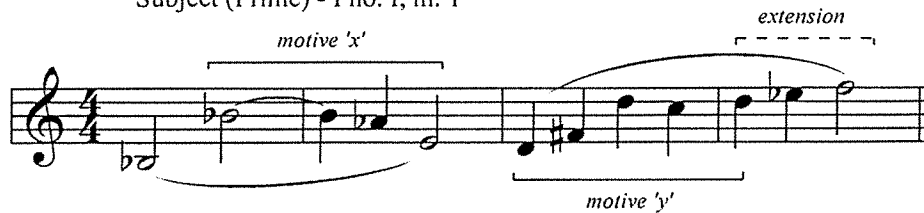


Note

The composition of *Narziss und Goldmund* was inspired by the two main characters and the philosophical underpinning found in the novel of the same name by Herman Hesse. First published in 1930 and set in medieval Germany, Narziss is a teacher at a monastery school who befriends a bright student there, Goldmund. As the novel unfolds, we come to see that Narziss – a structured and stable monk - reflects an Apollonian spirit of science and the mind. Over the course of the story, Goldmund learns through self-reflection he was not meant to become a monk, and instead develops into an explorer of life's experiences through love and art, a more Dionysian approach. The two movements of *Narziss und Goldmund* are designed to echo these two contrasting *personae*.

The music of *Narziss* is based on an ordered whole-tone series that is first presented in the opening bars of the piece. As shown in *Example A*, this series includes two motives (labeled *x* and *y*) plus an extension that leads the series out of a whole-tone world.

Subject (Prime) - Pno. I, m. 1




Example A

This series is initially derived from B^b. Each of the following statements of the series is then systematically transposed and varied through a progression of descending perfect 5ths:

Prime: B^b (Pno. I, m. 1) – E^b (Pno. II, m. 3) – A^b (Pno. I, m. 6) – D^b (Pno. II, m. 8)

The fifth, sixth and seventh statements of the series are inversions of the series, but without the extension. See *Example B*. The sixth and seventh of these inversions appear in *stretto*.

Inversion - Pno. II, m. 11

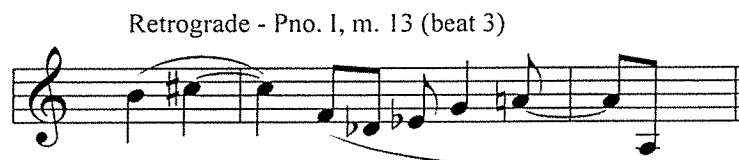


Example B

Structurally, these three statements continue the descent enharmonically through perfect 5ths:

Inversion: G^b (Pno. II, m.11) – B (Pno. I, m. 13) – E (Pno. II, 13).

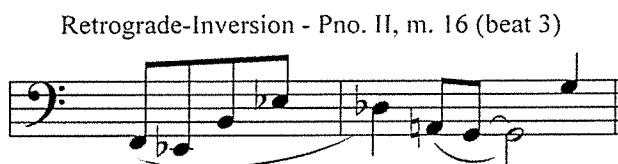
The eighth and ninth statements are in retrograde, with the eighth statement (shown in *Example C*) appearing simultaneously with the seventh inverted statement.



Example C

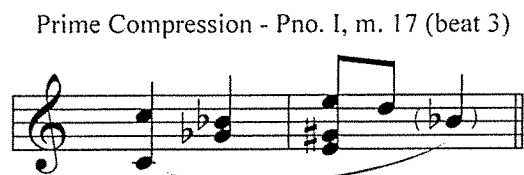
Retrograde: A (Pno. I, m.13) – D (Pno. II, m. 15).

The tenth statement is derived from G (continuing the descending perfect 5ths), and appears in retrograde-inversion (*Example D*).



Example D

The final two statements provide a compressed version of the prime series. See *Example E*.



Example E

Prime Compression: C (Pno. I, m.17) – F (Pno. II, m. 18).

The continuation of the perfect 5th structure with these compressed versions of the prime series immediately leads back to the original prime on B^b in m. 19 (Piano I). This time in diminution, the return also marks a second unfolding of the series, again systematically transposed through descending perfect 5ths.

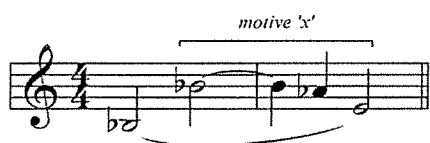
Although the progression of the series in *Narziss* adheres to the process described above, the filigree within and around that process is freer. Still, these musical continuations retain a relationship to the series by often including motives *x* and *y*. In addition, the rhythm throughout this movement is primarily guided by the vertical sonorities that result from the counterpoint between the individual lines. These rhythmic choices may variously involve a free application of augmentation and diminution of the series.

The movement closes on B^b , where it began. This closing does not indicate an overall tonality of B^b ; the music of this movement is highly chromatic and non-tonal in nature. Rather, B^b acts as an anchoring and generative pitch, one which orients the overall form and process found in *Narziss*.

In contrast to the quasi-modernist design found in *Narziss*, the second movement is much freer. In a binary form which moves from B^b to B before returning to B^b in a short coda, the music of *Goldmund* is restless and less stable, with multiple changes of meter and tempo. Still, the music here reveals certain connections to that of *Narziss*. For example, the main key of B^b in *Goldmund* parallels the anchor pitch in *Narziss*. Also, *Example F* shows how one of the principal ideas in *Goldmund* borrows and develops the *x* motive from the prime series in *Narziss*.

Example F

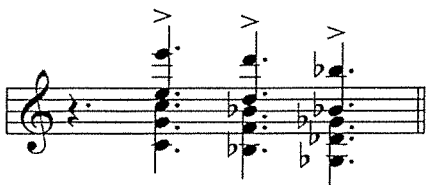
Narziss: subject (prime) - Pno. I, m. 1



Goldmund: motive *x* (Pno. I, m. 2)



Goldmund: motive *x* (Pno. II, m. 3)



In short, while the two movements of *Narziss und Goldmund* reflect the distinctions to be found between the Apollonian and the Dionysian approaches to life, certain musical connections in the work suggest their complementary relationship, and the friendship between Hesse's two characters.

* * *

First composed in 1983 and then edited in 2015, *Narziss und Goldmund* was premiered by Deborah Jamini and Sue Ellen Moncrief on 19 April 1984 at the Mannes College of Music in New York City. It is dedicated to the pianist Heather Coltman.