



Mu 101: Introduction to Music

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Queensborough Community College

Fall 2019

Sections F2 (T 12:10-3), J4A (Th 3:10-6), M4 (Th 6:10-9)



Roundtable #1

- Activity prep: What can we do as a class to make sure everyone gets as much out of this activity as possible?
- Cody Delistraty, “The Beauty-Happiness Connection” (2014)
- Eerola, “Who Enjoys Listening to Sad Music and Why?” (2016)
- Follow-up writing: What can you learn from an in-person discussion like today’s that you can’t learn any other way?

Break

Johann Franz Hormannsperger,
Ballroom with Musicians (1736)



Recap

- Music of the Medieval (ca 400-1200) and Renaissance (1400-1600) periods
 - Music can communicate in several ways simultaneously: text, mood, symbolism
 - Much music that is available today from these time periods is religious
 - Attitudes about music changed over time, and the style (sound) of music changed too
- Rhythm (duration of notes)
- Thinking like a musicologist
 - Why bother?

Thinking like a musicologist, part 5: Categorizing music / Telling stories

How can we group these pieces of music together to better understand how they relate? Which are most similar to each other? What details are meaningful?

Anonymous, *Kyrie eleison*
(c. 5th century, Milan)



Pérotin (1160-1230),
Viderunt omnes (Paris)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-94),
Jesu, Rex Admirabilis (Rome)



William Byrd (1543-1623),
Fantasia for five viols (London)

Not everyone thinks like a musicologist



Richard Dawkins

@RichardDawkins

Follow

Listening to the lovely bells of Winchester, one of our great mediaeval cathedrals. So much nicer than the aggressive-sounding "Allahu Akhbar." Or is that just my cultural upbringing?



3:00 PM - 16 Jul 2018

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9.7K 3.5K 16K

Thinking like a musicologist, part 6:

Understanding biases and context

Church bells (Christian)

- Calls people to prayer
- Can be heard across long distances
- Specific to this faith
- May require special training or practice (e.g., a carillon)
- Not considered “music”—it’s not for entertainment or heard in other spaces where people of this culture listen to music

Adhan (Muslim)

- Calls people to prayer
- Can be heard across long distances
- Specific to this faith
- May require special training or practice (a person who does this task is called a muezzin)
- Not considered “music”—this faith doesn’t call these sounds musical

Recap: Other music of the Medieval and Renaissance periods

- Sacred music is used for religious worship and rituals
 - This is music that would have been sung during a Mass (high point of prayers during the week in Catholic faith)
- Secular music is anything that's not intended for religious purposes
 - This is music that likely would have been danced to



Johannes Ockeghem, *Missa prolationum*, Sanctus (ca. 1460-97)



Anonymous, "Entre Av'e Eva" from the *Cantiga de Santa Maria* (compiled in the 13th century)

Why dance?

- Fun, exercise
- Display of talent
- Celebration
- Ritual
- Cathartic escape from daily life
- Community-building and community-defining



Music in the French royal court at Versailles

- King Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715)
- King Louis XV (r. 1715-74)
- Versailles
 - *Château* (palace)
 - Home of the French royal family, 1682-1789
- Employed 120 musicians
- Music for dancing, concerts, balls, eating, and waking up



King Louis XIV of France, portrait
by Hyacinthe Rigaud, 1701

Music in the French royal court at Versailles

- Audiences for court events were often foreign dignitaries (princes, ambassadors)
- German noblemen hired French musicians as performers and teachers and composers'
- French was considered the most sophisticated language and culture in the Baroque era



Versailles

“Nothing marks the greatness of princes better than the buildings that compel the people to look on them with awe, and all posterity judges them by the superb palaces they have built during their lifetime.”

–Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-83),
minister of finance to Louis XIV



Fashion: from the French court



- (Red) high heels and culottes
 - King Louis XIV was an excellent dancer and had well-defined calf muscles which he liked to show off
 - Looking taller
- Wigs
 - Lice control
 - Louis XIII (r. 1610-43) went prematurely bald
 - Physical grandeur and expense

King Louis XIV of France dressed as Apollo, 1653

The patronage system (Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods)

- The patronage system is the means through which most musicians earned a living until the 19th century
- Major patrons used music to display their wealth
 - The Catholic Church
 - The upper classes (nobility, aristocracy, royalty)
- Music is a social commodity – patrons displayed their wealth, power, and sophistication by associating themselves with fine artistic production
 - Music makes events more lavish and impressive
 - Employ musicians as composers, performers, and private teachers
 - Hire musicians for special events
 - Buy sheet music, instruments, and other artistic works
 - Document musical performances in word, in tapestry, and in painting



Anonymous, *Concert of Women* (ca. 1530-40)

Thinking like a musicologist (somebody who studies music)

- Thinking about music like a musicologist means addressing implicit questions in a text
 - “Text” = written words, a piece of music, an image
- Biases determine how we read a text
 - Power
 - Systems and structures
 - Individual biases (of the author/creator, and your own biases as a listener/reader/viewer)

Biases

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”

—George Orwell (1903-50),
1984 (1949)



“The great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”

—James Baldwin (1924-87),
The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948-1985



“We do not see things as they are; we see things as we are.”

—Anaïs Nin (1903-77),
The Seduction of the Minotaur (1961),
after the Talmud



An account of dancing at Versailles by Pierre Rameau

- What do we learn from this text?
- Who is there?
 - Who is there but isn't mentioned in the text?
- Who was the intended audience of this text?
- What do we know about the author?
- What questions do we still have (what are the limits of our knowledge)?

Music under the Sun King

During the seventeenth century, which the French still call their "grand siècle," music attended the French kings everywhere. They rose in the morning to the sound of the oboes and brasses of the Great Stable (Grande Écurie), they danced to the music of their famous "twenty-four violins" (also known as the Grande Bande), and were regaled at meals by a smaller band of fiddlers, known as the Petits Violons. In the Royal Chapel they heard the crowning musical expressions of their majesty and power: the *grands motets*, often sung by a choir of sixty, accompanied by an orchestra to match. At its height under Louis XIV, the royal musical establishment at Versailles numbered some 120 musicians. The description given by Pierre Rameau, dancing master to Louis XV, of a court ball suggests some of this splendor, and also the rigid formality that governed the proceedings. The dances came in a prescribed order, as in the standardized instrumental dance suite established by the lutenists and harpsichordists of Louis XIV's time.

Of the Ceremonial Observed at the King's Grand Ball

I believed it impossible to give a description more likely to inspire regard for the ceremonies and rules of private balls than first to attempt some brief account of the King's Grand Ball, since it is the most important of all such functions and should serve as a model for private balls in regard to the order of the proceedings, and the respect and politeness to be observed thereat.

In the first place, none is admitted to the royal circle save Princes and Princesses of the Blood Royal, the Dukes and Peers, and Duchesses, and afterwards the other Lords and Ladies of the Court according to their rank. The Ladies are seated in front, while the Lords are placed behind them. Nevertheless, I have ventured to represent the latter standing [see the illustration], to avoid confusion in my figures, and to make them more easily seen.

Everyone being thus placed in order, when His Majesty wishes the ball to begin he rises, and the whole company does likewise.

The King takes up his position at that end of the room where the dancing is to begin, which is near the musicians. In the time of the late King [Louis XIV], the Queen

Thinking like a musicologist: Questions to ask yourself



Judith Leyster, *Boy Playing the Flute* (1660)

- Who is in power?
 - What is the author's/artist's relationship to that power?
 - Why is this story being told and not another one?
- What historical/structural forces are influencing this particular telling of history?
 - What long-term changes or forces are at play that we know about but the author might not see or articulate?
 - What/who is left out of this depiction?
 - What perspectives are missing?
- What are my limitations as a reader/viewer/listener?



Jean-Baptiste Lully,
Gavotte from *Atys* (1676)

Dancing at the court of Versailles

Iconography –
the study and
interpretation
of visual
images



Dance ensemble at Versailles, 1696 by Antoine Trouvain

Dancing at balls

Iconography –
the study and
interpretation
of visual
images



Dance ball in Augsburg, Bavaria, 1750, by G.B. Probst

A Baroque concert

Iconography –
the study and
interpretation
of visual
images



Francesco Guardi (1712-93), *Concert in a Girls' School, Venice*

Reminders

- Good weekly habit: Review lecture notes and previous assigned reading the day *after* class
- Assigned reading is available online
 - Music history, musical elements (form, dynamics, tempo), cultural history of Europe
- Online Discussion #3 “Music and the brain” ends Sun Sep 22
 - Missed the first one, forgot to send your username, or didn’t meet all the participation requirements? You have the option of emailing me your contributions as a late assignment/revision
 - Online Discussion #4 starts M Sep 23
- Writing 4 (An account after Rameau) due T Sep 24 / Th Oct 3
- **Oops!** Missing due date from your course calendar: Writing #7 due T Nov 19 / Th Nov 14
- Have a great week!

End quiz

1. All music has a sense of beat or meter.

- a) True b) False

2. Dancing at parties is something people first started doing in the 20th century.

- a) True b) False

3. People were more religious during the Medieval period than they are today, which is why all the music created then was religious.

- a) True b) False