COMPOSITION PROJECT #5
(polytonal study)

1. **Composition**—Compose a short (24-32 measures) polytonal work for solo piano or two monophonic instruments drawn from the available instruments in class:
   a. If composing for solo piano, set each hand in a different key;
   b. If composing for other instruments, set each instrument in a different key.

2. **Pre-compositional work**—The work must be structured in one of the following three ways:
   a. A melody with accompaniment, in two different keys: the accompanimental part may be an Alberti bass, ground bass, or may be patterned after a type of dance rhythm (e.g., waltz, tango);
   b. A single melody used contrapuntally in two different keys: e.g., a canon or invention;
   c. A melody and a contrasting counter-melody, in two different keys.

   In the case of (a) above, you should consider the harmonic implications of your original melody, as the accompanimental part will most likely follow the harmony suggested by the melodic line (though transposed to a different key). With regard to (b) and (c), you will more likely need to consider the note-to-note relationships of the two lines (avoiding such weaknesses as unprepared octaves/unisons) rather than any kind of over-arching harmonic scheme.

3. The following suggestions will increase the effectiveness of this project:
   a. Make sure each voice *clearly establishes its key center*; avoid modulations—or limit yourself to just *one* in each voice.
   b. *Use major and/or minor keys only*: the use of other scales (e.g., octatonic, whole-tone) or modes will only obscure the key center of each line, and the result will not be truly polytonal.
   c. Choose *distantly-related keys*: closely related keys are much less effective in polytonal music because of the number of common tones between scales; as a result, those tones that are not shared may be perceived as chromatic alterations within a single key.
   d. Each part should maintain its independence throughout: the more you can do to ensure that each voice is distinct (through register, timbre, character, etc.), the more effective the polytonal result will be.

4. If you are using transposing instrument(s), make sure to *use the proper transposition* — and indicate “transposed score” in the top left corner of the page — so that performers can read from score.

5. **Commentary/analysis**—Analyze this work with regard to key relationships, rhythmic characteristics, and melodic contours within and between the two parts. Consider the following questions in your discussion:
   a. Which keys are used? Why did you select those keys?
   b. Where do the parts converge—i.e., where are they the most “consonant”?
   c. Where do the parts clash—i.e., where are they the most “dissonant”?
   d. How have you taken advantage of the differences and similarities between the two key areas?

- Be prepared to discuss the project in class on **Friday, March 16**; be prepared to read the works in class on **Friday, March 30**.
- The project is due in class on **Monday, April 2**.