

FACTFILE: GCE MUSIC

MUSIC FOR ORCHESTRA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Debussy: Nuages from Three Nocturnes

Debussy (1862-1918) was one of the most innovative and influential composers whose lifetime spanned the end of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. Although the term “impressionism” as applied to the school of painting exemplified by Monet and his contemporaries is often extended to Debussy, he did not approve of the term. Nevertheless, there are parallels in the understated way in which he creates moods or atmosphere through the use of non-functional harmonies and delicate orchestration.

The three Nocturnes were composed between 1897 and 1899 that is after *Prélude à L'après-midi d'un faune* (1894) and before *La Mer* (1905). Although they were partly inspired by Whistler's paintings of the River Thames, the inspiration for *Nuages* (literally clouds) came from a stormy day on the River Seine with the hooting of a riverboat represented by the recurring horn calls.

The opening theme, where clarinets and bassoons are an octave apart, consists almost entirely of alternating perfect fifths and thirds. Although the key signature is that of B minor, this tonality is obscured by the chromaticism of the second clarinet and second bassoon parts.

Ex. 1: Clarinets 1 & 2 (bb. 1-2)

Apart from one note, the second bar is an exact repetition of the first (a common trait in Debussy) and the fourth bar is a repetition of the third. The descending three-note figure in the oboe highlights pitches within the first clarinet part and is included in the next main theme which is played by the solo cor anglais at b. 5.

Ex. 2: Cor anglais (bb. 5-8)

This motif is typical of the composer in that it is contained within the interval of a tritone and it is also worth noting that its common time is superimposed upon the prevailing 6/4 metre. Although the timpani roll suggests B as a tonal centre, this certainty is contradicted by the whole-tone chord (G,B,F) at b. 7 which changes to an ambiguous G# and B at b. 9. A restatement of the opening theme in divided violins at b. 11 is extended with more complex harmonisation (parallel dominant ninth chords) at b. 14. The next few bars are a succession of diatonically unrelated dominant chords - Bb9 in b. 15 and G9 in b. 17 - followed by a chord in b. 19 which is used frequently by Debussy and Ravel, namely a minor triad (Bb minor) with a raised sixth (G natural). Against an ostinato pattern in divisi strings based on G9, the cor anglais theme returns at b. 21 followed by mysterious, tritonal horn calls which are answered in turn by falling perfect fifths in the cellos and basses.

Alternating C major and E minor chords in bb. 31-32 introduce a transitional passage in which the woodwind move up chromatically while the violas and cellos, in octaves, have an ascending sequence. When this string idea is transferred to the woodwind at b. 39, the strings have a sustained Ab.

The cor anglais theme, answered by a whole-tone and then a minor third in muted horns, returns (as always) at the same pitch in b. 43. The accompaniment this time is an ostinato consisting of alternating E minor (with the raised sixth) and G7 chords over a B pedal point. The minor third from the previous horn interjection (b. 50) is assimilated into a pentatonic melody for cor anglais (b. 51) which is underscored by a descending whole-tone scale in cellos and basses.

This leads into the restatement of the opening theme of the movement in the oboes at b. 57 to which a countermelody for solo viola has been added. Descending parallel seventh chords interspersed with a bar based on a whole-tone chord lead into the main contrasting section which begins at b. 64.

Melodically, this passage is based on the pentatonic scale lending it a markedly Eastern flavour more specifically perhaps recalling the Javanese *gamelan* which Debussy actually heard at the Paris exposition of 1889. A similar fascination with the oriental sound world is apparent in other works such as *Pagodes* from *Estampes* for solo piano. The combination of solo flute and harp is a sonority particularly associated with French impressionist composers.

Ex. 3: Flute (bb. 64-66)

The harmonic background consists of a sustained D# minor chord in *divisi* strings. This theme is repeated at b. 71 by solo violin, viola and cello in octaves complemented by alternating E9 and G#9 chords. The pentatonic cor anglais solo from bb. 51-57 is recalled at in the flute at b. 77 and the delicacy of this moment, as the flute descends into its lower register, is enhanced by the harp harmonics.

If the pentatonic material represents the contrasting 'B' section of what is a loosely ternary structure, the return of the first cor anglais theme and its filled-out horn counterpart at b. 80 signifies a return to the 'A' material albeit in a different order. These bars are characteristic of Debussy in their use of repetition and also the way in which the harmonies alternate:

Bar	Melody/instrument	Harmonisation
80	Cor anglais	Whole-tone
82	Horns (tritone)	C#9
84	Cor anglais	Whole-tone
86	Horns (whole-tone)	E9

Debussy's attention to orchestral detail is once more apparent in his use of string tremolando at b. 82 marked *sur la touche* (on the fingerboard) which lends a slightly darker tone quality and the specification of natural harmonics in the violins at b. 86 producing a more transparent timbre. The cor anglais melody at b. 88 is a reminiscence of b. 51 accompanied only by the three pitches on which this solo is based (E,D,B) as a tremolando in cellos and basses and a timpani roll. The recollection of previous material continues with the return of the movement's opening phrase in the bassoons at b. 94 and its subsequent fragmentation. The pentatonic flute theme from b. 64 is alluded to at b. 98 - merely shifted to the off beat by one quaver - and the tritonal horn calls make a final appearance at bb. 98-99. The retrospective nature of these final bars is enhanced by the gradual slowing up of the tempo and reduction in the dynamic level. Tonal uncertainty remains in the form of an unresolved G7 chord (b. 99) and even the timpani oscillates between B and D before the final pizzicato B signifies a return to the tonic.

Although *Nuages* can be construed as being in an approximation of ternary form, the reality is that the piece evolves through a series of restatements of the three main musical ideas:

- (a) Clarinets and bassoons (b. 1)
- (b) Cor anglais (b. 5)
- (c) Flute and harp (b. 64)

With varying and often ambiguous harmonic backgrounds and transformed orchestral contexts. This process may be demonstrated as follows:

Form	Bar	Instrument/theme	Harmony/tonality
A	1	(a) Clarinets & bassoons	B minor
	5	(b) Cor anglais (spans tritone)	Whole-tone chord F,G,B
	11	(a) Violins	B minor +
	21	(b) Cor anglais + horn call	G9
	33	Transitional passage	Chromatic
	43	(b) Cor anglais	E minor/G7
	51	Cor anglais (pentatonic)	G7
	57	(a) Oboes	B minor
B	64	(c) Flute & harp (pentatonic)	D# minor
	71	(c) Violin, viola, cello	E9/G#9
	75	(c) Flute & harp	D# minor
A	80	(b) Cor anglais + horn call	Whole-tone chord F,G,B
	88	Cor anglais (pentatonic) = b. 51	E,D,B
	94	(a) Bassoons	B minor + G
	98	(c) Flute	B,D
	99	Horn call = b. 23	Whole-tone
	101	Pizzicato	B



Ravel: Menuet and Rigaudon from Le Tombeau de Couperin

Neo-classicism involves the revisiting of stylistic features from earlier periods and several compositions by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) acknowledge the influence of music from previous centuries: *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (1899), *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn* (1909) and *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1914-17), for example. Ravel himself wrote of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* that:

“The tribute is directed not so much to the individual figure of Couperin as to the whole of French music of the eighteenth century.”

On a more personal note, each movement is dedicated to people close to Ravel who had lost their lives during the First World War. Like many other works such as *Pavane pour une infante défunte*, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was later orchestrated but in this 1919 version two of the original movements, *Fugue* and *Toccata*, are omitted.

III - Menuet

The wistful third movement of the orchestral suite (the fifth movement in the piano version) is inscribed to the memory of Jean Dreyfus to whom Ravel had already dedicated his *Menuet Antique* which dates from 1895 but forms the second movement of the *Sonatine* (1905). Many Baroque traits are immediately apparent:

- the music is imbued with the stately character of the minuet which was a common component of many Baroque dance suites e.g. Bach's *Orchestral Suite No. 2* in B minor;
- the ornamentation of the oboe solo (bb. 1 and 3) mimics the mordent;
- the melody initially consists of four-bar phrases;
- in keeping with the binary form model the minuet consists of two repeated sections the second of which modulates and then returns to the tonic;
- the movement as a whole is in the normal ternary form.

There are other features, however, which are more typical of the twentieth century and of Ravel in particular:

- the presence of dissonances which are not prepared or resolved in the traditional manner;
- frequent use of secondary sevenths and also dominant and secondary ninths in the harmony;
- the modal nature (Dorian in particular) of some of the melodic writing (especially bb. 9-16);

- repetition of phrases either exactly or with slight alteration e.g. bb. 10-11 = bb. 13-14 and bb. 17-18 = bb. 19-20.

The minuet's first section consists of two four-bar phrases; the first ending on the tonic (G major) the second with an imperfect cadence in E minor.

Ex. 1 Oboe (bb. 1-8)

Closer examination reveals how Ravel extends his harmonies producing characteristic seventh and ninth chords while at the same time maintaining their traditional functionality:

Bar	Beat	Harmony
1	1	G major root position
	2	C major first inversion
	3	G major second inversion
2	1&2	E minor7 second inversion + C appoggiatura
	3	A minor9 root position
3	1	B minor7
	2	D7+G
	3	D9 root position
4	1&2	G major root position (perfect cadence)
	3	D major root position
5	1&2	D9 root position
	3	D7 root position
6	1	E minor7 third inversion
	2&3	E minor7 root position
7	1	F# minor root position
	2	E minor root position
	3	A7 root position
8	1,2&3	B major (imperfect cadence)

The oboe melody which begins the second section is derived from the Dorian mode (transposed to A) and is almost entirely harmonised with minor triads in root position: B minor, A minor, D minor and F# minor. Eventually a C# is introduced (b. 18) and a perfect cadence in the dominant (D major) is reached at b. 24. Ravel then alludes to the minuet's

first section - thereby making this an example of rounded binary form - but avoids predictability by altering the harmonic context in the following ways:

- a whole-tone chord is introduced in b. 25;
- there is a modulation to A minor in bb. 27-28;
- chromaticism appears in b. 28;
- a G9 chord replaces G major when the first 4 bars are brought back (an octave higher) at b. 29.

The trio section, in the tonic minor, is entitled *Musette* in the original piano version referring to the bagpipe-like drone which persists throughout. Ravel's scoring of this feature (pedal points are a regular occurrence in his music) is remarkable for the way in which he creates an unusual sonority with divided cellos and double basses using natural and artificial harmonics. The modal melody played by the flute in its low register is doubled an octave lower by the bassoon and harmonized with parallel triads in the clarinets.

Ex. 2 Flute, bassoon clarinet 1&2 (bb. 34-41)

The melodic contour of bb. 34-37 is slightly altered at b. 50, transposed up a minor third at b. 54, fragmented at bb. 58-59 and then transposed down a minor third at b. 60. The parallel chords and the G pedal are retained right the way through as the orchestration and dynamics are increased. The last eight bars of this section are the same as the first eight - the melody is taken up by muted horn and trumpet - which means the structure of this trio section is also rounded binary.

In a stroke of compositional brilliance, the minuet is brought back at b. 74 combined with the modal melody and parallel triads of the preceding trio section and a brief flute countermelody.

Ex. 3 Flute, Oboe, Violin 2 & Violas (bb. 74-81)

This eight-bar segment finishes, as before, with an imperfect cadence but this B major chord now elides into the next section which is transposed up a major third and the melody which had been played by the oboe is now given to the first violins. The tonic key is regained at b. 98 which corresponds with b. 25 except that the original whole-tone chord is replaced by another typical of the composer namely A minor with the addition of F#, the raised sixth.

From b. 106 onwards feels like a coda with the *cor anglais* recalling bb. 5-6 over a tonic pedal and cello arpeggios. This material is repeated with decoration (b. 108) and then fragmented (b. 110) over harmonies which descend in a parallel progression:

G major, F# minor, E minor. The harmonic rhythm slows up from b. 112 while the lower auxiliary note motif which appeared throughout the minuet occurs in augmentation. After a delicate harp glissando (b. 121), the opening bar of the movement is passed from piccolo to oboe and then *cor anglais* before the final pause on a slightly ambiguous secondary ninth chord which combines the notes of the G major and D major triads.

IV - Rigaudon

The finale (the fourth movement of the original suite) is in remembrance of Pierre and Pascal Gaudin whose sister, Marie, had been a friend of Ravel's. This dance form, which has its origins in France and Provence in particular, features in the music of several composers such as Rameau, Purcell and J.S. Bach.

In keeping with its Baroque antecedents, this consists of a lively binary form in duple metre. After two prefatory bars which (thanks to the prominence of the trumpet) act as punctuation throughout, the principal theme, complete with characteristic anacrusis, is presented. The repetitive semiquaver motif in first violins and clarinets is accompanied by a descending scale in cellos and bassoon and pizzicato quavers which stress the note G as an internal pedal. Ravel constantly colours the chords by adding extra dissonances (mostly sevenths and ninths) to the underlying harmonic framework. The root position chords of the first two bars, which basically form a perfect cadence in C major, are enlivened as follows:

Bar	Beat	Harmony
1	1	F major with a major 7th
	2	D minor 11th
2	1	G 13th
	2	C major

When the first eight bars have been repeated, the second section takes up and extends the semiquaver idea with harmonisation based on parallel triads and rapidly passing through various keys unrelated to C major such as: Bb major (b. 15); C# major (b. 20); and F# major (b. 24). An archetypal Baroque process occurs at b. 25 where this motif (b. 10-11) is treated in a descending sequence and then a fragmented version of the same motif (b. 29) is used in the same way. Repetition of b. 30 leads to the end of this section whose last two bars reiterate the cadential progression of bb. 1-2.

The tempo slackens at b. 37 for the movement's central episode which is distinguished by the rhythmic ostinato which remains constant practically the whole way through. The new tonality of C minor is established at the outset by a drone fifth in the violas over which the oboe weaves a modal melody (Aeolian) with numerous mordent-like ornaments.

Ex. 4 Oboe (bb. 53-59)

The cor anglais imitates the last two bars and then the melody (slightly shortened) is repeated. The change of harmony at b. 69 (F# minor with a raised sixth - D#) is accentuated by deft orchestration: the quaver ostinato passes to the harp while muted divisi cellos sustain a four-part chord. The flute and

then the clarinet pick up on some aspects of the preceding oboe solo such as the mordent (b. 69), the initial long note (bb. 69-70), the rhythmic pattern consisting of two semiquavers and a quaver (b. 72), and the general modal inflection of the music. The note values lengthen in the wind as the quaver ostinato is again maintained by the harp.

The reprise of the A section begins at b. 93 and proceeds unaltered, apart from the omission of the repeats, right the way through until b. 122. At this point the accidental Bb is introduced resulting in a brief deviation to the subdominant (F major) at b. 126 before two cadential bars bring the work to a close.



First Movement – Bartok Concerto for Orchestra

In 1940 Bartók moved to America where, despite his failing health, the works of his last years represent a return to a more melodic and tonal style. He composed his Concerto for Orchestra between 15 August and 8 October 1943 in response to a commission from Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the work received its first performance on 1 December 1944. The composer's programme notes give an important insight into his conception of the work:

"The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat the single orchestral instruments in a 'concertant' or soloistic manner." The 'virtuoso' treatment appears, for instance, in the fugato sections of the development of the first movement (brass instruments).

Elements of Bartók's mature style, which are evident in the Concerto for Orchestra, include:

- Flexible rhythms
- Modes or scales derived from folk music
- Small melodic cells based around certain pitches or intervals
- "Night-music" passages
- Contrast between tonal and dissonant passages
- Imaginative use of orchestral colour

The first movement begins with an introduction (Andante non troppo) which has the mysterious air of Bartók's "night-music". This is the term used to describe passages (another comparable example would be the central section of the slow movement

of the Third Piano Concerto) where Bartók tries to imitate the sounds of the night. It opens with a pentatonic theme (n.b. the influence of folk music) in the cellos and double basses featuring perfect fourths and whole-tones.

Ex. 1: Cellos (bb. 1-6)

This is followed by an eerie tremolando on muted upper strings - the use of sul ponticello (on the bridge) in the violas adds a particularly strange timbre - which becomes a dissonant cluster around the note C. The cello and double bass phrase recurs and is extended at b. 12 and again at b. 22. The next significant motif emerges in the flute at b. 30. Like many of Bartók's melodies, it circles around a few central pitches.

Ex. 2: Flute 1 (bb. 30-33)

A diminution of the fourths motif, over an E pedal in the form of a timpani roll, begins at b. 35 while the trumpets at b. 39 develop the music of b. 30 (initially by inversion). This process continues in the flutes, oboes and violins at b. 51 with the addition of octaves, parallel thirds and a scalic extension. At b. 58 a scalic ostinato pattern is introduced which subsequently becomes the first bar of the main Allegro vivace section. This motif is also typical of Bartók in that it is contained within the space of the tritone (augmented fourth) which is also evident between the timpani, horns and trumpets.

Ex. 3: Cellos (b. 58)

Combined with a crescendo, accelerando and increase in orchestration, this drives the music towards b. 76. The musical material presented so far is of great importance as it provides the intervallic motifs which pervade the work's first movement and also because it has strong cyclic links with the third movement, *Elegia*.

The principal theme of the Allegro vivace is a good example of Bartók's compositional technique as it represents a fusion of two seminal motifs (both derived from the introduction): the scale enclosed within the tritone (b. 76) is a diminution of the ostinato figure from b. 58 and the rising fourths (bb. 77-78) are a diminution of b. 1. This version of the scale is of particular interest as comprises a series of pitches favoured by Bartók known as the octatonic scale which features alternate whole-tones and semitones. This material is immediately inverted (bb. 79-81) and other noteworthy features at this point are the changing metre and the way in which the melody is underpinned with diatonic triads giving the definite impression that F minor is the tonal centre.

Ex. 4: Violin 1 (bb. 76-81)

The fourths are developed further until b. 95 where the music feels more relaxed due to the use of the Aeolian mode (a C pedal lends tonal stability), the presence of thirds as melodic intervals and the doubling of the melody in parallel sixths (b. 110).

After a brief reference to b. 76 in the woodwind at b. 123, what seems at first to be a new theme appears in the trombone at b. 134. It is, however, based on the same perfect fourths which opened the movement (apart from the fact that one of the fourths has been filled in to form a scale) and is given tonal stability by the underlying C# pedal point.

Ex. 5: Trombone 1 (bb. 134-141)

A drone fifth (C - G) begins at b. 149 but then moves down a semitone at b. 155 where a pastoral interlude ensues. This consists of an apparently simple oboe theme based around an initial whole-tone whose dotted rhythm harks back to the opening of the Allegro vivace (b. 77 in particular).

Ex. 6: Oboe 1 (bb. 154-158)

This whole theme is repeated by the clarinets, in octaves, at b. 175 and then the whole-tone is developed at b. 192 in simultaneous descending sequence (flutes) and augmentation (clarinets and harp). Further transformation of this material, especially the dotted rhythm, provides a transition to the return of the Allegro vivace's principal theme. The restatement of this theme occurs at b. 231 with some alterations: the starting note is Db rather than F; the theme is shared between violins and trumpets and the scalar element, in both its ascending and descending forms, passes through the woodwind. Bartók displays many ingenious contrapuntal techniques in his treatment of this material - take bb. 242-247, for example: the octatonic scale pattern occurs as an ascending sequence in the violins while the violas and cellos enter with the same idea a quaver later producing a canon and stretto; meanwhile the woodwind have an inversion of the same material in a descending sequence. At b. 248 the perfect fourths, both rising and falling, are developed in a canon between second violins and the cellos entering a bar later. The music is propelled forwards by extending this motif upwards in diminution; the introduction of hemiola in the wind at bb. 265-268 while the strings have entries of the fourths motif in stretto.

The perfect fourth also forms the basis of the clarinet melody which commences another quiet interlude at b. 272.

Ex. 7: Clarinet 1 (bb. 272-277)

This is taken up by the cor anglais at b. 288 and then fragmented and imitated through the woodwind with augmentation occurring in the bass clarinet. At b. 313, however, the main (scalar) theme returns combined with the fourths theme from b. 134 which is immediately used fugally in the trombones and trumpets. The inversion of this motif in the horns at b. 342 is also treated as a fugato (the demonstration of brass virtuosity which Bartók alluded to in his programme notes) and builds to a loud climax based on quartal harmony. This coincides with a shortened restatement of the main Allegro vivace theme (at its original pitch) in b. 386. This sense of recapitulation is reinforced when the first interlude (from b. 154) returns in the solo clarinet at b. 401 and then flutes and oboes at b. 424. An interesting feature of the rhythmic background to this second statement is the superimposition of quadruplet and quintuplet patterns within the prevailing 3/8 metre. The direction to the harpist to play a tremolando effect

with a wooden or metal stick (b. 438) seems to be a deliberate attempt to recreate the sound of the cimbalom (a dulcimer-like Hungarian folk instrument). The distinctly tonal nature of this section is largely due to the predominance of parallel major triads between b. 456 and b. 466. The interval of a whole-tone, which is central to this interlude, remains prominent at b. 467 while the main scalic motif begins to re-emerge from b. 469

A final statement of the principal theme at b. 488 (again at its original pitch) is extended in conjunction with a descending sequence consisting of major and minor arpeggios (bb. 494-509). A final reference to the trombone's fourths theme (b. 514) brings the movement to a close with a disguised perfect cadence in F minor.

This first movement's structure may be summarised as follows:

	Bar	Content
Introduction	1	Descending fourths theme (pentatonic)
	30	Flute theme (semitones)
	58	Scalic motif as ostinato
Exposition	76	Principal theme - scalic motif + fourths (F minor)
	134	Trombone theme (fourths + passing notes)
	149	Episode 1 (whole-tone over B/F# drone)
Development	231	Principal theme (canonic)
	272	Episode 2 (fourths)
	313	Principal theme (fourths in fugato and inversion)
Recapitulation	386	Principal theme (F)
	397	Episode 1 (whole-tone over A/E drone)
	488	Principal theme & trombone theme (F minor)



Bernstein – On the Town Analysis

Bernstein: Three Dance Episodes from *On the Town*

The musical *On the Town* by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) was previewed at the Colonial Theatre, Boston, on December 13th 1944 and opened in New York on the 28th of the same month. Bernstein later made a suite of dances from the show, which was recorded in 1945 and subsequently revised to form the *Three Dance Episodes* which in turn received their first concert performance on February 13th 1946. Like the *Symphonic Dances* from *West Side Story*, which were premiered on 13 February 1961, the *Three Dance Episodes* have achieved a separate life of their own in the concert hall. The dance sections of the original show form an essential part of the action and are in themselves tightly organised as regard their melodic and rhythmic content. The *Three Dance Episodes* attempt to maintain this sense of cohesion in the context of a free-standing orchestral work where the influence of jazz and other popular styles mingles with “serious” compositional techniques (Bernstein was after all a classically trained Harvard graduate).

I - The Great Lover

On the Town describes the adventures of three sailors on a day’s shore leave in New York and each of the *Dance Episodes*, in addition to representing part of the story, is dedicated to someone who was involved in the original production. In *The Great Lover* one of the sailors, Gabey, falls asleep on the subway and imagines himself romancing Ivy Smith, the winner of the monthly “Miss Turnstiles” competition, whose picture has captivated him. The dedicatee of this movement, Sono Osato created the role of “Miss Turnstiles.”

The momentum of the subway train is suggested by the music’s rhythmic drive: fortissimo chords containing semitonal clashes (G/G#, D#/E) on the beat and a strongly accented E pedal (piano, timpani and lower strings) on the off-beats. This is transposed down a major third at b. 7 and a new trombone theme including a flattened seventh enters at b. 11.

Ex. 1: Trombone 1 (bb. 11-15)

This is followed at b. 15 by a busy dotted-rhythm motif (clarinets and violins) whose numerous repetitions over a tonic/dominant vamp and the regular beat provided by the drum kit also seem to simulate the motion of the train. If the syncopated dissonances in the muted trumpets (bb. 16 onwards) are a manifestation of jazz influence, the manipulation of rhythm by subtraction in bb. 21-24 is more typical of Stravinsky.

Ex. 2: Trumpets (bb. 21-24)

The trombone theme from b. 11 reappears at b. 24 and then the dotted rhythm vamp is brought back a third higher in E major (b. 27).

Rhythmic energy derived from syncopation and shifting accents is also a feature of the next idea presented by the woodwind in octaves at b. 33. Although the harmony is basically F major, there are again frequent “blue” notes present such as Ab and Eb.

Ex. 3 Flute (bb. 33-38)

Two aspects of Bernstein’s musical personality are now in evidence: the brass conclusion to this (bb. 39-40) comes straight from swing but the deployment of changing metre in bb. 41- 48 is more akin to Bartók or Stravinsky.

Most of the remainder of this movement consists of repetition or development of motifs which have been heard up to this point:

Bar	Original bar
49	1
56	8
63	15
73	33
81	41
97	49
105	39

The last four bars use syncopation, dotted rhythm and also juxtapose rising parallel triads and a descending bass line to provide an exciting ending.

II - Lonely Town: Pas de deux

The second movement is inscribed “To Betty Comden” who not only collaborated with Adolf Green in writing the lyrics of *On the Town*, but took the part of Claire de Loon in the original Broadway production. The scene is set in Central Park where Gabey watches a young high school girl dance with another sailor.

In terms of tempo, melody and harmony, the inspiration for this music lies in the blues and there is an obvious affinity as regards mood and scoring (clarinets, bass clarinet and solo muted trumpet) with the opening of the slow movement of Gershwin’s Piano Concerto. In the key of D major, parallel compound thirds between first clarinet and bass clarinet are supported by a pedal point in second clarinet and second horn. The jazz influence is evident here in the muted trumpet’s answer with a conspicuous “blue” note, F natural. This solo, and its continuation at b. 7, is based on Gabey’s number *Lonely Town* which precedes this *pas de deux* in the actual show. The accompanying harmonies, which include added major sixths and sevenths and a circle of fifths in b. 11, are also idiomatic of the blues style.

The key changes to E major at b. 12 where parallel D6 and E6 chords are used as an ostinato. The flute and oboe melody, which grows out of the initial major second, becomes more Copland-like in bb. 14-15 as perfect fourths become prominent. There is a particularly “bluesy” chord in b. 16 which, in addition to a G natural, contains simultaneously a major and minor third (C#/Cnatural). As the orchestration and dynamics increase, the key shifts to B major at b. 18 for a presentation of the theme from b. 12 in octaves between upper woodwind (with the added brightness of the Eb clarinet) and strings (with the exception of double basses). The constant syncopation in the accompaniment lends this passage a sense of increasing urgency which leads to the climax of this movement at b. 22. This is yet another transposition of the melody from b. 12 now fully scored and with the chordal ostinato in the brass.

As this subsides, the parallel thirds which opened the movement are brought back in the original key with the cor anglais replacing the muted trumpet. The melody from b. 12 receives a final statement in the last three bars as the dynamic level is progressively reduced.

III Times Square: 1944

The source of this final movement (dedicated to another member of the show’s original cast, Nancy Walker, who played Hildy) is the show’s Act 1 finale in which the sailors gather in New York’s Times Square.

The music is largely based on the *New York, New York* number from the beginning of the act which contains some of the musical’s most memorable themes. Jazz influence is again present in many ways:

- the scoring of the first fourteen bars resembles a traditional jazz band complete with piano, pizzicato double bass and drum kit;
- the melodic outline contains much syncopation and many “blue notes”;
- the solo clarinet (the more penetrating sound of the Eb clarinet) mimics the performance style of jazz in its frequent acciaccaturas and approximation of “swung quavers”;
- the harmonies consist mainly of primary chords in the key of F major with added sixths and sevenths; and
- the trumpets and trombones are directed to play “in hat” i.e. with a “Derby” mute.

The next idea at b. 15 is a passage for full orchestra with a regular crotchet pulse in the lower instruments and complex syncopations in upper brass, woodwind and strings. The initial bar is developed rhythmically and melodically by a process of extension, addition and transposition producing shifting accents and cross rhythms. In bb. 23-25 in particular a three-crotchet pattern is emphasised within the prevailing cut common metre.

Ex. 4: Violin 1 (bb. 15-25)

The key changes to Db major and the *New York, New York* theme is presented in bass clarinet, horns, trombones and lower strings punctuated with syncopated tutti chords.

Ex. 5: Trombones (bb. 26-29)

This is immediately repeated at b. 32 by upper woodwind, violins and trumpets in the key of E major against a three-beat pattern accentuated by the lowest instruments. Descending thirds over an E pedal at b. 42 and a sudden *diminuendo* prepare for the next section.

The change to 6/8 time enhances the swing-like character of the ostinato which is set up in the key of C major at b. 49 over a walking bass. The alto saxophone (its very presence a nod to the world of jazz) enters at b. 54 with a relaxed transformation of the *New York, New York* theme.

Ex. 6: Alto saxophone (bb.54-60)

The violins (doubled an octave lower by the violas) take up this version of the melody at b. 71 and are joined by the trumpet at b. 75. The key changes to Bb major at b. 80 where the trumpet acciaccaturas and trombone *glissandi* imitate the lip “smears” which jazz players might naturally use in such a typically “bluesy” phrase. Fragments of *New York, New York* appear in the woodwind at b. 83 and brass at b. 87 before the key reverts to C major for a full orchestral version of this theme at b. 92.

At b. 101 the lowest instruments have a transformation of *New York, New York* in cut common time while the upper instruments remain in 6/8. An *accelerando* leads into b. 105 where a syncopated motif in woodwind and trumpets is set against a walking bass ostinato. After four bars of *glissandi*, discords and changing metre (bb. 109-112), the syncopated motif returns.

A *presto* begins in Eb major at b. 122 whose energy stems from the driving tonic/dominant ostinato in the strings. Bitonality is created by the repeated descending phrase (doubled by flute, oboe, xylophone and piano) which begins with three notes of the D major triad. This launches headlong into a frantic chase between Eb and Bb clarinets throughout which the accompanying instruments maintain a rhythmic ostinato. In the bars which follow Bernstein, in a similar fashion to the first movement, pieces together and sometimes rescores, elements from the preceding pages:

Bar	Original bar
145	122
154	105
163	122
172	133
186	42

On reaching b. 195, another blues-like vamp is established and triplets are used to try and replicate “swung” rhythm. The trumpet solo (laden with “blue notes”) at b. 197 is a quotation from the Hildy’s number, *Come up to my place*, which was sung in the original Broadway production by Nancy Walker the dedicatee of this movement.

Ex. 7: Trumpet (bb. 197-201)

The melodic links between *Come up to my place* and *New York, New York* are apparent as the key changes to Bb major and the alto saxophone takes over in b. 201.

Bar 211 sees a return to more material from earlier in the movement (b. 15) - albeit in different harmonic and orchestral guise - while *New York, New York* comes back in the woodwind at b. 228 and b. 234. Another example of Stravinskyian rhythmic displacement can be seen in bb. 240-242 before the incisive ostinato related to b. 15 propels the music towards its exhilarating conclusion.

