

Music

Drunken Whaler

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Discuss the composer’s use of texture and pitch in this excerpt.


The timings indicated in the table below are there show you where the sections start and finish. Duration has nothing to do with how long a section is or the length of the piece/excerpt.

| A | A1 00:00:20 | Instrumental 00:00:44 | A2 00:01:12 | A3 00:01:33 | A4 00:01:55 |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| verse 1 - female melody monophonic | verse 2 – female melody double bass harmony homophonic | distorted guitars and electronic sounds | verse 3 – female choir melody A | verse 4 – lower octave vocals added | verse 5 – same vocals (different lyrics) |

A

- acapella
- melody = high pitched, soprano (young girl) with airy tone colour
- monophonic, therefore very light texture

A1

- second verse of song, melody = same young soprano
- *pizzicato* double bass is added = harmony
- contrast of high pitched melody and low pitched harmony
- homophonic but texture is still quite light as the double bass only plays a very simple rhythm, mainly 
- double bass plays root note of chord

Instrumental

- melody by guitar is based on chord progression of song
- rhythm of guitar melody is



- guitar uses distortion and it’s grungy tone colour makes the texture thicker
- use of bends by guitar in melody
- addition of percussive electronic sound with semiquaver rhythm increases the layers
- bass harmony accompaniment = alternating notes (interval of a fourth), based on chord progression
- texture of section is more dense with addition of layers of sound, combinations of rhythms, expressive techniques of guitars and electronic sounds

A2

- layers (instruments) from instrumental section continue, as harmony
- melody now consists of children’s choir singing in unison
- texture even more dense

A3

- pitch range of melody part widens with addition of a lower octave (boys?), all voices singing in unison, this also increases the texture

A4

- texture is the most dense in this section
- guitar chords are more apparent
- high pitched, scraping, electronic sounds add to the texture

Texture is monophonic in A section but is then homophonic for the rest of the excerpt.

Texture increases with each section due to addition of instruments and electronic sounds as well as the expressive techniques used (distortion on guitar).

The increase in texture causes the dynamics to get louder, beginning with *mp* in section A and finishing with *ff* in section A4.

Song is based on two chords.

Major tonality

Melody is that of the traditional song, Drunken Sailor.

Melody has an octave range, several repeated notes at the beginning of the phrase, stepwise contour.

Melody = eight bar phrases, first four bars are a descending sequence.