

*Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die.
Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness,
Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts
Not that only, but the co-existence,
Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
And the end and the beginning were always there.*

T.S. Eliot, **Burnt Norton**, V

One of my projects in a music education class in college was to create my ideal *listening list* for a high-school level music appreciation class. The requirements included a broad coverage of musical styles and genres and representation of the most famous composers from each period.

The following list represents my favorite listening, from all periods of Western music: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern. It includes a variety of genres: sonata form, orchestral suite, concerto, opera, mass, oratorio and song cycle.

All of these selections are available recorded; many I've heard live; either my daughter or I have even performed quite a few.

Most of the famous composers are included, but not necessarily their most famous works. The selections are organized in three different ways:

- Alphabetically, by composer, beginning on page 2.

If you want to see what I've recommended by a specific composer, look here.

- By period or style, beginning on page 3.

If you're interested in a specific musical style (Medieval and Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic or Modern), look here.

- By genre, beginning on page 6.

If you're interested in a particular musical genre (opera and oratorio, symphonic, chamber music, liturgical music, art song or song cycle), look here.

Composer

John Adams: *Harmonium*
Tomasso Albinoni: *Adagio*
Johann Sebastian Bach: *A Musical Offering; Brandenburg Concerti, Numbers 1 through 6; The Art of the Fugue; Mass in b minor; Toccata and Fugue in D minor & Magnificat*
Samuel Barber: *Adagio for Strings*
Bela Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra & String Quartet Number 6*
Ludwig von Beethoven: *String Quartet in a minor, Opus 132 & Symphony Number 7*
Hector Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*
Georges Bizet: *Les Pecheurs des Perles*
Johannes Brahms: *A German Requiem; Gypsy Songs & Hungarian Dances*
Benjamin Britten: *A Ceremony of Carols & Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*
Anton Bruckner: *Virga Jesse & Locus Iste*
Pablo Casals: *O Vos Omnes*
Frederic Chopin: *Nocturnes & Etudes*
Aaron Copland: *Appalachian Spring; Quiet City & Rodeo*
Charles Davidson: *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*
Claude Debussy: *Noel des Enfants qui n'ont Plus de Maison; Salut Printemps; La Mer; Images & Prelude sur l'Apres-midi d'une faune*
Leo Delibes: *Lakme*
Hugo Distler: *Es Ist Ein Ros Entsprungen & Das Ist Je Gewisslich Wahr*
John Dowland: *A Lute Lullaby*
Gabriel Faure: *Requiem*
Giovanni Gabrieli: *Canzona Number 2 & Canzona di septimi toni*
George Gershwin: *An American in Paris; Porgy and Bess & Rhapsody in Blue*
Edvard Greig: *Peer Gynt Suite*
Georg Friedrich Handel: *The Messiah & Water Music*
Paul Hindemith: *Matthias der Mahler*
Gustav Holst: *Ave Maria & The Planets*
Arthur Honneger: *A Christmas Cantata*
Zoltan Kodaly: *Hary Janos Suite*
Franz Liszt: *Waltzes*
Gustav Mahler: *Resurrection Symphony*
Jules Massenet: *Thais*
Kirk Mechem: *The Seven Joys of Christmas*
Felix Mendelssohn: *St. Paul*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Symphony Number 40; The Magic Flute; Eine Kleine Nachtmusik & Requiem*
Modest Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*
Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*
Niccolo Porpora: *Laetatus Sum*
Elizabeth Poston: *The Apple Tree Carol*
Francis Poulenc: *Gloria*
Michael Praetorius: *Terpsichore*
Serge Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf & Romeo and Juliet*

Sergei Rachmaninoff: *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*
Maurice Ravel: *Bolero & Chansons Hebraique*
Camille Saint-Saens: *Carnival of the Animals & Samson and Delilah*
Eric Satie: *Parade*
Domenico Scarlatti: *Concerto Grosso number 9 in C*
Arnold Schoenberg: *Serenade & Transfigured Night*
Franz Schubert: *Mass in G; Unfinished Symphony & Gretchen am Spinnrad*
Heinrich Schuetz: *Magnificat & The Heavens Are Telling*
Jean Sibelius: *Belshazzar's Feast*
Johann Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*
Richard Strauss: *Also Sprach Zarathustra*
Igor Stravinsky: *The Firebird; Persephone & Petroushka*
Georg Phillip Telemann: *Concerto in A minor for Violin, Oboe, Recorder and Continuo*
Virgil Thompson: *The Medea of Euripides*
Veljo Tormis: *Sugismastikud*
Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker & Pathetique Symphony*
Ralph Vaughn-Williams: *Fantasia on Greensleeves & Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*
Giuseppe Verdi: *Aida*
Antonio Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons; Gloria & Double Violin Concerto*
Richard Wagner: *The Ring Cycle*
William Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast*



Style

I tried to choose representative samples of music from all of the main periods: Medieval and Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern. The latter two periods have an abundance of works represented. This is due to the fact that so much more of this music is generally available.

Medieval and Renaissance Music (beginning on page 4) represents roughly the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. This music is notable for its use of single instruments and small groups of instruments. Often the instruments used are not in common use today. These include recorders and violas da gamba, as well as predecessors of our modern woodwind and brass instruments.

Baroque Music (beginning on page 4) represents roughly the Seventeenth Century. Polyphony, or many voices, were common then. This could take the form of multiple players of the same instrument, or different instruments, playing the melody at different times or at different starting pitches. Harmonies also became important, and the texture of the sound became much fuller.

Classical Music (beginning on page 4) represents roughly the Eighteenth Century. The use of an exacting structure was common. The symphony developed as a form. Opera took off.

Romantic Music (beginning on page 4) represents roughly the Nineteenth Century and includes many sub-styles, such as Impressionism, which originated in France as a musical correlation to impressionism in painting. Music of the Romantic era tends to have a strongly national character. The Classical structure is extended to, sometimes, the breaking point.

Modern music (beginning on page 5) represents the Twentieth Century. Experiments in harmony include use of the chromatic (12-tone) scale and serialism, where a strict, mathematical approach is applied to a motif in order to devise harmonies or to extend it into a theme or melody. Modern music encompasses a wide variety of personal styles.

If you want to make a course of study of this listing list, spend the months of January and February in the Medieval and Renaissance periods; March, April and May with Baroque; June in the Classical period; July, August and September in the Romantic era and October, November and December with the Modernists.

Medieval and Renaissance Music

John Dowland: *A Lute Lullaby*

Giovanni Gabrieli: *Canzona Number 2 & Canzona di septimi toni*

Niccolo Porpora: *Laetatus Sum*

Michael Praetorius: *Terpsichore*

Domenico Scarlatti: *Concerto Grosso number 9 in C*

Baroque Music

Tomasso Albinoni: *Adagio*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *A Musical Offering; Brandenburg Concerti, Numbers 1 through 6; The Art of the Fugue; Mass in b minor; Toccata and Fugue in D minor & Magnificat*

Georg Friedrich Handel: *The Messiah & Water Music*

Heinrich Schuetz: *Magnificat & The Heavens Are Telling*

Georg Phillip Telemann: *Concerto in A minor for Violin, Oboe, Recorder and Continuo*

Antonio Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons; Gloria & Double Violin Concerto*

Classical Music

Ludwig von Beethoven: *String Quartet in a minor, Opus 132 & Symphony Number 7*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Symphony Number 40; The Magic Flute; Eine Kleine Nachtmusik & Requiem*

Romantic Music

Hector Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*

Georges Bizet: *Les Pecheurs des Perles*

Johannes Brahms: *A German Requiem; Gypsy Songs & Hungarian Dances*

Anton Bruckner: *Virga Jesse & Locus Iste*

Frederic Chopin: *Nocturnes & Etudes*
Claude Debussy: *Noel des Enfants qui n'ont Plus de Maison; Salut Printemps; La Mer; Images & Prelude sur l'Après-midi d'une faune*
Leo Delibes: *Lakme*
Gabriel Faure: *Requiem*
Edvard Greig: *Peer Gynt Suite*
Franz Liszt: *Waltzes*
Gustav Mahler: *Resurrection Symphony*
Jules Massenet: *Thais*
Felix Mendelssohn: *St. Paul*
Modest Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*
Franz Schubert: *Mass in G; Unfinished Symphony & Gretchen am Spinnrad*
Jean Sibelius: *Belshazzar's Feast*
Johann Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*
Richard Strauss: *Also Sprach Zarathustra*
Peter Illyich Tschaikovsky: *The Nutcracker & Pathetique Symphony*
Giuseppe Verdi: *Aida*
Richard Wagner: *The Ring Cycle*

Modern Music

John Adams: *Harmonium*
Samuel Barber: *Adagio for Strings*
Bela Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra & String Quartet Number 6*
Benjamin Britten: *A Ceremony of Carols & Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*
Pablo Casals: *O Vos Omnes*
Aaron Copland: *Appalachian Spring; Quiet City & Rodeo*
Charles Davidson: *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*
Hugo Distler: *Es Ist Ein Ros Entsprungen & Das Ist Je Gewisslich Wahr*
George Gershwin: *An American in Paris; Porgy and Bess & Rhapsody in Blue*
Paul Hindemith: *Matthias der Mahler*
Gustav Holst: *Ave Maria & The Planets*
Arthur Honneger: *A Christmas Cantata*
Zoltan Kodaly: *Hary Janos Suite*
Kirk Mechem: *The Seven Joys of Christmas*
Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*
Elizabeth Poston: *The Apple Tree Carol*
Francis Poulenc: *Gloria*
Serge Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf & Romeo and Juliet*
Sergei Rachmaninoff: *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*
Maurice Ravel: *Bolero & Chansons Hebraique*
Camille Saint-Saens: *Carnival of the Animals & Samson and Delilah*
Eric Satie: *Parade*
Arnold Schoenberg: *Serenade & Transfigured Night*
Igor Stravinsky: *The Firebird; Persephone & Petroushka*
Virgil Thompson: *The Medea of Euripides*
Veljo Tormis: *Sugismastikud*

Ralph Vaughn-Williams: *Fantasia on Greensleeves & Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*

William Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast*

Genre

Six different genres are represented here: opera and oratorio, symphony and orchestral music, chamber music, art song and song cycle, religious and liturgical music and Christmas music. Here are some basic definitions.

Opera and Oratorio (beginning on page 7) are works which tell a story. They include instrumental sections and accompaniments, full choral passages two types of solo passages: recitatives and arias. Recitatives are reciting passages, arias are lyrical. An oratorio is an opera about a religious subject and contains sections that are often incorporated into religious services.

Symphony and Orchestral Music (beginning on page 7) are works of either single or multiple movements, that use more than one voice of instrument: string (e.g. violin, viola, cello, bass), woodwind (e.g. flute, clarinet, oboe, English horn, bassoon), brass (e.g. trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba) or percussion (e.g. various drums, various keyboard instruments). Some orchestral music also includes the human voice, in either solo or choral passages.

Chamber Music (beginning on page 8) includes works of either single or multiple movements, that use a single instrument, such as a piano, or a small group of instruments, such as a string quartet (i.e. two violins, a viola and a cello). Because the volume is necessarily softer on these compositions, they are meant to be performed in smaller, more intimate settings. They also generally feature more solo passages and make use of the contrast between the various instrumental voices.

Art Song and Song Cycles (beginning on page 8) are works written for the human voice, or for small groups of voices, generally with a single voice to a part (e.g. soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, bass). Songs may have an instrumental accompaniment, but typically only a single instrument will accompany the singer(s), since the main focus of the work is the text and the human voice. Song Cycles are simply a collection of songs by a single composer that are thematically related. The texts may or may not be from a single source.

Religious or Liturgical Music (beginning on page 9) is music specifically written to be performed as a part of a religious ceremony. It can, of course, also be performed in a concert hall. Typical examples of this type of music are masses and requiems (memorial masses for the dead). These large forms usually include orchestral accompaniments. Anthems are examples of short, single movement liturgical music.

Christmas Music (beginning on page 9) is a special category of religious music that is relevant to the Advent, Christmas & Epiphany seasons.

I tried to select a good representation of various genres in my 101 compositions. Each genre has a variety of unusual, as well as familiar works. However, if I were designing a course on a particular genre, the selections would probably be different.

For example, in the opera category, I've omitted Claudio Monteverdi, thought to be the first composer of opera. I've also omitted Puccini and Rossini, very famous operatic composers, because I personally prefer the French to the Italian. And, as an example of Bizet, I chose **The Pearl Fishers**, rather than the much better known **Carmen** not because the latter is over-rated, but because the former is under-rated.

Some pieces could have fallen into more than one genre, but I tried to place them in the most likely one. So, Handel's **Messiah** is in opera and oratorio, rather than Christmas, because it's an oratorio that tells the story of Christ's entire life, of which the Christmas section is only a part. Also, works which include both instrumental and vocal music are categorized based on the predominant texture.

To use this listening list as a course, spend the months of January and February on opera and oratorio; March, April and May on symphony and orchestral music; June and July on chamber music; August and September on art song and song cycles, October and November on religious and liturgical music and December on Christmas music.



Opera and Oratorio

Georges Bizet: *Les Pecheurs des Perles*
Leo Delibes: *Lakme*
George Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess*
Georg Friedrich Handel: *The Messiah*
Jules Massenet: *Thais*
Felix Mendelssohn: *St. Paul*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *The Magic Flute*
Camille Saint-Saens: *Samson and Delilah*
Jean Sibelius: *Belshazzar's Feast*
Johann Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*
Giuseppe Verdi: *Aida*
Richard Wagner: *The Ring Cycle*
William Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast*

Symphony and Orchestral Music

John Adams: *Harmonium*
Tomasso Albinoni: *Adagio*
Johann Sebastian Bach: *Brandenburg Concerti*, Numbers 1 through 6
Bela Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra*
Ludwig von Beethoven: *Symphony Number 7*
Hector Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*
Aaron Copland: *Appalachian Spring*; *Quiet City & Rodeo*
George Gershwin: *An American in Paris & Rhapsody in Blue*
Edvard Greig: *Peer Gynt Suite*

Paul Hindemith: *Matthias der Mahler*
Gustav Holst: *The Planets*
Zoltan Kodaly: *Hary Janos Suite*
Gustav Mahler: *Resurrection Symphony*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Symphony Number 40*
Modest Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*
Serge Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf & Romeo and Juliet*
Sergei Rachmaninoff: *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*
Maurice Ravel: *Bolero*
Camille Saint-Saens: *Carnival of the Animals*
Eric Satie: *Parade*
Domenico Scarlatti: *Concerto Grosso number 9 in C*
Arnold Schoenberg: *Serenade & Transfigured Night*
Franz Schubert: *Unfinished Symphony*
Richard Strauss: *Also Sprach Zarathustra*
Igor Stravinsky: *The Firebird; Persephone & Petroushka*
Peter Illyich Tschaikovsky: *The Nutcracker & Pathetique Symphony*

Chamber Music

Johann Sebastian Bach: *A Musical Offering; The Art of the Fugue & Toccata and Fugue in D minor*
Samuel Barber: *Adagio for Strings*
Bela Bartok: *String Quartet Number 6*
Ludwig von Beethoven: *String Quartet in a minor, Opus 132*
Johannes Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*
Frederic Chopin: *Nocturnes & Etudes*
Claude Debussy: *La Mer; Images & Prelude sur l'Apres-midi d'une faune*
Giovanni Gabrieli: *Canzona Number 2 & Canzona di septimi toni*
Georg Friedrich Handel: *Water Music*
Franz Liszt: *Waltzes*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*
Michael Praetorius: *Terpsichore*
Georg Phillip Telemann: *Concerto in A minor for Violin, Oboe, Recorder and Continuo*
Ralph Vaughn-Williams: *Fantasia on Greensleeves & Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*
Antonio Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons & Double Violin Concerto*

Art Songs and Song Cycles

Johannes Brahms: *Gypsy Songs*
Charles Davidson: *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*
Claude Debussy: *Salut Printemps*
Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*
Maurice Ravel: *Chansons Hebraique*
Franz Schubert: *Gretchen am Spinnrad*
Virgil Thompson: *The Medea of Euripides*

Veljo Tormis: *Sugismastikud*

Religious and Liturgical Music

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Mass in b minor & Magnificat*

Johannes Brahms: *A German Requiem*

Anton Bruckner: *Locus Iste*

Pablo Casals: *O Vos Omnes*

Hugo Distler: *Das Ist Je Gewisslich Wahr*

Gabriel Faure: *Requiem*

Gustav Holst: *Ave Maria*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Requiem*

Niccolo Porpora: *Laetatus Sum*

Franz Schubert: *Mass in G*

Heinrich Schuetz: *Magnificat & The Heavens Are Telling*

Christmas Music

Benjamin Britten: *A Ceremony of Carols & Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*

Anton Bruckner: *Virga Jesse*

Claude Debussy: *Noel des Enfants qui n'ont Plus de Maison*

Hugo Distler: *Es Ist Ein Ros Entsprungen*

John Dowland: *A Lute Lullaby*

Arthur Honneger: *A Christmas Cantata*

Kirk Mechem: *The Seven Joys of Christmas*

Elizabeth Poston: *The Apple Tree Carol*

Francis Poulenc: *Gloria*

Antonio Vivaldi: *Gloria*