

41 O hush thee my baby

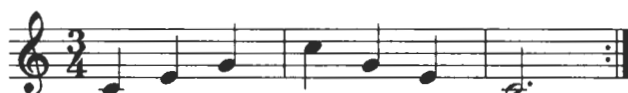
RESOURCES ▶ CD2 track 5 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 15, 16a, 17, 18, 22, 26

Information

This is a traditional Highland cradle tune collected by Hugh S. Robertson in the 1950s. The chorus words 'caidil gu lō' (pronounced 'cad-jil goo law') mean 'sleep till dawn'. The attraction of this song is its unusual melody with a range greater than an octave. It is arranged for mixed voices (SATB), which can just about be taught by rote, but access to the music may help some people. The verse words are archaic, but have interest as an example of a historical genre. To quote Hugh Robertson: 'If you are right in the heart of your song, depend upon it you will sooner or later find yourself right in the heart of the place and people whence the song came' (*Songs of the British Isles*, 1950).

Starting

- Warm up with plenty of arpeggios, as every voice has to sing them, particularly the sopranos.
- Establish a moderate three-in-a-bar pulse, perhaps with some body swaying to help the motion of a cradle, and sing this arpeggio exercise, alternating the words and going up by a semitone each time:



Ro ro ro ro ro ro ro.
Ree ree ree ree ree ree.

- Develop the arpeggio pattern by singing the first four notes of the song ('Oh ho-ro ee-') to establish the octave jump.

Teaching and rehearsing

- Teach the first four bars of the melody, encouraging singers to feel it as one continuous line which joins the first and last words. Don't identify or make an issue of the large leaps! Increase the sound through the first bar into the second, this helps the momentum. The vowel sound on 'ee-ree-ree' should not be too pinched and smiley; keep the mouth slightly open so it sounds like 'i-ri-ri'. This will help tone quality and pitch.
- The next four bars (5–8) start in the same way: tackle these next.
- Add the harmony parts to the chorus, then everyone can sing. This will help with the verses later. Begin with alto, as it starts and ends the phrases with the soprano. Then add the bass, which has the same phrase twice. Finally add the tenor line, which almost repeats as well.

- The last chorus, or coda, is very similar to the opening chorus but bar 17 is unison, and bar 20 has a variation in the harmony to create an interrupted cadence.
- For the verses, teach the melody first. The crotchet-only rhythm could make this sound rather wooden, so encourage a lilting feel, using the words to help with expression.
- Add the bass-line next; it has a repeated pedal note, then rises up a scale in a consistent pattern which should make it quite accessible.
- Next should come the tenor and alto, in that order; then try them together.

Ideas

- To ease the pressure of learning everything in one go, once the chorus is confidently known sing through the whole piece, with the leader (or a competent soloist) taking the verses. This gives a feeling of continuity and some sense of achievement, and it will help to teach the verse melody, as everyone hears it in context three times.
- To help smooth the passage of the chorus melody at the beginning, try isolating two short motifs (i.e. 'O ho-ro ee'—as in the exercise above—then 'ee-ree-ree cai-') before putting them back together.

Listen out

- Check carefully that everyone breathes where marked. Bar 8 needs particular attention: alto, tenor, and bass need to breathe with the sopranos as if they were going on to sing the next phrase. Decide how long the note on 'dawn' is to be. Bar 12 is even more crucial, because in verse 1 if the end letter, 't', is not together it will be obvious!

Performing

- The words dictate the order of events, so the main decisions for performing are the style and some dynamic contrast. This is a cradle song so it should be suitably calm and soothing.
- On the CD the melody is highlighted in verse 2: alto, tenor, and bass sing 'loo'. Humming is possible, but this can be difficult for younger voices. Why not try a solo voice or two?
- Keep the verses flowing; don't let the lack of rhythm make it stodgy.

41 O hush thee my baby

Scottish folksong
arr. Peter Hunt

Gently ♩ = 88
Chorus

Musical score for the chorus, measures 1-5. It features three staves: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), and Tenor/Bass (T. B.). The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: O ho - ro ee - (ree)-ree cai - dil gu Lō, O ho - ro. The second line of lyrics is: O ho - ro ho - ro sleep till dawn, O ho - ro. The third line of lyrics is: O ho - ro sleep till dawn, O ho - ro.

Musical score for the verse, measures 6-10. It features three staves: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), and Tenor/Bass (T. B.). The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: ee - (ree)-ree cai - dil gu Lō. Verse. ho - ro sleep till dawn. ho - ro sleep till dawn. 1. O hush thee my ba - by, thy - ro sleep till dawn.

Musical score for the continuation of the verse, measures 11-15. It features three staves: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), and Tenor/Bass (T. B.). The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: sire was a knight. Thy mo-ther a la - dye both gen - tle and bright.

2. O hush thee my baby, the time soon will come
When thy sleep shall be broken with trumpet and drum.
3. Then hush thee my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.

40 She moved through the fair

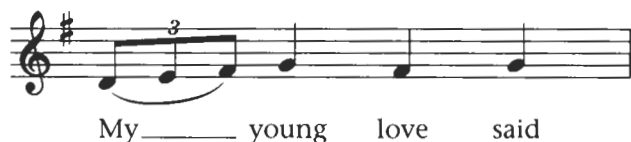
RESOURCES ▶ CD2 track 4 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 10a–14a, 20, 43

Information

This folksong from Donegal, Ireland, collected in 1909, is a most haunting melody, and reflects the ghostly nature of the lyrics. It has been performed in many versions, and a trawl of internet websites will reveal many recordings, slightly altered lyrics, and many opinions as to its origins. As with much of the material in *Voiceworks*, its simplicity is its strength. This melody is in the Mixolydian mode: like a major scale but with a flattened 7th or leading note (play the white notes on a keyboard from G to G to get the pattern of intervals). The four phrases are structured ABBA. This arrangement attempts to preserve the simplicity: each verse adds a voice, and by the end there is some richness to the four-part harmony. Retaining the expressiveness of such a free-flowing and flexible song in notation is a challenge. Gregorian chant (see the pieces in No. 47) provided the solution, which is to use bar-lines solely to indicate breaks in the phrases, where singers can naturally breathe before starting a new line.

Starting

- Warm up with good breathing exercises and slow mixolydian scales in preparation.
- Establish a slow pulse and sing the following exercise repeatedly, taking great care over the triplet figure so that it doesn't rush. It must be relaxed.



Teaching and rehearsing

- Teach the first phrase, following the inflection of the words. Follow this with the last phrase which is almost the same. If the group is large the leader will need to indicate a tempo. It is possible to follow the notation precisely if it helps the singers feel secure; it is written in a way that will sound natural and free.
- Teach the middle two phrases next; they are the same.
- Now put the four phrases together. Try all four verses, still to a single line, really telling the story.
- Now rehearse the lower of the two top voices (alto) for verses 2 and 3. Its rhythm is exactly the same as the melody, but the contour is flatter. Maintain the same flexibility and expression; singers should sing as if they had the tune.

- The lowest part (bass) is very simple, but it needs to have an even and consistent tone, like a gentle drone. Singers need to be careful about the lengths of the notes; listen to the voices above and move with them.
- Verse 4 will need to be taken apart and each harmony part rehearsed separately. None of them is difficult and they mostly move by step. Any 'clashes' in the harmony (e.g. bars 10 and 11) will not be a problem if singers are confident of their own lines. Less experienced singers tend to think only of their own line, without being aware of the effect of the harmony, the chords resulting from all voices sounding together.
- Begin work on the 'ensemble' sound with the last phrase ('till our wedding day'), where all voices sing in unison then break into four parts. The singers should try this slowly, chord by chord, moving to the next only when indicated by the leader, and letting each chord really bed down until it is secure.

Ideas

- If sustaining the melody or singing each phrase in one breath is not easy, sing faster, without worrying about gentle expression. When confidence has come it will be easier to slow down and lengthen notes.
- Remind singers that this is a folksong, so the words must be clear. It was originally sung by a solo voice, not a group, so they need to listen very carefully to each other and be aware of the ensemble.
- The longer sustained notes (e.g. (verse 1) 'me' in phrase 1; 'love' in phrase 4) can be helped with a crescendo through the note. No long note should ever stay at the same volume.
- The leader can help encourage singers to give shape to phrases with appropriate hand and arm movements (see page xv).

Listen out

- In verses 2 and 3 the notes should change cleanly in moving from the first to the second, and the second to the third phrase. Practise this by holding the last chord on its own, moving to the next, then back again. Do this several times so singers feel the movement they have to make. Then put it in context by singing the whole phrase.
- Make sure the triplets don't rush. In verse 4, bar 14, the tenor line has a triplet; other voices need to be aware of this so they don't crash through the bar-line before the tenors!

□ Performing

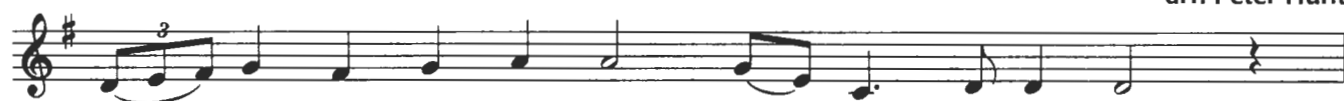
- This is such a wonderful tune that it should feel easy and good to sing. The lower voices should support without hindering the expression in the melody.
- Dynamics should not be too fussy; a moderate volume with some ebb and flow as the melody rises and falls will be sufficient. In general the song starts warmly, but the last verse should perhaps be more reflective.
- A suggested performance order is:
 - ~ verse 1: solo or group, melody only
 - ~ verse 2: melody plus bass-line
 - ~ verse 3: as above plus the alto line
 - ~ verse 4: four-part harmony.

To Helen

40 She moved through the fair

Freely ♩ = 78

Irish folksong
arr. Peter Hunt



1. My ___ young love said to me: 'My ___ moth - er won't mind;



and my fath - er won't slight you for your lack of kine.'



And she stepped a - way from me, and this she did say:



'It ___ will not be long, love, till ___ our wed - ding day.'