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## LIVRE OR SYMPHONY? LUTOSŁAWSKI'S *LIVRE POUR ORCHESTRE* AND THE ENIGMA OF MUSICAL NARRATIVITY

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### Enigma: a Composer Changes His Mind

On 29 May 1968 Witold Lutosławski typed a letter to Berthold Lehmann, Generalmusikdirektor of the Hagen Städtisches Orchester. Addressing the conductor in German, the composer discussed various minor practical matters relating to the parts and score of his soon-to-be-completed commission from Hagen, *Livre pour orchestre*, which had been scheduled for its first performance later that year as part of the Hagener Musiktage. Towards the end of his letter, however, Lutosławski broached a subject of considerably greater significance: the question of *Livre pour orchestre*'s title. The composer, it appears, had begun to change his mind.

The title was part of the composer's original plan for the piece, devised shortly after Lehmann had first approached him regarding a commission in 1962. As Lutosławski later explained, it had been his intention to compose 'a loosely connected group of movements ... a cycle of composition[s] of different lengths ending with a long finale'.<sup>1</sup> Yet he had initially envisaged not the work's eventual four *chapitres* separated by three short *intermèdes*, but rather a collection of orchestral miniatures, each exploiting different hues of the ensemble and interspersed with interludes; a slightly longer final *chapitre* would act as a rhetorical gesture of closure. That plan had suggested, in turn, the concept of a *livre pour orchestre*. Lutosławski reported that Lehmann had 'seized at the title and idea with alacrity'.<sup>2</sup>

In an interview conducted at the time of the work's Polish premiere at the 1969 Warsaw Autumn, Lutosławski gave a more precise explanation of why he had decided to call his cycle of pieces a *livre*. The origins of the title, he claimed, lay in the past. 'Couperin's *Livre de clavecin* and Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*', he told interviewer Tadeusz Kaczyński, 'were both collections of compositions of various lengths and forms'.<sup>3</sup> Yet the nature of the work had evidently been in a state of flux. 'When I finished it', he subsequently reported, 'it was much too organized, against my will, and the title no longer corresponded to the character of the piece';<sup>4</sup> instead of maintaining their independence, 'une certaine logique, une certaine action' among the *chapitres* had emerged.<sup>5</sup> In the 1969 interview he described elements of this emergence in more detail, employing striking terms. The *chapitres* and *intermèdes*, he said, had become 'links in the development of a single event ... . I feel that the construction of closed forms involves the presence

of contrasting elements, that is to say, elements with a sufficiently strong centrifugal force, and their subsequent subjugation to the unifying centripetal force. Only then is a composition likely to possess a firm and solid construction'.<sup>6</sup> His initial inclination in favor of a cycle of unconnected movements had been problematised, it appears, by the competing demands of a subjugating musical narrative – what Lutosławski termed an *akcja* ('action' or, less ambiguously in English, 'plot') and deemed all substantial pieces to require. Musical forms of significance such as the symphony, he stated elsewhere, 'should be composed of some musical events that together – one after another – may be compared to an action, to a plot of a drama, or a novel, or a short story ... This [musical action] is important for all those who want to approach the large-scale closed form'.<sup>7</sup>

The discussion of the piece's title in Lutosławski's letter to Lehmann confirms this change of direction,<sup>8</sup> and at the same time reveals creative and expressive tensions at the heart of this 'masterpiece of the modern orchestral repertoire'.<sup>9</sup> In his revelatory closing paragraph, the composer writes:

Finally, I would like to add a few more words about the title of the piece, as I find that the title 'Livre pour orchestre' sounds a little pretentious and does not quite correspond to the work's form. As you will no doubt recall, my initial intention was to write a series of small pieces. In which case the suggested title would have been a fitting one, but in its current state my work is much closer to a large closed form. That is why it is necessary to find a new title. Please allow me a little extra time to get a definitive title to you (possibly simply Third Symphony).<sup>10</sup>

By the time this communication had arrived in Hagen, however, the first performance of *Livre pour orchestre* had been announced for 18 November 1968. To change the title to Symphony No. 3 was therefore impractical, and Lutosławski later allowed his composition to be published with the title under which it was premiered. However, the fact that Lutosławski often mentioned this letter in later years suggests that, although its alternative title was never publicly revealed,<sup>11</sup> he remained ambivalent about the validity of the designation of the work as a 'book for orchestra'. Analysts approaching the piece might therefore begin by asking a superficially simple question: is this work a *livre*, that is, made up of independent components, or a symphony, which implies some kind of longer-range musical narrative? Much of what follows addresses this important but as yet unanswered question.<sup>12</sup> Other considerations immediately suggest themselves, however, thickening the analytical plot. How, for instance, might one enlist the conflicted theoretical literature on music and narrative in the task of analysing this piece with 'une certaine action'? And what questions might such an endeavour raise about the complex matter of musical narrativity?

### **Catalysing Section: Speaking (Circumspectly) of Musical Narrative**

The quest to read music as some kind of narrative, notes Joseph Kerman, is 'one of music criticism's most persistent and persistently controversial projects'.<sup>13</sup>

During the last twenty years, however, this music-theoretical subplot has re-emerged as a site of notably active disputation. On one side of the debate stand those who would probably agree with Roman Jakobson's assessment that instrumental Western art music, like many other non-verbal art forms, contains the semiotic potential to communicate aspects of a plot:

It is evident that many devices ... are not confined to verbal art. We can refer to the possibility of transposing *Wuthering Heights* into a motion picture, medieval legends into frescoes and miniatures, or *L'après-midi d'un faune* into music, ballet, and graphic art. However ludicrous may appear the idea of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in comics, certain structural features of their plot are preserved despite the disappearance of their verbal shape.<sup>14</sup>

On the other side, however, stand perhaps many more who would concur with Jean-Jacques Nattiez and consider 'the notion of musical story-telling or narration as just another metaphor to which human language, with its meagre means, has to resort in order to attempt to define the specificity of the unfolding of music in time'.<sup>15</sup>

Both sides of the debate – the more familiar aspects of which have been summarised in a number of recent publications<sup>16</sup> – made their voices heard in a 2006 AMS-List discussion of music and narrative.<sup>17</sup> Numerous contributions to that thread read like a weary re-treading of well-rutted pathways. Yet the discourse was distinguished by a number of posts focussing on the experiences of composers who have, in one way or another, used narrative-related ideas in their creative work.<sup>18</sup> A vacuum in the music-and-narrative literature could usefully be filled, those contributions implied, by the testimony of creative musicians, in order to provide a poetic counterpoint to the theoretical esthetics of musical narrativity (or against musical narrativity) proposed elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> Anecdotal evidence suggests that much recent music, for instance, has been created – and by composers as aesthetically divergent as Brian Ferneyhough and Judith Weir – with the intention of making music which draws on conventions of narrative, yet which remains distinct from more literal attempts at musical diegesis or mimesis of the kinds that have been rightly problematised by the musical narrativity debate's stress on the inability of music literally to narrate diegetically or to present mimetically the concrete components of a story.<sup>20</sup> Musical narratives need not, such testimony hints, be attempts to tell extramusical stories through purely musical means; however, some compositional traditions may require a more pragmatic approach to the location and interpretation of musical narrativity.

It may prove possible to relate some of the most pertinent issues to the more circumspect claims of a number of music theorists who have exhibited a diligent interest in the topic which has outlasted the engagements *en passant* of some scholars in the mid- to late 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>21</sup> For instance, rather than proposing the existence of all-encompassing systems of musical-narrative signification capable of explicitly representing or telling a literary or otherwise concretely signified story, Gregory Karl has argued forcefully that 'no major

advocate of musical narratology actually maintains that music narrates in any traditional sense' (subtexts variously entered elsewhere by Fred Maus, Anthony Newcomb and Joseph Kerman).<sup>22</sup> A musical narrative, Karl writes, 'has little to do with narrative' in the sense of a discourse telling or representing a literal tale through either mimetic or diegetic means. When used in relation to music, the term narrative is thus a somewhat 'misleading placeholder standing for an elusive sense of teleology', or in other words, *musical* narrativity.<sup>23</sup> The evocation of musical narrativity, in this sense, therefore appears to be one means by which some composers seek to make good on their poietic assumption that, to borrow Jonathan Kramer's words, 'one event leads to another, that there is implication in music'.<sup>24</sup> Listening to a musical discourse in order to discover a musical plot along such lines is also one means by which analyst-critics, performers and perhaps many other listeners seek to experience something of music's continuity in terms of sequences of cause and effect that conjoin to form an interlinked whole expressed by (or at least open to being read as being expressed by) a set of musical events (although there are alternative listening paradigms, of which more below).

The similarity of this somewhat circumscribed view of musical narrativity to Nattiez's ostensibly dismissive, but actually judiciously poised, view of the matter – often trotted out, misleadingly, as the final word on why one cannot speak of music as any kind of narrative – is so obvious that one wonders how it has hitherto been misconstrued (even, perhaps, by some of the more circumspect specialists).<sup>25</sup> Nattiez notes that reading music as some kind of plot runs the 'serious risk of slipping from narrative *metaphor* to an ontological illusion', the belief that, 'since music *suggests* narrative, it could itself *be* narrative'.<sup>26</sup> The verbs are the key. It may be beyond the semiological possibilities of music to narrate or represent a concrete story, but there is a vast gulf between the kind of critical strong-arming required to translate the somewhat opaque signifiers of a piece of music into a literal narrative (then to make some kind of truth claim about that reading's transcendent validity) and the culturally determined listening acts required to experience any evocation at all of musical narrativity – that is, the idea that one event leads to another, syntactically and sensuously, and that pieces of music can therefore sculpt one's perception of simulacra of cause and effect, development and logic, within closed forms symbolising directed processes with beginnings, middles and ends. Moreover, music is not a special case: any text's discourse, from the most semiotically transparent to the outright obtuse, requires input on the part of its perceivers to render impressions of a telling (a news broadcast, a conversation, an e-mail, a novel) into an understanding of something being told. A narrative, in Nattiez's acute definition, 'is not only a plot or a story, but also an *act*', and because 'this process ... operates when we hear music in a more or less spontaneous ... mode of listening', music too can give rise to 'the "narrative impulse"'.<sup>27</sup>

It follows that musical elements which encourage that impulse – expressive genres of metamorphosing topics, chains of instrumental actions and events,

shifts in the power relationship between soloists and ensembles, dynamic interactions of themes and tonal areas, and so on<sup>28</sup> – are, by accident or design, potential loci for experiences of musical narrativity. The music-and-narrative literature amply demonstrates how one can identify, compare and discuss such musical discourses without indulging in the kind of overenthusiastic musical narrativisations that seek to locate all of the signifiers of a literal story within a musical discourse. Alan Street aptly describes excessive narrativisation as ‘an act of ventriloquism: a manipulation of the figure of prosopopoeia for the sake of jumping the abysmal gap between word and work’.<sup>29</sup> It is too easy, when speaking of music and narrative, to go too far (or at least to go too far, too soon). And as Maus points out, the music-and-narrative debate more than adequately figured ‘the need for care in articulating claims about music and narrative’; the debate ‘did not prove’, however, ‘that analogies between music and narrative are useless’.<sup>30</sup> Musical narrativisations – notably strong interpretative responses to a multivalent metaphor structure consisting of musical signs already emplotted (or at least gathered into some kind of associative net) – are intensely subjective acts.<sup>31</sup> But it is also too easy to take the pitfalls of narrativisation as a reason to avoid investigating the gap between word and work altogether (Nattiez comes close to suggesting as much). And that is a problem, not least because this gap appears to be terrain explored aplenty by composers.

Lutosławski’s personal conception of musical plot, for instance – an idiosyncratic synthesis of Aristotelian dramatic theory, responses to creative work in the theatre, his teacher Witold Maliszewski’s conception of form as a psychological experience, analyses of works by Beethoven and a reaction against the excess of signification and lack of consequence he heard (or failed to hear) in modernism’s most innovative styles – reveals a composer eager to engage the narrative impulse.<sup>32</sup> His poetics of musical *akcja*, as deduced from his conversations, lectures and writings,<sup>33</sup> appears to have rested on two main elements: his interlinked notions of ‘key ideas’ and a distinction between ‘static’ and ‘dynamic’ events. In a 1962 lecture, ‘Problems of Musical Form’, Lutosławski explained that, ‘in the case of the classics’, a ‘key idea’ was presented in the form of a theme ‘clothed in its own characteristic harmony’ and was capable of summarising ‘the main idea of the whole work’; it thus determined a piece’s ‘general physiognomy’. He then explained how thematic ideas might be reconfigured in post-tonal contemporary music, arguing that, although it was unlikely to be presented melodically, a ‘key idea’ could manifest itself as ‘a single structure or “sound object” or, to put it differently, an independent complex of sounds bounded in time’. Such post-tonal *objets sonores*, he claimed, remained capable of determining ‘the cast of the whole work just as themes do in classical music’. In his description of the musical parameters which determined the nature of sound objects, Lutosławski placed a particular stress on the role of pitch organisation.

Key ideas therefore represented Lutosławski’s attempt to create substitutes within his mature post-tonal idiom for the pitch classes, motives, themes and

harmonies capable of bearing the developmental kernel of what he understood as classical-romantic musical plots. 'As far back as the sixties', he later recalled,

I saw that the main weak point of modern music was the fact that the very notion of theme (or even motif) [had been] discarded. In classical music, even a short motif is highly effective: its impact on the listener is 'radioactive' ... I tried to find some sort of substitute for conventional theme (in the shape of a combination of a small number of notes).<sup>34</sup>

What, then, are the 'radioactive' components of the 'small number of notes' which define a key idea? Lutosławski's predominant interest in the realm of pitch organisation was the creation of what he termed 'qualities': characterful types of limited interval-class structures (sometimes associated with pitch centres) manifested in his music as lines, simultaneities and limited-aleatory textures in which only two or three different types of interval class occur between adjacent horizontal and/or vertical pitches. The 'radioactive' impact of key ideas cloaked in distinctive qualities thus appears to have rested primarily on the posing of questions of 'quality' to be answered over the course of a musical *akcja*. For instance, local presentations of key ideas might anticipate or inaugurate global shifts in quality through an unstable detail of pitch organisation; ambiguous interval-class qualities might imply a need for purification; events might articulate one quality while implying another; or a search for affinities between initially contrasted qualities (embodied, perhaps, in more than one key idea) might be inaugurated. The working through of such musical problems thus becomes the musical *akcja*, motivating much of a Lutosławski piece's potential for expressive and structural power.<sup>35</sup>

The initial presentation of key ideas and of the events which subsequently investigate their 'radioactive' implications should occur, Lutosławski stated in the same 1962 lecture, during a composition's 'moments of intense significance'. Such moments form chains of what Lutosławski termed 'static' events; those chains of events, and the directed process of development they embody, signify the major turning points in a musical plot. More bluntly, these chains' working through of a key idea and its implications *are* the plot, the *akcja*, of a composition, and to perceive the plot of a Lutosławski musical narrative is (at least in part) to hear and recognise those relationships. (Note that the term 'static' should not be taken literally as either a musical or a cognitive description: Lutosławski uses it impressionistically to indicate a listener's absorption in (and of) the implications of a 'moment of intense significance' for a developing *akcja*.<sup>36</sup>) The all-important static events, in turn, are introduced, linked and framed by 'dynamic' events. (Lutosławski's use of this term is similarly idiosyncratic and indicates an imagined perceiver's anticipation of the next crucial instalment in the musical plot.) In dynamic events, variations of ideas previously presented in static events can be expected to shape, through a variety of means, the listener's anticipation of arrival (by sending one's imagination 'dynamically' forwards) at the next 'moment of intense significance', in other words, the next syntactically important

development in the plot-like chain of static events revealing the implications of a piece's key ideas.<sup>37</sup>

The following analysis utilises Lutosławski's composerly poetics of musical plot to interpret *Livre pour orchestre*. That proto-theoretical apparatus, however, is reinforced with reference to what may turn out, with respect to the wider debate concerning musical narrative, to illuminate conceptual similarities between the notions of a composer steeped in the Western art music tradition and other work on music and plot inspired by Roland Barthes's classic texts on the nature of narrative: his essay 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives' (1966) and book-length study *S/Z* (1970).<sup>38</sup> The present article adopts terminology from Barthes's 'Introduction' essay, rather than from *S/Z*. Not only is the former a more elegant fit with aspects of Lutosławski's poetics than are the codes of *S/Z* (and thus a hopefully productive contrast to the musical adaptations of *S/Z* discussed below), but its aims are also more closely aligned, at least arguably, with analyses of musical plot. In my own view, there remains a methodological dissonance between Barthes's 'writerly' project in *S/Z* (which seeks to open the content and meanings of a text to a plurality of authors and narratives) and the way in which that book's project has previously been adapted to somewhat more formalist 'readerly' projects in music analysis.<sup>39</sup>

For Barthes, a narrative's story is not passively perceived by a text's reader; it is an act of passionate reconstruction (and even deconstruction, as he ultimately argues in *S/Z*). To understand a narrative, Barthes wrote in his 'Introduction' essay, 'is not merely to follow the unfolding of the story, it is also to recognize its construction in "storeys", to project the horizontal concatenations of the narrative "thread" on to an implicitly vertical axis; to read ... a narrative is not merely to move from one word to the next, it is also to move from one level to the next'.<sup>40</sup> Barthes's 'narrative "thread"' – his term for a plot – therefore involves the reader in emplotting and then interpreting, within a suitable framework of cultural conventions, a chain of connected but not necessarily uninterrupted consecutive events in response to a text's discourse. Barthes refers to plots as 'functional sequences', made up of 'functional units' and padded out by 'expansion' or 'catalysing' units. The structuring of a plot, he writes, 'is essentially characterized by two powers: that of distending its [functional] signs over the length of the [text] and that of inserting unforeseeable [catalysing] expansions into these distortions'.<sup>41</sup>

For an event in a plot to be functional, Barthes explains, it must 'inaugurate or conclude [or, he says elsewhere, temporarily sustain] an uncertainty'.<sup>42</sup> A plot must therefore be inaugurated by an enigma: a question, problem or ambiguity to be developed and resolved by ensuing functional events (what will that gun be used for? why do these people own a parrot?).<sup>43</sup> It may be some time, however, before a perceiver discovers the full implications of any enigma. Consequently, the elasticated gap between the initiation and closure of a functional sequence, by catalysing the principal units of the narrative thread and thereby manipulating a perceiver's expectation of resolution, creates what Barthes calls 'suspense'. The

units of a functional sequence are pulverised and separated across the text by catalysing expansion units; perceivers, driven by psychology and cultural convention to seek an enigma-resolving event and thus closure, experience a tantalising unease until the final functional unit arrives and predicates the plot (like a predicate completing a sentence, or a tonic chord closing a harmonic sequence). As the elastic stretches, tension rises, thanks to the text's 'veritable "thrilling" of intelligibility ... "suspense" accomplishes the very idea of language: what seems the most pathetic is also the most intellectual – "suspense" grips you in the "mind", not in the "guts"'.<sup>44</sup>

Several obvious points of contact between Barthes's theorising of plot and Lutosławski's poetics of *akcja* can immediately be noted. There is a parallel between Barthes's idea that plots divide into functional and catalysing events and Lutosławski's notion of static events and their connecting dynamic counterparts. Barthes's 'veritable "thrilling" of intelligibility' may similarly remind one of Lutosławski's statements about playing with the 'active' listener's expectations and shaping a large-scale closed form as a psychological experience. Part of the thrill of emplotting an *akcja*'s moments of 'intense musical significance' could also relate to the enigmatic implications of one or more key ideas. If so, reading such music through Barthes's more widely tested and robust terminology – for instance viewing a key idea as a plot enigma whose question of quality inaugurates a functional sequence of static events seeking a solution to that problem – begins to suggest a theoretically engaged tool kit for analysing Lutosławski's music.

Similar tools have been developed from Barthes and tested elsewhere by music analysts. Patrick McCreless's and John Novak's extensions of *S/Z*'s codes for the analysis of narrative (the codes remix the terms discussed in Barthes's 'Introduction' essay) 'star' pieces of music into smaller segments to slow down their readings, then analytically process each event via the filter-like codes.<sup>45</sup> Barthes's proairetic code is thus adapted to relate to the basic functional and catalysing events in a piece of music. McCreless, for instance, links the proairetic to the contrapuntal-harmonic structure plotted by a Schenkerian graph (suggesting that voice-leading events form a ready-made starring of a musical text). He then traces what *S/Z* calls 'hermeneutic' enigmas and developments onto the graph's proairetic sequences – the enigmas he identifies relating to chromatic problems presented early in a composition and developed over the course of a piece at a variety of structural levels.

The enigma that McCreless locates in the first movement of Beethoven's 'Ghost' Trio, Op. 70, for instance, is the stress placed on the pitch F at the start of the piece. The pitch jars in the context of D major, the composition's tonal centre. Discussing McCreless's work, Novak usefully summarises the hermeneutic (that is, functional) sequence which sustains and eventually resolves that enigma:

The principal hermeneutic issue is the recurrence of the pitch F and its resolution: this note recurs throughout the piece, sometimes resolving down to E, other



times resolving up to F#. Part of the development section is in the key of F ... whose reference to the opening 'enigmatic' F is achieved through a return of the motive and texture of the piece's opening. The F reaches its apotheosis during the recapitulation in a lengthy F major passage.<sup>46</sup>

The music can thus close securely in D major, having reached the hermeneutic sequence's point of predication by resolving the enigmatic question of the pitch F. Novak identifies a similar enigma (F $\flat$  in the context of E $\flat$  minor) sculpting the hermeneutic destiny of Janáček's *The Fiddler's Child* (1912).

These analyses help hone an understanding of the possible characteristics of musical enigmas and functional sequences in Lutosławski, and also potentially in a wider repertoire of music. First, the enigma is an arresting idea; second, it can be heard as an issue to be resolved, interrogated, exploded, and so on in the context of a particular composition's stylistic framework; third, later instalments in a functional/hermeneutic sequence will on occasion be marked by a return not only to issues arising from the enigmatic problem, but also by a return to other elements (texture and motive in the case of the 'Ghost' Trio) which interrelate key functional events (both Novak and McCreless link the hermeneutic to Barthes's 'semic' code in order to trace recurring textures, for instance). Novak's commitment to expanding McCreless's application of Barthes-influenced narratological analysis into early twentieth-century music indicates the potential for adapting such theories to post-tonal applications, an especially intriguing possibility with later twentieth-century music (such as Lutosławski's) where pitch-organisational contrasts remain marked enough for degrees of similarity and difference, consonance and dissonance, cause and effect, and so on, to be implied with relative clarity.<sup>47</sup>

Bearing in mind the links that can be made between Lutosławski's and Barthes's ideas, the supportive context of existing music-analytical adaptations of Barthes's theories of narrative and the potentially wider-ranging links between such work and debates surrounding the constitution of musical narrativity, I will seek to offer a pragmatic and theoretically engaged adaptation of Lutosławski's poetics of musical plot to a close reading of *Livre pour orchestre* – the voices of composers having made an as yet little-heard contribution to this area of technical discourse. The analysis adopts this framework in response to a fascinating composition which itself raises issues of musical narrativity: this is a piece in which a classicist conception of symphonic plot vies with what turns out to be a modernist alternative, manipulating and ultimately reversing listener expectations.

What may be of wider interest here to analysts and theorists not directly engaged with issues of musical narrativity (or with Lutosławski's music, for that matter) is the possibility that such work could begin to feel somewhat similar, on reflection, to a good deal of other analytical activity. Is that because this approach offers a way to formalise intuitions which underwrite the key tropes of, say, traditional symphonic or thematic analysis? Once one has worked on music and narrative, one begins to sense a veiled reliance on narratological principles (disguised via code words such as 'symphonic', 'logic' and 'musical thought')

lurking within a multitude of attempts to elucidate meaningful plots of events (and in some cases more intensely subjective narrativisations of said events) in response to individual compositions – not to mention, of course, the commonplace yet theoretically ungrounded use of terms including ‘plot’ and ‘narrative’ in music criticism. That a narrative-oriented approach can prove productive in the analysis of works beyond the Lutosławski repertoire is already indicated, of course, by McCreless’s and Novak’s work, and by the wider music-and-narrative literature. A more sustained appraisal, beyond the boundaries of the present investigation, is thus required of the potential contribution of such work towards understanding, say, the bipartite classification ‘symphonic narrative’, and even the question of what makes a symphony symphonic.<sup>48</sup> One might nevertheless ask whether the apparent ease with which one can bring narrative tools to symphonic, thematic or even Schenkerian analysis also has something to say about claims lodged against traditional analytical methods in the wake of post-modern theory. Are narrative approaches tarred with the same brush, or do they offer a tool with which one might peel away a little of the tar? Identifying, isolating and codifying a linear plot of musical events, for instance – especially when one then illustrates said plot with a taxonomic diagram such as that shown in Ex. 10 below – comes perilously close to appearing to propose the essence of a piece as an unchanging and unchangeable architectural unity. The dangers of doing so seem clear at this moment in history, when ‘structures are ... understood to be asserted rather than discovered’ by critically engaged music analysis, and when ‘the analyst is more inclined than ever to see his or her work as the writing down of interpretations from a personal perspective’ as the discipline becomes ‘a focus on self-awareness’ as much as a focus on musical works.<sup>49</sup> One reason music is never just ‘the music itself’ is because musical works, like literary narratives, are also perceptual acts.

Narratives, however, are not static unities: narratives are all about *change*. Their fundamental tenet is *disunity* over time. Stories, Jonathan Culler has argued, are humanity’s pervasive mode of knowing and understanding change, whether we are ‘thinking of our lives as a progression leading somewhere’ or investing the sound of a clock’s tick-tock (in Frank Kermode’s famous example) with a sense of plot-like causality.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, stories – the plots told by narratives – do not exist outside of individual attempts to perceive and, in turn, relate aspects of the experience of change; those tellings (which are acts of criticism, whether formal or informal) in turn become further narrative discourses. Diagrams of plots are fraudulent or, better, fictional, in the sense that a photofit of a crook is fictional: it is not the crook’s actual photograph, still less the flesh-and-blood crook. Yet such fictions may prove useful in alerting other people to a phenomenon’s salient features, at least as perceived by an individual witness. One might help to catch a criminal, or even something salient about a piece of music.

If analysing for the plot of a composition is not merely a way of identifying a fictional photofit of static unity in order to facilitate, say, a reverie of disin-

terested reflection (although this may still be rewarding to some), it could therefore be because such discussions offer an opportunity to foreground the *experience* of particular processes of musical change.<sup>51</sup> Can one do this, however, without entirely traducing the validity of those previous, more traditional analytical gains? Alastair Williams has argued in the pages of this journal that, in place of a stand-off between ‘the straw target of a one-solution [musicological] modernism and an overstated postmodernist flexibility’ (that’s modernism in the sense of an intellectual tradition which includes such flagship ideas as ‘“the music itself”’, formalist approaches ignoring social context and a privileging of unity and integration), the ‘more fruitful approach’ may be critically to transform modernist musicological praxis by ‘valuing its achievements and jettisoning its failures’ in light of postmodernism’s own illuminations.<sup>52</sup>

Addressing such matters with any thoroughness, in a narratological context or otherwise, obviously lies beyond the scope of the present article. Eero Tarasti’s singularly meticulous theorising of musical narrativity, however, may hold a key to understanding the subtle re-engineering of traditional approaches to analysis that the narrative turn might encourage. He has made strenuous efforts ‘to depict *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist* in music – the alternation between Being and Doing, tension and rest, dissonance and consonance in the broadest sense of these terms’.<sup>53</sup> Tarasti identifies a reflexive relationship between music’s *sub specie aeternitatis* qualities and the dynamic flux of its experience in time. Indeed, he notes experiences of musical temporality that present alternatives to serial linear hearings, such as his proposal for a consideration of ‘superimposed, simultaneously present levels of musical action’ in the opening of Beethoven’s ‘Waldstein’ Piano Sonata, Op. 53.<sup>54</sup> Music, one is reminded, can be experienced in reverse, as disconnected moments, as a mosaic, as a spiral, as a tableau, and so on. Nonetheless, in the same rhetorical breath, Tarasti asserts that ‘music is basically a linear art of time’.<sup>55</sup> Elsewhere he makes clear his view of the dualistic nature of musical narrative, as developed primarily from his adaptation of the ideas of A. J. Greimas. Tarasti states that ‘the achronic fundamental structure of music is first spatial at a deeper level’, that is, something conceptual to be ‘composed out’ or, in Tarasti’s term, ‘generated’ by a piece, such as the enigmatic conflicts posed by a semiotic square’s inherent tensions. ‘At the next level’, he continues, ‘when music starts to get “narrativized”, this hierarchic relation is temporalized’.<sup>56</sup> And it is this diachronic temporalisation that one experiences when one listens to a piece of music and from which, in turn, one might seek to emplot the coordinates of an achronic concept. This quantum conception of musical narrativity therefore calls further attention to the intellectual ‘suspense’ Barthes identified as being central to the experience of perceiving a plot, which is not merely a fixed unity to be reconstructed and stored away like a photofit image in a database of analytical crimes, but also an experience of change to be shared with other perceivers through a feedback loop of temporal and atemporal reflection.

It is hoped that speaking of musical narrative in such terms, even in the relatively circumspect context of the present article's analytical investigation, will encourage more sustained and rigorous musings on these matters. The wider issues are certainly germane to this article's core function, for the point of *Livre pour orchestre* (from this narrativising perceiver's perspective, anyway) is that the piece is all about transformative change. It cannot merely be described as a straightforwardly unfolding structural unity – even if the Medusa's stare of one music analyst must fictionalise it as such, from time to time, in the quest for communicative clarity. Rather, it is a snaking musical experience which, during its most astonishing passage, infects the perceiver with a slow-acting realisation that rewrites the story entirely, as Lutosławski's anti-narrative centrifuge reverses its polarity and becomes centripetal, directed and symphonic.

### Functional Sequence: a Narratological Analysis of *Livre pour orchestre*

Performing a preliminary, Barthes-inspired 'starring' of the first movement of *Livre pour orchestre* (Fig. 1),<sup>57</sup> by segmenting the music into separate events and thus developing a basic overview of its form, is a relatively straightforward but productive process.<sup>58</sup> The music can be roughly hewn into a three-part ABA structure: the outer A sections are dominated by quietly gliding string textures, while the inner B section features louder and more robust exchanges between strings and brass. It is also possible to identify certain events as potential static instalments in a functional plot sequence. The first five bars and the sustained chords at rehearsal number 102 are obvious candidates. Other passages, such as rehearsal number 101 and the return of the *pesante* string 'theme' at bars 2–4 after rehearsal number 107, are clearly dynamic catalysing sections. What is one to make, however, of the *lento misterioso* at rehearsal number 104, in which one hears an echo of the static chords at rehearsal number 102 within a texture which is nonetheless continuously changing and thus potentially dynamic?

Seeking through a cursory initial segmentation to determine all of the *chapitre's* individual passages as either static or dynamic presents an analytical

Fig. 1 First *chapitre*, structural outline

A1/i	A2/i	A1/ii	A2/ii	A1/iii	B1/i	B2/i	B3	B1/ii	B2/ii	A1/iv
bs 1–5	bs 6–9 to reh. no 101	reh. no 102	reh. no 103	reh. no 104	reh. no 104, b. 8, to reh. no 105	reh. no 106	reh. no 107, b. 1	reh. no 107, bs 2–4	reh. no 108	reh. no 109 to end
♩ = c. 80	♩ = c. 120, <i>Più mosso</i>	♩ = c. 88, <i>Meno mosso</i>	<i>Più mosso / Meno mosso</i>	<i>Lento misterioso</i>	<i>Poco più mosso ma pesante</i>	♩ = c. 160, <i>Più mosso</i>	<i>Ad lib.</i>	♩ = c. 160		<i>Lento</i>
String chords	Flowing strings	String chords	Flowing strings	String chords	<i>Pesante</i> string 'theme'	Brass flourish	<i>Ad lib.</i> for basses, c'bassoon, piano, tuba	<i>Pesante</i> string 'theme' (cont.)	Brass flourish (cont.)	String chords and piano
<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>pp</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>fp</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>ppp</i>
c. 0'00"	0'22"	0'48"	1'02"	1'27"	1'52"	2'20"	2'25"	2'33"	2'38"	2'57" to c. 4'02"

challenge bearing a valuable lesson in relation to Lutosławski's structuring of instances of musical *akcja*. As Steven Stucky writes, the first *chapitre* could be considered an essay in transformation in which texture takes on a quasi-thematic role:<sup>59</sup> 'a texture of extraordinarily liquid quality made to glide continuously by means of glissando and quarter-tones, a stream of texture, now shallow, now coursing in deeper channels, now rushing ahead, now collecting in quiet pools of sound, now agitated, now tranquil'.<sup>60</sup> Texture can thus be thought of as one of the elements which generate the movement's 'mercurial temperament and capricious changes of direction'.<sup>61</sup> The music, consequently, is hardly ever static in the more general, non-Lutosławskian sense, because its parameters are always altering. Indeed, it could almost be considered an essay in musical suspense, in Barthes's usage, so teasingly does Lutosławski's control of musical flux manipulate one's expectation of its moments of arrival.

Developing a more precise identification of what is static and dynamic in the specifically Lutosławskian sense in *Livre pour orchestre* (and particularly the first *chapitre*), and thus the events in its functional sequence, therefore requires a more subtle approach than merely noting obvious surface changes. Considering what an individual event contains, in terms of the musical qualities and key ideas it presents or develops, is every bit as crucial to the identification of its implications. A revised segmentation of the first *chapitre* is therefore presented in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 First *chapitre*, 'static' and 'dynamic' events

STATIC 1	DYNAMIC 1	STATIC 2	DYNAMIC 2	STATIC 3	DYNAMIC 3
bs 1–5	b. 6–reh. no 101	Reh. no 102	Reh. nos 103–104 b. 7	Reh. no 104 bs 8–12	Reh. no 105
A1/i	A2/i	A1/ii	A2ii–A1/iii	B1/i (start)	B1/i (end)
String chords	Flowing strings	String chords	Flowing strings/ string chords	<i>Pesante</i> string 'theme' (start)	<i>Pesante</i> string 'theme' (end)
Key idea 1: 'quality' enigma (3 + 5 or 4 + 5?)	Catalysing development of key idea 1	Key idea 1: 2nd functional unit (10–note sonorities based on ics 3, 4 & 5)	Catalysing development of key idea 1	Statement of falling ics 1 + 2 emerges from string 'theme'	Catalysing development of key idea 1

STATIC 4	DYNAMIC 4	STATIC 5	DYNAMIC 5	STATIC 6	DYNAMIC 6
Reh. no 106 bs 1–2	Reh. no 106 b. 3	Reh. no 107 b. 1	Reh. no 107 bs 2– 4–reh. no 108 b.11	Reh. no 108 b. 12	Reh. no 109–end
B2/i (start)	B2/i (end)	B3	B1/ii–B2/ii (start)	B2/ii (end)	A1/iv
Brass flourish	Percussion flourish	<i>Ad lib.</i> for basses, c'bassoon, piano, tuba	<i>Pesante</i> string 'theme' cont./brass flourish cont.	Pause at end of brass flourish	String chords and piano
Key idea 1: 3rd functional unit (7-note brass chord pairing ics 4 + 5)	–	Fragmentary ideas exploring ics 1, 2 & 5	Catalysing development of key idea 1	Key idea 1: 4th functional unit (9- note brass chord pairing ics 4 + 5)	Chords based on ics 2 + 5 (encapsulating one final chord exploring key idea 1's ics)

Ex. 1 *Livre pour orchestre*, opening, bars 1–5

The image shows a musical score for the opening of 'Livre pour orchestre', bars 1-5. The score is for five string parts: Vn I div., Vn II div., Vla div., and Vcl. div. The music is in 3/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = ca 80. It features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with triplets. Dynamics range from ppp to p. The score includes markings for 'rit.' and 'a tempo'.

To avoid confusion, the section labels in Fig. 1 (A1/i etc.) will not be employed in the following discussion, in which the segmentation and labelling anticipates Fig. 2's more nuanced subdivisions.

The opening enigma of *Livre pour orchestre* is etched in the ravishing gestural arcs and diaphanous quarter-tone glow of the piece's first five bars (Ex. 1). The pitch content of these measures, as Charles Bodman Rae observes, is much too specific to allow one to consider it merely textural.<sup>62</sup> Stucky notes how bars 1–5 flow 'within the narrow registral ambitus bounded by a<sup>1</sup> and e<sup>2</sup>' (both notes prove to be significant),<sup>63</sup> only to suggest that these fluctuations seed a predominantly textural development. Rae observes, however, that this perfect fifth is joined by an additional pitch when the music's initial arc of string tone is answered by a gesture which curls inwards and sustains a mesh of quarter-tones, thereby disclosing the minor third between A<sub>4</sub> and C<sub>5</sub>, and, when one takes into account the already sustained E<sub>5</sub>, a sonority Rae likens to an A minor triad.<sup>64</sup> The minor third E<sub>5</sub>–D<sub>b</sub><sup>5</sup> wedge sustained above the pitch A<sub>4</sub> in STATIC 1b in turn creates a sonority which, following Rae, one might be tempted to hear as more like an A major triad.

*Livre pour orchestre* is not, of course, a tonal composition in which a tension between major and minor modes within the piece's first key idea might be expected to propel the machinations of a musical plot – as is the case, for example, in the composer's own *Dance Preludes* (1954), in which the clarinet's opening E<sub>b</sub> major arpeggio in the *Allegro molto* is immediately followed by a questioning exchange of minor and major thirds (G<sub>b</sub>–E<sub>b</sub>, G–E<sub>b</sub> and so on), which in turn conjures an enigmatic ambiguity from the opening modal security.<sup>65</sup> Yet

neither is the later orchestral work one in which the diatonic resonance of such sonorities can be considered entirely incidental, especially given Lutosławski's desire for his qualities to shape harmonic shifts more similar to changes between major and minor modes than to the movement between tonal areas.<sup>66</sup> In this regard, an element of uncertainty is induced when the third glissando in bar 5 alights on D $\flat$ , as opposed to the C sustained by the rising gestures in bars 1–2 and bars 3–4. The suspended pitches A4 and E5 anchor the sense of alternating minor- and major-like sonorities in STATIC 1a and 1b, and it is this alternation which brings another interval class into focus: interval class 4, in the form of the major third implied by the 'major triad' at the end of bar 5. Both of these triadic sonorities imply both minor and major thirds, of course, but it is the switch from A4–C5 in STATIC 1a to A4–C#5/D $\flat$ 5 in STATIC 1b, and thus the enlargement from interval class 3 to interval class 4 (minor third to major third), that the tonally acculturated ear is led to hear. The shift can therefore be heard to suggest a key idea in which the initial 'minor' interval-class pairing 3 + 5 is called into question by the 'major' interval-class pairing 4 + 5 (Ex. 2a and b).<sup>67</sup>

What emerges is a question of quality which one might refer to as *Livre pour orchestre's* opening enigma, as articulated by its first static, and thereby functional, plot event. Will the *chapitre's* (or even the entire piece's) principal quality be the interval-class pairing 3 + 5 or 4 + 5 (and will the dominant quality be primarily associated with a focus on E or on A)? Attempts to resolve this enigma – which can be summarised as the chromatic 'major-minor' set class [0347] (Ex. 2c) significant in many other Lutosławski pieces<sup>68</sup> – can be traced as a plot of static events that emerges as a functional sequence over the course of the first *chapitre's* fluid musical discourse. Fig. 2 outlines the first *chapitre's* plot of events (and, in so doing, reformulates to some extent the preliminary segmentation of the movement in Fig. 1); Ex. 3 outlines the sonorities articulated by the music's functional static events.<sup>69</sup>

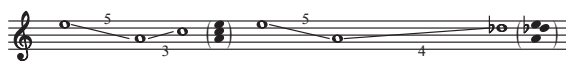
Certain elements summarised in Fig. 2 were anticipated in Fig. 1's initial segmentation, such as the emergence of an important new phase beginning with

Ex. 2

(a) STATIC 1a and 1b



(b) Bars 1–2 and 3–5

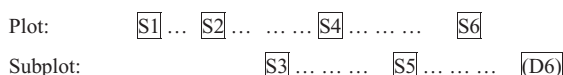


(c) Key intervals and harmonies



Ex. 3 First *chapitre*, functional sequence

S1	S2	S4	S6
3/4+5? (A or E?)	4+5 (A)	4+5	4+5

Fig. 3 'Plot' and 'subplot' plot-lines in the first *chapitre*

the *pesante* string theme identified originally as the start of the B section. Emplotting the presentation and development of key ideas and qualities during the *chapitre's* static events, however, suggests a more nuanced representation of the entire B section as a struggle between brass and strings *and* between a nascent second key idea – developing from initial hints of interval classes 1 + 2 into the interval-class quality 2 + 5 – and the original key idea. My analysis thereby recognises a crucial distinction between the coda and the earlier A sections: the change in quality in the second A section to a focus on the interval-class pairing 2 + 5, as opposed to permutations of the first key idea. More generally, it permits one to penetrate the mercurial fascinations of the piece's surface in order to interpret the transformations of its musical plot – most notably, a series of attempts to resolve convincingly its opening enigma through a weighty sonority pairing interval classes 4 + 5 which does not achieve a definitively climactic peroration establishing that quality over its alternative, 3 + 5.<sup>70</sup>

In this regard, one can hear a story emerging in 'storeys' during the static events in the *chapitre*. First, these events 'rise above' (in other words, are deemed more important than) the dynamic events in the piece's hierarchy of significant and less significant passages; second, some of the static events might be imagined to rise higher than the other static events in this hierarchy. A top 'storey' of functional units relates to developments of the implications of the enigmatic first key idea; a second, and initially less prominent, 'storey' begins to emerge at the start of the B section, establishing a second thread of events (Fig. 3). One might, in this regard, think of a plot and a subplot emerging from the first *chapitre's* musical discourse, with the main plot-line developing the 'radioactive' implications of the piece's opening key idea and then the subplot emerging to establish



a new key idea and, with it, a second enigma: the question of the potential relationship between the music's two key ideas, the chromatic set class [0347] and the diatonic set class [0257], which will eventually come to the fore as key idea 2. If this had indeed been intended as the first movement of a symphony, one might imagine that, in a strikingly novel way, an exposition introducing two subject groups has been presented, only for the music to be cut short on the cusp of the development section – an idea which, given what happens later in the piece (and Lutosławski's concerns about its title), has some credibility. The first movement's unresolved plot-lines return unexpectedly, and with revolutionary force, to invade the final *chapitre*.

Part of the effectiveness of that eventual invasion, of course, relates to the intervening music's suggestion that nothing of the sort is likely to happen. *Livre pour orchestre*'s inner *intermèdes* and *chapitres* were designed to prevent any evocation of overarching musical narrativity, fraying the threads of plot left hanging at the end of the first *chapitre* and, in so doing, implementing the *livre* model of unconnected musical miniatures.<sup>71</sup> In terms of the piece's eventual outcome, however, this proves to be an elegant deception. The music of the *intermèdes* and inner *chapitres* is far from insignificant.

Rae's analysis of the *intermèdes* is representative of the existing literature in that it adds little to Lutosławski's publicly stated interpretation of the role of these limited-aleatory interludes, although he does provide a useful dissection of their pitch content, rhythm and instrumentation.<sup>72</sup> Rae notes, for instance, the ways in which the instrumentation changes. The first *intermède* is scored for the noodlings of three clarinets, the second for two clarinets and harp and the third for harp and piano (the harp replacing one clarinet, then the piano replacing the other two clarinets, as indicated in Fig. 4). The effect of this shift in instrumentation over the course of the three *intermèdes* is gradually to bring the sound world of the finale's opening into focus. Rae also observes that the pitch organisation of the overlapping instrumental parts (Ex. 4), while utilising the pitches of a twelve-note cluster spanning G3 to F#4, forms 'four complementary and overlapping tetrachords' with the 'pattern of tone/minor-third/tone, although they are actually used horizontally with interval pairing 2 + 5 rather than 2 + 3'.<sup>73</sup> This leads to the rather different interval class 2 + 3 + 5 quality of the set class [0257] from the twelve-note interval class 1 cluster created by the sonority's complementary pitches (Ex. 5). However, the most striking local connection formed by this interval-class trinity is to the prominence of the interval-class

Fig. 4 Scoring of the three *intermèdes*

First <i>intermède</i>	Second <i>intermède</i>	Third <i>intermède</i>
Clarinet 1	Clarinet 1	Piano
Clarinet 2	Clarinet 2	
Clarinet 3	Harp	Harp



Ex. 5 First *intermède*, pitch complementation and organisation

Ex. 6 *Livre pour orchestre*'s two key ideas

quality 2 + 5 at the close of the first movement. Similar correspondences exist between the quality of the *intermèdes* and the start of the second *chapitre*.<sup>74</sup> Most significant of all, though, is the role of the [0257] chord in the finale, where, among other appearances, it forms the final harmony of the entire composition.

This pattern, the tetrachordal set class [0257] familiar (like the major-minor [0347] of key idea 1) from other Lutosławski pieces,<sup>75</sup> could thus be heard as a crystallisation of *Livre pour orchestre*'s second key idea (Ex. 6). Over the course of the first *chapitre* the quality of the second key idea emerges as a subplot. This set class then goes on to form the basis of most of the coda's string chords. The composer subsequently returns to it in each of the *intermèdes*. In the finale, what one might initially take to be just another *intermède* is gradually revealed to be the opening of the final *chapitre*. This moment therefore begins *Livre pour orchestre*'s centripetal subjugation, as the piece's underlying model begins its swing in favour of the symphonic.

The *intermèdes* do not effect this coup on their own. Instead, they act in tandem with the second and third *chapters* to evoke the sense of each section's *livre*-like autonomy, thereby making the finale's reversal all the more surprising. Had Lutosławski's precompositional plan for a *livre* been realised, each *chapitre* would have been a brief and unrelated *akcja*: a musical short story within an album of miniatures. Whether or not they had been separated by *intermèdes*, there would have been no sense of a musical argument running through the four or more movements. This does not mean, of course, that *Livre pour orchestre* would have lacked any reflexivity of content. There are actually many such associations, a large number of which stem from reconfigurations of the piece's key ideas.<sup>76</sup> To

describe these similarities as connections, however, may be misleading if one takes such a description to imply a plot-like thread evolving in a directed manner over the course of the first three *chapitres*.

Discussing the coherence created by the network of intervals, rhythms, textures and motives which recur throughout his *Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet* (also composed in 1968), György Ligeti coined the term 'kaleidoscopic'.<sup>77</sup> The distribution and refraction of this network of ideas throughout these ten small pieces reminded Ligeti of the ways in which a kaleidoscope forms different yet related patterns by presenting ever-changing perspectives on a single set of crystals. This useful analogy can be borrowed to describe the connections formed by the inner *chapitres* of *Livre pour orchestre*. Rather than suggesting a musical *akeja* coursing through these sections, the term 'kaleidoscopic unity' evokes the sense of coherence provided by old ideas recurring in unfamiliar guises. What ultimately emerges from *Livre pour orchestre* as a whole, of course, is a kaleidoscopic reorientation of its entire mode of organisation, as playfully fragmenting modernist permutations are replaced by a more linear and plotted classicism. In the central movements, however, this has yet to occur, and much of the charm of these *chapitres* resides in their self-contained nature. Indeed, if one seeks the character of the *Livre pour orchestre* that never was, one finds it in these rumbustious movements, the coherence of which never weighs down a buoyant sense of developmental inconsequentiality.

The opening of the *troisième chapitre*, and the brief recapitulation of that opening at the movement's close, is emblematic of this kaleidoscopic process. The intervallic content of these moments also offers a reminiscence of the work's opening and of its two key ideas (Ex. 7a and b). The kaleidoscopic unity of connections formed between and within the inner movements of *Livre pour orchestre* and its *intermèdes*, in contradistinction to Lutosławski's intentions, therefore serves continuously to remind the perceiver of the key components of the first *chapitre*'s plot, albeit without actually advancing that story. At no point, in other words, can the opening movement's concerns be entirely forgotten. Instead, elements of the piece's two key ideas are glimpsed often enough to imply a dotted line of gone-but-not-forgotten narrativity linking the first *chapitre* to events yet to come. What remains is to connect the dots.

If one is tempted to conceive of *Livre pour orchestre*'s first *chapitre* as being somewhat like a sonata-form exposition, the inner movements could be heard as insertions within a large-scale 'sonata deformation',<sup>78</sup> and the finale as the continuation, development and conclusion of a symphonic narrative interrupted at the end of the opening movement. Both subplot and plot re-emerge and evolve in the finale, predicating the music's plot-lines and, in so doing, twisting its ontology.

That twist in the musical tale is connected to a trick much discussed in the Lutosławski literature. Lutosławski informatively titles his finale '3me intermède et chapitre final', presumably to reflect the fact that there is no distinct break between the last *intermède* and the final *chapitre*. Instead, the finale evolves from

## Ex. 7

(a) Third *chapitre*, opening

$\frac{3}{4}$  ♩ = 160

The score for the opening of the third chapter is written for a chamber ensemble. It features five systems of staves. The first system includes Violin I (div. in 3), Violin II (div. in 3), and Cello/Double Bass (c. s.). The second system includes Violin I (div. in 3), Violin II (div. in 3), and Cello/Double Bass (c. s.). The third system includes Violin I (div. in 3), Violin II (div. in 3), and Cello/Double Bass (c. s.). The fourth system includes Violin I (div. in 3), Violin II (div. in 3), and Cello/Double Bass (c. s.). The fifth system includes Violin I (div. in 3), Violin II (div. in 3), and Cello/Double Bass (c. s.). The score includes dynamic markings such as *fp* and *mf*, and performance instructions such as *c. s.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. The tempo is marked as  $\frac{3}{4}$  ♩ = 160.

## (b) Evocation of key ideas

The score for the evocation of key ideas is written for a single system of staves. It features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The score includes dynamic markings such as *fp* and *mf*, and performance instructions such as *c. s.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. The tempo is marked as  $\frac{3}{4}$  ♩ = 160.

the third *intermède*. Instructions in the score indicate that the conductor should adopt the same nonchalant attitude (relax, mop brow, and so on) at the start of the finale as during the other *intermèdes*. Yet the change of instrumentation – the pairing of piano and harp, the loss of the clarinets – immediately indicates a different musical character. The new situation is then signalled more definitively by changes to the *intermède* material itself, changes which become even clearer

when (at rehearsal numbers 402 and 403) the conductor does not end the texture for harp and piano, but instead cues new instruments (tubular bells, then cellos playing *pizzicato*). Consequently, the music does not stop after about twenty seconds. Instead, this *intermède* evolves, expanding and metamorphosing dynamically, and becoming the pointillistic backdrop to a pair of *arco* cello lines at rehearsal number 404. These entwined lines, which sound a plangent semitonal knot of As and Bs (bowed pitches anticipated by the cellos' A $\flat$  and B $\flat$  *pizzicatos* at rehearsal number 403, which contract into the semitonal dyad at rehearsal number 404), therefore signal the final *chapitre*'s actual starting point, in other words, its first static or functional event. Fig. 5 presents an overview of the finale's structure.

As the string cantilena initiated by the two cellos unfolds and other instruments are added to its mass, its limited-aleatory textures, Lutosławski stated, 'acquire more and more meaning'.<sup>79</sup> How? For one thing, they develop sonorities that are harmonically more complex, implying a sense of developmental cause and effect. As part of this process, the cantilena leaches distinct pitches out of the backdrop until only untuned percussion and piano clusters remain in the *intermède* layer, which vanishes entirely when, as Lutosławski himself put it, 'we reach the orchestral *tutti* [rehearsal number 410], which can't possibly be taken for a moment of relaxation. *On the contrary, we are at the height of the musical action*'.<sup>80</sup> Several noteworthy developments, however, occur before that point.

Initially the interval class 2 + 3 + 5 quality of the work's second key idea dominates both layers of the music. This quality can be heard in the individual voices contributing to the pointillistic *intermède* texture; it is then taken up, more significantly, by the harmonies of the cantilena's limited-aleatory chorus of strings as their song of rising intensity comes to prominence (Ex. 8). The knot of As and Bs at rehearsal number 404 might suggest the interval class 1 at the centre of the piece's opening sonority or remind one of the pitch class A's role in the opening *chapitre*, but more locally it functions as a dissonance which is resolved at rehearsal number 405 by a [0257] sonority (the first of two prominent, bookending presentations of this chordal encapsulation of key idea 2 in the finale) which briefly blooms when the two cellos are augmented by violas to form the second event in the movement's functional sequence.

These moments begin to reveal the extent of the literally duplicitous trick played by the final *chapitre*. When the *livre*-reinforcing *intermède* material associ-

Fig. 5 Third *intermède* and final *chapitre*, structural overview

Introduction	A	B	Coda
Third <i>intermède</i>	Final <i>chapitre</i>	Final <i>chapitre</i> : cont.	Final <i>chapitre</i> : cont.
Reh. nos 401–403	Reh. nos 404–418c	Reh. nos 419–445	Reh. no 446–end
Harp, piano, bells and <i>pizz. intermède</i>	<i>Cantabile</i> cantilena (strings, then full orchestra)	<i>Ad libitum</i> blocks, macrorhythmic accel. and climax ( <i>tutti</i> )	String chords (with brass, then with flutes, then alone)
9'37"	10'51"	16'03"	18'08" to 21'10"

Ex. 8 Harmonies articulated by the string *cantilena*, rehearsal numbers 404–410

ated with key idea 2 begins unexpectedly to develop, as the harmony of rehearsal numbers 404–409 reformulates the interval classes of the *intèrmede*'s [0257] pattern making (interval classes 2 + 3 + 5), the *intermède* music is not only going against the grain of the anti-developmental musical model it has thus far helped to define, but can also be heard to continue the subplot crystallised by the emergence of the second key idea and its quality at the end of the first *chapitre*. By developing the *intermède*, the finale forges a link back to the opening movement's coda and invites one to read its musical plot as picking up where the first *chapitre* ended. The sections are no longer the independent short stories of an album-like collection: an overarching plot is beginning to take shape, as if the outer movements were connected by a single narrative arc separated by the mega-*intermède* of the kaleidoscopic inner sections. Other developments will shortly strengthen this sense of connection, when subplot yields to plot.

The limited-aleatory string textures in rehearsal numbers 404–409 form a neat example of part of a functional sequence. The new harmony revealed by each sonority in this chain of events is close enough to its predecessor and successor harmonies to suggest a quasi-logical process of transformation, working through permutations of key idea 2 in search of a more apposite quality solution. The six-note symmetrical harmony at rehearsal number 406, for instance, is formed of whole tones and a semitone spanning a boundary interval of interval class 3; rehearsal number 407's nine-note chord sounds like a near-doubling (in number of pitches, but also in richness of tone) of the [0257] chord; the ten-note sonority at rehearsal number 408 is built entirely from adjacent interval class 2s, save for the semitone about which its symmetry pivots; and rehearsal number 409's twelve-note sonority also feels like an expanded version of the [0257] chord. One might thus be led to expect, within the conventions of Lutosławski's mature style, the imminent arrival of a twelve-note *ad libitum*, which would secure the developmental ascendancy of the second key idea.

In fact, the actual ramifications of rehearsal number 410 (Ex. 9) are more complex. The cantilena perorates with a twelve-note sonority which, in pairing interval classes 3 and 5, can be heard as a culminating development of the second key idea (that is, as being derived from its kernel chord's innermost and boundary intervals) and thus of the functional plot sequence that began at rehearsal number 404. Given the absence of interval class 2s, however, a major change in quality is immediately perceptible – not least because the music returns, at this







and, while it might be slightly fanciful to map a bass journey from the A of rehearsal number 404 to this E at the root of the Tempo I *cantabile* after rehearsal number 413, the potential significance of this pitch is clear, not least as the pitch class from which key idea 1, and indeed the entire piece, first emerged. The purity of the pairing of interval classes 3 and 5 at rehearsal number 410a, however, has been usurped here by added interval class 4s. Consequently, while the arrival on E and addition of key idea 1's other main interval class mark rehearsal number 413's twelve-note chord as the next instalment in the piece's resurgent main plot-line, the chord's quality returns to relative intervallic ambiguity (3 + 4 + 5). Neither rehearsal number 410 nor 413, therefore, has combined a substantial chord pairing interval classes 3 and 5 with an E in the bass – a solution to the quality enigma of the first key idea not presented in the first *chapitre*.

From rehearsal number 414 the music is again dynamic, and sculpted as if to suggest momentum slipping away from the resurgent plot-line. One might wonder: has the best opportunity for a transcendent moment of closure been missed? If so, the sudden shifting of gears at rehearsal number 419 which inaugurates the start of the *chapitre*'s second main section may tempt one to frame one's reading of ensuing events in a manner similar to Robert Hatten's idea of a radical musical disruption evoking the existence of an authorial or narratorial presence controlling (or in this case seeking to re-exert control over) a piece's discourse.<sup>81</sup> The ensuing macrorhythmic *accelerando*'s drive to climax, while sculpting dynamic expectations of arrival at another significant plot instalment, centres on a process of cutting between cells of foreshortening and apparently new material. Consequently, it could initially be heard as a shift in discourse level and an attempt by 'the composer' to intervene and wrest back control of 'the work' (from its insubordinate symphonic tendencies) by enforcing this vigorous, grid-like symbol of the *livre* model's increasingly beleaguered anti-narrativity. Given Lutosławski's apparent struggles with the piece's nature and title, as documented by his letter to Lehmann, such a reading may not be entirely unrelated to the composer's actual creative struggles.

Gradually, however, this token of Lutosławski's original intentions is also subjugated. The ensuing blocks streamline into the macrorhythmic *accelerando* that propels *Livre pour orchestre* towards its apotheosis at rehearsal number 445. Writing about the last few moments before this culmination, Martina Homma notes that the silences separating rehearsal numbers 440, 441, 442 and 443 form the maximum possible contrast to the preceding macrorhythmic *accelerando*.<sup>82</sup> This is a keen observation, to which one might add that the silences lengthen and thus subtly smooth the transition from the preceding headlong *a battuta* to the *ad libitum* texture at rehearsal number 445, not merely by slowing the pace but by simultaneously suspending the music's sense of pulsation. Looking further forwards, however, these elongating pauses (and the rising chords which punctuate them) also form a prolepsis anticipating the end of *Livre pour orchestre*, and thus a 'semic' connection (the use of silences) between the resolution which is about

to occur (which relates most strongly to key idea 1) and the closing sonority of the piece (which relates more obviously to key idea 2).

As Stucky notes, the ‘wonderfully “consonant”, affirmative sound’ of the climax sonority is related, in part, to the solid grounding of its lowest perfect fifth and to the registrally and timbrally distinct triadic harmonies resulting from its interval-class content;<sup>83</sup> it also forms a striking contrast with the more dissonant interval-class trinity of 1 + 5 + 6 whose quality saturates the *accelerando*. Rae, too, stresses the climax sonority’s importance, reminding his readers that Lutosławski’s choice of ‘climactic harmony is a matter of significance’ in every piece.<sup>84</sup> Neither commentator, though, discusses the significance of this harmony in terms of the music’s resurgent plot-line. The climax chord can be emplotted as the closural resolution, at the piece’s peak of sensuous intensity, to the suspense generated by its opening question of ‘minor or major?’ or, more accurately, ‘interval class 3 or 4 with 5 (centred on A or E)?’. The matter is settled here, with rhetorical conviction and compelling symphonic logic, by a symmetrical twelve-note sonority firmly rooted on E in which only interval class 3s interlock adjacently with the perfect fourths and fifths of interval class 5. Ex. 10 emplots the chords at rehearsal numbers 410, 413 and 445 as the final static events that predicate the functional sequence inaugurated by the piece’s opening key idea. What follows, however, is not merely empty rhetoric in the form of a coda telling the listener that which is already known. Instead, the closural process draws together the plot threads relating to key ideas 1 and 2 by connecting the climax chord at rehearsal number 445 to the similarly significant final chord of the piece, in a gesture of clear organicist intent – organicism being an increasingly apparent organisational force in the coda of this now symphonic work.

The twenty-eight-note string chord which emerges at rehearsal number 446 is a version of the climax chord at rehearsal number 445, reinforced by octave doublings which eradicate the climax’s intervallic quality (Ex. 11). This is a characteristically elegant solution by Lutosławski, who, through fastidious organisation (the sonority is symmetrically wrapped around a central minor third, mixing semitones and whole tones with an outer pair of tritones, but created by overlapping different transpositions of the rehearsal number 445

Ex. 10 Key idea 1’s functional sequence

Start

102      106      108 b. 12      410      413      445

3/4+5?  
(A or E?)      4+5  
(A)      4+5      4+5      3+5      3/4+5  
(E)      3+5  
(E)

Ex. 11 Reworking of rehearsal number 445's harmony to yield a different chord at rehearsal number 446

chord's four-note segments), reconfigures the familiar to produce an utterly unfamiliar effect. Lutosławski then tapers this sonority by slicing pitches away from the bottom of a cyclical pattern of three closely related chords. The roots of those chords initially encircle E; when they are stripped from the chords, the stress on E is maintained by a spectral flute duet (the ghost of *cantilenas* past).<sup>85</sup> This phantasmal reminiscence is noteworthy, because part of the coda's closural function relates to its affirmation of the structural centrality of this pitch class, which, having opened the piece and then helped to secure the close of the *akcja's* main functional sequence, will now lend its weight to the piece's final plot twist.

The *poco meno mosso* seven bars before rehearsal number 447 is sculpted in a manner which initially suggests a contracting texture heading for a unison E6. At rehearsal number 447, however, the texture is compressed further within the space between C6 and B6. Four held chords, and then a fifth chord's quarter-tone compression – demarcated before and after by a general pause, the ending's semic echo of the silences which follow rehearsal number 440 – yield the sonority on which the music closes. The quarter-tone-inflected penultimate chord of the piece, as Peter Petersen points out, may remind one (also semically) at this rhetorically privileged moment of the quarter-tones at the opening of the piece;<sup>86</sup> the E at the base of the concluding sixth sonority, when it arrives, also links back to the start (and elsewhere). The final sonority of *Livre pour orchestre* is not, however, a tetrachord rooted on E and built from interlocking interval classes 3 and 5 (the quality one might expect to hear at this point as a closing summary of the climactic predication of the main plot-line), nor is it a repeat of the major-minor [0347] set class now rooted on the 'correct' pitch class, E. Instead, the final sonority, consisting of E, F#, A and B, reveals a version of the [0257] set class at the heart of the second key idea (Ex. 12).

Scored for a tissue of ethereal strings and rooted on E, this chord could therefore be heard to resolve the issues surrounding *Livre pour orchestre's* subplot, not merely by finally revealing, in splendid isolation, its four-note essence at a moment symmetrical to the first presentation of key idea 1's 'major-minor' chord, but also by suggesting an answer to the piece's second enigma: how, in this





album and book, and thus permits a 'double movement ... that ... is capable of achieving the clearly sensed diversity of an album and then of recomposing that as a structured whole'.<sup>91</sup> *Livre pour orchestre*'s creative confrontation is not dissimilar. Its eventually overarching *akcja* is part of an encapsulating musical narrative concerning a triumph of symphony over *livre*. The piece therefore symbolises aspects of a grander narrative of twentieth-century composition relating to alternative aesthetic positions.

Such an interpretation accords with the thesis that some of the most productive tensions within Lutosławski's music originate in the composer's play on the friction between classicist and modernist tendencies. For instance, it is hard to imagine the 'modernist paradigm' that Arnold Whittall identifies as central to Lutosławski's finest pieces of the late 1960s and 1970s – a 'site of ... intense interactions between opposing tendencies: connection and fragmentation, progressiveness and conservatism, polarity and synthesis'<sup>92</sup> – being more clearly spelt out than in *Livre pour orchestre*'s titular vacillations between the anti-narrative *Livre pour orchestre* and the narrative Symphony No. 3 (even if, in this particular case, one might feel that classicism eventually outweighs modernism). In this respect, the piece could even be heard as a companion piece to another not-exactly-a-symphony composed shortly after *Livre pour orchestre* and producing similar tensions.

Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* (1968–9), as Whittall writes elsewhere, has achieved 'the status of an exemplary modernist manifesto' thanks to its political references (most prominently to Martin Luther King, Jr.) and its famous third movement's confrontation between Mahler and Beckett – 'a confrontation itself fragmented around a whole host of other musical references, a celebration of disconcerting diversity that creates a corresponding need to search for synthesis'.<sup>93</sup> Berio's *Sinfonia* therefore inaugurates a powerful centrifugal momentum requiring an equally forceful centripetal subjugation. And indeed, Berio did, after the *Sinfonia*'s first performance, add a fifth movement in order that the fourth movement (the quiet aftermath of the Mahler-Beckett complex) would be followed by a finale which forges connections between materials heard in the earlier movements. *Sinfonia* therefore ends on an even more impassioned note of expressive and structural fervour than the heights achieved in its celebrated third movement. As David Osmond-Smith writes, the 'search for similarities and common elements' demonstrated by the third movement's uncovering of relationships between a Mahler scherzo, Beckett's *The Unnamable* and a wealth of other materials 'takes over as an autonomous principle' in *Sinfonia*'s finale.<sup>94</sup> It is thus the exploration of the principle of seeking to resolve tensions, as opposed to the actual achievement of an unambiguous resolution, which is the key to the finale's power: 'Berio fuses together materials from all the previous movements into a new and vitriolic synthesis. The gesture seems deeply indebted to the nineteenth-century cult of organic completion. In practice it offers neither apotheosis nor resolution, but rather an explosion of raw energy'.<sup>95</sup> 'In this way', Whittall adds, '*Sinfonia*'s essential modernism is reaffirmed rather than dissolved' in a wash of classicism.<sup>96</sup>

*Livre pour orchestre*'s search for synthesis (albeit in the face of less flamboyant fragmentations) seems similarly indebted to earlier paradigms of organicism (not for nothing, perhaps, was Lutosławski's favourite music critic of the past Eduard Hanslick).<sup>97</sup> As in Berio's *Sinfonia*, though, one could argue that it is the confrontation between the competing musical possibilities of disintegration and connectivity which generates this music's most impressive effects. In the Berio, such confrontations fuel the rage of the finale's search for synthesis; in the Lutosławski, similar tensions inflame the surging symphonic narrativity of its finale and a quest not only to resolve the first *chapitre*'s enigmas but to tackle the very issue of musical narrativity's potential, as reimagined by Lutosławski, as a means of symphonic structuring in the late 1960s. The power of *Livre pour orchestre*'s climax is that it marks the music's resolution of both plot and the very question of plot in a modernist context. By engaging with such issues, it thereby achieves a feat of transformation as impressive, in its own way, as the finale of the Berio.

*Livre pour orchestre* might therefore further be narrativised – if I might be permitted briefly to play the role of prosopopoeia's ventriloquist, having at least outlined in detail the plotment which underlies that stronger interpretation – as a structure symbolising the potency of narrative's essential quality: change. It has none of *Sinfonia*'s politically charged cultural cachet, of course, and its *akcja* can scarcely be likened to the highly politicised 'actions' of the 1960s and 1970s that were performed, for instance, by the Viennese 'actionist' Otto Mühl, Joseph Beuys, or the London-based Destruction In Art Symposium. Lutosławski, furthermore, steered clear of publicly linking his music to real-life events (as in the case of the question of his actual Symphony No. 3's possible links to Solidarity, given its main period of composition between 1981 and 1983); he preferred, if anything, to direct attention away from the very possibility.<sup>98</sup> As with the ultimately deceptive attitude struck by the conductor during *Livre pour orchestre*'s *intermèdes*, however, one might be tempted to read Lutosławski's position on such matters as an elegant (and no doubt politically judicious) deception, especially if one feels that the piece's transformative structure, in struggling to achieve change and forge agreement in the face of apparently irreconcilable musical, aesthetic and even ideological oppositions, is echoed in other Lutosławski pieces of the period, such as the String Quartet (1964) and Cello Concerto (1969–70). (Indeed, in *Livre pour orchestre* the astonishing thing is that agreement and balance are actually achieved; more often, Lutosławski's works of the period reveal an ultimately tragic failure to unite.) One might be tempted, in other words, to speculate about the subtext of artistic statements on the power, or even just the possibility, of change – of their ability to envisage and symbolise ways of doing things differently, by marshalling disparate ideas into powerful new syntheses – from an artist working in communist Poland in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>99</sup> That the piece can be heard to overthrow a distinctly twentieth-century spin on conventions of structural governance in favour of older organisational ideas might tempt one to go even further, were it not for the sharp



reminder offered by this very observation that the most potent argument put forwards by *Livre pour orchestre* is probably its aesthetic manifesto.

*Livre pour orchestre* emerges from even a relatively circumspect narratological analysis as one of Lutosławski's richest compositions. Out of those riches arose the nexus of tensions reflected in Lutosławski's uncertainty about the piece's title. There can be little doubt, one might argue, that a piece of such scope and accomplishment would have served the title 'Symphony No. 3' with distinction. Alternatively, one might judge that the more original title *Livre pour orchestre* befits the music's individuality. Yet *Livre pour orchestre*, finally, is neither a symphony nor a *livre*, but a *sui generis* musical achievement whose 'double movement' is unique and, as a result, uniquely powerful. In this respect, a dual title may suit it best of all. It could be time, in other words, to begin thinking of this outstanding piece as Lutosławski's Symphony ('*Livre pour orchestre*').

## NOTES

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1. Tadeusz Marek, '*Livre pour orchestre* by Witold Lutosławski', *Polish Music*, 4/i (1969), p. 12.
2. Marek, '*Livre pour orchestre*', p. 12.
3. Originally published as Tadeusz Kaczyński, '*Livre pour orchestre*. Rozmowa z Witoldem Lutosławskim', *Ruch Muzyczny*, 13/xvii (1–15 September 1969), pp. 3–5. Translation in Tadeusz Kaczyński, *Conversations with Witold Lutosławski*, 2nd edn, trans. Yolanta May and Charles Bodman Rae (London: Chester Music, 1995), p. 73.
4. Bálint András Varga, *Lutosławski Profile: Witold Lutosławski in Conversation with Bálint András Varga* (London: Chester Music, 1976), p. 27.
5. Jean-Paul Couchod, *La musique polonaise et Witold Lutosławski* (Paris: Stock Musique, 1981), p. 136; translation mine.
6. Kaczyński, *Conversations*, pp. 73 and 77.
7. Douglas Rust, 'Conversation with Witold Lutosławski', *Musical Quarterly*, 79/i (1995), p. 209.
8. The composer's own copy of this letter – along with approximately 28,000 further pages of correspondence with more than 3,500 individuals and institutions – can be read in the Lutosławski Collection at the Paul Sacher Stiftung. Always a careful correspondent, Lutosławski typed his letters using carbon paper, in order to keep copies back for his own records.

9. Steven Stucky, *Lutosławski and His Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 172.
10. ‘Zum Abschluss möchte ich noch ein paar Worte über den Titel des Stückes verlieren, ich finde, dass der Titel “Livre pour orchestre” ein wenig pretensios klingt und entspricht nicht ganz der Form des Werkes. Wie Sie sich sicher erinnern werden, war es meine erste Absicht eine Reihe von kleineren Stücken zu schreiben. Dafür würde der vorgeschlagene Titel passen, aber in dem jetzigen Stand der Arbeit ist mein Werk viel näher einer grossen geschlossenen Form. Darum macht sich die Suche nach einem neuen Titel erforderlich. Bitte geben Sie mir doch noch ein wenig Zeit um Ihnen den entgeltigen Titel (möglicherweise ganz einfach 3. Symphonie) mitzuteilen’. Lutosławski, letter to Berthold Lehmann, 29 May 1968; my translation. I would like to thank Dr Stanisław Będkowski for providing me with a copy of this letter, and my colleagues Martina Wallner and Dave Rock for helping to finesse my translation.
11. He may have done so in private. Although none of the Lutosławski scholars I have consulted knew previously of the alternative title, Andrzej Chłopecki’s recent *Warsaw Autumn* programme note on the four acknowledged symphonies speaks of there being, ‘[in] actual fact ... five not four symphonies, because *Livre pour orchestre* (despite its name) is also a symphony’. See Andrzej Chłopecki, ‘Witold Lutosławski’, in *Warsaw Autumn 2004* (Warsaw: Związek Kompozytorów Polskich, 2004), p. 282.
12. Reasonably detailed analyses of *Livre pour orchestre* appear in Philip Wilby, ‘Lutosławski and a View of Musical Perspective’, in John Paynter, Tim Howell, Richard Orton and Peter Seymour (eds.), *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1127–45, and in Andrzej Tuchowski, ‘The Integrative Role of Motion Patterns in Lutosławski’s Mature Symphonic Works: a Comparison of *Livre pour orchestre* and the Symphony No. 4’, in Zbigniew Skowron (ed.), *Lutosławski Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 287–304. For a discussion of these commentaries, Lutosławski’s post-compositional interpretative statements on *Livre*, and other sources documenting the piece’s critical reception, see my ‘“Akcja” and Narrativity in the Music of Witold Lutosławski’ (PhD diss., Cardiff University, 2005), especially pp. 201–15.
13. Joseph Kerman, *Concerto Conversations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 47.
14. Roman Jakobson, ‘Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics’, in Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in Language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), pp. 350–1.
15. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, ‘Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 115/ii (1990), p. 241.
16. See, for example, Michael Klein, ‘Chopin’s Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative’, *Music Theory Spectrum*, 26/i (2004), pp. 23–55; Matthew McDonald, ‘Silent Narration? Elements of Narrative in Ives’s *The Unanswered Question*’, *19th-Century Music*, 27/iii (2004), pp. 263–86; and Fred Everett Maus, ‘Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative’, in James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (eds.), *A Companion to Narrative Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 466–83.
17. Beginning with a pedagogical enquiry entitled ‘Narrative and Music’ (AMS-L, 5 April 2006), the thread quickly evolved under titles including ‘Semiotics, Mendelssohn, and Meaning’ and ‘What’s the Story?’.

18. See, for example, Galen Brown's post on his own compositional experiences (11 April 2006, 17:44), William Meredith's post on Beethoven (19 April 2006, 21:59) and Gregory Karl's post touching on music by Beethoven, Schubert, Weber and others (23 April 2006, 17:14).
19. A notable early exception to this general rule is Jann Pasler's essay 'Narrative and Narrativity in Music', in J. T. Fraser (ed.), *Time and Mind: Interdisciplinary Issues* (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1989), pp. 233–57. See also Márta Grabócz, 'Narrativity and Electroacoustic Music', in Eero Tarasti (ed.), *Musical Signification: Essays in the Semiotic Theory and Analysis of Music* (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1995), pp. 535–40; and Vincent Meelberg, *New Sounds, New Stories: Narrativity in Contemporary Music* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2006).
20. Ferneyhough (somewhat surprisingly, at least to me) described his *Carceri d'Invenzione I* (1982) as being plot-like during a documentary interview filmed in 2004 and shown at the London Sinfonietta event 'Inventions: Ferneyhough in Focus' (14 February 2004). Judith Weir discussed music and narrative in an interview with the present author for the London Sinfonietta. See [http://www.londonsinfonietta.org.uk/perform/weir\\_interview.html](http://www.londonsinfonietta.org.uk/perform/weir_interview.html) (accessed 23 May 2005).
21. In addition to Nattiez, 'Can One Speak' (1990), important early texts included Anthony Newcomb, "'Once More Between Absolute and Program Music": Schumann's Second Symphony', *19th-Century Music*, 7/iii (1983–4), pp. 233–50; Fred Everett Maus, 'Music as Drama', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 10 (1988), pp. 56–73; Patrick McCreless, 'Roland Barthes's *S/Z* from a Musical Point of View', *In Theory Only*, 10/vii (1988), pp. 1–29; Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Robert Hatten, 'On Narrativity in Music: Expressive Genres and Levels of Discourse in Beethoven', *Indiana Theory Review*, 12 (1991), pp. 75–98; Lawrence Kramer, 'Musical Narratology: a Theoretical Outline', *Indiana Theory Review*, 12 (1991), pp. 141–62; Joseph Kerman, 'Representing a Relationship: Notes on a Beethoven Concerto', *Representations*, 39 (Summer 1992), pp. 80–101; and William Kinderman, 'Integration and Narrative Design in Beethoven's Piano Sonata in A-flat Major, Opus 110', in Lewis Lockwood, Christopher Reynolds and James Webster (eds.), *Beethoven Forum 1* (1992), pp. 111–47. Two important precursor texts are Edward T. Cone's *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974) and 'Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story – or a Brahms Intermezzo', *Georgia Review*, 31 (1977); reprinted in R. P. Morgan (ed.), *Music: a View from the Delft* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 77–93. For a detailed analysis of past and present debates in the literature see my '“Akcja” and Narrativity', pp. 138–80.
22. Gregory Karl, 'Structuralism and Musical Plot', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 19 (1997), p. 13.
23. Karl, 'Structuralism and Musical Plot', p. 14.
24. Jonathan D. Kramer, 'Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music', *Musical Quarterly*, 64 (1978), p. 178.
25. See, for example, Karl, 'Structuralism and Musical Plot' (1997), and Kinderman, 'Integration and Narrative Design' (1992).

26. Nattiez, 'Can One Speak', p. 245.
27. Nattiez, 'Can One Speak', p. 243.
28. See, respectively, the works by Hatten, Maus, Kerman and Karl referenced above in n. 21.
29. Alan Street, 'The Obligato Recitative: Narrative and Schoenberg's Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16', in Anthony Pople (ed.), *Theory, Analysis and Meaning in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 183.
30. Maus, 'Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative', p. 467.
31. My own developing concept of musical narrativity, which takes off from reader-response theory, engages more thoroughly with the implications of this point than the theoretical apparatus adapted to serve a very specific purpose in this paper.
32. For a fuller overview of Lutosławski's poetics of musical plot see my 'Lutosławski, "Akcja" and the Poetics of Musical Plot', *Music and Letters*, 88 (2007), pp. 604–31.
33. Working from less documentary material than the present writer, Michael Klein and Douglas Rust have both examined the notion of *akcja*, reaching interestingly interconnected views (particularly regarding issues of texture) in Douglas Rust, 'A Theory of Form for Lutosławski's Late Symphonic Works' (PhD diss., Yale University, 1994) and Michael Klein, 'Texture, Register, and Their Formal Roles in the Music of Witold Lutosławski', *Indiana Theory Review*, 20/i (1999), pp. 37–70. Rust has incisively refined his views on texture in recent years, notably without continuing to discuss these issues under the rubric of *akcja*; Klein has produced a fascinating account, drawing on Hatten's work on expressive genre, of what he takes to be the primarily topical plot of Lutosławski's Symphony No. 4 (1988–92). See Douglas Rust, 'Two Questions of Perception in Lutosławski's Second Symphony', *Perspectives of New Music*, 42/ii (2004), pp. 190–221, and Michael Klein, *Intertextuality in Western Art Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), pp. 108–36. The manuscript 'Problems of Music Form' is part of the Lutosławski Collection of the Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basle. The terms in this discussion were extracted from that manuscript. For a more thoroughgoing examination of the terms and their source, see the article referenced in n. 32.
34. Irina Nikolska, *Conversations with Witold Lutosławski (1987–92)*, trans. Valeri Yerokhin (Stockholm: Melos, 1994), p. 113.
35. For a more detailed account of *akcja* and its implications for Lutosławski criticism, including a detailed discussion of 'Problems of Musical Form' and other lectures, see my 'Lutosławski, "Akcja" and the Poetics of Musical Plot' (2007). Composers lucky enough to have worked alongside Lutosławski are beginning to report on examples he gave from his own and other composers' music of key ideas and other significant matters. Steven Stucky has informed me, for example, that Lutosławski would habitually play the first theme of Debussy's Sonata for Violin and Piano at the piano in answer to the question 'What is a key idea?'. Following up on these leads is an urgent necessity, as is an examination of Lutosławski's sketches with a view to discerning his workings on key ideas. It is impossible to say definitively what was on Lutosławski's mind when he played this example, but one might nonetheless have fun speculating. After all, even before the first violin theme in bars 5–14, the piano outlines two enigmatic chords: G minor rising to C major (bars 1–4). Lutosławski

considered shifts in mode (for example, from minor to major) to be closer to the type of tonal effect he sought to reimagine through his qualities than shifts of key. Here, one might wonder if the enigma to be resolved is simply 'major or minor?'; in a more complex sense, it might be 'G minor as v of C major or C major as IV of G minor?'. Neither minor nor major, and neither G minor nor C major, in other words, is secured by this progression, and one might reasonably expect what follows to investigate, if not fully resolve, the matter. When the violin theme itself enters, one hears two descending triadic motives, one outlining G minor, the other E $\flat$  major (bars 5–8); minor and major are contrasted again. The E $\flat$  major motive, moreover, is unexpectedly supported, when it lands on the pitch E $\flat$ 4, by a shift from C major (with a dominant seventh provided by the violin's B $\flat$ 4) to an E $\flat$  minor chord in the piano. As well as posing another question – how does E $\flat$  minor fit into things? – one might wonder if this chord/key will provide an intermediary between the G minor and C major of the opening; one might also wonder about the longer-range role in this piece of shifts in harmonic centre by thirds. In what follows next (bars 9–14) there are, of course, further intriguing contrasts, and one might very well expect a sonata to investigate some of them: the obviously contrasting motivic content, say, most notably the triadic versus the scale gestures, or the rhythmic alternation and stratification of temporal states, from the feathery, floating violin descent and sustained opening piano chords to the more urgently directed, rising violin motives which follow. The question here is thus not what is *the* key idea, but rather, what is *not* a key idea. The only way to find out, of course, is to emplot a response to the whole piece (in which case the *appassionato* at bars 56–57 is but one site of potential interest, as minor shifts by a third to major once again, and in a strikingly new way).

36. For Lutosławski the terms 'static' and 'dynamic' refer to the activities of a listener (absorption in and absorption of an event's syntactical or statistical implications); they should not be taken as absolute descriptions of an event's musical characteristics. His terminology is idiosyncratic, of course, in terms of his intended meaning: understanding a static event involves relating its content to other moments (hardly a passive act of cognitive stasis), while a dynamic event seeks to invoke a more passive cognitive experience as the listener enjoys the sensuous ride *en route* to the next event demanding that the listener choose to be involved in it.
37. The above sketch is hardly the full story of *akcja*, and other aspects one would investigate in a thoroughgoing analysis of an *akcja* might include the conventions and situations Lutosławski adapted from the stage, literature and everyday life; his deployment of gestures, topics and other musical signifiers with strongly marked indexical and/or intertextual associations; and the roller coaster of expressive intensity constructed by the composer through his extraordinarily precise control of musical texture (not least in his limited-aleatory textures). Such an approach might usefully seek to draw on aspects outlined by Klein, myself and Rust (see nn. 32 and 33).
38. Roland Barthes, 'Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits', *Communications*, 8 (1966), ed. and trans. Stephen Heath as 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', in *Image – Music – Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977); and Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1970).
39. A *writerly* adaptation of *S/Z* to narratological music analysis would be well worth reading, of course, in the context of a postmodern musical narrative; John Zorn's *Spillane* (1991) springs to mind, as well as numerous works by Berio.

40. Barthes, 'Introduction', p. 87.
41. Barthes, 'Introduction', p. 117; see also pp. 88–104 ('II. Functions').
42. Barthes, 'Introduction', p. 94.
43. Barthes's examples include Ian Fleming's *Goldfinger* (1959) and Flaubert's 'Un coeur simple' (1877).
44. Barthes, 'Introduction', p. 119.
45. See McCreless, 'Roland Barthes's *S/Z*' (1988), and John Novak, 'The Programmatic Orchestral Works of Leoš Janáček: Their Style and Their Extra-Musical Content' (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1994).
46. Novak, 'The Programmatic Orchestral Works', p. 211.
47. Having said this, as Lutosławski implies, key ideas relating to texture, mood, rhythm, timbre, structural organisation and many other musical elements could function in musical styles where pitch-related enigmas are less significant or, owing to pitch-organisational complexity, less readily perceptible. See Varga, *Lutosławski Profile*, p. 35.
48. Lutosławski, as quoted above, was unequivocal on this matter: a symphony 'should be composed of some musical events that together – one after another – may be compared to an action, to a plot of a drama, or a novel, or short story'. See Rust, 'Conversation with Witold Lutosławski', p. 209.
49. Anthony Pople and Ian Bent, 'Analysis, §II, 6: Since 1970', in Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 2000), vol. 1, p. 570.
50. Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 83. For Kermode's 'tick-tock' see Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 45.
51. Such work might usefully branch out to connect with other ongoing investigations in music theory such as work on musical temporality or on ecological approaches to the psychology of perception. See, for example, Jonathan Kramer, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (New York: Schirmer, 1988), and Eric Clarke, *Ways of Listening: an Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
52. Alastair Williams, 'Musicology and Postmodernism', *Music Analysis*, 19/iii (2000), p. 386.
53. Eero Tarasti, 'Beethoven's *Waldstein* and the Generative Course', *Indiana Theory Review*, 12 (1991), pp. 101–2.
54. Tarasti, 'Beethoven's *Waldstein*', p. 101.
55. Tarasti, 'Beethoven's *Waldstein*', p. 101.
56. Tarasti, quoted in Grabócz, 'Narrativity and Electroacoustic Music', p. 539. Tarasti uses the term 'narrative' here in a different sense from my usage; according to him, the diachronic composing out of a piece 'narrativises' the achronic concept.

57. Expressive, dynamic and tempo indications refer to the start of each section, with the exception of A2/ii, where *più mosso* and *meno mosso* sections alternate.
58. All timings given in the charts are taken from Lutosławski's 1976 recording of *Livre pour orchestre* with the Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra (EMI 565305, 1978), the performance on which I relied when carrying out this study.
59. Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 124.
60. Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 167.
61. Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 165.
62. Charles Bodman Rae, *The Music of Lutosławski*, 3rd edn (London: Omnibus Press, 1999), p. 112.
63. Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 124. Stucky follows a different system for indicating registers from the present study, which would label these pitches A4 and E5.
64. STATIC 1a's sonority, though, like the one formed by the arrival of the pause at the end of STATIC 1b, is more specific than even Rae allows, not least owing to the 'quarter-tone heptachord' sustained by the webbing of the compound glissando articulating its minor-third arc; see Peter Petersen, 'Microtones in the Music of Lutosławski', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, p. 336.
65. The accompaniment of the ensuing *Andantino* even begins with a mirror image of, and perhaps also a model for, the interlocking interval class 3s of the opening of *Livre pour orchestre* (B $\flat$ -D $\flat$ , F-D). This possibility sounds especially tantalising when one listens to the version of *Dance Preludes* arranged for clarinet and string-heavy chamber ensemble in 1955 that was given its concert premiere at the Aldeburgh Festival under Benjamin Britten's baton in 1963.
66. As Petersen argues, Lutosławski's post-1960 approach to pitch organisation can be heard as 'the symbiosis of several tone systems: microtonality, diatonicism ... [.] pentatonicism', and the composer's individual approach to twelve-note harmony. His quality-focused approach, while dominant, 'does not mean that other tone systems occurring in Lutosławski do not have value of their own'; 'Microtones in the Music of Lutosławski', pp. 341-2. It seems clear, in fact, that Lutosławski imports or (to use his term) 'borrows' such associations to add nuance to the implications of his personal harmonic language – just as he borrowed structures and scenarios from the theatre and earlier musical styles to add nuance to his musical forms.
67. The analytical examples in this article adapt some rudimentary graphic conventions from Schenkerian analysis merely to clarify the specific ideas being demonstrated; they are in no way meant to imply an adaptation of the principles of voice-leading reduction.
68. Stucky observes that this chord is pitch-class set 4-17 [0347]; another sonority of importance in *Livre* discussed by Stucky (my key idea 2) is pitch-class set 4-23 [0257]; see Steven Stucky, 'Change and Constancy: The Essential Lutosławski', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, pp. 143-7. As Stucky points out, however, 'Forte-style set-theoretical analysis [in and of itself] is not very useful for understanding Lutosławski's music, especially the notion of the equivalency of inverted set-forms', which otherwise obscure the quality-related function of the harmonies in Lutosławski's music; see Stucky, 'Change and Constancy', p. 146, n. 42.

69. For a blow-by-blow close reading of the journey to and from the first movement's plot events, and indeed of the remainder of the composition, see my '“Akcja” and Narrativity', pp. 216–306.
70. The typical climactic gesture in Lutosławski's music is a twelve-note sonority, expressed in a limited-aleatory texture and scored for a piece's full ensemble.
71. Lutosławski described the purpose of the *intermèdes* in another of his letters to Lehmann: 'The three initial movements of the work are rather dense. After each of them a moment of relaxation is needed. The short interludes are to serve this purpose. They consist of quite insignificant music played *ad libitum*. The conductor's attitude should suggest that this is the moment for the audience to relax, to change their position, to cough ... . After about 20 seconds, the conductor raises the baton (to give the signal that the end of the relaxation has come) to interrupt the *ad libitum* playing and without letting up on the tension begins the next movement after a pause of five seconds. This is repeated after movements two and three'. Quoted in Marek, 'Livre pour orchestre', p. 10.
72. See Rae, *The Music of Lutosławski*, p. 110–12. Rae also notes a similar pattern in *Partita* (1984), where intervening *intermèdes* interact with the main movements to form a five-part structure.
73. Rae, *The Music of Lutosławski*, p. 111.
74. The second *chapitre*, moreover, begins quite clearly in the realm of the second key idea, but the sound world is gradually transformed into a more dissonant one. This is a typical example of what I term a 'quality modulation'. The ease with which the ear can follow this shift between relatively diatonic and relatively chromatic ideas indicates the effectiveness of Lutosławski's post-tonal language, which actively encourages one to follow the course of his pieces' harmonic developments (not something one can say of every mid-twentieth-century composer).
75. It is the final chord, for example, of *Epitaph* (1979).
76. See, for example, Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 168.
77. See György Ligeti, Péter Várnai, Josef Häusler and Claude Samuel, *György Ligeti in Conversation with Péter Várnai, Josef Häusler, Claude Samuel and Himself*, trans. Gabor J. Schabert, Sarah E. Soulsby, Terence Kilmartin and Geoffrey Skelton (London: Eulenburg Books, 1983), p. 135.
78. The term is used here as in James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 5–9. Hepokoski's observation that a significant aspect of the content of a sonata deformation is its 'dialogue with ... generic expectations' (p. 5) suggests the potential for developing a view of *Livre pour orchestre* along the lines of, say, a 'multimovement form in a single movement' (p. 7) encompassing aspects of a symphony and a *livre*.
79. According to Lutosławski, 'Subsequent sections, played *ad libitum*, acquire more and more meaning, till the listener, who at first took the beginning of this movement as another interlude, realises that ... something important is beginning to take place'. See Kaczyński, *Conversations*, p. 72.
80. Kaczyński, *Conversations*, p. 72; emphasis added.



81. See Hatten, 'On Narrativity in Music', p. 76. The author of a text is not to be equated simplistically with its narrator, of course; for a recent narratological discussion of authors and narrators dead, implied and resurrected, see Wayne C. Booth, 'Resurrection of the Implied Author: Why Bother?' and other essays in James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (eds.), *A Companion to Narrative Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 75–88.
82. Martina Homma, *Witold Lutosławski: Zwölfton-Harmonik, Formbildung, 'aleatorischer Kontrapunkt'*. *Studien zum Gesamtwerk unter Einbeziehung der Skizzen* (Cologne: Bela Verlag, 1996), pp. 186–7.
83. Stucky, *Lutosławski*, p. 118.
84. Rae, *The Music of Lutosławski*, p. 114.
85. Rae also notes this stress on E. See Rae, *The Music of Lutosławski*, p. 115; Rae focuses on the progression's upper pitches, not the bass.
86. Petersen, 'Microtones in the Music of Lutosławski', p. 341. In a very useful companion piece to the essay discussed above, McCreless has theorised the role of musical elements besides those relating to a functional/hermeneutic sequence in rhetorically shaping the sense of a piece's ending. See Patrick McCreless, 'The Hermeneutic Sentence and Other Literary Models for Tonal Closure', *Indiana Theory Review*, 12 (1991), pp. 35–73. Wilby's analysis of *Livre pour orchestre*, and especially its diagrammatic representation of intensity in the music, indicate some ways in which the listener's attention is drawn to cardinal matters by sensuous parameters.
87. Tuchowski's analysis of *Livre pour orchestre* and other pieces, which regards textural shaping as a foreground motion pattern calling attention to nodal points of structural articulation, encourages such a view. See Tuchowski, 'The Integrative Role of Motion Patterns', especially pp. 296–300; notably, this approach leads Tuchowski to consider the importance of the pitch E in *Livre pour orchestre*.
88. The composer Magnus Lindberg told me that, to him and other composers of his generation, Lutosławski's Symphony No. 2 sounded like a manifesto petitioning for renewed attention to the possibilities of constructing large-scale symphonic forms in a modernist idiom.
89. Lutosławski did not, as Petersen suggests, fail to comment on the existence of other *livres*. In his first published interview about *Livre pour orchestre*, he accepts his music's place in a lineage including not only Couperin and Bach, but also Messiaen (his 1951 *Livre d'orgue*) and Boulez (*Le livre pour quatuor*, 1948–9). See Petersen, 'Microtones in the Music of Lutosławski', p. 334, n. 33; see also Marek, '*Livre pour orchestre*'.
90. Pierre Boulez, *Orientalions: Collected Writings*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez and trans. Martin Cooper (London: Faber, 1986), p. 148.
91. From Jacques Scherer, 'Le "Livre" de Mallarmé', which accompanied the 1957 publication of Mallarmé's *Le livre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), as quoted and translated in Boulez, *Orientalions*, p. 147.
92. Arnold Whittall, 'Between Polarity and Synthesis: the Modernist Paradigm in Lutosławski's Concertos for Cello and Piano', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, pp. 244–5.

93. Arnold Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 302.
94. David Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words: a Guide to Luciano Berio's Sinfonia* (London: The Royal Musical Association, 1985), p. 74.
95. Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words*, pp. 74–5.
96. Whittall, *Musical Composition*, p. 303.
97. I located a bookmarked copy of Hanslick's *Music Criticisms 1846–99*, trans. and ed. Henry Pleasants (London: Peregrine Books, 1963), in the library of the composer's Warsaw home; the bookmark notes Hanslick's review of Brahms's Second Symphony (p. 157), which includes the following remarks: 'Nor are there any furtive glances in the direction of foreign artistic fields, nor any begging from poetry or painting. It is all purely musical in conception and structure, and purely musical in effect'. It is not hard to imagine the potential attraction for Lutosławski – a circumspect musical narratologist if ever there was one, seriously unimpressed by narrativisations – of such a statement.
98. On the other hand, Lutosławski did tell Nikolska that the construction of musical forms could be prompted by ordinary life experiences; see Nikolska, *Conversations*, p. 90.
99. Other readings stress the music's transformative power. See John Casken, 'The Visionary and the Dramatic in the Music of Lutosławski', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, pp. 36–56; Charles Bodman Rae, 'Lutosławski's Sound-World: a World of Contrasts', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, pp. 16–35; and Maja Trochimczyk, "'Dans la Nuit": The Themes of Death and Night in Lutosławski's *Oeuvre*', in Skowron, *Lutosławski Studies*, pp. 96–124. Casken, for instance, reads (and thus narrativises) *Livre pour orchestre* as one of a number of Lutosławski pieces opening 'new windows onto imaginary worlds', not least through the climax and its aftermath: 'a visionary intensity' followed by 'a mysterious evocation of the Unknown, a dreamlike vision ... a moment of intense introspection' (p. 40).

### ABSTRACT

Despite a lasting ambivalence regarding the title of his 1968 orchestral work, *Livre pour orchestre*, Lutosławski ultimately consented to publication of the work under the name with which it was premiered. Analysts approaching the piece might therefore begin by asking if this work is indeed a *livre* of independent parts or a more sustained musical utterance encoding some kind of longer-range musical narrative. Drawing on Lutosławski's poetics of musical plot, Roland Barthes's theories of narrative, music-analytical adaptations of Barthes's theories, ongoing debates surrounding the issue of musical narrativity and the composer's artistic and social context, this article constructs a close reading of a piece in which a classicist conception of symphonic plot vies with an alternative structural paradigm reinvigorated by modernism, manipulating and ultimately reversing expectations while sculpting a powerful experience of musical change.