Making Students Make Music: Integrating Composition and Improvisation into the Early Music Classroom

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In his essay "Teaching Music History: Principles, Problems, and Proposals," Douglass Seaton advises teachers to "make students make music" by having them perform, compose, or simply write out scores.[1] His specific recommendations for composition assignments include Aquitanian organum, isorhythmic motets, and a mass movement based on a *soggetto cavato* on the student's own name. Seaton also proposes introducing students to historical composition assignments such as those George Frederic Handel created for England's Princess Anne.[2]

This article will provide specific examples of how this approach can be implemented in daily teaching. The authors, a musicologist and a composer, have designed and team-taught an undergraduate course in early music that integrates the studies of composition and improvisation into the traditional survey of music history. As part of this class, we have developed methodologies and exercises that not only incorporate Seaton's suggestions, but also extend their principles to other genres.

The exercises require students to demonstrate fluency in major musical styles from the Medieval through the Baroque Period by analyzing, interpreting, and then reconstructing significant compositions and improvisations. Some of the resources designed for this approach were inspired by pedagogical manuals such as the *Scolica enchiriadis*. Adhering to Seaton's adage that the history of

1. Douglass Seaton, "Teaching Music History: Principles, Problems, and Proposals," in *Vitalizing Music History Teaching*, ed. James R. Briscoe, Monographs & Bibliographies in American Music 20 (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2010), 70–71.
2. See "Handel's Lessons for Princess Anne: Thoroughbass and Fugue," in Alfred Mann, *Theory and Practice: The Great Composer as Student and Teacher* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 21–39.

music is the music itself,"[3] the majority of the tasks are drawn directly from music literature, from compositional procedure in Guillaume de Machaut's *Messe de Nostre Dame* to improvisational practice in Corelli's Violin Sonata, op. 5, no. 1. The assignments generally take around ten minutes to introduce in class. Students report that it takes them approximately thirty minutes to complete each assignment between classes.

All of the assignments follow the same three-step plan. In the first step, the students analyze the original composition for important stylistic characteristics. The compositional models discussed below have been selected from the *Norton Anthology of Western Music*,[4] examples from Seaton's *Ideas and Styles in the Western Musical Tradition*, and from other pieces, but the methodology presented in this article could be applied to any works. The analyses typically begin with an examination of the melodic contour and tessitura of each scored voice. When applicable, the students analyze the counterpoint for uses of consonance, dissonance, and voice-leading, and also examine rhythmic structures. For vocal works, the students will often analyze the text setting.

In the middle step, the students reinforce the concepts found in their analyses by composing their own works in the same musical style. Step-by-step instructions are aligned with the analysis so that the students associate specific musical functions with the terms and concepts. Clear guidelines allow the students to be creative while detailing easily accomplishable goals. By employing compositional practices that are directly related to the theoretical principles established in the analyses, the students transcend theory by applying those rules in practice. Theoretical terms and concepts come to life as having specific musical implications rather than existing as disconnected terminology.

The final step requires the students to analyze their compositions, following the exact same procedures they used to analyze the model in the first step. This allows the students to confirm that the styles of their compositions are consistent with the musical style of the original work. If their analyses reveal errors in the compositional style, the students can make the necessary revisions to their assignments and reanalyze the works as many times as it takes to master each style.

In addition to building self-editing skills, requiring the students to analyze their own work facilitates quick grading—especially for musicologists who may otherwise feel uncomfortable grading composition. The instructor grades the students' analyses rather than their compositions. If an analysis is accurate, and

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3. Seaton attributes this quote to an unnamed but "wise music history teacher" from his own undergraduate experience. Douglass Seaton, *Ideas and Styles in the Western Musical Tradition*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xix, and "Teaching Music History," 63.

4. J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca, eds., *Norton Anthology of Western Music*, 6th ed., vol. 1 (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

if that analysis shows that the student composition follows the same compositional rules as the model, then the assignment is deemed to be satisfactory.

Gregorian Chant

The melodic and structural characteristics of plainchants are introduced through the monophonic "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor" (**Example 1**).[5] The initial steps of the Gregorian chant assignment address melodic contour by having the students circle all leaps larger than a third and label the corresponding interval above the staff (4, 5, etc.). The students also note the frequency of those leaps. In the "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor," there are only three leaps larger than a third: one perfect fourth and two perfect fifths. Recognizing the infrequency of leaps emphasizes the importance of conjunct motion in the construction of Gregorian chant. These same rules will, of course, govern melodic writing well into the Renaissance. In the incipit preceding the example, the students write the highest and lowest pitches of the entire melody in stemless noteheads. This general tessitura, they will learn later in the assignment, corresponds to the *ambitus*.

Example 1: The monophonic "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor," with a sample analysis. The boxes represent items that the students circle in their analyses. The students also provide the tessitura.

The next part of the assignment addresses additional aspects of the ecclesiastical modes. The students identify the first tone and the cadential tone for each of the Kyrie's three sections. In the "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor," the cadential tone of the first two sections (D) is the final, while the cadential tone of the third section (A) is a co-final. A quick analysis shows that the first tone of each

5. See Liber usualis, ed. the Benedictines of Solesmes (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée, 1938), 25; Burkholder and Palisca, *Norton Anthology*, 11; and Seaton, *Ideas and Styles*, 42.

of the three sections is also either the final (D) or the co-final (A). The students also identify the pitch around which the majority of the melodic patterns are oriented, specifically in the first half of each section. This allows them to recognize that the co-final (A) also serves as the dominant in this particular chant. Once they establish the ambitus (D-C'), the final (D), and the dominant (A) of "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor," the students can identify the chant as being in Mode 1.[6]

In the final portion of the analysis, the students identify the text setting by circling any syllables that are set as melismas. They find that the last syllable of "Kyrie," the first syllable of "eleison," and the last syllable of "Christe" are all set melismatically, while the remainder of the text is set syllabically.

In the composition component of the assignment, the students are given a blank set of staves and are instructed to compose their own Kyries in the same style as "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor." Any leaps larger than a third must be similar in size and frequency to those the students identified in their analyses. The remainder of the motion should be primarily conjunct, with perhaps a few leaps of a third. Since the students are instructed to compose their Kyries in Mode 1, they must use the same ambitus as "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor." Of particular importance is making sure that the first tone and cadential tone of each of the three sections is either the co-final/dominant (A) or the final (D). The dominant (A) should play a central role in each section by acting as a structural pitch. Lastly, the syllables that are melismatic in "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor" must be set melismatically, while the rest of the text should be set syllabically.

The final component of the assignment asks the students to analyze their own compositions in order to confirm that their work is stylistically similar to the original. The students circle and identify any leaps larger than a third, notate the tessitura, and use the ambitus, final, and dominant to establish the mode. Finally, they circle the syllables in their Kyries that are set melismatically.[7]

Florid Organum

The florid organum assignment builds on the melodic principles of the Gregorian chant assignment to create a melodic trope over "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor,"[8] using the well-known version from the *Codex Calixtinus* as a model

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6. For a table of the eight ecclesiastical modes, see Seaton, *Ideas and Styles*, 36.

7. A subsequent monophonic secular song assignment (not included in this article) builds on the melodic constructs of the Gregorian chant assignment while adding the structure of *Bar* form, using Walther von der Vogelweide's *Minnelied* "Palästinalied" as a model.

8. In-class exercises that precede the florid organum assignment ask students to compose short parallel organum works based on models from the *Musica* and *Scolica enchiriadis*, as

(**Example 2**).[9] Unlike the Gregorian chant assignment, in which the students analyze and then compose entire chants, the students analyze only the first half of the polyphonic "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor." For the second half, they are given the original tenor, over which they compose their own *duplum*.

Example 2: The polyphonic "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor," with a sample analysis. The students compose a new solution to the second half based on their analysis of the first half.

The assignment begins by using the techniques introduced in the Gregorian chant assignment to analyze the melodic contour of the *duplum* (disregarding any leaps separated by a bar line in our edition) and identifying the tessitura of each voice. The students then analyze the polyphonic "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor" for harmonic content and voice-leading. On blanks provided above each system, the students identify which intervals are used at the beginnings of each of the first four phrases, which correspond to the first four words of text ("Cunctipotens genitor Deus omni"), as well as which intervals are used at

well as a free organum trope based on the "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor" from *Ad organum faciendum*.

9. See José López-Calo, *La música medieval en Galicia* (Corunna, Spain: Fundación Pedro Barrie de la Maza, 1982), 51.

the ends of each phrase. The students find that each phrase begins on a unison or fifth and ends on a unison or octave. The students then analyze "internal cadences," meaning those that fall on the changes in the tenor. In this example, the internal cadences are all either fifths or octaves, with a sixth in the second system that quickly resolves outward to an octave. Demonstrating that certain intervals are used in very specific contexts introduces the concept of harmonic function.

After analyzing the harmonic content, the students examine the harmonic motion, or voice-leading. They add arrows in the space between the staves to show the directions from which each pitch in the tenor, and its corresponding pitch in the *duplum*, are approached. These arrows allow the students to quickly label the type of harmonic motion used to approach each syllable of text by adding "C" for contrary motion, "O" for oblique motion, "P" for parallel motion, and "S" for similar motion below the staff. As the students discover, there are only two kinds of motion used in this work: contrary and oblique.

The composition portion of the assignment asks the students to create a new *duplum* to complete the excerpt. While the students are adding only one voice, they are forced to address not only melodic contour, but also harmonic content and voice-leading. Like the first half of the excerpt, the second half is comprised of four phrases: one for "creator" and three for the original melisma on "eleison." The students must use the appropriate intervals for the beginnings and endings of phrases, as well as for all internal cadences. The students find that they often have limited choices. Each phrase must begin on a unison or fifth and cadence on a unison or octave. The majority of internal cadences must be perfect intervals, as well. Once the students decide how to approach the cadences, all that is left is to fill in the rest of the *duplum* with free melodic writing similar to what the students already crafted for the monophonic Kyrie, staying within the tessitura.

When analyzing their work, the students follow the same procedure as above to label tessitura, melodic contour, harmonic content, and voice-leading. The limited nature of the melodic and harmonic tendencies of this excerpt makes it easy for the students—and later the instructor—to quickly identify errors.[10]

10. A two-part substitute clausula assignment builds on the contrapuntal techniques established in the florid organum assignment by adding rhythm—specifically rhythmic modes. It is instructive to introduce Notre Dame organum duplum by comparing the "Benedicamus Domino" setting that appears in manuscript in the Seaton textbook (p. 70) with a modern transcription. The original organum duplum can then be compared with a variety of substitute clausulae. This same tenor later appeared in several motets, including two from the *Montpellier Codex*: "Ave virgo/Ave glorioso/Domino" and "Pucelete/Je langui/Domino."

Polyphonic Mass

The "Kyrie Cunctipotens Genitor" melody also provides the foundation for a four-part polyphonic mass assignment in which the students complete the *triplum* to the first "Kyrie" of Machaut's *La Messe de Nostre Dame* (**Example 3a**).[11] The students are given the first fourteen measures in their entirety and then the remaining thirteen measures without the original *triplum*. As with the previous assignment, the students are asked to fill in the missing music with a new melodic line that is melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically appropriate to the original composer's style.[12]

The techniques for evaluating the melodic contour and the tessituras remain the same, but a new method for analyzing harmonies is introduced. In spaces provided above the score, students identify the interval between the *triplum* and the lowest sounding voice (noting that the tenor and contratenor often cross). This analysis shows that the *triplum* is always a third, a fifth, or an octave away from the lowest voice with the exception of one passing tone.[13] In blanks below the score, the students identify each cumulative sonority as being either open (a fifth and an octave without a third) or a complete triad by writing "O" or "T." Anytime a student writes a "T," he or she is asked to circle it and note the metric placement of that sonority. The student finds that the downbeats of measures are typically open sonorities and that triadic sonorities only occur on weaker beats.

The rhythmic material found in Machaut's *La Messe de Nostre Dame* is relatively limited. While rhythm in the tenor is dictated by isorhythm, the other voices are less strict. The *triplum* is the most rhythmically active with quarter notes and syncopations. To demonstrate the limited rhythmic choices, the students are given a table that shows the eight rhythms (with four retrogrades) that comprise the rhythms of every measure in the first Kyrie (**Table 1**). Starting with the tenor, the students add a number below each measure that corresponds to its rhythm, adding an "R" to that number to designate a retrograde. They repeat the same process for the remaining three voices.

11. Guillaume de Machaut, *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 3, ed. Leo Schrade (Monaco: Éditions de L'oiseau-Lyre, 1977), 1–4 and Burkholder and Palisca, *Norton Anthology*, 127.

12. A medieval motet assignment prior to the polyphonic mass assignment expands the contrapuntal texture from two to three voices. In the compositional portion of the motet assignment, the students are given the tenor and motetus voices and are asked to compose a new triplum. By adding a single line to two existing vocal parts, the students must address the intricacies of three-part vocal writing without actually composing all three voices. An excellent model is the motet "Porta preminentie/Porta penitentie/Portas" from the *Montpellier Codex,* which again gives students the opportunity to compare an image of a manuscript in their textbook (p. 79) with a modern edition.

13. For the purposes of this exercise, we reduce the octaves to label tenths as thirds and twelfths as fifths.

Example 3a: Machaut, *La Messe de Nostre Dame*, "Kyrie," mm. 1–5, with a sample analysis (not including melodic leaps). The students analyze mm. 1–14.
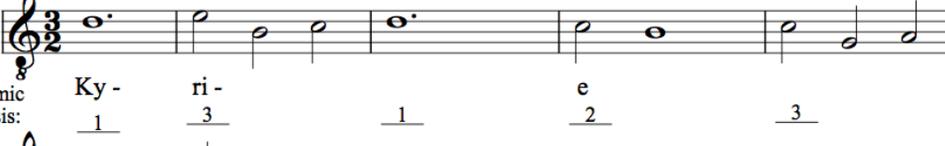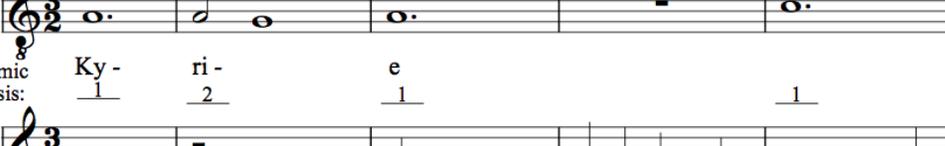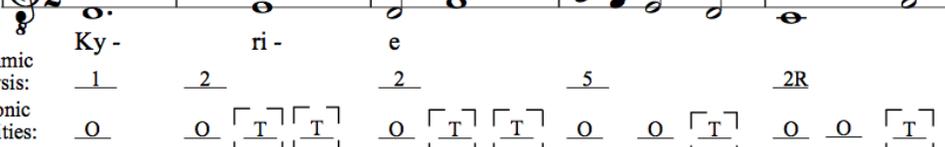
Table 1: The eight rhythms (with four retrogrades) that comprise the rhythms in the first "Kyrie" of Machaut's *La Messe de Nostre Dame*.

Once the students understand Machaut's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic style, they compose the remainder of the *triplum* in his style and then analyze their work for stylistic accuracy (**Example 3b**). Once again, the melody must move primarily stepwise and fall within the appropriate tessitura. The pitches that fall on beats must be thirds, fifths, or octaves above whichever tenor line is lowest at that point. The pitches that fall on the strong beats of every measure must support open sonorities, while the majority of pitches that fall on weak beats must contribute to triadic sonorities. The students must limit their rhythms to the eight rhythms and the four retrogrades, using each at least once.

Once the students complete the analysis of their newly composed *triplum*, the instructor simply confirms the proper melodic contour by looking at the frequency of leaps greater than a third. The instructor verifies proper harmonic content by making sure that the Os and Ts are accurate and fall on the appropriate beats. Lastly, the instructor checks to make sure that all of the rhythms come from Table 1, and that each rhythm and retrograde is used at least once.

Example 3b: Machaut, *La Messe de Nostre Dame*, "Kyrie," mm. 23–27, awaiting a new *triplum* and an analysis.

Soggetto Cavato

Following Seaton's advice, a subsequent assignment asks the students to create a *soggetto cavato* on their own names and then compose part of a four-part cantus-firmus mass in the style of Josquin des Prez's *Missa La sol fa re mi*.[14]

The students begin, as always, by analyzing the melodic contour of the example and the tessitura of each voice. Once again, the students circle any leaps larger than a third and write that interval above the staff. Beginning with this example, the students will also identify the melodic direction that follows the leap, noting whether the next pitch moves in the opposite direction, same direction, or repeats the second pitch of the leap by writing "opp.," "same," or "rep." above the staff (**Example 4a**). This is a useful tool for demonstrating that leaps larger than a third are generally followed by motion in the opposite direction.

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14. Josquin des Prez, *Opera Omnia*, I:2, ed. Albert Smijers (Amsterdam: G. Alsbach, 1957). There are two projects that bridge the gap between the polyphonic mass assignment, in which students compose one voice to complete a four-part texture, and the *soggetto cavato* assignment, in which they create all four voices. The first is a Renaissance motet assignment that introduces Renaissance panconsonance, as well as the technique of adding two new voices to two existing voices. Here, the model is the final section (mm. 121-50) of John Dunstaple's *Veni sancti spiritus/Veni creator*. The second project is a cantus-firmus mass assignment, in which the students are given one of the four voices to an excerpt from the "Gloria" of Guillaume Du Fay's *Missa Se la face ay pale* and generate another by transcribing material from Du Fay's three-part ballade "Se la face ay pale." They complete the four-part texture by composing the two other voices in Du Fay's style.

Example 4a: Josquin, Missa La sol fa re mi, "Kyrie," mm. 9-14, with a sample analysis.

In the earlier Polyphonic Mass assignment, the students are asked to identify the interval between the *triplum* and the lowest voice in spaces provided above the score. In the *soggetto cavato* assignment, they replicate this process for the *superius*, *altus*, and tenor. They also circle any dissonances (2nds, 4ths, and 7ths) in the three upper voices, labeling those pitches as passing tones ("PT"), neighbor tones ("NT"), or suspensions ("Sus.") and noting the metric placement of each dissonance. This process forces the students to make the startling revelation that there are only two dissonances in this entire excerpt—both of which are used in the exact same musical context.

Next, the students create *cantus firmi* based on their names using the *soggetto cavato* process. They do this by creating a permutation of their names (any combination of their first names, middle names, last names, nicknames, initials, etc.) that consists of either five or ten syllables. For each syllable in their names, they identify the hexachord syllable that most closely matches that vowel (**Table 2**), just as Josquin turned "Lascia fare mi" into "la sol fa re mi" and "Hercules dux Ferrariae" into "re ut re ut re fa mi re." A student who has an "A" in his or her name can choose either "fa" or "la," depending on which contributes to a smoother melodic contour alongside the other pitches.

Table 2: Solfege syllables and pitches for the five vowels.

A	E	I	O	U
fa/la	re	mi	sol	ut
F/A	D	E	G	C

The students begin the compositional process by transcribing their *cantus firmi* into the *bassus* line on the worksheet (**Example 4b**). They employ the rhythm from Josquin's *bassus*, which is provided above the staff. A student with a five-pitch *soggetto cavato* will repeat the cantus firmus twice, while a student with a ten-pitch *soggetto cavato* will use it just once. The next step is to transcribe the intervals between each of the three upper voices and the *bassus* that were identified in the analysis into the corresponding blanks above each staff. Using those structural intervals, the students compose the three upper voices by matching those intervals with pitches. Those intervals align each time the pitch in the *bassus* changes. Lastly, the students smooth the melodic lines by adding conjunct motion to Josquin's rhythms, which are again provided above each staff.

While grading the students' analyses, the instructor verifies that melodic leaps are of the same type and the same frequency as those established in the first analysis, and that the harmonic content is the same as Josquin's. The

Example 4b: The final measures of a Kyrie in the style of Josquin's *Missa La sol fa re mi*, awaiting all four voices and an analysis.

Example 5a: Praetorius, *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, mm. 1–13, with some analysis and awaiting completion.

instructor will also compare the rhythmic lines to the students' composed line to confirm the rhythm was transcribed correctly.

Chorale Motet

While the previous examples have all been mostly homorhythmic, the chorale motet assignment introduces contrapuntal imitation, using Michael Praetorius's four-part chorale motet *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* as a model (**Example 5a**).[15] Here, the students follow the now well-established methodologies for analyzing melodic contour, harmonic content, and voice-leading. What is new is the analysis of the points of imitation. Comparing Praetorius's *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* to the original chorale tune (**Example 5b**),[16] the students find that Praetorius uses the first three phrases of the chorale as points of imitation in this excerpt. To reinforce the relationship between the original chorale and Praetorius's chorale motet, the students circle the phrases in the excerpt that correspond to the phrases in the chorale melody. The students find that the first six pitches of each of the four vocal lines are identical to those of the first phrase of the chorale melody, and that this point of imitation returns in measures 5 through 7. New points of imitation, based on the contours of the first four pitches of the chorale's second and third phrases, begin in measures 8 and 10.

Example 5b: Martin Luther, "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland."

In the composition portion of the assignment, the students complete the excerpt by finishing points of imitation that are based on the second and third phrases of the chorale melody. In measure 8 of Praetorius's *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,* the second point of imitation is initiated in the second voice from the top. The students write the first five notes of the "Der Jungfrauen Kind

15. See Michael Praetorius, *Musae Sioniae, Teil V (1607)*, ed. Friedrich Blume and Hans Költzsch (Wolfenbüttel: Georg Kallmeyer Verlag, 1937), 114–15.

16. Burkholder and Palisca, *Norton Anthology*, 232. Praetorius's four-part chorale motet provides an instructive bridge between Martin Luther's monophonic adaptation of the hymn "Veni redemptor gentium" and J. S. Bach's cantata *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*. See Burkholder and Palisca, *Norton Anthology*, 713-35.

erkannt" point of imitation in the top and third voice, starting on the pitches provided. After the initial statement of the point of imitation, the students compose free counterpoint to complete the phrase. This process is repeated for the third phrase of the chorale, "Dass sich wunder alle Welt," in measures 10 through 12, with the students again being given the opening pitch. The final measures of the original except are provided to supply a cadence.

The students' analyses will demonstrate the proper use of points of imitation. The instructor should confirm that the pitches that are circled in the analysis of the newly composed voices are the first five pitches of the second and third phrases of "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland." As in previous assignments, the analysis will verify the proper use of tessitura, melodic contour, and dissonance, as well.

Palestrinian Counterpoint

The four-part textures of the previous examples are expanded to six parts in an assignment based on the Agnus Dei I from Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus Mass* (**Example 6a**).[17] The students follow the procedures established in the earlier assignments to analyze melodic contour and dissonances, again becoming aware of a remarkable absence of dissonance. When analyzing the harmonic content of the *Pope Marcellus Mass*, the students are also instructed to write the letter names of each pitch found in the harmonies in blanks provided below the score. As the texture increases with each successive entrance, the harmonies become complete triads. At times, the students may have only two pitches, as on the downbeat of measure 2 (G and D). By the downbeat of measure 4, the harmonies are complete triads. Lastly, the students return to the technique of circling the syllables in the excerpt that are set melismatically.

In the composition portion of the assignment (**Example 6b**), the students follow procedures that are parallel to the ones outlined in the earlier assignments. Leaps must be similar in size and frequency to those they identified in the analysis, which means that the voices should move mostly in stepwise motion. Leaps larger than a third must be treated in the same manner as established in the analysis: that is, followed by motion (almost always stepwise) in the opposite direction. The tessituras of each voice must be limited to Palestrina's tessituras, which allows the students to see how controlling each vocal range minimizes voice-crossing, resulting in a transparent texture. The harmonic content of the completed excerpt will reflect the harmonies outlined in the existing voices. Because of the triadic nature of the harmonies, the students are limited to just

17. *Le Opere complete di Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, Vol. 4, ed. Raffaele Casimiri (Rome: Edizione Fratelli Scalera, 1939), 194–96 and *Norton Anthology*, 263–65.

Example 6a: Palestrina, *Pope Marcellus Mass*, Agnus Dei I, mm. 1–5, with a sample analysis (not including melodic contour).

three options for pitches on any given beat. Parallel fifths and octaves must be avoided, and dissonance should be used sparingly, just as found in the analysis. Lastly, repetitions of the word "Agnus" are to be set syllabically, while the first syllable of "Dei" should be melismatic.

This assignment introduces the students to the complexity of composing Palestrinian counterpoint in a six-part texture. While such a task may seem daunting at the outset, the three existing voices that are provided create an easily identifiable harmonic framework. The student needs only to compose the remaining three voices by filling-in and doubling the harmonies that are already there. Within those existing harmonies, the students are free to focus on replicating Palestrina's melodic style. When grading the assignment, the instructor confirms the harmonic content, the proper use of dissonance, and the appropriate melodic contour.

Example 6b: Palestrina, *Pope Marcellus Mass*, Agnus Dei I, mm. 6–10, awaiting completion and analysis. Students complete mm. 6–15.

Figured Bass

Without a doubt, one of the most important innovations of the Baroque Era was the use of figured bass. To introduce the students to the principles of figured bass, we have them write-out a realization for the figured bass in Giulio Caccini's *Vedrò 'l mio sol*, using two realizations by H. Wiley Hitchcock as a

Example 7: Caccini, Vedrò 'l mio sol, mm. 25-28 and 54-57, with an analysis of both realizations. The students complete and analyze a third realization for mm. 25-35/54-64.

models (**Example 7**).[18] In blanks provided below both realizations, the students write the interval between each pitch in the right hand and the bass line, with the largest intervals on top. Any intervals larger than an octave should be reduced by an octave. By writing the complete figures for both realizations, the students are introduced to the improvisational nature of realizing figured bass. Noting the differences between each of the realizations highlights the degree of freedom for the performer. The students can also see the drastic differences between the full figures in their own analysis and the shorthand figures in Caccini's original, which of course omit thirds, fifths, and octaves. Next, the students examine the ornamental figures in both realizations, as well as in the vocal line. The students circle each ornament, giving it a number for future reference.

In creating their own realizations, the students fill in the harmonies designated by the figured bass on the first and third beats of each measure, using the standard rules of voice-leading. The students then flesh out their realizations by using the ornaments they identified in their analyses. They are instructed to use each of those ornaments at least once, but in locations different from the original. Through this process, the students begin to learn that continuo playing involves more than merely filling out harmonies. Indeed, it is a highly evolved form of improvisation that requires technical skill, theoretical knowledge, and the ability to engage in a musical dialogue with other musicians during performance.

When analyzing their own realizations, the students may draw inspiration from either of the provided realizations. In grading the assignment, the instructor can simply compare the students' work to Hitchcock's realizations. The ornaments are numbered so that the instructor only needs to verify that each ornament comes from the original model.

High Baroque Ornamentation

The ornaments that Arcangelo Corelli published in the third movement of his Violin Sonata, op. 5, no. 1 serve as an excellent model of high Baroque ornamentation.[19] In this assignment, the students are given the original, unadorned version of the first eight measures of the melody from the "Adagio" movement, as well as the embellished version (**Example 8**). The worksheet includes numbers above each distinct ornament for the students' reference and asks the students to identify whether each ornament begins with a consonance

18. Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche*, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, 1970), 81–85 and *Norton Anthology*, 393-96.

19. Arcangelo Corelli, *Zwölf Sonaten*, ed. Bernhard Paumgartner (Mainz: Schott, 1953), 10–13. See also *Les Oeuvres de Arcangelo Corelli*, Vol. 3, ed. Joseph Joachim and Friedrich W. Chrysander (London: Augener, 1890), 2–15. The ornaments in the slow movements, which were published in a 1715 reprint of the original from 1700, are presumed to be Corelli's.

Example 8: Corelli, Violin Sonata, op. 5, no. 1, 3rd mvt., mm. 1–4. The students ana-
lyze the published ornaments, suggest a second version, and realize the basso continuo
for mm. 1-8.

or dissonance, whether it ends with a consonance or dissonance, the kind of
dissonance included in the ornament (passing tone, neighbor tone, suspension,
etc.), and any other figures that are present in the ornament (a trill, etc.).

While the other assignments introduced in this article are primarily com-
positional in nature, this project deals exclusively with performance practice by
asking the students to generate their own embellished version of the melody.[20]
They begin by realizing the figured bass accompaniment, using the same pro-
cedure that was introduced in the figured bass assignment. They then write
out their own embellished violin lines using at least seven ornaments from the
model, but they may not use an ornament in the same measure as the original.
To reinforce the role of the basso continuo as a collaborative partner, the stu-
dents also complete the right hand of the continuo part with no fewer than five
of the ornaments from the original violin part.[21]

When grading the assignment, the instructor simply confirms that the cor-
rect number and variety of ornaments are used in the violin line and the right
hand of the continuo part.

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20. Other projects related to ornamentation and improvisation are based on Girolamo
dalla Casa's diminutions to Cipriano de Rore's madrigal *Tanto mi Piacque*; Claudio Monteverdi's
ornamented version of "Possento spirto" from *L'Orfeo*; and William Babel's ornaments to "Sulla
ruota di fortuna" from Handel's *Rinaldo*. These projects all tend to follow the same methodol-
ogy outlined here for the Corelli ornamentation assignment.

21. Other assignments that involve instrumental music include a keyboard transcription
inspired by William Byrd's *Pavana Lachrymae*; a fugue exposition based on J. S. Bach's Fugue
No. 21 in B-flat Major from *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*; and a Baroque dance modeled after
the Courante I from Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre's Suite in A Minor from *Pièces de
clavecin*.

Recitative

One of the final assignments introduces different techniques for expressing text in Baroque recitatives, using Alessandro Scarlatti's *Clori vezzosa, e bella* as a model (**Example 9a**).[22] The students begin by analyzing measures 44–46, circling each chromatically altered chord and identifying the word or phrase that is set to that specific harmony by writing its English translation above the staff. The students find that the most dissonant moments occur during the emotionally charged words "gioire" (joy), "pena" (suffering), and "martire" (torture). The students then circle any words set melismatically, finding in this brief excerpt that "pena" is set not only chromatically but also melismatically.

Having gained an understanding of how melismas and chromaticism can be used to express specific words in a recitative, the students are now prepared to try it themselves. They are given the text from mm. 47–50 of the same work ("e più penar vorrei per palesarti più, gl'affetti miei"),[23] along with Scarlatti's original bass line (**Example 9b**). The students realize the harmonies in block chords in the treble staff and then add the Italian text above their realization, making sure to align chromatic harmonies with significant words. Finally, the students circle any words that they would like to set melismatically.

The students are then given three empty staves, in which they set the text to a vocal line that reflects the harmonies outlined in their realizations. Particularly emotional words like "penar" (suffer) and "affetti" (feelings) should align with the most dissonant harmonies, and may also be set melismatically. Lastly, a keyboard accompaniment is added to support the text setting and activate the rhythm of the harmonic realization.

As always, the final step is an analysis. Once again following the exact same analytical procedure outlined in the first of the assignment's three parts, the students circle the chromatically altered chords, identify that word by writing its English translation above the staff, and circle any words set melismatically. In addition to reinforcing the important connections between the words and the music, this final step facilitates quick grading. All the instructor needs to do is verify that the important words are appropriately highlighted through being set both dissonantly and melismatically.

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22. Alessandro Scarlatti, *Three Cantatas for Voice and Cello with Keyboard*, ed. Peter Foster, Nona Pyron, and Timothy Roberts (Fullerton, CA: Grancino Editions, 1982), 16 and *Norton Anthology*, 629. An earlier project uses a similar methodology for composing Baroque arias, using Barbara Strozzi's *Lagrime mie* as an example.

23. "And I would like to suffer more to reveal to you more of my feelings." Translation from *Norton Anthology*, 633.

Example 9a: Scarlatti, *Clori vezzosa, e bella*, mm. 44–46, with a sample analysis.

Example 9b: Scarlatti, *Clori vezzosa, e bella*, mm. 47–50, bass line only.

Conclusion

Integrating composition and improvisation into the early music classroom has transformed "the history of music" into "the history of music-making." Instead of passively learning historical details and music literature, the students are actively scrutinizing and then replicating various artistic choices made by composers and performers of early music. In doing so, the students become engaged not only in mastering musical concepts, but—more importantly—in actually making music.