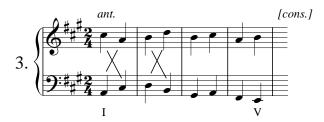
BASS-SOPRANO COUNTERPOINT

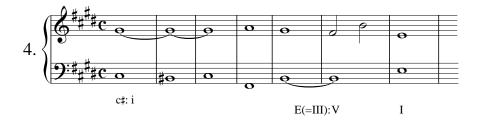
Note vs. note

- 1) In general, tonal musical textures unfold along a framework of two principal lines, a soprano and bass. While these two lines preserve a degree of independence, they also both combine to imply together a coherent and well-directed harmonic progression.
- 2) In the following examples, the bass and soprano move for the most part at the same time in **note-vs.-note counterpoint.** (Except for #2, which is a special case, these are not complete pieces.)











Notice some features of each individual line:

- 3) each moves within the range of an ocatve;
- 4) there are no diminished or augmented intervals;
- 5) each line mixes leaps and steps;
- 6) each is for the most part **diatonic**.

The bass and soprano together

- 7) create intervals that are **consonant** [major/minor (thirds/)tenths and sixths, perfect fifths and octaves];
- 8) **are never farther apart than three octaves** (the lines may somewhat exceed the actual vocal ranges);
- 9) do not create **long chains** of (thirds/)tenths or sixths;
- 10) do not approach perfect fifths/octaves in parallel motion;
- 11) approach perfect fifths/octaves in similar motion only by step in the soprano;

- 12) mix perfect consonances [fifths, octaves] and imperfect consonances [(thirds/)tenths, sixths];
- 13) leap together in the same direction only infrequently;
- 14) **maintain some distance from each other** (to leave room for the voices between them);
- 15) move for the most part in **uniform rhythmic values**, or patterns of values;
- 16) begin (except for #7) on a root-position tonic chord, and end on a root-position tonic or dominant chord.
- 17) Notice also
 - repeated units (including sequences);
 - voice exchanges; and
 - how each line responds to itself as it unfolds, filling in spaces it creates and continuing "promised" movement.

Introduction of dissonance

18) Notes in chords or in intervals that create **dissonance**—in other words, they are **relatively unstable**—connect **by step** with notes before and/or after them that create **consonance**, and are **relatively stable**. The dissonant members of chords or intervals depend on the preceding and/or following consonances for their musical meaning.

Passing tones

19) **Passing tones**—motion from and toward—carry the line from one consonant tone to another, as marked in Examples 9 and 10.

