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### MTO 10.4 Examples: Gauldin, “Tragic Love and Musical Memory”

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.04.10.4/mto.04.10.4.gauldin.php>

#### Example 1. Associative sonorities in the music of Alban Berg

a.

D F A + B (=H)  
└───┘  
(Op. 2, III, m. 7)

b.

B (=H) D# F# + A  
└───┘ └──┘  
(Op. 2, IV, m. 25)

c.

┌───┐  
Bb D F G  
└───┘  
(Vln. Concerto, IV, m. 2)

**Example 2.** Use of SPHINXES (= “acronyms”) related to the romantic relationship between Robert Schumann and Ernestine von Friken as found in his *Carnaval* (1834–35); original title: *Fasching: Schwänke auf vier Noten von Florestan* (intended for Ernestine but eventually dedicated to Carl Lipinski). The work is closed in “.fn\_flat(A).” major, the key Schumann had associated with his earlier love Henriette Voigt and whose origin may be traced back to Florestan’s (!) aria “In des Lebens Frühlingstagen” in Beethoven’s *Fidelio*.

The Three SPHINXES (No. 9): unless otherwise noted, pitch classes occur in the soprano line of each piece’s opening measure(s).

**SPHINX 1:** S C H A = E $\flat$  C B A (musical pitches in Schumann’s name). NOT used in music but found in title of “ASCH/ SCHA Lettres dansantes” (No. 11)

**SPHINX 2:** A S C H = A E $\flat$  C B (Ernestine’s home town). Found in “Pierrot” (in tenor), “Arlequin,” “Valse noble” (as A E $\flat$  B C), “Eusebius” (disguised), “Florestan,” “Coquette,” and “Papillons.”

**SPHINX 3:** AS C H = A $\flat$  C B (another form of Ernestine’s hometown). Found in “ASCH-SCHA; Lettres dansantes,” “Chiarina” (= Clara), “Estrella” (= Ernestine), “Reconnaissance,” “Pantalon et Columbine,” “Valse allemande,” “Paganini” (m. 25), “Aveu,” “Promenade,” and the closing “Marche”.

In a letter to Moscheles (September 1837), Schumann admits adding the titles *later* and specifically mentions four pieces, all of which had ties to his romantic relation with Ernestine: “Estrella” = (Ernestine, “the kind of name one might put under a portrait so as if to fix it *better in the memory*,”), “Reconnaissance” (“a scene of reunion”), “Aveu” (“a declaration of love”), and “Promenade” (“a stroll arm-in-arm with one’s partner at a German ball”).

**Example 3.** “Acronyms” for Petr Tchaikovsky and Désirée Artôt, as found in the tone poem *Fatum* (1868), the B $\flat$  minor Piano Concerto (1874–75), and the Symphony No. 3 (1875). These may be found in various transpositions (after David Brown).

pEtr tCHAikovsky = E C B A = 5 3 2 1 in minor mode (Concerto, Symphony No. 3)

DÉSIRÉE Artôt = D E (or E $\flat$ ) SI (= B) RE = (D) E A (*Fatum*)

DÉSirée Artôt = D $\flat$  A (B $\flat$ ) (*Fatum*, Concerto, Symphony No. 3, hints in *Romeo and Juliet*)

**Example 4.** The use of Balakirev's suggested  $D\flat$  major for the pair of "Romeo and Juliet's themes" in the secondary area of that Overture Fantasy (1869), with implications of Artôt's acronym  $D^b - A$  (enharmonic German sixth). This key also appears in "The Letter Scene" (*Eugene Onegin* 1877) with the same  $bVI$  emphasis, as well as the famous "None but the Lonely Heart" No. 6 of Op. 6 (1869), a song cycle dedicated to Artôt.

176                      184 "Romeo"                      193 "Juliet"                      251 (Codetta of Exposition)

$b: V^7/III = Gr^6_{\flat} (A^7) \quad D\flat: 6_4 \quad D\flat \text{ vs. } A^7 \quad I_{D\flat} \quad Gr^6_{\flat} (A^7) \quad I_{D\flat}$

**Example 5.** Unusual features of Tchaikovsky's  $B\flat$  minor Piano Concerto (1874), which may have provided the bases for Nikolai Rubinstein's negative criticisms, followed by possible "programmatic" explanations relating to his romantic relationship with Artôt.

**I. First movement:**

- a. Opens with extended "introduction" whose basic key of  $D\flat$  major is NOT the expected tonic of  $B\flat$  minor, and whose theme NEVER recurs in its original form. — Opening section constitutes an "exposition" of Tchaikovsky's own acronym  $\hat{5} \hat{3} \hat{2} \hat{1}$ , first in tonic and then in the "Love Key" of  $D\flat$  major (in association with Artôt's acronym).

Tchaikovsky                      7 Tchaikovsky                      Artôt

$b\flat:$                        $D\flat:$

Tchaikovsky                      Artôt theme for 2nd mov.

- b. Unusual use (for Tchaikovsky) of a Russian **folk song** (“Oy, Kryatsche, Kryatsche”) as the principal theme. — His rationale for choosing this melody may be its disguised references to **both** his and Artôt’s acronyms:

114

b $\flat$ :

Artôt

Tchaikovsky

- c. A “**double set**” of secondary themes in the curious key of VII (A $\flat$  major). — Perhaps modeled after the “Romeo and Juliet” secondary area. While the first theme makes obvious references to both Artôt and Tchaikovsky’s acronyms, the second or “reminiscence” theme (similar to Juliet’s) may refer to those romantic times the couple shared together. The harmonies which support the opening motive “Artôt’s theme” and the concerto’s opening statement (Tchaikovsky’s acronym in Example 4A) are **identical**

**1st Secondary theme (Artôt’s theme with Tchaikovsky later)**

184

Artôt

Tchaikovsky

A $\flat$ :

**2nd Secondary theme (“Reminiscence” theme)**

204

- d. The strange **absence** of the piano during the lengthy first section of the development. — This section focuses on a gradual intensification of the previous “reminiscence” theme (note allusions to Artôt’s  $D\flat - A$ ), possibly portraying their own deepening romantic involvement. Its climax prepares the dramatic double-octave entry of the soloist.

292                      Artôt                                      Artôt

- e. A buildup leads to  $bVI$ , which is then **prolonged** as a German sixth throughout most of the extended cadenza; note the pair of enharmonic resolutions as dominant seventh to the  $bII$  realm, **prior** to the appearance of the cadential 6/4 near its conclusion! — The opening statement of Artôt’s motive (as Ger6th) resolves to the Neapolitan B minor, where a series of rising chromatic sequences eventually arrive at a delightful setting of the “reminiscence” theme in C major, suggesting a possible sleigh ride through the Russian snows. The return to the original Ger6th  $G\flat$  and more expressive setting of Artôt’s motive is first rudely interrupted and then completely replaced by disturbing and turbulent octaves gestures that grow in intensity, suggesting that the former fond recollections are now increasingly clouded by her subsequent falseness and elopement. These intrusions grow in frequency and violence until they eventually overshadow her motive altogether. Following their climactic apex, the piano concludes with several more “resigned” settings of her acronym over 6/4 and dominant harmonies.

### Part I

523 Lead in      541 Artôt                                      Sequence      562 Reminiscence                      Sequence

B $\flat$ : V     $bVI$                        $bii$                        $ii$                                       II

**Part II**  
(increasing interruptions)

579 Artôt

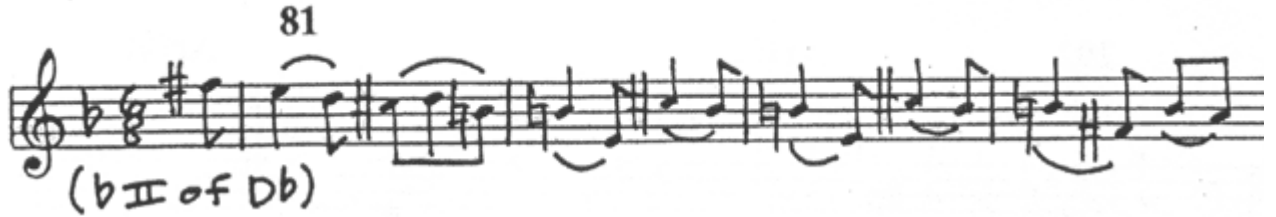
**Part III**

602 Artôt

## II. Second movement:

- f. The movement's usual key scheme: in addition to the tonic  $B\flat$  minor/minor, the use of  $D\flat$  major for the extended introduction, and  $A\flat$  major for the secondary area. — These primary keys may be rearranged to form a diatonic version of Artôt's acronym:  $D\flat A\flat B\flat$ .
- g. The **inconsistent** melodic statements of the primary theme (first =  $A\flat E\flat F A\flat$  in flute, but then  $A\flat E\flat B\flat A\flat$ ). — First statement is a diatonic version of Artôt's acronym, while the rest are "disguised forms" (according to Brown).
- h. The lovely oboe/cello duet based on the primary flute theme is strongly reminiscent of slow *pax de deux* movements in his ballets. — Perhaps refers to the evenings when Tchaikovsky may have taken Artôt to dinner and later dancing.

- i. The strange **Prestissimo** middle section with its rather garish “Petroushka-like” melody. — This is a setting of the saucy **chansonette** *Il faut s'amuser, danser, et rire*, a staple of Artôt’s repertoire and obviously known by Tchaikovsky.



- j. The movement is set in D $\flat$  major — Tchaikovsky’s choice of his “**love key**” seems particularly appropriate, since the entire movement resembles an *Albumblatt* of faded vignettes, recalling those times the composer and singer shared together. The enharmonic German sixth harmonies in the closing measures (“a la Romeo and Juliet”) again allude to Artôt’s D $\flat$  A.

**III. Third movement:**

- k. The curious quasi-rondo design with a “trepak” *tutti* transition and only **one** lyrical episode. — Following the musical reminiscence of Artôt during the second movement, her acronym now disappears in the Finale, and only Tchaikovsky’s version remains in disguised form of the single episodic theme.



- l. The concerto ends with an “apotheosis” tonic-major statement of the **episode** theme, following a final dominant buildup and brief “cadenza.” — Tchaikovsky seems to be suggesting that he has finally liberated himself from the oppressive memories of his tragic affair with Artôt, since it is now HIS theme alone that concludes the work.

**Example 6.** Background on Richard Wagner and Mathilde Wesendonk's "affair of the heart."

1. The couple first met in 1852 when she was only eighteen. Wagner composed his one-movement *Album Sonate* for her in 1853 prefaced with a dedicatory quotation from the Norns ("Know you what will follow?"), the meaning of which she was ignorant.
2. Mathilde became his "muse" for the Siegmund-Sieglinde Love Duet in Act I of *Walküre* (1854).
3. In April 1857 Wagner and Minna came to live in a cottage (Asyl) on the Wesendonk estate. During this time intimate correspondence passed between W. and M, although most scholars doubt that their affair was ever physically consummated. By December he had not only completed the Prelude and most of Act I for *Tristan*, but had also composed the song "Träume" based on Mathilde's text. Its orchestral arrangement (Christmas 1857) was prefaced with a dedication to Mathilde ("... the angel who raised me so high."). The couple looked on *Tristan* as a collaboration, the "symbolic child of their spiritual and platonic union" (Bailey). She traced over his pencil Preliminary Drafts for Acts I and II with ink, while he reciprocated by giving her the pencil sketch of the *Tristan* Prelude and the manuscripts for the Five Songs, which were originally intended as "private" documents. Increasingly strained relations between Otto and Minna eventually culminated in Wagner's decision to leave Asyl in August 1858.
4. During the composition of *Die Meistersinger* (1861-62) Wagner wrote a number of letters to Mathilde (some of which were signed "Hans Sachs") in which he admitted that his former physical ardor for her had abated ("We will see each other now and then. But *without* any desire.")
5. Wagner continued to see Mathilde occasionally and carried on an active correspondence with her until 1877.



**Example 7.** Music which Wagner probably associated with memories of his own romantic relationship with Mathilde Wesendonk, emphasizing the key of  $A\flat$  major.

1. A preexistent associations of femininity and love with the key of  $A\flat$  **major** in his earlier operas: Act II Love Duet in *Tannhäuser*, Elsa and her dream in *Lohengrin*, and the Rhinedaughters in *Das Rheingold* (and later portions of *Der Ring*).
2. The  $A\flat$  major *Album Sonate* (1853, dedicated to her). The opening melodic gesture of the sonata =  $E\flat A\flat G B\flat$  may represent a possible origin of the motif for the “So stürben wir” duet in Act II of *Tristan* =  $E\flat A\flat G (G\flat A\flat) B\flat$ .
3. The Prelude to Act I of *Tristan*, composed in the heat of the “affair of the heart” between Richard and Mathilde at Asyl, especially the “Tristan chord” itself (Robert Bailey considers this sonority as an  $A\flat$  **minor triad** with an added 6th) and its first twenty-one measures (to the D minor harmony).
4. The  $A\flat$  **major** “Träume” (December 1857) based on her text; especially the piano introduction (the “Tristan chord” outlined in a context of  $A\flat$ ) and coda, which most resemble the chromatic tonal language of *Tristan*.
5. While working on Act II of *Tristan in Venice* (already begun at Asyl), Wagner employed a parody of the “Träume” material in its opening  $A\flat$  **major** Love Duet. This Duet represents *the* crucial tonal shift in the opera toward a subsequent succession of ascending minor-third key centers ( $A\flat$  - B - Dm / Fm -  $A\flat$  - B).
6. The two scenes in *Meistersinger* between Eva (= Mathilde) and Sachs (= Wagner) are both set primarily in  $A\flat$  **major** and feature “Tristan-like” harmonies. Sachs’s famous admonition to the two lovers (Act III, Scene 4) quotes the opening measures from the *Tristan* Prelude, transposed a half-step lower to  $A\flat!$  These scenes (especially Act II, Scene 4) symbolize Wagner’s personal renunciation of any further physical desire toward Mathilde.
7. The “Tristan chord” (at its original pitch level and with implications of  $A\flat$ ) is related to sexual love and lust in the revised “Venusberg music” of Act I for the 1861 Paris production of *Tannhäuser* and the encounter between the young Parsifal and Kundry in Act II of *Parsifal*. The primary  $A\flat$  **major** of this last music drama may represent complementary aspects of “love:” where *eros* = the  $A\flat$  Flowermaidens’ Chorus, Kundry, and sensual love versus *agape* = the  $A\flat$  Knights of the Grail and Christ’s redeeming spiritual love.



- c. Parody of TRÄUME material (= first A $\flat$  major Love Duet in Act II), especially outline of the TRISTAN CHORD (using same pitches) and the ensuing TRÄUME HARMONIES. The DAY motif (already developed earlier in Act II); note relation to Tc2.

**TRISTAN CHORD** (163/1/1 - 2/1)      **TRÄUME HARMONIES** (163/2/1 - 164/ 1/4)      **DAY (164/2/1-2)** (164/2/1-2)

The image shows a musical staff with three sections. The first section, labeled 'TRISTAN CHORD (163/1/1 - 2/1)', features a series of chords in A $\flat$  major, with the first chord being the Tristan chord (A $\flat$  major triad with a lowered second degree). The second section, 'TRÄUME HARMONIES (163/2/1 - 164/ 1/4)', continues with a sequence of chords, including a V $^7$  chord. The third section, 'DAY (164/2/1-2) (164/2/1-2)', shows a sequence of chords, with the first chord being a (bVI) chord. The key signature is A $\flat$  major, indicated by two flats.

- d. SUN CONCEALED motif (166/1/1-4). Two versions of HOLY NIGHT motif; the first rearranges the three original "Tristan chords" while second uses only two Tc's.

**SUN CONCEALED (166/1/1-4)**      **HOLY NIGHT (161/5/1-4)** (DEATH disguised: B C E $\flat$  D)      **HOLY NIGHT (172/4/4-7)** (Two Tc version)

The image shows a musical staff with three sections. The first section, 'SUN CONCEALED (166/1/1-4)', features a sequence of chords in A $\flat$  major, with the first chord being the Tristan chord (A $\flat$  major triad with a lowered second degree). The second section, 'HOLY NIGHT (161/5/1-4) (DEATH disguised: B C E $\flat$  D)', features a sequence of chords, including Tc2, Tc3, and Tc1. The third section, 'HOLY NIGHT (172/4/4-7) (Two Tc version)', features a sequence of chords, including a (V $^7$ ) chord. The key signature is A $\flat$  major, indicated by two flats.

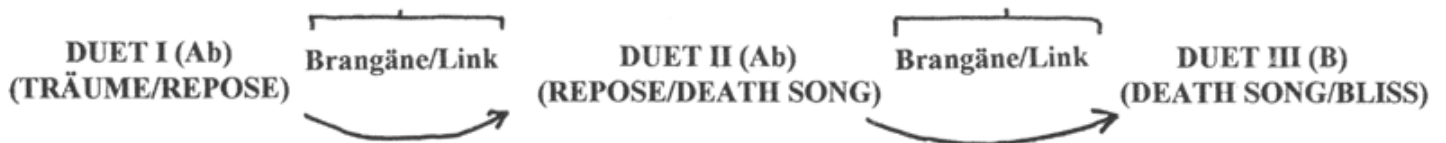
- e. REPOSE motif, which links the first two A $\flat$  major Love Duets in Act II, and the DEATH SONG motif, which closes the second Love Duet

**REPOSE (172/2/4 - 3/1)**      **DEATH SONG (179/1/1 - 4)**

The image shows a musical staff with two sections. The first section, 'REPOSE (172/2/4 - 3/1)', features a sequence of chords in A $\flat$  major, with the first chord being the Tristan chord (A $\flat$  major triad with a lowered second degree). The second section, 'DEATH SONG (179/1/1 - 4)', features a sequence of chords, including a V $^7$  chord. The key signature is A $\flat$  major, indicated by two flats.

**Example 9.** Motivic and tonal summary of the Love Duet complex in Act II, Scene 2 of *Tristan und Isolde*, which will furnish the basis for the subsequent “recollection of memories” sections during the following scene and in Act III. The key of A<sup>b</sup> major forms the referential center for the three duets, which are linked by similar material. The music shifts to B major during the final duet, whose climax is interrupted by the intrusions of Marke’s entourage.

a. Structure of ACT II Love Duets: (162/5/4 - 196/1/1)



b. Love Duet I (A<sup>b</sup> major parody of Träume material)

TRISTAN CHORD 162/5/4  
 TRÄUME HARMONIES 164/2/1  
 DAY 166/1/1  
 CONCEALED SUN 169/1/3  
 REPOSE 169/2/5  
 POTION HOLY NIGHT  
 TRÄUME (CODA)  
 BRANGÄNE INTERLUDE I

Link to Love Duet II

c.

REPOSE 172/2/4  
 HOLY NIGHT REPOSE  
 HOLY NIGHT REPOSE 173/1/3  
 HOLY NIGHT REPOSE 173/4/3  
 REPOSE

d. Love Duet II (A<sup>b</sup> major)

REPOSE 176/1/1  
 DEATH SONG (repeated)  
 178/1/1 (178/4/7)  
 178/3/5 (179/3/3)  
 180/2/2  
 BRANGÄNE INTERLUDE

d. Link to Love Duet III (compare to previous Link)

Musical score for 'Link to Love Duet III' in B major. The score is divided into sections: REPOSE (181/1/1), HOLY NIGHT, REPOSE (HOLY NIGHT), REPOSE (HOLY NIGHT), DAY REPOSE, BLISS (183/1/3), and HOLY NIGHT. The key signature is B major (two sharps). The score includes a handwritten '(A♭:)' at the beginning and a Roman numeral 'VII' below the first measure. The final measure is marked with 'V<sup>7</sup>/B'.

d. Love Duet III (B major) Stollen I

Musical score for 'Love Duet III (B major) Stollen I' - Part 1. It features three sections: DEATH SONG (187/2/1 = 294/4/1), DEATH/POTION (188/2/3 = 295/3/1), and DEATH/POTION (190/1/2 = 296/3/1). The key signature is B major. The score includes Roman numerals: I<sub>4</sub> for the first section, IV<sub>4</sub> for the second, and a TRANSITION marked 'Gr<sub>6</sub>' for the third.

Musical score for 'Love Duet III (B major) Stollen I' - Part 2. It features three sections: DEATH SONG (190/3/2 = 296/4/1), DEATH/POTION (191/2/4 = 297/1/2), and DEATH/POTION (193/1/1 = 297/4/1). The key signature is B major. The score includes Roman numerals: I<sub>4</sub> for the first section, I for the second, and a TRANSITION marked 'V<sup>7</sup>' for the third.

Musical score for 'Love Duet III (B major) Stollen I' - Part 3. It features two sections: BLISS (193/3/4 = 298/2/2) and 196/1/1 (Scene 3). The key signature is B major. The score includes Roman numerals: (IV) I<sub>6</sub> for the first section and V<sup>7</sup> for the second.

**Example 10.** Tristan's reply to Marke (Act II, Scene 3) represents the first group of memory recollections. While the text chronicles his external response to the king and inquires to Isolde, the music reveals Tristan's true internal state of mind, which continues to dwell on memories evoked by immediately preceding Love Duets. This section features a quasi-strophic design, in which the Introduction later functions as a Refrain in Strophes 2 and 3. The three strophes are tonally closed in  $A^b$ , effecting a tritone shift from Marke's prior D-minor referential center.

- a. Link (unable to answer Marke's question)

Intro (= Refrain) (Instrumental, recalling Duet motifs)

(Marke) 208/5/1 POTION 209/3/4 REPOSE HOLY NIGHT

d:  $V$  a:  $V^7$   $V^7 = Gr^6$   $Ab: \frac{6}{4}$   $V^7$

- b. Strophe 1 (Tristan's 1st query)

TRISTAN CHORD TRÄUME HARMONIES

209/5/7 210/1/3

$ab: i$   $I$   $V^7$

- c. Strophe 2 (Tristan's 2nd query)

REFRAIN

210/4/2 211/1/2 REPOSE HOLY NIGHT

$ab: i$   $I$   $V^7$

d. Strophe 3 (Isolde' response)

### REFRAIN

211/5/2

212/2/1

REPOSE HOLY NIGHT

(CODA?)

ab:

i

I

V<sup>7</sup>

→

(I)

**Example 11.** Tristan's *vague* and imprecise recollections of Isolde and their "night of love" as he awakes from his sick bed (Act III, Scene 1), and the distorted rhythmic settings of the Duet motifs as he feverishly awaits Isolde's arrival and entry (Scene 2)

**ACT III, SCENE 1**

**TRISTAN'S REPLY** 228/2/1      **TRISTAN CHORD** 228/3/1      228/4/4      **POTION**

Ab: i      I      V<sup>7</sup> (a:) V<sup>7</sup>      V<sup>7</sup>/V →

**HOLY NIGHT** 229/1/4      **REPOSE** 231/4/3

Ab: V<sup>7</sup>      F: I<sub>4</sub> —



## ACT III, SCENE 2

271/1/1

CONCEALED SUN

LOVE'S LONGING

C:  $bII \frac{6}{4}$

Gr6/bII    V<sup>7</sup>/bII = Gr<sup>6</sup>/C

274/2/1

REPOSE

C: I  $\frac{6}{4}$

**Example 12.** Isolde's *literal* recollections of the Love Duet music (Act II, Scene 2) during her concluding Transfiguration (Act III, Scene 3). With the exception of a pair of deleted measures, two sections appear in exact restatement: the DEATH SONG in Duet II ("fn\_flat(A)." major) and the final Bar of Duet III (B major). Wagner's modifications of the dynamics, tempi changes, texture, and orchestration of the latter setting emphasize its more spiritual nature, in contrast to the sensual passion of the original Duets.

DEATH SONG (Duet II)

(293/4/4 - 294/3/3 = 178/1/1 - 4/5)

(178/4/6 - 187/1/4 of Duets deleted.)

Climax resolution and apotheosis added to Transfiguration

(300/3/1 - 301/5/4

STOLLEN/STOLLEN/ABGESANG (Duet

III)

(294/4/1 - 300/2/2 = 187/2/1 -

195/3/4

**Example 13.** A comparison of the formal components and tonal schemes in Wagner's Final Version of Isolde's Transfiguration (= almost literal restatement of the B-major Love Duet in Act II) with his Preliminary Draft of the Transfiguration (late discarded). Following a slight expansion in the preliminary Ab section, the two Stollen in the Draft have exchanged positions, with the first transition deleted. The Abgesang remains intact, but the tonic resolution of its climax concludes with an apotheosis of the BLISS and POTION motifs.

The image displays two musical staves comparing the formal components and tonal schemes of Wagner's *Isolde's Transfiguration*. The top staff represents the **FINAL VERSION OF ISOLDE'S TRANSGURATION (B-MAJOR SECTION)**, and the bottom staff represents the **PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF ISOLDE'S TRANSGURATION (B-MAJOR SECTION)**. Both staves are in B major and 4/4 time.

**Final Version Structure:**

- Stollen 1:** Begins with a tonic resolution (I) and contains a transition (IV).
- Trans. 1:** A transition section.
- Stollen 2:** Begins with a tonic resolution (I) and contains a transition (Gr<sup>6</sup> I).
- Trans. 2:** A transition section.

**Preliminary Draft Structure:**

- Abgesang:** The opening section, which is identical in both versions.
- Stollen 1:** Begins with a tonic resolution (I) and contains a transition (V<sup>7</sup>).
- Trans. 1:** A transition section.
- Stollen 2:** Begins with a tonic resolution (I) and contains a transition (I).
- Trans. 2:** A transition section.

Arrows indicate the flow of the music and the exchange of positions between the two Stollen sections in the preliminary draft compared to the final version. The final version's Stollen 1 and Trans. 1 correspond to the preliminary draft's Stollen 2 and Trans. 1, respectively. The final version's Stollen 2 and Trans. 2 correspond to the preliminary draft's Stollen 1 and Trans. 2, respectively. The preliminary draft's Abgesang section is expanded compared to the final version's Abgesang.