

1. 2.

m l t d t l l l r d t l m m f m

7 3.

r m f f m d t l si si l t d r d t l si l si

choir



CANON IN G MINOR - HAYDN

USING THIS CANON

Compiled for the Presto project
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FOR DEVELOPING YOUR POLYPHONIC SKILLS

This canon features considerable rhythmic distinction between its three phrases. Take particular care with the placement of each phrase entry. After you have mastered the sing-and-play task in two parts, increase the challenge using some or all of the following steps: play one part with your right hand and another part with your left; sing one part and play the two other parts; change the key; increase the tempo.

WITH YOUR CHOIR OR SINGING GROUP

As part of the teaching process, ask the singers to sing only the notes that fall on the downbeat of each bar: d-l-r-m; m-f-r-m; si-l-t-si. This creates a scaffold or frame that can help guide the intonation and the feeling for the overall structure.

Observe the way that each of the three phrases begins: all three openings are quite different in their timing and in their rhythmic and melodic content. Teach each phrase carefully, emphasising their different starts, and including the 'count-in' or cue each time, to instil a strong sense of the correct moment of entry in each case. At the end of phrase 3, shorten the final note so that the return to phrase 1 is well-prepared and sung with precision.

Practise the opening of phrase 3 at a slow tempo: d-t-l-si, or incorporate it into a tailored preparatory exercise. The journey from B flat down to F sharp covers a distance of a diminished 4th, which arises at times in the context of a harmonic (or melodic) minor tone set and needs care in tuning and in connecting to the harmonic surround, particularly in this piece, where the last note of this opening, si, forms part of a tension-filled augmented triad, mi-si-do. Encourage the singers to emphasise the notes of this augmented triad, which occurs on the first downbeat of each phrase, and enjoy how its tension is released in the next chord, VI (E flat major), on the following downbeat.

IN THE MUSIC LESSON

If you previously explored the augmented triad in the context of the whole tone canon *Scary Sights, Scary Sounds* in the Presto Level 2 canons, make the connection here by revisiting that canon and remembering the sound and structure of the augmented triad, which is made up of two major 3rds. In *Scary Sights, Scary Sounds*, these major 3rds were C-E and E-G#. Here they are D-F# and F#-Bb (enharmonic equivalent of A#).

Analyse the score together to discover the differing starts of each of this canon's three phrases, and discuss the implications of these for the way we should conduct the piece.

Set your students the task of composing a text for this melody. Take care to include syllables and emphases that suit the phrase structure and the musical stresses.