

Premier Quatour, op. 53
Jean-Baptiste Singelè (1812-1875):
An
Analytical Overview and Schenkerian Reduction
of
the first S.A.T.B. Saxophone Quartet

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Introduction

The author wishes to thank his family and friends for their continued love and support. I want to personally acknowledge the contributions of Professor Scott Murphy. He should be commended for his excellent observations and critiques, as well as his innate psychotherapeutic skills. Without his expertise, and time-consuming editing, this project would not have come to fruition. He is a gifted teacher, music theorist, and musician.

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Premier Quatour, Opus 53 - Jean-Baptiste Singelée (1812-1875)

Introduction

The Premier Quatour, op. 53 (1857) of Jean-Baptiste Singelée is a four-movement work for soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones. This piece is important in several ways. First, it is a very early saxophone work, written only three years after the adoption of the saxophone into the French military bands in 1854, and only eleven years after the first patents granted for the instrument in 1846. Singelée composed this quartet at Adolphe Sax's (1814-1892) urging, for the Paris Conservatory saxophone curriculum. This collaboration with the inventor would have been invaluable for the 45 year-old Singelée in composing for the nascent and evolving saxophone family.

Secondly, this quartet is the first known work to be written in the SATB quartet genre. This genre was not established as the common saxophone quartet instrumentation until the early 1930's.¹ Although not published until 1977, the date of this composition places the saxophone quartet medium firmly in the Middle Romantic period, a good 70 years before the internationally recognized composer, Alexander Glazounov (1865-1936), composed his Saxophone Quartet, op. 109 of 1931. And thirdly, it is a substantial piece, 17' 30" in duration, was written by a well-respected musician/composer, and is often performed and recorded; it has survived the test of time.²

¹ The other common saxophone quartet instrumentation is AATB, which was more commonly used in the United States until as late as the 1970's.

² After languishing for 120 years in the Paris National Library (a manuscript copy of the parts only, placed there by Adolphe Sax), the Premier Quatour, op. 53, was reconstructed by Jean-Marie Londiex in 1977.

For these reasons, an analysis of the piece is warranted. This paper will include an overview of the formal, harmonic, and thematic materials incorporated in the work, as well as observations and insights made from voice-leading reductions, and a brief discussion of the mechanical limitations of the early saxophones, score errata, and suggestions for rehearsal and performance.

Historical Background

By the time Adolphe Sax had invented the saxophone in the early 1840's, instrumentation, repertoire, and tradition in the symphony orchestra, opera orchestra, and military bands were already firmly established. For Sax to introduce a new instrument and deviate from the musical 'state-of-affairs' was very ambitious, and he faced several challenges in establishing a place for the saxophone in the musical community. The need to generate effective saxophone pedagogy, a sufficient repertoire, and a number of virtuosi performers, were major obstacles. None of these was readily available when Sax demonstrated his bass saxophone to Hector Berlioz in 1842.

Realizing his predicament, Sax began to promote his new saxophone on several fronts. He set about training performers and generating method-books, encouraging and publishing solo and ensemble compositions for the saxophone, and demonstrating the instrument to important composers of the time. He also pressed for inclusion of the saxophone in military bands, symphonies and opera orchestras, and encouraged schools and conservatories to include saxophone instruction, as he fought to maintain his patents on the instrument.

The saxophone was officially adopted for use in the French army bands in 1854, after a famous and strange contest in Paris, whereupon two different groups, one with and one without saxophones were put to a public exhibition. It was decided that the band employing saxophones was much louder and more full in tone, and the audience at the event was apparently thrilled with the new sound. Inclusion in the French military groups helped generate acceptance for the new saxophone, providing a degree of integrity and insuring its success in other musical applications. Eventually the French military precedent affected concert bands worldwide and influenced the groups in the United States. Inclusion in the American military bands of Patrick Gilmore and John Phillip Sousa were later to have an enormous impact on the saxophone's entry into concert and popular music.

The Premier Quatour, op. 53 for saxophone quartet, by Jean-Baptiste Singelèe, was written in the first year of Adolph Sax's tenure as professor of saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire.³ As the junior professor of the first saxophone program, Sax was placed in charge of developing a suitable curriculum, and was immediately confronted with the task of supplying the annual departmental contest music for his instrument. His position enabled him to call on composers to write new music for the saxophone family. Singelèe, a boyhood friend of Sax's from the Brussels Royal Conservatory, was one of these composers, and wrote the Premier Quatour, op. 53 at Sax's urging. Sax placed the new saxophone compositions in the French National Library, assuring their preservation.

³ Adolphe Sax was appointed Professor of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatory in 1857. This was the first year the saxophone was ever taught at the university level, just eleven years after Sax's initial patent for the saxophone, and only three years after its adoption into the French military bands.

Overview

Although the saxophone and saxophone ensembles were a novelty at the time, the work in no way presents the saxophone as a toy, or amateur fad. Most of the character of the work borrows heavily from classic and operatic instrumental style in vogue in mid-nineteenth century France. Singelèe wrote his Premier Quatour in the traditional four-movement sonata-like arrangement, similar to the strings quartet arrangements of Haydn, and the symphonies of Beethoven. Musically the work is very predictable and tonal. There isn't anything too adventurous harmonically or melodically, and therefore the music is very approachable. This may have been intentional, an attempt at 'softening the blow' to a public whose majority had never seen nor heard a saxophone. The choice of key and tessitura might be somewhat conservative by contemporary standards, although the choice of tempi is by no means unchallenging.

At the time of the quartet's writing, the saxophone had several chromatic mechanical limitations. It lacked an articulated G[#], a bis B^b key, and the alternate chromatic F[#] key. This made playing in keys of more than two sharps or two flats more difficult than saxophone with modern innovations. Also, two separate register or octave keys, instead of the one key design now in use, made quick leaps in register somewhat problematic. Later inventors have corrected these limitations, though in 1856, they certainly would have affected any composer's choice of key; this might explain why Singelèe limits the transposed keys to three or less flats, and never more than one sharp throughout the quartet.

This is not a highly contrapuntal composition, and there is no use of fugal technique. However, sometimes the parts are interwoven such that the expression of melody moves between the individual voices as tessitura or range demands. Most often the texture is homorhythmic or heterophonic (i.e. melodically-dominated and pianistic in style, the soprano assuming the ‘right-hand’ melody, presented over motoric ‘left-hand’ lower parts, the baritone assuming a bass role, and the alto and tenor filling in important harmonic functions).⁴ To a lesser extent, the work does feature each of the instruments in melodic solos, and the brief use of duet and trio writing is also encountered. These compositional techniques make tonal blend between the instruments very important. Melodically there is a reliance on appoggiatura and suspension, and a balance between scalar and arpeggiated passages. Harmonically the quartet relies heavily on borrowed dominant harmonies and frequent modulation, often to remote key centers. Singelée demonstrates an affinity for the subdominant both at cadence points and as key centers. The use of sequence, period, and sentence phrasing separated by transitional material is a major feature, as well as the reliance on standard (rondo, ternary, and sonata) forms.

⁴ This ‘pianistic’ or ‘motoric’ style of writing is attributable to Singelée’s extensive experience with the opera in France. He is obviously influenced by the popular tastes of his day. Jean-Marie Londeix has stated that he hears the influence of Rossini in Movement 1 - Andante, Beethoven in Movement 2 – Adagio sostenuto, Mendelssohn in Movement 3 – Allegro vivace, and Meyerbeer in Movement 4 – Allegro. Professor Scott Murphy hears Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in the B-section of Movement 3.

Analysis:

Since this is the first work for SATB saxophone quartet, and as Singelée was a professional violinist, it is assumed that the string quartet was a model for this composition. Certainly this quartet is a homogenous grouping of the saxophone instrumental family. Not surprising, the four movements are very similar to the common sonata or symphonic design used by major composers in the late classical era. The movements are untitled, with indications only for tempo and style; I. Andante et allegro; II. Adagio sostenuto; III. Allegro vivace; IV. Allegretto. The tonality of the movements shifts between B^b and E^b, beginning in B^b major and concluding in E^b major. This creates strong dominant/tonic relations in the overall design of the movements. Unlike many of late-Romantic French composers, Singelée doesn't use common thematic material to unify the movements. As is more common of classical composers, the individual movements are united by tonality, texture, and compositional style, and the work as a whole is balanced by the contrasting tempi and individual character of the movements.

Overview of Movement 1: Andante-Allegro - (through-composed)

Movement 1 is a pairing of two separate sections in 4/4. The first section is a brief 39-measure Andante in B^b major, marked at quarter note equals 76bpm. This introductory section is slow and chorale-like in character. It is relaxed and gives the performers and listeners a calm preparation to the more lively material that follows. The andante is followed by a slightly longer 116-measure allegro section in E^b major, which is marked at quarter note equals 120bpm. Both the andante and allegro are through composed, using

somewhat regular (antecedent-consequent or sentence) phrasing separated by repetitive or sequential transitions. No thematic repetition is used in either section of this movement, nor is shared between the two, and both sections display unique musical characteristics. Thus no typical formal genre is presented. Although similar to a multi-movement sonata arrangement, this first movement of this quartet would most likely be a single movement sonata-allegro form. In this respect, Singelèe deviates from the classical sonata quartet arrangement, choosing a slow/fast pairing for the introductory movement. This is perhaps an explanation for the generic title of First Quartet, instead of calling the piece Sonata for Saxophone Quartet.

My voice-leading reductions lead me to believe that each section relies on an independent Ursatz. Technically they are separate works, linked together by proximity, contrast of character and tempo, and V-I association, i.e. the B^b major key of the Andante is resolved by the E^b of the Allegro. The Urlinie of the Andante section is a fifth-progression in B^b major, whereas the Allegro's Urlinie is a less common, octave progression, or 8-line, and is a rarity, in its use of the descending E^b mixolydian mode.

Voice-Leading Reduction of Movement 1: Andante Section

Most of the composing-out of the 5-line Urlinie is spent on the Kopfton, the fifth scale degree. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the voice-leading reductions shows that in the lack of melodic repetition, the Andante can be understood as a compositional progression to the climactic moment of the Andante, which coincides with the final

presentation of the Kopfton 5 in measure 32, and the subsequent completion of the Urlinie in the following six measures.

The first measure is the presentation of B^b major triad, under a fermata.⁵ This is typical of the common French *court* technique, a preparatory gesture that introduces the tonic, similar to a formal bow before a contest. The first phrase is homophonic, and the soprano voice, which begins on B^b, arpeggiates the tonic triad up to F, the Kopfton of the Urlinie, in measure 3. This eight-measure phrase is grouped 4 + 4. Not exactly a period structure, the second half is a repetition of the first, and modulates to D minor (III). This repetition reinforces the arpeggiated ascent to Kopfton 5, which can be seen clearly in the Middleground graph, and the conclusion of the phrase displaces the Kopfton 5 down the octave, as the composing out of III (D minor) begins. In measure 9 the texture becomes melody-dominated, and the first use of the motoric technique is encountered.⁶ This begins a four-measure phrase that modulates into the dominant key of F major (V). This section completes the composing out of the tonic triad, B^b, and can be seen at every level in the reductive graphs. Measures 13–18 are a transition that establishes F as the V chord. Measure 18 begins a four-bar phrase that reestablishes the tonic key of B^b, and a following two-measure extension reinforces the authentic cadence at Letter A. In measures 24–27 there are three ascending one-measure sequences that introduce an upper neighbor tone to the Urlinie, or the 6th scale degree-G, over E^b bass (IV). An extension in measure 28 resolves the Urlinie back down to Kopfton 5 (F) over B^b tonic. This begins

⁵ This occurs again in Movement 3.

⁶ The baritone voice is a broken bass pattern, and the tenor and alto voices assume harmonic functions and melodic answering motives to the soprano voice that dominates the texture. It is this technique that Singelée uses consistently and to great effect throughout the quartet.

the final drive to the climax of the movement on the F dominant chord, and concludes the Kopfton 5 in measure 32. This climax is achieved through an ascending stepwise motion in the bass, D–E^b–F in measures 30-32, wherein the Urlinie neighbor tone 6-G is again reintroduced over the E^b. This intensifies the resolution and climax of the Andante section with the final presentation of Kopfton 5 (measure 32), setting in motion the final cadential gestures of the section, which is seen in the Middleground graph.⁷ The Andante section quickly closes with an authentic cadence in measures 33-34. Here the Urlinie 4 (E^b) passes over the dominant F bass, and Urlinie scale degree 3 (D) is revealed over the tonic B^b bass. This scale degree 3 is prolonged briefly over V-I harmony, via a cadential extension in measures 35-36, which is repeated in measures 36-37. In measure 37 the final dominant chord is presented, and Urlinie scale degree 2 (C) appears. The final resolution to B^b tonic and Urlinie scale tone 1 (B^b) is achieved in measure 38, fulfilling the Ursatz, and completing the Andante section.

Voice-Leading Reduction of Movement 1: Allegro section

The Allegro section of Movement 1 is interesting for several reasons. The proposed voice-leading reduction shows that it is an octave or 8-line progression in E^b major. In itself, the octave progression is somewhat rare, but its descent is even more unique in the use of a lowered 7th scale degree in the Urlinie voice. One of the problems with the descending octave is that the seventh scale degree is the leading tone, which is

⁷ An awareness of the climactic drive is instructive for performers.

difficult to support harmonically, and tends to resolve upwards.⁸ Singelée solves this problem by lowering the Urlinie scale degree 7 by a half step. For this reason, I refer to the Ursatz of the Andante section as a Mixolydian octave progression. The use of this D^b in the Urlinie is not without its own complications, namely that the harmonic support for this tone isn't found in the tonic E^b major triad. Singelée solves the problem by using the subdominant A^b major and supertonic F minor as transitional harmonic support.

At the Background level, Urlinie Kopfton 8 (E^b) is supported by the tonic E^b (I), the lowered 7th (D^b) scale degree is composed over D^b major (bVII - passing first through A^b , to avoid parallel octaves) and then briefly to B^b minor (V). The bulk of the prolongation in this Allegro section is given to Urlinie scale degree 6 (C) over the subdominant chord A^b major (IV) and supertonic F minor (II); this too is somewhat atypical. Because scale tones 7 & 6 are difficult to support harmonically, octave divisions tend to rely on the V harmony and divide at scale degree 5, where the bulk of the prolongation would normally occur, then proceeding onward as a more typical fifth progression. In this way, scale degree 7 and 6 are passing dissonance over dominant or tonic harmony, and resolve at scale degree 5- B^b over V or I₆ harmonic support.

Singelée's prolongation of scale degree 6-C provides more emphasis on the subdominant harmony of A^b , which he introduced under scale Kopfton 8 to assist in the modulation to D^b major under scale degree b7 - D^b , and he eases the transition back to E^b major under scale degree 5- B^b , through the introduction of the supertonic F minor, which anticipates the coming relationship between F minor and scale degree 4, before returning again to A^b

⁸ Allen Cadwallader and David Gagnè. *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*. Oxford University Press: New York, 1998, 366-7.

major. The key relationship between A^b major and F minor for supporting scale degrees b7 and 6, is logical and both keys and scale degrees are used transitionally. The Urlinie scale degree $5-B^b$ is supported by the E^b tonic (I). This is interesting; because the normal model would have scale degree $5-B^b$ supported by V or I6 harmonies. Urlinie scale degree $4-A^b$ is supported by F minor in an upper neighbor motion over the bass tonic E^b . This F bass is resolved to tonic E^b for harmonic support, as Urlinie scale degree 3-G is introduced. B^b-V and E^b-I support the respective Urlinie scale degrees 2-F and 1- E^b , completing the Ursatz and the Allegro section of Movement 1.

Upon the final cadence of the Andante in B^b major in measure 38, there begins a unison transitory phrase in B^b (V) that opens the Allegro section in measure 39, and seen in the Middleground. This transition links the Andante to the Allegro, quickly modulates into E^b major, and begins a stepwise ascent to Urlinie Kopfton 8- E^b , that first appears in measure 48. This ascent can be seen at all levels in the reductions, is particularly evident even on the surface, thus indicating parallelism. Although an anticipation of Urlinie Kopfton 8- E^b is introduced in measure 45 over the I6/4, it isn't supported harmonically until measure 47, after an authentic cadence is completed in E^b major (I). This signals the end of the B^b major tonality for Movement 1. Although B^b reappears as the dominant chord in the final cadence of the Andante, when B^b does returns briefly as a key center (measure 79), the tonality is B^b minor. This is demonstrated in the Middleground and Deep Middleground graphs. Measures 48-55 show an antecedent/consequent phrase that outlines a descending fifth progression to A^b through motion to an inner voice. This A^b is finally resolved down to the third (G) at Letter B, again, through motion to an inner

voice. This G is transferred up an octave and descends to the Urlinie 8-E^b through motion from an inner voice in measure 57. This descent is in the form of a 2-measure motive that is sequenced in measures 58-59. During these four measures there is an emphasis on C minor (VI), supporting Urlinie scale degree 8. This signals the end of the tonic (I), and measures 56-58 become important to the modulation that follows. At measure 59, there is a modulation to D^b major (^bVII), signaled by a dominant chord on A^b. This section is somewhat unstable and unsettled until Letter C, as seen in the Middleground graph; lacking balanced phrasing it relies heavily on sequence and brief repetition, even the eight-measure phrase that ends the section is comprised of two four-measure phrases divided (1+1+4). On the Background graph, it is more obvious that an upper neighbor tone F is employed over Kopfton 8, and that the tone C supported by A^b also functions as a lower neighbor (through motion to an inner voice) to the b7-D^b Urlinie scale degree Singelèe is trying to achieve. The upper neighbor F over D^b bass is actually nested in the lower neighbor C over an A^b bass. Measures 59-77 are an anticipation of the ^b7 Urlinie scale degree that finally receives tonal support at Letter C. The reason for the instability of the section (measures 59-77) is that Singelèe has to avoid the parallel octaves created by Kopfton 8-E^b over E moving to Urlinie tone ^b7-D^b over the D^b. To achieve this he moves through motion to an inner voice to C over A^b in measure 59, then begins an ascent to upper neighbor F, from the A^b over the first D^b tonic chord in measure 60, which is demonstrated in the Middleground graph. Again, by introducing the A^b under the Kopfton 8-E^b, and using two neighbor tones, he escapes the parallel octaves created by the E^b and D^b. With the F now supported by the key of D^b, the Kopfton 8 becomes unstable, setting up the motion to an inner voice of Urlinie scale degree b7-D^b in

D^b , and its first consonant appearance at Letter C. In the Middleground and Deep Middleground graphs it is shown how the b7 is anticipated, and how the Kopfton 8 becomes non-harmonic in measure 66. In measures 67-76 an ascending sequential phrase (1+1+2) also adds to the tension before the Urlinie b7 is finally achieved at Letter C. At the background level the Kopfton 8- E^b gets support from A^b , before it descends to $^b7-D^b$ over D^b .

At Letter C (measure 77) the Urlinie degree b7 and the unusual key of D^b is confirmed with an authentic cadence. After a 2-measure transition, the key of B^b minor is achieved in measure 79. A balanced phrase (2+2+2+2) can be seen in the Middleground, which is a further composing out of Urlinie b7 . This phrase ends by modulating into A^b major (IV), using the B^b minor tonic as the supertonic. In measure 87 the Urlinie descends to scale degree 6-C, supported by the A^b major tonic (IV). Although the bulk of the Andante is spent on a prolongation of Urlinie 6, it is continually destabilized by the use of lower neighbor B^b 's. This is much less typical than the use of an upper neighbor motion in an Urlinie, and I feel that the preponderance of B^b lower neighbor tones in measures 88-135 is anticipatory of the B^b as scale degree 5. Near the surface it can be seen that measures 88-103 are transitional, and only at measure 103 does a regular phrase appear (4+4), again confirming Urlinie degree 6-C in A^b major (IV). Immediately following, another phrase (4+4) begins in measure 110. This phrase is used to modulate to F minor (II) under Urlinie degree 6-C, at measure 118. This sets up a modulatory bridge that extends to Letter E in measure 126, returning the key to A^b major (IV), and beginning a strong antecedent/consequent phrase to conclude Urlinie scale degree 6-C at

measure 134. At measure 135 Urlinie scale degree 5-B^b is finally achieved over a first inversion tonic chord in E^b major (I). Transitional material delays the effect of confirming Urlinie scale degree 5-B^b until measure 138, when the tonic E^b appears in root position. As is typical in a 5-line Ursatz, Urlinie scale degree 4-A^b appears in a passing motion, in this case supported by F, the supertonic of E^b major. Measures 137-141 show this clearly, and measures 142-145, are an exact repetition of 5-4 over I-ii, respectively. In measure 146 Urlinie scale degree 3-G appears over E^b (I). Scale degree 3 is prolonged briefly over an ascending bass line (see Middleground), becoming dissonant over the B^b (V) in measure 150, and thus resolves downwards to Urlinie scale degree 2-F. The Ursatz is completed in measure 151 with an authentic cadence in E^b major, as the Urlinie scale degree 1-E^b is finally achieved over E^b (I). A brief Codetta follows through measure 157, and is an elaboration of Urlinie scale degree 1-E^b over V-I harmony. The final harmonic gesture of the Codetta is the minor subdominant to major tonic (iv-I), or minor plagal cadence. Though unimportant at the Background level, as it occurs long after completion of the Ursatz, this final cadence reaffirms the importance of the subdominant key in composing out of scale tone 6, and the importance of A^b in the approach to scale tone ^b7 and D^b major. Perhaps Singelèe is tipping his hat to the subdominant, and hinting at the essence of the Allegro.

Overview of Movement 2: Adagio sostenuto - (sonata-rondo)

Movement 2 is a 105-measure, somewhat ambiguous 5-part sonata rondo form in E^b major, 3/4 meter, marked at quarter note equals 60bpm. As is typical of sonata second

movements this one is somewhat slow in tempo. Often however, the choice of sonata-rondo form occurs as the final movement in multi-movement chamber works. Here again, Singelée deviates a bit from expectation. The Adagio is generally melody dominated in texture, marked by balanced phrasing in the melodic material. Harmonically the key centers are always closely related.

As the name of the form implies, this is a combination of rondo and one-movement sonata design. Unity between the sections is achieved thematically and tonally. The typical thematic arrangement of sonata-rondo is an arch design:

A-B-A-C-A-B-A, wherein the return of the final B-section is transposed in the tonic E^b , instead of the dominant B^b , in which it typically presented. This transposition of the B material to the tonic upon its return is similar to the key design in the recapitulation of a sonata allegro. This sonata-rondo design is as follows:

Phrase: A1 - 2 - B - A1 - 2 - C - A 2 - C/A

Key: I - V - iii - I - V - IV - I - I

This sonata-rondo design is unique, as the B section never returns. The second theme of the A-section is in the $V-B^b$ major, and the B-section is in the relative G minor of the dominant B^b major key. It is tempting to label the second phrase of the A-section as 'B,' because when the A-section returns after the C-section, it is the A-section's second theme that recapitulates the A-section, transposed into the tonic E^b major. This would make some sense, as the B-sections of the typical sonata rondo are typically in the

V key. Unfortunately re-labeling the second phrase of the A-section would undo the sonata rondo design, leaving the analysis with an unconvincing formal arrangement.⁹

Using the above labeling, a typical 5-part rondo structure is revealed. After the return of A-section phrase 2 in the tonic, where the B-section would now be expected, the antecedent of the first theme from C-section returns transposed into the tonic E^b major as well (instead of it's initial key of A^b major). After a brief extension of this antecedent phrase, only a hint of the A-section, a truncated phrase one, returns to complete the rondo formula.

Again, after the second appearance of the C-section the *second* phrase of the A-section returns, not the first phrase as would be expected. The second phrase of the A-section (originally presented in the V-B^b) serves in place of the principal A-phrase, and returns in the tonic E^b major, satisfying the tonal demands of the sonata recapitulation.¹⁰ Also, where the first B-section would be expected to return in the rondo, the first phrase of the second C-section returns instead, also in the tonic E^b major (it was originally presented in A^b major). The thematic material of the B-section isn't particularly strong, and is woven into the transitional material that precedes it. Choosing the stronger theme of the C-section as a replacement (for the B-section material) makes musical sense as well. In the final section of the movement both the C and the A phrases are truncated and combined; the final section would more aptly be labeled C/A.

⁹ A-B-C-A-B-D-B-D/A

¹⁰ Singelèe uses this same design in the Sonata Allegro of Movement IV, bypassing the entire principle theme group upon the recapitulation.

Voice-Leading Reduction of Movement 2: Adagio sostenuto

The Remote Background graph, demonstrates that Movement 2 is a descending fifth progression in E^b major. Most of the composing-out is done on Urlinie Kopfton 5 over a prolongation of the tonic triad, which subsumes tonalities of E^b major, B^b major, A^b major, and G minor. Motion to an inner voice is clear for the second digression, as is the use of neighbor tones 4 and 6 in relation to Kopfton 5, during the recapitulation at Letter D.

Looking at the Background graph, the sonata-rondo form becomes more identifiable. The A-section supports Kopfton 5-E^b, over tonic and dominant harmonies the first two times it occurs, but only in the tonic during the recapitulation. The C-section is a composing out of Urlinie scale degree 3-G when it first appears in the subdominant key; this is seen as motion to an inner voice in the Remote Background. When the C-section returns in the tonic, it is a brief composing out of the Kopfton 5, which was reaffirmed in Letter D.

In the Deep Middleground graph the phrasing becomes more visible, and it is interesting to note the similarities between the A-sections at the beginning and at Letter B. Notice at the Recapitulation (Letter D), how Urlinie Kopfton 5 becomes important as the first note of each phrase of A-theme 2. When theme 2 of the A-section is first presented at measure 8, the Urlinie Kopfton 5 is the last note of the phrase.

The C-section also undergoes similar transformation, but this is shown more clearly in the middleground graph. At Letter C the top note of theme 1 of the C-section achieves the upper neighbor Urlinie 4-A^b. When phrase 1 of the C-section returns at

Letter E, the first note of the phrase is actually the Urlinie Kopfton 5-B^b, and the last part of this phrase becomes the final linear descent of the Urlinie degrees 5-4-3.

Linear motion dominates the texture of Movement Two at every level, and is apparent on the surface as well. This structural parallelism is interesting, as the melody continually uses a descending fifth line on the surface level. Shift of register and register transfer are also prevalent, see measures 57-59, and 66-70 of Middleground graph. Instances of reaching over, and coupling are also seen in measures 10-12, 13-15, and 53-54, but these are mostly a result of the linearity and register transfer displayed in the melodic line.

The Middleground shows how the rondo begins on Kopfton 5-B^b. There is clearly a linear fifth descent in B^b major through motion to an inner voice in the first half of theme 2 in the A-section, at measures 10-11, and 44-45. This linear descent also occurs as motion to an inner voice when the theme 2 of the A-section reappears in the tonic, E^b, at Letter D. Notable is the sentence structure of this particular phrase (2+2+4), and how the linear descent is reinforced through repetition and sequence. Sentence phrase structure is also demonstrated in theme 1 of the B-section at Letter A.

Use of neighbor motion in the Urlinie is shown at every level of the reductions. The Middle ground graph shows this as clearly as any. The use of scale degree 6-C in the consequent phrase of theme 2 in the A-section as an upper neighbor to the Kopfton 5-B^b in measure 13, is retained in measure 50, where the neighbor 6-C signals a move to F major, as well as measure 77 of the recapitulation, setting up the B^b pedal under Kopfton 5-B^b. Perhaps most interesting is the way the Urlinie dips to scale degrees 4-A^b and 3-G

between measures 52 and 66, the last half of the A-section continuing through the first presentation of the C-section (second episode). The use of this descent in the second A-section creates a false sense of closure, signaling the end is nearing in a simple ternary form, however, the new material in the C-section unveils the rondo form, and quickly reestablishes the importance of Kopfton5-B^b at measure 66. This in turn, gives rise to the true recapitulation of the sonata form at Letter D.

Overview of Movement 3: Allegro vivace - (scherzo and trio - compound ternary)

Movement 3 is a compound ternary form in B^b minor. It is 152 measures in length, in 3/4 meter, and the dotted half note equals 103bpm (the fastest tempo of the four movements). This is the first movement of the quartet that incorporates marked repeats, and the only movement in the minor mode. The *Trio* section is labeled, and serves as the bulk of the B-section of the ternary design: A-B-A. The homorhythmic texture and fast melodic pace of the A-sections is balanced by the melody-dominated texture, and slower moving melody of the Trio. The choice of a scherzo is very typical for the third movement of a multi-movement work, especially for composers of the late classic period. Typical of ternary form, this movement has no introductory section (although there is an introductory chord). Each section is marked by decisive cadences and a lack of transitional material; this is also typical of the ternary design. The melodic line throughout this movement is characterized by stepwise motion. Use of melodic repetition, sequence and neighbor tone is very common.

Like Movement 1, this movement also begins with triad set apart by a fermata. And again, it is a courting introductory gesture, this time in B^b Minor. Some ensembles omit this, at least on recordings, but its use effectively harkens the ear back to the opening of Movement 1, and generates unity and expectation of the return of previous material or mood. The first A section is a two-reprise binary form (*a-a-b-b*), in B^b minor. It is loosely heterophonic in texture, with soprano melody over motoric alto, tenor and baritone parts. The A-section – phrase 1 (labeled with a small-case ‘a’) is a 16-measure, 2-phrase period, antecedent/consequent. The consequent phrase modulates to E^b minor, cadences on the minor E^b tonic, which becomes iv in B^b minor; an authentic cadence in B^b minor immediately takes place at measure 16-17, setting up the repeat of A-section – A-*a* two-phrase period.¹¹ The A-section - phrase 2 (labeled with a small-case ‘b’) begins at Letter A, where there is an abrupt modulation to the relative D^b major. This second phrase group A-*b* contrasts the first, and begins with an 8-measure sentence; the first four measures (19-22) are sequenced up a whole step in the next four measures (22-26), modulating into E^b minor. The second 8-measure phrase of A-*b*, modulates abruptly to B^b minor, and its first 4-measures are simply repeated. The entire 16-measure A-*b* phrase is immediately repeated.

The B section begins with the Trio at Letter B, and an abrupt modulation to B^b major. This middle section is a *c-c-a’-c* phrase design, with the last *a’-c* phrases being repeated. The Trio section is a two-phrase period, antecedent/consequent in structure, and constitutes the first half of the B section. Each Trio phrase is 8-measures in length,

¹¹ This modulation to the subdominant, instead of the more typical dominant, is the same procedure Singelée used in the Allegro section of Movement I.

the first left harmonically open, with a half cadence in measure 51, and the second closed with an authentic cadence in B^b major at measure 67. At Letter C (measure 69) there is an abrupt modulation to G minor and a shortened and slightly modified version of the very first phrase of the movement is used as the *a'* (the 3rd) phrase of the B section, this material creates a 'da Capo' effect. After 4-measures this B-*a'* phrase concludes its 'da Capo' reference in measure 73, and the following musical material is an extension. In measures 74-81 there is an abrupt modulation to B^b major, extending and completing the B-*a'* phrase using unrelated 'new material.' At measure 85 the second phrase (the last half) of the original Trio section returns (*c*) again in Bb major. The B-*a'-c* material is repeated (Letter C to D), completing the B section.

At Letter D, there is an abrupt modulation to D^b major and the da Capo section begins. This last A section is a simple rounded binary form. It begins with an exact repetition of the movement's first 32-measure A section, this time without repeats (*A-a-b*), from Letter D-F. Then at Letter F, the opening 16-measure *A-a* phrase is presented for the final time, followed by a 4-measure codetta to close the movement.

The formal layout of Movement 3 is as such:

Phrase:

||: a :||: b :|| Trio c-c ||: a' || Trio -c (2nd 1/2) :|| a || b || a || Codetta ||

Key:

i-iv-i III-iv-i I vi-I I i-iv-i III-iv-i i-iv i

Section:

A **B** **A- da Capo**

This form is interesting because it lacks the common rounding usually found in second part of the A section. A simple two-reprise binary design is used instead. The B section is more ambiguous, but still binary in nature. The last half is repeated, making three subsections, the last two of which reinforce the B^b minor tonic. The da Capo A section is a rounded binary form.

Voice-Leading Reduction of Movement 3: Allegro-vivace

Voice-leading reductions indicate that Movement 3 is a descending 5th progression in B^b minor. The Remote Background graph shows the prolongation of Kopfton 5-F, and a continual elaboration of motion to an inner voice, which occurs in every sectional division of the movement. It is this continual inner voice motion and the interruption of the of the Urlinie descent at Scale degree 2, that gives the movement both continuity and a sense of 'expectation denied.'

Looking at the Background graph, important interruptions in these motions to an inner voice can be seen. Technically, the first 16-measure A-*a* phrase is an independent composition, and thus an extra cadential gesture is needed in the Codetta to reinforce the ending of Movement 3. This is unusual, since the large A section of a ternary form is usually a binary structure. More typical would be an interruption of the Urlinie at scale degree 2 at the ending of the first A-*a* phrase, and that the A-*b* phrase would resume with the Kopfton 5. This is not the case in the two-reprise binary structure that opens Movement 3, and is demonstrated by the move to the relative D^b major key in the second A-*b* phrase. It is here that the Kopfton 5 is reestablished through motion from an inner

voice. Looking at the Background graph, the first A section begins with the Kopfton 5-F. There is an Urlinie upper neighbor on scale degree 6-G, which resolves down to Kopfton 5-F. The 5-line Ursatz quickly descends, but instead of a cadence and interruption at scale degree 2, the Urlinie continues down to scale degree 1, and the Ursatz is actually completed in measure 17! This is exactly the same formula that appears at the end of the movement. The only difference would be the cadential formula that is added in the brief codetta. This early completion of the Ursatz threatens the rest of the movement with irrelevance.

Between Letter A and B is the second phrase of the A section, A-*b*. There is again a neighbor motion move to Urlinie scale degree 6-G supported by the E^b subdominant. Here an interruption on Urlinie scale degree 3-D occurs in the final measures before the repeat of this second phrase of the A section (A-*b*).

The large B section is an *a-a-b-a* design in the phrasing, labeled: *c-c-a'-c*. The Trio contains the first two small *c* phrases, (*c phrases* - to distinguish them from the thematic material used in the phrases of the A section). A reworking of the first '*a*' phrase at the opening of the movement begins at Letter C. Just as occurs at Letter A, the Trio section quickly reestablishes the Kopfton 5-F, through motion from an inner voice, using two 4-measure sequenced phrases (measure 38-45). The sentence phrasing of the Trio demonstrates an interruption on Urlinie scale degree 2-C. This interruption is very typical and more readily displayed in the Deep Middleground graph. After the interruption, the descent is completed with a downward 5th progression in B^b major, via motion to an inner voice in measures 61-67. The Trio is also strongly independent in

design, but the Urlinie scale degree 3-D doesn't have strong enough harmonic support to satisfy a completion of an Ursatz. When the *A-b* section returns in its modified form at Letter C, the interruption at Urlinie scale degree 2-C occurs again. The middleground graph shows the similarities between measures 1-5, and 68-71. Kopfton 5 is again achieved in measure 73, through contrary motion between the bass and treble voices. The following truncated Trio begins in measure 85, and again re-ascends to the Kopfton 5-F. Another descending 5th progression happens again, just before Letter D. The second part of the B-section (in repeats between Letter C and D) is an interruption of Urlinie scale degree 2-C (measure 80), and an unsatisfactory completion of the Ursatz in B^b major at measure 99. Both are seen as a prolongation of Kopfton 5-F at the Background levels.

The return of the A-section in B^b minor at Letter D, is a da Capo without repeats. The material is exactly like the beginning of the movement through Letter B. The final presentation of *A-a* is the same as the first. Singelèe's use of the neighbor Urlinie scale degree 6-G, over E^b bass, again shows his affinity for the subdominant harmony found throughout this quartet.

Overview of Movement 4: Allegretto - (sonatina)

Movement 4 is the most substantial at 215 measures in length. It is a sonatina in E^b major. The choice of this form for the last movement is not uncommon in four movement works, although this is usually expected in the first movement as well. This

movement follows the single movement sonata allegro design, but is more properly referred to as a sonatina, due to its brevity.

There is no introductory section. The movement begins with a 16-measure, two-phrase period (antecedent/consequent) in E^b major: Theme 1. Theme 2 begins at Letter A with a 4-measure phrase that is sequenced by the following 4-measure group. This phrase modulates to the dominant key of B^b major. In measure 25 a new phrase is begun in the V. This is again a 4+4-measure grouping, but instead of sequencing the second 4-measures are a repetition on the first. At measure 32 there is a 2-measure descending sequential extension to the preceding phrase begins the first transition. This continues with a repetition of 1-measure sequential material through Letter B at measure 38. This completes the Principal theme group and affirms the dominant key of B^b major. It is interesting to note that none of this Principal theme material returns in the Recapitulation at Letter E.¹²

At Letter B the Subordinate theme group is introduced in the dominant B^b major key. This is the theme that will return in the tonic E^b at the Recapitulation. This Theme 3 is a 16-measure two-phrase period (antecedent/consequent), which is linked by elision in measure 54, where there is an abrupt modulation to F major (II), to the second Subordinate theme, labeled Theme 4. Theme 4 is a solo for the tenor saxophone, and is also a 16-measure two-phrase period. Its consequent phrase is a melodic repetition of the antecedent, but the final cadence point on the tonic chord in F major, becomes a dominant pivot chord in the following key of B^b major.

¹² This is very common in the works of Haydn, a composer the violinist Singelée would have known quite well.

At Letter C, and the return of B^b major (V key), the Subordinate theme returns. A closing theme here would be more common in sonata form, however the reappearance of the Subordinate theme reinforces the key of the B^b dominant once again before the modulatory Development section. The 16-measure two-phrase period of the Subordinate theme is retained through measure 85, with a strong authentic cadence in B^b major. A brief Closing section (linked by elision to the end of the Subordinate theme) is finally introduced in measure 85, prolonging B^b major with the repetition of a 4-measure phrase, and a 6-measure cadential extension. Repeat signs conspicuously indicate the end of the Exposition at the end of measure 98.¹³

The Development section begins at Letter D; it is marked by the use of several sequential and transitional materials, and its lack of thematic development. Notable is the use of distant keys. There are more unrelated key centers here, than in any of the previous movements. Singelée chooses to emphasize harmonic expansion, rather than thematic development. In total there are eight key centers in the 52 measures of the Development section.

Beginning with a 4-measure phrase in F major (II), then quickly sequencing down to Eb minor (iv) through measure 106, C^b major (^bVI) is affirmed at measure 110. This creates harmonic instability by using three keys in 10 measures, and the thematic stability of the Exposition is thoroughly dissolved. Continuing the harmonic development, a sequence of the C^b material follows in measure 113, now in D^b minor (^bvii), cadencing finally in G^b minor (iii) at measure 118. This section in G^b minor is a transition itself,

¹³ Some quartets have omitted this repeat on their recordings.

becoming the dominant of C^b major (^bVI) at measure 120. With its resolution in measure 124, a 14-measure phrase in C^b major finally begins; this is the first thematic stability in the Development section, and by now, 24-measures later, by now sorely needed by the listener.¹⁴ The first 7-measures (m. 124-130) form a complete statement, answered by the second 7 measures (130-137), which is now in F^b major (^bII). In measure 138, the preceding 14-measure phrase is repeated in G^b major (^bIII), continuing the harmonic development, yet now retaining thematic material. This sequence remains intact until measure 148 where the Re-transition begins with a cadence in B^b major, and then standing on B^b as the dominant pivot chord in the E^b major key that follows. This precipitates the Recapitulation at Letter E.

The Recapitulation dispenses with the opening theme group of the Exposition, and sees the return of the Subordinate theme in the tonic E^b major.¹⁵ At Letter F the Subordinate theme 2 returns and cadences convincingly in B^b major.¹⁶ In the Exposition this theme was presented in F major, or the dominant key, thus it is natural for this theme 2 to return to the dominant key of B^b major in the Recapitulation. At Letter G (measure 184) the Subordinate theme repeats again in E^b major (I). Its consequent phrase is slightly modified melodically, but makes a strong authentic cadence in E^b major at measure 199, where the Coda immediately begins. The Coda is neither extensive nor developmental, and displays no major change in character. There is a 4-measure phrase from measures 199-203, which is repeated in measures 203-207. The final V to I

¹⁴ In 24 measures there have been a total of six key centers.

¹⁵ This satisfies the *triumph of the tonic* requirement of the sonata form.

¹⁶ It would be interesting if Singelèe had used this theme in the tonic E^b major as well.

cadential formula begins at measure 207, driving to the final cadence in measure 213. The tonic chord is then repeated in measure 214, and once again in measure 215, where it is held under a fermata, ending the movement and the work. This is the most aggressive cadential closing of any of the movements, and is a fitting conclusion to the quartet.

Voice-leading Reduction of Movement 4: Allegretto

The Remote Background graph shows the Ursatz to be an interrupted third-progression in E^b major; this is fairly typical of the sonata-allegro design. The Exposition shows a descent from Urlinie scale tone 3-G to 2-F. The Development is then a prolongation of Urlinie scale tone 2, with an upper neighbor motion to $b3-G^b$. After an interruption on the V, ending the Development section, the Urlinie then returns to scale tone 3-G, is embellished by a lower neighbor motion to 2-F, returns to 3-G, and finally fulfills the Ursatz by completing the Urlinie descent, 2-F to $1-E^b$, over a V to I bass.

Even at the Background level the phrase structure begins to show. The introductory phrases are clearly visible. At Letter B, notice how the upper neighbor motion over Urlinie scale tone 2-F, is changed in the Recapitulation; scale tone 3-G becomes the focal point here, and the neighbor tones are reversed. The Development section is primarily a motion from Urlinie scale tone 2-F to an upper neighbor tone of $bIII-G^b$ supported by a C^b bass, the tritone of the dominant key. Interesting is the upper neighbor motion to A^b , nested within the G^b itself, and there is even an upper neighbor motion within the A^b as well! The choice of C^b major key gives these Urlinie neighbor tones consonant support, and creates an upper neighbor harmony that resolves to the B^b

dominant that ends the Development. This is how Singelée is able to achieve such remote key centers, yet retain the integrity of the F major (II) to B^b major (V) to E^b major (I) tonality, moving into, through, and then out of the Development section. Even without the basic II-V motion of the Development section, the interrupted Ursatz would still retain its integrity.

The Deep Middleground reveals more about the phrasing. An interruption is shown in the introductory section of the Exposition. This reflects the antecedent/consequent design. The motion of Urlinie scale tone 3-G to 2-F at letter A is seen with the modulation to the B^b dominant. This movement shows how the Exposition and the Development sections are a prolongation of Urlinie scale tone 2, which is interrupted at the Recapitulation.

The Deep middleground shows much more stepwise motion, especially to and from an inner voice. This motion shows parallels to the melodic content that is very apparent in the surface writing for all parts. The local interruptions are seen in the Introduction, Recapitulation, and Closing section at letter G, as well the major interruption of the Urlinie at the Recapitulation. The repetition in phrasing is easily seen at this level, and the *triple nested* upper neighbor detail in the Development shows the importance of F major at Letter D, and B^b major just before the Recapitulation.

The Middleground graph shows the significant progressions at the local levels. At the end of the Introduction, just before Letter A, a descending fifth progression to Eb appears through motion to an inner voice. Measures 51-53 in Letter B show a descent to B^b through motion to an inner voice. Actually Urlinie scale tone 4-F (in B^b) is missing

here, and 6 substituted in its place. This is somewhat common, and happens again after Letter C when this material is repeated just before the Closing theme.¹⁷

There is a descending fifth progression in F major at the end of Letter B. In the Development section there is a descending fifth progression in C^b , followed immediately by another in D^b (measures 109-117) that outlines a sequence and a modulation between these two keys. Cover tones G^b in the C^b major key, A^b in the D^b minor key, G^b in the G^b minor key, and finally A^b in the F^b minor key areas, belie the nested neighbor tones so important to the key design of the Development section.

It is interesting to note how the Urlinie tones of the Subordinate theme are juxtaposed at the Recapitulation. In the Recapitulation the phrase begins on Urlinie scale tone 3-G, instead of attaining the 3-G at the top of the phrase as a neighbor motion embellishing scale tone 2-F (as done at Letter B and C). The descending fifth progression in E^b major is not surprising just before Letter F, as the Subordinate theme is completed in the tonic E^b , nor is the fifth progression in B^b with the conclusion of Theme 4 just before Letter G. Both now appear in new keys. The final presentation of the Subordinate theme at Letter G maintains the same local interruption it has demonstrated in its previous incarnations, although a final descending fifth progression E^b major is manifested at measure 194. The final presentation of Urlinie scale tone 3-G is in measure 197. The Urlinie and Ursatz are completed 3-G, 2-F, 1- E^b over I-V-I bass in measures 197-199. The Coda is an extension of the motion of scale tone 2-F to 1- E^b , again, over the V to I bass harmony.

¹⁷ Allen Carl Cadwallader, and David Gagnè. *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*. Oxford University Press: New York, 1998.

Score Errata:

When Jean-Marie Londiex resurrected this work in 1977, he had to create the score from individual manuscript parts. He should be commended for his excellent work. The publication of the Premier Quatour, Op. 53, is now available as the Molenaar Edition BV, Wormerveer, Holland, Copyright, 1977. My work has come from this edition. There is another published version of Movement 1, entitled Allegro de Concert, revised by saxophonist E.A. LeFebre.¹⁸ This work has a completely different Andante introduction section, but the Allegro is the same as movement one of the Molenaar edition.

Since the score was created from the parts, it contains the most errors. Perhaps the most frustrating oversight in the score is the lack of measure numbers. The letter numbers are nice, but they tend to align with formal sections, and there are many measures between letters. This makes rehearsal more time-consuming. I would suggest numbering the score and parts before the first rehearsal. Most of the errors in the score are minor. As for tracking the errors, I will use the nearest sectional Letter, as the measures are un-numbered.

Score Errata Movement 1: Andante

- Spelling error, in title should be Quatour, not Quator.
- The tied in measure 5 of the baritone should be changed to a dotted quarter note.
- 7 measures before Letter A, the half note on beat one of the soprano part should be a C#.

¹⁸ Carl Fisher, Inc. New York – Sheet Music Edition: W 1281.

Score Errata Movement 1: Allegro

- 6 measures after Letter B, the first half note in the alto part should be a B^b
- 7 measures after Letter C, the quarter note on beat 3 of the soprano part should be an E^b.
- 6 measures after Letter D there should be an *a tempo* marking.
- 5 measures before Letter E, the tenor part is missing an eighth-note G (top of staff) on the *and* of beat 4.
- 2 measures before Letter E, the eighth-note on beat one of the alto part should be a C[#].

Score Errata Movement 2: Adagio sostenuto

- Even though the note is tied over, a courtesy accidental B natural should be placed in the third measure after Letter A, in the tenor part.
- Letter B appears at the beginning of the 13th measure after Letter A.
- 7 measures after Letter B, a quarter note D should replace the eighth-note on beat 3, of the tenor part.
- 5 measures before the end, a quarter rest should be inserted in the alto, tenor, and baritone parts on beat 3.

Score Errata Movement 3: Allegro vivace

- In measure 9 of the baritone part, beat 1 should be a D in the staff.
- The second ending before A is labeled as 1.
- 15 measures after Letter C, the soprano part should have an Ab on beat 3.

Score Errata Movement 4: Allegretto

- 21 measures after Letter D, the eighth-note on beat two of the soprano part should be a D^b.
- Letter E should be marked 54 measures after Letter D.
- Letter F should be marked 48 measures before the end.
- Letter G should be marked 32 measures before the end.
- The Coda should be marked 17 measures before the end.
- 11 measures before the end the first note in the alto part should be a G.

Parts Errata

In general the individual parts are in better order than the score. This is because the modern score was generated from the manuscript parts. Both the tenor and baritone parts are in good order; only a few minor errors have been found in the other two parts.

Soprano Saxophone:

- Movement 3 - At the key change following Letter C, Letter D should be labelled, not Letter A.
- Movement 4 – Letter E appears 8 measures to late.

Alto Saxophone

- Movement 3 – A 1st and 2nd ending should be marked 3 and 2 measures before Letter B, respectively.

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