

# FACTFILE: GCE MUSIC

## AOS3 SECULAR VOCAL MUSIC: MUSICALS



### Kern: Ol' Man River from Showboat

*Showboat* by Jerome Kern (1885-1945) with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II marked a significant milestone in the development of the American musical for the following reasons:

- (i) It was one of the first musicals in which the musical numbers were an integral part of the production.
- (ii) The subject matter was serious rather than comic i.e. racial inequality.
- (iii) There was a deliberate attempt to create an African-American flavour through the use of folk-like melodies, “blue” notes, syncopation and the inclusion of the banjo in the orchestration.
- (iv) Musical motifs were used for dramatic purpose, to portray characters or to connect scenes.

*Ol' Man River* is one of the best-known songs from *Showboat* with its enormous popularity partly due to Paul Robeson's celebrated performance in the 1936 film version. It is sung in the first scene by Joe (a black dock labourer) when Magnolia asks him his opinion of the gambler Gaylord Ravenal. Joe (a bass) is not in himself a particularly significant character, but this song is both a commentary on the lot of the African-American people and a personification of the River Mississippi which forms the backdrop to the plot. The number is based on three melodies:

#### Ex. 1 Joe (bb. 1-8)

The melodic features of this opening theme include **falling stepwise movement** (b. 1), **repetition** (bb.1-2), **descending sequence** (bb. 5-6 are the same as bb. 1-2 only a third lower) and **regular four-bar phrasing**. Harmonically speaking, the first phrase uses the three primary triads within the key of **C major** and ends with an imperfect cadence in b. 4 while the second phrase begins on **A minor** and finishes with a perfect cadence in the tonic key.

The second melody, *Ol' Man River*, consists entirely of the notes of the **pentatonic** scale and also contains repetition (bb. 9-10 and 13-14) and syncopation in every bar:

#### Ex. 2 Joe (bb. 9-15)

The harmonisation of its first four bars is centred on **C major** which alternates with **A minor** and **F major** chords. In the second four bars G7 and G9 resolve on to the tonic in b. 15. Apart from an upward extension of the melody in bb. 19-20 and the introduction of a **diminished seventh chord** over a **chromatically descending bass** in bb. 20, the musical content of the next eight bars is an exact repeat of bb. 9-16. One of the most telling features of the orchestral accompaniment is the expressive oboe solo which comes at the end of each phrase (bb. 15-16 and bb. 23-24).

The tonality shifts to **E minor** for the third melody:

### Ex. 3 Joe (bb. 25-28)

**Repetition and descending sequence** are again present - bb. 27-28 are almost exactly the same as bb. 25-26, while bb. 29-30 uses the same melodic outline a third lower. The harmony of bb. 25-28 comprises alternating **E minor** and **B minor ninth** chords over a tonic/dominant bass while bb. 29-31 uses the same chords over a **tonic pedal point**. Bar 32 deviates from this pattern ending with an imperfect cadence in C which leads into the return of the second melody with new text, *Ah gits weary*. This is extended upwards, reaching a high E in b. 37 where the sense of climax is reinforced by the introduction of the horn in and later the full brass.

Following a prefatory G from the horns, the melody of Ex. 1 returns with new (and by modern standards politically incorrect) text: *...all work on de Mississippi*. The rhythm of the accompaniment has been varied by introducing a **3+3+2** pattern in quavers within the **2/4 metre** and the melody is doubled by the banjo. The harmony has also been altered by way of a C7 chord, which implies a modulation **to F major** in b. 46, and a circle of fifths (D7, G7, C) at the cadence in b. 48.

Bar 49 is where the male chorus sing for the first time, *Don't look up*, (in unison). The melody is the same as b. 25 (Ex. 3) but now notated in 2/4 time as opposed to the original 4/4. The accompaniment again implies a tonic pedal for most of this passage and the violins add a legato counter melody. Joe returns with *Let me go 'way from de Mississippi* (Ex. 1) at b. 57 (note the reference to Mississippi in the text on all three occurrences of this melody)

with modifications to the harmony: (i) a **Bb has been added** to the underlying C major chord producing a modulation to the subdominant (F major) in b. 58, (ii) the introduction of **A7** in b. 59 results in a **modulation to D minor** in the following bar, (iii) a **diminished seventh chord** is introduced in b. 61 and (iv) the **Bb7 chord** in b. 63 lends a particularly blues-like quality.

An orchestral link (b. 65) ushers in a choral reprise (TTBB) of *Ol' man River* to which Joe adds a decorative solo at the end of each phrase (bb. 72-73 and bb. 80-81). Noteworthy features include the doubling of the melody in the cellos, the **prominent octave leap** in the first tenors at b. 78 and a definite "blue note" in Joe's solo at b. 81. Bar 82 corresponds with b. 25 in terms of text (*You an' me we sweat an' strain*) and melody (Ex. 3). Joe's solo line is accompanied by the male chorus who hum alternating harmonies over a tonic pedal forming an ostinato which lasts for seven bars. There is a similar correlation between b. 90 and b. 33 except that Joe, rather than featuring as a soloist, now doubles the first basses of the chorus in octaves for three bars before continuing upwards to the high E as previously (b. 37). This, the culmination of the entire number, is underlined by the fortissimo entry of the trumpets and trombones in b. 94 to lend their support to the full vocal and orchestral harmony.

The two final bars have the same chord progression as bb. 39-40 i.e. tonic/subdominant/tonic resulting in a plagal ending.

The organisation of the thematic material in this number and its relationship with the lyrics is set out in the following table:

<b>Bar 1</b>	Dere's an ol' man called de Mississippi	Joe (solo) Ex. 1
<b>Bar 9</b>	Ol' man River	Joe (solo) Ex. 2
<b>Bar 25</b>	You an' me we sweat an' strain	Joe (solo) Ex. 3
<b>Bar 33</b>	Ah gits weary	Joe (solo) Ex. 2 (extended)
<b>Bar 41</b>	Niggers all work on de Mississippi	Joe (solo) Ex. 1
<b>Bar 49</b>	Don't look up, an' don't look down	Male chorus Ex. 3
<b>Bar 57</b>	Let me go 'way from de Mississippi	Joe (solo) Ex. 1
<b>Bar 66</b>	Ol' man River	Chorus & Joe Ex. 2
<b>Bar 82</b>	You an' me we sweat an' strain	Joe (solo) Ex. 3 chorus hum
<b>Bar 90</b>	Ah gits weary	Chorus & Joe Ex. 2 (extended)



## Rodgers and Hammerstein: Soliloquy from Carousel

Richard Rodgers (1902-1979) and Oscar Hammerstein II (1895-1960) first collaborated on *Oklahoma* (1943) and went on to become perhaps the most successful composer/lyricist partnership in the history of American musical theatre. Following the usual out-of town previews and substantial revisions, *Carousel* opened on Broadway on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1945 to immediate public and critical acclaim.

*Soliloquy* is remarkable because of its length (around seven and a half minutes) and content (it is an entirely solo number incorporating elements of aria and recitative along the lines of an operatic *scena*). It is sung near the end of Act 1 by Billy Bigelow, a recently unemployed carnival worker, who has just found out that his wife, Julie, is expecting their baby. The two sides of Billy's personality, on one hand brash and self-confident, on the other affectionate towards Julie and their unborn baby, are represented in the various contrasting sections.

The orchestral introduction establishes several layers of rhythmic, harmonic and melodic ostinato which continue throughout the first eight bars:

(i) the cellos and double basses have pizzicato crotchets on the first and fourth beats of the bar, (ii) the woodwind have a repeated pattern consisting of crotchet rest/crotchet/minim, (iii) the harmonies consist of alternating B minor and E9 chords which are coloured by the C# falling to B in b. 1 and the A# rising to B in b. 2:

### Ex. 1: Piano reduction (bb. 1-2)

Billy's entry in b. 5 features frequent repeated pitches and some unusual intervals such as a rising tritone (bb. 7-8) and falling augmented second (b. 10). It is surely indicative of his egotistical nature that he assumes at this point that the child is going to be a boy! The music modulates briefly to the relative major at b. 11 but returns immediately to B minor at b. 13 where new text, *I bet that he'll turn out to be*, is set to the same music as b. 5. The only difference occurs at b. 18 where the B# in the melody moves up chromatically through C# to D.

The change of time signature at b. 21 to cut common and the sudden increase in tempo (*più mosso*) is perhaps a metaphor for Billy's fickleness. Although

supposedly singing about his son to be (also named Bill), Billy is in fact describing himself. *I'll teach him to wrassle* is set to a three-note motif featuring repetition (bb. 21-23) and descending sequence (bb. 25-28) while the music derives a sense of forward momentum from the tonic/dominant bass (played by cellos and double basses) and the off beat chords in the upper strings and harp. Predictability is avoided in the last few bars of this section by juxtaposing whole tone chords and a dominant pedal in the bass (bb. 32-33) and chromatically altering some of the notes within the dominant seventh chord at b. 34.

A new 2/4 section in G major begins at b. 37 in which the interval of a perfect fourth associated with *My boy Bill!* is the principal melodic motif:

### Ex. 2: Billy (bb. 37-43)

A tonic/dominant bass combines with a rising cello countermelody while the chromaticism in the vocal line (b. 42 and b. 50) coincides with the use of diminished seventh chords in the accompaniment. *Like a tree he'll grow* also features repetition - this time a descending chromatic motif - and modulates, via a dominant ninth chord (bb. 59-60) to D major at b. 61 where the melody becomes totally triadic. A descending passage in triplet crotchets at b. 69 (not an exact sequence) leads back to G major where the next section of the soliloquy begins.

In 6/8 time G major and A minor chords alternate to form an ostinato over a tonic pedal while Billy on a monotone (D) lists all the jobs Bill Junior could do:

### Ex. 3: Billy (bb. 77-80)

The transposition of the same music up a third to Bb major at b. 84 represents his growing excitement. Following a perfect cadence in G major (bb. 92-93) the list of jobs becomes more recitative-like as the alternating harmonies (with a pitch common to both chords in the voice) change only once per bar. This becomes a descending sequence at b. 98 before the tempo slows and Billy, with a characteristic lack of modesty, pays himself a compliment:

Bar	Text	Harmony	Voice
94	He can haul a scow	G minor first inversion	G
95	Along a canal	A7 root position	G
96	Run a cow	G minor first inversion	G
97	Around a corral	A7 root position	G
98	Or maybe bark	F# minor first inversion	F#
99	for a carousel	Ab7	F#
100	Of course it takes talent	F# minor first inversion	F#
101	to do that well	D7	F#, A, D

Billy continues to fantasise about the possible achievements of his son to be but, although the lyrics are new, the music has been heard already: b. 102 is the same as b. 77 and b. 117 reprises the *My boy Bill!* theme from b. 37.

An unexpected change of mood occurs at the *Poco più mosso* in b. 147. The tonality is A minor (with the addition of a D#) and a 3+3+2 pattern is emphasised within the cut common metre. The dissonance within the off beat woodwind chords mimics Billy's acerbic tone as he describes the type of girl young Bill will definitely not marry and then his conversational manner occasionally merges into and out of spoken dialogue as even he realises that the child has not been born yet.

A new *Moderato* section begins at b. 163 in which Billy sees himself giving his teenage son some fatherly advice on how to deal with girls. Musically speaking this is built upon an ostinato consisting of alternating F7 and F6 chords over a tonic/dominant bass. The vocal melody, for the first twelve bars at least, is almost entirely based on the notes of the F major triad while the woodwind provide pentatonic interjections at the end of each phrase. The music deviates from this stable formula in bb. 175-178 to Gb6 and Ab6 where this is an ascending three-note figure in the melody. As the ostinato resumes Billy makes the realisation that the child, for whom he has been inventing so many imaginary scenarios, might actually be a girl.

At this point (b. 185) the music from the opening of the number (Ex. 1) returns in the key of A minor as an underscore to Billy's spoken lines while the

original melody appears as an expressive violin solo. As the remaining music of this section is repeated Billy, resuming his singing voice, gradually comes round to the notion of having a daughter. Descending chords (C major and Bb major) over two bars of dominant pedal (bb. 203-204) lead to a C7 chord in which the D# acts as a chromatic appoggiatura preparing for the final part of this number.

Up until now Billy, although singing presumptuously about his son, was really singing about himself. Now, as he contemplates the possibility of having a daughter, he demonstrates a gentler and more affectionate side of his personality. This is clearly conveyed in the music through the F major tonality, broader tempo, sustained legato lines and Romantic harmonisation. The main theme contains two significant motifs: (i) a four-note idea which circles around a central pitch (b. 205) and (ii) a descending sequence in dotted rhythm (b. 210).

#### Ex. 4: Billy (bb. 205-212)

Closer examination reveals how cleverly structured this tune is: (i) b. 205 is used in augmentation in b. 206, as an ascending sequence in b. 207 and is transposed up a fifth in b. 209 and (ii) the dotted crotchets and quavers of b. 211 are an augmentation of the quavers and semiquavers of b. 210. Other noteworthy features include the rising chromatic countermelody in the strings and the used of an augmented triad in b. 206. The triplet from b. 205 features prominently in the extension of this melody at b. 213 which ends with an imperfect cadence in A minor at b. 216. This phrase is then transposed up a major third at b. 217 but an augmented version of b. 210, harmonised with a circle of fifths (A7, D7, G7, C7) in bb. 219-220, returns to the tonic. *She has a few* is musically the same as *My little girl* apart from the pause in b. 226 and perfect cadence into b. 228.

Billy's agitation as he speaks *My little girl* is represented by a change of tempo and time signature at b. 228 and then the restless quaver movement in the lower strings which descends (mostly chromatically) in contrary motion to the rising vocal line. The sequence of chords from b. 232 also contributes to the sense of uncertainty before eventually ending on an F major chord which proves to be the dominant of the final section.

Bar 232	Bar 233	Bar 234	Bar 235	Bar 236	Bar 237	Bar 238
Cb	Eb	Bb+7th	Gb	Bbm+2nd	Gb	F
1 <sup>st</sup> Inv.	Root	1 <sup>st</sup> Inv.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Inv.	Root	Root	Root

The passionate declaration, *She's got to be sheltered and dressed in the best that money can buy*, is made even more dramatic by the tutti Bb major chords with rests in between. As the voice stays on a high F (b. 245), the bass moves down (nearly always in semitones) while the internal countermelody (the majority of which is also chromatic) creates additional dissonance by way of appoggiaturas. The pause on Billy's high G coincides with a subdominant chord but the expected resolution (despite the climactic timpani roll on Bb) is delayed by the rising

scale in the brass. This ends on an ambiguous Bb minor chord with an added seventh in b. 251 before the tension is resolved in a final perfect cadence. Billy's promise - *I'll go out and make it or steal it, or take it or die!* - which is emphasised by bold dotted rhythm, contains an undercurrent of tragedy as he is to die at his own hand during an attempted robbery in Act 2.

The various elements within this substantial number are as follows:

Bar	Text	Key	Metre	Tempo
1	I wonder what he'll think of me	Bm	4/4	Moderato
21	I'll teach him to wrassle	Bm	♩	Più mosso
37	My boy Bill	G	2/4	Allegro
73	I don't give a damn what he does	G	6/8	Con moto
92	He might be a champ	G	6/8	Con moto
99	Orchestra/dialogue/ My boy Bill	G	2/4	Allegro
147	And I'm damned if he'll marry	Am	♩	Poco più mosso
163	I can see him when he's seventeen	F	♩	Moderato
185	What would I do with her?	Am	4/4	Moderato
205	My little girl	F	4/4	Broadly
228	Orchestra/dialogue/ I got to get ready	F	♩	Poco più mosso
240	She's got to be sheltered	Bb	♩	Con vigore



## Bernstein: Tonight (Quintet) from West Side Story

In *West Side Story* Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) not only fused elements of jazz and Latin American music, but also combined aspects of musical theatre and “serious” compositional devices such as counterpoint and Wagnerian *Leitmotif*. In association with the dance director Jerome Robbins, lyricist Stephen Sondheim and the arrangers Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal, Bernstein modernised Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* story setting it in New York where the rival gangs of Jets and Sharks represent the warring Montagues and Capulets and the roles of the star-crossed lovers are taken on by Tony and Maria. The first performance of *West Side Story* took place in New York on 26th September 1957 and the musical went on to become Bernstein’s best-known work thanks in no small part to the original cast recording which was made during the same week as the premiere and the film version of 1961.

The Quintet version of *Tonight* comes near the end of Act 1 i.e. between Tony and Maria’s idealistic *One Hand, One Heart* and the violent *Rumble*. The drawing together of musical and dramatic strands in an ensemble number has many operatic precedents such as the famous Quartet from Act 3 of *Rigoletto* by Verdi. The participants in this number are Riff (leader of the Jets), Bernardo (leader of the Sharks), Maria (Bernardo’s sister), Tony and Anita (Bernardo’s girlfriend). Although not indicated as such in the score, Riff and Bernardo’s parts are generally sung by all the Jets and Sharks respectively. The orchestral introduction - the original scoring of *West Side Story* is similar to that of many theatre pit bands with four of the five woodwind players doubling on instruments including piccolo, flute, saxophones, clarinet and bass clarinet - plays an essential role in conveying the tension between these characters by the following means: (i) tonal ambiguity due to the prominence of notes of the whole tone scale (C, E, F#, G#) even though the key signature suggests A minor, (ii) the incisive semiquaver motif in the upper woodwind, trumpets, snare drum and violins in the first bar and (iii) a *marcato* three-beat ostinato pattern within the alternating 4/4 and 2/4 bars which is played by lower woodwind, trombone, the piano’s left hand and lower strings.

The influence of Stravinsky is clear in the changing metre and irregular phrasing of this opening instrumental passage. The most important motif, however, is the restless quaver pattern which is played in thirds by clarinets, horns and violins:

### Ex. 1: Cl. Hr. & Vl. (bb. 2-3)

The significance of this theme becomes apparent as it forms the melody of Riff and the Jets’ first line. An anacrusis consisting of a falling fourth and a rising scale on *Tonight* (the latter derived from the semiquaver rhythm of the opening bar) have been added.

### Ex. 2: Riff (bb. 7-10)

Bernardo and the Sharks adopt the same melody in b. 11 but this time it ends a third higher. There are also subtle touches of orchestration such as the introduction of the snare drum, muted trumpets and horn. The crotchet ostinato stops on Riff’s next phrase (b. 15) which begins with a rising perfect fourth and features repetition, changing metre (two 3/8 bars) and a hint of descending sequence especially in the harmony: A9 in b. 15 moving down to G9 in b. 16.

### Ex. 3: Riff (bb. 15-20)

The rising semiquavers on *right* are of course derived from the corresponding motif on *Tonight* (b. 9). This is where the lower instruments of the orchestra resume their ostinato crotchets leading to the second verse which perfectly balances the first in terms of the sharing of melodic interest:

Verse 1	Bar 7 Riff + Jets	Bar 11 Bernardo + Sharks	Bar 15 Riff + Jets
Verse 2	Bar 22 Bernardo + Sharks	Bar 26 Riff + Jets	Bar 30 Bernardo + Sharks

The key signature changes to A major at b. 37 where a new ostinato (A/ FJ) is set up in the bass and the metre is now an unchanging 4/4 time. Despite having the feel of a new section, there are many links to previous material: (i) the quaver movement in saxophones and violins is obviously connected to bb. 2-3 with the original semitones now whole tones, (ii) the pitches present (FJ, A, B, C#) are a transposition of those employed at the opening of the number resulting in similar tonal ambiguity and (iii) the melody sung by the Jets and Sharks (in unison) consists of quavers and begins with a rising fourth. The GJ and B# in this tune lend it a jazz/blues feel which is enhanced by the downward glissandi in the saxophones, horns and trumpets and is in keeping with the text at this point:

#### Ex. 4: Jets & Sharks (bb. 38-40)

This phrase is repeated (with different lyrics) at b. 42 but ends on the tonic where there is a brief orchestral interjection in which the semiquavers of Ex. 2 create a cross-rhythm in the trumpets. Melodically speaking, b. 46 is the same as b. 38 only shortened and transposed up a fourth. *Well they began it* is exchanged between the Jets and Sharks (note the dissonance in the orchestra) before voices and brass come together in unison (b. 48) and this section ends with a crescendo to fff and an angry *Tonight* in A minor.

The orchestral interlude (bb. 50-52) returns to the material of the introduction (plus a particularly suggestive “lip smear” from the alto and tenor saxophones) and prepares for what is essentially the third verse which is sung by Anita (low alto tessitura) who is looking forward to meeting up later with Bernardo. This is musically the same as b. 7 although the notated swung rhythm is not always apparent in performance.

Anita’s final rising fourth on *Tonight* overlaps with Tony’s first two notes as he gives a solo rendition of the *Tonight* theme which appeared earlier in the act as part of the Balcony Scene with Maria:

#### Ex. 5: Tony (bb. 86-74)

Bernstein actually composed *Tonight* as part of the Quintet and later extracted it for inclusion in the Balcony Scene duet. The time signature has settled into a regular 2/2 time signature whose gently syncopated *Beguine* rhythm is evidence of

Latin American influence. Tonal stability is ensured by the tonic pedal point over which the harmonies alternate between A9 in root position and B7 in third inversion. A sidestep into C major at b. 76 is achieved by using the sustained B in the voice (bb. 74-75) as a pivot note beneath which the harmony changes from G# minor to G7. The melody, doubled by violins and cellos, features repetition of a three-note cell (C, D, E) in bb. 74-76. There is an imperfect cadence in A minor into b. 82 but this is followed at b. 84 by an F major chord in second version. The descending sequence which occurs in the vocal line from b. 85, is immediately taken up by the violins in canon at one bar’s distance and brings the music back to the tonic (A major) at b. 92 by way of an augmented sixth chord and E7 chord in the previous bar. As Tony holds his final high E (b. 96), the orchestra creates a cross rhythm of 3+3+2 crotchets against the prevailing 2/2 metre.

In the orchestral interlude at b. 98 the quaver (bb. 2-3) and semiquaver (b. 9) motifs appear in parallel major triads over the second (A/ FJ) ostinato. The first ostinato reappears at b. 102 only now transposed up a third to C minor initiating the fourth verse sung by Riff. Bars 104-117 are, therefore, musically equivalent to bb. 7-20.

At b. 118 the key changes to C major for Maria’s reprise of *Tonight* but this time combined contrapuntally with the other musical and textual themes:

<b>Maria</b>	Tonight	Ex. 5
<b>Tony</b>	All right	Ex. 2 (semiquavers)
<b>Riff</b>	So I can count on you boy	Ex. 4

Other characters are involved when the modulation to Eb major occurs at b. 126:

<b>Maria</b>	Tonight	Ex. 5
<b>Anita</b>	Tonight	Ex. 2 (semiquavers)
<b>Jets</b>	We’re gonna jazz it	Ex. 4
<b>Sharks</b>	We’re gonna rock it	Ex. 4

Particularly noteworthy is what the Sharks sing at b. 130 - namely a transformation of Ex. 4 in augmentation. A new melodic strand comprising descending arpeggios in minms is added by the Sharks and Jets at b. 134:

<b>Maria + Tony</b>	Today	Ex. 5 (continuation)
<b>Anita</b>	Anita's gonna have her day Anita's gonna have her day	Ex. 2 Ex. 2 (semiquavers inverted)
<b>Jets</b>	They began it to stop 'em once and for all	Minms Ex. 4
<b>Sharks</b>	They began it we'll stop 'em once and for all	Minms Ex. 4

As the music builds to the final climax, the material allocated to most of the participants changes yet again:

<b>Maria + Tony</b>	Oh moon	Ex. 5 (continuation)
<b>Anita</b>	Tonight We're gonna rock it tonight	Rising 4th (augmentation) Ex. 4
<b>Jets</b>	The Jets are gonna have their way We're gonna rock it tonight	Ex. 2 Ex. 4
<b>Sharks</b>	The Sharks are gonna have their way We're gonna rock it tonight	Ex. 2 Ex. 4

There is a perfect cadence on to a C major chord (b. 148) which the orchestral payout based on bb. 98-101 contradicts with Ab major before the final resolution in the last bar.

The tightly woven motivic content of this number and the polyphonic combination of themes demonstrate Bernstein's classical training - he had after all studied at Harvard and the Curtis Institute - resulting in a particularly cohesive structure:

<b>Bar 1</b>	Orchestral introduction	A minor
<b>Bar 7</b>	Verse 1	A minor
<b>Bar 22</b>	Verse 2	A minor
<b>Bar 38</b>	Chorus	A major
<b>Bar 50</b>	Orchestral interlude	A minor
<b>Bar 53</b>	Verse 3	A minor
<b>Bar 68</b>	Tonight	A major
<b>Bar 98</b>	Orchestral interlude	A minor
<b>Bar 104</b>	Verse 4	C minor
<b>Bar 118</b>	Tonight combined with other themes	C major

Some aspects of this piece are very classical while the influence of jazz is also obvious. These features may be collated as follows:

#### Classical

- Operatic concept of the ensemble number
- Motivic structure
- Use of Leitmotif - themes associated with various characters e.g. Tonight
- Polyphonic combination of themes
- Dissonance
- Changing metre
- Irregular phrasing
- Cross rhythms

#### Jazz

- Scoring e.g. saxophones, drum kit, electric guitar, piano
- Riff/ostinato
- Glissandi for saxophones, brass and guitar
- Influence of Latin American music e.g. Tonight
- Swung rhythm e.g. Anita's verse
- Added note chords e.g. ninths
- Muted trumpets and horns



## Schönberg and Boublil: One Day More from Les Misérables

The musical version of Victor Hugo's sometimes convoluted novel, *Les Misérables*, came about as a result of the collaboration between the French song writer Claude-Michel Schönberg and the Tunisian-born Alain Boublil (NB the latter's surname is often misspelt). It was first performed in Paris in 1980 but it was not until the impresario, Cameron Mackintosh, backed an English language production in 1985 that it achieved widespread recognition leading to worldwide success.

*One Day More*, is in the same vein as many operatic ensemble numbers (there is no spoken dialogue in *Les Misérables*) as it is both a dramatic and musical culmination to Act 1. The main character, Valjean, having broken the terms of his parole, has been tracked down by the policeman, Javert. Not only is Valjean considering his position, but the other characters comment on their own personal circumstances too.

The introduction presents three ostinato patterns: (i) the semiquavers played by flute, violins, glockenspiel and RH keyboards (ii) the minims in the LH keyboards beginning with a descending scale and (iii) the following four-bar harmonic progression:

Bar 1	Bar 2	Bar 3	Bar 4
A6	F#m7	D	Bm/E9

### Ex. 1: Piano reduction (bb. 1-4)

Perhaps the most significant of these is (ii) as this falling scalar idea provides a link with some of the other musical numbers most notably *I dreamed a dream*. The melody, rhythm (2 quavers + crotchet) and accompaniment of Valjean's first entry *One day more* is also connected to a previous number in this Act - *Who am I?* - and features syllabic treatment of the text, descending sequence (b. 6 uses the same motif as b. 5 only a third lower) and frequent repetition of pitches. Another allusion to earlier music occurs at b. 9 where Marius interjects with *I did not live until today*. The melody, taken from Fantine's *I dreamed a dream*, is characterised by dotted rhythm (b. 9), the use of a triplet (b. 11) and "Scotch snap" rhythm (b. 12). Valjean adds the opening three notes of *One day more* before Cosette joins Marius in the parallel thirds (doubled

by horns) which form the continuation of this theme in bb. 13-16. The reworking of material taken from '*I Dreamed a Dream*' continues as Eponine's *One more day all on my own* is answered by Cosette and Marius singing *Will we ever meet again?* in thirds. At this point the ostinato figures in the accompaniment are replaced by syncopated chords in the violins, violas and keyboards. The music follows the harmonic structure of the original i.e. modulating to B minor and B major before returning via a descending sequence to the tonic

Bars 17-18	Bars 19-20	Bars 21-22	Bars 23-24
B minor	B major	A minor	A major

which is reinforced by a timpani roll:

This music is repeated with new lyrics by Enjolras (*One more day before the storm*) and Marius (*Do I*

Bars 26-27	Bars 28-29	Bars 30-31	Bars 32-33
F minor	F major	Eb minor	Eb major

follow where she goes?) in a different key: The Eb pedal (bb. 34-35) coincides with the homophonic entry of the chorus whose revolutionary call *The time is now, the day is here* is emphasised by the trumpets, snare drum rhythm and roll on suspended cymbal. This ends on an E7 chord (note the enharmonic relationship between the Ab and G# in the sopranos) which leads back into A major at b. 36.

Valjean's *One Day More* motif acts as an anacrusis to the next section in which the semiquaver patterns from the opening of this number return with a new accompaniment consisting of repeated quaver chords in the second keyboard and the descending scale now appears in a crotchet version in the cello and bass guitar. The interrelation of the musical motifs in *Les Misérables* is demonstrated here as these harmonies accompany music associated with the policeman Javert (*One more day to revolution*) and the Thénardiens (*Watch'em run amuck*) - the latter having been heard earlier in *Master of the House*.

Bar 44 corresponds with b. 17 except there is new text - *One day to a new beginning* - and that the

phrases of the melody alternate between the two sections of the chorus: sopranos in octaves with the tenors and altos in octaves with the basses. The syncopation of b. 17 has been replaced by dotted rhythms in woodwind and brass and a martial ostinato in the snare drum. An increase in excitement is created at the end of this section where Marius declares *My place is here, I fight*

*with you* as there is a crescendo over an A pedal (bb. 51-52).

The G7 chord in b. 53 launches the music into C major in the following bar where the superimposition of musical and textual motifs represents the conflicting aspirations of the various protagonists:

Character/instrument	Text	Motif
Valjean	One day more	2 quavers + crotchet
Cosette & Marius	I did not live until today	Dotted rhythm in 3rds
Javert	I will join these people's heroes	Quavers
Thenardiers	Watch 'em run amuck	Repeated semiquavers
Eponine	One more day all on my own	C/E/C
Flute, violin, viola, keyboard (RH)		Semiquaver ostinato
Trombone, bass guitar, cello, keyboard (LH)		Descending scalar motif

When the four-bar bass line and associated chord progression has been heard twice Valjean's semiquavers (*Tomorrow we'll be far away*) are taken up by the full cast in unison (*Tomorrow we'll discover*) at the 5/8 bar. An E7 chord (plus a minor ninth) takes the music into A minor (b. 63) before the final cadential second inversion (b. 64) - suspension (b. 65<sup>1</sup>) - resolution (b. 65<sup>3</sup>) and perfect cadence (b. 66). The unison statement of *One more dawn* (the upbeat to b. 64) is actually a

diminution of Valjean's 2 quavers + crotchet motif which is then harmonised homophonically as part of the final play on words: *One more day, One day more*. The resonant choral ending is combined with three important themes which are presented in the orchestra: (i) the repeated semiquavers (RH keyboards, woodwind and upper strings), (ii) the descending scale in minims (LH keyboards, trombone, bass guitar and cello) and the dotted rhythm of *I dreamed a dream* (trumpets and horns).

