

## Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 33

### Why are some sections so hard to sing: Quoniam Tu Solus

These notes go along with Activity 34 – two sheets with the short score of the section. You need to have that in front of you to refer to as you read through this explanation of the music.

### 1. Find your way round the short score headed Activity 34

To fit the music onto two sides not only has it been made small, but the 2 parts for each voice have been put onto one staff. And, as in the score we sing from, when a part is silent, it's staff disappears. You need to keep checking the S A and T at the start of each system.

### 2. How the music works – an overview

You looked at the start of this section in Activity 31. The words mean “For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ”. It's worthwhile looking at how Monteverdi uses repetition of the words. Imagine this as a play with the different groups of people having their say in turn and then together.

bar			
152	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	S	descending
158	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	A	
164	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	T	
170	Tu solus Altissimus	A	
174	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	S	Like the beginning
180	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	A	
186	Tu solus Altissimus	T	
190	Tu solus Altissimus	S	
194	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	T	Like the beginning but ascending
200	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	A	
206	Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus, tu solus, solus Dominus	S	
212	Tu solus Altissimus	All gradually join in with overlapping tunes	
225	Altissimus Jesu Christe	Everyone in chords	

### 3. The tunes and textures and modulations

Monteverdi uses just 2 tunes, very similar to each other. One is for Quoniam ... and the other for Tu solus Altissimus. He offers us the first one in parallel thirds all the time (+ a suspension leading into the cadence). The second one is done in imitation – voices copying each other. Still with a suspension leading into the cadence. That use of imitation allows him to make a really build up from 2 to 6 voices each singing their own bit of the tune together. He will have composed the tune so it would work like this.

It's modulation that provides the variety. Look at Activity 34 for the keys, and where they change. You're never in one key for more than a few bars. It's interesting that in such a minor key piece, all this section is in major keys – very affirmatory.