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TONAL-CENTRIC SECTIONAL TERNARY DESIGN AND MESSIAEN-DERIVED POST-TONAL PROCEDURES IN TORU TAKEMITSU'S *RAIN TREE SKETCH II*

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Abstract
This paper interrogates the nexus of large-scale form, local motivic design, and harmonic organization in Tōru Takemitsu's "Rain Tree Sketch II" (1992), a memorial work for Olivier Messiaen that absorbs and transforms salient aspects of the dedicatee's compositional practice. Proceeding from the ostensibly diffuse surface, the study demonstrates that the piece articulates a rigorously coordinated simple, sectional ternary design whose global framework is underpinned by clearly profiled phrases, contrasting and parallel periods, and cadential phrase groups, frequently mediated by elision. At the foreground, the analysis traces how registral deployment and recurring cadential gestures, especially a single tone-centric orientation even as the work deploys post-tonal materials and their chromatic complement. The "A" sections are shown to synthesize triadic, tertian sonorities with flexible pitch-set usage, privileging singable melodic contours and functionally intelligible bass progressions over strict transformational operations. By contrast, the "B" section functions as a textural and harmonic disjunction, recasting the material into polyphonic terms, new sonorities, and systematically exploiting Messiaen's Mode 2 while strategically suppressing the tonic pitch. The study further situates Takemitsu's deployment of Messiaen's "modes of limited transposition" and use of rhythms with added or subtracted values within a broader discourse on temporality that generates a perception of suspended, "atemporal" flow. "Rain Tree Sketch II" thereby emerges as a paradigmatic

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late-style work in which Takemitsu mobilizes inherited tonal, formal, and motivic archetypes in dialectical interaction with post-tonal collections and Messiaen-derived techniques, producing a memorial idiom that is at once referential and idiosyncratically personal.

Keywords
Music theory, Modern music, Piano music, Toru Takemitsu, Rain Tree Sketch II

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