-- Medieval and Renaissance Music  Know terms in bold

Textbook CD

Track 4, Hildegard of Bingen; see p. 153 for translation. A wonderful text; this musical selection does not capture what is distinctive about her musical compositions.

Track 5, Bernart de Ventadorn, Quan vei la lauzeta mover; reconstruction of the troubadour tradition, p. 179. Upon hearing this, be able to identify it as representative of the troubadour tradition.

Notes for CD on reserve

Be able to identify genre, style, title, and composer (when applicable – the information will be in bold). (Parenthetical information is strictly for your additional enjoyment and will not be on the exam.)

[1] Gregorian Chant – Ave Maria. The text is a traditional prayer. (Sung by Chanticleer, an internationally known vocal ensemble based in the San Francisco Bay Area. CD title: Magnificat) 1:24

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesu. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

(Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, you are blessed among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.)

[2] another example of Gregorian chant, Kyrie XVII, demonstrating melismas, as on the last syllable of the word “Kyrie.” (Also performed by Chanticleer. CD title: Mysteria) 2:04

[3] example of a trope (or troping); Kyria christifera, not on exam. Newly written words are added to pre-existing melismatic lines. Very Medieval!

[4] Hildegard of Bingen, Columba aspexit, c.1150. An example of chant that is not Gregorian. This performance is accompanied by a drone, the constant sounding of a pitch or pitches. Large intervals; large or wide range (large ambitus). The text is a poem by Hildegard, recalling her vision of St. Maximinus celebrating Mass. (Performed by Gothic Voices with Emma Kirkby. CD title: A Feather on the Breath of God. This recording, made in 1981, was very influential in the contemporary performance of early music and in the revival of interest in Hildegard. The CD title is a phrase that Hildegard used to describe her soul.) 5:16

[5] simple organum – Breve dies hominis. This sort of organum was, at first, generally improvised (as it is on this recording, performed by Lionheart). The earliest POLYPHONY. Homorhythmic and notes moving against one long held tone. The opening phrases are song as monophonic chant; the organum (and, hence, polyphony) begins about 53 seconds into the recording. As indicated by the CD title, this recording reflects what scholars today think was the performance practice in early 13th century. (CD title: Paris 1200.) 2:46

[6] Viderunt Omnes by Perotin, 1198. (Notre Dame school). Triple subdivision, florid organum (many rapid notes over long drawn out tones of chant). Note how the contrasting vowel sounds differentiate each section. (This is a sort of micro-orchestration as it is based on changes of timbre.) Another example of early POLYPHONY. - slowest (and lowest) line based on pre-existing fragment of chant. (Early Music Consort of London) 11:47

[7] motet Alle Psallite cum luya–Alleluia (Anonymous, 13th c.) Rhythmic modes; considerable repetition on several levels; dash in title indicates 2 layers of text sung simultaneously. The drum part is not in the score; it is a historically-informed choice by the contemporary performers.

- from England, known on the Continent
- slowest (and lowest) line based on pre-existing fragment of chant; sings only the word “Alleluia”
- upper 2 voices sing: “Alle,” praise with “luya.”

“Alle,” praise loudly with “luya.”
“Alle,” with a full and devoted heart praise God with “luya.”

(Early Music Consort of London) 1:07

[8] ARS NOVA! Note duple subdivision. Possibly by Philippe de Vitry. (Motet La mesnie—J'ai fait noueuletement—Grant despit, 2 layers of text is from the Roman de Fauvel, a satirical poem of 3000 verses that attacks both Church and State.) (performed by the Early Music Consort of London, 1976, CD title: Music of the Gothic Era) 1:16

[9] Machaut – Kyrie from Messe de Notre Dame. Text is Greek: Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison. (Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy . . . ). (Hilliard Ensemble, recorded 1987) 5:46

[10] 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. (performed by Project Ars Nova, c. 1994) “My lady, to you without reservation I give my heart, thought, desire, body, and love . . . ” 3:16

RENAISSANCE

According to a theorist writing in 1475, no music worth hearing had been written before 1440 . . .

[11] motet -- Ave Maria . . . Virgo Serena, 1502, by Josquin (c. 1440-1521). Imitative counterpoint, LINE, careful handling of dissonance, equality of parts (none more important or tuneful than the others). The shift to triple time and then back to duple near the end of a work is characteristic of many Renaissance works. In this example, the “perfection” of triple meter is associated the virginity & perfection of Mary. Opening based on a chant fragment, but most of the work is freely invented anew. Be able to identify period – Renaissance. See textbook glossary for definition of counterpoint. (a.k.a. Josquin des Prez (as in the book), Josquin Desprez (as in some record stores)). (Performed by The Hilliard Ensemble.) See p. 211-213; ex. 8.34-35.

[12] dance -- La Bouree by Michael Praetorius (c. 1571-1621). Consistent timbre throughout the ensemble typical of Renaissance instrumental AND vocal music. Simple, predictable phrases – it’s courtly dance music. Selection chosen to represent growing importance of secular instrumental music. German composer of international fame; 1st book about instrumentation. Such dances are collected into suites (in the Baroque era) which evolve into symphonies (in the Classical era). (Performed by the Early Music Consort of London. Not in text.)


[14] madrigal – Thomas Weekles (c. 1575-1623), As Vesta Was Descending, 1601, word-painting; piece discussed p. 243-244. Also on textbook CD.

[15] The music of William Byrd (p. 243 & documentary shown in class), Catholic composer in Protestant Elizabethan England, vividly reflects the conflict of ideas experienced after the Reformation. Ave Verum Corpus is an excellent example; the cross relationships (chromatic alterations in different voices) seem to point to and emphasize key Catholic aspects of the text. Tallis Scholars, Playing Elizabeth’s Tune (DVD).

NOT ON EXAM:

[16] Ave Maria, Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611, Spanish contemporary of Palestrina). 8-part (double choir) texture. The shift to triple time and then back to duple near the end of a work is characteristic of many Renaissance works. The sung text is the same as the Ave Maria as given in the Medieval handout, but can you tell? In other words, it is hard to follow – note how text is overwhelmed at times by the 8-part texture. Such complex textures overwhelming the text led to criticism of polyphonic music in the Church. Not in textbook. (St Clement’s Choir, Philadelphia. CD title: Music of Tomás Luis de Victoria. Note that this is a mixed choir, meaning that it combines male & female voices.)

on textbook CD: Kyrie from Mass of Pope Marcellus (Missa Papae Marcelli, date of composition, 1562-3; date given in text, 1567, is probably incorrect) by Palestrina (c.1525-1594). See p. 244-245; this mass is mentioned in text, but is not the one in the example (9.24). A 6-part texture; music of the Counter-Reformation, very conservative in style. The epitome of 16th-century counterpoint. Note forward rhythmic drive.