

Historical Periods of Music



Oide

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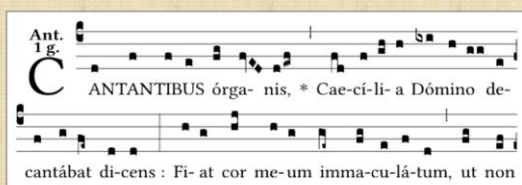
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Medieval

Up to 1450



Hildegard Machaut Dufay



Medieval music encompasses the sacred and secular music of Western Europe during the Middle Ages, from approximately the 6th to 15th centuries.

Classical

c1750 - c1810



Haydn Mozart Beethoven

Classical, from the word '*classicus*', describes a style that places an importance on grace and simplicity, beauty of line and shape, balance and proportion.



Renaissance

c1450 – c1600



Palestrina Byrd Monteverdi

Renaissance, meaning '*rebirth*', was a time of renewed interest in learning and culture. It was an age of scientific inquiry, of exploration and discovery.



Romantic

c1810 - c1910



Berlioz Tchaikovsky Schumann



Romantic, was first used to describe new ideas in art, music and literature in the 18th century. The emphasis was on emotional expression, inspired by nature, imagination and fantasy.

Baroque

c1600 - c1750



Vivaldi Handel Bach

Baroque, from the word '*barroco*', was first used to describe the highly ornamented style of architecture and art of the 17th century.

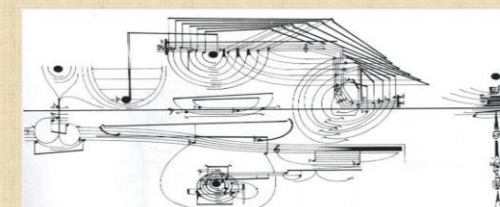


Modern

c1910 onwards



Schoenberg Stravinsky Reich



The **20th Century** is largely one of exploration and experimentation, leading to a variety of new trends, new techniques and sounds.

Medieval

Up to 1450



Hildegard

Machaut

Dufay

Ant. 1 g.
C ANTANTIBUS órga- nis, * Cae-cí-li- a Dómino de-
cantábat di-cens : Fi- at cor me-um imma-cu-lá-tum, ut non

Medieval music encompasses the sacred and secular music of Western Europe during the Middle Ages, from approximately the 6th to 15th centuries.

- Early notation system developed for *Plainchant*
- Used a special system of scales called *Modes*
- Music was written *Neumes*
- *Organum* evolved by adding lines to existing plainchant: *Parallel, Free* and *Melismatic*
- *Cantus Firmus*: when a plainchant melody was used as the basis of the composition
- Early *Harmony* used *Unison, 4th, 5th & 8^{ve}*
- *3rds & 6ths* heard later in the period
- *Texture*: separate musical strands were contrasted one against another, rather than blended together
- Songs and dances (*Estampie, Saltarello*) were composed by the *Troubadours*
- Earliest complete *setting of the Mass*
- *Distinctive timbres of medieval instruments*

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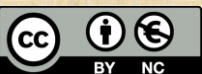
- Greater interest in secular songs (*Chanson, Ayre, Madrigal*), dances (*Pavan, Galliard*) and instrumental pieces (*Fantasia, Variations*)
- Main forms of Church music were still the *Mass* and the *Motet*
- *Accidentals* were used with the modes
- Early development of *Staff Notation*
- *Secular and folk melodies* also used as the Cantus Firmus in choral music
- The sound was blended by using simple chords (homophonic) or weaving the strands into a continuous flow (polyphonic) e.g., *Imitation* became an important compositional device
- More consideration was given to the harmonic effect of chords rather than superimposing one melody on another
- *Consorts* (groups of instruments) were formed such as *Viols, Crumhorns*, and *Recorders*



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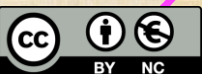
- *Major-Minor key system* gradually replaced modes
- The foundation for most types of music was the *Basso Continuo / Figured Bass*
- *Ground Bass* was a commonly used device
- Mainly *Polyphonic* texture used
- Strings formed the basis of the orchestra, and the harpsichord or organ filled out the harmonies above the figured bass. Occasional use of recorders, flutes, oboes, horns, trumpets and/or timpani
- *Long, flowing melodies* used **Ornamentation** (*Trill, Mordent*), *Imitation* (*Fugue*), and *Sequences*
- *One mood* persists throughout the piece
- *Motor-like rhythms* drive the music forward
- *Terraced Dynamics*: contrast of loud against soft, used throughout. No crescendo or diminuendo
- *Contrast of instrumental timbres* e.g., concertos
- Forms used: *Binary, Ternary, Fugue, Ritornello, Rondeau* and *Variations*
- Vocal music: *Aria, Cantata, Chorale, Opera, Oratorio* and *Recitative*
- Instrumental: *Concerto Grosso, Solo Concerto, Suite, Trio Sonata* and *Overture*



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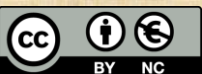
- Emphasis on *proportion* and *balance* which informed the shape and structure of the music
- *Shorter melodies* with a focus on grace and beauty of line which was achieved through clear-cut cadences and phrases
- *Crescendo* and *Diminuendo* now used
- The Harpsichord was replaced by the *Piano* and the *woodwind* became a *self-contained section*. Horns were used to provide harmonic support
- The Continuo fell out of use and the *Alberti Bass* accompaniment became widely used
- Texture *mainly Homophonic* as the music tended to be lighter and less complicated. Composers continued to use some polyphony and counterpoint
- Development of *Sonata Form*, which was widely used in orchestral and instrumental music
- Main types of music were predominantly
Instrumental: *Symphony, String Quartets, Trio, Serenade, Classical Concerto, Sonata*
Vocal: *Mass* and *Opera*



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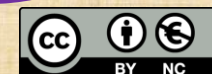
- **Greater freedom of form** resulting in large-scale works
- More focus on the **expression of emotion**, intense feelings and self-expression
- Adventurous **Modulations, Richer Harmonies**, often **Chromatic**, with striking use of **Discords**
- **Lyrical songlike melodies**
- **Programme** music
- Use of the **Idée Fixe** (Berlioz) / **leitmotif** (Wagner)
- **Denser textures** with bold dramatic contrasts of dynamics, pitch and timbres
- Larger and more **expanded orchestra** due to...
 - larger String and Woodwind sections
 - the invention of the valve system in the Brass
 - more varied and colourful Percussion and
 - expanded range of the Piano
- **Greater technical virtuosity**
- Vocal music: **Lied, Song Cycle, Opera**
Instrumental: **Concert Overture, Symphonic Poem, Programme Symphony**
Piano: **Nocturne, Étude, Impromptu, Mazurka, Polonaise**



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Modern

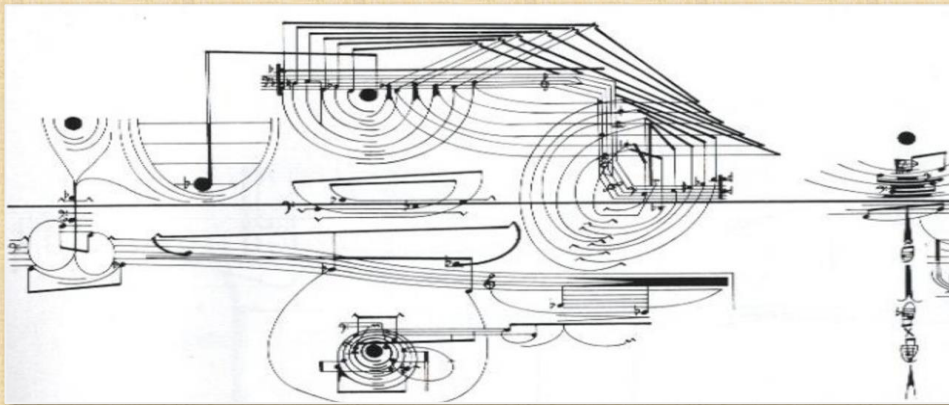
c1910 onwards



Schoenberg

Stravinsky

Reich



The **20th Century** is largely one of exploration and experimentation, leading to a variety of new trends, new techniques and sounds.

- Disjointed *Melodies*, often angular and spiky, include wide leaps with chromatic and dissonant intervals. Melody may be of secondary importance
- *Harmonies* likely to include extreme dissonance. *Note-clusters* sometimes used
- Music may be *Atonal* or *Polytonal*. Composers often invented their own systems to replace *Tonality*
- Vigorous *Rhythms* often with offbeat accents. *Unusual, Irregular Metres* and *Polymetre* sometimes used and often changed
- Unusual combinations of *Timbres*. Instruments often played forcefully at the extremes of their ranges. Sometimes unfamiliar sounds from familiar instruments
- Use of *Electronics* and new *Instrumental Techniques*
- Important styles, trends and techniques include: *Impressionism, Nationalism, Neoclassicism, Minimalism, Serialism, Musique Concrète, Aleatory music, Electronic music...*



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