

Explanation of New Rhythms and Notes

In musical time a whole-note (♩) is the unit by which all shorter time-values are measured, for instance an eighth-note (♪) is so called because it occupies one eighth the time of a whole-note; a quarter-note (♫) is so called because it occupies one quarter the time of a whole-note, etc.

The only regular system of subdividing a whole-note is by twos into halves, quarters, eighths, etc. If notes of other time values, for instance notes occupying one twelfth of a whole-note, are desired, they are called "eighth-note triplets" and written as eighth-notes, with a figure 3 over them, thus . Why not call them twelfth-notes, as would seem natural?

It is here proposed that all these irregular time-values be called by their correct names, according to the part of a whole-note they occupy. Thus are third-notes instead of "half-note triplets" since each occupies one third of the time of a whole-note; are fifth-notes instead of "quarter-note quintuplets, etc.

Although heretofore not suggested in notation, it will be seen that third, sixth, twelfth and twenty-fourth-notes form a related series; fifth, tenth and twentieth-notes another, and in fact, that a new series can be formed on each odd number and its divisions by two.

A new notation which brings out these relationships will be used as follows:

Whole-Note Series

Oval-shaped notes

Whole-note: ♩ half-note: ♮ quarter-note: ♫ 8th-note: ♪ 16th-note: ♩ 32nd-note: ♩

Third-Note Series

Triangular-shaped notes

2-3rds-note: △ 3rd-note: ▲ 6th-note: ▲ 12th-note: ▲ 24th-note: ▲ 48th-note: ▲

Fifth-Note Series

Square notes

4-5ths-note: □ 2-5ths-note: □ 5th-note: ■ 10th-note: ■ 20th-note: ■ 40th-note: ■

Seventh-Note Series

Diamond-shaped notes

4-7ths-note: ◇ 2-7ths-note: ◇ 7th-note: ◆ 14th-note: ◆ 28th-note: ◆ 56th-note: ◆

Ninth-Note Series

Oblong notes

8-9ths-note: ◻ 4-9ths-note: ◻ 2-9ths-note: ◻ 9th-note: ◻ 18th-note: ◻ 36th-note: ◻

Eleventh-Note Series

Oval notes with stroke

8-11ths-note: ◻ 4-11ths-note: ◻ 2-11ths-note: ◻ 11th-note: ◻ 22nd-note: ◻ 44th-note: ◻

Thirteenth-Note Series

Triangular notes with stroke

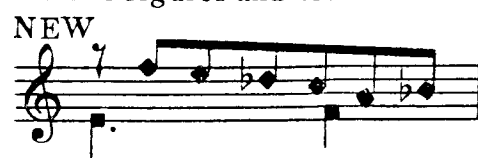
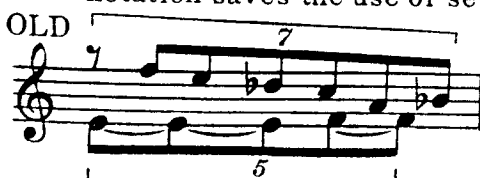
8-13ths-note: ◻ 4-13ths-note: ◻ 2-13ths-note: ◻ 13th-note: ◻ 26th-note: ◻ 52nd-note: ◻

Fifteenth-Note Series

Square notes with stroke

8-15ths-note: ◻ 4-15ths-note: ◻ 2-15ths-note: ◻ 15th-note: ◻ 30th-note: ◻ 60th-note: ◻

Following is part of the second measure of "Fabric," in both old and new notation. It will be seen that the new notation saves the use of several tied tones, as well as figures and brackets.



5. Fabric

Henry Cowell
(1917)

Andante

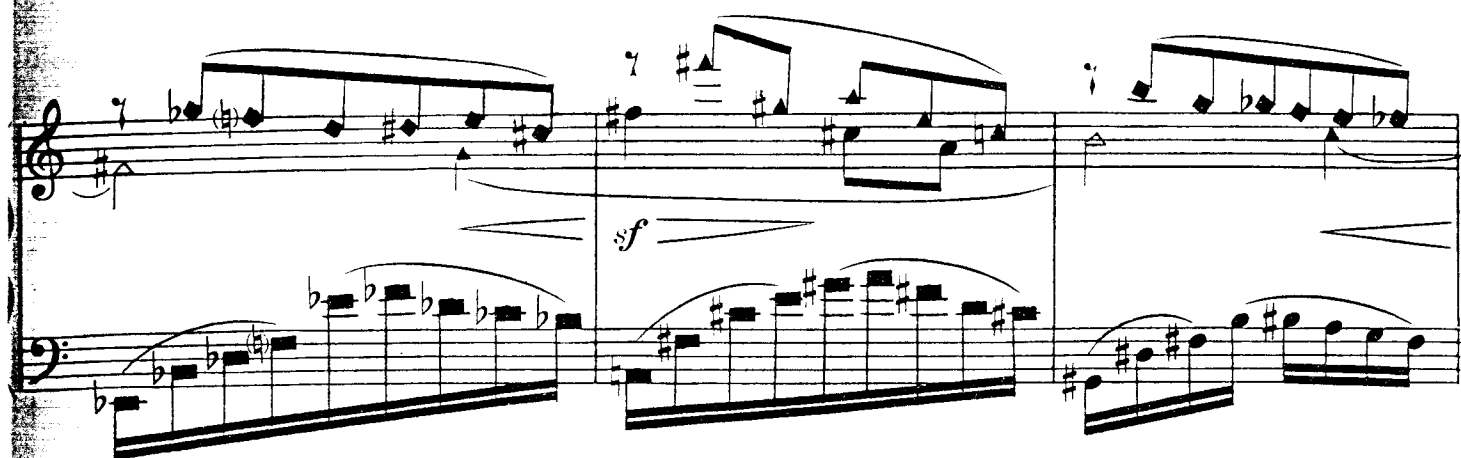
p *mf* *p* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Principal melody in Alto

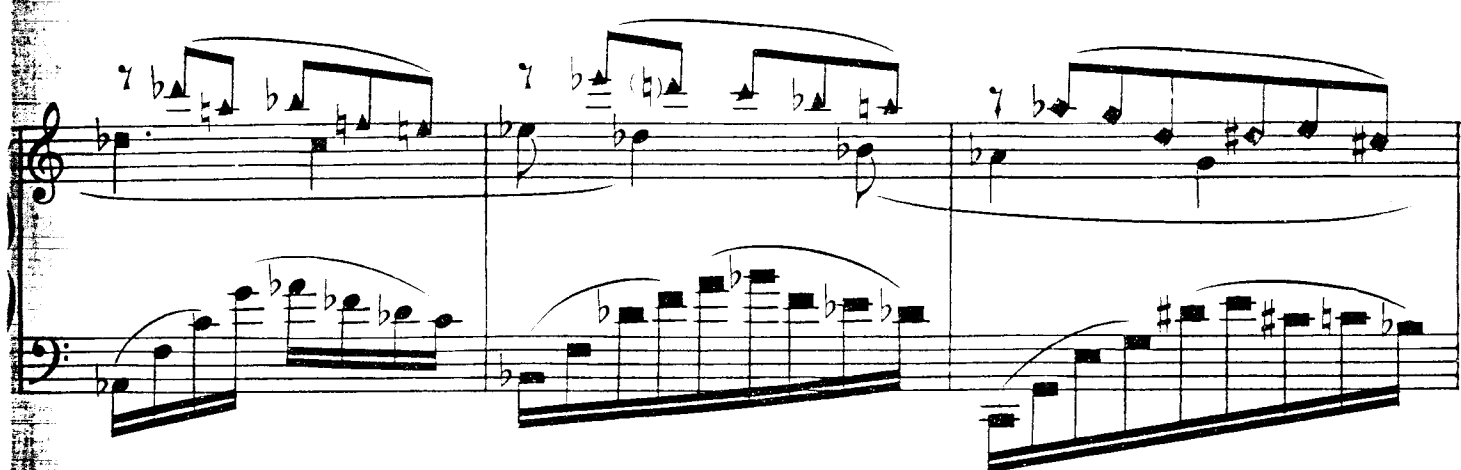
3 3 7

5

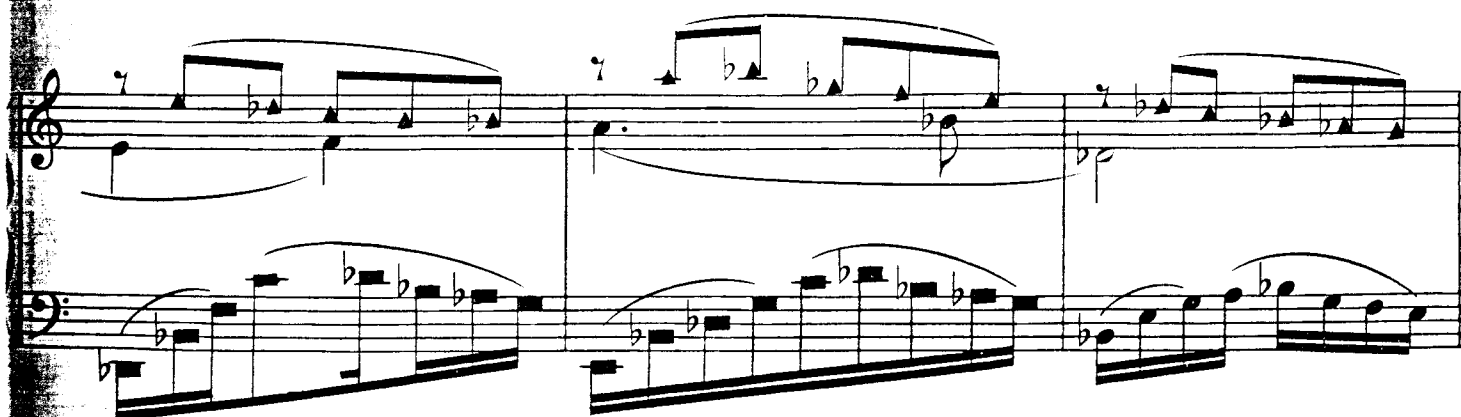
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First system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals and a fermata. The bass staff contains a bass line with a *sf* (sforzando) dynamic marking. The system is divided into three measures.



Second system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals and a fermata. The bass staff contains a bass line with a *sf* (sforzando) dynamic marking. The system is divided into three measures.



Third system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals and a fermata. The bass staff contains a bass line with a *sf* (sforzando) dynamic marking. The system is divided into three measures.



Fourth system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals and a fermata. The bass staff contains a bass line with a *rit. e dim.* (ritardando e diminuendo) dynamic marking. The system is divided into three measures.