

Music Department

AH

Understanding Music Listening Concepts



Name _____

Melody / Harmony

Words in this section describe what is happening in the melody or 'tune'.

The melody can be decorated in various ways:-

TURN

An ornament - 4 notes turn around the main Note.

Played as : the note above - the main note - the note below - the main note again.



APPOGGIATURA

An ornament which sounds like a 'leaning note'.

It takes on half the value of the main note that follows it.

Eg - 1 minim becomes 2 crotchets.



Harmony can change in the following ways:-

SUSPENSION

This effect occurs when a note from one chord is held over to the next chord creating a discord, and is then resolved by moving one step to make a concord.



TRITONE

Interval made up from three whole tones

Eg: F - B



Page | 3



POLYTONALITY / BITONALITY

Two or more keys played at the same time.

Eg : 1 part in C Major / 1 part in F Major.

Sounds strange to the ear!



TONE ROW / NOTE ROW

The 12 notes found in a chromatic octave

are arranged in a particular order - appearing once only in the row. Each note is as important as the other. Found in Serialism.



AUGMENTED TRIAD

This chord is formed by a major triad in which

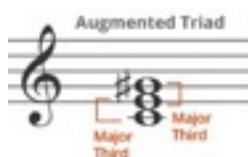
the 5th degree is raised by a semitone. This makes the intervals in the triad two major thirds.

A major third describes two notes which are five semitones apart

e.g. D-F# or G-B.



CHORD II* MINOR.



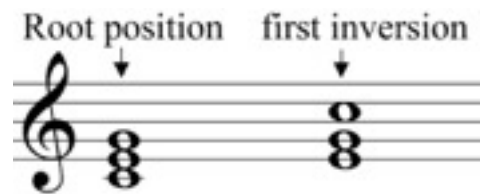
In a Major Key, Chord II is always





1st INVERSION*

A 1st inversion is when the chord is positioned so that the 3rd of the chord is the lowest note. (The bottom note moves to the top)



*There is more about this in the A+ Literacy Workbook.

RHYTHM

HEMIOLA

Often appears in Baroque music where music which has three beats in a bar moves to two beats and creates a cross rhythm over a bar line. This often happens to emphasise a cadence. Almost gives a Rallentando effect.



Texture / Structure / Form

Words in this section describe how a piece of music is put together or constructed

FUGUE

A contrapuntal piece based on a theme (subject) announced in one voice part alone, then imitated by other voices in close succession. In a fugue, the second time the melody enters it is called the answer as it enters at a different pitch, usually the dominant of the original key, for example the first note of the subject would be C and the first note of the answer would be G. As the answer plays, the first part continues with the countersubject above. The subject then appears again, as the original part enters free fugue. The table below helps show this structure.

SUBJECT

The main theme in a composition or the main themes in Sonata Form or the main theme on which a Fugue is based.

COUNTERSUBJECT

Found in a Fugue. After the subject or answer has been played, the continuation on that same voice or instrument is called the countersubject.

ANSWER

In a fugue, after the subject is played, the same tune appears in another voice or part in the dominant (a 5th higher or a 4th lower). This is called the answer.

STRETTO

Where the voices or parts enter very quickly one after another as in a Fugue.

ANTIPHONAL

One group of voices or instruments answers another. Like an echo effect.

BRIDGE

A link between 2 themes. In sonata form the transition or bridge passage links the first subject group to the second subject group and also modulates to the key of the second.

Page | 6

LEITMOTIV

A recurring theme throughout a work which represents a person, event or idea.

INVERSION

The music is mirrored or turned upside down

RETROGRADE

To go backwards - a musical section is played from the end to the beginning.

SONG CYCLE

A group of songs linked by a common theme or with a text written by the same author, usually accompanied by piano but sometimes by small ensembles or full orchestra.

Timbre / Dynamics

Words in this section describe instruments, ensembles and how they are used

Vocal:-

COUNTERTENOR

Male adult voice range higher than a tenor. Can sometimes sound like a female. Sound is produced by singing in what is called the 'head voice'

SPRECHGESANG

Technique used in vocal music where the singer is required to use the voice in an expressive manner half way between singing and speaking. 20th C. technique.

Instrumental:-

CONSORT

An old English word, from the Renaissance and early Baroque periods for a group of instruments or chamber ensemble. A Whole consort applies to one family of instruments such as Viols or Recorders, while a Broken consort applies to mixed families.

PIANO TRIO

A piano trio is a chamber music ensemble comprising of three instruments; the most common form comprises of a piano, violin and cello.

Styles

Words in this section describe the original style of the music in relation to the history of music

Musical periods:-

RENAISSANCE

Musical period from 1400 - 1600
Sacred choral music still remained as the most important music but composers started to take a much greater interest in composing secular music - music for use out with the church.

NATIONALIST

A term used to describe music which incorporates elements of folk music of the composers' country. It emerged around the second half of the 19th Century.

NEO-CLASSICAL

Music written from 1929 onwards as a reaction to Romanticism. Composers returned to the structures and the styles of the earlier period but included dissonant, tonal and atonal harmonies.

Vocal styles:-

MOTET

From the Renaissance period, a religious choral composition, usually unaccompanied (a cappella) for the Roman Catholic Church sung Latin and is the equivalent of the Anthem of the reformed church.

ANTHEM

Short sacred choral work sung in English. Sometimes unaccompanied but sometimes accompanied by organ.

MADRIGAL From the Renaissance period, a non-religious work, polyphonic in style and using imitation. The text is sung in English.

BALLETT A madrigal easily recognised by it's 'Fah-la-la' chorus.

CHORALE German Hymn tune written in four parts for Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. Usually Homophonic in texture

AYRE /AIR A song or simple melody, sometimes the title of a movement or suite. English for "Aria"

Instrumental styles:-

PAVAN A Renaissance court dance linked with the Galliard. The pavan is slow and stately with 2 beats in the bar. (Remember - PA-VAN - 2syllables)

GALLIARD A Renaissance court dance which follows a Pavan. The Galliard is quick and lively and has 3 beats in the bar. (Remember - GALL-I-ARD - 3 syllables)

SERIAL Method of composition in which the twelve notes of the chromatic scale are organised into a series or tone row. The row can be transposed, inverted or played in retrograde.

ELECTRONIC DANCE Electronic dance music is normally heard in clubs where the DJ combines tracks electronically into one smooth mix. Electronic dance music originally featured drum machines, synthesisers and sequencers but is currently now mostly produced using computers and software that contains sampling, effects, and multitrack recording features.

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

An umbrella term for all kinds of jazz music being played now - as well as jazz music of the 80s, 90s, 00s & 10s

