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TONES:

AN ANALYSIS OF ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON'S *21 SOUNDING MINUTES*

FOR SOLO FLUTE WITH INTERPRETIVE IMPLICATIONS

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A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY

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To Erik,
the bearer of unconditional things.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iv |
| LIST OF FIGURES..... | vii |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| LIST OF EXAMPLES | viii |
| ABSTRACT | xi |
| 1 INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 2 ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON AND HIS MUSIC..... | 11 |
| 3 21 SOUNDING MINUTES: HISTORY AND FEATURES..... | 20 |
| 4 STRUCTURAL AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS..... | 28 |
| Pitch Material, Style, and Rhetorical Procedures | 28 |
| Formal Categories | 31 |
| Monothematic <i>Minutes</i> | 32 |
| Tone Tones | 33 |
| Folksong Tones | 36 |
| Cloud Tones | 40 |
| Flower Tones..... | 43 |
| Heaven Tones | 47 |
| Woman Tones | 51 |
| Old Tones | 55 |
| Contrasting <i>Minutes</i> | 59 |
| Storm Tones | 60 |
| Fish Tones..... | 64 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Night Tones | 68 |
| Museum Tones | 72 |
| Child Tones | 76 |
| Morning Tones..... | 80 |
| International Tones..... | 84 |
| Multi-Section <i>Minutes</i> | 88 |
| God Tones | 89 |
| Rain Tones | 93 |
| Snow Tones..... | 97 |
| Evening Tones..... | 101 |
| Bird Tones | 105 |
| Love Tones..... | 109 |
| Man Tones..... | 113 |
| 5 CONCLUSIONS | 117 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 126 |
| APPENDIX A PERFORMANCE INSTRUCTIONS | 127 |
| APPENDIX B MOVEMENTS OF <i>21 SOUNDING MINUTES</i> | 128 |
| APPENDIX C RECORDINGS OF <i>21 SOUNDING MINUTES</i> | 129 |
| APPENDIX D FLUTE WORKS BY ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON | 130 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1. "Storm Tones," form and structural melody. | 63 |
| Figure 2. "Night Tones," structural melody. | 69 |
| Figure 3. "God Tones," pitch material in section A. | 91 |
| Figure 4. "Rain Tones," form and pitch centers. | 94 |
| Figure 5. "Evening Tones," form and structural melody with interruptions. | 101 |
| Figure 6. "Man Tones," form and structural melody. | 114 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1. Monothematic <i>Minutes</i> | 32 |
| Table 2. Key areas in "Flower Tones." | 44 |
| Table 3. Contrasting <i>Minutes</i> | 59 |
| Table 4. Multi-section <i>Minutes</i> | 88 |

LIST OF EXAMPLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Example 1. "Tone Tones," first line | 33 |
| Example 2. "Tone Tones," final line | 34 |
| Example 3. "Folksong Tones," first and second lines | 36 |
| Example 4. "Folksong Tones," fourth line | 38 |
| Example 5. "Cloud Tones," first line | 40 |
| Example 6. "Cloud Tones," third line | 41 |
| Example 7. "Flower Tones," first line | 43 |
| Example 8. "Flower Tones," fifth and sixth lines | 45 |
| Example 9. "Heaven Tones," first line | 47 |
| Example 10. "Heaven Tones," final line | 48 |
| Example 11. "Heaven Tones," third line | 48 |
| Example 12. "Woman Tones," first line | 51 |
| Example 13. "Woman Tones," fourth line | 52 |
| Example 14. "Woman Tones," third line | 53 |
| Example 15. "Old Tones," first line | 55 |
| Example 16. "Old Tones," fourth line | 56 |
| Example 17. "Old Tones," third line | 56 |
| Example 18. "Storm Tones," first line | 60 |
| Example 19. "Storm Tones," third line | 61 |
| Example 20. "Storm Tones," fifth line | 62 |
| Example 21. "Fish Tones," first line | 64 |
| Example 22. "Fish Tones," fourth line | 65 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Example 23. "Fish Tones," third line | 66 |
| Example 24. "Night Tones," first and second lines | 68 |
| Example 25. "Night Tones," fourth line | 70 |
| Example 26. "Museum Tones," first line | 72 |
| Example 27. "Museum Tones," third line | 73 |
| Example 28. "Museum Tones," final line | 74 |
| Example 29. "Child Tones," first line | 76 |
| Example 30. "Child Tones," third line..... | 77 |
| Example 31. "Child Tones," final line | 78 |
| Example 32. "Morning Tones," first line | 80 |
| Example 33. "Morning Tones," third line | 82 |
| Example 34. "Morning Tones," final line | 82 |
| Example 35. "International Tones," first line | 84 |
| Example 36. "International Tones," second line | 85 |
| Example 37. "International Tones," final line | 86 |
| Example 38. "God Tones," first line | 89 |
| Example 39. "God Tones," final line | 90 |
| Example 40. "God Tones," third line | 91 |
| Example 41. "Rain Tones," first line..... | 93 |
| Example 42. "Rain Tones," second line..... | 94 |
| Example 43. "Rain Tones," fifth line..... | 95 |
| Example 44. "Snow Tones," first line | 97 |
| Example 45. "Snow Tones," fourth and fifth lines..... | 98 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Example 46. "Evening Tones," first and second lines | 102 |
| Example 47. "Evening Tones," third line | 103 |
| Example 48. "Bird Tones," first and second lines | 105 |
| Example 49. "Bird Tones," fifth line | 107 |
| Example 50. "Love Tones," first line | 109 |
| Example 51. "Love Tones," third and fourth lines | 110 |
| Example 52. "Man Tones," first line | 113 |
| Example 53. "Man Tones," third and fourth lines | 114 |

ABSTRACT

Among the most significant and prolific Icelandic composers, Atli Heimir Sveinsson (b. 1938) has created music in virtually every style and genre. He has composed a diverse assortment of works for flute, and his formally innovative and programmatic *21 Sounding Minutes* for solo flute, composed for flutist Manuela Wiesler in 1980, has become one of the most performed and best-known pieces of Icelandic flute music. This document provides background information on the work's genesis, performance and reception history, and defining characteristics. It includes the perspectives of the composer and the two flutists, Áshildur Haraldsdóttir and Martial Nardeau, who have recorded the work in its entirety.

21 Sounding Minutes consists of twenty-one programmatic miniatures for solo flute. This study provides a detailed structural and rhetorical analysis of each movement, including discussion on the ways in which analytical observations may inform performance. The twenty-one movements fall into three formal categories: monothematic, contrasting, and multi-section and many of them share several stylistic features. Furthermore, connections exist both between individual movements and musical and programmatic content. The *21 Sounding Minutes* offer flutists myriad programming and interpretive options, giving them the opportunity to create virtually limitless versions of the work. Flutists can use the formal, rhetorical, and programmatic features uncovered in the analysis contained in this document in order to inform their programming and interpretive choices.

1 INTRODUCTION

Iceland, situated between Greenland and Norway at the boundary between the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, has a population of approximately three hundred thousand. The nation's outstanding education system, as well as the Viking mentality that encourages young people to leave their home for distant shores to broaden their horizons, has prevented the country from becoming culturally isolated. Because of this, Icelandic society has been able to cultivate a rich and varied artistic life, and this includes vibrant popular music and art music scenes.

Despite the abundant and often superb creative output generated by the composers of new music in Iceland, researchers have largely overlooked their work. Scholars have published little on Icelandic music thus far, and most of that is not particularly detailed. This is not surprising, given the country's small population and relatively short history of art music creation, which did not begin to develop substantially until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Atli Heimir Sveinsson (b. 1938) is a prime example of a brilliant composer who, despite his prominence and influence on the Icelandic music scene, has received less scholarly attention than he deserves.

Among the most significant and prolific Icelandic composers, Atli Heimir has created music in virtually every style and genre. His output includes numerous pieces for flute, among them the sizeable and formally innovative 21 *Sounding Minutes* for solo flute, one of the best-known and most widely-performed pieces of Icelandic flute music. It is the intent of this author to

illuminate those essential qualities of the work that enable it to captivate so many performers and listeners.

As noted earlier, despite Atli Heimir's¹ status as a towering figure in Icelandic musical life, scholars have published relatively little on the composer's life and works. No analyses of his works exist in print, nor does a detailed biography or a complete overview of his output. Several more general sources, however, provide valuable information.

Árni Heimir Ingólfsson contributed a general overview of the composer's life and music to the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, which also includes a selected works list.² Somewhat out of date, this entry does not include any information on the composer's activities since the year 2000, but does trace significant stylistic features of his music and provides several illustrative examples.

Three books on Nordic and Icelandic music provide the most significant amount of information on Atli Heimir's life and works. The two later works, as well as the aforementioned *Grove* entry, draw heavily on the first: Göran Bergendal's *New Music in Iceland* (copyright 1987, published 1991).³ This book makes passing mention of both Atli Heimir and Manuela Wiesler, the flutist for whom he wrote *21 Sounding Minutes*, in several places. A thirteen-page section dedicated to the composer provides an overview of his life, as well as a discussion of several of his works and some notable features of his output.

¹ In Icelandic, it is appropriate to refer to individuals by their first name under all circumstances.

² *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Sveinsson, Atli Heimir," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27172> (accessed November 13, 2012).

³ Göran Bergendal, *New Music in Iceland* (Reykjavik: Icelandic Music Information Centre, 1991), 110-122.

Marek Podhajski's *Dictionary of Icelandic Composers* (copyright 1993, published 1997) also contains information on Atli Heimir's life and works.⁴ This book enumerates and discusses Icelandic composers, but does not place the same emphasis as Bergendal's does on new Icelandic music in general. Podhajski's book uses some of the information Bergendal included in his work, while adding the author's own observations, as well as updated information on the composer's output. Similarly to Bergendal's book, Atli Heimir receives a passing mention in several places, but a brief section devoted to him exclusively contains the greatest concentration of information on his music.

The third book that contains information on Atli Heimir is *New Music of the Nordic Countries* from 2002, edited by John D. White. It includes the writings of several authors, but White himself wrote the chapter entitled "New Music of Iceland," which contains information on Atli Heimir.⁵ This book draws on Bergendal's and Podhajski's books but adds some of the author's own insights as well as newer material.

The Icelandic newspapers and broadcast media have interviewed Atli Heimir several times. *Morgunblaðið*, Iceland's oldest newspaper still in print, is one of the nation's foremost sources for current information on the arts. This paper printed several interviews with Atli Heimir, including some about his flute works.

⁴ Marek Podhajski, *Dictionary of Icelandic Composers* (Warsaw: Akademia Muzyczna im. Fryderyka Chopina, 1997), 50-54.

⁵ John D. White, ed., *New Music of the Nordic Countries* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2002), 333-337.

Liner notes accompanying recordings of Atli Heimir's works contain valuable insight from the performers who have recorded his music. They offer not only pertinent factual information on individual pieces, but also the flutists' thoughts on the music and the composer as well as material on the performers themselves. Some of that information has not been published elsewhere. Each published recording of the *21 Sounding Minutes* includes liner notes that the flutist wrote, sometimes with added input from other musicians or writers. Each flutist knows, or knew, the composer personally, so the writings that accompany the recordings are both credible and relevant. Manuela Wiesler's notes offer biographical information on her and the composer, and material on the history and nature of the work.⁶ Martial Nardeau's recording includes information on his first impression of the *Sounding Minutes*.⁷ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir's liner notes contain her account of the work's character, as well as insight into Atli Heimir and his music from respected Icelandic writer Thor Vilhjálmsen.⁸

These notes provide fascinating insights, and the books that discuss Atli Heimir and his works provide a wealth of information regarding his career and music. However, the answers to many questions regarding the events leading to the creation of the *21 Sounding Minutes*, its genesis, the manner in which flutists have performed it, and the way audiences have received it remain unanswered in published sources. This work aims to fill this gap by providing information about the genesis and performance history of *21 Sounding Minutes*

⁶ Manuela Wiesler, *To Manuela: Icelandic Solo Flute Music written for and played by Manuela Wiesler*, BIS CD-456, 1989.

⁷ Martial Nardeau, *Icelandic Flute Music*, Icelandic Music Information Centre ITM 8-06, 1993.

⁸ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, *Tónamínútur: Complete Works for Flute*, Smekkleysa SMK 55, 2006.

as well as insights from flutists who have recorded the work. It will also provide a detailed analytical discussion of each movement of the work as well as a discussion of performance considerations.

A work as large in scope and as formally innovative as the *21 Sounding Minutes* presents several challenges to performers and analysts alike. Form constitutes one of the work's most fascinating aspects, both on a large and small scale. The individual movements of the work vary to a surprising extent in construction, given their minuscule proportions, raising the question of what formal structures the composer uses and whether he employs any of them recurrently. Similarly, the work utilizes a large arsenal of extended techniques and varied compositional procedures, also raising questions regarding whether certain stylistic or rhetorical elements permeate the work. The answers to these questions will lead to an improved understanding of the composer's style.

Given that the work has twenty-one movements that seem remarkably different from one another, examining whether musical connections exist between *Minutes* will further illuminate the overall coherence of the work. Furthermore, as each movement of the work has programmatic content, investigating whether connections exist between those that have a related program, or between programmatic and musical elements, has considerable value.

The information uncovered through research into the background of the work will provide those interested in Atli Heimir's career with material hitherto not available in print. A structural analysis of *21 Sounding Minutes* should

benefit scholars wishing to gain a better understanding of the stylistic and formal procedures the composer employs, perhaps providing insight into compositional techniques that he uses in some of his other works. Performers of the work should be able to use that analytical information in order to inform performance decisions. Furthermore, as any playing of the *Sounding Minutes* involves programming decisions as well as interpretive ones, an understanding of how the work's movements relate to each other and insight into connections between programmatic and musical content will assist with performance.

In order to gain access to pertinent information that does not exist in published sources, I interviewed the composer and the two flutists who have recorded the piece in its entirety, Martial Nardeau and Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, in Iceland in August of 2012. I interviewed Atli Heimir and Áshildur at their respective homes in Reykjavik, and Martial at a coffee shop in his nearby hometown of Kópavogur.

Only Atli Heimir himself can provide certain information regarding how the *21 Sounding Minutes* came into existence. The extended techniques, unusual notation, and interpretive possibilities of the *Sounding Minutes* make input from performers especially relevant to the overall discussion of the piece, as well. The flutists who have worked with Atli Heimir, recorded his music, and performed this piece extensively have valuable insight to contribute, especially to performers wishing to study and play the work. They also have significant additions to make to the historical record of the performance and audience reception of the piece.

A list of questions provided the basis of the interviews, but it was only loosely followed, in order to give both performers and the composer an opportunity to express insights that might not have come to light had the interviews been more formally guided. Any quotations from Martial, Áshildur, or Atli Heimir in this document originate in these interviews, unless otherwise noted.

Because of the lack of published analysis or discussion of *21 Sounding Minutes*, information derived directly from its score provides the basis for all analytical discussion of the piece. The individual *Sounding Minutes* differ markedly from one another; the composer himself claims that he simply sat at the piano and improvised them, with no formal plan. Furthermore, as the work does not belong to any school of composition, but uses varied compositional elements and musical language, it would have been counterproductive to begin the analysis with a set theoretical framework in place. Instead, I addressed each movement on its own terms, using whatever analytical techniques proved fruitful when examining each.

As the analysis progressed, it became clear that the movements were, indeed, quite different from each other, but also that several of them had formal and/or rhetorical features in common. The process involved evaluating each *Minute* separately in terms of form, pitch content, melodic elements, extended techniques, and rhythmic procedures. Through examination of individual movements, a formal categorization emerged. Furthermore, several

compositional procedures that the composer employed repeatedly throughout the piece also came to light.

A discussion of performance issues accompanies the structural analysis of each *Minute*, including pertinent and enlightening insights from Áshildur and Martial. In several instances, the performance discussion includes suggestions regarding the ways in which the structural analysis can inform performance decisions. For this reason, the performance discussion of each movement follows its structural analysis directly.

21 Sounding Minutes calls for considerable use of extended techniques. I have not included detailed information regarding how they are to be executed, such as fingerings for individual notes, for several reasons. Flutes differ in construction according to regional tastes, including variances in mechanics and foot joint sizes. Student and professional flutes also differ significantly from each other in construction and capabilities. These factors make it difficult to prescribe solutions for technical issues in the *Minutes* as performance results will vary between instruments. Flutists also have access to several exemplary books on extended techniques, such as those by Robert Dick and James Pellerite.⁹ These works contain a wealth of information about fingerings and performance techniques, and can help a flutist determine which options will serve him or her best in performance. Several ever-changing online resources provide such information, as well. In addition, the composer's philosophy of allowing a performer considerable freedom in performance somewhat

⁹ Robert Dick, *The Other Flute: A Performance Manual Of Contemporary Techniques*, 2nd ed. (New York: Multiple Breath Music Co., 1989); James J. Pellerite, *A Modern Guide to Fingerings for the Flute*, 2nd ed. (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing Co., 1988).

contradicts the idea of one flutist providing a detailed prescription for performance methods.

When the score leaves doubt, however, as to how a flutist should play a movement, I include additional technical information for the benefit of those wishing to perform the work. The information included on performance derives from my own experimentation with extended techniques, a considerable amount of insight from Martial Nardeau, who taught me a large portion of the piece during my undergraduate studies at the Iceland Academy of the Arts, and from the abovementioned interviews.

21 Sounding Minutes features a highly unusual and innovative large-scale form, with twenty-one brief, programmatic movements, which may be played in any order, or from which a flutist may select a subset to perform. These diminutive movements display impressive formal variety, but take one of three basic forms: monothematic, contrasting, and multi-section.

Analysis also reveals that Atli Heimir employs several stylistic and rhetorical procedures that permeate the work. These all involve gestures or compositional elements found in a significant number of movements. Perhaps the most obvious stylistic feature of the work involves its use of strong contrasts, which function both as rhetorical and form-defining devices.

Although the *Sounding Minutes* rarely lapse into functional tonality, the composer echoes several tonal compositional elements during the work. Many of the *Minutes* have a clear pitch center or adhere to a certain mode or pitch collection, and they often feature unique, expressive moments where the

composer in some way deviates briefly from the previously established melodic practice or pitch collection. Some of the movements have an underlying structural melody as their foundation, many allude to a half-cadence toward their middle, and several feature a liquidating closing section where the texture dissolves and the dynamics fade out.

Furthermore, analysis demonstrates that *21 Sounding Minutes* features significant connections between movements and between programmatic and musical content. Some of these connections involve form, connecting movements through the use of similar formal divisions or compositional procedures. In some cases, *Minutes* related through programmatic content also feature musical connections. Flutists can use these observations in order to enhance their understanding of individual movements or to assist them in making programming decisions.

2 ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON AND HIS MUSIC

Still active as a composer, Atli Heimir Sveinsson has enjoyed a long and varied musical career and has become one of the most influential figures in Iceland's musical life. His creative activities and teaching have profoundly impacted the composition of new music in his home country. Furthermore, his active membership in various societies, vocal advocacy for music in the media, and work toward increasing the variety and scope of the country's concert life represent significant contributions to the Icelandic art music scene.

Born in September of 1938 in Reykjavik, Atli Heimir began taking piano lessons at age ten from Rögnvaldur Sigurjónsson at the Reykjavik College of Music (Tónlistarskólinn í Reykjavík). He also studied composition with Jón Nordal starting in 1957. In 1959, he graduated from the Reykjavik College of music and moved to Germany at the urging of composer Leifur Þórarinnsson, residing for a time at a Roman-Catholic monastery near Passau.

Later that year, he began studies at the Cologne University of Music (Staatliche Hochschule für Musik), an important center for new music in the post-war years. Atli Heimir feels particularly grateful that he had the opportunity to study composition with Günter Raphael, who taught him “the good, old handcraft” of serial composition.¹⁰ With his instrumentation teacher, Bernd Alois Zimmermann, he developed ease with composing in diverse styles. He also studied composition with Rudolf Petzold, conducting with Wolfgang von der Nahmer, and piano with Hermann Pillnay and Hans Otto Schmidt, receiving a

¹⁰ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview by author, Reykjavík, Iceland, August 16, 2012.

diploma in composition and theory in 1963. He participated in the Darmstadt summer course given by Karlheinz Stockhausen and studied further with Stockhausen, Henri Pousseur, Christof Caskel, and Frederick Rzewsky in Cologne.

According to Bergendal, these formative years afforded Atli Heimir an introduction to “different types of Central European culture—a little old-fashioned Jewish humanism from Günther Rafael, a dialectic view of history from Bernd Alois Zimmerman, and the post-war musical avant-gardism after Webern, as personified by Karlheinz Stockhausen.”¹¹ In 1964, he became one of the first of many Icelanders to study in the Netherlands, where he received training in electronic music from Gottfried Michael Koenig in Bilthoven.

Upon his return to Iceland, Atli Heimir settled in Reykjavik, the country’s capital, largest city, and primary center of artistic activity. There, he undertook a multifaceted and dynamic musical career. Although best known for his compositional output, he also taught music at the Reykjavik Junior College (Menntaskólinn í Reykjavík) from 1968 to 1978 and began teaching music theory and composition at the Reykjavík College of Music in 1978. Through his teaching, he profoundly influenced younger generations, counting among his students noted Icelandic composers such as Finnur Torfi Stefánsson, Hjálmar H. Ragnarsson, Kjartan Ólafsson, Hróðmar Sigurbjörnsson, Haukur Tómasson, and Atli Ingólfsson.

In addition to composing and teaching, Atli Heimir produced numerous music-related radio programs for the Icelandic National Broadcasting Service

¹¹ Bergendal, 112-113.

and conducted extensively. He served as chairman of the Society of Icelandic Composers (1972-83) and the Nordic Composers' Council (1974-76). In 1976, he became the first Icelandic composer to win the Nordic Council Music Prize for his 1973 Flute Concerto. A founder of the Dark Music Days festival for contemporary Icelandic music in 1980, he has also participated actively in various other music and arts festivals during the course of his career. The Swedish Royal Academy of Music elected him for membership in 1993.

The extremely varied nature of Atli Heimir's output makes him somewhat difficult to classify as a composer. Podhajski states that his most prominent characteristic "is his inclination toward permanent experimentation and his constant search within new composing techniques for the elements which could be suitable for his current creative interests."¹² White writes: "this imaginative composer can be alternately iconoclastic, mystical, jocose, brutal, silly, romantic, rebellious, emotional and expressionistic within a wide range of musical styles and media."¹³ Bergendal describes him as an "unsettled spirit, a restless and at times provocative experimenter," going on to say that he "with his creative egocentricity and more grandiose radicalism ought to take the role of, for example, an Icelandic Schumann."¹⁴

These evaluations paint Atli Heimir as a pioneering composer and an exciting and dynamic creative spirit, unafraid to upset the status quo. However, he also demonstrates considerable practicality by composing music for the performers and performance environments available in his community. These

¹² Podhajski, 53.

¹³ White, 337.

¹⁴ Bergendal, 111.

factors, combined with an element of sheer genius, explain why he has become one of the preeminent figures in Icelandic musical life.

Atli Heimir's considerable oeuvre runs the gamut between accessible songs and children's pieces for piano and enormous experimental operas and symphonies. Although he has created music belonging to most genres of art music—including operas, chamber works with tape, piano music, and solo instrumental pieces—most of his output consists of vocal pieces with instrumental accompaniment, chamber music, choral music, and orchestral works. He believes in the importance of all manner of musical activity and ideas, naming Mao Zedong's idea of letting "a hundred flowers bloom" as a guiding principle.¹⁵ In this spirit, he has composed music for the concert hall, theater, church, amateur performers, and children.

The composer's musical language exhibits impressive variety, reflecting almost all styles of music after World War II as well as many older styles. Several of his most beloved pieces use uncomplicated tonal or pentatonic pitch material and embody the characteristics of folk songs. His more daring works, however, frequently feature strong contrasts along with formal innovation and experimental and theatrical elements as well as serial, atonal, or extremely chromatic pitch content.

White writes that Atli Heimir is "noted for uniquely expressive ideas, for musical surprises, or for being in the forefront of avant-garde styles" and that he "enjoys confounding his audiences with seeming contradictions."¹⁶ White names

¹⁵ Bergendal, 117.

¹⁶ White, 335.

Karlheinz Stockhausen and John Cage as significant influences and states that “Atli strives for the broad, innovative and expansive gesture, and in this he is unique among Icelandic composers.”¹⁷

The vast array of compositional techniques Atli Heimir has employed in his works includes: “aleatoric organisation linked both with sound material and musical form, complicated textural arrangements, post-romantic styles, references to jazz and rock music and even musical elements from non-European cultures, especially from Japan.”¹⁸ Many of the composer’s works feature graphic scores, and a number of pieces entrust a considerable amount of control to the performer and may vary significantly from one performance to another.

Atli Heimir composed a number of works utilizing the serial techniques he had studied in Germany early in his career. His use of serialism varies considerably, from formal and strict application of patterns to free elaboration. Often, “serialism’s gestures and essence can be found in his music, but not necessarily the predetermined calculations.”¹⁹ For him, serialism offers a pitch language to use rather than a formula to follow, and it constitutes one of many colors in his palette.

Music for the stage, including ballet, opera, and incidental music, has played a significant role in Atli Heimir’s career. Furthermore, several of his pieces not directly written for the stage nonetheless incorporate elements of the theater. A number of these works require the use of props, specific lighting,

¹⁷ White, 333-334.

¹⁸ Podhajski, 50.

¹⁹ Bergendal, 112.

words spoken by the performers, or other extra-musical performance aspects. Some of this music exhibits absurd and intentionally provocative elements.

Atli Heimir wrote several pieces in a minimalist style, and a number of his works feature seemingly endless repetition. His minimalist pieces range from quiet, meditative, and introverted to obnoxious and intentionally offensive to the audience. In a different vein, some of the composer's music embodies a Romantic spirit, manifesting in lyrical tonal language, the use of Romantic-era forms, or neo-Romantic expressionism. He has also composed a considerable amount of programmatic music.

The diverse assortment of works that Atli Heimir has created for the flute reflects some of the vast variety featured in his output as a whole. He wrote them all for a specific performer or performance situation. When asked why he has written so many works for flute, Atli Heimir immediately launches into a discussion of the various flute players he has enjoyed working with, saying: "These flute players. They are the reason, the various excellent people I've encountered throughout my life."²⁰

The difficulty of Atli Heimir's works for flute ranges from falling within the grasp of intermediate students to demanding a virtuoso's expert touch. Similarly, the pieces vary tremendously in both size and style. Some are quite conservative while others have a more experimental character and feature innovative forms, styles, and techniques. The pieces written for individual flutists tend to be larger, more difficult, and more experimental in nature than his

²⁰ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

other flute pieces. Appendix C provides a complete list of Atli Heimir's works for flute.

Four flutists in particular inspired Atli Heimir to compose most of his flute works. The first was Robert Aitken, a Canadian flutist who lived in Iceland for a time. The composer says of him that he had an excellent command of extended techniques and that he could play a variety of different flutes. Atli Heimir composed his first substantial flute piece, the Flute Concerto, for him in 1973. This concerto features an innovative one-movement form as well as extended performance techniques. It opens at the zenith of the piece, with loud dynamics and bombastic percussion. It then moves on to a slower area and ends with a section for shakuhachi, a Japanese bamboo flute.

In more recent years, Atli Heimir has composed works for Kolbeinn Bjarnason and Áshildur Haraldsdóttir. Kolbeinn, an expert in avant-garde music and extended techniques, premiered Atli Heimir's one-movement Flute Concerto No. 2 in 2008. Áshildur Haraldsdóttir is a versatile New England Conservatory and Juilliard-trained flute virtuoso, member of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, and a former student of Manuela Wiesler. Atli composed his enormous, seven-movement Flute Sonata for her in 2002, as well as a set of variations on the folk-song "Man ég þig mey" in 2005. She is one of two flutists (the other being Martial Nardeau) who has recorded the *21 Sounding Minutes* in its entirety.

Of all the excellent flutists Atli Heimir has worked with, Manuela Wiesler (1955-2006) requires further consideration here; he composed the *21 Sounding*

Minutes for her in 1980. They had known each other for several years at that time, and he had written an earlier work, *Xanties* for flute and piano, for a competition performance by her and pianist Snorri Sigfús Birgisson in 1975. An extremely virtuosic piece of program music, this work calls for theatrical elements such as words spoken by the performers and displaying a candelabra with lit candles on the piano during the performance.

Manuela, an Austrian flutist born in Brazil, began studying flute in Vienna at age ten, gaining admission to the Vienna Conservatory in 1967. After graduating in 1971, she moved to Paris and studied with Alain Marion. In 1973, she returned to Vienna, where she married Icelandic clarinetist Sigurður Snorrason, with whom she moved to Iceland and stayed for ten years. From 1983-1985, she had an active performing career in Sweden, after which she moved back to Vienna, where she remained for the rest of her life. Manuela Wiesler passed away in 2006.

Manuela had an enormous impact on Iceland's musical life by inspiring the creation of a large number of new Icelandic works for flute. Atli Heimir asserts: "Iceland was too small for Manuela; she was in demand everywhere."²¹ With her excellent technique, mastery of extended playing techniques, and interpretive artistry she influenced an entire generation of Icelandic flute players through her inspirational performances and pedagogy.

Manuela's outstanding playing and keen interest in new Icelandic music motivated not only Atli Heimir, but also several other composers to write music for flute. Besides the two pieces Atli Heimir Sveinsson wrote for her, works

²¹ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

created for Manuela include Áskell Másson's *Itys* (1978), Hjalmar H. Ragnarsson's *In Black and White* (1978), Leifur Þórarinnsson's *Sumarmál* (1978) and *Sonata per Manuela* (1979), Magnús Blöndal Jóhannsson's *Solitude* (1983), Páll P. Pálsson's *The Girl and the Wind* (1979), Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson's *Euridice* (1979) and *To Manuela* (date unknown), and Kjartan Ólafsson's *Calculus* (1990).

Several of the works that Icelandic composers wrote for Manuela have become relatively well-known among Icelandic flutists, but few have enjoyed as much attention and celebration as the *21 Sounding Minutes*. The following section discusses the circumstances surrounding the genesis of that work and its performance and recording history, as well as its general features.

3 **21 SOUNDING MINUTES: HISTORY AND FEATURES**

Over a period of several years, Manuela Wiesler performed regularly under the auspices of the Swedish Rikskonserter, a national institution that organized and funded concerts all across Sweden. These concerts brought high-quality live musical performances to people who usually had little opportunity to enjoy such events, and they primarily took place in schools and rural areas.

According to Atli Heimir, the Rikskonserter approached Manuela about touring schools and introducing the flute and its music to Swedish students. The institution then contacted him, asking whether he would be interested in composing a piece for this tour. After some discussion between flutist and composer, they decided that a collection of brief movements would serve the purposes of the tour well, and this led to the Rikskonserter commissioning the *21 Sounding Minutes*.

Atli Heimir composed *21 Sounding Minutes* for solo flute during the summer of 1980 while staying in a house his family owns on the small island of Flatey, off the west coast of Iceland. Formerly an influential cultural center and the site of a Catholic monastery during the middle ages, the island accommodated a thriving community for centuries. During the latter half of the twentieth century, its population dwindled, and today the village has only a handful of year-round inhabitants. In the summertime, however, its houses take on the role of vacation homes and tourism thrives.

The house in Flatey serves Atli Heimir well as an enjoyable and peaceful space in which to compose. He says that he has written a considerable amount of music there. “You just turn off the phone. In past years, there was no telephone service or television; you can be in peace there.” Atli suggests that this environment may have influenced the piece and that nature and the island’s landscape played into its creation. He further states that he believes that such factors strongly influence Icelanders and their creative pursuits, such as writing and painting.²²

Atli Heimir claims that he primarily used improvisatory compositional methods when he wrote the *21 Sounding Minutes*, a technique he often employs when composing: “I sketch something; I improvise.” He mentions that although he has a background in serial composition, he does not use it in a calculated way and that there is nothing serial in the *Sounding Minutes*. He says that, to him, “the differentiation between tonal and atonal has never mattered.” He also suggests that perhaps he has “been given a way with words. I find it easy to enter into different styles.” He gives some of the credit for this facility to his erstwhile composition teacher, Bernd Alois Zimmerman, who frequently used a blend of different styles in his works.²³

On creating a series of programmatic character pieces for the Rikskonserter commission, the composer comments: “I do not know whether it works that way, but people have long thought that music can describe something...I talked about morning music and evening music and bird music

²² Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

²³ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

and people music, created odd titles.” Atli Heimir traces the lineage of these character pieces to Chopin and Schumann. He notes that because of the circumstances for which he wrote the *21 Sounding Minutes* it constitutes “occasional music,” but says that he nonetheless strove to create a high-quality work.²⁴

Of the considerable use of extended techniques in the piece, Atli Heimir says that although he has always been a bit of a modernist, he also feels that if composers call for new stylistic elements, they must have the proper inspiration to do so. Many pieces that require such techniques are little more than “catalogues of possibilities” that have little to say, and that many composers are “enchanted by the newness” of such things. He goes on to say “but, good God! Why not use it, if it is possible? There’s nothing wrong with that, but it is difficult to put it in an appropriate context; therein lies the problem.”²⁵

The autumn following their creation, Manuela Wiesler premiered the *21 Sounding Minutes* in Lund, Sweden. She toured the country with the work, and it became a staple of her repertoire. In 1989, she recorded her “12 favourite minutes” for the Swedish record company BIS, along with a number of other pieces Icelandic composers had composed for her.²⁶

Two other Icelandic flutists have since recorded the *21 Sounding Minutes* in its entirety. Martial Nardeau included it on his 1993 recording, *Icelandic Flute Music*, which features music for flute by several Icelandic

²⁴ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

²⁵ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

²⁶ Manuela Wiesler, *To Manuela: Icelandic Solo Flute Music written for and played by Manuela Wiesler*, BIS CD-456, 1989.

composers.²⁷ In 2005, Áshildur Haraldsdóttir released an album entitled *Tónamínútur: Complete Works for Flute*, which contains Atli Heimir's entire output for flute except for the concertos.²⁸ That album derives its title from the *Sounding Minutes*. Áshildur also recorded seven of the *Minutes* for her 2009 collaboration with Polish flutist Ewa Murawska and pianist Joanna Zathej-Wójcińska: *Together in Music: Icelandic & Polish Flute Music*.²⁹ Appendix C includes details on all published recordings of the *21 Sounding Minutes*.

Áshildur and Martial have both performed the work widely in Iceland and abroad, as well. Recently, Áshildur has played the *Sounding Minutes* in schools, using it in the manner originally intended, as an introduction to the flute and new music for students.

21 Sounding Minutes has gradually become one of the best-known and most extensively-performed pieces of Icelandic flute music. Most, if not all, Icelandic flutists are familiar with the work, and many of them have studied and performed at least part of it. It consists of twenty-one programmatic miniatures for solo flute, each printed on a single loose-leaf page. In the notes accompanying the score, the composer writes: "the duration of each movement is not to exceed one minute." After a minute, the performer must "stop and go immediately on to the next movement," even though he or she has not completed the previous one. He goes on to state: "a sound sign: a short

²⁷ Martial Nardeau, *Icelandic Flute Music*, Icelandic Music Information Centre ITM 8-06, 1993.

²⁸ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, *Tónamínútur: Complete Works for Flute*, Smekkleysa SMK 55, 2006.

²⁹ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, *Together in Music: Icelandic & Polish Flute Music*, Acte Préalable AP0224, 2009.

percussive sound – sfff’ should indicate the span of one minute to the performer.³⁰ Appendix A presents the work’s performance instructions in full.

The composer allows the flutist a considerable amount of flexibility when performing the *21 Sounding Minutes*, leaving the number of movements played and their order to the performer’s discretion. In addition, a flutist may perform any *Minute* up to three times so that the length of any performance can range from one minute to just over an hour. Flutists appreciate the flexibility the piece offers, both in terms of length and musical character. The ease of crafting a version of the piece that fits into any number of recital programs or performance situations contributes substantially to its popularity among performers.

In addition to its experimental and highly innovative form, *21 Sounding Minutes* requires the flutist to employ a vast array of extended playing techniques. Although many of these techniques constitute commonplace performance practice in the twenty-first century, they were relatively uncommon around 1980. These techniques create a remarkably multifarious soundscape for a solo flute work. Furthermore, the *Minutes* differ markedly in character both between and within certain movements, as well as displaying vast variety in tonal language. Rhythmic complexity and aleatoric elements further contribute to the work’s interest and generate an atmosphere of surprise and diversity.

The individual *Sounding Minutes* vary significantly in terms of difficulty, as well. Some movements require the performer to execute rare or difficult extended techniques, complex rhythms, or virtuosic technical passages while

³⁰ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, *Einundzwanzig tönende Minuten für Solo-Flöte* (Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1981).

others do not make such demands. While a performance of all twenty-one *Minutes* calls for a skilled player schooled in various extended playing techniques, a smaller selection of movements might not. This constitutes yet another element of flexibility for the performer, who can tailor the piece to suit his or her technical abilities.

Each movement of *21 Sounding Minutes* carries a programmatic title. The composer names the Romantic-era character pieces of Schumann and Chopin as the source for this idea. Programmatic topics derive from a variety of sources, including nature (“Fish Tones,” “Rain Tones”), people (“Woman Tones,” “Child Tones”), religion (“God Tones,” “Heaven Tones”), culture (“Museum Tones,” “Folksong Tones”), time of day (“Morning Tones,” “Night Tones”), emotions (“Love Tones”) and others. Although the composer denies a direct, descriptive connection between the *Minutes*’ titles and their music, in some cases, such as that of “Storm Tones,” the connection seems quite clear.

Flutists must select one of two approaches when they finish a movement in less than a minute. They may choose to repeat any completed *Minute* and play until cut off by the sound signal. Martial and Áshildur both choose this option. The other method involves ceasing to play after completing the movement, and waiting in silence for the remainder of the minute to pass before moving on to the next. Atli Heimir says that Manuela chose the latter approach in performance, a matter impossible to discern from her recording as she does not reach the end of any of the *Minutes*.

An important feature of the *21 Sounding Minutes* involves the cut-off of each movement. The composer calls for giving the flutist a sound signal at the end of one minute, to indicate that he or she should conclude that movement and move on to the next. This unusual element requires the performer to make several performance-related decisions.

Perhaps the most important of these decisions involves the nature of the sound signal used. The composer calls for a short, percussive sound, but does not provide further directions, leaving the performer a considerable measure of freedom. The sound signal must be audible to the performer, but a flutist must determine whether it should be loud or relatively soft, whether to use the same sound to end each movement, and what the nature of the signal should be. Differing sounds will influence the audience's experience of the piece in diverse ways and could, for instance, be unobtrusive, shocking, or even humorous.

Most, if not all, performers elect to use a consistent sound signal throughout their performance of the piece. When asked about the importance of using the same sound to end each *Minute*, the composer replied that it did not matter and that he had never given it any thought.³¹ Another decision involves whether or not to have another performer play the sound signal, or whether to engage audience members by assigning responsibility for ending the *Minutes* to one of them. Performers must also decide whether to have the timekeeper on or off stage; the composer leaves these choices up to the flutist.

Several flutists have performed different versions of the *Sounding Minutes* under widely varying circumstances. Divergent audiences have

³¹ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

received the piece favorably, although some listeners have also expressed surprise at some of the work's unusual or provocative elements.

When asked how audiences have received her performances of the work, Áshildur responds: "Very well, I must say. I've played it for typical new-music concertgoers and from teenagers down to six-year-olds" as the composer wrote it for schools. "It has gone very well, without exception."³² She goes on to talk about the impact of audience participation, noting that performances are particularly effective in reaching listeners when she allows audience members to give the sound signal that ends each *Minute*. This method gets the audience invested in the performance.

Martial Nardeau gave a similar response when asked about the work's reception, saying that his performances of the work have been well-received, both in Iceland and abroad. He says that whenever he has performed the work, audience members have commented on the *Sounding Minutes* in particular. He recalls that the principal of a music school in northern France asked to see the score. He also remembers a woman asking him why "Woman Tones" were "ugly." "God Tones" have received similar reactions, with audience members expressing surprise at the sound. He also says he has received comments on the extremely rapid and intense "Love Tones," that they were quite shocking to people and sounded more like a lovers' quarrel than music normally associated with love. "I've received all sorts of comments, and always something different in each place."³³

³² Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview by author, Reykjavík, Iceland, August 17, 2012.

³³ Martial Nardeau, interview by author, Kópavogur, Iceland, August 17, 2012.

4 STRUCTURAL AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Pitch Material, Style, and Rhetorical Procedures

Throughout the *21 Sounding Minutes*, Atli Heimir uses a number of rhetorical devices that recur in several movements. None of these procedures can be found in every *Minute*, but they appear consistently enough to warrant consideration as prominent stylistic features of the piece.

Atli Heimir utilizes varied pitch procedures in the *Sounding Minutes*: atonal, modal, tonal, and altered scales, with individual movements featuring varying degrees of chromaticism. Many *Minutes* use a modal or altered scale as their primary pitch material. In several instances, the composer opens a movement with a smaller set of pitches, giving an initial atonal impression, only to reveal the *Minute*'s full pitch collection gradually throughout subsequent phrases. Such coalescing pitch collections occur in "Woman Tones" and "Heaven Tones," for instance. In these *Minutes*, the composer opens with a set of three or four pitches, but quickly expands the collection to reveal the modal basis of the movement. In other movements, such as "Morning Tones," the composer introduces a movement's entire pitch collection at the outset, with later sections fragmenting it and utilizing sets extracted from it. In a handful of *Minutes*, the composer changes pitch centers during the movement's course.

Extended performance techniques pervade the *21 Sounding Minutes*, and constitute one of the first stylistic features an audience member at a performance of the work might notice. Usually, the composer confines himself

to one or two extended techniques for each movement, which he then applies on a consistent basis, lending each *Minute* a degree of stylistic consistency.

Many of the *Sounding Minutes* employ intensely contrasting interruptions as rhetorical devices. These contrasting sections also stand as independent formal sections within each movement. In many instances, the contrasts are so strong that they have quite a startling effect on the audience. Frequently, the composer sets these interruptions apart through a number of musical features, including the use or the lack of extended techniques, dynamic shifts, changes in tempo, time measured in seconds, changes in pitch material, and changes in articulation. Furthermore, he often separates the contrasting sections from the primary material with breath marks or rests. The stark contrasts presented within some movements, as well as the contrast a flutist may create between movements through programming choices, constitutes one of this work's most clearly defining features.

In many of the *Sounding Minutes*, the composer inserts one or two gestures which deviate from the stylistic or melodic framework established for the movement. These idiosyncratic moments, although smaller and more subtle than the aforementioned interruptions, often achieve extraordinary expressive effect. They may take the form of a unique instance of a pitch not belonging to the movement's established pitch collection, a break in the style established for that movement, or a unique accented pitch in an unexpected place.

Patrick McCreless has demonstrated how a composer of contemporary music can employ certain gestures that function rhetorically as half cadences,

despite being devoid of a traditional harmonic and formal context.³⁴ Atli Heimir uses such a device, placing an emphasis on $\hat{5}$ of the movement's mode toward the middle of many of the *Sounding Minutes*, often combining this pitch with various rhetorical procedures to create a unique, expressive moment. This emphasis on $\hat{5}$ echoes classical-era practices, although here it does not belong to a functional context and serves primarily as a rhetorical gesture. These gestures recall the classical half-cadence, and although they do not constitute true half cadences in the traditional, functional sense, they nonetheless create significant half-cadential moments.

Several *Sounding Minutes*, including "Child Tones" and "Bird Tones," feature motivic liquidation in their closing sections, where the ratio of rests to notes increases and previously introduced melodic material fragments. Often, a gradual decrease in dynamics accompanies this device.

In addition to these recurring rhetorical features, many individual *Minutes* relate to other movements by formal, rhetorical, and programmatic means. In some instances, such as that of "Bird Tones" and "Fish Tones," the movements connect on both a programmatic and a rhetorical level. In the case of "Rain Tones" and "Snow Tones," a threefold relation exists, with formal, motivic, and programmatic factors linking the movements. Some movements share a relation of pitch content and program, as the E-based "Man Tones," "Woman Tones," and "Child Tones" do.

³⁴ Patrick McCreless, "Anatomy of a Gesture: From Davidovsky to Chopin and Back," in *Approaches to Meaning in Music*, ed. Byron Almén and Edward Pearsall (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 11-40.

Formal Categories

In the *21 Sounding Minutes*, Atli Heimir employs one of three basic formal structures for each movement. Primarily, his use or non-use of contrasting melodic and/or technical elements within the *Minute* defines its form, but he divides some movements in more complex ways. Classifying the *Minutes* according to these formal procedures generates three categories: monothematic, contrasting, and multi section. This categorization provides the organizational framework for the following discussion of individual movements.

The monothematic *Minutes* embody the simplest forms and present subtle or no contrasts. They appear here in order from simplest to most complex, with formally undivided *Minutes* first, and the movements bearing a semblance of the formal divisions seen in the more strongly contrasting *Minutes* placed later.

The movements of the second group have a form created by two alternating, strongly contrasting sections, designated A and X. They also appear in this discussion in order of increasing complexity and segmentation.

The movements of the third group feature more complex formal divisions than those of the first two. These multi-section movements all feature two to three formal areas, designated A, B, and C. Four movements of the third group relate to those of the second group strongly in that they feature clearly contrasting X sections in addition to their A, B, and C areas. The discussion of these takes place directly after the minutes of the second group. The final three *Minutes* discussed do not contain contrasting X sections.

Monothematic *Minutes*

The movements of the monothematic group feature melodic material that remains essentially unaltered throughout, retaining similar rhythmic activity and melodic devices, without strongly contrasting sections. Seven of the *Sounding Minutes* take this form: “Tone Tones,” “Folksong Tones,” “Cloud Tones,” “Flower Tones,” “Heaven Tones,” “Woman Tones,” and “Old Tones.” Table 1 outlines the form of each of these movements.

| TITLE | FORM |
|-----------------------|--|
| Tone Tones | A |
| Folksong Tones | A |
| Cloud Tones | A (modulates) |
| Flower Tones | A-A ¹ -A ² |
| Heaven Tones | Ax-Ax ¹ -Ax ² -A ^C |
| Woman Tones | A-a-A ¹ -a ¹ -A ² |
| Old Tones | A-a-A ¹ -a ¹ -A ² -a ² -A ³ |

Table 1. Monothematic *Minutes*.

The simplest movements in terms of form, “Tone Tones” and “Folksong Tones” maintain a consistent pitch center. “Cloud Tones” and “Flower Tones” proceed without melodic or timbral contrasts, but do not maintain a constant pitch center. “Heaven Tones,” “Woman Tones,” and “Old Tones” all feature sections that diverge in timbre (designated as a or x), but the distinctions between areas here are much less pronounced than those found in the contrasting *Minutes*. In “Heaven Tones,” the composer weaves the timbral shifts into the closings of individual sections of the melody and ends the movement with a closing section based on primary material (A^C).

Tone Tones

Atli Heimir refers to the final *Sounding Minute* in the original published order, “Tone Tones,” as “just a little melody.”³⁵ This monothematic movement features the most restricted pitch collection of any in the entire work, limiting itself entirely to B \flat , C, D \flat , F, G, and A, a six-note scale related to the B \flat melodic-minor scale. The first phrase, shown in example 1, introduces the movement’s entire pitch collection.

“Tone Tones” features no chromatic pitches, and its pitch center remains consistent. Not tonal in any traditional sense, it nonetheless adheres to a particular scale-based collection. On this, the composer remarks: “Is it tonal or atonal? It is somewhere in between.”³⁶ Despite the movement’s non-tonal nature, B \flat assumes the role of pitch center through echoes of traditional tonal practice, with several descending F to B \flat leaps implying motion from dominant to tonic. Furthermore, A discernibly functions as the *Minute*’s leading tone.

Example 1. “Tone Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



An underlying structural melody involving a large-scale stepwise ascent from F (5̂) to B \flat (1̂) provides this movement’s foundation. Each structural pitch

³⁵ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

³⁶ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

receives emphasis within the melodic texture through tonal and agogic accents as well as repetition.

As example 1 illustrates, the initial structural F occurs in the first phrase, and the G follows soon after in the second phrase. A *ritardando* leading to the structural leading tone at the beginning of the third line heightens the sense of yearning created by this sustained A5. The held A creates a half-cadential moment as well, offering a pause but no sense of repose. The resolution of this tone does not occur until the high B \flat in the last line, shown in example 2. This B \flat also provides the movement's climax. A brief closing gesture follows, with the final pitch of the movement, F, implying a half cadence.

Example 2. "Tone Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



"Tone Tones," unlike most *Sounding Minutes*, requires no extended techniques. A slow tempo, a consistent *pianissimo* dynamic, and an expression marking of *amabile e dolcissimo* lend it a soft and gentle character. It lacks metric definition, with uneven rhythms and tempo fluctuations giving it a free-flowing, improvisatory quality. The composer notes: "it is no coincidence that I have left out the bar lines. There is no meter; it is all flowing."³⁷

³⁷ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

Awareness of the structural melody can inform a flutist's performance, especially with regards to the moment of extraordinary longing created by the structural leading tone. In the final line, this tone resolves in a satisfying manner to the tonic of B \flat , although the composer's *poco a poco morendo* indication and the half-cadential tag somewhat undermine the sense of closure.

Some flutists, including Áshildur, emphasize the importance of careful pacing in this movement, completing it in exactly one minute in order to close the piece with its final F. This half-cadential gesture at the end of the movement leaves the listener with a feeling of openness or incompleteness, perhaps suggesting that the piece goes on forever. Manuela takes similar care with the pacing on her recording, although Martial chooses to repeat the opening. Indeed, an alternative view involves interpreting the final F as leading into the movement's repetition. Viewed this way, the closing of "Tone Tones" represents a traditional use of the dominant function, leading into a repetition which would then, hypothetically, close on tonic. The composer's own *eventuell Da Capo* indication, which occurs in only four of the twenty-one minutes, lends support to this idea.

Many flutists, including both Martial and Áshildur, extol this *Minute's* extraordinary beauty and claim it as one of their favorites. It has become fairly standard performance practice to place "Tone Tones," at the end of a performance of a set of *Sounding Minutes*. Áshildur remarks specifically that these "tones about music" belong at the end.³⁸

³⁸ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Folksong Tones

“Folksong Tones,” the antepenultimate *Sounding Minute*, is the only one to use borrowed melodic material. It takes the form of a solo quodlibet, with three Icelandic folksongs played simultaneously. As example 3 shows, the first two melodies begin immediately, with the third joining them in the second line.

Example 3. “Folksong Tones,” first and second lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

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The musical score consists of two systems, each with three staves. The first system shows two melodies starting in the first line, with a third melody joining in the second line. The second system continues the three-melody texture. Dynamics include *sf*, *p*, and *ppp* (gliss).

The composer describes this use of an older contrapuntal device as “weaving the three melodies together in counterpoint. In a quodlibet, you sing different songs at the same time; they should fit together, and you manipulate the melodies a bit if need be.” He recalls creating an earlier quodlibet for the children’s play *Dimmalimm*, where he used three or four simultaneous melodies in a scene involving children playing games together at a birthday party.³⁹

³⁹ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

Examples 3 and 4 illustrate the way in which the composer separates the three songs from one another in a visible way for the performer by presenting each melody on its own staff. He further distinguishes the three melodies aurally by assigning each a distinct dynamic level and range. Although the ranges of the three different melodies overlap, the composer ensures that the voices never cross one another, further increasing the chances of each melody being audibly discernible from the others. He notates the three songs arhythmically and in no instance do the ends of their phrases coincide with one another.

The top line presents pitches with a *sforzando* and staccato performance indication, and its melody has the highest range of the three (F5 to D6). It contains the lighthearted children's song: "Hani, krummi, hundur, svín," or "Rooster, Raven, Dog, Pig," the text of which simply lists a number of animals and goes on to identify the sounds that they make. "Folksong Tones" includes a complete verse of this simple, wholly diatonic F-major melody.

The second line and middle voice of the movement contains the solemn, patriotic song "Ísland, farsælda frón," or "Iceland, Fortunate Isle." This melody uses two pentatonic scales consecutively, first F-A-B-C-D and then C-D-E-F#-G. It has a range (F4-G5) and dynamic (*piano*) that falls between that of the other two voices. The composer also includes a full verse of this song. The flutist slurs many of the notes of this voice to the following note in the top line.

The third melody, "Kvöldá tekur, sest er sól," or "Evening Descends, the Sun Has Set," inhabits the bottom line. In the key of D minor, this song has the

lowest range (D4-B4) and the softest dynamic (*ppp*) of all. The only melody of which the composer does not include a full verse, this voice involves an abbreviated closing section that follows the first two phrases of the song. Unlike the two upper lines, this melody features an extended technique; most of its pitches include a short pitch bend, either upward or downward.

This movement does not feature distinct formal sections, but the two upper voices allude to a half-cadential moment in the penultimate measure of the fourth line, shown in example 4. This moment, marked by relatively rapid successive attacks, coincides with the end of the third phrase of the top melody, which terminates on C, $\hat{5}$ in its F-major key. The last phrase of that song then goes on to close on its tonic pitch (F), completing a traditional periodic structure.

Example 4. “Folksong Tones,” fourth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Both Áshildur and Martial comment on the extreme difficulty of interpreting this movement in a satisfactory way. Áshildur observes that, initially, the notation made reading the movement difficult, but that it helps with interpreting the dynamics. She sees the unusual notation as the composer strongly emphasizing the need for adhering to the written dynamics. Rhythm

poses a challenge in this movement, as well; the composer places note heads at different locations within measures, rather than using traditional notation.⁴⁰

Regarding this movement, Martial remarks on the composer's skill in "piecing three songs together like a puzzle." He also mentions the importance of performing the dynamics of "Folksong Tones" as written. He discusses practicing this *Minute* like a pianist, working on one hand at a time, and suggests practicing each melody separately. He also discourages playing the movement at an excessively slow tempo, claiming that if a flutist performs this *Minute* well, the three melodies should be discernible to a certain extent.⁴¹

Only the lowest voice, with its relatively straightforward pitch bends, features an extended playing technique. The movement's main challenges involve learning to play it, given its unusual notation, and making the three melodies audible to the audience. The performer mainly accomplishes the latter by exaggerating the dynamic differences between voices, but also through articulation and general character. With the phrases of the three melodies overlapping with one another, decisions regarding where to breathe become quite complicated, as well.

For those flutists who initially have difficulty reading proportional notation, it may prove useful to subdivide the measures mentally into two or three sections, depending on which more closely matches the note placement within each. By initially thinking of the rhythms in more traditional terms, a flutist can more easily decipher the unusual notation.

⁴⁰ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁴¹ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Cloud Tones

Inaccurately translated as “Sky’s Tones” in the published version of the score, the title of the eleventh *Sounding Minute* is “Cloud Tones” in the original Icelandic as well as the German translation in the same print edition. This monothematic movement contains no interruptions or sudden contrasts, but gradually travels from one key to another during its course.

One of only three movements in the work to bear a key signature, “Cloud Tones” is arguably the most functionally tonal of all of the *Minutes*, although it utilizes tonal practices in an untraditional way. A pitch sequence near the beginning of the first line, G \flat -E \flat -A \flat -D \flat ($\hat{4}$ - $\hat{2}$ - $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{1}$), melodically implies authentic cadential motion in D \flat major (see ex. 5). Although the composer does not emphasize this gesture within the melody, the audible chromaticism of the movement’s first non-diatonic pitch, a D \natural at the end of the first line, indicates that, by this point, the D \flat -major key has nonetheless successfully been established.

Example 5. “Cloud Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



This chromatic D foreshadows the movement's gradual transition to the key of D major. The composer creates this transition through the ever-

increasing frequency of pitches belonging to D major, leaving the realm of D \flat major. The final line of the movement avoids the pitch D \flat altogether. The *Minute* then closes on the pitches B-G-E-A ($\hat{6}$ - $\hat{4}$ - $\hat{2}$ - $\hat{5}$), the four pitches which belong to D major, but not to D \flat major. These four pitches mimic the movement's opening, implying a half cadence in D major in the same way the $\hat{4}$ - $\hat{2}$ - $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{1}$ sequence in the first line implied an authentic cadence in D \flat major. Intensifying the effect of this transition to a different key area, an *accelerando* beginning in the third line (see ex. 6) coincides with the appearance of eighth notes, increasing the sense of motion in the line.

Example 6. "Cloud Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



As seen in example 6, a half-cadential moment in the D \flat -major key occurs in the third line of this movement. The first instance of the *Minute*'s leading tone, C, immediately precedes its most extensively repeated note, A \flat ($\hat{5}$). This gesture coincides with the movement's first occurrence of eighth notes and launches the aforementioned *accelerando* toward D major. In determining whether to highlight this moment, a flutist should bear in mind that the composer indicated that the movement's desired effect involves no expression. The repetition of the notes, as well as the *accelerando* that the composer indicates, should provide the moment with enough weight.

During their interviews, Martial and Áshildur both commented on the difficulty of performing this movement *senza espressione*, as the composer indicates in the score. Áshildur likens this movement to a blank canvas, and emphasizes playing it as written, with a good, stable tone.⁴²

Atli Heimir does not explicitly call for any extended techniques in the music for this movement. Martial Nardeau, however, states that the composer suggested using circular breathing to maintain continuity, but also notes that breaths can be effectively hidden during performance.⁴³ Circular breathing, or at least preventing the breaths from interrupting the movement's melodic flow, would certainly contribute to the overall smoothness and sense of constant motion in "Cloud Tones."

The composer does not supply the *eventuell Da Capo* indication featured at the close of some of the *Sounding Minutes*. Because of the transformation of key and change in velocity that occurs during the course of this *Minute*, a return to the beginning during a performance sets up a particularly striking and sudden contrast between the adjacent keys. The listener then hears clearly how far the movement has ventured. Translated to visual terms, this effect can be likened to a video of ever faster moving clouds, which suddenly stops and resumes from the beginning. In deciding whether to repeat this movement, a performer should consider the desirability of this abrupt effect. Manuela did not record this movement, but both Áshildur and Martial chose to repeat it on their recordings.

⁴² Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

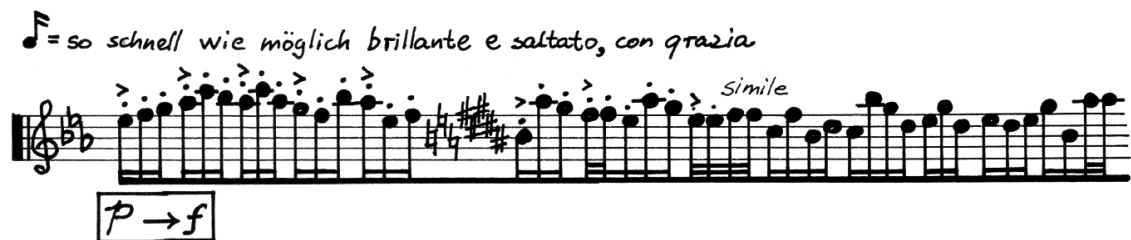
⁴³ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Flower Tones

Of the three *Sounding Minutes* that use key signatures, “Flower Tones” alone travels through several during the course of the movement. Although it neither modulates nor establishes tonal keys in a traditional manner, the movement presents audible and frequent changes in pitch center more clearly than any other. Each of the nine key areas confines itself entirely to the diatonic pitches belonging to its key signature.

A monothematic movement with no starkly contrasting textural, melodic, or technical elements, “Flower Tones” nonetheless features an underlying pattern of key relationships, continuous dynamic expansion, and effective manipulation of melodic range. As illustrated in example 7, the movement only exhibits one dynamic marking at the outset, $p \rightarrow f$, indicating that the performer should execute a well-paced crescendo throughout the movement. In this way, it gradually increases in sound intensity to the very end.

Example 7. “Flower Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



“Flower Tones” passes through nine key areas, illustrated in table 2. The implied keys sound with varying degrees of clarity, and some are fairly strongly established through quasi-functional melodic means. The pitch centers of these

nine areas create an underlying pattern that divides the movement into three larger sections, each containing three key areas. This creates an overall A-A¹-A² form.

| GROUP | AREA | IMPLIED KEY | RANGE |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------|
| FIRST GROUP (A) | 1 - 3 \flat | A \flat major | M6 |
| | 2 - 5 \sharp | B major | P8+P5 |
| | 3 - 1 \flat | F major | m7 |
| SECOND GROUP (A¹) | 4 - 4 \sharp | C \sharp minor | P8+P5 |
| | 5 - 1 \sharp | E minor | 2P8+M2 |
| | 6 - 2 \flat | B \flat major | P8+m6 |
| THIRD GROUP (A²) | 7 - 4 \flat | F minor | 2P8+P4 |
| | 8 - 3 \sharp | A major | 2P8+m2 |
| | 9 - 5 \flat | B \flat major | P8 |

Table 2. Key areas in “Flower Tones.”

Despite an initial key signature of three flats, “Flower Tones” begins in a clearly established A \flat major. All other sections center on a pitch that traditionally serves as tonic for their key signatures. The music travels through B major, F major, C \sharp minor, E major, B \flat major, F minor, A major, and B \flat minor. The second pitch center (B) lies an augmented second above the opening center of A \flat . The third pitch center falls a minor third below A \flat . These three pitch centers produce a diminished triad (taking enharmonic equivalency into account), a pattern that repeats itself with the next group of keys. The pitch centers of the final three keys, however, deviate from this pattern and more strongly imply functional harmonic relations, given that the movement clearly closes in B \flat minor (see ex. 8). The last three key areas respectively center on the dominant F, leading tone A, and tonic B \flat .

Example 8. "Flower Tones," fifth and sixth lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

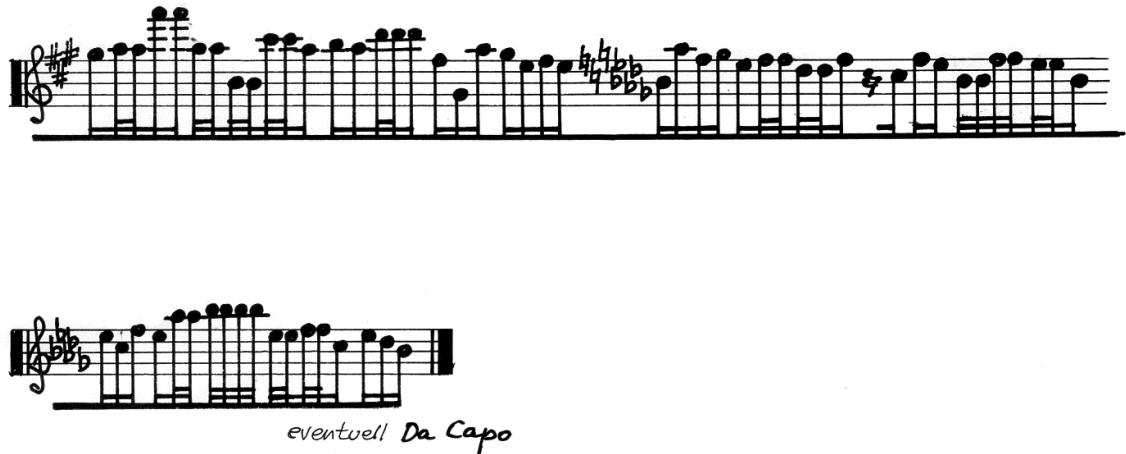


Table 2 also demonstrates how the composer applies a pattern to the range of the melody within each key area. The first key area limits itself to the range of a major sixth, but the second expands to an octave and a perfect fifth. The range of the third area contracts again, to a minor seventh. The fourth key area expands to an octave and a perfect fifth, and the fifth key area substantially expands to two octaves and a major second. The sixth key area then contracts to an octave and a minor sixth. The seventh area features the largest range of the entire movement, two octaves and a perfect fourth, with the range of the final two key areas decreasing, to two octaves and a minor second and then one octave in the final key area. These changes in range create an underlying pattern of expansion and contraction. The first two groups of three key areas feature the same pattern, one of expansion followed by contraction. The final section deviates from this pattern, with the range contracting from the movement's largest to a single octave in the final key area.

Although this *Minute* requires no extended techniques, Áshildur and Martial both remark on its challenging nature, and especially on the difficulty of executing a crescendo throughout the movement. Áshildur emphasizes keeping the rhythm exceedingly even and precise while maintaining an extremely fast tempo, saying that “Flower Tones” have to be “so incredibly perfect: mechanical.”⁴⁴ Martial Nardeau suggests that this movement illustrates a “beautiful bouquet,” with the constant change of key representing different types of flowers: “here you have daisies, here violets, and then there are roses here.”⁴⁵ The expansion that takes place with regard to dynamics and range throughout the movement may suggest an alternative interpretation: that of a bud expanding to a blossom.

This movement often takes less than a minute to perform, and the decision regarding whether to repeat it influences its overall effect profoundly. Especially because of the dynamic shift that occurs during the course of this movement, returning to the top of the page will provide a stark contrast and abrupt return to the point of departure. The composer included the indication *eventuell Da Capo* at the bottom of the page, indicating that he does not object to this effect. Martial suggests that the performer may also decide to keep the powerful dynamic from the end of the movement when repeating it, but this adds further to pacing considerations in connection with the omnipresent crescendo.

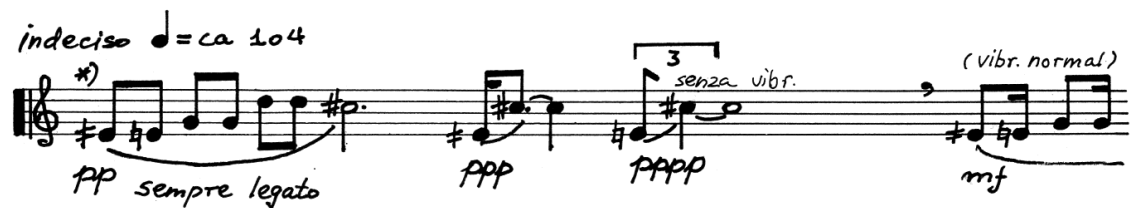
⁴⁴ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁴⁵ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Heaven Tones

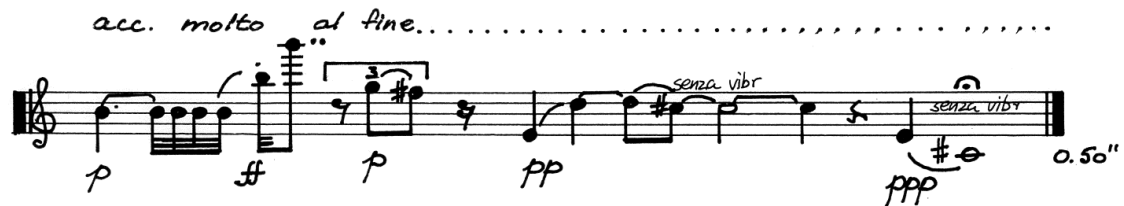
The sixth *Sounding Minute* in the composer's original ordering, "Heaven Tones," features a recurring motive: E-G-D-C#, which provides a backbone for much of its melodic content. As shown in example 9, the movement opens with this motive. An immediate echo in contracted form follows, with *ppp* and then *pppp* iterations of an ascending E4-C#5 figure, played *senza vibrato*. The motive occurs in embellished or fragmented form several times during the course of the movement.

Example 9. "Heaven Tones," first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The movement also closes with this motive, which fragments and contracts toward the end. As shown in example 10, the penultimate phrase of the movement omits the G from the original four-note figure while maintaining its contour and range. The closing utterance contains only a descending, *ppp* E4-C#4. This final downward gesture recalls, but reverses, the aforementioned ascending E4-C#5 echo figure in the first line.

Example 10. "Heaven Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



"Heaven Tones" lacks the starkly contrasting or differentiated areas of the more clearly sectional *Minutes*. However, it features three instances of repeated pitches that call for a change in timbre, indicated by arrows pointing to individual notes and a *farbe verändern* indication. Example 11 shows an instance of this device at the close of the third line.

Example 11. "Heaven Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Like many of the X sections of the *Minutes* of the contrasting group, the sections with an altered timbre distinguish themselves from the melodic material by their repeated pitches and alternative playing technique. However, they serve to close phrases of primary material, and thus do not constitute genuine contrasting sections. The movement, therefore, has a monothematic form consisting of three slightly varied A sections. Each A section closes on material with an altered timbre, weaving features of the contrasting *Minutes* into a

monothematic form. The final line (see ex. 10) contains a closing section based on primary material, and the movement takes an overall $Ax-Ax^1-Ax^2-A^C$ form.

“Heaven Tones” confines itself to the pitches of the E-Dorian mode, with the exception of an F grace-note embellishment of E in the third line, shown in example 11. The movement also largely avoids the pitch of A, which appears once, in the same phrase as the F. The phrase containing these two idiosyncratic pitches leads to a sustained and embellished B. This emphasized $\hat{5}$ occurs toward the middle of the movement, creating a half-cadential moment, with the phrase ending on the *Minute*’s only *sforzando* indication. The movement’s climax, in the last line, also occurs on B, with that pitch played in three octaves in rapid succession (see example 10).

Unmetered, with uneven beat lengths, varied rhythmic subdivisions, and several gradual tempo changes, “Heaven Tones” gives the listener the impression of an ethereal improvisation. In several places, the composer specifies that the performer should abstain from using vibrato. In others, he also calls for swift and extreme dynamic changes.

This movement features several instances of quarter tones, such as those shown in examples 9 and 11. All except one of these involve a quarter-tone alteration of the tonic pitch, E, which in all cases resolves to an unaltered E immediately or within the next few pitches. The final quarter tone occurs in the fourth and fifth lines and involves the upward inflection of D, which lends the note something of a leading-tone character. This quarter-tone pitch also leads to E, although some elaboration precedes its resolution.

Martial names “Heaven’s Tones” as one of his favorite *Minutes*, remarking on the *indeciso* performance indication at the outset and noting how the irregular rhythm and quarter tones contribute to this mood. He discusses the movement as a “study in color.”⁴⁶ Describing this *Minute* in terms of color seems appropriate, given that, in some sections, the composer indicates that the performer should create color changes between the iterations of repeated pitches. The composer also specifies vibrato use or non-use, and the quarter tones can be seen as shadings of pitches. The extreme register and dynamic changes within this movement serve to create tone-color changes, as well.

This movement resembles Japanese shakuhachi music, which features irregular rhythms, richly varied tone colors, timbral shifts, and expressive use of raised and lowered pitches. In addition, the E-Dorian scale on which the composer bases the movement has the same pitch content as the Japanese *ritsu* scale, a scale based on the pitches E, A, or B in Japanese tradition.⁴⁷ Atli Heimir has used Japanese elements in several of his compositions, including his opera, *The Silk Drum*, which has a libretto based on a Japanese Noh play.⁴⁸ The opera, first performed in 1982, dates from a similar time as *21 Sounding Minutes*. His earlier *Flute Concerto* (1973), furthermore, features a closing section that incorporates Japanese elements, calling for the flutist to play a shakuhachi.

⁴⁶ Martial Nardeau, interview.

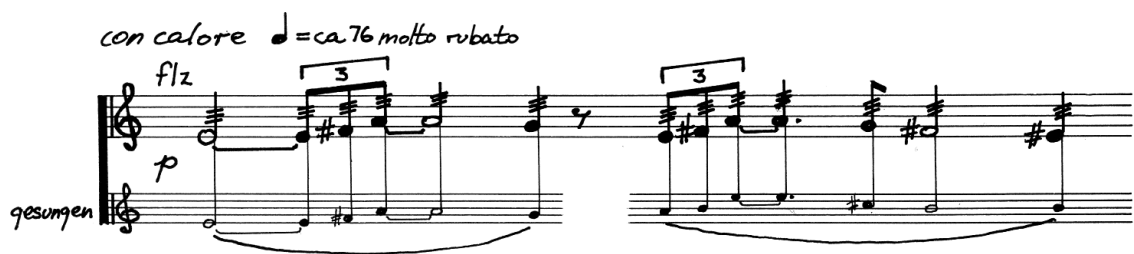
⁴⁷ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Mode,” <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43718pg5> (accessed March 28, 2013).

⁴⁸ Bergendal, 110-111.

Woman Tones

Most of “Woman Tones,” the second *Sounding Minute*, features two-part counterpoint, a highly unusual compositional technique for a solo flute piece. As illustrated in example 12, the composer achieves this by having the performer sing one voice and play another. Although written below the flute line, the voice remains above the played line in pitch from after the end of the first phrase, in which the voices move in unison, and until the close of the movement. The composer also requires the flutist to flutter tongue for most of “Woman Tones.”

Example 12. “Woman Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The slow, songlike movement contains a series of relatively brief phrases separated by rests. The composer gives “Woman Tones” a free-flowing character by bestowing upon it a *molto rubato* performance indication, using syncopation and triplets, and inserting eighth-note rests which create irregular beats.

“Woman Tones” features a pitch collection that gradually coalesces during its first phrases. The opening phrase contains the pitches E, F#, G, and A. In the next phrase, this set of pitches expands to include the rest of the movement’s E-Dorian pitch collection, with the exception of D, which does not

occur until the fourth line. The composer establishes E as the *Minute's* pitch center by opening with a sustained E which he then repeats extensively, beginning each phrase of the primary material with E in one of the voices. He then implies authentic cadential motion in the sung part at the very close of the movement, with B ($\hat{5}$) leaping up to E ($\hat{1}$).

“Woman Tones” confines itself exclusively to the diatonic pitch collection of the E-Dorian mode, with two notable exceptions. The occurrence of the *Minute*’s chromatic pitches coincides with two significant contrapuntal events, creating two distinct, idiosyncratic moments. These two enharmonically equivalent pitches are an E#, which appears at the end of the first line, and the F that sounds close to the center of the fourth line, shown in example 13. Each of these pitches stands out clearly and creates a uniquely expressive effect.

Example 13. “Woman Tones,” fourth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Throughout the movement, the flute and voice move in similar motion, with the exception of the two aforementioned instances of chromatic pitches. In the case of the first, the E#, the sung voice remains stationary on B, resulting in oblique motion between flute and voice. In the second instance, where F occurs, the voice moves in contrary motion to the flute, the only example of such voice-leading in the movement. Furthermore, this occurrence of F in the

flute line coincides with the *Minute*'s first appearance of D ($\hat{7}$), which sounds simultaneously in the voice.

Two of the phrases in "Woman Tones" (a and a¹) feature material with a contrasting timbre, which omits the singing and flutter tonguing. This material does not have the same interruptive role as the strongly differentiated X sections of the movements defined by their strong contrasts, but it nonetheless divides this *Minute* into sections, resulting in an A-a-A¹-a¹-A² form.

The first of these slightly contrasting phrases (a) contains a half-cadential moment, which occurs toward the movement's center, at the beginning of line three (see ex. 14). This half-cadential gesture coincides with the *Minute*'s climax as it involves its highest and longest pitch, a sustained B. Here, the composer hints at deceptive motion by resolving $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{6}$.

Example 14. "Woman Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



"Woman Tones" present unique challenges to performers, as it requires a highly unusual playing technique and the performance of two voices simultaneously, a feat seldom required of flute players. Martial states that Atli Heimir claims to have been the first composer to use singing and flutter tonguing simultaneously in a flute piece. Áshildur recalls learning this unusual technique when she performed *Xanties*, an earlier flute work by Atli Heimir.

“Woman Tones” have proven controversial in performance. Áshildur names this *Minute* as one of her favorites, saying that she enjoys singing and playing simultaneously, and how the two voices begin in unison and then diverge. She describes the movement as “trancelike.”⁴⁹ Martial recalls the decidedly different reaction of an audience member at one of his performances, who could not understand why “Woman Tones” was so “ugly.”⁵⁰

Martial also discusses the difference between a man’s and a woman’s rendition of this *Minute*, as women perform the sung part at the appropriate pitch level, whereas men sing an octave lower. In this way, he says, a woman’s interpretation of this movement is superior, but he does not think that this means that men should hesitate to perform it.

Given that this movement involves two layers of extended techniques, relatively complicated rhythms, and various expressive considerations, a flutist learning this movement may choose to break the task into smaller, more manageable units. One approach involves learning the flute line and sung melody separately. Later, the performer can practice adding the singing and flutter tonguing elements to the flute line, first only adding the flutter tonguing, then singing and playing, and finally using both techniques in combination.

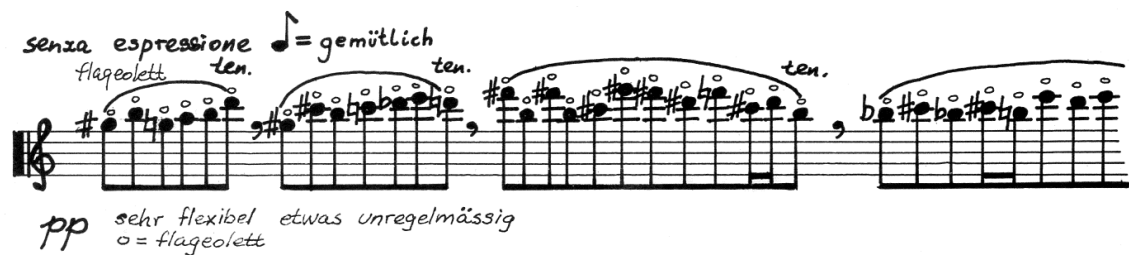
⁴⁹ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁵⁰ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Old Tones

The eighteenth movement in the original ordering of *21 Sounding Minutes*, “Old Tones,” features extensive use of overtones, to which the composer refers as *flageolett*. The movement’s first line, shown in example 15, demonstrates the manner in which the composer indicates this. Most of this *Minute* calls for the use of overtones, although the flutist plays three phrases *ordinario*. These phrases differ from the overtone areas significantly enough in timbre and range to set them apart as form-defining contrasting areas, creating an A-a-A¹-a¹-A²-a²-A³ form.

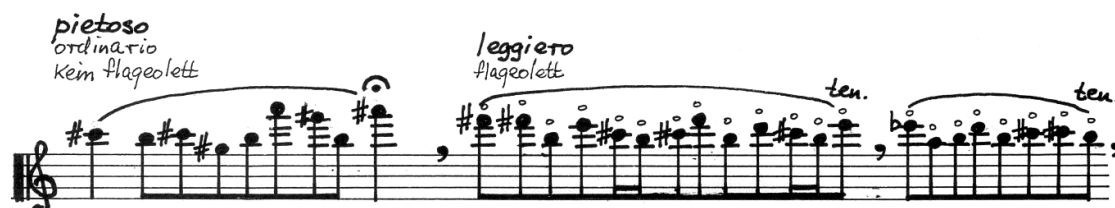
Example 15. “Old Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



In many movements that present strongly contrasting areas, or in which a clear interruption occurs, the use or non-use of an extended technique helps to differentiate the contrasting sections from the primary material. In this movement, however, the secondary sections’ resemblance to the primary material in melody, pitch content, rhythm, and phrase length undermines their contrasting effect. This *Minute*, much like “Woman Tones,” thus presents elements of both the monothematic group and the contrasting group of movements.

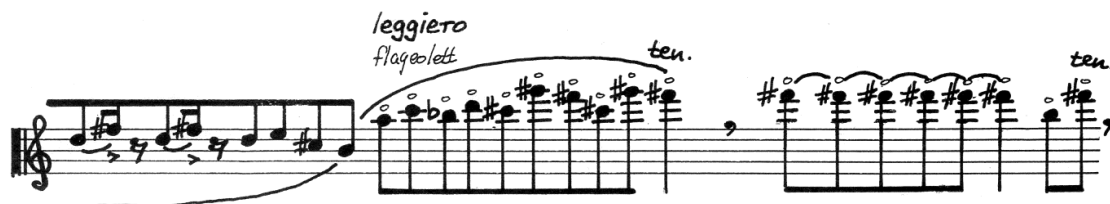
One performance consideration could also indicate that the composer did not intend a clear contrast between phrases. A flutist with a B foot joint can only perform overtones from the pitch B4 and up. Two of the *ordinario* phrases of “Old Tones” contain pitches lower than B4, so some or all of their pitches cannot be performed using overtones. The second *ordinario* phrase, however, could be played as overtones (see ex. 16), so this explanation does not account for the lack of overtones in that phrase.

Example 16. “Old Tones,” fourth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



This movement has a clear tonal center of B, confirmed in the third phrase of the first line with repeated F# to B leaps and by ending the phrase on B (see ex. 15). The *Minute* loosely implies a B-minor key, but the extensive chromaticism obscures the mode. The movement’s most extensively prolonged pitch, the F# at the end of line three (see ex. 17), creates a half-cadential point.

Example 17. “Old Tones,” third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Similar to “Tone Tones,” the movement’s climax occurs on the leading tone, a sustained A \sharp 6 in the fourth line, the only pitch in the movement marked with a fermata (see ex. 16). Furthermore, the flutist plays this phrase *ordinario*, without overtones. The phrase bears the expressive indication *pietoso*, marking it as the movement’s emotional high point. This leading tone remains unresolved, and the high B to which it should proceed does not appear in this movement. “Old Tones” does not achieve closure on the tonic pitch, but ends on the lowered $\hat{6}$ of B.

The other two *ordinario* phrases fall in a range lower than the rest of the movement and receive an expressive marking of *misterioso*. They extend down to the B3, an unusually low pitch for flute and one that only occurs in one other movement of the *Sounding Minute*: “Woman Tones.” These sections may imply an elderly person’s contemplation of death as the great mystery.

The composer includes the expressive markings *sehr flexibel* as well as *etwas unregelmässig* at the movement’s opening. Combined with the somewhat rusty, breathy sound of the overtones, irregular phrase lengths, and tenuto markings on the ultimate note of each phrase, these indications evoke the unsteady and halting movements of a person of advanced age. The tenuto markings at the end of each phrase also relate to “Museum Tones,” with their brief upward glissandi at the ends of phrases. With a *pianissimo* dynamic marking throughout, this movement quite literally dies out at the end, with the final expressive marking reading *quiteo*, and a *morendo* during the last phrase.

This closing gesture invites understanding “Old Tones” as describing not only old age, but also death from old age.

Interpreting “Old Tones” as a reflection of old age and death may influence a performer’s decision regarding whether to repeat the movement, should he or she reach its end before the allotted time runs out. If a flutist aims to present this programmatic interpretation in his or her performance, he or she may wish to avoid repeating the movement, waiting in silence for the allotted minute to end. This *Minute* does not contain the *eventuell Da Capo* marking included with some of the movements, despite the composer’s indication that it should last about fifty seconds.

“Old Tones” remains *pianissimo* throughout, and the musical language and tempo change little throughout its course. The composer does, however, include a variety of expressive markings: *senza espressione*, *misterioso*, *leggero*, *pietoso*, and *quieo*, which the flutist should bear in mind.

Áshildur and Martial both comment on performance issues that relate to the composer’s extensive use of overtones in this movement. Áshildur says that she enjoys the challenge of playing the overtones perfectly in tune while making them *pianissimo* and that this movement serves as a good exercise for her flute playing. She remarks on the distinctive nature of the *ordinario* sections as well, saying that the contrast constitutes Atli Heimir’s typical “fingerprint.”⁵¹ Martial prefers using a few ordinary fingerings in order to improve tone quality while altering the timbre slightly to suit the movement’s style.⁵²

⁵¹ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁵² Martial Nardeau, interview.

Contrasting *Minutes*

The *Minutes* of the second type have a form generated by two clearly contrasting elements. The secondary material of these movements consists of a clearly contrasting, interruptive X section that contributes musical interest and even shock value. Seven *Sounding Minutes* belong to this category: “Storm Tones,” “Fish Tones,” “Night Tones,” “Museum Tones,” “Child Tones,” “Morning Tones,” and “International Tones.” In each of these movements, the primary material and contrasting sections alternate, but the number of alterations varies. All but one, “Museum Tones,” close with primary material or a closing section or gesture loosely based on primary material (A^C). Table 3 lists these movements and their forms.

| TITLE | FORM |
|---------------------|---|
| Storm Tones | $A-X-A^1$ |
| Fish Tones | $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^C$ |
| Night Tones | $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^2$ |
| Museum Tones | $A-a-A^1-a^1-X-A^2-X^1-A^3-X^2$ |
| Child Tones | $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^2-X^2-A^3-A^C$ |
| Morning Tones | $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^2-X^2-A^3-X^3-A^C$ |
| International Tones | $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^2-X^2-A^3-X^3-A^4-X^4-A^5$ |

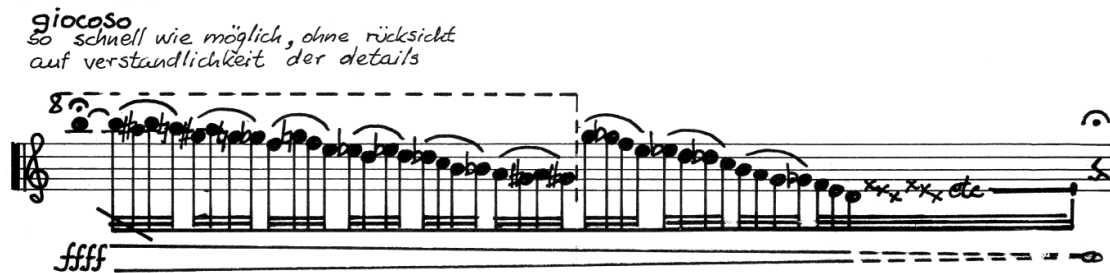
Table 3. Contrasting *Minutes*.

In many of the contrasting *Minutes*, extended techniques highlight the interruptive character of the secondary material. Often, when the primary material uses extended techniques, the secondary section does not, and vice versa. In many such movements, the X sections present sustained or repeated pitches that interrupt the flow of their relatively melodic primary areas.

Storm Tones

The intensely energetic “Storm Tones,” movement fifteen of the 21 *Sounding Minutes*, features an A-X-A¹ form, the simplest sectional division of all the *Minutes* that feature strongly contrasting formal elements. The tempo marking and performance direction at the outset: *so schnell wie möglich, ohne rücksicht auf verständlichkeit der details*, makes for an exceptionally virtuosic *Minute* (see ex. 18). The extremely chromatic A section opens with two long, rapid, descending phrases, each beginning with a sustained high note. The descent is winding at first, with repeated pitches and every pitch included. Further along, it speeds up and becomes more direct, omitting a few notes and repeating none. The phrase ends with the flutist repeating the last three pitches with an airy sound and key clicks until it fades out to nothing.

Example 18. “Storm Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



In the third line, shown in example 19, the composer fragments this rapid, chromatic material to create shorter phrases of varying length. A half-cadential moment occurs in this line, where the direction of the chromatic melodic fragments changes. Instead of descending, they ascend, terminating

three times on an F \sharp , the pitch a perfect fifth above the movement's pitch center, B.

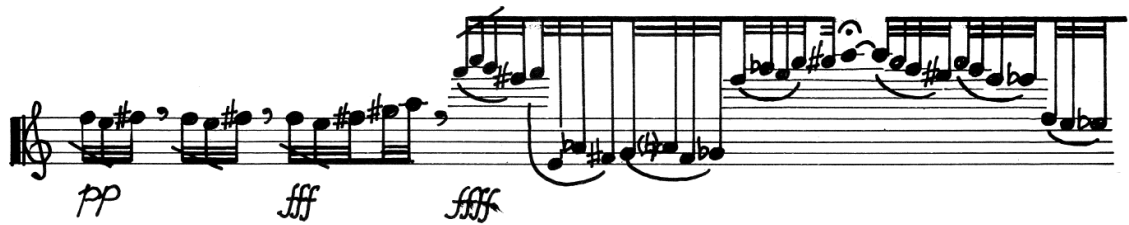
Example 19. "Storm Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The interruptive contrasting material occurs in lines three and four, with briefly sustained and repeated high B \flat s and As. Example 19 shows the beginning of this section. Here, for the first time in the movement, the composer presents a precise tempo marking, with a quarter note equaling 104 beats per minute.

Primary material returns in the fourth line with brief, chromatic *pianissimo* phrases and slightly longer *fff* phrases, perhaps suggesting wind gusts of differing speeds. In line five, shown in example 20, a *fff* area presents chromatic figures with sudden changes in tessitura, eventually leading to the movement's climax on D7. A rapid descent, following a similar pattern of brief, chromatic bursts of notes with sudden leaps to a different octave follows, leading to a sustained C4. A four-note chromatic ascent follows this C.

Example 20. “Storm Tones,” fifth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The movement closes with a series of three phrases quite similar to the opening of the movement, but far briefer. Short, chromatic descents follow long B6s, and the *Minute* terminates on a sustained B6.

The primary areas of “Storm Tones” contain five sustained pitches, shown as filled note-heads with fermatas (see ex. 18 and 20). These pitches create a large-scale ascending and then descending step progression of B-C-D-C-B, shown in figure 1. All of these pitches occur at a *ffff* dynamic, and the movement’s climax on D7 coincides with the progression’s apex, with its nadir occurring on the following C4. This structural progression increases the contrasting material’s interruptive effect; the X section sustains two descending pitches that break continuity with the primary material’s step progression, creating an overall B-C-(B \flat - A)-D-C-B structural melody. Another implication of this step progression involves the movement’s pitch center, B, which the composer obscures on the surface level with his extensive use of chromaticism, but more clearly demonstrates in the underlying progression.

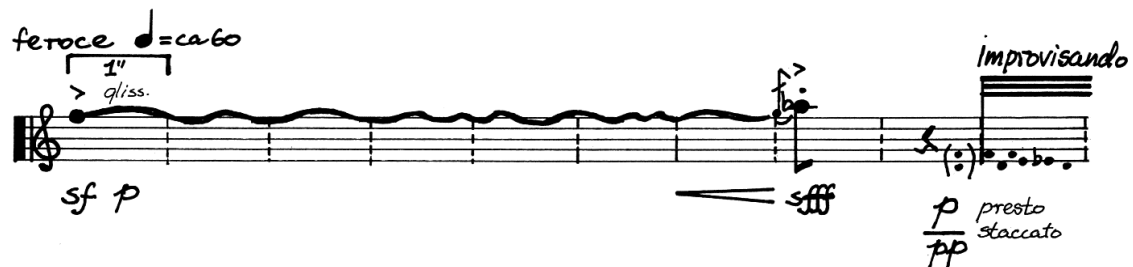
⁵³ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

63

Fish Tones

“Fish Tones,” the fourth *Sounding Minute*, has two clearly contrasting formal sections that result in an overall A-X-A¹-X¹-A^C structure. The primary material consists of an embellished chromatic ascent, similar to the first section of “Bird Tones” (see ex. 48). The movement begins on an F5 and climbs gradually to F6, suggesting a pitch center of F, although the extremely chromatic nature of the movement obscures any sense of mode. The composer fills the range between these two Fs completely, going beyond using all twelve tones, filling in the space between most of these pitches by bending the sustained notes up or down. Example 21 demonstrates where the flutist bends the opening F up and down, both reaching below it and filling in the pitch-space between the F and the F# directly above it, which appears in the next line.

Example 21. “Fish Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The only place where the performer does not quite fill the space between pitches in this manner lies between the tones A and D of the chromatic ascent. This occurs in the fourth line, shown in example 22. This point holds additional significance as the underlying pattern of the chromatic ascent changes here, as well. From the opening until the D# near the end of the fourth line, the performer

sustains each pitch, terminating with a chromatic rising glissando in grace notes, which leads to a staccato, *sfff* note. From the D at the end of the fourth line until the closing of the large-scale ascent, however, the composer simply writes a chromatically rising series of sustained pitches, with pitch bends again filling in the range completely.

Example 22. "Fish Tones," fourth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



As he does in many of the *Sounding Minutes*, Atli Heimir explores the expansion and contraction of different facets in both the primary and secondary material of "Fish Tones." An example involves the aforementioned grace notes at the end of each phrase, which increase in number during the course of the movement, from one to two, three, and finally five. Similarly, the rapidly repeated accents that appear in the second and third lines grow in number from two to three and finally four (see ex. 23).

A half-cadential moment occurs at the center of the movement, with the performer landing on a *sfff* C at the end of the third line (see ex. 23). The movement's most active phase, which contains a number of accents and interpolated pitches, leads to this gesture. The following phrase (see ex. 22) contains significantly fewer accents and pitches.

Example 23. "Fish Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



"Fish Tones" contains two sections of contrasting material that consist of rapid, improvised staccato pitches. They feature the performance instructions: *"zunehmend unregelmässig sempre stacc auch flz ad lib einige sff spitzen."* Here, as in the primary area, the composer defines a range and fills it entirely. The first secondary area (X), the beginning of which example 21 shows, calls for improvisation using pitches within the quite narrow range between D4 and F4. The second improvisatory section (X¹) uses pitches between C#4 and A4, a slightly expanded range. These sections relate to section B of "Bird Tones" (see ex. 48), in which the performer entirely fills in a restricted range of pitches with rapid notes while interspersing brief episodes of flutter tonguing at will.

After the latter occurrence of secondary material, "Fish Tones" closes with a briefly sustained low D that recalls the primary material. The entire *Minute* features only approximately notated rhythms within a framework of absolute time, with each ten measure line taking ten seconds to perform. The final line only contains four measures, and the composer indicates that the movement takes approximately fifty-four seconds to perform.

Martial Nardeau names "Fish Tones" as one of his favorite *Minutes*, while Áshildur describes the movement as entertaining, with the glissandi strongly

reminiscent of fish. Martial comments on the remarkable imagination the composer demonstrates by contrasting the long glissandi with the rapid, staccato, improvised material. He discusses performing the piece in France, and how audience members there see music describing fish as characteristically Icelandic, but mentions Claude Debussy as a French composer who had also dealt with impressions of fish.⁵⁵

Áshildur remarks on the precision of timing required when performing “Fish Tones,” as the composer uses absolute time indications in seconds for this movement.⁵⁶ This precise temporal framework contrasts with the somewhat improvisatory nature of the music itself. The contrasting section provides another example of the interaction between the precision of the composer’s instructions and the performer’s freedom of interpretation. Here, the restricted range of notes and the prescribed articulation converse with the flutist’s freedom to select the pitches used within that framework. In many of the *Sounding Minutes*, as well as other works by Atli Heimir, this interaction between what the composer specifically prescribes and the freedom he allows the performer constitutes a defining feature of his style.

Both flutists mentioned performing this movement along with “Bird Tones,” placing the two *Minutes* named after animals together, and they appear consecutively in the original score. Analysis demonstrates that structural and stylistic factors connect these two movements as well, lending support to this programming choice.

⁵⁵ Martial Nardeau, interview. Although he did not mention a particular piece, Martial may have been referring to Debussy’s “Poissons d’or” from his second volume of *Images* for piano.

⁵⁶ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Night Tones

"Night Tones" follows "Evening Tones" and precedes "Morning Tones" in the composer's published ordering of the *Sounding Minutes*. It contains a strongly contrasting element that appears twice during the course of the movement, creating a clearly delineated A-X-A¹-X¹-A² form. The primary material consists of a legato, unmetered melody in the Dorian mode, featuring duple and triple beat divisions and added eighth-note rests that obscure any sense of meter. The composer strongly contrasts this melody with two interruptions, in which the flutist plays sustained multiphonics. Example 24, which shows the opening of the movement, includes its first primary and contrasting section. An uncomplicated structural melody, involving a descending D minor triad with a double neighbor embellishment of $\hat{5}$, provides the primary material's foundation (see figure 2).

Example 24. "Night Tones," first and second lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

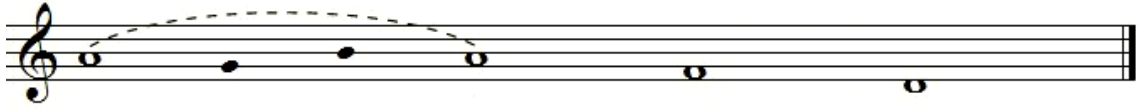
dolce ♩ = ca 58

pp

p

f

Figure 2. "Night Tones," structural melody.



The composer establishes the Dorian mode of the melodic sections clearly in the first phrase. With the exception of two chromatic pitches, the melodic sections of “Night Tones” confine themselves entirely to the D-Dorian collection. Each of the chromatic pitches constitutes a noticeable and expressive idiosyncratic moment. Adding to the effect of these moments, the flutist leaves the first chromatic pitch by a tritone leap, and both approaches and leaves the second by a tritone.

The first chromatic pitch, an E \flat close to the end of the first line (see example 24), constitutes a lowered $\hat{2}$ and an upper neighbor to the tonic pitch. This neighbor remains unresolved in this phrase, lending it an air of incompleteness.

The second chromatic pitch (B \flat) occurs in the fourth line (see ex. 25). This lowered $\hat{6}$ serves as an upper neighbor to $\hat{5}$, and resolves to a B on the next beat, which is then immediately followed by an A. This neighbor note to the dominant enjoys the resolution that the earlier neighbor to the tonic pitch lacked. The sustained A4 functions as a half-cadential moment as well as the return of $\hat{5}$ as the underlying structural pitch after the large-scale G-B double neighbor shown in figure 2.

Example 25. "Night Tones," fourth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The contrasting element of "Night Tones" involves two interruptions consisting of sustained multiphonics. Measured in absolute time, the length of each multiphonic tone ranges from two to three seconds, a measurement easily practiced with a metronome set to sixty beats per minute. The first grouping contains three sustained multiphonics, and the second has two. The composer separates the multiphonic areas from the melodic material with rests. A crescendo in the X section and a *forte* marking in X¹ further highlight their contrast with the primary areas. The composer specifies only one pitch to be used, leaving the selection of the simultaneously sounding pitches to the flutist.

The first multiphonic must contain D, the pitch center of the movement. The other four pitches indicated by the composer for these interruptions are D \sharp and C for the first grouping, and C \sharp and E for the second. The five pitches specified in the multiphonic interruptions create a five-note cluster with D at the center. Therefore, D anchors both the Doran melodic material and the atonal contrasting section. The composer employs similar procedures in "Morning Tones," in which G \sharp serves as the pitch center for the otherwise extremely divergent primary and contrasting material.

A flutist may achieve a more affective performance of this *Minute* by recognizing that the two chromatic pitches within the melodic material of “Night Tones” and the two multiphonic interruptions constitute expressive surprises within an otherwise stable, diatonic environment. The *dolce* indication, *piano* dynamic, and slow tempo further add to the calm, serene atmosphere, heightening the effect of the contrasting elements. Áshildur remarked upon this contrast, describing it as “ugliness from an entirely different direction in between, cold. It draws out the softness and beauty of the melodies.”⁵⁷

Both Áshildur and Martial comment on the beauty of this *Minute*, with Áshildur naming it as one of her favorite movements and expressing her belief that many share her appreciation for it. Martial describes “Night Tones” as “genuine impressionism,” and likens it to a bright summer night on Flatey, the island where Atli Heimir composed the piece.⁵⁸

Flutists often choose to perform the three “time-of-day” *Minutes* together, maintaining a logical chronological ordering in line with the programmatic titles of the movements. Áshildur Haraldsdóttir maintains the composer’s ordering throughout her recording, and so she places these three movements in the same order as he. Martial Nardeau plays the three *Minutes* consecutively and in chronological order, but begins with “Morning Tones,” moves on to “Evening Tones,” and then continues to “Night Tones.” Manuela only performs “Night Tones” and “Evening Tones” on her recording, but not consecutively.

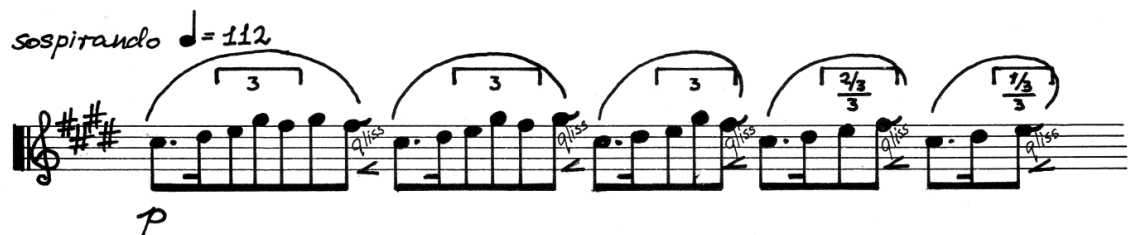
⁵⁷ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁵⁸ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Museum Tones

The thirteenth movement of *Sounding Minutes* and one of only three bearing a key signature, “Museum Tones” features primary melodic material and an interruptive contrasting section. The *piano* and legato primary sections incorporate beats of irregular length and upward pitch bends at the ends of phrases (see ex. 26). The opening A section utilizes a five-note pitch collection, C \sharp -D \sharp -E-F \sharp -G \sharp , which centers on C \sharp . It later changes pitch center from C \sharp to C, using a different five-note collection, E-F-G-A-C, while retaining its melodic, rhythmic, and expressive characteristics. With A and a representing the differing pitch centers of the primary material, respectively, the movement takes the form of A-a-A¹-a¹-X-A²-X¹-A³-X².

Example 26. “Museum Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



“Museum Tones” employs large-scale and small-scale processes of contraction and expansion, similar to several other *Minutes* previously discussed. As example 26 shows, the *Minute* opens with melodic material centered on C \sharp . The composer immediately repeats the opening phrase but truncated by one note at the end. He continues this process of truncation for the

rest of the first line, with each phrase omitting the final note of the previous one, reducing the number of notes to five, then to four, and finally three.

Section a, which begins toward the middle of the second line, uses a new, C-centered pitch collection. Here, the composer expands, rather than contracts, the phrase upon its sole repetition, extending it from seven notes to ten. Section A¹ begins with the sixth note of the third line (see ex. 27) and presents a five-note unit that uses the original C \sharp -centered pitch collection. A twelve-note unit, a¹, which employs the C collection, follows. Here, the composer adds a unique pitch that belongs to neither collection, with the penultimate note of section a¹ constituting the movement's only appearance of B \flat . This idiosyncratic moment, along with a *poco a poco stringendo* in the same line, leads into the movement's first interruptive X section.

Example 27. "Museum Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

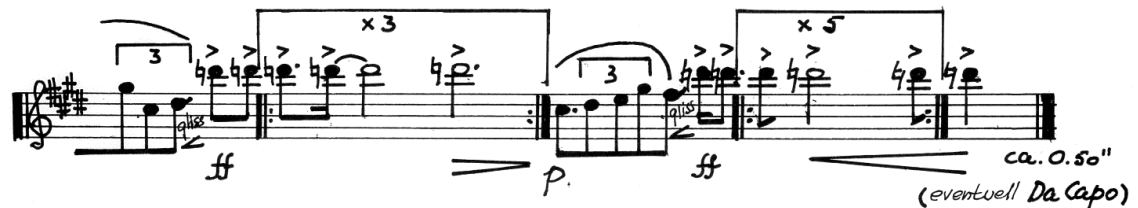


The contrasting section features only one pitch, a repeated D, which does not appear in the melodic sections of the *Minute*. Example 27 shows the beginning of this first X section, at the end of the third line. D stands out as a distinct pitch center of its own, due to its extensive repetition and absence from the primary material. With its *forte* dynamic, accented attacks, and lack of

reference to earlier pitch material, this strongly contrasting section quite effectively interrupts the melody.

After the first interruption, the primary material intercedes for a brief period (A^2), using the opening C \sharp -centered pitch collection, but with an added A borrowed from the C-centered collection. Two other interruptions, X^1 and X^2 , occur in the final line (see ex. 28). Here, briefer sections of melodic material intervene each time. In this way, the primary material contracts as the movement goes on while the rude interruption overshadows it. The movement closes on the final triumph of interruption over melody.

Example 28. "Museum Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The three pitch centers of "Museum Tones" create a three-note cluster, centered around C \sharp . C \sharp takes the role of the overall pitch center of the movement, with visits to its neighboring pitches. However, D proves to be a rather overbearing neighbor, and gradually displaces C \sharp as the pitch center during the second half of the movement.

Because of the gradual takeover of the interruption described above, and the resulting displacement of the *Minute's* pitch center, a flutist's interpretive choice or ability to repeat the movement within the allotted minute profoundly influences the impression it leaves. One of a handful of movements that feature

the *eventuell Da Capo* instruction at the bottom of the page, it appears that the composer does not object to a return to the C# area.

A flutist performing this piece should make the contrast between the melodic and interruptive sections quite clear to the audience. The interruption's gradual smothering of the primary material proves most effective when a performer follows the composer's dynamic and articulation indications closely. Attacking the first note of each interruption with a powerful dynamic and a sudden, intense accent strengthens the sense of the interruption cutting off the melody, while a more delicate sound should prevail in the primary material.

Martial recalls Atli Heimir relating that prayers or hymns he had heard in a Faroe Islands church inspired this movement, further stating that the upward pitch bends at the ends of phrases trace their origins there. Martial also states that the composer had explained that the movement describes "dead things," as museums contain only things that are dead or no longer used. He feels that this idea contradicts the *Minute's sospirando* performance indication.⁵⁹

Áshildur also remarks on the unusual upward pitch bend at the ends of phrases in "Museum Tones." She discusses the strong tendency for Western music throughout history to descend melodically toward the ends of phrases, but that this terminal upward pitch bend does the opposite. She finds this effect tremendously "futuristic" and "alien."⁶⁰

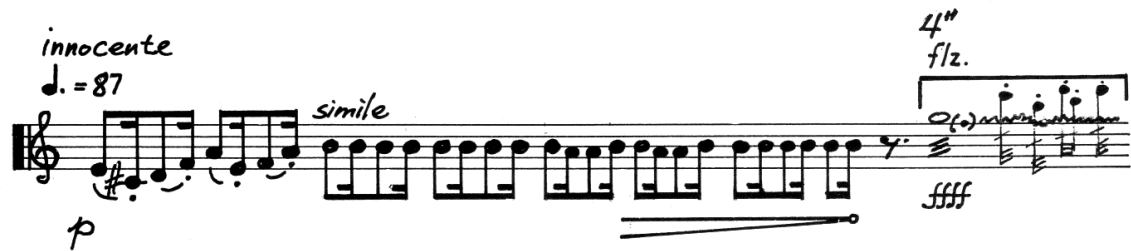
⁵⁹ Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁶⁰ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Child Tones

“Child Tones” falls third in the composer’s ordering of the *Sounding Minutes*, logically following “Man Tones” and “Woman Tones.” It features two instances of a starkly contrasting element, with the movement taking a clearly-defined $A-X-A^1-X^1-A^2-X^2-A^3-A^C$ form. The primary material consists of an *innocente* E-Phrygian melody, performed without extended techniques. This material maintains a steady swing-like rhythm but features considerable dynamic variation throughout the movement. Each statement of primary material features a diminuendo at the end, all but one fading away to nothing. The contrasting element involves a surprising interruption. Example 29 shows the first line, which contains the initial primary and contrasting sections.

Example 29. “Child Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The four sections of primary material feature varying degrees of embellishing chromaticism. This chromaticism increases toward the middle of the movement, peaking in the A^2 area. It then decreases toward the movement’s conclusion. Correspondingly, the tension in the music first accumulates and then abates. The first section (A) contains one chromatic tone, the second note (C#). This pitch initially obscures the movement’s modality, and

Like the first section, the second (A^1) only contains one chromatic pitch, a $G\sharp$. Section A^2 , however, features a more substantial chromatic area, the extensively repeated $B\flat$ - $A\flat$ - $C\flat$ - $A\flat$ pattern shown in example 30. Here, the melody, possibly representing the child, appears stuck in a rut. Furthermore, the crescendo to *forte* at the center of this section suggests the child's frustration with the situation. This moment also constitutes a half-cadential gesture, with the repeated $C\flat$, the highest pitch of the phrase and enharmonically equivalent to B, representing $\hat{5}$ of the movement's mode.

77

The liquidating closing (A^c) contains only one chromatic tone, $B\flat$, shown in example 31. The tritone approach to this pitch highlights its chromatic effect, but it resolves almost immediately to a B. Once again, the diatonic version of a pitch corrects the problem the chromaticism creates. The closing section also serves to confirm E definitively as the movement's tonic pitch by repeating it extensively and including several instances of B ($\hat{5}$) to E ($\hat{1}$) motion.

Example 31. "Child Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The shockingly interruptive contrasting element, which occurs three times, features a sustained *ffff* G-F trill with flutter tonguing and interpolated, approximately notated leaps to staccato high notes (see ex. 29). Each of these interruptions, measured in absolute time, lasts for four seconds. The furious nature of these X sections suggests a child's temper tantrum. An immediate return of the melodic material follows each interruption, as though nothing had occurred.

The primary performance challenge of "Child Tones" involves creating an effective contrast between the primary material and the interruptions. Áshildur mentioned the difficulty of creating this distinction. "It should be, I think, like a child that is just completely relaxed, or someone humming. I find it very difficult

to achieve that, being in a relaxed state and then bringing those *fortissimos*, explosions, and then returning.”⁶¹

Martial focuses more on the programmatic aspect of this movement, saying: “naturally, he [Atli Heimir] is a father and knows what it is to have children. Smiling, but ruckus in between, interruptions sometimes. This is children playing, playing nicely and then crying, and then playing again.”⁶²

In order to achieve satisfactory contrast between the two elements of this movement, a flutist must maintain a steady rhythm when performing the primary material. Adhering to the composer’s indicated dynamics, especially the diminuendos at the end of each A section, lays the groundwork for the impact the interruptions should make. The crescendo to *forte* in the third line assists with emphasizing the structurally and expressively critical half-cadential gesture.

The interruptions contain three technical elements: the trill, interpolated notes, and flutter tonguing. Flutists may choose to practice these aspects separately in order to make the desired effect relatively easy to master. Deciding in advance which notes to insert helps structure these moments, although some flutists may prefer improvising them. As the composer indicates the timing of the interruptions in seconds, setting a metronome to sixty beats per minute while learning the movement can help a flutist execute this measurement accurately.

⁶¹ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

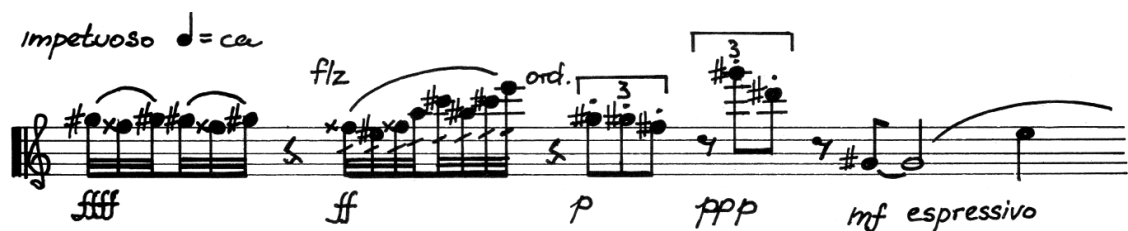
⁶² Martial Nardeau, interview.

Morning Tones

The ninth *Sounding Minute*, “Morning Tones,” features primary material and a contrasting element, both of which have G# as their pitch center. The two types of material alternate, differing from each other in articulation, rhythm, dynamics, and thematic content, outlining an A-X-A¹-X¹-A²-X²-A³-X³-A^C form.

The opening statement of the *impetuoso* primary material, shown in example 32, approximately lasts three quarters of the first line. It introduces the entire pitch collection of the movement, nine pitches in all. The pitches B, C, and D do not appear in this movement, and A# and E# do not recur after this opening section. The chromatic and rhythmically irregular primary material features both sudden and extreme dynamic changes and flutter tonguing. It presents brief, rapid fragments of motivic material, separated from each other by rests. This area relates musically to “Bird Tones,” with its rapid chromatic notes and flutter tonguing, and may imply bird song in the morning.

Example 32. “Morning Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The primary material occurs four additional times, for a total of five appearances. Each occurrence of primary material after the first features more restricted pitch material than the opening statement. The second and third

statements (A^1 and A^2) confine themselves to three pitches out of the collection, and the fourth statement (A^3) only uses two. The closing statement (A^C), however, expands to include four pitches from the original collection. The pitch collections of the primary-material sections, therefore, contract toward the middle of the movement and then expand slightly towards the end.

The much sleepier, *espressivo* contrasting material features long, legato phrases and a steady dynamic level within each section. Unlike many of the interruptive sections in the *21 Sounding Minutes*, these X areas have a more melodic character than the primary material. They use pitches from the collection of the primary section but confine themselves to D#, E, F#, and G#, with one notable exception.

The first statement of contrasting material (X) contains only D#, E, and G#, but the second statement (X^1) includes all four X-section pitches along with an embellishing A. The third statement (X^2) includes the four pitches of the set while the fourth statement (X^3) contracts to include only two of them, the G# and F#. The pitch collections of the contrasting material, therefore, first expand and then contract, opposite to the primary material.

A half-cadential moment occurs at the opening of line three of this movement (see ex. 33), with the D# that closes the X^1 section. The grace-note A that immediately precedes it also contributes to the uniqueness of this moment. This gesture involves the only occurrence of A and the only staccato and *sforzando* note within any X section. Furthermore, unlike the preceding pitches in this section, the flutist does not perform these two pitches as

overtones. These features all define the primary material, rather than the contrasting areas. Thus, a fragment from the opening section intrudes on, interrupts, or cuts off the secondary material, perhaps indicating that the bird has rudely awoken the sleeper.

Example 33. "Morning Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The distinction between primary and contrasting material blurs somewhat in the last line, shown in example 34, with the longer G#s having a particularly ambiguous role. The close of the movement also constitutes an idiosyncratic moment as it ends on a sustained quarter-tone-raised F#. The only instance of a quarter tone in this movement, this pitch has no obvious connection with earlier material.

Example 34. "Morning Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Áshildur likens the fragmented nature of "Morning Tones" to several different kinds of cereal that the composer blends together. She says that practicing each fragment on its own helps when learning the piece and that one

of the challenges of performing this movement well involves maintaining continuity, with quick transitions between the motivic fragments.⁶³

Martial, on the other hand, interprets “Morning Tones” as telling the story of someone who wakes up prepared to seize the day, suggesting that this movement may describe an “early bird.” He says that the movement reminds him of the prelude to Bizet’s *L’Arlésienne* Suite No. 1, with its vigorous, energetic opening.⁶⁴

A flutist playing this movement must portray the vastly differing characters of the primary and contrasting material, and ensure that the audience hears the contrast. As the composer indicates with his *sforzando* marking, the crucial “rude awakening” half-cadential moment in the third line should receive emphasis. Dynamics and articulation play a vital role in this movement as well, with the stark contrasts between the different motivic fragments of the primary material constituting an essential interpretive component. The primary sections require technical accuracy and clean playing while the contrasting section calls for smooth and meaningful interpretation.

Two of the contrasting sections require the flutist to perform overtones, and these require care with respect to tuning and tone quality. The composer does not indicate his desired fingerings for these pitches, but fingering the pitch class a perfect fifth below in the lowest octave produces the correct overtones.

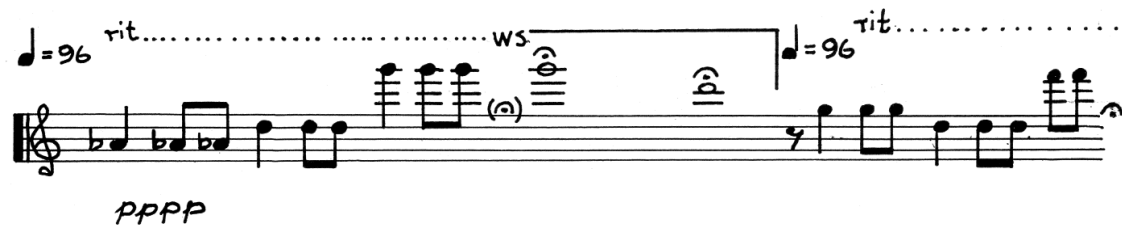
⁶³ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁶⁴ Martial Nardeau, interview.

International Tones

"International Tones," the penultimate *Sounding Minute*, features clearly contrasting elements, which create an extensively segmented A-X-A¹-X¹-A²-X²-A³-X³-A⁴-X⁴-A⁵ form. The only *Sounding Minute* without an expressive indication at the outset, the only instruction at the beginning is a tempo marking of ninety-six beats per minute. The primary material involves an ascending phrase consisting of quarter notes and eighth notes. Many of these notes repeat immediately and give the impression of a sound signal or Morse code rather than a melody. Example 35 shows the opening line of the movement, which contains sections A, X, and A¹.

Example 35. "International Tones," first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



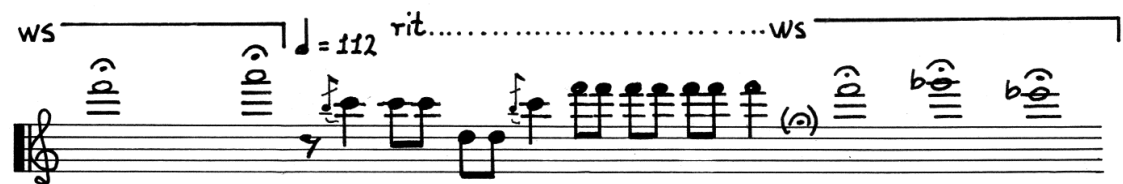
The dynamic *pppp* remains consistent throughout the movement, and each occurrence of the primary area involves a *ritardando* as the figure ascends, with a *mancando* indicated for the final phrase. The ascending nature of each phrase of the primary material leaves the listener with an impression of openness or incompleteness.

The composer avoids establishing a clearly discernible pitch center in this movement, but it nonetheless features a gradually coalescing pitch

collection. The movement opens atonally, with the pitches A \flat , D, and G (see ex. 35) barely hinting at the primary material's vaguely C-centered collection, which does not appear in its entirety until the final line of the movement. The first two phrases of primary material present the pitch collection used for the majority of the movement: C, D, F, G, and A \flat .

The pitch B occurs twice as a grace note before C in the second line (see ex. 36) but does not return during the course of "International Tones." These idiosyncratic moments, the only instances of grace-notes in the *Minute*, hint at leading-tone function and thereby constitute the movement's most direct evidence that C may be its pitch center, but the listener receives no confirmation of this.

Example 36. "International Tones," second line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The closing phrase, shown in example 37, includes the first and only appearance of both A and E \flat , finally exposing the entirety of the movement's pitch material. The resulting collection: C-D- E \flat -F-G-A \flat -A-B, relates to C minor, but the composer avoids confirming the pitch center or mode of the movement for the listener at any point, adding to the mystery by closing on F.

Example 37. "International Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Both Martial and Áshildur remark on the difficulty of performing “International Tones,” and they both count this *Minute* among the most challenging. Martial discusses the need to practice whistle tones regularly, in order to maintain proficiency in performing them. Immediately preceding each contrasting area, the primary material closes on the pitch of the first whistle tone. According to Martial, the composer wrote it in such a manner at Manuela’s behest as whistle tones are often difficult to perform but prove much easier once a flutist already has the embouchure formed for the appropriate pitch.⁶⁵ The composer also provides a break between the primary material and the whistle tones, allowing the performer time to prepare for executing this technique.

Áshildur discusses a different challenging aspect of performing this movement. She describes being “filled with extreme anguish over causing people boredom for this one minute,” and how a flutist must “be rather neutral” and “imagine the United Nations building in New York.” She comments on how classical flutists rarely perform in this manner, almost like a computer or synthesizer playing a sound signal or Morse code, perhaps indicating that a meeting is over or that a train is coming. “You have to play it very evenly and very well if you are going to be a perfect signal. You do not want it to be human” and “you have to get every note very stable, perfect, and in tune.”⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁶⁶ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Multi-Section *Minutes*

The third group of *Minutes* contains the most formally complex movements and exhibits the greatest structural variety. These *Minutes* feature more than two distinct thematic areas or significant enough transformations of the primary material to warrant further division or explanation than the movements of the second group. Seven *Minutes* belong to this third group: “God Tones,” “Rain Tones,” “Snow Tones,” “Evening Tones,” “Bird Tones,” “Love Tones,” and “Man Tones.” Table 4 lists these movements and their forms.

| TITLE | FORM |
|---------------|--|
| God Tones | X-A-X ¹ -B-A ¹ -X ² -A ^C |
| Rain Tones | A-X-B-A ¹ -X ¹ -C-X ² -A ^C |
| Snow Tones | A-X-A ¹ -X ¹ -B-X ² -C-A ^C |
| Evening Tones | A-B-X-C-A ¹ -B ¹ -X ¹ -A ² -B ² -A ^C |
| Bird Tones | A-B-C-AB ^C |
| Love Tones | A-B-C-A ¹ |
| Man Tones | A-B-C |

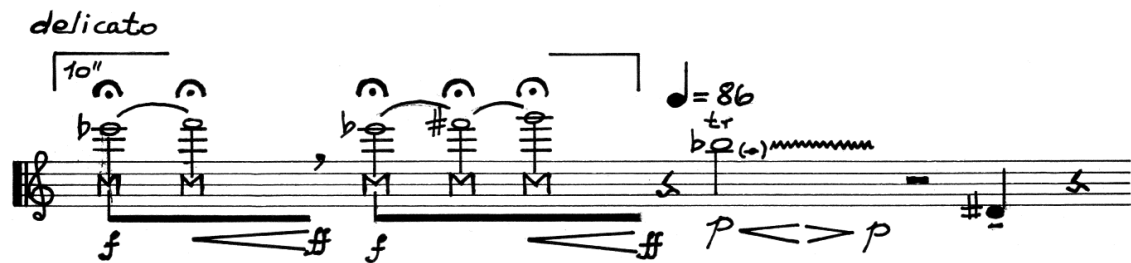
Table 4. Multi-section *Minutes*.

Some of the *Minutes* from the third group relate to those the second in that one of the movement’s sections distinguishes itself more clearly as an extreme contrast or interruption. Other multi-section movements lack clearly contrasting “X” sections and have a more through-composed character. However, they nonetheless feature a clearly defined form, with discernible thematic elements. Although each of these movements has a distinct form, some share relevant formal characteristics. Examples of this include “Rain Tones” and “Snow Tones” as well as “Bird Tones” and Love Tones.”

God Tones

"God Tones," the seventeenth *Sounding Minute*, features three distinct formal areas. In an X-A-X¹-B-A¹-X²-A^C form, it is the only movement to begin with a preemptive X area. The X sections of the movement involve a series of sustained multiphonics, performed at a *forte* dynamic with a crescendo to *fortissimo*. Example 38 shows the first X section. The time measurement in seconds rather than metronome beats, the sustained notes, and the extended technique usage here characterizes many interruptive contrasting sections in other movements, tying the rhetoric of these sections to that of other X sections in the work. Later in this movement, after the primary material has appeared, the multiphonic sections assume this more typical interruptive function.

Example 38. "God Tones," first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Furthermore, Atli Heimir concludes most *Sounding Minutes* with primary material or fragmented primary-material-based closing sections. As example 39 illustrates, this movement closes on a brief section based on A material, rather than the multiphonic sections, lending support to the idea that the musical element that appears second in the movement plays a primary-material role.

Example 39. "God Tones," final line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The multiphonic sections range in length from seven to ten seconds. As the movement progresses, each of the X sections contains fewer notes, and with each occurrence, the notes become longer. The first instance involves five notes over the span of ten seconds (see ex. 38), the second three notes over a seven-second span, and the third involves only one pitch sustained for a full ten seconds (see ex. 39). The pitches of the multiphonics sections (E \flat , F, F \sharp , G, and C \flat) do not appear to have a pitch center.

The three A sections involve a series of individual pitches, separated by both rests and large leaps. These sections display a considerable dynamic range, often with sudden shifts and rapid crescendos and decrescendos. The notes and rests vary significantly in length, as well. The first A section contains six pitches, which can be arranged into two three-note clusters. Each cluster has a distinct range, the higher one containing B \flat 5, B5, and C6 and the lower D5, D \sharp 4 and E4. The composer leaps between these two clusters, resulting in a B \flat 5-D \sharp 4-C6-E4-B5-D5 sequence, shown in figure 3. The pitch content of the primary sections contracts as the movement progresses, going from six notes to three and finally to two, similarly to the contracting pitch content of the X sections.

Figure 3. "God Tones," pitch material in section A.



The B section, the beginning of which example 40 shows, contrasts markedly with the other two. Conjunct, metrically regular, and with a consistent *mezzo forte* dynamic marking, this area is far more melodic than the others. Although the section has an ambiguous pitch center that may even be heard as changing during its brief course, it uses a D major/minor pitch collection, featuring F#, F, Bb, and B while avoiding C and C# altogether. Like that of "Bird Tones" and "Love Tones," this movement's third formal area is by far the most melodic.

Example 40. "God Tones," third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The closing section briefly returns to A-section material. Here, a connection with "Heaven Tones" materializes, with a *piano* to *pppp* descending minor third leap, very similar to the closing of that movement (see ex. 10). It also bears a *senza vibrato* indication, the only such marking in the entire work outside of "Heaven Tones."

Both Martial and Áshildur name “God Tones” as a difficult *Minute* to perform, but Áshildur adds that she has had students who enjoyed learning this movement most of all. Áshildur appreciates the “immense breadth” of the *Minute*, its openness, and that it allows a considerable amount of room for interpretation, remarking: “each person should be able to find their own God in it, and each audience member should be able to find what he wants to think about.”⁶⁷

In the movement’s multiphonic section, Atli Heimir specifies one pitch that the multiphonic must contain while letting the performer choose the other pitches. This allows a flutist to explore the sonorous multiphonics that he or she can most easily execute at a *forte* to *fortissimo* dynamic level. Áshildur appreciates this freedom, stating that the composer “figures that you can find it on your instrument or look it up in some book.” She admires his awareness of the need to create a dramatic impact there, rather than emphasizing the importance of each pitch. She believes that this demonstrates his confidence as a composer while others may “hide behind extreme precision.”

Martial recalls asking the composer about his thoughts regarding this movement in particular but receiving no answers. He thinks that it is good that this *Minute* leaves “questions unanswered.” He also recounts performing this piece and receiving comments and questions from audience members; the “ugliness” of the multiphonics took some of them by surprise.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁶⁸ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Rain Tones

The third of the weather-themed *Minutes* and the sixteenth overall, “Rain Tones,” like “Snow Tones,” features strongly contrasting X-sections as well as three other formal areas, resulting in an overall A-X-B-A¹-X¹-C-X²-A^C form. The only *Sounding Minute* to feature a time signature, 4/4, this movement is also the only movement to use bar lines in a wholly traditional manner (see ex. 41).

Example 41. “Rain Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



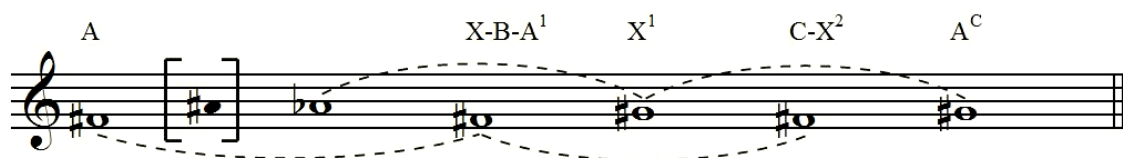
The movement opens with F#-centered material, mostly confining itself to the collection of the F#-minor scale, but with some chromatic neighbor tones. It features rapid grace-note embellishments of repeated pitches and extreme dynamic variation. At the end of the second line, shown in example 42, a sustained, *fff* A#6 occurs, leaping down to a D#6 and then back up to A#6. This constitutes an interruption within in the primary material, which resumes at the beginning of line three. However, as the central pitch has now changed to A \flat , with neighboring grace notes on G and B \flat , it appears that this interruption had enough power to displace the F# pitch center.

Example 42. "Rain Tones," second line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



After the interruptive A#6 in section A, "Rain Tones" begins to vacillate in pitch center between F# and G#/A \flat . Figure 4 shows this interruption and how these changes in pitch center correlate with the *Minute*'s overall form.

Figure 4. "Rain Tones," form and pitch centers.



The B section has a strong connection to "Snow Tones," opening with the repeated staccato notes and descending seventh leap so prominent in that movement's primary material (see ex. 44). It moves on to a half-cadential gesture at the end of line three, near the center of the movement, where the flutist sustains a C# ($\hat{5}$) for two measures with an inflection down a quarter tone, and then up a quarter tone. These quarter-tone inflections provide an additional link to "Snow Tones," which features quarter-tone inflections of G in its X sections. This gesture also features a *piano* dynamic and dynamic swells similar to those found in the X material of "Snow Tones" (see ex. 45).

The movement's C section, which occurs at the beginning of the fifth line (see ex. 43), also resembles that of "Snow Tones" in that it features legato

articulation and a more melodic line than sections A and B while remaining rapid. It features one idiosyncratic moment, a sustained C6, the only occurrence of C in the movement. This pitch also serves as the C section's climax.

Example 43. "Rain Tones," fifth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The contrasting X material occurs three times and in each case involves the sounding of pitches below the normal range of the flute. The performer achieves this through the use of tongue-blocked key slaps in the first two cases and tongue-rams in the third. Furthermore, although the first two occurrences of this device simply call for the repetition of one pitch, F# in the first and G# in the second, the third instance features the pitches F#, G, G#, B, and A (see ex. 43). Therefore, the third instance of contrasting material (X²) differs considerably from the first two (X and X¹). These contrasting moments all have a percussive effect, reminiscent of falling rain hitting a surface.

The movement's closing section, based on primary material, does not contain any instance of F#, the *Minute*'s opening pitch center. Instead, it closes on A \flat , the pitch to which the primary motive shifted after the interruption in section A. The prominent, enharmonically equivalent G#s and A \flat s in this section, as well as a leap from G# to C# toward the middle of the last line, suggest that the movement's pitch center has shifted from the F# of the opening

to G \sharp /A \flat at the end. It appears that the interruption in the first primary area that originally displaced F \sharp as the central pitch has far-reaching consequences.

Both Martial and Áshildur have a fondness for “Rain Tones.” They both remarked on the *indifferente* indication at the opening of the movement. Martial emphasizes playing this movement “cold” and not “injecting too much feeling into it.”⁶⁹ Áshildur suggests that the marking means “the rain does not care.” She particularly appreciates the clearly descriptive aspect of this movement, saying “you can hear the drops splashing.”⁷⁰ Martial enjoys that the tongue-blocked key slap and tongue ram allow the performer to produce pitches an octave lower than usual, expanding the flute’s range. He says that this sound often surprises audience members. A performer can enhance the descriptive nature of “Rain Tones” by adhering closely to the composer’s written indications, especially of dynamics and articulation. Emphasizing the percussive nature of the X sections also enhances the rain-like character of the movement.

This movement has a misprint in the fifth measure, which is missing one eighth note. When asked about this, the composer stated that simply adding an eighth-note rest to the end of the measure is an acceptable correction.⁷¹

“Snow Tones” and “Rain Tones” have much in common regarding formal structure and programmatic content, and flutists often program them together. Performers also often include “Storm Tones” with these two, as well. In the composer’s original ordering, he placed “Storm Tones” between “Snow Tones” and “Rain Tones,” suggesting that he thought of these movements as a trilogy.

⁶⁹ Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁷⁰ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

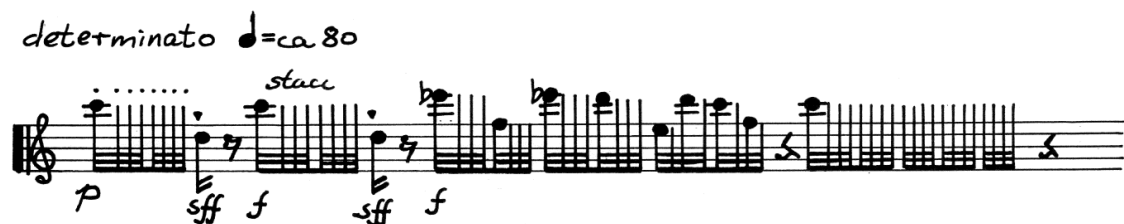
⁷¹ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

Snow Tones

Fourteenth in the composer's original ordering of movements, "Snow Tones" is the first of three weather-themed *Minutes*, followed by "Storm Tones" and "Rain Tones." The movement takes an A-X-A¹-X¹-B-X²-C-A^C form, with the X sections representing strongly contrasting interruptions.

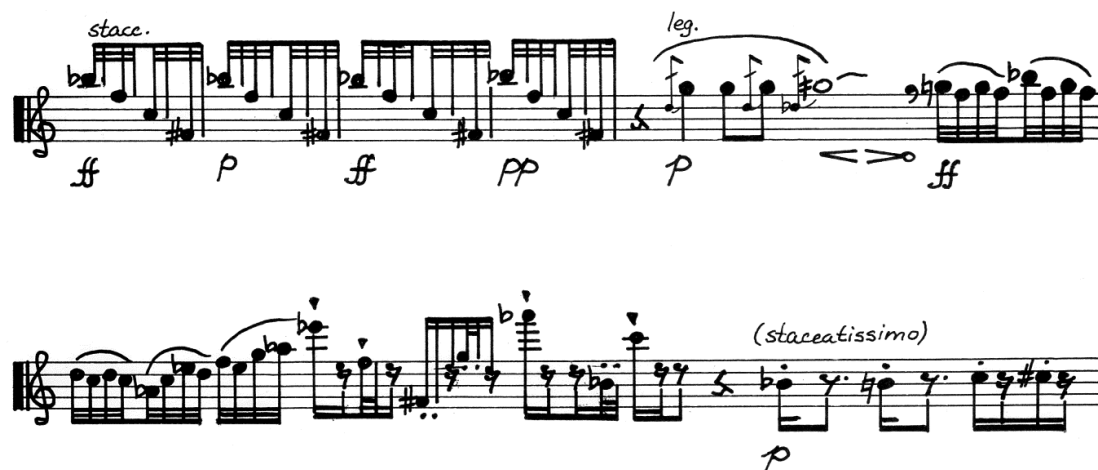
The A sections consist of rapid, often repeated staccato notes and prominent downward seventh leaps, suggesting falling snow. Example 44, which shows the opening of the movement, demonstrates this. These sections avoid establishing a pitch center, with A using the pitches C, D, E \flat , E, and F; A¹ using B \flat , C, C \sharp , D, F, and G; and A^C featuring a chromatic ascent from B \flat to D.

Example 44. "Snow Tones," first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The B section, at the beginning of the fourth line (see ex. 45), relates to the primary material in that it contains repeated staccato notes and descending leaps. However, it has more restricted pitch content and only features four iterations of a B \flat 5-F5-C5-F \sharp 4 sequence. Like the previous areas, this section avoids establishing a pitch center. The flutist plays the first and third statements *fortissimo*, with the second and fourth echoing *piano* and then *pianissimo*.

Example 45. "Snow Tones," fourth and fifth lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



This movement's C section, also shown in example 45, begins in the fourth line and continues into the fifth. Like the C areas of several other movements, this section features a more scalar pitch collection and more legato articulation. Here, "Snow Tones" correlates strongly with "Rain Tones." Although still rapid, the C section has a more melodic character than sections A and B. This section uses an E \flat -major pitch collection, terminating on an E \flat 6, briefly alluding to E \flat as a pitch center. The area leads almost directly to the closing section, with the final short, sharp E \flat separated from the first note of the closing section only by a sixteenth rest. The composer beams notes belonging to sections C and A^C together, suggesting that he thought of the closing area as emerging from section C.

Similarly to "Child Tones" and other movements, the composer liquidates the closing section of "Snow Tones," with a more sparse texture, *piano* dynamic and *staccatissimo* articulation indication. It begins in the fifth line, after the final

E \flat of the C section, where the music reverts to A-section rhetoric, with large leaps, repeated staccato notes, and an F \sharp which does not belong to the E \flat collection of the C section. Following a quarter-note rest, this section continues with a B \flat 4 towards the end of the penultimate line that ascends chromatically upwards to D, followed by a drop back down to A \sharp . This A \sharp initiates another chromatically ascending stepwise progression, this time to the quarter-tone raised D at the very end of the movement. This ascending chromatic step progression recalls the A¹ section, where it occurs an octave higher.

The strongly contrasting interruptive element (X) occurs three times and involves a brief melodic *legato* and *piano* passage, with grace-note embellishments of G. Example 45 shows section X². Each X section contains the same pitch material: D \flat , D, and G, with a final G raised by a quarter tone. The pitch content remains unaltered for all of the contrasting sections, but each successive X area grows longer by one quarter note. Although the composer notated the movement in an unusual manner, with relatively few note heads, the quarter tones in these passages and the final D, also raised by a quarter tone, are the only examples of extended techniques in the movement.

Áshildur mentions performing “Snow Tones” quite frequently, and both Martial and Áshildur emphasize the importance of a good staccato articulation in this movement. Martial discusses the challenge involved in creating a clear differentiation between “Snow Tones” and “Rain Tones.” He claims “Snow Tones” should have a more “cotton-like” quality, but must at the same time be extremely “*détaché*,” saying that the flutist must find a “snow-staccato.” Martial

also believes that a flutist must renounce ego and too much expression in this movement, and play it just as the composer wrote it, “cold as ice.”⁷² Áshildur finds the movement’s staccato articulation descriptive of snowflakes. She especially enjoys the contrast between legato and staccato sections in “Snow Tones.”⁷³

“Snow Tones” and “Rain Tones,” often programmed together, have more in common than a program dealing with precipitation. In terms of form, these movements share many features, although the interruptive X element of “Snow Tones” has a more melodic quality than the percussive X sections of “Rain Tones.” Perhaps one way of looking at this involves the way in which snowfall softens the contours of everything on which it lands, and the *piano* dynamic may suggest the way in which it muffles sound. A crucial interpretive consideration then involves performing this section *piano* and legato, as written. The quarter tones and grace-note embellishments in the X sections of “Snow Tones” also provide a link with “Heaven’s Tones,” which a performer may wish to take into account when programming these *Minutes*.

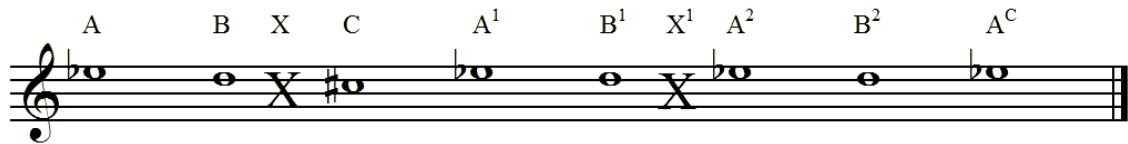
⁷² Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁷³ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Evening Tones

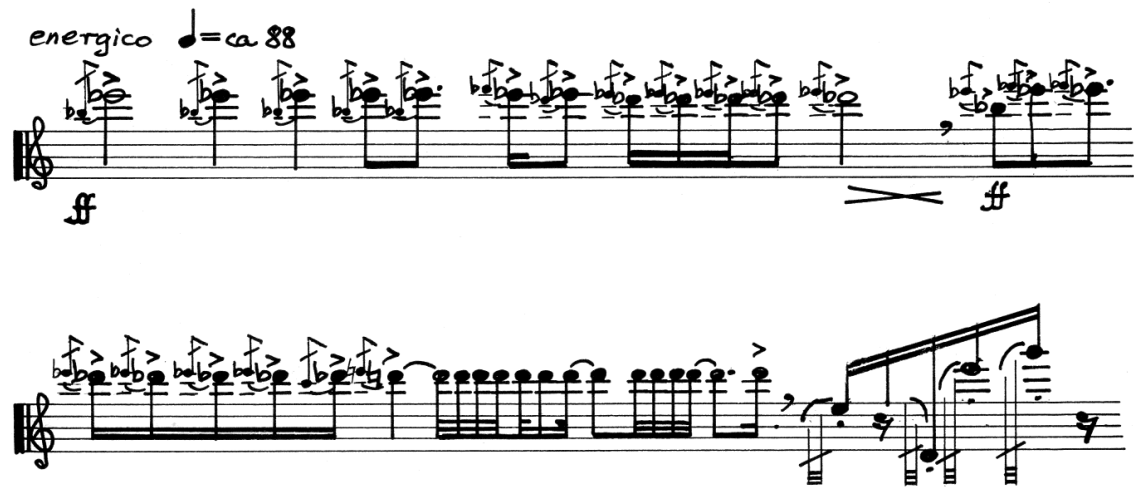
The seventh *Sounding Minute* and the first of three movements describing a time of day, “Evening Tones” features an extensively segmented form. It can be divided into three areas, according to underlying structural pitch changes and coinciding changes in musical rhetoric. A smooth, underlying structural melody, E \flat -D-C \sharp -E \flat -D-E \flat -D-E \flat provides the foundation for this form. Two strongly contrasting X sections interrupt this material, resulting in an overall formal scheme of A-B-X-C-A¹-B¹-X¹-A²-B²-A^C. Figure 5 demonstrates the structural melody and interruptions in “Evening Tones” and illustrates how it correlates with the movement’s overall form.

Figure 5. “Evening Tones,” form and structural melody with interruptions.



Example 46 shows the opening of “Evening Tones,” which begins with primary material (A) that centers clearly on E \flat . This section lasts for the entire first line and the beginning of the second. Here, the composer uses quick grace-note embellishments of accented, repeated notes as well as irregular beat lengths. This section contains only four pitches: E \flat , F \flat , B \flat , and D \flat . The A sections confine themselves entirely to this pitch collection, with one exception, a D in section A¹. This D connects to the following D-centered B sections as well as serving as a neighbor to E \flat .

Example 46. "Evening Tones," first and second lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The B section begins with an E \sharp grace note in the second line. It centers on D, confining itself exclusively to D and E. Both B sections involve repeating or sustaining D, and they include neighbor tones to D. The composer uses a micro-transition to move from A to the B section, with the E grace note embellishing the first D. Here, the composer utilizes the rhetoric of the primary material, but the pitch content of the B section.

At the end of the second line, the contrasting X material intervenes, featuring a series of improvised grace-note figures terminating on a determined pitch. The X sections of this movement serve as clear interruptions of the otherwise smooth underlying structural melody.

The C section occurs at the beginning of the third line, shown in example 47. It centers on C \sharp , and presents repeated C \sharp s with embellishments and rapid, slurred figures. Arguably more melodic than sections A and B, the C section features less restricted pitch content, using every pitch from C \sharp up to G. The B \flat

at the end of this section recalls the primary material, providing a micro-transition to the following A¹ section. This B \flat also serves as a half-cadential gesture, functioning as $\hat{5}$ immediately before a brief pause in the form of a breath mark and before the launch of a new section. As with the other multi-section *Sounding Minutes*, the relatively melodic C section of this movement occurs only once. “Evening Tones” closes with brief sections of A and B material, and, as in most of the 21 *Sounding Minutes*, the final phrase involves primary material.

Example 47. “Evening Tones,” third line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



In “Evening Tones,” Atli Heimir makes changes in musical rhetoric as the underlying structural pitch changes. This vaguely echoes the common-practice procedure of presenting a new theme in a different key, but here the composer does it on a much smaller scale, introducing new motivic material rather than a complete theme. The composer uses this approach in other *Minutes*, such as “Man Tones.” The musical language of these two movements has many similarities as well, with rapid and virtuosic passages as well as *fortissimo* dynamics and aggressive attacks. The form of “Evening Tones” also relates closely to that of “Rain Tones” and “Snow Tones,” which both feature interruptive sections as well as rapid but relatively melodic C-sections.

Martial notes the difficulty of the rhythm in “Evening Tones,” and suggests re-notating it in a traditional manner in order to simplify learning it. He says that when the flutist plays the rhythm accurately, it adds to the *energico* feeling that the composer indicates at the opening. He comments on the rather noisy character of the movement, and suggests that this may represent an evening concert.⁷⁴ Áshildur also remarks on the movement’s raucous nature, and how different its mood is from what one might expect from music representing the evening. She claims this represents Atli Heimir’s unpredictable style and suggests that the music of this *Minute* may represent nightlife.⁷⁵

This movement, which flutists often program in conjunction with “Morning Tones” and “Night Tones,” presents several interpretive and technical challenges to a performer. Awareness of the underlying structural melody and how it defines the movement’s form can enhance a performance. If the flutist slightly emphasizes the change in structural pitch, the audience will get a clearer picture of the motion of the underlying melody. The interruptive nature of the X sections can be emphasized, for example, by dramatizing the rests or breath marks that separate them from the rest of the movement’s material. As these sections do not have a pitch center or function as part of the underlying structural melody, a flutist has the freedom to choose pitches for the grace-note figures based on ease of performance. The movement’s only dynamic changes occur on sustained notes, and in each case involve a diminuendo followed by a crescendo, a highly effective gesture when emphasized.

⁷⁴ Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁷⁵ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Bird Tones

The fourth movement of *Sounding Minutes*, “Bird Tones,” has three distinct formal sections. It also features a dissolving closing based on material from the first and second areas, creating an A-B-C-AB^C form. The primary section, shown in example 48, lasts most of the way through the second line, where it closes with a long, sustained, flutter-tongued E \flat . This area bears a *veloce* performance indication and contains a nearly complete, embellished, chromatic ascent from the opening E to the E \flat a diminished octave higher. This ascent includes all pitches except A. The section features upwards glissandi, irregular rhythms, and sudden, extreme dynamic shifts, quite effectively depicting birdsong.

Example 48. “Bird Tones,” first and second lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

veloce $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 92$

gliss. gliss. gliss.

p $< sf$ pp $< sf$ p $< sf$ ff $< sf$

gliss. gliss.

$< sff$ $< sff$ pp fff $sfff$

tranguillo

$pppp$ kaum hörbar
ab und zu kurze flz.
ad lib. bis zum "dolce"

As noted earlier, the primary area of “Bird Tones” has much in common with the primary material of “Fish Tones,” which consists of an embellished

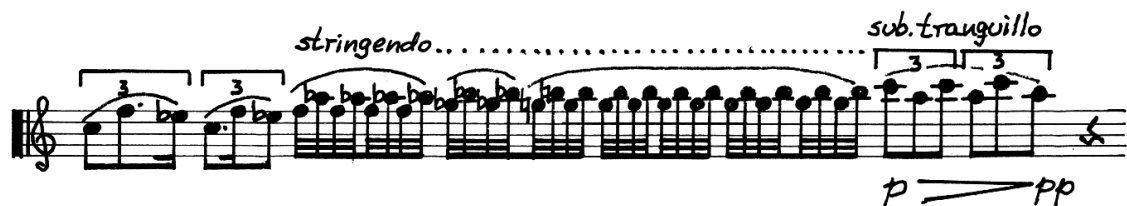
chromatic ascent, as well. “Fish Tones” also contains quick, ascending glissando figures in grace notes leading to a staccato pitch, like the one toward the end of the first line of “Bird Tones.” Furthermore, “Bird Tones” contains glissandi between half steps, using upward pitch bends. The composer uses a remarkably similar approach in “Fish Tones,” in which he requires the performer to fill in the space between many of the movement’s half steps by bending pitches (see ex. 21).

The B section, which begins near the end of the second line (see ex. 48), bears the expressive marking *tranquillo* and a *pppp* dynamic indication. Furthermore, the instructions read “*kaum hörbar, ab und zu kurze flz. ad lib. bis zum ‘dolce’*,” indicating that the performer should play extremely quietly, interpolating brief episodes of flutter tonguing. This chromatic passage contains rapid notes and irregular rhythms, using all pitches within the restricted range of C4-G4. The B section does not have a clearly defined pitch center but does repeat D4 extensively at the end of the phrase. After the repeated Ds, the performer slurs up to a staccato, accented E♭4, thus closing the B section on the same pitch as section A. Analogous to the secondary section of “Fish Tones,” this section chromatically fills in a narrowly defined range using rapid notes, with the performer interspersing brief occurrences of flutter tonguing. In overall form, however, “Bird Tones” differs in a significant way from “Fish Tones,” in that it contains a melodic C section.

The C section bears a *dolce* interpretive indication and has a markedly different character than sections A and B. Slower, with a slightly louder dynamic

of *piano*, this section utilizes the pitches B \flat , C, D \flat , E \flat , and F, centering on F, with an emphasis on F($\hat{1}$) and C($\hat{5}$). This area relates strongly to the third section of “Love Tones,” which uses the same F-centered pitch collection (see ex. 51). The C sections of the two movements also feature similar rhythm. Furthermore, in the penultimate line of “Bird Tones,” shown in example 49, the rapid, stringendo tremolo in thirds strongly recalls the primary material of “Love Tones” (see ex. 50). A *subito tranquillo* triplet figure consisting of C and A follows, the first occurrence of A in the movement. This A finally fills in the gap left in the chromatic ascent at the *Minute*’s opening.

Example 49. “Bird Tones,” fifth line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



“Bird Tones” ends with a liquidating closing section (AB^C), recalling A and B-section material in several respects. It involves a series of brief utterings that consist of sustained notes with rapid, ascending, chromatic, embellishing grace-note figures. The ascending nature of these figures and the closing section overall recalls primary material, but their soft dynamic and rapidly winding chromatic pitches more strongly relate to the secondary area. Gradually, the sustained notes grow shorter and eventually disappear, the rests between figures grow longer, the number of notes in each figure becomes smaller, and the dynamic fades from *piano* to *pppp*.

Both Martial and Áshildur name “Bird Tones” as one of their favorite *Minutes*, also mentioning that they often program them together with “Fish Tones.” Both of them discuss the highly descriptive, birdlike nature of this movement while emphasizing the importance of performing the movement’s complex rhythms accurately. Martial finds the *tranquillo pppp*, *kaum hörbar* section especially effective. He describes the area as extremely delicate, and finds that if he plays it with good rhythm and finds a good tempo, he “can achieve exceptionally good flow” in the section.⁷⁶ Áshildur describes the upward glissandi as quintessentially birdlike, and the ascending line reminds her of flying upward. She mentions the extreme and sudden dynamic changes as a typical “Atli Heimir contrast.” The *dolce* melody of the third section has considerable appeal for her, and she finds the closing section exceedingly birdlike, as well.⁷⁷

A flutist may wish to consider the unusually strong and clear links between “Bird Tones” and “Fish Tones” on one hand, and “Bird Tones” and “Love Tones” on the other, when programming a set of *Sounding Minutes*. Flute players often perform “Bird Tones” and “Fish Tones” together because of their associated programmatic content, and this analysis demonstrates that the link between the two movements runs deeper than that. Although the Western imagination often associates love with birds, flutists have not usually made this connection in their performances and recordings, and neither Martial nor Áshildur mentioned programming these two movements together.

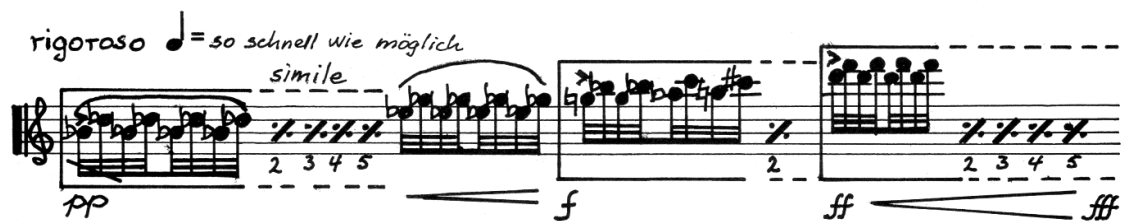
⁷⁶ Martial Nardeau, interview.

⁷⁷ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

Love Tones

The twelfth *Sounding Minute*, “Love Tones,” has an A-B-C-A¹ form. The primary section lasts through the first two lines and example 50 shows the first of its two series of rapid (*so schnell wie möglich*) tremolos. Most of these involve minor third leaps, but in the first line, the tremolo interval expands to a major third as the dynamic increases from *pianissimo* to *forte*. As the dynamic becomes louder, the pitch level of the tremolo figures also changes more quickly, with fewer repetitions of each interval. However, toward the end of the first line, the interval returns to a minor third and repeats several times as the dynamic increases to *fff*.

Example 50. “Love Tones,” first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



The second round of tremolos, which occurs in the second line, features mostly minor thirds as well, contracting to an extensively repeated major second at the end. The flutist repeats this major-second tremolo several times, and the dynamic quickly increases to *fff*. Characterized by turbulence and unrest due to rapid playing and extreme dynamic changes, the departure of the tremolo interval from the accustomed minor third as the dynamic increases exacerbates the sense of turmoil. Extremely chromatic and without a pitch

center, the two passages of section A together include all pitches of the chromatic scale except for B.

The B section, shown in example 51, consists of a twofold iteration of a descending figure, from C7 down to A4, followed by an ascending figure from Eb4 to D7. In the first descending statement, performed *fff* and staccato, most of its individual pitches repeat. The second instance of the descending gesture serves as an echo of the original statement. It has identical pitch content, but features a *piano* dynamic with a diminuendo to *pianissimo*, legato articulation, and no repeated pitches. The ascending figure follows immediately, with a crescendo to the climactic D7 in the fourth line. The composer specifies similar articulation in this gesture as he did for the preceding descending statements. The flutist performs the ascent from Eb4 to E6 with staccato, repeated pitches, but ends the figure with a direct, legato ascent. This section, like section A, has no established pitch center but uses all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale.

Example 51. "Love Tones," third and fourth lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)

The musical score for Example 51 consists of two staves. The top staff features two descending chromatic scales. The first scale is marked with a crescendo line and the dynamic *p*. The second scale is marked with a crescendo line and the dynamic *pp*. The bottom staff begins with a staccato descending scale marked *ffff*. This is followed by a triplet of eighth notes marked *leg. molto* and *p*. Then, there is a series of six triplet eighth notes marked *ca. 80*. Finally, the staff ends with an ascending scale marked *ca. 90* and *f*.

Section C, which begins in the fourth line (see ex. 51), has a markedly different character than the rapid and frenetic music that precedes it. The composer provides a new tempo marking, indicating that a quarter note now equals eighty beats per minute. This section also bears the marking *leg. molto*, which presumably stands for legato rather than leggiero, given the context. This section has a pitch center of F, and confines itself to the pitches of the natural F-minor scale. This area relates strongly to the third section of “Bird Tones,” using the same pitch collection and similar rhythmic procedures (see ex. 49). The C section has two clearly defined subsections. The first of these features a *piano* dynamic and triplet rhythm which gives the listener a compound-meter impression. The second has a dynamic of *forte* and a slightly increased tempo (ninety beats per minute), with a simple meter and more disjunct melody.

This movement contains a more decisive return of primary material in its closing section than most *Sounding Minutes*, with a reappearance of the opening tremolos, mostly in minor thirds. The first tremolo involves a perfect fourth from $\hat{5}(C)$ to $\hat{1}(F)$ of the previous section’s collection, facilitating the transition from the melodic C section into the more agitated and chromatic closing. The closing, like the opening phrases, increases in dynamic from *pianissimo* to *fff*, with the flutist arriving at the loudest dynamic just as he or she performs a minor second tremolo, again linking agitation and intervals deviating from a minor third. The flutist performs the final tremolo *ppp* following a short rest, giving the impression of an echo or an afterthought. The interval of this final tremolo, a major third, further distinguishes it from the preceding material.

Martial and Áshildur agree that “Love Tones” is one of the most technically challenging *Sounding Minutes*, with the extraordinarily rapid tremolos requiring virtuosic technique. Áshildur names this movement as one of her favorites, citing its “flow and virtuosity and excitement.” She also mentions the strongly contrasting melodic section as typifying the composer’s style.⁷⁸ Martial discusses the tempestuous musical language of the piece, saying that it exemplifies the “controversial” element of Atli Heimir’s style. He states that the rhetoric of this movement often surprises audience members; it sounds more like a lover’s quarrel than music traditionally associated with love. He sees this movement as conveying the turbulent emotions of a person in love, someone swept off his or her feet. He also mentions that many composers use tremolo when expressing love or passion in their music.⁷⁹

When performing this movement, a flutist should be conscious of the vastly differing characters of the chromatic, tumultuous A and B sections, on one hand, and the melodic, singing quality of the C section on the other. In this way, a performer can convey some of the vast range of emotions a person in love experiences. A flutist may also wish to consider the strong ties this movement has to “Bird Tones” when programming it, either emphasizing it for the audience by programming the two *Minutes* in immediate succession, or disguising it by separating them in time. A flutist should also consider whether to interpret the corresponding sections of these movements in similar ways, or whether to perform them differently from one another.

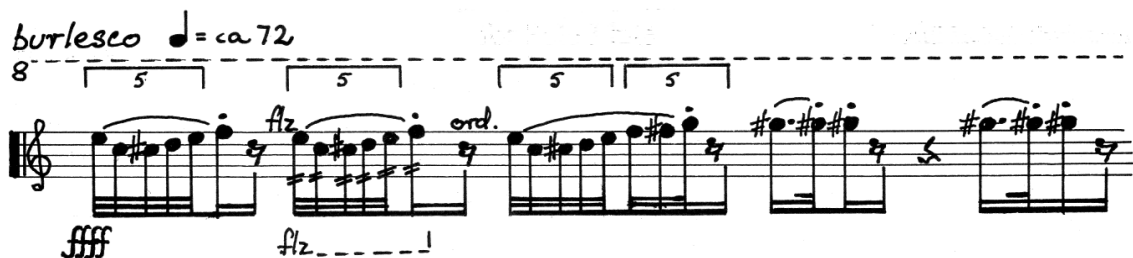
⁷⁸ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁷⁹ Martial Nardeau, interview.

Man Tones

The first movement in the composer's original ordering of the *Sounding Minutes*, "Man Tones" opens with an aggressive, *ffff* dynamic, virtuosic stepwise melodic material, and a high tessitura (see ex. 52). More through composed than most *Minutes*, "Man Tones" does not feature the strong contrasts found in some movements, nor does it embody the more thoroughly monothematic character of others. Rather, it has three distinct sections, which generate an overall A-B-C form. The movement's pitch material centers around E, but also includes a considerable amount of chromaticism, making it difficult to assert that it belongs to an identifiable mode. Strong dynamic contrasts and varied rhythmic elements add to the aggressive, boisterous nature of the *Minute*.

Example 52. "Man Tones," first line. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



A large-scale arpeggiation underlies "Man Tones," as shown in figure 6. As the structural pitch changes, so does the musical rhetoric, aligning the structural melody with the overall formal division of the movement. The A section centers around the structural melodic pitches of E, with which it opens, and G#, which takes over in the second half of the first line. This part of the structural melody repeats in the second line, which strongly recalls the first. This

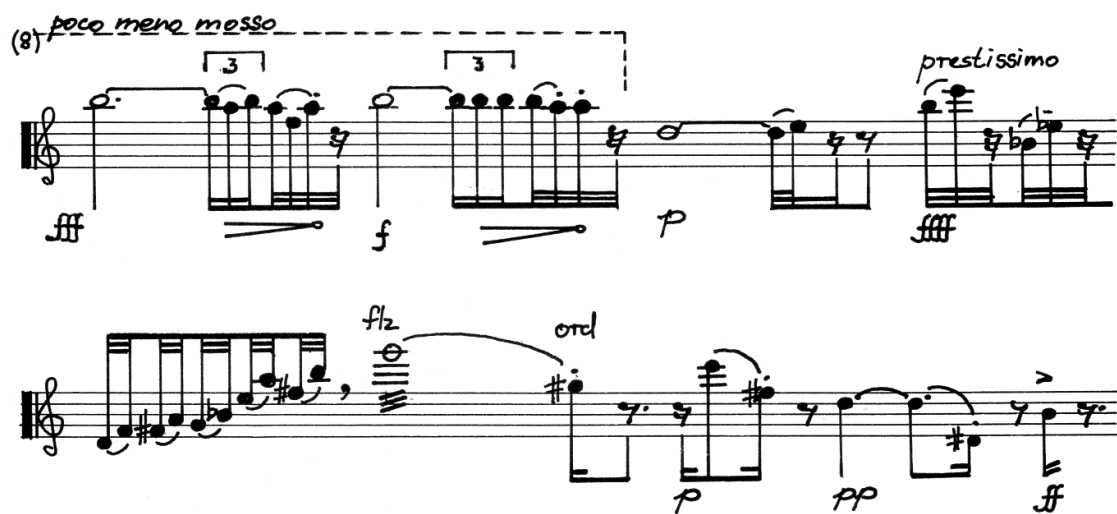
section features a fairly regular rhythm, rapidly moving stepwise melodic figures, and a *fortissimo* to *fff* dynamic.

Figure 6. "Man Tones," form and structural melody.



The B section of "Man Tones" begins with a sustained, *fff* B6 at the beginning of the third line, shown in example 53. This section strongly emphasizes B, continuing the underlying arpeggiation of an E-major triad. The rhythmic procedures in this area are somewhat less regular than in section A, and it introduces extreme dynamic contrasts. A half-cadential moment occurs where the first figure in the fourth line terminates suddenly on B (5̂), followed by the only breath mark in the movement.

Example 53. "Man Tones," third and fourth lines. (Copyright © Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS. Printed with permission.)



Arguably the movement's most significant pitch, the sustained, flutter-tongued G6 in the fourth line (see ex. 53) occurs where the underlying structural arpeggiation leads the listener to expect a G#, or perhaps an E. The longest pitch in the movement, this G constitutes a moment of crisis that launches the liquidating, and much less confident, closing section of the movement (C). The flutist then slurs the G down to a G# a major seventh below, after which the melodic content becomes extremely disjunct, with large leaps and rests between individual pitches and exceedingly irregular rhythm. Here, a *piano* to *ppp* dynamic dominates, although the section also features a handful of strongly accented pitches. A *poco a poco calando al fine* indication at the beginning of the penultimate line exacerbates the section's feeling of liquidation and dissipation. The movement's underlying large-scale arpeggiation does not settle on E again until its penultimate pitch, a *fff* iteration of E6. A downward leap of an octave and an augmented fourth to a *piano* Bb4 immediately undermines this already weak resolution.

The form of "Man Tones" lends itself much better to an interpretation involving a clear narrative than many of the other *Sounding Minutes*. It might, for instance, tell the story of a confident or aggressive man, full of bluster at the opening. Perhaps he puts in a great deal of effort to accomplish a task, but fails and has a crisis moment after which he loses his footing.

Áshildur names "Man Tones" as one of her favorite *Sounding Minutes*, saying that she frequently performs it. She describes the movement as "virtuosic, and a powerful explosion," noting that the *fortissimo* dynamics in the

high range are quite idiomatic for flute and “you can let the flute sound like a whole orchestra or a trumpet here, truly attack it.”⁸⁰ Martial suggests that this movement might be Atli Heimir’s self-portrait and that he has a sense of humor about himself. He notes the confident beginning with the accompanying *burlesco* indication, interpreting this as fun had at the expense of an overconfident man. He likens the composer to an author “up in the clouds somewhere watching the people, and then writing. He is a bit like that.”⁸¹ This suggests that Martial thinks of Atli Heimir as assuming a storyteller’s role in writing this movement.

Flutists often program “Man Tones” along with “Woman Tones” and “Child Tones,” taking into account the movements’ programs. Indeed, the composer placed these three movements at the beginning of the published edition of *21 Sounding Minutes*. Furthermore, although formally quite diverse, these three *Minutes* share a pitch center of E.

A flute player performing “Man Tones” may wish to take into account the underlying structural arpeggiation, the musical rhetoric of the three formal sections, and the structural importance of the crisis-moment G at the beginning of the C section. Drawing the different characteristics of each section forth by adhering closely to the composer’s written expressive indications may enhance a listener’s experience of this movement as a story. Dynamics play a vital part in an effective interpretation, as well as excellent technique and accurate execution of the complex and varied rhythms.

⁸⁰ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

⁸¹ Martial Nardeau, interview.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Atli Heimir Sveinsson's *21 Sounding Minutes* for solo flute presents several analytical and interpretive challenges. An understanding of the formal and rhetorical procedures the composer employs in the work can inform a flutist's choices regarding programming, interpretation, and whether or not to repeat a movement in performance.

Despite the highly unusual large-scale form of the work, Atli Heimir employs a handful of identifiable formal structures for the individual *Minutes*, with each movement taking one of three basic forms. Identifying these forms allows for a classification of the work's movements into three groups: monothematic, contrasting, and multi-section, with each containing seven *Minutes*. However, because of the variation within the differing categories, as well as overlap between them, they require a more nuanced interpretation of formal structures than the simple, three-group classification offers on its own.

A lack of strong rhetorical, thematic, or timbral contrast characterizes the *Minutes* of the monothematic group. The purest example of this form, "Tone Tones," maintains rhetorical consistency and features the most restricted pitch content of all of the *Minutes*. "Folksong Tones" has a larger pitch collection and more dynamic variance, while "Cloud Tones" and "Flower Tones" change pitch centers during their course. "Heaven Tones" features timbral contrasts at the close of individual phrases, but they do not constitute contrasting sections in and of themselves. "Old Tones" and "Woman Tones" bridge the gap between the monothematic group and the contrasting group in that they present clearly

defined areas of timbral contrast, but these sections do not differ significantly from the primary material in pitch content or melodic procedures.

The contrasting movements of the *Sounding Minutes* have in common a clear division into two alternating, strongly contrasting sections: the primary material and an interruption. Frequently, these sections distinguish themselves through melodic and rhythmic content, pitch, and tone color, although these changes need not all be present in all instances. The number of occurrences of the differing sections varies, so the formal layout of these movements ranges from the simplest A-X-A¹ form to a far more segmented A-X-A¹-X¹-A²-X²-A³-X³-A⁴-X⁴-A⁵. The strength of the contrast between sections within these movements varies, but in all cases the X sections differ markedly and significantly from the primary areas.

In some cases, the X sections do more than simply provide contrast. “Storm Tones,” for instance, features an X section that interrupts its underlying structural melody. In “Museum Tones,” the intrusive X section gradually subsumes the A material, and in “Child Tones” the interruptions add programmatic significance if interpreted as a child’s temper tantrum. In “Morning Tones,” the atonal X section uses pitch content extracted from the primary area while providing an expressively contrasting melodic element.

Four *Minutes* from the third group, which features more complex forms than the previous two groups, present contrasting X sections similar to those of the *Minutes* of the second group. “Rain Tones,” “Snow Tones,” “Evening Tones,” and “God Tones” all have two to three clearly differentiated formal

sections (A, B, and C), as well as more clearly contrasting interruptions (X). The composer sets these off from the rest of the form similarly to the X sections of contrasting movements.

In “Evening Tones” and “Man Tones,” the composer creates distinct formal areas by linking variance in rhetorical procedures with changes in the movements’ underlying structural melodies. In “Man Tones,” this results in a straightforward A-B-C form, whereas in “Evening Tones,” the form becomes quite segmented for such a brief piece (A-B-X-C-A¹-B¹-X¹-A²-B²-A^C).

Four of these multi-section movements, “Rain Tones,” “Snow Tones,” “Love Tones,” and “Bird Tones,” feature A and B sections which relate to one another strongly, whereas their C sections have a more smooth and songlike character. In the case of “Rain Tones” and “Snow Tones,” this more legato and stepwise melody retains the rapid tempo of the rest of the movement, whereas in “Love Tones” and “Bird Tones,” the melodic section features a more relaxed tempo than the preceding material. Although “God Tones” has a highly distinctive design (X-A-X¹-B-A¹-X²-A²), it also relates to “Bird Tones” and “Love Tones” in that its third section has a much more legato, melodic character than its preceding formal areas.

The composer uses varied compositional procedures when dealing with pitch material in the *21 Sounding Minutes*. According to Atli Heimir, “the differentiation between tonal and atonal has never mattered” to him and regarding the *Sounding Minutes* he says “there is nothing twelve-tone in it, but I expect that some of it is very chromatic, with varying degrees of

chromaticism.”⁸² Indeed, the pitch language of the different movements of the work varies considerably in chromaticism, which the composer uses in different ways. In some cases, such as in “Woman Tones” and “Night Tones,” he uses striking chromatic pitches within an otherwise diatonic context to create meaningful idiosyncratic moments. In others, such as “Child Tones” and “Morning Tones,” he uses embellishing chromaticism to obscure the movement’s mode while retaining a fairly clear pitch center. Some *Minutes*, such as “Storm Tones” and “Fish Tones,” feature an extremely chromatic overall pitch language.

Many of the *Sounding Minutes* feature a defined pitch center and several belong to an identifiable mode. In some, such as “Night Tones,” atonal interruptive X sections contrast starkly with the clearly established Dorian mode of the movement’s primary material. In others, such as “Morning Tones,” the composer extracts the X section’s pitch material from the collection introduced by the primary material. Although most of the *Sounding Minutes* maintain a consistent pitch center throughout, several of them, such as “Cloud Tones,” “Flower Tones,” “Rain Tones,” and “Museum Tones,” have obvious changes in pitch center. These three movements, furthermore, close on a different pitch center than the one on which they opened.

Some movements, such as “Tone Tones” and “Man Tones,” have a structural melody as their foundation. In some cases, these have programmatic as well as interpretive implications. For instance, the structural melody of the monothematic, wholly diatonic “Tone Tones” consists of a basic scalar ascent

⁸² Atli Heimir Sveinsson, interview.

from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$, providing a satisfying and uncomplicated foundation for this little melody. The much more dramatic and problematic structural melody of “Man Tones,” however, presents a major-triad arpeggiation, interrupted by a striking and dramatic G ($\flat\hat{3}$), constituting a moment of crisis that results in the liquidation of the final section and a labored, and ultimately undermined, closing on the tonic pitch of E.

Although the *Sounding Minutes* present significant stylistic variety, several rhetorical procedures consistently appear. The most prominent of these involves the composer’s effective use of contrast, both as a form defining and rhetorical device. In many cases, contrasting sections of movements stand as independent formal sections that function as interruptions. A related device occurs on a much smaller scale and in a much more subtle way, when the composer presents unique occurrences of individual chromatic pitches or compositional procedures in order to generate expressive effects within phrases. Another recurring structural element, the half cadential gesture, often occurs toward the middle of a movement and frequently emphasizes $\hat{5}$ in relation to its tonic pitch or pitch center. Furthermore, many of the *Minutes* present a liquidating closing section, usually based on fragmented primary material.

Another element of Atli Heimir’s style present in the *21 Sounding Minutes* involves the freedom he affords the performer. In many cases, such as in “Old Tones,” the movements bear an undecided tempo indication. Some, such as “Fish Tones” and “Evening Tones,” feature sections that require a flutist to

improvise or choose pitches to play. When he calls for multiphonics, the composer only indicates one pitch that should sound while allowing the performer to choose the other. In her interview, Áshildur mentions this “trust of the performer” and the freedom the composer allows the musicians that perform his works as an important component of Atli Heimir’s style. She notes that he manages to strike a good balance between absolute compositional control and too much performer freedom: “he does his 90%, and then you do your 10%.”⁸³

Several connections between different movements of the *Sounding Minutes* exist, and in some instances these links appear to relate to the movements’ programs. One of the clearest instances involves the association between “Bird Tones” and “Love Tones,” which involves both pitch material and melodic procedure. “Rain Tones” and “Snow Tones” share not only programmatic content, but formal procedures, as well. Furthermore, a small section of the melodic material of “Snow Tones” appears in “Rain Tones,” including the falling seventh leap so prominent in the primary material of the former, and which connects easily to the idea of falling precipitation. In these instances, musical elements connect programmatically related movements.

When asked about how they select and order movements, Martial and Áshildur discussed some methods they use to choose *Minutes* for performance, beyond simply selecting their favorites. Both flutists mentioned programming movements with related programs together. The most obvious of these combinations, and those that the composer arranged together in his original ordering include “Man Tones,” “Woman Tones,” and “Child Tones”; “Bird Tones”

⁸³ Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, interview.

and “Fish Tones”; “Evening Tones,” “Night Tones,” and “Morning Tones”; and “Snow Tones,” “Storm Tones,” and “Rain Tones.” A flutist may wish to link less obviously connected movements, such as “Love Tones” and “Bird Tones,” or “Bird Tones” and “Morning Tones,” as well, in order to highlight to listeners the musical connection between these movements. Alternatively, he or she may choose to obscure this relationship by avoiding performing these movements in immediate succession.

Both flutists also mentioned placing “Tone Tones” at the end of any performance of a set of *Minutes*. The composer placed this movement last in his original ordering, and it seems that flutists rarely perform a series of *Sounding Minutes* without closing on it. All published recordings of the work, complete and partial, conclude with “Tone Tones,” whether or not they otherwise adhere to the composer’s original ordering of *Minutes*. As the simplest and most pitch-restricted movement, “Tone Tones” has a welcome effect of repose after much of the tumult that precedes it.

Other programming considerations the flutists mentioned involve the character of the *Minutes*. A flutist should consider aspects of contrast and variety as well as performance issues. Playing too many slow movements or similar movements in a row may make for a monotonous listening experience. Performing too many virtuosic, high-energy movements in immediate succession not only diminishes contrast in the same way, but may also prove physically challenging to the flutist.

A flutist may also use his or her understanding of the formal and structural details of individual movements in order to create a more powerful interpretation, or to enhance the listener's perception of the movements' programmatic content. A flutist's awareness of a movement's underlying structure and changes in pitch center, for instance, may inform performance. In some movements, such as "Man Tones," where an unexpected pitch in the movement's structural melody leads to dissolution in its closing section, the melodic foundation can even tell a story and should be audible to perceptive audience members. Similarly, when a movement changes pitch center in a way that suggests motion or transformation, as "Cloud Tones" does, the flutist should make this change clearly audible to his or her audience. All of this must, of course, happen in a tasteful, non-pedantic manner.

In addition to decisions regarding which movements to perform and how to interpret them to an audience, the choice of whether to repeat a movement from the beginning, should there be time to do so, impacts performance considerably. Here, a flutist may wish to take into account musical considerations, as well as programmatic ones. The decision regarding whether or not to repeat a movement will impact a performance to differing extents, depending on these two elements. In "Old Tones," for instance, with its *morendo* closing, a flutist aiming to convey the *Minute* as representing death, and death as an ending, may not wish to repeat it from the beginning. He or she may, instead, choose to pace the movement carefully, closing it at the end of a minute, or to wait in silence until the allotted time runs out. On the other hand,

should the flutist wish to express the idea that death does not constitute an ending, he or she may want to repeat the movement. In some movements, a shift in pitch center and/or dynamic level occurs, making the decision whether to repeat or not weightier than in others. “Cloud Tones,” with its gradual shift of pitch center by one half step, exemplifies this. In that instance, a gradual shift has occurred over time, whereas returning to the beginning of the movement involves an abrupt shift back to the movement’s starting point. Repeating “Flower Tones,” which changes both pitch center and dynamic level during its course, has a similar effect.

In the immense and complex *21 Sounding Minutes*, myriad programming and interpretive options give performers the opportunity to create virtually limitless versions of the work. This vast variety stems from the richness of musical material the composer provides, as well as the freedom he affords the interpreters of his music. A performance of a work such as *21 Sounding Minutes* involves creativity and thoughtful choices no less than interpretive aspects. Flutists can use the formal, rhetorical, and programmatic aspects this analysis has uncovered in order to create a more informed performance of a set of *Sounding Minutes* or a complete performance of all twenty-one.

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APPENDIX A PERFORMANCE INSTRUCTIONS

*The following instructions from the composer accompany the score of the 21 Sounding Minutes.*⁸⁴

The duration of each movement is not to exceed one minute.

At that time stop and go immediately on to the next movement, although the previous one was not played completely to the end.

The span of one minute shall be indicated to the performer by a sound sign: a short percussive sound - sfff [sic]

The movements can be played in any order. The number of the movements is determined by the programme duration.

Any movement may be repeated up to three times.

Accidentals apply only to the note they precede.

Multiphonics are only roughly indicated.

All other explanations are in the score.

⁸⁴ Atli Heimir Sveinsson, *Einundzwanzig tönende Minuten für Solo-Flöte* (Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1981).

APPENDIX B MOVEMENTS OF 21 SOUNDING MINUTES

| Icelandic | Original Translation | Alternative Translation ⁸⁵ |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Karlatónar | Men's Tones | Man Tones |
| 2. Kvennatónar | Woman's tones | Woman Tones |
| 3. Barnatónar | Children's Tones | Child Tones |
| 4. Fuglatónar | Bird's tones | Bird Tones |
| 5. Fiskatónar | Fish's tones | Fish Tones |
| 6. Himnatónar | Heaven's tones | Heaven Tones |
| 7. Kvöldtónar | Evening's tones | Evening Tones |
| 8. Nætturtónar | Night's tones | Night Tones |
| 9. Morguntónar | Morning's tones | Morning Tones |
| 10. Blómatónar | Flower's tones | Flower Tones |
| 11. Skýjatónar | Sky's tones | Cloud Tones |
| 12. Ástartónar | Love's tones | Love Tones |
| 13. Safntónar | Museum's tones | Museum Tones |
| 14. Snjótónar | Snow's tones | Snow Tones |
| 15. Stormtónar | Storm's tones | Storm Tones |
| 16. Regntónar | Rain's tones | Rain Tones |
| 17. Guðstónar | God's Tones | God Tones |
| 18. Gamlir tónar | Old tones | Old Tones |
| 19. Þjóðlagatónar | Folklore's tones | Folksong Tones |
| 20. Alþjóðatónar | International tones | International Tones |
| 21. Tónatónar | Tone's tones | Tone Tones |

⁸⁵ While many of the nouns in the Icelandic titles of movements can be accurately translated as possessive, they are all accurately translated as adjectival. Therefore, alternative, more consistent translations are listed here, with each noun used adjectivally in the English version. In most cases, the Icelandic version has a plural noun, customary in Icelandic adjectival compounds, but I have kept the singular in each case, more idiomatic of English usage. In the case of "Cloud Tones," the translator inaccurately translated the title as "Sky's Tones," and that has been corrected.

APPENDIX C RECORDINGS OF 21 SOUNDING MINUTES

Áshildur Haraldsdóttir. *Together in Music: Icelandic & Polish Flute Music*.

Performed by Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, Ewa Murawska, and Joanna Zathey-Wójcińska. Composed by Árni Björnsson, Jónas Tómasson, Atli Heimir Sveinsson, Atli Ingólfsson, Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson, Paul Kletzki, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, and Tadeusz Szeligowski. Recorded at Akademia Muzyczna, Poznan in February 2009. Poland: Acte Préalable AP0224, 2009. 1 CD. Includes seven *Sounding Minutes*.

Áshildur Haraldsdóttir. *Tónamínútur: Complete Works for Flute*. Performed by

Atli Heimir Sveinsson, Áshildur Haraldsdóttir, Anna Guðný Guðmundsdóttir, and Kristinn H. Árnason. Recorded at Salurinn, Kópavogur and Víðisstaðakirkja, Hafnarfjörður in May and November-December 2005. Reykjavik: Smekkleysa SMK 55, 2006. 2 CDs. Includes all *Sounding Minutes*.

Nardeau, Martial. *Íslensk flaututónlist: Icelandic Flute Music*. Performed by

Martial Nardeau and Örn Magnússon. Composed by Árni Björnsson, Mist Þorkelsdóttir, Atli Ingólfsson, Atli Heimir Sveinsson, Kjartan Ólafsson, and Jónas Tómasson. Recorded at Seltjarnarneskirkja, Seltjarnarnes and Víðistaðakirkja, Hafnarfjörður in January and February 1993. Reykjavik: Icelandic Music Information Centre ITM 8-06, 1993. 1 CD. Includes all *Sounding Minutes*.

Wiesler, Manuela. *To Manuela: Icelandic Solo Flute Music written for and*

played by Manuela Wiesler. Performed by Manuela Wiesler. Composed by Magnús B. Jóhannsson, Atli Heimir Sveinsson, Leifur Þórarinsson, Hjálmar H. Ragnarsson, and Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson. Recorded at Furuby Church, Sweden in October 1989. Djursholm: BIS CD-456, 1989. 1 CD. Includes twelve *Sounding Minutes*.

APPENDIX D FLUTE WORKS BY ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON

Einundzwanzig tönende Minuten für Solo-Flöte. Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1981. Solo flute. Twenty-one movements. Composed for Manuela Wiesler during the summer of 1980.

Flautukonsert nr. 2. Reykjavik: ITM, 2008. Flute and orchestra. One movement. Composed for Kolbeinn Bjarnason in 2008.

Flautusónata. Reykjavik: ITM, 2005. Flute and piano. Seven movements. Composed for Áshildur Haraldsdóttir in 2002.

Intermezzo. Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1976. Flute and piano. One movement. Excerpt from incidental music to *Dimmalimm*, 1970.

Intermezzo II úr Dimmalimm. Reykjavik: ITM, 1991. Flute and piano. One movement. Excerpt from incidental music to *Dimmalimm*, 1970.

Koncert for Fløjte og Orkester. Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1976. Flute and orchestra. One movement. Composed for Robert Aitken in 1973.

Lethe. Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen, 1987. Flute, alto flute, or bass flute. One movement. Inspired by *Solitude* by Magnús Blöndal Jóhannsson.

Man ég þig mey. Unpublished. Solo flute or other instruments. Theme and fourteen variations. Composed for Áshildur Haraldsdóttir in 2005.

Xanties. Reykjavik: ITM, 1975. Flute and piano. One movement. Composed for Manuela Wiesler and Snorri Sigfús Birgisson in 1975.

Örstef. Reykjavik: ITM, 1991. Solo flute or other wind instruments. Five movements. Composed for amateur performance in 1991.