

MUSIC

The Art of Listening



Jean Ferris

FOURTH EDITION

MUSIC

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Jean Ferris

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Preface

Music: The Art of Listening is a practical, concise textbook for the beginning student of music history and appreciation. The nontechnical language may be readily understood by a student with no previous music experience, and very little music notation—which means little to someone who does not read music—is included.

Throughout the text, music is presented in relation to the other arts and always in cultural and historical context, with relationships drawn between music of the distant past and that of modern times. The lives of the great composers are briefly discussed in relation to the works they produced. The chapters on vernacular music emphasize its relation to and influence on art music, the primary focus of this regrettably short course. (Ideally the rich world of folk and popular musics would deserve a course of its own.)

American music is presented in its historical context: thus students learn, for example, that the music of the Reformation profoundly affected music in the United States; that Mozart and Benjamin Franklin were eighteenth-century contemporaries who shared a classical taste; and that the trend toward nationalism, so strong in late nineteenth-century Europe, was slow to affect American music.

While the fourth edition remains primarily devoted to art music of the Western world, it includes six Musical Encounters with other cultures. Such encounters (of a musical kind) illustrate the disparate ways in which the materials of music are used, discouraging the misconception that the familiar is necessarily “right.” Further, awareness of such varied aesthetic concepts prepares students to receive non-traditional approaches to Western music with a positive attitude and so enhances understanding of recent art music.

Each Musical Encounter has been placed with concern for relevance to the material it

follows or precedes. Thus, having discussed the elements and forms of music in a Western context, we immediately explore the manner in which the musicians of India develop melody and harmony and construct a composition. Islamic music, influenced by religious chant much as Western music is by the Gregorian tradition, comes after the chapter on Medieval music. The music of China is introduced following our discussion of the Renaissance period, by which time China's highly developed culture was becoming a source of admiration (and trade) in the West. We explore Native American music after discussing the rise of nationalism in Europe, pointing out the long-standing lack of this "native" influence on mainstream American music. The music of Japan, so highly influential on the Impressionists, is introduced before Debussy. And the music of Africa, of strong significance to twentieth-century Western music (art and vernacular), is presented before the music and art it so strongly affected. In each case, we touch upon the role of music and performance practice in the particular culture. Listening Examples—necessarily brief—are included in each discussion.

Since the intent here is more aesthetic than didactic, key terms and individuals are not listed at the end of these sections: it seems less important for students to memorize differences between *dastgah* and *gushe*, for example, than to develop an interest in and liking for concepts foreign to their experience. Rather, topics to encourage critical thinking about these unfamiliar musics are offered. While the format of the text makes it possible, for those who wish, to avoid the Encounters, I hope many will find that they greatly enrich the introductory music experience.

The supporting package for this edition is stronger than ever. A third cassette was added to the student listening package so that we could include the new listening material for the Musical Encounters as well as new selections by Gabrieli, Amy Beach, Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, and James DeMars. A set of two supplemental compact discs is also available to instructors. Optional Listening Examples for these recordings are located in the Instructor's Manual; *these examples may be copied and distributed to students*. This valuable option greatly increases the flexibility of choice of examples to be studied.

The Instructor's Manual also includes chapter outlines, resource lists, and test questions. Testing software for Macintosh and IBM-compatible computers is also available.

I am extremely grateful to my colleagues at Arizona State University, on whose expertise I continually impose in the quest to improve this text. For this edition in particular, I thank Dr. Theodore Solis for his suggestions and efforts on its behalf; Dr. J. Richard Haefer for advice concerning Native American Music; and Dr. James DeMars, whose *Tapestry V* (Listening Example 57) so beautifully illustrates the sharing of Western and non-Western ideas.

My thanks as well to the music appreciation students at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College who shared with me the results of their extensive study of rap music and allowed me to use their material in this edition of the text. Their hard work and thoughtful gesture will be widely appreciated by those who use the book.