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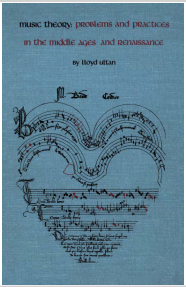
MUSIC THEORY PROBLEMS AND



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Recommended Course Materials & Supplementary Reference Resources

Please note: Below are recommended reference materials that accompany this subject. Scan the QR code next to any title to view syllabus details.



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Survival Training 24 Easy to Learn Methods for Learning How to Start a Fire, Create Firestarters



Plants and Empire Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World (Londa Schiebinger)



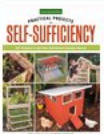
Pavement Management Guide 2nd Edition (AASHTO)



Reckoning The Ends of War in Guatemala (Diane M. Nelson)



Someone Is Always Watching (Kelley Armstrong)



Practical Projects for Self-Sufficiency DIY Projects to Get Your Self-Reliant Lifestyle Started (Chris



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SHTF Survival Boot Camp A Course for Urban and Wilderness Survival during Violent, Off-Grid,

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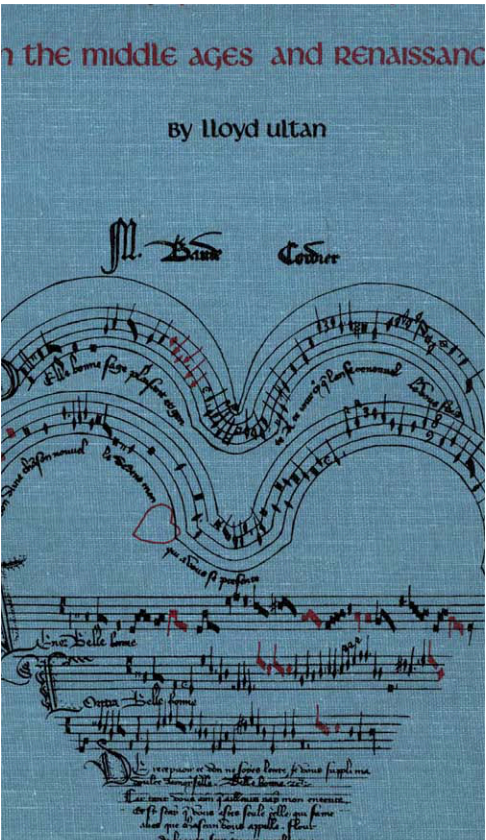
By lloyd ultan



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problems and practices
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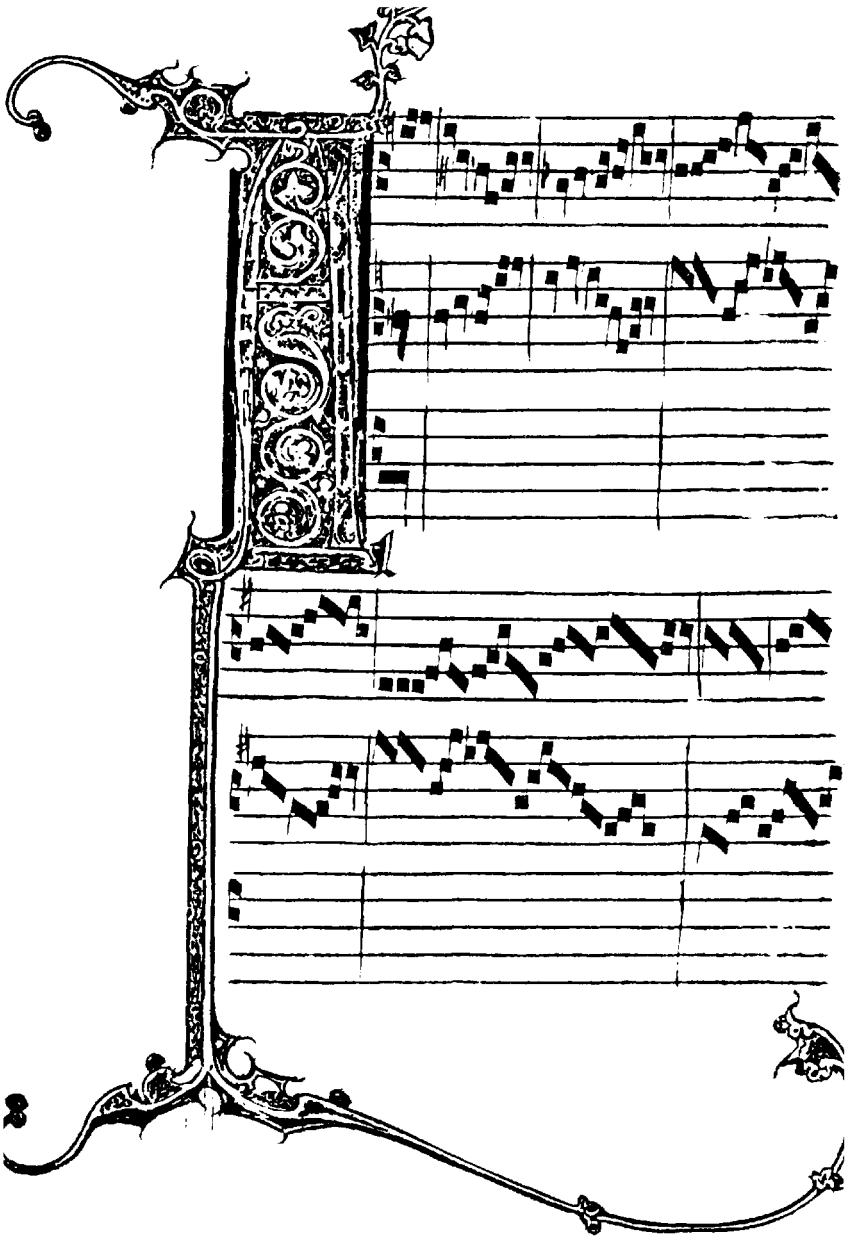
and renaissance



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Music Theory: Problems and Practices in the Middle Ages and Renaissance



By Lloyd Ultan

Professor and Chairman
Departments of Music and Music Education
University of Minnesota

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dedication

To

Roslye, my wife

Wendy
Alicia
Jacqueline
Deborah

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preface

The study of music theory is the study of musical style by carefully attending to the minutiae of compositional technique in the perspective of the broad organizational concept of an entire composition. This study is directed toward the cultivation of a deep concern for and consciousness of the smallest details in the analysis and creation of music as well as toward cultivating an awareness of the manner by which these small components have served composers in the development of expansive musical forms.

Traditionally the formal study of music theory has been confined to the styles and techniques of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Occasional token homage has been paid to the works of Palestrina, and the music of the twentieth century has been approached with trepidation and diffidence. It is the purpose of the present volume to study the theory of music through the perspective of history and, by introducing subject matter not normally included in the undergraduate curriculum, to achieve a degree of equity between the several historical periods of Western music and the respective degrees of difficulty posed by their various limitations, characteristics, and aesthetic concerns.

The academic program this volume is designed to serve is intended to supplant in part the traditional music-major theory curriculum. The volume was developed to serve two semesters of a three-year theory program. Ideally, in such a program the traditional courses in harmony, counterpoint, form, and ear training would be incorporated into a two- to three-year historical theory sequence.

This volume is revolutionary in concept because it suggests that theoretical problems of the Middle Ages and Renaissance be presented to freshmen and sophomores. This has traditionally been done on the graduate level, and even then it was rarely approached from a creative theoretical point of view. We recognize that the curriculum of each institution has special limitations and requirements. Therefore the volume has been designed to provide materials for beginning a logical continuum of study, while enabling each faculty to adapt the materials to its own needs.

The author assumes that students will bring to this study a basic musical background such as may be acquired in a strong fundamentals of music class that provides an introduction to the concepts of line, rhythm, vertical relationships, notations, and forms. Students are expected to have developed a good, basic reading ability. In addition, an understanding of fundamental concepts like the following is highly desirable: the balance between unity and variety in the design of music; the constantly changing attitudes toward consonances and dissonances; the rudiments of acoustics (at least to the extent of understanding the relationships of the overtone series); and the concept of the graphic representation of sound—students must be flexible in their understanding of the concept if they are to successfully approach the early notational efforts of the Middle Ages as well as the diverse experiments of the twentieth century.

It should be fully understood by students and teachers that this book is not intended to be a musicological treatise providing results of new research or treating a narrow subject in depth. Nor can it be equated with the traditional harmony or counterpoint textbook designed to serve present theory curricula. It has been conceived, rather, to assist students in developing analytical and compositional techniques by studying selected works in historical sequence. Only a tiny sampling of the vast literature available has been made to serve the particular needs of given theoretical problems. Unquestionably many other works could have been selected to accomplish the same ends. Likewise it would have been possible to devote attention to some subjects that are mentioned in passing or that have been completely ignored. It was the author's judgment that only topics that would contribute directly to the evolution of students' techniques in both analysis and composition and that were sufficiently important in the evolution of compositional style in general or of individual techniques in particular would be included in this study. Undoubtedly the omission of some specific subjects allows room for debate about the value they might have offered in this context. It is possible that

there are readers who will consider some of the subjects covered to be unnecessary or unimportant relative to things they are more interested in. It is the author's experience in having developed and taught theory classes that the materials presented are the most effective for the purposes defined and are both interesting and challenging to students. This is especially so when work with this volume is coordinated with the accompanying workbook/anthology. However, each class reflects the unique cumulative talents of its participating students and the interests, talents, and personality of its teacher. The author encourages expanding or contracting the content of this volume to suit the particular needs and interests of the individuals concerned.

In light of the many parallels between historical periods, even at opposite ends of the time spectrum (comparisons between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century are more and more frequently employed and can be remarkable in their clarity), flexibility should be cultivated in the minds of all students. The study of music theory can be a marvelous vehicle for the achievement of that goal if it is understood that the seemingly severe limitations imposed by many styles provide an almost infinite source of choices which challenge the imagination, knowledge, and technical facility of students. The emphasis throughout this study should be on the development of a sensitivity to the music and a recognition of the artistic premises that pervade the thinking of all composers. Students should be discouraged from cold, matter-of-fact adherence to rules and should be encouraged to understand the malleability of all styles and techniques. The development of musicality must be the primary goal, and the achievement of computerlike representation of sharply defined practices should be considered the greatest failing.

No volume of this complexity and dimension can be realized without the sympathetic assistance and advice of many people. One, beyond all others, has made the existence of this book possible. Through her intense efforts in obtaining materials, her devotion and care in proofreading, her understanding of my various problems and frustrations, and her incisive evaluation and provocation always directed toward achieving greater refinement and clarity, my wife Roslye made it possible for this project to be completed with whatever merits it may have achieved.

It is impossible to express appreciation to all who have contributed to this volume. However, I do wish to acknowledge those whose contributions have been most significant: Dr. George C. Schuetze Jr.; the late Dr. Esther Williamson Ballou; James L. McLain; Alan Mandel; John Marlow; Douglas Dawson; Tommie Carl; Dr. Meredith Little, all associated with The American Univer-