

The Composer's Canvas -

*The artistic, musical and cultural
influences of Claude Debussy*

Student No:

Centre No:

"I am trying to do 'something different' in a way realities - what the imbeciles call 'impressionism' is a term which is as poorly used as possible, particularly by art critics."

- Claude Debussy in a letter of March, 1908,

Claude Debussy's desire to do 'something different' was a transfer of Impressionist art ideals to music, using musical, social and cultural influences within his work.

The Impressionist works for which Claude Debussy is best known for resulted from his close association with Impressionist artists and writers of the time, who transferred their ideas of subtlety and illusion to the composer. The Impressionists' goal to "suggest, rather than depict," images in their work was bred into Debussy's subtle, atmospheric compositions, and as a result, the works of contemporaries such as Mallarme, Verlaine, Whistler and Turner formed the subjects of many of Debussy's works.

Such an example is the famous orchestral work *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, inspired by Mallarme's poem. The poet had remarked "*The music prolongs the emotion of the poem and fixes the scene more vividly than colours could have done.*" Indeed, Debussy expands the palette of the artist by using numerous techniques, such as lending and varying lines (fig. 1, 2 & excerpts 1, 2), "colouring" his canvas by bringing out the tone colours of the flute and oboe and allowing a near absence of rhythm to forward the Impressionist ideas of mystery and illusion.

flute lends solo line to oboe Fig. 1

Fl.
Hb.

p *expressif*

Fig. 2

Lines alternate between first and second flutes

The influence, and later rejection of Wagner's compositional development is apparent in Debussy's avoidance of the "incessant restatement" of themes (fig. 3a-b & excerpt 3a-b), which he previously observed in Wagner's work. Here, the harp's glissando is stated to suggest a dream and only returns much later in bar 21, thus maintaining the mystery favoured by Impressionist artists.

Fig. 3a

Bars 7, 8, 10 - harp suggests a dream

Fig. 3b

Harp returns later for bar 21 to reiterate dream

Debussy also captures³⁰⁰ the lines of Mallarme's poem in the third repetition of the flute motive (fig. 4, ex. 4), where "an empty, sonorous, monotonous line" is communicated in the flute's mellow note, then followed by a playful twinkling of triplets - "to reflower by the lakes while you wait for me!"

Mellow note

Playful twinkling of triplets

Fig. 4

"an empty, sonorous line"

"to reflower by the lakes while you wait for me!"

Impressionist art techniques, such as tonal ambiguity (fig. 5a, b) and the use of colour (tone colour in music) to evoke atmosphere have been utilised in Debussy's piece. In fig. 6, rather than being melodic phrases, the instruments' lines operate in "dots", a technique favoured by pointillist painters.

Fig. 5a



Fishing Boats Leaving the Harbor, Le Havre
1874 (160 Kb); Oil on canvas, 60 x 101 cm (23 5/8 x 39 3/4"); Private collection

Impressionist painting by Monet; the use of blurred colours evokes atmosphere



Fig. 5b

Tonal ambiguity in music to evoke atmosphere



Fig. 6

Instruments' lines operating in "dots", a technique used by pointillist painters in art

The frivolity of the flute line achieves symbolist poet Edgar Allan Poe's belief in the "confusion and intermingling of all sense-impressions," through shifts in rhythm and harmony throughout the piece, varying between sinister tones, amiability, delight and serenity (fig. 7 - 10).

Fig. 7 - "sinister"

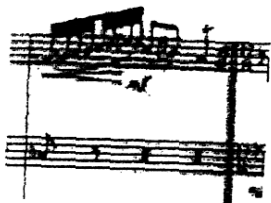


Fig. 9 - "delight"



Fig. 8 - "amiability"

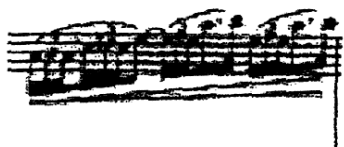
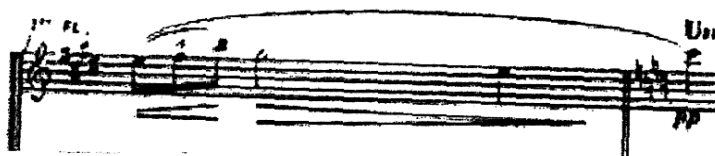


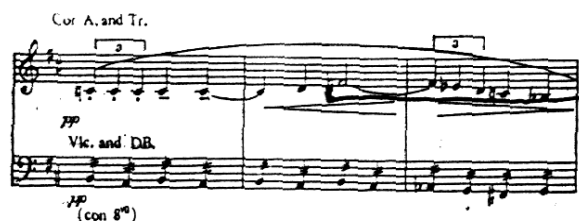
Fig. 10 - "serenity"



Debussy's subtle style also reflects Symbolism, an art movement which suggested ideas and states of mind through symbols⁷. The movement itself was influenced by oriental art such as the Japanese prints, and this cultivated⁴⁰⁰ Debussy's interest in the Eastern culture, evident in *La Mer*. A carving by Japanese artist Hokusai, and the works of Turner, Edgar Allen Poe and other artists contributed to the composition of *La Mer*, with Debussy's "passionate love for the seas"⁸ leading him to compose a work that reflected "the expression of the waters, the play of curves described by changing breezes."⁹

La₅₀₀ Mer uses the pentatonic scale (fig. 11, ex. 5) to create the oriental flavour of Hokusai's work, also combining the rippling texture of the strings and the arpeggio figures in the harp parts to make a gamelan-like sonority. The contrasting section, built on a striking figure in triple rhythm, suggests the heaving motion of the sea (fig. 12, ex. 6):

fig. 11



In the English horn and Trombone, La Mer uses the pentatonic scale to create an oriental flavour, reflecting Hokusai's artwork



fig. 12



The triplet rhythm in the horns suggests the heaving motion of the sea

The influence of art is also evident in Debussy's orchestral work *Nocturnes*, in which he referred to the violin original violin solo as "the study of grey in painting¹⁰". The⁶⁰⁰ inspiration for the work came from Whistler's picture series, *Nocturnes*, and likewise, the music work suggests three canvases- *Clouds*, *Festivals* and *Sirens*.

In *Clouds*, (fig. 13, ex. 7) the opening bars resemble a phrase in Mussorgsky's *Sunless* song-cycle, showing the influence of one of the few composers Debussy held in high esteem.

fig 13



Opening bars of *Clouds* show influence of Mussorgsky, whom Debussy admired

Festivals was inspired by Debussy's recollection of merry-making at the Bois de Boulogne, a fashionable park on the edge of Paris. Here, the composer draws influence from his natural settings like many of the Impressionist⁷⁰⁰ painters who created works of smoke, water and forests.

His artistic sensitivity is seen in a "cosmic rhythm¹¹", symbolic of the "rhythm of the atmosphere¹²". Debussy's own labels, "atmosphere" and "symbolic" is characteristic of both the Symbolist and Impressionist concepts.

The lively rhythm, like the flute's line in *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, is an important unifying ingredient in the piece (fig. 14, ex. 8):



Sirens, depicting the "sea and countless rhythms¹³", was inspired by Regnier's poem *L'Homme et la Sirene* and Swinburne's *Nocturne*, both of which concern mermaids and their effects on mortals. Musically, *Sirens* is⁸⁰⁶ communicative of Debussy's love of decoration and of arabesque, present in *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* and influenced by orientalisms found in Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov and other Russian composers.

Although Debussy tended to follow his own rules, relying on art movements of the period to guide his compositions, Chopin was an important musical influence upon him. This is evident in *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* (fig. 15, ex. 9), where a warmly sustained lyrical clarinet episode is reminiscent of a theme in Chopin's D flat Nocturne (Op. 27, no. 2):



Like *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, *The Submerged Cathedral* shows the cultural influence of literature upon⁹⁰⁰ Debussy. Based on an ancient legend of a sunken church that would rise out of the water at certain times, the composer "narrates" the music like a piece of literature, with techniques such as repetition of a motive at a lower register (fig. 16a-b, ex. 10a-b) to communicate the church's descent into the water.



original motive stated



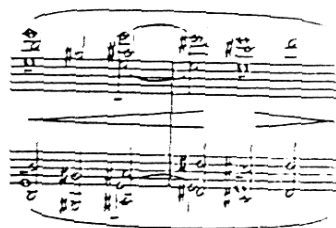
motive in section 2
repeated 3 octaves lower

The composer's use of ancient modes shows his reaction to the traditional ideas of tonality favoured by classical composers and instructions such as "*Profondement calme (Dans une brume doucement sonore)*" communicate₁₀₀ a specific intent to achieve the Impressionist ideas of mystery and vagueness. Debussy's affiliation with these artists led him to employ techniques, such as parallel neutral chords imitative of medieval organum and repeated E bell tolls (fig. 17, ex. 11), and "chanting priest" modal melodies (fig. 18) which help to suggest the eerie cathedral.

Fig. 17

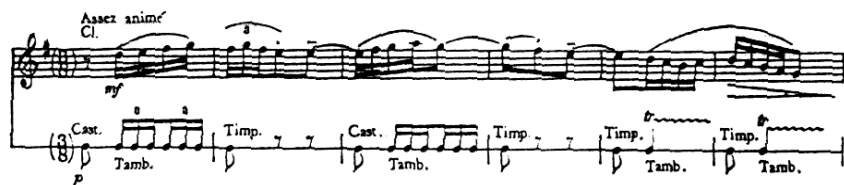


Fig. 18 - "chanting priest" modal melodies



Debussy's Impressionist ability to evoke atmosphere, a revolt from the₁₁₀₀ excesses of emotion in Romanticism, is displayed in *Iberia* with themes that reflect "*the spirit of Spanish music*₁₄". Spanish instruments, such as castanets and tambourine are used to communicate the lively rhythms and atmosphere of Spain. In the first section, *Par les rues et par les chemins*, the composer depicts "*village songs heard in the bright, scintillating light*₁₅" with use of a Spanish melodic phrase and a generic theme given out by clarinets, a kind of *sevillana*, a Spanish dance (fig. 19, ex. 12):

Fig. 19



In the *Parfums de la nuit* section₁₂₀₀, Debussy portrays the texture, colours and atmosphere of the Andalusian night through the oboe's whole-tone, expressive *habanera*₁₆ theme. Rippling woodwind and *glissandi* chords in the strings are sounded and divided violas and cellos then take up the *habanera* rhythm.

The last section, *Le Matin d'un jour de fete*, reverts back to art with its ability to paint vivid pictures without being too overdone or structured. Debussy captures the "awakening of people and of nature...a water-melon vendor and children whistling¹⁷" through irregular tambourine, side-drum and bells, fragments of song and dance and memories parodied from the previous sections.

The violins and violas¹³⁰⁰ of the orchestra are instructed to hold their instruments under the arm like a guitar and to strum in chords, which eventually become clear and emphatic (fig. 20, ex. 13):

(♩ = 112) fig. 20

The musical score consists of five staves. The top two staves are for Violins I and II (VI. I div. and VI. II div.), the next two are for Violas (Vlas div.), and the bottom one is for Bells. Each of the four string staves begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 112. The instruction 'pizz.' (pizzicato) is written above the first staff, followed by a dynamic marking of 'mf' (mezzo-forte) and a crescendo hairpin leading to 'f' (forte). The Bells staff starts with a dynamic marking of 'f'.

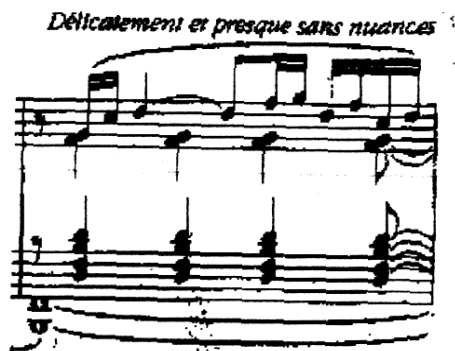
Debussy's adoption of this previously "primitive¹⁸" technique mirrors the daringness of Turner's painting, *Rain, Steam and Speed*, which had in its time, been criticised as "tinted steam¹⁹" (fig. 21). The composer's revert from traditional composition devices such as this corresponds with Impressionist artists' unconventional approaches to paintings.

fig. 21 - Turner's "Rain, Steam and Speed" broke artistic conventions during its time but is now also regarded as important to the development of modern art (as Debussy is to music)



Debussy's cultural surroundings also included the Javanese and Annamite,¹⁴⁰⁰ gamelan orchestras. First heard by Debussy in 1889, the impact of this culture is profound upon Debussy's music, with the gamelan sounds reproduced in many of his works. Their influence is seen in *Pagodas*, which uses several different version of the pentatonic scale (fig. 22a, b, ex. 14):

fig. 22a



first theme of *Pagodas* uses a black pentatonic scale

fig. 22 b




another version of the pentatonic scale in *Pagodas*

This exposure to Gamelan music resulted in Debussy adopting a more "static" feel within his compositions, imitating the timeless repeated cycles of Javanese music. This is detected in his use of ostinato in the highest part of *Pagodas* (fig. 23):

fig. 23

1^o Tempo



ostinato imitates timeless cycles of Javanese music

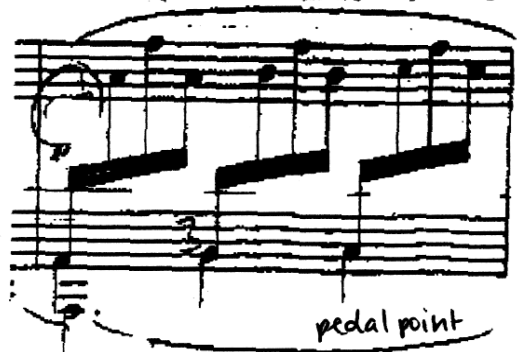
pp

The image shows a musical score for the first tempo of 'Pagodas'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff features a melodic line with a series of notes that repeat in a pattern, marked with a bracket and the handwritten note 'ostinato imitates timeless cycles of Javanese music'. The lower staff is marked 'pp' and shows a bass line with a few notes. The tempo is indicated as '1^o Tempo'.

The frequent use of pedal point also contributes to the₁₅₀₀ static effect in *Prelude from Pour le piano* (fig. 24):

fig. 24

un peu retardé . . .



pedal point

The image shows a musical score for the 'Prelude from Pour le piano'. It features two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with a bracket above it and the handwritten note 'un peu retardé . . .'. The lower staff has a bass line with a long, sustained note, marked with a bracket and the handwritten note 'pedal point'. The tempo is indicated as 'un peu retardé'.

Here, the bass note, the strongest determinant of harmony, is long and unchanging, and thus gives the impression of a long unchanging harmony.

The complicated layered texture within Javanese gamelan music also contributed to Debussy's compositions. His style of counterpoint deviates from the traditional European style in three ways – through layering, fragmentary work and ornamental features.

His counterpoint, like gamelan music, contains melodies with entire separate and independent planes sounds, often suggesting the tone quality of different instruments being layered on top of each other. This is apparent in the first theme₁₆₀₀ of *Pagodas*, suggestive of three layers of sound (fig. 25).

fig. 25

Délicatement et presque sans nuances

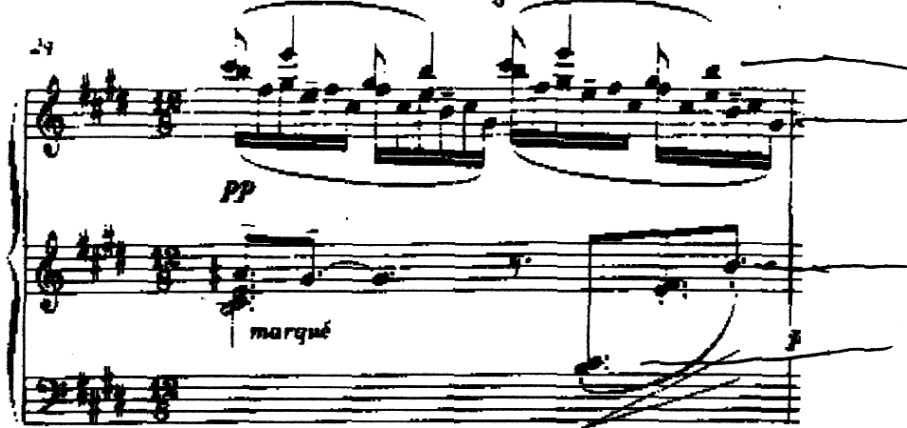


3 layers of sound

Like the balungan²⁰ in gamelan music, Debussy uses melodic material made up of brief motifs which are repeated without any type of development. In *Cloches a travers les feuilles*, Debussy writes in four distinct layers (fig. 26):

fig. 26

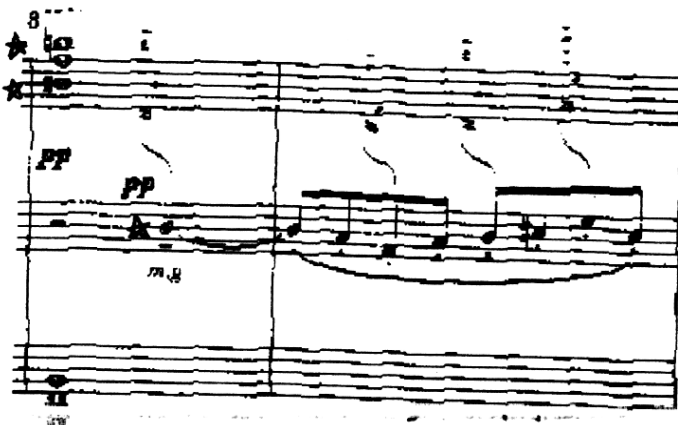
Un peu animé et plus clair



four distinct layers

Lastly, the ornamentation in octaves in *Lune* (fig. 27) is suggestive of the way gamelan instruments an octave apart work together to play or embellish a melody:

fig. 27



* - suggestive of the way gamelan instruments an octave apart work together

8^{va} base

In addition to these qualities, Debussy also employs gamelan techniques that combine with his Impressionist and Symbolist influences to achieve a unique sound. In *Cloches*, the soft, staccato notes held in the pedal resemble a ringing sound reminiscent to the gamelan (fig. 28) and he also makes prominent use of the 2nd interval to produce bell-like sounds (fig. 29):

fig. 28



— staccato notes held in pedal resemble a ringing sound reminiscent of the gamelan

fig. 29



— 2nd intervals produce bell-like sounds

Debussy's early works reveal the classical and compositional influence of other composers. Such an example is *Nocturne*, which begins with Lisztian flourishes for five bars, and is followed by a languorous melody which gives to a few bars of mechanical rising sequences, reflective of Grieg¹⁸⁰⁰. A later passage of quasi-recitative contains the flavour of the folk-based style of Borodin or Rimsky-Korsakov and later, there is a touch of Wagnerian chromaticism (fig. 30):

fig. 30



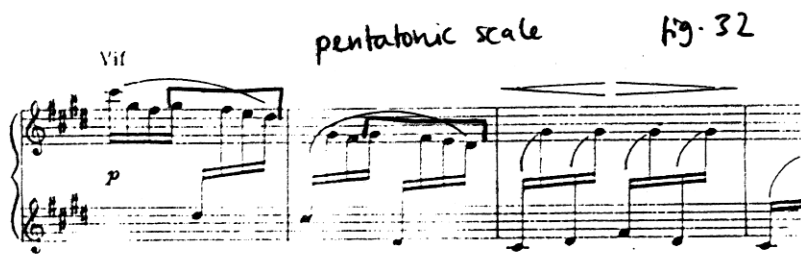
Chopin also contributed to Frenchman's early style, as seen in *Muzurka*, where Debussy employs similar rhythmic details, accompaniment patterns and the inflected₂₁ scale to Chopin's Polish dance. *Mazurka*'s Griegian sequences and the lack of adventurousness in the keyboard writing shows the influence of Romanticism, which is partly shed in Debussy's *Suite bergamasque*.

Verlaine's world of *masques et bergamasques* provided the inspiration for the suite, and also later influenced Debussy's use of dance-forms, toccatas₁₉₀₀ and toccata-style preludes, particularly in *Pour le piano*. This work captures the *commedia dell'arte*₂₂ culture, popular to Paris at the time, and is considered a key work in the composer's stylistic development. It conveys the spirit of Verlaine's *fetes galantes*₂₃ world and exhibits elements of the essentially Debussyan harmonic language, with unresolved discords, whole-tone and pentatonic scales and slight tonal ambiguities.

The magnificent opening theme of the *Prelude*, from *Pour le piano*, has its clear A minor clouded early in the second bar, where a delightful chromatic upward slither recalls the accompaniment to the song *Fantoches* in the₂₀₀₀ first set of *Fetes Galantes* (fig. 31):



Delicate right-hand triplets seize an atmosphere of fantasy and masquerade, perhaps derived from the sounds of the gamelan, and the *Prelude* ends with a harp-like cadenza, with modal and whole-tone scale alternating. Already, Debussy's classical (music), societal and cultural influences can be seen with his combination of sounds and impressions. He expands this in *Toccata*₂₁₀₀, which uses a fragment of the pentatonic scale truly captures the vibrancy of the festivals which Debussy experienced in Paris (fig. 32):



Clair de lune, third in *Suite bergamasque*, probably arrived from Verlaine's identically-named poem and was also inspired by Verlaine. Debussy translates the poet's symbolism within the opening bars, where the descent of the solo piano symbolises the gentle shedding of light from the moon's rays (fig. 33, ex. 15).



The piano's *con sordino* is effective in capturing the mysterious and solitary quality of the moon, and the absence of other instruments allows for accurate depiction of the still and magical atmosphere of the night. Throughout this gentle, exquisite work, Debussy uses soft dynamics, tied notes, warm tone colour and sweet harmony to communicate the milky, luminescent quality of the moon. Debussy's regard to Chopin's pedalling as "a kind of breathing²⁴" influenced his statement that the damper pedal was "mostly a means of covering up a technical deficiency²⁵" and as a result, *Clair de Lune* acts precisely and without a pedal, with the "breathing" he observed in Liszt's music transferred to tied notes and flowing phrases within both lines (fig. 34, ex. 16).



use of flowing phrases and tied notes, influenced by "breathing" he observed in Liszt's playing

Lindaraja, composed immediately after *Suite bergamasque* is the first of Debussy's works to²³⁰⁰ incorporate Spanish rhythms and idioms. Harmonic features such as chains of consecutive triads, free use of the major second as a harmonic unit and some melodies based on arbitrary scales, show the composer's grasp of the Andalusian forms of musical speech (fig. 35):

(Modéré) fig. 35

over ritardando

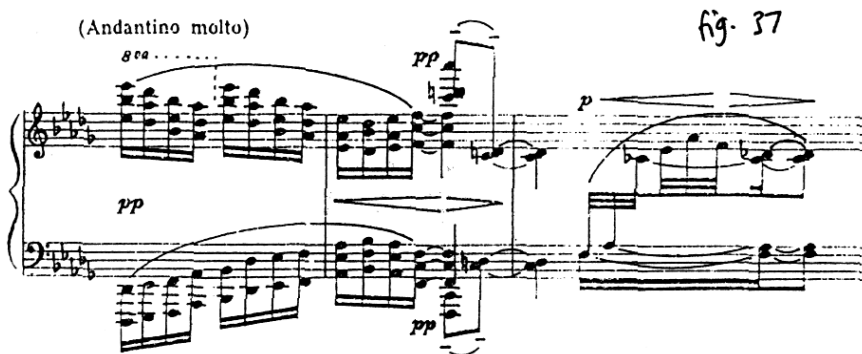
This piece was the forerunner to *La soiree dans Grenade*, which also used Spanish idioms in addition to an *ostinato* basic to the piece and based on the rhythm of the *habanera*. Debussy's influences outside France mirrored the Impressionist artists' interest in the Eastern culture which they integrated in their works, much like Debussy does in this²⁴⁰⁰ piece. He uses thematic material to relay a wide variety of mood and style, ranging from a morose Moorish chant, in which there are plays made with an "oriental" augmented second, to a distinctly popular dance-song at *tres rythme*. His departure from conventions, already seen in his use of consecutive triads in *Lindaraja*, is developed here with major and minor modes, which he believed "should coexist in a flexible way²⁶". (fig. 36):

(Mouvement de Habanera) fig. 36

Counterpoint is achieved in the mingling of thrumming guitars, castanets and flickers of sound in and out of the texture. The Spanish atmosphere which is evoked here indicates Debussy's Impressionist intent₂₅₀₀ to capture atmosphere, rather than depict an image₂₇.

The tonal bravery and counterpoint in *La soiree dans Grenade* is continued in *Images*, which uses chordal counterpoint in contrary motion to suggest reflections of objects. The use of diatonic harmony, whole-tone progressions, chromaticism and pentatonic fragments shows the evolvement of his musical style upon escaping the “structures and compositional demands₂₈” to which he has previously been subjected.

The delicate Japanese lacquerwork which inspired the first *Images* is conveyed in *Reflets dans l'eau* in tiny convulsions in the water that settle, expressed in a symbolic musical pattern (fig. 37):



Lights of sunlit water₂₆₀₀ are illustrated through glistening arpeggios and broken-chord patterns and passion to achieve illusion, which he shared with Turner, is seen in the dreamlike, hushed coda at the end.

The influence of other composers, such as the Rimskyan melody in *Images* is seen in *Hommage a Rameau*, in treads of triadic chords which have a Satie-like plainness and major sevenths, a mannerism of Ravel (fig. 38):



Debussy's experience of the Javanese gamelan music in 1889 influenced the gamelan effect in *Et la lune descend sur la temple qui fut*, out of the second book of *Images* (fig. 39):

fig. 39

(Lent)

pp

sa bassu

m.g.

un peu en dehors

Cède-

m.d.

There is also influence of English folk song in the melody, which later detaches from the gamelan feature, giving a modal, chordal accompaniment in $2/7(6)$ a manner of Vaughn Williams. Other musical influences upon Debussy's writing are detected in *Children's Corner*, a collection of works dedicated to his daughter, Chou-Chou, and possibly inspired by Mussorgsky's song-cycle, *Nursery*.

The first of the suite, *Gradius ad Parnassum*, is a satirical reference to Clementi's collection of studies, *Gradius ad Parnassum*, and parodies technical studies by creating the image of a child's "hygienic and progressive gymnastics₂₆" at the piano. The piece documents the child's various emotions, from optimism to boredom (fig. 40a-b, ex. 17):

fig. 40 a - "optimism"

Modérément animé

p

égal et sans sécheresse

fig. 40 b - "boredom"

37 **Animez un peu**

The musical score for 'Animez un peu' consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and features a series of eighth-note runs. The lower staff is in treble clef with the same key signature, starting with a whole note chord. The piece is marked with *pp* and *expressif* (expressive) throughout.

In the last piece, *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, there is a satirical reference to Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*₃₀ with the indication *avec une grande émotion* and a suffix like a gleeful chuckle (fig. 41,

ex. 18):

The musical score for 'Cédez' is in two systems. The first system is marked *p* *avec une grande émotion* (with great emotion). The second system is marked *a Tempo* and *pp* (pianissimo). A handwritten note 'gleeful chuckle' is written next to the final notes of the second system. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings.

Confronted with the black face of the golliwog, Debussy adopted a jazzy, cake-walk rhythm, inspired by popular pseudo-Negro American songs of the time. The childish, nursery suite conveys the composer's intent (for his devotee, Chou-Chou), and this is also shown in the purposeful work, *Hommage*₂₈₀₀ *a Haydn*. Although not a great influence upon Debussy, the centenary of Haydn's death led him to compose the tribute, in which he fashioned thematic material from the letters of Haydn's name.

H is the German name for B natural, and Y and N were found by counting alphabetically along the keyboard from A until they were arrived at. The resulting spelling is BADDG, and he uses this as a basis for a theme, starting at bar 8 (fig. 42)

The musical score for 'Hommage a Haydn' shows a piano (*p*) dynamic. The main theme is based on the letters H, A, Y, D, N. To the right of the main score, a separate line of music shows the notes corresponding to the letters H, A, Y, D, N on a treble clef staff.

The piece is cast as a slow introduction (*mouvement de valse lente*) and allegro, an oblique tribute to Haydn's mastery of first-movement symphonic form (fig. 43).

Fig. 43

Mouv^t de Valse lente

PIANO

P doux et expressif

Debussy's musical style is seen to have been influenced by the music around him – his early works reflect a romantic style, later reacting against over-blown 19th century romanticism and arriving₂₉₀₀ at a more impersonal, ritualistic form of composition.

Debussy's association with famous Impressionists and Symbolists of the day, combined with his new-found interest in tonality and colour in music, shaped Claude Debussy's style into a blend of artistry, capturing the colours of his instruments through subtle melody and harmony, combined with a musical attentiveness to the beauty, nature and culture which surrounded him. The Impressionist style to which he is renowned for today resulted from his appropriation of musical, social and cultural forms into his work, and seen from the examination of works above, these cultivated the music, and art, of Archille Claude Debussy₃₀₀₀.

Footnotes

¹ taken from *Impressionist Influences in the Music of Claude Debussy*, available from www.tcd.ie/Music/JF%20History/debussy.html

² *Claude Debussy and Impressionism*, available from classicalmus.hispeed.com/articles/debussy.html

³ *Claude Debussy – The Musical Influences* available from public.srce.hr/~fsupek/explorer.html

⁴ *Debussy On Music*, Debussy, C. 1977

⁵ *Impressionist Influences in the Music of Claude Debussy*, available from www.tcd.ie/Music/JF%20History/debussy.html

⁶ available from ww.geocities.com/snufflesyoung/html/wct3c/debussy2.htm

⁷ *Symbolism in Literature and Art* available from www.poetrymagic.co.uk/advanced/symbolist.html

⁸ *Debussy 101* available from www.angelfire.com/biz/musicclassical/debussy101.html

⁹ *Claude Debussy in the Composer's Words* available from www.hearts-ease.org/cgi-bin/conservatory_quotes.cgi?ID=62

¹⁰ *Debussy 101* available from www.angelfire.com/biz/musicclassical/debussy101.html

¹¹ Cox, D. *Debussy Orchestral Music*. British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1974.

¹² Jarocinski, S. *Debussy*. Eulenburg Books, London, 1976.

¹³ *Debussy: Nocturnes* available from fmg-www.cs.ucla.edu/geoff/prognotes/debussy/nocturnes.html

¹⁴ Cox, D. *Debussy Orchestral Music*. British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1974.

¹⁵ *Complete Music for Two Pianos – Excerpts from the Sleeve Notes* available from <http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/notes/55014.html>

¹⁶ The musical descendant of the contradanza, the habanera or *contradanza habanera* (Havana-style contradanza), the *habanera's* distinguishing musical feature is its short, repeating 2/4 rhythmic figure in the bass line:

¹⁷ Cox, D. *Debussy Orchestral Music*. British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1974.

18 *Impressionist Influences in the Music of Claude Debussy*, available from www.tcd.ie/Music/JF%20History/debussy.html

19 *Claude Debussy* available from www.web-helper.net/PDMusic/Biographies/DebussyClaude/default.asp

20 A melodic nucleus that moves at a moderate speed. In gamelan music, a simplified or an elaborated version of the balungan

21 to change the pitch or tone of (the voice), in a scale

22 an Italian comedy popular to the period

23 gallant festivals

24 Dawes, F. *Debussy Piano Music*. British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1969.

25 Long, M. *At the Piano With Debussy*. Aldine Press, London, 1972.

26 Cox, D. *Debussy Orchestral Music*. British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1974.

27 *Claude Debussy and Impressionism*
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30 Its chromaticism is said to have offered Debussy a new viewpoint of tonal harmony that he synthesized and later rejected

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Discography

Debussy, C. "La Mer" conducted by Alfred Scholz, performed by Philharmonia Slavonica. EEC CD 55121

Debussy, C. "Clair de lune" performed by Eileen Broster and Bronwen Jones, Pianos. 521 0073

Debussy, C. "Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune" conducted by Edouard van Remoortel, performed by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. EEC CD 55121

Debussy, C. "Iberia" and "Children's Corner" conducted by Carlos Pantelli, performed by Philharmonia Slavonica. EEC CD 55121

Debussy, C. "Cathedrale Engloutie (Prelude No. 10)" performed by Samson Francois, piano. EMI Records Ltd CDM 166432 2

Debussy, C. "Three Nocturnes" conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini, performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra and Choir EMI Records Ltd CDM 166432 2

MUSIC EXTENSION – Musicology Elective

Band E2/3

Annotation – Sample 2

Title: The Composer's Canvas

The essay has a clear intent and the sustained argument draws on many influences surrounding Debussy's music. It demonstrates an accomplished understanding of the musical concepts. The essay draws valid conclusions but does not always provide sufficient musical support for these conclusions. The breadth of the topic prevents in-depth discussion of the works although specific musical examples are included. There is a large list of secondary sources and the candidate relies heavily upon them, sometimes at the expense of analytical detail.