



Ericsson F. Hatfield

Studio Syllabus

“Art, then, is a productive state guided by a true course of reasoning.”

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.4

Montréal

2026



Contents

I. Philosophy of Instruction

II. Prerequisites

III. Counterpoint Curriculum

IV. Lesson Format & Tuition

V. Scheduling & Cancellation Policy

ericsson.f.hatfield@gmail.com

www.ericssonhatfield.com

I. PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

This studio approaches composition as a craft grounded in technical clarity. The curriculum centers primarily upon the study of contrapuntal procedure, particularly canon, invertible counterpoint, sequence, and fugue.

Particular emphasis is placed on the study of canon and invertible counterpoint due to their rigor, strict causality, and capacity to illuminate musical structure with exceptional clarity. These procedures form the technical foundation from which broader compositional understanding may develop.

The curriculum emphasizes fluency and understanding rather than brute repetition or the rapid accumulation of material. Students are expected to engage deeply with refinement, revision, and structural comprehension throughout the course of study.

All theoretical concepts are approached through direct compositional application. Procedures are studied not only analytically, but through composition, memorization, improvisation, stylistic modeling, and performance.

As students progress, opportunities for readings, recording projects, and live performance may arise.

II. PREREQUISITES

Students are expected to already possess fluency in reading and performing music. Rudimentary piano proficiency is required, as well as regular access to a piano or keyboard during lessons.

Students must also possess the ability to notate music, whether by hand or digitally. Free notation software such as MuseScore is fully acceptable for this purpose. Students are also encouraged to regularly practice writing music by hand as part of their technical development.

Lessons are conducted online via Zoom unless the student is physically present in Montréal. Students taking lessons online are expected to maintain a stable internet connection, a working camera setup and audio quality suitable for musical instruction.

Students under the age of 18 must have parental consent, and a parent or guardian must be present or nearby during instruction.

III. COUNTERPOINT CURRICULUM

The counterpoint curriculum is cumulative and mastery-based. Advancement is determined by demonstrated fluency and technical understanding rather than fixed timelines. Students should expect substantial repetition, refinement, memorization, and revision throughout the course of study.

The progression outlined below concerns the contrapuntal and procedural core of the broader curriculum.

The pace of progression varies considerably depending upon the student's level of preparation, consistency, and degree of engagement. For highly committed students, the core curriculum typically requires approximately 1.5–2 years of concentrated study, though many students continue beyond this point as their work develops.

A. FOUNDATIONAL KEYBOARD FLUENCY

The progression begins with the memorization and internalization of contrapuntal patterns at the keyboard. This groundwork establishes the technical reflexes, structural hearing, and improvisational fluency necessary for later contrapuntal study.

To Be Memorized at the Keyboard

- Sequences in 3 Voices
- Cadences in 3 Voices

Students learn the seven circuits of sequences in three voices along with their derivatives. These patterns are treated not merely as written exercises, but as material to be internalized for spontaneous compositional use.

As a result of this study, students develop rudimentary improvisational fluency, including the ability to improvise over bass lines and around given melodic subjects.

B. CANON & CONTRAPUNTAL PROCEDURE

The study of canon proceeds through increasingly complex forms of imitation, invertibility, and derivative construction.

Introduction to Canon

- Imitation at the Unison
- Original Combinations & Derivatives
- Infinite Canon in 2 and 3 Voices
- Canonic Drills at the Keyboard

Imitation at the Octave

- Invertible Counterpoint at the Octave
- Infinite Canon in 2, 3, and 4 Voices

Imitation at the Fifth / Fourth

- The Hexachord
- Infinite Canon in 2, 3, and 4 Voices

Invertible Counterpoint at the Twelfth

- Introduction of o-Based Vektored Measurement
- Infinite Canon in 2, 3, and 4 Voices

Pedagogical Models

- Hatfield — *Canon in C Major for 3 Voices*
- Hatfield — *Canon in A Minor for 4 Voices*

Repertoire

- Nanino — *Ascendo Patrem Meum*
- Nanino — *Sol Post Vesperas Declinat*
- Kirnberger — *Canon a quattro voci in A minor*

Imaginary Combinations

- Infinite Canon in 2, 3, 4, and 6 Voices

Pedagogical Models

- Hatfield — *Kyrie Eleison*, Canon in 4 Voices
- Hatfield — *Confiteor*, Canon in 5 Voices

Repertoire

- J. S. Bach — *Mass in B Minor*, “Confiteor,” BWV 232
- Kirnberger — *Canon in 6 Voices*

C. FUGUE & FORMAL INTEGRATION

The study of fugue functions as a synthesis of the contrapuntal procedures developed throughout the earlier stages of the curriculum. Here, techniques of imitation, invertibility, sequence, and formal disposition are integrated within larger compositional structures.

Topics

- The Exordium
- Disposition
- Ultima

- Sequences

Pedagogical Models

- Ericsson Hatfield — *Kyrie Eleison: Canon & Fugue*

Repertoire

- J. S. Bach — *Die Kunst der Fuge*, BWV 1080, Contrapunctus I
- J. S. Bach — *Mache dich, mein Geist, bereit* (“Bete Aber Auch Dabei”), BWV 115
- J. S. Bach — *Mass in B Minor*, “Christe Eleison,” BWV 232
- J. S. Bach — *Mass in B Minor*, “Confiteor,” BWV 232

D. MATHEMATICAL MODELS OF COUNTERPOINT

Formalized mathematical models are introduced only after substantial practical fluency has been established. These models emerge directly from contrapuntal procedure and serve to illuminate the mechanics of counterpoint through systematic and causal methods of analysis.

Formal Theory of Counterpoint

- **Fundamental Theorem of Counterpoint**

$$h = i - m$$

- **Transformation**

$$\Delta h = \Delta i + (m^a - m^b)$$

- **Derivative**

$$\Delta f = h$$

- **Shift**

$${}^t h_k = \sum_{j=0}^{t-1} h_{k+j}$$

Canon in Contrary Motion

Topics

- Tonal, Strict, and Free Imitation
- Reflected and Mixed Derivatives
- Infinite Canon in 2, 3, 4, and 6 Voices in Contrary Motion



IV. LESSON FORMAT & TUITION

Instruction is offered privately through regularly scheduled lessons, both online and in person.

An initial consultation lesson is offered free of charge. This meeting serves as an opportunity to discuss the curriculum, assess preparation and goals, and determine whether the studio is an appropriate fit for the student.

Standard lessons are offered in one-hour and two-hour formats.

INDIVIDUAL LESSONS

- \$120 USD — One Hour
- \$200 USD — Two Hours

FIVE-LESSON BLOCKS

- \$550 USD — Five One-Hour Lessons
- \$900 USD — Five Two-Hour Lessons

TEN-LESSON BLOCKS

- \$1,000 USD — Ten One-Hour Lessons
- \$1,700 USD — Ten Two-Hour Lessons

Reduced rates for lesson blocks reflect the continuity and long-term commitment encouraged by the curriculum. Students residing in Montréal may inquire regarding local tuition rates in Canadian dollars. Shared lessons are also available for students wishing to divide tuition costs. Students participating in shared lessons are expected to progress through the curriculum at the same pace. Block rates may also be applied to shared lessons. Students facing exceptional financial hardship are encouraged first to consider shared lessons or supplementary financing options before requesting accommodation directly.

V. SCHEDULING & CANCELLATION POLICY

Lessons are scheduled on weekdays according to Eastern Time.

Lessons canceled or rescheduled with less than 24 hours notice may not be refunded. Because lesson times are reserved specifically for each student, consistent attendance and advance communication are expected.

Exceptions may be made at my discretion in cases of emergency or exceptional circumstance.

CONTACT & INQUIRY

Serious inquiries regarding instruction may be directed to:

ericsson.f.hatfield@gmail.com

Additional information is available at:

www.ericssonhatfield.com

