Analytical Skills at the RAM – An Introduction

The Analytical Skills core modules at the RAM provide an extensive study of the workings of common practice tonal music, including an in-depth look at the theoretical basis of tonality, analytical approaches to form and harmony, and composition using tonal materials and structural models.

We understand that students will have many different levels of experience with music theory, and the module is designed to be both accessible and challenging to all students. However, there are certain core concepts which prior familiarity with will make the beginning of your study much easier.

Before you begin your studies we EXPECT you to have a knowledge of the following:

1. Music notation, including the ability to read bass and treble clef fluently, and to write rhythms correctly.
2. The concept of intervals.
3. How to recognize keys, and to form scales in those keys.
4. How to build triads in a key, and to put them in inversions.
5. How to write harmonic progressions out of primary triads (tonic, subdominant/supertonic, dominant), and how those can fit with melodies.
6. The types of musical motion between 2 lines (similar, parallel, contrary, oblique).

We also strongly ENCOURAGE you to have an understanding of:

1. Basic voice-leading: how to combine two (or more) musical lines following certain key principles.
2. How melodies and harmonic progression combine to form phrases, articulated by cadences.
3. The relationship between consonance and dissonance, and how they relate to musical motion and voice-leading (passing notes, auxiliary notes, suspensions etc).
4. 7^{th} chords and how to use them in a harmonic progression.

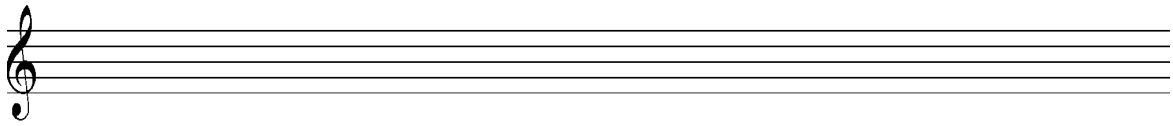
What follows is an example of a diagnostic test we use to assess theory knowledge – you will take something similar in week 3. The answers are on the page after. Some of the ways materials are presented (scales in strange keys and so on) may seem odd, but they are a good way to explore your understanding of the concepts.

If you can do all or most of this already you are in a good position for the beginning of your studies, if not, spending some time with the primer that's also provided is important. This is an attempt to start from, if not the very beginning, at least an early stage, so apologies if it seems basic or patronizing!

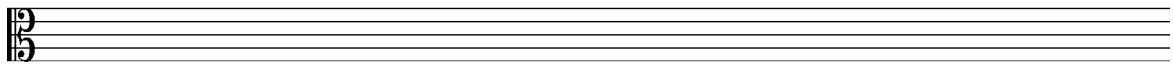
T&A1 literacy test – In class week of September 30th, 30 minutes

Part 1a: Write the following scales in the given clef, using key signatures and necessary accidentals. (12 marks)

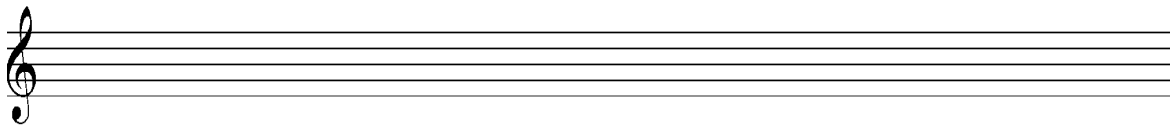
G^{b} harmonic minor



D# major

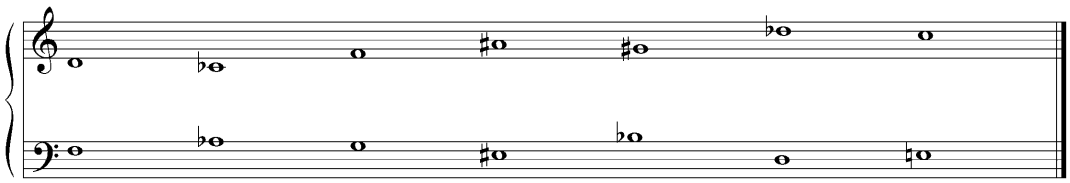


1b: Use accidentals only:



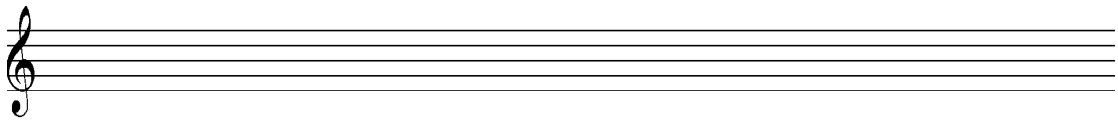
E# melodic minor (ascending and descending

Part 2: Identify the intervals (size and quality) between the 2 parts, and classify as perfect consonance, imperfect consonance, or dissonance as shown. (12 marks)



M6
Im.Con

Part 3: Write the chords indicated, using accidentals. (16 marks)



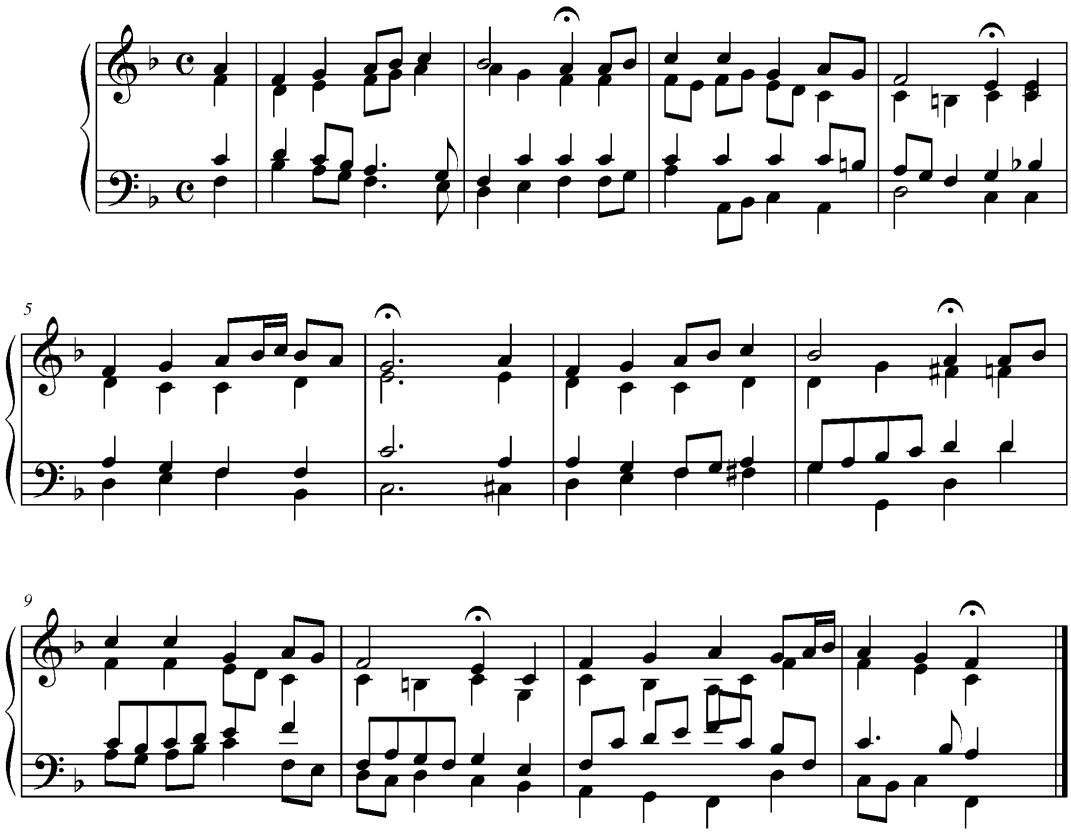
D min: vii^{o6}_{5} B maj: IV^{6} C# maj: V^{4}_{2} F min: ii^{6}

Part 4:

Identify and label each of the following in the extract below:

1. An imperfect cadence
2. A modulation to the supertonic
3. The subdominant chord
4. A suspension
5. An auxiliary (neighbor) note

(20 marks)



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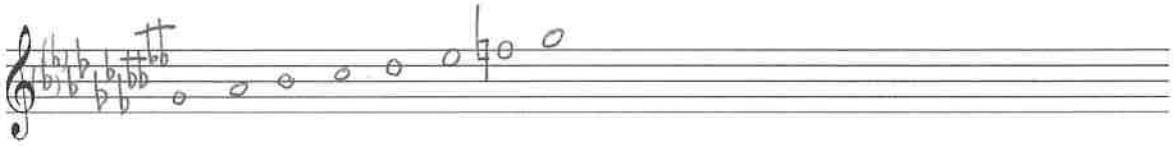

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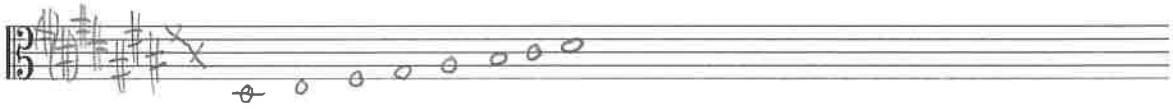

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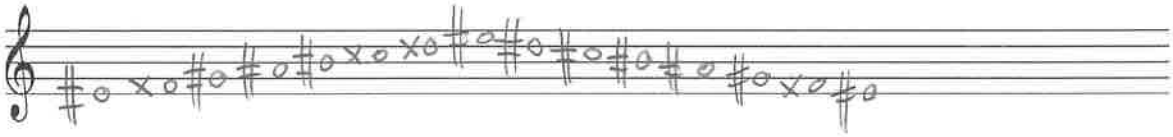

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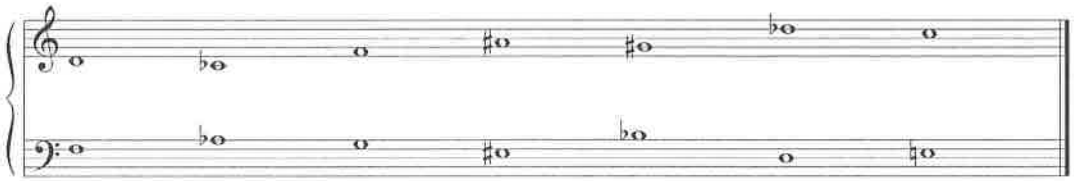

M6	m3	m7	P.11 / Comp P.4	Aug 6th	Comp Aug 8ve	Comp m6
Im.Con	Im.Con	Diss	Diss	Diss	Diss	Im. Con:

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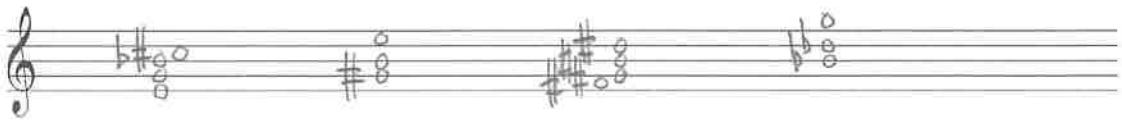

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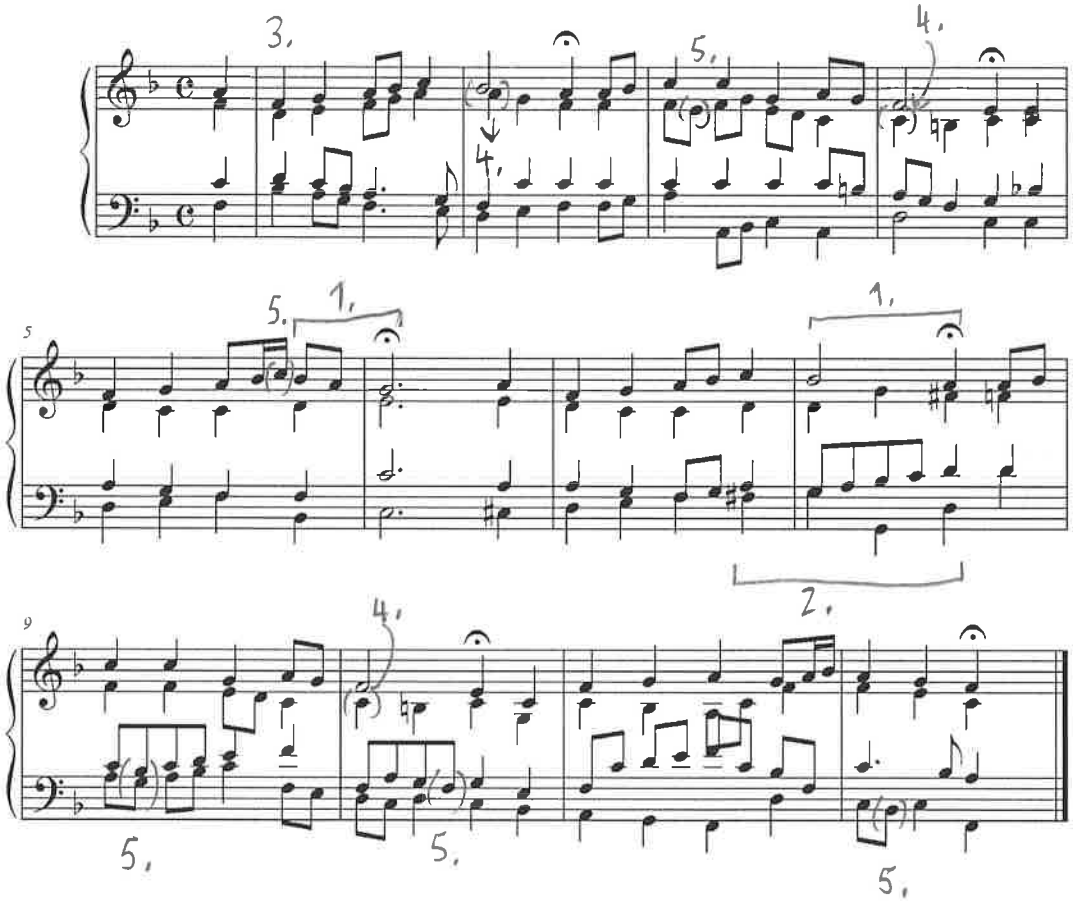
(20 marks)