepitoso" style and closes out *Brillance* in a flamboyant fashion. Strepitoso is a "direction to perform forcefully," executed in a strong and fast manner.[66] This is an apt description as the movement's excessive

[66] David Fallows, "Strepitoso," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 5, 2022, https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26945.

energy is relentless. The melody is purely technical in the opening and the texture is fairly sparse as the piano plays a role of establishing pulse while outlining the saxophone's arpeggiated pitches. Then the roles reverse as the piano takes on a sustained, espressivo melody which the saxophone supports with running sixteenth notes.

The cadenza arrives fairly early in this final movement. As seen in each previous movement, Gotkovsky places the saxophone at the upper reaches of its regular range for ultimate expression. Embracing the chromaticism that led to this moment, the saxophone ascends and descends incessantly between a tritone of its F# and C. Gotkovsky uses a very similar cadenza in her *Concerto pour Saxophone*, though there is, by contrast, further development by way of moving the chromatic passage up a half-step for even more tension (see Figure 3.14). The cadenza finishes with a downward embellished, fully diminished sequence from the saxophone's F# before plunging upwards into the next section. Many of Gotkovsky's cadenzas are fashioned by an embellished figure which is typically marked to hesitate, accelerate, and pull back in a short span, directly controlling the intended execution of the soloist (see Figure 3.15).

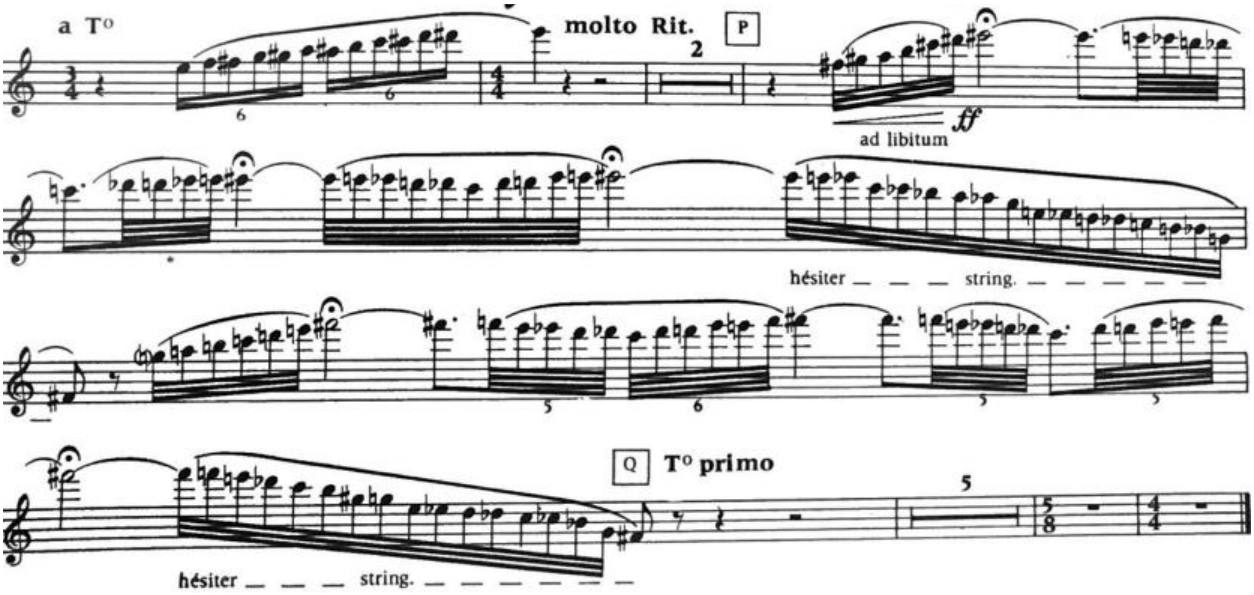



**Figure 3.14** cadenza in *Concerto pour Saxophone-alto et Orchestre* "Allegro con fuoco," letters P–Q.

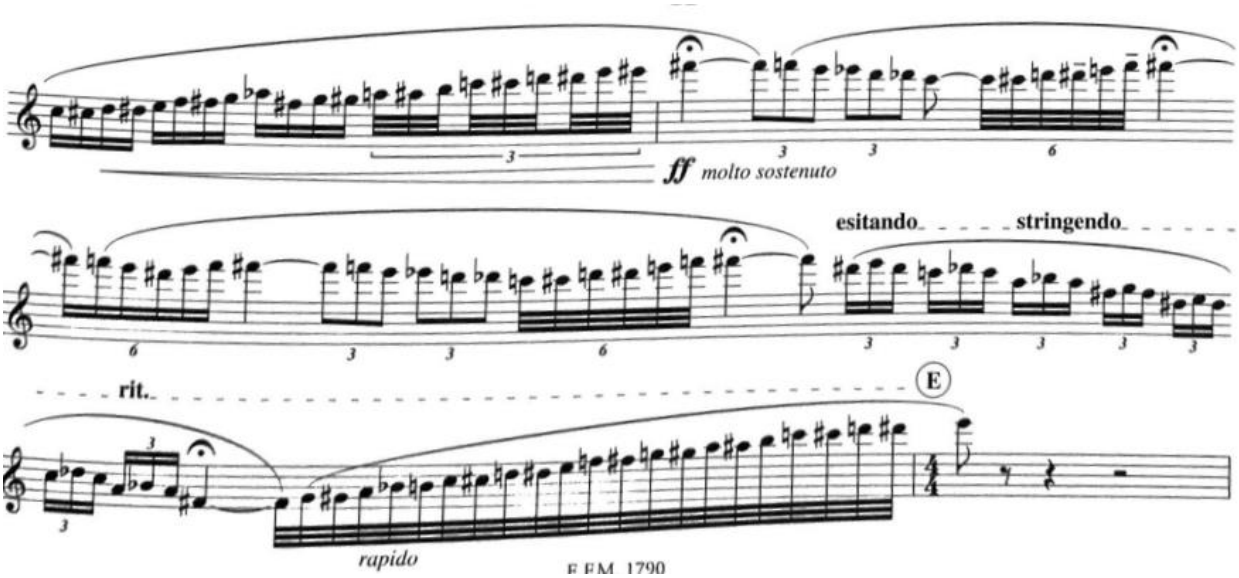



**Figure 3.15** cadenza in *Brillance* "Final," mm. 24–26.

Following the cadenza, Gotkovsky moves into a dance-like section, gradually expanding the repeated, ascending dance motif by an interval of a fourth, then a tritone, and finally a major seventh for decisive tension (see Figure 3.16).

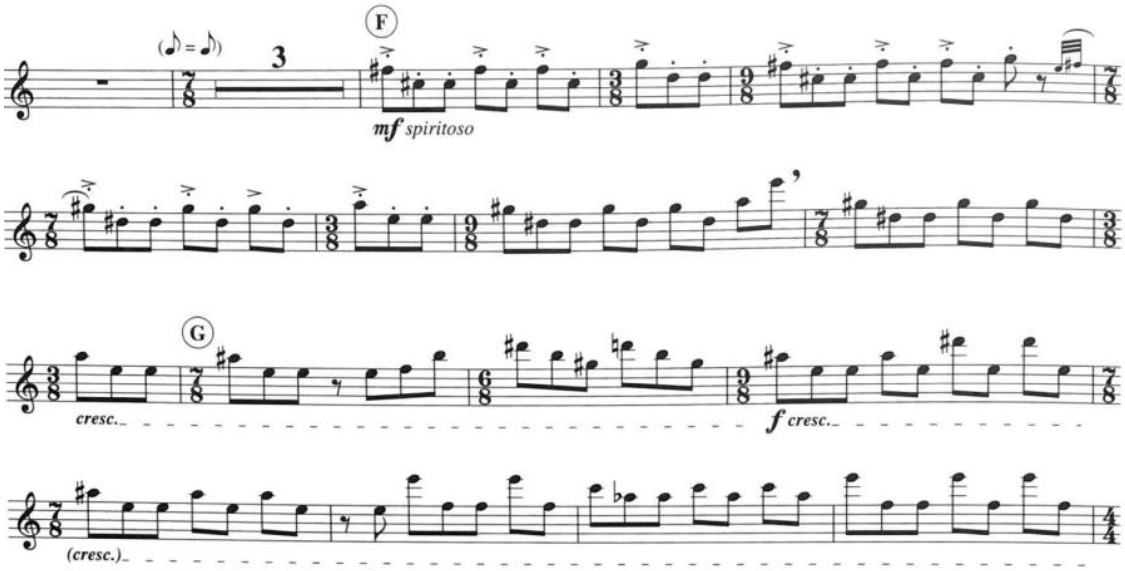



**Figure 3.16** dance motif and melodic ascension. Spiritoso marking comparison in *Brillance* "Final," mm. 31–45.

At letter I, Gotkovsky reintroduces sustain at the height of the saxophone's flourishes through arpeggiated patterns, landing on its written high E in brilliant sustain. During this sustain, the

piano hammers out the same collection of notes found in the saxophone's technical passage with rhythmic intensity. Rather than resolving the momentum here, Gotkovsky repeats the technique in a new transposition to ingrain more chromaticism. This time the saxophone lands on its high F, a half-step away from the previous E for melodic tension, while the piano hits a D pedal tone, a half-step away from its previous pedal, expanding both instruments in opposite directions and forming a tritone between them.

A recapitulation occurs at letter K to cultivate further structure towards the end of the movement. Along with a new transposition, Gotkovsky instills imitation by adding the piano in the arpeggiated motif from the beginning. Even greater imitation is had at letter L, with the piano copying the saxophone's rhythm and pitches apart by one beat. Gotkovsky sets stretto in motion, shortening the imitation to occur by the length of an eighth note until the section collapses under the stressful intensity (see Figure 3.17).

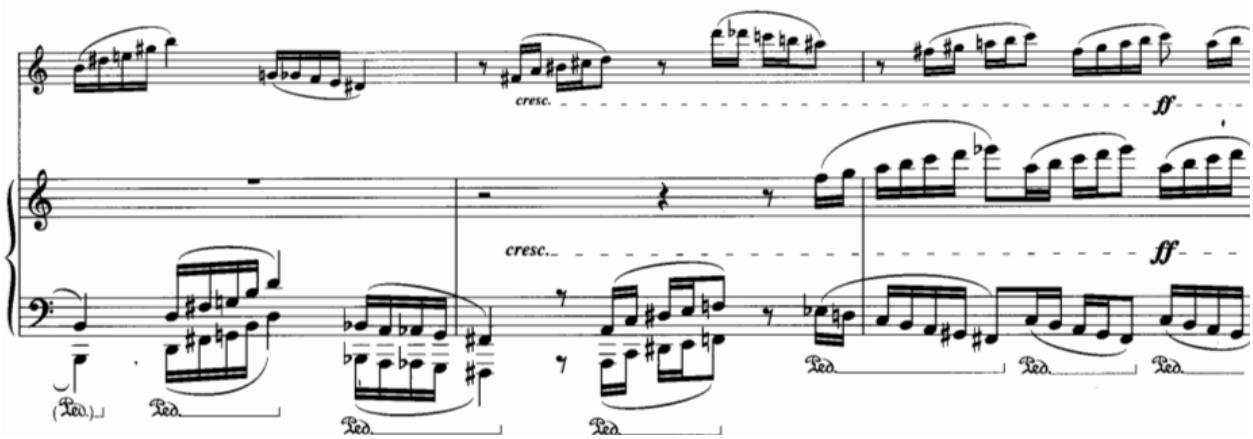



**Figure 3.17** examples of imitation and stretto in "Final," mm. 76–78.

The final melody ascends through a technique passage before the saxophone once more enters its high register with a passionate singing quality. Just like letter I, the saxophone moves from its repeated high E to a repeated F, calling to the "strength and joy" as described by Gotkovsky before ending the movement with a quick five-note descent.

Rhythm

Along with the purpose of the technical lines in "Déclamé," Gotkovsky's handling of rhythm reinforces the recitative and declamatory style of the first movement of *Brillance*. At both of their entrances, the piano and saxophone initiate feelings of syncopation. Sagrillo has documented Gotkovsky's use of syncopation in her *Poeme du Feu* (1978) for wind band, noting that the "beginning upbeat rhythm turns out to be perfectly malleable, because it can be transferred into a Lombardian rhythm, which, in turn, mutates into syncopation."[67] These Lombard rhythms appear throughout her music when a short, accented note is followed by a longer one, as is the case in the opening of *Brillance*. The saxophone's opening line features four repetitions of this syncopation, three of which are dotted iterations, followed by an elongated version that closes out the initial section and makes way for the piano's own declamatory gestures (see Figure 3.18). Also of note is how Gotkovsky writes in articulation markings to enhance the style of a given section. By placing the tenuto and accent on the beat, she ensures a sensation of weight so that the rhythms that happen afterwards feel syncopated and rebound off the first note of each figure.

[67] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky: Her Life and Style," 306.

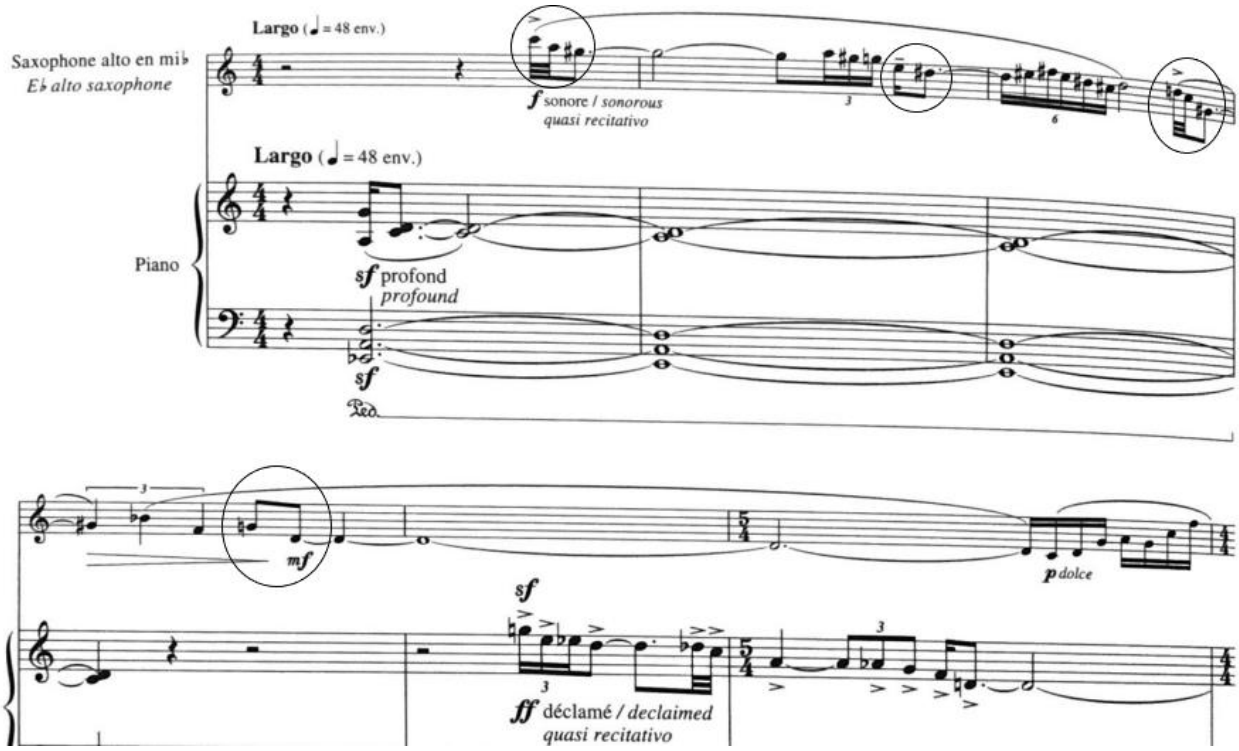



**Figure 3.18** syncopation in the melodic line, *Brillance* "Déclamé," mm. 4–6.

Contrasting with the recitative quality of the intense passages is the reserved middle section at letter B. For a moment, Gotkovsky places both voices at pianissimo in a "dolcissimo e legato molto" style, creating a hushed atmosphere with sparse texture. The rhythms found here are a common feature in Gotkovsky's writing, vacillating between four sixteenths and three triplets, with the last leg of each beat tying into the next. Here, the saxophone blurs the sense of pulse, but the piano's quarter notes sustain the fundamental tempo. When the saxophone reenters with the declamatory melody, its rhythms are now more intense, with triplet-sixteenths to match the ascending melodic notes in the upper register. Gotkovsky's use of repetition and articulation is again apparent in the figure leading to the last sustain, with each note carrying a tenuto for emphasis during a ritardando to the end.

The surface appearance of "Désinvolte" does not display extensive rhythmic complexity like polyrhythms. Gotkovsky does, however, introduce a struggle between feeling certain sections in two versus three through the use of hemiolas, which are visible at the beginning by

the pattern in the saxophone's melody. This effect is heard most clearly in the third and fourth measures where the saxophone alternates between its written G#-F# and G-F# (see Figure 3.19). The absence of rhythmic accompaniment here further promotes a lack of agogic weight until the pattern changes to groups of three eighth notes travelling in the same direction after letter A.

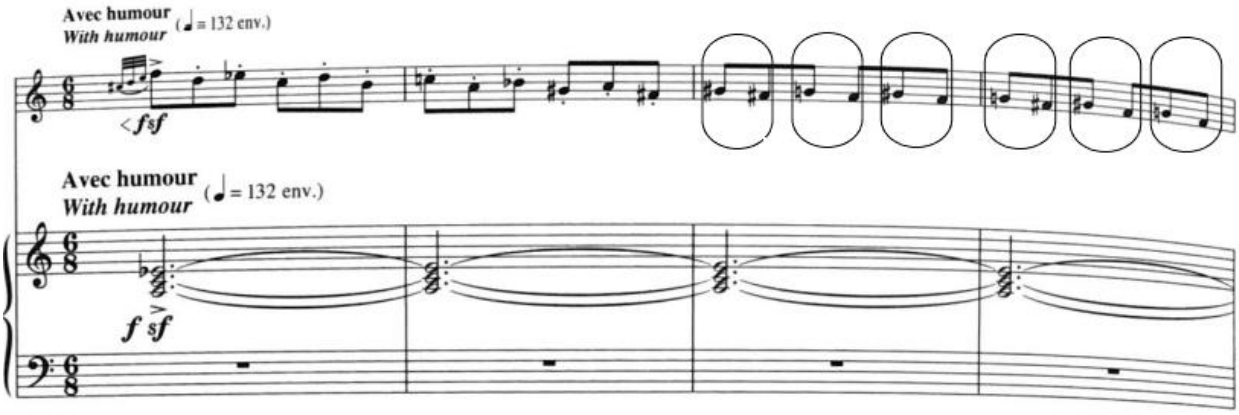



**Figure 3.19** hemiolas in the saxophone part at the beginning of "Désinvolte," mm. 1–4.

Hemiolas present themselves in more than one way in "Désinvolte." Following the saxophone's sustained melody at letter B, Gotkovsky distorts the compound meter through a repetition of two sixteenths leading to an eighth note. This is highly evidenced in the beaming across bar lines and the presence of the 4/8 measure in which a sense of duple meter is promoted during measures of triple meter (see Figure 3.20). A final example of hemiolas exists a few measures later when the piano transitions from two groups of three notes in an ostinato to three groups of two notes per measure with accents on every note. As with the beginning material, Gotkovsky highlights this effect here by alternating high versus low ranges.

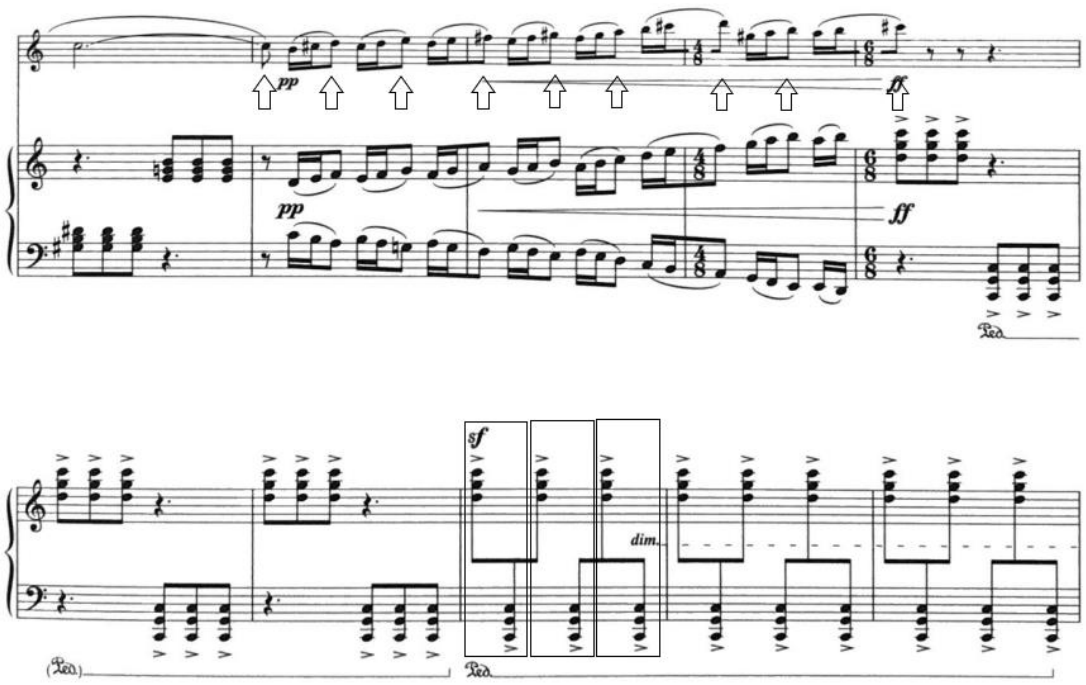



**Figure 3.20** hemiola examples through note groupings and range and ostinato, "Désinvolte," mm. 25–34.

Ostinato is used to a substantial degree in the second movement, providing structure and buoyancy to the haughty character of "Désinvolte." Carroll identifies this as an influence of Messiaen's rhythmic pedal which "repeats indefatigably without busying itself about the rhythms which surround it."[68] Gotkovsky often supplies ostinato as a backdrop for melodic content, for moments of significant structure, or as transitional material. In Figure 3.20, ostinato is used to signify the end of that section and transition into the following section.

Despite the changing meters in the beginning of the movement, the rhythm in "Dolcissimo" is fairly regular due to the slow eighth-note melody which masks the changing meters. Before the saxophone enters with its simple melody, the piano leads an ostinato in which the lower voice changes pitch on every second sixteenth note of each beat to propel the slow melody forward. Like the first movement's method of disguising pulse through tied notes across beats of triplets and sixteenths, letter A builds agitation through a similar tactic, this time only

[68] Carroll, "The Influence of Messiaen," 59.

using sixteenth notes. A recapitulation occurs at letter D with the saxophone taking up the mantle of ostinato while the piano performs a truncated form of the beginning three-note melody. Gotkovsky even inserts added rhythmic value by including an extra sixteenth note into measure 21 to prepare the listener for rhythmic complexity (see Figure 3.21). This complexity is found in the form of syncopation as the saxophone plays the original melody starting on its C against the piano ostinato which has now been transformed into emphasizing a pattern of three sixteenth notes rather than four.

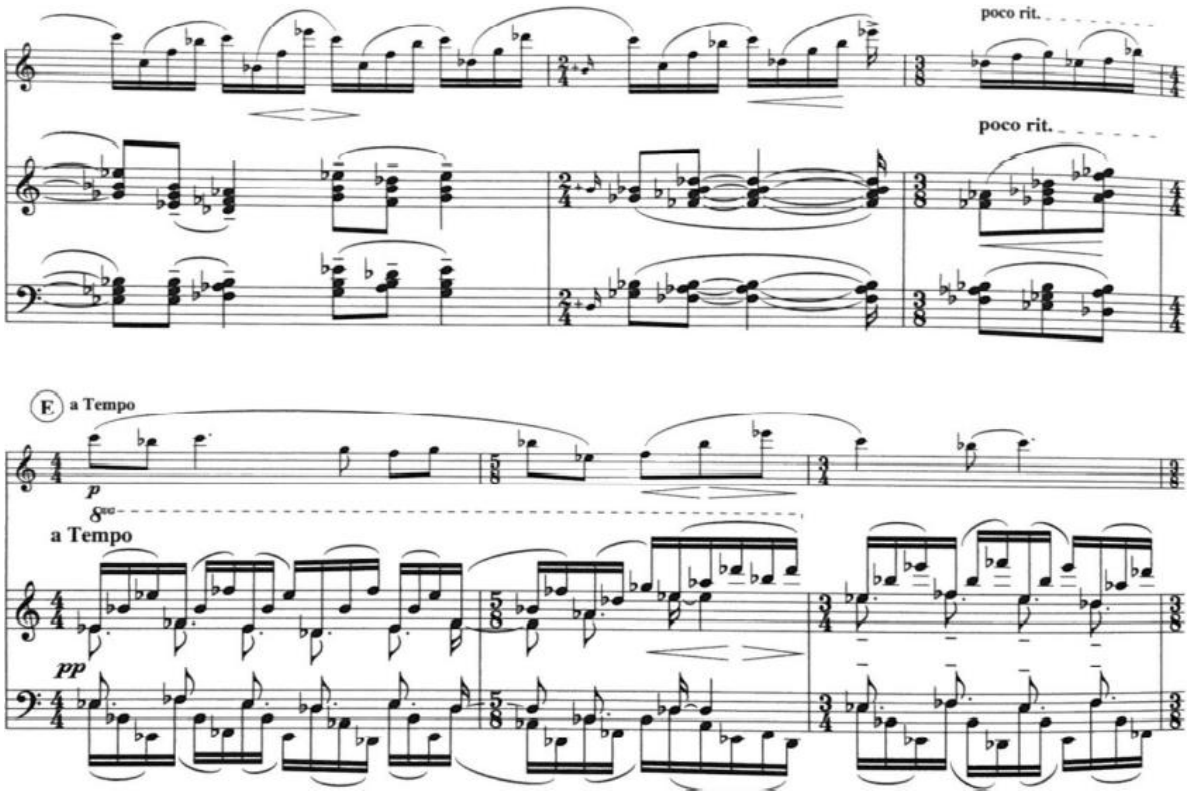



**Figure 3.21** piano truncated melody, added value, and increased syncopation at the end of "Dolcissimo," mm. 20–25.

"Final" is highly rhythmic with a swift tempo and use of quick arpeggiated patterns in both instruments. Rhythmic interest is created by the saxophone's omission of the first sixteenth note downbeat of each measure, propelling the music forward at a greater pace. This treatment also occurs in the last movement of *Variations Pathétiques*, causing the momentum to spill forward as the saxophone rebounds off the piano's downbeats.

Following the cadenza, the piano pushes forth into a new section which brings in the "rhythm and dynamism" of Gotkovsky's description of the "Final." Gotkovsky uses divisive rhythm in measure 26 by establishing a two-measure rhythmic pulse before interrupting the continuity by the removal of an eighth note, initiating a dance in 7/8. When the saxophone enters at letter F, Gotkovsky marks the style as spiritoso, meaning "spirited, lively, with vivacity,"[69] (see Figure 3.16). In her music, this stylistic descriptor is usually accompanied with staccato markings and within dance-like areas where she moves between duple and triple rhythms, as is the case in the last movement of *Variations Pathétiques* (see Figure 3.22). Multiple meter changes coupled with subtle melodic change drive the energy from letter F to H.

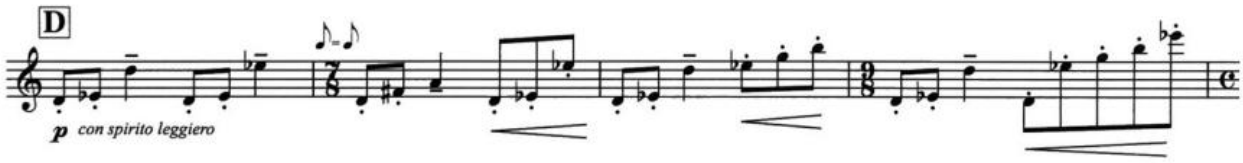



**Figure 3.22** spiritoso marking comparison in *Variations Pathétiques* "Prestissimo con fuoco," mm. 59–62.

Letter N brings back the arpeggiation introduced in the beginning and the 7/8 dance style of letter E to drive the movement to its end. For clarity, Gotkovsky keeps the piano in eighth notes while the saxophone contains sixteenths. The ending contrasts quick flourishes with sustained upper-register pitches before the saxophone closes in a five-note descending gesture which occurs once again at the end of *Incandescence*.

Harmony

The ternary form of "Déclamé" is emphasized by changes in harmonic structure. A plethora of tonal structures can be derived from the modes of limited transposition, such as

[69] David Fallows, "Spiritoso." *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 6, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26432.

"major, minor, diminished, augmented triads, seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords, and structures that only the limited modes can yield, such as chords with more than two half-steps, and simultaneous cross relations." [70] From the beginning to letter B, Gotkovsky relies on quartal and quintal harmonies made famous by her French impressionist predecessors. Barring any predetermined quality of these harmonic structures, the fact that the vertical harmonies become denser at the return of the melody at letter C suggests an overall progression and sense of direction within the movement. One crucial aspect that will continue to occur in each case study is Gotkovsky's routine of repetition with slight changes. This has already been noticed in the declamatory rhythmic gestures of "Déclamé" and is highlighted with even greater changes in the harmony at the return of the A section at letter C. The recapitulation features much denser chordal structures containing half-steps and tritones.

The harmonies of "Désinvolte" reveal much dependence on minor and diminished chords to contrast with the quintal leaps in the melody as well as the chromatic motion that occurs in the sustained melody. Letter B is characterized by an ostinato that alternates through diminished and minor chords (see Figure 3.23). Upon return of the ostinato at measure 29, the chords become quartal to set up the leaping melody of letter C.

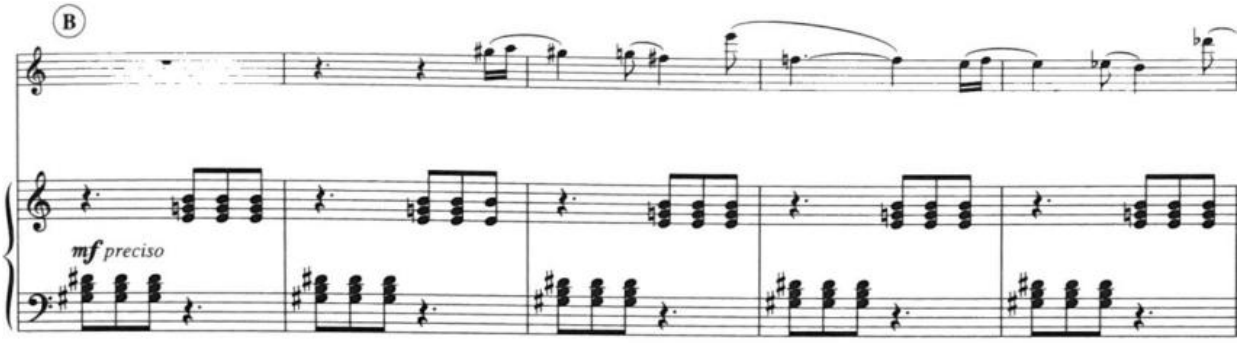



**Figure 3.23** minor and diminished chords in ostinato in "Désinvolte," mm. 20–24.

[70] Carroll, "The Influence of Olivier Messiaen," 45.

In “Dolcissimo,” a sense of tonal ambiguity is evoked from the piano’s oscillation between Eb and Fb striking on the second sixteenth note of each beat. The outer sections of the movement function within the Phrygian mode, a departure from the harmonies of the preceding movements’ use of quartal, quintal, and chromatic palettes. Chromaticism is, however, introduced in the middle agitated section. To close out this ternary-form movement, Gotkovsky recalls her description of simplicity with a perfect fifth between the voices and assuring the tonal center as Eb.

Throughout the fourth movement, “Final,” Gotkovsky employs a type of modal mixture that vacillates between major, minor, augmented, and diminished tonal outlines. The beginning features the saxophone playing a measure of minor arpeggios, followed by a measure of major arpeggios before these begin to switch on every beat in a condensed form. This formula of weaving in and out of traditional triadic structures takes precedence throughout the movement, continually altering the expected tonality.

Both instruments drop to a piano volume at letter C and chromaticism begins to intrude before time pulls back into the saxophone’s cadenza. Following the cadenza at letter F, Gotkovsky uses chords with two half-steps to highlight the tension in the melody. Quartal harmonies dominate at letter O. Interestingly, Gotkovsky keeps the lower voice of the piano the same while the upper voice supports the ascending motion of the saxophone by outlining its pitches, a common occurrence in Gotkovsky’s writing for accompaniment. This treatment follows suit all the way to the end, wherein the lower piano voice contains major chords while the upper voice utilizes half-steps to fight against the major quality. Resolution occurs in the last five measures when the piano’s continuous Db drops to a C for the final note.

Form

Gotkovsky creates cohesion in her works through repetition and use of traditional forms. Compared to more classical works, the opening movement of *Brillance* might not fit a strict definition of ternary form. Many factors, however, suggest a tripartite form, especially considering the opening material and its evolved return at letter C. Further evidence is found in Gotkovsky's treatment of harmony in the middle section. In its brevity, the middle section's three measures act as a shift in character between the two A sections, marked softly in a dolcissimo style with sparse texture. Texture is typically the clearest marker for sectional shifts in Gotkovsky's music. Quartal and quintal harmonies dominate the first A section, while the B section features a scarcity, nearly an absence, of vertical harmony. The A section returns at letter C with the crashing of harmonic clusters and a reinstating of the declaimed style lasting all the way to the end.

"Désinvolte" is an instance of Gotkovsky writing in a rondo form. She introduces a melody which is then juxtaposed with the occurrence of a new melody shortly thereafter. This happens three times in the beginning of "Désinvolte" wherein a buoyant melody ensues, followed by a more sustained melody before a leaping melody at letter C. After the scherzo melody of the 5/8 section intervenes, each previous melody recurs in the second half of the piece, though not in the same order as they first appeared. This repetition increases the accessibility of the movement for the listener by continually revisiting prior material.

"Dolcissimo" distinguishes itself as the clearest version of ternary form in *Brillance*. The movement begins and ends in the Phrygian mode, with a middle section that is more harmonically chromatic and melodically recitative than the outer sections. Interest is created in the saxophone adopting the piano's introductory ostinato at the recapitulation.

"Final" is illustrated as an unusual formal structure. It is made of multiple sections that differ greatly from each other, with the presence of repetition tying the movement together. Wacyk describes the through-composed aspect of Gotkovsky's music as moment-form, as she patches together short alternating sections giving the music a ceaseless quality.[71] As mentioned previously, changes in texture and harmony are the clearest markers of sectional shifts. The beginning material up to the cadenza forms the first section. The cadenza then interrupts the flow before a new dance-like section is introduced at letter E. After a series of multiple separate formal moments, Gotkovsky uses pedal tones to provide structural clarity. This allows points of arrival, like at letter I, to offer a sense of direction and completion following a succession of segmented phrases. A ritardando signals the recapitulation of the beginning material, now truncated as is characteristic of Gotkovsky in order to vary her material. An imitative section unfolds until the dance-like material returns once more, prevailing through to the end. Through this patchwork of assorted sections, Gotkovsky creates a form that is always changing but is continuously familiar.

Summary

From *Brillance*, we can glean much of Gotkovsky's early compositional language as it appears in the context of chamber music. Her chamber pieces typically fall under the category of short character movements, such as the six-movement *Caractères* or five-movement *Eolienne pour Flute et Harpe* (and its derivatives for clarinet or saxophone).[72] Others fall into a sonata arrangement, like *Brillance* and *Incandescence* due to both their small and large-scale forms. Sonatas portray "two, three or four successive movements in contrasting characters … in no

[71] Wacyk, "Powerful Structures," 47.
[72] Ida Gotkovsky, *Caractères* (Paris: Chappell S.A., 1971).; Gotkovsky, *Eolienne*.

form of instrumental music is there a better opportunity than in the sonata to depict feelings without words."[73] Gotkovsky writes in such a combination, bringing together the absolute music of classical forms and approaching programmatic notions via the naming of her works, such as *Brillance* rather than "Sonata for Saxophone." "Brillance" instills extra-musical associations, such as the sheen of the saxophone itself or the timbral quality in its high register as is exemplified in her exploitation of this register for moments of intensity and climax.

Additionally, Gotkovsky reveals her mastery of synthesizing the language of her teachers and predecessors to cultivate her own compositional identity. Her adaptation of Messiaen's modes of limited transposition engages "synthetic material, with the possibility of tonal centers and implied tertian harmonies,"[74] granting a level of accessibility for the listener rather than throwing them into an altogether unfamiliar sound world. Gotkovsky's treatment of rhythm is comparable, utilizing small-scale changes such as additive rhythms to move between regular pulsation and dance-like sections. Along with melodic modal shifts, texture regularly demarcates sectional shifts in her music, moving from busy rhythmic stacking to large sound blocs or a sparseness of material. Ultimately, *Brillance* represents a somewhat traditional mode of writing in Gotkovsky's oeuvre.

[73] Sandra Mangsen et al. "Sonata," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 1, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26191.
[74] Sanders, "A Woman's Voice," 18.

## CASE STUDY TWO: *VARIATIONS PATHÉTIQUES*

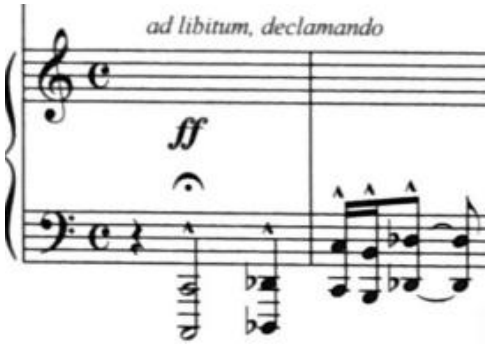
*Variations Pathétiques* signifies a departure from many of the compositional aspects achieved in *Brillance*. There is a general reduction of tonally inspired structures in Gotkovsky's music for the saxophone following *Brillance* as she began to operate in a more chromatic palette. Gotkovsky also begins to embrace the altissimo register, the upper extended range of the saxophone, that witnessed ever increasing exploration throughout the twentieth century and was becoming more widely taught at the university and conservatory level. As the name suggests, *Variations Pathétiques* represents variations on a particular motif. Sagrillo, a prominent scholar on Gotkovsky, contends with the language of theme, element, and motif, eventually concluding that Gotkovsky will often write with what he refers to as basic ideas, "which [are] too short to qualify as a theme and she does not develop themes in conforming to classical form principles, but they are simply, not to say permanently, repeated without substantial changes."[75] This is especially evident in *Variations*, in which the basic idea takes the form of a three-note ascending gesture of a minor second followed by a major seventh. This gesture appears within each movement, very obviously in most movements and more embedded in others and is the unifying force for the work as a whole. For each movement, Gotkovsky gives the following description:

> I-"Declamando con passione" is a melodic variation of the art of phrasing and legato style, strength of power and equality of sonority in the full range.
> II-"Prestissimo-Leggierissimo" is a variation of clarity and of opposition.
> III-"Lento-Rubato" is a variation of line and changes from the highest degree to the pianissimo.
> IV-"Rapido-molto legato-leggiero" is a variation of transparency and velocity.
> V-"Con simplicità-anima" is of simplicity, of a very great difficulty in its stripped nature, contained, inward.
> VI-"Prestissimo con fuoco" is a whirlwind of fire.[76]

[75] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky: Her Life and Style," 303.
[76] Ida Gotkovsky, "Press," See 1981–1990, Harry Gee "The Clarinet and Saxophone Music of Ida Gotkovsky," in NAWCPI Journal, Spring 1984. https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1981-1990.html

Melody

Gotkovsky defines the word pathétique "in its fullest context, to indicate passion, emotion, force of power, tenderness, and delicateness."[77] Unlike *Brillance*, the movements of *Variations* lack titles and are referred to as the stylistic descriptors that are paired with tempo markings. The first movement, "Declamando con passione," opens with an announcement of the variation motif in its original form in the piano. Following the piano's introduction, the saxophone mimics the piano's first five notes in exact pitches and recalls some of the recitative-like declamation of *Brillance's* "Déclamé" with regard to rhythm and sustain (see Figures 3.24 and 3.25). As in *Brillance*, Gotkovsky depends on the saxophone's high register for absolute intensity, this time extending her reach into the saxophone's altissimo register. A cadenza shortly follows the grand opening with Gotkovsky employing such techniques as adding notes around the variation motif, intervallic expansion, and embellishment of chromatic lines (see Figure 3.26). She also demonstrates her ability in setting up the use of patterns and their subsequent variation to avoid redundancy.




**Figures 3.24** first appearance of the primary variation motif in the piano, *Variations Pathétiques I*, mm. 1–2.

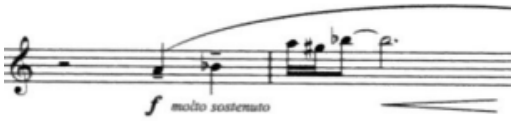



**Figure 3.25** primary variation motif in the saxophone, mm. 5–6.

[77] Ibid.

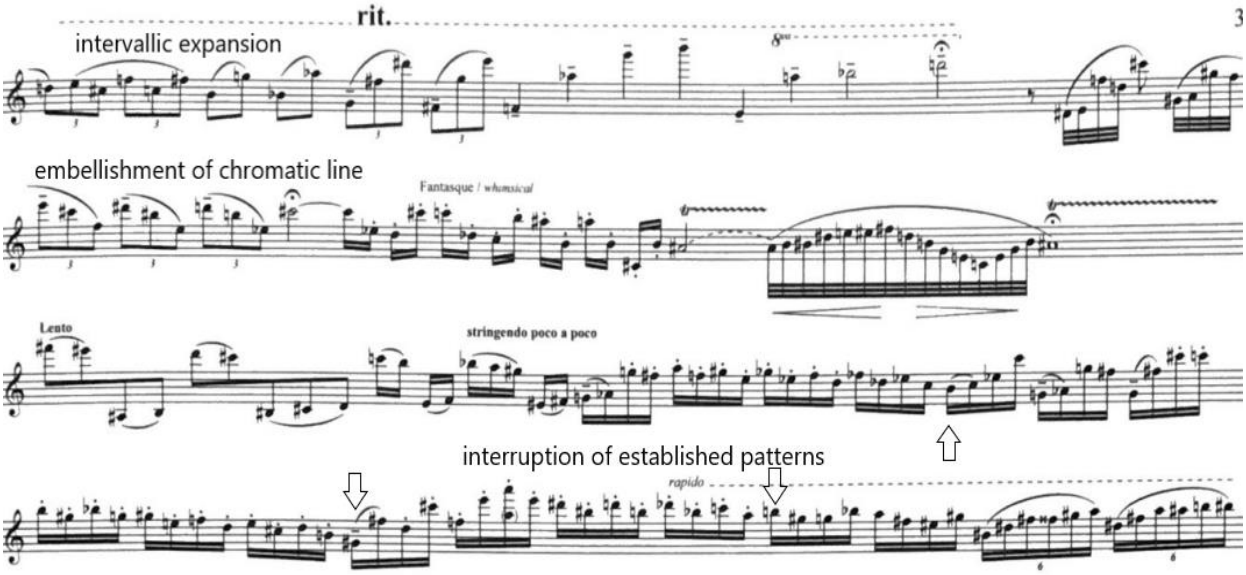



**Figure 3.26** developmental techniques in cadenza and the use of altissimo, mm. 13.

In an interview with Nancy Sanders, Gotkovsky states that "the opening clarinet theme of the first movement [of the Clarinet Concerto] contains all the compositional elements used throughout the Concerto."[78] Likewise, the material in the beginning and cadenza of "Declamando con passione" lays the groundwork for the melodic material of the entire piece. Within the first minute, we already see a heavy reliance on chromatic movement as the dominating melodic force in *Variations Pathétiques.* Throughout the cadenza alone there is a majority of either minor second or major seventh intervals, recalling the variation motif. Gotkovsky's treatment of this cadenza is much different to those of the *Concerto pour Saxophone* and *Brillance* which descend and ascend chromatically and repeat. Here, she allows for a greater degree of development, very similar to the opening cadenza of the "Final" movement of her *Concerto pour Clarinette* (1968) (see Figure 3.27).[79]

[78] Sanders, "A Woman's Voice," 28.
[79] Ida Gotkovsky, *Concerto pour Clarinette et Orchestre* (Paris: Éditions Musicales Transatlantiques, 1968).

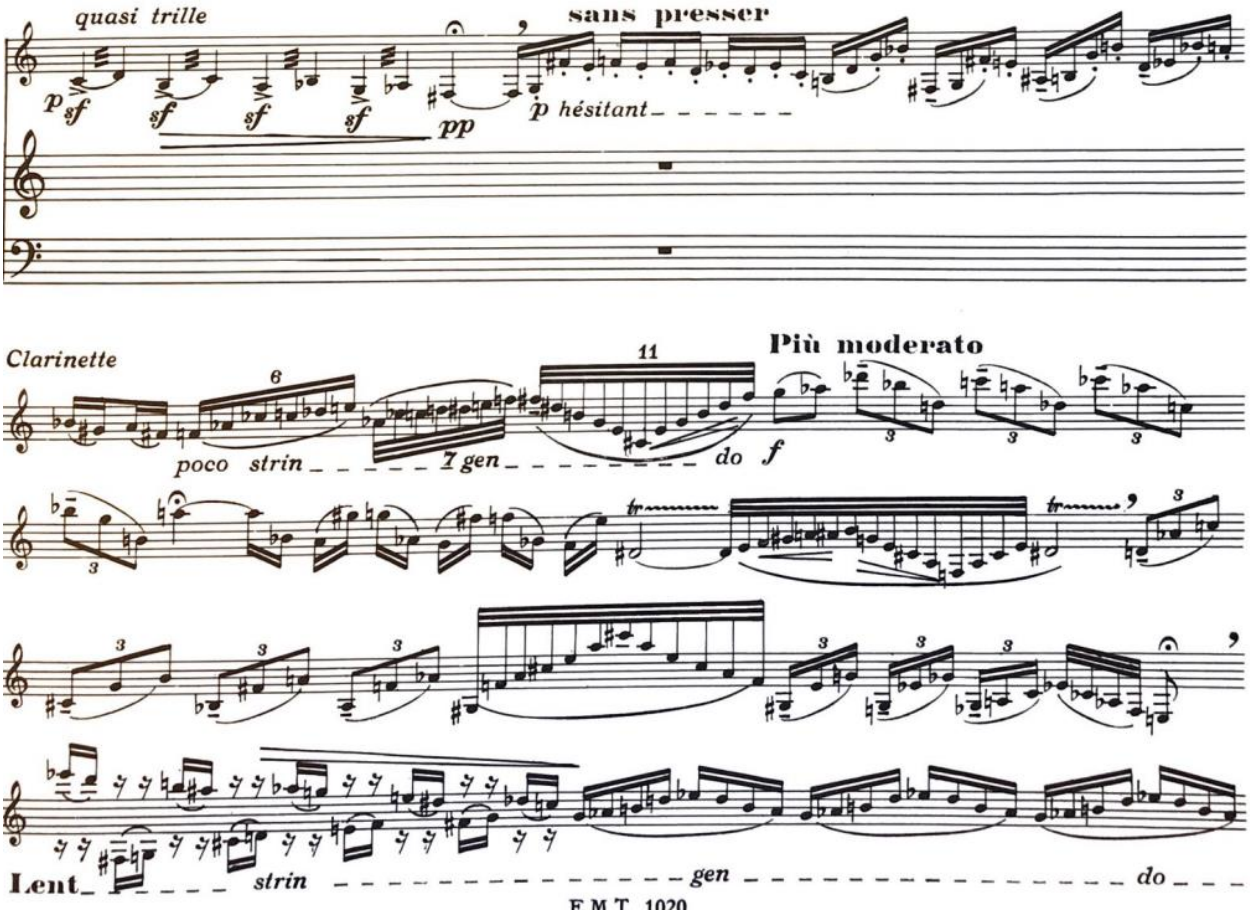



**Figure 3.27** cadenza similarities in the opening of the "Final" from Gotkovsky's *Concerto pour Clarinette III.*

Following the cadenza, the saxophone recovers the variation motif in a new transposition. Herein lies Gotkovsky's mode of development: repetition of the basic idea with slight changes. In the misterioso section at letter C, agitation builds in the form of a crescendo as well as the presence of major seventh interval leaps in the saxophone part, driving the melody towards its climax. Gotkovsky positions the saxophone on its high F#, repeating the major seventh leap upward for sustained intensity coupled with the piano's own major seventh leaps. After the climactic section, the saxophone recovers the Lombard rhythms on its descending G-F# before it is slowed and inverted to F#-G, and finally reinverted to D-C# in the saxophone's low register to draw the movement to a close.

The ominous, misterioso quality continues in movement two with the return of the variation motif in a veiled scherzo style (see Figure 3.28). The detaché articulations are very much reminiscent of *Brillance's* "Désinvolte," suggesting a similar style but with a different overall character between the two movements.

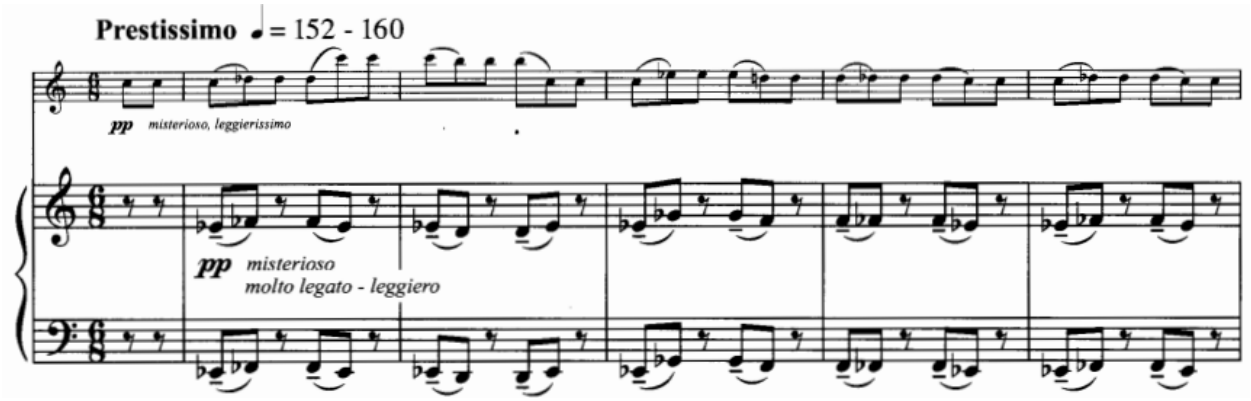



**Figure 3.28** transposition of variation motif in a scherzo style, *Variations Pathétiques II.* mm. 1–5.

Letter C reveals a new melody marked "dolce sostenuto" as the saxophone and piano descend in range. *Brillance* uses the saxophone similarly in the sustained descending climax of "Désinvolte." Gotkovsky first realized this motion in the "Véloce" movement of her *Variations Concertantes* (1970) for bassoon and again in the "Final" movement of her *Quatuor de Saxophones* (1983) (see Figures 3.29, 3.30, and 3.31).[80]

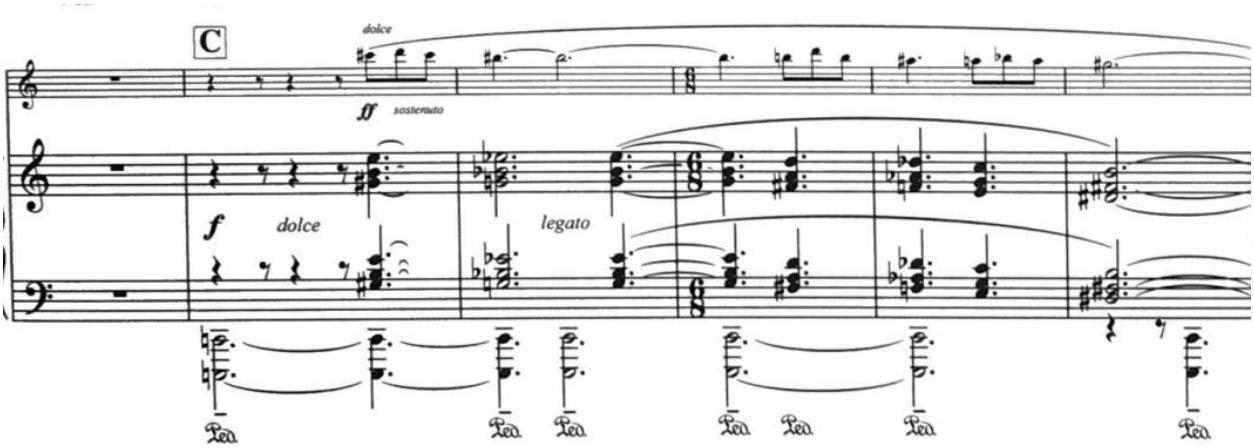



**Figure 3.29** sostenuto melody in *Variations Pathétiques II.* with harmonic pedal and chordal planing, mm. 42–46.

[80] Ida Gotkovsky, *Variations Concertantes* (Paris: Éditions Musicales Transatlantiques, 1970).; Gotkovsky, *Quatuor de Saxophones*.

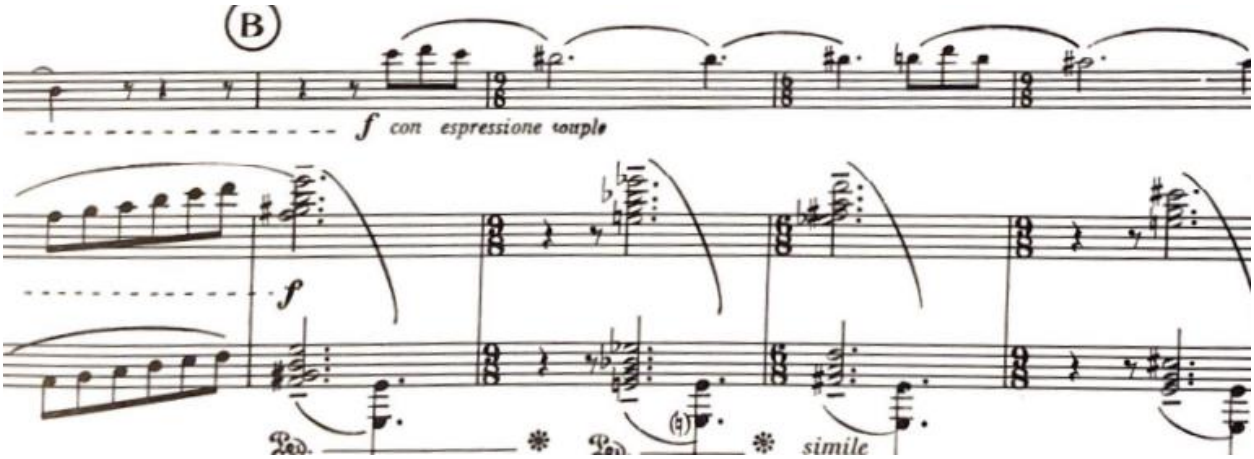



**Figure 3.30** sostenuto melody in *Variations Concertantes III* marked "con espressione souple."

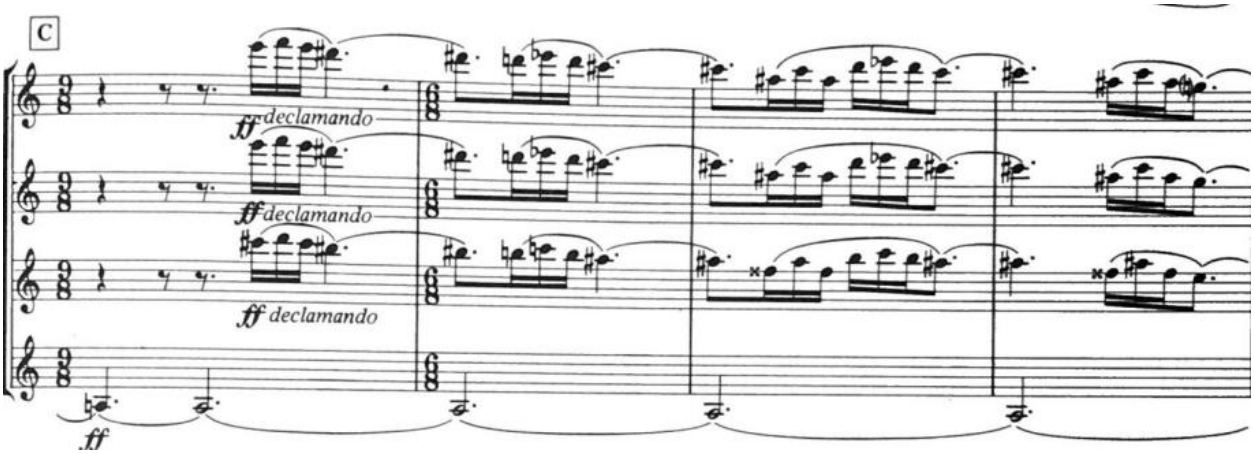



**Figure 3.31** sostenuto melody in *Quatuor de Saxophones VI* marked "declamando" with harmonic pedal.

As demonstrated in the figures above, we can deduce a few stylistic factors. Firstly, these points of arrival are significant structures within each piece with their own clarity regarding pitch and rhythm. Secondly, their similarities suggest a specific gesture of a singing quality. Each version begins with a pickup gesture followed by a sustain. The most significant difference is found in style which is to be expected given that each movement within each piece will not have the same emotional character. Therefore, each style is impacted by and related to each other, but should be handled according to Gotkovsky's directions, with the quartet's "Final" version having more

urgency in terms of stylistic markings while both the bassoon's "Véloce" and saxophone's "Prestissimo-Leggierissimo" are sweeter and more supple.

As mentioned previously, the 5/8 section that appears in *Brillance II* reappears in measure 65 and presents itself again in *Incandescence*. This time the saxophone performs descending diminished triads while gradually rising in pitch every two measures. Meanwhile, the piano ascends through diminished harmonies but in sustains rather than being detached like it does in *Brillance II*. Letter E is repetitive as the piano accents chord clusters while the saxophone relentlessly flourishes up to its high D# until it reaches its E in measure 90 to solidify the chromatic resolution.

A new legato section is introduced at letter F and is characterized by imitation as the saxophone follows the piano in close canon with momentary sustains in each voice. The imitation culminates in measure 117 when the mimicry of the two voices repeats until the saxophone fades out. Gotkovsky uses these moments of imitation in each of her pieces written in a scherzo style as a means of developing contrast with the homophonic sections. Following the recapitulated material from letter G, Gotkovsky launches the saxophone to a multi-measure sustain on its high F# while the piano plays a familiar ostinato. If Gotkovsky followed her formula from *Brillance II*, then the material following the saxophone's high register sustain would involve a descending detached line which finishes at pianissimo. However, *Variations II* develops its own course as Gotkovsky writes in a coda that elongates the ending. After the saxophone's climactic sustain, the instrument plays a descending detached line but introduces a new, falling chromatic line on each downbeat in tandem with the piano (see Figure 3.32). Their destination is to return to the Eb of the beginning, but Gotkovsky continues placing obstacles in the way to stall the final resolution. After another detached line leading to the piano's sustained

E, both instruments finally reach an Eb. In jest, both instruments abruptly end the movement with a three-note figure at a sudden forte, cyclically returning the piece to its beginning Eb.

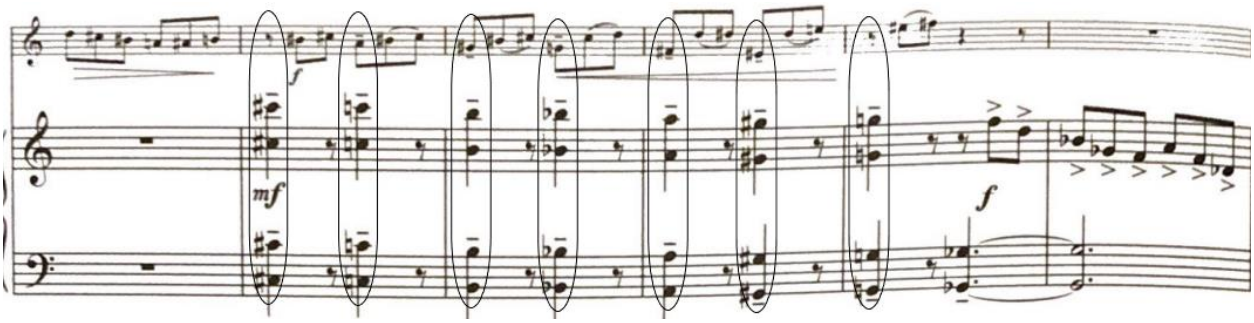



**Figure 3.32** falling chromatic line in saxophone and piano, *Variations Pathétiques II*, mm. 210–215.

Gotkovsky offers multiple clues for the singing, melodic nature of movement three, "Lento-Rubato." She describes the movement as a "variation of line and changes" with stylistic markings such as "dolce con eleganza" and "molto sostenuto cantabile con calore" for an elegant atmosphere of warmth. The saxophone opens the movement with the variation motif similar to movement two in an anacrusis pickup gesture of three notes. This gesture is distributed throughout the movement as the main melodic device and is altered to become syncopated as well, depending on what part of the measure it begins. Measure 15 reintroduces a sustained chromatic figure that is very similar to the cadenzas discussed previously in *Brillance IV* and the *Concerto pour Saxophone*. In each case, Gotkovsky places the saxophone in its upper register before falling chromatically to a sustained pitch and returning upward (see Figure 3.33). Another similarity is found in measure 23 as the saxophone alternates through chromatic groupings. This happens in the cadenza of movement one as well as in movements five and six. In the latter movements, the groupings involve four notes rising and falling while this movement sticks with groupings of three notes for variety.

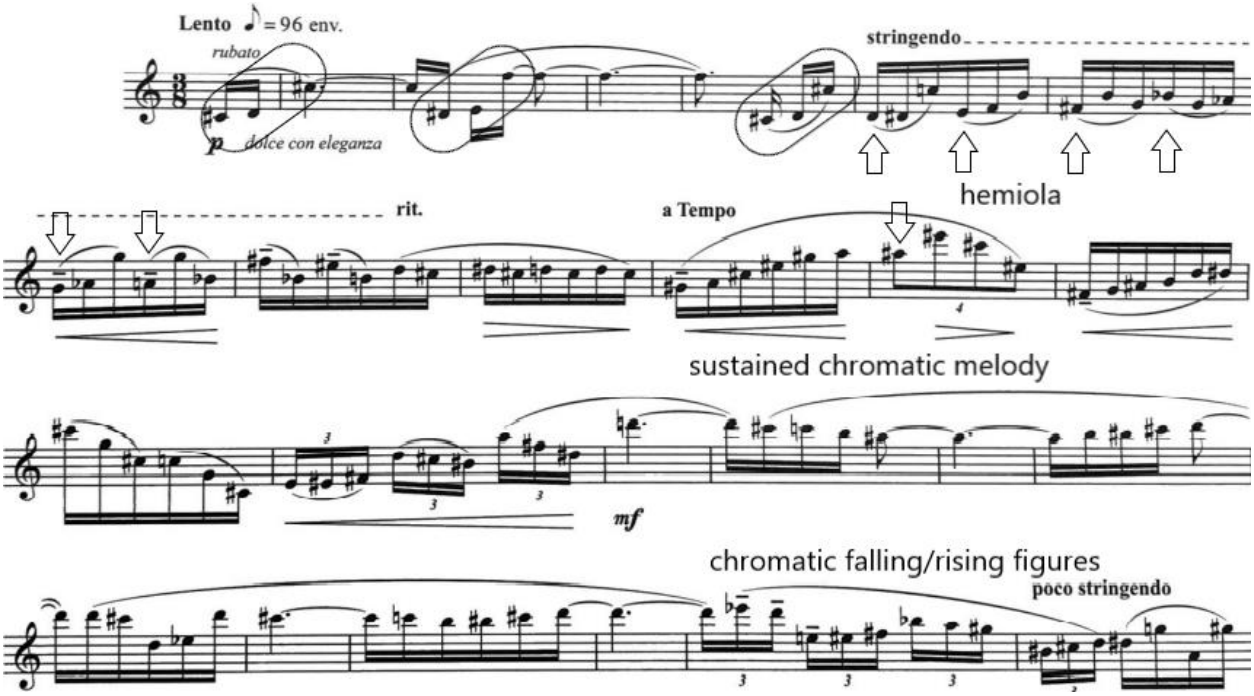



**Figure 3.33** variation motif and melodic/rhythmic techniques in opening of *Variations Pathétiques III*, mm. 1–24.

Following a middle section, the beginning melodic material returns at letter C with the variation motif now featuring upward leaps of a minor seventh and major ninth, essentially parallels of a major second instead of a half-step. Gotkovsky uses a standard "sol-do" cadence to create ease for the listener after much chromaticism and ends this section with charm (see Figure 3.34).

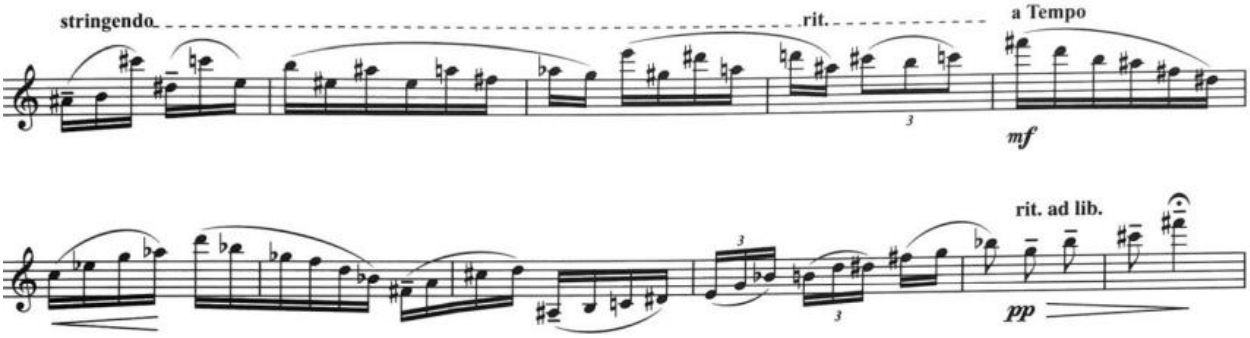



**Figure 3.34** cross-bar beaming and standard "sol-do" cadence in *Variations Pathétiques III,* mm. 54–64.

Letter D marks the onset of the C section, a melancholy song as the two instruments engage each other antiphonally measure by measure. Throughout the movement Gotkovsky is very particular in guiding the performer's expression with regard to time. For example, letter D

remains the same tempo until a stringendo is marked and followed by a ritardando into a new section. Every rehearsal letter, as well as a few intra-sectional phrases, follows a similar path as we have seen in Gotkovsky's control of expression in her cadenzas. This aptly sets up the saxophone's final gestures as it leaps upward to lengthy sustains via a major seventh into its upper register from F#-E#. The leap of the major seventh to a sustain has characteristically been used by Gotkovsky to achieve intensity coupled with a loud volume in the upper reaches of the saxophone's range. In this case, however, the major seventh is accompanied by a hushed intensity as the movement evaporates into silence.

The most interesting aspect of the fourth variation is its inventive musical origin. "Rapido-molto legato-leggiero" is almost an exact interpolation of the "Léger" movement of Gotkovsky's *Caractères* for violin and piano written for her sister Nell.[81] It even reproduces pitches and gestures verbatim with minimal alteration. Curiously, the version in *Caractères* completely omits bar lines in favor of free meter whereas meter changes are ubiquitous in the version for saxophone (see Figures 3.35 and 3.36).

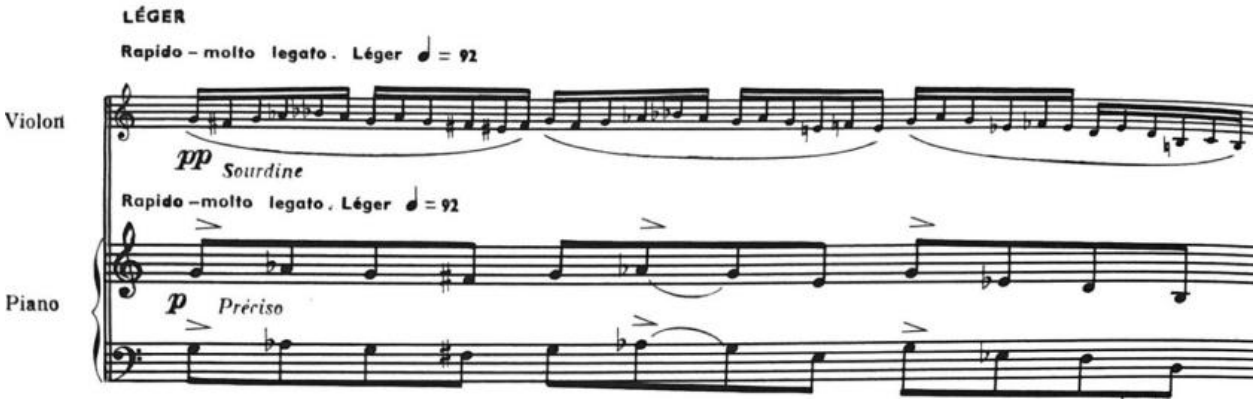



**Figure 3.35** beginning of "Léger" from Gotkovsky's *Caractères.*

[81] Gotkovsky, *Caractères.*

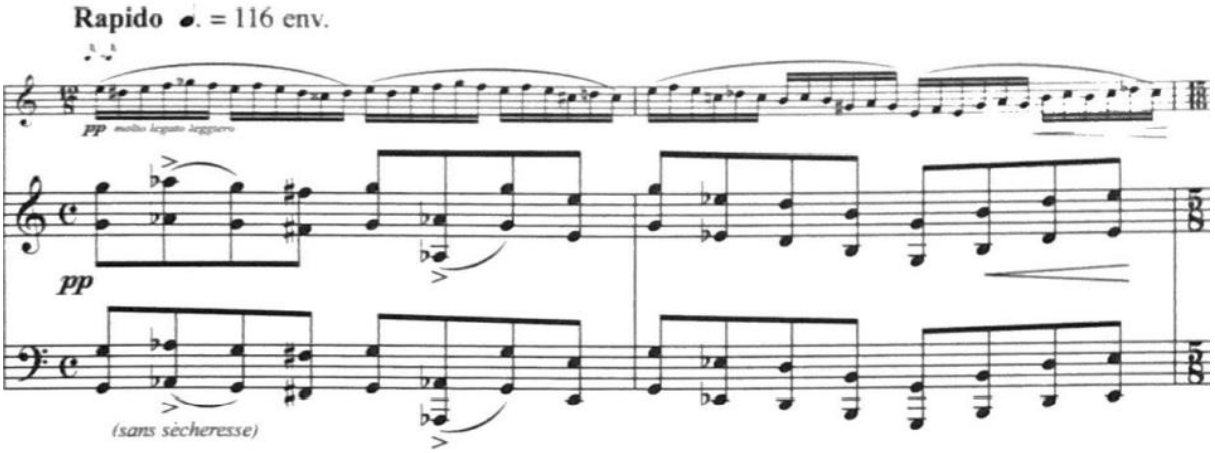



**Figure 3.36** beginning of "Rapido-molto legato-leggiero" from *Variations Pathétiques*, mm. 1–2.

The melody at the beginning of the movement is essentially an embellishment of the piano's eighth note line. The saxophone enters a quasi-cadenza in measure 14 to highlight its technical proficiency. During the middle section at letter C, an off-kilter dance between the saxophone and piano occurs in 7/8. This marks a departure from *Caractères* in that the melody here is a reworking of the primary variation motif to fit the meter and character of the movement (see Figure 3.37). Similar to the beginning, the instruments belong to two separate meters that match downbeats and upbeats with both instruments marked in 7/8 (the saxophone part is simultaneously marked in 21/16). Intensity is increased as the ensemble moves into letter D with the saxophone continuing its upper and lower line, now traversing the full regular range of the instrument to heighten the drama. After a brief return of the beginning material in a new transposition, Gotkovsky moves the ensemble into a section unlike anywhere else in the piece. Letter F places the saxophone and piano in different tonal centers as the saxophone ascends expressively with liberty into the altissimo register, now integrated into the saxophone's technical capacities within Gotkovsky's oeuvre. A recapitulation in terms of melodic pitch occurs to briefly close the end in an extremely soft volume.

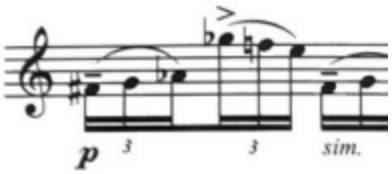



**Figure 3.37** variation motif in "Rapido-molto legato-leggiero," mm. 23.

The fifth movement, "Con simplicità-anima," is perhaps the most distinctive out of all the variations. It is far less chromatic and instead revolves around the minor third as the motivic interval that ties the movement together. Hunter notes that the second movement of Gotkovsky's *Concerto pour Trombone*, "Dolcissimo,"[82] contains the melodic blueprint for both "Con simplicità-anima" and the fifth movement of the *Quatuor de Saxophones*, "Cantilène."[83] Due to the significant similarities between the two movements in *Variations* and *Quatuor de Saxophones*, we can assume certain aspects with regard to style. Since "Con simplicità-anima" is more of a description of the style than a movement title, the meaning of "Cantilène" can and should affect how one approaches *Variations Pathétiques*. *Cantilène* in French derives from the Italian *cantilena*, "a particularly sustained or lyrical vocal line, meaning lullaby in Italian," which in turn finds its etymology from the Latin word cantus, or song.[84] Therefore, "Con simplicità-anima" can be approached as a simple song that has motion despite its reserved tempo.

The contour and repetitive nature of the initial melody in "Con simplicità-anima" suggests the influence of plainchant. For Messiaen, plainchant was "an inexhaustible mine of rare and expressive melodic contours."[85] Gotkovsky similarly uses plainchant as a means of achieving melodies that have a "stripped nature, contained, inward."[86]

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[82] Ida Gotkovsky, *Concerto pour Trombone et Orchestre* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 1978).
[83] Hunter, "Finding Intertextual Meaning," 10-11. See Hunter's dissertation for more information on the intricacies of melodic and textural borrowing relating to Gotkovsky's *Concerto pour Trombone*.
[84] Ellen T. Harris, "Cantilena," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 5, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04774.
[85] Bell, *Olivier Messiaen*, 8.
[86] Ida Gotkovsky, "Press," See 1981–1990, Harry Gee "The Clarinet and Saxophone Music of Ida Gotkovsky," in NAWCPI Journal, Spring 1984. https://www.gotkovsky.com/textes_versionFR/txt_presse/presse-1981-1990.html

Here, contour is the key identifier as "the melodic contour [in plainchant] takes the form of an arch; it begins low, rises to a higher pitch, where it remains for some time, then descends at the end of the phrase."[87] This can be seen at the beginning when the saxophone moves in a gradual, upward motion from a C, then to a D, and reaching an F at the height of the first phrase before restating the beginning of the melody (see Figure 3.38). Similar shaping is found within the phrase that occurs between measures 9 and 16, where the saxophone rises to its high F# sustained with chromatic melisma before descending. This phrase also contains the movement's first instance of the variation motif, found in measure 11, which returns in inversion at measure 19. Gotkovsky's placement of the motif in these moments is important because it serves as a means of attaining chromaticism in the more dominant setting of minor pentatonic.

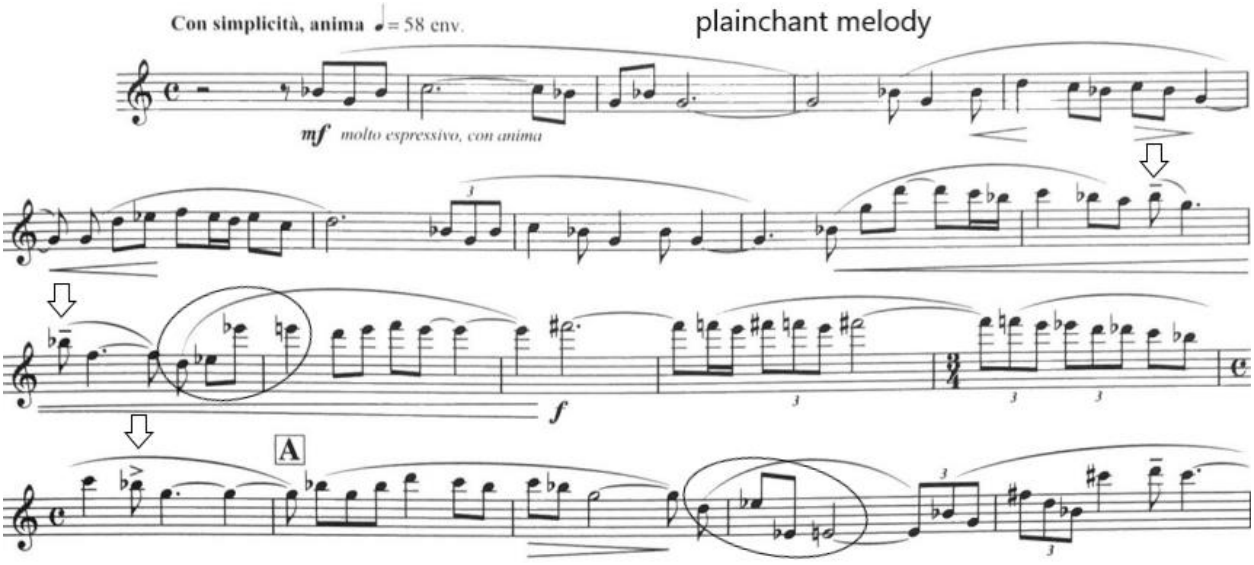


**Figure 3.38** plainchant melody, syncopation, and variation motif within "Con simplicità-anima," mm. 1–20.

To transition toward new material, Gotkovsky recalls the beginning of the cadenza found in the first movement. In this case, the line rises and falls in an upward direction and is used as an "announcement of chromaticism"[88] that arrives in the middle B section. The saxophone

[87] Bell, *Olivier Messiaen*, 8.
[88] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky, Her Life and Style," 303.

centers its melody around its high E in a veiled “dolcissimo lontain” (distant) style while the piano’s lower voice supports the saxophone’s movement through a downward chordal planing. At letter C, the instruments trade roles and the piano plays the melody exclusively. After a recapitulation, the soloist’s final statements involve leaps of a major seventh and a dramatic tritone to forte before chromatically falling to a contemplative ending.

The final movement, “Prestissimo con fuoco,” begins with an intense announcement of the variation motif in the piano (see Figure 3.39). When the saxophone enters, a tritone is formed between its accented notes and its oscillating half-step figure. This is a byproduct of functioning within the modes of limited transposition as many of the melodic techniques in the movement involve chromaticism. Repetition is key in this opening section and Gotkovsky uses it to highlight certain notes of arrival in the melody, evoking the “whirlwind of fire” from her description.

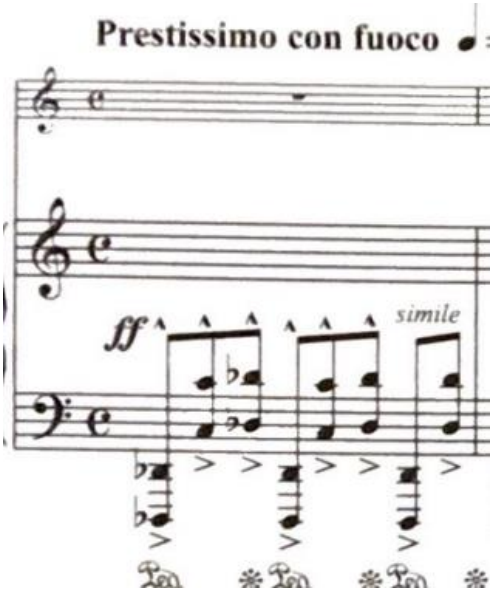


**Figure 3.39** variation motif at the opening of “Prestissimo con fuoco,” m. 1.

A dialogue is formed between the instruments at letter B as the piano brings back the variation motif from the beginning while the saxophone borrows the falling and rising figure from the first

movement's cadenza as the technical basis of its line. Structure is created in this section by both instruments ending every one of their statements on an E.

Letter D brings a "con spirito" lifted style to the variation motif as the instruments bounce between each other (see Figure 3.40).

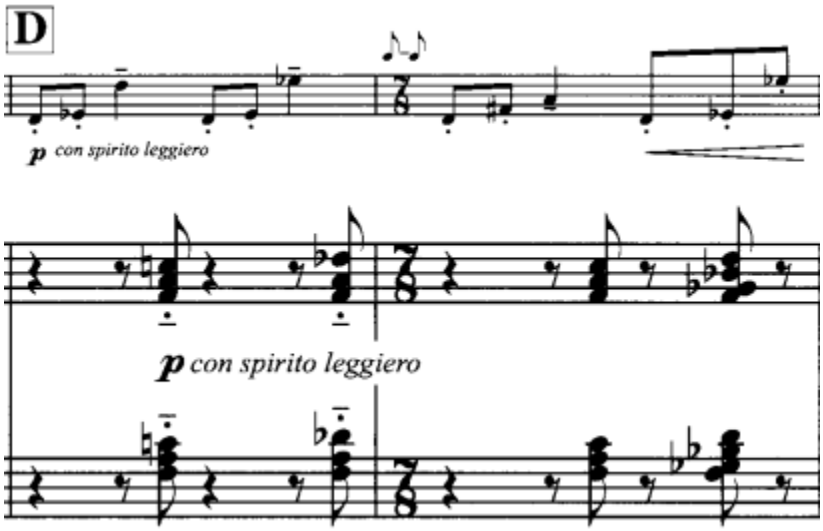


**Figure 3.40** variation motif in "con spirito" style in "Prestissimo con fuoco," mm. 59–60.

The section which follows also works from the variation motif, this time placing the instruments in canon, first at a distance and then in stretto as they move right on top of one another. The piano abruptly cuts out while Gotkovsky writes in octave displacement in the saxophone's melody, similarly to *Brillance IV*. Through phrasal elision, the saxophone borrows the "con spirito" rhythm of letter D to set up the harmonic rhythm of letter F. The saxophone moves through arpeggiated lines that are reminiscent of *Brillance IV* but are much more harmonically static. This trend continues at letter G when the saxophone ascends to its sustained high E#, conjuring the major seventh interval for utmost intensity at the apex of this section.

Letter I is marked "lento" with an overarching stringendo that speeds up the pacing before the original tempo is recovered at letter J. After an interlude in the piano, the saxophone recovers the character of the first movement's cadenza with the reintroduction of the original

variation motif. The cyclical journey of *Variations Pathétiques* is achieved in the saxophone's final cadenza. Much of the cadenza is the same as it appears in the first movement but, as we have seen before with Gotkovsky, subtle changes are made to generate a sense of transformation. The saxophone begins on its E, F, and F#, recalling the variation motif before recovering the similarities of the first movement, such as declaimed rhythms and high register sustains. Gotkovsky provides technical lines for momentum before outlining a major triad through the saxophone's altissimo register to contrast with the modal chromaticism rife throughout the movement. Just like the cadenza of *Brillance's* "Final," Gotkovsky leads the performer in pacing through hesitation, acceleration, and a pulling back of an embellished line of triplets. The E, F, and F# that initiated the cadenza are brought back for its ending, now repositioned as F, E, and F#, creating a major second interval and representing a stark divergence from the realm of chromaticism. The ensemble enters a dialog between the saxophone's flourish up to its F-E-F# sustained figure and the piano's declaimed triplet gestures with each voice displaying their gestures three times before the end.

Rhythm

Gotkovsky's treatment of rhythm in the first movement is quite similar to the recitative style of *Brillance*. Both piano and saxophone contain the Lombard rhythm's strong-beat accents and tenuto markings followed by a syncopated off-beat that are used to intensify the long sustains. These appear more so after the saxophone's cadenza at letter A (see Figure 3.41). A short technical cadenza with trills reminiscent of the *Concerto pour Clarinette's* cadenza precedes the new "misterioso" section.

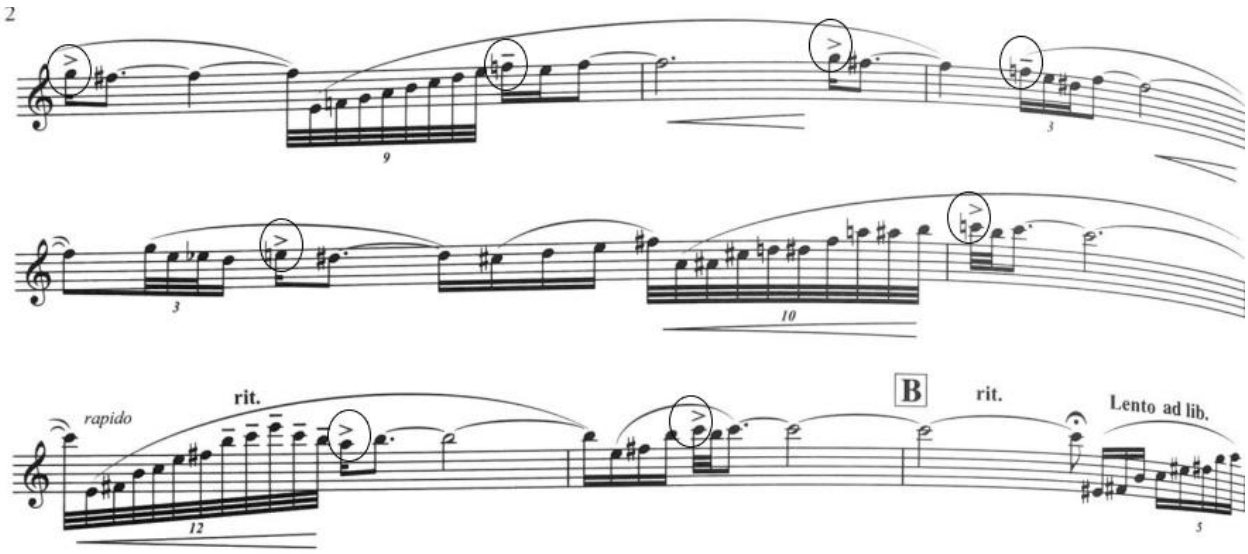


**Figure 3.41** Lombard rhythms in the saxophone in "Declamando con passione," mm. 15–22.

"Prestissimo-Leggierissimo" is highly rhythmic at a very quick tempo. As a scherzo, it is quite similar to *Brillance's* "Désinvolte." One of the key similarities between the two movements is the use of ostinato to signal significant structural moments, as is the case in measure 90 (see Figure 3.42).

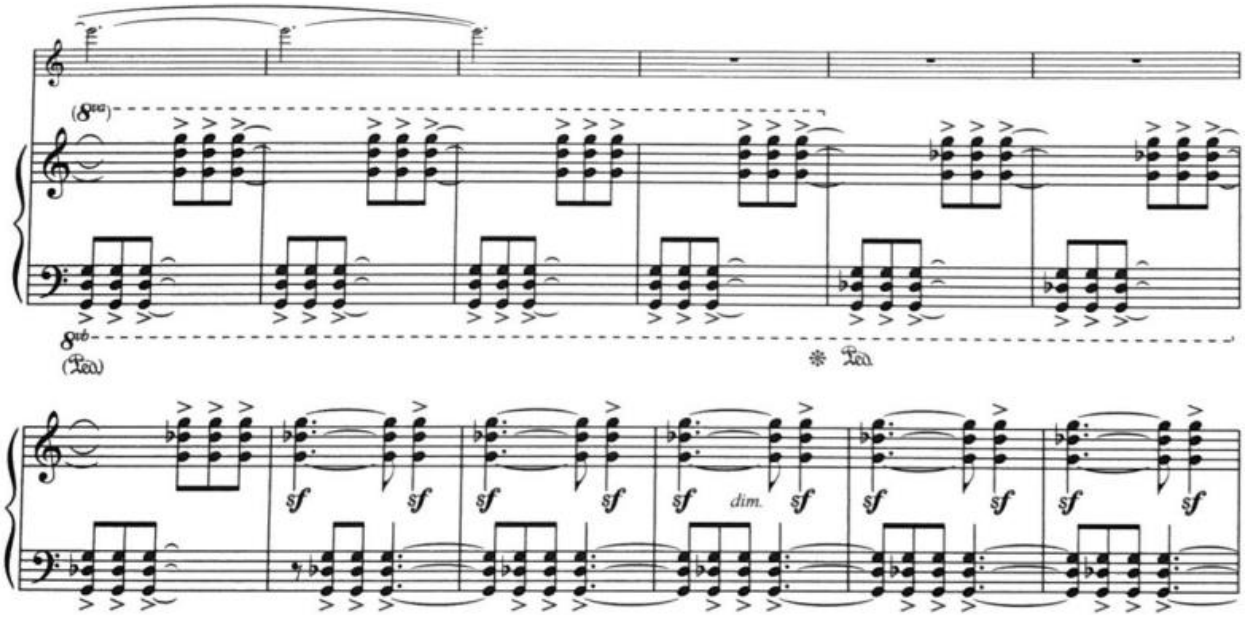


**Figure 3.42** ostinato as structurally significant moment and as hemiola in "Prestissimo-Leggierissimo," mm. 91–102.

The ostinato originates as a perfect fifth of G-D, becomes a tritone of G-Db at measure 95, and then reconstitutes itself as a hemiola at measure 98 with the sforzando markings on the first and fifth eighth notes for rhythmic tension. A similar occurrence happens in measure 192 at the climax of the movement in which the piano is brought back into ostinato with the accompanying hemiola blurring effect that disguises the pulse.

Movement three, "Lento-Rubato," remains in 3/8 throughout, setting the scene of a slow waltz, although Gotkovsky does much to alter the expected agogic placement of downbeats through use of hemiolas and stresses on beats two and three. Apart from note groupings, hemiolas can be found in Gotkovsky's placement of tenuto articulations as well as groupings of four eighth notes in the span of three eighth notes, as in measures 11 and 95 (see Figure 3.33).

As we have seen, Gotkovsky's means of development is found in repetition with slight alteration. She masks the agogic expectancy by emphasizing different parts of each measure and only places weight on the first downbeat sparingly. Gotkovsky brings further variation in this section by beaming groups of notes across bar lines, disguising the meter with alternating groupings of six and four notes between measures 58–61 (see Figure 3.43).


**Figure 3.43** cross-bar beaming with note groupings of four and six, "Lento-Rubato," mm. 59–64.

The fourth movement begins with the saxophone in a compound meter while the piano is in duple. This juxtaposition feels fairly regular as the instruments match downbeats and upbeats, with the saxophone having its dotted eighth note at the same tempo of the piano's eighth note. Twelve measures in, the two instruments start to share the same sixteenth subdivision. Gotkovsky keeps the saxophone in 9/8 but beams eight sixteenth notes together to match the

piano's half-note, rather than six sixteenths as before. She circumvents the meter differences by placing the piano in 4/4 plus one eighth note, with the two instruments now sharing the same number of sixteenths in the measure through added value (see Figure 3.44). This unity is short-lived before the meter starts to unravel completely, losing any sense of measured time. The saxophone enters a "quasi cadence" while the piano is directed to "follow" the saxophone's contoured line. If the beginning is indicative of Gotkovsky's "of transparency" description for the movement, then this section belongs to the other half of the description, "of velocity." Both instruments feature broad flourishes before any sense of time is reintroduced.

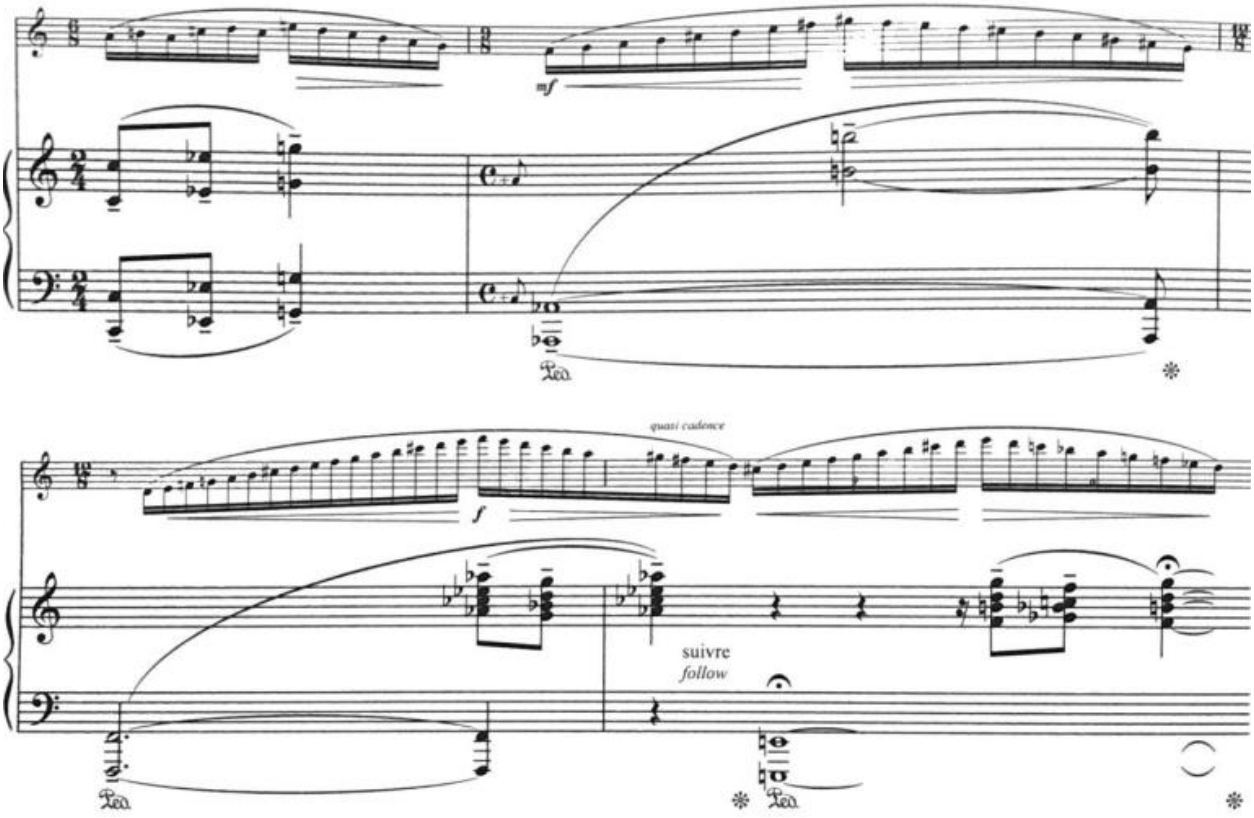


**Figure 3.44** added rhythmic value in "Rapido-molto legato-leggiero," mm. 11–14.

Gotkovsky places the pianist in a compound meter at letter B, setting the standard for transitional moments when the saxophone is no longer playing. She sets up the following middle section with wide leaps while also bringing back some of the added value as before in order to

put the movement back on course. There are also instances of note-groupings being beamed across bar lines, further distorting pulse along with accents placed on upbeats. Measure 17 moves from 9/8 to 8/8 with a momentary additive rhythm in the three-note up-and-down gestures before entering measure 18 which is marked as 7/8 plus one sixteenth, essentially a 15/16 measure (see Figure 3.45). Gotkovsky uses these rhythmic devices to set the stage for the upcoming saxophone material. The gesture in measure 18 moves from down-up to up-down in measure 19, harkened emphatically with a sudden forte and a return to regular meter.

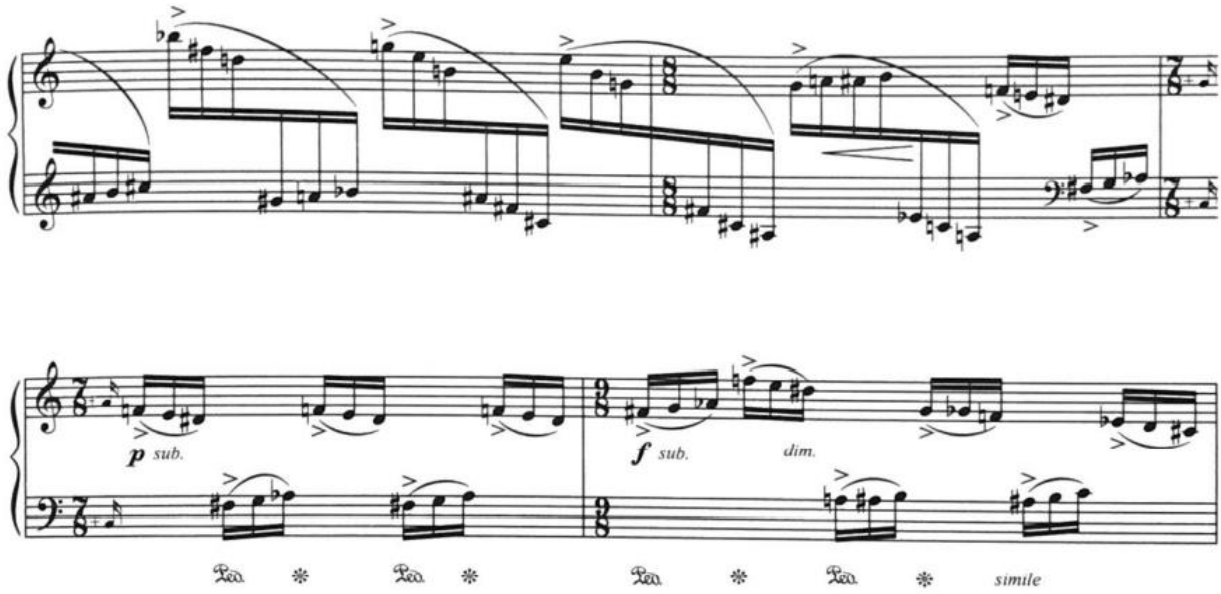


**Figure 3.45** additive rhythm, cross-bar beaming, and shifting gestural direction in *Variations Pathétiques IV*, mm. 16–19.

When the saxophone enters in measure 23, the feel of long-short-short set up by the piano is disrupted, reorganizing the feel to short-long-short. Here, Gotkovsky's placement of articulation markings is highly strategic. The piano has right-hand accents during its beat of three eighth notes which call attention to its own melodic line. The saxophone has tenuto markings on an upward figure starting on its F# of each beat to provide emphasis on the meter, while an upper line that descends chromatically has accents on the upbeats, furthering the "preciso" style of this section. The performer must be cognizant of these articulation differences, as well as phrase-

markings and beamings, when negotiating where to place emphasis or where to let the line flow fluidly. Measure 28 presents an unusual instance of a measure without any alert of meter shift despite the obvious addition of an extra eighth note. From the note groupings, the meter seems to exist in 12/8 for the saxophone (since it remains in triple) and 8/8 in the piano, with eighth-note groupings of 2+3+3 before the piano once again takes on the compound meter for two measures in the transition to letter D. This section is quite similar to letter C, but the section subsists in a feeling of short-short-long for further variation rather than direct repetition.

In the fifth movement, rhythm is fairly regular with interest being instituted through a degree of syncopation and phrasal goal points most notably through the addition of tenuto and accent markings. The succeeding sustains rebound from the weight of the shorter, goal-oriented notes, like the more noticeable Lombard rhythms of the first movement. During the middle section, the saxophone omits its downbeats through its line of sixteenths as it did in *Brillance IV*, bringing further rhythmic variety and momentum to the slow quarter note-based melody in the piano.

Like the second movement, “Prestissimo con fuoco” is highly rhythmic due to its speed and alternating sections. Interest is created through the piano’s grouping of notes which, while in 4/4 time, are combined to highlight groups of three versus two and involves beaming across the bar line in measures 3 and 4 (see Figure 3.46). This sets the stage for Gotkovsky’s treatment of rhythm throughout the movement. Rhythmic repetition is used in the same way, as the saxophone initially repeats groups of four notes while in measure 26 it begins to alternate between groups of three and four to increase intensity.

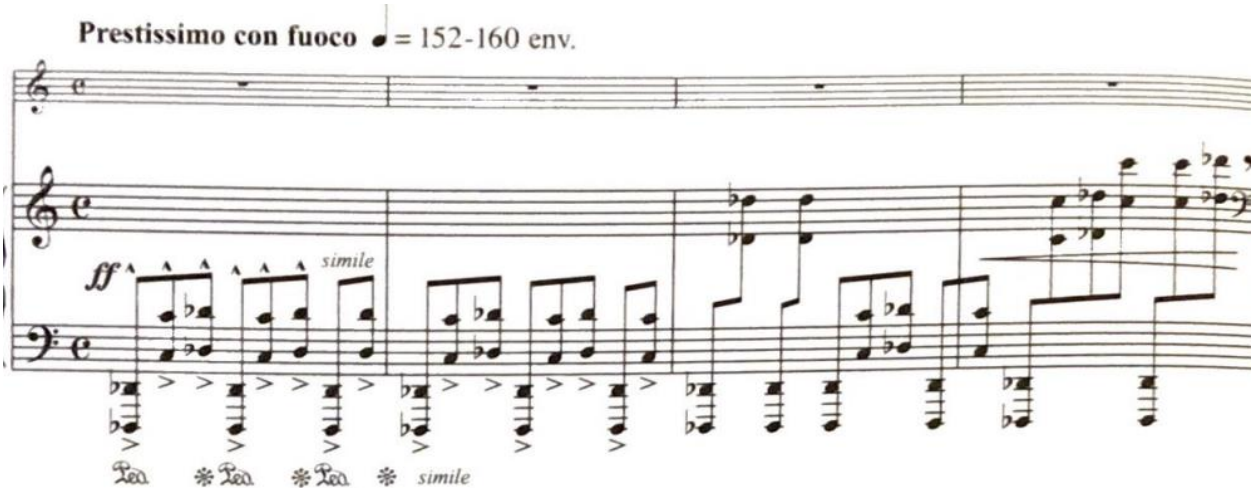


**Figure 3.46** rhythmic variety through three versus two and cross-bar beaming in "Prestissimo con fuoco," mm. 1–4.

A major emphasis is placed on the pulse of groupings of three versus two. Measure 73 is an interesting predicament in which Gotkovsky utilizes added value to make up for the note groupings, beaming across bar lines, and rhythmic complexity which involves the addition of a single eighth note (see Figure 3.47). Curiously, the publication does not include any indication of an added value.

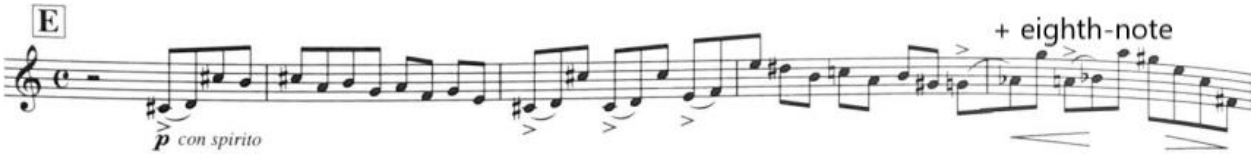


**Figure 3.47** added value in the "con spirito" canon in "Prestissimo con fuoco," mm. 69–73.

Gotkovsky introduces rhythmic variety at letter F by the omission of downbeats and moving the saxophone's entrances to the second sixteenth note to thrust the energy onward, as was the case in *Brillance IV*.

At letter H, the piano is launched into new material which keeps the instrument in groups of three despite the 4/4 time. Harkening once again to *Caractères,* Gotkovsky reuses material from the movement titled "Sauvage" almost exactly in terms of pitch and rhythm (see Figure 3.48).

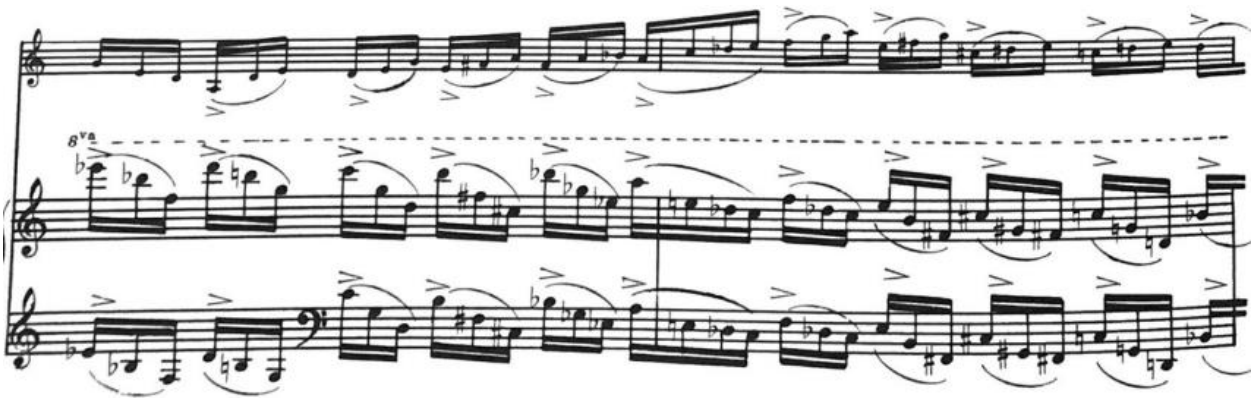

**Figure 3.48** groups of three versus four from "Sauvage" in *Caractères*, mm. 123–124.

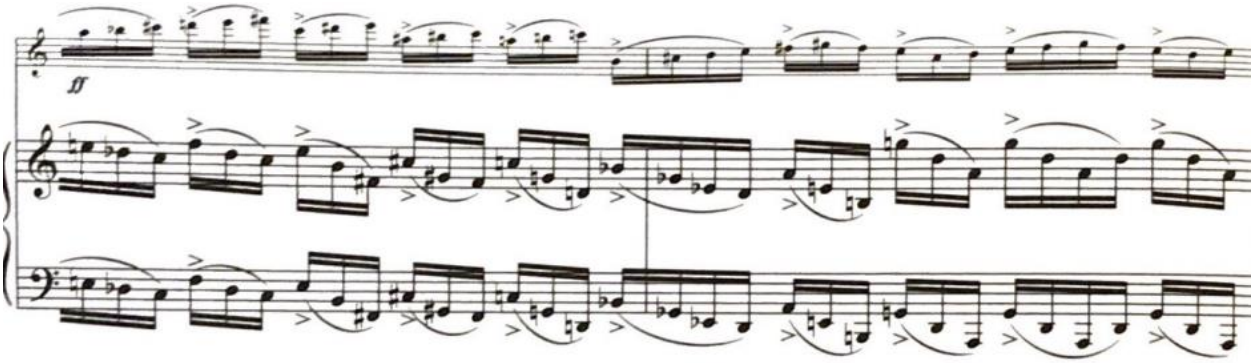

**Figure 3.49** interpolation of "Sauvage" in pitch, rhythm, and counterpoint in "Prestissimo con fuoco," mm. 110–111.

As seen in Figures 3.48 and 3.49, Gotkovsky places the soloist and piano in rhythmic unison, each grouping starting with an accent to demarcate rhythmic interest as the ensemble moves in additive rhythm between groupings of three and four notes. The counterpoint is also notable here as the instruments move in contrasting motion.

At letter I, both instruments remain in their sixteenth-based rhythms with stress on the downbeats until letter J removes some of the piano texture to make way for a solo line in the saxophone in measure 125. Texture becomes very dense when the piano plays alone at letter K. The first movement is recalled by the piano's declaimed triplet gesture and the Lombard rhythms in the saxophone's cadenza. Gotkovsky thrusts the listener back into the ritualistic dance of 7/8 at the coda of the movement following the cadenza. This is mostly for the sake of upholding intensity before letter M in which she recalls the piano's broad triplets in contrasting motion

from the first movement's climax (see Figure 3.50). This gesture will be seen again in the final movement of *Incandescence*, as well as the piano's declamatory gestures made up of triplets and Lombard rhythms that bring the movement to a close.

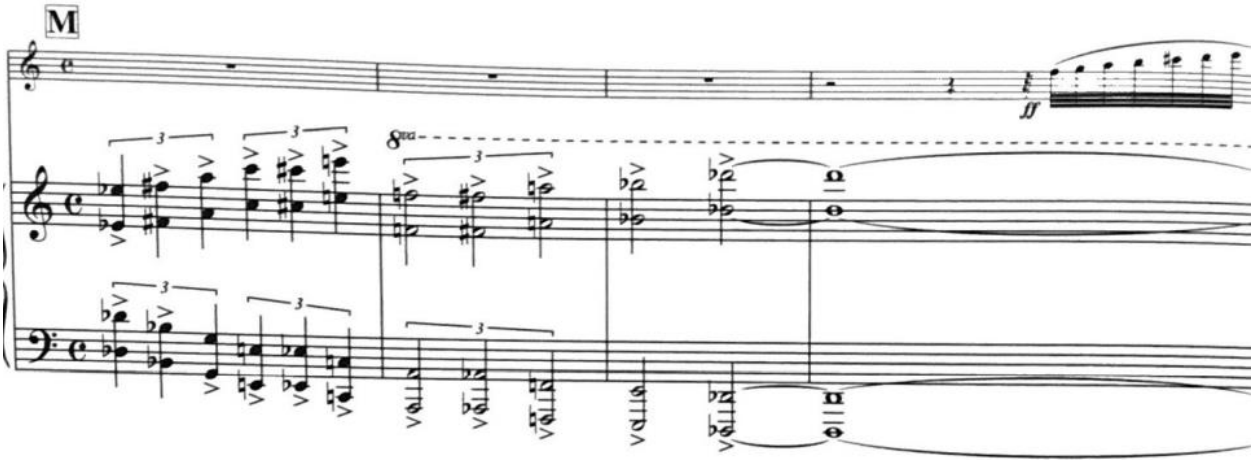


**Figure 3.50** contrasting motion in piano, recalling the broad triplets of the first movement's climax in *Variations Pathétiques VI*, mm. 150–153.

Harmony

As mentioned previously, Gotkovsky operates in a much more chromatic palette in *Variations* than she does in *Brillance*. This is elucidated in the widespread use of chordal structures containing half-steps and tritones (see Figure 3.51).

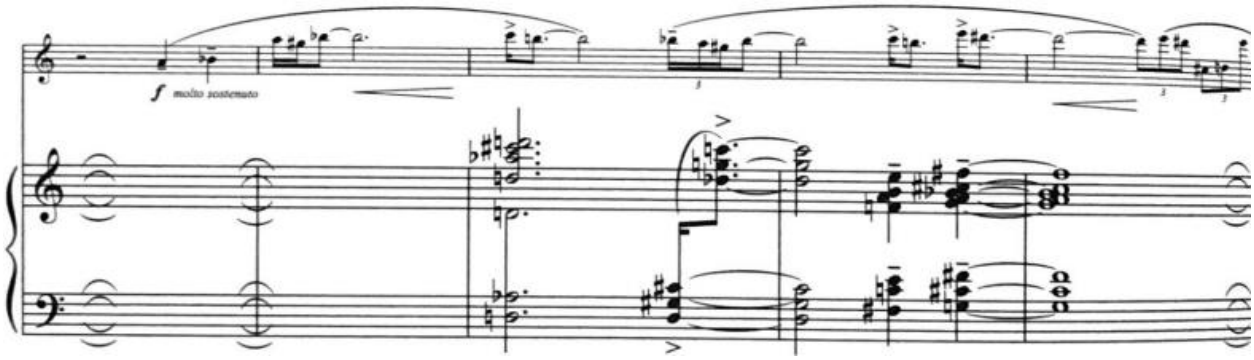


**Figure 3.51** chords containing multiple half-steps and tritones, "Declamando con passione," mm. 5–9.

At letter C, Gotkovsky introduces a technique to her music for saxophone and piano: static harmony. Whereas ostinato represents a rhythmic and harmonic pedal, this type of static

harmony "creates a sense of stasis in her music through long sections of repetition or long tones, as if to insist listeners hear a specific tone color more deeply."[89] By employing static harmony at letter C, Gotkovsky is able to increase the amount of agitation due to the piano's droning of a pedal tone D in spite of all the rhythmic and harmonic changes on top (see Figure 3.52). Besides the pedal tones, the piano also plays a role in intensification through repeated notes in pickup gestures which have a sticky, insistent quality. This is furthered when the sticky repeated notes change from eighth notes to sixteenth notes to set up the climax of the movement.

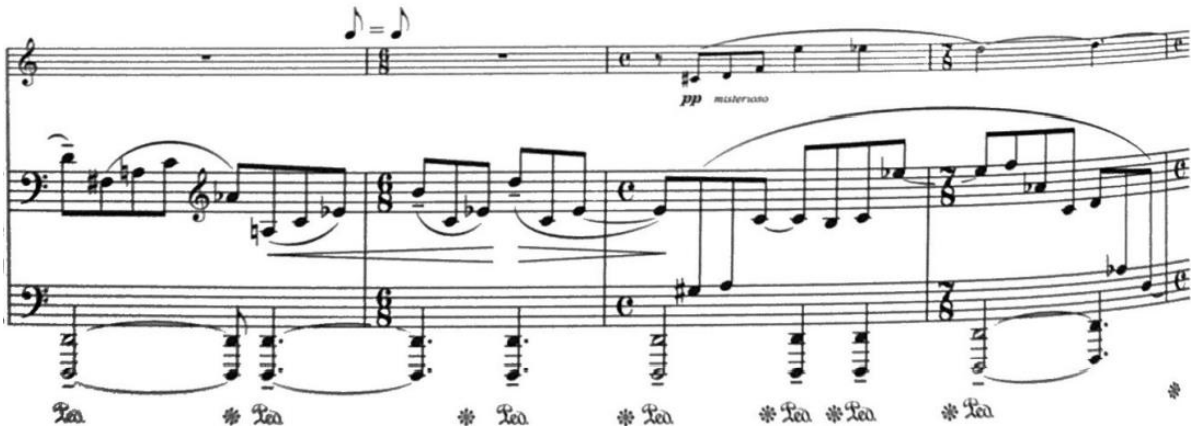


**Figure 3.52** static harmony in the form of pedal tones in the piano part. Transposed motif reintroduced in saxophone, "Declamando con passione," mm. 25–28.

Similarly to "Désinvolte," "Prestissimo-Leggierissimo" utilizes diminished chordal structures frequently, but wholly engages in a more chromatic atmosphere than the movement from *Brillance*. The pedal tone, like ostinato, is used in this movement during moments that are structurally significant. The piano plays a dual role through its harmonic pedal "as a means of projecting a harmonic center in the absence of traditional harmonic hierarchy"[90] while also supporting the saxophone's movement through chordal planing.

Just like the previous movements, Gotkovsky's treatment of melody and harmony is highly chromatic in "Lento-Rubato. The piano will typically contain chords with half-steps or

[89] Wacyk, "Powerful Structures," 31.
[90] Sanders, "A Woman's Voice," 25.

tritones, as in measure 2. The left hand plays a Bb split in octaves while the right hand contains an A and an E which are a half-step and tritone away from Bb, respectively. This harmonic ambiguity furthers the instability throughout the movement.

The most interesting aspect of the fourth movement in terms of harmony is the section that occurs at letter F. This section is marked "Lento" with the saxophone playing ad libitum in an "espressivo" manner as the piano is directed to follow the saxophone in a "dolce" style. Along with the shift in style, the material is completely new, and the harmony is tonal, though non-functional. Both instruments undergo a series of modulations and exist as bitonal blocs of sound, lasting for only a short time before each instrument enters its own new key center (see Figure 3.53). All the chords for the piano, besides the first one which is diminished, are major triads and move through chordal planing. Impressionists of the early twentieth century used this parallel motion of chords to "reduce the functional effect of harmony and to increase its coloristic value."[91] Here, Gotkovsky uses this parallelism in a similar manner, heightening the palette of colors even more so by pitting the saxophone and piano in different key centers. Meanwhile, the saxophone plays sixteenth note figures based in major and minor sonorities, switching keys simultaneously alongside the piano and chromatically in its own line. A relationship between the two voices in terms of key centers discerns itself on the middle chord, on which both instruments are in E major, and the last two chords on Eb major and A major, a tritonal difference. The penultimate chord even features the saxophone displaying a standard "sol-la-ti-do" cadence. This section also highlights an area where both voices are in their extreme ranges, especially for the saxophone which starts on its lowest written note, a Bb, rising three octaves to its altissimo C# on the final chord. There is a sensation of ascension and evaporation by this journey in terms of

[91] Leon Dallin, *Techniques of Twentieth Century Composition*, (Dubuque: WM. C. Brown Company, 1957), 103.

range before Gotkovsky returns the music to previous material. Gotkovsky wrote several religious works for church choirs that went unpublished.[92] Perhaps this ascension in range is reverential, reaching ever upwards in the manner of Messiaen who, as Christopher Dingle notes, exploited a "congruity between music in the higher register and the celestial, and music in the middle and lower registers and the terrestrial."[93]

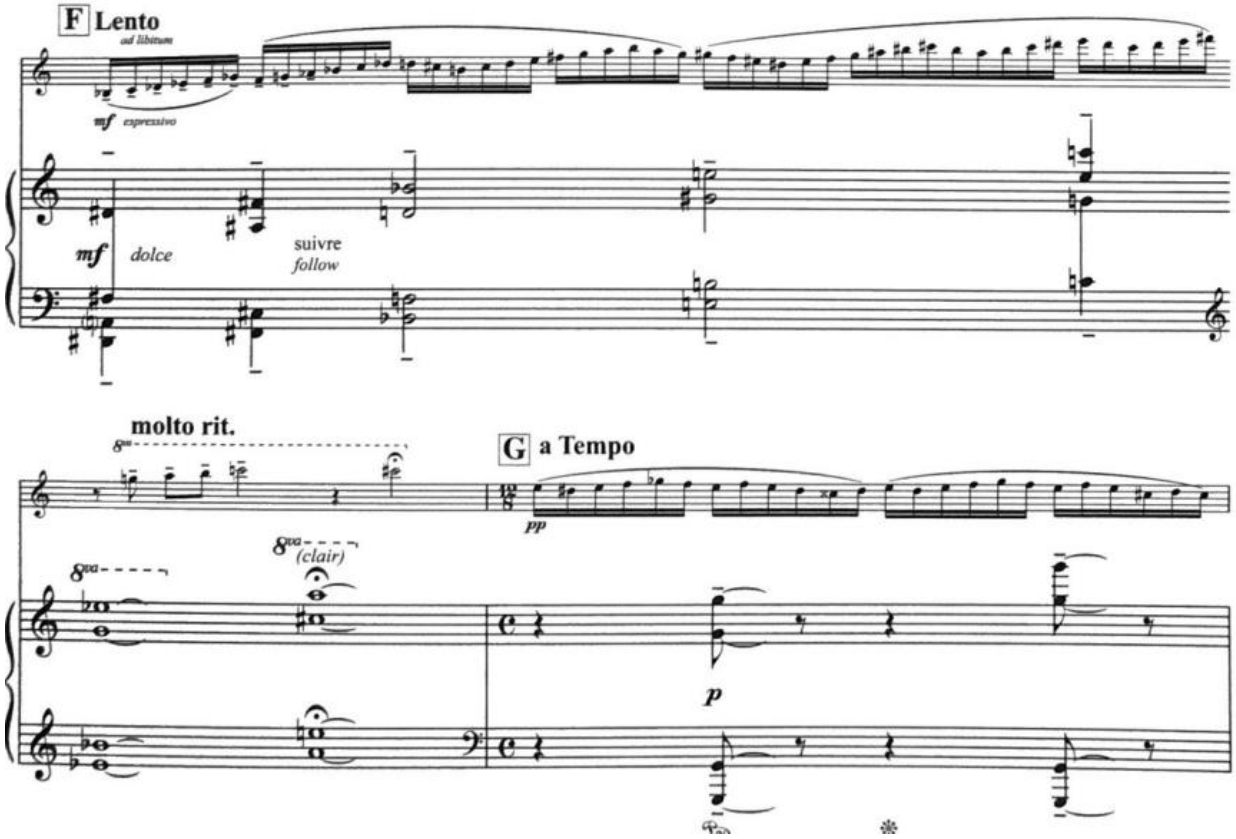


**Figure 3.53** bitonal blocs and standard cadence in *Variations Pathétiques IV*, mm. 53–54.

As discussed previously, movement five is distinct due to its harmonic difference from the other movements. Harmony is very similar in each of the instances that were mentioned from which Gotkovsky borrows the material for "Con simplicità-anima." Each version places the instruments in Bb minor with a strong inclination towards Bb minor pentatonic. The similarities

[92] Sagrillo, "Ida Gotkovsky: Her Life and Style," 289.
[93] Christopher Dingle, "Frescoes and legends, the sources and background of *Saint Francois d'Assise*," in *Messiaen: Music, Art, Literature* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 317.

between “Con simplicità-anima” and “Cantilène” from Gotkovsky’s *Quatuor de Saxophones* are significant and are nearly exact besides the instrumentation and a few stylistic descriptors. Since the saxophone can continuously vibrate its sound versus the piano’s limited striking and reverberance, the sonic experience between the quartet and saxophone and piano pairing is much different.

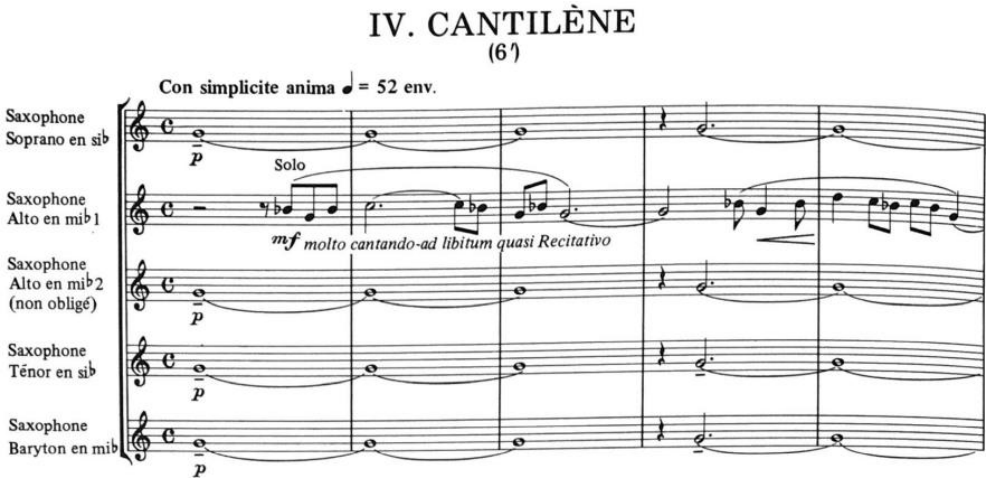


**Figure 3.54** similarity to “Con simplicità-anima” from “Cantilène” in *Quatuor de Saxophones*, mm. 1–5.

In the middle section, the piano lays the foundation of harmony in G minor, a minor third down from the opening’s Bb minor. At the end of the middle section, the piano reharmonizes to Bb minor to set up the recapitulation of the original melody.

Like the previous movements, “Prestissimo con fuoco” uses chordal structures bearing half-steps and tritones. Letter B lays a static harmonic setting with the instruments continuously returning to an E. The section at letter F is marked by a heartbeat pulse in the piano, creating an emphasis on pulse between beats one and three. The harmony in the piano spells out the saxophone’s texture and will follow this trend throughout the section. Gotkovsky changes the harmonies more frequently as the section ensues, but always keeps them bound to an A in both the piano and saxophone (its F#). Nearly the full spectrum of chromaticism is utilized in the treble voice at letter I as the bass voice tolls out a broad, sustained “pesante” line to establish the

drama of the saxophone's upcoming cadenza. At the end of the piece, completion is most felt in the harmonic movement, as the piano goes from its Db to a D-A-Eb chord in each declaimed gesture in the bass voice, which finally succumbs to a perfect fifth of D-A-D in the last two measures.

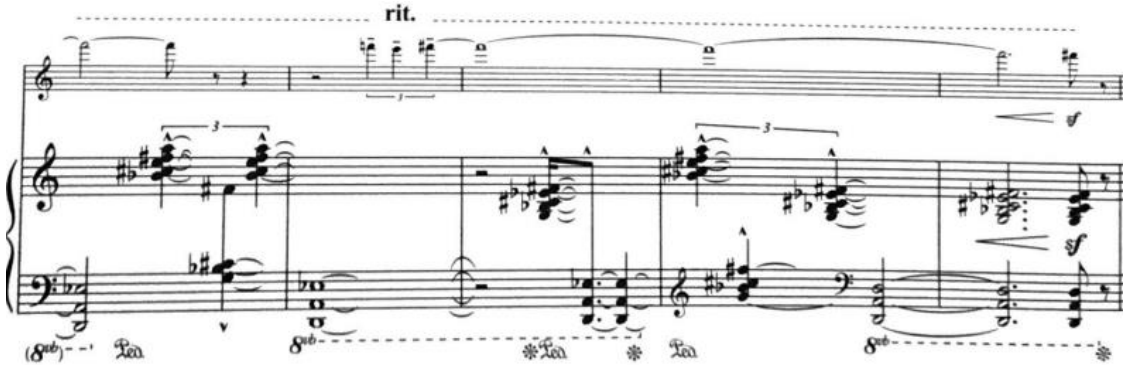


**Figure 3.55** harmonic completion at the end of *Variations Pathétiques VI*, mm. 158–162.

Form

In *Variations Pathétiques*, Gotkovsky uses the same repetitive forms as she did in *Brillance* to increase accessibility for the listener. Movements one, two, four, and five all exist in a ternary form, with the return of beginning material that is shortened and altered after contrasting middle sections. For example, in movement two the piano retrieves the recapitulation of the "misterioso" A section at letter G. Most of the material is exactly the same as the beginning, just in a new transposition which puts the saxophone in its lower register. Letter I features the "dolce sostenuto" melody of letter C, though it remains in the higher range of the saxophone for longer. Afterwards, Gotkovsky reduces the amount of material being recapitulated rather than writing a complete reenactment of letters A–F.

The form of movement three is quite like a rondo with its contrasting episodes and recurrence of the original melody with modifications, but it lacks the rondo's typical swift character and instead shifts between grace and melancholy. Letter A marks the beginning of the B section which is noteworthy due to its increase in volume for both instruments. Letter F is a

recapitulation since it uses the exact pitches of the saxophone's beginning, although the harmonic rhythm is slower and more somber.

Movement four, which is in a ternary form, uses Letter E to serve as a recapitulation of the beginning material transposed up a whole step from G to A, returning the two instruments to their original format only in volume and meter with slight changes in instrumental range. It is a brief moment of familiarity, however, as the saxophone's direction of sixteenth embellishments vacillates between a lower neighbor and an upper neighbor for contrast, while the beginning almost exclusively features upper-neighbor embellishments (see Figure 3.56). As seen in other instances, Gotkovsky will vary material used previously to remind the listener of the past but with a fresh perspective.

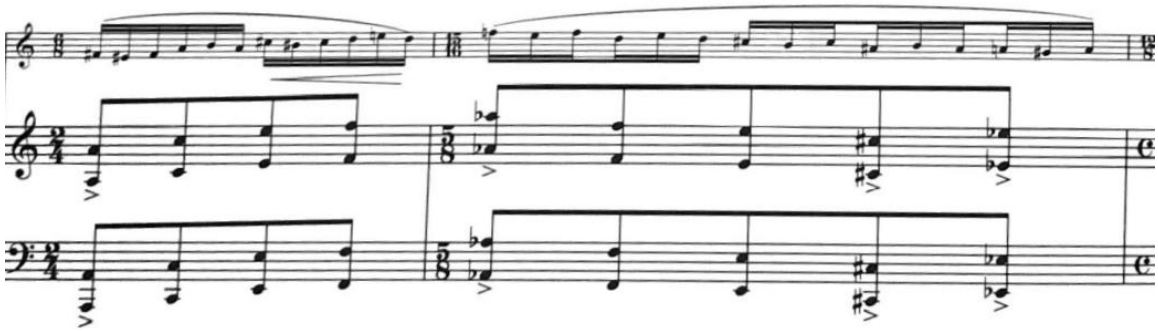

**Figure 3.56** variation of embellishments in contrast to the beginning in *Variations Pathétiques IV* mm 45–46.

Gotkovsky rarely repeats restatements of a section exactly how they appear in their initial existence. Rather, development occurs through the transformation of repetition, as in movement five. When the saxophone recovers the plainchant melody at letter D, much of the harmonic rhythm is similar until the piano brings in the influence of the middle section's sixteenth-based accompaniment. Following suit, the saxophone plays a truncated version of the first A section, completing the ternary structure of the movement.

Like we saw in Gotkovsky's form of *Brillance IV*, "Prestissimo con fuoco" exists in a moment-form, moving through similar melodic ideas with texture as the significant difference.

The beginning through letter C is intense in the saxophone's technical figures and the piano's groupings of two versus three while letter D is spirited and lifted in style. After the heartbeat pulses of letters F and I, the cadenza channels significant intensity into the ending's return of dance-like rhythms and declamatory gestures which draw the piece to a dramatic finish.

Summary

Through *Variations Pathétiques*, we can see an evolution in Gotkovsky's writing for saxophone. There is more cohesion than was found in *Brillance*, mostly due to the nature of the variation form. Each movement, though belonging to the macro structure, contains its own character. Gotkovsky envelops into the work new treatments of melodies and harmonies, adding to her corpus of intertextuality while also reworking previous material and reviving its purpose to fit within a new context. *Variations Pathétiques* remains a considerable force in her body of works and influenced much of her chamber music after 1980. For the saxophone, *Variations Pathétiques* developed from many of the standards set in *Brillance*: a reliance on the saxophone's upper register for lyricism and accessing the instrument's ability to articulate quickly and maneuver through technique with ease and proficiency. Gotkovsky treats the saxophone in the same way in *Variations*, but with more freedom in exploring the expressive capacities of the instrument. There are quick movements with difficult patterns and articulations but there are also moments of subtlety and passion that were not explored in *Brillance*, stressing the transformation in Gotkovsky's writing style over time. This method of furthering the breadth of her music will be expanded in *Incandescence.*

## CASE STUDY THREE: *INCANDESCENCE*

Commissioned in 2011 by the Contemporary Tenor Repertoire Initiative, *Incandescence* is the most recent piece that Gotkovsky has produced for the saxophone.[94] It is also unique in the restrained setting that it takes on throughout much of the slow first and second movements. Featuring much sustain and lyricism, the work is more patient than the recurring intensity of *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques* but is nevertheless agitated with slow builds to climactic moments. The last movement also transitions through meter shifts more frequently than that of the fast movements of the aforementioned works. *Incandescence* is the first work that Gotkovsky has produced for the tenor saxophone and piano and, as was the case with her works written for the alto saxophone, she utilizes the full breadth of the instrument's range as well as the altissimo register in the final movement. Keeping in line with her method of self-borrowing, *Incandescence* is to a great extent a reworking of her *Sonate pour Clarinette Solo*.[95] The sonata is in four movements, of which the first three align with the three movements of *Incandescence*, though not in the same order. Cook emphasizes Gotkovsky's use of the modes of limited transposition through each movement of the clarinet sonata as well as her method of alluding to sonata form for structural integrity, both of which will be referred to in the following comparative analysis of *Incandescence.*

### Melody

Unlike the previous works for saxophone wherein the piano leads the introductions, Gotkovsky opens the work with a lengthy cadenza in the saxophone, most likely harkening back

[94] Gotkovsky, *Incandescence.*
[95] Ida Gotkovsky, *Sonate pour Clarinette Solo* (Wormerveer: Molenaar Edition BV, 1986).

to the influence of her solo clarinet sonata. This influence is felt immediately in the cadenza's free meter. The first movement in both works is titled "Lyrique," and the clarinet version is marked "Declamando con Brio." Declamatory styles have been used in the first movements of *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques*, while "brio" is Italian for vivacity, fire, "a descriptive term for a playing style of brilliance."[96] It is curious that Gotkovsky did not include such a marking in *Incandescence*, but through intertextual reference, we can assume stylistic similarities between the work and the solo clarinet sonata.

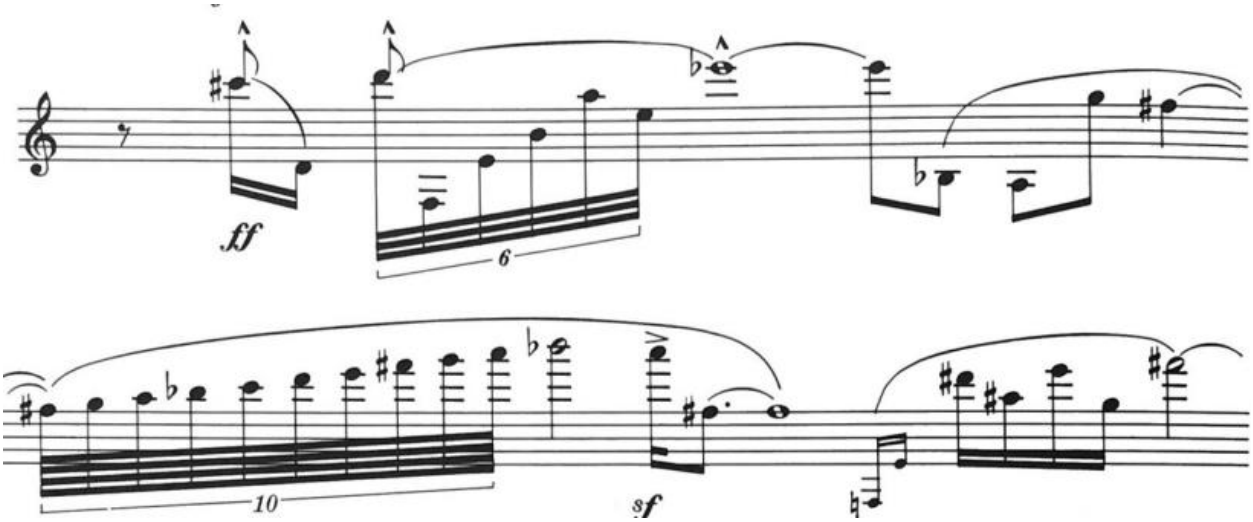


**Figure 3.57** beginning material in the *Sonate pour Clarinette Solo I.*

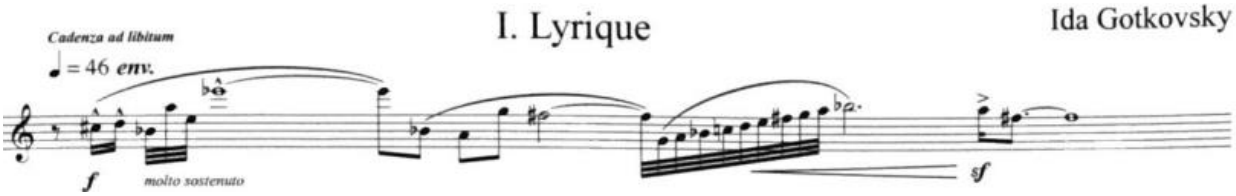


**Figure 3.58** beginning material of *Incandescence I*.

In the solo clarinet sonata, the extensive range of the clarinet is fully exploited with giant leaps of octave displacement, whereas the saxophone's cadenza has a much more confined range. Like the previous pieces, Gotkovsky places the saxophone in its upper range for brilliant lyricism.

[96] David Fallows "Brio." *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 10, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04001.

Due largely to operating within the modes of limited transposition, the work features the intervals of a half-step and major seventh prominently, as seen in the opening gesture that leads to the saxophone's Eb. This first line contains the primary theme from which the succeeding material throughout the movement is derived.

As is the fashion in Gotkovsky's cadenzas for the saxophone, she controls expression through direct instructions of hesitating, accelerating, and pulling back into a sustain. This happens at the beginning and end of the cadenza, though markings of "lento" and "stringendo" are written in a few areas as well. Another similarity to previous cadenzas, such as the one from the first movement of *Variations Pathétiques*, is found in Gotkovsky's large leaps between multiple octaves to create an upper and lower line (see Figure 3.59).

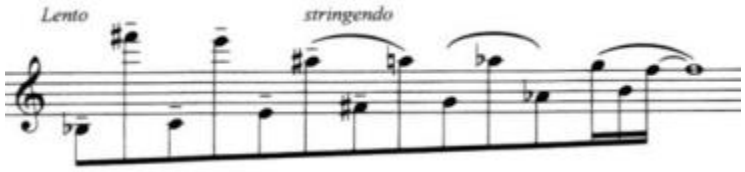


**Figure 3.59** creation of upper and lower line in the cadenza of *Incandescence I.*

One aspect that makes this cadenza distinct is Gotkovsky's way of writing a particularly expressive gesture that is akin to a triple-stop idiomatic on bowed string instruments. The description on the publisher's page incorrectly likens this to the use of multiphonics, an instrument's ability to produce multiple pitches at once with a single fingering, though Gotkovsky does not include fingerings above the gesture or within the preface for such a technique. Multiphonics usually contain microtones smaller than a half-step, and no pitch is indicated as a microtone in the score. By writing the gesture in the form of a triple-stop, Gotkovsky places emphasis on the weight of the lowest note followed by its release to the upper notes in the illusion of polyphony (see Figure 3.60).

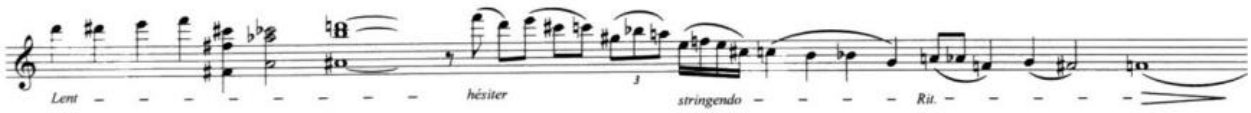


**Figure 3.60** use of the triple-stop gesture and control of expression at the end of the cadenza in "Lyrique."

Following rhythmic intensity, Gotkovsky places the saxophone in its high register at measure 25 moving between its E and F taken from measures 7–11 to create tension via a half-step. In further recollection, the saxophone enters with the melody from the very beginning at measure 33, this time completely unembellished through motivic reduction in its sustained freedom. Messiaen describes this reduction as "repeating a fragment of the theme, taking away from it successively a part of its notes up to concentration upon itself, reduction to a schematic state, shrunken by strife, by crisis."[97] Rather than from literal strife, the unembellished melody acts as a respite from the highly saturated intensity in the very active cadenza and the passionate moments of the middle section. The melody is laid bare, and because of this Gotkovsky keeps the lyricism in the middle register rather than her usual treatment of sustaining in the high register.

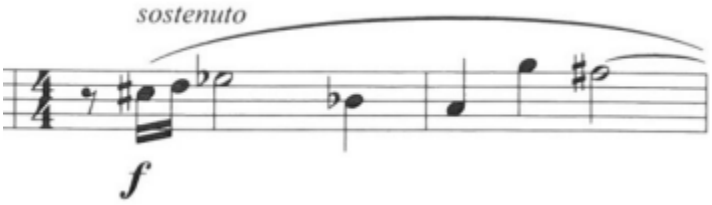


**Figure 3.61** unembellished melody of "Lyrique, mm. 33–34.

After much of the sustained section, the saxophone endures on the three-note chromatic gesture of the main theme and repeats this gesture through a gradual softening. In contrast to the saxophone's passionate Eb in the opening, a tranquil atmosphere is set at the end as the

[97] Wacyk, "Powerful Structures," 29-30.

saxophone ascends to its high Eb, sustained at length at pianissimo and accompanied by the piano's final half-step-oriented chord.

Movement two, titled "Andante," is largely taken from the "Dolcissimo" third movement of the solo clarinet sonata. Gotkovsky also used this movement as inspiration for the "Arioso" first movement of her *Brillante Symphonie* (1989) for wind band in which the clarinet echoes the opening "Dolcissimo" melody (see figures 3.63 and 3.64).[98] An arioso is "melodious, a style that is song-like as opposed to declamatory, emphasized [by its] emotional intensity."[99] This is an apt description for the "Andante" movement, positioned between two movements of high intensity and particularly notable because of its sense of restraint and sustained stability. Interestingly, Gotkovsky places the tenor, an instrument keyed in Bb just like the clarinet, on its C whereas the clarinet versions begin a tritone away on an F#. *Incandescence* sets the stage for an atmosphere completely different from both clarinet versions by introducing the piano's harmonic rhythm before the saxophone enters. Keeping the piece's title in mind, the embodiment of incandescence shines as a flickering light through all the changes and shifts returning to the saxophone's C.

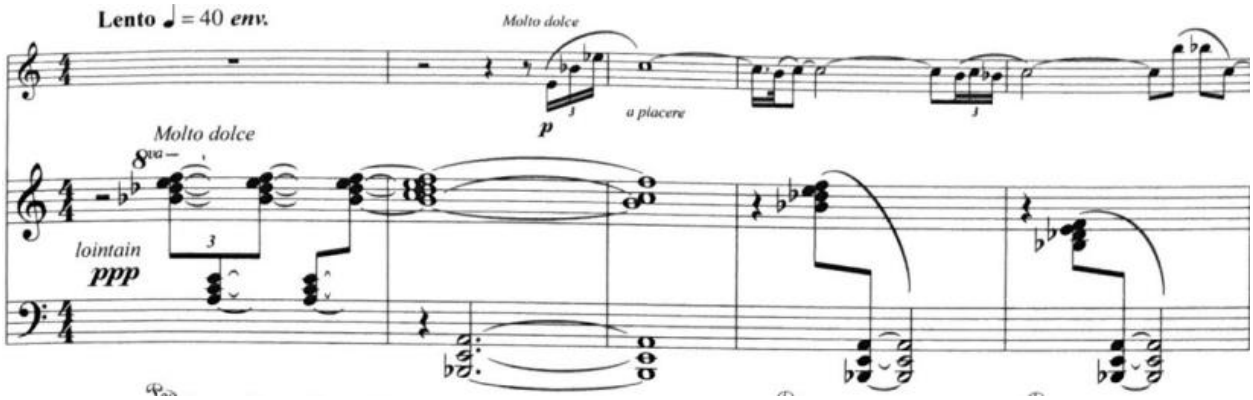


**Figure 3.62** beginning of "Andante" in *Incandescence*, mm. 1–5.

[98] Ida Gotkovsky, *Brillante Symphonie* (Wormerveer: Molenaar Edition BV, 1989).
[99] Julian Budden et al. "Arioso," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed March 10, 2022. https://doi-org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.01240.

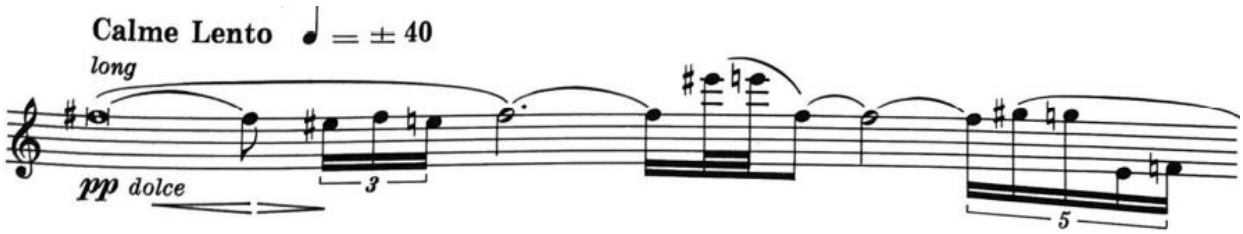


**Figure 3.63** "Andante" melody in its first usage in *Sonate pour Clarinette Solo* "Dolcissimo," m. 1.

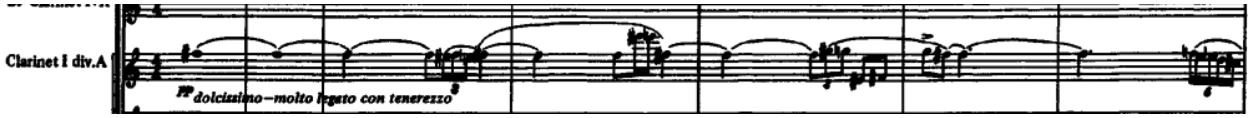


**Figure 3.64** "Andante" melody in *Brillante Symphonie* "Arioso," mm. 1–7.

This movement "stands apart as using free chromaticism with the fewest implications of modes of limited transposition."[100] Despite the free chromaticism, there is a definitive pull back to the saxophone's C even when the sustains move to the tritone of F#, the farthest interval away from C. One major difference between the melody in "Andante" and the clarinet melody is the saxophone's pickup gesture which is used as the beginning of the third movement's motif to glue the piece together. Intervallic relationships mostly involve half-steps and tritones throughout the movement, just like harmonic relationships.

Gotkovsky signals the first major shift with an increase in volume. Measure 21 initiates a crescendo to mezzo-forte a major seventh away from the saxophone's C to its B, followed by an upward journey to its high F# at forte and sustained at length. This is shadowed by a descent to the saxophone's lower register which Gotkovsky used prominently at the end of the first movement of *Variations Pathétiques*.

Measure 34 features the rising and falling chromatic gesture from the beginning of the cadenza of the first movement of *Variations Pathétiques* in a miniature cadenza as it ascends to

[100] Cook, "Formal Delineation," 36.

its F in measure 37, signaling the climax of the movement. The piano becomes much more active in its accompaniment and begins its statements with the triplet pickup gesture of the beginning melody. In this middle section the saxophone continues to circle around its F# and undergoes much of the melodic treatment as its C does in the beginning with recitative-like leaps and rhythms. This preempts a momentary return to its C before cascading up a major seventh to its B. The ensemble then trades this upward cascade back and forth, each time removing a note and becoming softer and slower until evaporating in sustain (see Figure 3.65).

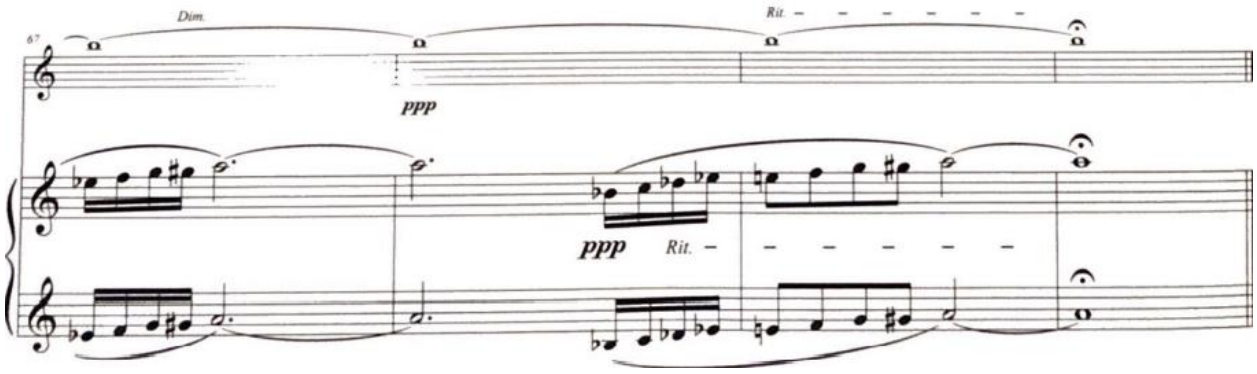


**Figure 3.65** upward cascades ending a major seventh away from the beginning in *Incandescence* "Andante," mm. 67–70.

The pickup gesture from the second movement is reused as the beginning of the dance-like melody, now changed from E-Bb-Eb to E-B-D. The groupings here are much more stable and repetitive in comparison to the octave leaps in the solo clarinet sonata. After an intense interlude in the piano, the saxophone reenters with the dance-like beginning material but the accompaniment is notably more lyrical in its marking of "dolce." Rather than continuing with the previous material, Gotkovsky brings back the scherzo 5/8 melodies from the second movements of *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques*. In each piece these sections are treated with dynamic variation and the alternation between groups of three and two notes, followed by flourishes up to sustains. This scherzo melody's appearance in each of the works for saxophone asserts Gotkovsky's goal of the "unity of musical expression" as it serves the same purpose of tension

and release in each piece. *Incandescence* takes most of its treatment of the 5/8 scherzo melody from *Variations Pathétiques II* in the direction of its notes and piano accompaniment, as well as the piano interlude that occurs between the 5/8 sections (in this case, 5/16) and the intense sustains. The apex of the saxophone's line reaches its D# which was the main pitch in the first movement's central melody (Eb) and is emphasized later in the movement's climax.

For variation, the piano inverts the beginning dance-like melody in measure 65 so that it descends rather than ascends. The saxophone is then invited to play the inverse of the dance-like melody. This is less of a recapitulation and more of a contrast to the beginning material through transformations occurring in the form of melodic inversion and use of the altissimo register in measure 103. We have witnessed Gotkovsky access altissimo in *Variations Pathétiques*, but her treatment of the register in that context was more for sustain. Here, altissimo is accessed in a quick technical run, integrating extended techniques into both lyrical and technical passages, seen also in her use of flutter-tonguing. Measure 104 recalls the cascading material, but the saxophone plays more of a lyrical role though its sustains, culminating in a sudden leap into the altissimo on the saxophone's D. The dynamic begins to subdue during a brief imitation between the ensemble, lowering the intensity for a new section.

Measure 167 introduces imitation at the eighth note between the ensemble for utmost tension like the imitation of *Brillance IV*. The final cadenza is far different from any that have appeared in the pieces discussed in its slow nature. It acts a repose from the speed and intensity of the first half, only bringing in declamatory gestures via the piano's interruptive rhythms. The saxophone starts in its lower register, emphasizing quarter notes with interspersed triplets that provide momentum as the instrument ascends first to its altissimo G#. After a brief middle period, the saxophone becomes more chromatic as it ascends to its high F# before broadly

blossoming to its climactic D#, retrieving the pitch's importance from the first movement and tying the piece together.

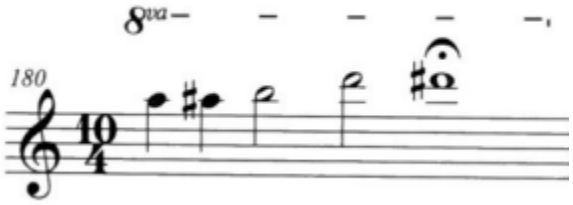


**Figure 3.66** cyclical use of D# (Eb) to tie the movements of *Incandescence* together in "Final," m. 180.

Upon the saxophone's entrance in measure 201, an expansive setting is formed. The instrument begins on its low B and moves to its middle Eb, the pitch from the lyrical melody of the first movement. Gotkovsky then drives the saxophone up to sustaining its high F#, harkening back to the final moment of *Variations Pathétiques* and showing her propensity once more for the major seventh between G-F#. This self-reference of sustain and repetition of the saxophone's G-F# is another way of Gotkovsky "uniting musical expression," sealing the interval's affect as one of joyous splendor. She keeps the sustain at length until uniting the ensemble on the five-note chromatic gesture for its final declarative statement.

Rhythm

The opening cadenza of *Incandescence* is very much reminiscent of the first cadenza in *Variations Pathétiques* in its declamatory gestures, sustains, and rhythmic development. When the piano enters, it sets up the rising and falling contour motif of the following section. The saxophone reenters and both voices trade interjections between sixteenths and triplets as the saxophone moves between the half-step of its E and F. Breaking with the solo clarinet sonata, *Incandescence* takes its inspiration for the tempo and mood change at measure 12 from the first movements of her *Variations Concertantes*, *Eolienne*, and *Concerto pour Trombone*, each named

"Lyrique." Each "Lyrique" movement throughout these differing compositions contains a line of melodic pitches indicated by tenuto markings and embellished as triplets before converting to sixteenths in repetition multiple times over. In all cases, rhythmic complexity is attained through polyrhythm, with the solo instrument having groups of four sixteenths to each beat against the accompaniment's groupings of five, six, or seven sixteenths in the span of a single beat (see Figure 3.67). Combined with crescendo, the circumstances allow for a moment of significant intensity. *Incandescence* heightens this effect, continuing the ceaseless repetition for multiple measures, each measure highlighting a specific pitch until a ritardando signals a new section. In the saxophone's last iteration, the sixteenths transfer to eighths and the grouping of four drops to three as it holds the anticipation of the lost half-step while the piano's eighths transfer to yielding quarter notes (see Figure 3.68).

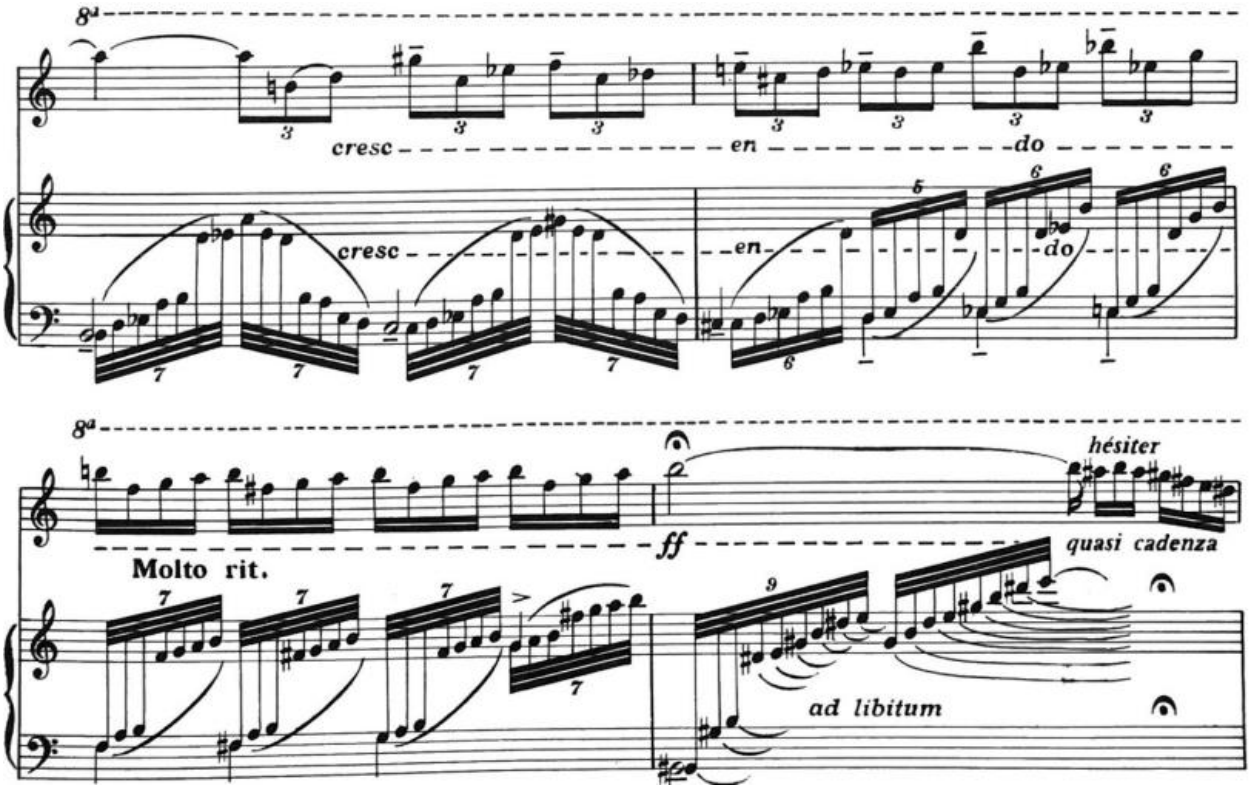


**Figure 3.67** embellished triplet melody converting to sixteenth repetition in *Eolienne I*, mm. 18–21.

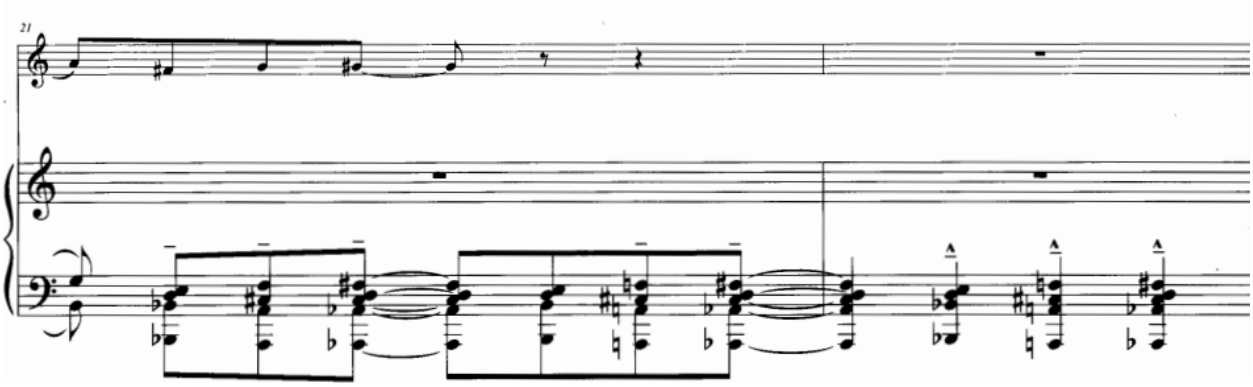

**Figure 3.68** sixteenth repetition transferring to eighths followed by quarters in *Incandescence I*, mm. 21–22.

A "déclamando" style is reached in measure 23 with both instruments in a general rhythmic unison marked by tenuto articulations. Just as in Gotkovsky's other works for saxophone, texture is a major demarcation of form, and the ensemble's unison here signifies a moment of importance and clarity. Further tension following the saxophone's repeated E-F is found in the piano's repetition of its notes and chords twice in a row in measure 27, like the sticky agitation from the first movement of *Variation Pathétiques*. Once the unembellished melody appears in measure 33, the piano continues its motion through ever-moving triplets and groupings of sixteenths, masking the pulse through ties across beats and alluding to *Brillance I*.

This triplet figure with ties across beats happens once more in the saxophone in the second movement to set up the climax (see Figure 3.69). In *Brillance*, however, Gotkovsky develops this tying figure whereas in *Incandescence* it remains static for two measures. Regardless, the saxophone takes on an accompanying role in both works to make way for the piano's slow chromatic descent.

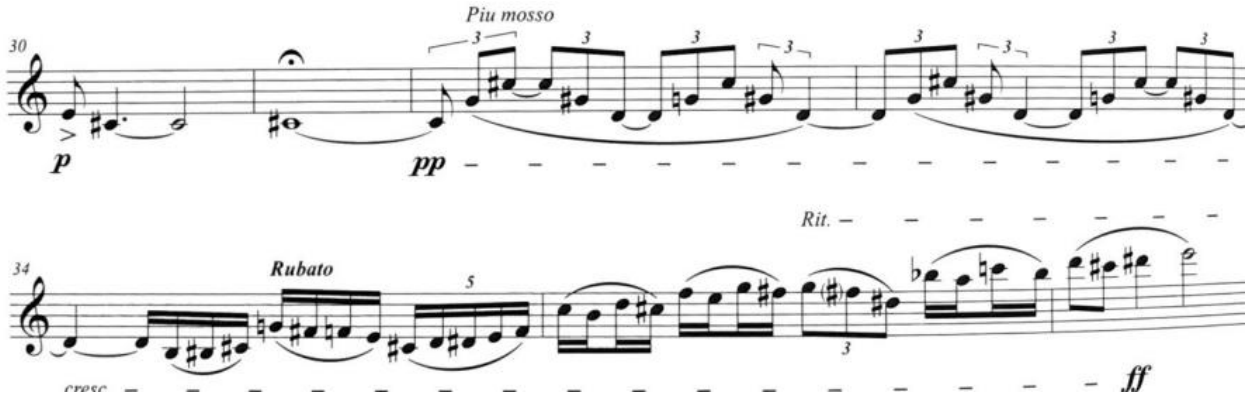


**Figure 3.69** saxophone in low register with accompanimental tying figures and chromatic rubato gesture in "Andante," mm. 30–36.

Gotkovsky reinforces the recitative aspect of movement two with alternating triplets, sixteenths, thirty-seconds, and groups of five and nine notes within a single beat. These gestures either preempt or follow the lengthy sustains that characterize the movement. Meanwhile, the piano's accompaniment remains primarily as slow triplets which disguise the pulse during the saxophone's sustains.

The "Final" movement finds its origins in the second movement of the solo clarinet sonata titled "Scherzo capricioso." There is no meter in the clarinet version, but the groupings suggest an ongoing tension between a feeling of two versus three that is further emphasized in *Incandescence's* "Final." Gotkovsky uses similar techniques such as motivic addition and reduction, as she adds or removes the repetition of the groups of two and three notes. Nearly every measure in the opening twelve measures changes meter and makes way for the main theme to be "developed by motivic reduction, a technique commonly employed by Messiaen."[101] Measure six also features an extended technique new to Gotkovsky's saxophone repertoire, flutter-tonguing. This involves the fluttering of the tongue to create distortion through the instrument. Gotkovsky places these flutter-tongues to interrupt both the repetition of the

[101] Ibid, 22.

beginning melody as well as a new figure that starts in measure 12. This new figure is characterized with quick thirty-second neighbor-tone embellishments, bringing variation to the feeling of three versus two (see Figure 3.70). Accompanimental material regularly outlines the tension between the saxophone's note groupings, adding to the rhythmic strain with the playing of a half-step simultaneously on the beats of two sixteenths.

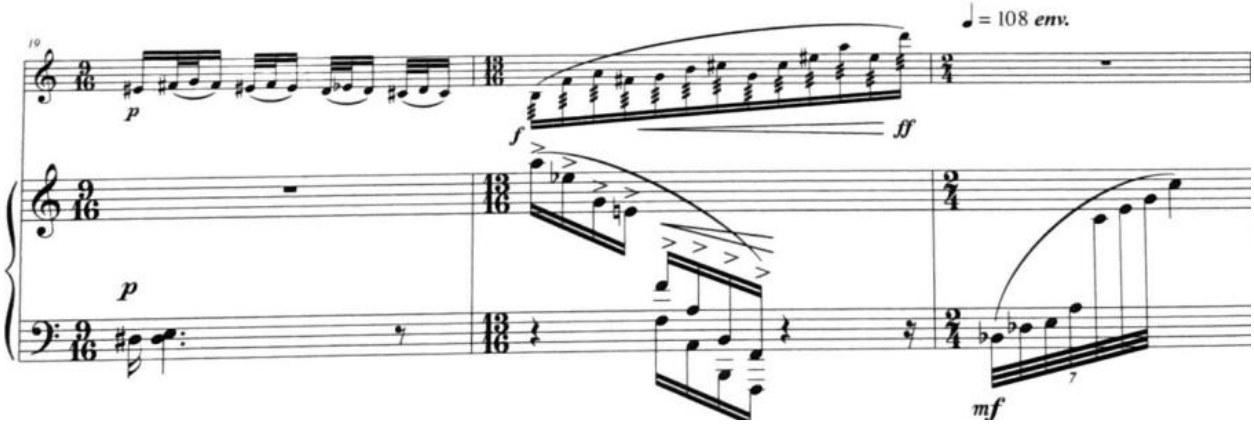


**Figure 3.70** neighbor-tone embellishment and flutter-tonguing in "Final," mm. 19–21.

A new section is introduced by a drop-in tempo, moving the pulse to the value of a quarter note. This section is marked by its prevalence of polyrhythm as the ensemble moves through cascades of contrasting motion. Polyrhythms are present in *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques,* but not to the extent they are found in *Incandescence* (see Figure 3.71).

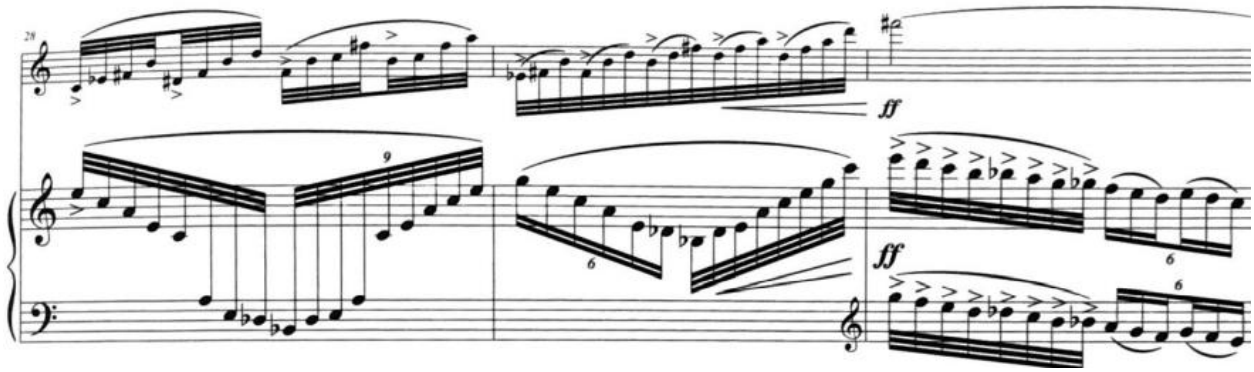


**Figure 3.71** polyrhythms between the ensemble in "Final," mm. 28–30.

Measure 74 recalls the ostinato figures of *Brillance* and *Variations Pathétiques* to serve as a transition rather than as a moment of structural significance as were the previous instances of ostinato.

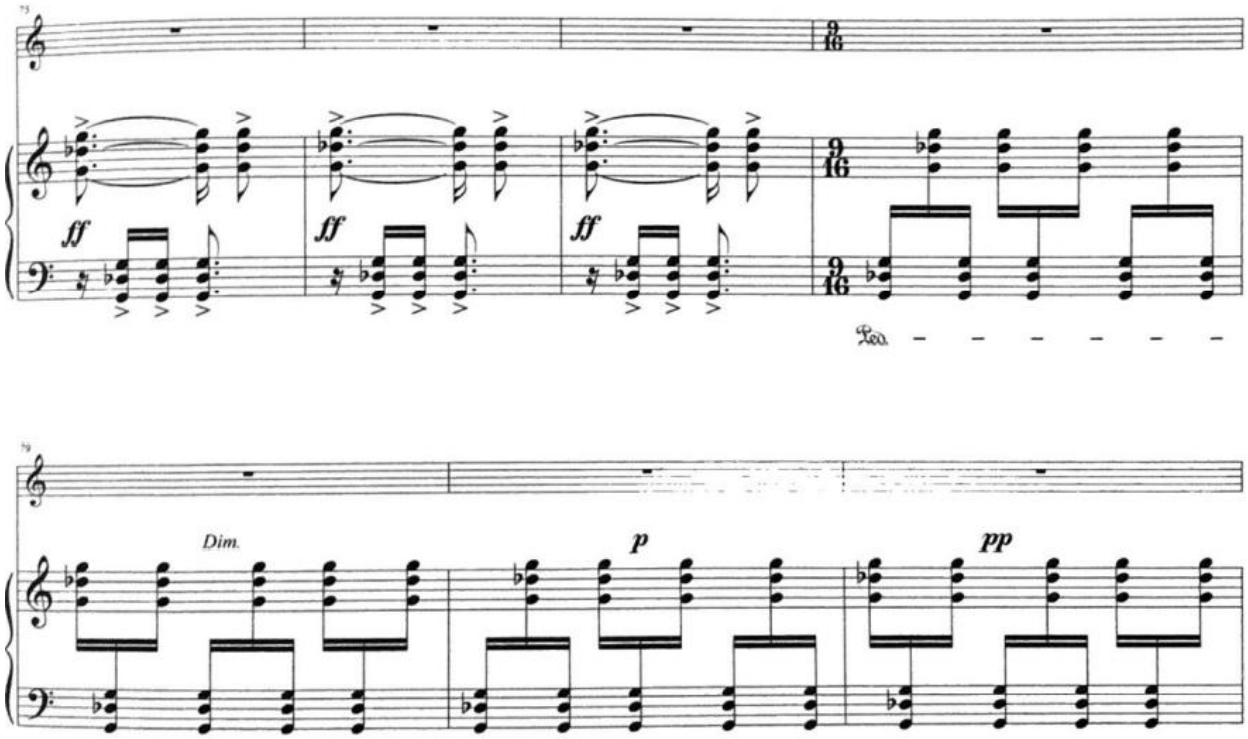


**Figure 3.72** ostinato used as transition in "Final," mm. 75–81.

The tenor saxophone's lower register is once again emphasized in a type of ostinato with the piano in the misterioso section of measure 123. In measure 146, another section is introduced which takes inspiration from the beginning of the last movement of *Variations Pathétiques* in its groupings of three versus two ostinato plus cross-bar beaming. The saxophone also moves through alternating, repeated sixteenths like its entrance in "Prestissimo con fuoco." *Brillance IV* is alluded to as well here in the saxophone's constant reharmonization in a gradual upward direction (see Figure 3.73).

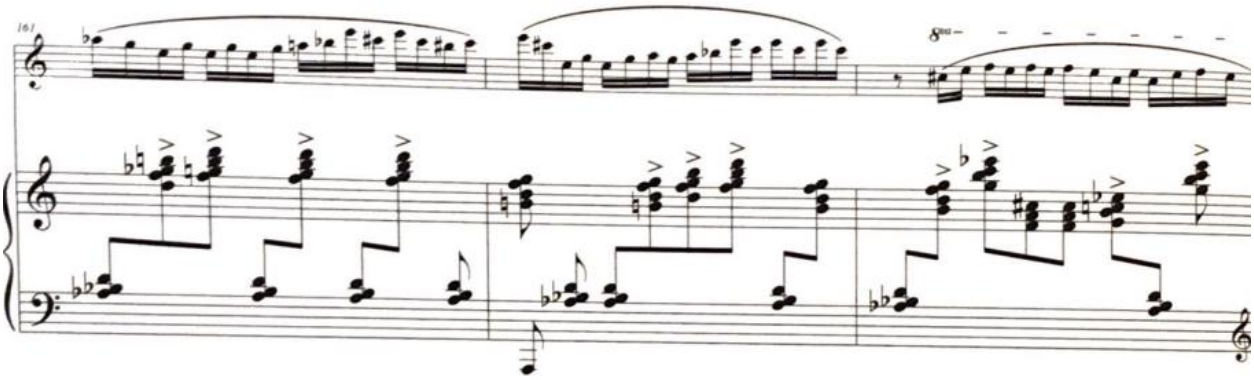

**Figure 3.73** piano's three versus two ostinato and saxophone's constant reharmonization in "Final," mm. 161–163.

To introduce the cadenza, the piano calls to mind its declamatory gestures from *Variations Pathétiques*, featuring broad triplets and the Lombard rhythm. Similar to the end of "Prestissimo con fuoco," the piano recovers the intensity of the opening with its dance-like melody, this time in larger meters of 14/16, 15/16, and 17/16. Gotkovsky even provides some of the piano's gestures the from the outer movements of *Variations Pathétiques* in its broad triplets, extending the piano to its extreme ranges in both directions (see Figure 3.50). When the tempo reaches its regularity in measure 193, the piano introduces a quick, five-note figure with declamatory interjections (see Figure 3.74). This five-note gesture, emblematic of the ending of *Brillance*, is used to end the work in strong unison.

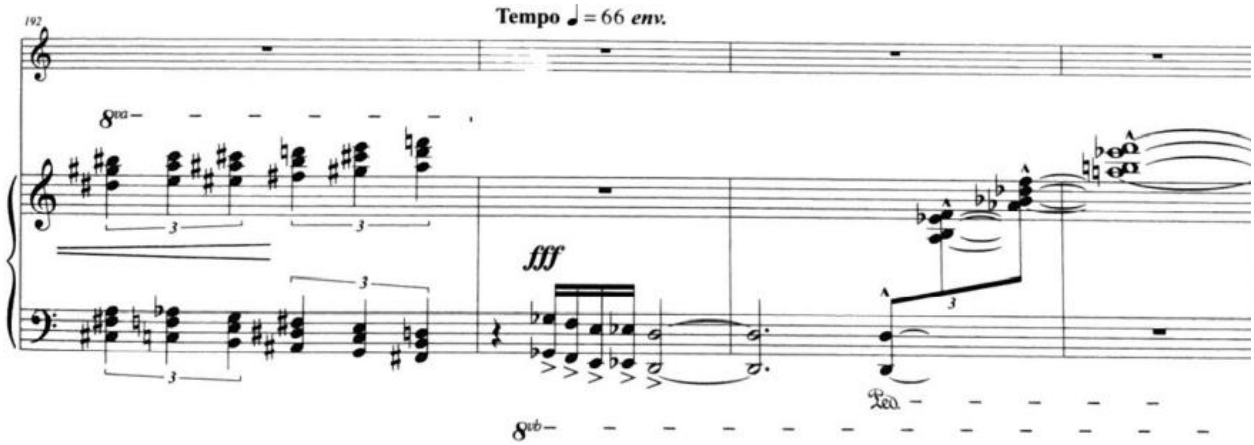


**Figure 3.74** piano's contrasting motion in broad triplets, five-note ending motif, and declamatory gestures in "Final," mm. 192–195.

Harmony

As is Gotkovsky's treatment of harmony in *Variations Pathétiques*, harmony in *Incandescence* is highly chromatic with chords with multiple half-steps and tritones. This is highly evident in the second and third movements (see Figures 3.75 and 3.76). In the second movement, the piano's accompaniment is extremely minimal and features chords with relationships built on half-steps.

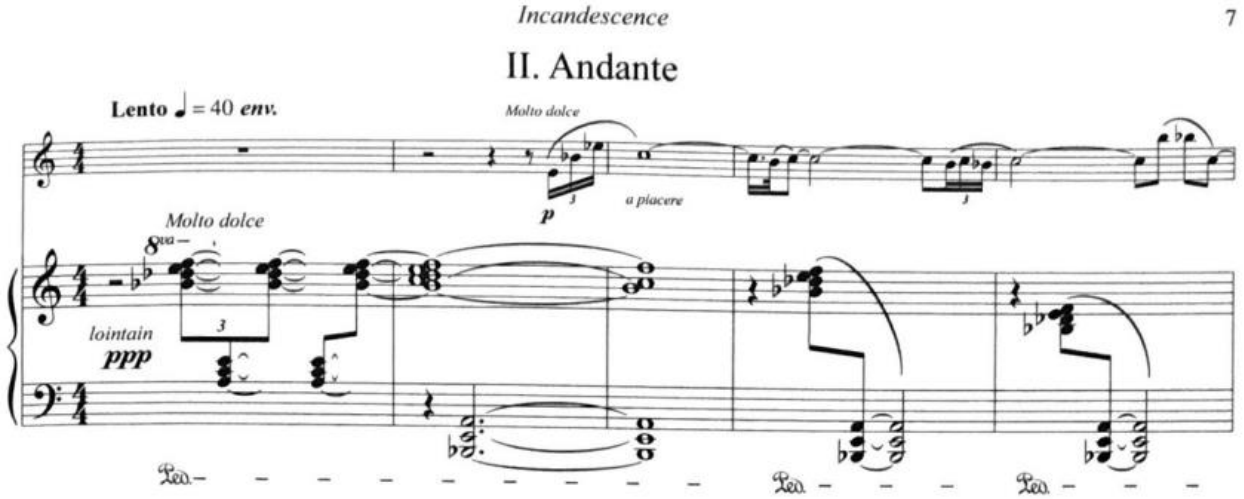


**Figure 3.75** chords comprising at least one half-step and tritone in "Andante," mm. 1–4.

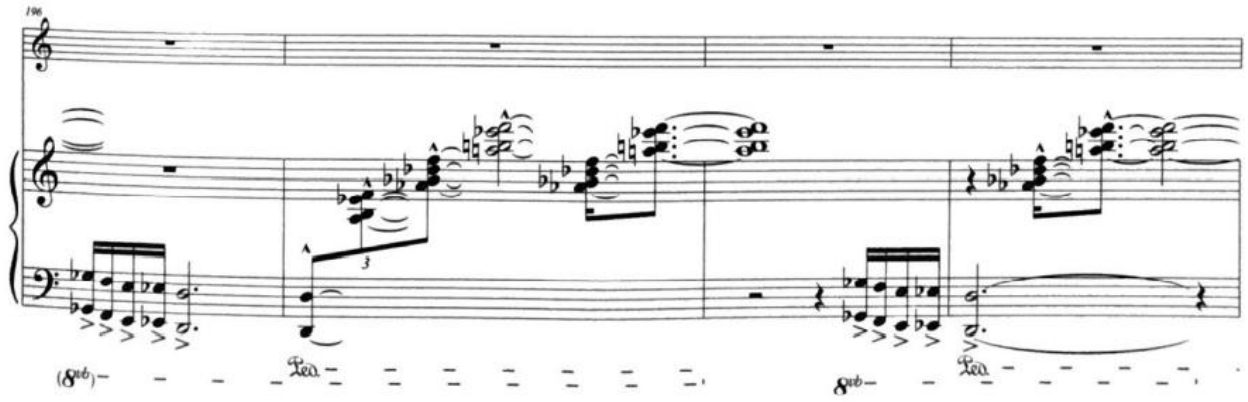

**Figure 3.76** chords with two simultaneous tritones in "Final," mm. 196–199.

Gotkovsky also uses pedal tones similarly to their usage in *Variations Pathétiques*. At measure 31 the piano crashes back in after a suspenseful fermata with a C split in octaves in its bass voice, producing a pedal tone that lasts all the way to the end for a foundational center.

Form

Gotkovsky shows her propensity for repetitive formal structures once more in *Incandescence*. Like *Brillance, Incandescence's* macro structure is a sonata arrangement with more cohesion in its usage of motivic figures that tie the piece together. These are found in the Eb which is melodically significant to the outer movements as well as the three-note pickup gestures of the second and third movement.

The first movement belongs in a loose ternary form, with the saxophone's cadenza acting as the first A section. The piano's entrance until measure 30 serves as the developmental middle section with measure 31 recalling the rising and falling gesture from the saxophone's beginning cadenza. The appearance of the unembellished cadenza's melody in measure 34 seals the return of the beginning material.

Movement two also fits into ternary form. This is most clearly observed in the melodic material with the saxophone's recurring C being used as the recapitulation at measure 50. Typical to Gotkovsky's recapitulations, she truncates the material in its return and adds in new treatment, such as the saxophone's falling to its lowest note, an A#. The middle section is noteworthy due to its increase in dynamics and its exchange from the saxophone's sustained C to sustaining an F# a tritone away.

Moment-form dominates the "Final," securing its usage as the form of each of the pieces being analyzed in these case studies. Though there is much repetition analogous to rondo form,

the sudden shifts to differing sections places moment-form as the structure which assembles the puzzle of movement three together.

Summary

*Incandescence* is far more stoic than its counterparts in its slow-moving, lyrical expression, but Gotkovsky retains her ability to create ultimate drama and intensity on both ends of the dynamic spectrum as evidenced in the comparative analysis. She accesses lyrical sustain in the tenor saxophone's lower and middle registers more so than previously explored with the alto saxophone, while still exploiting the brilliance of the instrument's upper range. *Incandescence* also represents a solidification of Gotkovsky's adherence to traditional forms and clear structures while pushing against those boundaries with unique treatments of melody and harmony. Her trilogy of saxophone works epitomizes her journey as a composer, both in her use of materials as well as intertextuality in her method of self-borrowing. Gotkovsky invoked many allusions between each of the analyzed pieces and used the influences of her other chamber works to weave an oeuvre of infinite musical expression.

## CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the pieces discussed in this paper's case studies, Gotkovsky fulfills her mission of creating a "universal work." Each individual work reveals the evolution of her compositional practice and her aesthetic development, especially when interpreted through the lens of intertextuality. In prioritizing her pursuit of the simultaneity of creative progression and infinity, we can observe her body of works as establishing the unity of musical expression she strives for, elucidated through the emotional content in each piece of her music. The case studies presented here tie these emotional styles together in a demonstration of Gotkovsky's credo that speaks to her goal of uniting musical expression throughout all time.

Of the many aspects that Gotkovsky contends with in her responsibility as a composer, repetition, both within a single piece and across her body of works, plays a profound role in her music. Repetition furthers the architectural structure that her music is built upon and increases accessibility for the listener as well as the performer. Despite the presence of repetition there are always transformations that vary the musical material while maintaining a degree of familiarity. Rather than being in the extreme avant-garde or stuck in the past, she establishes a marriage of formal traditionalism and untapped experimentalism, a "contemporary language with vigorous structures."

Gotkovsky's treatment of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form, as seen through this paper's comparative analyses, is consistent with regard to her chamber music. Differences are found either in her approach to the idiosyncrasies of the instruments she writes for or the character and thematic setting she applies to each piece. This is comparable to Gotkovsky's method of writing for wind band in which she adeptly handles a plethora of timbral and textural options. As in her writing for clarinet, the saxophone's technical proficiency is capitalized upon.

The number of movements between slow and fast styles splits almost evenly, highlighting her taste for both the saxophone's lyrical and technical capabilities. For the saxophone, we have witnessed her inclination of accessing the instrument's upper range, regardless of volume, for sustained lyricism, while the middle and lower registers are more often used transitionally or developmentally between points of interest in the high register. This is most likely due to her exposure to the French school of saxophone which, in the middle of the twentieth century, adopted a wide and expressive use of vibrato. As seen through the case studies, the brilliance of the saxophone's upper register grants Gotkovsky a means of achieving "the unity of musical expression" towards which she is constantly writing.

This paper has added additional weight to understanding the extent to which Gotkovsky borrows material from herself. Any further research on her life and music must contend with this fact as it is one her of signature traits. An examination of her early works is therefore recommended to discover the origins of the themes and motifs she carries and implants throughout her music. Many of her works, especially for chamber settings, have not yet been discussed or recorded, making efforts to do so all the more valuable in the discovery of her compositional style and output. Through the lens of intertextuality, this paper has identified the ways in which Gotkovsky executes her musical vision through the mission of her credo. This intertextual method should be further explored in order to unpack the doubtlessly numerous cross-relations throughout her effort to "create a universal work."

The application of these findings is lastly of important relevance to performance practice. Through interrogating intertextual relationships across Gotkovsky's chamber works, deductions of style have been made that lead to a greater understanding of her compositional practice, ultimately laying the ground for a more informed performance. In my own preparation of the

pieces analyzed in the case studies, intertextuality played the most significant role in realizing Gotkovsky's credo and how it affects one's performance of her works. Although this paper focuses on *Brillance, Variations Pathétiques,* and *Incandescence,* delving into her other chamber works rendered for me a greater awareness of Gotkovsky's ideals of securing singular musical expression through tying styles and emotions across her music rather than only looking into her output for saxophone. It also illuminated how the three analyzed pieces fit into her oeuvre and how she achieves her creation of a universal work through self-borrowing. It is not enough to simply know that a particular melody is used across many of Gotkovsky's works, but to pursue the emotional content behind that melody and to strive to understand its expression and placement in a given work.

Gotkovsky has not been granted her rightful position alongside the major composers of the late twentieth century. We are thus beholden to seek the ways in which we can establish a more informed performance of her music, to discover how she instills her credo in her art. Therefore, through her music we must unlock that same determination with which she writes, that call to ensure a universal musical expression.

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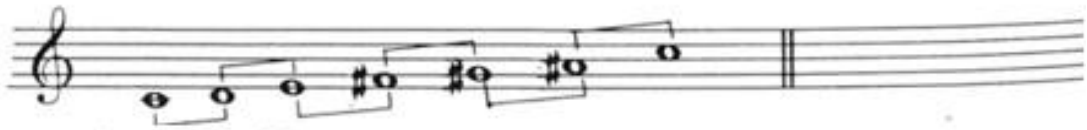
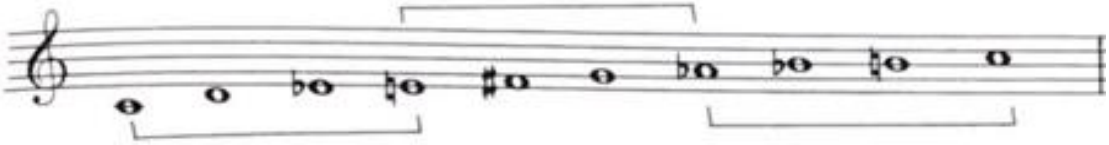
## APPENDIX A: (modes of limited transposition)

Mode 1



Mode 2, first transposition

Mode 3, first transposition



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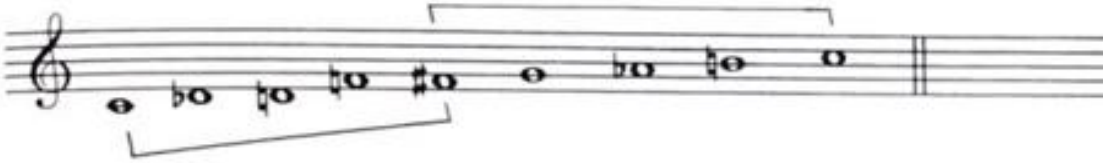
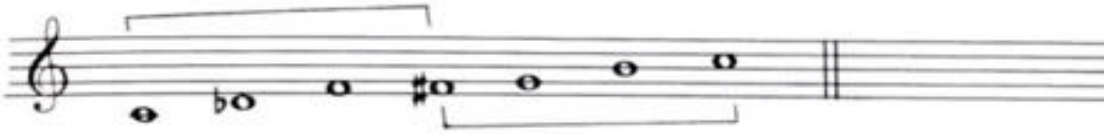


Mode 5, first transposition



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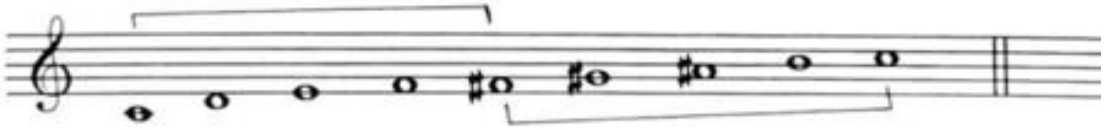
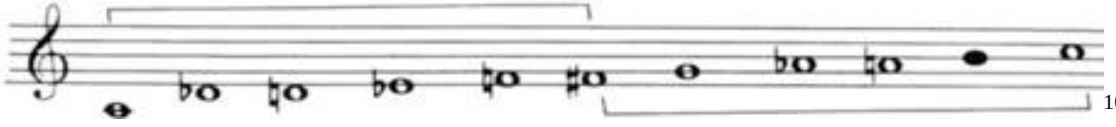


Mode 7, first transposition



[102]

[102] Carla Huston Bell, *Olivier Messiaen* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984).

## APPENDIX B: DMA LECTURE RECITAL

Scott Augustine, *saxophone*
Kevina Lam, *piano*

Music Building Auditorium
April 1, 2022
Friday, 5:30pm

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First Half- **Introducing Ida Gotkovsky: Her life and influences**

**Discussion of Brillance**

IDA GOTKOVSKY (b. 1933)

**Brillance (1974)**
*I. Déclamé*
*II. Désinvolte*
*III. Dolcissimo*
*IV. Final*

-Intermission-

Second Half- **Discussion of Variations Pathétiques I–III**

**Variations Pathétiques (1980)**
*I. Declamando con passione*
*II. Prestissimo–Leggierissimo*
*III. Lento–Rubato*
*IV. Rapido–molto legato–leggiero*
*V. Con simplicità–anima*
*VI. Prestissimo con fuoco*

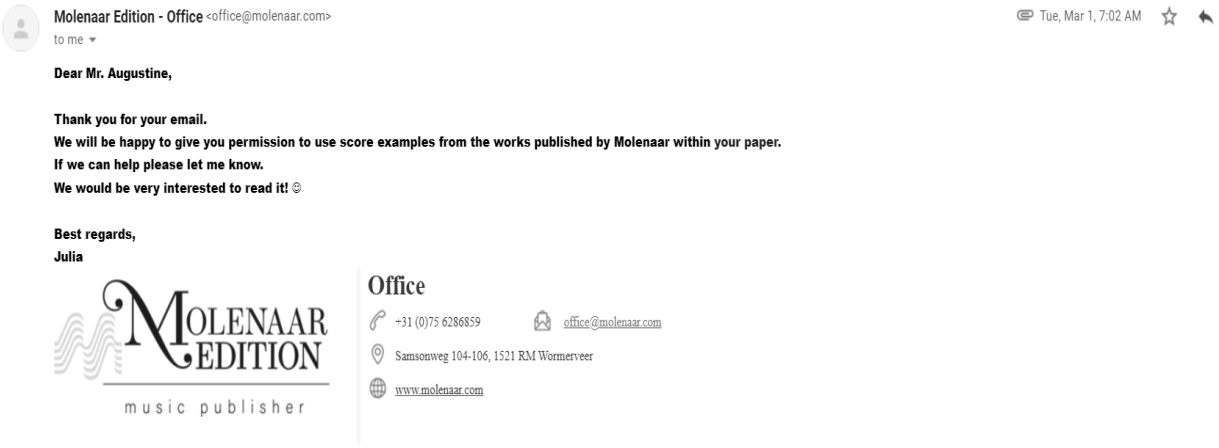
**Discussion of Incandescence**

**Incandescence (2011)**
*I. Lyrique*
*II. Andante*
*III. Final*

**Conclusions**

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree. Scott Augustine is a student of Professor Debra Richtmeyer.

# APPENDIX C: PERMISSION FROM MOLENAAR EDITION TO USE SCORES



**Molenaar Edition - Office** <office@molenaar.com> Tue, Mar 1, 7:02 AM

to me

**Dear Mr. Augustine,**

**Thank you for your email.**
**We will be happy to give you permission to use score examples from the works published by Molenaar within your paper.**
**If we can help please let me know.**
**We would be very interested to read it!** ☺

**Best regards,**
**Julia**

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music publisher

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