

I. Middle Ages (450 – 1450)

A. Characteristics of Style and Performance Genres

Ancient music of Greece, Egypt and Israel was preserved through oral transmission rather than notation

- Most medieval music was vocal
- After 1100, instruments were used in the church. Various instruments were used as accompaniments
- Gregorian Chant – Official music of the Roman Catholic Church set to liturgical Latin text
- The chant was originally preserved by oral transmission and later notated for preservation

Music was “modal” using diatonic church modes

Secular Music – 12th and 13th centuries, the earliest collection of secular music was spread by the Troubadours of Southern France and the Trouveres of Northern France.

Mass – Sacred choral composition made up of five sections: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. It is a re-enactment of the sacrifice of Christ.

The mass has two categories:

Mass Ordinary – Roman Catholic Church texts with the same throughout the calendar year.

Mass Proper – Changes throughout the calendar year according to the occasion.

B. Important Composers

Pope Gregory I (The Great)

Hildegard of Bingen (1098 – 1179)

Perotin, Leonin – Cathedral of Notre Dame – Paris

Francesco Landini (c. 1325 – 1377)

Guillaume de Machaut (c. 1300 – 1377) noted for the great Notre Dame Mass – mid 14th century

II. Renaissance (1450 – 1600)

A. Characteristic Styles and Performance Genres

Vocal music was more important than instrumental music. Renaissance material was polyphonic. The hallmark of Renaissance vocal music is the imitative use of melodic material.

Imitation – A melodic idea is presented in a voice or instrument – then immediately followed by or restated in another. This concept is like that of a round (row row row your boat. . .)

Word Painting – A musical representation of specific poetic images found in the text of a vocal or choral composition.

Lute – a household musical instrument. It is a plucked string instrument shaped like a half pear.

Motet – Polyphonic choral composition set to a sacred Latin text (other than the mass).

Madrigal – Composition written for several voices set to a secular poem.

B. Important Composers

Josquin Desprez (c. 1440 – 1521): motet Ave Maria; Virgo Serena; Pope Marcellus Mass (1562 – 1563)

Thomas Weelkes (c. 1575 – 1623)

Thomas Morley (1557 – 1623)

Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1557 – 1612)

Guillaume Dufay (c. 1400 – 1460)

Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)

Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina (c. 1525 – 1594)

Orlando di Lasso (Lassus) (1532 – 1594)

William Byrd (1543 – 1623)

Don Carlo Gesualdo (c. 1560 – 1613)

Thomas Luis de Victoria (c. 1549 – 1611)

Thomas Tallis (c. 1505 – 1585)

Johannes Ockegherm (1430 – 1495)

Jacob Obrecht (1452 – 1505)

Gilles Binchois (c. 1400 – 1460)

John Dunstable (c. 1370 – 1453)

Adrian Willaert (c. 1490 – 1562)

Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450 – 1517)

III. Baroque

A. Characteristic Styles and Performance Genres

A single movement of a baroque piece expresses a consistent emotional state or mood throughout (doctrine of affections)

The three venues of music in the Baroque period: church music, court music and the theatre (the stage)

Musical texture was polyphonic with emphasis on the soprano and bass lines. Imitation between various lines or “voices” was very common. Compositions typically may shift in texture with changes in mood and words.

- Text painting or word painting was common. Music was used to depict the meaning of specific words.
- Words may be emphasized by writing many rapid notes for a single syllable of text.

Terraced Dynamics – an abrupt shift from one dynamic level to another.

Solo Concerto – a composition written for instrumental soloist and orchestra with a three-movement form (fast-slow-fast).

Concerto Grosso – music composition consisting of a small group of instrumental soloists pitted against a larger group of players.

Sonata – an instrumental composition in several movements for one or more players.

Trio Sonata – a baroque composition with three melodic lines written for four players.

Arcangelo Corelli (1653 – 1713) was a great composer of this genre.

Opera – The “camerata” was an Italian fellowship or society composed of nobles, poets and composers, who met in Florence around 1575, whose discussions prepared the way for the beginning of the Opera. The first great Italian opera was “Orfeo” composed by Claudio Monteverdi.

First Public Opera house – 1637 – Venice

Opera – A musical drama with orchestral accompaniment, performed on stage with soloists, chorus, costumes and scenery.

Libretto – the “text” or story for the opera

Librettist – the dramatist who writes the text of an opera.

Recitative – A vocal line in an opera, oratorio or cantata that imitates the rhythms and pitch fluctuations of speech.

Aria – The extended vocal solo, expressing an emotional state, found in operas, oratorios and cantatas.

Cantata – 20-30 minute composition written for choir, soloists and orchestra, included in the Lutheran Church Service.

Oratorio – large scale composition written for vocal soloists, orchestra and chorus set to a narrative biblical text.

Chorale – a German hymn-tune

Passion – a choral composition set to the story of Christ's death

Chorale Prelude – a short organ composition used in the Lutheran church just prior to the singing of the hymn.

Important Composers

J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

George Frederic Handel (1685 – 1759)

Antonio Vivaldi (c. 1678 – 1741)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643)

Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1554 – 1612)

Michael Praestorius (1571 – 1621)

Heinrich Schutz (1585 – 1672)

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632 – 1687)

Dietrich Buxtehude (c. 1637 – 1702)

Arcangelo Corelli (1653 – 1713)

Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)

Alessandro Scarlatti (1660 – 1725)

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681 – 1767)

Francois Couperin (1663 – 1733)

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683 – 1764)

Domenico Scarlatti (1685 – 1757)