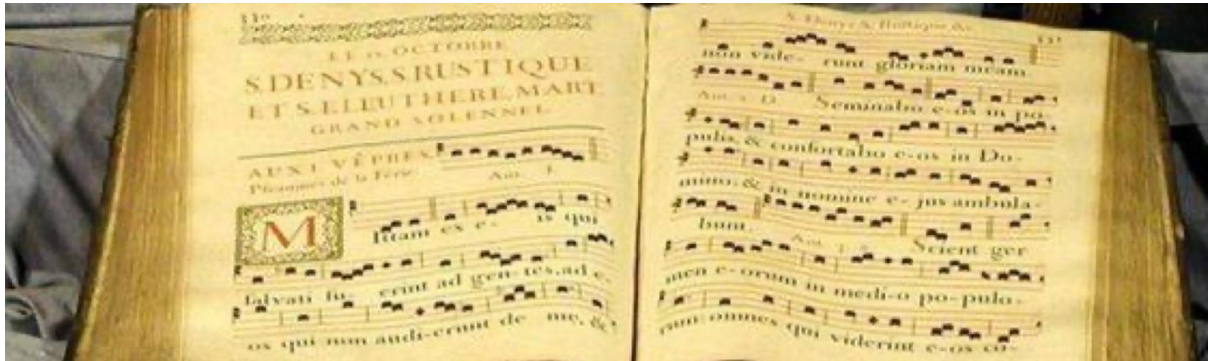


# Musical stories



## Music from the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, as far as can be ascertained, the development of music is tied to the development of church music.

The ancient texts and melodies used in the Catholic Church have been collected and codified by order of Pope Gregory I (540-604). This collection is known today as Gregorian chant. They are all unanimous chants.

In the **Middle Ages** a new art developed: **polyphony**. In polyphonic music, several musical lines (all with their own identity) sound simultaneously.

### Worldly music

Troubadours were poets of (secular) poetry and composers. Most troubadours sang of courtly love, but war (e.g. the crusades) was also a popular subject. In addition, hate poems were written. Jugglers were itinerant professional play men who also played music. They did not compose songs themselves, but performed works composed by others or performed folk music. When jugglers were permanently employed by a noble lord they were called minstrels.

### Medieval musical instruments

Although vocal music dominated in the Middle Ages, there was also a wealth of instrumental music, mainly dance music. This music was probably unison, but towards the end of the 12th century polyphonic dance music was also composed. The troubadours used lutes and harps to accompany their singing. String vases were also popular. Wind instruments included the shawm and early trumpets. The percussion consisted of

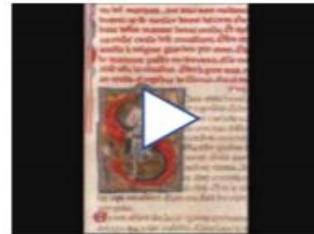
cymbals, bells, triangles, and so on. As for church music, we are sure that church vocal music was accompanied by the organ. The organ was modest in size. Very popular was the portable organ, which was worn on a shoulder strap.

Various medieval instruments came directly from the Middle East. They were taken by the crusaders. Usually this happened after a battle with the pagans who left their instruments on the battlefield. A well-known example is the shawm that still exists in its original form.



Activity:

- Listen to the different pieces of music.



Which piece is unanimous? Polyphonic?

Which piece is worldly music?

- Did you know ... that some contemporary musicians play contemporary music in a Gregorian way? Listen and recognize the music.