Paul Creston Sonata op.19 for Eb Alto Saxophone and Piano

A performative, analytical and rhythmic approach

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Alla mia famiglia:
mamma, papà, Jessica e Paola

Table of Contents

Foreword

I would like to convey my sincere appreciation and thankfulness to Professor Yves Senden and Professor Hans de Jong for their valuable insights into the subject, their patience as well as for their constant willingness to help.

I would also like to give special thanks to the Professor Joseph Murphy and Dr. Anthony LaBat for their promptness to help me in the research of essential sources, without which this paper would not have been written.

I would like to thank my cousin Nicole di Sandro for her review of my final draft. Your comments have improved the correctness and readability of this thesis.

Last but not least, I would like to thank to all the people which gave me suggestions, remarks, appreciations, encouragements.

Introduction

This study has two different purposes. First, it aims to obtain an analytical prospectus of the *Sonata op. 19 for Eb Alto Saxophone and Piano* written in 1939 by the composer Creston investigating, throughout an overall analysis, all the features of this work - the formal structure of each movement, the masterful usage of the harmony and the melody and especially the rhythm. The analysis's objective is to reach a full musical understanding of the piece, which should be reflected in my performance practice. The second purpose of this paper is to obtain guidelines for the saxophone performance: this objective is explored through an analytical and rhythmical approach to the saxophone's melody of the *Sonata*, employing the research on the rhythm contained in the Creston's textbook *Principles of Rhythm*. In fact, I am going to use the textbook for both my objectives: for integrating the formal analysis of the piece and to achieve the mentioned guidelines for the performance.

In the first chapter I am going to describe the biography of Paul Creston, offering a general view of the main characteristics of his music - in order to prepare the reader to the specific features of the *Sonata*. Moreover, in this chapter I am going to introduce the composer's point of view towards the rhythm.

In the second chapter I am going to report the current sources and manuscripts of the *Sonata* - indicating their dating and location – in order to offer the terms of reference for further studies on this subject.

The third chapter is the widest of this paper: first, it informs about the genesis of the *Sonata* with an historical overview - the earliest recordings, the first performance etc. Second, it opens to the analysis of the piece, starting from an analytical glance on the formal structure and then, going deeper into the analysis of each movement: investigating the form, the harmony and the tonalities, the melodies, and the rhythm. I am going to explain specific composition's mechanisms and devices regularly used by Creston. Moreover, every remark is punctually linked to the score, which contains further details as well.

The fourth chapter focuses on an analytical approach to the rhythm of the saxophone's melodic line: practically the 'performative analysis' based on a rhythmical approach. It wants to prove how a rhythmical analysis of the phrasing can guide and help the performer: this aim is reached, as I said, obtaining crucial information from the Creston's textbook *Principles of Rhythm*. I am going to defend my argumentation offering a few examples taken directly from the analysis of the *Sonata*. Therefore, this chapter is specifically addressed to the field of performance.

The urge to not trivialize in terms of simple and direct correspondence the relationship between 'analysis' and 'performance' inspired me to write the fifth and last chapter. First, I am going to briefly trace some of the considerations formulated since nowadays on this complicate relationship, in which I am going to include my contributions. Moreover, the presence in this paper of two types of analysis - the 'formal analysis' of the third chapter and the 'performative analysis' of the fourth chapter - suggests the possibility of a reflection on their single contribution to the 'performance', carrying out a theoretical comparison.

1 A wide glance to the composer: Paul Creston (1906-1985)

The composer Cowell referred about a letter that Creston sent to him in 1948, wherein he affirmed that «everyone should compose and that musical compositions should be a definite course in our educational system, as much as history and mathematics, without deeming it a special privilege of the professional composers». Immediately after, he continues saying that «musical composition is as vital to [his] spiritual welfare as prayer and good deeds; just as food and exercise are necessities of physical health, and thought and study are requisites of mental well-being»[1].

Reading these declarations, it is possible already to glimpse the profound philosophy of Creston, grew after years of intensive studies and research, which will be summarized in his textbook. Therefore, before delving into his music concept, it is fundamental to know about his life.

1.1 Biography and books

Creston was born in New York City on October 10 in 1906. Walter Simmons wrote one of the most comprehensive biography of the composer; in his book *Voices in the wilderness* he writes that the story of Creston «has the qualities of an American myth»[2], because he achieved fame and success coming from a poor immigrant family. In fact, at that time his name was not Paul Creston, but Giuseppe Guttoveggio since his parents were emigrated from Sicily in 1905. He started since his earliest childhood to study music, but when he was fifteen, for economic needs he was forced to find a clerical job and to continue the studies for his own. Simmons refers that Creston, being motivated and ambitious, kept a grueling schedule fundamentally split between work and studies - not only music, but also literature, linguistic studies, foreign languages, philosophy etc. When two years later he got married, decided to change his name in Paul Creston.

During the 1930s, He became working as organist of St. Malachy's Church where he remained for thirty years, meanwhile he started to compose intensively. In these years He became even the piano accompanist of the saxophone virtuoso Cecil Leeson remembered as the first saxophonist overseas, who created the bases for the new school of saxophone[3]. Creston said about Leeson that he was grateful to him for have stimulated himself to write for the saxophone. He wrote for Leeson not only the *Sonata*, but also a *Suite for Alto Saxophone and Piano* - completed in 1935 - and a *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* - completed in 1941 and premiered three years later by the NY Philarmonic, with a young Vincent J. Abato as soloist.

In 1950s, the fame of Creston arrived overseas, so much so that the composer Shostakovich «named Creston as one of the American composers whose music was most admired in the Soviet Union»[4].

To the 1960s years belong the writing of his two first textbooks: *Principles of Rhythm*, published in 1964 and *Creative Harmony,* which was never published. *Principles of Rhythm* can be described as a summation of all his theories regarding the rhythmic elements in music, developed during many years. In fact, the textbook, which is primarily addressed to the students of compositions, aim to include the rhythm into the main musical components analyzed by composers - in the same ways as the counterpoint, the harmony, the melody and form - because, as Creston writes, until that moment «with the rhythm they have been relatively unconcerned».[5]

[1] Cowell (1948, 534-535).
[2] Simmons (2004, 191).
[3] Marzi (2009, 145-146).
[4] Simmons (2004, 197)
[5] Creston (1961, *introduction*).

After many guest-conducting tours around the world, Creston became professor of music at Central Washington State College, until his retirement in 1975. Just before his retirement, Creston finished other three textbooks: *Rational Metric Notation*, which was published several years later, *Rhythmicon*, a ten-volume series of graded rhythmic exercises for piano students and another one dubbed *Theory and Practice of Rhythmic Patterns*, in which are showed several rhythmic exercises for all the instruments.

In 1985, a few years after his latest compositions - *Sadhana, op.117*, a work for cello and chamber orchestra, and his *Symphony no. 6, op. 118* for organ and orchestra - he died for a kidney's cancer.[6]

1.2 The music of Creston

It seems necessary to expose general considerations about the music of Creston before introducing the reader into the analysis of his *Sonata*. Simmons classified Creston as a traditionalist - for the use of classical forms and his technique of thematic development - and a Neo-romantic - for the emotional expression of his work[7]. Looking into the main music characteristics of Creston's compositions, the rhythmic structure - as is obvious from his theoretical publications, is the primary element - which contributes to give the unity to his musical work. About Creston's music, Henry Cowell writes that:

all his music shows his care for continuity and consistency. He seems to have followed certain rhythmic usages that contribute to this kind of integration ever since he first tried his hand at composition» and added that those rhythmic devices «provide a great deal of variety in the continuity of the music. He usually uses several rhythms together, and it is in the different relationships between them that unobtrusive but definite shifts of tiny accents give constant delicate rhythmic change[8].

Not only the rhythm provides to give a complex texture to the Creston's music, but also the harmony, which is described by Creston himself as "pantonal", because of the constant change of the key-center.[9] What Carol Walgren writes about the Creston's piano music can be extended even to his work for Saxophone and Piano:

[his piano music] is characterized by strong melodic lines and vivid harmonies, with frequent use of dissonance and polytonality in both homophonic and polyphonic textures. […] The compositions are expressive of a variety of moods and emotions, and they manifest both lyrical and objective qualities. The pieces provide performance material of varying levels of technical difficulty[10].

In fact, it is not rare to find in the *Sonata* several dissonances and polychords which contribute to sophisticate and complicate the harmonic texture, making the tonalities often uncertain. Moreover, these harmonic features are often accompanied by virtuoso melodic lines played by both Saxophone and Piano. However, more specific characteristics are explained in the analytic chapters.

A final comment must be done on his treatment of the classical forms, since are used in the *Sonata op. 19* as well. Creston makes a traditional use of the classical forms, but taking distance from some aspects, like for example, the importance of the key relationship and the use of the thematic material in the recapitulation, which does not reproduce faithfully the thematic exposition. On the other hand, his development is largely in-depth. Simmons, writing about Creston's music in general, refers to a specific developmental technique used by Creston, which is called "tangential variation": a special device

[6] Simmons (2004, 201).
[7] Simmons (2004, 203).
[8] Cowell (1948, 535-537).
[9] Simmons (ibidem).
[10] Walgren (1975, 6).

consisting of reiterating the beginning of a theme, but changing its continuation. The mechanism creates an effect close to the jazz improvisations' feeling.[11] I found this device clearly used in the development of the *Sonata*'s I movement as I have described in the analytic chapters.

[11] Simmons (2004, 210).

2 Sources and manuscripts

The *Paul Creston Collection* was donated in 1987 to the University of Missouri-Kansas City Louise Creston, Paul Creston's wife. They are housed in *LaBudde Special Collections*, which have more than 300 manuscript scores. As we can read from their website[12], the collection is divided into 19 series that occupy 89 boxes. Apparently, all we have are two folders which contain a certain number of copies of the work. I could not directly consult the sources because of the long distance that separate me from the library mentioned, therefore all the information which I refer are available in the online catalogue of the library.

In the Serie I, *Manuscript Scores*, Box 1 Folder 14 it is contained the only second movement of the work transcribed for viola. It seems to be the only manuscript available related to the *Sonata*. Among the three pages written in ink, there are annotations, glosses in pencil as well. The dating indicated is post-1939.

In the Serie II: *Published Scores*, Box 26 Folder 24 there are contained three copies of the printed edition by Shawnee Press (Delaware Water Gap, Pa), which is the first and only extant edition of the work: in philology it is technically named *editio princeps*. The year of publication indicated is the 1945. All the copies are full score including the saxophone part and bear the dedication to the saxophone player Cecil Leeson. The *copy no.1* is an autograph since it contains a monogram of the composer in ink. Moreover, there are fingerings written in pencil. The *copy no.2* seems clean because there are no indications about its interior features. Lastly, the *copy no.3* differs from the others only for its translation in Russian.

[12] University of Missouri-Kansas City, University Libraries, *online Library catalog*, accessed on March 3, 2021, UMKC Libraries | Paul Creston Collection.

3 The Sonata op. 19 for Eb Alto Saxophone and Piano: genesis and formal structure

The *Sonata op. 19 for E-flat Alto Saxophone and Piano* is one of the standard pieces of the saxophone repertoire, as well as probably the «Creston's single most widely performed and best-known work»[13]. It was completed in 1939 and premiered the following year in New York City. Creston himself performed as piano accompanist of Cecil Leeson, a virtuoso saxophonist who commissioned the work. The oldest recordings that we have about this sonata are the performances by three of the major saxophonists: Vincent J. Abato - with Creston at the piano - Marcel Mule and Sigurd Rascher.

The *Sonata* comprises three movements: the first movement *With vigor* is in 4/4 meter with a tempo marking of 126 bpm for quarter note and it is conceived as a *Sonata-Allegro form*. Therefore, it includes two main themes: a first vigorous and proud theme and a second one quieter and more lyrical. The second movement *With tranquility* is in 5/4 meter with a tempo marking of 66bpm for quarter note and it is the most lyrical part of the whole piece: starts with a very «smoothly flowing melody» which sounds, as Simmons intuitively noticed, as a kind of development of the second theme of the first movement[14]. This warm melody reaches, with an intensive climax, its dramatic peak and then, it distends again its flow concluding on a *pp* dynamic. Lastly, the third movement *With gaiety* is in 2/4 meter with a tempo marking of 160 bpm for quarter note and it is conceived as *Rondo form*, often used as final movement in classical sonatas. It is very sparkling and vivacious, characterized by the irregular rhythmical patterns that create often polymetric sketches and overlapping interactions between the two instruments, which I am going to explain in this chapter.

3.1 Analysis of the first movement *With Vigor*

As I said, the first movement is conceived as a *Sonata-Allegro form*. Therefore, it is divided in three main sections: exposition, development, and recapitulation. The time signature is 4/4 and the tempo marking is 126 bpm for a quarter note, with the indication *With vigor*. The *exposition* occupies the first 27 measures wherein there are two themes and a short *codetta* of the exposition.

The *A theme* is declared in the beginning of the piece with a powerful entrance on a *f* dynamic with a strong pulse[15]. This theme can be divided into the sections of six measures each one. The composer used a few rhythmical drafts reiterated, imitated, and developed during the movement. Already the second phrase of the *A theme* is nothing more than the expansion of the rhythmic cell in measure 2, see Figure 1:

Figure 1: measures 2 and 7

[13] Simmons (2004, 229).
[14] Simmons (ibidem).
[15] For the nomenclature used see Paul Creston, *Principles of Rhythm* (1961, 11).

The saxophone is the leading actor, which starts the melody on the beat playing a D# Phrygian mode - enharmonically Eb - on a C7 chord played by the piano. This is the first cadence of the piece: in fact, the piano plays the notes Db, F and B - enharmonically Cb -, practically a Db7 chord who goes immediately to C7 chord. It is the triton substitution for the cadence G7 - C7. In this first part the Piano plays just rhythmical chords to drive harmonically the melody, while the saxophone introduces the *A theme*, see Figure 2.

In all piece the triton substitutions are widely used, making the harmony more sophisticated and constantly uncertain: the Creston's "pantonal" harmonic concept is immediately declared. Another example is in the second bar: a G7#5 – Gb7#5 (triton of C7) – D#min7b5 (enharmonically Ebmin7b5) second grade of Dbmin– C#7 enharmonically Db7 (triton of G7) – DΔ7. See Figure 2.

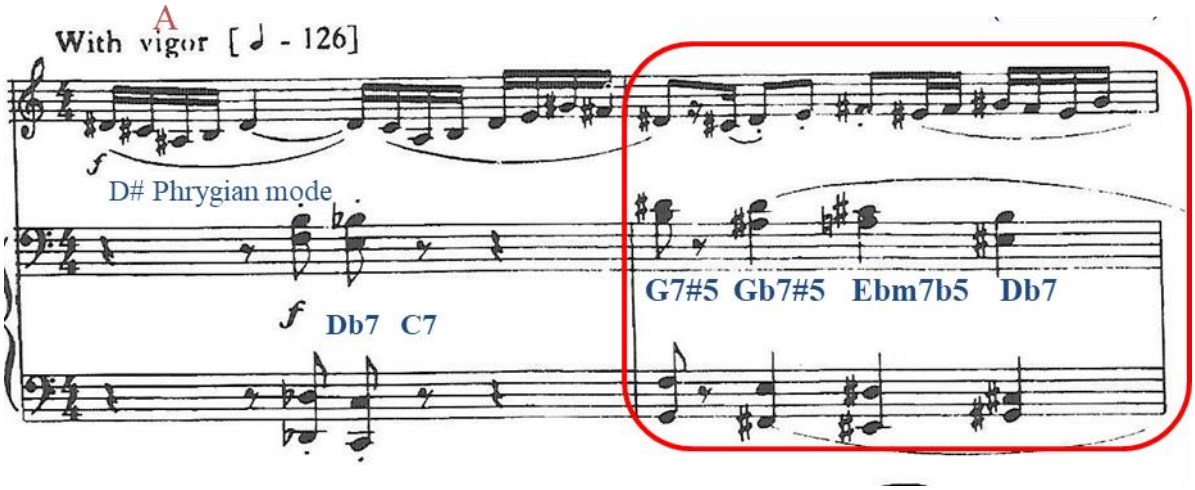

Figure 2, I mov., measures 1- 2

Another example can be found in bar 4, illustrated in Figure 3, where we see the first real cadence: A7 – Eb7 (triton of A7) – A7 – Eb7 (triton of A7) – DΔ7. See the following Figure 3

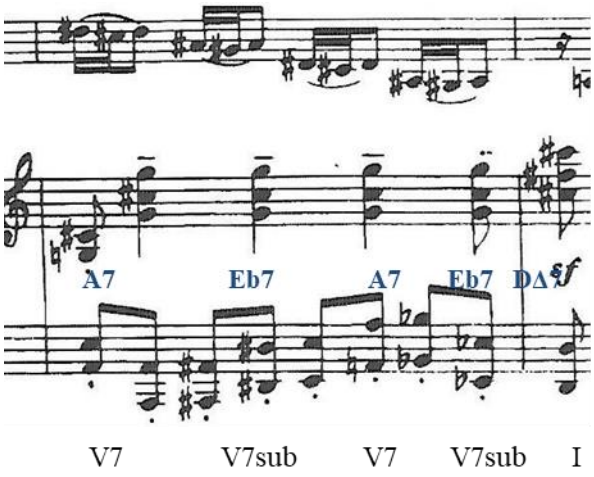

Figure 3, I mov., measure 4

A slight *ritardando* announces the beginning of the *B theme,* which starts on next measure on the *in time*. The *B theme* starts on bar 13 with the upbeat of the previous measure. The tonality is clearly E major, established with a E major-major seventh chord, as showed in Figure 4.

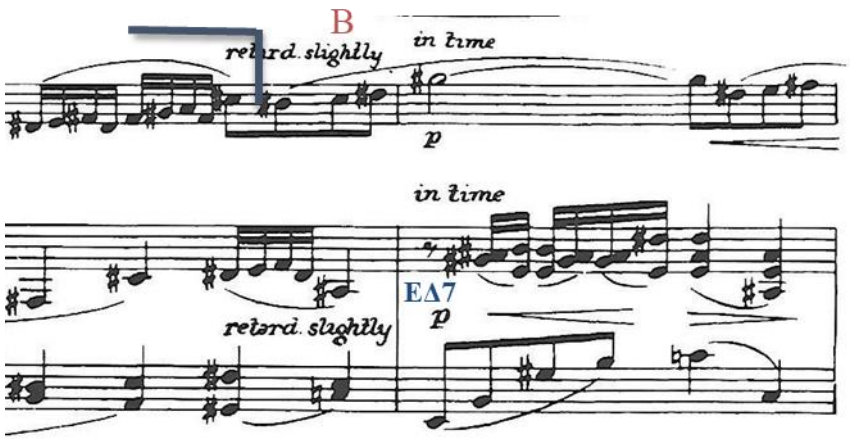

Figure 4: I mov., measure 12-13

As the first theme, the *B theme* can be divided in two phrases as well: the first phrase lasts for 4 measures wherein the saxophone plays a melody much more spread and wide respect to the *A theme*, meanwhile the piano plays with the left hand a very simple accompaniment of arpeggios with 4 eight notes and two quarter notes, the right hand builds up sixteen notes with an upbeat - which double the left hand's figuration of quarter notes - and two quarter notes.

The second part of the *B theme* starts on measure 17 with the upbeat in the previous measure. Moreover, this second phrase introduces a new musical material: the triplets, played by the saxophone.

The piano continues playing the same figuration but repeating the same musical material twice in same measure, see Figure 5.

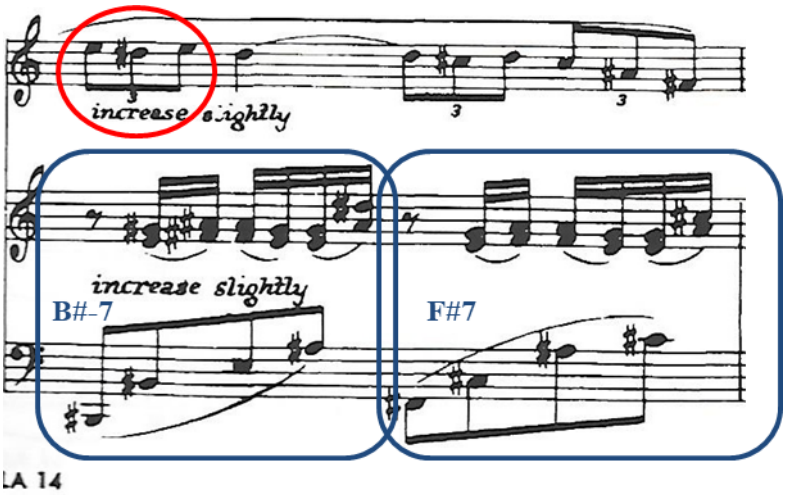

Figure 5: I mov., measure 17

This second part could be finished on measure 20, when harmonically it comes back to the EΔ7, after a cadence D#7 – EΔ7, wherein the saxophone ends its phrase with an *appoggiatura* on the note G# - major third of EΔ7 chord. Rather, Creston prolongs the phrase with an extension of two measures - bars 20 and 21; in the piano part this extension exposes a reversal of the material in the right hand, while the left hand keeps playing the arpeggios with the eighth notes. The saxophone part resumes musical material belonging to the *A theme*: this effect could be read as a signal which advises the listeners that the piece is moving to a new section. Once ended the phrase, the saxophone drops out, leaving the piano playing six measures more - bars 22-27 -, which can be considered as a *codetta* of the exposition. As the Figure 6 shows, the *codetta* played by piano recovers essentially the *B theme*, but in GΔ7.

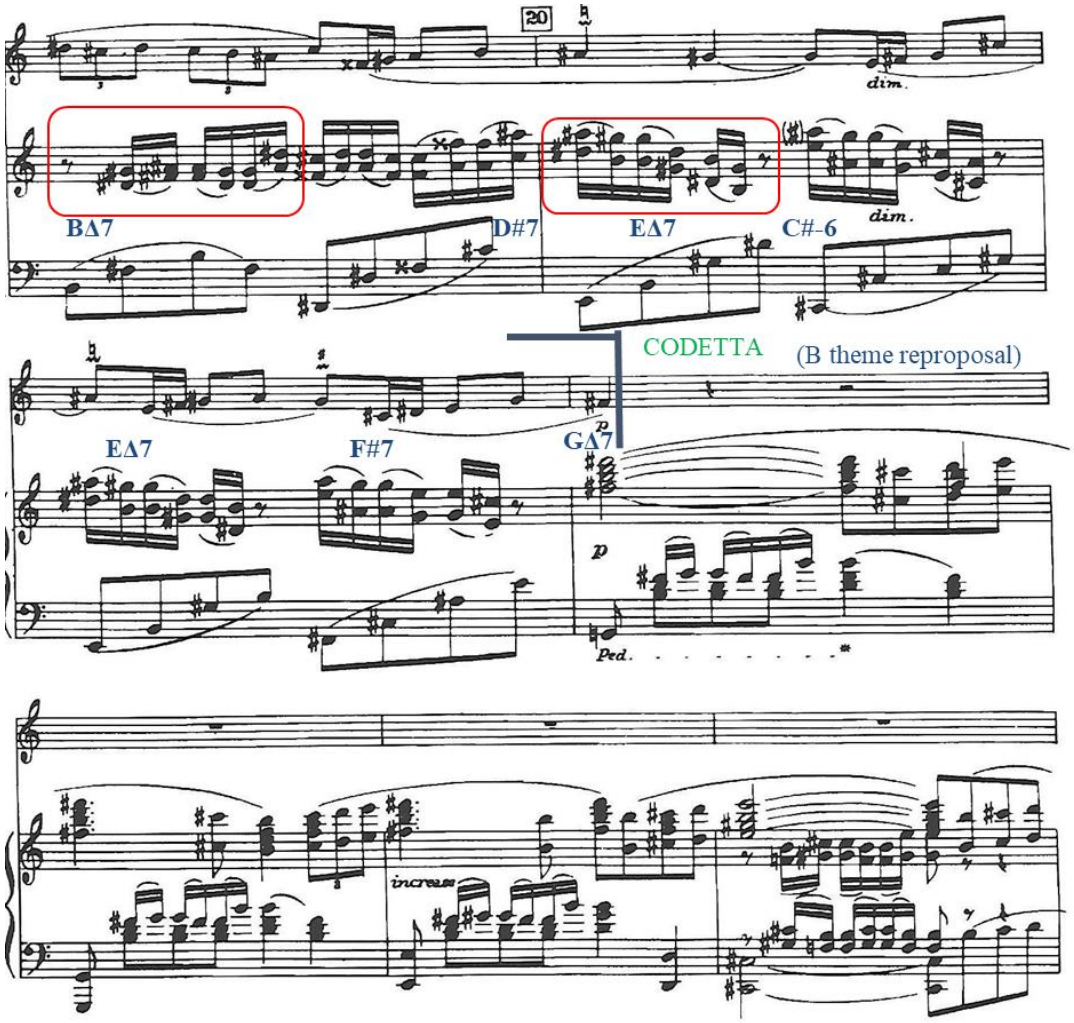

Figure 6: I mov., measures 19-25

In measure 27 the sixteen notes played by the piano with both hands throws the phrase of the saxophone, which essentially develops in a sequential progression the accompaniment's material of the *B theme*. This sequential melody that comes out here can be read as the "real" melody of the development, which can be found in all section, see Figure 7.

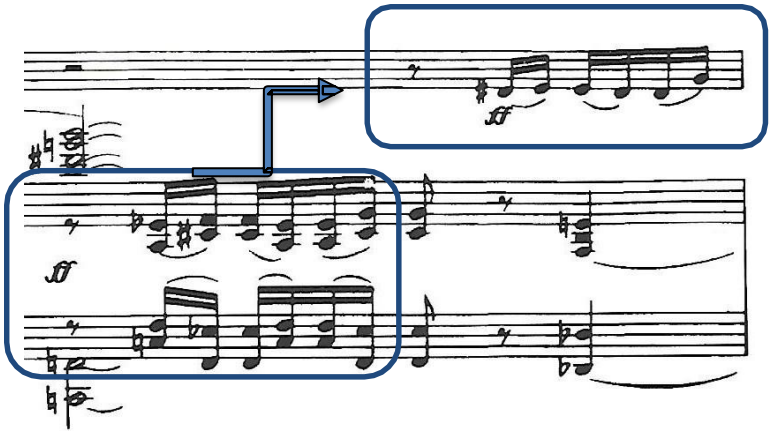

Figure 7: I mov., measure 27

The sequential melody played by the saxophone opens to the transition to the beginning of the *development* in measure 30. The development's melody results as a combination of two musical materials: the incipit of the exposition's *A theme* - which is reiterated twice before the "real" re-proposal of the *A theme* in measure 36 combined to the transitional melody. This head motif's repetition is a specific device used by Creston and called "tangential variation", already declared in the previous chapter 1.2. In this section, the piano accompaniment shows a various material: starts with a *pizzicato* figurations closer to the previous rhythmical patterns, but from measure 31 it can be read as variations to the first two cadential eight notes placed at the beginning of the piece - see Figure 2- , which doubles the first eight note, as showed in the following Figure 8.

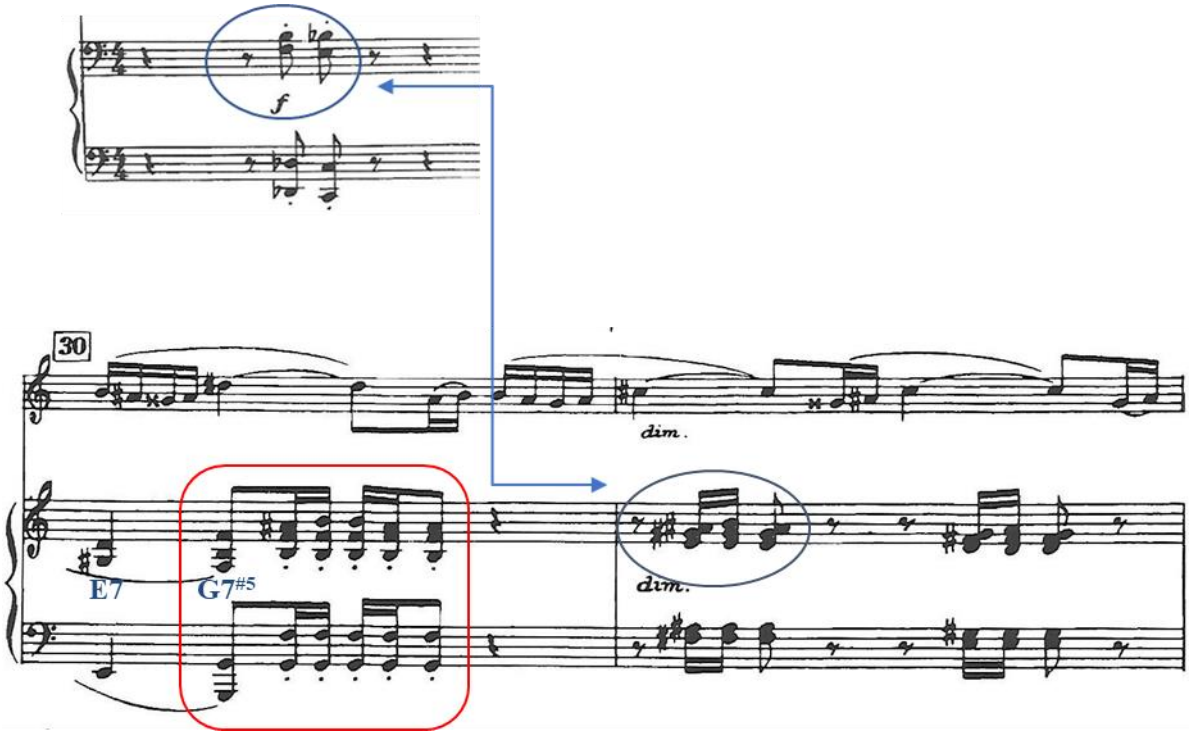

Figure 8: I mov., measures 30-31

Finally, it turns to the "original" rhythmical patterns in measure 34, not anymore as a cadence, but as its inversion: E- chord – BΔ7 repeated twice, then the piano silences for one measure before the reprise of the *A theme*; see the following Figure 9.

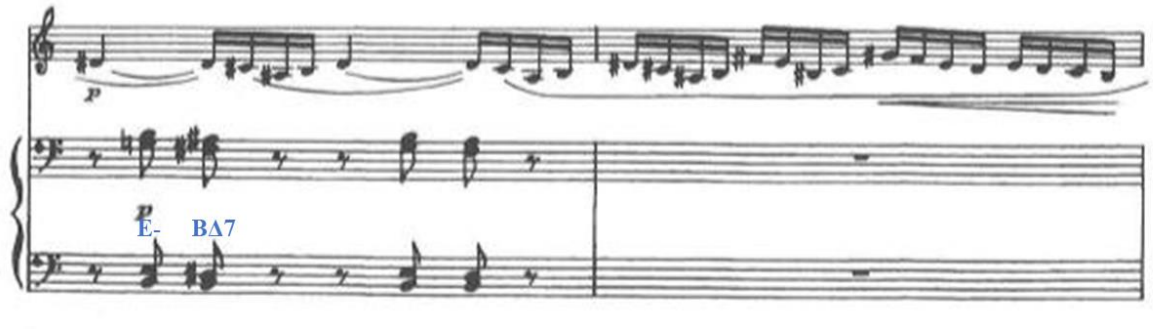

Figure 9: I mov., measures 34-35

In measure 36 it reproposes not only the incipit, but all the exposition *A theme* - see Figure 10. The harmony follows the same principles of the progression in the *A theme*'s beginning, with the only difference in the first two chords, which are surprisingly two triads: E+ chord and D#+ chord.

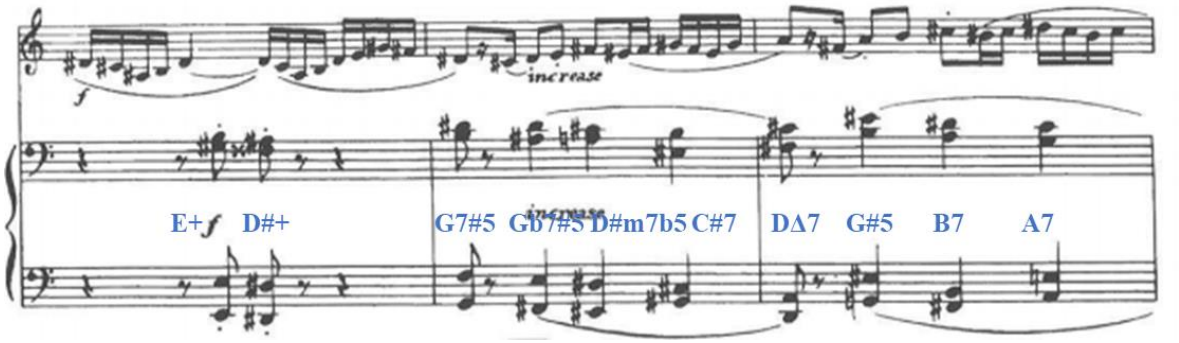

Figure 10: I mov., measures 36-38

In the following measures 39-40 the piano creates new figurations: after the BΔ7 chord, with both hands plays an interval of third major - B to D# notes - followed by a descending half scale in B+ that arrives to G#7 chord in measure 40. The following Figure 11 shows how these descending eight notes in unison are played with the *pizzicato* technique.

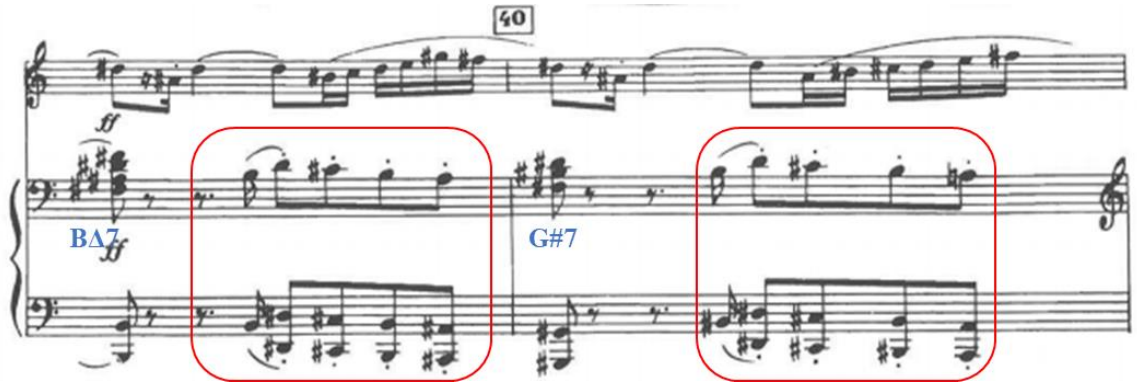

Figure 11: I mov., measures 39-40

In this section the interaction between the two instruments becomes more present through the several imitations. In measures 41-42 these imitations produce a chiastic shape in the score, as shown in the following Figure 12.

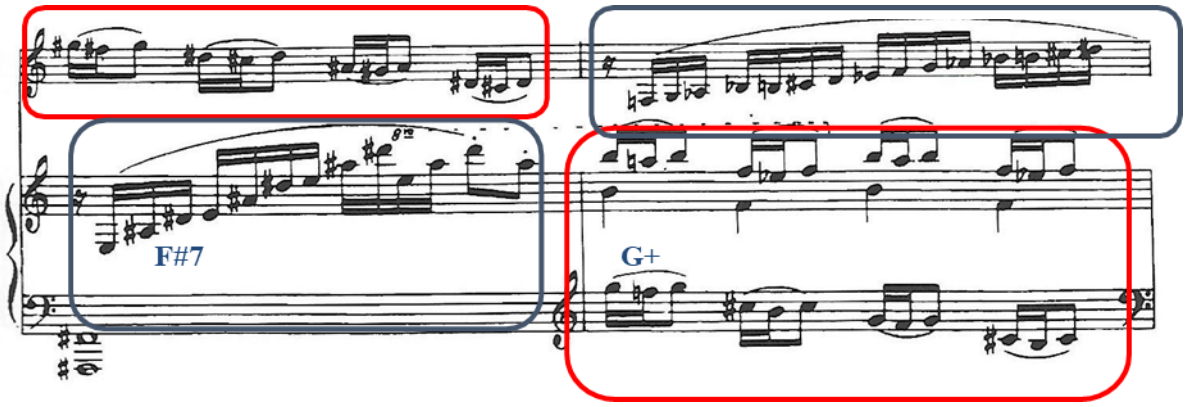

Figure 12: I mov., measures 41-42

So far, Creston developed basically two musical materials: the first phrase of *A theme* and the sequential phrase introduced in measure 27 - see Figure 7; from measure 43 he started to focus the development on other two musical materials: the second phrase of *A theme* and the extension's material of *B theme*, as results clear from Figure 13:

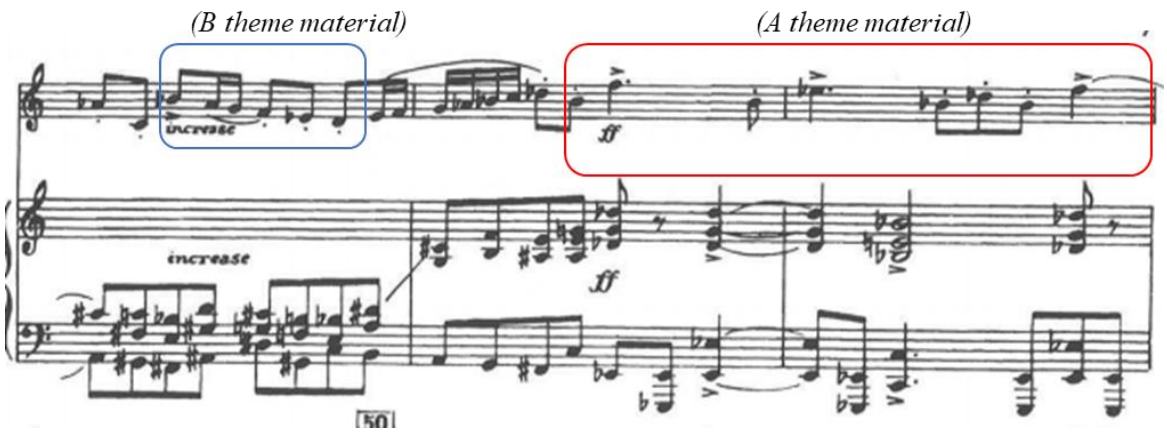

Figure 13: I mov., measures 46-48

Harmonically, in measure 43 - reported in the Figure 14 - there is a dominant chord progression: G7#5 – undefined chord – C#7 – A7 – B7 – C#7, which arrives to a D#7 chord in the following measure. Here the piano plays sixteen notes in the low register with both hands, creating a double voice distant a major tenth interval. This musical figuration is followed by uncompleted dominant seventh chords of eight notes.

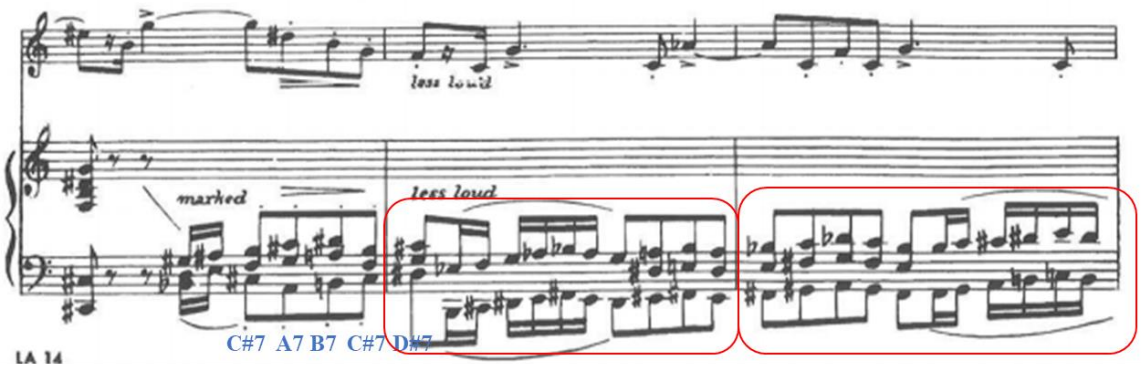

Figure 14: I mov., measures 43-45

Even in this development's section the interaction between saxophone and piano becomes highly noticeable. A clear example can be found in measures 52-53. This development's section finishes in measure 56: the saxophone, distending the musical materials, fades away with a slight retard. Here the piano starts a solo part which is clearly the *B theme* already played in measures 22-29, but now developed widely with a new color. The tonality is evidently in Db major, introduced by a plagal cadence, see the following Figure 15.

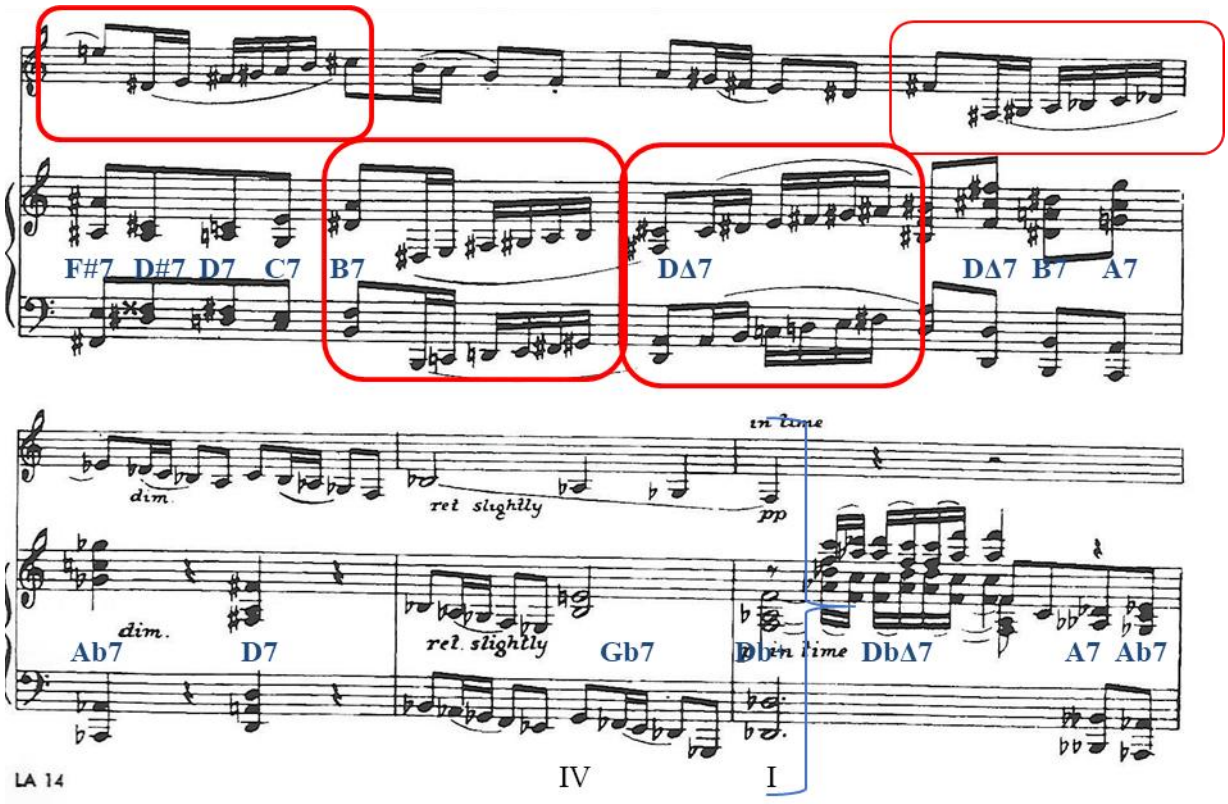

Figure 15: I mov., measures 52-56

A slight retard of the piano prepares the saxophone's entrance in measure 65, which softly introduce the *B theme* developed and integrated with the "sequential melody", as showed in Figure 16. The tonality changed to E major: the harmonical connection can be explained as an enharmonic third relation: Db major - enharmonically C# major - to E major, the third grade of C#. The saxophone lyrically plays a repetition of bars 13-14 but one octave lower, while the piano plays the known *B theme* accompaniment. The saxophone player should play this major third interval with a very rich sound on the *piano* dynamic, because it is the keynote of this passage in E major: in fact, it is reiterated three times in the first three bars.

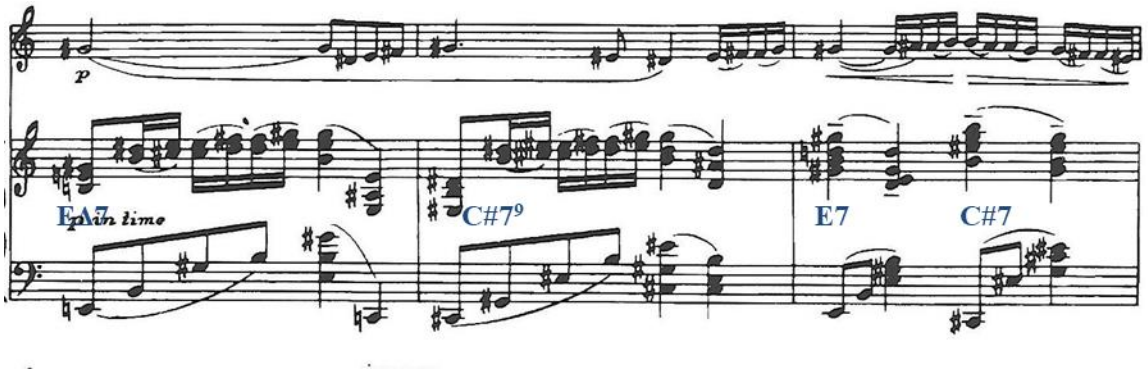

Figure 16: I mov., measures 65-67

In the following measures the harmony shows clearer cadences: substitute dominant seventh chord cadence and one perfect cadence G7 - C+, see Figure 17.

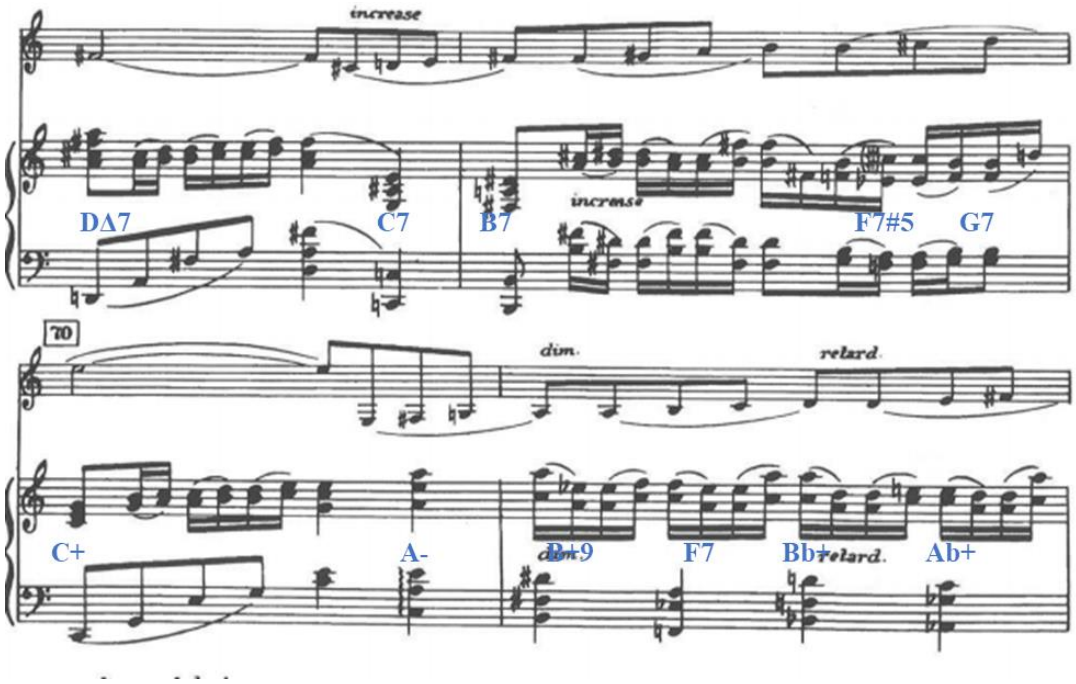

Figure 17: I mov., measures 68-71

On measure 72, the music reaches its lyrical peak with the second phrase of *B*, introduced by a cadence with the subdominant chord: Ab – G, with the upbeat in the previous bar. The harmony becomes clearer, unambiguously tonal. The Creston's fascination for the rhythm is clear also in this part, where the two instruments play together a polymetric figuration, which is three – in the saxophone melody - against two – in the piano voice. On this opening to G major seventh the performer should show all his expressiveness with a kind of *dolcissimo* feeling, see Figure 18.

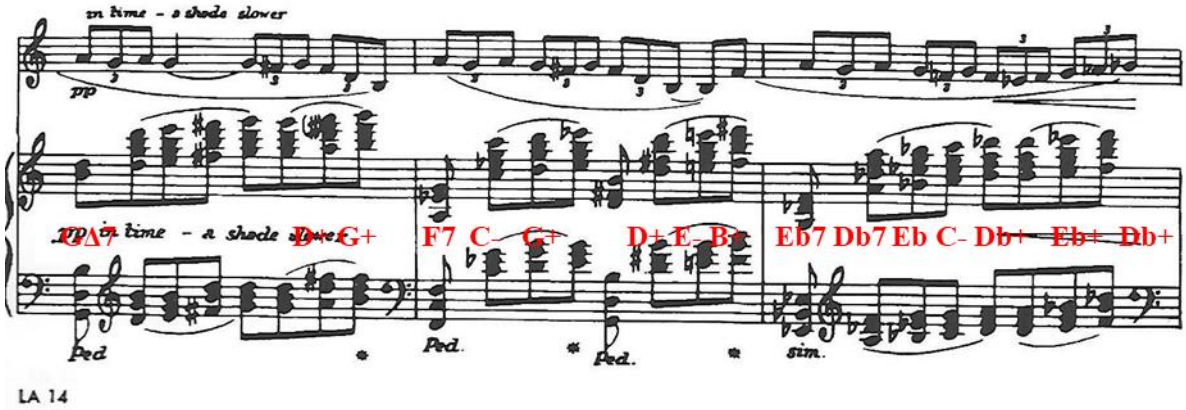

Figure 18: I mov., measures 72 - 74

In measure 80 the extension of the phrase of *B theme* is developed just reiterating the rhythmic pattern on several dominant seven chords. It gives the illusion to finish the phrase with a VI7 – VIIb7 – IΔ7 cadence, but then it extends the phrase re-starting with an IV7 chord. This musical material starts a transition to the *recapitulation*, see Figure 19.

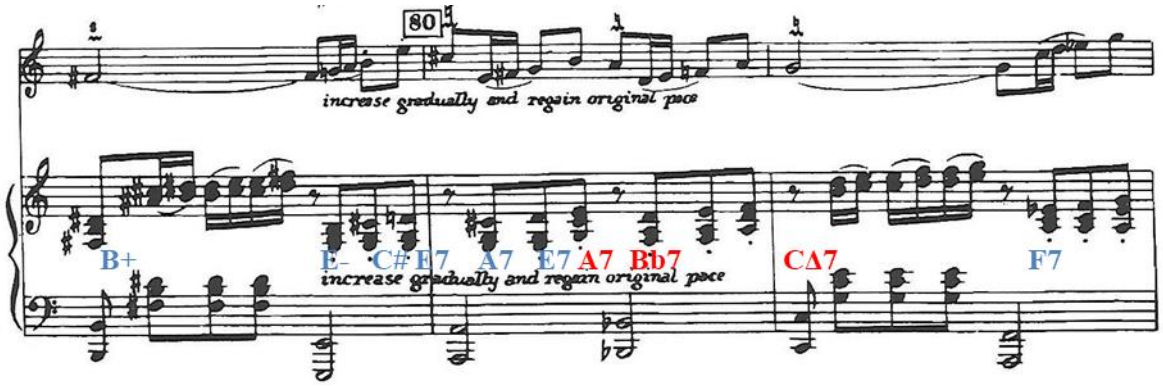

Figure 19: I mov., measures 79 - 81

In the measure 82-83 - shown in the following Figure 20 -, it seems to appear a new music material, first played by the saxophone and then by the piano, but in fact it is nothing else than the "sequential melody" material slightly elaborated for four bars before the recapitulation. This pattern essentially consists of a progression of wider intervals respect to the original material and analyzing carefully it is very clear that everything is about a few key notes: F, Eb, Db, C, Bb - m. 82-83 - Eb, Db, C and Db, C, Bb, A - m. 84 – 85.

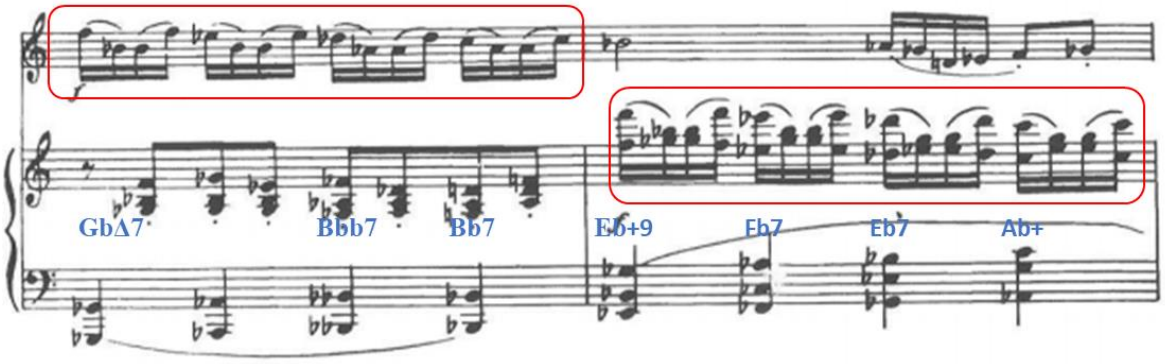

Figure 20: I mov., measures 82-83

The ***recapitulation*** starts in measure 86 and is introduced by an authentic cadence: VII – I in Db major, as showed by the Figure 21. The energic flow of the development is unbroken in the formal passage and it continues through the recapitulation until the end. It is certainly unusual that this section reformulates the music material of the second phrase of the *A theme* combined to the material from the second phrase of *B theme*, which is reminded by the piano in the first measures, anticipating the

saxophone.

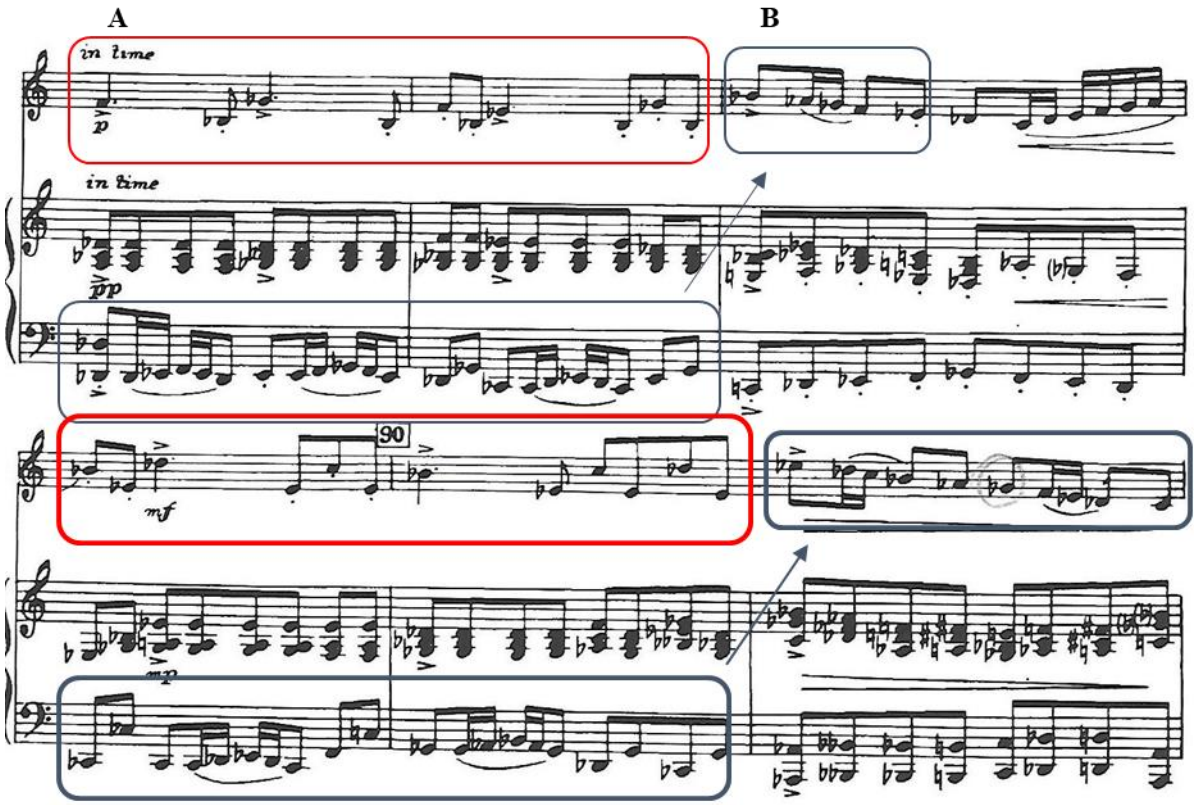

Figure 21: I mov., measures 86 - 91

After this first recapitulation's section, the saxophone finally reproposes the *A theme*'s beginning, not directly as in the beginning of the movement, but with the composer's mechanism of the 'tangential variation', therefore two "false starts" like in the development until to arrive to the "real reprise" in measure 96, introduced by a perfect cadence (G7 – C7), as showed in the following Figure 22:

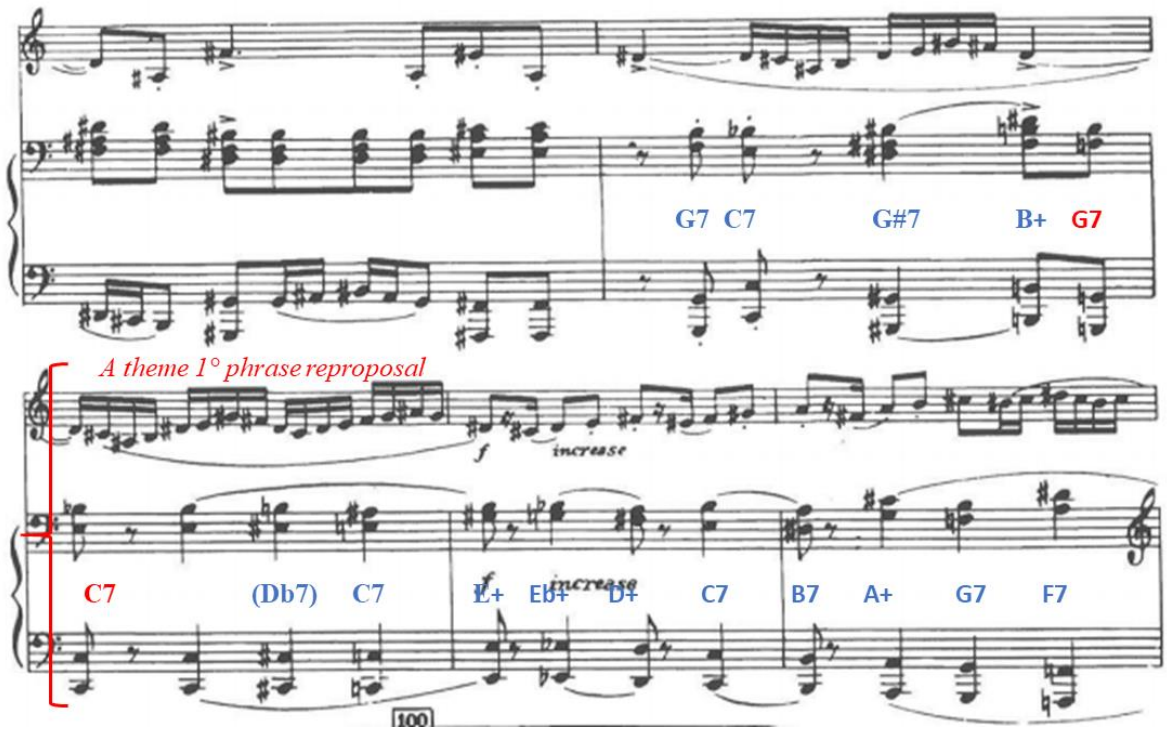

Figure 22: I mov., measures 94 - 98

Harmonically it is an interesting feature that the first two cadences play by the piano in the two "false starts" - respectively bars 93 and 95 - are not anymore tritone-substitute dominant cadence - Db7 – C7, showed in Figure 2 -, but now they are just perfect cadences: G7 – C7. It is as though Creston wanted to give a greater sense of clearness in the end of the piece. Moreover, in measure 97 a simple rhythmic pattern seems coming out, played by piano on the right hand. This rhythmic feature, which is initially presented as a quarter note followed by an eight note with rest, turns now in different versions - see the following Figure 23. Essentially the effect obtained is the sudden break of a wider sound.

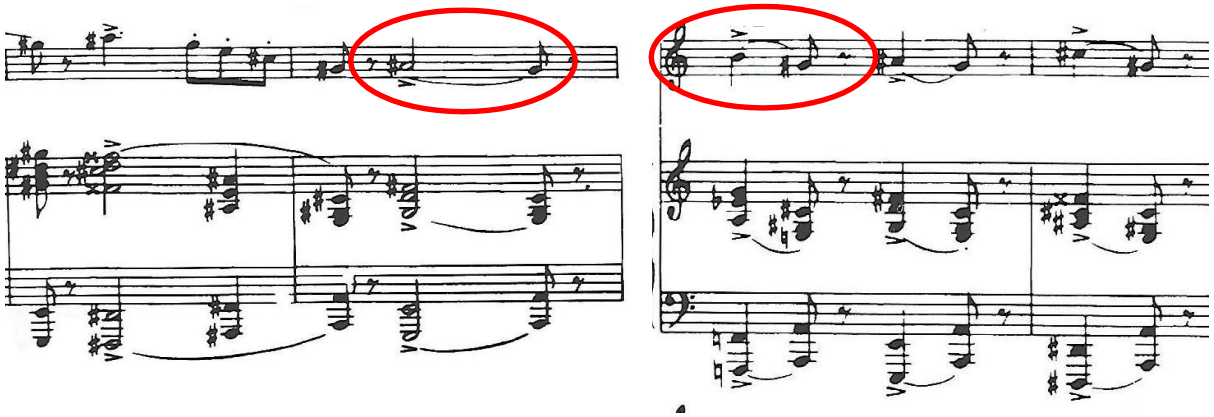

Figure 23: I mov., measures 105-106

In this part the rhythmic patterns become more complex through the combination of different rhythmic elements, taken both from *B theme* and *A theme*, showed in Figure 24. The two instruments are playing a kind of hemiola: in fact, we have 3 beats against 4 pulses - in the first case with the shifted

accent; this irregular subdivision is explained in his textbook *Principles of Rhythm*[16]. The composer essentially divided the 8 units of the 4/4 measure into 3+3+3 equal units - with the *overlapping*, which is, as the composer himself writes, «the extension of a phrase rhythm beyond the bar line»[17]. In the harmony there is a fast progression of several dominant seventh chord, which create different cadences: V7 – I7, VII7 – I7, third dominant relations, etc.

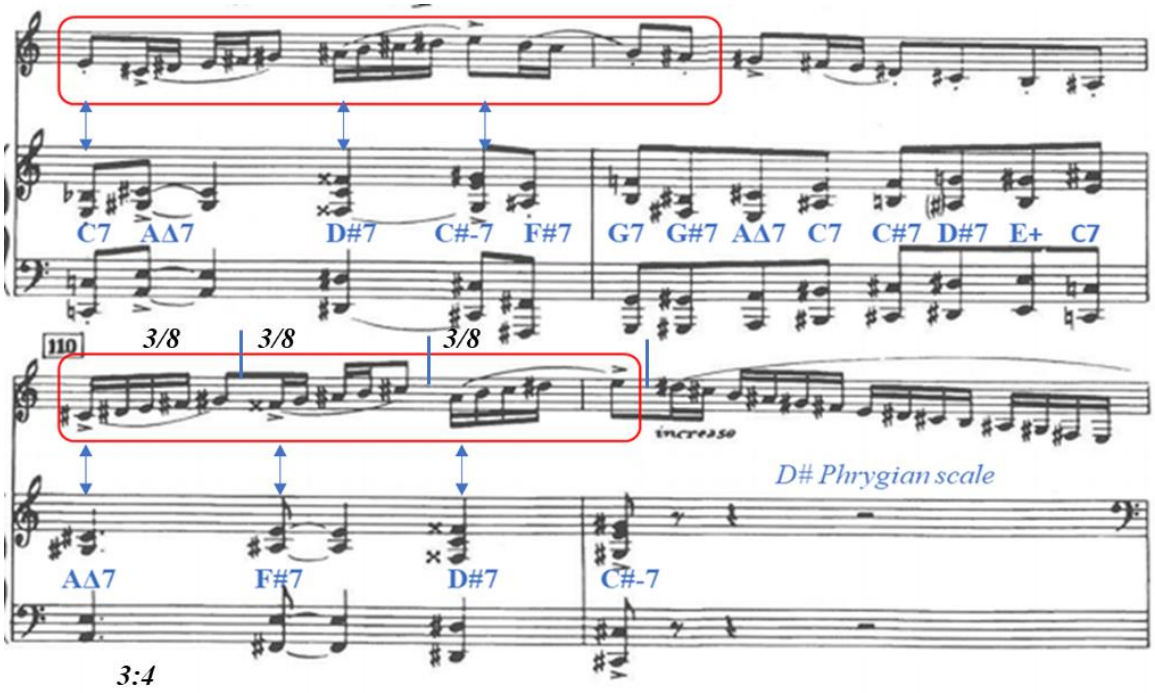

Figure 24: I mov., measures 108 - 111

In bar 112, after a D# Phrygian descending scale, the saxophone plays the last reminder to the *A theme*'s second phrase while the piano plays a sequential progression from the *A theme*'s first phrase - that is played by the saxophone just two bars later - conducting the harmony to E major. Moreover, there is an interlocking of the same figuration between the two voices - as it is underlined in Figure 25.

[16] Creston (1965, 76-80).
[17] Creston (1965, 96).

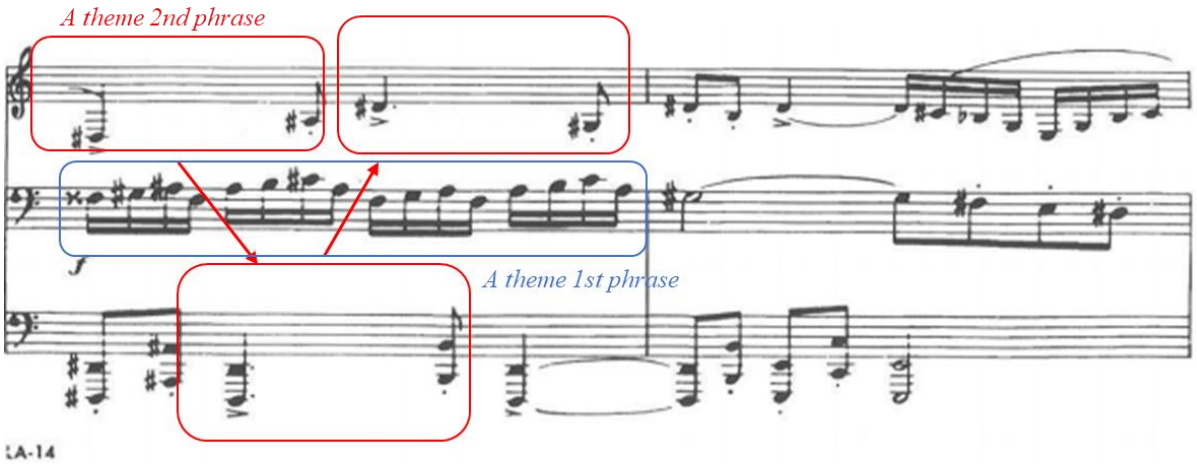

Figure 25: I mov., measures 112 - 113

After a “cascade” of sextuplets played by piano - in measure 120 -, moving on a large C7#9 chord the saxophone plays a rapid A# Locrian mode - enharmonically Bb, so the seventh of C7 chord -, arriving to the third major grade of the last chord, the note G# - as shown in the following Figure 26.

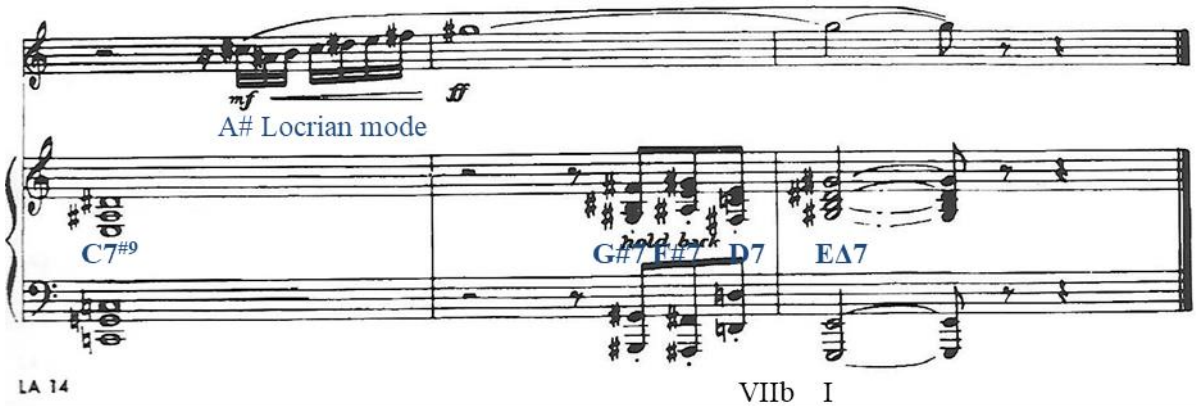

Figure 26: I mov., measures 121 -123

Table 1, Formal structure of the movement I, *With Vigor*.

Movement I, With Vigor **Sonata Allegro Form**				
SECTIONS	**INSTRUMENTATION**	**MEASURES**	**TONALITY**[18]	
Exposition		**1 -27**		
A Theme (two phrases)	Saxophone and Piano	1 - 12	? – D Major	E Major (from bar 6)
B Theme (two phrases)	Saxophone and Piano	13 - 22	E Major	-
Codetta (B material)	Piano	22 - 29	G Major	-
Development		**28 - 85**		
A Theme (+ B materials)	Saxophone and Piano	30 - 56	E Major	-
B Theme	Piano	56 - 81	Db Major	
B Theme	Saxophone and Piano	65 - 79	E Major (first phrase)	G Major (second phrase)
Transition	Saxophone and Piano	80 - 85	C Major	-
Recapitulation		**86 - 123**		
A Theme (second phrase extended)	Saxophone and Piano	86 - 92	Db major	
A theme (two phrases extended)	Saxophone and Piano	93 - 123	?	E Major (from bar 99)

[18] In the table are indicated the main tonalities in order to clarify the schema, but the piece is much more complex: the tonalities change quickly, making the harmony often ambiguous. Moreover, in some places it is difficult to find a clear tonality because the music is closer to a modal concept.

3.2 Analysis of the second movement *With tranquility*

The II movement brings the pace *With tranquility,* which is the comparable of the *Adagio*, in clear contrast with the first and the last movement, as in the traditional piano sonata. As one might expect, the meter is a large 5/4 time to give the feeling of a slower pace and the metronome indication is 66 bpm for quarter note, even though many saxophone players perform even slower. The recording of II movement by Donal Sinta is a remarkable example of a much slower performance, where the tempo is around 45 bpm for quarter note. The recording is included in the CD *American Music* by Donald Sinta, with Nelita True at the piano[19].

The II movement's formal structure is clearly divided in three sections, which I called A – A' – A'' because of the variations developed towards the same theme. The first A occupies the first 14 measures and includes the presentation of the theme played softly by the piano, starting with an A major chord in second position. This position is used both for giving since from the beginning a sense of "instability" and for creating a bass line with the low notes of the following chords (E – D# – C# – B – A – G# – F# – E – D – C – Bb – A), as shown in Figure 27:

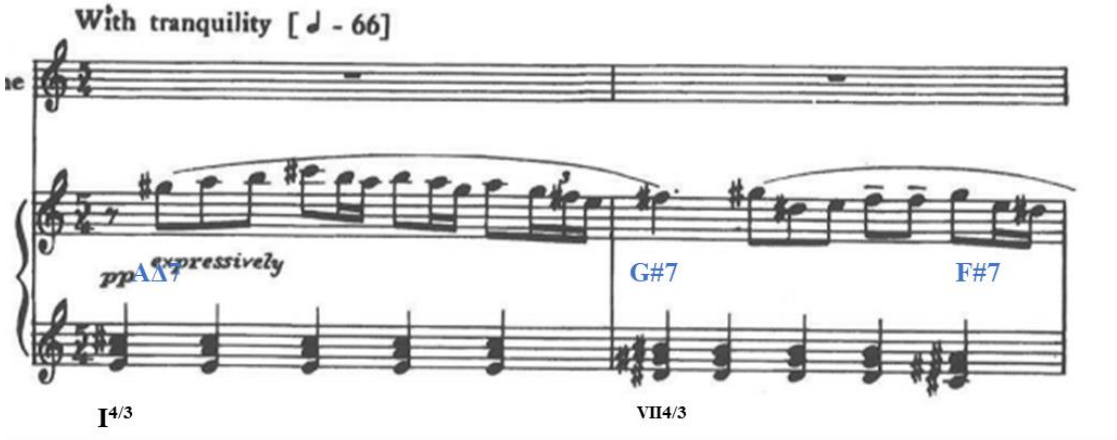

Figure 27: II mov., measures 1-2

Although the movement starts in A major, the harmony, through a progression of dominant seventh chord and substitute dominant seventh chord, becomes immediately uncertain. The progression conduces again to the A major, only where the saxophone declares the theme. In fact, the introductory piano part is ended with a substitute dominant cadence Bb7- AΔ7, which is followed by a larger and always delicate theme repetition played by the saxophone that starts with a silent-pulse[20] in bar 8. The dynamic remains soft (from *pianissmo* to *piano),* always accompanied by the indication *expressively*, as shown in the following Figure 28.

[19] Saxophone Sonata, Op. 19: II. With tranquility - YouTube, provided to YouTube by *NAXOS of America* and posted by *Donald Sinta (tema)* on 20th January 2015, accessed on 29th November 2020.
[20] The nomenclature used is taken from the textbook *Principles of Rhythm*, in the chapter where Creston describes the six species of rhythm; *ibidem*, p. 11.

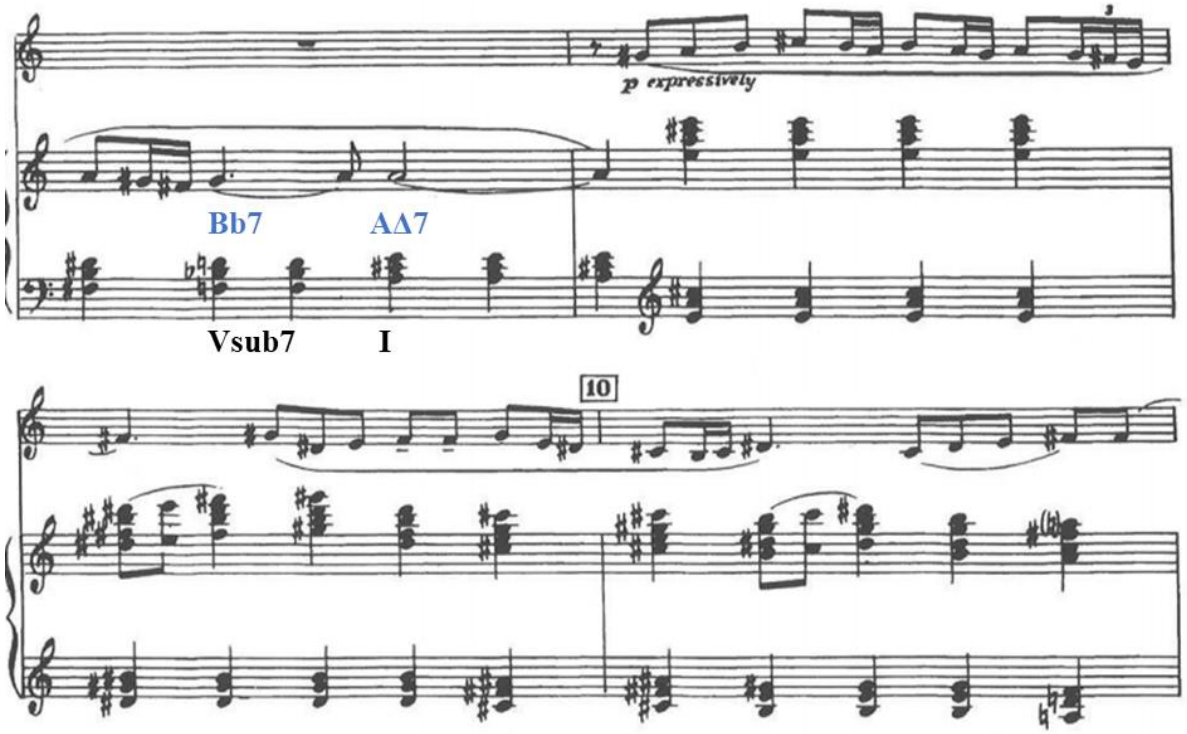

Figure 28: II mov., measures 7 - 10

Behind the saxophone melody, the chord progression played by the piano remains the same of the beginning; it starts to change almost in the end of the A section, guiding the harmony to F# Major, see Figure 29. The dynamic is kept on *piano*; only in one point, with the increase of the drama, the saxophone reaches a *mezzoforte*, but it is followed by a sudden *pianissimo*. The last phrase of A closes the melody with a slight retard on a F# Major chord, see Figure 29.

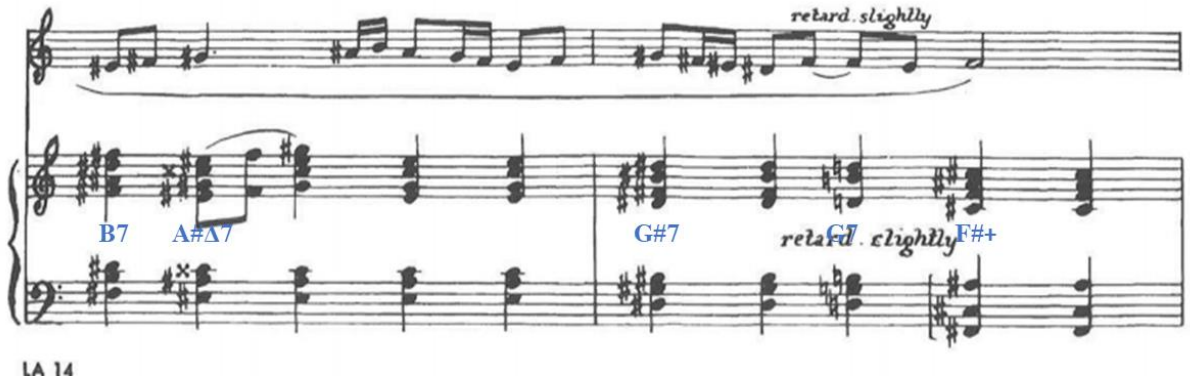

Figure 29: II mov., measures 13-14

The A' section consists in a re-proposal of the theme but with more emphasis. The harmony finds clearer resolution in second measure with the cadence D7 – GΔ7, which gives a sense of liberation, release after the previous sophisticated harmonic progression, as shown in the following Figure 30.

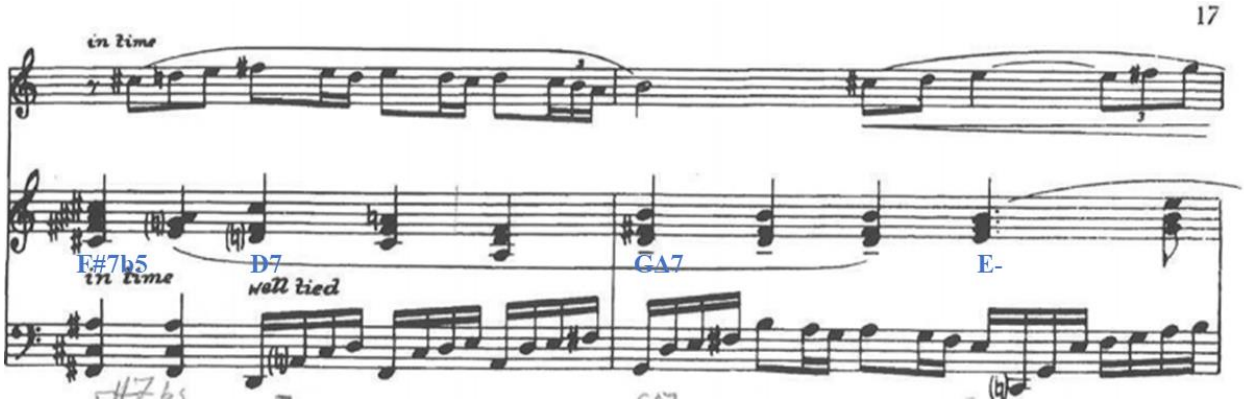

Figure 30: II mov., measures 15-16

In general, in A' section the tonalities change quickly making impossible to identify any key-center; the harmony is absolutely "pantonal", as Creston named its music.

In this middle section the music reaches its dramatic peak, which is maintained for a few bars. It is characterized by a increase of the dynamic (*forte* and *fortissimo*), started in bar 24 with the indication *increase and accel.* (see Figure 31), and a rhythmic change to a completely new pattern, a modification of the previous triplets to a more marked pattern, almost "martial":

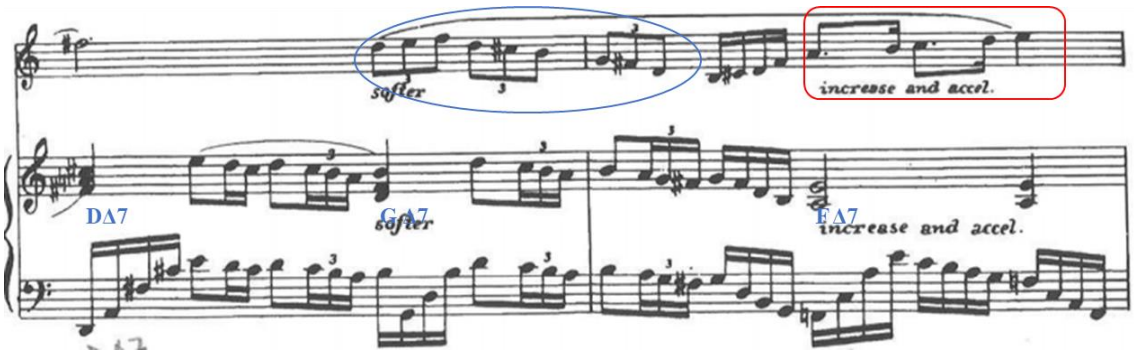

Figure 31: II mov., measures 23 -24

And then, this new figuration changes again to its exasperation: in fact, the previous dotted rhythm becomes a fragmented cascade of quick notes (obtained by the addition of notes in the weak time), see the following Figure 32. This "exasperated" rhythmic pattern moves on a big chord of E-9^4 in first position, which is composed of a $G7^9$ chord played by the left hand and three notes E – B – E played by the right hand. The $G7^9$ could be probably read as a kind of "weak resolution" of the previous F#7. The dramatic pattern is imitated by the piano immediately after the saxophone, but now the harmony moved on a FΔ7 chord.

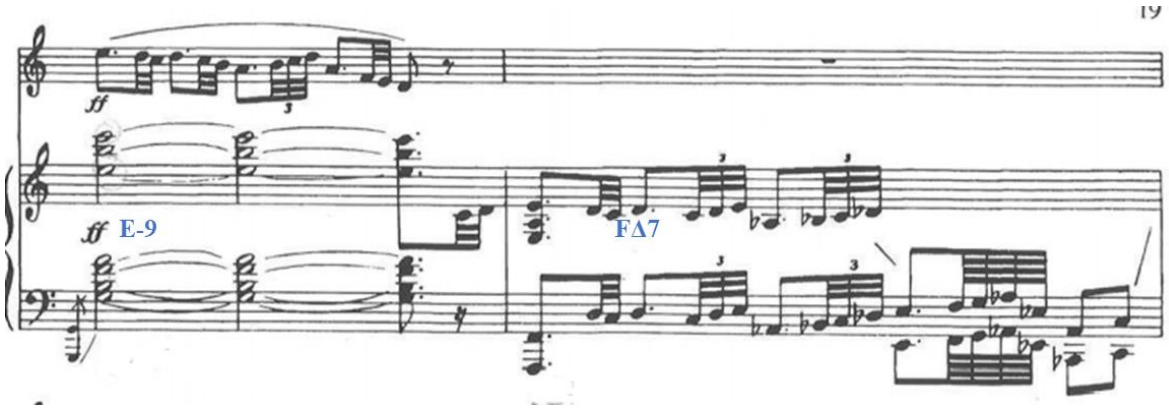

Figure 32: II mov., measures 31-32

The A'' section finds the original tranquility and softness. The section is introduced by a substitute dominant complete cadence. IV – V sub. – I, which brings the harmony to C Major. In the first measures of this last section (mm.35 - 37), the piano changes the progress of its sixteen notes, opening the arpeggio with both hands, see Figure 33.

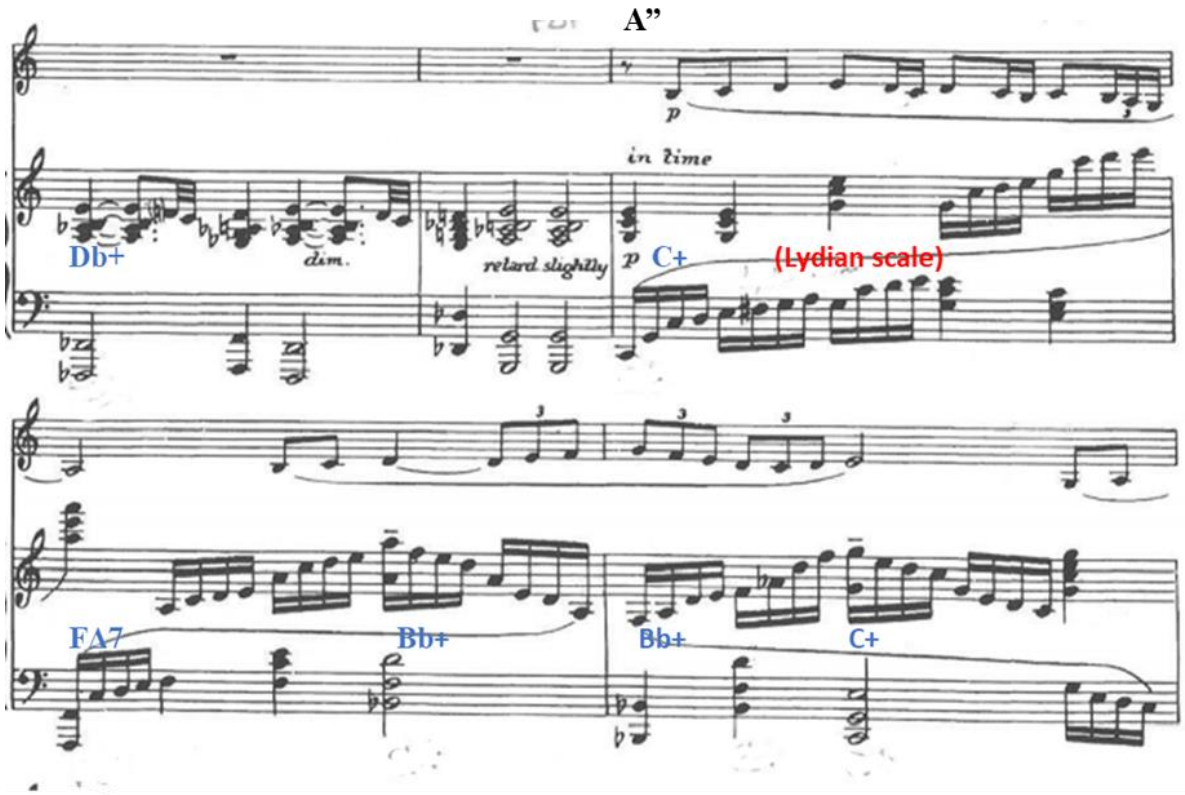

Figure 33: II mov., measures 33- 37

In the half part of the section the harmonic key-center becomes ambiguous, but after a while the tonality turns clearly to A Major, introduced by the cadence E7 – A6 (made unperfect by the presence of the bass note D) in measures 42-43, as showed in the following Figure 34.

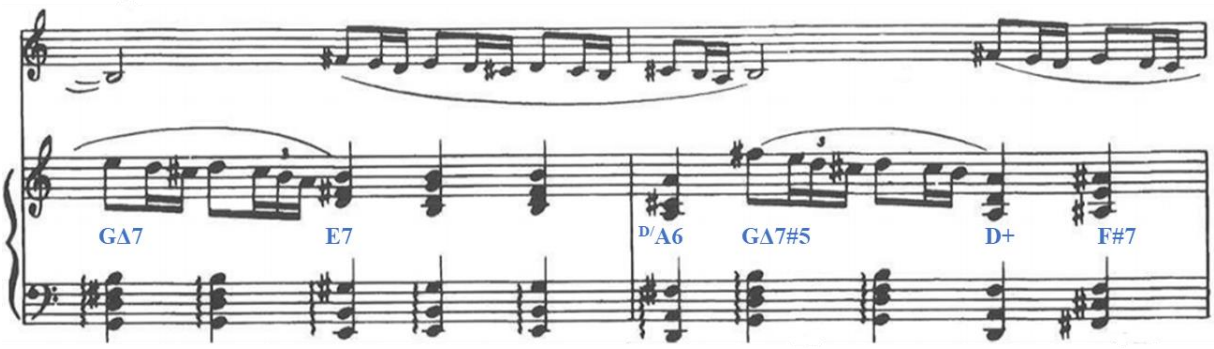

Figure 34: II mov., measures 42-43

The quietness is brought until the end when it gradually fades away on a *pianissimo*, where the A major tonality is confirmed by a substitute dominant cadence Bb7 – A in bars 44-45 (see Figure 35), and then with a last cadence in the last two bars where the saxophone reaches, after a retard on the second last note, a C# (major third of the chord).

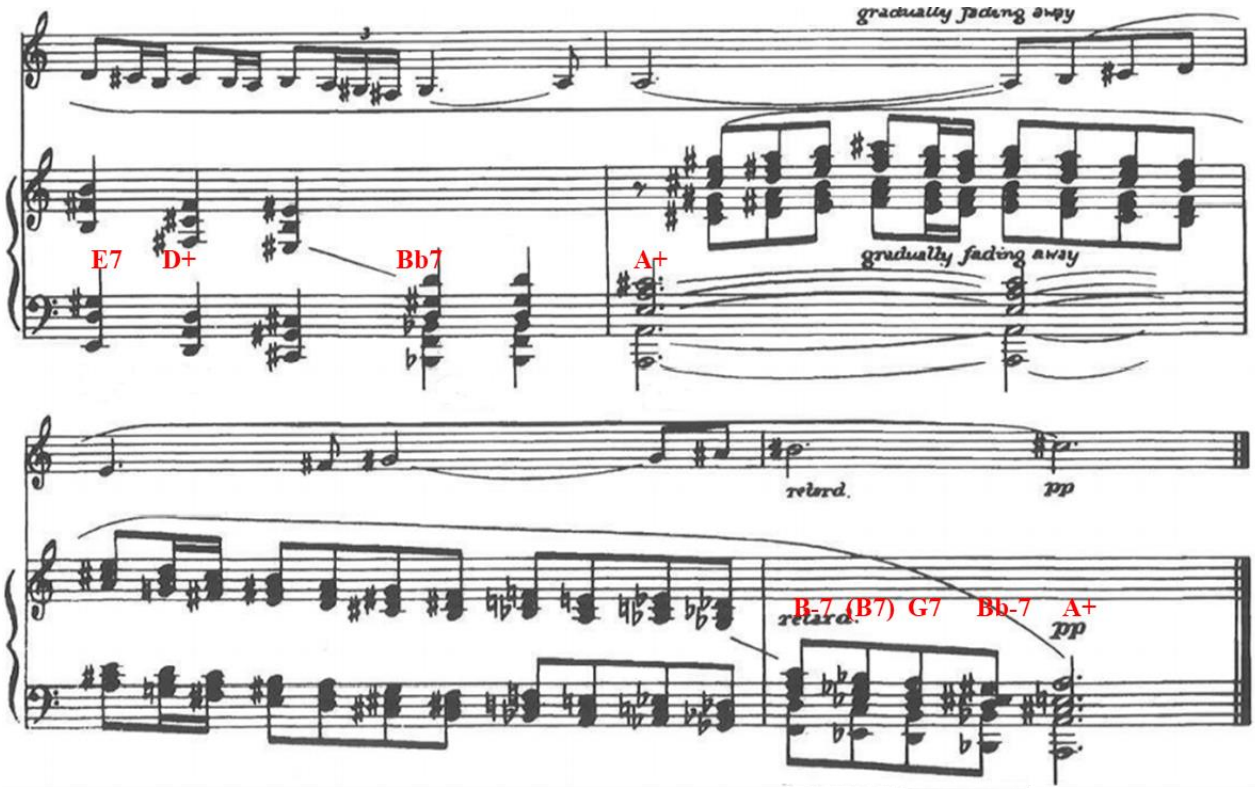

Figure 35: II mov., measures 44-47

Table 2, Formal structure of the movement II, *With tranquility*.

Movement II, With tranquility **A – A' – A'' form**				
SECTIONS	**INSTRUMENTATION**	**MEASURES**	**TONALITY**	
A		**1 - 14**		
	Piano	1 - 7	A major	
	Saxophone and Piano	8 - 14	A major	F# Major (in the end, bar 14)
A'		**15 - 34**		
	Saxophone and Piano	15 - 31	F# Major	-
	Piano	31 - 34	-	
A''		**35 - 47**		
	Saxophone and Piano	35 - 47	C major	A major

3.3 Analysis of the third movement *With gaiety*

The third and last movement *With gaiety* is the longest and the quickest of the piece; the tempo marking is 160 bpm for quarter note and the time signature is 2/4. The structure of the movement consists of rondo form, divided in seven sections: A – B – A – C – A – D – A. The crispness of the rondo is due to the irregular rhythmic patterns used and the asymmetrical overlapping between the two instruments.

The principal motif A, also named 'refrain', starts upbeat, therefore with a weak-pulse - using the Creston's nomenclature[21] - and lasts until measure 39. The main features of the refrain are this incipit and the repetitive mordent - which creates what Creston called *embellished accent* - together with the *dynamic accent* and the *agogic accent*, which shifts in the first three measures of the theme: starts on the first beat, after moves upbeat on the syncopation and then goes on the second beat. Creston (1906-1985) himself, writing about the 'overlapping structure' in his textbook *Principles of Rhythm*, quotes this III movement's incipit as an example of the second type of overlapping: wherein «the segment of duration is obtained by multiplying the number of measures by the number of units»[22]. Indeed, in the saxophone line the phrase rhythm creates a multimetric rhythm, as shown in the following Figure 36. It is necessary to remember that, as declared by the composer, the final aim is «to obtain a freely flowing but varied rhythm, unshackled by a mechanically conceived and executed meter»[23]. Meanwhile the piano accompaniment includes arpeggios of eight notes with the left hand with the accent played together with the saxophone; this accentuation gives a feeling of irregular patterns to the listener. The accompaniment of the left hand remains essentially the same for all the A section. At the same time the right hand plays a pattern of sixteen notes in A major, which is essentially the first bar played inverted with variations for four times. The harmony starts clearly in D major, where the saxophone plays the dynamic accent with the mordent always on the F# - major third of the chord -, as shown in the following Figure 36.

[21] Creston (1965, 11).
[22] Creston (1965, 100-102)
[23] Ibidem.

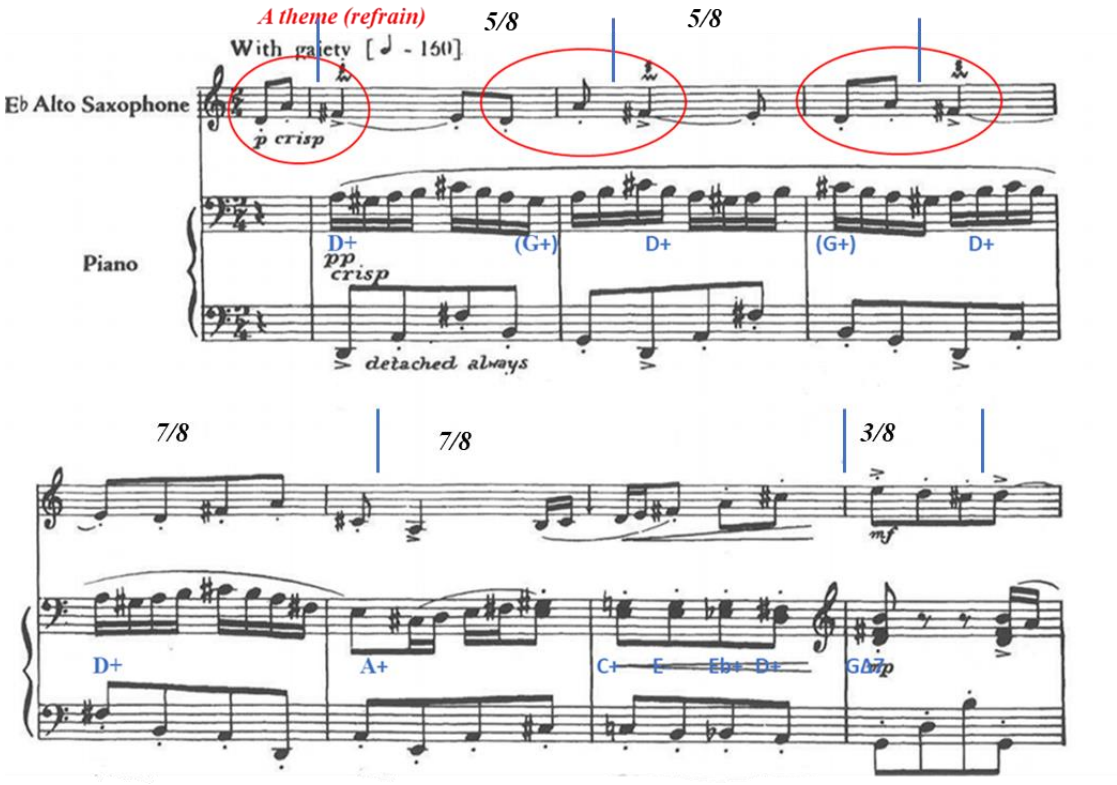

Figure 36: III mov., measures 1-7

In measure 13 it appears a new rhythmic figure in the right hand of the piano: a syncopation that creates a "stumbling effect" which drives the harmony towards the authentic cadence in measures 14-15: C#° - Bmin7 – (A) – Dmaj, where starts the *A section*'s repetition. The rhythmic syncopations is created practically dividing the 16 sixteen notes of the two bars in 6 groups of sixteen notes: 3+3+3+3+2+2, in which, excluding the last two groups, it could be read even as a 4 beats against 6 pulses. See the following Figure 37.

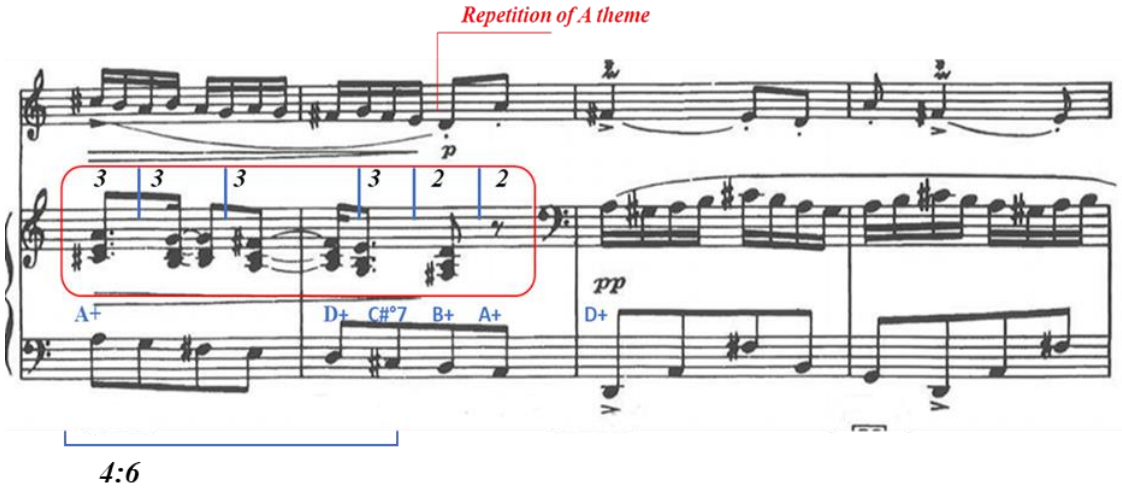

Figure 37: III mov., measures 13-16

From bar 15 it starts the repetition of *A theme* with some variations like in measure 21-23 (see Figure 38). There is a rhythmic pattern which remembers a similar one seen in bars 110 -111 in the first

movement, shown in Figure 24. It is fundamentally a subdivision of the rhythm in 4 equal eight-notes groupings: 3+3+3+3.

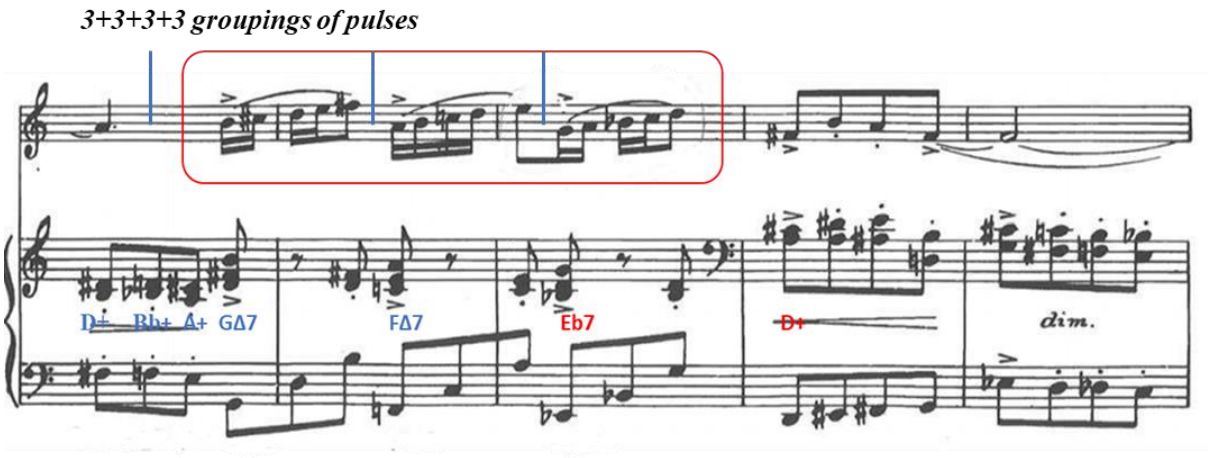

Figure 38: III mov., measures 21-25

In bar 36 starts the same figuration of the first part's end: the saxophone play sixteen notes over the the piano's syncopations, but instead of a *diminuendo*, now a *crescendo* drives the music to a *sforzato* in bar 39, where the *A section* finishes. The piano is rhythmically playing two small patterns: first a 4 against 6 and then a 3 against 4, which could be read together as 7 beats against 10 pulses. This rhythmic pattern is the second and last *Sonata*'s examples mentioned in his textbook[24]. A perfect cadence V – I opens to a new section which starts with a transitional phase: this phase lasts for 5 bars and affirms the harmony in F# Major. See the following Figure 39.

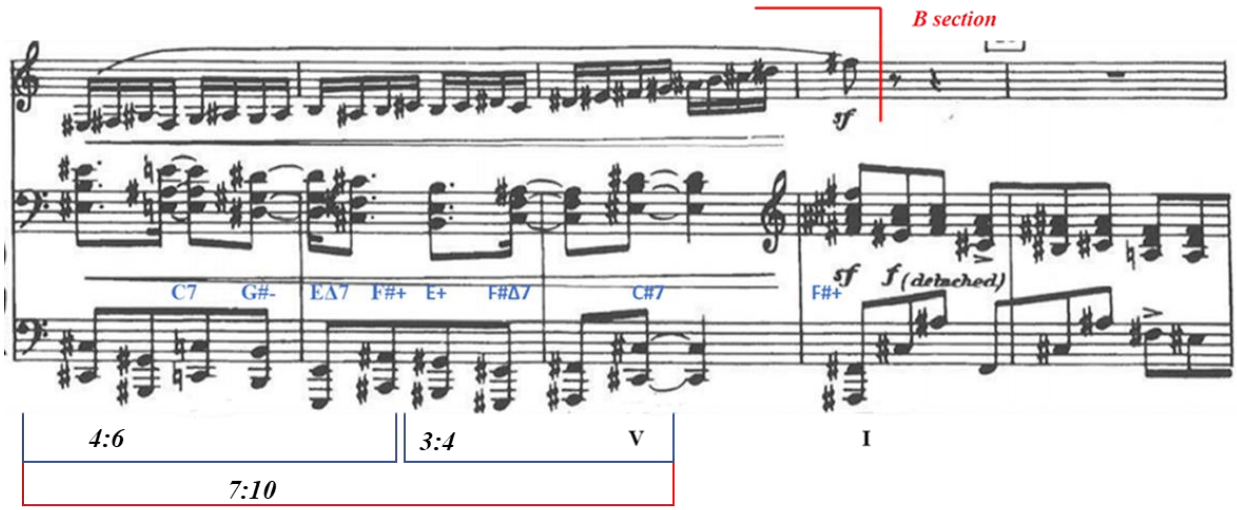

Figure 39: III mov., measures 36 - 40

The piano accompaniment concerned in eight-notes sequences based on a overlapping structure, which continues for almost all the *B section*. These brief sequences, in *diminuendo*, opens to the *B theme,* introduced by the saxophone in bar 45 which plays a C# half note with dynamic accent on a F# Major chord. This chord confirms the tonality through a perfect cadence II – V – I, as shown in the next Figure 40.

[24] Creston (1965, 119)

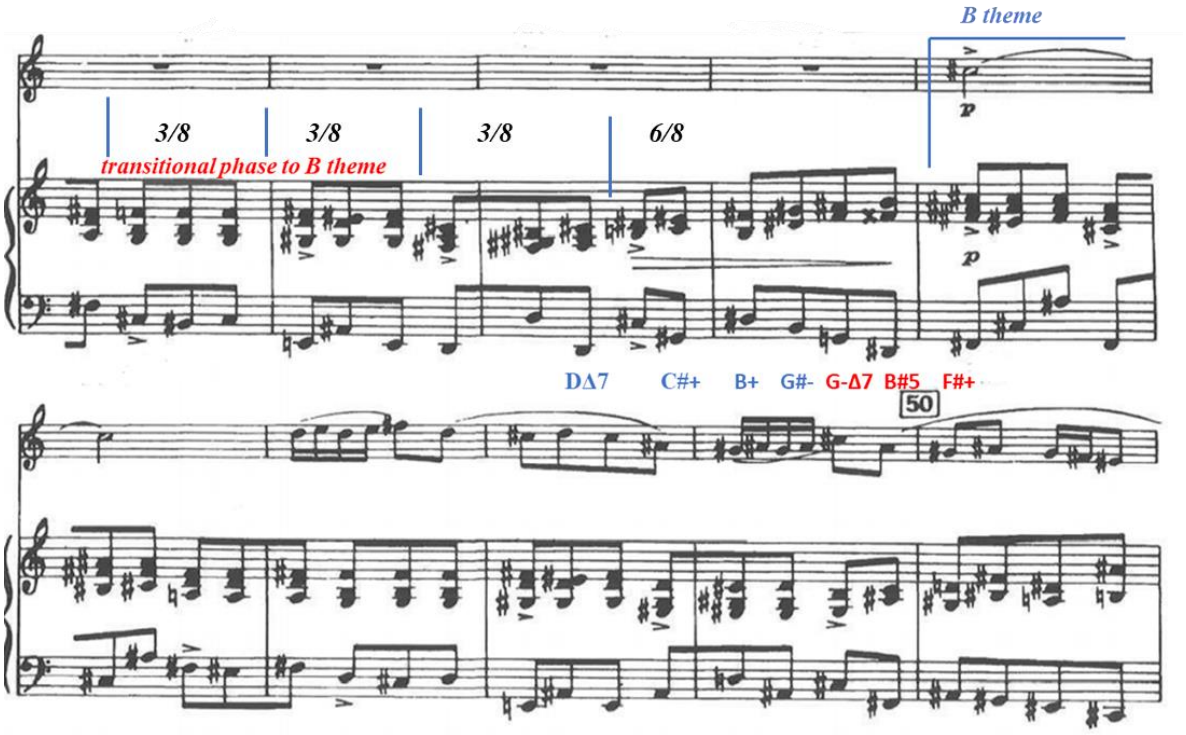

Figure 40: III mov., measures 41 -50

The *B theme* sounds much quieter than the previous theme, even though it keeps being very rhythmic as the first one. It could be divided in two parts: a first part ends in bar 58 and the second one in bar 75. The first phrase ends (in measures 51-52) with the final pulse which Creston (1965-1982) names *dovetail*, that happens when the final sound becomes the initial sound of succeeding phrase[25]. In measures 54-55 (reported in the following Figure 41) turns the asymmetric rhythmic patterns already seen in the first movement (see Figure 24) and in the previous *A theme* (see Figure 38). The same rhythmic pattern, which is an example of 'regular subdivision overlapping', is used by Creston (1906-1982) in the *Dance II* of his composition named *Two Choric Dances*. The example is reported in his mentioned textbook[26].

[25] Creston (1965,10)
[26] Creston (1965,119)

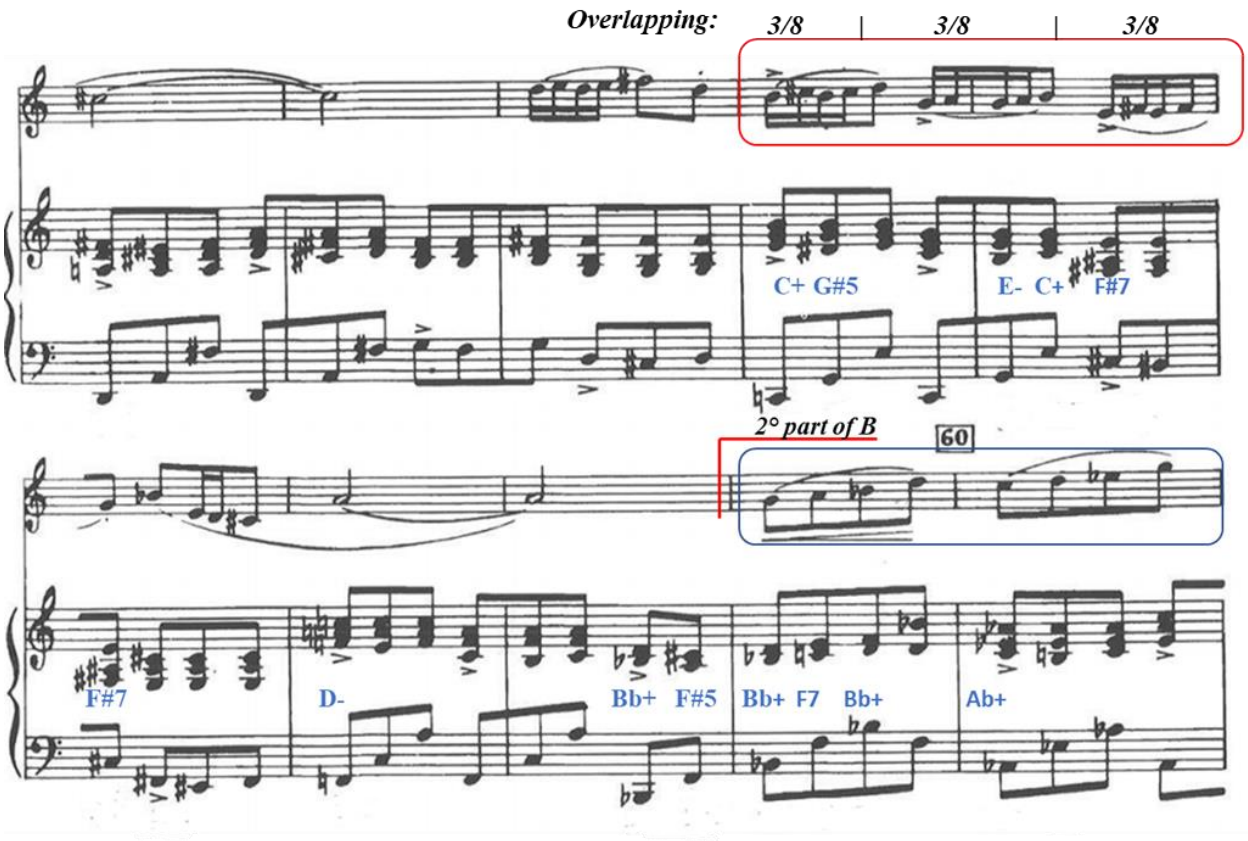

Figure 41: III mov., measures 51-60

A new material in the saxophone line opens to the second part of *B section*. The harmony is moving from the previous tonality of F# Major to a new tonality, in fact in the beginning of this second part is uncertain (see the previous Figure 41). The new tonality in Db Major is found in measure 64, introduced by a cadence VII – I. Here the *B theme* is repeated a fourth lower, as shown in Figure 42.

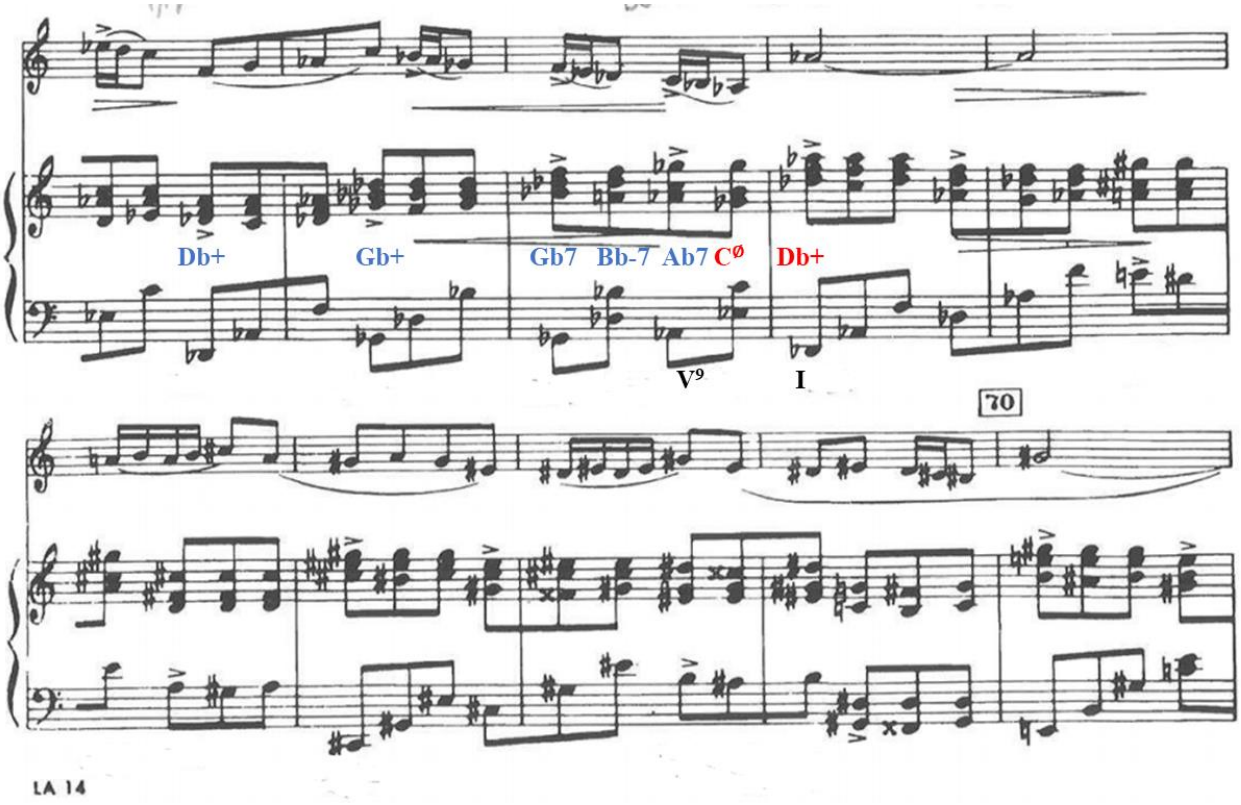

Figure 42: III mov., measures 61 - 70

The saxophone ends *B theme* in bar 74 reaching a Gb eight note on a Cb Major chord in first position. The piano plays a *pizzicato* eight notes with the right hand and a rapid scale of sixteen notes in Cb Lydian with the left hand. The sixteen notes open to a quintuplet played with both hands: a F Phrygian scale played with the left hand and a C# Phrygian scale (enharmonically Db) with the right hand, which conduces to the refrain on the upbeat of bar 75. See the following Figure 43.

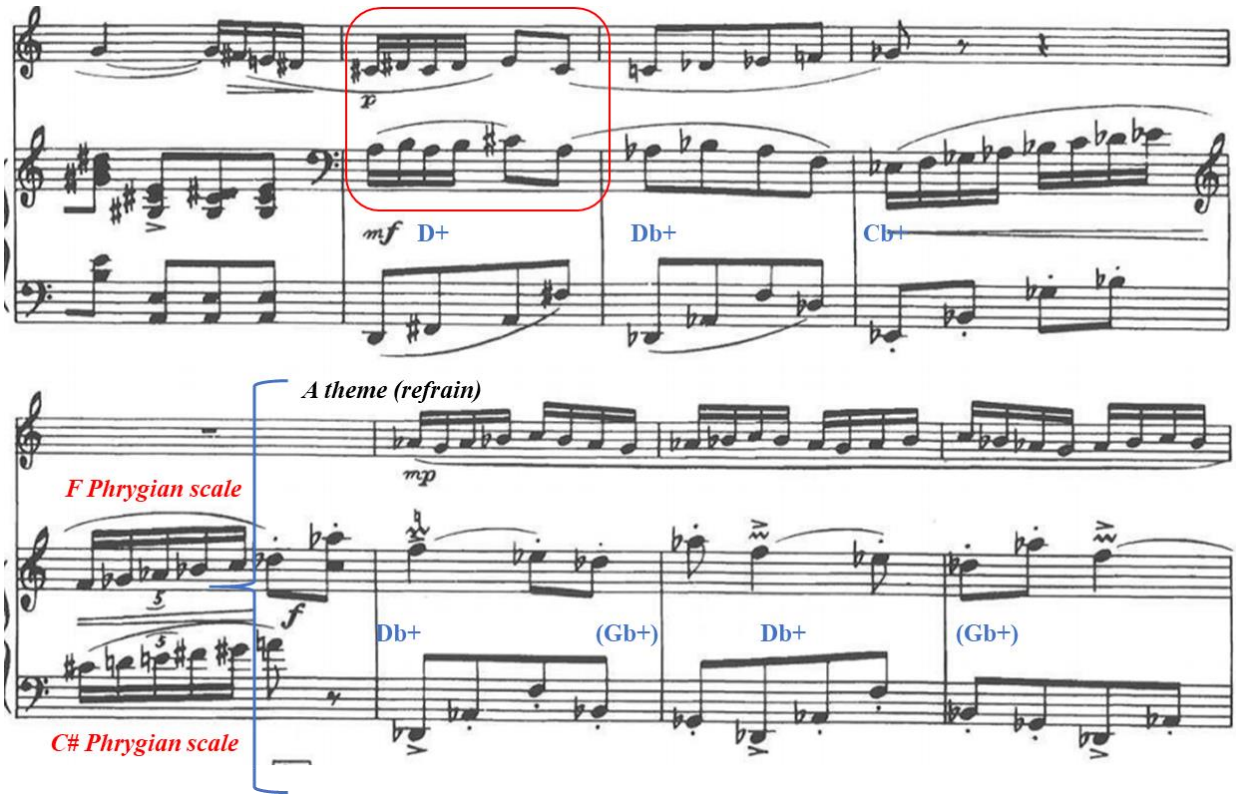

Figure 43: III mov., measures 71-78

The *A theme* is resubmitted with an inversion of the two parts: now the saxophone plays the previous piano accompaniment with *mezzopiano*, while the piano plays the main theme on a *forte* with the right hand and continues the eight notes' accompaniment with the left hand, as shown in the previous Figure 43. This reversal of the parts ends in measure 88, where the piano plays a kind of "interlude" for 7 bars. The harmony is moving to a new tonality: after a brief affirmation of D Major (in measure 88), it moves through a E Major/minor (measures 90-93) and then a perfect cadence G7 – CΔ7 seems to fix the tonality in C Major, but it becomes obscure shortly afterwards. The saxophone enters on the upbeat of bar 94, repeating the *A theme* a major second higher than the original. See the following Figure 44.

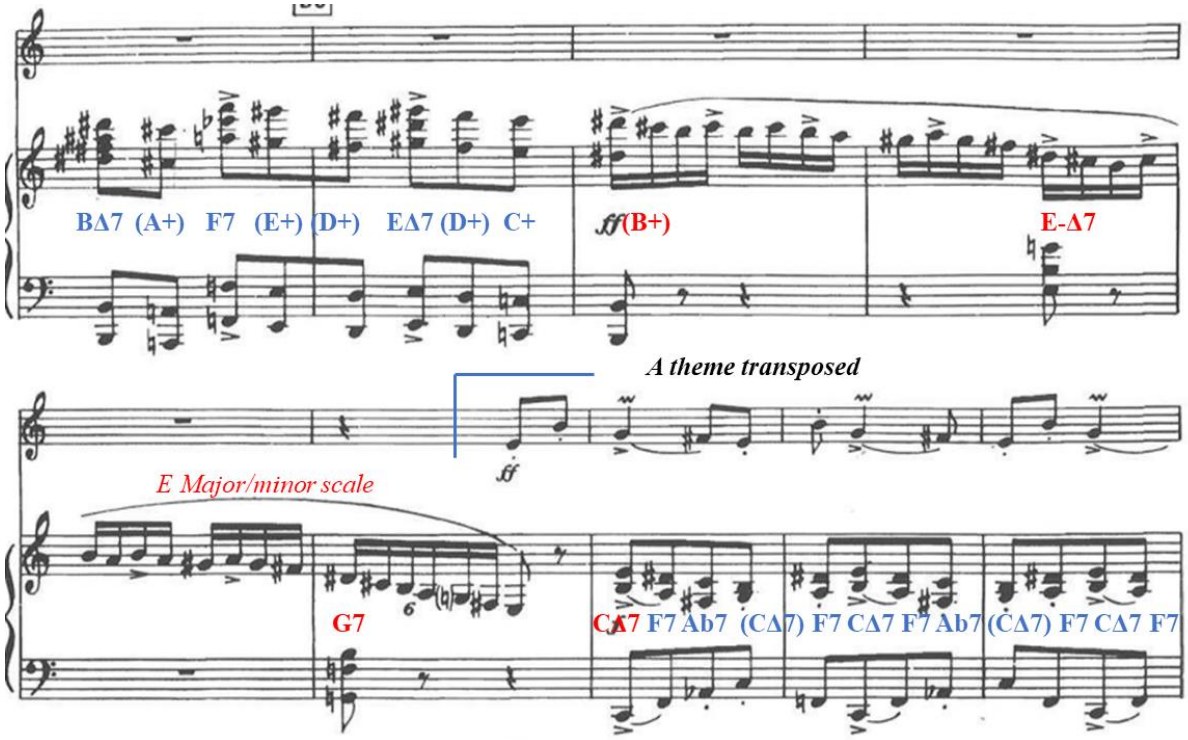

Figure 44: III mov., measures 89 -97

The tonality of C Major is left from bar 101, where a dominant seventh chords progression (chromatically descendant) moves the key-center to D Major, affirmed by substitute dominant cadence Eb7 – D7 (in measure 102). But already in the further bar the key-center is A Major, in fact for four bars (103- 106) there is an alternation of three chords: AΔ7 – G#+ - A#7 (enharmonically Bb7, that is the tritone substitution of E7), see the next Figure 45.

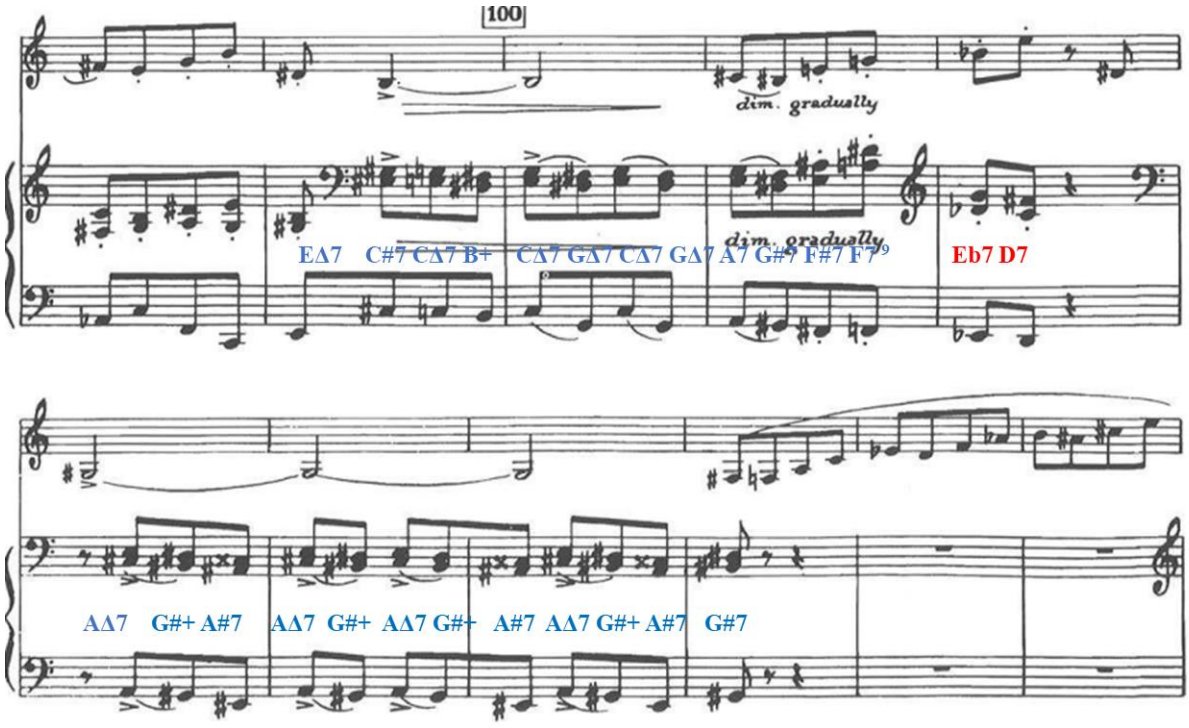

Figure 45: III mov., measures 98 -108

The variation played by the saxophone in the last part of the *A theme* suggests an upcoming passage to the new section, indeed in measure 106 the piano drops out (see the previous Figure 45) and the new *C section* starts in measure 110. The piano plays, with the right hand, chords of half note and quarter note which fill the harmonic texture; the indication in the score is *smoothly*. Meanwhile, with the left hand the piano keeps playing the eight notes like before, but now the indication is changed: not anymore *detached always*, but *well tied (Pedal)*. The two indication in the piano score are obviously in perfect agreement with the saxophone line, which is quite lyrical: it shows long *legato* phrases (in evident contrast to the short phrases of the *A section*) and new smooth music materials like the quarter note triplets. See the following Figure 46. The harmony starts in the clear tonality of B Major, but it becomes soon ambiguous.

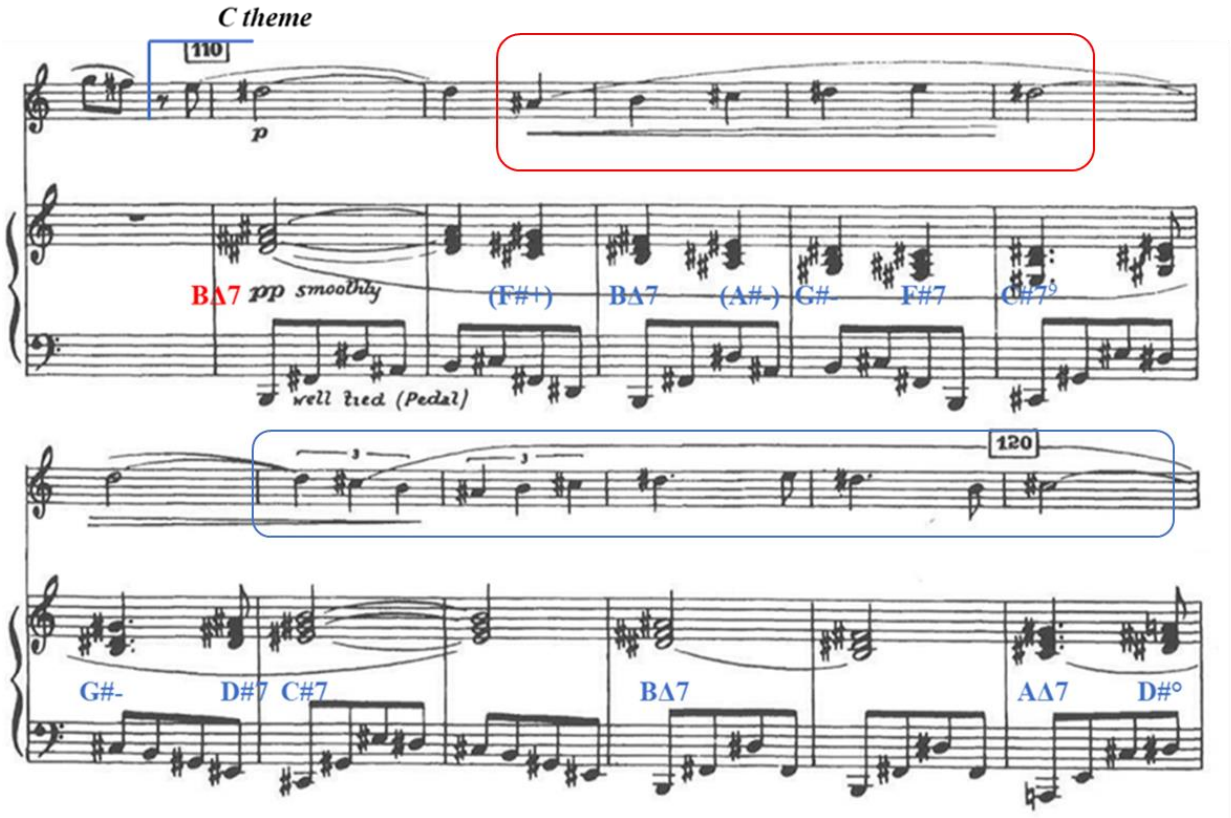

Figure 46: III mov., measures 109 -120

The *C theme* is created through the combination of two main music ideas: the first one, which opens the theme, consists of a quarter note half scale that starts from the seventh grade, arrives to the fourth grade and comes back to the third - circled in red in the previous Figure 46. The second music idea is composed by quarter note triplets - circled in blue in the previous Figure 46 - : it is repeated in the following measures (122 – 127) one tone lower than the previous phrase. The first idea also is repeated and extended, but in tonality of F Major (measures 127 – 137). See the Figure 47.

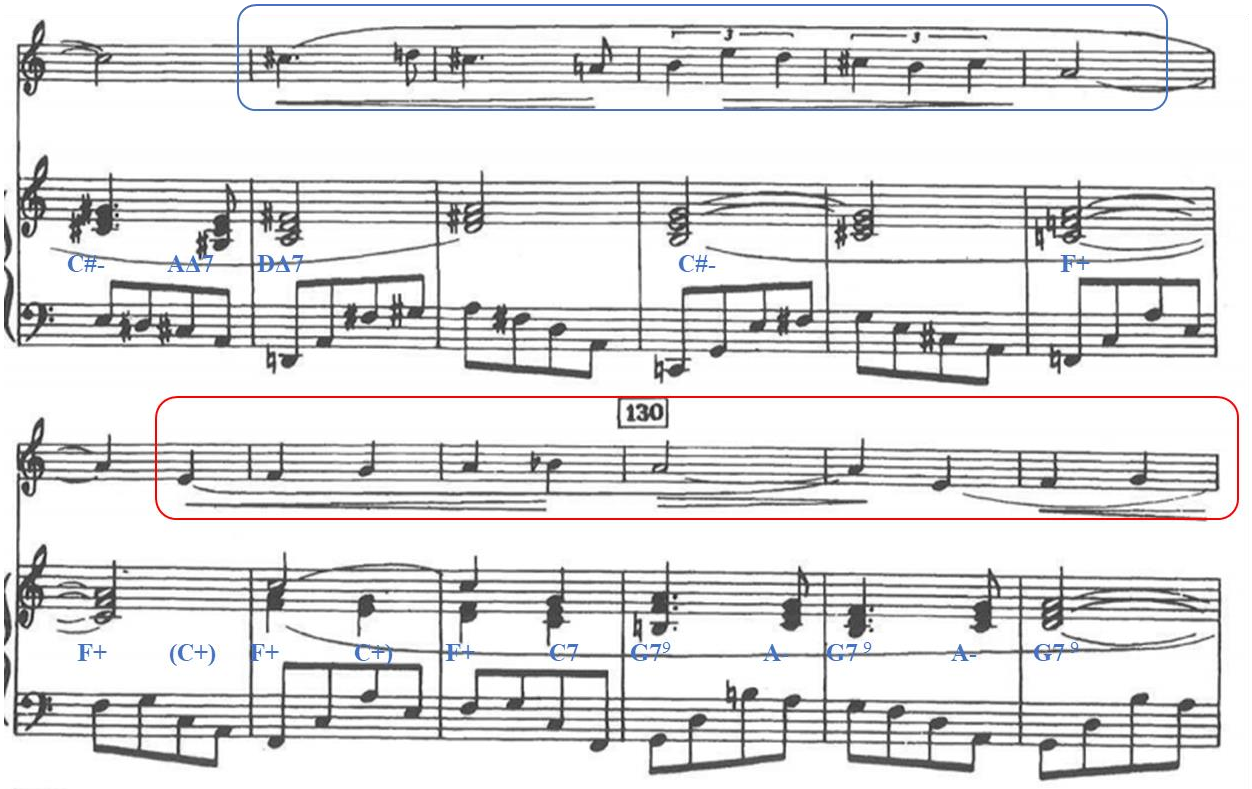

Figure 47: III mov., measures 121 - 132

In measures 138 – 144 the first idea is repeated a fourth lower than the beginning. The harmonic key-center is not identifiable: it seems to be moving around E Major, but then appears in measures 142-143 a clear perfect cadence in B Major, which confirms the tonality in the end of the phrase. This time is the piano to play the quarter note triplets, opening the new phrase for the saxophone in bar 145. See the following Figure 48.

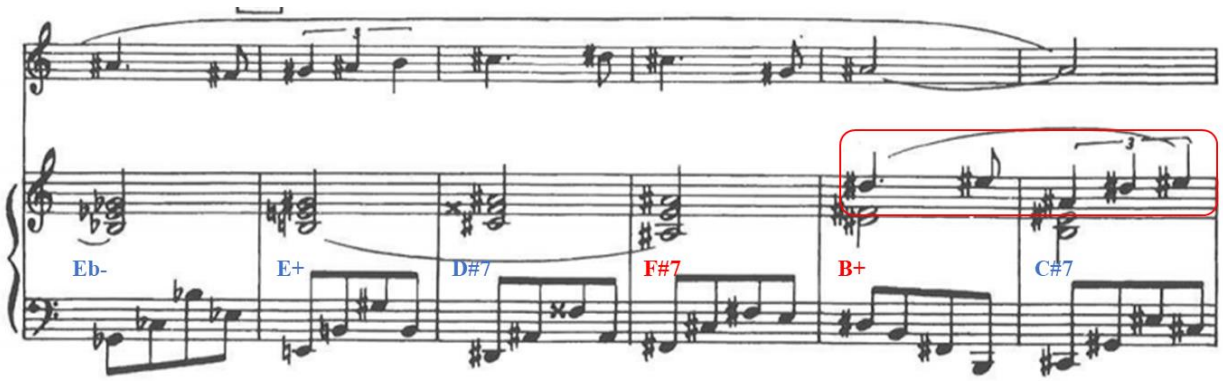

Figure 48: III mov., measures 139 - 144

Here the saxophone plays one last brief repetition of the first idea, one tone lower as already seen in the previous Figure 47, but now the phrase shows a sudden change of the style: the long *legato* lyrical phrase is interrupted by a *staccato* articulation in measure 149, which links the music, together with the pushy repetition of the last rhythmic pattern, to the original sense of gaiety. The harmony in the first part in unclear, but then from bar 149 seems to move around the tonality of F# Major, indeed in measures 153-154 it is confirmed by a perfect cadence IIb – V – I.

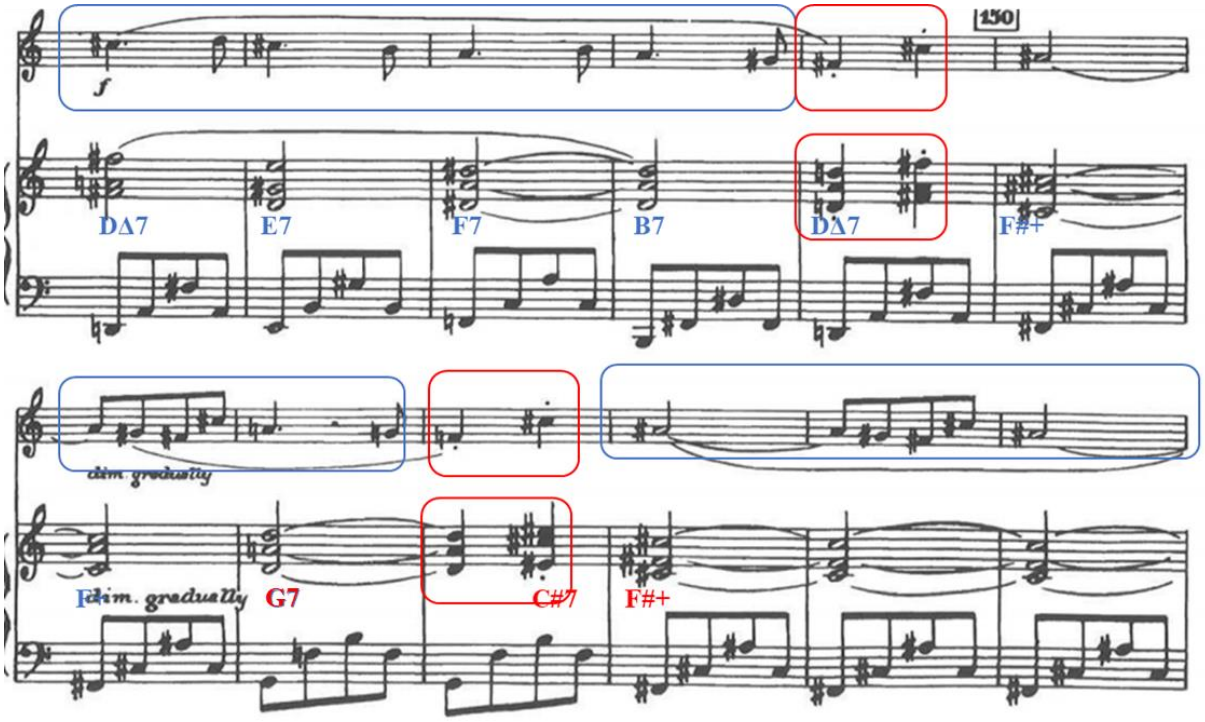

Figure 49: III mov., measures 145 -156

The *C section* ends in bar 159 with a cadence in third relationship F#7 – D7. There, the piano plays alone an "interlude" of 5 bars in *diminuendo*, wherein a sequence of *staccato* eight notes with the dynamic accent continually shifted, anticipates the now well-known features of the *A theme*. The refrain starts with the upbeat of bar 164, now with the indication *pianissimo* for both the instruments. It is the exact transposition of the beginning, but a third major higher. The tonality is clearly F# Major and the harmony remains the same of the beginning. See the next Figure 50.

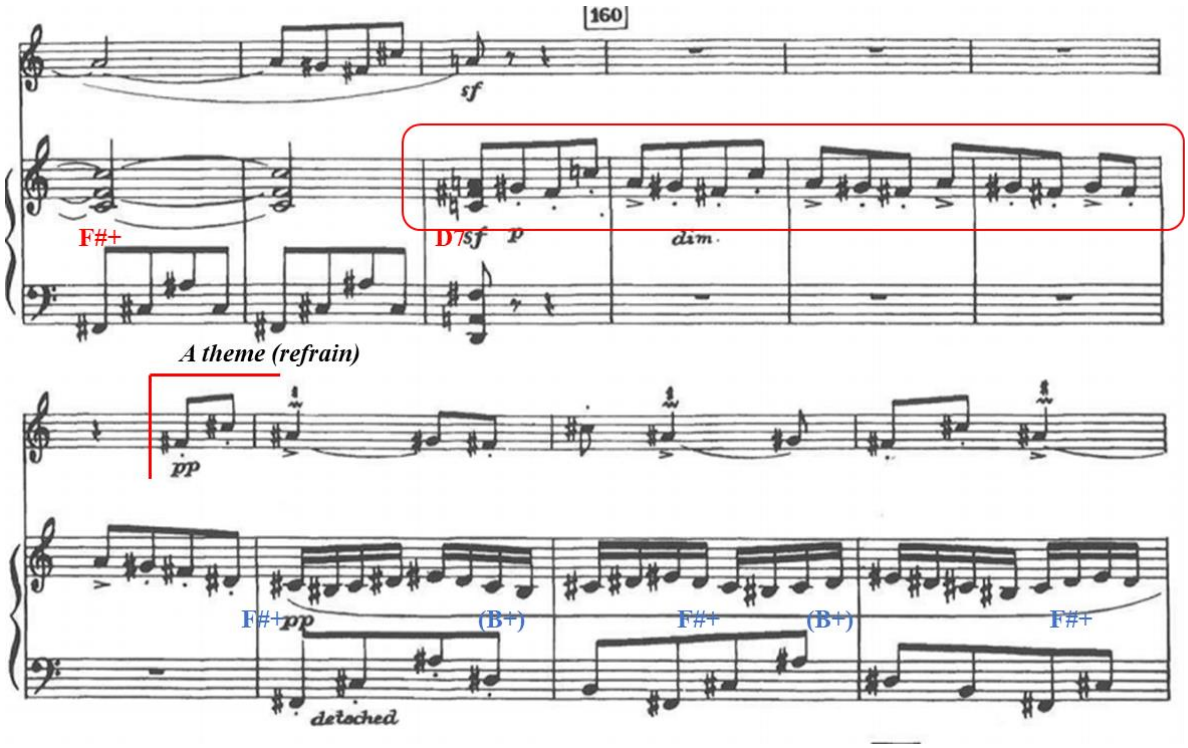

Figure 50: III mov., measures 157 - 166

A first difference from the original refrain appears in measures 176 – 179, where the usual sixteen notes played by the saxophone in the end of the phrase are now played by the piano in a variation of the previous bars 74-75, shown already in Figure 43. Indeed, the piano plays a E# Dorian mode that reaches the tonic F# on the upbeat of bar 179, exactly when the saxophone starts the *A theme* repetition. See the Figure 51.

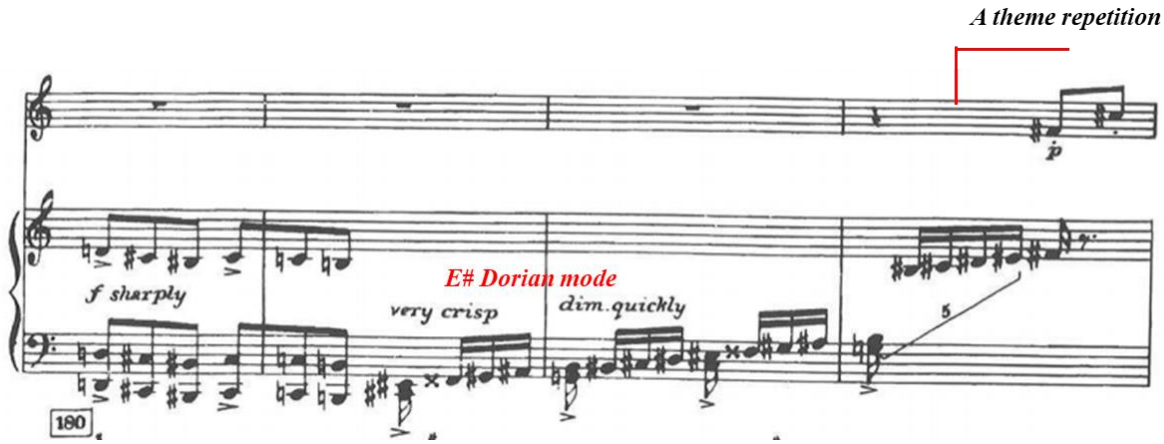

Figure 51: III mov., measures 176-179

This repetition of the refrain shows some variations in the melody: for example, the F# Major scale played by the saxophone in bars 186-187 over a G#7 chord that resolves on eight note A Major chord. Or even the doubling of the piano accompaniment by the saxophone in bars 188 – 192. See the Figure 52.

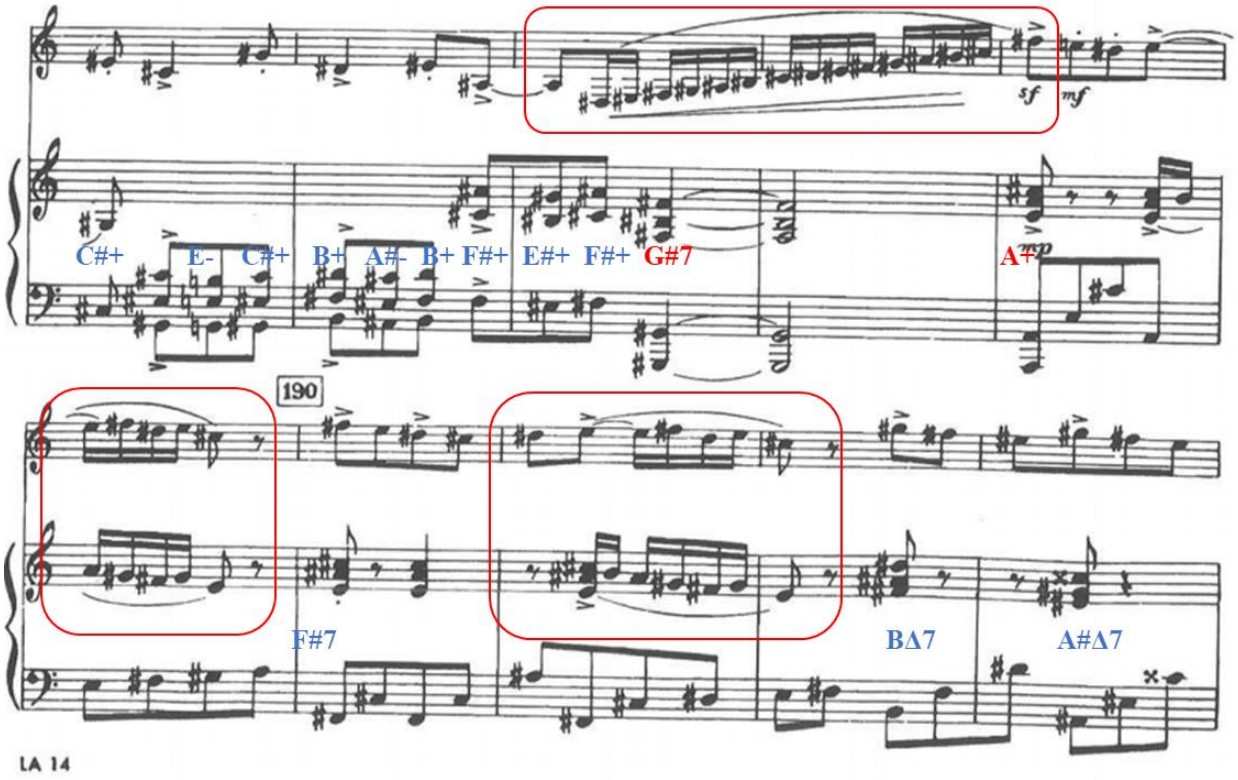

Figure 52: III mov., measures 184 - 193

And then, a last variation is the F# Major scale played for descending thirds with a closing quintuplet in bars 195-198 over a big chord of G#7 played by the piano. This long phrase closes the *A theme* opening a "transition period" which tends toward the *D section*. This is a very interesting part of the movement: first, because the eight-note perfect cadence in measures 197-198 (G#7 – A+), repeated also in 202-203 (D7 – C#+) seems to remember the first eight-note cadence spread in the first movement, seen for the first time in Figure 2. Second, because the music shows its joyful peak through this "comical/ironical" pace: dude of the bass notes played by the piano that remembers the folk music accompaniment (like in the polka, for example) and dude of the big dynamic contrast (from *fortissimo* to a sudden *piano*) which, together with the repetition/imitation of the sixteen notes, contribute to create this ironical effect. All these features are highlighted in the following Figure 53.

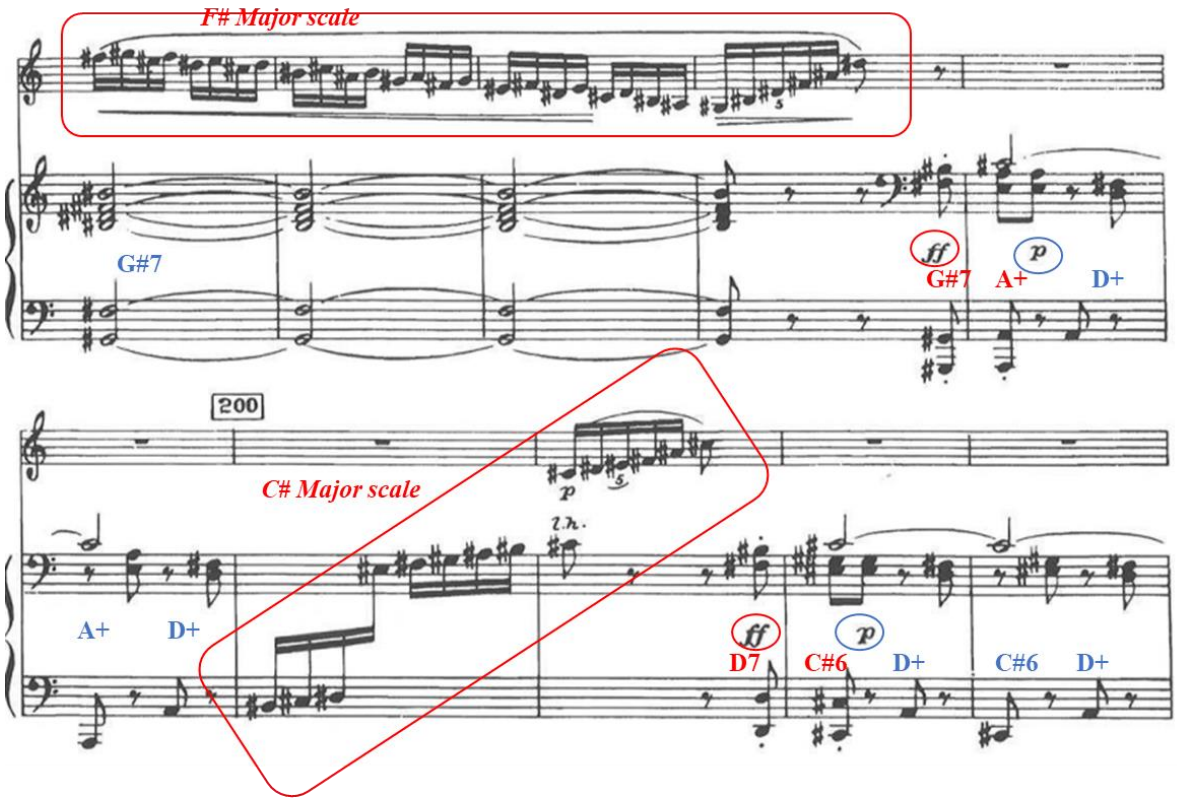

Figure 53: III mov., measures 194 -203

The *D section* starts in measure 205 with a major seventh interval started in anacrusis: a low F note which reaches the higher E with a quick *crescendo* from *forte* to *sforzato*. The piano accompaniment continues to play that kind of "folk music accompaniment" with bass quarter note played with the left hand and eight-notes upbeat played with the right. The tonality is A Major and the chords' progression is for the most readily recognizable. The *D theme* could be divided in three part. The first part starts in bar 205 and lasts until bar 220, the second part occupies the measures 220-230 and then, the third and last part starts in measure 230 and lasts until bar 245, wherein the *refrain* will take over. In bars 212-213 the saxophone opens the new phrase with sixteen-notes and quintuplets in E Mixolydian mode, while the piano plays just three notes (A – G# – F#) on the upper voice creating a syncopation with the same notes in the bass line. See the next Figure 54.

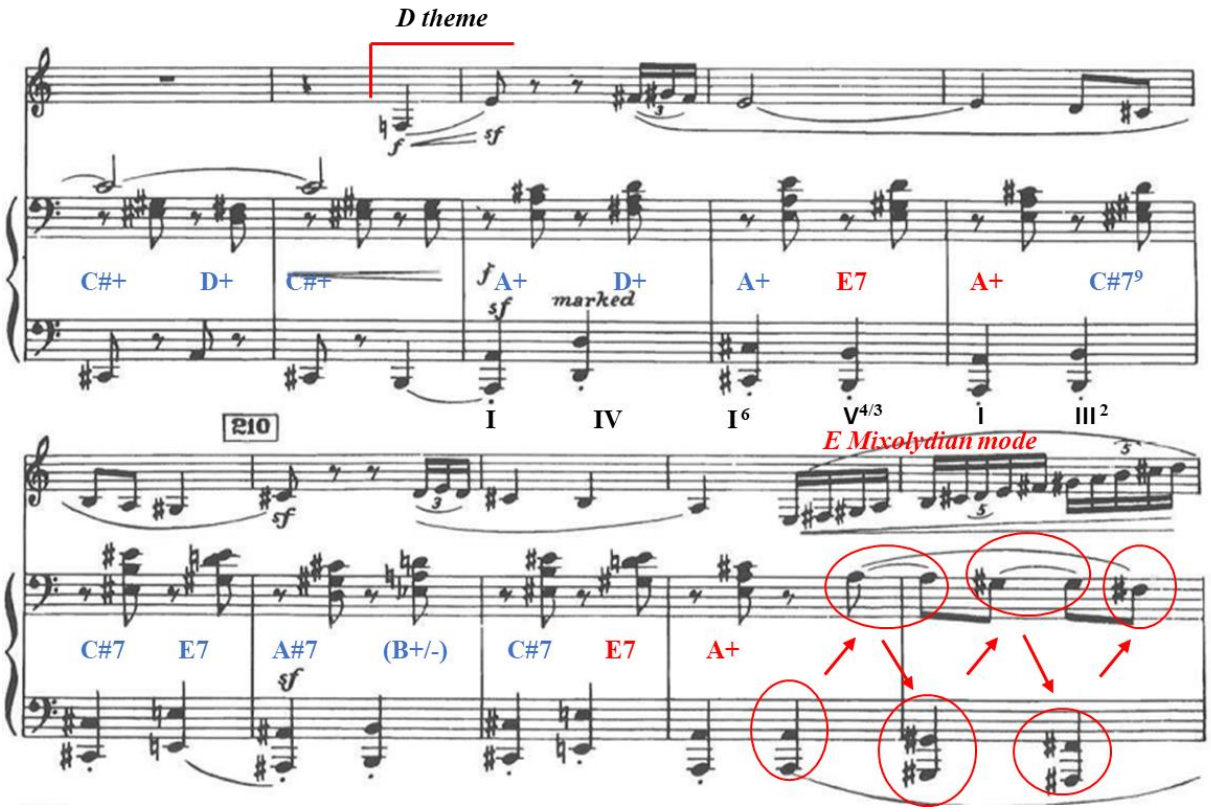

Figure 54: III mov., measures 204 - 214

In the following bars the saxophone repeated the theme one octave higher and extending the melody by the addition of eight notes. The piano keeps the same easy rhythmic pace than before playing chords which still have A Major as harmonic key-center. The bass line played by the piano create an ascendant scale half diatonic half chromatic from F note until G# note. See the Figure 55.

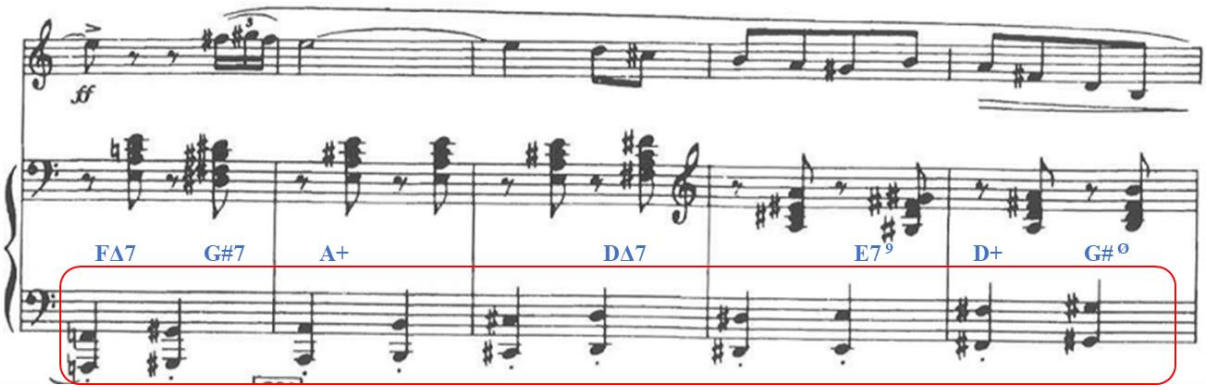

Figure 55: III mov., measures 214 - 218

The second part of the *D section* starts in bar 220, now the theme is transposed a third major higher than the beginning, the piano accompaniment remains the same than before, but the harmony starts to move to another tonality. A first variation appears in measures 224-225, where the saxophone plays eight-notes triplets in the exact point where the harmony moves to the tonality of Bb Major. See the following Figure 56.

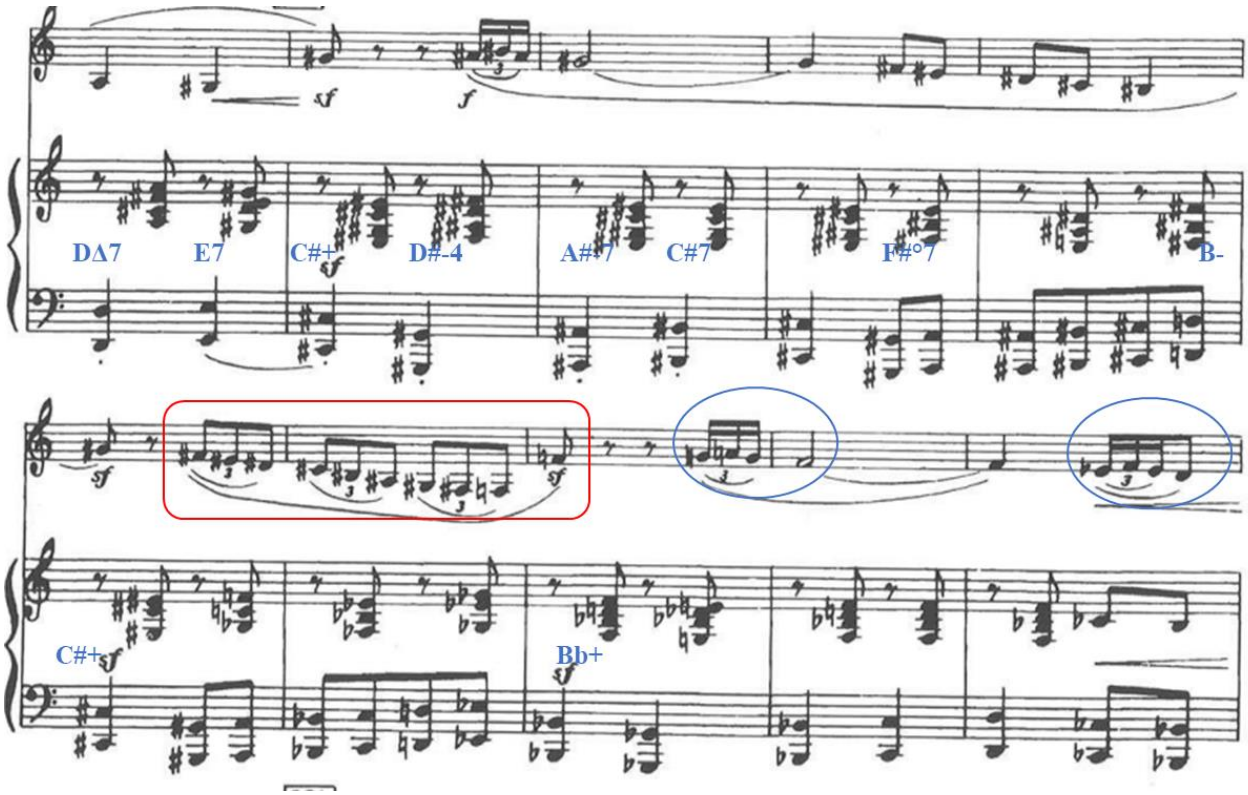

Figure 56: III mov., measures 219 - 228

From bar 230 the *D theme* is reproposed with a new variation which consists of the repetition of the head's motif (see the previous Figure 56 and the next): a special Creston's mechanism known as "tangential variation" already declared in this paper in the paragraph 1.2 and explained during the analysis of the I movement as well, see the explanation for the Figure 8. The measures 230-234 are a clear repetition of the previous 226-230, there are just a few differences: first, the quick sixteen-notes triplets are reiterated an half step below, see the following comparison in Figure 57.

Figure 57: III mov., comparison measures 226-227 and 230-231

The second differences between the two phrases is that the piano changes one single note in the accompaniment's repetition of bar 229, in fact in bar 233 there is a Fb instead of F natural. See the following Figure 58. By the way the most important change is in the harmony, which in this second phrase becomes more unstable: the chords in bars 231-232 are third related (Gb7 – Ebb7 – Gb7), moreover in bars 233-234 there is a "simulation" of a substitute dominant cadence Eb – D+, since the Eb is now a single note, not a seventh chord.

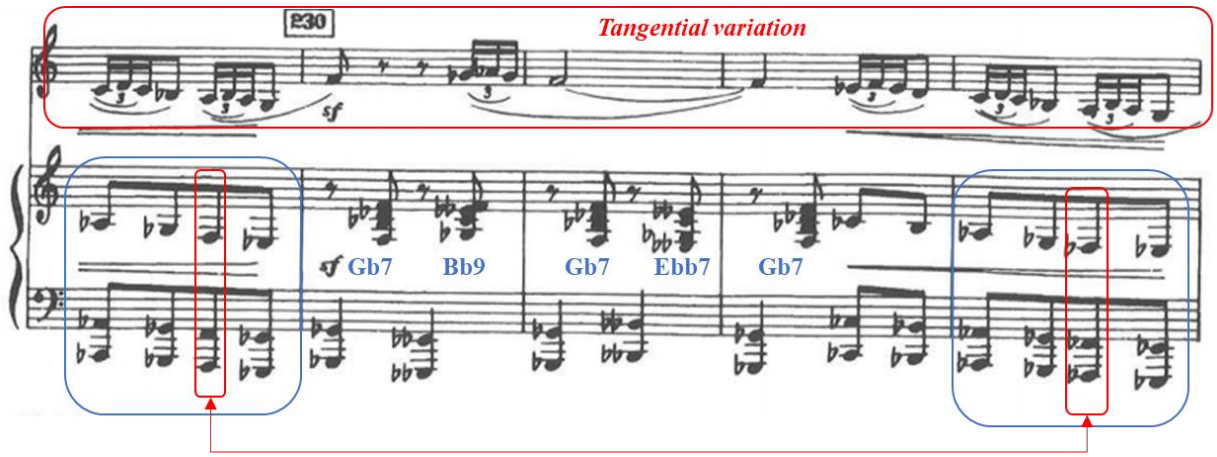

Figure 58: III mov., measures 229 - 233

In bar 234 the *D incipit* is reproposed a fifth higher than the beginning on a *fortissimo*, which goes gradually to the *pianissimo* in bar 245. This last phrase starts form the high A and arrives to the low one in bar 239. The harmony is unclear: the key-center seems to sway between D Major and B Major. Indeed, in bars 237-238 there is a perfect cadence in B Major, nevertheless in bars 240-241 there is a substitute cadence in D major. The melody seems to follow the D Major tonality, but the main notes (A – F# – D – A) could be part of a D major chord or B seventh dominant chord. See the Figure 59.

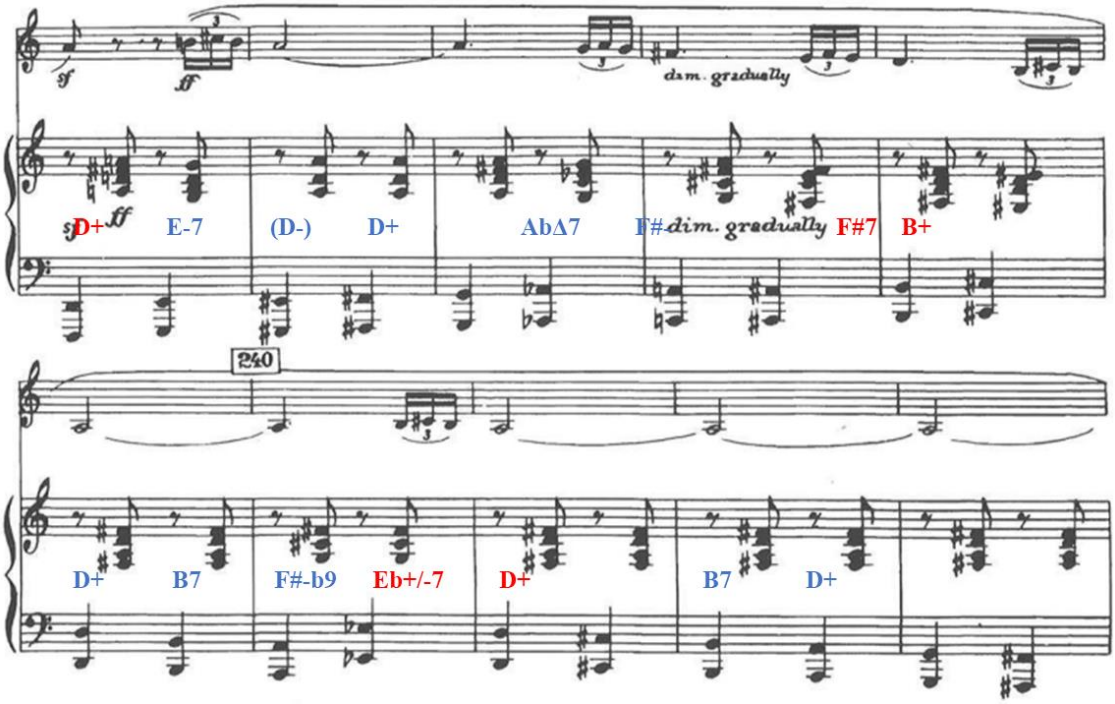

Figure 59: III mov., measures 234 - 243

The last repetition of the sixteen-notes triplets (bars 240-241) sounds now like an echo (it is almost on *pianissimo*). The half note A is extended for almost for bars, in bar 244 a final quick sixteen-note triplet (G – A – G) ends on F# in bar 245, major third of a D major chord with which starts the *refrain*. The A theme is the same of the beginning, but the melody starts on the beat played by the piano. See Figure 60.

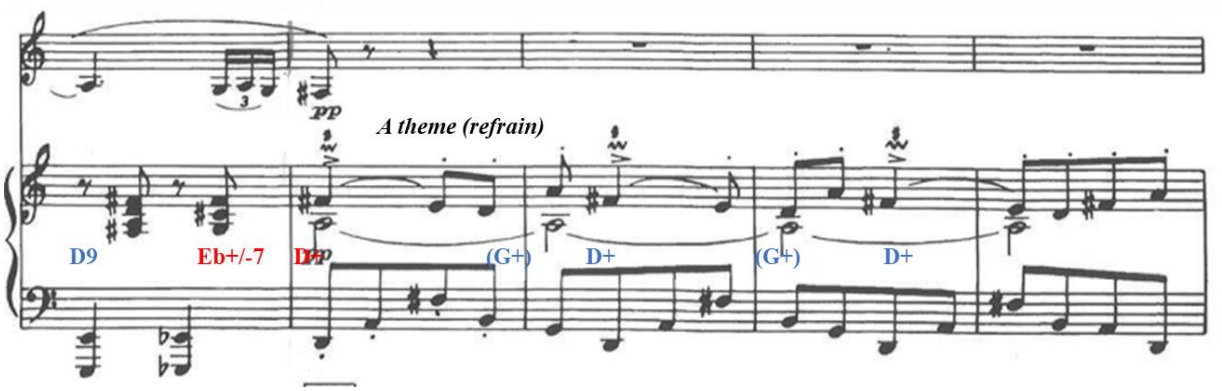

Figure 60: III mov., measures 244-248

The piano plays the first "little phrase" of the *A theme* alone, then the saxophone starts playing in bar 250 with the previous upbeat, continuing normally the now well-known theme just for three measures. Here it appears again the mechanism of the "tangential variation", used on the pattern of the second half phrase. See the following Figure 61.

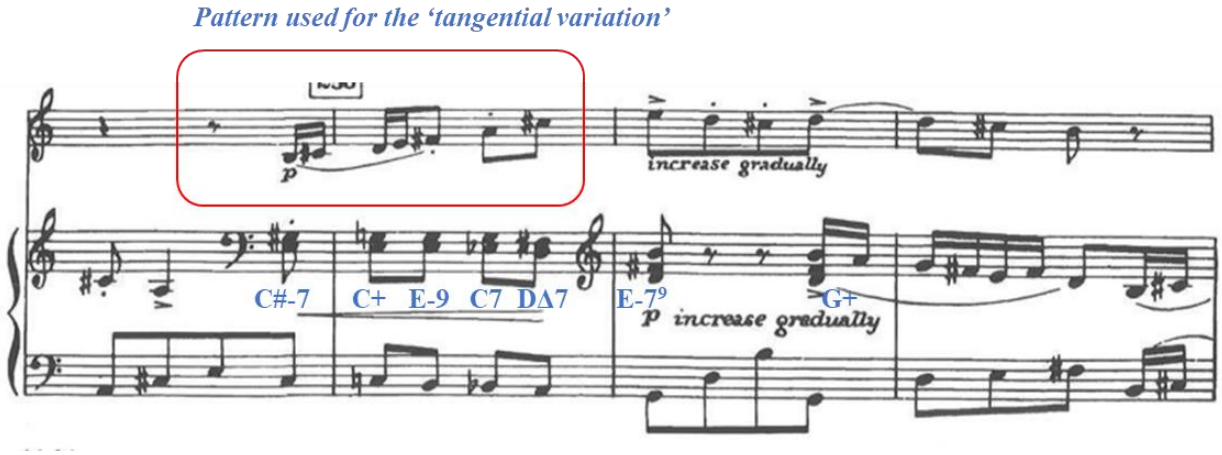

Figure 61: III mov., measures 249 -252

In bar 252 the piano repeats exactly the same previous pattern played by the saxophone, followed by the quick entrance of the saxophone, which plays the same pattern than before but with a small change: the syncopation is shifted by the addition of one note (B). See Figure 62.

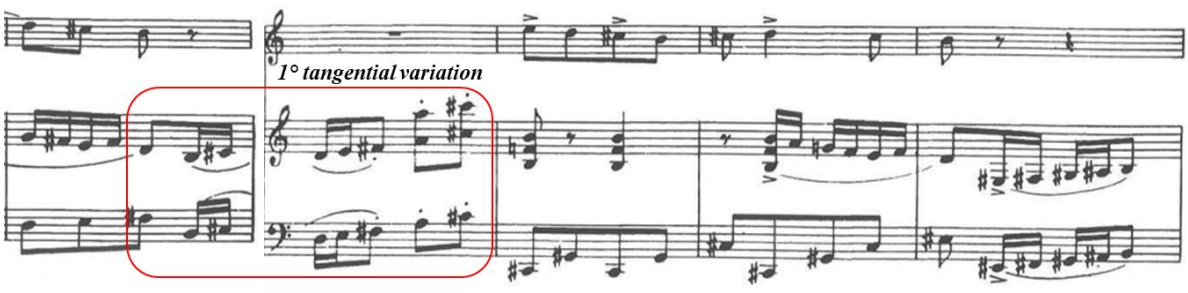

Figure 62: III mov., measures 252- 256

The pattern is repeated in bar 256-258, now handling the same rhythmic pattern used by the saxophone in bars 21-23 (shown in Figure 38), this time the piano plays it with both hands. This second variation is followed by another rhythmic variation of the saxophone line without syncopation. See Figure 63.

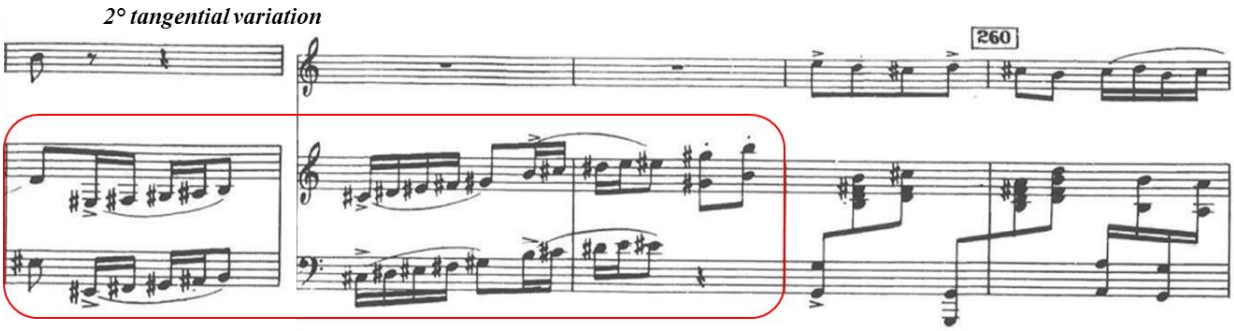

Figure 63: III mov., measures 256 - 260

The saxophone closes this first part of *A theme* changing the end of the phrase: it starts with two sixteen-notes quadruplets like the previous *A theme*'s ending phrase (see Figure 53), but now this D major scale played for intervals is closed with a rhythmic figure (two sixteen notes and one eight note) which acts as replacement of the upbeat starting of eight-note. Therefore, the *A theme* restarts in bar 262. The harmony is still clearly in D major, as the beginning. See Figure 64.

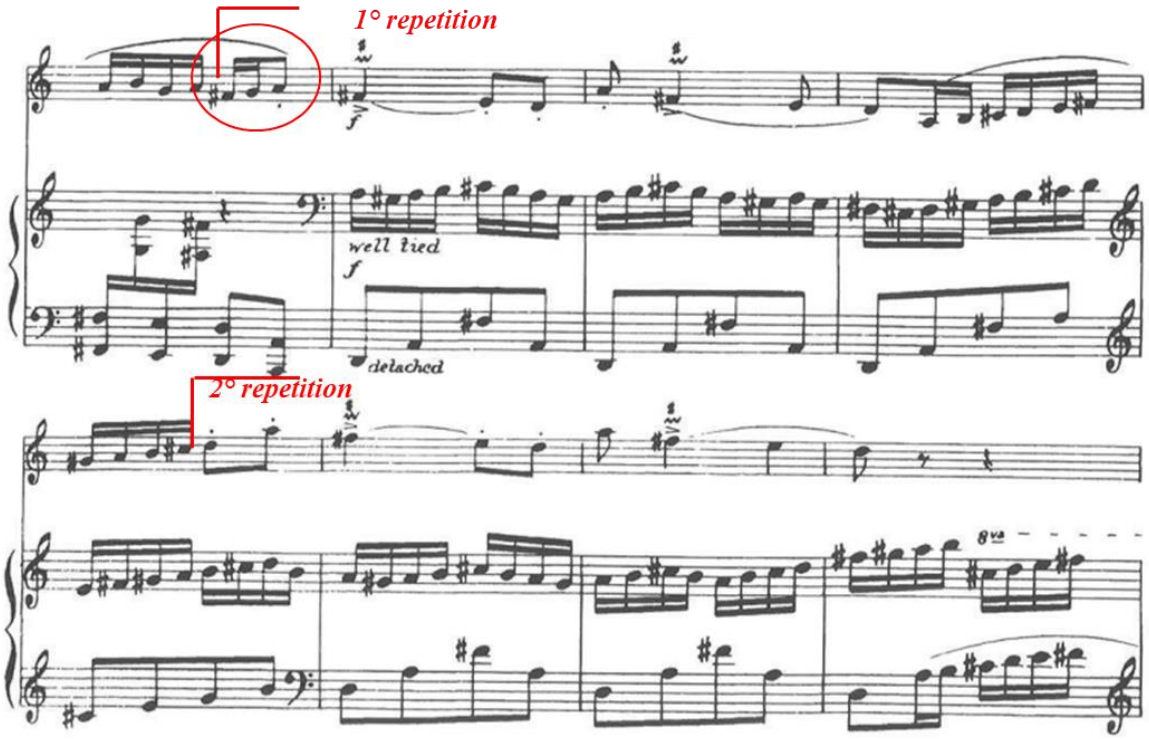

Figure 64: III mov., measures 261 - 268

The third and last repetition of the *A theme* starts in bar 270 with the upbeat. The theme now in *fortissimo* is fully composed by eight notes. The piano accompaniment keeps the same pace but with different harmonic progression, in fact the harmony shows some ambiguous passages. See the following Figure 65.

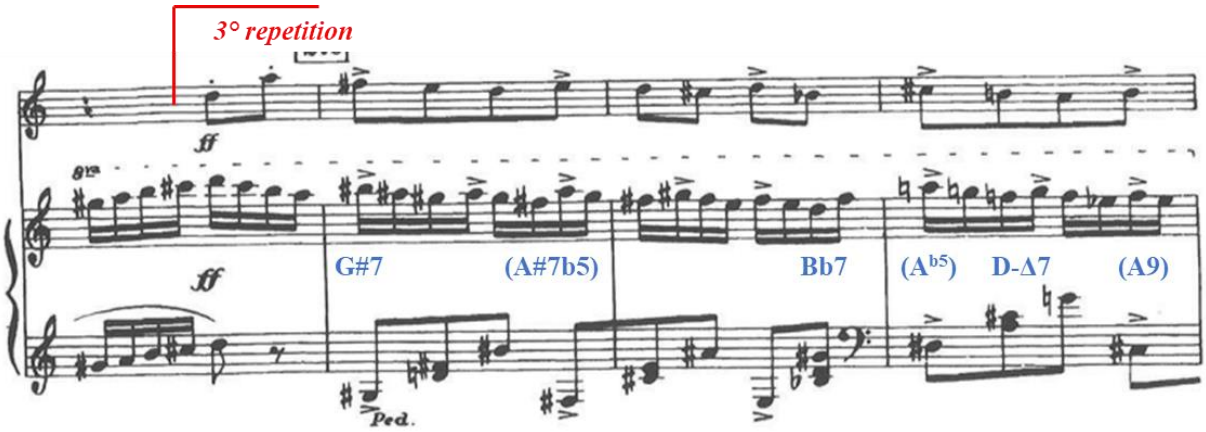

Figure 65: III mov., measures 269 - 272

Both saxophone and piano (on the left hand) are practically playing 3 beats against 4 pulses: this is how the result of the writing process sounds, but instead the composer divided the 8 units in 3+3+2 groups, rather than divide the 8 eight notes in the traditional 4 groups x 2 units. This process is well-explained by the composer himself in his mentioned textbook, in the chapter dedicated to explain the irregular subdivision[27]. Even if the meter is 2/4, the reader should count the measures two by two, indeed, as the composer wrote in his textbook *Principles of* Rhythm, «For reasons of convenience or practicality, the grouping of pulses is sometimes not contained in a single measure, but in a frame of two or more measures»[28], this meter of two measures is called *dimeter*. At the same time, the right hand of the piano is playing an hemiola (there are 3 beats in every bar of 2 pulses). In the following Figure 66 and the next ones I adopted the same symbols used by Creston (1906-1985) in his mentioned textbook: the small circles indicate the pulses, while the arrows indicate the beats[29].

[27] Creston (1965, 76-80)

[28] Creston (1965, 4).

[29] Creston distinguishes the terms *pulses* and *beats*: the first are the *metrical pulses* of the measure, while the beats are the *rhythmic beat* which may or may does not coincide with the pulse. See Creston (1965, 3).

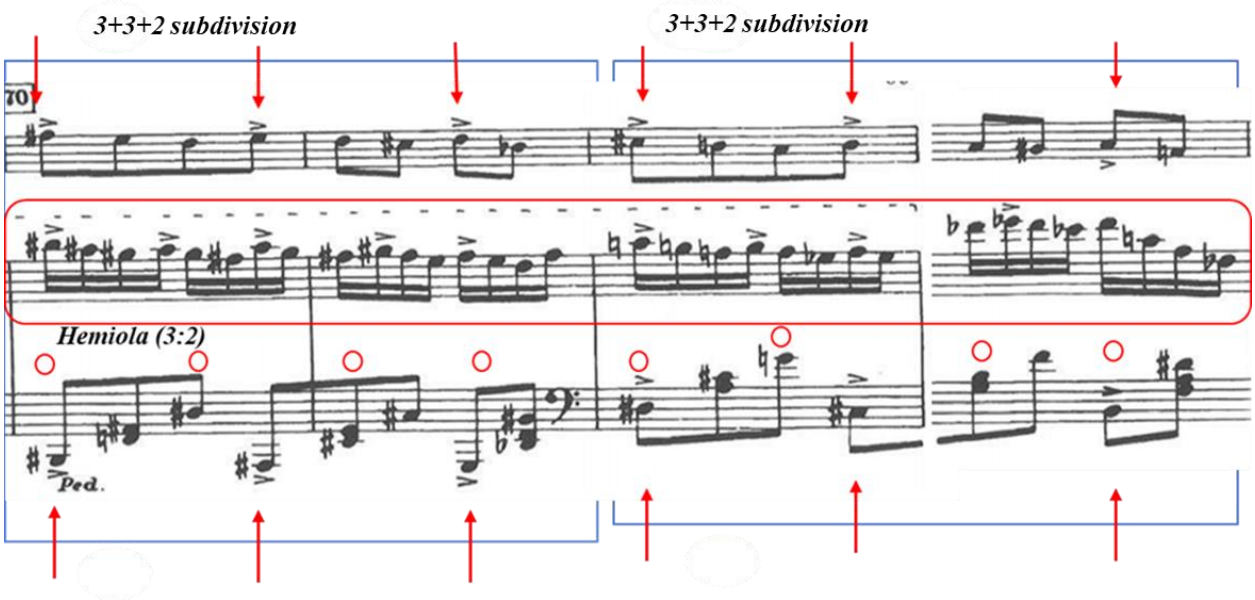

Figure 66: III mov., measures 270-273

The same 3+3+2 irregular subdivision is showed in measures 274-275, but now with wider notes: the pattern is the same of the one showed in Figure 24; after that, the rhythm becomes regular playing quarter notes on the beat and dynamic accents on the strong pulses. The piano arrives to a G7 half-note chord (which is kept for two bars) through a cadence [V7sub] – IV – I. On that wide G7 chord the saxophone continues the previous eight-notes pattern played by the piano. See the Figure 67.

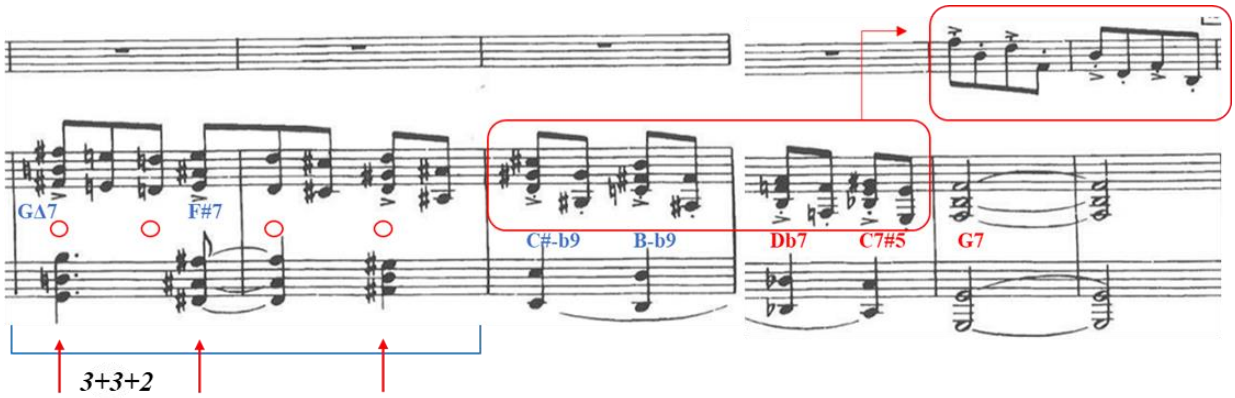

Figure 67: III mov., measures 274-279

From bar 280 the saxophone rests while the piano plays a sixteen-notes undefined scale, which is continued by the piano in the following two measures: it seems an almost whole tone scale in C# (enharmonically from Db), which is the augmented fifth of the half-note F7#5 chord kept for two bars in 282-283. See the Figure 68.

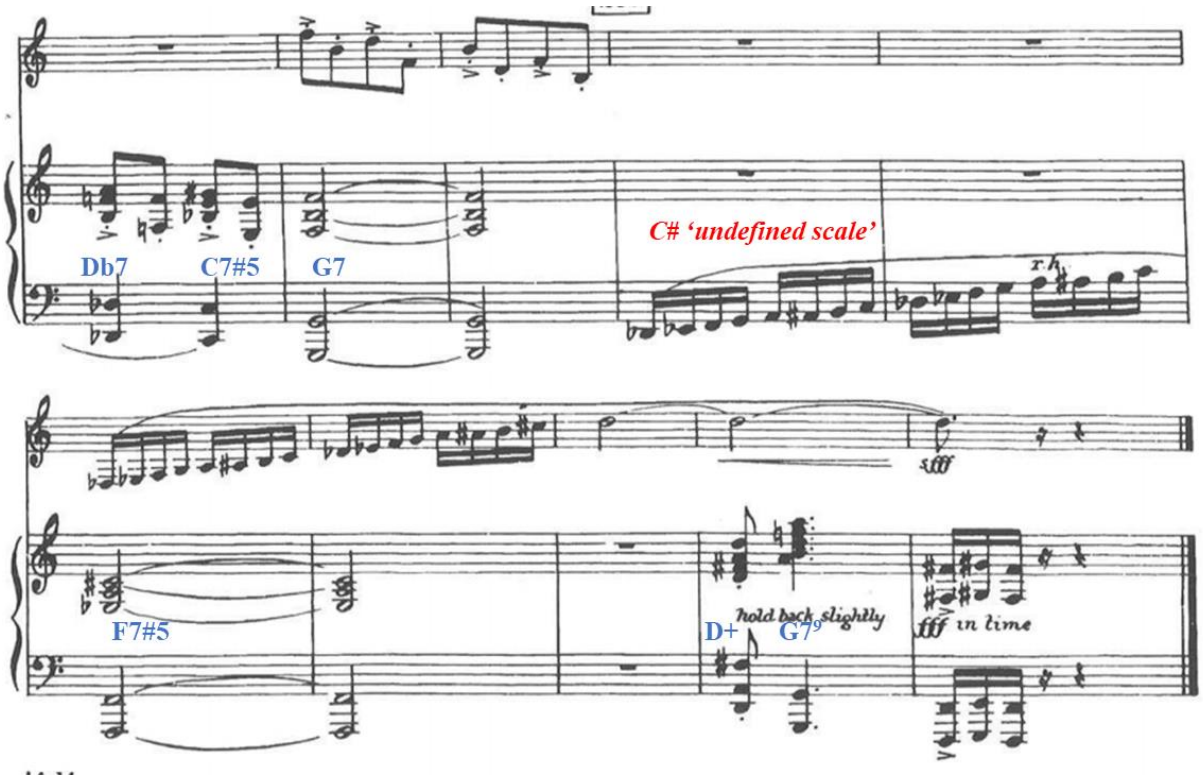

Figure 68: III mov., measures 277 - 286

As shown in the previous Figure 68, the unclear scale in C# played by the saxophone arrives to the last note of the piece: the note D, which becomes the tonic when the piano plays the third last chord, a D Major chord. The last note is kept for almost three full bars and played with a ending *crescendo* that arrives to a ***sfff*** in the last measure. Under that last note, the piano plays in the second last bar a syncopation with the chords D Major and $G7^9$ slightly *ritenuto* (as written in the score: *hold back slightly*). Finally, in the last bar, it plays *in time* three sixteen-notes bichords (that are three major thirds in D, E and again D) on a ***fff***.

Table 3, Formal structure of the Movement III, *With gaiety.*

Movement III, With gaiety **Rondo form**				
SECTIONS	**INSTRUMENTATION**	**MEASURES**	**TONALITY**	
A (*refrain*)		**0-39**		
A theme (first phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	0-14	D Major	
A theme (second phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	14- 39	D Major	F# Major
B		**39- 75**		
Interlude	Piano	39- 44	F# Major	-
B theme (1st part)	Saxophone and Piano	45 - 58	F# Major	-
B theme (2nd part)	Saxophone and Piano	59-75	-	
A (*refrain*)		**75-109**		
A theme	Saxophone and Piano	75-88	Db Major	
Interlude	Piano	88-94	-	
A theme	Saxophone and Piano	94-109	C Major	-
C		**110-163**		
C theme (1st part)	Saxophone and Piano	110- 138	B Major	-
C theme (2nd part)	Saxophone and Piano	138-159	-	D Major
Interlude	Piano	159-163	-	
A (*refrain*)		**164- 197**		
A theme (first phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	164-179	F# Major	-
A theme (second phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	179-197	F# Major	
D		**197-245**		
Interlude	Saxophone and Piano	197-205	A Major	D Major
D theme (1st part)	Saxophone and Piano	205-219	A Major	
D theme (2nd part)	Saxophone and Piano	219-245	-	D Major
A (*refrain*)		**245-286**		
A theme (first phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	245-261	D Major	

A theme (second phrase)	Saxophone and Piano	261-269	D Major	
A theme (ending)	Saxophone and Piano	269-286	-	D Major

4 An analytical approach to the rhythm in saxophone line

In this chapter I am going to employ the rhythmic reading tools provided by Creston to the analysis of the saxophone line. The objective is, as explained in the Introduction, to offer leading guidelines for the performance. This aim is pursued starting from the assumption that an analytic reading of the rhythm is the primary step of the 'performative analysis' to process a musical interpretation - more specific theoretical issues are addressed to the chapter 5. If 'phrasing' is - as we learned from the first years of our music studies - the 'art of performing music', which involves a correct use of breathing, crescendos and diminuendos, dynamics and rhythm, a deep understanding of the rhythmic features in a musical phrase will help the performer to give shape to its interpretation.

It is not so usual, but almost a privilege to have a textbook written by the composer himself which contains his point of view on such a complicated argument like the rhythm. Therefore, I decided to dedicate a space to his major textbook *Principles of Rhythm* with which I drew up my rhythmic approach to the analysis. Therefore, I also have demonstrated how it can be useful for the performance besides the composition, which is the primary objective of the book.

4.1 *Principles of rhythm*: a starting point for a rhythmic analysis

As declared by Creston himself, the textbook was written in 1965, abandoning the project of writing a text on harmony and composition, because he felt that the rhythm was the musical component more disregarded by the student composer in composition instruction[30].

He starts his textbook giving many definitions of the word *rhythm* and explaining the basic elements of it, which are *meter*, *pace*, *accent*, *pattern*. Immediately we find important information for the performance: Creston wrote that the «accent is the very life of the rhythm. Without it, meter is a monotonous series of pulse-groups […]. There are various more subtle ways of rendering prominent a certain tone, and any means which draws attention to, singles out, or gives special significance to a tone, is a form of accent»[31]. This means that the performer should follow the ways of the accentuation explained by composer, who writes about eight types of accents: dynamic, agogic, metric, harmonic, weight, pitch, pattern and embellished[32].

Creston, talking about rhythm, jumps to the past twice: before dedicating a chapter to the 'pre-classic dance rhythms' and after in the *Appendix I*. There, he exposes a historical overview on rhythm: starting from the ancient Greek meters and rhythmic modes, passing throughout the mediaeval meters, and arriving to the 16th Century meters. The reason that drove him to write about the 'pre-classic dance rhythms' is that he saw many students «belittle any theory of an earlier century and forget that what exists today, in music, as significant and worthy can trace its origin to the ancient philosophy»[33]. This aspect is very much important, besides of the historical side, for the rhythmic analysis: first, it allows us to lead back specific rhythmic modes and patterns found in our score to an ancient, primal meter with a large background of uses and meanings; second, it provides terms to call easily and quickly

[30] Creston (1971, 93).

[31] Creston (1965, 28).

[32] The composer quotes in the footnote a nineth and tenth type of accent: the *tone-color*, referred to the orchestration and the *expressive accent*, which is a function of the expression (when one tone, especially in running passages, is emphasized by tone intensity). Unfortunately, this second type is not widely explained, but just hinted.

[33] Creston (1965, 45).

certain rhythmic patterns found in the compositions. It means that the terms *iambuses*, *trochees*, *dactyls*, *anapests* etc., can be used to identify specific rhythmic features.

The centerpiece of the book is the chapter named *Rhythmic Structures*, wherein Creston establishes five different plans for the organization of duration in ordered movement, which are: *regular subdivision*, *irregular subdivision*, *overlapping*, *regular subdivision overlapping*, *irregular subdivision overlapping*. Analyzing in the previous chapter the *Sonata* under discussion, I have already indicated some of these structures explained by the composer.

4.2 The rhythm in the saxophone line: tracing guidelines for the performance

Delving into the analysis of the saxophone line, I am going to expose a few examples of rhythmic analysis in order to offer some guidelines for the performer. Starting from the beginning of the piece, the saxophone line begins with a sixteen-note quadruplet on the strong pulse. The first step for a rhythmic analysis, as we know, is to find a hierarchy of notes into the phrase. The most important note is the one who holds the primary accent. In this case, following the Creston's indications, since the second D# is the longest in the phrase, the performer should play a stronger impulse on that note. The composer calls this type of accent the *agogic*, that is a quantitative accent, whose emphasis is expressed by means of duration[34]. Then, always following his explanations, the line shows an increase of the pitch on the C#, which occurs always on the strong pulse: the performer should play the line with the intention to reach the C# (*pitch accent*) and emphasize more the second one (*agogic accent*), which is longer than the first one. See the following Figure 69.

Figure 69: Saxophone line I mov., mm. 1-3

In measure 5 the saxophone plays quick sixteen notes to the high F# (*pitch accent*), which should be emphasized but not much as the following quarter-note G#, because it is longer (*agogic accent*), higher (the new *pitch accent*, which indicates an increase of the tension), it is even on the strong pulse and is written with the *dynamic accent.* The G# leads to its resolution: the high A natural in measure 8. Creston calls this type of accent *harmonic accent*, which «emphasizes a pulse or a beat by means of a dissonance on that pulse or beat»[35]. Moreover, this is the highest note of the movement, so it should be played with an impulse even more intense (the new *pitch accent*). After the A note, quick sixteen notes give a brief release's moment to the music. See the Figure 70.

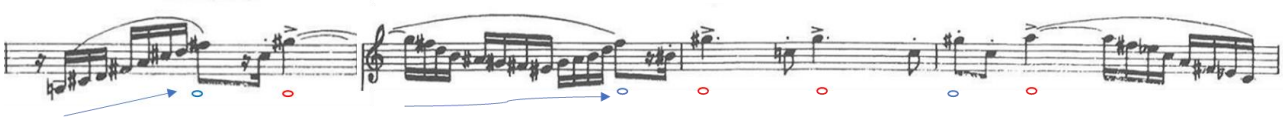

Figure 70: Saxophone line I mov., 5-8

The following bars show again quick sixteen notes which lead to the half-note A in measure 10. The sixteen notes can be played emphasizing the firsts of every quadruplets (*expressive accent*[36]), until to arrive to main note which is the half-note A (holder of *agogic accent* and *pitch accent*). Then, the two

[34] Creston (1960, 29).
[35] Ibidem.
[36] According to what Creston briefly said about this type of accent, we can assume that this is.

following notes shows a brief release of the tension which can be expressed by a little *diminuendo*. See the next Figure 71.

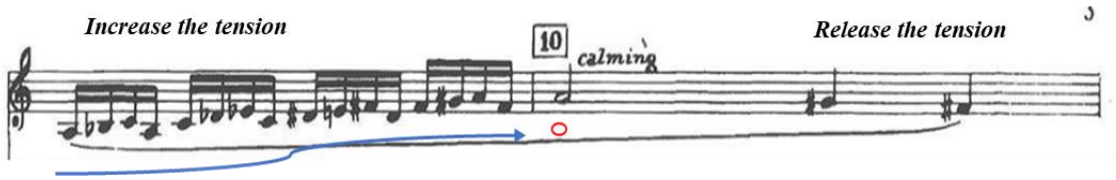

Figure 71: Saxophone line I mov., mm. 9-10

It would result redundant to analyze in this way all the movement, hence I am going to indicate a few more examples of this analytic reading of the rhythm taken from the second and third movement of the *Sonata.*

The saxophone line in the second movement keeps for all its duration the same rhythmic pace: *With tranquility*. This pace is made by long periods which express an increase of the tension in the antecedent half phrase and a release of the tension in the consequent phrase. For the performer one of the most important aspect is to not cut these periods, never losing completely the tension on the half notes included between the two phrases (antecedent and consequent). The phrases in this movement, excluding the *A' section* (see the Table 2), show mainly the same rhythmic patterns, which can be identified and called with the Greek word *dactyl.* This ancient meter concerns (in the classic quantitative meter) in a long syllable followed by two short syllables, which, in terms of duration can be referred to the music language. This means that the performer should play the phrase keeping in mind this kind of rhythmic pattern, therefore playing as strong pulses always the eight notes. As shown in Figure 72 the eight note together with two sixteen notes correspond exactly to this Greek meter.

Figure 72: Saxophone line II mov., mm. 15-16

The previous Figure 72 shows also that the saxophone line reaches immediately the highest note, which is the F# (*pitch accent*) and then it goes gradually descending to the half-note B natural. As said just before, the tension must be proportionally kept for all its duration and then increasing again for the opening of the consequent phrase.

One last example from the third movement to conclude this chapter: in measures 53-55 the rhythmic pattern concerns in four sixteen notes followed by an eight note, it is repeated four times, even extending the phrase beyond the bar line. In fact, it is good to remember that for Creston the bar line is nothing more than a graphic symbol, as shown in the analysis of the *Sonata* submitted in this paper, he often uses the *overlapping structure*. From bar 54 the first sixteen note brings the *dynamic accent*, so obviously the performer must respect that accentuation every time; but where it is not specified, the performer should follow the accent inherent to the rhythmic structure. For example, in bar 53, the first sixteen note is not accentuated: it means that the type of accent to respect is the *pitch accent*, indeed the quick notes lead to the F#. In this movement the accentuation is mostly explicit throughout the *dynamic accents,* whose continuous switching gives to the movement the sense of crispness and gaiety. A clear example is offered in the following Figure 73.

Figure 73: Saxophone line III mov., mm. 51-55

This is the umpteenth demonstration of how the overall comprehension of the rhythm of the piece must always precede the interpretation of the musical line because the rhythmic patterns, as seen previously, can be found straddling between the bars as well.

5 Analysis and Performance: traces of the intrigued relationship

The topic here briefly explained is obviously a too wide subject to be dealt with in a short chapter of this study. My purpose is just to trace, in broad terms, some of the considerations formulated since nowadays, in which I am including my contributions.

Since I started this study from the induced assumption that the 'analysis' of the *Sonata* would have improved my 'performance', it results necessary to dedicate a short chapter to my reflections on this relationship. Even because I have elaborated in my study two different types of analysis; in fact, the term 'analysis' sounds ambiguous in this theoretical field. It needs a clarification: by that I am referring to the deep study of the formal structure, the harmony, the melody, the interplay of the instruments or the analysis of orchestration and so on, of the full score of a piece. This is exactly the kind of work that I carried out in the third chapter of this paper, a type of analysis normally credited more to the musicologist and musical analysts than the performers.

The need to clarify the term is motivated by practical reasons: indeed, all the performers - or, at least, the experienced performers - make continuously analysis approaching to a new piece. As Rink explained, they are «continually engaged in a process of "analysis" » which is an «integral part of the performing process»[37]. This kind of performer's analysis, which Rink calls "informed intuition" can result already sufficient to get all the necessary information for the performance. This is indeed the analysis which I carried out in the fourth chapter of this paper, with the difference that I based my performative analysis on the Creston's rhythmic advices and theory - through the support of the textbook *Principles of Rhythm*. In fact, there are recurrent situations in tonal music which could be easily recognized by experienced performers with strong music intuitions. As Nolan writes, «the experienced performer's familiarity with the conventions of the tonal rhetoric may make the analytical classification of such situations seem redundant for the purpose of performance»[38]. This is probably a fact that must be accepted: the performance does not always need necessarily to a deep analysis, as showed in this paper, but perhaps it should be valuated case by case. In fact, as said by Narmour: «the notion that performers must have 'theoretical and analytical competence' is like claiming that one must be able to identify all grammatical constructs and parts of speech in order to speak articulately»[39].

On the contrary, Berry - who is apparently considered the pioneer of the discussion on the relationship between analysis and performance - points out the necessity for the performers to analyze the structure and form of their pieces to avoid "capricious" intuition, setting up their own performance on decision made by "rational reflection":

> the effort of working out an analysis of structure leads to performance decisions which are relatively free of caprice, which do not rely purely on intuition[40].

In other words, after having completed the formal analysis, the performer chooses appropriate "interventions" - term used by Berry - based on that analysis. Starting from these considerations, Berry underlies the important for the performer to learn the elements of form and structure to reach an "illumined" performance. It is doubtless, I think, that the analytical work on the full score brings out details which would be impossible to perceive only with the performative practice - the "informed intuition" - since the performer obtains a 360-degree view about the piece learning the composer's way

[37] Rink (1990, 323).
[38] Nolan (1993-4, 18).
[39] Rink (ibidem).
[40] Rink (1990, 330).

of writing and so on. Nevertheless, it should be calculated the incidence of the information obtained in the performance, which are clearly impossible to calculate because of their connection to the personal 'interpretation'. Perhaps, more than anyone, Bethany Lowe emphasizes the interpretative factor, postulating it as a mediatory term connected - directly or indirectly - to the analysis and the performance, which suggests the application of wider ideas from the field of psychology, semiotics et cetera[41]. These kinds of considerations may lead us too far from the short aim in this context. Therefore, most of the information learned from the analysis can be interpretated in several ways since a significant part of the performer's considerations is – even though not purely - subjective. Subjective, I need to specify, in the extent that the performer's personal reception of a piece of music respects the general conventions and the common rules of the performance practice. Moreover, as I wanted to prove in the previous chapter, the guidelines for a musical interpretation are in part contained already in the musical phrases, in their rhythmic structures. Therefore, it is not exclusively relegated to the field of expression.

As should result clear already from the text briefly exposed, the relationship between analysis and performance is defined in different terms by several authors. Moreover, as Rink pointed out, the argument is full of contradiction and confusion[42]; these incompatibilities are created by the different orientations of the authors, which are in large measure theorists. As I said, in this context, my aim was to draw initial outlines on which I could build further studies, indeed - as Nolan ends intuitively in her study - much more can be done through research in the field of pedagogy[43].

[41] Lowe (2003, 93-94).
[42] Rink (1990, 319-324).
[43] Nolan (1993-4,139).

6 Conclusions

Since the very beginning of my research, the main objectives have been to provide a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the *Sonata* and to demonstrate that - in the study of a score - an overall comprehension of the rhythmic features can trace precise guidelines for the performer. I reached both these objectives with the help of the Creston's comprehensive textbook *Principles of Rhythm*, which has been a fundamental pillar in building my study.

My first purpose was to obtain an analytical prospectus of the *Sonata* in order to reach a full understanding of the musical features of the work, learning the main compositional devices used by the composer and obtaining a 360-degree view of the piece. This are all the information I have learned from the detailed analytic work carried out in the third chapter. In the composition of the highlighted *Sonata* Creston used the traditional classic forms - a *Sonata-Allegro form* for the first movement, an *Adagio form* for the second movement and a *Rondo form* for the last movement - although each part is characterized for a constant propensity to the experimentation. In other words, his musical composition reflects a musical comprehension which is quite far from the classical assumptions. In fact, as I punctually showed in the body of my analysis, the use of the *Sonata-Allegro form* in the first movement is revived in many aspects: the use of specific mentioned composition's devices for the development of the melody - the mentioned 'tangential variation' - the unusual full combination of music materials, the uncommon connection between the sections of the movement as well as the connection between the movements themselves etc. In this regard, the lyricism of the second movement sounds as a perfect development of the previous second theme of the first movement. Experimental is also the harmonic conception of the composer, which he himself described as 'pantonal': indeed, the key-center constantly moves, creating numerous ambiguous harmonic passages with several undefined chords or very complex polychords. It is a characteristic which involve each movement of the *Sonata*; in fact, the primacy of unsolved dominant-seventh chords' sequences makes the limited perfect dominant-seventh chord cadences very delighted. The rhythm is, of course, the main important aspect of the *Sonata*. After having investigated the textbook *Principles of Rhythm*, I believe I can say that the importance of the Creston's work was to create an original compositional approach to the rhythm, explaining it from his fundamental components and schematizing his complexity in five structures: in this manner he wanted to make it easily accessible to the composer students. In my analysis I found a perfect correspondence between his rhythmic conception and its application in the composition practice. The complexity of the rhythmic elements is shown from the first movement but reaches its greatest form in the third one: it has a very vivacious character, distinguished by many irregular rhythmical patterns, polymetric sketches, regular and irregular overlapping structures - the rhythmic structures described in his textbook which I highlighted into the score's fragments contained into the formal analysis.

My second purpose was to obtain guidelines for the performance practice of the saxophone player, employing a specific rhythmic approach to the saxophone's melody and using the study on the rhythm contained in the Creston's textbook. The fourth chapter is indeed completely dedicated to the field of the performance. Starting from a description of the textbook *Principles of Rhythm*, I sustained it can be useful for both musical perspectives: the compositional practice and the performative practice. In fact, the rhythm - with all its constituent elements described by Creston - contains already the key reading proper of the musical materials also in terms of performance. Since the rhythmic components contained in a musical line - accent, pace, meter and pattern - give shape and organization to the natural pulses of the phrases, an analytic reading of them becomes a fundamental step for the performer, to process his/her own interpretation. To support my argument, I offered few examples, by applying Creston's reading tools to the rhythmic structures of each movement of the *Sonata* at issue. In general, the

importance of this kind of performative analysis, which is also named ‘informer intuition’ by Rink, is widely discussed. There are musicians and theorists which consider it satisfactory for the performance’s results, highlighting the not necessary of the detailed ‘formal analysis’. In this regard, I added a last chapter about the relationship between analysis and performance in order to demonstrate the complexity of the argument. Rightfully some theorists, as Lowe, pointed out the presence of the interpretative factor in both types of analysis. It seems difficult to define the borders between what can be objectively read into the score and what is a result of the performer’s considerations, speculations. As shown in the chapter, this complex argument is full of contradiction and confusion; it clearly shows the need of further enlightening studies and investigations.

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