

Course Announcement – Fall 2012

MUS-M 651-25846 / MEST-M 650

# Introduction to Medieval Music



In this course we will explore the musical repertory developed in Western Europe during the Middle Ages, evaluating the information that music manuscripts and other textual/visual documents give us on authors, events and on the role of music in the culture and society of the time. The nature of the repertory and of the extant sources requires an interdisciplinary approach: we will discuss the relation of music with aspects of contemporary literary, artistic, philosophic and scientific production. As for the music itself, this was a period of experiments: new forms and techniques were developed, some very different from today's practices, as different was the way composers, performers and listeners approached music. However, many pillars were erected that allowed greater musical edifices to be built in the centuries to come.

The class time will include lectures, student presentations, class discussions and musical listening. One or more sessions will be held at the Lilly Library to examine some medieval music documents. Ability to read scores in modern music notation may be an advantage, but there are no prerequisites. Class attendance is mandatory.

**Topics will include:** Music and Liturgy and their development; Chant: an oral and written phenomenon; Instruments, voices, and the 'music of the spheres'; The 'art' and 'science' of music; Music and poetry; Medieval music books; Music and drama; The development of notated polyphony; Music in the castle and in the city; Troubadours and Trouvères; The rise of the figure of the composer; 'Ars antiqua': Motet and Conductus; The 'Ars nova' in France; Guillaume de Machaut: text, music and image; The 'Ars nova' in Italy; English music and other peripheral developments; The 'Ars subtilior' and the international repertory of the late 14<sup>th</sup> century.

**Course goals:** Develop a higher familiarity with authors, compositions, genres, manuscripts up to ca. 1400; gain a better understanding of the social, political, cultural and artistic background of musical composition, performance and circulation in medieval Europe; investigate issues of orality/written circulation, authorship, intertextuality, authenticity in performance; develop communication and research skills.

**Assignments and grading (subject to change):** Presentations, listening exam, midterm exam, optional research project, final exam, class participation.

**Suggested textbooks:** R. Hoppin, *Medieval Music* (and *Id. Anthology of Medieval Music*). New York: 1978; J. Yudkin, *Music in Medieval Europe*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1989; M. Everist, *Companion to Medieval Music*. Cambridge 2011; J.P. Burkholder and C. Palisca, *Norton Anthology of Western Music*, New York, 2010; O. Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*. ed. L. Treitler vol. 3. New York: 1998. Further material posted on *OnCourse* and on reserve.

**Instructor:** Giuliano Di Bacco

**Place and times of the class:** Merrill Hall, Room MU 205 —Tuesday & Thursday 11:15-12:30