

Music Appreciation 8
21 October 2004

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC
MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE

Be able to define the characteristics of works:

Instrumentation

- Instrumental (and what instruments)
- Vocal (and how many voices)
- Combination

Texture

- monophonic - single line, any number of voices
- polyphonic - multiple lines of equal importance
- homophonic - clearly defined melody/harmony
- vocal textures: syllabic = one syllable for each note, neumatic = 2-3 syllables for each note, melismatic = many syllables for each note

Genres

- Motet – Polyphonic vocal work, usually sacred (liturgical).

- Mass – The central service of the traditional Christian liturgy, a ritual celebration of Christ's last supper with his disciples. The liturgy of the Mass consists of the Ordinary (fixed texts said or sung at every Mass) and the Propers (texts that vary according to the date within the liturgical year, such as a particular feast date or season).
- Anthem – Designation given to many motet-like works on English texts from the 16th century onward. The full anthem is for chorus throughout. The verse anthem alternates choral passages with passages for solo voice and instrumental accompaniment.
- Cantata – Vocal work, usually sacred, for performance forces of varying size, from soloist and basso continuo to soloists, chorus, and orchestra.
- Chanson (French) – Secular song
- Frottola (Italian) – Lighthearted, sometimes sarcastic/ironic poetry with chordal textures, lively dance like rhythms, frequent use of syncopation and hemiola.
- Chorale – A hymn, either in its harmonized form or as a melody alone. Congregational music of the Protestant Reformation (Germany).

Special techniques

- Word Painting – the use of musical elements to imitate the meaning of a specific passage of text (see Byrd, William - Sing Joyfully in listening excerpts)

COMPOSERS

Josquin des Prez

- 1450-1521
- Mass styles:

1. Cantus firmus:
 - is based on:
 - A. Plainchant
 - B. Secular Song
 - C. Arbitrary arrangement of solmization syllables (like AGFDE)
 - D. *Sogetto cavato*, in which the cantus firmus subject is “carved” out of a given word or name.
 - the techniques by which they are applied:
 - A. Strict – c.f. remains consistently in the tenor
 - B. Ostinato – c.f. is repeated consistently, in at least one voice at all times
 - C. Free – c.f. migrates from voice to voice, can drop out altogether

2. Canon:

Structured according to the principle of strict canon, in which at least one of the notated voices generates a second.

3. Imitation (or parody)

Incorporate all the voices of an existing work into the fabric of a new work, or at least the opening sections of key movements.

4. Paraphrase

Borrowing an existing melodic idea from a different work but elaborating it freely in all voices of a new work.

- Motet functions:
 1. Liturgical – functioned within the liturgy of the Mass Proper, but limited largely to Offertory texts; rarely connected with the Office, which used less elaborate music, plainchant, or simply hymns.
 2. Devotional – Religious gatherings outside the liturgy; ex. Memorial services for the deceased.
 3. Occasional – commissioned for specific occasions such as dedications, life events for important figures, etc.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

- 1525/26-1594
- compositions representative of the Renaissance polyphonic style
- legend (not true): his *Missa Papae Marcelli* convinced the Council of Trent not to ban polyphonic music from the Roman Catholic liturgy
- first 16th century composer to have his complete works published

Orlande de Lassus

- 1530/32-1594
- Most prolific composer in the history of music, writing over 2000 works both sacred and secular (70 masses, 500 motets, 100 settings of Magnificat, psalms, hymns, 200 madrigals, 150 french chansons, 90 german lieder)
- Composed vocal works in Italian, French, German, and Latin

Heinrich Schütz

- 1585-1672, born 100 years before Bach
- leading German composer of the 17th century
- key figure in transmitting the *seconda prattica* to Northern Europe
- composed the first German opera
- also believed that proper grounding in counterpoint (basis of *prima prattica*) was an essential element of compositional instruction

J.S. Bach

- 1685-1750
- Composed ~280 Cantatas, Passions, Mass and Motets, secular Chamber Music and Orchestral Music, instrumental Concertos, Organ Music, Harpsichord Music, and Canonic/Fugal works in his last decade.
- Originator of modern orchestral music (Brandenburg Concertos).