

The Cello Music of Leo Ornstein

by

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ABSTRACT

In addition to his many other works, Russian-American composer Leo Ornstein (1893-2002) contributed a substantial body of literature for cello and piano, including Sonata No. 1 (1915-1916), Sonata No. 2 (circa 1920), Composition No. 1 (date unknown), Two Pieces (date unknown), and Six Preludes (1930-1931). His cello music is an eclectic mix of twentieth-century Neoromantic and atonal styles.

This study includes a recording of the complete works for cello and piano by Leo Ornstein and a description of the music that details the formal procedures and how the cello and piano relate to one another. The discussion offers extensive musical examples in support of the descriptions.

The recording was completed at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada (October 2009), with R. Nicolas Alvarez, cello, in collaboration with pianist Keith Kirchoff. Andre Shrimski produced and edited the recording.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Rudy and Sylvia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This document and accompanying recording have been possible thanks to the help and support of many people:

Tom, thank you for being my mentor and believing in my abilities. I am the cellist I am today because of you. Dr. Holbrook, thank you for giving so much of your time to guide me through the process of writing this document. Keith, the journey we went on to complete this recording was immense and at times rocky, but was the most rewarding musical experience of my life – thank you! Paul, thank you for pushing me to finish this and selflessly giving of your time to type-set the musical examples. Severo, thank you for opening up your home to warmly host a recital of your father's music and for allowing me to use the musical examples in the text. Thank you to my former teachers, John Sharp, Carter Enyeart and Claudia Encarnacion for being role models and inspiring me to be a professional musician. Finally, thank you to Mom and Dad for all the love and support. I reached this point because of you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING LEO ORNSTEIN

Born the son of a Synagogue cantor in 1893 in the town of Kremenchug, Russia, Leo Ornstein has been called “the most notorious musician on the American Arts Scene (between 1915 and 1920).”¹ Recognized as a child prodigy by his brother-in-law, he soon began studies at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.² The Russian Revolution of 1905 forced the Ornsteins to flee because of religious persecution and the family settled on the lower east side of New York City.³

Ornstein soon enrolled at the Institute of Musical Art (which later became the Juilliard School), where he studied piano with and was mentored by Bertha Fiering Tapper. His debut recital in America took place in 1911; he played standard works by Bach, Beethoven, and Anton Rubenstein.⁴ In 1910 and again in 1914 he toured Europe, performing some of his own music, making contacts and hoping to soon return there. The outbreak of war on the Continent prevented this, however, and as a result his career unfolded exclusively on the North American side of the Atlantic.⁵

With a series of concerts at the Bandbox Theater in New York City in 1915 (the same year he married Pauline Mallet-Provost), Ornstein introduced American audiences to such works as Ravel’s *Gaspard de la nuit* and Schoenberg’s *Drei Stücke*, Op. 11, alongside his own music.⁶ He became a celebrity and was labeled a futurist because many of his early works were experimental for the time. One prominent contemporary critic, Paul Rosenfeld, wrote in a 1916 *New Republic* article: “Ravel, Scriabin and

¹ Michael Broyles and Denise Von Glahn, *Leo Ornstein: Modernist Dilemmas, Personal Choices* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), xiii.

² *Ibid.*, 8.

³ Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920’s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11.

⁴ Vivian Perlis and Libby Van Cleve, *Composers’ Voices from Ives to Ellington: An Oral History of American Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 71.

⁵ Broyles and Von Glahn, 47, 50.

⁶ Perlis and Van Cleve, 74

Strawinsky are well on the road to becoming classics; Schoenberg is already a trifle *vieux jeu*. Ornstein alone continues to represent to the critics the composer who delights in ugliness for its own sake, and to the public the grand comic figure it demands the ultra-modern composer to be.”⁷ This attitude from critics and the public may have been one of the reasons Ornstein withdrew from public life around 1920. According to Perlis and Van Cleve, Ornstein made the decision to leave a performance career in order to compose what he wanted, rather than what promoters and audience members expected from him.⁸

In an interview with Terence O’Grady that appeared in *Perspectives of New Music* in 1984, Ornstein corroborates what Perlis and Van Cleve claimed. O’Grady asks Ornstein if he withdrew from public life as a composer because of the “audiences clamoring for novelty,” or because he had “exhausted the style” in which he had “gained so much notoriety.” His reply was,

I suppose it's a bit of both. Perhaps it was to some extent the demand of just creating more novelty, and I became, as I grew older, much more involved in other matters in music than novelty. Substance was really becoming very much more important to me. And the externals, how I transferred that substance, meant much less to me. That's why I'm not excited at all whether the style is particularly nouveau or whether it's actually old classical style. It doesn't bother me at all because it's the intrinsic value of the piece that now counts. That's the thing that I'm really concerned with now.⁹

This certainly begins to explain the body of material Ornstein wrote for the cello. The existing music is an eclectic mix of Ornstein’s two styles—radical and conservative, but on a whole tends to the conservative.

⁷ Paul Rosenfeld, “Ornstein.” *The New Republic* (May 27, 1916): 83.

⁸ Perlis and Van Cleve, 75.

⁹ Terence J. O’Grady and Leo Ornstein, “A Conversation with Leo Ornstein.” *Perspectives of New Music* 23, no.1 (Autumn - Winter, 1984):131-132, *Perspectives of New Music*. <http://jstor.org/stable/832908>. (accessed January 31, 2010)

Severo Ornstein publishes all of his father's scores that are available on the website, www.poonhill.com, each labeled with an S #. In the overview, he explains that of all the works that had previously been published by various publishers, including Schirmer, Schott, Hansen, Breitkopf, Fischer, Boston Music Co., Elkan-Vogel, and General Music Inc., are now out of print, and so his are, in fact, the only published scores available presently.¹⁰ In the appendix of their book, Broyles and Von Glahn include a catalog of compositions that lists all pieces known.¹¹ The following is the list of cello works that they include: Cello Sonata No. 1, Op. 52, dated 1915-1916, S#612, originally published by Fischer in 1918; Cello Sonata No. 2, circa 1920, S#613; Cello Sonatina, dated before 1918, (no s#, therefore not available); Composition No. 36 (also known as Composition No. 1¹²), date unknown, S#619; Five Pieces, Op. 75, dated before 1918 (no S#, therefore not available); Russian Lament, dated 1922 or before (no S#, therefore not available); Two Pieces, Op. 33, Nos. 1 and 2, date unknown, S#620; and Six Preludes for Cello and Piano, 1930-1931, S#611.

The following chapters provide descriptions of the music detailing formal procedures and illustrating how the cello and piano relate to each other. Composition No. 1 is the subject of Chapter 2. In relation to the other works, this piece is the least complex, with the cello playing passionate melodies while the piano accompanies. Chapter 3 focuses on Sonata No. 1. Compared to all of Ornstein's cello music, this sonata is the most conventional in terms of its formal structure—it is in the only work that loosely follows the form of a Romantic sonata. Chapter 4 details Sonata No. 2, which is a long, one-movement composition, very different from its predecessor in its freeform

¹⁰ Ornstein, Severo. "Scores." Severo Ornstein.

http://poonhill.com/list_of_works.htm (accessed July 5, 2012)

¹¹ Broyles, Michael, and Denise Von Glahn. *Leo Ornstein: Modernist Dilemmas, Personal Choices*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

¹² Broyles, Von Glahn.
Severo Ornstein

structure. Two Pieces, Op. 33, follows in Chapter 5. These pieces are unique because they are atonal and rather fleeting, and they provide a distinct contrast to all the others. Finally, the Six Preludes, possibly his last work for cello and piano, is described in Chapter 6. These preludes are remarkable because each exudes its own exceptional character, and as a whole they show Ornstein's extraordinary ability to blend the sound of the two instruments into one.

CHAPTER 2

COMPOSTION NO. 1

The date of genesis for Composition No. 1, also known as Composition No. 36 (published as Composition No. 1), is unknown.¹³ The work is a one-movement piece, creating a solemn and prayerful mood. In contrast to the majority of works for cello and piano by Ornstein in which the cello and piano are equal partners, the cello plays the dominant role here while the piano accompanies. Ornstein writes almost no expressive markings or dynamics, so almost all is left up to the performers. The piece is structured in two parts distinguished by two different key areas; melodically, it is very homogeneous.

The first section begins with an introduction from the piano before the song-like cello melody begins in m. 4. As shown in Example 1, the piano settles into a gently swaying ostinato rhythm while the cello unfolds a long, elaborate melody. The tonality is clearly that of G minor, and the cello's augmented seconds between F-sharp and E-flat add an exotic flavor.

¹³ Severo Ornstein. "List of Works." Severo Ornstein.http://poonhill.com/list_of_works.htm (accessed January 25, 2010)
Broyles, Michael, Von Glahn.

The image shows a musical score for Example 1, consisting of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 1 through 5, and the second system covers measures 6 through 9. The music is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The upper staff is for the cello, and the lower staves are for the piano. The piano accompaniment features a consistent rhythmic pattern of half-note chords in the bass and eighth-note chords in the treble. The cello melody begins with a series of eighth notes, followed by a more melodic line with some triplets and arch-shaped motifs.

[Example 1: Composition 1, mm. 1-9]

From m. 16, the cello melody changes and is now marked by ascending leaps and descending skips to form one-measure arch-shaped motives, all the while keeping the embellishments and augmented seconds. The repeated rhythm in the piano accompaniment remains the same. Example 2 shows how the melody becomes even more expressive and embellished beginning at m. 24 with eighth-note triplet figures in the cello, which soon become sixteenth-note ornaments in m. 26 and sixteenth-note triplets in m. 30. Meanwhile, the piano accompaniment continues with half-note chords in the bass and adds constant eighth-note chords in the treble.

The image displays a musical score for Example 2, consisting of three systems of staves. Each system includes a single treble clef staff (likely for Cello) and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for piano accompaniment. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat). Measure numbers 22, 26, and 29 are circled at the beginning of their respective systems. The first system (measures 22-25) features a cello melody with triplet markings and a piano accompaniment of chords. The second system (measures 26-28) shows a cello melody with a descending line and a piano accompaniment of chords. The third system (measures 29-31) continues the cello melody and piano accompaniment. A small number '3' is visible at the end of the second system.

[Example 2: Composition 1, mm. 22-31]

Similar melodic figures continue until m. 40 where the key signature changes to four flats and the piano accompaniment becomes a right-hand ostinato over a slowly descending bass line (Example 3). This section, mm. 40-49, is a transition to the return of the first cello melody at m. 50. During the transition, the cello rises to a peak in m. 43 and then descends over three measures to a low F that matches the bass of the piano.

[Example 3: Composition 1, mm. 41-49]

Ornstein returns to the original melodic material at m. 50, this time transposed down a step. The music from mm. 50-69 is identical to that of mm. 6-23 with the exception of the transposition. Composition 1 begins to wind down beginning at m. 73 as the cello plays a final, repetitive melody against descending half-note chords over a B-flat pedal in the piano. The piece ends on a long, sustained chord that makes for a very tentative ending; the B-flat in the bass is harmonized as an E-flat-minor 6/4 with an added C.

CHAPTER 3

SONATA NO. 1, OP. 52

Of the Sonata No. 1 for Violoncello and Piano (1915-1916), Op. 52, John C. Freund says, “Dedicated to Hans Kindler, this sonata for ‘cello is one of those tours de force for pianist and bowman of which the flippantly termed ‘Wallpaper’ Sonata for violin and piano by Ornstein is another example. Examination shows that a goodly proportion of peculiar and yet (when played by the composer himself) so often compelling and illuminating effects are evident in the score.”¹⁴ The work is also very romantic in nature, especially when compared to Two Pieces, Op. 33. The “effects” that Freund speaks of include Ornstein’s signature tone clusters and lush harmonies, sections in which the listener can find it difficult to distinguish the cello from the piano and vice versa, and piano ostinatos that create a background for long cello lines. There are moments when the sound of the two instruments is just a “sound,” as if produced by one instrument. The violin sonata that Freund writes of could be one of two, Op. 26, or Op. 31 both written in 1915.

Ornstein shared a close friendship with Hans Kindler, who was principal cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1914 to 1931. They often performed together, including a concert in 1922 at the Ballroom Bellevue-Stratford, Musicales, in Philadelphia, which may have included Op. 52.¹⁵ As part of a revival of Ornstein’s music in the 1970s headed by Vivian Perlis, Pauline Ornstein, Peter Ornstein, and Severo Ornstein, Op. 52 was performed along with the *Six Preludes* by cellist Paul Olefsky at the “Northfield Mount Herman chamber Music Workshop and Festival” on August 4, 1972.¹⁶ The first recording

¹⁴ John C. Freund. “New Music vocal and instrumental: Sonata for Violoncello by Leo Ornstein, op. 52.” *Musical America* 29, no. 18 (March 1, 1919). text-fiche.

¹⁵ Broyles and Von Glahn, 190 .

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 253-254.

of the work is a 1975 LP with cellist Bonnie Hampton and pianist Nathan Schwartz that also included three of the cello Preludes.¹⁷

The first movement, *Allegro appassionato*, has the tempo marking “*circa* ♩ = 84-88,” and is broken up into a series of thematic groups loosely in sonata form. Unlike some of his other works for cello and piano, Ornstein is very detailed with expressive and dynamic markings, possibly due to his collaboration with Kindler. The opening theme is heroic and bold and shared between the two instruments. The cello starts out with a pointed dotted rhythm while the piano plays thick sixteenth-note triplets (Example 4). For most of the theme, they are in rhythmic unison and the piano is often doubled in minor seconds creating striking dissonances that add to the boldness. The cello rises in pitch to a peak in m. 4, then falls. Starting with the *subito piano* in m. 3, the two instruments steadily increase in dynamic through the end of this theme in m. 8, where it segues with a *poco ritardando* into the next section. Overall, this passage illustrates how Ornstein makes the cello and piano work together to form a unified sound.

¹⁷ Leo Ornstein, Sonata for Cello & Piano, 3 Preludes, Bonnie Hampton, Nathan Schwartz, Orion ORS 76211, LP, 1975

Allegro appassionato
circa ♩ = 84 - 88

LEO ORNSTEIN, Op. 52

Violoncello

Piano

Allegro appassionato

2

4

sfz

crescendo

mf

subito p

crescendo

mf

[Example 4: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 1-5]

This new section, mm. 9-26, is marked *Andante*, and the meter changes from 4/4 to 3/4. Adding to the contrast, the key signature changes to four sharps, and a reiteration of C-sharp/G-sharp in the bass anchors C-sharp as a tonal center (Example 5). Prevalingly diatonic, the melodies in the cello and the piano sound modal, and the passage overall is a respite from the loud, vigorous opening theme.

9 Andante

mp Andante *più p*

legato p *più p*

[Example 5, Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 9-13]

There are dramatic dynamic changes throughout the *Andante*. For example, m. 19 is marked *f molto crescendo*, followed by a *diminuendo* in m. 20 to *mp* by m. 21 (Example 6). These dynamic surges help to reinforce the romantic feel of this portion of the sonata.

19

f molto crescendo *mp*

f molto crescendo *mp*

[Example 6, Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 19-21]

With a change of key signature to four flats, at m. 27, a new section, *Andante, ma appassionato*, begins. Here the cello plays an excessively sentimental melody in the middle register using long, sustained notes, eighth notes, and quarter notes, and moving in such a way that it reaches several pauses on descending seconds, resembling “sighs” (Example 7, mm. 32 and 34). The piano accompanies with flowing sixteenth notes in the right hand and its own melody in the middle.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for measures 31-34. The top system (measures 31-32) features a cello line (labeled 'Ila') with a dynamic of *f* and a piano accompaniment with a dynamic of *mf*. The bottom system (measures 33-34) features a cello line with a dynamic of *più f* and a piano accompaniment with a dynamic of *più f*. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand line with triplet eighth notes and a left-hand line with quarter notes. The key signature is three flats and the time signature is 3/4.

[Example 7: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 31-34]

With another abrupt change, a *fortissimo sempre* piano interlude takes place in mm. 39-46 with a waltz-like melody, *più mosso*, accompanied by triplets against eighth notes. The interlude slows, *mp molto diminuendo e ritardando*, before the re-entrance of the cello in m. 47.

Ornstein writes *solo* above the cello's re-entrance, indicating its importance (Example 8). Here, the cello plays its own waltz-like tune, accompanied by quarter-note chords in the left hand of the piano and triplet figures in the right.

47 *poco più mosso*
Solo
mp
poco più mosso
mp

[Example 8: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 47-49]

The cello solo ends on a high, sustained note, *fortissimo*, which diminuendos into the start of a new section, *alla marcia*, at m. 59 (Example 9). The piano accompaniment in this section consists of percussive, *staccato* eighth notes, which emulate a military march and reinforce the *alla marcia* character despite the 3/4 time signature. The march rhythm is punctuated with sixteenth-note triplets in both instruments.

59 *alla marcia*
mf
alla marcia
mf
sffz

[Example 9: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 59-61]

In m. 67, the piano accompaniment begins to incorporate sixteenth notes while the cello continues its melody in the high register. An ascending sequence of eighth notes, *crescendo*, takes shape in m. 69 reaching a peak on a high note in the cello in m. 70, *forte*.

At m. 75, marked *forte, poco a poco più animato*, the *alla marcia* section intensifies with triplet figures in both the cello and the piano. It reaches a *fortissimo molto crescendo* in m. 78 and a *fff* in m. 79, and with a *molto ritardando* the end of the *alla marcia* leads into a return of the opening thematic material in m. 80 (Example 10). Overall, the *alla marcia*, mm. 59-79, is comparable to a sonata form development.

The image displays a musical score for two staves, likely cello and piano. The first staff (top) is in treble clef, and the second staff (bottom) is in bass clef. Measure 79 is marked with a 2/4 time signature, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and dynamics including *molto rit.* and *fff*. It features triplet figures in both staves. Measure 80 is marked with a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and dynamics including *f* and *Tempo I^{mo}*. It shows the return of the opening thematic material.

[Example 10: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 79-80]

The return, *Tempo I^{mo}*, m. 80, is very much like the recapitulation of a romantic sonata. The vigorous opening theme is brought back in mm. 80-87. The *Andante*, mm. 88-103, is almost identical to the *Andante* in mm. 9-26, but its ending is modified because the sentimental cello melody that follows does not change keys, as it did the first time (also similar to a sonata-form recapitulation).

The section with this returning cello melody, mm. 104-115, is similar to the *Andante, ma appassionato*, but is not marked as such, and it remains in four sharps.

The piano interlude returns in m. 116, this time with the cello playing rising eighth notes, first in the low register, then in the high, mm. 116-124, (Example 11).

The image displays a musical score for measures 116-121. The score is written for a cello and piano. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The cello part (top staff) begins at measure 116 with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) features a *ff sempre* dynamic and includes several triplet markings. A first ending bracket labeled *8va* spans measures 119-121. The piano part continues with a *ff* dynamic throughout the passage.

[Example 11: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 116-121]

The piano interlude continues without the cello, mm. 125-127, *forte crescendo* leading to a *fortissimo, molto sostenuto ed appassionato* at the re-entrance of the cello in m. 128. Here, mm. 128-136, the cello becomes recitative-like and rhapsodic, incorporating sixteenth-note quintuplets with *crescendi* to sustained notes and dramatic pauses. The piano accompanies with sustained chords and *marcato* quarter notes and reinforces the first sustained cello note in m. 131 with a *sffz* chord. The piano continues with loud

chords arpeggiated into the downbeats during the cello's dramatic pauses (Example 12). The two instruments come to an operatic break, including a measure of silence, in mm. 136-137.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system, labeled '132', shows a cello staff and a piano staff. The cello staff begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line marked *ff*. The piano staff features arpeggiated chords, also marked *ff*. The second system, labeled '134', continues the cello and piano parts. The cello staff has a stepwise melody marked *p* and *ff sempre*, with a dynamic change to *sfffz*. The piano staff has a *crescendo* leading to *ff sempre* and *sfffz*. A first ending bracket labeled '1' is shown at the end of the piano staff in measure 134.

[Example 12: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 132-137]

When the drama clears, the music calms, with an *Andante*, mm. 138-153, which begins with a *pianissimo* stepwise melody in the treble of the piano and a tranquil, sustained melody in the cello accompanied by sustained chords in the lower voices of the piano (Example 13). The percussive arpeggios of the previous passage are turned into gentle sweeps.

144

III^a II^a I^a

mf *mf*

L.H. R.H. L.H.

149

p *poco a poco dim.* *rit.* 8^{va}

p *poco a poco dim.* *rit.*

[Example 13: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 144-153]

With a *diminuendo* and a *ritardando* in m. 53, the *Andante* moves seamlessly into a *tranquillo*, m. 154, where a soft, serene melody in the cello reminiscent of the opening theme of the movement is accompanied by gentle, arpeggiated, sixteenth-note sextuplets in the piano. This melody begins to grow in intensity in m. 158, indicated by a *poco a poco crescendo*, and reaches a *forte* on an accented sixteenth-note turn figure, m. 161. Ornstein brings back this figure three more times, each one at a lower dynamic and with a drop in register. The movement comes to a close with a long sustained B while the piano continues its arpeggios and finally settles on a long B-minor triad, *ppp*.

The second movement, *Andante sostenuto*, in 3/4, begins with a low, meditative, and mysterious melody, *pianissimo dolce, con sordino*, in the cello accompanied by *ppp*,

dolce sustained notes in the piano's bass (Example 14). The treble of the piano contains an eighth-note rhythmic ostinato moving down by step, each time starting on the second half of beat one, adding to the walking *Andante* feel.

The image shows a musical score for Violoncello and Piano. The Violoncello part is written in bass clef, 3/4 time, with a tempo marking of 'Andante sostenuto' and dynamics of 'con sordino', 'pp', and 'dolce'. The Piano part is written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs), also marked 'Andante sostenuto' and 'ppp dolce'. The piano part features a rhythmic ostinato in the right hand and sustained bass notes in the left hand.

[Example 14: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 1-2]

The cello melody, which continues to grow, will occupy the entire movement, constantly unfolding against variations of the opening ostinato in the piano. The first phrase, mm. 1-9, is in F Phrygian over an F pedal in the piano. The melody's return to F in m. 9 through the augmented second A to G-flat is a colorful touch. A restatement of the melody begins in m. 9, and with a different continuation it returns to F in m. 15. From here, more emphatic than mysterious now, the cello melody rises in pitch and dynamic as the piano's bass notes move off of F, to E-flat, G-flat, and eventually B-flat. The cello reaches a forte peak in m. 25 (Example 15), then descends in pitch and volume all the way to its lowest C in m. 32.

[Example 15: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 24-26]

A contrasting middle section, mm. 33-52, changes meter to 4/8 and is marked *un poco animato*, *pianissimo* in the cello and *ppp sempre* in the piano. Despite the soft dynamic marking, the cello is now *senza sordino*. A variation of the ostinato accompaniment materializes in the piano, which continues to strike a sustained chord on each downbeat. The plodding eighths in the treble become sixteenth-note triplets with secundal chords (Example 16). The dissonances add splashes of color to complement the new cello melody, which alternates between sixteenth-note triplets and sixteenth notes while progressively ascending in pitch and volume.

[Example 16: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 33-34]

As the melody progresses, the volume continues to build, *poco a poco crescendo*, and makes way for several small climaxes indicated by thirty-second-note triplets accentuating the downbeats. No longer mysterious, but angry now, the first two of these crests are marked *con forza* in mm. 42-43, while the accompaniment remains relatively unchanged.

The section eventually reaches *fortissimo* in m. 49 (Example 17). The cello revisits its peak twice (m. 50 and m. 51) before falling. The tempo quickly slows down in m. 52, *molto ritardando*, and the middle section ends with a fermata over a variant of f: V⁹, preparing a return of the F Phrygian melody in the next measure.

The image displays a musical score for Example 17, covering measures 49 to 52. The score is written for piano and cello. The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of three flats and a 4/4 time signature. It features a series of cluster chords, with an 8va marking indicating an octave shift. The dynamics are marked as *ff* (fortissimo) and *accel.* (accelerando). The cello part is shown in a single staff with a 4/4 time signature, featuring triplet patterns and an 8va marking. The dynamics are marked as *rit.* (ritardando) and *molto rit.* (molto ritardando). The score concludes with a section marked *IIIa* in 3/4 time.

[Example 17: Sonata No. 1, mvt.2, mm. 49-52]

The opening section returns in m. 53, *Tempo Im^o*, this time with the piano's eighth-note ostinato expanded into gentle sixteenth notes beginning on the second sixteenth of each beat, *pianissimo*. The section brings back the same peaks as before, but, at greater intensity in both pitch and dynamic level as foreshadowed by the cello melody's beginning an octave higher than before. The cello reaches a high E-flat in m. 61 at *forte* and essentially sustains it for eight measures, moving above and below it in a pentatonic scale pattern that contrasts with the cluster chords in the piano. The last approach to E-flat in m. 67, reaches *fff* (Example 18). The section's biggest moment is in m. 69, marked *ffff* and "large" in the cello part. This is the most passionate peak in the

entire movement. Although not indicated, it is implied by the *Tempo Imo* marking in m. 71 that the performers should slow down leading into this climax.

[Example 18: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 67-70]

The *Tempo Imo* begins *mezzo forte*, significantly softer than the climax, and winds the movement down. The piano accompaniment continues with its sixteenth-note rhythmic ostinato and sustained chords while the cello reiterates a slow, three-note figure and ends on a long B-flat, *smorzando*. The piano's last chord, with B-flat in the bass, is softer than anywhere else in the movement, *pppp*, although it contains sixteenth notes.

The third movement, a *Scherzo*, is in ABA form, *Vivo, ma non troppo*. The A sections are themselves in *aba* form. It begins with a two-measure cello solo in 9/8,

forte, then *diminuendo*, *ritardando* (Example 19). These two measures set up an important rhythmic idea for the movement of an eighth-note, sixteenth-rest, sixteenth-note, eighth-note grouping that occurs at the start of every phrase in the A section. Although this rhythm is associated with 9/8, the meter is obscured by the ties in the introduction and does not become clear until after the piano enters.

Scherzo
Vivo, ma non troppo

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Violoncello and Piano. The Violoncello part is written in a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 9/8. It begins with a forte (f) dynamic and a tempo marking of 'Vivo, ma non troppo'. The melody consists of eighth-note, sixteenth-note, and eighth-note groupings. A 'rit.' (ritardando) marking is present towards the end of the first measure. The Piano part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 3/4. It begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a tempo marking of 'Vivo, ma non troppo'. The piano part features a counter melody with plained harmonization in the left hand and a fast, stepwise thirty-second note line in the right hand.

[Example 19: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 1-2]

The cello continues this figure in the form of a fiery melody beginning in the low register in m. 3 where the piano, in 3/4, *pianissimo*, plays fast, stepwise thirty-second notes in the right hand and a counter melody with plained harmonization in the left hand. This soft accompaniment provides an active background for the cello's *mezzo forte*, *marcato* line (Example 20). The section continues in similar fashion with swells in dynamic levels and octave shifts in the melody until m. 15.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system, labeled '3', features a cello line in 9/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time. The cello part is marked 'mf marcato' and 'a tempo'. The piano part is marked 'pp' and 'a tempo'. The second system, labeled '4', continues the piano accompaniment with an '8va' marking above the bass staff. The piano part continues with a similar texture, and the cello part continues with the same 9/8 rhythm.

[Example 20: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 3-4]

The section relaxes in m. 11 when the piano changes to arpeggiations in the left hand supporting a romantic right-hand melody. The cello for four measures continues its 9/8 scherzo rhythms, then joins the style of the piano in m. 15. Quickly going from *f* (m.15) to *ff* (m. 17) to *fff* (m. 21), this lush, impassioned episode abruptly returns to the opening idea at m. 23.

The *Tempo I^{mo}* here returns to the beginning of the *Scherzo*. It contains many of the same dynamic swells as before and rounds off the *aba* design of the A section. The thirty-second notes of the piano continue to the end, with only a *molto diminuendo* and a *molto ritardando* to put on the brakes before the B section begins.

The B section, *Andante misterioso*, mm. 35-51, is chant-like and plaintive. The cello and piano are in rhythmic unison beginning *pianissimo*, *molto tranquillo*, *egualmente*, emphasizing that the notes are to be played precisely together and

describing how delicate the texture is here (Example 21). The “chant” begins with a two-measure phrase reiterating a single pitch in the cello, supported with parallel seventh chords in the piano. The next two measures, mm. 37-38, reiterate the first phrase but more elaborately. From here the “chant” grows in dynamic level to a *mezzo forte* in m. 43. before quieting down to *pianissimo* in m. 49. The cello is anchored to the pitch B, which is surrounded by A [B] C D. The repeated half-step approaches to B from C suggest Phrygian mode, and in mm. 43-46 this tetrachord is transposed to E Phrygian, with heightened expression. The return in m. 47-49 of the B tetrachord closes this section, *pianissimo*.

Andante misterioso
egualmente

35

pp

Andante misterioso

pp egualmente

37

ppp

ppp

[Example 21: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 35-38]

Measures 50-51 are a retransition to the return of the A section. These measures bring back the opening figure, but still at a slow pace, *meno mosso*, *ma non troppo*, after the *Andante* tempo. The A section returns in m. 52 at the *Tempo Imo* and is largely the same as the first A section. In this formal structure, Ornstein is following the convention

for a scherzo movement. The return of A parallels the first A right up to the end, where the *molto ritardando* that prepared the B section now ends the movement, *ppp*.

Movement four is grouped into sections, including a return of the first section at the end. It begins *Moderato (con moto)*, in 6/8. The cello plays an animated *mezzo piano* melody whose 6/8 swing is enhanced with syncopations and groups of sixteenth notes (Example 22). The piano accompanies with sixteenth-note arpeggiations splashed with tone clusters. As in other movements of this sonata, the piano consists largely of rhythmic ostinatos that serve as background for long cello melodies.

Moderato (*con moto*) ♩ = 72

Violoncello

mp

Moderato (*con moto*)

Piano

mp

[Example 22: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, mm. 1-4]

The cello melody begins again in m. 5, *poco più forte* and transposed up an augmented second. The line rises to a high point in m. 9, then falls two octaves and rises again, to a new peak on C in m. 13. For the remainder of this section, the cello becomes more emphatic with the addition of a mordent figure on most of its downbeats.

The next section, *meno mosso, fortissimo appassionato*, brings a change in the piano part. Up until this point, it had been mainly accompaniment, but now its treble takes on a lead melodic role, echoing the swinging 6/8 rhythm of the cello while the cello plays a countermelody ascending into the very high register (Example 23). The left hand of the piano remains as accompaniment, but now with arpeggiated, eighth-note quintuplets.

The musical score for Example 23 consists of three staves. The top staff is for the cello, starting at measure 19 with a melodic line in 6/8 time. It features a 'delta va' marking and a dashed line indicating an ascending range. The middle staff is for the piano right hand, also in 6/8 time, with a lead melodic line marked 'ff appassionato' and 'meno mosso'. The bottom staff is for the piano left hand, featuring arpeggiated eighth-note quintuplets marked with 's'.

[Example 23: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, mm. 19-21]

The music moves passionately through loud and soft dynamics and flexible tempos, reaching a resounding *fff*, m. 24, then *mezzo forte*, m. 25, and swinging to another *fff* in the very next measure, m. 26, while slowing down with a *ritardando*. The music picks up quickly, *a tempo*, m. 27, *mezzo piano*. After another steady *poco a poco crescendo*, m. 28, the music comes to an additional *ritardando*, this time *crescendo, fortissimo*. These ups and downs and fluctuations demonstrate the highly romantic character of this section in particular and of the sonata as a whole.

The following section, *meno mosso amabile*, m. 31, brings the tempo down to a slower pace. The piano reverts to accompaniment here with parallel pentatonic chords arpeggiated in thirty-second notes. Against this impressionistic background, the cello plays an expressive melody bringing back the stepwise sixteenth notes from before.

In m. 44, *fortissimo*, *molto appassionato e sostenuto*, the opening theme from the second movement returns in the high register of the cello but in triplet figures instead of dotted rhythms (Example 24). The piano's background figuration resembles its first in this movement, but with bigger clusters and more emphatic rhythm. In m. 51 the cello begins a descent, with intermittent ascending leaps, before coming to rest on a sustained note in m. 61.

The image displays a musical score for Example 24, covering measures 44 to 47. It is written in 8/8 time. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 44-45) shows the cello part with a melodic line of dotted rhythms and a piano accompaniment of triplet chords. The second system (measures 46-47) continues the piano accompaniment and shows the cello line descending and ending on a sustained note. Dynamics include *ff* and *sempre f*.

[Example 24: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, mm. 44-47]

There is a *ritardando* in m. 63 leading into m. 64, *più animato*, which brings about a big change in character from slow and lyrical to fast and lively in 8/8. The piano's new figuration consists of a staccato eighth-note sequence in the left hand with fast, fleeting, downward arpeggiations in the right (Example 25). The cello's melody is enlivened with staccato sixteenths.

[Example 25: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, m. 64]

After a rise to *più forte* in m. 69, the accompaniment becomes more intense with thirty-second-note sextuplets reaching high peaks. This frenzied passage culminates in m. 73 with a *ritardando*, *fortissimo*, *crescendo*.

The next section, *Moderato*, m. 74, is explosive, with pounding, *molto marcato* sextuplets, *fff*, in the piano against a *fortissimo sempre*, *con spirito* line in the cello (Example 26). The loud, high sustained note in the cello, mm. 76-77, is the conclusion of this long build-up.

[Example 26: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, mm 74-77]

The intensity drops back in m. 78 as the piano plays a lush melodic line, *molto tranquillo*, accompanied by triplet arpeggios and off-beat eighth notes, while the cello plays a countermelody. The new passage grows in volume, *più animato e crescendo*, and becomes more passionate, reaching *forte, appassionato ma sostenuto* in m. 86. An ascent into the high register reaches a peak, m. 92, *fff, molto marcato*, and for the next three measures the volume gets softer incrementally to *fortissimo*, m. 93, then *forte, crescendo*, m. 94. The cello sustains *sfz* whole notes while the piano's tall eighth-note chords continue, leading into the *Tempo I^{mo}*.

The *Tempo I^{mo}* at m. 96 brings back the opening piano figuration and cello melody resembling that of the opening section. This passage acts as a retransition that anticipates the return in m. 112 of the the original material, *Tempo I^{mo} ma più appassionato*, this time an octave higher in the cello. The return continues as before, including the lush *meno mosso* section featuring the piano. As in m. 30, the *meno mosso*

section ends in m. 141. Earlier the *amabile* section with thirty-second note arpeggiations followed, but here at the end of the movement is a coda.

The final section, *Andante, con ferocità*, in 9/8, is loud, *fff sempre*, and dramatic. The cello brings back the swinging 6/8 rhythms in the high register as the piano plays slow, six-note chords (Example 27). The climax of this closing section is the *ffff*, dissonant chord in m. 149.

142 *Andante, con ferocità*
fff
Andante, con ferocità
fff sempre

146
fff
fff *mf*

[Example 27: Sonata No. 1, mvt. 4, mm. 142-149]

From here the coda diminishes in energy, *Andante tranquillo*, and the dynamics drop from the *ffff* to *pppp* within the next three measures. Ornstein clearly favors quiet *smorzando* endings, and this movement is no exception.

Of all his cello pieces, this sonata is Ornstein's most conventional. It is in four movements (much like any romantic sonata), and each individual movement plays a role within this convention; the first movement is loosely in sonata form; the second is an ABA slow movement; the third a *scherzo* with *da capo*; and the fourth is the grand finale.

CHAPTER 4

SONATA NO. 2

Sonata No. 2, originally titled *Rhapsody*, dates from about 1920 and was never published.¹⁸ The piece is much like its original title—rhapsodic. The entire sonata is in one movement divided into sections. For much of the piece, the cello plays lush melodies while the piano accompanies, with only occasional melodic interludes.

Ornstein opens the piece with long, sustained notes and triplet figures in the cello and fast arpeggios expressing C-sharp minor in the piano (Example 28). The melody begins right away, with no introduction, and returns in various forms throughout the work. There is no tempo marking at the beginning, as is common in Ornstein's music.

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of Sonata No. 2. The score is written for cello and piano. The key signature is C-sharp minor (three sharps) and the time signature is 2/2. The first system is marked with a circled '1' and the second with a circled '3'. The cello part consists of long, sustained notes with triplet markings. The piano accompaniment features fast arpeggios and sixteenth-note patterns. The score is divided into two systems, each with a circled measure number (1 and 3).

[Example 28: Sonata No. 2, mm. 1-4]

¹⁸ Broyles and Von Glahn, 309.

In mm. 27-30, a crescendo can be inferred from the emphatic quarter notes in the cello followed by a long sustained note, while the piano's arpeggiated notes grow stronger and dramatically lead to the next section, which is in a new tonality indicated by a change of key signature from four to two sharps. The piano introduces a new, passionate melody, m. 31, distinguished by an ascending sequence of leaping chords in the right hand while the left hand continues with fast, arpeggiated notes as before (Example 29). The cello plays a countermelody, consisting of groups of rapid notes. This section comes to a close with the cello lingering on a high note stretched by a fermata, m. 41, thus changing the mood.

The image displays a musical score for Example 29, Sonata No. 2, measures 31-36. The score is written in 4/4 time and D major. It is organized into three systems of staves. The first system (measures 31-32) shows a cello line with eighth-note patterns and a piano accompaniment with chords and arpeggios. The second system (measures 33-34) features triplet figures in the cello line and an 8va marking in the piano part. The third system (measures 35-36) continues with triplet and quintuplet figures in the cello line and an 8va marking in the piano part.

[Example 29: Sonata No. 2, mm. 31-36]

The cello again takes the melody in m. 42, with triplet figures leaping up to high peaks while the piano accompanies with fast, descending arpeggios (Example 30). The cello line is heavily ornamented with rapid neighboring and passing figures. In m. 61 the

cello pauses on a sustained note, helping to segue into a new section at m. 62, with another change of key signature, this time to four flats.

The image displays a musical score for Example 30, consisting of two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 42, shows a cello part in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a '6' marking. The second system, starting at measure 44, shows the cello part in the upper staff and the piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature changes to four flats (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db), and the time signature remains 3/4. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern, and the cello part features a new lyrical melody with a '3' marking. The piano part includes a 'p.' marking and a '8va' marking.

[Example 30: Sonata No. 2, mm. 42-46]

In this new section, beginning in m. 62, Ornstein writes his first tempo and expressive marking in the piece thus far – *Andante espressivo*. A new, lyrical melody in the cello is accompanied with a new ostinato rhythm in the piano, mm. 62-71 (Example 31).

Providing contrast as would a slow movement, this Andante is the beginning of a build-up of emotional intensity that will climax much later, at the return of the opening of the sonata at m. 192.

[Example 31: Sonata No. 2, mm. 62-67]

What emerges next is a melody in the piano, mm. 72-78, with ascending eighth-note figures that reinforce the feeling of rising intensity alongside a dark cello countermelody marked by dotted rhythms and triplet figures (Example 32).

[Example 32: Sonata No. 2, mm. 71-74]

The *più mosso, forte*, in m. 79 once again fortifies the ascending intensity with a faster, bolder section in which the cello plays a variation of the previous piano melody while the piano accelerates into arpeggiated thirty-second-note quintuplets and groups of ten (Example 33).

[Example 33: Sonata No. 2, mm. 79-81]

This variation leads to another change of key signature and a slowing of the rhythmic pace at m. 88 (Example 34). Here a canon between the piano and the cello arises and continues for ten measures.

[Example 34: Sonata No. 2, mm. 88-93]

After this canonic interlude, a transition in mm. 98-102 continues to push, *forte*, *poco a poco animato*, to a new, gigue-like tune in the cello, mm. 103-111, *più animato e*

ritmico in 2/8 meter (Example 35). The piano accompaniment adds a rhythmic framework of eighth-note chords, off the beat.

Example 35 shows a musical score starting at measure 103. The tempo/mood is *più animato e ritmico* and the dynamics are *f più animato*. The score is in 12/8 time. The upper voice has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth-note chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

[Example 35: Sonata No. 2, mm. 103-106]

Suddenly, in complete contrast, there is a change of tempo to *Allargando* and yet another change of key signature at m. 112 (Example 36). Ornstein writes “very broad” underneath a recitative-like cello melody that is repetitive and confined while the piano, *fff*, opens out into a texture so lush that it requires four staves. This section is an intermediate climax in the gradual rise in intensity.

Example 36 shows a musical score starting at measure 112. The tempo is *Allargando* and the dynamics are *very broad fff*. The score is in 3/4 time. The upper voice has a recitative-like melody with a five-measure rest and an eighth-note pattern. The piano accompaniment is lush, with a cello-like melody in the upper right hand and a complex texture in the lower right hand and left hand.

[Example 36: Sonata No. 2, mm. 112-114]

The gigue-like tune immediately returns, mm. 119-123, *più animato* with a new accompaniment figure that includes a downward version of the big arpeggios in the *Allargando*. The brief reminiscence of the gigue comes to a pause on a fermata, m. 123.

As the music continues its rise, it abruptly changes to fluttering thirty-second notes in the piano while the cello plays a version of the opening melody in rhythmic diminution (Example 37).

[Example 37: Sonata No. 2, mm. 124-125]

At m. 133, the cello changes to a descending chromatic line, as the piano adds a new layer above its tremolo, further increasing the building tension (Example 38). The textural complexity culminates with sustained low trills in both cello and piano, while the right hand continues its triplet figures (Example 38, mm. 137-139). The music comes to a slight pause with a *ritardando* in m.139.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Example 38, measures 135-139.
 System 1 (Measure 135): The right hand contains a melodic line with three triplet markings. The left hand features a rhythmic accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern.
 System 2 (Measure 136): The right hand continues the melodic line, incorporating sextuplet markings. The left hand maintains the rhythmic accompaniment.
 System 3 (Measure 137): The right hand has a melodic line with triplet markings and a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with a wavy line indicating a tremolo effect.

[Example 38: Sonata No. 2, mm. 135-139]

In mm. 140-147, *moderato*, the piano melody from the *Andante*, mm. 72-78, returns but transposed up a minor third. This reminder of previous material foreshadows the imminent return of the opening. At the *molto animato*, m. 148, the canonic passage is recalled as the piano imitates the cello in diminution (Example 39).

(148) *molto animato*

The image shows two systems of musical notation for measures 148-152. The first system (measures 148-150) includes a single melodic line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in two staves. The piano part features triplets in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The second system (measures 150-152) continues the piano accompaniment with triplets and an 8va section in the right hand, and chords in the left hand. The tempo marking is *molto animato*.

[Example 39: Sonata No. 2, mm. 148-152]

From this point on, melodic fragments of previous themes begin to emerge as agitation builds in anticipation of the return. On the way, a more spritely section materializes, *Allegro*, m. 156 (Example 40). The piano part is divided into three staves with thirty-second note/eighth-note repeated figures on top and melodic fragments similar to the original melody in the middle. The bottom staff has slow-moving octaves that plod along by step. Meanwhile, the cello plays a countermelody with bits and pieces of its original melody.

156 *Allegro*

158

molto marcato

8va

[Example 40: Sonata No. 2, mm. 156-159]

In another recall of previous themes, mm. 172-178 incorporate the original melody and rapid arpeggios with the accompaniment from the gigue-like section, (Example 41).

[Example 41: Sonata No. 2, mm. 172-178]

The various melodic fragments continue with almost constant triplet eighth notes in the piano while the cello works its way higher and higher. In m. 190, the piano swoops upward to a sustained chord in m. 191 while the cello continues with triplet eighths and sixteenths to dissolve into the return of the opening melody at m. 192.

The return of the opening is very much the same as the beginning, with mm. 192-221 being equivalent to mm. 1-30; mm. 222-232 are equivalent to mm. 31-41 but without the cello countermelody; mm. 233-248 are equivalent to mm. 42-57; mm. 249-252 are equivalent to mm. 58-61, transposed to a different pitch level, mm. 253-262 being

equivalent to mm. 62-71 also transposed and without the *Andante espressivo* marking; and mm. 263-268 are equivalent to mm. 72-77. The following two measures (269-270) are a small transition into the final section of the piece.

The final section, mm. 271-289, recalls the beginning of the work with thirty-second-note arpeggios in the piano and a cello melody in rhythms similar to those of its opening. Finally, the cello comes to rest while the piano arpeggiates a B-Major triad with an added C (Example 42). The sonata ends on this bittersweet, dissonance-infused triad, in a tonality quite different from the C-sharp minor opening.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Example 42. The first system, starting at measure 285, features a piano part with rapid thirty-second-note arpeggios and a cello part with a melodic line. The second system, starting at measure 287, shows the piano part continuing with arpeggios and the cello part ending with a sustained chord. The key signature is B major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4.

[Example 42: Sonata No. 2, mm. 285-289]

CHAPTER 5

TWO PIECES, NO.1 AND NO. 2, OP. 33

Op. 33 (date unknown)¹⁹ is the most compact of the Ornstein cello works, approximately two minutes in length, and the only one entirely atonal. Joshua Gordon, who edited Op. 33 using the manuscripts from the Ornstein papers at the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library at Yale University, writes: “Only one suggested bowing is indicated, as a dotted slur in measure 8 of Piece no. 1; one thumb position fingering is suggested for Piece no. 2, measure 7.”²⁰ All other markings are Ornstein’s and they are quite detailed. Unlike Sonata No. 2 and Composition No. 1, the performers are given ample information about how to perform this music; expressive markings, dynamics, and tempo changes are indicated for nearly every measure.

Piece No. 1 begins *Andante*, but it passes through seven changes of tempo in its 23 measures, ending at *Adagio*. Much of the cello writing is legato and lyrical while the piano line is filled with disjointed melodic fragments with leaps from high to low, low to high, groups of ascending and descending fast notes, and dissonant harmonies. Vivian Perlis writes: “Ornstein’s dissonance is in the use of close intervals, particularly minor seconds, and the tone clusters (used by Ornstein five or six years before Henry Cowell called them “tone clusters”) are not a random slapping at notes, but groups carefully worked out according to overtones.”²¹ Example 43, mm. 1-4, illustrates Ornstein’s signature “tone clusters” (upbeat to m. 1 in the piano), frequent tempo changes (*Andante* m. 1, *Piu mosso* m. 3, *piu animato*, m. 4), complex rhythms (quintuplet eighth notes in the cello against sixteenth notes in the piano), and large leaps in the piano. This example

¹⁹ Broyles, Von Glahn.

Severo Ornstein

²⁰ Gordon, Joshua, “Editor’s Note,” in *Two Pieces, Op. 33 No. 1 and 2 for Cello and Piano by Leo Ornstein*. Brandeis University, June 19, 2007.

²¹ Vivian Perlis, “The Futurist Music of Leo Ornstein,” *Notes*, Second Series 31, no. 4 (June 1975): 735-750. Music Library Association. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/896806> (accessed January 13, 2010)

also shows the disjunct but singing nature of the cello line, with broad eighth-note triplets and quintuplet eighth notes, reinforced by Ornstein’s *dolce* marking, against much faster moving notes in the piano.

Andante *dolce*

Cello

Piano

p

pp

mp

p

poco dim.

(change to bass clef here not in MS or very faint)

3 *Piu mosso*

piu animato

Piu mosso

mp

mf

p

cresc.

mf

[Example 43: Piece No. 1, mm. 1-4]

The *piu animato*, m. 4, has the cello joining the piano with fast notes and sizable leaps. The tempo fluctuates with a *poco ritardando* in m. 5, followed by a three-measure section in which the pace quickens and the volume rises with a *piu mosso* in m. 6, a *poco animato e crescendo* in m. 7, and rapid chromatic ascending notes in the cello, *crescendo* in m. 8 (Example 44).

The piano all the while is interjecting splashes of color with clustered notes, off-beat entrances, and irregularly-placed *sf* accents in m. 8.

5 *poco rit.* *Piu mosso*

poco rit. *Piu mosso*

7 *poco animato e crescendo* *Piu mosso*

8 *molto cresc.* *Piu lento*

cresc. sf *f* *dim.* *f* *mp*

*cello slur suggested by the editor

[Example 44: Piece No. 1, mm. 5-9]

The *piu lento*, m. 9, slows the pulse until m. 14, where Ornstein writes *Allegro* for one measure followed by an immediate *Lento* at m. 15 (Example 45).

The image displays a musical score for Example 45, consisting of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 14 and 15. Measure 14 is marked 'Allegro' and 'Lento' with dynamics 'p' and 'pp'. The second system covers measures 16 and 17. Measure 16 is marked 'poco agitato' and 'piu e piu forte' with dynamics 'f' and 'mf'. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

[Example 45: Piece No. 1, mm. 14-17]

The cello and piano come to a pause at the *Lento* before the *poco agitato* at m. 16. There is a *meno mosso* at m. 20 that once again slows the pace, followed by an *Adagio* at m. 22, winding the piece down as the dynamics soften to *piano* in the cello and *pianissimo* in the piano's final tone clusters.

If Piece No. 1 is concise, Piece No. 2, being only 17 measures long, is the epitome of brevity. Marked *Allegro ma non troppo*, it begins fast and loud unlike the opening of Piece No. 1 but alternates loud and soft dynamics six times in the first ten measures (Example 46). Like Piece No. 1, it is distinguished by complex rhythms and frequent

tempo changes along with these fluctuations in dynamics. The first such tempo change occurs at m. 8, *poco a poco stringendo* continuing until a *ritardando* in m. 12 leading to a *Meno mosso* at m. 14. The *stringendo* is accompanied by a steady crescendo to a *fortissimo* in m. 12, which quickly falls to *pianissimo* at the *Meno mosso*. The *Tempo I* returns for one measure (m. 15), *pianissimo*, immediately followed by a *Piu lento* (m. 16) that continues until a very soft ending of *pizzicato* chords in the cello against an intermittently repeated chord in the piano. Overall, the piece rises to a peak in m. 12 and finishes with a quiet, sparse denouement.

1 **Allegro ma non troppo** pizz.

Cello *mf* *p*

Piano *f* *mf* *p* *p e misterioso* *mf*

5 **arco** *poco a poco stringendo*

ff *p* *f* *ff* *mp* *mf*

10 *rit.* *molto cresc. e rit.* *ff*

f *ff* *piu crescendo* *ff*

[Example 46: Piece No. 2, mm. 1-12]

CHAPTER 6

SIX PRELUDES

The Six Preludes for Cello and Piano were composed between 1930 and 1931. Ornstein premiered the work on April 11, 1931, in New York with cellist Alexandre Barjansky at a concert sponsored by the League of Composers.²² The two instruments play equal roles in this work, and of all of Ornstein's works for cello and piano, this one in particular creates a world of sonic color in which the two interweave seamlessly through rich textures, exotic melodies, and complex rhythms.

The Preludes have been performed separately, but performing the complete set of six proves most effective. Each prelude has its own unique character but the overall mood of the set is dark, mysterious, and foreboding.

Severo Ornstein quotes his father in the liner notes of a recording of three of the Preludes:

The Preludes for Cello and Piano I suppose might be called *avant-garde*, whatever that may mean. Here many of the sounds that emanate are of a sophisticated nature. This set of pieces brings together strong outline and a new vernacular. These are not individual pieces. Each is an integral part of the group. The piano and cello parts are integrated to such an extent that it is difficult to extract one from the other.²³

Compared to many of Ornstein's other works, the Preludes are not "*avant-garde*." Many works by Ornstein are largely or entirely atonal. The Preludes, although not necessarily in a particular key, still exhibit elements of tonal music. However, that Ornstein relies heavily on textural and timbral effects may be what Severo Ornstein is referring to when he says "*avant-garde*," calling it "of a sophisticated nature" when differentiating between the Preludes and traditional tonal music.

²² Broyles and Von Glahn, 241.

²³Leo Ornstein. *Sonata for Cello and Piano, 3 Preludes*. Bonnie Hampton, Nathan Schwartz. Orion ORS 76211, LP, 1975.

S. Ornstein says that “each [prelude] is an integral part of the group.” Along with that, there appear to be two sub-groups of three: Preludes I through III and Preludes IV through VI both follow curves of rising intensity that culminate with Preludes III and VI. Preludes I and II exhibit a more subdued character compared to III, which is loud and bombastic. Preludes IV and V are also subdued compared to the large, somewhat violent character of Prelude VI.

Another view of the set as a whole is presented by Vivian Perlis in a review of a 1980 recording of the Six Preludes, with Italo Babini, cello, and Elizabeth Sawyer Parisot, piano:

Basically lyrical and accessible, the six were written as a set and are meant to be heard together rather than as individual pieces. Prelude II expands on Prelude I's short romantic ideas. Prelude III is fast and technically difficult. In contrast, IV is lyrical and slow with material that is subsequently developed in V, where the piano takes the leading role. VI is an "allegro agitato" with the cello and piano in dialogue.²⁴

This description supports Ornstein's view that the Preludes are meant to be performed as a group and not as individual pieces. Interestingly, in the program notes for this particular recording, the author states that the Preludes can “be played individually” with an acknowledgment that they are “essentially parts of one great piece.”²⁵

Prelude I is short and concise, only 19 measures long. It is by far the shortest movement of the six, yet no less significant for its passionate character and clear overall shape. Marked *Moderato sostenuto*, it consists of a continuous cello melody characterized by sustained notes on the downbeats with an elaborate anacrusis to each. Undulating, apeggiated triplets in the piano form the accompaniment, creating a dream-like mood. Momentum builds as the piece *crescendos* and ascends, moving faster at the

²⁴ Vivian Perlis, “Review: String Quartet No. 3 by Leo Ornstein, Sonata for Violoncello and Piano by Alexei Haieff, Six Preludes for Violoncello and Piano by Leo Ornstein,” *American Music* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 105.

²⁵Leo Ornstein. Six Preludes for Violoncello and Piano. Serenus SRS 12090-11. LP.

poco a poco animato in mm. 6-8. The cello in m. 8 reaches its peak on a *forte* high note, and the piano accompaniment gives way to loud, dissonant, eighth-note chords. This high note serves as the center of the arch shape. Beginning in m. 10, the piano chords slow down and diminish in dynamic level as the cello begins a sequential descent and arrives at a low sustained note in m. 13 (Example 47). The *tempo primo* at m. 15 brings the cello back to its original register, and a new version of its opening motive creates a sense of return. However, the piano's figuration changes in this final section, combining big, *pianissimo* chords on the downbeats with an ostinato in delicate triplets. The soothing and repetitive final five measures serve as a peaceful conclusion for the dramatic rise and descent of this prelude.

[Example 47: Prelude I, mm. 9-15.]


Like other movements, Prelude II consists of multiple sections with many tempo changes and shifting meters. Dynamically, it stays at *mezzo piano* or less with the exception of a loud section (*Feroce*, mm. 61-67), where it reaches *fortissimo*. Although

there is almost constant motion, much of the movement feels placid because at least one voice is almost always sustaining long notes, and because of the smooth duple and triple rhythms and flexible tempos.

The cello and piano weave together seamlessly and play equally important roles in the *con moto* section, mm. 1-24, much as in other preludes. The movement begins with a rolled, sustained chord with an ascending eighth-note line in the piano alongside a terraced, ascending eighth-note line in the cello (Example 48).

II

Con moto ♩ = 112



[Example 48: Prelude II, mm. 1-4]

There is near constant motion; if the cello is playing a sustained note, the piano is in motion, until mm. 7-8, where both the cello and the piano pause on a sustained note.

The interwoven cello and piano lines continue, accompanied by sustained chords in the piano and their rhythms become more animated through the end of the section at m. 24 (Example 49).

The musical score for Example 49 consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 6 to 8. The top staff is the cello line, starting with a half note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. The piano line (middle and bottom staves) features a melody in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand. Performance markings include *p* (piano), *poco a poco*, *ritard.* (ritardando), and *a tempo*. The second system covers measures 9 to 12. The cello line continues with a melodic line, including a triplet of eighth notes in measure 11. The piano line continues with sustained chords and a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. Performance markings include *poco rit.* (poco ritardando).

[Example 49: Prelude II, mm. 6-12]

The next section, *Quasi improvvisamente* (mm. 25-33) has a dream-like quality. The cello takes over the melody, which the piano punctuates with *pianissimo* sustained chords (Example 50).

25 *Quasi improvvisamente*

[Example 50: Prelude II, mm. 25-28]

The last three measures, *poco a poco morendo*, reiterate a figure in preparation for a new section. The cello and the piano have been so independent that the F's they strike together in mm. 31-33 are very affecting.

The *Doloroso*, mm. 34-49, is soft and plaintive. The piano's triplet chords in the treble and slow-moving bass line doubled in octaves create such a rich texture that the piano is notated on three staves (Example 51).

34 Doloroso

36

[Example 51: Prelude II, mm. 34-37]

The cello's line pauses frequently on long, sustained pitches; while it is stationary, the piano's triplets fill in. The two instruments continue to alternate activity and relative repose.

The cello becomes more emphatic in m. 42, as Ornstein indicates *marcando e portando la melodia* and what were previously sixteenth notes in the cello become eighth notes (Example 52). The section ends on a long, high, sustained note in the cello, *ppp*.

42

44

marcando e portando la melodia

[Example 52: Prelude II, mm. 42-46]

The following section, *Con moto e vigoroso*, mm. 50-60, is quite agitated and rises steadily in intensity and dynamic. Ornstein indicates *poco a poco crescendo e agitato* at m. 50 and *più crescendo* at m. 53 (Example 53).

50 *Con moto e vigoroso*

poco a poco agitato

poco a poco cresc. e agitato

53 *più cresc.*

56 *f*

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 50-52) is marked 'Con moto e vigoroso' and 'poco a poco agitato'. The piano part features a steady bass line with quadruplets in the left hand and triplet eighth-note figures in the right hand. The second system (measures 53-55) is marked 'più cresc.' and continues the rhythmic complexity. The third system (measures 56-58) begins with a forte dynamic and shows a further increase in intensity. The time signature shifts between 5/4 and 3/4 throughout the section.

[Example 53: Prelude II, mm. 50-58]

Shifting between 5/4 and 3/4 meters, the piano is very busy with quarter-note quadruplets in the left hand against triplet eighth-note figurations in the right hand reminiscent of its chords in the *Doloroso* section. In mm. 50-55, the cello plays

sustained whole and half notes along with eighth notes to form a countermelody with the piano. At m. 56, the piano expands to three layers, and at m. 57 the cello begins to accelerate to triplets that match those of the piano.

This frenzied activity continues into the *Feroce*, mm. 61-73, the climax of the movement. This short section is the loudest dynamically (*fortissimo*) and is where the cello plays its highest pitches. There are eighth-note triplets in the right hand of the piano against strong, octave eighth notes in the left hand along with a low, sustained, pedal chord (Example 54, mm. 61-66). Above this, the cello plays a loud, double-stop melody in triplet figuration before falling to a long, low, sustained trill for 5 measures (mm. 67-72).

61 Feroce

64

[Example 54: Prelude II, mm. 61-66]

Above the trill, the piano plays *sff*, percussive chords (m. 67) that fall dynamically as a *poco diminuendo* is introduced (m. 68). The rhythm decelerates, mm. 68-73, as Ornstein spaces out the chords and the eighth notes become quarter notes, which in turn become long sustained notes. *Andante* is indicated for the last measure of the section, m. 73, where a *fermata* halts the momentum and the long trill in the cello ends with a written-out *ritardando*.

The *Tempo I^o*, mm. 74-79, rounds off the Prelude with a return of the opening *con moto* section. Only the initial six measures are brought back, and these lead directly into the section marked Coda, *Dolente*.

The Coda is in 2/4 meter throughout and consists of a six-measure phrase stated three times. The cello reiterates a chromatically descending line on long sustained notes and eighth notes, reinforcing the “sorrowful” quality of the *dolente* (Example 55). The piano’s *pianissimo* eighth notes in the right hand are reminiscent of the *Con moto* section, and the cross-rhythm of the quarter-note triplet arpeggiations in the left hand is a delicate reminder of earlier, vigorous passages.

Coda
80 Dolente

The musical score for the Coda section (mm. 80-85) is presented in two staves. The top staff is for the cello, and the bottom staff is for the piano. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Dolente'. The piano part is marked 'pp'. The cello line consists of long sustained notes with eighth notes, creating a chromatically descending line. The piano part features eighth notes in the right hand and quarter-note triplet arpeggiations in the left hand.

[Example 55: Prelude II, mm. 80-85]

A *ppp smorzando* with sustained chords brings this prelude to a very quiet end.

A quick, *scherzo*-like movement, Prelude III is the longest of the six at 194 measures. It is divided into sections, each set off by a single rhythmic figuration and distinct tempo.

The first section, *Presto*, mm. 1-89, is impish and playful, with the piano in constant *staccato*, perpetual-motion eighth-note chords while the cello plays double-stop *pizzicato* and *arco* eighth notes. The accents of the piano often oppose those of the cello, as shown in Example 56.

From m. 11, the cello joins the piano in relentless eighth notes, creating a rhythmic constant while the meter alternates between 2/4 and 3/4. Together, they play equal roles in creating a soundscape of colors that make it difficult at times for the listener to distinguish between the two instruments, an illustration of S. Ornstein's point about the integration of cello and piano. The cello remains in the lower register, serving as the bass, while the piano sounds in the higher register, sometimes leaving out the middle range entirely.

III

Presto $\text{♩} = 100$ pizz. arco

5 pizz. arco

9 pizz. arco

poco a poco cresc. *poco a poco cresc.* 8va

[Example 56: Prelude III, mm. 1-12]

Example 56, above, also illustrates the textural and timbral effects that reinforce S. Ornstein’s statement that the preludes are “avant-garde.”

A large *crescendo* reaches *ff* in m. 28, *fff* in m. 37, and *ffff* in m. 41. At this peak, the percussive eighth notes in the cello and the left hand of the piano come to an end while the constant eighths continue high in the right hand of the piano. In mm. 43-45, the cello plays *ff* triple-stop chords as the piano falls in register and dynamic.

At m. 46, marked *piano*, the cello takes on the melodic role with a rhythmic eighth-note theme, first rising, then falling sequentially with grace-note embellishments. This theme is repeated and transposed up a major sixth, at *poco più forte*, in mm. 54-61. Meanwhile, the piano remains soft with steady eighth notes and ostinatos in the left hand.

At m. 70, the constant eighth notes begin to break down. As this section of the movement comes to a close, Ornstein writes fragmented rhythmic motives punctuated by rests (Example 57).

The image shows a musical score for Example 57, covering measures 80 to 89. It is written in 2/4 time. The top staff is for the cello, and the bottom two staves are for the piano. The cello part begins at measure 80 with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) marking and plays a rhythmic eighth-note theme. The piano accompaniment consists of steady eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The score ends at measure 89 with a double bar line and repeat signs.

[Example 57: Prelude III, mm. 80-89]

The marking *Poco più mosso* begins the next section, mm. 90-114. The role of the piano now shifts to that of accompaniment with a rustic, eighth-note ostinato. When the cello re-enters in m. 91, it plays a six-measure, dance-like melody, *forte* (Example 58). The cello elaborates on this singing melody, incorporating driving eighth notes and

triplets while the piano continues with percussive notes and large chords. This section culminates in an exuberant, *fff* passage, mm. 107-114, marked *Con moto*, with the piano and cello sharing the same rhythm.

87 *pizz.* Poco più mosso $\text{♩} = 112$

91 *arco*

93

95

[Example 58: Prelude III, mm. 87-97]

An abrupt change in character takes place at the *poco meno mosso*, beginning at m. 115, where the *marcato* eighth and quarter notes become *legato* sixteenth-note arpeggiations in the piano and an *espressivo*, folk-like melody appears in the cello (Example 59). This folk-like melody develops into an elongated statement (mm. 121-129) of the dance-like theme first introduced in m. 91.

115 Poco meno mosso

The musical score for Example 59 consists of two systems of staves. The first system starts at measure 115, marked 'Poco meno mosso'. It features a cello line (top staff) with a folk-like melody and piano accompaniment (middle and bottom staves) with sixteenth-note arpeggiations. The piano part is marked with a forte dynamic (*f*) and an expressive marking (*f espress.*). The second system starts at measure 117 and continues the same texture.

[Example 59: Prelude III, mm. 115-118]

The texture changes at the *Energico*, m. 130, as the piano abruptly returns to percussive eighth notes while the cello carries on with playful variations of its folk-like melody in the high register (Example 60).

130 **Energico**

The image shows a musical score for measures 130-133. It consists of two systems. The first system (measures 130-131) shows a cello line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The piano accompaniment has a right hand with chords and a left hand with a rhythmic pattern of dotted-eighths and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *ff* and *fff*. The second system (measures 132-133) continues the piano accompaniment and includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) in measure 133.

[Example 60: Prelude III, mm. 130-133]

Ornstein also adds bold dotted-eighth and sixteenth rhythms to the left hand of the piano. In m. 138, a new sixteenth-note accompaniment figure appears in the right hand of the piano while the left hand mirrors the rhythms of the cello (Example 61). This passage begins with a *subito piano* and climbs to a pounding *fff* culminating with a low note in the cello and high, accented chords in the piano at m. 146.

138

140

[Example 61: Prelude III, mm. 138-141]

The *Tempo I*^o, mm. 147-194, returns with material similar to that of the beginning of the Prelude; it brings back constant eighth notes in the piano, but the cello is at a higher pitch. As before, the rhythm is broken at the peak of a *crescendo* (m. 166 being equivalent to m. 41), and afterward the eighths resume in the piano (m. 171). Ornstein brings the Prelude to a close by interrupting the hammered eighth notes with rests and creating an element of suspense. Further drama is added with a large, ascending *glissando* from the cello contrasted with descending eighths in the piano. The movement concludes on a powerful, *fff*, dissonant chord in the piano with two striking, double-stop *pizzicati* from the cello (Example 62).

[Example 62: Prelude III, mm. 179-194]

Ornstein's tempo marking for Prelude IV is *Andante non troppo* in 4/4 meter. What makes this Prelude unique is the omission of bar lines at the beginning for the introductory cello solo. Ornstein writes *ad lib.* under the cello line, indicating a free-meter feel. The introduction begins soft and in the low register, progresses to large leaps, syncopations, and pauses on sustained notes, and ends on a long whole note before the piano enters.

What follows is a section in which the piano flowingly accompanies a long cello melody, mm. 2-23. The piano accompaniment is distinguished by arpeggiated eighth notes entirely on the black keys save for minor seconds at the top, suggesting an out-of-tune folk instrument. Against the swaying ostinato, the cello unfolds an *espressivo* melody full of lyrical triplets and eighths (Example 63).

The image displays a musical score for Example 63, consisting of three systems of music. Each system includes a piano accompaniment and a cello melody. The piano part is written in 4/4 time and features a continuous arpeggiated eighth-note pattern on black keys, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) at the beginning. The cello part is written in 4/4 time and features a long, expressive melody with triplets and eighth notes. The first system starts at measure 2, the second at measure 6, and the third at measure 9. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, triplets, and dynamic markings.

[Example 63: Prelude IV, mm. 2-10]

The piano accompaniment remains largely pentatonic until m. 16, when the musical character becomes louder and more emphatic (Example 64). Falling back, the passage ends with an ostinato in the piano reminiscent of its swaying accompaniment figure.

15

18

21

f

ff

pp

8va

[Example 64: Prelude IV, mm. 15-23]

After a pause, a new section begins at m. 24 (Example 65). The piano has three contrapuntal lines whose composite rhythm creates steady eighth notes. Because the cello has a slow-moving, stepwise line, the melodic activity of the piano comes to the forefront.

[Example 65: Prelude IV: mm. 24-27]

The cello returns to the melodic role in the high register, mm. 31-37 (Example 66). Here the piano and cello begin a new melody that for seven measures is doubled at the fourth; the parallelism and the diatonic pitch collection of this passage create an Impressionistic effect.



[Example 66: Prelude IV, mm. 31-35]

A new ostinato figure in the piano in mm. 38-43 sets up a return of material from the opening of the Prelude. Ornstein's indication of *Tempo I^o* at m. 44 is interesting in that he never noted a different tempo anywhere else in the movement, although the marking does serve to call attention to the return. As in other preludes lacking tempo or dynamic markings, Ornstein may have left it up to the performers to interpret their own changes in tempo. At the *Tempo I^o*, m. 44-54, the right hand takes on the main melody, in octaves, reminiscent of the cello's melody in m. 5, while the left hand accompanies with arpeggiated eighth-note quintuplets (Example 67). Adding a third layer, the cello's new countermelody helps to create a lush version of the opening.

44 *Tempo I^o*

45

47

49

[Example 67: Prelude IV, mm. 44-50]

A long, low note in the cello in mm. 52-54 marks the end of the return. While it sustains, the piano's quintuplet eighths slow to eighth notes and the melody tapers off into a repetitive figure.

Marked *piano espressivo*, the last five measures of the movement, mm. 55-59, bring back the initial cello solo, this time written out with bar lines and accompanied by a delicate figure in the piano, *pianissimo*. The Prelude comes to a close, *morendo*, on a long, sustained chord.

Prelude V is the most abstract and atmospheric of the six. The movement is marked *Non troppo (Quasi improvisato)*, which does not convey a tempo. It is interesting to note that the first 75 measures of this 85-measure movement contain no dynamic or expressive markings. This is, however, typical of many other Ornstein scores. Sonata No. 2 for Piano and Cello, for example, has almost no slurs or phrase markings and very few dynamic markings. Composition No. 1 for Cello and Piano is similar to this sonata with its lack of markings. One can speculate that Ornstein either was careless with his markings, or he wanted the performers to interpret the music on their own, or perhaps a combination of the two.

This Prelude resembles a recitative and aria. The first 22 measures combine ornate melodic lines in complex, syncopated, speech-like rhythms from both instruments, against a persistent repeated-note figure in the piano (Example 68).

V

Non troppo (Quasi improvisato)

The musical score is presented in two systems. Each system contains three staves: Bass (left), Treble (middle), and Bass (right). The time signature is 2/4. The first system covers measures 1-4, and the second system covers measures 5-8. The piano part features a repeated-note figure in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The violin part has a melodic line with triplets and a 7-measure slur. The viola part has a bass line with triplets and a 5-measure slur. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, triplets, and dynamic markings.

[Example 68: Prelude V, mm. 1-4]

Measure 20 begins a transition in which the piano's repeated-note figure is prevalent, accompanied by chords that become a series leading up to a sustained note in the middle of m. 22 (Example 69). The momentum of the music suggests a *crescendo* to *forte* at this point.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Example 69. The first system (measures 21-22) includes a cello line with a melodic phrase and piano accompaniment featuring triplets. The second system (measure 23) shows a cello line with a soaring melody and piano accompaniment with arpeggiated figures. The third system (measure 24) continues the piano accompaniment with arpeggiated figures.

[Example 69: Prelude V, mm. 21-24]

The arpeggiated figures beginning in m. 23 (Example 69 above) provide accompaniment for an aria-like melody in the cello and indicate a possible drop in dynamic to *piano* or *pianissimo*. The soaring melody in the cello begins with a minor third, which recalls the very opening of this Prelude. From m. 30, the rhythm of the melody becomes increasingly active, gradually transitioning to constant sixteenth-note triplets from m. 43 for eight measures. Over the course of six measures, beginning at m. 51, the rhythm slows to end on a long, sustained note at m. 57. At m. 60, an interlude in

the piano takes over and the arpeggios from the “aria” become a chromatic figure that accompanies a melody doubled in major sevenths (Example 70).

The image shows a musical score for Example 70, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system starts at measure 60 and the second system starts at measure 62. The music is in 2/4 time. The piano part features a chromatic figure in the right hand, which is a sequence of notes: C4, C#4, D4, D#4, E4, E#4, F4, F#4, G4, G#4, A4, A#4, B4, B#4, C5. This figure is accompanied by a melody in the left hand, which is a sequence of notes: C4, C#4, D4, D#4, E4, E#4, F4, F#4, G4, G#4, A4, A#4, B4, B#4, C5. The melody is doubled in major sevenths, meaning the right hand plays the same notes as the left hand but shifted up by a major seventh interval. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *ff* in the piano part, and *ff* in the melody part. The score also includes a fermata over the final note of the melody in measure 63.

[Example 70: Prelude V, mm. 60-63]

A transitional passage in mm. 69-76 restores the ornate melodic lines and repeated-note figure of the opening “recitative.” Measure 75 is significant because for the first time in this Prelude, Ornstein provides expressive markings. He writes *più agitato e crescendo, allargando molto* in m. 75, which leads to a sustained *fortissimo* chord in m. 76 (Example 71). This passage is similar to the transition before the “aria” (mm. 21-22), yet much more dramatic. It is another signal to the players that mm. 21-22 should be performed in similar fashion.

[Example 71: Prelude V, mm. 73-76]

An ostinato of ascending parallel fifths in the left hand of the piano in the final section, *Andante non troppo* (mm. 77-85), provides a foundation for the exchange of melodic flourishes between the cello and the right hand of the piano. This section is marked *pianissimo* and gradually ends on a long, sustained note, bringing the movement to a slow, somber conclusion.

Much like the third, Prelude VI exhibits a fast and energetic character with sections separated by strong rhythmic figurations and long ostinatos. Marked *Allegro agitato*, the piano is used in a percussive way, also as in the third.

The movement begins with a pounding, sixteenth-note ostinato in the piano that accompanies a robust, march-like melody in the cello. The melody ends on a long, sustained note at m. 21 and is characterized by embellishing grace notes and forceful eighths (Example 72).

VI

Allegro agitato

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the piano accompaniment in the lower register, with a rhythmic ostinato of eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The tempo is marked 'Allegro agitato' and the dynamics are 'ff'. The second system shows the cello part in the upper register, starting at measure 5, with melodic fragments in minor ninths. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

[Example 72: Prelude VI, mm. 1-8]

In mm. 24-47 the piano ostinato rapidly changes to sweeping thirty-second notes, punctuated with melodic fragments in minor ninths, while the cello plays off-beat triple-stop *pizzicati* along with *arco* responses to the piano's melodic fragments (Example 73).

27

30

33

36

[Example 73: Prelude VI, mm. 27-37]

At m. 48 a new rhythm takes over. The piano ostinato mixes triplet eighths in the treble with duple eighths in the bass, thus maintaining the *agitato* character (Example 74). Above this ostinato, the cello plays a new dance-like tune in triplets. This passage, mm. 48-83, effectively replaces the 2/4 meter with 6/8, thus accelerating the rhythm.

The image shows a musical score for Example 74, consisting of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 48 to 51, and the second system covers measures 52 to 55. The music is written for piano and cello. The piano part features a complex ostinato pattern: the right hand plays a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter rest, while the left hand plays a duple eighth-note pattern (G3, A3, B3). The cello part plays a melody of eighth notes in triplets, starting with G4, A4, B4, C5, and then moving to lower registers. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

[Example 74: Prelude VI, mm. 48-55]

At m. 65, the pitches of the ostinato change and the dance-like melody from the cello is heard in a higher register. As shown in Example 75, the piano takes over the melody (mm. 72-76) then moves into a new triplet ostinato in the right hand, doubled in octaves, while the cello plays a countermelody.

The image displays a musical score for Example 75, consisting of three systems of music. Each system includes a right-hand staff (treble clef) and a left-hand staff (bass clef). The first system (measures 72-75) shows a right-hand melody with triplets and a left-hand accompaniment of sustained chords. The second system (measures 76-79) continues the right-hand melody and introduces a piano ostinato in the left hand. The third system (measures 80-82) shows the right-hand melody continuing while the left hand plays sustained chords.

[Example 75: Prelude VI, mm. 72-82]

At m. 83 the right-hand ostinato is no longer doubled in octaves and is accompanied by sustained chords in the left hand leading to a *molto ritardando* at m. 84 and then a *meno mosso* section at m. 86 (Example 76). This new section begins with a rising and falling melody in the cello accompanied by a piano ostinato.

86 *meno mosso*

90

94

[Example 76: Prelude VI, mm. 86-96]

The piano's triplet figure is transposed up at m. 95 as the cello melody continues. The ostinato figure becomes more percussive at m. 103, and as a result, the 6/8 feel becomes even more emphatic. At m. 107, the cello takes over the ostinato in the low register while the piano rests for two measures. The piano then re-enters with its own syncopated melody at m. 109. At m. 120, the piano melody intertwines with the cello, and sixteenth notes are introduced in the left hand of the piano. Irregular meter changes occur, launching a chaotic passage in which the rhythm quickens to sixteenth-note quintuplets in m. 137 and septuplets in m. 146.

At m. 153, the 6/8 feel is restored with a right-hand melody in the piano against eighth-note septuplets in the left hand for five measures while the cello lingers on a sustained high note for one measure and rests for four (Example 77). The cello then answers the piano's 6/8-like melody with its own triplet response at m. 158. This call-and-response between the piano and the cello occurs twice and leads the movement into the *Tempo I^o* at m. 173.

The image displays a musical score for Example 77, covering measures 153 to 160. It is written for piano and cello. The piano part is in 6/8 time. In measures 153-157, the left hand plays eighth-note septuplets (groups of seven notes) while the right hand plays a melodic line. In measure 158, the piano's right hand continues its melody, and the left hand plays a triplet of eighth notes. In measure 159, the piano's right hand plays a triplet of eighth notes, and the left hand continues with septuplets. In measure 160, the piano's right hand plays a triplet of eighth notes, and the left hand continues with septuplets. The cello part is in 6/8 time. In measure 153, it has a sustained high note for one measure and rests for four. In measure 158, it plays a triplet of eighth notes. In measure 159, it plays a triplet of eighth notes. In measure 160, it plays a triplet of eighth notes.

[Example 77: Prelude VI, mm. 153-160]

Here (*Tempo I^o*) the opening cello melody returns a step higher with a piano ostinato that is slightly altered to incorporate sixteenth-note triplets (Example 78).

173 Tempo I°

177

[Example 78: Prelude VI, mm. 173-180]

At m. 191, the piano's melody doubled in minor ninths returns along with a triplet melody in the cello. Ornstein then combines running sixteenth notes in the piano, fragments of previous tunes, and rampant meter changes to create a raucous and abrupt finish for this final prelude.

The Six Preludes, because of their rich textures, exotic harmonies, and complex rhythms, are an ideal model of Leo Ornstein's cello music. Like Sonata No. 1, elements of Impressionism and Neoromanticism occur. They also share the lush lyricism that exists in Sonata No. 2 and Composition No. 1. Examples of tone clusters are found throughout the Preludes as in Two Pieces, Nos. 1 and 2.

It was because of the Six Preludes that I was drawn to Leo Ornstein's music. The idea of recording the complete works for cello and piano by Ornstein was conceived at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada, during an artist residency in the winter of 2009. Pianist Keith Kirchoff and I met in Banff and began collaborating on various projects when we agreed to perform and record Ornstein's cello and piano music after

reading through the Preludes. It became very clear then that this music would become the subject of my doctoral project. We spent long hours for the remainder of the residency rehearsing and performing the music in Banff and other locales in Alberta including a guest artist performance at the University of Lethbridge. In the summer of 2009, we performed the complete works in Tempe, Arizona, Los Angeles, California, Los Olivos, California and Woodside, California, at the home of Severo Ornstein, Leo Ornstein's son. We returned to Banff in October of 2009 and recorded the music. For me, this project has been the most rewarding musical experience of my life.

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APPENDIX A
PERMISSION LETTER

Poon Hill
2200 Bear Gulch Road
Woodside, CA 94062
Tel: (650) 851-4258
e-mail: Severo@poonhill.com

April 11, 2013

Dear Mr. Alvarez,

You have my permission to include whatever examples you wish of my father's 'Cello music in your document. I look forward to receiving the document and a copy of the recording.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Severo M. Ornstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Severo M. Ornstein

APPENDIX B

RECORDING OF ORNSTEIN'S CELLO AND PIANO WORKS

[CONSULT ATTACHED FILES]

APPENDIX C

ABOUT KEITH KIRCHOFF

Keith Kirchoff is one of the most outstanding artists of his generation. He works towards promoting under-recognized composers and educating audiences as to the importance of new and experimental music. An active lecturer who has presented in countries throughout the world, his recital programs focus on the integration of computers and modern electronics into traditional classical performance spaces.

Kirchoff has played in many of North America's largest cities as well as major cities throughout Europe. He has appeared with orchestras throughout the U.S. performing a wide range of concerti, including the Boston premiere of Charles Ives' *Emerson Concerto* and the world premiere of Matthew McConnell's *Concerto for Toy Piano*, as well as more traditional concerti by Tchaikovsky and Chopin. He has also been a featured soloist in many music festivals, including Performing Arts at CAM (Chelsea Contemporary Art Museum, New York), the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS), the Oregon Festival of American Music, PianoForte Chicago, The Experimental Piano Series, Ives and His World, and The eXtensible Toy Piano Project.

The winner of the 2006 Steinway Society Piano Competition and the 2005 John Cage Award, Kirchoff was named the 2011 "Distinguished Scholar" by the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association. He has also received composing grants from MetLife Meet the Composer and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

Kirchoff's primary teachers include Dean Kramer, Stephen Drury, and Paul Wirth. He received his Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Oregon in 2003, graduating summa cum laude, and then received his Master of Music degree at the New England Conservatory in 2005. He has also studied composition with Michael Gandolfi

and Jeffrey Stolet and conducting with Richard Hoenich. In addition to his recordings on his independent label Thinking outLOUD Records, Kirchoff has released recordings on the New World, SEAMUS, and Zerx labels.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Los Angeles-based cellist, R. Nicolas Alvarez, enjoys an exciting career as an orchestral, solo, and chamber musician and music educator. Prior to arriving in California, he was a member of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and assistant principal cellist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and was an active freelance musician in Arizona. He has played under the batons of Daniel Barenboim, Kurt Masur, Pierre Boulez, Christoph Eschenbach, James Levine, David Robertson, and Osmo Vänskä.

In 2005, he was a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center (TMC) in Massachusetts, where he served as principal cellist of the TMC Orchestra. In addition he has performed at the Texas Music Festival, the Killington Music Festival, and the Pablo Casals Festival in France. He has performed in master classes for Joel Krosnick, Laurence Lesser, Bernard Greenhouse, Steven Isserlis, and Yo-Yo Ma.

As a musician in the Phoenix area, he performed regularly with the Phoenix Symphony, Arizona Opera, and the Downtown Chamber Series, and he appeared at the Red Rocks Festival in Sedona.

A versatile musician equally comfortable with traditional and contemporary repertoire, Alvarez's projects have included collaborations with composer Louis Andriessen, the Canadian premiere of Doug Harbin's *Suite for Cello in Three Parts* a recording of Leo Ornstein's complete works for cello and piano with pianist Keith Kirchoff, a performance of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, and a series of Beethoven sonatas with pianist Liang-yu Wang.

As a musician in Los Angeles, Alvarez has performed with numerous orchestras including the Torrance Symphony, the Burbank Philharmonic, the Redlands Symphony, and the Golden State Pops Orchestra. In the summer of 2011 he performed with California's Camerata Tango at the One World Theater in Austin, Texas.

A passionate educator, he holds a teaching certificate from the state of Texas and is a registered teacher with the Suzuki Association of the Americas. Alvarez has maintained private studios in Texas and Arizona and served as Thomas Landschoot's Teaching Assistant at Arizona State University. He currently teaches privately and for the Harmony Project, a program dedicated to serving low-income youth in Los Angeles.

Alvarez holds a Master of Music from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and a Bachelor of Music from the University of North Texas. He is currently completing a Doctor of Musical Arts in cello performance at Arizona State University. His principal teachers have been Carter Enyeart, John Sharp, and Thomas Landschoot.