

# Saltus Duriusculus

from

Dietrich Bartel's

*Musica Poetica: musical-rhetorical figures in German  
Baroque*

University of Nebraska Press, 1997

Translation from the original:

*Handbuch der musikalischen Figurenlehre*

Definition of the term (p. 381):

**Saltus Duriusculus:** a dissonant leap.

The specific identification of a dissonant leap as a distinct figure is encountered only in Bernhard's *Figurenlehre*. The harshness of the leaps is conveyed through the word *durus*, meaning not only "hard, harsh" but also "rough, brazen." This negative connotation is particularly well-suited to express a text, as Bernhard's example illustrates. The word *falsch* (false) is expressed through a falling diminished seventh. Not only is the text effectively expressed through the dissonance, but an added significance of "harshness, shamelessness" is implied through the literal meaning of a *duriusculus* leap. Like the *passus duriusculus*, this figure can also assume an added explicative dimension, lending it the potential to signify more than even the text might apply. Although the *saltus duriusculus* is defined only in his *Tractatus*, Bernhard discusses forbidden leaps (*verbothene Sprünge*) in the ninth chapter of his *Bericht*, where he suggests that they might be used in the *stylus recitativus*, "where they might be admitted to accommodate certain affections.

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