
Letters to the Editor

From Michael Graubart

I hope you will forgive me if I point out (and take a little further) one aspect of your article on Petrassi (*Tempo* 194), as there is a second part still to come.

The 'cardinal 4-note motif' shown in Ex.2 (a) is not, in fact, 'semitone/minor third/semitone'. Taken as an ordered melodic succession, it is semitone/major third (in the opposite direction)/semitone (direction reversed again). But intervallically it is semitone/major second/semitone: G# - A - B - C.

(major second)

The interesting thing about this is that the motif is half of an octatonic collection – and that the inversion in bar 2 of the example is the other half, so that the two statements of the motif complement each other octatonically. I am not familiar enough with 20th-century Italian music to be sure, but I would have thought that the use of the octatonic scale would have been rare; on the other hand the relation of this with, on the one hand, Russian music in general and Stravinsky in particular, and on the other with Bartók, is suggestive.

Is there something missing from the middle voice in bar 2 of Ex.2 (a)? (I haven't got a score here to look at.) As it stands, the example only has 11 of the 12 notes; B \flat is missing. But with the exception of the initial F (which is a member of the octatonic collection formed by the two statements of the 'cardinal motif'), the notes of the free lowest voice, together with the free last two notes (F#, G) of the middle voice, form 7 notes of a different octatonic collection; if there is a B \flat somewhere, this would be the eighth note of a complete octatonic collection.*

In the other parts of Ex.2 the octatonic relationships are less unambiguous. In (b), the B \flat at the beginning of bar 2 acts as a pivot between two incomplete octatonic collections; in (c) the quavers of one voice belong to the same octatonic collection as the crotchets of the other (and vice versa).

64 Moor End Road
Mellor
Stockport
Cheshire SK6 5PT

From Martin Anderson

In his article on Goffredo Petrassi and his Concertos (*Tempo* 194) Calum MacDonald points to Hindemith's 1925 work as the first in the genre and writes that "The next notable work with that title, if I am not mistaken, is Walter Piston's 1933 Concerto written for the Boston Symphony Orchestra". I fear he does err: Vagn Holmboe's *Concerto for Orchestra* dates from 1929 and his *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra* from 1931, the year in which Breitkopf & Härtel published the *Concerto for Large Orchestra*, op.43, by Adolph Busch. Mr MacDonald wrote that "I know of no study that indagates [there's a word I had to look up] the origins of the "Concerto for Orchestra"". I suspect that a bit of indagation of Adolph Busch's music would reveal some astonishing riches.

11 rue de l'Arc de Triomphe
75017 Paris

* Calum MacDonald's apologies: 'minor' for 'major' was an uncaught typo, and Ex.2(a) does indeed show only an 11-note series – B \flat is in fact avoided until bar 6. The second part of his article is not scheduled to appear before the September 1996 issue of *Tempo*.