

Purcell: 'Music for a White'

B

3

A

STRUCTURE
The piece opens with an intro featuring the ground bass that the whole song is built around. The intro is three bars long instead of the usual four or eight.

HISTORY
This piece was written in 1692 as part of the incidental music for the play *Oedipus* by John Dryden and Nathaniel Lee.

Bar 10

TERMS
At bar 10, syllables of words are given more than one note each. This is called 'melismatic'.

TERMS
The smaller notes are called appoggiaturas. They are an example of ornamentation.

Bar 13

TERMS
The word 'eternal' is stretched out in the music. This is an example of word painting.

TERMS
The tied note D is held over from one bar to the next. This is an example of a suspension.

MELODY
These notes are a sequence of the boxed-in notes at the end of the previous bar.

Bar 19



Bar 4

MELODY
Section A starts in bar 4 with one note for each syllable. This is called 'syllabic'.

HARMONY
The singer's E note clashes with the D and F in the bass to create dissonance.

HISTORY
This is a da capo aria. 'Da capo' means 'from the head', or 'repeat the music from the beginning'.

Bar 12

Bar 22

HARMONY
Bars 22 and 23 end with a 'i⁶-4-V-I' cadence in C major. C major is the relative major of the tonic key.

Bar 23

TERMS
The C# is a sharpened third in the tonic A minor chord to create an A major chord. This is called a *terce de Picardie*.

RHYTHM
The quaver rest / quaver note combination creates syncopation.

TERMS
The descending notes on the word 'drop' are an example of word painting and of onomatopoeia.

NOTATION
The sign above the first note in bar 25 is a lower mordent.

Bar 26

MELODY
The three notes under the bracket are a sequence of the first three notes in bar 23 above.

TONALITY
The E major chord at this point in the music signals the end of section B and preparation for the repeat of section A in the tonic key of A minor.

TEXTURE
The texture of the music throughout the song is homophonic.

Bar 28

Bar 29

HISTORY
The song 'Music for a White' is a lament written in the Italian style.

FORM
Section A1 begins with a repeat of bars 4-10 with extra ornamentation in the vocal part.

Bar 35

FORM
Bar 35 to the end of the piece uses repetition of the word 'all' to create new material and provide the piece with a sort of coda.

TERMS
The final chord is arpeggiated, shown by the wavy line, and played one note after the other from bottom to top.

Bar 38