When we sing lines in which a fifteenth-century musician uses ethereal polyphony to complain mundanely about money or hoarseness, more than half a millennium melts away. Equally intriguing are moments in which we experience solmization puns. These familiar worries and surprising jests break down temporal distances, humanizing the lives and endeavors of our musical forebears. Yet many instances of self-reference occur within otherwise serious pieces. Are these simply in-jokes, or are there more meaningful messages that we risk neglecting if we dismiss them as comic relief? Musicologist Jane D. Hatter takes seriously the pervasiveness of these features. Divided into two sections, this study considers pieces with self-referential features in the texts separately from discussions of pieces based on musical self-referential elements. This examination of connections between self-referential repertoire from the years 1450–1530 and similar self-referential creations for painters’ guilds reveals musicians’ agency in forming the first communities of early modern composers.

Jane D. Hatter is an assistant professor of musicology at the University of Utah. She has published articles on musical communities and intersections between music and the visual arts.
The aim of Music in Context is to illuminate specific musical works, repertoires, or practices in historical, critical, socioeconomic, or other contexts; or to illuminate particular cultural and critical contexts in which music operates through the study of specific musical works, repertoires, or practices. A specific musical focus is essential, while avoiding the decontextualization of traditional aesthetics and music analysis. The series title invites engagement with both its main terms; the aim is to challenge notions of what contexts are appropriate or necessary in studies of music, and to extend the conceptual framework of musicology into other disciplines or into new theoretical directions.

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Composing Community in Late Medieval Music

Self-Reference, Pedagogy, and Practice

JANE D. HATTER

University of Utah
For Wesley
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Note to the Reader

Pitch notation

When specific pitches are indicated in the text they will be referred to according to the terminology of the Guidonian gamut or scala generalis. These are listed here from low to high, and c = middle c:

GG A B C D E F G a b c d e f g aa bb cc dd ee

Clefs

In mensural notation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the most common clefs are C clefs (\(\text{\textg}\)) and F clefs (\(\text{\textf}\)). G clef (\(\text{\textg}\)) is sometimes used, but this is less common. C clefs and F clefs can occur on any line of the staff, so where necessary these will be indicated with the letter C or F and a number indicating the line on which it occurs starting from the bottom line of the staff. For example, C1 indicates that there is a C clef on the bottom line of the staff and F3 indicates that there is an F clef on the middle line.

Mensuration signs

Mensuration signs are the late medieval equivalent of our modern time signatures, but they have some important differences.¹ They indicate recurring patterns of binary (imperfect or minor) and ternary (perfect or major) at different hierarchical levels (tempus for the breve and prolation for the semibreve). There are also larger mensural levels (modus for the

¹ The basic texts for learning mensural notations are Willi Apel, The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600; and Carl Parrish, The Notation of Medieval Music. For a more recent discussion of this topic that is highly accessible and accompanied by a recording of some of the music discussed in the text, see Thomas Forrest Kelly, Capturing Music: The Story of Notation.
The five most common mensuration signs in use for the time period covered by this book are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☰</td>
<td>perfect tempus, major prolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☰</td>
<td>perfect tempus, minor prolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☰</td>
<td>imperfect tempus, major prolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☰</td>
<td>imperfect tempus, minor prolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☰</td>
<td>which has the same metric structure as ☰ but probably would be performed at a faster tempo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>