



Response to Janet Schmalfeldt's Response

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[1] In the spirit of Janet's "whimsical" hearing of Babbitt's *Lonely Flute* "as a naughtily overdetermined parody of Tchaikovsky's song, with Tchaikovsky's music itself representing the antipode of Babbitt's aesthetic, though not necessarily his sympathies" (paragraph 12), we demonstrate two additional connections between Babbitt's *Lonely Flute* and Tchaikovsky's "Lonely Heart."

D \flat

[2] Babbitt unmistakably underlines pc D \flat in *Lonely Flute*, as does Tchaikovsky in "Lonely Heart." The original key of the Tchaikovsky song is D \flat . Perhaps the most recognizable motive of the song is its opening gambit, repeated when the voice enters (**Example 4b**). Melodically the motive involves a lower-voice motion from C4 to D \flat 4.

[3] Compare this to *Lonely Flute*, which opens (**Example 4a**) with a phrase bounded by C4–D \flat 4, emphasized by repetition, duration, and dynamic changes. As mentioned earlier, the dynamic changes on the held D \flat reference blank partitions in an indexed array-lyne segment. (*Lonely Flute*'s opening emphasizes D \flat in an additional way: D \flat , F, and A \flat bound its opening phrases at measures (2)–3, 4–6, 7–9, 10–.)

[4] As shown in **Example 10a**, the end of the work (measure 158) restates a held D \flat with changing dynamics—again four different dynamics moving generally from louder to softer. Babbitt brings attention to this D \flat 5 by preceding it with an octave leap from D \flat 6, which itself ends a complete row statement and array lyne.⁽¹⁾ He also repeats and emphasizes D \flat 5 in the remaining measures of the work.

[5] Flutter tongues (F.T.) perform a function similar to that of the changing dynamics above. *Lonely Flute* contains only four instances of flutter tongue. Two of these occur in close proximity near the end of the work (just preceding the fast "riff"), both on relatively long D \flat /C \sharp 4's (**Example 11**). The first (**Example 11a**) follows flutter-tongue D \flat 4 with *fortissimo* C4 for a dramatic cadence, hinting at the C4–D \flat 4 of the work's opening. The second (**Example 11b**) echoes the opening more literally (cf. **Example 11c**), referencing the same array-lyne segment | 8621 | ~ | *fortissimo*, ending with D6 to D \flat /C \sharp 4, and moving immediately to {B \flat 4, F}.⁽²⁾

[6] C–D \flat marks the begin / endpoints of the only four pc aggregates in the piece that are restricted to middle or low register. At measures 27–28 and measure 60 (not shown), C5–D \flat /C \sharp 5 articulates the beginning of pc aggregate 12 and ending of pc

aggregate 23 respectively. At measures 38–39 and 78–79, C4–D \flat 4 ends pc aggregate 15 and falls just after the beginning of pc aggregate 30 respectively.

[7] These various emphases on D \flat highlight yet another aspect of compositional virtuosity in *Lonely Flute*: the underscoring of a particular pc using tightly linked contextual devices (beginning/ending, held D \flat 's with changing dynamics or timbres, registral emphases, segmental cross-references), and referring to the tonality of Tchaikovsky's *Lonely Heart*—within the constraints of *Lonely Flute*'s pc and tp arrays.

[8] Although clear analytically, the prominence of D \flat is considerably cover aurally—subtly but not obviously present except at the beginning and ending of the work. The hidden aspects of this compositional punning lend a sly and mischievous slant to Babbitt's virtuosity.

Prelude/Postlude

[9] The end of *Lonely Flute* ties in to the beginning not only through emphases on D \flat , but also via more specific pc and rhythmic links.

[10] A comparison of Examples 10a and 4a shows that the penultimate phrase (measures 155–158) echoes phrases 1 and 3 (measures 1–3, 7–9). Like phrase 3, the penultimate phrase sticks out because of its square rhythms and possible motivic references to Tchaikovsky's "Lonely Heart." Like phrase 1, it begins with a leap between G6 and C4, and ends with the held D \flat discussed earlier. In between these pc references to phrase 1, it connects clearly to phrase 3. As shown in Examples 10a and 10b, the two phrases index the same array-lyne segment,⁽³⁾ with the final partition differing in order but identical in pitch. The closing <B \flat 6–C–F> of phrase 3 reappears at the opening of the penultimate phrase as <F–C–B \flat 6>, in a retrograde of pcs and pitch contour.

[11] In addition, Examples 10b and 10c show that the peak pitch(class)es at the opening of phrase 3 <A, F#6, B6> conclude the work, in reverse order and in retrograde pitch contour. The final phrase shown in Example 10c also references phrase 3 in other ways that we do not detail here.

[12] **Example 12a** diagrams these relationships between opening phrases 1 and 3 and closing phrases P and F (penultimate and final). Phrases 3 and P relate strongly (rhythm, motive, p/pc strings), with weaker links between the begin/endpoints of phrases 1 and P, and of phrases F and 3, respectively. The symmetry thus displayed, and the musical characteristics of the four phrases, suggest a hearing of the work that corresponds roughly to the Tchaikovsky song model (Example 12b): piano introduction preceding vocal entry, brief piano postlude following vocal cadence. In other words, phrases 1–2 of *Lonely Flute* introduce phrase 3 ff., and phrase F concludes following phrase P. *Lonely Flute*'s opening emphasis on {D \flat , F, A \flat } at phrase boundaries, and its penultimate phrase's A \flat –D \flat "closure" support this interpretation, as does the pacing of pc versus tp aggregate durations (close to 1:1 ratio at the work's beginning and ending only).⁽⁴⁾

[13] That Babbitt drew such specific opening-closing relationships, in both pitch and rhythm, from distant portions of pc and tp arrays again attests to his compositional agility. The option of interpreting these opening and closing passages as prelude and postlude, in parallel to *Lonely Flute*'s namesake, suggests further dimensions of parody.

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Footnotes

1. This passage follows on the heels of the “riff,” which also references a row statement.

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2. The only other “special effect” of the work, key clicks (marked + in the score), also perform a specific structural function. Key clicks mark portions of row segments that occur “early” or “late” at block boundaries, i.e., that begin in the previous block, or end in the following block. Only one key click of the five instances in the work does not perform this function: the key click in measure 98 (Example 5 [DjVu] [GIF]), which sets up the *p/pp* aggregate and the work's climax, occurs not on the high D \sharp 6 as expected, but on C \sharp 5 (which was also emphasized in the preceding passage). One can read this anomalous key click as further emphasis of pc D \flat at a crucial structural point.

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3. Babbitt appears to have relaxed strict relations between phrase 3 and the referenced array lyne in order to obtain rhythm and pc correspondences to the penultimate phrase.

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4. The relative lengths of the hypothesized prelude (Phrases 1–2, 18 quarter notes) and postlude (5 quarter notes) very roughly match the proportions of the Tchaikovsky introduction and postlude (32 and 8 quarter notes).

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