

Music Lab

Musical Modelling — Unit Five

Consider the musicals you outlined in Unit One. Select six songs that pique your interest (through listening) in terms of accompaniment and study the piano/vocal score for each song.

- What is it that caught your interest? A particular rhythmic pattern? A progression?
- How is the rhythm carried forward? What do you see in the bass? In the treble staff?
- How are the progressions voiced?
- Is the vocal melody doubled in the accompaniment?
- How is the climax of the entire song supported in the accompaniment?

Next, consider the music for each separate section. As much as possible, try to consider the music independently of the lyric.

- Does each A section match exactly the others? What about the B sections?
- If there are differences, are they only at the ends of the sections?
- Do the ends of the sections make sense cadentially to continue into the section that follows?
- Can you identify the high point in each phrase of each section?
- Are the vocal high points supported in the accompaniment?
- Can you identify the musical high points in each quatrain or stanza?
- Can you identify the musical peak of the entire song?

From the six songs you selected, can you identify what kinds of songs they are?

- Are they ballades, charm songs, comedy songs or musical scenes?
- What are the observations you made to determine the category above?
- Are there any songs which fit exactly into the category?
- Are there any songs which seem to pull from or fit into more than one category? If so, why?
- How do the song categorizations correspond to dramatic function within the shows?
- Do any of the songs seem to run *counter* to your expectations in terms of dramatic function?
(for example, a strong rhythmic figure accompanying a ballade)

Finally, if a song you have selected does not seem to fit any of the expectations that we have examined in this unit, does it offer a more successful model? If so, what is the model? Is it one that you find useful?