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Les Majorales d'Ulldemolins

Cançó de pandero d'Ulldemolins - Tambourine song from Ulldemolins

Introduction

This is a tune known as *Les majorales d'Ulldemolins*, an example of a tambourine song — *cançons de pandero* — belonging to the extensive repertoire from the tradition of *Les Majorales d'Ulldemolins*^[i].

These kind of songs are preserved as melodies, sometimes written down in *llibres d'orgue* and other handwritten music compilations or, in other cases, in fieldwork studies, as a way to preserve music which is usually transmitted aurally^[ii]. The notation did not provide the harmonic accompaniment and rhythmic patterns, expecting the performer to improvise, following canons and standards well known both by the musicians and the audience.

Explanation

The arrangement:

- Transcribes the original tune in the upper part with the lyrics.

*Majorala l'han posada,
majorala no en vol ser,
majorala l'han posada,
majorala del Roser.*

*Majorala l'han posada,
la meva amiga lleial,
majorala l'han posada,
Déu li deixi complir l'any.^[iii]*

- Establishes a harmonic pattern of fifths.
- Is written in dotted quarter notes, with a suggested rhythmic variation.
- Suggests a countermelody, following the rhythm of the melody.

Work notes:

- The use of *c sharp* and *c natural*, provides the opportunity to use the melody as a technical training for stringed instruments, like violins.
- The accent pattern of melody, with the third eighth note tied with the fourth of the 6/8, can be developed into an exploration on the accenting and phrasing in the music.
- The accompaniment rhythm in fifths can be improvised. Different rhythmic patterns are usual in this kind of dance; they should support the melody by providing a steady beat which reinforce the accents.
- A three part structure in the melody offers the opportunity to suggest different improvisation possibilities to further develop this structure.

Bibliography

PALOMAR I ABADIA, Salvador: *Les majorales del Roser d'Ulldemolins*. Ed. Carrutxa (Quaderns d'Ulldem). 1989

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Notes

^[i] *Cançó de pandero* is a song with lyrics traditionally sung by women with the accompaniment of a square tambourine. The *confraria del Roser d'Ulldemolins* - Ulldemolins brotherhood of the Roser - begins in 1598.

The *confraria*, formed by *majorals* and *majorales* — male and female members of the association — were in charge of the organisation of religious celebrations. Every year, on Easter Day Mass the names of the *majorales* were announced, which would constitute the *confraria* of for the following year. They were twelve; one responsible every month. Source: [Ulldemolins municipality website](#)

^[ii] The written source for the melody presented is a handwritten version in a paper napkin. Originally orally transmitted to the author if the text by a musician specialist in Catalan traditional music, Joan Moliner, in the bar of the conservatory.

^[iii] The lyrics are sung by the friend of a girl who has been chosen as *majorala* against her will. The song invokes God to help her accomplish her year of service. Source of the lyrics belonging to a variation of the melody: ALOMAR I ABADIA: 1989, p 28.