Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1989) was dedicated to and premiered by the pianist, Kevin Power. The demanding piano part represents a shift from the piano's traditional role in a concerto, and rather than engaging in a typical dialogue with orchestra maintains an almost continuous thread of sound throughout. The relative dramatic importance of the orchestral part varies from simple accompaniment to outright assertion. Throughout, the piano seems to maintain itself as an independent voice.

This independence is further reflected in the tight structural underpinning of the concerto, which is based on two modal structures, a Principal Mode (B flat, C sharp, D, E, F, G sharp, A) and an Auxiliary Mode (B, C, D sharp, F sharp, G) and their transpositions to each note of the Principal Mode. These two modes are used in strict opposition; when the piano is working with the Principal Mode, the orchestra will be exploring the Auxiliary Mode, and vice versa. Thus the concept of binary opposition expresses itself through the structure of the work as well as through the natural opposition of forces between piano and orchestra.

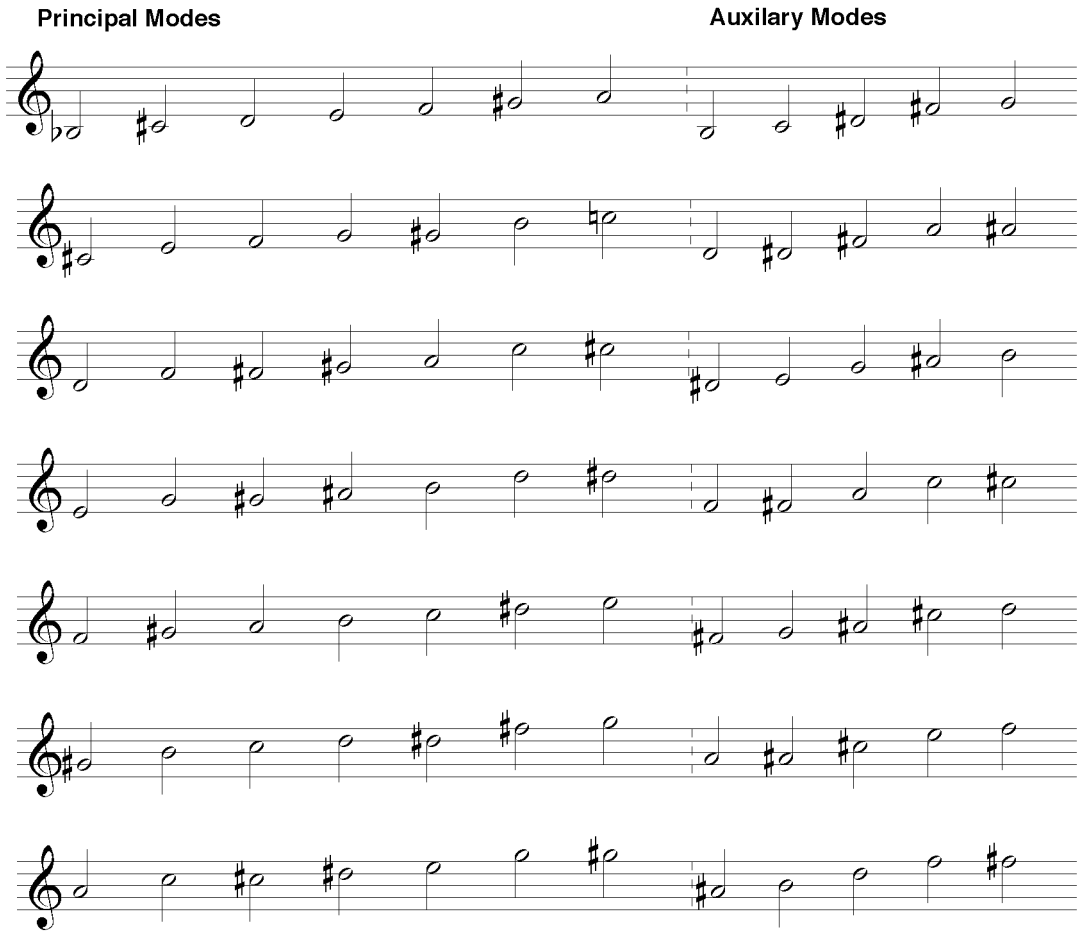
The Concerto's single movement may be divided into two sections, the first of which is an Arch form definable by the movement of the Principal Mode through its range of transpositions from B flat to G sharp and back. The second of the two sections is characterized by heightened energies and a solo cadenza which is distinguished less by its virtuosity than by its opening lyricism and its sustained tension. The concerto concludes with a dramatic climax.

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

The dualistic nature of the **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra** is apparent in surface features such as the division of the work's single movement into two parts of roughly equal duration but can also be observed in the use of the piano in competition with the orchestral forces. To escape from the historical model of concerto form which is usually a dialogue between the solo instrument and the orchestra, the role of the piano was conceived as that of a generative force. The relationship of the orchestra to the piano's almost continuous thematic thread varies from simple decoration of the solo part to occasional moments of principal focus.

The use of pitch relates closely to the work's underlying premise of opposing polarities. Two modal sets were established. The Principal Mode and the Auxiliary Mode (*x* and *x'*) together comprise the twelve chromatic notes. Transpositions of these modes were limited to those obtained by transferring the same intervallic structures onto each note of the initial Principal mode (see Example 1).

In the opening bars of the concerto the piano and strings establish the first seven-note Principal Mode (based on B flat) followed by the woodwind and brass supplying the remaining five notes which comprise the Auxiliary Mode. Although at any given moment the pitch content may be expanded beyond the confines of a single mode, the practice of assigning one mode to the solo part or group and the other mode to the remaining voices underpins the harmonic structure of the whole work and reflects its dualistic character.



Example 1: **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra**: Pitch Sets

Transposition	Notes in common with B flat Principal Mode	Total
C sharp	C sharp, E, F, G sharp	4
D	C sharp, D, F, G sharp, A	5
E	B flat, D, E, G sharp	4
F	E, F, G sharp, A	4
G sharp	D, G sharp	2
A	C sharp, E, G sharp	3

Example 2: **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra**: Common pitch classes between Principal Modes

Similarities and differences between each of the transpositions of the Principal Mode were considered to be of some significance. It was noted that the B flat Principal Mode (the original modal set) contained varying numbers of pitch classes in common with its transpositions (see Example 2). This characteristic suggested possible structural implications for the use of these modes. Where a mode contained a relatively large number of notes in common with another mode, a smooth "modulation" from one mode to the other could be effected if the common notes were perceived as having a pivotal function; where there were relatively few notes in common, an abrupt "modulation" would result. Thus the B flat Principal Mode and the G sharp Principal Mode came to be seen as diametrically opposing forces since they contained just two notes in common.

The macro-structure of the first half of the concerto (Bars 1 - 85) is defined by a series of wave or off-centre arch formations generated by the solo piano. In turn these portions may

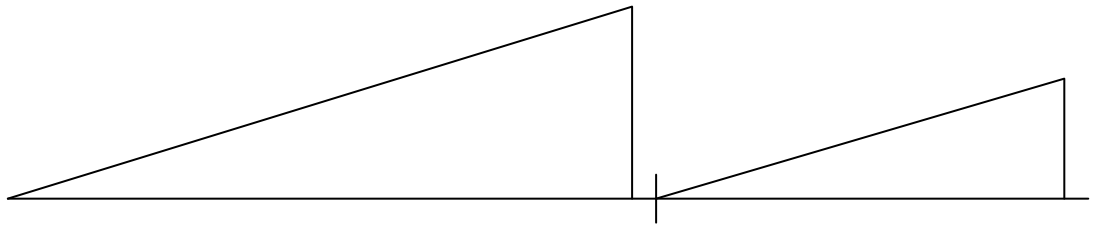
Wave Formations in Section I

Waves:	I		II	III	IV	V	VI
Bars:	1-6	7-15	16-38	39-66	67-80	81-85	
				16-18	39-41	67-68	
				19-21	41-47	69-71	
				21-26	47-49	72-74	
				27-30	49-54	75-80	
				(30-38)	55-56		
					57-60		
					60-66		

Example 3: **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra**: Sub-structures and Wave Formations in Section 1

be further subdivided into smaller waves or arches which are characterised by excursions from low to high registers and back.

Gradual change in average durations complements the harmonic motion in relation to the arch. Smaller average durations occur with closer proximity to the peak of the arch; melodic lines become less fragmentary.



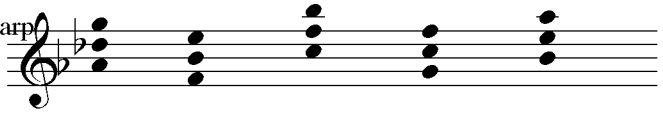
[approximation of the original figure]

Example 4: **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra**: Sub-structures in Section 2

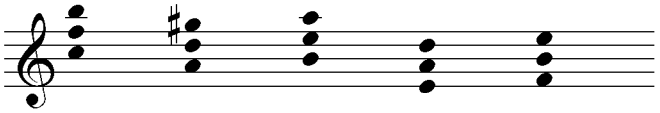
The second half of the concerto comprises two sections: I - Bars 86 - 299, II - bars 300 - 391. The principal motion in this section is towards two climax points at the end of each internal section: Bars 278 and 385 (see Example 4).

Sub-section II mirrors the structure of Sub-section I but in a compressed version. I(a) is for orchestra alone; II(a), a kind of anti-cadenza, is for piano alone. The solo piano again generates the sense of forward motion through the gradual intensification of gestures derived from a series of three-note aggregates drawn from the C sharp, B flat and a composite F/E Principal modes (see Example 5). These pitch ideas, presented initially in linear form as trills and tremolandi or as rapid arpeggiated figures, gradually evolve to produce a hybrid vertical gesture which manifests as chordal arpeggios and tremolandi.

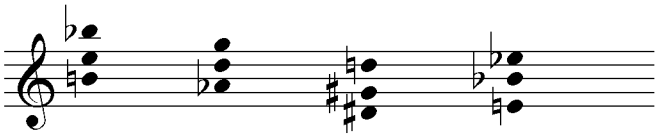
Mode: C sharp



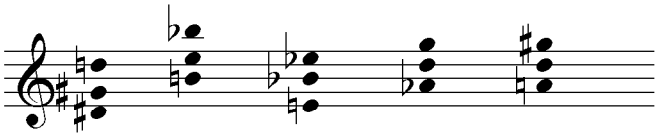
Mode: F



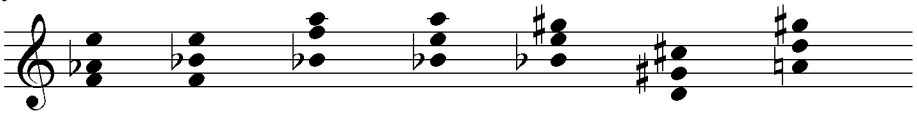
Mode: E



Mode: Composite F/E



Mode: B flat



Example 5: **Concerto for Piano and Orchestra**: Three note aggregates