

REHEARSAL NOTES

Measures 1-23: Introduction

Ascending arpeggios that cover a large register and introduce the rhythmic figures that will be heard all throughout the piece permeate this section, which acts as the opening of this concertino. Measures 1-15 are rhythmic and energetic, followed by the first appearance of the *montuno*, played by horn 1 at m.16. This short moment is to be memorable and it should be performed as a solo. Measures 17-18 are lyrical and dolce, offering contrast in character to what has been heard up to that moment. Measures 19-23 bring back the rhythmic element of this section and thus resemble the character of mm.1-15.

Measures 24-33: Letter A

Measures 24-27 introduce a second montuno, now in a lower register. This rhythmic melodic line dialogues with the soloist, which responds to it with the figure in mm.25-26. Measure 27 brings back the lyricism from mm.17-18. A back and forth between rhythmic and lyrical gestures takes place here. Measures 29-33 repeat the components of mm.24-27, with another statement of the montuno in the low register, another response to it from the soloist, and two closing measures to this portion of the music given in mm.32-33.

Measures 34-58: Letter B

The primary theme of the concertino is presented in mm.34-36, played primarily by the soloist. This theme uses the pitches of the opening arpeggios and the rhythm of the montunos. Measure 37 brings back the lyricism that has been appearing in bits and pieces before (i.e. m.17-18 and m.27). Measure 38 presents a rhythmic, syncopated gesture that will be prominent as the piece continues to unfold. The rhythm of the gesture in m.38 is highly characteristic of the Cuban musical genre *son* that deeply informed the composition of this piece. The primary theme returns in mm. 39-40, now in longer statements, as new notes have been added to it. Lyricism returns too in mm. 41-42. In measures 43-51 the primary theme is even longer, and it is now built upon dominant seventh chords, which will also become prominent in further sections of the piece. The soloist, who is playing the primary theme, alternates with the ensemble that plays a rhythmic gesture in response. The dialogue from mm.24-27 comes back one more time. The addition of the claves in this section enhances the Cuban flavor of the music. Finally, measures 52-58 are an elaboration of the montuno from m.16, which has now added notes to make it longer and give it a more chromatic sonority.

Measures 59-88: Letter C

The secondary theme of the concertino enters here. It is derived from the primary theme, but it is now loosely in the dominant (i.e. the primary theme had D as its tonal center, while this new theme's tonal center is A), and it is of a lyrical character, thus marked *cantabile*. The accompaniment of the theme is played by the saxophones and horns first, and then by the piano, harp, and vibraphone. The rhythm in the accompaniment is challenging because the many ties make it difficult to feel the downbeats. This rhythm rather emphasizes the off beats, but the performer must audiate the downbeats while playing what it is written, to be able to play this rhythm correctly. In this section, the accompaniment must be in the background, acting as a "cushion" to the theme, which is played by the soloist and it should always be in the foreground. At mm. 73-39 the marimba doubles the solo part to add color, and thus it is important that they are together in these measures.

Measures 89-94: Letter D

The primary theme (mm. 34-39) returns, having E as its tonal center and being played by the ensemble in this occasion. This section is the closing of all of the preceding sections up to this point in the piece. If viewed as a sonata form, this would be the closing section at the end of the exposition.

Measures 95-100: Transition

In this transition, material from the primary theme is fading out while new material: quartal chords, announces the section that is about to begin.

Measures 101-144: Letters E, F, & G

A new theme starts in m.101. Rather than a single line, this theme is built using chord progressions. The effect is that of having five independent lines superimposed to form the chords that create this theme. At m.108, the quartal chords from the transition return; this is the material that is now fading out. At m.115 the new theme returns, now in dialogue with a gesture that first appears at m.117 and that we will hear later on, at the end of the soloist's cadenza and at the beginning of letter O. The music that starts at m.132 makes me think of the way in which the bass line is played in some of Bach's keyboard music, short and elegant, with some resonance after the attack, a sound I attempt to recreate using the articulation marks I wrote. In letter G,

the music builds up and recedes, ending with an arpeggio that outlines a chord of a somewhat “jazzy” sonority, in preparation for the next section.

Measures 145-166: Letter H

The rhythmic component that was prominent at the start of the piece comes back to occupy this new section, as does the dialogue between different groups of the ensemble, the question-response element that comes from the African roots of Cuban music. If the dialogue between the different groups of the ensemble is followed, the performance of this section will most likely be successful. Harmonically, the dominant seventh chords that had been hinted at in previous sections come to the fore in this section. The percussion is very prominent as well, which enhances the rhythmic component of this music. Pick up to m.154-156 bring back the rhythmic, syncopated gesture from m. 38, only a bit longer, which is also about to become the bass line all throughout letter I.

Measures 167-191: Letter I

The bass clarinet and tenor sax. start the section with yet another montuno while the piano has the bass line, picked also by the contrabassoon, baritone sax. and double bass a few measures later. The second montuno in the section is played by the soloist in m.171, as a response to the first montuno played by the bass clarinet and tenor sax. In m. 175 the soloist’s montuno travels to the first clarinet for a second statement while the soloists plays a short gesture as a countermelody. This gesture is then echoed by the soprano sax. in mm. 176-177. Both gestures are in the middle ground as opposed to the montuno’s second statement in the first clarinet that should be prominent in this moment. Another layer in the texture is introducing short rhythmic punctuations, played by the right hand of the piano and trombones and euphoniums. This layer, together with the accompaniment in the percussion, is to be in the background. Starting at the pick up to m.179 we encounter the main thematic material of this section, played by the flutes, oboes, trumpets, and the soloist. This theme is heard until m.187. Underneath, we continue to hear bits and pieces of the first and second montunos that appeared at the beginning of the section, all on top of the bass line that remains constant as well as the accompaniment in the percussion. At the pick up to m.189 through m.191, we find a descending chain of dominant seventh chords with a rhythm that is derived from the syncopated gesture that first appeared at m. 38, and that has been heard in different variants by this point of the piece: a dotted eighth-sixteen tied to another dotted eighth-sixteen figure. Measure 191 acts as a decelerator of what came before with longer rhythmic values and a 4/4 time signature.

Measures 192-227: Letter J

The soloist plays yet another montuno in mm.192-199. The bass line is given to the double bass and the piano provides the harmonic support. Flutes and clarinets add color by doubling the chords in the piano part when the second phrase of the montuno comes in. At m.199, the attention shifts from the soloist to the bass clarinet, which introduces new thematic material. Saxophones accompany the first phrase of the new material, while the piano and double bass play the bass line. The soloist and vibraphone double the bass clarinet, an octave higher, when the second phrase of the new material comes in. Horns join in the accompaniment and the bass trombone comes in to reinforce the bass line. At measure 206, the woodwinds and saxophones start playing sustained chords that alternate with ascending arpeggios in the solo part, as well as chords of shorter duration, played by the muted trumpets. The bass line continues its course, but it is now played by the piano, double bass, and harp. The percussion section that began with claves and shaker, grows with the addition of the tom toms. Measures 220-228 bring back the material introduced by the bass clarinet in mm.199-206, but now over D7 and G7 chords as opposed to E7 and A7, which were the underlying harmonies when this material was first stated. In this restatement, soprano and alto sax, as well as the soloist, have the thematic material, which goes to flutes, oboes, clarinets, and still the soloist, with the entrance of the second phrase. Horns continue to play the accompaniment, joined by trombones and tuba at mm.226-227, and the contrabassoon, piano and double bass play the bass line. Short gestures that act as countermelodies take place at measure 222 & 225-226, played by the piano and “colored” with the jam block.

Measures 229-270: Letters K & L

In these sections, the addition of the timbales to the percussion enhances the Cuban flavor of the piece and the orchestration emulates the sound of a jazz band. Once again, the dialogue between different instruments is at the center of the music. The gestures in the solo part found in letter K, are taken up by the ensemble when letter L starts, and they become longer with each new iteration.

Measures 271-278: Letter M

This section acts as a preparation for the soloist’s cadenza; it is the “farewell” of the ensemble until it returns again after the cadenza ends.

Measures 279-291: Letter N

Soloist's cadenza. Measures 279-289 are based on material previously heard and mm. 290-291 announce a gesture that will be heard in the next section.

Measures 292-343: Letter O

Measures 292-315 are an introduction to this section. In it, the next three elements interact: a new theme that descends chromatically with each repetition of its main motive (flutes, mm.292-299 and E. Horn, m.301), a gesture in the solo part that also descends chromatically (soloist, mm.294-301) and that was first heard in measures 117 & 120 and 125 & 128, and a new lyrical theme (soprano sax., mm.303-308) that derives from the contour of the very first montuno heard in the piece, played by horn 1 in m.16. At the pick up to m. 316, the lyrical theme, the most important of the three elements mentioned above, is played by the soloist and the orchestration becomes gradually fuller. Reminiscence of the gesture from m. 294 is played by the English Horn at mm. 318-320, while the lyrical theme takes over. At m.329, another iteration of the lyrical theme is heard while the orchestration continues to be enriched.

Measures 344-379: Letter Q, R, & S

The new theme that opened letter O (flutes, mm.292-299 and E. Horn, m.301) takes over. This restatement of it is not shy and sparse as it was the case when it first appeared, but it is bold and rich, played now by the trumpets. At the pick up to m.358 (letter R) the lyrical theme returns, now with a different tonal center. In this iteration, the sound of the ensemble is much fuller than in previous ones, creating a climatic moment in the piece. The "fade out" of the section happens in mm. 372-379 (letter S), utilizing material from the accompaniment to the new theme (Bass clarinet, mm. 292-293) and following a chromatic descent one last time.

Measures 380-396: still letter S

A second cadenza written for the soloist closes the work. A roll in the timpani provides the accompaniment. The piece ends quietly, as the music gradually fades away.