

Valery King

Music

A survey of some quality resources

Music has often been called the universal language; it is common to every culture on earth and has an obvious universal appeal. No wonder, then, that there seem to be more Web sites devoted to music than to any other subject. Very casual and unscientific research (i.e., a Google search in late October) revealed more than 1 billion results when searching for music on the Internet. As a comparison, war elicited 494 million hits; movies, 414 million; and sex, a mere 237 million. Music is a vast subject, indeed, to cover in a short article. In establishing what criteria to apply, decisions became more a matter of what to leave out than what to include. Of necessity, this is a mere skimming of the surface of the available quality music resources online.

Although many of the following Web sites contain sound files, none of them are specifically designed as download sites for your MP3 or iTunes device (with one notable exception). All of the sites are free (or mostly, or almost, free). I've also endeavored to choose stable Web sites that are likely to be available for some time to come.

Of course, there are many worthy sites I was unable to include. For areas of music not covered here it is often productive to go to one of the university library gateways or general sites noted in the first section, Meta-sites and gateways.

Meta-sites and gateways

All-Music Guide. Named a MARS Best Free Reference Website in 1999, allmusic has gone through quite an overhaul since then, absorbing its sister Web site, allclassical.com, and creating a Premium Content section

that requires (free) registration to access. It is attractive and easy to search. Some of the content designated as Premium includes music samples, an advanced search function, and expanded artist and album information, so registration can be worthwhile. *Access:* <http://www.allmusic.com/>.

Librarians Internet Index (LII): Music. LII is a well-organized point of access for reliable, trustworthy, librarian-selected websites and the music index is no exception. The site can be either browsed by topic or searched with basic or advanced search features. *Access:* <http://lii.org/pub/topic/music>.

University Music Library Web sites. These sites often maintain high-quality directories to online music resources. Some excellent ones include the William and Gayle Cook Music Library, Indiana University School of Music (*Access:* www.music.indiana.edu/music_resources/); the University of Washington Libraries Music Library (*Access:* www.lib.washington.edu/music/); the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library at Harvard University (*Access:* <http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/#loebmusic>); and Washington University in St. Louis (*Access:* <http://library.wustl.edu/subjects/music/index.html>).

Websites of Interest to Musicologists. No bells-and-whistles here, but a clean, well-organized and substantial listing of music-related sites posted off the Web page of the American Musicological Society. Grouped

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into more than 30 categories, this is a very inclusive list with many links I have not seen elsewhere, including academic job listings, translation, and musicology blogs. *Access:* http://www.sas.upenn.edu/music/ams/musicology_www.html.

Yahoo! Entertainment > Music.

Yahoo's lists have been used by libraries for years because they are well-organized, hierarchical, subject-oriented, and very easy to navigate. Browse an extensive listing of links by artists, instruments, genres, and many other categories here. *Access:* <http://dir.yahoo.com/Entertainment/Music/>.

Classical

Baroque Music Homepage. This is a visually stunning site with its portraits of major composers of the period. Included are several essays on various aspects of the Baroque, information and links to Web sites on many of the composers and musicians of the period, recommended recordings, and a Baroque music sampler. *Access:* <http://www.barquemusic.org/index.html>.

Classical Net. Fulfilling a similar need as Essentials of Music (EoM) (described below), Classical Net contains guides to building a classical music collection, articles and reviews, information on composers, links to related Web sites, and more. The site is more inclusive and more scholarly than EoM and offers more than 4,000 links to other classical music Web sites. Additionally, there are listings of mailing lists and newsgroups dealing with various aspects of classical music. *Access:* <http://www.classical.net/>.

Essentials of Music. Sony Classical Music has joined with W.W. Norton & Company to create this site which offers an introduction to classical music built around Sony's Essential Classics music series. Search in Eras, Composers, or the Glossary; many entries are illustrated with audio excerpts from the series. This is an excellent resource for new students of classical music, where they can hear examples in the context of a major classical work of musical terms

like pizzicato or forte, rather than simply reading a definition. *Access:* <http://www.essentialsofmusic.com/>.

Popular

Billboard.com. The Web site of a publication that began in 1894, this is a primary news site for the commercial music scene, with daily music news, weekly charts (with music samples), new releases, and a Review Finder with tens of thousands of original album reviews from 1970 through today. *Access:* <http://www.billboard.com/>.

Popular American music collection from UCLA. One of the largest databases covering the history of popular music in the United States from 1790 to the present, this site's particular strengths within the 20th-century holdings include music for the theater, motion pictures, radio and television, as well as general popular music, country, rhythm and blues, and rock songs. *Access:* <http://digital.library.ucla.edu/apam/>.

Jazz

A Jazz Improvisation Primer. An online textbook by jazz musician Marc Sabatella, with information on all topics related to jazz improvisation, from jazz history to music theory to practical advice on playing in a group. Includes an annotated bibliography and discography. *Access:* <http://www.outsideshore.com/primer/primer/>.

A Passion for Jazz! Music History and Education. A nicely arranged site with a lot of information, including a timeline, a glossary, a section on jazz history, festivals, and more. There is an extensive photo gallery, and a particularly fascinating section on jazz chords and scales. *Access:* <http://www.apassion4jazz.net/>.



Ethnomusicology and folk music

Smithsonian Global Sound (SGS). From the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, *The New York Times* called this the ethnographic answer to iTunes.

Designed to deliver the world's diverse cultural expressions . . . in an informative way for a reasonable price, Smithsonian Global Sound contains tens of thousands of tracks from the Folkways archive and other world archives. Search by musical genre, instrument, geographic area and culture, and download not just the music but the documentation (text and photographs). Free audio samples are numerous, and 99 cent downloads help pay royalties to the musicians. For educational institutions and libraries, SGS has partnered with Alexander Street Press (information is at www.alexanderstreetpress.com/products/glmu.htm) to create a subscription database version with value-added functionality, such as the ability to create playlists for use with music education courses. *Access:* <http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/index.aspx>.



Southern Mosaic: The John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern States Recording Trip. From the Library of Congress American Memory project, this is a searchable site documenting a recording expedition by Archive of American Folk Song curator John Lomax and his wife Ruby. Nearly 700 of the songs they recorded are available here in MP3 format, with ballads, blues, children's songs, cowboy songs, dde tunes, eld hollers, lullabies, play-party songs, religious dramas, spirituals, and work songs. Lots of other goodies, including a fascinating photo archive. *Access:* <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/lohtml/>.

Opera and musical theater

Aria Database. This database has a diverse collection of information on more than 1,000 operatic arias. Designed both for singers and nonsingers, it includes translations and aria texts of most arias as well as a collection of MIDI files of operatic arias and ensembles. *Access:* <http://www.aria-database.com/>.

Musicals101.com: the Cyber Encyclopedia of Musical Theatre, TV and Film. Author John Kenrick created this Web site, devoted

to the history of musical theater, in 1996. It now numbers more than 600 pages. A series of essays cover selected performers and shows, how musicals are made, and more. Special features, reference resources, and reviews make this site a lot of fun for fans and a valuable resource for librarians and researchers. *Access:* <http://www.musicals101.com/>.



Song lyrics and sheet music

American Memory from the Library of Congress Sheet Music Collections. A rich site providing access to the historic sheet music at the Library of Congress. Some of the collections include:

African-American Sheet Music, 1850-1920, selected from the collections of Brown University;

We'll Sing to Abe Our Song! : Sheet Music about Lincoln, Emancipation, and the Civil War from the Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolniana;

Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1820-1860 and 1870-1885;

Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920.

Access these and more at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/> and choose Performing Arts, Music.

Lester S. Levy Collection of Sheet Music. One of the earliest, and still one of the best, digitized sheet music Web sites. This collection from Johns Hopkins University contains more than 29,000 pieces of popular American music from 1780 to 1960, but its greatest strength is its thorough documentation of 19th-century America through popular music. *Access:* <http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/>.

Copyright

MLA: Copyright for Music Librarians. This is a clear, concise, and well-laid-out Web site from the Music Library Association explaining the intricacies of music copyright for librarians and music teachers. The infor-

mation about pending legislation, news, and litigation and its impact on music libraries is useful and timely. Guidelines relevant to music and education, FAQs, related links, and a bibliography round out one of the most practical and useful Web sites on copyright. *Access:* <http://www.lib.jmu.edu/org/mla/>.

Public Domain Music. This is an excellent Web site for performers, composers, and teachers to determine whether a song is in the public domain and, therefore, available for performance, publication, or arrangement without fear of infringing upon copyright. *Access:* <http://www.pdinfo.com/>.

Musical instruments

Medieval and Renaissance Instruments. The photos on this site are of an excellent quality, as are the short essays and lists of additional resources. The one drawback to this site is that you have to click on the name of the instrument before you can see an illustration of it, but most entries have MP3 sound files so you can hear them. *Access:* <http://www.music.iastate.edu/antiqua/instrumt.html>.

The Virtual Instrument Museum. A multimedia site with audio, video, still images and some Quicktime Virtual Reality, or QTVR, images (360 degree interactive photos) of the impressive World Instrument Collection at Wesleyan University. If you ever wondered what a kagan, bouzouki, or ud look and sound like, this is a good place to find out. *Access:* <http://learningobjects.wesleyan.edu/vim/>.

Music history

Lift Every Voice: Music in American Life. An exploration of the history of the ballads, hymns, spirituals, patriotic odes, minstrel and musical works, and protest songs of the United States. There are high-quality audio clips of songs from each musical style and images of sheet music, song sheets, and photo-

graphs. From the University of Virginia Library. *Access:* <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/exhibits/music/>.

Music History 102: A Guide to Western Composers and their Music from the Middle Ages to the Present. From the Internet Public Library, an extensive original collection of text, images, and audio clips of great works of Western classical music. *Access:* <http://www.ipl.org/div/mushist/>.

Music theory

Ricci Adams' Musictheory.net. This is a collection of animated music theory tutorials. Interactive exercises for keyboard, guitar, brass, and ear that include sight and audio recognition of notes, keys, chords, and other elements are found in the Trainers section. Utilities include a chord calculator, staff paper, and a matrix generator. The trainers and utilities may be downloaded. *Access:* <http://www.musictheory.net/>.

Music associations

MENC: The National Association for Music Education. MENC provides music educators, students, and musicians with information on and links to education standards, career opportunities, financial aid, a job center, state-run festivals, suppliers of music products, teacher's guides, special events, and more. Some of the projects MENC sponsors include the National Anthem Project, the Fund for the Advancement of Music Education, and Music in our Schools Month, a public outreach program in March each year. *Access:* <http://www.menc.org/>.

Music Library Association. The professional organization in the United States devoted to music librarianship and all aspects of music materials in libraries. Along with information about the association, the Web site also has a page on music copyright for librarians (see the entry under Copyright), a directory of library school offerings in music librarianship, a placement service job list for music librarians, lists of association publications, and links to other useful online information. *Access:* <http://www.musiclibraryassoc.org/>. *ZZ*