

Rounds, Catches, and Imitative Forms: Assignments

Assignment 19 due Tuesday, 3/31

Think about some simple familiar rounds (Row Your Boat, Frère Jacques, etc.).

Consider how the parts fit together and answer the following questions:

- How do you think you would set about composing a round?
- How would you plan it so that it would “work”?

Write out your answers neatly for discussion.

Assignment 20 due Thursday, 4/2

Pick any short round (1-2 measure interval of imitation) you especially like that we have not already analyzed in class and do the following:

- Prepare a multi-staff score that presents the round as a single polyphonic entity of 3 parts or more. Align the rhythms properly. Include the lyrics, also properly aligned with the music. Neat and correct notation counts!
- Analyze the harmonic scheme, using roman numerals in the score. Then make note in clear prose of anything especially interesting/peculiar/ambiguous/lovely in the harmony or counterpoint.
- Explain in clear prose how the simultaneous parts are differentiated from one another.
- Explain how interest is maintained throughout the course of the melody.

Assignment 21 due Tuesday, 4/7

Pick any longer round (3-measure interval of imitation or longer) you especially like and do the same as for assignment 2.

Optional Extra Credit Asst. (must be prepared for performance in class on 4/7 or 4/9)

Form a group with other students and prepare a 3-, 4-, or more-part round for class performance. Your group should have as many people as there are parts in the round (no doubling). You will receive a group grade based on the following:

- difficulty/adventurousness of music
- intonation, rhythm, and phrasing
- diction (the words should be absolutely clear to everyone listening)
- presentation: stage presence, staging, costumes—use your imagination

Pick a familiar round, any round on the course pages, or one from the resources on the “Where To Find Rounds” page. Be adventurous!

Assignment 22 due Thursday, 4/9: Intro to Invention and Fugue

Assignment 23 due Tuesday, 4/14: Bach “Little” G minor Organ Fugue, BWV 578

Composition Project (= Assignment 24; **30 points**) due Thursday, 4/16

Write an original round (music and lyrics) of 3 or more parts.

You may use a pre-existing text, such as a short poem or motto, if you wish; but be sure that your music sets the text aptly and convincingly.

A round that “works” harmonically, avoids redundancy (parallel unisons) and other problem parallels, and is professionally notated will receive at least 23 points (out of 30). For additional points, strive for one or more of the following:

- good differentiation of the parts
- clever or elegant lyrics
- longer or more elaborate harmonic scheme
- more than three truly independent parts

For an extra challenge, try writing a true catch with a hocketed “catch” in the lyrics—perhaps with lighthearted *misandric* lyrics to balance the misogynist tradition in the repertoire.

Notate your round in **score format**, i.e. as a multi-part piece.

TERMS for rounds: imitation, round, catch, canon, hocket, interval of imitation (both time and pitch senses of the term).

Terms for fugue and invention will be listed on assignments 22 and 23.

Mozart, Difficile lectu, K. 559

Difficile lectu mihi mars et jonicu difficile.

This is “Dog Latin,” meaning roughly:

It is difficult for me to read military history, and the Ionic dialect.

But the text is a pun along the lines of the nonsense prank sentence “Owa Tagoo Siam.” Heard not as Latin, but as a combination of German and Italian, it takes on meanings having nothing to do with either war or ancient dialects.

13. „Difficile lectu mihi mars“

Dreistimmiger Kanon
KV 559*)

Datiert Wien, 2. September 1788

1.
Dif - fi - ci - le le - ctu mi - hi mars et jo - ni - cu, jo - ni -
6
cu dif - fi - ci - le, 2.
le - ctu le - ctu le - ctu mi - hi mars, mi -
12
- - hi mars le - ctu le - ctu dif - fi - ci - le, 3.
le - ctu le - ctu, jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu
17
jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu jo - ni - cu dif - fi - ci - le.

Diff = ficile lectu mihi mars et jonica
diff = cile. lectu lec
sta lectu = mihi mars. mi = hi mars lectu lectu diff = cile. lectu lectu jonicu ionica
ionica = jonica diff = cile

Sources for Rounds and Catches

If you use one of these sources, be sure you choose a true round. It must have three or more parts which imitate at the unison. All rounds are canons, but not all canons are rounds. A catch is almost always a round—just be sure it has at least three parts.

in Bailey-Howe

Edward Bolkovac and Judith Johnson

150 rounds for singing and teaching. Boosey & Hawkes, c1996 M1578.B6 O5 1996

Hillier, Paul, ed.

The Catch Book. Oxford University Press, 1987. M1579.C37 1987

153 English catches originally published between 1652 and 1763. Includes every known catch by Henry Purcell. Excellent scholarly edition, with authentic texts.

300 years of English partsongs : glees, rounds, catches, partsongs, 1600-1900.

Faber Music Ltd., 1983 M1579 .A14 1983

Newman, Joel, ed.

The Catch Club, Part I. Da Capo Press: New York, 1965. M 1578.C329 v.1

The Catch Club, Part II. Da Capo Press: New York, 1965. M 1578.C329 v.2

Facsimile reprint of classic collection originally printed from 1731 to 1765.

For more rounds and catches in Baley-Howe, browse the M1578-1579 area, as well as the M1740 area. Check both the regular size and the Quarto shelves.

Additionally: Most composers wrote rounds for occasions or jokes, so a good place to look is in volumes of incidental vocal pieces from “complete works” editions in the M3’s.

on the internet

www-personal.umich.edu/~msmiller/rounds.html

A variety of rounds with notation and midi files

roundz.tripod.com

Lots of resources and links, with sound files of a few rounds as well

...and: you can always try using the Google

1
Su-mer is i-cum-en in Lhu-de sing cuc-cu! Grow-eth sed and blow-eth med And

2
springth the wu-de nu. Sing cuc-cu! Aw-e blet-eth af-ter lomb, lhouth

3
af-ter cal-ve cu, Bul-loc stert-eth, buc-ke vert-eth Mu-rie sing cuc-cu!

4
Cuc-cu, cuc-cu, Wel sing-es thu cuc-cu Ne swik thu nav-er nu!

Sing the above melody as a 4-part round over the two "Pes" parts, which cycle continuously:

Pes 1
Sing cuc-cu nu, Sing cuc-cu!

Pes 2
Sing cuc-cu! Sing cuc-cu nu,

Sumer is icumen in

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu;
Groweth sed and bloweth med
And springeth the wude nu.
Sing cuccu!
Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu;
Bullock sterteth, bucke verteth;
Murie sing cuccu.
Cuccu, cuccu,
Wel singes thu, cuccu,
Ne swik thu naver nu.
Sing cuccu nu! Sing cuccu!
Sing cuccu! Sing cuccu nu!

*Sumer=summer; icumen=coming
lhude=loud, cuccu=cuckoo
sed=seed, med=meadow
springeth=revives, wude=woods, nu=now
awe=ewe, lomb=lamb
lhouth=lows (moos), calve=calf, cu=cow
sterteth=jumps, bucke=buck, verteth=farts
murie=merry
wel=well, thu=thee (you)
swik=be silent, naver=never*

British Library, MS Harley 978, is a manuscript from Reading Abbey dating from the mid-thirteenth century. Reading Abbey, however, did not have a scriptorium, and the MS was probably copied at Oxford, which as a university town was a major centre of book production by this period. It was probably owned by one of the three Reading monks it mentions, William of Winchester, a lover of music whose history was otherwise undistinguished and occasionally scandalous; on a visit to Leominster Priory in the 1270s, he was brought before the Bishop of Hereford for incontinence with a number of women, including a nun of Limebrook Priory.

The manuscript is a miscellaneous compilation, mainly of Latin and French texts, useful or entertaining rather than devotional; it includes other musical pieces (all religious), medical material, Goliardic satires, the earliest and best text of the *Lais* of Marie de France, and a French poem on hawking. *Sumer is icumen in* is the only Middle English text in the manuscript, and it is possible that it was included primarily for its musical interest.

— from *Wessex Parallel WebTexts*. Bella Millett <http://www.soton.ac.uk/~wpwt/>

Three Catches

A **catch** is a unison round, usually but not always in 3 parts. The term probably derives from the Italian *caccia* (hunt or chase), meaning a **unison canon** for two voices (one voice is “chasing” the other). In English, though, the term early took on a double meaning: catches often concern drinking, sex, digestion, marriage, or politics, often with a risqué twist or “catch” to the lyrics. In some cases, a **hocket** between the voice parts creates an altogether new meaning from the lyrics which is not apparent when the melody is sung in unison.

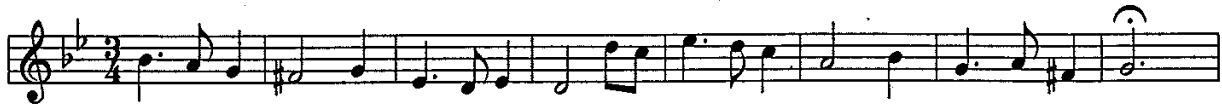
“An Old Epitaph” does not have a hidden meaning, but it does employ clever text-painting on the last word, qualifying it as a classic catch. Given the dominant Puritan culture in 17th-century England, joshing about prayer and the afterlife was as bold as any sexual or political theme.

The Isum catch employs the common device of a putatively “clean” text whose bawdy meaning is nonetheless obvious—sort of like the 20th-century hit “Shaving Cream.” To understand the double meaning, you need to know that notating music was sometimes called “pricking” (as in “pen-prick”), while to “shake” meant to trill, which was necessary on early keyboard instruments like the spinet in order to sustain long notes. Here, the already racy meaning becomes even racier when the melody becomes a 3-part round.

“Once, Twice, Thrice,” on the other hand, doesn’t even pretend to have a “clean” sense. But the canon still results in a hocket with a surprise twist.

An Old Epitaph

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)



Un- der this stone lies Gab - ri - el John, In the year of our Lord one thou- sand and one.




Co- ver his— head with turf— or stone, 'Tis all one, 'tis all one, with turf or stone, 'tis all one.



Pray for the soul of gen - tle John; If you please you may, or let— it a - lone, 'tis all one.

Celia learning on the Spinnet

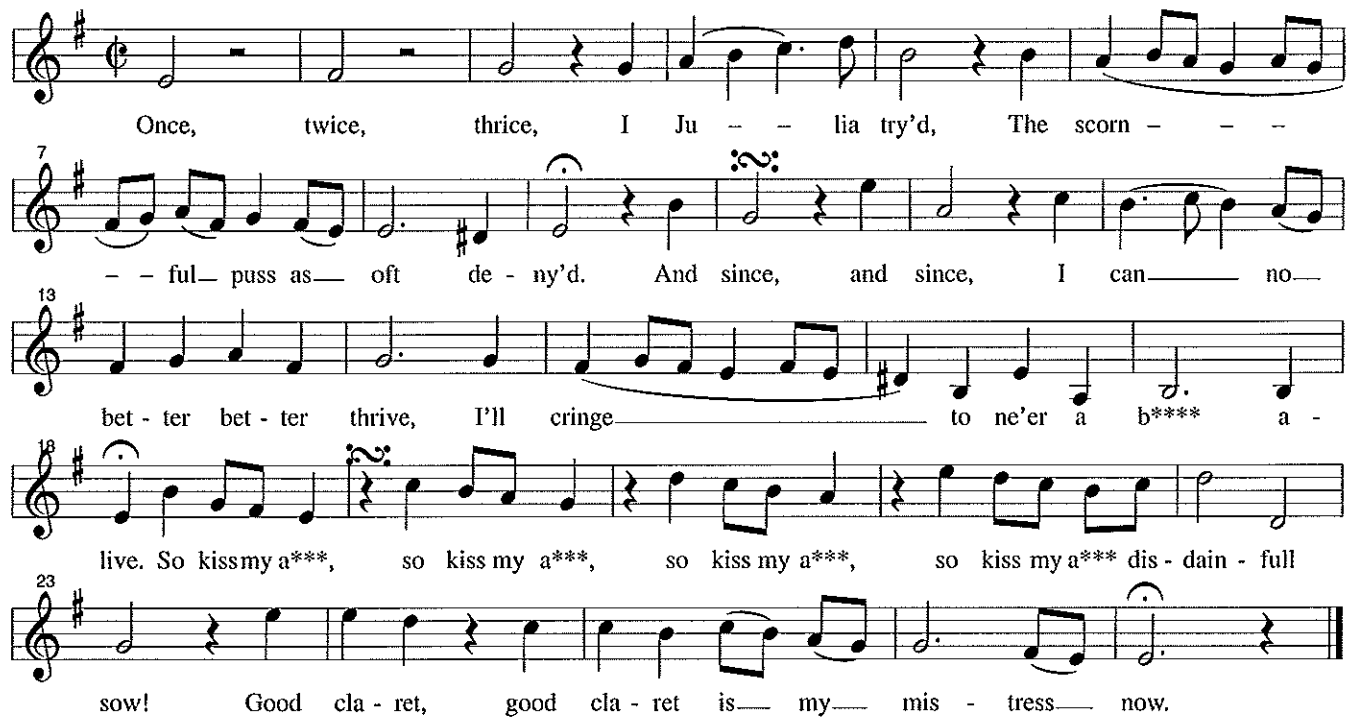
John Isum (c.1680-1726)



When Ce-lia was learn-ing on the spi-net to play, Her tu-tor stood by her to
 show her, to show her, to show her, to show her the way. She
 shook not the note, which an-ger'd him much, And made him, and made him cry,
 'Zounds! 'tis a long prick, a long prick, a long prick'd note you touch.' Sur -
 priz'd was the la - dy to hear him com—plain, And said, and said, and
 said, 'I will shake it, I will shake it when I come to't a - gain.'

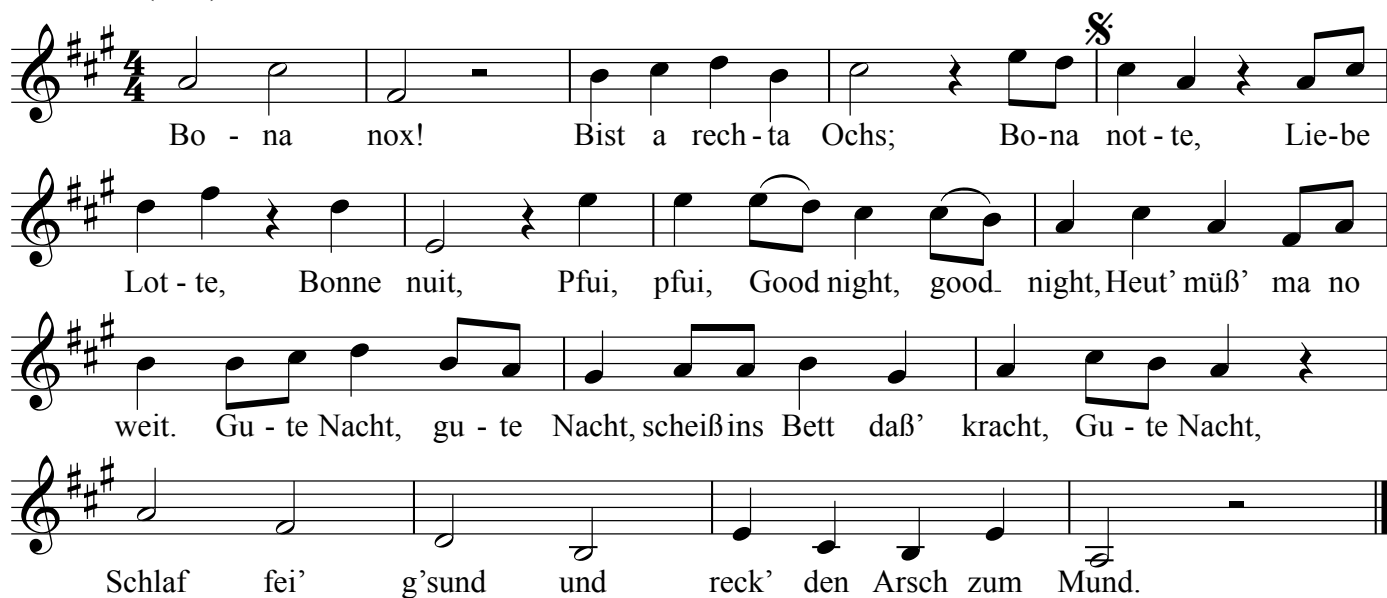
“Once, Twice, Thrice”

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)



Once, twice, thrice, I Ju - - lia try'd, The scorn - - -
 - - ful- puss as - oft de - ny'd. And since, and since, I can - - no -
 bet - ter bet - ter thrive, I'll cringe - - - to ne'er a b**** a -
 live. So kiss my a***, so kiss my a***, so kiss my a***, so kiss my a*** dis - dain - full
 sow! Good cla - ret, good cla - ret is - my - mis - tress - now.

Mozart (1788)



Bo - na nox! Bist a rech - ta Ochs; Bo-na not - te, Lie-be
Lot - te, Bonne nuit, Pfui, pfui, Good night, good night, Heut' müß' ma no
weit. Gu - te Nacht, gu - te Nacht, schein ins Bett daß' kracht, Gu - te Nacht,
Schlaf fei' g'sund und reck' den Arsch zum Mund.

Benjamin Britten: from *Peter Grimes*



Old Joe has gone fish - ing and Young Joe has gone fish - ing and
You Know has gone fish-ing and found them a shoal. Pull them in in
han' - fuls and in can - fuls and in pan - fuls. Bring them in
sweet-ly, Gut them com - plete-ly, Pack them up neat - ly, Sell them dis -
creet - ly. O haul a - way!
O haul a - way!