

Harmony and Soundness

Introduction

Harmony and Soundness is a comprehensive guide to the principles and practices of harmony in music. Whether you're a student of music theory, a composer, or simply someone who wants to deepen their understanding of music, this book will provide you with the tools and knowledge you need to master this essential aspect of musical composition.

Throughout the book, we will explore the foundations of harmony, including the major and minor scales, intervals, and chord construction. We will then delve into voice leading fundamentals, learning the rules and techniques for creating smooth and effective voice leading in your compositions. The book also covers extended chords and their applications, harmonic

analysis, modulation and key relationships, and chromaticism and dissonance.

With clear explanations, numerous musical examples, and practical exercises, *Harmony and Soundness* is an invaluable resource for anyone looking to expand their harmonic knowledge and skills. Whether you're a beginner just starting to learn about harmony or an experienced musician looking to refine your craft, this book will provide you with the insights and guidance you need to take your music to the next level.

In addition to the core concepts of harmony, the book also explores advanced harmonic techniques, such as polychords, clusters, atonality, and free atonality. We will also examine harmony in different musical styles, including classical music, jazz, popular music, and world music.

By the end of this book, you will have a comprehensive understanding of harmony and be able to apply these principles to your own compositions and

arrangements. So embark on this journey into the world of harmony and discover the power of sound and structure in music.

Book Description

Harmony and Soundness is a comprehensive and accessible guide to the principles and practices of harmony in music. Whether you're a student of music theory, a composer, or simply someone who wants to deepen their understanding of music, this book will provide you with the tools and knowledge you need to master this essential aspect of musical composition.

With clear explanations, numerous musical examples, and practical exercises, Harmony and Soundness covers a wide range of topics, including:

- The foundations of harmony, including the major and minor scales, intervals, and chord construction
- Voice leading fundamentals, including the rules and techniques for creating smooth and effective voice leading
- Extended chords and their applications

- Harmonic analysis, including Roman numeral analysis and identifying chord functions
- Modulation and key relationships
- Chromaticism and dissonance
- Advanced harmonic techniques, such as polychords, clusters, atonality, and free atonality
- Harmony in different musical styles, including classical music, jazz, popular music, and world music

Whether you're a beginner just starting to learn about harmony or an experienced musician looking to refine your craft, *Harmony and Soundness* is an invaluable resource that will provide you with the insights and guidance you need to take your music to the next level.

This book is more than just a theoretical exploration of harmony. It also includes practical exercises and examples that allow you to apply the concepts you learn to your own compositions and arrangements. With *Harmony and Soundness*, you'll gain the skills

and knowledge you need to create music that is both beautiful and structurally sound.

Chapter 1: Foundations of Harmony

The Nature of Harmony

Harmony is the art of combining musical sounds to create a pleasing and meaningful whole. It is one of the most important elements of music, along with melody, rhythm, and texture. Harmony can create a sense of tension and release, movement and stasis, and light and shade. It can also be used to express emotions, paint pictures, and tell stories.

Harmony is based on the idea that certain combinations of notes sound good together. These combinations are called chords. Chords are built on intervals, which are the distances between two notes. The most common type of chord is the triad, which is made up of three notes. Triads can be major or minor, depending on the interval between the first and third notes.

The way that chords are combined to create harmony is called chord progression. Chord progressions can be simple or complex, and they can create a wide variety of different moods and atmospheres.

Harmony is an essential part of music, and it can be found in all genres of music, from classical to jazz to rock to pop. It is a powerful tool that can be used to create beautiful and meaningful music.

The Functions of Harmony

Harmony serves several important functions in music. First, it provides support for the melody. The chords that accompany a melody help to define its harmonic context and give it a sense of direction. Second, harmony can create a sense of movement and momentum. The way that chords are combined can create a feeling of forward motion or stasis. Third, harmony can be used to create tension and release. The use of dissonant chords can create a sense of tension, which can be resolved by the use of consonant chords.

Finally, harmony can be used to express emotions and paint pictures. The choice of chords and chord progressions can create a wide variety of different moods and atmospheres.

The Elements of Harmony

Harmony is made up of several different elements, including:

- **Chords:** Chords are the basic building blocks of harmony. They are made up of three or more notes that are played together.
- **Chord Progressions:** Chord progressions are the sequences of chords that are used to create harmony.
- **Harmony:** The overall effect of the combination of chords in a piece of music.

Harmony and Melody

Harmony and melody are two of the most important elements of music. They work together to create a

cohesive and meaningful whole. The melody is the main vocal or instrumental line of a piece of music, while the harmony provides the background support. The relationship between melody and harmony is complex and interdependent. The melody can be used to create tension and release, while the harmony can be used to support and enhance the melody.

Chapter 1: Foundations of Harmony

The Major and Minor Scales

Harmony is the relationship between different notes or chords played simultaneously. It is one of the most important elements of music, as it provides structure and organization to a piece of music. The major and minor scales are two of the most fundamental scales in Western music, and they form the basis for many different chords and progressions.

The Major Scale

The major scale is a seven-note scale that has a bright and cheerful sound. It is constructed by starting on a specific note and then moving up in whole steps and half steps according to the following pattern:

- Whole step
- Whole step
- Half step

- Whole step
- Whole step
- Whole step
- Half step

For example, the C major scale starts on the note C and moves up in whole steps and half steps to D, E, F, G, A, B, and then C again.

The Minor Scale

The minor scale is also a seven-note scale, but it has a darker and more somber sound than the major scale. It is constructed by starting on a specific note and then moving up in whole steps and half steps according to the following pattern:

- Whole step
- Half step
- Whole step
- Whole step
- Half step

- Whole step
- Whole step

For example, the A minor scale starts on the note A and moves up in whole steps and half steps to B, C, D, E, F, G, and then A again.

The Relationship Between Major and Minor Scales

The major and minor scales are closely related. Each minor scale has a corresponding major scale that shares the same notes. For example, the A minor scale and the C major scale both contain the notes A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. However, the order of the notes is different. This difference in order gives the two scales their different sounds.

The major and minor scales are used in a wide variety of musical styles, from classical to jazz to rock. They are essential for understanding harmony and creating music that is both beautiful and expressive.

Chapter 1: Foundations of Harmony

Intervals and Chord Construction

Intervals and chords are the building blocks of harmony. An interval is the distance between two notes, while a chord is a group of three or more notes played together. Understanding how to construct and use intervals and chords is essential for creating music that is both pleasing to the ear and structurally sound.

Intervals

The simplest interval is the unison, which occurs when two notes are the same pitch. From there, intervals can be classified as either consonant or dissonant. Consonant intervals are those that sound stable and harmonious, while dissonant intervals sound more tense and unstable.

The most common consonant intervals are the perfect unison, perfect octave, perfect fifth, major third, and

minor third. The most common dissonant intervals are the major second, minor seventh, and tritone.

Chords

A chord is a group of three or more notes played together. Chords can be built by stacking intervals on top of each other. The most common type of chord is the triad, which is a chord made up of three notes: a root, a third, and a fifth.

The root of a chord is the lowest note in the chord. The third is the note that is three scale steps above the root. The fifth is the note that is five scale steps above the root.

Triads can be either major or minor. A major triad is a triad that contains a major third and a perfect fifth. A minor triad is a triad that contains a minor third and a perfect fifth.

Chord Construction

Chords can be constructed in a variety of ways. One common method is to use the circle of fifths. The circle of fifths is a diagram that shows the relationship between the twelve notes of the chromatic scale.

To construct a chord using the circle of fifths, start with the root note of the chord. Then, move clockwise around the circle of fifths to find the note that is a perfect fifth above the root. This note will be the fifth of the chord. Finally, move clockwise around the circle of fifths again to find the note that is a major or minor third above the root. This note will be the third of the chord.

For example, to construct a C major chord, you would start with the note C. Then, you would move clockwise around the circle of fifths to find the note G. This note would be the fifth of the chord. Finally, you would move clockwise around the circle of fifths again to find the note E. This note would be the third of the chord.

The C major chord would then be written as C-E-G.

Conclusion

Intervals and chords are essential elements of harmony. By understanding how to construct and use them, you can create music that is both beautiful and structurally sound.

This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.

Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Foundations of Harmony * The Nature of Harmony * The Major and Minor Scales * Intervals and Chord Construction * Basic Chord Progressions * Common Cadences

Chapter 2: Voice Leading Fundamentals * The Concept of Voice Leading * Rules of Voice Leading * Parallel Motion and Contrary Motion * Avoiding Dissonant Intervals * Cadential Progressions

Chapter 3: Extended Chords and Their Applications * Seventh Chords: Dominant, Major, and Minor * Ninth, Eleventh, and Thirteenth Chords * Altered Chords: Suspensions and Passing Tones * Functional Progressions with Extended Chords * Extended Chords in Jazz and Popular Music

Chapter 4: Harmonic Analysis * Roman Numeral Analysis * Identifying Chord Functions * Analyzing

Chord Progressions * Harmonic Rhythm and Cadential Analysis * Harmonic Analysis in Various Musical Styles

Chapter 5: Modulation and Key Relationships * The Concept of Modulation * Common Modulation Techniques * Modulation to Related Keys * Modulation to Distant Keys * Modulation in Classical and Romantic Music

Chapter 6: Chromaticism and Dissonance * The Use of Chromaticism in Harmony * Types of Dissonance: Consonance and Dissonance * Resolving Dissonance * Chromatic Harmony in Jazz and Popular Music * Chromaticism in Film and Video Game Music

Chapter 7: Harmonic Progressions in Composition * Creating Effective Harmonic Progressions * Using Harmonic Progressions to Create Form and Structure * Harmonic Progressions in Different Musical Genres * The Role of Harmonic Progressions in Melody Writing * Harmonic Progressions and Emotional Expression

Chapter 8: Advanced Harmonic Techniques *

Polychords and Clusters * Atonality and Free Atonality

* Harmonic Techniques in Contemporary Music *

Harmonic Analysis of 20th-Century Music * The Future of Harmony

Chapter 9: Harmony in Practice *

Composing Short Harmonic Progressions * Writing Melodies with Strong

Harmonic Support * Arranging Songs and

Accompaniments * Using Harmony to Create Tension

and Release * Practicing Harmony through Ear Training and Improvisation

Chapter 10: Exploring Harmony in Different Musical

Styles * Harmony in Classical Music * Harmony in Jazz

* Harmony in Popular Music * Harmony in World

Music * The Evolution of Harmony Through Musical History

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