

**COUNTERPOINT FOR GUITAR
WITH IMPROVISATION IN THE
RENAISSANCE STYLE AND
STUDY IN MOTIVIC METAMOR-
PHOSIS** by *Dusan Bogdanovic*

Berben. 131 pages.

Dusan Bogdanovic explains in his introduction that this textbook is a result of lectures and courses taught over the years. He sets out, and succeeds in presenting, a method of teaching counterpoint to the gui-

tarist, not as a theoretical subject, but as a vibrant aspect of guitar performance, improvisation and composition. By exploring various aspects of musicianship through a balanced, integrated and musical approach, Bogdanovic attempts to supply the modern guitarist with a more harmonised and integrated approach to the art of music.

Though he delves into certain philosophical issues about the state of post-modern man and methods of learning, the musical explanations are lucid and pertinent while practical and conceptual ideas are graphically illustrated as charts.

Chapters on counterpoint offer excellent descriptions and musical examples explaining species counterpoint in two and three voices. The descriptions of cadences and canonic technique are supported with practical exercises. Notably, the short chapter on imitation is summed up by a brilliant analysis of the imitation technique of Francesco da Milano describing the modal and non-modal harmonic plan of the given fantasia.

A lucid description of Improvisation in the Renaissance style has a surprising acknowledgement to the jazz guitar method of William G. Leavitt. Here Bogdanovic refers to the position principals that are used in Mr Leavitt's *Modern Method for Guitar*, thus offering a practical set of fingerings for his theories. Explaining how modal playing can be derived from the scales he leads to a description of Renaissance melodic patterns and how to build useful exercises on them. Most of the musical examples are based on the works of Byrd, Milano, Narvaez and Dowland, offering direct examples from some of the best music in the literature.

There is so much more material to cover that is beyond the scope of this review; melodic and metric interpretation, perpetual canons, Fibonacci transformations and motivic transformations to name a few. My recommendation is that any serious guitarist/teacher/performer/composer with an academic interest in teaching counterpoint should have this book as an important reference or method. After reading and playing through this treatise one is left with the impression that Bogdanovic is an intelligent and creative musician trying to verse the guitarist in the use of learned counterpoint, but with ref-

erence to the guitarist's literature, not that of the vocal or keyboard tradition (though these traditions are very important). The only question I am left with at the end of this tome is 'why wasn't this done before?'

Peter Argondizza