

## Project Year

2007

## Project Team

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## Project Title

Digital Adventures in the History of Music from Adam and Eve to the Baroque Era

## Audience

Students in the History of Music course

## Pedagogical Issue

Presently, Dr. Weiss uses WebCT to present online course materials to students. While students enjoy having most of the course online, they are anxious to download materials, particularly audio and video files. Course evaluations tell us that students want to be able to work away from the computer, using devices such as iPods. In order to facilitate the busy lifestyle of Conservatory students, digital presentations, available both online and as downloadable MPEG-4 files, would allow students to study on the go and away from the computer.

Additionally, WebCT is limited in its ability to use audio files in quizzes. The current version of WebCT used at JHU does not support multimedia or sound presentations as part of the test module. Incorporating Flash-based quizzes into digital presentations would provide an opportunity for creating online listening recognition tests - a vital preparation tool for the *History of Music* course.

## Solution

Digital Adventures focuses on the creation of Flash-based lecture presentations through the use of Camtasia software. The Flash-based lecture presentations will serve to enhance students' understanding of the material by encapsulating narrative, text, graphics, streaming musical analysis, and audio excerpts into a single portable flash movie. The ability of Camtasia to easily combine sound excerpts with Flash-based quizzes will provide an opportunity for creating online listening recognition tests. The incorporation of these quizzes as part of the presentations will help ensure student's complete comprehension and assimilation of the material.

Digital Adventures is also aimed at the art enthusiasts and the community in general. Music as an art does not exist in a vacuum but is a rich multi-faceted cultural phenomenon linked to architecture, literature and visual arts. By deploying a series of Flash lectures based on the course material, Digital Adventures will aspire to enhance and enrich the general knowledge and appreciation of music of the pre-Baroque era.

## Technologies Used

Courseware (WebCT development), PowerPoint/Presentation, HTML/Web Design, Digital Audio, Digital Video, Camtasia, Finale

## Project Abstract

*Digital Adventures* is a tri-dimensional project aimed at developing and enriching the understanding and appreciation of pre-baroque music for conservatory and university students as well as the general community. The first dimension of the project focuses on the creation of multi-media presentations combining narrative, graphics, streaming musical analysis and audio excerpts, as well as built-in self-evaluation quizzes. Through the use of Camtasia, PowerPoint and Finale software, all of the above elements will be incorporated in a single portable presentation that can be viewed online (Flash) or downloaded to a portable media player (MPEG-4). Furthermore students will be provided with self-evaluating listening recognition tests - a vital preparation tool currently unavailable on WebCT.

The second aspect of *Digital Adventures* focuses on the implementation of an in-class voting system through the use of CPS software and hardware. There are no prerequisites for this course and considering the extremely diverse student body the implementation of in-class voting will greatly aid in tracking the immediate level of student comprehension. As well, it will encourage class participation of students who might otherwise feel inhibited by language and/or cultural barriers. Finally, the incorporation of identical quizzes using both CPS and Flash will ensure coherence and better understanding of the material.

The third component of *Digital Adventures* is aimed at enhancing the knowledge and appreciation of music in the general community. By developing a series of lectures using Flash based on the course material, but stripped off of course specific content, *Digital Adventures* will trace the relations and influences between music, religion, socio-economic events, and the other arts. The Flash presentations will be deployed on a faculty JShare account and will be accessible via the web.

By incorporating the above features, *Digital Adventures* aims to further and extend the knowledge and understanding of music and culture by taking advantage of the latest advances in technology and bringing the past into the future.