

III  
Le Concile des faux dieux

PRÉLUDE

N° 1

DEBUSSY AND STRAVINSKY:  
ANOTHER LOOK INTO THEIR MUSICAL RELATIONSHIP

Mark McFarland

The paths of Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky are for the most part separate. Debussy being the principal founder of a style on which Stravinsky later built. However, these paths also overlap during a significant period in each of their careers. From 1910 to 1918 these composers maintained a friendship, and these final years of Debussy's life coincided with Stravinsky's sudden rise to fame with the Ballets Russes. Both men recognized and respected the other's genius, and they not only dedicated works to one another but shared their compositions in progress. Because of this level of interaction, it is not surprising that elements of one man's style would be adopted by the other. This investigation explores their musical relationship from the angle of a Stravinskian influence on Debussy.

The term "influence" in this study will be used primarily in its traditional sense, referring to the conscious and selective emulation of one composer by another. This approach has been termed the "influence as generosity" theory. It has been used by Charles Rosen and Leonard B. Meyer, among others, and in literary criticism it descends most clearly from T. S. Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent."<sup>1</sup> With this approach, influence is judged by the similarity, born from exposure, between works. These two components—access and similarity—will be the central focus of the musical relationship discussed below.<sup>2</sup> However, this study will also

1. See Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 9-11; Charles Rosen, "Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 4 (1980): 87-100; Leonard B. Meyer, "Innovation, Choice, and the History of Music," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (1983): 517-544; and T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), in *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950).

2. These terms are borrowed from Richard Taruskin, "Revising Revision," review of Kevin Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence," and Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition*, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 46 (1993): 117.

explore the applicability to these composers of the most recent theory of influence, the "influence as anxiety" theory originated by Harold Bloom<sup>3</sup> and applied to music most notably by Joseph Straus<sup>4</sup> and Kevin Korsyn.<sup>5</sup>

The relationship between Debussy and Stravinsky has been the topic of numerous studies;<sup>6</sup> however, the issue of musical influence has most often been seen in one direction only, from the older French to the younger Russian composer. Stravinsky's frank acknowledgment of artistic debt certainly supports this, since he openly admitted that "the musicians of my generation and I myself owe the most to Debussy."<sup>7</sup> Stravinsky's near-quotations of Debussy's "Nuages" (from the *Trois Nocturnes*) at the opening of *Le Rossignol* also reveals the French composer's influence (Example 1). True, a common inspiration for both passages might be found in mm. 16-23 of *Les jours de fête sont fins* from Mussorgsky's song cycle *Sans soleil*.<sup>8</sup> But in a contemporary diary entry, it was specifically to a Debussyan influence that Stravinsky confessed when he asked himself: "Why should I be following Debussy so closely when the real originator of this operatic style was Mussorgsky?"<sup>9</sup> The documentary evidence that most strongly suggests a reciprocal influence comes from Stravinsky, who proudly noted that Debussy consulted him about problems of orchestration in *Jeux*.<sup>10</sup> However, Stravinsky also stated unambiguously that there was no change in Debussy's style owing to their contact.<sup>11</sup>

3. Bloom's theory has been developed in a series of books: see Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), *Kabbalah and Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1975), *Poetry and Repression: Revisionism from Blake to Stevens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), and *Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

4. Straus, *Remaking the Past*.

5. Kevin Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence," *Music Analysis* 10 (1991): 3-72.

6. See for example François Lesure, "Debussy e Stravinski," *Musica d'oggi* 2, no. 6 (1959): 242-44; Jean Georges-Aubry, "Debussy et Stravinsky," *Revue de Musicologie*, numero special Claude Debussy (1962): 107-109; André Souris, "Debussy et Stravinsky," *Revue belge de musicologie* 16 (1962): 45-56; Eric Walter White, "Stravinsky and Debussy," *Tempo* 61-62 (1962): 2-5; Maurice Fleuret, "Debussy speaks of Stravinsky," Stravinsky speaks on Debussy," in *Musical Opinion* 86 (1963): 212-13; Edward Lockspeiser, "Diaghilev and Stravinsky," in *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 168-188; Jeremy Noble, "Debussy and Stravinsky," *Musical Times* (January 1967): 22-25. See also the documentation, in the form of letters and writings by these two composers, upon which these studies are based.

7. Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), p. 48.

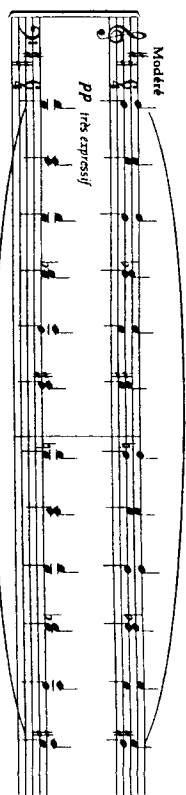
8. Both composers were certainly aware of the whole Russian school. "Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft: *Expositions and Developments* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), p. 138.

9. Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), p. 133. It is unclear from this quote whether Stravinsky was referring simply to issues of text-setting, or to a broader Debussyan influence.

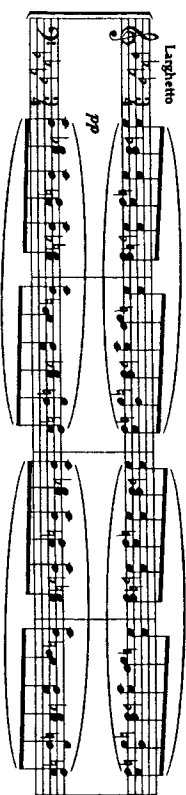
10. Stravinsky and Craft, *Conversations*, p. 50.

11. Stravinsky and Craft, *Conversations*, p. 48.

Example 1a: Debussy, *Nuages* from the *Nocturnes* (1897-99), mm. 1-2.



Example 1b: Stravinsky, Introduction to Act I of *Le Rossignol* (1908-14), mm. 1-4.



Despite the apparent one-sided nature of this musical influence, certain writers have commented on the appearance of Stravinskian traits in Debussy's works.<sup>12</sup> These observations are often limited to a single work or to an idea common to two works, and have never appeared in the context of a thorough investigation of Stravinsky's influence on Debussy. The lessons that Debussy learned from Stravinsky are actually more varied than previous writers have suggested, and they affect a larger number of works as well. In fact, Stravinsky's influence on Debussy is apparent in the remarkable string of works the latter wrote between 1911 and 1915, works which include musical borrowings from the Russian composer's ballets and emphasize

12. See for example Koechlin, *Debussy* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1927), p. 51; Lesure, "Debussy e Stravinski," 242; and Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, 2: 186. See also Robert Orledge, *Debussy and the Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), for references to Stravinskian polytonality in works ranging from *Khamma* to *La boîte à joyaux*; and Roy Howat, "Modes and Semitones in Debussy's Preludes and Elsewhere," *Studies in Music* 22 (1988): 81-104, where Stravinsky's influence in the second book of preludes is related to the composer's acquaintance with *Petrushka*. See finally Pieter van den Toorn, "Stravinsky: Reflections on Context and Analytical Method," *International Journal of Musicology* 1 (1992): 161-200, where several of Debussy's preludes from his second book are shown to exhibit Stravinskian treatment of octatonic routines; and Richard Taruskin, "Influence Abroad," in *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 770-78, which identifies many of the Stravinskian passages cited in this study, but ultimately discounts them as constituting a Stravinskian influence.

prominent elements from Stravinsky's own musical language. Further, this string of works—which includes the second book of piano preludes, the ballets *Jeux*, *Khamma*, and *La Boîte à joujoux*, as well as the *Berceuse héroïque* and *Six épigraphes antiques*—began shortly after the two composers met, and ended when Debussy began to write his neoclassical sonatas in 1915, the year that their previously warm friendship began to cool.

### Debussy's Familiarity with Stravinsky's Works

Debussy was acquainted with the major works that Stravinsky composed between 1910 and 1914, and he was uncharacteristically effusive in his comments about them.<sup>13</sup> The two composers first met in June 1910 after the premiere of *The Firebird*: Debussy praised Stravinsky's new work and invited him to dinner. Soon afterward, Debussy gave Stravinsky a photograph of himself inscribed "à Igor Stravinsky en toute sympathie artistique."<sup>14</sup> Debussy was more specific in describing his feelings about *The Firebird* when he wrote, "it's not perfect, but, in certain respects, it's an excellent piece of work none the less because the music is not the docile slave of the dance... And every now and then there are some extremely unusual combinations of rhythms!"<sup>14</sup> Debussy evidently recognized and respected Stravinsky's genius from the very beginning. However, there was also a competitive edge to their relationship, at least on Debussy's part, in addition to which a master-pupil dynamic occasionally emerged. For example, when Stravinsky later asked for Debussy's honest assessment of *The Firebird*, the latter flippantly and patronizingly replied, "Que voulez-vous, il fallait bien commencer par quelque chose."<sup>15</sup> Stravinsky also speculated that Debussy's competitive nature was responsible for his silence on the subject of *Le Rossignol*:

As to its reception, the 'advanced' musicians were genuinely enthusiastic—or so I thought. That Ravel liked it, I am certain, but I am almost as convinced that Debussy did not, for I heard nothing whatever from him about it. I remember this well, for I expected him to question me about the great difference between the music of Act I and the later acts, and though I knew he would have liked the Mussorgsky-Debussy beginning, he probably would have said about that, too, 'Young man, I do it better.'<sup>16</sup>

13. Debussy attended the premiere of *The Firebird*, marveled at the score of *Petrushka*, played through a four-hand piano version of *The Rite of Spring*, and received the dedication for *Le roi des étoiles*. From Stravinsky's writings, we know that Debussy was acquainted with *Le rossignol* (Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, p. 132); and from Debussy's comment that "Stravinsky himself is leaning dangerously towards Schoenberg" (François Lesure and Roger Nichols, *Debussy Letters* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987], p. 306) it is reasonable to assume that he knew of the *Three Japanese Lyrics*. After the war began and Debussy's health began to worsen, he heard almost no new music, including Stravinsky's, beginning with the *Three Pieces for String Quartet*.

14. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, p. 221.

15. "What do you want, you had to start somewhere." Stravinsky and Craft, *Expositions and Developments*, p. 131.

16. Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, p. 132.

Debussy's competitive feelings seemed to diminish in the face of his overwhelmingly positive reaction to *Petrushka*. Six months after its premiere, Debussy praised Stravinsky in a letter to his friend Robert Godet. Although he did not mention any particular score by name, his enthusiasm was clearly directed at this most recent ballet.<sup>17</sup>

Did you know that quite near you, in Clarens, there's a young Russian composer: Igor Stravinsky, who has an instinctive genius for colour and rhythm? I'm sure you'd like both him and his music. . . . And 'he's not all tricks.' He writes directly for orchestra, without any intermediate steps, and the outline of his music follows only the promptings of his emotion. There are no precautions or pretensions. It's childish and savage. Even so, the organization is extremely delicate.<sup>18</sup>

The following spring, when Debussy thanked Stravinsky for sending him the score of *Petrushka*, his praise was even more lavish, even if he could not completely suppress the air of a knowing teacher.

Thanks to you I've spent a lovely Easter holiday in the company of *Petrushka* . . . and I know few things as good as the passage you call 'le tour de passe-passe' . . . There's a sort of sonorous magic about it, mysteriously transforming these mechanical souls into human beings: it's a spell which, so far, I think you are alone in possessing. And then there are orchestral *certainities* such as I have encountered only in *Parsifal*—I'm sure you'll understand what I mean! You'll progress beyond *Petrushka*, of course, but you can still be proud of what the work stands for.<sup>19</sup>

Debussy's enthusiasm for Stravinsky's music initially extended to *The Rite of Spring*, although his opinion of this work would eventually change. Long before the ballet's premiere, the two composers met at Louis Laloy's house on June 9, 1912 and played through a four-hand piano arrangement of the score. The experience was overwhelming. As Laloy reported, "When they had finished, there was no question of embracing, nor even of compliments. We were dumbfounded, overwhelmed by this hurricane which had come from the depths of the ages and taken our life by the roots."<sup>20</sup> Later the same year, while anticipating the ballet's premiere, Debussy found words to express his admiration for this work when he wrote to Stravinsky:

17. There is no documentary evidence proving that Debussy attended the premiere of *Petrushka*, but his presence in Paris that day together with his borrowings from this work suggest that he must have been present. See footnote 25 below for more information on this topic.

18. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, p. 250.

19. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, pp. 256-58.

20. Roger Nichols, *Debussy Remembered* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1992), p. 240; translated from Louis Laloy, *La Musique retrouvée* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1928). In both sources, the meeting is incorrectly assigned to 1913 rather than 1912. The correct year is apparent from Debussy's letter of November 5, 1912 to Stravinsky, which refers to this event (see the following citation).

I still think of the performance of your *Sacre du printemps* at Laloy's house... It haunts me like a beautiful nightmare and I try in vain to recall the terrifying impression it made. That's why I wait for the performance like a greedy child who's been promised some jam.<sup>21</sup>

Stravinsky also recalled Debussy's enthusiasm for the ballet during the rehearsals for the premiere.<sup>22</sup>

*Le Roi des étoiles*, which was dedicated to Debussy, made less of an impression on the French composer than did the nearly contemporaneous *Rite of Spring*. He considered the work extraordinary but unperformable, and compared it to Plato's harmony of the spheres.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the cantata's first performance did not take place until 1939, more than twenty-five years after its composition.

The overwhelming impression that Stravinsky's early scores made on Debussy is equally apparent in the music he composed during the same period. The following chronological survey details the precise nature and extent of Stravinsky's influence on Debussy, beginning with quotations, both exact and free, from each of Stravinsky's early ballets, and proceeding to subtler, yet more far-reaching, Stravinskian elements in Debussy's scores.

### The Impact of *The Firebird* and *Petrushka* on *Khamma*

*Khamma* (1911-12) is the first work in which Debussy's reaction to Stravinsky's music is clearly evident, for it contains quotations from the two ballets with which Debussy was then acquainted. It is clear from the chronology of works that it was Debussy's unreserved admiration for *Petrushka* that prompted his Stravinskian musical borrowings, for neither the *Morceau de clarinette* (*Petite pièce* for clarinet and piano, 1910) nor *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien* (1910-11) contain allusions to *The Firebird*, which Debussy had already heard. In contrast, *Khamma*, begun six months after the première of *Petrushka*, unmistakably responds to that score by quoting the famous *Petrushka* chord.<sup>24</sup> In fact, the explicitness of Debussy's borrowing indicates that the composer must have attended the première of the ballet,<sup>25</sup> even though documentary evidence shows only that he received the score from Stravinsky well after he had composed *Khamma*. Once established, Stravinsky's influence extended to his earlier ballet as well, for *Khamma* also includes two of the most prominent motifs from *The Firebird*, those of the bird herself as well as that of Kashtchei the Immortal.

21. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, p. 265.

22. Stravinsky and Craft, *Expositions and Developments*, p. 142; and Stravinsky and Craft, *Memoirs and Commentaries*, p. 145.

23. Igor Stravinsky et al., *Avec Stravinsky* (Monaco: Editions du Rocher, 1958), p. 201.

24. Musical details, discussed below, show that Stravinsky's ballet was the model for Debussy's borrowing and not Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* or Strauss's *Elektra*, both of which also contain the same triadic complex.

25. Debussy was undoubtedly in Paris on the day of the *Petrushka* première (June 13, 1911); although he was about to travel to Turin to conduct his works, a letter to Gabrièle d'Annunzio shows that he left for Italy only on the 19th of that month. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, p. 242.

In *Khamma*, Debussy's musical borrowings from Stravinsky's ballets go well beyond mere fleeting references, and actually affect the leitmotivic and harmonic structures. The Firebird motif—Ab-Fb-Eb-D, as it first appears in Stravinsky's ballet—makes its initial appearance in *Khamma* throughout the prayer to save the city (Example 2); appropriately, *Khamma* herself, the city's eventual savior, is also associated with this motif soon after her initial entrance (Example 3). In both passages, the construction of this figure helps to establish a whole-tone context. The motif is composed of a leap of a major third and a chromatic trichord. As in *The Firebird*, Debussy consistently treats the middle note of this trichord as a passing tone, so the motif presents a tri-tone with a major second imbedded within it (whole-tone subsets (0 2 6) or (0 4 6)). The labeling of this motif's appearances by transposition and transformation (i.e., P8 for Ab-Fb-Eb-D) shows that any even-numbered transformation implies whole-tone collection A (C D E F# G# A# C), while odd-numbered transformations imply collection B (Db Eb F G A B Db). Therefore, during both scenes in *Khamma* in which this motif appears, its overlapping and simultaneous statements help to establish collection A.

Example 2: Debussy, *Khamma* (1911-12), mm. 58-61.

Musical notation for Example 2, showing a melodic line with annotations R10, R6, R10 etc., P10, and P4. Below the staff is the label 'Whole-Tone Collection A'.

Example 3: Debussy, *Khamma*, m. 130.

Musical notation for Example 3, showing a melodic line with annotations ppp, P6, and P4 etc. Below the staff is the label 'Whole-Tone Collection A'.

Example 4: Debussy, *Khamma*, mm. 26-9.

pp  
Dyad 17  
19  
18  
Octatonic Collection II

Example 7: Debussy, *Khamma*, m. 364.

Dyad 15  
17  
16  
Octatonic Collection III

Example 5: The Three Octatonic Collections.

Collection I (A+B)  
Collection II (B+C)  
Collection III (A+C)  
A  
B  
C

Example 8a: Debussy, *Khamma*, mm. 158-60.

mf  
cresc.  
3  
3  
3

Example 8b: Stravinsky, *Petrushka* (1910-11), No. 51 - 51+3.

Furioso  
3  
3  
3

Example 6: The "Ladder of Thirds" from Stravinsky, *The Firebird* (1909-10).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 1  
Octatonic Collection I  
Octatonic Collection II  
Octatonic Collection III

Another borrowing from *The Firebird* that becomes integral to the structure of *Khamma* involves the motif associated with the Grand-Prêtre (Example 4). This figure is constructed from a succession of three thirds (Example 5). These three thirds are also contained within the leitmotif of Kaschei the Immortal, which is itself part of a succession of twenty-four thirds that Stravinsky described as Magic Thirds (Example 6).<sup>26</sup> The complete array of Magic Thirds is more accurately described as a ladder of thirds by Taruskin because of the voice-leading that defines it, for its lower voice consistently ascends a tritone (to the upper voice) while the upper voice descends a semitone (to the lower voice), thus alternating between minor and major thirds.<sup>27</sup> With this structure, the ladder of thirds modulates among the three octatonic collections, while three-dyad segments remain within a single collection; it is the latter technique that underlies much of the octatonic music in *The Firebird*. Debussy again follows Stravinsky's harmonic setting of this figure, for the Grand-Prêtre's motif in *Khamma* is initially built from dyads 17-19 of this ladder (presented in the order 17, 19, 18) to form collection II. A transposed version of this motif appears later in the ballet where dyads 15-17 are harmonized by tritone-related chords to form collection III (Example 7).<sup>28</sup>

A final quotation in *Khamma* is not a recurring motif, but instead accompanies the title character's actions in the temple of Amun-Ra. In this passage, the piano's tremolo between F $\sharp$  and C major triads is identical (aside from octave doublings and chord notation) to the figuration accompanying "Petrushka's Curses" (Example 8). This telling moment is discussed below in greater detail, where it is considered in the context of the passage of which it is a part and is compared with the corresponding passage in Stravinsky's ballet.

### The Impact of *The Rite of Spring* on the *Preludes* for Piano, Book II, and Beyond

In comparison with his borrowings from *The Firebird* and *Petrushka* in *Khamma* (the quotation of motives, the duplication of their harmonic treatment, and the incorporation of these ideas into its structure), Debussy's references to *The Rite* in later works are often less precise and less prominent, but they are evident nonetheless. Quotations from *The Rite* first

26. This description appears in the analytic notes found on the Aeolian piano rolls of *The Firebird* that Stravinsky produced in 1928-29. For more information on these piano rolls, see Mark McFarland, "Leit-Harmony, or Stravinsky's Musical Characterization in *The Firebird*," *The International Journal of Musicology* 3 (1994): 203-233.

27. Richard Taruskin, "Chez Pétouchka: Harmony and Tonality chez Stravinsky," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 10 (1987): 271.

28. Debussy had in fact used dyads 23, 24, and 1 (in that order) from the ladder of thirds in mm. 81-86 of *La Danse de Puck*, written several months before the premiere of *The Firebird*. However, faced with Debussy's other quotations from Stravinsky's scores, it would be difficult not to hear the Grand-Prêtre's motif as another reference to *The Firebird*. The change in ordering of these thirds from that heard in Stravinsky's ballet is perhaps Debussy's way of making this material his own, just as his use of the Firebird motif differs slightly from Stravinsky's. For example, see *Khamma*, mm. 54-72, where Debussy deploys the Firebird motif in perhaps the one motivic combination Stravinsky did not fully explore in his ballet.

appear in *Les Tierces alternées*,<sup>29</sup> which was composed after the two men played through the piano score but before the ballet's première.<sup>30</sup> At the end of the prelude's second refrain, the main theme from the "Ritual Action of the Ancestors" appears; the quotation is marked by tenuto accents, and in its melodic outline and rhythmic character, differs only slightly from the original (Example 9). The two settings of the theme contrast most strikingly in their harmonic contexts: Stravinsky placed it within octatonic collection I while Debussy starts it on a *Trisitan* chord and uses it as a transition into whole-tone harmony.

Debussy's next reference to *The Rite* appears in *La Boîte à bijoux*, although the nature of this borrowing is precisely the opposite of that found in *Les Tierces alternées*. Rather than duplicate melodic material within an altered harmonic setting, Debussy includes in *La Boîte* a free quotation of the opening measures of Stravinsky's ballet while highlighting the harmonic potential of the material (Example 10). If the similarity between these two passages is not immediately apparent, this is because the nature of their relationship is imprecise; brackets X and Y identify related elements. Common to these passages is a texture comprised of a melody that emphasizes a (0 2 3 5) tetrachord (X) and a chromatically descending accompaniment (Y), although these elements combine in two distinct ways. While strikingly different in their harmonies, the distinction actually forms one of the most telling connections between the two scores. Although the opening measures of *The Rite of Spring* are not octatonic, the initial clash between C and C $\sharp$  and the frequent major sevenths between the soprano and tenor lines anticipate the use of this interval in the partitioning of the octatonic scale throughout the ballet. The frequent use and explicit nature of this octatonic routine in *The Rite* led van den Toorn to single it out as

29. This borrowing was first identified in Howat, "Modes and Sentences," p. 87.

30. Debussy's only opportunity to hear *The Rite* prior to the publication of his second book of preludes in April 1913 was the four-hand performance of the ballet in June 1912 noted above. However, it is unclear exactly what the two composers played through that day. Pierre Monteux claimed to have heard the entire score in April of the same year, when Stravinsky unveiled *The Rite* to Diaghilev ("Early Years," in Minna Lederman, ed., *Stravinsky in the Theatre* [New York: Pellegrini and Cudany, 1949], pp. 128-29). Yet Stravinsky's widow and Robert Craft have stated that only Part I of the score was performed that day, whereas the melody in question, quoted in *Les tierces alternées*, comes from Part II (Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978], pp. 87 and 613). The latter recollection is probably correct since sketch study shows that, before his trip to Monte Carlo and Paris, Stravinsky had finished composing Part I of the score, and would not sketch the melody in question until after his return to Clarens (Igor Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring: Sketches 1911-1913* [London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1969], and Pieter van den Toorn, "The Sketchbook," in *Stravinsky and 'The Rite of Spring': The Beginnings of a Musical Language* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987], pp. 22-38). Yet Debussy's near-quotation in *Les Tierces alternées* of the melody from "The Ritual Action of the Ancestors" can hardly be a coincidence. A credible scenario has been put forward by Pieter van den Toorn, who proposed that Stravinsky "may simply have played through some of the as-yet-undecided passages in a quasi-improvisational fashion" for Monteux in April 1912 (Pieter van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and 'The Rite of Spring'*, p. 35). Stravinsky probably did the same for Debussy two months later.

**Example 9a:** Debussy, *Les Tierces alternées* from the *Preludes for Piano* Book II (1911-13), mm. 75-80.

Musical score for Example 9a, Debussy's *Les Tierces alternées*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *pp* dynamic. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'.

**Example 9b:** Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring* (1911-13), No. 132 - 132+2.

Musical score for Example 9b, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *p* dynamic and the tempo marking *e tranquillo*. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'.

**Example 10a:** Debussy, *Prelude to La Boîte à joujoux* (1913), mm. 45-8.

Musical score for Example 10a, Debussy's *Prelude to La Boîte à joujoux*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *pp* dynamic. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'. Other annotations include 'G, F, E, D (0, 2, 3, 5)', 'p molto dim.', 'Tritone-Related Chords (E & B)', and 'Y'.

**Example 10b:** Stravinsky, Introduction to the First Part of *The Rite of Spring*, mm. 1-6.

Musical score for Example 10b, Stravinsky's *Introduction to the First Part of The Rite of Spring*. The score is in D major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *Lento* tempo and a *mp* dynamic. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'. Other annotations include 'D, C, B, A (0, 2, 3, 5)', 'a piacere', and 'Y'.

**Example 11a:** Debussy, *Berceuse heroïque* (1914), mm. 59-60.

Musical score for Example 11a, Debussy's *Berceuse heroïque*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *p* dynamic. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'.

**Example 11b:** Stravinsky, Introduction to the Second Part of *The Rite of Spring*, No. 86+2 - 86+4.

Musical score for Example 11b, Stravinsky's *Introduction to the Second Part of The Rite of Spring*. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with a *p* dynamic. The melody is characterized by alternating thirds. A circled section of the score is labeled 'Octatonic Collection I'. Other annotations include 'Collection III'.

“without question the most thoroughly octatonic of all Stravinsky’s works.”<sup>31</sup> Debussy responds to this aspect of the score, for although he avoids the same partitioning model, his free quotation from the opening of *The Rite* highlights the octatonic potential of this material: Bb and E major triads not only form the boundaries of the chromatic descent in the accompaniment, but are superimposed at the end of this line to form collection I.

The *Berceuse héroïque* contains Debussy’s final and most explicit quotation from *The Rite*. Although the rhythm is substantially changed, a striking ostinato figure from the introduction to the second part of Stravinsky’s ballet is reproduced near the end of this work (Example 11).<sup>32</sup> Like the passage from *The Rite* that Debussy emulated in *La Boîte*, this ostinato anticipates the arrival of octatonic harmony in Stravinsky’s ballet. Indeed, the harmonic support immediately given to this figure in *The Rite* makes its accountability to octatonic collections I and III explicit.<sup>33</sup> However, unlike the Stravinskian passage in *La Boîte*, the octatonic potential of the ostinato quoted in the *Berceuse héroïque* is not made clear, for Debussy only incorporates the harmonically ambiguous two-line texture.

### Stravinsky’s Harmonic Influence on Debussy

Common to all of Debussy’s borrowings from Stravinsky’s ballets is a connection with chromatic harmony—defined here as symmetric scales, or Messiaen’s “modes of limited transposition”<sup>34</sup>—and most often the octatonic set. Regardless of whether Debussy simply quoted octatonic material, or varied the prominence of Stravinsky’s octatonic harmonizations in his references to them, he was clearly responding to the Russian composer’s frequent use of this set. And such a response could easily transcend simple quotations from Stravinsky’s ballets and filter more deeply into Debussy’s style to form a less obvious, yet more profound, Stravinskian influence. In fact, the most striking elements of the Russian composer’s harmonic language—the octatonic set, the opposition between diatonic and chromatic harmony, and the superimposition of chords related by semitone—became central features of Debussy’s chromatic style soon after the two composers met. To be sure, Debussy had used these materials and techniques sporadically prior to 1911, yet their sudden, consistent prominence between 1911 and 1915 is remarkable. His increased interest in these ideas is especially striking because he expanded his earlier treatment of them in an unmistakably Stravinsky direction. Each of these points will be explored below: Debussy’s pre-Stravinsky use of these three ideas will be discussed first, followed by their development in his works composed after 1910.

31. Van den Toorn, *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*, p. 470.

32. This quotation was identified by Robert Orledge and printed in Howat, “Modes and Semitones,” p. 90.

33. See Pieter van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and ‘The Rite of Spring,’* pp. 197-200.

34. Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, vol. 1., trans. John Satterfield (Paris: A. Leduc, 1956).

Although Debussy used the octatonic set in some of his earliest compositions, it was merely to create a fleeting “purple patch” outside the main musical argument;<sup>35</sup> rarely before 1911 are octatonic and diatonic sets on an equal footing.<sup>36</sup> The octatonic set first appears in one of Debussy’s earliest compositions, the song *Fleur des blés* of ca. 1880, where the set appears as a digression within the cadential progression II-V-I (Example 12). Two dominant seventh chords with roots on E and Bb are inserted between the supertonic and the dominant chords, embellishing an otherwise standard cadence with a six-note subset of collection I. Yet these two octatonic chords are clearly subsumed by the diatonic context in which they are placed and which governs this entire song. In only three works composed before 1911 are diatonic and octatonic sets treated equally: *L’Ombre des arbres* (1885) from the *Arriettes oubliées*, *Dans le jardin* (1903), and *Ce qu’a vu le Vent d’Ouest* from the first book of piano preludes (1907-10).<sup>37</sup>

*Fleur des blés* is therefore more typical of the way Debussy used the octatonic set in his early works. This song is also representative of Debussy’s compositional arrangement of the octatonic set, since his octatonic vocabulary before 1911 consisted almost exclusively of juxtaposed triads and seventh chords related by minor third or tritone, i.e., van den Toorn’s Model A partitioning of the scale. Howat notes the beginning of a “methodical exploration of octatonic techniques” after 1910,<sup>38</sup> an exploration which involved both the partitioning of this scale and its increased role within the work. Having incorporated the *Petrushka* chord into *Khamma*, Debussy began to superimpose rather than merely juxtapose chords within octatonic passages, thereby creating *complexes sonores*, to use Stravinsky’s evocative term.<sup>39</sup> The opening *complexes of Brouillards*—the first of which actually contains the *Petrushka* chord—are the most obvious example of this change

35. Tovey used the term “purple patch” to indicate a passage of chromatic (which is to say, colorful) harmony, as in the following discussion of modulation: “It is an undisputed fact that modulations in a dominant direction have an effect of action, while modulations towards the subdominant have an effect of retirement. With a major tonic the three remaining directly-related keys are minor, a contrast which outweighs their other distinctive characters. To move from a major tonic to the relations of its tonic minor, such IIIb and Vlb, is to pass into deep and warm shadow. Such modulations form characteristic purple patches in the course of Mozart’s second subjects.” Donald Francis Tovey, *The Forms of Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 61.

36. In arguing that Debussy was not influenced by Stravinsky, Allen Forte ignores Debussy’s new focus on chromatic harmony in 1911 and emphasizes instead the mere presence of octatonic passages earlier in the composer’s output. See Allen Forte, “Debussy and the Octatonic,” *Music Analysis* 10, nos. 1-2 (1991): 158-59.

37. It is significant that the first two of these three works are *mélodiques*, since Debussy’s harmonic language was much more adventurous in his early vocal works than in his contemporary instrumental works. Debussy’s selection of symbolist poetry for these early songs provided additional motivation for his harmonic development.

38. Howat, “Modes and Semitones,” p. 85. Howat locates the expansion of Debussy’s octatonic vocabulary in the second book of piano preludes, although it began earlier, with *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien* and *Khamma*.

39. Igor Stravinsky, *The Poetics of Music*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 26.



(Example 13); others include *mm. 58-64 of Les fêtes sont d'exquises dansuses*, the "branch shaking" motif of *Jeux* (m. 378), and the cadenza of *Feux d'artifice* (m. 67).<sup>40</sup>

In addition to chordal superimposition, another Stravinskian idea that begins to appear in Debussy's works after 1910 is the (0 2 3 5) tetrachord that defines van den Toorn's Model B octatonic partitioning. Stravinsky used this routine briefly in *Petrushka*<sup>41</sup> and throughout *The Rite*; however, Debussy did not follow these models precisely. Instead, he invariably supported these tetrachords with triads and seventh chords, thus combining Models A and B. This mixture of octatonic partitioning is found in *La Boîte à joujoux* (see Example 10a above), as well as in the piano preludes "Feuilles mortes" and *La Terrasse des audiences du clair de lune*, the latter of which uses two (0 2 5) trichords in the melodic line to help establish octatonic accountability (Example 14).<sup>42</sup> Finally, unlike Stravinsky, Debussy never explored the (0 2 3 5) tetrachord as a common link between octatonic and diatonic contexts.<sup>43</sup> However, in *Jeux* he did confine a melodic line to this tetrachord in a diatonic passage accountable to the Dorian mode, just as Stravinsky repeatedly did throughout both *Petrushka* and *The Rite* (Example 15).

Although Debussy had incorporated both diatonic and chromatic harmony within his works before he met Stravinsky, after 1910 he developed this harmonic opposition in a way that resembled the system of "leit-harmony" (to use Stravinsky's term), which the Russian composer used in both *The Firebird* and *Petrushka*.<sup>44</sup> In these works, the human and fantastic worlds are differentiated from one another by harmonic means, the supernatural characters associated with whole-tone or octatonic music, the mortal characters with diatonic writing.<sup>45</sup> Opposition between diatonic and chromatic harmony is thus incorporated into the very structure of both ballets.

While Debussy's works before 1911 certainly contain conflict—although not between mortal and supernatural characters—they do not use a detailed system like leit-harmony to organize their harmonic opposition. Parks has

40. These passages contradict van den Toorn's assertion that Debussy's lack of octatonic superimpositions distinguished him from Stravinsky. However, it is true that these superimposed chords are rarely struck simultaneously in Debussy's works, while this is often true in Stravinsky's scores. Van den Toorn further points out perhaps the most striking difference between these two composers, their rhythmic language, a topic discussed below. See van den Toorn, "Stravinsky: Reflections on Context and Analytical Method," pp. 190-191.

41. Although Model A partitioning dominates the octatonic music in this ballet, see van den Toorn's analysis of Nos. 7 and 35 (*The Music of Igor Stravinsky*, pp. 84-5), which are seen as interpenetrations of the D-scale-on-A (A Dorian) and octatonic collection III, two scales that share a common (0 2 3 5) tetrachord.

42. For an examination of both Model A and B partitioning of the octatonic scale in *La Terrasse des audiences du clair de lune* and its relation to Stravinsky's octatonic practices, see van den Toorn, "Stravinsky: Reflections of Context and Analytical Method," pp. 189-195.

43. For an examination of the dual-role of this tetrachord, see van den Toorn, *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*.

44. Stravinsky and Craft, *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents*, p. 61.

45. These ballets actually represent the end of a tradition, beginning with Glinka's opera *Ruslan and Ludmila*, which employed this type of harmonic characterization.

noted the characterization of psychological states by harmonic means in *Pelléas et Mélisande*,<sup>46</sup> while Langham Smith relates the harmonic opposition within this opera to the symbolism connected with darkness and light.<sup>47</sup> However, the association of harmony and character within these systems is not fixed. This changes in Debussy's stage works beginning with *Khamma*, for they all incorporate wholly or in part Stravinsky's system of harmonic characterization. The Grand-Prêtre in *Khamma* is generally linked with the octatonic set while the ballet's title character is associated with either the whole-tone or octatonic sets in her mimed scenes.<sup>48</sup> In *Jeux*, the young man's diatonic music contrasts with the young girls' chromatic music, and in *La boîte à joujoux* the whole-tone motif of the pulcinella stands apart from the diatonic themes of the doll and the soldier. In fact, Debussy made the leit-motivic and leit-harmonic structure of the latter ballet explicit by prefacing the score with a list of characters and their related motifs. Finally, in the ballet *No-jia-li*, for which only sketches dating from January 1914 exist,<sup>49</sup> the little princess is associated with diatonic music while the palace guards who enforce silence in the kingdom are linked to an octatonic motif.<sup>50</sup>

Debussy also used chordal superimpositions early in his career, but a tentative exploration of chords related by semitone began only with the first book of piano preludes (Example 16). Such superimpositions suggest symmetric scales—and chromatic harmony as defined in this study—since the chromatic clashes between chord members audibly invoke the semitone interval that characterizes the chromatic scale; in fact, large subsets of the total chromatic can be formed. This becomes a more frequent and prominent feature of Debussy's works after 1910. The most striking example is the opening of the first piano étude ("Pour les cinq doigts") of 1915, where both G and F# major pentachords are superimposed to fill chromatically the ambitus of pitches between F# and D (Example 17a). More typically,

46. Richard Parks, *The Music of Claude Debussy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 163-186.

47. Richard Langham Smith, "Tonality of darkness and light," in *Claude Debussy: Pelléas et Mélisande*, by Roger Nichols and Richard Langham Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 107-139.

48. Khamma's adherence to her chromatic leit-harmony in mimed scenes and the frequent breaking of this leit-harmony in danced scenes create yet another reference to Stravinsky's early ballets. In *The Firebird*, leit-harmony is strictly maintained in mimed scenes while it can be varied in danced scenes; in this way, the harmonic characterization of the ballet is related to its formal structure. Debussy initiates this structure in *Khamma*, though in a less systematic fashion. For more information on the relationship between harmonic characterization and form in *The Firebird*, see McFarland, "Leit-Harmony," pp. 203-33.

49. Bibliothèque nationale (Paris), MS 17726.

50. These associations between stage character and harmony are not directly made in the sketches for this work but are implied in various ways. The theme of No-jia-li is labeled but left blank in the ballet's prelude, although the diatonic music that surrounds this blank measure certainly implies a diatonic theme for this character. Octatonic music appears later in the prelude, although it is not specifically associated with the palace guards. However, Orledge has linked this motif with these characters because of the figure's "aggressive rhythm," and presumably also because the guards appear on stage in the opening scene of the ballet. See Orledge, *Debussy and the Theatre*, pp. 186-205.

Example 12: Debussy, *Fleur des blés* (1880), mm. 27-32 (reduction).

Example 13: Debussy, *Brouillards* from the *Preludes for Piano Book II*, m. 1.

**Modéré**  
 extrêmement égal et léger  
 la m.g. un peu en valeur sur la m.d.

Example 14: Debussy, *Feuilles mortes* from the *Preludes for Piano Book II*, mm. 25-7

Minor-Third Related Triads

Octatonic Collection III

Example 15a: Debussy, *Jeux*, No. 23+5-6 (mm. 196-7).

On aperçoit le jeune homme  
 au fond à gauche, qui semble se cacher...

C Dorian

Example 15b: Stravinsky, *Petrushka*, No. 5+3-8.

**f**  
 tempo

G Dorian

Example 15c: Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*, No. 28+4-8.

B Dorian

**Example 16a:** Debussy, *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir* from the *Preludes for Piano Book I* (1907-10), mm. 3-5.

Musical score for Example 16a, showing piano accompaniment for 'Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir' from the Preludes for Piano Book I (1907-10), mm. 3-5. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord.

**Example 16b:** Debussy, *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir*, mm. 18-19 (reduction).

Musical score for Example 16b, showing a reduction of piano accompaniment for 'Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir' from the Preludes for Piano Book I (1907-10), mm. 18-19. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord.

**Example 17a:** Debussy, *Pour les "cinq doigts"* from the *Etudes Book I* (1915), mm. 11-12.

Musical score for Example 17a, showing piano accompaniment for 'Pour les "cinq doigts"' from the Etudes Book I (1915), mm. 11-12. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *p*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *p* and includes a fermata over the final chord. The text "(0 2 4 5 7) at T6" is written below the notes.

**Example 17b:** Debussy, *Brouillards*, m. 9.

Musical score for Example 17b, showing piano accompaniment for 'Brouillards' from the Etudes Book I (1915), m. 9. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord. The text "(0 4 7 9) at T6" is written below the notes.

Pitch Content=Set 7:21 (0 1 2 4 5 8 9) at T6

**Example 18a:** Debussy, *Brouillards*, mm. 3-4 (reduction).

Musical score for Example 18a, showing a reduction of piano accompaniment for 'Brouillards' from the Etudes Book I (1915), mm. 3-4. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord. The text "Superimposed Chords Related by: Tritone" and "Semitone" is written below the notes.

**Example 18b:** Stravinsky, *Perushka*, No. 50-3 - 50-2.

Musical score for Example 18b, showing piano accompaniment for 'Perushka' from the Etudes Book I (1915), No. 50-3 - 50-2. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord. The text "Superimposed Chords Related by Alternating Semitone and Tritone" is written below the notes.

**Example 19a:** Debussy, *Pour un tombeau sans nom*, from the *Six Épigraphe antiques* (1914), mm. 13-15.

Musical score for Example 19a, showing piano accompaniment for 'Pour un tombeau sans nom' from the Six Épigraphe antiques (1914), mm. 13-15. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a delicate piano texture with arpeggiated chords and a melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking is *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with *pp* and includes a fermata over the final chord. The text "Chordal Superimposition by Semitone A1/C" is written below the notes.

Example 19c: Stravinsky, Introduction to the Second Part of *The Rite of Spring*, mm. 1-2.

Debussy superimposes chords with fewer members, as in the simultaneous presentation of the triads G/B/D and G<sup>b</sup>/B<sup>b</sup>/D<sup>b</sup>/E<sup>b</sup> in the first episode of the prelude *Brouillards*, thus leaving gaps in the chromatic space (Example 17b). While the étude is more literally chromatic, both examples share the same underlying idea: the chromatic clash between chord members.

After the first book of piano preludes, Debussy began to incorporate superimposed semitone-related chords more forcefully, but the difference is one of degree rather than kind. Stylistic development alone might explain this change. However, Debussy's praise of Stravinsky's ballets, his quotations from these works, the distinct changes in his octatonic vocabulary, and the organization of his harmonic oppositions, all point to an undeniable Stravinskian influence. And each facet of this influence centers around chromatic harmony. It therefore seems likely that Stravinsky also prompted Debussy's increased interest in superimposed semitone-related chords, which

is evident in the works he composed between 1911 and 1915. Indeed, it is inconceivable that "Brouillards" could have been written without knowledge of *Petrushka* (Example 18),<sup>51</sup> or that passages from "Pour un tombeau sans nom" and the *Berceuse héroïque* are not directly indebted to the second part of *The Rite of Spring* (Example 19).

While Stravinsky's influence on Debussy is profound, the French composer never lost his individual voice. The most striking difference between these two musicians is in their rhythmic language, Debussy's being flexible and subtle while Stravinsky's is mechanical and conspicuous. Clearly, Debussy never became a mere imitator of Stravinsky. His borrowings from the younger Russian composer decreased, but did not eliminate, the distance between them.

In order to isolate precisely what Debussy found most worthy of emulation, one need look no further than Debussy's letter of November 9, 1913, in which he acknowledged receiving a score of *The Rite* and praised its composer for having "enlarged the boundaries of the permissible in the empire of sound."<sup>52</sup> Clearly, to a composer as interested in harmony as Debussy, Stravinsky's harmonic language—more radical than Debussy's yet still in accord with his aesthetics—must have been deeply compelling. Other aspects of Stravinsky's style which represented a more fundamental break with Debussy's practice, including the sparse orchestration of *Petrushka* and the rhythmic differences noted above, must have been much less intriguing to the French composer, or at least, less enticing.

#### Debussy and "The Anxiety of Influence"

The "influence as generosity" theory, used in the examination above, portrays Debussy as having selectively adopted what he most admired in the Stravinsky scores he knew. Bloom's more recent theory of "influence as anxiety," on the other hand, views matters differently. As Taruskin has pointed out, Bloom rejects the two points fundamental to the "generosity" theory, access and similarity;<sup>53</sup> he considers the former, source study,<sup>54</sup> and the latter, 'weak.'<sup>55</sup> Due to its radically different approach to an old problem, the application of Bloom's theory to music has immeasurably broadened the topic of musical influence. Yet the explanatory power of Bloom's theory, like any other, depends upon the situation under consideration. In general, every

51. The partitioning of the *complexes sonores* at the opening of *Brouillards* is changed slightly in Example 18a in order to clarify the relationship between the two superimposed chords. Although the second chord is an exact transposition of the first, in Debussy's score the lowest notes of both hands are switched in order to maintain accountability to C major in the lower line, an idea central to this work. Nevertheless this notational change does not obscure the audible superimposition of chords related by tritone common to both of the opening *complexes sonores* which contrasts with the following two *complexes*, constructed from semitone-related chords.

52. Stravinsky and Craft: *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*, p. 52.

53. Taruskin, "Revising Revision," p. 117.

54. "My motive is to distinguish once and for all what I call 'poetic influence' from traditional 'source study'." Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 116.

55. "Poetic influence, in the sense I give to it, has almost nothing to do with the verbal resemblances between one poet and another." Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 19.

such theory tends to apply most readily to a particular repertory, typically the one which sparked the theorist's initial interest and whose idiosyncrasies, in turn, may have shaped the theory. Applying the same theory to a foreign repertory may therefore yield less successful results.<sup>56</sup>

Differences between Bloom's "influence as anxiety" theory and the "influence as generosity" theory, which has thus far seemed particularly well suited to the study of Stravinsky's influence on Debussy, begin at the highest level of abstraction—the true topic of poetry, or in our case, music—and proceed to more specific issues. The following comparison of these two theories will pursue this course in applying each theory to complementary passages from *Khamma* and *Petrushka*.

It would be difficult if not impossible to establish the true topic of music for the "influence as generosity" theory since this question is so large as to encompass the fields of musical aesthetics, hermeneutics, philosophy, and semantics. However, for the "influence as anxiety" theory the true topic of poetry is clear: it is the anxiety of influence itself.<sup>57</sup> Bloom's theory therefore becomes a codification of the driving force behind poetry, rather than simply a tool with which to compare poetic similarity. And thus, the "anxiety of influence" contains an inherent artistic judgment—separating poets as either strong or weak, depending on their attitude towards the works of their predecessors—while the "influence as generosity" is concerned merely with establishing influence and not with measuring its success. Another fundamental difference between these two theories is in their respective views of the individual work. Under "influence as anxiety," poems are no longer treated as individual entities, but rather in terms of relations. Bloom's theory centers around intertextuality, with the relationship between works measured by six revisionary ratios. These ratios, each of which is associated with both a rhetorical trope and a psychic defense, represent the various interpretations of influence that stem from a strong poet mistreading his precursor. They are measured and judged as a final step, taken only after the completion of a careful analysis of the two works in question.

The appeal of Bloom's theory over the traditional approach to musical influence stems primarily from two factors: its dependence on intertextuality and its ability to uncover concealed influences. The advantage of intertextuality stems from the relation between art and its history. By excluding individual texts and admitting only relations between texts, Bloom's theory encompasses not only the text itself but also how the artist misreads his precursors. Therefore, history becomes a part of the poem, rather than something interpreted by historians.<sup>59</sup> By denying the idea of an

individual work, Bloom destroys the traditional concept of an artwork as a self-contained, organic whole.

The ability to reveal hidden influences hinges on Bloom's adoption of Freud's psychic defenses, which can hide the composer's true attitudes toward his predecessors. As Bloom put it, "all poets, weak and strong, agree in denying any share in the anxiety of influence."<sup>60</sup> The psychic defenses can help unravel the meaning behind some otherwise baffling statements made by certain composers. For example, Stravinsky's vehement denunciations of Scriabin's music cannot camouflage his obvious debt to this composer in the piano études and *Le Roi des étoiles*. With psychic defenses coming into play, Bloom's theory is completely insulated from criticism: an artist's admission of influence may shield the true unconscious influence, while on the other hand, the artist's denial of influence may indicate an anxious reaction that would invite further investigation.<sup>61</sup>

Because of these fundamental differences, the two theories of influence appear so dissimilar as to be mutually exclusive. And indeed, recent scholarship on the topic of musical influence has generally tended to choose one theory over the other. This is especially true of Korsyn and Straus, who encourage an exclusive reliance on "influence as anxiety" and use rhetoric implying that they consider Bloom's theory to have superseded all others.<sup>62</sup> The following comparison of the two theories will judge the strengths and limits of each by applying them to the same pair of works: *Khamma* and *Petrushka*.

Debussy wrote *Khamma* largely for financial reasons and thought little of it, although Charles Koechlin, who was responsible for much of its orchestration, considered it superior to *Jeu*.<sup>63</sup> While history has not judged this ballet quite so favorably, it is nevertheless historically important as the first to exhibit a pronounced Stravinskian influence, most clearly evident in its use of the *Petrushka* chord. In fact, establishing the twin points of access and similarity in the preceding analysis of these passages helped to establish Debussy's "generous" borrowings from Stravinsky (see Example 8 above). When the *Petrushka* chord is considered within a larger context in both works, Stravinsky's influence on Debussy becomes even clearer. The relevant

60. Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 10.

61. "An artist's own testimony . . . is the least reliable indicator as to his real creative forebears, the ones whose works he has perversely reinscribed, except insofar as disavowal, belokening anxiety, may arouse suspicion." Taruskin, "Revising Revisions," p. 118.

62. For example, Korsyn, after criticizing much contemporary analysis as being ahistorical and sterile, writes, "Bloom's theory, then, will give us an intertextual rhetoric, while providing a model for analyzing compositions as relational events rather than as closed and static entities and thus integrating deep structural analysis with history" (Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics," p. 15). Straus similarly dismisses "influence as generosity" as inadequate to the task of explaining the relationship between twentieth-century composers and their predecessors. For him, Bloom's theory is the key that unlocks the single concept that unifies the music of this century.

63. Koechlin judged *Khamma* superior "because it was less sectionalized, and at times more vigorous, without losing its inimitable Debussyist charm." Koechlin, *Debussy*, p. 36; translated in Orledge, "Debussy et 'La 'Girl' anglaise,'" p. 139.

passage from *Khamma* (mm. 152-67) begins just after the entrance of the title character and continues throughout her actions in the temple of Amun-Ra. The comparative passage from *Petrushka* (Nos. 48-52) occurs at the opening of the second tableau, which coincides with the shift from the mortal to the supernatural world. Both passages follow clear musical divisions and begin tentatively, build in intensity, and move quickly towards the *Petrushka* chord, which is prominent throughout the remainder of the excerpt.

Debussy clearly duplicates the *Petrushka* chord in instrumentation, register, and pitch-class; differences, which involve chord doublings and enharmonic notation, are relatively inconsequential. However, since there were tritone-related major triads before Stravinsky's, in both Ravel's *Jeu d'eau* (1901) and Strauss's *Elektra* (1906-08), the similarities between Debussy's and Stravinsky's *Petrushka* chords, remarkable as they are, cannot alone constitute proof of a specifically Stravinskian influence on Debussy. There are, however, two more subtle references to *Petrushka* in *Khamma*. First, Debussy accompanies the piano tremolo with a succession of three triads: major triads on F $\sharp$  and C together create octatonic accountability, while a G major triad, which lies outside of this collection, appears between them (see Example 8a). This same juxtaposition appears in Stravinsky's ballet just prior to "Petrushka's Curses," where the same three triads appear in piano arpeggios, the G triad once again serving as the temporary dominant of the C triad (see Example 18b). Second, both scores later transpose the tritone-related chords to A and E $\flat$ : in *Petrushka* this occurs as this character enters the stage in the third tableau, and in an equally prominent place in *Khamma*, at the moment when Khamma saves the city. These further correspondences reinforce the condition of similarity and further validate the "influence as generosity" theory.

These same two passages will now be viewed through the lens of Bloom's "influence as anxiety," beginning with some preliminary analysis.<sup>64</sup> This is necessary because, when applying the revisionary ratios, differences between the passages are just as important as similarities. Although the *Petrushka* chord appears prominently in both composers' scores, in Stravinsky's ballet it is heard in varied guises, creating ever-fresh sounds from this single sonority. Stravinsky also quickly deviates from and returns to this chord, further enlivening its appearances. The climax of this passage is

64. An important aspect of Bloom's theory should be mentioned here. A strict interpretation of Bloom's writings makes influence an unconscious act rather than a conscious decision ("No poet, I amend that to no strong poet, can choose his precursor; any more than any person can choose his father." Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 12). The selectivity of Debussy's borrowing from Stravinsky would seem to contradict this point. However, Joseph Straus's application of Bloom's theory allows the strong composer to choose his precursor, and Korsyn openly questions Brahms's claim that he had neither seen nor heard Chopin's Scherzo Op. 31 (Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics," pp. 16-17). Debussy's knowledge of Stravinsky's ballet does not therefore invalidate the application of Bloom's theory to these works. The same is true for the obvious similarity between the passages selected for comparison, both of which feature the *Petrushka* chord. Although similarity for Bloom does not necessarily indicate influence, both Straus and Korsyn apply Bloom's theory to works with obvious connections.

this delayed until No. 51 ("Petrushka's Curses"). By contrast, Debussy invokes the *Petrushka* chord in a more blatant fashion: it immediately provides the climax of this passage and displays only minimal variety in its orchestration, texture, and embellishment. Only the trumpet fanfare heard above the chord animates the passage. This static presentation of the *Petrushka* chord is then dropped as quickly as it appeared, setting the stage for the first of Khamma's three dances, which follows immediately.

The next step in a Bloomian analysis is to interpret the type of "misreading" of one artist by the other. This involves finding the appropriate revisionary ratios to categorize the type of influence exhibited. Through these steps, not only is influence determined, but the quality of the later work is judged as well. This is because the revisionary ratios are applicable only to strong artists who confront the work of their predecessors, and therefore the anxiety of influence, in order to clear artistic space for themselves. Strong artists, in other words, can maintain their originality and style while simultaneously echoing an earlier work. Conversely, compositions by weak artists fail in this test; their compositions may be charming, but, being wholly derivative, they do not withstand or even warrant critical judgment.

One of Bloom's revisionary ratios is clinamen, which he associates with the rhetorical trope of irony and the psychic defense of reaction-formation. As Bloom explains, clinamen "appears as a corrective movement in [the later] poem, which implies that the precursor poem went accurately up to a certain point, but then should have swerved, precisely in the direction that the new poem moves."<sup>65</sup> Because the passage from *Khamma* is more understated than the corresponding passage in *Petrushka*, it is perhaps conceivable that this revisionary ratio could be used to describe Debussy's adoption of the *Petrushka* chord; however, the crucial element of irony is entirely absent in this passage. While Debussy clearly places Stravinsky's motive in a new musical context, its appearance in *Khamma* is as sincere as it was in *Petrushka*. It therefore seems that clinamen is not the revisionary ratio by which Debussy's work achieves its strength.

In accordance with Bloom's frequent pairing of revisionary ratios,<sup>66</sup> Joseph Straus points out that "clinamen, through the specific musical revisionary strategies by which it is worked out, frequently leads to what Bloom calls apophrades," which Straus then defines as "when a work fully assimilates and transforms its predecessor[.] . . . reorient[ing] our normal conceptions of chronology and influence."<sup>67</sup> Berg's borrowings from Bach in his Violin Concerto and from Wagner in his *Lyric Suite*, both of which are seamlessly incorporated into the serial structure of these works, are examples of this revisionary ratio. On the other hand, Debussy's borrowing from *Petrushka* in *Khamma* would convince few listeners, if any, that the chronology of these works was reversed. In fact, their chronology is all too

65. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 14.

66. Bloom begins to pair the revisionary ratios into dialectical pairs in his *A Map of Misreading*.

67. Straus, *Remaking the Past*, p. 134.

apparent, since *Khamma* sounds here like a hollow imitation of Stravinsky's ballet. Debussy apparently sought to duplicate the intensity of Stravinsky's ballet, although his style, by nature less direct and forceful than Stravinsky's, was inadequate to this challenge. The decreased intensity, as well as the brevity and static nature of the *Petrushka* chord in *Khamma*, also prevent the application of the revisionary ratio of tessaera, through which "the later poet provides what his imaginary ratio tells him would complete the otherwise 'truncated' precursor poem and poet."<sup>68</sup> Had Stravinsky written his ballet in reaction to *Khamma*, *Petrushka* would certainly be perceived as having extended and completed the material in Debussy's score, but since the chronology of these works is just the opposite, tessaera is inapplicable.

*Khamma*'s "hollow" sound could conceivably lead to the application of two other revisionary ratios: askesis, a type of self-curtailement, or kenosis, associated with a strategy of "emptying out." Askesis is more fully defined as a self-conscious estrangement from the precursor, and it is this revisionary ratio through which the strongest poetry is created. Debussy's usage of the *Petrushka* chord does not consciously separate itself from Stravinsky's ballet, but rather unsuccessfully attempts to invoke the same heightened affect. Askesis, then, does not seem to apply. Kenosis, on the other hand, seems like a better fit: it is associated with the psychic defenses of isolation, undoing, and regression, and the trope of metonymy (substituting an aspect or attribute for the thing itself). Straus, however, has convincingly associated kenosis in 20th-century works with antitromanticism, or a stripping away of expressive excess, as in Stravinsky's misreading of Tchaikovsky in *The Fairy's Kiss*.

One last revisionary ratio remains to be examined: daemonization, associated with the trope of hyperbole and the psychic defense of repression. As Korsyn explains, the relationship between these ideas is dialectical: "hyperbole exaggerates, and so produces a climax through intensification; repression makes this climax possible, through an 'unconsciously purposeful forgetting' of prior texts."<sup>69</sup> Bloom's original comments further clarify this issue by asking, "*What is being freshly repressed?*" What has been forgotten, on purpose, in the depths, so as to make possible this sudden elevation to the heights?<sup>70</sup>

Bloom's questions are germane to the analysis of another passage in *Khamma*, one that occurs later in the ballet, during Khamma's second dance. This passage, although musically distinct from the earlier one, is similar in certain important respects (Example 20). First, the dance excerpt is almost exclusively octatonic, accountable once again to collection III. Second, and most telling, the octatonic accountability is also established through tritone-related major triads. In contrast, however, Khamma's second dance does not contain the *Petrushka* chord but instead presents its two constituent triads as a melody that arpeggiates one chord in complete form—embellished with a

Example 20: Debussy, *Khamma*, mm. 242-44.

Example 21: Henri Rebert, *Traité d'harmonie*, 4th ed. (Paris: Colomblier, n.d.), p. 72.

lower chromatic neighbor (D#-E-G-C)—followed by its tritone-related chord, though lacking its fifth (G#-Bb). A six-note subset of the octatonic scale is again formed, although not the same subset as the *Petrushka* chord. Therefore, although strongly implying the *Petrushka* chord, this motif actually forms a different octatonic subset [6-228 (0 1 3 4 7 9) rather than 6-30 (0 1 3 6 7 9)].

Once harmonic support is given to this melodic figure, however, its relation to the *Petrushka* chord is clarified. In fact, the harmonic support Debussy uses here is—quite literally—a textbook example of tritone-related chords, now dominant seventh chords rather than triads (Example 21).<sup>71</sup> This voice-leading motion in Khamma's dance therefore clarifies the content of the melody it supports, clearly revealing the tritone-related chords embedded in this figure.

Bloom's questions regarding daemonization, quoted above, seem especially appropriate to the comparison of these two passages from *Khamma*. In Khamma's dance, the *Petrushka* chord, which was central to Debussy's initial musical borrowing from Stravinsky, is partially obscured and thereby repressed. This repression allows Debussy to use this material in a much less static manner than previously. Now, rather than sustain the same *Petrushka* chord unchangingly, Debussy transposes it through a cycle of

68. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 66.

69. Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics," p. 50.

70. Bloom, *Poetry and Repression*, p. 236.

71. Henri Rebert, *Traité d'harmonie*, 4th ed. (Paris: Colomblier, n.d.), p. 72.

minor thirds. In so doing, he presents in the space of a single measure what Stravinsky separated into distinct tableaux: the appearance of the *Petrushka* chord on all possible nodes of the same octatonic collection—in other words, on C/F# and E $\flat$ /A.

Both the psychic defense of repression and the trope of hyperbole are apparent here, making daemionization seem the appropriate description of the relationship between these passages. Yet one troubling fact thwarts this designation. Khamma's dance, while effective, still sounds derivative; even though it recasts and intensifies Stravinsky's original material, it still cannot escape from the shadow of Stravinsky's ballet. While Debussy has confronted the anxiety of influence more forcefully in this second passage, it still sounds more like Stravinsky than Debussy.<sup>72</sup>

The passages compared above, relatively typical of Stravinsky's influence on Debussy, represent a weak misreading of a precursor work. Bloom would therefore categorize Debussy as a weak composer, at least in his work influenced by Stravinsky, since Debussy generously adopts aspects of the Russian composer's style rather than appropriates these elements in works that confront and challenge those by Stravinsky.<sup>73</sup> Yet it is impossible to consider Debussy a weak composer.<sup>74</sup> Further, Debussy's "Stravinskian" compositions include some of his greatest works: the second book of preludes for piano and the ballet *Jeux*. "Influence as generosity" therefore seems the more fruitful approach to this musical relationship, since the investigations of access and similarity provide a basis for both establishing the influence and explicating its specific details. "Influence as anxiety," on the other hand, showed Debussy to be a weak composer and his borrowing from Stravinsky, strictly derivative. *Khamma* may not be one of Debussy's greatest works, but it represents a turning point in his career since it initiated a string of Stravinsky-influenced compositions that culminated in the ballet *Jeux*. Bloom's theory would dismiss such a work, and it cannot therefore entirely displace the traditional approach. Indeed, the goal of this comparison was to show the danger of relying on any single theory of musical influence since, like theories of musical analysis, each has particular strengths and weaknesses based on its fundamental perspective. Further, just like theories of analysis, theories of influence are applicable to varying degrees depending on the musical context under consideration. The single work chosen for this study was best viewed through the traditional theory of

72. A possible exception among Debussy's Stravinskian works is *Brouillards*, which could represent a tessera of the second tableau of *Petrushka* since it works out the superimposition of chords related by tritone and semitone more systematically.

73. "It does not happen that one poet influences another, or more precisely, that one poet's poems influence the poems of another, through generosity of the spirit, even a shared generosity. But our easy idealism is out of place here. Where generosity is involved, the poets influenced are minor or weaker; the more generosity, and the more mutual it is, the poorer the poets involved." Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 30.

74. Boullez thought that twentieth-century music began with the *Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Pierre Boullez, *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 267. And Stravinsky himself said that "the musicians of my generation and I myself owe the most to Debussy." Stravinsky and Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*, p. 48.

influence. Thus, while Bloom's "influence as anxiety" theory has become the preferred vehicle for exploring musical influence in recent scholarship, this study suggests that it should not be the only one.

However, one element of Bloom's theory, not explicitly part of the "influence as generosity" theory, is most revealing when considering Debussy's reaction to Stravinsky: the element of competition. This struggle between an artist and his model is implicit in Bloom's theory ("Poetic strength comes only from a triumphant wrestling with the greatest of the dead, and from an even more triumphant solipsism"<sup>75</sup>), and it is certainly present in the Debussy-Stravinsky relationship. In fact, Debussy's competitive feelings had important consequences for the evolution of this influence.

### The End of Debussy's Stravinskian Influence

Debussy was enthusiastic about *The Rite* from the time of his four-hand performance of the work with Stravinsky up until its premiere. Then, however, his opinion apparently changed, for he described it sarcastically on the day of its first performance as "primitive music with all modern conveniences."<sup>76</sup> His criticisms of the work quickly became even more cutting, for the following day he remarked "c'est tout de même pas comme ça qu'on fera de la musique française."<sup>77</sup> Finally, shortly after the outbreak of war, he told Ernest Ansermet:

you know how much I admire *Petrushka*, but *The Rite* disturbs me. It seems to me that Stravinsky is trying to make music with non-musical means, just as the Germans apparently pretend to be able to make beef steaks out of sawdust. Negro drumming is not really music after all.<sup>78</sup>

Debussy's attitude towards *The Rite* was likely colored by the relatively indifferent response to his own ballet, *Jeux*, just two weeks earlier. An element of jealousy was certainly apparent to Stravinsky, who commented wryly, "Debussy, who might well have been upset by *The Rite* was, in fact, much more upset by the success of it a year later."<sup>79</sup> Whatever the reason, the French composer's competitive spirit was broken. Faced with a score as revolutionary as *The Rite*, which Stravinsky said owed more to Debussy than to anyone else,<sup>80</sup> but which obviously carried his ideas to new extremes, Debussy must have realized that he had been eclipsed as the leading musical figure in Paris. This change in status is reflected in the letter with which he

75. Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 9.

76. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, p. 270.

77. "That's not at all how French music will be made." Jean-Aubry, "Debussy et Stravinsky," p. 109.

78. White, "Stravinsky and Debussy," p. 3. This description of *The Rite* was apparently not unique, for according to Stravinsky, Debussy persisted in calling the ballet "une musique nègre." Stravinsky and Craft, *Memoirs and Commentaries*, p. 81.

79. Igor Stravinsky, "A propos 'Le sacre du printemps,'" *The Saturday Review*, 26 Dec. 1959, p. 30.

80. Stravinsky and Craft, *Expositions and Developments*, p. 142.



thanked the Russian composer for the score of the ballet. In contrast to the tone of superiority in his previous correspondence with Stravinsky there is now a sense of capitulation:

For someone like me, who is on his way down the other side of the hill but still in possession of an ardent passion for music, there is a special satisfaction in declaring how much you have enlarged the boundaries of the permissible in the Empire of Sound.<sup>81</sup>

Despite his ambivalence toward *The Rite*, Debussy's respect for Stravinsky never diminished and he continued to express admiration for Stravinsky's genius. Months after the premiere of *The Rite*, when Stravinsky was recovering from typhoid, Debussy expressed his deep concern: "J'espère que vous êtes tout à fait remis? Il le faut, parce que la musique a trop besoin de vous."<sup>82</sup> And since Debussy criticized *The Rite* behind Stravinsky's back,<sup>83</sup> never to his face, it is significant that he also continued to compliment Stravinsky to others, as when he proclaimed him "the most wonderful orchestral technician of his age."<sup>84</sup>

Despite this enduring admiration, Debussy's comment regarding *The Rite of Spring*—"c'est tout de même pas comme ça qu'on fera de la musique française"—can be read as a personal manifesto. While Debussy's preoccupation with a chromatic language was directly linked to his recent familiarity with and enthusiasm for Stravinsky's music, a movement away from this chromatic style begins in *La Boîte à joujoux*, the first score he began to compose after expressing misgivings about Stravinsky's style. Because this process was gradual, the Russian composer's influence is still audible in this score and those that followed. Indeed, echoes of *The Rite* in *La Boîte à joujoux*, the *Berceuse héroïque*, and *Pour un tombeau sans nom* were detailed above (see Examples 10, 11, and 19 above). However, the prominent use of chromatic harmony that defines Stravinsky's influence on Debussy gradually diminished in importance. It appears in no. III of *En blanc et noir*, dedicated to Stravinsky, but in neither of the other two movements, nor in the other works of 1915 (the *Études* and first two Sonatas). Debussy signaled this break with some of his nastiest remarks about Stravinsky, though he did so privately, in two letters to his friend

Robert Godet. Around the time that he was completing his second sonata (October 1915), Debussy observed that "Stravinsky himself is leaning dangerously towards Schoenberg."<sup>85</sup> And only months later, while maintaining admiration for the Russian composer, Debussy attacked not only Stravinsky's music, but the man himself:

I've seen Stravinsky recently... He says: my *Firebird*, my *Sacre*, like a child saying: my top, my hoop. And that's exactly what he is—a spoiled child who, from time to time, cooks a snook at music. He's also a young savage who wears noisy ties and kisses the ladies' hands while treading on their toes. When he's old, he'll be intolerable. That's to say, he won't be able to tolerate any music; but, for the moment, he's amazing. He claims to be a friend of mine because I've helped him climb a ladder from which he can hurl grenades—not all of which explode. But, as I say, he's astonishing.<sup>86</sup>

To explain the growing distance between the two composers after 1913, Robert Orledge has pointed to differences in their aesthetics.<sup>87</sup> Orledge also notes Stravinsky's superior marketing skills, his lack of dependence on a single publisher, his extroverted nature, and his financial acumen.<sup>88</sup> These factors may also have played a role, but more decisive was Debussy's feeling that he could no longer compete with the younger composer. In fact, Orledge suggests that Debussy's turn to neoclassicism was his way of avoiding direct comparison with Stravinsky's ballets.<sup>89</sup> The most dramatic anecdotal evidence of Debussy's frame of mind at the crucial juncture is an eyewitness account of his demeanor at a performance of *The Rite*:

Debussy's face was distressed. It showed a grief impossible either to master or to hide: that of the creator before whom opens a world wholly different from his own: the sadness of being left behind, the suffering of the artist in the presence of new forms which reveal his place and his limits.<sup>90</sup>

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*, p. 312.

87. Of particular interest to Orledge is Stravinsky's lack of interest in "the dream-world of the subconscious that meant so much to Debussy and which essentially belonged (with the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*) to the nineteenth century." Orledge, *Debussy and the Theatre*, p. 173.

88. Scott Messing mentions other factors that may have contributed to the growing rift between the two composers, although the incidents he cites all took place well after their friendship had become strained. Stravinsky's criticism of Impressionism in an interview given before August 1915 may have been reported to Debussy, while Stravinsky's criticism of *Le martyre de Saint Sébastien* in a letter to Diaghilev from November 16, 1916 definitely reached Debussy's ears. See Scott Messing, *Neoclassicism in Music: From the Genesis of the Concept through the Schoenberg/Stravinsky Polemic* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 89-91.

89. Orledge, *Debussy and the Theatre*, p. 299.

90. Igor Stravinsky, *Themes and Conclusions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), p. 177, citing Henri-René Lenormand.

81. Igor Stravinsky, *Selected Correspondence*, ed. Robert Craft, vol. 3 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), p. 7.

82. "I hope that you are completely recovered? You had better be, since music needs you too much." Stravinsky *et al.*, *Avec Stravinsky*, p. 201.

83. Indeed, in spite of his misgivings about the Russian composer, Debussy dedicated to him the last of his Caprices *En blanc et noir*. Stravinsky became aware of the French composer's criticism of him and his music only when his read Debussy's published letters:

After reading his friendly and commendatory letters to me (the liked *Petroushka* very much) I was puzzled to find quite a different feeling concerning my music in some of his letters to his musical friends of the same period. Was it duplicity, or was he annoyed at his incapacity to digest the music of the *Sacre* when the younger generation enthusiastically voted for it?

Stravinsky and Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*, p. 48.

84. Lesure and Nichols, *Debussy Letters*, 306.

Prior to this realization, Debussy had enthusiastically embraced Stravinsky's music and allowed it to influence his own musical thought. Subsequent to it, he began to distance himself from the Russian composer—and in the process, reinvent himself.

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## CHRONIQUE

Dans le cadre du 4<sup>e</sup> Concours international de piano XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, qui s'est déroulé à Orléans du 21 au 29 février 2000, une petite exposition Debussy a été présentée au Musée des Beaux-arts de la ville (7 février-5 mars), à laquelle notre Centre a participé.

*Novva*, une œuvre pour douze solistes, chœur et orchestre de Régis Campo "sur des textes de Claude Debussy" a été créée et exécutée du 20 mars au 20 mai 2000 à Paris et dans divers lieux de la région parisienne, par l'Ensemble Soli-Tutti et l'ensemble instrumental Futurs-Musiques, sous la direction de Denis Gautheyrie.

### SOTTISIER

Deux représentations de *Pelléas* au piano ont été données au Théâtre Impérial de Compiègne les 4 et 12 mars 2000, sous la direction artistique de Pierre Jourdan ("1<sup>re</sup> version pour piano seul, 1893-1895"). Le programme du spectacle comprenait l'étonnante justification suivante de cette version, que nous donnerons sans commentaire :

"L'orchestration de *Pelléas et Mélisande* a été faite par Busser et Messager. Mais tellement revue par Debussy qu'on n'a pas le droit de dire qu'elle n'est pas de Debussy".  
(Extrait de *Cinquante ans d'occupations* de Sacha Guitry, Presses de la Cité – Collection Omnibus, 1998, chapitre "Portraits et anecdotes", p. 499)

### PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE

#### AUSTRALIA

Opera Australia : Sydney Opera House  
17, 23, 29, 31 October 1998 (1st production of this opera in Sydney)  
Conductor : John Fiore (USA)  
Director : Patrick Nola (Australia)