

9

National Identity

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INTRODUCTION

In a sense, all music is political. No form of musical expression is detached from issues of class, race, nationality, and identity. If we argue that a Mozart string quartet is free from all political concerns, we ignore the fact that Mozart lived and worked in Vienna, the powerful, German-speaking seat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We ignore the fact that 18th-century string quartets embodied Enlightenment-era political values regarding equality and rational discourse. And we ignore the fact that Mozart's music is used today to represent elite cultural values.

In this chapter and the next, however, we will be exploring forms of musical expression that are explicitly political. We will examine a variety of musical works that were created to express or challenge political values. We will also encounter musical works that were not intended by their creators to contribute to political discourse, but that were coopted and repurposed by political actors.

In this chapter we will be considering the power of music to define and identify nations. The idea that music can express something important about a community has a long history. The ancient Greeks, for example, believed that the unique musical styles of each regional tribe represented the characteristics of that tribe. Moreover, they believed music to be so powerful that anyone who heard music from a particular tribe would in turn exhibit the characteristics of its members. Of course, for us to believe that music can express something about a group of people, we must first agree that all members of the group share something fundamental in common. This can be dangerous, for it invites the exclusion of any member who does not conform. Any claim



Image 9.1: This image shows ancient Greeks.

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that a piece or style of music represents a nation should be met with the question, “What members of the nation does this music fail to represent?”

NATIONAL ANTHEMS

The most explicitly political genre of music is the national anthem. Almost every country has one today, but national anthems have actually not been in use for very long. The first official national anthem was “God Save the Queen,” adopted by Great Britain in 1745. European countries began adopting anthems in the mid-19th century. This is the same period during which many modern European countries first came into existence, including Germany and Italy. This was also a period of growing **nationalism**. Artists, philosophers, and politicians generally agreed that people who shared an ethnic and linguistic heritage were somehow bound together and should belong to the same nation. Populations that shared such a heritage—the Hungarians, for example, who were governed by German speakers, or the Poles, who were governed by Russians—began to campaign for independence. Members of all ethnic groups generally agreed that art could express the characteristics of their people, whether or not they had secured autonomous rule. An official anthem became a means of documenting national values and expressing national pride.

National anthems can play an important role in shaping an individual’s relationship with the nation. To begin with, anthems are often sung in unison by large groups of people. Recent research has revealed that singing in a community increases levels of oxytocin, a hormone that is closely associated with interpersonal bonding. Singing together, therefore, actively promotes feelings of closeness and community solidarity. Group singing also causes participants’ breathing and heart rates to synchronize. Finally, studies have revealed that singing with other people promotes altruism, raises trust levels, and improves cooperation. It even raises pain thresholds. When groups of people sing the national anthem, therefore, they are not inspired only by the words or music. The experience of singing together itself reinforces national identity.

National anthems can also play a more abstract role in binding a nation together. The ritual of singing or hearing the anthem at sporting events and ceremonies helps us to feel connected with the nation and with one another. Whenever we sing or hear the anthem, we can imagine millions of our fellow citizens doing the same. We will never meet or even see the vast majority of these people, but the national anthem unites us, for it is the one song that everyone in the nation knows. That fact gives it great symbolic power.

Of course, the specific words and tunes of anthems are also of significance. It is difficult, however, to make generalizations about anthem texts and melodies, for there is a great deal of variety. To understand how the character and history of an anthem can reflect a nation’s identity, we will look at some examples.

United States of America: “The Star-Spangled Banner”

As is the case with almost every national anthem, the words and the tune to “The Star-Spangled Banner”¹ were created by different people at different times. The tune is several decades older than the text, but our story will begin with the famous poem by Francis Scott Key (1779–1843). During the War of 1812, Key travelled with a delegation to the British flagship HMS *Tonnant* to negotiate a prisoner exchange. Although Key and his compatriots were successful in their mission, they were held captive after overhearing British officers plan an attack on the city of Baltimore. Key subsequently witnessed the nighttime battle from aboard a British ship. Famously, he knew that the American forces had emerged victorious when he saw their flag flying over Fort McHenry in the morning light on September 14, 1814. Key began his poem onboard the ship and finished it shortly after his release from captivity. The text of its earliest surviving draft appears below, transcribed from his handwritten manuscript.

1. 

“The Star-Spangled Banner”
Composer: John Stafford Smith
Lyricist: Francis Scott Key
Performance: Whitney Houston with The Florida Orchestra, conducted by Jahja Ling (1991)

O say can you see, by the dawn’s early light,
What so proudly we hail’d at the twilight’s last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight
O’er the ramparts we watch’d, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket’s red glare, the bomb[s] bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
O say does that star[-]spangled banner yet wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe’s haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o’er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning’s first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream,
‘Tis the star-spangled banner—O long may it wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle’s confusion
A home and a Country should leave us no more?

Their blood has wash'd out their foul footstep's pollution.
 No refuge could save the hireling and slave
 From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
 Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
 Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land
 Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
 Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
 And this be our motto—"In God is our trust,"
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

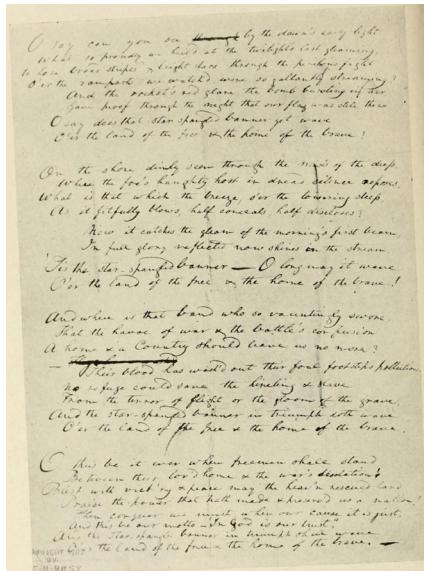


Image 9.2: The autograph manuscript of Key's poem can be viewed at the Maryland Historical Society.

Source: Wikipedia

Attribution: Francis Scott Key

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Originally untitled, Key's poem was first printed in Baltimore a few days later, probably on September 17, in a **broadside** entitled "Defence of Fort M'Henry." Broadsides—single sheets of paper printed on one side only—were commonplace in larger cities during the 18th and 19th centuries. Their texts often dealt with topics of the day, and they frequently carried news of a recent scandal, accident, crime, or execution. Such texts could be written, typeset, printed, and distributed very quickly, so broadsides were an effective means of spreading information. More specifically, "Defence of Fort M'Henry" was printed as a **broadside ballad**, so in addition to providing a ballad text (Key's poem, in this instance), it named the popular tune to which the text was to be sung. Because buyers already knew the currently popular tunes, they could immediately sing the new lyrics. (This type of songwriting differs greatly from the approach

common today, in which a single person typically creates both the lyrics and the melody—or at least works with a songwriting partner who provides the missing half. Reusing another composer's melody would not only seem to lack creativity but would probably result in a lawsuit.)

It is not clear that Key himself had any particular melody in mind when he wrote "Defence of Fort M'Henry," or that he ever intended for it to be sung. However, he had written song texts before. Indeed, various lines and images included in his September 1814 poem first appeared in his 1805 song "When the

Warrior Returns.” Perhaps for this reason, the 1814 poem had the same pattern of syllables and rhymes as Key’s previous effort, and therefore fit the same tune. In the “Defence of Fort M’Henry” broadside, between an introduction describing the fort’s bombardment and the poem’s text, there appears the indication “*Tune—Anacreon in Heaven.*” Pairing the text with this melody produces a **ballad**—a narrative, strophic song. A **strophic song** is one in which each stanza of text is sung to the same melody.

This tune, which we recognize today as the melody of “The Star-Spangled Banner,” was composed by John Stafford Smith (1750–1836) around 1776 and first published, with lyrics by Ralph Tomlinson (1744–78), as “The Anacreontic Song” around 1779. The song was also widely known as “To Anacreon in Heaven,” which are the opening words. Tomlinson’s lyrics celebrate the ancient Greek poet Anacreon, who wrote about love, wine, and amusements. Smith and Tomlinson created their song for the Anacreontic Society, a London gentlemen’s club founded around 1766. Its members were amateur musicians who desired to promote the arts and enjoy one another’s company. Their meetings included a concert, dinner, and light entertainment, and they sang “To Anacreon in Heaven,” the society’s “constitutional song,” after finishing their meal (the point at which the fun really began). Although the Anacreontic

Society occasionally aspired to higher things, it was essentially a drinking club—and a rather lively one by all reports. The Society was shut down in 1792 after a visit by the Duchess of Devonshire provoked controversy over some lewd after-dinner songs. Though the Society had lasted for only a few decades, “To Anacreon in Heaven” was a hit. It quickly became popular with the creators of broadside ballads and accumulated a large number of texts. When “Defence of Fort M’Henry” appeared, therefore, the tune’s indication allowed any purchaser to immediately sing the ballad.

“The Star-Spangled Banner,” as it came to be known, joined a pantheon of patriotic 19th-

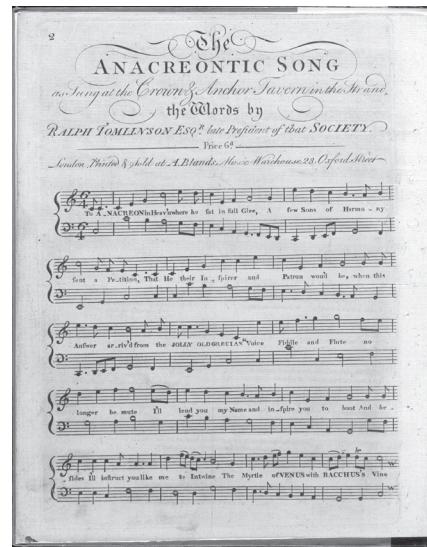


Image 9.3: “*The Anacreontic Song*” is clearly identified as a drinking song by the text across the top of this sheet music, which reads “as sung at the Crown & Anchor Tavern in the Strand.”

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: Poem by Ralph Tomlinson, music by John Stafford Smith

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Image 9.4: Meetings of the Anacreontic Society were famously raucous, as captured in this 1801 caricature by James Gillray.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: James Gillray

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century songs. It quickly gained popularity, but was generally overshadowed by “Hail, Columbia” and “America” (“My Country, ‘Tis of Thee”). “The Star-Spangled Banner” faced significant criticism as a national song. The leading objection was that it was simply too difficult to sing. Indeed, its **melodic range** (an octave and a fifth) is unusually wide for a national anthem, and all but professional singers struggle to reach the highest notes. The melody is also characterised by **disjunct motion**—that is to say, the notes of the melody do not simply move up and down the scale, but instead are separated by large intervals. Others complained that its text, too specifically tied to a unique historical event, failed to reflect national values more generally. Finally, it has been criticized for its militaristic subject matter. All the same, the song slowly gained traction, first becoming popular at Independence Day celebrations. In 1899, the US Navy adopted “The Star-Spangled Banner” for official use, and in 1916 President Woodrow Wilson ordered that it be played at all military events.

By the early 1900s, many variations of the song’s tune had arisen, so in 1917, President Wilson commissioned five prominent musicians—Walter Damrosch, Will Earheart, Arnold J. Gantvoort, Oscar Sonneck, and John Philip Sousa—to agree on and publish a standardized version. Baseball fans began singing the song at games beginning in 1918. Finally, on March 3, 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a bill designating “The Star-Spangled Banner” as the national anthem of the United States. The legislation had been championed by Rep. John Linthicum of Baltimore, who, understandably, had taken an interest in promoting a local song. He was successful only following extensive debate over the song’s merits and deficiencies and the consideration of several alternatives, including “America the Beautiful.”

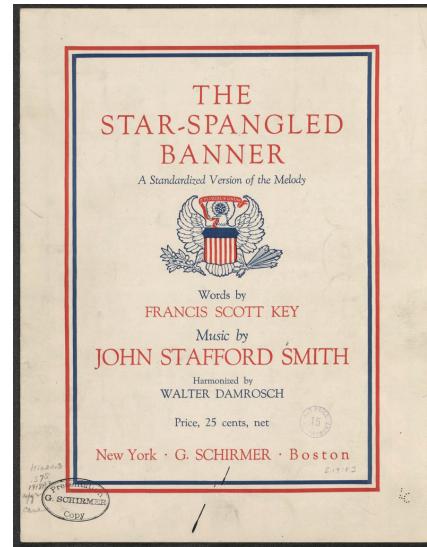


Image 9.5: A standardized version of “The Star-Spangled Banner,” with a harmonization by Walter Damrosch, was published in 1918.

Source: Library of Congress

Attribution: Francis Scott Key, John Stafford Smith, Walter Damrosch

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Performing “The Star-Spangled Banner”

There have been countless performances of “The Star-Spangled Banner:” most indifferent, but some exceptionally good or bad. It seems that a video of another “national anthem fail” circulates about once a year. But what is it that makes a “bad” performance? Sometimes, as in the case of Christina Aguilera’s performance at the 2011 Super Bowl, it’s because the singer forgets the words. Sometimes, as in the case of Victoria Zarlenga’s rendition at an international soccer match in 2012, it’s because the singer can’t stay on key. And sometimes, as in the case of

Fergie's performance at a 2018 NBA All-Star game, it's because the singer takes an interpretive approach that is considered inappropriate (Fergie's "sexy," jazz-inspired version of the anthem provoked laughter and backlash).

So what makes a "good" performance"? These vary as well, but they usually share certain characteristics. First, of course, all of the notes and words are correct. Second, the accompaniment—if present at all—is in appropriate style; many successful renditions use military band instruments, which are conducive to patriotic expression. Third, the singing style needs to come across as dignified. This can mean several things. Singers with various backgrounds, including R & B, pop, rock, and opera, have all given successful performances. But the singer can't sound like they're showing off, and they can't sound like they are trying to entertain. These unspoken rules can turn performing the national anthem into a nerve-wracking experience, for it is difficult to predict how audiences will interpret what they hear.



Image 9.6: Here, Whitney Houston performs for a London audience in 2010.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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One of the most highly-praised renditions of the anthem was given by Whitney Houston at the 1991 Super Bowl. In examining her performance, we will consider how she blended her personal style with patriotic signifiers to satisfy the crowd.

Houston's performance starts off with the sounds of the snare drum—a clear reference to marching music that simultaneously signifies the US military and captures the mood of disciplined patriotism that would attend a military review. The sound might also spark a sense of pride in the listener, or perhaps responsibility. It might make them stand up a little bit straighter. A trumpet **fanfare** precedes Houston's entrance. When she does begin to sing, she is accompanied by a full brass ensemble, which underpins her lyrics with the power, volume, and brilliant timbre of a military band.

This orchestration remains consistent through the first A section of the musical form, but with the second A section ("Whose broad stripes. . .") there is a significant change in the sound of the performance. Suddenly, Houston is backed by not a military band but soaring strings, whose shimmering timbre and connected articulation contrast with what we have just heard. And that's not all: The strings also play harmonies that are significantly more adventurous and less predictable than those provided by the brass ensemble. The second A, therefore, is more meditative and introspective. It replaces an expression of military might with one of emotional complexity.

Houston emphasizes this contrast with her vocal production. She sings the first A section in a fairly straightforward manner, using the full power of her voice. In

the second A section, however, she both reduces her volume and increases her use of **ornamentation**. Melodic ornaments, in this case, are any notes that are not included in the most basic version of “The Star-Spangled Banner”—the version you might sing at a sporting event or patriotic celebration. You can also hear how Houston changes her vocal production. Her sound becomes breathy and subdued—the result, in some cases, of using **head voice** instead of **chest voice**.

The mood changes again when we arrive at the B section (“And the rockets. . .”). The brass and percussion rejoin the strings, while Houston abandons her airy timbre and gives us the full power of her voice. The orchestra is primarily there to accompany the singer, but every once in a while a brass fanfare emerges from the texture. The climax of the anthem is accentuated by both the singer and the orchestra. On the word “free,” Houston adds a melodic ornament that takes her to the highest note of the performance—an interval of a fourth above the top note in the official version. Then, when she arrives at “brave,” the orchestra plays an unexpected harmony that prolongs the final cadence. In other words, we have to wait a few extra seconds before it feels like the song is really over.

Germany: “The Song of the Germans”

While “The Star-Spangled Banner” traced a long path to its status as national anthem, the process was fairly straightforward. The same cannot be said of many other countries. The current national anthem of Germany is titled “The Song of the Germans” (German: *Das Lied der Deutschen*). However, it was not the first national anthem, and it has not been in continuous use. Its history offers an excellent example of how transformations in the identity, contents, and use of an anthem can reflect the complex political journey of an individual nation.

Although it traces its history back for many centuries, the modern nation of Germany came into existence in 1871. By this time, it was typical for European nations to adopt national anthems, and the Germans were certainly not to be excluded from this practice. At first, they adopted the Prussian national anthem. They did so to symbolize the unification of previously-independent Prussian principalities under a single nation. The title of the anthem was “Hail to Thee in the Victor’s Crown,” and it featured the refrain “Hail to thee, emperor!” The melody, however, was that to which “God Save the Queen” is currently sung—a sign of the close ties between European monarchies.

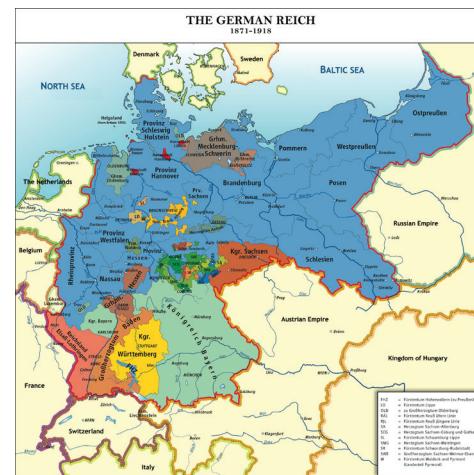


Image 9.7: This map indicates the original borders of Germany, following the country's unification in 1871. Much of what was once Eastern Germany is now Poland.

Source: Wikipedia

Attribution: Users "Wiggy!" and "kgberger"

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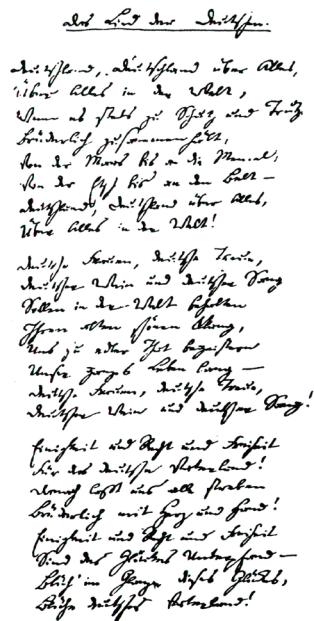


Image 9.8: Here we see Fallersleben's original manuscript for "The Song of the Germans."

Source: Wikimedia Commons
Attribution: Hoffmann von Fallersleben
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national anthem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which carried a text entitled “God Save Emperor Francis.” By rewriting this important anthem, Fallersleben sought to rewrite political reality. The tune, incidentally, had been composed in 1797 by one of the most important of all Austrian composers, Franz Joseph Haydn. It would continue to serve as the national anthem of Austria, although with different texts to suit changes in government, until World War II.

World War II also brought changes to Germany, which was divided at the close of the war into East Germany and West Germany. The government of East Germany commissioned an entirely new anthem, entitled “Risen from the Ruins,” while West Germany ceased to use an anthem altogether. Although unusual, it is not difficult to explain this development. Anthems tend to represent patriotic feeling and pride in one’s country—sentiments that seemed inappropriate in a post-Holocaust Germany. Various songs—including Ludwig van Beethoven’s

World War I, in which Germany was defeated, prompted major political reorganization. The emperor abdicated in 1918 and was replaced by a constitutional government known as the Weimar Republic. The new government required a new anthem—but the song selected for the role was in fact very old. The words to “The Song of the Germans” were written in 1841 by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, a Prussian academic. The text was initially subversive. Fallersleben lived and worked in a monarchy, but his song called for the unification of the German-speaking lands under democratic rule. During his own time, this was a dangerous message, and Fallersleben was dismissed from his post for promoting it. Following the unification of Germany, however, the call became patriotic and Fallersleben’s song was celebrated.

Like Key, Fallersleben wrote his text to fit a preexisting melody. Because he was making a political plea, he selected a political tune: the



Image 9.9: Here we see the 1797 manuscript of Haydn's hymn, now in the Austrian National Library.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
Attribution: Joseph Haydn
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“Ode to Joy,”² now the anthem of the European Union—were used to mark state occasions in West Germany, but “The Song of the Germans” was not officially readopted until 1952.

2.



Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” is the official anthem of the European Union. Here it has been recorded with the original German text, but it is also sung in other languages and performed as a textless instrumental.

When it did enter back into use, it was accompanied by significant conflict over the text. The first stanza in particular had become controversial. It opens with the line, “Germany, Germany above all, above all in the world.” To Fallersleben, this meant that the promise of a united German nation must be held above the petty interests of minor German monarchs. To the Nazis, however, it was a call for Germany to take over the world. The second verse, which celebrates German women, wine, and song, perhaps lacks the dignity required of an anthem. After the war, therefore, the third verse was favored:

Unity and justice and freedom
For the German fatherland!
Towards these let us all strive
Brotherly with heart and hand!
Unity and justice and freedom
Are the safeguards of fortune;
Flourish in the radiance of this fortune,
Flourish, German fatherland!

Controversy over the words, however, has come to stand in for larger political battles. In this way, “The Song of the Germans” simultaneously unites and divides the country, while embodying its difficult past.

Performing “The Song of the Germans”

To consider “The Song of the Germans”³ in use, we will look at a performance that is, in most respects, very similar to Houston’s rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” This performance also took place at a major sporting event—a match between two teams in the national German soccer league. The anthem was again sung by a popular performer. Namika, who was born Hanan Hamdi to Moroccan immigrant parents, is a well-known singer and rapper who has landed several hits since 2015. Like Houston, she performs the anthem in her own individual style. She introduces melodic ornaments but makes a conscious effort not to distract from the dignity of the text. And, finally, the orchestration of the accompaniment is remarkably similar, for Namika is also backed by the militaristic combination

of brass and snare drums, and her rendition is likewise punctuated by trumpet fanfares.

3.



“The Song of the Germans”
 Composer: Franz Joseph Haydn
 Lyricist: August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben
 Performance: Namika at Bundesliga match between FC Bayern Muenchen and Bayer 04 Leverkusen in Munich (2017)

There is, however, one very significant difference: Namika is joined by the fans, whose voices can clearly be heard throughout the performance. While Houston was admired as a soloist, Namika is leading a sing-along. Why this difference? It is certainly not the case that Germans are more patriotic or more musical. The German anthem, however, is considerably more singable than “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Given that it outlines a range of only an octave and that the melody is largely **conjunctional**, containing few large melodic leaps, “The Song of the Germans” can be sung by an untrained musician. It is likely that these musical differences have contributed to contrasting cultural traditions: Germans join in, while Americans leave anthem singing up to the professionals.

South Africa: “National Anthem of South Africa”

The story of “National Anthem of South Africa”⁴ is equally tortuous, although the narrative details—and the resulting anthem—reflect a different type of national strife. While Germany came into conflict with the world, the South African conflict was entirely internal, unfolding as a white ruling minority sought to disenfranchise the non-white majority. This conflict and its resolutions were captured in a trio of official and unofficial anthems.

4.



“National Anthem of South Africa”
 Composers: Enoch Mankayi Sontaga & Marthinus Lourens de Villiers
 Lyricists: Enoch Mankayi Sontaga & C.J. Langenhoven
 Performance: Ndlovu Youth Choir (2019)

The roots of modern South Africa are to be found in the 17th century, when Dutch colonists first settled on its shores. The descendants of these colonists, who both displaced and intermingled with the native Africans, speak a language known as Afrikaans that combines elements of Dutch and indigenous languages. In the early 19th century, British colonists displaced the Dutch, and South Africa became a part of the British Empire. In this way, English became an important language,

and it has continued to be widely spoken even since South Africa gained independence in 1931.

In total, eleven official languages are spoken in South Africa: Afrikaans, English, and nine indigenous African languages. This, of course, creates problems for the selection of a national anthem. The language of the anthem will naturally reinforce the power and the prestige of the citizens who speak that language, while symbolically excluding those who speak other languages. Language, therefore, plays an important role in the history of South Africa's national anthems—and in that of other polyglot nations.

The political parties that came to power upon South Africa's independence from Great Britain represented the interests of the Afrikaner and English-speaking minorities. A decade of increasing tension between ethnic groups culminated in the 1948 election of the National Party, an Afrikaner ethnic nationalist party that instituted the policy of **apartheid** (the Afrikaans word for “separateness”). Apartheid was a form of white supremacist segregation whereby every South African citizen was legally classified as “white,”

“black,” “colored,” or “Indian.” A citizen’s racial classification then determined where they were allowed to live and what jobs they were allowed to hold. Public spaces were segregated, with preference given to “white” South Africans, and non-whites had limited power to vote. In addition, interracial marriages and sexual relationships were prohibited.

The National Party also adopted a new national anthem. South Africa had been using “God Save the King/Queen,” a legacy of its colonial status, but a political desire to distance British influence resulted in the 1957 designation of “The Call of South Africa” (Afrikaans: “Die Stem van Suid-Afrika”) as the national anthem. The text to “The Call of South Africa” was a 1918 Afrikaans poem by C.J. Langenhoven. The musical setting was created three years later by Marthinus Lourens de Villiers. The poem reflects an



Image 9.10: The nation of South Africa is located at the southern tip of the African continent.

Source: Wikipedia

Attribution: User "Amada44"

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17. Die stem van Suid-Afrika
 (Met verf van Let. Eks. Boedd! LANGENHOVEN) M. L. DE VILLIERS
 C. J. LANGENHOVEN

Do is Er t, -k, | d i d i m : i n | s i s - i f - m i | s i f - i d - i k, | d i s - i - s, |
 Opgekriek.

1. Uit die blou van on - ge - be - mel, uit die dipo - te van ons see, Oor ons
 2. In die mier van ons ge - been - te, in ons hart en stel en gres, In ons
 3. In die noi - pleid van ons so - mer, in ons win - ter - nag se kou, In die
 4. Op U Al - mag van ver - trou - end het ons va - de - re ge - bou. Stenk ook

Met voorbaak.

1. e - wi - ge - ge - berg - tes waer die kran - se ant - woord - gen, Deur ons vry - ver - la - te
 2. roem op ons ver - le - de, in ons hoop op wat sal wees, In ons wil en werk en
 3. len - le van ons hof - de, in die tan - fer van ons rou, By die kind van heu - like -
 4. ons oek - krag, o He - rel om te hand - haaf en te heu - De die er - van ons

1. s - i - s ts f m i m i c f r - i - m - f m i m i f i s - i - s - i -
 2. wan - del, van die kruin van ons wieg tot aan ons grad - Dool geen an - der land ons lief - de, trek grot
 3. klok - kies, by die klap - klap op die kis - Street stem ons moont ver - niet, ly
 4. valt - re vir ons kin - ders er - we bly: Koen - te van die Al - ter - hoogste, teen die

Image 9.11: “The Call of South Africa” was the official anthem under apartheid.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: Various

License: Public Domain

Afrikaner perspective, and it celebrates ownership of the South African land—which was taken from the native inhabitants by colonizing forces. As a result, “The Call of South Africa” was and continues to be deeply offensive to many black South Africans.

At the same time that “The Call of South Africa” was gaining popularity among Afrikaners, black South Africans were coalescing around an alternative anthem. “Lord Bless Africa”⁵ (Xhosa: “Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika”) began life as a Methodist hymn. The tune, first verse, and chorus were composed in 1897 by Enoch Mankayi Sontaga, a teacher at a mission school. Sontaga, who was of Xhosa descent, was influenced by the British hymn tradition, and he described “Lord Bless Africa” as a combination of European four-part harmony with a repetitive, African-style melody. It quickly gained popularity among church congregations, and in 1912 was adopted by the South African Native National Congress, a political party that advocated the rights of black South Africans. In 1927, “Lord Bless Africa” was published in an expanded version that included seven additional Xhosa-language verses by Samuel Mqhayi. During apartheid, the hymn—which was banned by the National Party—became a symbol for resistance to the racist policies of the government. Many considered it to be the true national anthem.

5.



This video captures a performance of “Lord Bless Africa” by Paul Simon and the group Ladysmith Black Mambazo to close Simon’s 1987 African Concert.

Apartheid officially came to an end with a 1992 referendum, and the first open elections of the post-apartheid era, which took place in 1994, put the previously-banned African National Party into power. Nelson Mandela, who had played a leading role in negotiating the end of apartheid, became President. Mandela had been imprisoned by the National Party for his anti-government activities from 1964 until 1990. As President, however, he was committed to the principles of reconciliation and equality. For this reason, he declared that “The Call of South Africa” and “Lord Bless Africa” would both hold the status of national anthem, and for several years both songs were performed at state and sporting events.

Although symbolically significant, having dual anthems was logically difficult. The combined performance took about five



Image 9.12: After being imprisoned by the National Party for more than a quarter of a century, Mandela became President of South Africa.

Source: Wikipedia

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minutes, and the question about performance order was politically charged. In addition, the two languages represented by the anthems fell significantly short of reflecting the linguistic diversity of the South African populace.

In 1997, therefore, Mandela commissioned a new anthem. He required that it combine the two existing anthems, contain verses in a variety of language, expunge controversial references to colonialism, and emphasize national unity. He also insisted that it be no longer than one minute and forty-eight seconds in length.

The resulting “National Anthem of South Africa” is in two parts, the first taken from “Lord Bless Africa” and the second from “The Call of South Africa.” It includes two verses from “Lord Bless Africa.” The first half of the first verse is in Xhosa, while the second half is in Zulu. The second verse is in Sethoso. At this point, the anthem **modulates** to a new key and we hear the first four lines of “The Call,” sung in Afrikaans to the original melody. The final lines of the anthem, which are in English, contain a new text calling for the people of South Africa to come together in order to “live and strive for freedom.”

Performing “National Anthem of South Africa”

Our rendition comes from the Ndlovu Youth Choir. This ensemble was founded in 2009 as an after-school program for impoverished children in the rural village of Moutse. The goal of the organizers was to provide these young people with the same quality of music education that was available to affluent youth and to thereby give them a means with which to express themselves and find a meaningful path in life. In 2019, the choir won international fame by advancing to the final round of *America’s Got Talent*. Many performances of “National Anthem of South Africa” feature a vocal soloist singing in a popular style and an orchestral accompaniment including brass and percussion—that is to say, they are stylistically identical to the anthem performances we have already examined in this chapter. The Ndlovu Youth Choir, however, developed a unique arrangement of “National Anthem of South Africa” that exhibits various indigenous singing styles.

“National Anthem of South Africa” is certainly unusual. It contains two unrelated melodies in different keys and verses in five languages. All the same, it reflects the diversity of the nation and speaks to a troubled past. It provides a musical representation of a nation that has been fractured and reunited.

Israel: “The Hope”

One additional national anthem will provide an opportunity to consider the connection between music and nation. This time, our analysis will reveal little about the complex history of the nation, as was the case with “Song of the Germans” and “National Anthem of South Africa.” Instead, it will shed further light on the difficulty of assigning national identity to a melody.

The national anthem of Israel, entitled “The Hope”⁶ (Hebrew: “Hatikvah”), has a brief and uncomplicated history. It was immediately adopted on an unofficial

basis when the nation of Israel was founded in 1948, and it became the official national anthem in 2004. The text was written in 1878 by the Polish poet Naphtali Herz Imber, and it expresses yearning for a return to the Jewish homeland. “The Hope” was used as an anthem by several Zionist groups, and beginning in 1897 it was sung at the Congresses of the World Zionist Organization, which advocated for the founding of an autonomous Jewish nation. As such, it came to represent Zionist sentiment throughout the Jewish diaspora.

6. 

“The Hope”
 Composers: Giuseppe Cenci & Samuel Cohen
 Lyricist: Naphtali Herz Imber
 Performance: prisoners at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp (1945)

The deep significance that “The Hope” had for Jewish people is evidenced by several stories from WWII-era concentration camps. In one recorded incident, a group of Czech Jews sang “The Hope” as they were escorted into the gas chamber at Auschwitz. The guards were enraged and beat them, but could not stop the singing. Reports from other camps indicate that the song was sung frequently by Jewish prisoners and that it brought them solace. When Bergen-Belsen was liberated, the inmates also sang “The Hope”—a recording of which was captured and broadcast to the world.

The melody to which Imber’s text has always been sung was provided by Samuel Cohen in 1888. He did not compose it but rather adapted it from a melody he had heard sung in Romania. The tune, however, is not Romanian. In fact, it can be traced to a 16th-century Italian song entitled “La Mantovana,” which has been attributed to the singer Giuseppe Cenci and was first published around 1600. The melody quickly became popular and soon had been paired with texts in Dutch, Polish, Ukrainian, Romanian, and English.



Image 9.13: This 1907 edition of “The Hope” paired it with another popular Zionist song.

Source: Library of Congress

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Bedřich Smetana, "The Moldau"

		"The Moldau" from <i>My Homeland</i> Composer: Bedřich Smetana Performance: The Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ádám Medveczky (1987)
Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	A	This passage represents the emergence of the Moldau from two small springs that join together to form a powerful current; the principal melody is shared with Israel's national anthem, "The Hope"
4'06"	B	This passage represents the rural landscapes through which the Moldau passes; the folk-like melody is meant to evoke the celebration of a farmer's wedding
5'34"	C	This passage represents a scene described by the composer as "the round dance of the mermaids in the night's moonshine"
8'44"	A'	The principal melody returns
10'44"		The melody shifts into the major mode
11'12"		This passage quotes from Smetana's symphonic poem "Vyšehrad," which is the first in the cycle <i>My Homeland</i> ; it serves both to connect the works thematically and to represent the literal presence of the Vyšehrad castle, which stands on the banks of the Moldau

Most famously, the melody was used by the Czech composer Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884) as the main theme for his nationalist **symphonic poem** "The Moldau" (1874), which belongs to a larger cycle of works entitled *My Homeland*. Here we begin to see the complexities surrounding "The Hope." Decades before this tune came to communicate Jewish identity, and more than half a century before it would represent the nation of Israel, it was used to signify Czech identity and national sentiment.

Smetana's "The Moldau" is an example of program music. It describes in sound the course of the famous Moldau river as it winds its way through the countryside and ultimately joins the Elbe river. "The Moldau" contains a succession of distinct sections. First, we hear the river emerge from a pair of warm and cold springs. It



Image 9.14: This photograph captures Smetana around the time that he wrote “The Moldau.”

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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slowly gains strength until a mighty, expressive melody—that used for “The Hope”—bursts forth to represent the river. Next we hear the sounds of dance music as it might be played at a country wedding, followed by a nocturnal passage representing mermaids in the moonlight. Finally, the river theme returns, first in its original minor mode and then in a triumphant major.

How can an Italian melody develop and sustain both Jewish and Czech nationalistic connotations—all while continuing to be periodically mistaken for a Flemish, Polish, Ukrainian, Romanian, and Scottish folk song? The answer has to do both with musical style and with the power of association. “La Mantovana” is an exceptionally simple tune. It contains two parts, one lower and one

higher (a typical characteristic in many folk traditions). Both parts have a limited range and move primarily using stepwise motion. All of these attributes allow “La Mantovana” to be adapted in conformance with the conventions of various national styles.

However, association is more powerful than style. Listeners who first encountered this melody as representing the Moldau river and Czech identity will have a hard time hearing it in a different way. It has a similarly powerful (although quite different) meaning for Jews who grew up singing the Zionist lyrics. The multiple identities of the tune have created consternation in the Jewish community, and many have objected to its pairing with Imber’s text. All the same, efforts to find or create a new musical setting have always met with failure, and this melody continues to exercise enormous emotional power over a global population.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATION IN WESTERN ART MUSIC

As we have already seen, anthems are only the most obvious and explicit example of national representation in music. There are many ways in which music can come to stand for a nation. Sometimes, composers or performers set out to capture national character in sound. They seek to develop an individual work or a broader style that is uniquely tied to their national identity. Other times, those in power identify and promote music that is determined to represent the nation. In such cases the music is not created with the nationalistic intent, but rather repurposed. Finally, we might differentiate between musical representations created by the people who belong to nations or ethnic groups versus those created by outsiders.

We are not talking here about **exoticism**, wherein an artist represents an ethnic group for the purpose of voyeuristic entertainment, but rather contributions to national style made from a foreign perspective.

Contesting the Representation of Hungary

We will begin by looking at two compositions for piano, each created by a Hungarian composer who sought to express his national identity in music. Both composers turned to Hungarian folk music for inspiration, but they disagreed about which Hungarian folk tradition best represented Hungarian identity. This type of disagreement has larger implications about who “counts” as a citizen and whose culture can be understood to represent the nation.

It is important to note that the political nation of Hungary did not exist when either of these pieces were composed. Instead, Hungary was ruled by German-speaking monarchs, first as a territory of the Austrian Empire and then as a subservient partner in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Modern Hungary first gained independence upon the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire following World War I. Throughout the 19th century, however, Hungarians sought greater autonomy by means of political protest and armed revolt. Efforts to represent Hungarian identity in the arts were part of a larger nationalist movement that had ties to the quest for independence.

Franz Liszt, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*

		<i>Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2</i> Composer: Franz Liszt Performance: Tiffany Poon (2014)
Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	A	This introductory passage is dramatic and mysterious
	Lassan	This part of the rhapsody is characterized by unexpected harmonies and flexible tempos
0'44"	B	The tempo stabilizes into a slow march
1'27"	C	This theme begins in the major mode
1'44"	D	This theme imitates the sound of a cimbalom; it accelerates in tempo

2'30"	A	
3'04"	B	This theme returns in the low register of the piano
3'41"	C	
4'36	A	This theme returns in the lowest register of the piano
Friska		This part of the rhapsody is characterized by stable harmonies and fast tempos
5'12"	D	This theme returns in the high register of the piano; as it accelerates in tempo, the harmony stabilizes
6'00"	E	This passage includes a large number of closely related themes; all are accompanied by the same harmonic pattern, which oscillates between the I and V chords
8'45"		The tempo slows and the melody briefly turns to the minor mode
9'02"		The major mode returns, the tempo accelerates, and the volume builds, leading into an explosive final cadence

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) is an unusual candidate for “most famous Hungarian composer,” although he certainly merits the title. To begin with, he did not speak Hungarian. Although the village of Doborján in which Liszt was born was located in the Kingdom of Hungary, the inhabitants spoke German. Furthermore, Liszt lived in Hungary for only the first decade of his life. He demonstrated great musical talent as a child, so his parents took him to Vienna at the age of 11 to cultivate his gifts. He returned only on concert tours. All the same, Liszt was proud of his Hungarian heritage and expressed it frequently in his compositions for piano.

Liszt’s extraordinary career set new standards for piano playing and public



Image 9.15: This 1839 portrait by Henri Lehmann captures Liszt as a young man.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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performance. After a successful Viennese debut in 1822, he completed his education and embarked on what might have been a typical career of teaching, composing, and performing. In 1832, however, he happened to attend a recital in Paris by the Italian violin virtuoso Niccolò Paganini. Liszt was astonished by Paganini's extraordinary technique, and he committed to becoming Paganini's equal at the piano. To this end, Liszt gave up concertizing and went into seclusion to refine his technique.

When Liszt returned to the stage in 1838, he was indeed heralded as the greatest living pianist. He embarked on a decade-long tour of Europe, during which he established a reputation for flamboyant and thrilling performances. It was Liszt's practice to appear on stage with two pianos, for he played with such force that he would break strings and need to change instruments. Before Liszt, solo recitals were practically unheard of. Audiences preferred variety, and it was considered foolish to imagine that anyone would attend a concert with only one performer. Liszt, however, provided his own variety, combining piano **transcriptions** of symphonies with **improvisations**, classics by the great composers of the past, and showy new compositions by himself. Liszt also possessed a great deal of sex

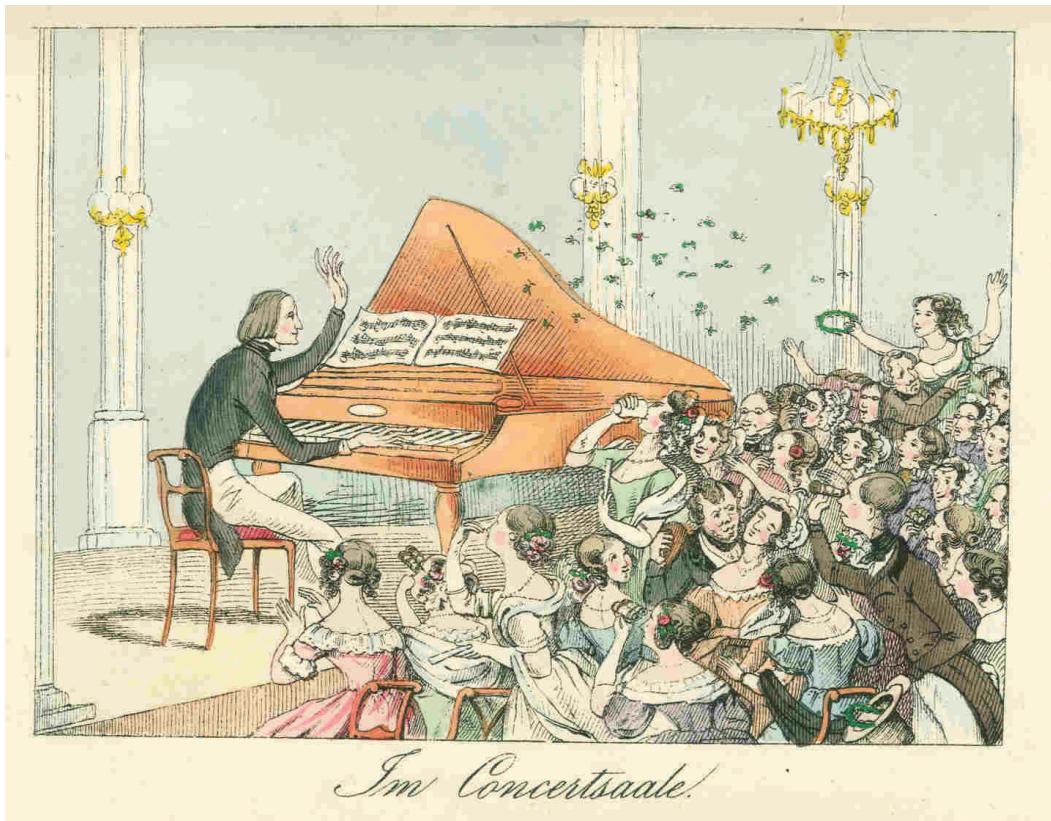


Image 9.16: This 1842 engraving captures the spirit of a Liszt recital: The audience is made up almost entirely of women, who blow kisses, throw flowers, and faint in ecstasy.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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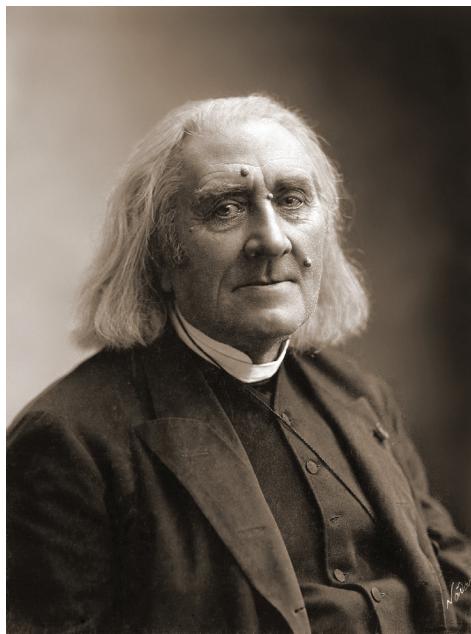


Image 9.17: Liszt lived a long and productive life—long enough to be photographed in 1886.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Image 9.18: Although Liszt gave up his public touring career in 1848, he continued to play piano in more intimate settings. He is pictured here with the American violinist Arma Senkrah.

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appeal. He was particularly popular with society ladies, who went into hysterics at his concerts and fought over his discarded items. Due to his enormous success, Liszt became the first performing artist to require a manager.

Liszt composed piano music in a variety of genres. His fantasies explored operatic themes written by other composers, while his etudes showcased specific piano techniques. He also produced nineteen *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, each of which was inspired by the Romani music that Liszt heard as a child. Liszt was not the first composer to write “Hungarian” music, which had been in fashion for decades. However, his Hungarian compositions were more personal than those of German composers, who used Hungarian musical elements to flavor their works. Liszt made it clear that his music was a personal statement that reflected his national identity.

We will examine Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, which is certainly his best-known effort in the genre. In it, Liszt uses the scales, rhythms, and forms of Hungarian music as a vehicle for dazzling piano technique. A good performance of *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* is entertaining and astonishing. Before looking at Liszt’s composition, however, we need to know something about the folk tradition on which the piece is based.

Liszt was influenced by a style of dance music known as **verbunkos** that he associated with the itinerant Romani musicians of his childhood home. The Romani—known colloquially as Gypsies—live across Europe, although they are often excluded from mainstream society and actively persecuted. In the village where Liszt grew up, Romani musicians played

verbunkos music in cafes as entertainment for the upper classes. Their traditional instruments included violin and cimbalon, a type of hammered dulcimer. Although verbunkos music is unique to Hungary, therefore, it is closely associated with the Romani people, who are not ethnic Hungarians.

Verbunkos music has a variety of distinctive characteristics. To begin with, it is divided into two sections: an opening *lassan* and a concluding *friska*. The *lassan* is slow and melancholic, featuring dramatic harmonic shifts. It lacks a pulse and has an improvisatory feel. The *friska*, on the other hand, builds in volume and tempo, becoming increasingly exciting as it approaches a conclusion. The harmonies are simple, alternating between the tonic and dominant chords.

Verbunkos music also employs different scales than European concert music. While 19th-century composers of art music used only the major and minor scales, Romani musicians used various scales—mostly related to minor—that featured raised or lowered pitches and, as a result, contained augmented intervals (that is to say, intervals greater than a whole step, which is the largest possible distance between two notes in a major or minor scale). Such scales sounded exotic to Liszt's audience, as they still do to many Westerners today.

Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* exhibits the influence of verbunkos dance music in a variety of ways. To begin with, it takes the two-part form of a *lassan* and *friska*. The *lassan*, which is exceptionally dramatic, features a march-like theme



Image 9.19: This group of Romani musicians was photographed in 1865.

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that is occasionally interrupted by unmetered flights of fancy. The music sounds as if it might be improvised, but in fact Liszt wrote out every note. In addition to these rhythmic characteristics, Liszt occasionally introduces unusual scales that echo Romani practice. The *friska* begins with a passage that is meant to imitate the sound of a Hungarian cimbalom. From there, Liszt finds his way to the major mode and provides a virtuosic conclusion.

Béla Bartók, *Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary*⁷

By the time Béla Bartók (1881-1945) was growing up in southern Hungary, Liszt was a national hero. Hungarians were proud of his monumental success across Europe and his influence on the elite musical establishment. They had also come to accept his musical representations of Hungarian identity—such as we observed in *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*—as authentic and correct. As a music student, therefore, Bartók took Liszt as a model and sought to express his Hungarian identity using a similar musical language.

7.



Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary

Composer: Béla Bartók

Performance: Béla Bartók, Welte piano roll (1927)

In 1904, however, Bartók had an experience that changed his thinking about how Hungarian identity should be represented in art music. While visiting a summer resort, he happened to hear a nanny sing folk songs from the region of Transylvania. It was unlike any music he had ever heard before—and was certainly far removed from the verbunkos dance music of the urban cafes. He immediately set out to discover and document as much Eastern European folk music as he could find, becoming in the process one of the earliest **ethnomusicologists** (a scholar who specializes in indigenous music traditions).

Bartók found a like mind in fellow composer Zoltán Kodály, with whom he travelled the countryside recording the music of rural singers and instrumentalists. They sometimes used a primitive recording device that captured sound by carving grooves into a wax cylinder, but they also wrote down melodies using Western **staff notation** and they transcribed song texts. In 1906, they

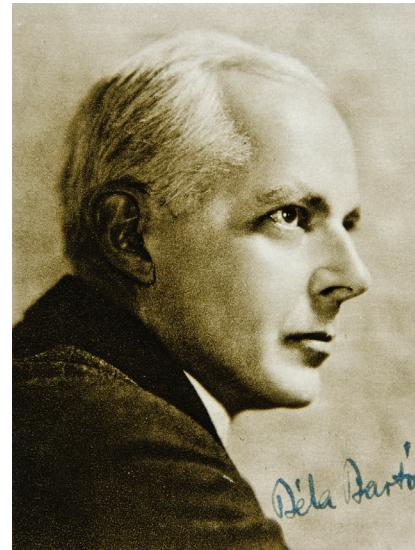


Image 9.20: This photograph of Bartók was taken in 1922.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 9.21: Here we see Bartók recording the songs of Slovak peasants in 1908.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 9.22: This 1905 photograph captures Bartók and Kodály shortly after their partnership was formed.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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published *Hungarian Folk Songs*, a collection of peasant songs with simple piano accompaniments. Their intent was to spread awareness about the existence of the music, which they valued highly.

Following his studies, Bartók began to criticize Liszt's version of Hungarian musical identity. Verbunkos dance music, he argued, was not the real Hungarian folk music. His objection was less to the ethnic identity of the Romani musicians who performed it as to the commercial context in which verbunkos music had developed and thrived. It flourished in the cities and was sponsored by the aristocracy as official Hungarian culture. True Hungarian folk music, argued Bartók, was to be found among the disenfranchised rural peasantry.

Bartók was interested both in promoting the cause of Hungarian independence and in developing his own unique voice as a composer. While he took genuine pride in the folk culture of Eastern Europe, he also saw it as grist for his own creative mill. His omnivorous appetite for folk music attracted some criticism from Hungarian nationalists. They were pleased when he promoted Hungarian folk music, but less supportive when he strayed beyond the bounds of the ethnic Hungarian population.

Again, however, we must ask, "Who counts as Hungarian?" This is not a question of literal citizenship, but a question of belonging. Which ethnic groups are to have their cultural products privileged as representing the nation? The borders of the Austro-Hungarian empire extended far beyond those of modern Hungary, encompassing a variety of ethnic groups and spoken languages. Bartók was not interested in deciding who counted as Hungarian. His mission was to collect and popularise as broad a selection of folk music as possible and to integrate that music into his own compositions.



Image 9.23: This map depicts the distribution of ethnic groups within the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1910. It reveals the significant presence of non-Hungarian ethnic groups within the borders of modern-day Hungary.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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To see one of Bartók's compositional techniques in action, we will take a look at his *Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary*. It features tunes that he collected from the region of Transylvania, which was a part of Hungary for the first two decades of the 20th century. (Bartók shortened the title to *Romanian Folk Dances* when Romania annexed the region following World War I.) Like Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, this is a piece for solo piano based on Hungarian folk music. The similarities end there, however, for the purpose behind Bartók's composition was completely different.

Romanian Folk Dances contains six independent movements. They are entitled “Joculcu bătă” (Stick Dance), “Brâul” (Sash Dance), “Pe loc” (In One Spot), “Buciumeana” (Dance from Bucsum), “Poarga Românească” (Romanian Polka), and “Mărunteł” (Fast Dance). The melody of each movement is taken from a Transylvanian fiddle tune. Bartók did not alter the melodies, transcribing them as he had heard them. He then supplied an original accompaniment, which is usually heard in the left hand of the piano. Bartók described this approach as similar to crafting a piece of jewelry in order to show off a beautiful gem. His musical settings were supposed to exhibit the inherent beauty and interest of the folk tunes. All the

same, his unusual harmonies are what make these pieces enjoyable and interesting for most listeners.

Because Bartók was unwilling to make changes to the borrowed folk tunes, each movement is short and simple in terms of form. Although only the second movement repeats literally in its entirety, all of the movements contain some melodic repetition. As in the Liszt example, we hear unusual scales and rhythms, which Bartók derived from the folk music he studied. Bartók, however, was not a virtuoso pianist, and he was not writing music for the purpose of popular entertainment. His emphasis was on fidelity to his source material, not show.

There are, of course, other reasons for which the music of Liszt and Bartók sounds quite different. Liszt was composing at the height of the **Romantic** era, when music was expected to be highly expressive while also adhering to certain rules about the use of harmony. Bartók, writing in the early 20th century, was a **modernist**. He sought to break new ground by replacing **common-practice tonality**—the typical chord progressions we are familiar with from most Western music—with a new harmonic language of his own invention. *Romanian Folk Dances* is an early example of his experimental work.

Contesting the Representation of the United States

Antonín Dvořák, *Symphony No. 9 “From the New World”*

Throughout the 19th century, Europeans considered the United States to be a cultural backwater. Americans, of course, were preoccupied not with artistic innovation but with expanding and stabilizing their nation. Those who did pursue the arts were expected to receive their training in Europe and to imitate European models. In the late 19th century, however, American composers became increasingly interested in developing a unique national voice.

None of this is to say that there was no distinctively American music in the 19th century. There certainly was—much of which is explored elsewhere in this volume. Hymn composers in New England and the South had already developed several new strains of church music, while diverse folk traditions flourished in rural areas. In addition, there were the rich musical traditions of Native Americans, who faced eradication on a national scale, and African Americans, whose influence was first felt in the sphere of popular and dance music. However, none of this mattered to members of the arts establishment. They valued European-style concert music and sought a way to express American identity in that context.

Surprisingly, the composer who is usually cited as launching the American school of composition was not an American at all, but a Czech. Although he did not actually break new ground, Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) tends to get credit for the bizarre reason that he was European, and therefore commanded greater respect and attention from his contemporaries than did American composers. In fact, Dvořák was brought to the United States for the express purpose of guiding the development of American music.

Dvořák was a prime candidate for teaching Americans how to express national identity in music, for he had first made a name for himself by doing the same for the Czech musical establishment. His first successful composition was a series of orchestral pieces ostensibly based on Slavic dances. For Dvořák, however, his national identity was a source of frustration. He struggled to be accepted not as a Czech composer but as a *good* composer.

When Dvořák came to New York City in 1891, he was at the height of his career. He had been invited to serve as the first director of the National Conservatory of Music, which was to train American musicians in the European concert tradition. He was also expected to contribute to the development of American concert music. Dvořák produced two monumental “American” works during his stay in the United States, both of which were premiered in 1893. One was his String Quartet No. 12, known as the “American Quartet” (a work composed, ironically, during his visit to a Czech community in the midwest). The other was his Symphony No. 9 “From the New World.” The symphony in particular exemplifies Dvořák’s ideas about what was American in music.

Dvořák was regularly asked for his views on this subject, and in 1895 he published an article entitled “Music in America” that contained his advice to American composers wishing to develop a national style. He recommended, unsurprisingly, that they draw inspiration from folk music: specifically, that of African Americans and Native Americans. Dvořák, of course, knew very little about American folk traditions—he was completely ignorant of folk music in most parts of the country, while his ideas about Native American music were more fantasy than fact. His observation that Native American and African American musics were “practically identical” betrays his shallow thinking on the subject.

The one thing Dvořák really did know something about was African American **spirituals**. He encountered this repertoire through Harry Burleigh, who was a student at the National Conservatory of Music during the time that Dvořák served as director. Burleigh had learned to sing spirituals from his grandfather, who had been born a slave but had purchased his freedom in the 1830s, and he later gained international fame both for his concert arrangements of spirituals and for his original art songs. At Dvořák’s request, Burleigh frequently sang for him in his home. He reported that “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,” apparently the composer’s favorite item in his repertoire, was the basis for the theme in the first movement of Symphony No. 9. The second movement, which we will consider in detail, also features a spiritual-like theme. In fact, it was such a convincing fake that it was



Image 9.24: This photograph of Dvořák was taken in 1882.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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HARRY T. BURLEIGH

Image 9.25: This photograph of Harry Burleigh was taken in 1936, many years after his youthful association with Dvořák.

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frequently mistaken for a genuine spiritual after a student of Dvořák's wrote a text for it, titled "Goin' Home," in 1922.

Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 also has a Native American connection, although it is romanticized and inauthentic. Dvořák, like most Europeans, was familiar with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1855 epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*, in which the poet provides a largely fictionalized account of the life of an Ojibwe warrior. *Hiawatha* had been translated into Czech in 1870, and Dvořák was familiar with it before his visit to the United States. Although Symphony No. 9 is an example of absolute music and should not be understood to communicate a specific, coherent narrative, Dvořák told interviewers that the two internal movements were both influenced by *Hiawatha*, and that he intended the second movement as a sketch for a dramatic setting of the text (a project



Image 9.26: This illustration was included in an 1891 edition of *The Song of Hiawatha*.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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that he never in fact pursued). Although Dvořák offered few specifics, it has been argued that the two themes of the second movement—one gentle and romantic, one distraught and funereal—portray the wooing and death of Hiawatha's bride, Minnehaha.

		Symphony No. 9 "From the New World," Movement II Composer: Antonín Dvořák Performance: Berliner Philharmoniker, conducted by Ferenc Fricsay (1960)
Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Intro	The brass play a sequence of sustained harmonies
0'53"	A	The spiritual-inspired theme is heard in the English horn; it has a form of aba'
2'44"	Intro	The woodwinds repeat the sequence of harmonies
3'12"	A	Muted strings play the b section of the A theme; the English horn concludes with the a' section
4'54"		The horns play the opening motif of the A theme
5'20"	B	This plaintive, minor-mode theme, played by the oboe, is accompanied by tremolo strings
5'56"	C	For this minor-mode theme, pizzicato strings provide the steady pulse of a funeral march
6'45"	B	The B theme returns in the muted violins
7'52"	D	This theme, also cast as a funeral march, is played by the muted violins
8'48"	B	The B theme briefly returns in the muted strings
9'11"	E	Various instruments and sections, beginning with the oboe and flute, imitate birdsong
9'27"		The cyclical theme, which returns in each movement, is heard in the low brass, while the A theme is heard in the trumpets

10'08"	A	This theme returns in the English horn; the b section is played by muted strings; the a' section begins in solo strings
12'43"	Intro	The opening passage is repeated in the brass; it resolves via an ascending string passage into a quiet, low-range final chord

Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 follows the standard four-movement pattern for a European symphony, two examples of which were examined in Chapter 7. We will take a look at the slow movement, which Dvořák placed second. This movement is in **ternary form**, with a brief introductory passage that also serves as the conclusion. The introduction consists of a series of seven chords, played slowly by the brass section. The harmonies, which are unexpected and dramatic, seem to lift the curtain on a magical scene.

The first section features Dvořák's spiritual-inspired theme. It is first played by the English horn—a double reed instrument that can be thought of as a low-pitched oboe. The theme itself is also in ternary form (a b a'). The a' section concludes with an ascent in the melody that brings it to a satisfying close. The first statement of the theme is followed by a repetition of the introductory chords in the winds, the b section of the theme in the strings, and the conclusion of the theme in the English horn. The tempo throughout is extremely slow (marked Largo by Dvořák), and the mood is peaceful.

The middle section of the movement offers a marked change in mood, as Dvořák increases the tempo and switches from the major to the minor mode. This section is primarily in **rondo form**, meaning that a principle theme alternates with secondary themes. The principle theme is agitated and mournful, featuring a repeated descending figure, while the secondary themes are accompanied by a steady bass line that could belong to a funeral march. After the final abbreviated statement of the principle theme, Dvořák inserts a major-mode passage in which the winds and strings imitate birds. Dvořák frequently included birdsong in his compositions, and his "American Quartet" also features such imitations. In this case, the birdsong can be directly related to *Hiawatha*, which includes the telling of a myth in which people are turned into birds.

Next, Dvořák includes a reference to the first-movement theme based on "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," overlaid with the spiritual-like theme from this movement. By stating the two themes simultaneously, Dvořák draws our attention to their similarity. Both, after all, reflect the same African American influence. Dvořák is also continuing the practice of connecting the movements of a symphony, known as **cyclical technique**, that we first saw at work in Berlioz's *Fantastical Symphony*.

The closing section contains the last statement of the spiritual theme, although this time the b passage is laced with pauses. These convey the impression that the

“singer” of this wordless song is overcome with emotion, needing perhaps to sob or catch their breath. Finally, the opening chords are heard once more, the last of which is repeated and sustained.

This movement—and Symphony No. 9 as a whole—can be taken as Dvořák putting his own advice to American composers into action. Those composers, however, did not necessarily appreciate his guidance. Their negative reactions were largely understandable. To begin with, the American arts establishment had already been grappling with the task of developing a unique national voice. That a foreigner would step in and tell them what to do was, to many, unpalatable. Composers also objected to Dvořák’s specific advice. The music of Native Americans and African Americans, they argued, was not the music of all Americans. It represented only a small portion of the populace and could not stand in for the country as a whole. While certain individuals objected for racist reasons, most simply did not accept Dvořák’s argument that a national style could be derived from these narrow sources.

Amy Beach, *Gaelic Symphony*⁸

One of many composers who rejected Dvořák’s approach was Amy Beach (1867–1944). As we will see, Beach preferred to found an American style on the folk music of her ancestors, who hailed from the British Isles. Before examining her response to Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9, however, we need to learn something about this extraordinary woman.

Beach counts among the many composers who began their careers as child prodigies. Born into a well-to-do New Hampshire family, she demonstrated a thorough grasp of pitch before she could talk and was harmonizing melodies at the age of two. She composed her first piano music—a set of waltzes—at the age of four, and was soon giving public piano recitals that attracted the attention of the press. When her family moved to a Boston suburb in 1875, Beach was able to receive professional training in music, although she was to remain almost entirely self-taught as a composer. She would learn by analyzing newly-published music from Europe and studying Berlioz’s textbook on orchestration.



Image 9.27: This undated portrait of Amy Beach is held at the Library of Congress.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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8.



Gaelic Symphony, Movement II

Composer: Amy Beach

Performance: Detroit Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Neeme Järvi (1992)



Image 9.28: This photograph of Beach was taken a few years after she married and gave up her performing career.

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Beach gave her debut performance with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the age of sixteen, and might have gone on to become the great piano **virtuoso** of her era. Instead, at the age of 18, she married. Her husband, Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, was twenty-four years her senior and, in Beach's own words, "old-fashioned." He believed that it was a man's honorable obligation to support his wife, and he was not willing to allow Beach to pursue a career performing or teaching piano. He supported her work as a composer, however, and did a great deal to promote her success. For the twenty-five years of their marriage, therefore, Beach committed herself to composition. She won accolades from both the press and her peers, and was warmly accepted into what has been termed the Second New England School of composers.

Beach first gained attention in 1892 with her Mass in E-flat major, which was the first work by a woman ever to be performed by Boston's prestigious Handel and Haydn Society. Then in 1896 the Boston Symphony Orchestra premiered her *Gaelic Symphony*, the first to be composed by an American woman. Although it is only fair to acknowledge Beach's role as a trailblazer, many now consider the *Gaelic Symphony* to be the first great American symphony, regardless of the composer's identity. Beach preferred not to write or speak about her experiences as a female composer in an era when women were discouraged from entering the field, and later stated only that she had met with no particular difficulty. In 1900, Beach appeared as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in her Piano Concerto in C-sharp minor—a rare public performance during her married years. The extreme difficulty of the work attests to Beach's virtuosic abilities.

Upon her husband's death in 1910, Beach resumed her performance career. She toured Europe in the 1910s, where she was praised as a rare American composer whose work equalled that of Europeans in quality. Both her *Gaelic Symphony* and her Piano Concerto—again with the composer at the keyboard—were well received. Back in the United States, Beach continued to compose and perform while also developing music programs for children and mentoring younger composers.

Beach—like all American composers active in the 1890s—was well aware of Dvořák's advice and intimately familiar with his Symphony No. 9. In 1893, she was one of a number of prominent composers interviewed by the *Boston Herald* on the topic of Dvořák's recent call for music based on the melodies of African Americans (he would only later praise Native American influence). Each was asked what they thought about Dvořák's advice and what they saw as the future of American concert

music. Beach acknowledged that spirituals were beautiful and expressive, but she rejected them as the basis for an American style. Instead, as she put it, “We of the North should be far more likely to be influenced by the old English, Scotch, or Irish songs inherited with our literature from our ancestors.” She agreed, it seems, with Dvořák’s call to incorporate folk influences, but disagreed about which folk music embodied American identity—or, at least, her identity. Beach’s response indicates that, while Southern composers might be differently influenced by their musical environment, the music of the plantations meant nothing to her.

Beach put her theory into practice with the *Gaelic Symphony*. She began by studying Irish folks tunes, which were to form the basis of her work. She eventually incorporated four melodies that had been published in an 1841 Dublin magazine. However, it was her intent not only to quote genuine Irish folk melodies but also to absorb their musical language and use it in her original themes. Beach began by writing the second movement, which we will examine. Her symphony, like Dvořák’s, is traditional in its overall structure. It opens and closes with lengthy movements in sonata form, while the third movement is slow and expressive.

The second movement begins with a complete presentation of an Irish folk tune titled “The Little Field of Barley.” After a brief introduction by the horn and strings, the tune is played by the oboe—a choice of instrument perhaps inspired by the English horn in the second movement of Dvořák’s symphony. Accompanying drones in the clarinets and bassoon can be heard as imitating a bagpipe. At the conclusion of the melody, the tempo changes, suddenly becoming much faster. We then hear a series of variations on the tune. The first is provided by the violins, who play rapid series of high, sparkling notes. Next we hear from the winds, who pass the theme back and forth with the violins. The horn and English horn then take the theme to the minor mode. Upon the recovery of the major mode, the tempo slows and we hear the original tune once more from the English horn. At this point the music swells dramatically, although a concluding fast passage featuring flutes and violins means that the movement ends with a smile.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STYLE AND INSTRUMENTATION

In the previous section, we looked at four individual works that can each be understood to express something about national identity. All four of these works, however, belong generally to the tradition of Western art music. When Liszt and Bartók wrote for solo piano, they contributed to the repertoire for pianists trained in the classical style. When Dvořák and Beach composed symphonies, they adhered to norms developed by two centuries of European composers. In other cases, however, entirely new musical traditions come to represent a nation’s identity. Such traditions have unique characteristics and practices, and sometimes unique instruments as well. They become inextricably linked with national identity on an international level and can serve to further the political interests of a nation. Such

is the case with the tradition of steelband music, which developed in and came to represent the nation of Trinidad and Tobago.

Steelband Music of Trinidad and Tobago

Like South Africa, the nation of Trinidad and Tobago is largely defined by its colonial past. The modern nation consists of two islands (Trinidad is the larger, Tobago the smaller). These islands were first claimed as a Spanish colony in 1498. The invaders rewrote the demographics of the region, essentially eradicating the indigenous population while bringing vast numbers of enslaved Africans overseas to work in the agricultural sector. For this reason, citizens of African descent now make up about 40% of the population.



Image 9.29: This map depicts the nation of Trinidad and Tobago, which is located off the coast of Argentina.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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By the end of the 18th century, Spain struggled to supply enough settlers to oversee its island's industries. To this end, in 1783 the Spanish King invited French settlers to take over agricultural lands on the islands, resulting in French cultural influence. In 1797, however, the British took military control of Trinidad and Tobago, and the islands remained part of the British empire until independence in 1962.

As a result of British colonialism, English is the official language of Trinidad and Tobago, although most residents speak a creolized form that reflects the influence of several African languages. However, citizens of British descent make up only a small portion of the population. Following the abolition of slavery in 1838, Indian immigrants came to the islands as indentured laborers. Today, their descendants also make up about 40% of the population. Trinidad and Tobago, therefore, is a diverse nation in which African, Indian, and European influence can be discerned in everyday life.

The vestiges of Catholicism—brought centuries ago by Spanish and French colonists—will be central to our discussion. Although only a fifth of the nation's population identify as Catholic today, one Catholic tradition in particular continues to have a major impact on the music of Trinidad and Tobago: **Carnival**. We discussed Carnival elsewhere in Chapter 4, for it played a significant role in the development of opera. Diverse Carnival traditions have arisen around the world in the wake of European imperialism. Although no two traditions are identical, all facilitate exuberant celebration in the period leading up to the start of Lent.



Image 9.31: Groups of revelers dress in matching costumes, which are painstakingly crafted in the months leading up to Carnival.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Image 9.30: Carnival participants wear extravagant costumes adorned with sequins and feathers.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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The history of Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago is tied to the history of the islands' occupation. While Carnival was celebrated by the Spanish and French, it was suppressed by the British, who were not Catholic and did not approve of the celebration's excesses. Under British rule, Carnival was restricted to the Monday and Tuesday before Lent. The islands' governors, however, could not put down the celebrations altogether, and during the 19th century they became increasingly exuberant—sometimes even violent. The early 20th century saw Carnival transformed into a more respectable event.

This was accomplished through the institution of competitions for Carnival participants, with perhaps the most coveted title—Calypso Monarch—going to the performer of the best new calypso song.

Music was always very important to Carnival. The **calypso** tradition developed among enslaved Africans, and has roots in the sung storytelling of West Africa. Here, however, we will focus on the dance music associated with Carnival—in particular, that performed on the nation’s indigenous instrument, the steelpan.

Steelpans developed out of an older tradition of dance music known as *tamboo bamboo*. Both traditions had something important in common: The instruments could be constructed at no cost out of readily available materials. *Tamboo bamboo* was performed using hollow bamboo sticks, which were stamped on the ground to create complex rhythmic patterns. The various dimensions of the sticks meant that they produced different tones. *Tamboo bamboo* developed after drums were banned by the British in 1834, but the practice was itself banned a century later as part of the ongoing attempt to quell the Carnival festivities.

Although the origins of steelpans—like those of most musical traditions developed by disenfranchised populations—are shrouded in mystery, it is certain that impoverished Afro-Trinidadian youth began building drums out of discarded biscuit tins in the late 1930s. The first experimenters entered into intense competition with one another, and each sought to create a drum that could play more individual pitches than that created by his rival. Notes could be produced by hammering raised bumps into the bottom of the tin, the size of which determined the pitch. Oil barrels, which were readily available due to the presence of a US naval base on the island, soon replaced biscuit tins as the material of choice. Before long, these musicians had developed drums that could play complete melodies—and were extremely noisy.

At first, the British government reacted to steelpans with the same disdain they had cast upon tamboo bamboo and drums in the past. There was general concern that the new instrument would fuel street violence and lead to civil unrest. In 1946, however, a钢pan musician named Winston “Spree” Simon played the British national anthem, “God Save the King,” for the governor. By performing a European melody on the instrument (and a patriotic one at that), Simon proved that steel pans could be respectable. The British immediately saw the instrument’s potential for the promotion of national pride and set about establishing the steelpan as a national instrument.



Image 9.32: Today, most of the music in Carnival parades is blasted from sound trucks.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: User “Jean-Marc /Jo BeLo/Jhon-John”

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Image 9.33: In this photograph taken by David Stanley, we see members of the group NGC Steel Xplosion playing in the 2014 Panorama competition.

Source: Flickr

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The process began in 1949, when a Government Steelband Committee was formed to promote steelpans music. The Committee in turn formed the Trinidad and Tobago Steelband Association and founded the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra. In 1952, a steelband category was added to the national Trinidad Music Festival, which had been established in 1948 to celebrate and encourage the European concert tradition. When steelbands participated in the Music Festival, they played European classics arranged for steelpans. Finally, in 1963, the Panorama competition was founded to celebrate the independence of Trinidad and Tobago. Panorama is a highlight of the annual Carnival celebrations, and it continues to honor the band who gives the best performance of a recent dance hit.

Over the first few decades of its existence, the steelpans became an extraordinarily flexible instrument. It had to be, seeing as it was used to play both nuanced symphonic classics and energetic dance music. An individual instrument has a full set of **chromatic** pitches (analogous to the keys on a keyboard) spanning at least one octave. Pans come in a variety of sizes, from the small tenor or lead pan to the bass pan, which requires multiple physical drums with just a few pitches each. A steelband will contain dozens of pans in a variety of sizes. The pans are played using rubber-tipped mallets, which are often “rolled” (repeatedly struck in a rapid pattern) on the instrument to create a sustained pitch.



Image 9.34: In some of the higher-range instruments, the pitches are spread across two pans.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 9.35: In this photograph, we see musicians in Saint-Martin playing multiple sizes of instruments, with the large bass pan in the foreground.

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Steelpan musicians have always valued their ability to play classical music. From the beginning, the performance of concert music demonstrated the sophistication of the instrument and the musicians—who at first were all members of the black community—in front of an international audience that was skeptical of their worth. In fact, the desire to play classical music well steered the development of the instrument, and many of its contemporary features, such as the suspension of the pans from metal frames, exist to facilitate concert performance. However, steelbands (or steel orchestras, as they are often called) don't take on classical repertoire primarily to prove themselves. The musicians play concert music because they love it and because it is deeply meaningful to them.

Invaders: Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 5, Fourth Movement⁹

9.		Symphony No. 5, Movement IV Composer: Ludwig van Beethoven Performance: Invaders, World Steelband Music Festival (1992)
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We will examine a performance from the 1992 World Steelband Music Festival, which developed out of the Trinidad Music Festival in 1964 (one year after Trinidad and Tobago gained independence). This festival celebrates the diverse capabilities of the instrument, for each competing band must perform both an arrangement of a calypso and a selection from the European concert repertoire. However, this structure has not been without conflict. In the years following independence, some representatives of the Afro-Trinidadian community insisted that steelbands should only play indigenous music, not that of the colonizers. Other factions were

unwilling to sacrifice music they loved in order to make a political statement, and believed that European influence could make Afro-Trinidadian music better. These kinds of political concerns still preoccupy performers in the European tradition in all parts of the world.

In 1992, the Invaders chose the fourth movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 for their Festival performance. The Invaders are one of the oldest steelbands in Trinidad, tracing their lineage back to the earliest days of steelpan development. They have been equally successful performing concert repertoire and dance music, taking prizes at both the World Steelband Music Festival and Panorama.

For this performance, the Invaders add percussion instruments taken from the symphony orchestra, including a set of timpani. They dress in a manner that reflects concert hall practice (tuxedos for men, elegant matching jackets for women) and are led by a **conductor**. None of these elements would be present if the Invaders were competing at Panorama, but they are all considered appropriate for a performance of Beethoven. They do not read from sheet music, as orchestral musicians would, but have instead memorized their parts. The Invaders play all the notes just as Beethoven wrote them. The sound of the ensemble, however, is quite unlike anything Beethoven could have imagined.

Trinidad All Stars: Ultimate Rejects, "Full Extreme"

Our second performance, from the 2017 Panorama competition, is quite different. At Panorama, it is typical for a steelband to perform an arrangement of a hit song from the previous year. These arrangements are more than just transcriptions for steelband: That is to say, the members of the ensemble do not simply play the notes of the song on their instruments. Instead, steelband arrangers use the song as a starting point from which to craft elaborate variations. The resulting composition is usually about ten minutes long (in contrast to the three-minute popular song on which it is based) and demonstrate the full range of the ensemble's capabilities.

Although steelbands used to perform arrangements of calypso songs, in recent years they have turned to a new genre of Carnival music: **soca**. Soca is a variety of electronic dance music. Unlike calypso, soca songs value danceability over lyric content. They are closely associated with Carnival, and often celebrate the spirit of freedom and joy that imbues the festivities. During Carnival, the new songs for that year are blasted from speakers carried through the streets on truck beds. Although recorded soca has largely displaced live steelband performances in Carnival parades, the musical practices continue not only to coexist but to influence one another.

In 2017, the Trinidad All Stars took first place in the Panorama competition with their arrangement of the soca song "Full Extreme,"¹⁰ which was released that same year by the band Ultimate Rejects. The song is characterized by its lively beat and repetitive melodic and textural refrains. The lyrics, which reflect a local English, dialect, celebrate the party spirit that cannot be quenched even by recession and

disaster. The music video reinforces this message, as costumed carnivalgoers dance despite the oppressive presence of uniformed police. The refrain “We jammin still” captures the power of Carnival to overcome centuries of attempted repression.

10.



This is the music video for the 2017 Ultimate Rejects song “Full Extreme.”

The extended performance of “Full Extreme”¹¹ by the Trinidad All Stars fully captures the soca song’s energy, even though it includes no text. Central to the performance, of course, is the arrangement itself. Steelpan arrangers are highly regarded in the pan community, and the best are competitively recruited by the bands who hope to win Panorama. This 2017 arrangement of “Full Extreme” was created by Leon “Smooth” Edwards. Edwards was born in the capital of Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain, where he became involved with steelpan music at a young age. He played with the Trinidad All Stars from 1968 until 2002, continuing to participate in Carnival even after immigrating to the United States in 1988. Edwards began arranging in 1975, and won his first Panorama as an arranger in 1980. “Full Extreme” was his ninth win.

11.



“Full Extreme”

Composer: Ultimate Rejects, arranged by Leon “Smooth” Edwards

Performance: Trinidad All Stars, Panorama Preliminary (2017)

In Edwards’ arrangement, you can hear the basic melodic elements of the Ultimate Rejects’ song. However, his arrangement is considered “good” because of the many ways in which it departs from the original, which is too repetitive to be very interesting in a purely instrumental version. In particular, Edwards makes use of the chromatic capabilities of the steelpan, writing passages that require players to strike almost every note on the instrument. He also contributes **variations** on the melody of the song. Finally, he occasionally interrupts the rhythmic groove, with has the effect of heightening the rhythmic excitement of his arrangement. The Trinidad All Stars’ performance is strong not only because they play all the correct notes at the correct times but because they exude energy throughout. The best steelpan players—like the best performers in many traditions—become physically involved in the music.

There are a number of additional noteworthy differences between the All Stars’ performance of “Full Extreme” and the Invaders’ performance of Beethoven. The players wear a coordinated uniform, but it is t-shirts, not tuxedos. They

do not require a conductor, but are instead lead by the rhythm section—which contains a drum set and various timekeeping instruments, not timpani. Before the performance begins, we can hear the succession of metallic strikes that set the music in motion. (Appropriately, the rhythm section in this type of steelband is referred to as the “engine room.”) The level of dedication and professionalism, however, is the same, as steelbands practice intensely—and in secret—in the months leading up to Carnival.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

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10

Support and Protest

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we examined various ways in which nations can be represented by musical means. Our examples included national anthems, pieces of art music that draw from folk sources, and a complete musical tradition with national significance. In this chapter, we will turn our attention to the role of music in political action, and we will see how music can not only represent a nation but also directly influence its character and future.

As we already discussed in the context of national anthems, music can bring people together and inspire them to feel sympathetic toward one another. Music—especially participatory music—can create community. Music can also inspire an emotional response in the listener. These capacities are combined to great effect when music is used to urge a group of people to think or act along specific political lines.

Sometimes, music is employed in support of a political candidate or ideology. The most prominent examples of this include campaign songs, music played at political rallies, and the soundtracks to political advertisements. In all of these cases, music is used to inspire sympathy with a cause or candidate and win the support of the listener. However, the creators of the music in question do not always have a say in its political use. More often than not, music is coopted for political purposes and used in ways that the original artist had never imagined (and may not approve of). In such cases, we see the capacity of music to express meaning beyond its creator's intent.

Other times, music is used to combat a dominant political force. The most prominent example of this is the **protest song**, which is used to inspire resistance to an ongoing political action. When music is used to protest ruling powers, however, there is always an element of danger. Those who position themselves in opposition to governments or bosses risk serious reprisal. For this reason, protest music is not always easy to decipher. Sometimes it is **overt** in its meaning, clearly indicating the objectionable situation and the desired action. Sometimes, however, it is **covert**, instead disguising its meaning so that only certain listeners will receive the message. In such cases, it can be difficult to determine exactly what a piece of

music “means” or even to prove that it is subversive at all. We will examine both overt and covert examples in this chapter.

MUSIC AS POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Campaign Songs

The use of music to rally support for a political cause has a long history. Music has been used around the world to display the power of monarchies, to urge soldiers into battle, and to inspire patriotic support for all manner of governments. Here, we will focus on the role of music in American politics, with special attention given to specific songs that have been used by candidates seeking election to the presidency.

Although we are focusing on campaign songs, those are not the only musical tools that have been employed by American political candidates. Before the rise of mass media, campaigning was conducted in person at events such as rallies, parades, and whistle stops, often to the accompaniment of a local brass band playing popular and patriotic tunes. Today, we are more likely to hear campaign music via television, whether we are watching a televised campaign event or a paid political advertisement. At events, candidates are likely to use popular songs that convey a relevant message, set the right mood, or speak to a desired voting base. In advertisements, we are more likely to hear **underscoring** similar to that used in television shows and movies. Such music attracts less attention than a popular song, but it plays an equally important role in communicating the candidate’s message.

To see underscoring at work, we might examine two recent television advertisements from a 2016 Republican candidate for governor of Georgia, Casey Cagle. In a spot from early in the campaign, titled “Difference,”¹ Casey touts his humble beginnings, strong personal ethic, and political accomplishments. The music behind his voiceover is bouncy and cheerful. The major mode tells us that this is a message of optimism, while the mid-tempo drumbeat and repetitive, **staccato** melody notes are reassuring and uplifting. Later in the campaign, however, Cagle—in response to a strong showing by his rival—attempted to construct a new public persona for himself, one that emphasized strength and determination. These qualities are reflected in the television advertisement “About,”² which features music that would be equally at home in an action film. The minor mode and suspenseful harmonies keep the listener on edge, while periodic percussive strikes suggest danger and unrest. As musicologist Naomi Graber has observed, the music builds to a climax in parallel with Cagle’s rousing speech, suggesting that Cagle himself is the superhero in this narrative.

1.



In this 2016 campaign ad for Georgia gubernatorial candidate Casey Cagle, the music is bouncy and cheerful.

2.



In this ad from later in Cagle's campaign, the music is suspenseful.

Candidates are sometimes musicians themselves and are therefore able to exploit their own musical skills to win the sympathy and support of the public. In 1886, for example, two brothers—Alf and Bob Taylor—ran against one another in a bid to become governor of Tennessee. Both men were excellent fiddlers, and they not only performed frequently throughout the campaign but also used their love of folk music to establish a down-home identity and connect with rural voters. More than a century later, President Bill Clinton advertised himself as fun-loving and cool by playing saxophone on *The Arsenio Hall Show*, while Democratic presidential candidate Martin O’Malley garnered attention by playing guitar and singing Taylor Swift’s “Bad Blood” on *The View*. Although the genres (and skill levels) of these candidate-performers varied widely, all used music to paint themselves as good-humored and relatable.

When it comes to conveying a specific political message through music, song is clearly



Image 10.1: Alf and Bob Taylor fiddling at one of their campaign events in 1886. Bob won the election, but Alf was elected governor of Tennessee in 1920.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: George Simons

License: Public Domain



Image 10.2: Bill Clinton famously played saxophone on The Arsenio Hall Show in 1992. The sunglasses further underscore Clinton’s message to voters.

Source: Flickr

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Image 10.3: Martin O’Malley singing on the campaign trail in 2014.

Source: Flickr

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the best choice, and it has been in use since the beginning of American electoral politics. In the earliest years, election songs were usually **parodies**. As early as George Washington's reelection campaign in 1792, supporters advocated their candidates' causes by writing new words to recent popular songs. This technique could be very effective. Because the melody was already familiar, parody lyrics were quickly learned, sung, and spread. The success of a popular song could even contribute to the success of the campaign that chose to parody that song. In 1840, William Harrison's campaign song "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," which parodied the familiar "Three Little Pigs," became so popular that it was widely credited with winning him the presidency.

There is also a long history of presidential candidates relying on endorsements by celebrity musicians to boost their popularity. The earliest example of this came in 1860, when the famous abolitionist singer Jesse Hutchinson wrote a parody song in support of Abraham Lincoln. The song—"Lincoln and Liberty, Too," set to the tune of "Rosin the Beau"—was a hit, but Hutchinson's popularity probably contributed just as much to Lincoln's victory.

New songs have also been written in support of presidential candidates. While this practice dates to the early 20th century, it is particularly widespread today, when anyone can write a song, record a performance, and upload their contribution to social media. Technology has always influenced the role of music in presidential elections. Beginning in the 1930s, the prevalence of radio (and later television) led campaigns to employ songs that were already popular—an approach that proved more effective than the creation of a new song that might or might not prove a hit.

In this chapter, we will consider three such songs. These songs are all quite different in style and message, but they share one important thing in common: None of them were written with any political end in mind. In each case, the presidential campaign coopted the song because it supported the campaign's political message.

Milton Ager and Jack Yellen, "Happy Days Are Here Again"

The first presidential candidate to coopt a popular song for his campaign was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who in 1932 adopted the recent hit song "Happy Days Are Here Again"³ to represent his political agenda. Although the song was not created for his campaign and did not communicate an explicitly political message, Roosevelt found that it perfectly captured the spirit of his presidential bid.

3.		"Happy Days Are Here Again" Composers: Milton Ager and Jack Yellen Performance: Annette Hanshaw (1930)
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It is no surprise that Roosevelt should have been the first presidential candidate to use a popular song in his campaign. The 1920s and 1930s were a time of



Image 10.4: This 1932 photograph shows Roosevelt giving a campaign speech in Topeka, KS.

Source: Flickr

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extraordinary growth in the music recording and broadcast industries, with the result that popular songs were more influential than ever before. The first commercial license was issued to a radio station in 1921, while 1925 saw the invention of the electrical microphone and an accompanying improvement in the quality of recorded and broadcast sound. Due in part to the economic downturn of 1929, radio soon eclipsed the phonograph in popularity. The most successful programming in that era consisted of live musical performances. Roosevelt was the first presidential candidate (and later president) to take full advantage of the radio as a platform for connecting with Americans and spreading his message.

The decision to play “Happy Days Are Here Again” at the 1932 Democratic National Convention was made spontaneously after the man who introduced Roosevelt gave a lifeless and dour speech. Roosevelt’s campaign managers had originally intended to brand him with “Anchors Aweigh” (a nod to his Navy service), but they felt that the occasion called for something more lively and selected “Happy Days Are Here Again” at the last moment. The song proved effective and was used for the remainder of the campaign. In fact, it was such a success that “Happy Days Are Here Again” was associated with the Democratic Party for many years to come.



Image 10.5: Here we see Roosevelt making a radio broadcast from his home in 1943.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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In 1932, a song like “Happy Days Are Here Again” would have had particular resonance with Americans, who were experiencing the worst effects of the Great Depression. The 1930s saw a public clamor for escapist films, theater, and songs. Almost no popular songs from this era reference the difficulties that plagued Americans following the stock market crash of October 1929. Instead, they celebrate good times, affluence, and carefree living.

The authors of “Happy Days Are Here Again”—composer Milton Ager and lyricist Jack Yellen—were themselves the beneficiaries of fortunate timing, for they wrote their song just before the onset of the Great Depression. “Happy Days” was commissioned by MGM for inclusion in an early sound film, *Chasing Rainbows* (1930). While waiting for the film to be released, however, Ager and Yellen provided their new song to bandleader George Olsen, who performed regularly at Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City. Olsen’s band premiered “Happy Days” on October 24, 1929—the day of the crash. Olsen supposedly called on his soloists to “sing it for the corpses,” a reference to the morose diners who had just lost their life savings. As Yellen recalled, “After a couple of choruses, the corpses joined in, sardonically, hysterically. Before the night

was over, the hotel lobby resounded with what had become the theme song of ruined stock speculators as they leaped from hotel windows.”

“Happy Days Are Here Again” went on to become a major hit. It appealed to listeners who reveled in the irony of the lyrics (“happy days” were certainly *not* anywhere to be seen), but it also embodied the American spirit of optimism and perseverance in the face of extreme difficulty. The lyrics—like those of most successful songs—are not about any particular event or situation. Instead, they speak in broad terms, bidding farewell to “sad times” and “bad times” before celebrating the fact that “the skies above are clear again” and calling on all to “tell the world” that “happy days are here again.”

“Happy Days Are Here Again” was a project of a songwriting industry known as **Tin Pan Alley**. The main product of Tin Pan Alley song



Image 10.6: Band leader George Olsen premiered “Happy Days are Here Again” on the day of the 1929 stock market crash.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 10.7: This undated photograph depicts a building in Tin Pan Alley that housed many of the era's leading music publishers.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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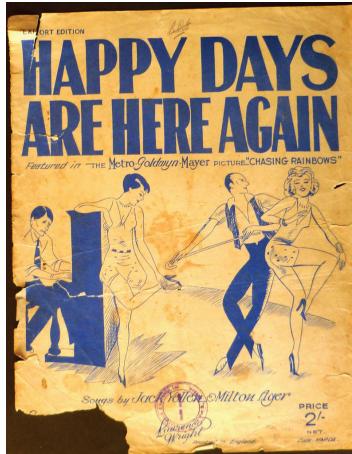


Image 10.8: The sheet music cover for "Happy Days Are Here Again" (1929).

Source: Flickr

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and His Orchestra, but this was only the first in a parade of renditions by a variety of popular singers. We will consider the 1930 recording by Ben Selvin and His Orchestra, with Annette Hanshaw on vocals.

Ben Selvin (1898-1980) holds the honor as the most productive recording artist in American history, having recorded as many as 20,000 individual tunes. It is difficult to make an exact count because Selvin recorded under dozens of different names for all of the major record labels of his era. This was a typical practice, since performing artists were required to sign exclusive contracts with recording companies. The use of pseudonyms allowed an artist to triple or quadruple their income by recording with a variety of labels. As a producer at Columbia Records, Selvin also oversaw the creation of recordings by other artists. His catalog includes some of the finest records made in the early 1930s.

Annette Hanshaw (1901-1985) was among the countless singers who performed and recorded with Selvin's band. She was also very famous in her own right, being voted the best female popular singer in a 1934 *Radio Stars* magazine poll. Hanshaw, however, later confessed that she detested performing and could not stand her own records. She loved music but became very nervous in front of

publishers was sheet music, which consumers would purchase so as to be able to perform hit songs in their own homes. By 1929, sheet music sales had already been eclipsed by phonograph sales, and radio was further eating into the popular music market share. Still, songwriting teams, usually in the employment of Tin Pan Alley publishers, continued to crank out potential hits into the 1940s. (The name "Tin Pan Alley" refers to the discordant sounds of cheap pianos being played in the many publishing houses located on a single block in Manhattan.)

During the Tin Pan Alley era, songs were not often associated with individual performers. Instead, hit songs were recorded by all of the prominent singers, each of whom was expected to perform a common repertoire. "Happy Days Are Here Again" was first recorded in November 1929 by Leo Reisman



Image 10.9: At the time this photo was taken in 1934, Annette Hanshaw was one of the most popular singers on the radio.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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a microphone and was dissatisfied with her abilities as a singer.

Selvin and Hanshaw's recording of "Happy Days Are Here Again" is typical of 1920s-era **sweet jazz**. This type of music was intended primarily for dancing, and it could be heard in upscale urban hotels, ballrooms, and on the radio. Selvin's band contains instruments that we associate with jazz today, such as saxophones, trumpets, trombones, and piano, but—in keeping with the standard of the era—it also contains a violin section, and the bass line is played on the tuba instead of the string bass. The tempo is lively and the beat is clearly articulated by the rhythm section (piano and tuba).

Ager and Yellen's jazz-influenced tune is highly **syncopated**, meaning that melody notes often fall between beats. We can hear this in the chorus: The word "happy" falls on the beat, but the words "days" and "are" come after the beat. (Try clapping the pulse while reciting the lyrics in rhythm to see how this works.) This pattern is repeated with the next phrase, in which "here" falls on the beat but the second syllable of "again" come off the beat. Selvin's band makes this pattern sound even more exciting by shortening the melody notes that fall on the beat.

The form of this recording is also typical of the era. Although the song "Happy Days Are Here Again" technically begins with a **verse**, Selvin chooses to open his rendition with the much catchier **chorus**. After singing through the chorus once, Hanshaw sings the verse, which is much shorter than the chorus and also in the minor mode. This provides welcome contrast, but the change in mood doesn't last long. Next, we hear a rendition of the chorus by an anonymous trio of male singers. Finally, we get an instrumental version, with the male singers joining in for the closing phrase. In short, most of the recording is taken up by three complete turns through the chorus—which, by the end of the three minutes, is firmly lodged in the listener's head.

This approach to the production of popular music—extreme repetition, softened by a brief excursion into contrasting material—is still with us today. Although the forms, sounds, and lyrics have all changed, record producers continue to foreground the most memorable musical material while finding opportunities to introduce contrast. This delicate balance between too much repetition (which would make a song annoying) and too little (which would prevent it from being memorable) characterizes the eternal formula for successful popular music.



Image 10.10: Ben Selvin, pictured here in 1945, might have recorded as many as 20,000 tunes over the course of his career.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Paul Simon, "Bridge Over Troubled Water"

Successful campaign songs always combine a relevant text with music that sets an appropriate emotional tone. It is easy to see how a song like "Happy Days Are Here Again" could serve this purpose well: It is bright and cheerful, and exhibits unchecked optimism about the future. The 1970 Simon & Garfunkel hit "Bridge Over Troubled Water"⁴ is a less obvious choice for a political campaign. While the song's lyrics touch on themes that a candidate might want to emphasize, the music lacks the energy of a typical campaign song. We will begin, therefore, by examining the song itself. Then we will consider why George McGovern, the Democratic challenger to President Richard Nixon, might have selected it for his 1972 campaign.

4. 

"Bridge Over Troubled Water"
Composer: Paul Simon
Performance: Simon and Garfunkel (1970)

In 1969, Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel were two of the biggest stars in American popular music. Their recent albums *Sounds of Silence* (1966) and *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme* (1966) had both proved major hits, and they were at the forefront of the **folk rock** genre. Although both men sang and made contributions to the duo's **arrangements**, Simon was the lead songwriter—a fact that caused some friction, as Simon increasingly felt that Garfunkel was not making an equal contribution to the partnership. The duo broke up in 1970 just as their fourth album, *Bridge over Troubled Water*, was rapidly climbing the charts.

Simon wrote "Bridge over Troubled Water" very quickly in 1969. He later recounted that the basic idea took him about twenty minutes to work out, while the whole song was finished in under two hours. The title lyric was inspired by a line from the 1958 Swan Silvertones song "Mary Don't You Weep," in which Claude Jeter sings, "I'll be your bridge over deep water if you trust in me." Simon's source ended up shaping not only the lyrics but the sound of his new song. The Swan Silvertones were an African American gospel group, and their music drew from the rich tradition of black church music. Although Simon and Garfunkel did not attempt a wholesale



Image 10.11: Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel in 1968.

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Corporation and Columbia Records

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imitation of this style, they wanted their recording to reflect the influence of gospel (a style discussed in Chapter 11).

“Bridge over Troubled Water” contains three verses, the last of which was added at the request of Garfunkel to support the song’s dramatic musical climax. Simon wrote the verse, but never cared for it—his message was communicated in its entirety in the first two verses. These vow to the listener that, although they may be “weary, feeling small,” “down and out,” or “on the street,” the singer will always “take your part” and “lay me down / Like a bridge over troubled water.” In short, the song promises solace and support for anyone who is experiencing difficulties in life.

Although Simon wrote the song using his favored instrument, the guitar, he chose to make the recording with a piano played in the gospel style. The instrumental introduction, with its grandiose chords and syncopated rhythms, could indeed preface the entrance of a gospel singer. Instead, we hear the voice of Garfunkel, which Simon thought was better suited to the tune than his own. The first verse is accompanied only by piano. The second verse is additionally supported by vibraphone, which adds warmth and resonance without changing the character of the song.

At the conclusion of the second verse, however, the music takes a new direction. First, a drum set crashes onto the soundscape. Strings enter next, followed by an electric bass. The full instrumental forces grow in energy throughout the third and final verse, which also features Simon singing a harmony part. In the final seconds of the song, the tempo slows as the strings ascend to their highest note, producing a triumphant conclusion.

Despite the drama that Simon and Garfunkel were able to produce in their studio recording of “Bridge over Troubled Water,” the song itself is not particularly energetic. It features a slow tempo, a sustained vocal line, and lyrics that encourage the listener to feel calm and resolute. It’s not a song one would play to rile up a crowd or to encourage enthusiastic support for a cause.

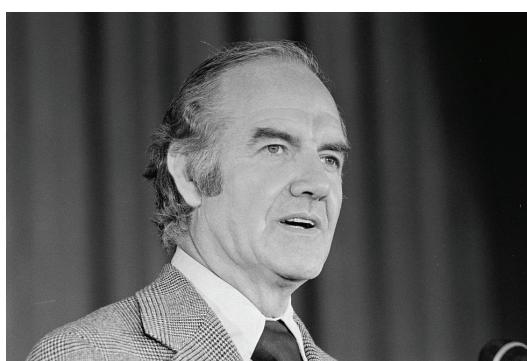


Image 10.12: In 1972, George McGovern ran an unsuccessful presidential campaign to unseat Richard Nixon.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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All the same, George McGovern chose “Bridge over Troubled Water” as the theme song for his 1972 presidential bid, and he played it at his rallies throughout the campaign. The song certainly embodied many of McGovern’s values. He ran on a platform of national unification and healing, advertising his ability to reach across the aisle and bring opposing factions together. The preceding years had indeed been characterized by devastating internal conflict, including the 1968 assassination of

Martin Luther King, Jr., the 1969 Stonewall riots, and growing unrest concerning the war in Vietnam—unrest that culminated in the 1970 Kent State massacre in which National Guardsmen killed four student protesters. McGovern positioned himself as a staunchly anti-war candidate who would bring peace to the nation. For this reason, “Bridge over Troubled Water” was uniquely suited to his campaign. At one point, McGovern even quoted the song directly, stating, “I want, indeed, to become a bridge over troubled waters.”

McGovern was able to use “Bridge over Troubled Water” in another way as well. He invited Simon and Garfunkel to participate in a benefit concert that took place in Madison Square Garden on June 14, 1972. (Simon actively supported McGovern’s candidacy; Garfunkel was less enthusiastic but eager to perform before a large crowd.) McGovern naturally benefitted from having star performers take the stage, just as he profited from associating himself with a song that was heard constantly on the radio. However, McGovern was also able to polish his image by bringing the sundered duo back together for the first time since their partnership had ended. He, after all, was the candidate of reconciliation and peace making. McGovern’s ability to restore the Simon and Garfunkel partnership therefore attested to his potential skills as a national leader.

“Bridge over Troubled Water,” therefore, was perhaps not as bizarre a choice for a campaign song as one might think. Unfortunately for McGovern, the song does not seem to have done him any good: He was soundly defeated in the 1972 election by incumbent Richard Nixon, who won over 60% of the vote and took every state except Massachusetts and the District of Columbia.

Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne, “I Won’t Back Down”

In contrast with Simon and Garfunkel’s soulful ballad, Tom Petty’s 1989 hit “I Won’t Back Down”⁵ is an obvious choice for a political candidate. In fact, it is so well-suited to the campaign trail that half a dozen candidates have employed it in just the first two decades of the 21st century. It was also used to voice a non-partisan political message following the September 11 terrorist attacks. At the same time, at least one candidate’s attempt to coopt the message and popularity of “I Won’t Back Down” backfired. We will try to understand why this song has been so useful in the context of political discourse and consider the risks of coopting the creative work of a celebrity for partisan purposes—especially when that celebrity is politically active.

5.



“I Won’t Back Down”

Composer: Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne

Performance: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (1989)

By the time he released “I Won’t Back Down,” Tom Petty (1950-2017) was already a rock music superstar. Petty was born and raised in Gainesville, FL, where he dropped out of high school to join a band. He was inspired by Elvis Presley and The Beatles, whose success proved to him that it was possible for a regular, working-class kid to make it in music. Although Petty only achieved local celebrity in his first decade as a rock musician, the late 1970s saw the meteoric rise of his band Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, which recorded a string of successful albums between 1976 and 1987. Although the Heartbreakers would reconvene in the early 1990s and continue to release albums until just a few years before Petty’s 2017 death, Petty took a hiatus in 1988 to join George Harrison’s group the Traveling Wilburys. During this same period, Petty also released his first solo album, *Full Moon Fever*. The lead single from this album was “I Won’t Back Down.”

Half of the songs on *Full Moon Fever* were cowritten by Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne, an English musician and founding member of the Traveling Wilburys. It is common for popular songwriters to work in pairs. This strategy has proved successful since the early 20th century, when Tin Pan Alley songwriters teamed up to produce hits. Many songwriters find that this approach aids productivity, since the contributors can help one another out of creative difficulties and suggest improvements to the music or lyrics. Lynne also produced the album and is, therefore, in part responsible for the sound of “I Won’t Back Down.”

The success of “I Won’t Back Down”—both as a popular song and as a political soundtrack—can be traced to its straightforward message. Like “Happy Days Are Here Again,” “I Won’t Back Down” does not refer to any particular event or circumstances. We don’t know what the singer is standing up for, or against whom he is resisting, or why he is in a position that requires he stand his ground. All we know is that, despite “a world that keeps on pushin’ me around” and “draggin’ me down,” the singer “won’t back down.”

The music admirably communicates this message of steadfast endurance. “I Won’t Back Down” is set to a medium rock tempo—not so fast as to feel frantic but not so slow as to feel lethargic. The music sounds as if it—like the singer—could carry on this way forever. The sung melody has a protracted melodic rhythm, meaning that the individual note values are long and unhurried. Petty’s unaffected drawl further convinces us that he is not to be moved, while the relaxed guitar solo underscores the point. “I Won’t Back Down” is, naturally enough, in the major mode, but the accompaniment prominently features a minor chord, heard under



Image 10.13: Petty continued to perform up until his death. He is pictured here on stage in 2012.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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the word “won’t” in the title line. This tinges the lyric with seriousness of purpose. Although the singer is not overly concerned, he is not taking the threat lightly.

“I Won’t Back Down” first made political headlines in 2000, when George W. Bush used it at events during his presidential campaign. The song seemed an excellent choice, but it became a liability when Petty protested, sending the campaign a cease-and-desist letter and demanding that they quit using his music. Bush’s campaign staff might have known better: Petty had already indicated a penchant for political speech as a musician and had aligned himself with various activist causes. In 1979, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers performed in a Madison Square Garden concert intended to raise support for the dismantling of nuclear power plants, while in 1985 they took to the stage for the famous Live Aid concert in Philadelphia, which raised funds to combat famine in Ethiopia. And in 1992, Petty had written the song “Peace in L.A.” in response to the Rodney King riots, donating all proceeds to charity. Although none of these were explicitly left-wing causes, Petty was certainly aware of his power as a political agent, and he knew that music could make a difference in a political struggle. After the 2000 election, Petty performed “I Won’t Back Down” at Al Gore’s concession speech, thereby clearly sending the message that he intended to retain control over how his music was used.



Image 10.14: The 1985 Live Aid concert raised funds to combat famine in Ethiopia.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Petty, however, did not always interfere when politicians coopted his music. During the 2008 presidential campaign, for example, “I Won’t Back Down” was used by Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton and John Edwards, but also by Republican candidate Ron Paul. In 2012, he again made no comment when “I Won’t Back Down” was played at the Democratic National Convention. That same year, however, he issued another cease-and-desist letter to Representative Michele Bachmann, who used his song “American Girl” to launch her presidential campaign. Petty, of course, was not the first rock star to object to the coopting of his hits—and also not the last. All modern presidential campaigns are accompanied by a chorus of popular recording artists asking that candidates stop using their music. It’s not clear why Petty accepted some uses of his songs and rejected others, but it is entirely clear that he understood the power of his music and celebrity.

CARL ORFF, *CARMINA BURANA*

Although popular song has been the preferred political vehicle of the past century, art music is also ripe for exploitation. Indeed, much of the music that we enjoy in concert halls and opera houses today was created on behalf of political regimes for the purpose of cementing their power. Monteverdi’s opera *Orpheus*, for example, was intended to display the wealth of the Gonzaga court and solidify its position in the eyes of visitors. Although the plot of *Orpheus* is not explicitly political, many of the Italian operas of the following two centuries portrayed monarchs as benevolent and wise father figures ordained by God for the safekeeping of their people—an image that did much to mediate potential unrest. The modern symphony orchestra, in its own turn, might be traced to a court in Mannheim, where an orchestra was used to advertise the splendor of Charles III Philip, who ruled a large region in what is now Germany.

Orff and the Nazi Party

Here, however, we will examine a 20th century instance of concert music turned to political use. While Carl Orff (1895-1982) did not set out to write a political piece of music, his **scenic cantata** *Carmina Burana* was embraced by the Nazi Party, the leaders of which believed that it conveyed many of their values and could be put to use for the purpose of riling up crowds and building communal



Image 10.15: This photograph of Carl Orff was taken in 1940, the same year that *Carmina Burana* began to be used at Nazi rallies.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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sentiment. Beginning in 1940, *Carmina Burana* was frequently performed at Party rallies and government functions, in which context it both exemplified “good” Nazi music and was used to boost enthusiasm for the government and its activities.

Carl Orff was not himself a member of the Nazi Party. After the war, he was investigated by the American denazification authorities, who cleared him of collaboration charges and authorized him to continue his professional work. All the same, Orff thrived under the Nazi regime, and he certainly didn’t use his position of relative influence to resist the regime’s activities. He never denied the Nazis permission to use his work, and on several occasions actually wrote music on their behalf. Any attempt at subversion, of course, would probably have culminated in Orff’s execution. In short, he behaved as many Germans of the era did, neither supporting nor condemning the Nazis.

Orff wrote a large number of theatrical works, many of which expressed his theory of “elemental music.” In attempting to recapture the power of ancient Greek drama, Orff advocated for a unified stage art that combined music, dance, poetry, image, design, and theatrical gesture. If this sounds familiar, we have already seen other creative figures attempt to revive the arts of ancient Greece (the Florentine Camerata, discussed in Chapter 4) and develop an all-encompassing approach to musical theater (Richard Wagner, discussed in Chapter 3). Indeed, Orff himself was responsible for the 1925 revival of the most famous opera produced under the Camerata’s influence, Claudio Monteverdi’s *Orpheus*. His greatest impact, however, was in the field of music education. He co-founded the Günther School in Munich in 1924 and taught music there until the end of his life. The techniques he developed for working with young children are still in use today.

Carmina Burana

Carmina Burana—certainly Orff’s most successful composition—is what he termed a “scenic cantata.” A **cantata** is a multi-part work for voice(s) and accompaniment. We examine two cantatas elsewhere in this volume: Barbara Strozzi’s *Lagrime mie* for solo soprano and basso continuo (Chapter 8) and Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Sleepers, Wake* for soloists, choir, and orchestra (Chapter 11). Cantata, however, is a flexible designation. Just as Strozzi and Bach’s cantatas have little in common, Orff’s cantata will in turn bear only a limited resemblance to other cantatas you might have encountered. His addition of the term “scenic” indicates that his cantatas are meant to be staged. Orff envisioned dramatic performances complete with sets, costumes, pantomime, and dancing. *Carmina Burana* was indeed presented as a dramatic spectacle in its early days, although now you are more likely to encounter it as an unstaged concert work.

Today, *Carmina Burana* seems to have completely shed its wartime significance. Few people know that it was ever used as Nazi propaganda, and it is widely enjoyed by audiences and performers. This is in part possible because the text has nothing whatsoever to do with politics, war, or Nazi values. Indeed, the text is nearly a thousand years old: Orff extracted it from a medieval manuscript of



Image 10.16: This scenic sketch was created for a 1959 production of *Carmina Burana* in Munich.

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the same name. “*Carmina Burana*” is Latin for “Songs from Benediktbeuern,” and refers to a volume of poems written primarily in the 11th and 12th centuries. The manuscript containing the poems was discovered at a Benedictine monastery in Benediktbeuern (now a municipality in Bavaria) and is prized as one of the most significant collections of what are known as **goliard** songs.

Goliards were, in modern terms, carousing college dropouts. Many were younger sons from wealthy families. Because only the eldest son could inherit, younger sons were sent to monasteries or Catholic universities, where they were educated in theology and prepared to enter the clergy. Many of these young men, however, had no affinity for the religious life and instead preferred to pursue more earthly pleasures. Because they had been well educated, goliards were able to leave a record of their satirical poems and racy songs. Most of these were written in Latin, the language of the Catholic church, although some are in the vernacular languages spoken by the goliards.

The songs in the *Carmina Burana* manuscript address all of the topics that might be of interest to young men who enjoy having a good time: the fickleness of fortune and wealth, the ephemeral nature of life, the joy of the return of Spring, drinking, gluttony, gambling, and lust. Few of the texts can be associated with specific melodies, meaning that a composer who wanted to borrow them would



Image 10.17: Fortune, as portrayed in the *Carmina Burana* manuscript. Her wheel raises kings to the heights while crushing peasants below. However, because the wheel is constantly turning, those on the bottom can hope for an improvement in their fortunes, while those on the top must remember that they will not remain there.

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to shape our lives. We will examine four musical selections, one representing each of the four themes explored in *Carmina Burana*.

“O Fortune”

The opening chorus, “O Fortune,”⁶ is certainly the most famous part of *Carmina Burana*. It has featured in dozens of films, television shows, commercials, and video games, and has even been employed by professional sports teams. Its text consists of three stanzas:

6.



“O Fortune” from *Carmina Burana*

Composer: Carl Orff

Performance: Orchestra and choir of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, conducted by Eugen Jochum (1968)

be obliged to create new musical settings. Orff did so, although he often sought to imitate the melodic shapes and modes of Gregorian chant (see Chapter 11 for an example).

Taken as a whole, however, Orff’s music is far removed from that of the medieval Catholic church. He wrote for an enormous ensemble consisting of three vocal soloists, three choirs (two mixed and one boys’), and a large orchestra complete with an eighteen-piece percussion section and two pianos. His music was inspired by Igor Stravinsky’s primitivist ballets (see Chapter 3), which used repetitive melodic figures (**ostinatos**) and jarring rhythms to evoke a pre-modern social order.

To create his scenic cantata, Orff first chose twenty-three poems from the manuscript and organized them into scenes, which address the topics of fate, springtime, drinking, and love. The first and last scenes are identical, for they portray “Fortune, Empress of the World.” The vision of fortune as a great wheel that turns incessantly can be found throughout the *Carmina Burana* manuscript, where it is represented both in verse and image. It therefore seemed natural to Orff that his cantata should end as it had begun, with a mighty chorus announcing the power of fate

O Fortune, like the moon of ever changing state, you are always waxing or waning; hateful life now is brutal, now pampers our feelings with its game; poverty, power, it melts them like ice.

Fate, savage and empty, you are a turning wheel, your position is uncertain, your favour is idle and always likely to disappear; covered in shadows and veiled you bear upon me too; now my back is naked through the sport of your wickedness.

The chance of prosperity and of virtue is not now mine; whether willing or not, a man is always liable for Fortune's service. At this hour without delay touch the strings! Because through luck she lays low the brave, all join with me in lamentation!

Translation by Gavin Betts. Used with permission.

The music is simple in the extreme. After a shockingly loud introduction, in which the full chorus and orchestra sound a series of accented chords, the instruments of the orchestra set an ostinato into motion. The ostinato contains only four pitches, each of which is sharply accented. Over the top of this ostinato, the chorus sings a melody constructed out of repeated melodic and rhythmic fragments. Almost all of the melodic motion is **conjunction** and the entire melody occupies the tiny range of a fifth. Some commentators have compared this melody to Gregorian chant, while others have remarked upon its folk-like qualities.

The first two verses are musically identical, but the third is marked by an explosion in volume. The sopranos repeat their melody, but they do so an octave higher than before. Likewise, high-register instruments join the ostinato. In the final moments of the movement, the pattern finally breaks as a new six-note ostinato takes us to the final thrilling chord. Orff's music certainly conveys the power and inescapability of fate!

“Dance”

The next selection we will consider has quite a different mood. It is an instrumental movement from the springtime scene entitled simply “Dance.”⁷ All the same, “Dance” shares a great deal in common with “O Fortune.” Orff opens the movement with a series of dramatic chords, after which he uses ostinatos to underpin a melody that is itself full of melodic repetition. And once again, that melody



Image 10.18: This pastoral illustration appears in the *Carmina Burana* manuscript.

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moves primarily by step and occupies only a small range. “Dance” feels a bit more rhythmically unpredictable than “O Fortuna.” This is due to the fact that the meter changes frequently, which prevents a steady pulse from being established (try tapping your toe along to the music—it should be very difficult). A further sense of liveliness is produced by metric disagreements between the ostinato and the melody: Often, the strong pulses in each layer do not line up.

7.



“Dance” from *Carmina Burana*
Composer: Carl Orff
Example: Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, conducted by
Donald Runnicles (2002)

“Dance” is in a ternary (A B A) form. The first A section features strings, which composers often employ to bring pastoral scenes to life. The flute, which carries the melody in the B section, is even better suited to shepherd life. This middle passage is unusual, for we hear only the flute and timpani—a rare paring to be sure. Finally, the A melody returns in the horns and trumpets. As in “O Fortune,” the music builds to an exciting and noisy final chord.

“Once I had Dwelt on Lakes”

Our third example will provide still further contrast, for it features one of the humorous texts that Orff chose to include in his cantata. “Once I had Dwelt on Lakes”⁸ is narrated from the perspective of a roast swan as he awaits his fate on a banquet table:

8.



“Once I had Dwelt on Lakes” from *Carmina Burana*
Composer: Carl Orff
Performance: Gerhard Stolze, Orchestra and choir of the
Deutsche Oper Berlin, conducted by Eugen Jochum (1968)

Once I had dwelt on lakes, once I had been beautiful, when I was a swan.
Poor wretch! Now black and well roasted!

The cook turns me back and forth; I am roasted to a turn on my pyre; now
the waiter serves me. Poor wretch! Now black and well roasted!

Now I lie on the dish, and I cannot fly; I see the gnashing teeth. Poor wretch!
Now black and well roasted!

Translation by Gavin Betts. Used with permission.

Each of the three stanzas concludes with a refrain, which is sung by the men of the choir. The part of the swan is played by the tenor soloist, who sings at the top of his range. The resulting sound, which is often tense and pinched, can be heard as an imitation of the swan's own voice. We also hear the swan in the opening bassoon solo—played at the top of *that* instrument's range. Finally, the fluttering sound in the strings and flute might capture the swan's trepidation as he contemplates his impending fate. Once again, repetitive melodies—melodies that are also, in the case of that sung by the choir, stepwise and limited to a narrow **range**—are underpinned by ostinatos.

"It is the Time of Joy" & "Sweetest of Men"

Finally, we will examine a selection—or, to be fair, a pair of selections—from the scene dealing with love. We are not talking about romantic love, however, but carnal lust. The texts to “It is the Time of Joy”⁹ and the short response number “Sweetest of Men”¹⁰ outline the courtship of a woman by a young man who is consumed with desire. She ultimately accedes:

9.	 <p>“It is the Time of Joy” from <i>Carmina Burana</i> Composer: Carl Orff Performance: Gundula Janowitz, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Orchestra and choir of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, conducted by Eugen Jochum (1968)</p>
10.	 <p>“Sweetest of Men” from <i>Carmina Burana</i> Composer: Carl Orff Performance: Gundula Janowitz, Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, conducted by Eugen Jochum (1968)</p>

It is the time of joy, O maidens, now enjoy yourselves together, O young men.

Refrain: Oh, oh, I am all aflower, now with my first love I am all afire, a new love it is of which I am dying.

I am elated when I say yes; I am depressed when I say no. **Refrain**

In the time of winter a man is sluggish, when spring is in his heart he is wanton. **Refrain**

My innocence plays with me, my shyness pushes me back. **Refrain**

Come, my mistress, with your joy; come, come, fair girl, already I die. **Refrain**

Sweetest of men,
 I give myself to you wholly!

Translation by Gavin Betts. Used with Permission.

This musical example is dominated by percussion and piano, which keep up a lively rhythmic accompaniment. The verses are sung alternately by the women and the men of the choir, while the **refrain** is sung alternately by the baritone soloist and the boys' choir. The complete vocal forces come together for the final verse/refrain pair. Every pair is sung to the same melody, but the timbral variations introduced by the changes in singers keeps the music from getting stale.

"Sweetest of Men" could hardly be more different from "It is the Time of Joy." In place of the percussive ostinatos, the orchestra sustains a single harmony. The solo soprano soars to the top of her range, carrying the fifth vowel of her text through a long passage of notes. This is known as a **melismatic** passage, and it contrasts sharply with the **syllabic** character of the previous number, in which every syllable was paired with a single note. The selection can be heard in fairly graphic terms as the satisfying fulfillment of a sexual encounter, which was communicated by all the bumps and bangs of the previous number.

This particular moment almost got Orff into trouble with the authorities, for the Nazi regime did not take kindly to the glamorization of improper social behaviors. (The Soviet regime was equally prudish, as exemplified by its response to Dmitri Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsen District*, which is detailed in the final section of this chapter.) In fact, Herbert Gerigk, a leading ideological voice in the Nazi Party, registered several objections to *Carmina Burana* when he reviewed the premiere: He found fault in the language of the text, which was incomprehensible to German listeners; the primitive character of the music, which he considered to reflect the influence of jazz (a musical style that was widely denigrated and strictly forbidden); and the "loose morals" on exhibit in the cantata.

Nonetheless, it was another interpretation of *Carmina Burana* that won official acceptance. The Nazi official Horst Büttner regarded the work as exemplifying "the radiant, strength-filled life-joy of the folk." He also pointed out that the poems were artifacts of German folk heritage, and therefore to be treasured as national literature. Finally, Büttner connected the rhythms and melodies with German folk music, thereby identifying *Carmina Burana* as an authentic expression of German identity.

When used in the context of political gatherings, *Carmina Burana* had the added value of encouraging powerful and unambiguous collective emotional reactions. It seemed to echo Hitler's call for Germans to "think with your blood." This was the kind of music that could inspire support for the regime on a purely physical level.

MUSIC AS POLITICAL PROTEST

Just as music can be used to express confidence in a candidate or government or to win support for a political cause, it can also be used to protest the actions of those in power. Because these two objectives are similar, campaign songs and protest songs generally have certain characteristics in common. The elements that usually make for a good campaign song—non-specific lyrical content, catchy

melody, energetic rhythms, hopeful mood—also tend to make for an effective protest song. In both cases, after all, the song is supposed to inspire those who hear it to rally in support of a political action.

However, there are some important differences in the ways that campaign songs and protest songs are used. Campaign songs are usually broadcast over loudspeakers at live events or perhaps performed by a band. They might also be included in television advertisements. In all of these contexts, campaign songs are passively consumed by the audience. They play an important role in setting a mood and establishing a campaign's brand, but their potential effectiveness is limited to their sound and lyrics.

Protest songs, on the other hand, are most often performed by the protesters themselves. They are not passively consumed but collectively voiced in a **participatory** context. Therefore, the sound of the song as a commercial product is not of paramount importance. What *does* matter is that the song be fairly simple in terms of text and melody so that participants can quickly learn it, and so that even the least accomplished singer will be able to join in.

Protest songs differ from campaign songs in another important way as well, for they are likely to be expressly written for political use. At the same time, protest songs are often coopted by movements that are far removed from their original context and may or may not have the explicit support of the song's creator. And, just as a non-political song can be adopted by a campaign, a non-political song can be deployed in support of a protest movement. Once again, therefore, we will see how creative artists cannot be guaranteed to retain control over the meaning or use of their own works.

Protest Songs

Florence Reece, "Which Side Are You On?"

Our first example was certainly intended as a protest—and a pointed, personal protest at that. The creator of this song was not a popular performing artist but an impoverished union organizer in rural Kentucky, unknown outside of her own community until long after the song was written. She did not have commercial success on her mind but, rather, the immediate survival of her family, which had been targeted for destruction by a powerful oppressive force.

Florence Reece (1900-1986) was the daughter and wife of coal miners. Born in Tennessee, she married Sam Reece at the age of sixteen and moved with him to Harlan County, Kentucky. It was here that a bloody conflict between mine workers and owners, now known as the Harlan County War, would play out between 1931 and 1939. In addition to fighting to protect her family, Florence documented the period in poems and songs that both reflected her desperate situation and called on fellow members of the mining community to maintain the struggle.

During World War I, the coal mining industry enjoyed a boom in production. Coal, after all, was needed for the production of steel, of which the war effort re-

quired an endless supply. Although coal companies saw the greatest profits, individual coal miners also lived comfortably during this period: Because there was enormous demand for their labor, the United Mine Workers (UMW)—the union that represented coal miners—was able to secure high wages on their behalf.

Following Armistice, however, coal companies failed to scale back their production, with the result that the market was overwhelmed and prices dropped precipitously. Many coal miners were fired, while those who remained on the job saw their wages cut again and again. Then, in 1929, the Great Depression hit, and conditions for mine workers became even worse. The UMW found that it had lost its bargaining power and withdrew, leaving workers without advocacy.

Miners who lost their jobs or found the conditions intolerable could not simply leave. To begin with, work was scarce in the early 1930s. It was the structure of the mining industry, however, that posed the greatest challenges. Miners lived in company towns that were owned and operated by the mining conglomerates. They could not buy their own homes and were reliant on the company store for household goods and groceries—stores that often inflated prices and encouraged mine employees to go into debt. Miners who wanted to leave often were not able to do so, since they owed money to their employer, while those who lost their jobs simultaneously became homeless.

Another union stepped in to fight on behalf of the desperate miners, whose labor was still necessary to keep the industry going. That union, the National Miners Union, was backed by the American Communist Party, and it was



Image 10.19: These Harlan County miners were photographed in 1946.

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Image 10.20: Miners endured difficult living conditions with no prospects for future wealth.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 10.21: Coal mining was difficult and dangerous work.

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willing to undertake extreme actions. The mine owners, on the other hand, were able to buy the support of local sheriffs, the state militia, and the court system. They even hired Chicago gangsters to take out union leaders. The ensuing conflict resulted in countless deaths on both sides, including hundreds of children and infants who starved to death or were denied medical services by the company doctors.

One particular skirmish prompted Florence Reece to create “Which Side Are You On?”¹¹ Sam Reece was a union leader and, therefore, a target for the company-backed law enforcement. One day, Sheriff J.H. Blair arrived at the Reece home with his men. They ransacked the house in front of Florence and her seven terrified children and then settled in to wait for Sam, with the intention of shooting him dead when he arrived. Sam, however, had been warned about the raid and did not return home that day. After the men left at nightfall, Florence tore a calendar off the wall and wrote the text to her song on the back.

11.



“Which Side Are You On?”

Composer: Florence Reece

Performance: Florence Reece

Florence Reece was a lyricist, not a composer, and when she wrote songs, she sang the words to familiar pre-existing melodies. For “Which Side Are You On?” she chose the melody of an old Baptist hymn, which she knew as “Lay the Lily Low.” The same melody is also used for the traditional ballad known variously as “Jack Munro,” “Jack Went A-Sailing,”¹² and “The Maid of Chatham.” The ballad is probably of British origin and, therefore, can be considered a likely source for the hymn melody known to Reece.

12.



This rendition of “Jack Went A-Sailing” was recorded in 1968.

The hymn melody was a natural and effective choice. As a committed Christian, Reece would have been likely to select tunes that she had learned in the context of worship. This particular tune is simple and easy to sing. It is also a bit ominous, given its minor mode and descending melody—the last note of each phrase is the lowest. As a result, the tune cannily captures the spirit of Reece’s message.

Reece’s message is straightforward and unadorned. She does not rely on poetic imagery or metaphor—and she doesn’t need to. In the first stanza, she praises the union. In the second, she announces that victory is assured. In the third, she makes it clear that everyone involved in the conflict must choose a side, calling out the sheriff who threatened her family by name. In the fourth, she brings in her concern

about the children of miners. In the fifth, she exhorts miners to be honest and brave. In the sixth, she proclaims her mining heritage—and incorporates her only flight of poetic fancy, referring movingly to her deceased father as “in the air and sun.” And in the seventh (not heard in our recording), she returns to the theme of collective strength through unionization. The chorus—a simple question, repeated four times—drives home the message without any ambiguity.

Reece did not record her song until much later in life. When she did so, she sang in the simple, unadorned style of many Appalachian ballad singers. She sings without accompaniment, just as she would have in 1931. Her words have a force that comes not only from her personal experiences but from her knowledge that they continue to be relevant. Although the Harlan County miners emerged victorious in 1939, another conflict would take place in 1973, when 180 miners employed by the Eastover Coal Company’s Brookside Mine and Prep Plant went

on strike for improved working conditions and decent wages. Reece joined the strikers in solidarity, and her rendition of “Which Side Are You On?” before a crowd of miners and their families was recorded in the documentary *Harlan County, USA*.

Reece’s song first gained mainstream popularity when it was recorded in 1941 by the Almanac Singers,¹³ a **folk revival** group based in New York City and led by a young Pete Seeger. The Almanac Singers were actively engaged with left-wing politics, and they were interested in supporting the labor movement. Their version employs guitar and banjo accompaniment and features a large group of singers on the chorus—a sonic representation of the collective workers represented by the union. The song was later recorded by dozens of other artists, and it has been used in protests around the world.



Image 10.22: Pete Seeger, who led the Almanac Singers, went on to have a remarkable career as a singer, songwriter, and activist.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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13.



“Which Side Are You On?”

Composer: Florence Reece

Performance: The Almanac Singers (1955)

Bob Dylan, “Blowin’ in the Wind”

It is not surprising that a folk revival group like the Almanac Singers would record Reece’s protest song. Participants in the folk revival movement were

almost universally preoccupied with social justice issues, and its singers would both record and create countless protest anthems. In fact, it is difficult to select a representative example. Bob Dylan's classic "Blowin' in the Wind,"¹⁴ however, will serve our purpose well. It will allow us to consider the connection between style and message, to examine the typical characteristics of a successful protest song, and to consider the ways in which a protest song can mean something to listeners (and singers) that was never intended by its creator.

14.



"Blowin' in the Wind"
Composer: Bob Dylan
Performance: Bob Dylan (1963)

The folk revival movement began in the 1930s, when young people in northern cities began to take an interest in the songs and tunes of rural Southern musicians. The movement was largely driven by field collectors, the most prominent of whom were the father-son team of John and Alan Lomax. Collectors would travel through rural communities recording folk artists. In fact, it was Alan Lomax who collected "Which Side Are You On?" from Florence Reece in 1937. Sometimes, collectors would actually bring rural performers up north to perform on college campuses and at folk festivals. For the most part, however, the folk revival was driven by northern musicians performing the songs they learned from field recordings, using the same acoustic instruments—especially guitar—that were common in the south.

Although the folk revival was sparked during the Great Depression, it did not exert mainstream influence until the 1960s, when the counterculture movement adopted folk music as a favored means of expression. The 1960s saw extraordinary social upheaval, as young people rebelled against the conservative social values of the post-WWII era, marginalized groups fought for civil rights, and anti-war activists protested US involvement in Vietnam. Folk music quickly became an important vehicle for political speech.

Most of the central figures in the folk revival did not become famous performing authentic folk music. Instead, they wrote and recorded original songs in a folk style. Perhaps the most influential and respected of these artists was Bob Dylan, who produced an extraordinary catalog of songs featuring his own evocative poetry.



Image 10.23: This photograph of Bob Dylan was taken at the 1963 March on Washington.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 10.24: "Blowin' in the Wind" appeared on Dylan's second album, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*.

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Dylan was regarded as a folk singer because he accompanied himself on acoustic guitar and harmonica, but he was more interested in expressing himself creatively than in preserving music of the past.

Bob Dylan was born Robert Allen Zimmerman to Midwestern Jewish parents in 1941. He moved to New York City in 1961, where he legally changed his name while still using a variety of pseudonyms to record and publish his creative work. Dylan's eponymous first album, released in 1962 by Columbia Records, consisted mostly of familiar folk and gospel songs. It was hardly a success, barely breaking even in financial terms, and skeptics within Columbia recommended that his contract be terminated. Dylan's producer

stood by him, however, and his second album, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* (1963), was considerably more successful. The album's songs were decidedly topical, addressing political concerns ranging from integration to the Cuban missile crisis. The first song on the album was "Blowin' in the Wind."

"Blowin' in the Wind" is in three stanzas, each of which concludes with a refrain. Each of the stanzas consists of a series of three questions, the answer to which is promised by the refrain, even though it is never in fact provided. Within each stanza, the questions become increasingly pointed and specific. The first in each set tends to be vague: It does not connect with a social issue and cannot be ascribed specific meaning. The later questions, however, begin to make explicit reference to ongoing political crises. Mentions of "cannon balls" and "deaths" clearly conjure the image of war, while the lament that some people are still not "allowed to be free" elicits scenes of oppression at home and abroad.

However, despite the growing specificity and attendant urgency of the questions, Dylan never makes the subject of his song exactly clear. He is concerned about war, but which war? He laments oppression, but whose? We can easily guess what was on his mind in 1962, when he wrote this song. The Vietnam War, which had been ongoing since 1955, was beginning to attract significant opposition in the United States, while the civil rights movement was quickly gaining momentum. Dylan became particularly involved in the struggle for racial equality. He performed at the 1963 March on Washington, and his third album, *The Times They Are a-Changin'* (1963), contained a number of songs that addressed the struggles and victories of equal rights campaigners.

We might, therefore, imagine that we know what this song meant to Dylan, but that does not mean that the significance of "Blowin' in the Wind" is limited to the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. Dylan himself ensured that his

song could speak to political issues beyond his own time and place. He did so by refraining from mentioning the social causes of his day and instead speaking in broad, almost universal terms. His concerns about war and freedom apply just as well to ancient struggles as they do to those that have yet to take place. We might draw a contrast here with Reece's song, which explicitly mentions mining and even names one of her adversaries.

Dylan's music suits his message: Each of the questions begins with the same melodic phrase and ends on an inconclusive pitch, indicating that there is more to be said, while his refrain, which promises an answer, ends on the home pitch (the tonic scale degree). The melody is highly repetitive, making it easy to learn. It also encompasses only a small vocal range and moves almost entirely by step (conjunction motion), making it easy to sing. Finally, the simple guitar accompaniment can be replicated by a moderately competent player. In short, this song, which requires neither special equipment nor advanced musical training, can be performed by almost anyone.

However, Dylan's melody also carries meaning on a deeper level. Like Reece, he did not write his melody from scratch, but rather adapted it from another song. His source, the African American **spiritual** "No More Auction Block,"¹⁵ provides us with additional insight into what the song might mean, for "No More Auction Block" describes the relief of a formerly-enslaved person who has escaped from slavery and is no longer to be subjected to humiliations and abuses. According to Alan Lomax, the song originated in Canada, where it was sung by former slaves after the practice was abolished there. It later spread to the United States. Dylan's melody is not identical, but one can easily hear that he borrowed the opening melodic phrase. When we listen through the lens of the spiritual, we can feel even more confident about the relationship between "Blowin' in the Wind" and the civil rights movement.

15.



In this recording, we hear Odetta sing the spiritual "No More Auction Block."

But we can't go too far in ascribing specific meaning to "Blowin' in the Wind." Dylan himself refused to explain what the song meant, or even to admit that it meant anything in particular. When the song was published in *Sing Out!* magazine in 1962, it was accompanied by the following note from Dylan:

There ain't too much I can say about this song except that the answer is blowing in the wind. It ain't in no book or movie or TV show or discussion group. Man, it's in the wind — and it's blowing in the wind. Too many of these hip people are telling me where the answer is but oh I won't believe that. I still say it's in the wind and just like a restless piece of paper it's

got to come down some ... But the only trouble is that no one picks up the answer when it comes down so not too many people get to see and know ... and then it flies away. I still say that some of the biggest criminals are those that turn their heads away when they see wrong and know it's wrong.

In other words, “Blowin’ in the Wind” is about searching for answers, not providing them.

Dylan went even further in distancing his song from the political turmoil of the early 1960s, stating clearly before its first ever performance, “This here ain’t no protest song or anything like that, ‘cause I don’t write no protest songs.” It’s easy to understand why Dylan, an artist with a wide-ranging creative vision, would not want to be pigeonholed as a writer of protest songs. All the same, his claim rings hollow, especially in light of the many activists who were inspired by his song and the social movements that have adopted it.

We will examine two recordings of “Blowin’ in the Wind,” both made in 1963. First, we will listen to Bob Dylan’s own version, which was released as a single and included as the lead track on his second album. This version was moderately successful: *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan* peaked at 22 on the Billboard album charts. However, Dylan’s songs have almost always done better when sung by other performers. We will also listen to the version by the folk trio Peter, Paul & Mary, who can be considered responsible for making “Blowin’ in the Wind” a hit. Their recording reached number 2 on the Billboard singles charts.

Dylan’s version is remarkably simple and unpolished. He plays a regular rhythm on the guitar, choosing the most obvious chords (he uses only three). At the end of each verse, he pauses to blow a few notes on the harmonica. His timing as a singer was always idiosyncratic, and sometimes the words don’t fall on the beat, as you would expect. His voice is rough, and he doesn’t seem to put any effort into expressing the meaning of the text.

The version recorded by Peter, Paul & Mary is considerably more sophisticated.¹⁶ Although the group also accompanies their singing with guitars, they use two instruments, not one, and the guitars are played using a refined finger-picking style that is far removed from Dylan’s simple strumming. We hear the guitars right at the beginning, when they provide an extended introduction to the song. Peter, Paul & Mary also chose more nuanced and compelling harmonies than Dylan had. As a result, their version is significantly more difficult for an amateur to replicate.

16.



“Blowin’ in the Wind”

Composer: Bob Dylan

Performance: Peter, Paul & Mary (1963)

All three members of the group were singers, and they used this to their advantage by varying the vocal texture phrase by phrase. The first verse begins



Image 10.25: This photograph of the folk trio Peter, Paul & Mary was taken in 1970.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 10.26: Peter, Paul & Mary had great success with their version of Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind."

Source: Flickr

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in two-part harmony with Mary Travers on the melody, but grows in volume and energy when a third voice enters to underscore the final question. Then the men sing the first refrain without Mary, who subsequently sings the first question in the second verse alone. All three take the second question in unison and the third in harmony before Mary sings the second refrain as a solo. The third verse builds to a climax as Mary moves from the melody to a high harmony, after which she sings the final refrain alone. All three provide a final unison refrain to close out the recording. The changes in texture draw the listener's attention to some of the more important questions (the one about freedom is especially forceful), while also making the song more interesting.

Finally, Peter, Paul & Mary's version has a polish that is lacking in Dylan's. The rhythms are regular and predictable, while the voices of the singers are carefully controlled and perfectly in tune. This is not to say that Peter, Paul & Mary's version is better, and many people prefer Dylan's recording for its simplicity and honesty. However, this comparison gives us some insight into what makes a hit: It is not only the song that matters, but the arrangement and performance.

Bob Marley and Peter Tosh, "Get Up, Stand Up"

In our previous example, style played an important role in the construction of a successful protest song. On the one hand, the acoustic instruments and simplified techniques of the folk revival made "Blowin' in the Wind" easy to perform—and also appropriate for informal outdoor renditions in the context of rallies, marches, or picket lines. On the other, the folk style positioned "Blowin' in the Wind" in a long line of protest songs, of which "Which Side Are You On?" is an early example. In other words, it is typical for a folk song to also be a protest song, and listeners therefore have an easy time accepting "Blowin' in the Wind" in this role.

Style will also be important to our next example. Some characteristics of the **reggae** style, which relies on a range of amplified electric instruments, make "Get

Up, Stand Up" (1973)¹⁷ somewhat more difficult to use in the context of an on-the-ground protest. At the same time, reggae itself is deeply connected with social rebellion and resistance to oppressive ruling powers—so much so that the genre itself might be considered a protest. In the case of this song, therefore, a knowledge of the reggae style and its historical context is vital to understanding the message of the music.

17.



"Get Up, Stand Up"

Composer: Bob Marley and Peter Tosh

Performance: Bob Marley and the Wailers (1973)

Reggae has been around since 1968, when it emerged as the most widely-performed and influential style of popular music in Jamaica. Reggae represented a synthesis of various music traditions of Central and North America. Jamaican listeners had easy access to American popular music, which was imported on recorded discs and broadcast on the radio, and they were particularly enthusiastic about rhythm 'n' blues and jazz. Following Jamaican independence in 1962, however, Jamaicans were increasingly interested in developing unique popular music styles that represented their national identity. The first of these were ska (an uptempo style featuring jazz instrumentation and off-beat accents) and rocksteady (a slower version of ska), both of which influenced reggae. Ska and rocksteady also drew from the Caribbean traditions of mento and calypso—as did reggae in its own turn.

The meaning of the Jamaican English term “reggae” has been much debated. It can be used to refer to a person who is poorly dressed, or to a quarrel. It has also been connected with the term “streggae,” which can describe a loose woman. The term was first used in a musical context in the Maytals’s 1968 song “Do the Reggay,” which also established the stylistic conventions of what would become a major new genre. The lead singer of the group, Frederick “Toots” Hibbert, provided his own definition of the term: “Reggae just mean comin’ from the people, an everyday thing, like from the ghetto. When you say reggae you mean regular, majority. And when you say reggae it means poverty, suffering, Rastafari, everything in the ghetto. It’s music from the rebels, people who don’t have what they want.” Reggae music, therefore, would speak to regular Jamaicans, and it would address their rebellious desire to overthrow the forces that kept them in poverty.

Hibbert also mentions **Rastafarianism**, which is another vital ingredient to reggae. We can understand neither the reggae worldview nor the specific lyrics of reggae songs without addressing this movement. Rastafarianism can trace its roots to the “Back to Africa” movement of the 1920s. The leader of the movement was Marcus Garvey, a firey political orator of Jamaican origin who advocated for pan-African unity. In his view, those of African descent in all parts of the world should take pride in their heritage and throw off the yoke of white colonial oppression. He sought independence for black majority colonial states but also encouraged

members of the African **diaspora** to return to Africa, where he imagined the founding of a single unified African state with himself at the head. While organizing in the United States, Garvey went so far as to establish a shipping company, the Black Star Line, for the express purpose of returning African Americans to the African continent. This project, however, led to Garvey's 1923 conviction for mail fraud, after which he was deported.

Back in Jamaica, Garvey prophesied that the liberation of the entire African diaspora would be sparked by the crowning of a black king in Africa. He founded his claim in an interpretation of the Book of Revelation, which foretells the rise of the Lion of Judah. When the Ethiopian regent Ras Tafari Makonnen became Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1930, therefore, Garvey and others believed that the prophecy had been fulfilled. Selassie, whose full title includes the designation "Lion of the Tribe of Judah," traced his own lineage back to King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Selassie himself was an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, and he disdained the prophecies that were emanating from the New World. In Jamaica, however, Selassie's coronation sparked a wave of renewed black pride and confidence that the end of colonial oppression must be at hand. Selassie's former title and name soon lent itself to the new movement, which was part political ideology and part religion.

Rastafarians adhere to the teachings of the Bible, which they believe to have originally been written in an Ethiopian language. They reject colonial domination and seek to recover a shared black identity. However, there is no centralized authority within the Rastafarian community, and there are no administrative hierarchies or orthodox beliefs. Rastafarians are not even agreed about the identity of Emperor Haile Selassie: Some believe that he is Christ reincarnate, while others regard him as a prophet. (The fact that Selassie was assassinated in 1974 led some to lose their faith, but devout followers maintained either that his death had been faked or that he survived in a spiritual form.)

Despite the negligible status of Rastafarianism as a religion (there are at most one million practitioners around the world), it has attracted significant attention due to the popular success of reggae music. Many Jamaican musicians of the 1960s found themselves drawn to the ideology, and reggae music soon came to



Image 10.27: This photograph of Ras Tafari Makonnen was taken a few years before he became Emperor Haile Selassie I.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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embody Rastafarian identity and beliefs. Rastafarians were also quick to establish a wide variety of symbols—the green, yellow, and red colors of the Ethiopian flag, dreadlocks, and cannabis use—that helped identify practitioners to the larger community. All of these symbols came to be associated with reggae as well. When reggae gained popularity abroad following the success of the 1973 film *The Harder They Come*, a wide variety of cultural symbols were therefore available for use in identifying and promoting the new musical style.

For most people, it is the sound of reggae music that initially attracts them to the genre. All reggae songs have a moderate, laid-back tempo. They are in quadruple meter, but the emphasis is on the off-beat, which is usually marked by two sharply articulated strums on the electric guitar. The bass also plays an important role, accentuating strong beats and contributing countermelodies, while the drums hold the groove in place. Other typical instruments include the electric organ, which often fulfills a similar role to that of the guitar, and jazz-derived horns including the saxophone and trumpet.

The rhythms in reggae emerge from the interactions of these various instruments, each of which contributes one element to a complex groove. No single instrument is responsible for the rhythmic character of a song, but each has a unique role in sustaining the beat. At the same time, individual players are free to vary their rhythms, the result of which is a flexible groove that shifts in form while maintaining its essential identity. In reggae, various rhythmic patterns—termed “riddims”—have specific names and coded meanings, known only to those initiated into the tradition. The essential structure of the rhythmic texture, however, is derived from African practices and can be found in various musical traditions of the African diaspora.

We will hear this type of groove in our recording of “Get Up, Stand Up.” Before considering the sound the the song, however, we must address the lyrics. The message of “Get Up, Stand Up” is embodied in its short chorus, which calls on the listener to “stand up for your rights,” with the added encouragement, “don’t give up the fight!” All three verses also conclude with the “stand up for your rights” refrain, which echoes both the text and music of the chorus.

While the chorus and concluding refrains are unambiguous, the three verses contain references to the Rastafarian belief system that might be lost on the uninitiated. The first verse opens with a derisive reference to a “preacher man,” who symbolizes the institutionalized (and white) Christian church, which Rastafarians regard as an oppressive force. It continues on to warn that “not all that glitters is gold,” a reflection of the Rastafarian disdain for worldly possessions. The second verse mocks those who await the second coming of Christ, while the third makes the observation that “almighty Jah is a living man”—both expressions that rest on the common Rastafarian belief that Emperor Haile Selassie is (or was) God incarnate.

In sum, therefore, “Get Up, Stand Up” is a song steeped in the Rastafarian tradition that calls for the listener to pursue both spiritual and political freedom.



Image 10.28: This photograph of Bob Marley was taken in 1980, at which point he was an international celebrity.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 10.29: Peter Tosh is pictured here in 1979.

Source: Flickr

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The call to protest embodied in its chorus is broad and might be applied to any number of specific situations. The verses, however, outline a uniquely Rastafarian worldview that few listeners are likely to accept. In this way, “Get Up, Stand Up” might be considered a deeply flawed protest song, for it seems to be intimately tied to the time and place of its origin. While “Blowin’ in the Wind” could be about any war or any oppressive situation, “Get Up, Stand Up” is explicitly about the Jamaican experience.

The creators of “Get Up, Stand Up,” however, would not have seen this specificity as a flaw. They were committed to giving voice to the oppressed among the African diaspora, and they couldn’t care less about whether their song could be conveniently exploited by others. “Get Up, Stand Up” was the creation of two of reggae’s chief architects, Bob Marley (1945-1981) and Peter Tosh (1944-1987). The song was initially inspired by the suffering of impoverished Haitians, whose condition Marley witnessed when touring the island in the early 1970s. Marley recorded several versions of the song with his group, The Wailers, while Tosh released his own solo version. We will



Image 10.30: Bob Marley’s group The Wailers, seen here performing at London’s Crystal Palace in 1980, contained several guitars, electric bass, electric organ, a variety of percussion instruments, and three female backup singers.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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consider the first recording of “Get Up, Stand Up,” which appeared on The Wailers’ 1973 album *Burnin’*.

The track begins with a few drum hits, after which the basic pulse is established by various electric guitars. The groove—with all of its parts in place—enters along with Marley’s voice. Although most of the instruments in the band are occupied with the groove, a guitar—the sound of which is processed by a “wah-wah” pedal—occasionally interjects melodic riffs, while an electric bass periodically fills in between sung phrases. Marley’s voice is recorded on several tracks, which allows him to converse with himself in a **call-and-response** style: While one Marley sings the chorus, another provides encouragement. His informal yet impassioned vocal delivery is meant to connect emotionally with the listener and spur them into action. The idea of collectivity is reinforced by **double-tracking** on the chorus. Because we actually hear more than one voice singing the call to protest, we easily imagine a crowd—and just as easily join in ourselves. The chorus, after all, is very easy to sing. It contains only four pitches, and the melody outlines the stepwise ascent of a scale.

The harmonies, likewise, are easy to play. The entire song essentially rests on a single minor **triad**—a harmony that reinforces the seriousness of the song’s message, and that literally anyone could provide using a guitar or piano. Here, however, we run into some difficulty, for while it is easy to replicate the harmony and melody of the chorus to “Get Up, Stand Up,” it is very difficult to replicate the style. To do so requires a broad array of electric instruments, each played by an expert with perfect timing and a deep knowledge of their role in the groove. This can only be accomplished in a staged setting. While Peter Yarrow was able to strum his guitar and lead a sing-along of “Blowin’ in the Wind” at a 2011 Occupy Wall Street protest,¹⁸ for example, “Get Up, Stand Up” is more likely to be blasted over loudspeakers, as it was during the 2011 teachers’ strike in Madison, WI.¹⁹

18.



In this video, we see Peter Yarrow leading a sing-along of “Blowin’ in the Wind” at a 2011 Occupy Wall Street protest.

19.



In this video, a recording of “Get Up, Stand Up” is played at the 2011 teachers’ strike in Madison, WI.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH, SYMPHONY NO. 5

One of the most famous pieces of protest music in the European concert tradition might not have been a protest at all. Experts still debate the meaning of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 5. Some believe that it was a harsh rejection of the

totalitarian regime under which he lived and worked, while others are skeptical of this interpretation. Because Symphony No. 5 is a piece of **absolute music** (instrumental music that does not narrate an explicit story), it can be interpreted in many different ways. While this leaves the message in question, it has also permitted the work to have a powerful impact on generations of listeners.

Music in the Soviet Union

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was born shortly before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, in which the longstanding Czarist regime was overthrown and the Soviet Union was born. The revolution brought hope to many Russians. Life under the Czars had been difficult for all but the aristocracy, with no chance for upward mobility and little freedom. The new government promised to improve the lot of Russia's working class, bringing opportunities for education and economic success.

Soon, however, the Soviet Union ran into trouble. After the first decade, economic hardships led to dissatisfaction. At the same time, Joseph Stalin, who had become head of the government followed the death of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin in 1924, set out to consolidate his power. While the Soviet Union was meant to be governed by a committee, Stalin soon had absolute control. Part of his strategy was to deflect blame for the nation's struggles onto others. In the 1930s, he



Image 10.31: This photograph of Dmitri Shostakovich was taken in 1950.

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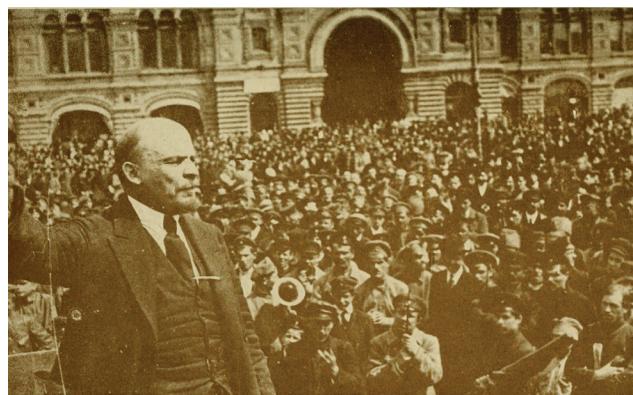


Image 10.32: In this photograph we see Lenin hearing the demands of the masses.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Image 10.33: Stalin, pictured here in 1941, quickly consolidated his power and became a dictator.

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held a series of public “show trials” in which prominent members of the government were convicted of crimes against the Soviet people. In this way he purged the government of all those who did not support him while positioning himself as an advocate of the people.

This is the environment in which Shostakovich finished his education and began his career. Shostakovich gained international fame at the age of 19, when his Symphony No. 1 was well received not only in the Soviet Union but in Europe as well. At first, unsurprisingly, the young composer produced music in support of the government. Many of his early works explicitly praised Soviet leaders and celebrated the revolution. It seems that he personally felt optimistic about his nation’s future.

The arts, however, faced difficult times under Stalin. Stalin believed in the power of artists to influence public opinion and encourage dissent. For this reason, he went to great lengths to keep creative workers under control. He did so through a combination of censorship, intimidation, and outright murder.

Stalin’s strategy for taking control of the music establishment was very clever indeed. He began in 1929 by reforming the nation’s music conservatories (prestigious schools that trained performers, conductors, scholars, and composers). His first move was to fire the faculty and replace them with partisans. Next he changed the admission standards, such that only students from working-class backgrounds were permitted to attend. These reforms were to be short lived, but he had made his point. When the professors were allowed to return to their posts, they understood that Stalin had total power over their careers (and lives) and were ready to fall into line.

In 1932, Stalin formed the Union of Soviet Composers (USC), a national organization in which all composers were required to participate. The purpose of the USC was to ensure that members only created music that upheld the values of the government and portrayed it in a positive light. Members were required to hold each other accountable and report any deviant behavior to the authorities. With all of the composers living in fear and spying on one another, Stalin was in a position to dictate the messages that were being broadcast in concert halls and opera houses.

All composers were required to uphold the doctrine of **Socialist Realism**. Exactly what constituted Socialist Realism was never made entirely clear, which is what gave the doctrine its power. Stalin always had the final say concerning any individual work, and his judgment alone could determine whether the composer had met the required standard or not. All artistic works, however, were expected to portray the communist revolution in a positive light. They were to be optimistic and uplifting. And they were certainly not permitted to criticize the Soviet Union or depress the consumer. Stalin also required that concert music be accessible to all citizens, and he preferred that it be based on popular or folk styles. If a musical work was condemned as **formalist**, then it had failed to achieve these goals, and the composer would face serious repercussions.

Shostakovich's Condemnation

Following the success of his Symphony No. 1, Shostakovich continued to climb the ranks of Soviet composers. By the 1930s, he was certainly the best known and most influential. When he finally ran afoul of the government, therefore, it was a major event.

In 1934, Shostakovich premiered an opera (his second) entitled *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsenk District*. The opera was based on an 1865 novella by Nicolai Leskov that centered on Katerina, the neglected wife of a well-to-do merchant. In the novella, Katerina has an affair that ultimately leads to her and her lover committing a series of murders to protect their secret. After they are captured, convicted, and sent to a prison work camp, the man leaves Katerina for another female prisoner. Overcome with fury and grief, Katerina seizes him and leaps into an icy river, where they both perish.

In short, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsenk District* featured a typical operatic narrative, full of romance and violence and ending in tragedy. The opera was a huge success in Leningrad and Moscow, performing to enthusiastic audiences for two years. Then, in 1936, Stalin himself attended a performance in Moscow. He had recently attended a performance of Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera *Quiet Flows the Don*—an overtly pro-government work with little artistic merit. (Ironically, much of the opera had been orchestrated by Shostakovich, who stepped in to help his



Image 10.34: This photograph was taken at the Stockholm premiere of *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsenk District* in 1935.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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less-adept colleague.) Stalin publicly demonstrated his support, giving the piece a standing ovation and insisting upon meeting the composer. Nine days later, he saw *Lady Macbeth*. This time, Stalin did not even stay to the end.

The next day, an article entitled “Muddle Instead of Music” appeared in *Pravda*, the official government newspaper. The article was unsigned, but readers understood that it spoke for Stalin himself. The article began by condemning *Lady Macbeth* in terms of subject matter and musical expression. The opera celebrated corruption, reveled in degradation, and lacked musical clarity. Next the author began to attack past works of Shostakovich, arguing that he had been working against the doctrine of Socialist Realism for many years. Finally, the article included a clear warning for the composer: If Shostakovich did not mend the error in his ways, he might find himself in serious trouble.

This anonymous article raises some questions. Why did *Lady Macbeth* come under condemnation two years after it had premiered and after it had been well received? How was it that many of Shostakovich’s pieces that had previously been accepted as “good” were suddenly denounced as “bad”? What was the purpose of this article? Although we can never know for sure, it seems likely that Shostakovich had simply become too successful—and therefore too powerful. With a single anonymous article, Stalin was able to put him in his place.

The article meant an immediate halt to all aspects of Shostakovich’s career. Performances of his work were cancelled and commissions were withdrawn. The composer himself called off the premiere of his Symphony No. 4, which had been



Image 10.35: This is the *Pravda* article, “Muddle Instead of Music,” that stalled Shostakovich’s career and threatened his life.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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about to take place. He lost all standing in the Union of Soviet Composers and was essentially blacklisted.

Shostakovich also feared for his life. In fact, for a month following the publication of the article he spent nights on his porch so that the police would not wake up his children when they came to arrest him. His fears were justified, for many other composers had already disappeared, having been taken away to prisons or work camps. However, the police did not come, and after a time Shostakovich's thoughts turned to the revitalization of his career. In order to be readmitted to the music establishment, he needed to be formally rehabilitated. This process required a public apology and the creation of a new work that would demonstrate his contrition. With rehabilitation in mind, he began work on his Symphony No. 5.

Symphony No. 5

When Symphony No. 5 premiered in Leningrad in 1937, it was accompanied by another article, this time signed by the composer. The article was entitled "My Creative Response." In it, Shostakovich (or, more likely, a government agent writing on his behalf) admitted that he had strayed from the path illuminated by Socialist Realism but proclaimed that he had seen the error in his ways and desired to reform. He described Symphony No. 5 as an autobiographical account of his personal suffering and rebirth, culminating in a return to optimism.

The **symphony** does indeed follow a general trajectory from darkness to light—the same trajectory as Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, which clearly served as a model (see Chapter 7). The first movement is angsty and tormented. Its jagged melodies and sparse instrumentation seem to portray devastation and hopelessness. The brief second movement is a bizarre waltz. The third and fourth movements, however, bring the listener through catharsis to a possible triumph, and it is these that we will examine closely.

Movement III

According to reports, the audience wept throughout the third movement of Symphony No. 5.²⁰ The music is certainly sorrowful. A dirge-like tempo combines with winding melodies in the minor mode to express an unmistakable despair. Sometimes the instruments imitate speech, as if they are attempting to put into words an emotion that cannot be spoken. Shostakovich's orchestration is sparse: He includes only strings, harp, and a few solo winds, each of which take their turn with the melody.

20.



Symphony No. 5, Movement III

Composer: Dmitri Shostakovich

Performance: San Francisco Symphony, conducted by
Michael Tilson Thomas (2009)

However, there is another explanation for the listeners' reaction. In this movement, Shostakovich captures the sound of Russian Orthodox funeral music.²¹ This would have resonated with his audience on several levels. To begin with, times were very difficult in the late 1930s, as the Soviet population was devastated by famine and disease. Everyone in the hall knew someone who had died, and everyone was mourning. At the same time, the government had abolished the Russian Orthodox religion and closed the churches. Nobody had heard this music for decades. As such, it also represented the past and all that had been lost. Despite its portrayals of agony, however, the third movement concludes on a note of hope. The final minutes are calm, and the closing chords are in the major mode.

21.



This funeral chant by Pavel Chesnokov is typical of Russian Orthodox music.

Movement IV



Symphony No. 5, Movement IV

Composer: Dmitri Shostakovich

Performance: The New York Philharmonic, conducted by Leonard Bernstein (1959)



Symphony No. 5, Movement IV

Composer: Dmitri Shostakovich

Performance: Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vasily Petrenko (2000)

Bernstein Petrenko What to listen for

o'oo	o'oo"	The finale starts with a trill in the winds that leads to pounding timpani and an aggressive brass theme; the energy continues to grow as the tempo increases
3'03"	3'23"	The tempo slows and the energy dissipates
4'46"	5'24"	The violins quote from Shostakovich's song "Rebirth"
6'40"	7'42"	The build to the Coda begins; Bernstein takes a quick tempo from the start, while Petrenko takes a relaxed tempo
8'10"	10'54"	The Coda begins; Bernstein's tempo is more than twice that of Petrenko

The fourth movement begins with a terrifying crash, as pounding drums introduce a militaristic minor-mode theme in the brass. The music grows in excitement for several minutes before giving way to a period of calm. In this middle section, Shostakovich introduces a **quote** from a song he had composed years before using a text by the poet Alexander Pushkin. The title of the song is, in fact, “Rebirth,” and it describes the process of peeling away an outer layer accumulated over time to reveal the true substance beneath. After this interlude, the music regains momentum, building to a dramatic major-mode conclusion. It is here, however, that we must pause to debate what this music really means.

The closing passage of Symphony No. 5 features the ringing, high notes of trumpets, backed up by the entire orchestra. Played at a fast tempo, as it often is, the music is thrilling and triumphant. However, this approach to performing the **coda** seems to have derived from a misprint in the first published version of the symphony, which indicated a lively tempo of 188 quarter notes per minute. In reality, Shostakovich wanted this passage to be performed at a tempo of 184 eighth notes per minute, which, at less than half of the misprinted tempo, is quite slow. At this speed, the music sounds not triumphant but painful. The trumpet players agonize as they blast out their high notes, while the string players saw back and forth for minutes on end. One can literally hear the suffering of the musicians. When the symphony finally ends, it is with a sensation of exhaustion, not overcoming, as if the orchestra has been beaten into submission. Some commentators have described the passage as a false smile, put on because the authorities have required as much—but not a true representation of joy.

What does it mean?

The controversy over the tempo is only part of the story. For many decades, fans of Shostakovich have wanted to hear Symphony No. 5 as protest music and to believe that the composer was defying the government. They received confirmation in 1979, when Soviet musicologist Solomon Volkov published a book entitled *Testimony*. Volkov claimed that he had sat with Shostakovich during his final weeks and written down the composer’s reminiscences. In *Testimony*, Volkov confirmed that Shostakovich had always stood in opposition to the Soviet regime and that Symphony No. 5 was indeed meant to protest its oppressive rule. However, Volkov was almost immediately discredited by Shostakovich’s wife, who said that he and her husband were hardly even acquainted. Few continue to take his account seriously.

The response following the concert was also mixed. Some critics did not feel that Shostakovich had successfully communicated the personal metamorphosis outlined in his article. The third movement, they felt, was simply too sad, while the fourth movement failed to offer the transformative rebirth that was promised. However, the audience was thrilled, and gave the symphony a thirty-minute standing ovation. Perhaps for this reason, the government officially accepted Shostakovich’s apology and declared him rehabilitated. He was able to return to

his work—although with the knowledge that Stalin could end his career (and his life) if he failed to keep in line.

The controversy surrounding Symphony No. 5 is possible because of its status as absolute music. On the one hand, it is just a symphony—just music, just sound. It is titled with a number, and the movements are marked only with their tempos. It is therefore impossible to prove that the music is about one thing or another. The symphony's various contexts, however, which include its role as Shostakovich's rehabilitation piece, the accompanying article, the musical references, and its expressive language, give us a great deal of material to use in debate. The symphony must be about something. To this day, however, noone has conclusively proven what Shostakovich meant to communicate with his Symphony No. 5.

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Unit 5

FUNCTIONAL MUSIC

11

Music for Spiritual Expression

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis

INTRODUCTION

Religious practitioners around the world have long used music to express their spiritual convictions. Music plays a particularly significant role in the context of worship. This is hardly surprising: Music has the power to encourage a wide variety of emotional states, ranging from meditative calm to frenzied excitement. It can help participants in worship to feel close to each other and to their deity. It also aids in the memorization and communal recitation of texts, which often define religious practice. Individual creative artists also draw inspiration from their religious convictions, even if the music they produce is not intended for the purpose of facilitating worship.

In this chapter, we will explore a variety of examples related to Christian worship and beliefs. The focus on Christianity is the result of the Western and classical bias of this text. Christianity has been the dominant religion of Europe since the 4th century, when it was legalized by the Roman emperor Constantine the Great. Most of the influential composers in the classical tradition belonged to Christian denominations, and many wrote beautiful music for use in church services. As a result, church music through the ages has both reflected and shaped broader musical practices. The stylistic variety of this music is nearly infinite. This variety results from the combined forces of general musical taste, the requirements of religious authorities, and the needs and histories of congregations.

This chapter will be dedicated to the examination of worship music from different eras. Although today we are more likely to hear most of this music in concert halls or on recordings, much of it was first intended for practical use in church services. To understand how this music came to be and what it meant in its time and place, we will consider each example in its religious context.

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, "O STRENGTH OF WISDOM"

Histories of European music almost always begin with the chants that were used in medieval Catholic churches. This is for the simple reason that **Gregorian chant**, as it is most commonly known, was the first music to be written down using the early form of staff notation from which modern musical notation is descended.

As such, it is the earliest European music to have been preserved, and therefore the earliest music that is available for close examination.

Gregorian Chant

Gregorian chant constitutes an enormous body of music for use in Catholic worship services. In musical terms, it is fairly simple to characterize. The rhythms of Gregorian chant are determined by the natural stresses of the text, and it therefore does not have a regular pulse or meter. The melodies tend to have a small range and feature conjunct motion, making them accessible to untrained singers. Gregorian chants are often in modes other than major and minor, which can make them sound unusual to modern ears. Finally, Gregorian chants are **monophonic**, meaning that each was written down as a single, unaccompanied vocal line to be sung by a group in unison or by a soloist. (Although we know that countermelodies and accompaniments were often improvised, these were not recorded using notation.)

The name “Gregorian chant” derives from a popular legend concerning the origins of this body of music. According to tradition, the Holy Spirit regularly visited Pope Gregory I in the form of a dove so as to impart divine wisdom. Following the unification of state and church powers as the Holy Roman Empire in 800, the entire body of chant began to be attributed to Gregory, and was thereafter named for him. This attribution—which was taken as fact by most believers—served an important purpose, for it suggested that the style of chant preferred in Rome came straight from God. However, there are some problems with this story. The practices of Gregorian chant predated Gregory I, who served as Pope from 590 to 604, by centuries, and it continued to grow and develop long after his reign. In fact, it is today considered unlikely that Gregory I contributed anything to the repertoire that bears his name.

The use of chant is common across many religious traditions. Within Christianity, there are a variety of chant styles, including Russian Orthodox chant, the Byzantine chant of Greece, Ethiopian Orthodox chant, and Anglican chant. In Judaism, congregants chant from the Torah. In Islam, the call to prayer is chanted five times a day from the minaret of the mosque. In Buddhism, monks chant together to facilitate their meditative practice. In Hinduism, practitioners chant when they perform religious rituals in the home. All of these forms of chant have elements in common, due to the fact that each uses the human voice to sound a sacred text on an occasion of great solemnity.



Image 11.1: This 12th-century manuscript illumination shows the Holy Spirit, in the form of the dove, whispering into the ear of Pope Gregory I.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 11.2: These Buddhist monks are chanting as part of a religious ceremony.

Source: Flickr

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Gregorian chant began to develop in the Benedictine monasteries of Italy, the first of which was founded by St. Benedict of Nursia in 529. All monks and nuns withdraw from the world to dedicate their lives to God by means of regular prayer and humble living. Those belonging to Benedictine orders live according to the Rule of St. Benedict, a book that describes the organization of monasteries and monastic life. In particular, the Rule of St. Benedict punctuates each day with eight worship services known as the **Canonical Hours**. Each of the Hours has a different purpose and contents, but all include the chanting of Psalms—all 150 of which are chanted each week. The Hours also include other types of chant, the texts of which are in Latin and are primarily derived from the Bible.

But why chant? All of these texts could just as easily be recited. What does the act of singing contribute to the worship experience? There are a number of

good reasons for which monks began to chant. To begin with, the act of communal singing creates a shared physical experience. Participants breathe together and their heart rates begin to coordinate. Singing also has a calming effect. In addition, singing helps with the memorization of text. Although monastics were often literate and had access to books, they did not usually read words (or music) in the context of worship. Books were valuable and rare, and were reserved for close study, not daily use. Singing also helps words to carry through a large space—such as the cavernous interior of a medieval church. Finally, singing helped the monks to stay awake. Monastic life

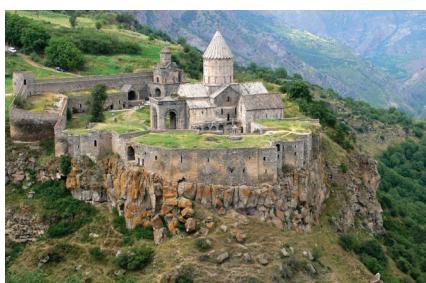


Image 11.3: Monasteries, like this 9th-century example in Armenia, were often built in remote locations so that monks and nuns could fully remove themselves from society.

Source: Wikipedia

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allowed for very little sleep, and several of the Canonical Hours took place when most would rather be in bed.

Benedictines and other Catholics had been chanting for centuries before any of this music was written down. The Catholic church first became concerned with recording its repertoire of chant after the founding of the Holy Roman Empire in 800. As the church spread across Europe, the authorities in Rome began to worry about losing control over distant congregations. In order to maintain centralized authority and prevent churches from breaking away, it was necessary for the **liturgy**—all of the words, music, and actions that constitute church services—to be standardized. Texts could be written down and actions described, but music remained ephemeral.

Before the development of music notation, chants were passed on and preserved by means of **oral tradition**. Practitioners would learn and memorize the music through repeated hearings. A monk or priest could then bring the chant to a distant community and teach it to the Christians there. This was risky, however, for music in the oral tradition usually changes over time and distance as individual musicians forget how it goes, commit errors, or make intentional alterations. Catholic authorities worried that the emergence of unique musical traditions would lead churches to desire independence in other ways as well.

A solution to this problem was finally recorded around 1026 by the Italian monk Guido of Arezzo. Guido sought to create a system by which monks and choristers could more easily learn Gregorian chants. To facilitate learning, he assigned syllables to the first six pitches of what today we call the scale. These syllables—ut, re, mi, fa, sol, and la—were drawn from the Latin text to a hymn, and they are still in use today (“ut” was replaced by the more singable “do” in the 17th century). He then began positioning the pitches on a lined staff that indicated their relative distance from one another. Guido’s system of notation was not quite like that in use today: His staff had only four lines, his noteheads looked quite different, and he had no way of indicating rhythms. Modern notation, however, is directly descended from this medieval invention.

Beginning in the 11th century, therefore, the melodies of Gregorian chant could be preserved on paper. Although we take musical notation for granted today, it transformed the development of music in the Western world. For the Catholic church, it offered a guarantee that Gregorian chants would be



Image 11.4: Although this example dates from about 200 years after Guido of Arezzo, it illustrates the principles of his music notation system.

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Image 11.5: This famous image from *Scivias* portrays Hildegard receiving a vision from god.

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sung in the same way across Europe. Over time, however, notation would develop to allow for the construction and preservation of increasingly complex musical structures containing many simultaneous melodies, such as we will encounter with the next example. It also allowed for composers to emerge as significant and powerful figures.

All of this took time, however, and it was typical in the medieval era for chant composers to remain uncredited and anonymous. This was in part due to the myth that assigned authorship of all chant to Pope Gregory I, and in part due to the fact that individual creativity was not highly esteemed. But there is one major exception to this rule: the abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), who not only composed dozens of extraordinary chants but also exerted far-reaching influence within the Catholic church.

Hildegard's Extraordinary Life

Hildegard was born into a minor noble family in what is today southern Germany. As a child she was pledged to the Benedictine monastery at Disibodenberg—perhaps as a tithe (tradition holds that she was the tenth child), perhaps as a ploy by her parents to gain favor, or perhaps because she had experienced spiritual visions from the age of three. Hildegard was trained by Jutta, an older woman who served as abbess at the monastery and who was also an **anchor**. As such, she was permanently enclosed in a small hut adjoining the monastery. An opening allowed food to be passed in and waste to be passed out, but Jutta herself remained in place until her death in 1136.

Hildegard was elected to replace Jutta as abbess. Disibodenberg, however, was home to monks as well, and the entire community was under the authority of the abbot. Hildegard wanted greater independence for herself and her nuns, and asked that they be allowed to move to Rupertsberg. When the abbot refused her request, Hildegard went to the archbishop instead. Although the archbishop granted his permission, the abbot still refused to allow the women to depart. Hildegard then became very ill to the point of total bodily paralysis. The abbot took this to be a sign from God, and finally permitted the nuns to leave Disibodenberg. Hildegard officially founded her monastery at Rupertsberg in 1150, followed by a second at Eibingen in 1165.

At Rupertsberg, the nuns had need for only a single male monastic, who visited in order to give communion and hear confession. This monk, Volmar, also served

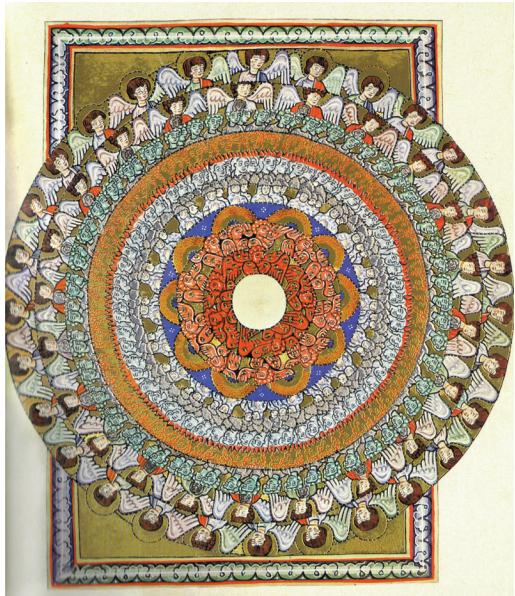


Image 11.6: This illumination captures Hildegard's vision of the angelic hierarchy.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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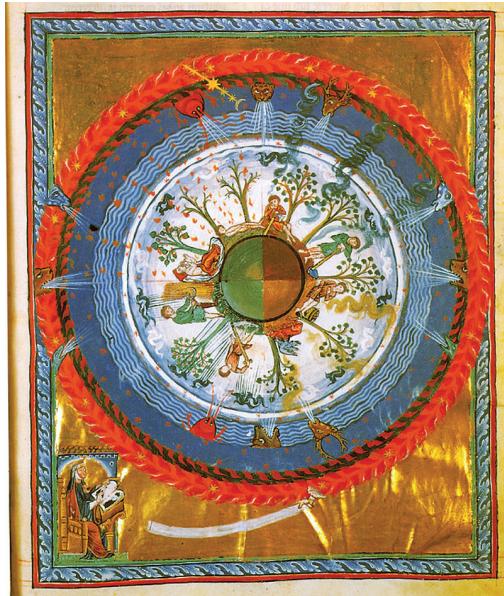


Image 11.7: This illustration of the earth and heavens appeared in Hildegard's third and final theological compendium, *Book of Divine Works*.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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as Hildegard's scribe and encouraged her to record her visions. She finally did so in the 1151 compendium *Scivias* (Latin for "Know the Ways"), which included rich illustrations and a number of musical compositions. This was followed by two additional volumes of theological writing. Pope Eugene III accepted Hildegard's recorded visions as church doctrine, thereby according her unusual status in the church for a woman. Hildegard also wrote on the topics of botany and medicine, created recipes, recorded church history, and invented her own secret alphabet. She was finally recognized as a Saint and Doctor of the Church in 2012, following a centuries-long canonization process.

Hildegard's music is remarkable for its creativity and expressivity. Her best-known work is a musical drama called *Ordo Virtutum* (Order of the Virtues), which portrays the struggles of a human soul to resist mortal temptation. The play's single male role—the devil, who speaks instead of singing to indicate his nature—was probably played by Volmar. Hildegard also composed a wide variety of chants for use in church services. These are notable for their melodic complexity, extensive vocal ranges, frequent variations, and **text painting** (the practice—unusual for the time—of expressing the meaning of the text in music). In short, Hildegard broke all of the rules for chant composition, and as a result created unusually compelling works.

"O Strength of Wisdom"

We will examine her **antiphon** "O Strength of Wisdom" (Latin: "O Virtus Sapientiae").¹ An antiphon is a short chant that can be used in various ways

throughout the course of the Canonical Hours. Antiphon texts were usually drawn from the Psalms, but Hildegard always wrote her own chant texts. The imagery is inspired by her visions and makes reference to her theological writings:

O strength of Wisdom
 who, circling, circled,
 enclosing all
 in one lifegiving path,
 three wings you have:
 one soars to the heights,
 one distils its essence upon the earth,
 and the third is everywhere.
 Praise to you, as is fitting,
 O Wisdom.

Translation by Kate Quartano Brown.

1.



“O Strength of Wisdom”

Composer: Hildegard of Bingen

Performance: Rebecca Ramsey, Armonico Consort, Choir
 of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge (2019)

Divine Wisdom (Latin: *Sapientia*), embodied by a woman, was a prominent allegorical character in Hildegard's writings. For her, *Sapientia* was the life-giving force that animated the cosmos. The three-winged figure might refer to an illustration that appeared in *Scivias*, which in turn represented the “Jealousy of God” as he battled the devil. The number three is always associated with the Holy Trinity of God the Father (who “soars to the heights”), God the Son (who is found “upon the earth”), and God the Holy Spirit (who “is everywhere”)—the three natures of the single creator.

This chant is in the Phrygian mode, which is similar to minor but also contains a lowered second scale degree. This can give music in the Phrygian mode a dark and ominous character, but Hildegard's chant is essentially joyful in terms of text and music. It begins with a long **melisma** on the invocation “O.” (A melisma is a sequence of notes sung on a single syllable.) This sets a reverential mood. She uses melismas throughout to emphasize important words—the first

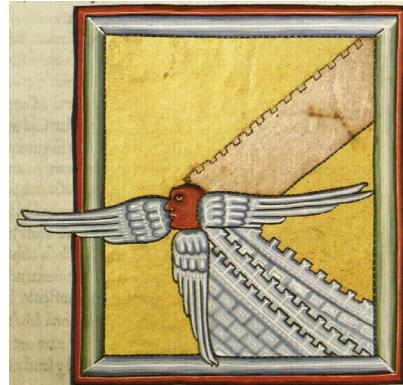


Image 11.8: This illumination appeared in *Scivias*, Hildegard's first theological work.

Source: WikiArt

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mention of “Sapientiae,” for example, contains sixteen pitches. Melismas also draw out the text so that the listener has an opportunity to meditate on its meaning: Without them, the poem would be sung too quickly. Hildegard employs text painting when she elevates her melody to its highest note with the words “to the heights,” and then down nearly to its lowest to illustrate the passage “upon the earth.”

GIOVANNI DA PALESTRINA, *POPE MARCELLUS MASS*

Next we will consider a famous piece of choral music composed in the late 16th century for use in the Sistine Chapel, which is located within the Vatican in Rome and used by the Pope himself. This piece of music is not only beautiful but historically significant. To understand how it came to be composed and why it has the characteristics that it does, we must take a look at the religious politics of the era.

The Reformation

Beginning in 800, with the foundation of what would later be known as the Holy Roman Empire, the Catholic Church was the dominant religious force in Europe. During the 16th century, however, the Catholic Church began to run into trouble. One by one, factions began to break off, forming new denominations and rejecting the authority of the Pope.



Image 11.9: This portrait of Martin Luther was painted by Lucas Cranach the Elder in 1529.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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The first sign of defection came in 1517, when Martin Luther, a Catholic priest, posted his 95 theses to the door of a church in Wittenburg, Germany (or so the story goes—it is likely that his writings were in fact disseminated in a less flamboyant manner). Luther's 95 theses were a list of complaints about the Catholic Church. Some of his objections were to practices that amounted to outright corruption. The most famous of these was the sale of indulgences, whereby priests would forgive the sins of their parishioners in return for money. Luther also objected to the complexity of the Catholic hierarchy, which he saw as preventing Christians from experiencing a direct relationship with God. Finally, he had concerns about the services, which were in Latin (a language that was not understood by

most members of the public), and the music, which he worried was overly complex and exclusive.

Luther had no intention of founding a new church. His only desire was to convince the Catholic Church to reform itself. However, he unwittingly began

a chain of events that led to the creation of the Lutheran Church—the music of which we will explore in the next section. The English soon followed the Germans in abandoning Catholicism. The Anglican Church was founded in 1534 by King Henry VIII when the Pope refused to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. And in Switzerland, the Calvinists were defecting from the Catholic Church during this same period.

All of this constituted a crisis for the Catholic Church, which saw the first major challenge to its authority in Europe. To address the crisis, the Pope convened an ecumenical council of high-ranking church officials to reform Catholic doctrine. The Council of Trent was held between 1545 and 1563. It debated a number of issues, and in fact adopted some of the reforms first suggested by Luther.

In 1562, the Council turned its attention to music. It determined that music for worship had come to inappropriately resemble that intended for entertainment. To correct this, the Council banned the use of musical instruments, which were associated with dancing and secular song and were therefore considered inappropriate for worship. Instruments, however, were not the only concern. Church composers had developed the habit of including popular tunes in their music, usually to demonstrate how clever they were at reworking preexisting musical material into something new. Their compositions were also becoming virtuosic and extravagant, and the Council was concerned that the focus of church music was on fancy singing, not the meaning of the text.

The Council was particularly critical of **polyphonic** music, in which each vocal part has an independent melody. In such compositions, the sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses each sing the words of the text at different times, which can make those words almost impossible to understand. Such music is beautiful, but it was perceived to be undermining the goals of the church service.

The Council of Trent briefly considered banning polyphonic music altogether, but ultimately did not, instead issuing strict rules about how such music must be composed. They required that music for the church be sober and restrained, avoiding the showy excesses that were characteristic of music for entertainment, and that the text always be comprehensible. They encouraged styles that were **syllabic**, meaning that each pitch corresponds to a single syllable of text, and **homorhythmic**, meaning that all of the voices move in rhythm together, each singing the same text at the same time.

Luckily for the Catholic Church, a composer was ready to take on the challenge of creating compelling music that met their



Image 11.10: This 1588 painting by Pasquale Cati depicts the Council of Trent.

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requirements. Giovanni da Palestrina (1525–1594) spent his entire life in the employment of the Catholic Church. He served as organist, singer, and choir director at a variety of churches in Rome, including St. Peter's basilica, the largest church in the world. It is worth noting that women were prohibited from singing in the choir at St. Peter's. Instead, the high vocal parts were performed by boys, by men who sang in a high **falsetto** range, or by men known as **castrati** due to the fact that they had been castrated before puberty with the result that they retained voices in the soprano range. In total, Palestrina served ten Popes—a testament to the longevity and impact of his career.

Palestrina and his Music

Palestrina was an advocate of a musical style known as the *ars perfecta*, or “perfect art.” Members of this school of composition believed, first and foremost, that music—like human beings—could be perfected. They sought to develop and formalize a style that was rational and aesthetically pleasing. Palestrina, after all, lived and worked at the height of the Italian **Renaissance**, a period during which the sciences and arts both flourished as intellectuals revived the values of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. Adherents to the *ars perfecta* developed a set of rules for composers to follow. The resulting music was calm, free of dissonance, and fairly predictable. It radiated a sense of self-control and rationality. It also all sounded pretty much the same. Perfection, after all, cannot be improved upon.

Palestrina’s enormous body of music is considered to exemplify the peak of achievement in the *ars perfecta* style. His compositions were particularly influential due to the invention in 1501 of a technique for printing music. Rome was home to one of the first music publication firms, meaning that Palestrina’s compositions could easily be published and distributed across Europe. Palestrina was enormously productive. He wrote over four hundred motets—stand-alone choral pieces with Latin texts that are



Image 11.12: This lithograph of Palestrina was produced by Henri-Joseph Hesse in 1828.

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Image 11.11: In this engraving we see Giovanni da Palestrina presenting his work to Pope Julius III.

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intended for use during church services. He also created at least 104 settings of the Mass Ordinary, the most famous of which we will examine here.

The **Mass Ordinary** contains all of the words that are spoken or sung at every Catholic Mass, which today we can think of as the typical Sunday morning service. The entire text of the service, including the parts that change from day to day, is termed the **liturgy**. The Mass Ordinary, like the rest of the service, is principally in Latin, and it contains five parts: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. Each part contains a text that is considered central to the Catholic faith, and which parishioners must speak, sing, or at least hear every time they attend a service.

Pope Marcellus Mass

We will examine the Kyrie and Credo from Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus Mass*. Out of Palestrina's many Masses, this one is the most closely associated with the Council of Trent and its musical reforms. Indeed, it is fabled that the Council decided not to ban polyphony after hearing this Mass, although most historians doubt the truth of this story. However, this Mass was certainly composed with the musical values of the Reformation in mind, and it satisfied the Council's requirements.

It is not certain when Palestrina composed this Mass, but it is named for Pope Marcellus II, who reigned for only twenty-two days in 1555. Marcellus's brief papacy happened to span Holy Week, the most sacred period in the Catholic calendar. Holy Week encompasses the seven days leading up to Easter. The most austere of these is Good Friday, on which day the faithful remember Jesus's crucifixion. Following the 1555 Good Friday service in the Sistine Chapel, Pope Marcellus berated the choir for singing music that he found inappropriate given the seriousness of the occasion. Apparently they had chosen music that was complex and virtuosic, while the Pope would have preferred something simple and modest.

This Mass, therefore, was a direct response to the Pope's complaint, but also a more general response to concerns that were later expressed by the Council of Trent. By the time it was published in 1567, it was a model for Catholic composers everywhere. With the *Pope Marcellus Mass*, Palestrina satisfied the new requirements of the Catholic Church without abandoning his musical values. His



Image 11.13: This 1555 engraving captured Pope Marcellus II during his brief reign.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Mass was beautiful and expressive, but also modest and clear. He has succeeded in producing art that served the requirements of worship.

To see how this music worked, we will consider the Kyrie and the Credo. These are the most disparate movements of the Mass. The Kyrie has the shortest text: It translates in its entirety to “Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.” The text is also unusual because it is in Greek, not Latin. The Credo has the longest text, for it details all of the core Catholic beliefs. This text is also known as the Nicene Creed, for it was adopted by the First Council of Nicea in 325. In the context of a musical setting, however, this movement is always termed the Credo. The Latin verb “credo,” which opens the text, means “I believe.” The Credo goes on to summarize the story of Christ and state the essential tenets of the faith. The current English version of the Nicene Creed as used by the Catholic Church reads as follows:

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
 I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
 and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Kyrie

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	"Lord have mercy"	Each of the six parts enters independently; it is impossible to say which has the melody
1'17"	"Christ have mercy"	This section begins with the soprano and bass in homorhythm, but soon becomes polyphonic
2'37"	"Lord have mercy"	This section has the same texture as the first "Lord have mercy," but the musical contents are different

For his setting of the Kyrie, Palestrina did not take particular concern with the clarity of the text. The reason is evident enough: The text is very brief, and it is instantly recognizable by its first word, which appears nowhere else in the liturgy. In keeping with the three-part structure of the text, Palestrina uses a ternary musical structure. He repeats the short text many times within each section, such that the listener hears the Greek words dozens of times.

The nature of the text allows Palestrina to do two things with his music that were otherwise frowned upon by church authorities. First, his Kyrie is highly **imitative**, each vocal part entering independently. There are six vocal parts, meaning that the texture quickly becomes dense. First, we hear the altos. Next, the highest sopranos, followed by the lowest basses. Within half a minute, everyone is singing. No single part has the melody. Instead, as is typical of polyphonic music, every part is equally important, and melodic fragments are passed around. This also means that the text does not line up between vocal parts. Second, his vocal lines are melismatic, meaning that many notes are sung on a single syllable of text.

All the same, Palestrina is careful not to show off. The music is noble and stately. The melodies are modest and restrained, while the harmonies move slowly and deliberately. The movement has a single, introspective mood. Palestrina aims to

create an atmosphere in which churchgoers can ponder the meaning of the words and prepare for worship.

Credo

Time	Text	What to listen for
0'00"	"I believe in one God. . ."	The opening line is chanted by a solo male voice
0'07"	" . . . the Father almighty. . ."	We seldom hear all six voice parts at the same time; instead, groups of three to five voice parts take turns singing phrases in homorhythm
2'31"	" . . . and by the Holy Spirit. . ."	The note values lengthen and the rhythmic complexity lessens
3'27"	"For our sake he was crucified. . . ."	The texture is reduced to four voices; at first, we hear only the low parts
5'11"	"I believe in the Holy Spirit. . ."	The texture expands to six voices; this passage is sprinkled with melismas
7'53"	"Amen"	The texture becomes increasingly polyphonic

The Credo is quite different. To begin with, although the Credo text is about thirty times as long as the Kyrie text, the Credo movement is only about twice as long as the Kyrie. This is because Palestrina does not repeat text and does not draw out words using melismas. Instead, he focuses on moving through the text from beginning to end with the maximum of clarity.

Palestrina achieves this clarity in several ways. First, he seldom uses the entire choir, instead limiting the texture to three or four vocal parts. Second, he uses a homophonic texture in which all of the parts sing the same words at the same time. Finally, he avoids melismas, using them only at the ends of phrases once the meaning has already been communicated.

The Credo contains more musical diversity than the Kyrie. Palestrina divides it into four sections. The first includes the opening text, the second begins with Christ's incarnation, and the third describes his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. The final section lists the core Catholic beliefs. Because the third section contains the text most essential to Christianity, it receives the most serious treatment. Palestrina reduces his choir to four parts and uses long note values for the passage about Christ's burial, followed by more rapid rhythms to symbolize his return to life.

Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus Mass* provides an excellent example of how the values of the Christian church influenced the development of music. Palestrina's Latin-texted compositions are frequently performed by choirs today, and they are widely admired for their elegance and beauty. However, Palestrina might never have produced music in quite this style were it not for pressure from his employers.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, FUGUE IN G MINOR AND SLEEPERS, WAKE

About 150 years later, another composer of church music was also guided by the needs and preferences of his faith community. The church music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) is quite different from that of Palestrina, however, both because musical tastes had changed in the intervening years and because Bach worked not for the Catholic but for the Lutheran Church. We will take a look at two of his most famous creations: a piece of music for the organ and a composition for choir and orchestra.

Bach's Legacy

Today, the music of J.S. Bach is performed more frequently than that of almost any other composer from the European tradition. Ensembles all over the world are dedicated to his music, while countless books have detailed his life and works. He is esteemed by many as the greatest composer of all time (although, as will be discussed in the final chapter of this book, it is nearly impossible to define “greatness” in music).

All of this would have very much surprised the composer himself. During his lifetime, Bach was not particularly famous or respected, and he struggled constantly with difficult working conditions and low pay. He was better known as an organist than as a composer: While Bach was respected as a virtuoso



Image 11.14: This portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach was painted in 1746 by Elias Gottlob Haussmann.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 11.15: During his lifetime, Bach was best known as an organist. He is depicted at the console in this 1725 engraving.

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performer, his compositions were considered old-fashioned and stuffy. Only a handful of his works—mostly for keyboard—were published before his death, and he had no reason to expect future generations to take any interest in his music.

Bach's fortunes shifted in the early 19th century, when German musicians began to revive and popularize his music. The most significant such event took place in 1829 when the composer Felix Mendelssohn staged a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in Berlin. Like *Sleepers, Wake* (German: *Wachet auf*), which we will examine, the *St. Matthew Passion* was a work for choir and orchestra intended for use in a Lutheran church service. Bach never imagined that any of his church music would be performed in concert halls or consumed as either art or entertainment. He sought only to support the work of the church. Since the time of Mendelssohn, however,

Bach's choral compositions have been a staple of the concert repertoire, and today's listener can access thousands of recordings.

A brief examination of Bach's life and career will serve to contextualize his work as a composer. Bach was born into a large family of German musicians that extended back for many generations. His father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncles, and other male ancestors were all performers and in most cases composers, while his sons were all to become composers as well. From the time of his birth, therefore, there was no doubt about Bach's future career. Musicians of his time and place generally found employment with either a court or a city, in which capacity they would produce new compositions, oversee performances, and participate in those performances as instrumentalists or singers.

Bach's Career

Bach never lived outside the region of Thuringia, which today is located in central Germany, and he never travelled beyond the borders of the modern German nation. Following an education in Eisenach, he took a series of five professional posts. First he served as a church organist in the cities of Arnstadt (1703-1707) and Mühlhausen (1707-1708). His next position was at the ducal court in Weimar (1708-1717), where he played the organ and served as music director. After this he became music director at the court of Prince Leopold in Köthen (1717-1723). Finally, Bach took the position of music director at the St. Thomas Church in the city of Leipzig, where he remained until his death.

Famously, Bach was not the city council's first choice for the job. They initially offered the post to a composer—Georg Philipp Telemann—whose music is only seldom performed today, but who at the time was considered to be more fashionable. Bach was in turn loathe to accept the job, which was less prestigious than the post he held in Köthen. He made the move to Leipzig, however, out of concern for his family. Bach, who was married twice, had a total of twenty children, ten of whom survived into adulthood. Leipzig had excellent schools, and he knew that his sons would have better prospects in that city. Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena, was herself a highly-skilled musician. She provided her husband with invaluable assistance, copying out parts by hand each week so that the church musicians could perform his music during the Sunday service.

In Leipzig, Bach was required to perform a variety of tasks on behalf of the municipal government. He was principally responsible for music at the St. Thomas Church, but also oversaw music at the city's other three churches. As music director, Bach produced instrumental and vocal compositions for use in the church, hired musicians, ran rehearsals, and played the organ. He also taught music and Latin at the St. Thomas School, which was attached to the church. Finally, he was obliged to produce music for civic occasions, including commemorations of important events and celebrations of esteemed visitors.

Bach frequently complained about his immense workload and limited resources. He felt that the city did not provide adequate funds with which to hire



Image 11.16: Today, this statue of Bach stands outside of the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 11.17: The interior of the St. Thomas Church looks much the same today as it did in Bach's time.

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Image 11.18: This 1723 engraving depicts the St. Thomas Church and adjoining School, where Bach taught music and Latin.

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the musicians that he needed, and he often had to limit his instrumentation due to budgetary concerns. Although today one can hear Bach's music rendered by the best choirs and orchestras in the world, Bach himself was seldom able to arrange for high-quality performances of his music. He relied primarily on students from the St. Thomas School and from the nearby Leipzig University.

We will examine two pieces of church music from two different parts of his career. Bach's Fugue in G minor dates from his early years as a church organist in Arnstadt. Like most of Bach's music, it has survived only as a handwritten manuscript. The same is true of *Sleepers, Wake*, which was created in 1731 for use at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig.

Fugue in G minor

		Fugue in G minor Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach Performance: Wolfgang Rübsam (1977)
Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Exposition	The subject is heard first in the soprano voice, then alto, then tenor, then bass
0'51"	Episode	All of the episodes consist largely of sequences
0'58"	Subject	After a false entrance in the tenor, the subject is heard in the soprano
1'11"	Episode	
1'17"	Subject	Heard in the alto
1'28"	Episode	
1'36"	Subject	Heard in the bass
1'47"	Episode	
1'59"	Subject	Heard in the soprano
2'10"	Episode	This is the most diverse and lengthy episode
2'31"	Subject	Heard in the bass; the tempo slows before the final cadence

Bach wrote hundreds of fugues, most of which had nothing to do with his work as a church musician. The term **fugue** refers to a compositional technique that can be applied across genres. Bach wrote most of his fugues for keyboard instruments such as the harpsichord, which resembles a small piano in appearance but creates sound using quite a different process: When the player depresses a key, it causes a string to be plucked with a quill or piece of hard leather. Most famously, Bach twice wrote keyboard fugues in every major and minor key. His two collections, known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I* (1722) and *Book II* (1742), were intended to demonstrate a new method for tuning the harpsichord. Bach also wrote fugues for solo string instruments, orchestra, and choir. One of Bach's final works, entitled *The Art of Fugue*, was left incomplete at his death but nonetheless demonstrated his ultimate mastery of the technique.

Fugal technique was widely employed in the 18th century. It is simple in principle, but very challenging to execute. Whether a fugue is written for instrumentalists or singers, we always speak of its “voices” and use the typical choral designations: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. Most fugues have four voices, although Bach wrote for as few as two and as many as six.

Every fugue begins with a solo melody in one of the voices. This melody is called the **subject**. The composer will introduce the subject in each of the voices in turn until all have entered the texture. This section of the fugue is called the **exposition**. For the remainder of the fugue, sections that do not contain the subject, which are known as **episodes**, will alternate with statements of the subject, which constitute the **development**. The subject will appear in many different keys and sometimes in different forms (for example, the melody might be turned upside down) until finally it is heard one last time in the original key and the fugue concludes. A fugue might have many episodes or none at all, and there is no predetermined length or precise form.

Fugue				
<u>Exposition</u>	<u>Development</u>	<u>Final</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject introduced • Subject answered (in different keys) • Countersubjects accompany subjects 	<p>Episode(s) Bridging material for return to Subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject presented in different keys • Possible transformations of the subject (inversions, etc.) 	<p>Episode(s) Bridging material for return to Subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject and countersubject in the original key 		
Optional: Coda (at the end)				

Fugues are difficult to write because the composer must follow complex rules concerning the relationships between the voices. These rules concern the distances between simultaneous pitches, the directions in which voices move, the special treatment of notes that do not belong to chords, and the keys in which the subject must appear. Because the subject itself can never be altered, the composer must employ all of their skill to avoid breaking rules. (These rules are not arbitrary, but rather emerged over decades of practice and guide the composer in creating a fugue that sounds good.) Bach seems to have enjoyed the challenge of fugue writing, and he often created subjects that were especially difficult to work with.

Although a fugue is not necessarily an example of church music, Bach composed organ fugues for use in Lutheran church services. We will examine a fairly simple fugue that he composed in his capacity as church organist for the city of Arnstadt. He would have played his Fugue in G minor at the beginning or end of services, but also on organ recitals that were intended not for worship but for the enjoyment of the audience. While this piece of music sets a mood that is appropriately serious for worship, its complexities also reward careful listening.

In Arnstadt, Bach played on an organ that had just been installed by the builder Johann Friederich Wender. All organs work by blowing air through pipes, which might be made out of wood or metal, be of various shapes, or contain reeds. These

variations allow organs to produce many different sounds. Most organs have multiple keyboards, each of which can be linked to one or more sets of pipes. In this way, the performer can quickly change from one sound quality to another by moving between keyboards. Sets of pipes are activated or deactivated by adjusting wooden rods known as stops. Organs also have an additional keyboard, termed the pedalboard, that is operated using the feet. The pedalboard is typically linked to pipes that sound in the lowest register.

Despite its complexity, the organ is actually one of the oldest instruments found in Europe. Organs were first developed in



Image 11.19: Although the church in Arnstadt was known as the New Church during the time that Bach worked there, in 1935 it was renamed the Bach Church in honor of the composer.

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Image 11.20: The organ in the New Church at Arnstadt.

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ancient Greece over two thousand years ago. Although early organs were small and portable instruments, they began to grow in the 14th century when the first permanent organ was installed in a church. By the 19th century organs had become enormous instruments capable of producing a great range of volumes and timbres.

Bach's organ in Arnstadt is still played today. Like other Baroque organs, it is fairly small, although still capable of producing a wide variety of sounds. It has two keyboards and a pedalboard, which together give the player access to twenty-one sets of pipes. Baroque organs are not capable of gradual changes in dynamic. The performer can suddenly alternate between loud and soft by changing keyboards, but all notes played using a given set of pipes are the same volume. Fugues, therefore, are most often performed without any dynamic changes.

Bach's Fugue in G minor (often called the "Little" Fugue in G minor, to distinguish it from others in the same key) has a five-measure subject. The subject begins with long note values, but gradually incorporates shorter and shorter note values as it proceeds. This creates an impression of increased activity, even though the tempo does not accelerate. The fugue has four voices, which enter from highest to lowest in the order soprano-alto-tenor-bass. The texture quickly becomes dense, and—after the opening measures—at least one voice is moving rapidly at all times. Although the fugue is short, therefore, one needs to listen to it several time to hear everything that is going on. It can be challenging to pick out the subject, even once it has become familiar.

Bach was noted for the density and complexity of his music. Indeed, that was the characteristic that earned him scorn in his own time—just as it earned him respect a century after his death. He also preferred to establish and then maintain a single mood with each piece of music. As such, there is little expressive variation within the Fugue in G minor. Once the engine starts, it runs steadily and unerringly until the final cadence.

Sleepers, Wake

During the early years of his employment in Leipzig, J.S. Bach dedicated most of his energy to the creation of **Lutheran church cantatas**. This was a big job because the churches there required a new cantata every week. The Lutheran liturgical calendar is organized into a year-long cycle of Biblical readings, and the cantata corresponded with the topic of the readings and the sermon. For this reason, Bach needed to produce an appropriate cantata for every Sunday morning Mass and for special services, making for a total of sixty cantatas a year.

After his first year on the job, Bach could have begun to reuse old cantatas—but instead he completed a whole second cycle and most of three additional cycles. Bach had also written church cantatas at several of his previous jobs. However, none of his church cantatas were ever published. As a result, about two hundred are extant today, while hundreds more might have been lost.

A **cantata** is a multi-part work for voice(s) and instrumental accompaniment. Bach's Lutheran church cantatas are multi-movement works for choir, soloists, and

orchestra. Bach always used texts in German, the language of his congregation. He did not write the texts himself, however, but rather selected them from among the works of various theological poets. Each cantata is thirty to forty minutes long and usually contains four to seven movements. Some of the movements use the entire choir, while others feature solo singers, often paired with solo instruments.

Bach's cantatas constituted the musical focus for worship at St. Thomas and other churches in Leipzig. Although forty minutes of choral music might seem excessive, the services themselves lasted four hours. The centerpiece was a one-hour sermon, which was preceded by opening prayers, hymns, readings, and the performance of the cantata. Communion followed the sermon.

The cantata had a very specific purpose: It reflected on the Biblical readings for the day, interpreted their meaning for the congregation, and prepared listeners to understand and appreciate the sermon. As stated above, Bach in no way regarded his cantatas as entertainment—or even, strictly speaking, art. He was deeply committed to his Lutheran faith and he understood his role in the service to be essentially spiritual. His cantatas shaped churchgoers' understanding of their relationship with God.

We will see Bach's approach to cantata composition in *Sleepers, Wake*. Although many of Bach's cantatas are difficult to date, we know that this one was first performed on November 25, 1731. The occasion was the 27th Sunday after Trinity—a day that occurs only in years during which Easter falls very early, for in regular years the liturgical season of Advent will have already commenced. This explains why Bach had to write this cantata several years after having completed his annual cycles, for the 27th Sunday after Trinity had not occurred since 1704. *Sleepers, Wake* was performed only once in Bach's lifetime, at Leipzig's St. Nicholas Church.

The Epistle reading for the 27th Sunday after Trinity is 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11, while the Gospel reading is Matthew 25: 1-13. Both exhort Christians to be prepared for the return of Christ. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he warns that the Lord will come "like a thief in the night," without any warning. Matthew records the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. All had gathered together to await the coming of the bridegroom (an allegory for Christ), but the foolish virgins had failed to bring extra oil for their lamps. While they were away buying oil, the bridegroom arrived and the wedding feast commenced. The wise virgins, who were prepared for the arrival, were welcomed into the hall, but the foolish virgins were shut



Image 11.21: Bach was also responsible for music at the large St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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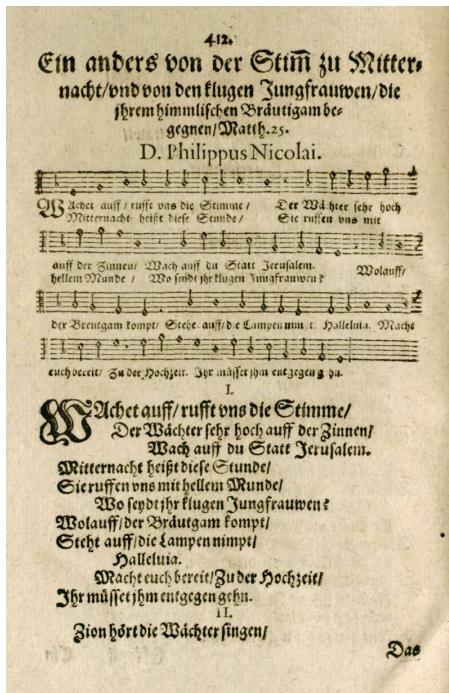


Image 11.22: Here we see the original 1599 publication of the chorale "Sleepers, Wake."

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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out in the darkness. The message is clear: Christians must be prepared for Christ's coming. If they are not, they will be excluded from heaven and denied eternal life.

Bach's cantata reflects on this parable using a variety of musical and dramatic techniques. He began by selecting an appropriate **Lutheran chorale** on which to base his cantata. Chorales are unison hymns sung by the congregation, and they were first developed by Martin Luther himself in the early years of the church. One of Luther's objections to Catholic worship was that the music was performed in Latin by professional choirs. He preferred participatory music in the language of the congregants. To develop a repertoire of chorales, he wrote new tunes, adapted Gregorian chants, and even borrowed popular melodies. Luther saw no problem with using secular music for worship. As he supposedly put it, "Why should the devil have all the good tunes?"

Because *Sleepers, Wake* is based on a Lutheran chorale, it is a special type of cantata known as a **chorale cantata**. Bach primarily wrote chorale cantatas while in Leipzig, and he developed a unique approach to their construction, of which *Sleepers, Wake* is a fine example. The cantata contains seven movements, three of which—the first, fourth, and seventh—include text and music from a 1599 chorale of the same name. Bach selected this chorale because it, too, comments on the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, thereby offering another layer of interpretation. Everyone in the congregation at St. Thomas would have known the chorale well and would have instantly recognized the words and music. Because the chorale is in A A B form, each of the movements based on it is in that same form.

I. Wake up, the voice calls us

Bach spreads his references to the chorale throughout the cantata, and he integrates it with his own music differently on each occasion. In the first movement, we hear the choir sing the first verse of the chorale text:

Wake up, the voice calls us
of the watchmen high up on the battlements,
wake up, you city of Jerusalem!
This hour is called midnight;

they call us with a clear voice:
 where are you, wise virgins?
 Get up, the bridegroom comes;
 Stand up, take your lamps! Hallelujah!
 Alleluia!
 Make yourselves ready
 for the wedding,
 you must go to meet him!

Translation by Francis Browne

We also hear the chorale melody, but it is buried in a dense texture of newly-composed music. While Bach's congregation would have recognized the chorale, many modern listeners have a hard time even picking the melody out.

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Ritornello	The violins and oboes exchange melodic material in a call-and-response texture
0'28"	A “Wake up, the voice calls us . . .”	The sopranos sing the chorale melody while the altos, tenors, and basses sing newly-composed material
1'32"	Ritornello	This ritornello is identical to that which opened the movement
2'00"	A “This hour is called midnight . . .”	The A music repeats with a new texts
3'04"	Ritornello	This ritornello sounds different because it moves through several key areas

	B	
3'24"	"Get up, the bridegroom comes. . ."	We hear exclamations of "get up" and "stand up" from the choir
3'57"	"Alleluia!"	This passage is especially ornate; the chorale melody does not enter until near the end
4'42"	"Make yourselves ready. . ."	The texture returns to normal
5'32"	Ritornello	We hear the complete ritornello one last time
2'10"	Episode	This is the most diverse and lengthy episode
2'31"	Subject	Heard in the bass; the tempo slows before the final cadence

The first movement starts with orchestral music, the uneven dotted rhythms of which suggest a wedding march. Dotted rhythms were also associated with royalty in this era—another appropriate connotation for music about Christ's coming. This opening passage is in fact a **ritornello**. In this movement Bach combines ritornello form, in which an orchestral melody returns throughout a piece of music, with the A A B form of the chorale. The resulting form is: rit A rit A rit B rit. The orchestra also provides short interjections between the verses within each section. Although a congregation might sing the first verse of the chorale in less than two minutes, the first movement of the cantata takes nearly four times as long to perform. This is due to the slowed-down chorale melody and frequent orchestral interruptions. As a result, however, the congregation has an opportunity to meditate on the text, the meaning of which is reinforced by Bach's musical setting.

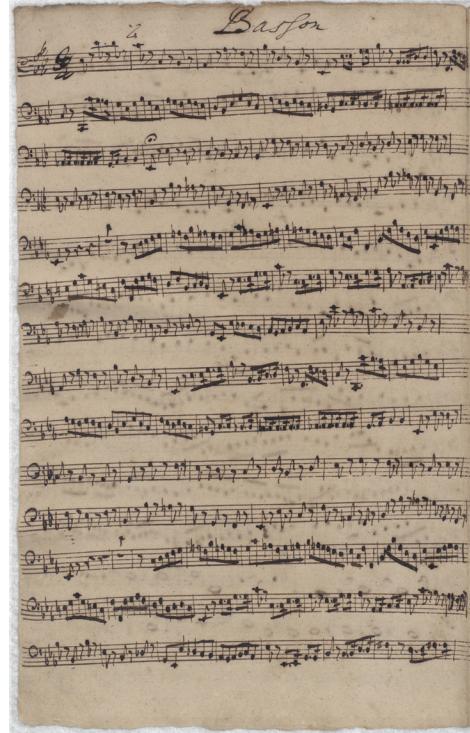


Image 11.23: This bassoon part in Bach's own hand is one of only a few extant original manuscripts for *Sleepers, Wake.*

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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The first movement is texturally very dense. There are active parts for strings, winds, and voices, and it is seldom possible to identify a single, dominant melody. The opening ritornello contains three distinct layers. Underpinning everything is the **basso continuo**, a feature of almost all music composed in the Baroque era (1600-1750). Basso continuo is always performed by some combination of low-pitched instruments and instruments that can play chords. In this case, we hear cello, bassoon, organ, and harpsichord. While Baroque bass lines can be simple, Bach's seldom are. This one contains a variety of interesting rhythmic and melodic elements, thereby attracting an unusual amount of the listener's attention. Above that, the violins and oboe trade melodic motifs back and forth in a six-part texture.

When the singers enter, the orchestra begins by repeating the musical material from the ritornello. The already-dense texture suddenly becomes much more complex. First we hear the sopranos with the familiar chorale melody. While the sopranos sing in slow, even note values, the altos, tenors, and basses sing quickly. These other voices occasionally integrate text painting as well, such as with their ascending cries on the text "wake up". Also notable is the passage on the text "Alleluia," which features excitable melismas in the altos, tenors, and basses.

Ritornello Form: Movements I & IV of Bach's <i>Sleepers, Wake</i>						
	A <i>from chorale</i>		A <i>from chorale</i>		B <i>from chorale</i>	
<u>ritornello</u> orchestra	lines 1-3 of text with accompaniment	<u>ritornello</u> orchestra	lines 4-6 of text with accompaniment	<u>ritornello</u> orchestra	lines 7-12 of text with accompaniment	<u>ritornello</u> orchestra

IV. Zion hears the watchmen sing

The chorale disappears until the fourth movement,² when we hear the second verse sung by the tenor section:

Zion hears the watchmen sing,
her heart leaps for joy,
she awakes and gets up in haste.
Her friend comes from heaven in his splendour,
strong in mercy, mighty in truth.
Her light becomes bright, her star rises.

Now come, you worthy crown,
Lord Jesus, God's son!
Hosanna!
We all follow
to the hall of joy
and share in the Lord's supper.

Translation by Francis Browne.

2.



IV. "Zion hears the watchmen sing" from *Sleepers, Wake*

Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach

Performance: American Bach Soloists (2007)

This movement is much simpler than the first movement. In place of the orchestral ritornello, with its call-and-response texture, we have a unison ritornello melody from the violins and violas. The chorale melody, instead of being buried in a complex texture, is clearly presented without competition from other vocal parts. All the same, this movement is by no means simple. The two melodies—one in the strings, one in the tenors—weave around one another in unpredictable and extraordinary ways. While their phrases never start or end together, the parts always complement one another.

VII. May gloria be sung to you

We finally hear a straightforward presentation of the chorale in the seventh movement,³ in which the entire choir—and perhaps the congregation as well—sing the third verse in four-part harmony:

May gloria be sung to you
with the tongues of men and angels,
with harps and with cymbals.
The gates are made of twelve pearls,
in your city we are companions
of the angels on high around your throne.
No eye has ever perceived,
no ear has ever heard
such joy.
Therefore we are joyful,
hurray, hurray!
for ever in sweet rejoicing.

Translation by Francis Browne

3.



VII. "May gloria be sung to you" from *Sleepers, Wake*
Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach
Performance: American Bach Soloists (2007)

Although Bach borrowed chorale melodies from the Lutheran tradition, he always created his own harmonizations. In practice, this means that the soprano part is borrowed, but the alto, tenor, and bass parts are original. Bach has the orchestral musicians double the vocal parts, playing the same melodies that are being sung. This makes the ensemble sound exceptionally full and rich without distracting from the chorale melody: a fitting culmination to the cantata.

II. He comes

Although there are four movements that do not contain the chorale melody or text, we will look at only two of them. The text was supplied by an unknown poet. It includes many references to the Song of Solomon—a passage of Biblical love poetry that was understood by Bach and his contemporaries to be a metaphor for the love between Jesus and the faithful soul. To set this expressive new text, Bach used musical forms from the opera stage: **recitative** and **aria**. Bach never wrote an opera and did not think highly of the form, but he often adapted operatic conventions for his own purposes.

The second movement⁴ of *Sleepers, Wake* is a recitative for solo tenor:

He comes, he comes,
the bridegroom comes!
You daughters of Zion, come out,
he hastens his departure from on high
to your mother's house.
The bridegroom comes, who like a roe deer
and a young stag
leaps on the hills
and brings to you the wedding feast.
Wake up, rouse yourselves
to welcome the bridegroom!
There, see, he comes this way.

Translation by Francis Browne.

4.



II. "He comes" from *Sleepers, Wake*
Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach
Performance: American Bach Soloists (2007)

He announces the coming of the bridegroom with a series of exuberant melodic leaps, accompanied only by basso continuo. This movement contains no repetition and has no particular form. In fact, the singing—as is always the case with recitative—is not particularly melodic at all. Instead, its purpose is to declaim the text with the utmost expressive force.

III. When are you coming, my salvation?

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Ritornello	This ritornello features a virtuosic violin obbligato
0'26"	A “When are you coming...”	The soprano and bass exchange lines while the solo violin line weaves about them
1'46"	Ritornello	This ritornello is similar to that which opened the movement, but it is in a different key
1'59"	B “Open the hall...”	This passage has the same texture as A, but the music and text are different
2'32"	Ritornello	This passage is not closely related to the opening ritornello
2'46"	B'	This passage is similar to B, but it is in a different key
3'18"	Ritornello	This ritornello is very brief, for it is interrupted by the return of the A text
3'25"	A' “When are you coming...”	This passage echoes A, but is not musically identical
4'25"	Ritornello	The closing ritornello is identical to that which opened the movement

The recitative serves to introduce the third movement, which is a duet for soprano and bass. Just as recitative developed within the operatic tradition, this is clearly an operatic duet—specifically, the type of duet sung by two characters who are in love. The soprano and bass call back and forth to one another, expressing their mutual desire. Bach’s lovers, however, are a Soul (soprano) and Jesus (bass), and they offer a dramatic enactment of the desire that all Christians are meant to feel for their savior.

Because the third movement is based in operatic conventions, it has the ***da capo form*** of an opera aria. “Da capo” literally means “from the head,” and it serves as an instruction to the performers to repeat the first of two parts, resulting in an A B A form. (The second A is not written out.) Bach accompanies his aria with basso continuo and an ***obbligato*** (or “obligatory”) instrumental solo. He intended the obbligato part in the fourth movement to be performed on the violino piccolo, a type of small violin that is tuned higher than a modern instrument. However, it can also be performed on a standard violin. The instrumental soloist provides ritornellos before, between, and after each of the sung sections, but also supplies a virtuosic accompaniment to the vocal soloists. The resulting music is beautiful and expressive—even if the text is a bit corny:

Soul: When are you coming, my salvation?

Jesus: I come, your portion.

Soul: I wait with burning oil.

Jesus: Open the hall

Soul: I open the hall

Both: to the heavenly feast.

Soul: Come, Jesus!

Jesus: Come, lovely soul!

Translation by Francis Browne.

JOHN NEWTON, “AMAZING GRACE”

So far, we have examined compositions for use in Christian worship that are fixed in terms of their musical details. Two recordings of *Sleepers, Wake*, for example, might differ slightly in terms of tempo or timbre, but they will sound essentially the same. They will certainly contain all of the same pitches and rhythms, and will be similar in length. These are all characteristics of the classical tradition, in which the composer exercises a great deal of control over the musical work.

Next, however, we will examine an example of Christian worship music that has changed dramatically as it has been adopted and adapted by different religious communities. In fact, the only element of “Amazing Grace” to remain consistent throughout its lifetime has been the words, although all of the versions under consideration here also use the same melody—that which will be familiar

to those who know the hymn. This stylistic flexibility is typical of music in the **vernacular** tradition, which permits the reinterpretation and transformation of musical compositions by individual performers.

No-one has ever performed *Sleepers, Wake* without being aware that it was composed by J.S. Bach, but people sing “Amazing Grace” every day without knowing who penned the words or music. Indeed, those are not easy questions to answer—the text, although initially written by John Newton (1725–1807), was later expanded by an anonymous author, while people still debate the identity of the tune’s composer. People who know this hymn are more likely to identify it with one of its great interpreters, such as Aretha Franklin, whose version we will encounter below.

Newton’s Life

The story of “Amazing Grace” begins with John Newton, who wrote six verses—some familiar from modern usage, some not—in 1772. Newton was a clergyman in the Church of England. He served as curate in the village of Olney, where his parishioners were largely impoverished and uneducated. Newton gained a reputation for impassioned preaching that spoke to the personal moral struggles of his congregants. Unlike other preachers, Newton willingly shared sins from his own past—and those were certainly in no short supply.

Newton took to the sea as a ship’s apprentice at the age of eleven, but was pressed into service with the Royal Navy after refusing to obey his captain’s orders. After deserting the Navy to visit a young lady, Polly Catlett, he was traded to a slave ship, where he developed a reputation for writing obscene songs and using language that shocked even sailors. Newton had renounced his Christian faith early in his seagoing career, but in 1748 a near-death experience aboard the ship *Greyhound* inspired him to reconsider his beliefs. He was further encouraged by his love for Polly, whom he married in 1750. All the same, it was many years (and another brush with death) before Newton reformed in any meaningful way, and he continued to work in the slave trade well into the 1750s. Newton began studying theology in 1756 and was finally successful in securing ordination and his position at Olney in 1764.

At Olney, Newton began writing hymns for his congregation to sing together at weekly prayer meetings. Newton’s hymns used simple language that was easily intelligible to his parishioners, and many of his texts were written in the first person. They focused on the confession of sins and the joys of salvation. Although

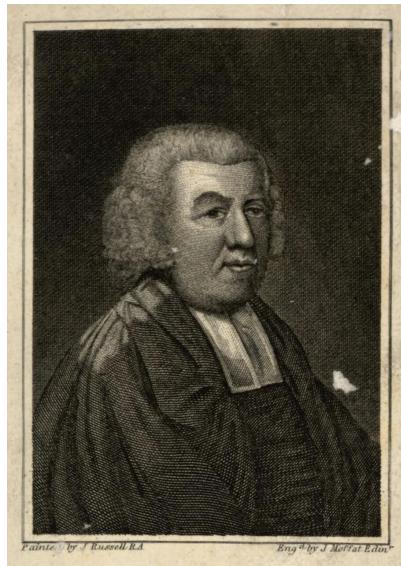


Image 11.24: This engraving of John Newton by John Moffat was published around 1788.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 11.25: Here we see the interior of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church in Olney, where Newton served as curate.

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the quality of his verse was criticized by some, Newton's hymns became quite popular. They first appeared in print as part of the 1779 collection *Olney Hymns*, which included "Amazing Grace":

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)

 That sav'd a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,

 Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,

 And grace my fears reliev'd;

How precious did that grace appear

 The hour I first believ'd!

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares,

 I have already come;

'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,

 And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promis'd good to me,
 His word my hope secures;
 He will my shield and portion be
 As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
 And mortal life shall cease;
 I shall possess, within the veil,
 A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
 The sun forbear to shine;
 But God, who call'd me here below,
 Will be forever mine.

Although it is known that Newton's congregation used his "Amazing Grace" text beginning in 1773, we have no idea what tune or tunes the text was sung to. It certainly was not the tune we know today. Newton was not a composer, but he always intended for his devotional poems to be sung. Like other hymn text authors, he crafted his verses using specific patterns of syllables and rhymes so that they could be sung to preexisting melodies. This system of interchangeable texts and tunes meant that any hymn text could be sung to a variety of tunes and any tune could be supplied with a variety of texts. Only over time have specific texts and tunes in the hymn tradition come to be paired off, such that churchgoers expect a text—"Amazing Grace," for example—always to be sung to the same melody.

"Amazing Grace"⁵ in the Sacred Harp Tradition

5.



"Amazing Grace"

Performance: Texas Sacred Harp Singers, Southwest
 Sacred Harp Singing Convention (2011)

The pairing of "Amazing Grace" with its tune took place in 1835, when William Walker published a version in his hymnal *Southern Harmony*. The name of the tune was "New Britain" and it had already been in circulation for some time, although in the company of different texts. The authorship of "New Britain" is still contested. It was based in turn on two older melodies that first appeared in the 1829 hymnal *Columbian Harmony*. These tunes are unattributed, which indicates that they might be the work of hymnal compilers Charles H. Spilman and Benjamin Shaw. It is equally likely, however, that the tunes derive from folk tradition and might trace their origin to the British Isles. The "New Britain" tune also appears in an 1828 manuscript compiled by hymn composer Lucius Chapin, who has been proposed as yet another potential author. It is unlikely that a composer will ever

be identified—if, indeed, “New Britain” was even the product of a single composer, which we have reason to doubt.

By the time William Walker published his version in 1835, the “Amazing Grace” text had already become very popular in the United States. It was widely used during the Second Great Awakening, which saw the staging of revivals across the country. These revivals featured charismatic preachers, who swayed crowds using emotionally charged speech punctuated with song. The verses of “Amazing Grace”—which embodied the personal, confessional approach to conversion favored by these preachers—were paired with simple refrains and sung to familiar tunes without the aid of hymnals.

Walker was not personally associated with the Second Great Awakening, but he made his living as a hymn publisher and singing teacher, and was therefore aware of trends in the world of Protestant worship music. Walker belonged to the American hymn tradition known as **shape-note singing**, which encompasses a unique form of notation, an approach to music education, and a compositional style.

The notation used in the shape-note tradition was first developed in late-18th century England for the purpose of simplifying the task of reading music. As its name suggests, shaped notation employs various shapes—each paired with a syllable—to represent the different pitches. In its original form, the system used only four shapes, even though a scale contains seven distinct pitches. The shapes were repeated in a way that maintained consistent patterns of intervals between shapes. If a singer could learn the intervallic distance between two shapes, they could easily sing music at sight. The syllables provide an additional tool for singers and also make it easy to teach the system. (The use of syllables to learn melodies actually dates back to ca. 1026, when the Italian monk Guido of Arezzo proposed a system that used six syllables—including the four later adapted by shape-note enthusiasts.)

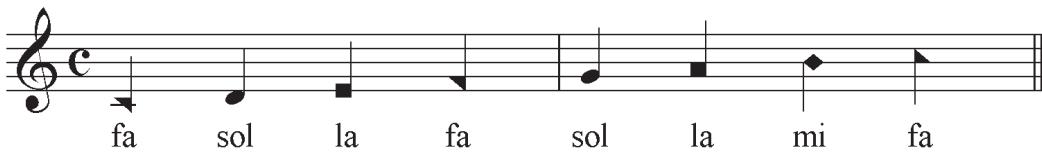


Image 11.26: These are the four distinct shapes used in Sacred Harp-style notation.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Shaped notation was adopted in the United States as part of a movement to improve church music. During the second half of the 18th century, music lovers in New England began to lament the sorry state of American congregational singing. Churchgoers were largely illiterate, and they did not have access to hymnals or instruments. The most common method of hymn singing, known as **lining out**, required a songleader to call out a musical phrase, which the congregants would then repeat in unison. Activists wanted to restore four-part harmony to the worship service, but this would require music literacy and access to printed notation.

To fulfill both of these needs, entrepreneurs began to publish hymn books and offer singing schools. A singing master would travel around a region, spending two weeks at a time teaching anyone who was interested how to read using the shape-note system. Singing schools were usually hosted by a church, and classes would meet daily. These schools not only paved the way to better church music, but also provided much-needed entertainment to farming communities during the winter months and facilitated interactions between young men and women, who had few opportunities to encounter one another unchaperoned. The students would not only pay tuition to the singing master but would purchase hymn books—another important source of income.

The hymns composed in the American shape-note tradition were unique. Most of the composers—William Billings (1746-1800) and Daniel Read (1757-1836) were the most famous to emerge from the First New England School—were self-taught, and they gleefully rejected the conventions of European harmony and part writing. Their hymns contain unusual and harsh sounds (the result of breaking voice-leading rules), uneven phrases, and incomplete chordal harmonies (open fifths in place of triads). The shape-note composers also adhered to the ancient practice of putting the melody in the tenor part instead of the soprano—an approach, dating back to medieval church polyphony, that had already disappeared from European choral music.

The singing school movement was launched in New England, but by the early 19th century had come to be regarded as outdated. The North, after all, aspired to a cosmopolitan identity and was embarrassed by the primitive efforts of its shape-note composers. The movement, however, found a new home in the South, where rural singing masters flourished up until the Civil War. It was there that the most influential hymn books were published. William Walker's *Southern Harmony* was among these, but without question the most important shape-note hymnal was *The Sacred Harp* (1844), published in Georgia by Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King. Unlike other such hymnals, *The Sacred Harp* has remained popular into the present day, and enthusiasts around the world regularly gather to sing from its pages. As such, the tradition of shape-note singing is today most commonly referred to as **Sacred Harp singing**.

Participants in modern Sacred Harp sing adhes to a number of practices that originated in the singing school movement. To begin with, their purpose is not worship but music marking. Many Sacred Harp enthusiasts also profess Christian beliefs,



Image 11.27: Pictured here are participants in a 19th-century singing school that took place in Keene, New Hampshire.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 11.28: In this photograph by Brent Moore, we see a song leader standing in the center of the hollow square. He is beating time with his arm.

Source: Flickr

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and sings often begin and end with prayer, but Sacred Harp thrives because participants are committed to the music.

At a typical sing, participants sit in a formation known as a “hollow square,” with singers—seated according to vocal part—facing a central open space. Although the vocal parts are gendered in typical choirs, this is not the case in Sacred Harp: Women will frequently sing the tenor part up an octave, while men will sing the soprano part down an octave. There is no conductor. Instead, participants will take turns selecting hymns, which each will direct from the central position. The person who chooses the hymn will specify which verses are to be sung, and someone will provide the starting pitches for each part. Then the group will sing through the hymn once on the syllables before turning to the text.

The vocal style associated with Sacred Harp singing is also unusual. Participants do not tend to approach their task with nuance. Instead, each sings as loudly and exuberantly as they can, often accenting the rhythms with physical movement (something that is expressly prohibited in choral singing). The tempos are steady. Finally, there is never instrumental accompaniment.

“Amazing Grace,” paired with the tune “New Britain,” appears in both *Southern Harmony* and *The Sacred Harp*. The *Southern Harmony* version contains only three voice parts (soprano, tenor, and bass), but editions of *The Sacred Harp* eventually added an alto part. (Experienced singers might notice that the soprano part is very high. This notation, however, is not meant to be taken literally, and



Image 11.29: The Southern Harmony version of "Amazing Grace," published in 1835, contains only three voice parts.

Source: Wikimedia Commons
Attribution: William Walker
License: Public Domain

NEW BRITAIN. C.M.

Columbian Harmony, 1829.



Image 11.30: The Sacred Harp version of "Amazing Grace," published in 1844, contains four voice parts.

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most groups will sing the hymn in a lower key.) The familiar melody is in the tenor in both versions, while the other parts provide harmony above and below. As a result, a performance of this version of the hymn strikes most listeners as familiar, but somehow strange.

Our rendition of "Amazing Grace" was recorded at the Southwest Sacred Harp Singing Convention in McMahan, TX, in 2011. After an initial pass using the syllables, the participants sing the first four verses of Newton's text.

"Amazing Grace" in the Southern Gospel Tradition⁶

Soon after the 1844 publication of *The Sacred Harp*, a rift emerged in the Southern hymn publishing community. In 1846, Jesse Aiken published *The Christian Minstrel*, which introduced a new shape-note system using seven shapes. This development seemed natural enough. As one advocate for the new system put it, "Would any parent having seven children, ever think of calling them by four names?" Aiken's hymnal provoked a virulent debate. While some publishers refused to adopt the new system, others were won over. William Walker himself switched to seven-shape notation with his 1866 hymnal *Christian Harmony*. Eventually, the seven-shape system emerged victorious.

6.

"Amazing Grace"

Performance: The Inspirations (1976)

Other changes came upon the hymn publishing industry as well. By the late 19th century, the stark harmonies of *The Sacred Harp* had largely been eschewed in favor of more pleasing harmonies derived from popular music. Hymn composers

moved away from the minor mode—which dominates the pages of *The Sacred Harp*—and began to write in a more cheerful vein. Composers also abandoned the archaic practice of placing the melody in the tenor voice, instead putting it in the soprano and supporting it with accompaniment in the lower parts. Finally, piano accompaniment was introduced in the early 20th century as churches gained access to instruments.

All of these characteristics describe the **Southern gospel** tradition, which continues to flourish. Southern gospel music is driven by hymn composers and publishers, who supply a steady diet of new hymns. These are sung at conventions, which attract vast numbers of singers eager to test their reading ability on unfamiliar music. At the same time, Southern gospel devotees enjoy singing old favorites, such as “Amazing Grace.” Although Southern gospel music does not belong to a single Christian denomination, it is closely associated with evangelical branches such as the Southern Baptist Convention.

In the early 20th century, Southern gospel publishers began sponsoring professional quartets to sing their music. These quartets—which were at first all-male—took the singing conventions, where they would perform the latest hymns from a particular publisher. They also participated in revivals, gave concerts, sang on the radio, and released commercial recordings. It might be argued that Southern gospel transformed from a **participatory** musical tradition to a **performative** one, for today many people think of Southern gospel primarily as a commercial music genre. At the same time, collective singing of Southern gospel music continues to take place in churches and at singing conventions.



Image 11.31: Although Southern gospel quartets were traditionally all male, modern singing groups typically include women.

Source: Picryl

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Our example was recorded by the Inspirations in 1976. The Inspirations follow solidly in the model established in the early 20th century by publishers' quartets. The group was formed in 1964 when Martin Cook, a high school chemistry teacher in Bryson City, NC, began singing gospel music with four of his students. A couple years later they founded a gospel music festival, Singing in the Smokies, and by 1969 the Inspirations were a full-time professional group. A string of number-one gospel hits in the early 1970s cemented their reputation.

The Inspirations' recording of "Amazing Grace" was created during a live performance in Warner Robbins, GA. This is important, both because the sounds of the audience contribute to the effectiveness of the recording and because the release of live albums is a meaningful practice in the gospel tradition. After all, this music is intended to have a profound and personal impact on the listener. The Inspirations describe themselves as "an enthusiastic, sincere, clean-cut group of fundamental conservative Christian gentlemen with a desire and an objective to witness to a needful and sinful world through the medium of Gospel Music." They make music not to entertain an audience but to save it.

The first verse is sung by lead tenor Archie Watkins. As is typical of the genre, he sings the melody in the highest part of his range. This means that the top notes sound almost like cries. We can hear that he is straining to reach them—an effort that is emotionally compelling and communicates the sincerity of the message. This type of singing has roots in the tradition of secular Appalachian music-making, and can be heard in banjo songs and bluegrass. Watkins does not sing with a steady pulse, as we heard in the Sacred Harp rendition, but takes his time to express each individual word.

For the second verse, the ensemble enters to supply a wordless harmony, switching to text only for the final two words. The third verse is sung on text by the entire ensemble, although Watkins high melody still stands out from the texture. We also hear the low bass singing of Mike Holcomb—another characteristic feature of the Southern gospel music.

The third verse sung by the Inspirations, however, is not the third verse of Newton's text:

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun.

In fact, this verse wasn't written by Newton at all. It was first published in the 1790 Virginian hymnal *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, in which it was incorporated into the much older hymn "Jerusalem, My Happy Home." (In *The Sacred Harp*, the verse appears as part of "Jerusalem, My Happy Home" and "Ninety-Fifth Psalm," but is not included in "Amazing Grace.") The first person to associate this verse

with “Amazing Grace” was Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the 1852 anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. In Stowe’s narrative, Uncle Tom sings three verses of “Amazing Grace”—two of Newton’s verses and the new one—to mark his moment of greatest spiritual need.

It is typical for favorite verses to appear in more than one hymn. This is the result of oral tradition. A certain verse—memorable for its imagery or message—sticks in a singer’s head. They then add the verse to another hymn, one that has a tune with the same pattern of strong and weak beats. It is believed that Stowe was drawing from African American oral tradition in particular when she included this verse in “Amazing Grace.” However, it was not included in a hymnal until the 1910 *Coronation Hymns*.

“Amazing Grace” in the Black Gospel Tradition⁷

Black gospel is not unrelated to Southern gospel. The two traditions share a great deal in common and have always influenced one another. In the period during which these traditions developed, however, American society was highly segregated—by Jim Crow laws in the South and by less visible means in the North. It is unsurprising, therefore, that a unique tradition of music, based in part on African American musical tradition, should have arisen among black worshippers.

7.



“Amazing Grace”
Performance: Aretha Franklin (1972)

The style of music making that would come to be known as black gospel emerged first in the Holiness churches of the early 20th century. These congregations traced their roots to the revival meetings of the Second Great Awakening, in which many African Americans had participated. They favored a highly expressive and emotional form of worship, in which individual congregants might be moved to speak or sing.

During the 1920s, musicians in Holiness churches began to incorporate popular influences into worship. These included styles of piano playing derived from ragtime, percussion and brass instruments associated with jazz, and blues-inspired vocals. Although some churchgoers were skeptical about the inclusion of secular sounds in worship, the music gained popularity with the success of early recordings by artists like Arizona Dranes, a blind pianist and singer who belonged to the Church of God in Christ.

In the 1930s, male quartets—much like those in the Southern gospel tradition—and choirs came to the fore as black gospel gained followers. Although the style borrowed from popular music, it maintained strict separation from the commercial



Image 11.32: The Golden Gate Quartet, seen here performing in 1964, was founded in 1934 and remains active today, although with new members.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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world, and gospel singers who made secular recordings were often shunned by the church community. At the same time, black gospel exercised enormous influence on the development of popular music. This influence is especially evident in the singing styles that emerged in rhythm 'n' blues and, later, soul. It is no wonder that many successful gospel artists were attracted by the possibility of mainstream popular success.

Aretha Franklin (1942–2018) was among the most prominent of these crossover singers, although anxieties about secular music had largely subsided by the time her career took off. Franklin was the daughter of a Baptist minister, C.L. Franklin, and she first sang in the church. Her father was something of a celebrity, and Franklin got to know many of the great gospel singers while she was still a child. At the age of 12, she began accompanying her father on preaching tours, for which she would

provide stirring music. At 18, however, she decided to leave gospel behind for a career in popular music. With her father's support, she moved to New York City and signed with Columbia Records.

Franklin did not flourish at Columbia, and it was not until she moved to Atlantic Records in 1967 that her career took off. Her version of "Respect," which topped the R&B and pop charts that year, was just the first in a chain of hit singles and albums. At the height of her success, however, Franklin returned to her roots and recorded a gospel album, the 1972 *Amazing Grace*. It was to be the top-selling album of her entire career.

Amazing Grace was recorded live over the course of two evening concerts at the New Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles. Franklin was backed up by the Southern California Community Choir and the prominent gospel singer Reverend James Cleveland. The title track, "Amazing Grace," is the longest on the double album, clocking in at nearly eleven minutes. (Our version, taken from the master recording, is over sixteen minutes long.) The selection was featured near the end of the first evening's concert, and was without doubt the high point of the show.

As with the Inspirations' recording discussed above, the fact that Franklin's "Amazing Grace" was recorded live is important. The sounds of the audience help us to visualize the church setting and remind us that this is worship music. We don't just hear the song—we also hear people being moved and transformed by the song. The shouts and applause of the listeners are integral to the performance. The audience noise also helps us to understand the motivations of the singer. Aretha is not just performing a song: She is expressing her deeply held beliefs in an intensely personal way. Finally, we can hear how the audience shapes the performance. As they respond to Franklin's singing, they also inspire her to new heights of expression.

Franklin's singing style is emblematic of the black gospel tradition. She in fact only sings two verses of the hymn: the first and third. However, she weaves them into an epic drama, full of twists and turns. Every vowel of the text is drawn out in a long **melisma** containing many notes, and there is never a sense of pulse. Although the first verse is elongated and intense, we soon find out that Franklin was only getting started. The emotional energy builds with the third verse, in which Franklin brightens her timbre as she moves to the top of her range. She also adds a great deal of new text, which gives the impression of having been improvised



Image 11.33: This 1967 photograph shows Aretha Franklin five years before she recorded "Amazing Grace."

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: Atlantic Records

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on the spot. With these added words, she personalizes the message and seems to confess her own sins. She speaks directly to the people in the room through music.

In the final line of the verse, however, Franklin abandons the texts and insteads hums an additional iteration of the melody. By doing so, she draws down the emotional energy for the purpose of producing an even more dramatic final conclusion. Upon returning to the text of verse three, Franklin inauguates a series of call and response passages between herself and the choir/audience. Again, the verse fails to conclude, and the choir enters with the third-line text. It seems almost as if they are trying to provide Franklin with the strength to finish the hymn. When Franklin returns with the first line of the verse, she builds her singing into shouts and cries before finally arriving “home.”

These three renditions of “Amazing Grace” are remarkably different. Variations in performing forces—choir vs male quartet vs solo female vocalist with piano accompaniment—do not even begin to explain the variations in aesthetic and emotional impact. Instead, we have to examine the vocal styles that are characteristic of each performing tradition—styles that in turn make sense only in the context of worship practices that are each unique to a time and place. In the end, we see how a hymn written centuries ago by a reformed slave trader can embody and express the spiritual values of diverse individuals and sects.

JOHN COLTRANE, A *LOVE SUPREME*

All of the compositions we have examined in this chapter were originally intended for practical use in a worship service. In our exploration of “Amazing Grace,” however, we encountered instances of performances—Aretha Franklin’s, for example—that brought the hymn into less formal realms. Franklin’s concerts probably provided a worship experience to some of those present, and her performance was an expression of deeply held belief. The essential purpose of the concerts, however, was

to create a commercial recording, which is in turn available for consumption as entertainment.

With our final example, we will encounter a similar instance of personal belief influencing the commercial output of a performing artist. John Coltrane’s album *A Love Supreme* (recorded in 1964, released in 1965) was certainly never intended for use in a place of worship. All the same, it was clearly intended by the performer as an act of worship, although the specifics of Coltrane’s belief system—outlined below—continue to elude researchers.



Image 11.34: Coltrane is pictured here in 1963.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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John Coltrane (1926-1967) was one of the great jazz innovators of the 20th century. He began playing saxophone as a teenager in Philadelphia. Coltrane joined the Navy during World War II, where his talent was recognized and he received the rare honor of being permitted to play with the base swing band even though he had not enlisted as a musician. Upon leaving the military, he toured with various bands and began to meet and play with the jazz luminaries of the era.

Coltrane began his post-war career playing bebop, a high-intensity form of jazz in which virtuosic soloists exhibit their skills. Bebop is performed by **jazz combos**—small ensembles with a single performer per instrument. A combo will almost always include piano, bass, and drums, with the addition of one more players on a melody instrument (saxophone, trumpet, and trombone are the most common). In bebop, the combo will begin by playing a set melody, usually underlaid with complex harmonies. This composition is termed a **head** and is notated on a **lead sheet**. Then the members of the ensemble will take turns improvising solos over the chord progression. Coltrane composed and recorded perhaps the most difficult of all bebop heads, “Giant Steps,”⁸ in 1959 (released on the album *Giant Steps* in 1960).

8.



“Giant Steps” (1959) is perhaps Coltrane’s most famous composition—and performance.

Like many jazz musicians of the era, Coltrane struggled with drug and alcohol abuse, and he became a heroin addict. In 1957, however, Coltrane quit heroin cold turkey, locking himself in his Philadelphia home to battle withdrawal. He later described “a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life.” He indeed went on to produce his greatest work, and religious themes would increasingly dominate his music for the rest of his career. Coltrane’s most compelling spiritual statement, by all accounts, was his 1965 album *A Love Supreme*.

In the liner notes to *A Love Supreme*, Coltrane described his 1957 experience: “At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music. [...] This album is a humble offering to Him. An attempt to say “THANK YOU GOD” through our work, even as we do in our hearts and with our tongues.” There is no doubt that Coltrane intended his album as an expression of his profound spiritual thanksgiving to god—but it is not clear exactly who or what “god” was to Coltrane.

Both Coltrane’s maternal and paternal grandfathers were pastors in the African Methodist Episcopal church, and there is no doubt that his childhood experiences with Christian worship influenced both his beliefs and musical expression. However, Coltrane became increasingly interested in non-Christian spiritual beliefs in his adult years. His first wife, with whom he maintained a close

friendship even after they divorced, was a Muslim convert. Later he took to studying Eastern religions, and he was known to pore over the religious texts of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism with equal fervor. In the liner notes to his 1965 album *Meditations*, Coltrane stated bluntly, “I believe in all religions.”

A Love Supreme is in four parts: “Acknowledgement,” “Resolution,” “Pursuance,” and “Psalm.” For this reason, the complete work is often described as a suite. The parts range from seven to eleven minutes in length, and were recorded in a single session on December 9, 1964. The performers, in addition to Coltrane, were McCoy Tyner on piano, Jimmy Garrison on bass, and Elvin Jones on drums. This ensemble, known today as the “classic quartet,” recorded many of Coltrane’s greatest albums.

Although *A Love Supreme* is generally regarded as a unique artistic work that cannot easily be categorized, it can also be understood as an example of **modal jazz**. In modal jazz, the traditional chords of bebop are replaced by harmonies built on modal scales—those other than major and minor. With the emphasis shifted away from harmony, performers focus more on melodic development, rhythmic intricacy, timbral variation, and emotional expression. Examples of modal jazz tend to be slower and more exploratory than bebop recordings. Throughout, *A Love Supreme* avoids explicit melodic statements or clear rhythmic frameworks. There is no “tune,” and the listener cannot easily find a downbeat or identify the meter. Instead, the recording gives the impression of transcending the confines of “jazz” and offering a window directly into the players’ souls.

“Acknowledgement”⁹ opens with the reverberation of a gong and cymbal rolls. Out of this wash of sound emerge Tyner’s piano chords and Coltrane’s improvisation on a four-note figure. Next we hear the primary theme of the album: a four-note, repeated motif played by Garrison on the bass. When Coltrane enters again, it is with the same four notes we heard him play at the opening of the track. He slowly adds notes and builds in energy, eventually using the technique of **overblowing** to create squawking notes in the high range of the instrument. We hear the same rhythmic patterns again and again throughout his solo. Finally, Coltrane plays the four-note motif from the bass again and again, in dozens of different keys. The track concludes with members of the combo singing the motif on the text “a love supreme” before Garrison plays a closing bass solo. By singing, the performers reveal what had hitherto been a secret meaning behind the motif that dominates the composition.



Image 11.35: The album cover for *A Love Supreme* is stark and serious.

Source: Flickr

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9.



“Acknowledgment” from *A Love Supreme*
Composer: John Coltrane
Performance: The John Coltrane Quartet (1964)

The final part, “Psalm,”¹⁰ also has a secret text. This time, the text is a poem of praise authored by Coltrane and included in the album’s liner notes. It uses phraseology and language that is familiar from Christian worship, but at no point does it explicitly indicate that Coltrane is worshipping the Christian god. Similarly, the title “Psalm”—a reference to the Psalms of Christian and Jewish tradition—clearly refers to something other than a literal Biblical Psalm. Although there is no sung text in the recording, the listener can easily follow the words as Coltrane plays, since his phrasing closely matches that of the poem.

10.



“Psalm” from *A Love Supreme*
Composer: John Coltrane
Performance: The John Coltrane Quartet (1964)

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Print

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12

Music for Moving

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis

INTRODUCTION

Any music that has a regular pulse can cause listeners to tap their feet or clap in unison. Sometimes, however, such coordination of physical activity is the primary purpose of music. This is the case when soldiers sing together while they march, or when a DJ blasts music onto a crowded dance floor. Work songs can coordinate practical labor, such as chopping wood or sowing seeds, while dance music brings people together in an enjoyable social activity. All music related to movement, however, has certain elements in common, for it must relate to the mechanical functions of the human body.



Image 12.1: Prisoners at the Parchman Penal Farm in Mississippi, such as these photographed in 1911, often sang call-and-response songs to coordinate their physical labor and keep up their endurance.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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MUSIC FOR MARCHING

Music can have a powerful impact on the energy and coordination of marching groups. It not only keeps participants stepping in time but can provide them with motivation as they become tired. For this reason, militaries around the world have accompanied marching with music for untold centuries. No matter when or where such music is created, it is always essentially similar. Music for marching, after all, must be in **dule meter** (for humans have two legs) and must feature a pulse at a walking pace—brisk for a drill, perhaps, or stately for a ceremony. The pulse must always be clear, strong, and regular, so that marchers can hear and respond to it. Music for marching cannot contain tempo variations, or it would no longer be of use. Music for marching also needs to be loud. Because of its military connections, marching music tends to be firmly associated with a specific nation, for which it can provide patriotic expression. This is true of both examples that we will explore.



Image 12.2: Marching bands are a typical feature of parades, such as this 2007 parade that took place at the Texas State Fair.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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JOHN PHILIP SOUSA, “THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER”

		<p>“The Stars and Stripes Forever” Composer: John Philip Sousa Performance: United States Navy Band (2013)</p>
Time	Form	What to listen for
o’oo”	Intro	The march starts with a unison melody played by the ensemble

0'04"	A	A variety of instruments play the melody
0'19"	A	The A strain is repeated
0'34"	B	The volume drops as the clarinets and euphoniums take the melody
0'50"	B	The second pass through the B strain, featuring the trumpets, is considerably louder
1'05"	C	The volume diminishes again as single-reed instruments take the melody
1'37"	D	Unison trombones lead off this passage
2'01"	C'	A piccolo countermelody is added to the C strain
2'31"	D	The D strain is repeated
2'55"	C"	A trombone countermelody is added to the C strain; in addition, the trumpets take over the melody, thereby increasing the volume

The most prolific and influential composer of **marches** in the United States was John Philip Sousa (1854-1932). Although he began his career as a military musician, most of Sousa's marches were intended for concert performance by his band, which toured the world for decades around the turn of the 20th century. For this reason, his marches are particularly interesting to listen to, but they still meet the requirements for functional marching music.

Sousa was born in Washington, D.C., where his father served as a trombone player in the Marine Band. Following some initial private music instruction, Sousa enlisted as a musical apprentice in the United States Marine Corps at the age of 13. He left the military in 1875 to pursue a career in theater music, and over the next five years

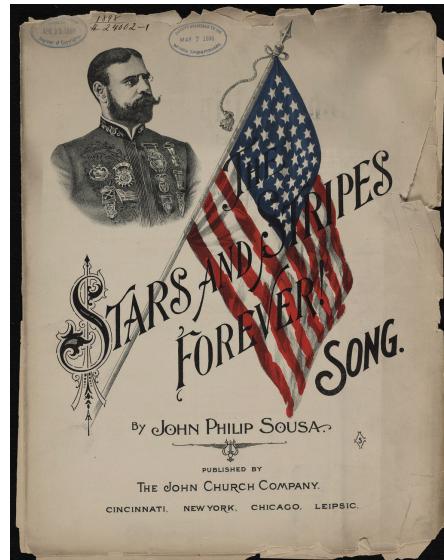


Image 12.3: Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" was premiered in 1897.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: John Philip Sousa

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he performed on the violin and began to develop his ability as a conductor. During this period, Sousa also became an expert **arranger**—a skill that would serve him well for the remainder of his career. At first he produced **orchestrations** of popular operas, but later he would make a name for himself as a composer. In 1880, Sousa was asked to produce a series of arrangements of operatic selections for the Marine Band. On the strength of his excellent work, he was invited to rejoin the Corps, this time as director of the Marine Band.

The United States Marine Band

The United States Marine Band has a remarkable history of its own. Established in 1798, it is the oldest of the formal United States military bands, which today number well over one hundred and are attached to all five branches of the military. Of course, the United States military employed musicians long before the Marine Band was formed—and indeed, long before the United States itself came into existence. As early as 1633, the Virginia militia relied on drummers to coordinate drills and maneuvers, and beginning in 1687 the Virginia colonists provided public funds for the purchase of military instruments. The first record of a complete military band dates from 1747, when the Pennsylvania colonists formed regiments.

Both drummers and bands supported American troops throughout the Revolution. In fact, musicians have been credited with some of the major victories. At the 1777 Battle of Bennington, for example, the drummers and fifers accompanied troops directly into battle, inspiring the soldiers to soundly defeat the British in what has since been recognized as a turning point in the war. That same year, buglers were added to cavalry units and tasked with coordinating maneuvers by means of **bugle calls**. At the conclusion of the war, General Washington proclaimed that all military musicians were to be allowed to keep their instruments in recognition of the great hardship they had endured.



Image 12.4: This photograph of Sousa was taken in 1900.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.5: This photograph of the Marine Band was taken in 2019.

Source: The United States Marine Corps

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Image 12.6: This painting, created by Archibald Willard in 1857, depicts drummers and fifers in the Revolutionary War.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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The 19th century saw significant improvements both in military music programs and in the construction of the instruments used by military bands. As of 1815, when music was introduced to the West Point curriculum, a military band was likely to include flutes, oboes, bassoons, clarinets, French horns, serpents, bass drums, and tambourines. Soon, however, improved brass instruments—most notably the trumpet, which could now play complex melodies—led to their inclusion in the standard band line-up. These technical developments were the result of new production techniques associated with the Industrial Revolution, and they benefited wind musicians in all settings by greatly expanding the capabilities and ranges of their instruments.

By the time Sousa began his career, therefore, the military band was a large and sophisticated ensemble capable of great flexibility and nuance. Sousa himself aided in the creation of the sousaphone, which is essentially a tuba that has been modified to increase its capacity such that it can be heard over a band. The status of military musicians was also on the rise. General Phillip Sheridan had credited musicians with Union victories in the Civil War, stating that “music has done its share, and more than its share, in winning this war.” The Civil War was certainly fought to diverse musical accompaniment: 28,000 musicians serving in 618 bands accompanied troops into battle, played for ceremonies, and provided entertainment at military encampments.

Sousa’s Career

As director of the Marine Band, Sousa was primarily responsible for providing ceremonial music. Since 1801, the Marine Band has boasted a unique attachment to the White House, earning the nickname “The President’s Own.” The Marine Band plays for all Presidential inaugurations, state funerals, and military funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. It also marks the arrival of visiting heads of state and participates in state dinners and formal receptions. As the premier national music ensemble, it serves as a symbol of military and political might.

Sousa, however, also expanded the public-facing role of the Marine Band. In 1891 he took the band on a concert tour, inaugurating an annual tradition that has carried into the present day. Under Sousa, the Marine Band also released commercial recordings under the auspices of the Columbia Phonograph Company. This was a point of significant contention for Sousa himself. On the one hand, his Columbia recordings made him famous: It was as a direct result of his success as a recording artist that Sousa was able to launch a lucrative private career upon leaving the military in 1892. At the same time, Sousa believed that recording technology marked the inevitable decline of live music as both a professional and amateur pursuit.

For decades to come, Sousa would publicly resist the steady growth of the recording industry while simultaneously profiting from it. 1906 saw the publication of Sousa’s most famous attack on the industry, an article entitled “The Menace of Mechanical Music.” That same year he made the following remarks at a congressional hearing:



Image 12.7: Here we see Sousa's band in 1893.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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These talking machines are going to ruin the artistic development of music in this country. When I was a boy—I was born in this town—in front of every house in the summer evenings you would find young people together singing the songs of the day or the old songs. To-day you hear these infernal machines going night and day. We will not have a vocal cord left. The vocal cord will be eliminated by a process of evolution, as was the tail of man when he came from the ape.

Sousa conjured up an apocalyptic image of parlor pianos fallen silent and children divested of the ability to sing their childish songs. He warns of a future where all music will come from the “talking machine.” At the same time, however, Sousa’s own band was releasing recordings—although Sousa himself almost never conducted the ensemble at recording sessions and was able to proudly state that he was in no way personally associated with the gramophone companies.

Although this might seem hypocritical, the subject of the congressional hearing mentioned above—a new copyright law, intended to protect the rights of composers in the realm of recorded music—casts the controversy in a different light. While Sousa may indeed have genuinely feared the effects of “canned music” on amateur participatory music making, he was primarily concerned with the rights of composers, who were losing income due to that fact that they could not claim

royalties on recordings of their works. Until 1909, anyone could make and sell unlimited recordings of a published musical composition or literary work upon purchasing a single copy of the printed product. Composers, lyricists, song writers, and authors were not entitled to royalties, and instead had to watch those in the recording industry get rich from their creative work. In making the above argument, Sousa was trying to appeal to the public and win support for the passage of updated legislation. He was eventually successful: The Copyright Act of 1909 guaranteed compensation to composers and authors whose work was reproduced in a recorded medium.

Sousa also worried that “canned music” would prevent people from attending live performances by the Sousa Band, for such concerts were the main source of income for Sousa and his musicians. The Sousa Band toured constantly, making visits not only to all parts of the United States but to countries around the world. In total, the band gave well over 15,000 concerts between 1892 and 1931. A typical concert would include transcriptions of popular orchestral works, operatic excerpts (complete with vocal soloists), virtuosic instrumental solos, and—most thrilling of all—newly-composed marches by Sousa himself.

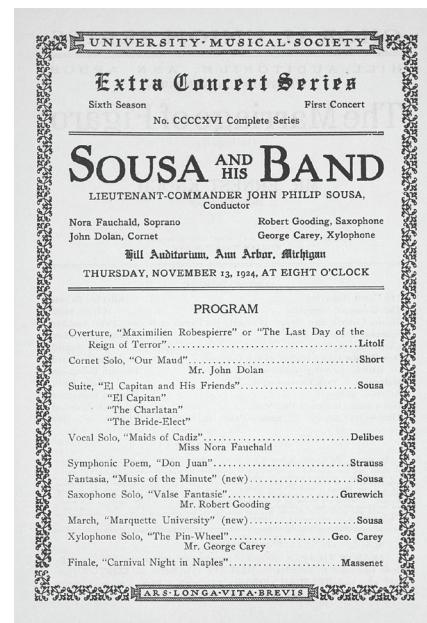


Image 12.8: This program outlines a typical concert by the Sousa Band. The audience, however, would have heard more than just the single march listed here: Sousa interpolated marches in between most of the more serious numbers.

Source: Ann Arbor District Library

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(complete with vocal soloists), virtuosic instrumental solos, and—most thrilling of all—newly-composed marches by Sousa himself.

The Stars and Stripes Forever

We will consider Sousa’s most famous march, “The Stars and Stripes Forever.” According to Sousa, he composed this march in his head in late 1896, shortly after hearing about the death of his manager and friend David Blakely. It was premiered in early 1897 and met with immediate success. Ninety years later, in 1987, “The Stars and Stripes Forever” was designated as the National March of the United States of America by an act of Congress.

In addition to performing “The Stars and Stripes Forever” at concerts, the Sousa Band made several recordings of the march. Even more profitable, however, were Sousa’s various arrangements for performance by amateur musicians. These included versions for piano (two, four, or six hands), zither (solo or duet), one or two mandolins (solo or with piano accompaniment), guitar (solo or duet), banjo (solo or duet), and banjo with piano. In addition, Sousa published full band arrangements for all of his marches—although he was careful to include many part

duplications between the instruments, so that even a small town band with only a few members would be able to give a successful performance.

“The Stars and Stripes Forever” provides a typical example of a Sousa march. Its form might be summarized as: intro A A B B C D C’ D C”. It begins with a brief but loud introduction by the whole band. This is followed by three distinctive melodic passages, or “**strains**,” the first two of which (A and B) are repeated. Each of the strains is in the major mode, and each—naturally—features the regular pulse of percussion and low brass. Next, an interlude (D) interrupts the pleasant mood of the strains: Blasting brass belt out chromatic scales and dissonant chords, exploring minor-mode territory while climbing to successively higher pitch levels. It is a relief, therefore, when the third strain returns (C’), now with a piccolo countermelody floating over the topic. Another interlude (D) sets up a final rendition of the C strain. Now elaborated upon even further, C” features both the piccolo countermelody and an additional countermelody in the trombones. The resulting cacophony is undeniably exciting.

SCOTTISH TRADITIONAL, “SCOTLAND THE BRAVE”

Our previous example, “The Stars and Stripes Forever,” might just as well have been discussed in Chapter 9 as an example of music embodying national identity. Not only is it the official National March of the United States, but it has come to be associated with patriotic events, especially Independence Day. Our next example would be even more at home in Chapter 9: Both the tune—“Scotland the Brave”¹—and the musical tradition—Scottish Highland bagpiping—are intimately connected with Scottish history and identity. This is, of course, hardly surprising. When we talk about marches, we are often talking about military tradition, and it is nearly impossible to disentangle military history and practice from national identity and pride.

1.



“Scotland the Brave”

Performance: Pipes and Drums of the Gordon Highlanders
(2008)

Scottish Highland Bagpipes

Scottish Highland bagpipes are certainly a military instrument. The first written account of bagpipes being carried into battle dates from 1549, when the piercing sound of bagpipes was found to carry across the battlefield even better than that of a trumpet. Pipers were regularly attached to combat regiments, and they could be heard on both sides of the famous Jacobite rising of 1745, when Charles Edward Stuart sought to regain the British throne. In this conflict, bagpipes served not only to urge troops into battle but to mark the identity of the combatants: the Jacobites



Image 12.9: The Scottish Highland bagpipes are particularly loud and powerful.

Source: Flickr

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carried Scottish Highland bagpipes, while the British troops carried Lowland bagpipes (a related instrument that has fallen out of use).

Pipers continue to serve in the British military into the present day, although their role is now only ceremonial and they are no longer deployed in combat. The last appearance of pipers on the front line took place during a 1967 uprising in the British protectorate of South Arabia (now part of Yemen). Pipers also led assaults during both of the World Wars, but the practice was largely abolished due to the high casualty rate.

There is no question that the Scottish Highland bagpipes are an outdoor instrument. They are extremely loud. Scottish bagpipes seem to have come into use during the 1200s, although it is unknown whether they were adapted from a Roman instrument or developed independently. The basic principle of any bagpipe is the same: An air reservoir (usually a bag) is squeezed so as to force air

through a series of pipes, thereby producing sound. Most of the pipes are tuned to a fixed pitch, but one is equipped with holes that allow the piper to sound specific notes. While bagpipes can be found around the world, the Scottish instrument and associated tradition has certainly gained the greatest prominence. Today, pipe bands can be found in almost all former British colonies and throughout the United States.

In Scottish Highland bagpipes, the air reservoir is filled when the piper blows into a long **air pipe**. Although the piper must regularly refill the reservoir, this action has no impact on the sound of the instrument, which is continuous and always at the same volume. This is because the sound is produced by air from the bag—which is kept under a constant pressure—flowing out through the pipes. The fixed-pitched pipes are three in number, and they all play the same note, although in two different octaves. The other pipe—termed the **chanter**—allows the piper to play nine distinct pitches spanning just over an octave.

The fact that the melodic capabilities of the Highland pipes is so limited means that performers must either play repertoire suited to their instrument or adapt other melodies by changing some of the notes. For example, pipers frequently play the melody from Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World" (Chapter 9), which is usually retitled "Goin' Home."² However, the Highland pipes do not have a pitch that is required to correctly perform the middle section of the melody. Instead, pipers simply play the closest pitch that is available on the instrument, which happens to be one half step lower than the pitch Dvořák had intended.

2.



“Goin’ Home” is a popular selection for Highland pipers.

It is typical for pipers to borrow tunes from other repertoires. In fact, the two tunes most frequently played on Scottish Highland bagpipes—“Amazing Grace” and “Scotland the Brave”—began life and became popular independent of the piping tradition. “Amazing Grace,” discussed in Chapter 11, is a Christian hymn. Although the lyrics were written by an English preacher, they were paired with their melody in the United States, which is also where the hymn became popular. In a sense, therefore, “Amazing Grace”—like “Goin’ Home”—is a musical import.

Scotland the Brave

“Scotland the Brave,” on the other hand, seems to have been written in Scotland in the 1890s, although it was initially played on other instruments. The tune first appeared in the 1895 *Gesto Collection of Highland Music*, in which it was titled “Scotland Forever” and labelled as a “trumpet march.” Around 1911, it was included in a collection of pipe music published by the Boys’ Brigade Bands of Glasgow—an indication that Scottish pipers were playing it. The tune, however, did not become famous until 1951, when Cliff Hanley added a patriotic text so that it could be sung in a theatrical production. “Scotland the Brave” quickly became a hit, and in 2006 placed second in a public poll to select an unofficial national anthem for Scotland.

“Scotland the Brave” bears all of the typical characteristics of a march. It is in duple time, to facilitate the tramping of feet. It is in a bright major mode (although the tuning of pipes is not always equivalent to that of a piano). The melody is rhythmically straightforward: There is a note on every strong beat, meaning that the melody will coordinate with the steps of marchers, and the notes that fall between the beats are placed sparsely and predictably. After all, a complex melody would be lost in the noise of an outdoor march, and would confuse the regular rhythm of the movement. It might even prove catastrophic to coordination. The melody also features uneven, or **dotted**, rhythms, which have long been associated with royalty and pomp.

“Scotland the Brave” is also packed with repetition. It is in a **rounded binary form**, meaning that its two parts both end with the same melodic phrase. That phrase also constitutes the first half of the first part, such that the tune can be diagrammed as [A A'] [B A']. In a single turn through the tune, therefore, we hear the A phrase three times—and the B phrase is closely related, bearing the same rhythmic characteristics. Although this form is common in folk music of the British Isles, the melody of “Scotland the Brave” is particularly effective. Both the A and B phrases include the lowest and highest notes of the tune, although they reverse the melodic contour. The A phrase ascends immediately from the low octave to

the high and then back down, while the B phrase begins in the high octave and plummets to the low—twice. The result is dizzyingly triumphant.

When we hear pipers play “Scotland the Brave,” we hear more than just the notes of the melody as it might be sung or played on the trumpet. That is because pipers deploy a variety of **idiomatic** melodic ornaments that are uniquely available on their instruments. These sometimes sound like glitches or hiccups, but they are in fact specific sequences of between one and four pitches that are quickly and precisely added to the melody using the finger holes on the chanter. Each ornament has a name and is considered appropriate for a specific type of music, and pipers in large bands perform ornaments in perfect unison. In “Scotland the Brave,” ornaments help to emphasize the march rhythm. After all, the Scottish Highland bagpipes can only produce sound in a constant, uninterrupted stream. Ornaments break up the sound and introduce rhythmic excitement.

We hear several other instruments on our recording. The pipers are aided by a line of drummers, who keep the pulse steady while also emphasizing the rhythmic contour of the melody. The second time through the melody the pipers are joined by the instruments of a marching band, including brass and flutes. These instruments play a simpler, unornamented version of the tune. We can detect subtle clashes when the pitch produced by the bagpipes, which are tuned according to a unique system, disagrees with that produced by the other instruments.

MUSIC FOR DANCING

Dance music has many of the same demands as march music. It needs to be loud, so that the dancers can hear it over the sounds of their movements. It needs to have a steady tempo, so as to propel the dance forward. It shouldn’t be too melodically complex, since the dancers won’t be playing close attention. And it often needs to be repetitive, so that dancing can carry on at length.

Unsurprisingly, bagpipes are just as well suited to dancing as they are to marching. In Scotland they are used to accompany the various folk dances, each of which is characterized by a specific meter and rhythm. Reels,³ for example, are in a fast **quadruple meter** with an emphasis on beats one and three and a melody that moves in steady rhythm at twice the pace of the underlying pulse. Jigs,⁴ on the other hand, are in compound duple meter, meaning that each pulse is subdivided into three sub-pulses. These characteristics, of course, are not randomly assigned: They reflect the steps of the dance.

3.



In this example, an Irish pipe band plays a pair of reels.

4.



Here, a Scottish-style pipe band plays a jig.

Because dancing often takes place indoors, Scottish Highland bagpipes are not always the most desirable instrument. One is more likely to hear an instrument that has been used to accompany dancing throughout Europe for many centuries: the violin. The violin is terrifically convenient as a dance instrument. It is small, and therefore highly portable. It can play a fast melody, but is also capable of providing harmonies. It is fairly easy to hear, given its high range and bright timbre. And it can be played standing up—perhaps even by the same person who is calling out the dance instructions. For all of these reasons, violin has emerged as the most popular instrument to accompany dancing from Hungary to Texas.

We will begin our tour of dance music in the United States, therefore, with one of the oldest traditions: The fiddle-driven dance music of the **Southern Appalachians**.

DANCE MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES

Appalachian Square Dancing: Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, and Kyle Creed, "Arkansas Traveler"

To see the violin at work as a dance instrument, we will first visit an influential fiddler who lived in North Carolina, Tommy Jarrell (1901-1985). Jarrell developed a unique fiddling style that was both loud and rhythmically exciting, and which was therefore well suited to Appalachian square dancing. We will also consider a recording made by two other musicians from the same region, Fred Cockerham (1905-1980) and Kyle Creed (1912-1982). Although their style was at first limited to Surry County, NC, it has since been adopted by fiddlers and banjo players around the country.

Before we can consider either Appalachian dancing or the music that accompanied it, we need to understand how the instruments used in this tradition found their way into the Southern Appalachian mountains. In addition to the fiddle, mountaineers soon took up the open-backed banjo—an instrument, unlike the violin, that is indigenous to the American South. The combination of fiddle and banjo proved ideal for dancing: Both instruments can play melody while also maintaining rhythmic drive.

The Fiddle

The fiddle was brought to the New World by immigrants from the British Isles and mainland Europe (particularly Germany). Some were lucky enough to bring physical instruments, but many instead brought the recollection of how a violin

looked and sounded. These individuals then built their own instruments using available materials. Such homemade fiddles had their shortcomings, but they attest to the importance of music in the lives of impoverished mountaineers who had few material possessions.

The fiddle was played with equal enthusiasm by black and white Americans. As early as the 1690s, enslaved people were tasked with mastering the instrument so that they could provide music for dances. These performers were expected to supply the latest European dance tunes, but they would introduce rhythmic characteristics that have their roots in West African music. They also played their fiddles for entertainment within the enslaved community—often under the fascinated gaze of white onlookers, who sought to imitate their playing. In this way, a uniquely American style of dance music emerged on Southern plantations. When African Americans left the plantations and moved into the mountains, whether enslaved or free, they brought their music with them.

The Southern Appalachians were populated primarily by poor immigrants from the Ulster province of Ireland. These individuals, known in the United States as the Scotch-Irish, crossed the Atlantic as indentured servants, after which they repaid the cost of their passage by working on plantations in Pennsylvania. Upon fulfilling their labor contracts, Scotch-Irish immigrants travelled into the mountains in search of available land. There, as they labored side-by-side with free and enslaved blacks, music often became an important point of exchange. Tunes and playing styles alike were shared across racial lines, with the result that the Scotch-Irish repertoire was soon transformed, reinterpreted, and expanded.

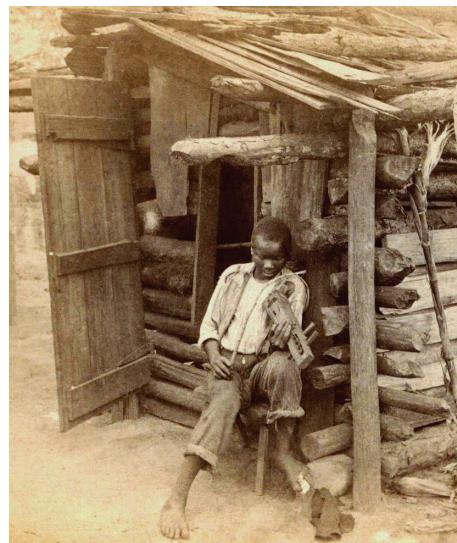


Image 12.10: African Americans began to play the fiddle in the early years of American slavery, when they were expected to provide dance music for their masters. In this image we see a young man playing a homemade instrument for his own amusement.

Source: Flickr

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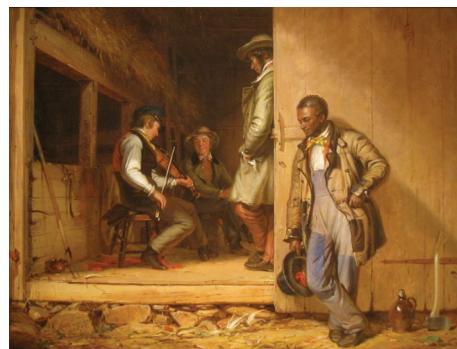


Image 12.11: William Sydney Mount, who traveled through the South in the mid-19th century to sketch scenes for his paintings, has left us with extensive documentation of the interracial musical exchange that was taking place. In this scene, an African American listens surreptitiously to a white fiddler. We can imagine that he is a fiddler himself, and is perhaps listening in order to learn the tune.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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The Banjo

While the fiddle is a European instrument that underwent change in the hands of Southern African Americans, the banjo is an African American instrument that was transformed by professional white performers in the North. The earliest banjos were built by enslaved people and played for their own amusement. The first recorded mention of a banjo dates from 1781, when Thomas Jefferson noted that the instrument had been “brought hither from Africa.” The banjo is indeed derived from West African lutes, including the *akonting* and the *ngoni*. These instruments share important features with the early banjo, including a round neck and strings of unequal length (one is shorter than the others and used to provide a regular drone).

The 19th century saw the transformation and popularization of the banjo in the hands of white musicians. The process began in the 1830s, when the banjo was adopted by **minstrel show** performers as the representative instrument of plantation life. Over the next few decades, **blackface minstrelsy** swept the nation, becoming the most popular form of theatrical entertainment in the United States. Minstrel shows were premised on the imitation of African American music, dance, and speech. Although minstrels advertised their authenticity, most knew little of life in the South and instead borrowed their materials from the Anglo-American comedic and musical traditions. In order to portray various stock characters, performers would blacken their faces with burnt cork and dress in the rags of the slave or the finery of the free Northern dandy. They would also accompany their singing and dancing with the instruments of slavery—most notably the banjo.

As a minstrel instrument, the banjo underwent several important changes. It borrowed the flat neck and **frets** of the guitar, which facilitated the performance of melodies. A fifth string was added, thereby expanding the instrument’s range. And the body of the banjo developed its characteristic round shape: The instruments built by enslaved people were often constructed out of gourds, but 19th-century



Image 12.12: This modern *akonting* is descended from the same West African instrument as the banjo.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.13: The *ngoni* has a canoe-shaped body and short neck, but is also closely related to the banjo.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.14: A costumed performer in blackface poses with his banjo.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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minstrels began to stretch skin heads across discarded cheese hoops. The instrument was played in a style known as **clawhammer** or *frailing* in which the performer uses the nail of their index finger to strike melody strings on strong beats while sounding the short fifth (or drone) string with their thumb in between melody notes.

The popularity of blackface minstrelsy is complicated to explain. The practice certainly traded on racist stereotypes and derogatory humor, but it also reflected a genuine interest in black culture and creativity. Consumers of minstrelsy believed that they were getting an authentic glimpse of plantation life—and they often found the characters sympathetic and appealing. The most vicious characterizations arose after the Civil War, when Northerners began to fear an influx of newly-liberated African Americans. At the same time, black performers sought to gain acceptance (and make a living) by

putting on minstrel shows of their own. Incredibly, they had to wear dark makeup and imitate the antics of white minstrels in order to be considered authentic.

The impacts of minstrelsy were felt throughout the American popular music landscape. Indeed, they continue to resonate into the present day. Here, however, we will focus on the popularization of the banjo, which soon became a mainstream instrument. In fact, by the late 19th century, it had become an acceptable alternative to the piano for young ladies, while both male and female banjo orchestras proliferated into the 1920s. The banjo became a staple in early jazz, and could be heard in every dance band. The banjo also spread throughout the rural South, where white players were influenced both by traveling minstrels and by the African American musicians in their midsts.

Dancing and Mountain Life

This brings us back to the Southern Appalachians, where rural mountain dwellers played the fiddle and banjo both for entertainment and for profit. The image of the carefree hillbilly strumming a banjo on his porch is, of course, profoundly misleading: Mountaineers worked hard and lived precariously, and they often did not have the leisure to indulge in music. All the same, if they wanted to be entertained, they had to entertain themselves, and music helped to pass the time at home.

Musicians could also earn money by playing at dances. **Square dancing**—although frowned upon by certain churchgoers—was a popular form of

entertainment. A dance would usually take place inside of a home on a Saturday night, and people would walk great distances to attend. All of the furniture would be moved outside, and the floor might be sprinkled with cornmeal. The musicians—or perhaps just a single fiddler—would stand in a central doorway and play as loudly as possible. To play for a dance, a fiddler only needed to know one tune, which could be repeated all night if necessary. Dances could become quite rowdy, and young women were often prohibited from attending. Those who did show up would pay a little money, some of which would be handed over to the musicians—unless they were simply compensated with dinner.

Appalachian square dancing⁵ is descended from social dances of Europe and the British Isles, although it has taken on unique forms. The dancers are organized either into squares of four couples or large circles containing any number of couples. They engage in a variety of familiar and repetitive interactions, usually following the instructions of a **dance caller**. Dancers might grasp hands to turn around one another, exchange places, dance in couples, gallop up and down lines, or weave amongst one another. The dances can go on indefinitely, although the caller usually brings them to an end after ten or fifteen minutes.

5.



In this video, a caller leads participants through the figures of a square dance to the accompaniment of “Arkansas Traveler.”

Such dances require music with a steady pulse, a fast pace, and an emphasis on the off-beat: Dancers move with a continuous down-and-up motion, and they frequently add individualized footwork between the basic steps. While it does not matter which specific tune is played for a dance, the style of the performance is therefore very important.

The Musicians of Surry County, NC

This brings us, finally, to Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, and Kyle Creed, all of whom contributed to the development of a unique and highly danceable style in Surry County, NC, in the early 20th century. Of the three, only Cockerham was a professional musician. Indeed, it was very uncommon for mountaineers to pursue music as an occupation. There was more money to be made in manual labor, with the result that only those with physical handicaps (most often blindness) were likely to resort to music as a primary source of income. Like many rural musicians of the era, Cockerham found work with a traveling medicine show, advertising a rhubarb salve made by the South Atlantic Chemical Company. It was grueling work that required constant travel and frequent live radio performances in distant cities.

Creed was an expert carpenter and stone mason, and he made a living in construction. In the 1960s, however, Creed built a banjo for his friend Fred

Cockerham. It was a success, and over the next two decades Creed applied his carpentry skills to the production of about two hundred banjos. His work as a **luthier**, or instrument builder, was enormously influential. Creed's banjos, which are highly prized, had several unique features, including a shorter neck than had previously been typical. Today, most open-backed banjos are built following his design. Creed was also an expert fiddler and banjo player. Like many Appalachian musicians, he learned to play from older male relatives, including his father, uncle, and grandfather.

Jarrell charted the most typical course through life. As a boy, he learned to play banjo and fiddle from his father, who made a living as a farmer. Jarrell would often provide dance music with his father and his uncle: The three men would stand in different rooms, each playing the fiddle at top volume. Upon his marriage in 1923, however, Jarrell took a job in road construction, operating a motor grader for the North Carolina Highway Department, and played fiddle and banjo only for his own entertainment. Work like his, however, hardly left the laborer with excessive time and energy for leisure pursuits, and Jarrell largely gave up music for much of his adult life. He returned to his instruments only in the 1960s, following the death of his wife. His exuberant style attracted many admirers, and aspiring musicians began to visit him at home, where Jarrell's legendary hospitality won him many friends.

Arkansas Traveler

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'01"	A	Jarrell establishes a lively dance rhythm with his bow; this remains consistent throughout the performance
0'10"	A	Jarrell repeats the A strain
0'18"	B	The B strain is in a higher range, as is typical
0'27"	B	Jarrell repeats the B strain
[...]	AABB etc.	Jarrell continues to play in this pattern for the remainder of the video

We are going to consider two performances of the tune "Arkansas Traveler." This is one of the best-known Appalachian fiddle tunes, and it is characteristic of

the repertoire. Like almost all fiddle tunes, “Arkansas Traveler” is in **binary form**. Each of the two sections is repeated, resulting in an A A B B pattern. Both the A and B sections end with the same concluding gesture, however, which becomes one of the characteristic elements of this tune. It is also typical for the two sections of a fiddle tune to be played in different ranges. In “Arkansas Traveler,” the A section is in the low range, while the B section is high. (Fiddlers traditionally referred to these as the “course” and “fine” sections, in reference to the relative thickness of the low and high strings.) The whole tune can be repeated as many times as desired.

“Arkansas Traveler” is additionally interesting because of its connection to a popular minstrel show sketch. The origins of the tune itself—first published in Cincinnati, OH, in 1847—are unclear. It gained popularity, however, as part of a humorous skit in which a city gentleman stops to ask a mountaineer for directions. The mountaineer routinely misunderstands the traveler and delivers a series of humorous punchlines at his expense. The skit entered circulation as early as the 1820s, and initially portrayed an interracial encounter. Later, when the “Arkansas Traveler” tune and accompanying fiddle-driven story were added (the mountaineer cannot remember how to finish the tune, and is grateful when the



Image 12.15: In this famous 1870 portrayal of the “Arkansas Traveler” sketch, a well-dressed city gentleman encounters a fiddling “hillbilly.” The image is crowded with hillbilly stereotypes. These include the mountaineer’s beard, fiddle, dog, tumble-down shack, large family, and threatening wife. A sign reading “whiskey” suggests that he is a moonshiner.

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traveler takes up the fiddle and plays the final phrase), it was reworked to address anxieties surrounding class relations. Some versions portrayed the mountaineer sympathetically—others, less so.

We will begin with Jarrell's fiddle version of "Arkansas Traveler." Jarrell's influence on the old-time fiddling tradition cannot be overstated, and his style has a number of distinct features. First, he almost never plays on just one string. Instead, he adds harmonies by bowing on two (or even three) strings at the same time, or by dipping his bow to sound the lower strings while he plays a melody in the high range. Second, he prioritizes rhythm over melody. Although you can hear the notes of the tune, Jarrell never sacrifices rhythmic drive. He also emphasizes the off-beats, changing the direction of his bow in between the rhythmic pulses of the tune and thereby introducing **syncopation**. You can imagine how he could play for a dance all by himself. There is no need for additional instruments to supply harmony or rhythm: Jarrell does it all.

The second most common dance configuration would be fiddle and banjo. The practice of combining fiddle and banjo was first documented among enslaved people in 1774, and it developed first in the African American community. The fiddle and banjo produce a **heterophonic texture**, since each plays an idiomatic version of the same melody (that is, a version suited to the instrument). In this recording we hear Cockerham on the fiddle and Creed on the banjo (although both men played both instruments, and they often switched roles).⁶ Unlike Jarrell, Cockerham plays only the melody notes, although his bowing patterns also create syncopated rhythmic patterns. Creed closely follows the melody on the banjo, but because his instrument works so differently he does not play exactly the same notes. In between beats, he periodically hits the short fifth string with his thumb, thereby emphasizing the syncopated character of the music. Occasionally, he produces an **arpeggio** by slowly strumming across the strings from lowest to highest, ending on the melody note.

6.



"Arkansas Traveler"

Performance: Fred Cockerham and Kyle Creed

Swing: Irving Berlin/Fletcher Henderson, "Blue Skies"⁷

In the previous section, we talked about the social dance practices of rural America, where workers gathered in private homes and danced to the sounds of fiddle and banjo. The same desire to engage in social dancing as a form of leisure was also prevalent in cities. Whether one worked on a farm or in an office, dancing offered an opportunity to have fun, drink alcohol, and socialize with the opposite sex. In cities, however, dance practices developed along quite different lines. After all, there was a great deal more money to made, and dance musicians were in

constant competition to provide dancers with the most novel and exciting music. This, in combination with technological developments on the one hand and a large, youthful consumer base on the other, led to rapid developments in the urban dance music of the early 20th century.

7.



“Blue Skies”

Composer: Irving Berlin (arr. Fletcher Henderson)

Performance: Benny Goodman and His Orchestra
(Remastered 1991)

1920s Social Dancing

We have already visited with a 1920s dance band: That led by Paul Whiteman (Chapter 7), whose “sweet jazz” records swept the market. By the 1930s, however, Whiteman’s style was already out of date. To begin with, new inventions were changing the instrumentation of dance bands. The electronic microphone allowed the plucked string bass to replace the tuba. The string bass had a more percussive articulation and could play at faster tempos, with the result of intensifying dance music. The banjo, which had featured a built-in resonator that allowed it to project, was replaced by the developing electric guitar. Strings and woodwinds, such as the clarinet and oboe, disappeared in favor of saxophones and brass, which came to be organized into large sections. The size of bands increased to about seventeen players, while the drummer took on an more active role in maintaining rhythmic energy.

All of these changes took place in response to the dancers, who were developing increasingly energetic and athletic steps. The most influential new dance of the era was the **Lindy Hop**,⁸ which was introduced by a pair of African American dancers in 1928. Early dancers—mostly young African Americans in Harlem—sought to outdo one another in an attempt to impress white “slummers,” who got a thrill from visiting clubs and ballrooms in black neighborhoods. The Lindy Hop went mainstream in the 1930s and young people across the country imitated wild new steps that they saw in ballrooms, on stage, or in films.

8.



The Lindy Hop has been a competitive dance since its inception. Today, dancers from around the world face off in formal competitions.

The new musical style that developed to accompany the Lindy Hop and other related dances was soon known as **swing**, a term that now refers both to the dances themselves and to the characteristic uneven, or “swung,” rhythms of the music. These rhythms reflected the relaxed and informal movements of the

dancers, who rejected the upright posture and precise steps of older styles. The term, however, was first used by African Americans to describe well-played music and the euphoric emotions it produced. The widespread adoption of the term—along with expressions such as “cool,” “hip,” and “in the groove”—paralleled the growing interest in black culture and music among white musicians and audiences.

Goodman, Henderson, and the Rise of Swing

Despite enthusiasm among urban young people, it took a while for swing music to catch on. In 1935, however, clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman (1909-1986) was able to connect with a demographic of young white listeners who propelled swing music into the forefront of the American conscious. The key to Goodman’s success was the radio. In 1934, he secured a spot on the national radio program *Let’s Dance*. The show featured three bands, each of which played a different style of popular dance music: Latin, sweet, and hot. Goodman’s band represented the “hot” style, but listener response indicated that the other styles were generally preferred. A disastrous national tour in the summer of 1935 confirmed the band’s poor reception. Upon arriving in Hollywood, however, Goodman was greeted by cheering fans. These young West Coast listeners had been listening religiously to Goodman’s band, which

always played after midnight on the East Coast and therefore had received little exposure in all but the westernmost time zone.

Goodman’s style was derived from the work of African American arranger Fletcher Henderson (1897-1952). During his years working as a pianist and bandleader in New York City, Henderson produced creative and danceable arrangements of hit popular tunes. Although these arrangements were first intended for his own band to perform and record, Goodman purchased Henderson’s catalog outright in the mid-1930s and introduced the arranger’s hard-driving, rhythmic style to a mainstream audience. Henderson also produced new arrangements to suit Goodman’s needs. In 1939, Henderson joined Goodman’s band, which was one of few integrated bands active in the Swing Era.



Image 12.17: Goodman performing with his ensemble in 1946.

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Image 12.16: Benny Goodman around the year 1970.

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Image 12.18: Goodman's band, members of which are pictured rehearsing in 1952, was one of few integrated swing bands.

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Henderson was one of the key architects of the swing style. He abandoned the free-wheeling improvisation of Dixieland jazz in favor of carefully-scripted parts for instruments organized into sections. Although he also produced original compositions, Henderson based most of his arrangements on the melodies of popular songs. We will be considering his treatment of Irving Berlin's 1926 "Blue Skies."

Blue Skies

Irving Berlin (1888-1989)—a Russian immigrant to New York City—was one of the leading song writers of the early 20th century. Although "Blue Skies" first gained traction on the musical theater stage, the song really took off with Al Jolson's 1927 performance in *The Jazz Singer*—the first commercially successful "talking picture." Today, "Blue Skies" is regarded as a jazz standard. Its popularity among jazz musicians, however, is due expressly to the success of Henderson's brilliant arrangement, which he created for Goodman in 1935.

Henderson's "Blue Skies" opens with an introduction in which the trumpets and clarinets call back and forth to one another over a pounding rhythmic pulse. The **chorus** of "Blue Skies" is then presented by the band. The melody is in A A



Image 12.19: Here we see a young Irving Berlin seated at the piano in 1906.

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B A form, which Henderson reflects in his instrumentation. The first two A sections are played by the trumpets, while the two phrases of the B section are played by the saxophones and trombones respectively. Finally, the saxophones round out the melody with the final A section. Henderson, however, does not merely reproduce Berlin's tune. He adds melodic flourishes, unusual harmonies, and—most importantly—unpredictable syncopations. By doing so, Henderson reimagines what was already an outdated song for a new generation of dancers.

The remainder of the arrangement consists of repeated passes through Berlin's tune, each more creative than the last. The melody itself slowly recedes from the foreground, although snippets are always audible. For the second pass, the trumpets (now muted) take the A section again, but this time with constant

interruption from the saxophones, resulting in a **call and response** texture. A solo saxophone player provides the remainder of the melody, but during the final A section he substitutes an improvised alternative melody. What should have been a third turn through the "Blue Skies" tune begins with an improvised trumpet solo, backed up by saxophone interjections. The melody returns with the B section, which is introduced by the trumpets and finished by the saxophones. The concluding A phrase is likewise split between those instruments. A final turn through the melody begins with a clarinet solo by Goodman himself, but ends with the entire band playing the concluding A phrase. The effect is exciting: We hear the full force of Goodman's horns, backed up by the driving power of the rhythm section.

Disco: Chic, "Good Times"

African American musicians and dancers have had an outsized impact on American popular music since the turn of the 20th century. We have already considered ragtime, Dixieland jazz, and swing—all dance-rooted styles that attracted large audiences and influenced the course of musical development. The trend continued: In the 1950s, black rhythm 'n' blues artists laid the groundwork for rock 'n' roll. Soul emerged as gospel singers brought the sounds of the black church into the mainstream, while funk developed from the combination of soul-infused vocals with jazz harmonies and the interlocking rhythmic layers common in African-derived traditions. Also in the 1960s, producer Berry Gordy created his signature sound at Motown Records in Detroit and built a roster of black performers who were able to withstand the British Invasion.

Disco Dancing

We will pick up the story in the 1970s, when black artists contributed significantly to another dance tradition: **disco**. Disco, however, is decidedly multiethnic. It bears traces of funk, but also the rhythms of Latin America, and it was first associated with a community that was bound together not by race but by sexual orientation. Eventually, it would come to be embraced as the musical style of the 1970s counterculture, and discos would become meetings places for people from all walks of life.

The birth of disco dancing and music can be traced to 1970, when New York City DJ David Mancuso began throwing private parties in an underground venue. His clientele consisted primarily of members of the gay community, most of whom were black, and all of whom were regularly harassed by the police when they visited commercial gay bars and clubs. Disco soon captured the interest of other groups, including Latina/o/x and Italian Americans, and venues proliferated in cities like Philadelphia and San Francisco. By 1975, disco has become a national craze, appealing to everyone who sought an escape from the political and economic pressures of the decade.

Disco music is primarily characterised by its fast tempo, “four-on-the-floor” beat (meaning that every pulse in a quadruple meter framework is emphasized), and dense textures. Disco tracks are usually founded on a rhythmic groove consisting of chicken-scratch guitar (a playing technique used to produce a rhythmic, pitchless sound), a variety of percussion instruments, and electric guitar **riffs**. This is underpinned by a syncopated electric bass line. In addition, however, one might hear piano, electric guitar, electric piano, synthesizers, and orchestral instruments. The resulting music is irresistibly groovy, but also full of variation, since the instruments enter and leave the texture throughout a given track. In short, it is exactly the kind of music that makes people want to dance.

Because disco music was intended for dance clubs, not radio play, it was released in a different format than rock music. Rock singles were usually about three minutes long, and were released on 45 rpm 7-inch discs. Rock albums—which were oriented toward listeners, not dancers—featured a curated selection of songs on a 33 1/3 rpm 12-inch disc. Dancers, however, required long stretches of music, and the 7-inch single was not convenient for use in clubs. Disco producers, therefore, because designing their songs for 12-inch discs. Instead of offering variety, however, they would stretch out a single track until it took up an entire side—about twenty-two minutes. DJs would then facilitate smooth transitions between discs to keep a crowd dancing through the night.

Chic was one of the most successful disco bands. The group was formed by guitarist Nile Rodgers and bassist Bernard Edwards in 1970, although it was not until 1976 that they took the name Chic. In 1977 they were joined by drummer Tony Thompson, and soon thereafter by singers Luci Martin and Alfa Anderson. The band had a string of hits in 1978 and 1979, but disbanded following the rapid decline in disco’s popularity.



Image 12.20: Chic is still active. Here, we see the band performing in 2012.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Good Times

We will examine their 1979 song “Good Times.”⁹ It is a fine representative of the disco style in its own terms, but it also proved seminal in the development of hip-hop, which we will consider next. The members of Chic publicly stated that every one of their songs contained a “deep hidden meaning,” which could be discerned through careful examination of the lyrics. The lyrics to “Good Times” are, on the surface, a series of straightforward calls to party and enjoy oneself. However, they contain several quotes from Depression-era songs, including the title line of “Happy Days Are Here Again,” which we examined in Chapter 10. According to Rodgers, these references were a commentary on the dismal economic situation of the late 1970s, which paralleled that of the 1930s. In this light, “Good Times” takes on something of a grim character: It invites the listener to engage in escapist party behavior, but also offers a reminder that the challenges of life will still be waiting.



Image 12.21: Nile Rodgers (left) performing with Chic in 2014.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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9.



“Good Times”

Composers: Nile Rogers and Bernard Edwards

Performance: Chic (1979)

Of course, there is no reason to assume that the average consumer would give any attention to the words. “Good Times” was a hit because of its danceable

beat. After an opening synth swoosh, the track launches into a groove consisting of handclaps, drumset, a repetitive guitar riff, and a funky bass line. A piano occasionally enters the mix, while the sound of strings wafts above. The vocals are delivered in a detached, **staccato** manner that further contributes to the song's rhythmic energy. Near the middle of the track, the texture is reduced to handclaps, drums, and bass. One by one, the other layers—Fender Rhodes electric keyboard, piano, guitar, and strings—are reintroduced, with the effect of rebuilding the energy level in this 12-inch dance club version of the single. “Good Times” was one of the last disco songs to top the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart.

Hip-Hop: The Sugarhill Gang, “Rapper’s Delight”

Hip-hop was also born in New York City, although it grew out of the needs and creative impulses of another disenfranchised community: black youth in the Bronx. During the 1970s, poor neighborhoods in New York City were devastated by cuts to municipal and federal funding. The city itself faced dire budget shortfalls, with the result that one fifth of all public workers were laid off in 1975 alone. This meant that police and fire forces shrank, classrooms became more crowded, and basic utilities fell into disrepair. Landlords—no longer able to maintain decaying tenements—turned to arson, while rates of homelessness, prostitution, and crime all skyrocketed. By 1979, the New York subway—home to 250 felonies every week—was the most dangerous public transportation system in the world. In what has been termed “white flight,” those with the means to flee the city left for more hospitable communities. This depletion of the tax base plunged the city even further into debt—a debt now shouldered only by the residents without the money or connections needed to begin a new life elsewhere.

The Birth of Hip-Hop

The hardest-hit neighborhood was the Bronx, which by 1977 had become, in the words of the *New York Times*, “a symbol of America’s woes.” The demographics of the Bronx were radically transformed during this decade. Overall, the population plummeted by 20%. This was largely due to “white flight”: While white residents numbered over a million in 1970, making up 73% of the borough’s population, over half left the Bronx, reducing the white population to only 47% by 1980. At the same time, the black and hispanic populations grew, constituting 32 and 34% of the population respectively by 1980. Many of the new residents immigrated from Caribbean nations and from Puerto Rico, bringing with them the popular music styles of Latin America.

Hip-hop emerged when impoverished youth living in the Bronx sought ways to express and entertain themselves. The music and dance that we will consider here were part of a complex of practices that also included visual art (graffiti) and characteristic modes of dress and speech. All of these served to identity the practitioners, build and enforce community bonds, and provide a creative outlet.



Image 12.22: This photograph captures President Jimmy Carter on his 1977 tour of the Bronx, which was intended to draw attention to the neighborhood's economic woes.

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Hip-hop culture was also extremely competitive, and those active as musicians and dancers worked constantly to develop new techniques, sounds, and moves that would distinguish a practitioner from the crowd.

The first pioneers of hip-hop music were DJs, who borrowed their tools and techniques directly from the disco. DJs would provide music for block parties and community dances by playing the disco, salsa, and funk records that the dancers loved. In playing records, however, these DJs played careful attention to crowd reactions and developed unique approaches that stimulated dancers to greater activity. DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell, b. 1955 in Jamaica), for example, noticed that dancers' energy increased during the **breaks**—passages in dance music in which the melody recedes and we hear only the rhythm section. To take advantage of this, he began to play two identical records at the same time, **backspinning** one to repeat breaks while the other continued to sound over the loudspeakers. Later, Theodore Livingston (b. 1963) noticed that backspinning created a scratching sound that could be used to add rhythmic excitement to the track. In this way, DJs transformed recorded music and laid the groundwork for a completely new style.

At first, DJs confined themselves to operating the turntables. DJ Kool Herc and a few others, however, began reciting rhymes over the breaks, thereby becoming the first rappers. Soon, DJs began recruiting dedicated rappers known as **MCs** (an abbreviation of “master of ceremonies”). Many of their rhymes were connected

with the African-derived tradition of the “toast,” in which a skilled orator tells a story celebrating a protagonist’s cunning and resource. Although the toasting tradition had largely died out in black culture, it survived in prisons and was captured on the hit 1973 album *Hustler’s Convention*,¹⁰ which had an enormous influence on early MCs.

The dance style that developed alongside hip-hop was highly individual and expressive. “**Breaking**” derived its name from the rhythmic breaks isolated by DJs, whose music came to be known as “breakbeat.” Dancers, known as “b-boys” and “b-girls,” performed increasingly acrobatic moves in response to the DJ’s looped breaks, which in turn inspired the DJ to generate more intense rhythms. Individuals and crews often entered into direct competition with one another, engaging in dance battles that took place within a circle of onlookers.

10.



The 1973 album *Hustler’s Convention* captures the toasting tradition and had an enormous influence on early hip-hop.



Image 12.23: DJ Kool Herc, pictured here in 2009, was one of the pioneers of hip-hop.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.24: Breaking remains central to hip-hop culture.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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For most of the 1970s, hip-hop was regarded as a **performance practice**, not a genre of music. It was an approach to the presentation of dance music that involved looping breaks, scratching records, and reciting rhymes. The early DJs and MCs, however, never considered the possibility of recording their music or seeking commercial success outside of the Bronx. In fact, most refused invitations to enter the recording studio. For this reason, the first hip-hop records were made not by the pioneers of the style but rather by relatively unknown performers working with studio musicians.

Rapper's Delight

This was the case with the first hip-hop hit, “Rapper’s Delight.”¹¹ In 1979, New Jersey-based producer Sylvia Robinson recruited three local MCs—Michael “Wonder Mike” Wright, Henry “Big Bank Hank” Jackson, and Guy “Master Gee” O’Brien—to create a hip-hop record for Sugarhill Records. The group called themselves the Sugarhill Gang, and they recorded “Rapper’s Delight” in a single take with a live band hired for the occasion. In keeping with the disco model, the fifteen-minute single was released on a 12-inch disc. It sold over two million copies in the United States, peaking at 36 on the Billboard Hot 100 charts and proving that there was a large commercial market for hip-hop.



Image 12.25: The MCs who called themselves the Sugar Hill Gang.

Source: Flickr

Attribution: Russell Mondy

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11.



“Rapper’s Delight”

Composers: Nile Rogers, Bernard Edwards, and the
Sugarhill Gang

Performance: The Sugarhill Gang (1979)

MCs usually rapped over breaks from pre-existing songs. It is therefore not surprising that “Rapper’s Delight” should borrow from a recent hit: Chic’s “Good Times.” In this case, the original record was not used directly. Instead, the studio players performed the handclaps, drumset pattern, bass line, piano riffs, and synth hits from “Good Times” live while the MCs took turns rapping. All the same, the borrowed music is immediately recognizable. Nile Rodgers certainly recognized it when he heard a DJ playing “Rapper’s Delight” in a New York club. At first he was extremely angry and threatened to sue, but the matter was quickly settled and Rogers and Bernard Edwards were credited as co-authors. Later, Rogers came to admire “Rapper’s Delight,” citing its originality and cultural significance.

The lyrics to “Rapper’s Delight” are typical of early hip-hop. The MCs boast about their skills and accomplishments, encourage the listeners to dance, celebrate the party lifestyle, and play with patterns of rhythmic syllables. At one point, the rapping gives way to a break, which could have been looped in live performance to facilitate dancing. Most characteristic of this record, however, is the fact that it is founded on pre-existing music. Hip-hop artists would continue to borrow and reimagine musical material for the purpose of paying homage, providing commentary, and exhibiting their own creativity. The resulting tradition is rich with **intertextual** references.

DANCE MUSIC IN CONCERT SETTINGS

In the last section, we considered four musical examples that were all created expressly to facilitate dancing. That doesn’t mean that this music can’t be enjoyed by a listener—indeed, it often is. However, these have been examples of practical dance music.

In the next section, we will consider dance rhythms and forms adapted to purely musical ends. This essentially takes us back to where the chapter started, with John Philip Sousa’s concert marches. Here, however, we take a look at two dramatically different composers who each used the popular dance styles of their time and place to inform music that was meant primarily for listening.

Johann Sebastian Bach, Cello Suites

We have already considered the career of J.S. Bach, one of the most respected and influential composers in the European tradition. In Chapter 11, we examined two pieces of music that he created for use in the Lutheran church. Bach held a series of positions as organist or music director with various courts and municipalities, and in each of these positions he was required to compose music of various types in order to satisfy the needs of his employer.

Bach and the Baroque Dance Suite

Although most of his jobs required the production of church music, one did not: his position as music director at the court of Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Köthen,

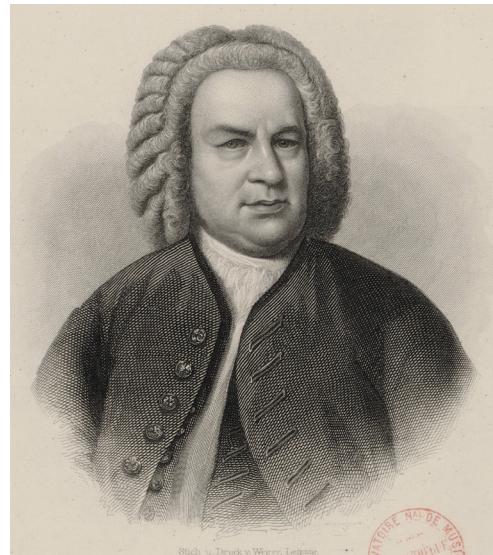


Image 12.26: This engraving by August Weger was produced after the composer’s music became popular with 19th-century audiences.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.27: This grandiose portrait depicts Bach's employer, Prince Leopold.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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which he held from 1717 to 1723. Because the Prince was a Calvinist, he had little need for church music; Calvinist churches of the time rejected musical instruments and restricted singing to the modest chanting of Psalms. A piece of music like “Sleepers, Wake” (Chapter 11), therefore, would not have been welcome. The Prince, however, maintained a lavish court, and he was particularly fond of music. He sang and played the violin, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. Although his parents had declined to spend money on music, Prince Leopold assembled a large court orchestra of eighteen musicians and recruited the finest composer in the region: Bach. During Bach’s employment, Prince Leopold called upon him to produce instrumental music and cantatas for the purpose of entertaining guests, celebrating anniversaries, and generally ornamenting life in the palace.

While at the Prince’s court, Bach adopted the practice of composing **dance suites**. The popularity of dance suites stemmed from the desire of minor German monarchs to emulate the court of the French king, which was renowned for its sophistication and luxury. The dance suite was pioneered by the German composer Johann Jacob Froberger (1616-1667), who traveled throughout Europe absorbing and adapting the musical styles that he heard at courts in France, Italy, England, and Belgium. Froberger was able to bring this music to German courts in the form of dance suites, which were associated with cosmopolitan sophistication. Unlike Froberger, Bach never left Germany. All the same, he became a master of musical forms and styles from throughout the continent.

The dance suite consists of movements inspired by court dances from various European countries. At the core of the dance suite are the Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, and Gigue. To these may be added any number of other dances, including the Menuet, Bourée, Gavotte, and Loure. In addition, some dance suites begin with a Prelude, which establishes the key area for the suite and sets the mood.

The sources of the four required movements reveal the international character of the dance suite. The Allemande traces its origins to Germany, although by the time it was integrated into the dance suite it had been adopted and transformed by French courts (the French name for Germany is *Allemagne*). Although the Allemande was initially a fast-paced dance in quadruple meter, the French slowed it to a stately tempo. The Courante can be of two types, French or Italian. While both are in **triple meter**, the French is slow and dignified, while the Italian is



Image 12.28: In this 1772 engraving by James Caldwell, aristocrats dance the Allemande.

Source: New York Public Library

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quick and lively. The Sarabande originated in Mexico, where it was a quick and salacious dance accompanied by castanets. After being banned from the Spanish courts for alleged obscenity, however, it was reinvented as a slow and dignified triple-meter dance with rhythmic emphasis placed on the second beat. And finally, the Gigue traces its roots to the English and Irish jig, a fast dance in **compound duple meter** (meaning that each pulse is divided into three sub-pulses).

In the context of a dance suite, all four of these movements are always cast in binary form. Each part is repeated, with the resulting form of A A B B. This should strike the reader as familiar, for it is also the form of the Appalachian dance tune “Arkansas Traveler.” Likewise, it can be found in the folk dances of the British Isles and Europe. Bach refined the form in his own dance suites, starting both the A and B sections with similar melodic material in different keys. Bach’s B sections usually start in the **dominant** key, which is based on the fifth scale degree of the original key. For example, if the suite is in the key of C major, each A section will start in the key of C, while each B section will start in the key of G.

Bach wrote a large number of dance suites for many different configurations of instruments. These include four suites for orchestra, twenty-eight for keyboard, three for lute, six for violin, six for cello, and one for flute. A word of caution, however, for it is in fact very difficult to count Bach’s suites. He gave such works

a variety of titles, including Suite, Partita, and Overture, and only a handful—six keyboard partitas—were published in his lifetime. The others have survived only in manuscript form, since they were intended for private court performance, not widespread distribution.

In the court of Prince Leopold, dance suites were performed solely as musical entertainment. The dances themselves had largely fallen out of fashion, but their rhythms and gestures lived on in the suites. We will consider two movements from two of Bach's suites for solo cello: the Courante from Suite No. 2 in D minor and the Sarabande from Suite No. 4 in E-flat major.

Bach's Cello Suites

The six suites for solo cello are among Bach's most influential compositions. All cellists play at least some of the suites, although the last two present major challenges: Suite No. 5 in C minor requires that the cellist change the pitch of their highest string, while Suite No. 6 in D major seems to have been written for a related but higher-pitched string instrument, with the result that it is exceedingly difficult to perform on a modern cello. Today, it is common to hear these pieces in performance, and they have been recorded countless times.

Despite their ubiquity, however, a great deal of mystery surrounds the origin of the cello suites. To begin with, in the time of Bach it was very uncommon to write music featuring the cello, and essentially unheard of to write for solo cello. The cello was part of the **basso continuo** section, and was therefore relegated to strictly accompanimental roles. Bach would have written these suites for a specific performer (or performers) at the court of Prince Leopold, so we can assume that he had a close relationship with one or more accomplished players who would have been able to bring the music to life.

The legacy of these suites is further complicated by the fact that the original manuscripts have not survived. Instead, we have been left with copies made by Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena. It is worth considering her role in his life with some care. When Bach joined Prince Leopold's court, he brought with him his first wife, Barbara. In 1720, however, Barbara died while Bach was traveling with the Prince. Anna Magdalena was the daughter of a court trumpeter and a court singer herself. She married Bach in 1721, at the age of 20. In addition to raising their many children, Anna Magdalena provided Bach with invaluable services as a **copyist** and perhaps



Image 12.29: The only surviving manuscripts containing the cello suites are in the hand of Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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even collaborator. She would copy out individual parts from his orchestral scores and also make clean copies of his roughly worked-out draft manuscripts. Because the only surviving manuscripts for the six cello suites are in her hand, there has been some controversy concerning the accuracy of the bowings and articulations, which have a significant effect on the performance of the music. Anna Magdalena's copy is also free of dynamic markings and other phrasing instructions, with the result that modern performers have to make many important decisions about how to interpret these pieces.

It is hard to determine exactly how the Courante was danced. On the one hand, dance notation is notoriously vague. On the other, there were many variations of the Courante, and it is known to have transformed over time. However, we can make generalizations. The word *courante* (or the Italian *corrente*) means “running,” and the dance has been described as containing quick back-and-forth steps, little leaps, and stately glides. It was performed by couples. Bach's Courante from Suite No. 2 certainly reflects the activity of such a dance: The melody moves at a quick but regular pace, offering few chances for repose.




Courante from Cello Suite No. 2 in D minor
Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach
Performance: Phil Snyder (2019)

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	A	The tempo is steady throughout, and there is not much rhythmic variety
0'31"	A	The A section is repeated
0'59"	B	The B section starts with the same melodic motif as the A section, but it is in a higher range
1'28"	B	The B section is repeated

Although the Sarabande was initially, in the words of one priest, “a dance and song so loose in its words and so ugly in its motions that it is enough to excite bad emotions in even very decent people,” by Bach's time it had been thoroughly reformed. The Sarabande¹² from Suite No. 4 reflects the slow, stately dance that had been popular in French courts of the previous century. It contains uneven dotted rhythms throughout—rhythms that were intimately associated with French royalty and pomp. This contributes to the movement's serious and dignified tone.

12.



Sarabande from Cello Suite No. 4 in E-flat major
Composer: Johann Sebastian Bach
Performance: Phil Snyder (2019)

Johann Strauss II, *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka* and *The Blue Danube*

In 19th-century Vienna, Johann Strauss II (1825–1899) was known as “The Waltz King.” His dance-inspired compositions were enormously popular, and by the time of his death he had accumulated countless honors and plaudits. Strauss’s music is also uniquely tied to Viennese identity: It is played by the Vienna Philharmonic every New Year’s Eve and presented on nightly concerts for the benefit of tourists to the city. In total, Strauss composed over 400 **waltzes**, **polkas**, and quadrilles. Although his orchestra did sometimes play for balls, Strauss’s fame and influence resulted from concert performances, and many of his compositions are not suited to dancing.

Strauss’s Career

Strauss carried on the legacy of his father, Johann Strauss I (1804–1849), who was largely responsible for transforming the waltz from a rustic country dance into a dance for the sophisticated urban ballroom. Johann I, however, forbade his sons from pursuing careers in music. He knew from experience that a musician’s life was strenuous, and he wanted stable, middle-class business careers for his own children. When he caught Johann II practicing the violin one day, therefore, he beat him severely. Johann II, however, was not to be deterred. Throughout his youth he secretly studied violin and composition with members of his father’s orchestra, and in 1844 he assembled his own orchestra and put on a concert at Dommayer’s Casino (a venue in which his father had frequently appeared, but that he subsequently boycotted).

The concert, which included popular selections of the day in addition to four of Strauss’s own com-



Image 12.30: The photograph of Johann Strauss II was taken in 1899 by Franz Luckhardt.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 12.31: This 1894 caricature by Theo Zasche captures Strauss II as “The Waltz King.”

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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positions, was a great success, but the young orchestra leader still found it difficult to compete with his father. He spent much of the first few years of his career touring outside of Vienna, and was only able to build his local reputation following his father's death. Soon, however, Strauss had established himself as a musical trend-setter in the city, and in 1863 he was finally appointed Music Director of the Royal Court Balls—a position that had in fact been created for his father, but which Strauss was long denied due to his support for the rebels during the 1848 Vienna Revolution.

We will consider two of Strauss's most famous compositions: *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka* (1858) and *The Blue Danube* (a waltz composed in 1866). Both of these works were created for concert performance. While it would be possible to dance to them, at least in part, each contains elements that are intended to appeal to the listener and that might even foil any attempt to dance.

Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka

Invention of the polka is traditionally attributed to a housemaid working in Czech-speaking Bohemia. According to legend, she attracted attention with a lively dance set to a regional folk song. Admirers asked her to teach it to them, and the dance quickly spread throughout the countryside. Whatever its origins, the polka was certainly a fixture in Prague ballrooms by 1837, and it was being danced in Vienna by 1839. Next to the waltz, the polka was certainly the most successful European ballroom dance of the 19th century. Within a few decades, it was being danced throughout central and western Europe, up north in the Netherlands and Russia, to the east in India, and in the New World, where it was popular from Mexico to the midwestern United States.

The term “polka” is believed to be derived from the Czech word for “half,” and therefore probably refers to the duple meter of polka music. The dance is performed by couples, who embrace while performing a distinctive step (evocative of tripping or galloping) as they whirl around the room. Dancers tend to bob up and down in time to the beat. The polka is always performed at a fast tempo, and it is one of the more energetic 19th-century ballroom dances.

Strauss composed his *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka*¹³ for performance in Pavlovsk, Russia, where he had the honor of conducting the summer concert season at the Vauxhall Pavilion every year between 1856 and 1865. These performances often



Image 12.32: The polka, represented here in a print from the 1840s, was originally a rural folk dance.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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stimulated his creativity, and Strauss created some of his most memorable works for these concerts. In 1858, he was inspired to write a polka that captured the excitement and thrill of gossip—for which “Tritsch-Tratsch” (an equivalent to “chit chat”) was current Viennese slang.

13.		<i>Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka</i> Composer: Johann Strauss II Performance: The City of Prague Philharmonic (2004)
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Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka is certainly full of energy. Its characteristic **motif**—heard right at the beginning—is a rapidly ascending octave. The melody is played primarily by high-pitched instruments, such as the violin and flute, while the tinkling triangle emphasizes the **offbeats**. The polka is in a ternary form (A B A), each section of which contains its own repeating melodies. The A section has an internal form of a b c a, while the B section has the form d d e d e d. In short, Strauss deploys an excellent balance of contrast and repetition. The polka starts with an exuberant trill and ends with a hilarious sequence of outbursts from the flutes, oboes, and brass. The regular duple pulse in a fast tempo is maintained throughout, with occasional emphasis from the snare drum or cymbals.

The many musical details of *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka* make it worth listening to. If one is dancing, it is more difficult to appreciate Strauss’s clever and delightful orchestration. At the same time, this music is perfectly suitable for dancing—although in such a case the orchestra might choose to repeat the B and A sections one or two times more before playing Strauss’s remarkable ending. In this case, therefore, we have music that was created for the concert stage but that could also live in the ballroom with minimal adjustment.

The Blue Danube

		<i>The Blue Danube</i> Composer: Johann Strauss II Performance: Wiener Philharmoniker, conducted by Karl Böhm (1973)
Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Intro	Flutes and horns hint at the first waltz theme; tremolo strings shimmer in the background
1'27"	Waltz 1	Internal form: abb
2'34"	Waltz 2	Internal form: aaba

3'34"	Waltz 3	Internal form: aabb
4'33"	Waltz 4	Internal form: intro aabb
5'43"	Waltz 5	Internal form: intro aab
6'56"	Coda	Unlike the preceding waltzes, the coda—which revisits many of their themes—contains no direct repetition and includes many transitional passages
8'16"		The theme from Waltz 1 returns; after a passage of calm, it builds to an exuberant climax

The Blue Danube has additional features that tie it to concert performance. Before considering those, however, we need to consider the waltz as a ballroom dance. Like the polka, the waltz seems to have originated in the Bavarian countryside, although it is somewhat older, perhaps dating to the mid-18th century. When the waltz first entered urban ballrooms, it proved something of a shock: Never before had pairs of dancers held each other in such a close embrace. In older ballroom dances, such as the minuet, the dancers kept a respectful distance from



Image 12.33: This illustration appeared in Thomas Wilson's 1816 manual *Correct Method of German and French Waltzing*.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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one another, but when waltzing a man actually put his hand around his partner's waist. Soon, however, dancers had become accustomed to this new style, and by the 1780s the waltz was common in Vienna and beginning to spread around Europe. It was Strauss himself, however, who—building on the legacy of his father—ensured the dance's popularity throughout the 19th century.

The waltz calls for smooth, gliding motions, and is therefore quite unlike the polka. A mid-19th century waltz was energetic but stately—the tempos, therefore, were moderate. The waltz is in a characteristic triple meter, with dancers moving down and forward on the first beat, but rising up on the second and third. This is reflected in the music, for the first beat (or **downbeat**) is usually stronger and sounded in a lower range than the others (often intoned as “boom-chuck-chuck”). In Vienna, it became typical for the orchestras play the second beat just a little early, thereby producing a sense of weightlessness in the last part of the pattern.

The Blue Danube actually began life as a choral piece. It was commissioned by the Vienna Men's Choral Association, with whom Strauss had already enjoyed a two-decades-long association. While Strauss was supposed to be at work on his choral waltz, Austria suffered a bitter defeat in the Seven Weeks' War with Prussia. The conflict sapped morale in Vienna, with the result that the choirmaster encouraged Strauss to write an exceptionally joyful and lighthearted piece in order to lift the audience members' moods. A satirical text was added by the Choral Association poet, although it was apparently disliked by both the singers and the audience. As a result, the reception accorded *The Blue Danube* at its premiere on February 15, 1867, was surprisingly tepid for a waltz that would become Strauss's most popular composition. A more serious text—that sometimes sung today—was appended in 1889. However, *The Blue Danube* is most often heard in its purely orchestral form, and it was as an instrumental piece that it became famous following a performance at the World Exhibition in Paris later in 1867.

Unlike *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka*, *The Blue Danube* is a fairly lengthy piece with a complex form. Like Strauss's other waltz-inspired concert pieces, it consists of a string of independent, self-contained waltzes—five, to be precise—preceded by an introduction and followed by a lengthy **coda**. The introduction hints at the theme of the first waltz, while the coda revisits themes from the first four waltzes, concluding with a grandiose statement of the same theme with which the piece timidly opened.

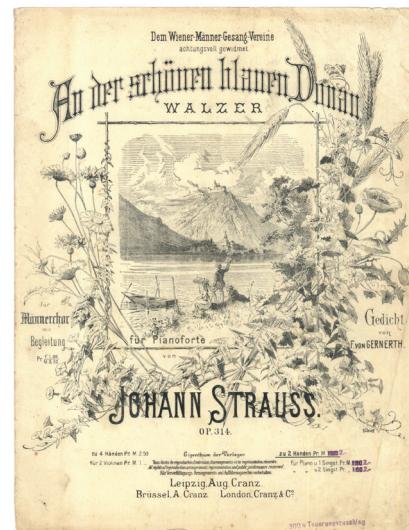


Image 12.34: This 1910 edition of *The Blue Danube* includes the vocal parts.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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One could not dance to this version of *The Blue Danube*: The introduction starts too slowly and is too tentative, while the coda would confuse dancers with its unorthodox form and frequent transitions. The individual waltzes, however, could easily be extracted for ballroom use. Each is in binary form, the A and B sections of which each contain the correct sixteen measures and expected repeats. Although each of the waltzes contains two distinct themes, the standard waltz rhythm (“boom-chuck-chuck”) is never absent.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Print

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Unit 6

EVALUATING MUSIC

13

What is Good Music?

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis and David R. Peoples

WHAT IS GOOD MUSIC?

It seems as if one of the objectives of this book should be to reveal what the difference is between “good” music and “bad” music. However, if you have read this entire book and still have no idea, don’t worry—the authors don’t know either. Or, at least, we are not able to make any generalizations about what is good and what is not, even if we are adept at identifying quality in specific instances. This is because music is so diverse in its forms and objectives that there cannot be a single standard of quality. When we ask, “Is this music good?,” what are we asking? Although this particular question is vague and unhelpful, asking questions can help us to judge the quality of a specific composition or performance.

First, we should think about the purpose behind a given composition. Is it supposed to make people dance? Is it supposed to provoke an emotional reaction? Is it supposed to make listeners feel patriotic? Is it supposed to incite rebellion? Is it supposed to be intellectually engaging? Then we should ask the question, “Is this piece of music successful at achieving its objective?” This way we can avoid pointless comparisons between pieces of music that serve completely different functions. There is no value in saying that a symphony by Beethoven is “better” than an Appalachian fiddle tune.

Second, we can measure a composition against others of its type. While it is misguided to compare a Bach cantata to a hip-hop track, we can argue that Bach wrote better cantatas than other 18th-century German church composers, or that Ice-T is a better rapper than Vanilla Ice. To do so, we need to agree on some specific criteria used to determine quality. This is very difficult. Most classical musicians agree that Bach is the greatest composer of his era, if not of all time. They will argue that his music is better than that of his contemporaries because it is more complex, or more expressive. But who decided that complexity and expressivity were desirable qualities? Bach was not highly regarded in his own time, when listeners preferred a more restrained approach to composition. Should that matter to us today? There’s a further problem. Although Bach’s music was not widely studied or performed until eighty years after his death, it now forms the bedrock of the classical music industry and educational system. Can those of us who grew up

playing and listening to Bach's music judge its quality, when that same music has been used to define and teach "goodness" in classical music? Or are we only able to judge less familiar composers in comparison to Bach?

Third, we might compare a piece of music to others of its kind by considering originality. When we find a pop song or a string quartet or a gamelan composition that we really love, we are probably attracted to it because, while representative of its type, it is somehow different in an appealing way. All songs played on Top 40 radio have a great deal in common, but a "good" song is likely to have something special that sets it apart from the others. All string quartets composed in the 18th century will share formal and stylistic features, but a "good" one will stand out as unique. What it means to be original and how innovations might be received will depend on the type of music.

Fourth, we can consider the skill of the composer or performer. Certain types of music—four-voice fugues, for example—are objectively difficult to craft, and we can empirically judge their quality. However, this is often not the case, as this type of evaluation requires strict criteria. We can also judge the skill with which music is performed. In the classical tradition, we tend to separate the quality of a performance from the quality of the music being performed. In other traditions, however, such is often not the case. The music of John Coltrane is "good" not because he wrote exceptional tunes but because his recordings are extraordinary. If he had spent his career publishing printed music, no-one would have noticed. Because he worked with a team of highly-skilled musicians to record and release groundbreaking performances, however, we hold his music in high esteem. And how do we know that his recordings are "good"? This again requires some level of agreement between members of the jazz community concerning the goals of their music.

Finally, we can take into account the impact that music has on listeners and society. We can argue that "good" music is important to someone, or plays a role in the development of art or culture. It has certainly been argued that the music of Wagner is "good" because it heavily influenced the next generation of composers. It has also been argued that Wagner is a "good" composer because many people love his operas. However, influence and popularity are often determined by factors that are independent of the music itself. Wagner happened to be a German male (which allowed him to be taken seriously) with a royal patron (which allowed him to focus on his work and to stage lavish productions of his most ambitious operas). These circumstances contributed significantly to his legacy. If Wagner had written all of the same operas, but they had never been staged and were forgotten today, would those operas still be "good"? Were there other composers writing at the same time who, due to less fortunate circumstances, have been forgotten, but whose music was just as "good" or "better"? Is it even possible to know? To turn to another example, young people are often criticized for listening to "bad" (that is, popular and ephemeral) music. This has been going on for many generations, but no amount of criticism can stop anyone from listening to music that they love.

and that has meaning for them. Does the fact that a piece of music is important to someone make it “good”?

As these questions reveal, it is no easy task to determine whether a piece of music is “good” or not. It is tempting to paraphrase the words of Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who famously declined to define pornography in a 1964 decision but instead stated “I know it when I see it.” Many of us would like to say of good music, “I know it when I hear it”—and sometimes we do. However, we should never forget the limitations of our individual perspectives, and we should keep our ears open to all of the good music that is waiting to be discovered.

THE PULITZER PRIZE

Despite the problems inherent in trying to identify the “best” music, we have long insisted on doing so. This is evidenced by countless competitions and awards across all genres of music. Perhaps the most prominent award given to a composer of art music is the Pulitzer Prize for Music, which has been awarded annually since 1943. The current criteria indicate that this award is “For a distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during the year.” The history of Pulitzer Prize winners, therefore, should be a history of the best music composed in the last 75 years. In truth, of course, many of the composers and works to receive the Pulitzer have been forgotten, while many great musicians were never considered because their music was not considered to be art.

1945: AARON COPLAND, APPALACHIAN SPRING

Of all the compositions ever to win the Pulitzer Prize, none may have been so warmly embraced by the listening public as Aaron Copland’s *Appalachian Spring*. This orchestral work—first conceived of as a **ballet**, but more frequently performed on the concert stage—has never left the repertoire, and it is regularly performed in versions for both **chamber orchestra** and full orchestra. *Appalachian Spring* also helped to solidify Copland’s reputation as a composer of explicitly “American” music. Indeed, Copland-esque soundtracks have been used to accompany on-screen cowboys and ranchers ever since the 1940s, and we have long accepted that the sound of Copland is the sound of rural America.



Image 13.1: This photograph of Copland was taken in 1946, one year after he won the Pulitzer Prize.

Source: Picryl

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Copland's Career

Aaron Copland (1900-1990) did not start off his career writing folksy-sounding concert pieces. His earliest interest lay in synthesizing jazz and classical idioms, as we saw George Gershwin do with his 1924 *Rhapsody in Blue*. Copland, however, did not meet with Gershwin's success. Gershwin was an uneducated popular song composer who rose to the challenge of writing a sophisticated concert work and was therefore lauded for his accomplishments. Copland, on the other hand, had the benefit of a rigorous education, and in 1924 was concluding three years of study in Paris with the most renowned composition teacher of the 20th century, Nadia Boulanger. When he incorporated jazz into his early works, therefore, he was scorned by highbrow critics who thought that by doing so Copland was degrading his art. Copland gave up the project and instead wrote sophisticated concert music in a modern style for the rest of the 1920s.

The Great Depression convinced many composers of art music to adopt a more commercial style. They did so both out of necessity and for ideological reasons. It was not practical to write elite music for small audiences during a period of such hardship, but it also seemed unethical. What was the purpose of art if not to comfort people in their time of suffering? Copland was also interested in using music to further left-wing political causes in which he had taken an interest. He was particularly influenced by the rising interest among young progressives in American folk music, which was understood to represent the common people and their struggles.

Folk tunes had a major impact on Copland as he began to develop his unique musical language. All three of the ballets that cemented his reputation as a composer used folk melodies to portray rural America. *Billy the Kid* (1938) combines a variety of cowboy songs with Mexican folk music to tell the story of the famous outlaw. *Rodeo* (1942), also set on the Western frontier, features an Appalachian fiddle tune called "Bonaparte's Retreat" in its final scene. And *Appalachian Spring* (1944) contains a set of variations on the Shaker hymn tune "Simple Gifts."



Image 13.2: Like many composers, Copland was also active as a conductor. He is pictured here working with bass-baritone William Warfield in 1963.

Source: Picryl

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Appalachian Spring

Before looking inside *Appalachian Spring*, however, we need to know a little more about how this ballet came to be. In 1942, Copland was commissioned to write a ballet "on an American theme" by dancer Martha Graham and music



Image 13.3: Martha Graham was among the most famous American dancers of the 20th century.

Source: Picryl

Attribution: Barbara Morgan

License: Public Domain



Image 13.4: This portrait of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge was completed by John Singer Sargent in 1923.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Attribution: John Singer Sargent

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patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Copland completed the 25-minute score without a narrative in mind—his aim was simply to write music that sounded “American” and contained dramatic contrasts. In fact, he had no idea what the ballet was to be about until he saw it just a few days before the October 1944 premiere at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He later loved to talk about the compliments he received from listeners who felt that he had perfectly captured the Appalachian mountains in music, when in fact no such idea had been in his mind while composing.

The dramatic narrative, which was developed by Graham after she heard the music, concerns the marriage of a young farming couple. The eight brief scenes portray the community coming together to celebrate the wedding, the various emotions felt by the bride and groom, and the adventure of embarking upon married life. The title, which replaced Copland’s working title, *Ballet for Martha*, was drawn from a line of Hart Crane’s 1930 poem “The Dance.”

Scene One

We will take a look at the first, second, and seventh scenes to get an idea about how Copland created “American”-sounding music. After seeing the ballet performed, he wrote his own summaries of the music and action incorporated into each scene. To describe scene one, he wrote “Very slowly. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.”¹ In this excerpt, we can hear several of the techniques that characterize Copland’s music. He creates the impression of a wide open space by juxtaposing high and

low sounds. He captures a sense of stillness by writing music that moves slowly and seldom changes harmony. Finally, his melodies outline triads in different key areas. This means that scene one is not in any particular key, and is therefore **polytonal**. But the music is not jarring or uncomfortable, like that which we heard

in *The Rite of Spring*. Instead, Copland creates a floating effect: we often don't know where we are or where we are going, but the experience is pleasant.

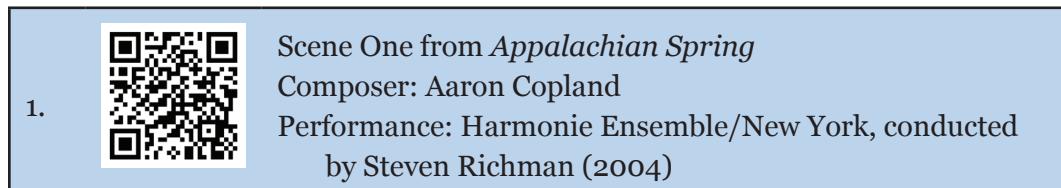


Image 13.5: This snapshot captures a scene from the premiere of *Appalachian Spring*.

Source: Picryl

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Scene Two

The mood suddenly changes with scene two, which Copland described as follows: “Fast/Allegro. Sudden burst of unison strings in A major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.”² Copland continues to employ polytonality, but we are now dancing instead of floating. He introduces a variety of exciting rhythmic elements, including **mixed meter**, that make it difficult (or even impossible) to tap your foot along to the music. The elated sentiment that Copland describes is communicated by means of fast tempos and **disjunct** melodies that include large leaps. The religious sentiment is communicated through a sequence of powerful, emotive harmonies.

2.



Scene Two from *Appalachian Spring*

Composer: Aaron Copland

Performance: Harmonie Ensemble/New York, conducted
by Steven Richman (2004)

Scene Seven

Copland’s use of a traditional tune comes in scene seven:³

Calm and flowing/Doppio Movimento. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title “The Gift to Be Simple.” The melody borrowed and used almost literally is called “Simple Gifts.”

3.



Scene Seven from *Appalachian Spring*

Composer: Aaron Copland

Performance: Harmonie Ensemble/New York, conducted
by Steven Richman (2004)

Copland regularly relied on the work of scholars and song collectors. In this case, he turned to Dr. Andrews’s 1940 volume *The Gift to Be Simple: Songs, Dances and Rituals of the American Shakers* for source material. Copland first presents the hymn tune in the solo clarinet. Like Bartók (see Chapter 9), he does not alter the melody at all, but he does provide an original and very modern harmonization. Copland then leads the listener through a series of **variations**, each of which is more rhythmically exciting and virtuosic than the last.

It is interesting to note that Copland was in fact one of the early champions of music appreciation as a subject of study. He sought to reveal the secrets of the concert hall to as many new listeners as possible, and he dedicated much of his



Image 13.6: This group of New York Shakers was photographed around 1880.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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time to talking and writing about music for the public. His 1937 volume *What To Listen For In Music* is an early classic of the music appreciation literature and is still in print.

1965: THE DUKE ELLINGTON CONTROVERSY

After Copland, the Pulitzer Prize was awarded to a long list of highly-educated white male composers writing in the European concert tradition. Clearly, jury members considered the production of “good music” to be linked to genre, race, and class. The winning works included symphonies, concertos, cantatas, and operas. However, the 1960s saw growing unease among listeners, performers, and scholars with this narrow definition of what could be “good” in music. Jazz, in particular, had developed into a sophisticated concert genre, and a number of composers were producing music that was, by many measures, just as “good” as that coming out of the classical sphere. The primary differences lay in instrumentation (jazz band instead of orchestra), **harmonic** language (jazz composers used different scales and chords), and the incorporation of **improvisation**.



Image 13.7: Duke Ellington playing the piano and smiling at the Hurricane Club in New York, N.Y., in May 1943.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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This tension came to the forefront in 1965. Upon considering the various nominated works, the Pulitzer jury concluded that none of them was worthy of the prize. Instead, they recommended that a special citation be granted to Duke Ellington (1899-1974) in recognition of his lifetime of accomplishment in the field of music. Ellington had initially been nominated by Viola Lomoe, the wife of a newspaper editor and a dedicated fan of jazz. She had suggested that the jury consider Ellington's recent *The Far East Suite*, which she described as "being one of the larger forms of orchestral music" and therefore eligible for recognition. However, she also suggested that Ellington's entire career was prize worthy. "If the whole body of Ellington work can be considered," she wrote, "that can be heard anywhere, any time. In fact, it's inescapable, though often it's played or sung without a credit line."

Ellington's Career



Image 13.8: The Cotton Club, pictured here in 1930, opened in 1920 as a Harlem night spot for white "slummers."

Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Lomoe made a valid point about the ubiquity of Ellington's music, which has become ingrained in American culture. He composed over 3,000 popular songs in his lifetime, the best-known of which is perhaps "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" (1931). Ellington first rose to national prominence as a pianist and band leader in 1927, when his group became the house band at the Cotton Club in Harlem. The Cotton Club was one of several 1920s-era establishments that catered to white New Yorkers who were attracted by the perceived danger and excitement of dabbling in African American culture. While the club only admitted white patrons, the musicians, dancers, and servers were all black. Patrons and employees were not permitted to mix, however, and the advertising and decorations established the Cotton Club as

a place where white New Yorkers could safely encounter the exotic black other. Although Ellington and his musicians were sometimes required to play up to stereotypes, they were still able to create masterpieces in the jazz idiom, and their music was heard across the country via regular radio broadcasts.

For several decades after leaving the Cotton Club in 1931, Ellington and his band toured internationally and made popular recordings. Ellington always thought of his music as art, and he resisted the jazz label, instead describing his own creations as "beyond category." While his songs gained the greatest popularity, many of his compositions relied on the extended forms of classical music.

The Far East Suite



Image 13.9: Duke Ellington is pictured here with his ensemble in 1963.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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The Far East Suite, recorded in 1966, is one such work. It contains nine movements, ranging from two-and-a-half to eleven-and-a-half minutes in length, and was inspired by world tours undertaken by Ellington's group in 1963 and 1964. The suite was a collaboration between Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, his longtime creative partner. While cowriting is common in jazz, the fact that *The Far East Suite* had two composers sets it apart from the classical tradition, in which instrumental compositions are always the work of an individual.

Each selection on the album represents Ellington's impressions upon visiting a foreign country. Commenting on the trip, Ellington stated, "The cats in the band go crazy about everything they see." In essence, each piece took a geographic area as an artistic starting point, resulting in continuous contrast and the ongoing transformation of accompanimental ideas. *The Far East Suite* includes an array of constantly evolving interactions between soloists (whether improvising or not) and unique combinations from within the ensemble.



Image 13.10: This photograph of Ellington was captured during a 1963 tour stop in India.

Source: Flickr

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A feature of Ellington's compositions is the thoughtful use of each instrument's unique voice. In the suite, each of the instrumental voices conjures up an element of the travel experience. The first movement of the suite, entitled "Tourist Point of View,"⁴ sets the mood by contrasting comforting and disorienting sounds. In the introduction, we hear **dissonant** chords played by the brass. Upon the entrance of the saxophone soloist, these are replaced by bright, high harmonies in the winds, which in turn give way to a call-and-response texture that pits the two sections against one another. The constant changes in texture and timbre suggest an onslaught of new and unfamiliar experiences. In the foreground, we hear smooth solos that use intervals similar to those in Eastern melodies, although the airy sound of the tenor saxophone serves as a touchstone of familiarity. The energy reaches a peak with Cat Anderson's high trumpet playing, but the track concludes with a general decrescendo until finally the bass and drums fade out.

4.



"Tourist Point of View" from *The Far East Suite*

Composer: Duke Ellington

Performance: Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra
(1967)

As the suite progresses, each movement takes on a new story, which is illustrated using a combination of unique musical elements. These range from the use of a clarinet in "Bluebird of Delhi" to portray the song of a bird, pitted against a swinging ensemble (typical of Ellington/Strayhorn's sound), to the muted brass improvisations in "Amad," which suggest the Muslim call to prayer against a persistent piano **ostinato**.

"Isfahan"⁵ (a city in Iran) is captured with a slow jazz ballad that showcases the sound of Johnny Hodges on alto saxophone against a relaxed and relatively soft ensemble. This movement has an easygoing atmosphere. Dramatic harmonies, produced by winds and muted brass, are paired with heavy rhythmic punctuations and ostinatos. Gravity is provided by occasional full ensemble interjections, some of which are echoed by unaccompanied melodies in the saxophone. ("Isfahan" is still popular among jazz artists today and is regularly performed by ensembles of varying size).

5.



"Isfahan" from *The Far East Suite*

Composer: Duke Ellington

Performance: Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra
(1967)

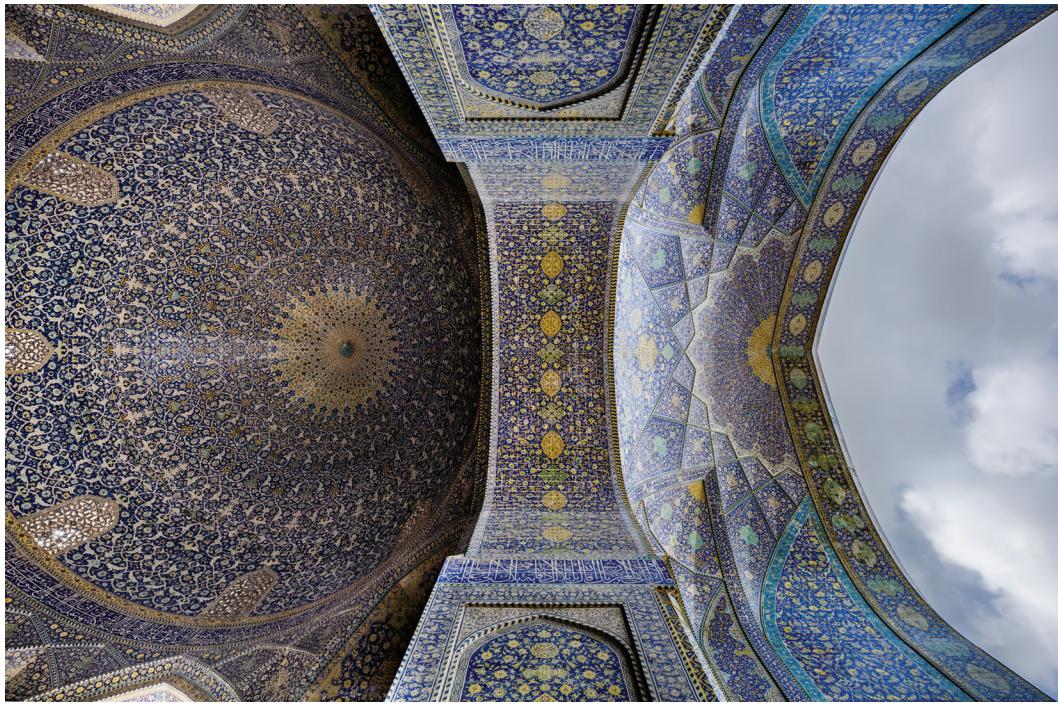


Image 13.11: Isfahan is home to some of the great architectural marvels of the Middle East, such as the Shah Mosque, pictured here.

Source: Flickr

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We hear the influence of music from the 1960s in the rock inflections (especially in the drums) and non-swung beat divisions of “Blue Pepper.” But the suite quickly mellows in “Agra,” and concludes with what might be described as a sequence of cadenzas in the final movement, “Ad Lib on Nippon.” *The Far East Suite* took elements that had developed over the course of a decades-long collaboration between the artists Strayhorn and Ellington—in particular, the use of slowly-shifting ensemble colors that interacted with and influenced solo improvisations—to a new level, illustrating a story shaped by personal experience.

Disappointment

However, 1965 is not remembered as the first year in which a jazz composer was recognized with a Pulitzer Prize. This is because, despite the jury’s recommendation, the Pulitzer board refused to issue a special citation to Duke Ellington. Two jurors resigned in protest, and many more felt that a serious injustice had been perpetrated. The Pulitzer Prize was meant to recognize excellence in American music. Jazz was, without question, the most significant musical art form to have emerged in the United States, and Ellington was one of its most prominent and creative figures. If the purpose of the Pulitzer Prize was to celebrate excellence in American music, on what grounds was Ellington to be denied recognition? The man himself joked, “Fate is being kind to me. Fate doesn’t want me to be famous too young.” (He

was 66 years old.) However, Ellington was offended—not because the board had rejected him, but because they had rejected a form of music that he valued highly. “Most Americans still take it for granted that European music—classical music, if you will—is the only really respectable kind,” he later said in an interview. “By and large, then as now, jazz was like the kind of man you wouldn’t want your daughter to associate with.” Ellington firmly believed that jazz could constitute “good music” and that criteria could be established by which the determine quality in jazz.

1997: WYNTON MARSALIS, *BLOOD ON THE FIELDS*

Despite the uproar, it was still to be several decades before a jazz composer would win the Pulitzer Prize for Music. By the 1990s, it was well established that the Pulitzer in music usually went to compositions for symphony orchestra. Occasionally, small chamber ensembles, choirs, and even solo piano were selected. Only once had the award gone to an electronic composition: Mario Davidovsky’s *Synchronisms No. 6 for Piano and Electronic Sound* (1970). It comes as no surprise that many musicians detected a sense of exclusiveness and prejudice on behalf of the Pulitzer committee.

In 1994, notable composer and performer Gunther Schuller (who had performed with jazz musicians Dizzy Gillespie and John Lewis) was awarded the Pulitzer for his *Of Reminiscences and Reflections*, a composition for large orchestra. Although Schuller was a member of the jazz community, his winning composition contained few jazz elements. In particular, it lacked a jazz sound and performance style. As a result of his win, however, Schuller was invited to adjudicate for the 1997 Pulitzer in Music. The other jury members included a jazz critic, a jazz performer, and two traditional composers. With a majority of jury members having extensive experience in jazz, the panel finally chose to award the Pulitzer to a jazz musician.

Developing *Blood on the Fields*

Several years earlier, the Lincoln Center had **commissioned** jazz artist Wynton Marsalis (b. 1961) to present a new composition. The 32-year-old Marsalis was already well known as a jazz trumpeter and composer; indeed, he had established the Lincoln Center’s own summer jazz series in 1987, and had made great progress in his mission to institutionalize jazz as a respected American art form. Although Marsalis grew up in New Orleans and interacted with important jazz musicians from a young age, most of his early training was in classical music, and it was with the intent of pursuing an orchestral



Image 13.12: The Jazz at the Lincoln Center Orchestra, captured here in a photograph by Adam Bowie, was founded and is still led by Wynton Marsalis.

Source: Flickr

Attribution: Adam Bowie

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Image 13.13: Wynton Marsalis is a virtuoso trumpeter who performs in a variety of styles, including jazz and classical.

Source: Flickr

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career that he enrolled in the Juilliard School in 1979. Although he soon decided that his future lay in jazz, Marsalis's background prepared him to create music that drew from a diversity of traditions, styles, and forms. In response to the Lincoln Center commission, therefore, he decided to create a work in the European **oratorio** tradition. Oratorios employ an orchestra and vocal soloists to tell a story, although their presentation does not incorporate costumes, sets, or acting. Instead, the story is communicated entirely through sound.

For his oratorio, which was premiered in 1994, Marsalis crafted a narrative that related the experiences of an enslaved couple. His story begins on a slave ship and ends with

the protagonists striking out for the north and freedom. The two main characters are Leona and Jesse, the latter of whom was a prince before his enslavement. Over the course of *Blood on the Fields*, the two aid each other in adjusting to their new lives, finding hope for the future, and eventually escaping from bondage. Originally, Marsalis had intended *Blood on the Fields* to be “tragic the whole way through, with no redemption.” Following extensive study and reflection, however, he concluded that optimism was “a very important part of the jazz expression.” Marsalis’s attitude—as well as his music—was deeply influenced by Duke Ellington, whose work he perceived as being essentially optimistic.

In creating the music for *Blood on the Fields*, Marsalis drew from a variety of African American traditions, including New Orleans jazz, blues, funk, chants, **field hollers**, work songs, and **spirituals**. He wrote for a jazz orchestra of forty musicians, with an important role for himself on the trumpet. In addition to playing their instruments, the orchestra members also recite text in unison to prepare each scene. Marsalis patterned this approach on the tradition of ancient Greek theater, which employed a chorus to narrate and reflect upon events.

Work Song (*Blood on the Fields*)

We will consider “Work Song (*Blood on the Fields*),”⁶ which is the sixth scene of the oratorio’s twenty-one. In this scene, Leona and Jesse are working in the fields, and they describe their monotonous labor and lament their unbearable situation. Although the scene follows quickly upon that in which they are purchased at auction, we are informed that in fact fourteen years have passed.

6.



"Work Song (Blood on the Fields)" from *Blood on the Fields*
Composer: Wynton Marsalis
Performance: The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra (1997)

The first thing we hear is Marsalis's trumpet. The growling sound he produces using a plunger mute is modelled on the playing of James "Bubber" Miley, who pioneered this style as a member of Ellington's band in the 1920s. Marsalis's improvisatory melody imitates the shapes and sounds of blues singing, although of course his playing communicates emotion without the benefit of words. In between his phrases, the members of the orchestra recite in unison.

Soon, the members of the orchestra establish a groove, which remains fairly consistent for the remainder of the scene. Throughout *Blood on the Fields*, Marsalis makes an effort to represent the motions and elements of each scene in music. In this case, we hear the regular rhythms of field labor. Punctuated brass exclamations and forceful drum hits emphasize the heaviness and effort of the work, while the unevenness of the rhythmic pattern suggests strain and sudden movements. The groove itself is rooted in the practices of various African and African-derived musical traditions. The process by which many distinct instruments each contribute a fragment to a complex musical whole is known as **hocket**, and is characteristic of black musical styles ranging from jali recitation to funk.

The regular interjections of other instruments suggest the sound and texture of New Orleans jazz, in which no single instrument carries the melody. Instead, each member of the ensemble contributes a distinct line to the texture, all of which combine to produce a rhythmic cacophony. In the case of "Work Song," we might also hear the instruments as the voices of other enslaved workers, joining the two vocalists in protest.

2013: CAROLINE SHAW, PARTITA FOR 8 VOICES

The 2013 Pulitzer Prize attracted an unusual amount of attention. To begin with, at 30 years old, Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) was the youngest composer ever to win a Pulitzer. In addition to that, she was only the fifth woman to win in the seventy years of the competition. (Ellen Taaffe Zwilich was the first, in 1983.) Finally, the work itself was out of the ordinary. *Partita* requires amplified singers to employ unusual and non-Western vocal techniques, and at the time of the award only one vocal ensemble—Roomful of Teeth, of which Shaw herself is a founding member—had ever performed it. In fact, Roomful of Teeth had not even premiered the complete work, but had programmed individual movements as they were completed. *Partita* had also not been published and could only be heard on Roomful of Teeth's eponymous 2012 album, which itself won a Grammy for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance in 2013. In this way, *Partita* was more like a pop song than a classical composition. As a result, it inspired discussion not only

about whether or not it was “good” but about whether it even had the necessary characteristics to satisfy the criteria used to evaluate compositional quality.

Roomful of Teeth

We can’t understand *Partita* without understanding the history and mission of Roomful of Teeth. The group was founded in 2009 by Brad Wells, who had a vision for an eight-part vocal ensemble that would break new ground in the world of art music. Most choirs adopt a uniform vocal production technique derived from the European tradition. However, the human voice is capable of producing an extraordinary range of sounds, and there is boundless variety in the techniques used by non-Western and popular singers. The members of Roomful of Teeth learn these techniques from world-renowned experts. In the past decade, the group has studied Tuvin **throat singing**, yodeling, Broadway **belting**, Inuit throat singing, Korean P’ansori, Georgian singing, Sardinian cantu a tenore, Hindustani music, Persian classical singing, and Death Metal singing. All of these techniques have been incorporated into their performances. To accomplish this, Wells commissions composers to write music expressly for the group. Much of this work takes place during an annual gathering at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams, Massachusetts, where teachers, singers, and composers come together to create new music.

As you can imagine, not just any choir can sing the repertoire that is created for Roomful of Teeth. Although the music is notated, the techniques required to perform it are highly specialized, and any vocal ensemble that wants to take on the challenge will require training. For this reason, few other choirs have ever performed *Partita*. Roomful of Teeth, on the other hand, continues to perform the work regularly. Some of their concerts are traditional in format, but they also engage with experimental performance techniques. In January of 2019, for example, they performed *Partita* outdoors in Times Square to the accompaniment of the LEIMAY Ensemble, a contemporary dance troupe.



Image 13.14: Roomful of Teeth is an experimental vocal ensemble founded in 2009.

Source: Roomful of Teeth

Attribution: BONICA AYALA

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Shaw and her Inspirations

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) was among the first composers to write for Roomful of Teeth. Her training at the time she began work on *Partita*, however, was oriented towards violin performance, not composition (or even vocal performance). She only entered a PhD program in composition in 2010. This also makes her unusual. Most previous Pulitzer winners were established figures with degrees, university positions, and long lists of major works. Shaw was essentially unknown.

The inspiration for *Partita* came from several sources. The first was Sol LeWitt's *Wall Drawing 305*, which can be viewed at the MASS MoCA, where Roomful of Teeth completes an annual residency. *Wall Drawing 305* is not a work of visual art in the traditional sense (just as Shaw's *Partita* is not a traditional choir piece), and might be categorized as **conceptual art**. The "work" is, in fact, a set of instructions intended to guide draftsmen in placing one hundred points on a wall. These instructions can be followed by anyone in any space to create the drawing. LeWitt was interested in randomness, and he sought to prevent the emergence of patterns in the visual product. No two realizations of any work in his *Wall Drawing* series will be the same.

Shaw was attracted to LeWitt's artistic vision, and she used several of his instructive texts in *Partita*. Her description of the work also ties it to *Wall Drawing 305*: "Partita is a simple piece. Born of a love of surface and structure, of the human voice, of dancing and tired ligaments, of music, and of our basic desire to draw a line from one point to another." However, she also cites Times Square as a source for the work:

Since my very first years living in New York City, I have spent a lot of time in Times Square. I used to walk through the area right after I moved there just to take in its unique combination of chaos and magic. It is truly unlike any place in the world. I love to see how many people come to the city and visit Times Square, who are always looking up in awe and confusion and wonder. It is that mix of confusion and wonder that is also deeply in *Partita*. . . I also like to think about the traffic patterns that move through Times Square, intersecting, crossing, and pausing in different ways, just like the text in the first movement. . .



Image 13.15: Caroline Shaw is still at the beginning of her career.

Source: Original Work

Attribution: Caroline Shaw

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Finally, Shaw took the title and form of *Partita* from the tradition of Baroque **dance suites**. Bach used the terms partita and suite almost interchangeably, although his partitas are somewhat looser in form. Shaw would have encountered the term partita as a violinist, since that is how Bach labelled his suites for solo violin. Three of Shaw's movements share the names of typical Baroque dances: "Allemande," "Sarabande," and "Courante." The final movement, titled "Passacaglia," links *Partita* with a different Baroque form, for a passacaglia is a set of variations over a repeating bass line. We do not find passacaglias in genuine Baroque dance suites.

Passacaglia

To get a sense of how *Partita* sounds, we will consider the last of the four movements, "Passacaglia."⁷ The movement opens with the ensemble presenting a cycle of harmonies. They sing the same **chord progression** three times, but each time using a different vocal timbre. The first time through, they produce warm, rounded sounds. The second time, they shift timbres mid-pitch, switching from bright to subtle. The third time, they sing in a chest style derived from Bulgarian choral practice, producing a piercing and aggressive sound followed by a gasping sigh.

7.



"Passacaglia" from *Partita for 8 Voices*

Composer: Caroline Shaw

Performance: Roomful of Teeth (2013)

Next we hear the chord progression again, but this time it is overlaid with oscillating figures in half of the voices. These carry into the subsequent section, providing the backdrop for a high melody sung in octaves and then for spoken text extracted from LeWitt's *Wall Drawing 305*. During this passage we also hear harmonic **overtone singing** from the men, who manipulate low pedal tones to produce a rainbow of high-pitched sounds. One by one, the singers switch to reciting LeWitt's text, until we are left with a cacophony of speaking voices. Isolated pitches extracted from the opening chord progression occasionally pierce the texture.

The cacophony is only resolved by the production of a grating sound derived from Korean *pansori* singing. This builds in strength before transforming into the opening chord, which inaugurates one final pass through the harmonic progression in chest voice. A second pass begins, but is derailed by the introduction of new chords. More overtone singing ornaments the final harmony of the piece.

2018: KENDRICK LAMAR, DAMN.

The 1997 decision to grant the Pulitzer Prize to a jazz composer certainly broke new ground, but the 2018 decision represented an even bolder divorce

with tradition. There were, as always, three finalists. The most conventional work under consideration was Michael Gilbertson's *Quartet*, a work for **string quartet** in the concert tradition. The next contender was Ted Hearne's *Sound from the Bench*. This **cantata** for chamber choir, two electric guitars, and drums is a bit less conventional. In it, Hearne combines text from landmark Supreme Court decisions with excerpts from ventriloquism textbooks to comment on the evolving legal notion of corporate personhood. Despite any eccentricities, Gilbertson and Hearne are both conservatory-educated composers who write concert works for traditional ensembles, and are therefore typical Pulitzer Prize contenders.

More Controversy

Neither Gilbertson nor Hearne won the competition, however. Instead, the jury awarded the Pulitzer Prize to Kendrick Lamar for his hip-hop album *DAMN.* In doing so, they rejected 75 years of received wisdom about what kind of music is prize-worthy, instead making the bold assertion that hip-hop has the potential to be “good” music and that there are criteria for judging the relative quality of hip-hop artists and tracks. How else could they identify Lamar as being the “best”? However, this effort to bring hip-hop into the world of the Pulitzers presented challenges. To begin with, *DAMN.* is not a literate musical work. That is to say, it did not begin life as notes on a page, and musical notation does not play a role in its preservation. This, of course, is true of most popular genres, and that leads us to the next point.

Up until 2018, only works in art music genres had been considered for the prize. Jazz, of course, was not always considered to be “art music,” but by the 1960s there was at least a strong argument being made that it ought to be, and it was possible to obtain a college degree in jazz studies. Furthermore, the specific Ellington work cited in 1965 was

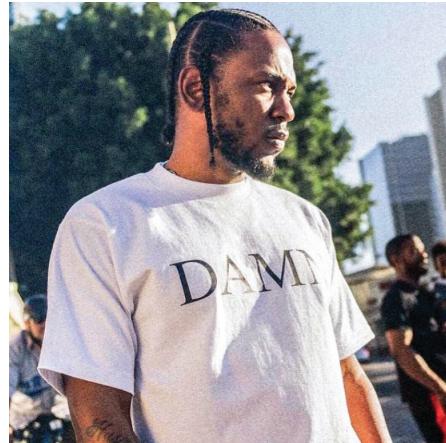


Image 13.16: Kendrick Lamar's album *DAMN.* won the Pulitzer Prize in 2018.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 13.17: This photograph of Lamar was taken at the 2018 Pulitzer ceremony.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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not a popular song, but rather an adventurous instrumental composition, while Marsalis's 1997 composition was even more self-evidently a work of "art." Jazz in general was not exactly popular by the time it was recognized with a Pulitzer, and the works in question were particularly cerebral. Hip-hop, on the other hand, is decidedly a popular genre.

Furthermore, Kendrick Lamar is decidedly a popular hip-hop artist. He is not a fringe figure, producing artsy, experimental tracks in the hip-hop vein for a small group of admirers. With scores of Grammy nominations, over a dozen Grammy wins, multiple million-selling albums, and a string of singles at the top of the Billboard Hot Rap charts, Lamar's music is mainstream. In this respect, he was a new type of Pulitzer Prize winner. Before, the jury had often recognized artists who were well-known in the world of concert music, but it had never selected a winner who was genuinely *popular*. This raised questions not only about how "good" music can be identified but also about the purpose of the Pulitzer. In the past, it had served to boost the careers of little-known composers, or at least provided support to those creating music in a field that offered few opportunities for financial gain. Lamar needs neither fame nor money. What purpose could be served in providing him with more of both?

The answer, of course, is that the art music establishment—represented by the Pulitzer Prize jury—was seeking to make a statement about its own values. By extending the honor to Lamar, they both acknowledged the profound impact that hip-hop has had on art music composers and suggested that the categories of "art" and "popular" might not even make sense anymore. Good music is good music—so why should anyone get hung up on genre? The gap between the worlds of art and popular music still exists, of course. Nowhere is this more evident than in the awkward phrasing of the Prize jury's citation, which describes *DAMN.* as "a virtuosic song collection unified by its vernacular authenticity and rhythmic dynamism that offers affecting vignettes capturing the complexity of modern African-American life." This is not language that would speak to the average hip-hop fan. However, it does speak to classical music aficionados, and it positions *DAMN.* within the lineage of Pulitzer Prize-winning works.

DNA

The jury selected "DNA"⁸ as the emblematic track from the album, so we will consider that example. Most hip-hop is highly collaborative: **Producers**, rappers, and studio musicians work together to create individual tracks, each shaping the final product in different ways. There is seldom a single artist who decides exactly how it will sound. In the case of "DNA," Lamar worked with Michael Len Williams II (b. 1989), a producer and rapper who has also collaborated with Gucci Mane, Miley Cyrus, Rihanna, and Beyoncé (he contributed to "Formation," mentioned in Chapter 5). "DNA" grew out of a beat that Williams had originally prepared for Gucci Mane, but that he offered to Lamar while they were working on tracks that would eventually become part of *DAMN.* Lamar was inspired by Williams's work

and created the first part of “DNA.” In the recording studio, however, Lamar began rapping *a capella*, subsequently asking Williams to build a beat around his words.

8.



“DNA”

Composers: Kendrick Lamar & Michael Len Williams II

Performance: Kendrick Lamar (2017)

The result is a single track in two distinct parts. At the midway point, the pulse breaks down. We hear an excerpt from a televised attack against Lamar, made by Geraldo Rivera on Fox News: “This is why I say that hip-hop has done more damage to young African Americans than racism in recent years.” Seemingly in response, Lamar’s rapping accelerates and the rhythms become staggeringly complex. Williams later stated that he “wanted it to sound like he’s battling the beat,” which it certainly does. The pulse recedes into the background during this section, encouraging the listener to focus entirely on the intense rhythmic exchanges between Lamar and his environment. The lyrics in “DNA” are wide-ranging, but they return repeatedly to issues of disenfranchisement and generational trauma in the black community. Lamar uses hip-hop to shine a light on these problems—mocking Rivera’s reactionary dismissal in the process.

GREATNESS AND GENRE

The preceding discussion about the Pulitzer Prize for Music has essentially been a discussion about “greatness” and genre. For most of the twentieth century, the Pulitzer committee restricted their concept of “greatness” to classical music. In the late twentieth century they expanded it to include jazz, and in the twenty-first century that have expanded still further to include hip-hop. What will come next? We can only wait and see. However, it is clear that the committee has historically perceived some genres as superior to others, and continues to see “greatness” only in specific realms.

Some of the best performing artists, however, clearly do not place these same limitations on music. In this section, we will explore the work of individual artists and performing ensembles that have excelled in the realm of classical music, but have put as much (or more) energy into other genres. All of these artists would disagree that any one musical genre is superior to another. Instead, they hear good music everywhere and are inspired by a variety of styles and approaches.

ALARM WILL SOUND

Alarm Will Sound is an instrumental ensemble based in New York City. The group was initially formed by students at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. While pursuing degrees in music, founders Gavin Chuck and Alan Pierson



Image 13.18: This photograph of Alarm Will Sound was taken in 2011 by Michael Clayville.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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got into conversation about the limited opportunities for the performance of **New Music** (a standard term for recent, often experimental, art music compositions, many of which might be classified as **avant-garde**)—and especially **minimalist** music. They recruited a group of interested performers and started a concert series. Upon graduating from Eastman, the members of the ensemble decided that they wanted to keep working together, and in 2001 Alarm Will Sound was founded.

The group's first concert under their new name took place on May 24, 2001, in New York City's Miller Theater. Unsurprisingly, given their collective interests, the program explored the music of minimalist composer Steve Reich (b. 1936). Reich was at the forefront of the development of minimalism in the 1960s. Although minimalist composers take a variety of approaches to their work, they share an interest in developing extended compositions from limited musical material. Reich himself has always detested the term



Image 13.19: Steve Reich in 1976.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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“minimalism,” and the more descriptive “pattern and process music” is often used instead. This is fitting: Most minimalist composers employ fixed transformative processes in their work.

Reich’s Compositional Processes

Reich’s earliest experiments were completed using **tape loops**. He discovered that if he played two identical loops of audio tape at slightly different speeds, he could produce a dazzling and constantly shifting array of effects, opening up a world of sound that could never be detected in the untransformed material. Reich’s first completed tape piece did not even use musical sounds. Instead, he built *Come Out*⁹ (1966) using a clip from an interview with Daniel Hamm, one of the Harlem Six—a group of black men (mostly teenagers) who were coerced into confessing to a 1964 murder and denied adequate representation by the courts. Although the men were convicted by an all-white jury in 1965, all but one of the charges were eventually overturned. In *Come Out*, we hear Hamm explaining the means to which he had to resort in order to convince police that he and his co-defendants had been beaten in jail and required medical attention.

9.



Steve Reich created his pioneering tape loop composition *Come Out* in 1966.

Come Out was initially a byproduct of a sound collage that Reich built at the request of civil rights activist Truman Nelson, but it ended up being a broadly influential minimalist experiment. Over the course of the 13-minute work, Hamm’s voice slowly dissolves into a cacophony of rhythms and timbres. The words soon become unintelligible as the listener’s interest shifts to the element of pure sound. Although it is almost impossible to detect the gradual changes that are taking place, no two seconds of the recording are the same. Sustained attention is rewarded with an inimitable sonic experience.

Reich soon applied similar techniques to musical material, at the same time developing new approaches to facilitating gradual change over extended periods of time. Reich was a highly trained musician, having studied at the Juilliard School in New York City and Mills College in Oakland, CA. He also had omnivorous tastes: He was equally enthralled with jazz, the music of Bach and Vivaldi, rock, and Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*. Later, he took opportunities to study non-Western traditions, including Balinese gamelan and West African drumming. All of these influenced his mature style.

Tehillim

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	Melody	The Psalm text is presented by a solo singer and accompanied by tambourine and clapping
0'36"	Melody (repetition)	Another singer repeats the melody, which is now doubled by clarinet
1'12"	Canon in 2 voices	The two singers perform the melody in canon
1'47"	Canon in 2 voices (two repetitions)	The strings enter with sustained harmonies
2'59"	Canon in 4 voices	The tempo slows; each phrase is repeated many times; the voices are doubled by reed organ and accompanied by maracas; the string harmonies continue
8'49"	Melody	The solo singer is doubled by clarinet and accompanied by tambourine, clapping, and maracas
9'24"	Melody (repetition)	The string harmonies return
9'58"	Melody (repetition)	A second singer harmonizes below the melody
10'32"	Melody (final statement)	The texture thins as elements disappear one by one

On their inaugural concert, Alarm Will Sound performed two large-scale Reich works for orchestral ensemble and singers: *Tehillim* (1981) and *The Desert Music* (1983). We will consider *Tehillim*, which, by Reich's own account, represented

his first attempt to engage musically with his Jewish heritage. The texts, sung in Hebrew by four female voices, are taken from the Book of Psalms (the original Hebrew word for which is “*Tehillim*,” which literally means “praises”). In the first movement, we hear four lines from Psalm 19:

The heavens declare the glory of God;
 the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
 night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
 no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
 their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

At first, a solo voice is accompanied only by a tambourine without jingles (intended by Reich to evoke the small drum mentioned in Psalm 150) and clapping—another mode of rhythmic accompaniment that was in use during Biblical times. We hear the entire Psalm text sung to a continuous melody, which is shaped by the rhythms of the Hebrew words. This is an atypical way for Reich to open a piece of music, but he soon begins applying transformations.

The second time through the melody, the singer is doubled by a clarinet, while a second percussive accompaniment of tambourine and clapping enters in **canon** with the first. Next, we hear the melody in a two-voice canon, one singer echoing the other. Soon after the canon begins, the strings enter with sustained harmonies. At the conclusion of this turn through the complete melody, the tempo slows and the texture fractures into a four-voice canon. The four singers repeat each individual line of the Psalm many times. They are doubled by electric organ, which contributes a reedy timbre, and accompanied by maracas. The sustained string harmonies gradually shift, seemingly out of time with the voices. Finally, the original soloist—again doubled by clarinet—assumes the melody once more, to the accompaniment of drums and maracas. She is briefly harmonized by one of the other singers, but the movement ends much as it began.

While *Tehillim* is quite different from *Come Out* in all surface respects, we can see how Reich’s basic compositional process is consistent. The textures in *Tehillim*—as in *Come Out*—are created from the increasingly complex layering of limited sound material. In the case of *Tehillim*, Reich relies on rhythmic and melodic canons, augmented by slow-moving, kaleidoscopic harmonies.

Orchestrating Aphex Twin

The members of Alarm Will Sound were brought together by their love for music like *Tehillim*, and in their early years they found a great deal of success staging concerts that highlighted the work of individual living composers. However,



Image 13.20: Aphex Twin performs at Coachella in 2008.

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more openly.” Despite the varied opinions about the merit of such a project, Alarm Will Sound eventually took it on. Their work culminated in the 2005 album *Acoustica*, which primarily featured arrangements taken from Aphex Twin’s 2001 album *Drukqs*.

Whether or not all of the work required to make and record these arrangements was worthwhile is debatable. We will consider the opening track from *Acoustica*, “Cock/Ver10.”¹⁰ One might argue that Alarm Will Sound’s limited sound palette and acoustic means of production are inferior to the programmed beats, digitally-refined timbres, and studio effects of Aphex Twin’s original¹¹—or one might prefer the sounds of orchestral instruments. It is hard not to be impressed by the skill of the arranger, Stefan Freund, who translated Aphex Twin’s track into an orchestral score, and by the individual performers, who place complex rhythms and melodic gestures in exactly the right place.

10. 	“Cock/Ver10” Composer: Aphex Twin (arr. Stefan Freund) Performance: Alarm Will Sound (2011)
11. 	“Cock/Ver10” was included in Aphex Twin’s 2001 album <i>Drukqs</i> .

From Chuck’s perspective, the strength of the project lay in its capacity to connect the ensemble with new audiences and put their artistic values on display. It became, in his words, “an important platform from which to pursue a wide-ranging artistic vision that doesn’t worry too much about genre—electronic vs. acoustic, high-modernist vs. pop-influenced, conventional classical concert vs. multimedia

experience.” In short, by recording the works of Aphex Twin, Alarm Will Sound proved that they were eager to embrace good music from unexpected quarters.

YO-YO MA

Perhaps the most visible and influential individual to make a career as a classical crossover artist has been cellist Yo-Yo Ma. His work has embraced a range of folk and non-Western musical styles, with the result that he has successfully bestowed his own cultural prestige on a large number of performers and traditions that might otherwise not have come into contact with the classical establishment. His projects have resulted in the creation of a lot of excellent music and the introduction of new sounds to classical audiences.



Image 13.21: Cellist Yo-Yo Ma was born in Paris in 1955.

Source: Flickr

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Image 13.22: Yo-Yo Ma performing in 2008.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Classical Mastery

Yo-Yo Ma was born in Paris to Chinese parents, but his family immigrated to the United States when he was seven. He first gained prominence as a child prodigy. Almost immediately after his arrival in the States, Ma played for Presidents John F. Kennedy and Dwight D. Eisenhower at a Kennedy Center benefit concert that was broadcast on national television.¹² This was the first in a series of prominent performances and television appearances that introduced Ma to the American public.

12.



A young Yo-Yo Ma played cello on live television in 1962.

After earning his bachelor’s degree at Harvard University in 1976, Ma embarked on what could have been a typical concert career. He appeared as a soloist with orchestras around the world, collaborated with chamber musicians, and released

recordings, eleven on which won Grammys between 1985 and 1998. The first of these award-winning recordings offered Ma’s interpretation of the complete Bach cello suites (see Chapter 12)—a rite of passage for any cellist who wants to be counted among the greats.

Ma still performs these pieces regularly. He has presented the complete suites to crowds numbering in the tens of thousands at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Chicago, but he also played movements from the suites at the one-year national September 11 memorial service, the funeral for Senator Edward M. Kennedy, and the service held to honor victims of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. In 2019, he featured the Prelude to Suite No. 1 in G major¹³—certainly the best-known movement from the suites—in a video meant to express the many ways in which the arts bring communities together. He issued an invitation for people around the world to submit videos on the theme of self-expression and community building. Many of these were then integrated in the final video.

13.



Yo-Yo Ma has proven his mastery of the classical cello literature. Here he plays the Prelude to Bach’s Suite No. 1.

Despite his success on the concert stage, however, Ma soon embarked on a series of collaborations that brought him into contact with non-classical performers and genres. By doing so, he clearly indicated his belief that examples of “good music” can be found in all traditions, and that quality is determined by the level of execution and creativity that characterize a performance. Early in his journey, Ma collaborated with a team of world-class tango musicians to record *The Soul of the Tango* (1997). This Grammy-winning album contributed to the elevation of tango from its undeniably humble roots.

Tango

Tango originated in the slums of Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the late 19th century. A popular dance style, the tango was inherently international: It was driven by an instrument brought to South America by German immigrants, the *bandoneon* (a type of push-button accordion) and capitalized on the **syncopated** rhythms of rural *gauchos* (cowboys) and African slaves. The lyrics to early tango songs described the hardships of life in the slums, while the accompanying dance reflected the violence of knife duels, the characteristic posture of the good-for-nothing young man, and the ritualistic domination of the female dancer by her male partner. The tango rhythm is built on a **quadruple-meter** framework with an emphasis on the second half of the second beat.

The tango was at first treated with contempt in its native Argentina. The dance and its accompanying music, after all, were associated with poverty, seedy establishments, and questionable morals. In 1907, however, the tango made a hit in Paris, where it acquired cultural cachet. By the 1920s, it had been embraced around the world, but in the 1930s its popularity began to fade (in part because the Great Depression excited an appetite for more cheerful music). Later in the century, however, Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) would reinvent the tango for the concert hall, composing nuanced and dramatic pieces that were intended for listening, not dancing.

We will consider Yo-Yo Ma's recording of Piazzolla's famous "Libertango," which he recorded with Leonardo Marconi on piano, Antonio Agri on violin, Hector Console on bass, Horacio Malvicino on guitar, and Néstor Marconi on bandoneon. The title incorporates the Spanish word for "liberty"—a reference to Piazzolla's new style, which he launched with the 1974 publication and recording of this composition. Any performance of "Libertango" is immediately recognizable, due to the catchy ostinato played by the bandoneon. The composition itself is fairly simple: After an introduction, which establishes the ostinato and harmonic progression, we hear the A section twice. This is followed by the B section, which begins with contrasting material but concludes with a variation on the first half of the A melody. Then the ostinato returns, serving as a basis for improvisation.

	"Libertango"		
Composer: Astor Piazzolla Performance: Yo-Yo Ma, Leonardo Marconi, Antonio Agri, Hector Console, Horacio Malvicino, Néstor Marconi (1997)			
Time	Form	What to listen for	
0'00	Ostinato	The bandoneon establishes the ostinato while the piano plays a syncopated rhythm known as the tresillo	
0'26"	A	The A melody is played in the cello	
0'54"	A	The A melody is played by the cello and violin in octaves	
1'22"	B	The B melody is played by the bandoneon	

1'37"	A'	The bandoneon plays a variation on the first half of the A melody, which is now combined with the ostinato; the cello and violin play a countermelody
1'50"	Ostinato	This time, the cello and violin double the bandoneon on the ostinato
2'18"	Ostinato with improvisation	The guitar player improvises a solo over the ostinato

Throughout the recording, we can clearly hear the **tresillo** rhythm that is characteristic of much Latin American music. This rhythm has its roots in West African music, and it entered the Latin American mainstream when the traditions of enslaved Africans combined with the folk and popular practices of both indigenous peoples and colonial powers. The same rhythm can also be heard in African-derived musics of the United States, such as ragtime. The tresillo rhythm can be counted as 3+3+2. Each count is a half-beat, such that one measure in quadruple meter contains eight counts. In our recording of “Libertango,” the tresillo rhythm is heard primarily in the piano.

Appalachian Music

At about the same time, Ma also turned his attention to the folk music of the United States. He teamed up with celebrity fiddler Mark O’Connor and renowned bass player Edgar Meyer to record two albums, *Appalachia Waltz* (1996) and *Appalachian Journey* (2000), each of which contains fiddle tunes, songs, and new compositions inspired by the American folk sound. The trio did not attempt to reproduce authentic performing styles. Instead, they brought their own skills and backgrounds to the creation of unusual arrangements that balanced traditional material with novel interpretation.

We will consider their rendition of “Fisher’s Hornpipe” from *Appalachian Journey*. This tune has been convincingly attributed to James A. Fishar, who served as music director at Covent Garden opera house in London in the 1770s. It appeared as “Hornpipe #1” in his 1778 collection of dance tunes. Whether or not Fishar composed the tune, it quickly gained popularity. Today it can be heard all over the British isles, in Canada, and in the United States, where it first appeared in print in 1796. There are countless versions—a symptom of the **oral tradition**, in which tunes are learned not from notation but by ear. Appalachian fiddlers would most likely have learned “Fisher’s Hornpipe” from travelling dance musicians and adapted it to their own tastes.

For comparison, we might consider Tommy Jarrell’s version of “Fisher’s Hornpipe,”¹⁴ which he learned from his father. This is an example of the traditional

fiddling style known today as Round Peak, named after a prominent geological feature near Mt. Airy, NC. Jarrell provides harmony by playing multiple strings at the same time and rhythm by employing syncopated bowing patterns. As such, he doesn't particularly require accompaniment.

14.



This recording of “Fisher’s Hornpipe” by Tommy Jarrell provides a good example of a traditional Appalachian rendition.

Ma and company’s rendition is quite different. O’Connor is joined on the fiddle by bluegrass legend Alison Kraus. Although they play the same instrument as Jarrell, their technique could not contrast with his more greatly than it does. Each plays only a single melodic line, and does so with great precision and clarity. The slower tempo allows each note to sparkle. Occasionally we can hear vibrato—a technique that Jarrell would never employ. When accompanying other instruments, O’Connor and Kraus evoke some of the same rhythms as Jarrell, but their rendition of the melody is less syncopated.

Perhaps most importantly, the version of “Fisher’s Hornpipe” on *Appalachian Journey* takes the original tune far outside of its folk framework. When Jarrell plays “Fisher’s Hornpipe,” he simply repeats the A and B strains until he decides that it is time to stop. His version is in the key of D, and it most certainly stays there. O’Connor and Kraus (soon joined by Meyer and Ma) begin with a fairly straightforward rendition of the tune, but after a few times through they switch to a groovy rhythmic pattern. Then, as Ma takes the melody, they **modulate** (change keys)—twice. Next, each player takes a turn with the A or B section, adding ornaments as if trying to outdo the person who played before. After this, they break into a **polyphonic**, four-part version of the tune that includes several countermelodies. The recording ends with even more key changes and virtuosic, high-range playing from Ma.



“Fisher’s Hornpipe”

Composer: James A. Fishar (arr. Mark O’Connor)

Performance: Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, Mark O’Connor, Alison Krauss (2000)

Time	Form	What to listen for
0'00"	A	The two violins play the A strain in harmony (note: Jarrell begins with the other strain, making this his B strain)
0'10"	A	Addition of bass pizzicato

0'21"	B B	Addition of cello harmony
0'42"	B' B'	The two violinists play a variation on the B strain
1'04"	A' A'	The two violinists play a variation on the A strain
1'25"	A	The key modulates up one step and the cello plays the A strain, which is extended by a brief concluding passage
1'39"	A	The key changes again as a solo violin plays the A strain
1'49"	A	The other violin plays the A strain with additional ornamentation
1'59"	B	The cello plays the B strain
2'09"	B	The bass plays the B strain
2'21"	B B	One violin plays the B strain while the other instruments provide new countermeasures in a polyphonic texture; the key changes for the second statement of the B strain, the last phrase of which is repeated
2'46"	A' A	The A' variation returns for one statement before the cello plays the A strain
3'08"	A' A	The key modulates up by one step for another A' statement; it modulates up by yet another step for a cello statement of the A strain
3'30"	Coda	A concluding passage echoes the opening motif of the A strain

Silk Road Project

Ma's most significant and lasting foray outside of the European concert tradition, however, began in 1998 and has carried into the present day. He founded the Silk Road Project with the aim of bringing together musicians and cultures from across the regions formerly traversed by the **Silk Road**—the trade route, spanning from Italy to Japan, that shaped Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia beginning in the second century BCE. For Ma, the Silk Road was a symbol of intercultural exchange. For two millennia, the Silk Road moved

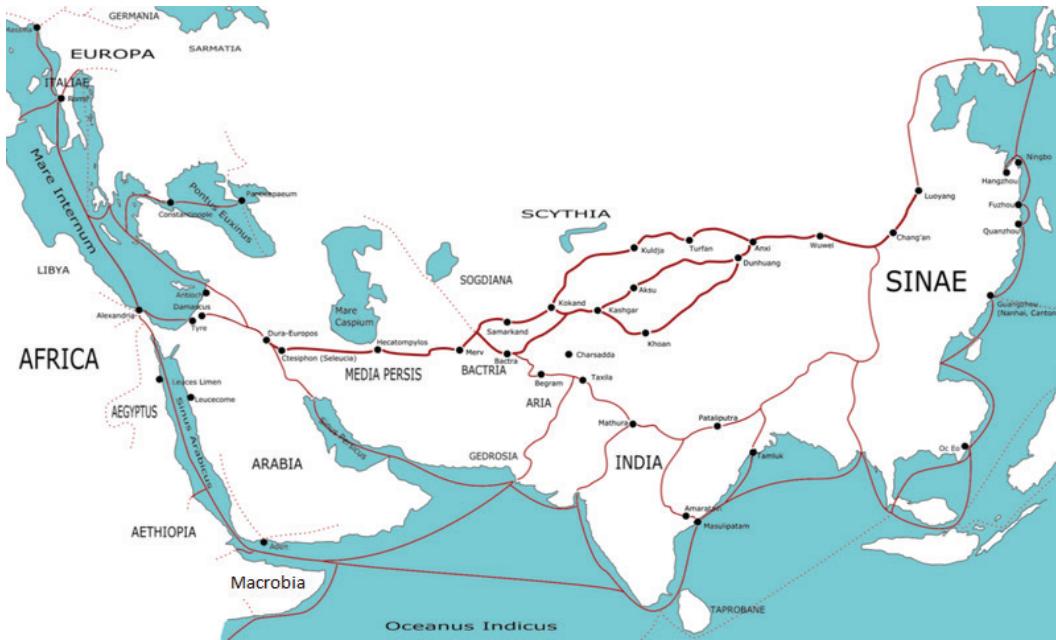


Image 13.23: This map details the trade routes in use by the first century CE.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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clothing, artifacts, musical instruments, songs, stories, and religious beliefs from one end of the known world to the other. Ma has described the historical Silk Road as “a model for productive cultural collaboration, for the exchange of ideas and traditions alongside commerce and innovation”—values that he wants to promote in the modern world.

Although the Silk Road Project has grown into a multifaceted arts organization—Silkroad—that pursues a variety of initiatives, we will consider only the activities of the Silkroad Ensemble, a collective of international **virtuosi** who blend the instruments, styles, and techniques of various musical traditions. The ensemble contains nearly sixty members (although only a dozen or so perform together on any given occasion) and has been active across the globe. Its members record albums (seven in the first two decades), give concerts, host festivals, and conduct clinics for students of all ages.

The music played by the Silkroad Ensemble comes from a variety of sources. Sometimes, individual members share traditional pieces from their own cultural backgrounds. The various performers then find a way to interpret that music in a way that makes sense to each of them, and the ensemble works together to develop creative arrangements. Sometimes, the Silkroad Ensemble—like Roomful of Teeth, discussed above—commissions composers to write works for their unique performing forces and abilities. And sometimes, the ensemble adapts pieces of music that have been written for other performers. In all cases, their repertoire blends cultural influences. However, it is very important to Yo-Yo Ma that the Silkroad Ensemble treat its sources with respect and avoid exoticizing



Image 13.24: Members of the Silkroad Ensemble bow following a 2011 concert at the University of California, Berkeley.

Source: Flickr

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non-Western musical traditions—like we saw happen in Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker* (Chapter 4).

We will consider one of the Silk Road Ensemble’s most popular numbers, “Arabian Waltz.” This piece was written and recorded by the Lebanese composer and oud player Rabih Abou-Khalil in 1996. Although well-versed in traditional Arab music, Abou-Khalil is equally knowledgeable of Western traditions, having studied flute at the Academy of Music in Munich, Germany. His compositions blend Arab scales, textures, and rhythms with influences from jazz, rock, and European concert music. “Arabian Waltz” was written for oud, string quartet (a European ensemble), and traditional Arab frame drums.

The original recording¹⁵ featured Abou-Khalil in collaboration with the Balanescu Quartet—an ensemble led by Romanian violinist Alexander Bălănescu that specializes in experimental music.



Image 13.25: Rabih Abou-Khalil is a well-known oud player and composer.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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15.



“Arabian Waltz”

Composer: Rabih Abou-Khalil

Performance: Rabih Abou-Khalil, The Balanescu Quartet
(1996)



Image 13.26: The shakuhachi is related to the Persian ney, discussed in Chapter 8.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Image 13.27: The janggu is played here by a performer in traditional garb.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Clearly, “Arabian Waltz” was a cross-cultural work from its inception. In the hands of the Silkroad Ensemble, however, it has absorbed an even greater depth of international influence. We will consider a live performance that the ensemble gave in 2009 at the Park Avenue Armory in New York City. The ensemble, on this occasion, consisted of two violins, viola, cello, string bass, pipa (a Chinese lute—see Chapter 6), sheng (the Chinese mouth organ—see Chapter 4), shakuhachi (a Japanese flute), tabla (North Indian drums—see Chapter 6), various Middle Eastern frame drums (see Chapter 8), and janggu (a Korean drum). This is unquestionably an extraordinary assortment of instruments, each played by a master of the respective tradition.

The Silkroad Ensemble’s performance of “Arabian Waltz”¹⁶ begins just as Abou-Khalil’s had, with the sound of Arab frame drums. From the start, however, the ensemble members leave their unique stylistic fingerprints on this rendition. The principal melody is first heard in the shakuhachi, played by Kojiro Umezaki. Umezaki plays the melody—itself unmistakably Middle Eastern—in a Japanese style, introducing the typical embellishments that are **idiomatic** to the shakuhachi. Another remarkable contribution comes from the tabla player, Sandeep Das, who likewise plays his instrument just as he would in a North Indian context.

In the second half of the performance, Das is featured in a solo that combines the sound of the tabla with the other drums, producing an unprecedented aggregation of percussive timbres.

16.



“Arabian Waltz”

Composer: Rabih Abou-Khalil

Performance: Yo-Yo Ma, The Silkroad Ensemble (2009)

CONCLUSION

These case studies have explored the expansive definitions of “good music” offered by recent Pulitzer committees, a leading art music ensemble, and one of the most famous living classical musicians. All have agreed that quality can be found in many genres and traditions. We might sum up their values according to the five criteria presented in the introduction.

Was every example in this chapter successful at fulfilling its stated purpose? We’ve looked at a lot of dance music—did it inspire you to dance? Did Shaw’s *Partita* change the way you think about the possible uses for the human voice? Did Marsalis’s “Work Song” cause you to feel the suffering of his oratorio’s protagonists?

Was each of these examples exceptional when compared to others of its type? Is Lamar the best hip-hop artist, and was *DAMN.* the best hip-hop album of 2017? Is *Tehillim* a particularly compelling example of minimalist composition? Are the works of Aphex Twin superior to those of other electronic music artists?

Were these examples particularly original? Do they stand out from the field? Is there something about the musical details of *Libertango* that make it stick in your head? Does the originality of the vision behind Ellington’s *Far East Suite* qualify it as “better” than other jazz compositions of the era?

The skill of the performer—whether we are talking about Lamar’s accomplished rapping, Roomful of Teeth’s polished singing, Alarm Will Sound’s clever orchestrating, or Ma’s exquisite cello playing—certainly contributes to the quality of each of these examples. Ma in particular has exhibited singular dedication to identify and collaborating with the most accomplished performers from each global tradition. Flawless execution is central to his cross-cultural vision. But what about the skill of the composers? How can we judge that?

Finally, what impact has this music had on society? As an enormously popular performer, Lamar has certainly had an impact—will his legacy shape the future of hip-hop? Copland certainly defined the sound of “Americanness” for generations of composers. That makes him important, but does it make him good? Shaw is still at the beginning of her career—will her future influence determine the quality of *Partita* in some way?

This book ends as it began: with a long list of questions. None of these questions can be definitively answered, but they are all worth asking. They are worth asking because we listen to music every day, meaning that every day we have the opportunity to engage with an art form that human beings have used to communicate, entertain, and even shape the course of history for tens of thousands of years. We can either listen passively or we can ask questions of what we hear. These questions lead us to listen with greater care, extract more from the music in our lives, and discover new things about the world around us.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Print

Hasse, John Edward. *Beyond Category: The Life and Genius of Duke Ellington*. Da Capo Press, 1995.

Online

Andrew Granade and David Thurmaier, *Hearing the Pulitzers* podcast: <http://hearingthepulitzers.podbean.com/>

Caroline Shaw: <https://carolineshaw.com/>

Jazz at Lincoln Center: <https://www.jazz.org/>

Pulitzer Prizes for Music: <https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-category/225>

Roomful of Teeth: <https://www.roomfulofteeth.org/>

Silkroad Ensemble: <https://www.silkroad.org/>

Wynton Marsalis: <https://wyntonmarsalis.org/>

A

Instruments of the Orchestra

INTRODUCTION

The symphony orchestra has been a fixture of Western concert music since the early 18th century. It grew in size over the course of the 19th century as composers added new instruments and increased the number of players. Today, a professional orchestra is likely to contain about a hundred musicians. These are divided into sections of various sizes based on the instruments they play.

Orchestras include four different types, or families, of instruments. These are known as the **strings**, **woodwinds**, **brass**, and **percussion**. The instruments contained in each family share a means of sound production, but they come in different sizes and might be made of different materials. As a result, they play in different ranges and with different timbres. Each instrument of the orchestra also has different strengths and weaknesses. Some can play with great agility, while others are better suited to sustained pitches. Some are loud and piercing, suited to prominent solo lines, while others are more subtle. Composers who write for the orchestra must carefully consider the characteristics of each instrument. When the symphony orchestra is used well, however, it is capable of producing an extraordinary variety of sounds.

To hear each of the instruments in the orchestra and see a demonstration of its capabilities, please visit this webpage maintained by the London-based Philharmonia Orchestra: <https://www.philharmonia.co.uk/explore/instruments>.

THE STRING FAMILY

All orchestral string instruments produce sound when a vibrating string causes a hollow wooden body to reverberate. On all instruments except the harp, the strings are usually set into motion with a bow, although they can also be plucked. Modern bows are strung with horsehair, while the strings themselves are made out of various metals. Because string instruments are not very loud, there are usually a lot of them in an orchestra.

Violin

The violin is the smallest modern string instrument. It has four strings and plays in a high range. In an orchestra, there are two sections of violin players: the first violins and the second violins. The first violins often have the melody, while the second violins are more likely to play harmony in a lower ranger.

Viola

The viola looks nearly identical to the violin, but it is somewhat larger. Although it also has four strings, they sound at a lower pitch. As a result, the viola plays in a lower range and produces a richer timbre.

Cello

The cello sounds one octave lower than the viola. It is also much bigger, and is held vertically between the knees instead of on the shoulder. It is supported by a metal rod called an endpin.

Bass

The bass is the largest member of the string family, and it sounds in the lowest range. Although it looks somewhat like a large cello, the shape is different: notice how the upper part of the body slopes into the neck. The bass is also tuned differently. It is the least agile of the string instruments and seldom gets time in the spotlight, although a virtuoso performer can do amazing things with it.

Harp

The harp is only distantly related to the other string instruments. Each of its 40+ strings is tuned to a different pitch, and they are plucked to produce sound. The harp is inaudible when the rest of the orchestra is playing, but it is often assigned important solo passages.

THE WOODWIND FAMILY

All woodwind instruments produce sound when the player blows into the instrument, thereby causing the column of air to vibrate. All woodwinds were at one point in history made of wood, except for the saxophone, which has always been made of metal. However, this is not why they are classified together as a group. The reason for this is their similar construction, which constitutes a tube with holes. The more holes that are covered by fingers or keys, the lower the pitch, while the fewer holes that are covered, the higher the pitch. Additionally, the shape of the tube will influence the timbre: cylindrical instruments produce clear and brilliant timbres, while conical instruments produce round, vocal-like timbres. The inner dimensions of the flute and clarinet exhibit cylindrical bores (the tubing

is of a consistent diameter) and the oboe, bassoon, and saxophone exhibit conical bores (the tubing gradually expands in diameter throughout the length of the instrument).

In many woodwinds, the use of a single or double reed further modifies the timbre. Over time, orchestral composers came to prefer a system of paired woodwinds—2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons—as the standard woodwind section, adding other instruments as they desired for color.

Flute

Flutes can be made of various metals, although most professionals prefer solid silver. The player produces sound by blowing across an open hole near the closed end of the tube, and controls pitches both by depressing keys and increasing or decreasing wind pressure.

Flutes come in many sizes. It is typical for orchestral music to contain parts for the standard flute and a small, high-pitched flute called a piccolo. However, there are also larger flutes, including the alto, bass, and rare contra-bass flutes.

Clarinet

Clarinets are typically made of wood with metal keys. The player creates sound by blowing air into a mouthpiece with a piece of cane (a **single reed**) attached, which causes the reed to vibrate.

Like flutes, clarinets come in various sizes. Orchestras typically include a soprano clarinet (also called a B-flat clarinet) and a bass clarinet, which is twice as large (pitched one octave lower). Composers also write for other sizes, including the alto clarinet (which falls between the standard and bass clarinets) and the high-pitched E-flat sopranino clarinet.

Saxophone

The saxophone uses a single-reed mouthpiece similar to that of the clarinet, and the body of the instrument is made out of brass. Most sizes feature an upturned bell. The instrument's unusual name comes from its inventor, Adolphe Sax, who in the 1840s was seeking to create an instrument to blend the agility of the woodwind family with the large dynamic range of the brass family.

The saxophone is seldom found as a permanent member of the woodwind section in the orchestra, often appearing only as a soloist. However, it has become increasingly prominent in art music of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is best known for its use in jazz and popular music.

Oboe

The oboe is similar to the clarinet in construction and appearance, but in place of a mouthpiece containing a single reed it utilizes a pair of reeds protruding

from one end. The player blows through these reeds, causing them to vibrate and produce the distinctive nasal timbre of the oboe. All instruments that utilize this method of sound production are referred to as **double reeds**.

The English horn is a related double-reed instrument. It is somewhat larger than the oboe and produces a lower, richer sound.

Bassoon

The bassoon is the largest double-reed instrument. It gets its own entry here because, unlike the English horn, it is one of the core instruments of the orchestra and is used in almost every piece of music. The bassoon has a distinctive appearance: Its long resonating column rises considerably above the head of the player. Although the bassoon produces pitches in a very low range, composers sometimes employ an even lower-pitched version, the contra-bassoon.

THE BRASS FAMILY

All instruments in the brass family feature a cup-shaped metal mouthpiece into which the player blows air in a way that causes their lips to vibrate. As the family name suggests, the instruments are typically made of brass, and, although they come in many shapes and sizes, each essentially constitutes a long tube with a bell at the end. Brass instruments vary in terms of range (which is determined in part by the length of the tube) and the method by which the player controls the pitch. They also vary in the brightness of their timbre, which depends on whether the instrument is cylindrical bore (the tubing is of a consistent diameter until it opens into the bell) or conical bore (the tubing gradually expands in diameter throughout the length of the instrument).

Trumpet

The trumpet is the smallest—and therefore highest-pitched—member of the brass family. As a cylindrical-bore instrument, it has a brilliant, piercing sound. The performer controls pitch by depressing valves that open and close, which changes the length of the tubing, and by buzzing their lips faster or slower.

French Horn

The French horn plays in a range that is similar to that of the trumpet, but it sounds quite different. This is due in part to the fact that it is conical bore and in part to the fact that the length of tubing is much greater. A horn player holds the instrument with one hand in the bell, which allows them to additionally control pitch and timbre.

Trombone

Like the trumpet, the trombone is a cylindrical-bore instrument with a bright sound. Its greater size and length mean that it produces lower pitches. The most striking difference between the two instruments, however, has to do with the method by which the player controls the pitch. While all other brass instruments have valves that allow or prevent air from passing through lengths of tubing, a trombone player manually extends or shortens the length of their instruments by moving a large slide.

Euphonium

The euphonium is a conical bore brass instrument that fills the middle-low register of the brass section. It is similar in construction to a tuba, sounding one octave higher. It is not a standard member of the orchestral brass section, but it plays an important role in American and British wind bands.

Tuba

The tuba is the largest instrument in the brass family and plays the lowest notes. The tuba was introduced into the modern orchestra in the mid-19th century and is therefore one of the newest members of the brass family. Although it is operated much like a trumpet, the fact that it is conical bore and features an upward facing bell contributes to its more muted timbre.

THE PERCUSSION FAMILY

All percussion instruments create sound when a resonating body is set into motion following an impact. If this description seems vague, it is because percussion instruments employ an extraordinary variety of methods to produce sound. The simplest percussion instrument is a pair of clapping hands, while the most complex require extensive mechanical workings.

In general, percussion instruments can be grouped into pitched and unpitched classes. Pitched percussion instruments sounds specific pitches and are therefore able to play melodies and harmonies, while unpitched are used only to sound rhythms.

PITCHED

Piano

The piano is the most common percussion instrument. Indeed, it is usually classed by itself, for—unlike other percussion instruments—it is played by specialists who perform an enormous repertoire of solo music that has been created for the piano over the past three hundred years. What identifies the piano as a percussion instrument is its method of producing sound. When a player depresses a key on the

piano, it causes a hammer to strike a metal string, the vibrations of which produce sound within the wooden body of the instrument. The keyboard is laid out in a way that gives the player access to every pitch of the chromatic scale, while the mechanical action allows performers to control the dynamic level and sustain of each note.

The piano is closely related to other keyboard instruments that are discussed in this book, including the harpsichord and organ. These are described in the context of specific examples.

Mallet Percussion

Most of the pitched percussion instruments are laid out like a piano keyboard, but produce sound when the player strikes a key with a mallet. This in turn causes a metal tube positioned below the key to vibrate and produce sound. The marimba has wooden keys and a large range. Its timbre is mellow and resonant. The xylophone looks similar to the marimba, but it has a smaller range and produces a more articulated and piercing sound. The glockenspiel is smaller still and has metal keys that produce a bell-like sound.

Timpani

The timpani have a long history in the orchestra, and they are arguably the most important instrument in the percussion section. The timpani constitute a set of three to five drums with large copper bowls and taut resonating heads. Each drum is tuned to sound a specific pitch. Although the timpanist seldom plays melodies, the drums are often used to reinforce the harmonic structure of the music.

Unpitched

The list of unpitched percussion instruments is nearly endless. One of the most common is the snare drum, which has two taut resonating heads, the lower of which is strung with metal beads that produce a rattling sound. The player uses two sticks to perform rhythms on the upper head. Also common is the bass drum, which likewise has two heads and is played with a large, soft mallet. Various gongs and cymbals are made out of metal and either struck with a mallet or crashed together.

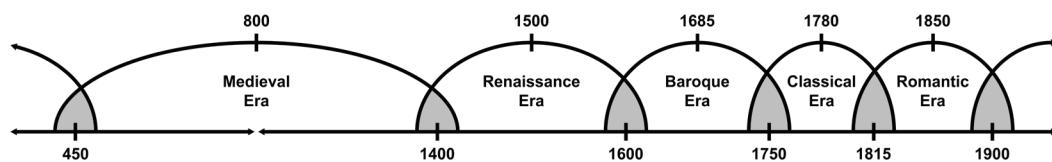
B

Western Art Music

This appendix is designed to assist instructors who seek to craft alternative pathways through this textbook. In particular, it will facilitate the design of a chronologically-ordered music appreciation course focused on Western art music. Under the heading “Western Art Music,” such works are first grouped according to their respective style periods (see also the accompanying figure, “A Timeline of Western Art Music”) and then listed alphabetically (by the last name of their composer(s) in most cases, by some other designator in the others). Additionally, listed under “Other Musical Works,” instructors designing the type of course mentioned above will find relevant works of Western folk music and popular music, non-Western music, and cross-cultural music. List entries beginning with an asterisk (*) are works mentioned but not discussed at length; all other works listed are covered in great depth and are represented by an official listening example. Each entry includes the work’s date(s) of composition, premiere, or publication and the chapter(s) in which the work is mentioned.

The style-period dates given in this guide are widely accepted and correspond to those used in “A Timeline of Western Art Music.” On this timeline, each style period is represented by a semi-oval proportional in size to its period’s duration. Because the evolution of musical style takes place over time, each period fades gradually into the next. This process produces smaller, transitional periods of varying lengths (the overlapping areas of the semi-ovals), within which the dates of the large style periods are positioned (though not necessarily centered). During these transitional periods, older composers writing in a fully developed style are working concurrently with the avant-garde, a younger generation of composers innovating toward the emerging style. At the apex of each semi-oval there appears a date marking a significant milestone in the period.

A Timeline of Western Art Music



WESTERN ART MUSIC

The Medieval Era (450–1400)

Countess of Dia, “A chantar m’er” [I must sing] (ca. 1200) (chapter 8)

* Dies irae [Day of wrath], the sequence of the Requiem Mass (chapter 6)

Hildegard of Bingen, “O virtus Sapientiae” [O strength of Wisdom] (ca. 1150) (chapter 11)

* Hildegard of Bingen, *Ordo virtutum* [Order of the virtues] (ca. 1150) (chapter 11)

The Renaissance Era (1400–1600)

John Dowland, “Flow, My Tears” (1600) (chapter 8)

John Dowland, *Lachrimae, or Seven Tears* (1604) (chapter 8)

* John Dowland, *Lachrimae* (1596) (chapter 8)

Giovanni da Palestrina, *Missa Papae Marcelli* [Pope Marcellus Mass] (published 1567) (chapter 11)

The Baroque Era (1600–1750)

* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Die Kunst der Fuge* [The art of fugue] (completed 1749; published 1751) (chapter 11)

Johann Sebastian Bach, Fugue in G minor (“Little”), BWV 578 (composed by 1707) (chapter 11)

Johann Sebastian Bach, Six Suites for Solo Cello, BWV 1007–12 (ca. 1720) (chapter 12)

* Johann Sebastian Bach, *St. Matthew Passion* (performed 1727) (chapter 11)

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Wachet auf* [Sleepers, wake], BWV 140 (1731) (chapter 11; see also chapter 10)

* Johann Sebastian Bach, *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* [The well-tempered clavier], Book 1 (1722) and Book 2 (1742) (chapter 11)

* Giulio Caccini, *Euridice* (1602) (chapter 4)

* George Frideric Handel, *L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* [The cheerful person, the thoughtful person, and the moderate person] (1740) (chapter 2)

* George Frideric Handel, *Water Music* (premiered 1717) (chapter 4)

* George Frideric Handel, *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (performed 1749) (chapter 4)

Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Orfeo* [Orpheus] (1607) (chapter 4; see also chapter 10)

* Jacopo Peri, *Dafne* (1597) (chapter 4)

* Jacopo Peri, *Euridice* (1600) (chapter 4)

Barbara Strozzi, *Lagrime mie* [My tears] (1659) (chapter 8)

Antonio Vivaldi, *Le quattro stagioni* [The four seasons], nos. 1–4 (of 12) from *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* [The contest between harmony and invention] (1725) (chapter 6)

The Classical Era (1750–1815)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, *Ah! perfido* [Ah! Deceiver] (1796) (chapter 7)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, *Choral Fantasy* (1808; revised 1809) (chapter 7)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, Mass in C Major (1807) (chapter 7)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 4 (1804–6/7) (chapter 7)

Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 (1807–8) (chapter 7; see also chapter 9)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 6 (“Pastoral”) (1802–8) (chapters 6 and 7)

Franz Joseph Haydn, String Quartet, Op. 33, No. 2 (“The Joke”) (1781) (chapter 8)

* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito* [The clemency of Titus] (1791) (chapter 4)

* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Cosí fan tutte* [All women do it] (1790) (chapter 4)

* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (1787) (chapter 4)

* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro* [The marriage of Figaro] (1786) (chapter 4)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* [The magic flute] (1791) (chapter 4)

The Romantic Era (1815–1900)

* Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (1822–24) (chapter 7)

* Hector Berlioz, *Le retour à la vie* [The return to life] (1831–32) (chapter 6)

Hector Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique* [Fantastical symphony] (1830) (chapter 6; see also chapters 7 and 9)

* Antonín Dvořák, String Quartet No. 12 (“The American”) (1893) (chapter 9)

Antonín Dvořák, Symphony No. 9 (“From the New World”) (1893) (chapter 9)

- Franz Liszt, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* (1847) (chapter 9)
- Modest Mussorgsky, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874) (chapter 6)
- Franz Schubert, “Erlkönig” [Elf king] (1815) (chapter 5)
- Franz Schubert, *Die schöne Müllerin* [The lovely maid of the mill] (1824) (chapter 5)
- Clara Schumann, Piano Trio in G Minor (1846) (chapter 8)
- Bedřich Smetana, *Vltava* [The Moldau] (1874), from *Má vlast* [My homeland] (1874–79) (chapter 9)
- Johann Strauss II, *An der schönen, blauen Donau* [The blue Danube] (composed 1866; premiered 1867) (chapter 12)
- Johann Strauss II, *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka* (1858) (chapter 12)
- * Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Iolanta* (1891) (chapter 4)
- Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *The Nutcracker* (1892) (chapters 4 and 7)
- * Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *The Nutcracker [Suite]* (1892) (chapter 4)
- * Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Sleeping Beauty* (1890) (chapter 4)
- * Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Swan Lake* (1877) (chapter 4)
- * Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 4 (1877–78) (chapter 7)
- Richard Wagner, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* [The ring of the Nibelungs] (1848–74), the Ring Cycle, including *Das Rheingold* [The Rhinegold], *Die Walküre* [The Valkyrie], *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung* [Twilight of the gods] (chapter 3)

The Twentieth Century and Beyond (1900–Present)

- Alarm Will Sound, *Acoustica: Alarm Will Sound Performs Aphex Twin* (2005) (chapter 13)
- * Alarm Will Sound, *Steve Reich, Tehillim/The Desert Music* (2002) (chapter 13)
- Béla Bartók, *Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary* (1915) (chapter 9)
- Amy Beach, *Gaelic Symphony* (1894–96) (chapter 9)
- * Amy Beach, Mass in E-flat Major (1890) (chapter 9)
- * Amy Beach, Piano Concerto in C-sharp Minor (1899)
- * Benjamin Britten, *War Requiem* (1962) (chapter 7)
- * John Cage, *4'33"* (1952) (chapter 1)
- * John Cage, *Williams Mix* (1952) (chapter 1)

- * John Alden Carpenter, *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* (1915; revised 1948) (chapter 7)
- * Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, *Bamboula* (1911) (chapter 7)
- * Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* (1891) (chapter 7)
- * John Coltrane, *Giant Steps* (album, released 1960) (chapter 11)
John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme* (album, released 1965) (chapter 11)
- Aaron Copland, *Appalachian Spring* (ballet, 1943–44) (chapter 13)
- * Aaron Copland, *Billy the Kid* (ballet, 1938) (chapter 13)
- * Aaron Copland, *Rodeo* (ballet, 1942) (chapter 13)
- * Henry Cowell, *Dynamic Motion* (1916) (chapter 1)
- * Mario Davidovsky, *Synchronisms No. 6 for Piano and Electronic Sound* (1970) (chapter 13)
- * Ivan Dzerzhinsky, *Quiet Flows the Don* (1934) (chapter 10)
- * Edward Elgar, *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* (1901) (chapter 7)
- Duke Ellington (and Billy Strayhorn), *The Far East Suite* (recorded 1966); released as Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, *Duke Ellington's "Far East Suite"* (1967) (chapter 13)
- * Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra, “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)” (released 1932) (chapter 13)
- * Duke Ellington and His Washingtonians, “East St. Louis Toodle-Oo” (1927) (chapter 7)
- * George Gershwin, *An American in Paris* (1928) (chapter 1)
George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue* (premiered 1924) (chapter 7)
- * Gustav Holst, *The Hymn of Jesus* (composed 1917; premiered 1920) (chapter 3)
Gustav Holst, *The Planets* (1914–16) (chapter 3)
- Catherine Likhuta, *Lesions* (2017) (chapter 6)
- Wynton Marsalis, *Blood on the Fields* (premiered 1994) (chapter 13)
- Carl Orff, *Carmina Burana* (1936) (chapter 10; see also chapter 7)
- * John Powell, *In Old Virginia* (1921) (chapter 7)
- Florence Price, *Symphony No. 1* (1931–32) (chapter 7)
- * Florence Price, *Symphony No. 3* (1938–40) (chapter 7)

- * Florence Price, *Piano Concerto in One Movement* (1934) (chapter 7)
- Maurice Ravel, orchestration (1922) of Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874) (chapter 6)
- Steve Reich, *Come Out* (1966) (chapter 13)
- Steve Reich, *Tehillim* (1981) (chapter 13)
- * Steve Reich, *The Desert Music* (1983) (chapter 13)
- Caroline Shaw, *Partita for 8 Voices* (in four movements, each premiered individually between 2009 and 2011); released as Roomful of Teeth, *Roomful of Teeth* (2012) (chapter 13)
- * Dmitri Shostakovich, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1930–32) (chapter 10)
- * Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphony No. 1 (1924–25) (chapter 10)
- * Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphony No. 4 (1935–36) (chapter 10)
- Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5 (1937) (chapter 10; see also chapter 7)
- * Igor Stravinsky, *L'oiseau de feu* [The firebird] (1910) (chapter 3)
- * Igor Stravinsky, *Petrushka* (1911) (chapter 3)
- Igor Stravinsky, *Le sacre du printemps* [The rite of spring] (1913) (chapter 3)
- * Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, *Symphony No. 1 (Three Movements for Orchestra)* (1982) (chapter 13)

OTHER MUSICAL WORKS

Western Music

- “Amazing Grace” (three renditions) (chapter 11)
- * Aphex Twin, *Drukqs* (2001) (chapter 13)
- “Arkansas Traveler” (two renditions) (chapter 12)
- The Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) (chapter 8)
- Irving Berlin, “Blue Skies” (1927) as arranged by Fletcher Henderson (1935) (chapter 12)
- Chic, “Good Times” (1979), from the album *Risqué* (1979) (chapter 12)
- * George M. Cohan, “Over There” (1917) (chapter 7)
- * Concert spirituals performed by Roland Hayes (chapter 7):
“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,” arranged by Henry T. Burleigh (see also chapter 9)

- “Bye and Bye,” arranged by Roland Hayes
- * Emerson, Lake & Palmer, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1971) (chapter 6)
- “Fisher’s Hornpipe” (two renditions) (chapter 13)
- Jimi Hendrix, “Purple Haze” (live, 1970) (chapter 7)
- Jimi Hendrix, “The Star-Spangled Banner” (live, 1969) (chapter 7)
- * Victor Herbert, *A Suite of Serenades* (1924) (chapter 7)
- Kendrick Lamar, *DAMN.* (2017) (chapter 13)
- * Lightnin’ Rod (pseudonym of Jalal Mansur Nuriddin), *Hustlers Convention* (album, 1973) (chapter 12)
- Yo-Yo Ma, *Soul of the Tango: The Music of Astor Piazzolla* (1997) (chapter 13)
- * Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and Mark O’Connor, *Appalachia Waltz* (1996) (chapter 13)
- Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and Mark O’Connor, *Appalachian Journey* (2000) (chapter 13)
- Mekong Delta, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1996) (chapter 6)
- National anthems (various) (chapter 9)
- * The Original Dixieland Jass Band, “Livery Stable Blues” (1917) (chapter 7)
- “Scotland the Brave” (ca. 1890s) (chapter 12)
- John Philip Sousa, *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (1896) (chapter 12)
- Steelband music of Trinidad and Tobago (chapter 9)
- The Sugarhill Gang, “Rapper’s Delight” (single, 1979) (chapter 12)
- Isao Tomita, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1975) (chapter 6)
- John Williams, *Star Wars [A New Hope] (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)* (1977) (chapter 3)
- John Williams, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)* (1980) (chapter 3)
- John Williams, *Soundtrack to Star Wars: Return of the Jedi (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)* (1983) (chapter 3)
- * John Williams, music for numerous films directed by Steven Spielberg, beginning with *The Sugarland Express (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)* (1974) (chapter 3)

Non-Western Music

Tanburi Cemil Bey, “Samâi Shad Araban” (ca. 1900) (chapter 8)

Chinese solo repertoire:

“Attack on All Sides” (composed by 1818) (chapter 6)

* “The Song of Gaixia” (composed ?) (chapter 6)

Peng Xiuwen, “Spring River in the Flower Moon Night” (ca. 1957) (chapter 6)

Tian Han, *Baishe zhuan* [The story of the white snake] (1958) (chapter 4)

Javanese traditional (gamelan) music, *The Love Dance of Klana Sewandana* (chapter 4)

“Raga Madhuvanti” (two renditions) (chapter 6)

“The Sunjata Story” (two renditions) (chapter 5)

Cross-Cultural Music

Arabian Waltz (two renditions) (chapter 13):

Rabih Abou-Khalil, featuring the Balanescu Quartet et al. (released 1996)

Yo-Yo Ma and The Silk Road Ensemble (live, 2009)

C

Definition of Terms

Absolute music - Instrumental music that does not claim to be about anything other than its own form and sound; the opposite of program music.

Academy - In 16th- and 17th-century Italy, a society of like-minded intellectuals dedicated to pursuits including discussion, debate, and engagement with the arts.

Achievement - What a person does with their aptitude.

Advent - In the Catholic church calendar, the four weeks leading up to Christmas.

Air pipe - The pipe extruding from a set of bagpipes into which the player blows air.

Allegory (in music) - The use of musical sounds to signify hidden meaning.

Alto - A singer with a range somewhat lower than that of a soprano, usually female.

Anchor - A monastic who lives their entire life in a small room adjoining a monastery, thereby “anchoring” the community.

Antiphon - A short Gregorian chant that can be used in various ways throughout the Canonical Hours and in the Mass.

Apartheid - The system of legalized racial segregation that was in place in South Africa from 1948 into the early 1990s.

Aptitude - The ease and speed with which the brain processes certain kinds of information.

Aria - A work for solo vocalist that follows a set form. Arias are most common as components of operas and oratorios, but can also be composed as stand-alone works.

Arioso - A passage of vocal music that is more structured than recitative but less formal than aria; usually brief in comparison with an aria.

Arpeggio - A musical gesture that sounds the pitches of a chord one at a time, either ascending or descending.

Arranger - Someone who takes a melody or work created by another composer and makes limited alterations; arrangements are usually created for specific ensembles and include some new musical material, although the original material is still easily detected.

Arrangement - A version of a composition designed for performance by a specific set of instruments or voices. Arrangements can be made by the original composer, but are usually produced by a collaborator or successor.

Ars perfecta - A style of vocal composition that reached maturity in 15th-century Italy. Music in this style is polyphonic and follows a robust set of rules concerning the treatment of dissonance.

Articulation - The manner in which a pitch is begun, sustained, and released.

Auditory cortex - The area of the brain in which sound is first processed.

Avant-garde - From the French for “advance guard”; used to refer to works of art that break with norms and explore new creative territory.

Ayre - A solo song with lute accompaniment common in the Baroque English tradition.

Backspinning - The practice employed by DJs of spinning a record in reverse in order to repeat a passage.

Ballad - A song that tells a story.

Ballet - A style of presentational dance, the current form of which emerged in 18th-century France. Ballet is often used to tell stories by means of gesture and music, and is characterized by unique apparel, including tutus and pointe shoes.

Bar - A unit determined by meter that contains the basic grouping of pulses (e.g. a bar in triple time will contain three beats). Synonymous with “measure.”

Bar form - A musical form, A A B, common in troubadour songs and Lutheran hymns.

Bar lines - In notated music, vertical lines that indicate the beginning and end of each bar.

Baroque - A period in Western music history that is typically bookmarked by the invention of opera (ca. 1600) and the death of J.S. Bach (1750).

Belting - A style of singing employed by women for which the performer uses their chest voice to produce pitches in a high range to powerful effect; common in Broadway productions beginning in the mid-20th century.

Basso continuo - A type of instrumental accompaniment developed in the Baroque era. Basso continuo is most often performed using two instruments:

one that can play harmonies (e.g. harpsichord) and one that can play a bass line (e.g. cello).

Beijing opera - A style of Chinese opera that was developed in the Beijing court in 1790; relies on stable character types and incorporates symbolic actions, costumes, and makeup.

Binary form - A two-part musical form, usually mapped as A B.

Blackface minstrelsy - The practice of portraying African American stereotypes with the aid of dark makeup. Although primarily associated with the 19th-century minstrel show, neither blackface nor minstrelsy have entirely disappeared from American society.

Blue note - A lowered note (usually the third, fifth, or seventh scale degree); typical of the blues style.

Blues - An African American musical style dating from the early 20th century. Distinctive characteristics of this style include lowered notes, slides, and a 12-bar structure.

Break - A passage in dance music in which the melody recedes and we hear only the rhythm section.

Breaking - The athletic style of dancing that developed alongside hip-hop music.

Broadside - A single-sheet publication format popular from the 16th to 19th centuries.

Broadside ballad - A broadside containing the text to a new song, usually meant to be sung to a familiar melody that is named but not notated.

Broca's area - The area of the brain that controls the physical production of speech. This area takes in sound, converts it to neuronal representations, then translates it to the physical motion involved in making speech sounds.

Bugle call - A brief melody played on the bugle or trumpet for the purpose of signalling a military maneuver or structuring military life. The best-known bugle call, "Taps," is played at US military funerals.

Cadence - A harmonic gesture that brings a phrase to an end.

Call and response - A texture in which two parts exchange melodic material.

Calypso - A song tradition associated with Trinidadian Carnival. Although the musical style of calypso songs has changed over the past two centuries, their lyrics are characterized by clever wordplay and sociopolitical topics.

Canon - A texture in which all parts carry the same melody, but enter at points separated by a set distance.

Canonical hours - A sequence of eight daily church services that structure life in a Benedictine monastery.

Canso - A type of troubadour song that addresses the hopeless love a knight feels for the noblewoman he serves. Such love, termed *fin'amor*, cannot be consummated, for the knight has sworn fidelity to the woman's husband.

Cantata - A multi-part work for voice(s) and accompaniment. 17th-century cantatas were often for solo voice and basso continuo, while later cantatas were more often for soloists, choir, and orchestra. Cantatas can be secular (a chamber cantata) or sacred (a church cantata).

Carnival - The public celebration that immediately precedes the period of Lent in many Catholic-majority countries.

Castanets - Small wooden clappers that are held in each hand and used to tap rhythms in the flamenco tradition.

Caste system - A system of social organization in which roles are hereditary and immutable. Caste membership generally determines an individual's social class, marriage prospects, and trade.

Castrati - Male singers who were castrated before puberty to prevent their voices from changing. Castrati were first used in Catholic church choirs, but later took the leading male roles in Italian opera. The practice was made illegal in Italy in 1861.

Cerebral cortex - The outermost layer of the brain. It is this area that controls complex thought.

Cerebrum - The outermost layer of the brain that gives it a wrinkled appearance. Both Broca's and Wernicke's Areas are situated in the Cerebrum.

Chamber music - Music intended for one-on-a-part performance in a small space; usually refers to compositions that require between two and eight performers.

Chamber orchestra - A small orchestra, containing around twenty performers.

Chanter - The pipe on a set of bagpipes that contains holes, allowing the player to sound nine distinct pitches.

Conceptual art - A work of art to which the underlying idea is more important than its visual characteristics.

Chest voice - A mode of vocal production used to access notes in the medium and low ranges; so named because the singer feels the vibrations in their chest. When chest voice is carried into the high range, it sounds quite different from head voice.

Chord - A collection of pitches, usually three or four, that belong to the same mode, are separated by intervals of a third, and are often sounded simultaneously to support a harmony.

Chord progression - A sequence of chords; certain chord progressions are common, while others are unusual and might sound displeasing.

Choreographer - The person who determines the physical movements (choreography) of a dance.

Chorus - In most popular songs, the part of the melody that is frequently repeated, and always with the same text; usually the most memorable part of a song.

Chromatic - Using notes beyond those included in the major or minor scale.

Classical - A period in Western music history that is typically considered to extend from 1750 to 1815. This period is characterized by restrained harmonies, balanced phrases, and transparent textures.

Clawhammer - A style of banjo playing for which the performer sounds melody notes by striking the four melody strings with the fingernail of their index or middle finger and sounds drone notes by plucking the short fifth string with their thumb.

Coda - A concluding passage added to the end of a composition that otherwise adheres to a set musical form or process.

Col legno - A technique for playing a string instrument that involves turning the bow upside down and bouncing the wooden stick on the strings.

Commission - The process by which a performer, producer, or organization hires a composer to create a new musical work.

Common-practice tonality - The system that governed the use of harmonies in Western music between the 17th and early 20th centuries; still relevant to most music produced today.

Compound duple meter - A type of duple meter in which each of the two pulses is subdivided into three subpulses; can be counted ONE-two-three-FOUR-five-six.

Concept album - An album (collection of songs) that is unified by a coherent narrative or mode of presentation.

Concert overture - A descriptive single-movement orchestral work.

Concerto - A work for instrumental soloist(s) with orchestral accompaniment.

Conductor - An ensemble leader who does not play an instrument but instead keeps time, often using a baton, and guides the performance using gestures.

Conjunct motion - Melodic motion in which the pitches move up and down the scale; the opposite of conjunct motion.

Contrast - The relationship between two musical passages that do not share recognizable melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic features.

Copyist - The person who copies out a written work; before printing technology became cheap and accessible, this role was crucial to the proliferation and performance of musical works.

Corpus callosum - A bundle of fibers that divide the two halves of the brain and transmit messages from one side of the brain to the other.

Countermelody - A secondary melody that complements the principal melody.

Covert - A term applied to a work of art that has a hidden meaning.

Crescendo - The process of gradually getting louder.

Cyclical technique - An approach to composition in which the various parts of a large-scale work are unified by recurring melodic material.

Da capo form - A form used principally in 17th- and 18th-century arias containing two contrasting sections and an instruction to the singer to repeat the first section upon reaching the end of the notated music. The form can therefore be diagrammed A B A.

Dactylic hexameter - A poetic meter in which a phrase is divided into six feet, each of which contains a long and two short syllables.

Dance caller - The person who calls out instructions to dancers while they perform a social dance with established moves, most of which require the interaction of partners; common in square dancing and contra dancing.

Dance suite - A genre of music in which each movement is inspired by a courtly European dance. Every dance suite contains an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, and Gigue, in addition to other dances. This genre emerged in 17th-century Germany.

Decrescendo - The process of gradually getting softer (interchangeable with “diminuendo”).

Development - In sonata form, the middle passage between the Exposition and the Recapitulation, in which themes from the Exposition are explored and transformed. In a fugue, the bulk of the composition, between the exposition and the final subject entrance, during which the subject is heard in a variety of keys and possibly undergoes specific transformations.

Diaspora - All members of a population that has been spread across various nations or regions (e.g. the African diaspora contains all people of African

ancestry found throughout the world).

Diegetic music - Music that is part of a dramatic scene and is therefore audible to the characters in that scene.

Diminuendo - The process of gradually getting softer (interchangeable with “decrescendo”).

Disco - A style of dance music that emerged in New York City in the 1970s; characterized by a fast tempo, quadruple meter, syncopated bass lines, and dense textures.

Disjunct motion - Melodic motion in which the pitches do not simply move up and down the scale but are instead separated by large intervals; the opposite of conjunct motion.

Dissonance - The effect produced by simultaneously-sounded pitches that are separated either by a very small interval (e.g. a minor or major second) or an interval not present in triad-based harmonies (e.g. an augmented fourth or major seventh). Although the perception of dissonance is rooted in musical context and personal taste, it strikes most listeners as uncomfortable.

Dominant - The fifth degree (note) in a major or minor scale, or the harmony based on that note.

Dotted rhythm - A rhythmic pattern in which pairs of notes are of unequal length, the first being three times as long as the second.

Double reed - A type of instrument that utilizes a pair of reeds protruding from one end to produce sound. The player blows through these reeds, causing them to vibrate. This family includes the oboe, English horn, and bassoon.

Double tracking - An audio recording technique in which a performer sings or plays along with their own prerecorded performance, usually to produce a stronger sound than can be obtained with a single voice or instrument.

Downbeat - The first beat in a measure or bar.

Dubbing - The process by which additional audio tracks are added to a studio recording.

Duple meter - A meter in which pulses (beats) are grouped by twos, usually in a strong-weak pattern.

Dynamic level - The loudness or softness of a musical passage.

Epic - A lengthy story concerning a quest or heroic adventure. Epics are often ancient, having been orally transmitted for many generations, and are frequently associated with a nation or ethnic group.

Episode - In a fugue, a passage in which the subject is not heard.

Ethnomusicologist - A scholar who specializes in indigenous music traditions.

Exoticism - The exploitation of a culture for the purpose portraying it as foreign, unusual, exciting, or titillating; relies on stereotypes instead of authentic representation.

Exposition - In sonata form, the section in which the Primary and Secondary Themes are introduced in their respective keys. In a fugue, the opening passage in which the subject is heard once in every voice.

Extramusical - Anything related to a musical work that is not explicitly conveyed in a performance.

Fanfare - A short, martial melody, usually played on trumpets or other brass instruments, that most often emphasizes the first, third, and fifth scale degrees; can introduce a performance or be integrated into a larger work as a dramatic signifier.

Fasıl - A suite of six to eight movements in the Ottoman tradition.

Falsetto - The head voice range in male singers; this technique allows men to sing in what is typically a female range.

Field holler - A style of unaccompanied singing, often improvised, used by enslaved African Americans to accompany work, communicate, or express emotions.

Field recording - The act of making recordings on location, usually of non-professional musicians in the rural communities where they live and work; also the recorded object itself.

Fixed composition - A musical work the contents of which are firmly established ahead of performance by a composer. Every performance of a fixed composition will be recognizable as a performance of the same work.

Flamenco - A style of music and dance native to Spain that features guitar accompanied by complex rhythms both clapped and played on the castanets.

Florentine Camerata - A group of intellectuals who gathered in Florence in the late 16th century and are responsible for developing European opera.

Folk revivals - In the United States, a period of widespread interest in folk music beginning in the 1930s and peaking in the 1960s.

Folk rock - A genre that emerged in the United States in the 1960s that blends elements of folk and rock music, usually by adding electric guitars and drums to songs that would otherwise qualify as folk.

Foot - In poetry, the basic metric unit; analogous to a measure or bar in music.

Forbrain - The anterior (forward-most) region of the brain.

Form - The organization of a musical work in time; can be mapped using terms or letter names.

Formalist - A term used in the Soviet Union to condemn art that did not meet the expectations set forth by the doctrine of Socialist Realism. Formalist art was usually described as being preoccupied with its own qualities instead of advancing the goals of the revolution.

Forte - A loud dynamic.

Fortissimo - A very loud dynamic, louder than forte.

Freemasonry - A system of secret fraternal organizations that traces its roots to the stonemasons' craft guilds established in the fourteenth century. Freemasonry is rich with lore and symbolism, and initiates progress through degrees as they become privy to its secrets.

Fret - A raised piece of wood or metal on a fingerboard that allows the player to easily stop the string at a specific point in order to sound a pitch. Frets are common on instruments in the lute class (e.g. the guitar).

Frontal lobe - The anterior (forward-most) lobe of the brain.

Fugue - A type of composition in which a melodic subject is introduced in each of the voices (usually numbering three or four) at the outset. Statements of the subject then alternate with episodes in which the subject is not present.

Gamelan - An instrumental ensemble native to Indonesia, consisting primarily of bronze gongs and metallophones.

Genre - A way of categorizing musical works based on perceived characteristics, use, or market.

Gesamtkunstwerk (German; English: “total artwork”) - Composer Richard Wagner’s term for an all-encompassing work that brings together varied art forms--music, dance, gesture, poetry, image--into a single, ideal medium of artistic expression. He used this term to describe his late operas.

Glissando - When an instrumentalist slides from one pitch to another.

Goliard - A medieval cleric who had studied at a European university but then grew disaffected with religious life. Goliards are remembered for their satirical poems and songs.

Gregorian chant - A body of monophonic vocal music developed in the medieval Catholic church.

Guru - In the North Indian tradition, a master who passes on musical knowledge to an apprentice.

Harlem Renaissance - A 1920s intellectual, social, and artistic movement centered in the Harlem neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City.

Harmonics (string technique) - A technique whereby the player touches the string lightly at a specific place while bowing, thereby producing an airy, high pitch.

Harmony - The pitches that support the melody; can refer generally to non-melodic voices or specifically to chords.

Head voice - A mode of vocal production used to access notes in the high range; so named because the singer feels the vibrations in their head.

Head - In jazz, a composition that is used as the basis for improvisation.

Heterophonic texture - A musical texture in which all melodic instruments/voices perform essentially the same melody at the same time, but with individual variations determined by the capabilities of the instrument.

Hindbrain - The posterior (back) region of the brain.

Hocket - A technique by which two or more voices contribute different notes to a single continuous melody.

Homophonic texture - A musical texture in which a single prominent melody is supported by accompaniment.

Homorhythmic - A musical texture in which all of the voices move in the same rhythm.

Hot jazz - In the 1920s, social dance music played primarily by African American bands; defined in contrast to sweet jazz, which was played primarily by white bands and was more rhythmically and timbrally restrained.

Idiomatic - Tailored to the capabilities and limitations of a specific instrument.

Imitation - A compositional technique whereby the voices in a polyphonic texture enter one at a time with similar melodic material.

Impresario - An impresario takes on the presentation of art as a financial venture, overseeing all elements of a production.

Improvisation - Composition during the act of performance. Improvisation is usually guided by norms and practices that belong to a given tradition.

Intertextual - Concerning connections or exchanges between distinct creative works.

Interval - The distance between two pitches.

Jali - In West Africa, a member of a hereditary caste of musicians responsible for transmitting stories and songs.

Jazz combo - A small jazz ensemble with one player per instrument.

Jim Crow - Legalized racial segregation in the United States. Jim Crow laws were in place between 1877 and the mid-1960s and were most common in the South.

Kumbengo - The repetitive melodic pattern--usually played on a kora, balafon, or ngoni--that underpins various types of singing in the West African jali tradition.

Lead sheet - A notated composition in the jazz tradition. A chart indicates the melody and harmonies of a composition, but it does not indicate instrumentation. In addition, performers will alter the melody and improvise solos over the harmonies, meaning that various performances of the same chart will sound quite different.

Legato - A smooth, connected form of articulation.

Lent - In the Catholic church calendar, the forty days of fasting and penitence that lead up to Easter.

Libretto - The words that are sung in a musical drama, such as an opera or oratorio.

Lining out - A hymn-singing practice in which a leader calls out fragments of text before the congregation slowly sings the passage. This approach to hymn singing was common before hymnals were readily available and churchgoers had the ability to read music.

Liturgy - All of the required words, music, and actions that constitute a church service.

Lindy Hop - An influential dance of the Swing era, introduced in 1928 by a pair of African American dancers.

Low-frequency oscillation - In synthesized music, the use of low frequencies to produce a pulsing or vibrating effect

Lute - A class of plucked string instruments in which the strings extend along a neck and pass over a closed resonating chamber; the guitar is a member of the lute class.

Lutheran chorale - A hymn for use in the Lutheran church; all chorales were originally monophonic.

Lutheran chorale cantata - A special type of Lutheran church cantata that incorporates chorale texts and melodies.

Lutheran church cantata - A multi-movement work for soloists, choir, and orchestra intended for use in a Lutheran worship service; typical in 17th- and 18th-century Germany.

Luthier - A craftsperson who builds and repairs wooden musical instruments.

Major mode - A collection of pitches that can be used to craft melodies and harmonies. The major mode is characterized by a specific sequence of intervals between scale degrees and is often heard as happy, cheerful, or confident.

Makam - The system of modes in Turkish music, developed in the Ottoman Empire.

Makam music - The classical music of the Turkish tradition.

March - A musical composition in duple meter performed at a steady, moderate tempo to which one could march, whether the composition is intended for practical use or concert performance.

Mass - Originally, the Catholic church service that includes Communion; other denominations have also adopted this term, and today Mass typically takes place on Sunday morning.

Mass Ordinary - The texts that are recited or sung during every Catholic Mass.

MC - Short for “master of ceremonies”; in hip-hop, the original designation for the performer, now known as a rapper, who improvises spoken lyrics over the beat.

Measure - A unit determined by meter that contains the basic grouping of pulses (e.g. a measure in triple time will contain three beats). Synonymous with “bar.”

Melisma - A sequence of notes all sung on a single vowel.

Melismatic - Vocal music in which there are many pitches per syllable.

Melodic motion - Described in terms of the intervallic relationship between adjacent pitches, which can produce either conjunct or disjunct motion.

Melodic range - The span between the low and high notes of a melody; can be small, medium, or large in size.

Melodic shape - The shape of a melody, which is determined by the trajectory of the pitches in terms of highness and lowness.

Melody - A coherent sequence of notes that, if embedded in a complex texture, is clearly of primary importance.

Meter - The grouping of pulses into stable units usually containing two, three, or four pulses.

Mezzo forte - A medium-loud dynamic.

Mezzo piano - A medium-quiet dynamic.

Microtones - Intervals smaller than a half step.

Midbrain - The middle region of the brain.

Mimesis - The imitation of real-world sounds with instruments or voices.

Minimalism - An approach to composition in which a process of gradual transformation is applied to limited musical material.

Minor mode - A collection of pitches that can be used to craft melodies and harmonies. The major mode is characterized by a specific sequence of intervals between scale degrees and is often heard as tragic, ominous, or serious.

Minstrel - In 12th-century Aquitaine, a travelling musician who spreads the songs of the troubadours.

Minstrel show - In the 19th-century United States, a form of entertainment in which performers (usually white) enacted African American stereotypes by darkening their faces with burnt cork or greasepaint, speaking in pseudo-dialect, and portraying established character types through song, dance, and comical sketches.

Mixed meter - The alternation between various meters, such that meter is not felt consistently throughout a musical composition.

Modal jazz - A jazz genre in which the traditional chords of bebop are replaced by harmonies built on modal scales. Performers focus on melodic development, rhythmic intricacy, timbral variation, and emotional expression.

Mode - In music, a system for organizing pitches. The most common modes in Western music are major and minor. Non-Western modal systems include makam and raga.

Modernism - An artistic movement of the early 20th century that glorified progress and presented an optimistic view about the future.

Modulation - The act of changing from one key (a set of pitches determined by a scale) to another.

Monophonic - Having a single melodic line with no accompaniment or countermelodies.

Multitrack recording - A technique by which each instrumental or vocal part is recorded on a different track, often not simultaneously, allowing for the creation of a studio recording that cannot be replicated in live performance.

Murder ballad - A ballad that tells the tale of a murder, most often concerning a young woman who has been murdered by her lover.

Music therapy - The clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a licensed music therapist.

Musical topic - A compositional style or technique that has come to be associated

with a specific subject matter (e.g. chromatic scales to represent wind, or horn calls to connote hunting). Topics were first theorized by musicologist Leonard Ratner.

Nationalism - Identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.

New Music - Experimental art music produced recently by living composers.

Non-diegetic music - Music that is heard in tandem with a dramatic scene but that is not a part of the scene and therefore not audible to the characters in that scene.

Obbligato (Italian; English: “obligatory”) - A term used in the 17th and 18th centuries to refer to a solo instrumental countermelody incorporated into an aria. The term references the fact that such accompaniments cannot be omitted without seriously detracting from the work.

Octave equivalence - The idea that pitches whose frequencies are related by powers of two (e.g. 220, 440, 880) are the same note and, to a degree, interchangeable; pitches separated by an octave are therefore assigned the same letter name.

Offbeat - A weak pulse (two or four) in quadruple meter, or the weak pulse (two) in duple meter.

Opera - A form of staged music drama in which all or part of the text is sung.

Opus - Latin for “work;” used to number compositions, usually in the order of creation (e.g. Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 is his opus 67).

Oral tradition - The means by which stories, customs, and music are passed from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Oratorio - An unstaged dramatic work for solo vocalists, choir, and accompanying ensemble that tells a story using sung text and music.

Orchestration - The act of adapting a composition for orchestra, which involves assigning elements of the melody and harmony to different instruments; also the resulting product.

Organicism - A compositional technique by which all parts of a musical work are interconnected; in typical cases, the work seems to grow out of a single motif.

Orientalism - The stereotyped representation of Eastern cultures in Western works of art.

Ornamentation - The addition of trills, runs, or other embellishments to a melody. Ornamentation is sometimes indicated in the notated score but often not.

Ostinato - A repeating melodic or rhythmic figure.

Overt - A term applied to a work of art the meaning of which is entirely apparent.

Overtone - A higher-pitched frequency that is activated when a pitch is produced.

Overtone series - A sequence of higher-pitched frequencies that are activated every time a pitch is produced.

Overtone singing - A style of singing employed primarily by men for which the performer produces a single low pitch but changes the shape of their mouth to accentuate various overtones.

Overture - An instrumental work that opens a musical drama. Overtures precede operas, oratorios, ballets, musicals, and other forms. Overtures can also be composed as stand-alone works.

Panning - A technique used in two-channel recording by which a sound gradually transitions from one channel to the other; this effect is most evident when one listens using headphones, in which case the sound will move from one ear to the other.

Parody - A musical parody is produced when someone supplies new lyrics to a familiar melody.

Participatory - A music event in which the boundary between the roles of performers and audience members is indeterminate or nonexistent; with “presentational,” one of two ends of a spectrum of music event types.

Pavan - A type of slow, stately court dance popular in 16th-century Europe.

Pentatonic - A melody that uses only five pitches.

Performance practice - Non-notated practices that are essential to the accurate presentation of a musical work.

Period instruments - Instruments that were used in a specific historical period. This term is most often applied to performances of works from before 1900 on instruments built to meet historic specifications.

Piano - A quiet dynamic.

Pianissimo - A very quiet dynamic, quieter than piano.

Pitch - The “highness” or “lowness” of a sound; can be represented as a frequency or a note name.

Pizzicato - A technique for playing a string instrument by which the performer plucks the strings with their finger.

Plantation song - A popular song written ostensibly from an African American perspective that expresses a nostalgic yearning for plantation life in the South.

Such songs, often written using dialect and performed in blackface, were popular between the mid-19th century and the early 20th century.

Polka - A fast dance in duple meter, performed by couples, that was first popularized in the 1830s.

Polyphonic texture - A musical texture in which no single voice has the melody and all are equally important.

Polytonality - When harmonies in multiple keys are sounded at the same time.

Presentational - A music event in which there is a clear boundary between the roles of performers and audience members; with “participatory,” one of two ends of a spectrum of music event types.

Producer - In contemporary popular music, the person who designs the overall sound of a track. A producer might program beats, adjust audio levels, or contribute in a variety of other ways before, during, and after the recording process.

Program music - An instrumental composition that tells a story or paints a picture. Program music never includes a sung or spoken text, but it is always associated with a printed text. This might range from a descriptive title to a lengthy essay.

Prosody - The pattern of accented and unaccented syllables in poetry.

Protest song - A song intended to protest a corporate or political action or regime. Such songs can carry overt (apparent) or covert (hidden) meaning.

Psychedelic rock - Rock music inspired by or representative of psychedelic culture, which centers on the use of mind-altering substances; a category associated primarily with the late 1960s US.

Pulse - A regularly-spaced rhythmic emphasis; synonymous with “beat.”

Quadruple meter - A meter in which pulses (beats) are grouped by fours, usually in a strong-weak-medium-weak pattern.

Quadratonic - A melody that uses only four pitches.

Quotation - The technique of incorporating a familiar melody into a composition for the purpose of conveying information to the listener.

Raga - A musical mode in the North Indian system. Ragas are organized into families, and each has a unique name. Unlike the Western scale, a raga contains more than just a set of hierarchically-organized pitches. It also contains information about pitch order, how to approach and ornament pitches, characteristic melodic motifs, and affective associations.

Ragamala - A miniature painting that captures the character of a raga.

Rastafarianism - A belief system that emerged in Jamaica when regent Ras Tafari Makonnen was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia in 1930; combines biblical faith with the belief that Selassie is (or was) Christ.

Recapitulation - In sonata form, the section in which all of the themes from the Exposition are heard for a second time, but in the home key.

Recitative - A style of singing that is modelled on dramatic speech. In recitative, there is minimal repetition and seldom a recognizable melody. The rhythm is determined by text stresses. Recitative is usually sparsely accompanied, using only a few instruments. It is used in opera and oratorio to propel the plot forward.

Refrain - A passage of music that returns throughout a vocal work.

Reggae - A genre of music that developed in Jamaica beginning around 1968; characterized by a medium tempo, quadruple meter, off-beat accents, electric instruments (organ, guitars, bass) that play interlocking rhythmic patterns, and lyrics concerning social justice and Rastafarian beliefs.

Register - A part of an instrument or vocalist's range; can be high, middle, or low.

Renaissance - A period in Western music history that is typically bookmarked by the rise of humanist thought (ca. 1400) and the invention of opera (ca. 1600).

Repetition - The relationship between two identical musical passages.

Reprise - The return of a musical number in the context of a theatrical performance.

Requiem - The Catholic funeral Mass.

Rhythm - The temporal aspect of sound; can be described as the pattern of "on" and "off" states exhibited by any sound as time passes.

Riff - A brief, repeated melodic fragment in popular music.

Ritornello - A passage of instrumental music that returns throughout a composition. This term is usually applied to music of the Baroque era.

Romantic - A period in Western music history that is typically considered to extend from 1815 to 1900. This period is characterized by expressive harmonies, experimental forms, and the rise of program music.

Rondo form - A musical form in which a refrain, introduced at the outset, alternates with contrasting material (e.g. A B A C A B A).

Rounded binary form - A type of two-part form in which both parts end with similar melodic material (e.g. [a a'] [b a"]).

Royalties - The profit share due to creative artists when their work is sold or reproduced in any form, including sheet music, recordings, and live

performances.

Sacred Harp singing - A shape-note singing practice that relies on the Sacred Harp hymnal, first published in 1844.

Salon - A gathering in the home of a wealthy art lover for the purpose of engaging with elite culture in intimate surroundings.

Saz semâisi - The concluding movement in a *fasıl* suite of the Ottoman tradition. The form alternates between unique *hane* passages and a *teslim* refrain. The final *hane* is in a lively dance meter.

Scale - A sequence of pitches containing the principle notes that can be used to compose or improvise in a given key. A scale is characterized by the intervals between the notes, which are usually major or minor seconds but can also be thirds.

Scenario - The sequence of scenes in a ballet.

Scenarist - The person who develops the scenario for a ballet.

Scenic cantata - A staged dramatic work for vocal soloists, choir, and orchestra that includes costumes, pantomime, and dancing; developed by Carl Orff.

Score - A document in which all parts of a composition are notated. In most cases, only the conductor reads from the score, while instrumentalists read from individual parts that include only their own music and singers read from vocal scores that include only the voice parts.

Session musician - A professional musician who makes studio recordings for use in film, television, or the popular music industry.

Sequence - The repetition of melodic material at a different pitch level.

Shape-note singing - A tradition of hymn singing that relies on notation in which the scale degrees are indicated with differently-shaped noteheads; flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries, but still widely practiced today.

Silk Road - The trade route, spanning from Italy to Japan, that shaped Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia beginning in the second century BCE.

Single reed - A type of instrument that utilizes a single reed embedded in a mouthpiece to produce sound. The player blows across the reed, causing it to vibrate. This family includes the clarinets and saxophones.

Singspiel - A form of German comic opera in which sung arias are interspersed with spoken dialogue; can be translated as “song play.”

Soca - A dance music genre associated with Trinidadian Carnival that dates to the 1970s.

Socialist Realism - The Soviet doctrine requiring that all art portray the communist revolution in a positive light. Art was also expected to be optimistic and accessible.

Sonata form - A typical form for the first movements of instrumental works in the European tradition of the 18th and 19th centuries. The form contains three principal sections (the Exposition, Development, and Recapitulation) and an optional fourth (the Coda). The thematic contents and key areas of the Exposition and Recapitulation are tightly controlled.

Song cycle - A set of songs that work together to tell a story or explore an emotional state.

Song plugger - In the first half of the 20th century, a music publishing company employee who was responsible for advertising songs either by performing them in public or convincing professional singers to adopt them.

Soprano - A singer with a high range, usually female.

Source music - Music in a film or television show that is generated from within the scene and is therefore audible to both the viewer and the characters.

Southern Appalachians - The mountainous region traversing the states of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Spiritual - A folk hymn from the African American tradition.

Square dancing - A form of social dancing in which four sets of couples face one another as the sides of a square and engage in a sequence of interactive movements.

Staccato - An articulation that is short and accented.

Staff notation - A system of notation that developed in Europe beginning in the 11th century and is in common use today. Noteheads are placed on a 5-line staff to indicate pitch and register. Rhythm is indicated by the appearance of the note.

Stop time - A style of accompaniment in jazz and blues that is characterized by chords sounded on the downbeat and followed by space that is occupied only by a soloist.

Strain - In certain forms, including those of marches and ragtime, the term used for a unique section (e.g. the B strain).

String quartet - Can refer either to a chamber ensemble made up of two violins, a viola, and a cello, or to a piece of music composed for such an ensemble.

Strophic song - A song in which all verses are sung to the same melody.

Subgenre - A means of dividing musical genres into increasingly specific subcategories.

Subject - In a fugue, the unaccompanied melody that is introduced at the outset and then heard in all voices over the course of the composition.

Suite - A multi-movement instrumental work that does not adhere to a standard formal structure (e.g. symphony).

Sweet jazz - In the 1920s, social dance music played primarily by white bands; defined in contrast to hot jazz, which was played primarily by African American bands and was more rhythmically and timbrally daring.

Swing - A style of dance music that emerged in the 1930s and is characterized by “swung” rhythms, which are produced when the first in a pair of notes is held for twice as long as the second, resulting in a long-short pattern; also refers to the accompanying style of dance.

Syllabic - Vocal music in which there is one pitch per syllable.

Sympathetic strings - Strings on an instrument that are intended to vibrate in sympathy with sounded pitches, thereby influencing the timbre and resonance of the instrument.

Symphonic poem - A descriptive single-movement orchestral work that portrays a scene, tells a story, or communicates a philosophical idea; popular in the late 19th century.

Symphony - A genre of orchestral music. A symphony usually contains four movements, the first of which is in sonata form. The interior movements are respectively slow and dance-inspired, although the order is not set. The final movement is fast.

Syncopation - An rhythmic pattern that deemphasizes strong beats and emphasizes off-beats (that is, the second halves of beats).

Syntax - The orderly arrangement of sounds in a system.

Tablature - A type of instrument-specific notation that provides the player with visual instructions regarding where to place their fingers on a fretboard or keyboard. Guitar tablature, or “tab,” is common today.

Tango - A style of dance and music that emerged in the slums of Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the late 19th century.

Tape loops - Short audio recordings made on magnetic tape that can be endlessly looped. The use of tape loops was common amongst early minimalist composers.

Tempo - The rate at which the pulse is felt.

Ternary form - A three-part form that can be diagrammed as A B A.

Text painting - A technique by which the composer translates the meaning of a text into sound (e.g. sets the word “falling” to a descending melodic line).

Throat singing - Any of several variants of overtone singing, for which the performer produces a single low pitch but changes the shape of their mouth to accentuate various overtones.

Through-composed - A vocal composition in which each stanza of the poem is sung to unique music, in contrast to a strophic setting.

Timbre - The quality of a sound, determined by its overtones.

Tin Pan Alley - The music publishing industry that flourished in New York City between the 1890s and 1940s; so named because many of the publishers stationed their headquarters on the same block, and the sound of their many pianos was said to resemble the clanging of tin pans.

Tonic scale degree - The first and most important note of a scale; the “home” pitch to which melody and harmony tend to return.

Transcription - The act of notating music.

Tremolo - Rapid articulation on a single pitch or, sometimes, quick alternation between two pitches. On string instruments, tremolo involves moving the bow back and forth very quickly to produce a fluttering sound.

Tresillo - A syncopated rhythm common in Latin American music. This rhythm, which occurs in a duple- or quadruple-meter framework and can be counted as 3+3+2, has its roots in West Africa.

Trill - A rapid oscillation between two adjacent pitches.

Triple meter - A meter in which pulses (beats) are grouped by threes, usually in a strong-weak-weak pattern.

Trobairitz - A 12th-century Aquitainian noblewoman who wrote refined love songs; the female counterpart to a troubadour.

Underscoring - Music in a film or television show that is audible to the viewer but not to the on-screen characters.

Variation - The relationship between two musical passages that share recognizable melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic features, but that are not identical. Also, a compositional technique in which a foundational piece of music is altered in a way that distinguishes it from the source while leaving the source recognizable.

Velum - A common material in the production of medieval manuscripts; most often made from dried sheep skin.

Verbunkos - A style of dance music performed by Romani musicians; can be roughly divided into two parts: the slow, expressive *lassan* and the lively *friska*,

which features simple harmonies and increases in tempo.

Vernacular - The language spoken by the people in a given area; can also refer to folk or popular music traditions that are comprehensible to the average citizen.

Verse - In most popular songs, the part of the melody to which the same words are never sung twice; usually alternates with the chorus.

Vibrato - A wobble added to a pitch.

Vida - A medieval biography of a troubadour.

Viol consort - An ensemble of viols of various sizes, ranging from treble to bass. This was a common chamber ensemble in 16th-century Europe.

Volume - The loudness or quietness of sound; can be specified in terms of amplitude (specific) or dynamic marking (contextual).

Virtuoso - One who is highly skilled at playing an instrument.

Waltz - A moderately-paced dance in triple meter, performed by couples, that dates from the 18th century.

Wayang wong - A narrative dance tradition from Java, performed to the accompaniment of gamelan music.

Wernicke's Area - The specific area of the brain that processes understanding of language and construction of meaningful thoughts.

Zither - A class of plucked or hammered string instruments in which the strings extend across a closed resonating chamber; familiar examples include the autoharp and hammered dulcimer.