

APPENDIX

Music of the World

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A.1 INTRODUCTION

As we have seen, music in Western culture is part of a rich tradition beginning with the Greeks, developing through the music of the church, and eventually resulting in the music we hear today. But have you ever considered what music is like in non-Western cultures? As with Western music, the various cultures across the globe have their own traditions, musical styles, practices, and rules that are often vastly different from the music many Americans are used to.

The following is a sample of many different music styles from all over the world. This review will be a very cursory introduction to only a handful of the thousands of musical styles that exist across the globe with which you may not be familiar. Bear in mind that many of these musical traditions date back hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of years and deserve further exploration outside of the context of this textbook. Beyond these examples, much more music is available to you through YouTube. In this review, we will primarily focus on the musical elements of melody, rhythm, instrumentation, and harmony, and describe the processes that different societies use to combine these elements.

A.2 IMPORTANT TERMS

- cajun
- celts
- bodhran
- raga
- tala
- sitar
- tabla
- pentatonic scale
- koto
- shakuhachi
- mbira
- djembe
- tamtam

A.3 NORTH AMERICA

A.3.1 Native American Music

Throughout history, certain cultures have had more opportunity to develop music than others. Often, the effort required to hunt, gather, or raise food has been all encompassing and has left little time for leisure or artistic pursuits. Therefore, music was only performed when the people thought it was necessary or important. Like many other cultures, traditional Native American music was normally performed as a part of important rituals meant to ask specific deities for various benefits, such as increased health, successful hunting, success in war, or rain; or to contact the spirit world for other reasons.

Most traditional Native American music was vocal music. It was used to tell a story, express a wish, or to describe an emotional state, and it was almost always accompanied with percussion. The percussion instruments used were normally drums made of stretched animal skins, rattles, and, later, metallic bells. Vertical flutes and panpipes were sometimes used to accompany love songs. These songs had a small range with a few different pitches and were quite often based on the **pentatonic scale**, a five-note scale used in many different cultures. Most Native American music was not harmonized and did not have any form of harmonic accompaniment.

Listen to the Native American music linked below. Listen for the drums and the limited range of the voices and their use of the pentatonic scale.

Native American Line Dance Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txFWJbHgcMM>

A.3.2 Tejano (TexMex)

Tejano or TexMex music is a blend of Central American and European influences. TexMex specifically refers to the music that grew out of both Mexico and Texas. It is dance oriented and uses European scales and chords. Instruments often include upright bass, drums, guitar, accordion, and solo vocal.

TexMex Music – *Ay te Dejo en San Antonio* – (Flaco Jimenez)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z--fJolAWQg>



Figure A.1 | Chasi, Bonito's Son, an Apache musician playing the "Apache fiddle"

Author | A. Frank Randall

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The following example is based on the Western European dance called the waltz. It is in three-quarter time, with the emphasis on beat one. Listen for the ukulele, trumpet, drums, guitar, vocal harmony, and the trombone.

TexMex Music – *Arboles de la Barranca* – (El Coyote)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNjXv4rajHE>

A.3.3 Southwest Louisiana

Cajun Zydeco is another form of American folk music that grew from European roots. This style was developed by Cajuns, the descendants of Acadian immigrants (French speakers from Acadia), who settled in the swamps of Southwest Louisiana, later to be called Acadiana. Almost all Zydeco music is vocal and is almost always designed for dancing. Instruments were traditionally acoustic since electricity is not easy to come by in Acadiana! Instruments include upright bass (later the electric bass), drums, accordion, fiddle, guitar, and solo vocal. The words are almost always in French, the language of the Cajun settlers.



Figure A.2 | Clifton Chenier on accordion, brother Cleveland on washboard and John Hart on tenor saxophone

Author | User "Bozotexino"

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Zydeco Music - *Tu le Ton Son Ton* - Clifton Chenier

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiexKQt8FyQ>

A.4 EUROPEAN FOLK MUSIC

A.4.1 France

Much of European folk music is largely built around song forms that are tied together by the lyrics of the songs. In the following example of folk music from France you may notice that the scales and instruments sound a little like those of our modern American folk music (except for the language). The development and use of major and minor scales is what gives our Western European music its distinctive sound.

French Folk Song - *M'en Suis Allé Aux Noces* 1980s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrBm7RYRdoE>

A.4.2 Celtic (Ancient Scotland, Ireland, and a small portion of France)

The **Celts** refers to a diverse group of people who lived during the Iron Ages in what is now Great Britain and Western Europe. In addition to speaking Celtic languages, these people shared a common musical heritage, one that is still used by their descendants. Celtic music is often recognized by its instrumentation, which combines bagpipes, various stringed instruments, and drums. Celtic music also has a distinctive melodic style, with wide leaps that outline the harmonies of the song, creating a feeling of jubilation. This Celtic example is a modern version of a traditional dance song. However, once you get past 0:50 on the counter, it becomes much more traditional with flute and **bodhrans** (stretched skin drums.)



Figure A.3 | Rapalje
Author | Sander van der Wel
Source | Wikimedia Commons
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Celtic folk music - Cry of the Celts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlHmGy4Aq_g

Many modern performance groups focus on music from the Celtic tradition, as can be heard in the example below.

Modern Celtic Ensemble (Celtic Woman) - Téir Abhaile Riú

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjyljC5fSeU>

A.4.3 Norway

Norway has a centuries-long history of vocal and instrumental music. Indeed, many of their folk ballads and songs date back to the Middle Ages; often, they describe the dramatic tales of historical figures from that period. The Norwegian folk music linked below is one such Norwegian ballad of the Middle Ages era. It uses European sounding scales as well as several wind instruments.

Norwegian folk music - Kalenda Maya - Heming og Gygri

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwWojrmq05c>

Figure A.3 | A Hardanger fiddle made by Knut Gunnarsson Helland
Author | Frode Inge Helland
Source | Wikimedia Commons
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A.4.4 Russia

Russian folk music uses what we would call the modern minor scale. Listen to how distinctive this Russian folk music sounds as its slow introduction gradually gives way to faster and faster verses, until it reaches a very fast and exciting dance-like conclusion.

Russian folk music - Hej sokoly - Krzysztof

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCXcfDli3yo>

A.4.5 Balkan Peninsula (Southeastern Europe)

The region of Southeastern Europe that includes Hungary, Romania, Macedonia, Turkey, and several other countries, is called the Balkans. This region has a rich musical heritage with many fast, exciting, dance-like songs using accordion and clarinet. Balkan music is unique in that it incorporates complex rhythms that we do not often hear in Western music.

Balkan Traditional Music - Mirjan Hasi, Clarinet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eczarul7300>

A.5 ASIAN MUSIC

A.5.1 India

Indian classical music is almost always performed in small groups. Indian musicians do not use scales and harmony like we do in our Western music. Their music includes improvisation and is based on rhythmic melodic patterns. The example here is a traditional improvised Indian piece that employs the stringed **sitar** and the **tabla** drum.

Indian Music - Ravi Shankar - *Raga Ramkali*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCJkjhNms0I>

SIDEBAR:

The melodic patterns Indian music uses are called **raga**, which are more of a shape than a scale. The rhythmic patterns are called **tala**, which are established patterns that repeat over and over. Often the raga and tala don't line up exactly, so there never seem to be any repeated sections. Indian musicians use a large stringed instrument called a sitar, and stretched skin drums called tabla.



Figure A.5 | Russian Boy with Balalaika

Author | Wilhelm

Amandus Beer

Source | Wikimedia

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Figure A.6 | Gadulka
Bulgarian knee-violin
with bow

Author | User "Arent"

Source | Wikimedia

Commons

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Figure A.7 | A Lady
Playing the Tanpura

Author | User "Arent"

Source | Wikimedia

Commons

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A.5.2 Japan

Like Indian music, Japanese music is also performed in small groups and uses pentatonic scales, but that is where the similarities end. Japanese folk music is not improvised. Rather, it is composed and is almost always built around lyrics that are either borrowed from poetry or composed for the specific song. The music is made up of regular rhythms, but there is no intentional harmony as in Western music. Japanese musicians pride themselves on memorizing each composition and then performing it exactly the same way every time. They use a large thirteen string instrument called a **koto**, and an end blown flute called a **shakuhachi**.

Listen for the koto and the shakuhachi in the traditional Japanese selection below.

Japanese Music – *Tsuki no shizuku* (Played on Koto and Shakuhachi)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IITn9XHXT8k>



Figure A.8 | Japanese folkwoman playing shamisen
Author | Christopher Wagner
Source | Wikimedia Commons
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A.5.3 China

At first glance, Chinese Opera is not that different than Italian Opera in that it is a musical drama incorporating costumes, song, and dance. However, a closer examination reveals that the music of Chinese Opera differs greatly from Western opera. Chinese Opera singing style often involves singing melodies derived from the pentatonic scale. Also, Chinese singers can be heard sliding between notes of the melody, giving the music a “slippery” quality that is unique to Eastern Music. Give this piece a listen, and you will hear this quality!



Figure A.9 | Sichuan Opera in Chengdu
Author | User “Zoharby”
Source | Wikimedia Commons
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Chinese Opera

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPYKQhsx_HQ

A.5.4 Indonesia

When we think of a gong, we often envision a large brass thing that looks like a giant cymbal. True, gongs come in many different sizes and can actually be used to

play melodies but this often envisioned image is one variant of a gong named **tamtam**. In Indonesia, gongs have been used in traditional music for centuries. The following video shows musicians using many different sized gongs while performing Indonesian music.



Figure A.10 | Gamelan ceremonial Munggang, Kraton Surakarta

Author | Giovanni Sciarrino

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Indonesian Gong Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzOlx-cohuta>

A.6 SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC

Folk music in many parts of South America is similar to folk music of Native Americans as well as folk music from parts of Africa. Stretched skin drums, wooden flutes, rattles, pentatonic sounding scales, and vocal music are all popular in this region. The first example is a modern performance of traditional Aztec music and the second is a modern adaptation a traditional Inca song Compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the pieces.

Aztec Music of Mexico

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiFljznibKo>

Inca Music - *Ecos del tiempo*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49WVkJrWTDg>

A.7 CARRIBEAN POP MUSIC

Numerous cultures currently thrive in the Caribbean. One of the more popular styles of music in the Caribbean is called **Reggae** and is from the island of Jamaica. The following example by Bob Marley combines American electronic instruments with the distinctive reggae beat, which involves the guitar playing staccato chords of the off beats of each measure.

Reggae Music - *Get Up, Stand Up* - Bob Marley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuMlHdxiIZ8>

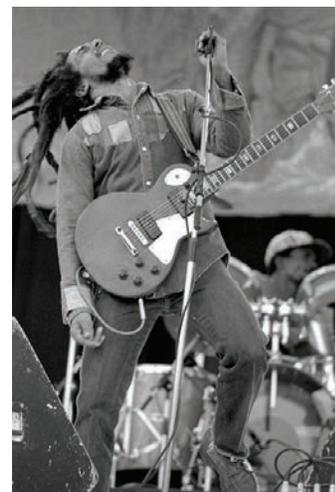


Figure A.11 | Bob Marley

Author | Eddie Mallin

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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A.8 AFRICAN FOLK MUSIC

A.8.1 Zimbabwe

The **mbira** is an integral part of the folk music of Zimbabwe. It is a common small keyboard type instrument that is played by the performers' thumbs. Its metal reeds are tuned to different pitches, and it is usually used to accompany vocalists.

Zimbabwe - Mbira music at Copacabana Harare Zimbabwe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2cIOdnG-Fw>

A.8.2 Senegal

Senegal is a country located on the far coast of West Africa. In Senegal, the traditional stretched skin drum is called the **djembe**. By way of contrast, modern **Senegalese** music shows an American influence; synthesizer sounds, drum set, and electric bass and guitar are often used.

Senegal - Traditional djembe drummers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfXnuG6X7cw>

Senegal Music - Modern – (Bakane featuring Viviane Yaya Diere)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJCh9eMnlX-M&list=PLfoK9L3f5inQOQPFEW_S8ZXd7Mf89YK-CL&index=2



Figure A.12 | Mbira Dzavadzimu

Author | Alex Weeks

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Figure A.13 | Djembe

Author | Djembe Art

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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A.9 GLOSSARY

Bodhran - a traditional Celtic open-ended frame drum with a low, resonant sound

Cajun Zydeco – American folk music developed by Cajuns, the descendants of Acadian immigrants (French speakers from Acadia), who settled in the swamps of Southwest Louisiana.

Celts – a term referring to a diverse group of people who lived during the Iron Ages in what is now Great Britain and Western Europe.

Raga - a pattern of notes that used as the basis for improvisation in Indian classical music

Tala – a repeating rhythmic pattern that forms the rhythmic foundation for Indian classical music

Sitar – a plucked string instrument used in Indian classical music.

Tabla - a pair of hand drums used in Indian classical music

Pentatonic scale – a five-note scale used in traditional music throughout the world

Koto – a traditional Japanese string instrument with thirteen strings over movable bridges

Shakuhachi – a bamboo flute used in traditional Japanese music

Mbira – an African thumb piano

Djembe – a hand drum used in the music of West Africa

Tamtam – a large metal gong

GLOSSARY

A cappella – vocal music without instrumental accompaniment

Accidentals – notes that are not normally found in a given key

Acoustical Engineer – a person who works in the area of acoustic technology

Acoustician – a person who studies the theory and science of acoustics

Acoustics – the study of how sound behaves in physical spaces

Amplitude – refers to how high the wave form appears to vibrate above zero when seen on an oscilloscope; louder sounds create higher oscilloscope amplitude readings

Anthem – a musical composition of celebration, usually used as a symbol for a distinct group, particularly the national anthems of countries. Originally, and in music theory and religious contexts, it also refers more particularly to short sacred choral work and still more particularly to a specific form of Anglican

Antiphonal – A genre of sacred music featuring multiple choirs, or a choir that has been divided into different groups that can perform call and responses.

Aria – Homophonic compositions featuring a solo singer over orchestral accompaniment. homophonic compositions featuring a solo singer over accompaniment. Arias are very melodic primarily utilized in operas, cantatas, and oratorios.

Art song – a composition setting a poem to music, generally for one solo voice and piano accompaniment; in German, a Lied

Atonal – Music that seeks to avoid both the traditional rules of harmony and the use of chords or scales that provide a tonal center

Ballads – a song form used often in folk music, which is used to tell a story that usually contains a moral or lesson.

Bar – see measure

Basso continuo – continuous realization of harmony throughout a musical piece, usually by a harpsichord and/or cello. The Basso continuo provides a framework/template for harmonic accompaniments.

- Beat** – the basic unit of time in music
- Bebop** - a style of small group jazz developed in the late 1940s, which featured fast moving harmonies, angular melodies, and highly complex rhythms
- Big Band** – large jazz ensembles (15-20 members) popular in the 1930's and 1940's. The term "Big Band" also refers to the era in which these bands were popular.
- Bluegrass** – a variation of country music featuring fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bass guitar, and the five-string banjo that developed largely in the Appalachian region
- Blues** – a style of music that, at the turn of the twentieth century, began to form out of African American work songs, field hollers, and spirituals. Today, the word "blues" is used loosely and can refer to feeling sad or down, to any song played in a bluesy style, or more specifically, to a song that follows a blues form, which is a twelve-bar strophic song form.
- Bodhran** - a traditional Celtic open-ended frame drum with a low, resonant sound
- Brass** – instruments traditionally made of brass or another metal (and thus often producing a "bright" or "brassy" tone) whose sound is generated by blowing into a mouthpiece that is attached to a coiled tube
- Broadway Musical** – a style of Musical Theatre, which integrated a cohesive plot with songs and dances that advanced that plot. Broadway specifically refers to the street of the same name in New York City that became known for this style.
- Cadence** – the ending of a musical phrase providing a sense of closure, often through the use of one chord that resolves to another
- Cadenza** – section of a concerto in which the soloist plays alone without the orchestra in an improvisatory style
- Cajun Zydeco** – American folk music developed by Cajuns, the descendants of Acadian immigrants (French speakers from Acadia), who settled in the swamps of Southwest Louisiana.
- Cantata** – A composite major church choir form from the Baroque period that involves soloist, choir, and orchestra. Cantatas have several movements and last for fifteen to thirty minutes. Cantatas are performed without staging but they utilize narration, arias, recitatives, choruses and smaller vocal ensembles.
- Celts** – a term referring to a diverse group of people who lived during the Iron Ages in what is now Great Britain and Western Europe.
- Chamber music** – music--such as art songs, piano character pieces, and string quartets--primarily performed in small performing spaces, often for personal entertainment
- Chanson** – is in general any lyric-driven French song, usually polyphonic and secular. A singer specializing in chansons is known as a "chanteur" (male) or "chanteuse" (female); a collection of chansons, especially from the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, is also known as a chansonnier.
- Chant** – text set to a melody written in monophonic texture with un-notated rhythms typically used in religious worship

- Chapel Master** – Director of music, secular and sacred, for the courts' official functions and entertainment.
- Children's Song** – a type of folk song designed to teach a simple lesson. They are often simple to sing and easy to remember.
- Chorale** – Originally the result from the German protestant church's reformation, the chorale is the hymn (tune) is a four part homophonic work that is sung by the church congregation. Chorales became the foundation for several cantatas and chorale preludes for organ.
- Chord** – the simultaneous sounding of three or more pitches; like intervals, chords can be consonant or dissonant
- Chord Progression** – a series of chords
- Chromatic** – musical pitches which move up or down by successive half-steps
- Chromaticism** – a style of composition which uses notes that are not a part of the predominant scale of a composition or one of its sections.
- Church Music** – Sacred music written for performance in church, or any musical setting of ecclesiastical liturgy, or music set to words expressing propositions of a sacred nature, such as a hymn. Church Music Director is a position responsible the musical aspects of the church's activities.
- Coda** – optional final section of a movement that reasserts the home key of the movement and provides a sense of conclusion
- Composition** – the process whereby a musician notates musical ideas using a system of symbols or using some other form of recording
- Concerto** – a composition for a soloist or a group of soloists and an orchestra, generally in three movements with fast, slow, and fast tempos, respectively
- Concerto Grosso** – a musical composition for a small group of soloists and orchestra.
- Conductor** – individual who leads an orchestra
- Conjunct** – a melody that moves mostly by step, in a smooth manner
- Consonant** – (adjective) term used to describe intervals and chords that tend to sound sweet and pleasing to our ears; consonance (noun), as opposed to dissonance, is stable and needs no resolution.
- Consort** – A renaissance consort is a group of renaissance instrumentalists playing together. A whole consort is an ensemble performing with instruments from the same family. A broken consort is an ensemble comprised of instruments from more than one family.
- Contemporary Country** – a mixture of rock rhythm sections and a singer singing with a country accent about many of the same topics that traditional country singers have used over the decades.
- Contemporary R&B** – generally refers to music with jazz, gospel, and funk roots that uses electronic instruments, drums, horns, and vocals.

- Cori spezzati** – A divided choir that is utilized to perform in a polychoral style—able to perform “call and response”. Large churches were designed with multiple choir seating sections to perform such works.
- Counter-Reformation** – The preservation movement or “Counter-Reformation” against the protestant reform led to the development of the Jesuit order (1540) and the later assembling of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which considered issues of the church’s authority and organizational structure.
- Country Music** – a term describing a broad variety of musical styles including Bluegrass, Hillbilly Music, and Contemporary Country. Generally speaking, most types of music that fall under this category originated in the American South (although it also encompasses Western Swing and cowboy songs) and features a singing style with a distinctly rural southern accent, as well as an instrumentation that favors string instruments such as the banjo, guitar, or fiddle.
- Courtly Love** – love for a beloved, without any concern for whether or not the love will be returned, called “courtly” because it was praised by those participating in medieval courts
- Cycles per Second (cps)** – a definition of frequency of vibration; replaced by Hertz in 1960
- Da capo** – instruction—commonly found at the end of the B section or Trio of a Minuet and Trio, to return to the “head” or first section, generally resulting in an A - B - A form
- Dance Music** – music written for dancing. The instrumentation of various types of folk dance music varies with the style.
- Dance Music [WM1]** – is music composed specifically to facilitate or accompany dancing
- Development** – the middle section of a sonata-form movement in which the themes and key areas introduced in the exposition are developed;
- Disjunct** – a melody with wide leaps and rapid changes in direction
- Dissonant** – (adjective) intervals and chords that tend to sound harsh to our ears; dissonance (noun) is often used to create tension and instability, and the interplay between dissonance and consonance provides a sense of harmonic and melodic motion in music
- Dixieland** – an early form of jazz developed in New Orleans during the turn of the twentieth century featuring syncopated rhythms, improvised solos and harmonies, as well as a common instrumentation that included trumpet, clarinet, saxophone, trombone, tuba, banjo, piano, guitar, and drums.
- Djembe** – a hand drum used in the music of West Africa
- Double-exposition form** – form of the first movement of a Classical period concerto that combines the exposition, development, and recapitulation of sonata form with the ritornello form used for the first movements of Baroque concertos; also called first-movement concerto form
- Drone** – a sustained pitch or pitches often found in music of the middle ages or earlier and in folk music

- Dynamic** – the variation in the volume of musical sound (the amplitude of the sound waves)
- Elektronische Musik*** - (German term meaning “electronic music”) Music composed by manipulating only electronically-produced sounds (not recorded sounds.)
- Equalization (EQ)** – the process of raising or lowering different frequencies of sound, either in a recording, or within a tone (overtones)
- Exposition** – first section of a sonata form movement, in which the themes and key areas of the movement are introduced; the section normally modulates from the home key to a different key
- Expressionism** – Style of composition where composers intentionally use atonality. Arnold Schoenberg devised a system of composing using twelve tones. His students Alban Berg and Anton Webern composed extensively in this twelve-tone style.
- Folk Music** – a term used to describe a wide variety of musical forms that developed within different cultures, often for different reasons. Folk music is often passed down not through written music, but orally from one generation to another.
- Form** – the structure of the phrases and sections within a musical composition (Does it repeat?)
- Frequency** – how quickly or slowly a medium (solid, liquid, gas) vibrates and produces a sound
- Frets** – is a raised strip on the neck of a stringed instrument. Frets usually extend across the full width of the neck and divide the string into half steps for most western musical instruments. Most guitars have frets.
- Fugue** – perfected by J.S. Bach during the baroque period, fugues are a form written in an imitative contrapuntal style in multiple parts. Fugues are based upon their original tune that is called the subject. The subject is then imitated and overlapped by the other parts by the called the answer, countersubject, stretto, and episode
- Fundamental Pitch** – the lowest pitch in the harmonic series
- Galliard** – was a form of Renaissance dance and music popular all over Europe in the 16th century.
- Guido of Arezzo** – a medieval music theorist who developed a system of lines and spaces that enabled musicians to notate the specific notes in a melody
- Harmony** – any simultaneous combination of tones and the rules governing those combinations (the way a melody is accompanied is also another way to define harmony)
- Hemiola** – the momentary shifting from a duple to a triple feel or vice versa
- Hertz (Hz)** – the unit of frequency defined as one cycle per second and named after Heinrich Hertz (1857-1894) in 1960
- Hillbilly Music** – an early form of country music, Hillbilly Music was an alternative to the jazz and dance music of the 1920s and was portrayed as wholesome music of the “good old days.”

- Homophonic** – musical texture comprised of one melodic line accompanied by chords
- Homophony** – Music where the melody is supported by a chordal accompaniment that moves in the same rhythm. Homophony is generally the opposite of polyphony where the voices imitative and weave with each other.
- Honky Tonk Music** – a country combo style that became quite popular in the 1940s and 1950s. Originally performed in saloons known as “honky tonks,” many of the songs dealt with subjects associated with honky tonks such as infidelity and drinking.
- Hymn** – religious song most generally having multiple strophes of the same number and length of lines and using strophic form
- Idée fixe*** – a famous melody that appears in all five movements of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* to represent the beloved from the program
- Impressionism** – music composed based on the composer’s impression of an object, concept, or event. This style included the use of chromaticism, whole-tone scales and chords, exotic scales, new chord progressions, and more complex rhythms
- Improvisation** – the process whereby musicians create music spontaneously using the elements of music as building blocks
- Instrumentation** – the instruments comprising a musical group (including the human voice)
- Interval** – the distance in pitch between any two notes
- Jig** – is the accompanying dance tune for an energetic folk dance usually in a compound meter.
- Key** – the set of pitches on which a composition is based
- Keyboard** – instruments that are characterized by keyboards, such as the piano, organ, vibraphone, and accordion
- Koto** – a traditional Japanese string instrument with thirteen strings over movable bridges
- Laptop orchestra** – an ensemble formed by linking laptop computers and speakers together to generate live and/or recorded performances using both synthesized and pre-recorded sounds
- Leitmotiv** – “guiding motive” associated with a specific character, theme, or locale in a music drama, and first associated with the music of Richard Wagner
- Libretto** – The text or actual words of an opera, musical, cantata or oratorio, written or compiled by a librettist
- Madrigal** – a musical piece for several solo voices set to a short poem. They originated in Italy around 1520. Most madrigals were about love.
- Mass** – Catholic celebration of the Eucharist consisting of liturgical texts set to music by composers starting in the middle ages
- mazurka** – a Polish dance in triple time, with emphasis on beat 2
- Mbira** – an African thumb piano
- Measure** – a unit of time that contains a specific number of beats defined by the meter/time signature

- Melisma** – More than one note sung during one syllable of the text. The melismatic style was used extensively in gregorian chant.
- Melody** – a succession of single tones in musical compositions
- Meter** – the way in which the beats are grouped together in a piece
- Minstrel Show** – an American form of theatre developed in the nineteenth century and featuring white performers in blackface performing in a variety show, which depicted black characters as happy participants in romanticized versions of the American slave south.
- Minuet and trio form** – form based on the minuet dance that consists of a Minuet (A), then a contrasting Trio (B), followed by a return to the Minuet (A)
- Monophonic** – musical texture comprised of one melodic line; a melodic line may be sung by one person or 100 people
- Motet** – is a highly varied sacred choral musical composition. The motet was one of the pre-eminent polyphonic forms of Renaissance music.
- Motive** – the smallest musical unit of a melody, generally a single rhythm of two or three pitches
- Motor rhythm** – The constant repeated subdivision of the beat. The motor rhythm provide unity and stability within the musical piece.
- Movement** – a subsection or independent section/piece of a larger work. (Ex. A symphony is divided into movements.)
- Music** – sound and silence organized in time
- Musical Theatre** – a type of dramatic performance that tells a story through dialogue, with singing and dancing added to support and move the plot along.
- Musique Concrète** – a type of electro-acoustic music that uses both electronically produced sounds (like synthesizers) and recorded natural sounds (like instruments, voices, and sounds from nature)
- Nationalism** – pride in one's nation or cultural identity, often expressed in art, literature, and music
- Neoclassicism** – A musical movement that arose in the twentieth century as a reaction against romanticism and which sought to recapture classical ideals like symmetry, order, and restraint. Stravinsky's music for the ballet Pulcinella (1920) is a major early neoclassical composition.
- New Orleans Jazz** – (see Dixieland)
- Noise** – a disorganized sound with no observable pitch
- Octave** – the distance between two musical pitches where the higher pitch vibrates exactly twice as many times per second as the lower
- Opera** – A staged musical drama for voices and orchestra. Operas are fully blocked and performed in costume with sets. Operas utilize arias and recitatives without no narration.

- Opera Buffa** – comic style of opera made famous by Mozart
- Opera Seria** – serious style of eighteenth-century opera made famous by Handel generally features mythology or high-born characters and plots
- Operetta** – a “light opera” developed in the nineteenth century that required classically trained singers, but featured less complex music than a typical opera.
- Oratorio** – a major work with religious or contemplative character for solo voices, chorus and orchestra. Oratorios do not utilize blocking, costumes, or scenery.
- Oscilloscope** - an electronic device that displays a visual representation of the different types of sound waves
- Overtones** (also known as harmonics) – a musical tone heard above a fundamental pitch
- Partials** – the sounds of different frequency that naturally occur above a fundamental (primary) tone
- Pavanne** – is a slow processional dance common in Europe during the 16th century Renaissance.
- Pentatonic scale** – a five-note scale used in traditional music throughout the world
- Percussion** – instruments that are typically hit or struck by the hand, with sticks, or with hammers or that are shaken or rubbed by hand
- Performing Forces** – see instrumentation
- Phrase** – smaller sub-sections of a melody
- Pitch** – a tone that is composed of an organized sound wave
- Pizzicato** – the plucking of a bowed string instrument such as the violin, producing a percussive effect
- Plagal cadence** – ending of a composition that consists of a IV chord moving to a I chord and most often associated with church music
- Polychoral (style)** – a compositional style where the chorus/choir is divided into two or more groups that can perform with or independently for each other (see antiphonal).
- Polyphony** – musical texture that simultaneously features two or more relatively independent and important melodic lines
- Polyrhythm** – two or more different rhythms played at the same time
- Polytonality** – a compositional technique where two or more instruments or voices in different keys (tonal centers) perform together at the same time
- Primitivism** – A musical movement that arose as a reaction against musical impressionism and which focused on the use of strong rhythmic pulse, distinct musical ideas, and a tonality based on one central tone as a unifying factor instead of a central key or chord progression.
- Program music** – instrumental music intended to represent a something extra musical such as a poem, narrative, drama, or picture, or the ideas, images, or sounds therein.

Program symphony – program music in the form of a multi-movement composition for orchestra

Protest Song – a type of folk song written to directly, or by suggestion, voice complaints about some injustice.

Raga - a pattern of notes that used as the basis for improvisation in Indian classical music

Ragtime – a musical genre developed near the turn of the twentieth century that featured syncopated rhythms. The style became nationally popular after being widely published as sheet music.

Range – the number of pitches, expressed as an intervallic distance

Rap – a form of spoken word delivered over a beat. It can be improvised or written out in advance.

Recapitulation – third and final second of a sonata-form movement, in which the themes of the exposition return, now in the home key of the movement

Recitative – An operatic number using speech-like melodies and rhythms, performing using a flexible tempo, to sparse accompaniment, most often provided by the basso continuo. Recitatives are often performed between arias and have texts that tend to be descriptive and narrating.

Reformation – was a succession and division from the practices of the Roman Catholic Church initiated by Martin Luther. Led to the development of Protestant churches.

Refrain – a repeating musical section, generally also with repeated text; sometimes called a “chorus”

Register – the low, medium, and high sections of an instrument or vocal range

Rhythm – the way the music is organized in respect to time

Rhythm According to the Text – rhythm that follows the rhythm of the text and is notated

Rhythm and Blues (R&B) – a term originally referring to music recorded by black musicians and intended for use by the African American community. The term has evolved throughout the years and encompasses several different musical styles, including soul, funk and now contemporary R&B.

Ritornello Form – repeated unifying sections founds in between the solo sections of a concerto grosso

Rock and Roll – a style of music that grew out of Rhythm and Blues and came into prominence during the 1950s. The style features a strong backbeat and often features electric guitar, bass and drums. The style is now known as “rock” has spawned many subgenres.

Rondo – instrumental form consisting of the alternation of a refrain “A” with contrasting sections (“B,” “C,” “D,” etc.). Rondos are often the final movements of string quartets, classical symphonies, concerti, and sonata (instrumental solos).

- Rubato** – the momentary speeding up or slowing down of the tempo within a melody line, literally “robbing” time from one note to give to another
- Sampling** – a technique in which a clip of a preexisting song is isolated and looped, often as a background for a rapper
- Scale** – a series of pitches, ordered by the interval between its notes
- Scena ad aria** – nineteenth-century operatic combination of a recitative (“scena”) plus aria; here the aria generally has two parts, a slower cantabile and a faster cabaletta
- Scherzo** – form that prominently replaced the minuet in symphonies and strings quartets of the nineteenth century; like the minuet, scherzos are ternary forms and have a triple feel, although they tend to be somewhat faster in tempo than the minuet.
- Scratching** – the technique of improvising a rhythmic solo on one turntable over a beat
- Sectional form** – A piece where distinct sections can be identified due to changes in texture and other musical compositional techniques.
- Sequence** – a repetition of a motive or phrase at a different pitch level
- Serialism** – composing music using a series of values assigned to musical elements such as pitch, duration, dynamics, and instrumentation. Arnold Schoenberg’s 12-tone technique is one of the most important examples of serialism.
- Seventh Chord** – a chord that has four pitches stacked in intervals of thirds
- Shakuhachi** – a bamboo flute used in traditional Japanese music
- Sine Wave** – the simplest sound wave that occurs in nature. A pure sine wave contains no partials and is perfectly smooth and rounded in appearance on an oscilloscope.
- Sitar** – a plucked string instrument used in Indian classical music.
- Solo** – A musical piece that features on musician either with or without accompaniment. In larger scored piece, the solo is the main part that should be brought out while performing.
- Sonata** – composition for a solo instrument or an instrument with piano accompaniment, generally in three movements with fast, slow, and fast tempos, respectively
- Sonata form** – a form often found in the first and last movements of sonatas, symphonies, and string quartets, consisting of three parts – exposition, development, and recapitulation
- Song** – a composition sung by voice(s)
- Song cycle** – a collection of art songs, unified by poet, narrative, musical style, or composer
- Sound** – the mechanical movement of an audible pressure wave through a solid, liquid, or gas
- Sound Waves** – longitudinal waves (compression and rarefaction waves) that travel through a solid, liquid, or gas
- Step** – the distance between adjacent notes in a musical scale
- String quartet** – performing ensemble consisting of two violinists, one violinist, and one cellist that plays compositions called string quartets, compositions generally in four movements

- Strings** – instruments whose sound is produced by setting strings in motion
- Strophe** – section of a poem or lyric text generally of a set number of lines and line length; a text may have multiple strophes
- Strophic** – a composition that uses the repetition of the same music (“strophes”) for successive texts
- Stylized dance** – piece of music that sounds like a dance but that was not designed for dancing. In other words, a stylized dance uses the distinct characteristics of a dance and would be recognized as sounding like that dance but might be too long or too complicated to be danced to.
- Subject** – The main melody or tune of a fugue.
- Suite** – A multi-movement instrumental musical composition of baroque music—usually in dance form.
- Swing** – a term used to describe the rhythmic bounce that characterizes the jazz style. The term can also refer to the big band music of the 1930s and 1940s.
- Syllabic** – music in which each syllable of a text is set to one musical note
- Symphonic poem** – program music in the form of a single-movement composition for orchestra; sometimes called a tone poem
- Symphony** – multi-movement composition for orchestra, often in four movements
- Syncopation** – the act of disrupting the normal pattern of accents in a piece of music by emphasizing what would normally be weak beats.
- Synthesizers** - instruments that electronically generate a wide variety of sounds. They can also modify electronic or naturally produced recorded sounds
- Tabla** - a pair of hand drums used in Indian classical music
- Tala** – a repeating rhythmic pattern that that forms the rhythmic foundation for Indian classical music
- Tamtam** – a large metal gong
- Tempo** –the speed at which the beat is played
- Ternary form** – describes a musical composition in three parts, most often featuring two similar sections, separated by a contrasting section and represented by the letters A – B – A.
- Terraced dynamics** – Used during the Baroque period, this is where the different sections have a piece of music have a set volume unique for that particular section. The next section may be written to be performed at another volume.
- Texture** – the ways in which musical lines of a musical piece interact
- Theme and Variation form** – the presentation of a theme and then variations upon it. The theme may be illustrated as A, with any number of variations following it – A’, A”, A””, A”””, etc.

Through-composed – a movement or composition consisting of new music throughout, without repetition of internal sections

Timbre – the tone color or tone quality of a sound

Time signature – the numeric notation at the beginning of a line of music where the top number indicates how many beats are in each measure and the bottom number indicates which type of note will represent that beat

Tonic – the most important pitch of a key; the note from which the other pitches are derived

Triad – a chord that has three pitches stacked in intervals of thirds

Tutti – Where the entire musical ensemble performs together as a whole as opposed to a soloist.

Twelve-Bar Blues – a twelve-bar musical form commonly found in American music

Twelve-tone Technique – Compositional technique developed by Arnold Schoenberg that derives musical elements such as pitch, duration, dynamics, and instrumentation from a randomly produced series of the twelve tones of the chromatic scale (the 12-tone row)

Verse and Refrain Form – a musical form (sometimes referred to as verse and chorus) in which one section of music is sung to all the verses and a different section of music is sung to the repeating refrain or chorus

Vocal – having to do with the human voice

Western Swing – a style of country music that developed in western cities and borrowed instruments from the dance band such as saxophones, trombones, trumpets, piano, bass, and drums.

Woodwinds – instruments traditionally made of wood whose sound is generated by forcing air through a tube, thus creating a vibrating air column

Word painting – was utilized by Renaissance composers to represent poetic images musically. For example, an ascending melodic line would portray the text “ascension to heaven.” Or a series of rapid notes would represent running.

Work Songs – a type of folk song devised to help groups of people perform physical work. The music usually uses the tempo of the work itself and was sung by lumberjacks, railroad workers, and prison chain gangs, among others.