

RECOURSE TO UNISON

for melodic + chordal instrument(s)

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COMPOSITION NOTES for RECOURSE TO UNISON

The formal structure of this composition follows what I call a *web form*, which is here numerically divided into 22 discrete sections. Sections 1, 8, 15, and 22 are expositions of the Opening Figures (**OF**) and are positioned as such in order to orient the remaining material, which is entirely based on the first three Generating Figures (**GF-A**, **GF-B**, and **GF-C**). The interaction of these three elements in sections 2-7 leads to the creation of two more Generating Figures (**GF-D** and **GF-E**). Likewise, in sections 9-14 **GF-C**, **GF-D**, and **GF-E** interact to create **GF-F** and **GF-G**. These are used in sections 16-21 and eventually lead to the return of the opening material in retrograde.

Recourse to Unison is written in Open Clef, which implies that it may be performed by any combination of melodic and chordal instruments. At section 1 the two parts begin in unison before expanding to separate staves at section 2. The single-line staff always represents the exact center of an instrument's range. Notes of indefinite pitch placed above or below this line (when there are not additional staff lines present) are to be interpreted by the performers. Additional staff lines placed above or below the center line imply a more measured sense of interval: what looks like a 2nd is a 2nd, what looks like a 3rd is a 3rd, etc., and any subsequent notes on the same line or space within a phrase should be held to the same pitch. When these additional staff lines expand or contract, so should the intervallic relationships within the phrase. No accidentals, key signatures, or precise rhythms are given; the performers are expected to listen to each other and choose their pitches and durations accordingly.

Phrase material is connected by a dashed-slur. The traditional slur indication should be interpreted as a traditional slur. Silences are implied by the relative graphic space between phrases, or in some cases by the absence of one or another of the staves (although a collapsing of 2 staves to one always represents a unison). Vertical dashed lines indicate a unison attack that will be cued by one of the players, or by a conductor in the case of a large ensemble performance.

Finally, material that is placed within nested repeat zones must always follow the numerical indication given at the bottom of each backward repeat (X indicates an open repeat). Generally any backward repeat may jump to any forward repeat within a set of nested repeat zones (but cannot jump past either double-barred repeat symbol). One of the players or the conductor should give a cue when the music is to move on.

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WEB FORM DIAGRAM for *RECOURSE TO UNISON*

- 1 OF (Opening Figures)
- 2 **GF-A** (Generating Figure A) > static harmonics
- 3 **GF-B/GF-C** > OF reduction > [B, A, C-inversion, B-inversion-composite] = **GF-D**
- 4 **GF-B** expansion > A-inversion-composite
- 5 **GF-A** expansion
- 6 **GF-B/GF-C** > OF reduction > [B-inversion, A-inversion, C, B-composite] = **GF-E**
- 7 **GF-B** > A-retrograde-inversion
- 8 OF-inversion
- 9 **GF-D**
- 10 **GF-E/GF-C** > OF reduction > [E, D, C-inversion, E-inversion-composite] = **GF-F**
- 11 **GF-E** expansion > D-inversion-composite
- 12 **GF-D** expansion
- 13 **GF-E/GF-C** > OF reduction > [E-inversion, D-inversion, C, E-composite] = **GF-G**
- 14 **GF-E** > D-retrograde-inversion
- 15 OF-inversion
- 16 **GF-F**
- 17 **GF-G/GF-C** > OF reduction > **GF-E**
- 18 **GF-G** expansion > F-inversion-composite
- 19 **GF-F** expansion
- 20 **GF-G/GF-C** > OF reduction > **GF-D**
- 21 **GF-G** > A-retrograde-inversion
- 22 OF-retrograde

WEB: 1-8, 2-5, 3-6, 4-7; 8-15, 9-12, 10-13, 11-14; 15-22, 16-19, 17-20, 18-21

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The score is divided into three sections, each marked with a boxed number:

- Section 1:** Features a melodic line starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a chordal accompaniment of diamond-shaped notes. The melodic line includes a trill and a series of notes that ascend and then descend, with a dashed line indicating a phrase. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present.
- Section 2:** Continues the melodic line with a trill and a series of notes. It includes a dynamic marking of *p* and a boxed number '2'.
- Section 3:** Features a melodic line with a trill and a series of notes, with a dashed line indicating a phrase. It includes a dynamic marking of *f* and a boxed number '3'.

The score uses various musical notations, including notes, rests, trills, and dynamic markings (*f*, *mp*, *p*). The chordal accompaniment consists of diamond-shaped notes on a staff.

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Two staves of musical notation. The top staff contains notes with slurs and a trill. The bottom staff contains notes with slurs and a 'vo' marking. A bracket labeled '2-5' connects a note in the top staff to a note in the bottom staff.

4

Musical notation for two staves. On the left, a large triangle contains two sets of notes on slanted lines. The notation includes brackets labeled '1-3', a 'vo' marking, and a bracket labeled 'X'.

5

ff

accel.

X

X

X

X

X

X

Detailed description: This exercise consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a series of slanted lines and notes, followed by a bracketed section containing four measures of music. The bottom staff starts with a dashed line labeled 'accel.' and a series of notes, followed by a bracketed section containing four measures of music. Both bracketed sections end with a measure containing an 'X' symbol. A dynamic marking of 'ff' is placed between the two staves, and a wedge-shaped hairpin indicates a crescendo.

6

mp

4-7

mp

Detailed description: This exercise consists of two staves. The top staff has a series of notes with a slur and a dashed line above it. The bottom staff has notes with a slur and a dashed line below it. A dynamic marking of 'mp' is placed between the staves, and a wedge-shaped hairpin indicates a crescendo. A bracket labeled '4-7' is placed over a section of the top staff.

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7

mf

2-3

2-3

2-5

2

Detailed description: Exercise 7 consists of a diagram on the left and a musical staff on the right. The diagram shows a triangle with two parallel lines sloping downwards from left to right. Several black dots are placed on these lines. Dashed arcs connect some of the dots, and a circled infinity symbol is at the bottom. The musical staff features a series of notes and rests. The first measure is marked *mf* and contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled '2-3'. The second measure contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled '2-3'. The third measure contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled '2-5'. The fourth measure contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled '2'. Dashed arcs connect notes across measures, and a circled infinity symbol is at the beginning of the staff.

8

pp

rit.

X

vo

2

Detailed description: Exercise 8 consists of a diagram on the left and a musical staff on the right. The diagram shows a triangle with two parallel lines sloping downwards from left to right. Several black dots are placed on these lines. Dashed arcs connect some of the dots, and a circled infinity symbol is at the bottom. The musical staff features a series of notes and rests. The first measure is marked *pp* and contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled 'X'. The second measure contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled 'vo'. The third measure contains a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a dotted quarter note, with a bracket underneath labeled '2'. A circled infinity symbol is at the beginning of the staff. The word 'rit.' is written below the diagram. A circled infinity symbol is also present in the diagram.

9

Musical exercise 9 on a grand staff. The top staff features a sequence of notes with a dashed slur, a bracketed interval labeled "2-5", a solid slur, and a dashed slur. The bottom staff features a dashed slur, a solid slur, a solid slur, and a dashed slur. A vertical dashed line labeled "V" connects the two staves.

10

Musical exercise 10 on a grand staff. The top staff contains notes with a dynamic marking "f", a bracketed interval labeled "4-7", a slur with "OV", and a slur with "fz". The bottom staff contains notes with a dynamic marking "f", a slur with "OV", a slur, a slur, a slur, and a slur. Vertical dashed lines connect the staves.

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Two staves of musical notation. The top staff has a bracketed fingering '4-7' and a slur over a group of notes. The bottom staff has a bracketed fingering '2-5' and a slur over a group of notes. Vertical dashed lines connect notes between the two staves. A large, wide, tapering shape is drawn on the right side of the staves, with a vertical dashed line passing through it.

11

A single staff of musical notation. It features several groups of notes, some with slurs and some with articulation marks. A bracketed fingering '4-7' is present. There are 'X' marks at the end of some note groups. A large, wide, tapering shape is drawn on the right side of the staff, similar to the one in the first block.

12

Exercise 12 consists of two staves of music. The top staff begins with a series of notes ascending and then descending, followed by a section of six measures. The first measure has a dotted line with the word "accel." below it. The second measure has a dashed slur under the notes. The third measure has a solid slur. The fourth measure has a "2-3" marking. The fifth measure has a dashed slur. The sixth measure has an "X" marking. The bottom staff also begins with a series of notes ascending and then descending. It follows with a section of six measures. The first measure has a dashed slur. The second measure has a "V 0" marking. The third measure has a solid slur. The fourth measure has a "2-3" marking. The fifth measure has a dashed slur. The sixth measure has an "X" marking.

13

Exercise 13 consists of two staves of music. The top staff begins with a series of notes ascending and then descending, followed by a section of six measures. The first measure has a dynamic marking of "f". The second measure has a "4-7" marking. The third measure has a "V 0" marking. The fourth measure has a solid slur. The fifth measure has a dynamic marking of "mp". The sixth measure has a dynamic marking of "f" with a wavy line above it. The bottom staff begins with a series of notes ascending and then descending. It follows with a section of six measures. The first measure has a dynamic marking of "f". The second measure has a "V 0" marking. The third measure has a dashed slur. The fourth measure has a dashed slur. The fifth measure has a solid slur. The sixth measure has a dynamic marking of "mp". The seventh measure has a dynamic marking of "mp". The eighth measure has a dynamic marking of "f".

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The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff features a melodic line with a dashed slur over a sequence of notes, followed by a solid slur and a final note. Below this, two bracketed pairs of notes are shown, with the number '9' centered under each pair. The lower staff also features two bracketed pairs of notes, with the number '9' centered under each pair. To the right, two more bracketed pairs of notes are shown, with the number '6' centered under the first and 'X' under the second. Further right, two more bracketed pairs of notes are shown, with '5-7' centered under the first and 'X' under the second.

14

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with the dynamic marking *mf* and a dashed slur over a sequence of notes. This is followed by a bracketed pair of notes with '4.7' centered under them. The lower staff begins with the dynamic marking *mf* and a dashed slur over a sequence of notes. The two staves then continue with a series of notes and slurs, including a dashed slur over the upper staff's notes and a solid slur over the lower staff's notes. The system concludes with a final note on the upper staff marked with an accent (^) and a final note on the lower staff marked with an accent (^).

15

Musical score for exercise 15, consisting of two staves. The upper staff begins with a dotted quarter note on the middle line, followed by a slur over six eighth notes ascending from the middle line to the first space. A dashed line connects the start of the slur to the first note. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over two eighth notes on the middle line. A dynamic marking *p* is placed below the staff with a wedge-shaped hairpin. The lower staff starts with a dotted quarter note on the middle line, followed by a slur over six eighth notes descending from the middle line to the first space. A dashed line connects the start of the slur to the first note. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over two eighth notes on the middle line. A dynamic marking *mf* is placed above the staff. The exercise concludes with a series of five bracketed pairs of notes: a dotted quarter note on the middle line followed by an eighth note on the middle line. The first pair is marked *gradual rit.* above the staff. The second pair has a slur over the eighth note. The third pair has a slur over the eighth note and an 'X' below it. The fourth pair has a slur over the eighth note. The fifth pair has a slur over the eighth note and a '2' below it.

16

Musical score for exercise 16, consisting of two staves. The upper staff begins with a bracketed pair of notes: a dotted quarter note on the middle line followed by an eighth note on the middle line, with the number '4-7' below. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over six eighth notes ascending from the middle line to the first space. A dashed line connects the start of the slur to the first note. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over two eighth notes on the middle line. A dynamic marking *p* is placed to the left of the first pair. The lower staff starts with a bracketed pair of notes: a dotted quarter note on the middle line followed by an eighth note on the middle line, with the number '2-5' below. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over six eighth notes descending from the middle line to the first space. A dashed line connects the start of the slur to the first note. This is followed by a dotted quarter note on the middle line, then a slur over two eighth notes on the middle line. A dynamic marking *p* is placed to the left of the first pair.

17

Musical score for exercise 17, consisting of two staves. The top staff begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and contains a series of notes with a dashed slur above them. The bottom staff also begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and contains notes with a dashed slur above them. Vertical dashed lines connect corresponding notes between the two staves. The score includes various articulation marks, including slurs and accents, and ends with a bracketed section labeled 4-7.

18

Musical score for exercise 18, consisting of two staves. The top staff begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and contains notes with a dashed slur above them. The bottom staff begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and contains notes with a dashed slur above them. Vertical dashed lines connect corresponding notes between the two staves. The score includes various articulation marks, including slurs and accents, and ends with a bracketed section labeled X.

19

2-5

2-3

4-7

X

20

f

p

piano

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21

Exercise 21 consists of two staves. The upper staff contains four groups of notes, each enclosed in brackets. The first group has a dotted line from the first note to the second, with a '6' below. The second group has a dotted line from the first note to the second, with an 'X' below. The third group has a slur over the first two notes, with a '3' below. The fourth group has a slur over the first three notes, with a '2' below. The lower staff contains two groups of notes in brackets, with '5-7' and 'X' below them respectively. The rest of the lower staff contains diamond-shaped symbols. Two horizontal lines with a wedge-shaped taper are positioned between the two staves.

22

Exercise 22 features a complex arrangement of notes and slurs. It begins with a *f* dynamic marking and a wavy line. The notes are arranged in a series of lines that curve downwards from left to right. There are several slurs and ties connecting notes across different lines. A dashed line indicates a connection between notes. The exercise concludes with a final note on a single staff, followed by a double bar line and a slash.