# Chapter 10

# Constructing and Labeling Triads

#### **CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

When three or more pitches are produced at the same time the resulting sound is called a chord. In this chapter you will learn how to construct and analyze chords. Triads, three-note chords, as well as four-note chords are the building blocks of music. Harmony occurs when a series of chords move horizontally in time. This chapter also addresses how to identify triads using two systems of analysis: roman numeral analysis and figured bass.

Listen as your instructor plays the following piece of music. What is the connection between the melody and accompanying chords?

Variation on a Lullaby

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)



# 10.1 Major, Minor, Diminished, and Augmented Triads

A **triad** is a three-tone chord built on intervals of a third. Triads are composed of three notes: the root of the triad, the third of the triad, and the fifth of the triad. The following figure shows that triads are built on two superimposed thirds.



Triads may be classified as major, minor, diminished, or augmented.

#### **Major Triads**

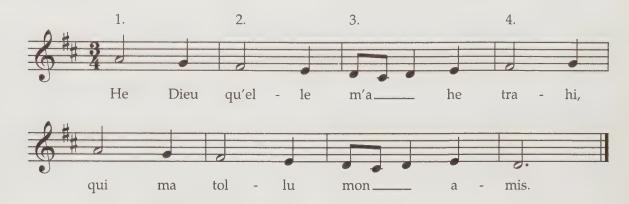
## Sing, Memorize, and Analyze

#### **Internalizing Music**

25

1. Listen to the French Canon on Track 25. Perform and memorize the song.

French Canon



#### **Analyzing What You Hear**

- 1. Sing the canon from memory in four parts. Listen as the instructor plays the first note of each measure harmonically (all notes sounding together) and melodically (notes played one after another).
- 2. How many different notes do you hear?
- 3. What are the solfège syllables for these notes?
- 4. Listen as your instructor plays notes harmonically or melodically. Describe the notes of the triads with solfège syllables.
- 5. Name the interval between each note of the triad.
- 6. As a class, sing the triad in three parts.

#### **Music Theory**

A major triad consists of two superimposed thirds—a major third between the root and the third degree, a minor third between the third and the fifth degree—and a perfect fifth between the root and fifth degree of the triad. In root position, the third of the triad is a note positioned a third above the root, and the fifth of a triad is a note positioned a fifth above the root.



The root determines the name of the triad.



#### **Minor Triads**

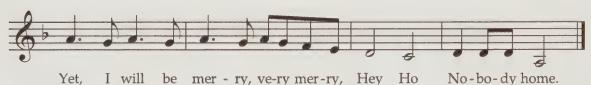
### Sing, Memorize, and Analyze

#### **Internalizing Music**

Listen to "Hey Ho Nobody Home" on Track 26. Perform and memorize the song.

Hey Ho Nobody Home





#### **Analyzing What You Hear**

- 1. Sing "Hey Ho" In Canon. Listen as the instructor plays all the notes on the first beat of each measure harmonically and melodically.
- 2. How many different notes do you hear?
- 3. Can you describe the notes of the triads with solfège? What is the interval between each note of the triad?
- 4. As a class, sing the triad.

We use the harmonic minor scale for deriving chords and triads because this form of the scale is used so frequently in harmony. Remember that the leading tone (7) of the harmonic minor scale is raised a half step; you will need to put an accidental in front of the leading tone, as it does not appear in the key signature.

#### **Music Theory**

A **minor triad** consists of two superimposed thirds: a minor third between the root and the third degree and a major third between the third and the fifth degree. There is a perfect fifth between the root and the fifth degree of the triad.



The root determines the name of the triad.

