

More Musical Elements

Octave – an interval spanning 8 notes of the scale.

In Western music the octave can be divided into 12 steps, called the chromatic scale. Chroma is the ancient Greek word for color.

Key – describes the tonic (home note) and specifies major or minor tonality.

A half step is the closest spot one can move to up or down from a note.

A whole step is two half steps.

Placing a sharp beside a note increases it by a half step

Placing a flat beside a note decreases it by a half step

Tonic is the home base which music often begins from and gravitates back to. Tonic is the major point of rest.

Dominant (5<sup>th</sup>) is the point of most heightened activity.

Major scale is WWHWWWH (Play C Major)

7<sup>th</sup> (leading tone ) to 8<sup>th</sup> (octave or tonic) is a strong natural push

5<sup>th</sup> (dominant) or 4<sup>th</sup> (subdominant) are strong natural pushes. 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> also strong. 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> (octave or tonic) another strong push.

Minor scale is WHWWHWW (Play C Minor)

Other scale configurations:

Tritonic 3-note scale (some parts of Africa)

Pentatonic 5-note scale (all over the world – Africa, Asia, Native America)

Heptatonic 7-note scale other than major-minor

Microtones smaller than half steps... found all over the world... inflections can be made easily with voice and string instruments, also possible on winds and brass... blue notes in blues/jazz are examples of subtly inflecting a note or up or down microtonally... i.e. up or down less than a half step.

Western scales often the same going up and coming down

Indian ragas an example of non-western scale different up then down

Triad: three-note formations that much of western harmony is built upon.

Most common harmonic progression in western music is I-IV-V-I

Play Battle Hymn example

Diatonic – melody and harmony firmly rooted in the key

Chromatic –introduces other notes into the melody/harmony not in the home key

Modulation – begin by establishing a key, change to a related key, then return to the home key. i.e. statement – departure – return. Home key is a safe anchor. Foreign key represents instability and adventure.

Transposition – re-casting the same melody and/or harmonic pattern in a higher or lower key... useful for contrast and for fitting specifications of vocal ranges and instrument capabilities.

Play Haydn again and Mozart, Mountain Path, Bhimpalasi, Schumann, Mozart again.

Baroque - Introduction

Renaissance- Baroque transition... polychoral singing = two or three choirs that answer each other antiphonally.

Gabrielli was the first composer to specify dynamics and instrumentation in his scores.

Baroque likely taken from Portuguese Barrocco... an irregular-shaped pearl

Collegium musicum – an on-campus music group... example of middle class/bourgeois music making increasingly prevalent in the baroque era

Baroque was the age of discovery:

Newton – theory of gravity

Spinoza – philosophy

Galileo - astronomy

Descartes – mathematics

Milton – literature (Paradise Lost)

Intensification of religious conflict btwn Protestant and Catholic forces

New World Protestant colonization

Many artists still worked under royal or other bureaucratic patronage  
i.e. Bach

Renaissance to Baroque: interest shifted from elaborate polyphony to monody (“one song”), solo song with instrumental accompaniment.

First cultivated in Florence by a group of musicians, writers, artists called the Camerata (salon). Aimed to resurrect the music-drama of ancient Greece. Soon was applied not just to short poems but to entire dramas. Hence the beginnings of opera.

Week 9 Listening:

1. Haydn, Surprise Symphony
2. Battle Hymn (Glory, Glory, Hallelujah)
3. Mozart, Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, I
4. In A Mountain Path (Chinese classical music)
5. Bhimpalasi (North Indian classical music)
6. Schumann, In the lovely Month of May
7. Strozzi, Begli Occhi