

1.

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

4

2.

l l f r f m r d di r ri m m d d r d r ri m

8

3.

l m d l l f r r r d t l s f l l simm r m r d t d t l

choir



CANON IN G MINOR - CALDARA

USING THIS CANON

Compiled for the Presto project
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Dublin City University, 2023

FOR DEVELOPING YOUR POLYPHONIC SKILLS

This final canon of the Presto collection brings together many musical features and challenges encountered earlier throughout Levels 1, 2, and 3, including rhythmic diversity between phrases; syncopation, differing phrase starts, wide vocal range and changing tessitura; large melodic leaps, and intricate harmonic background. Analyse the character of each phrase, particularly their openings, which, while melodically and rhythmically related, are positionally distinct and therefore present challenges when combined in a sing-and-play task.

Keep a strong feeling of tonic and dominant harmony while singing the melody, and enjoy the unusual flattened II (A flat major) chord, known as the Neapolitan, that occurs in the third full bar of the three-part texture.

After mastering the sing-and-play task in two parts, proceed to the next level of challenge by adding the third part, practising step by step, and for further advanced musicianship training, change the key up or down a semitone or a tone.

WITH YOUR CHOIR OR SINGING GROUP

Beginning with an offbeat entry on a relatively high note, phrase 1 needs an energetic cue to bring about a confident entry. After the initial triadic movement mi-do-la, the melody largely features stepwise movement, but an upward leap of an octave, D-D', needs timely preparation and forward-thinking so that the higher note has sufficient space and is well-tuned. Towards the end of the phrase we encounter the flattened 2nd, ta, which gives the Neapolitan chord its character. Encourage keen tuning of the semitonal figure ta-la-si-la in the final bar of the phrase, practising this in isolation if needed.

The melody at the opening of phrase 2 consists of the triad of chord iv, descending: la-fa-re, and the phrase continues in a low tessitura, rising chromatically to the fifth degree before a leap down to the low home note, la. Keep a strong sense of the diatonic notes d, r, m and slot the chromatic notes as carefully placed stepping stones in between, maintaining a strong feeling of aiming for the fifth degree that serves as the climax of the phrase on a dominant chord which immediately resolves.

Phrase 3 is reached via a leap of a compound 5th, which is exceptionally large in the context of canon repertoire and needs strong harmonic feeling for accurate pitching. Later, care is again needed for a large leap up to the fifth degree before the melody descends to its end. Teach the melody precisely and in a theoretically informed way, and ensure the unison is at a high standard of security and confidence before adding the second and third parts.

IN THE MUSIC LESSON

Use this melody for a game of 'Spot the Intervals': sing and name all the intervals between adjacent melodic notes, and then proceed to the harmonic intervals: sing and name all intervals created between any two phrases. Divide into three groups to cover the three combinations of phrases, and perform well-practised solutions for the full class.

