

2 Species Counterpoint

-2 notes in the counterpoint for every one in the CF.

-Metrical Accent- first half note (on the beat) is accented; 2nd half note (off beat) not accented.

-Diminution- term given to the unaccented notes because they divide the duration of the original first-species framework in half.

-introduces the **dissonant harmonic intervals** (2, 4, A4, d5, 7, 9)

-dissonant harmonic intervals must fall on the **unaccented** second half of the measure

-approach by step from a consonant harmonic interval (the preparation) on the downbeat

-connect by step to a consonant harmonic interval (the resolution) on the following downbeat.

-Resolution- motion from a dissonance to a consonance.

-It is possible to have 2 consonances against a cantus note (skip or leap) or 5-6, 6-5 intervals.

Passing Tones (P)

-approached by step and left by step in the same direction. (Introduces 2, 4, and 7th on the unaccented part of the measure.)

-5-6 or 6-5 is also considered a passing tone but it is not labeled because it is not dissonant.

Consonant Skips (CS)

-also known as **chordal skips**

-adds melodic interest to the counterpoint by providing a **contrast** to the stepwise motion of passing tones

-Too many passing tones in a row and the melody becomes **conjunct**.

-Too many consonant skips in a row and the melody becomes **disjunct**.

Neighbor Tones (N)

-Upper Neighbor (UN)

-Lower Neighbor (LN)

-occurs on the unaccented part of a measure by stepping into the note above or below it, then returning to the original note.

-approached and left by step in opposite directions.

-can be consonant (5-6) or dissonant (3-2)

Melodic Considerations

Guidelines to writing good 2nd species

- 1) Skip or leap within the bar lines instead of across them
- 2) Use a wider range than in first species
- 3) Create one high point to the line and a possible 2nd high point
- 4) Consider two skips, or a skip plus small leap (P4) as a larger leap
- 5) Ideally, after a leap, follow with stepwise motion in the opposite direction

Harmonic Considerations

- 1) Interval on the 1st half note must be **perfect or imperfect consonant**
- 2) Write **dissonant intervals only on the 2nd half note** (unaccented beat)
- 3) To avoid hidden (direct) 5ths and 8ths approach intervals P5 and P8 on the downbeat by step in the upper part, ideally in contrary motion. **DO NOT APPROACH P5 or P8 in similar motion with a skip or leap in the upper voice.**

Analyze from downbeat to downbeat and also from note to note to avoid forbidden parallel motions.

Below is an example of good second-species counterpoint written above a given *cantus firmus*. Passing tones have been marked with a "P." Notice that all harmonic dissonances are passing tones; however, passing tones are not necessarily dissonant. As long as the line moves by step in the same direction, the motion may be described as "passing" whether or not some notes are dissonant.

The musical score shows a cantus firmus in the bass clef and a counterpoint in the treble clef. The counterpoint consists of a sequence of notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2. Above the counterpoint staff, four 'P' marks are placed above the notes G3, B3, E3, and G2. Below the counterpoint staff, a series of numbers (3, 2, 6, 3, 3, 2, 5, 3, 3, 5, 6, 3, 8, 7, 6, 5, 8) are placed below the notes, representing the interval between the counterpoint note and the cantus firmus note below it.