

Symphonies of Wind Instruments: Revisited

Abstract

Stravinsky's monumental *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* enjoys a well-deserved place of distinction among his body of works. Over its ninety-six year existence, the structure of *Symphonies* has invited much criticism and scholarly debate. The purpose of this paper is to utilize the findings of one scholar in particular, Richard Taruskin, who discovered that *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* follows the formal layout of the Russian Orthodox service for the dead, known as the *Panikhida*.

Building on this discovery, this paper elucidates the pitch structure of *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, providing a more cohesive and comprehensive understanding of the work.

Taruskin identifies *Symphonies* as a liturgical work, inviting a study of the role chant plays in the work's melodic content. A detailed analysis demonstrates how the pitch structure of the entire work, on both the micro and macro levels, is derived from two areas: the opening "bell motif, and the closing chorale.

Understanding Stravinsky's tonal language in *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* is vital to understanding the form, which has long puzzled both performers and critics. This new pitch analysis is intended to provide conductors another way to understand the ways in which this masterpiece for winds achieves unity of design.