MUSIC HISTORY

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DISCOVERING MUSIC

Hoy comamos y bebamos (Juan del Encina)
MUSIC HISTORY

1.- THE RENAISSANCE: NEW MUSIC FOR A NEW SOCIETY
In the Renaissance religious music was written, but social life became important, and gradually the number of secular compositions was increasing. The Renaissance was the period covered by the XV and XVI Centuries. The composers of this era continued to write music for several voices (polyphony), but everything they did sounded very simple and natural.

In 1501, Ottaviano Petrucci published the first edition of scores. The music press was a decisive step in the spread of scores around the world.

1.1.- RELIGIOUS MUSIC
The composers of religious music were able to compose musical works in which the technique of combining several melodic lines (polyphony) reached a surprising perfection.

The ideal sounds of this style is:

✔ Works performed *a capella*, a musical style that is characterized by using only the voices of the singers to produce the sounds of melody and harmony, instead of using musical instruments.

✔ Preferably, there were musical works composed for the four basic voices: soprano, alto, tenor and bass, and every voice had a separate melodic line. Among all they create a mixture that follows the technique of imitation (*imitative texture*).

✔ The text was in *Latin*, which was the language of the church.

✔ The most important musical forms were the *mass* and the *motet*.

Some prominent composers were: Joaquin DesPrés (1450-1521), Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594), Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611).

1.2.- SECULAR MUSIC
The urban expansion and the improving lifestyle favored the growth of musical activity outside the church. Composers themselves often composed music to be played in courts or public parties.

1.2.1.- Vocal music in the Renaissance
The vocal music was polyphonic music, usually three or four melodic lines sung by different voices. But unlike religious music, here instruments are important because they either follow the voices or replace them.

✔ The rhythm was marked, clearly distinguishable strong beats (accents) and the weak.

✔ The text was secular and was written in the respective languages of each region.

✔ The texture was *homophonic*, that is, the voices sang together, making the implementation and understanding of words easier.
Of the many types of compositions that correspond to these features we can highlight the “Villancico” (in Spanish). Villancico’s name comes from the “villano”, because originally they were popular songs with secular texts, not to be confused with the typical Christmas songs or carols (villancicos in Spanish).

In Spanish there were also songs and romances, which were set mostly in the Cancionero de Palacio (a songbook compiled by the year 1500).

A special case was the madrigal whose texts were often secular and had five or six voices. The madrigal appeared in Italy, but spread throughout the rest of Europe. They were careful that the result was an intimate union between the lyrics and the music.

### 1.2.2.- Instrumental music in the Renaissance

Instrumental music became socially important because it was essential for dance and for public ceremonies. In this new society, to be a perfect courtier was imperative to know the dances danced at parties and ceremonies. In these court dances, unlike popular dances, steps or small jumps were danced. It was often combined in pairs: one slow and one fast. The set of dances was called a suite.

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<tr>
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### 1.3.- THE RENAISSANCE IN SPAIN

This period was considered the Golden Age of Spanish music with international fame. Music, like most of the political and cultural activities at the time, was determined by the religious spirit. It was the time of Fray Luís de León, Santa Teresa de Jesús, San Juan de la Cruz, El Greco and Berruguete.

The work of the great Spanish Renaissance polyphonic composers was concentrated, austere and imbued with a deep mysticism.

Juan del Enzina, musician and poet, was the author of polyphonic vocal pieces that fused the popular with the refined.

During the reigns of Carlos V and Felipe II, the Spanish renaissance reached its maximum, with authors like Cristóbal Morais, Tomás Luis de Victoria and Antonio de Cabezón. The first two were great masters in the treatment of the voices in polyphony. Cabezón was the creator of Spanish organist school: he merged the European styles and techniques taking their harmonic and contrapuntal conceptions and creating very beautiful and perfect pieces.

In the sixteenth century in Spain musicians played the vihuela, an instrument ancestor of the guitar. Luis de Milán, Luis de Narváez and Diego Pisador created pieces for this instrument.
2.- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE RENAISSANCE

2.1.- BOWED STRING INSTRUMENTS

The family of violas differed from the current bowed string with more strings and frets on the neck. Their sound was more delicate.

**VIOLA DA GAMBA**

The *viola da gamba* was supported by the legs (gamba = leg). It had 6 or 7 strings and the fingerboard had frets. Its timbre was sweet and incisive.

**VIOLA DA BRACCIO**

The *viola da braccio* rested on the shoulder like a violin. It had had frets and 4 strings.

**LIRA DA BRACCIO**

The *lira de braccio* was an important predecessor of the violin. It rested on the shoulder and had 5 strings and 2 drones outside the fingerboard.
2.2.- PLUCKED STRING INSTRUMENTS

LUTE

VIHUELA

CLAVICÉMBALO

ESPINET

VIRGINAL

2.3.- PERCUSSIVE STRING INSTRUMENTS

CLAVICHORD

The strings are struck by metal plates nailed to the end of the keys. It had little volume, and was not used in large halls.

Sets or consorts in the Renaissance, were groups of 3 to 8 instruments of the same family with all ranges from the bass to soprano. The result was a very homogeneous sound.
2.4.- WOODWIND INSTRUMENTS

FIPPLE FLUTES

Cross-section of the head of a recorder, indicating the wooden fipple plug (A), a "ducted flue" windway (B), and the "labium lip" which forms the far edge of the "voicing mouth"

RECORDERS

2.5.- BRASS INSTRUMENTS

HORN

TRUMPET

SACKBUT

2.6.- ORGAN

3º ESO MUSIC IN ENGLISH - IES CAMPO DE SAN ALBERTO
HOY COMAMOS Y BEBAMOS (JUAN DEL ENCINA) – LISTENING GUIDE

× Juan del Encina (1468-1530): He was a musician and poet from Salamanca who composed many "villancicos". They were songs for several voices which consisted of “coplas” and “refrán”, whose lyrics dealt with various topics, some religious and Christmas. Much of his poetry and music was included in the songbook Cancionero de Palacio from the Catholic Monarchs times.

× This musical piece was a festive villancico, written in triple time. From the content of the lyrics it appears that it was sung at the time of carnival, as it invites the table to enjoy the time before the fasting of Lent.

× The composition was written for four voices in homophonic style, as the main voice was the soprano and the rest accompanied with the same rhythm.

× The interpretation we hear is accompanied by instruments doubling the voices, as there is no specific music for instruments.

× The four soloists do not sing in some verses, as some voices are replaced by instruments.

× The instruments used are: bombard, dulzaina, viola, clarinet, guitar, drums and tambourine.