

Music A-Level Composition 2023  
"Olivia"

Write a contemporary love song for a community production for Musical Theatre for one or more female voices.

This song is based on Olivia and Viola's characters in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, taking the lyrics from the "Willow Cabin Speech" in Act 1, Scene 5. The lyrics have been adapted by

It is for two female singers, piano accompaniment, saxophone, trombone, bass guitar, and drum kit. The vocal range for Viola is soprano- D4 to F#5, and Olivia is soprano- G#4 to A5.

The piece starts in D major with a simple, chordal, piano accompaniment played piano as the two characters speak. The introduction is in 100bpm but shifts to 150bpm for the drum fill into chorus 1.

This chorus is in forte as Viola sings a lyrical melody about Olivia. The chorus uses melody dominated homophony with a piano, bass guitar, and drum kit accompaniment. There is a dynamic swell on "for you" and the chorus ends on a perfect cadence.

The first verse follows as section B, slightly quieter, with the same piano accompaniment style of chorus 1. There is a new drum part.

The verse crescendos back to forte with another drum fill into chorus 2 which is in a new piano accompaniment style.

Section D is an instrumental accompaniment for Viola and Olivia's conversation. The alto saxophone plays a new solo melody. The bass guitar plays the same "verse" bassline, but a new piano accompaniment style comes in. The section is quieter to allow for the conversation to be heard.

A drum fill takes us into the forte chorus 3 in section E, using the newer accompaniment style from chorus 2. The chorus slows down to 95bpm with a ritardando at the end as we come into the waltz-style dance break in section F.

Although starting in the traditional slow waltz tempo, the section uses a steady accelerando into a typical fast waltz tempo of 180bpm. The section uses the original piano accompaniment style from Verse and Chorus 1. There is a trombone solo here, playing a decorated variation of the verse melody. The drum plays a traditional waltz drum part. Halfway through the waltz section, the alto saxophone joins in with a counterpoint of the trombone part, using contrary motion.

Section G is chorus 4, starting stripped back the vocal anacrusis in mezzo-piano. This is accompanied by the original piano part playing a quiet piano. A drum fill takes us into the thicker forte section where the other accompanying instruments come in, as well as a countermelody in the trombone.

Section H is verse 2, slightly quieter, with a new piano accompaniment style based on 5ths. The trombone and alto saxophone play a two-note addition at the end of phrases. The end of verse two modulates into the relative minor (E minor) using a perfect cadence.

The I section is a minor bridge, using a thin, stripped back texture- vocals, piano chords, and a simple drum part. These parts are louder, with the vocal building up to fortissimo.

The chorus at J is back in D major, using a perfect cadence and a drum fill to modulate back. The piano uses the original accompaniment style from A and B. The trombone and alto sax play a countermelody, harmonising with the vocals.

Section K is the final chorus/outro, using a new key of E major as a wholetone shift, as is common of the musical theatre genre. It is supported by the piano accompaniment and bass guitar, as well as a drum fill. The final chorus is loud, with most parts playing forte or fortissimo. The second vocalist comes in here, singing a second melody. The trombone and alto sax harmonise with the respective vocalists, and the piano continues with accompaniment style from section J. The piece ends with a ritardando down to 110bpm with both vocalists, the trombone, and alto sax harmonising on the last phrase. The last note is held as a chord as a drum fill finishes the piece.