

Soprano and Bass lines in 18th Century Writing

Note to Note Counterpoint in 18th Century Style

- Durations are normally half and quarter notes or quarter notes and 8th notes
- Both consonant and dissonant harmonic intervals drawn from **7th chords** to create forward motion
- **Parts aren't equal: bass line** becomes the **foundation** of the harmonic progression, with the **melody in the soprano**. This is not usually invertible.
- Occasional deviations from species counterpoint will pop up but overall, **the basic guidelines of counterpoint are used**.

18th Century Contrapuntal Motion

- **Same as strict style: (Note to Note)**
 - Each bass note corresponds to a single soprano note in the same rhythm
 - Intervals are a mix of perfect and imperfect consonances
 - Mostly contrary motion
 - Same closing pattern
- **Different from strict style:**
 - Immediate repetition of notes
 - Use of more oblique motion
 - Stronger tonal cadence (5 to 1 in the bass and 7 to 1 in soprano)
Soprano ti-do; Bass so-do

18th Century Contrapuntal Motion

- **Phrase**—unit of musical thought that ends with a point of closure or rest (cadence)
- **Cadence**—combination of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements that **create closure** at the **end of the phrase**
- **5 to 1** motion in the bass implies **dominant to tonic**. This combined with a 2 to 1 or 7 to 1 close in the soprano make the strongest kind of cadence (conclusive)
Soprano ti-do or re-do; Bass so-do

Chordal Dissonance

- **Dissonant harmonic intervals that occur as a part of a 7th chord.**
- **Tendency tones** created in 7th chords: **Scale degree 4** (7th of the chord tone) **resolves down to scale degree 3... Fa-Mi** and **Scale degree 7** (3rd of the chord tone) **resolves up to scale degree 1... Ti-Do**.
- The tendency tones (scale degree 4 and 7) create a tritone.
 - When spelled as a **d5** the notes **resolve inward to a 3rd**.
 - When spelled as an **A4** the notes **resolve outward to a 6th**.

Characteristics of the Bass Line Implied Harmonies

V6/5 to I (Leading tone **ti** is in the bass and must **resolve up to 1 or do**)

V4/2 to I6 (Fa is in the bass and must **resolve down to mi** making the 1 chord in 1st inversion)

V7 to I (3 do's and one mi. So is omitted)

Typical closing scale degree patterns for bass lines

- Conclusive: 6-5-1 (**la,-so-do**); 4-5-1 (**fa-so-do**); 2-5-1 (**re-so-do**); 1-5-1 (**do-so-do**)
- Less Conclusive: 1-7-1 (**do-ti-do**); 6-7-1 (**la-ti-do**); 5-7-1 (**so-ti-do**)
- Inconclusive (ends on V chord or Half Cadence): 1-5 (**do-so**); 4-5 (**fa-so**); 6-5 (**la-so**)
- At the beginning, the bass line usually implies tonic harmony (1 or 3) or is a V to I anacrusis (5 or 7 moving to 1)

In minor keys

- if the bass line goes from **7 to 1**, make sure to **add** the correct **accidental** to create the **leading tone**
- If the bass line ascends from 5 to 1, make sure to use the ascending melodic minor (raised 6 and 7)
- If the bass line descends from 1 down to 5, make sure to use the descending form of melodic minor (lowered 6 and 7)

Characteristics of Soprano Lines

- Typically more conjunct than the bass line
- Typical closing scale degree patterns for soprano lines
- Conclusive: ends on do - 3-2-1 (**mi-re-do**); 2-7-1 (**re-ti-do**); 6-7-1 (**so-ti-do**); 2-1 (**re-do**)
- Less Conclusive: ends on mi - 5-4-3 (**so-fa-mi**); 2-3 (**re-mi**)
- Inconclusive: Half Cadence ends on so or ti or re - 6-5 (**la-so**), 4-3-2 (**fa-mi-re**); 2-1-7 (**re-do-ti**)

Opening the Counterpoint

- Begin with a **strong sense of tonic**
- Bass and soprano pairings with **1 or 3 is strongest**
- Pieces that start with an **anacrusis** generally **imply the dominant** while the first downbeat would be the tonic

Melodic Embellishments in Chorale Textures

■ Three types of passing tones:

- **Accented (dissonant PT)** occurs on a **strong beat**
- **Unaccented (dissonant PT)** occurs on a **weak beat**
- **Unaccented consonant**

– **Consonant and dissonant neighbor tones**

- **Consonant skips** (also known as a chordal skip since they are now often in the context of a chord)

– **Suspensions**

- Mixed with other embellishments rather than being the main focus (like in 4th species strict style) or reserved for setting up a cadence
- May be connected to the preparation by a tie (as in strict style) or a longer note duration (half note instead of 2 tied quarters)
- Same suspensions as in strict style: 4-3, 7-6, 9-8 in upper part and 2-3 in lower
- Re articulated suspension—when the suspended note is not tied to its preparation
- Length of the preparation, suspension, and resolution may vary but suspension **MUST** arrive on the beat