

**MTO 29.3 Examples: Zeller, *Klangfarbenmelodie*, Chromophony, and Timbral Function in Arnold Schoenberg's "Farben"**

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

<https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.23.29.3/mto.23.29.3.zeller.html>

**Example 1.** Textural integration of three auditory streams creating the pulsating organism in the background textural layer of "Farben"

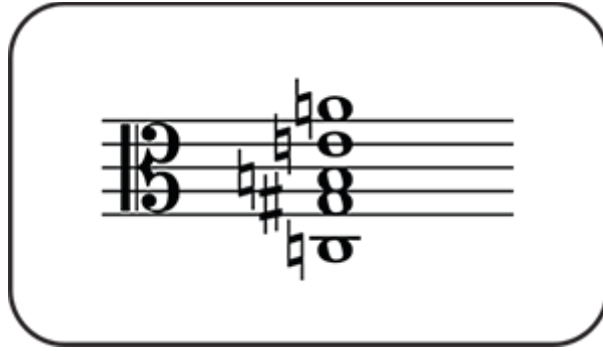
The image displays three musical streams, each on a separate staff, illustrating the textural integration of three auditory streams. The first two streams are in treble clef, and the third is in bass clef. Stream 1 includes Fl. I, Fl. II, Cl. II, and Bsn. II. Stream 2 includes E.H., Tpt. II, Bsn. I, and Hn. II. Stream 3 includes Va. solo and Cb. solo. The notation shows various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines across these instruments.

Stream 1  
Fl. I  
Fl. II  
Cl. II  
Bsn. II

Stream 2  
E.H.  
Tpt. II  
Bsn. I  
Hn. II

Stream 3  
Va. solo  
Cb. solo

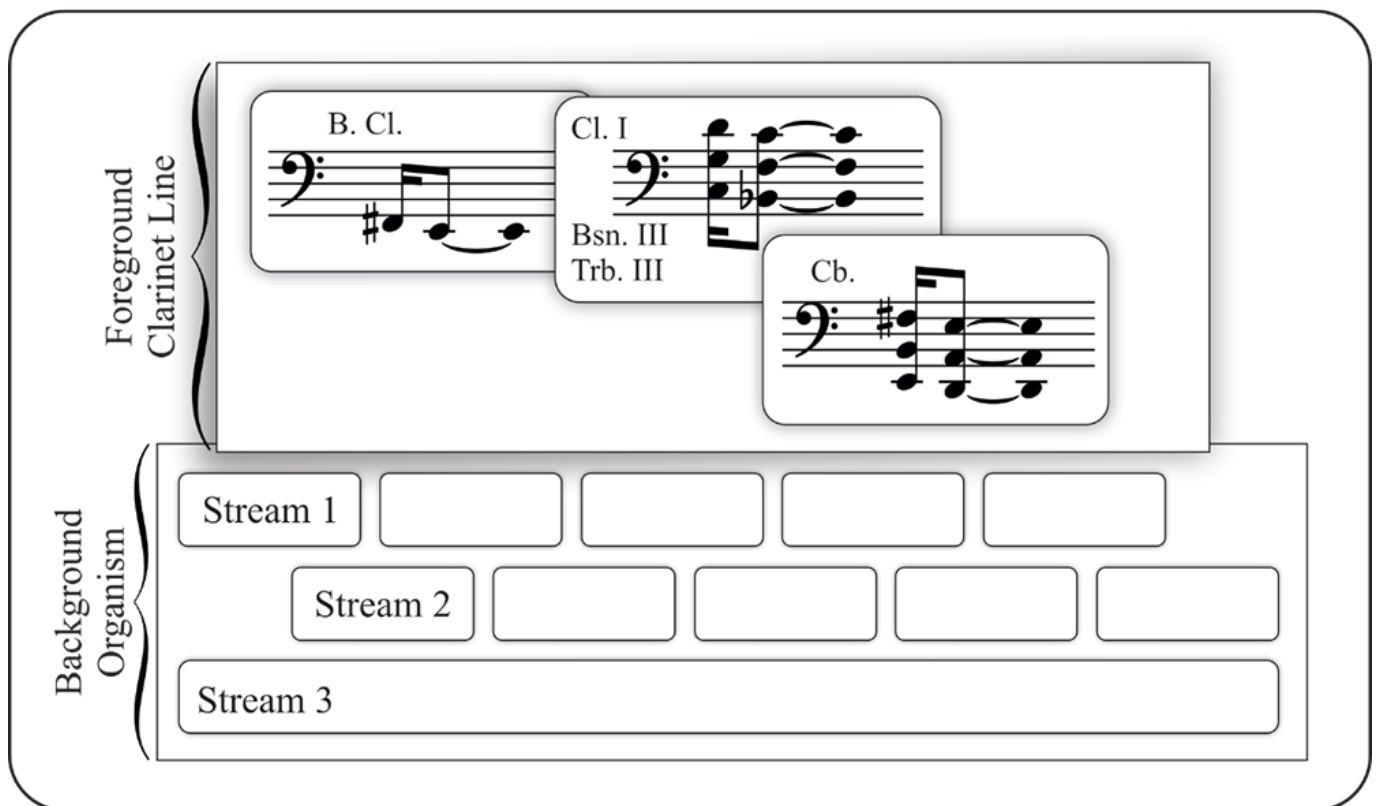
**Example 2.** "Farben" pitch collection T0



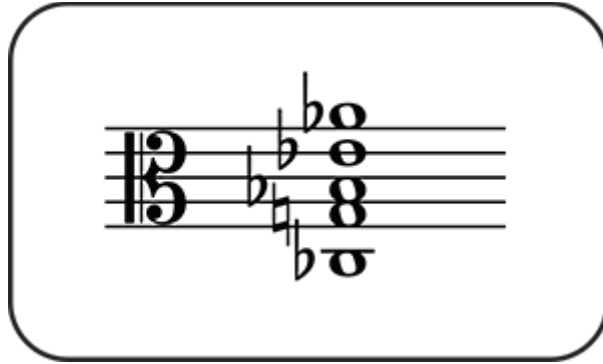
**Example 3.** Canonic movement of the musical tone collection's bass voice from solo viola to contrabassoon, mm. 7–9



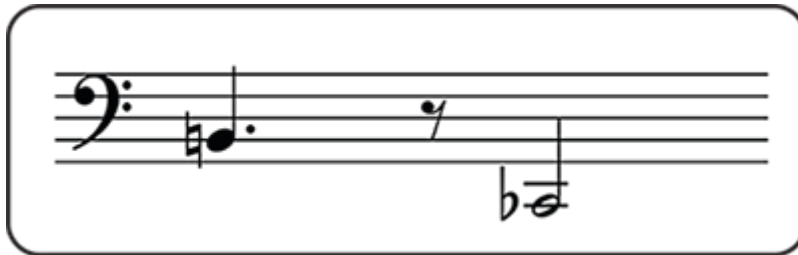
**Example 4.** Clarinet line descending whole-step gestures as a new textural layer, mm. 7–11



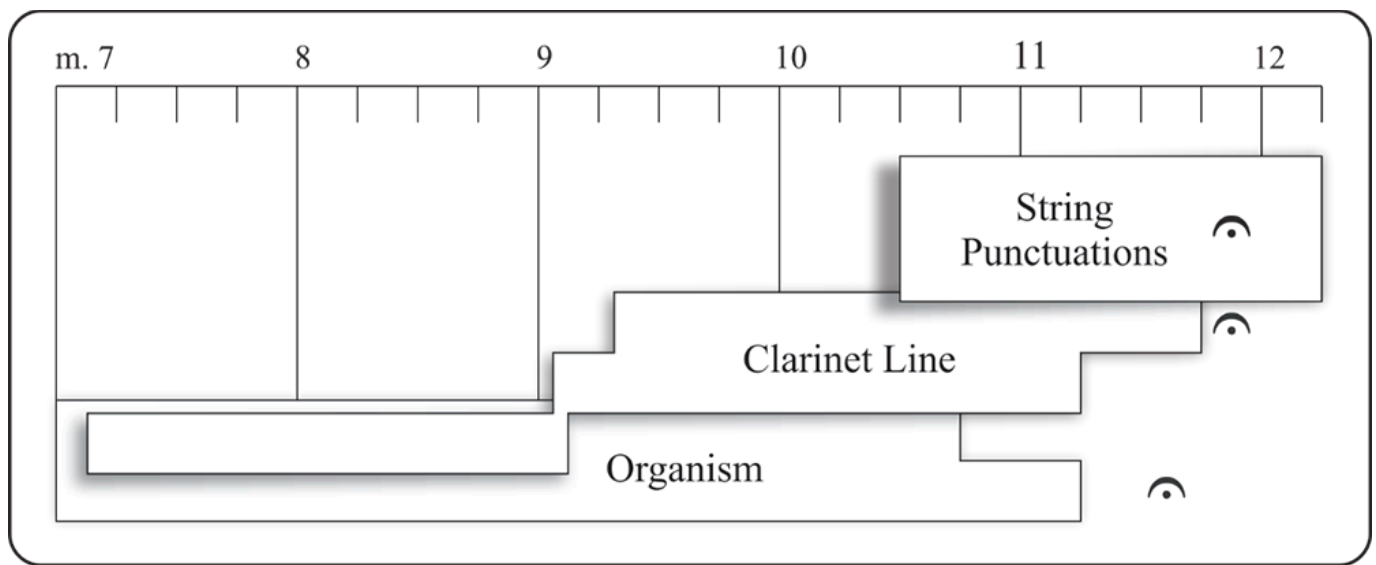
**Example 5.** T11 in the background organism at m. 9



**Example 6.** The contrabassoon's descending leap from Bb2 to Cb2 (Bb1) is the seam between the background organism and the string punctuation in m. 10



**Example 7.** Progression of timbral transformation across three textural layers from the organism to the string punctuations in "Farben," mm. 7-11



**Example 8.** Timbral imitation of the harp by the piccolo and celesta at the beginning of the harp line, mm. 12–17

This block contains two musical staves. The left staff, labeled 'm. 12' and 'Hrp.', shows a harp part with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. The right staff, labeled '16', shows parts for 'Pic. II' and 'Cel.' with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The harp part consists of a sequence of chords and single notes, while the piccolo and celesta parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

**Example 9.** Progression of clarinet line through ascending gestures in B section in mm. 20–25

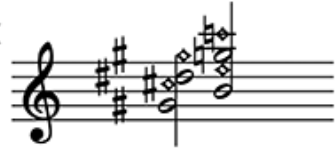
This block contains five musical staves, each representing a different instrument in a sequence. The first staff is labeled 'm. 20' and 'Cl. I', showing an ascending eighth-note line. The second staff is labeled '24' and 'E. H.', showing a similar ascending eighth-note line. The third staff is labeled '25' and 'Bsn.', showing an ascending eighth-note line. The fourth staff is labeled 'B. Cl.', showing an ascending eighth-note line. Each staff includes a treble clef and a key signature of one flat.

**Example 10.** a) T11/T3 in the foreground string punctuations over T2 in the background organism with enharmonic spellings, m. 20; b) T4 in the foreground string punctuations over T4 in the background organism with enharmonic spellings, m. 25

**a** m. 20

String punctuation

Vn. I



Organism

Tpt. I/Ob. I  
Tpt. II  
B. Cl./Cl. II/Trb. I  
Va./E.H.  
Cb./Hn. I/Cbsn.



**b** m. 25

String punctutation

Va./Vc./Cb



Organism

S. Cl.  
Bsn. II  
Hn. II  
Fl. I  
Trb. II

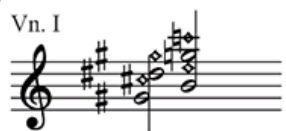


Example 11. String punctuation line, mm. 20–25

String punctuation line

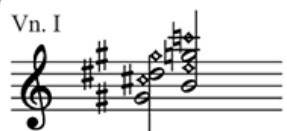
m. 20

Vn. I



24

Vn. I



25

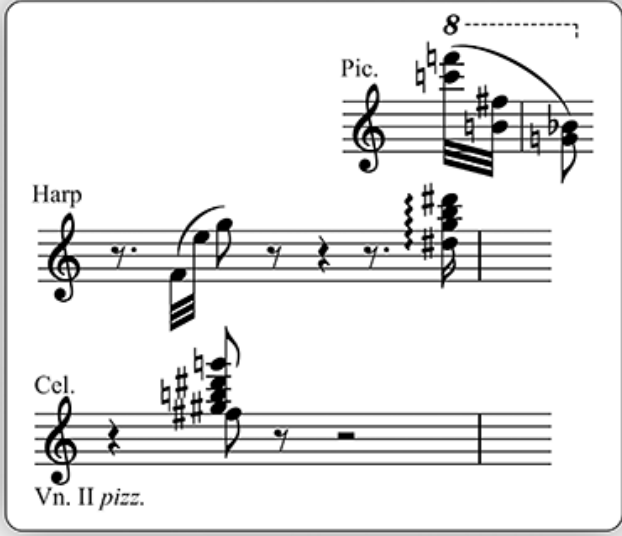
Va./Vc./Cb



**Example 12.** Interactions between the harp line and the other timbral lines in mm. 20–21: a) ascending leap in unison in both harp and clarinet lines; b) celesta bridging harp line and string punctuations with shared pitch-classes; c) the flutes and violas supporting the harp line

m. 20

Harp line



Pic.

Harp


Cel.

Vn. II *pizz.*

Clarinet line

a


Cl. I



String punctuation line

b


Vn. I



c

Fl.

Va. *pizz.*



**Example 13.** “Up-down” and “up-down-up-up” gestures in the textural foreground, mm. 20–25

The image displays musical notation for two parts: Harp line and Clarinet Line, spanning measures 20 to 25. The Harp line is divided into three sections: m. 20 (Harp, Va. pizz.), m. 24 (Pic., + Fl. 8va), and m. 25 (Hrp./Cel.). The Clarinet Line is divided into three sections: m. 20 (Cl. I), m. 24 (E. H.), and m. 25 (Bsn. I, B. Cl., Bsn. II).

**Example 14.** Events in the foreground timbral lines every four bars, mm. 12, 16–17, 20–21, 24–25

mm.	Event	Timbral Line
12	Arpeggiation	Harp
16–17	Echo	Harp
20–21	Up-down	Harp/Clarinet/String Punctuations
24–25	Up-down-up-up	Harp/Clarinet/String Punctuations



**Example 15.** The *tremolo ponticello* string punctuation and its conclusion in string harmonics, mm. 28–30

m. 28                      30

String punctuations

The diagram shows three measures of music. Measure 28 is labeled 'm. 28' and features a 'Va./Vc.' part with a tremolo ponticello effect, indicated by a double line under the staff and a diagonal line connecting the notes. Measure 29 is labeled '30' and features a 'Vc./Cb.' part with diamond-shaped notes. Measure 30 shows a final chord with a 13th harmonic, indicated by a circled '13' and a sharp sign.

**Example 16.** Timbral cadence at m. 30, cadential sonority in the harp line and string punctuations

m. 30

Harp line

The diagram shows two parts of music for measure 30. The top part is labeled 'Harp line' and features a 'Harp/Cel.' part in treble clef with a complex, multi-note cadential sonority. The bottom part is labeled 'String punctuations' and features a 'Vc./Cb.' part in bass clef with diamond-shaped notes and a final chord with a 13th harmonic.

**Example 17.** Timbral cadence at m. 30 in the harp line and string punctuations releasing the tension built through the rapid increase in timbral rhythm and the accumulation of a dense texture in the preceding bars

m. 26      27      28      30

**Cadential sonority**

T0

**Dense texture with increased timbral rhythm**

Va./Vc.      Vc./Cb.

String Punctuations

B. Cl./Hn./Trb.

Clarinet Line      Bsn./Cbsn./Tub.

Organism      T3 T2 T1 T0

Example 18. The four timbral lines in the A' section of "Farben" (excerpt from Example 19)

m. 31 32 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

**Harp Line**

Hrp. Cel.  
8

Pic.

Pic. Hrp. Cel.

Hrp./Tba.

**String Punctuations**

Vn.

Strings

**Clarinet Line**

Fl. Cl.

Cl. Hrp./Cb.

Tbn. B. Cl.

Cl.

**Organism**

T0 T1 T0 T11 T1 T0

Example 19. Timbral analysis of “Farben” illustrating its four timbral lines and textural layers

Arnold Schoenberg, *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 16, No. 3, “Farben”

Form: A m. 1 7 9 11 12 B 15 16 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 N 30 31 32 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Notated in concert pitch

**Textural Background**

**Organism**

Streams I: Fl, Hrn, HCU, Hfssn, II  
Streams 2: E, H, Trp, Hfssn, Hfhn, II  
Streams 3: Va, Cb

Background transposition: T0

**Textural Foreground**

**Harp Line**

Hrp, Pic, Ccl, Hrp, Pic, Hrp, Pic, Ccl

**String/Punctuation Line**

Ve. C/Ssb, T11  
Foreground transposition: T11

**Clarinnet Line**

B, Cl, Cl/Bsn/Tuba, Cb

Cl, Va, Hrp, Pic, Hrp, Pic, Ccl, Hrp, Pic, Ccl

Foreground transposition: T3, T4

Dense texture with timbral rhythm

Va, Vc, Ve, C/Ssb, Cl, Hrn/Tbn, Bsn, Cb

Foreground transposition: T3, T2, T1, T0

Strings

Cl, Hrp/Cb, Cl

Foreground transposition: T0, T1, T0, T1, T1, T0