

Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 26

Learn about the harmonic framework of the opening section. All this means, is find out what's going on with the chords. It would be good to listen to the Youtube performance once you've read about this section of the music. Listen out for the harmony changes, as part from all the busy notes. You could also play the chords on the online chord player while you sing everything!

The piece starts with these 15 bars of glorious energy. Almost to the end there are semiquavers (the notes that start the piece) going on continuously. It seems so complicated when you learn to sing it. But look at the chords. If you have the cpdl score the next bit is really obvious, because the instrumental bass part is given.

For 4 bars, Monteverdi alternates E major and A minor chords. In bar 5, he starts alternating C and G chords. In the last 4 bars there's a bit more variety - the alternating pattern ends and D minor gets a look in. Often in music, the chords change a bit more quickly towards the end.

In Activity 18 you learned about the tonic and dominant. In Activity 22 you found that the tonic and dominant chords are really important.

The Gloria is in A minor. The first 4 bars are in A minor. A is the tonic and E is the dominant. In bar 5, the pattern shifts to C and G chords. These are the tonic and dominant of C major, and this, supported by losing the G#s that belong to A minor means the music has change key (modulated) to C major. In bar 12, Monteverdi starts to change back to A minor by using a D minor chord. That belongs to both C major and A minor, so it acts as a pivot.

1 E Am E Am E Am

4 E Am C G C G

7 C G C G C G

10 C G C G

12 Dm Am E Am E A