

Music 11, 7/11/06

Inversions continued

Unlike the seconds and thirds, the fourth and fifths do *not* come in major or minor qualities. They are “perfect,” and can be expressed as: “P4” and “P5.”

The P4 and P5 can, however, be expanded and contracted. When a perfect interval is expanded, it becomes “augmented” and when it is contracted, it becomes “diminished.” This *is* similar to major and minor intervals (A5/d5, A4/d4)

The P4 and P5 are inversions of each other, as are A5 and d4, and d5 and A4.

How to spot a Perfect 5<sup>th</sup> (P5):

P5s are always positioned on the staff such that the two notes are *both* either on a line or in a space, and there is one line or space (respectively) between them. In the diatonic scale, all 5ths are perfect 5ths (P5) except one: the interval B-F is a diminished fifth (d5).

How to spot a Perfect 4<sup>th</sup> (P4):

P4s are always positioned on the staff such that one note is on a line and the other is on a space. You could say that the notes are generally “centered” in the octave—that is, they are neither really close to each other nor really far apart.

What are intervals important to know? This will be increasingly evident when we get into harmony, but there are practical reasons for knowing intervals as performers. Suppose a director of a choir says, “hey—sing a P5 above the Altos!” Could you do this without knowing what a P5 is? Also, composers rely heavily on the different “sounds” of different intervals. Major and minor sound different (have different “moods”), for example. Analysts who study music need to know intervals in order to demonstrate that elements of a musical composition are unified in some way. Certain intervals might recur throughout a work, and even comprise its fundamental structure. This idea is fairly complex, and for our purposes in music 11, I will not elaborate on this. ☺

Now we know all the intervals, and the following chart will summarize them:

<u>Interval name</u>	<u># of semitones</u>	<u>its inversion</u>	<u># of semitones (in the inversion)</u>
m2	1	M7	11
M2	2	m7	10
m3	3	M6	9
M3	4	m6	8
P4	5	P5	7
A4/d5	6	d5/A4	6
P5	7	P4	5

m6	8	M3	4
M6	9	m3	3
m7	10	M2	2
M7	11	m2	1

### Melodic form

Sure, notes follow each other, and we can examine their melodic relationships in small scales, like immediate intervals, etc., but let's take a broader look at melody.

Often, a tune has parts that repeat. Most nursery rhymes or popular folk songs have much repetition of parts—this is one of the reasons why they are so memorable. But there are conventions for *how* the parts of a tune repeat and change to make an overall unified tune.

Melodic form is a lot like rhetoric (or poetry): an idea is stated, it is repeated, it is then elaborated a bit (perhaps), and finally the original idea is recalled.

In analysis of melodic form, we look at melodic segments in a way that is analogous to the above. We see how musical segments follow each other, and examine their logic.

In class we have tested this theory with numerous examples. A typical large-scale melodic form is:

AABA, where the first and second A sections complement each other (they are usually a near-literal repeat), the B section contrasts slightly, and the final A section repeats the earlier A section.

Let's look at the relationship between the first 2 A sections in the above model.

Generally, the A sections are repetitions. However, they typically end in different ways. The first usually has a sense of openness—that is, something about its ending invites more music. When we hear it, we want the music to keep going, as though the composer said something that demands clarification, or closure. It is like a dependent clause in language. The second A section will often begin exactly like the first A section, but it will end with relatively *more* finality. It is as though the composer has completed an entire thought at this point.

This structure is called a period: A period is usually 2 phrases in which the second ends with a stronger sense of closure than the first. How do we demonstrate this complementary relationship? More tomorrow. Sorry to keep you in suspense. Think of this as the first phrase in a period. Ha!