

## Counterpoint In Composition

Counterpoint in Composition The Study of Voice Leading Columbia University Press

Prout's still indispensable work is profusely illustrated with musical examples woven directly into the text. Strict Counterpoint is the preliminary technical work for actual musical composition. At the time of original publication, Ebenezer Prout was Professor of Harmony and Composition at the Royal Academy of Music.

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-- Stanley Persky, City University of New York

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An excerpt from the Introduction: COUNTERPOINT is the art of so writing two or more melodies that they may be satisfactorily performed at the same time. All weaving together of melodies, from the simplest combination of two simple themes to the most complex polyphony of a Wagner score is Counterpoint. But the study of Strict Counterpoint (our present object) resolves itself into building one or more melodies upon a given melody. The added melody or melodies may be above or below the given melody. Counterpoint was the earliest form of artistic musical composition. It was the outgrowth of the simplest attempts of two singers to sing together without producing discordant effects. In Counterpoint then, we are primarily concerned with the movement of voices or parts, and the student should endeavor from the beginning to accustom himself to follow each part in its movement, to think, so to say, horizontally, instead of thinking as in Harmony, perpendicularly. It is to be remembered too, that Counterpoint is primarily a series of consonances, dissonances being introduced only under careful restrictions. There are three most important principles to be observed in all writing of Counterpoint. First, the Principle of Variety, by which is meant that the constant aim of the writer of Counterpoint is to avoid monotony, no matter from what cause it may arise. Thus broken chords and arpeggios as suggesting rather a single harmony than several melodic tones; voices moving a third or a sixth apart, by which one voice is merely a copy of the other; repetitions of figures; sequences, and nearly stationary parts are all undesirable. Second, the Principle of Clearness. Nothing must be introduced which would tend to obscure the movement of each voice or confuse one voice with another voice, or to give the Counterpoint the effect of aimless wandering. Fig. 1a. Thus, crossing or overlapping of parts, voices moving out of their proper range (Fig. 16), and formless melodies are all to be avoided. Third, the Principle of Euphony. One important function of music is to please the ear, and although the pleasure derived from fine Counterpoint is of a different character from that which we get from beautiful Harmony, still the composition must always be well-sounding. As Counterpoint deals chiefly with melodies, the student should write his Counterpoint as if for voices, keeping within the range of the voice for which he is writing and observing the following suggestions as to the progression of each voice or part.

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"Counterpoint proceeds by developing species counterpoint in the tradition of Johann Joseph Fux and his famous *Gradus ad Parnassum* (1725), but with attention to Schenker's more in-depth study. Everyone from beginning music theory students to composers to graduate composition students will benefit from the methods introduced here. As emphasized in the preface, readers are presented with "exercises for composition." Rather than actually teaching a student to compose, working through these exercises will improve musicianship as it applies to both composition and understanding music theory."--BOOK JACKET.

The mathematical theory of counterpoint was originally aimed at simulating the composition rules described in Johann Joseph Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum*. It soon became apparent that the algebraic apparatus used in this model could also serve to define entirely new systems of rules for composition, generated by new choices of consonances and dissonances, which in turn lead to new restrictions governing the succession of intervals. This is the first book bringing together recent developments and perspectives on mathematical counterpoint theory in detail. The authors include recent theoretical results on counterpoint worlds, the extension of counterpoint to microtonal pitch systems, the singular homology of counterpoint models, and the software implementation of contrapuntal models. The book is

suitable for graduates and researchers. A good command of algebra is a prerequisite for understanding the construction of the model.

The Craft of Tonal Counterpoint is a complete pedagogic package for students of composition and music theory."--BOOK JACKET.

Excerpt from Applied Strict Counterpoint So many pupils have acknowledged to me the advantages that have accrued to them from having understood and practised the application of Strict Counterpoint in composition in the strict style, that it seemed to me a short treatise on the subject might be serviceable. Very few teachers encourage the study of Strict Counterpoint in anything but its purely technical and analytical aspects. It is certain that very few students understand the function of the semibreve Canto Fermo. Still fewer realize that it can be eliminated, and that the application of the technique of Strict Counterpoint without this constant factor results in composition in the style of the Polyphonic Period. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at [www.forgottenbooks.com](http://www.forgottenbooks.com) This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.

Explores the contrapuntal element in significant works from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the music student who fully understands the composition of harmony Serge Ivanovitch Taneiev was a great teacher of composition in Russia, having taught the great Russian composers and influenced scores of other musicians. Names like Serge Rachmaninoff, Leonid Sabaneiev, Lazare Saminsky, Walter Piston, Philip Greely Clapp, Igor Stravinsky, Tchaikofsky, and Serge Koussevitzky, who wrote the Introduction to this large volume. Music scholars who are acquainted with the Convertible Counterpoint of Serge Ivanovitch Taneiev consider it the greatest work ever written in its field.

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