UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF THE MUSIC CATEGORY

Corinna Garriock International Faculty Certified Music Judge Region 16 Fall Music School

### Music Category Basics

- The primary focus of the music category is the <u>performance of a song</u> arranged in four-part harmony, barbershop style.
- The music judge evaluates
  - the musicality of the performance,
  - the quality of the song and arrangement, and
  - the degree to which the performance meets the requirements of the barbershop style.

In SA, 70% of the Music Category is devoted to Performance in the barbershop style.

The other 30% is devoted to the Song & Arrangement and its effectiveness as a representative of the barbershop style.

### Music Category Basics

At its heart, the Music
Category is simply about
the music you choose
and how you lift that
music off of the page.

## Elements of the Music Category

| Contest: Region #                                                                                          | Chorus Regio | Con # Quartet                                                                                                           | Date |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| SONG & ARRANGEMENT (0-3) Merit as Barbershop Material Form/Melody/Lyrics Arrangement Harmonization Voicing | 30 points)   | PERFORMANCE (0-Vocal Skills Harmony Accuracy Barbershop Style Tempo Rhythm Musical Unity Phrasing Dynamics Musical Ener |      | FREE! JCDB Online! |

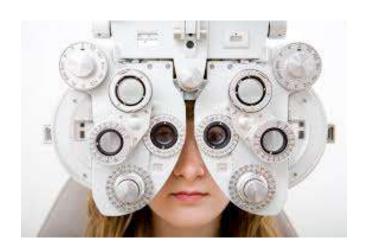


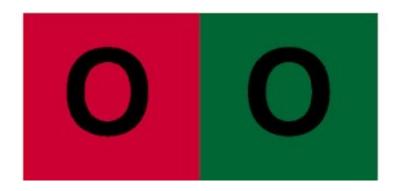












## Barbershop's Defining Characteristics

- Unaccompanied (a cappella), close harmony, four-part vocal music with the melody primarily in a middle part (not top, not bottom).
- An 'interesting' melody and a general audience lyric that mostly lives in the diatonic scale (i.e. few accidentals). Lyric demonstrates metric unity and an obvious rhyming structure.
- ▶ 'Popular song' form. Generally 8-measure building blocks. Chorus demonstrates melodic unity (ex. AABA, ABAC, ABACA).
- Harmonization primarily consisting of major triad, dominant seventh and dominant ninth harmonizations. Chord progressions primarily utilize dominant-to-tonic resolution.
- Arrangement structure: Chorus is mandatory. Intro, verse, tag, bridge optional.
- Every melody note is harmonized i.e. texture is primarily homophonic (vs. polyphonic)
- Voicings strengthen the <u>lock and ring</u> characteristic of the <u>barbershop style</u>.
- ▶ Embellishments are utilized for dramatic effect or to achieve continuity in the absence of instruments.

- □ Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?

### Feeling out of your depth on harmonizations?

Start by googling the song title with the word 'chords'.

Look for an original chord chart – guitar, piano, doesn't matter what instrument.

Look for mostly Major (just a capital letter – like C), Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> (like C7) and Dominant 9<sup>th</sup> (like C9).

- Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?

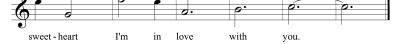
- ABAC
- Primarily major scale
- G-rated; rhyming
- Primary chords
- **Primarily**
- Strong
- Appropriate



#### Let Call You Sweetheart

Beth Slater Whitson & Leo Friedman





D7

**G**7

 $\mathbf{C}$ 

Α7

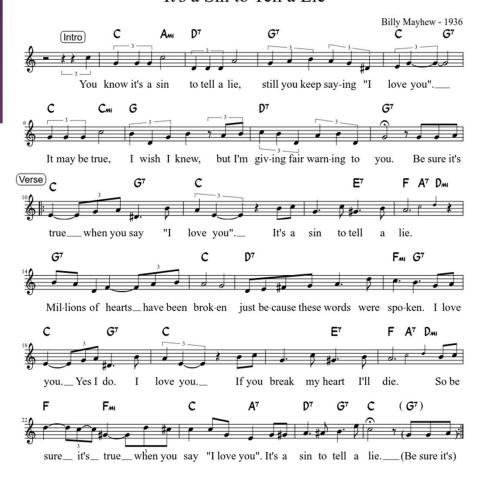
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- □ Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?

- ABAC
- Primarily major scale
- G-rated; rhyming
- Primarily Major
- Primarily
- Strong
- Appropriate



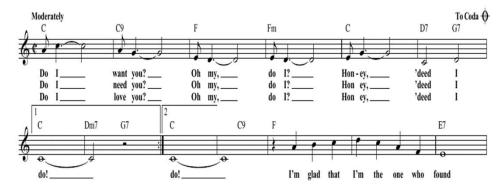
#### It's a Sin to Tell a Lie



- Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?

- AABA
- All major scale
- G-rated; rhyming
- Primarily Major
- Off and on...
- Jazz influenced
- Can obscure the message. They \*are\* the message, maybe...

### 'Deed I Do







- □ Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?



- Primarily major scale;
   Range requires
   frequent part swaps
- G-rated; rhyming
- Mix; Maj7 in hook
- Primarily homophonic
- Stretched at bridge
- Many... 'contest' arrangement strays far from original

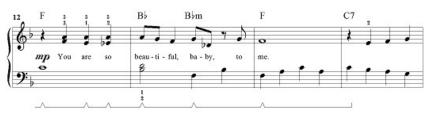
#### YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL

Words and Music by BILLY PRESTON and BRUCE FISHER Arranged by WESLEY SCHAUM











- □ Form?
- Melody?
- Lyrics?
- Harmonization?
- Homorhythmic?
- Voicings?
- Embellishments?

- AAAA
- Primarily major scale
- G-rated; rhyming
- Primary ok but not much movement
- No needs drums (bass)
- Varied; more focused on a melodic (and very fun) bass line.
- Many; BBS in style?

### Footloose (Key of A)







## The Perfect Barbershop Song?

- ► The Music Category defines the type of song and arrangement that will most effectively reflect the barbershop style.
- Other songs can be brought into the style if they possess the hallmarks of a strong barbershop song and are arranged effectively in barbershop style.
- ▶ If we choose to experiment with the style, what are the key elements to 'preserve' and which are less important to us?
- Choose intelligently. If you want to take a risk, do it! Just do it in an informed fashion.

## Questions?

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### Resources

- ▶ Ear Training Learn to hear the 'big three' and the secondary chords.
  - ▶ <a href="http://tonedear.com/ear-training/chord-identification">http://tonedear.com/ear-training/chord-identification</a>
- ► Harmonics / Overtones
  - https://youtu.be/Wx\_kugSemfY