

# Mu 101: Introduction to Music

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Queensborough Community College

Spring 2020

Sections M1 (M 6:10-9p), C3A (W 9:10-12p), H3A (W 2:10-5p)

THIS IS THE FINEST  
SNOWBALL EVER MADE!



PAINSTAKINGLY HAND-  
CRAFTED INTO A PERFECT  
SPHERE FROM A SECRET  
MIXTURE OF SLUSH, ICE,  
DIRT, DEBRIS AND FINE  
POWDER SNOW, THIS IS  
THE ULTIMATE WINTER WEAPON!



YES, THIS MARVEL OF  
CRYSTALLINE ENGINEERING WI-



ANOTHER CASUALTY  
OF THE SEDUCTION  
OF ART.

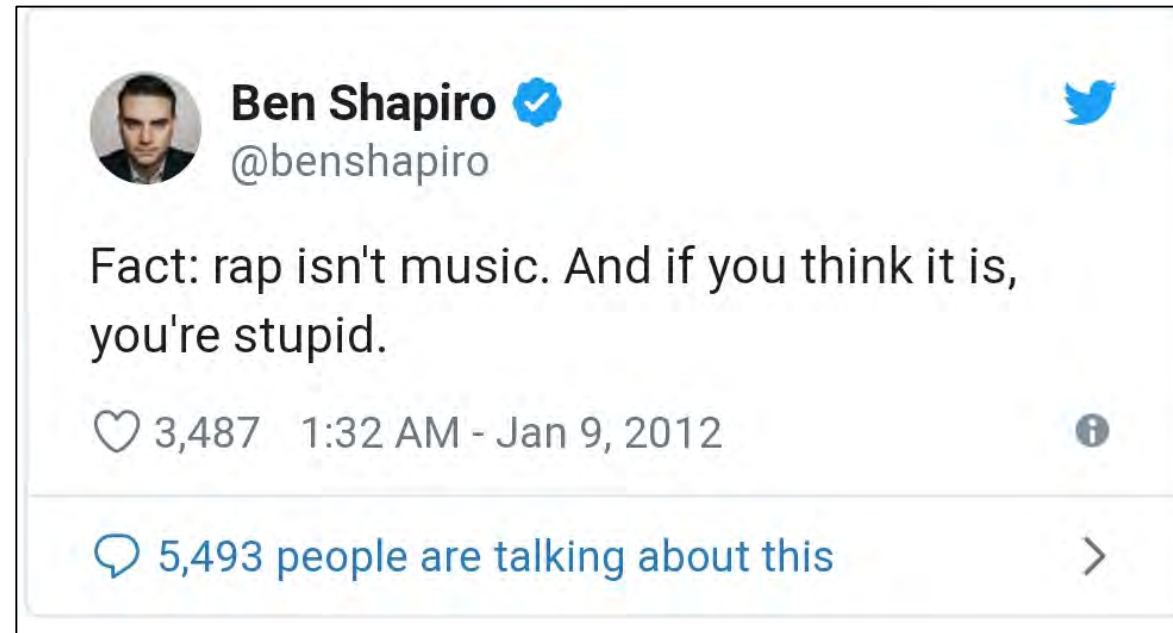


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# Recap

- Music of the Medieval (c. 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
- Unnamed musician, Pérotin, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, William Byrd
- Meaningful comparisons require precision—knowing what you mean, framing relevant ideas, specific examples
- Thinking like a musicologist
  - Why bother?
- Soundscape (Writing 1)

# Recap: Stereotypes



# 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

3,469 Retweets 16,405 Likes



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

# In-class essay: Describing music of the Medieval and Renaissance periods



Josquin des Prez, *Absalon, fili mi* (c. 1513)

- Sacred music
- Used for religious worship and rituals
  - This piece was likely composed to commemorate the death of an important figure's son (e.g., a pope or an emperor)

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



- Secular music
- Not intended for religious purposes
  - This is music that likely would have been danced to

# Rhythm

- Closely related to physical movement (pulse)
  - Tapping, clapping, snapping, or dancing
- Length of individual notes (duration)
- Rhythm is a means of organizing musical time (meter, measure)
  - Meter – the regular groupings of strong and weak pulses
  - A measure contains a strong beat followed by weak beat(s)
- Rhythm propels music forward

# Another approach to music education: the Suzuki Method

- Shinichi Suzuki (1898-1998)
- Developed a music education method for people of all ages and abilities

“Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability which can be developed. Any child who is properly trained can develop musical ability just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue. The potential of every child is unlimited.”



# Another approach to music education: the Suzuki Method

1.



Blue



Watermelon



Blue



Jello

2.



Blue



Blue



Shh



Blue

# Another approach to music education: the Suzuki Method

**MUSIC MIND GAMES™**  
**Notes and Rests Card Chart**

The chart displays musical symbols and their corresponding illustrations in a grid-like format. The symbols are arranged in rows and columns, with each cell containing a musical symbol and a small illustration. The symbols include whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes, and rests. The illustrations are colorful and depict various scenes, including children playing instruments, animals, and food. The chart is titled "Notes and Rests Card Chart" and is part of the "MUSIC MIND GAMES" series.

www.musicmindgames.com

© 2011 Michiko Yurko

# Why dance?

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





# The French royal court



- Versailles – a *château* (palace)
  - Home of the French royal family, 1682-1789 (King Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI)
- Employed 120 musicians
- Music for dancing, concerts, balls, eating, and waking up





# 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



“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



Etienne  
Allegrain,  
View of the  
Chateau de  
Versailles  
and the  
Orangerie  
(c. 1695)





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

- The patronage system is the means through which most musicians earned a living until the 19<sup>th</sup> 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)

# 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











# Baroque clothing

Versailles, uniform (coat) of the grand livery of the royal household



# Baroque clothing

Versailles, hunting costume





# Not everything survives history

- Power
  - What defines power at a moment in time? What happens when power changes hands?
- Values
  - What matters enough to be created? What matters enough to keep?
- Luck
  - What's beyond our control?



Antoine (1588-1648) or Louis Le Nain (1593-1648),  
Peasant family in an interior (c. 1625-1648)

# Thinking like a musicologist

- 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*



# New York City

What makes NYC special or unique?



# The arts in New York City

The artistic institutions that help define the city were shaped by wealthy 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century industry businessmen [remember Orwell and Baldwin?]:

- Metropolitan Museum of Art established in 1870 by a group of wealthy Americans to create a “national institution and gallery of art” to bring art and education to the American people
- Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), steel magnate – built Carnegie Hall in 1891
- Augustus D. Juilliard (1836-1919), textile merchant – gave money in his will that established The Juilliard School in 1905
- John D. Rockefeller, Sr. (1839-1937), John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874-1960), John D. Rockefeller, III (1906-78)
  - Senior was the wealthiest American of all time; founded Standard Oil and established the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913
  - III: helped found and lead the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, which opened in 1962 as part of an urban renewal project

# Support for the arts = access to the arts

Current national arts funding:

- National Endowment for the Arts was established in 1965 “to nurture American creativity, to elevate the nation’s culture, and to sustain and preserve the country’s many artistic traditions.”
  - Supports arts making in all 435 Congressional districts of the country so that all Americans have access to the arts and artists working outside of big cities are able to make art
  - Annual budget is \$152.8M (0.003% of the annual US budget, \$3.899T)
- National spending on the arts, per capita
  - US: \$0.47
  - Canada: \$5.19
  - Germany: \$19.81

# Supporting the arts in New York City

- New York City is unique in its support of the arts today – arts here are better funded and more accessible than in most US cities
- New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
  - Awarded \$43.9M to 1,000 NYC cultural groups and institutions in 2018-19 (annual budget: \$198.4M)
  - Music, dance, theater, murals, arts education in schools and community centers, affordable studio and rehearsal space for artists
- NYC Cultural Plan, 2016-17
  - Asked NYC residents what culture they had in their neighborhoods, what was lacking, what help they needed to help improve the social and economic welfare of their neighborhoods
  - Plan for prioritizing funding of arts organizations going forward

# Writing Portfolio

- Writing 2 (due M Mar 2 / W Mar 4) and Writing 6 (due M Apr 27 / W Apr 29): Your choice of topic and style
  - Expand an online discussion comment, in-class discussion/writing
  - Attend a classical music concert
  - Think about examples we've read in class from Bianca Bosker, Amanda Mull, David Foster Wallace, Alexander Chee. Additional examples are available online (Assignments—Writing Portfolio)
- Writing 3 (due M Mar 23 / W Mar 25): Music criticism
- Writing 4 and Reflection 2 (due M Mar 30 / W Apr 1)
  - Attend a classical music concert
- Writing 5 (due M Apr 20 / W Apr 22): Create a primary source document
  - Today's Rameau reading could be a model for this



Toni Morrison (1931-2019)

“Writing to me is an advanced and slow form of reading. If you find a book you really want to read but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”

# Reminders

- Good weekly habit: Review lecture notes and previous assigned reading the day *after* class
- Assigned reading is available online + article for the student-led discussion circle
  - Cultural/political history of Europe, musical elements (form, dynamics, tempo)
- Online Discussion #5 (Music and gender) ends Sun Mar 1 (informal writing grade)
  - Online Discussion #6 starts M Mar 2
- Student-led discussion #1 (informal writing grade) in class M Mar 2 / W Mar 4. Topic: aesthetics – you'll receive an email with your assigned article
- Writing 2 due M Mar 9 / W Mar 11
- Exam 1 due M Mar 16 / W Mar 18
- 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 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- a) True      b) False

3. What's a question you still have about music from the Baroque period?