Passacaglia

A passacaglia is a type of **instrumental** piece usually associated with the **Baroque** period in which a bass line is repeated for the whole piece. This is a **GROUND BASS**. The passacaglia was often played on the organ but it other instruments (e.g. strings) could play it too.

Characteristics of a passacaglia:

- Slow tempo
- Usually triple time (though other time signatures also used)
- Often in the minor key
- Based on a short 4 or 8 bar phrase.

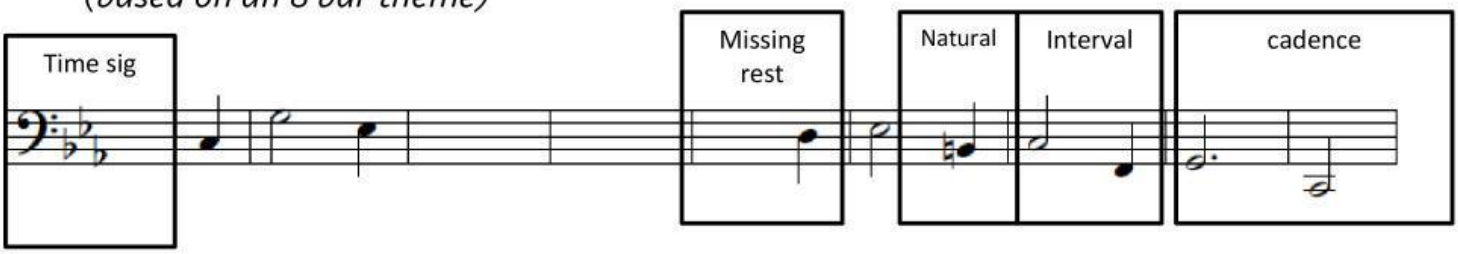
The bass line is repeated many times while the upper parts are varied. While the theme in the bass is repeated, the upper parts become increasingly elaborate.

The French term for Passacaglia is the *Chaconne* and in England it was called the *Chacony.* e.g. Purcell's *Chacony in Gm*



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Listen to the Passacaglia in Cm by Bach and answer the questions below
(based on an 8 bar theme)



1. Insert the missing time signature
2. Name the rhythmic feature at the start _____
3. Add the correct rest to complete the bar marked in bar 4.
4. Name the interval marked in bar 6. _____
5. Name the cadence at the end _____
6. Why is there a B natural at the end of bar 5? _____
7. Listen and choose the correct pattern of notes below to complete the missing note in the bass line above



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Comparison Question

Listen to these 2 excerpts. In columns 1 and 2 tick all the concepts you hear (matching the total at the bottom). In the final column select seven concepts that are common to both

CONCEPTS	EXCERPT 1	EXCERPT 2	COMMON TO BOTH
MELODIC			
Acciaccatura			
Trill			
Sequence			
Mordent			
Turn			
HARMONY/TEXTURE			
Major			
Polyphonic			
Tierce de Picardie			
Homophonic			
RHYTHMIC			
Syncopation			
Anacrusis			
3 beats in a bar			
2 beats in a bar			
STRUCTURE			
Ground bass			
Basso continuo			
Pedal			
Ritornello			
STYLES			
Renaissance			
Baroque			
Concerto grosso			
Oratorio			
Passacaglia			
Solo concerto			
	9 total	**9 total**	**7 common**

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Concept checklist

Fill in your own definitions of each of these concepts you have looked at in this unit.

MELODY/HARMONY	
Acciaccatura	
Mordent	
Trill	
Turn	
Sequence	
Melisma	
Syllabic	
Perfect cadence	
Imperfect cadence	
Interrupted cadence	
Plagal cadence	
Tierce de picardie	
Obbligato	
C major	
F major	
G major	
A minor	
Tonic	
Sub dominant	
Dominant	
Relative major	
Relative minor	
Rhythm/Tempo	
Anacrusis	
Augmentation	
Diminution	
Simple time	
Compound time	

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Texture/Structure/Form	
Basso continuo	
Concerto grosso	
Da capo aria	
Binary form	
Ternary form	
Polyphonic/ Contrapuntal	
Unison	
Homophonic	
Pedal	
Inverted pedal	
Ground bass	
Style	
Aria	
Recitative	
Chorus	
Opera	
Oratorio	
Mass	
Solo concerto	
Concerto grosso	
Passacaglia	
Timbre	
Ripieno	
Concertino	
A cappella	

Summary of Baroque music

Write down as many key identifying features as you can of music in the Baroque period.

LIVEWORKSHEETS