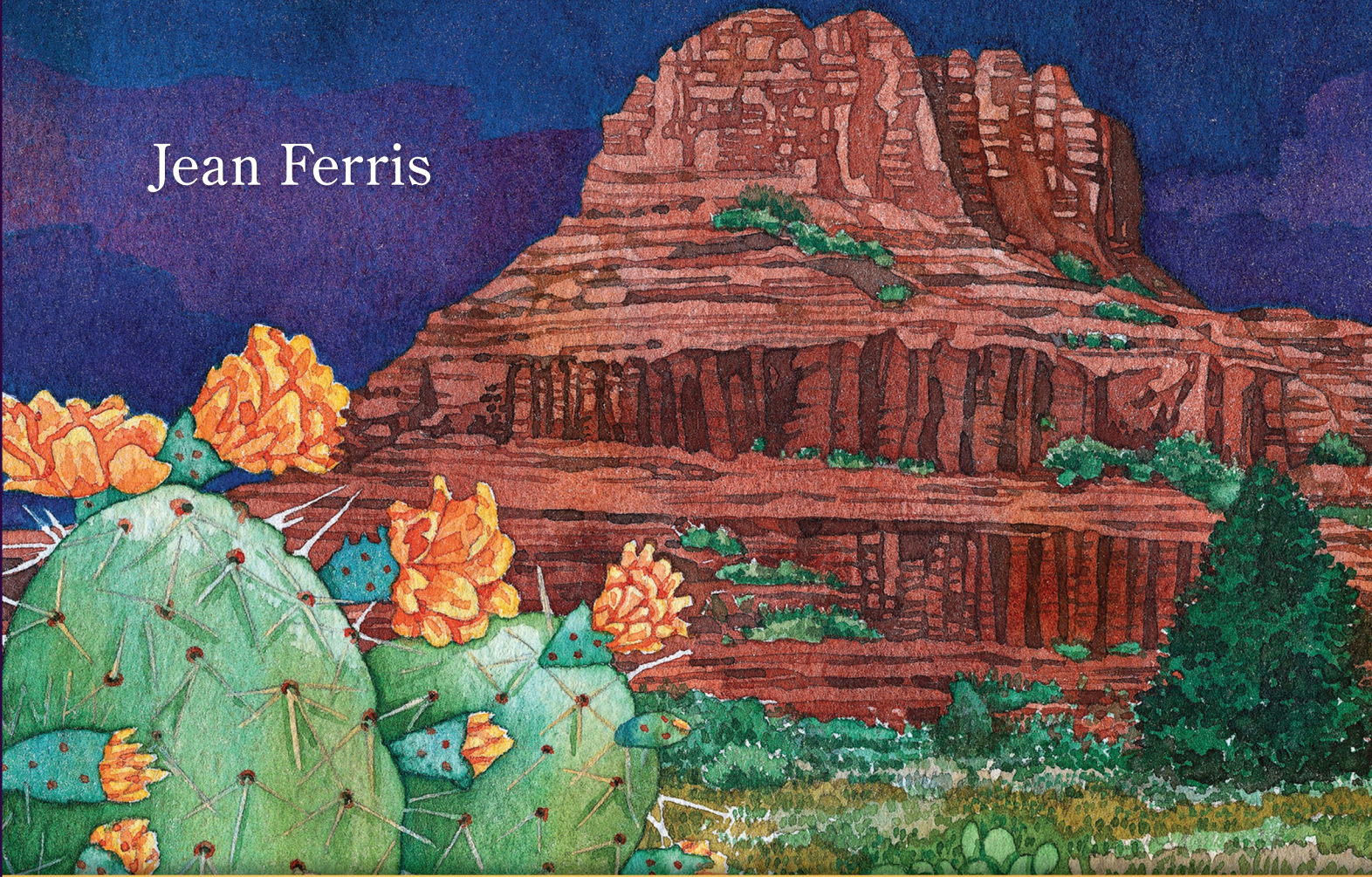


Jean Ferris



America's Musical Landscape

Seventh Edition

LISTENING EXAMPLES

Page #	CD #	Track	Composer	Title	Duration
9	1	1	Anonymous	“John Henry”	2:55
22	1	2	Anonymous	Yeibichai Chant Song (excerpt)	0:57
23	1	3	Anonymous	Sioux Grass Dance (excerpt)	0:55
30	1	4	Anonymous	“El corrido de Gregorio Cortez”	2:44
32	1	5	Anonymous	“Barbara Allen”	2:48
35	1	6	Anonymous	“Shenandoah”	1:48
38	1	7	Anonymous	Field Holler	1:15
38	1	8	Anonymous	Father’s Field Call	0:22
39	1	9	Jesse Bradley	“Hammer, Ring” (excerpt)	2:36
41	1	10	Anonymous	“No More Auction Block for Me”	2:09
47	1	11	Louis Bourgeois	“Old Hundred” (excerpt)	0:24
49	1	12	Joseph Brackett, Jr.	“’Tis the Gift to Be Simple”	1:09
54	1	13	William Billings	“Chester”	1:28
56	1	14	William Billings	“When Jesus Wept”	1:16
57	1	15	Daniel Read	“Sherburne”	0:57
67	1	16	Anonymous	“Yankee Doodle” (excerpt)	0:46
80	1	17	(possibly) James Macdermid	“There’ll Be Joy, Joy, Joy” (excerpt)	1:37
81	1	18	Anonymous	“Amazing Grace”	4:19
82	1	19	Anonymous, arr. Lawrence Brown	“Nobody Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen” (excerpt)	1:58
85	1	20	Lowell Mason	“Nearer, My God, to Thee”	4:21
90	1	21	Daniel Decatur Emmett	“(I Wish I Was in) Dixie’s Land”	3:31
92	1	22	Stephen Foster	“I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair”	3:17
94	1	23	Stephen Foster	“Oh! Susanna”	1:15
97	1	24	(probably) John Stafford Smith	“The Anacreontic Song” (“Anacreon in Heaven”)	4:29
101	1	25	Anonymous	“Get Off the Track”	2:49
111	1	26	Louis Moreau Gottschalk	“Le bananier”	2:48
115	1	27	John Knowles Paine	<i>Fuga giocosa</i> , op.41, no. 3	1:27
119	1	28	Amy Marcy Cheney Beach	Symphony in E minor (“Gaelic”), second movement	8:25
130	1	29	John Philip Sousa	“The Stars and Stripes Forever”	3:11
133	1	30	Scott Joplin	“Maple Leaf Rag”	3:04

LISTENING EXAMPLES

Page #	CD #	Track	Composer	Title	Duration
138	1	31	George M. Cohan	“Rose” (“A Ring to the Name of Rose”)	2:29
140	1	32	Irving Berlin	“Alexander’s Ragtime Band”	2:59
144	1	33	Cole Porter	“Night and Day”	3:12
152	1	34	Robert Johnson	“Hellhound on My Trail”	2:34
154	2	1	(probably) Bessie Smith	“Lost Your Head Blues”	2:54
156	2	2	W. C. Handy	“St. Louis Blues”	3:09
159	2	3	Lillian Hardin Armstrong	“Hotter Than That” (excerpt)	1:31
162	2	4	James P. Johnson	“Carolina Shout”	2:45
167	2	5	Count Basie, Lester Young	“Taxi War Dance”	2:50
171	2	6	Duke Ellington	“Mood Indigo”	3:03
172	2	7	Billy Strayhorn	“Take the A Train”	2:54
178	2	8	Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie	“KoKo”	2:53
181	2	9	Duke Ellington	“Concerto for Cootie”	3:19
183	2	10	Paul Desmond	“Take Five”	5:23
185	2	11	Miles Davis, arr. Gil Evans	“Boplicity”	3:00
190	2	12	Jimmie Rodgers	“Blue Yodel no. 9”	2:37
194	2	13	Anonymous	“The Ballad of Casey Jones”	3:02
197	2	14	Earl Scruggs	“Earl’s Breakdown”	3:00
204	2	15	Danny Ku	“Mele of My Tutu E”	2:57
207	2	16	Anonymous	Cajun Two-Step (excerpt)	1:00
217	2	17	Tito Puente	“Para los Rumberos”	2:46
220	2	18	Antônio Carlos Jobim	“Desafinado” (“Off Key”)	4:11
235	2	19	Chuck Berry	“School Day”	2:34
238	2	20	Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier, Edward Holland	“Stop! In the Name of Love”	2:52
241	2	21	Anonymous	“Down by the Riverside”	2:29
244	2	22	James Brown	“Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag”	2:06
256	2	23	Bob Dylan	“Mr. Tambourine Man”	2:29
262	2	24	John Coltrane	<i>A Love Supreme</i> —Part I, “Acknowledgement” (excerpt)	4:36
286	2	25	The Sugarhill Gang	“Rapper’s Delight” (excerpt)	3:22

AMERICA'S *Musical*
LANDSCAPE

SEVENTH EDITION

AMERICA'S *Musical*
LANDSCAPE

JEAN FERRIS

Emeritus Professor of Music
Arizona State University





AMERICA'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE, SEVENTH EDITION

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For John and Liz





About the Author

Twenty years after completing a bachelor of music degree in music history and literature at the University of Michigan, I received an MA, also in music history, at Arizona State University, where I then taught music history and appreciation for the next twenty years. *Music: The Art of Listening* and *America's Musical Landscape* evolved for use in my classes, and I am delighted that other instructors have found them useful, too.

My interest in travel and in world cultures began early, encouraged by attending high school in Manila, Philippines, and later by living for nearly a year in Japan with my husband and our four children. I still travel extensively, and when home stay busy playing the piano, cooking, practicing yoga, reading, doing needlework, and of course writing. And there's always time to enjoy our twelve grandchildren!

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Online Listening Examples



(Listening guides for the Online Listening Examples are at the Online Learning Center. The music can be found at YouTube or other sites, or in most cases can be purchased very reasonably from iTunes.)

Beach, Amy Marcy Cheney: “The Year’s at the Spring”

Braxton, Anthony: 92 + (30, 32, 139) + (108c, 108d)

for Creative Orchestra

Cage, John: *Aria* and *Fontana Mix*

Gershwin, George: Concerto in F

Gillespie, Dizzy: “Shaw ’Nuff”

Gottschalk, Louis Moreau: “Bamboula”

MacDowell, Edward: “To a Wild Rose” from

Woodland Sketches

Monroe, Bill: “It’s Mighty Dark to Travel”

Reich, Steve: *Drumming*

Rodgers, Jimmie: “Daddy and Home”

Still, William Grant: *Afro-American Symphony*,

first movement

Wills, Bob: “New San Antonio Rose”



Preface

The survey course for which this text is designed affords the same broad coverage of musics—classical and popular, secular and religious, vocal and instrumental—as does the traditional music appreciation course predominantly featuring European examples. Here we tackle the happy task of introducing basic musical terms and concepts using selected examples of outstanding American music.

As suggested in the title of the text, I have often related music to other arts, finding such comparisons to have pedagogical as well as aesthetic value for nonmusicians perhaps more familiar with visual and literary than with aural experience. Asher B. Durand's stunning landscape painting *Kindred Spirits* (p. 74), an eloquent portrayal of the nature poet William Cullen Bryant and the Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole sharing reverent admiration for their country's natural splendors, in fact inspired this text, which seeks to capture some of that painting's expression of the interdependence uniting American art and artists.

The musical landscape we explore stretches from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast between Canada and Mexico, and Hawaii—the areas comprising today's United States. Though influences abound from above and below the northern and southern borders, and though each of the many cultures of North, Central, and South America and Mexico has a rich American musical landscape of its own, time constrains most American music courses to cover only some of the music, of only certain regions, within the United States. Regret for what we cannot cover must encourage us to extend our exploration as soon and as far as possible throughout all of the Americas.

New to the Seventh Edition

- The proportion of *vernacular* to classical coverage has again been expanded.
- Less attention to early concert music allows more to *recent classical music, pop, rock, hip-hop, jazz* and *electronic music*.
- Several *new Listening Examples* add variety and appeal to the listening experience.
- The text-specific Online Learning Center at www.mhhe.com/ferrisaml7e offers further supplemental material, including guides for Online Listening Examples and Suggestions for Further Listening/Viewing/Reading, as

well as multiple-choice and true/false quizzes, projects, and links to useful websites. While the websites may change from time to time, students will be well advised to form the habit of creatively checking the Internet as they study each chapter. Simply entering as keywords the name of a composer, a piece, or an instrument, for example, reveals information to further students' experience and understanding of every topic.

- Thinking Critically boxes are placed throughout the text near the subjects they address.
- Encores, appended to certain Listening Examples, encourage further listening related to pieces covered in the text.

Special Features

- **Prelude:** Introduces basic technical information concerning texture, form, and notation. Students may browse through the Prelude at the beginning of a term and return to it readily to refresh their understanding as the concepts recur throughout the course. While instructors will differ in the emphasis they place on the Prelude, it's as essential a part of the text, and the course, as the prelude of a well-written music composition is to that work.
- **Part Openers:** As in the last edition, relevant social and cultural information appears before each section in Part Openers, available to those who find them valuable, but unobtrusive for those who choose to leave them out. The Part Openers are not intended as material to be absorbed for test purposes, but as enriching and thought-provoking information related to the music covered in that section. They set the context in which music was conceived and first experienced, and broaden students' perspective of music's place in the cultural environment.
- **Part Summaries:** These present terms and names with which students should have become familiar, much as they might appear in a concert program or a newspaper review.
- **Effective Learning Tools:** Terms to Review, Key Figures, Online Listening Examples, Encores, and Listening Examples provide students with extensive support to master the material and enhance their knowledge of American music. Critical Thinking questions prompt further inquiry by students.

Recordings

The three CDs accompanying the text offer students generous opportunity to apply their developing listening skills to representative selections of music. Restrictions imposed by recording companies often determine what we may and may not include; it is especially difficult to acquire permission to use current or even recent popular music. Of course students and/or instructors may wish to supplement class listening experiences with relevant examples from their personal collections; and the Internet offers innumerable opportunities to hear complete pieces or excerpts via computer. Listening guides for pieces

listed as Online Listening Examples are included at the Online Learning Center, should instructors choose to assign or to play in class some of this music. Besides these options, YouTube offers rich viewing as well as listening experiences; and music from Apple's iTunes Store can be downloaded for a modest fee.

Support for Instructors

For the instructor, we offer the following resources at the Online Learning Center:

- Instructor's manual
- Test Bank
- PowerPoint slides

I continue to be indebted to colleagues and friends whose expert advice assists me in improving this text and bringing it up-to-date. Again, I wish to thank my friend and outstanding jazz musician Dan Pinson for lending his expert ear to some of the jazz interpretations in this edition. And I am most grateful and indebted to Professor Robert Ceely for contributing his own detailed description and analysis of his vibrant and significant piece, "VONCE."

My editors for this project have all been particularly patient, helpful, supportive, and in every way magnificent. I must express profound gratitude especially to Nadia Bidwell, development editor, who contributed enormously to the improvements in this edition; to LouAnn Wilson, diligent and gifted art editor; to Tom Laskey, of Sony BMG Music Entertainment, for the fine CDs; and to Rashmi Malhotra, project manager, for supervising and coordinating all of our efforts. Thank you all so much!

I am most grateful as well to the following prepublication reviewers, who shared valuable suggestions for improving the text based on their experiences using it: Anita Hanawalt, University of La Verne; Peggy Lupton, Cape Fear Community College; Mary Ann Nilsson, Durham Technical Community College; Vincent Rufino, College of St. Elizabeth; and Thomas Stauch, Harper College.

Jean Ferris

Introduction



Most Americans today would find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to experience a day without music, so pervasive is the sound of music in our everyday lives. Music enhances many of our social, religious, and work-related experiences. Music sets rhythms for us to dance or exercise to, keeps us company at work or play, enhances our concentration and our emotional response when we are viewing a film or a musical, accompanies some religious services, helps us go to sleep at night, and makes it easier to wake up in the morning and to prepare for another day filled with the sounds we individually enjoy.

From the wide field of *popular* musics, we generally develop preferences for certain kinds, or styles, over others. That is, from the incredibly rich menu of sounds available today we might choose most often to hear rap, jazz, rock, country, pop—or something else. Some of us enjoy instrumental music; others prefer song. Our tastes change over long periods of time, and our preferences may differ from one moment to another, depending on our mood or circumstance at a given time.

The great world of *classical* music, as it is often called, also encompasses a tremendous range of sounds. Unfortunately, none of the terms generally used to distinguish between the music we call popular and the music we call classical is truly descriptive of the differences we recognize between them. We can agree that music that serves no functional purpose, but simply expresses an abstract concept a composer thought worth sharing—music that requires intense concentration and sometimes a measure of learning and experience on the part of the listener differs from music that exists primarily as a means of entertainment. It is difficult, however, to describe differences between these two kinds of music without implying unintended and inappropriate judgments of value. Commonly we speak of music that requires extensive training on the part of composers and performers, and that may assume some guided experience on the part of the listener, as *classical*, *art*, *concert*, or *serious* music; but none of those terms properly distinguishes between this music and much of the music played by DJs on popular radio sites. No one is more *serious* about music than outstanding singer-songwriters in the popular fields. Many great American songs have survived beyond their days of initial popularity to become *classics* in their own right. *Concerts* are among the most important venues for experiencing so-called popular music of many kinds. And *art* suggests simply a creative means of expression, with no inherent requirement

THINKING CRITICALLY

Has music ever enhanced your ability to remember something—an advertised product, for example? How does music contribute to a visual experience, such as watching a film?

that it be simple or complex or even good. Further confusing the issue, many so-called classical pieces have become so familiar and well-loved that today they are performed in concerts we refer to as *pops*.

The terms italicized above, however, have become inherent parts of the language of music. You will hear and read them in formal and informal discussions of music, and we will use them in this text, although with sensitivity to the unintended connotations they have acquired. Words, after all, serve only to broaden our ideas about music and our knowledge of its history. No words can substitute for the glorious experience of hearing, and understanding, the great and beautiful musics of the United States.

The more we understand about musical forms and the elements that constitute the building materials of music, the better we are prepared to enjoy music of all kinds. Recognition of the historical context in which music was conceived, and an awareness of the relationships between music and the other arts of a given period, will enhance our understanding and our pleasure. It is my personal wish that your delight in listening to all kinds of music will increase immeasurably as you discover the many and varied aspects of America's musical landscape.

PRELUDE

Basic Properties of Musical Sound



Music, an art of organized sounds, is virtually limitless in variety and in the power to enchant and challenge our ears. However, because it never holds still, and we can neither see nor touch it, understanding music can be an elusive thing, and the world's greatest music may prove challenging to the unprepared listener.

The more we understand the qualities of music, the elements of which it is constructed, the historical-social setting in which a given piece evolved, the intent of the composer, and the contributions of the performer or performers, the greater will be our intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic rewards for listening to any kind of music. One can readily develop a sense of musical form, making it easier to enjoy a piece of some length. And while it is unnecessary to be able to read music in order to enjoy listening to it, some knowledge of how music is notated may be of interest even to the casual listener. The purpose of our Prelude, then, is to explain some basic concepts that may serve as a helpful introduction to your music experience, and to which you may refer for review throughout your course of study.

THINKING CRITICALLY

What roles does music currently play in your life?

The Elements of Music

Musicians generally recognize four **elements of music**—rhythm, melody, harmony, and timbre—as the fundamental materials of which music is composed. As we listen to music, any one of the elements—a memorable tune, a driving rhythm, the unusual sound of an exotic musical instrument—may attract our attention; but more often we respond to the combination of two or more of the elements of music without methodically analyzing the name and proportions of each.

Understanding these building blocks of music enhances our listening and provides a vocabulary with which to discuss a piece in some detail. Further, listening with *awareness* of what we hear greatly increases our capacity to enjoy all kinds of music.

Rhythm Because music consists of arrangements of long and short sounds and silences, **rhythm**, having to do with time relationships in music, is the most basic of the elements. The system of music notation used in the Western world indicates the rhythm of music by giving the *proportional* length of each

TABLE 1 Rhythmic Notation

This table assumes that the quarter note equals 1 beat. Any other note value may equal 1 beat instead, the number of beats per other note values changing proportionately.

Notated Symbol	Name	Rest	Number of Beats per Note	Number of Notes Equal to 4 Beats
◦	Whole note	—	4	1
♪	Half note	—	2	2
♪	Quarter note	⌵	1	4
♪	Eighth note	γ	½	8
♪	Sixteenth note	γ	¼	16

sound and silence; that is, written music dictates the duration of each sound or silence only in relation to other sounds and silences in the piece.

Rhythmic values are expressed in the familiar terminology of fractions (Table 1): The value of a *half note*, for example, is equal to half the value of a *whole note*. But the specific duration of a half note depends upon the **tempo**, or rate of speed, at which the music is performed. *Tempo*, which means “time,” is one of many Italian words adopted into a virtually universal music language during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Italians dominated music in the Western world. Foreign musicians studying in Italy absorbed the techniques and much of the terminology of their Italian masters, which they shared with their own students and patrons upon returning to their homelands. Since then, many Italian music terms have been used all over the world, remaining in common use today.

Music listeners quickly become familiar with the most common Italian words for tempos, shown in Table 2, which regularly appear in printed concert programs and often also in newspaper reviews of concerts and recordings.

Meter Just as language is formed of irregularly occurring accented and unaccented syllables, musical sounds, too, may occur without specific rhythmic organization. If, however, musical sounds are arranged in rhythmic patterns, similar to those of poetry as opposed to prose, we say the music is metered.

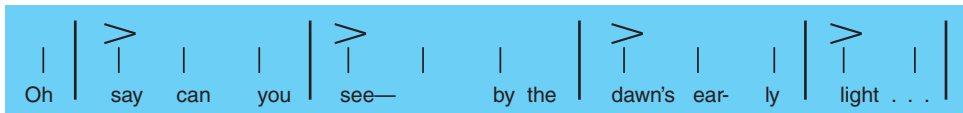
Meter organizes rhythm into units called *measures*, each containing a particular number of pulses, or beats. The common meters are *duple* (two beats per measure), *triple* (three beats per measure), and *quadruple* (four beats per measure). In Western practice—that is, in music based on European traditions of the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries—the first beat of each measure is normally accented, or stressed; and if there are four or more beats per measure, there is at least one secondary accent as well.

TABLE 2 Common Tempo Indications

<i>Largo</i>	Slow; "broad"
<i>Adagio</i>	Slow; "at ease"
<i>Andante</i>	Moderately slow; "walking" tempo
<i>Moderato</i>	Moderate
<i>Allegro</i>	Fast; cheerful
<i>Presto</i>	Very fast
<i>Vivace</i>	Lively
<i>Molto</i>	Very (<i>allegro molto</i> = very fast)
<i>Non troppo</i>	Not too much (<i>allegro non troppo</i> = not too fast)
<i>Con brio</i>	With spirit



Duple meter



Triple meter



Quadruple meter

> = Stress, or accent ∪ = Secondary accent

FIGURE 1

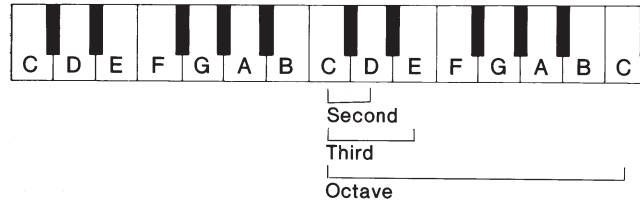
Common meters, showing accents.

For example, in quadruple meter (Figure 1), the secondary accent falls on the third beat.

Melody Musical sounds, called *tones*, are caused by something vibrating at a particular frequency, or rate of speed. Tones are said to be relatively high or low in *pitch*, depending upon the rate of vibration of the medium producing the sound: The faster a string on a violin or the column of air in a trumpet vibrates, the higher the level of pitch. Much as a sentence is a meaningful succession of words, a **melody** is a meaningful succession of tones of various levels of pitch. (The words *tone* and *note* may be used interchangeably, *tone* suggesting the sound as it is heard and *note* its written representation.)

FIGURE 2

A piano keyboard, indicating intervals of a second, a third, and an octave.



Tones have letter names, A through G. The *interval*, or distance, between tones is named according to the number of tones it includes; for example, from A to B is a *second*, from A to C, a *third*, and so on (Figure 2). The most basic interval is the *eighth*, called an **octave**, the two tones of which share the same letter name and sound nearly alike. The higher tone of the octave vibrates at exactly twice the rate of the lower tone, the simple relationship of their frequencies (the ratio 2:1) causing minimal tension between them.

All keys on a keyboard that bear the same letter name *look* the same as well, because they occupy the same position relative to other keys. For example, if we start at the left of the keyboard and move up, we see that the last white key before the third of the three black keys is always an A (Figure 2), D is always the white note between the two black notes, and so on.

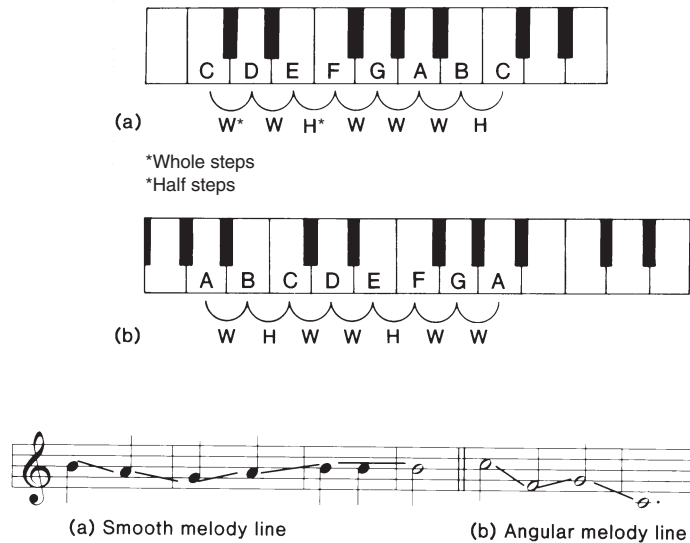
Scales. Melodies are based on **scales**: stepwise rising or descending patterns of pitches within the range of an octave. By the seventeenth century, two particular seven-note patterns—the *major* and *minor* scales—had been accepted as those that best served European composers of concert music, and they continue to prevail in Western music today.

The major and minor scales each include two *half steps* (the closest distance between two keys on a keyboard) and five *whole steps* (the equivalent of two half steps). The white notes of the octave from C to C on the keyboard correspond to the pattern of the major scale, while the white notes of the octave from A to A correspond to the pattern of the minor scale.

Music based on the major scale sounds very different from music that is minor, because of the different order in which the half and whole steps occur (Figure 3). If you can play a keyboard instrument, you might play the first three notes of “Doe, a Deer” from *The Sound of Music*, beginning on C. These are the first three notes of the major scale. Now *lower* the third tone by a half step, or begin playing on A and use all white keys, and you will hear how the melody would begin if it were based on a minor scale.

We will discuss scales other than the major or minor as they apply to music covered later in this text.

Further Characteristics of Melody. Melodies of course have rhythm, the tones of a melody occurring in some order of long sounds, short sounds, or both. If a melody, such as a children’s song or folk song, is particularly singable and memorable and seems complete in itself, we call it a *tune*. A different kind

**FIGURE 3**

The major and minor scales. (a) The white notes of the octave from C to C on the keyboard correspond to the pattern of the major scale. (b) The white notes of the octave from A to A on the keyboard correspond to the pattern of the minor scale.

FIGURE 4

Melodic contours.

of melody is a brief, fragmentary melodic idea or *motive*, recurring throughout a piece, particularly in instrumental music. Probably the most famous motive in Western music is the four-note “knocking” pattern (short-short-short-long) that begins Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, identified at least as readily by its rhythm as by its melodic characteristics.

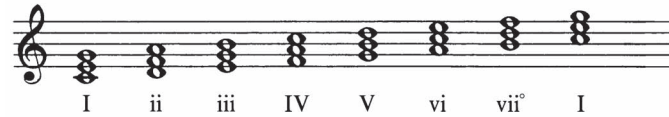
Because we may draw a line up or down from one note of a melody to the next, we think of a melody as *linear* and identify its contour as angular (with large leaps between the tones), smooth (with the tones closely connected), or some combination of angular and smooth. Figure 4 compares, for example, the smooth contour of “Merrily We Roll Along” with the angular shape of “Westminster Chimes.” Other familiar tunes that might further clarify this distinction are “America” (“My Country, ’Tis of Thee”) (smooth) and “The Star Spangled Banner” (sharply angular in contour).

Harmony The melodies of European and American music generally are accompanied by simultaneous combinations of tones called **harmony**, defined as the sounding of two or more different tones at once in a logical or meaningful (not necessarily beautiful) manner. The system of harmony that has governed Western music for nearly 400 years, based upon the major and minor scales (the tonal scales), is called *tonality* or the *tonal system*.

Purposeful combinations of three or more different tones constitute **chords**, which enrich the sounds of Western music and please Western ears much as linear perspective adds depth and pleases the eyes of lovers of Western art. Indeed, chordal harmony, like linear perspective, is a peculiarly Western concept; both the aural and the visual concepts evolved during the Western Renaissance, and neither has become characteristic of non-Western arts. While the notes of a

FIGURE 5

Triads on each note of the C major scale.



melody are written in succession, or in linear fashion, the tones of a chord are notated vertically, above and beneath each other.

Tonal Harmony. The first tone of a major or minor scale, called the **tonic**, represents a kind of home base, from which a piece of music in the Western tradition is likely to begin and on which it is even more likely to end. The tonic names the **key** of a composition; for example, we say a piece is in the key of A major, meaning that the tonic note is A and most of the tones are those of the major scale. For another example, a piece based on the D minor scale is said to be in the key of D minor.

Each of the tones in a major or minor scale bears a specific relationship, relatively distant or close, to the tonic. The fifth step of the scale, called the *dominant*, is the tone most closely related to tonic. It is heard frequently during a piece, and it seems to bear almost a gravitational pull back to tonic, or home base. The second-closest tone to tonic is the fourth step above (or the fifth below) tonic, called the *subdominant*.

The most basic chord in the tonal system, consisting of three alternate tones (or a third piled on top of a third), is called a **triad** (Figure 5). Triads may be built on any tone of the major or minor scale and bear the same relationship to tonic and to each other as the tones upon which they are built. Thus the strongest relationship is between the tonic triad (often represented by the Roman numeral I) and the triad built upon the fifth note of the scale, or the dominant (V). The next-closest chord to tonic is the triad built upon the fourth, or subdominant, step of the scale, which provides a somewhat weaker drive toward tonic.

The I, IV, and V chords, then, provide the cornerstones of tonal harmony. Many simple melodies are effectively accompanied by just these three closely related chords.

Timbre The quality or **timbre** (tam'-breh) of a musical sound depends on characteristics of the medium producing it. Thus musical instruments have distinctive timbres according to their size, the material of which they are made, and the manner in which they are played. For example, the timbre or "color" of the sound produced by a violin differs from that of a flute, and the sound produced by plucking the string of a violin is unlike the sound made when the same string is bowed.

Pitch also affects the timbre of musical sound: Notice how the high tones of a piano differ in timbre as well as pitch from the very low tones of the instrument, and how men's and women's voices are distinguished in terms of timbre as well as the range of their pitches.

TABLE 3 Dynamic Levels

Levels of Volume		
Italian Term	Abbreviation	English Meaning
<i>Pianissimo</i>	<i>pp</i>	Very soft
<i>Piano</i>	<i>p</i>	Soft
<i>Mezzopiano</i>	<i>mp</i>	Moderately soft
<i>Mezзоforte</i>	<i>mf</i>	Moderately loud
<i>Forte</i>	<i>f</i>	Loud
<i>Fortissimo</i>	<i>ff</i>	Very loud

Another factor affecting the timbre of a voice or instrument is the loudness or softness of the sound, called its **dynamic level**. Composers often vary the dynamic level within a piece for many reasons: to achieve emotional effects, to illustrate events described in the text of a song, or to achieve extramusical effects in descriptive instrumental music. The Italian words *piano* and *forte*, respectively meaning “soft” and “loud,” are among the commonly used dynamic terms included with their abbreviations in Table 3.

Form

When describing a work of art, we might first mention its **genre**—that is, the kind or category of music to which it belongs, such as orchestral, choral, or folk. We also often consider the manner in which it is organized—its **form**. There are many approaches to formal design, based upon principles of *repetition* and *contrast*, with repetition lending a work unity, symmetry, and balance, and contrast providing the variety necessary to sustain interest. A play, for example, may have one or several acts, a novel a number of chapters, a poem one or several strophes or stanzas. Similarly, an instrumental musical composition may have one or several sections, or *movements*.

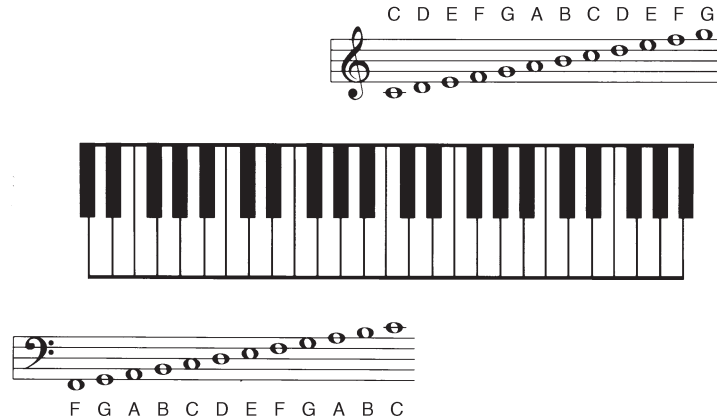
Songs, too, are organized according to textual or musical properties. The most common song form, called *strophic*, has two or more verses, each set to the same music.

Music Notation

Although one may well enjoy listening to and even performing music without learning to read music notation, some conception of how music is written may be of interest. For centuries, Western music has been written on a *staff* of five lines and four spaces (Figure 6). Musical pitches and rhythms are written as *notes*, and notated silences are called *rests*. The staff forms a kind of “ladder,” with each line and each space representing a particular pitch. A sign called a

FIGURE 6

Pitches notated in the treble (high) and bass (low) clefs. Certain tones, including “middle C,” may be notated in either the bass or the treble clef.



clef, placed at the beginning of the staff, indicates that a particular line represents a specific pitch, thus fixing the relative position of all the other pitches on the staff.

Understanding just these basic concepts of how music is written allows us, without really “reading” music, to follow the ascending and descending patterns of tones written on a page and have an approximate idea of how the music would sound.

Elements of an American Sound

Because America’s early settlers came from many different cultures, it took time for music to acquire a characteristic American sound; but surprisingly soon, music—like the English language—changed its accent in the New World. The manner in which the elements of music are selected and combined, the choice of timbres, various means of musical expression such as changes in dynamic level and in tempo, and the purpose for which music is intended are among the nearly indefinable qualities that determine a particular composition’s characteristic sound, or **style**.

In music, as in fashion, *style* refers to a manner or mode of expression, and again as in fashion, style in music is affected by the time and the culture that produce it. For example, American rhythms may be more flexible than those characteristic of European music; and although the delay or anticipation of accented beats called *syncopation* occurs in music worldwide, its bold and consistent use gives much American classical as well as popular music a distinctive flavor. The long, irregular melodies of pieces such as Samuel Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* (Listening Example 74) are sometimes thought to reflect the informality, personal freedom, and lack of physical and cultural boundaries associated with the ideal American life. Jazz musicians, by using traditional instruments in new and unusual ways, caused Americans to alter the timbres of symphonic as well as popular musics, as we hear for example in William Grant Still’s *Afro-American Symphony* (Listening Example 75).

Thus, although much American music is stylistically indistinguishable from music by European composers of the same period, perhaps you will sense in some American pieces a certain audacity, a generous expansiveness, a peculiar irregularity, or some other scarcely definable attribute that simply “sounds American.”

How to Improve Your Listening Skills

Attendance at live performances as well as repeated and concentrated study of the text’s listening examples are essential to furthering your understanding and enjoyment of music, for no written or spoken words can substitute for the impact music makes on our minds and hearts. It is not difficult to develop skills to enhance your listening comprehension and pleasure—not just for now but for the rest of your life.

First, approach each listening experience with expectations of enjoyment. Next, try to memorize music as you hear it so that it will quickly become familiar, and so that you will develop an awareness of a composition’s form even as you listen to it for the first time. Remember to apply the knowledge gleaned from your class discussions and from this text to the music you are hearing. By listening actively, even *creatively*, you will participate in the successful collaboration of composer, performer, and listener that makes possible the magnificent experience of enjoying great music.

Listening Example 1 offers the opportunity to apply your developing listening skills to the well-known African American folk ballad “John Henry.” We will discuss folk ballads in more detail in Chapter 2; meanwhile, notice that the song tells a story, in many verses, all set to the same music (**strophic form**).

THINKING CRITICALLY

Has music ever enhanced your ability to remember something—an advertised product, for example? If so, how?



Virgil Thomson
(1896–1989)

“The way to write American music is simple. All you have to do is be an American and then write any kind of music you wish.”

Listening Example 1

“John Henry”

In the late nineteenth century, the story of a former slave who had become a “steel-driving man” passed from person to person—both black and white—through many regions of the country. The text of the song would be adapted to local and timely conditions. Thought to have originally been associated with the 1870–1872 construction of the largest tunnel built up to that time, other versions have John Henry hand-driving his steel drill to lay railroad track. In each case, the legendary hero pits his strength against the newly invented steam drill, winning the contest but losing his life in the effort. Each time you listen to this song, try to hear something that escaped your notice before, “stretching your ears” to capture all that the performance offers.



CD 1
Track
2:56

—Continued