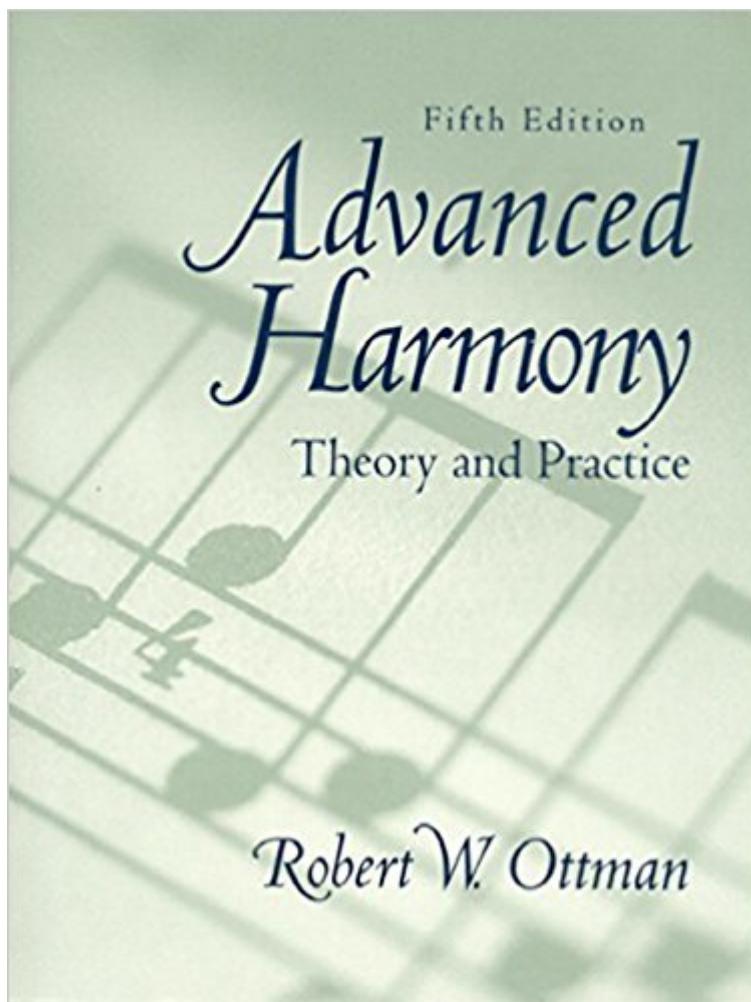


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Advanced Harmony: Theory And Practice With CD Package (5th Edition)



Synopsis

Advanced Harmony: Theory and Practice presents a systematic study of the principles of harmonic composition as developed by the composers of the 17th to the 19th centuries. The text applies an incremental learning approach to the academic aspect of music and applies newly acquired knowledge to the writing of music. Covers topics such as modulation, triads, chords, the 19th century, the 20th century, melody, rhythm, harmony, various composers, and more. For musicians just starting out, or for anyone interested in learning more about music theory.

Book Information

Paperback: 504 pages

Publisher: Pearson; 5 edition (March 24, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0130862371

ISBN-13: 978-0130862372

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 1.4 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.9 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 starsÂ [See all reviewsÂ](#) (4 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

When I was in music school, we used Robert Ottman's Sight Singing book, and I still think the current edition is terrific. He also wrote texts on elementary harmony and this text on advanced harmony. This is an interesting and practical guide to the basics of harmony. The subtitle is "theory and practice" and that is right, but by theory it really means musical grammar and the emphasis in the book is really on practice. What have composers actually done, what to look for, and how to hear it. The text is concise, without long and labored explanations. However, for those who want detailed explanations of harmony, it might seem terse. The real emphasis in this text is on the rich selection of musical examples. A CD accompanies the text that plays the musical samples so the student can hear them (if you can't hear them by looking at them music or play them on your piano). So, the text is really for a practicing musician who wants to know the steps, say, to a "pivot chord" without an extended explication of the implications of such a thing. Ottman also deals with aspects of

orchestration, figuration, and musical form. Again, his approach is always practical and does not delve into the topics in an extended way. He lets the student examine the musical samples to get the point of what the text says. I think this is the way musicians actually prefer learning about music, anyway. If they wanted to read lots of text they would have pursued a different profession, right? Sure, those of us who study music theory dig into things a bit differently, but it is the music analysis written in some form of notation we always find most compelling.

I immediately saw some questionable analyses in this book. I'll note an example below. Also, I don't understand the consistent, simplistic analysis of a single pivot chord as establishment of modulation. The analysis should be broader in terms of the overlapping of dually interpreted regions. In many examples used by Ottman, successive regions (as opposed to a single pivot chord) should be identified as part of a more sophisticated interpretation of modulation. Also, I don't understand the value in using figured bass as part of a text on advanced harmony. Sure, a brief explanation of figured bass in elementary harmony books would explain the conventional use of the terms "6 chords" and "4-3 chords" etc., but this should only serve to explain common usage of inversion identification. Beyond that, someone would need to explain the value in the figured bass exercises I see here? Maybe one example of misinterpretation will relate my dissatisfaction with the text. I use this example, because I see consistent misinterpretation of diminished chords in the text. By the way, I likely have an older edition (third). In a harmonic analysis of Schubert's Sonata in B flat Major measures 42-48, Ottman sees the harmonic progression of I (B flat major) - V - vii/ii (single pivot chord - a diminished chord/vagrant harmony then reinterpreted as vii of the new key of F# minor, an altered root of tonic major!??!) - then V f# minor - I of f# minor. I strongly disagree with this analysis. A more logical explanation of this modulation should consider the interchangeability of major and minor with a simple modulation to the closely related region of submediant minor via the regions path of tonic major - tonic minor - to tonic minor's submediant minor enharmonically presented as f# minor.

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