

The Essential **Listening** Second Edition
to MUSIC

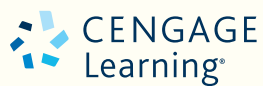
Craig Wright



The Essential Listening to Music **2e**



Craig Wright
Yale University



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**The Essential Listening to Music,
Second Edition**
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For Clark Baxter—innovator, publisher, and valued friend

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About the Author



Craig Wright

Craig M. Wright received his Bachelor of Music degree at the Eastman School of Music in 1966 and his Ph.D. in musicology from Harvard University in 1972. He began his teaching career at the University of Kentucky and for the past forty years has been teaching at Yale University, where he is currently the Henry L. and Lucy G. Moses Professor of Music. At Yale, Wright's courses include his perennially popular introductory course, *Listening to Music* (also part of the offerings of Open Yale Courses, which can be viewed on YouTube), and his large lecture course *Exploring the Nature of Genius*. He is the author of numerous scholarly books and articles on composers ranging from Leoninus to Bach. Wright has also been the recipient of many awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Einstein and Kinkeldey Awards of the American Musicological Society, and the Dent Medal of the International Musicological Society. In 2004, he was awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters from the University of Chicago. And in 2010 he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, joining fellow inductee banjo player Steve Martin.

Wright is currently serving at Yale as Academic Director of Online Education.

In addition to *The Essential Listening to Music*, Wright has also published *Listening to Music* and *Listening to Western Music, Seventh Edition* (Schirmer Cengage Learning, 2014); *Listening to Music, Chinese Edition* (Schirmer Cengage Learning/Three Union Press, 2012), translated and simplified by Profs. Li Xiujung (China Conservatory, Beijing) and Yu Zhigang (Central Conservatory, Beijing), both of whom worked with Wright at Yale; and *Music in Western Civilization, Media Update* (Schirmer Cengage Learning, 2010), with coauthor Bryan Simms. He is currently at work on a volume titled *Mozart's Brain: Exploring the Nature of Genius*.

Preface



Why a New Edition? Technology!

People lucky enough to teach music appreciation have a number of textbooks from which to choose. So why do we need another?

The Essential Listening to Music, Second Edition, is for the instructor who wants to spend a bit more time teaching somewhat fewer major pieces. A book that discusses, say, seventy to one hundred pieces may seem at least twice as valuable as a book that covers only about fifty. But some instructors do not have the time, and some students have not acquired the ability, to devote careful attention to more than five masterworks per week over a fourteen-week semester. With fewer pieces at hand, each teacher will also have more time to personalize the course by adding his or her own preferred media to the classroom experience. Thus, this book might be seen as a classic example of “less is more”: fewer written words, more opportunity for online media. Indeed, this is the perfect book for an online music appreciation course.

But whether your music education occurs in a traditional classroom or online, technology drives the need for newer editions, including this one. Today instructors are not as “textbook dependent” as they were five to ten years ago. The Internet has made possible instant access to a wealth of media that can enhance students’ interest by making the musical experience immediate and relevant to their world. Textbooks themselves are increasingly becoming hybrids—a combination book and media center. The book can also be experienced entirely online, with links to a wealth of electronic resources embedded therein. The job of the textbook today is to assure not only that students have access to these resources, but also that the almost limitless number of audio and video tracks and clips available globally have been reduced to a manageable number of the very best. Finally, the textbook of today must not only inform as well as link to the outside world—it must also be educationally creative.

Videos, animations, and exercises of all sorts are the newest modes of educational engagement in the twenty-first century. Instead of viewing these electronic experiences as unwanted distractions, *The Essential Listening to Music, Second Edition*, has embraced them. Many new drills, videos, and animations are built into the MindTap platform that accompanies the book. In every way, this new edition of *The Essential Listening to Music* is written for the digital age. Its aim is to take what is essentially a past culture (Western classical music) and present it in the mode of delivery of today and tomorrow. Only in this way will students come to see that this past culture is relevant to their current existence; only in this way will students be engaged, indeed inspired, to learn.



MindTap: An Online Companion

When *Listening to Music* was first under development some thirty years ago, the publisher considered issuing the recordings on vinyl, but instead dared move to a revolutionary new development: magnetic tape. Thereafter came CDs, now streaming music and downloads. Similarly, some dozen years ago I and the publisher created an online platform as a necessary companion to the book. Now entitled MindTap, it has grown into an engaging, personalized online environment, accessible on laptops, tablets, and handheld devices. With relevant assignments that guide students to analyze, apply, and improve thinking, MindTap also allows instructors to measure skills and outcomes with ease.

A Core Repertoire

What pieces of music are essential for students studying Western music? While we may all debate what should comprise the “canon” of Western music, *The Essential Listening to Music* presents a cohort of pieces that many instructors would eagerly adopt. In fact, it is built on the opinions of many appreciation instructors and on what is now my own nearly forty-five years of teaching music appreciation at the college level. Thus, the compositions presented and discussed here are not only the staples of the concert hall today, but also pieces that work in the classroom. Through them the instructor can present virtually all of the elements, forms, processes, and historical changes that have appeared in Western art music during the last millennium.

For instructors who also wish to cover popular or world music, relevant text material from *Listening to Music, Seventh Edition*—and the audio that accompanies it—is available through the Cengage custom publishing group at a small additional cost.

Writing Style

A briefer book would seem to require a more basic mode of presentation. With *The Essential Listening to Music*, I have simplified my prose and chosen a vocabulary that speaks directly to the college student of today. The book is still challenging, but it is accessible.




New to This Edition


Although its goals have not changed, this edition of *The Essential Listening to Music* incorporates several improvements.






MindTap

Text pedagogy is fully integrated with MindTap, to provide high-value gradable activities (Listening Exercises, Chapter Quizzes by Timothy J. Roden of Ohio Wesleyan University, and Critical Thinking Quizzes by James D. Siddons of Liberty University), as well as opportunities to engage with content and to practice.


The points on the MindTap Learning Path are, wherever appropriate, cued in the text with a MindTap logo  MindTap to remind users to take advantage of its rich resources. The Learning Path for *The Essential Listening to Music* is organized according to the following sections, all cued in the print text:


 MindTap **START . . .** signals a new animation for most chapters by Stephen Malinowski, of Music Animation Machine, incorporated in an engagement activity introduced by the author and accompanied by questions geared for class discussion.

 MindTap **READ . . .** Text reading begins, including a new set of learning objectives to preview each chapter's core concepts.

In the MindTap reader, embedded streaming audio, an Active Listening Guide for every work discussed, YouTube videos, and streaming instant audio of most notated musical examples, in place where they are needed, are cued in the print text with  MindTap **WATCH . . .** and  MindTap **LISTEN TO . . .** reminders. Full Listening Guides are also available in MindTap, with a print-PDF option.

Twelve new or reworked Listening Exercises provide in-depth quizzing on even more individual selections. The user make take these live, in place in the eBook, but they also appear separately, for students who want to take them without scrolling through the chapter.

 MindTap **PRACTICE . . .** reminds students to review their Active Listening Guides again in MindTap after finishing the chapter.

 MindTap **DO . . .** reminds students to demonstrate understanding and apply concepts by taking a Chapter Quiz and a new Critical Thinking Quiz at chapter end. These quizzes may be used for student review and practice. However, they also can be graded, and grades submitted to the instructor, if the instructor so chooses.

Text-related Improvements

Six musical works are new to the Second Edition, spanning eras from Classical to Postmodernist, and including a John Williams theme from the *Harry Potter* films.

- Chapter 8 now includes a discussion of Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, accompanied by a recording by Wynton Marsalis.
- Chapter 9 discusses the famous *Elvira Madigan* Piano Concerto by Mozart, accompanied by a Murray Perahia recording.



- A different Chopin nocturne, that in E \flat major recorded by Arthur Rubinstein, appears in Chapter 11.
- Chapter 12 now includes a different movement from Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*: "March to the Scaffold."
- Chapter 13 has new coverage of Wagner's *Die Walküre* and its rousing favorite—"Ride of the Valkyries."
- Chapter 16 concludes with a rewarding "dessert": John Williams's Hedwig's Theme from *Harry Potter*.

Craig Wright is now hosting a Facebook page—**Listening to Music with Craig Wright**—where readers will find discussions and blogs about what's happening with music today, and a mechanism for communicating directly with the author.



Pedagogical Aids

Listening Exercises

The Essential Listening to Music, like *Listening to Music*, was the first music appreciation text on the market to include Listening Exercises, now online in MindTap, where they may be graded electronically. By means of these, students will embrace hundreds of specific passages of music and make critical decisions about them. The exercises begin by developing basic listening skills—recognizing rhythmic patterns, distinguishing major keys from minor, and differentiating various kinds of textures. The exercises then move on to entire pieces in which students are required to become participants in an artistic exchange—the composer communicating with the listener and the listener reacting over a span of time. Ultimately, equipped with these newly developed listening skills, students will move comfortably to the concert hall, listening to classical and popular music with greater confidence and enjoyment. To be sure, this book is for the present course, but its aim—like any good educational experience—is to prepare students for a lifetime of learning, in this case, one of music listening and enjoyment. Text cues, which are “live” in the eBook, highlight the availability of online Listening Exercises.


Listening Guides

In order to keep this edition as brief as possible, full-text Listening Guides have been replaced with Listening Cues, which contain such key information as download references, genre and form, a concise suggestion of “What to Listen



For,” and cues to MindTap interactive streaming music, Active Listening Guides, often a video, and Listening Exercises. In addition, full Listening Guides appear in MindTap, from which users may also print out PDFs for offline review.

The Active Listening Guides in MindTap feature full-color interactive and streaming listening guides for every selection, along with listening quizzes and background information.



Ancillaries for Students

Streaming and Downloads

All the musical content discussed in the book is available streaming in MindTap and as free downloads, accessible via the Music Download Card packaged with each copy of the textbook.

Other MindTap Features

MindTap offers several distinctive features, including highlighting, flashcards, ReadSpeaker, and opportunities for instructors to change and add their own teaching materials to the Learning Path.

In addition, MindTap contains numerous YouTube videos; video demonstrations of keyboard instruments; eighteen iAudio podcasts on difficult musical concepts; a checklist of musical styles with integrated musical style quizzes; musical elements tutorials; an appendix on writing concert reports; and grade management for instructors.

Students may access MindTap using a passcode either bundled with their text or purchased online at www.cengagebrain.com.



For Instructors

Instructor's Companion Site

Accompanying *The Essential Listening to Music* is an Instructor Companion Website where you will find an Instructor's Resource Manual, Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero®, and PowerPoint presentations.

The extensive **Instructor's Resource Manual**, written by Timothy J. Roden of Ohio Wesleyan University, supplements the textbook.



Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero® is a flexible, cloud-based system that allows you to

- Author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning products.
- Create multiple test versions in an instant.
- Deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you prefer.

This edition's test bank also includes embedded music clips, allowing you to seamlessly integrate “drop the needle” listening items with other test material. (Music clips are also available separately on the Instructor's Companion Site.)

The **Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations**, created for this edition by Vicki Curry of James Madison University, are predesigned for use with the book; include full-color images, music clips, and YouTube and other web links; and are fully customizable.

Custom Options

The following enrichment chapters from *Listening to Music* are available for customization:

- Ch. 37 American Popular Music to World War II
- Ch. 38 Postwar Jazz
- Ch. 39 Broadway, Film, and Video Game Music
- Ch. 40 Rock: Music of Rebellion
- Ch. 41 The Far East
- Ch. 42 The Near East and Africa
- Ch. 43 The Caribbean and Latin America

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Craig Wright
Yale University

chapter ONE

The Power of Music

 MindTap™ **START** ... experiencing this chapter's topics with an online video activity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1 Describe how we perceive music.
- 2 Compare popular and classical music.
- 3 Know the primary genres and styles of classical music, as well as the “language” of its communication.
- 4 Recognize where and how to listen to music.
- 5 Test the capacity of classical music to move you, by exploring two of its most famous examples.

Why do we listen to music? Does it keep us in touch with the latest musical trends, help get us through our morning exercise, or relax us in the evening? Each day almost everyone in the industrialized world listens to music, whether intentionally or not. The global expenditure for commercial music is about \$40 billion annually, more than the gross domestic product of half of the 192 countries identified by the World Bank. Whereas in earlier centuries a music lover needed to seek out a concert or other live performance, now almost everyone can listen to music from a smartphone. Do you have an “app” for ballet or painting? Likely not. But probably you have one or more for music—iTunes, Spotify, Shazam, and Pandora, among them. Turn on the radio, and what do we hear: drama or poetry? No, usually just music; the radio is basically a transmission tool for music.

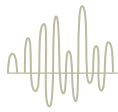
But why is music so appealing? What is its attraction? Does it perpetuate the human species? Does it shelter us from the elements? No. Does it keep us warm? Not unless we dance. Is music some sort of drug or aphrodisiac?

Oddly, yes. Neuroscientists at Harvard University have done studies that show that when we listen to music, we engage processes in the brain that are “active in other euphoria inducing stimuli such as food, sex, and drugs of abuse.”¹ These same researchers have explained the neural processes through which listening to particular pieces of music can give us goose bumps. There is a chemical change in the human brain, as blood flow increases in some parts and decreases in others. In this way, music can lower the heart rate and reduce levels of stress. Although listening to music today may or may not be necessary for survival, it does alter our chemical composition and our mental state. It is pleasurable and rewarding, as well as therapeutic.

It is also powerful—yet mysterious. Here’s a riddle: “You can’t see it; you can’t touch it. But it can touch you; it can make you cry or lift you up and out of your seat.” What is it? Music, of course! Indeed, music has an inspirational power. Think of a religious service, or a wedding or funeral, or a parade or commencement, without music. Think of the four-note “rally” motive played at profession sports events to get the crowd energized. Think of the refined sounds of Mozart in a commercial intended to convince us to buy an expensive watch. Plato (*The Republic*) once said what advertisers practice today: “To control the people, control the music.”

Sound perception is, in fact, the most powerful sense we possess, likely because it *was* once essential to our survival—who is coming and from where? Friend or foe? Flight or fight? We get frightened at horror films, not when the images on the screen become vivid, but when the music starts to turn ominous. In short, sounds rationally organized in a pleasing or frightening way—music—profoundly affect how we feel and behave.

¹Anne Blood and Robert Zatorre, “Intensely Pleasurable Responses to Music Correlate with Activity in Brain Regions Implicated in Reward and Emotion,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 98, No. 20 (Sept. 25, 2001), pp. 11818–11823.



Music, the Ear, and the Brain

Briefly defined, **music** is the rational organization of sounds and silences passing through time. Tones must be arranged in some consistent, logical, and (usually) pleasing way before we can call these sounds “music” instead of noise.

Like all sound, music is a disturbance of the atmosphere, one that creates **sound waves**, vibrations that reflect differences in air pressure. But music is special: its sound waves come in regular patterns. Air molecules are compressed and expanded—compression and rarefaction is the official term—in consistently recurring cycles (Figure 1.1). And they repeat with shocking speed. When we play the pitch called middle C on the piano, the cycle repeats (vibrates) 256 times per second; for the A above it, this happens 440 times per second. The speed of the vibration determines what we perceive as high and low pitches. The faster the vibration, the higher the pitch.

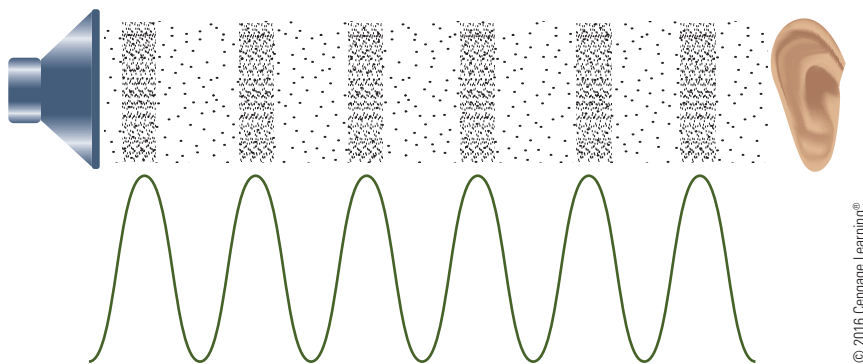


FIGURE 1.1

A representation of air molecules showing six vibrations of a single cycle of a sound wave. The more dots, the more compact the molecules. For the musical pitch middle C on the piano, such a cycle repeats 256 times per second—the strings on the piano are vibrating that quickly! ▲

When we hear music, sound waves make their way to our inner ear and are transformed into electro-chemical impulses. Here the “central processor” is a small organ called the **basilar membrane**, which recognizes and sorts the sound patterns, and then sends the information, via the auditory nerve, to the brain.

Given all the love songs in the world, we might think that music is an affair of the heart. But both love and music are domains of a far more complex vital organ: the brain (Figure 1.2). When sound-stimulated impulses reach the brain, neurons go to work analyzing them for pitch, color, loudness, duration, and direction of source, among other things. Most processing of sound (music as well as language) takes place in the temporal lobe. If we are imagining how the next line of a song will go, that decision is usually reached in the frontal lobe. If we are playing an instrument, we engage the motor cortex (parietal lobe) to move our fingers, and the visual center (occipital lobe) to read the notes. How do we feel about the music? Emotions are generated mostly in the limbic system, especially in an area called the amygdala. As the music proceeds, our brain constantly updates the information it receives, hundreds of times per second. At a speed of more than 250 miles



WATCH . . . a YouTube video on music and the brain, online.

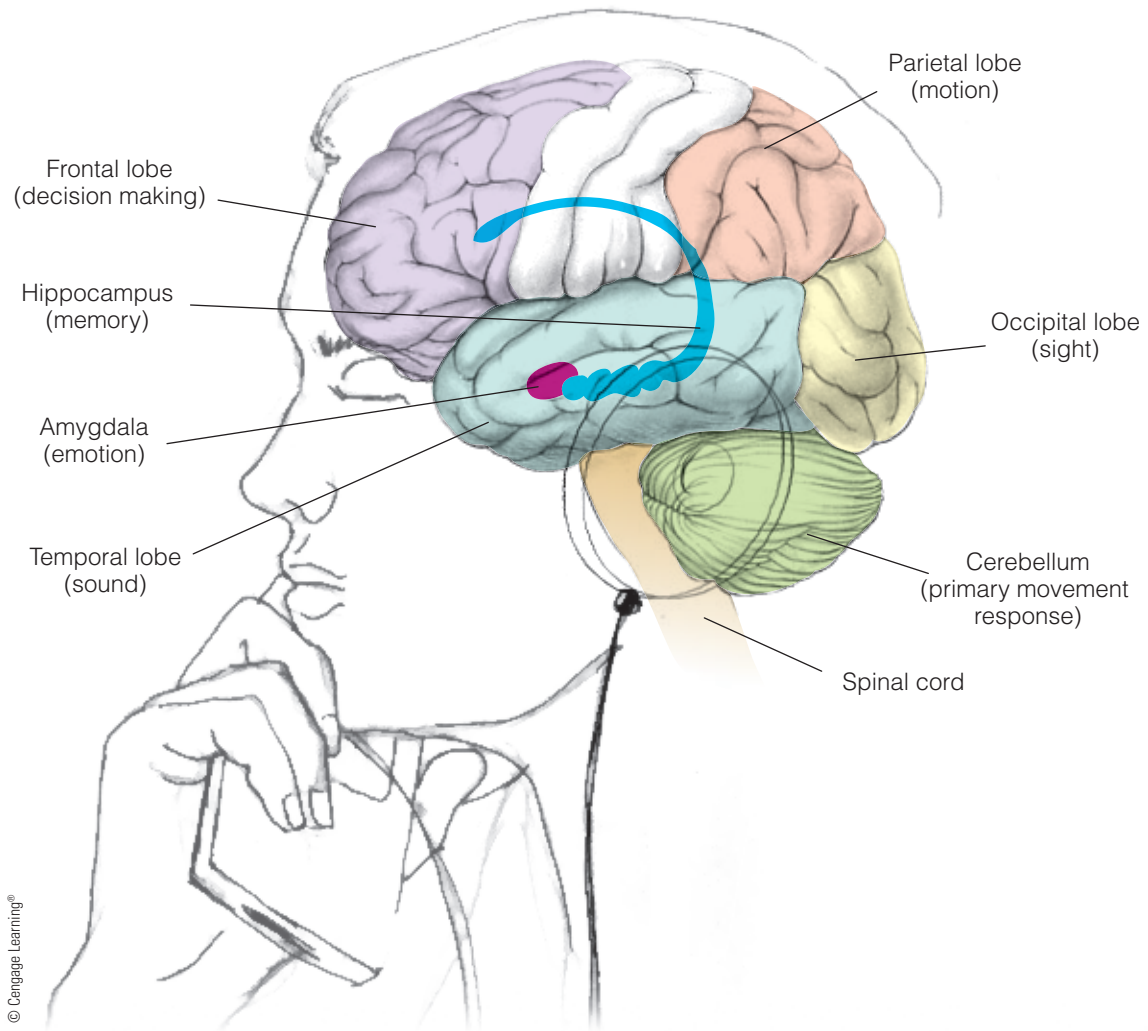


FIGURE 1.2

The processing of music in our brain is a hugely complex activity involving many areas and associated links. The first cerebral recognition and sorting of sounds, both musical and linguistic, occurs largely in the primary auditory cortex in both the left and right temporal lobes. ▲

per hour, associative neurons integrate all the data into a single perception of the sound. The chemical composition of our brain is altered, causing us to relax, or, if the impulses come strongly at regular intervals, to get up and dance.

Our Musical Template: Why We Like What We Like

What's your favorite piece of music—your favorite song or symphony? What types of music do you like? That depends on who you are, and on the kind of musical template you have in your head. A **musical template** is simply a set of

musical expectations that each of us engages as we listen to a piece; it reminds us how we think the music ought to go, what sounds good and what bad. But how do we come by our musical template? Like most aspects of our personality, we derive it partly through nature and partly through nurture.

Natural components in our musical template include an awareness of consonant and dissonant sounds, created by the overtone series—the physical properties of sound in the natural world, the specifics of which we need not go into here. Our sensitivity to a strong beat is another natural element, for it results from the evolution of the human brain. All people around the world have more or less the same response to consonance and dissonance, and all people respond to a regular beat.

Not all people, however, have the same expectations as to how a melody should go or how a harmony should sound. These preferences are determined by where we are born and live; we gradually assimilate the musical environment around us. A person reared in Beijing, China, likely will expect melody-focused music with pitches bending through a five-note scale; someone from Mumbai, India, likely is more comfortable listening to the sounds of the sitar playing a six-pitch scale; while someone from Nashville, Tennessee, in the United States, would expect a guitar to accompany a voice singing a seven-pitch major or minor scale. Thus, the nurturing element in music is a gradual process of musical acculturation, and it happens most intensely during the adolescent years. One of the aims of this book is to alter your musical template, so that you are familiar and comfortable with the sounds of classical music and eager to embrace more.



Listening to Whose Music?

Today most of the music that we hear isn't "live" music but recorded sound. Sound recording began in the 1870s with Thomas Edison's phonograph machine, which first played metal cylinders and then vinyl disks, or "records." During the 1930s, magnetic tape recorders appeared and grew in popularity until the early 1990s, when they were superseded by a new technology, digital recording. In digital recording, all the components of musical sound—pitch, tone color, duration, volume, and more—are analyzed thousands of times per second, and that information is stored on compact discs (CDs) or in computers as sequences of binary numbers. When it is time to play the music, these digital data are reconverted to electrical impulses that are amplified and pushed through speakers, headphones, or earbuds as sound waves.

Today most music is no longer sold as a commodity you can hold—as sheet music, a vinyl recording, or a CD, but rather is streamed or downloaded as MP3 or M4A files. While the audio quality is not as good as "live" acoustical sound, surely the tradeoff has been worth it. What had been an expensive experience for a lucky few (listening to live music at a concert) can now be enjoyed by almost anyone, anywhere, any time. This holds true for popular and classical music alike.

Popular or Classical?

Most people prefer **popular music**, music designed to please a large portion of the general public. Downloads and streams of pop outsell those of classical by more than twenty to one. But why are so many people, and young people in particular, attracted to popular music? Often it has to do with the power of the beat (see below and Chapter 2) and the lyrics.

Classical music, too, can be a powerful force. Hearing the huge, majestic sound of a mass of acoustical instruments—a symphony orchestra—can be an overwhelming experience. Classical music is often regarded as “old” music, written by “dead white men.” But this isn’t entirely true: No small amount of it has been written by women, and many composers, of both sexes, are very much alive and well today. In truth, however, much of the classical music that we hear—the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, for example—is old. That is why, in part, it is called “classical.” In the same vein, we refer to clothes, furniture, and cars as “classics” because they have timeless qualities of expression, proportion, and balance. Broadly defined, **classical music** is the traditional music of any culture, usually requiring long years of training; it is “high art” or “learned,” timeless music that is enjoyed generation after generation.



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Popular and Classical Music Compared

Today Western classical music is taught in conservatories around the world, from Paris to Beijing to Singapore. Western pop music enjoys even greater favor; in many places Western pop has replaced local pop traditions, so that all that remains are the local lyrics sung in the native tongue. But what are the essential differences between the music we call popular and the music we call classical (Figure 1.3)? Cutting to the quick, here are five ways in which they differ:

- Popular music often uses electric enhancements (via electric guitars, synthesizers, and so on) to amplify and transform vocal and instrumental sounds. Much of classical music uses **acoustic instruments** that produce sounds naturally.
- Popular music is primarily vocal, involving **lyrics** (accompanying text that tells listeners what the music is about and suggests how they should feel). Classical music is more often purely instrumental, performed on a piano or by a symphony orchestra, for example, and it employs its own language of pure sound to express meaning to the listener.
- Popular songs tend to be short and involve exact repetition. Classical compositions can be long, sometimes thirty to forty minutes in duration, and most repetitions are somehow varied.

FIGURE 1.3

Classical music requires years of technical training on an instrument and knowledge of often-complicated music theory. Some musicians are equally at home in the worlds of classical and popular music. Juilliard School of Music–trained Wynton Marsalis can record a Baroque trumpet concerto one week and an album of New Orleans–style jazz the next. He has won nine Grammy awards—seven for various jazz categories and two for classical albums. ▲

- Popular music is performed by memory, not from a written score (have you ever seen music stands at a rock concert?), and each performer can interpret the work as he or she sees fit (hence the proliferation of “cover songs”). Classical music, even if played by memory, is initially generated from a written score, and there is typically one commonly accepted mode of interpretation—the piece exists, almost frozen in time, as a work of art.
- Finally, popular music has a strong beat that makes us want to move in sync with it. Classical music often subordinates the beat in favor of melody and harmony.

This last point is important: Music with a regularly recurring beat has a powerful effect on our psyches, causing us to dance or motivating us to exercise. Cognitive neuroscientists have yet to explain fully the power of the beat. They suggest, however, that sounds with forcefully recurring patterns are processed in the “time-measuring” neurons of the cerebellum, one of the earliest parts of the brain to develop during human evolution. These neurons connect with motor neurons causing us to move, a physical response to isochronous stimulation—the beat. That explains how much pop music, especially dance music, “works.” But what about classical music?



How Does Classical Music Work?

Explaining how classical music works requires an entire book—this one. But some preliminary observations are in order.

Genres and Venues of Classical Music

Genre in musical terminology is simply a word for “type of music.” Needless to say, there are almost endless types of popular music: rap, hip-hop, blues, R&B, country, EDM (electronic dance music), and Broadway show tunes among them. **Venue** is merely a fancy word for place. Genre and venue are interrelated. The place where we go to hear music determines the type of music we hear. If we go to a bar, likely we will hear a blues or rock band, and there will be room for dancing, or at least swaying. If we go to a chamber music hall, we may hear a string quartet, and no one will move.

The acoustical conditions of the venue also affect the kind of music we hear. A rock band in a large, acoustically open stadium will need great electrical amplification to add volume and richness to the sound. No one would ask that same electrifying band to play in an acoustically reverberant cathedral because auditory mush would result. That reverberant cathedral, temple, or mosque requires the simplest sort of sound, and that is why chant is preferred there.

The venues for classical music are of three main types: opera houses and theaters for opera and ballet; concert halls for symphony orchestras; and chamber halls for smaller, solo ensembles. Concert halls, such as the Disney Center in

FIGURE 1.4

Some concerts require a large hall seating two to three thousand listeners (such as the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, Nashville, Tennessee, shown in Figure 1.5). For other performances a smaller venue with two to seven hundred seats is more appropriate, as we see here at the chamber music hall of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels, Belgium. >



Landov

Los Angeles, the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville (see Figure 1.5), or Carnegie Hall in New York, are large, accommodating two to three thousand listeners. Chamber halls, for solo performing groups, are smaller, accommodating perhaps two to seven hundred lovers of classical music (Figure 1.4).

Finally, genre and venue determine how we dress and behave—social convention has made it so. A fan goes to hear Kanye West at the River Rock Casino in Las Vegas dressed casually, ready to dance and make a lot of noise. Yet that same person would likely attend a concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Symphony Hall attired in suit and tie; any “fan” noise would only distract the orchestra. In sum, venue (Table 1.1) dictates genre and comportment: where we go determines what we hear, what we wear, and how we behave.

TABLE 1.1 Venues for Classical Music with Typical Genres Listed Below

Opera Houses and Theaters	Concert Halls	Chamber Halls
Opera	Symphony	Art song
Ballet	Concerto	String quartet
	Oratorio	Piano sonata

Styles of Classical Music

Style in music is generally the distinctive sound created by an artist, composer, or performing group. Internet radio services such as Pandora use algorithms to recommend songs that match the musical styles we prefer. Style is also the sum of the musical commonalities that typify the music of an age. Historians generally label as “eras” lengthy periods possessing common attributes and give them names such as “the Renaissance” or “the Enlightenment”—this helps simplify complex developments and makes comprehension easier. To this same end, music historians identify eight style periods, extending from the Middle Ages to the Postmodern era (Table 1.2).

TABLE 1.2 Musical Style Periods

Middle Ages: 476–1450	Romantic: 1820–1900
Renaissance: 1450–1600	Impressionist: 1880–1920
Baroque: 1600–1750	Modern: 1900–1985
Classical: 1750–1820	Postmodern: 1945–present

Sometimes the structure of the music alerts us to its style period; the music of the Classical period, for example, typically unfolds with melodies that are short and symmetrical. But most often we recognize the style period by obvious surface details, such as the colorful sounds of the instruments or the swings in the volume; the music of the Romantic era, for instance, is marked by a huge orchestral sound pushed forward by lush, sweeping strings—perhaps that is why it is popular with almost all listeners. Yet whatever the style and genre of the classical music we prefer—be it Romantic symphony or Classical opera—we don’t always know *why* we like it. The aim of this book, in part, is to explain the “why.”

The Language of Classical Music

Communication involves sending a message that generates a response. If a friend rushed up to you and said, “Your dog was just run over by a beer truck,” you’d probably react with shock and profound sadness. In this case, a verbal language conveys meaning and elicits an emotional reaction.

But music, too, is a means of communication, one older than spoken language; spoken language, many evolutionary biologists tell us, is simply a specialized subset of music. Over the centuries, composers of classical music have created a language that also can convey shock and sadness. This language of music is a collection of audible gestures that express the world of feelings and sensations in ways that words cannot. The Romantic composer Gustav Mahler drove home the point when he said: “If a composer could say what he had to say in words, he would not bother trying to say it in music.”

On a basic level, music lessons are not required to understand the language of music; we have been passively assimilating it since birth, each of us forming our musical template. We intuit, for example, that music that gets faster and rises in pitch communicates growing excitement, because we have heard these gestures frequently, as in “chase scenes” in films and on TV. Another piece might sound like a funeral march. But why? Because the composer is communicating this to us by using a slow *tempo*, low *range*, regular *beat*, and *minor key*. Understanding musical terms such as these will allow us to simplify complex issues of perception and emotion, and thereby penetrate to the heart of the seemingly mysterious nature of music.

Where and How to Listen

All of the music discussed in this book is available streaming in MindTap and for downloading via a special access card packaged with each new book. For each piece an Active Listening Guide can be found in MindTap that will lead