Conference on Enhancing Student Learning Experience

17th November 2016 (Thursday)

Co-organized by FSTE & HKCAAVQ

UG-06, PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus

Teaching and Experiencing Music Theory in the Music Curriculum: Pedagogical Design and Practice

Dr. Martin Lee, Music Theorist
Assistant Professor
School of Humanities and Languages
Caritas Institute of Higher Education

Background

1) Essential part of western music
2) Taboo
3) Limited pedagogical literature
4) Limited instructional methodologies

Problems

1) Can’t get the concepts of counterpoint and its operation

2) Vicious circle

    a) Dissemination of musical knowledge

    b) Musical performance

3) Vertical aspect of chord in stead of horizontal interactions with voices

Solution: Change and Emphasis in Music Curriculum

1) Revisiting counterpoint through
   a) Concept
   b) Reinterpretation
2) Orchestral experience of counterpoint

Applications in Courses and Music Activities:

1) Western Music History
2) Materials and Techniques of Music
3) Music Analysis
4) Studio Pedagogy
5) Conducting
6) Weekly Choir/Ensemble Rehearsal

Western Music History

1) Rise of polyphony in the Medieval period--*Organum*

2) Renaissance period --> Common practice period

3) Rather than abruptly “jumping” into Baroque period

4) Natural evolution of *organum*

Western Music History

5) Think in terms of lines rather than vertical block of notes

6) Sense of cohesion via intervallic relationship

7) Horizontal aspect is easily neglected in the music curriculum

Materials and Techniques of Music

1) Theoretical issue of counterpoint
2) Species counterpoint
    a) 1st species: note against note
    b) 2nd species: 2 notes against 1
    c) 3rd species: 4 notes against 1
    d) 4th species: syncopation
    e) 5th species: mixture of the above

Music Analysis

1) Imitative counterpoint
2) More complex musical relationship
3) Analytical readings and assignments
4) Strengthen and consolidate the theoretical concepts
5) Shown in master composers' works

Studio Pedagogy

1) Importance of horizontal line, i.e.

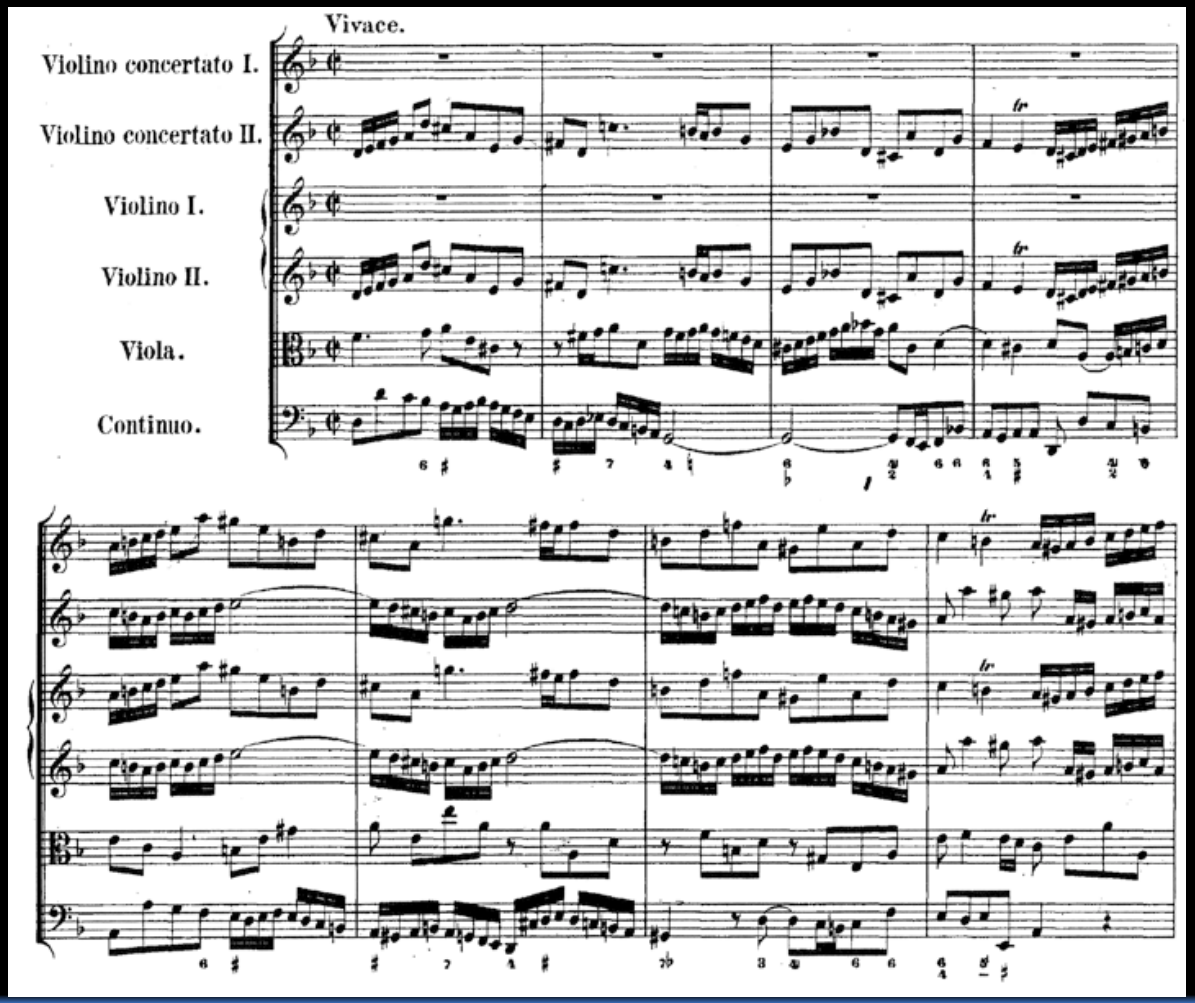
MELODY

2) Learning and teaching are simultaneous processes

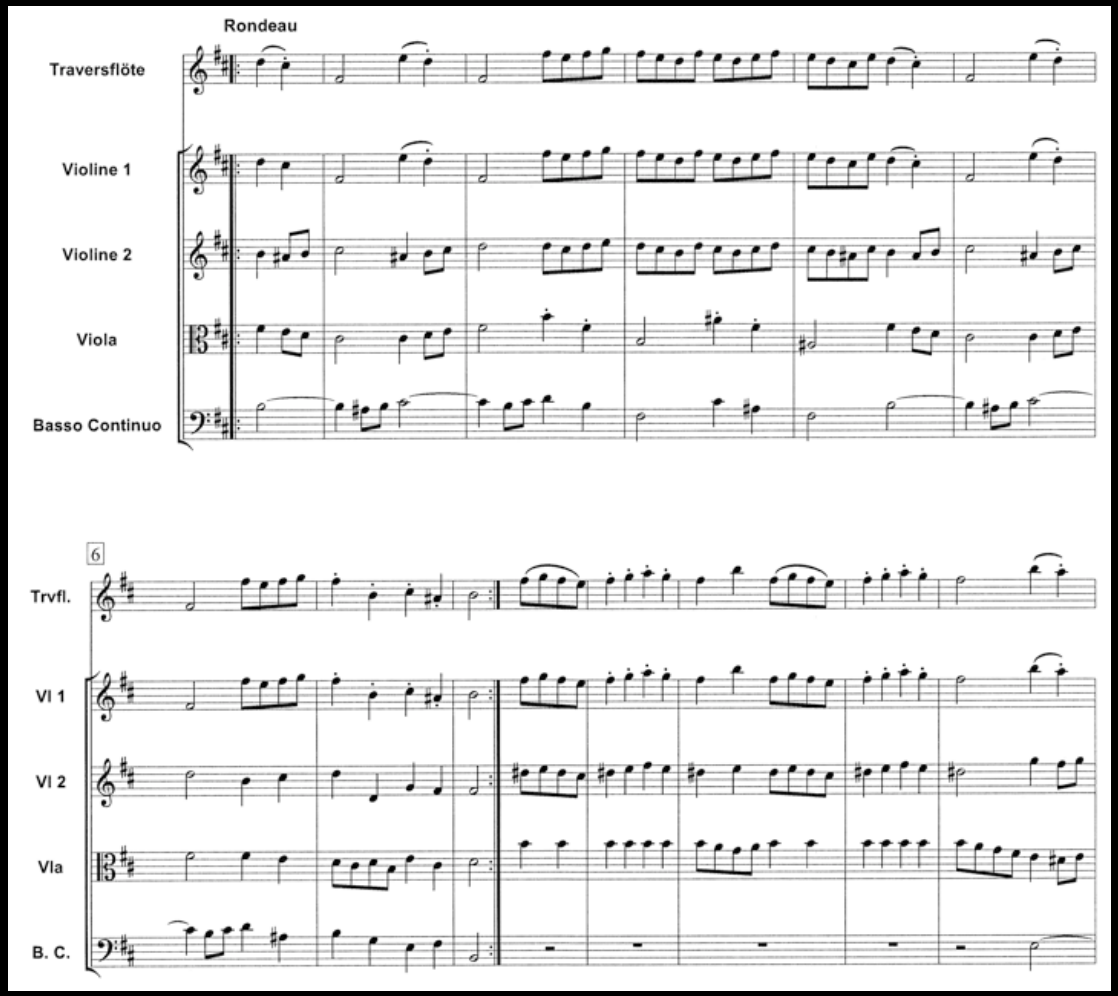
3) Active listening and trace the melodies

4) Play with other musicians

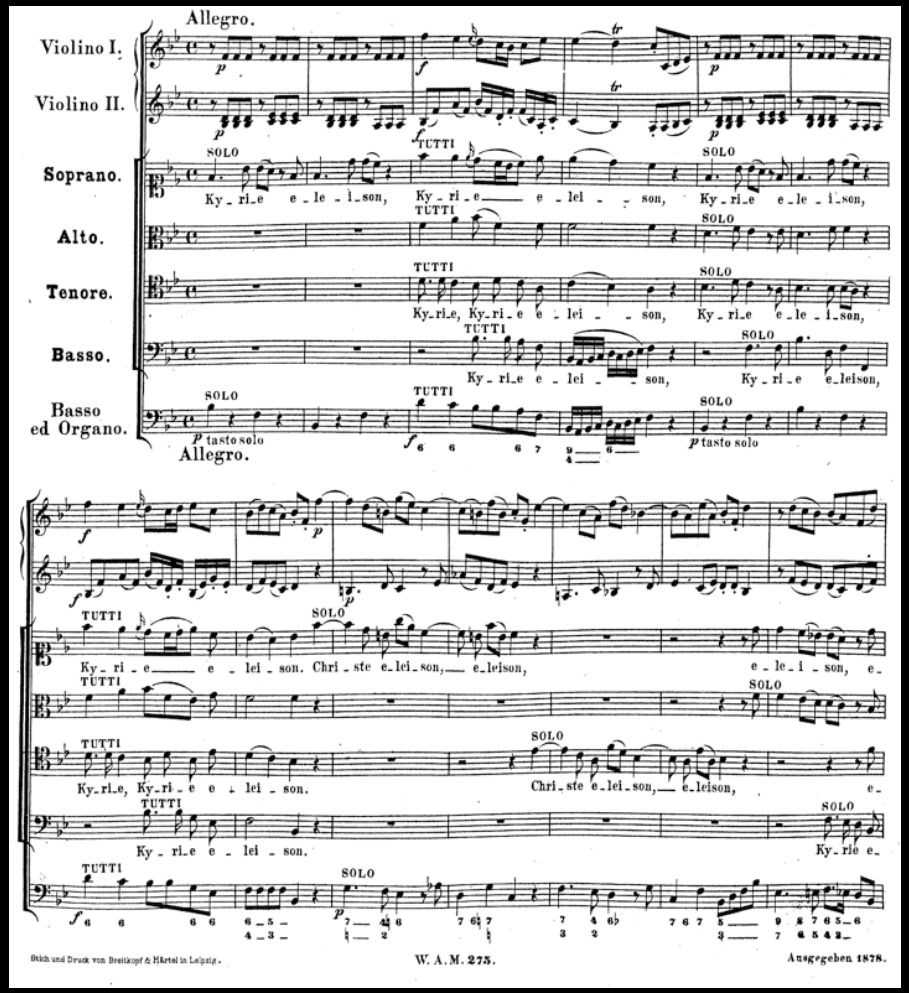
Choir/Ensemble/Orchestra: J. S. Bach Double Concerto



Choir/Ensemble/Orchestra: J. S. Bach Orchestra Suite No. 2



Choir/Ensemble/Orchestra: Mozart Missa Brevis in B-flat



Conducting (Instrumental)

1) Listening
2) Shaping
3) Pointing out weaknesses and errors
4) “3D” experience to oversee the counterpoint interactions among voices

Conclusion

Performance becomes the

1) apotheosis, and
2) destination

for students to understand counterpoint cultivated by composers

Thank you!

Music Examples

1) J. S. Bach: Concerto for 2 Violins in D Minor, BWV 1043, 1st movement
2) Recorder Ensemble