

The Keyboard Accompaniment

The Role of the Accompaniment

- 1) Enhances the mood of the text. This may be achieved through dynamics, register, texture, rhythm, and counter-material. If the subject matter of the text involves folk material you may want a guitar or banjo type accompaniment. If the text has religious connotations an a cappella setting might be desirable.
- 2) Provides harmonic support, rhythmic impetus, meter, and counterpoint. As a general rule, the less these elements appear in the vocal parts the more they should appear in the accompaniment. For example, a solo melody in a vocal part should be filled out harmonically by the accompaniment.
- 3) Gives pitches for the voices - especially starting notes and doubling awkward leaps or chromatic passages.
- 4) Provides contrasting instrumental sections such as introductions, interludes, endings. The accompaniment also establishes moods, key, tempo, meter, and style.
- 5) May create sudden changes in key, tempo, mood, or style.
- 6) Fills between vocal phrases to allow breathes.
- 7) Contributes to the energy and growth of the development. May be done by extending range, change of register, rhythmic acceleration, harmonic density. Variations may also be used.
- 8) Unifies the arrangement. A distinct melodic or rhythmic motive of the vocal parts may serve as the motive of accompaniment. This motive may be developed through standard motivic practices.
- 9) Silence. A cappella moments at the right point may be very effective.

Technical Considerations:

- 1) Keyboard accompaniment for elementary or middle school should be relatively easy to play.
- 2) Range: The bass should stay between C and c1 (2 octs.). The right hand usually plays between c1 and g2.
- 3) Right hand - may double top vocal line above and below at the octave or at the unison. It may also play counter-material.
- 4) Left hand - doubles the lowest vocal part by unison of an octave lower.

Styles of Accompaniment:

- 1) Choral Doubling - Simply involving the exact doubling of the vocal parts. Used for Hymn settings primarily.
- 2) Arpeggiation - provides a certain flowing momentum. Be sure to consider chord spacing rules and voice leading.
- 3) Rhythmic patterns and figures - Certain styles may be expressed through the associations of a rhythmic pattern.
- 4) Counter-material - independent material that does not belong to or doubles the vocal material. May be used in leading into the next sub-phrase. Be sure it does not distract from or dominate the choral writing. It should remain outside the choral register and have contrasting shape and rhythm.
- 5) Unconventional Voicings - harmonic embellishments such as change of inversion, chord substitution, adding 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, 13ths, quartal/quintal chords, clusters, etc.
- 6) Special effects - use your imagination.

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~jazz~ Harmony

7th and 9th chords:

- Add a 7th to any diatonic triad. The 7th always resolves down.
- Add a 9th to any diatonic triad. The interval of a m9th from the root is undesirable except in the Vb9. Certain alterations must therefore be made:
The alterations in major are as follows:
 - iii9 = E G B D F#
 - vii half dim 9 = B D F A C#The alteration in minor is as follows:
 - ii dim 9 = D F Ab C E nat.
- Watch out for parallel 7ths and 9ths for they are difficult to sing.
- Part Writing rules for 9th chords:
 - 1) V9 chords with a major 9th resolve only to major chords.
 - 2) The V9 functions as a dominant.
 - 3) Use wide spacing.
 - 4) The chord's 5th may be omitted.
 - 5) In resolving to I, the 9th resolves down by step to the 5th of the I chord.
 - 6) The non-dominant 9th chord functions like a non-dominant 7th chord and resolves typically to another 9th chord or 7th chord.

Chord Substitutions and Embellishments:

Used to project a more contemporary jazz style.

- 1) Add 7ths and 9ths.
- 2) Replace a chord with another chord which has two tones in common with the original. For example:
 - iii for I
 - vi for I
 - V for vii
 - ii for IV
- 3) Any chord may be preceded by its dominant (secondary dominants).
- 4) V7 may be replaced by the progression ii7 - V7.
- 5) Any V7 may be replaced by a V7 whose root is a tritone away. A V7b5 will produce smoother voice leading.
- 6) Quartal chords may be built upon the notes of the melody thereby removing functional harmony.

Voicings:

- 1) Divisi - Since a 9th chord has 5 notes, a complete chord may only be formed by dividing a voice part. If this is desired, either the soprano or the bass should be divided as they will most likely have the most singers.
- 2) Chord voicing - Harmonic clarity is best when the pitches of a chord are ordered to reinforce, as overtones, the chord root. The voicing with the clearest harmonic intent then would be Root - P5 - M3 - m7 - M9. Harmonic clarity is best reserved for cadences. Within harmonic progressions harmonic clarity varies considerably.

Notation

- Two types of score layout:
 - 1) Open - each voice is written on its own staff. Use when the vocal parts have different texts.
 - 2) Close - SA on one staff, TB on the other. Use when the vocal parts have identical texts.
- Dynamics and expression marks go above the staves.
- Use beamed groups rather than flags (antiquated).

Four-Part Arrangements

- Often set a cappella due to the richness of the voices.
- The high tessitura of the SSAA often leads the arranger to add an accompaniment.
- TTBB is rich in overtones (as is SATB) and does not require accompaniment.

Textures:

- 1) Note against note -
 - Emphasizes the text.
 - Used when the melodic line has fairly fluid rhythmic motion.
- 2) Animated homophony -
 - The melody is accompanied by melodic embellishment in the other three parts.
 - May be used as a textural variant as it produces more rhythmic motion than note against note.
 - When two voices move together as melodic embellishments they usually move in parallel 3rds or 6ths.
- 3) Melody line with harmonic support -
 - treble dominated texture.
 - One voice has more rhythmic motion than the rest which are identical in rhythm.

Contrapuntal Textures:

- 1) Countermelody - Harmony added at the end of an SATB arrangement to help achieve the climax.
- 2) Figuration - non-continuous fragmentary lines that provide rhythmic and melodic punctuation to the original melody. In four-voice textures, figurations appear in three voices with the 4th voice being melody.
- 3) Ostinato - short repeated motive. In four-voice textures, one voice sings the melody while the other three combine in either note against note or contrapuntal texture with ostinato. Use when the melody has little harmonic change.
- 4) Imitation - Points of imitation are most frequent. Afterwards a section may become more homophonic. Imitation often occurs at the interval of a 4th or a 5th so that it falls in a comfortable range for all the voices.

All-Female Arrangement

- Three common types: SA, SSA, SSAA.
- SSAA Range: (F) G - g2 (a2)
- Because the tessitura is high for the fundamental bass in the alto to provide the full harmonic support that is available when male voices sing an octave lower, a keyboard accompaniment is often included.
- Melody most often appears in the soprano 1. Melody may also in alto 2 for contrast.
- Homophonic textures predominate with contrapuntal textures used as contrast.

- There are frequent close spaced chords and parallelism.

All-Male Arrangements

- Most for TTBB, but some for TBB and TB.
- Rich in resonance and overtones and therefore may be set a cappella.
- Range: (F) G - g1 (a1)
- Melodies may appear in the outer or the inner voices. The melody may migrate among the voices.
- Homophonic textures predominate with occasional contrapuntal textures.
- Close chord spacing with parallel and contrary chord connection is used.
- Do not write perfect 5ths below Eb.

Two-Part Arrangements

- Since complete harmonies are not possible, keyboard accompaniment is normally included.
- Two-voice combinations: SA, SB, TB, children's chorus (I+II).

Homophonic textures:

- 1) Note against note - most common. The 2nd voice parallels the first usually by a 3rd or a 6th. 4ths and other intervals are possible. Excessive parallel 3rds may become dull.
- 2) Animated Homophony - Begin with note against note texture, then embellish the rhythm of the second voice.

Contrapuntal textures:

- 1) Countermelody -
 - independent melodic line that sounds against a given melody, maintaining separate pitch, rhythm, and contour. Achieves independence primarily through rhythm - it complements the rhythm of the melody.
 - May be above or below the main line.
 - May be text or a vocable ("ah"). If text, it is usually derived from the original text.
- 2) Decant -
 - like note against note but the added voice takes on the character of a 2nd melody. It usually appears above the main melody.
- 3) Figuration -
 - a non-continuous fragmentary line that provides rhythmic and melodic punctuation to the original melody.
 - Used to fill in rhythmic gaps.
- 4) Ostinato -
 - repeated motive with rhythmic and pitch components. 1-2 measures long.
 - ostinati work best with one harmony sounding for several measures.
- 5) Imitation -
 - use points of imitation at the unison, octave, 5th, or 4th.
- 6) Canon -
 - Not all melodies have the musical properties that allow for canonic treatment. Look for a static tonic harmony throughout.

Three-Part Arrangement

- Not all chords may be fully expressed. Therefore, keyboard accompaniment is included.
- Two main arrangements: SSA, SAB (SCB)
- SSA, SA, and SSAA - high tessitura. Use a keyboard accompaniment for the fundamental

- bass. The lowest voice either doubles the bass of the keyboard accompaniment or sounds another pitch in the harmony.
- SAB -
 - 1)Used in choirs with few male voices.
 - 2)Used in junior high choirs where boys voices are changing. The SCB arrangement is normally used. Many SAB arrangements may be sung by a SCB choir.

Homophonic Textures -

Note against note textures will normally have much parallel motion and close voicing is the norm. In SSA, the alto does not provide the fundamental bass.

Introductions and Endings

Introductions

Introductions are usually derived from important motivic material in the body of the arrangement. They should establish mood and style. Four possible derivations of the introductory material:

- 1) Derived from the first phrase. This creates unity and also provides pitches for the singers.
- 2) Based on ending phrases or subsequent phrases of the main body. Used in multi-verse arrangements.
- 3) Derived from the accompaniment if the accompaniment has a catchy rhythmic pattern.
- 4) Combine prominent melodic material with portions of accompanimental patterns.

Endings

Endings should be conclusive providing emphasis on the final musical or textural ideas. Three possible derivations of ending material:

- 1) Repeat the last phrase or concentrate on an important motive.
- 2) Rhythmically augment the final phrase. This will effectively broaden the tempo.
- 3) Tag ending - a brief punctuation to signal the end.

Freely composed intros and endings based on rhythmic and harmonic patterns or textural references are also possible. Imitation is an often used technique.