

The Oxford Companion to Music

by Percy Scholes

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Summary:

The Oxford Companion to Music is a comprehensive reference book on music written by Percy Scholes. It was first published in 1938 and has since been revised several times, most recently in 2002. The book covers all aspects of music from its history and theory to composers, performers, instruments, genres, styles and forms. It also includes biographies of important musicians as well as entries on musical terms and concepts.

The book begins with an introduction that provides an overview of the development of Western music from ancient Greece through the 20th century. This section also contains information about non-Western musics such as Indian classical music and African drumming traditions. Following this are sections devoted to specific topics such as harmony, counterpoint, form and analysis; orchestration; vocal technique; composition techniques; performance practice; notation systems; acoustics; electronic instruments; popular music styles including jazz and rock 'n' roll; world musics including folk songs from various countries around the globe.

In addition to these topics there are chapters dedicated to individual composers such as Bach, Beethoven or Mozart which provide detailed accounts of their lives along with analyses of their works. There are also entries for major musical institutions like conservatories or opera houses throughout Europe. Finally there is a glossary containing definitions for hundreds of musical terms.

Overall The Oxford Companion to Music is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in learning more about any aspect related to music whether it be historical facts or technical details regarding composition or performance practices.

Main ideas:

#1. *Music Theory: Music theory is the study of the structure and elements of music, including rhythm, melody, harmony, and form. It is an essential part of understanding and creating music, and is used to analyze and explain musical works.*

Music theory is a complex and fascinating field of study. It involves the analysis of musical elements such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and form in order to understand how they work together to create music. Music theory can be used to analyze existing works or to compose new pieces. It also provides insight into the structure of music and helps musicians develop their own unique style.

At its core, music theory is about understanding relationships between notes and chords. By studying these relationships, musicians can learn how different combinations of notes interact with each other to create pleasing sounds. They can also use this knowledge when composing their own pieces by choosing which notes will sound best together.

In addition to helping composers write better music, music theory can help performers interpret existing works more accurately. By understanding the underlying structure of a piece, performers are able to make informed decisions about dynamics and phrasing that bring out the full potential of a composition.

Music theory is an essential part of any musician's education because it gives them an in-depth understanding of how music works on both a theoretical level and practical level. With this knowledge they are able to create beautiful

compositions that stand out from others.</p></div>

#2. Musical Instruments: Musical instruments are devices used to produce sound, and can be divided into four main categories: string, wind, percussion, and electronic. Each instrument has its own unique sound and capabilities, and can be used to create a wide variety of musical styles.

String instruments are the oldest type of musical instrument, and include instruments such as the violin, guitar, harp, and lute. These instruments produce sound by plucking or strumming strings that vibrate when struck. String instruments can be used to create a wide range of sounds from gentle melodies to powerful chords.

Wind instruments use air blown through a tube or reed to produce sound. Examples of wind instruments include flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones and saxophones. Wind instruments can be used for both melodic lines and accompaniment.

Percussion instruments are played by striking them with sticks or mallets in order to produce sound. Examples of percussion instruments include drums (such as snare drums), cymbals, xylophones and marimbas. Percussion is often used for rhythm sections in music.

Electronic musical Instruments use electronic components such as amplifiers and speakers to generate sound electronically rather than acoustically like traditional acoustic musical Instruments do. Electronic musical Instruments have become increasingly popular over the last few decades due to their versatility and ability to create unique sounds not possible with traditional acoustic Instruments.</p></div>

#3. Musical Genres: Musical genres are categories of music that share certain characteristics, such as style, instrumentation, and tempo. Examples of genres include classical, jazz, rock, and hip-hop.

Musical genres are an important part of music history and culture. They provide a way to categorize different types of music, making it easier for listeners to find the type of music they enjoy. Each genre has its own unique characteristics that set it apart from other genres. For example, classical music is typically characterized by complex harmonies and intricate melodies, while jazz often features improvisation and syncopated rhythms.

In addition to style, instrumentation can also be used as a defining factor in musical genres. Classical pieces are usually composed for orchestras or chamber ensembles featuring strings, woodwinds, brass instruments, and percussion instruments. Jazz bands may include saxophones, trumpets, trombones, pianos or keyboards; electric guitars; basses; drums; and sometimes vocalists. Rock bands often feature electric guitars with distortion effects pedals along with bass guitar and drums.

Tempo is another element that helps define musical genres. Classical pieces tend to have slower tempos than jazz or rock songs which generally move at a faster pace. Hip-hop beats are usually quite fast compared to other styles of popular music.

By understanding the various elements that make up each genre of music we can better appreciate the diversity within the world of sound.</p></div>

#4. Music History: Music history is the study of the development of music over time, from its earliest beginnings to the present day. It includes the study of musical styles, composers, and instruments, as well as the social and cultural contexts in which music was created.

Music history is the study of how music has evolved over time, from its earliest beginnings to the present day. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including musical styles, composers, instruments, and the social and cultural contexts in which music was created. Music historians seek to understand why certain pieces were composed in particular ways or why certain instruments became popular at different times. They also explore how music has been

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used for various purposes throughout historyâ€”from religious ceremonies to entertainment.

The study of music history can provide insight into many aspects of our culture today. By looking back at past eras we can gain an understanding of how musical trends have changed over time and what influences have shaped them. We can also learn about the impact that technology has had on musical production and consumption as well as discover new ways to appreciate existing works.

Studying music history is not only interesting but also beneficial for those who wish to pursue a career in any field related to music such as composition or performance. Knowing more about the development of different genres will help musicians better understand their craft and create more meaningful works.

#5. *Music Education: Music education is the process of teaching music to students of all ages. It includes instruction in music theory, performance, composition, and history, as well as the development of musical skills and appreciation.*

Music education is an important part of any student's development. It provides students with the opportunity to explore their creativity and express themselves through music. Music education also helps develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and communication. Through learning about different musical styles and genres, students can gain a better understanding of the world around them.

In addition to teaching music theory and performance techniques, music educators often focus on developing a student's appreciation for all types of music. This includes introducing students to classical works from various eras as well as popular songs from today's culture. By exposing students to different kinds of music they may not have heard before, teachers can help broaden their horizons.

Music education also has many benefits beyond just learning how to play an instrument or read sheet music. Studies have shown that children who receive regular instruction in playing instruments tend to perform better academically than those who do not participate in any kind of musical activity. Additionally, research suggests that engaging in musical activities can improve mental health by reducing stress levels and increasing self-esteem.

#6. *Music Technology: Music technology is the use of technology to create, record, and manipulate music. It includes the use of computers, synthesizers, and digital audio workstations, as well as the development of new instruments and sound processing techniques.*

Music technology has revolutionized the way music is created, recorded, and manipulated. It has enabled musicians to explore new sounds and techniques that would have been impossible before. Computers, synthesizers, digital audio workstations (DAWs), and other technological tools allow for unprecedented levels of control over sound production. With these tools, producers can create complex arrangements with multiple layers of sound in a fraction of the time it used to take.

The development of new instruments such as MIDI controllers and virtual instruments also allows for greater flexibility when creating music. These instruments are often designed to be more intuitive than traditional acoustic instruments, allowing users to quickly learn how to use them without having extensive musical training or knowledge. Additionally, many modern DAWs come with built-in effects processors which enable producers to easily add reverb or delay effects without needing additional hardware.

Finally, advances in digital signal processing have allowed engineers and producers to manipulate sound in ways that were previously unimaginable. For example, pitch correction software can automatically correct out-of-tune notes while preserving the original performance's character; dynamic range compression can make quiet sections louder while keeping loud sections from becoming too overwhelming; and spectral analysis algorithms can isolate individual elements within a mix so they can be processed separately.

#7. *Music Notation: Music notation is the system of symbols used to represent musical sounds and rhythms. It is used to record and communicate musical ideas, and is an essential part of understanding and performing music.*

Music notation is a powerful tool for communicating musical ideas. It allows musicians to accurately record and share their compositions, as well as to learn and perform music written by others. Music notation consists of symbols that represent different aspects of the music, such as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, and expression. By combining these symbols in various ways, composers can create complex pieces of music that are easily understood by performers.

The use of standardised musical notation has been around since at least the 9th century AD. Over time it has evolved into an incredibly sophisticated system capable of representing almost any kind of musical idea imaginable. Today's modern notations are used in all genres from classical to jazz to pop and beyond.

Learning how to read and write music is an essential part of becoming a musician. It helps you understand what you hear when listening to a piece or performance; it also gives you the ability to communicate your own ideas clearly through writing them down on paper or computer screen.

#8. *Music Psychology: Music psychology is the study of the psychological aspects of music, including its effects on the listener, performer, and composer. It includes the study of musical perception, cognition, emotion, and behavior.*

Music psychology is a fascinating field of study that explores the psychological aspects of music. It looks at how music affects people in different ways, from its effects on listeners to performers and composers. Music psychology examines musical perception, cognition, emotion, and behavior. It seeks to understand why certain pieces of music evoke strong emotions or memories in some people while others may not be affected by them at all.

The study of music psychology can help us better understand how we interact with and respond to music. It can also provide insight into the creative process behind composition and performance. By understanding more about our relationship with music, we can gain a greater appreciation for it as an art form.

In addition to providing insights into our own experiences with music, research in this area has practical applications as well. For example, studies have shown that listening to certain types of classical or ambient instrumental pieces can reduce stress levels and improve concentration during work tasks. Music therapy is another application where knowledge gained through research in this field has been used successfully.

#9. *Music Therapy: Music therapy is the use of music to promote physical, emotional, and cognitive health. It is used to treat a variety of conditions, including depression, anxiety, and autism.*

Music therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses music to help individuals achieve their therapeutic goals. It can be used to treat physical, emotional, and cognitive issues. Music therapists use various techniques such as improvisation, songwriting, listening to music, and playing instruments in order to create an environment where clients can express themselves and work through their problems. Music therapy has been found to be effective in treating depression, anxiety disorders, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse disorders, eating disorders, chronic pain management and more.

The goal of music therapy is not only for the client's mental health but also for overall wellbeing. Through the use of musical activities such as singing or playing instruments together with a therapist or group members it helps build relationships between people which can lead to improved communication skills and social interaction. Additionally it provides an outlet for creative expression which can help reduce stress levels while increasing self-esteem.

Music therapy sessions are tailored specifically for each individual depending on their needs; they may involve active

participation from the client or simply listening passively while the therapist plays soothing music. The length of time spent in each session varies depending on what works best for the individual but typically lasts around 45 minutes.

#10. *Music Industry: The music industry is the business of creating, producing, and distributing music. It includes record labels, publishers, radio stations, and streaming services, as well as the artists and musicians who create the music.*

The music industry is a complex and ever-evolving business. It involves the production, distribution, promotion, and sale of recorded music. Record labels are responsible for signing artists to recording contracts and producing their albums. Publishers handle the licensing of songs for use in films, television shows, commercials, video games, etc., as well as collecting royalties from radio airplay and other uses of copyrighted material. Radio stations play an important role in promoting new releases by playing them on the airwaves. Streaming services such as Spotify have revolutionized how people consume music by providing access to millions of tracks at any given time.

In addition to these entities that make up the traditional music industry infrastructure there are also independent musicians who produce their own recordings without relying on record labels or publishers. These DIY artists often rely on digital platforms like Bandcamp or SoundCloud to distribute their work directly to fans around the world.

The modern music industry is constantly changing due to technological advances such as streaming services and social media platforms which allow artists more control over how they reach audiences than ever before. As technology continues to evolve so too will the ways in which we experience and interact with music.

#11. *Music Criticism: Music criticism is the practice of evaluating and analyzing music. It includes the study of musical works, performances, and composers, as well as the evaluation of musical trends and styles.*

Music criticism is an important part of the music industry, as it helps to shape public opinion and influence the direction of musical trends. Music critics evaluate and analyze music in a variety of ways, including through reviews, interviews, and analysis. They may focus on particular genres or styles of music, or they may take a broader approach that looks at all types of music. Criticism can be used to assess the quality of performances or recordings, as well as to explore how different composers have approached their craft.

The practice also involves looking at historical context and examining how certain works fit into larger cultural movements. Critics often draw comparisons between different pieces or artists in order to better understand them within their respective contexts. Additionally, they may look at social issues such as gender roles in popular music or racial representation in classical compositions.

Ultimately, the goal of any form of criticism is to provide insight into what makes certain pieces successful or unsuccessful and why some works are more influential than others. By understanding these factors, we can gain a greater appreciation for both individual works and entire genres.

#12. *Music Composition: Music composition is the process of creating music. It includes the use of musical elements such as melody, harmony, rhythm, and form to create a unique musical work.*

Music composition is an art form that has been around for centuries. It involves the use of musical elements such as melody, harmony, rhythm, and form to create a unique musical work. The composer must be able to combine these elements in order to create something that is both pleasing and meaningful. Music composition can take many forms including classical music, jazz, pop music, film scores and more.

The process of composing music begins with the selection of a key or tonality which will serve as the foundation for the piece. This key will determine what notes are used throughout the piece and how they interact with each other. Once this has been established then it's time to begin writing melodies and harmonies that fit within this tonal framework. After this comes arranging these melodic ideas into sections or movements which make up the overall structure of the piece.

Once all of these components have been put together it's time to refine them until they become a cohesive whole. This may involve adding additional instruments or voices as well as making adjustments to dynamics or tempo in order to bring out certain aspects of the composition more clearly.

Finally once everything is complete it's time for performance! Whether performed by live musicians or through electronic means like MIDI sequencing software there is nothing quite like hearing your own compositions come alive!

#13. *Music Performance: Music performance is the act of performing music. It includes the interpretation and execution of musical works, as well as the development of musical skills and techniques.*

Music performance is the act of performing music. It involves the interpretation and execution of musical works, as well as the development of musical skills and techniques. Music performance can take many forms, from a solo instrumentalist playing a piece to an orchestra or choir performing a symphony or cantata. The performer must be able to interpret the composers intentions accurately while also bringing their own unique style and expression to the work.

The process of preparing for a performance requires careful study and practice in order to master both technical aspects such as intonation, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, phrasing etc., as well as more subtle elements such as emotionality and expressiveness. A successful performance will combine all these elements into one cohesive whole that conveys both the composer's message and the performer's individual interpretation.

In addition to mastering technique, performers must also develop stage presence in order to engage with their audience. This includes developing confidence in front of an audience through body language and facial expressions that convey emotion without detracting from the music itself.

#14. *Music Business: The music business is the business of creating, producing, and distributing music. It includes record labels, publishers, radio stations, and streaming services, as well as the artists and musicians who create the music.*

The music business is a complex and ever-evolving industry. It involves the production, distribution, promotion, and sale of recorded music as well as live performances. Record labels are responsible for signing artists to recording contracts and producing their albums. Publishers help songwriters protect their copyrights by registering songs with performing rights organizations such as ASCAP or BMI. Radio stations play an important role in promoting new releases while streaming services like Spotify provide access to millions of tracks from around the world.

In addition to these traditional players in the music business, there are also independent musicians who self-release their own material without relying on record labels or publishers. These DIY artists often use digital platforms such as Bandcamp or SoundCloud to distribute their work directly to fans. The internet has opened up many opportunities for independent musicians to reach wider audiences than ever before.

The success of any artist depends on how well they can market themselves and build relationships with fans through social media channels such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. Music videos have become increasingly popular over recent years due to the rise of video streaming sites like YouTube which allow anyone with a camera phone or computer access to create content that can be seen by millions.

#15. *Music Production: Music production is the process of creating a recording of a musical work. It includes the use of recording equipment, sound engineering, and mixing techniques to create a finished product.*

Music production is a complex process that involves many different elements. It begins with the selection of musical material, which can be composed or improvised. Once the music has been chosen, it must be recorded using microphones and other recording equipment. The sound engineer then uses mixing techniques to create a balanced mix of all the instruments and vocals in the track.

The next step is to edit and arrange the track into its final form. This includes adding effects such as reverb, compression, EQing, panning and more to enhance certain aspects of the song. Finally, mastering is used to ensure that all tracks are at an optimal level for playback on various devices.

Music production requires skillful use of technology as well as creative vision in order to achieve a desired result. It takes time and practice to become proficient in this art form but when done correctly it can produce amazing results.

#16. *Music Copyright: Music copyright is the legal protection of a musical work. It includes the exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, and perform a musical work, as well as the right to collect royalties for its use.*

Music copyright is an important concept in the music industry, as it provides legal protection for musical works. It grants exclusive rights to the composer or author of a work, including the right to reproduce, distribute and perform their work. This means that anyone who wishes to use a copyrighted piece of music must obtain permission from its creator before doing so. Additionally, those who have obtained permission are required to pay royalties for any commercial use of the work.

The scope of music copyright can vary depending on jurisdiction; however, most countries recognize some form of copyright protection for musical works. In general terms, this includes both published and unpublished compositions such as songs and instrumental pieces. Copyright also covers arrangements or adaptations made by someone other than the original composer.

In addition to granting exclusive rights over a composition's use and distribution, music copyright also serves as an incentive for composers and authors to create new works. By protecting their intellectual property through copyrights they can be compensated financially when others wish to make use of their creations.

#17. *Music Publishing: Music publishing is the business of creating, producing, and distributing music. It includes the licensing of musical works, as well as the collection of royalties for their use.*

Music publishing is an essential part of the music industry. It involves creating, producing, and distributing musical works for commercial use. This includes licensing songs to be used in films, television shows, advertisements, video games and other media outlets. Music publishers also collect royalties from these uses and distribute them to songwriters or composers.

The process of music publishing begins with a songwriter or composer submitting their work to a publisher who will then evaluate it for potential success. If accepted by the publisher they will negotiate terms such as royalty rates and ownership rights before signing a contract with the artist. The publisher will then promote the work through various channels such as radio playlists, streaming services and live performances.

Once released into the public domain, music publishers are responsible for collecting royalties from any usage of their copyrighted material. They may do this directly or through organizations like ASCAP (American Society of Composers Authors & Publishers) which collects fees on behalf of its members when their works are performed publicly.

Music publishing is an important part of ensuring that artists receive fair compensation for their creative efforts while allowing others to enjoy their work legally without fear of copyright infringement.</p>

#18. *Music Theory Education: Music theory education is the process of teaching music theory to students of all ages. It includes instruction in music theory, performance, composition, and history, as well as the development of musical skills and appreciation.*

Music theory education is an important part of any musician's development. It provides the foundation for understanding and creating music, as well as developing a deeper appreciation for it. Music theory instruction covers topics such as

scales, chords, intervals, harmony, counterpoint, form and analysis. Students learn to identify musical elements in compositions and develop their own creative ideas through composition exercises.

Performance skills are also developed through music theory education. Students learn how to interpret written notation accurately and expressively on their instrument or voice. They gain knowledge of different styles of playing or singing that can be applied to various genres of music.

History is another key component of music theory education. By studying the works of past composers students gain insight into the evolution of musical styles over time and become familiar with influential figures in classical music history.

Finally, by engaging in activities such as improvisation and ear training students develop aural skills which help them recognize patterns within pieces they hear or play themselves.

#19. *Musicology: Musicology is the study of music in its historical, cultural, and social contexts. It includes the study of musical styles, composers, and instruments, as well as the social and cultural contexts in which music was created.*

Musicology is a fascinating field of study that encompasses many different aspects of music. It looks at the history and evolution of musical styles, instruments, and composers, as well as the social and cultural contexts in which music was created. Musicologists examine how music has been used to express ideas or emotions throughout history, from ancient times to modern day. They also explore how different cultures have interacted with each other through their shared love for music.

In addition to studying the past, musicologists also look at current trends in popular culture and analyze how they are influencing our understanding of what constitutes "good" or "bad" music. By looking at both historical and contemporary sources, they can gain insight into why certain genres become popular while others fade away over time.

The study of musicology is important because it helps us understand not only our own musical tastes but those of other cultures around the world. It allows us to appreciate the beauty found in all types of musical expression—from classical symphonies to hip-hop beats—and recognize its power to bring people together regardless of language or background.

#20. *Music Festivals: Music festivals are large-scale events featuring live music performances. They are typically held outdoors and feature a variety of musical genres, as well as food, drinks, and other activities.*

Music festivals are a great way to experience live music in an exciting and unique setting. They often feature multiple stages, with different genres of music playing simultaneously. Attendees can wander from stage to stage, discovering new artists and sounds as they go. Music festivals also provide the opportunity for fans to meet their favorite musicians in person, as well as other like-minded people who share their passion for music.

In addition to the musical performances, many music festivals offer food vendors selling delicious treats and drinks that help keep attendees energized throughout the day or night. Some even have carnival rides or art installations that add another layer of entertainment. Many festivalgoers take advantage of these activities while enjoying the atmosphere created by thousands of people coming together to celebrate their love of music.

Music festivals are becoming increasingly popular around the world due to their ability to bring together diverse groups of people through a shared appreciation for sound. Whether you're looking for a weekend getaway or just want an excuse to dance all night long, attending a music festival is sure to be an unforgettable experience.