

# INTELLECTUAL COUNTERPOINT

## ORGANIC DOMAIN GRAMMAR

### TOTAL CONNECTIVITY

#### SUMMARY

As opposed to dry/textural counterpoint done for effect, intellectual counterpoint strives to achieve true semantic possibility, encoding and communication of ideas through the interaction of voices. Music indeed has the power to objectively communicate information, but it needs a rich and formalized language to do so: counterpoint between audible, distinguishable voices - and then one must know how to "read it". Intellectual counterpoint is one of two main axioms in the New Style (alongside collage) - designed to maintain continuity of contrapuntal mastery (middle ages > madrigals > Palestrina > Bach > Grosse/Hammerklavier > Salome > Carter/Boulez, etc.), "grounding NS" in each domain, and functioning as an objective messenger of information about the subject. The more explicit legitimizes the decisions made within the counterpoint.

While the ideal ensemble range is of duo/trio/quartet/octet-size, it has been extended to "group processes" of 100 voices or more, allowing for more reification potential, information and effect.

#### **EXAMPLES:** + Total Connectivity

Action layered onto slow motion action (Cocteau - 'Le Sang D'Un Poete')

Appropriation object

Appropriation of another voice's motif

Axiom - clashing (individuality)

Axiom - social (shared by all voices)

Barrier/extreme - voice(s) behave toward/in an extreme of music (reactions(q))

Cause and effect

Contrary motion as 'opposite', reversal, dialectic

Convergence + parallelism (using certain interval)

Convergence, external - 2 voices

Convergence, external - all voices

Criticism of line, object by another (related to irony)

Derivation that opens new gateway

Deviation

Deviation, introduced by small discrepancy in one voice

Distillation, simplification

Dominant voice switch

External parody

Form - embed of general form (and thus 'task')

Form - embed of variation set (organic variation set)

Form - tempo simultaneities (may happen infrequently)

Gesture - contradiction, between voices or internally

Growing courage of assertion (consonance from dissonance, etc)

Harmonic irony, once sets are established (the nature/timing of deviations)

Harmonic regimentation - explicit, as event

Harmony - appoggiaturas from pitch-set tones/chords

Harmony - dissonant juxtaposition of transpositions of initial set

Harmony, set - extraction of interval to use elsewhere (vs. notes)

Harmony, set - subset, dissolving set into subsets

Harmony, set - transposition of initial set into all other keys

Imitation - external 'contagion' ('rippling through')

Ironic deviation from established grammar

Ironic style injection

Juxtaposition

Light assertion of motif or chord, then deeper voicing + forte ('deepening')

Metamorphosis, internal (one voice)

Metric modulation, juxtaposition

Motif - transposition + stagger (fugue)

Negation

Puns - doubly-functioning objects

Questioning by one voice of a social axiom (an axiom in all other voices)

Quote

Quote + answering quote from different source

Range domains - once an inst crosses into range, it acts differently

Register change

Repetition + reinterpretation

Role switch

Splicing a single melody among voices (could mean interruption or cooperation)

Staggered dynamic expression in different voices (opposing swells, ebbs)

Stratification  
 Suspension + external action  
 Suspension + external action, then role switch  
 Tempo - halftime/double-time  
 Transformation - inversion  
 Transformation - retrograde  
 Transformation - transposition  
 Transgressions  
 Turning point  
 Unchanging element (passacaglia, 'Unanswered Question')  
 Voice crossing  
 Voice individuality = each voice as individual, with behavior and idiom  
 Voices - division into subsets + idiom (individuality idea but in subsets)  
 Wit - see 'musical humor', esp. higher forms of it

## TOTAL CONNECTIVITY

### SUMMARY

Total connectivity states that any idea/element within the context of the whole composition, affects the whole, must be accountable to the whole, and can only be fully understood in light of the whole. This compositional “butterfly effect” births sub-ideas like logic, connectedness, inevitability, accountability, proportion, balance, acknowledgement, micro/macrocasm, tension/resolution, “turning point” and others. It is the “thinking composition”, ethical and intellectual, able, ideally to explain the meaning of every note - realized in 2012’s “intellectual counterpoint”. Connectivity encourages the development of music as a meaningful, tangible language, and treating it/using it as such.

The principle is surprisingly inclusive - “everything must be possible” in composition, in so far as it is a logical consequence of events before or is dealt with/reconciled afterwards.

NS-proper’s combinatorial domain evolves toward a complex system - interconnected, reacting, where any idea in it affects the whole, (even perhaps disproportionately). This is also represented in the idea web. Connectivity’s ethical streak - “accountability”, is represented in “theoretical possibilities” rigorous approach toward choice and the risk of the arbitrary, “generalization”, the goal of “unequivocal representation” in reification, justification, and intellectual counterpoint’s role as ‘primary axiom’ (alongside collage).

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#### Generalization/New Style significance:

##### NS:

NS as a complex system - any idea in it affects the whole, perhaps disproportionately = *interconnected*  
 Genius in music  
 Total connectivity = precursor to “infinite combinatorics” and “appropriate interactions between reifications” in NS  
 Also: *Justification* - “accountability” ....an impossibly high standard?  
 Reification *is* justification = ideally every (nameable) parameter is justified against the subject  
 = Tone-editing in its early, “small” use  
 A process of due diligence in composition  
 Developing variation in truest form = everything metaphoric = “metaphoric web”

##### Generalization:

NS as complex system  
 Infinite combinatorics, superpositions/choice problem  
 “Complete justifiability” complete developmental rigor (subjective criteria?)  
 “Relatedness” barrier of development - crosses into metaphoric insistence at increasingly remote levels  
 Disclaimer: presence of development is built into NS, but *not necessarily into the reification*  
 the lack of unity or development in an NS reification *is an option implied by the development/connectivity parameter*  
 + Negative generalization: no...

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**Total Connectivity:** Any idea/element is within the context of the whole composition, affects the whole.

Any element within the whole can only be fully understood in *light of the whole*.

This compositional “Butterfly Effect” births sub-ideas like inevitability, accountability, proportion, balance, acknowledgement, micro/macrocasm, tension/resolution etc.

“**The thinking composition**” - the intellectual aspect of music, the semantic aspect

The evolution of musical material through the duration of the composition

To create musical meaning by explicit acknowledgement and manipulation of musical material/interaction

To develop music as a meaningful language, and treating it/using it as such

Logic, connectedness, inevitability

Abstract music has a program *within itself* based on its own symbols and elements of meaning it creates

Total connectivity, counterintuition, symbolism, form and long-line are the *dramatic system* for abstract music

To infuse as much meaning into a composition as possible - the management of meaning

“Anything is possible” through accountability/total connectivity

Retroactive connectivity: any musical material, in light of the piece it created, seems profound and pregnant with meaning

“The end/whole piece” is present in the beginning

Simultaneous micro (small note-note drama) and macro (plot) views of work - micro view expands time, giving each interaction more meaning

**Accountability:** Legitimizing any compositional decision is possible: Bach: “everything must be possible” (lawful composition)  
 Meta-orientation, self-referential - music about itself  
 this is a key element to the mature style, where any aspect can be reconciled and meta-orientation allows for any “style”  
 treat the element as a fact and consider what the *implications* for the rest of the composition are

Logical conclusions of a decision/element: what does the decision mean for the composition?

Does it change the definition of the composition?

Does it change the direction the composition will go in?

Does it plant a seed to be explored later in the composition?

Does it present a problem to be solved?

**“Turning Points”:** a point where the composition can no longer act as it did before

(“The moment when...”: changes everything – think dramatically/socially)

Why? task/programmatic reason? textual reason?

musical reason? is a new musical element/gesture the reason?

Change Part: Change an aspect that is consistent everywhere else, making a certain part unique

Directionality Change: At specific moment, reverse the common directional tendencies of the work  
 (or a part) (*reversing gravity*)

The most extreme “infamous moment” is a complete turning point/change of assumptions

Turning points don’t necessarily mean change of ensemble or cinematography etc. - but idea/axiom/character  
 (Although new orchestration or audio-size is the most immediate)

“Resolution” as a concept - is intangible - “due diligence”, consideration, etc.

Balance/Counterbalance: weight, preparation and reaction (the idea that everything dissonant/odd is resolved)

Resolving a Past “Oddity”: Create a dissonance in the work, only to recover/resolve it later

Long-Term Appoggiatura

Resolving to a note across a register shift

Variations (Enigma): Omission of main theme, leaving only the variations, or main theme appears only at end

Repeated Expansion: Repeat material/melody, each time taking one step farther to complete it, until it is complete (or not)

Tonic Resolution:

Missing Note: The appearance of melody to complete a harmony, resolving an ambiguity by *providing the missing note(s)*

Tonic Avoidance: Implication by absence - avoiding a tonic key or chord in musical material

(setting up for a stronger resolution on tonic later)

Explicit Pedagogy:

Transparent Process: Show the composing process/train of thought through the composition

Flaws: Leave in flaws as a humanizing influence or as material for composer’s problem solving (pedagogical)

see: musical material in the new style (*meta-orientation* can create this explicit problem solving orientation)

Serialism as self-referential music

**Development, Developing Variation:** Manipulations of initial material create metaphor throughout

Variation-based worlds: worlds within a composition created with musical material

see: Joyce - the Joycean work, self-referential using any possible aspect

Metaphor

Through Inversion: Metaphoric equivalence of inverted intervals (within the octave) – one balancing/accounting for the other  
 through any development strategy (see development, object list, etc.) - ideally all of I.O. is a development process

Reinterpretation: Repeated section is somehow modified from its last appearance (ornamented, emotional difference, different instrument etc.)

New Axiom

Non-Literal Repetition (Orchestral): Distribute a literal repetition among multiple instruments (ex: 1st and 2nd violin, flute/oboe etc.)

Reinterpretation by Character: composer (also: performer) *reinterprets* repeated section based on different emotion to be communicated

Reinterpretation by Increasing Emotion: Literal repetition of a verse in song is invigorated by increased intensity in delivery

De-Capo Aria: Reinterpretation as a measure of skill (ornamentation, cadenza)

Ascent into Higher Register: Increase intensity of repetition by transposing into higher register (*climactic*)

also: transposition, reharmonizing, directionality, etc.

Non-Word Section/Reinterpretation: Non-word sounds (la, la) etc. replace a melody, on outro/reinterpretation/new section

Reinterpretation (Pitch Level): Repetition of line/phrase/word at higher pitch levels each time (ascending) or descending

New Theme (Existing Harmony/Contrafact): Invent a new theme over the same harmonic progression, thus casting new light on the harmony

Size Juxtaposition: Several “sizes” of the same musical material juxtaposed/layered (augmented (2x, 4x), diminished (1/2x, 1/4x), original, etc.)

Augmented material against/under the original

Transformation: transfiguration, objects, morphologies

Multi-Movement: (“movement” could apply to verse/section/part/songs etc. – any division)

Cyclical Review/Finale: Central aspects of previous movements are worked out/developed within the final movement

Cyclical Theme: Developed/transformed themes open each successive movement, increasing cohesiveness/relatedness/continuity

**Refraction/Tone-Editing:** Holistic transformation over the whole composition creates perceived stylistic unity

“Smoothing” the disparate ideas in a work into a more unified style, idea and ensemble

blanket axiom, etc.

weaving a new element/modular element into the whole effectively

see: NS, where tone-editing has been elevated in importance/significance/power

**Preparation:** Elements do not exist for their own sake, but always to prepare the next event

**see: preparatory theory, supersession**

Preconditioning: Create an expectation within a work – once created, it can be modified, dashed, played with/against, reinforced/exposed

In a classical sonata (also in jazz), this comes with exposition of the long-line, which is then developed and reinterpreted

Subconscious Planting: Plant an idea in the mind of the listener, preparing for a full exposition of it at a later time

intro/prelude before long-line/theme is revealed - formally, you could even wait until the end to expose the full theme

Foreshadowing: Hints or parts/geneses of an event/idea/emotion to materialize in full later in the work

Foreshadow the first theme in the introduction, by hiding as secondary feature of the intro

(in the accompaniment, or fragmented etc.)

Foreshadowing (Understatement): Present important musical material as unimportant,

to emerge with full significance later (subversive)

Pre-Development (Preparatory): Develop musical material *before* the original has been stated

Examples:

“Foil” (Preparation by Contrast): Prepare for a musical event by presenting material of an opposite nature right before it

Calm Before Drama: Calm or static atmosphere created before section of drama/climax (instrument solo, chorus, vocal ad-libs)

Staticity After Action: Timeless/static/held atmosphere placed after a section of momentum (disorienting)

Light Before Heavy: Light/“friendlier” version of intense event directly before its arrival (ironic foreshadowing)

“Clues” of Underlying Emotion: An underlying emotion is portrayed by small events placed throughout a section/piece

“Implication by Absence” - prepare something by its lack, or exalt something by not referencing it (also a philo/dramatic concept)

**Supersession:** Create a larger/more meaningful interaction after an event, joining it into a larger process (essentially loop breaking)

Long-line subsuming: treat modular event material as transitory part of a longer arc/process

Loop breaking: resisting material’s impulse to dwell on itself – instead emphasizing progress to larger goal

supersession defeats inductive reasoning (because it reveals an outer-context that was unable to be seen from/in the previous condition)

the listener is tempted into inductive reasoning, assuming that the current state will remain consistent (or that it is supreme)

inductive reasoning is defeated b/c of an inability to be sure about *all* cases or contexts

**Other Time-Based/Dramatic Ideas:**

Flashback: Quoting part of a previous section/movement in current one (reinterpret?) - contrast

Post-Echoes: Less potent/different incarnations of a previous event (echoes, reflections, after-images etc.)

Orchestral Echoes (Ripple Effect): An action in one instrument/voice causes others to imitate/react (the initial action ripples through the others)

Sequester Then Unite: Keep two parts of musical material (and their respective developments) apart - *until a key time* to meet and interact

Takeover: Gradual upheaval of one aesthetic/idea by a subsidiary one (how? – many ways to “take over”/emerge)

**Sequence/Event-Based Expectations:** An “event 1” foreshadows the coming of “event 2” through their joining in a previous segment

This is a listener expectation that can be played with:

Omit “event 2”      Change “event 2”      Separate “event 1” and “event 2”      Reverse their order, etc

A new cause creates familiar effect (replace event 1)

**Macrocosm/Microcosm:** An idea/emotion/structure/social dynamic etc. is represented in larger/smaller scale

*Overlapping?* Directly juxtaposed? Before or after?)

An idea/emotion/structure/social dynamic etc. is reflected in different levels throughout the work as implications/symptoms of larger dynamic (total connectivity – every element colors/effects every other)

Growth: An element grows in presence/impact/proportion throughout the work (or shrinks/weakens)

Microcosm (Preparatory): Presenting an interaction on a smaller scale, anticipating/preparing listener for the macro version

Microcosm (Chord>Key): Chord progression transfigured upward into *modulation scheme*

Microcosm (Melody>Key): Modulatory scheme for a work as a reflection of pitch sequence in melody – each note corresponds to a key

**Individuation/Specific Roles of Notes/Pitches:** Individual melody note octave-transposed to become a pedal (note values taking on new roles)

Each note value has a distinct personality (all C’s etc.)

Scale Confusion: audience cannot tell between microcosm and macrocosm (2001)

allows for transition between macrocosm and zoomed microcosm within a fixed frame = ambiguity  
moment of reveal

Scale Confusion Quote: Play famous musical quote/image at different scale (volume, tempo, zoom) and eventually reveal

Scales (see Barriers/Extremes, Roads) - frequency-level, sample/micro-level, object level, meso/form level, macro, etc.

**Leitmotif**

Variations of a central theme reoccurring (the specific manner of variation is for an extramusical reason)

Style of music changes

Simplicity or complexity, dynamic transformations

Extreme gestures

Different words to the same music

“Turning points” where music can no longer be the same

No longer utilizing a style or effect because of the change

Beginning to use a style of effect because of the change

Modulations

Amount of leitmotifs and their interaction (each individually programmatically designed)