



THE **TOP 3** TRAPS ...



**... most composers fall into
and don't know how to get
out!**

1) The Music sounds blocky and stiff!

- the Diatonic system focuses more on verticality than the horizontal force
- it neither fully explores line writing nor teaches it properly
- Lessons 1-6 from the Composition Course teach you all you'll ever have to know about line writing
- please refer to "**1. The Power of Line Writing**" below

2) The Music sounds generic & mediocre!

- everybody uses the same rules, chord changes, and scales
- let's use a section from the "Matrices of the Intervals" (M3) to create a different sound and enhance what we know already
- please refer to "**2. The Escape**" below

3) No control of the vertical architecture!

- learn how to use the Harmonic series (or Overtone series = OTS)
- it explains different ranges (bass range, harmonic range, FX range)
- it explains chord complexity and how to use it in composition
- it explains the strength of the intervals
- and much more ...
- please refer to "**3. OTS Cheat Sheet**" below

Note: Many composers struggle to write original and fresh music and get frustrated. At MITA, we teach a transparent and proven methodology that will help you define your unique musical voice and raise above the generic sound of everybody else.

<https://musicintervaltheory.academy/>



1. The Power of Line Writing

♩ = 74

Ex. 5a: "Beyond the Horizon" - 1p

FRANK HERRLINGER

The musical score consists of four staves of music in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff (measures 1-4) is labeled 'Phrygian (G)' and 'Ionian (G)'. The second staff (measures 5-8) is labeled 'Lydian (C)', 'Aeolian (Ab)', and 'Mixolydian (D)'. The third staff (measures 9-12) is labeled 'Phrygian (G)' and 'Ionian (G)'. The fourth staff (measures 13-16) is labeled 'Phrygian (G)'. Red 'CA' markings are placed under the final notes of measures 8 and 16, indicating chromatic alteration.

To get more variety and color into our lines, let's switch from one mode to another.

The example above uses scale tones all the way through (except for the ones marked with CA, chromatic alteration). We still move within the Diatonic world but don't stick to any musical key as we continuously switch from one tonal center to another.

Horizontal variation for the ear



'Scale changes' are very powerful for musical storytelling as it connects to the **Matrix of Modes** that gives you control over color and emotion.

Ex. 5b: "Beyond the Horizon" - 2p

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17 Phrygian (G) Ionian (G)

21 Lydian (C) Aeolian (Ab) Mixolydian (D) CA

25 Phrygian (G) Ionian (G)

29 Phrygian (G) CA

Here's a possible 2nd line to the first one following only two guidelines (no DBL, no 13s).

Ex. 5c: "Beyond the Horizon" - 4p

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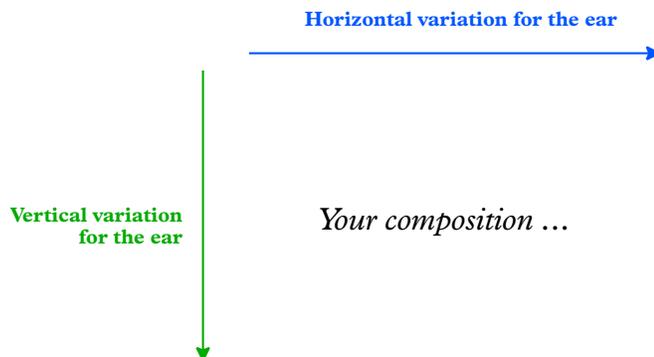
33 Phrygian (G) Ionian (G)

Aeolian (G) Mixolydian (G)

The musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are in the treble clef. The first staff is labeled 'Phrygian (G)' and the second staff is labeled 'Ionian (G)'. The bottom two staves are in the bass clef. The first staff is labeled 'Aeolian (G)' and the second staff is labeled 'Mixolydian (G)'. The score shows a sequence of notes and rests across four measures, illustrating the combination of these four modes.

Let's enhance the Diatonic system even more by combining two different scales/modes vertically. Although every line uses scale tones only, the overall vertical result doesn't sound diatonic anymore.

This is a quick way to stay focused and organized with your composition while creating exciting and unique colors and emotions that are not easy to get otherwise.



37

Lydian (C) Aeolian (Ab) Mixolydian (D)

CA

Lydian (C) Aeolian (Ab) Mixolydian (D)

41

Phrygian (G) Ionian (G)

Aeolian (G) Mixolydian (G)

45

Phrygian (G)

CA

Dorian (G)

CA

Line writing (1p to 4p) is an essential part of your compositional toolbox, and you want to be able to weave individual lines together so that they create not only a horizontal force but also vertical stability throughout every register!

As the author, you should be in control!

2. "The Escape" (Sketch)

FRANK HERRLINGER

♩ = 120 bpm

Piano

"F" is used to bridge into the tonality in the next bar

originally this was 3+1, changed by ear to 2+1

8+3 (PC of 3+1) and shifted down by 1 from original position of 3+1

1+8 (PC of 3+1) and shifted down by 3 from original 3+1 position

these are my 4 structures

this is my 2nd structure, a 2+7

LTs

4

2+7 but shifted down by 1 from original position

descending 1s

like bass part in bar 24, but shifted up by 1

third structure, 6+3 horizontally

3+4

LT

3+1 based on notes that don't create 13s against the line above

fourth structure, 3+4 horizontally

LT

like bar 20, but shifted up by 3

descending 1s in bottom line

8

repetition from the previous bar

repetition from the previous bar but shifted down by 1

LT

3+1

now the middle part also follows the desc. 1s

11

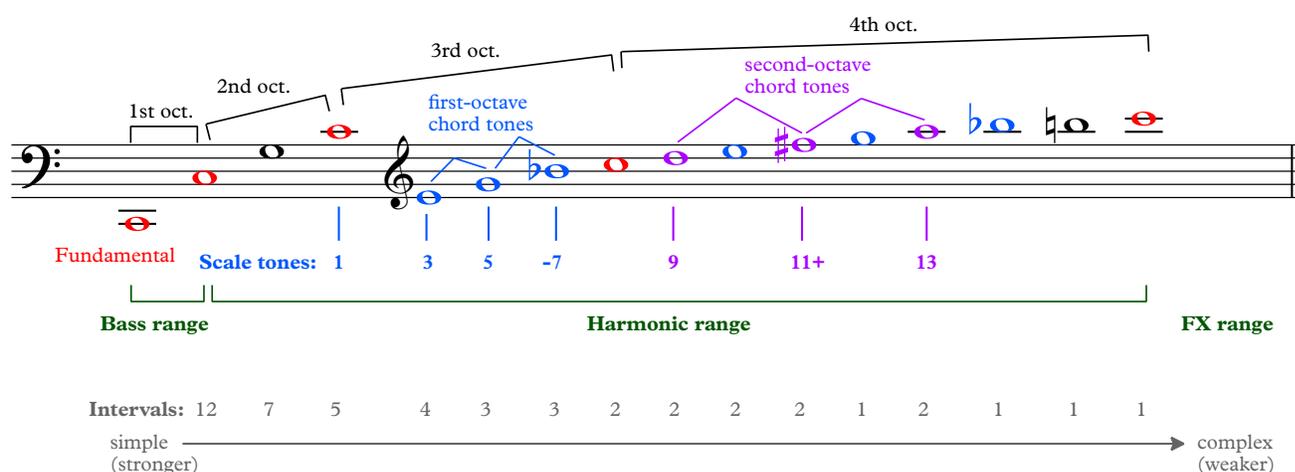
LT

3+1

3. "OTS Cheat Sheet"

The first thing that should come to mind when talking about vertical stability or architecture is the Overtone Series (OTS), as it provides perfect guidance on that subject.

Every octave in the OTS repeats itself in the higher ones. That already shows clearly that vertical stability works from simple to complex when starting from the bottom of the playable range and moving up.



The Harmonic series (or Overtone Series, OTS) is often mentioned in passing, but the value is tremendous! We suggest you become familiar with this chart and use it as guidance for the architecture in your compositions and orchestrations!

Never forget that you can also go against the nature of the OTS and create tension and dissonance!

In the ebook about the OTS (available to members inside the Music Interval Theory Academy), we even compose an entire orchestral piece on these concepts!

And the Orchestration Concepts go even deeper into how to use that knowledge to flesh out rough sketches into full orchestrations.

<https://musicintervaltheory.academy/orchestration-concepts/>