ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

- Compose an interlocking pattern for two people. Perform it for the class.
- Find a video of *Kecak* on the internet. Do you hear a pulse?

Harmony

Harmony occurs when at least two different pitches sound at the same time, such as when two people sing together with different material or when a musician strums the strings of a guitar. Harmonies that sound pleasing to our ears are said to be consonant. Those that sound harsh or clash are said to be dissonant. As a general rule, dissonant harmonies are used to produce feelings of anxiety or tension. 2.8

Different cultures and time periods have different standards of what is consonant and dissonant. A musician in the 12th century, for instance, would likely find the works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) to be jarringly dissonant. Today, however, we consider Mozart's music to be quite soothing.

In Western art music, three or more pitches that sound at the same time create a chord. Chords are built according to specific rules. The most basic rule is that a simple three-tone chord, or triad, is built upward from the bottom (or "root") in alternating scale tones. Thus, a triad built on "do" will skip "re," include "mi," skip "fa," and end on "sol." The resulting triad will be do–mi–sol.

Chords function in a manner similar to melodic scale tones in that they too have varying degrees of stability. A chord built on the first scale degree (do–mi–sol) is the most stable. This is called the "tonic" or (Roman numeral) I chord. Most pieces in the Western tradition begin and end on the tonic chord. The "dominant," or "V" chord, is second in foundational importance to the tonic chord. It is built on the fifth scale degree (sol–ti–re). The dominant chord has a tendency to return home to the tonic. Third in foundational importance is the "subdominant," or "IV" chord (fa–la–do). The subdominant tends to move either to the tonic or the dominant (Figure 2.9).

FIGURE 2.9 I–IV–V chord progression.

These three chords make up the harmonic backbone of Western music. If you string these together (subdominant [IV], dominant [V] and tonic [I]), you get a common ending formula known as a cadence. Slightly more complex (and more common) are cadential progressions based on the chord series I–vi–ii–V–I. George Gershwin's hugely popular song "I've Got Rhythm" (1930) followed this pattern almost throughout. Even today, musicians call the sequence "rhythm changes." It remains a standard progression in both jazz and pop music.

ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

- Bring an instrument into class and perform. Have your classmates describe the sound.
- Make an idiophone with things in your backpack or on your desk. Can you make a chordophone? An aerophone?
- As you listen to the pieces discussed in later chapters, describe the timbres you hear (nasal, clear, rough, etc.). Then consider how timbre affects meaning.

Texture

The ways in which different musical parts fit together is called texture. Music can have different textures.  2.10 A large orchestral texture might be described as thick, like velvet. A solo flute might be silky thin. Music theorists categorize texture according to five different characteristics:

1. Monophony
2. Polyphony
3. Homophony
4. Heterophony
5. Biphony.

Monophony consists of a single musical line without accompaniment. Even though many voices or instruments might be involved, as long as all are sounding the exact same line, the texture is monophonic.

Polyphony involves several independent lines sounding simultaneously. The simplest kind of polyphony is a round (also called a canon). A good example is the children's song "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" in which everyone sings the same melody at a different time.

In more complex examples of polyphony, the independent melodies are not necessarily the same tune. Instead, complementary lines are woven together like threads in a tapestry. Much of the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods was written polyphonically. Composers relied on a strict set of compositional rules to combine the different lines. Later composers often used polyphony to indicate a "learned" or elevated style of music.

Kyrie eleison

LISTENING 2.3 GUIDE

This setting of Kyrie eleison is an example of a monophonic, sacred chant from the Middle Ages (see Chapter 7: Music and Spirituality). Notice that all of the voices are singing the exact same melody.

LISTENING 2.4 GUIDE

e *Pope Marcellus Mass*, by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Listen to the six-voice polyphonic setting of the Kyrie eleison text by the Renaissance composer Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca. 1525–1594). Notice how each voice enters separately, one after the other.

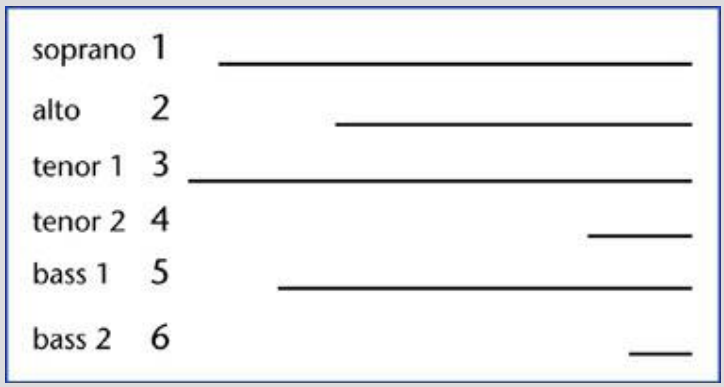

FIGURE 2.10 Diagram of vocal entrances in Palestrina's Kyrie eleison.

LISTENING 2.5 GUIDE

ce," performed by the Robert Shaw Festival Singers

Listen to the Robert Shaw Festival Singers singing "Amazing Grace." Concentrate on the texture, particularly the relationship between the melody and the accompanying chords.

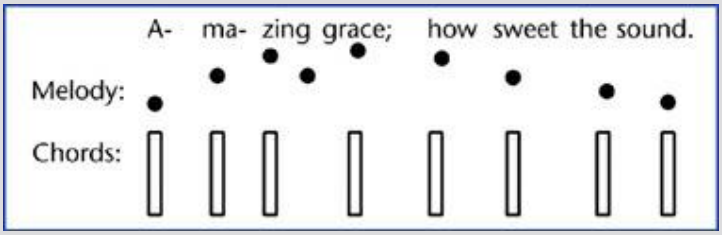

FIGURE 2.11 Vocal shape and homophonic texture of "Amazing Grace."

Homophonic texture consists of a melody plus chordal accompaniment, such as a guitar-strumming folksinger. The basic idea behind homophony is that the accompanimental tones sound together as a whole rather than as individual parts. For example, when a musician strums a six-string guitar, the listener hears a single event comprising six tones, rather than six individual tones each with its own particular identity. In the Western tradition, the vast majority of hymns, folk tunes, and popular songs are set in a homophonic texture. More complex homophonic textures may be found in symphonic works and other pieces from the Western art music tradition, but these, too, are considered to be homophonic since they are based on an underlying chordal foundation.

Heterophony is heard when a single basic melody is performed slightly differently by two or more performers. For instance, one singer/player might add embellishments to his version of the melody in order to differentiate it from that of another musician. Or, he might perform it with slightly different rhythms from the other performer. This texture is uncommon in Western music, but is often used in Middle Eastern, Asian, and Native American cultures.

Biphony refers to two separate lines consisting of a melody plus a drone. Biphonic music is often found in world music repertories. Bagpipes use drone pipes along with the melody pipe. A harmonic singer can produce both a drone and a melody. Most Indian music uses a drone instrument to establish the tone "sa."

"Tarawangsa," performed by S.B. Manchakai

LISTENING 2.6 GUIDE

In this excerpt, one musician plays the *tarawangsa*, a two-stringed fiddle, while the other plays a small zither called a *kapaci*. As the kapaci player plucks the main tones of the melody, the tarawangsa player uses a bow to perform an embellished version of the same tune.

”Tuvan Folk Melody”

LISTENING 2.7 GUIDE

In this Tuvan folk melody, a vocalist produces a melody above an unchanging drone. How does he do it? First, he produces the drone pitch with his vocal chords. Then, by moving his lips and tongue in various ways, he changes the shape and size of his oral cavity. As this resonating chamber is reshaped, different overtones are emphasized. These overtones make up the melody.

ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

- With a partner, read the following words aloud in exact unison: "Monophonic music requires perfect blend." If you succeeded in being in unison, you performed in a monophonic style. Now, choose a new sentence that your partner does not know. Say it aloud and have your partner repeat what you say as she hears it. Inevitably, she will speak her words slightly behind yours, maybe even leave out or change a word. This is heterophony.