

From the Wellspring to the Oceanfront

Camacho Montealegre, Luis

Master's thesis / Diplomski rad

2019

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **University of Zagreb, Music Academy / Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Muzička akademija**

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SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU MUZIČKA AKADEMIJA
III. ODSJEK

LUIS CAMACHO MONTEALEGRE

FROM THE WELLSPRING TO THE OCEANFRONT

Performance analysis of Igor Lešnik's
marimba works *Neenah* and *Water
Sculpture*

DIPLOMSKI RAD



ZAGREB, 2019.

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DIPLOMSKI RAD

Mentor: red. prof. art. Igor Lešnik

Student: Luis Camacho Montealegre

Ak.god. 2018/2019.

ZAGREB, 2019.

DIPLOMSKI RAD ODOBRIO MENTOR

red. prof. art. Igor Lešnik

Potpis

U Zagrebu, 18.06.2019.

POVJERENSTVO:

1. red. prof. art. Igor Lešnik
2. red. prof. art. Marina Novak
3. izv. prof. art. Ivana Kuljerić Bilić
4. nasl. doc. Božidar Rebić
5. nasl. doc. Marko Mihaljović

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1. INTRODUCTION

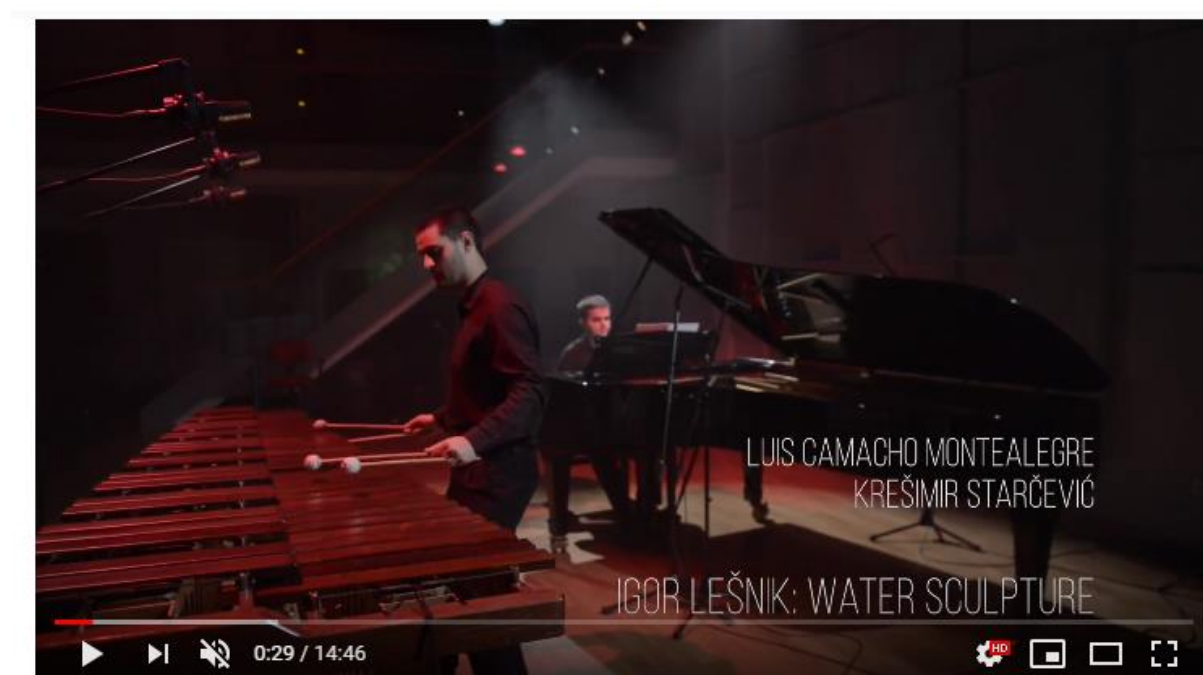
Five days after I had performed my final bachelor recital at “Conservatorio Superior de Música de Murcia” in the summer of 2016, I was back in Zagreb, to meet professor Igor Lešnik and work again with him after several months after my Erasmus exchange. This time it was about my participation in a concert with biNgbang percussion ensemble in Ulm (Germany). During the rehearsal week we talked about my participation at one of the most prestigious marimba competitions in the world, the Universal Marimba Competition taking place in Sint-Truiden (Belgium). My competition program needed to be decided and Prof. Lešnik suggested one of his own creations for marimba as free choice piece for the first round. The piece entitled *Neenah* might enable me to present to the jury a first impression of myself that would be fresh, original and representative of my new academy and my professor. Nevertheless, it turned out the first round had a performance time limit of 10 minutes which imposed I perform only the first half of the piece, appropriately entitled *Nee*. Starting immediately to work on the piece was in fact my first contact with Lešnik’s musical language for marimba.

Sometime later, the organization decided to offer the candidates three choices for the final round’s marimba concerto: *L. A. Concerto*, by Piet Sverts; *Concerto No. 1* by Chin Cheng Lin; and *Water Sculpture* by Igor Lešnik. We realized this provides a possibility my participation in this competition becomes sort of cyclical in character because the music of my first-round performance would actually represent the aesthetic basis of the marimba concerto I am supposed performing in the final round.

I have to confess that in the early days of preparing both pieces the idea didn’t sound so magnificent. I tended to mix passages, even reaching the point in which one day I would jump from playing *Nee* into playing *Water Sculpture* without noticing, or even surprise myself doubting from which piece would be the passage I was playing.

However, after for some time digging into both pieces, I managed to understand the differences. In addition, I started enjoying the particular and positive language that both pieces share. And even when I didn’t reach the final round in the Universal Marimba Competition, I was sort of marked for life. *Water Sculpture* became the marimba concerto of my career at that time (nowadays, that position is shared with Igor Kuljerić’s *Concerto for Ivana*). I was lucky enough

to record *Water Sculpture* in the brand-new studio of the Zagreb Music Academy and perform it several times with the String Orchestra of the Music Academy. All of this happened after the competition during the academic year 2017/2018.



Igor Lešnik WATER SCULPTURE Luis Camacho Montealegre, marimba & Krešimir Starčević, klavir

Fig. 1.a: Recording of *Water Sculpture* in MUZA Studio. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vd-rXTVkPQ>

After such experience and prompted to point out just one of characteristics of Lešnik's music, I would opt for his attention to detail. His works are challenging, like labyrinths; there are many puzzles inside, hidden structures and different musical layers but despite inherent complexity they all sound simple and straightforward. His writing targets performances that have powerful meaning and requires a synergy in which the performer feels with ease handling technically demanding and complicated material that – if played well - may look simple at the first glance.

It is for these reasons that I decided to deepen into Lešnik's style of composing for marimba, with the goal of providing a guide for future performers of these pieces, a guide that unluckily didn't exist by the time I was establishing first contacts with these works.

The core of the work will be a parallel analysis of *Nee* and *Water Sculpture*, scrutinizing formal, harmonic, melodic, agogic and aesthetic aspects of the performance.

2. BIOGRAPHY OF IGOR LEŠNIK

Igor Lešnik was born in Zagreb on February 23, 1956. From 1975 to 1979 he studied and graduated percussion at the Academy of Music in Skopje, in the class of professor Emil Klan. He completed his postgraduate course as a Bulgarian state scholar with professor Dobri Paliev in 1985. A year later he graduated in Wurzburg in Germany with professor Siegfried Fink.

Lesnik worked in percussion section of the Symphony Orchestra of Croatian Radio and Television and led it from 1979 to 2013. The teaching work he started as honorary professor on Music Academy of Zagreb in 1989 when he founded a percussion department and started teaching the main percussion studies. He's been working there ever since, marking 2019 as the 30th year of percussion on the Academy.

In 1990 he started organizing international percussion events such as International Percussion Ensemble Week in Bjelovar. He is also the president of the Croatian Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society in USA and the Jury President of the Universal Marimba Competition in Belgium. In 2003 he was awarded French knighthood title (*Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres*) for his accomplishments in arts and literature.



Fig. 2.a: Photo of Igor Lešnik, taken for the cover of his CD "Twenty Years Later"

3. CONTEXTUAL SOURCES

Neenah for marimba solo (and optional percussion) was composed in 2010 while *Water Sculpture for marimba and strings* was composed two years later, in 2012. Already after just reading through both pieces I understood they might be considered as the source and it's development. In other words, *Water Sculpture* sounded like a more complex version of *Neenah*. Hence, it felt natural to focus first on the piece conceived as the source.

Introductory notes of the published score point toward wellspring of inceptive ideas for the piece and actually predict further development of the presented music. Therefore, I quote the original text underlying a portion of it for further reference.

„Dedicated to my younger daughter Nina, this five-octave marimba work is the jury president's repertoire contribution towards the 10th anniversary of the Universal Marimba Competition to be held 23-30 July 2011 in Sint-Truiden, Belgium.

Neenah is a word for 'water' in the Winnebago language, but it is also a town in Wisconsin, United States. The population was 2,657 at the 2000 Census. Some claimed that the name of the locality originated in the answer which an old Native American once gave to Governor James Duane Doty when the latter pointing to the Fox River asked "What is that?" ? meaning to ask the name of the river. The Native American, supposing that white man wished to know what water was called in his language, answered "neenah," which means water or running water. As a parable of artistic interpretation, the above story implies that the impression in the artist's mind might (or shall I say should?) differ from actual reality and hopefully open up new perspectives.

Despite the popular joke that defines the general disposition to expect the best in all things as just a lack of information, this music rather optimistically aims to leave the impression of a "marimba reduction" of an orchestral piece. Adaptable to other instruments, the musical material plays with a variety of orchestral instrumentations in which individual voices are developed in contrasting ranges or tonal colours resulting in frequent jumps between registers and timbres. This compositional procedure is somewhat in contrast to so-called "idiomatic" writing, but this author believes the fruit of such creative process might still be positively accepted as his humble contribution to the already tremendously rich marimba literature.“

Further on, within performance notes we read:

„The five variations develop harmonic material from the beginning theme, which is itself based on a suspended triad with shifting roots and melodic minor scales.

The musical form and modulations derive from the spelling of 'NEENAH' while the rhythmical structure, frequent use of certain intervals, and quintuplet motifs are generated from the numeric sequence 03.02.2003.

The piece may be performed in any of following three form variations to be freely chosen by the actual players:

a) bars 1-237 (optional ending), subtitled "NEE..." duration approx. 7 minutes;

b) from bar 238 (alternative beginning) to the end of the score, subtitled "...NAH", duration approx. 8 minutes;

c) entire score (optionally cutting bars 233-237), approx. total duration 15 minutes.

...

Following the baroque ideal of motoric rhythms describing eternity through an endless musical flow, the work ends in a "fade-out" suggesting the music's continuation after the performer is finished.

The above leads to the correlation of the two elements that provide rhythmical basis and initial pitch sequence of the composition.

- 1) Rhythmical basis: the date of the birth of composer's daughter marked in the calendar shares a curious coincidence - the numbers present in this date are 2, 3 and 0 (03/02/2003). Furthermore, if the number 0 is erased from the equation, the resulting sequence is 3+2 + 2+3. This sequence, combined with the composer's interest in mathematical rules in nature, will provide the rhythmic pillars of the piece.
- 2) Initial pitch sequence is derived from the Ho-Chunk Wisconsin tribe language word meaning "running water". The musical translation into American notation system of the English spelling (**N****E****E****N****A****H**) forms a succession of three pitches - the first melodic motive of the piece: **E** – **A** – **H**.

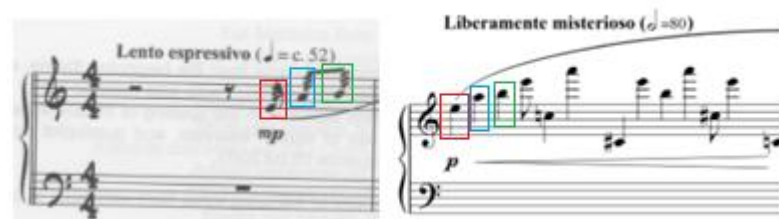
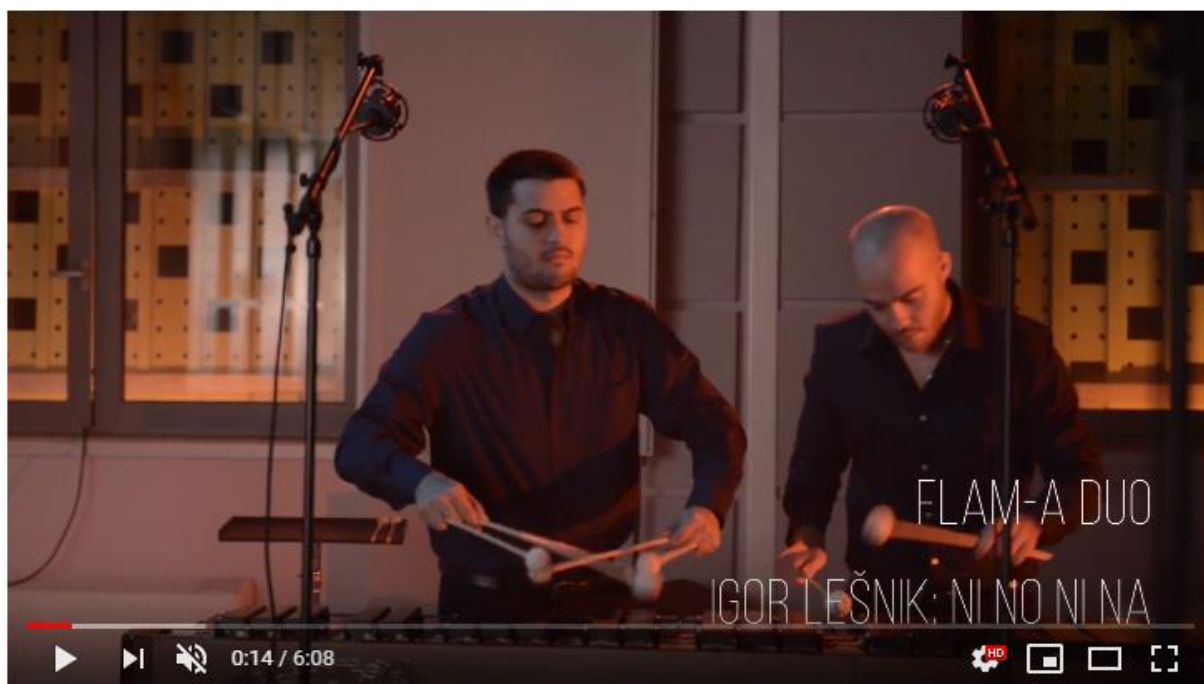


Fig. 3.a: (Left) Nee, bar 1; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bar 1

The aspect of the running water led Lešnik to adopt the composing approach that - for the purpose of this research - I am going to name the “river philosophy” because in the music of Igor Lešnik it is often the case his earlier composed pieces are tributaries of his new works. For example, the very ending section of *Neenah* performed just by clicking the rattan mallet shafts has identical odd time signature structure as the beginning of the *Water Sculpture* where the rhythm of the solo part tends to depict water drops. Almost like one piece is feeding the next one as a confluent and the process continues until the end of a cycle.

Last but not least: *Water Sculpture* is not the only work derived from *Neenah*. The second half of the original music entitled ...*NAH* was in 2017 “translated” into another piece entitled *NI NO NI NA for Marimba 4 hands and Tupan*. It was commissioned by Japanese percussion duo Nino Masayuki & Nina Fujisawa but I also performed it with my Flamaduo at the Luxembourg Competition in 2018 and recorded it in the new studio of the Zagreb Music Academy.



Igor Lešnik NINONINA Flam-a Duo

Fig. 3.b: Recording of *Ni no ni na* in MUZA Studio. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECHiOIEe6So&t=11s>

4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF *NEE* AND *WATER SCULPTURE*

Due to the amount of similarities between these two works, I have decided to analyze both pieces simultaneously, highlighting the developments and differences that I will find throughout the pieces.

Commencing with the shape, the piece is divided in two large sections, preceded by an introduction and concluded with a coda. These sections clearly differ in *tempi*, in the character of their musical content and in their own rhythmical subdivision.

<i>NEE</i>	Introduction	Section A	Section B	Coda
Length (in bars)	1 - 16	17 – 132	133 – 206	207 - 233
Tempo	Quarter = 52	Full = 96	Full = 84	Full = 52
Character	<i>Lento espressivo</i>	<i>Moderato leggiero</i>	<i>Andante con moto</i>	<i>Lento solenne</i>
Subdivision	Binary	Binary	Quintuplets (5)	Binary

<i>WATER SCULPTURE</i>	Introduction	Section A	Section B	Coda
Length (in bars)	1 - 20	21 – 238	239 – 407	408 - 431
Tempo*	Quarter = 50	Full = 96	Full = 72	Full = 48
Character*	<i>Lento espressivo</i>	<i>Moderato leggiero</i>	<i>Appassionato</i>	<i>Misterioso poco sostenuto</i>
Subdivision	Binary	Binary	Quintuplets (3 + 2, 2 + 3)	Binary

*Due to the higher complexity of the piece, only the main tempo and character of sections is provided in this chart, although these sections contain changes in both tempo and character within themselves

One important detail that can be extracted from the information shown in the charts is the decrease of tempo from *Nee* to *Water Sculpture*, overall in the section B. In fact, this necessity of slower motion is related to the main difference between these works: primarily due to the presence of the large string orchestra but also because of the constant changes in quintuplet's subdivision and the usage of dotted rhythmical motives. In order to achieve clarity and rhythmical articulation of contrapuntal lines the tempo was forced to drop from 84 to 72 bpm.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Nee: ---

WS: 1

The first bar in *Water Sculpture* deserves special attention, due to its load of thematic material and the visual image that hides in that group of notes. It is the composer's idea to present a material that evokes the landscape of a cave full of stalactite and stalagmite, all created so patiently by the nature, yet all so different; and those notes pretend to be the sound of the drops falling randomly on the solid rock inside the cave.



Fig. 4.1.a: Water Sculpture, marimba part, bar 1.

In this passage, the importance of the rhythm throughout Lesnik's compositions is already displayed. The passage must be interpreted freely, but it masks a reminiscence of the latin-like motor of the section A. In addition, the choice of pitches is the generator of the melodic and harmonic material of the piece. As it is shown before, the E – A – H melodic motive (marked in blue) generates intervals of fourths and fifths. Moreover, the interchange of C and C # in different octaves creates the illusion of a line that plays with major sevenths (marked in green) and minor ninths (marked in red). All these intervals signify a vital key in the growth that differs *Water Sculpture* from *Nee*.

Nee: 1 – 9

WS: 2 – 10

Here is where the introduction really starts, providing the first melodic motive of the pieces.



Fig. 4.1.b: (Left) Nee, bars 1 – 4; (Right) Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 2 – 4

The beginning of *Nee* provides the intervals shown in the first bar of *Water Sculpture* (based on E – A – H melodic motive), but it is a combination of the intervals shown before (fourths and fifths in red, and major seventh in green) creates the main melodic motive of the introduction (marked in blue). However, Lešnik used a different way to present it in *Water Sculpture*: the orchestra presents this melodic material in an imitative manner with two voices that also vary the rhythm every time they intervene exploring the figure of triplets.

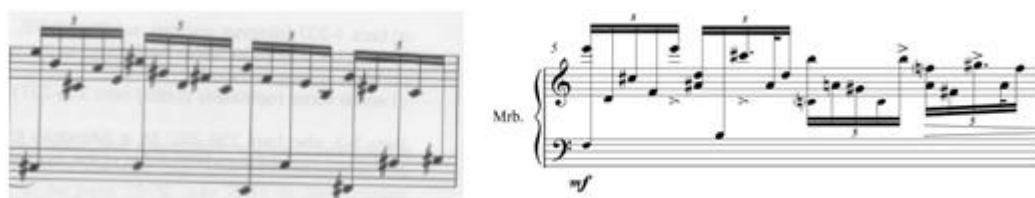


Fig. 4.1.c: (Left) *Nee*, bar 4; (Right) *Water Sculpture*, marimba part, bar 5

The other main difference to highlight is the usage of dotted figures that slowly define the transition between the plain quintuplets of *Nee* and the fragmented 3+2 (or 2+3) quintuplets of *Water Sculpture*. Nevertheless, this contrast is introduced in a very subtle way: only few beats of the introduction are changed into dotted figures, just as a premonition of what can be found further in the piece. The presence of quintuplets in sections with binary subdivision confirms Lešnik's attention for rhythmical depth and complexity. It is typical to find in his works combinations of odd meters and sudden changes between eighth notes, triplets and quintuplets.

Nee: 10 – 11

WS: 11 – 12

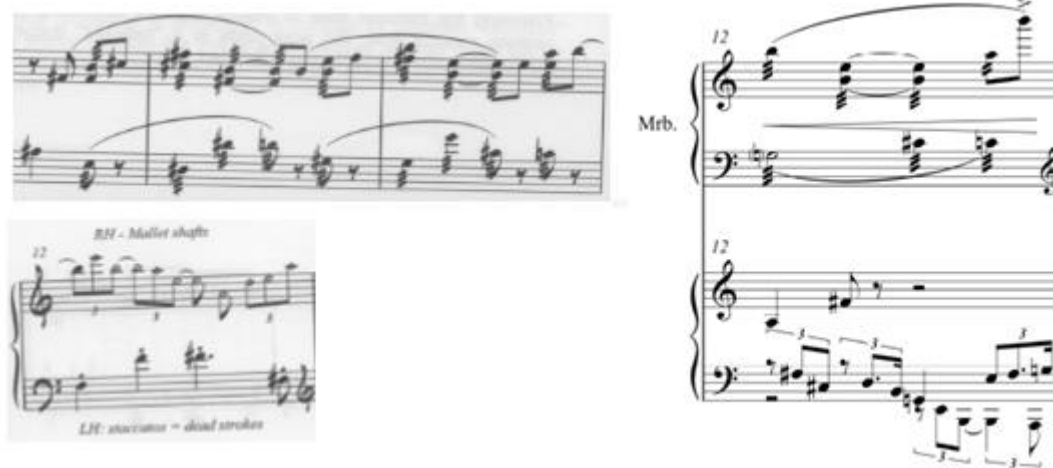


Fig. 4.1.d: (Left) *Nee*, bars 10 (with upbeat) - 12; (Right) *Water Sculpture*, marimba part, bar 12

This brief choral passage reveals a hint about the harmonic procedure used by Lešnik. Playing with a line in the bass that combines chromatic moves with diminished fifths or augmented fourths, he bounces from a major chord into a minor, still keeping the thematic fourths that actually form arpeggiated suspended cords in the top line. The novelty in *Water Sculpture*'s marimba part takes place in the last eighth note of each bar: a big jump onto the highest octave in marimba's register that reminds the listener of the initial texture. In addition, the orchestra provides an anticipation of the material that appears in *Nee* in the bar 12 as an accompaniment to the choral.

Nee: 12 – 15

WS: 13 – 16



Fig. 4.1.e: (Left) Nee, bars 12 - 13; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bar 14

This moment represents the first appearance of the dead-strokes (marked in green) and mallet shafts (marked in red) in *Nee*. Combined with the mandolin tremolo technique used in the initial bars, these unusual techniques provide a wide variety of marimba sounds in a very short time. However, Lešnik decides not to use these effects in *Water Sculpture* in favor of rhythmical development: the rhythmical pattern of the left hand is altered by adding dotted figures (marked in blue).

Nee: 16

WS: 17 – 20

The image shows a musical score for Water Sculpture, bars 17-20. The score is for a string ensemble (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso) and includes a marimba part. The tempo is marked 'Lento espressivo (♩ = 50)'. The score includes various markings such as 'senza sord.', 'senza sord. unis.', 'p', 'rit.', 'div.', 'ppp', and 'arco'. A red box highlights a section of the score, and a green box highlights another section.

Fig. 4.1.f: Water Sculpture, score, bars 17 - 20

The first time that *Water Sculpture* shows an increase in number of bars compared to *Nee* is at the end of the introduction. While in *Nee*, two groups of quintuplets prepare the transition into section A, *Water Sculpture* requests the orchestra to play once more the material from the bars 2 to 5. The section is closed by a typical “false cadenza” procedure by Lešnik. In the penultimate bar of the introduction (bar 19), chromatic lines of Cellos and Basses in contrary motion under the pedal note of violas end on an unresolved whole tone chord. In the final bar (bar 20), this B natural pedal note is actually interpolated into a whole tone scale and forms a characteristic major seventh with basses. However, a sort of “consonant-like” final impression is present due to the top note of first violins forming minor sixth with basses. Such a habit of creating unexpected chords as a result of modal counterpoint appears throughout *Water Sculpture* but also in other Lešnik’s compositions.

4.2. SECTION A

Nee: 17 - 24

WS: 21 – 37

The image shows a musical score for the piano reduction of 'Water Sculpture', bars 33-36. The score is written for marimba (Mrb.) and piano. The marimba part (top system) has two measures of rests followed by two measures of chords, with the last eighth note of each bar highlighted in red. The piano part (bottom system) has four measures of a rhythmic pattern, with the last eighth note of each bar highlighted in green.

Fig. 4.2.a: *Water Sculpture*, piano reduction, bars 33 – 36

These bars function as the introduction of Section A. A new rhythmical motor has been introduced: a latin-like ostinato, playing with the *clave* and putting the weight on the last eighth note of every bar (marked in green). In this section, one of the most typical ways of adapting a solo piece into a concerto for orchestra can be noticed: doubling the presentation of the musical ideas. Firstly, the marimba enters alone and secondly the orchestra continues developing the material with the same groove, giving marimba the space to add a lyrical phrase based on major sevenths (marked in red).

Nee: 25 – 31

WS: 38 – 52



Fig. 4.2.b: (Left) Nee, bars 25 - 26; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 45 - 47

If a theme that represents these two compositions had to be selected, this would be the one. Acting as a theme of section A, this 8-bars phrase represents the origin of the composition. Harmonically speaking, it's the clear statement of tonality we find in the piece. Built around tonal grades in E major (tonic, subdominant, dominant) and embellished with substitute-tones always searching for the ninth to approach the eighth (marked in green), it sounds like this theme reflects the joy that a parent must have felt when his child was born. However, this material gets transformed into a more complex theme in *Water Sculpture*, when the marimba answers to the orchestra after they presented the original version of the theme with a variation including again major seventh intervals (marked in blue). In red we can observe characteristic quintuplets' ascending run based on the Bartok acoustic scale added as the cue that indicates that a new phrase is coming (as in bars 21, 64, 72, etc.).

Nee: 32 – 41

WS: 53 – 64



Fig. 4.2.c: (Left) Nee, bars 33 - 36; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 54 - 56

Lešnik introduces here a “montuno” texture based in a minor chord with alternated presence of major seventh and major sixth (A, C, E, F#/G# - marked in red), which works as transitional material that will lead to a new appearance of the theme. This sequence is created using Bartok's scale (which contents the same tones of a melodic minor scale, in this case A melodic – A, H, C, D, E, F#, G#). Nonetheless, before the theme reappears, we can hear a progression featuring the second melodic motive of the section A. Rhythmically strong in the off-beat, this material gets divided in *Water Sculpture* between soloist and orchestra, closing with another quintuplets' line based on Bartok's scale. However, in *Nee* these quintuplets were originally triplets (as shown in green). Sacrificing triplets on benefit of quintuplets is a trademark that shows the composer's grown interest in the figure of 5.

Achieving balance and rhythmical accuracy with so many changes between binary subdivision and quintuplets requires higher level of the time control from the soloist. Keeping stability between binary subdivision and triplets is not as demanding as constantly fluctuating between eighth notes, triplets and quintuplets. For this reason, Lešnik has a piece of advice while practicing this type of work: using the metronome in an unconventional way. He suggests to his students to practice using the metronome to indicate upbeats rather than down beats. The result is similar to typical hi-hat offbeats in drumset playing and might seem quite challenging while dealing with odd rhythms and fast rhythmical changes. However, this process reassures the performer's stability and time-keeping. This way, the player becomes accurate not only on the beat, but also within the beat, regardless the type of subdivision or the number of notes each beat has.

Nee: 42 – 48

WS: 65 – 79



Fig. 4.2.d: (Left) Nee, bars 42 - 43; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 64 – 66

In this second presence of the theme, Lešnik modifies the harmony by using the minor subdominant (noticing the C instead of C# in the chord in red). This small change in *Nee* becomes bigger in *Water Sculpture*, where an inversion in the order of thematic presentation takes place (now marimba comes first and orchestra answers). In the marimba part, dead-strokes function as a rhythmical background for the theme.

Nee: 49 – 61

WS: 80 – 92

The montuno-like material of the previous transition between themes strikes back, but this time transposed with base in E and followed by the re-exposure of the second melodic material. However, instead of moving onto the theme, Lešnik re-uses the montuno line to connect to the new section upcoming.

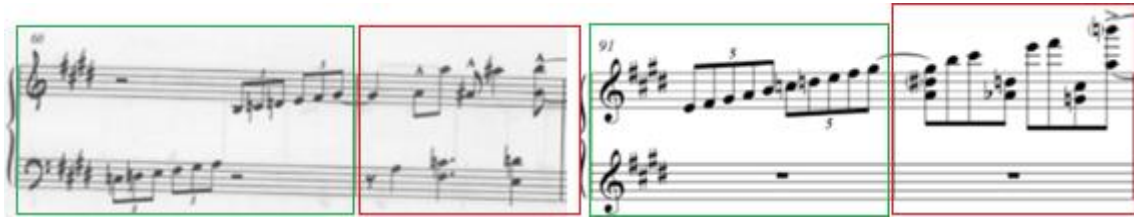


Fig. 4.2.e: (Left) Nee, bars 60 - 61; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 91 – 92

All the musical material in this phrase is pretty similar in both pieces, but the bars shown in figure 9 represent the first major structural change between *Nee* and *Water Sculpture*. Apart from the already mentioned interchange from triplets to quintuplets (marked in green), there is a fundamental change in the bars marked in red. Although the result in rhythm is identical, the melody and harmony go on totally different ways that will result on two new phrases with same character and rhythm, but with a totally different musical speech.

Nee: 62 – 73

≠

WS: 93 – 111



Fig. 4.2.f: (Left) Nee, bar 63; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 95 – 97

As explained before, the connection point between *Nee* and *Water Sculpture* in this particular spot is the character of the rhythm, again latin-like ostinato, and the constant jumps generating three lines in three different octaves in the marimba: a pedal in the bass (in red) and in the upper voice (only in *Nee*, in *Water Sculpture* this voice changes pitches and uses sevenths and ninths instead of octaves – in green), and a chromatic line with two voices in the middle register (in blue). The major structural change of this phrase lays on the usage of the new material absent from *Nee*; for example, the combination of both whole tone scales in bar 96 (first beat on G, second beat on F#). All these new elements elevate *Water Sculpture* onto a new level of composing.

Nee: ---

WS: 112 – 123



Fig. 4.2.g: Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 113 – 114

After the loudest spot so far in the concerto (in bar 111 it is notated *fff*), the phrase that follows discloses to me the most interesting material of the piece (that is going to reappear in its altered form in the cadenza), due to the fact that it contains absolutely every element that defines Lešnik's composing style. Starting with the timber, he chooses the violin as the duo partner for the marimba, searching the maximum contrast between long and short sound. However, the length of these long notes in the violin is marked by the subdivision of the bar, clearly shown by the marimba pattern of eighth notes. As the accents reflect, the rhythm 3+2 + 2+3 is presented clearly for the first time: initially fragmented by the interpolation of breaks (bars 113 – 116), later re-exposing the material from the introduction (bar 5) implementing the dotted figures which give a touch of clarity to the subdivision (bars 118 – 120). Harmonically, three different strategies are combined at this spot:

- 1) In red, a combination of the possible intervals that can be generated by using three correlative pitches (in this case, H, C, C #): minor second, major second, minor seventh, major seventh, octave, minor ninth, etc.
- 2) In green, an alternation of major third (written out as diminished fourth) and augmented fourth generated by the opposite chromatic movement of the voices.
- 3) In blue, an expansion of the method shown in green: by continuing the opposite chromatic movement, a minor sixth and minor seventh get created.

Nee: ---

WS: 124 – 140

By using again a quintuplets' scale with whole-tone material in it (bar 124), Lešnik returns to the latin-like groove reusing the texture presented in *Agitato* in bar 93, but both shortened and juxtaposed. For only four bars (between 125 and 128) we here simultaneously the material with

legato character presented in 106 and 107 (now presented by the orchestra) and the rhythmical lines from 94 and 95 (played by the soloist). This situation develops into a disappearance of the sound, with the marimba part only intervening as an echo from the previous phrase, and the orchestra keeping the groove by reusing the bass line that was sounding in bars 65 – 73.

Fig. 4.2.h: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 133 – 138

Closing this phrase, Lešnik prepares for a new intervention of the theme. The indication of *Moderato leggiero* is just a reminder of the change of character, alluding to the feeling created at the very beginning of the section A. But it is not only the character what evokes the idea of hearing the theme again, but also the harmonic procedure: Lešnik presents to us again a harmony based in fourths (in blue), combined with lines that move chromatically (in green); and furthermore, chromatic movements that generate alternation between major, sus2 and minor chords (in red).

Nee: ---

WS: 141 – 154

Fig. 4.2.i: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 141 – 142

Having prepared the atmosphere for the new intervention of the theme, this time Lešnik decides to upgrade the accompaniment by requesting the soloist to use the structural frame of the marimba and generate percussive sounds that provide a rhythmical base for the theme. This feature is one of the milestones of Lešnik's way of composing and understanding music: the involvement of the full instrument in the task of sound production. As a composer, he challenges the performer to always investigate all the sound-wise possibilities that the percussion instruments have, beyond the most conventional ways.

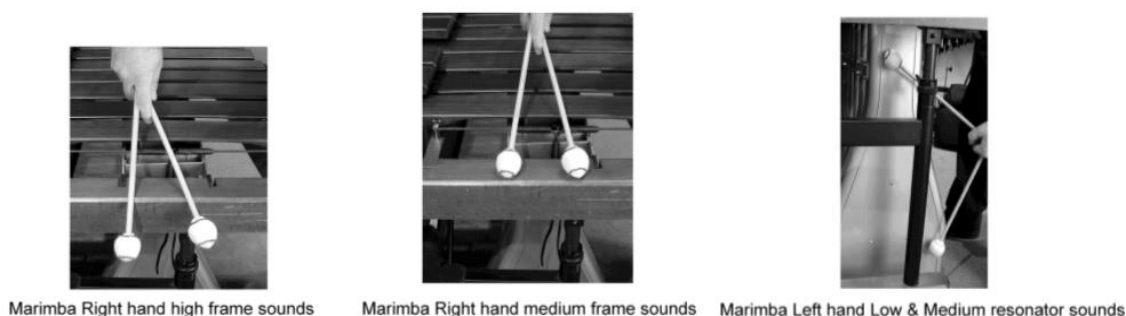


Fig. 4.2.j: Water Sculpture, explanatory pictures regarding frame and resonators' sound

This usage of the full instrument provides the compositions a new level of authenticity, making each performance of the piece more unique and particular than usual; if in a more standard way of composing we could expect variables to influence the performance (such as different hall, different performer) in Lešnik's works the choice of instrument creates even a bigger difference between performances due to the fact that the material the resonators and frame are created has direct influence on the sound.

Furthermore, this aspect of his compositions comes along a new responsibility for the performer, which is achieving a wide knowledge about how every different brand of each instrument functions: which materials they use, if they have whether metallic or wooden structures, and, above all, how the performer can extract the best sound out of it. For him, some of the marimbas have hidden in their structure sounds that could fool the ear and bring the feeling that we are listening, actually, another instrument: the wooden frame might work as well as a wood block; resonators might act as well as deep metals; and the metallic frame can sound as an anvil.

Nee: ---

WS: 155 – 164



Fig. 4.2.k: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 157 – 161

In the exact same way as in the previous appearances of the theme, the montuno-like transition follows up. Nevertheless, in this occasion the spotlight transfers to the orchestra: a new progression based on the material from bar 2 in *Water Sculpture* appears (marked in red, green and blue).

Nee: 74 - 77

WS: 165 – 168

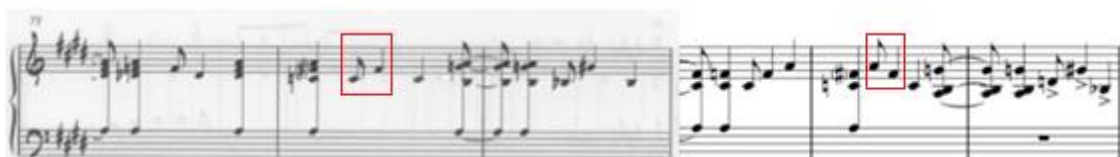


Fig. 4.2.l: (Left) Nee, bars 75 - 77; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 166 - 168

This small phrase of four bars has been separated in order to highlight the fact that original material from *Nee* has appeared again in *Water Sculpture*. This harmonic progression with two inner lines moving chromatically in opposite direction represents the origin of the musical work found in bars 112 -123. But, despite the harmony is identical and the rhythm is absolutely the same, we still find small differences like the tones marked in red. These small changes are the reminder of another milestone in Lešnik's composing: the "river" philosophy, which will be explained further in this work.

Nee: 78 – 84

≠

WS: 169 – 190



I opt to use for the second time the inequality sign to reflect that Lešnik used different material in these two phrases that occupy the same space in terms of shape. In *Nee*, an anticipation of

the principal texture in Section B takes place, based in the harmony of the main theme. But in *Water Sculpture* the duality orchestra-soloist comes back to the stage; as the soloist is using his instrument as a percussion set that provides rhythm and groove in bars 141 – 154, now the orchestra is requested to explore its percussive possibilities from bar 173 to 186.

Nee: 85 – 92

WS: 191 – 198



Fig. 4.2.m: (Left) Nee, bars 84 - 86; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 190 – 193

Despite the different material preceding this phrase, in both pieces the second melodic material (marked in green) appears to announce a new entry of the theme.

Nee: 93 – 108

WS: 199 – 214



Fig. 4.2.n: (Left) Nee, bars 93 - 95; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 199 – 201

According to what composer told me, his improvisation on vibraphone using block intervals of thirds and seconds to highlight the melody combined with the layer of eighth notes exploring the scale of E major is exactly how this music came about and became later a sort of *leitmotiv* of the marimba piece.

Once the music material got down written out in the marimba score, a milestone of Lešnik's composing got reflected in it. Observing from a further point of view, both sections look pretty similar in both pieces. But looking through a magnifying glass, small changes in the choice of pitches shall be noticed: all the sections marked in color have been changed slightly, but the melody and rhythm remained intact.

This is what I named the **“river” philosophy**: for Lešnik, music is in a constant flow. He uses the metaphor of the river, affirming that no one can step in the same river twice in the same spot. Even when you step in the exact same spot, the water that you are stepping into is already different. Connecting the metaphor with performing arts, even when the same piece is played

by the same performer in the same hall with the same people in the audience listening, there cannot be two performances that are exactly the same. Time flows, and with it, the possibility of exact repetition. In his composing, he reflects this idea by avoiding exact quotations between pieces, and always including at least a small change whenever a theme is presented several times.

Nee: 109 – 116

WS: 215 – 222

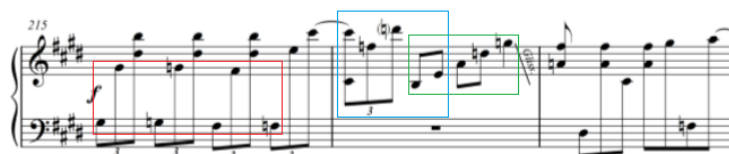


Fig. 4.2.o: Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 215 – 217

In contrast with the previous phrase, this material represents the only identical quotation of a whole phrase from *Nee* in *Water Sculpture*, even to the point that it doesn't have any kind of accompaniment. Eight bars that sound absolutely the same in both pieces, like a development of the thematic material from the previous phrase. In terms of composing language, several elements that are representative of Lešnik's style can be found here, like the usage of chromatic lines (marked in red), the fluent fluctuation between triplets and eighth notes (marked in blue) and the melodic material based in intervals like fourths (marked in green).

Nee: 117 – 124

WS: 223 – 230

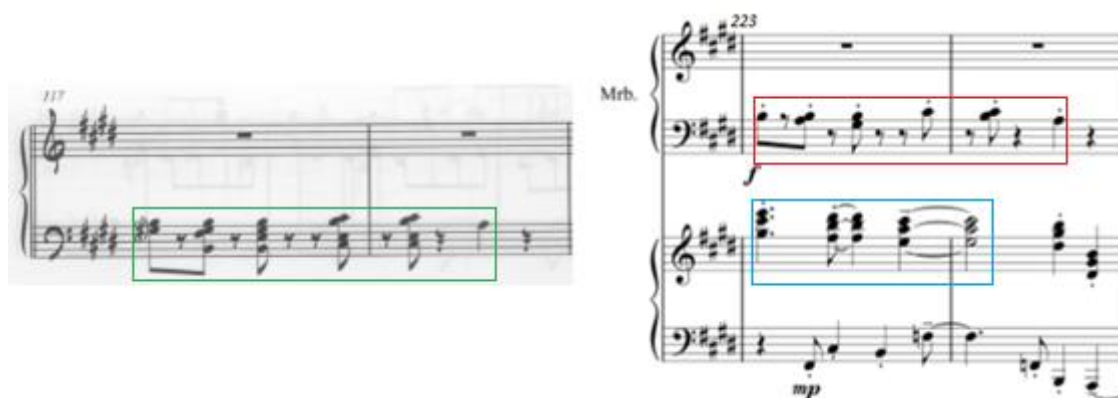


Fig. 4.2.p: (Left) Nee, bars 117 - 118; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 223 – 224

In this passage orchestration plays an important role. Both phrases are meant to be loud and majestic, but in *Water Sculpture*, marimba part is just a color, letting the orchestra's pizzicato present the melodic counter-theme (marked in blue) that was used previously as a background for the theme that the marimba is playing in the section in bars 199 – 214. In this way, the dead-

strokes used in *Water Sculpture* (marked in red) are very contrasting while compared to the block chords originally used in *Nee* (marked in green), but the final result as a whole musical entity is similar.

Nee: 125 – 132

WS: 231 – 238

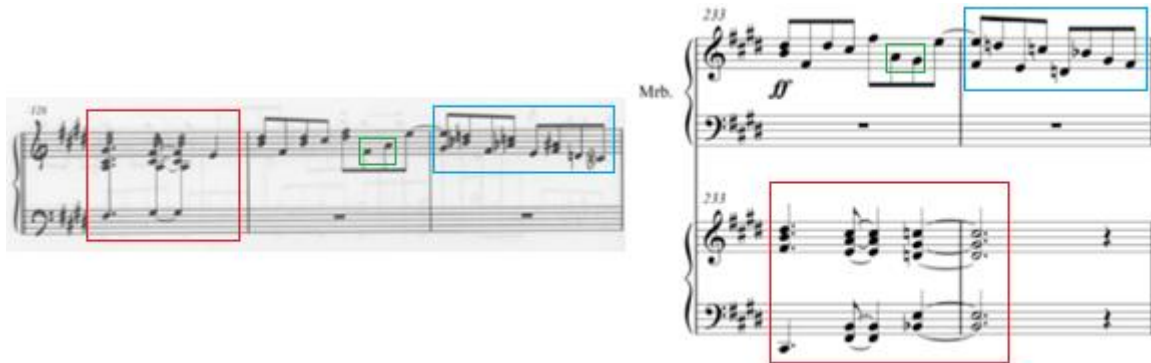


Fig. 4.2.q: (Left) Nee, bars 126 - 128; (Right) Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 233 – 234

This phrase is the coda from Section A, starting from the rolls following the incipit of the orchestral counter-theme exposed previously (marked in red) and finishing in a descending glissando. It is in this phrase when the origin of the counter-theme becomes clear; Lešnik used an anticipation. He took the material from bar 126 in *Nee*, and placed it in the orchestra as accompaniment of the phrase in *Water Sculpture* (bars 199 – 214). It is very interesting to observe how Lešnik misplaced some material, altering the order originally proposed in *Nee*, but at the same time giving *Water Sculpture* a deeper sense of complexity.

Closing this section, Lešnik's "river" philosophy appears once more, providing difficulties to the performer when he tries to learn both pieces simultaneously. Small changes are both in the single line below the thematic thirds and seconds (marked in green) and in the intervals used in the whole-tone scale material (marked in blue). However, these changes are not made just by arbitrary criteria: the orchestral part is taken into account and it forces the composer to modify slightly the marimba part to create better synergy between soloist and orchestra.

4.3. SECTION B

Nee: 133 – 140

WS: 239 – 248

As announced previously, the biggest change between Section A and Section B relies onto the subdivision. The piece switches its rhythmical motor at this point, and the material about to come will take the figure of 5 as a vital constant. However, the structure of this subdivision varies from one piece to another.

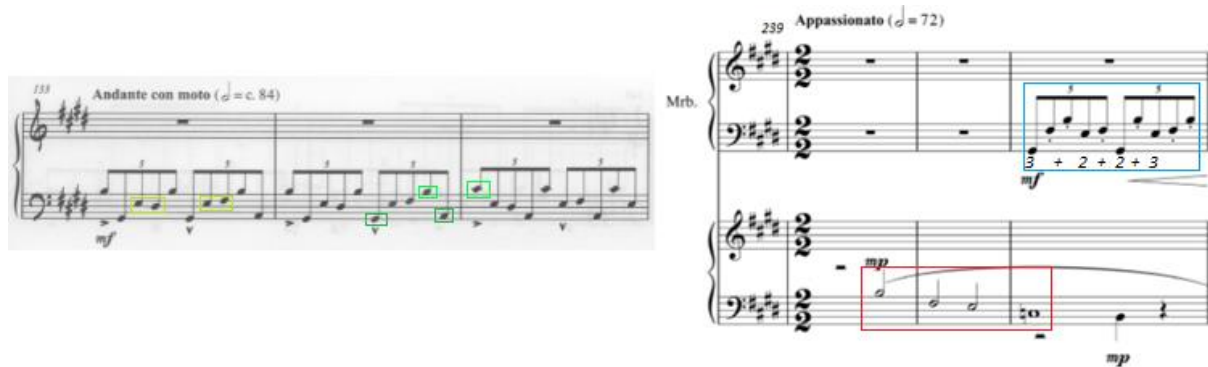


Fig. 4.3.a: (Left) Nee, bars 133 - 135; (Right) Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 239 – 241

In *Nee*, the quintuplets' texture is playing with small movement in the three voices, moving diatonically and avoiding jumps (marked in green). In *Water Sculpture*, the orchestra presents the inversion of the motivic material of the introduction (marked in red) while the marimba has a different goal; rhythmical layer already providing the 3+2 + 2+3 (marked in blue) but in a subtle way; the beats of the subdivision have open sound and the ghost notes are marked as dead-strokes by the staccato sign. This is one spot in which Lešnik's shows once more his attention to detail and his mastery of flow; this new rhythmical element is introduced only with a small change in the length of the tone that provides articulation, reserving clearer proof (that could be provided by accents) for later.

Nee: 141 – 144

WS: 249 – 252

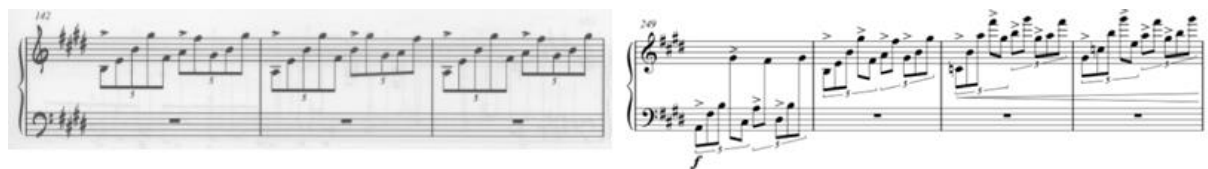


Fig. 4.3.b: (Left) Nee, bars 142 - 144; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 249 – 252

In this phrase, the main difference between the marimba parts of each piece is the organization of the musical material in the register of the marimba. In *Nee*, the principle of small movements between voices is kept; but in *Water Sculpture*, Lešnik displays this material (slightly modified in terms of pitches' choice) throughout a wider range of the marimba keyboard.

Regarding the work with different subdivisions, here is the clear proof that was mentioned before, and a reminder of the reason why this section in *Water Sculpture* must have a slower tempo indication. In *Nee*, the pulse is clearly divided in two parts, which means it should sound as if it were to be conducted in two beats. This idea would work for *Water Sculpture* as well, but the main difference is that there are two different subdivision coexisting at the same time.



Fig. 4.3.c: *Water Sculpture*, piano reduction, bars 249 – 251

Orchestra mainly bases its rhythm on quarter notes, meanwhile marimba is having five notes every beat (instead of four). This is a vertical challenge for both versions, because although both soloist and orchestra mark every beat (marked by the black vertical lines), what happens inside must be a perfect polyrhythm of 5 against 4. So far, it doesn't seem that there is a reason to slow down, but actually, this is not the complete rhythmical picture.

249

Mrb.

Main beats
 Marimba's subdivision (3 + 2 + 2 + 3)
 Orchestra's subdivision (2 + 2 + 2 + 2)

Fig. 4.3.d: *Water Sculpture*, piano reduction, bars 249 – 250

What is visible in this graphic is the vertical situation that actually happens when subdivision is included in the picture. In the legend, the number represents the amount of eighth notes that each line has, having determined before that marimba is based in quintuplets (meaning 10 eighth notes per bar) and orchestra is based in plain eighth notes (meaning 8 notes per bar).

This complex rhythmical background goes throughout the section, and is the main reason for the slower tempo in *Water Sculpture*: not so much because of its difficulty, but because of providing space to the player in order to play out this texture in the most precise manner. Although such a “vertical analysis” might seem confusing at first the actual musical result sounds much less complicated no doubt due to fundamental difference in character of the bowed string instruments and percussive attacks of marimba efficiently coupled with usual conductor’s gestures ensuring control over the tempo stability.

After establishing the main common point and difficulties of the *Appassionato* section in both pieces, the point of rupture regarding melodic and harmonic material has arrived. Until the next section (*Stesso tempo con moto*), *Nee* and *Water Sculpture* take different ways. In order to understand this better, the analysis will be done piece by piece, explaining how and why Lešnik decided to change this material.

Nee: ---

WS: 253 – 254



Fig. 4.3.e: Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 253 – 254

These two bars of descending scale in *Water Sculpture* are the connector between phrases, they function as a cue for change. Looking only into *Water Sculpture*'s formal structure in *Appassionato*, a pattern is discovered: the combination of these three phrases (quintuplets with dead-strokes, quintuplets with accents and scale) is used four times, gradually increasing dynamics.

Nee: ---

WS: 255 – 262

This is the second time that the pattern shown previously appears, but this time the first part of the pattern (quintuplets with dead-strokes) has been shortened from eight bars to only four. Also the dynamic situation has changed, both orchestra and marimba are considerably louder.

Musical score for piano reduction, bars 261–263. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of three sharps. Bar 261 shows the marimba (Mrb.) part with a quintuplet of eighth notes. Bar 262 shows the marimba part with a glissando (s) and a final note with an accent. Bar 263 shows the piano part with a forte (ff) dynamic and a pizzicato block chord. The score is annotated with a blue box around the marimba quintuplet in bar 261, a green box around the glissando in bar 262, and a red box around the piano's forte chord in bar 263.

Fig. 4.3.f: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 261 – 263

One of the loudest spots of the *Appassionato* section also appears in this phrase: the orchestra has a pizzicato block chord in *fff* (marked in red), which happens to take place in the only moment the marimba stops its rhythmical motor of quintuplets. Lešnik uses again the glissando as a dramatic move (marked in green) after preparing it by shortening the scale and adding density with double notes (marked in blue).

Nee: ---

WS: 263 – 275



Fig. 4.3.g: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 267 – 269

In the third time, the innovation arrives mainly from the orchestral material. A new motive in triplets based on half and quarter notes (marked in green and red) increases the difficulty of keeping vertical accuracy although the difficulty of vertical synchronization is minimized by the fact it goes for a four-bar concertmaster solo spot. In the marimba part, the scale introduces some embellishments with the shape of accented sixteenth notes in the quintuplets scale, placed carefully fitting the subdivision 3+2 + 2+3.



Fig. 4.3.h: Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 274 – 275

Nee: ---

WS: 276 – 289

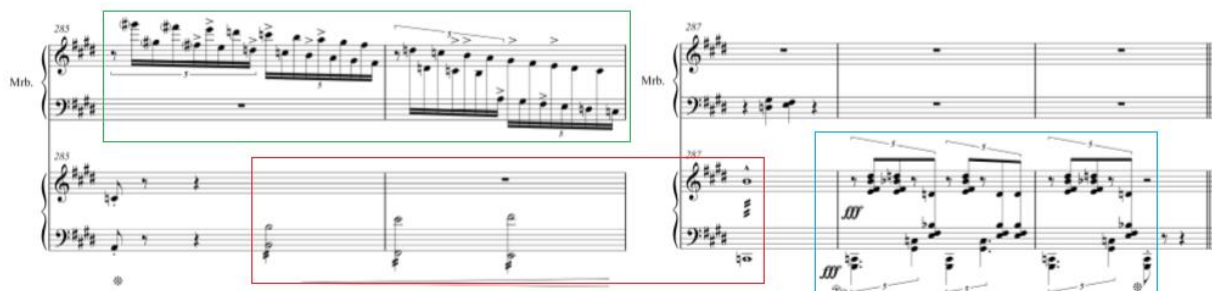


Fig. 4.3.i: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 285 – 289

The fourth and last time this formal pattern appears the main focus is in the transition to the new section. In the scale, Lešnik takes back Bartok's scale (as explained before, same tones as A melodic) and places it in a line of octaves in the marimba part (marked in green), well supported by two voices in the orchestra that present the main motive of the introduction (E –

A – H motive, but transposed to H – E – F#) in contrary motion, and finishing into a major seventh.

Moreover, this particular connection between *Appassionato* and *Stesso tempo con moto* is managed differently between the orchestral version and piano score: the rhythmical chords in quintuplets (marked in blue) are added into piano score, being actually the substitute of orchestral fermata whole tone chord in *fff*. This way, Lešnik keeps the tension required to enter in *Stesso tempo con moto* even when the piano can't hold a long chord keeping the same intensity.

Nee: 145 – 172

WS: ---

This formal pattern that repeats four times in *Water Sculpture* doesn't exist in *Nee*. Instead, Lešnik presents already the melodic material that will be the base of *Stesso tempo con moto*, but with a different harmony.



Fig. 4.3.j: (Above) Nee, bars 152 - 153; (Below) Nee, bars 176 – 177

The example taken shows clearly the similarities between these two musical moments, no matter the fact that they are written in different octaves. However, only the tones marked in green are the same; the rest have been chromatically altered in the ascending direction (for example, G passed to be G#). For this reason, this material will be analyzed more in detail in the next paragraph, coming back to the simultaneous strategy.

Nee: 173 – 192

WS: 291 – 311

In both pieces, this point is dividing the Section B in two parts. In *Nee*, this division has been explained already with the chromatic alteration of the melodic material from bars 150 – 172. However, in *Water Sculpture* a section with a new character starts: *Stesso tempo con moto*.

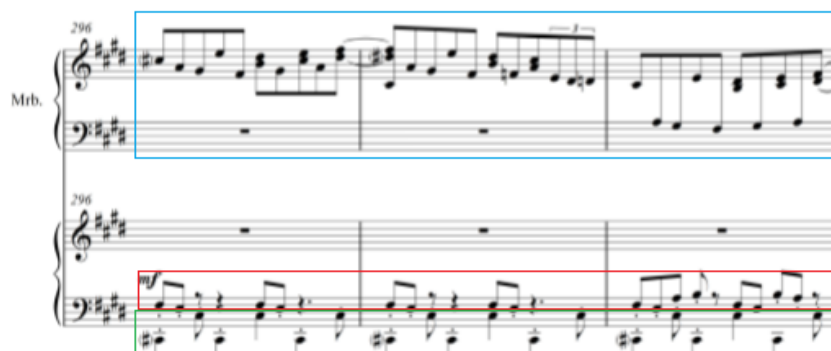


Fig. 4.3.k: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 296 – 298

In this section, the marimba material is an almost identical quotation from *Nee* (marked in blue), meanwhile the cellos accompany with a pedal in C# providing the rhythmical base with the 3+2 + 2+3 ostinato (marked in green). The phrase is initiated only by the ostinato, but few bars after the marimba has entered, the rest of the orchestra fills in the rests with eight note motives dispersed among various string groups (marked in red). Although each small motive reappears on the same spot in every bar, this particular section represents the most demanding aspect of rhythmic coordination among orchestra parts in the whole concerto.

Nee: 193 – 206

WS: 312 – 325



Fig. 4.3.l: (Left) *Nee*, bars 193 - 195; (Right) *Water Sculpture*, marimba part, bars 312 – 315

In *Nee*, this is the moment in which the monotony of the 5 seems to be broken, triplets appear to give a binary feeling ($2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2$) that fight the feeling of the quintuplets in two beats ($5 + 5$). This spot also displays Lešnik's "river" philosophy: the lines are almost identical, but the changes of F# into F and D# into D (marked in green) bring to the part different feeling and enlarge the scale in *Water Sculpture*, increasing its melodic complexity. In terms of shape, this phrase brings *Nee* directly into the coda, but in *Water Sculpture* the cadence needs to be prepared; and for that reason, Lešnik has reserved a little more space to explore his creativity.

Nee: 62 – 73*

WS: 326 – 347



Fig. 4.3.m: (Left) Nee, bars 63 - 64; (Right) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 337 – 338

This new character, *Agitato molto con fuoco*, is an additional section in *Water Sculpture* that doesn't appear in *Nee*. This section starts with the orchestra alone, bringing back the ostinato with 3 + 2 + 2 + 3 subdivision performed by Cellos and Violas *spiccato*.



Fig. 4.3.n: Water Sculpture, viola and cello part, bars 336 – 339

On the other hand, marimba part hides one of the most interesting moments of *Water Sculpture* in terms of compositional development. Lešnik rescues the material from the bars 62 – 73 in *Nee*, and shapes them in a totally different way. I must admit, this is a melodic connection I was able to notice only because of the fact that I was preparing both pieces at the same time. But it is incredible useful, because actually both places are connected in character. Both moments must be loud, a powerful display of marimba sound. However, Lešnik stretched this material by repeating notes in the upper line (marked in red), dividing the intervals of the middle voice (marked in green) and jumping between octaves in the bass line (marked in blue). With these techniques, *Water Sculpture* becomes a piece in which the connections between themes are much deeper and more complex.

Nee: ---

WS: 348 – 367

The image shows a musical score for 'Water Sculpture' by John Cage, piano reduction, bars 349–351. The score is written for marimba (Mrb.) and piano. The marimba part is in 2+3/4 time and features a melody in the middle voice (marked in red) and a bass line (marked in green) with a 1-2-3-4-5 rhythm. The piano part is in 2+3/4 time and features a melody in the right hand (marked in blue). The tempo is marked 'mf'.

Fig. 4.3.o: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 349 – 351

The closer the cadenza gets, the more changes in character and tempo appear. The section in *Nobilmente tranquillo* brings a sensation of double slower tempo, but still keeping the 3+2 + 2+3 subdivision. It starts with marimba alone, playing block chords keeping the melody in the middle voice (marked in red). The bass line is very tricky, because its rhythm can lead to a confusion in the subdivision. As marked in the numbers, the bass intervenes every two beats (marked in green), but that is the reason why the performer must be really careful, and only accent the notes that have the accent written. In this manner, the notes marked with 1, 2 and 5 are part of the beat's subdivision, and the notes 3 and 4 are part of the weak figures of the subdivision. In addition to this rhythmical combination, the orchestra inherits the texture from marimba's part in *Agitato*, and the marimba appears with small and loud interventions in the manner of the right hand in the piano reduction on bars 330 – 332 creating a dialogue between soloist and orchestra.

Nee: 201 – 206*

WS: 368 – 373

The image shows a musical score for 'Water Sculpture' by John Cage, marimba part, bars 370–372. The score is written for marimba and piano. The marimba part is in 2+3/4 time and features a melody in the middle voice. The piano part is in 2+3/4 time and features a melody in the right hand. The tempo is marked 'Poco maestoso'. The score includes a section marked '(poco a poco rit. e decresc.)'.

Fig. 4.3.p: (Above) Water Sculpture, marimba part, bars 370 - 372; (Below) Nee, bars 203 - 205

The passage to connect to coda in *Nee* is now reused in *Water Sculpture* to prepare the cadenza, but in *Water Sculpture* the material is transposed into mostly half-tone lower, generating tension that precedes the loudest spot of the piece. It is again the chromatic alteration shown in *Nee* in the middle of the Section B. Nevertheless, here it is used in research of the polarity of the scale: converting H into B, E into Eb... this result into a transformation that sounds very far from the tonal center of the piece (it is a modal piece, but the theme is based on E).

Nee: ---

WS: 374 – 379

Fig. 4.3.q: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 374 – 375

The preparation for cadenza is also the dynamic climax of the piece, and the material used is taken from the marimba part in *Nobilmente tranquillo*. This material is continued by a new change of character, *Lento espressivo*, which brings back the atmosphere of the beginning.

4.4. WATER SCULPTURE'S CADENZA

The cadenza in *Water Sculpture* is the culmination point of the piece. It is a condensation of all the musical material exposed in the piece, but elevated to the maximum level of complexity. It starts with a choral, very brief (only three bars), that reminds the listener how the piece started. The first three notes are a transposition of the main motive, the E – A – H taken from Neenah. But soon enough, quintuplets with inner subdivision come back; firstly, providing an F# minor chord in second inversion which functions as a bridge, and later bringing back the thematic sevenths to the stage in bar 383. In cadenza, the speed of motion in the flow is clearly increased. Changes between motives happen faster, and even when they repeat, they are usually embellished with different techniques (like the flams in the second part of bar 383).

After the corona, a descending scale introduces the phrase based on the beginning of the Section B: a new *Appassionato* is presented, at first very loud and accented and then suddenly very soft. When the quintuplets' ostinato is brought to piano dynamics, the situation develops into a dialogue between small active interventions of sixteenth notes and the ostinato itself (which again brings a new element to the table, the re-usage of the dead-strokes as an articulation effect). These interventions vary in dynamics, but the climax is provided by block chords in bars 396 – 397. Once more, these chords are an example of the speed of change in cadenza's material: in bar 397, Lešnik adds the accents to prolong the climax until the end of these block chords. It is interesting to remark how the composer, by converting the flams that can be heard in the second part of bar 383 into a constant appearance, gives the audience a cue for every big change that happens in the *Appassionato* section (visible in bars 388 – previous to first piano with dead-strokes moment -, 396 – previous to fortissimo block chords, 400 – previous to the end of the *Appassionato* section).

New section has no time signature, but it is divided in sequences. First three sequences are a transition, and their main goal is arriving to the percussive motivic material. Still based on quintuplets' subdivision, Lešnik alternates entrances of the percussive sounds with the ordinary playing, but using the same material in both cases. These motives are exposed in chronological order in the following manner:

Motive A: ordinary sound



Motive B: frame and resonators



Motive B: ordinary sound



Motive A: frame and resonators

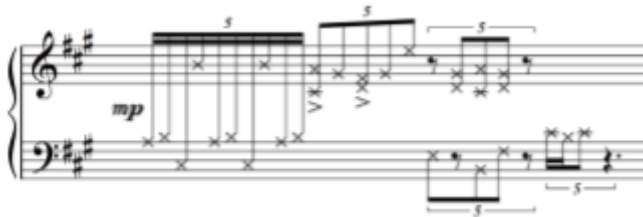


Fig. 4.4.a, b, c, d: Water Sculpture, marimba part, cadenza

These motives develop, getting interrupted twice by two interventions of the orchestra: one with a long sound, one with a short attack. Both interventions are built in the percussive way, melting better with the atmosphere created by the soloist.

Misterioso, in tempo (♩ = c. 180)

Mrb.

402

5+5

mp

Cross shaped noteheads in RIGHT hand: play with finger KNUCKLES on the open KEY LID

Cross shaped noteheads in LEFT hand: for higher notation play with finger KNUCKLES on the PIANO LID, for lower notation play with finger KNUCKLES on freely chosen part of the piano.

Fig. 4.4.e: Water Sculpture, piano reduction, bars 402 – 403

By the end of the cadenza, the interventions of percussion and marimba stretch and become more active, preparing for the entrance of the orchestra in 402. In the marimba part, this represent a transposition of the material used in the Section A (bars 112 – 117, marked in red). However, here the accompaniment deserves to be highlighted. Orchestral players are required to tap the body of their instruments with fingers. In the piano score, as indicated in green, the

407

Liberamente molto espressivo

mf

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, starting at measure 407. The tempo/mood is marked "Liberamente molto espressivo". The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand (bass clef) plays a more rhythmic accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 below the notes. Articulations include accents (marked with a 'v' symbol) and slurs. The score is annotated with four colored boxes: a green box spanning measures 407-410 in the right hand, a red box spanning measures 407-410 in the left hand, a blue box spanning measures 407-409 in the left hand, and a purple box spanning measures 407-410 in the left hand. The dynamic marking "mf" (mezzo-forte) is at the bottom.

In the last bar of cadenza, melodically speaking, four voices that are continuously intervening one after another create an arpeggio-like atmosphere. These voices (marked from upper to lower in green, red, blue and purple) move in opposite directions in groups of two (two upper ascending, two lower descending). Rhythmically, the subdivision in 3+2 + 2+3 provides the base. However, when you observe the bass line as a rhythmical beat, a sort of 5 against 4 feeling is discovered: every accented beat falls in a new mallet (marked in highlighted numbers).

Nee: 207 – 219 ≠ WS: 408 – 413

34

Taking a closer look to *Nee*'s coda, the beginning results actually surprising. This long roll is holding a major seventh in a moment that acts as the end of the section B (breaking the rhythmical flow of the quintuplets) and initiates the coda. But, as it already happened in the last chord of *Water Sculpture*'s introduction (bar 20), the feeling of resolution is not completely satisfactory. The dissonance of the seventh gives Lešnik the opportunity of continuing the flow of the piece without breaking the tension. As shown earlier, this idea of a continuous lack of cadences throughout the piece is a consequence of Lešnik's "river" philosophy. In terms of harmonic complexity, this moment is the point of tangency between the two pieces: it is the clearest sign of dissonance that can be found in *Nee*, and it becomes the basic interval for *Water Sculpture*'s musical material. In other words, what in *Nee* means exception, in *Water Sculpture* becomes the rule.

Nee: 220 – 237

WS: 414 – 431

The image displays a musical score comparison between two pieces. The top system shows the score for *Nee*, bars 226 to 231. The bottom system shows the piano reduction of *Water Sculpture*, bars 420 to 425. The score is written for piano (p) and marimba (Mrb.). The *Nee* section features a red box highlighting a specific harmonic moment and a blue box highlighting a quintuplet. The *Water Sculpture* section features a green box highlighting a harmonic moment, a purple box highlighting a quintuplet, and an orange box highlighting another harmonic moment. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Fig. 4.5.b: (Above) *Nee*, bars 226 - 231; (Below) *Water Sculpture*, piano reduction, bars 420 – 425

Unlike in the previous phrase, both pieces restart sharing material and this time it will last until the end. The usage of cannon in distance of octave (marked in red) provides the return to a scenario with more consonant harmony, which in Lešnik's music means that the end is near. The only difference in the marimba part is the presence of the dotted quintuplets in *Water Sculpture* in contrast with the flat quintuplets of *Nee* (marked in blue). However, the fact that in *Water Sculpture* the coda takes place after a solo cadenza, encouraged Lešnik to use the orchestra to remind the listeners the wide variety of musical material that has appeared previously in the piece. In this way, the cellos play a reminiscence of the strings intervention at

the *Appassionato* which introduces the section B (marked in purple), while the rest of the strings work with the rhythmical pattern extracted from the theme of section A (marked in green) and with a transposition of the motive in whole-tone scale taken from bar 230 in *Water Sculpture* (marked in brown).

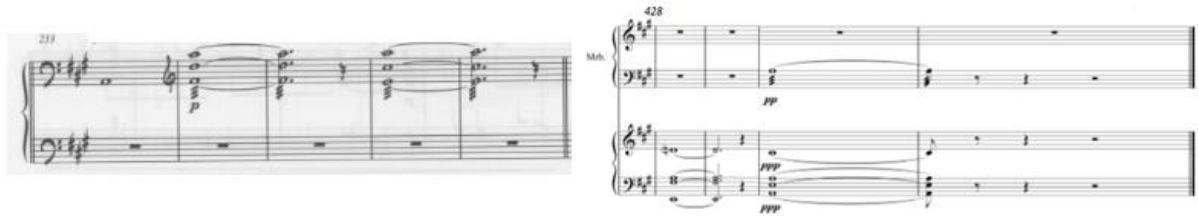


Fig. 4.5.c: (Left) Nee, bars 233 - 237; (Below) *Water Sculpture*, piano reduction, bars 428 – 431

Finally, last bars have a deep meaning in this “river” music concept. After starting with waterdrops inside the cave, through the wellspring transformed into a river with all the confluent moving in the same direction but in so many different ways, the arrival to the ocean waterfront is as inevitable as clear and calm. So the music ends, softly, quietly and giving a final sense of cadence that was never given before. Almost like the cycle ended discretely enabling another one to begin.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As a performer that had several encounters with Igor Lešnik's music, I can say that his works are a reflection of his own personality. He is a labyrinth just as his pieces, and he is the type of player that manages to make the most complex music look the simplest. However, I find myself in trouble when I need to define his composing style. I have shown in this text his ideas, trying to put some logic and order to his musical decision; but the truth is, some things cannot be full rationalized. His pieces are created by the combination of complex logic and blasts of inspiration.

Nevertheless, I believe there are several concepts that need to be highlighted as the most helpful for the future performers:

- Always have present the “river” philosophy: in the practice time, marking the small differences between similar themes can save the performer lots of time and effort. Also, have continuity always in high priority when performing longer parts of the pieces.
- Develop constant rhythmical awareness: overall in *Water Sculpture*, knowing precisely your rhythm is a vital skill for the performer, due to countless polyrhythms and rhythmical challenges for both soloist and orchestra. Tools like practicing with metronome playing in the upbeat, or using a recording with minus one, are welcomed and appreciated.
- Prepare to research on sound: the amount of technical difficulties and tricks, combined with the usage of frame and resonators, demand a high level of control in sound production from the performer. These pieces require deep knowledge of the instrument.
- Do not forget the origin of this music: in a very personal way, I find very important to give at least some thought to the true origin of these pieces. They must sound refreshing like water, and they should present a joyful atmosphere to the audience.

Coming to the oceanfront, I must close this work by providing the beginning of a new cycle. I truly believe I will enlarge my research in Igor Lešnik's music, widening the view and transferring it to more solo works, and eventually, into chamber music.