

Music: the international language



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Music is a part of people's lives from all around the world. It has been around for at least 50, 000 years and most likely originated in Africa (Wallin, et al. 1). There are several distinct genres of music. The most recognized forms in the western hemisphere are: classical, jazz, rock and folk, as well as others which are essentially branches from the four previously mentioned. Many career options exist for those wishing to pursue music, many of which require one or more scholastic degrees. In music, there are a plethora of diverse structural forms in which music is composed. A structural form usually describes the order the " sections" in a piece of music are written. Without composers, there would be little music today. Most composers have a unique style that they write in that can be identified by anyone with a trained ear. Music is constantly in an evolutionary state, and the music industry changes to reflect that. The future holds endless possibilities for the social and economical effects of new music.

Musical notation was not always nice printed symbols arranged in an easy to read format. The Greeks were the first to implement a system for translating written work into sound. However this system made it difficult for someone to imagine the melody, and was extremely difficult to reproduce, and there were usually many errors on copies. The Romans used the first 15 letters of the Roman alphabet above the applicable words to determine pitch with the first letter as the low pitch and the 15th letter as the high pitch. Neuma, or Neumes, is a very peculiar notation used mostly by 6th to 12th century ecclesiastical writers. Deciphering this notation is essentially guesswork due to the number of variables affecting the sounds. (" Changes in Musical
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Notation"). Of all the genres of music, classical is the most distinct. It usually includes string instruments, French horns, and trumpets, as well as others. Rock music or "devil music" as some people refer to it, has become increasingly popular around the world since its inception in the mid 1900's. This type of music is known to use electric guitars, drum kit, and vocals. Jazz also uses those instruments, but in a different way. In a typical "big band" jazz orchestra, there will be five saxophones, four trombones, four trumpets, a pianist, a drummer and a guitarist. The jazz style is quite different from that of other types of music. Normally, the first and third beat of a four beat measure are emphasized, in jazz the second and fourth beats are emphasized.

In music, there are many formal structures (the way sections of a piece repeat) in which songs are written. Sectional form is a mixture of short chunks of a piece (DeLone. et al. 87). Vocal music often employs the use of the strophic form, which repeats the same section over again (AA...). Binary form, as the name might suggest, has two different sections played in succession (AB) or one repeated and then the other repeated (AABB). Similarly to binary form, chain form has three or more sections played in succession (ABC) or (AABBCC). Ternary, or tertiary form, similarly to binary form has two different sections, the difference being there is a "B" section sandwiched in between two "A" sections (ABA). Arch form has three different sections, one "C" section in between two "B" sections, which is then in between two "A" sections (ABCBA). Finally, rondo form, which comes in two varieties: symmetrical and asymmetrical. Symmetrical form is (ABACABA) as asymmetrical form is (ABACADAEA) ("Musical Form").

There are many fun and rewarding careers in music many of which involve working with an assortment of creative individuals. Composition, the art of writing music, is one of the more difficult, yet also more rewarding choices, although it is hard to make a living as a composer unless the utmost dedication is displayed. Teaching others music, either by instruments, theory, or otherwise, is an occupation in high demand around the United States (“ Bachelor of Music”).

Musicians are the key element of music, without them there would be no live music. Music therapy is one of the less known musical vocations. Music therapists help people with mental illness or disability by using music (“ Careers in Music Therapy”).

There have been many great classical composers, each with his or her own identifying characteristics in their writing. Johann Sebastian Bach is known for never leaving pauses in his music. However, George Frideric Handel writes so that there are moments where no notes are played (grand pause.) Mozart has written over 600 pieces of music, all of which were written in one draft. Music is all about sound, and for a mostly deaf man, Ludwig Van Beethoven is quite an accomplished composer.

The music industry is generally defined as “ the businesses and organizations that record, produce, publish, distribute, and market recorded music” (“ Music Industry”). There are four major record companies or “ labels,” Sony BMG, EMI, Universal and Warner. In 2005, Universal dominated the United States market with a 31. 71% market share. In a close second came Sony BMG with 31. 71%. Warner firmly holds third with a solid 15%

market share, leaving EMI to clean up with the remaining 9.55%.

Independent labels cover 18.13% of the US market, but there are many independent companies and none of which hold a candle to the "big four" (Cashmere).

Music artists and record companies alike make most of their money from music sales, but with the rise of peer-to-peer file sharing networks, it has been increasingly popular to illegally download or, pirate, stolen music. According to the American Federation of Musicians, gross revenue for music drops about 20% annually due to piracy. In reaction to the horrifying statistics the Recording Industry Association of America or, RIAA, has taken a number of steps to fight internet piracy. One of their goals is to inform the public of the repercussions music piracy has on the individuals who earn a living from legitimate music exchange ("Online Music Piracy").

Jazz is the only style of music native to the United States of America. It is clear that many other genres thought to be "truly American" are actually just bits and pieces from the musical traits of other cultures. Jazz music is brimming with improvisation solos, where a musician is usually given a chord progression also known as "changes," and the musician plays notes in the scale of the key given at the specified time. Although the ink on the page may say to play in C7 one could just as well play in Cm instead. Jazz is also not bound to the "limitations" of other forms of music and will not always be cut up into easy-to-identify sections. One thing almost all types of music have in common is scalability, for example, there could be a single saxophonist playing "Harlem Nocturne" on a street corner, or there could be an 18 piece big band orchestra playing the same song in a concert hall. The <https://assignbuster.com/music-the-international-language/>

same applies to classical music, but it is more common to see a street musician playing jazz than classical music.

The invention of solid-state electronics brought on many changes. The music world was affected when someone figured that if you make a keyboard and set it so each key you press produces a different frequency at a line level current and run it through an amplifier, there will be an electronic piano-style keyboard! This device later became known as the analog synthesizer and was used in many performing bands. Several years later, digital sound synthesis technology made it possible to have hundreds of different “patches” on a keyboard, eliminating the need for expensive sound modules for analog synthesizers. Today, both technologies are used, but analog is mostly just used and built for historical and experimental purposes.

Every kind of music requires an instrument, be it human vocal cords, a bassoon, or a microchip, at least one instrument is required. There are three types of “traditional” instruments. Brass instruments are devices in which sound is made by pressing the lips to the large end of an almost conical mouthpiece and buzzing the lips whilst blowing. Instruments requiring no buzzing are referred to as woodwinds. The sound can be made either by a single reed, where the

player places the top front two teeth on top of a tapered mouthpiece and presses the bottom lip over the bottom teeth contacting the reed and blowing so the reed vibrates in between the mouthpiece and the bottom lip. A double reed instrument has no mouthpiece, only two reeds that are pointed together at the end. The third form of woodwind sound production

entails placing the lips on the near side of a hole in the mouthpiece and blowing air over the gap, just like making a glass bottle whistle.

In music, there are two categories, one for the high society, and one for the low society. The high society music is that of the classical, baroque romantic and other such eras, are usually performed in formal venues. In contrast, the low society music such as jazz, rap and hip hop could be performed in places where formal etiquette is not present such as a casino, night club or parking lot. It is apparent that the average audience member of a classical performance will have an income higher than that of an audience member from a hip hop concert. By analyzing this data, musicologists have concluded that the class distinction is not related to the music itself, rather, the crowd associated with that type of music.

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