Audio Timeliner Help (Version 3.0)
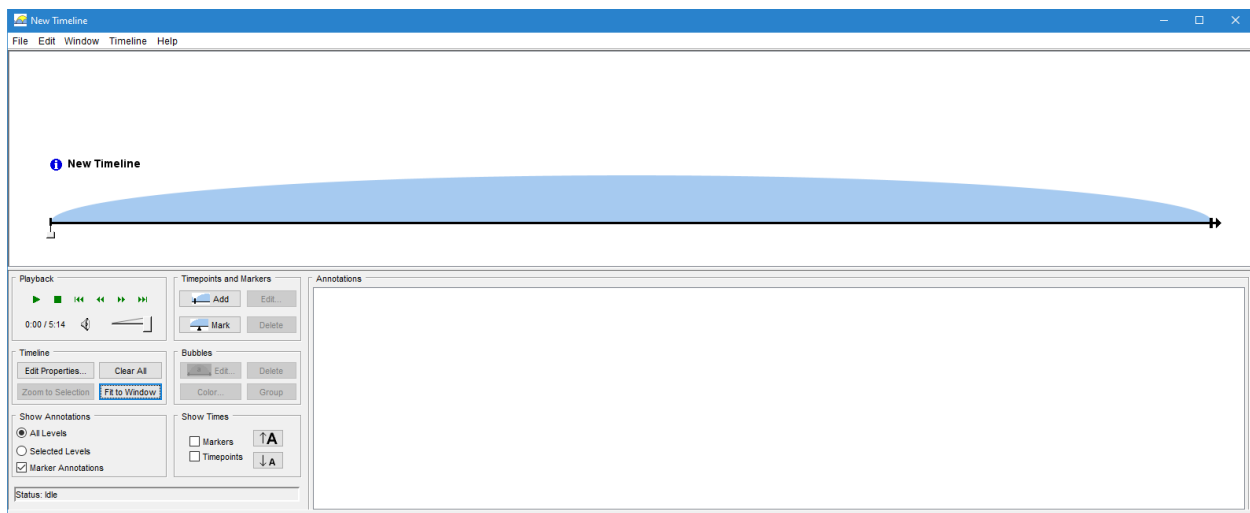
The Audio Timeliner can be used to create a "bubble diagram" of the formal structure of a piece of music by adding digital annotations to an audio file (such as an mp3 file).

This help document explains how to create, save, open, and edit timelines; how to add timepoints and markers; how to edit bubbles, timepoints, and markers; how to add annotations; and how to print your timeline diagram.
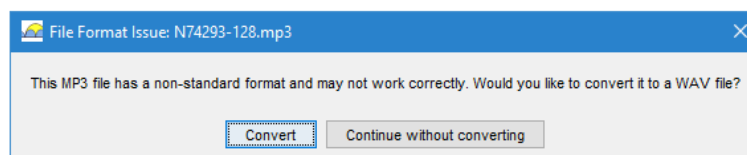
Create a New Timeline

When the Audio Timeliner opens, you are prompted to make a choice. To create a new timeline, select "Choose Audio for a New Timeline." You can also create a new timeline at any time by choosing "New Timeline…" from the File menu.

A file selection dialog opens. Find and select an mp3 file (or a wav or m4a file) and choose "Open." The Timeline window will open with a single blue bubble. You may now begin to add timepoints, bubbles, markers, labels, and annotations, as described below.
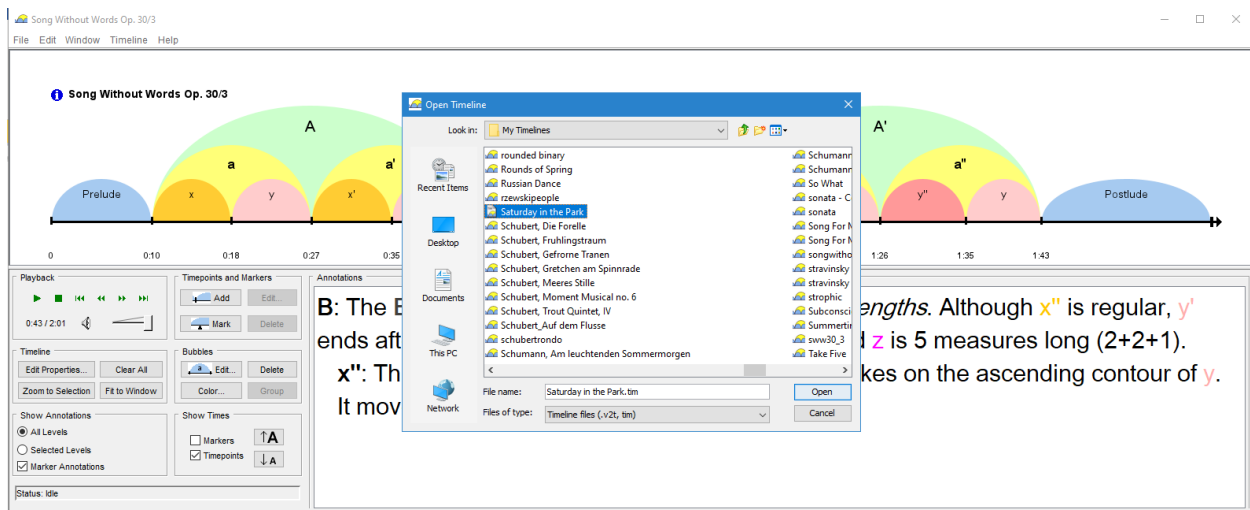

TIP: Audio Timeliner might detect encoding issues with certain mp3 files (particularly those with variable bit rates). If Audio Timeliner cannot open your file, you will see an option to convert it into a WAV file (see below). You can also use an online audio file converter or a program like Audacity to convert problematic mp3 files into working mp3 files (choosing a constant bit rate of 128 kbps, which is generally the default setting).
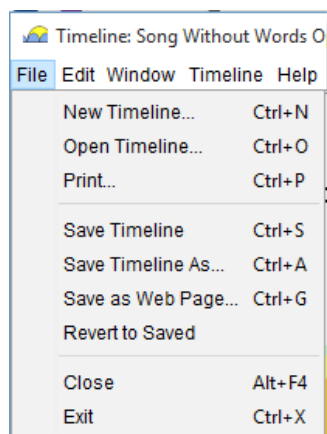
Open an Existing Timeline

To open an existing Timeline file (either .tim or .v2t), use one of the following methods:

- Choose "Open an Existing Timeline…" from the popup dialog when the program begins.
- Select "Open Timeline…" from the File menu.
- Double-click on any .tim or .v2t file saved on your local computer and it will open directly in the Audio Timeliner.

Save a Timeline

A timeline may be saved by selecting either "Save Timeline" or "Save Timeline As..." from the File menu. Saving a timeline via the File menu results in a file with a ".tim" extension. "Revert to saved" allows you to clear any changes you have made to a timeline since the time you last saved it.

Save As a Web Page

A timeline can also be saved as a web page (an html file). To save as a web page select "Save as Web Page" from the File menu. The web page will contain the following information:

1. the timeline title
2. a small graphic of the timeline (a .gif file)
3. the timeline description
4. a list of bubble, marker and timepoint labels and annotations
5. other information about the timeline including the date/time the file was saved
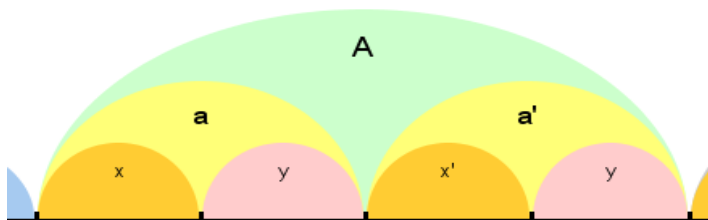

Playback

The playback controls are used to control the audio playback. These include play/pause, stop, fast forward and rewind, as well as mute and volume controls. Use the previous and next track controls to jump from bubble to bubble.
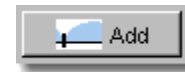

Timepoints

Timepoints represent the boundaries for structural segments of a work. For example, you can use timepoints to mark the beginning of phrases or sections. Bubbles appear in between timepoints.

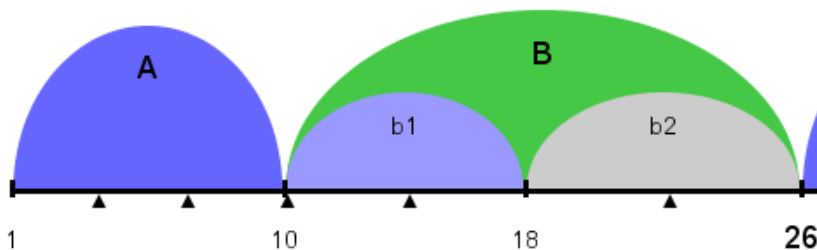- **Adding** – There are several ways to add a timepoint:

    o Press the "Add" button
    o Double-click just below the timeline.
    o Press the Enter key.
    o Select "Add" from the Timepoint submenu of the Timeline menu.

- **Selecting** – To select a timepoint, position the cursor directly over the timepoint (the cursor should change to a left/right arrow). Click on the timepoint to select it. You cannot select multiple timepoints.

- **Moving** – To move a timepoint, select and "drag" it horizontally to a different location on the timeline. As the timepoint is moved, the bubbles will adjust accordingly.

- **Deleting** – To delete a timepoint, select it and click the Delete button or press the delete key on the keyboard. You may also select the "Delete" option from the Timepoint submenu of the Timeline menu.

- **"Clear All"** – Pressing the "Clear All" button will remove all current timepoints (and bubbles) and markers. You may also clear everything by right-clicking on the timeline and selecting "Clear All" or by selecting "Clear All" from the Timeline menu.

Markers

Markers can be used to mark specific events without creating formal boundaries (no bubbles).

- **Adding** – There are several ways to add a marker:

    o Press the "Mark" button
    o Press Ctrl + Enter.
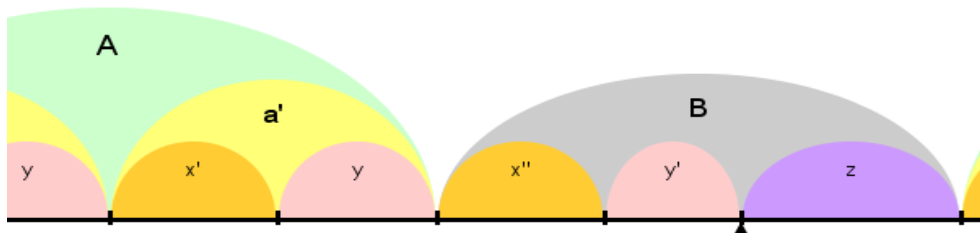   o Select "Mark" from the Timepoint submenu of the Timeline menu.

- **Selecting** – To select a marker, position the cursor directly over the marker (the cursor should change to hand). Click on the marker to select it. The marker will turn white when it is selected. You cannot select multiple markers.

- **Moving** – To move a marker, select and drag it to a different location on the timeline.

- **Deleting** – To delete a marker, select it and click the Delete button or press the delete key on the keyboard. You may also select the "Delete" option from the Timepoint submenu of the Timeline menu.

- **"Clear All"** – Pressing the "Clear All" button will remove all current timepoints (and bubbles) and markers. You may also clear everything by right-clicking on the timeline and selecting "Clear All" or by selecting "Clear All" from the Timeline menu.
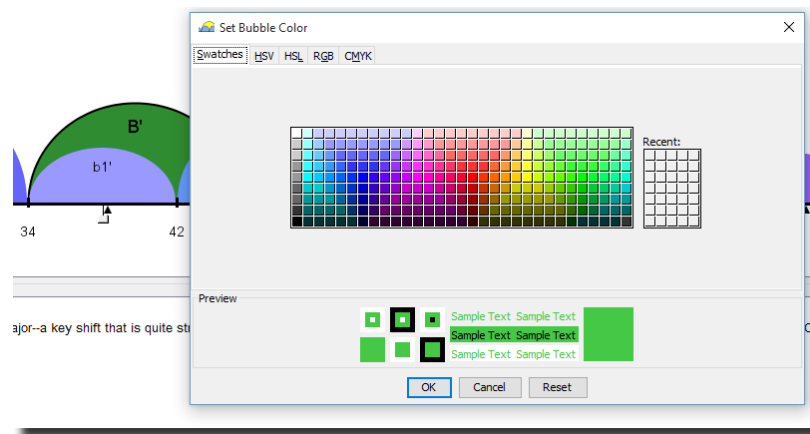
Bubbles

Bubbles are the time-spans between timepoints on the line, which may be used to represent the phrases, periods, or larger formal sections of music. The visual properties of bubbles can be edited to better show relationships between sections or to suit personal preferences. Bubbles may also be grouped together.

- **Selecting** – In order to edit bubbles, you must first select them. To select a single bubble, just click on it. To select multiple bubbles you may:

  - Shift-click to select contiguous bubbles: select one bubble, press and hold down the 'Shift' key (on the keyboard), then click on another bubble. All of the bubbles in between will be selected.

  - Control-click to select non-contiguous bubbles: select one bubble, press and hold down the 'Ctrl' key (on the keyboard), then click on other bubbles. Only the bubbles you click will be selected.

  - Drag a box around the bubbles you want to select by clicking anywhere outside of the bubbles then dragging a box over them.

  - Use any of the above methods in combination.

- **Deleting** – To delete a bubble, first click on it. It will change color to indicate it has been selected. Press the "Delete" button or right-click on the bubble and choose "Delete" from the popup menu.

- **Grouping** – Select the bubbles that you would like to group together (as described in the previous section) and then click the "Group" button. "Group" is also available by right-clicking on a selected bubble and choosing "Group Bubbles" from the resultant menu, and via the "Bubbles" submenu of the Timeline menu.

- **Bubble Color** – You may change the background color of the entire timeline, or the color of individual bubbles or bubble levels. Change the background color by selecting "Change Background Color" from the Timeline menu, or by right-clicking anywhere on the timeline background area. There are several ways to change bubble colors:

    o Change the color of individual bubbles by selecting the bubble(s) and clicking the "Color..." button. (The colors which you have most recently selected will be available in the palette on the right.)

    o Change the entire timeline color scheme to Black & White via the "Edit Properties..." dialog box.

    o Change the default bubble level colors in the "Edit Properties..." dialog box.

    o Right-click on a bubble or a selected group of bubbles and choose "Change Color" or "Set Level Color" from the menu.

    o Select the bubble(s) you want and choose either "Change Color" or "Set Level Color" from the Bubbles submenu of the Timeline menu.
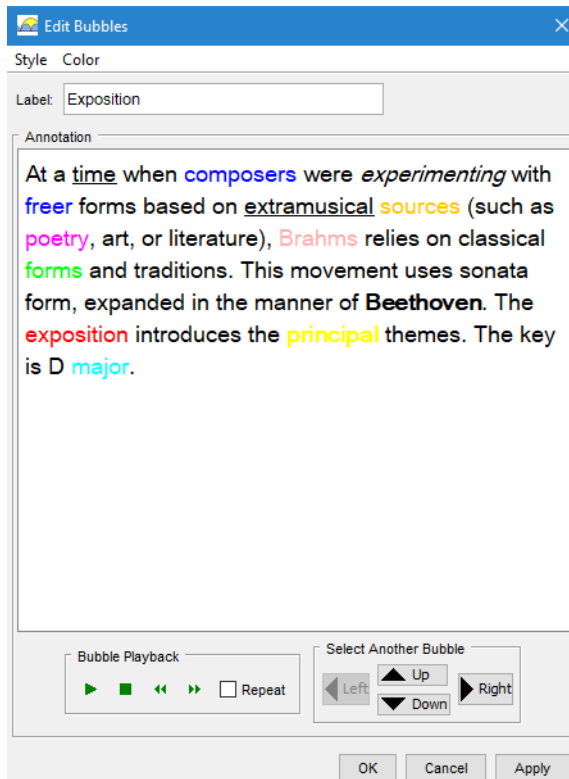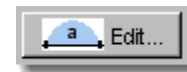

- **Bubble Shape** – The default bubble shape is rounded. To change to "square bubbles" select the "Square Bubbles" option from the Timeline menu or open the Properties dialog box and select "Square Bubbles" in the "Bubble Shape" area.

- **Bubble Height** – You can adjust the default bubble height in the "Edit Properties..." dialog box. Move the slider along the scale from small to large.

- **Bubble Level** – You may also adjust the level of a bubble. (For example, you might want similar sections of a work to be at the same hierarchical level.) To do this, select the desired bubble(s) and choose "Move Up a Level" or "Move Down a Level" from either the right-click popup menu or the Bubbles submenu on the Timeline menu (Ctrl-Up and Ctrl-Down will also work). Note that level adjustments will only be made if there is "room" for the bubble(s) to move in that direction.

Adding Labels and Annotations

Bubbles – Short, descriptive labels may be placed directly on bubbles in the timeline. Bubble labels might be used to indicate phrase form (A, B, a, a', b''), name larger sections ("Exposition", "Coda", "Variation II"), or to describe the bubble contents more generally ("repeated", "inversion", "transitional", "octatonic", "5", etc.).

Use the Edit Bubbles window (shown below) to add and edit bubble labels and annotations. To open this window:

- Select a bubble and click the "Edit..." button
- Or right-click on the selected bubble and choose "Edit..." from the menu.
- Or choose "Bubble(s)->Edit" from the Timeline menu
- Or double-click on a bubble

Labels will appear on the bubbles and annotations will appear in the Annotations window below the timeline. You can use the "Style" and "Color" menu options to edit your annotation text with bold, underline, italics, and various colors.
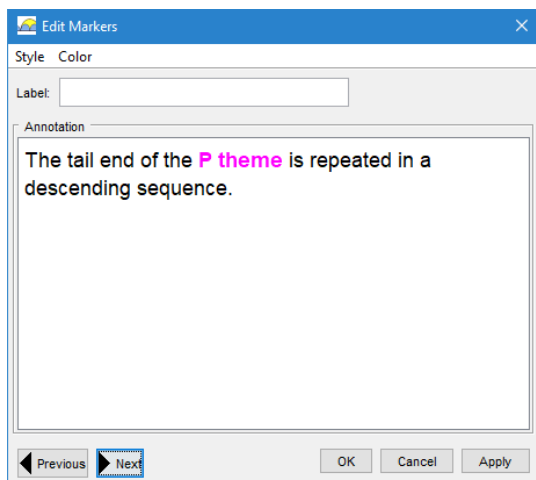
You can use the bubble playback controls (which play only the selected bubble) just as you would in the timeline window, but you also have the option to loop playback of the selected bubble as you label or annotate.

You may also navigate from bubble to bubble directly within the window in order to add labels, rather than clicking back and forth from the timeline. Use the Up, Down, Left and Right controls in the "Select Another Bubble" pane to navigate through the bubbles.

Be sure to click "Apply" or "OK" to see the changes you've made in the Edit Bubbles window.

Markers – Marker labels and annotations may be added in the "Edit Markers" window:

- Open the "Edit Markers window by selecting the marker and clicking the "Edit..." button
- Or select a marker and choose ""Edit..." from its right-click menu
- Or select a marker and choose "Edit Label…" from the Timepoints submenu
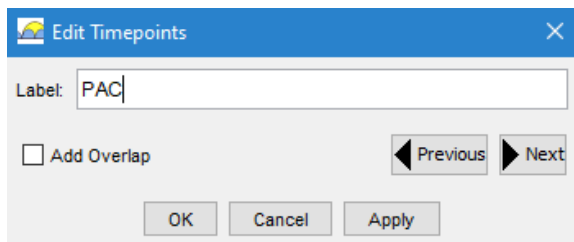- Or double-click on a marker.

Marker labels will appear underneath markers on the timeline. Marker annotations will appear in the Annotations window below the timeline.

Move back and forth between markers using the "Previous" and "Next" buttons at the bottom of the window. You can also edit annotation text with the "Style" and "Color" menu options.

You can check or uncheck the "Marker Annotations" box on the main panel to control whether marker labels are displayed in the annotation pane as the slider moves past them during playback.

Timepoints – Timepoint labels can be added in the "Edit Timepoints" window. Timepoint labels might be used for measure numbers or cadence types.

- Select the timepoint and click the "Edit..." button
- Or choose "Edit Label..." from the Timepoints submenu
- Or choose "Edit..." from the right-click menu
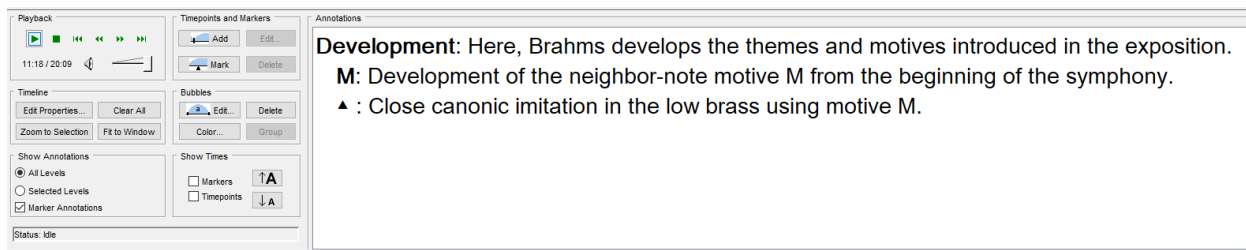- Or double-click on the timepoint

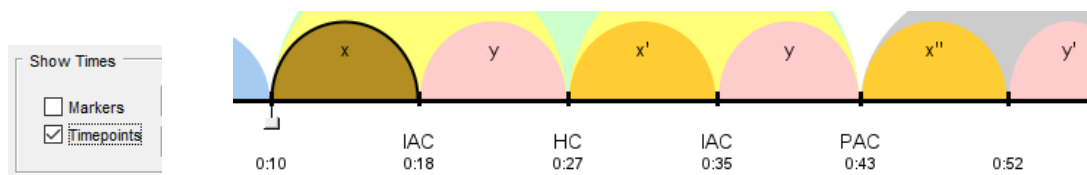Labels will appear below timepoints on the timeline.

Use the "Previous" and "Next" buttons to navigate between timepoints. You can also select "Add Overlap" to add a bracket representing a phrase overlap to your diagram.
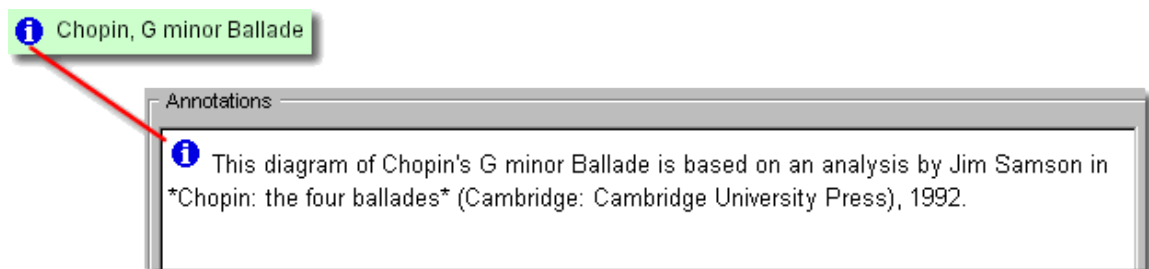
The Annotation Window

- **Annotations** – Annotations can be attached to individual **bubbles** and **markers**. Annotations allow you to write complete sentences that describe the musical events or processes that take place in the current bubble or that are associated with a marker. For example, annotations might be used to describe melodic or thematic characteristics, discuss motivic transformations, explain unusual modulations or chord progressions, give the text and translations for vocal music, or just describe generally what is going on. The annotations that you create will be displayed during playback in the annotation pane.

- **Annotation Display Options** – You can adjust the way that annotations are displayed in the annotation window. You can increase or decrease the font size and choose which levels of annotations to display. In the example above, "All Levels" is selected. Thus, annotations for all bubble levels are displayed. When the "Selected Levels" option is chosen, only annotations for the selected bubble level(s) are shown. You can also choose whether to display marker annotations during playback by checking/unchecking the "Marker Annotations" box.

- **Show Times** – to hide or show the times displayed (in seconds) below the timeline, select/deselect the "Markers" or "Timepoints" checkboxes in the "Show Times" area.
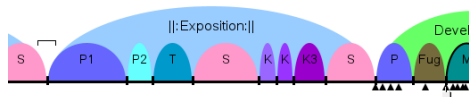

- **Timeline Description** – You can create or edit a timeline description in the Edit Properties window. This description will appear in the annotation pane when the timeline file is opened. You may also view it by pressing the information button next to the timeline title.

Adjusting the Timeline

You can adjust the appearance of the timeline in several ways: by resizing the window, resizing the timeline, zooming in and out on a selection, or even creating smaller "excerpt" timelines.

- **Window Resize** – Drag on the sides of the timeline window or "Maximize" the window to increase the size of the Annotation display area. You can also drag the middle divider between the timeline and the annotations to adjust their relative sizes.
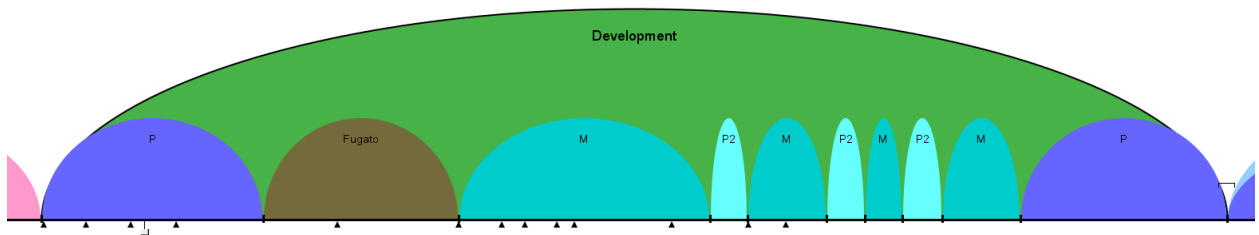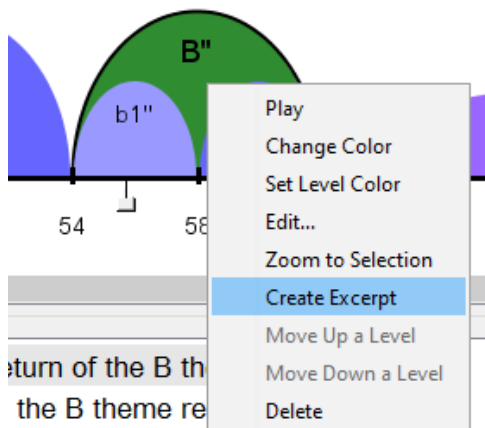

drag this divider to adjust

- **Timeline Resize** - To manually change the timeline size, place the cursor over the arrow at the right end of the timeline. When you cursor changes to a hand, drag it left or right until the timeline is the desired size. To set it back to its original size press the "Fit to Window" button.

- **Zoom to Selection** - You may enlarge a portion of the timeline in order to better see labels or make more detailed changes to timepoints (such as the "Development" section shown below). To do this, select the range of bubbles you would like to zoom in on and click "Zoom to Selection." The selected range of bubbles will fill the viewing area. To set it back to its original size, press the "Fit to Window" button.
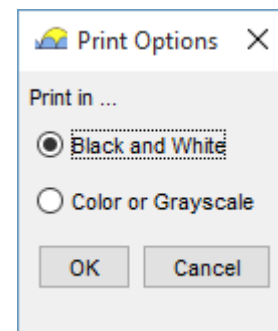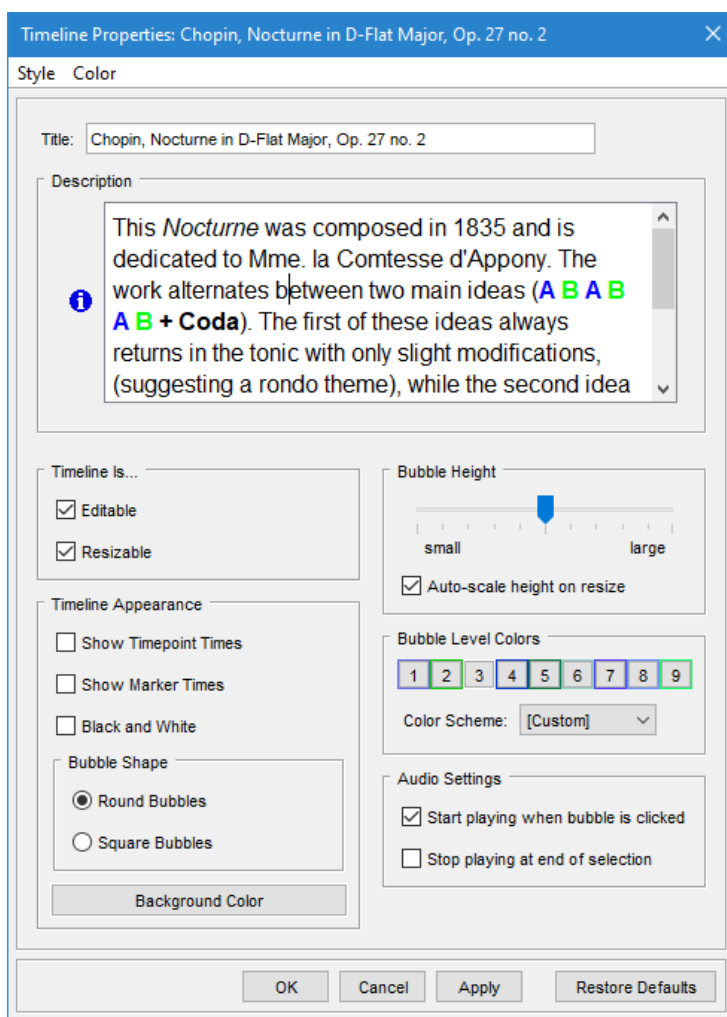

Create Excerpt - You may want to create an excerpt of your timeline diagram. For example, you might want to create a separate, more detailed diagram of just the B section in your timeline. To do this, select the bubble or range of bubbles that you want in the excerpted timeline. Right-click and select "Create Excerpt" from the popup menu; or select "Create Excerpt" from the Timeline menu. A new timeline will automatically be created that contains only that selection.

Timeline Properties

Use the Timeline Properties window (shown below), to make additional adjustments to timeline properties. Here, you can change the title and description (including the "style" and "color" of the annotation text), adjust bubble level colors, choose a color scheme, change bubble height and shape (including "square bubbles"), adjust the audio settings, choose to show times under timepoints and markers, and decide whether the timeline should be editable and resizable. Press "Restore Defaults" to reset all properties you have adjusted.

To open the Timeline Properties window, click on the "Edit Properties..." button in the Timeline panel. Alternatively, you may select "Edit Properties..." from the Timeline menu or right-click on the slider and select "Edit Properties..." from the resulting menu.

Printing

To print out a timeline, simply choose the "Print..." option from the File menu. A Print dialog box will appear from which you may choose to print in Black & White OR Color/Grayscale.