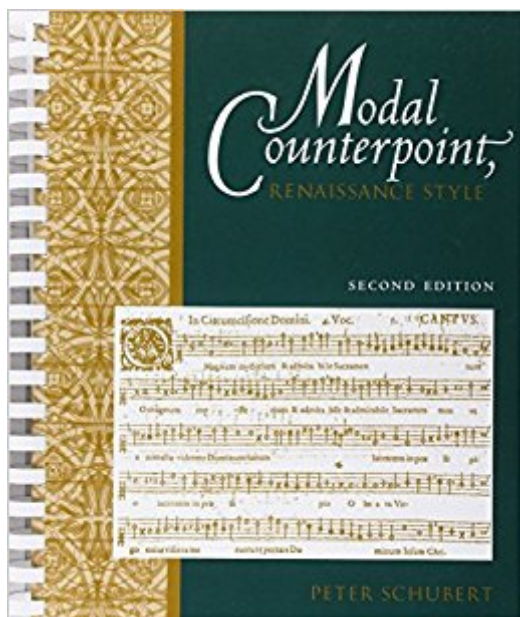


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# Modal Counterpoint: Renaissance Style



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"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

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

Peter Schubert is on the faculty of McGill University. As a first-time teacher of species counterpoint I am impressed by this book's organization, clarity of explanation and vast quantity of practice exercises. For the sake of the beginner student fine nuances of style are skipped, especially in the early chapters, in favor of a thorough grounding in rules, divided into "hard" and "soft" categories. The former are regarded as unyielding benchmarks of correctness, while the latter have to do more with stylistic ease and euphony. The sheer quantity of rules may overwhelm some students; careful explanation by the instructor is necessary to avoid glazed-over eyes and discouragement. At least in my edition there is as yet no attempt to put some of the examples and exercises in audio form, as do many theory texts today. I also think answer keys for some of the shorter exercises would make this book even more useful, though of course such things tempt some students to peek. Still, the organization of the material and the obvious expertise of the author make this textbook a most impressive entry in the music theory teaching sweepstakes.

Easy to read, many many exercises, great approach to the subject. A lot of examples from the literature - this is especially helpful.

This book has a clear modern writing style with plenty of good examples. As a graduate student in composition I found it an engaging and efficient way to learn the information I was interested in.

Bought this for a workshop on the topic as it was recommended by the instructor. Had no idea there were such tightly constructed rules on composition in the Renaissance... Thank goodness for the rule breakers.

Errata for 'Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style' by Peter Schubert

Page 2 Ex. I-2: C time sig. should read 2/1 Ex. I-2: m.8, alto, last quarter B-flat should read B-natural

Page 3 Line 8: "labeled in the example" should be deleted (or add missing labels)

Page 10 Ex. 1-1b: last line, 3rd measure fill in G-A-B-C

Page 14 Ex. 1-3e: "(see Exx. 14-6 and 14-7)" should read "(see Exx. 14-9 and 14-10)"

Page 15 Ex. 1-3g: "(see Exx. 14-6 and 14-7)" should read "(see Exx. 14-9 and 14-10)"

Page 23 ill. #6: 2nd ex. w/ pyramid upside down should say "avoid"

Page 25 Ex. 2-6b: treble 8ve clef in first two exx. should be alto clef Ex. 2-6b: clef in 3rd Ex. should be normal treble clef

Page 51 line 9: "25 percent" should read "20 percent"

Page 55 Exercise 4-D2: first CF note A should read G

Page 61 line 16: "shown in Example 5-4" should read "shown in Example 5-5"

Page 70 line 5: "high point to the next." should read "high point to the next temporary low point or vice-versa."

Page 72 line 1: "third-species Mixolydian" should read "third-species Hypomixolydian"

Ex. 5-D2: 4th staff, last note low G should be an octave higher

Page 87 ill. rule 4: last example, "X" should be over quarter-note G

Page 92 Ex. 7-5a: add brackets in mm. 4-11 over B-G-A-A-A and A-F-G-G-G

Page 93 Exx. 7-5b & c: same as above

Page 99 Exercise 7-C2: signature in middle line should be B-flat (not C-flat!)

Page 146 Puzzle-canon exercise: fourth canon, last note C should be D

Page 169 line 1: "Example 5-2" should read "Example 5-4"

Page 178 line 11: "stepwise in one direction (you" should read "stepwise (you"

Page 187 Ex. 14-9: m.5, top line, tenor octave clef should be regular treble clef

Page 188 Ex. 14-9: m. 16, middle line, 7th note should be F, not G

Page 188 Ex. 14-10: m. 7, beat 4, middle voice, dot missing

Page 192 line 15: "Compare numbers 4 and 7." should read "Compare numbers 4 and 6."

Page 194 Ex. 14-12, #7: middle line, tenor octave clef should be regular treble clef

Page 221 lines 3-4: delete "In each ...and bracketed" or have students label & bracket in Exx. 16-8 and 16-9

Page 225 line 3: "in the mode indicated" delete (or teacher must specify mode)

Page 252 line 10: "at the asterisk" should read "in m. 23" (or add \* in alto, m. 23)

Page 283 Ex. 19-14: bass, m. 14, reverse note E and rest

Page 308 Ex. App. 1-1: underline both first and third syllables in "Be - ne - dic - tus"

Page 316 Appendix 4: 15th CF note breve D should be semibreve D

Other minor/obvious

mistakes are excluded.

MCRS is the most comprehensive textbook in print (as of 2006) that teaches 16th century counterpoint in terms of species. (The Jeppesen counterpoint book also deals with species, but has only c.f. exercises, and is not organized in a student-friendly way.) Schubert's music examples are drawn primarily from Renaissance music treatises rather than repertoire, in order to illustrate the various species; the relatively small number of repertoire examples includes more French chansons than excerpts from Palestrina or Lassus. There are considerably more exercises and assignments--from preparatory "warmups" through analyses and error detections to c.f. fragments and complete cf's--than can be covered in a 15- week course. Canon and invertible counterpoint are recurring topics. My students found the organization of "hard" and "soft" rules helpful. The exercises can be time-consuming, so teachers considering adopting this book as a course text should allow ample time to go through it in advance to decide which exercises to use and to actually write out their solutions.

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