Part II

The Middle Ages and Renaissance
Time-Line

Middle Ages (450-1450)

- Rome sacked by Vandals—455
- Beowulf—c. 700
- First Crusade—1066
- Black Death—1347-52
- Joan of Arc executed by English—1431
**Renaissance (1450-1600)**

- Guttenberg Bible—1456
- Columbus reaches America—1492
- Michelangelo: *David*—1504
- Raphael: *School of Athens*—1505
- Martin Luther’s *95 Theses*—1517
- Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*—1596
The Middle Ages

- Period of wars and mass migration

- Strong class distinctions
  - Nobility: castles, knights in armor, feasting
  - Peasantry: lived in huts, serfs—part of land
  - Clergy: ruled everyone, only monks literate
The Middle Ages

✿ Architecture
  – Early: Romanesque
  – Late: Gothic

✿ Visual Arts
  – Stressed iconic/symbolic, not realism

✿ Late Middle Ages saw technological progress
The Renaissance

- Rebirth of human learning and creativity
- Time of great explorers
- Humanism
- Fascination w/ ancient Greece & Rome
The Renaissance

- Visual art becomes more realistic
  - Mythology is favorite subject
  - Nude body, as in ancient times, is shown

- Weakening of the Catholic Church

- Education & literacy now status symbol
  - Result of invention of printing press
Chpt. 1: Music in the Middle Ages

- Church dominates musical activity
  - Most musicians were priests
  - Women did not sing in mixed church settings

- Music primarily vocal and sacred
  - Instruments not used in church
Gregorian Chant

- Was official music of Roman Catholic Church
  - No longer common since 2nd Vatican Council

- Monophonic melody set to Latin text

- Flexible rhythm without meter and beat

- Named for Pope Gregory I (r. 590-604)

- Originally no music notation system
  - Notation developed over several centuries (see p. 68)
The Church Modes

- “Otherworldly” sound—basis of Gregorian Chant
- Different \( \frac{1}{2} \) and whole steps than modern scales
- Middle Ages and Renaissance use these scales
  - Some Western Music uses these scale patterns
    - *What Do You Do With a Drunken Sailor?*—Dorian mode
    - *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*—Aeolian mode
Listening

Alleluia: Vidimus stellam
(We Have Seen His Star)

Listening Outline: p. 70
Brief set, CD 1:47

Listen for:  
- Gregorian Chant (Latin language)
- Many notes per syllable of text
- Monophonic texture
- Ternary form—A B A
Listening

O Successores (You Successors)

Hildegard of Bingen

Listening Guide: p. 72
Brief Set, CD 1:50

Chant

Originally written without accompaniment
This recording includes a drone—long, sustained notes

Note extended range of melody
Written for nuns by a nun (to be sung in convent)
Secular Music in the Middle Ages

Troubadours (southern France) and Trouveres (northern France)

- Nobles wrote poems/songs for court use
  - Performed by jongleurs (minstrels)

- Topics: courtly love, Crusades, dancing
Estampie

- Medieval (Middle Ages) dance music

- Triple meter with strong beat (for dancing)
  - Notated as chant: only a single melody line
    - Performers probably improvised accompaniment

- Listening example—Brief Set, CD 1:51
  - This performance played on *period instruments*
    - Melody played on *rebec* (bowed string instrument and *pipe* (tubular wind instrument)
    - Drone on *psaltery* (plucked or struck string instrument)
The Development of Polyphony: Organum

Between 700-900 a 2nd line added to chant
- Additional part initially improvised, not written
- Paralleled chant line at a different pitch

900-1200 added line grew more independent
- Contrary motion, then later a separate melodic curve
- c. 1100 note-against-note motion abandoned
  - 2 lines w/ individual rhythmic and melodic content
  - New part, in top voice, moved faster than the chant line
School of Notre Dame: Measured Rhythm

- Parisian composers developed a rhythmic notation
  - Chant notation had only indicated pitch, not rhythm
  - Notre Dame’s choirmasters Leonin & Perotin were leaders
    - Writing with notated rhythm came to be called the Notre Dame style

- Medieval thought was that interval of 3rd dissonant
  - Modern chords built of 3rds are now considered consonant
14th Century Music: “New Art” In France

Composers wrote music not based on chant
- Borrowed secular melodies to put in sacred music

New music notation system had developed
- New system allowed for better rhythmic notation
- Syncopation, now possible, became common

The new type of music was called *ars nova*
Guillaume de Machaut

- Mid- to late-14th Century composer (1300-1377)
  - Also famous as a poet
  - Though a priest, spent most of life working at court

- Wrote both sacred and secular music

- Best known for his *Notre Dame Mass*
Listening

Puis qu’en oubli sui de vous
(Since I am forgotten by you; around 1363)
by Guillaume de Machaut

Vocal Music Guide: p. 78
Brief Set, CD 1:52

Listen for:
- Melancholy feel
- Rondeau form (8 lines, ab aa ab ab,)
- Syncopation
- Interpretation (3 notated lines, 1 text)
Listening

Agnus Dei from Notre Dame Mass
by Guillaume de Machaut

Vocal Music Guide: p. 79
Brief Set, CD 1:53

14th Century, part of mass ordinary
Polyphonic—4 voices (parts)
Ternary form: A B A (form results from the text)

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem

Performance Profile:
Andrew Parrott-conductor
Listen for conductor's interpretation, use of solo voices, and attempt to create an historically accurate performance
Chapter 2: Music in the Renaissance

- Church choirs grew in size (all male)

- Rise of the individual patron
  - Musical center shifted from Church to courts
  - Court composers wrote secular & sacred music
  - Women did not sing in mixed church settings
> Musicians: higher status & pay than before
  
  – Composers became known for their work

> Many composers were Franco-Flemish
  
  – Worked throughout Europe, especially in Italy

> Italy became music capital in 16th Century
  
  – Other important centers: Germany, England & Spain
Characteristics of Renaissance Music

Words and Music

- Vocal music more important than instrumental
- Word painting/text painting
Texture

Polyphonic

Primarily vocal- *a cappella*
  - Instruments, if present, doubled the vocal parts

Rhythm and Melody

Rhythm “flows” and overlaps
  - Composers less concerned with metrical accents

Smooth, stepwise melodies predominate
  - Melodies overlap rhythmically between voices
Sacred Music in the Renaissance

Two main forms:

Motet
- Short polyphonic choral work
- Latin text usually overlaid with vernacular text
- Often borrows lowest voice part from a chant

Mass—the Catholic worship service
- Long work that includes 5 main parts of service
  - Kyrie
  - Gloria
  - Credo
  - Sanctus
  - Agnus Dei
Josquin Desprez

- 1440-1521 (contemporary of Columbus & da Vinci)

- Wrote both sacred and secular music
  - Worked with the Papal Choir in Rome
  - Worked for King Louis XII of France

- Leading composer of his time—famous while alive
  - His work influenced other composers
  - Was highly praised by Martin Luther
Ave Maria…Virgo Serena
Josquin Desprez

Vocal Music Guide: p. 84
Brief Set, CD 1:56

Listen for:
Four voices
Polyphonic imitation
Overlapping voice parts
Palestrina

- Culmination of the Renaissance (1525-1594)
- Worked primarily in Rome
  - Music director at St. Peter’s
Palestrina

- Worked during and after Council of Trent
  - Council of Trent (1545-1563) addressed:
    - Abuses & malpractice within Church
    - Emerging Protestantism
    - Role of music in worship
      - Some advocated a return to monophonic music
      - Finally decided on non-theatrical worship music

- Wrote music meeting demands of Trent
  - His work became the model for mass composers
Listening

*Pope Marcellus Mass* (1562-63)

Kyrie
by Palestrina

Vocal Music Guide: p. 87
Brief Set, CD 1:59

Six voices
Polyphonic imitation w/ overlapping voice parts

Text:  
*Kyrie eleison*  
*Christe eleison*  
*Kyrie eleison*
Secular Music in the Renaissance

Madrigal
- Intended for amateur performers (after dinner music)
- Extensive use of text painting
- Printed in part-book or opposing-sheet format
- Originated in Italy
  - English madrigal lighter & simpler
Listening

As Vesta was Descending (1601)

by Thomas Weelkes

Vocal Music Guide: p. 89
Brief Set, CD 1:62

Follow text (English) throughout song

Note text painting:

Pitches rise on “ascending”
Pitches fall on “descending”
“Running down”
“Two by two,” “three by three,” “all alone”
Instrumental Music

Still subordinate to vocal music
- Increasingly, instruments accompanied voices
- Sometimes played adapted vocal music alone

Published music stated that various parts of the music could be sung or played
Purely instrumental music existed almost exclusively for dancing

- Dancing became ever more popular during the Renaissance

Distinction between loud outdoor instruments and softer indoor ones

Composers did not specify instrumentation
Listening

Passamezzo and Galliard
by Pierre Francisque Caroubel
From *Terpsichore* (1612) by Michael Praetorius

Listening Guide: p. 91
Basic Set, CD 1:81

Renaissance dance music
Dances frequently played in pairs
  Passamezzo in duple meter (form: a a’ b b’ c c’)
  Galliard in triple meter (form: a a’ b b’ c c’ a’ b’ c’)
Instrumentation not specified in written music