**The Secrets of Orchestration**

**Part One. Orchestral Chord Voicings**

**Chapter 3. Woodwinds & Brass**

**Lecture 14c. Several-part harmony (modern)**

Hello and nice to see you.

Today I am going to talk about how to voice modern harmony between horns and woodwinds.

Let’s start to do it.

If you have successfully learned the previous lesson, it will be easier to voice a several-part harmony.

Because you should be careful about the lower portion of the several-part harmony. The upper portion is not hard to voice.

Let me explain it in the graphic.

When you are going to voice the harmony between horns and woodwinds, follow these steps.

Always start with the horns.

Then go to find the low woodwinds, which consist of the contrabassoon, bassoons, and bass clarinet.

Finally, voice the upper portion with the high woodwinds, which contain clarinet, oboe, and flute families.

So, let’s voice the first chord.

The chord sounds like this.

OK. First of all, you should decide how many horns should play and which notes should be assigned.

I want to give the **G** and **C** to horns. This is the middle register of the horn.

Then, I am going to complete the lower portion of the chord.

The low **G** and **F** will be played by two bassoons. Of course, depending on the chord and your choice, other low woodwind instruments also can be used.

The next step is to complete the upper voices above the horns. You can choose the timbre you want. It could be just hot or cold, or mixed timbre.

I want to use 1 English horn and 2 clarinets.

Generally, it would be better to use the 2nd (middle) register of the instruments, as they are available to play at any dynamic, from soft to strong.

Of course, this chord can be voiced in different ways.

For example, 3 horns, 1 low woodwind, and 3 high woodwinds.

Or, 4 horns, 1 low woodwind, and 2 high woodwinds.

So, I am going to start with 1st option.

All voicings are in the **C score**.

Soft dynamics should be used.

This is a nicely balanced chord with soft dynamics. I used the overlay method.

What about this voicing?

Hıgh woodwinds remain unchanged, horns are below the bassoons.

Is this effective voicing or not?

Of course not.

Because the horns will cover the bassoon sound. This is less effective voicing.

This is why we have learned the combination of the horns and bassoons in the previous lecture.

Which voicing is effective? The first or second one?

The upper portion of the chord is the same in both voicings.

Horns and bassoons are voiced with an interlocking method.

Of course, the first voicing is most effective, since one of the bassoons is below the horn.

Soft dynamics should be used.

Here is the same. The high woodwinds remain unchanged.

Horns and bassoons are voiced with an enclosure method.

The first voicing is effective since horns blend well inside two bassoons.

Any soft dynamic can be used.

Let's voice the seventh chord with both soft and strong dynamics.

If a soft dynamic is required, it is enough to assign each note to one timbre.

So, the 1st bassoon takes the bass of the chord, while two horns play above the bassoon.

Two clarinets will complete the upper harmony.

When dynamic marking is ***mp*** or stronger you should double the woodwind instruments. Especially if the chord contains 4,5, and 6 notes.

So, the lower **D** will be doubled by two bassoons.

Two horns remain unchanged.

The upper **F** and **A** will be doubled by two flutes.

The same dynamic should be written below all instruments.

Of course, you can use other combinations of the instruments, as I mentioned before.

It is not necessary to always use low woodwinds. This chord can also be played without low woodwinds.

For example, 3 horns and 2 flutes.

Let’s move to the next one.

This chord can be voiced with 3 horns and 3 clarinets.

I am going to use the overlaying method.

The horns take the **C, D#,** and **E.**

The **F#, G,** and **A#** will be played by 3 clarinets.

Is this effective voicing?

Of course, not.

There is an undesirable tension between the instruments because of the second intervals.

The overlaying is a less effective method. You can find the best voicing than this one.

As I said, before starting to voice the chord you’d better analyze the construction of the chord.

At first glance, it looks like the chaos of the chromatic tones.

But this is a poly-chord containing a union of two different triads: **C major,** and **D# minor.**

Now the chord is understandable.

Ok. When you are going to voice polychords, try to highlight each chord of the construction with the same or similar timbres, as much as possible.

Thereby, all the chords of the construction will be clearer and audible in the orchestra.

For example, let's use the interlocking method.

The **C major** chord is in the horns, while the **D# minor** will be played by three clarinets.

The lower note also can be substituted with the bassoon, as it has a warm timbre like the horn.

When a medium or stronger dynamic is required, the upper portion of the harmony should be doubled by two instruments.

For example, 3 clarinets can be reinforced by 2 bassoons and 1 English horn.

The next chord is **Cmaj7(-13).**

As you heard, this chord sounds mysterious due to the augmented triad.

Again, we should analyze the construction.

If I divide the construction, then I will get two different chords:

The **C augmented** triad and **E minor** triad.

I want to highlight the **C-augmented** triad.

Hence, it will be played by three horns.

The **E minor** can be voiced by three clarinets.

Don’t use strong dynamics.

What about this voicing?

As I always mentioned in our previous lectures, don’t voice the chord between different timbres, as they have no uniformity in color.

This kind of voicing always should be avoided.

Of course, the chord can be voiced with a strong dynamic, if the woodwinds are doubled.

Like before, this is also unwished voicing, since there is undesirable tension between high woodwinds.

Instead of this, the construction of the chord also can be divided as follows:

The **C major** and **E major** triads.

3 horns take the **C major**, while the **E major** will be doubled by two different families.

Let’s voice one more chord.

This is also a mysterious chord that contains three different triads:

The **B-flat major**, the **B-flat augmented**, and the **B minor**.

For this one, I will use 4 horns.

So, the **F#, B-flat, D,** and **F#** will be played by four horns.

Since this is a 9-part harmony, the lower portion of the chord can be doubled, even at soft dynamic.

I will apply the classical approach.

So, the low **B** will be played by the contrabassoon and the 2nd bassoon.

The upper **B** will be played by the 1st bassoon and the bass clarinet.

This is a quite strong bass below the horns.

The **B-flat major** is played by the English horn and two clarinets.

At strong dynamics, the high woodwinds should be doubled, as there are 4 horns in the chord.

So, the low woodwinds remain unchanged, as they have already doubled.

The **B-flat** **major** will be played with the interlocking method, as we have learned in lecture number 5.

So, we have done our lesson. Thanks for watching. Bye-bye.