

Renaissance

1450-1600

“Rebirth”

Historical Developments

Period of exploration, adventure, & scientific inquiry

- Columbus
- Vasco de Gama
- Magellan

Age of artistic awakening

- da Vinci
- Michaelangelo
- Raphael

Artists found inspiration in ancient Greek and Roman cultures

Historical Developments

Invention of the printing press & movable type

- made learning easier
- knowledge spread faster
- music was now printed and published

Reformation

- Martin Luther

Renaissance Society

Moved from being highly religious to more secular

Emphasis on the church lessened and people began to feel a sense of personal freedom

More emphasis put on the human experience

Humanism

Humanism

Focused on human life and its accomplishments

More emphasis was put on the pleasures of the senses

No longer concerned with life after death

Music in the Renaissance

Music was part of education

Every educated person was expected to be trained in music

Music became appreciated for its aesthetic value as an art form

- not just used for church or court or to entertain
- to create an emotional response, composers to offer a more sonorous experience

Music was created by people from all social classes as well as amateur and professional musician

More complex musical ideas became common

From Church to Court

Musical activity continued to shift to the courts

- Royalty competed for the best composers and musicians
- Court composers wrote music for court chapel and for entertainment (balls, feasts, etc.)
- Court composers traveled with nobility

Musicians were employed not only employed by the church and court but were also employed as instrument builders, music printers, and music publishers

Women more involved as music makers as singers

Characteristics of Renaissance Music

Words & Music

Texture

Rhythm & Melody

Words & Music

- **Vocal music more important than instrumental music**
- **music was written to enhance the meaning and emotion of the text**
- **word painting-musical representation of specific poetic images i.e. “up to heaven” notes would generally go up**
- **no extreme contrast in dynamics, tone color, or rhythm**

Texture

- Mostly polyphonic
- choral pieces usually have 4-6 voice parts
- imitation was common “round”
- homophonic texture heard in lighter music (like dance music)
- chords now used; interval of 3rd (very consonant)
- a cappella-music sung with out accompaniment

Rhythm & Melody

- **Rhythm flows gently**
- **Each melody on its own rhythm**
- **Melodies often sung in a round**
- **Conjunct melodies that were easy to sing**

Sacred Music

Two Main Forms

- **Motet**
- **Mass**

Listening #1

Ave Maria...Virgo Serena
by Josquin Desprez

CD 1/73-75

Listening Guide pg 107-108

Sacred Music Composers

Flemish School

- Guillaume Du Fay (transitional composer)
- Johannes Ockeghem
- Jacob Obrecht
- Josquin des Prez

Josquin des Prez

- Belgium 1440-1521
- Greatest Master of his time
- developed Franco-Flemish style to its highest point
- composed masses, motets, & some secular music (chanson)
- gifted teacher
- Choir boy at St. Quentin, traveled frequently held positions at the Papal chapel in Italy, the royal court in France and in Burgundy

Listening #2

El Grillo by Josquin Desprez

Supplemental CD #10

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

- Italy 1524-1594
- lived and worked during Counter-Reformation
- composed masses, motets, and madrigals (secular)
- he was the 1st Renaissance composer whose works were published in a complete edition
- choir boy at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, organist, served at several churches in Rome
- fur merchant later in life

Listening #3

*Pope Marcellus Mass: Kyrie by
Palestrina*

CD 1/76-78

Listening guide pg. 110

Listening #4

Pope Marcellus Mass: Gloria by
Palestrina

Norton Anthology CD 1/18-19

Listening Guide pg. 106 (Machlis book)

**Secular
Renaissance
Music**

Vocal Music

- became more popular because music was more readily available
- important leisure activity (vs. for church or dances)

Genres

- Madrigal
- Ballett
- Renaissance Lute Song

Madrigal

- short poem set to music
- vernacular text often about love
- combines homophonic and polyphonic textures
- written for several solo voice parts (not choirs)
- use of word painting (imitating sounds such as bird calls or street cries)
- more unusual harmonies than the sacred motet
- started in Italy around 1520 spread to England by the late 1580s

Listening #5

**As Vesta Was Descending by Thomas
Weelkes**

CD 1/79

Listening Guide 112-113

Ballett

- also called fa-la
- simpler than the madrigal
- dance-like song for several solo voices
- mostly homophonic
- “fa-la” often used in the refrain (thus the name)
- started in Italy and spread to England by 1600

Listening #6

**Now is the Month of Maying by
Thomas Morley**

CD 1/80

Listening Guide 113-114)

Renaissance Lute Song

- simpler type of secular music than the madrigal
- solo voice and lute
- Cultivated in England from 1590s-1620s
- mostly homophonic in texture
- Lute accompaniment is secondary to the vocal melody

Renaissance Lute

- Plucked string instrument
- Body shaped like half of pear
- Most popular instrument in the Renaissance home



Listening #7

**Listening: Flow My Tears by John
Dowland**

(CD 1/83-Listening Guide 106-108)

Sting-Flow My Tears

Instrumental Music

- becoming more popular but still not as popular as vocal music
- instruments were still used mainly to accompany voices
- sometimes people played vocal music because not much instrumental music was written
- By the late 1500s more instrumental music was written mostly for dancing (every cultured person was expected to be skilled in dance)
- Instrumentation was not specified by composer

Renaissance Instruments

- shawm
- recorder
- harpsichord
- lute
- cornett
- sackbut
- viol
- organ
- Regal

Listening #8

Ricercar No. 7 by Willaert

Supplemental CD #14

Instrumental Music Genres

Three Main Forms

Theme and Variations

Pavane (passamezzo)

Galliard

Pavane

- **also called passamezzo**
- dance and musical type
- duple meter

Listening #9

**Passamezzo & Galliard: Passamezzo by
Pierre Fancisque Caroubel**

CD 1/81

Listening Guide 116

Galliard

- dance and musical type
- triple meter

Listening #10

**Passamezzo & Galliard: Galliard by
Pierre Fancisque Caroubel**

CD 1/82

Listening Guide 116-117

The Venetian School

- Venice, Italy was the center of musical growth
- Composers from St. Mark's Cathedral
 - Andrian Willaert
 - Andrea Gabrieli
 - Giovanni Gabrieli
- Wrote more purely instrumental works
- Inspired by the architecture of the cathedral-
two separate choir lofts they composed music
for separate choirs of instruments that were
located in different places.

Listening #11

In Ecclesiis by Gabrieli

Supplemental CD #13

Listening Guide Handout

(pg. 42 in record guide)

Renaissance Composers

Josquin des Prez

- Review earlier notes on Josquin
- homophonic style in secular music
- polyphonic style distinguished by his use of imitation
- his compositions showed the impact of humanism
- music expressed the meanings of the words more than other composers did

Review Listening #2: El Grillo by Josquin

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

- Review earlier notes on Palestrina
- Influenced by Counter-Reformation
- returned church music to the simplicity and purity of earlier times
- his style was officially sanctioned by the church and became known as the *stile antico* or “old style”

**Review Listening #3: Pope Marcellus Mass:
Kyrie**

Johannes Ockeghem

- Franco-Flemish Composer
- 1420-1497
- “Prince of Music” for his generation

Orlandus Lassus

- Franco- Flemish Composer 1532-1593
- “Prince of Music” for his generation
- honored with knighthood

John Dunstable

- English c. 1390-1453
- best English composer of his generation
- also a renowned mathematician and astronomer

Listening #12

**O Rosa Bella Green by
Dunstable Supplemental CD #12**

William Byrd

- English 1543-1623
- the finest Elizabethan composer of this time

Giovanni Gabrieli

- Italian 1556-1612
- established one of the first purely instrumental styles in his canzonas and sonatas
- 1st to write vocal works with an independent instrumental accompaniment
- expanded the motet for 2-5 choirs, some of them instrumental (concerto style)
- famous, influential teacher

Review Listening #10: In Ecclesiis by Gabrieli