

STANDARD HARMONY

15 Sets of Harmony Exercises for SMMS/RSAMD

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Introduction

These 15 sets of exercises, with explanatory notes, combine to make a progressive course in standard harmony starting with Triad construction and culminating in more advanced Bach Chorale harmonisations.

The course consists of 60 ½ hours of taught lessons. Sets 1 to 7 are designed to be taught in weekly lessons of one hour with a ratio of about ten students to one teacher. The exercises in these sets are designed to be completed within the lesson time. Sets 8 to 15 are designed to be taught in weekly tutorials of a ½ hour with a ratio of about three students to one teacher. The exercises in these sets are designed to be completed as home-work in between tutorials.

The course assumes a starting level of knowledge commensurate with ABRSM Grade V theory although the first lessons on Triad construction are pitched a little lower than this. However, the course does move forward quite quickly and despite the considerable amount of consolidation and revision exercises involved, individual teachers will want to gauge the pace of delivery carefully. For SMMS the course will last three years from S3 to S6 and will articulate with other courses in Text Setting, Free Composition, Figured Bass and Fugue. Sets 11 and 14 have been devised to provide folios of work which could be used for OCR A level music submissions in accordance with the new syllabus introduced in 2008, although the “unseen” class tests for these folios have not been provided for in these sets.

For the RSAMD Junior Academy of Music the course could be delivered in a similar way to SMMS or be used as supplementary material by individual teachers who may wish to “fast track” younger, advanced students or “consolidate” older, less advanced students.

For RSAMD undergraduate students these exercise could be seen as a resource which can be “dipped into” as individual students and tutors see fit. A Supplement has been provided consisting of lists of stock progressions and recommended methodology which will be of help to the student who does not work through these sets from start to finish.

It is possible for a student to work through these sets of exercises without a teacher but the input provided by an experienced teacher is invaluable. There are many ideas and issues touched upon in this course which invite discussion and further exploration and this is best lead by a teacher.

Furthermore, many teachers will disagree with some of the ideas expressed or the order in which they are introduced. Such disagreements and the discussions which follow are often most interesting and a rewarding aspect of education.

Contents:

Set 1, 5 lessons:

- 1: Primary Triad Construction.
- 2: Secondary Triad Construction.
- 3: Use of Primary and Secondary Sevenths.
- 4: Principles of Chord Choice.
- 5: Class Test.

Set 2, 5 lessons:

- 1: Construction of a Four-Part Texture,
- 2: Construction of a Four-Part Texture; Exercises.
- 3: Construction of Perfect and Imperfect Cadences.
- 4: Construction of Interrupted and Plagal Cadences.
- 5: Class Test.

Set 3, 3 lessons:

- 1: Principles of Voice-Leading.
- 2: Use of Inversions.
- 3: Class Test.

Set 4, 3 lessons:

Three Revision Exercises.

Set 5, 7 lessons:

- 1: Revision Exercise.
- 2: Principles of Passing Notes.
- 3: Principles of Suspensions.
- 4: Stock Progressions a).
- 5: Stock Progressions b).
- 6: Stock Progressions c).
- 7: Class Test.

Set 6, 5 lessons:

- 1: Principles of Modulation a).
- 2: Principles of Modulation b).
- 3: Stock Progressions in Extra Keys.
- 4: Class Test a).
- 5: Class Test b).

Set 7, 7 lessons:

Seven Revision Exercises.

Set 8, 6 lessons:

- 1: Revision Exercise.
- 2: Chromatic Adjustments to Standard Cadences a).
- 3: Chromatic Adjustments to Standard Cadences b).
- 4: Use of Chromatic Passing Notes.
- 5: Class Test a).
- 6: Class Test b).

Set 9, 6 lessons:

- 1: Use of the Passing Six-Three.
- 2: Use of the Circle of Fifths.
- 3: Use of the Chromatic Circle of Fifths.
- 4: Use of Secondary Dominants.
- 5: Class Test a).
- 6: Class Test b).

Set 10, 6 lessons:

- 1: Recommended Method.
- 2: Introduction to Chromatic Harmony.
- 3: Use of the Diminished Seventh and the Dominant Minor Ninth.
- 4: Use of the Neapolitan Sixth.
- 5: Use of the Augmented Sixth (Italian).
- 6: Class Test.

Set 11, 7 lessons:

Six Exercises which could constitute a folio for examination submission. (The seventh lesson would be used for an “unseen” test, not produced with this Set).

Set 12, 6 lessons:

- 1: Revision Exercise a).
- 2: Revision Exercise b).
- 3: Use of the German Sixth.
- 4: Use of the French Sixth.
- 5: Features Idiosyncratic of Bach a).
- 6: Features Idiosyncratic of Bach b).

Set 13, 6 lessons:

Bach Chorales a). Six Exercises with an introduction to Chorale Setting and the collection by Riemenschneider.

Set 14, 8 lessons:

Bach Chorales b). Seven Exercises which could constitute a folio of chorale harmonisations for examination submission. (The eighth lesson would be used for an “unseen” test, not produced with this Set).

Set 15, 8 lessons:

Bach Chorales c). Eight exercises consisting of more difficult chorale settings.

Supplement.

Consisting of notes and examples from the Sets of Exercises.