

Music 231

Fifth Species Counterpoint, Two Parts

These notes are a distillation (with supplements and editorials, in red) of Salzman/Schacter's Counterpoint in Composition. It is in no way a substitute for reading and working through the actual text book.

New Material

- Mixed rhythms
- Eighth notes
- Ornamental resolution of suspensions

I. General observations

- A. Use a combination of second, third, and fourth species, and the rhythms associated with them
- B. The goal is to achieve a smoothly flowing line
- C. Avoid rhythmic patterns as one avoids melodic patterns in earlier species

II. Unmixed note values within the measure

- A. Generally, values will be mixed within the measure
- B. The same note value should not continue for more than two or possibly two and a half measures
- C. Be cautious of segmentation
- D. Avoid whole notes, except for the final measure

III. Mixed Note Values within the measure

- A. Mixed values within a measure will predominate
- B. Longer values will coincide with stronger accents
 1. Half notes will fall only on the first beat except:
 - a. in the case of two half notes per bar
 - b. the half note on the weak beat is tied over the barline
 - c. in the penultimate measure (see VIII. B., below)
 2. Eighth notes will only fall on the second and fourth beats
 - a. Eighth notes will occur in pairs only
 - b. Must move stepwise within the pair, and usually in approach and departure
- C. Patterns should not become motivic—the addition of eighth notes is not usually enough to break up a rhythmic sequence
- D. Changing values within a measure yields a smoother line than changing at the beginning of a measure
- E. Every note value is governed by the procedures of the species to which it belongs
- F. Given these new possible note value combinations, it is possible to have a consonant suspension that ties over just to a quarter note (see examples 15-14 and 15-15)

IV. Ornamental resolutions of suspensions

- A. Three quarter-note ornaments.
 - 1. Anticipation of resolution
 - 2. Consonant leap up
 - 3. Consonant leap down
- B. Two eighth-note ornaments of the resolution.
 - 1. Lower neighbor
 - 2. Upper neighbor
- C. One eighth-note ornamentation of the suspension
 - 1. Upper neighbor.

Ornamentation of Suspensions

The image displays seven musical examples of suspension ornamentation in 3/4 time, arranged in a grid. Each example consists of a treble and bass staff. The bass staff contains a single half-note suspension on the second beat. The treble staff shows the resolution of this suspension on the third beat, with various ornaments. Red circles highlight the specific ornament notes.

- Unornamented:** Shows a plain resolution from the suspension note to the final note.
- Anticipation of resolution:** The ornament is a quarter note on the second beat, occurring before the suspension.
- Consonant leap (up):** The ornament is a quarter note on the third beat, a step higher than the suspension note.
- Consonant leap (down) [preferred]:** The ornament is a quarter note on the third beat, a step lower than the suspension note.
- Upper neighbor of resolution:** The ornament is an eighth note on the third beat, a step higher than the suspension note.
- Lower neighbor of resolution:** The ornament is an eighth note on the third beat, a step lower than the suspension note.
- Upper neighbor of suspension:** The ornament is an eighth note on the second beat, a step higher than the suspension note.

V. Dissonance treatment

- A. Dissonances are governed by the species to which they belong
- B. Among eighth notes, either the first or second may be dissonant, or both if a double passing tone

VI. Parallel perfects; unisons

- A. Parallels are governed by the rules of the species from which their rhythm is derived
 - 1. Eighth notes are considered ornaments of third species
 - 2. The pattern half note, quarter, quarter separating parallel perfects is context-sensitive
 - While usually acceptable, it becomes problematic if one of the perfects is emphasized through a leap or other means—like in second species
- B. Unisons are governed by the rules of the current species (i.e. in third species, only on beats 2, 3, or 4, or on the second half note of fourth species)

VII. Correlation of melodic and rhythmic motion

- A. Extended scale motion is best presented in smaller values
- B. Decorations are best in small values
 - You will remember, for example, that the dissonant neighbor tone is not used in second species
- C. Most suspensions will be ornamented
- D. Generally, leaps should be preceded by longer notes
- E. Rhythmic momentum should develop gradually toward the middle of the exercise, and then relax again toward the end

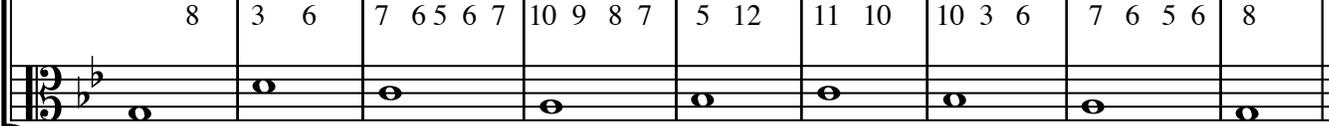
VIII. Beginning and ending the exercise

- A. Begin with longer values, so that momentum can develop—generally, a half rest and a half note (preferred) or two half notes
- B. End, if possible, with a suspension resolving to the leading tone—the resulting half note on the weak beat is acceptable here

Please note: the information on this page has been supplied by Dr. Ronald Caltabiano

5th Species Examples

5-21, C

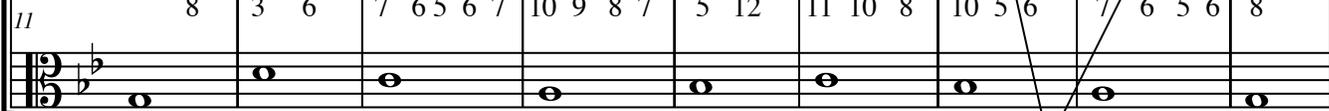
Upr. Cpt. 
 C.F. 

unprep/unres leap, but it's an easier 8ve approached by a longer note value

8 3 6 7 6 5 6 7 10 9 8 7 5 12 11 10 10 3 6 7 6 5 6 8

Also, there is an implied melodic outline of a 7th from F down to G

Modified...

Upr. Cpt. 
 C.F. 

leap corrected, but it's now a descending 6th approached by a shorter note value

11 8 3 6 7 6 5 6 7 10 9 8 7 5 12 11 10 8 10 5 6 7 6 5 6 8

Also, the F \natural so closely followed by the F \sharp implies chromaticism

Modified

Upr. Cpt. 
 C.F. 

leap now only a 5th, but minimally resolved UN of ornamented susp helps fill the gap

8 3 6 7 6 5 6 7 10 9 8 7 5 12 11 10 8 10 6 7 8 7 6 8

5-21, b

C.F. 
 Lwr. Cpt. 

1 2 3 3 2 1 3 4 6 5 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 6 7 6 5 6 5 3 6 3 2 3 4 3 1