

Music History Review Sheet II
PRAXIS Review Class

The Beginnings of Polyphony (Medieval – Early Renaissance)

Organum (about 11th century)

- First type of polyphony—organized, planned music
- A second line (and subsequently more lines) of music was added to a chant (usually below it) moving in parallel motion @ a P4 or P5; strict simple parts; sometimes the organum was doubled above –AKA modified parallel organum (plural is organa)
- AD ORGANUM FACIENDUM—treatise on organum about 11th century; evolved into several types.
- 12th century—more florid organum; score format begins to evolve
- 12th to 13th century—Notre Dame is center of polyphony (THE NOTRE DAME SCHOOL); use of rhythm and meter via rhythmic modes based on long and short values
- LEONIN, composer in this style: MAGNUS LIBER ORGANI (Big book of organum); wrote strict and free organum; first known composer of organum
- Anonymous IV, another composer (whoever he was!); student of Leonin and Perotin, English guy
- PEROTIN: discant—added organum above

Motet (French “mot” meaning word)

- Replaced/evolved from organum about 1200
- At this time in 3 parts with different languages simultaneously: Latin, French, for example
- Appeared in score format and choir book format
- FRANCO OF COLOGNE, wrote treatise in 1260—devised rhythmic notation system
- Devices employed in Motet at this time: hocket (split up melody); rota (round); gymee; rondellus

ARS NOVA (14th Century)

- Philip de Vitry writes a new treatise about writing music (1320); 4th part comes into use as a result, further defines rhythmic uses and “time”; isorhythms used—structural organization that was used by composers.
- MAUCHAT: Mass of Notre Dame; polyphonic, one of the first unified polyphonic settings of the mass
- MOTET is still a form with four parts, rhythmic devices and still a linear approach to composition; MASSES written—cohesive, thematic writing of the ORDINARY of the Mass.
- Mass types: cantus firmus (based on a particular melody in tenor); Cyclic Mass, Motto Mass, Parody Mass, Plainsong Mass
- SECULAR FORMS: forme fixe in France (rondeaus, etc); ITALY—madrigal, caccia, and balata; forms are strict; mix of polyphony and monophony

- Other Composers: Landini (Italy), Dunstable (England), DuFay (Burgundian School)
- Polyphonic style of this period (to about 1450) spread across European courts and to England.
- 1450 is about the time the New Renaissance style begins—the one we are most familiar with.
- BURGUNDIAN SCHOOL: Guillaume Du Fay (1400-1474) major composer of this influential school of polyphonic writing—different settings of the mass (see above)
- Pervading imitation was the compositional style throughout period.