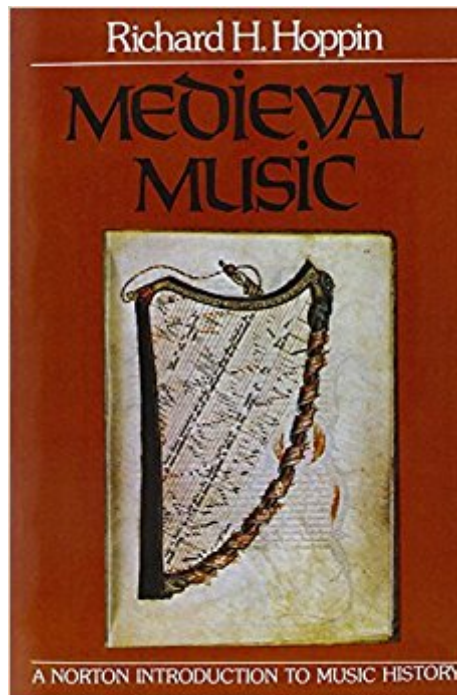




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# Medieval Music (The Norton Introduction To Music History)



## Synopsis

The captivating "history" of the figure of Orpheus, his enduring legacy as the force and muse of creation itself. For at least two and a half millennia, the figure of Orpheus has haunted humanity. Half-man, half-god, musician, magician, theologian, poet, and lover, his story never leaves us. He may be myth, but his lyre still sounds, entrancing everything that hears it: animals, trees, water, stones, and men. In this extraordinary work, Ann Wroe goes in search of Orpheus, tracing the man and the power he represents through the myriad versions of a fantastical life: his birth in Thrace, his studies in Egypt, his voyage with the Argonauts to fetch the Golden Fleece, his love for Eurydice and the journey to Hades, and his terrible death. We see him tantalizing Cicero and Plato, and breathing new music into Gluck and Monteverdi; occupying the mind of Jung and the surreal dreams of Cocteau; scandalizing the Fathers of the early Church, and filling Rilke with poems like a whirlwind. He emerges as not simply another mythical figure but the force of creation itself, singing the song of light out of darkness and life out of death.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This series presents the music of the Western world to the nonspecialist in six original, strikingly illustrated volumes. In each one, an outstanding musicologist surveys the music of a specific period, discusses its major composers, and examines the forces that influenced and helped shape the oeuvre. The series is designed to carry on the tradition of excellence in musical scholarship that

Norton has established in this field.

Mr. Hoppin has been dead for over twenty years, and this book is still as good as it gets in terms of Medieval music history. It is great for undergraduate or graduate study because it is so detailed and accurate. If you can get through this book, you will have everything you ever need to know about Medieval western music unless you're doing postgraduate work in musicology. A few notes, though:- It is an older book, so the prose can be pretty dense at times. This is not light reading.- It is pretty daunting to read this book if you don't know anything about music history in general. If you really have never read about music history, I would start with Grout first, and then try to tackle this book and the others in the Norton series.

bought as reference book

I am an amateur, that is, I love early music. Mr. Hoppin's book is engaging in that he not only writes about the music, but gives the political and cultural background to the music. His examples are carefully explained. Even though this is used as a "textbook," it is not dry reading. Most people who love early music, will not find his musical explanations too technical. A basic knowledge of music (for many gained from private piano study) will be sufficient knowledge to take in Mr. Hoppin's explanations. For me, this is an essential text. I refer to it over and over again as an "early music" musician.

Nice Hymnal

what I received is a book kept in perfect conditions, with a plastic cover, much better than expected

This book has become the standard textbook for graduate music courses on medieval music in the U.S. I have read most of the new Norton books from this series on music history, and must say it's above average. Most people and even many music majors feel that medieval music can be at times, well, boring. Hoppin's text proves to be scholarly yet interesting. The first chapter is a fascinating historical introduction from the end of the Roman Empire up to 1000 A.D. The second chapter then covers the history of the Christian liturgy through this time, which is also equally interesting. Following chapters cover sacred music (Gregorian Chant, the music of the Offices/Mass, Embellishment of the liturgy, polyphony, and the Notre Dame School) and then switches over to

secular music (trouveres, music outside France, and the motet). The book then covers the later medieval period, including the Ars Nova in France, Machaut, the Italian Ars Nova, and even a section on English music. If not already clear by the preceding paragraph, this text is not recommended for beginners at all. I found many concepts in the book difficult (especially some of the explanations on psalm tones and the "flex" as well as some of the Franconian or Italian mensuration), and I'm supposed to know this stuff. As with most books in this series, a companion anthology of medieval music can also be purchased which I found quite helpful. Hoppin refers to it often. Another helpful book to have on hand would be a copy of the good old *Liber usualis*. They're tough to find these days. Other books on medieval music are by Jeremy Yudkin and there is a two-volume set written by Giulio Cattin and F. Alberto Gallo which has been recently translated. I haven't read either, but they are the only ones I know of which might be this thorough. Hoppin provides a good bibliography for each chapter, so experts can dig deeper. A very good survey overall.

This book (and its companion anthology) provide a solid introduction to the rise of polyphony in the medieval period. It necessarily deals with church forms and the ways in which they evolved over centuries. Hoppin then shows us the secular music and poetry of the troubadours, dance music, and the rise of the motet and the ways which they not only interacted with each other, but how they in turn changed sacred music. The author presents his material in a logical sequence with appropriate illustrations and musical examples. The text is very readable and provides good references and bibliographical sources for further reading and study. Hoppin is also sensitive to the geographical differences in the way music developed. He does have separate chapters for the Ars Nova (new art) in France, Italy, and other developments in England. And since the time period is long, he also focuses what happens in different centuries. The only composer that gets his own chapter (since so much music was written by the ever present anonymous) is the monumental Guillaume de Machaut. The book ends discussing the transition to the Renaissance and the "Old Hall Manuscript". Fascinating stuff from a very rich and formative period in the tradition of Western Art Music.

A very detail book of Music from period before 300 A.D to the beginning of Music Renaissance. Concepts are often illustrated with musical examples and with historical background provided. It is written in a style apt for advanced music students. Not recommended for amateur and even music student who want to learn the "basics" of Medieval Music

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