

# One Fourth and a Pair (OFAP)

The previous modules in this workbook have explored two pairs of chords using the Musicarta Easy Piano Style. This module uses exactly the same principles to produce a keyboard composition covering three positions (chords): A minor, E minor and D major. A minor and E minor are a fourth apart, hence the title.

The final-version module study is called *The Vigil*, and is a series of variations on the basic fourth-plus-a-pair movement (MS at end of module). Here is what it sounds like.



The chord sequence for the music you've just heard is:

1	Am	Em	Am	Em	Am	Em	D	Em
33							(repeats)	
	D	Em	D	D	Em	Em		

The basic eight-chord phrase plays four times before going on to the extended ending at bar 33.

You can find the basic MEPS hand positions in the glossary on page 27. Note that both hands play in the treble clef, that is, above middle C. The music is in E minor – key signature, F sharp.

## Movement and variations

Here is the basic movement – walking down from A minor to E minor and back again

OFAP\_02

The left hand stops on count 3, when the right hand walks to the third of the next chord. Now, introduce some anticipation in the right hand. The left hand plays one fewer quavers.

# Musicarta Easy Piano Style

Am Em Am Em

1 & 2 & 3 & (4) & 1 & 2 & 3 & (4) &

5 2 1 5 2 1

Am Em D Em

5

OFAP\_03

Extend the right hand run as far as the root of the E minor chord, and carry the pattern over into the D major bar.

Am Em Am Em

1 & 2 & 3 & (4) & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4

5 2 1 5 2 1

Am Em D Em

5

OFAP\_04

Here's the same right hand with a different left hand.

# One Fourth and a Pair

Am Em Am Em

Am Em D Em

OFAP\_05

One more right hand note is anticipated – the melody C in bar 3 is brought forward into the end of bar 2. The counting applies to both hands combined.

### Competing notes

The hands play close together in the Musicarta Easy Piano Style, and in fact they often compete over the same note, (usually the root) which is needed both as a melody note and in the rhythmic left hand pattern (ostinato). This is indicated in the MS by a small pair of brackets which say, in effect, “Get out of the way quickly – this note will soon be needed by your other hand!”

To achieve this effect, you play the first of the two notes very short but use the sustain pedal so it doesn't sound staccato. It may take a little time to master playing like this. There's an easier left hand which skirts round the problem – and is actually used in the performance of this module's final-version study. You see it in the first bar, below.

You play just five notes – B, M, T, M, B. You can substitute this left hand pattern wherever you find sharing notes too difficult – the important thing is to keep playing.

### Development (continued)

Here, the right hand has brought the note D above the A minor third into play.

Musicarta Easy Piano Style

Am Em Am Em

Am Em D Em

OFAP\_06

Still, count 3 (the fifth quaver) is the only quaver slot where nothing is played. Here are two bars of that pattern with counts and full TLR (together, left, right) analysis.

Am Em

T L T R | T L T | T L T R | T L T  
1 & 2 & (3) & 4 & | 1 & 2 & (3) & 4 &

Repeat the segment until your performance is secure.

OFAP\_07

Rhythmic smoothing

Now here is the right hand rhythmically 'smoothed' as in previous modules.

OFAP\_08

## One Fourth and a Pair

The musical score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system has four measures with chords Am, Em, Am, and Em. The second system has four measures with chords Am, Em, D, and Em. Fingerings and rhythmic markings are provided for both hands.

The first two-bar pattern has the dotted lines and counts to show exactly where the in-between right hand notes fall. All the other right hand notes are in the same place as before. Once you've mastered the smoothed rhythm, you can apply it to any of the patterns. Remember that this rhythmic smoothing is optional. Your performance will sound fine with the original crotchet-plus-quaver pairs.

### Melodic 'contour'

Being aware of melodic contour – and deliberately varying it – is an important part of the improviser's skill. (By 'contour', we mean whether the melody goes up or down or stays the same.)

Here's the last line of the previous study with a different up/down contour.

OFAP\_09

The musical score shows four measures with chords Am, Em, D, and Em. Fingerings and rhythmic markings are provided for both hands.

*(Notes continue after the MS.)*

# The Vigil

R A Chappell

M.M. ♩ = 108

The musical score for "The Vigil" is written for piano and treble clef. It consists of five systems of music, each with two staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked as M.M. ♩ = 108. The score includes various chords (Am, Em, D) and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The piece is marked with a first ending bracket at the beginning and a repeat sign at measure 17. The score ends with a final cadence at measure 24.

Am Em Am

Em Am Em

D Em

18 21

5 2 1 5 2 1 5 2 1 5 2 1 5 2 1

Musical notation for measures 24-26. Measure 24 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The right hand begins with a quarter note G4 (finger 1) and a dotted quarter note A4 (finger 1). The left hand plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 25 features a half note G4 (finger 4) in the right hand and a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 26 continues with a half note G4 (finger 1), a quarter note A4 (finger 1), a quarter note B4 (finger 2), and a quarter note C5 (finger 1) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). A slur covers measures 24-26.

Musical notation for measures 27-29. Measure 27 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The right hand begins with a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 2). The left hand plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 28 features a half note G4 (finger 4) in the right hand and a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 29 continues with a half note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 2) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). A slur covers measures 27-29.

Musical notation for measures 30-32. Measure 30 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The right hand begins with a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 2). The left hand plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 31 features a half note G4 (finger 4) in the right hand and a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 32 continues with a half note G4 (finger 1) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). A slur covers measures 30-32.

Musical notation for measures 33-35. Measure 33 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The right hand begins with a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 1). The left hand plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 34 features a half note G4 (finger 1) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 35 continues with a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 1) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). A slur covers measures 33-35.

Musical notation for measures 36-38. Measure 36 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The right hand begins with a quarter note G4 (finger 4), a quarter note A4 (finger 5), a quarter note B4 (finger 3), and a quarter note C5 (finger 1). The left hand plays a descending eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 37 features a half note G4 (finger 1) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). Measure 38 continues with a quarter note G4 (finger 1), a quarter note A4 (finger 1), a quarter note B4 (finger 2), and a quarter note C5 (finger 3) in the right hand. The left hand continues the eighth-note pattern: G4 (finger 5), F#4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 1). A slur covers measures 36-38.

## Musicarta Easy Piano Style

Here's another melodic contour variation.

OFAP\_10

Play this segment on repeat and listen to it carefully until you can hear the up/down pattern and point out where it varies from the previous one. (This is an invaluable exercise in 'playing by ear'.)

Feel free to experiment with the up/down choices and see if you come up with a combination you prefer.

Module performance – *The Vigil*

Here's the finished module study again.

OFAP\_perf (Video)

If you listen carefully, you will hear that, in the repeat of the first section, the right hand in bars 10 and 12 has the 'smoothed' rhythm. Tiny variations in repeated material keep it sounding fresh, and often creep into performance by themselves, as your understanding of the music deepens.

Here are sections of the module performance to check your understanding

The first phrase

OFAP\_11

'Composing at the keyboard' means you can play how you like. Here's that same phrase with more 'smoothing'. Listen carefully and compare with the previous performance, then try yourself.