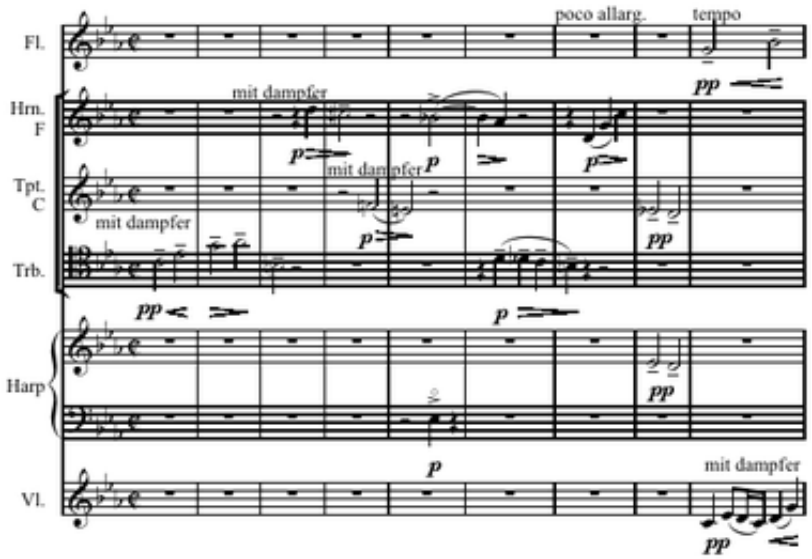
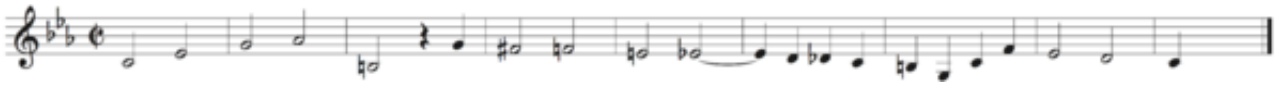
Klangfarbenmelodie (tedesco per "melodia suono-colore") è unatecnica musicale che implica la divisione di una linea musicale o melodia tra più strumenti , piuttosto che assegnarla a un solo strumento (o set di strumenti), aggiungendo così colore (timbro) e consistenza alla linea melodica. La tecnica è talvolta paragonata al " puntinismo ",[1] una tecnica pittorica neoimpressionista.

I deriva termine da Arnold Schoenberg s' *Harmonielehre* , [2] in cui si discute la creazione di 'strutture timbriche'. Schoenberg e Anton Webern sono particolarmente noti per il loro uso della tecnica, Schoenberg in particolare nel terzo dei suoi *Cinque pezzi per orchestra* (op. 16), e Webern nel suo op. 10 (probabilmente una risposta all'op. 16 di Schoenberg), il suo Concerto per nove strumenti (op. 24), l'op. 11 pezzi per violoncello e pianoforte , e la sua orchestrazione dei sei-parte *Ricercar* da Bach *Offerta Musicale* :



Klangfarbenmelodie in Webern's arrangement of Bach's *Ricercar*

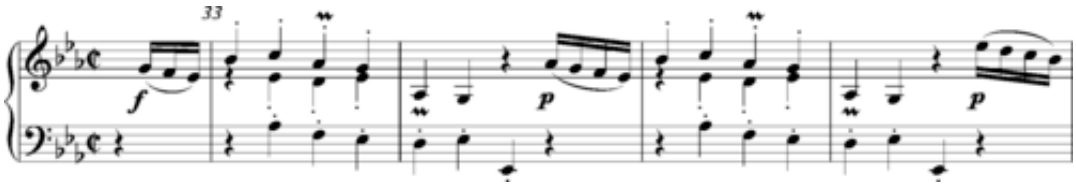
This may be compared with Bach's open score of the subject and the traditional homogeneous timbre used in arrangements:



Bach's open score of his Ricercar subject.

Play (help·info)

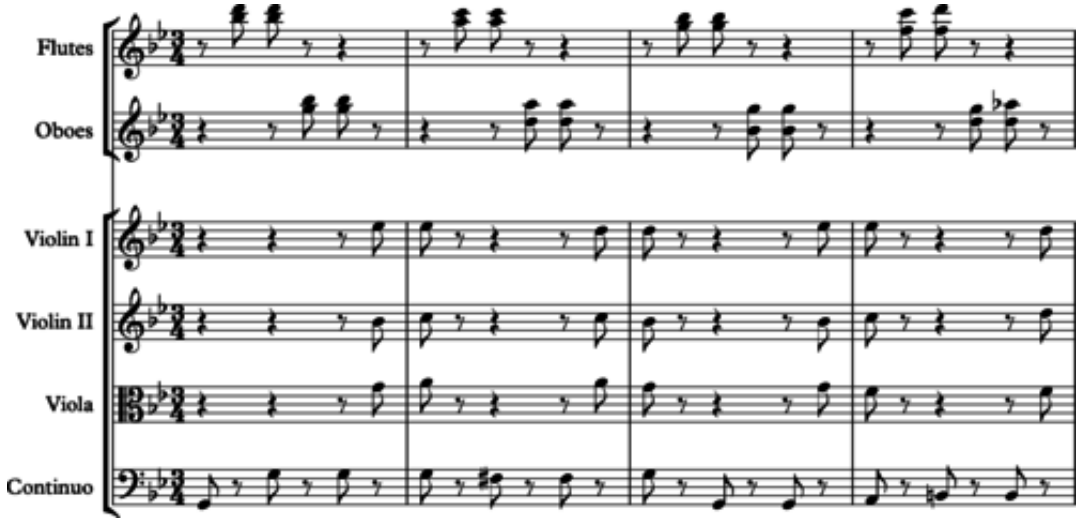
Schoenberg himself employed the technique in his 1928 orchestration of the "St. Anne" organ Prelude BWV 552 from J. S. Bach's *Clavier-Übung III*. Malcolm MacDonald says of this arrangement, "The gamut of colour—including harp, celesta and glockenspiel, six clarinets of various sizes, and a very agile bass tuba is brilliantly kaleidoscopic. The instrumentation has a serious purpose, however: it emphasizes structural divisions ... and, above all, brings out the individual contrapuntal lines."[3] A sequence of constantly changing timbres may be clearly heard in Schoenberg's rendering of the following passage:



Notable examples of such voice distribution that preceded the use of the term may be found in music of the 18th and 19th centuries. John Eliot Gardiner says of the orchestral opening of J. S. Bach's Cantata *Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot*, BWV 39, "Bach sets out almost tentatively in an introductory *sinfonia* with repeated quavers tossed from paired recorders to paired oboes to the strings and back over stiffly disjointed quavers in the continuo.":[4]

-00:00

J.S.Bach, Cantata BWV39, opening bars



J. S. Bach Cantata BWV 39, opening bars.

In Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, ("Eroica"), first movement, according to George Grove, we hear "a succession of phrases of three notes, repeated by different instruments one after another":[5]

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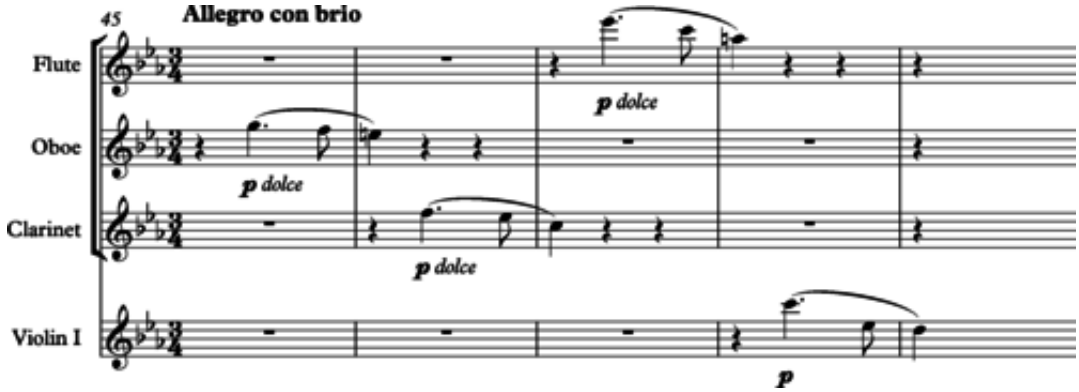
Beethoven Symphony 3, 1st movement, bars 45-49



Beethoven, Symphony No. 3, first movement, bars 45–49.

Similarly, in the fourth movement of Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*, ("March to the Scaffold") , the melody first appears as a descending scale played on 'cellos and basses:

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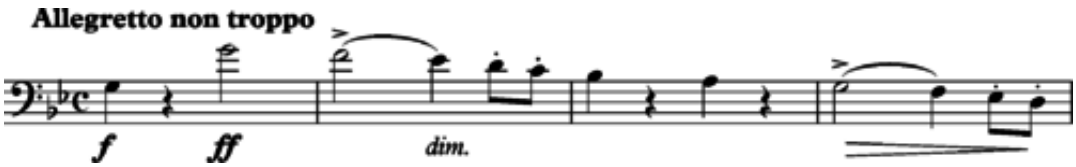
Berlioz, descending scale theme from the March to the Scaffold bars 17-

20

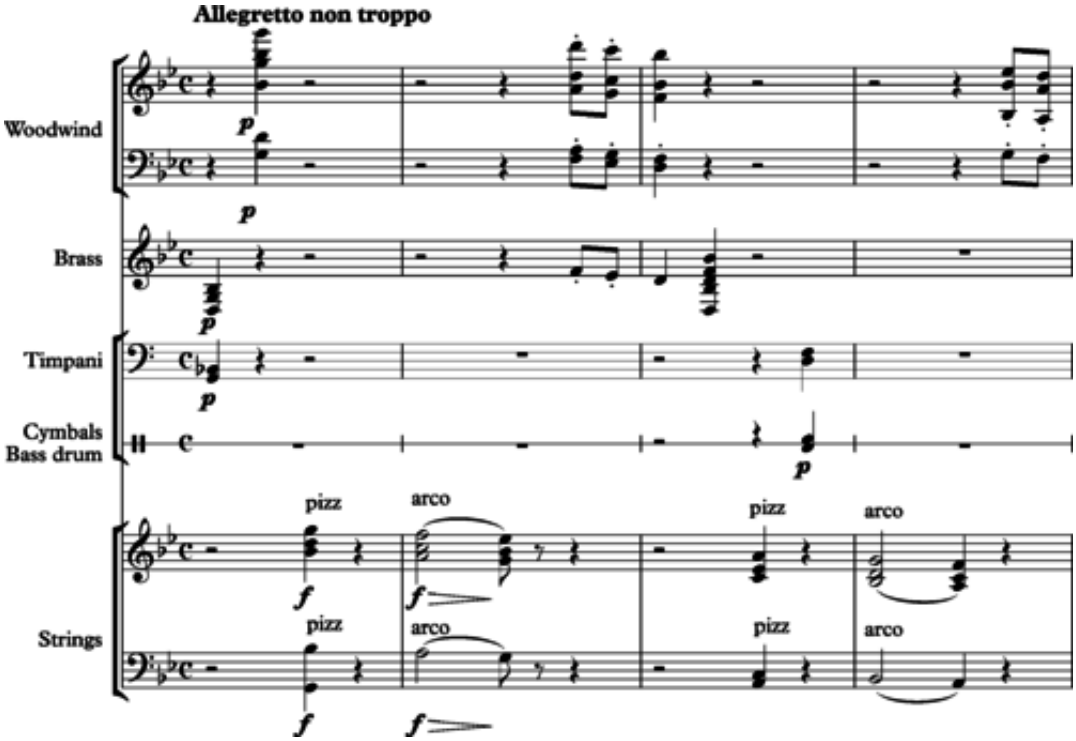


Descending scale theme from Berlioz' March to the Scaffold, bars 17–20.

Later, this melodic line is passed between the strings and the winds several times:

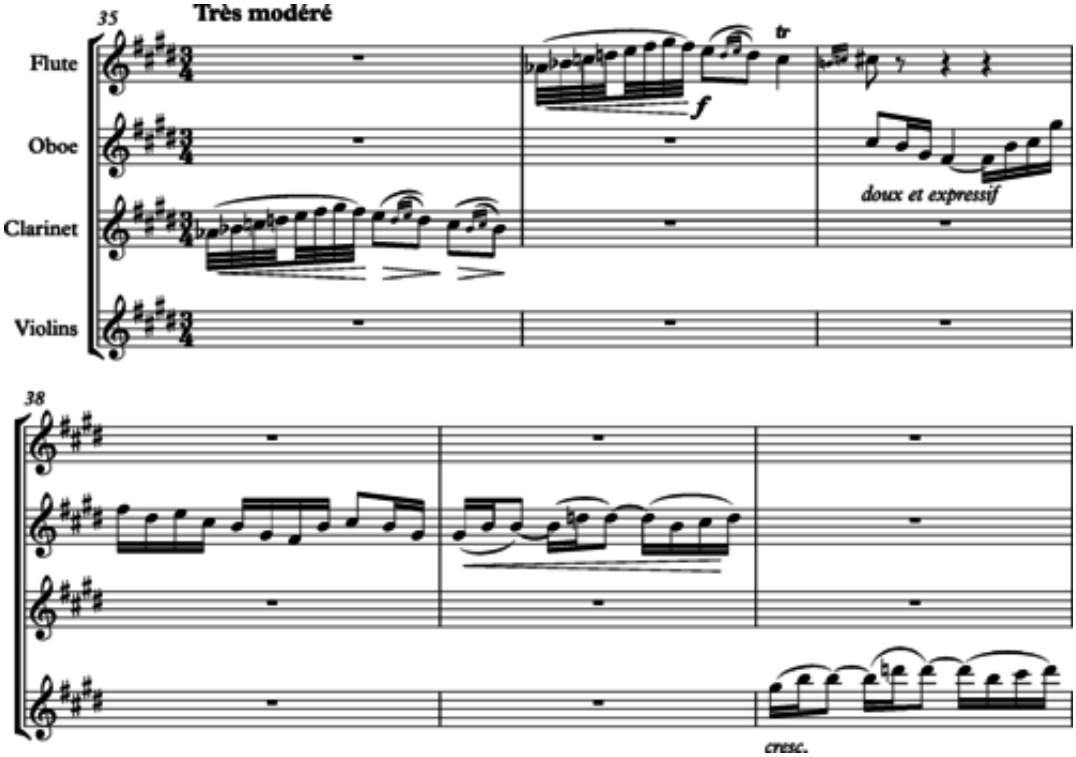
-00:00

Berlioz, March to the Scaffold bars 109-12



Berlioz March to the Scaffold, bars 109–12.

There are further instances in the works of Claude Debussy:



Debussy, Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune, bars 35-40. Link to passage on YouTube

Regarding the latter, Samson writes: "To a marked degree the music of Debussy elevates timbre to an unprecedented structural status; already in *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* the *color* of flute and harp functions referentially."[6]

In the 1950s, the concept inspired a number of European composers including Karlheinz Stockhausen to attempt systematization of timbre along serial lines, especially in electronic music.[7]