

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

'O FORTUNA'

YEAR 7, UNIT 3



NOTE DURATIONS

Note	Rest	Duration
		4 Counts
		2 Counts
		1 Count
		½ Count
		¼ Count

THE LYRICS

Fortune spins her wheel. Who will win, who will lose? Inspired by medieval literature, 'O Fortuna' is one of the most famous choral pieces in the world. The text is taken from medieval poems - here are the opening Latin lines (and their English translation).

O Fortuna
Velut luna
Statu variabilis
Semper crescis
Aut decrescis...

O Fortune,
like the moon
you are changeable,
ever waxing,
ever waning...



MIDDLE C



ABOUT THIS UNIT

Theme: Descriptive Music

Facts/info: 'O Fortuna' is part of a cantata (a vocal composition with instrumental accompaniment) called Carmina Burana. The name Carmina Burana means 'songs of Beuren', which was a Benedictine monastery in Bavaria.

Carmina Burana was composed between 1935 and 1936 and it is based on 24 poems from medieval literature. It was intentionally written for entertainment, rather than a religious purpose, as the piece is subtitled as: 'secular songs for singers and choruses to be sung together with instruments and magic images'.

Reflection

What did you like best about this piece of music? Why? Was there anything you didn't enjoy about it? Why?

What are the 'style indicators' of Classical Choral Music? How do you know this is 'Classical' music?

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

'O FORTUNA'

YEAR 7, UNIT 3



KEY WORD	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE/SYMBOL
Melody	The 'tune' - often (but not always) the highest part in a piece	
Chord	2 or more notes played together. A three-note chord is known as a 'triad'	
A minor	A chord (triad) consisting of the notes A, C and E	
D minor	A chord (triad) consisting of the notes D, F and A	
Crescendo	Gradually getting louder	
Pulse	The steady beat which forms the underlying 'heartbeat' of the music	
Bass	The bass is the lowest pitched part in a piece of music.	
Ostinato	A short melody or rhythm which repeats over, and over again	
Tempo	The speed of the pulse (i.e. how fast or slow the music is)	Adagio ♩ = 40
Rhythm	A pattern of different note durations (lengths)	
Cantata	A large scale work for choir, soloists and orchestra.	Carmina Burana is a Cantata

WIDER LISTENING

- Danse Macarbe by Camille Saint-Saens
- The Carnival of the Animals by Camille Saint-Saens
- Peter and the Wolf by Gabriel Prokofiev
- Also Sprach Zarathustra by Richard Strauss

AT A GLANCE

