

# Chopin's Prelude in D major, Opus 28, No. 5: Analysis and Performance

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## **I**ntrOduction

An interesting piece of music, like an interesting person, will probably have some qualities that set it apart. Of these unusual qualities, some may be displayed on the surface, accessible to everyone; others may become evident only to those who have lived with the piece or person for a long time. If Chopin's D major Prelude were a person, he or she would be not only interesting but also more than a bit eccentric, for the piece packs an unusually large number of unusual characteristics (both evident and concealed) into a very small space.

In trying to understand the Prelude (see Ex. 1), we might do well to begin with one of its more obvious eccentricities as a way to gain access to the piece as a whole, including its more hidden aspects. And in general, when we analyze a piece in preparation for performing it, a useful first approach is often to become aware of its special, idiosyncratic elements and to ask the piece why they are there. We may have to work rather hard at our questioning before the piece deigns to give us an answer (most people wouldn't answer such a question right away either). But if the piece does begin to reveal itself to us, we shall be in a position to play it in ways that fit its individual character rather than with a generalized, one-size-fits-all, sort of expression.

## **The slur**

One of the Prelude's peculiarities is so glaring that we can spot it by looking at the score from a distance that would preclude our actually reading the notes: a single slur covers the entire piece ex-

EXAMPLE 1. Chopin, Prelude in D major Op. 28 No. 5

*Allegro molto.*

5. *cresc.*

7. *cresc.*

14. *cresc.*

20. *dim.*

26. *cresc.*

32. *dim.*

Note: The last note in the right hand of m. 16 appears erroneously in many scores as an A# instead of an A $\natural$ .

cept for the last two bars. What does this slur mean? In piano music, of course, the basic meaning of a slur is that the notes under it are to be played legato. According to the great singer Pauline Viardot as reported by Camille Saint-Saëns, however, "when huge slurs extend over entire musical periods [in Chopin], they indicate this *spianato* playing, without nuances or discontinuities in the rhythm."<sup>1</sup> The term "*spianato*," an Italian word meaning "made level or smooth," comes from the traditions of bel canto singing, traditions that strongly influenced Chopin both as composer and pianist. But Viardot's interesting comment cannot be relevant to the giant slur in the Prelude, though it may well be valid for some other passages in Chopin. First of all, the Prelude is not a cantabile piece to which principles of bel canto singing would apply (though, as in all of Chopin, there are unmistakable connections to vocal style in the compositional fabric); secondly, Chopin himself has placed nine crescendos and decrescendos within the slur, so he hardly had a delivery "without nuance" in mind.

Thus this slur certainly retains its more usual meaning: all the notes under it form a continuous legato line. Although Chopin could have achieved approximately the same result by writing "legato" at the beginning of the piece (as he does in the E♭ major Prelude from the same opus), the single immense slur suggests a stricter legato without any of the breathing pauses that would normally signal the ends of rhythmic groups and phrases even in pieces that are played legato. Places where such "breaths" might reasonably occur are by no means lacking in the Prelude: for example, after m. 4 (or perhaps the first note of m. 5), after m. 8, and in similar places. In fact at least one well-known editor of the past, Karl Klindworth, "improved" on Chopin by putting in just such points of articulation; indeed he substituted thirteen little slurs for Chopin's one big

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<sup>1</sup>Pauline Viardot was a composer and an excellent pianist as well as one of the most famous singers of her time. She and Chopin were good friends, and he is known to have accompanied her when she sang. Later in life she gave her impressions of Chopin to Saint-Saëns, who published them. The remark about "*spianato*" performance is quoted in the indispensable book of Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, trans. Naomi Shohet with Krycia Osostowicz and Roy Howat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 54.

slur!<sup>2</sup> Klindworth's suggested points of articulation are by no means implausible; nonetheless, his misguided editing amounts to an act of vandalism, for no editor has the right to falsify the composer's text and misrepresent it to performers. Klindworth's corrupt text not only leads to performances with faulty articulation—conventional performances of a most unconventional piece—but also blocks access to possibly important insights of a general nature, for such an unusual feature as the single big slur probably relates to other aspects of the composition. We can't ask Chopin what his reasons might have been for putting almost the whole piece under one slur. But if the editor lets us know that the composer has done just that, we can try to discover what there might be about this piece that would call for a performance "all in one breath." Let us begin this process by looking at the Prelude's form.

### Large form

A feature of the Prelude that is almost as striking as the slur is the fact that it seems to go over the same ground (or almost the same ground) twice. Measures 1-16 recur in mm. 17-32 with only slight variation. These two segments take us almost to the end of the piece; following them, mm. 33-36 take place over a tonic pedal and 37-39 contain a I-V-I cadence, so we might be inclined to regard these seven bars (which do not repeat anything heard earlier) as a coda. If we regard the form of the Prelude as resulting primarily from the patterns of repetition and contrast of its motivic contents, then it would fall into two large sections: A (1-16) + A varied (17-32) + Coda (33-39).

### Four-bar groupings

Looking a bit more closely at the inner subdivisions of this large formal scheme, we can see that virtually all of it is organized in four-bar groups that articulate its motivic design and regulate its tonal motion; each new group represents a forward step through tonal space. Only the last group—three bars instead of four—con-

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<sup>2</sup>Frédéric Chopin, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Karl Klindworth, rev. ed., vol. 2, no. 7 (Berlin: Bote und Bock, 1909), 165.

tradicts this grouping in fours, and even it can be heard as the greater part of a four that fades into (and is more or less completed by) the silence of the final rest with fermata. Concentrating on the larger outlines of the motivic design, the bass and the harmonic structure, we can plot the four-bar steps of the tonal motion as in Figure 1. The symbols that designate the design elements will be explained later.

**FIGURE 1.** Four-bar groups

| Measure | Design  | Main bass tone/harmony |                                   |
|---------|---------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1       | x       | [                      | A (V of D)                        |
| 5       | a       |                        | D (I)                             |
| 9       | a       |                        | E (II)                            |
| 13      | b       |                        | F# (III#)                         |
| 17      | x       | [                      | A (V of D; starts on second beat) |
| 21      | a       |                        | D (I)                             |
| 25      | a       |                        | E (II)                            |
| 29      | b       |                        | F# (I <sup>6</sup> of D)          |
| 33      | x       |                        | D (I)                             |
| 37      | cadence |                        | D-A-D (I-V-I) in 37-39            |

In two important ways, Figure 1 confirms the large picture of the Prelude's form described above. In the first place, the sequence of design elements—"x"—"a"—"a"—"b"—unfolds twice, starting in mm. 1 and 17. And in keeping with this division into two sections, the bass line goes over the same ground twice with the repeated pattern A-D-E-F# (see the brackets in the chart). Note that the only significant contrast in harmony between the two sections—F# major (III) in bar 13 versus D major (I) in 29—goes together with an equally significant similarity in the contour of the bass line, for the D major begins with F# as its lowest note. Both segments, therefore, contain a stepwise ascent D-E-F#, but the second F# assumes a different harmonic function in order to lead convincingly to the Prelude's impending close.

## Large-scale harmony

A still closer view of the Prelude, however, would lead one to regard the A + A + Coda scheme given above as somewhat oversimplified. The problem centers on the opening four bars, which are remarkably unstable in rhythm and harmony; they sound much less like the clearly marked beginning of the piece than like the slightly chaotic process of searching for such a beginning. Lacking perceptible downbeats and sustaining a dissonant dominant sonority made more intense by the clash between  $\sharp\hat{6}$  and  $\flat\hat{6}$ , the opening four-bar group is clearly a kind of introduction. It takes place outside of the structure, though it leads into the opening tonic of that structure in the way an upbeat leads into a downbeat. The theorist Edward T. Cone has suggested that a basic rhythmic shape of much nineteenth-century music is precisely one of an upbeat—often an extended upbeat like this one—leading into a “structural downbeat”: a point of arrival in the tonal structure as well as the rhythm.<sup>3</sup> The beginning of our Prelude would, I think, form a perfect illustration of an extended upbeat preceding a structural downbeat. The dominant that recurs in m. 17 with the repetition of the opening bars creates a second extended upbeat, which leads into the tonic downbeat of m. 21.

If we chart the music's form from the perspective of tonal structure and large-scale rhythmic shape, then, the primary landmarks that articulate the music's flow occur at mm. 5 and 21. If we chart according to pattern repetition (as in Fig. 1), the main division would occur at m. 17, where the music “starts over.” Because of this overlapping between tonal motion and motivic design, there is no uncontested point of articulation or formal division in the middle of the piece. This blurring of boundaries produces a special kind of continuity for the Prelude; perhaps Chopin's extravagant slur is at least in part the external sign of this inner continuity. In any case, the Prelude's form results from the tension it maintains between two articulative forces, design and structure. I have tried to incorporate the notion that the piece “really” begins at m. 5 into Figure 1

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<sup>3</sup>Edward T. Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: Norton, 1968), 24-25.

by labelling the design element of mm. 1-4 as "x" and the one starting at m. 5 as "a." The "x" element is introductory; sounding over tonic harmony near the end, it is recycled to resemble a coda. The "a" is expository, with a stable beginning and increasing instability and intensity thereafter—a process enhanced by the sequential repetition one step higher of mm. 9-12. The "b" idea, with its repeated cadential figure, represents the conclusion that caps each of the two phases of the musical discourse.

There is still more to be said about the overlapping between pattern repetition and tonal structure. The I chord of m. 21 is not only the beginning of a new phase of motion; it is also the end of the preceding one. As I show in Example 2, a voice-leading sketch of the Prelude, I read the first big harmonic progression as I-III $\sharp$ -V-I, and the second one as I-I $^6$ -V-I. The tonic of m. 21, therefore, does double duty as the end of the old and the beginning of the new. My inference of a I-III $\sharp$ -V-I structure for mm. 5-21, rather than, say, I-II-V-I, results from my hearing the III $\sharp$  as one of the structural pillars that form important beginnings and goals of motion. On the other hand, I regard the E minor chord (II) of m. 9 as subordinate to the I and III—specifically as a passing chord leading from I to III—because it falls in the middle of the motion and continues the motivic pattern begun in m. 5. The D and F $\sharp$ , on the other hand, begin and end the stepwise ascent, and each of them is emphasized by a new motivic idea.

Thus the V of mm. 17-20 forms an integral part of a larger cycle of harmonic movement, leading from a beginning on I to a closure on I (though that close, in turn, becomes a new beginning). The apparently identical V of mm. 1-4, on the other hand, enters without any preparation and leads into the harmonic cycle without forming part of it. The two dominants, therefore, have quite different meanings and functions especially with regard to rhythm: the second one sounds like an upbeat *inside* a larger tonal and rhythmic structure, whereas the opening one sounds like an upbeat *outside* the structure. I suspect that some readers who have played or heard Opus 28 as a set have shared my impression that the upbeat formation at the beginning of the D major Prelude seems to grow naturally out of the closing chord of the piece before it, the E minor Prelude: the first note of the right-hand part, B, belongs to the E minor

EXAMPLE 2. Chopin, Prelude Op. 28 No. 5, Voice-leading sketch

Measures: 5 9 13 17 21 25 29 33

Repeated Design: A1

Harmonic Structure: V I III<sup>#</sup>-b V I I (I<sup>6</sup>) V I

Coda?

tonic chord, and sounds like a suspended ninth resolving into the dominant note of D major. I know of absolutely no evidence to support the speculation that the introductory bars of our Prelude form a link from the preceding piece (though we do have such evidence for the third and fourth Etudes of Opus 10). But my ear persists in telling me that at least three of the Opus 28 Preludes—those in G major, E minor, and D major—seem to be dovetailed one into the next. (I am not at all trying to suggest that these pieces must be performed as a group, only that they may be so performed to very good effect.)

### A closer look at the harmony

Example 3 contains a more detailed voice-leading sketch of mm. 5-16. In it we see that the bass notes D and E (mm. 5 and 9) both move to their upper fifths, A and B, before proceeding to the next move in the rising stepwise line. This motion creates a pattern of ascending fifths, D (m. 5), A (m. 7), E (m. 9), B (m. 11), and F# (m. 13). Since D is the beginning of the motion, F# its goal, and E the stepwise connection of beginning to goal, these lower bass notes and the chords they support outweigh in significance the upper fifths. Rhythmic emphasis also underscores the centrality of the rising third D-E-F#, for each of these notes marks the beginning of a four-bar group. Readers familiar with Schenkerian analysis will recognize the *unfolding* of a 5-6-5 progression in the bass motion leading from D to E and a variant of this motion, a 5-<sup>0</sup>7-5 unfolding, in the continuation from E to F#. In both phases of the ascent, an applied chord—dominant or diminished seventh—prepares the next goal by means of a chromatic inflection, D# to E and E# to F#. The E# diminished seventh chord reappears in m. 28, when the ascending motion is repeated, but there it functions as a common-tone diminished seventh resolving to I rather than as a leading-tone chord directed to III.

### Large-scale melodic structure

Example 2 shows my view of the overall contour of the top voice. Because of the density of the writing and the highly contrapuntal character of the texture, the upper voice is initially much harder to

EXAMPLE 3. Chopin, Prelude Op. 28 No. 5. mm. 5-16,  
more detailed sketch

5 9 13 16

reaching over

etc.

5 6 5 E: 07 F# 5

D: 5 6 5

follow than the bass. A thread through the labyrinth is provided by the emphasis that accrues to the right-hand D at the downbeat of m. 5, an emphasis generated by its forming a focal point both of tonal motion (resolving the prior C#) and of rhythm (resolving the extended upbeat). This D is then transferred up one octave in the next bar, and in this higher register, it resolves the E, highest and most prominent pitch in the introductory dominant. In Example 2, note the motion of the opening tenth C#-E in the treble clef into the octave on D; this picture compresses into vertical intervals the polyphonically conceived right-hand part, in which the polyphony is seemingly dissolved into a single melodic line.

If we now follow the larger melodic line at the four-bar junctures that mark the Prelude's course, we see that it ascends from the initial D to E (mm. 9-10) and F# (mm. 13-16). This stepwise ascent moves through the same scale degrees as the bass, a procedure that would have led to parallel octaves were it not for the considerable melodic, harmonic, and contrapuntal activity in between the octaves, activity which breaks up the parallel motion. In Schenkerian theory, incidentally, the rising lines of the bass and upper voice would be weighted differently. In the bass, the tonic of m. 5 would count as the primary structural pitch, which generates all the others including the F#. In the top voice, however, the F# would function as the first tone ( $\hat{3}$ ) of the descending melodic structure, and the D and E before it would form an *initial ascent* leading to the F# (see the disposition of half notes and quarter notes in Ex. 2). Examples 2 and 3 also show that the rising motion of this initial ascent is effected by means of the technique of *reaching over*; each new note in the ascent represents an element belonging to an inner voice that crosses over the previously higher part.

Since the second half of the piece begins to repeat the first half with only slight variations, the music of mm. 17-28 has the same top-voice structure as the corresponding bars of the first section. But the harmonic change that occurs in m. 29—I<sup>6</sup> instead of III#—brings with it a melodic change as well: instead of rising to F#, the upper line sinks back to D. (The F#'s that occur on the third beat of each bar are subordinate to the D's, which are the main notes in these bars.) Now, if the first half of a piece rises to a high F# as a goal, and if the second half begins to repeat the same ascent with

only slight variation, listeners would naturally expect the climactic event to recur. And in general, we would expect the repetition of a large-scale pattern to equal (or even surpass) the impact produced by its model. Chopin's avoidance of the climactic F#, therefore, creates a kind of frustration for the melodic line, which turns back from the expected goal at the very moment it should arrive there. The frustration is only increased by the events that follow, for they sound, first of all, like a final cadence repeated several times (mm. 29-32), and then like the beginning of a coda announcing that the Prelude has already reached its conclusion (mm. 33-36). As the apparent coda unfolds, however, the crescendo suggests that something momentous is about to occur; and indeed in m. 37, Chopin gives us our F#, lifted into the splendor of a higher octave and made all the more welcome because the piece was already sounding as if it were just about over.

The surprising advent of the high F# sheds light on the Prelude's form, large-scale rhythm, and emotional tone. First as to the form: if we understand the structural meaning of a coda to be an extension of the final tonic, after the piece's story has been told, then these last bars do not form a true coda, but an integral part—indeed the capstone—of the Prelude's structure. Note that Chopin refuses to let go of this hard-won F# once he has achieved it; the top-voice resolution  $\hat{3} \hat{2} \hat{1}$  is submerged in the middle of the right-hand chords, with F# ringing out on top of it. The arrival on F# also creates a focal point in the Prelude's rhythmic structure: m. 37 becomes another structural downbeat and indeed the most impressive one in the entire piece. The four bars preceding it, then, function as an extended upbeat preparing this climactic event. And as to the emotional tone: the way Chopin deceives us at first into hearing a coda shows an important and often overlooked facet of his artistic personality—his playfulness, wit, and humor. Indeed the entire Prelude should be performed with this humorous ending in mind; the very real tensions it builds up are comic tensions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Chopin's sense of humor, by the way, was not limited to his music; he could draw clever caricatures, and he was known among his circle of friends as an outstandingly gifted and amusing mimic.

### The first four bars: rhythm

The first build-up of tension occurs right at the outset of the Prelude, in the drawn-out dominant, the modal clashes and the rhythmic uncertainties of the opening four bars. That so much tension is generated so early on in a piece is most unusual, and it contributes to the sense of tonal and rhythmic resolution with the arrival of the structural tonic and structural downbeat in m. 5. How ought one to feel the rhythmic groupings within this extended upbeat? Two possibilities suggest themselves, shown in Example 4, a and b. In the first of these, we divide the twenty-four sixteenth notes into three plus five groups of four plus one ( $3 + 20 + 1 = 24$ ). In the second solution, we divide the twenty-four into two plus five groups of four plus two ( $2 + 20 + 2 = 24$ ). I believe that the second scansion of the music produces far better results, for it highlights the B-A figure and gives a syncopated quality to the low A's of the left hand and the B $\sharp$ 's and B $\flat$ 's of the right hand. The syncopation arises because these prominent sounds, which attract accents, fall on the second note of each four-note group, a normally "weak" position. The other solution has much less character, for it loses the tension of the syncopations. The prominent notes now fall on the first sixteenth of each group. I believe that confirmation of my view occurs at the repetition of this passage in m. 17, which begins after two sixteenth notes that still express an F $\sharp$  harmony (III). The "harmonic rhythm" thus produced divides the steady sixteenths into two plus four, rather than three plus four. The greater clarity of the later passage reflects back on the more obscure opening bars.

### The first four bars: chromaticism

The syncopated melodic figure of the right hand grows out of the Prelude's first two notes, B and A; they are repeated in doubled values to form the syncopated motive. The rhythmic figure continues, but at the second statement, a chromatically inflected note, B $\flat$ , usurps the place of the B $\sharp$ . The B $\sharp$  and B $\flat$  then alternate for the remainder of the four-bar introduction, with B $\sharp$  having the final word. (The A $\sharp$  in m. 5 is a subtle hint that we have not heard the last of B $\flat$ .) The two alternating sounds are, of course, the major and minor forms of the same scale degree,  $\hat{6}$ , rivals whose close juxtaposition creates

EXAMPLE 4. Measures 1-4, rhythmic subdivisions: two versions

a)

b)

less good

better

The image displays two musical staves, labeled 'a)' and 'b)', each containing four measures of music. The music is written in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Above each measure, there are numbers indicating rhythmic subdivisions. In version 'a)', the subdivisions are 3, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4. In version 'b)', the subdivisions are 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 2. The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals. Dashed lines connect corresponding notes between the two versions. The label 'less good' is placed below version 'a)' and 'better' is placed below version 'b)'.

the potential for a kind of dramatic conflict: which one will ultimately prevail? In our Prelude, the B $\sharp$  certainly predominates during the four-bar introduction and its repetition midway through the piece. When the syncopations return over tonic harmony near the end, however, B $\flat$  displaces B $\sharp$  altogether (mm. 33-36). The more intense chromatic sound, with its minor-mode associations, helps to generate the momentum that will carry the upper line to the climactic high F $\sharp$  of m. 37.

There is, I think, a slightly subversive aspect to the triumph of this chromatic interloper over its more respectable (or at least more usual) diatonic and major-mode rival. It is a victory, moreover, that is foretold by an extraordinary occurrence in mm. 13-16. These bars contain a repeated cadential figure in F $\sharp$  major, III $\sharp$  in the key of D. Just before the III moves on to V, however, the major changes to minor; A $\sharp$  gives way to A $\flat$ . As Example 5 shows, the A $\sharp$ -A $\flat$  progression is the enharmonic transformation of the two-note figure B $\flat$ -A from m. 2—an incredible example of what Schenker calls "hidden repetition."<sup>5</sup> Through the hidden repetition, Chopin is able to allude to the B $\flat$  in a harmonic context where a genuine B $\flat$  could not possibly appear. Although the chromatic half step A $\sharp$ -A $\flat$  and the diatonic half step B $\flat$ -A function in very different ways, the similarity in sound—a kind of musical pun—establishes a motivic connection between them.

The contrast between B $\sharp$  and B $\flat$  is so fundamental an element of the Prelude's design that its importance must, I think, be underscored in performance. For this to happen, the pianist should give a different kind of inflection—a different color, really—to the two chromatic variants. In playing the Prelude myself, I try to achieve this differentiation with the help of fingering: I use the normal 3-2 for the B-A of m. 1, but I use 2-2 for the B $\flat$ -A, sliding the second finger from the black key to the white. A result of this approach is an imperceptible hesitation before the B $\flat$  and an equally slight lingering on it; it takes me a fraction of a second to get my second finger over the B $\flat$  and another microsecond to prepare my hand for

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<sup>5</sup>This "hidden repetition" is lost in the versions of the score of this Prelude where the end of m. 16 contains an A $\sharp$  in the right hand instead of an A $\flat$ .

**EXAMPLE 5.** A $\sharp$ -A $\flat$ , mm. 13-16

the sliding motion. The agogic accent thus produced helps to highlight this crucial pitch, and I try to enhance the effect with a very small increase in tone. I find that producing these nuances sets limits to the speed with which I play the Prelude, though I try for as quick a pace as is compatible with these differentiated details. In any case, the actual speed of the Prelude's *Allegro molto* is conditioned by the extremely dense texture, which suggests a rich polyphony and which goes together with a rapid rhythm of melodic progression and of chord changes—very often three chords per 3/8 bar. People can't always hear as fast as pianists can play, and there is no point in racing through the Prelude if its melody, harmony, and counterpoint are reduced to a kind of sonic rubble in the listeners' ears.

### Foreground reduction

Example 6 contains a bar-by-bar reduction of the Prelude, which attempts to show the density of its texture and the consequent rapidity of its melodic, harmonic, and contrapuntal rhythms. The arrows above the upper staff in Example 6 are my suggestions for agogic nuances; those pointing left indicate a slight holding back in the tempo, while those pointing right indicate a forward push. In my opinion, such deviations from strict time are necessary in playing almost any piece, and they are particularly crucial to an effective performance of the Prelude. This is because the continuous legato required by Chopin's slur prevents our using articulation as a shaping element, so that a distinctive profile in performance can

EXAMPLE 6. Foreground reduction with suggested agogic nuances

agogic  
nuances

5 10

15 20 25

18 - 20  
= 2 - 4

26 - 28  
= 10 - 12

(continued)

**EXAMPLE 6.** (cont.)

arise only out of dynamics and agogics. My reasons for suggesting these specific nuances are listed below:

m.1, 1st two notes, hold back a bit because of the importance of the two-note motive (  $\hat{6}$   $\hat{5}$  ).

m. 2, B $\sharp$ -A, (and parallel places), hold back very slightly for reasons explained above. The B $\sharp$ -A figure in tempo.

mm. 5-6, hold back downbeat of 5 to highlight arrival on tonic. The wide skips in the left-hand part will make this happen automatically if one doesn't purposely rush them. (The holding back, then, will be distributed on both sides of the barline.) The motion to the more active upper fifth, A, in the harmony of mm. 6 and 7 provides an opportunity to regain the basic pace. Since the big melodic line D-E-F $\sharp$  leads to its goal in the upper octave, be sure to give the high D of m. 6 enough tone and time to let it sing out, thus highlighting the beginning of the line. (The weak metrical position of this important note might tempt some players to slight it.) In order not to drag the tempo, I suggest holding down the D through the next two sixteenth notes rather than delaying those notes.

m. 9, a bit of time for the left-hand E, but very little. Then (mm. 10-12) intensify the rising sequence by moving forward imperceptibly. The high E of m. 10, like the D of m. 6, needs to be clearly enunciated.

m. 13, give F $\sharp$ , the culminating note of the line, enough tone to make it sound like a goal. Since this note appears four times (mm. 13-16), no special agogic emphasis is needed.

mm. 16-17, the last beat of 16 and the first two of 17 need time, first to bring out the A $\natural$  of the right hand (see above), and then to clarify the harmony change from III to V.

mm. 17-21, like 1-5. I would make the repetition more intense than the first statement, playing at a slightly higher dynamic level and emphasizing the B $\natural$ -B $\flat$  contrast.

mm. 22-24, the slight changes from 6-8—greater chromaticism and minor-mode color—suggest a very slight holding back, to be made up in mm. 25-28, which are the same as 9-12.

mm. 29-32, I would take a little time at the first two notes of m. 29 to underscore the arrival on a D major (instead of F $\sharp$  major) chord. I would then support the diminuendo by holding back the tempo, as though this really were a coda and the piece was relaxing into its conclusion. Near the end of the passage (m. 32), the *ritenuto* (though not exaggerated) should be outspoken enough to be perceptible to listeners, just as it might be if the piece were really to end at the downbeat of m. 33.

mm. 33-36, support the crescendo by moving forward, but take a little time on the first B $\flat$ . The *accelerando* must develop enough momentum to restore the original tempo after the quasi-*ritenuto* of the preceding four-bar group.

Except for mm. 16-17 and 29-36, these nuances of time must be so slight as to be almost imperceptible, and they must be performed smoothly enough to give the impression (or should I say illusion?) of a steady pace. An overly hectic pushing and pulling of the tempo would contradict both the continuous sixteenth notes of the surface rhythms and the humorous spirit of this wonderful little piece.

