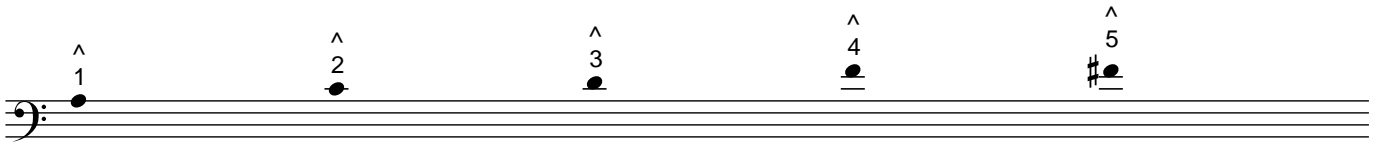


Recomposing Max Vredenburg's no. 14, op. 12

Objective: a form A1–A2–A3 based on two interconnected five notes rows

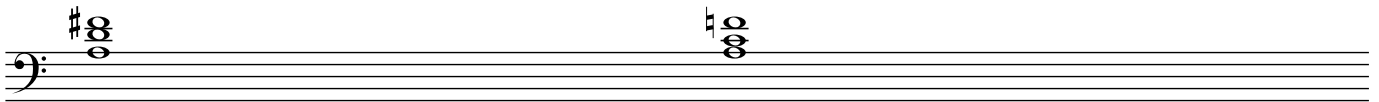
Vredenburg's piece is a fascinating play of two five note rows. As we can see (too often) in his works, Vredenburg uses techniques as a repeated melody (in right and left hand) and accompaniment, voice exchange and syncopated repetition. In a few steps, the piece will be recomposed, however, from an other point of view than used in the other analyses. We will try to find a second five note row which interact in a subtle way with a first five note row. We will introduce a new concept: heterophony, a simultaneous variation of the same melodic line. In addition, we will show Vredenburg's long-distance voice-leading thinking.

Step 1: an universal five note melodic frame for the accompaniment.

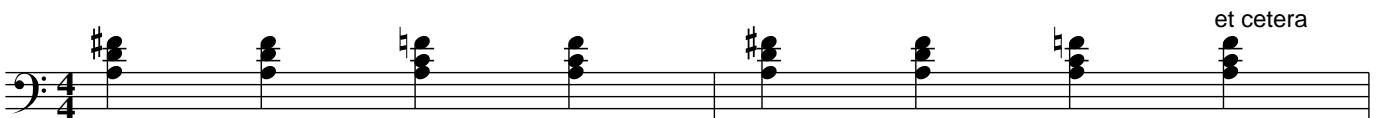


Step 2: making an ostinato of chords

It could be argued that two chromatic chords are 'stable' if they have one tone in common. An example of such chord combination is shown in the following example (common tone: A).



It should be noted that the two chords have two different chord structures, which can be seen as some sort of 'sound contrast' ('the second chord is interesting because it differs from the first in terms of structure'). It's easy to make a one-bar ostinato (4/4), with a charming chord repetition.



Step 3: melodies in the ostinato and their musical possibilities

We can hear two melodies in the ostinato, which can have a natural ending (assuming that D is the main tone and D-F#-A is the main triad):

Two musical staves in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff shows 'melody 1' with notes D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. The second staff shows 'melody 2' with notes D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. Both end with 'et cetera' and a whole note D.

To continue thinking first on ostinato and melody 2, it is an easy step to see the melody as a follow up of the ostinato. Something like:

Musical staff in bass clef, 4/4 time. It shows a sequence of chords: D2-F#2-A2, E2-G2-B2, F#2-A2-C3, G2-B2-D3, A2-C3-E3, B2-D3-F#3, C3-E3-G3, D3-F#3-A3. This is followed by 'et cetera' and a whole note D.

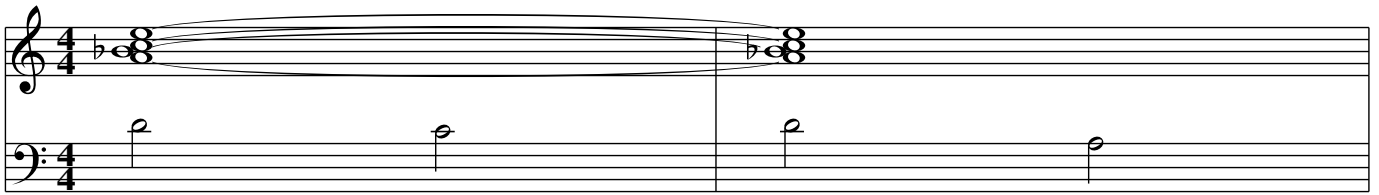
And if we feel that the ostinato has to return, we can write a smooth connection, based on the oscillating D-C:

Musical staff in bass clef, 4/4 time. It shows a sequence of chords: D2-F#2-A2, E2-G2-B2, F#2-A2-C3, G2-B2-D3, A2-C3-E3, B2-D3-F#3, C3-E3-G3, D3-F#3-A3. This is followed by 'et cetera' and a whole note D.

So vertical and horizontal composing. The last idea we can explore is combining melody and ostinato:

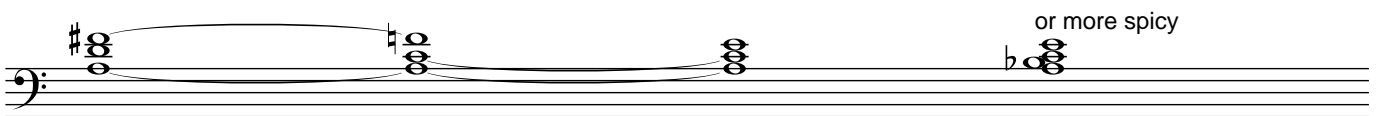
Musical staff in treble clef, 4/4 time. The top staff has notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The bottom staff shows a sequence of chords: D2-F#2-A2, E2-G2-B2, F#2-A2-C3, G2-B2-D3, A2-C3-E3, B2-D3-F#3, C3-E3-G3, D3-F#3-A3. This is followed by 'et cetera' and a whole note D.

When the lowest voice has a melody, the highest voice can have a chord. What chord? The one with the note E as top voice (see above melody 1). As an example the chord which can be derived from the ostinato (this will be explained in Step 4):

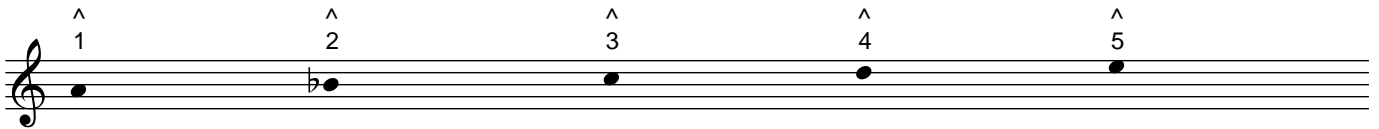


Step 4: what does the first five note row (for the melody) look like?

The answer is given in the last example. The chord that results from the ostinato with an added dissonance:



Hence the second five note row can be the horizontalization of the last chord:



Note that our melody is part of this row! That means that the rows for highest and lowest voice are connected intimately.

Step 5: making form

It is now quite easy to compose a little piece with an ostinato and a melody. These two ingredients can be applied successively and simultaneously (which results in a form of heterophony).

Below Vredenburg's piece, which will speak for itself.

Note the bars 5–7 with the syncopated and diminished melody which produces a new and rich sounds.

Molto espressivo ♩ = 84

suave

5

pp

10

pp

pp

3

come primo

calando

ppp

rall.

About the author:

Reinier Maliepaard, psychologist, software engineer, organist and teacher at the ArtEZ Conservatorium Netherlands (music theory and music history). Maliepaard maintains several internet sites as www.bestmusicteacher.com en www.artezmusictools.nl.

His freeware music notation program MC Musiceditor (Windows) can be downloaded at www.mcmusiceditor.com

This article has been typeset with MC Musiceditor 6.1.6 (www.mcmusiceditor.com – www.bestmusicteacher.com)
