



A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR MUSIC THEORY

## MTO 26.2 Examples: Bhogal, Orchestral Tissue, Subordinate Arabesques, and Turning Inward in Maurice Ravel's Boléro

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

<https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.2/mto.20.26.2.bhogal.html>

### Example 1. Decorative melody, mm. 5–22

1<sup>o</sup> Solo

Fl. *pp*

Tamb.

1<sup>o</sup> Fl.

Tamb.

1<sup>o</sup> Fl.

Tamb.

1<sup>o</sup> Fl.

Tamb.

Fl. 1

2<sup>o</sup> 3

*pp*

**Example 2.** Summary of stylistic overlaps and differences between decorative and arabesque melody

Decorative Melody	Arabesque Melody
Solo melody	Solo melody
Soft dynamics	Soft dynamics
Undulating registral motion	Undulating registral motion
(Largely) conjunct motion	(Largely) conjunct motion
Legato articulation	Legato articulation
Long phrase (usually regular)	<b>Long phrase (frequently irregular)</b>
(Frequently) metered	<b>(Frequently) unmetered</b>
(Frequently) harmonized	<b>(Frequently) unharmonized</b>
Can be accompanied by other instruments	<b>(Frequently) unaccompanied</b>
Can occur at any point of a composition	<b>(Frequently) occurs at the opening of a piece or at a new section/formal juncture</b>
Does not have to feature rhythmic instability	<b>Always features duple/triple rhythmic conflict</b>
Does not have to be associated with aspects of characterization, narration, and evocation	<b>(Frequently) aligned with aspects of characterization, narration, and evocation</b>

### Example 3. Arabesque melody, Rehearsals 2–3

1<sup>o</sup> Solo

Bon

Tamb.

1<sup>er</sup> Bon

Tamb.

1<sup>er</sup> Bon

Tamb.

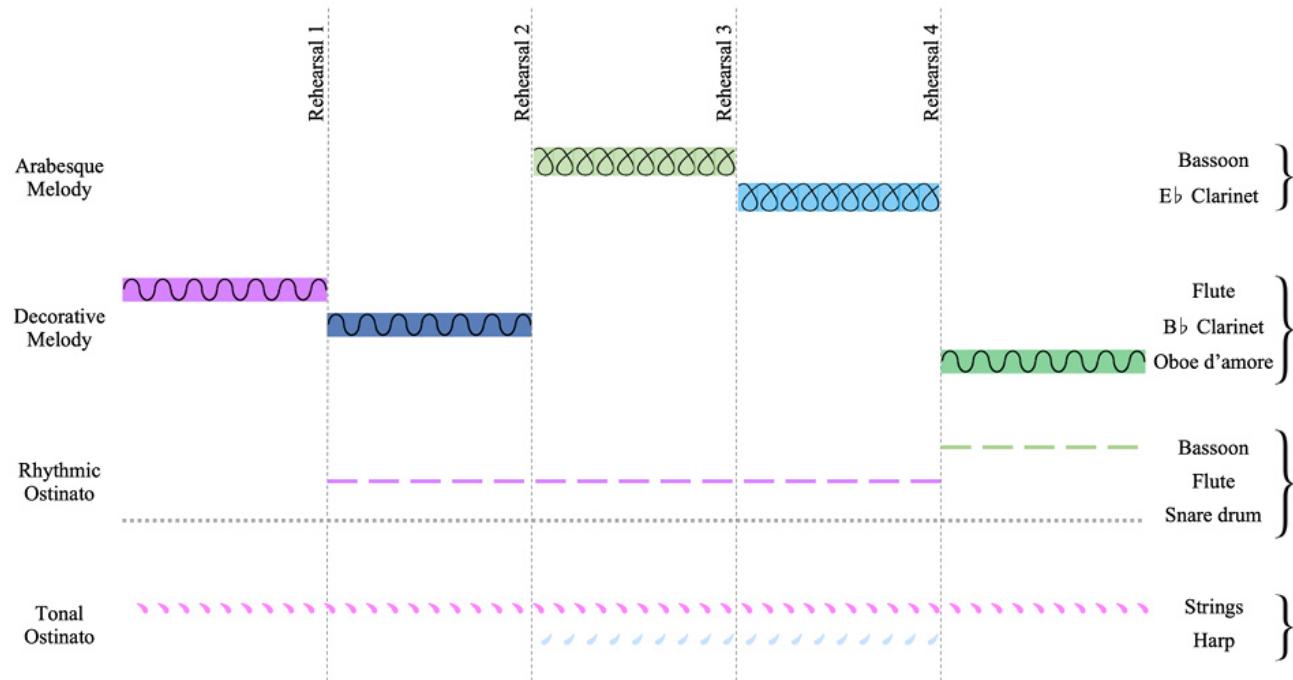
1<sup>er</sup> Bon

Tamb.

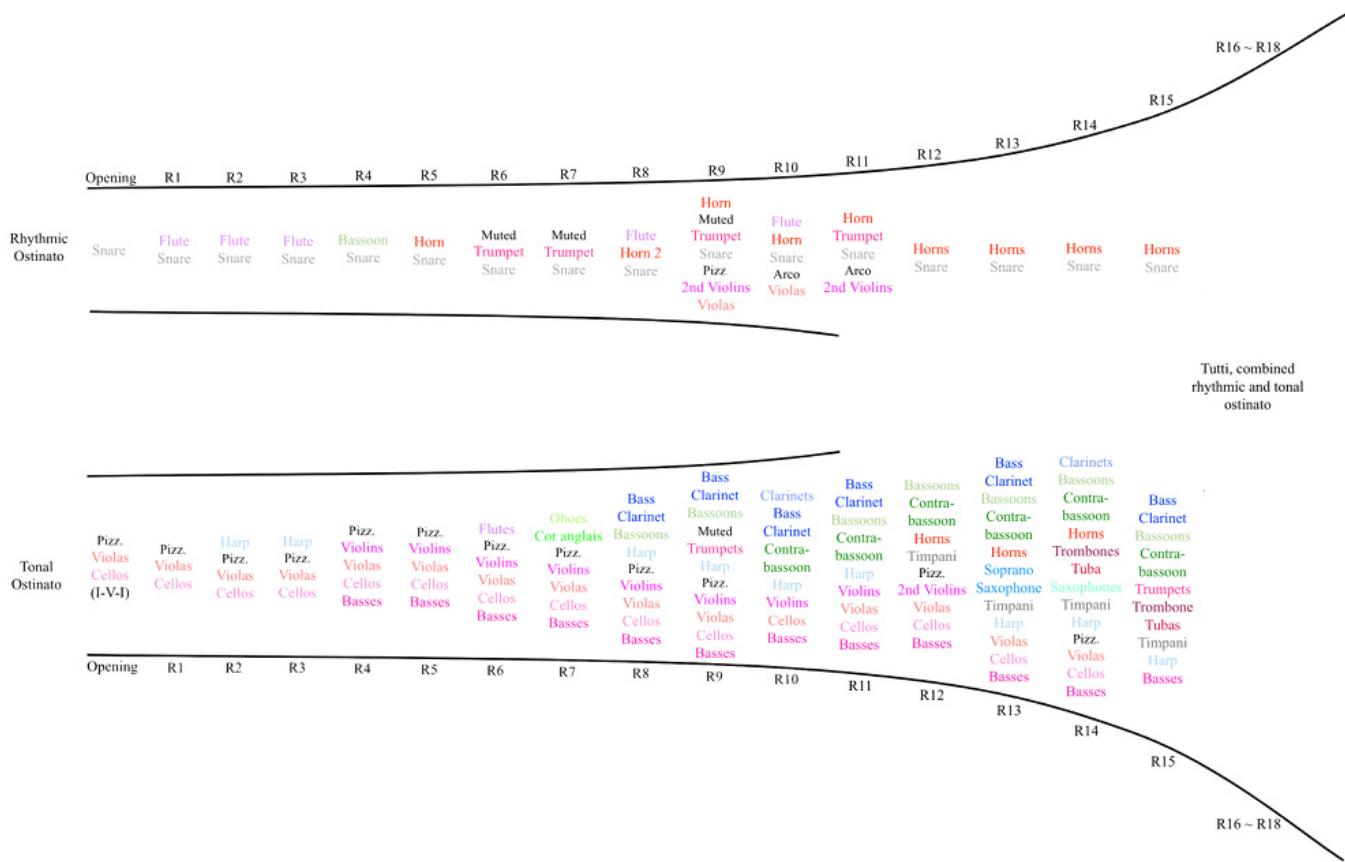
**Example 4.** The harp contributes to the projection of metric ambiguity, Rehearsal 2, mm. 1–6

Musical score for Rehearsal 2, mm. 1–6. The score includes parts for 1<sup>st</sup> Fl., Basson, Tamb., Harpe, Vpons, Altos, Velles, and C.B. The harp part consists of sustained notes with 'oo' markings. The 1<sup>st</sup> Fl. has a solo section with 'mp' dynamics. The bassoon and tambourine provide rhythmic patterns. The alto and bass parts provide harmonic support.

**Example 5.** A visual impression of the emerging sonic tapestry as “orchestral tissue,” Rehearsals 1–4



**Example 6.** Rhythmic and tonal ostinati compete for textural prominence before merging at Rehearsal 16



**Example 7.** Metric ambiguity in the rhythmic ostinato, mm. 1–2

Tempo di Bolero, moderato assai  $\text{♩} = 72$

2 Flûtes

2 Tambours

1<sup>er</sup> Violons

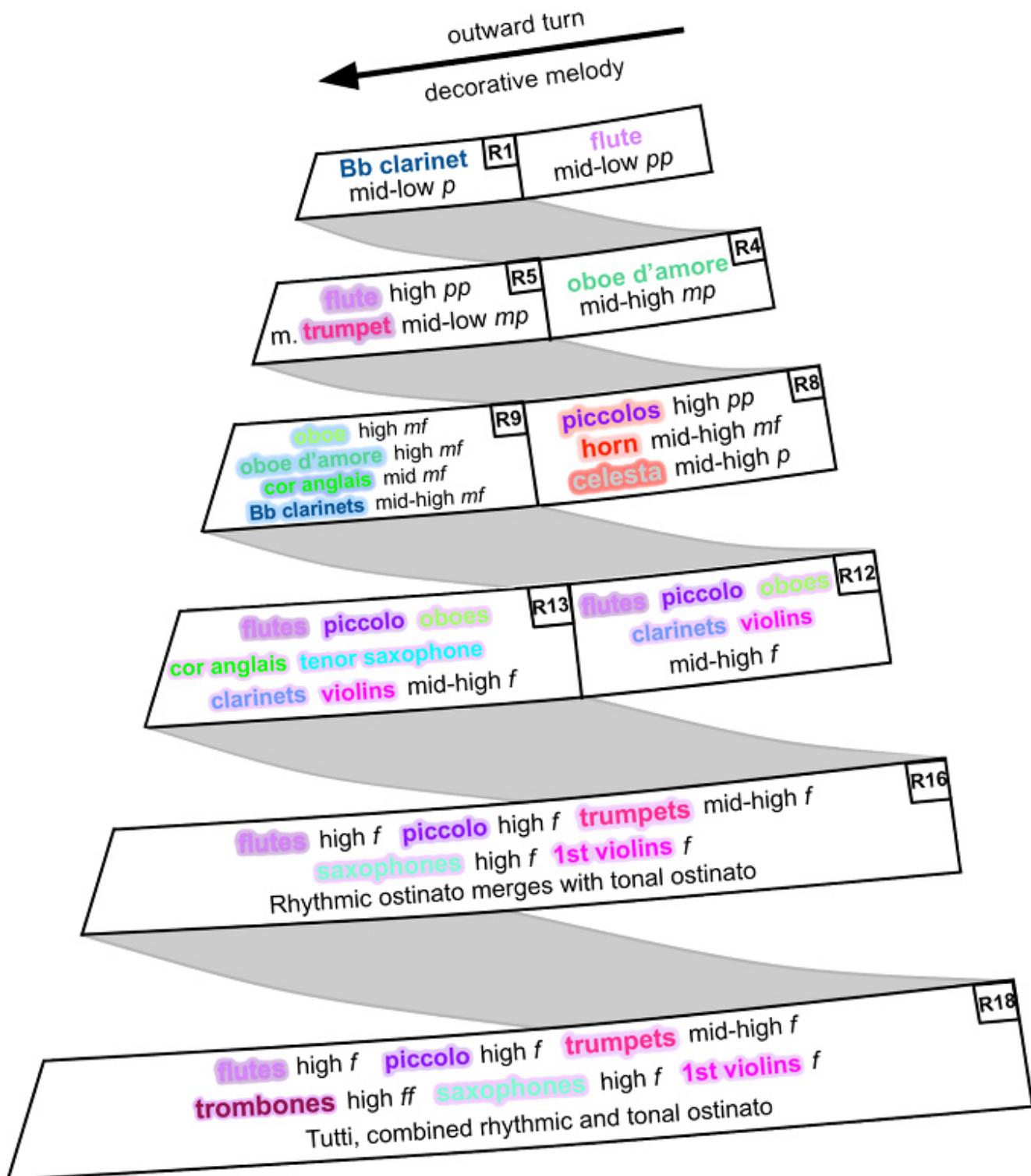
2<sup>ds</sup> Violons

Altos

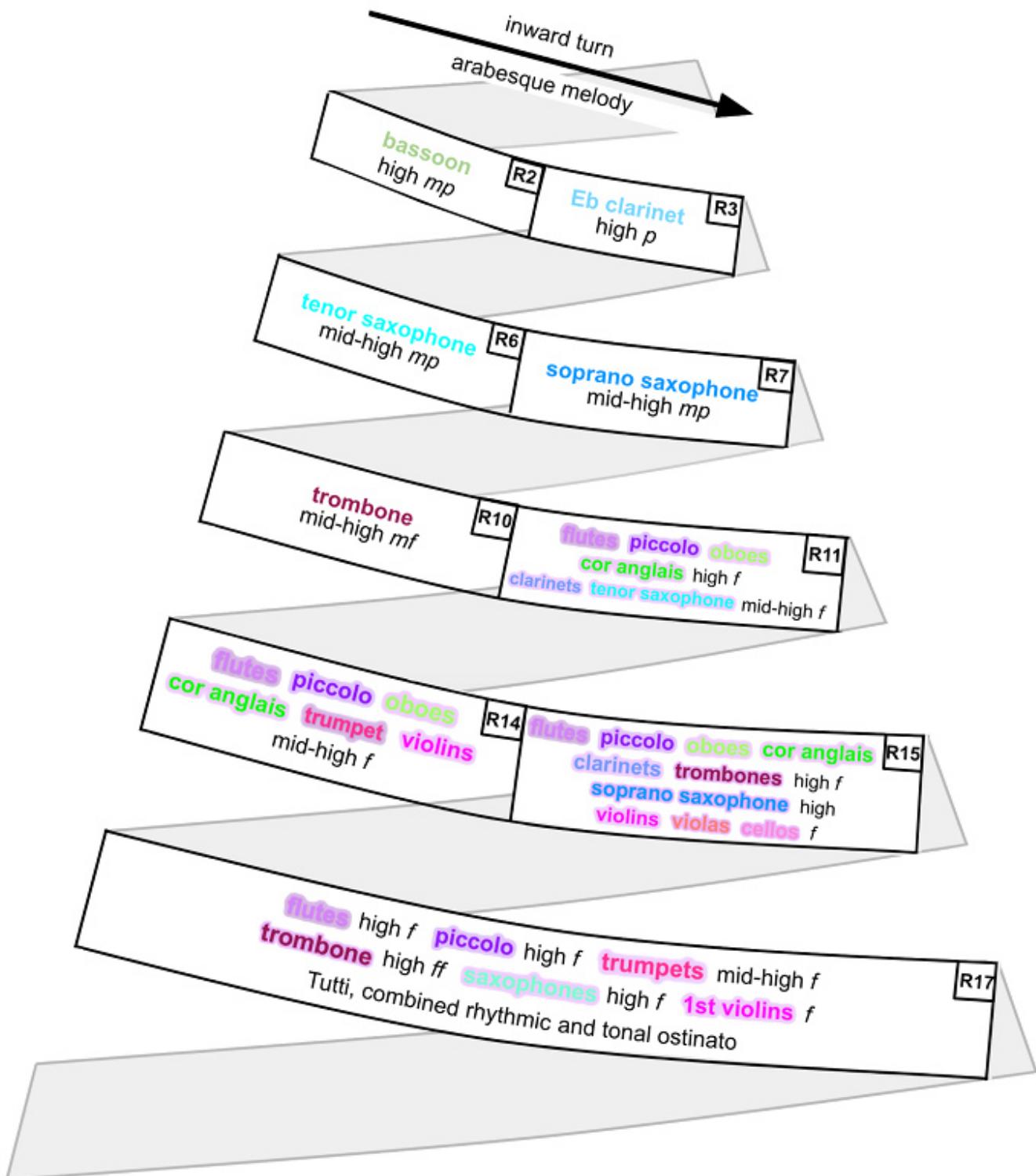
Violoncelles

Contrebasses

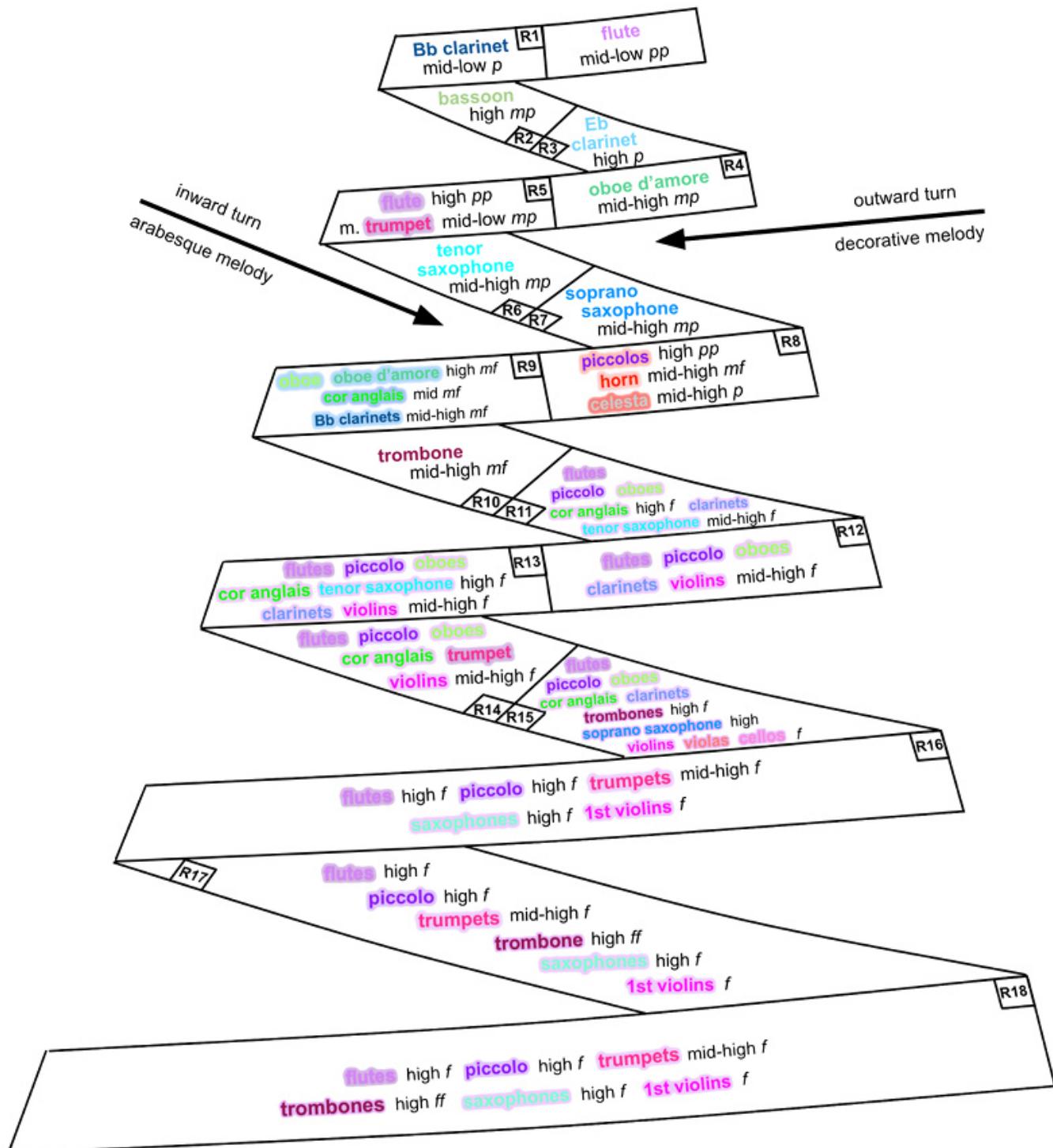
Example 8. A spiral view of outward turning melodies



**Example 9.** A spiral view of inward turning melodies



### Example 10. A spiral view of both melody types



**Example 11.** A comparison of the original arabesque melody with the version that emerges at Rehearsal 17

**Original melody at Rehearsal 2**

Bassoon (1<sup>o</sup> Solo) *mp*

**Transformed melody at Rehearsal 17**

perc. vclns

*second phrase*

Bassoon

*third phrase*

*prolonged third phrase*

*re-starting third phrase*

*decorative melody returns*

*3*

*18*

**Example 12.** Triplet figure undergoes timbral transformation in the final four measures

1<sup>o</sup> et  
2<sup>o</sup> Trb.

3<sup>o</sup> Trb.

Tuba

S.

Sax.

T.

Timb.

Tamb.

T - T.

Cymb.

Gr. C.

Harp

①

②

③

①

②

③

VII<sup>e</sup>

VII<sup>e</sup>