

6.6 Parallelism, Planing, and Impressionism

Parallelism = Two or more voices moving in parallel motion (see 2.4 *Elementary Contrapuntal Motions*).

Chordal parallelism or **planing** (say "PLAY-ning") = Entire triads or seventh chords moving in parallel motion.

Three types of planing:

1. Diatonic parallelism
2. Chromatic parallelism
3. Mixed parallelism

1. Diatonic Planing

In *diatonic planing*, all voices follow the pitch classes of a major or minor scale (or diatonic mode).



2. Chromatic (or "Real") Planing

In *chromatic (or "real") planing*, the voices maintain *exact* interval relationships, adding accidentals as needed. Below, the intervals in the top-line melody are reproduced exactly in each part below (M2, M2, m3, M2, m2).



3. Mixed Planing

In *mixed planing*, the voices use a mixture of diatonic and chromatic planing techniques (compare 1 and 2 above).



Impressionism

Planing is commonly associated with **Impressionism**, a designation used to describe the works of composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel from the early twentieth-century. In addition to planing, Impressionism uses modes (primarily diatonic modes, whole tone scales, and pentatonic scales), reduced emphasis on downbeats, and programmatic titles (like "The Sunken Cathedral"). Impressionist composers were inspired at least partially by the Impressionist movement in art which began in the late 1800s (Renoir, Monet, etc.).