



CONCISE HISTORY OF WESTERN MUSIC

BARBARA RUSSANO HANNING

FIFTH EDITION
ANTHOLOGY UPDATE



Concise History of Western Music

5th edition Anthology Update

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Part Six

The Twentieth Century and Today



CHAPTER 23

Classical Modernism



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Prelude – 1

- The established repertoire
 - musical classics dominated almost every field
 - new music judged by standards of the classics
 - living composers in competition with established repertoire
 - theme of modernism: write music that fit into repertoire, different enough to attract attention

Prelude – 2

- Modernism
 - search for place beside classics, innovation with emulation of the past
 - changes reflect differences in value of tradition
 - most continued use of tonality, some moved beyond tonality

The First Generation of Modernists – 1

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918)
 - claimed by some as major source of modern music
 - born in suburb of Paris, middle-class family
 - studied at Conservatoire, age ten
 - 1880s, worked for Tchaikovsky's patron, twice traveled to Russia
 - 1884, won the Prix de Rome; two years in Italy
 - 1888, pilgrimage to Bayreuth
 - friendships with Symbolist poets, other artists
 - made a living as critic and publishing his works

The First Generation of Modernists – 2

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - major works: *Pelléas et Mélisande* (opera); *Jeux* (ballet); orchestral works; piano pieces; about 90 songs; string quartet and other chamber works
- French musicians sought greater independence from German music
 - revival of sixteenth–eighteenth-century French music
- direction: toward pleasure and beauty
 - admiration for Wagner, revulsion against bombast
 - French tradition, preference for sensibility, taste, restraint

The First Generation of Modernists – 3

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - influences
 - Russian composers, Rimsky-Korsakov and Musorgsky
 - medieval music, parallel organum
 - music from Asia, Javanese gamelan
 - impressionism and symbolism
 - detached observation; evoke mood, feeling, atmosphere, scene
 - common-practice harmony avoided, attenuated
 - creates, juxtaposes musical images
 - motives not developed
 - dissonances need not resolve

The First Generation of Modernists – 4

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - sonorities move in parallel motion
 - contrasts of scale type, exotic scales
 - instrumental timbres intrinsic to musical content
- piano music
 - *L'isle joyeuse* (The Joyous Isle, 1903–1904)
 - motives associated with particular figuration, chords, scale type, dynamic, range
 - succession of distinct images
 - chromatic, whole-tone chords without urgency to resolve
 - tonal focus, defies conventional tonal relationships

Ex23-01

23

(a)

25

mf *dim.* *pp*

(b) (c) (d)

27

mf *dim.* *p*

(b) (c) (c & e)

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano piece in 4/4 time, key of D major. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 23-24) features a treble staff with eighth-note triplets and a bass staff with a single eighth note followed by a half note. The second system (measures 25-26) includes dynamic markings *mf*, *dim.*, and *pp*, and contains triplets and a sixteenth-note sextuplet. The third system (measures 27-28) continues with triplets and a change to 3/8 time for the final two measures, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure numbers 23, 25, and 27 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Labels (a), (b), (c), (c & e), and (d) are placed below the staves to identify specific musical elements.

The First Generation of Modernists – 5

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - evocative titles: visual images, evoke distinctive styles
 - *Estampes* (Engravings, or Prints, 1903)
 - two sets of *Images* (1901–1905 and 1907)
 - *Golliwogg's Cake-walk from Children's Corner* (1906–1908), imitates Scott Joplin, recasts Wagner
 - 24 Preludes (1909–1910, 1911–1913), character pieces, picturesque titles at end
 - abstract works
 - *Suite bergamasque* (ca. 1890), *Pour le piano* (1894–1901), updated French tradition of keyboard suite
 - *Études* (1915), explored pianistic timbre, technique

The First Generation of Modernists – 6

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - orchestral music
 - same characteristics as piano music, with
 - element of instrumental timbre
 - instrument associated with motive
 - great variety of tone colors, textures
 - *Prélude à “L’Après-midi d’un faune”* (Prelude to “The Afternoon of a Faun,” 1891–1894)
 - on symbolist poem by Stéphane Mallarmé
 - detachment and delicacy of French Symbolists
 - masterful orchestral technique

F23-01



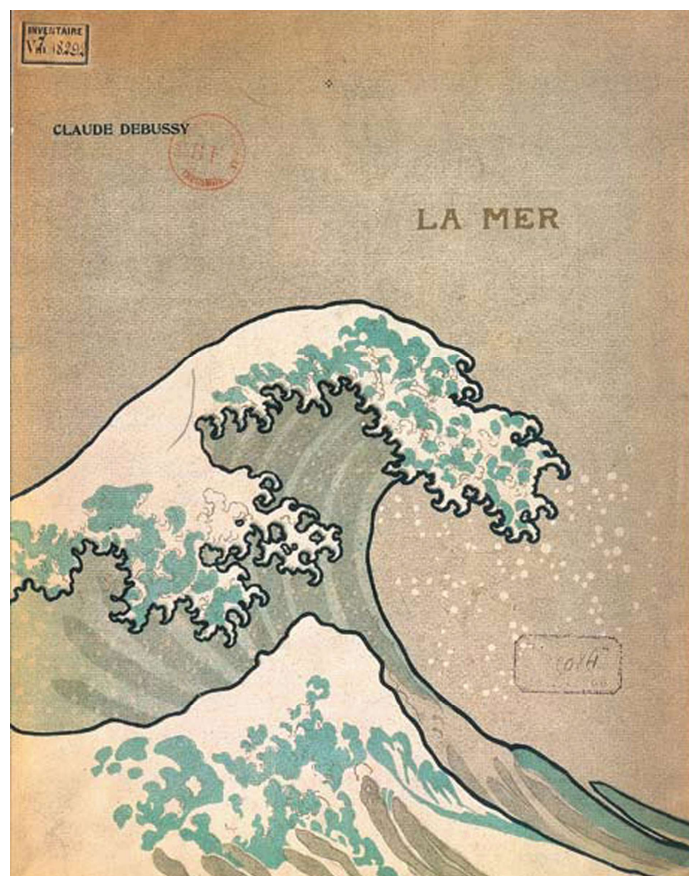
The First Generation of Modernists – 7

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - *Nocturnes* (1897–1899)
 - *Nuages* (Clouds), subdued imagist instrumentation
 - *Fêtes* (Festivals) brilliance of full ensemble
 - *Sirènes*, orchestra with wordless female chorus
 - *La mer* (The Sea, 1903–1905), rapidly alternating musical images
 - *Nuages* (NAWM 172), interaction of timbre with motive, scale type
 - oscillating pattern fifths, thirds
 - appearances feature different tone colors, pitches
 - sometimes series of parallel triads, seventh or ninth chords

The First Generation of Modernists – 8

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - octatonic English horn motive juxtaposed
 - motive never developed, transposed, different instrument
 - complete identification between timbre and motive
 - musical gestures answer motive
 - coherence, stillness, contemplation
- songs and stage music
 - song settings of Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine, François Villon
 - incidental music *The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* (1910–1911)
 - ballet *Jeux* (1912–1913)

F23-02



The First Generation of Modernists – 9

- Claude Debussy (1862–1918) (cont'd)
 - *Pellás et Mélisande* (1893–1902), only completed opera
 - response to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*
 - symbolist play by Maurice Maeterlinck
 - modal harmonies, subdued colors, restrained expressiveness
 - fluent recitative, flow of French language
 - instrumental interludes, mysterious inner drama
 - Debussy's influence
 - seminal force in history of music
 - influenced nearly every distinguished composer of early twentieth century

F23-03



The First Generation of Modernists – 10

- Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)
 - often grouped with Debussy as impressionist
 - superb assimilationist, variety of influences
 - traditional forms, diatonic melodies, complex harmonies within tonal language
 - Varied influences; impressionist works, strong musical imagery
 - *Jeux d'eau* (Fountains, 1901), piano piece
 - *Miroirs* (Mirrors, 1904–1905), *Gaspard de la nuit* (1908), sets
 - *Rapsodie espagnole* (Spanish Rhapsody, 1907–1908), orchestral suite

The First Generation of Modernists – 11

- Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) (cont'd)
 - *Daphnis et Chloé* (1909–1912), ballet
 - interest in classical forms
 - String Quartet in F (1902–1903)
 - Violin Sonata (1923–1927)
 - French tradition: styled dances, suites
 - *Menuet antique* (1895)
 - *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (Pavane for a Dead Princess, 1899)
 - *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (Memorial for Couperin, 1914–1917), later orchestrated

The First Generation of Modernists – 12

- Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) (cont'd)
 - neoclassicism
 - 1910s–1950s, pre-Romantic music revived, imitated, evoked
 - eighteenth-century music then called Classic
 - originated in France, rejection of German Romanticism
 - *Le tombeau de Couperin*, suite of six movements in eighteenth-century genres

F23-04



The First Generation of Modernists – 13

- Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) (cont'd)
 - *Rapsodie espagnole* (NAWM 173), orchestral suite
 - Spanish idioms
 - Evocation of Spain, authentic flavor
 - Mother grew up in Madrid
 - Four movements
 - most overtly Spanish are second and third, *Malagueña* and *Habanera*
 - Marked by imitations of guitar playing
 - Outer movements, *Prélude à la nuit* and *Feria*, mood pieces
 - Play between triple and duple meters, hints of seguidilla melody

The First Generation of Modernists – 14

- Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) (cont'd)
 - French, Russian, influences also present
 - French art, popular traditions
 - Viennese waltz, blues, jazz influential
 - Jazz especially in Piano Concerto for the Left Hand (1929-1930)
 - Written for pianist who lost right arm in WWI

Modernism and National Traditions – 1

- Russia: Serge Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin
 - Serge Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)
 - 1917, left Russia after Russian Revolution
 - emigrated to United States
 - made living as pianist
 - notable works
 - three symphonies
 - *The Isle of the Dead* (1907), symphonic poem
 - *The Bells* (1913), choral symphony
 - characteristic works for piano
 - twenty-four preludes (1892–1910)
 - *Études-Tableaux* (1911, 1916–1917)

F23-05



Modernism and National Traditions – 2

- Russia: Serge Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin (cont'd)
 - four piano concertos
 - *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934), piano and orchestra
 - Prelude in G Minor, Op. 23, No. 5 (1901, NAWM 176)
 - innovative textures, melodies
 - traditional harmonies, ABA' form
 - elaborates G-minor triad, energetic pattern, marchlike rhythms
 - alternating registers continues with variation throughout A section
 - Rachmaninoff's style
 - renowned for passionate, melodious idiom
 - focused on elements of Romantic tradition

Modernism and National Traditions – 3

- Russia: Serge Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin (cont'd)
 - Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915)
 - influences
 - Liszt, Wagner: chromaticism
 - Rimsky-Korsakov: octaonic scale, other exotic elements
 - Debussy, Russian composers: juxtapositions of texture, scale, figuration
 - complex harmonic vocabulary evolved
 - skirted conventional tonal harmony
 - complex, referential chord
 - chord contains tritones derived from octatonic
 - chords do not project yearning to resolution

F23-06

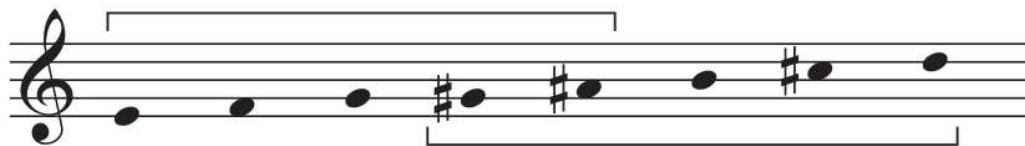


Modernism and National Traditions – 4

- Russia: Serge Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin (cont'd)
 - transcendence of desire, read as erotic, mystic
 - sense of progression by altering referential chord
 - *Vers la flamme* (Toward the Flame), Op. 72 (1914, NAWM 177), “poem” for piano
 - opening establishes referential sonority of two tritones
 - tritones “resolve” to perfect 5ths
 - figuration changes section to section, static blocks of sound juxtaposed
 - symphonies, other orchestral works
 - *Poem of Ecstasy* (1908)
 - *Prometheus* (1910), linked pitches to colors

Ex23-02

a. Octatonic scale on E–F



b. Opening

Allegro moderato

Allegro moderato

pp sombre

pochiss.

con sord.

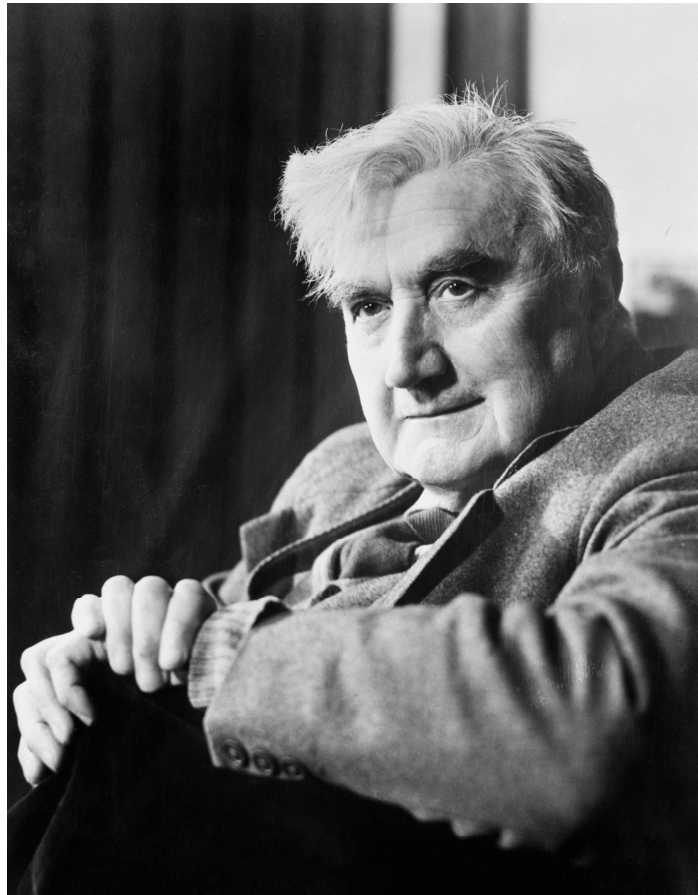
Modernism and National Traditions – 5

- Spain: Manuel Falla
 - Spanish composers sought to reclaim national tradition
 - authentic use of native materials
 - Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)
 - collected, arranged national folk songs
 - earlier works: melodic, rhythmic qualities of Spanish popular music
 - *La Vida breve* (Life is Short, 1904–1913), opera
 - *El Amor brujo* (Love, the Sorcerer, 1915), ballet
 - *El Sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat, 1916–1919), ballet

Modernism and National Traditions – 6

- Spain: Manuel Falla (cont'd)
 - mature works: national elements, neoclassical approach
 - *El Retablo de maese Pedro* (Master Pedro's Puppet Show, 1919–1923)
 - Concerto for Harpsichord with Five Solo instruments (1923–1926)
- England: Ralph Vaughan Williams
 - composers sought distinctive English voice
 - Cecil Sharp (1859–1924), Ralph Vaughan Williams, collected and published hundreds of folk songs

F23-07



Modernism and National Traditions – 7

- England: Ralph Vaughan Williams (cont'd)
 - both used folk melodies in their compositions
 - *Norfolk Rhapsodies* (1905–1906)
 - *Five Variants of “Dives and Lazarus”* (1939)
 - Gustav Holst (1874–1934) and Vaughan Williams, leaders of new English school
- Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)
 - cultivated national style in his works
 - nine symphonies, other orchestral pieces
 - film scores
 - works for band
 - songs, operas, many choral pieces

Modernism and National Traditions – 8

- England: Ralph Vaughan Williams (cont'd)
 - inspirations
 - folk song
 - English hymnody
 - earlier English composers: Thomas Tallis, Henry Purcell
 - studied with Ravel
 - strongly influenced by Debussy, Bach, Handel
 - wrote art and utilitarian music
 - links to amateur music-making, kept from esoteric style
 - national style
 - incorporation, imitation of British folk tunes
 - assimilation of sixteenth-century modal harmony
 - *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (1910), based on Tallis hymn

Modernism and National Traditions – 9

- Czechoslovakia: Leos Janáček
 - nationalism in Eastern Europe was urgent political concern
 - at home: assertion of independent national identity
 - abroad: appeal for international recognition as a nation
 - Leos Janáček (1854–1928)
 - leading twentieth-century Czech composer
 - sought specifically national style
 - collected, edited folk music from Moravia
 - studied rhythms, inflections of peasant speech, song

F23-08



Modernism and National Traditions – 10

- Czechoslovakia: Leos Janáček (cont'd)
 - style
 - melodies, rhythms based on inflections, rhythms of spoken words
 - applied to instrumental music
 - contrasting sonorities, harmonies, motive, tone colors
 - repeats, juxtaposes ideas rather than developing
 - *Jenufa* (1904), opera
 - based on Moravian subject
 - gained wider prominence
 - later works became part of international repertory

Modernism and National Traditions – 11

- Finland: Jean Sibelius
 - Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)
 - Finland's leading composer
 - Finland culturally dominated by Sweden
 - Sibelius became Finnish patriot, sought to create national style
 - themes for vocals works, symphonic poems from Finnish epic, *Kalevala*
 - established reputation, symphonic poems
 - *Kullervo*, five movements with soloists and chorus
 - *The Swan of Tuonela*
 - *Finlandia*, most famous and political

Modernism and National Traditions – 12

- Finland: Jean Sibelius (cont'd)
 - supported by Finnish government as national artist
 - international reputation
 - performances of symphonic poems
 - Violin Concerto (1903–1904)
 - seven symphonies (1899 through 1924)
 - personal style
 - modal melodies
 - simple rhythms
 - insistent repetition of brief motives, pedal points
 - strong contrasts of timbres, textures

The Avant-Garde – 1

- Avant-garde: art that seeks to overthrow accepted aesthetics
 - iconoclastic irreverent, antagonist, nihilistic
 - movement began before World War I
 - focus on what is happening in the present
 - shared attitudes: unrelenting opposition to status quo
- Erik Satie (1866–1925)
 - French nationalist, more radical break from tradition
 - three *Gymnopédies* (1888), for piano

F23-09



The Avant-Garde – 2

- Erik Satie (1866–1925) (cont'd)
 - all ostentatiously plain, unemotional
 - all use same slow tempo, accompanimental pattern, melodic rhythm, similar modal harmonies
- piano works, 1900–1915
 - surrealistic titles, running commentary
 - satirized titles, directions of Debussy and other composers
 - challenges assumptions of tradition
 - *Embryons desséchés* (Dried Embryos, 1913)
 - mocks classical masterworks
 - third (NAWM 179) satirizes Wagnerian leitmotifs

The Avant-Garde – 3

- Erik Satie (1866–1925) (cont'd)
 - larger pieces
 - *Parade* (1916–1917), “realistic ballet”
 - written by Jean Cocteau, choreography by Léonide Massine, scenery and costumes by Picasso
 - introduced cubism to the stage
 - incorporated jazz elements, a whistle, siren, typewriter
 - caused a scandal, as did *Relâche* (No Show Tonight, 1924)
 - influenced younger French composers and American avant-garde

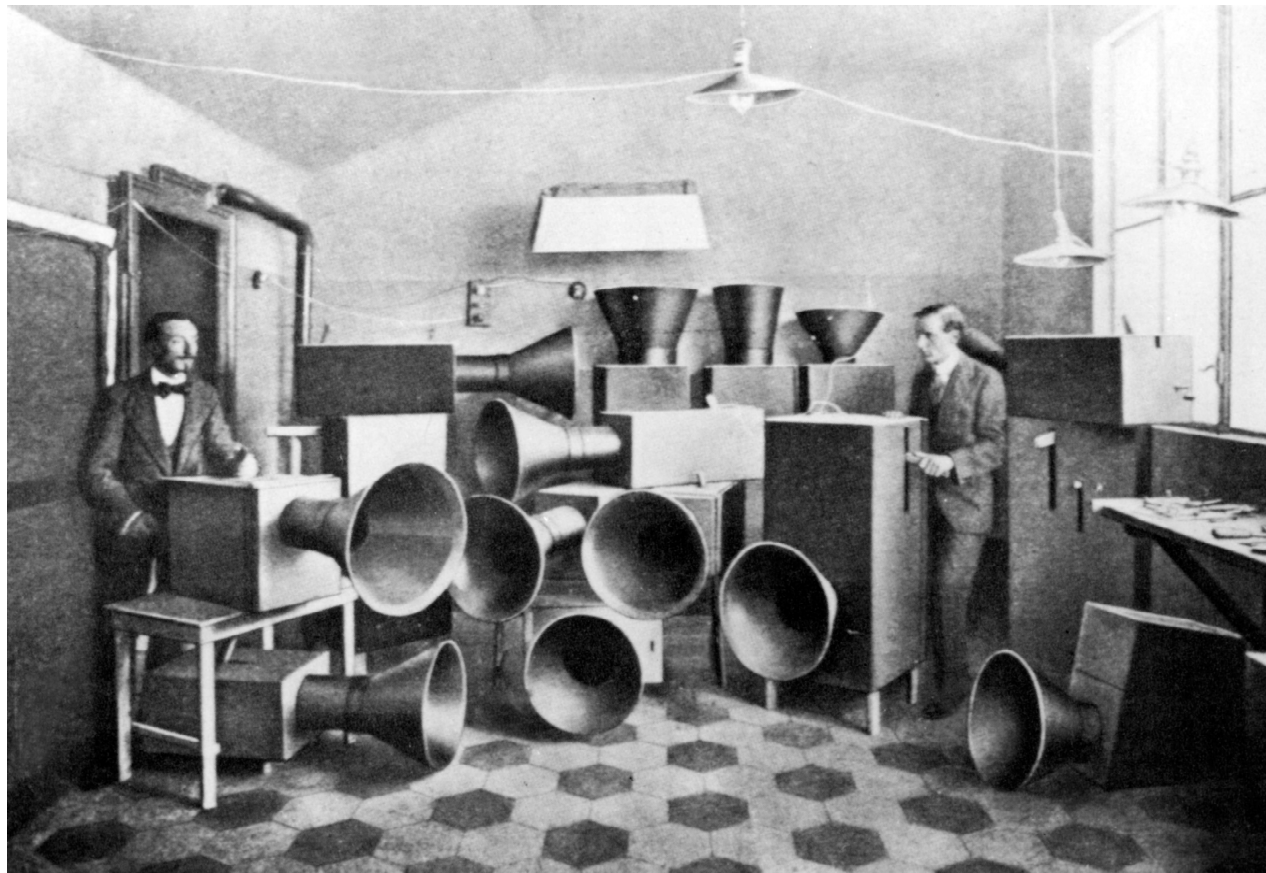
TIMELINE

TIMELINE Classical Modernism				
Musical Events	<p>1897 Strauss, <i>Don Quixote</i> (NAWM 162)</p> <p>1897–99 Debussy, <i>Nocturnes</i> (NAWM 172)</p> <p>1901 Ravel, <i>Jeux d'eau</i></p> <p>1901 Rachmaninoff, <i>Prelude in G Minor</i> (NAWM 176)</p> <p>1901–4 Mahler, <i>Kindertotenlieder</i> (NAWM 170)</p>	<p>1905 Strauss, <i>Salome</i> (NAWM 171)</p> <p>1907–8 Ravel, <i>Rapsodie espagnole</i> (NAWM 173)</p> <p>1907–10 Mahler directs Metropolitan Opera in New York</p> <p>1910 Ralph Vaughan Williams, <i>Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis</i></p> <p>1913 Futurist manifesto, <i>The Art of Noises</i></p>	<p>1914 Alexander Scriabin, <i>Vers la Flamme</i> (NAWM 177)</p> <p>1915 Falla, <i>El amor brujo</i></p> <p>1916–17 Satie, <i>Parade</i></p> <p>1925 Janáček, <i>The Makropulos Affair</i></p> <p>1934 Rachmaninoff, <i>Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini</i></p>	
	1900		1950	
Historical Events	<p>1872 Monet, <i>Impression: Soleil levant</i> (Figure VI.2)</p> <p>1889 Erection of the Eiffel Tower for the Paris World's Fair</p> <p>1900 Freud, <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i></p> <p>1903 Wright brothers fly first successful airplane</p>	<p>1905 Einstein's first paper on the theory of relativity</p> <p>1906 Cézanne, <i>Mont Sainte-Victoire</i> (Figure VI.3)</p> <p>1907 Braque and Picasso paint first cubist pictures (Figure VI.4)</p> <p>1908 Ford designs the Model T automobile</p> <p>1914–18 World War I</p>	<p>1917 Russian Revolution brings Bolsheviks to power</p> <p>1929 New York stock market crash begins Great Depression</p> <p>1933 Hitler comes to power in Germany</p> <p>1938 Germany absorbs Austria</p> <p>1939–45 World War II</p>	

The Avant-Garde – 4

- Futurism
 - Italian futurists rejected traditional instruments
 - Luigi Rossolo, futurist painter
 - argued for new kind of music based on noise
 - built new instruments, *intonarumori* (noise-makers)
 - stimulated later developments: electronic music, microtonal composition, new instrumental timbres

F23-10



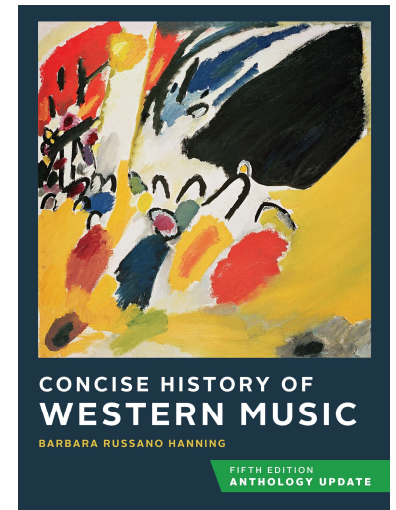
Postlude

- Late Romantic or Modern?
 - music difficult to classify
 - composers of this generation have aspects of both eras
 - nineteenth-century traits with twentieth-century sensibilities
 - critical esteem has changed over time
 - overwhelming sense of measuring oneself against the past



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This concludes the Lecture Slide Set
for Chapter 23

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