

Krebs, Harald. "Some Extensions of the Concepts of Metrical Consonance and Dissonance." *Journal of Music Theory*. Vol. 31, No. 1. 99-120.

This article describes an extension of Maury Yeston's ideas of metrical consonance and dissonance. Basically, the idea of a perceived meter can only arise when a given stratum of regular pulses is associated with a slower stratum that organizes the pulses into equivalent groups. Collections of strata are consonant when their rates of motion are multiples or factors of each other by an integer greater than one. When two or more strata are not related in such a simple manner, they are rhythmically dissonant. Krebs then initiates his own spin-off of Yeston's concepts by first modifying the terminology. The definition of meter is changed into metrical consonance and dissonance and the arithmetic relationship between levels of motion is really not arithmetic difference levels of motion, but instead, degrees of alignment.

Metrical consonance arises from the combination of at least two levels such that each interpretive level coincides with a faster level. Levels involve regular motion; a combination of just one pulse level and one interpretive level must always be consonant. Because this is a paper based on the "perceived" interpretation levels, there are different states to be mentioned, indirect and direct. Metrical dissonance requires the presence of at least three levels. There are two types of dissonance mentioned, type A and type B. Type A dissonance is the type of metrical dissonance arising from the combination of levels of different cardinalities. Type B dissonance is the type where conflicting groupings of a pulse level can arise from the nonaligned superimposition of at least two interpretive levels of the same cardinality. In either case, the two conflicting levels are rarely heard as being equal in significance; one of the levels is usually heard as being primary, the other or others as secondary. To attempt to explain further, Krebs coins the phrases "direct metrical dissonances" and "indirect metrical dissonances." Krebs then introduces the idea of "subliminal metrical dissonances" to which he claims are analogous to non-tonic scale steps in harmonic theory. The rest of the paper mentions the possible relationships that all of these "types" can have, including juxtapositions, superimpositions, consonance-consonance, consonance-dissonance, dissonance-consonance (which he also calls resolutions), and dissonance-dissonance relationships.

I thought this was a horrible article. The ideas are interesting, but the idea of taking 20 pages to say something that really takes only 5 is just ridiculous. The examples given are unclear and very difficult to follow (though they were interesting musical selections). What really caught me off guard though was his quote, "both levels are heard as being subliminally dissonant." Normally this would

not really bother me, but it was his insistence on mentioning the etymology of Yeston's terminology that made me really look into his own terminology. The word subliminal, meaning "below the limit," was always a difficult word for me to accept since a psychology professor mentioned that there could never be anything below the limit that can affect us because it is below the level of effectiveness. Oh, and what does "oom-pah" on page 106 mean? What is its etymology? I know I am being harsh and distracted from what this paper is really trying to say, but when the writing is this bad, what else can I do?