**Preface ix**
**Prologue: Antiquity 2**

**Part One THE MEDIEVAL ERA 16**
- Prelude to Part One 17
- CHAPTER 1 Plainchant and Secular Monophony 25
- CHAPTER 2 Polyphony to 1300 57
- CHAPTER 3 Music in the 14th Century 73

**Part Two THE RENAISSANCE 92**
- Prelude to Part Two 93
- CHAPTER 4 The Emergence of Renaissance Style 106
- CHAPTER 5 The Genres of Renaissance Music, 1420–1520 122
- CHAPTER 6 Music in the 16th Century 153

**Part Three THE BAROQUE ERA 184**
- Prelude to Part Three 185
- CHAPTER 7 The New Practice 193
- CHAPTER 8 Vocal Music, 1600–1650 207
- CHAPTER 9 Vocal Music, 1650–1750 224
- CHAPTER 10 Instrumental Music, 1600–1750 258

**Part Four THE CLASSICAL ERA 288**
- Prelude to Part Four 289
- CHAPTER 11 The Art of the Natural 298
- CHAPTER 12 Instrumental Music in the Classical Era 314
- CHAPTER 13 Vocal Music in the Classical Era 336
- Major Composers of the Classical Era 354

**Part Five THE 19TH CENTURY 356**
- Prelude to Part Five 357
- CHAPTER 14 The Age of the Tone Poet 367
- CHAPTER 15 Orchestral Music, 1800–1850 383
- CHAPTER 16 Piano Music, Chamber Music, Song 408
- CHAPTER 17 Dramatic and Choral Music 435
- CHAPTER 18 Orchestral Music, 1850–1900 464
- Major Composers of the 19th Century 485

**Part Six THE 20TH CENTURY 488**
- Prelude to Part Six 489
- CHAPTER 19 The Growth of Pluralism 499
- CHAPTER 20 The Search for New Sounds, 1890–1945 515
- CHAPTER 21 Beyond Tonality 539
- CHAPTER 22 The Tonal Tradition 560
- CHAPTER 23 New Currents after 1945 577
- CHAPTER 24 Popular Music 602
- Major Composers of the 20th Century 631

**Epilogue: Music in the New Millennium 639**

**Appendices 644**
**Glossary 653**
**Source Notes 663**
**Index 667**
Contents

Preface ix
Prologue: Antiquity 2
MUSIC IN THE BIBLICAL WORLD 3
ANCIENT GREECE 4
Music in Ancient Greek Society 5
Greek Musical Theory 6
MUSIC IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE 9
THE MUSICAL LEGACIES OF ANTiquITY 11
Music and the Cosmos 12
Music and the Soul 12
Music and the State 14
Theory versus Practice 14
Vocal versus Instrumental Music 15
SUMMARY 15

Part One THE MEDIEVAL ERA 16
Prelude to Part One 17
CHAPTER 1 PLAINCHANT AND SECULAR MONOPHONY 25
THE EMERGENCE OF PLAINCHANT 25
THE ELEMENTS OF PLAINCHANT 31
Liturgical Function 32
Relationship of Words and Music 34
Mode 38
Melodic Structure 39
Rhythm 41
THE EXPANSION OF PLAINCHANT 42
SECULAR MONOPHONY 51
Songs in Latin 51
France 52
The Iberian Peninsula 54
Germany 54
SUMMARY 56
CHAPTER 2 POLYPHONY TO 1300 57
ORGANUM 57
Innovations in Organum 58
Notre Dame Organum 61
Clausula 63
Motet 65
Conductus 68
Mensural Notation 69
Franconian Notation 70
Petronian Notation 71
SUMMARY 72

CHAPTER 3 MUSIC IN THE 14TH CENTURY 73
FRANCE: THE ARS NOVA 73
The Roman de Fauvel 74
Polyphonic Settings of the Mass Ordinary 77
Secular Song 81
The Ars subtilior at the End of the 14th Century 82
ITALY: THE TRECENTO 84
ENGLAND 87
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC 87
SUMMARY 91

Part Two THE RENAISSANCE 92
Prelude to Part Two 93
RENAISSANCE HUMANISM 96
THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION 100
RENAISSANCE PAINTING AND SCULPTURE 101
MUSIC IN THE RENAISSANCE 103
CHAPTER 4 THE EMERGENCE OF RENAISSANCE STYLE 106
Consonance and Dissonance: Trusting The Ear 106
SONORITY: THE CONTENANCE ANGLOISE 108
Fauxbourdon and Faburden 109
New Sonority, Old Structure: Du Fay’s Nuper rosarum flores 110
Josquin’s Ave Maria . . . Virgo Serena and The Style of The Renaissance 113
Treatment of Text 115
Texture 115
CONTENTS

Cadential Structure 116
Mode 117
Melody 117
Rhythm 117
Harmony 120
White Notation 121
* Summary 121

CHAPTER 5 THE GENRES OF RENAISSANCE MUSIC, 1420–1520 122
Sacred Vocal Music 122
The Mass: Du Fay and Ockeghem 122
The Mass: Josquin des Prez and His Contemporaries 129
The Motet 133
Secular Vocal Music 138
Chanson 138
Frottola 141
Instrumental Music 144
Renaissance Instruments 145
Keyboard Music 150
Dance Music 151
* Summary 152

CHAPTER 6 MUSIC IN THE 16TH CENTURY 153
Secular Vocal Music 153
The Parisian Chanson 153
The Italian Madrigal 154
Secular Song in Germany, Spain, and England 161
Sacred Vocal Music 166
Music of the Reformation 166
Music of the Counter-Reformation 168
Instrumental Music 174
Intabulations 176
Variations 176
Freely Composed Works 176
Dance Music 179
* Summary 183

Part Three THE BAROQUE ERA 184
Prelude to Part Three 185
War, Revolution, and Colonial Expansion 186
The Scientific Revolution 188
The Musical Baroque 189

CHAPTER 7 THE NEW PRACTICE 193
Searching for The Secrets of Ancient Greek Music 193
The Florentine Camerata 195
The Seconda Pratica 197
Music in The Baroque Era: A Stylistic Overview 202
* Summary 206

CHAPTER 8 VOCAL MUSIC, 1600–1650 207
Secular Song 207
Italy: The Madrigal 207
France: The Air de cour 213
Opera 215
Sacred Music 222
* Summary 223

CHAPTER 9 VOCAL MUSIC, 1650–1750 224
Opera 224
France: Comédie-ballet and Tragédie en musique 225
Italy: Opera seria 228
England: Masque, Semi-Opera, Opera, and Ballad Opera 239
Sacred Music 244
Music in Convents 244
Oratorio 245
Motet and Mass 247
Cantata 248
Conceptions Of The Compositional Process 255
* Summary 257

CHAPTER 10 INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, 1600–1750 258
Instruments of The Baroque Era 258
The Violin 258
Winds, Brass, and Percussion 259
Keyboard Instruments 261
The Orchestra 262
The Public Concert 263
Instrumental Genres of The Baroque Era 263
Sonata 264
Concerto 266
Suite 271
Other Keyboard Genres 275
* Summary 287
Part Four  THE CLASSICAL ERA  288
Prelude to Part Four  289
The Age of Enlightenment  289
War and Revolution  292
The Industrial Revolution  294
Music in Enlightenment Society  295
CHAPTER 11  THE ART OF THE NATURAL  298
Music and The Idea of Nature  298
Music in The Classical Era: A Stylistic Overview  300
The Elements of Classical Style  302
The Illusion of Order  303
Style and Form in The Mid-18th Century  305
Sonata Form  306
The Fantasia  312
* Summary  313
CHAPTER 12  INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE CLASSICAL ERA  314
The Language of Instrumental Music  314
Form and Genre in Instrumental Music  316
Sonata  318
String Quartet  319
Symphony  323
Concerto  329
* Summary  335
CHAPTER 13  VOCAL MUSIC IN THE CLASSICAL ERA  336
The Rise of Opera Buffa  336
Opéra Wars  337
Gluck and The Reform of Opera  339
Mozart and The Synthesis of Operatic Styles  343
Sacred Music  347
Song  352
* Summary  354
Major Composers of the Classical Era  354

Part Five  THE 19TH CENTURY  356
Prelude to Part Five  357
Progress and Dislocation  357
Ideas and Ideologies  360
Reaction, Reform, and Revolution  361
The Musical World of the 19th Century  363
CHAPTER 14  THE AGE OF THE TONE POET  367
Romanticism and The New Prestige of Instrumental Music  367
The Composer As High Priest  368
Originality and Historical Self-Consciousness  371
The New Dichotomy Between Absolute and Program Music  373
Nationalism  376
The Growing Division Between Art and Popular Music  376
Music in The 19th Century: A Stylistic Overview  379
* Summary  381
CHAPTER 15  ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, 1800–1850  383
Bigger Halls, Bigger Audiences, and Louder Instruments  383
The Symphony  384
Beethoven’s Symphonies  385
The Symphony after Beethoven  388
The Concert Overture  400
The Concerto  403
* Summary  407
CHAPTER 16  PIANO MUSIC, CHAMBER MUSIC, SONG  408
Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas and String Quartets  408
Song  409
The Character Piece  417
The Virtuoso Showpiece  428
* Summary  434
CHAPTER 17  DRAMATIC AND CHORAL MUSIC  435
Opera  435
Italy in the Early 19th Century: Rossini  435
Italy at Midcentury: Verdi  436
Opera and Politics  443
France: Grand Opéra and Opéra Comique  446
Germany: Weber to Wagner  447
The Elements of Wagnerian Music Drama  448
CONTENTS

Operetta 460
Choral Music 461
SUMMARY 465

CHAPTER 18 ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, 1850–1900 464
Music For Dancing And Marching 464
The Ballet 467
The Symphonic Poem 470
The Symphony 471
The Challenge of the Past: Brahms 472
Nationalism: Dvořák 476
The Collision of High and Low: Mahler 481
SUMMARY 484
Major Composers of the 19th Century 485

Part Six THE 20TH CENTURY 488
Prelude to Part Six 489
The Impact of Recorded Sound 493
Modernism: The Shock of the New 495

CHAPTER 19 THE GROWTH OF PLURALISM 499
From Homogeneity to Diversity 499
The Past Confronts The Present 502
Recorded Versus Live Music 504
Authenticity 506
Music in 20th-Century Society 507
Music and the State 507
Music and Race 509
Music and Protest 511
Music Therapy 511
Ambient Music 512
Music in The 20th Century: A Stylistic Overview 512
SUMMARY 514

CHAPTER 20 THE SEARCH FOR NEW SOUNDS, 1890–1945 515
Impressionism 515
Challenges to Tonality 518
Radical Primitivism 525
Nationalism 531
New Timbres 535
SUMMARY 538

CHAPTER 21 BEYOND TONALITY 539
Atonality 539
Serial Composition 551
SUMMARY 559

CHAPTER 22 THE TONAL TRADITION 560
Neoclassicism and The “New Objectivity” 560
Orchestral Music 563
Film Music 565
Ballet 567
Chamber Music 570
Opera and Musical Theater 572
SUMMARY 576

CHAPTER 23 NEW CURRENTS AFTER 1945 577
New Sounds from Old Instruments 577
Combinatoriality 578
Integral Serialism 579
Aleatory Music 581
Electronic Music 584
Minimalism 591
Postmodernism 596
SUMMARY 601

CHAPTER 24 POPULAR MUSIC 602
Hymnody and its Legacy 602
Ragtime and Blues 604
Ragtime 604
Blues 607
Popular Song 609
Jazz: To 1945 612
Jazz: After 1945 614
Country Music 619
The Folk Revival 623
Rhythm & Blues, Rock, and Rap 625
SUMMARY 630
Major Composers of the 20th Century 631
Epilogue: Music in the New Millennium 639

Appendices 644
Glossary 653
Source Notes 663
Index 667
Preface

Undergraduates studying music history may or may not be passionate about history, but they are always passionate about music. For this reason, I have structured *A History of Music in Western Culture* around a carefully selected repertory of music that reflects the development of the art from antiquity to the present. My goal has been to help students gain a broad understanding of the nature of music, its role in society, and the ways in which these have changed over time. Students who become familiar with the repertory of works in the accompanying *Anthology of Scores* and the corresponding set of recordings will be well equipped to understand this history: the requisite names, dates, and terms will be far more memorable when associated with specific works of music. Perhaps even more importantly, students will have a sound basis from which to explore musical works and repertories beyond those covered in the present book, including the musics of other cultures.

*A History of Music in Western Culture* seeks to challenge students to think critically about the nature of music and its past. Music history is too often presented (and learned) as one long series of indisputable facts. I have tried to integrate into this text enough primary source documents—excerpts from composers’ letters, contemporary reviews, theoretical treatises, and the like—to demonstrate the ways in which the raw materials of history can be open to conflicting interpretations. Indeed, the most interesting historical issues tend to be precisely those about which experts disagree.

FEATURES OF THE TEXT

*A History of Music in Western Culture* builds its narrative around the two-volume *Anthology of Scores* and a set of accompanying sound recordings, which are available both as compact discs and as streaming audio available through the *MySearchLab*, an online learning environment designed specifically for this text. Every work in the *Anthology* gets a discussion in the text, called out with an icon in the margin cross-referenced to both the scores and recordings.

Following a prologue on the music of antiquity, the text is divided into six parts, each corresponding to a major era in music history: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, 19th century, and 20th century. The text concludes with a brief epilogue on music today. Each part begins with a *prelude*—with one or more *maps*—that summarizes the historical and social background of each era, and the first chapter in each part provides an overview of the major stylistic characteristics and theoretical concerns of the music of the era.

The text also offers a variety of features and pedagogical tools:

- An *outline* at the beginning of each chapter gives students an overview of the content of the chapter.
- The opening pages of each prelude include a *comparative timeline* that lists major musical events side-by-side with other significant historical events.
- A graphic *summary of style differences* in each part highlights the principal differences in musical style between each era and the one immediately preceding (Renaissance versus Medieval, Baroque versus Renaissance, etc.).
- *Key terms* are highlighted in each chapter and defined in a *glossary* at the end of the book.
- Significant composers are featured in extended *Composer Profiles* that include key biographical information and a survey of principal works.
- *Primary Evidence* boxes contain excerpts from relevant contemporary documents, exposing students to some of the raw materials of music history. A brief introduction places each selection in its context and challenges students to think about the interpretation of historical evidence.
- *Focus* boxes highlight important information that expands on aspects of the core narrative.
- *Performance Practice* boxes examine in detail an alternative performance of the same work.
Students will thereby have the opportunity to compare and discuss strikingly different ways of bringing to life the same notes on a page. In the Baroque era, for example, students can hear excerpts from Bach’s “Goldberg” Variations as performed by Trevor Pinnock, playing on a harpsichord such as the composer would have played, and as performed by Glenn Gould, playing on his 20th-century concert grand piano.

- Numerous examples, tables, and diagrams help students grasp key points and visualize musical structures.
- The last chapter in each part concludes with a set of discussion questions designed to stimulate reflection on broad issues in music history.

NEW FEATURES OF THE FOURTH EDITION

This text has been expanded, corrected, and updated, particularly in the sections on Medieval and Renaissance music. New repertory has been introduced throughout the text in response to feedback from instructors on what works elicit the best responses from students in the classroom. Improved graphics make the material more readily comprehensible. Other key changes include the following:

- The all new MySearchLab online learning environment provides a variety of tools to help instructors access lecture materials, and help students understand the material found in the book, including
  - An interactive eText, fully page compatible with the printed version, that allows students to highlight passages and make notes, as well as access other MySearchLab features.
  - Scrolling Translations online that allow students to follow original texts and English translations simultaneously. No more flipping back and forth to the end of a score to follow a translation of the text in the score!
  - Streaming audio so that students and instructors can access music easily anywhere with an internet connection.
  - Quizzes that offer students the opportunity to test their understanding of each chapter’s materials.
- A variety of other learning materials, including Term Flashcards, Inside the Orchestra videos, documentaries, and more.

FEATURES OF THE SCORE ANTHOLOGY

The works in the Anthology of Scores to A History of Music in Western Culture have been carefully selected to represent the developments in music history discussed in the text. Every selection in the Anthology of Scores is discussed in the text. Volume I covers antiquity through the Baroque era; Volume II covers music of the Classical era to the present.

Key features of the Score Anthology include

- Integrated commentary. Excerpts from the text are integrated into the score anthology at the end of each selection, providing students with basic information and a brief discussion of every work.
- Cross-referencing to text and recordings. Each selection in the anthology opens with a clear cross-reference to the recorded version of the work (disc and track number) and to the discussion of the work within the text (page number). In addition, the score and recordings in the anthology correspond exactly within their chronological span (Volume One of each through the Baroque era; Volume Two of each since the Classical era).

New to the Score Anthology

- All new Scrolling Translations on MySearchLab, which provide both students and instructors with easy access to real-time English translations of foreign-language vocal works in the Anthology.

FEATURES OF THE RECORDED ANTHOLOGY

Fifteen compact discs complement the text and Anthology of Scores. These recordings draw on the resources of many different recording labels and feature some of the most
distinguished artists and ensembles of our time, such as Sequenza, Anonymous 4, Hilliard Ensemble, Orlando Consort, Les Arts Florissants, Huelgas Ensemble, Gothic Voices, La Chapelle Royale, Consort of Musicke, Tashi, La Petite Band, Tallis Scholars, Concentus Musicus Wien, Theatre of Voices, English Baroque Soloists, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, and Concerto Köln.

Representative soloists include Paul O’Dette, Emma Kirkby, Davitt Moroney, Thomas Quasthoff, Trevor Pinnock, Malcolm Bilson, Ruggiero Raimondi, Kiri Te Kanawa, Roberto Alagna, and Jessye Norman.

The discs are arranged chronologically and mirror the content and structure of the Anthology of Scores:

- Volume I: Antiquity through the Baroque Era (6 discs).
- Volume II: The Classical Era to the Present (9 discs).

AN EXPANDED LIBRARY OF RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

A History of Music in Western Culture comes with a variety of supplementary print and multimedia materials for both instructors and students.

Instructor’s Manual

The Instructor’s Resource Manual with Tests provides the following:

- Sample syllabi, including suggestions for how best to incorporate MySearchLab materials into your course.
- Chapter outlines and summaries to help you organize and structure your lectures.
- Key terms found throughout the book.
- Discussion Questions, Essay Questions, and Class Projects, each designed to both spur in-class conversations on important topics and provide the opportunity for outside assignments for your students.
- A list of online resources and publications that can be used for research.
- Other media sources that can be helpful such as movies and DVDs of live concerts/performances.

Test Item File and Pearson MyTest

The all-new Test Item File is filled with dozens of multiple choice and essay questions per chapter, allowing instructors to create their own custom exams. The Test Item File is available in a variety of formats, including BlackBoard and WebCT, as well as in Pearson’s own MyTest format, which allows instructors to build and randomize tests, save multiple versions across semesters, and print their exams and answer keys from any computer.

PowerPoint Lecture Slides

Mirroring the organization and content of the text, a set of PowerPoint slides provides a useful tool for lectures and classroom presentations. The value of the slides is further enhanced by the inclusion of some of the book’s photos, maps, tables and charts, as well as links to all of the MySearchLab assets so that instructors can seamlessly access streaming audio and videos during their lectures.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the many scholars who reviewed the manuscript for this book and its revisions at various points in its development. Their thoughtful and often detailed comments were invaluable at every stage in the process:

Roberto Catalano, San Bernardino Valley College; Alice Clark, Loyola University New Orleans; Vincent Corrigan, Bowling Green State University; Jim Davis, SUNY Fredonia; Alicia Doyle, California State University, Long Beach; Rachel Golden, University of Tennessee; Margaret Hasselman, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Karl Hinterbichler, University of New Mexico; Michael Long, University at Buffalo; Alyson McLamore, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; Kevin N. Moll, East Carolina University; James Randall, The University of Montana; Christina Reitz, Western Carolina University; Matthew Steel, Western Michigan University; Sarah Waltz, University of the Pacific; Eric Wood, University of the Pacific. For the fourth edition in particular, I am especially indebted to Sean Gallagher (Boston University) for his thorough review and thoughtful suggestions for strengthening the Medieval and Renaissance portions of the text and anthology. Rob Deemer (SUNY-Fredonia) was a great help in selecting three representative works of music written since 2000. Thanks, Rob.

I am also grateful to many colleagues and students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for
their help at many points along the way. Fellow faculty members Tim Carter, John Covach, Annegret Fauser, Jon Finson, Anne MacNeil, Jocelyn Neal, Severine Neff, and Tom Warburton all offered helpful advice (and an ear) at various stages of the project. I was also fortunate to be able to draw on the able help of several students in preparing the manuscript: Christina Tuskey, Jennifer Germain, Michelle Oswell, Seth Coluzzi, Ethan Lechner, Joseph Singleton, Douglas Shadle, and above all Peter Lamothe. Samuel Brannon prepared new musical examples and anthology scores for the fourth edition with great efficiency. The staff of the Music Library—particularly Dan Zager, Phil Vandermeer, Diane Steinhaus, Eva Boyce, Carrie Monette, and Bradshaw Lentz—were unfailingly helpful and efficient.

Thanks, too, to Ruell Tyson and his staff at the Humanities Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. My fellowship there in the spring of 1999 provided the time and mental space needed to launch this project, and my weekly conversations with the other fellows that semester helped me think through some of the more basic issues associated with writing a textbook of this kind.

I am grateful as well to Massimo Ossi (Indiana University) for his comments on an early version of the Baroque section of the text; to Suzanne Cusick (New York University) for her help in matters pertaining to Francesca Caccini; and to Diane Parr Walker and Jane Edmister Penner (University of Virginia) for their help in securing a reproduction of Thomas Jefferson’s request for music by Carlo Antonio Campioni. J. Samuel Hammond (Duke University Libraries) and Jeremy Yudkin (Boston University) also provided help and advice at many points along the way. Margaret Murata (UC-Irvine) and Barbara Haggh-Huglo (University of Maryland) were very generous in suggesting improvements for earlier editions.

My editors at Pearson have been a delight to work with from the very beginning. I first discussed the project with Bud Therien. Bud’s successor as music editor, Chris Johnson, was the prime mover in this enterprise, as was Richard Carlin for the third edition. The current team at Pearson Education—Music Editor, Roth Wilkofsky; Editorial Assistant, Chris Fegan; and Production Manager, Joe Scordato—has been indispensable in making the fourth edition that much better. Teresa Nemeth provided many useful ideas for improving early drafts of the manuscript. Elsa Peterson helped with the development of the 20th-century chapters and coordinated the compilation of the anthology manuscript. Francelle Carapetyan and Diana Gongora were unflagging in their effort to track down the needed illustrations. Tom Laskey (Sony BMG Music Entertainment) expertly coordinated the revised package of recordings.

Finally, my deepest thanks go to my family. My parents were not directly involved in producing this book, but they made it possible in ways that go well beyond the obvious. My brother Bob gave invaluable advice at an early stage of the process. And it is to Dorothea, Peter, and Andrew that I dedicate this book, with love.

Mark Evan Bonds is the Cory C. Boshamer Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he has taught since 1992. He holds degrees from Duke University (BA), Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel (MA), and Harvard University (PhD). His publications include Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration (1991), After Beethoven: Imperatives of Symphonic Originality (1996), and Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven (2006). He has also published essays on the music of Haydn and Mozart and has served as editor-in-chief of Beethoven Forum.
Why Study Music History?

Why study music history? This is a fair question, one you have likely asked yourself, particularly if you happen to be using this book as part of a required course. Here are a few reasons:

- **A greater understanding of music’s emotional power and its role in society.** Music is one of the most powerful yet least understood of all the arts. It has played a significant role in every known culture in human history. In the Western world, people have used it in widely varying contexts. It has provided entertainment, played a central role in many forms of religious worship, and has long been considered important to a well-rounded education. It has been admired since ancient times for its therapeutic benefits and it is used in shopping malls today for its ability to put people in the mood to buy. Political candidates identify themselves with theme songs, and patriotic music helps promote feelings of national unity. Music has even been used for torture. Entire generations have defined themselves according to the music they have enjoyed. And today, music drives a multibillion-dollar industry.

- **A richer understanding of music’s basic elements.** Composers and musicians have combined a few basic elements—rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, timbre, and form—in a remarkable variety of ways since ancient times. The polyphony of the 13th century sounds quite different from early-20th-century ragtime, but both are composed from the same building blocks. Studying music history helps us understand how these elements have been manipulated over time to create such a diversity of effects. And in the process, it can make us better listeners.

- **A sense of changing musical styles across time.** Why, within the space of less than a hundred years, did Bach write in one style, Mozart in another, and Chopin in yet another? Why is so much of the music written after 1900 difficult to grasp on first listening? Why do musical styles change at all? Although we do not have to be able to answer these kinds of questions to enjoy the music of any composer or period, our attempts to do so can increase our understanding of it and deepen the pleasure it brings us.

- **A basis for exploring new works and repertories.** Familiarity with a wide range of representative works from different historical periods enhances our ability to learn and understand new works and repertories of different kinds, including those of non-Western cultures. All of us are looking to expand our playlists in one way or another.

- **A greater ability to talk and write about music.** Music, the most abstract of all the arts, is notoriously difficult to describe in words. If we could identify exactly what a work of music is “about” or translate its meaning into words, why would we bother with the music at all? Still, the fact that we can never capture in prose the essence of music does not mean that we should remain silent on the subject. The very process of trying to write about music can help us appreciate what distinguishes it from fiction, poetry, drama, painting, dance, architecture, or any other form of human expression.