



Modal Counterpoint: Renaissance Style

By Peter Schubert

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An exceptional text for undergraduate and graduate music students, *Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style* uses a wide variety of carefully graded exercises to present guidelines for writing and analyzing 16th-century music. The only species counterpoint text that draws directly on Renaissance treatises, it provides a conceptual framework to guide students through composition and analysis as it teaches them general structural principles. With stylistically diverse examples including not only motets and mass movements but also French chansons, German chorale settings, English canzonets, Italian madrigals, and Spanish organ hymns, villancicos, and ricercars, the book gives students a "real-life" feel for the subject. It distinguishes between technical requirements ("hard" rules) and stylistic guidelines ("soft" rules), and includes coordinated exercises that allow students to develop their skills systematically. The concluding chapters provide the formal and conceptual building blocks for longer pieces and encourage students to understand analysis and composition as complementary activities. By the end of the book, students are writing real compositions, not just drill exercises. The text also features progressively graded exercises, historical asides that explain important topics and issues of the period, and some notes in the preface on using the book in the classroom. Combining the historical accuracy of "style-oriented" texts with the more systematic species counterpoint approach, this book offers a unique alternative to other methods.

Now in its second edition, *Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style* integrates improvisation activities and new repertoire examples into many chapters; revises the chapter on three-part writing (Chapter 14) so that it pays more attention to rules and strategies; reworks the chapters on cadences (Chapter 10) and on writing two parts in mixed values (Chapter 11) to make them more accessible to students; incorporates clarified instructions throughout; and includes a summary of rules.

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Editorial Review

Review

"There is no other textbook in modal counterpoint quite like it. Schubert's innovative division of rules into "hard" (rules never to be violated) and "soft" (rules that may be violated if the occasion demands) has proven very useful in the classroom, and his warm-up exercises for each species are quite helpful. This certainly ranks among the best music theory textbooks of the past ten years."--Anton Vishio, *Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, New York University*

"This is one of the most successful textbooks in any area of music I have used in sixteen years of university teaching. It is also remarkably well edited. Its format is both instructor- and student-friendly. This is a book of inspired musicality, pragmatic pedagogy, scholarship, and wit."--Jeff Perry, *Louisiana State University*

About the Author

Peter Schubert is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Music at McGill University, Montreal.

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