Pope Innocent III, On the Misery of the Human Condition, c. 1200

A man’s last day is always the first in importance, but his first day is never considered his last. Yet it is fitting to live always on this principle, that one should act as if in the moment of death. . . . We are forever dying while we are alive; we only cease to die when we cease to live. Therefore it is better to die to life then to live waiting for death, for mortal life is but a living death. . . .

Have a nice day!

Late Medieval (Gothic) Music

Gothic Era
1150/1400
about 250 years

The Notre Dame School:
Leonin & Perotin

Musical culture shifts from the monasteries to the cathedrals & universities, urban centers of learning

Yes, that Notre Dame

MUSIC

ORGANUM

- A type of composition developed from 900-1250
- POLYPHONIC
- based on a (pre-existing) chant or fragment thereof to which one or more contrapuntal parts are added
- as it started with improvisation, one could call it a technique as well
- no certain connection to “organ” as in the instrument

Defining this term will NOT be on the exam.
Listening example – simple organum
- simple organum improvised by the performers on plainchant
- a style and practice at the Notre Dame school
- origin of POLYPHONY

Listening example – Perotin
Viderunt Omnes
- organum by Perotin (Notre Dame school), 1198.
- Rhythmic modes – TRIPLE SUBDIVISION
- florid organum (many rapid notes over long drawn out tones of chant).
- Note how the contrasting vowel sounds differentiate each section
- slowest (and lowest) line based on pre-existing fragment of chant

* Know this piece for the exam

Viderunt Omnes fines tèrrae
salutáre Dóti nótístri:
Jubiláté Dóti ónnis tèrra.

Nótum fécit Dóminus
salutáre súiam:
ante conspéctum géntium
revelávit justítiám súiam.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation which comes from our God; sing joyfully to God all the earth.

The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

A page from Pérotin’s Alleluia nativitas

1+2 = 3 = Rhythmic Modes
- Rhythm previously (900-1100) considered in terms of long & short emphasis, but was not precise
- Rhythm began to be organized with a precise 2:1 ratio, “long” being twice as long as “short”
- 2+1 = 3, the Trinity, a deeply satisfying number from the point of view of Medieval theology
- Rhythm was still not precisely notated, but was indicated by the grouping of neumes and applying the proper Rhythmic Mode (next slide)
- This period of evolution (1100-1250) culminated in the notation of rhythm that is used today
The 6 Rhythmic Modes

I 2 1 (long-short)
II 1 2 (short-long)
III 3 1 2 (LONG-short-long)
IV 1 2 3
V 3
VI 1 1 1

Pitches to be performed were given by neumes; the grouping of the neumes would indicate "perform according to Mode II repeated 3 times" (for example).

Listening example - *Alle psallite–Alleluia*

*Alle psallite–Alleluia* (Anonymous, 13th c.)
- from England, known on the Continent
- use of rhythmic modes
- layered texts
- slowest (and lowest) line based on pre-existing fragment of chant
- a motet

**Alle psallite cum luya**

Transcribed into modern notation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triphras</th>
<th>Duphram</th>
<th>Tenor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alle psallite</td>
<td>Alle luya</td>
<td>Alle psallite cum luya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alle concrepando psallite</td>
<td>Alle luya</td>
<td>Alle concrepando psallite cum luya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alle corde voto Deo toto, psallite cum luya</td>
<td>Alle luya</td>
<td>Alle corde voto Deo toto, psallite cum luya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alleluya</td>
<td>Alle luya</td>
<td>Alleluya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Concrepando psallite cum corde voto Deo toto. Alleluya.)</td>
<td>(Resounding loudly sing with heart devoted all to God. Alleluya.)</td>
<td>(Resounding loudly sing with heart devoted all to God. Alleluya.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1250 – rhythmic notation

Franco proposes system of dots and stems that give relative durations to notes

Black note heads = long
White = short

(documents date from 1280; the system was probably in use already by that time)
(to the tune of "I got rhythm")

I got rhythm,
I got pitches.
In 1250,
who can notate anything more?

"white note" – Renaissance

Listening example – an Ars Nova motet

- use of DUPLICATE SUBDIVISION
- layered texts
- slowest (and lowest) line based on pre-existing fragment of chant
- a motet

Motet, 13th c.

- definition changes markedly over the centuries
- starting around 1220, the term denotes a curious musical form with 3 simultaneous layers of music & text:
  - chant (slow-moving), usually just a partial text or single word of the original chant text
  - added line with a Latin poem with religious content as text
  - added line with a secular love poem in French
- not a "listener-oriented" music! - a great example of the Medieval 'culture of the book' mindset

[MEDIEVAL/ARS NOVA] a comment about motets from a 14th century music theorist:

“This sort of song should not be performed before ordinary people because they do not notice its fine points nor enjoy listening to it, but before learned people and those on the lookout for subtleties in the arts.”
Some songs

Bernart de Ventadorn (c. 1150-1180), “Quan vei la lauet mover”

TEXTBOOK CD EXAMPLE 5, p. 179 – an example of courtly romantic love &
THE TROUBADOUR TRADITION
about 45 poems known, less than half with melodies

L’homme armé (The Armed Man) – folk tune used by later composers (not on reserve or textbook CD)

jongleurs (French)

“...a class of professional musicians who first appear about the tenth century: men and women wandering singly or in small groups from village to village, from castle to castle, gaining a precarious livelihood by singing, playing, performing tricks, and exhibiting trained animals – social outcasts often denied the protection of the laws and the sacraments of the Church.”

jongleurs

“People of no great wit, but with amazing memory, very industrious, and impudent beyond measure.”

Petrarch, Italian Renaissance poet

“Do the jongleurs have any hope? None. Because they are from the bottom of their hearts the ministers of Satan.”

Honorius d’Autun, a medieval cleric (d. c. 1151)

Ars Antiqua and **ARS NOVA**

- Ars Antiqua (old art)
- Ars NOVA (new art, new technique)
  - declared c. 1316 by composer Philippe de Vitry
  - based on new techniques of notating rhythm which **ALLOWED DUPLE SUBDIVISION OF THE BEAT**
  - greatly favored complexity, often hidden
- leading Ars Nova composer is Machaut . . .

**Guillaume de MACHAUT**

- 1st complete Mass (**Messe de Notre Dame**) setting by a composer; unusual 4-part texture, c. 1350
- works mostly secular, as opposed to sacred; typical for 14th c. composers
- widely famous in Europe in his lifetime (1300-1377)
Guillaume de MACHAUT
to the tune of the Beatles’ "Michelle")

Machaut, you know,
Wrote motets and songs so long ago,
Guillaume Machaut

Listening example – Machaut Mass
Machaut – from Messe de Notre Dame
Lush, 4-part texture
Harmonies unusual to our ear – pre-tonal isorhythm

Iso-what?
Isorhythm – the combination of a pattern of pitches and a pattern of durations & silences

THE POINT: The Medieval Mind is different!

Listening example – Machaut song
Machaut –
fixed song form Chanson Balladee, Dame a vous; a secular love poem from Machaut’s own 4300-line poem about courtly love; note the repetition and instruments.

Listening example – Machaut song
Machaut –
“My lady, to you without reservation I give my heart, thought, desire, body, and love . . .”

Maybe the medieval mind isn’t so different . . .

MUSIC OF ALL KINDS THAT WAS NOT NOTATED

NOTATED SECULAR MUSIC
NOTATED SACRED MUSIC

WHAT SURVIVED?
SUMMARY – Late Medieval & Gothic

- ARCHITECTURE – arches get the point; buttresses fly & glass is stained – emphasis on VERTICAL
- ART – dematerialized human figures moving towards realistic pictorial space
- MUSIC – POLYPHONY; rhythmic notation; Ars Nova
- IDEAS – life is bad, humans worse, God is great
- EVENTS – plague, weakening of Church authority

Anchor Dates

- 1000 - Musical STAFF used for CHANT in the EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD in MONASTERIES
- 1066 - BATTLE OF HASTINGS depicted in the BAYEUX TAPESTRY which we associate with FEUDALISM
- 1150 - GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE
- After 1300 - ARS NOVA

Up to dates?

480 BC - Start of CLASSICAL GREEK PERIOD
0 - Just after the start of the ROMAN EMPIRE; Caesar Augustus reigns
547 - SAN VITALE: sort of end of Early Christian period
c. 1000 - Guido describes the musical staff
c. 1150 - Gothic architecture defined & disseminated
After 1300 - Ars Nova