Very Short Introductions online

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The Blues: A Very Short Introduction
Elijah Wald

Print Publication Year: 2010 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780195398939.001.0001

The Blues: A Very Short Introduction surveys a genre which lies at the heart of American culture. Blues is more of a broad musical tradition than a musical genre, with a constantly evolving pop culture. It explores its roots in work and praise songs, and its popularization by W. C. Handy. It follows its evolution from Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith to Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix; identifies the impact of rural field recordings of Blind Lemon Jefferson and Charley Patton; explores the influence of blues on country music and jazz; and looks at the rhythm and blues trends of the 1940s and 1950s, from T–Bone Walker to Muddy Waters.

Early Music: A Very Short Introduction
Thomas Forrest Kelly

Print Publication Year: 2011 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199730766.001.0001

Early Music: A Very Short Introduction explores the music of the Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods. The revival of Gregorian chant in the early nineteenth century, the ‘Cecilian movement’ in later nineteenth century Germany, and Mendelssohn's revival of Bach, are just some of the efforts made to restore early music. In recent years this interest has taken on particular meaning, representing a rediscovery of little-known underappreciated repertoires and an effort to recover lost performing styles. Much has been gained in the twentieth century from the study and revival of instruments, playing techniques, and repertories.

Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction
Timothy Rice

Print Publication Year: 2014 Published Online: Dec 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199794379.001.0001

Item type: book
Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction describes this growing discipline, showing how modern researchers go about studying music from around the world, looking for insights into both music and humanity. Ethnomusicologists believe that all humans, not just those we call musicians, are musical, and that musicality is one of the essential touchstones of the human experience. This insight raises big questions about the nature of music and the nature of humankind, and ethnomusicologists argue that to address these questions properly, we must study music in all its geographical and historical diversity. Ethnomusicologists today not only examine traditional forms of music, but also explore more contemporary musical forms.

**Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**

Kathryn Kalinak

Print Publication Year: 2010 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780195370874.001.0001

Film Music: A Very Short Introduction focuses on the most central issues in the practice of film music. What is film music? How is it composed? How does film music work? The rich and deeply moving sounds of film music are as old as cinema. The very first projected moving images were accompanied by music in many places as a variety of performers — from single piano players to small orchestras — brought images to life. Film music has since become its own industry, an aesthetic platform for expressing creative visions, and a commercial vehicle for growing musical stars of all varieties.

**Folk Music: A Very Short Introduction**

Mark Slobin

Print Publication Year: 2011 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780195395020.001.0001

Folk Music: A Very Short Introduction explores a remarkably diverse musical genre. It considers folk musical traditions from across the globe, everything from music to accompany a Russian wedding near the Arctic Circle, to a group song in a small rainforest village in Brazil, and an Uzbek dance tune in Afghanistan. Three poignant songs from three widely separated regions — northern Afghanistan, Jewish Eastern Europe, and a ballad from the Anglo–American world — are living examples of the richness of this ever-changing musical genre. Musical notation and lyrics are included throughout.

**Music: A Very Short Introduction**

Nicholas Cook

Print Publication Year: 2000 Published Online: Sep 2013  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780192853820.001.0001
The world teems with different kinds of music—traditional, folk, classical, jazz, rock, pop—and each type of music tends to come with its own way of thinking. Drawing on a wealth of accessible examples ranging from Beethoven to rock music and Western music to Chinese zither music, Music: A Very Short Introduction attempts to provide a framework for thinking about all music and the values and qualities we ascribe to it. By examining the personal, social, and cultural values that music embodies, this VSI reveals the shortcomings of traditional conceptions of music, and sketches a more inclusive approach emphasizing the role of performers and listeners.

The Orchestra: A Very Short Introduction

D. Kern Holoman

The Orchestra: A Very Short Introduction considers the structure, roots, and day-to-day functioning of the modern philharmonic society and explores topics ranging from the life of a musician in a modern orchestra, the recent wave of new hall construction, threats of bankruptcies and strikes, and the high salaries of conductors and general managers. Can such a seemingly anachronistic organization long survive? Does the symphony matter in contemporary culture? The orchestra remains a potent political and social force. It has adapted well to the digital revolution, and it continues to be seen with civic pride. In a time of upheaval in how classical music is created, heard, distributed, and evaluated, the orchestra has managed to retain its historic role.

World Music: A Very Short Introduction

Philip V. Bohlman

World Music: A Very Short Introduction shows how ‘world music’ has emerged as an invention of the West from encounters with other cultures and presents its modern diversity ranging from folk and traditional music to ‘worldbeat’. This VSI is wide-ranging in its geographical scope, yet individual chapters provide in-depth treatments of selected music cultures and regional music histories. The book frequently zooms in on repertoires and musicians—such as Bob Marley, Bartok, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan—and attempts to account for world music's growing presence and popularity at the beginning of the twenty-first century.