

# Gnossienne 1 Analysis:

## Microtonal Theory and Application:

The piece's initial maqamaat is a Nakriz in F though the  $E^{\sharp}$  grace note in the end of the first system suggests a momentary modulation to a Nawa Athar in F. In the middle of the fifth system the harmony advances to a  $B^{\flat}$  minor chord and the lower jins changes to a Nahawand in F in order to accommodate the  $B^{\flat}$  in the melody. At the seventh system Satie uses an F melodic minor melody starting on the C and descends it on a Nawa Athar in F to include the  $D^{\flat}$  in it's approach to the C.

The harmony in the piece is very simple and atmospheric, there are only three chords: F minor, C minor and  $B^{\flat}$  minor functionally working as a i, iv, v. The use of only minor chords gives the piece a heavy tone with a sense of depression with the exclusion of the leading tone from the v minor chord (C minor). The initial theme has a slightly dark tone emphasized by the minor second generated between the  $B^{\sharp}$  in the melody line and the C from the harmony's F minor chord. The piece has a moment of clarity and brightness when the melody goes to a melodic minor scale on system seven though as the melody falls back into a Nawa Athar in F so does the mood of the piece. The emotional characteristic of the piece is also a result from the **||:ABCB:|** form which has **B** as a recurring section instead of the typical **A**, perhaps contributing with a deceptive expectation. The repetitive rhythm also adds to the mood by imitating an echoing call with no response, the rhythm is performed very fluidly due to the absence of bar-lines giving the piece a dream-like quality. The piece's simplicity and deep emotional character makes it a satisfyingly intense experience to listen to it.