

Creative Curriculum

Carmen Suite No. 1 - Entr'Acte (Aragonaise)

Georges Bizet

Grade - 4

Length of Movement - 2:30

Instrumentation: Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Timbales, Triangle, Tambourine, Harp, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass

Analysis

Form: ABA

Rhythm: The beginning phrase features an energetic, driving triple meter dance rhythm. Throughout the piece, there is a constant eighth-note pulse, keeping the steady triple-meter dance feel. The 3/8 accompaniment figures are contrasted by dotted eighth+sixteenth and tied eighth-notes in the melody. Motivic use of seven-measure stream of sixteenth notes in half-step slurs. Entire orchestra accents unison marcato eight-notes to emphasize the climax.

Melody: A Major and D harmonic minor scales, creating the Bflat to C# minor-third jump. Melody is very scalar and step-wise. Melody floats in the first section, then glides on faster gestures for the secondary motif. Very light, playful and dance-like. The use of mixed-scales are very effective. C and C# are used to imply slightly different harmony, the A Phrygian mode and the D harmonic minor, though as stated, the A major scale is used plenty.

Harmony: The harmony is interesting, as the key signature suggests the key center of D minor (i), but the piece begins and ends nearly all phrases on the dominant A major (V). It is very easy to hear this in A major (I), with a modal interchange of the minor iv chord (d minor). There are many instances of the melody containing the A major scale, implying that the use of B-flat is the Neapolitan 2nd of A major, instead of the flat 6 in d minor. And again, because the piece begins and ends on A major chords, I will forgo the notion that the entire piece is a large Dominant-to-Tonic resolution in d minor, since the only moment of arrival in d minor is 111 measures in (very powerful, though extremely brief), and lasts merely two measures, as the harmony then walks down a fourth to A major. The piece finishes out in A major as well.

In A Major:

||: I ^bVII⁷ ^bVI⁷ ^bVII⁷ I ^bVII⁶ ^bVI^{6/4} ^bVII⁶ :||

||: I iv^{6/4} I^{7/5} (no 3) iv^{6/4} I iv^{6/4} I^{7/5} (no 3) iv^{6/4} :|| x 8

||: ^bVI ^bVI⁺ ^bVI iv ^bII ^bIII :|| ||: ^bVI I^{6/4} ^bVI I^{6/4} ^bVI I^{6/4} :||

Timbre: First eight measures are Strident, Rounded, Brassy, Heavy; darker subito-pianissimo settles in and gives way to a main melody that is light, flowing, with vibrato. Louder contrasting sections are bright and shimmering. String pizzicato creates a bouncing feeling, yet pointed, woody and brittle as well.

Texture: interchanges between sparse instrumentation (low string pizzicato accompanying an oboe soloist) and full orchestral responses with percussive accents creates effective contrasts. Very skillful “handing-off” of fast-moving melodies between upper strings and woodwinds. Constantly intensifies with thicker orchestration, then is contrasted with thinned delicate gestures. Tambourine creates the constant dance-like feel.

Executive Skills Required:

Accuracy of syncopated entrances in melody (main melody entering on beat 2 in 3/8 time, has a tendency to be late).

Keeping dance-like waltz tempo steady and in unison.

Fast sixteenth-note scale runs ascending and descending in upper strings and woodwinds.

Musical Elements Addressed:

Waltz feel: 3/8 time, downbeat emphasized, root of chord on downbeat (beat 1) and harmonies on offbeats (beats 2 & 3), dance-like rhythms (practice dancing in small area, repeating two-steps of the waltz, to internalize/embody the style/pulse/feel)

Texture/Orchestration: Full orchestra homophonic beginning, thinned out pizzicato and delicate woodwinds polyphony.

Phrasing: characterization of melodic motifs, stylistic phrasing (i.e. dynamics, vibrato)

Teaching these elements would be scaffolded by starting with the rhythmic feel of the waltz style. By internalizing the 3/8 feel, the musicians will hold integrity to the rhythms and style, understanding the emphasis on downbeats and accurately marking the two upbeats. Starting with standing simple body movements, such as a two-step back and forth in a waltz pattern, progressing to counting and singing the emphasized beats and offbeats.

Teaching the scale used for improvisation will take some scaffolding as well. To achieve command of the “jazz” harmonic-minor scale (both lowered and natural 7th scale degree), I would first have students review the notes of the D major scale, then the D minor scale, then the D harmonic-minor scale, and finally modeling the notes of the special harmonic-minor scale. I would have them isolate and play parts of the scale (first half, second half) to get it under their fingers. Finally, we would look at the harmony of the two accompanying chords in the exercise, and determine when the appropriate time to play each of the notes in the scale. We would also build arpeggios together out of the notes of the scale, assigning chord qualities to each.

Creative Curriculum Map

Month: April & May

Name: Tom Terrell

Creative Focus for Each Week (National Standard)	Skill/Musical Element Knowledge Outcomes/Objectives	Materials/Resources	Student Activities	Assessment (describe what and how you assess skills and knowledge taught)
Respond/Connect Week One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to piece - Identify narrative elements associated with sonic qualities - Explain reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recording of Carmen Suite No. 1 - Paper/Pen or computer 	Write a narrative of what they hear, imagining characters, scenes, etc. that the music “tells”, explaining the correlations chosen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informal discussion of ideas formulated from listening - Read through the narratives, grade based on effort to connect
Perform Week Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn/rehearse ensemble piece - Internalize/embody rhythmic integrity of waltz style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orchestral parts - Instruments, rehearsal setup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sightread piece followed by rehearsals - Small dance movements to internalize/embody the 3/8 waltz feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal: proficiency of reading and playing parts - Watching students to see if they can internalize/embody dance movements

<p>Perform/Create Week Three</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue rehearsals to develop proficiency of material - Begin gathering/brainstorming material for improvisation exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rehearsal setup - Notation, pencils - Projector, sample improvisation exercise material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rehearse piece - As a class, extract rhythm loops from salient phrases/motifs/gestures - In small groups, compose/arrange accompaniment loop parts based on features of piece - As a class, extract Key/Scale for improvisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving proficiency of material - Rhythms chosen relate to piece - Accompaniment loops are clear, playable, and relatable to piece (must feature some aspect of piece) - Key/Scale is appropriate to tonal center of piece
<p>Create Week Four</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use compiled materials to loop accompaniment and have students take turns improvising - Record for individual/personal reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rhythm exercise sheet (with 5 rhythms) - Accompaniment parts and Scale sheet for each instrument key/clef - Recording device 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loop accompaniment - Take turns down each row playing an improvised solo, using Scale and Rhythms provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student must listen to the recording of their improvisations and write a short response identifying strong moments and areas that need improvement
<p>Create Week Five</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assign small chamber groups (4-8 students) - Students begin extracting elements of piece that will shape individual compositions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notation, pencils and/or computer notation software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refer to narratives to begin brainstorming inspiration for original composition - Work on composition for chamber group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher check-in, student's direction is viable - answering student questions regarding composition

<p>Create/Perform Week Six</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish composing pieces - Rehearse pieces in chamber ensembles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notation, pencils and/or computer notation software - Multiple rehearsal setups for chamber groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present their compositions to their groups - Groups rehearse the compositions for performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students complete 1-3 minute compositions with at least one element derived from Carmen
<p>Perform Week Seven</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish rehearsing - Present to public in a multi-dimensional student-centered event initiative - Document/Record event/concert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance setup - Any materials needed for student-centered concert event initiatives (i.e. visual projectors, microphone amplification, food, lighting, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and execute student-centered performance event - Perform Carmen (full ensemble) - Perform compositions (in chamber groups) in student-centered concert event (i.e. featuring visuals, poetry, food, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students executed their goals with performance - Quality of performance of Carmen, impacted positively by improvisation/composition exercises - Each student's pieces were played
<p>Respond Week Eight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect/debrief on performance and creative process - Discuss/Share feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playback materials - pen and paper or computer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide feedback to classmates on their compositions - Debrief pros/cons/ takeaways of concert event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students to draft a letter to one other classmate giving feedback of their composition - Students provide engaging discussion on reflection/debrief