

Editor's Preface

The third issue of *Res Musica* is based on selected essays from the Sixth International Conference on Music Theory held in Tallinn, October 15–17, 2010. The main topic of the conference was hierarchical analysis, particularly Schenker's analytical method. As we know, any hierarchical analysis is impossible without clear priorities. However, those of Schenkerian analysis are by no means uniquely comprehensible. Is it primarily a science or an art or an ideology? Which aspect – counterpoint, harmony, melody, rhythm (meter) or form (design) – is given priority by generating its main outcome: voice-leading graphs? Is there only one kind of Schenkerian analysis, or are there several, each with different priorities? Is it possible to develop the deep insights of Schenkerian analysis in the context of a logically non-contradictory and historically well-founded theory?

Most of the articles in this issue attempt to give, in one way or another, an answer to these questions. The answers, depending on the standpoints of authors, can be divided into three large groups: 1) It is possible to develop Schenkerian analysis into an acceptable scientific method, in the context of music theory, without giving up the main premises formulated by Schenker. 2) It is impossible to develop it into an acceptable scientific method without giving up at least some of its main premises. 3) The main merit of Schenker's method is not its scientific quality but rather its capacity for interpretation; therefore an attempt to reform it on scientific grounds may only damage it.

The articles by **David Neumeyer** and **Olli Väisälä** belong to the first group. According to Neumeyer, an undue ideological emphasis and subjectivity attributed to Schenker's method can be overcome in a pluralistic practice where Schenkerian analysis constitutes but one of many possible types of hierarchic analyses. An example of such a practice can be seen in the system of structural determinants proposed by Väisälä, which – in combination with harmony and the norms of voice-leading – can result in more coherent analyses. Hidden priorities of the various methods are demonstrated through a comparison

of different analytical traditions (as another possible application of Neumeyer's pluralistic practice) in **Patrick McCreless's** article.

The articles by **Mart Humal** and **Ildar Khannanov** belong to the second group. Whereas Schenkerian analysis can be developed into a non-contradictory theory by substituting, according to Humal, a five-part voice-leading matrix for the *Ursatz* and its constituent parts (the *Urlinie* and *Baßbrechung*), the same is possible, according to Khannanov, by replacing the pseudo-hierarchy typical of Schenkerian analysis with the "real" hierarchy where each structural level is determined by features uniquely inherent in it.

The articles by **Poundie Burstein** and **Stephen Slottow** belong to the third group. According to Burstein, Schenkerian analysis, in its best manifestations, is not an empirical but rather a hermeneutic process that endeavours to describe how a composition might be heard most effectively. To insist that the features cited in the analysis should be empirically verified as inhering in the composition itself, would disqualify many of the most substantive examples of Schenkerian analysis. According to Slottow, analysis is not only a theory but also a practice; like performance, it is interpretive, characterised by a great deal of subjectivity. Both authors emphasize the pedagogical aspect of Schenkerian analysis, its thought-stimulating power.

In addition to the aforementioned articles, this issue contains two more essays by the authors whose aim is not to polemize about methodologies but rather to demonstrate their applicability. **Cecilia Oinas** shows how Schenkerian analysis can be combined with the performance of a composition. **Avo Sõmer** demonstrates how a context of the visual could be fruitful in discovering some aspects of a musical composition.

Due to the specificity of their topics, the main articles in this issue of *Res Musica* are in English. In order to make the readers of Estonian acquainted with their content, the articles are provided with extended summaries in Estonian. Since these, to a high degree, consist of commentaries on musical examples, they should give the reader an idea of an

article even without following discussions leading to their conclusion. Like those of the previous issues, articles published here are reviewed by two anonymous readers. I would like to express my gratitude to them, as well as to Mart Humal, who, in addition to being one of the initiators of the conference, helped me in editing the texts and translating the summaries.

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(translated by Mart Humal)