Medieval Period
500 - 1400

Plainsong:

Renaissance Period
1450-1600
French for “rebirth”
What’s Going On?

Understanding what’s happening in the world during a set of time helps to understand the music and art of that time period, and vice versa.

We’re going to look at the culture of the Renaissance Period, and how it affected the music.
Johannes Gutenberg

➢ Invented the first printing press
➢ It used moveable type as a way to print
The invention of the printing press allowed music and books to be more readily available.
William Shakespeare

- Probably the greatest writer in history
- He invented 1700 different words
- He used 29,066 different words in his writings
- The average person has a vocabulary of about 5000 words
Shakespeare's Works

- Romeo and Juliet
- Othello
- Hamlet
- MacBeth

Signed all of his works: By me William Shakespeare
What the World Believed About our Solar System
Nicholas Copernicus

- Considered the Father of Modern Astronomy
- Believed the sun was the center of the universe and not the earth
What Copernicus Believed About our Solar System
Galileo Galilei

- Astronomer
- Made drastic improvements to the telescope
- Proved Copernicus’s theory of the sun as the center of the universe
- Was placed on house arrest for the remainder of his life due to his acceptance and proof of Copernicus’s theory
Andreas Vesalius

- Father of Modern Anatomy
• Vesalius’s drawings were very intricate and detailed.
• He would have artists present at his dissections so the drawings would be as accurate as possible.
Another Detailed Drawing
Medieval Architecture

• Prior to the Renaissance, architecture had been **gothic** in style
  • Gargoyles, sharp lines and an uninviting look to them
• Architecture changed during the Renaissance.
Medieval Architecture - Also called “Gothic”
Renaissance Architecture

➢ Places emphasis on symmetry, proportion, and geometry.

➢ Orderly arrangements of columns, pilasters and lintels, semicircular arches, hemispherical domes, niches and aedicules
Music in the Renaissance

➢ The invention of the printing press allowed music more available
➢ Every educated person was expected to be trained in music.

“I am not pleased with the courtier if he be not also a musician”
~unknown (some Count…not Dooku)
Word Painting

- In the Renaissance, vocal music was more important than instrumental music (text).
- Renaissance composers often wrote music to enhance the text. This technique is called WORD PAINTING.
Word Painting

➢ Definition: A musical representation of poetic images

➢ Examples

➢ If the text said “descending from heaven” the music might have a descending melodic line
➢ If the text said “running” the music might have a series of rapid notes

➢ Though there is much emotion in Renaissance music, there are not extreme contrasts in dynamics, rhythm or tone color.
Texture of Music

➢ The texture of Renaissance music is mainly **polyphonic**
➢ Imitation among the voice parts is common
  ➢ Very much like a **round**
➢ Renaissance music sounds “fuller” than Medieval music when the low bass notes are finally used.
➢ Renaissance music used very little instrumental accompaniment.
  ➢ Using no instruments is called **a cappella**
Word Painting / Polyphonic

- See the Polyphonic Music
- Word painting was popular, but not as advanced as today’s word painting.
Rhythm and Melody

➢ Renaissance music has a gentle flow, not a sharply defined beat.
  ➢ This is because each melodic line is independent of another
  ➢ When one melody is finishing another may just be beginning
Secular Music of the Renaissance

- For entertainment, Kings would have musicians available at all times to perform for him.
- Courts would employ 10-60 musicians.
- The number of musicians depending on how much $$$ the court had.
Secular Music of the Renaissance

- Kings preferred to employ musicians who had additional talents
- This person would be called a "Renaissance Man"
  - Someone who was gifted or talented at many things
    - Ex. - Poet, artist, musician, sculptor, etc.
Quiz #1

1. What is word painting?
2. Music without accompaniment is called ___________ music.
3. ___________ music was the most important type of music in the Renaissance.
4. Renaissance music was mainly ___________ in texture.
5. Courts might employ ___ to ___ musicians.
6. What is a Renaissance Man?
Sacred Music in the Renaissance

➢ The two main forms of sacred music in the Renaissance are the **MASS** and the **MOTET**.

➢ The Renaissance *mass* is a polyphonic choral composition made up the 5 sections of the mass ordinary. What are these five parts?

➢ A *motet* is a polyphonic choral work set to sacred Latin text other than the ordinary of the mass.
Sacred Music in the Renaissance

 ➢ Mass Ordinary
 ➢ Kyrie (Lord Have Mercy)
 ➢ Gloria (Glory be to Thee)
 ➢ Credo (I Believe)
 ➢ Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)
 ➢ Agnus Dei (O Lamb of God)
Josquin des Prez

- A contemporary of Leonardo Da Vinci and Christopher Columbus
- A master of Renaissance music
- Let's listen to one of his Ave Maria
  - A Latin prayer to the Virgin Mary
  - Uses polyphonic imitation
Ave Maria, a motet by Josquin des Prez

Cool! Visual representation of notes, and translation of words

was our cleansing.

nostra fuit purgatio.
ACTUAL PICTURE OF SOME OF JOSQUIN DES PREZ’S MUSIC
The Reformation

➢ Started by Martin Luther
➢ A German priest and professor who began the Protestant Reformation
➢ Luther felt the Catholic church was corrupt.
The Reformation

➢ Luther felt the Catholic church was corrupt because of the selling of indulgences.
➢ The practice of paying off your sins with money
The Reformation

➢ Luther revealed everything he felt was wrong with the Catholic church by writing The 95 Theses.
➢ As he wrote each of the theses he would nail them to the door of the local church for all to see.
The Reformation

➢ Because of his beliefs and revelation about the Catholic church, Luther was banned from the church for the rest of his life.

➢ So, he started the first Protestant religion called Lutheranism, which is still practiced today.

➢ Lutheran practice is very similar to the practices of the Catholic Church.
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

- One of the most important Renaissance composers
- Devoted himself to the Catholic church
- His music includes:
  - 104 masses
  - 450 other sacred works
- He struggled during the Reformation
  - What is the Reformation?
- Lets listen to the Kyrie from the Pope Marcellus Mass
More Pics of Palestrina
Palestrina’s Kyrie from Missa Papae Marcelli
Secular Music in the Renaissance

- During the Renaissance, secular vocal music became increasingly popular
- Music was an important leisure activity
  - Every educated person was expected to play an instrument or sing
  - Every educated person was expected to read notation
Secular Music in the Renaissance

➢ Renaissance secular music was written for groups of solo voices
  ➢ Sometimes a voice with instrumental accompaniment

➢ Renaissance town musicians played for a variety of functions
  ➢ Festivals, Birthdays, Weddings, Celebrations, Dances, etc

➢ Most instrumental music was intended for dancing
Basse Dance

➢ Performance: Slow dances require slow, measured beats. Start with quarter or half note beats, then gradually add brief eighth or sixteenth note flourishes.

➢ Avoid extended eighth note figures, as they tend to give a piece a 'double time' feel that does not complement the basse dance well in most instances.
Basse Dance
Branle Dance

➢ The branle (pronounced brawl') probably evolved from the ronde or country dance.

➢ It is basically a circle or chain of dancers linked by holding hands or fingers.

➢ Most branles are in 2/2 or 3/4 time.

➢ A collection of several branle double saute steps in 2/2 is called a gavotte.
Branle Dance

➢ Perhaps the most common form of dance.

➢ Fast, Lively, great flexibility for instruments.

➢ Mostly in 2/2 time and repeats often.
Branle Dance
Cantiga Dance

- Attributed to Santa Maria of Alphonso X (el Sabio, the Wise), King of Castile from 1252-84
- 400 of these!
- Not known if he wrote or just collected them all, but gets all the credit!
Cantiga Dance

➢ Not specifically written for dance
➢ Strongly punctuated and highly rhythmic = good for dances.
The Madrigal

- Originated around the year 1520 and continued to be written for the next 70-80 years
- A *madrigal* was written for several solo voices
- The text usually came from a pre-existing poem
  - The text typically dealt with the subject of *love*
- Madrigals used two different textures
  - Polyphonic - many sounds happening at the same time throughout.
  - Homophonic - single sounding throughout.
- Melody accompanied by chord
Thomas Weelkes

One of the top Madrigal composers

Since Robin Hood, Maid Marian,
And Little John are gone-a,
The Renaissance Ballett or (Fa-la)

- This composition was much simpler than the madrigal
- It is a dance-like song for several solo voices
- In contrast to most renaissance music, the ballett was mostly homophonic in texture
- The same music is sung for each verse and followed by nonsense syllables fa-la
Another Madrigal
Instrumental Music in the Renaissance

➢ Thought still not as popular as vocal music, instrumental music did become more popular.
➢ Typically instruments were used to accompany vocal solos or small groups.
➢ Most instrumental music was intended for dancing.
➢ The most important instruments were recorders, shawms, cornetts, sakbutts, lutes, viols, organs, regals, and the harpsichord.
The Recorder

- Much like what you played in elementary school
- They would have been made out of wood and holes were cut into them
- They varied in size to have high and low sounds
Recorder Ensemble
The Shawm

➢ Very much like today’s oboe.
➢ A very loud instrument.
➢ Typically used outdoors
The Cornett

- The sound is produced like today’s cornet
- But, the notes are played more like a recorder
The Cornett
A stringed instrument much like today’s violin, cello and viola
The Lute

- 15 to 24 strings
- Much like today’s guitar, but with more strings
- Would have taken a lot of practice to learn to play
The Lute
The Sakbut

➢ Early version of the trombone
➢ Very thin metal, probably brass, that was wrapped in leather
Quiz #2

1. Who is credited with inventing over 1700 words?
2. Define Polyphony.
3. True or False: Instrument music was not as popular as vocal music in the Renaissance.
4. Name 3 instruments that were popular during the Renaissance.
5. Define homophony.