

Glossary

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

- accent** (noun) a beat that is stressed or played louder than the surrounding beats; (verb) to stress a beat by playing it louder than the surrounding beats
- accidental** (noun) a symbol that is placed beside a note on a staff to alter its pitch; sharp, flat, or natural
- Aeolian** (noun) one of the modes; equivalent to natural minor or a white key scale from A to A; first identified in the Renaissance period
- aleatoric** (adjective) happening by chance; refers to music into which an element of chance is introduced either in the compositional process or in the performance
- alla breve** (noun) a time signature equivalent to 2/2, in which there are two beats per measure and the half note is the beat; usually abbreviated as a c with a slash through it; also known as cut time
- altered chord** (noun) a chord that contains a pitch that is altered from the key signature
- altered dominant scale** (noun) another name for the diminished whole-tone scale in jazz; it is the seventh mode of the jazz minor scale
- altered tone** (noun) any tone that does not exist in a diatonic scale
- alto** (noun) the second to highest voice line in a four-voice texture; usually associated with the low range of female voices
- anacrusis** (noun) upbeat; a partial measure found at the beginning of a composition or section; it is balanced by an incomplete measure at the end of the composition or section
- analysis** (noun) the act of breaking down a whole into its constituent parts for the purpose of explanation and understanding
- anticipation** (noun) a type of nonharmonic tone that occurs between beats; it is approached from a chord tone by step and resolves by repetition
- appoggiatura** (noun) a type of nonharmonic tone that is approached by a leap either up or down and resolves by step in the opposite direction

arpeggiated six-four chord (noun) one of the four types of six-four chords; it occurs in a pattern with other inversions of the same chord

atonality (noun) the absence of tonality; a style of music in which dissonance is not regulated in the same manner as tonal music

augmented (adjective) made larger; in music, this is often applied to intervals, i.e. when a major interval is made larger, it is called augmented

augmented sixth chord (noun) a chord that is built with a lowered sixth scale degree and a raised fourth scale degree; these two chord tones typically resolve in contrary motion to the dominant scale degree of a key

augmented triad (noun) one of the four types of triads; it is constructed by raising the chordal fifth of a major triad

authentic cadence (noun) a dominant-to-tonic progression that ends a composition or a section of music

authentic mode (noun) one of the church modes in which the range of the melody extends primarily from the starting note of the mode up an octave to the same pitch class

avant-garde (noun) the vanguard; those who go in front of others as innovators; (adjective) a style of music that is experimental or unusual, often meant to question the definition of music itself

bar line (noun) a straight line placed on a staff to show the organization of the meter and the boundaries of each measure

bass (noun) low in pitch; a nickname for the F clef; the lowest voice of any texture; usually associated with the lowest range of male voices

basso continuo (noun) the practice of writing an accompaniment in the Baroque period that consisted of a single bass line, usually meant for performance on a cello, plus a series of figures which were to be interpreted by a keyboard player to provide the harmony of composition

bebop scale (noun) one of four scales used in jazz that add a chromatic passing tone to a traditional scale such as major, jazz minor, or one of the modes

bichordality (noun) the use of two discrete sets of chords simultaneously, not necessarily referencing any specific tonality

bitonality (noun) the use of two key simultaneously

blues scale (noun) a scale used in jazz that includes a lowered third scale degree, often tuned between *me* and *mi*, a raised fourth scale degree, and a lowered seventh scale degree

borrowed chord (noun) a chord that is diatonic in the parallel scale of the prevailing key

borrowed division (noun) a division of the beat that is not typical in the prevailing time signature; in a simple meter, a borrowed division is the triplet which is borrowed from a compound meter; in a compound meter, the borrowed division is the duplet which is borrowed from a simple time meter

cadence (noun) a falling inflection of the voice; an ending of a section of music, usually described by a pair of roman numerals

cadential six-four chord (noun) one of the four types of six-four chords; it directly precedes the dominant chord at an authentic cadence

cadenza (noun) a florid and/or showy section of a concerto performed by the solo instrument; it usually occurs at the end of the first movement of the concerto

cardinal number (noun) a term used in pitch class set analysis to describe the number of elements in a given set

changing tone (noun) a type of nonharmonic tone that includes two nonharmonic pitches in sequence, one above and one below the surrounding chord tone

chord (noun) a group of three or more pitches that are associated together in some manner

chord progression (noun) a series of chords that follow a logical sequence, usually based on the circle of fifths

chromatic modulation (noun) a type of modulation that uses a secondary dominant chord to move from one key to another

chromatic scale (noun) a scale that consists entirely of half steps; usually the scale is spelled with sharps when it ascends and with flats when it descends

church mode (noun) one of eight patterns of notes that were identified during the Middle Ages as the basis of chant tunes; the definition of modes was later expanded to include four additional modes

circle of fifths (noun) a device that explains the nature of relationships between keys and key signatures; when starting with C major, each successive key adds a sharp or a flat to the key signature and its name moves up or down from C by the interval of a fifth

clef (noun) a symbol that is placed on a staff in order to provide names to the lines of the staff; clefs are named by letters of the musical alphabet but also have common nicknames (G or treble clef, F or bass clef, C or alto clef)

close structure (noun) a manner of constructing chords on a staff so that the upper three voices are placed less than an octave apart

closely related keys (noun) keys (or scales) whose key signatures are similar, within one sharp or flat of one another

cluster (noun) a group of closely spaced notes using distances of whole or half steps; often used as a basis for twentieth-century musical composition

common chord (noun) a chord that provides a link between two keys at a point of modulation

Common Practice Period – a span of approximately three hundred years when the majority of music was written using the tonal system; the period of time from roughly 1600-1900

common time (noun) a time signature equivalent to 4/4 time, in which there are four beats per measure and the quarter note is the beat; usually abbreviated as a c

common tone (noun) a chord tone that exists in both of two adjacent chords; the common tone stays in the same voice in both chords

composite meter (noun) a type of meter (time signature) that shows how accents are placed within an irregular number of beats per measure; a time signature that uses multiple top numbers separated by plus signs to show groups within an irregular meter

compound interval (noun) an interval larger than an octave

compound meter (noun) a meter (or time signature) in which the beat divides into three equal parts; a meter represented by a top number in the time signature of 6, 9, or 12

concept music (noun) a musical work that cannot be performed

conjunct (adjective) representing a style of movement within a melody that is primarily based on steps rather than leaps

consonance (noun) a pleasant sound; any combination of musical pitches that result in a pleasant sound

consonant (adjective) sounding pleasant or pleasing to the ear

contrary motion (noun) motion between two voices that results in the voices moving in opposite directions, either toward each other or away from each other

courtesy accidental (noun) an accidental that is placed in a musical score although it is not necessary; for example, when an F# is placed in a measure of music in C major, it is canceled by the next bar line, but a natural symbol placed in the next measure (the courtesy accidental) appears anyway to make the pitch of the note absolutely clear

cross relation (noun) the appearance of two different chromatic versions of a single pitch in different voices; chromatic voice leading that is spread between two voices; for example, F–F#–G would typically appear in a single voice, but if the F and F# appear in different voices, this occurrence is considered a cross relation

- crossed voices** (noun) a phenomenon in which one voice of a texture crosses into a range that is deemed to belong to another voice; a voice-leading practice that is considered to be incorrect in four-part harmony
- cut time** (noun) a time signature equivalent to 2/2, in which there are two beats per measure and the half note is the beat; usually abbreviated as a c with a slash through it; also known as *alla breve*
- cyclic variation** (noun) a manipulation of group of notes in pitch class set theory to determine the smallest distance between all elements of a given set; the pitches are numbered and each pitch is used in sequence as the starting element of the set, with the smallest interval between first and last element being named the normal order
- deceptive cadence** (noun) a cadence or ending in which a dominant chord moves to a submediant chord (V-vi or V-VI)
- deceptive progression** (noun) the movement of the dominant chord to a submediant chord within a progression in order to prolong it
- diatonic** (adjective) in a key; in a scale; dealing with any notes, intervals, or chords that are built from the notes of a given scale (major or minor)
- diatonic modulation** (noun) a technique of moving from one key to another through a chord that is built of notes that are in the scale of both keys; the use of a diatonic common chord to change from one key to another
- diminished** (adjective) made smaller; in music, this is often applied to intervals, i.e. when a perfect interval is made smaller, it is called diminished
- diminished-diminished seventh** (noun) also known as a fully diminished seventh chord; a chord built entirely of intervals of minor thirds; a symmetrical four-note chord
- diminished-minor seventh** (noun) a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a diminished triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh
- diminished scale** (noun) a term used in jazz to mean the octatonic scale; a scale built of alternating whole and half steps
- direct modulation** (noun) a change of key that takes place without using a chord that is common to both keys
- disjunct** (adjective) representing a style of movement within a melody that is primarily based on leaps rather than steps
- dissonance** (noun) an unpleasant sound; any combination of musical pitches that result in an unpleasant sound

dissonant (adjective) sounding unpleasant to the ear

distantly related keys (noun) two keys whose key signatures are dissimilar; for example, G \flat major and G major are distantly related keys

division (noun) a rhythmic figure that divides the beat note into two or three equal parts dodecaphonic

dominant (noun) the fifth note of a major or minor scale; a chord built on the fifth scale degree in major or minor

dominant seventh chord (noun) a four-note chord built on the fifth note of a major or minor scale; a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a major triad and the outer notes form a minor seventh interval

dominant-type chord (noun) any of five chord qualities or roman numerals that can directly precede the tonic at a cadence; the five qualities are major triad (V), major-minor seventh chord (V7), diminished triad (vii $^{\circ}$), fully diminished seventh chord (vii $^{\circ}7$), or half diminished seventh chord (vii \flat 7).

Dorian (noun) one of the original church modes used for chant tunes in the Middle Ages; equivalent to a white key scale from D to D

dotted note (noun) a symbol placed beside a note to lengthen it by half of its original value

double flat (noun) a symbol placed beside a note ($\flat\flat$) to lower it by a whole step

double sharp (noun) a symbol placed beside a note ($\sharp\sharp$) to raise it by a whole step

doubly dotted note (noun) a symbol placed beside a note (two dots) to lengthen it by three-quarters of its original value; the first dot lengthens the note by half of its value and the second dot lengthens it again by half of half of its original value

downbeat (noun) the first beat of any measure; the gesture made by a conductor to demonstrate the first beat of a measure

duplet (noun) a division of a single beat in which the beat divides into two equal parts; the term usually implies a borrowed division of the beat in a compound meter

enharmonic (adjective) referring to two or more ways of spelling the same musical sound

enharmonic German sixth (noun) a German augmented sixth chord that has been respelled so that it can correctly resolve (from a voice-leading standpoint) to a tonic six-four chord in a major key

enharmonic modulation (noun) a type of modulation that takes place through the enharmonic respelling of a chord or a single note in one key so that it sounds the same but has a different function in the new key

electroacoustic music (noun) music that is meant to be performed through loud speakers; a generic term that can be used to reference many categories of electronic music

electronic music (noun) music that is composed, performed, or otherwise assisted by electric or electronic means

escape tone (noun) a nonharmonic tone that is approached by step and resolves by leap in the opposite direction

figured bass (noun) a system of shorthand music notation that developed during the Baroque period; it consisted of a series of numbers and symbols that were written beneath a bass line and intended for the keyboard player to read and interpret as an accompaniment to the overall texture of the music

fixed-do solfège (noun) a type of solfège (system of sight singing) that uses syllables to represent musical pitches; in the fixed-do method, C is always *do*

flat (noun) a symbol that is placed beside a note to lower its pitch by one half step

foreign keys (noun) similar in meaning to distantly related keys; two keys whose key signatures are dissimilar; for example, G \flat major and G major

Forte number (noun) a categorization and labeling of all possible pitch class sets containing three to nine elements; the numbers generally appear in a table; in order to determine a Forte number, it is necessary to find its prime form

fully diminished seventh (noun) the same as a diminished-diminished seventh chord; a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a diminished triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh

French sixth (noun) a type of augmented sixth chord that contains the following notes (represented in solfège): *le-do-re-fi*; the note that separates the French sixth from the other augmented sixth chords is the second scale degree which forms a triad with *le*

German sixth (noun) a type of augmented sixth chord that contains the following notes (represented in solfège): *le-do-me-fi*; the first three notes of the chord form a major triad

grand staff (noun) a notational device that connects two staves with a bar line and a bracket, and usually features a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff; the standard notational device for piano music

graphic notation (noun) a notational device that uses elements other than notes to represent musical sounds

graphic score (noun) a musical work that uses pictures or other graphic elements to convey the meaning of the work

Gregorian chant (noun) one of the earliest collections of notated music, named for Pope Gregory I; the chants were collected and notated during the reign of the Emperor Charlemagne

- Gypsy scale** (noun) a scale that is associated with Hungarian folk music that is built on the following pattern: major 2nd, minor 2nd, augmented 2nd, minor 2nd, minor 2nd, augmented 2nd, minor 2nd
- half cadence** (noun) a cadence that ends with a dominant chord, usually found at the end of a section of a composition other than the final section
- half-diminished seventh** (noun) the same as a diminished-minor seventh chord; a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a diminished triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh
- half step** (noun) a distance equivalent to a minor second; the closest distance between any two keys on the piano, i.e. E to F, B to C, or F to F \sharp
- harmonic minor** (noun) a version of the minor scale that raises the seventh note of the natural minor by a half step, creating an augmented 2nd between the sixth and seventh scale degrees
- harmony** (noun) the blending of individual musical sounds (called chords); a series of chords with a logical structure; the study of the processes involved in creating progressions
- hexachord** (noun) a group of six notes that are associated together in some way
- imbrication** (noun) the process of grouping smaller sets of notes into larger sets in pitch class set analysis
- Impressionism** (noun) the style of French music, poetry, and painting that was prominent during the turn of the twentieth century, approximately 1890–1930; the music of composers Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel
- improvisation** (noun) a style of music performance, primarily associated with jazz, in which the performers extemporize and utilize spur-of-the-moment inspiration to influence the outcome
- indeterminacy** (noun) a style of twentieth-century composition in which a composer relinquished control of some element of either the compositional process or the performance of the work
- interval** (noun) the distance between two pitches, described numerically (size, represented as an ordinal number) and as a quality (specific distance, represented as major, minor, perfect, diminished, or augmented)
- interval class** (noun) typically abbreviated as “ic”; one of six intervals recognized in pitch class set theory; see interval equivalence
- interval equivalence** (noun) a principle of pitch class set analysis that equates intervals to numbers (unison=0, minor 2nd=1, major 2nd=2, and so on) and considers the inversion of intervals to be equivalent for purposes of analysis; ic 0 = ic 12, ic 1 = ic 11, and so on
- interval inversion** (noun) the process of reversing the order of two pitches so that they become a new interval, i.e. A up to C is a minor 3rd, but when the order is reversed, C up to A, it becomes a major 6th

interval music (noun) a technique or style of twentieth-century music where a particular interval is emphasized or used as a focus of a composition

interval vector (noun) a series of six integers that represent the total interval content of any pitch class set;

inversion (noun) the process of rearranging the members of a given musical structure; in any structure, the number of possible inversions is equal to the number of elements in the group, i.e. there are two possible versions of an interval (2 notes), there are three possible positions for a triad, and so on

inversion row (noun) a variation of the prime row of a twelve tone row that is created through inverting each interval of the original prime row; the inversion row is placed in the left most column of a twelve-tone matrix

Ionian (noun) one of the modes; equivalent to major scale or a white key scale from C to C; first identified in the Renaissance period

irregular doubling (noun) the process of doubling a chord tone other than the normal choice in a four-voice structure, i.e. irregular doubling in a root position chord would involve doubling the soprano instead of the bass

Italian sixth (noun) a type of augmented sixth chord that contains only three notes (represented in solfège): *le-do-fi*

jazz minor scale (noun) also known as the melodic minor scale (as defined in jazz); a scale that is equivalent to the ascending portion of the traditional melodic minor scale: *do-re-me-fa-sol-la-ti-do*

key (noun) the name of the major or minor scale that is used as a basis for a tonal composition; the ending note of a tonal composition

key signature (noun) a group of sharps or flats that are written at the beginning of each staff and affect the pitch of those letter names within the composition

lead sheet (noun) a style of music notation used in jazz that consists of a melody line accompanied by a series of chord symbols that represent the harmonization of the melody

leading tone (noun) the seventh note of a major or minor scale that is specifically one half step lower than the tonic

leading-tone seventh (noun) same as a fully diminished seventh chord; the same as a diminished-diminished seventh chord; a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a diminished triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh; a four-note chord that is built on the leading tone scale degree of a major or minor key

ledger line (noun) an extension of the staff, written as an extra line above or below any staff exactly the width of a single note

Liber Usualis (noun) the title of a book that is the standard collection of all existing Gregorian chants, compiled by the monks of the Solemnnes monastery; the most well-known edition was produced in 1961 and featured all chants written on four-line staves

Locrian (noun) one of the modes; a twentieth-century addition to the modes that is equivalent to a white key scale from B to B

Lydian (noun) one of the original church modes used for chant tunes in the Middle Ages; equivalent to a white key scale from F to F

major (adjective) the name given to a scale based on the following pattern: major 2nd, major 2nd, minor 2nd, major 2nd, major 2nd, major 2nd, minor 2nd; any pattern derived from the major scale, such as an interval or a triad

major-major seventh (noun) a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a major triad and the outer interval is a major seventh

major-major seventh (noun) a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a major triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh; a dominant seventh chord

matrix (noun) a device used to identify all 48 forms of a twelve-tone row in order to have all rows identified for either writing a composition or analyzing a composition; a table with 144 spaces, 12 rows and 12 columns, for writing a 48 versions of the row

measure (noun) a segment of music defined by bar lines; an organizational tool for music rhythms; a group of one set of beats as defined by the meter of the music

mediant (noun) the third note or scale degree of a major or minor scale

mediant relationships (noun) a typical description of the types of modulations that were common in the tonal music of the Romantic period; modulation between keys that are a third apart

melodic minor (adjective) a form of the minor scale that (in traditional tonal music) raises the sixth and seventh notes of the natural minor scale when ascending and lowers the sixth and seventh notes of the scale back to their original pitches when descending

meter (noun) the aspect of rhythm that identifies how frequently an accent or stress occurs to emphasize a beat; a duple meter has a stress on every other beat; a triple meter has a stress on every third beat; a quadruple meter has a stress on every fourth beat

middle C (noun) the key C that is closest to the center of the piano

microtone (noun) an interval that is less than half step; an musical sound that exists between two notes that are a half step apart

MIDI (acronym; noun) Musical Instrument Digital Interface; a protocol developed in the 1980s to allow electronic music instruments and other devices to communicate using a uniform computer language

minor (noun) the scale (natural or pure minor) which is based on the following pattern: major 2nd, minor 2nd, major 2nd, major 2nd, minor 2nd, major 2nd, major 2nd; any the various iterations of the minor scale using accidentals to create a leading tone (harmonic or melodic); any pattern derived from the minor scale, such as an interval or a triad

minor-minor seventh (noun) a four-note chord in which the lower three notes form a minor triad and the outer interval is a minor seventh

Mixolydian (noun) one of the original church modes used for chant tunes in the Middle Ages; equivalent to a white key scale from G to G

modal jazz (noun) a type of jazz in which improvisation is based on the iterations of a given scale, such as the modes of the major or jazz minor scale

modal modulation (noun) the process of changing key within a composition through the use of a borrowed chord as the pivot; modulation to any of the major or minor keys related through the use of parallel scales

mode (noun) any of the scales that can be created using the white keys of the piano, i.e. D to D, E to E, and so on; any of the patterns used in the Middle Ages and Renaissance as the basis for both sacred and secular composition; in jazz, the iteration of any scale starting on a pitch other than the name of the scale

mode mixture (noun) a blending of the resources of two parallel keys within the same composition

modulation (noun) the process of moving from one key to another within a composition

moveable-do solfège (noun) a type of solfège (system of sight singing) that uses syllables to represent musical pitches; in the moveable-do method, *do* is always the tonic of the key or the first note of the scale

music theory (noun) the study of the building blocks and norms of musical composition and the subsequent analysis of actual compositions in order to compare them to the norms and describe the processes observed

musical alphabet (noun) the first seven letters of the alphabet, used to name musical pitches; A–B–C–D–E–F–G

musique concrète (noun) one of the earliest styles of electronic music that involves sounds recorded from nature or other real-world sources onto tape; the tape is then manipulated through a variety of techniques to become a composition

natural (noun) a symbol that cancels a sharp or flat; a symbol that returns any altered tone to its original pitch

natural minor (noun) a minor scale that does not contain any alterations from the key signature; equivalent to the Aeolian mode

- Neapolitan sixth chord** (noun) a category of chromatic chords that consists of a major triad built on the lowered second scale degree
- neighbor tone** (noun) a nonharmonic tone that is approached by step and resolved by step in the opposite direction; a nonharmonic tone that moves a step away from the chord tone and returns to the same note
- neutral structure** (noun) a manner of constructing chords on a staff so that the soprano and tenor are exactly one octave apart, with the other two voices containing the other two chord tones; a structure typically used with first-inversion chords where the norm is to double the soprano
- ninth chord** (noun) a chord that contains five chord tones stacked in thirds (for example: G–B–D–F–A); a chord typically found in the extended harmony of late-Romantic music
- nonfunctional harmony** (noun) a harmonic progression that does not follow the norms of the circle of fifths progression; a harmonic progression or series of chords that is not tonal
- nonharmonic tone** (noun) a tone that may occur in any voice that is not part of the underlying chord or harmony
- nontonal music** (noun) a style of music that is not based on a major or minor scale; a style of music in which dissonance is not regulated in the same manner as tonal music
- normal order** (noun)
- note** (noun) a symbol of sound; typically a circle placed on a staff line
- oblique motion** (noun) a type of motion between two voices in which one voice remains stationary while the other voice moves
- octatonic scale** (noun) a scale built of alternating whole and half steps; the scale may begin on any note and either the whole step or half step may be used to start the scale
- octave** (noun) the interval of an eighth; the distance between two notes that have the same name but are spread apart by eight notes
- open structure** (noun) a manner of constructing chords on a staff so that the upper three voices span a distance greater than an octave
- order of the flats** (noun) the order in which flats are added to a key signature, based on the circle of fifths which starts with C—zero flats, F—one flat (B), and so on; BEADGCF
- order of the sharps** (noun) the order in which sharps are added to a key signature, based on the circle of fifths which starts with C—zero sharps, G—one sharp (F), and so on; FCGDAEB
- pandiatonicism** (noun) the use of the resources of a major scale without the associated harmonic progressions associated with tonal music

parallel keys (noun) two keys that share a name or a common starting note

parallel motion (noun) a type of motion between two voices where both voices move in the same direction by exactly the same interval; typically in four-voice harmony, movement of parallel perfect fifths and octaves is considered unacceptable

parallelism (noun) identical to parallel motion; a style of musical composition in which parallel motion is a standard feature of the texture, typical in music of the Impressionist period

part writing (noun) the process of creating a four-voice musical texture according to certain standardized procedures that grew out of the chorale style of J.S. Bach

passing six-four chord (noun) one of the four types of six-four chords; it occurs in a pattern of stepwise movement in the bass line

passing tone (noun) a nonharmonic tone that is approached by stepwise motion and resolve by stepwise motion in the same direction

patch (noun) a setting on a synthesizer that produces a specific sound; originally a term used in analog synthesis to describe the process of connecting hardware modules with patch chords

pedal six-four chord (noun) one of the four types of six-four chords; it occurs in a pattern characterized by an unchanging bass note

pedal tone (noun) from organ literature, an unchanging note sustained on the pedal rank while the harmonies change in the upper voices; a nonharmonic tone that consists of an unchanging bass note in any style of music that is sustained while the harmonies change above it

pentachord (noun) a group of five notes that are associated together in some way; the first five notes of a major or minor scale

pentatonic scale (noun) a five-note scale that can start on any pitch and must contain the following intervals: three major seconds and two minor thirds; the minor thirds must not occur consecutively within the scale

perfect (adjective) representing an interval quality that is associated with the following intervals of a major scale: 1st, 4th, 5th, 8ve; intervals that are based on whole number ratios in terms of their frequencies or number of vibration per second

Petrushka chord (noun) a famous sonority from the ballet *Petrushka* by Igor Stravinsky that demonstrates bichordality from the octatonic scale; a chord that superimposes a C major triad over an F# major triad

Phrygian (noun) one of the original church modes used for chant tunes in the Middle Ages; equivalent to a white key scale from E to E

Picardy third (noun) a major triad heard at the end of a composition in a minor key; the chordal third of a major triad used as the final sonority of a composition in a minor key

picture score (noun) a notational device that incorporates a picture or graphic image in place of traditional music notation on a staff

pitch (noun) the concept of music that distinguishes the relative highness and lowness of sound

pitch class (noun) the categorization of all musical sounds that share a name, i.e. all of the Cs in any octave or any of their enharmonic respellings

pitch class set (noun) a group of pitches from a composition chosen for the purposes of pitch class set theory because they demonstrate some relationship with each; the number of pitches chosen for the set is considered to be the set's cardinal number; the group of pitches is converted to a numeric system and placed in an ascending order

pivot chord (noun) a chord that is used to modulate from one key to another; a chord that can be analyzed in two keys at the point of modulation

plagal cadence (noun) a cadence or ending in which a subdominant chord moves to a tonic chord (IV–I or iv–i)

plagal extension (noun) another term for a plagal cadence; a term used to reference the fact that the plagal progression does not stand alone, but always follows an authentic cadence

plagal mode (noun) one of the church modes in which the range of the melody extends from approximately a perfect fourth below the name of the mode up to approximately a perfect fifth above the name of the mode

plagal progression (noun) the movement of the subdominant chord to a tonic chord within a progression rather than at a cadence point

planing (noun) an alternate term for “parallelism”; often used in reference to Impressionist music

pointillism (noun) a style of twentieth-century music and painting that was based on dots of sound or color; in music, a style that often uses sparse, brief, and/or widely spaced musical sounds to create a texture

polychordality (noun) the use of three or more sets of chords simultaneously, not necessarily referencing any specific tonality

polytonality (noun) the use of three or more keys simultaneously

post-tonal music (noun) music written after the Common Practice Period in which a technique other than tonality is used

primary triads (noun) the major triads of a major scale; the tonic, subdominant, and dominant triads of the major or minor scale

prime (noun) unison; the interval of a first; the sound of two identical pitches performed together

prime form (noun) the final version of a pitch class set after the processes of cyclic variation, normal order, and set inversion have taken place

prime row (noun) the original row of a twelve-tone series; any transposition of the original twelve-tone row

quality (noun) a reference to the exact size of an interval or the interval content of a chord; uses the words major, minor, perfect, augmented, diminished

quartal harmony (noun) harmony that is based on intervals of a fourth, as opposed to tertian harmony which is based on intervals of a third

quarter tone (noun) an interval that is half of a half step; an interval that is centered between two notes that are a half step apart

range (noun) the typical span of notes that is appropriate for specific voices of a texture or a particular instrument

realization (noun) the process of interpreting a bass line and figured bass symbols at the keyboard to create a harmonization

relative keys (noun) two keys, one major and the other minor, that share a key signature

retardation (noun) a nonharmonic tone that is approached by repetition and resolved stepwise upward; a nonharmonic tone that behaves like a suspension but resolves up instead of down

retrograde row (noun) the backwards version of any of the prime rows of a twelve-tone series

retrograde inversion row (noun) any of twelve versions of the prime row of a twelve-tone series in which the size of the intervals has been inverted and the row appears backwards

retrogression (noun) a progression in which two chords from the circle of fifths progression are reversed in order, for example I-V-IV-I

root (noun) the lowest note of any tertian chord (triad or seventh chord) when it is stacked entirely in thirds; the name of a chord

scale (noun) a pattern of pitches, usually comprising the span of an octave, in a particular order of whole and/or half steps

secondary dominant (noun) a temporary tonicization of a particular diatonic chord through the use of its own dominant chord which is not diatonic in the overall key

secondary dominant sequence (noun) a series of secondary dominants that follow one another without resolving to their own tonics

secundal harmony (noun) harmony that is based on intervals of a second, as opposed to tertian harmony which is based on intervals of a third

segmentation (noun) the process of choosing the groups of notes (or sets) that will be used for a pitch class set analysis

serialism (noun) a compositional technique in which an order is chosen for an element of music such as pitch; that order is used as the basis for the composition

seventh chord (noun) a four-note chord stacked in intervals of thirds

sharp (noun) a musical symbol that is placed beside a note on a staff to raise that note one half step in pitch

similar motion (noun) motion between two voices that results in both voices moving in the same direction but by different intervals

simple meter (noun) a meter (or time signature) in which the beat divides into two equal parts; a meter represented by a top number in the time signature of 2, 3, or 4

solfège (noun) a system of sight singing that equates brief syllables with specific scale degrees; a system of singing originated by Guido of Arezzo in the tenth century

soprano (noun) the highest voice in a given texture; usually associated with the high range of female voices

sound mass (noun) a twentieth-century compositional technique in which clusters of notes are stacked so densely that individual pitches cannot be discerned; sound mass is often a aleatoric technique in which performers are asked to improvise around given parameters

staff (noun) a system of five parallel lines used for music notation; it is designed to show high versus low sound by the position of notes placed on it (plural: staves)

structure (noun) the manner of spacing notes in a chord in a multiple-voice texture; in four-voice harmony, typical structures are open, close, and neutral

subdivision (noun) a rhythmic figure that divides the division of the beat; the subdivision is created by dividing the division note into two equal parts in both simple and compound meters

subdominant (noun) the fourth note of a major or minor scale

submediant (noun) the third note of a major or minor scale

subtonic (noun) the seventh note of a natural minor scale, or the lowered seventh note of a melodic minor scale; the subtonic is also possible in a major scale with the use of an accidental

supertonic (noun) the second note of a major or minor scale

supertriplet (noun) a rhythmic figure where three notes of equal length are spread over two beats

suspension (noun) a nonharmonic tone pattern that contains three separate parts—preparation, suspension, and resolution; the preparation is a chord tone, the suspension is on the same line or space and in the same voice and usually occurs on a strong beat; the resolution moves stepwise downward in the same voice to become a member of the underlying chord

swing rhythm (noun) a rhythmic technique used in jazz where divisions of the beat are written as notes of equal length but instead are performed in a unequal manner, usually long-short

symmetrical chord (noun) a chord that cannot be inverted without turning into a different spelling of the same quality; for example, a fully diminished seventh chord will always be comprised of the same four pitch classes, no matter how it is spelled

syncopation (noun) a rhythmic techniques where emphasis is given to beats in the measure that are not ordinarily stressed

system (noun) a group of staves that are meant to be played simultaneously, such as in an orchestra score where a four-measure segment might be written on twenty or more individual staves to represent each instrument

tenor (noun) the second to lowest voice line in a four-voice texture; usually associated with the high range of male voices

tertian (adjective) of or relating to the interval of a third

tetrachord (noun) a group of four notes that are associated together in some way; the first or second half of a major or minor scale

theorist (noun) a person who studies music theory; a person who attempts to explain the norms of various musical styles and compares individual works of music against those norms

thirteenth chord (noun) a chord that contains all seven letters of the musical alphabet stacked in thirds (for example: G–B–D–F–A–C–E); a chord typically found in the extended harmony of late-Romanic music

tie (noun) a curved line that joins of the value of two notes into a single sound; a symbol that is typically found to create a musical sound that extends past a bar line

time signature (noun) the physical representation of a meter written on a staff; it consists of two numbers—the top number represents the meter (or the number of beats per measure) and the bottom number is a code for a type of note (2 is a half note, 4 is a quarter note, 8 is an eighth note)

tonal (adjective) in a key; referring to a type of music that is built on a major or minor scale and contains a tonic

tone row (noun) a sequence of twelve unique pitches that are placed in a specific order prior to the composition of a twelve-tone musical work

tonic (noun) the first note of a major or minor scale; the final sonority of a composition written using a major or minor scale; the point of resolution following a dominant chord

tonicization (noun) the creation of a temporary tonic, usually as the result of a secondary function chord

transpose (verb) to change a given melody or chord progression to a new key, keeping intact all of the interval relationships of the original

treble (noun) high in pitch; a nickname for the G clef

triad (noun) a three-note chord that is built exclusively in intervals of thirds

triplet (noun) a division of a single beat in which the beat divides into three equal parts; the term usually implies a borrowed division of the beat in a simple meter

tritone (noun) an interval that is also known as an augmented fourth or a diminished fifth; an interval that can be viewed as a series of three whole steps, F-B (F-G, G-A, A-B)

tritone substitution (noun) an alternative used in jazz for the V7-I cadential progression; the V7 contains a tritone between the chordal third and seventh which can be respelled and inverted to become the tritone of a different V7 chord

truncated progression (noun) a chord progression in which one of the chords from the standard circle of fifths is omitted; for example, instead of I-vi-ii-V-I, a truncated progression would be I-vi-V-I

twelve-bar blues (noun) a chord progression typical in jazz styles; it consists of a single chord per measure in the following progression I-I-I-I-IV-IV-I-I-V-IV-I-I; seventh chords are often substituted for the triads listed in the progression

twelve-tone technique (noun) a musical style developed in the early twentieth century by Arnold Schoenberg in which all twelve notes of the chromatic scale are regarded as equal; the twelve tones are placed in a specific order prior to the compositional process and that ordering is used as the basis of the composition

unordered set (noun) a term from pitch class set analysis that describes the process of regarding a group of pitch classes without regard to the order in which they appear in the composition; instead, they are re-arranged in numerical order from lowest to highest starting with C as 0

upbeat (noun) a partial measure found at the beginning of a composition or section; it is balanced by an incomplete measure at the end of the composition or section; also known as an anacrusis

vocal range (noun) the span of pitches that are regarded the norm for a specific voice, such as soprano, alto, tenor, or bass

voice leading (noun) the movement of individual lines within a texture, according to certain norms and styles

voice (noun) an independent line of melody that exists within a larger texture; often named soprano, alto, tenor, bass

whole tone scale (noun) a scale that is built entirely of whole steps; the scale is considered symmetrical because it remains the same pattern no matter which note is used as its starting pitch

whole step (noun) a distance equivalent to a major second; the distance between any two white keys on the piano that have a black key between them, i.e. C to D, D to E, F to G, A to B

Z-related pair (noun) a pair of pitch class sets that shares the same interval vector; these sets are identified in the table of Forte numbers with the letter “z”