

Grieg: ANITRA'S DANCE [PEER GYNT SUITE No.1, Opus 46]

Form and structure:

This piece could be analysed as **binary** or **ternary form** for a number of musical reasons. The overall plan of the movement is:

Introduction	Section A	Section B	Section A1	Section A2	Coda
	(repeated)		(repeated)		
BARS:					
1 - 6	7 - 22	24 - 39	40 - 69	70 - 89	91 - 93
Opening chords	Theme 'w' Theme 'x'	Theme 'y' Theme 'z'	Development	Extended	Short conclusion

Instrumentation:

String Orchestra

(Violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello 1, cello 2 and double bass)

Triangle (untuned percussion instrument).

ROMANTIC ERA (1810 – 1900)

Rhythm:

simple triple time

3/4

Three crotchet beats in every bar [i.e. ♪♪♪]

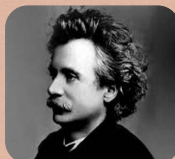
Simple rhythms used throughout, and some dotted rhythms used effectively in the contrasting section.

Background details:

Composed by **Edvard Grieg** (1843 – 1907), a composer of the **Romantic** period in music, generally considered to be one of the leading composers of the era.

In **1875**, he wrote incidental music for a play by the famous playwright Henrik Ibsen called 'Peer Gynt'. In all, he wrote 26 movements, of which four were used to create Suite No.1 (Opus 46) in 1888.

Anitra's Dance was the 3rd movement in this suite.



Texture:

Mainly **homophonic** - melody and accompaniment. **Monophonic** at end of Section A (bars 19 - 22)

Imitation is used (e.g. bar 70).

Harmony:

Mostly **diatonic** (e.g. bar 7 - 10)

Chromatic in some sections (e.g. bars 15-17)

The harmony is interesting.

Chords from the home key of A minor are used, but also note the added discord notes on some dominant chords (e.g. 7ths and 9ths used in the opening phrase, bars 6³ – 10, and in similar phrases thereafter).

Examples of cadences

Perfect cadence in A minor (bar 10)

Perfect cadence in E minor (bar 22)

Other harmonic features

Diminished chords (bars 28-31 and 32-35)

Circle of 5ths

E Major (b.24) → A Major (b.32) → D Major (b.40)

Pedal notes (e.g. bars 7-13, 14-18, 24-28 etc).

Tempo:

Tempo di Mazurka/Molto Allegro

Spirited dance (waltz) - 160 bpm

Tempo slows in bar 68-69 (*poco rit*), and resumes original tempo in bar 70 (*a tempo*).

Tonality:

The main key is **A MINOR** (known as the tonic key/home key).

Note the modulations to **E minor** (bar 19), **E major** (bar 24), **A major** (bar 32), **D major** (bar 40), and **D minor** (bar 50).

Melody:

*both **conjunct** (stepwise) and **disjunct** (uses intervals)

*use of anacrusis (the up-beat)

*uses ornaments to decorate

*covers a large pitch range overall.

Four ideas are identified:

Theme 'w'



Theme 'x'



Theme 'y'



Theme 'z'



Dynamics:

Ranges from **pp** (*pianissimo* – very soft) to **f** (*forte* – loud).

Crescendo (gradual volume increase) and **diminuendo / decrescendo** (gradual volume decrease) – both used throughout.