

35. The Rules

M = Melody; **H** = Harmony (Sonority); **R** = Rhythm; **F** = Form (Structure).

F

- 1.1 Modal polyphony is diatonic.
- 1.2 The official group of Gregorian Modes consists of eight different diatonic scales extending over an octave.
- 1.3 Every polyphonic piece is in a single mode from beginning to end.
- 1.4 By tradition, the range and *finalis* of the Tenor voice provide the official mode name for any composition.

M

- 2.1 The four standard voice-types will be used and their given ranges must be upheld.
- 2.2 The music should be written in as low a register as possible for all voices.
- 2.3 The overall *ambitus* of any given part in a polyphonic setting should be about an octave and never larger than a tenth. It will conform to the range of the mode employed in the composition.

M

- 3.1 Steps are the most common intervals in melodic lines, with skips being the next most common.
- 3.2 Leaps are less common and all are controlled by precise rules.
- 3.3 The tritone must always be avoided, both melodically and harmonically.

H

- 3.4 There is a three-level hierarchy of harmonic intervals: perfect consonances, imperfect consonances, and dissonances.

M

- 4.1 Note-repetition is limited; a note may only be repeated once, but never when the other part is stationary.
- 4.2 Single leaps of perfect fourths, fifths, and octaves, both up and down, often appear.
- 4.3 Leaps of a sixth, up or down, are forbidden with one exception: the ascending diatonic minor sixth. Seventh leaps are forbidden.
- 4.4 Skips and leaps of any augmented or diminished interval are likewise prohibited, and a voice may never leap by a compound interval.
- 4.5 All two-interval or three-note melodic combinations moving in the same direction (either up or down) are controlled by two fundamental principles, the Low-Interval, and the Polar-Outline rules.
- 4.6 The S&L rule: no leap, whether ascending or descending, may have a smaller interval beneath it going in the same direction.
- 4.7 Polar or boundary intervals must conform to the rules for simple intervals.
- 4.8 Successive leaps of a fourth or fifth in the same direction are prohibited.
- 4.9 In any form of motion, successive skips and leaps should be limited to three in a row.