



Supplement 6

Free writing (2 parts)

In free writing, the cantus firmus principle is abandoned, and both parts contain a mixture of note values. For the most part, the same rules as for two-part writing in fifth species are valid in free writing; for the most part, the same rules about the overall shape of lines apply, as well. The main difference between free writing and fifth species writing is that free writing is *composition*.

In the exercises we do, the phrase structure will be much the same as that found in the Lassus *Cantiones* you have. A complete composition consists of several phrases, each of which sets a phrase of a text, each of which is musically unique, and each of which ends on a cadence. The cadences that do not end the composition are called *medial* cadences. The final cadence is called (all together, now) the *final* cadence. In each musical phrase, one voice enters alone and the other enters later, often (but not necessarily) imitating the first voice. If the second voice enters while the first note in the first voice is still sounding, it must enter on a perfect consonance; otherwise, the second voice may enter on an imperfect consonance. At the opening of the piece or at the beginning of a new section of text, the imitation may be as long as six halves later; at the opening of a less articulative phrase (one that begins only with long notes — wholes and brevises (brevæ? brevi?)) the second voice is more usually two, three or four halves later — which is also okay for a big new phrase. At the opening of the entire piece, the leading voice usually (but not always) enters on the tonic of the mode and the second voice usually enters on the tonic or the fifth of the mode. This pattern for the beginning of the piece is highly recommended, although not set in stone (e.g. see Lassus *Cantiones* #3, which is in Dorian mode and begins on E).

The final cadence of a composition should be in the same mode as its opening. Other medial cadences, including the cadence that closes the first phrase, may be in other modes than the mode of the opening. In other words, any phrase may modulate. Any medial cadence may be on F and any phrase except the opening phrase may begin on F. No phrase may cadence on B, but a phrase may begin on B if a mode is understood as other than on B (e.g. Phrygian beginning on the "dominant"). No phrase may begin or end on a "black note." There are no set rules for where medial cadences may occur, but the following guide given by David Lewin may be helpful:

<i>A piece beginning in</i>	<i>often has medial cadences on</i>
C.....	G or A
D.....	F or A
E.....	C or A or G
G.....	D or C
A.....	C or D

Feel free to ignore the above information if it is not helpful to you.

The *final* cadence of a composition should be a suspension cadence of the familiar sort, ending at the octave or unison. The final cadence may be a longa or brevis or a whole note on the third half of a $\frac{4}{2}$ measure tied to a brevis or longa. This writer prefers the cadence on a brevis which is attacked on the downbeat of the last measure and takes up the whole measure. In the latter

situation of a whole tied to a brevis or longa, note that this is the only situation in which a note of lesser value can be suspended to a note of greater value (remember how, for instance a dotted whole was supposed to begin on a "strong half" and how the rhythm ♩_♩ was prohibited in fifth species).

When you want to cadence using a suspension formula, you will have to decide which of the two voices will "play" fourth species counterpoint and which voice will "play" cantus firmus. It helps greatly when you plan ahead. Medial cadences may also be suspension cadences that end on the octave or unison. They may also be less conclusive: they may end on a fifth instead of an octave or unison; they may use non-suspension approaches; and as mentioned, they may end on a note that is not the tonic of the prevailing mode. Here is an example of a medial cadence on A:



It has some of the signs of the suspension cadence on A (the chromaticism and the ornament in the lower voice), but the cadential interval is a fifth instead of an octave or unison. A medial cadence should involve both voices; if one voice drops out where it seems a cadence has occurred, a cadence has not occurred. Use a leading tone in a medial cadence, if appropriate.

The medial cadence should occur on the first or third half of the $\frac{4}{2}$ measure. The cadence tone is usually prolonged only for the duration of a whole note or a dotted whole note, and that in only one of the voices; the other voice rests and breathes after its cadence attack and then leads off the next phrase without any discontinuity in sound — there should be no point in the middle of a composition where there is a composed silence in both parts. These are typical medial cadences with one voice holding the cadence tone and the other voice beginning the new phrase:



The main points are that a) one voice breathes after the cadence and b) the other voice sustains while the first one breathes so that there is no break between the cadence and the phrase that follows. See the Lassus *Cantiones* for all kinds of ideas for medial cadences.

In an academic course such as this, it's usually death to make the following statement: You may now cross the voices in free writing, just as Lassus does in his *Cantiones*. If you cross voices, then the rule that the voices may never be separated by more than a tenth will be strictly enforced! Do not cross the voices excessively, and by all means make connections so that the listener can tell what belongs to which line — e.g., don't use many leaps for Voice 1 to cross over Voice 2 and then back again. The upper and lower lines should retain that identity at least at the extremes of phrases. You will find that crossing voices will help you create beautiful, organic, wonderful contrapuntal compositions. Not.

Rhythmic Considerations

First, a set of redefinitions, for the sake of clarity. A *strong quarter* is the first, third, fifth or seventh quarter in a $\frac{4}{2}$ bar; a *weak quarter* is the second, fourth, sixth or eighth in the bar (terms come from third species). A *strong half* is the first or third half of the bar; a *weak half* is the second or fourth half of the bar (second species). Strong halves attack where whole notes à la cantus firmus, would attack; strong quarters attack where consecutive halves would attack.

The longa, if you use it at all, can only be used at the end of the composition. The brevis should be used only at the end or at the beginning. Sometimes (see Lassus) the brevis is also used at the first medial cadence. The first note of the composition does not need to be a brevis. The dotted whole or whole tied to a half ($\circ _ \text{d}$) should be used only at the beginning of a phrase or in a medial cadence. Whole notes, as long as they begin on strong quarters, may be used freely. The two voices should not simultaneously attack whole notes after the second voice has entered in any phrase (you can see why: rhythmic independence and especially rhythmic vitality is lost when this happens). Sorry, Tennessee.

Once you have progressed past the beginning of the phrase, at least one of the voices should attack on each half note. Otherwise, the overall rhythm is full of holes and dead spots.

Do not syncopate both voices at the same time. If one voice syncopates, the other voice must be in a more regular rhythm. Any whole note that begins on a weak half, in other words, must be supported by an attack in the other voice on a strong half. The rhythm $\text{d} \circ \text{d}$ should be supported in the other voice with something like $\circ \text{d} \text{d}$ or $\circ \circ$ or $_ \text{d} \text{d} \circ$ or $_ \text{d} \text{d} \text{d} \text{d}$ or a wide range of other options, providing the syncopation is accompanied by something that attacks the strong beat not attacked in the syncopation. This keeps the overall rhythm from sounding jerky. If you are using a suspension cadence, only one voice may use an ornamentation formula, while the other voice should use only whole notes or half notes.

The two parts must be kept rhythmically and melodically independent. As above, simultaneous whole notes, simultaneous dotted halves and simultaneous suspended halves should not be used. *Both voices should not have two consecutive half notes at the same time.* One voice may have two consecutive half notes and the other may have a dotted half followed by a quarter or a half-tied-to-a-quarter.

x $\text{d} \text{d}$ x is BAD
x $\text{f} \text{f}$ x

x $\text{d} \text{d}$ x is OK
x $\text{f} \text{f} \text{f} \text{f}$

x $\text{d} \text{d}$ x is OK
x $\text{f} \text{f}$ x

Quarters move more quickly, so the two voices may move in simultaneous quarters a bit more. Four simultaneous quarters in a row are okay in the middle of the piece, but only if the melodic profiles are independent. No more than two or three may be exactly parallel (parallel thirds, sixths or tenths). Toward the end of the composition it is ok to excite the audience with a long burst of consecutive simultaneous quarters for special effect — but save such a passage for the ending. David Lewin calls such a passage "the musical equivalent of gold filigree on a printed text." Given the Lassus examples, you may compose a passage in the middle of the piece of up to eleven consecutive quarters in one voice if the other voice moves slowly, and if the quarters do not form elevators, and if the last quarter is a weak quarter.

Once a phrase is underway, it is idiomatic for the rhythm to ebb in one voice while flowing in another and vice versa. That is, one voice may be somewhat fancy and detailed while the other voice is plainer and in longer note values. Both voices should trade off being "fancy" and "plain." Ebbing and flowing rhythmically trades off between the voices so that one voice doesn't get all the good stuff while the other one has only gruel. The complementary relation of rhythm is analogous to contrary motion in melodies.

Dissonance Treatment

The correct treatment of many dissonances in free writing will clearly be covered by a pertinent species rule. There will be some new possibilities for dissonance treatment in free writing, as well. The list below is an incomplete list of ways of treating dissonances not clearly covered by a species rule (there are others evidenced in the music of the period; if you can codify a different way based on practice, show me and we'll add it to the arsenal). The trick here is to determine which voice contains the "dissonant" note and to treat it contrapuntally in the correct way.

When both lines move in quarters, first species rules apply if all the vertical intervals are consonant, except that two is a suggested number for consecutive thirds, sixths or tenths, and three is the absolute maximum. Third species rules cover dissonant weak quarters. There are ways that quarters may combine to form dissonances which will be covered later.

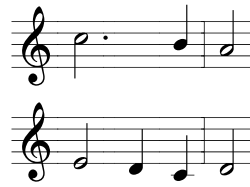
Consider a passing tone dissonance as in second species. This should be used only when the other voice has a whole note, dotted whole note, or whole tied to a half; otherwise the other voice may sound illegally dissonant. A common error is to try to use a dissonant "passing" half note against a preparation for a suspension in the other voice, as illustrated below:



The G in the lower voice is dissonant with the C in the upper voice. Since it's not possible to tell which voice is rhythmically subordinate to which, it's not possible to tell which voice is the dissonant one, or why. N.B. the rule to suspend the C in fourth species is that it must be consonant; yet the G with which it forms a dissonant is clearly passing and treated correctly in second species. So who's right? Nobody. Is this governed by the rules of fourth species or second species? Neither. Therefore, this is prohibited.

Passing, neighboring and cambiata dissonance on a weak quarter (as in third species) may be used freely. This means that upper neighbor tones may be used (as Lassus uses them), but sparingly. If both voices are moving in quarters, a dissonance may be used on a weak quarter, but not on a strong quarter, providing each voice treats its weak quarter according to one of the legal formulas.

Appoggiatura dissonance in its limited form as manifested in fifth species should not be used if the other voice attacks the fourth quarter of the whole note beat. This makes the third quarter in the voice making the appoggiatura improperly dissonant. But the appoggiatura may be used in any other rhythmic context, providing that it begins on a first or third half of a measure. The appoggiatura *may* be used when the other voice prepares a suspension.



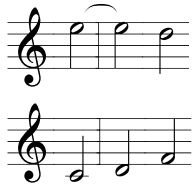
BAD



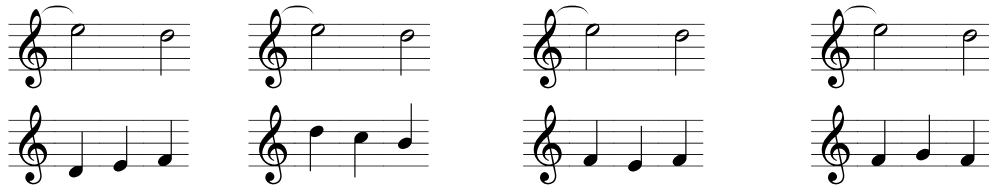
GOOD

In the second formula, the rhythmic subordination of the quarter notes to the suspension preparation, plus the consonance on the fourth quarter to which the appoggiatura resolves, makes it clear that the preparation for the suspension is essentially consonant. Compare that with the second/fourth species problem in the previous example.

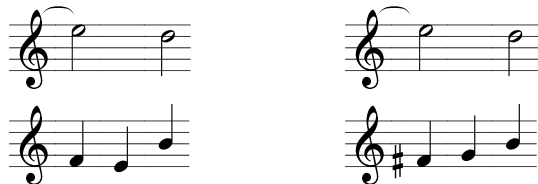
A suspension to a dissonance must begin on a strong quarter, as in fourth species (that is, it must begin on the second or fourth half of the measure). It must resolve stepwise *down* (not up anymore, no, no, nope!) on a strong quarter — that is, the preparation must be a half-note long, and so must the dissonance. (♩♩♩ or ♩♩♩ or the ornamented versions are the only possible rhythms when a suspension is dissonant). This being satisfied, the other voice may move on, from the moment of the suspension dissonance itself (on "quarter 1") to a different note under the tone of resolution (on "quarter 3"). This motion may be in halves, as below:



(Note here that the new rule that dissonances must resolve downward would have necessitated an incorrect resolution from 9 to 8 if the lower voice had not moved!) Or the line may move in quarters after the dissonance. In that case, the motion in quarters from the first to or through the third quarter must involve no leaps. The examples below are correct:



The examples below are incorrect:



In free writing, you are allowed "the dissonant dot." The dissonant dot is not a suspension in any sense, but is a special kind of syncopation. It syncopates the motion of two voices in parallel thirds, sixths or tenths through three consecutive halves. Such a motion is forbidden, as such (remember, three consecutive halves are prohibited!); but when it is syncopated by a dotted half-plus-quarter in one of the voices, it becomes "idiomatic." In this formula the dot may dissonate.

In case you're wondering what this is all about, see the examples below: **a** is prohibited because it contains three consecutive halves; it provides the skeleton of **b** and **c**, which use the dissonant dot in the upper voice and lower voice, respectively.

The first half of this pattern should be a strong half (first or third). The third note doesn't have to be a half note; both voices can go on freely once the third note has been attacked. This pattern is not used if the first half is a weak one (second or fourth half). I.e., the pattern analogous to the above is not valid as expressed below:

Never use the dissonant dot as a sped-up fourth species suspension. It may be used in conjunction with a cambiata-like figure, as the Palestrina example several pages ahead of this shows.

The "dissonant third quarter" in third species is allowed by Fux, but not here. It is now allowed only in the context shown below:

Here, the following are true: one voice prepares for a fourth species suspension: in the string of quarters in the other voice the first, second and fourth quarters are consonant; the third quarter, which sounds at the same time as the first voice, is dissonant with the suspension preparation. In this case, the line in quarters must RETURN to the dissonant interval on the strong quarter which follows. It may then continue on with a quarter, half, dotted half or whole — the most common note value is a whole note, making a suspension cadence. If this is too complex, it's best to forget about it for now until you have more experience in writing with the other rules.

Watch out for direct fifths, octaves and unisons, either simultaneously, from a quarter back, a half back (sounds like football) or even a whole back, when the line is approaching simultaneous attacks anywhere, on weak halves as well as strong. Never let both lines leap to a simultaneous attack in the same direction. After the entrance of the second voice in a phrase, it's rare to find both voices attacking a unison or octave simultaneously on a strong (first or third) half. The examples below are bad. Figure out why.



The fourth species ornaments may now be used to elaborate any line moving down by step in half notes, i.e.



to use more than two in a row, nor too many at all, since it makes the line too lacy, complicated and jejeune.

Text Setting

Each counterpoint line will be a setting of a text. At the end of this supplement are some short Latin texts suitable for setting in this style. You may choose your own text, providing it is not in English, providing it is sacred, and providing you clear it with me. Each phrase of a composition will set one particular phrase of text; within each phrase the text may be repeated freely. As seen in Supplement Five, skips to high points work best as beginnings of text repetitions. In each new musical phrase, a new text phrase is often chosen (but may be the same as the previous phrase) with distinct new musical ideas. I.e., every new musical/text phrase carries with it new musical invention. Sometimes you may want to end a composition with a long "Amen," providing the sentiment expressed in the text is something to be happy about. Alternately, you may want to do a long composition in several phrases that simply sets the word Amen over and over again in different ways.

Every note value longer than a quarter may carry a syllable of text. No eighth note can carry a syllable. A single quarter can bear a syllable, but usually only when the preceding dotted half or half-tied-to-quarter also carries a syllable, and the quarter is followed by a longer note value that also carries a syllable. Any syllable carried by a quarter note must be unstressed in relation to the syllables that surround it. For instance, you may set the word "Kyrie" in the rhythm ♩·♩♩ or the word "Gloria" as ♩♩♩ — Since the word "Maria" has a stress on "ri," you will not want to set that syllable on a quarter note.

A syllable may change on the first of a string of quarters, but not in the middle of a string of quarters; nor may it change on the FIRST longer note after the string of quarters.

The last syllable in a phrase of text should be taken by the cadence tone; this rule overrides the one stated directly above.

You may use repeated notes **IN MODERATION** when you use note values of halves or greater if and only if a new syllable is sung when the note repeats. Don't overuse this. When repeated tones occur, they are usually in material that opens a phrase before the second voice enters, and in subsequent imitations or quotations of the same thematic material.

Consider the accents of the syllable changes and the stress patterns of the text as resources for rhythmic variety and flexibility — that is, as another dimension for "counterpoint." It is not necessary to put text accents always on strong halves, despite what your mother told you. It is idiomatic, especially in Lassus, to create cross-metric patterns with them. See especially *Cantiones* #1.

Imitation

You took Music HUM, didn't you? So you know what imitation is. Not only that, it's the sincerest form of flattery (and the flattest form of sincerity). Actually, your instructor probably used "imitative" more than he or she used words like "music." Writing imitative counterpoint is not as scary as one thinks it is, peering in from the outside. Imitative parts merely imitate, they don't have to share lodging and make breakfast for each other.

You are not going to write strict canons in this class. Imitation is much less strict than canonical writing. What will be most important in your imitative writing will be the openings of new phrases, which are normally imitated literally, but can be imitated at inversions, in retrogrades, in augmentation and in diminution. If you feel lucky, you can try one of the more complex ones. Otherwise, stick with imitating at the octave or unison, or at any other diatonic interval, providing that you do not end on B. Imitation at the unison and at the fifth are most common.

Imitation may be strict or it may be free. The distinction is self-evident. "Real" answers are preferred to "tonal" answers (if you don't know what this means, purge this from memory and read on). After the opening musical phrase is stated and imitated, the way you imitate is mostly free. Obviously, it pays to plan ahead. Generally, you should plan on imitating the opening up to the first text repetition, and the beginnings of subsequent repetitions of the text.

Stretto imitation is quite common in music of the late sixteenth century (even more so in the early sixteenth century) — that is, imitation in which a new voice is added before the previous voice finishes the theme. See the Lassus *Cantiones* and the beginnings later given in this Supplement. Don't make all your lines move stepwise at all times — these lines lack profile. When moving in long note values, larger skips are helpful and give a thematic profile to a line.

Remember *Valde Honorandus Est* from Supplement 5? (Pregnant pause, shuffling of papers) Here's how Palestrina began that piece (the lower voice sounds an octave lower than notated):

Val - de ho - - - no - ran - dus est, - - - - -

Val - de ho - - - no - ran - dus est, - - - - - val - - - - -

Find the "dissonant dot" that Palestrina turns into a cambiata. This is not explicitly allowed in our list of rules, but you may use it, since Palestrina did.

And here's a little imitative development of *the bread that descended from heaven*:

Hic est pa---nis de ca-----lo de-----scen-dens

Hic est pan--is de ca-----lo de---scen-dens

Openings of pieces

Here are some openings to try for starters in imitation:

"Ave Maria" (repeat as often as needed)

A---ve Ma-ri-----a,

A--

"Gloria" (repeat as often as needed)

Glo-----

Glo-----ri-a, Glo-----

"Amen" (repeat as often as needed)

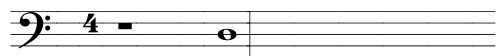
A---

A--men, A-----

"Patrem omnipotentem" (repeat as often as needed)



Pa -- trem om - ni - po

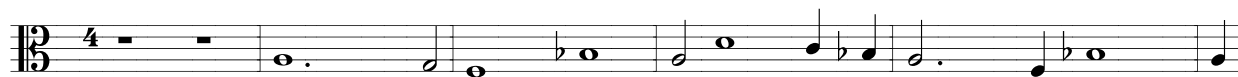


Pa -

"Kyrie eleison" (repeat as often as needed)



Ky- --- ri - e E --- lei- --- son

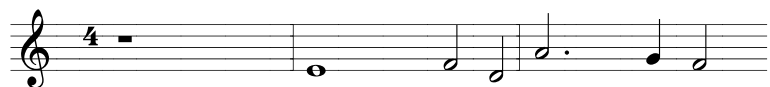


Ky- --- ri - e E --- lei- --- son

"Cum Sancto Spiritu" (repeat as often as needed) *Non-strict imitation*



Cum Sanc-to Spir- --- i- --- tu

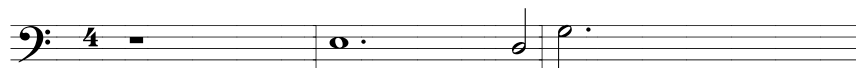


Cum Sanc-to Spir- ---

"Requiem" (repeat as often as needed)



Req- --- ui - em, Req- --- ui -



Req- --- ui - em,

Exercise: Find a correct interval of imitation and delay of imitation for the Palestrina *Sanctus* melody given at the beginning of Supplement 5:



San- --- ctus, San- ---

Sample Latin texts

Ave Maria,
Gratia Plena.
Dominus tecum,
Virgo serena.

*Hail Mary,
Full of grace.
God is with you,
Serene virgin.*

Agnus Dei
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Miserere nobis.

*Lamb of God,
Who takes away the sins of the world
Have mercy on us.*

Kyrie Eleison
Christe Eleison
Kyrie Eleison

*Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy*

Benedictus
Qui venit
In nomine Deus

*Blessed
Is he who comes
In the name of the Lord.*

Gloria
In excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax
Hominibus bonae voluntatis

*Glory
To God in the highest
And on earth
Peace, good will towards men.*

Credo in unum Deum
Patrem omnipotentem
Factorem coeli et terrae
Visibilium omnium et invisibilium

*I believe in one God
the Father almighty
Maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.*

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth
Pleni sunt coeli et terra
Gloria eius.

*Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of Sabaoth
heaven and earth are full
of your glory.*

Requiem æternam
Dona eis Domine.

*Eternal rest
Give them, Lord.*

Cum Sancto Spiritu
In gloria Dei Patris
Amen. *Amen.*

*With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father,*