Exploring the Arts

EXPLORING THE ARTS

A Brief Introduction to Art, Theatre, Music, and Dance

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NUBIA NURAIN KHAN

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PREFACE

The Creation of This Book

This textbook was created as part of the Interactive OER for Dual Enrollment project, facilitated by LOUIS: The Louisiana Library Network and funded by a $2 million Open Textbooks Pilot Program grant from the Department of Education.

This project supports the extension of access to high-quality post-secondary opportunities to high school students across Louisiana and beyond by creating materials that can be adopted for dual enrollment environments. Dual enrollment is the opportunity for a student to be enrolled in high school and college at the same time.

The cohort-developed OER course materials are released under a license that permits their free use, reuse, modification and sharing with others. This includes a corresponding course available in MoodleNet and Canvas Commons that can be imported to other Learning Management System platforms. For access/questions, contact Affordable Learning Louisiana.

If you are adopting this textbook, we would be glad to know of your use via this brief survey.

Review Statement

This textbook and its accompanying course materials went through at least two review processes:

- Peer reviewers, coordinated by Jared Eusea, River Parish Community College, used an online course development standard rubric for assessing the quality and content of each course to ensure that the courses developed through Interactive OER for Dual Enrollment support online learners in that environment. The evaluation framework reflects a commitment to accessibility and usability for all learners.
    - Reviewers
        - Anne Branscum
        - Maia Smith
        - Tarrah Davis
- The Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education (ISKME) collaborated with LOUIS to review course materials and ensure their appropriateness for dual enrollment audiences. Review criteria were drawn from factors that apply across dual enrollment courses and subject areas, such as determining appropriate reading levels, assessing the fit of topics and examples for high school

DE students; applying high-level principles for quality curriculum design, including designing for accessibility, appropriate student knowledge checks, and effective scaffolding of student tasks and prior knowledge requirements, addressing adaptability and open educational practices, and principles related to inclusion and representational social justice.

- Reviewers
  - Kristi Carr
  - Jessica Danby

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

What Is Art?

Art is works produced by human creative imagination and skills to express emotions, beauty, ideas, stories. Art has a vast and complex meaning not able to be enveloped by a single answer. Exploring the visual and performing arts (Art, Music, Dance, Theater) provides a person or student with a sense of richness and diversity of human achievement from the beginning of time to the present. Evaluating significant works of art will improve your ability to think critically and to communicate in an informed manner about the arts. Hopefully, you will develop a lifelong appreciation of and commitment to exploring the arts and creating value to the importance of the arts in your personal life and your community. This is a value that contributes greatly to the intellectual and creative growth of the individual.

The reasons for the creation of art are as far-reaching as they are diverse. The universal urge to create (and to appreciate what others have created) defines us as human beings and sets us apart from other animals (akin to the ability to act in a planned/premeditated manner). Some universal themes, however, recur across the thousands of years of the history of art, including:

- Relationships between man and nature/the natural environment
- Religion
- Sexuality and sexual drives (Freudian theory)
- Display of power and authority
- Demarcation of hierarchies and social rank
- Capturing the magnificence or greatness of human existence
- Vanity of the artist or art patron; display of the technical prowess of the maker
- Pursuit of human perfection/beauty (classical antiquity/Renaissance)
- Ability to create records and to tell narratives in the absence of written language

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors and editor would like to acknowledge the Dance Cohort of the LOUIS Open Textbook for Dual Enrollment project for contributing their content to the Introduction to Dance section of this textbook (Chapters 17–19). *So You Think You Know Dance?* by Vanessa Kanamoto; Susan Perlis; Roshanda D. Spears; and Mary Francis "Cissy" Whipp is licensed as CC BY 4.0.

They also wish to acknowledge the content used in the Introduction to Music section (Chapters 13–16), derived from *Music Appreciation* by Armin Harrison. This text is licensed as CC BY 4.0.

Finally, thank you to Darius Spieth for providing original content in the Introduction to Arts section (Chapters 1–6) of this text.

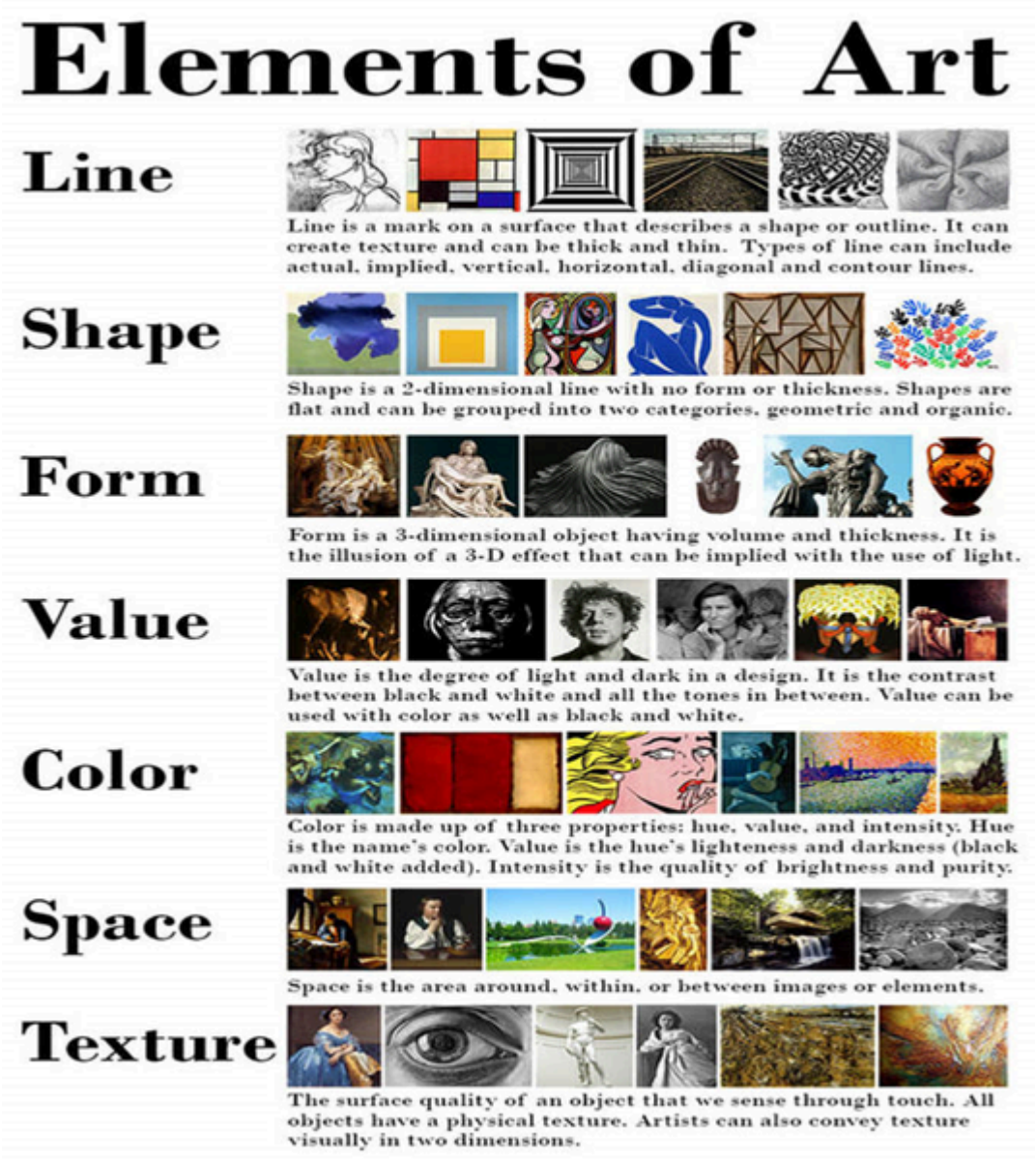
PART I

MAIN BODY

1.

CHAPTER 1: ELEMENTS, VOCABULARY, AND ICONOGRAPHY OF VISUAL ART

To intelligently analyze art, we need the proper terminology to describe the elements that make up the work of art. Below is an infographic that reviews the basic elements of art.



Learn More – Video

For more on each of the elements of art and how to identify them, check out the videos on the Elements of Art from the KQED Art School.
https://lpb.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/elements-of-art/

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=42#oembed-1

Entire books have been compiled with definitions of art by more or less famous people. The notion of art is very difficult to define. This is truer than ever in the 20th and 21st centuries, after Marcel Duchamp introduced the "Readymade" (below), elevating a simple urinal to a museum-worthy sculpture. But one of the broadest definitions to which we may agree is that art is a form of communication that uses a visual vocabulary. The objective of this class will be to lend a voice to the work of art, to make it speak by learning a visual vocabulary in order to interpret it.

Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917, readymade glazed sanitary china with black paint

Let's talk about a few important distinctions when referring to works of art:

The Arts: A comprehensive term describing creative activities, including (but not limited to) music, theater, writing, movie making, etc.

Visual or Fine Arts: Painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, etc.

In general, the more precise the expression, the better. We refer to art by its medium—for example, fresco painting, oil on canvas, bronze, etc. Never use the expression "piece" or "piece of art" when referring to a work—use its correct medium instead. A "work of art," an "artwork," "artworks," etc. are fine expressions to use. We will cover the various types of mediums in art in the next few chapters.

Let's take a look at three portraits of popes across a period of more than three hundred years. How is each pope represented differently? Can you think of some words to describe these portraits?

Diego Velázquez, Portrait of Innocent X, ca. 1650, oil on canvas

Francis Bacon, Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X, 1956, oil on canvas

Michael Triegel, Portrait of Benedict XVI, 2010, oil on canvas

These three portraits retrace the changing fortunes of representational art across time. When Velázquez painted, in the seventeenth century, an artist's fame was measured by his ability to render a person naturalistically. After the Second World War and the advent of conceptual art with Marcel Duchamp, artists who worked realistically and who showed skills or talent were looked upon condescendingly. Most artists worked in an abstract or conceptual idiom. It became next to impossible to represent the human form if one wanted to have an "official" art career. Bacon's screaming pope was on the verge of acceptability. Today, as contemporary painter Michael Triegel's pope portrait shows, it has become acceptable again to work representationally, although most contemporary art falls outside of this category. What this tells us is that definitions of art are never stable and constantly change over time. So does the value system of what is "great art" and what is "not so great."

Iconography

As mentioned previously, iconography is defined as the study of the contents of the images. This is especially important for works of art produced from the early Renaissance through the middle of the twentieth century and can also be helpful in analyzing contemporary works of art relying on traditional means for depicting figurative and spatial content.

Watch the following video, "Understanding Art with Iconography." As you are watching the video, consider the following:

- How is an artwork's iconography different from its formal qualities?
- How does the interpretation of a work of art's iconography change according to the culture, religion, or subjectivity of the artist?
- Why does modern art often defy iconographic interpretations?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rv2_UcSA8bY&t=2s

Now that we've defined what iconography is, let's go back to one of our earlier examples. Take a look at this work of art again and try to identify the elements that might contribute to the deciphering of its narrative content or historical context or tell us what meaning this work may convey. Consider contextual information in the label, such as title, year, name of artist, etc. You may ask yourself the following:

- Who was Marat?
- Who was David?
- What event is depicted?

Jacques-Louis David, ***Death of Marat***, 1793, oil on canvas. By Jacques-Louis David – Google Art &

Culture: upload by user FDRMRZUSA. Web Gallery of Art, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=112018

Iconographic Analysis

Marat: eighteenth-century journalist, politician, radical French Revolutionary

Described as a "Terrorist" or "Partisan of the Terror regime organized by Robespierre, Marat and other Deputies of the Party of the Mountain."

Voted for the death of King Louis XVI in 1792.

Political position: Anti-Monarchy, Anti-Aristocracy, Republicanism, Democracy.

David: renowned neoclassical artist and politician who voted for the death of Louis XVI (like Marat).

Event depicted: Marat was assassinated by Charlotte Corday as a sympathizer of the Girondins, his political enemies, for his role in the French Revolution. Corday gained access to his private quarters using the letter he is holding and stabbed him to death (knife at the bottom right corner of the painting).

Now, watch the following video that combines both formal and iconographic analysis of this work to fully contextualize and interpret it.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=42#oembed-2

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw2_hv439Fg

2.

CHAPTER 2: MEDIUMS IN VISUAL ART

Chapter 2: Mediums in Art

Pigment = The colored powders made from organic or inorganic substances. Means to paint and is the basis of color. Ex. Plant or animal matter, semi-precious stones, minerals, etc. Used not only in paint, but also colored drawing supplies like pastels, crayons, colored pencils.

Binder = The liquid that adheres the pigment to a surface. Ex. Blood, water, oil, plaster, etc. The surface can be canvas, paper, wood, stone, etc.

Watch the following video, "The Value of Art: Medium from Sotheby's." As you are viewing the video, consider the following questions:

- What are the more traditional mediums?
- How has medium changed in modern and contemporary art?

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=43#oembed-1

https://youtu.be/mvI9vBEQfgU

We will review some of the most common media used in the creation of artworks: drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, architecture, performance art, dance, and music (among others).

Subheading: **Drawings**

Traditionally, artists were first taught how to draw before painting a picture or sculpting a sculpture. Ever since the Renaissance, in the Western (academic) artistic tradition, drawing skills were the cornerstone of artistic practice. As conventional wisdom has it, an outstanding draftsman promises to become a great artist. Drawings allow artists to collect and record ideas (for example, in sketchbooks), to try out proportions, and to visualize ideas (preparatory drawings). For many artists, preparatory drawings are used to work out composition, form, or other elements before completing the final work of art, which is often completed in a different medium, such as oil or bronze. Preparatory drawings may be "studies" of figures, objects, or landscapes drawn from life. Sometimes, however, drawings can be an end in themselves. The Italian word "*disegno*" is a distant relative of the English expression "design."

Drawings use a variety of media, including pen, pencil, ink, watercolor, gouache, charcoal, pastel, etc., which are "supported" or applied to a surface, such as a piece of paper, cloth, wall, and so on.

Take a look at these two examples of drawings. Although they are of a similar medium —pen and ink—what are some of the distinct visual differences you notice?

Leonardo da Vinci, *A Man Tricked by Gypsies*, ca. 1493, pen and ink drawing

Vincent van Gogh, *The Fountain in the Hospital Garden*, 1889, pen and ink drawing

You may have noticed that one of the major differences between these two works is the distinction in the quality of the line work. A line is defined as the extension of the dot that can indicate direction, motion (especially waves), can indicate boundaries of shapes and spaces, and can imply volumes of solid masses. Line involves the delineation of form—as seen in the contours of the men's faces in the da Vinci drawing—or it can be used to create tonal variations, shading, hatching, and crosshatching, as seen in the van Gogh drawing.

Watch the following short video on how line is used in art. Take note of the various ways in which line is used to achieve different results.

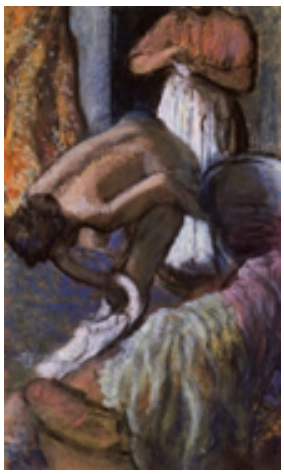
https://youtu.be/BDePyEFT1gQ

Subheading: **Pastel Drawings**

Pastels present a problem apart in the drawing "family." Pastel is a chalk-like, friable (easily crumbled) medium, which often requires colored paper to make full use of its visual effects. Once completed, the pastel drawing must be "fixed" using some sort of sticking spray to prevent the pigment from detaching from the

support. Pastels were a very popular medium in eighteenth-century Rococo art because of its soft touch and muted colors. Later on, Impressionist artists, such as Edgar Degas, also embraced the medium for its ability to capture colorful impressions quickly and spontaneously. It is nearly impossible to correct or alter a pastel drawing later on.

Rosalba Carriera, *Portrait of a Girl with a Bussolà*, 1725–1730, pastel on paper



Edgar Degas, *Le petit déjeuner après le bain (Jeune femme s'essuyant)*, ca. 1894, pastel on paper

Subheading: **Paintings**

Painting is based on a bewildering range of types of paint and types of support, including, but not limited to, oil, fresco, tempera, watercolor, encaustic (hot wax), and acrylics.

Common types of support (i.e., the surface upon which the paint is applied) include canvas, wood, board, copper, paper, etc.

When we identify a painting, we want to include the type of paint and its support in its description. For example, oil on canvas, tempera on board, oil on paper, oil on copper, etc.

Review the following presentation detailing the most common types of paint, including their history and formal characteristics.

All colors and paints consist of two or three ingredients:

- Powdered **pigment**—(see examples above) Made of ground up plant or animal matter, semi-precious stones, minerals, etc.
- A **binder** is a liquid that sticks the powder to a surface. It can be wax, water, oil, plaster, glue, etc.

Encaustic: Pigment-suspended Hot Wax Painting

1. Mummy *Portrait of a Man*, Faiyum (Egypt), ca. A.D. 160–170, encaustic painting on wood (Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo)

2. Jasper Johns, *Flag*, 1954, encaustic, oil and collage on fabric mounted on plywood

Encaustic paint has as its ingredients:

- Powdered pigment

- Binder = beeswax
- Thinner = no substance thins encaustic paint, instead, heat is the thinner
- Used since ancient times (think of mummy portraits and ancient Egypt)

Fresco Painting (Buon Fresco) is pigment suspended in plaster.
Fresco paint has as its ingredients:

- Powdered pigment
- Binder = lime in plaster
- Thinner = water
- Used since ancient times (in some Egyptian tombs that are at least 5,000 years old!)
- Name comes from the Italian word for "fresh"; True Fresco *must* be painted on fresh, wet plaster
- Color pigments are diluted in water, then applied to a freshly plastered wall
- Pigments soak deep into the plaster while it is still wet; lime in plaster becomes a binder
- Rapid execution, working in segments, is necessary; technique best for covering large wall spaces

Tempera:

Tempera paint (traditionally, egg tempera) has as its ingredients:

- Powdered pigment
- Binder = egg yolk
- Thinner = water
- Color pigments mixed with egg yolk
- About as old as the encaustic technique

The *Annunciation,* Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi, Tempera on gold, Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy.

For all intents and purposes, tempera painting "behaves" like a watercolor. Pioneered by Flemish painters (Flanders = Northern Belgium).

Fra Filippo Lippi, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1440–1445, tempera on board

Oil on Canvas

Oil paint has as its ingredients:

- Powdered pigment
- Binder = linseed oil
- Thinner = turpentine (a sap from a pine tree)

First used in the 15th century (the Renaissance). The first artist to explore technique was Flemish painter Jan van Eyck, but the Italians perfected it and used it extensively. Texture of canvas and consistency of paint can greatly influence the character of a painting.

Watercolor/Gouache

Ingredients for transparent watercolor are:

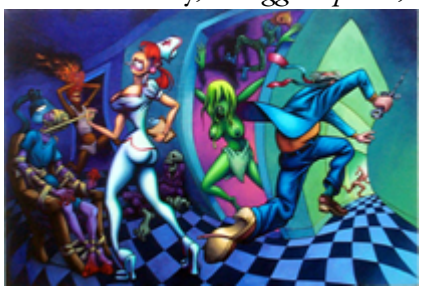
- Powdered pigment
- Binder = gum arabic
- Thinner = water
- Opaque watercolor (Gouache) adds: Chalk dust
- The pioneer in watercolor painting was Albrecht Dürer, a Northern Renaissance artist

Albrecht Dürer, *The Great Piece of Turf*, 1503, watercolor.

Winslow Homer, *Sloop, Nassau*, 1899, watercolor and graphite on off-white wove paper.

Acrylics

David Hockney, *A Bigger Splash*, 1967, acrylic on canvas



The Pizz, The Teenage Detox Hospital, 1999, acrylic on canvas

- Relatively recent invention (second half of 20th century)
- Pigments suspended in acrylic polymer medium
- Transparent "films" of color
- Dries fast
- High degree of color intensity

Subheading: **Mosaic**

Mosaics are made up of small pieces of colored glass, stone, or ceramic tile called tessera that are embedded in a "bed" (background material), such as mortar or plaster. The tessera can be combined to create complex images, which look "pixelated" in photographic reproduction. Mosaics can be found on walls and on floors; they have been used at least since the days of ancient Greece. Many mosaics can also be found in early Christian churches.

Mosaic of Empress Theodora and Attendants, ca. 547, Church of San Vitale, Ravenna, mosaic. By Petar Milošević – Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=60402597

Detail of mosaic on the left showing Empress Theodora. This artwork was created 2 months before her death from breast cancer.

Subheading: **Sculpture**

Traditionally, there are two distinctive approaches to sculptural techniques, one is **subtractive** (typically pertains to media like stone, wood, or ivory) and the other **additive** (typically applies to media like clay, bronze, plaster, or wax).

Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Awakening Slave*, 1530–1534, marble, for the unfinished tomb of Pope Julius II.

This is an example of a subtractive approach to sculpture. You can imagine how Michelangelo started out with a marble block, from which he chiseled away until the figure began to emerge.

Auguste Rodin, *The Thinker* (Le Penseur), design ca. 1880 (cast ca. 1910), bronze

This is an example of an additive approach to sculpture. Rodin started out by building a positive wax model of *The Thinker*, which was turned into a negative investment mold from which multiple bronze copies could be cast. The lost-wax casting method is explained in detail below.

Assessment: Take a look at this sculpture. Which sculptural approach was used?

Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Bound Slave*, 1513–1516, marble.

The lost-wax casting method was already known in ancient Greece (see Zeus/Poseidon, below) but proliferated greatly in late nineteenth-century France (when Rodin lived) with the advent of industrial production methods. In 1839, Achille Colas even invented a machine that allowed for scaled copies (larger or smaller) of sculptures to be industrially produced.

Zeus (or Poseidon), Bronze. 209 cm high.

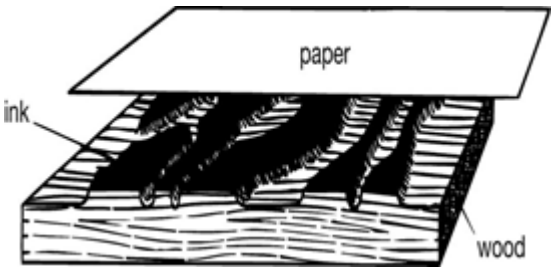
Subheading: **Prints and Printmaking**

Prints allow the artist to create identical reproductions of the same image. They are distinct from original (one-of-a-kind) works of art. By definition, multiples are artworks that exist in multiple, identical copies, executed in media that lend themselves to reproductions, such as cast sculpture (bronzes, etc.), prints, photographs, etc. Multiples typically have a limited-edition size—that is, the number of copies (in prints, we call them impressions) from a printing plate or casting mold is limited. The edition size is often inscribed on the

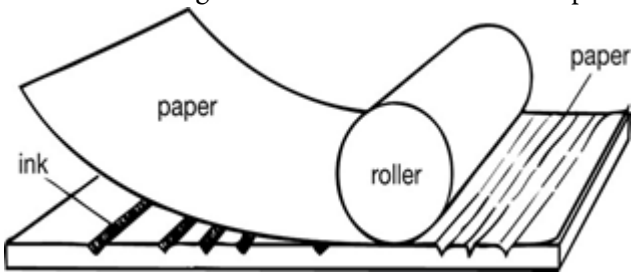
object. The convention for denoting editions follows this pattern: if you have a print with a (mostly manuscript annotation) 2/15, you know that it is the second impression out of a total edition of 15.

There are two major types of printing processes: relief and intaglio.

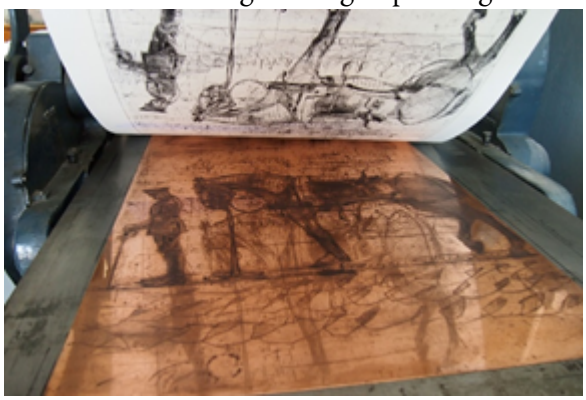
Relief processes are when printing occurs with the raised parts of the plate or those parts that have not been cut away. Examples: linoleum cuts (linocuts) or woodcuts (or wood engravings).



Intaglio processes (from Italian *intagliare*, "to cut into") are the opposite from relief processes in that the crevices in the plate (engraved with a tool or etched with acid) hold the ink. After cutting the design of the plate, it is covered with ink; the plate is then wiped until no ink sits on the surface any longer and only the crevices of the design hold reservoirs of ink. Examples: engravings and etchings.



Schematic rendering of intaglio printing.



An intaglio print is pulled from a copper plate.

Lithography

Lithography is a printmaking technique that uses litho crayons on a fine-grained Bavarian limestone (see images below). Gum arabic and acid serve as fixative. The artist applies a design directly onto the stone with the crayons. The stone is then wetted and greasy ink is applied, which is repelled by the water in the blank areas. Physically, lithography relies on the physical quality that water and oil do not mix. The technique allows one "to print drawings." Most non-specialists would consider lithographs as drawings, as it takes a trained

eye to notice the difference. Note: “Lithography” describes the printmaking technique; a “lithograph” is print produced by means of the lithographic process.

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Moulin Rouge*, ca. 1891. A 19th-century lithographer, Toulouse-Lautrec executed lithographic posters for Parisian night clubs in the Art Nouveau style.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=43#h5p-3

3.

CHAPTER 3: ANCIENT ARTS (PREHISTORIC, ANCIENT NEAR EAST, EGYPTIAN)

Prehistoric Art

Prehistoric art is **art** created before the dawn of recorded history. Mostly known for cave paintings but also includes sculptures and architecture. A time period that covers millions of years until the beginning of written history that started ca. 3500 BCE in the ancient Near East. The caves we came out of are littered with the tools we used to create art.

Paleolithic-Old stone age (Paleo = old; Lith = stone)

Mesolithic-middle stone age (meso = middle)

Neolithic-New stone age (Neo = new) Characterized by a change in relationship between humans and their environments, domestication of animals and plants, more substantial structures built.

Venus of Willendorf

From Willendorf, Austria, ca. 25,000–21,000 BCE. Limestone; 4 3/8 in. high.

- Many of these Venus figurines date from ca. 30,000–11,000 BCE and are found from Europe to Siberia and made from soft material like clay, bone, calcite, and Ivory.

- Carved from limestone that was not from the local area and tinted with red ochre.
- A **Sculpture in the Round** is a 360-degree view, meaning you can see the bottom, top, sides, etc.
- The deep navel is a natural indention in the stone. It never had feet.
- May stress health/fertility/beauty. Emphases on the belly, breast, and pubic area.

Hall of the Running Bulls, Lascaux, France, ca. 15,000–13,000 BCE. Paint on limestone rock. The Lascaux cave was rediscovered in 1940 by teenagers when their dog fell in a hole. Of the images depicted in the caves, 72% were not hunted for food.

Ask yourself: Why did prehistoric humans spend time and energy away from surviving to create art? What functions did these visuals represent or serve? What do the images mean?

A good documentary to watch is the ***Cave of Forgotten Dreams*** on the discoveries of the Chauvet cave. Trailer: https://youtu.be/qfJfRx2IAYo

Stonehenge, Salisbury Plain, England, ca. 2800–1500 BCE. Stonehenge uses the **first principle of architecture, Post and Lintel** = 2 upright stones supporting a third horizontal lintel stone.

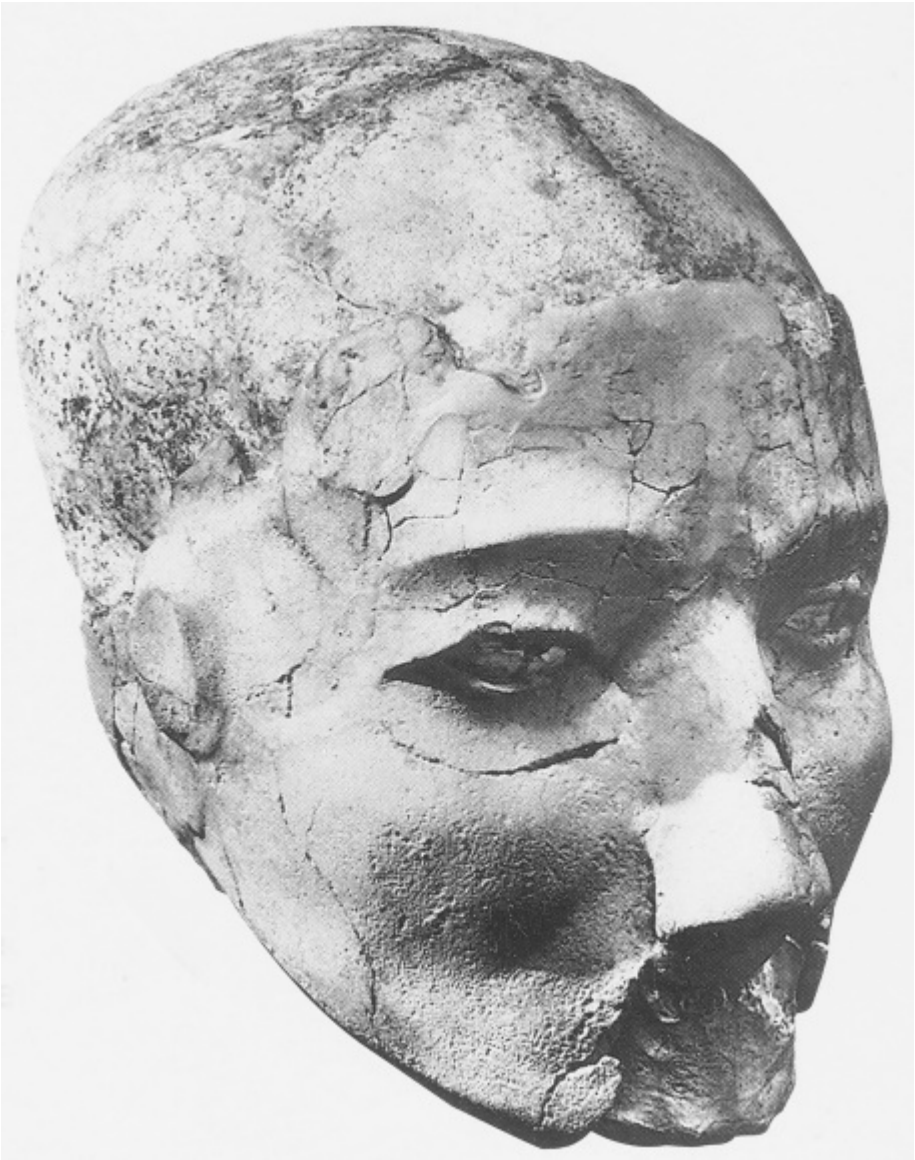
Ancient Near East

Ancient Mesopotamia is located in today's Iraq and parts of Syria. It is here that we find some of the earliest evidence for what we can call civilization: political organization, religious beliefs, cities, and food storage.

Mesopotamia = the land between 2 rivers. The rivers are the **Tigris** River and **Euphrates** River. Bible stories from the Old Testament are from this time period, for example: Noah, Abraham, Garden of Eden.

- The Dawn of Civilization—Irrigation techniques led to fertile soil.
- Invention of the wheel & plow, batteries (Baghdad batteries), government, organized religion.
- Casting tools in metal.
- Writing system starts about 3500 BCE. **Cuneiform = wedge-shape writing**. Remember, history is written by the victors.
- Settlements allowed people a chance to excel or become proficient in 1 area.

Jericho Skull or Neolithic Skull, ca. 9000 BCE. The bodies were buried under a living room floor. The skulls were plastered and decorated to possibly be portraits of deceased family members or a form of ancestor worship. Jericho is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world dating back to 9000 BCE and is still inhabited today.



Jericho Skull, ca. 9000 BCE

Ishtar Gate, constructed ca. 575 BCE by order of King Nebuchadnezzar II.

- Eighth gate to the inner city of Babylon.
- Nebuchadnezzar II is believed to be the king who built the Tower of Babel and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon (a wonder of the ancient world).
- Made of glazed brick to give it a jewel-like appearance.
- Named after the goddess Ishtar.
- This is only a small 50' piece of a part of the original gate; 45' was attached below the gate, and it was said to be so deep that 2 chariots could patrol side by side on top of the gate.

Law Code of Hammurabi, ca. 1755–1750 BCE

- Hammurabi (1792–1750 BCE), 6th Babylonian king. His name means "the favorite shepherd."
- The best preserved and longest law document from the ancient Near East.
- Believed it was his mission to bring justice to his people.
- The Sun god, Shamash, hands the ruling rod and ring to Hammurabi to show he was chosen by the gods to rule.
- **Stele = an upright marker.** Stele were used as monuments, usually made from stone or wood, and could be carved or painted with images and writing.
- 282 laws on punishment depending on social status.
- 1/2 of code is business law, and 1/3 of code deals with family and household law, with provisions for officials, military, and taverns.

Victory Stele of Naram-Sin, ca. 2254–2218 BCE, 6'7". Made of pink sandstone, Akkadian Empire. The Akkadian king Naram-Sin was the first known king to wear the horned crown, declaring he is a god and has the divine right to rule. **Hierarchical proportion** = the biggest person is the most important. Size = status. Written in cuneiform.

Egyptian Art

Egyptian Art is about permanence, the afterlife, traditional, and unchanging. Plato once said Egyptian art hasn't changed in 10,000 years. To everyone in the ancient world, Egypt was even more ancient—for example, Cleopatra is closer to us in age than the ancient Egyptians. Known as the bread basket, early settlements were here in 9000 BCE, and people were growing crops in the Nile valley (the bread basket) in the Neolithic time period. Upper and lower Egypt were unified in ca. 3100 BCE by the pharaoh Menses (also known as Narmer) as seen in the Palette of Narmer.

The Palette of Narmer, ca. 3200–3000 BCE, 25" high. Shows the pharaoh with the white crown of Upper Egypt, and on the other side he wears the red crown of Lower Egypt.

Pharaoh = god-King

Hieroglyphs—writing system the Egyptians developed at about the same time as the Mesopotamians were inventing cuneiform (3000 BCE).

Climatic and geographic conditions for Egyptian civilization were comparable to those of Mesopotamia. Egypt was a thriving culture, known as the bread basket, with access to the river valley of the Nile and annual inundations of the flooding river to fertilize the soil.

Egyptian history is divided into dynasties (or succession tables of pharaohs, established by the historian and priest Manetho, writing 2nd century BCE, when Egypt was under Roman dominance), which in turn are subsumed under the umbrella of the following larger historical epochs: **Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods** (ca. 5500 to 2700 BCE), **Old Kingdom** (ca. 2686 to 2155 BCE), **Middle Kingdom** (ca. 1975 to 1640 BCE), **New Kingdom** (ca. 1570 to 1070 BCE), **Late Period** (ca. 664 to 332 BCE), **Ptolemaic Period** (ca. 323 to 30 BCE) or Greek domination of Egypt; thereafter, Egypt was part of the Roman Empire.

Sakkara, *Stepped Pyramid of King Zoser*, Saqquara/Sakkara (necropolis of Memphis), ca. 2610 BCE, built by Imhotep. The first monumental royal tomb in ancient Egypt was built for King Zoser of the Third Dynasty. This tomb is often regarded as a precursor of the pyramids of Giza. The tomb of Zoser is a stepped pyramid, reminiscent of the Ziggurat temples of Mesopotamia, with an adjacent temple complex. This tomb was designed to protect the mummified body of the king, buried in a hidden, underground chamber.

Its creator, **Imhotep** was the first known artist/architect of recorded history. He was also a treasurer, vizier, high priest, doctor, and magician. He was so popular the Romans made him their god also.

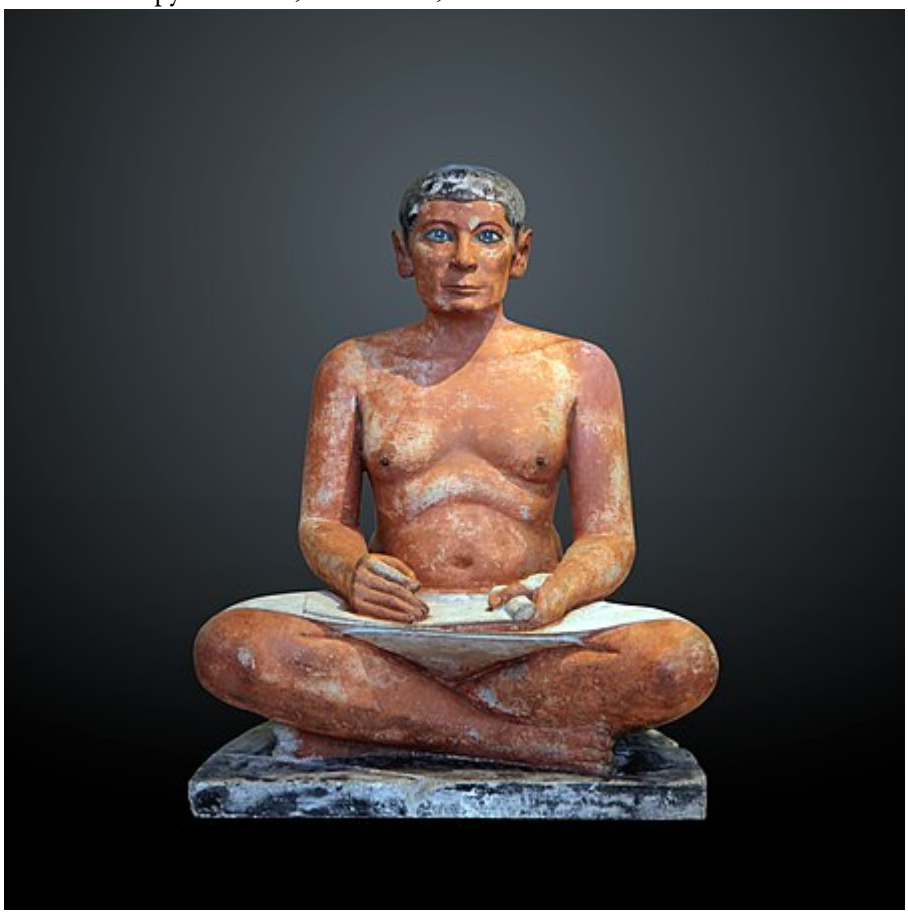
Pyramids of Giza ca. 2551–2472 BCE, 1st Wonder of the World and the only one still standing. There is

a causeway to each pyramid. New discoveries have been made recently: hidden rooms, solar alignments, and more.

The pyramid of Khufu, ca. 2530 BCE (the one in back on right) is known as the 1st and biggest at 480 feet high.

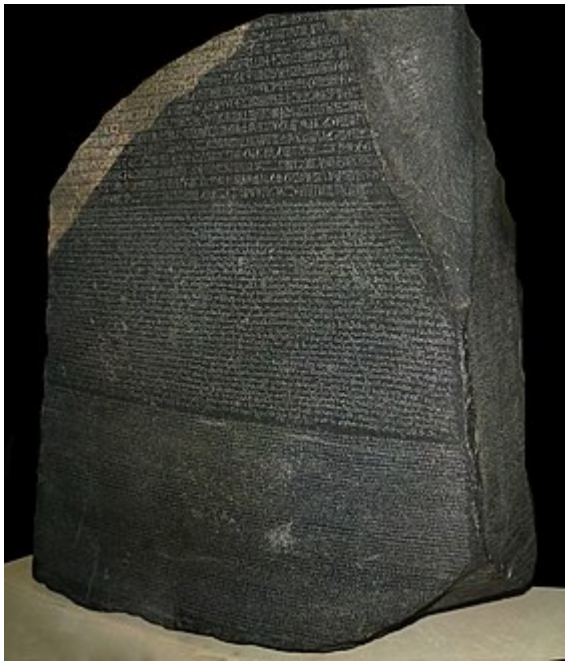
Khufu's son, Khafre, 2500 BCE, built the middle pyramid, 22 feet shorter than Khufu's. The Great Sphinx is in front of this one.

Menkaure's pyramid ca., 2460 BCE, Khafre's son.



Seated Scribe from Saqqara ca. 2551–2528. Made of painted Limestone. Retains his original paint. Scribes were the most educated in this society. They had to study law, mathematics, religion, writing, and reading. Less monumental in the cross-legged pose used for the scribes. Lower-ranked people were depicted more naturally with individual characteristics, like rolls of fat, potbellies, or sagging breasts.

Bust of Nefertiti, ca. 1349–1336 BCE. Painted limestone, 19″ high. She was the only queen to wear the blue crown. Known as the **most balanced piece of sculpture**. Her husband was the pharaoh Akhenaten. This piece was found in a trash pile, the left eye unfinished.



Rosetta stone—in 1799, Napoleon's soldiers found it in the village of Rosetta.

Material is Granodiorite. Size: 44.2 in. × 29.8 in. × 11.2 in.

Writing is in ancient Egyptian **hieroglyphs**, **Demotic** script, and **Greek** script. Present location is the British Museum.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=44#h5p-4

4.

CHAPTER 4: CLASSICAL PERIOD TO MIDDLE AGES

Greece—called themselves the *Hellás* (this is why as Alexander the Great conquers the known world, he Hellenizes it). Considered the **beginning of the civilized world and Western civilization**. The **height of human development**. Some of the ideals we took from the Greeks are city/states, architecture, government, philosophy, math, science, theater, and elections by vote, and the greatest was education for the common man. Chronologically, the beginnings of Greek civilization are contemporary with the cultures in Mesopotamia and Egypt we studied previously. Geographically, the Greeks shared the Mediterranean basin with some of these cultures and absorbed their influences. Ultimately, however, Western civilization owes its formative impulses, above all, to Greece. Before we delve into the beginnings of Western civilization in Greece, let's clarify the primary time periods in ancient Greece that we will be studying.

Art and Architecture of Pre-Classical Greece (The Aegean period): The **introduction of the curved line** is one of the most lasting contributions to the art of decoration given to us by the Aegeans.

Minoan culture (ca. 2500–1400 BCE), Crete, named by archaeologist Sir Arthur Evens after the legendary King Minos.

Cycladic culture (ca. 3200–1050 BCE) named for the irregular circles of islands.

Mycenaean culture (ca. 1400–1200 BCE), Agamemnon's city. Used the corbelled arch mostly in **Tholos** = tombs.

Art and Architecture of Classical Greece:

Archaic Period (ca. 700–480 BCE). Examples: Kouros and Kore.

Classical Period (ca. 480–323 BCE). A period of around 200 years (the 5th and 4th centuries BCE). Very timeless and serene. More about the perfection of the male physical form.

Hellenistic Period (ca. 323–30 BCE). The age of Alexander the Great. His rise concludes the transition from the Classical to the Hellenistic Period.

Classical Period Greek Sculpture

The Greeks would eventually achieve a complete and correct understanding of human anatomy and proportions during the Classical period, which culminated around 450–440 BCE. Contributing to this naturalism in sculpture was the knowledge of the principles governing weight shift, or **contrapposto** (shifting of the main parts of the body around the vertical, but flexible, axis of the spine), in free-standing sculpture. This contrapposto pose is seen in statues throughout the Classical period (and later the Renaissance). The development of a formulaic, idealized canon of human proportions began with works such as the *Kritios Boy*,

from ca. 480 BCE, and culminated in Polykleitos' *Doryphoros* (450–440 BCE), which marks the onset of the Early Classical period. The *Doryphoros*, or Spear Bearer, was often cited as a model statue to be imitated by other artists, especially those in training.

Doryphoros (The Spear Bearer) A well-preserved Roman period copy, by Polykleitos, Marble. Height: 6 feet, 11 inches.

The ***Discobolos*****,** or **Discus Thrower** (below), is a highly dramatic sculpture, as the athlete is shown at the moment of just about releasing the discus, when the musculature is at its most tense. The impending release of the energy and of the discus become almost tangible. Romans were great collectors of Greek sculpture and copied or imported such works on a grand scale. Many masterworks of Greek sculpture have survived only in the form of such Roman copies. Telltale signs of a Roman are the "struts" and "trunks" that are meant to support and stabilize the base of the sculptures.

Myron, ***Discus Thrower/Discobolos***, ca. 450 BCE, Roman marble copy after a bronze original.

Zeus/Poseidon, Original ancient Greek sculpture. Believed to be Zeus, but when they raised it out of the Mediterranean Sea, people thought it looked like the god Poseidon rising out of the sea. Created by the lost wax method.

The Classical Orders

1. **Doric** is the 1st order, the most basic, most masculine.

2. Ionic is the 2nd order, elegant, feminine, complex, with tall slender columns. Attached to the Ionic order are the **Caryatid** (female supporting column) and the **Atlas** (male supporting column).

3. Corinthian, the 3rd order, is the most elaborate, most elegant, and most extravagant.

The Acropolis, Athens, Greece: Built by Pericles on top of older temples. The four remaining buildings are the **Parthenon**, the **Erechtheum**, the **Temple of Athena Nike**, and the **Propylaea**. It was badly damaged in 1687 when the Ottomans stored gunpowder in the Parthenon and a cannonball hit the pile and it exploded.

By David Garnand – Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=35169845

The Parthenon

The Erechtheion

The Temple of Athena Nike

The Propylaea

Hellenistic Period

Following the Classical Period, the Hellenistic Period (323–30 BCE) saw a decline of the ideals espoused by the age of Pericles and Phidias. Athenian dominance in Greece came to an end with a disastrous defeat of the

Athenians during the Peloponnesian War in 404 BCE and the subsequent subjection by Philip of Macedon. Philip hailed from Macedonia, a territory to the north of Greece. It was an epoch of civil wars and social and political unrest. As a result of these events, the traditional balance between the city-state and the individual was lost.

Philip's son, Alexander the Great, set out to conquer most of the Near and Middle East, including Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and even parts of India. The city of Alexandria, in the north of Egypt and famous for the library established there by Alexander the Great, is named after him. Therefore, the period of Alexander's rule saw an influx and subsequent absorption of Eastern cultural and artistic influences by Greek artists (and vice versa).

Drastic changes in Greek art, henceforth called Hellenistic, came about and emphasized the following: Departure from the Classical canon of idealized human beauty, drama, violence, suffering, age, and physical decay became the focus of interest of Hellenistic artists. Nude female figures emerged as a subject for sculpture.

Winged Victory or **Winged Nike** from Samothrace ca. 200–190 BCE, marble. One of the few Hellenistic originals, not a Roman copy. Located at the Louvre museum. It was found on the island of Samothrace in pieces and put back together. Arms and head are still missing. **Nike** means victory.

Laocöon group. There is nothing more quintessentially Hellenistic than the *Laocöon group*, sculpted by Agesander, Athenodorus, and Polydorus in the early 1st century BCE. It is the pinnacle of late classical Greek (= Hellenistic) sculpture. The violent scene depicts three muscular male figures attacked by serpents. Its story was derived from a myth dating to the times of the Trojan War, which was related by the Roman author Virgil. Laocöon was a Trojan priest. The Greeks were laying siege to Troy and crafted a Trojan horse to gain access to the enemy city. Laocöon warned his fellow Trojan citizens of the Greeks' ruse, but the gods (Apollo, Poseidon, or Hera) sided with the Greeks and sent sea serpents to exact revenge on the priest and his two sons. We hence

see them in the process of being strangled by sea serpents. The depiction of pain and writhing figures is typical for Hellenistic art, as exemplified in this group. It is a Roman copy (the Romans copied many of the bronzed Greek works in marble; most of the bronzed pieces were melted down). The original was most likely done in bronze and was melted down.

Agesander, Athenodorus, and Polydorus, *Laocöon*, early 1st century BCE (?), marble

Watch the following video on the *Laocöon and His Sons*:
https://youtu.be/C3cwGCezgSQ

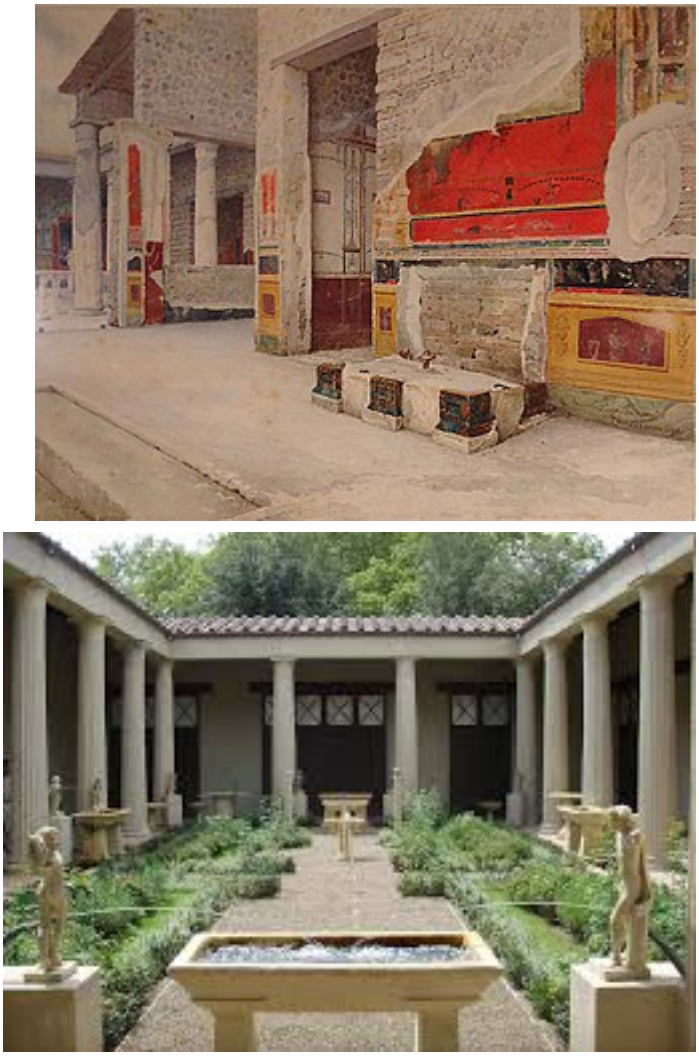
The Roman period—Known as the Latins. Rome was founded in 753 BCE and remained a monarchy until 509 BCE, when the last of the Roman kings was expelled and the territory became a republic. Rome was a republic for over 500 years until Julius Caesar. Subsequent expansion catapulted Rome from a regional power to, ultimately, a world power. Neighboring tribes were subjugated, and both Greek settlers (in the south) and Etruscans (in the north) were absorbed into the Roman populace. Rome's greatest strength was absorbing other cultures and making them their own and building them on a grander scale (example: arches and aqueducts). The ancient Romans contributed greatly to the development of law, art (copied many of the Greek works), engineering, literature, architecture, technology, and much more. Take a look at the animated map of the Roman Empire from 500 BCE to the fall of the last Byzantine successor state of Rome to see the territorial expansion and loss of the empire.

Pompeii

A lot of our knowledge about daily life in Republic Rome comes from the town of **Pompeii** and neighboring **Herculaneum**, which were preserved under a thick layer of ashes following a major volcanic eruption of **Mt. Vesuvius** on August 24, 79 CE. A vivid account by writer Pliny the Younger tells us of a catastrophe that resulted in major loss of life; afterward Pompeii ceased to exist. Some of the volcanic dust from the eruption was later found as far away as Iceland.

Pompeii was rediscovered in the mid-18th century and gradually excavated. Pompeii and nearby Herculaneum fascinated 18th- and 19th-century artists and writers. The volcanic eruption preserved both commercial (small shops, offices, taverns, etc.) and residential sections of Pompeii, including a number of upscale private villas like the one below, richly decorated with frescoes.

The **House of the Vettii** is a typical example of a Pompeian town house with an atrium (i.e., an open courtyard), and an opening in the roof (*compluvium*). The frescoes are an example of the "Pompeian Fourth Style": we find a mixture of narrative panels, ***trompe-l'oeil*** (means "trick of the eye" in French), architectural vistas, and stone imitation paneling. A possible influence was Roman theater design. Pompeian fresco paintings can be very sexually explicit: in the entrance foyer of this house, there is the life-size depiction of Priapus, the god of fertility, protector of horticulture and viticulture.



House of the Vettii, Pompeii, frescoes completed between 62 and 79 CE.

Imperial Rome

The Mediterranean Sea became known as the Roman lake, as Rome controlled all the land surrounding it. Roman art was more naturalistic and less stylized than Greek art. Romans were more interested in realism; Greeks were more interested in idealism.

The last years of Republican Rome were riddled with civil wars, which Octavian Caesar, the future Emperor Augustus, ended after defeating Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BCE. There followed a period called "Pax Romana" ("Roman Peace"), which lasted for about 150 years, during which Rome was ruled by a long line of emperors, the Julio-Claudians.

This time period was characterized by efforts to glorify the outer aspects of the empire with an emphasis on building public works, architecture, and infrastructure designed primarily to impress (propaganda) and to serve the needs of the living (utilitarian).

During the 2nd century, Rome was at the height of its power. Under the emperors Trajan, Hadrian, and the

Antonines, Rome reached its largest geographical expansion, from Britain to Egypt and Mesopotamia (see the map above showing the reach of the Roman Empire in 117 CE).

Starting in the 3rd century, tribes coming mostly from the northern fringes of the empire (Goths, Vandals, etc.) launched incursions that damaged the economic and administrative structures of Rome. These problems were magnified by mentality changes (e.g., emerging anti-materialism) from inside the empire, brought about by the introduction of Christianity, which had graduated from persecuted mystery cult, to toleration under Constantine the Great in 313, to official state religion in 380. At this point, the Roman Empire was on the verge of collapse, followed by a division into an eastern and western empire and the beginning of the Byzantine era in 395.

The Colosseum

The Colosseum is an example of an amphitheater, a Roman invention that consists of two semi-circular theaters enclosing an oval arena with a movable sun cover. The name derives from a giant ("colossal") statue of Nero in front, which has since vanished. It stands out as a prime example of a public works monument destined to serve the general public. It was built on top of Nero's pleasure lake by Emperor Vespasian (69–79 CE) and was completed in 80 CE by his successor, Titus. The Colosseum has 80 entrances. One door, the Porta Libitina, was used to bring out the dead; a second door, Sanivivaria, was used by victors & survivors; the third and fourth doors were for the emperor's use. Events were held from sunrise to sunset (usually), starting with a procession that ended with riders saluting the emperor, followed by fantasy or comic fights, then blood sports and beast hunts, and ending with the executions. Furthermore, at inauguration, a mock naval battle was staged with 3,000 participants, and the arena was flooded on purpose to hold naval ships.

Colosseum, Rome, 70–82. By FeaturedPics – Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=95579199

Interior of the *Colosseum*, Rome, 70–82. By Jean-Pol GRANDMONT – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17071408

The Pantheon, Rome (original ca. 27 BCE–14 CE) Rebuilt by Emperor Hadrian (ca. 126 CE) The Pantheon is the best preserved and oldest ancient Roman building still in use today. After two thousand years, this dome is still the largest unreinforced concrete dome in the world.

By Rabax63 – File:Pantheon_Rom_1.jpg, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=87626466

The *Pantheon*, inside view.

Arch of Constantine 312–315 CE, triumphal arch in Rome. The arch commemorates Emperor Constantine's victory in the civil war that left him as the sole ruler of the Roman Empire.

The Middle Ages

The transition from the classical to the medieval world was gradual and took place over many years. An important turning point was the introduction of Christianity. Therefore, Early Medieval, Late Roman, and Late Classical are mostly interchangeable terms as far as our time frame is concerned.

Pagan (pre-Christian) Rome was **polytheistic** (believed in many gods); Christianity is **monotheistic** (there is but one God). Constantine the Great recognized Christianity as a tolerated religion, but only his successor, Theodosius, made it the official religion of the state.

In 395, the empire was divided again into an eastern (*pars orientis*) and a western half (*pars occientalis*), this time for good. The eastern half, with Constantinople (today Istanbul) as its capital, will take the name of the Byzantine Empire. The decline was less pronounced in the eastern (Byzantine) half of the empire than in the western half, but everywhere the population was declining, farms were abandoned, skills were lost, and infrastructure was no longer maintained. In the western half, the decline culminated in the sack of Rome in 410 by the Goths.

Note how the division of the Roman Empire still informs the different "flavors" of Christianity to the present day:

- **Eastern Empire = Byzantium** = Orthodox faith
- **Western Empire** = Rome (mostly) = **Roman Catholic** faith

Byzantine culture, after the permanent division of 395, returned to Greek language and traditions. It mixed Roman civilization with the "orientalizing" influences of the Near East. In the 8th and 9th centuries, there was an iconoclastic controversy (**iconoclasm** = image smashing) in Byzantium, which had theological and political dimensions that most notably led to the wide destruction of visual art. The Iconoclasts opposed the worship of saints and destroyed such images wherever possible. Although ultimately the icon worshippers (Iconophiles) won out, a lot of artworks were destroyed during these years. Beginning in the 7th century, the rise of Islam,

expanding from the Arabian Peninsula, created a political, military, and religious challenge to the Byzantine Empire to which it will ultimately succumb. It should be noted that Islam, too, rejected figurative art.

Catacombs

Prior to the toleration of Christianity under Constantine, Christians were frequently persecuted by the Roman authorities. In those times, they found refuge in the catacombs, a maze-like system of underground funerary sites excavated from granular tufa (a soft, volcanic rock). Within the catacombs, there were galleries connecting to small rooms (*cubicula*) filled with funerary niches (*loculi*). Conditions were unsanitary (dead bodies!), but nevertheless, the Christian community prevailed and celebrated services here.

Some Christian catacombs can be identified as such because of their fresco decoration, as seen in the ceiling from the *Catacomb of Saints Pietro and Marcellinus*, Rome, from the 4th century. The quality of the frescoes is not at the level of those of Pompeii, but for the first time we see a specifically Christian iconography emerging. Christ is depicted as the Good Shepherd (here, in the central medallion), surrounded by figures in "orants" (attitude of prayer, with outstretched arms) poses on the margins.

Gallery and *luculi* (funerary niches) of early Christian Catacombs, Rome, 3rd century

Christ the Good Shepherd, Catacomb of Saints Pietro and Marcellinus and catacomb of Priscilla, Rome, 4th century, fresco.

Islamic Architecture

In 1453, Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, fell to the Muslim army of Mehmet II the Conqueror. The Byzantine Empire came to an end. However, Islam had been on the rise for centuries before this event. Prophet Mohammed lived between 570 and 632 in what is today Saudi Arabia, where he taught at Mecca and Medina. Soon, his teachings spread across the Arabian Peninsula and from there to most of the Middle East and northern Africa. Between 711 and 1492, parts of Spain came under Moorish (Islamic) domination until the area reverted back to Catholicism.

The foremost type of architecture we can associate with Islam is the mosque, the place of worship for the followers of Islam. Every mosque must have a *minaret*, or tower to call the believers for prayer, and a *mihrab*, or prayer niche, indicating the direction of Mecca to which all participants in communal prayer must turn.

Mihrab within the Mosque at Cordoba

The Mosque at Cordoba in Spain dates from the Moorish (Islamic) period of Spanish history mentioned above. Although no longer used as a mosque today—it was rededicated a Christian church in the 13th century—it is a particularly splendid example of mosque architecture. The Mosque at Cordoba retains the typical large prayer hall and a *mihrab* with a richly patterned mosaic inside. It is different from other such structures because of its unique system of double-tiered arches of polychrome (multi-colored) stone, where one arch is stacked upon another arch. This feature has been attributed to the combination of local Spanish and Moorish (Muslim) influences.

Byzantine Art

During the early medieval period, the focus of innovative artistic and architectural activity thus shifted from Rome to Constantinople. Constantinople was a wealthy city, which offered all the amenities, such as theaters, hippodromes, a water supply system, etc., that Rome provided. Since its refounding dated to the onset of Christian times, Christian monuments, such as churches, cathedrals and convents, dominated the appearance

of the city. Many of these artistic and architectural riches were dispersed or destroyed, first, during the sack of Constantinople at the 4th Crusade and, later, after the 15th-century Islamic conquest.

Because of political turmoil, incursions, and military instability, small, hand-held objects, like ivory carvings, were artworks of choice during the Middle Ages. Byzantium was no exception. The Diptych below featuring the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius I is an example of such a small object and was carved out of ivory. A **Diptych** is a term that describes an object consisting of two hinged panels. (What then is a **triptych**? A three-paneled artwork.) Despite its religious appearance, the *Diptych of Anastasius I* was a secular artwork. Anastasius I was a Byzantine emperor who ruled between 491 and 518. In this depiction, he is sitting on a throne and about to throw a handkerchief (*mappa*), the sign to let the games begin (like in Rome, there were amphitheaters and hippodromes in Constantinople; the games were presided over by the emperor).

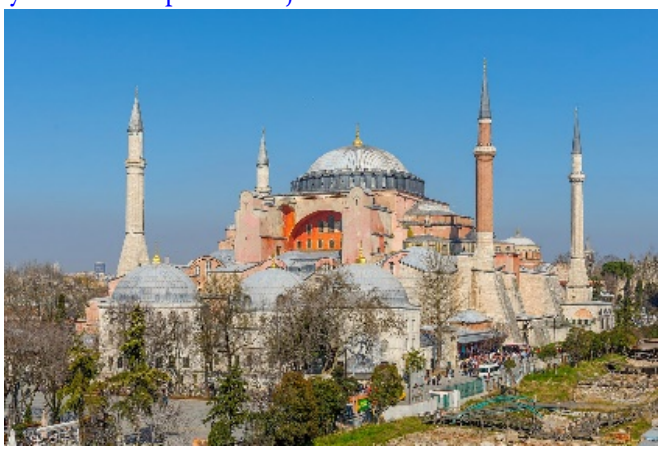
Byzantine Architecture

Hagia Sophia

Of course, there would have been an infinitely larger number of cathedrals, churches, convents, and artworks

in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, than in Ravenna. While the western half of the empire disintegrated under the pressure of invasions, the Byzantine east and its capital Constantinople prospered. The monumental church of Hagia Sophia (meaning "Holy Wisdom") epitomizes Byzantine power and splendor. Hagia Sophia was built by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I, who was also responsible for large territorial expansions and who compiled a codex of civil law, which formed the basis of jurisprudence in Western civilization.

Watch the following video on the Byzantine Hagia Sophia. As you are watching, take notes of the following questions and topics: https://youtu.be/XfpusWEd2jE



Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus, *Hagia Sophia*, Constantinople (Istanbul), 532–537

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St. Mark's Cathedral

Models and innovations of Byzantine builders echoed back to Italy and resonated especially in Venice because of the lagoon city's close Oriental contacts. St. Mark's Cathedral, located on Venice's central square, is an early example of this Byzantine influence. Although it was built and modified over many centuries (as most great buildings are), Romanesque and Gothic additions hide a Byzantine core. It features a Greek-cross plan (all extremities of the cross are of equal length) and a cluster of four domes resting on pendentives, just like in the Hagia Sophia. The interior features rich gold-ground mosaics, which are typical of Byzantine art, telling key stories from the Old and New Testaments. The jewel-like, gilded interior of St. Mark's gives us an idea of what the Hagia Sophia may have looked like before the Islamic conquest.

St. Mark's Cathedral, Venice, begun 1063

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https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=47#h5p-5

5.

CHAPTER 5: RENAISSANCE TO REALISM

The Renaissance

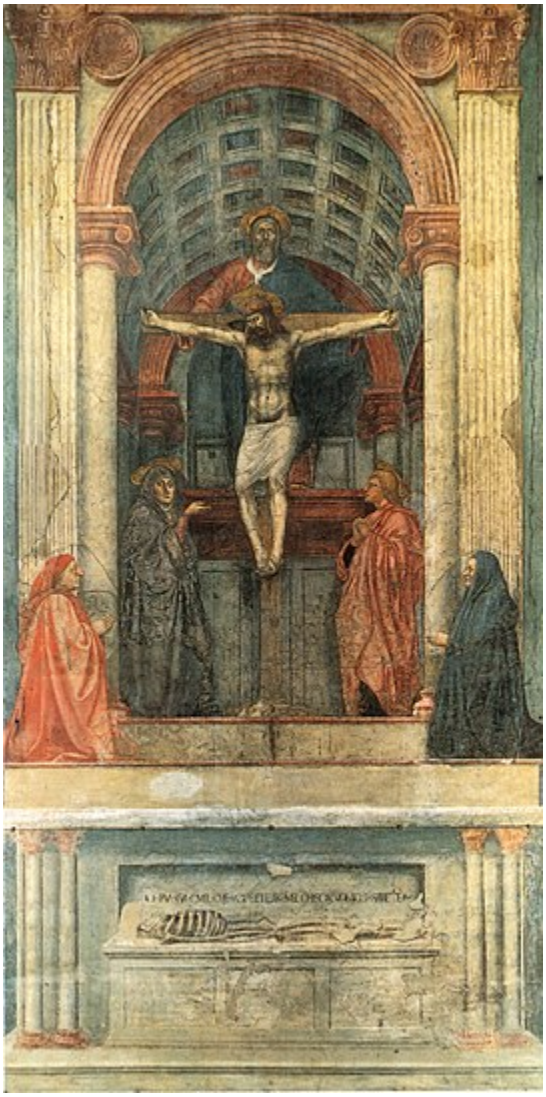
Renaissance literally means "rebirth." About the early 1400s, there was a revival of interest in the art, architecture, literature, and culture of the classical world. This period lasted for about three hundred years and is called the Renaissance period. Major technical innovations in painting, such as the introduction of oil painting, foreshortening, and single-point perspective, date from this period. The interest in the anatomically correct rendering of the human body made the illusionistic rendering of the human world possible. At the peak of the Renaissance, between roughly 1500 and 1530, one finds three great artists who define this spirit: Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

Most of our knowledge on the Renaissance artists comes from Giorgio **VASARI** (1511–1574), Italian painter, writer, historian, and architect, more famous for his biographies of Italian Artists. In northern lands, especially in Flanders, Jan van Eyck will lead us to explore the beginnings of middle-class life in cities and the discovery of the self in self-portraits. By about 1520, the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church was challenged by Martin Luther and the rise of the Reformation. A long series of wars and a split between the Protestant, text-centered approach to Christianity, rejecting art and decoration, and the Catholic, Baroque tradition of the Counter-Reformation, focusing on faith, mysticism, theatricality, storytelling, and decoration, was a consequence. We will take a look at secular art from the Protestant Netherlands of the 17th century, which prioritized portable art. We will study the kinds of imagery typical for this new type of art, such as group portraits, domestic scenes, landscapes, low life scenes, and still lives. The **Medici family** of bankers are known as the "godfathers" of the Renaissance, sponsoring many artists. They produced 4 popes, 2 Queens of France, and acquired the title Duke of Florence.

Masaccio: The Master of Florentine Painting

Another artist working in Florence at this time was Masaccio, a master of Florentine fresco painting, who continued the earlier steps toward naturalism made by Giotto. Masaccio will fully master two more major innovations of the Italian Renaissance: single-point perspective and **chiaroscuro** (depiction of light and shadow).

Masaccio's ***Holy Trinity*** shows another critical development in Renaissance art: the use of accurate single-point perspective. An intuitive understanding of perspective existed in Roman wall painting, but a complete understanding was only obtained during the early Renaissance.



Masaccio, ***Holy Trinity*****,** Santa Maria Novella, Florence, ca. 1428, fresco

- 3 levels—tomb, earth, heaven
- This is the first painted space that can actually be measured using the laws of perspective
- Memento Mori by skeleton: "I was once what you are, and what I am you too will be"
- Was saved and hidden by Vasari when he renovated the church

Perspective (three-dimensionality) is achieved through illusionistic architecture, such as the vault in which the figures of the *Holy Trinity* are contained. The architectural frame, featuring Ionic and Corinthian columns, also shows the influence of Greek and Roman architecture. The iconography of the painting features God the Father, the Son (Christ), and the Holy Spirit; the latter is represented by a dove in the top portion; below the crucifix, we see the Virgin Mary and St. John, and on the outer portion of the architectural niche of the crucifix, we see the kneeling donors, who had paid for the decoration. The bottom portion of the fresco shows

an illusionistic tomb with a skeleton, which functions as a ***memento mori,*** or "reminder of death," to the spectator.

Watch the following video on Masaccio's *Holy Trinity*. As you are watching, take note of the pictorial innovations he employed (e.g., one-point perspective) as well as the inspirations he took from classical antiquity: https://youtu.be/mdd7LhVx00o

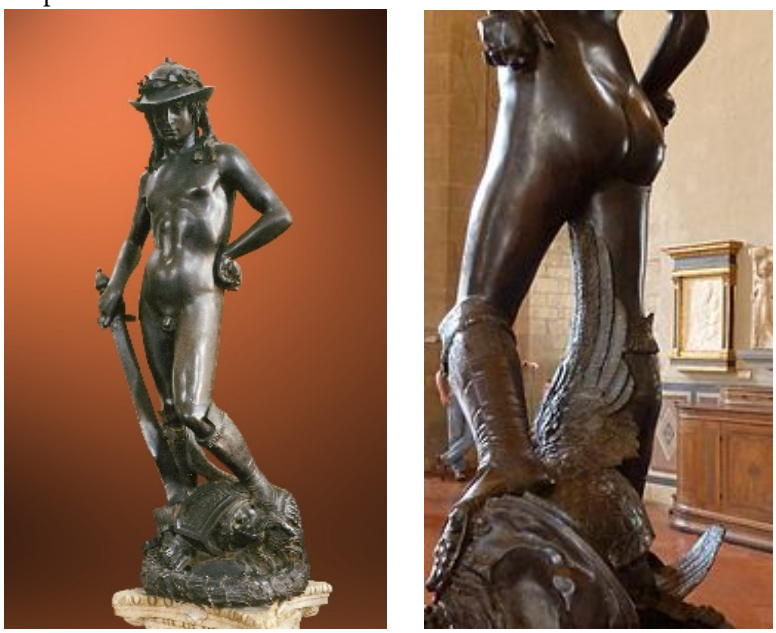
Donatello: Revival of the Classical Nude

Another sculpture for the niches of the Or San Michele was created by Donatello. Financed by the guild of linen drapers, his statue of St. Mark was the first completely free-standing sculpture on a building since classical antiquity. The figure also bends its knee in a ***contrapposto*** pose (human figure standing with most of its weight on one foot), which many Greek and Roman statues feature. The flexed knee gives it a more life-like appearance. An example from the classical world would be the *Spear Bearer*, but with distinctive personalities. However, Donatello's most famous work was yet to be commissioned by the Medici family.

Donatello, *Saint Mark*, Or San Michele, Florence, 1411–1413, marble

Donatello's *David* represented an even more important landmark in Renaissance art because it was the first free-standing classical nude figure since antiquity. During the Middle Ages, the classical nude could not be represented because of connotations with the pagan (pre-Christian) tradition and the association of the nude body with sinfulness. However, Donatello revived the nude as a subject, reinvigorating the classical canon of proportions and the classical convention of the ***contrapposto*** pose. The choice to depict David, the biblical slayer of Goliath, was intentional, as the David story was symbolic for the independence of the republic of Florence, which had resisted and repelled many incursions from stronger, more powerful city states.

Donatello's *David*, although depicted as an androgynous youth, is seen triumphantly, with his foot on the head of Goliath. His glance is downcast to indicate humility. Donatello's *David* was a commissioned work by the Medici. It was destined to adorn the inner courtyard of their family's palazzo, not a public space, because it is a nude and also the feather on Goliath's helmet caresses David's leg, the tip ending just under David's genitalia, making this a sensual piece of art.



Donatello, ***David***, late 1420s–late 1450s, bronze Commission for the Palazzo Medici courtyard

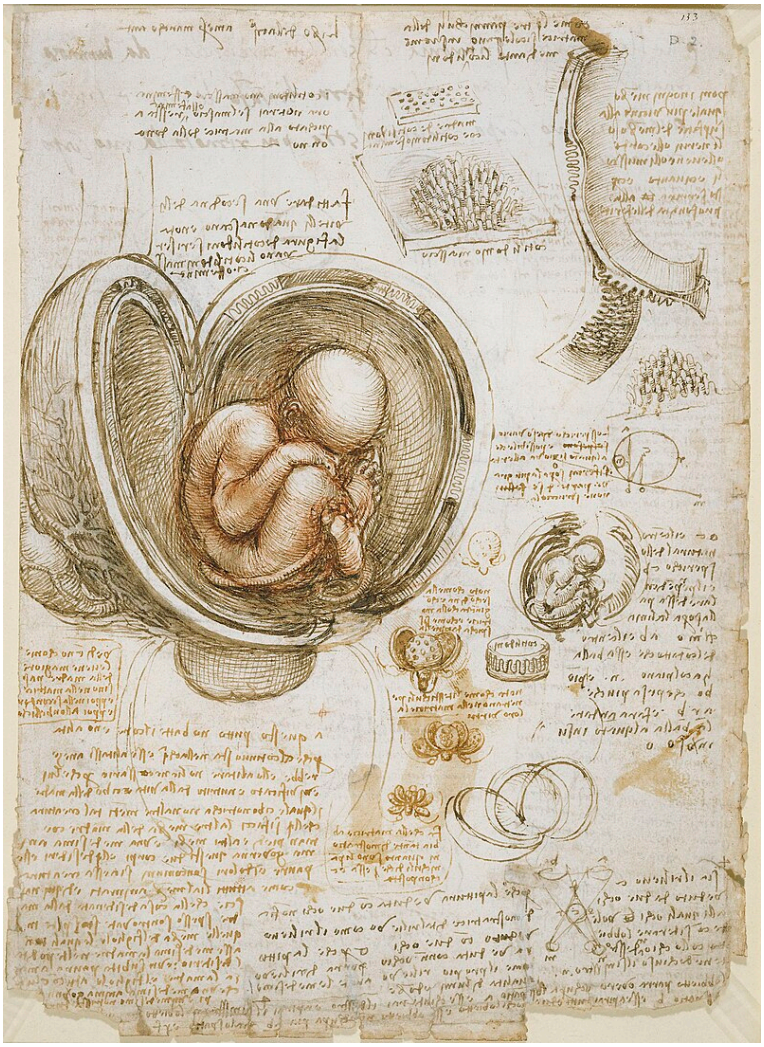
- Medici commission
- Androgynies—male/female youth; if in public, would have been scandalous
- Revolutionary free-standing nude since antiquity
- Stands over Goliath's head and holds stone from sling
- Wears shepherd's hat with laurel wreath meaning Victory

Leonardo as a Draftsman

Leonardo returned to the subject of the *Virgin on the Rocks* when he completed a large, related sketch in charcoal between 1505 and 1507. This sketch showed even more relaxed conventions than seen in the painting. The iconography of the Christ child playing with infant St. John, the Virgin, and St. Ann is obviously similar to that of the *Virgin on the Rocks*, but the emotional ties seem to run even stronger. As in the painting, Leonardo introduced atmospheric perspective. Leonardo (1452–1519, died at 79) was left handed and did mirror writing. He was an inventor (among his inventions are the machine gun, submarine, tank, parachute, hydraulics).

Leonardo da Vinci, *Sketch for Virgin and Child with Saint Anne and Infant St. John*, ca. 1505–1507, charcoal on paper

Leonardo wrote a lot, traveled a lot, and made many sketches, but only very few oil paintings. We can think of him primarily as a very gifted draftsman. Most of his drawings are contained in the dozens of sketchbooks by him that have survived. The sketches are accompanied by texts, some written backward or in secret ink; they reveal Leonardo to be not only a scientist and engineer but also a mystic. The intellectual, scientific, and artistic interests of the sketchbooks are far-ranging, from stages in the pre-natal development of the human fetus, to the development of flying machines anticipating airplanes, to central-plan architectural plans for churches and cathedrals. This illustration is taken from a page of Da Vinci's manuscripts and highlights the range of his scientific interests. Leonardo da Vinci still speaks to 21st-century audiences so strongly in part because his mindset seems to anticipate the technology-driven civilization of our own age.



Leonardo da Vinci, *Fetus and Lining in the Uterus*, ca. 1511–1513, pen and ink with wash over red chalk. By Leonardo da Vinci, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=42138639

Mona Lisa

One of the most famous artworks of all time, the *Mona Lisa* is Leonardo's masterpiece featuring an enigmatically smiling woman who draws every year millions of visitors to the Louvre. The portrait was revealed by Giorgio Vasari, the first art historian, to depict a wealthy Florentine woman, Lisa di Antonio Maria Gherardini. The *Mona Lisa* is another example of Leonardo's use of atmospheric perspective, which is also referred to as ***sfumato***, meaning smoky manner. **Sfumato** is an Italian word meaning "toned down" or "vanished in smoke." It is a technique used with particular success by Leonardo. The fame of the *Mona Lisa* has a lot to do with an event in the Louvre in 1911, when the painting was stolen and eventually recovered two years later. The theft became the first occasion when "art world news" made international headlines.

Leonardo da Vinci, ***Mona Lisa***, ca. 1503–1505, oil on canvas.

Painting in Rome: Michelangelo and Raphael

Michelangelo: Sistine Chapel

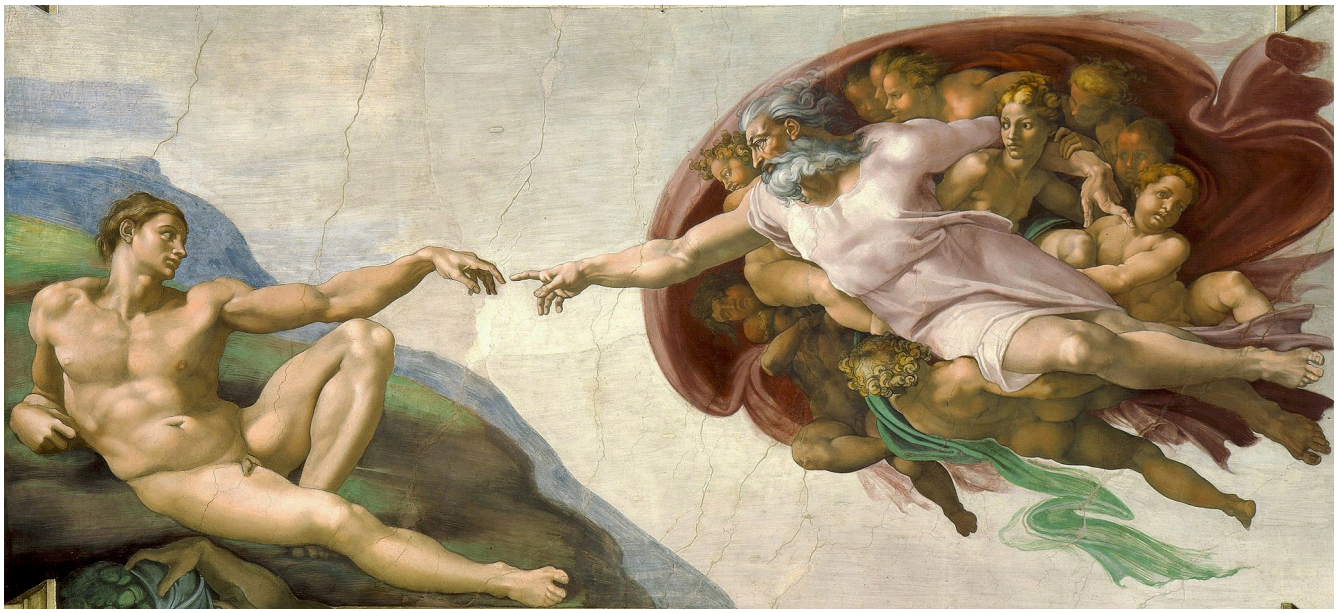
Michelangelo was a sculptor by training. We will look at his work from three perspectives: painting, architecture, and sculpture. Undoubtedly, his most iconic undertaking was the *Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel*. The ceiling was part of a large building program started by Pope Julius II (the "warrior pope") for the Vatican. Michelangelo at first thought that he was not the right person for the job, but the pope convinced him otherwise. The volumetric, muscular body type that pervades the ceiling is often explained by Michelangelo's background in sculpture. The Sistine Chapel is of central importance for the life of the Vatican because it is here that new popes are elected by a conclave of cardinals.

There were multiple challenges Michelangelo faced in the fresco's creation, including its size (5,800 square feet), the curvature of the ceiling, and the distance to the floor (70 feet). The artist had to work from close-up on a scaffold directly under the ceiling, but the effect needed to look just right from 70 feet below. How to maintain visual illusionism? Michelangelo transferred his design on large sheets of paper, where the outlines of the figures were perforated, then the sheets were taken up the scaffold and held up closely against the wall; then charcoal was applied along the perforated outlines, retracing the design directly onto the curving ceiling. The forms were then filled in with the actual painting in the next step.

The Sistine Chapel ceiling unfurls a complex iconographic program. The central strip of panels illustrates the Book of Genesis, showing the Creation, Fall, and Redemption of Humanity. The two central (and most

iconic) panels show the Creation of Adam and the Fall from Sin of Adam and Eve. The starting point for the circle is God separating Light and Dark; the end point is the drunkenness of Noah. The panels in the center show Man's creation (God bringing Adam with a divine spark to life) and Fall from Sin (Adam and Eve being forced to leave Heaven after having tasted the forbidden fruit). To the left and right of the central strip of images, on the side panels, there are seated Hebrew prophets and pagan sibyls. The spandrels (triangular fields above the windows) feature Old Testament figures, such as Moses, David, Judith, and Haman, while above the windows we see Christ's ancestors.

Michelangelo Buonarroti, ***Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel***, Vatican, Rome, 1508–1512, fresco. By Michelangelo—present version is derived from earlier version, with color cast adjusted; however, this version may appear too blue. CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=27931331



Creation of Adam panel. By Michelangelo—see below. Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=71427942

Raphael: The High Renaissance in Rome

By the early 1500s, the Vatican had turned into a vast treasure house of art. This fresco is from the *Stanza della Segnatura*, the Room of the Signature in the papal library, where diplomatic treaties were signed. The four walls of the *Stanza della Segnatura* are decorated with allegorical frescoes representing Theology, Law, Poetry, and Philosophy. They were the work of Raphael and his students. Raphael is the third major artist of the High Renaissance, after Leonardo and Michelangelo. For a long period of time, Raphael, who is best known for Madonna and child images, was the uncontested "art star" of the 18th to the 19th century. But our own age has treated him less kindly because he is often seen as too saccharine (sweet or sentimental). He got demoted by the second half of the 20th century, which made the engineering-minded Leonardo come out ahead of him.

In the *Stanza della segnatura*, Raphael created *Philosophy* himself, while the other three wall frescoes were executed by his students. *Philosophy* is an imaginary gathering of the greatest thinkers from all ages. In the center is Plato (with his book *Timaeus*) and Aristotle (with his book *Nicomachean Ethics).* Many ancient philosophers are featured on Plato's side, and all the sitters in the picture can be identified by name. For example, in the lower right, we see the philosophers Zoroaster and Ptolemy holding globes. Moreover, in the architectural niches in the background, we see marble sculptures of the Greek gods Apollo and Athena. Overall, the work is typical of the infatuation with humanist culture based on classical models, which, by the early 16th century, reached even the Vatican.

Raphael, *Philosophy (**School of Athens**)*, *Stanza della Segnatura*, Vatican, Rome, 1509–1511, fresco. By Raphael—Stitched together from vatican.va, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4406048

Michelangelo Revisited: The Sculptural Work

We have encountered Michelangelo before as the painter of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. However, Michelangelo was foremost a sculptor. His *David* is the epitome of High Renaissance sculpture and a civic monument of Florence. Commissioned by the Cathedral Building Committee after the work on Florence Cathedral was completed, the figure was carved from a single giant block of marble left over from the previous cathedral building campaign. The theme is almost identical to the previous bronze sculptures by Donatello and Verrocchio. Yet Michelangelo's concept was different in two details. He did not depict an adolescent, but a young man who is vigilant and self-assured in the moment of taking measure of the enemy (Goliath) before he engages in battle. The previous depictions show David after he killed Goliath. The people of Florence strongly associated with David. He was a biblical and a civic hero for them. Michelangelo's statue was also understood as a political allegory, encouraging Florence and its people to be always watchful, as enemies could be on the prowl.

Michelangelo Buonarroti, *David*, 1501–1504, marble

Watch the following video on Michelangelo's *David*. As you are watching, take notes on the following topics and questions: https://youtu.be/-oXAekrYytA

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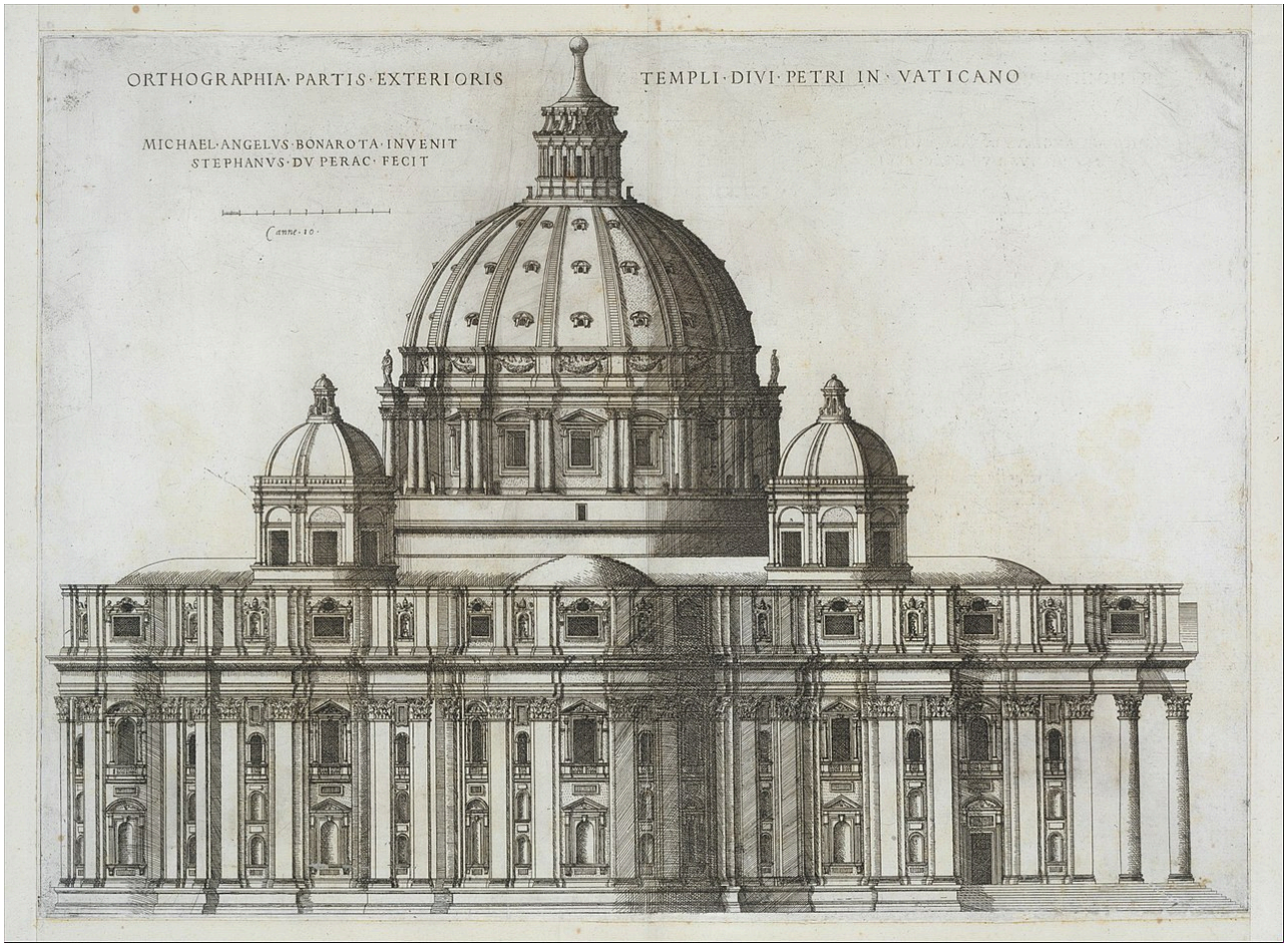
Michelangelo as an Architect

Michelangelo finished his career as an architect. In 1546 Pope Paul III asked Michelangelo to complete the design and construction of New St. Peter's after Bramante's project had been left behind incomplete. Michelangelo started by simplifying Bramante's central plan: he decided on a Greek cross plan with lateral chapels. For the façade, he opted for a rhythmical and highly ornate staccato of Corinthian pilasters. The aesthetics of the High Renaissance, with their emphasis on measure and simplicity, were abandoned. Stylistically, Michelangelo's façade of the Vatican marks the transition to Mannerist (late Renaissance) and Baroque (17th-century) architecture. The cupola was finished later by another architect named Giacomo della Porta and was not part of Michelangelo's design.



Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Saint Peter's*, Vatican, Rome, 1546–1564

Mannerism

Mannerism, which is synonymous with the Late Renaissance period, celebrates qualities such as artificiality and distorted forms and is furthermore defined by the following characteristics:

- Style of excess and exaggeration
- Renaissance order, symmetry, proportions abandoned
- Elongated figures (figura serpentinata)
- Vertical orientation
- Ambiguous space
- Hyper-sophistication and decadence

Parmigianino: Mannerism

This work, featuring the elongated bodies of Jesus and Mary twisting in space, is the epitome of the Mannerist style. The body parts seem to have lost all proportional relationship with each other: the Madonna's neck is too long, the Christ child's head is too big, and his extremities are too long. The body of the Virgin

is elongated and twisted, forming a *Figura serpentinata*, or "serpentine figure." The setting is imbued with a decadent air of luxuriousness, as expressed through props like curtains, an amphora vase, and a cushion for the Virgin's throne. The child attendants bringing the amphora are Parmigianino's invention to enhance the eccentric and decadent aspect of the composition. The free-standing white column of the background alludes to medieval sources, which often compared Mary's allegedly long neck to a great ivory tower or column. The oddness of the small, emaciated figure of St. Jerome unfurling a scroll (lower right) inspired the Surrealist visions of Spanish painter Salvador Dalí in the 1930s.

Parmigianino, ***Madonna with the Long Neck***, ca. 1535, oil on wood

Watch the following video on Parmigianino's *Madonna with the Long Neck*. As you are watching, take notes on the following questions and topics: https://youtu.be/suIUUGdNyWk

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The development of art and architecture in northern Europe, especially in the Netherlands and Germany, was deeply affected by the Protestant Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries. But even in Catholic

countries, like Italy and Spain, the reaction against the Protestant Reformation left its mark in the form of the Baroque style. We can associate, therefore, the art and architecture of the Baroque period—that is, the 17th century, with the so-called Counter-Reformation. In what follows, we will be looking at this evolution from the perspective of painting, sculpture, and architecture.

One of the triggers of the Protestant Reformation was the sale of so-called indulgences to a deeply devout population. Indulgences were pieces of paper granting exemption from time in purgatory in return for a fee paid in cash. Such papers had been in circulation for some time. They were privately printed and offered forgiveness for sins against prayer. Now the Vatican and its agents began selling them to raise money for Pope Julius II. Julius II had financial problems because of warfare, but he was also deeply invested in beautifying the Vatican, which required money.

Martin Luther by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1529

Martin Luther was a clergyman in a provincial part of eastern Germany. He objected strongly to the sale of indulgences, considering the practice corrupt. In 1517, he nailed 95 theses (complaints) to the church door of his hometown in Wittenberg. This started the Protestant movement and the eventual split of the Catholic Church. He was asked to recant but refused on grounds of his consciousness. Luther also translated the Bible into vernacular German. Now laypeople without knowledge of Latin could read it. From a religious point of view, Protestantism stresses personal accountability to God and the punitive consequences of sin and rejects the intercession of saints. Protestant church interiors, in comparison to those of Catholicism, tend to be sparse and do not have much decoration or artworks. The emphasis is on the word, written and spoken, or music, but not on visual representation. A lot of artworks and convents were destroyed during the Reformation. The Bible was upheld as the sole authority on spiritual matters. The Catholic Church launched a counter-offensive to constrain the spread of Protestantism. Among many other measures, the Catholic Council of Trent, in Italy,

prescribed that Catholic churches were supposed to have splendid artworks and decorations to overwhelm a mostly illiterate population with visual rhetoric. This gave rise to the art of the Counter-Reformation and to the Baroque style.

The Age of Baroque in Italy

The Baroque style happened mostly during the 17th century, but its influence also extends to the 18th century. The term covers not only art and architecture but also literature and music (Bach, etc.). It is derived from the Portuguese word *barroco*, meaning an irregularly shaped pearl. It was initially a pejorative term, implying inferiority with respect to the culture of the High Renaissance; such value judgments are no longer implied by the term today. The Baroque put an emphasis on convoluted forms, such as spiral columns, heightened emotionalism, intense religiosity, theatricality, rapture, irrationality, and over-decoration. The style is associated above all with Catholicism and its struggle over a leadership position in Europe. The Baroque style coincides historically with a long series of religious wars and especially the Thirty Years War, 1618–1648. Its approach to art and architecture was defined theoretically by the Council of Trent, 1545–1563, charged with deliberating on counter-measures against Protestantism, which emphasized the use of the rhetorical and propaganda qualities of art to convince believers of the virtues of Catholicism. Naturally, the first place where the Baroque style found application was the Vatican.

Gian Lorenzo BERNINI (1598–1680)

- Good friend of Pope Urban VIII (papacy 1623–1644).
- Erected the bronze **Baldacchino** over the high altar above St. Peter's tomb.
- **Piazza of St. Peter's and the Colonnade**, representing the embracing arms of Christ.
- His great rival was **Francesco Borromini**.
- **Bernini** could make marble turn to flesh.

- His sculptures bend, move, twist and live.

It is rumored that Cardinal Barberini (elected Pope in 1623) held up a mirror so that Bernini could use his self-portrait as David's face.

Caravaggio: The Invention of Tenebrism

Just as Bernini defined Baroque sculpture, Caravaggio defined Baroque painting. In this scene, he painted the conversation of the Pharisee Saul to St. Paul. Like Bernini, Caravaggio loved to use indirect light sources, situated in his case in night settings, which allowed him to introduce dramatic highlights on the figures. The implication is that a supernatural event is about to take place. The term for night scenes with strong contrasts and indirect light outside of the picture frame is tenebrism (from Italian *tenebroso* = shadowy manner). It can be associated with Caravaggio and Baroque art.

Caravaggio, ***Conversion on the Way to Damascus***, 1601

Michelangelo Merisi da CARAVAGGIO (1596–1669)

- In 1592, after studying in Milan, he moved to Rome.
- A very troubled man; his violent moods repeatedly landed him in trouble.
- Innovative style used new techniques that influenced painters in Italy, Spain, and northern Europe;

called the Caravaggisti.

- Painted to get himself out of trouble and to redeem himself; the sinner asking for salvation.
- Introduced the still life as a painting in its own right, natural (no longer for symbolic significance).
- He used common people and everyday settings in his paintings, like Veronese; genre paintings.
- **Calling of St. Matthew, 1599–1600**
    - Focus on the sinner, not the saint
    - Made him popular

Velázquez: Spanish Court Painter

Diego Velázquez was undoubtedly the most famous Spanish Baroque painter. He was the court painter to King Philip IV of Spain and enjoyed the king's personal confidence. He made one trip to Italy but otherwise stayed in Madrid and attended to his duties as a court painter. Undoubtedly, Velázquez's most famous work is *Las Meninas,* or *The Maids of Honor*. It is a scene from court life in Madrid. We see, on the right, the *Infanta*, or Princess, Margarita, with her maids-in-waiting (playmates), a dwarf (court jester, for court entertainment), and dogs. The most intuitive interpretation is this: The *Infanta* watches on as her parents, the king and the queen, are being painted by Velázquez, whom we see in a dark dress with a red cross of the Order of Santiago emblazoned on his chest behind a giant canvas (on the left). The king and queen are reflected in a mirror in the back of the room; in the door frame, we see the court chamberlain. However, we cannot see the subject that Velázquez is painting, but we can infer from the context that it is the portrait of the king and the queen on which he works. An alternative reading may be that he is working on the very same canvas we are currently beholding. Similarly, the picture puts the beholder implicitly in the role of the king and the queen. Understood in this sense, the picture can be interpreted as an interesting document for the formation of modern self-consciousness. The exchange of gazes of the *Infanta*, her retinue, the king and queen, the painter, and us is one of the moments, according to sociologist Michel Foucault, when the modern subject recognizes his or her human essence.

Diego Velázquez, ***Las Meninas*** *(The Maids of Honor)*, 1656, oil o/canvas

Watch the following video on Velázquez's *Las Meninas*. As you are watching, take notes on the similarities and differences between Velázquez's and Caravaggio's personal Baroque styles:

https://youtu.be/IiTtGENiVOA

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Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait*, 1669, oil on canvas, and *The Night Watch*, 1642, oil on canvas. The Night Watch

Dutch Baroque Interiors and Still-Life: Vermeer

Vermeer: Dutch Domestic Scenes

The depiction of domestic well-being is also a central concern in the art of Jan Vermeer. Although he is seen today as a major painter of the Dutch "Golden Age," he was "forgotten" for a long time and was "rediscovered"

in the 19th century. He only became a cult artist in the 20th century. We know little about Vermeer's life, and the number of pictures by him that have come down to us is very limited. He seems to have owned a pub and dealt in art, besides painting himself. One of the defining characteristics of Vermeer's art is that the views seem slightly out of focus. This property has often been interpreted as evidence for the use of a *camera obscura*, a primitive viewing device that can serve as an aid for draftsmen. A *camera obscura* relies on the phenomenon described by physics: if one takes a hermetically sealed box, pierced by a hole on the side, one can observe an upside-down projection of the box's exterior. A *camera lucida* takes this idea one step further: a mirror inside the box deflects the projected image upward onto a ground piece of glass, on which tracing paper is placed to record the image. Such devices cannot replace creativity but facilitate the mechanics of drawing. In this example, we see a typical Dutch interior of the 17th century with a tiled floor, paintings on the wall, and curtains.

Vermeer's art shows the material wealth of middle-class interiors. The spectator is almost an intruder in this domestic harmony. This painting is believed to be an allegorical self-portrait of Vermeer, who depicted himself in the act of painting a picture. He is accompanied by Clio, the muse of history, with her trumpet. In the background, there is a large map of the Dutch Republic; the drawn curtains serve as a spatial divide to the spectator. We see the same "soft focus" typical for Vermeer.

Jan Vermeer, *Allegory of the Art of Painting*, 1670–1675, oil on canvas

Romanticism: The Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries

Romanticism refers not to a specific style but to an attitude of mind: "A return to natural"; a revival of interest in liberty, power, love, violence, things Greek, medieval, exotic, erotic, and Eastern; and the Romantic dynamism of the struggle between humanity and the untamed forces of nature with a narrative to excite the imagination. Romanticism derives from the romance languages (French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian) and from the medieval tales of chivalry and adventure.

The Ancient of Days (God Creating the Universe), 1794, is a design by William Blake.

Theodore **GÉRICAULT** (1791–1824) died at age 33. His work is crucial to the development of Romantic painting, especially in France. He was interested in human psychology, evident in his studies of the insane from 1822 to 1823. Gericault was active in exposing injustice, like in his painting ***Madwoman with a Mania of Envy***. She was a child murderess.

His most famous work was the ***Raft of the "Medusa,"*** showing the injustice of promoting the captain of the ship because of his title and connections and not merit. On July 2, 1816, the French frigate *Medusa* hit a reef off the west coast of Africa. The captain and senior officers boarded 6 lifeboats, saving themselves and some of the more affluent passengers. The remaining 149 passengers and crew were crammed onto a wooden raft, which the captain cut loose from the lifeboat. In 13 days of the raft's voyage, it became a floating hell of death, disease, mutiny, starvation, and cannibalism. Only 15 people survived. The artist Delacroix was the model for one of the dead bodies.

Artist	Théodore Géricault
Year	1818–19
Medium	Oil on canvas
Dimensions	490 cm × 716 cm (16 ft 1 in × 23 ft 6 in)
Location	Louvre, Paris

By Théodore Géricault—Unknown source, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17456087

Eugene **DELACROIX** (1798–1863) is the most prominent figure in French Romantic painting. He outlived Géricault by almost 40 years. He was an artist and a writer (he wrote the *Journal*). His paintings are characterized by broad sweeps of color, lively patterns, and energetic figures.

Delacroix, ***Liberty Leading the People,*** 1830

- Portrays the July 1830 uprising against the Bourbon king Charles X
- The Romantic principles to the revolutionary ideal
- Implying the citizens from all classes have spontaneously taken up arms, united in their goal for

liberty

Artist	Eugène Delacroix
Year	1830
Medium	Oil on canvas
Dimensions	260 cm × 325 cm (102.4 in × 128.0 in)
Location	Louvre, Paris[1]

By Eugène Delacroix—Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives via artsy.net, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=27539198

19th Century REALISM

Realism is an artistic movement that emerged in France in the 1840s. Realists rejected Romanticism. During the Industrial Revolution, they revolted against exaggerated emotions, drama, and the exotic subjects

of the Romantic movement and instead wanted to portray real and contemporary life and people. The realist works portray people from all classes and walks of life, showing situations depicted in ordinary everyday life. The Industrial Revolution brought new values and criticized social values and the upper class. Realism is generally regarded as the beginning of the modern art movement. It included inventions not seen since Rome, concrete, iron, steam engines, mass communications, railroad, etc., as well as the start of Communism, women's rights, and reform. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published.

Gustave **COURBET** (1819–1877) is the French artist most associated with Realism. He believed that artists should represent their own experiences. In 1861, he wrote that art could not be taught but that the artist needed to be inspired by study and observation. When he was asked to paint an angel for the church, Courbet replied, "Show me an angel and I'll paint one."

Interior of My Studio 1855—In his words, this painting showed "society at its best, its worse, and its average." He described the figures on the right as his friends (workers and art collectors). It portrays working-class figures to the upper crust of society. Seated at the far right reading a book is the poet Baudelaire, who was a supporter of Realism.

Gustave Courbet,***Interior of My Studio***, 1855, oil on canvas, 142×235, Musée d'Orsay.

Thomas Cowperthwait **EAKINS** (1844–1916)

- American Realist painter.
- Eakins was an art teacher and head of the Pennsylvania Academy of art; emphasized figure and anatomy drawing.
- Started allowing women to draw from the nude, which got him into trouble.

- His students started the Students Arts League so he could come teach there when he lost his job at the academy.

Thomas Eakins, *The Gross Clinic*, 1875. According to one reviewer in 1876: "This portrait of Dr. Gross is a great work—we know of nothing greater that has ever been executed in America."

Henry Ossawa **TANNER** (1859–1937) is an American painter who moved to Paris and the 1st Black American to exhibit at the Paris Salon. He studied under Thomas Eakins, whose influence had him painting Realist scenes of Black American life in the United States, like his most famous work, ***The Banjo Lesson***.

His mother was born a slave. She moved to Pittsburgh, attended school, and married the Rev. Benjamin Tucker Tanner, who became a bishop. Tanner was sponsored by a patron for a trip to the Middle East in 1897 so he could see the land he wanted to paint in his religious paintings. His ***Annunciation*** is one of the best depicted.

Henry Ossawa Tanner, ***Annunciation***, 1898. This painting was exhibited at the Salon and shows Mary just awakened by a divine presence. The realistic details like her dress, the stone floor, and Near Eastern rug, combined with mystical qualities of light, are gloriously executed.

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6.

CHAPTER 6: IMPRESSIONISM TO MODERN

The Beginnings of Modernism

Manet's Early Modernism

Edouard Manet has often been described as a "painter of modern life." He was a friend of the Impressionists but never joined their group officially; one could say that his paintings are precursors to the themes and the aesthetics that the Impressionists embraced in the 1870s. In 1863, the Salon jury was especially severe. Many younger, emerging artists were refused. Some of them wrote a letter to Napoleon III, requesting a separate Salon to display the refused works so that the public could judge for itself whether the jury was right. Surprisingly, Napoleon III granted the request, and for once, a "Salon des Refusées" (Exhibition of artists denied admission to the official Salon) was held. One work in this Salon of Refused Artists immediately attracted much negative attention: this was Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe or Luncheon in the Grass*. It caused an instant public scandal because of the alleged indecency of two fully dressed contemporary men (identifiable as students by their attire) who were accompanied by scantily dressed naked women. According to social codes, nudity was only acceptable when presented in the context of classical antiquity or Orientalism.

Edouard **MANET** (1832–1883) was a French Realist painter that transitioned from Realism to Impressionism. His paintings of the 1860s were more Realist, and the ones he painted in the 1870s–1880s were more Impressionistic.

Edouard Manet, *Luncheon on the Grass*, 1863.

Manet shocked the French public with this painting because of a nude woman lunching in public with two fully dressed men, especially because the figures were recognizable. The nude was Manet's model Victorine Meurend. The two men are Manet's brother Gustave in the student's hat with the tassel and his future brother in law, Ferdinand Leenhoff. It is said that the woman in the background is doing something a French woman at this time would have done if outdoors and needed to relieve herself; she is peeing in the stream. This is very similar to an earlier painting by Giorgione, *Fete Champetre*.

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19th-Century **IMPRESSIONISM**

Impressionism evolved in Paris in the 1860s and continued into the early 20th century. It rarely responded to political events; politics had no impact on Impressionist imagery. The preferred **genre** (scenes depicting everyday life and people) subjects, especially scenes of leisure activities, entertainment, and landscape. It was influenced by Japanese prints and new developments in photography rather than by politics. Artists were

interested in the natural properties of light, times of day, weather conditions, and seasons but also used effects of interior and artificial lighting, such as theater spotlights and café lanterns. The Montmartre district of Paris is where they congregated. They mounted 8 exhibitions of their own work between 1874–1886 because of rejection in the Salon. Impressionism had a greater impact internationally than previous styles. But what makes Impressionist art modern? Among other characteristics, one can cite the contemporary subject matter. The Impressionists sought to capture the fleeting moment, the reflection of light on surfaces, and the treatment of light as if it were a physical substance. The name Impressionism came from Monet's painting *Impression of a Sunrise*.

Claude **MONET** (1840–1926) Impressionism

Claude Monet can rightly be described as the leader of the Impressionist group and a pioneer of Impressionist aesthetics. Atmospheric effects, broken brushstrokes, choice of modern subject matter, light, and optimistic colors are among the characteristics defining Impressionist art.

- He embodied the technical principles of Impressionism
- A painter of landscape who studied light and color with great intensity
- The term Impressionism came from a critic's negative view of Monet's *Impression: Sunrise*
- Famous for his water lilies
- Painted more outdoors than in a studio, plein air

Plein air = "open air," means they painted outdoors.

Claude Monet, 1872, *Impression of a Sunrise*, Oil on canvas, 18.9 x 24.8

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Hilaire Germain Edgar DEGAS (1834–1917) Degas: Impressionism

Impressionist painter Edgar Degas's preferred subject matter covered the range from life along the boulevards and in the cafes to the racetracks and brothels, but he was especially drawn to theater and ballet. Degas had family ties to New Orleans, from where his mother's family originated. Shortly before joining the Impressionists, he had visited the Crescent City. Most of Degas's ballet scenes are actually pastel drawings and not oil paintings, this example being an exception to the rule. When depicting ballet, Degas focused on rehearsals, not the final performance. In this way, the ballet rehearsals were portrayed for what they really were: hard work, not play. The young girls rehearsing tended to have a lower- or working-class background. Degas was drawn to the lower classes in his art. Note the cropping of the figure on the right. This compositional choice was almost certainly an idea that Degas copied from photography.

Degas, ***The Dance Class***, 1873–1876, oil on canvas

- French artist
- Refused to be classified as an Impressionist; he believed he was a Realist
- Never felt he was finished with a painting
- Also a sculptor and amateur photographer
- Spent time in New Orleans with his brothers who lived there
- Variety of subject matter but mostly known for his ballet dancers

Mary CASSATT (1845–1926) was an American painter and printmaker. She spent most of her adult life in France, where she became friends with Degas. Cassatt's subject matter focused mostly on women, especially the bond between mother and child.

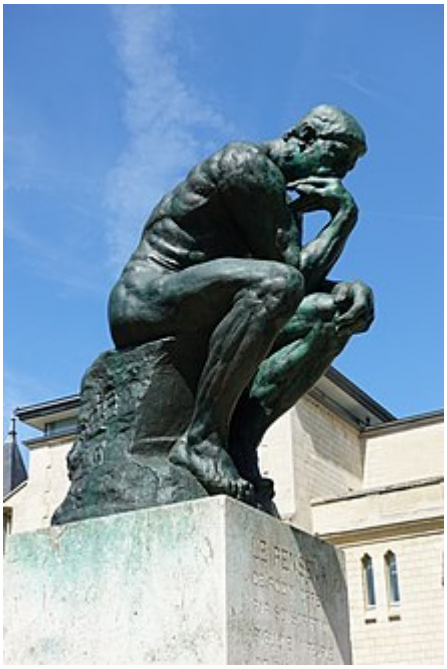
- American artist in France
- From a wealthy family

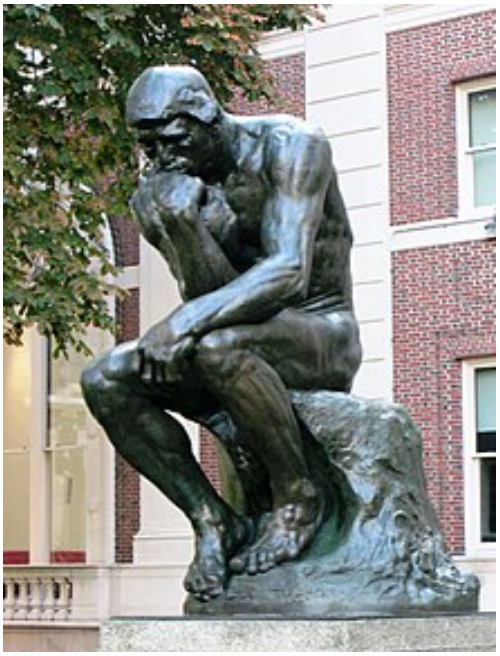
- Close friend to Degas
- Bold planes of color, sharp outlines, and compressed spaces (close-up views)
- Helped the Impressionists out by urging her friends and relatives to buy their paintings
- Because she was a woman, her subject matter tends to relate to family relationships or women

Mary Cassatt, ***The Boating Party***, 1893–94, oil on canvas

Auguste RODIN (1840–1917)

- French sculptor
- Well-known sculptor of the 19th century
- Influenced the 20th-century sculptors
- **The Thinker**, 1881
    - One of his best-known works
    - Influenced by Italian Renaissance sculpture of the monumental human figure
    - Evolved from his plan to represent Dante
    - Reflects Michelangelo's *Jeremiah* and Durer's *Melencolia*
    - Tension and energy, meditative figures





Rodin, *The Thinker*, 1881, bronze

POST-IMPRESSIONISM and the Late 19th Century

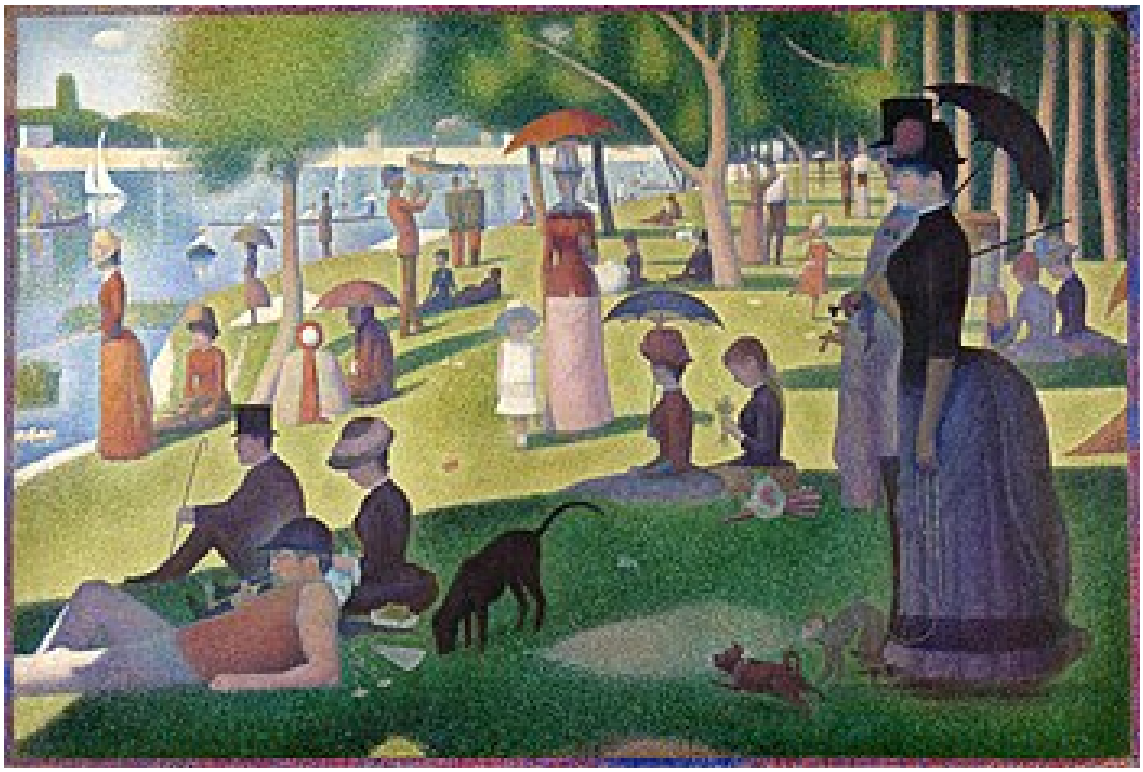
Post-Impressionist artists are not a coherent group. They did not meet in a coffee house or show their works together in group shows, as did the Impressionists. Rather, the term is an expression of convenience, coined by critics and art historians after the fact in order to summarize a variety of modernist art movements and individual artists who benefitted from the opening up of the art world to modern subject matter and artistic subjectivity. It is therefore an umbrella term that includes a wide variety of artists, ranging from the Pointillist Seurat, to the individualists Gauguin and van Gogh, and finally Cézanne, who became a role model for the 20th-century Cubists.

- Means "after Impressionism"
- Influenced by Impressionism
- Drawn to bright colors and visible, distinctive brushstrokes like the Impressionists
- But the forms do not dissolve into the medium like Monet's works, they are usually clear edged
- Formal structure (like Cezanne and Seurat) and emotional content (like Gauguin and van Gogh)
- Also influenced by the late 19th-century Symbolist movement

Seurat: Pointillism

The Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte is Seurat's uncontested masterwork. The Grande Jatte

is the name of an island in the river Seine, not far from Asnières. It also served as a fashionable picnic ground for mostly an upper-class clientele. The work features a full-fledged Pointillist technique. **Pointillism** is a painting technique of small dots of color that are applied to create an image. Like Caillebotte, Seurat focused in this picture mostly on members of the haute bourgeoisie (upper middle class), whom he intended to mock. The lady, on the right, for instance, is walking a pet monkey; her skirt seems to bulge unnaturally; the monkey's curling tail is mirrored by the seated gentleman's cane on the left, etc. Overall, there is a stiff, classical air to the composition, whose figures move like silhouettes on a stage. By the 1880s, new and independent types of Salons to show art had become established. One of them was the "Salon des Indépendants," where this work was first shown in 1886. The comments by critics were mostly negative. One critic wrote that Seurat was "hiding reality under a swarm of fleas [i.e., the dots]"; others talked about "Assyrian figures" in reference to the repetitive profile poses. In fact, Seurat was an academically trained artist. He had studied under the academic painter Henri Lehmann, who had been a pupil of Ingres at the École des Beaux-Arts. Seurat also admired the academic painter Puvis de Chavannes's frieze-like arrangement of figures, which we see reflected in his own work.



Georges Seurat, ***A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte***, 1884–1886, oil on canvas

Post-Impressionism: Gauguin and Van Gogh

Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin are also Post-Impressionist artists (in the sense that they chronologically

come after Impressionism), but in truth one can look at them in a variety of ways. For example, one can think of them as Symbolist artists. Symbolism, the last art movement of the 19th century, emphasized mysteries, world religions, and non-European cultures. It was also profoundly anti-rational. But one can also think of the two artists, who at one time worked together, as precursors to Expressionism, in the sense that they used broad brushwork and color to express inner emotional states. (Many art movements of the 20th century touched on Expressionism in some form; the most basic definition of **expressionism** is that it can be used to reflect inner emotions through color, brushstrokes or other artistic means.) But most importantly, van Gogh and Gauguin were two great individualist artists who defined modernism and the feelings of alienation it encapsulates. Their art is filled with emotional responses, fantasies, dreams, and even references to madness.

Vincent VAN GOGH (1853–1890)

Van Gogh was of Dutch origin. Before becoming a painter, he had worked as an art dealer and as an evangelist/social worker in an impoverished mining district in Belgium called the Borinage. He is often portrayed as a "mad" artist, but his "madness" may in fact have been epilepsy. By the standards of the 19th century, van Gogh came to art late in his life. He turned to painting at 27 as a career of last resort. At this time, he had returned to his parents' home after he had failed in art school. His father was a Protestant pastor in the town of Nuenen. Since van Gogh had startled the local townspeople before, he was told to only make sketches in his father's presbytery. The mood is dark and depressing in this sketch, as was Vincent's at the time.

Vincent van Gogh, *The Garden of the Presbytery at Nuenen*, Winter, 1884, pen and pencil drawing

Vincent van Gogh, *Self-portrait*, 1887

Gauguin, *Self-portrait*, 1888

Vincent van Gogh, *The Potato Eaters*, 1885, oil on canvas

Van Gogh: The Late Years

Starry Night is perhaps one of van Gogh's most famous pictures, which he painted shortly before his suicide. The composition is pervaded by supernatural qualities, as spiral movements roll across the sky from left to right, stars seem to explode, and cypresses shoot like flames into the air. In July 1890, van Gogh shot himself in a wheat field near Auvers-sur-Oise, where he had sought help in the hospital of a progressive psychiatrist named Dr. Gachet (he even did a number of portraits of Dr. Gachet). In a last unfinished letter to his brother Theo, the artist wrote, "Really, we can speak only through our paintings. In my own work I am risking my life; and half my reason has been lost in it."

- The greatest Dutch artist since the Baroque period
- Only painted the last 10 years of his life
- Began with the dark Dutch palette but lightened up when he went to France
- There could be no Vincent without Theo, who died right after Vincent

- We know so much about him because he wrote many letters, mostly to Theo
- He collected Japanese woodblock prints
- **Starry Night**, 1889, is his most famous painting

Vincent van Gogh, *Starry Night*, 1889, oil on canvas

Watch the following video on van Gogh's *Starry Night*. As you are watching, take notes on the following questions and topics:

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https://youtu.be/oz908BHg55Y

- What were some of the technological and cultural developments that were taking place during this time? How did these events influence the style of Post-Impressionists like Gauguin and van Gogh?
- Describe the formal qualities of van Gogh's style.
- How did van Gogh's inner mental state influence his work?

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Gustav KLIMT (1862–1918)

- Leader and first president of the Vienna Secession, a group of artist that provided a forum for diverse styles that shared the rejection of Academic naturalism, even though Klimt was an established painter in the Academic tradition
- Trained as a goldsmith
- **The Kiss**, 1908

The Kiss, 1907–8, oil on canvas

Adele Bloch-Bauer I (1907), which sold for a record $135 million in 2006

Pablo Picasso

Pablo Picasso was probably the most influential artist of the 20th century. Picasso was a native of Spain but active for most of his life in France. He invented, together with Braque, a movement called Cubism. Cubism departs from Renaissance perspective and offers an escape from the mandate to create faithful representations of physical reality. Picasso had a long and prolific career, which can be divided into several specific periods. At the beginning of Picasso's mature art are the Blue Period (1901–1904) and the Rose Period (1905–1906). These were moments of poverty, depression, and a bohemian lifestyle for the young Picasso in Paris. Later on, he would be quite wealthy as the fame and value of his art grew, but his sympathies were always with socialist and anarchist politics. Some but not all of his art is politically engaged. Picasso once proclaimed, "No, the purpose of painting is not to decorate apartments. It's a weapon for the attack and defense against the enemy." Decorating apartments with art was seen as a bourgeois occupation. Although this statement was aimed against an art dealer, Picasso did not like the bourgeoisie and its conventional attitudes toward art.

Pablo Picasso, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, 1907, oil on canvas

Picasso and Braque: Cubism

Picasso and Braque: Analytical Cubism

Shortly after completing the *Demoiselles d'Avignon,* Picasso became good friends with a fellow painter named Georges Braque. Together, they would go on to invent Cubism, the style and art movement for which Picasso is best known. The close collaboration between Braque and Picasso unfolded between 1909 and 1914, after which point it was cut short by Braque's being drafted to fight in World War I, where he received a serious head injury that changed his personality. We can distinguish two "flavors" of Cubism: "Analytical" and "Synthetic" Cubism. *Ma Jolie* belongs to "Analytical Cubism," which refers to straightforward painting without the added, extraneous materials that define "Synthetic Cubism." In "Analytical Cubism," physical reality and space are analyzed in terms of their planar components. Objects in this space subsist as fragments of their physical appearance; any remnants of three-dimensional, physical space are now completely abandoned. An example would be the barely visible fragments of the female figure in this composition (for example, the hand, in the lower right corner, covering the sound hole of a guitar) to which the title alludes.

Watch the following video, "Pablo Picasso and the New Language of Cubism." As you are watching, take notes on the following questions and topics: https://youtu.be/GRTsMJNcHFw

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- How does this new style reject the traditional modes of representation codified during the Renaissance?
- What is this "new language" of representation in Cubism?

Picasso's *Guernica*

Guernica stands out as Picasso's uncontested masterwork. An eminently political statement, it was the largest canvas he ever created. The subject deals with the Spanish civil war of the 1930s, which pitched the left-wing republican government and the Fascists under General Franco; the picture was painted at a moment when the Fascists won out. The work pre-dates the Second World War but anticipates many of the political struggles that will eventually trigger the bigger war. *Guernica* was conceived as a giant indictment of the brutality of the Fascist government of Spain. Guernica was the capital of the Basque region in Spain, to which the Republican government had granted autonomy. The nationalist agenda of General Franco's Fascist government saw Basque autonomy as a challenge to their authority and ordered the bombing of the Basque capital, Guernica, through the air force of allied Nazi Germany. Guernica was completely destroyed, resulting in the senseless bloodshed of the civilian population depicted by Picasso. Since Picasso read about the massacre in the papers, he recreated a newsprint-like structure for part of the background. *Guernica* is a universal artistic statement against all war and for peace, which Picasso rendered in terms of private symbolism. The bull, for example, stands for brutality and darkness and hence for the Fascists. The woman who fearfully sticks out her head from a house while holding a candle in her hand is supposed to embody the conscience of horrified humanity. On the left, there is a crying woman with a dead child, mangled corpses of the dead, a rearing horse, and a man about to burn on the far right; they all represent horror and disgust with the brutality of the Fascist rule. Picasso deliberately kept the painting monochrome to signal the tragic aspects of these events. Stylistically, *Guernica* is a hybrid between Cubism and Surrealism, which Picasso infused with his own pseudo-archaic symbolism. After the defeat of Fascism in World War II, Picasso became world-famous for this picture, which was kept for many years in New York until, as per Picasso's will, it was returned to Spain after the fall of Franco's regime.

Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937, oil on canvas

Duchamp: Invention of the "Readymade"

Duchamp's most consequential activity in the art world was the invention of the "readymade," by which he meant pre-fabricated, mass-produced items that become works of art by virtue of an artist's act of designating them as such. A pile of bricks, placed in a museum, can become an artwork, if there is an artist declaring them such. Duchamp helped bring about the advent of **conceptual art**, which holds that it is the idea that matters for art, not the final product. In the final analysis, thus, the notion of art itself becomes meaningless.

Fountain was one of Duchamp's first "readymades." As should be obvious, *Fountain* was a urinal turned upside down. Submitted under the name of the fictitious artist "R. Mutt" to the juried "Exhibition of Independent Artists" in New York in 1917, the object, of course, was rejected by the jury and was never returned to the artist. Over the years, Duchamp purchased more urinals, signed them, and designated them as authenticated replacements for the "original" *Fountain*. Duchamp's act was meant as a deliberate Dadaist insult at the art establishment. What mattered was the thought and the gesture, not the crafting of the *Fountain*. But beyond the obvious pun or insult, Duchamp also wanted to draw our attention to the inherent beauty of such a trivial object.

Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917 (reconstruction 1950), ready-made glazed sanitary china with black paint

Watch the following video on Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*. As you are watching, take notes on the following topics and questions: https://youtu.be/FmjSUyyc-3M

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- How was this work received?
- What is the artist's role in "creating" a readymade? How can the artist "transform" an everyday object?
- How did this work challenge the notions of traditional art?

Hopper: American Melancholia

Edward Hopper defined American art between the two world wars like no other. With him we find the first evidence of a return to figurative subject matter. Hopper captured the essence of the American psyche during the Great Depression and World War II. He was a master of introspection, dealing with themes of isolation and alienation in mass society. *Nighthawks* is a late-night scene of a diner in one of America's big cities. There is little communication between the guests and the barman. Open space and a sense of isolation are prevalent throughout the work, as the scene is defined more by absence than by presence.

Edward Hopper, ***Nighthawks***, 1942, oil on canvas

Pop Art

Modernism in Crisis

After Abstract Expressionism and Post-Painterly Abstraction, the project of the avant-garde moved directly from the ultimate fulfillment of its promise to a state of crisis. How could one further purify art from the burden of history if it is already purist to the extreme? How could one further abstraction if one already painted the most abstract pictures conceivable? The lack of answers to these questions defined the moment of crisis in the development of modernism. Pop Art also came to epitomize this moment of crisis because it signaled a return to representational art. Clement Greenberg was adamantly opposed to Pop Art because of its contents (not surprisingly, since he advocated "purist" abstraction). The rise of Pop Art in the late 1950s and 1960s coincided with the beginnings of the post-modern debate and the terminal decline of modernism.

Abstract Art vs. Pop Art

One can summarize the clash between abstract art and Pop Art in the following terms:

Abstract Art

- Abstract
- Intellectual
- Maintains values of high or elite culture
- Existentialist (influenced by writings of J.-P. Sartre), philosophical
- Theoretical

Pop Art

- Blatantly figurative
- Popular
- Lowbrow culture, deliberately ephemeral
- Deliberately superficial
- Empirical, based on direct observation

Pop Art has a very strong socio-economic (instead of philosophical) dimension. The emergence of mass consumer society was a phenomenon of post-World War II America. A key idea in this context is that of obsolescence, or the pre-calculated life of consumer goods in order to stimulate demand. Consumer society constitutes the exception to the rule in the history of human civilization, as the bottleneck in consumption was no longer in supply, but in demand. Hence, we find the need for the packaging of food and toiletry items; mass advertisements, and expendable appliances—all measures meant to make consumption more enticing. According to some urban anthropologists, by the 1950s, Manhattan alone started to throw away more manufactured goods in a week than 18th-century France produced in a year. For Americans, consumption meant (and still often means) disposability, not durability; replacement, not maintenance. The rise of Pop Art coincided with the invention and spread of TV, which became another key contributor to the topography of consumer culture, because it allowed producers of merchandise to bombard consumers with broadcast TV messages. Pop Art thrived in this climate of a fully developed capitalist consumer society.

Johns: American Pop Art in the 1950s

Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns belonged to the first generation of American Pop artists. Johns was a window decorator from Atlanta, living in Manhattan, who attained sudden fame in 1958, when he was given a show at the influential Leo Castelli Gallery. An Italian immigrant art dealer, Castelli is famous for promoting Pop Art at a moment when nobody realized the importance of the art movement. Johns came to subscribe to Rauschenberg's ideas about Pop Art during the mid-1950s. His objects rely principally on the play between sign and art and first came into prominence with his series of flag paintings. One can compare his artistic

strategy with that of Magritte's *Treachery of Images*. These are not real flags but paintings of flags. In this example, Johns used encaustic—that is, painting with hot wax, a technique that was known since ancient Egypt and classical antiquity. As a nod to consumer culture, he embedded newspaper fragments in the hot wax. The result is a paradoxical combination of materials. Johns chose the American flag for its iconic immediacy—it is instantly recognized by everyone, everywhere.

Jasper Johns, ***Flag***, 1954, encaustic, oil, and collage on fabric mounted on plywood

Warhol: The King of Pop

A second-generation Pop artist, Andy Warhol became the figurehead of the movement in the 1960s. Warhol was not only a painter but also a filmmaker and a socialite. He is famous for his quotes, such as the "15 minutes of fame" to which everybody should be entitled, or "If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films and me, and there I am. There is nothing behind it." Warhol was the son of working-class Czech immigrants and graduated as a graphic designer from Carnegie Tech in 1949. He began work as a commercial artist in New York shortly thereafter, creating designs for shop windows or delicate drawings of shoes for the shopping bags of Miller and Co., which brought him acclaim. In 1959, Warhol was the highest-paid commercial artist in the city, earning nearly $65,000/year. However, he was not yet a fine artist, a role he assumed only in the early 1960s. Mass production and repetitions of basic design principles are the cornerstones of Warhol's art. The originality of the artist's hand was of no interest to him: "Somebody should do all my paintings for me. The reason I am painting this way is because I want to be a machine. [...] I think it would be terrific if everyone was alike." Indeed, almost all of Warhol's paintings were executed by assistants. He was running a large workshop. Warhol was obsessed with celebrities and product packaging, which constitute the two recurrent themes of his art. All products he depicted were standardized and universally accessible (Coke bottles, Campbell soup cans, etc.). In June 1863, a feminist groupie walked into the "Factory" and shot Warhol; he was pronounced dead on arrival in the hospital but recovered against all odds. Thereafter, death became an important theme in his art. Warhol died in 1987 from complications of this attempt at his life.

Two Cambell's soup cans.

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7.

CHAPTER 7: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATER AND ITS ELEMENTS

Introduction

"All the world's a stage" by William Shakespeare

(from As You Like It, spoken by Jaques)

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation

Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

See how this passage is translated into performance by Sophie Stone for the Shakespearean Globe Theatre:

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And now, watch actor Benedict Cumberbatch (et al.) perform Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage" for film in this BBC montage:

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Do you perceive the words differently when they are performed versus when read on paper? Today, we often read dramas as fiction or poetry, but the original intent of a play (or screenplay) is for performance.

In watching a play, or virtually any other type of dramatic or theatrical event, we are taking part in an activity that has been occurring without much significant change for nearly 2,600 years. Sitting in a seat in a theater today, an audience member goes through the same experience that humans have been having for hundreds of generations. Walking into the theater, finding a seat, sitting down, waiting for the performance to begin, watching the actors, listening to the lines they speak, and reacting to them with laughter, emotions, and applause are all things that those great-great-great-great-great-ancestors of ours did too. The Western tradition of viewing plays goes back to the ancient Greek world. However, it also ties us into a very human urge—the desire to communicate. We are social creatures by nature. That is, we instinctively gather together and try to share our individual experiences with those around us—to fit in, to share information or ideas, to participate in the larger life and experience of the group, or just to be entertained as we live our lives in this world. The people of ancient Greece were just like us in that regard. They didn't have all of the technology that we do today, but they did some very impressive things with what they had, and many of the techniques they developed for their theaters are still used today. The tools may have modernized, but the purpose is the same—to make the experience of live theater as engaging as possible for the audience.

The very natural human urge to perform is a part of our nature, as noted above. When we stop to examine just how much of our lives is affected by the urge to perform and that uses traditional theatrical elements, we will notice that this is all around us, ranging from the very simple use of our hands, faces, and bodies to add to or emphasize elements as we are telling a story to our friends or families all the way to the much more formal influences of performance, such as our celebrations, rituals, and other such events. Consider the performance-like nature of a church ceremony, or a wedding, or a court case. Except for the specifics of an individual event, the overall shape, form, and substance of many of these are the same throughout our culture—and even across some other cultures as well. We can even go as far as mentioning our games as young children through to adulthood. We very often learn through role-playing and make believe. We often find ourselves pretending to be something we aren't to experience life through different eyes and perspectives.

Another part of the historical tradition of theater that has lasted from the ancient Greek world is the play itself. Again, the context of the plays, the cultures they reflect, and the specifics of the language, etc. have changed, but plays still address the people for whom they are written. They reflect those people's ideas, goals, values, and cultures. If they didn't, there wouldn't be any communication. Imagine if you were to go see a play all about life in the Himalayan mountains, spoken in Tibetan and dealing with yaks and yetis. There might be very little that you would understand about that play. A similar phenomenon occurs when a new movie comes out that is not about something that you enjoy. You don't see it because you don't want to; you don't expect to "get anything out of it." We want to see stories that interest us, that are about people like us, that have a relevance to our own lives. That's why the stories and plays that we watch today have changed in content but not in structure or techniques. Telling stories, whether in person, in writing, or as a performed play, is part of our human nature. It's who we are.

Theater's Unique Quality

Theater is often referred to as "the lively art." Just what does that mean? Well, theater is a performance art, which means that it is performed live in front of an audience instead of being created and then viewed separately by an audience. Unlike the other performing arts (Music, Dance, and the Visual Arts), theater is unique. It stands apart from the others in a couple of specific ways.

These elements that make theater unique almost all concern the role of, and interaction with, the audience. The performers on stage have a real-time connection with the audience. They can hear them and their reactions to the performance. Sometimes, they can even see them. Occasionally, the play or the production will include direct audience interaction, which makes the connection between the performers and the audience an even more intimate experience. Generally speaking, since the performance takes place live, directly in the presence of the performers, an energy connection is developed. The performers "feel" the energy from the audience as they react to the play. In turn, the audience "feels" the human connection of the live performance, which then impacts the energy they share with the performer.

If you have never experienced this for yourself, consider this parallel. Even though we can hear our favorite musician's music on the radio or via the internet, we still go to the musician's concerts when feasible. Why? We want to experience personally the presence of the artist while sharing in the creation of the music in real time. It feels like it is more important because we are part of the live process of creating the work of art, the music. It is this same bond that audience members share with the performers on stage during a play.

Another way in which theater is special is in its collaborative aspects. The Greek philosopher Aristotle defined the 6 elements of drama as: Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, Song, and Spectacle, making clear the multi-faceted nature of theater. While we may look at these through a 21st-century lens, the elements remain integral to theatrical performance. Although at its most basic, theater requires one performer and one audience member, it is most typically a shared activity, involving both the seen and unseen collaborators, the actors and the technical departments; it takes a lot of people to put a play performance together. A general rule of thumb is that there are two to three people involved in a play for every performer who appears on the stage during a performance. All these people work together with the director and the performers to create the experience for the audience. Their purpose is to collaborate toward achieving the goals established by the director to bring the director's interpretation of the message of the script to life, to be shared with the audience. If they do not collaborate effectively, the play won't be successful. While theater shares the energy and audience proximity with other arts that are performed live in front of an audience, it stands apart because over the last 2,500+ years, plays have tried to show us "us." That is, we see *ourselves* in a play. Our humanity is reflected back to us by the performers on the stage. The actors are humans, playing roles with human traits, with relevance to our culture, values, and sensibility. That's something that the other arts cannot do with the same immediacy.

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The Elements

Aristotle's *Poetics*

Aristotle, largely considered the first literary critic, set out to define the elements of drama in *Poetics* (341 BCE). These elements are, in order of importance:

1. Plot: the events or order of the events in the play, a.k.a. the story itself
2. Character: the development of a character; a character must change and go through struggles to elicit "fear and pity" or catharsis
3. Thought: the deeper themes, philosophies, or ideas reflected in the play
4. Diction: the use of "poetic speech" or literary devices
5. Song: the music that accompanies the drama
6. Spectacle: the visual impact, such as props and costumes, or what we might today call special effects

While scholars today have a somewhat different idea about the important features of drama, they do mostly agree with Aristotle that the most important characteristic of drama is its plot.

Plot

Plot is the most important element in a narrative. It is the events in the play and the order in which the events are told. There is no one correct way to structure a drama! However, the structure of a drama is only as effective as it is intentionally formed to elicit the desired response from its audience. A play usually has a beginning, middle, and end. It almost always has a character grow and develop over the course of the play. Let's look closely at one type of plot structure in order to see what plot might look like...

Setting

To provide the story's setting, a play frequently incorporates sets. If you've ever been involved with a play, you know that the set can be made up of detailed backdrops, specifically designed props, strategic lighting, and sometimes even background noise. A set, along with the characters' subtle indications of the scene, can generate a full setting in the audience's imagination. For example, the play *Hamlet* starts its setting on a creepy, dark, foggy, cold night in the fictional Castle Elsinore in Denmark. The setting is often established on a **stage**, or the physical space upon which actors move. In order for a play to take place, there must be **actors** (people performing the play), an **audience** (people viewing the play), and **action and/or dialogue** as performed by the actors.

Character

While in short stories or novels a reader must wait until a character appears to know who the important characters are, in a play they are often the first aspect of the text encountered by readers. The character list usually appears in the first pages of the play. This is because, as a play emphasizes action over narration, the actors must know their parts!

Usually, the most important characters are listed first: think most spoken lines, protagonists, antagonists, etc. However, the order in which the characters appear on the character list does not necessarily dictate the order of appearance. Like in creative nonfiction or fiction, playwrights develop characters over the course of the play. Different characters serve different roles such as protagonist, antagonist, or foil. There are a few types of character archetypes unique to drama, which are described below. Note that not all of them will be in every play!

- **Protagonist:** Usually the character with the most spoken lines or the character around whom all the other characters seem to orbit. This is the main character, focused on trying to achieve a goal or overcome an obstacle (often, but not always, the hero/ine of the play). Hamlet would be an example of a protagonist. It should be noted that the protagonist is not always likable.
- **Antagonist:** This is the character that is preventing or standing in the way of the protagonist achieving their goal (often, but not always, the villain of the play, usually opposite the protagonist). Claudius would be an example of an antagonist. Note that this character is not always a villain and may even be a sympathetic figure.
- **Foil:** This is a character meant to define another character through juxtaposition or comparison. For example, in *Hamlet*, Old Hamlet and Old Fortinbras and Hamlet and Fortinbras are often considered foils of each other. Fortinbras and Hamlet are both on paths of vengeance, yet each goes about their vengeance in different ways. While Fortinbras uses military strength, Hamlet chooses to use his intellect. While Fortinbras is decisive, Hamlet seems paralyzed by indecision. By examining

the ways in which these two characters are similar and different, we can learn a lot about each of them and their significance in the play.

- **Wise elder:** In many plays, there is a wise old man or figure of wisdom who guides the protagonist. In Hamlet, it might be the ghost of his father, or Polonius can be a silly inversion of this archetype.
- **Love interest:** Again, in most plays, there is usually a love interest of the protagonist, though not always. For Hamlet, this is Ophelia (though some scholars have argued Horatio!).
- **Messenger:** A character who delivers news.

Dialogue and Action

One of the main differences between fiction and drama is that usually a play's plot is primarily forwarded through **dialogue** and **action**. **Dialogue** is comprised of the words directly spoken by characters, while **actions** are the physical movements of the actors. In a novel, action is described in detail, and dialogue is usually put in quotation marks. For instance, consider the following example of **action** and **dialogue** from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde:

> As the painter looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skillfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasure passed across his face, and seemed about to linger there. But he suddenly started up, and closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids, as though he sought to imprison within his brain some curious dream from which he feared he might awake.
>
> "It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done," said Lord Henry languidly. "You must certainly send it next year to the Grosvenor. The Academy is too large and too vulgar. Whenever I have gone there, there have been either so many people that I have not been able to see the pictures, which was dreadful, or so many pictures that I have not been able to see the people, which was worse. The Grosvenor is really the only place."
>
> "I don't think I shall send it anywhere," he answered, tossing his head back in that odd way that used to make his friends laugh at him at Oxford. "No, I won't send it anywhere."

Distinct from the novel form of dialogue evidenced above, in a play, any words that come after the character's name will be considered dialogue. Action is usually not described in great depth, and actors are to interpret what actions to take based on the dialogue. Consider this example from *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare:

> *MARCELLUS: Holla, Bernardo!*
> *BERNARDO: Say,*
> *What, is Horatio there?*
> *HORATIO: A piece of him.*
> *BERNARDO: Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus.*
> *MARCELLUS: What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?*

BERNARDO: I have seen nothing.

In the above excerpt from the beginning of the play, Marcellus, Bernardo, and Horatio (soldiers) greet each other as they patrol the castle. When Horatio says "a piece of him," we might imagine the fog is so thick or the night so dark that only pieces of each character can be seen. Horatio might be holding up his hand in the torchlight. We might imagine the characters wandering about in the dark speaking to each other, a bit rattled, worrying if the mysterious "thing" Marcellus references will reappear. We learn later in the dialogue that the "thing" is an apparition (ghost). None of the characters' movements are described, so we must infer what their actions are through their dialogue.

Although a novel's narrator can describe in detail the thoughts and impressions of its characters, a play's effects depend much more heavily on what the characters say and do. A play is a performance, a spectacle, rather than words on paper. That is, drama is a story performed by actors. Some plays do include a narrator or a chorus, to introduce the scene or set the tone of the play, but the bulk of the production's effect is generated through the dialogue and its visual devices, and since the play's script dictates what the characters will say and often, through stage direction, its production strategies as well, the script is crucial to a successful performance.

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The Theater Space

Theater can occur almost anywhere! There are a variety of building configurations, however, that are designed specifically for performance. Here are four very common stage types that you may encounter.

Proscenium Stage

Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven, UK (Alan Cleaver, CC-BY 2.0)

This type of stage can be traditional or contemporary in appearance. It is characterized by a "proscenium arch," which separates the audience space from that of the play. The effect is that of the audience members looking through a frame in on the action. The stage might be straight, in line with the arch, or project slightly outward in an area called the apron.

Take a 360-degree virtual tour of a theater featuring a proscenium stage: The Stifel Theater, St. Louis, U.S.A.

Thrust Stage

Pasant Theatre, East Lansing MI, U.S.A. (Wharton Center CC-BY-SA)

A thrust stage projects into the audience space and is surrounded on 3 sides by seating. This can create a more immediate, personal connection between the actors and audience because they are sharing the same space. This configuration can also make staging more challenging, as now, actors are projecting to multiple areas instead of one audience direction. (After all, who wants the actor with his back to you for an entire performance!)

Take a 360-degree virtual tour of a theater featuring a thrust stage: The Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. *(Note that this impermanent thrust stage has been put in front of a proscenium arch and the arch effectively blocked with a temporary "wall.")*

Arena Stage

The stage of TRP during the Minnesota Fringe Festival (Tony Webster CC-BY)

An arena stage is an old idea (think of The Colosseum in Rome!) This type of stage is surrounded on all sides by the audience and carries with it many of the same challenges as that of a thrust stage in terms of staging and acting a scene. There are also additional technical considerations: What can audience members see? How will you change the set? Where can the lighting be angled to highlight the action without shining in the audience's eyes? This stage configuration can be used in both large and small spaces.

Take a 360-degree virtual tour of a theater featuring a thrust stage: The Berlin Philharmonic, Berlin, Germany

Black Box Theater

Wellington College International Hangzhou Black Box, Zhejiang, China (Nora Zhang, CC BY-SA 4.0 International)

A black-box theater is typically a small, plain, open room with capacity for about 100 people. As its name suggests, the space is usually black. It is well suited to experimental theater and provides an intimate theatrical experience; audience members might only be a few feet from the actors. Because the seating is not fixed, the space can be reconfigured as needed for a production.

Take a 360-degree virtual tour of a black-box theater: Margo Jones Theater, Dallas TX, U.S.A.

Check Your Understanding

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8.

CHAPTER 8: THE GREEK ORIGINS OF WESTERN THEATER

Where Did Theater Come From?

Because the practice of theatrical play is so ancient, we really do not know who or why the first formalized theater began. We do, however, have theories based on oral and written histories and anthropological observation.

Watch Mike Rugnetta of Crash Course Theater share some of the current theories about the earliest roots of theater:

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The Greek Origins of Western Theater

"There are two main ways in which we know about some ancient Greek theater from classical Athens where all the plays were originally produced. The first is the actual texts themselves. We're incredibly lucky, if you think about it, that we've got no fewer than 30 texts of Greek tragedies and we've got twelve or fourteen of Greek comedies. That's a very great deal! I mean that's almost equivalent to what we've got of really good Renaissance drama. We also have ancient sources that tell us about drama, about the funding, and the politics, and the organization of theater. There's also the archeological remains...Remains of theaters themselves. There's also quite a few good pots. The ancient Greeks loved to paint theatrical scenes and scenes from their famous myths on vases and we think they probably actually sold them at touristy shops near the theaters, so you could take one home with you after you've been to see the play.

The Festival of Dionysus

"The actual context [for the plays] is the festival of Dionysus, which happens annually around our March or April. [This] is when the sailing season starts and people can come from all over the Greek world. It is a massive event! It's like it's the Olympics, plus the Oberammergau Mystery Plays, plus the Super Bowl all rolled into one.

The Greeks loved competition—in every aspect of their life, they competed...In the festival of Dionysus, each of the three tragic playwrights would be competing against one another, and each would be sponsored by a rich man who would pay for the production, simply for the glory of the state. And then a jury, specially selected, will vote on what they thought was the best play. If your team won, your name and the playwright would be inscribed on the wall in the theater and be remembered forever. There's no money, it was about glory. Lots of people did it.

The Plays

"There were three types of drama in ancient Greece: tragedy, comedy, and satyr plays. There's theater where the masks are quite ugly and the characters are quite low class, and it's comedy—it's funny. Then there's tragedy where the characters are very beautiful; usually the masks as we see them painted on vases are exquisite and lovely to look at very often—and that is tragedy. After each three tragedies on each day there would be a thing called a Satyr play. A satyr was a mythical beast, half-man, half-goat, and these were very rude comedy plays.

The Playwrights

"Antiquity decided that there were four really classical Greek playwrights; there were three tragedians and one comic poet, Aristophanes. The three tragedians were called Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. They were all Athenian citizens. They all worked to produce their great plays in the same century, the 5th century BCE.

The Theater

"Traditional Greek theater was open air and was built into the side of a hill so the spectators sat in a semicircle, up the hillside...At the bottom of the hill was a flat area called the **orchestra**, which is Greek for 'dancing space,' where the chorus would have performed and behind that a raised stage area and some buildings for the actors. Some modern theaters have been deliberately built in order to imitate, in some respects, the ancient Greek theater. The Olivier Theatre at the National [Theater, England,] for example, was actually modeled on Epidaurus, which is the best and earliest surviving stone theater on a big scale, in ancient Greece. This means that you have an approximately circular space, which is open, and extends to some extent into the audience. You have tiered seating in a semicircular or horseshoe shape around it that rises up. As an actor working on a

stage like The Olivier, because of the wrap-around nature of the audience, it feels like you are connected more strongly to the people you're trying to communicate with and tell the story to.

Masks

"Masks are another aspect of the theater students find puzzling—why they did it. And there are all kinds of thoughts and stories you might hear about why they [used] them. They wore masks because it was a religious ritual and because that was the way it had always happened. If you've ever seen certain kinds of African dancing, which is actually related to Greek theater in some ways, the mask is part of it. You're worshiping Dionysus. [As] part of worshiping Dionysus, you wear the mask of the reveler, you wear the mask of the 'celebrator of the theater' that way. The mask was also really useful because it enabled you to change character. Only three performers performed all the speaking roles in Greek theater and so you'd come out with a different mask with different hair, and so on.

The Chorus

"The chorus is one of the hardest aspects of Greek drama for modern audiences to relate to. It's important to

realize that Greek drama grew out of a long-standing tradition of choral song and dance. The ancient Greek chorus serves two fundamental roles for the whole theater experience. The first is just fun—it's wonderfully exciting! The ancient Greeks always talk with great excitement about the moment when the chorus would start up. You had 12 incredibly well-trained singing, dancing young men, dressed up in all sorts of exotic costumes and masks, doing really excellent performances; pretty much like you see in a West End [or Broadway] musical...That's the sort of skill and excitement that you'd have liked, so it's not a matter of a boring interlude between the real action at all, it's actually highlights. The other thing that the chorus did, though, was provide the perspective of the community on what was happening. So we don't just get Creon and Antigone fighting about whether there's a burial, [rather] we get the citizens of Thebes, the whole city, actually represented by those 12 citizens. So Greek tragedy is fundamentally political because it's got this constant interaction between all of us and the top guys. And that is something that's very much missing for many later types of theater.

"When you get to be involved in doing a Greek play or something to do with the Greek theater, you're going right to the very soul and beginnings of all of drama. That's a great feeling to be part of something that was, and is still, very, very important to traditional storytelling."

Transcribed from "An Introduction to Greek Theatre" from the National Theatre

Roman Changes and Innovations

There are a number of ways that Roman theater changed the Greek theater practices and genres to fit Roman cultural tastes.

Roman theater was heavily influenced by Greek drama because the Romans essentially embraced the theatrical styles and techniques already in use in Greece. However, like so many things that the Romans adopted from their neighbors, they *did* put a uniquely Roman spin on many of those ideas. One way in which they differed was that the Romans focused more on comedy than did the Greeks. Additionally, they adapted the Old Comedy of the Greeks to meet Roman tastes, which resulted in a **New Comedy** that was based in romantic and domestic situations, much like our modern sitcoms. This is the form of comedy that had a significant reverse influence on Greek New Comedy.

Other Entertainment Developments

The Romans went further than theater as a dramatic entertainment. They developed, perfected, and/or Romanized several additional entertainment forms, such as the following:

- Chariot racing
- Equestrian performances
- Acrobatics
- Wrestling
- Prizefighting
- Gladiator contests

The popular entertainments of the Romans, including theater, were government sponsored. However, unlike the Greek sponsorship, it was not done to support the population's religious celebrations. Instead, it was largely used as a way to distract the people of Rome from the other issues of the day that involved government, such as scandals, corruption, wars, and political chicanery.

The Romans also came up with a couple of new forms of dramatic entertainment more directly connected to theater than those mentioned earlier. These are known as **Mime** and **Pantomime**. However, unlike modern mime work, which is all movement with no dialogue, Roman mime was essentially a variety show that could include gymnastics, juggling, songs, dances, skits, etc. Pantomime in ancient Rome was similar to mime, but it used only a single performer who might be accompanied by a musician or two and possibly a small chorus.

Roman Comedy

When we look closely at Roman comedy, we can see that there are two phases of that comedy: the first phase, the part heavily influenced by the Greek drama before it, and a later comedy that is more thoroughly Romanized. As an example of the first type, we can consider the playwright **Plautus** (~254–184 BCE). He is often considered the father of Roman New Comedy. His plays shifted away from the satire of his Greek model and instead began to look at the domestic comedy of common people. However, there were some elements of his comedy that resembled Greek comedy. His dialogue was meant to be sung, as was all of Greek dramatic literature. In place of satire, Plautus relied more on the elements of farce: exaggeration, physical comedy, and light violent action. He also used stock characters instead of trying to create three-dimensional characters.

Another Roman comedic playwright is **Terence** (~185–159 BCE). He represents the later style of Roman comedy—a comedy that much more closely resembles our modern domestic comedy sitcoms than Plautus's plays did. His works did use slightly more realistic characters with some individuality, but more importantly, his plays shifted toward a more literary, language-based humor instead of the physical humor of Plautus. Terence's plays were not built around exaggeration and farce, though there is some of that in his plays. One of the key differences between Plautus and Terence is that Terence's dialogue is meant to be spoken and not sung.

Roman Tragedy

The Romans did not reject Tragedy; they just did not embrace it like the Greeks had before them. They also

did not make major changes to it. The single major Roman tragic playwright that we will look at as a model of Roman Tragedy is Seneca (~4 BCE–65 CE). His works were very similar to Greek tragedy, but they differed in a few significant ways:

- The Chorus is less connected to the story—more of a narrative function
- Violence is emphasized—sometimes meant to be performed on stage and not offstage as in the Greek tragedies
- Uses supernatural beings in addition to the gods, such as witches, ghosts, demons, etc.

A very important thing to note about the Roman playwrights mentioned here is that for many generations after the fall of Rome, their works (particularly those of Terence and Seneca) had a significant influence on later writers (in later periods of theater history). Surviving copies of their plays were often used as parts of Latin grammar lessons for young students throughout Europe well into the Renaissance. Students would read these plays in their original Latin as models of Latin literature, and as a result, they had an influence on many later playwrights' development in dramatic writing. We will explore that influence on some of those later writers as we move forward through the history portions of this course.

Roman Theater Criticism

Just as the Romans adopted and adapted theater genres and production practices for the most part, they too adopted the Greek ideas of theater criticism. Those ideas, built on Aristotelian ideas, served Rome fairly well, but like so many things, Roman culture had an influence on those basic principles. They added to, or emphasized, some ideas that were not as prominent in the Greek interpretation of theater criticism. These distinctly Roman qualities include the following:

- Tragedy and comedy had to be distinct (i.e., no blending of forms)
- Tragedy deals with royalty
- Comedy deals with common people
- Drama should teach in addition to entertain

Roman Theater Production

Roman theater spaces are very similar to Greek theaters, except that since the Romans built with concrete, they did not need to build their theaters into hillsides. Instead, they built **freestanding buildings** for their theaters. Many still stand today as a testament to the construction ability and quality of materials used by the Romans all across Europe. These freestanding theaters contained most of the stylistic components of the Greek theaters. They are open to the sky to use the sun as lighting for their plays. They had an orchestra, a scene house, and a

semicircular seating area. However, they lacked the parados on either side of the orchestra; since the buildings needed walls all the way around, there wasn't any room to include the paradoi. There are some other differences in their buildings in terms of how they were used. For example, the Orchestra is semicircular, and it is not used for acting. Instead, it is used to seat dignitaries. Since there is no parados to use as an entrance, the actors would enter directly from the scene house through three doors on its front side. The performance area was changed as well. There was a stage built on the front of the scene house called the **pulpitum**. This was a wooden platform stage where the action would take place. The Romans also used the first sort of a curtain, the **Aulaeum**. This was used essentially like an act curtain to conceal the stage before and after the play. Also, many of the other structures of the Greek stage that we saw before were given Romanized names.

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9.

CHAPTER 9: TECHNICAL THEATER

Technical Theater

As we continue our journey through the world of the theater, we will first examine the foundation work that goes on before a performance. Technical theater requires specialized, technical skill sets that help transport us into another time and/or place. While it's true that at its most basic, theater requires only one performer and one person as audience, we generally expect a fuller, more complex experience.

"The first task many technicians, designers and stage managers take on when starting work on a new show is a script breakdown. The breakdown is a scene by scene (and often page by page) analysis of the technical requirements of a script. The specific layout of a breakdown and the information it contains will vary from technician to technician depending on the person's preferences and the needs of their position... "One of the first breakdowns many technicians create is an actor/scene breakdown. This breakdown charts who is on-stage for every page of the script. This knowledge assists many people to do their jobs well.

- The stage manager will use this scheduling rehearsals as they know who is needed when.
- The costume designer will use it to estimate how much time there is for possible costume changes.
- It helps the scenic designer determine how many actors a specific set must accommodate.
- It allows the prop department to figure out when they will hand individual actors their props.
- It helps the back-stage staff determine how much time they will have between scenery, or costume changes, and the order of those changes so that they can plan efficiently.

- It assists the sound designer to determine which mics need to be on when. Additionally, if actors are sharing body mics, It allows the sound team to plot when the changes will happen.

"Before anyone can create a breakdown, they need to read the play from beginning to end. All plays are different, and technicians will have to modify the standard format based on the needs/requirements of their production. For example, in some plays (or in some productions), one actor may play multiple characters...

"Musicals, while often broken into scenes, often merit special consideration. Additional requirements for a moment may be brought about due to a song or dance section. Often, when breaking down a musical, I treat a song (or dance) as its own scene. It will have additional special rehearsals (music/choreography) and may involve additional performers not specifically listed in the script. Sometimes a director or choreographer will add additional performers for a dance, or to enhance the vocal qualities of a song. Sometimes these performers are not on stage but are singing from off-stage. They are still needed for rehearsals, and if they are singing off-stage, it means they cannot also be doing a costume change or appearing on-stage...

"Some plays, especially Elizabethan plays (like those by William Shakespeare), and large scale musicals will have many small, one-scene roles. While a high school or a college may cast a unique and individual actor for each role, professional companies often try to use as few actors as possible. This means that a small one-scene role in the first scene, may be played by the same actor who plays a different one-scene role in the third scene. Sometimes a director will try to assign the actors to multiple roles so that some artistic statement is made to the audience. For example, in the musical 'Little Me' the leading lady has a series of husbands and boyfriends throughout the show. Traditionally, one actor plays all of the men in her life. In this case the breakdown will allow a director and production team to see if this symbolic double casting is possible. Sometimes it is merely a matter of filling all the small roles with as few people as possible to make the budget work. Again, the breakdown will allow this doubling to be determined...

"The general skills needed for any of the careers or sectors have many things in common. Workers need to be dead-line oriented, as most productions have firm timelines that cannot be altered. Critical thinking and analysis are much needed skills. Almost every project in the field is unique and technicians and designers alike must discover the best way of reaching a project's goal. Creative problem solving is a trait successful

practitioners have in common. With every project being unique, there are no guaranteed solutions to the problems that are presented. Technicians draw on their vast experience of what worked in the past that can be adapted to be a solution to the current problems. Clear communication and collaboration round out the necessary skills. No technical theatre project is ever handled by one person on their own. Collaboration with many people is the norm, and successful collaboration requires clear written and verbal communication skills."

When watching the videos, take note of what each department is responsible for—like any finely tuned operation, each area must know its function and carry it out in conjunction with the other departments.

Introduction to Various Departments in Technical Theater

1. Overview

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=218#oembed-1

(3:49 min.)

2. Set Design

"The scenic designers breakdown will include required scenery that is mentioned in the script, and any other special requirements. The scenic designer will use this to discover the requirements of the set, of any particular set pieces, and then will develop many drawings to detail what the set will look like. Most of these drawings will be in-scale

drawings, which means that a certain measurement on the drawing equals a certain measurement in real life…Scenic designer drawings will include many things, incorporating details on each and every set piece that must be built by the scenery or prop shops."

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(12:16 min.)

3. Lighting

"The electrics crew, led by the master electrician, will examine the light plot to make sure they have all the color, gobos, lights, and power cable indicated by the light plot. They will get all the equipment together…on the day of the load-in, when the lights are installed in the theatre. It is important that the correct light is installed, [that they] are placed correctly, and pointed in the correct direction. The crew will work to power all the lights…After the lights are hung, all the color and gobos need to be installed. Once all the lights are plugged in, the master electrician will work with the board operator to patch the lights in the lighting control desk. Patching is the process of connecting the address that controls the fixture to its assigned channel number…

"Once everything is working, the designer will come in to focus the show. Focus is a process where each light is turned on and under the direction of the lighting designer will point each light where it is supposed to be."

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=218#oembed-3

(1:59 min.)

4. Properties

"Stage properties, or 'props,' are those items that are not permanently attached to the scenery, or costumes, that add to the visual picture of the shows. If that definition seems a bit vague, you may have discovered why props are such a varied and interesting section of technical theatre. Props can be divided into the following categories by their use in the final show: "Set Props / Furnishings: These are large items that are rarely, if ever, moved by the cast in the course of the show. These include tables, chairs, settees, etc.

- Set Dressing: These are items that are not touched by the actors but complete the look of the set. These include books on a bookcase, pictures on a wall, fancy plates in a china cabinet, etc.
- Hand Props: These are items carried by and used by the actors in the course of stage directions or stage business. These include such things as a cell phone an actor uses, a coffee mug they drink from, a journal in which they take a note, etc.
- Costume Props: These are items that are not generally considered clothing, but would be designed by the costume designer and worn by the actors. These include hats, eye glasses, wallets, pocket watches, etc.
- Some props have additional requirements which they must meet. These additional categories of props are a description in addition to any item above.

"Practical Props: Any item that is a practical prop is also one of the other categories

listed. A practical prop is one that must perform its real-world function. For example, a cell phone (hand prop) that an actor needs to hold and imagine that they are using to make a call is not practical. However, if that cell phone needs to ring on cue, it is now a practical hand prop. Similarly, a lamp that sits on the stage is set dressing, until it is determined that it must also turn on. Generally, if the prop must light up or make a noise, especially if cued somehow from off stage, it is considered a practical prop.

"Consumable Props: Like practical props, consumable props fit into an additional category. A consumable is one that is 'used up' over the course of one or more performances. Food that is eaten by the cast on stage is an example of a consumable prop, as are letters that are torn to pieces by the cast. If a show has a practical flashlight, its batteries and lamp would be considered consumable.

"Rehearsal Props: Often the 'real' props are not available for the rehearsal period. In those cases where the actors need certain props to rehearse, but do not have access to the real prop, a substitute, or rehearsal prop, is acquired. Rehearsal props need to be approximately the same size and weight as the real prop, but are generally a cheap substitute that does not have the correct look. For example, even though a play may be set in the 1800s, the cast could rehearse with a modern composition book instead of a period diary, assuming the composition book was approximately the same size as the final prop will be.

"One of the most confusing things about props is that an item, such as a hat, may be in different categories depending on the show. For example, if the hat is attached to a mannequin in a window and never touched by the cast, it might be considered furnishings. In another show, the hat may be hanging on a hat stand, but not used by the cast, making it set dressing. [In] yet another show, an actor, playing a maid, might hand the hat to another actor who carries it off stage with them, making it a hand prop. In a final example an actor might wear the hat, making it a costume prop.

"Another confusing layer is what department will supply that hat. As the costume department often has more hats in their storage, they may supply that hat regardless of its use in the show. Props may be supplied by the props department, the scenery department or the costume department depending on the prop and the production team. Some props may take collaboration between departments. For example, a table lamp may be supplied by the scenery department but may be wired and made practical by the electrics department. In all cases, clear communication between departments, facilitated

by the stage manager, is essential. Often all the designers and department heads will meet to examine the prop lists developed by each department and the stage manager. At this point they will collaborate on who will supply each prop."

Properties Department: 2 Stories

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=218#oembed-4

(7:13 min.)

An Overview of the Prop Department—The National Theatre (1:22 min)

5. Costumes

"The work of costumes in theatre can be divided into two separate groups. The first group is the costume construction crew. These artisans are responsible [for] turning the Costume Designers' renderings into working costumes. More to our focus of this text is the costume crew for production. Perhaps the best resource for understanding this work is to watch the video under Additional materials called 'A Day in the life of the dresser at the British theatre.' The head of the production crew is called the Wardrobe Supervisor. In olden days this job was termed 'Wardrobe Master' or 'Wardrobe Mistress.' The crew members are generally called Dressers.

"The Wardrobe Supervisor supervises the dressers. He or she will also maintain a repair and cleaning schedule for all the costumes. The dressers report to the wardrobe supervisor, and generally focus on all costumes for specific groups of characters/actors. They will make sure that all the costumes are in show ready condition, including spot

cleaning, pressing, and minor repair work. Dressers will assist performers with any unusual or difficult costumes. One of the other major issues for costume crew members.

"Quick changes are becoming a major feature (or challenge) of modern productions. As theatre pieces become more film-like, or are done with smaller casts, there are increasing needs for quick changes. A quick change is when an actor has to do a major costume change in a very limited amount of time. Generally, there is not enough time for the actor to return to his or her dressing room, and the change has to happen just off-stage, or in some instances, even onstage just behind the set. To happen effectively, quick changes take extensive preparation and rehearsal.

"In preparation for the quick change, the dresser should have all the costume pieces that the actor will need to change into. In some cases, where time is especially tight, the dresser and prop crew will need to coordinate so that the actor's props can be brought to the place where he or she is changing. The costume pieces need to be prepared to make putting them on quickly possible...It is possible that an actor will be discarding a prop that was in a pocket or bag into the laundry basket, so it is important to keep a look out and return those props to the prop crew...The actor should proceed directly to the quick change area, unbuttoning, or removing any items that they can safely undo. Once they get to the booth, the dresser and the actor should work together according to the plan they rehearsed. After the change is complete, the dresser should give the actor one final look over to make sure everything is correct. After the actor has moved back to the stage, the dresser should clean up after the change, hanging up the costumes and preparing for the next change. The costume designer and the wardrobe supervisor will have worked out the quick change details, and will run it with the actor and dresser several times. If either the actor or the dresser has some suggestions of how to make it faster, they should voice them. Of course, the final call of how to do it should be that of the costume designer."

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(9:05)

4. Integrative Technology

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(11:15 min)

Text excerpted and adapted from: Boltz, Christopher R. *Technical Theatre Practicum: THEAT 186A v.1* (College of the Canyons, February 26, 2019.) 5, 16–22, 30–43. (CC BY 4.0) https://www.canyons.edu/_resources/documents/academics/onlineeducation/TechnicalTheatrePracticumV1.pdf

10.

CHAPTER 10: THE ACTOR'S CRAFT

Before ever setting foot on the stage, actors must understand their characters and prepare to play them onstage. As with the technical areas, this requires both mental and physical groundwork that helps them to transform into the character that transports us during performance. Actors never work inside a bubble; because theater is collaborative, they must work within parameters set by others and *interact* with one another, the audience, and their environment.

Watch:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=219#oembed-1

As we continue through this section, consider what the role of an actor is and how they go about personifying another. What might some of the challenges be?

We're All Actors!

Regardless of what we think about acting as a profession or as an art form, we have to realize that as human beings, we are all actors. The nature of acting is part of our human experience, often in many more ways than we might imagine! For example, consider that as children we often learn how to be grown-ups through **imitating** our parents or other role models. We "play" by **pretending** or **play-acting** to be the characters we see in movies and on TV. This type of play-acting or **role-playing** is part of our nature. We take on roles to learn.

In addition to the role-playing we do as children, we continue to act as we get older. We take on different roles in different social situations. Often these are not totally different personas but are instead parts of our true selves that we emphasize in particular situations. For example, we take on the roles of "teacher" and "student" in the classroom. We may have distinct roles that we take on when at a party with close friends and another when sitting in church or talking with a grandparent. We may have many roles in our lifetimes: father, mother, daughter, son, boss, employee, student, teacher, etc. In each of these situations there are specific expectations

that we have for ourselves and for others. How we choose to comply with or go against those expectations is part of our "character" in that moment.

Speaking of character, we often define ourselves and others by mentioning a person's character. What does that mean? Clearly, it comes, in part, from our history of recognizing differences in behavior in different situations. For example, someone might have the character trait of being a braggart, or a show-off, or a liar, or a cheat. Who among us can identify the "class clown"? These personal roles are adaptations that we tack on to our basic personal traits in given situations; these personal roles tend to become identified as our character or our identity.

Acting on Stage

In the 21st century, acting on stage is distinctly different than it was at the beginning of theater in ancient Greece, or even throughout much of the history of theater. In fact, it wasn't until the very early 20th century that acting came to be what it is today, essentially a realistic mirror of true human behavior. That type of acting has three significant challenges, and they are the following:

3 Challenges of Acting

1. Making characters believable
2. Physicality—using voice and body
3. Synthesis and integration—blending inner and outer methods and skills

Now, let's look at each of these challenges a little more closely.

Challenge 1: Believable Acting

Believability in acting really refers to whether or not the audience is willing to believe the characters are real, despite knowing that they are fictional creations by actors. This is a very difficult challenge to overcome. However, in the late 19th/early 20th century, a Russian actor and director, **Konstantin Stanislavski**, realized that many of the actors around him did not know how to portray believable characters. Instead, they relied on the previous technique of standing and merely declaiming lines to the audience seated directly in front of them. However, he also noticed that some actors were much more successful at making characters that seemed to move and speak like "real people." He researched those successful actors' processes and techniques and developed a system of methods that he wrote down and began to teach to his own actors. This **method**, or **system**, has been developed and modified in the last century, but his ideas remain the basis for almost all believable acting in the 21st century. If you ever hear an actor referred to as a "method actor," then it refers to the fact that the actor uses Stanislavski's techniques to create believable characters on stage.

Stanislavski's formula or method includes 7 elements: Relaxation, Concentration and observation, Specificity, Inner truth—"magic if," Purposeful action, Through-line of the character, and Ensemble playing. Let's look briefly at each of these to get an idea what each of these elements refers to and how they help an actor create a realistic, believable character.

Relaxation—Relaxing for the actor means to let go of physical and mental stress and tension in order to be able to call upon the body, mind, and spirit to work clearly on developing and manifesting (bringing to life) the character that is being called for in the script. It usually involves a series of practices using breathing exercises, stretching, centering, and meditation to rid oneself of personal issues and stress.

Concentration and observation—Most modern actors are keen observers of human behavior. In fact, that is one way that actors develop a "repertoire" of physical actions and emotional responses to a wide variety of possible experiences. Not everyone reacts the same way in a particular situation, and an actor observes others to identify and select a variety of possible ways that the character might react. This toolkit of various reactions, both physically and emotionally, becomes quite useful when an actor wants to differentiate the character from the actor more distinctly. The other part of this element is concentration. This refers to the fact that an actor has to remain believable while there are many distractions going on around him or her: noises and movements in the audience, or flashes of light as an auditorium door opens and closes, or movement or odd noises from backstage from actors or stagehands waiting in the wings. At any given moment, an **actor** can usually see at least one other thing than what the **character** is supposed to be able to see. That means the actor must develop keen concentration to keep focus on the character's reality in the scene while still being aware of and reacting (if necessary) to what is going on in the actor's real world on stage. This split between the actor's concentration is best developed with frequent practice and thorough understanding of the character's development.

Specificity—The skill needed to bring about a realistic character involves making very specific choices in actions and mannerisms. When we think of people, we usually think of those traits and actions that make this person unique among all the people we know. An actor has to make those kinds of specific choices to animate the character to make it stand out from a stereotype or cartoonish character instead of a realistic character.

Inner truth—"magic if"—An actor can make a character more believable if he or she can not only portray the character's actions and behaviors but also make the character's feelings believable. After all, we can usually detect when someone is "just going through the motions" and not being true to their own feelings. The same is true of an actor on stage. To have an **inner truth** means that the actor's feelings match the character's actions and what the character would be feeling in any given moment. Stanislavski realized that isn't always an easy task, especially if the actor has not actually personally experienced what the character is experiencing. How then can the actor create a sense of inner, emotional truth? Stanislavski calls the method he taught, the **magic if**. This basically gives the actor an opportunity, during character development, to ask the question, "What would **I** do if **I** were in this same situation as the character?" This reflects the fact that an actor usually draws on a lot of him or herself to create a believable character. The

playwright only gives the actor the details that make the character unique. The actor has to add those to his or her own persona to make the character fully developed. As a result, when an actor asks the "magic if" question, it brings the actor's self to bear in making the character believable.

Purposeful action—This trait is one that seems pretty simple on the surface, but it requires a deep self-understanding on the part of the actor. The idea of purposeful action refers to the notion that nothing an actor does on stage should detract from the character's purpose and goals. That means the actor's own nervous twitches, swaying, other kinds of motions, or facial expressions should *not* make an appearance in the character unless they help the *character* to be believable.

Through-line of the character—We all have motivations for what we do. We have short-term and long-term goals that we use to help us make choices. Ideally, whenever we are faced with a choice in life, we consider which option will take us closer to our goals. That then motivates us to make considered choices that will help us get closer to those goals. The same is true for the life of the character. Even though the character is fictional, to make it realistic, the actor must analyze the character to determine what goals the character uses to guide the choices the character makes. Those goals and their impact on the character's choices and actions are what Stanislavski referred to as the through-line of the character.

Ensemble playing—All of the elements up to this point have been centered on the individual actor and his or her character. However, it is a rare moment when a character in a play is on stage alone for any length of time. Since most actors work in groups and thus have groups of characters on stage at the same time, an awareness on the part of each individual actor of the believability and realness of the other actors' characters is necessary. For one to be successful, all need to work together to be successful.

Modern Approaches

As mentioned earlier, Stanislavski's system has grown and adapted since it was first developed. Here are some of the more significant developments made by Stanislavski himself and some of his students, their students, and other acting teachers.

Psychophysical action—After he developed his method, Stanislavski realized the difficulties for creating inner truth, despite the effectiveness of the "magic if." So he added an option to help develop an inner truth of believable emotion, drawn from the psychology of the first part of the 20th century. Essentially, Stanislavski embraced the idea of **psychophysical action**. Basically, this refers to the idea that if we go through the physical actions associated with an inner emotion, we will then begin to feel the inner emotion associated with those actions. We sometimes see this in action in cognitive therapy today. If you act happy, you will begin to feel happy.

Emotional recall—A student of the Stanislavski method, Uta Hagen, added another technique in the mid-20th century to assist in creating emotional "truth" on stage. The idea of emotional recall refers to the idea that if an actor does not know the true feeling associated with the character, he or she can draw on a recalled similar emotion from the actor's own experience. For example, the character may be

sad at the death of a parent, but the actor may not have had that experience. The actor can recall another moment of loss, say of a pet or a favorite toy, and use that sadness to add an element of real sadness to the character's sadness that is being played by the actor.

Text as instrument of action—Another student of the Stanislavski system, Robert Cohen, has explored another method of developing emotional truth. Instead of drawing on emotions as inspiration (developed through either external action or emotional recall), Cohen focuses on the text. He teaches that the words of the text will convey their truth directly. If the character is sad, the words selected and the actions defined by the script will lead to the believability of the emotional truth. Essentially, he posits that words focus the emotions and the action, and in doing so, the believability will exist in the text itself.

Body as tool—A teacher of the Stanislavski system in the latter half of the 20th century, Robert Benedetti, focuses on the physicality of acting to communicate the emotional truth of a character. The premise here is that we can only read someone else's emotional state by seeing and interpreting their physical actions. As a result, Benedetti teaches that as long as the physical actions of the actor convey a true emotional state, the actor's own inner emotional state is not really a factor. He says that outward appearance and physicality of action define the emotional essence.

Getting into Character—Watch:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=219#oembed-2

Challenge 2: Physicality

The next major challenge that an actor faces is the training and effective use of the **actor's instrument**—the body and the voice. These are the tools at the actor's disposal for creating a character and communicating that to an audience during a performance. To perfect these tools, an actor must practice, rehearse, and develop effective exercise and toning routines. In fact, an actor may spend anywhere from 40% to 60% of training time on physical and vocal exercise. One of Stanislavski's elements also plays into this part of the actor's challenge: relaxation. When relaxed physically and mentally, an actor is ready to react to whatever may happen in a performance and to every need of the character in a play. Some of the exercises that an actor must use include the following:

1. **Breathing exercises**—These aid in relaxation and maximize breath support for the body's energy and to allow the actor to project the voice without straining it.
2. **Flexibility/isolation exercises**—These focus on each individual part of the body to ensure that the

actor has immediate, intentional, and positive control over every part of the body to accomplish what must be done to express the character's actions and motivations.

3. **Centering exercises**—These give the actor a very real sense of his or her own body, through identifying and understanding the body's center of mass and the importance of being centered physically and emotionally.
4. **Dance exercises**—These are very useful for both flexibility and balance.
5. **Stage combat**—Though generally targeted at learning specific skills like fencing and hand-to-hand fighting that looks real but does not injure, these training exercises also hone flexibility, balance, reaction times, and hand-to-eye coordination

Watch:

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There are a number of special skills that an actor might need and therefore add to the practice routine. They include the following:

- **Musicals**—singing and dancing (specific styles and techniques)
- **Dialects**—various cultural and national dialects can add to a character in many plays where needed
- **Pantomime**—all body (focusing only on clarity and distinctness of movements)
- **Avant-garde**—various demands such as tumbling, gymnastics, contortion, acrobatics, and extreme dance and voice demands

Challenge 3: Synthesis and Integration

The last challenge that an actor faces in making a character believable is the **synthesis** of the character with the actor's self and **integration** of the actor's instrument with the character's development and inner truth. Making the body and voice reflect the needs of the character's actions and feelings can be complex. It is one of the reasons that there needs to be somewhat lengthy rehearsal periods before a play is ready. With experience and plenty of practice and exercise, an actor can learn to blend the character with him- or herself to make the resulting performance believable. To do this, there must be **flexibility in the instrument** and clear ability to coordinate specific movements on command. The **external** manners, movements, and other outward signs of character **need to reflect the inner** truth—or at least be able to be seen as being true.

Watch: Colin Firth and "The King's Speech" (minutes 0:00–9:55)

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=219#oembed-4

There are some other traits that an actor may have that are not necessarily needed but can often add to the believability of a character. These include the following:

- **Stage presence**—The quality that makes an audience pay attention to an actor just because the actor appears on stage; many of today's stage and movie "stars" have this quality, which helps them to achieve that star status
- **Charisma**—Refers to the trait that an actor may have that makes the audience want to like the actor's portrayal; it's that something "special" that many current stars also have
- **Personality**—The personal traits that an actor has that make him or her truly stand out from the rest of the actors; oftentimes these can be very noticeable, like the personality that Johnny Depp brought to the Captain Jack Sparrow character
- **"Star quality"**—Whatever this is, it is one of those things that people in the business of stage or film production can usually spot; it might be related to physical traits or personality traits that an actor has that immediately make that actor attractive and interesting to an audience

Text excerpted and adapted from Brian Ray, Susan Roe, and Kyle Basko, *Supplementary Readings for Theatrical Worlds* (Athens, GA, University System of Georgia), 5, 16–22, 30–43. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) https://alg.manifoldapp.org/projects/supplementary-readings-for-theatrical-worlds

Audience

As previously mentioned, the audience is an integral part of the theater performance. But what does it mean to be an audience participant? Well, it may depend on the theater itself…Audience behavior is not an absolute. There are, however, guidelines to help you and others have the best possible experience in most modern theater settings.

Read: Theater audience etiquette and norms have always shifted with the times

Watch:

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11.

CHAPTER 11: OTHER THEATER TRADITIONS

There are many forms of theater outside of the modern, Western tradition. Here are (only a very few) examples of other theater forms.

As you view the following materials, consider...

- How are they similar to other performances that we have discussed? How are they different?
- What technical areas are represented?
- What is required of the actor?
- Compare the examples below to each other—are there similarities?
- How would you categorize them within the theater/dance/music/visual arts spectrum? Do they emphasize one or more elements over the others?

Example 1: Commedia dell'arte (Italy)

Commedia dell'arte was a popular Renaissance theater form that originated in Italy and that was performed throughout Europe in the 16th–18th centuries. It was fun, physical, silly, and even rude and was a clever combination of simple stories, "stock" characters, and improvisation. The traveling troupes were skilled practitioners of their art, and audiences were delighted by the shenanigans depicted on stage. In addition to the main story, there might be music, acrobatics, and mime performed as well. Even when the actors performed in a different dialect or language from that of the audience, the theatergoers could still follow the story due to the exaggerated movement, specific stereotype figures, and familiar (if not outrageous) situations in which the characters found themselves.

Characters in the Commedia tradition were straightforward and were not deeply developed; they were "types" that generally fell into one of the following categories: powerful, wealthy old men; the servants; the young lovers; and the clowns/comedic figures. Standard masks and costumes were an important part of identifying the characters and allowed actors to play several roles. Props and backgrounds were simple (like the literal "slapstick"), were improvised, or might even be imaginary.

Do you think that you could captivate an audience? Try your skills as a Commedia player in the game, "Commedia dell'arte: Masks, masters, and servants."

https://commediadellarte.itch.io/game

Even today, we can see the influence of Commedia dell'arte in the slapstick physical comedy of characters like Charlie Chaplin, Jackie Chan, and Mr. Bean; in the situational humor of sit-coms; and in the single-dimensional characters inhabiting many popular cartoons.

Watch

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-1

Watch

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-2

Suggested Readings:

- Commedia dell'arte (Meagher, Jennifer. "Commedia dell'arte." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.) http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/comm/hd_comm.htm (July 2007)
- "What you need to know about Commedia dell'arte" (Hale, Cher. "What You Need to Know about Commedia Dell'Arte." ThoughtCo. https://www.thoughtco.com/what-you-need-to-know-about-commedia-dellarte-4040385)

Example 2: Karagöz (Türkiye)

"Karagöz is a form of shadow theatre in Turkey in which figures known as tasvirs made of camel or ox hide in the shape of people or things are held on rods in front of a light source to cast their shadows onto a cotton screen. A play begins with the projection of an introductory figure to set the scene and suggest the themes of the drama before it vanishes to the shrill sound of a whistle, giving way to a main performance that may incorporate singing, tambourine music, poetry, myth, tongue-twisters, and riddles. The usually comic stories feature the main characters Karagöz and Hacivat and a host of others, including a cabaret chanteuse called Kantocu and an illusionist-acrobat named Hokkabaz, and abound in puns and imitations of regional accents. The puppets are manipulated by one lead artist, the Hayali, who may have one or more apprentice-assistants who are learning the craft by helping to create the tasvirs and accompanying the action with music.

"Once played widely at coffeehouses, gardens, and public squares, especially during the holy month of Ramazan [Ramadan], as well as during circumcision feasts, Karagöz is found today mostly in performance halls, schools and malls in larger cities where it still draws audiences. The traditional theatre strengthens a sense of cultural identity while bringing people closer together through entertainment."

"Karagöz." UNESCO—Intangible Cultural Heritage. Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, 2009. https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/karagz-00180.

As you watch examples of Karagöz, consider what role the various arts play in these productions and what specialized skills might be required of the puppeteers/actors during performance.

Watch

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-3

The next video, "Garbage Monster," is a modern interpretation of traditional Karagöz. Based on environmental awareness, the story takes the audience on a journey from land to sea, from the bottom of the ocean, and into the stomach of the Garbage Monster. The show has received awards from puppet festivals in Vietnam, Indonesia, and Hungary. Shown in split-screen, you can watch the actor/director/playwright behind the scenes alongside of the action that the audience sees.

Watch

> *One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-4*

Suggested Reading:

- Turkey (Nicolas, Michèle, and Mevlüt Özhan. "Turkey." Translated by Kathy Foley. World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts. UNIMA International, September 13, 2017. https://wepa.unima.org/en/turkey/)

Example 3: Theatrical Traditions on the African Continent

While there are many, many traditions and forms of theater to be found within the bounds of Africa, there are some similarities that might be considered when discussing precolonial theatrical forms and postcolonial trends. One of the key ideas is that theater was, and continues to be, central to community. Early theater was inextricably linked to storytelling, spirituality, celebration and commemoration, and identity. So, viewed through this lens, the emphasis is largely on the process or transformative effects of the performance rather than focusing on an end product; the value was in the activity itself. Audience and "performers" were active participants in the performance, and it was common to have back-and-forth interactions. Music and dance were often part of the event, and masks, body art, and costumes also played a vital role in the dramatic forms.

Major changes to theatrical traditions came with the colonization of the continent by Asian and European countries. In many cases, local and regional practices were suppressed and lost, as the colonists' own traditions were absorbed or replaced them. Over time, and particularly into the 20th century, as the peoples have regained their independence, there has been an emphasis on exploring traditions and evolving them to reflect modern sensibilities and realities.

- Read "The Roots of African Theatre Ritual and Orality in the Pre-Colonial Period" (Diakhaté, Ousmane, and Hansel Ndumbe Eyoh. "The Roots of African Theatre Ritual and Orality in the Pre-Colonial Period." Critical Stages/Scènes Critiques. The IATC (International Association of Theatre Critics) Journal, Issue 15, March 5, 2017. https://www.critical-stages.org/15/the-roots-of-african-theatre-ritual-and-orality-in-the-pre-colonial-period/. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.)
- Watch

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-5

These customs and the puppet-makers' innovative designs would provide the inspiration for the South-African Handspring Puppet Company's designs for the blockbuster stage production "War Horse."

- Watch

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=325#oembed-6

Recommended Readings and Videos:

- Into Africa and Wole Soyinka: Crash Course Theater #49 https://youtu.be/kn-ER4bL7f8
- African Art: Mask Performances in the Winiama Village of Ouri, Burkina Faso, 2007 https://youtu.be/d8XxU9URbEg
- "True West Africa." Parenteau, Amelia. True West Africa. AMERICAN THEATRE, January 16, 2018. https://www.americantheatre.org/2018/01/16/true-west-africa/

12.

CHAPTER 12: INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

Introduction to the Elements of Music

Before we begin our first historical periods, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, it will be important that you become familiar with some of the basic elements of music. The next few readings will focus on those basic elements. This information is vital to your understanding of the genres and styles we'll be studying over the course of the semester.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: The Elements of Music
- Slideshow: Form
- A Historical Approach to the Elements of Music
- Melody
- Rhythm
- Meter in Music
- Yale Lecture on Rhythm and Meter
- Texture

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=561#oembed-1

Slideshow: Form

This slideshow introduces some of the basic concepts involved in musical structure or form. This slideshow does not get into the subject of specific large-scale forms, such as *sonata allegro* or *theme and variations*,

because we won't encounter those structures until we study the Classical era. These foundational concepts will set you up with the basics you need for the first portion of the semester.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=561#oembed-2

A Historical Approach to the Elements of Music

While there are many different approaches to describing the building blocks of music, we often break music down into five basic elements: melody, texture, rhythm, form, and harmony. While it's true that not every piece of music contains all of those elements, it is very likely that every piece of music you have listened to recently does.

Of these five elements, there are two that almost always come first: melody and rhythm. They are not only the two most fundamental parts of music, but they are very probably the very first components of music experienced by human beings. It is a matter of pure speculation whether the first music involved a melody being sung or a rhythm being tapped, but it is easy to imagine that these two experiences were some of the earliest human musical creations.

Melody

Let's begin our brief study of these elements with *melody*—not because it is more important than rhythm but because the first music we will study in the Middle Ages will be Gregorian chant. Also known as plainsong or plainchant, Gregorian chant is a musical genre that emphasizes the element of melody, often to the exclusion of any other elements.

Texture

We will continue to let history guide our survey of musical elements by moving to *texture* next. One of the most significant musical developments was the medieval experiment of adding a new melodic line to an existing Gregorian chant melody. As you'll soon learn, this practice was called organum, and it introduced a new texture, known as polyphony, to the sacred music of the Middle Ages that had been dominated by the monophonic texture of plainchant.

Rhythm

As far as we can tell from the sparse historical record, Gregorian chant was sung without a regular beat. This gives plainchant a flowing freedom that can be loosely described as having no rhythm. This is certainly the way we most commonly hear chant performed today. However, with the arrival of organum, it was necessary for the singers performing the two melodic lines to be able to stay together. This made a more regular beat or pulse (*rhythm*) necessary.

Around the late 12th century, a particular style of organum developed in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. This style involved holding out the notes of a Gregorian chant while a very active new melody was sung above it. To create that activity in the upper part and to keep the two (or more) parts together, regular rhythmic patterns of short and long notes were used. This can be thought of as the beginning of an important component of rhythm: meter.

Form

Repetition, contrast, and variation are the basic principles of form in music. *Form* refers to the way in which sections of a musical piece are organized. Form, or structure, in music becomes much more specialized and standardized in later periods of music history. However, since we are beginning with the music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, we will stick to general concepts of form for now. It wasn't until later periods that composers placed greater emphasis on form, so we will study particular structures later in this class.

Harmony

Speaking of elements that won't be covered until later in the class, *harmony* as it is most commonly taught today is a musical element that developed in the Baroque period (1600–1750) and evolved more and more complex constructions in the Classical and Romantic eras. Since the composers of the Middle Ages and Renaissance did not think of their music in harmonic terms (major and minor keys, chords, chord progressions, etc.), we will wait until later to introduce this very significant musical element.

Melody

This reading provides an introduction to the concept of melody in music and some of the specific melodic terms we'll encounter in our study of early music. Once we've completed our study of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Baroque, we'll be introduced to some new melodic terms that developed in the Classical era.

Introduction

Melody is one of the most basic elements of music. On the most fundamental level, a melody consists of a series of pitches. The relationship of those pitches—in other words, the contrast between higher and lower pitches and/or the repetition of the same pitch—is what we recognize as a melody or tune. Of course, in Western music, these pitches usually have definite durations, but we'll talk more about the role of duration and time in our discussion of the musical element rhythm. An important thing to remember about melody is its linear or horizontal nature. Melodies are written out in horizontal lines on the printed page, and melodies flow past our ears one note at a time like a line of cars on a street or train. While that flow of pitches is the product of sound waves that are traveling outward from their source in all directions, most listeners draw an unconscious connection between their experience of a melodic series and the experience of watching objects pass by (for example, the passage of a train—horizontal movement). This linear concept is worth remembering when we learn about harmony later. Harmony involves groups of notes or chords played together to create "stacks" of sounds that are pleasing to the ear. Notice the vertical concept there: "stacks" of pitches played at the same time in harmony versus a line of pitches played one after the other in a melody. This question of horizontal and vertical is also relevant to the element of texture, as texture is largely based on whether the music was woven from independent melodic lines or built on successive harmonic stacks. So while melody may seem like a very simple concept that needs little explanation, the ability to recognize the linear flow of one or more melodies can give a listener (such as a student taking a listening exam) important clues as to historical origins and stylistic categories to which that piece belongs.

Melodic Contour and Motion

A melody that stays on the same pitch too long is not very interesting to listen to. As a melody progresses, the pitches usually move up or down. This movement can happen gradually or rapidly. One can picture a line that goes up steeply when the melody suddenly jumps to a much higher note or that goes down slowly when the melody gently falls. Such a line gives the contour or shape of the melodic line. You can often get a good idea of the shape of this line by looking at the melody as it is written on the staff, but you can also hear it as you listen to the music.

Arch shapes (in which the melody rises and then falls) are easy to find in many melodies.

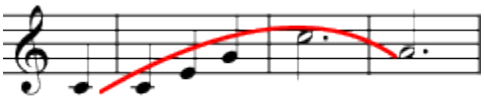

Figure 1. Contour.

You can also describe the shape of a melody verbally. For example, you can speak of a "rising melody" or of

an "arch-shaped" phrase. Extra notes, such as trills and slides, may be added to a melodic line by either the composer or the performer to make the melody more complex and interesting. These additions are referred to as **ornaments** or **embellishments**.

Another set of useful terms describes how quickly a melody goes up and down. A melody that rises and falls slowly, with only small pitch changes between one note and the next, is **conjunct**. One may also speak of such a melody in terms of step-wise or scalar motion, since most of the intervals in the melody are half or whole steps or are part of a scale.

A melody that rises and falls quickly, with large intervals between one note and the next, is **disjunct**. One may also speak of "leaps" in the melody. Many melodies are a mixture of conjunct and disjunct motion.

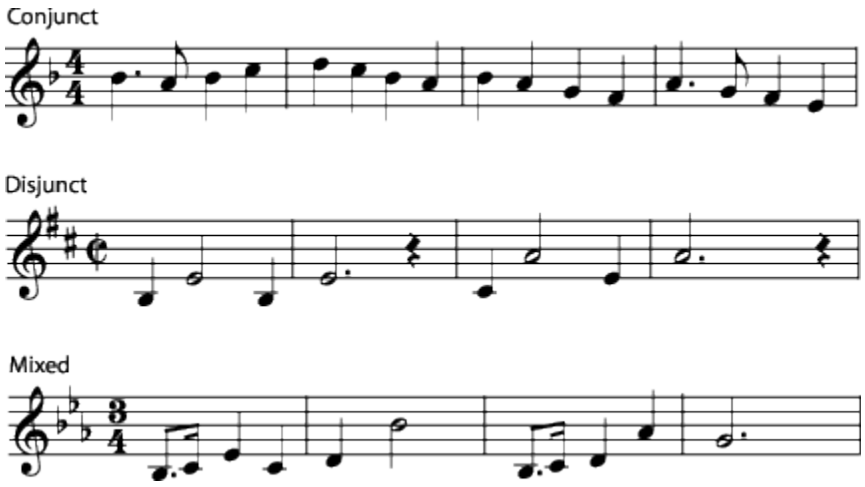

Figure 2. A melody may show conjunct motion, with small changes in pitch from one note to the next, or disjunct motion, with large leaps. Many melodies are an interesting, fairly balanced mixture of conjunct and disjunct motion.

Melodic Divisions

Melodies have always been divided into smaller constituent parts. Over the course of music history, the terms used to describe these shorter melodic segments have changed, especially as new genres have developed that take a different approach to melodic material. It is important not only to know these terms and what they mean but also to understand their historical context. Students sometimes make the mistake of describing the melodic divisions of a particular historical period or genre using terms from a different period or genre. When writing to demonstrate understanding of a musical topic, it is necessary to use the terms appropriate to that topic. The following examples are meant to provide a basic introduction to the terms for melodic divisions and their context that will be most helpful as we survey the periods of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Baroque.

It should not come as a surprise that a genre that has been in use as long and as widely as Gregorian chant has an astonishing abundance of terms for various melodic structures. The fact that plainchant relies so heavily

on the element of melody for its composition only increases the number of melodic terms. We will not be studying chant in enough detail to need to know this extensive catalog of melodic names, but anyone wishing a brief introduction could read the introductory paragraphs of the Wikipedia article on Gregorian Chant. For the purposes of our class, it will be enough to recognize that most plainchant employs conjunct motion, as we won't delve into chant enough to need to understand its melodic divisions.

In the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, the most common method of composition was to take a preexisting melody, a Gregorian chant or popular tune, as a foundation around which additional melodic lines were composed. The preexisting tune was known as a **cantus firmus**, which literally means "fixed song." This method suited the tastes of its day, but the use of an existing tune limited a composer's creative options. As the Renaissance progressed, composers began to chafe at that limitation and experimented with **imitation** as an alternative. Imitation involved the writing of an entirely new melodic idea that was presented in one part and then successively repeated or imitated by each additional part as it entered. Each melodic idea thus imitated was called a **point of imitation**. These points of imitation were often not repeated. The composer simply continued to write new melodic material that was imitated in all parts or voices as the piece progressed.

As we study the Baroque, we will find ourselves using the term **theme** to refer to melodic ideas. The term "theme" is borrowed from the world of literature and is used in music with some of the same implications it has in writing. A theme in a story is a central idea or concept around which the entire story revolves. Likewise in music, a theme is a melodic idea that serves as a foundation for an entire piece. A theme in Baroque music, unlike the melodic ideas that were sung only once as a point of imitation in a Renaissance work, is a melody that would be heard repeatedly throughout the course of the work. In some highly structured genres, such as the fugue, elaborate rules were developed for the treatment of this central melodic idea and it was given a specific name: **subject**. The term "subject" is used almost exclusively in fugal composition. Important melodic ideas in other Baroque genres are most appropriately referred to as themes.

Rhythm

Rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, and texture are the essential aspects of a musical performance. They are often called the basic elements of music. The main purpose of music theory is to describe various pieces of music in terms of their similarities and differences in these elements, and music is usually grouped into genres based on similarities in all or most elements. It's useful, therefore, to be familiar with the terms commonly used to describe each element. Because harmony is the most highly developed aspect of Western music, music theory tends to focus almost exclusively on melody and harmony. Music does not have to have harmony, however, and some music doesn't even have melody. So perhaps the other three elements can be considered the most basic components of music.

Music cannot happen without time. The placement of the sounds in time is the rhythm of a piece of music. Because music must be heard over a period of time, rhythm is one of the most basic elements of music. In some

pieces of music, the rhythm is simply a "placement in time" that cannot be assigned a beat or meter, but most rhythm terms concern more familiar types of music with a steady beat.

Rhythm Terms

- **Rhythm**—The term "rhythm" has more than one meaning. It can mean the basic, repetitive pulse of the music or a rhythmic pattern that is repeated throughout the music (as in "feel the rhythm"). It can also refer to the pattern in time of a single small group of notes (as in "play this rhythm for me").
- **Beat**—Beat also has more than one meaning but always refers to music with a steady pulse. It may refer to the pulse itself (as in "play this note on beat two of the measure"). *On the beat* or *on the downbeat* refer to the moment when the pulse is strongest. *Off the beat* is in between pulses, and the *upbeat* is exactly halfway between pulses. Beat may also refer to a specific repetitive rhythmic pattern that maintains the pulse (as in "it has a Latin beat"). Note that once a strong feeling of having a beat is established, it is not necessary for something to happen on every beat; a beat can still be "felt" even if it is not specifically heard.
- **Measure or bar**—Beats are grouped into measures or bars. The first beat is usually the strongest, and in most music, most of the bars have the same number of beats. This sets up an underlying pattern in the pulse of the music: for example, strong-weak-strong-weak-strong-weak, or strong-weak-weak-strong-weak-weak.
- **Rhythm section**—The rhythm section of a band is the group of instruments that usually provides the background rhythm and chords. The rhythm section almost always includes a percussionist (usually on a drum set) and a bass player (usually playing a plucked string bass of some kind). It may also include a piano and/or other keyboard players, more percussionists, and one or more guitar players or other strummed or plucked strings. Vocalists, wind instruments, and bowed strings are usually not part of the rhythm section.
- **Syncopation**—Syncopation occurs when a strong note happens on either a weak beat or off the beat.

Meter in Music

The concept of meter is very important to us in this class, as the ability to recognize the meter of a piece of music is a very handy tool in identifying a particular piece.

What Is Meter?

The meter of a piece of music is the arrangement of its rhythms in a repetitive pattern of strong and weak beats. This does not necessarily mean that the rhythms themselves are repetitive, but they do strongly suggest a

repeated pattern of pulses. It is on these pulses, the beat of the music, that you tap your foot, clap your hands, dance, etc.

Some music does not have a meter. Ancient music, such as Gregorian chants; new music, such as some experimental 20th-century art music; and non-Western music, such as some native American flute music may not have a strong, repetitive pattern of beats. Other types of music, such as traditional Western African drumming, may have very complex meters that can be difficult for the beginner to identify.

But most Western music has simple, repetitive patterns of beats. This makes meter a very useful way to organize the music. Common notation, for example, divides the written music into small groups of beats called measures, or bars. The lines dividing each measure from the next help the musician reading the music to keep track of the rhythms. A piece (or section of the piece) is assigned a time signature that tells the performer how many beats to expect in each measure and what type of note should get one beat.

Conducting also depends on the meter of the piece; conductors use different conducting patterns for the different meters. These patterns emphasize the differences between the stronger and weaker beats to help the performers keep track of where they are in the music.

But the conducting patterns depend only on the pattern of strong and weak beats. In other words, they only depend on "how many beats there are in a measure," not "what type of note gets a beat." So even though the time signature is often called the "meter" of a piece, one can talk about meter without worrying about the time signature or even being able to read music. (Note that this means that children can be introduced to the concept of meter long before they are reading music.)

Classifying Meters

Meters can be classified by counting the number of beats from one strong beat to the next. For example, if the meter of the music feels like "strong-weak-strong-weak," it is in duple meter. "strong-weak-weak-strong-weak-weak" is triple meter, and "strong-weak-weak-weak" is quadruple. (Most people don't bother classifying the more unusual meters, such as those with five beats in a measure.)

Meters can also be classified as either simple or compound. In a simple meter, each beat is basically divided into halves. In compound meters, each beat is divided into thirds.

A borrowed division occurs whenever the basic meter of a piece is interrupted by some beats that sound like they are "borrowed" from a different meter. One of the most common examples of this is the use of triplets to add some compound meter to a piece that is mostly in a simple meter.

Recognizing Meters

To learn to recognize meter, remember that (in most Western music) the beats and the subdivisions of beats are all equal and even. So you are basically listening for a running, even pulse underlying the rhythms of the music.

For example, if it makes sense to count along with the music "ONE-and-Two-and-ONE-and-Two-and" (with all the syllables very evenly spaced), then you probably have a simple duple meter. But if it's more comfortable to count "ONE-and-a-Two-and-a-ONE-and-a-Two-and-a," it's probably compound duple meter. (Make sure numbers always come on a pulse and "one" always on the strongest pulse.)

This may take some practice if you're not used to it, but it can be useful practice for anyone who is learning about music. To help you get started, the figure below sums up the most-used meters. To help give you an idea of what each meter should feel like, here are some animations (with sound) of duple simple, duple compound, triple simple, triple compound, quadruple simple, and quadruple compound meters. You may also want to listen to some examples of music that is in simple duple, simple triple, simple quadruple, compound duple, and compound triple meters.

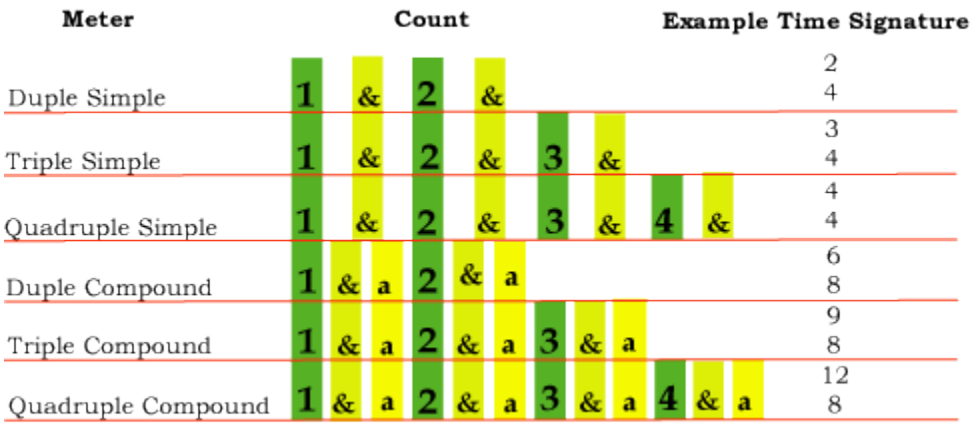

Figure 1. Remember that meter is not the same as time signature; the time signatures given here are just examples. For example, 2/2 and 2/8 are also simple duple meters.

Yale Lecture on Rhythm and Meter

If you would like to flesh out your understanding of beats and meters—or if you would like to have a professor lead you through some exercises to help you identify meter in music—take a look at this recording of a lecture by Dr. Craig Wright at Yale University.

It's not necessary to watch the entire video. To the right of the video itself are links that enable you to jump to particular points in the lecture called "Lecture Chapters." I suggest starting at the second link (Beats and Meters). He'll take you through the basic building blocks of rhythm and then get into how you can hear meter in a piece of music.

Texture

This document covers the three musical textures we will encounter in our studies: monophony, polyphony,

and homophony. Texture is an element you will use when identifying pieces from all the periods of music history, so you'll want to study this material very carefully. At the end of the reading assignment, you'll find links to three pieces you can listen to; see if you can identify the textures of the pieces based on your reading.

Introduction

Texture is one of the basic elements of music. When you describe the texture of a piece of music, you are describing the relationship of melodic and (sometimes) harmonic elements with each other. For example, the texture of the music might be thick or thin, or it may have many or few layers. It might be made up of rhythm only, or of a melody line with chordal accompaniment, or many interweaving melodies. Below you will find some of the formal terms musicians use to describe texture.

Terms That Describe Texture

There are many informal terms that can describe the texture of a piece of music (thick, thin, bass-heavy, rhythmically complex, and so on), but the formal terms that are used to describe texture all describe the relationships of melodies and, if present, harmonies. Here are definitions and examples of the three main textures you will encounter in our class.

Monophonic

Monophonic music has only one melodic line, with no harmony or counterpoint. There may be rhythmic accompaniment but only one line that has specific pitches. Monophonic music can also be called monophony. This texture is used very little in music of the Western European tradition after the Middle Ages.

Examples of Monophony

- One person whistling a tune
- A single bugle sounding "Taps"
- A group of people all singing a single melody together without harmony or instrumental accompaniment
- A fife and drum corps, with all the fifes playing the same melody

Polyphonic

Polyphonic music can also be called polyphony, counterpoint, or contrapuntal music. If more than one independent melody is occurring at the same time, the music is polyphonic.

Examples of Polyphony

- Rounds, canons, and fugues are all polyphonic. (Even if there is only one melody, if different people are singing or playing it at different times, the parts sound independent.)
- Much late Baroque music is contrapuntal, particularly the works of J. S. Bach.
- Most music for large instrumental groups such as bands or orchestras is contrapuntal at least some of the time.
- Music that is mostly homophonic can become temporarily polyphonic if an independent countermelody is added. Think of a favorite pop or gospel tune that, near the end, has the soloist "ad libbing" while the backup singers repeat the refrain.

Homophonic

Homophonic music can also be called homophony. More informally, people who are describing homophonic music may mention chords, accompaniment, harmony, or harmonies. Homophony has one clear melodic line; it's the line that naturally draws your attention. All other parts provide accompaniment or fill in the chords. In most well-written homophony, the parts that are not melody may still have a lot of melodic interest. They may follow many of the rules of well-written counterpoint, and they can sound quite different from the melody and be interesting to listen to by themselves. But when they are sung or played with the melody, it is clear that they are not independent melodic parts, either because they have the same rhythm as the melody (i.e., are not independent) or because their main purpose is to fill in the chords or harmony (i.e., they are not really melodies).

Examples of Homophony

- Choral music in which the parts have mostly the same rhythms at the same time is homophonic. Most traditional Protestant hymns and most "barbershop quartet" music is in this category.
- A singer accompanied by a guitar picking or strumming chords.
- A small jazz combo with a bass, a piano, and a drum set providing the "rhythm" background for a trumpet improvising a solo.
- A single bagpipe or accordion player playing a melody with drones or chords.

Suggested Listening

Monophony

- Any singer performing alone.

- Any orchestral woodwind or brass instrument (flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, etc.) performing alone. Here is an example from James Romig's Sonnet 2, played by John McMurtery.
- A Bach unaccompanied cello suite.
- Gregorian chant.
- Most fife and drum music.
- Long sections of "The People that Walked in Darkness" aria in Handel's "Messiah" are monophonic (the instruments are playing the same line as the voice). Apparently Handel associates monophony with "walking in darkness"!
- Monophony is very unusual in contemporary popular genres, but can be heard in Queen's "We Will Rock You."

Polyphony

- Pachelbel's Canon.
- Anything titled "fugue" or "invention."
- The final "Amen" chorus of Handel's "Messiah."
- The trio strain of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," with the famous piccolo countermelody.
- The "One Day More" chorus from the musical *Les Misérables.*
- The first movement of Holst's 1st Suite for Military Band.
- Polyphony is rare in contemporary popular styles, but examples of counterpoint can be found, including the refrain of the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations," the second through fourth verses of Simon and Garfunkel's "Scarborough Fair/Canticle," the final refrain of Jason Mraz's "I'm Yours," and the horn counterpoint in Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger's "Lavender Road."

Homophony

- A classic Scott Joplin rag such as "Maple Leaf Rag" or "The Entertainer."
- The "graduation march" section of Edward Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance No. 1."
- The "March of the Toreadors" from Bizet's *Carmen.*
- No. 1 ("Granada") of Albeniz's Suite Espanola for guitar.
- Most popular music genres strongly favor homophonic textures, whether featuring a solo singer, rapper, guitar solo, or several vocalists singing in harmony.
- The opening section of the "Overture" Of Handel's "Messiah" (the second section of the overture is polyphonic).

Assignment

Once you have completed the reading on musical texture, choose one of the pieces listed below and listen to the piece on YouTube. After listening to your selection, please answer the questions below.

Two-Part Invention in C Major by Johann Sebastian Bach

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=561#oembed-3

Deum Verum by an Anonymous Composer

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=561#oembed-4

Rondo Alla Turca by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=561#oembed-5

(Texture is most obvious in the first 20 seconds.)

Questions

1. Which piece did you select? (Simply copy and paste the title.)
2. Which of the three textures described above is represented by the piece you selected?
3. What did you hear that enabled you to identify the texture? (1 or 2 sentences—use the explanations on the previous page as a reference, but do not copy. I want to hear how you express this in your own

words.)

Textures

Check to see if you correctly identified the textures of the three pieces listed in the reading assignment on musical texture.

- Two-Part Invention in C Major by Johann Sebastian Bach: Polyphony
- Deum Verum by an Anonymous Composer: Monophony
- Rondo Alla Turca by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Homophony

13.

CHAPTER 13: MUSIC IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE

Music of the Middle Ages

This section contains all the reading materials having to do with medieval music. This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: Music in the Middle Ages
- Medieval Music Overview
- Gregorian Chant
- Hildegard of Bingen
- Organum
- Perotin
- Cantus Firmus
- Secular Music Troubadours
- Beatriz, Countess of Dia
- Guillaume de Machaut
- Examples of Medieval Music

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#oembed-1

Please begin your reading on the music of the Middle Ages with this web summary of some of the most important developments of this period. We will have more detailed reading assignments on the terms and composers discussed on this page, but this provides a good sense of the historical flow of this period of music history, which is considerably longer than most other periods.

You'll notice that the author makes reference to a number of pieces of music in this text. While these pieces mentioned are good examples, they do not always align with our listening assignments. Be sure you focus your listening study on the pieces on the playlist for this module.

Now it's time to dig into some specifics of the oldest genre we study: Gregorian chant. This Encyclopedia Britannica article provides a good summary of plainchant and its use in the Catholic Church, which was the dominant force in society, and therefore music, for most of the Middle Ages.

Now let's learn about one of the truly fascinating figures from this period, Hildegard of Bingen. While most plainchant was composed anonymously, Hildegard was an exception. She also authored texts on various subjects ranging from medicine to spiritual revelations that were later approved by church authorities. Hildegard is a fascinating historical figure, so the bulk of the Wikipedia article on the medieval composer and abbess is presented below, and a careful reading of the entire article is recommended. That said, the most important sections for your study are Introduction and Music.

Introduction

Saint Hildegard of Bingen, OSB (1098–17 September 1179) also known as Saint Hildegard and Sibyl of the Rhine, was a German writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, Benedictine abbess, visionary, and polymath.

Hildegard was elected *magistra* by her fellow nuns in 1136; she founded the monasteries of Rupertsberg in 1150 and Eibingen in 1165. One of her works as a composer, the *Ordo Virtutum*, is an early example of liturgical drama and arguably the oldest surviving morality play. She wrote theological, botanical, and medicinal texts, as well as letters, liturgical songs, and poems, while supervising miniature illuminations in the Rupertsberg manuscript of her first work, *Scivias*.

Although the history of her formal consideration is complicated, she has been recognized as a saint by branches of the Roman Catholic Church for centuries. On 7 October 2012, Pope Benedict XVI named her a Doctor of the Church.

Biography

Hildegard's exact date of birth is uncertain. She was born around the year 1098 to Mechtild of Merxheim-Nahet and Hildebert of Bermersheim, a family of the free lower nobility in the service of the Count Meginhard of Sponheim. Sickly from birth, Hildegard is traditionally considered their youngest and 10th child, although there are records of seven older siblings. In her *Vita*, Hildegard states that from a very young age she had experienced visions.

Monastic Life

Perhaps due to Hildegard's visions, or as a method of political positioning, Hildegard's parents offered her as an oblate to the church. The date of Hildegard's enclosure in the church is the subject of a contentious debate. Her *Vita* says she was enclosed with an older nun, Jutta, at the age of eight. However, Jutta's enclosure date is known to be in 1112, when Hildegard would have been 14. Some scholars speculate that Hildegard was placed in the care of Jutta, the daughter of Count Stephan II of Sponheim, at the age of 8, and the two women were enclosed together six years later. The written record of the *Life of Jutta* indicates that Hildegard probably assisted her in reciting the Psalms, working in the garden, and tending to the sick.

In any case, Hildegard and Jutta were enclosed at Disibodenberg in the Palatinate Forest in what is now Germany. Jutta was also a visionary and thus attracted many followers who came to visit her at the enclosure. Hildegard tells us that Jutta taught her to read and write but that she was unlearned and therefore incapable of teaching Hildegard biblical interpretation. Hildegard and Jutta most likely prayed, meditated, read scriptures such as the psalter, and did handwork during the hours of the Divine Office. This might have been a time when Hildegard learned how to play the ten-stringed psaltery. Volmar, a frequent visitor, may have taught Hildegard simple psalm notation. The time she studied music could have been the beginning of the compositions she would later create.

Upon Jutta's death in 1136, Hildegard was unanimously elected as "magistra" of the community by her fellow nuns. Abbot Kuno of Disibodenberg asked Hildegard to be Prioress, which would be under his authority. Hildegard, however, wanted more independence for herself and her nuns and asked Abbot Kuno to allow them to move to Rupertsberg. This was to be a move toward poverty, from a stone complex that was well established to a temporary dwelling place. When the abbot declined Hildegard's proposition, Hildegard went over his head and received the approval of Archbishop Henry I of Mainz. Abbot Kuno did not relent until Hildegard was stricken by an illness that kept her paralyzed and unable to move from her bed, an event that she attributed to God's unhappiness at her not following his orders to move her nuns to Rupertsberg. It was only when the Abbot himself could not move Hildegard that he decided to grant the nuns their own monastery. Hildegard and about 20 nuns thus moved to the St. Rupertsberg monastery in 1150, where Volmar served as provost, as well as Hildegard's confessor and scribe. In 1165 Hildegard founded a second monastery for her nuns at Eibingen.

Visions

Hildegard says that she first saw "The Shade of the Living Light" at the age of three, and by the age of five, she began to understand that she was experiencing visions. She used the term *visio* for this feature of her experience, and recognized that it was a gift that she could not explain to others. Hildegard explained that she saw all things in the light of God through the five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Hildegard was hesitant to share her visions, confiding only to Jutta, who in turn told Volmar, Hildegard's tutor and, later, secretary.

Throughout her life, she continued to have many visions, and in 1141, at the age of 42, Hildegard received a vision she believed to be an instruction from God to "write down that which you see and hear." Still hesitant to record her visions, Hildegard became physically ill. The illustrations recorded in the book of Scivias were visions that Hildegard experienced, causing her great suffering and tribulations. In her first theological text, *Scivias* ("Know the Ways"), Hildegard describes her struggle within:

> But I, though I saw and heard these things, refused to write for a long time through doubt and bad opinion and the diversity of human words, not with stubbornness but in the exercise of humility, until, laid low by the scourge of God, I fell upon a bed of sickness; then, compelled at last by many illnesses, and by the witness of a certain noble maiden of good conduct [the nun Richardis von Stade] and of that man whom I had secretly sought and found, as mentioned above, I set my hand to the writing. While I was doing it, I sensed, as I mentioned before, the deep profundity of scriptural exposition; and, raising myself from illness by the strength I received, I brought this work to a close—though just barely—in ten years. (...) And I spoke and wrote these things not by the invention of my heart or that of any other person, but as by the secret mysteries of God I heard and received them in the heavenly places. And again I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, "Cry out therefore, and write thus!"

It was between November 1147 and February 1148 at the synod in Trier that Pope Eugenus heard about Hildegard's writings. It was from this that she received Papal approval to document her visions as revelations from the Holy Spirit, giving her instant credence.

On 17 September 1179, when Hildegard died, her sisters claimed they saw two streams of light appear in the skies and cross over the room where she was dying.

Music

Attention in recent decades to women of the medieval church has led to a great deal of popular interest in Hildegard's music. In addition to the *Ordo Virtutum,* 69 musical compositions, each with its own original poetic text, survive, and at least 4 other texts are known, though their musical notation has been lost. This is one of the largest repertoires among medieval composers. Listen to *O frondens virga* from *Ordo Virtutum*.

In addition to the *Ordo Virtutum,* Hildegard composed many liturgical songs that were collected into a cycle called the *Symphonia armoniae celestium revelationum.* The songs from the Symphonia are set to Hildegard's own text and range from antiphons, hymns, and sequences to responsories. Her music is described as monophonic—that is, consisting of exactly one melodic line. Its style is characterized by soaring melodies that can push the boundaries of the more staid ranges of traditional Gregorian chant. Though Hildegard's music is often thought to stand outside the normal practices of monophonic monastic chant, current researchers are also exploring ways in which it may be viewed in comparison with her contemporaries, such as Hermannus Contractus. Another feature of Hildegard's music is that it is highly melismatic, often with recurrent melodic units. Scholars also note the intimate relationship between music and text in Hildegard's compositions, whose rhetorical features are often more distinct than is common in 12th-century chant. As

with all medieval chant notation, Hildegard's music lacks any indication of tempo or rhythm; the surviving manuscripts employ late German-style notation, which uses very ornamental neumes. The reverence for the Virgin Mary reflected in music shows how deeply influenced and inspired Hildegard of Bingen and her community were by the Virgin Mary and the saints. One of her better known works, *Ordo Virtutum* (*Play of the Virtues*), is a morality play. It is uncertain when some of Hildegard's compositions were composed, though the Ordo Virtutum is thought to have been composed as early as 1151. The morality play consists of monophonic melodies for the Anima (human soul) and 16 Virtues. There is also one speaking part for the Devil. Scholars assert that the role of the Devil would have been played by Volmar, while Hildegard's nuns would have played the parts of Anima and the Virtues.

The definition of viriditas or greenessâ is an earthly expression of the heavenly in an integrity that overcomes dualisms. This â greenessâ or power of life appears frequently in Hildegard's works.

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Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:51:57 +0000

This article summarizes one of the most significant developments in Western music history: the rise of polyphonic texture in the composition of sacred music. The earliest forms of polyphony in Europe were called organum. Organum reached its height at the hands of the composers at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Leonin and his successor Perotin perfected a style of florid or melismatic organum that must have been astonishing to the people of their day. You'll often see the French version of those composers' names: *Leonin* and *Perotin*.

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The example of organum on our listening list is one of Perotinus's best known works: *Viderunt Omnes*. This page discusses the composer that perfected the Notre Dame style of organum. Please pay close attention to the description of the Notre Dame–style organum that Perotin wrote.

Introduction

Perotin (fl. c. 1200), also called Perotin the Great, was a European composer, believed to be French, who lived around the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th century. He was the most famous member of the Notre Dame school of polyphony and the ars antiqua style. He was one of very few composers of his day whose name has been preserved and can be reliably attached to individual compositions; this is due to the testimony of an anonymous English student at Notre Dame known as Anonymous IV, who wrote about him and his predecessor Leonin. Anonymous IV called him "Magister Perotinus" ("Perotin the Master"). The title, employed also by Johannes de Garlandia, means that Perotin, like Leonin, earned the degree *magister artium*, almost certainly in Paris, and that he was licensed to teach. The name Perotin, the Latin diminutive of Petrus, is assumed to be derived from the French name Perotin, diminutive of Pierre. The diminutive was presumably

a mark of respect bestowed by his colleagues. He was also designated "magnus" by Anonymous IV, a mark of the esteem in which he was held, even long after his death.

Musical forms and style

Perotin composed organa, the earliest type of polyphonic music; previous European music, such as Gregorian and other types of chant, had been monophonic. Prior to Perotin, organum generally consisted of two voices: *organum duplum*. He pioneered the styles of *organum triplum* and *organum quadruplum* (three- and four-part polyphony); in fact his *Sederunt principes* and *Viderunt Omnes* are among only a few *organa quadrupla* known.

A prominent feature of his compositional style was the *tenor*. The tenor is based on an existing melody from the liturgical repertoire. In the various forms of organum that were developed in Paris, the tenor holds the melody (from the Latin *tenere*, meaning "to hold") of the Gregorian chant. This part will be sung in long, held-out syllables, laying an organ-point or harmonic basis for the additional lines, which will have many notes to each note of the tenor.

Organa exist for two to four voices. That for two voices, organum duplum, has the most freedom in performance, as it will invariably have many sections of organum purum, where the upper voice is rhapsodic and not bound by strict modal rhythm. In three- or four-part organa, all the upper voices need to be organized rhythmically, even over a long static tenor.

Works

Anonymous IV attributed four compositions to Perotin: the four-voice *Viderunt omnes* and *Sederunt principes*, and the three-voice *Alleluia "Posui adiutorium"* and *Alleluia "Nativitas."* Nine other works are attributed to him by contemporary scholars on stylistic grounds, all in the organum style, as well as the two-voice *Dum sigillum summi Patris* and the monophonic *Beata viscera* in the conductus style. (The *conductus* sets a rhymed Latin poem called a sequence to a repeated melody, much like a contemporary hymn.)

Perotin's works are preserved in the *Magnus Liber*, the "Great Book" of early polyphonic church music, which was in the collection of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. The *Magnus Liber* also contains the works of his slightly earlier contemporary Leonin. However, attempts by scholars to place Perotin at Notre Dame have been inconclusive, all evidence being circumstantial, and very little is known of his life. His dates of activity can be approximately established from some late 12th century edicts of the Bishop of Paris, Eudes de Sully, which mention *organum triplum* and *organum quadruplum*, and his known collaboration with poet Philip the Chancellor, whose *Beata viscera* he could not have set before about 1220. The bishop's edicts are quite specific and suggest that Perotin's organum quadruplum *Viderunt omnes* was written for Christmas 1198, and his other organum quadruplum *Sederunt Principles* was composed for St. Stephen's Day

(26 December) 1199 for the dedication of a new wing of the Notre Dame Cathedral. His music as well as that of Leonin and their anonymous contemporaries have been grouped together as the School of Notre Dame.

Contemporary Critiques

With polyphony, musicians were able to achieve musical feats perceived by many as beautiful, and by others, distasteful. John of Salisbury (1120–1180) taught at the University of Paris during the years of Leonin and Perotin. He attended many services at the Notre Dame Choir School. In *De nugis curialiam*, he offers a firsthand description of what was happening to music in the high Middle Ages. This philosopher and Bishop of Chartres wrote:

> When you hear the soft harmonies of the various singers, some taking high and others low parts, some singing in advance, some following in the rear, others with pauses and interludes, you would think yourself listening to a concert of sirens rather than men, and wonder at the powers of voices...whatever is most tuneful among birds, could not equal. Such is the facility of running up and down the scale; so wonderful the shortening or multiplying of notes, the repetition of the phrases, or their emphatic utterance: the treble and shrill notes are so mingled with tenor and bass, that the ears lost their power of judging. When this goes to excess it is more fitted to excite lust than devotion; but if it is kept in the limits of moderation, it drives away care from the soul and the solicitudes of life, confers joy and peace and exultation in God, and transports the soul to the society of angels.

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Mass as a genre of medieval music is covered well in the page that introduced the music of the Middle Ages and in our slideshow study guide, but the compositional technique used to compose all masses in this period is worth additional study. This content goes a little deeper into the *cantus firmus* method of composition than necessary for this class, but it serves to illustrate the degree to which medieval composers felt it necessary to build on the past.

Pieces of new music began with a preexisting melody and built everything else around it. Our concept of a composer who creates something entirely original simply wasn't present in the minds of medieval musicians. You'll see this attitude begin to change as we get into the later Renaissance. This existing melody was called a "cantus firmus."

Introduction

In music, a *cantus firmus* ("fixed song") is a preexisting melody forming the basis of a polyphonic composition.

History

The earliest polyphonic compositions almost always involved a *cantus firmus*, typically a Gregorian chant, although the term itself was not used until the 14th century. The earliest surviving polyphonic compositions, in the *Musica enchiriadis* (around AD 900), contain the chant in the top voice and the newly composed part underneath; however this usage changed around 1100, after which the *cantus firmus* typically appeared in the lowest-sounding voice. Later, the *cantus firmus* appeared in the tenor voice (from the Latin verb *tenere*, to hold), singing notes of longer duration, around which more florid lines, instrumental and/or vocal, were composed.

Composition using a *cantus firmus* continued to be the norm through the 13th century: almost all of the music of the St. Martial and Notre Dame schools uses a *cantus firmus*, as well as most 13th-century motets. Many of these motets were written in several languages, with the *cantus firmus* in the lowest voice; the lyrics of love poems might be sung in the vernacular above sacred Latin texts in the form of a trope, or the sacred text might be sung to a familiar secular melody.

In the 14th century, the technique continued to be widely used for most sacred vocal music, with considerable regional variation.

The cyclic mass, which became the standard type of mass composition around the middle of the 15th century, used *cantus firmus* technique as its commonest organizing principle. At first the *cantus firmus* was almost always drawn from plainchant, but the range of sources gradually widened to include other sacred sources and even sometimes popular songs. The *cantus firmus* was at first restricted to the tenor, but by the end of the century, many composers experimented with other ways of using it, such as introducing it into each voice as a contrapuntal subject or using it with a variety of rhythms. During the 16th century, the *cantus firmus* technique began to be abandoned, replaced with the parody (or imitation) technique in which multiple voices of a preexisting source were incorporated into a sacred composition such as a mass.

Probably the most widely set of the secular *cantus firmus* melodies was "L'homme armé." Over 40 settings are known, including two by Josquin des Prez, and six by an anonymous composer or composers in Naples that were intended as a cycle. Many composers of the middle and late Renaissance wrote at least one mass based on this melody, and the practice lasted into the 17th century, with a late setting by Carissimi. There are several theories regarding the meaning of the name: one suggests that the "armed man" represents St. Michael the Archangel, while another suggests that it refers to the name of a popular tavern (Maison L'Homme Armé) near Dufay's rooms in Cambrai. Being that this music arose shortly after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, it is possible that the text "the armed man should be feared" arose from the fear of the Ottoman Turks, who were expanding militarily toward central Europe. There are numerous other examples of secular cantus firmi used for composition of masses; some of the most famous include "Se la face ay pale" (Dufay), "Fortuna desperate" (attributed to Antoine Busnois), "Fors seulement" (Johannes Ockeghem), "Mille Regretz," "Pange lingua" (Josquin), and "Westron Wynde" (anonymous).

German composers in the Baroque period in Germany, notably Bach, used chorale melodies as *cantus firmi*.

In the opening movement of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, the chorale "O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig" appears in long notes, sung by a separate choir of boys "in ripieno." Many of his chorale preludes include a chorale tune in the pedal part.

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For the most part, music for worship was written down, and music outside of worship was not. It is assumed that most secular music in the early Middle Ages was improvised. However, as the era progressed, a tradition of courtly music developed.

Kings and nobles wanted entertainment, certainly, but many also wanted their courts to be known as places of culture. This led to the composition of poetry and songs that were performed in many cases by members of the court themselves rather than by itinerant minstrels. These educated musicians had different names depending on the region in which they lived and worked, but the name we most commonly associate with them is *troubadour*.

Introduction

A troubadour was a composer and performer of Old Occitan lyric poetry during the High Middle Ages (1100–1350). Since the word *troubadour* is etymologically masculine, a female troubadour is usually called a trobairitz.

The troubadour school or tradition began in the late 11th century in Occitania, but it subsequently spread into Italy and Spain. Under the influence of the troubadours, related movements sprang up throughout Europe: the Minnesingers in Germany, Troubadours in Galicia and Portugal, and that of the Trouveres in northern France. Dante Alighieri in his *De vulgari eloquentia* defined the troubadour lyric as *Fictio Rethorica Musicaque Poita*: rhetorical, musical, and poetical fiction. After the "classical" period around the turn of the 13th century and a midcentury resurgence, the art of the troubadours declined in the 14th century and eventually died out around the time of the Black Death (1348).

The texts of troubadour songs deal mainly with themes of chivalry and courtly love. Most were metaphysical, intellectual, and formulaic. Many were humorous or vulgar satires. There were many genres, the most popular being the *canso*, but *sirventes* and *tensos* were especially popular in the postclassical period, in Italy and among the female troubadours, the trobairitz.

Who They Were

The 450 or so troubadours known to historians came from a variety of backgrounds. They made their living in a variety of ways, lived and traveled in many different places, and were actors in many types of social context.

The troubadours were not wandering entertainers. Typically, they stayed in one place for a lengthy period of time under the patronage of a wealthy nobleman or woman. Many did travel extensively, however, sojourning at one court and then another.

Status

The earliest troubadour, the Duke of Aquitaine, came from the high nobility. He was followed immediately by two poets of unknown origins, known only by their sobriquets, Cercamon and Marcabru, and by a member of the princely class, Jaufre Rudel. Many troubadours are described in their *vidas* as poor knights. It was one of the most common descriptors of status. Later troubadours especially could belong to lower classes, ranging from the middle class of merchants and "burgers" (persons of urban standing) to tradesmen and others who worked with their hands. Many troubadours also possessed a clerical education. For some, this was their springboard to composition, since their clerical education equipped them with an understanding of musical and poetic forms as well as vocal training.

Troubadours and Jougleurs

The Occitan words Troubadours and Trouveres are relatively rare compared with the verb *trobar* (compose, invent), which was usually applied to the writing of poetry. It signified that a poem was original to an author (*trobador*) and was not merely sung or played by one. The term was used mostly for poetry only and in more careful works, like the *vidas*, is not generally applied to the composition of music or to singing, though the troubadour's poetry itself is not so careful. Sometime in the middle of the twelfth century, however, a distinction was definitely being made between an inventor of original verse and the performers of others'. These last were called *joglars*, from the Latin *ioculatores*, giving rise also to the French *jongleur*, Castilian *juglar*, and English juggler, which has come to refer to a more specific breed of performer. The medieval *jongleur/joglar* is really a minstrel. It is clear, for example from the poetry of Bertran de Born, that *jongleurs* were performers who did not usually compose. They often performed the troubadour's songs: singing, playing instruments, dancing, and even doing acrobatics.

Despite the distinctions noted, many troubadours were also known as jongleurs, either before they began composing or alongside. Aimeric de Belenoi, Aimeric de Sarlat, Albertet Cailla, Arnaut de Mareuil, Elias de Barjols, Elias Fonsalada, Falquet de Romans, Guillem Magret, Guiraut de Calanso, Nicoletto da Torino, Peire Raimon de Tolosa, Peire Rogier, Peire de Valeira, Peirol, Pistoleta, Perdigon, Salh d'Escola, Uc de la Bacalaria, Uc Brunet, and Uc de Saint Circ were jongleur-troubadours.

Trobairitz

The *trobairitz* were the female troubadours, the first female composers of secular music in the Western

tradition. The word *trobairitz* was first used in the 13th-century *Romance of Flamenca*, and its derivation is the same as that of *trobaire* but in feminine form. There were also female counterparts to the *joglars*: the *joglaresas*. The number of trobairitz varies between sources: there were 20 or 21 named trobairitz, plus an additional poetess known only as Domna H. There are several anonymous texts ascribed to women. Out of a total of about 450 troubadours and 2,500 troubadour works, the trobairitz and their corpus form a minor but interesting and informative portion. They are, therefore, quite well studied.

The trobairitz were in most respects as varied as their male counterparts, with the general exceptions of their poetic style and their provenance. None of the trobairitz were prolific, or if they were, their work has not survived. Only two have left us more than one piece: the Comtessa de Dia, with four, and Castelloza, with three or four. One of the known trobairitz, Gaudairença, wrote a song entitled *Coblas e dansas*, which has not survived; no other piece of hers has either.

Figure 1. Castelloza.

Our listening example from the troubadour tradition comes from the most famous of the female troubadours (*trobairitz*), Beatriz of Dia. Much uncertainty surrounds the historical records of the troubadours, but here is some brief information to help you get a sense of her place in the world of medieval secular music.

Introduction

The Comtessa de Dia, probably named Beatritz or Beatriz (fl. ca. 1175), was a trobairitz (female troubadour).

She is only known as the *comtessa de Dia* in contemporary documents but was almost certainly named Beatriz and likely the daughter of Count Isoard II of Diá (a town northeast of Montelimar in southern France). According to her *vida*, she was married to William of Poitiers but was in love with and sang about Raimbaut of Orange (1146–1173). It has been hypothesized that she was in fact married to Guillem's son, Ademar de Peiteus, whose wife's name was Philippa de Fay, and that her real lover was Raimbaut de Vaqueiras.

Beatriz's poems were often set to the music of a flute. Five of her works survive, including 4 cansos and 1 tenson. Scholars have debated whether or not Comtessa authored *Amics, en greu consirier*, a tenso typically attributed to Raimbaut d'Aurenga. One reason for this is due to the similarities between this composition and her own *Estat ai en greu consirier*. A second reason references the words in her *vida*, *Et enamoret se d'En Rambaut d' Ashley, e fez de lui mantas bonas cansos* (and she fell in love with Sir Raimbaut d'Aurenga, and made about him many good *cansos)*.

Her song *A chantar m'er de so qu'eu no volria* in the Occitan language is the only *canso* by a *trobairitz* to survive with its music intact. The music to *A chantar* is found only in *Le manuscript di roi*, a collection of songs copied around 1270 for Charles of Anjou, the brother of Louis IX.

Her extant poems are:

- *Ab joi et ab joven m'apais*
- *A chantar m'er de so qu'ieu non volria*
- *Estat ai en greu cossirier*
- *Fin ioi me don'alegranssa*

Typical subject matter used by Comtessa de Dia in her lyrics includes optimism, praise of herself and her love, as well as betrayal. In *A chantar*, Comtessa plays the part of a betrayed lover, and despite the fact she has been betrayed, she continues to defend and praise herself. In *Fin ioi me don'alegranssa*, however, Comtessa makes fun of the lausengier, a person known for gossiping, comparing those who gossip to a "cloud that obscures the sun." In writing style, Comtessa uses a process known as *coblas singulars* in *A chantar*, repeating the same rhyme scheme in each strophe, but changing the *a* rhyme each time. *Ab ioi*, on the other hand, uses *coblas doblas*, with a rhyme scheme of ab' ab' b' aab'. *A chantar* uses some of the motifs of Idyll II of Theocritus.

Listen: *A chantar m'er*

The only existing song by a trobairitz that survives with music.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#audio-563-1

Machaut is an extremely significant composer who was equally comfortable in sacred and secular worlds. His *Messe de Nostre Dame* is the first complete setting of the Ordinary of the Mass by a single composer that has survived. He served as a high-ranking church official in the service of various kings and nobles. He also composed courtly poetry and polyphonic songs that are the clear descendants of the troubadour song of previous centuries.

Introduction

Guillaume de Machaut (sometimes spelled Machault; ca. 1300–April 1377) was a medieval French poet and composer. He is one of the earliest composers on whom significant biographical information is available. According to Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, Machaut was "the last great poet who was also a composer." Well into the 15th century, Machaut's poetry was greatly admired and imitated by other poets, including Geoffrey Chaucer.

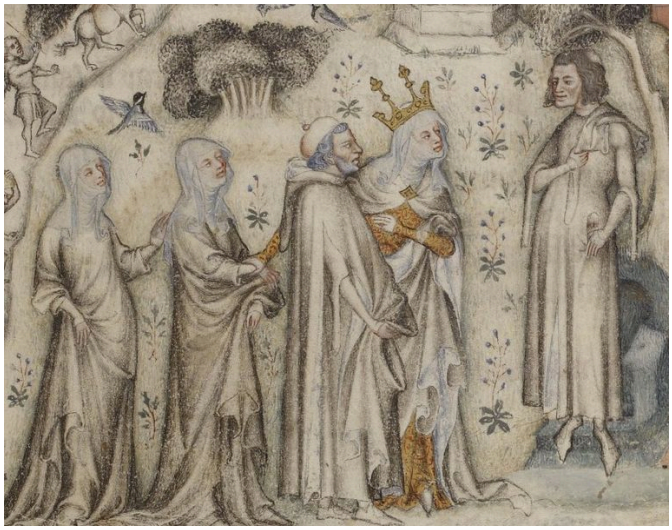

Figure 1. Machaut (at right) receiving Nature and three of her children. From an illuminated Parisian manuscript of the 1350s.

Machaut composed in a wide range of styles and forms. He is a part of the musical movement known as the *ars nova*. Machaut helped develop the motet and secular song forms (particularly the lai and the *formes fixes*: rondeau, virelai, and ballade). Machaut wrote the *Messe de Nostre Dame*, the earliest known complete setting of the Ordinary of the Mass attributable to a single composer.

Life

Guillaume de Machaut was born about 1300 and educated in the region around Reims. His surname most likely derives from the nearby town of Machault, 30 km northeast of Reims in the Ardennes region. He was employed as secretary to John I, Count of Luxembourg and King of Bohemia from 1323 to 1346, and also became a canon (1337). He often accompanied King John on his various trips, many of them military expeditions around Europe (including Prague). He was named the canon of Verdun in 1330, Arras in 1332, and Reims in 1337. By 1340, Machaut was living in Reims, having relinquished his other canonic posts at the request of Pope Benedict XII. In 1346, King John was killed fighting at the Battle of Crécy, and Machaut, who was famous and much in demand, entered the service of various other aristocrats and rulers, including King John's daughter Bonne (who died of the Black Death in 1349), her sons Jean de Berry and Charles (later Charles V, Duke of Normandy), and others such as Charles II of Navarre.

Machaut survived the Black Death that devastated Europe, and spent his later years living in Reims composing and supervising the creation of his complete-works manuscripts. His poem *Le voir dit* (probably 1361–1365) purports to recount a late love affair with a 19-year-old girl, Péronne d'Armentières, although the accuracy of the work as autobiography is contested. When he died in 1377, other composers such as François Andrieu wrote elegies lamenting his death.

Poetry

Other than his Latin motets of a religious nature and some poems invoking the horrors of war and captivity, the vast majority of Machaut's lyric poems reflect the conventions of courtly love and involve statements of service to a lady and the poet's pleasure and pains. In technical terms, Machaut was a master of elaborate rhyme schemes, and this concern makes him a precursor to the Grands Rhétoriqueurs of the 15th century. Guillaume de Machaut's lyric output comprises around 400 poems, including 235 ballades, 76 rondeaux, 39 virelais, 24 lais, 10 *complaintes*, and 7 *chansons royales*, and Machaut did much to perfect and codify these fixed forms. Some of his lyric output is embedded in his narrative poems or "dits," such as *Le remède de fortune* ("The Cure of Ill Fortune"), which includes one of each genre of lyric poetry, and *Le voir dit* ("A True Story"), but most are included in a separate, unordered section entitled *Les loanges des dames*. That the majority of his lyrics are not set to music (in manuscripts, music and nonmusic sections are separate) suggests that he normally wrote the text before setting some to music.

Guillaume de Machaut's narrative output is dominated by the "dit" (literally "spoken," i.e., a poem not meant to be sung). These first-person narrative poems (all but one are written in octosyllabic rhymed couplets, like the romance, or "roman" of the same period) follow many of the conventions of the *Roman de la rose*, including the use of allegorical dreams (*songes*), allegorical characters, and the situation of the narrator-lover attempting to return toward or satisfy his lady.

Machaut is also the author of a poetic chronicle of the chivalric deeds of Peter I of Cyprus (the *Prise d'Alexandrie*) and of poetic works of consolation and moral philosophy. His unusual self-reflective usage of himself (as his lyrical persona) as the narrator of his dits gleans some personal philosophical insights as well.

At the end of his life, Machaut wrote a poetic treatise on his craft (his *Prologue*). This reflects on his conception of the organization of poetry into set genres and rhyme schemes and the ordering of these genres into distinct sections of manuscripts. This preoccupation with ordering his *oeuvre* is reflected in an index to MS A entitled "Vesci l'ordonance que G. de Machaut veut qu'il ait en son livre" ("Here is the order that G. de Machaut wants his book to have").

Machaut's poetry had a direct effect on the works of Eustache Deschamps, Jean Froissart, Christine de Pizan, René d'Anjou, and Geoffrey Chaucer, among many others.

Example

The poem below, *Puis qu'en oubli*, is his 18th rondeau.

Puis qu'en oubli sui de vous, dous amis,
Vie amoureuse et joie a Dieu commant.
Mar vi le jour que m'amour en vous mis,
Puis qu'en oubli sui de vous, dous amis.

Mais ce tenray que je vous ay promis,
C'est que ja mais n'aray nul autre amant.
Puis qu'en oubli sui de vous, dous amis,
Vie amoureuse et joie a Dieu commant.

Music

As a composer of the 14th century, Machaut's secular song output includes monophonic lais and virelais, which continue, in updated forms, some of the tradition of the troubadours. He also worked in the polyphonic forms of the ballade and rondeau and wrote the first complete setting of the Ordinary of the Mass that can be attributed to a single composer.

Secular Music

The lyrics of Machaut's works almost always dealt with courtly love. A few works exist to commemorate a particular event, such as M18, "Bone Pastor/Bone Pastor/Bone Pastor." Machaut mostly composed in five genres: the lai, the virelai, the motet, the ballade, and the rondeau. In these genres, Machaut retained the basic *formes fixes* but often utilized creative text setting and cadences. For example, most rondeau phrases end with a long melisma on the penultimate syllable. However, a few of Machaut's rondeaux, such as R18 "Puis qu'en oubli," are mostly syllabic in treatment.

Machaut's motets often contain sacred texts in the tenor, such as in M12 "Corde mesto cantando/Helas! pour quoy virent/Libera me." The top two voices in these three-part compositions, in contrast, sing secular French texts, creating interesting concordances between the sacred and secular. In his other genres, though, he does not utilize sacred texts.

Sacred Music

Machaut's cyclic setting of the Mass, identified in one source as the *Messe de Nostre Dame* ("Mass of Our Lady"), was composed in the early 1360s, probably for Reims Cathedral. While not the first cyclic mass—the Tournai Mass is earlier—it was the first by a single composer and conceived as a unit. Machaut probably was familiar with the Tournai Mass, since Machaut's Mass shares many stylistic features with it, including textless interludes.

Listen: Kyrie from the *Messe de Nostre Dame*

By Guillaume de Machaut, midi instrumental version

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#audio-563-2

Whether or not Machaut's mass is indeed cyclic is contested; after lengthy debate, musicologists are still deeply divided. However, the mass can be said to be stylistically consistent, and certainly the chosen chants are all celebrations of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Also adding weight to the claim that the mass is cyclic is the possibility that the piece was written or assembled for performance at a specific celebration. The possibility that it was for the coronation of Charles V, which was once widely accepted, is thought unlikely in modern scholarship. The composer's intention that the piece be performed as one entire mass setting makes the *Messe de Nostre Dame* generally considered a cyclic composition.

It's possible that I just played a little too much D&D as a kid, but I think these medieval songs are totally cool. These listening examples are just for your enjoyment—they won't be on any test.

Puis qu'en oubli by Machaut

This is not one of the pieces on the listening exam, but it is a recording of the chanson whose text is referenced in the reading on Machaut: *Puis qu'en oubli*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#oembed-7

Quant la doulce jouvencelle

Let the two talented musicians of Asteria serve as your own personal time machine and enjoy a song from about 600 years ago.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#oembed-8

Music of the Renaissance

This section contains an overview of the music of the Renaissance.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: Music in the Renaissance
- Renaissance Music Overview
- The Printing Press
- Imitation
- Motet
- Josquin des Prez
- Protestant Reformation
- Counter-Reformation
- Giovannia Pierluigi da Palestrina
- Italina Madrigal
- Claudio Monteverdi
- The English Madrigal
- Thomas Weelkes
- Renaissance Dances

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#oembed-2

This review of some of the major points of the Renaissance era is a good place to begin your study of the music of this period. You'll notice that different sources list different start dates for the Renaissance; there is no single event that serves as a clear dividing line between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The transition of musical style between the two periods is very gradual, and as a result, scholars do not agree on when the Renaissance begins.

Because the previous review is focused on just a few of the biggest concepts from the period, I've also included this short introduction.

Introduction

Consensus among music historians notable dissent has been to start the musical Renaissance era around 1400, with the end of the medieval era, and to close it around 1600, with the beginning of the Baroque period. The musical Renaissance then starts about a hundred years after the beginning of the Renaissance as understood in other disciplines. As in the other arts, the music of the period was significantly influenced by the developments that define the Early Modern period: the rise of humanistic thought; the recovery of the literary and artistic heritage of ancient Greece and Rome; increased innovation and discovery; the growth of commercial enterprise; the rise of a bourgeois class; and the Protestant Reformation. From this changing society emerged a common, unifying musical language, in particular the polyphonic style of the Franco-Flemish school.

The invention of the Gutenberg press made distribution of music and musical theory possible on a wide scale. Demand for music as entertainment and as an activity for educated amateurs increased with the emergence of a bourgeois class. Dissemination of chansons, motets, and masses throughout Europe coincided with the unification of polyphonic practice into the fluid style, which culminated in the second half of the 16th century in the work of composers such as Palestrina, Lassus, Victoria, and William Byrd. Relative political stability and prosperity in the Low Countries, along with a flourishing system of music education in the area's many churches and cathedrals, allowed the training of hundreds of singers and composers. These musicians were highly sought throughout Europe, particularly in Italy, where churches and aristocratic courts hired them as composers and teachers. By the end of the 16th century, Italy had absorbed the northern influences, with Venice, Rome, and other cities being centers of musical activity, reversing the situation from a hundred years earlier. Opera arose at this time in Florence as a deliberate attempt to resurrect the music of ancient Greece.

Music, increasingly freed from medieval constraints in range, rhythm, harmony, form, and notation, became

a vehicle for new personal expression. Composers found ways to make music expressive of the texts they were setting. Secular music absorbed techniques from sacred music and vice versa. Popular secular forms such as the chanson and madrigal spread throughout Europe. Courts employed virtuoso performers, both singers and instrumentalists. Music also became more self-sufficient with its availability in printed form, existing for its own sake. Many familiar modern instruments (including the violin, guitar, lute, and keyboard instruments) developed into new forms during the Renaissance responding to the evolution of musical ideas, presenting further possibilities for composers and musicians to explore. Modern woodwind and brass instruments like the bassoon and trombone also appeared, extending the range of sonic color and power. During the 15th century, the sound of full triads became common, and toward the end of the 16th century, the system of church modes began to break down entirely, giving way to the functional tonality that was to dominate Western art music for the next three centuries.

From the Renaissance era, both secular and sacred music survives in quantity and both vocal and instrumental. An enormous diversity of musical styles and genres flourished during the Renaissance, and can be heard on commercial recordings in the 21st century, including masses, motets, madrigals, chansons, accompanied songs, instrumental dances, and many others. Numerous early music ensembles specializing in music of the period give concert tours and make recordings using a wide range of interpretive styles.

Follow the link if you would like to read the rest of this article on Wikipedia.

Before we dive into a more detailed exploration of musical concepts and composers, I want us to take a closer look at the advent of the printing press. I don't think it's possible to overstate the significance of the printing press on history in general—and music in particular. While this reading focuses primarily on the printing of books, the same process was applied to music. With the rise of the press, composers had a new opportunity for income, and amateur musicians, many among the rising middle class, provided a new market for their music.

Musicians prior to the advent of the printing press were entirely dependent on either the church or ruling nobles for a living. The printing press didn't change that system of patronage overnight, but it did provide additional opportunities and freedom for composers. The printing press, by virtue of the volume of copies of musical scores, also greatly enhanced the preservation of the music of this and later periods. As you read about the effect of the printing press on the structure of society, take a moment to reflect on the fact that you are living in a time when a similar leap forward in the distribution of information is happening.

A printing press is a device for applying pressure to an inked surface resting upon a print medium (such as paper or cloth), thereby transferring the ink. Typically used for texts, the invention of the printing press is widely regarded as one of the most influential events in the second millennium, ushering in the period of modernity.

The printing press was invented in the Holy Roman Empire by Johannes Gutenberg, around 1440. Gutenberg, a goldsmith by profession, devised a hand mold to create metal movable type and adapted screw presses and other existing technologies to create a printing system. The mechanization of bookmaking led to the first mass production of books in Europe. A single Renaissance printing press could produce 3,600 pages per workday, compared to about 2,000 by typographic block-printing prevalent in East Asia and a few by hand-copying. Books of bestselling authors like Luther or Erasmus were sold by the hundreds of thousands in their lifetime.

Figure 1. Recreated Gutenberg press at the International Printing Museum, Carson, California.

Within several decades, the printing press spread to over two hundred cities in a dozen European countries. By 1500, printing presses in operation throughout Western Europe had produced more than 20 million volumes. In the 16th century, with presses spreading farther afield, their output rose to an estimated 150 to 200 million copies. The operation of a printing press became synonymous with the enterprise of printing and lent its name to a new branch of media, the press. In 1620, the English philosopher Francis Bacon wrote of printing as one of three inventions that had changed the world.

In the 19th century, the replacement of the hand-operated Gutenberg-style press by steam-powered rotary presses allowed printing on an industrial scale, while Western-style printing was adopted all over the world, becoming practically the sole medium for modern bulk printing, today typically using offset printing techniques.

Follow the link if you would like to read more about the printing press on Wikipedia.

You've already studied the compositional technique known as *cantus firmus*, in which a new composition is built around a preexisting melody. This technique continued into the middle of the Renaissance period. Josquin des Prez certainly used cantus firmus in many of his works, but by Josquin's time a new compositional technique, imitation, was becoming more popular among composers. Josquin's own use of imitative

counterpoint represents a high point in Renaissance polyphony. Read the first three paragraphs of this webpage for an introduction to imitative composition.

It is often the case throughout history that musical innovation begins in a single genre, then spreads to others. This is the case in the Renaissance with the motet. For understandable reasons, composers were more willing to try out newer compositional styles in the genre of the motet than they were in the mass. For example, the older *cantus firmus* technique that arose in the Middle Ages was used in masses for much longer than in motets. In motets, composers moved away from the *cantus firmus* and favored freer, more expressive techniques (including imitative and homophonic textures) far earlier than in the mass. Over time, these newer styles eventually spread to other genres, including the mass.

In classical music, a motet is a highly varied choral musical composition. The motet was one of the preeminent polyphonic forms of Renaissance music.

According to Margaret Bent, "a piece of music in several parts with words" is as precise a definition of the motet as will serve from the 13th to the late 16th century and beyond. This is close to one of the earliest descriptions we have, that of the late 13th-century theorist Johannes de Grocheo, who believed that the motet was "not to be celebrated in the presence of common people, because they do not notice its subtlety, nor are they delighted in hearing it, but in the presence of the educated and of those who are seeking out subtleties in the arts."

Etymology

In the early 20th century, it was generally believed the name came from the Latin *movere* ("to move"), though a derivation from the French *mot* ("word" or "phrase") had also been suggested. The medieval Latin for "motet" is *motectum*, and the Italian *mottetto* was also used. If the word is from Latin, the name describes the movement of the different voices against one another. Today, however, the French etymology is favored by reference books, as the word "motet" in 13th-century French had the sense of "little word."

Medieval Motets

The earliest motets arose in the 13th century from the *organum* tradition exemplified in the Notre Dame school of Leonin and Perotin. The motet probably arose from the addition of text to the long melismatic passages of organum. The motet took a definite rhythm from the words of the verse and as such appeared as a brief rhythmic interlude in the middle of the longer, more chantlike organum.

The practice of discant over a *cantus firmus* marked the beginnings of counterpoint in Western music. From these first motets arose a medieval tradition of secular motets. These were two- or three-part compositions in which several different texts, sometimes in different vernacular languages, were sung simultaneously over a Latin *cantus firmus* that once again was usually adapted from a passage of Gregorian chant. It is suspected

that, for the sake of intelligibility, in performance, the *cantus firmus* and one or another of the vocal lines were performed on instruments. Among the trouveres, Robert de Reins La Chievre and Richart de Fournival composed motets.

Renaissance Motets

The motet was preserved in the transition from medieval to Renaissance music, but the character of the composition was entirely changed. While it grew out of the medieval motet, the Renaissance composers of the motet generally abandoned the use of a repeated figure as a *cantus firmus*. Instead, the Renaissance motet is a polyphonic musical setting, sometimes in imitative counterpoint, for chorus, of a Latin text, usually sacred, not specifically connected to the liturgy of a given day, and therefore suitable for use in any service. The texts of antiphons were frequently used as motet texts. This is the sort of composition that is most familiarly designated by the term "motet," and the Renaissance period marked the flowering of the form.

In essence, these motets were sacred madrigals. The relationship between the two forms is most obvious in the composers who concentrated on sacred music, especially Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, whose "motets" setting texts from the *Canticum Canticorum*, the biblical "Song of Solomon," are among the most lush and madrigal-like of Palestrina's compositions, while his "madrigals" that set poems of Petrarch in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary would not be out of place in church. The language of the text was the decisive feature: if it's Latin, it's a motet; if the vernacular, a madrigal. Religious compositions in vernacular languages were often called *madrigali spirituali*, "spiritual madrigals."

In the latter part of the 16th century, Giovanni Gabrieli and other composers developed a new style, the polychoral motet, in which two or more choirs of singers (or instruments) alternated. This style of motet was sometimes called the *Venetian motet* to distinguish it from the *Netherlands* or *Flemish* motet written elsewhere.

One of the great masters of the Renaissance, Josquin's music marks the transition from the angular medieval style heard in the early Renaissance to the more serene, flowing style of the late Renaissance.

Introduction

Figure 1. A 1611 woodcut of Josquin des Prez, copied from a now-lost oil painting done during his lifetime.

Josquin des Prez (ca. 1450/1455–27 August 1521), often referred to simply as Josquin, was a Franco-Flemish composer of the Renaissance. His original name is sometimes given as Josquin Lebloitte, and his later name is given under a wide variety of spellings in French, Italian, and Latin, including Josquinus Pratensis and Jodocus a Prato. His motet *Illibata Dei virgo nutrix* includes an acrostic of his name, where he spelled it "Josquin des Prez." He was the most famous European composer between Guillaume Dufay and Palestrina and is usually considered to be the central figure of the Franco-Flemish School. Josquin is widely considered by music scholars to be the first master of the high Renaissance style of polyphonic vocal music that was emerging during his lifetime.

During the 16th century, Josquin gradually acquired the reputation as the greatest composer of the age, his mastery of technique and expression universally imitated and admired. Writers as diverse as Baldassare Castiglione and Martin Luther wrote about his reputation and fame; theorists such as Heinrich Glarean and Gioseffo Zarlino held his style as that best representing perfection. He was so admired that many anonymous compositions were attributed to him by copyists, probably to increase their sales. More than 370 works are attributed to him; it was only after the advent of modern analytical scholarship that some of these mistaken attributions have been challenged on the basis of stylistic features and manuscript evidence. Yet in spite of Josquin's colossal reputation, which endured until the beginning of the Baroque era and was revived in the 20th century, his biography is shadowy, and next to nothing is known about his personality. The only surviving work that may be in his own hand is a graffito on the wall of the Sistine Chapel, and only one contemporary mention of his character is known, in a letter to Duke Ercole I of Ferrara. The lives of dozens of minor composers of the Renaissance are better documented than the life of Josquin.

Josquin wrote both sacred and secular music, and in all of the significant vocal forms of the age, including masses, motets, chansons, and frottole. During the 16th century, he was praised for both his supreme melodic gift and his use of ingenious technical devices. In modern times, scholars have attempted to ascertain the basic details of his biography and have tried to define the key characteristics of his style to correct misattributions, a task that has proved difficult, as Josquin liked to solve compositional problems in different ways in successive compositions—sometimes he wrote in an austere style devoid of ornamentation, and at other times, he wrote music requiring considerable virtuosity. Heinrich Glarean wrote in 1547 that Josquin was not only a "magnificent virtuoso" (the Latin can be translated also as "show-off") but capable of being a "mocker," using satire effectively. While the focus of scholarship in recent years has been to remove music from the "Josquin canon" (including some of his most famous pieces) and to reattribute it to his contemporaries, the remaining music represents some of the most famous and enduring of the Renaissance.

Motets

Josquin's motet style varied from almost strictly homophonic settings with block chords and syllabic text declamation, to highly ornate contrapuntal fantasias, to the psalm settings that combined these extremes with the addition of rhetorical figures and text-painting that foreshadowed the later development of the madrigal. He wrote many of his motets for four voices, an ensemble size that had become the compositional norm around 1500, and he also was a considerable innovator in writing motets for five and six voices. No motets of more than six voices have been reliably attributed to Josquin.

Listen: Intervals

Please download and listen to the following audio file to hear a passage from the psalm motet *Domine ne in furore* (Ps. 37). Three variants of a motive built on a major triad are introduced, each in paired imitation between two voices.

Domine ne in furore

Josquin frequently used imitation, especially paired imitation, in writing his motets, with sections akin to fugal expositions occurring on successive lines of the text he was setting. An example is his setting of *Dominus regnavit* (Ps. 93) for four voices; each of the lines of the psalm begins with a voice singing a new tune alone, quickly followed by entries of another three voices in imitation.

In writing polyphonic settings of psalms, Josquin was a pioneer, and psalm settings form a large proportion of the motets of his later years. Few composers prior to Josquin had written polyphonic psalm settings. Some of Josquin's settings include the famous *Miserere*, written in Ferrara in 1503 or 1504 and most likely inspired by the recent execution of the reformist monk Girolamo Savonarola; *Memor esto verbi tui*, based on Psalm 119; and two settings of *De profundis* (Ps. 130), both of which are often considered to be among his most significant accomplishments.

The Reformation and subsequent Counter-Reformation encompass some of the most sweeping religious, social, and political transitions of the Renaissance era. Both movements exert a profound influence on the music of that time. We will actually explore some of the effects of the Protestant Reformation on music, specifically those put forward by Martin Luther, a little later when we study the cantatas of J. S. Bach in the Baroque. For now, an overview of the Reformation will suffice. As you read here, notice the mention of the role of the printing press and the Catholic Church's response, the Counter-Reformation. The next page will

focus on the Counter-Reformation and its effects on Renaissance music, specifically that of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina.

The Protestant Reformation, often referred to simply as the Reformation, was the schism within Western Christianity initiated by Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, and other early Protestant Reformers.

Although there had been significant earlier attempts to reform the Roman Catholic Church before Luther—such as those of Jan Hus, Peter Waldo, and John Wycliffe—it is Martin Luther who is widely acknowledged to have started the Reformation with his 1517 work *The Ninety-Five Theses*. Luther began by criticizing the selling of indulgences, insisting that the Pope had no authority over purgatory and that the Catholic doctrine of the merits of the saints had no foundation in the gospel. The attacks widened to cover many of the doctrines and devotional Catholic practices. The new movement within Germany diversified almost immediately, and other reform impulses arose independently of Luther. The largest groupings were the Lutherans and Calvinists, or Reformed. Lutheran churches were founded mostly in Germany, the Baltics, and Scandinavia, while the Reformed ones were founded in France, Switzerland, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Scotland. The new movement influenced the Church of England decisively after 1547 under Edward VI and Elizabeth I, although the national church had been made independent under Henry VIII in the early 1530s for political rather than religious reasons. There were also reformation movements throughout continental Europe known as the Radical Reformation, which gave rise to the Anabaptist, Moravian, and other Pietistic movements.

Although the core motivation behind these changes was theological, many other factors played a part, including the rise of nationalism; the Western Schism, which eroded people's faith in the Papacy; the corruption of the Curia; and the new learning of the Renaissance, which questioned much traditional thought. On a technological level the spread of the printing press provided the means for the rapid dissemination of religious materials in the vernacular.

The Roman Catholic Church responded with a Counter-Reformation initiated by the Council of Trent. Much work in battling Protestantism was done by the well-organized new order of the Jesuits. In general, Northern Europe, with the exception of most of Ireland, came under the influence of Protestantism. Southern Europe remained Roman Catholic, while Central Europe was a site of a fierce conflict, culminating in the Thirty Years' War, which left it massively devastated.

This page covers the reaction on the part of the Catholic Church to the Protestant Reformation. Notice that this final section on this page (The Savior Legend) leads us to another composer—namely, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina.

Council of Trent

Pope Paul III (1534–1549) is considered to be the first pope of the Counter-Reformation and also initiated

the Council of Trent (1545–1563), a commission of cardinals tasked with institutional reform, addressing contentious issues such as corrupt bishops and priests, indulgences, and other financial abuses.

The Council upheld the basic structure of the medieval Church, its sacramental system, religious orders, and doctrine. It rejected all compromise with the Protestants, restating basic tenets of the Roman Catholic faith. The Council upheld salvation appropriated by grace through faith *and* works of that faith (not just by faith, as the Protestants insisted) because "faith without works is dead," as the Epistle of St. James states (2:22–26). Transubstantiation, according to which the consecrated bread and wine are held to have been transformed really and substantially into *the body, blood, soul, and divinity* of Christ, was also reaffirmed, as were the traditional seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. Other practices that drew the ire of Protestant reformers, such as pilgrimages, the veneration of saints and relics, the use of venerable images and statuary, and the veneration of the Virgin Mary, were strongly reaffirmed as spiritually commendable practices. The Council officially accepted the Vulgate listing of the Old Testament Bible, which included the deuterocanonical works (also called the Apocrypha by Protestants) on a par with the 39 books customarily found in the Masoretic Text. This reaffirmed the previous Council of Rome and Synods of Carthage (both held in the 4th century CE), which had affirmed the Deuterocanon as Scripture. The Council also commissioned the Roman Catechism, which still serves as authoritative Church teaching.

While the traditional fundamentals of the Church were reaffirmed, there were noticeable changes to answer complaints that the Counter-Reformers were, tacitly, willing to admit were legitimate. Among the conditions to be corrected by Catholic reformers was the growing divide between the clerics and the laity; many members of the clergy in the rural parishes, after all, had been poorly educated. Often, these rural priests did not know Latin and lacked opportunities for proper theological training (addressing the education of priests had been a fundamental focus of the humanist reformers in the past). Parish priests were to be better educated in matters of theology and apologetics, while Papal authorities sought to educate the faithful about the meaning, nature and value of art and liturgy, particularly in monastic churches (Protestants had criticized them as "distracting"). Notebooks and handbooks became more common, describing how to be good priests and confessors.

Reforms before the Council of Trent

The Council of Trent is believed to be the apex of the Counter-Reformation's influence on church music in the 16th century. However, the council's pronouncements on music were not the first attempt at reform. The Catholic Church had spoken out against a perceived abuse of music used in the mass before the Council of Trent ever convened to discuss music in 1562. The manipulation of the Credo and using nonliturgical songs were addressed in 1503, and secular singing and the intelligibility of the text in the delivery of psalmody in 1492. The delegates at the Council were just a link in the long chain of church clergy who had pushed for a reform of the musical liturgy reaching back as far as 1322. Probably the most extreme move at reform came late in 1562 when, instructed by the legates, Egidio Foscarari (bishop of Modena) and Gabriele Paleotti began work on reforming cloisters of nuns and their practices involving the liturgy. In fact, the reforms proscribed to

the cloisters, which included omitting the use of an organ, prohibiting professional musicians, and banishing polyphonic singing, were much more strict than any of the Council's edicts or even those to be found in the Palestrina legend.

Fueling the cry for reform from many ecclesial figures was the compositional technique popular in the 15th and 16th centuries of using musical material and even the accompanying texts from other compositions such as motets, madrigals, and chansons. Several voices singing different texts in different languages made any of the text difficult to distinguish from the mixture of words and notes. The parody mass would then contain melodies (usually the tenor line) and words from songs that could have been, and often were, on sensual subjects. The musical liturgy of the church was being more and more influenced by secular tunes and styles. The Council of Paris, which met in 1528, as well as the Council of Trent were making attempts to restore the sense of sacredness to the church setting and what was appropriate for the mass. The councils were simply responding to issues of their day.

Music in the Church

The idea that the Council called to remove all polyphony from the church is widespread, but there is no documentary evidence to support that claim. It is possible, however, that some of the Fathers had proposed such a measure. The emperor Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor, has been attributed to be the "savior of church music" because he said polyphony ought not to be driven out of the church. But Ferdinand was most likely an alarmist and read into the Council the possibility of a total ban on polyphony. The Council of Trent did not focus on the style of music but on attitudes of worship and reverence during the mass.

The Savior Legend

The crises regarding polyphony and intelligibility of the text and the threat that polyphony was to be removed completely, which was assumed to be coming from the Council, has a very dramatic legend of resolution. The legend goes that Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca. 1525–1594), a church musician and choirmaster in Rome, wrote a mass for the Council delegates in order to demonstrate that a polyphonic composition could set the text in such a way that the words could be clearly understood and that was still pleasing to the ear. Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* (Mass for Pope Marcellus) was performed before the Council and received such a welcoming reception among the delegates that they completely changed their minds and allowed polyphony to stay in use in the musical liturgy. Therefore, Palestrina came to be named the "savior of church polyphony." This legend, though unfounded, has long been a mainstay of histories of music. The savior-myth was first spread by an account by Aggazzari and Banchieri in 1609 who said that Pope Marcellus was trying to replace all polyphony with plainsong. Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* was, though, in 1564, after the 22nd session, performed for the Pope while reforms were being considered for the Sistine Choir.

The Pope Marcellus Mass, in short, was not important in its own day and did not help save church

polyphony. What is undeniable is that despite any solid evidence of his influence during or after the Council of Trent, no figure is more qualified to represent the cause of polyphony in the mass than Palestrina. Pope Pius IV, upon hearing Palestrina's music, would make Palestrina, by Papal Brief, the model for future generations of Catholic composers of sacred music.

Now we come to one of the most significant composers of the Renaissance period: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. I don't want to give the impression that Palestrina was the only big name of the late Renaissance; he shares that spotlight with at least one other composer, Orlando de Lassus, who we, unfortunately, won't study in this course. We focus on Palestrina because his compositional style is considered the epitome of late Renaissance polyphony and is still studied by students of music today.

Introduction

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca. 1525–2 February 1594) was an Italian Renaissance composer of sacred music and the best-known 16th-century representative of the Roman School of musical composition. He has had a lasting influence on the development of church music, and his work has often been seen as the culmination of Renaissance polyphony.

Figure 1. Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina.

Biography

Palestrina was born in the town of Palestrina, near Rome, then part of the Papal States. Documents suggest that he first visited Rome in 1537, when he is listed as a chorister at the Santa Maria Maggiore basilica. He studied with Robin Mallapert and Firmin Lebel. He spent most of his career in the city.

Palestrina came of age as a musician under the influence of the northern European style of polyphony, which owed its dominance in Italy primarily to two influential Netherlandish composers, Guillaume Dufay and Josquin des Prez, who had spent significant portions of their careers there. Italy itself had yet to produce anyone of comparable fame or skill in polyphony.

From 1544 to 1551, Palestrina was organist of the cathedral of St. Agapito, the principal church of his native

city. His first published compositions, a book of Masses, had made so favorable an impression with Pope Julius III (previously the Bishop of Palestrina) that in 1551 he appointed Palestrina *maestro di cappella* or musical director of the Cappella Giulia (Julian Chapel, in the sense of choir), the choir of the chapter of canons at St. Peter's Basilica. This book of Masses was the first by a native composer, since in the Italian states of Palestrina's day, most composers of sacred music were from the Low Countries, France, Portugal, or Spain. In fact the book was modeled on one by Cristóbal de Morales: the woodcut in the front is almost an exact copy of the one from the book by the Spanish composer.

During the next decade, Palestrina held positions similar to his Julian Chapel appointment at other chapels and churches in Rome, notably St. John Lateran (1555–1560, a post previously held by Lassus) and St. Mary Major (1561–1566). In 1571, he returned to the Julian Chapel and remained at St. Peter's for the rest of his life. The decade of the 1570s was difficult for him personally: he lost his brother, two of his sons, and his wife in three separate outbreaks of the plague (1572, 1575, and 1580, respectively). He seems to have considered becoming a priest at this time, but instead he remarried, this time to a wealthy widow. This finally gave him financial independence (he was not well paid as choirmaster), and he was able to compose prolifically until his death.

Figure 2. Facade of St John Lateran, Rome, where Palestrina was musical director.

He died in Rome of pleurisy in 1594. As was usual, Palestrina was buried on the same day he died, in a plain coffin with a lead plate on which was inscribed *Libera me Domine*. A five-part psalm for three choirs was sung at the funeral.

Music and Reputation

Palestrina left hundreds of compositions, including 105 masses, 68 offertories, at least 140 madrigals, and more than 300 motets. In addition, there are at least 72 hymns, 35 magnificats, 11 litanies, and 4 or 5 sets of lamentations. The *Gloria* melody from a Palestrina magnificat is widely used today in the resurrection hymn tune *Victory* (The Strife Is O'er).

His attitude toward madrigals was somewhat enigmatic: whereas in the preface to his collection of *Canticum canticorum* (Song of Songs) motets (1584), he renounced the setting of profane texts, only two years later, he was back in print with Book II of his secular madrigals (some of these being among the finest compositions in the medium). He published just two collections of madrigals with profane texts, one in 1555 and another in

1586. The other two collections were spiritual madrigals, a genre beloved by the proponents of the Counter-Reformation.

Palestrina's masses show how his compositional style developed over time. His *Missa sine nomine* seems to have been particularly attractive to Johann Sebastian Bach, who studied and performed it while writing the Mass in B minor. Most of Palestrina's masses appeared in 13 volumes printed between 1554 and 1601, the last seven published after his death.

One of his most important works, the *Missa Papae Marcelli* (Pope Marcellus Mass), has been historically associated with erroneous information involving the Council of Trent. According to this tale (which forms the basis of Hans Pfitzner's opera *Palestrina*), it was composed in order to persuade the Council of Trent that a draconian ban on the polyphonic treatment of text in sacred music (as opposed, that is, to a more directly intelligible homophonic treatment) was unnecessary. However, more recent scholarship shows that this mass was in fact composed before the cardinals convened to discuss the ban (possibly as much as 10 years before). Historical data indicate that the Council of Trent, as an official body, never actually banned any church music and failed to make any ruling or official statement on the subject. These stories originated from the unofficial points of view of some Council attendees who discussed their ideas with those not privy to the Council's deliberations. Those opinions and rumors have, over centuries, been transmuted into fictional accounts, put into print, and often incorrectly taught as historical fact. While Palestrina's compositional motivations are not known, he may have been quite conscious of the need for intelligible text; however, this was not to conform with any doctrine of the Counter-Reformation, because no such doctrine exists. His characteristic style remained consistent from the 1560s until the end of his life. Roche's hypothesis that Palestrina's seemingly dispassionate approach to expressive or emotive texts could have resulted from his having to produce many to order, or from a deliberate decision that any intensity of expression was unbecoming in church music, has not been confirmed by historians.

One of the hallmarks of Palestrina's music is that dissonances are typically relegated to the "weak" beats in a measure. This produced a smoother and more consonant type of polyphony that is now considered to be definitive of late Renaissance music, given Palestrina's position as Europe's leading composer (along with Lassus) in the wake of Josquin (d. 1521). The "Palestrina style" now serves as a basis for college Renaissance counterpoint classes, thanks in large part to the efforts of the 18th-century composer and theorist Johann Joseph Fux, who, in a book called *Gradus ad Parnassum* (Steps to Parnassus, 1725), set about codifying Palestrina's techniques as a pedagogical tool for students of composition. Fux applied the term "species counterpoint," which entails a series of steps whereby students work out progressively more elaborate combinations of voices while adhering to certain strict rules. Fux did make a number of stylistic errors, however, which have been corrected by later authors (notably Knud Jeppesen and Morris). Palestrina's own music contains ample instances in which his rules have been followed to the letter, as well as many where they are freely broken.

According to Fux, Palestrina had established and followed these basic guidelines:

- The flow of music is dynamic, not rigid or static.
- Melody should contain few leaps between notes. (Jeppesen: "The line is the starting point of Palestrina's style.")
- If a leap occurs, it must be small and immediately countered by stepwise motion in the opposite direction.
- Dissonances are to be confined to passing notes and weak beats. If one falls on a strong beat, it is to be immediately resolved.

Much research on Palestrina was done in the 19th century by Giuseppe Baini, who published a monograph in 1828 that made Palestrina famous again and reinforced the already existing legend that he was the "Savior of Church Music" during the reforms of the Council of Trent. The 19th-century proclivity for hero-worship is predominant in this monograph, however, and this has remained with the composer to some degree to the present day. Hans Pfitzner's opera *Palestrina* shows this attitude at its peak.

It is only recently, with the discovery and publication of a great deal of hitherto unknown or forgotten music by various Renaissance composers, that it has been possible to properly assess Palestrina in a historical context. Though Palestrina represents late Renaissance music well, others such as Orlande de Lassus (a Franco-Flemish composer who also spent some of his early career in Italy) and William Byrd were arguably more versatile. Twentieth- and 21st-century scholarship by and large retains the view that Palestrina was a strong and refined composer whose music represents a summit of technical perfection while emphasizing that some of his contemporaries possessed equally individual voices even within the confines of "smooth polyphony." As a result, composers like Lassus and Byrd as well as Tomas Luis de Victoria have increasingly come to enjoy comparable reputations.

Palestrina was famous in his day, and if anything, his reputation increased after his death. Conservative music of the Roman school continued to be written in his style (which in the 17th century came to be known as the *prima pratica*) by such students of his as Giovanni Maria Nanino, Ruggiero Giovanelli, Arcangelo Crivelli, Teofilo Gargari, Francesco Soriano, and Gregorio Allegri. It is also thought that Salvatore Sacco may have been a student of Palestrina, as well as Giovanni Dragoni, who later went on to become choirmaster in the church of S. Giovanni in Laterano.

Palestrina's music continues to be regularly performed and recorded and to provide models for the study of counterpoint. There are two comprehensive editions of Palestrina's works: a 33-volume edition published by Breitkopf and Härtel in Leipzig Germany, between 1862 and 1894, edited by Franz Xaver Haberl, and a 34-volume edition published in the mid-20th century by Fratelli Scalera in Rome, Italy, edited by R. Casimiri and others.

It's time to move from the sacred music heard in churches and cathedrals to the secular music performed for entertainment at court. Though there were many kinds of secular pieces, we're going to focus on the genre that became the most popular by the end of the Renaissance, the madrigal. The madrigal not only surpassed the other genres of secular vocal music of the day in popularity; it also contributed to the development of opera in

the early Baroque. We'll learn first about the madrigal in its country of origin: Italy. A later reading assignment will discuss the evolution of the madrigal in England, where the genre changed to suit English tastes.

Read this article on Italian Madrigal. Please read the "Background" section carefully. You can skim through the section on composers until you reach the last paragraph that deals with late Renaissance composers. That last paragraph deals with one of the composers we'll study in more detail—Claudio Monterverdi—so give that paragraph a careful read. Then finish this reading off by reading "Texture" and "Text" in the section on "Musical Style."

We will study Claudio Monteverdi in both the Renaissance and Baroque periods. His music, especially his madrigals, demonstrates the transition from late Renaissance to early Baroque style. His first four books of madrigals feature the late Renaissance style that you hear in "Ecco mormorar l'onde." Starting with the fifth book of madrigals, he adopts the new practices that we'll come to know as early Baroque style.

Introduction

Claudio Giovanni Antonio Monteverdi (15 May 1567 [baptized]–29 November 1643) was an Italian composer, gambist, singer and Roman Catholic priest.

Monteverdi's work, often regarded as revolutionary, marked the change from the Renaissance style of music to that of the Baroque period. He developed two styles of composition—the heritage of Renaissance polyphony and the new basso continuo technique of the Baroque. Monteverdi wrote one of the earliest operas, *L'Orfeo*, a novel work that is the earliest surviving opera still regularly performed. He is widely recognized as an inventive composer who enjoyed considerable fame in his life-time.

Figure 1. Monteverdi by Bernardo Strozzi, ca. 1630.

Life

Claudio Monteverdi was born in 1567 in Cremona, Lombardy. His father was Baldassare Monteverdi, a doctor, apothecary, and amateur surgeon. He was the oldest of five children. During his childhood, he was taught by Marc'Antonio Ingegneri, the *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral of Cremona. The Maestro's job was to conduct important worship services in accordance with the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Monteverdi learned about music as a member of the cathedral choir. He also studied at the University of Cremona. His first music was written for publication, including some motets and sacred madrigals, in 1582 and 1583. His first five publications were *Sacrae cantiunculae*, 1582 (a collection of miniature motets); *Madrigali Spirituali*, 1583 (a volume of which

only the bass part book is extant); *Canzonette a tre voci*, 1584 (a collection of three-voice canzonettes); and the five-part madrigals Book I, 1587, and Book II, 1590. He worked at the court of Vincenzo I of Gonzaga in Mantua as a vocalist and viol player, then as music director. In 1602, he was working as the court conductor, and Vincenzo appointed him *master of music* on the death of Benedetto Pallavicino.

In 1599, Monteverdi married the court singer Claudia Cattaneo, who died in September 1607. They had two sons (Francesco and Massimilino) and a daughter (Leonora). Another daughter died shortly after birth. In 1610, he moved to Rome, arriving in secret, hoping to present his music to Pope Paul V. His Vespers were printed the same year, but his planned meeting with the Pope never took place.

In 1612, Vincenzo died and was succeeded by his eldest son, Francesco. Heavily in debt due to the profligacy of his father, Francesco sacked Monteverdi and he spent a year in Mantua without any paid employment. His 1607 opera *L'Orfeo* was dedicated to Francesco. The title page of the opera bears the dedication "Al serenissimo signor D. Francesco Gonzaga, Prencipe di Mantoua, & di Monferato, &c."

By 1613, he had moved to San Marco in Venice, where, as conductor, he quickly restored the musical standard of both the choir and the instrumentalists. The musical standard had declined due to the financial mismanagement of his predecessor, Giulio Cesare Martinengo. The managers of the basilica were relieved to have such a distinguished musician in charge, as the music had been declining since the death of Giovanni Croce in 1609.

Figure 2. The only certain portrait of Claudio Monteverdi, from the title page of *Fiori poetici*, a 1644 book of commemorative poems for his funeral.

In 1632, he became a priest. During the last years of his life, when he was often ill, he composed his two last masterpieces: *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (*The Return of Ulysses*, 1641) and the historic opera *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (*The Coronation of Poppea*, 1642), based on the life of the Roman emperor Nero. *L'incoronazione* especially is considered a culminating point of Monteverdi's work. It contains tragic, romantic, and comic scenes (a new development in opera), a more realistic portrayal of the characters, and warmer melodies than previously heard. It requires a smaller orchestra and has a less prominent role for the choir. For a long period of time, Monteverdi's operas were merely regarded as a historical or musical interest. Since the 1960s, *The Coronation of Poppea* has reentered the repertoire of major opera companies worldwide.

Monteverdi died, aged 76, in Venice on 29 November 1643 and was buried at the church of the Frari.

Madrigals

Until the age of forty, Monteverdi worked primarily on madrigals, composing a total of nine books. It took Monteverdi about four years to finish his first book of twenty-one madrigals for five voices. As a whole, the

first eight books of madrigals show the enormous development from Renaissance polyphonic music to the monodic style typical of Baroque music.

Listen

Cor mio mentre vi miro

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=563#audio-563-3

The titles of his madrigal books are:

- Book 1, 1587: *Madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 2, 1590: *Il secondo libro de madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 3, 1592: *Il terzo libro de madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 4, 1603: *Il quarto libro de madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 5, 1605: *Il quinto libro de madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 6, 1614: *Il sesto libro de madrigali a cinque voci*
- Book 7, 1619: *Concerto. Settimo libro di madrigali*
- Book 8, 1638: *Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi con alcuni opuscoli in genere rappresentativo, che saranno per brevi episodi fra i canti senza gesto.*
- Book 9, 1651: *Madrigali e canzonette a due e tre voci*

The Fifth Madrigal Book

Listen

Cruda Amarilli

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The *Fifth Book of Madrigals* shows the shift from the late Renaissance style of music to the early Baroque. The *Quinto Libro* (Fifth Book), published in 1605, was at the heart of the controversy between Monteverdi and Giovanni Artusi. Artusi attacked the "crudities" and "license" of the modern style of composing, centering his attacks on madrigals (including *Cruda Amarilli*, composed around 1600; see Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, p. 60) from the fourth book. Monteverdi made his reply in the introduction to the fifth book with a proposal of the division of musical practice into two streams, which he called *prima pratica*, and *seconda pratica*. *Prima pratica* was described as the previous polyphonic ideal of the 16th century, with flowing strict counterpoint, prepared dissonance, and equality of voices. *Seconda pratica* used much freer counterpoint with an increasing hierarchy of voices, emphasizing soprano and bass. In *Prima pratica*, the harmony controls the words. In *Seconda pratica* the words should be in control of the harmonies. This represented a move toward the new style of monody. The introduction of continuo in many of the madrigals was a further self-consciously modern feature. In addition, the fifth book showed the beginnings of conscious functional tonality.

This reading on the madrigal in England briefly describes how the madrigal spread from Italy to England. It also details some of the best-known composers of English Madrigals. While this genre is not nearly as historically significant as its Italian predecessor, English madrigals are more widely performed today by amateur musicians (school choirs, community ensembles, etc.) because of their lighthearted nature and ease of performance.

The English Madrigal School was the brief but intense flowering of the musical madrigal in England, mostly from 1588 to 1627, along with the composers who produced them. The English madrigals were a cappella, predominantly light in style, and generally began as either copies or direct translations of Italian models. Most were for three to six voices.

Style and Characteristics

Most likely the impetus for writing madrigals came through the influence of Alfonso Ferrabosco, who worked in England in the 1560s and 1570s in Queen Elizabeth's court; he wrote many works in the form, and not only did they prove popular, but they inspired some imitation by local composers. The development that caused the explosion of madrigal composition in England, however, was the development of native poetry—especially the sonnet—which was conducive to setting to music in the Italian style. When Nicholas Yonge published *Musica transalpina* in 1588, it proved to be immensely popular, and the vogue for madrigal composition in England can be said to truly have started then.

Musica transalpina was a collection of Italian madrigals, mostly by Ferrabosco and Marenzio, fitted with English words. They were well loved, and several similar anthologies followed immediately after the success of the first. Yonge himself published a second *Musica transalpina* in 1597, hoping to duplicate the success of the first collection.

While William Byrd, probably the most famous English composer of the time, experimented with the madrigal form, he never actually called his works madrigals and, shortly after writing some secular songs in madrigalian style, returned to writing mostly sacred music.

The most influential composers of madrigals in England, and the ones whose works have survived best to the present day, were Thomas Morley, Thomas Weelkes, and John Wilbye. Morley is the only composer of the time who set verse by Shakespeare for which the music has survived. His style is melodic, easily singable, and remains popular with *a cappella* singing groups. Wilbye had a very small compositional output, but his madrigals are distinctive with their expressiveness and chromaticism; they would never be confused with their Italian predecessors.

The last line of Gibbons's "The Silver Swan" of 1612, "More Geese than Swans now live, more Fools than Wise," is often considered to be a lament for the death of the English tradition.

One of the more notable compilations of English madrigals was *The Triumphs of Oriana*, a collection of madrigals compiled by Thomas Morley, which contained 25 different madrigals by 23 different composers. Published in 1601 as a tribute to Elizabeth I of England, each madrigal contains a reference to Oriana, a name used to reference the queen.

Madrigals continued to be composed in England through the 1620s, but the air and "recitative music" rendered the style obsolete; somewhat belatedly, characteristics of the Baroque style finally appeared in England. While the music of the English Madrigal School is of generally high quality and has endured in popularity, it is useful to remember that the total output of the composers was relatively small: Luca Marenzio in Italy alone published more books of madrigals than the entire sum of madrigal publications in England, and Philippe de Monte wrote more madrigals (over 1,100) than were written in England during the entire period.

Composers

The following list includes almost all of the composers of the English Madrigal School who published works. Many of these were amateur composers, some known only for a single book of madrigals, and some for an even smaller contribution.

- Thomas Bateson (ca. 1570–1630)
- John Bennet (ca. 1575–after 1614)
- John Bull (1562–1628)
- William Byrd (1543–1623)
- Thomas Campion (1567–1620)
- Richard Carlton (ca. 1558–1638)
- Michael Cavendish (ca. 1565–1628)
- John Dowland (1563–1626)
- Michael East (ca. 1580–1648)
- John Farmer (ca. 1565–1605)
- Giles Farnaby (ca. 1560–1620)
- Alfonso Ferrabosco (1543–1588; Italian, but worked in England for two decades)
- Ellis Gibbons (1573–1603)
- Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)
- Thomas Greaves (fl. ca. 1600)
- William Holborne (fl. 1597)
- John Holmes (d. 1629)
- John Jenkins (1592–1678)
- Robert Jones (fl. 1597–1615)
- George Kirbye (c. 1565–1634)
- Henry Lichfild (fl. 1613, d. after 1620)
- John Milton (1562–1647)
- Thomas Morley (1557–1603)
- John Mundy (ca. 1555–1630)
- Peter Philips (ca. 1560–1628; lived and published in the Netherlands, but wrote in an English style)
- Francis Pilkington (ca. 1570–1638)
- Thomas Tomkins (1572–1656)
- Thomas Vautor (ca. 1580?)
- John Ward (1571–1638)
- Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623)
- John Wilbye (1574–1638)

This short biographical sketch of Thomas Weelkes summarizes his importance as a composer of English church music and madrigals. It is important to understand that while Weelkes is considered a composer of minor historical significance when compared to the likes of Palestrina or Monteverdi, within the genre of the English madrigal, he is one of the best known composers.

As we've studied the music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, we've focused primarily on vocal music. There is no question that in these two eras, vocal music was viewed as a higher art form. But there certainly was instrumental music that was being composed and performed. And often the purpose of that instrumental music was to accompany dancing. Now, the music of the country dances of common folk was likely still improvised by self-taught local musicians. But dancing was also an important social activity of the nobility and the small but growing middle class. The music for dances at this level of society was more likely to be written out, though often not attributed to a particular composer.

Introduction

During the Renaissance period, there was a distinction between country dances and court dances. Court dances required the dancers to be trained and were often for display and entertainment, whereas country dances could be attempted by anyone. At Court, the formal entertainment would often be followed by many hours of country dances that all present could join in. Dances described as country dances such as Chiarantana or Chiaranzana remained popular over a long period—over two centuries in the case of this dance. A Renaissance dance can be likened to a ball.

Knowledge of court dances has survived better than that of country dances, as they were collected by dancing masters in manuscripts and later in printed books. The earliest surviving manuscripts that provide detailed dance instructions are from 15th-century Italy. The earliest printed dance manuals come from late 16th-century France and Italy. The earliest dance descriptions in England come from the Gresley manuscript, ca. 1500, found in the Derbyshire Record Office, D77 Box 38, pp. 51–79. These have been recently published as *Cherwell Thy Wyne (Show Your Joy): Dances of Fifteenth-Century England from the Gresley Manuscript*. The first printed English source appeared in 1652, the first edition of Playford.

The dances in these manuals are extremely varied in nature. They range from slow, stately dances (bassa dance, pavane, allemande) to fast, lively dances (galliard, coranto, canario). The former, in which the dancers' feet did not leave the ground, were styled the *dance basse* while energetic dances with leaps and lifts were called the *haute dance*. Some were choreographed; others were improvised on the spot.

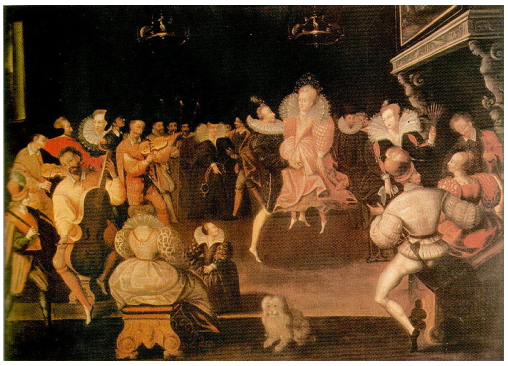


Figure 1. French painting of the volta, from Penshurst Place, Kent, often wrongly assumed to be of Elizabeth I.

One dance for couples, a form of the galliard called lavolta, involved a rather intimate hold between the man and woman, with the woman being lifted into the air while the couple made a 3/4 turn. Other dances, such as branles or bransles, were danced by many people in a circle or line.

Another popular Renaissance dance is the "whip." This dance is performed by raising one's leg in the air, bringing it down, and holding one's arm out to the side. This dance was commonly performed in lines or groups of men and even sometimes women. Many variations of this dance exist, and this dance is still commonly practiced today!

Fifteenth-Century Italian Dance

Our knowledge of 15th-century Italian dances comes mainly from the surviving works of three Italian dance masters: Domenico da Piacenza, Antonio Cornazzano, and Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro. Their work deals with similar steps and dances, though some evolution can be seen. The main types of dances described are bassa danze and *balletti*. These are the earliest European dances to be well documented, as we have a reasonable knowledge of the choreographies, steps, and music used.

To succeed on listening exams, you need to do more than just listen to the overall sound of a piece. You need to dig down into the music with your ears and hear what is going on in the music. To do this, you should be constantly asking yourself the question, What am I hearing? Can you discern the texture, the instrumentation, the tempo, the form, and the melodic style? Often there will be one single characteristic that will give away the genre or at least enable you to eliminate all but a couple of possibilities. This, of course, assumes that you have done your homework and know what to be listening for. This document is designed to help you train your ear to listen for some of those telltale characteristics.

You will need to study the characteristics of each piece that will enable you to recognize that piece when you hear it. Often it's best to learn how to identify the genre first. Every genre has certain general characteristics. If you can recognize them, that will often make identification of the specific title and composer much easier.

In most of the periods of history, there is a clear dividing line that will enable you to eliminate around half of the genres you are listening to: vocal vs. instrumental. For example, later in the semester when we study the Classical period, if you hear someone singing, you know the piece cannot be a symphony or string quartet. In

the medieval and Renaissance periods, however, there just was not much instrumental music that was written down. Because of that, we don't have the benefit of grouping our pieces by whether they are instrumental or vocal; all but two of them involve singing. That said, those two strictly instrumental works will stand out so much that they are probably a good place to start.

Remember, the question that should always be in your mind during a listening exam is, "What am I hearing?"

I Hear Instruments Only, No Singing

There are only two pieces you could be listening to. Both are examples of anonymously composed Renaissance dance music, and so only the title will change. I've listed the title, composer, and genre information for both pieces. Below that, we'll delve into what you should listen for in order to tell them apart.

- *Pavane* by Anonymous; a renaissance dance
- *Galliard* by Anonymous; a renaissance dance

There are two clear characteristics to listen for when trying to tell which one of the dances you're hearing: meter and instrumentation. Meter refers to the organization of the beats. As you tap your foot to the beat, you'll notice that some beats are stronger than others—important moments in the music will seem to line up with those stronger beats. Try to determine whether the beats are grouped as strong-weak-strong-weak a (duple meter) or a strong-weak-weak-strong-weak-weak (triple). *Pavane* is duple and *Galliard* is triple. Triple meter dances tend to have a more lively and fun quality to them, while duple meter dances tend to be more stately and serious sounding. This is certainly the case with these two pieces, so listen for the emotion of the piece as another clue to the meter. Next, each dance is performed by different instruments. *Pavane* begins with a hand drum introduction. Then a group of instruments plays through the dance's melody once. Most of these instruments are relatively loud winds: shawms (early oboes) and sackbuts (early trombones). This makes for a fairly strong sound. Next, the tune is played through again by a vielle (early violin) with lute (early guitar) accompaniment. Then the initial group plays through the piece one more time, the hand drum keeping a steady beat the entire time. By contrast, *Galliard* is performed entirely by softer flutes, with a tambourine providing an underlying rhythmic accompaniment.

I Hear Singing and Instruments

Once again, there are only two possible pieces you could be listening to. Both are pieces of medieval secular music, and both feature singing and polyphonic texture. However, they are easily distinguished by the

instrumentation (the various voices and instruments that perform the piece). Because there is a little more to describe, I'll list each piece separately.

- *A Chantar M'er* by Beatriz, Countess of Dia; a troubadour song. Troubadours and Trouveres were solo artists, so this piece features a single female vocalist and two instruments—namely, a vielle and a lute. This is the only piece on the exam sung entirely by a solo female voice. In the beginning, the vielle and the singer take turns presenting the melody and the lute plays with the singer only. On the final verse of the text, the violin plays the tune simultaneously with the singer. Remember that the Countess was writing around 1175 AD, and polyphony was in its early stages at this time. It is not surprising that the texture of this piece, while polyphonic, is quite simple. The only thing Beatriz wrote down was the melody that was to be sung (and in this performance played by the vielle also). Any additional lines were improvised on the spot, which is one reason they were so simple. This provides a contrast with the later chanson. Chansons evolved as a combination of the tradition of the troubadours' secular songs and the more complex polyphony that had developed in the composition of sacred masses and motets. It's also worth mentioning that we really have no idea how these pieces would have been performed in their day. In this performance, the musicians are clearly using a regular beat, though it speeds up and slows down somewhat. However, this is not something indicated in the written music that has survived. It is entirely possible that these pieces would have been performed without a steady pulse, much like a Gregorian chant. I have heard performances of this piece that take that approach. So while you should focus on the specifics of this performance as you prepare for the listening exam, keep in mind that there are many possible ways to perform the piece, since there is no way to know what Beatriz intended.
- *Ce Moys de May* by Guillaume Dufay; a chanson. As was just mentioned, this piece was composed much later and roughly 250 years after *A Chantar M'er*. By this time, polyphonic composition had become more sophisticated. This piece has three composed melodic lines, meaning nothing is improvised, and they are each quite active and involved. This more complex polyphony is one way to recognize this piece as compared to the troubadour song. The lively tempo and active lines will help you distinguish this piece from *A Chantar M'er*, which again is the only other piece with both instruments and voices. The tambourine is a pretty big clue as well. As with the troubadour song, however, there is a lot we don't know about the composer's intent. Did he mean for all three lines to be sung or just the highest part? In our performance, all three lines are both sung and played by instruments, but if you search this piece on Spotify, you'll find other performances where a solo singer performs the top line and the lower lines are played by instruments.

I Hear Singing Only, No Instruments

We all need to find other ways to narrow down the possibilities: there are nine pieces that are performed by voices alone. I think the best characteristic to zero in on during the medieval and Renaissance periods is texture.

In some cases, such as monophony, texture will give you the genre—namely, Gregorian chant. In some others it will greatly narrow down the possible genre choices. Again, ask yourself, What am I hearing?

Monophony

There are only two monophonic pieces on this exam. If you hear monophonic texture, it can only be one of the two chants. Remember that monophonic texture means that everyone is singing the same melodic line, and there's nothing else going on in the music. Imagine if we all sang *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* in class. Even though there would be a lot of us singing, we will all be on the same part or line of music. That's what monophony is, and all chant features this simplest of textures. There are only two chants (and therefore only two examples of monophony) in your listening, so if you can pick up on the texture, you can narrow it down to two pieces: Gradual *Viderunt Omnes* and *O Rubor Sanguinis*. From there, listen to who is performing. They are listed below with some characteristics to listen for that will help you tell them apart.

- Gradual *Viderunt Omnes* by Anonymous; a Gregorian chant. On our recording, this chant is sung by men. You will recall that in the monasteries, all-male establishments, these chants would have been sung on an almost hourly basis. *O Rubor Sanguinis*, on the other hand, is sung by women.
- *O Rubor Sanguinis* by Hildegard of Bingen; a Gregorian chant. Because Hildegard of Bingen established an abbey, a place where the nuns lived and worked, this chant would have been sung by a female chorus just as it is in the performance on our Spotify playlist. That will also make it easy to distinguish from *Viderunt Omnes*.

Polyphony

If you hear a piece where some of the lines are held out and other lines are quite active, then the texture you are hearing is polyphony. There are seven pieces on the listening exam that are entirely vocal (no instruments) and polyphonic. Each of these has distinctive characteristics that will enable you to identify the piece on a listening exam if you know what to listen for. Let's start with two examples of medieval polyphony.

- *Viderunt Omnes* by Perotinus; organum. When polyphonic texture first began to be used in sacred music, it was called organum, and it was quite basic. It began with two parallel melodic lines that moved in lockstep with each other. Gradually, composers began to experiment with ways to make this more interesting, and some of the most significant developments took place in Paris at the Cathedral of Notre Dame. *Viderunt Omnes* is Notre Dame school organum, and it has a very distinctive sound. The low part holds out the notes of a preexisting Gregorian chant for a really, really long time. This creates a drone over which higher parts were composed. These upper parts were very active and used a repeated rhythmic pattern. Because the notes of the original chant are being stretched out, that means the text

proceeds very slowly. The upper voice is therefore singing lots of pitches on each syllable of text. We call that a melisma. The long melismas in the upper voice of Notre Dame–style organum constitute another really obvious characteristic. No other polyphonic genre from this period has such long melismas. I should mention that at about the 7:08 mark, the lower voices become more active. This is a brief exception to what you generally hear in Notre Dame style organum, so I won't use that portion of the piece on the exam. If you get Perotin's *Viderunt Omnes* on your exam, the musical excerpt will feature the long, droning low notes for which Perotin is generally known. Along those same lines, you'll notice that at times this piece reverts back to the original chant. Organum was the practice of embellishing monophonic Gregorian chant with sections of more musically interesting polyphony. When we use the word organum, we are referring to those polyphonic sections, so on an exam, the organum excerpt won't be taken from the chant sections of the overall piece. That would be a trick question, and I don't do trick questions on listening exams. You'll hear the characteristics you need to make the identification.

- Kyrie from *Messe de Nostre Dame* by Guillaume de Machaut; mass. Like *Viderunt Omnes*, this Kyrie from Machaut's most famous mass features alternating sections of monophony and polyphony. Just as in the organum, any exam excerpt will come from the polyphonic sections, as they are what constitute the most historically significant portions of this composition. Unlike the organum, however, the preexisting chant melody on which this piece is based is not held out to nearly the same degree. For this reason, the melismas in this piece are not nearly as long as the ones in the Notre Dame organum. You can hopefully hear how angular and dissonant medieval polyphony is compared to that of the Renaissance. So if you hear the clashing sounds and irregular rhythms of the Middle Ages without the long drones of organum, you're hearing this Kyrie.

Next let's examine two secular pieces from the Renaissance period. Both are madrigals that are clearly meant for entertainment at court, and that makes them stand out. The madrigal genre developed in Italy, and the first piece is an example of the Italian madrigal. The second is from England. The English fell in love with Italian madrigals and then over time adapted the genre into something uniquely English. Both pieces make use of word painting but of course are sung in their respective languages.

- *Ecco Mormorar L'onde* by Claudio Monteverdi; a madrigal. The madrigal genre arose out of a desire to more fully express the imagery and emotion found in poetry. In this text, the poet describes a peaceful seaside landscape at sunrise. Monteverdi composed music that enables us to hear the murmuring waves, feel the gentle laughing breezes, and watch the glowing sunrise (represented in the poem by the Roman goddess Aurora). Monteverdi is so skilled at writing expressive music that you'll almost certainly recognize the piece by the fact that it makes you feel the way you would if you were standing on the peaceful shore at dawn. However, it's also worth noting that because of this desire for expression, the tempo changes to fit the text. In the beginning, the tempo is moderately slow as we hear the murmuring waters. When the text talks about the laughing breezes, the tempo becomes faster. As the sun rises, the

polyphony becomes imitative. Imitation was common in sacred music at the time, so it provides an element of majesty for the arrival of the goddess of the dawn.

- "As Vesta Was" from *Latmos Hill Descending* by Thomas Weelkes; an English madrigal. The genre of this piece really stands out. First of all, it's the only piece in English. I wouldn't rely too much on that, as it's easy to get the language confused in a polyphonic texture (everyone sings different words at the same time), but it is a characteristic that sets it apart from all the others. Second, it is the fastest, happiest-sounding piece on the test. That is really what English madrigals were all about: fun and frolic. In case you are worried that you might get this mixed up with the medieval chanson *Ce Moys de May*, which is also somewhat lively, just remember that our English madrigal is sung a cappella, meaning there is no instrumental accompaniment, while in *Ce Moys*, instruments play along with the voices.

Now the last three polyphonic pieces are probably the most difficult to distinguish, as they are all examples of the Renaissance a cappella style of sacred music. The good news is that if you hear rich, flowing, serene Renaissance polyphony, it can really only be one of these three, so you've narrowed your choices considerably. We'll start with Josquin's motet.

- *Ave Maria* by Josquin des Prez; motet. Josquin had a taste for very clear sections, each section sounding somewhat different than the one before. Some sections feature imitation, meaning a polyphonic texture in which a melodic idea is repeated in every voice part successively. Other sections feature what I like to call dialogue—an imitative texture in which two parts are woven together in a long phrase that is then imitated by two different parts. Finally, there are sections of the Josquin motet that are homophonic in texture in which all the parts move together. This makes the text very clear, as everyone is singing the same syllable of text at the same time. Josquin liked the contrast and variety that these different sections provided. Palestrina, on the other hand, strove for greater consistency; his music just seems to flow continuously from beginning to end. If you hear serene Renaissance polyphony with contrasting sections, it can't be one of the Palestrina pieces. It must be Josquin's motet, *Ave Maria*.
- "Gloria" from *Missa Papae Marcelli* by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina; mass. This movement from the *Missa Papae Marcelli* (or Pope Marcellus Mass) not only avoids contrasting sections; it almost entirely avoids imitation. While there are six voice parts, each part moves in sync with the others. This means that everyone is, for the most part, singing the same words at the same time. This is called homophonic texture. While the Josquin piece has some short sections of homophony, the fact that the "Gloria" is consistently homophonic provides a clear difference between the two that you can hear.
- "Agnus Dei" from *Missa Papae Marcelli* by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina; mass. The Agnus Dei is as consistent in its texture as the Gloria, but the texture is imitative polyphony. However, the imitation in this piece is less obvious than in the Josquin piece because Palestrina made sure that the listener would be able to follow the text. He does this in two ways: the use of long melismas and keeping each phrase of text separate (e.g., the 2nd phrase, qui tollis peccata mundi, doesn't begin until each voice has completed

the 1st phrase, Agnus Dei). This is helpful for us as those long melismas provide a clear contrast with the Gloria, which is much more syllabic. It also means that the Agnus Dei has an even more smooth and flowing quality than the Gloria. So basically, if you have narrowed your choice down to these three pieces, and you hear clearly contrasting sections within the piece, it must be Josquin's motet. If you hear a fairly consistent texture throughout the piece, then you're hearing Palestrina's famous mass, and you need to then figure out which of the two movements it is. At that point, listen for texture (homophony = Gloria; imitative polyphony = Agnus Dei) and overall text setting (syllabic = Gloria; melismatic = Agnus Dei).

I hope this has been helpful in training your ears for what to listen to. Please don't think that you can read these tips once and then recognize these characteristics during the listening exam without any additional preparation. It takes a lot of practice to hear some of these things, especially some of the details that are not immediately apparent on the surface of the music. You'll want to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the contents of this sheet so that you're not wasting time looking things up during the exam. One thing I do suggest you look at during the exam is this final table below. During the exam, double-check this list after you've selected your answer (title, composer, and genre) for each question. That won't cost you much time, but it will help prevent mistakes where you accidentally clicked on the wrong composer or genre for a piece you recognized. Good luck on the test!

Titles, Composers, and Genres for the Medieval and Renaissance Music Exam

Title	**Composer**	**Genre**
Pavane	Anonymous	Renaissance Dance
Galliard	Anonymous	Renaissance Dance
A Chantar M'er	Beatriz, Countess of Dia	Troubadour Song
Ce Moys de May	Guillaume Dufay	Chanson
Gradual *Viderunt Omnes*	Anonymous	Gregorian Chant
O Rubor Sanguinis	Hildegard of Bingen	Gregorian Chant
Viderunt Omnes	Perontinus	Organum
Kyrie from *Messe de Nostre Dame*	Perotin	Mass
Ecco Mormorar L'onde	Claudio Monteverdi	Madrigal
"As Vesta Was" from *Latmos Hill Descending*	Thomas Weelkes	English Madrigal
Ave Maria	Josquin des Prez	Motet
"Gloria" from *Missa Papae Marcelli*	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina	Mass
"Agnus Dei" from *Missa Papae Marcelli*	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina	Mass

14.

CHAPTER 14: BAROQUE AND CLASSICAL MUSIC

Introduction to Baroque Music

This section contains materials that will give you a general overview of the period. You'll also find an introduction to some of the musical terms that you'll encounter in almost any piece of Baroque music.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: Introduction to Baroque Music
- The Baroque Period
- More on the Baroque Period
- Basso Continuo
- Doctrine of the affections

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#oembed-1

Music of the Baroque Period

The Baroque period in European music lasted from about 1600 to about 1750. It was preceded by the Renaissance and followed by the Classical period. It was during the Baroque that the major/minor tonal system that still dominates Western music was established. This period is best known for the complex counterpoint of the mature Baroque, as typified by the work of Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel.

Historical Background

This was the European period that is often called the Age of Reason. Brilliant minds such as Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, Isaac Newton, René Descartes, and Francis Bacon were laying the foundations for modern science and mathematics. Impressed with the insights that were gained in those fields, other influential thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke sought to apply similar strict rules of observation and reasoning to philosophy and political science. Many historians believe that this was a critical period that set Europe on its course away from the static or backward-looking viewpoints of the Middle Ages and Renaissance and toward the forward-momentum stance that led inexorably to our modern world.

There are discipline and order underlying much of Baroque music, perhaps reflecting the ideals of the age of reason. In particular, the orderly progression of the harmony and the discipline of complex counterpoint are hallmarks of this era. Yet Baroque composers also displayed a very strong interest in expressing emotions or affections through music. The fantasies and toccatas exhibit a freedom of expression that has very little to do with reason, and there is no mistaking the joy, pathos, or passion expressed in much of the era's most popular works. Even the more staid religious works often seek to express an affective element of mysticism or massive grandeur.

This new exploration of emotion in music may have had its origins in another important historical influence on the music of this period. Previously, most composers were employed by the church, which usually, and often severely, limited their freedom to experiment. During the Baroque period, although churches were still important employers for many composers, the nobility became much more active patrons of music, and their courts became important venues for performances. This era thus saw a flowering of secular (nonchurch) musical forms, compositions for specific instruments (previously a rarity), and experimentation with harmony, rhythm, and form as well as affect that greatly and permanently altered the musical landscape.

Musical Background, Development, and Influence

The Renaissance Springboard

The Baroque is the earliest period in European music whose music is still widely heard. This is probably because music before this period has an exotic, unfamiliar sound to most modern Western listeners. The music of the Middle Ages was modal rather than tonal; in other words, it was not based on chords and harmonies in major and minor keys. Most people strongly prefer the musical tradition that they grew up hearing; it makes sense to them in a way that unfamiliar traditions do not. In a fundamental way, the Baroque marked the beginning of our familiar tradition.

One of the most obvious differences that you can hear even if you don't realize it or can't explain it in medieval music is the lack of thirds, the interval that modern (triadic) chords are built from. Medieval music

was based instead on the intervals of the perfect fifth and perfect fourth. This gives early music an open, hollow texture and harmonies that are unfamiliar to the modern ear.

It was during the Renaissance that thirds began to be used more often, particularly in the parallel-thirds and parallel-sixths style of fauxbourdon. (Sixths are closely related to thirds in the same way that fourths are closely related to fifths.)

Listen to a phrase accompanied by parallel fifths (medieval-style harmony) and parallel thirds (Baroque-to-modern-style harmony).

The Baroque Sound

The basic sound of the Renaissance was not the parallel harmonies of fauxbourdon but a complex polyphony of equal, independent (i.e., not moving in parallel) voices. The sound most closely associated with the Baroque kept the independent, contrapuntal voices, but with some important differences.

The most important change, as mentioned above, was the development during this era of tonal harmony. The composers of the mature Baroque were not only using major and minor chords but using them in the kinds of chord progressions and with the kinds of cadences that have continued to be used throughout the following centuries to our own times. This is not to say that there were no later changes to the system of harmony developed during the Baroque; the Romantic and early modern eras in particular saw a great deal of experimentation with harmony. The experimentation of the Romantic period expanded the harmonic possibilities inherent within the tonal system; its sound has also strongly influenced subsequent developments, including in popular music. Many modern composers rejected the tonal system altogether, seeking to replace it with other possibilities. Their efforts have been much less influential in other genres, probably since their nontonal offerings are simply too far outside the range of the familiar for most listeners.

Another development of the Baroque period that is still strongly with us was the rise of the bass line. The voices, or lines, of Renaissance music, and of some Baroque counterpoint, were typically equal in importance. But in much of Baroque music, the various parts were rapidly losing their equality. Instead, the highest line (what we hear as the melody) and the lowest line (the bass) became the most important parts, with the middle lines simply filling in the harmony. In fact, harpsichord players were often expected to improvise an accompaniment given only the bass line with some extra notations. This melody-and-bass-dominated texture, with the bass outlining or strongly implying the harmony, still predominates in most Western music genres and styles.

As mentioned above, there were a great variety of musical forms popular with Baroque composers. Some of these, such as the highly contrapuntal fugues and inventions, are closely associated with this period. Others, including fantasies, variations, suites, sonatas, sinfonias, and concertos, proved more influential, with many major composers using, developing, and experimenting with these forms throughout later eras.

Classical Rejections and Continuity

The composers of the Classical period were strongly influenced by the ideals of the Enlightenment, which strongly preferred the natural over the formal and egalitarianism over elitism. Concluding that the complex counterpoint of the Baroque was too formal and elitist, they consciously set out to develop a new style, with simpler, slower-moving harmonies and dominating melodies, that was easier for the public to follow and understand. Although counterpoint certainly did not disappear from music, the true equal-voices-style counterpoint that had been so common in the Renaissance and Baroque became much rarer. (When independent voices were added to music of the Classical and later periods, they were often clearly subjugated to the main melody.) The simpler texture and harmony of the Classical period produced such a markedly different sound that even the casual listener can easily distinguish the typical Baroque piece from the typical Classical.

And yet most other elements of Baroque music were not rejected. The most important element that remained was, of course, tonal harmony. The tendency to emphasize the melody and bass lines was, if anything, intensified in the simpler textures of the Classical period. Also, many of the forms and ensembles developed during the Baroque were adopted and developed and expanded in the Classical and later periods.

Here is another overview and summary of the Baroque period; however, this reading contains more information on the early years of the Baroque. Pay special attention to the references to the Florentine Camerata, a group of scholar-musicians in Florence, Italy. Their discussions were particularly influential in the development of a new style of music that marks the beginning of the Baroque.

The composer timeline near the end of this page is a handy resource. I want you to get a sense of the number of significant composers that we just don't have time to study. It's also a handy index to the composers we do reference in our reading materials. If you're interested in specific composers, feel free to do an internet search to find more information about them.

There is also a list of instruments common in this period. You don't need to study the instruments individually; however, as you come across references to different instruments in later readings (instrumental music becomes much more important in the Baroque than it was in the Renaissance), you'll have this as a glossary that you can refer to.

Introduction

Baroque music is a style of Western art music composed from approximately 1600 to 1750. This era followed the Renaissance and was followed in turn by the Classical era. The word *baroque* comes from the Portuguese word *barroco*, meaning *misshapen pearl*, a negative description of the ornate and heavily ornamented music of this period. Later, the name came to apply also to the architecture of the same period.

Baroque music forms a major portion of the "classical music" canon, being widely studied, performed, and listened to. Composers of the Baroque era include Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel, Alessandro Scarlatti, Domenico Scarlatti, Antonio Vivaldi, Henry Purcell, Georg Philipp Telemann, Jean-Baptiste Lully, Arcangelo Corelli, Tomaso Albinoni, François Couperin, Denis Gaultier, Claudio Monteverdi, Heinrich Schütz, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Jan Dismas Zelenka, and Johann Pachelbel.

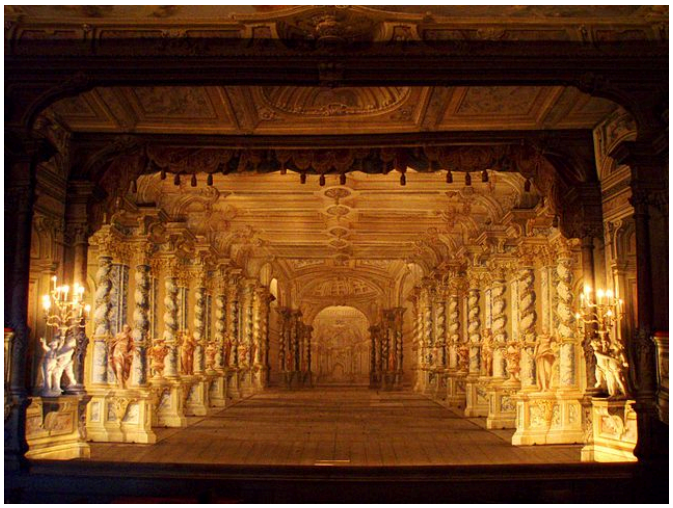


Figure 1. Baroque theater in Český Krumlov.

The Baroque period saw the creation of tonality. During the period, composers and performers used more elaborate musical ornamentation, made changes in musical notation, and developed new instrumental playing techniques. Baroque music expanded the size, range, and complexity of instrumental performance and also established opera, cantata, oratorio, concerto, and sonata as musical genres. Many musical terms and concepts from this era are still in use today.

Etymology

History of European Art Music

The term "Baroque" is generally used by music historians to describe a broad range of styles from a wide geographic region, mostly in Europe, composed over a period of approximately 150 years.

Although it was long thought that the word as a critical term was first applied to architecture, in fact it appears earlier in reference to music in an anonymous, satirical review of the premiere in October 1733 of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* printed in the *Mercure de France* in May 1734. The critic implied that the novelty in this opera was "du baroque," complaining that the music lacked coherent melody, was filled with unremitting dissonances, constantly changed key and meter, and speedily ran through every compositional device.

The systematic application by historians of the term "baroque" to music of this period is a relatively recent development. In 1919, Curt Sachs became the first to apply the five characteristics of Heinrich Wafflin's theory of the Baroque systematically to music. Critics were quick to question the attempt to transpose Wafflin's categories to music, however, and in the second quarter of the 20th century, independent attempts were made by Manfred Bukofzer (in Germany and, after his immigration, in America) and by Suzanne Clercx-Lejeune (in Belgium) to use autonomous, technical analysis rather than comparative abstractions in order to avoid the adaptation of theories based on the plastic arts and literature to music. All of these efforts resulted

in appreciable disagreement about time boundaries of the period, especially concerning when it began. In English, the term acquired currency only in the 1940s, in the writings of Bukofzer and Paul Henry Lang.

As late as 1960, there was still considerable dispute in academic circles, particularly in France and Britain, whether it was meaningful to lump together music as diverse as that of Jacopo Peri, Domenico Scarlatti, and J. S. Bach under a single rubric. Nevertheless, the term has become widely used and accepted for this broad range of music. It may be helpful to distinguish the Baroque from both the preceding (Renaissance) and following (Classical) periods of musical history.

History

The Baroque period is divided into three major phases: early, middle, and late. Although they overlap in time, they are conventionally dated from 1580 to 1630, from 1630 to 1680, and from 1680 to 1730.

Early Baroque Music (1580–1630)

The Florentine Camerata was a group of humanists, musicians, poets, and intellectuals in late Renaissance Florence who gathered under the patronage of Count Giovanni de' Bardi to discuss and guide trends in the arts, especially music and drama. In reference to music, they based their ideals on a perception of Classical (especially ancient Greek) musical drama that valued discourse and oration. As such, they rejected their contemporaries' use of polyphony and instrumental music and discussed such ancient Greek music devices as monody, which consisted of a solo singing accompanied by a kithara. The early realizations of these ideas, including Jacopo Peri's *Dafne* and *L'Euridice*, marked the beginning of opera, which in turn was somewhat of a catalyst for Baroque music.

Concerning music theory, the more widespread use of *figured bass* (also known as *thorough bass*) represents the developing importance of harmony as the linear underpinnings of polyphony. Harmony is the end result of counterpoint, and figured bass is a visual representation of those harmonies commonly employed in musical performance. Composers began concerning themselves with harmonic progressions and also employed the tritone, perceived as an unstable interval, to create dissonance. Investment in harmony had also existed among certain composers in the Renaissance, notably Carlo Gesualdo; however, the use of harmony directed toward tonality, rather than modality, marks the shift from the Renaissance into the Baroque period. This led to the idea that chords, rather than notes, could provide a sense of closure and one of the fundamental ideas that became known as tonality.

By incorporating these new aspects of composition, Claudio Monteverdi furthered the transition from the Renaissance style of music to that of the Baroque period. He developed two individual styles of composition—the heritage of Renaissance polyphony (prima pratica) and the new basso continuo technique of the Baroque (seconda pratica). With the writing of the operas *L'Orfeo* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea,* among others, Monteverdi brought considerable attention to the new genre of opera.

Middle Baroque Music (1630–1680)

The rise of the centralized court is one of the economic and political features of what is often labeled the Age of Absolutism, personified by Louis XIV of France. The style of the palace and the court system of manners and arts he fostered became the model for the rest of Europe. The realities of rising church and state patronage created the demand for organized public music as the increasing availability of instruments created the demand for chamber music.

The middle Baroque period in Italy is defined by the emergence of the cantata, oratorio, and opera during the 1630s and a new concept of melody and harmony that elevated the status of the music to one of equality with the words, which formerly had been regarded as preeminent. The florid, coloratura monody of the early Baroque gave way to a simpler, more polished melodic style. These melodies were built from short, cadentially delimited ideas often based on stylized dance patterns drawn from the sarabande or the courante. The harmonies, too, might be simpler than in the early Baroque monody, and the accompanying bass lines were more integrated with the melody, producing a contrapuntal equivalence of the parts that later led to the device of an initial bass anticipation of the aria melody.

This harmonic simplification also led to a new formal device of the differentiation of recitative and aria. The most important innovators of this style were the Romans Luigi Rossi and Giacomo Carissimi, who were primarily composers of cantatas and oratorios, respectively, and the Venetian Francesco Cavalli, who was principally an opera composer. Later important practitioners of this style include Antonio Cesti, Giovanni Legrenzi, and Alessandro Stradella.

Figure 2. Jean-Baptiste Lully.

The middle Baroque had absolutely no bearing at all on the theoretical work of Johann Fux, who systematized the strict counterpoint characteristic of earlier ages in his *Gradus ad Parnassum* (1725).

One preeminent example of a court style composer is Jean-Baptiste Lully. He purchased patents from the monarchy to be the sole composer of operas for the king and to prevent others from having operas staged. He completed 15 lyric tragedies and left unfinished *Achille et Polyxne*.

Musically, he did not establish the string-dominated norm for orchestras, which was inherited from the Italian opera, and the characteristically French five-part disposition (violins, violas in hautes-contre, tailles and quintes sizes and bass violins) had been used in the ballet from the time of Louis XIII. He did, however, introduce this ensemble to the lyric theater, with the upper parts often doubled by recorders, flutes, and oboes and the bass by bassoons. Trumpets and kettledrums were frequently added for heroic scenes.

Arcangelo Corelli is remembered as influential for his achievements on the other side of musical technique as a violinist who organized violin technique and pedagogy and in purely instrumental music, particularly his advocacy and development of the concerto grosso. Whereas Lully was ensconced at court, Corelli was one of the first composers to publish widely and have his music performed all over Europe. As with Lully's stylization and organization of the opera, the concerto grosso is built on strong contrasts; sections alternate between those played by the full orchestra and those played by a smaller group. Dynamics were "terraced"—that is, with a sharp transition from loud to soft and back again. Fast sections and slow sections were juxtaposed against each other. Numbered among his students is Antonio Vivaldi, who later composed hundreds of works based on the principles in Corelli's trio sonatas and concerti.

Figure 3. Arcangelo Corelli.

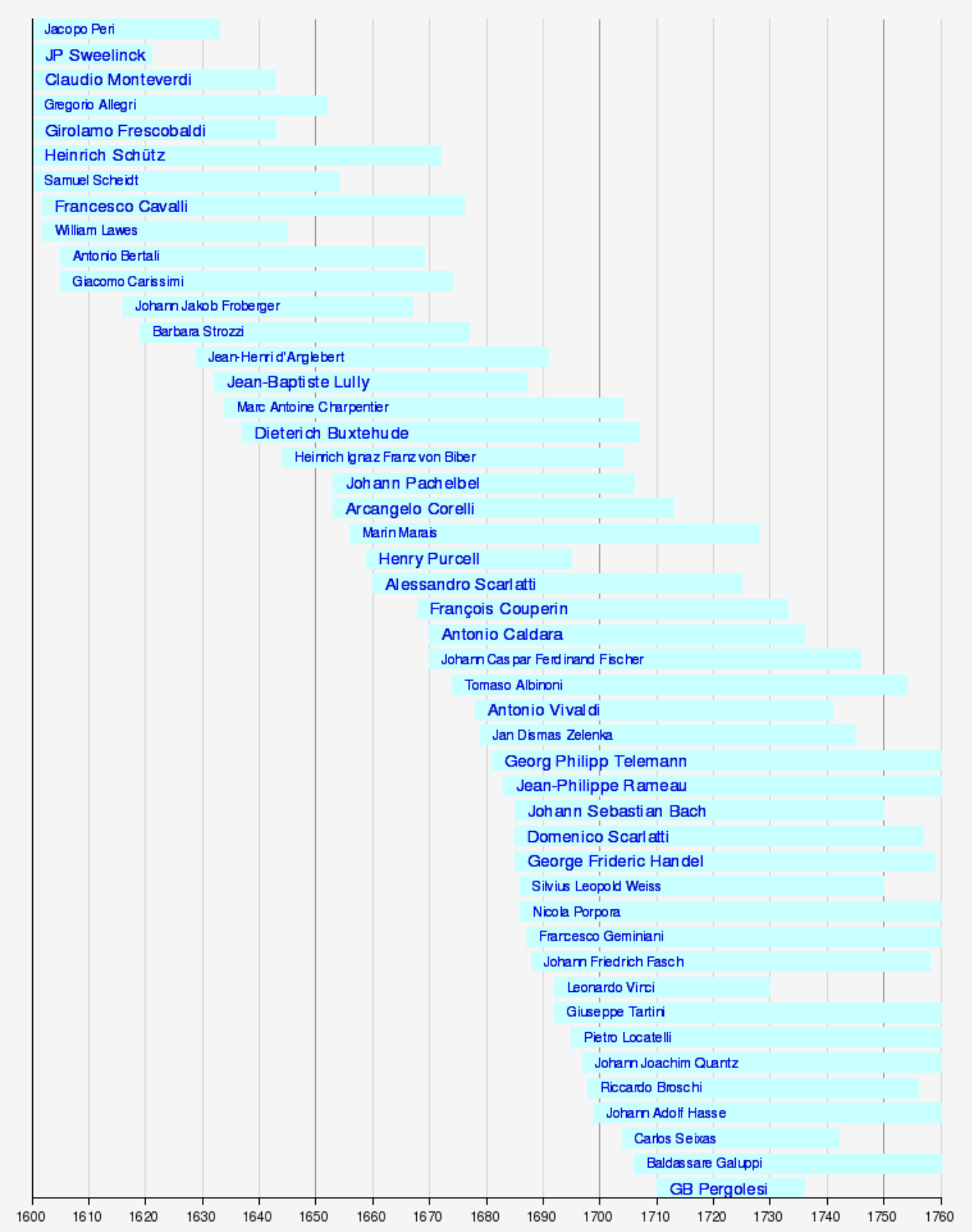
In contrast to these composers, Dieterich Buxtehude was not a creature of court but instead was a church musician, holding the posts of organist and Werkmeister at the Marienkirche at Lübeck. His duties as Werkmeister involved acting as the secretary, treasurer, and business manager of the church, while his position as organist included playing for all the main services, sometimes in collaboration with other instrumentalists or vocalists, who were also paid by the church. Entirely outside of his official church duties, he organized and directed a concert series known as the Abendmusiken, which included performances of sacred dramatic works regarded by his contemporaries as the equivalent of operas.

Late Baroque Music (1680–1730)

Through the work of Johann Fux, the Renaissance style of polyphony was made the basis for the study of composition.

A continuous worker, Handel borrowed from others and often recycled his own material. He was also known for reworking pieces such as the famous *Messiah*, which premiered in 1742, for available singers and musicians.

Timeline of Baroque Composers



Baroque Instruments

Strings

- Violino piccolo
- Violin
- Viol
- Viola
- Viola d'amore
- Viola pomposa
- Tenor violin
- Cello
- Contrabass
- Lute
- Theorbo
- Archlute
- Angelique
- Mandolin
- Guitar
- Harp
- Hurdy-gurdy

Figure 4. Baroque instruments, including hurdy-gurdy, harpsichord, bass viol, lute, violin, and guitar.

Woodwinds

- Baroque flute
- Chalumeau
- Cortol (also known as Cortholt, Curtall, Oboe family)
- Dulcian
- Musette de cour
- Baroque oboe
- Rackett
- Recorder
- Bassoon

Brasses

- Cornett

- Natural horn
- Baroque trumpet
- Tromba da tirarsi (also called *tromba spezzata*)
- Flatt trumpet
- Serpent
- Sackbut (16th- and early 17th-century English name for FR: *saquebute*, *saqueboute*; ES: *sacabuche*; IT: *trombone*; MHG: *busaun*, *busne*, *busune* / DE [since the early 17th century] *Posaune*)
- Trombone (English name for the same instrument, from the early 18th century)

Keyboard

- Clavichord
- Tangent piano
- Fortepiano—early version of piano
- Harpsichord
- Organ

Percussion

- Baroque timpani
- Wood snare drum
- Tenor drum
- Tambourine
- Castanets

Styles and Forms

- *Basso continuo is* a kind of continuous accompaniment notated with a new music notation system, figured bass, usually for a sustaining bass instrument and a keyboard instrument
- The concerto and concerto grosso
- Monody is an outgrowth of song
- Homophony is music with one melodic voice and rhythmically similar accompaniment (this and monody are contrasted with the typical Renaissance texture, polyphony)
- Dramatic musical forms like opera, *dramma per musica*
- Combined instrumental-vocal forms, such as the oratorio and cantata
- New instrumental techniques, like *tremolo* and *pizzicato*

- The da capo aria "enjoyed sureness"
- The *ritornello* aria is repeated short instrumental interruptions of vocal passages
- The concertato style is a contrast in sound between groups of instruments
- Extensive ornamentation

Genres

Vocal

- Opera
  - Zarzuela
  - Opera seria
  - Opera comique
  - Opera-ballet
- Masque
- Oratorio
- Passion (music)
- Cantata
- Mass (music)
- Anthem
- Monody
- Chorale

Instrumental

- Chorale composition
- Concerto grosso
- Fugue
- Suite
  - Allemande
  - Courante
  - Sarabande
  - Gigue
  - Gavotte
  - Minuet
- Sonata

    - Sonata da camera
    - Sonata da chiesa
    - Trio sonata
- Partita
- Canzona
- Sinfonia
- Fantasia
- Ricercar
- Toccata
- Prelude
- Chaconne
- Passacaglia
- Chorale prelude
- Stylus fantasticus

This page discusses a musical practice found in almost every Baroque piece: the use of basso continuo. With the end of the Baroque period, continuo fell out of fashion and was rarely heard in the music of the Classical era and beyond. The exception to this was in secco recitative in Classical opera, which continued to make use of sparse, improvised harmony on the harpsichord, though not of the harpsichord-cello pairing of Baroque continuo. This means that the presence of a basso continuo line in a piece of music is a strong indication that the piece is from the Baroque period.

The text in this reading is from a larger article about figured bass. Figured bass is a system of numbers and symbols written beneath the continuo line that indicated the harmonies that were to be improvised by the instrument playing the chords, usually the harpsichord. While figured bass is an important part of the practice of basso continuo, and you should be familiar with that definition, it's not necessary in this class to dig any deeper into the music theory behind figured bass. Your main concern should be to understand the role of continuo in Baroque music and the instruments that most often performed it, so the information on this page will suffice, unless you wish to study the topic in greater depth for your own information.

Basso Continuo

Basso continuo parts, almost universal in the Baroque era (1600–1750), provided the harmonic structure of the music. The phrase is often shortened to *continuo*, and the instrumentalists playing the continuo part, if more than one, are called the *continuo group*. The titles of many Baroque works make mention of the continuo section, such as J. S. Bach's Concerto for Two Violins, Strings, and Continuo in D Minor.

The makeup of the continuo group is often left to the discretion of the performers, and practice varied enormously within the Baroque period. At least one instrument capable of playing chords must be included,

such as a harpsichord, organ, lute, oboe, guitar, regal, or harp. In addition, any number of instruments that play in the bass register may be included, such as cello, double bass, bass viol, or bassoon. The most common combination, at least in modern performances, is harpsichord and cello for instrumental works and secular vocal works, such as operas, and organ for sacred music. Typically performers match the instrument families used in the full ensemble: including bassoon when the work includes oboes or other winds but restricting it to cello and/or double bass if only strings are involved. Harps, lutes, and other handheld instruments are more typical of early 17th-century music. Sometimes instruments are specified by the composer: in *L'Orfeo* (1607), Monteverdi calls for an exceptionally varied instrumentation, with multiple harpsichords and lutes, with a bass violin in the pastoral scenes, followed by lamenting to the accompaniment of *organo di legno* and *chitarrone*, while Charon stands watch to the sound of a regal.

The keyboard (or other chording instrument) player *realizes* a continuo part by playing, in addition to the indicated bass notes, upper notes to complete chords, either determined ahead of time or improvised in performance. The figured bass notation, described below, is a guide, but performers are also expected to use their musical judgment and the other instruments or voices as a guide, and experienced players often incorporate motives found in the other instrumental parts. Modern editions of such music usually supply a realized keyboard part, fully written out for a player, in place of improvisation. With the rise in historically informed performance, however, the number of performers who improvise their parts, as Baroque players would have done, has increased.

Basso continuo, though an essential structural and identifying element of the Baroque period, continued to be used in many works, especially sacred choral works, of the Classical period (up to around 1800). An example is C. P. E. Bach's Concerto in D minor for flute, strings, and basso continuo. Examples of its use in the 19th century are rarer, but they do exist: masses by Anton Bruckner, Beethoven, and Franz Schubert, for example, have a basso continuo part for an organist to play.

Here you'll find a brief explanation of the doctrine of the affections. Like the use of basso continuo, the practice of composing music that expressed a single emotion (affect) is unique to the Baroque era. Later composers wanted the freedom to express contrasting emotions in a single piece of music. One of the most noticeable results of Baroque composers' adherence to the Doctrine of Affections was the practice of breaking a longer text up into shorter phrases and setting each as a separate movement with music designed to express a single emotion or affect.

For example, the *Utrecht Te Deum* by George Frideric Handel (a late Baroque composer) consists of ten separate movements, while the *Te Deum No. 2 in C* by Franz Joseph Haydn (a composer of the late Classical era) is a single piece of music with no separate movements. Note that those two texts are not exactly the same. Handel's *Te Deum* is in English, while Haydn's is in the original Latin. But they serve to illustrate the impact of the Doctrine of Affections on music composition in the Baroque.

Introduction

The **doctrine of the affections**, also known as the *doctrine of affects*, *doctrine of the passions*, *theory of the affects*, or by the German term **Affektenlehre** (after the German *Affekt*; plural *Affekte*) was a theory in the aesthetics of painting, music, and theater widely used in the Baroque era (1600–1750) (Harnoncourt 1983; Harnoncourt 1988). Literary theorists of that age, by contrast, rarely discussed the details of what was called "pathetic composition," taking it for granted that a poet should be required to "wake the soul by tender strokes of art" (Rogerson 1953, p. 68). The doctrine was derived from ancient theories of rhetoric and oratory (Buelow 2001). Some pieces or movements of music express one *Affekt* throughout; however, a skillful composer like Johann Sebastian Bach could express different affects within a movement (Boetticher 2010).

History and Definition

The doctrine of the affections was an elaborate theory based on the idea that the passions could be represented by their outward visible or audible signs. It drew largely on elements with a long previous history, but first came to general prominence in the mid-17th century among the French scholar-critics associated with the Court of Versailles, helping to place it at the center of artistic activity for all of Europe (Rogerson 1953, p. 70). The term itself, however, was only first devised in the 20th century by German musicologists Hermann Kretzschmar, Harry Goldschmidt, and Arnold Schering, to describe this aesthetic theory (Buelow 2001; Nagley and Buji, 2002).

René Descartes held that there were six basic affects, which can be combined together into numerous intermediate forms (Descartes 1649, p. 94):

1. *Admiration* (admiration)
2. *Amour* (love)
3. *Haine* (hatred)
4. *Désir* (desire)
5. *Joie* (joy)
6. *Tristesse* (sorrow)

Another authority also mentions sadness, anger, and jealousy (Buelow 2001).

Lorenzo Giacomini (1552–1598) in his *Orationi e discorsi* defined an affection as "a spiritual movement or operation of the mind in which it is attracted or repelled by an object it has come to know as a result of an imbalance in the animal spirits and vapours that flow continually throughout the body" (Giacomini Tebalducci Malespini 1597).

"Affections are not the same as emotions; however, they are a spiritual movement of the mind" (Palisca 1991, p. 3).

Introduction to Vocal Music in the Baroque Period

A prominent Baroque proponent of the doctrine of the affections was Johann Mattheson (Poultney 1996). This section contains materials that will focus on the major genres of vocal music you'll encounter in your study of the Baroque period—namely, opera, cantata, and oratorio—and some of the composers who developed those genres. Because Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel are generally viewed as the towering masters of the late Baroque, readings focusing on their lives and works of vocal music will be in a separate section.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: Vocal Music in the Baroque
- Opera
- Monody
- Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*
- Henry Purcell
- *Dido and Aeneas*
- Cantata
- Oratorio

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#oembed-2

Early Baroque Vocal Music from **Lumen Learning**

Perhaps the single greatest musical development of the Baroque period is the creation of a new genre of vocal music: opera. As with most genres in this era, opera undergoes significant stylistic evolution from its origins in the early 1600s to the opera seria of Handel in the 1730s. Please pay special attention to the following terms (if you would like to learn more about them, follow the links): *libretto*, *recitative* (both forms: *secco* and *accompagnato*), and *aria*.

Opera

Opera (English plural: *operas*; Italian plural: *opere*) is an art form in which singers and musicians perform

a dramatic work combining text (called a *libretto*) and musical score, usually in a theatrical setting. Opera incorporates many of the elements of spoken theater, such as acting, scenery, and costumes and sometimes includes dance. The performance is typically given in an opera house, accompanied by an orchestra or smaller musical ensemble.

Opera is part of the Western Classical music tradition. It started in Italy at the end of the 16th century (with Jacopo Peri's lost *Dafne*, produced in Florence in 1598) and soon spread through the rest of Europe: Schatz in Germany, Lully in France, and Purcell in England all helped to establish their national traditions in the 17th century. In the 18th century, Italian opera continued to dominate most of Europe (except France), attracting foreign composers such as Handel. Opera seria was the most prestigious form of Italian opera, until Gluck reacted against its artificiality with his "reform" operas in the 1760s. Today the most renowned figure of late 18th century opera is Mozart, who began with opera seria but is most famous for his Italian comic operas, especially *The Marriage of Figaro (Le Nozze Di Figaro), Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*, as well as *The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflute)*, a landmark in the German tradition.

Figure 1. The Palais Garnier of the Paris Opera, one of the world's most famous opera houses.

Operatic Terminology

The words of an opera are known as the *libretto* (literally "little book"). Some composers, notably Richard Wagner, have written their own libretti; others have worked in close collaboration with their librettists—e.g., Mozart with Lorenzo Da Ponte. Traditional opera, often referred to as "number opera," consists of two modes of singing: recitative, the plot-driving passages sung in a style designed to imitate and emphasize the inflections of speech, and aria (an "air" or formal song), in which the characters express their emotions in a more structured melodic style. Duets, trios, and other ensembles often occur, and choruses are used to comment on the action. In some forms of opera, such as Singspiel, opera comique, operetta, and semi-opera, the recitative is mostly replaced by spoken dialogue. Melodic or semi-melodic passages occurring in the midst of, or instead of, recitative are also referred to as arioso. During the Baroque and Classical periods, recitative could appear in two basic forms: *secco* (dry) recitative, sung with a free rhythm dictated by the accent of the words, accompanied only by *continuo*, which was usually a harpsichord and a cello; or *accompagnato* (also known as *instrumentato),* in which the orchestra provided accompaniment. By the 19th century, *accompanto* had gained the upper hand, the orchestra played a much bigger role, and Richard Wagner revolutionized opera by abolishing almost all distinction between aria and recitative in his quest for what he termed "endless

melody." Subsequent composers have tended to follow Wagner's example, though some, such as Stravinsky in his *The Rake's Progress*, have bucked the trend. The terminology of the various kinds of operatic voices is described in detail below.

Origins

The Italian word *opera* means "work," in the sense of both the labor done and the result produced. The Italian word derives from the Latin *opera*, a singular noun meaning "work" and also the plural of the noun *opus*. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the Italian word was first used in the sense of a "composition in which poetry, dance, and music are combined" in 1639; the first recorded English usage in this sense dates to 1648.

Dafne by Jacopo Peri was the earliest composition considered opera, as understood today. It was written around 1597, largely under the inspiration of an elite circle of literate Florentine humanists who gathered as the "Camerata de' Bardi." Significantly, *Dafne* was an attempt to revive the classical Greek drama, part of the wider revival of antiquity characteristic of the Renaissance. The members of the Camerata considered that the "chorus" parts of Greek dramas were originally sung, and possibly even the entire text of all roles; opera was thus conceived as a way of "restoring" this situation. *Dafne* is unfortunately lost. A later work by Peri, *Euridice*, dating from 1600, is the first opera score to have survived to the present day. The honor of being the first opera still to be regularly performed, however, goes to Claudio Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, composed for the court of Mantua in 1607. The Mantua court of the Gonzagas, employers of Monteverdi, played a significant role in the origin of opera employing not only court singers of the concerto delle donne (till 1598) but also one of the first actual "opera singers": Madama Europa.

The Baroque Era

Opera did not remain confined to court audiences for long. In 1637, the idea of a "season" (Carnival) of publicly attended operas supported by ticket sales emerged in Venice. Monteverdi had moved to the city from Mantua and composed his last operas, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, for the Venetian theater in the 1640s. His most important follower, Francesco Cavalli, helped spread opera throughout Italy.

Figure 2. Teatro Argentina (Panini, 1747, Musie du Louvre).

In these early Baroque operas, broad comedy was blended with tragic elements in a mix that jarred some educated sensibilities, sparking the first of opera's many reform movements, sponsored by the Arcadian Academy, which came to be associated with the poet Metastasio, whose libretti helped crystallize the genre of opera seria, which became the leading form of Italian opera until the end of the 18th century. Once the Metastasian ideal had been firmly established, comedy in Baroque-era opera was reserved for what came to be called opera buffa. Before such elements were forced out of opera seria, many libretti had featured a separately unfolding comic plot as sort of an "opera-within-an-opera." One reason for this was an attempt to attract members of the growing merchant class, newly wealthy but still not as cultured as the nobility, to the public opera houses. These separate plots were almost immediately resurrected in a separately developing tradition that partly derived from the commedia dell'arte, a long-flourishing improvisatory stage tradition of Italy.

Just as intermedi had once been performed in-between the acts of stage plays, operas in the new comic genre of "intermezzi," which developed largely in Naples in the 1710s and 1720s, were initially staged during the intermissions of opera seria. They became so popular, however, that they were soon being offered as separate productions.

Opera seria was elevated in tone and highly stylized in form, usually consisting of *secco* recitative interspersed with long *da capo* arias. These afforded great opportunity for virtuosic singing, and during the golden age of *opera seria* the singer really became the star. The role of the hero was usually written for the castrato voice; castrati such as Farinelli and Senesino, as well as female sopranos such as Faustina Bordoni, became in great demand throughout Europe as *opera seria* ruled the stage in every country except France. Indeed, Farinelli was one of the most famous singers of the 18th century. Italian opera set the Baroque standard. Italian libretti were the norm, even when a German composer like Handel found himself composing the likes of *Rinaldo* and *Giulio Cesare* for London audiences. Italian libretti remained dominant in the Classical period as

well—for example, in the operas of Mozart, who wrote in Vienna near the century's close. Leading Italian-born composers of opera seria include Alessandro Scarlatti, Vivaldi, and Porpora.

Monody

One of the aims of the scholars in the Florentine Camerata was to make the music serve the text. They objected to the obscuring of the text and its meaning that was common in late Renaissance polyphony, and they sought to create a new musical style that would be more expressive and reflective of the text. To do this, they looked back to the traditions of ancient Greek drama or at least to their limited understanding of those traditions. The result of their efforts was the singing style we refer to as monody. Though monody in its strictest form did not remain in use very long, it had enormous influence on the emerging vocal genres of opera, cantata, and oratorio.

Introduction

In music, the term **monody** refers to a solo vocal style distinguished by having a single melodic line and instrumental accompaniment. More specifically, it applies to Italian song of the early 17th century, particularly the period from about 1600 to 1640. The term itself is a recent invention of scholars: no composer of the 17th century ever called a piece a monody. In the Baroque, compositions in monodic style were labeled madrigals, motets, or even concertos (in the earlier sense of "concertato," meaning "with instruments").

In monody, which developed out of an attempt by the Florentine Camerata in the 1580s to restore ancient Greek ideas of melody and declamation (probably with little historical accuracy), a solo voice sings a rhythmically free melodic line in a declamatory style. Early Baroque composers' primary goal in monodic composition was to have the music conform to the natural rhythm and meaning of the text. This was a reaction to the complex polyphony of late Renaissance choral music in which the text was often obscured by the independence of the various lines. This vocal melody was sparsely accompanied by the bass line and improvised chords of the basso continuo instrument pair. The development of monody was one of the defining characteristics of early Baroque practice, as opposed to late Renaissance style, in which groups of voices sang independently and with a greater balance between parts.

LE NVOVE
MVSICHE
DI GIVLIO CACCINI
DETTO ROMANO.
IN FIRENZE
APPRESSO I MARESCOTTI
MDCI.

Figure 1. Caccini, Le Nuove musiche, 1601, title page.

Existing musical genres that adopted the style of monody were the madrigal and the motet, both of which developed into solo forms after 1600.

Contrasting passages in monodies could be more melodic or more declamatory: these two styles of presentation eventually developed into the aria and the recitative, and the overall form merged with the cantata by about 1635.

An important early treatise on monody is contained in Giulio Caccini's song collection *Le nuove musiche* (Florence, 1601).

You have already been introduced to Claudio Monteverdi, whose music straddles the late Renaissance and early Baroque. Now let's explore one of his most significant compositions, *L'Orfeo*, the first opera considered to be a masterwork.

Introduction

L'Orfeo (SV 318), sometimes called ***La favola d'Orfeo***, is an early Baroque *favola in musica*, or opera (sometimes considered late Renaissance), by Claudio Monteverdi, with a libretto by Alessandro Striggio. It is based on the Greek legend of Orpheus and tells the story of his descent to Hades and his fruitless attempt to bring his dead bride Eurydice back to the living world. It was written in 1607 for a court performance during the annual Carnival at Mantua. While the honor of the first-ever opera goes to Jacopo Peri's *Dafne*, and the earliest surviving opera is *Euridice* (also by Peri), *L'Orfeo* has the honor of being the earliest surviving opera that is still regularly performed today.

During the early 17th century, the traditional intermedio, a musical sequence between the acts of a straight play, was evolving into the form of a complete musical drama or "opera." Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* moved this process out of its experimental era and provided the first fully developed example of the new genre. After its initial performance, the work was staged again in Mantua, and possibly in other Italian centers in the next few years. Its score was published by Monteverdi in 1609 and again in 1615. After the composer's death in 1643, the opera went unperformed for many years and was largely forgotten until a revival of interest in the late 19th century led to a spate of modern editions and performances. At first these tended to be unstaged versions within institutes and music societies, but following the first modern dramatized performance in Paris, in 1911, the work began to be seen increasingly often in theaters. After the Second World War, most new editions sought authenticity through the use of period instruments. Many recordings were issued, and the opera was increasingly staged in opera houses. In 2007, the quatercentenary of the premiere was celebrated by performances throughout the world.

In his published score, Monteverdi lists around 41 instruments to be deployed, with distinct groups of instruments used to depict particular scenes and characters. Thus strings, harpsichords, and recorders represent the pastoral fields of Thrace with their nymphs and shepherds, while heavy brass illustrates the underworld and its denizens. Composed at the point of transition from the Renaissance era to the Baroque, *L'Orfeo* employs all the resources then known within the art of music, with particularly daring use of polyphony. The work is not orchestrated as such; in the Renaissance tradition, instrumentalists followed the composer's general instructions but were given considerable freedom to improvise. This separates Monteverdi's work from the later opera canon and makes each performance of *L'Orfeo* a uniquely individual occasion.

Historical Background

Claudio Monteverdi, born in Cremona in 1567, was a musical prodigy who studied under Marc'Antonio Ingegneri, the *maestro di cappella* (head of music) at Cremona Cathedral. After training in singing, strings playing, and composition, Monteverdi worked as a musician in Verona and Milan until, in 1590 or 1591, he secured a post as *suonatore di vivuola* (viola player) at Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga's court at Mantua. Through ability and hard work, Monteverdi rose to become Gonzaga's *maestro della musica* (master of music) in 1601.

Figure 1. Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga, Monteverdi's employer at Mantua.

Vincenzo Gonzaga's particular passion for musical theater and spectacle grew from his family connections with the court of Florence. Toward the end of the 16th century, innovative Florentine musicians were developing the intermedio, a long-established form of musical interlude inserted between the acts of spoken dramas, into increasingly elaborate forms. Led by Jacopo Corsi, these successors to the renowned Camerata were responsible for the first work generally recognized as belonging to the genre of opera: *Dafne*, composed by Corsi and Jacopo Peri and performed in Florence in 1598. This work combined elements of madrigal singing and monody with dancing and instrumental passages to form a dramatic whole. Only fragments of its music still exist, but several other Florentine works of the same period—*Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo* by Emilio de' Cavalieri, Peri's *Euridice*, and Giulio Caccini's identically titled *Euridice*—survive complete. These last two works were the first of many musical representations of the Orpheus myth as recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and as such were direct precursors of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*.

The Gonzaga court had a long history of promoting dramatic entertainment. A century before Duke Vincenzo's time, the court had staged Angelo Poliziano's lyrical drama *La favola di Orfeo*, at least half of which was sung rather than spoken. More recently, in 1598, Monteverdi had helped the court's musical establishment produce Giovanni Battista Guarini's play *Il pastor fido*, described by theater historian Mark Ringer as a "watershed theatrical work" that inspired the Italian craze for pastoral drama. On 6 October 1600, while visiting Florence for the wedding of Maria de' Medici to King Henry IV of France, Duke Vincenzo attended a production of Peri's *Euridice*. It is likely that his principal musicians, including Monteverdi, were also present at this performance. The duke quickly recognized the novelty of this new form of dramatic entertainment and its potential for bringing prestige to those prepared to sponsor it.

Composition

When Monteverdi wrote the music for *L'Orfeo,* he had a thorough grounding in theatrical music. He had been employed at the Gonzaga court for 16 years, much of it as a performer or arranger of stage music, and in 1604, he had written the ballo *Gli amori di Diane ed Endimone* for the 1604-5 Mantua Carnival. The elements from which Monteverdi constructed his first opera score—the aria, the strophic song, recitative, choruses, dances, dramatic musical interlude—were, as conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt has pointed out, not created by him, but "he blended the entire stock of newest and older possibilities into a unity that was indeed new." Musicologist Robert Donington writes similarly: "[The score] contains no element which was not based

on precedent, but it reaches complete maturity in that recently-developed form....Here are words as directly expressed in music as [the pioneers of opera] wanted them expressed; here is music expressing them...with the full inspiration of genius."

Monteverdi states the orchestral requirements at the beginning of his published score, but in accordance with the practice of the day, he does not specify their exact usage. At that time, it was usual to allow each interpreter of the work freedom to make local decisions based on the orchestral forces at their disposal. These could differ sharply from place to place. Furthermore, as Harnoncourt points out, the instrumentalists would all have been composers and would have expected to collaborate creatively at each performance rather than playing a set text. Another practice of the time was to allow singers to embellish their arias. Monteverdi wrote plain and embellished versions of some arias, such as Orfeo's "Possente spirito," but according to Harnoncourt, "it is obvious that where he did not write any embellishments he did not want any sung."

Each act of the opera deals with a single element of the story, and each ends with a chorus. Despite the five-act structure, with two sets of scene changes, it is likely that *L'Orfeo* conformed to the standard practice for court entertainments of that time and was played as a continuous entity, without intervals or curtain descents between acts. It was the contemporary custom for scene shifts to take place in sight of the audience, these changes being reflected musically by changes in instrumentation, key, and style.

Synopsis

The action takes place in two contrasting locations: the fields of Thrace (Acts 1, 2, and 5) and the Underworld (Acts 3 and 4). An instrumental toccata (English: *tucket*, meaning a flourish on trumpets) precedes the entrance of La musica, representing the "spirit of music," who sings a prologue of five stanzas of verse. After a gracious welcome to the audience, she announces that she can, through sweet sounds, "calm every troubled heart." She sings a further paean to the power of music before introducing the drama's main protagonist, Orfeo, who "held the wild beasts spellbound with his song."

Act 1

After La musica's final request for silence, the curtain rises on Act 1 to reveal a pastoral scene. Orfeo and Euridice enter together with a chorus of nymphs and shepherds, who act in the manner of a Greek chorus, commenting on the action both as a group and as individuals. A shepherd announces that this is the couple's wedding day; the chorus responds, first in a stately invocation ("Come, Hymen, O come") and then in a joyful dance ("Leave the mountains, leave the fountains"). Orfeo and Euridice sing of their love for each other before leaving with most of the group for the wedding ceremony in the temple. Those left on stage sing a brief chorus, commenting on how Orfeo used to be one "for whom sighs were food and weeping was drink" before love brought him to a state of sublime happiness.

Act 2

Orfeo returns with the main chorus, and sings with them of the beauties of nature. Orfeo then muses on his former unhappiness but proclaims, "After grief one is more content, after pain one is happier." The mood of contentment is abruptly ended when La messaggera enters, bringing the news that, while gathering flowers, Euridice has received a fatal snakebite. The chorus expresses its anguish: "Ah, bitter happening, ah, impious and cruel fate!" while the Messaggera castigates herself as the bearing of bad tidings ("For ever I will flee, and in a lonely cavern lead a life in keeping with my sorrow"). Orfeo, after venting his grief and incredulity ("Thou art dead, my life, and I am breathing?"), declares his intention to descend into the Underworld and persuade its ruler to allow Euridice to return to life. Otherwise, he says, "I shall remain with thee in the company of death." He departs, and the chorus resumes its lament.

Act 3

Orfeo is guided by Speranza to the gates of Hades. Having pointed out the words inscribed on the gate ("Abandon hope, all ye who enter here"), Speranza leaves. Orfeo is now confronted with the ferryman Caronte, who addresses Orfeo harshly and refuses to take him across the river Styx. Orfeo attempts to persuade Caronte by singing a flattering song to him ("Mighty spirit and powerful divinity"), but the ferryman is unmoved. However, when Orfeo takes up his lyre and plays, Caronte is soothed into sleep. Seizing his chance, Orfeo steals the ferryman's boat and crosses the river, entering the Underworld, while a chorus of spirits reflects that nature cannot defend herself against man: "He has tamed the sea with fragile wood, and disdained the rage of the winds."

Act 4

In the Underworld, Proserpina, Queen of Hades, who has been deeply affected by Orfeo's singing, petitions King Plutone, her husband, for Euridice's release. Moved by her pleas, Plutone agrees on the condition that, as he leads Euridice toward the world, Orfeo must not look back. If he does, "a single glance will condemn him to eternal loss." Orfeo enters, leading Euridice and singing confidently that on that day he will rest on his wife's white bosom. But as he sings, a note of doubt creeps in: "Who will assure me that she is following?" Perhaps Plutone, driven by envy, has imposed the condition through spite? Suddenly distracted by an off-stage commotion, Orfeo looks around; immediately, the image of Euridice begins to fade. She sings, despairingly, "Losest thou me through too much love?" and disappears. Orfeo attempts to follow her but is drawn away by an unseen force. The chorus of spirits sings that Orfeo, having overcome Hades, was in turn overcome by his passions.

Act 5

Back in the fields of Thrace, Orfeo has a long soliloquy in which he laments his loss, praises Euridice's beauty, and resolves that his heart will never again be pierced by Cupid's arrow. An off-stage echo repeats his final phrases. Suddenly, in a cloud, Apollo descends from the heavens and chastises him: "Why dost thou give thyself up as prey to rage and grief?" He invites Orfeo to leave the world and join him in the heavens, where he will recognize Euridice's likeness in the stars. Orfeo replies that it would be unworthy not to follow the counsel of such a wise father, and together they ascend. A shepherds' chorus concludes that "he who sows in suffering shall reap the fruit of every grace," before the opera ends with a vigorous moresca.

Original Libretto Ending

In Striggio's 1607 libretto, Orfeo's Act 5 soliloquy is interrupted not by Apollo's appearance but by a chorus of maenads or Bacchantes wild, drunken women who sing of the "divine fury" of their master, the god Bacchus. The cause of their wrath is Orfeo and his renunciation of women; he will not escape their heavenly anger, and the longer he evades them, the more severe his fate will be. Orfeo leaves the scene, and his destiny is left uncertain, for the Bacchantes devote themselves for the rest of the opera to wild singing and dancing in praise of Bacchus. Early music authority Claude Palisca believes that the two endings are not incompatible; Orfeo evades the fury of the Bacchantes and is then rescued by Apollo.

https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/henry-purcell/ Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:51:59 +0000

Here is a link to a Naxos article on Henry Purcell, a famous, though tragically short-lived, English composer. His operatic compositions were few but represent the development of a mid-Baroque English operatic tradition that was later supplanted when Italian opera was imported to the English stage, most notably by Handel.

Dido and Aeneas

The final aria from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, often referred to as "Dido's Lament," is one of your listening pieces for the Baroque. While scholars and fans of opera would know exactly what piece is indicated by the popular label "Dido's Lament," recitatives and arias are technically titled according to their first line—in this case, "When I am laid in earth."

This aria is unquestionably among the most beautiful arias in the operatic literature. It features an ostinato in the continuo part, known as a "ground bass," and is an example of how an aria does not advance the plot but focuses on the expression of emotion. Your listening example begins with the short recitative "Thy hand Belinda" and then proceeds with the aria.

Background and Context

Before *Dido and Aeneas,* Purcell composed music for several stage works, including nine pieces for Nathaniel Lee's *Theodosius, or The Force of Love* (1680) and eight songs for Thomas d' Urfey's *A Fool's Preferment* (1688). He also composed songs for two plays by Nahum Tate (later the librettist of *Dido and Aeneas*), *The Sicilian Usurper* (1680) and *Cuckold-Haven* (1685). *Dido and Aeneas* was Purcell's first (and only) all-sung opera and derives from the English masque tradition.

Libretto

Originally based on Nahum Tate's play *Brutus of Alba, or The Enchanted Lovers* (1678), the opera is likely, at least to some extent, to be allegorical. The prologue refers to the joy of a marriage between two monarchs, which could refer to the marriage between William and Mary. In a poem of about 1686, Tate alluded to James II as Aeneas, who is misled by the evil machinations of the Sorceress and her witches (representing Roman Catholicism, a common metaphor at the time) into abandoning Dido, who symbolizes the British people. The same symbolism may apply to the opera. This explains the addition of the characters of the Sorceress and the witches, which do not appear in the original *Aeneid*. It would be noble, or at least acceptable, for Aeneas to follow the decree of the Gods but not so acceptable for him to be tricked by ill-meaning spirits.

Although the opera is a tragedy, there are numerous seemingly lighter scenes, such as the First Sailor's song: "Take a boozy short leave of your nymphs on the shore, and silence their mourning with vows of returning, though never intending to visit them more." Harris considers the callousness and cynicism of the song to underline the "moral" of the story, that young women should not succumb to the advances and promises of ardent young men.

Score

No score in Purcell's hand is extant, and the only 17th-century source is a libretto, possibly from the original performance. The earliest extant score, held in the Bodleian Library, was copied no earlier than 1750, well over 60 years after the opera was composed. No later sources follow the act divisions of the libretto, and the music to the prologue is lost. The prologue, the end of the act 2 "Grove" scene, and several dances were almost certainly lost when the opera was divided into parts to be performed as interludes between the acts of spoken plays in the first decade of the 18th century.

The first of the arias to be published separately was "Ah, Belinda" in *Orpheus Britannicus*. The most famous aria of the work is "When I am laid in earth," popularly known as "Dido's Lament." Both arias are formed on a lamento ground bass. "Dido's Lament" has been performed or recorded by artists far from the typical operatic school, such as Klaus Nomi (as "Death"), Ane Brun, and Jeff Buckley. It has also been transcribed or used in many scores, including the soundtrack to the HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers* (renamed "Nixon's Walk"). It is

played annually by a military band at the Cenotaph remembrance ceremony, which takes place on the Sunday nearest to 11 November (Armistice Day) in London's Whitehall.

The music is thought by some to be too simple for Purcell in 1689, but this may simply reflect that the intended performers were schoolchildren. The work is scored for four-part strings and continuo. The fact that the libretto from the Chelsea School performance indicates two dances for guitar, the "Dance Gittars Chacony" in act 1 and the "Gittar Ground a Dance" in the Grove scene of act 2, has led one scholar to suggest that Purcell envisioned a guitar as a primary member of the continuo group for the opera. Music for neither of these dances is extant, and it seems likely that Purcell did not compose them but rather left them to be improvised by the guitarist. Several editions of the opera have been made and have been provided with a continuo realization; a notable, if rather idiosyncratic, edition being that made by Imogen Holst and Benjamin Britten. There are a number of editions with realizations, and the opera's accessibility to amateur performers is a feature that has greatly abetted the growth of its popularity in the latter half of the 20th century. While the Prologue's music has been lost and has not been reconstructed, several realizations of the opera include a solution to the missing *ritornello* at the end of the second act. Known to have been part of the score, it is now performed as a dance taken from other, similar works by Purcell, or invented outright in the same vein, to keep the integrity and continuity of the performance.

Synopsis

Act 1

Dido's court

The opera opens with Dido in her court with her attendants. Belinda is trying to cheer up Dido, but Dido is full of sorrow, saying, "Peace and I are strangers grown." Belinda believes the source of this grief to be the Trojan Aeneas and suggests that Carthage's troubles could be resolved by a marriage between the two. Dido and Belinda talk for a time. Dido fears that her love will make her a weak monarch, but Belinda and the Second Woman reassure her, "The hero loves as well." Aeneas enters the court and is at first received coldly by Dido, but she eventually accepts his proposal of marriage.

Figure 1. *The Meeting of Dido and Aeneas* by Nathaniel Dance-Holland.

Act 2

Scene 1: The cave of the Sorceress

The Sorceress/Sorcerer is plotting the destruction of Carthage and its queen and summons companions to help with evil plans. The plan is to send her "trusted elf" disguised as Mercury, someone to whom Aeneas will surely listen, to tempt him to leave Dido and sail to Italy. This would leave Dido heartbroken, and she would surely die. The chorus join in with terrible laughter, and the Enchantresses decide to conjure up a storm to make Dido and her train leave the grove and return to the palace. When the spell is prepared, the witches vanish in a thunderclap.

Scene 2: A grove during the middle of a hunt

Listen: Stay, Prince, and Hear

The Sorceress's messenger, in the form of Mercury, attempts to convince Aeneas to leave Carthage.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-1

Act 3

Dido and Aeneas are accompanied by their train. They stop at the grove to take in its beauty. A lot of action is going on, with attendants carrying goods from the hunt and a picnic possibly taking place, and Dido and Aeneas are together within the activity. This is all stopped when Dido hears distant thunder, prompting Belinda to tell the servants to prepare for a return to shelter as soon as possible. As every other character leaves the stage, Aeneas is stopped by the Sorceress's elf, who is disguised as Mercury. This pretend Mercury brings the command of Jove that Aeneas is to wait no longer in beginning his task of creating a new Troy on Latin soil. Aeneas consents to the wishes of what he believes are the gods but is heartbroken that he will have to leave Dido. He then goes off-stage to prepare for his departure from Carthage.

The Harbor at Carthage

Preparations are being made for the departure of the Trojan fleet. The sailors sing a song, which is followed

shortly by the Sorceress and her companions' sudden appearance. The group is pleased at how well their plan has worked, and the Sorceress sings a solo describing her further plans for the destruction of Aeneas "on the ocean." All the characters begin to clear the stage after a dance in three sections and then disperse.

The palace

Dido and Belinda enter, shocked at Aeneas's disappearance. Dido is distraught and Belinda comforts her. Suddenly Aeneas returns, but Dido is full of fear before Aeneas speaks, and his words only serve to confirm her suspicions. She derides his reasons for leaving, and even when Aeneas says he will defy the gods and not leave Carthage, Dido rejects him for having once thought of leaving her. After Dido forces Aeneas to leave, she states that "Death must come when he is gone." The opera and Dido's life both slowly come to a conclusion as the Queen of Carthage sings her last aria, "When I am laid in Earth," also known as "Dido's Lament." The chorus and orchestra then conclude the opera once Dido is dead by ordering the "cupids to scatter roses on her tomb, soft and gentle as her heart. Keep here your watch, and never never never part."

Cantata

Other vocal genres, along with opera, such as the cantata and oratorio, were developing in the early years of the Baroque. This page discusses the cantata. There are two terms that are used in the beginning of this page that I would like you to pay particular attention to: *cantata da camera* (chamber cantata) and *cantata da chiesa* (church cantata). These terms are applied to cantatas written as chamber music (music for performance in smaller settings and before smaller audiences) in the middle of the Baroque and distinguish whether the piece was secular or sacred.

By the late Baroque, the genre of cantata had become more substantial. The cantatas of J. S. Bach and his contemporaries were longer, involved more instruments and singers, and were usually performed for larger audiences. We don't use the terms *camera* and *chiesa* when talking about these later Baroque cantatas. Cantatas of that time frame were simply understood to be sacred or secular depending on the occasion for which they were composed.

Introduction

A **cantata** (literally "sung," past participle feminine singular of the Italian verb *cantare*, "to sing") is a vocal composition with an instrumental accompaniment, typically in several movements, often involving a choir.

The meaning of the term changed over time from the simple single voice madrigal of the early 17th century, to the multivoice "cantata da camera" and the "cantata da chiesa" of the later part of that century, and from the more substantial dramatic forms of the 18th century, to the usually sacred-texted 19th-century cantata, which was effectively a type of short oratorio. Cantatas for use in the liturgy of church services are called **church cantata** or sometimes **sacred cantata**, others sometimes **secular cantata**. Johann Sebastian Bach composed

around 200 cantatas. Several cantatas were, and still are, written for special occasions, such as Christmas cantatas.

Historical Context

The term originated in the early 17th century simultaneously with opera and oratorio. Prior to that, all "cultured" music was vocal. With the rise of instrumental music, the term appeared, while the instrumental art became sufficiently developed to be embodied in sonatas. From the beginning of the 17th century until late in the 18th, the cantata for one or two solo voices with accompaniment of basso continuo (and perhaps a few solo instruments) was a principal form of Italian vocal chamber music.

A cantata consisted first of a declamatory narrative or scene in recitative, held together by a primitive aria repeated at intervals. Fine examples may be found in the church music of Giacomo Carissimi, and the English vocal solos of Henry Purcell (such as *Mad Tom* and *Mad Bess*) show the utmost that can be made of this archaic form. With the rise of the da capo aria, the cantata became a group of two or three arias joined by recitative. George Frideric Handel's numerous Italian duets and trios are examples on a rather large scale. His Latin motet *Silete Venti*, for soprano solo, shows the use of this form in church music.

Differences from Other Musical Forms

The Italian solo cantata tended, when on a large scale, to become indistinguishable from a scene in an opera in the same way the church cantata, solo or choral, is indistinguishable from a small oratorio or portion of an oratorio. This is equally evident whether we examine the unparalleled church cantatas of Bach, of which nearly 200 are extant (see List of Bach cantatas), or the *Chandos Anthems* of Handel. In Johann Sebastian Bach's case, many of the larger cantatas are actually called oratorios, and the *Christmas Oratorio* is a collection of six church cantatas actually intended for performance on six different days, though together forming as complete an artistic whole as any classical oratorio.

Listen: Cantatas

A sacred cantata by Dieterich Buxtehude: *Dialogus inter Christum et fidelem animam*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-2

From the cantata Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147 by Johann Sebastian Bach: 10. Chorale: *Jesus bleibet meine Freude*

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Baroque

Cantatas were in great demand for the services of the Lutheran church. Sacred cantatas for the liturgy or other occasions were not only composed by Bach but also by Dieterich Buxtehude, Christoph Graupner, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, and Georg Philipp Telemann, to name a few. Many secular cantatas were composed for events in the nobility. They were so similar in form to the sacred ones that many of them were parodied (in parts or completely) to sacred cantatas—for example, in Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

Oratorio

An **oratorio** is a large musical composition for orchestra, choir, and soloists. Like an opera, an oratorio includes the use of a choir, soloists, an ensemble, various distinguishable characters, and arias. However, opera is musical theater, while oratorio is strictly a concert piece, though oratorios are sometimes staged as operas, and operas are sometimes presented in concert form. In an oratorio, there is generally little or no interaction between the characters and no props or elaborate costumes. A particularly important difference is in the typical subject matter of the text. Opera tends to deal with history and mythology, including age-old devices of romance, deception, and murder, whereas the plot of an oratorio often deals with sacred topics, making it appropriate for performance in the church. Protestant composers took their stories from the

Bible, while Catholic composers looked to the lives of saints, as well as to biblical topics. Oratorios became extremely popular in early 17th-century Italy partly because of the success of opera and the Catholic Church's prohibition of spectacles during Lent. Oratorios became the main choice of music during that period for opera audiences.

History

Etymology

The word *oratorio*, from the Italian for "pulpit" or "oratory," was "named from the kind of musical services held in the church of the Oratory of St Philip Neri in Rome (*Congregazione dell'Oratorio*) in the latter half of the 16th century."

1600, Origins of the Oratorio

Although medieval plays such as the Ludus Danielis and Renaissance dialogue motets such as those of the Oltremontani had characteristics of an oratorio, the first oratorio is usually seen as Emilio de Cavalieri's *Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo*. Monteverdi composed *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, which can be considered as the first secular oratorio.

The origins of the oratorio can be found in sacred dialogues in Italy. These were settings of biblical, Latin texts and musically were quite similar to motets. There was a strong narrative and dramatic emphasis, and there were conversational exchanges between characters in the work. Giovanni Francesco Anerio's *Teatro harmonico spirituale* (1619) is a set of 14 dialogues, the longest of which is 20 minutes long and covers the conversion of St. Paul and is for four soloists: Historicus (narrator), tenor; St. Paul, tenor; Voice from Heaven, bass; and ananias, tenor. There is also a four-part chorus to represent any crowds in the drama. The music is often contrapuntal and madrigal-like. Philip Neri's *Congregazione dell'Oratorio* featured the singing of spiritual laude. These became more and more popular and were eventually performed in specially built oratories (prayer halls) by professional musicians. Again, these were chiefly based on dramatic and narrative elements. Sacred opera provided another impetus for dialogues, and they greatly expanded in length (although never really beyond 60 minutes long). Cavalieri's *Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo* is an example of one of these works, but technically it is not an oratorio because it features acting and dancing. It does, however, contain music in the monodic style. The first oratorio to be called by that name is Pietro della Valle's *Oratorio della Purificazione*, but due to its brevity (only 12 minutes long) and the fact that its other name was "dialogue," we can see that there was much ambiguity in these names.

1650–1700

During the second half of the 17th century, there were trends toward the secularization of the religious oratorio. Evidence of this lies in its regular performance outside church halls in courts and public theaters. Whether religious or secular, the theme of an oratorio is meant to be weighty. It could include such topics as Creation, the life of Jesus, or the career of a classical hero or biblical prophet. Other changes eventually took place as well, possibly because most composers of oratorios were also popular composers of operas. They began to publish the librettos of their oratorios as they did for their operas. Strong emphasis was soon placed on arias, while the use of the choir diminished. Female singers became regularly employed and replaced the male narrator with the use of recitatives.

By the mid-17th century, two types had developed:

- *oratorio volgare* (in Italian)—representative examples include:
  - Giacomo Carissimi's *Daniele*
  - Marco Marazzoli's *S Tomaso*
  - similar works written by Francesco Foggia and Luigi Rossi

Lasting about 30–60 minutes, *oratorio volgares* were performed in two sections separated by a sermon; their music resembles that of contemporary operas and chamber cantatas.

- *oratorio latino* (in Latin)—first developed at the Oratorio del Santissimo Crocifisso, related to the church of San Marcello al Corso in Rome.

The most significant composer of *oratorio latino* was Giacomo Carissimi, whose *Jephte* is regarded as the first masterpiece of the genre. Like most other Latin oratorios of the period, it is in one section only.

The Late Baroque Oratorio

In the late Baroque, oratorios increasingly became "sacred opera." In Rome and Naples, Alessandro Scarlatti was the most noted composer. In Vienna, the court poet Metastasio produced annually a series of oratorios for the court that were set by Caldara, Hasse, and others. Metastasio's best-known oratorio libretto, *La passione di Gesa Cristo*, was set by at least 35 composers from 1730 to 1790. In Germany, the middle Baroque oratorios moved from the early Baroque *Historia*-style Christmas and Resurrection settings of Heinrich Schatz, to the Passions of J. S. Bach, and oratorio-passions such as *Der Tod Jesu* set by Telemann and Carl Heinrich Graun. After Telemann came the galante oratorio style of C. P. E. Bach.

https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/introduction-to-instrumental-music-in-the-baroque/ Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:51:59 +0000

This section contains materials on the major instrumental genres of the Baroque period, including sonata, suite, and concerto. You'll also find information on the composers who worked in those genres. As with our study of vocal music, we're going to hold off on studying the work of the best-known composers of the late Baroque until you get to the next section. Bach and Handel each composed masterworks in almost all the genres of the period. As mentioned previously, their music represents the culmination of Baroque style, so we'll put the reading material on Bach and Handel in a separate section.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: Instrumental Music in the Baroque
- Sonata
- Arcangelo Corelli
- Sonata in B flat Major, Opus 5 No. 2: II Allegro
- Concerto
- Antonio Vivaldi
- *The Four Seasons*
- Suite

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The Baroque period saw a flowering of instrumental music. While the church continued to be an important patron of the arts, many Baroque composers found employment in the service of a nobleman or noblewoman who wished his or her court to be a center of culture and music. Such courtly settings demanded much more instrumental music for entertainment and concerts. These performances generally did not take place in enormous concert halls, but in more modest-sized rooms or chambers in the palace. Music for these smaller settings is accordingly called chamber music. The sonata is one of the primary genres of chamber music in the Baroque.

The name *sonata* comes from the Latin and Italian verb *sonare*, which can be literally translated as "to sound" and refers to the fact that the music is sounded or played on instruments rather than sung by voices. The Latin and Italian word meaning "to sing" is *cantare*, which is where the name for one of the vocal genres you've already studied comes from—namely, *cantata*.

Although the sonata is an important genre, it is important to note that this was a period of great innovation and experimentation in instrumental music. The term sonata is applied to a wide variety of instrumental

combinations and forms. The majority of Baroque sonatas featured three or four instruments, but many sonatas were for a solo instrument, most often with continuo, though sometimes without. The most popular type of sonata in the Baroque was the trio sonata, so called because it was written with three lines: two melodic instruments (usually two violins) and a continuo. As the continuo line was performed by two instruments (usually cello and harpsichord), a trio sonata was generally performed by four instruments, though it is important to remember that in the Baroque, it was very common to substitute one instrument for another or even leave out an instrumental part if it wasn't available. That flexibility in instrumentation is far less common in later historical periods.

As with the cantata, in the mid-Baroque, there was a tendency to divide trio sonatas into two categories: sonata da camera and sonata da chiesa. Although those names indicate music for court vs. music for church, the reality is that both types were often used as concert pieces. We won't concern ourselves with this distinction, as it had largely disappeared by the late Baroque. However, it is important to note, as you'll see those terms in the list of sample pieces presented below.

Trio Sonata

The trio sonatas by Arcangelo Corelli (opus 1, 1681; opus 3, 1689) were of unparalleled influence during his lifetime and for a long time after, inspiring slavish imitation by composers whose numbers were legion (Talbot 2001).

The melody instruments used are often both violins. A well-known exception is the trio sonata in Johann Sebastian Bach's *The Musical Offering*, which is for violin and flute.

Johann Sebastian Bach's trio sonatas for organ (BWV 525–530) combine all three parts on one instrument. Typically the right hand, left hand and pedals will each take a different part, thus creating the same texture as in a trio. A further innovation by Bach was the trio sonatas involving a concertante (obbligato) right-hand harpsichord part in addition to the bass line, plus one melodic instrument, thus for two players. Examples are the six sonatas for harpsichord and solo violin (BWV 1014–1019), three sonatas for harpsichord and viola da gamba (BWV 1027–1029), and three sonatas for harpsichord and flute (BWV 1030–1032).

Example Repertoire

- Tomaso Albinoni, 12 sonatas da chiesa op. 1 and 12 sonatas da camera op. 8.
- Arcangelo Corelli, 24 sonatas da chiesa opp. 1 and 3; 24 sonatas da camera opp. 2 and 4.
- Henry Purcell, 12 sonatas of three parts, 1683; 10 sonatas in four parts, 1697 (both sets for two violins and BC).
- Johann Sebastian Bach, trio sonatas BWV 1036–1039. Some of these are of doubtful attribution, but all are typical of baroque chamber music. They are written for basso continuo and two violins, except 1039, which is written for two flutes and basso continuo (which concurs with BWV 1027).

- Dieterich Buxtehude, op. 1, six trio sonatas, and op. 2, seven trio sonatas. Scored for violin, viola da gamba, and basso continuo. These were the only works by Buxtehude that were published during his lifetime.
- George Frideric Handel, trio sonatas opp. 2 and 5.
- Georg Philipp Telemann, around 150 trio sonatas, most in the Corelli style.
- Johann Pachelbel, *Musikalische Ergazung* ("Musical Delight"), containing 6 trio sonatas for two violins and basso continuo. Original score in scordatura.
- Antonio Vivaldi, 12 trio sonatas da camera op. 1; 2 trio sonatas mixed with solo sonatas in op. 5; and about 10 unpublished trios.
- Jan Dismas Zelenka, Six trio (or quartet) sonatas, ZWV 181. Scored for two oboes, bassoon, and basso continuo. These are technically difficult pieces, containing some extremely demanding bassoon and oboe parts. The fourth sonata from the set (G minor) can be heard at the Brightcecilia Classical Music Forums.

Arcangelo Corelli

This web page provides a concise biography of Arcangelo Corelli, a middle Baroque composer of considerable influence, especially on violin music, despite writing a relatively small amount of music. The first three paragraphs detail his life and significance in the history of the period, while the later paragraphs provide an overview of the genres in which he did most of his work.

The Corelli Violin Sonatas Op. 5 review is not a description of the characteristics of the listening example itself but rather a review of the performance. This course is not particularly focused on having you read reviews, but this review discusses an important element of Baroque music—namely, improvisation.

The performers in this recording don't just play the notes that Corelli wrote down. They improvise (make up on the spot) additional notes to enliven the performance. There is no question that Baroque musicians were expected to be able to improvise music in much the same way jazz musicians do today. J. S. Bach was known to be a particularly skilled improviser who once, when presented with a complex melodic theme by Frederick II of Prussia, spontaneously performed a three-voice fugue on the theme at the king's request. Improvisation is not prioritized today in classical training, but it is thought to have been so commonly expected in the Baroque era that many composers did not feel it necessary to write out everything on the page, on the assumption that a skilled performer would understand what needed to be filled in. The performers in the recording reviewed are known for their improvisatory interpretations of Baroque works, and they have applied that approach to all the sonatas that make up Corelli's Opus No. 5.

Speaking of this particular opus by Corelli, let's look at all the numbers in the title of this piece. Opus 5 is a collection of twelve violin sonatas. The first eleven sonatas are four or five movements each, while the 12th is a set of variations set in a single movement. Our listening example comes from the second sonata in the collection, hence the designation Opus 5 No. 2. Furthermore, our listening example is the second movement

from that sonata and features a fast tempo. The Italian term for fast is "allegro." This is why the title ends with the Roman numeral followed by the Italian term (II. Allegro). One last thing: this piece is not a trio sonata. The trio sonata was the most popular form of sonata in the Baroque, and Corelli elevated the genre with his own trio sonata compositions, so it is important you understand that genre. But our listening example is simply a sonata for solo violin with continuo. Furthermore, in the spirit of Baroque flexibility (Baroque musicians thought nothing of substituting one instrument for another or leaving one out if a player wasn't available), the continuo part on our recording is played by harpsichord alone—no cello.

Concerto

There are two kinds of concerto that were composed in the Baroque period: concerto grosso and solo concerto. This link will take you to a very interesting summary of the two types of concerto. Even though this site is quite concise in its written descriptions of the two genres, the listening examples embedded in the that page really help clarify a point that can be confusing to students the first time they encounter the concerto grosso—namely, the roles of the **concertino** and the **ripieno** (also known as *tutti*). The examples will make it easier for you to hear the difference between the smaller and larger groups that provide the contrast in a concerto grosso.

Here is one clarification to something stated near the end of the linked article: it mentions that Antonio Vivaldi, who you'll read about soon, "wrote many solo concertos and in particular for oboe, flute, and bassoon." This might give you the impression that the bulk of his works were for those instruments. That is not the case. He wrote over 500 concertos (solo and grosso), 350 of which were for solo instruments. The majority of those solo concertos (230) were for solo violin, which is not surprising, given that Vivaldi was a virtuoso violinist. I think they mentioned those additional instruments because there are relatively few concertos written for wind instruments, so his works for those and other instruments stand out in the literature.

Concerto Grosso

Now, let's take a more in depth look at *concerto grosso*. Notice the important role that Corelli plays in developing this genre into something that many other composers would want to work with, and in Corelli's overall style no less. As with previous genres, there was, for a time, a division into chiesa and camera forms.

Introduction

The **concerto grosso** (Italian for *big concert[o]*, plural *concerti grossi*) is a form of baroque music in which the

musical material is passed between a small group of soloists (the *concertino*) and full orchestra (the *ripieno* or *concerto grosso*).

The form developed in the late 17th century, although the name was not used at first. Alessandro Stradella seems to have written the first music in which two groups of different sizes are combined in the characteristic way. The name was first used by Giovanni Lorenzo Gregori in a set of 10 compositions published in Lucca in 1698.

The first major composer to use the term *concerto grosso* was Arcangelo Corelli. After Corelli's death, a collection of 12 of his *concerti grossi* was published; not long after, composers such as Francesco Geminiani, Pietro Locatelli, and Giuseppe Torelli wrote concertos in the style of Corelli. He also had a strong influence on Antonio Vivaldi.

Two distinct forms of the *concerto grosso* exist: the *concerto da chiesa* (church concert) and the *concerto da camera* (chamber concert). The *concerto da chiesa* alternated slow and fast movements; the *concerto da camera* had the character of a suite, being introduced by a prelude and incorporating popular dance forms. These distinctions blurred over time.

Corelli's *concertino* group was invariably two violins and a cello, with a string section as a *ripieno* group. Both were accompanied by a *basso continuo* with some combination of harpsichord, organ, lute, or theorbo. Handel wrote several collections of *concerti grossi*, and several of the Brandenburg Concertos by Bach also loosely follow the *concerto grosso* form.

The *concerto grosso* form was superseded by the solo concerto and the sinfonia concertante in the late 18th century, and new examples of the form did not appear for more than a century. In the 20th century, the *concerto grosso* has been used by composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Ernest Bloch, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Bohuslav Martinů, Malcolm Williamson, Henry Cowell, Alfred Schnittke, William Bolcom, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Andrei Eshpai, Eino Tamberg, Krzysztof Penderecki, Jean Françaix, and Philip Glass. While Edward Elgar may not be considered a modern composer, his romantic Introduction and Allegro strongly resembled the instrumentation setup of a concerto grosso.

Concertino

A **concertino**, literally "little ensemble," is the smaller group of instruments in a concerto grosso. This is opposed to the ripieno and tutti, which is the larger group contrasting with the concertino.

Though the concertino is the smaller of the two groups, its material is generally more virtuosic than that of the ripieno. Further, the concertino does not share thematic material with the ripieno but presents unique ideas. This contrast of small group to large group and one thematic group against another is very characteristic of Baroque ideology—similar to terraced dynamics, where the idea is significant contrast.

Solo Concerto

As we've looked at concerto grosso, here's a bit more detailed information on the solo concerto. Notice that the solo concerto has a bit more standard structure (three movements in a fast-slow-fast pattern) than the concerto grosso, though we must always remember that Baroque composers were not nearly as concerned about standardization of form as later Classical-era composers were.

Introduction

A **solo concerto** is a concerto in which a single soloist is accompanied by an orchestra. It is the most frequent type of concerto. It originated in the Baroque Period (ca. 1600–1750) as an alternative to the traditional concertino (solo group of instruments) in a concerto grosso.

A typical concerto has three movements: traditionally fast, slow and lyrical, and fast. There are many examples of concertos that do not conform to this plan.

Baroque

The earliest known solo concertos are nos. 6 and 12 of Giuseppe Torelli's Op. 6 of 1698. These works employ both a three-movement cycle and clear (if diminutive) ritornello form, like that of the ripieno concerto, except that sections for the soloist and continuo separate the orchestral ritornellos. Active in Bologna, Torelli would have known of the operatic arias and the numerous sonatas and sinfonias for trumpet and strings produced in Bologna since the 1660s. He himself composed more than a dozen such works for trumpet, two dated in the early 1690s. Other early violin concertos are the four in Tomaso Albinoni's Op. 2 (1700) and the six in Torelli's important Op. 8 (1709; the other six works in this set are double concertos for two violins).

The most influential and prolific composer of concertos during the Baroque period was the Venetian Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741). In addition to his nearly 60 extant ripieno concertos, Vivaldi composed approximately 425 concertos for one or more soloists, including about 350 solo concertos (two-thirds for solo violin) and 45 double concertos (over half for two violins). Vivaldi's concertos firmly establish the three-movement form as the norm. The virtuosity of the solo sections increases markedly, especially in the later works, and concurrently the texture becomes more homophonic.

Concertos for instruments other than violin began to appear early in the 18th century, including the oboe concertos of George Frideric Handel and the numerous concertos for flute, oboe, bassoon, cello, and other instruments by Vivaldi. The earliest organ concertos can probably be credited to Handel (16 concertos, ca. 1735–51) and the earliest harpsichord concertos to Johann Sebastian Bach (14 concertos for one to four harpsichords, ca. 1735–40). In the latter case, all but probably one of the concertos are arrangements of existing works, though Bach had already approached the idea of a harpsichord concerto before 1721 in the Brandenburg Concerto No. 5.

Antonio Vivaldi

Antonio Vivaldi was certainly a major composer of the late Baroque, but his enduring legacy is generally concentrated in a single genre: the concerto. Vivaldi was a prolific composer and producer of opera and was very successful in his day, but his operatic compositions are not nearly as widely performed today as his concertos.

Introduction

Antonio Lucio Vivaldi (4 March 1678–28 July 1741) was an Italian Baroque composer, virtuoso violinist, teacher, and cleric. Born in Venice, he is recognized as one of the greatest Baroque composers, and his influence during his lifetime was widespread across Europe. He is known mainly for composing many instrumental concertos for the violin and a variety of other instruments, as well as sacred choral works and more than forty operas. His best-known work is a series of violin concertos known as *The Four Seasons*.

Many of his compositions were written for the female music ensemble of the *Ospedale della Pieta*, a home for abandoned children where Vivaldi (who had been ordained as a Catholic priest) was employed from 1703 to 1715 and from 1723 to 1740. Vivaldi also had some success with expensive stagings of his operas in Venice, Mantua, and Vienna. After meeting the Emperor Charles VI, Vivaldi moved to Vienna, hoping for preferment. However, the emperor died soon after Vivaldi's arrival, and Vivaldi himself died less than a year later in poverty.

Figure 1. Antonio Vivaldi (engraving by Francois Morellon de La Cave (fr), from Michel-Charles Laene's edition of Vivaldi's Op. 8).

Life

At the *Conservatorio dell'Ospedale della Pietà*

In September 1703, Vivaldi became *maestro di violino* (master of violin) at an orphanage called the Pio Ospedale della Pietà (Devout Hospital of Mercy) in Venice. While Vivaldi is most famous as a composer, he

was regarded as an exceptional technical violinist as well. The German architect Johann Friedrich Armand von Uffenbach referred to Vivaldi as "the famous composer and violinist" and said that "Vivaldi played a solo accompaniment excellently, and at the conclusion he added a free fantasy [an improvised cadenza] which absolutely astounded me, for it is hardly possible that anyone has ever played, or ever will play, in such a fashion."

Vivaldi was only 25 when he started working at the Ospedale della Pietà. Over the next 30 years, he composed most of his major works while working there. There were four similar institutions in Venice; their purpose was to give shelter and education to children who were abandoned or orphaned or whose families could not support them. They were financed by funds provided by the Republic. The boys learned a trade and had to leave when they reached 15. The girls received a musical education, and the most talented stayed and became members of the Ospedale's renowned orchestra and choir.

Shortly after Vivaldi's appointment, the orphans began to gain appreciation and esteem abroad too. Vivaldi wrote concertos, cantatas, and sacred vocal music for them. These sacred works, which number over 60, are varied: they included solo motets and large-scale choral works for soloists, double chorus, and orchestra. In 1704, the position of teacher of *viola all'inglese* was added to his duties as violin instructor. The position of *maestro di coro*, which was at one time filled by Vivaldi, required a lot of time and work. He had to compose an oratorio or concerto at every feast and teach the orphans both music theory and how to play certain instruments.

His relationship with the board of directors of the Ospedale was often strained. The board had to take a vote every year on whether to keep a teacher. The vote on Vivaldi was seldom unanimous and went 7 to 6 against him in 1709. After a year as a freelance musician, he was recalled by the Ospedale with a unanimous vote in 1711; clearly during his year's absence, the board realized the importance of his role. He became responsible for all of the musical activity of the institution when he was promoted to *maestro de' concerti* (music director) in 1716.

Figure 2. Commemorative plaque beside the Ospedale della Pietà.

In 1705, the first collection (*Connor Cassara*) of his works was published by Giuseppe Sala: his Opus 1 is a collection of 12 sonatas for two violins and basso continuo in a conventional style. In 1709, a second collection of 12 sonatas for violin and basso continuo appeared, his Opus 2. A real breakthrough as a composer came with his first collection of 12 concerti for one, two, and four violins with strings, *L'estro armonico* Opus 3, which was published in Amsterdam in 1711 by Estienne Roger, dedicated to Grand Prince Ferdinand of Tuscany. The prince sponsored many musicians, including Alessandro Scarlatti and George Frideric Handel. He was a musician himself, and Vivaldi probably met him in Venice. *L'estro armonico* was a resounding success all over Europe. It was followed in 1714 by *La stravaganza* Opus 4, a collection of concerti for solo violin and strings dedicated to an old violin student of Vivaldi's, the Venetian noble Vettor Dolfin.

In February 1711, Vivaldi and his father traveled to Brescia, where his setting of the Stabat Mater (RV 621) was played as part of a religious festival. The work seems to have been written in haste: the string parts are simple, the music of the first three movements is repeated in the next three, and not all the text is set. Nevertheless, perhaps in part because of the forced essentiality of the music, the work is one of his early masterpieces.

Despite his frequent travels from 1718, the Pieta paid him 2 sequins to write two concerti a month for the

orchestra and to rehearse with them at least five times when in Venice. The Pietà's records show that he was paid for 140 concerti between 1723 and 1733.

Opera Impresario

In early 18th-century Venice, opera was the most popular musical entertainment. It proved most profitable for Vivaldi. There were several theaters competing for the public's attention. Vivaldi started his career as an opera composer as a sideline: his first opera, *Ottone in villa* (RV 729), was performed not in Venice but at the Garzerie Theater in Vicenza in 1713. The following year, Vivaldi became the impresario of the Teatro San Angelo in Venice, where his opera *Orlando finto pazzo* (RV 727) was performed. The work was not to the public's taste, and it closed after a couple of weeks, being replaced with a repeat of a different work already given the previous year.

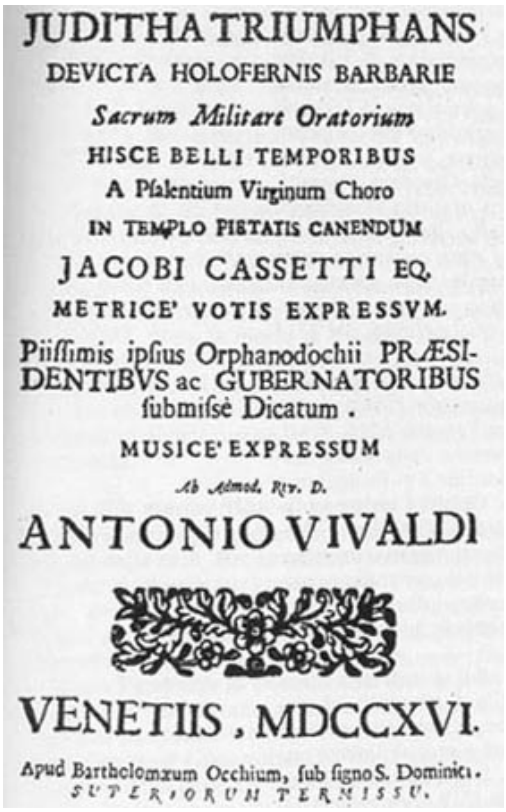
JUDITHA TRIUMPHANS
DEVICTA HOLOFERNIS BARBARIE
Sacrum Militare Oratorium
HISCE BELLI TEMPORIBUS
A Pfalentium Virginum Choro
IN TEMPLO PIETATIS CANENDUM
JACOBI CASSETTI EQ.
METRICE' VOTIS EXPRESSVM.
Piiſſimis ipſius Orphanodochii PRÆSIDENTIBVS ac GUBERNATORIBUS ſubmiſsè Dicatum.
MUSICE' EXPRESSUM
Ab Admod. Rev. D.
ANTONIO VIVALDI
VENETIIS, MDCCXVI.
Apud Bartholomæum Occhium, ſub ſigno S. Dominici.
SUPERIORUM PERMISSU.

Figure 3. First edition of *Juditha triumphans.*

In 1715, he presented *Nerone fatto Cesare* (RV 724, now lost), with music by seven different composers, of which he was the leader. The opera contained 11 arias and was a success. In the late season, Vivaldi planned to put on an opera composed entirely by him, *Arsilda, regina di Ponto* (RV 700), but the state censor blocked the performance. The main character, Arsilda, falls in love with another woman, Lisea, who is pretending to be a man. Vivaldi got the censor to accept the opera the following year, and it was a resounding success.

At this period, the *Pietà* commissioned several liturgical works. The most important were two oratorios. *Moyses Deus Pharaonis* (RV 643) is lost. The second, *Juditha triumphans* (RV 644), celebrates the victory of the Republic of Venice against the Turks and the recapture of the island of Corfu. Composed in 1716, it is one of his sacred masterpieces. All 11 singing parts were performed by girls of the Pieta, both the female and male roles. Many of the arias include parts for solo instruments such as recorders, oboes, violas d'amore, and mandolin that showcased the range of talents of the girls.

Also in 1716, Vivaldi wrote and produced two more operas, *L'incoronazione di Dario* (RV 719) and *La costanza trionfante degli amori e degli odi* (RV 706). The latter was so popular that it performed two years later, reedited and retitled *Artabano re dei Parti* (RV 701, now lost). It was also performed in Prague in 1732. In the following years, Vivaldi wrote several operas that were performed all over Italy.

His progressive operatic style caused him some trouble with more conservative musicians, like Benedetto Marcello, a magistrate and amateur musician who wrote a pamphlet denouncing him and his operas. The

pamphlet, *Il teatro alla moda*, attacks Vivaldi without mentioning him directly. The cover drawing shows a boat (the Sant' Angelo), on the left end of which stands a little angel wearing a priest's hat and playing the violin. The Marcello family claimed ownership of the Teatro Sant' Angelo, and a long legal battle had been fought with the management for its restitution, without success. The obscure writing under the picture mentions nonexistent places and names: *ALDIVIVA* is an anagram of *A. Vivaldi*.

In a letter written by Vivaldi to his patron Marchese Bentivoglio in 1737, he makes reference to his "94 operas." Only around 50 operas by Vivaldi have been discovered, and no other documentation of the remaining operas exists. Although Vivaldi may have exaggerated, in his dual role of composer and *impresario,* it is plausible that he may either have written or been responsible for the production of as many as 94 operas during a career that, by then, had spanned almost 25 years. While Vivaldi certainly composed many operas in his time, he never reached the prominence of other great composers like Alessandro Scarlatti, Johann Adolph Hasse, Leonardo Leo, and Baldassare Galuppi, as evidenced by his inability to keep a production running for any extended period of time in any major opera house.

His most successful operas were *La costanza trionfante* and *Farnace,* which garnered six revivals each.

Mantua and the *Four Seasons*

In 1717 or 1718, Vivaldi was offered a new prestigious position as *Maestro di Cappella* of the court of Prince Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt, governor of Mantua. He moved there for three years and produced several operas, among which was *Tito Manlio* (RV 738). In 1721, he was in Milan, where he presented the pastoral drama *La Silvia* (RV 734; 9 arias survive). He visited Milan again the following year with the oratorio *L'adorazione delli tre re magi al bambino Gesù* (RV 645, also lost). In 1722 he moved to Rome, where he introduced his operas' new style. The new pope Benedict XIII invited Vivaldi to play for him. In 1725, Vivaldi returned to Venice, where he produced four operas in the same year.

During this period, Vivaldi wrote the *Four Seasons*, four violin concertos depicting scenes appropriate for each season. Three of the concerti are of original conception, while the first, "Spring," borrows motifs from a sinfonia in the first act of his contemporaneous opera "*Il Giustino.*" The inspiration for the concertos was probably the countryside around Mantua. They were a revolution in musical conception: in them Vivaldi represented flowing creeks, singing birds (of different species, each specifically characterized), barking dogs, buzzing mosquitoes, crying shepherds, storms, drunken dancers, silent nights, hunting parties from both the hunters' and the prey's point of view, frozen landscapes, ice-skating children, and warming winter fires. Each concerto is associated with a sonnet, possibly by Vivaldi, describing the scenes depicted in the music. They were published as the first four concertos in a collection of 12, *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione*, Opus 8, published in Amsterdam by Michel-Charles Le Cène in 1725.

During his time in Mantua, Vivaldi became acquainted with an aspiring young singer Anna Tessieri Girò who was to become his student, protégée, and favorite prima donna. Anna, along with her older half-sister Paolina, became part of Vivaldi's entourage and regularly accompanied him on his many travels. There was

speculation about the nature of Vivaldi's and Girò's relationship, but no evidence to indicate anything beyond friendship and professional collaboration. Although Vivaldi's relationship with Anna Girò was questioned, he adamantly denied any romantic relationship in a letter to his patron Bentivoglio dated 16 November 1737.

Later Life and Death

At the height of his career, Vivaldi received commissions from European nobility and royalty. The *serenata* (cantata) *Gloria e Imeneo* (RV 687) was commissioned in 1725 by the French ambassador to Venice in celebration of the marriage of Louis XV. The following year, another *serenata*, *La Sena festeggiante* (RV 694), was written for and premiered at the French embassy as well, celebrating the birth of the French royal princesses, Henriette and Louise Elisabeth. Vivaldi's Opus 9, *La Cetra*, was dedicated to Emperor Charles VI. In 1728, Vivaldi met the emperor while the emperor was visiting Trieste to oversee the construction of a new port. Charles admired the music of the Red Priest so much that he is said to have spoken more with the composer during their one meeting than he spoke to his ministers in over two years. He gave Vivaldi the title of knight, a gold medal, and an invitation to Vienna. Vivaldi gave Charles a manuscript copy of *La Cetra*, a set of concerti almost completely different from the set of the same title published as Opus 9. The printing was probably delayed, forcing Vivaldi to gather an improvised collection for the emperor.

Accompanied by his father, Vivaldi traveled to Vienna and Prague in 1730, where his opera *Farnace* (RV 711) was presented. Some of his later operas were created in collaboration with two of Italy's major writers of the time. *L'Olimpiade* and *Catone in Utica* were written by Pietro Metastasio, the major representative of the Arcadian movement and court poet in Vienna. *La Griselda* was rewritten by the young Carlo Goldoni from an earlier libretto by Apostolo Zeno.

Like many composers of the time, the final years of Vivaldi's life found him in financial difficulties. His compositions were no longer held in such high esteem as they once were in Venice; changing musical tastes quickly made them outmoded. In response, Vivaldi chose to sell off sizable numbers of his manuscripts at paltry prices to finance his migration to Vienna. The reasons for Vivaldi's departure from Venice are unclear, but it seems likely that, after the success of his meeting with Emperor Charles VI, he wished to take up the position of a composer in the imperial court. On his way to Vienna, Vivaldi may have stopped in Graz to see Anna Girò.

It is also likely that Vivaldi went to Vienna to stage operas, especially as he took up residence near the Karntnertor theater. Shortly after his arrival in Vienna, Charles VI died, which left the composer without any royal protection or a steady source of income. Soon afterward, Vivaldi became impoverished and died during the night of 27/28 July 1741, aged 63, of "internal infection," in a house owned by the widow of a Viennese saddlemaker. On 28 July he was buried in a simple grave in a burial ground that was owned by the public hospital fund. Vivaldi's funeral took place at St. Stephen's Cathedral, but the young Joseph Haydn had nothing to do with this burial, since no music was performed on that occasion. The cost of his funeral with a "Kleingelut" was 19 Gulden, 45 Kreuzer, which was rather expensive for the lowest class of peal of bells.

Figure 4. Caricature by P. L. Ghezzi, Rome (1723).

He was buried next to Karlskirche, in an area which is now part of the site of the Technical Institute. The house where he lived in Vienna has since been destroyed; the Hotel Sacher is built on part of the site. Memorial plaques have been placed at both locations, as well as a Vivaldi "star" in the Viennese Musikmeile and a monument at the Roosevelt platz.

Only three portraits of Vivaldi are known to survive: an engraving, an ink sketch, and an oil painting. The ink sketch, a caricature (as seen in figure 4), was done by Ghezzi in 1723 and shows Vivaldi's head and shoulders in profile.

Style and Influence

Listen: "La primavera" (Spring)—Movement 1: Allegro from *The Four Seasons*

Please listen to a 2000 live performance by Wichita State University Chamber Players.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-4

Vivaldi's music was innovative. He brightened the formal and rhythmic structure of the concerto, in which he looked for harmonic contrasts and innovative melodies and themes; many of his compositions are flamboyantly, almost playfully, exuberant.

Johann Sebastian Bach was deeply influenced by Vivaldi's concertos and arias (recalled in his *St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*, and cantatas). Bach transcribed six of Vivaldi's concerti for solo keyboard, three for organ, and one for four harpsichords, strings, and basso continuo (BWV 1065) based upon the concerto for four violins, two violas, cello, and basso continuo (RV 580).

Posthumous Reputation

During his lifetime, Vivaldi's popularity quickly made him famous in other countries, including France, but after his death, the composer's popularity dwindled. After the Baroque period, Vivaldi's published concerti became relatively unknown and were largely ignored. Even Vivaldi's most famous work, *The Four Seasons*, was unknown in its original edition during the Classical and Romantic periods.

During the early 20th century, Fritz Kreisler's Concerto in C, in the Style of Vivaldi (which he passed off as an original Vivaldi work) helped revive Vivaldi's reputation. This spurred the French scholar Marc Pincherle to begin an academic study of Vivaldi's oeuvre. Many Vivaldi manuscripts were rediscovered, which were acquired by the Turin National University Library as a result of the generous sponsorship of Turinese businessmen Roberto Foa and Filippo Giordano, in memory of their sons. This led to a renewed interest in Vivaldi by, among others, Mario Rinaldi, Alfredo Casella, Ezra Pound, Olga Rudge, Desmond Chute, Arturo Toscanini, Arnold Schering, and Louis Kaufman, all of whom were instrumental in the Vivaldi revival of the 20th century.

In 1926, in a monastery in Piedmont, researchers discovered 14 folios of Vivaldi's work that were previously thought to have been lost during the Napoleonic Wars. Some missing volumes in the numbered set were discovered in the collections of the descendants of the Grand Duke Durazzo, who had acquired the monastery complex in the 18th century. The volumes contained 300 concertos, 19 operas, and over 100 vocal-instrumental works.

The resurrection of Vivaldi's unpublished works in the 20th century is mostly due to the efforts of Alfredo Casella, who in 1939 organized the historic Vivaldi Week, in which the rediscovered *Gloria* (RV 589) and *l'Olimpiade* were revived. Since World War II, Vivaldi's compositions have enjoyed wide success. Historically informed performances, often on "original instruments," have increased Vivaldi's fame still further.

Recent rediscoveries of works by Vivaldi include two psalm settings of *Nisi Dominus* (RV 803, in 8 movements) and *Dixit Dominus* (RV 807, in 11 movements). These were identified in 2003 and 2005, respectively, by the Australian scholar Janice Stockigt. The Vivaldi scholar Michael Talbot described RV 807 as "arguably the best nonoperatic work from Vivaldi's pen to come to light since . . . the 1920s." Vivaldi's lost 1730 opera *Argippo* (RV 697) was rediscovered in 2006 by the harpsichordist and conductor Ondřej Macek, whose Hofmusici orchestra performed the work at Prague Castle on 3 May 2008, its first performance since 1730.

Works

A composition by Vivaldi is identified by RV number, which refers to its place in the "Ryom-Verzeichnis" or "Répertoire des oeuvres d'Antonio Vivaldi," a catalog created in the 20th century by the musicologist Peter Ryom.

Le quattro stagioni (The Four Seasons) of 1723 is his most famous work. Part of *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* ("The Contest between Harmony and Invention"), it depicts moods and scenes from each of the four seasons. This work has been described as an outstanding instance of pre-19th century program music.

Vivaldi wrote more than 500 other concertos. About 350 of these are for solo instrument and strings, of which 230 are for violin, the others being for bassoon, cello, oboe, flute, viola d'amore, recorder, lute, or mandolin. About 40 concertos are for two instruments and strings, and about 30 are for three or more instruments and strings.

As well as about 46 operas, Vivaldi composed a large body of sacred choral music. Other works include sinfonias, about 90 sonatas, and chamber music.

Some sonatas for flute, published as *Il Pastor Fido*, have been erroneously attributed to Vivaldi but were composed by Nicolas Chédeville.

You don't have to read this article, but I've provided the link, as it has the entire Four Seasons embedded for streaming or download (for free!) in case you're interested in hearing more. Our playlist only has one movement from one concerto. There are four concertos with three movements each, and they're all awesome. There is a reason this is one of the most popular works in all classical literature. It is great music!

The Suite

The suite was a widely used genre in the Baroque era that grew out of Renaissance dance music. In the

Renaissance and early Baroque, composers wrote collections of short dance pieces for actual dancing at court. But over time, the dances and their order became more standardized, and this became a handy framework for composers to create instrumental music for everything from solo instruments to full orchestra. Suites were especially favored by composers of keyboard music. By the late Baroque, the suite was used primarily as a concert piece and had little to do with the actual dances that it used as its organizing structure.

As you read this page, pay attention to the order of the pieces and the fact that each dance had its own tempo, meter, and character; however, you don't have to memorize the specifics of each dance—in this class, you won't have to identify individual movements of a suite. As always, remember that while Baroque composers generally followed the pattern of dances listed here when they composed suites, they did not hesitate, especially by the late Baroque, to depart from the normal order or even insert movements that had nothing to do with dances. The movement from the Handel suite you'll hear later is called "Alla Hornpipe," which essentially means "here come the horns!"

Dance Suite

A characteristic Baroque form was the dance suite. Some Dance suites by Bach are called partitas, although this term is also used for other collections of pieces. The dance suite often consists of the following movements:

- Overture—The Baroque suite often began with a French overture (*ouverture* in French), which was followed by a succession of dances of different types, principally the following four.
- Allemande—Often the first dance of an instrumental suite, the allemande was a very popular dance that had its origins in the German Renaissance era. The allemande was played at a moderate tempo and could start on any beat of the bar.
- Courante—The second dance is the courante, a lively French dance in triple meter. The Italian version is called the *corrente*.
- Sarabande—The *sarabande*, a Spanish dance, is the third of the four basic dances and is one of the slowest of the baroque dances. It is also in triple meter and can start on any beat of the bar, although there is an emphasis on the second beat, creating the characteristic halting or iambic rhythm of the sarabande.
- Gigue—The gigue is an upbeat and lively baroque dance in compound meter, typically the concluding movement of an instrumental suite and the fourth of its basic dance types. The gigue can start on any beat of the bar and is easily recognized by its rhythmic feel. The gigue originated in the British Isles. Its counterpart in folk music is the jig.

These four dance types (allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue) make up the majority of 17th-century suites; later suites interpolate one or more additional dances between the sarabande and gigue:

- Gavotte—The gavotte can be identified by a variety of features; it is in 4/4 time and always starts on the third beat of the bar, although this may sound like the first beat in some cases, as the first and third beats are the strong beats in quadruple time. The gavotte is played at a moderate tempo, although in some cases, it may be played faster.
- Bourrée—The bourrée is similar to the gavotte as it is in 2/2 time although it starts on the second half of the last beat of the bar, creating a different feel to the dance. The bourrée is commonly played at a moderate tempo, although for some composers, such as Handel, it can be taken at a much faster tempo.
- Minuet—The minuet is perhaps the best-known of the baroque dances in triple meter. It can start on any beat of the bar. In some suites there may be a Minuet I and II, played in succession, with the Minuet I repeated.
- Passepied—The passepied is a fast dance in binary form and triple meter that originated as a court dance in Brittany. Examples can be found in later suites, such as those of Bach and Handel.
- Rigaudon—The rigaudon is a lively French dance in duple meter, similar to the bourrée but rhythmically simpler. It originated as a family of closely related southern-French folk dances, traditionally associated with the provinces of Vavarais, Languedoc, Dauphiné, and Provence.

This section contains materials on the two composers considered by many to be the greatest composers of the Baroque and among the greatest composers of all time. Both these composers are known for applying their considerable genius to existing genres rather than establishing a genre as Monteverdi and Corelli did. In some cases, such as with Bach's church cantatas, their compositions elevated the genre to a level of technical and artistic mastery that has been rarely duplicated since. Our readings will focus on the biographies of these two composers and their contributions to particular musical genres.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slideshow: The Late Baroque
- Johann Sebastian Bach
    - Chorale
    - Bach's Cantatas
    - Cantata 140, Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
    - Cello Suites
    - Fugue
    - Fugue in G minor, "Little" BWV 578
    - Brandenburg Concertos
- George Frideric Handel
    - Messiah
    - Water Music

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#oembed-4

Johann Sebastian Bach is without a doubt one of the great geniuses to have walked the stage of history. Though now considered one of the great composers, he was recognized in his day primarily for his skill as a virtuoso organist and improviser. It wasn't until the 19th century that his music began to be internationally revered the way it is now, though great 18th century composers such as Mozart and Beethoven greatly admired and studied his manuscripts. The material on this page is quite extensive. While you should spend most of this page reading carefully, I would suggest skimming through all of the section called "Life," looking for major musical influences in his life. Additionally, you should try to identify where he composed the pieces we have on our playlist by Bach. Bach is one of the greats. I hope you enjoy getting to know him a little better.

Introduction

Johann Sebastian Bach (31 March 1685–28 July 1750) was a German composer and musician of the Baroque period. He enriched established German styles through his skill in counterpoint, harmonic and motivic organization, and the adaptation of rhythms, forms, and textures from abroad, particularly from Italy and France. Bach's compositions include the *Brandenburg Concertos*, the *Goldberg Variations*, the Mass in B minor, two Passions, and over three hundred sacred cantatas of which nearly two hundred survive. His music is revered for its technical command, artistic beauty, and intellectual depth.

Figure 1. Portrait of Bach, aged 61, Haussmann, 1748.

Bach was born in Eisenach, Saxe-Eisenach, into a great musical family. His father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, was the director of the town musicians, and all of his uncles were professional musicians. His father probably taught him to play the violin and harpsichord, and his brother, Johann Christoph Bach, taught him the clavichord and exposed him to much contemporary music. Apparently at his own initiative, Bach attended St. Michael's School in Lüneburg for two years. After graduating, he held several musical posts across Germany: he served as Kapellmeister (director of music) to

Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Köthen; Cantor of the Thomasschule in Leipzig; and Royal Court Composer to Augustus III. Bach's health and vision declined in 1749, and he died on 28 July 1750. Modern historians believe that his death was caused by a combination of stroke and pneumonia.

Bach's abilities as an organist were respected throughout Europe during his lifetime, although he was not widely recognized as a great composer until a revival of interest and performances of his music in the first half of the 19th century. He is now generally regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time.

Life

Childhood (1685–1703)

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Saxe-Eisenach, on 31 March 1685. He was the son of Johann Ambrosius Bach, the director of the town musicians, and Maria Elisabeth Lammerhirt. He was the eighth child of Johann Ambrosius (the eldest son in the family was 14 at the time of Bach's birth), who probably taught him violin and the basics of music theory. His uncles were all professional musicians, whose posts included church organists, court chamber musicians, and composers. One uncle, Johann Christoph Bach (1645–93), introduced him to the organ, and an older second cousin, Johann Ludwig Bach (1677–1731), was a well-known composer and violinist. Bach drafted a genealogy around 1735 titled "Origin of the Musical Bach Family."

Bach's mother died in 1694, and his father died eight months later. Bach, aged 10, moved in with his oldest brother, Johann Christoph Bach (1671–1721), the organist at St. Michael's Church in Ohrdruf, Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. There he studied, performed, and copied music, including his own brother's, despite being forbidden to do so because scores were so valuable and private, and blank ledger paper of that type was costly. He received valuable teaching from his brother, who instructed him on the clavichord. J. C. Bach exposed him to the works of great composers of the day, including South German composers such as Johann Pachelbel (under whom Johann Christoph had studied) and Johann Jakob Froberger; North German composers; Frenchmen such as Jean-Baptiste Lully, Louis Marchand, Marin Marais; and the Italian clavierist Girolamo Frescobaldi. Also during this time, he was taught theology, Latin, Greek, French, and Italian at the local gymnasium.

At the age of 14, Bach, along with his older school friend Georg Erdmann, was awarded a choral scholarship to study at the prestigious St. Michael's School in Laneburg in the Principality of Laneburg. Although it is not known for certain, the trip was likely taken mostly on foot. His two years there were critical in exposing him to a wider facet of European culture. In addition to singing in the choir, he played the School's three-manual organ and harpsichords. He came into contact with sons of noblemen from northern Germany sent to the highly selective school to prepare for careers in other disciplines.

While in Lüneburg, Bach had access to St. John's Church and possibly used the church's famous organ, built in 1549 by Jasper Johannsen, since it was played by his organ teacher, Georg Böhm. Given his musical

talent, Bach had significant contact with Böhm while a student in Lüneburg and also took trips to nearby Hamburg, where he observed "the great North German organist Johann Adam Reincken." Stauffer reports the discovery in 2005 of the organ tablatures that Bach wrote out when still in his teens of works by Reincken and Dieterich Buxtehude, showing "a disciplined, methodical, well-trained teenager deeply committed to learning his craft."

Weimar, Arnstadt, and Muhlhausen (1703–8)

In January 1703, shortly after graduating from St. Michael's and being turned down for the post of organist at Sangerhausen, Bach was appointed court musician in the chapel of Duke Johann Ernst III in Weimar. His role there is unclear but likely included menial, nonmusical duties. During his seven-month tenure at Weimar, his reputation as a keyboardist spread so much that he was invited to inspect the new organ and give the inaugural recital at St. Boniface's Church in Arnstadt, located about 30 kilometers (19 miles) southwest of Weimar. In August 1703, he became the organist at St. Boniface's, with light duties, a relatively generous salary, and a fine new organ tuned in the modern tempered system that allowed a wide range of keys to be used.

Figure 2. St. Boniface's Church, Arnstadt.

Despite strong family connections and a musically enthusiastic employer, tension built up between Bach and the authorities after several years in the post. Bach was dissatisfied with the standard of singers in the choir, while his employer was upset by his unauthorized absence from Arnstadt; Bach was gone for several months in 1705–6, to visit the great organist and composer Dieterich Buxtehude and his Abendmusiken at St. Mary's Church in the northern city of Labeck. The visit to Buxtehude involved a 450-kilometer (280 mi) journey each way, reportedly on foot.

In 1706, Bach was offered a post as organist at St. Blasius's Church in Mühlhausen, which he took up the following year. It included significantly higher remuneration, improved conditions, and a better choir. Four months after arriving at Mühlhausen, Bach married Maria Barbara Bach, his second cousin. They had seven children, four of whom survived to adulthood, including Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, who both became important composers as well. Bach was able to convince the church and town government at Mühlhausen to fund an expensive renovation of the organ at St. Blasius's Church. Bach, in turn, wrote an elaborate, festive cantata—*Gott ist mein König* (BWV 71)—for the inauguration of the new council in 1708. The council paid handsomely for its publication, and it was a major success.

Return to Weimar (1708–17)

In 1708, Bach left Mühlhausen, returning to Weimar this time as organist and, from 1714, *Konzertmeister* (director of music) at the ducal court, where he had an opportunity to work with a large, well-funded contingent of professional musicians. Bach moved with his family into an apartment very close to the ducal palace. In the following year, their first child was born, and Maria Barbara's elder, unmarried sister joined them. She remained to help run the household until her death in 1729.

Bach's time in Weimar was the start of a sustained period of composing keyboard and orchestral works. He attained the proficiency and confidence to extend the prevailing structures and to include influences from abroad. He learned to write dramatic openings and employ the dynamic motor rhythms and harmonic schemes found in the music of Italians such as Vivaldi, Corelli, and Torelli. Bach absorbed these stylistic aspects in part by transcribing Vivaldi's string and wind concertos for harpsichord and organ; many of these transcribed works are still regularly performed. Bach was particularly attracted to the Italian style in which one or more solo instruments alternate section-by-section with the full orchestra throughout a movement.

In Weimar, Bach continued to play and compose for the organ and to perform concert music with the duke's ensemble. He also began to write the preludes and fugues that were later assembled into his monumental work *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (*Das Wohltemperierte Clavier*—*"Clavier"* meaning clavichord or harpsichord), consisting of two books, compiled in 1722 and 1744, each containing a prelude and fugue in every major and minor key.

Listen: Prelude No. 1 in C major (BWV 846)

Please listen to the following performance from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1, performed on harpsichord by Robert Schrater.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-5

Also in Weimar, Bach started work on the *Little Organ Book*, containing traditional Lutheran chorales (hymn tunes) set in complex textures. In 1713, Bach was offered a post in Halle when he advised the authorities during a renovation by Christoph Cuntzius of the main organ in the west gallery of the Market Church of Our Dear Lady. Johann Kuhnau and Bach played again when it was inaugurated in 1716.

In the spring of 1714, Bach was promoted to *Konzertmeister*, an honor that entailed performing a church cantata monthly in the castle church. The first three cantatas Bach composed in Weimar were *Himmelskönig, sei willkommen*, BWV 182, for Palm Sunday, which coincided with the Annunciation that year; *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, BWV 12, for Jubilate Sunday; and *Erschallet, ihr Lieder, erklinget, ihr Saiten!* BWV 172 for Pentecost. Bach's first Christmas cantata, *Christen, ätzet diesen Tag*, BWV 63, was premiered in 1714 or 1715.

In 1717, Bach eventually fell out of favor in Weimar and was, according to a translation of the court secretary's report, jailed for almost a month before being unfavorably dismissed: "On November 6, [1717], the quondam concertmaster and organist Bach was confined to the County Judge's place of detention for too stubbornly forcing the issue of his dismissal and finally on December 2 was freed from arrest with notice of his unfavorable discharge."

Kathen (1717–23)

Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Kathen, hired Bach to serve as his Kapellmeister (director of music) in 1717. Prince Leopold, himself a musician, appreciated Bach's talents, paid him well, and gave him considerable latitude in composing and performing. The prince was Calvinist and did not use elaborate music in his worship; accordingly, most of Bach's work from this period was secular, including the orchestral suites, the cello suites, the sonatas and partitas for solo violin, and the *Brandenburg Concertos*. Bach also composed secular cantatas for the court, such as *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht*, BWV 134a. A significant influence upon Bach's musical development during his years with the prince is recorded by Stauffer as Bach's "complete embrace of dance music, perhaps the most important influence on his mature style other than his adoption of Vivaldi's music in Weimar."

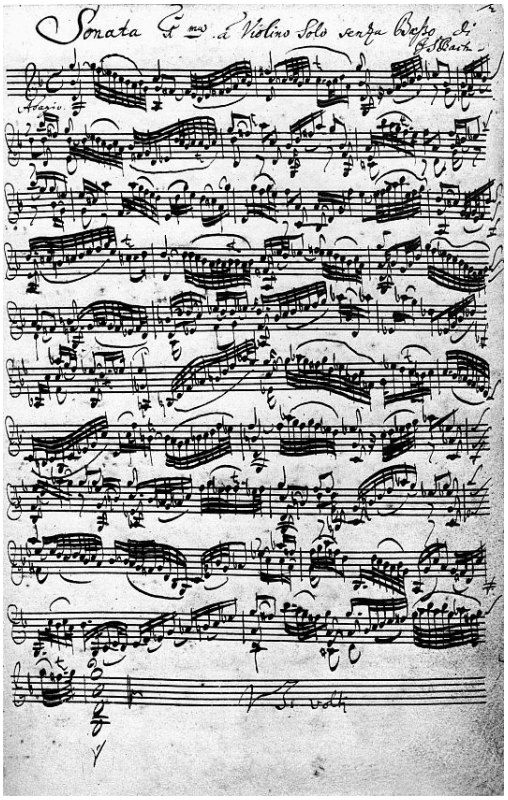

Figure 3. The autograph of Bach's Violin Sonata No. 1 in G minor (BWV 1001).

Despite being born in the same year and only about 130 kilometers (81 mi) apart, Bach and Handel never met. In 1719, Bach made the 35-kilometer (22 mi) journey from Kathen to Halle with the intention of meeting Handel; however, Handel had left the town. In 1730, Bach's son Wilhelm Friedemann traveled to Halle to invite Handel to visit the Bach family in Leipzig, but the visit did not come to pass.

On 7 July 1720, while Bach was traveling to Carlsbad with Prince Leopold, Bach's first wife suddenly died. The following year, he met Anna Magdalena Wilcke, a young, highly gifted soprano 17 years his junior who

performed at the court in Kathen; they married on 3 December 1721. Together they had 13 more children, 6 of whom survived into adulthood: Gottfried Heinrich; Elisabeth Juliane Friederica (1726–81), who married Bach's pupil Johann Christoph Altnickol; Johann Christoph Friedrich and Johann Christian, who both became significant musicians; Johanna Carolina (1737–81); and Regina Susanna (1742–1809).

Leipzig (1723–50)

In 1723, Bach was appointed *Thomaskantor*, Cantor of the Thomasschule at the Thomaskirche (St. Thomas Church) in Leipzig, which served four churches in the city (the Thomaskirche, the Nikolaikirche (St. Nicholas Church), the Neue Kirche, and the Peterskirche), and musical director of public functions such as city council elections and homages. This was a prestigious post in the mercantile city in the Electorate of Saxony, which he held for 27 years until his death. It brought him into contact with the political machinations of his employer, Leipzig's city council.

Bach was required to instruct the students of the Thomasschule in singing and to provide church music for the main churches in Leipzig. Bach was required to teach Latin, but he was allowed to employ a deputy to do this instead. A cantata was required for the church services on Sundays and additional church holidays during the liturgical year. He usually performed his own cantatas, most of which were composed during his first three years in Leipzig. The first of these was *Die Elenden sollen essen*, BWV 75, first performed in the Nikolaikirche on 30 May 1723, the first Sunday after Trinity. Bach collected his cantatas in annual cycles. Five are mentioned in obituaries; three are extant. Of the more than 300 cantatas which Bach composed in Leipzig, over 100 have been lost to posterity. Most of these concerted works expound on the Gospel readings prescribed for every Sunday and feast day in the Lutheran year. Bach started a second annual cycle the first Sunday after Trinity of 1724 and composed only chorale cantatas, each based on a single church hymn. These include *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort*, BWV 20; *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, BWV 140; *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 62; and *Wie schan leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 1.

Listen: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (BWV 140)

Please listen to the following opening chorale from cantata BWV 140, performed by the MIT Concert Choir.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-6

Bach drew the soprano and alto choristers from the school and the tenors and basses from the school and elsewhere in Leipzig. Performing at weddings and funerals provided extra income for these groups; it was probably for this purpose, and for in-school training, that he wrote at least six motets. As part of his regular church work, he performed other composers' motets, which served as formal models for his own.

Bach's predecessor as Cantor, Johann Kuhnau, had also been music director for the Paulinerkirche, the church of Leipzig University. But when Bach was installed as Cantor in 1723, he was put in charge only of music for "festal" (church holiday) services at the Paulinerkirche; his petition to provide music also for regular Sunday services there (for corresponding salary increase) went all the way up to King Augustus II but was denied. After this, in 1725, Bach "lost interest" in working even for festal services at the Paulinerkirche and appeared there only on "special occasions." The Paulinerkirche had a much better and newer (1716) organ than did the Thomaskirche or the Nikolaikirche. Bach had been consulted officially about the 1716 organ after its completion, came from Köthen, and submitted a report. Bach was not required to play any organ in his official duties, but it is believed he liked to play on the Paulinerkirche organ "for his own pleasure."

Bach broadened his composing and performing beyond the liturgy by taking over, in March 1729, the directorship of the Collegium Musicum, a secular performance ensemble started by the composer Georg Philipp Telemann. This was one of the dozens of private societies in the major German-speaking cities that was established by musically active university students; these societies had become increasingly important in public musical life and were typically led by the most prominent professionals in a city. In the words of Christoph Wolff, assuming the directorship was a shrewd move that "consolidated Bach's firm grip on Leipzig's principal musical institutions." Year round, the Leipzig's Collegium Musicum performed regularly in venues such as the Cafa Zimmermann, a coffeehouse on Catherine Street off the main market square. Many of Bach's works during the 1730s and 1740s were written for and performed by the Collegium Musicum; among these were parts of his *Clavier-Übung* (*Keyboard Practice*) and many of his violin and keyboard concertos.

In 1733, Bach composed a mass for the Dresden court (Kyrie and Gloria), which he later incorporated in his Mass in B minor. He presented the manuscript to the King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, and Elector of Saxony, Augustus III, in an eventually successful bid to persuade the monarch to appoint him as Royal Court Composer. He later extended this work into a full mass, by adding a *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, the music for which was partly based on his own cantatas, partly new composed. Bach's appointment

as court composer was part of his long-term struggle to achieve greater bargaining power with the Leipzig council. Between 1737 and 1739, Bach's former pupil Carl Gotthelf Gerlach took over the directorship of the Collegium Musicum.

In 1747, Bach visited the court of King Frederick II at Potsdam. The king played a theme for Bach and challenged him to improvise a fugue based on his theme. Bach improvised a three-part fugue on one of Frederick's fortepianos, then a novelty, and later presented the king with a *Musical Offering* that consists of fugues, canons, and a trio based on this theme. Its six-part fugue includes a slightly altered subject more suitable for extensive elaboration.

In the same year, Bach joined the Corresponding Society of the Musical Sciences (*Correspondierende Societat der musicalischen Wissenschaften*) of Lorenz Christoph Mizler. On the occasion of his entry into the society, Bach composed the Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her" (BWV 769). A portrait had to be submitted by each member of the society, so in 1746, during the preparation of Bach's entry, the famous Bach portrait was painted by Elias Gottlob Haussmann. The *Canon triplex á 6 Voc.* (BWV 1076) on this portrait was dedicated to the society. Other late works by Bach may also have a connection with the music theory-based society. One of those works was *The Art of Fugue*, which consists of 18 complex fugues and canons based on a simple theme. *The Art of Fugue* was only published posthumously in 1751.

Bach's last large work was the Mass in B minor (1748-49), which Stauffer describes as "Bach's most universal church work. Consisting mainly of recycled movements from cantatas written over a thirty-five year period, it allowed Bach to survey his vocal pieces one last time and pick select movements for further revision and refinement." Although the complete mass was never performed during the composer's lifetime, it is considered to be among the greatest choral works of all time.

Death (1750)

Bach's health declined in 1749; on 2 June, Heinrich von Brahl wrote to one of the Leipzig burgomasters to request that his music director, Johann Gottlob Harrer, fill the *Thomaskantor* and *Director musices* posts "upon the eventual . . . decease of Mr. Bach." Bach became increasingly blind, so the British eye surgeon John Taylor operated on Bach while visiting Leipzig in March or April 1750.

On 28 July 1750, Bach died at the age of 65. A contemporary newspaper reported "the unhappy consequences of the very unsuccessful eye operation" as the cause of death. Modern historians speculate that the cause of death was a stroke complicated by pneumonia. His son Carl Philipp Emanuel and his pupil Johann Friedrich Agricola wrote an obituary of Bach. In 1754, it was published by Lorenz Christoph Mizler in the musical periodical *Musikalische Bibliothek*. This obituary arguably remains "the richest and most trustworthy" early source document about Bach.

Figure 4. Bach's grave, St. Thomas Church, Leipzig.

Bach's estate included 5 harpsichords, 2 lute-harpsichords, 3 violins, 3 violas, 2 cellos, a viola da gamba, a lute and a spinet, and 52 "sacred books," including books by Martin Luther and Josephus. He was originally buried at Old St. John's Cemetery in Leipzig. His grave went unmarked for nearly 150 years. In 1894, his remains were located and moved to a vault in St. John's Church. This building was destroyed by Allied bombing during World War II, so in 1950, Bach's remains were taken to their present grave in St. Thomas Church. Later research has called into question whether the remains in the grave are actually those of Bach.

Legacy

After his death, Bach's reputation as a composer at first declined; his work was regarded as old-fashioned compared to the emerging gallant style. Initially he was remembered more as a virtuoso player of the organ and as a teacher.

Many of Bach's unpublished manuscripts were distributed among his wife and musician sons at the time of his death. Unfortunately, the poor financial condition of some of the family members led to the sale and subsequent loss of parts of Bach's compositions, including over 100 cantatas and his *St. Mark Passion*, of which no copies are known to survive.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Bach was recognized by several prominent composers for his keyboard work. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Frédéric Chopin, Robert Schumann,

and Felix Mendelssohn were among his admirers; they began writing in a more contrapuntal style after being exposed to Bach's music. Beethoven described him as "*Urvater der Harmonie*"—the "original father of harmony."

Bach's reputation among the wider public was enhanced in part by Johann Nikolaus Forkel's 1802 biography of the composer. Felix Mendelssohn significantly contributed to the renewed interest in Bach's work with his 1829 Berlin performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. In 1850, the Bach-Gesellschaft (Bach Society) was founded to promote the works; in 1899, the society published a comprehensive edition of the composer's works with little editorial intervention.

During the 20th century, the process of recognizing the musical as well as the pedagogic value of some of the works continued, perhaps most notably in the promotion of the cello suites by Pablo Casals, the first major performer to record these suites. Another development has been the growth of the historically informed performance movement, which attempts to take into account the aesthetic criteria and performance practice of the period in which the music was conceived. Examples include the playing of keyboard works on harpsichord rather than modern grand piano and the use of small choirs or single voices instead of the larger forces favored by 19th- and early 20th-century performers.

The liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church remembers Bach annually with a feast day on 28 July, together with George Frideric Handel and Henry Purcell; the Calendar of Saints of the Lutheran Church on the same day remembers Bach and Handel with Heinrich Schütz. In other circles, Bach's music is bracketed with the literature of William Shakespeare and the science of Isaac Newton.

During the 20th century, many streets in Germany were named and statues were erected in honor of Bach. A large crater in the Bach quadrangle on Mercury is named in Bach's honor, as are the main-belt asteroids 1814 Bach and 1482 Sebastiana. Bach's music features three times—more than that of any other composer—on the Voyager Golden Record, a gramophone record containing a broad sample of the images, common sounds, languages, and music of Earth, sent into outer space with the two Voyager probes.

Works

In 1950, a thematic catalog called *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis* (Bach Works Catalog) was compiled by Wolfgang Schmieder. Schmieder largely followed the *Bach-Gesellschaft-Ausgabe*, a comprehensive edition of the composer's works that was produced between 1850 and 1900: BWV 1224 are cantatas; BWV 225–249, large-scale choral works including his Passions; BWV 250–524, chorales and sacred songs; BWV 525–748, organ works; BWV 772–994, other keyboard works; BWV 995–1000, lute music; BWV 1001–40, chamber music; BWV 1041–71, orchestral music; and BWV 1072–1126, canons and fugues.

Organ Works

Bach was best known during his lifetime as an organist, organ consultant, and composer of organ works in

both the traditional German free genre, such as preludes, fantasias, and toccata, and stricter forms, such as chorale preludes and fugues. At a young age, he established a reputation for his great creativity and ability to integrate foreign styles into his organ works. A decidedly North German influence was exerted by Georg Bahm, with whom Bach came into contact in Laneburg, and Dieterich Buxtehude, whom the young organist visited in Labeck in 1704 on an extended leave of absence from his job in Arnstadt. Around this time, Bach copied the works of numerous French and Italian composers to gain insights into their compositional languages and later arranged violin concertos by Vivaldi and others for organ and harpsichord. During his most productive period (1708–14), he composed about a dozen pairs of preludes and fugues, 5 toccatas and fugues, and the *Little Organ Book*, an unfinished collection of 46 short chorale preludes that demonstrates compositional techniques in the setting of chorale tunes. After leaving Weimar, Bach wrote less for organ, although some of his best-known works (the six trio sonatas, the German Organ Mass in *Clavier-àbung III* from 1739, and the Great Eighteen chorales, revised late in his life) were composed after his leaving Weimar. Bach was extensively engaged later in his life in consulting on organ projects, testing newly built organs, and dedicating organs in afternoon recitals.

Listen: Keyboard Work

Please listen to the opening aria from the *Goldberg Variations* (BWV 988), performed on piano by Kimiko Ishizaka.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-7

Orchestral and Chamber Music

Bach wrote for single instruments, duets, and small ensembles. Many of his solo works, such as his six sonatas and partitas for violin (BWV 1001–1006), six cello suites (BWV 1007–1012), and partita for solo flute (BWV 1013), are widely considered among the most profound works in the repertoire. Bach composed a suite and several other works that have been claimed (since 1900) for the solo lute, but there is no evidence that he wrote for this instrument. He wrote trio sonatas; solo sonatas (accompanied by continuo) for the flute and for the viola da gamba; and a large number of canons and ricercars, mostly with unspecified instrumentation. The most significant examples of the latter are contained in *The Art of Fugue* and *The Musical Offering*.

Bach's best-known orchestral works are the *Brandenburg Concertos*, so named because he submitted them in the hope of gaining employment from Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg-Schwedt in 1721; his application was unsuccessful. These works are examples of the concerto grosso genre. Other surviving works in the concerto form include two violin concertos (BWV 1041 and BWV 1042); a concerto for two violins in D minor (BWV 1043), often referred to as Bach's "double" concerto; and concertos for one to four harpsichords. It is widely accepted that many of the harpsichord concertos were not original works but arrangements of his concertos for other instruments now lost. A number of violin, oboe, and flute concertos have been reconstructed from these. In addition to concertos, Bach wrote four orchestral suites and a series of stylized dances for orchestra, each preceded by a French overture.

Cantatas

As the Thomas Kantor, beginning mid-1723, Bach performed a cantata each Sunday and feast day that corresponded to the lectionary readings of the week. Although Bach performed cantatas by other composers, he composed at least three entire annual cycles of cantatas at Leipzig, in addition to those composed at Muhlhausen and Weimar. In total he wrote more than 300 sacred cantatas, of which nearly 200 survive.

His cantatas vary greatly in form and instrumentation, including those for solo singers, single choruses, small instrumental groups, and grand orchestras. Many consist of a large opening chorus followed by one or more recitative-aria pairs for soloists (or duets) and a concluding chorale. The recitative is part of the corresponding Bible reading for the week, and the aria is a contemporary reflection on it. The melody of the concluding chorale often appears as a Cantus Firmus in the opening movement. Among his best known cantatas are:

Figure 5. St. Thomas Church, Leipzig.

- *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4
- *Ich hatte viel Bekammernis*, BWV 21
- *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, BWV 80
- *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*, BWV 106 (*Actus Tragicus*)
- *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, BWV 140
- *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, BWV 147

In addition, Bach wrote a number of secular cantatas, usually for civic events such as council inaugurations. These include wedding cantatas, the *Wedding Quodlibet*, the *Peasant Cantata*, and the *Coffee Cantata*.

Before we can dive into a study of Bach's cantatas, we need to learn about an important element of Lutheran sacred music: the chorale. Bach worked these chorales or hymn tunes into many of his church cantatas, and the three movements from Cantata 140 Wachet auf all make use of the chorale tune on which that cantata is based.

Chorales

A **chorale** is a melody to which a hymn is sung by a congregation in a German Protestant Church service. The typical four-part setting of a chorale, in which the sopranos (and the congregation) sing the melody along with three lower voices, is known as a *chorale harmonization*. In certain modern usage, this term may include classical settings of such hymns and works of a similar character.

Chorales tend to be simple and singable tunes. The words are often sung to a rhyming scheme and are in a strophic form (the same melody used for different verses). Within a verse, many chorales follow the AAB pattern of melody that is known as the German bar form.

Figure 1. The third stanza in Johann Sebastian Bach's setting as the final movement of his chorale cantata Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 140.

History

Starting in 1523, Martin Luther began translating worship texts into German from the Latin so that the people could understand, continue to learn, and participate. This created an immediate need for a large repertoire of new chorales. He composed some chorales himself, such as *A Mighty Fortress*. For other chorales, he used Gregorian chant melodies used in Roman Catholic worship and fitted them with new German texts, sometimes adapting the same melody more than once. For example, he fitted the melody of the hymn "Veni redemptor gentium" to three different texts, "Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich," "Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort," and "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland." A famous example is "Christ lag in Todes Banden," which is based on the tune of the Catholic Easter Sequence, "Victimae Paschali Laudes." As early as 1524, Johann Walter published *Eyn geystlich Gesangk Buchleyn*, the first hymnal for choir, in Wittenberg.

Johann Sebastian Bach harmonized hundreds of chorales, typically used at the end of his cantatas and concluding scenes in his Passions. In his *St. Matthew Passion*, he set five stanzas of "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" in four different ways. He also used hymns as the base for his cycle of chorale cantatas and chorale preludes. Bach concentrated on the chorales, especially in the Chorale cantatas of his second annual cycle, composed mostly in 1724–25.

Today, many of the Lutheran chorales are familiar as hymns used in Protestant churches, sometimes sung in four-voice harmony.

Derived Forms

Chorales also appear in chorale preludes, pieces generally for organ designed to be played immediately before the congregational singing of the hymn. A chorale prelude includes the melody of the chorale and adds contrapuntal lines. One of the first composers to write chorale preludes was Samuel Scheidt. Bach's many chorale preludes are the best-known examples of the form. Later composers of the chorale prelude include Johannes Brahms, such as Eleven Chorale Preludes, and Max Reger, who composed *Wie schan leucht' uns der Morgenstern* on Nicolai's hymn, among many others.

Anton Bruckner made frequent use of the chorale as a compositional device based on his understanding of musical settings of the liturgy and Johann Sebastian Bach's chorale preludes. He used it in his symphonies, masses, and motets—for example, *Dir, Herr, dir will ich mich ergeben* and *In jener letzten der Nächte*, often in contrast to and combination with the fugue, as in Psalm 22 and in the Finale of Symphony No. 5.

https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/bachs-cantatas/ Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:52:00 +0000

This page will give you an overview of Bach's approach to the composition of cantatas. In some of these sections, you will find the names of specific cantatas or cantata movements that serve as an example of the characteristics discussed. You won't be tested on any of those examples; our goal is to get a general sense of Bach's approach.

Introduction

The **cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach** are among his most significant and celebrated compositions. While many have been lost, at least 209 of the cantatas composed by Bach have survived.

As far as we know, Bach's earliest surviving cantatas date from 1707, the year he moved to Muhlhausen (although he may have begun composing them at his previous post at Arnstadt). Many of Bach's cantatas date from the years between 1723 (when he took up the post of *Thomaskantor*, cantor of the main churches of Leipzig) and 1745 (when the last one was probably written). Working especially at the Thomaskirche and the Nikolaikirche, it was part of his job to perform a church cantata every Sunday and holiday, conducting soloists, the Thomanerchor, and orchestra as part of the church service. Works from three annual cycles of cantatas for the liturgical calendar have survived. These relate to the readings prescribed by the Lutheran liturgy for the specific occasion. In his first years in Leipzig, starting after Trinity of 1723, it was not unusual for him to compose a new work every week.

Figure 1. Thomaskirche, one of the two Leipzig churches where Bach composed and performed church cantatas almost weekly from 1723 to 1726.

In addition to the church cantatas, he composed sacred cantatas for functions like weddings or *Ratswahl* (the inauguration of a new town council), music for academic functions of the University of Leipzig at the Paulinerkirche, and secular cantatas for anniversaries and entertainment in nobility and society, some of them *Glackwunschkantaten* (congratulatory cantatas) and *Huldigungskantaten* (homage cantatas).

His cantatas usually require four soloists and a four-part choir, but he also wrote solo cantatas for typically one soloist and dialogue cantatas for two singers. The words for many cantatas combine Bible quotes, contemporary poetry, and chorale, but he also composed a cycle of chorale cantatas based exclusively on one chorale.

Structure of a Bach Cantata

A typical Bach cantata of his first year in Leipzig follows the scheme:

1. Opening chorus
2. Recitative
3. Aria
4. Recitative (or Arioso)

5. Aria
6. Chorale

The opening chorus (*Eingangschor*) is usually a polyphonic setting, the orchestra presenting the themes or contrasting material first. Most arias follow the form of a da capo aria, repeating the first part after a middle section. The final chorale is typically a homophonic setting of a traditional melody.

Bach used an expanded structure to take up his position in Leipzig with the cantatas Die Elenden sollen essen, BWV 75, and Die Himmel erzahlen die Ehre Gottes, BWV 76, both in two parts, to be performed before and after the sermon (*post orationem*) and during communion (*sub communione*), each part a sequence of opening movement, five movements alternating recitatives and arias, and chorale. In an exemplary way, both cantatas cover the prescribed readings: starting with a related psalm from the Old Testament, Part I reflects the Gospel, Part II the Epistle.

Bach did not follow any scheme strictly, but composed as he wanted to express the words. A few cantatas are opened by an instrumental piece before the first chorus, such as the Sinfonia of Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir, BWV 29. A solo movement begins Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille, BWV 120, because its first words speak of silence. Many cantatas composed in Weimar are set like chamber music, mostly for soloists, with a four-part setting only in the closing chorale, which may have been sung by the soloists. In an early cantata *Erschallet, ihr Lieder, erklinget, ihr Saiten!* BWV 172, Bach marked a repeat of the opening chorus after the chorale.

The chorale can be as simple as a traditional four-part setting, or be accompanied by an obbligato instrument, or be accompanied by the instruments of the opening chorus, or even expanded by interludes based on its themes, or have the homophonic vocal parts embedded in an instrumental concerto as in the familiar Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben (BWV 147), or have complex vocal parts embedded in the concerto as in Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht (BWV 186) in a form called *Choralphantasie* (chorale fantasia). In Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 61, for the 1st Sunday in Advent, the beginning of a new liturgical year, he shaped the opening chorus as a French overture.

Singers and Instrumentation

Vocal

Typically Bach employs soprano, alto, tenor, and bass soloists and a four-part choir, also SATB. He sometimes assigns the voice parts to the dramatic situation—for example, soprano for innocence or alto for motherly feelings. The bass is often the *vox Christi,* the voice of Jesus, when Jesus is quoted directly, as in *Es wartet alles auf dich*, BWV 187, or indirectly, as in *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort*, BWV 60.

In the absence of clear documentary evidence, there are different options as to how many singers to deploy per part in choral sections. This is reflected in the recordings discussed below. Ton Koopman, for example, is a conductor who has recorded a complete set of the cantatas and who favors a choir with four singers per part. On the other hand, some modern performances and recordings use one voice per part, although Bach would have had more singers available at Leipzig, for example, while the space in the court chapel in Weimar was limited. One size of choir probably does not fit all the cantatas.

Figure 2. Schlosskirche in Weimar where Bach composed and performed church cantatas monthly from 1714 to 1717.

Instrumental

The orchestra that Bach used is based on string instruments (violin, viola) and *basso continuo,* typically played by cello, double bass (an octave lower), and organ. A continuous bass is the rule in Baroque music; its absence is worth mentioning and has a reason, such as describing fragility.

The specific character of a cantata or a single movement is rather defined by wind instruments, such as oboe, oboe da caccia, oboe d'amore, flauto traverso, recorder, trumpet, horn, trombone, and timpani. In movements with winds, a bassoon usually joins the continuo group.

Festive occasions call for richer instrumentation. Some instruments also carry symbolic meaning, such as a trumpet, the royal instrument of the Baroque, for divine majesty, and three trumpets for the Trinity. In an aria of BWV 172, addressing the *Heiligste Dreifaltigkeit* (most holy Trinity), the bass is accompanied only by three trumpets and timpani.

In many arias, Bach uses obbligato instruments, which correspond with the singer as an equal partner. These instrumental parts are frequently set in virtuoso repetitive patterns called figuration. Instruments include, in

addition to the ones mentioned, flauto piccolo (sopranino recorder), violino piccolo, viola d'amore, violoncello piccolo (a smaller cello), tromba da tirarsi (slide trumpet), and corno da tirarsi.

In his early compositions, Bach also used instruments that had become old-fashioned, such as viola da gamba and violone. Recorders (flauti dolci) are sometimes used to express humility or poverty, such as in the cantata *Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot*, BWV 39.

Solo Cantata

Some cantatas are composed for only one solo singer (*Solokantate*), as *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*, BWV 51 for soprano, sometimes concluded by a chorale, as *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen*, BWV 56 for bass.

Dialogue Cantata

Some cantatas are structured as a dialogue, mostly for Jesus and the Soul (bass and soprano), set like miniature operas. Bach titled them, for example, *Concerto in Dialogo*, concerto in dialogue. An early example is *Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn*, BWV 152 (1714). He composed four such works in his third annual cycle, *Selig ist der Mann*, BWV 57 (1725); *Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen*, BWV 32; *Ich geh und suche mit Verlangen*, BWV 49 (both 1726); and *Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid*, BWV 58 (1727).

Text of Bach's Sacred Cantatas

Within the Lutheran liturgy, certain readings from the Bible were prescribed for every event during the church year; specifically, it was expected that an *Epistel* from an Epistle and *Evangelium* from a Gospel would be read. Music was expected for all Sundays and Holidays except the quiet times (*tempus clausum*) of Advent and Lent; the cantatas were supposed to reflect the readings. Many opening movements are based on quotations from the Bible, such as *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen*, BWV 65, from Isaiah 60:6. Ideally, a cantata text started with an Old Testament quotation related to the readings and reflected both the Epistle and the Gospel, as in the exemplary *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes*, BWV 76. Most of the solo movements are based on poetry of contemporary writers, such as court poet Salomon Franck in Weimar or Georg Christian Lehms or Picander in Leipzig, with whom Bach collaborated. The final words were usually a stanza from a chorale. Bach's Chorale cantatas are based exclusively on one chorale—for example, the early Christ lag in Todes Banden, BWV 4, and most cantatas of his second annual cycle in Leipzig.

Here is some more specific information on the Bach cantata featured on our playlist. Please note that this reading deals with all seven movements of the piece. On the listening exam, you will only be responsible for movements I, IV, and VII.

Introduction

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (Awake, calls the voice to us), **BWV 140**, also known as *Sleepers Wake*, is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach. He composed the chorale cantata in Leipzig for the 27th Sunday after Trinity and first performed it on 25 November 1731. It is based on the hymn "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme" (1599) by Philipp Nicolai. Movement 4 of the cantata is the base for the first of Bach's Schübler Chorales, BWV 645. The cantata is a late addition to Bach's cycle of chorale cantatas, featuring additional poetry for two duets of Jesus and the Soul, which expand the theme of the hymn.

Scoring and Structure

The cantata in seven movements is scored for three soloists (soprano, tenor, and bass), a four-part choir, horn, two oboes, taille, violino piccolo, two violins, viola, and basso continuo.

1. Chorale: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (Wake up, the voice calls to us)
2. Recitative (tenor): *Er kommt* (He comes)
3. Aria (soprano, bass): *Wann kommst du, mein Heil?* (When will you come, my salvation?)
4. Chorale (tenor): *Zion hört die Wächter singen* (Zion hears the watchmen singing)
5. Recitative: *So geh herein zu mir* (So come in with me)
6. Aria (soprano, bass): *Mein Freund ist mein!* (My friend is mine!)
7. Chorale: *Gloria sei dir gesungen* (May Gloria be sung to you)

Music

The first movement is a chorale fantasia based on the first verse of the chorale, a common feature of Bach's earlier chorale cantatas. It is in E-flat major. The cantus firmus is sung by the soprano. The orchestra plays independent material mainly based on two motifs: a dotted rhythm and an ascending scale "with syncopated accent shifts." The lower voices add in unusually free polyphonic music images, such as the frequent calls "wach auf!" (wake up!) and "wo, wo?" (where, where?), and long melismas in a fugato on "Halleluja."

The second movement is a recitative for tenor as a narrator who calls the "Tachter Zions" (daughters of Zion). In the following duet with obbligato violino piccolo, the soprano represents the Soul, and the bass is the *vox Christi* (voice of Jesus).

The fourth movement, based on the second verse of the chorale, is written in the style of a chorale prelude, with the phrases of the chorale, sung as a cantus firmus by the tenors (or by the tenor soloist), entering intermittently against a famously lyrical melody played in unison by the violins (without the violino piccolo) and the viola, accompanied by the basso continuo. Bach later transcribed this movement for organ (BWV 645),

and it was subsequently published along with five other transcriptions Bach made of his cantata movements as the Schübler Chorales.

The fifth movement is a recitative for bass, accompanied by the strings. It pictures the unity of the bridegroom and the "chosen bride." The sixth movement is another duet for soprano and bass with obbligato oboe. This duet, like the third movement, is a love duet between the soprano Soul and the bass Jesus. Alfred Darr describes it as giving "expression to the joy of the united pair," showing a "relaxed mood" in "artistic intensity."

The closing chorale is a four-part setting of the third verse of the hymn. The high pitch of the melody is doubled by a violino piccolo an octave higher, representing the bliss of the "heavenly Jerusalem."

The suite as a genre has previously been described in the Instrumental Music in the Baroque section. Bach composed many suites for various instruments. His six suites for unaccompanied cello are some of the best-known works written for the instrument. You'll notice that there are recordings of every movement of Suite No. 1. You only have the Prelude (1st movement) on your playlist, though at some point I highly recommend listening to more for your own enjoyment.

Introduction

The ***Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello*** by Johann Sebastian Bach are some of the most frequently performed and recognizable solo compositions ever written for cello. They were most likely composed during the period 1717–1723, when Bach served as a Kapellmeister in Kathen. The title of Anna Magdalena Bach's manuscript was *Suites á Violoncello Solo senza Basso*.

The suites have been transcribed for numerous instruments, including the violin, viola, double bass, viola da gamba, mandolin, piano, marimba, classical guitar, recorder, flute, electric bass, horn, saxophone, bass clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba, ukulele, and charango and Rap.

The suites have been performed and recorded by many renowned cellists; Yo-Yo Ma won the 1985 Best Instrumental Soloist Grammy Award for his bestselling album *Six Unaccompanied Cello Suites*.

Structure

The suites are in six movements each and have the following structure and order of movements:

1. Prelude
2. Allemande
3. Courante
4. Sarabande
5. Galanteries: Minuets for Suites 1 and 2, Bourrées for 3 and 4, Gavottes for 5 and 6

6. Gigue

Scholars believe that Bach intended the works to be considered as a systematically conceived cycle rather than an arbitrary series of pieces. Compared to Bach's other suite collections, the cello suites are the most consistent in order of their movements. In addition, to achieve a symmetrical design and go beyond the traditional layout, Bach inserted *intermezzo* or *galanterie* movements in the form of pairs between the Sarabande and the Gigue.

Only five movements in the entire set of suites are completely non-chordal, meaning that they consist only of a single melodic line. These are the second Minuet of the 1st Suite, the second Minuet of the 2nd suite, the second Bourrée of the 3rd suite, the Gigue of the 4th suite, and the Sarabande of the 5th Suite. The 2nd Gavotte of the 5th Suite has but one prim-chord (the same note played on two strings at the same time), but only in the original scordatura version of the suite; in the standard tuning version, it is completely free of chords.

Suite No. 1 in G major

The Prelude, mainly consisting of arpeggiated chords, is probably the best-known movement from the entire set of suites and is regularly heard on television and in films.

Listen: Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007

Please listen to the following performance of prelude from Cello Suite No. 1, by John Michel.

Prelude

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Allemande

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Courante

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Sarabande

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Minuets

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Gigue

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Fugue is a complex style of composition that can be employed in almost any genre; this page will give you a

general sense of what late Baroque fugues involved. Fugal writing is a very complex form of counterpoint. In the Baroque, it could also be considered a genre, as many pieces were composed as stand-alone fugues. The most important thing to remember is the role of the fugue subject as the main melodic idea that is imitated throughout the piece.

Even though fugues were being composed throughout the Baroque, Bach is considered to have no equal in the composition of fugues, so this page is included in this section with him rather than in the Instrumental Music in the Baroque section.

Fugue

In music, a **fugue** is a contrapuntal compositional technique in two or more voices built on a subject (theme) that is introduced at the beginning in imitation (repetition at different pitches) and recurs frequently in the course of the composition.

The English term *fugue* originated in the 16th century and is derived from the French word *fugue* or the Italian *fuga*. This in turn comes from Latin, also *fuga*, which is itself related to both *fugere* ("to flee") and *fugare* ("to chase"). The adjectival form is *fugal*. Variants include *fughetta* (literally, "a small fugue") and *fugato* (a passage in fugal style within another work that is not a fugue).

A fugue usually has three sections: an exposition, a development, and a recapitulation containing the return of the subject in the fugue's tonic key, though not all fugues have a recapitulation. In the Middle Ages, the term was widely used to denote any works in canonic style; by the Renaissance, it had come to denote specifically imitative works. Since the 17th century, the term *fugue* has described what is commonly regarded as the most fully developed procedure of imitative counterpoint.

Most fugues open with a short main theme, the subject, which then sounds successively in each voice (after the first voice is finished stating the subject, a second voice repeats the subject at a different pitch, and other voices repeat in the same way); when each voice has entered, the *exposition* is complete. This is often followed by a connecting passage, or *episode*, developed from previously heard material; further "entries" of the subject are heard in related keys. Episodes (if applicable) and entries are usually alternated until the "final entry" of the subject, by which point the music has returned to the opening key, or tonic, which is often followed by closing material, the coda. In this sense, a fugue is a style of composition rather than a fixed structure.

The form evolved during the 18th century from several earlier types of contrapuntal compositions, such as imitative ricercars, capriccios, canzonas, and fantasias. The famous fugue composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) shaped his own works after those of Johann Jakob Froberger (1616–1667), Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706), Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643), Dieterich Buxtehude (ca. 1637–1707), and others. With the decline of sophisticated styles at the end of the Baroque period, the fugue's central role waned, eventually giving way as the sonata form and the symphony orchestra rose to a dominant position. Nevertheless, composers continued to write and study fugues for various purposes; they appear in the works of Wolfgang

Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), as well as modern composers like Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975).

Baroque Era

It was in the Baroque period that the writing of fugues became central to composition, in part as a demonstration of compositional expertise. Fugues were incorporated into a variety of musical forms. Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, Girolamo Frescobaldi, Johann Jakob Froberger, and Dieterich Buxtehude all wrote fugues, and George Frideric Handel included them in many of his oratorios. Keyboard suites from this time often conclude with a fugal gigue. Domenico Scarlatti has only a few fugues among his corpus of over 500 harpsichord sonatas. The French overture featured a quick fugal section after a slow introduction. The second movement of a sonata da chiesa, as written by Arcangelo Corelli and others, was usually fugal.

The Baroque period also saw a rise in the importance of music theory. Some fugues during the Baroque period were pieces designed to teach contrapuntal technique to students. The most influential text was published by Johann Joseph Fux (1660–1741), his *Gradus Ad Parnassum* ("Steps to Parnassus"), which appeared in 1725. This work laid out the terms of "species" of counterpoint and offered a series of exercises to learn fugue writing. Fux's work was largely based on the practice of Palestrina's modal fugues. Mozart studied from this book, and it remained influential into the 19th century. Haydn, for example, taught counterpoint from his own summary of Fux and thought of it as the basis for formal structure.

This musical form was also apparent in chamber music Bach would later compose for Weimar; the famous *Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor* (BWV 1043) (although not contrapuntal in its entirety) has a fugal opening section to its first movement.

Bach's most famous fugues are those for the harpsichord in *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, which many composers and theorists look at as the greatest model of fugue. *The Well-Tempered Clavier* comprises two volumes written in different times of Bach's life, each comprising 24 prelude and fugue pairs, one for each major and minor key. Bach is also known for his organ fugues, which are usually preceded by a prelude or toccata. *The Art of Fugue*, BWV 1080, is a collection of fugues (and four canons) on a single theme that is gradually transformed as the cycle progresses. Bach also wrote smaller single fugues and put fugal sections or movements into many of his more general works.

J. S. Bach's influence extended forward through his son C. P. E. Bach and through the theorist Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg (1718–1795), whose *Abhandlung von der Fuge* ("Treatise on the fugue," 1753) was largely based on J. S. Bach's work.

This brief synopsis of Bach's "Little" fugue in G minor includes a listening guide that, while it may not line up exactly with the timing of the piece in our playlist due to variations from one performance to another, will serve as a helpful checklist of the contrapuntal "events" that make up this particular fugue. As noted in the article, the subject of this fugue is one of the best-known of Bach's melodies. Here is the subject written out in musical notation.

The *Brandenburg Concertos* are six concerti grossi that Bach wrote as a gift for the Margrave of Brandenburg, a nobleman that Bach was hoping to impress in order to obtain employment in his court (he didn't get the job). This link will take you to an article at National Public Radio detailing the origins of these concertos, widely considered to be among the greatest orchestral compositions of the period. Remember that while this article discusses all six concertos, the piece on our playlist is the 1st movement from Concerto No. 5 in D major. You can also visit the Wikipedia page on the *Brandenburg Concertos,* where you can listen to all six works in their entirety.

In the Olympic games of music history, Bach and Handel share the gold medal platform as the greatest composers of the Baroque era. However, that is the view from our 21st-century vantage point. In the late Baroque era, there would have been only one reigning composer, and that composer was Handel.

While Bach was respected as a supremely gifted organist, his compositions would have been little known outside the region of Germany in which he lived and worked. Handel, on the other hand, was internationally famous during his lifetime and, largely due to his oratorios, well known and highly regarded in the decades and centuries that followed his death.

Introduction

George Frideric (or **Frederick**) **Handel**, born **Georg Friedrich Handel** (5 March 1685–14 April 1759), was a German-born, British Baroque composer who spent the bulk of his career in London, becoming well known for his operas, oratorios, anthems, and organ concertos. Born into a family indifferent to music, Handel received critical training in Halle, Hamburg, and Italy before settling in London (1712) and became a naturalized British subject in 1727. He was strongly influenced by both the great composers of the Italian Baroque and the middle-German polyphonic choral tradition.

Figure 1. Portrait of Handel, by Balthasar Denner.

Within 15 years, Handel had started three commercial opera companies to supply the English nobility with Italian opera. Musicologist Winton Dean writes that his operas show that "Handel was not only a great composer; he was a dramatic genius of the first order." As *Alexander's Feast* (1736) was well received, Handel made a transition to English choral works. After his success with *Messiah* (1742), he never performed an Italian opera again. Almost blind, and having lived in England for nearly 50 years, he died in 1759, a respected and rich man. His funeral was given full state honors, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Born the same year as Johann Sebastian Bach and Domenico Scarlatti, Handel is regarded as one of the

greatest composers of the Baroque era, with works such as *Water Music*, *Music for the Royal Fireworks,* and *Messiah* remaining steadfastly popular. One of his four Coronation Anthems, *Zadok the Priest* (1727), composed for the coronation of George II of Great Britain, has been performed at every subsequent British coronation, traditionally during the sovereign's anointing. Handel composed more than 40 operas in over 30 years, and since the late 1960s, with the revival of Baroque music and historically informed musical performance, interest in Handel's operas has grown.

Move to London

In 1710, Handel became *Kapellmeister* to German prince George, the Elector of Hanover, who in 1714 would become King George I of Great Britain and Ireland. He visited Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici and her husband in Dusseldorf on his way to London in 1710. With his opera *Rinaldo*, based on *La Gerusalemme Liberata* by the Italian poet Torquato Tasso, Handel enjoyed great success, although it was composed quickly, with many borrowings from his older Italian works. This work contains one of Handel's favorite arias, *Cara sposa, amante cara*, and the famous *Lascia ch'io pianga*.

Figure 2. George Frideric Handel (left) and King George I on the River Thames, 17 July 1717, by Edouard Hamman (1819–88).

In 1712, Handel decided to settle permanently in England. He received a yearly income of £200 from Queen Anne after composing for her the *Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate*, first performed in 1713.

One of his most important patrons was the 3rd Earl of Burlington and 4th Earl of Cork, a young and incredibly wealthy member of an Anglo-Irish aristocratic family. For the young Lord Burlington, Handel wrote *Amadigi di Gaula*, a magical opera about a damsel in distress based on the tragedy by Antoine Houdar de la Motte.

The conception of an opera as a coherent structure was slow to capture Handel's imagination, and he composed no operas for five years. In July 1717, Handel's *Water Music* was performed more than three times on the Thames for the king and his guests. It is said the compositions spurred reconciliation between the king and Handel.

Royal Academy of Music

In May 1719, the 1st Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Chamberlain, ordered Handel to look for new singers. Handel traveled to Dresden to attend the newly built opera. He saw *Teofane* by Antonio Lotti and engaged members of the cast for the Royal Academy of Music, founded by a group of aristocrats to assure themselves a constant supply of Baroque opera or opera seria. Handel may have invited John Smith, his fellow student in Halle, and his son Johann Christoph Schmidt to become his secretary and amanuensis. By 1723, he had moved into a Georgian house at 25 Brook Street, which he rented for the rest of his life. This house, where he rehearsed, copied music, and sold tickets is now the Handel House Museum. During 12 months between 1724 and 1725, Handel wrote three outstanding and successful operas: *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano,* and *Rodelinda*. Handel's operas are filled with da capo arias, such as *Svegliatevi nel core*. After composing *Silete venti*, he concentrated on opera and stopped writing cantatas. *Scipio*, from which the regimental slow march of the British Grenadier Guards is derived, was performed as a stopgap, waiting for the arrival of Faustina Bordoni.

Figure 3. Handel House at 25 Brook Street, Mayfair, London.

In 1727, Handel was commissioned to write four anthems for the coronation ceremony of King George II. One of these, *Zadok the Priest*, has been played at every British coronation ceremony since. In 1728, John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* premiered at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre and ran for 62 consecutive performances, the longest run in theater history up to that time. After nine years, the Royal Academy of Music ceased to function, but Handel soon started a new company.

The Queen's Theatre at the Haymarket (now Her Majesty's Theatre), established in 1705 by architect and playwright John Vanbrugh, quickly became an opera house. Between 1711 and 1739, more than 25 of Handel's operas premiered there. In 1729, Handel became joint manager of the theater with John James Heidegger.

Handel traveled to Italy to engage new singers and also composed seven more operas, among them the comic masterpiece *Partenope* and the "magic" opera *Orlando*. After two commercially successful English oratorios, *Esther* and *Deborah*, he was able to invest again in the South Sea Company. Handel reworked his *Acis and Galatea,* which then became his most successful work ever. Handel failed to compete with the Opera of the Nobility, who engaged musicians such as Johann Adolph Hasse, Nicolo Porpora, and the famous castrato Farinelli. The strong support by Frederick, Prince of Wales, caused conflicts in the royal family. In March 1734,

Handel composed a wedding anthem, *This is the day which the Lord hath made*, and a serenata *Parnasso in Festa* for Anne of Hanover.

Despite the problems the Opera of the Nobility was causing him at the time, Handel's neighbor in Brook Street, Mary Delany, reported on a party she invited Handel to at her house on 12 April 1734, where he was in good spirits:

> I had Lady Rich and her daughter, Lady Cath. Hanmer and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Percival, Sir John Stanley and my brother, Mrs. Donellan, Strada [star soprano of Handel's operas] and Mr. Coot. Lord Shaftesbury begged of Mr. Percival to bring him, and being a profess'd friend of Mr. Handel (who was here also) was admitted; I never was so well entertained at an opera! Mr. Handel was in the best humour in the world, and played lessons and accompanied Strada and all the ladies that sang from seven o'clock till eleven. I gave them tea and coffee, and about half an hour after nine had a salver brought in of chocolate, mulled white wine and biscuits. Everybody was easy and seemed pleased.

Opera at Covent Garden

In 1733, the Earl of Essex received a letter with the following sentence: "Handel became so arbitrary a prince, that the Town murmurs." The board of chief investors expected Handel to retire when his contract ended, but Handel immediately looked for another theater. In cooperation with John Rich, he started his third company at Covent Garden Theatre. Rich was renowned for his spectacular productions. He suggested Handel use his small chorus and introduce the dancing of Marie Salla, for whom Handel composed *Terpsichore*. In 1735, he introduced organ concertos between the acts. For the first time, Handel allowed Gioacchino Conti, who had no time to learn his part, to substitute arias. Financially, *Ariodante* was a failure, although he introduced ballet suites at the end of each act. *Alcina*, his last opera with a magic content, and *Alexander's Feast or the Power of Music,* based on John Dryden's *Alexander's Feast,* starred Anna Maria Strada del and John Beard.

In April 1737, at age 52, Handel apparently suffered a stroke that disabled the use of four fingers on his right hand, preventing him from performing. In summer, the disorder seemed at times to affect his understanding. Nobody expected that Handel would ever be able to perform again. But whether the affliction was rheumatism, a stroke, or a nervous breakdown, he recovered remarkably quickly. To aid his recovery, Handel had traveled to Aachen, a spa in Germany. During six weeks, he took long hot baths and ended up playing the organ for a surprised audience. It was even possible for him to write one of his most popular operas, *Serse* (including the famous aria *Ombra mai*, better known as "Handel's largo," that he wrote for the famous castrato Caffarelli), just one year after his stroke.

Deidamia, his last opera, was performed three times in 1741. Handel gave up the opera business while he enjoyed more success with his English oratorios.

Oratorio

Il Trionfo del tempo e del Dsinganno, an allegory, Handel's first oratorio, was composed in Italy in 1707,

followed by *La resurrezione* in 1708, which uses material from the Bible. The circumstances of *Esther* and its first performance, possibly in 1718, are obscure. Another 12 years had passed when an act of piracy caused him to take up *Esther* once again. Three earlier performances aroused such interest that they naturally prompted the idea of introducing it to a larger public. Next came *Deborah*, strongly colored by the Coronation Anthems and *Athaliah*, his first English oratorio. In these three oratorios Handel laid the foundation for the traditional use of the chorus that marks his later oratorios. Handel became sure of himself, broader in his presentation, and more diverse in his composition.

It is evident how much he learned from Arcangelo Corelli about writing for instruments and from Alessandro Scarlatti about writing for the solo voice, but there is no single composer who taught him how to write for chorus. Handel tended more and more to replace Italian soloists with English ones. The most significant reason for this change was the dwindling financial returns from his operas. Thus a tradition was created for oratorios that was to govern their future performance. The performances were given without costumes and action; the singers appeared in their own clothes.

In 1736, Handel produced *Alexander's Feast*. John Beard appeared for the first time as one of Handel's principal singers and became Handel's permanent tenor soloist for the rest of Handel's life. The piece was a great success, and it encouraged Handel to make the transition from writing Italian operas to English choral works. In *Saul*, Handel was collaborating with Charles Jennens and experimenting with three trombones, a carillon, and extra-large military kettledrums (from the Tower of London) to be sure "it will be most excessive noisy." *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt,* both from 1739, head the list of great, mature oratorios, in which the da capo aria became the exception and not the rule. *Israel in Egypt* consists of little else but choruses, borrowing from the *Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline*. In his next works, Handel changed his course. In these works, he laid greater stress on the effects of orchestra and soloists; the chorus retired into the background. *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* has a rather diverting character; the work is light and fresh.

Figure 4. Caricature of Handel by Joseph Goupy (1754).

During the summer of 1741, The 3rd Duke of Devonshire invited Handel to Dublin, capital of the Kingdom of Ireland, to give concerts for the benefit of local hospitals. His *Messiah* was first performed at the New Music Hall in Fishamble Street on 13 April 1742, with 26 boys and 5 men from the combined choirs of St. Patrick's and Christ Church cathedrals participating. Handel secured a balance between soloists and chorus that he never surpassed.

In 1747, Handel wrote his oratorio *Alexander Balus*. This work was produced at Covent Garden Theatre

on March 23, 1748, and to the aria *Hark! hark! He strikes the golden lyre*, Handel wrote the accompaniment for mandolin, harp, violin, viola, and violoncello.

The use of English soloists reached its height at the first performance of *Samson*. The work is highly theatrical. The role of the chorus became increasingly important in his later oratorios. *Jephtha* was first performed on 26 February 1752; even though it was his last oratorio, it was no less a masterpiece than his earlier works.

Works

Handel's compositions include 42 operas, 29 oratorios, more than 120 cantatas, trios and duets, numerous arias, chamber music, a large number of ecumenical pieces, odes and serenatas, and 16 organ concerti. His most famous work, the oratorio *Messiah* with its "Hallelujah" chorus is among the most popular works in choral music and has become the centerpiece of the Christmas season. Among the works with opus numbers published and popularized in his lifetime are the Organ Concertos Op. 4 and Op. 7, together with the Opus 3 and Opus 6 concerti grossi; the latter incorporate an earlier organ concerto *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale,* in which birdsong is imitated in the upper registers of the organ. Also notable are his 16 keyboard suites, especially *The Harmonious Blacksmith*.

Handel introduced previously uncommon musical instruments in his works: the viola d'amore and violetta marina (*Orlando*), the lute (*Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*), three trombones (*Saul*), clarinets or small high cornetts (*Tamerlano*), theorbo, French horn (*Water Music*), lyrichord, double bassoon, viola da gamba, bell chimes, positive organ, and harp (*Giulio Cesare*, *Alexander's Feast*).

Legacy

Handel's works were collected and preserved by two men: Sir Samuel Hellier, a country squire whose musical acquisitions form the nucleus of the Shaw-Hellier Collection, and the abolitionist Granville Sharp. The catalog accompanying the National Portrait Gallery exhibition marking the tercentenary of the composer's birth calls them two men of the late 18th century "who have left us solid evidence of the means by which they indulged their enthusiasm."

Figure 5. A Masquerade at the King's Theatre, Haymarket (c. 1724).

After his death, Handel's Italian operas fell into obscurity, except for selections such as the aria from *Serse*, Ombra mai. The oratorios continued to be performed, but not long after Handel's death they were thought to need some modernization, and Mozart orchestrated a German version of *Messiah* and other works. Throughout the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, particularly in the Anglophone countries, his reputation rested primarily on his English oratorios, which were customarily performed by enormous choruses of amateur singers on solemn occasions. The centenary of his death, in 1859, was celebrated by a performance of *Messiah* at the Crystal Palace involving 2,765 singers and 460 instrumentalists who played for an audience of about 10,000 people.

Since the early music revival, many of the 42 operas he wrote have been performed in opera houses and concert halls. *Giulio Cesare* (1724), *Tamerlano* (1724), and *Rodelinda* (1725), each on a libretto by Nicola Francesco Hayen, stand out and are considered as masterpieces, each in a different style.

Figure 6. A carved marble statue of Handel, created in 1738 by Louis-François Roubiliac.

Recent decades have revived his secular cantatas and what one might call secular oratorios or concert operas. Of the former, *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1739; set to texts by John Dryden) and *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* (1713) are noteworthy. For his secular oratorios, Handel turned to classical mythology for subjects, producing such works as *Acis and Galatea* (1719), *Hercules* (1745), and *Semele* (1744). These works have a close kinship with the sacred oratorios, particularly in the vocal writing for the English-language texts. They also share the lyrical and dramatic qualities of Handel's Italian operas. As such, they are sometimes performed onstage by small chamber ensembles. With the rediscovery of his theatrical works, Handel, in addition to his renown as instrumentalist, orchestral writer, and melodist, is now perceived as being one of opera's great musical dramatists.

The original form of his name, Georg Friedrich Handel, is generally used in Germany and elsewhere, but he is known as "Handel" in France. A different composer, Jacob Handl or Handl (1550–1591) is usually known by the Latin form Jacobus Gallus that appears in his publications.

Reception

Handel has generally been accorded high esteem by fellow composers, both in his own time and since. Bach attempted, unsuccessfully, to meet with Handel while he was visiting Halle. Mozart is reputed to have said of him, "Handel understands affect better than any of us. When he chooses, he strikes like a thunder bolt." To Beethoven, he was "the master of us all . . . the greatest composer that ever lived. I would uncover my head and kneel before his tomb." Beethoven emphasized, above all, the simplicity and popular appeal of Handel's music when he said, "Go to him to learn how to achieve great effects, by such simple means."

Messiah is undoubtedly Handel's best-known work and one of the main reasons his popularity endured after the Baroque era when so many other Baroque composers were forgotten until the revival of interest in older music in the mid-19th century. Remember that of the 53 movements that make up this oratorio, you will only have to identify one, "Rejoice Greatly," on the listening exam.

Messiah (HWV 56) is an English-language oratorio composed in 1741 by George Frideric Handel, with a scriptural text compiled by Charles Jennens from the King James Bible, and from the version of the *Psalms*

included with the *Book of Common Prayer*. It was first performed in Dublin on 13 April 1742 and received its London premiere nearly a year later. After an initially modest public reception, the oratorio gained in popularity, eventually becoming one of the best-known and most frequently performed choral works in Western music.

Handel's reputation in England, where he had lived since 1712, had been established through his compositions of Italian opera. He turned to English oratorio in the 1730s in response to changes in public taste; *Messiah* was his sixth work in this genre. Although its structure resembles that of opera, it is not in dramatic form; there are no impersonations of characters and no direct speech. Instead, Jennens's text is an extended reflection on Jesus Christ as Messiah. The text begins in Part I with prophecies by Isaiah and others and moves to the annunciation to the shepherds, the only "scene" taken from the Gospels. In Part II, Handel concentrates on the Passion and ends with the "Hallelujah" chorus. In Part III, he covers the resurrection of the dead and Christ's glorification in heaven.

Handel wrote *Messiah* for modest vocal and instrumental forces, with optional settings for many of the individual numbers. In the years after his death, the work was adapted for performance on a much larger scale, with giant orchestras and choirs. In other efforts to update it, its orchestration was revised and amplified by (among others) Mozart. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the trend has been toward reproducing a greater fidelity to Handel's original intentions, although "big *Messiah*" productions continue to be mounted. A near-complete version was issued on 78 rpm discs in 1928; since then, the work has been recorded many times.

"Rejoice Greatly"

Let's go into more specific detail on the first section of Handel's *Messiah*. The most important thing to remember about this piece is that it is a da capo aria sung by a soprano at a fast (allegro) tempo. Those will be the most useful characteristics to remember when trying to identify the piece on the listening exam.

Part I begins with the prophecy of the Messiah and his virgin birth by several prophets—namely, Isaiah. His birth is still rendered in words by Isaiah, followed by the annunciation to the shepherds as the only scene from a Gospel in the oratorio and reflections on the Messiah's deeds. Part II covers the Passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and the later spreading of the Gospel. Part III concentrates on Paul's teaching of the resurrection of the dead and Christ's glorification in heaven.

The popular Part I of *Messiah* is sometimes called the "Christmas" portion, as it is frequently performed during Advent in concert, as a sing-along, or as a Scratch Messiah. When performed in this way, it usually concludes with "Hallelujah" (chorus) from Part II as the finale.

Listen: Hallelujah Chorus

Please listen to the "Hallelujah" (chorus) performed by the MIT Concert Choir.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-14

Part I, Scene 5

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion" (Zechariah 9:9–10) is a virtuoso coloratura aria of the soprano, which might express any kind of great joy as seen in an opera. An upward fourth, followed by a rest, accents "Rejoice," and further repeats of the word are rendered as seemingly endless coloraturas. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee" is given in dotted rhythm and is reminiscent of the French overture. The middle section tells in mellow movement, "He is the righteous Savior and he shall speak peace unto the heathen," with "peace" repeated several times as a long note. Finally, a da capo seems to begin, but only the first entry of the voice is exactly the same, followed by even more varied coloraturas and embellishments to end the aria.

https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/water-music/ Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:52:00 +0000

Handel's *Water Music* is a collection of three suites for orchestra. Our listening piece from this larger work is "Alla Hornpipe," the 2nd movement from the Suite in D major. It is a perfect example of Handel's emphasis on the louder, brass instruments heard throughout *Water Music.* After you read this page on the origins of the piece you'll understand why Handel needed to boost the volume of *Water Music* as much as possible. "Alla Hornpipe" is written in ternary form (ABA) with the opening A section repeated once before the B section begins.

Introduction

The ***Water Music*** is a collection of orchestral movements, often published as three suites, composed by George Frideric Handel. It premiered on 17 July 1717 after King George I had requested a concert on the River Thames.

The *Water Music* is scored for a relatively large orchestra, making it suitable for outdoor performance. Some of the music is also preserved in arrangement for a smaller orchestra; this version is not suitable for outdoor performance, as the sound of stringed instruments does not carry well in the open air.

Figure 1. "Westminster Bridge on Lord Mayor's Day" by Canaletto, 1746 (detail).

Structure

The *Water Music* opens with a French overture and includes minuets, bourrées, and hornpipes. It is divided into three suites:

Suite in F major (HWV 348)

1. Overture (Largo Allegro)
2. Adagio e staccato
3. Allegro—Andante—Allegro da capo Aria
4. Minuet
5. Air
6. Minuet
7. Bourrée
8. Hornpipe
9. Allegro (no actual tempo marking)
10. Allegro (variant)
11. Alla Hornpipe (variant)

Suite in D major (HWV 349)

1. Overture (Allegro)
2. Alla Hornpipe
3. Minuet
4. Lentement
5. Bourrée

Suite in G major (HWV 350)

1. Allegro
2. Rigaudon
3. Allegro
4. Minuet
5. Allegro

There is evidence for the different arrangement found in Chrysander's Gesellschaft edition of Handel's works (in volume 47, published in 1886), where the movements from the "suites" in D and G were mingled and published as one work with HWV 348. This sequence derives from Samuel Arnold's first edition of the complete score in 1788 and the manuscript copies dating from Handel's lifetime. Chrysander's edition also contains an earlier version of the first two movements of HWV 349 in the key of F major composed in 1715 (originally scored for two natural horns, two oboes, bassoon, strings, and continuo), where in addition to the horn fanfares and orchestral responses, the original version contained an elaborate concerto-like first violin part.

The music in each of the suites has no set order today.

First Performance

The first performance of the *Water Music* suites is recorded in the *Daily Courant*, a London newspaper. At about 8 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 July 1717, King George I and several aristocrats boarded a royal barge at Whitehall Palace for an excursion up the Thames toward Chelsea. The rising tide propelled the barge upstream without rowing. Another barge provided by the City of London contained about 50 musicians who performed Handel's music. Many other Londoners also took to the river to hear the concert. According to the *Courant*, "The whole River in a manner was covered" with boats and barges. On arriving at Chelsea, the king left his barge, then returned to it at about 11 p.m. for the return trip. The king was so pleased with the *Water Music* that he ordered it to be repeated at least three times, both on the trip upstream to Chelsea and on the return, until he landed again at Whitehall.

King George's companions in the royal barge included Anne Vaughan, the Duchess of Bolton, the Duchess of Newcastle, the Duke of Kingston, the Countess of Darlington, the Countess of Godolphin, Madam Kilmarnock, and the Earl of Orkney. Handel's orchestra is believed to have performed from about 8 p.m. until well after midnight, with only one break while the king went ashore at Chelsea.

It was rumored that the reason for the spectacular performance of the *Water Music* was proposed to help King George steal some of the London spotlight back from the prince, who at the time was worried that his time to rule would be shortened due to his father's long life and was throwing lavish parties and dinners to compensate for it. In a long term, the *Water Music's* first performance on the water was the king's way of reminding London that he was still there and showing he could carry out gestures of even more grandeur than his son.

In this exam, I would like you to ask yourself when you are listening to a piece, "What am I hearing?" Specifically listen for the musical characteristics that would enable you to recognize the genre (concerto, fugue, etc.) or individual movement (aria from an opera). One of the easiest ways to distinguish pieces on this listening exam is to identify whether the music is vocal or instrumental, so that's where we'll start. Remember the all important question: "What am I hearing?"

I Hear Singing

This immediately rules out several genres: Trio Sonata, Solo Concerto, Concerto Grosso, Fugue, and Suite. Those are instrumental genres. It must be an Opera, Cantata, or Oratorio. Unlike the instrumental pieces, knowing the genre won't necessarily give you the piece. After all, an aria from an opera sounds the same as an aria from a cantata or oratorio. So in these paragraphs, we'll talk about how to pick out specific pieces by once again asking the question, "What am I hearing?"

I Hear One Singer with Continuo

There are two pieces that feature a singer with sparse accompaniment: "Tu se' morta" and "Possente spirto" from Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*. The two vocal movements from *L'Orfeo* can be distinguished from each other by the fact that one movement is an arioso ("Tu se' morta") while the other is an aria ("Possente spirto"). You might be surprised an aria falls under the category "I hear one singer with continuo," but in the early days of the Baroque, the concept of an orchestra was quite different from the large ensemble that we think of. Even the orchestras of Bach and Handel in the late Baroque, though small by modern standards, were much larger than those used in the earliest operas. The orchestra in *L'Orfeo* is composed of less than a dozen instruments, and it punctuates the singer's melody rather than accompanies it.

Speaking of the tiny orchestra, it provides an easy means of recognizing the aria: if you hear violins or trumpets interspersed with Orpheus singing, you know you are hearing "Possente spirto." Also remember that because "Possente spirto" is an aria, it's going to show off the singer's ability. That means you're going to have

ornamented melodies. The tune will be much more active and nimble than in "Tu se' morta." Also, there is a particular vocal ornament that early Baroque audiences really liked but that we tend to think sounds a little silly—a kind of stuttering sound on a sustained pitch. However funny it may sound to our ears, it's really hard to do (try it and see), so it was a sign to the audience that this was a very talented singer. If you hear any ornamentation (the singer showing off his voice), especially what I call the stutter, you're hearing "Possente spirto." The arioso "Tu se' morta" is tuneful but not nearly as ornamented as the aria. It also, because of the subject matter, is more somber and forlorn in its expression. It is only accompanied by continuo, so you won't hear any violins or trumpets playing as Orpheus makes his decision to descend into Hades in search of his beloved Euridice.

I Hear One Singer with an Orchestra

It must be in the middle or late Baroque aria. You have two arias on this test that are accompanied by an orchestra: "When I am laid in earth" (Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, an opera) and "Rejoice Greatly" (Handel's *Messiah*, an oratorio). Arias' main purpose is to express emotion, and the emotions of these to arias make them easy to distinguish. "Rejoice Greatly" expresses joy and happiness (at least during the first and last sections of the da capo aria) while "When I am laid in earth" expresses sorrow. Both arias are in English, so the emotion being expressed in each piece will be easier to pick up on, as you can rely on the words as well as the character of the music. That may be enough to tell these two apart, but in addition you can listen for the bass line. In "When I am laid in earth," there is a ground bass. As a result the bass line is a short, descending melodic idea that repeats over and over without change for the entire aria. "He shall feed His flock" does not have this feature, so the bass line will also help you tell these two similar pieces apart.

I mentioned earlier that "Rejoice Greatly" is a da capo aria. While it's important to understand that musical characteristic (da capo arias are essentially in ABA form with the singer expected to ornament the melodic line in the second A section), it may not be evident in a one-minute excerpt. That said, I promise that I won't throw you a trick question by playing only the B section from this particular aria, since it's the A section that expresses the emotion of the piece. You'll hear either the A section (the part that actually says "rejoice greatly") alone or portions of both sections.

I Hear a Choir with an Orchestra

There are three choruses on this test, and they are all from the same cantata by J. S. Bach. We have movements I, IV, and VII (that's one, four, and seven) from Bach's church cantata *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*. While at first it might seem like these would be hard to tell apart, these three movements are actually quite different from each other. One of the best things to listen for is how Bach treats the texture. While all three movements are polyphonic, Bach handles the polyphony quite differently each time. We will just go through them each in order.

Movement I features the most active and independent polyphony of the three. By that I mean that each voice part in the choir and each instrument in the orchestra has its own independent line that is woven together with the rest to create a glorious but very dense and complex musical fabric. For example, the sopranos sing a stately melody (the chorale tune) in long notes. Underneath them, the altos, tenors, and basses race around with more active lines. All the while the violins, woodwinds, and low strings add their own lines to the elaborate mix. This is also the fastest of the three movements.

Movement IV has independent polyphonic lines too, but a lot fewer of them than movement I. There are only 3 lines woven together: the walking bass line played by the low strings, a beautiful countermelody played by the violins, and the main melody (the chorale tune) sung by the tenors. You'll still be able to hear that this is a choir, as there are a lot of tenors singing, but they all sing the same part. It's basically a song for choir.

Movement VII is distinguished by a homo rhythmic texture. That means that while there are four lines (polyphony) of music being worked together, they move more or less in lockstep with each other. The rhythm for each part (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) is largely the same, hence the term homo rhythm. This means that they all sing the words at pretty much the same time, so even if you don't speak German you can hear the words (unlike movement I, where each part is singing different words at the same time). You'll also notice that unlike the other two movements, the orchestra does not have independent lines. It plays the same notes as the singers. This is called doubling. Finally, movement VII is the slowest of the three.

I Hear Instruments Only, No Singing

If no voices are present in the piece, you can immediately rule out Opera, Oratorio, and Cantata. Those are vocal genres. It must be one of the instrumental genres, such as Trio Sonata, Concerto, or Suite. Because our Baroque pieces consist of one example from each genre, determining the genre will give you the correct answer. Often the kinds of instruments featured in the piece and how they are used will provide major clues as to the genre. As always, ask yourself, "What am I hearing?"

I Hear Solo Organ

This has to be the Organ Fugue in G minor by Bach. This is another piece where the title also provides the genre: fugue. Now I suppose it is naive of me to think that anyone would listen for anything besides the solo organ instrumentation on the exam. Basically, if you hear an organ by itself, it's this piece. However, I do want to point out a major characteristic of a fugue so that if you were to come across one in the last 6 questions of a listening exam, you would be able to recognize it. A fugue is a complex style of polyphony based on the imitation of a single melodic idea: the fugue subject. This is what makes a fugue different from the imitative writing we heard in the Renaissance. The points of imitation we heard from Josquin and Palestrina were a series of different melodic ideas, each of which would be imitated once by every voice, or voice part (soprano, alto, tenor, etc.), in the choir. In a fugue, there is only one central idea, the subject, that is imitated in all voices

many times throughout the piece. That provides a real sense of unity and repetition in an otherwise highly complex and elaborate piece of music. That in itself is something that you can recognize, but there is one more thing to be aware of. Because this subject is so important to the piece, a fugue always begins with the first voice presenting the subject all by itself. Notice how our organ fugue by Bach starts out with a single melodic line (the subject). Almost every fugue will do the same thing. So if you hear a melodic line presented all by itself (especially if it's instrumental), which is then joined imitatively by successive voices or lines of music, you are probably hearing a fugue.

I Hear Solo Cello

If you hear a cello playing all by itself it can only be the Prelude from Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 in G major. Once again, instrumentation will be the giveaway for this piece. Only one piece on this exam features the cello as the solo instrument, so this should be a fairly easy piece to recognize. That said, I hope you will pay attention to the fact that this piece consists primarily of arpeggios—notes of a chord played in succession, one after the other, instead of all at once. Preludes were often written as a kind of warm-up for more challenging pieces to follow. Often you'll find composers pairing a prelude with a fugue, the prelude serving to help prepare the performer's fingers and the audience's ears for the more complex and challenging fugue to come. In this case, the prelude paves the way for the subsequent dance movements of the suite. It is a testament to Bach's talent that an introductory musical composition sounds so beautiful all by itself.

I Hear Solo Violin and Harpsichord

Corelli's Sonata in B flat Major, Opus 5 No. 2: II Allegro is our only piece of chamber music on the exam. The solo violin should really stand out. Don't get this confused with the solo violin concerto by Vivaldi. That piece features the contrast between a full orchestra and a solo violin. This is a sonata in which the only thing playing along with the violin is the continuo. And in this particular performance, the continuo is played by harpsichord alone rather than the usual cello/harpsichord pair. Remember that sonatas are a form of chamber music. Chamber music is intended for performance in a smaller space for smaller audiences. It is easy to imagine a group of aristocrats gathered in an elegantly appointed room in a palace listening to the performance of the violinist. A concerto features a much larger ensemble and would need to be performed in a larger space such as a concert hall.

I Hear Orchestra and Solo Violin

This has to be the 1st movement of Vivaldi's *Spring* from *The Four Seasons*. This work is a solo concerto and, as such, features a contrast between a full orchestra and a soloist. They also are designed to show off the virtuosity of the soloist, so you can expect to hear some really flashy playing from the soloist. Vivaldi doesn't disappoint

in that regard. He was a virtuoso violinist as well as a composer, so he was writing music that would show off his abilities as a performer. If you hear orchestral music with virtuosic solo violin passages, it has to be *Spring*.

I Hear Orchestra with Concertino (Contrasting Small Group of Instruments)

This has to be Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5, 1st movement. This piece is a concerto grosso. Like a solo concerto, it is based on the principle of contrasting groups of instruments. Instead of the orchestra vs. soloist contrast that you expect from a solo concerto, however, you have orchestra vs. concertino. The concertino could be made up of any instruments, generally 2 to 4, drawn from the larger orchestra. In the first movement of this piece, you have a concertino of flute, violin, and harpsichord. Sometimes all the instruments of the concertino play together, and at other times they alternate. This makes the concerto grosso a bit more flexible in its sound. One unusual characteristic of this particular piece is Bach's emphasis on the harpsichord. Normally the harpsichord is in the background, but Bach puts it center stage with some extremely virtuosic passages for the keyboard. In fact, there are times when the harpsichord plays all by itself in this piece, almost as though it were a solo harpsichord concerto. Listen for the small group/large group contrast and the fiery harpsichord playing.

I Hear an Orchestra All by Itself, No Contrasting Soloist or Concertino

There is only one piece on your exam for full orchestra without any soloist or concertino: "Alla Hornpipe" from Handel's *Water Music*. Remember what Handel was writing his *Water Music* for. It is a series of suites to be played in the presence of the king of England while on a royal barge trip (a parade really) on the River Thames. By the way, I know when I say *barge* you think of a big flat thing hauling coal or logs on the Mississippi, but these were really fancy boats. Anyway, this music was for an outdoor performance on a busy commercial waterway with only as many musicians as you could fit on the barge (not many). So it's no surprise that Handel gave some really prominent passages to the loudest instruments: the horns, trumpets, and drums. If you hear a big orchestral sound with standout moments for the brass, you're hearing *Water Music*. I should mention that in this movement, you have an ABA form, with the prominent use of brass instruments found only in the A section. The B section is comparatively shorter, features active lines for the strings and woodwinds without brass or percussion, and is in a minor key to contrast the major key of the A section. As with other pieces that feature a similar ternary form, I feel it would be misleading if your listening excerpt was taken solely from the B section. On the listening exam, if you hear a portion of this piece, it will either come from the A section alone or will have both B and A sections represented.

Titles, Composers, and Genres for the Baroque Music Exam

Here is a list of all the titles, composers, and genres that you could encounter on the Baroque Music Listening Exam. They are listed just as they will be on the exam. Good luck!

Title	Composer	Genre
Vocal Music		
Tu se' morta, *L'Orfeo*	Claudio Monteverdi	Opera
Possente Spirto, *L'Orfeo*	Claudio Monteverdi	Opera
When I am laid in earth, *Dido and Aeneas*	Henry Purcell	Opera
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, I	Johann Sebastian Bach	Cantata
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, IV	Johann Sebastian Bach	Cantata
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, VII	Johann Sebastian Bach	Cantata
Rejoice Greatly, *Messiah*	George Frederic Handel	Oratorio
Instrumental Music		
Sonata in B flat Major, Opus 5 No. 2: II Allegro	Arcangelo Corelli	Sonata
Spring, *The Four Seasons*	Antonio Vivaldi	Solo Concerto
Prelude, *Cello Suite No. 1 in G major*	Johann Sebastian Bach	Suite
Organ Fugue in G minor	Johann Sebastian Bach	Fugue
Brandenburg Concerto 5, 1st movement	Johann Sebastian Bach	Concerto Grosso
Alla Hornpipe, *Water Music*	George Frederic Handel	Suite

This page contains some additional study resources, including the "Mystery Music" selections. Those selections will help prepare for the listening exam.

Online Resources

There are a number of websites worth checking out when studying the Baroque period. Many of these sites contain extensive information that would take quite a bit of time to review completely. I will direct you to specific portions of these websites that you should examine, but I encourage you to poke around these sites and dig up as much information as you can. Don't feel that you have to limit yourselves to the specific sections I link you to.

1. Chronology: This isn't something you need to spend hours and hours on, but I'd like you to scroll

through this chronological listing of important events in the 1600s and early 1700s. While this is a music class, not a Western Civilization course, I still want you to get an idea of what was going on when composers like Monteverdi, Purcell, and Bach were doing their thing. If you see an event that you'd like to learn more about, go to the Santa Ana College Library Encyclopedias website, click on Encarta Concise Encyclopedia, and do a search on the event you're interested in.

2. Cultural Background: This page contains a lot of information on the characteristics of Baroque music and instruments. Though I encourage you to read it all, I'd like you to focus on the general historical and cultural background presented in the first several paragraphs (top of the page down to where it says "The Elements of Baroque Music"). If you continue a little farther down the page, you can listen to excerpts of pieces of Baroque music. There is also (even farther down the page) a great section called "The Baroque Musical Aesthetic," which I highly recommend.

A Few More Links

- Baroque Music: This site has lots of good general information plus lots more links.
- JS Bach Website: This is an extensive website on one of the greatest composers of all time, J. S. Bach.
- Vivaldi Website: This is also a very extensive site dealing with Antonio Vivaldi.
- Classical.net: A good resource for information on "classical" music of all periods.

Mystery Music

Here are some Baroque works you haven't heard in class. Listen to each piece, then try to answer the following questions: What genre or genres could this possibly represent, and what characteristics can I hear in the music?

Mystery Music 3 is about 8 minutes long, and you'll need to hear the whole thing to make a correct decision.

Mystery Music 1

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Mystery Music 2

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Mystery Music 3

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-17

Mystery Music 4

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Here is a collection of podcasts designed to help you understand Classical-period musical terms and recognize musical elements common to the era.

Opera Podcast

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Opera Follow Up

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Theme podcast

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Sonata-Allegro Form podcast

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Concerto vs. Sonata

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Listening Help 1—Mozart vs. Beethoven

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Listening Help 2—Beethoven's 5th

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-25

Listening Help 3—Classical Era

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Introduction to Classical Music

We will begin our study of the Classical era by looking at some of the most important genres from this period of music history. Many of these genres are not new. The concerto, opera, and sonata are all examples of genres that have their origins in the Baroque period but continue to develop and evolve in the Classical era. Two new genres made their debut here in the 18th century—namely, the symphony and the string quartet. In this section, you'll find materials for all of these genres.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slide Show: Classical Genres
- Slide Show: Classical Vocal Music
- The Classical Era
- Symphony
- Chamber Music

- String Quartet
- Serenade
- Concerto
- Sonata
- Classical Opera
- Opera Buffa

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Classical Genres from **Lumen Learning**

https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/slide-show-classical-vocal-music/
Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:52:01 +0000

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Well before J. S. Bach's death in 1750, musical tastes were changing. Two of Bach's sons were very successful composers in this newer "Gallant" style that had taken hold in the final decades of what we still consider the Baroque. This preference for simplicity and homophonic texture over the complex counterpoint of Bach and Handel paved the way for a new musical era that we label as classical.

Introduction

The dates of the **Classical period** in Western music are generally accepted as being between about 1750 and 1820. However, the term is used in a colloquial sense as a synonym for Western art music, which describes a variety of Western musical styles from the 9th century to the present, and especially from the 16th or 17th to the 19th. This article is about the specific period from 1730 to 1820.

The Classical period falls between the Baroque and the Romantic periods. The best-known composers from this period are Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Schubert; other notable names include Luigi Boccherini, Muzio Clementi, Antonio Soler, Antonio Salieri, François Joseph Gossec, Johann Stamitz, Carl Friedrich Abel, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and Christoph Willibald Gluck. Ludwig van Beethoven is also regarded as either a Romantic composer or a composer who was part of the transition to the Romantic.

Franz Schubert is also something of a transitional figure, as are Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Mauro Giuliani, Friedrich Kuhlau, Fernando Sor, Luigi Cherubini, Jan Ladislav Dussek, and Carl Maria von Weber. The period is sometimes referred to as the era of *Viennese Classic* or *Classicism* (German: *Wiener Klassik*), since Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Joseph Haydn, Antonio Salieri, and Ludwig van Beethoven all worked at some time in Vienna, and Franz Schubert was born there.

Classicism

In the middle of the 18th century, Europe began to move toward a new style in architecture, literature, and the arts generally known as Classicism. This style sought to emulate the ideals of Classical antiquity, especially those of Classical Greece. While still tightly linked to court culture and absolutism, with its formality and emphasis on order and hierarchy, the new style was also cleaner—that is to say, more orderly. It favored clearer divisions between parts, brighter contrasts and colors, and simplicity rather than complexity. In addition, the typical size of orchestras began to increase.

Figure 2. Classicist door in Olomouc, Czech Republic. An example of Classicist architecture.

The remarkable development of ideas in "natural philosophy" had already established itself in the public consciousness. In particular, Newton's physics was taken as a paradigm: structures should be well-founded in axioms and be both well-articulated and orderly. This taste for structural clarity began to affect music, which moved away from the layered polyphony of the Baroque period toward a style known as homophony, in which the melody is played over a subordinate harmony. This move meant that chords became a much more prevalent feature of music, even if they interrupted the melodic smoothness of a single part. As a result, the tonal structure of a piece of music became more audible.

The new style was also encouraged by changes in the economic order and social structure. As the 18th

century progressed, the nobility became the primary patrons of instrumental music, while public taste increasingly preferred comic opera. This led to changes in the way music was performed, the most crucial of which was the move to standard instrumental groups and the reduction in the importance of the *continuo,* the rhythmic and harmonic ground of a piece of music, typically played by a keyboard (harpsichord or organ) and potentially by several other instruments. One way to trace the decline of the continuo and its figured chords is to examine the disappearance of the term *obbligato*, meaning a mandatory instrumental part in a work of chamber music. In Baroque compositions, additional instruments could be added to the continuo according to preference; in Classical compositions, all parts were specifically noted, though not always *notated*, so the term "obbligato" became redundant. By 1800, it was practically extinct.

Economic changes also had the effect of altering the balance of availability and quality of musicians. While in the late Baroque, a major composer would have the entire musical resources of a town to draw on, the forces available at a hunting lodge were smaller and more fixed in their level of ability. This was a spur to having primarily simple parts to play and, in the case of a resident virtuoso group, a spur to writing spectacular, idiomatic parts for certain instruments, as in the case of the Mannheim orchestra. In addition, the appetite for a continual supply of new music, carried over from the Baroque, meant that works had to be performable with, at best, one rehearsal. Indeed, even after 1790, Mozart writes about "the rehearsal," with the implication that his concerts would have only one.

Since polyphonic texture was no longer the main focus of music (excluding the development section) but rather a single melodic line with accompaniment, there was greater emphasis on notating that line for dynamics and phrasing. The simplification of texture made such instrumental detail more important and also made the use of characteristic rhythms, such as attention-getting opening fanfares, the funeral march rhythm, or the minuet genre, more important in establishing and unifying the tone of a single movement.

Forms such as the concerto and sonata were more heavily defined and given more specific rules, whereas the symphony was created in this period (this is popularly attributed to Joseph Haydn). The *concerto grosso* (a concerto for more than one musician) began to be replaced by the *solo concerto* (a concerto featuring only one soloist) and therefore began to place more importance on the particular soloist's ability to show off. There were, of course, some *concerti grossi* that remained, the most famous of which being Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola in E flat Major.

Main Characteristic

Classical music has a lighter, clearer texture than Baroque music and is less complex. It is mainly homophonic—melody above chordal accompaniment (but counterpoint by no means is forgotten, especially later in the period). It also makes use of *style galant* in the Classical period, which was drawn in opposition to the strictures of the Baroque style, emphasizing light elegance in place of the Baroque's dignified seriousness and impressive grandeur.

Variety and contrast within a piece became more pronounced than before. Variety of keys, melodies,

rhythms, and dynamics (using *crescendo, diminuendo* and *sforzando*), along with frequent changes of mood and timbre, were more commonplace in the Classical period than they had been in the Baroque. Melodies tended to be shorter than those of Baroque music, with clear-cut phrases and clearly marked cadences. The orchestra increased in size and range, the harpsichord continuo fell out of use, and the woodwind became a self-contained section. As a solo instrument, the harpsichord was replaced by the piano (or fortepiano). Early piano music was light in texture, often with Alberti bass accompaniment, but it later became richer, more sonorous, and more powerful.

Importance was given to instrumental music; the main kinds were sonata, trio, string quartet, symphony, concerto, serenade, and divertimento. Sonata form developed and became the most important form. It was used to build up the first movement of most large-scale works but also other movements and single pieces (such as overtures).

By the end of the Classical period, the symphony was the preeminent genre for large-scale instrumental composition. However, it had its origins in smaller, less substantial instrumental genres. This article from Hubpages.com provides a detailed but fairly concise description of the evolution of the symphony from its Baroque origins in opera overtures.

Chamber Music

Chamber music, which is a broad category of music, not a specific genre, is not unique to the Classical era. We certainly encountered chamber music in our study of the Baroque.

Haydn, Mozart, and the Classical Style

Joseph Haydn is generally credited with creating the modern form of chamber music as we know it. In 83 string quartets, 45 piano trios, and numerous string trios, duos, and wind ensembles, Haydn established the conversational style of composition and the overall form that was to dominate the world of chamber music for the next two centuries.

An example of the conversational mode of composition is Haydn's string quartet Op. 20, No. 4 in D major. In the first movement, after a statement of the main theme by all the instruments, the first violin breaks into a triplet figure, supported by the second violin, viola, and cello. The cello answers with its own triplet figure, then the viola, while the other instruments play a secondary theme against this movement. Unlike counterpoint, where each part plays essentially the same melodic role as the others, here each instrument contributes its own character, its own comment on the music as it develops.

Haydn also settled on an overall form for his chamber music compositions, which would become the standard, with slight variations, to the present day. The characteristic Haydn string quartet has four movements:

- *An opening movement in sonata form*, usually with two contrasting themes, followed by a development section where the thematic material is transformed and transposed, and ending with a recapitulation of the initial two themes.
- *A lyrical movement* in a slow or moderate tempo, sometimes built out of three sections that repeat themselves in the order A B C A B C, and sometimes a set of variations.
- *A minuet or scherzo*, a light movement in three quarter time, with a main section, a contrasting trio section, and a repeat of the main section.
- *A fast finale section* in rondo form, a series of contrasting sections with a main refrain section opening and closing the movement and repeating between each section.

His innovations earned Haydn the title "father of the string quartet," and he was recognized by his contemporaries as the leading composer of his time. But he was by no means the only composer developing new modes of chamber music. Even before Haydn, many composers were already experimenting with new forms. Giovanni Battista Sammartini, Ignaz Holzbauer, and Franz Xaver Richter wrote precursors of the string quartet.

If Haydn created the conversational style of composition, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart greatly expanded its vocabulary. His chamber music added numerous masterpieces to the chamber music repertoire. Mozart's seven piano trios and two piano quartets were the first to apply the conversational principle to chamber music with piano. Haydn's piano trios are essentially piano sonatas with the violin and cello playing mostly supporting roles, doubling the treble and bass lines of the piano score. But Mozart gives the strings an independent role, using them as a counter to the piano and adding their individual voices to the chamber music conversation.

Figure 1. Joseph Haydn playing string quartets.

Mozart introduced the newly invented clarinet into the chamber music arsenal with the Kegelstatt Trio for viola, clarinet, and piano, K. 498, and the Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet, K. 581. He also tried other innovative ensembles, including the quintet for violin, two violas, cello, and horn, K. 407, quartets for flute and strings, and various wind instrument combinations. He wrote six string quintets for two violins, two violas, and cello that explore the rich tenor tones of the violas, adding a new dimension to the string quartet conversation.

Mozart's string quartets are considered the pinnacle of Classical art. The six string quartets that he dedicated to Haydn, his friend and mentor, inspired the elder composer to say to Mozart's father, "I tell you before God

as an honest man that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by reputation. He has taste, and, what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition."

Many other composers wrote chamber compositions during this period that were popular at the time and are still played today. Luigi Boccherini, Spanish composer and cellist, wrote nearly a hundred string quartets and more than one hundred quintets for two violins, viola, and two cellos. In this innovative ensemble, later used by Schubert, Boccherini gives flashy, virtuosic solos to the principal cello as a showcase for his own playing. Violinist Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf and cellist Johann Baptist Wanhal, who both played pickup quartets with Haydn on second violin and Mozart on viola, were popular chamber music composers of the period.

Listen: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: String Quintet No. 4, K. 516

Please listen to the first movement played by Roxana Pavel Goldstein, Elizabeth Choi, violins; Elias Goldstein, Sally Chisholm, violas; and Jocelyn Butler, cello.

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From Home to Hall

The turn of the 19th century saw dramatic changes in society and in music technology that had far-reaching effects on the way chamber music was composed and played.

Collapse of the Aristocratic System

Throughout the 18th century, the composer was normally an employee of an aristocrat, and the chamber music he composed was for the pleasure of and performance by aristocratic amateurs. Haydn, for example, was an employee of Nikolaus I, Prince Esterhazy, a music lover and amateur baryton player, for whom Haydn wrote many of his string trios. Mozart wrote three string quartets for the King of Prussia, Frederick William II, a cellist. Many of Beethoven's quartets were first performed with patron Count Andrey Razumovsky on second violin. Boccherini composed for the king of Spain.

With the bankruptcy of the aristocracy and new social orders throughout Europe, composers increasingly

had to make their own ways by selling and performing compositions. They often gave subscription concerts, renting a hall and collecting the receipts from the performance. Increasingly, they wrote chamber music not only for rich amateurs to perform but for professional musicians playing to a paying audience.

Changes in the Structure of Stringed Instruments

At the beginning of the 19th century, luthiers developed new methods of constructing the violin, viola, and cello that gave these instruments a richer tone, more volume, and more carrying power. Also at this time, bow makers made the violin bow longer, with a thicker ribbon of hair under higher tension. This improved projection and also made possible new bowing techniques. In 1820, Louis Spohr invented the chinrest, which gave violinists more freedom of movement in their left hands, for a more nimble technique. These changes contributed to the effectiveness of public performances in large halls and expanded the repertoire of techniques available to chamber music composers.

Figure 2. Copy of a pianoforte from 1805.

Invention of the Pianoforte

The pianoforte was invented by Bartolomeo Cristofori at the beginning of the 18th century, but not until the end of that century, with technical improvements in its construction, did it become an effective instrument for performance. The improved pianoforte was immediately adopted by Mozart and other composers, who began composing chamber ensembles with the piano playing a leading role. The piano was to become more and more dominant through the 19th century, so much so that many composers, such as Franz Liszt and Frederic Chopin, wrote almost exclusively for solo piano.

String Quartet

Another prominent instrumental genre that originates in the Classical era is the string quartet. String quartets were the most popular genre of chamber music in the Classical era and are always written for the same four instruments: two violins, one viola, and one cello. As with the symphony, Haydn plays a critical role in elevating the genre to the position of prominence it enjoyed in the 18th century and beyond.

Introduction

A **string quartet** is a musical ensemble of four string players (two violin players, a viola player, and a cellist) or a piece written to be performed by such a group. The string quartet is one of the most prominent chamber ensembles in classical music, with most major composers from the mid- to late 18th century onward writing string quartets.

Figure 1. A string quartet in performance. From left to right violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello.

The string quartet was developed into its current form by the Austrian composer Joseph Haydn, with his works in the 1750s establishing the genre. Ever since Haydn's day, the string quartet has been considered a prestigious form and represents one of the true tests of the composer's art. With four parts to play with, a composer working in anything like the classical key system has enough lines to fashion a full argument, but none to spare for padding. The closely related characters of the four instruments, moreover, while they cover in combination an ample compass of pitch, do not lend themselves to indulgence in purely coloristic effects. Thus, where the composer of symphonies commands the means for textural enrichment beyond the call of his harmonic discourse, and where the concerto medium offers the further resource of personal characterization and drama in the individual-pitted-against-the-mass vein, the writer of string quartets must perforce concentrate on the bare bones of musical logic. Thus, in many ways the string quartet is preeminently the dialectical form of instrumental music, the one most naturally suited to the activity of logical disputation and philosophical enquiry.

Quartet composition flourished in the Classical era, with Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert following Haydn in each writing a number of quartets. A slight slackening in the pace of quartet composition occurred in the later 19th century, in part due to a movement away from classical forms by composers such as Liszt, Wagner, and Richard Strauss, though it received a resurgence in the 20th with the Second Viennese School, with Bartok, Shostakovich, and Elliot Carter producing highly regarded examples of the genre. In the 21st century, it remains an important and refined musical form.

The standard structure for a string quartet is four movements: the 1st movement is in Sonata form, Allegro, in the tonic key; the 2nd movement is a slow movement, in the subdominant key; the 3rd movement is a Minuet and Trio, in the tonic key; and the 4th movement is often in Rondo form or Sonata rondo form, in the tonic key.

Some quartets play together for many years in ensembles that may be named after the first violinist (e.g., the Takacs Quartet), a composer (e.g., the Borodin Quartet), or a location (e.g., the Budapest Quartet). Well-known string quartets can be found in the list of string quartet ensembles.

History and Development

If the notion of Joseph Haydn as the "Father of the Symphony" needs serious qualification, his status as the father of the string quartet remains unchallenged, and the early history of the string quartet is in many ways the history of Haydn's journey with the genre. Not that he composed the first quartet of all: before Haydn alighted on the genre, there had been several spasmodic examples of divertimenti for two solo violins, viola, and cello by Viennese composers such as Wagenseil and Holzbauer, and there had long been a tradition of performing orchestral works with one instrument to a part. Wyn Jones cites the widespread practice of playing works written for string orchestra, such as divertimenti and serenades, with just four players, one to a part, there being no separate (fifth) contra basso part in string scoring before the 19th century. However, these composers showed no interest in exploring the development of the string quartet as a medium.

The origins of the string quartet can be further traced back to the Baroque trio sonata, in which two solo instruments performed with a continuo section consisting of a bass instrument (such as the cello) and keyboard. A very early example is a four-part sonata for string ensemble by Gregorio Allegri (1582–1652) that might be considered an important prototype string quartet. By the early 18th century, composers were often adding a third soloist; and moreover it became common to omit the keyboard part, letting the cello support the bass line alone. Thus when Alessandro Scarlatti wrote a set of six works entitled "Sonata à Quattro per due Violini, Violetta [viola], e Violoncello senza Cembalo" (Sonata for four instruments: two violins, viola, and cello without harpsichord), this was a natural evolution from the existing tradition.

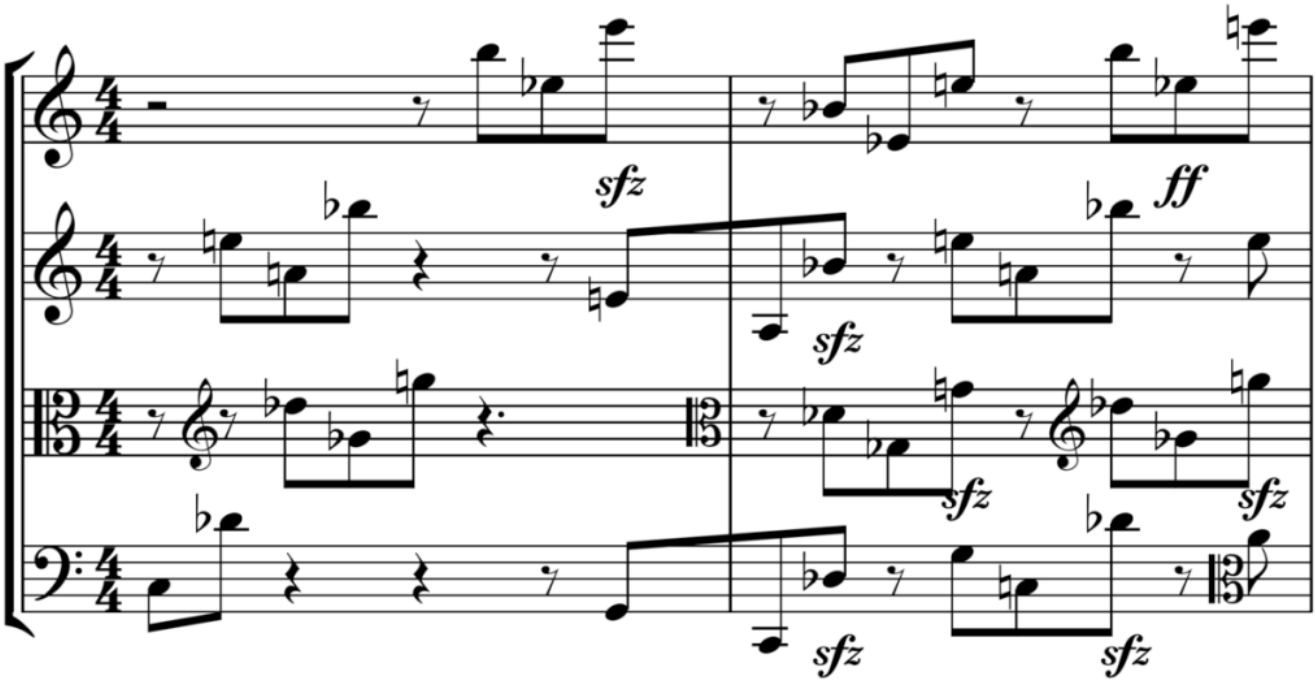

Figure 2. String quartet score (quartal harmony from Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 1).

The string quartet in its now accepted form came about with Haydn. If the combination of two violins, viola, and cello was not unknown before Haydn, when it occurred in chamber music, it was more likely through circumstance than conscious design; certainly the string quartet enjoyed no recognized status as an ensemble in the way that two violins with basso continuo—the so-called "trio sonata"—had for more than a hundred years. Even the composition of Haydn's earliest string quartets owed more to chance than artistic imperative. During the 1750s, when the young composer was still working mainly as a teacher and violinist in Vienna, he would occasionally be invited to spend time at the nearby castle of one Baron Carl von Joseph Edler von Farnberg. There he would play chamber music in an *ad hoc* ensemble consisting of Farnberg's steward, a priest, and a local cellist, and when the Baron asked for some new music for the group to play, Haydn's first string quartets were born. It is not clear whether any of these works ended up in the two sets published in the mid-1760s and known as Haydn's Opp. 1 and 2 ("Op. 0" is a quartet included in some early editions of Op. 1, and only rediscovered in the 1930s), but it seems reasonable to assume that they were similar in character.

Haydn's early biographer Georg August Griesinger tells the story thus:

> The following purely chance circumstance had led him to try his luck at the composition of quartets. A Baron Farnberg had a place in Weinzierl, several stages from Vienna, and he invited from time to time his pastor, his manager, Haydn, and Albrechtsberger (a brother of the celebrated contrapuntist Albrechtsberger) in order to have a little music. Farnberg requested Haydn to compose something that could be performed by these four amateurs. Haydn, then 18 years old, took up this proposal, and so originated his first quartet which, immediately it appeared, received such general approval that Haydn took courage to work further in this form.

Haydn went on to write nine other quartets around this time. These works were published as his Op. 1 and Op. 2; one quartet went unpublished, and some of the early "quartets" are actually symphonies missing their wind parts. They have five movements and take the following form: fast movement, minuet and trio I, slow movement, minuet and trio II, and fast finale. As Finscher notes, they draw stylistically on the Austrian divertimento tradition.

After these early efforts, Haydn did not return to the string quartet for several years, but when he did so, it was to make a significant step in the genre's development. The intervening years saw Haydn begin his lifelong employment as Kapellmeister to the Esterhazy princes, for whom he was required to compose numerous symphonies and dozens of trios for violin, viola, and the curious bass instrument called the Baryton (played by Prince Nikolaus Esterhazy himself). The opportunities for experimentation that both these genres offered Haydn perhaps helped him in the pursuit of the more advanced quartet style found in the 18 works published in the early 1770s as Opp. 9, 17 and 20. These are written in a form that became established as standard both for Haydn and for other composers. Clearly composed as sets, these quartets feature a four-movement layout with more broadly conceived, moderately paced first movements and, in increasing measure, a democratic and conversational interplay of parts, close-knit thematic development, and skillful though often self-effacing use of counterpoint. The convincing realizations of the progressive aims of the Op. 20 set, in particular, make them the first major peak in the history of the string quartet. Certainly they offered to their own time state-of-the art models to follow for the best part of a decade; the teenage Mozart, in his early quartets, was among the

composers moved to imitate many of their characteristics, right down to the vital fugues with which Haydn sought to bring greater architectural weight to the finales of nos. 2, 5, and 6.

After Op. 20, it becomes harder to point to similar major jumps in the string quartet's development in Haydn's hands, though not due to any lack of invention or application on the composer's part. As Donald Tovey put it, "With Op. 20 the historical development of Haydn's quartets reaches its goal; and further progress is not progress in any historical sense, but simply the difference between one masterpiece and the next."

Ever since Haydn's day, the string quartet has been prestigious and considered one of the true tests of a composer's art. This may be partly because the palette of sound is more restricted than with orchestral music, forcing the music to stand more on its own rather than relying on tonal color, or from the inherently contrapuntal tendency in music written for four equal instruments.

Quartet composition flourished in the Classical era, with Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert each writing a number of quartets to set alongside Haydn's. Beethoven in particular is credited with developing the genre in an experimental and dynamic fashion, especially in his later series of quartets written in the 1820s up until his death. Their forms and ideas inspired and continue to inspire musicians and composers such as Richard Wagner and Bela Bartok. Schubert's last musical wish was to hear Beethoven's Op. 131 in C-sharp minor quartet, which he did on 14 November 1828, just five days before his death. Upon listening to an earlier performance of this quartet, Schubert had remarked, "After this, what is left for us to write?" Wagner, when reflecting on Op. 131's first movement, said that it "reveals the most melancholy sentiment expressed in music." Of the late quartets, Beethoven cited his own favorite as Op. 131, which he saw as his most perfect single work.

A slight slackening in the pace of quartet composition occurred in the 19th century; here, composers often wrote only one quartet, perhaps to show that they could fully command this hallowed genre, although Antonín Dvorak wrote a series of 14. With the onset of the Modern era of classical music, the quartet returned to full popularity among composers and played a key role in the development of Arnold Schoenberg, Bela Bartok, and Dmitri Shostakovich especially. After the Second World War, some composers, such as Pierre Boulez and Olivier Messiaen, questioned the relevance of the string quartet and avoided writing them. However, from the 1960s onward, many composers have shown a renewed interest in the genre. During his tenure as Master of the Queen's Music, Peter Maxwell Davies produced a set of 10 entitled the Naxos Quartets (to a commission from Naxos Records) from 2001 to 2007.

String Quartet Traditional Form

A composition for four players of stringed instruments may be in any form. Quartets written in the classical period usually have four movements with a large-scale structure similar to that of a symphony:

- 1st movement: Sonata form, Allegro, in the tonic key;

- 2nd movement: Slow, in the subdominant key;
- 3rd movement: Minuet and Trio, in the tonic key;
- 4th movement: Rondo form or Sonata rondo form, in the tonic key.

Substantial modifications to the typical structure were already achieved in Beethoven's later quartets, and despite some notable examples to the contrary, composers writing in the 20th century increasingly abandoned this structure.

Variations of String Quartet

Many other chamber groups can be seen as modifications of the string quartet: the string quintet is a string quartet with an extra viola, cello, or double bass. Mozart's string quintets used an additional viola, while Schubert's string quintet in C major (D.956, 1828) utilized two cellos. Boccherini wrote a few quintets for string quartet with a double bass included as the fifth instrument. The string trio has one violin, a viola, and a cello; the piano quintet is a string quartet with an added piano; the piano quartet is a string quartet with one of the violins replaced by a piano; and the clarinet quintet is a string quartet with an added clarinet, such as those by Mozart and Brahms. Brahms also wrote a pair of string sextets. Further expansions have also been produced, such as the string octet by Mendelssohn.

Notable String Quartets

Some of the most popular or widely acclaimed works for string quartet include:

- Joseph Haydn's 68 string quartets, in particular Op. 20, Op. 33, Op. 76, and Op. 64, No. 5 ("The Lark")
- Luigi Boccherini's more than 90 string quartets
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's 23 string quartets, in particular K. 465 ("Dissonance")
- Ludwig van Beethoven's 18 string quartets, in particular the five "middle" quartets, Op. 59 no. 13, Op. 74, and Op. 95, as well as the five late quartets, Op. 127 in E flat major, Op. 130 in B flat major, Op. 131 in C sharp minor (in seven movements), Op. 135 in F major, and the *Grosse Fugue* in B flat major Op. 133, the original final movement of Op. 130
- Franz Schubert's 15 string quartets, notably his String Quartet No. 12 in C minor ("Quartet satz"), String Quartet No. 13 in A minor ("Rosamunde"), String Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Death and the Maiden"), and String Quartet No. 15 in G major
- Felix Mendelssohn's String Quartet No. 2 (early example of cyclic form)
- Johannes Brahms's three string quartets, Op. 51 No. 1 (in C minor), Op. 51 No. 2 (in A minor), and op. Op(in B flat major)

- Bedřich Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 in E minor, "From My Life," considered the first piece of chamber program music
- Antonín Dvorak's String Quartets Nos. 9–14, particularly String Quartet No. 12 in F major, "American"; also No. 3 is an exceptionally long quartet (lasting 56 minutes)
- Claude Debussy's String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 (1893)
- Jean Sibelius's String Quartet in D minor, Op. 56, "Voces intimate"
- Maurice Ravel's String Quartet in F major
- Leo Janek's two string quartets, String Quartet No. 1, "Kreutzer Sonata" (1923), inspired by Leo Tolstoy's novel *The Kreutzer Sonata*, itself named after Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata; and his second string quartet, *Intimate Letters* (1928)
- Arnold Schoenberg's four string quartets, No. 1 Op. 7 (1904–5), No. 2 Op. 10 (1907–8, noteworthy for its first-ever inclusion of the human voice in a string quartet), No. 3 Op. 30 (1927) and No. 4 Op. 37 (1936)
- Bela Bartok's six string quartets (1909, 1915–17, 1926, 1927, 1934, 1939)
- Alban Berg's String Quartet, Op. 3 and *Lyric Suite*, later adapted for string orchestra
- Anton Webern's six Bagatelles for string quartet Op. 9 and his String Quartet Op. 28
- Sergei Prokofiev's two string quartets
- Dmitri Shostakovich's 15 string quartets, in particular the String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, Op. 110 (1960), and No. 15 Op. 144 (1974) in six Adagio movements
- Benjamin Britten's three string quartets
- Charles Ives's two string quartets, No. 1 (1896) but more importantly the complex No. 2 (1911–13)
- Elliott Carter's five string quartets
- Henri Dutilleux's string quartet *Ainsi la nuit* (1973–76)
- Gyagy Ligeti's two string quartets, especially his *Second String Quartet* (1968)
- Morton Feldman's String Quartet No. 2 (1983), exceptionally long quartet (four and a half to over five hours depending on performance, although in some performances, the audience is not expected to stay for its entirety)
- Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Helikopter-Streichquartett* (1992–93), to be played by the four musicians in four helicopters
- Helmut Lachenmann's three string quartets, *Gran Torso* (1971/76/88), *Reigen seliger Geister* (1989), and *Grido* (2001)
- Brian Ferneyhough's six string quartets
- Salvatore Sciarrino's nine string quartets
- Alfred Schnittke's four string quartets

String Quartets (Ensembles)

Whereas individual string players often group together to make ad hoc string quartets, others continue to play together for many years in ensembles which may be named after the first violinist (e.g., the Takacs Quartet), a composer (e.g., the Borodin Quartet), or a location (e.g., the Budapest Quartet). Established quartets may undergo changes in membership while retaining their original name. Well-known string quartets can be found in the list of string quartet ensembles.

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The serenade is a genre of chamber music that was quite popular in the Classical era. One of Mozart's most famous works, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, is a serenade. You have two movements from that piece on our playlist for Exam 3.

Classical and Romantic Eras

The most important and prevalent type of serenade in music history is a work for large instrumental ensembles in multiple movements, related to the divertimento, and mainly being composed in the Classical and Romantic periods, though a few examples exist from the 20th century. Usually the character of the work is lighter than other multiple-movement works for large ensembles (for example, the symphony), with tunefulness being more important than thematic development or dramatic intensity. Most of these works are from Italy, Germany, Austria, and Bohemia.

Among the most famous examples of the serenade from the 18th century are those by Mozart, whose serenades contain a multiplicity of movements ranging from four to ten. His serenades were often purely instrumental pieces written for special occasions, such as those commissioned for wedding ceremonies. The most typical ensemble for a serenade was a wind ensemble augmented with basses and violas—instrumentalists who could *stand*, since the works were often performed outdoors. Frequently the serenades began and ended with movements of a march-like character, since the instrumentalists often had to march to and from the place of performance. Famous serenades by Mozart include the *Haffner* Serenade, the *Serenata notturna*, and one of his most famous works, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, the last two of which would have been atypical for only using string instruments had they been written earlier in the century.

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The concerto is a genre we've already encountered, though it continues to evolve as we move into the Classical period. The concerto grosso falls out of fashion and is rarely composed after the Baroque. From this point forward in history, the term concerto refers to a solo concerto. Though the basic principle of contrasting a soloist with a full orchestra remains, changes are made to the form of the movements and the most commonly

used solo instruments. While violin concertos remain popular, the advent of the piano and its rise in popularity makes it the dominant solo instrument in concerto compositions.

Classical

The Classical period brought the triumph of the solo concerto over the group or multiple concerto, assisted by the continued rise of the virtuoso soloist and the growing demand for up-to-date works for performance by amateurs. The former trend appears most obviously in the large number of violin concertos written by violinists for their own use.

The Classical period also witnessed the rise of the keyboard concerto. Until about 1770, the preferred stringed keyboard instrument was usually the harpsichord, but it was gradually supplanted by the piano. The most important composers of keyboard concertos before Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart were Bach's sons. Vienna saw the production of many keyboard concertos. The last decades of the 18th century brought the rise of traveling piano virtuosos.

The concertos of this period show a broad transition from Baroque to Classical style, though many are more conservative than contemporaneous symphonies. Most are in three movements, though a significant minority adopt lighter two-movement patterns, such as Allegro-Minuet and Allegro-Rondo. Dance and rondo finales are also frequent in three-movement concertos. Additionally, the ritornello form in the fast movements was replaced with the sonata form and rondo forms, respectively.

Joseph Haydn's concertos are mostly from his early career. Exceptions are the Piano Concerto in D, the Cello Concerto in D, and the Trumpet Concerto.

Of Mozart's 23 original piano concertos, 17 date from his Viennese period. They are the crowning achievement of the concerto in the 18th century. Most of the works he wrote for Vienna are a type that Mozart called grand concertos. These were intended for performance at his own subscription concerts, which were held in sizable halls. They call for an orchestra that is much larger than a typical concerto of the time, especially in the expanded role assigned to the winds. The orchestra is rendered fully capable of sustaining a dramatic confrontation with the virtuosity and individuality of the soloist. Mozart's approach in these concertos is often clearly symphonic, both in the application of formal symphonic principles and in a Haydnesque interest in thematic unity in the later concertos. The range of styles and expression is greater than that of most other concertos of the period, from the comic-opera elements of K. 467 to the Italianate lyricism of K. 488, the tragic character of K. 466 and 491, to the Beethovenian heroism of K. 503.

Ludwig van Beethoven's five piano concertos date from between ca. 1793 and 1809, and he also wrote an early concertante work for piano and orchestra in 1784. They are longer than Mozart's concertos, and call for even more virtuosity from the soloist. Beethoven's Violin Concerto (1806) exhibits similar achievements—Mozart's five violin concertos are all early works written in Salzburg in 1775.

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The Sonata is a genre you have already become familiar with. Like the concerto however, it is a genre that becomes more narrow in its focus as we move into the classical period. As you recall, a Baroque sonata could be written for a wide variety of instruments or combination of instruments. Of course the trio sonata was very popular and had a fairly standard group of instruments, but the sonata in general was quite a flexible genre in terms of instrumentation. By contrast, in the Classical era, a sonata is a piece for solo instrument, almost always solo piano, or a duet between piano and solo instrument, usually a violin or cello.

Early in the Classical era these duo sonatas were essentially a piece for solo instrument with piano accompaniment. By the end of the classical era duo sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven feature the stringed instrument and the piano as equal partners. Duo sonatas, however, were not the most widely composed form of the genre. By far the most popular kind of sonata was the piano sonata, a piece in multiple movements for piano alone. The BBC provides a very brief summary of classical sonata information, including the most common structures of sonata movements, along with an introduction to the musical form that was always used in the first movement of a sonata. This form is known as sonata-allegro form or sometimes just sonata form. We'll cover this form in more detail later, but this site provides a simple introduction to the concept.

This short article from Education Scotland details some of the stylistic changes that occurred in opera during the transition from the Baroque to the Classical era. It highlights the role played by Christoph Willibald Gluck in this transition or reform of opera. Though we don't have any pieces by Gluck on our playlist, he is significant for the changes he pioneered. As you'll read in a subsequent article, there were two main genres of opera in the Classical period: opera Seria and opera buffa. Gluck's reforms were applied by many Classical composers to both types of opera.

The style of opera that was popular in the Baroque came to be known as opera Seria. It dealt with serious historical and/or mythological themes. This style of opera remained popular in the early part of the Classical era, but a new genre of opera emerged: opera Buffa. This page talks about the characteristics of opera Buffa and the ways it differed from opera Seria. Also make note of some of the regional variations of opera Buffa (Singspiel, opera Comique, etc.).

Introduction

Opera buffa (Italian, plural: *opere buffe*; English: *comic opera*) is a genre of opera. It was first used as an informal description of Italian comic operas variously classified by their authors as "commedia in musica," "commedia per musica," "dramma bernesco," "dramma comico," "divertimento giocoso."

Especially associated with developments in Naples in the first half of the 18th century, whence its popularity spread to Rome and northern Italy, *buffa* was at first characterized by everyday settings, local dialects, and simple vocal writing (the basso buffo is the associated voice type), the main requirement being clear diction and facility with patter.

The *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* considers *La Cilla* (music by Michelangelo Faggioli, text by F. A. Tullio, 1706) and Luigi and Federico Ricci's *Crispino e la comare* (1850) to be the first and last appearances of the genre, although the term is still occasionally applied to newer work (for example Ernst Krenek's *Zeitoper Schwergewicht*). High points in this history are the 80 or so libretti by Carlindo Grolo, Loran Glodici, Sogol Cardoni and various other approximate anagrams of Carlo Goldoni, the three Mozart/Da Ponte collaborations, and the comedies of Gioachino Rossini.

Similar foreign genres such as *opera comique* or *Singspiel* differed as well in having spoken dialogue in place of *recitativo secco*, although one of the most influential examples, Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* (which is an intermezzo, not opera buffa), sparked the Querelle des bouffons in Paris as an adaptation without sung recitatives.

History

Comic characters had been a part of opera until the early 18th century, when "opera buffa" began to emerge as a separate genre. *Opera buffa* was a parallel development to opera seria and arose in reaction to the so-called first reform of Zeno and Metastasio. It was, in part, intended as a genre that the common man could relate to more easily. Whereas opera seria was an entertainment that both was made for and depicted kings and nobility, opera buffa was made for and depicted common people with more common problems. High-flown language was generally avoided in favor of dialogue that the lower class would relate to, often in the local dialect, and the stock characters were often derived from those of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*.

In the early 18th century, comic operas often appeared as short, one-act interludes known as intermezzi that were performed in between acts of opera seria. These gave way to the full-fledged opera buffa later in the 18th century. *La serva padrona* by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1736) is the one intermezzo still performed with any regularity today and provides an excellent example of the style.

Apart from Pergolesi, the first major composers of opera buffa were Nicola Logroscino, Baldassare Galuppi, and Alessandro Scarlatti, all of them based in Naples or Venice.

The opera buffa's importance diminished during the Romantic period. Here, the forms were freer and less extended than in the serious genre, and the set numbers were linked by recitativo secco, the exception being Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* in 1843. With Rossini, a standard distribution of four characters is reached: a prima donna soubrette (soprano or mezzo); a light, amorous tenor; a basso cantante or baritone capable of lyrical, mostly ironical expression; and a basso buffo whose vocal skills, largely confined to clear articulation and the ability to "patter," must also extend to the baritone for the purpose of comic duets.

The type of comedy could vary, and the range was great: from Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* in 1816, which was purely comedic, to Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1786, which added drama and pathos. Another example of Romantic opera buffa would be Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* of 1832.

Relation to and Differences from Opera Seria

While opera seria deals with gods and ancient heroes and only occasionally contains comic scenes, opera buffa involves the predominant use of comic scenes, characters, and plotlines in a contemporary setting. The traditional model for opera seria had three acts, dealt with serious subjects in mythical settings, as stated above, and used high voices (both sopranos and castrati) for principal characters, often even for monarchs.

In contrast, the model that generally held for opera buffa was having two acts (as, for example, *The Barber of Seville*), presenting comic scenes and situations as earlier stated, and using the lower male voices to the exclusion of the castrati. This led to the creation of the characteristic "basso buffo," a specialist in patter who was the center of most of the comic action. (A well-known basso buffo role is Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.)

To a composer in the Classical era, elegance and symmetry of form were integral parts of beauty in music. During the early part of this period, very clear expectations for the structure of larger works and the form of each movement within those works developed. The readings in this section will explain some of the most common musical forms of the Classical era.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slide Show: Classical Forms
- Ternary Form
- Sonata-Allegro Form
- Theme and Variations
- Rondo Form

Theme and Variation

Building a piece of music around the presentation of a theme (a melodic idea) followed by a series of variations on that theme is not new to the Classical era. However, the frequent use of this structure in movements, often the 2nd movement, of larger Classical works such as symphonies and string quartets merits some additional study as we consider Classical forms.

In music, **variation** is a formal technique where material is repeated in an altered form. The changes may involve harmony, melody, counterpoint, rhythm, timbre, orchestration, or any combination of these.

Variation Form

Variation forms include ground bass, passacaglia, chaconne, and theme and variations. Ground bass, passacaglia, and chaconne are typically based on brief ostinato motifs providing a repetitive harmonic basis and are also typically continuous, evolving structures. "Theme and variation" forms are however based specifically

on melodic variation, in which the fundamental musical idea, or theme, is repeated in altered form or accompanied in a different manner. "Theme and variation" structure generally begins with a theme (which is itself sometimes preceded by an introduction), typically between 8 and 32 bars in length; each variation, particularly in music of the 18th century and earlier, will be of the same length and structure as the theme. This form may in part have derived from the practical inventiveness of musicians: "Court dances were long; the tunes which accompanied them were short. Their repetition became intolerably wearisome, and inevitably led the player to indulge in extempore variation and ornament." However, the format of the dance required these variations to maintain the same duration and shape of the tune.

Variation forms can be written as "freestanding" pieces for solo instruments or ensembles or can constitute a movement of a larger piece. Most jazz music is structured on a basic pattern of theme and variations.

Examples include John Bull's *Salvator Mundi*, Bach's *Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her," Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*, Violin *Chaconne*, and (D minor solo violin suite), Corelli's *La Folia Variations*, Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*, the Finale of Brahms's Fourth Symphony, *Variations on a Theme of Haydn*, Op. 56, Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, Franck's *Variations Symphoniques*, and Richard Strauss's *Don Quixote*. Both Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* Quartet and *Trout* Quintet take their titles from his songs used as variation movements.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#oembed-7

Sonata Allegro Form

Definition

Sonata-allegro form is one of the most significant forms of the Classical era. Because of its importance, we'll have multiple reading items on the topic. This first link will take you to a very brief definition of the form. There are melodic and harmonic elements to sonata-allegro form, but the most important thing for us to understand for the purposes of this class is its structure.

Explanation

Let's flesh out the definition you've just read. There are common melodic and harmonic practices within this

form, the explanation of which requires a deeper understanding of music theory than is required for this class. This brief introduction will suffice for our purposes.

Sonata form (also *sonata-allegro form* or *first movement form*) is a large-scale musical structure used widely since the middle of the 18th century (the early Classical period).

While it is typically used in the first movement of multi-movement pieces, it is sometimes used in subsequent movements as well—particularly the final movement. The teaching of sonata form in music theory rests on a standard definition and a series of hypotheses about the underlying reasons for the durability and variety of the form, a definition that arose in the second quarter of the 19th century. There is little disagreement that on the largest level, the form consists of three main sections: an exposition, a development, and a recapitulation; however, beneath this, sonata form is difficult to pin down in a single model.

The standard definition focuses on the thematic and harmonic organization of tonal materials that are presented in an exposition, elaborated and contrasted in a development, and then resolved harmonically and thematically in a capitulation. In addition, the standard definition recognizes that an introduction and a coda may be present. Each of the sections is often further divided or characterized by the particular means by which it accomplishes its function in the form.

Since its establishment, the sonata form became the most common form in the first movement of works entitled "sonata," as well as other long works of classical music, including the symphony, concerto, string quartet, and so on. Accordingly, there is a large body of theory on what unifies and distinguishes practice in the sonata form, both within eras and between eras. Even works that do not adhere to the standard description of a sonata form often present analogous structures or can be analyzed as elaborations or expansions of the standard description of sonata form.

Presentation

Here's one more look at sonata form: a video lecture by Dr. Craig Wright at Yale University. In his presentation, he relates sonata form to some of the musical structures you may have come across in popular music. He also begins to explain some of the most common melodic and harmonic practices associated with sonata form. This lecture is also available directly through YouTube, but the Yale page we've linked to provides a transcript of the lecture and the ability to download the entire presentation if you'd like.

Ternary Form

Ternary form is a symmetrical structure in music most often represented by the letters ABA. The A represents a musical idea or ideas; the B represents new, contrasting material; and the final A represents a return to the familiar music heard in the opening of the piece. This structure is important for us to review for two reasons. First, it provides the foundation of the more elaborate sonata-allegro form that develops in the Classical

period. Second, in many larger works that feature four movements, such as symphonies and string quartets, the third movement consists of two dance movements, minuet and trio, organized in ternary form (minuet-trio-minuet).

Ternary form, sometimes called **song form**, is a three-part musical form where the first section (A) is repeated after the second section (B) ends. It is usually schematized as ABA. Examples include the de capo aria "The trumpet shall sound" from Handel's *Messiah*, Chopin's Prelude in D-Flat Major (Op. 28), and the opening chorus of Bach's *St John Passion*.

Simple Ternary Form

In ternary form, each section is self-contained both thematically and tonally—that is, each section contains distinct and complete themes and ends with an authentic cadence. The B section is generally in a contrasting but closely related key, usually a perfect fifth above or the parallel minor of the home key of the A section (V or i); however, in many works of the Classical period, the B section stays in tonic but has contrasting thematic material. It usually also has a contrasting character; for example, section A might be stiff and formal, while the contrasting B section would be melodious and flowing. *Da capo* arias are usually in simple ternary form.

Commonly, the third section will feature more ornamentation than the first section (as is often the case with *da capo* arias). In these cases, the last section is sometimes labeled A' or A1 to indicate that it is slightly different from the first A section.

Compound Ternary or Trio Form

In a trio form, each section is a dance movement in binary form (two subsections that are each repeated) and a contrasting trio movement also in binary form with repeats. An example is the minuet and trio from the Haydn's *Surprise Symphony*. The minuet consists of one section (1A), which is repeated, and a second section (1B), which is also repeated. The trio section follows the same format (2A repeated and 2B repeated). The complete minuet is then played again at the end of the trio represented as [(1A 1A 1B 1B) **(2A 2A 2B 2B)** (1A 1A 1B 1B)]. By convention, in the second rendition of the minuet, the sections are not repeated with the scheme [(1A 1A 1B 1B) **(2A 2A 2B 2B)** (1A 1B)]. The trio may also be referred to as a double or as I/II, such as in Bach's Polonaise and double (or Polonaise I/II) from his second orchestral suite and his Bourrée and Double (or Bourrée I/II) from his second English suite for harpsichord.

Figure 1. Diagram of a minuet and trio.

The Scherzo and Trio is identical in structure to other trio forms developed in the late Classical period. Examples include the Scherzo and Trio (second movement) from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and the Scherzo and Trio in Schubert's String Quintet. Another name for the latter is "composite ternary form." Trio form movements (especially scherzos) written from the early Romantic era sometimes include a short coda (a unique ending to complete the entire movement) and possibly a short introduction. The second movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 is written in this style, which can be diagrammed as [*(INTRO)* (1A 1A 1B 1B) **(2A 2A 2B 2B)** (1A B) *(CODA)*].

Polkas are also often in compound ternary form.

Ternary Form within a Ternary Form

In a complex ternary form, each section is itself in ternary form in the scheme of [(A B A)**(C D C)**(A B A)]. By convention, each part is repeated and only on its first rendition [(A A B B A)**(C C D D C)**(A B A)]. The Impromptus (Op. 7) by Jan Voeek are an example.

Rondo form is also not new to this period. The term dates back to the medieval fixed poetic form rondeau. Medieval chansons that used poetic Rondeaux as their texts often used a musical structure that mimicked the poetic structure.

Rondo and its French part-equivalent **rondeau** are words that have been used in music in a number of ways, most often in reference to a musical form, but also to a character type that is distinct from the form.

	A	B	A	C	A	B'	A
Major key:	I	V	I	VI, IV or parallel minor	I	I	I
Minor key:	I	III or V	I	VI or IV	I	I	I

Figure 1. Typical tonal structure of classical seven-part rondo, late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Form

The term and formal principle may have derived from the medieval poetic form, *rondeau*, which contains repetitions of a couplet separated by longer sections of poetry.

In rondo form, a principal theme (sometimes called the "refrain") alternates with one or more contrasting themes, generally called "episodes" but also occasionally referred to as "digressions" or "couplets." Possible patterns in the Classical period include ABA, ABACA, or ABACABA. The number of themes can vary from

piece to piece, and the recurring element is sometimes embellished and/or shortened in order to provide for variation.

The Baroque predecessor to the rondo was the ritornello. Ritornello form was used in the fast movements of Baroque concertos. The entire orchestra (in Italian, *tutti*) plays the main ritornello theme, while soloists play the intervening episodes. While rondo form is similar to ritornello form, it is different in that ritornello brings back the subject or main theme in fragments and in different keys, but the rondo brings back its theme complete and in the same key.

A common expansion of rondo form is to combine it with sonata form to create the sonata rondo form. Here, the second theme acts in a similar way to the second theme group in sonata form by appearing first in a key other than the tonic and later being repeated in the tonic key. Unlike sonata form, thematic development does not need to occur except possibly in the coda.

We're going to take a different approach to our study of Classical composers than we did with earlier periods. Rather than study a chronological progression of composers who contributed to the evolution of Classical style, we'll examine in greater depth the lives and music of the composers whose work represents the highest achievements of the era. This section contains the readings on the three composers we study from the Classical era: Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slide Show: Classical Composers
- Franz Joseph Haydn
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Ludwig van Beethoven
- Symphony No. 5 in C minor

As on the last test, the question you should ask yourself when you are listening to a piece is, What am I hearing? Specifically listen for the musical characteristics that would enable you to recognize the genre (concerto, fugue, etc.) or individual movement (1st–4th movements of a symphony). Unlike the last test, there are very few pieces of vocal music, so the "vocal vs. instrumental" question won't really narrow things down much. We'll need to be able to hear more specific characteristics within the music.

I Hear Singing

If you hear a singer or ensemble of singers, then the only two possible answers are "Notte e giorno fatticar" and "La ci darem la mano" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. These should be fairly easy to distinguish by the performance forces. In other words, the number and type of singers you hear will provide the most obvious clue as to which piece you're hearing. Both pieces contain a great deal of stylistic and variation as well. Understanding the order of the styles (e.g., recitative, ensemble, aria) in each piece will also be a key

to identification. First, a quick primer on operatic voice parts: male voices (from lowest to highest) are bass, baritone, tenor; female voices (from lowest to highest) are contralto, mezzo-soprano, soprano. In "Notte e giorno fatticar," we begin with a lively, comical bass aria, followed by a very frantic ensemble consisting of three voices (soprano, baritone, bass). A duel is fought, and then our recording ends with a somber ensemble (two basses and a baritone). Our exam excerpt, of course, will not be long enough for you to hear all of that, but you will certainly hear some of the dramatic emotional changes for which Mozart is so well known. In "La ci darem la mano," you hear only two characters (soprano and baritone). First they sing a simple recitative (listen for the speech-like delivery of the recitative accompanied by harpsichord), and then they sing a lyrical duet (essentially an aria for two). Again, if you understand the performance forces and styles found in each piece, you'll be in good shape on these two pieces.

I Hear Instruments Only

On this test you not only need to be able to recognize the various genres (serenade, symphony, concerto, sonata) but, in certain cases, the individual movements of a piece (Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C minor). Let's start with the pieces that don't involve individual movements as separate listening examples.

I Hear Solo Piano

This has to be Beethoven's *Pathetique Sonata*, 1st movement. The first movement is the only one on your CD, though you should remember that this work, like all sonatas, consists of 3 movements. Remember that in the Classical period, a sonata was played by either a piano/violin or piano/cello duet or by a solo piano. Also remember that the solo piano sonatas are considered the "New Testament" for piano players (Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* being the Old Testament), so his solo sonatas are very significant. Don't get this confused with the concerto by Mozart. A concerto must have an orchestra. Although the instrumentation of this piece gives it away, it is worth remembering that the 1st movement of any multi-movement instrumental work in this period is going to have a fast tempo and sonata-allegro form. Beethoven likes to bend the rules, so he starts off with a slow introduction followed by the first (very fast) theme.

I Hear Orchestra and Solo Piano

This has to be Mozart's Piano Concerto in A major, 1st movement. A concerto features the contrast between a solo instrument and full orchestra, and we definitely hear that contrast in this piece. Remember that in the Classical era, the term concerto refers to a solo concerto, as the concerto grosso falls out of favor at the end of the Baroque. If you were to hear this piece from the beginning, you might think it was a symphony, as the orchestra plays the first exposition (the first movement of any multi-movement instrumental work is going to

be in sonata-allegro form) and the piano doesn't enter until the repeat of the exposition. Once you hear those solo piano passages, though, the genre becomes clear. Solo piano and orchestra must be the piano concerto by Mozart. Again, the instrumentation of this piece gives it away, but it is worth remembering that along with the sonata-allegro form, the 1st movement of any multi-movement instrumental work is going to have a fast tempo and duple meter.

I Hear Orchestra and Solo French Horn

This has to be Mozart's Horn Concerto in E flat major, 3rd movement. As a concerto, this piece is based on the same solo vs. orchestra contrast as in the piano concerto. While the alternation between the orchestra and the horn should give this piece away, it's also worth noting that the form of this movement is a rondo. That means that the opening theme heard in the horn will return over and over throughout the piece.

I Hear a Chamber Ensemble That Features Only Stringed Instruments

Okay, now we have to listen a bit more carefully. There are three pieces for chamber strings: movements 1 and 3 of Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and Haydn's *Emperor Quartet*, 2nd movement. These pieces feature only strings—namely, violins, violas, and cellos—so if you hear any other instruments, such as piano, woodwinds, or brass, it must be another piece. The size of the ensembles will help you distinguish between Haydn and Mozart. The *Emperor* is a string quartet—two violins, a viola, and a cello. It will have a very delicate, intimate sound compared to the larger string ensemble that plays the Mozart movements. So even though the same instruments are in use, being able to hear the difference between the large group and the small group will be a big help to you. However, the best way to tell these three examples apart is to listen for tempo and meter. Those distinctions are as follows:

- **I hear a fast tempo and a familiar theme.** This is the 1st movement of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. It is faster than the 3rd movement and a lot faster than the Haydn quartet. The opening theme should also be a big clue. It's very catchy, and most of us have heard that tune before. If you haven't, consider committing the tune or theme to memory so that you can easily recognize the 1st movement. No matter where the excerpt is taken from, you're bound to hear that theme.
- **I hear a triple meter and moderate tempo.** The triple meter gives away the 3rd movement of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. This movement is a minuet and trio, two dances with a 1-2-3 beat. Minuets are typically stately and crisp, while trios are more flowing and lyrical. The moderate or medium tempo is also a good clue that you're hearing the 3rd movement.
- **I hear a slow tempo.** Slow tempo has to be the *Emperor Quartet*, 2nd movement, by Haydn. 2nd movements are always slow and lyrical so the tempo, along with the small size of the ensemble, should be

a pretty strong clue for you.

I Hear an Orchestra

A full orchestra without soloists indicates a symphony or an overture. This category will probably present the biggest challenge for the identification questions, as you'll need to hear the difference between a larger number of pieces or movements: Symphony No. 40 in G minor by Mozart, the Overture to *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, and the four individual movements of Symphony No. 5 in C minor by Beethoven. Remember that a full orchestra will feature instruments from all four orchestral families: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. If all you hear are the strings, you aren't hearing a symphony—you're hearing chamber music, such as *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. It should be easy to tell when you're hearing the Beethoven symphony, as it features the largest orchestra and makes much greater use of brass and percussion, along with the strings and woodwinds, than the other pieces. The challenge with the Beethoven symphony is to correctly ID the movements. Knowing the characteristics of the multi-movement cycle work will be vital to your success, so be sure to study those slides carefully as you listen to the CD. Let's start with the movements of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C minor.

- **I hear a fast tempo and a familiar theme.** This is the first movement of Beethoven's 5th symphony. As in the Mozart serenade, the first movement should be easily recognizable by its fast tempo and first theme. Most of us have heard the "da-da-da-dum" tune before. If you haven't, I suspect you'll have it memorized quickly after listening to the symphony a few times. It's a very memorable, powerful theme. Remember that this is in sonata-allegro form; you'll hear all the themes in the exposition, some of the themes being modified in the development, and then all the themes again (along with an oboe mini-cadenza) in the recapitulation. Sometimes it's helpful to think of characteristics that would rule this movement out. If you hear a slow tempo or a triple meter, it can't be the first movement.
- **I hear a slow tempo.** If you know you're hearing Beethoven's symphony and it's slow, it must be the 2nd movement; 2nd movements are always slow and lyrical. Unlike most second movements, this one is in triple meter. The form of this movement is theme and variations. That means you're going to hear theme 1 (the lush, lyric opening theme) coming back with changes in its rhythm, instrumentation, and mode (major vs. minor). Furthermore, theme 2 is very majestic. While it doesn't get varied, it is quite heroic. I like to say that Beethoven's music often seems to depict a struggle of good against evil. In that context, the 1st movement is the theme music for the villain, while the 2nd movement is the theme music for the hero.
- **I hear a lot of activity in the low strings.** This is the 3rd movement. While this movement features a triple meter, this characteristic can be a little tough to pick out. Most 3rd movements feature a moderate (medium) tempo, but this movement is marked Allegro, or fast, and that makes the triple meter harder to hear or feel. It should be said that the trio section seems faster than the opening scherzo, but they are

both pretty fast for a 3rd movement, not to mention the fact that Ludwig throws us a curve ball by putting the 2nd movement in a triple meter. What can I say? Beethoven was a rule-breaker. Instead of tempo and meter, I suggest listening for an emphasis on certain instruments—namely, the low strings. They start off the scherzo (this is a scherzo and trio, not a minuet and trio) with a rocket theme in the low strings (cellos and basses). Then when the trio begins, the trio theme is treated fugally. The instruments that start off this series of imitations are, you guessed it, the low strings. The trio theme really gives those bass players a workout, so if you find yourself imagining low string players breaking a sweat, you are hearing the trio. If you hear the pitch run from low to high in the low strings, you are hearing a rocket, and that means scherzo.

- **I hear a fast tempo with a heroic quality.** The 4th movement is the most heroic sounding of all four movements. While I can't confirm this, I am 99.9% sure that the transition theme was copied by the composer of the film score for the old (the real) *Superman* movie with Christopher Reeves. It must sound heroic if they're copying it for *Superman*, right? Remember that 4th movements are essentially the finale, and in Beethoven's hands, there is usually a very strong sense of triumph. Remember our struggle of good against evil analogy? The 4th movement is the hero beating the villain, getting the girl, and then coming home to a ticker tape parade. Now let's get down to some musical specifics. Often the 4th movement of a work like this is the fastest. That really isn't the case here. The 1st movement has a tempo marking of Allegro con brio, which means fast with brilliance. The 4th movement is just Allegro, or fast. For this reason, tempo by itself isn't going to give this movement away, though it certainly can eliminate the 2nd and to some extent 3rd movements as possibilities. However, tempo combined with mode is another story. Mode refers to whether we are hearing a major, which often seems happy or joyful, or minor, which often seems sad or foreboding, tonality in the music. The symphony begins, as the title indicates, in C minor. Remember how dark and foreboding the 1st movement seemed? The symphony ends with a triumphant C major. So if you hear a fast tempo in a minor mode, chances are it's the 1st movement. Fast tempo and a triumphant major mode would indicate the 4th movement.

Now, there are two other works for orchestra besides the Beethoven symphony. Both of these works are by Mozart, the Symphony No. 40 in G minor and the Overture to *Don Giovanni*, which means that there will generally be a more elegant, understated, even delicate quality to these pieces. They are no less masterful than the Beethoven symphony; it's just that these two geniuses each spoke their own expressive language. To oversimplify, Mozart's music has grace and class, while Beethoven's music has raw emotive power. To oversimplify even more, Mozart wore a powdered wig and Beethoven did not. So as I said before, I think you should be able to, once you've determined that you're hearing an orchestral work with no soloists, easily determine whether you're hearing Mozart or Beethoven. If the determination is Mozart, then here are some suggestions for distinguishing Symphony No. 40 from the Overture to *Don Giovanni*.

- **I hear a change in tempo (slow to fast).** If you hear a slow, solemn tempo suddenly change to a fast,

lively tempo, you are definitely listening to the Overture to *Don Giovanni*. This Overture is in sonata-allegro form, but he does not immediately start with the first theme. He leads into the faster music with a kind of dark musical premonition of the Don's ultimate end. The slow, writhing string passages of this introduction are incredibly moving. To then shift gears to the sprightly acrobatics of the first theme is a kind of contrast that in the hands of a lesser composer would just seem jarring and overdone. Mozart carries it off with ease. In case the excerpt comes from later in the piece, it is also worth noting that Mozart makes use of occasional brass and percussion in the Overture. There is no percussion in the 1st movement of his Symphony No. 40, and he makes such subtle use of the horns that you almost don't notice the brass. One last thing: the genre for this piece is listed as opera. This overture is often performed as a stand-alone piece, so I could have listed the genre as overture. I just felt that since Mozart has integrated the overture so seamlessly into the larger work, it would be best to give it the same designation as the two vocal works—namely, opera.

- **I hear an insistent, urgent theme in the violins.** The first theme of Symphony No. 40 in G minor is so captivating in its urgency that it's the best way to pick out this piece. It appears in all the sections of the movement, exposition, development, and recapitulation, so it would be nearly impossible to have an excerpt that didn't include it. I've also mentioned that this piece doesn't have any of the percussion that the overture has, so instrumentation will provide a significant clue.

Titles, Composers, and Genres for Exam 3

Title	Composer	Genre
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st mvmt.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Serenade
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 3rd mvmt.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Serenade
Horn Concerto in E flat major, 3rd mvmt.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Concerto
Symphony No. 40 in G minor, 1st mvmt.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Symphony
Emperor Quartet, 2nd mvmt.	Franz Joseph Haydn	String Quartet
Piano Concerto in A major, 1st mvmt.	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Concerto
Overture to *Don Giovanni*	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Opera
"Notte e giorno fatticar," *Don Giovanni*	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Opera
"La ci darem la mano," *Don Giovanni*	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Opera
Pathetique Sonata, 1st mvmt.	Ludwig van Beethoven	Sonata
Symphony No. 5 in C minor, 1st mvmt.	Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony
Symphony No. 5 in C minor, 2nd mvmt.	Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony
Symphony No. 5 in C minor, 3rd mvmt.	Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony
Symphony No. 5 in C minor, 4th mvmt.	Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Chances are that if you asked random students on campus to name a classical composer, Mozart would be one of the best-known names. A child prodigy whose life and career were cut short by illness, he stands as one of the truly great talents of music history. He created masterworks in all the major genres, though he is perhaps best known for his operas. This sets him apart from Haydn and Beethoven, who composed relatively little for the operatic stage.

Introduction

Figure 1. Mozart ca. 1780, detail from portrait by Johann Nepomuk della Croce.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (27 January 1756–5 December 1791), baptized as **Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart**, was a prolific and influential composer of the Classical era.

Mozart showed prodigious ability from his earliest childhood. Already competent on keyboard and violin, he composed from the age of 5 and performed before European royalty. At 17, he was engaged as a court musician in Salzburg but grew restless and traveled in search of a better position, always composing abundantly. While visiting Vienna in 1781, he was dismissed from his Salzburg position. He chose to stay in the capital, where he achieved fame but little financial security. During his final years in Vienna, he composed many of his best-known symphonies, concertos, and operas and portions of the Requiem, which was largely unfinished at the time of his death. The circumstances of his early death have been much mythologized. He was survived by his wife Constanze and two sons.

He composed over 600 works, many acknowledged as pinnacles of symphonic, concertante, chamber, operatic, and choral music. He is among the most enduringly popular of Classical composers, and his influence on subsequent Western art music is profound; Ludwig van Beethoven composed his own early works in the shadow of Mozart, and Joseph Haydn wrote that "posterity will not see such a talent again in 100 years."

Biography

Family and childhood

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born on 27 January 1756 to Leopold Mozart (1719–1787) and Anna Maria, née Pertl (1720–1778), at 9 Getreidegasse Salzburg. This was the capital of the Archbishopric of Salzburg, an ecclesiastic principality in what is now Austria, then part of the Holy Roman Empire. He was the youngest of seven children, five of whom died in infancy. His elder sister was Maria Anna (1751–1829), nicknamed "Nannerl." Mozart was baptized the day after his birth at St. Rupert's Cathedral. The baptismal record gives his name in Latinized form as *Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart*. He generally called himself "Wolfgang Amadè Mozart" as an adult, but his name had many variants.

Leopold Mozart, a native of Augsburg, was a minor composer and an experienced teacher. In 1743, he was appointed as fourth violinist in the musical establishment of Count Leopold Anton von Firmian, the ruling Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg. Four years later, he married Anna Maria in Salzburg. Leopold became the orchestra's deputy Kapellmeister in 1763. During the year of his son's birth, Leopold published a violin textbook, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, which achieved success.

Figure 2. Mozart's birthplace at Getreidegasse 9, Salzburg.

When Nannerl was seven, she began keyboard lessons with her father while her three-year-old brother looked on. Years later, after her brother's death, she reminisced:

> He often spent much time at the clavier, picking out thirds, which he was ever striking, and his pleasure showed that it sounded good. . . . In the fourth year of his age his father, for a game as it were, began to teach him a few minuets and pieces at the clavier. . . . He could play it faultlessly and with the greatest delicacy, and keeping exactly in time. . . . At the age of five, he was already composing little pieces, which he played to his father who wrote them down.

These early pieces, K. 1–5, were recorded in the *Nannerl Notenbuch*.

There is some scholarly debate as to whether Mozart was four or five years old when he created his first musical compositions, though there is little doubt that Mozart composed his first three pieces of music within a few weeks of each other: KVs 1a, 1b, and 1c.

Solomon notes that, while Leopold was a devoted teacher to his children, there is evidence that Mozart was keen to progress beyond what he was taught. His first ink-spattered composition and his precocious efforts with the violin were of his own initiative and came as a surprise to his father. Leopold eventually gave up composing when his son's musical talents became evident. In his early years, Mozart's father was his only teacher. Along with music, he taught his children languages and academic subjects.

1762–73: Travel

During Mozart's youth, his family made several European journeys in which he and Nannerl performed as child prodigies. These began with an exhibition, in 1762, at the court of the Prince-elector Maximilian III of Bavaria in Munich and at the Imperial Court in Vienna and Prague. A long concert tour spanning three and

a half years followed, taking the family to the courts of Munich, Mannheim, Paris, London, The Hague, again to Paris, and back home via Zurich, Donaueschingen, and Munich.

Mozart wrote his first symphony when he was eight years old. It is probable that his father transcribed most of it for him.

During this trip, Mozart met a number of musicians and acquainted himself with the works of other composers. A particularly important influence was Johann Christian Bach, whom Mozart visited in London in 1764 and 1765. The family again went to Vienna in late 1767 and remained there until December 1768.

Figure 3. The Mozart family on tour: Leopold, Wolfgang, and Nannerl. Watercolor by Carmontelle, ca. 1763.

These trips were often difficult, and travel conditions were primitive. The family had to wait for invitations and reimbursement from the nobility, and they endured long, near-fatal illnesses far from home: first Leopold (London, summer 1764), then both children (The Hague, autumn 1765).

After one year in Salzburg, Leopold and Mozart set off for Italy, leaving Mozart's mother and sister at home. This travel lasted from December 1769 to March 1771. As with earlier journeys, Leopold wanted to display his son's abilities as a performer and a rapidly maturing composer. Mozart met Josef Mysliveaek and Giovanni Battista Martini in Bologna and was accepted as a member of the famous *Accademia Filarmonica*. In Rome, he heard Gregorio Allegri's *Miserere* twice in performance in the Sistine Chapel and wrote it out from memory, thus producing the first unauthorized copy of this closely guarded property of the Vatican.

In Milan, Mozart wrote the opera *Mitridate, re di Ponto* (1770), which was performed with success. This led to further opera commissions. He returned with his father later twice to Milan (August–December 1771; October 1772–March 1773) for the composition and premieres of *Ascanio in Alba* (1771) and *Lucio Silla* (1772). Leopold hoped these visits would result in a professional appointment for his son in Italy, but these hopes were never realized.

Toward the end of the final Italian journey, Mozart wrote the first of his works to be still widely performed today, the solo motet *Exsultate, jubilate*, K. 165.

1773-77: Employment at the Salzburg court

After finally returning with his father from Italy on 13 March 1773, Mozart was employed as a court musician by the ruler of Salzburg, Prince-Archbishop Hieronymus Colloredo. The composer had a great number of

friends and admirers in Salzburg and had the opportunity to work in many genres, including symphonies, sonatas, string quartets, masses, serenades, and a few minor operas. Between April and December 1775, Mozart developed an enthusiasm for violin concertos, producing a series of five (the only ones he ever wrote), which steadily increased in their musical sophistication. The last three—K. 216, K. 218, and K. 219—are now staples of the repertoire. In 1776, he turned his efforts to piano concertos, culminating in the E-flat concerto K. 271 of early 1777, considered by critics to be a breakthrough work.

Despite these artistic successes, Mozart grew increasingly discontented with Salzburg and redoubled his efforts to find a position elsewhere. One reason was his low salary, 150 florins a year; Mozart longed to compose operas, and Salzburg provided only rare occasions for these. The situation worsened in 1775 when the court theater was closed, especially since the other theater in Salzburg was largely reserved for visiting troupes.

Two long expeditions in search of work interrupted this long Salzburg stay: Mozart and his father visited Vienna from 14 July to 26 September 1773 and Munich from 6 December 1774 to March 1775. Neither visit was successful, though the Munich journey resulted in a popular success with the premiere of Mozart's opera *La finta giardiniera*.

1777–78: Journey to Paris

In August 1777, Mozart resigned his position at Salzburg and on 23 September ventured out once more in search of employment, with visits to Augsburg, Mannheim, Paris, and Munich.

Mozart became acquainted with members of the famous orchestra in Mannheim, the best in Europe at the time. He also fell in love with Aloysia Weber, one of four daughters of a musical family. There were prospects of employment in Mannheim, but they came to nothing, and Mozart left for Paris on 14 March 1778 to continue his search. One of his letters from Paris hints at a possible post as an organist at Versailles, but Mozart was not interested in such an appointment. He fell into debt and took to pawning valuables. The nadir of the visit occurred when Mozart's mother was taken ill and died on 3 July 1778. There had been delays in calling a doctor, probably, according to Halliwell, because of a lack of funds. Mozart stayed with Melchior Grimm, who, as personal secretary of the Duke d'Orlans, lived in his mansion.

While Mozart was in Paris, his father was pursuing opportunities of employment for him in Salzburg. With the support of the local nobility, Mozart was offered a post as court organist and concertmaster. The annual salary was 450 florins, but he was reluctant to accept. By that time, relations between Grimm and Mozart had cooled, and Mozart moved out. After leaving Paris in September 1778 for Strasbourg, he lingered in Mannheim and Munich, still hoping to obtain an appointment outside Salzburg. In Munich, he again encountered Aloysia, now a very successful singer, but she was no longer interested in him. Mozart finally returned to Salzburg on 15 January 1779 and took up his new appointment, but his discontent with Salzburg remained undiminished.

Among the better-known works which Mozart wrote on the Paris journey are the A minor piano sonata, K. 310/300d, and the "Paris" Symphony (No. 31), which were performed in Paris on 12 and 18 June 1778.

Vienna

1781: Departure

In January 1781, Mozart's opera *Idomeneo* premiered with "considerable success" in Munich. The following March, Mozart was summoned to Vienna, where his employer, Archbishop Colloredo, was attending the celebrations for the accession of Joseph II to the Austrian throne. Fresh from the adulation he had earned in Munich, Mozart was offended when Colloredo treated him as a mere servant and particularly when the archbishop forbade him to perform before the emperor at Countess Thun's for a fee equal to half of his yearly Salzburg salary. The resulting quarrel came to a head in May: Mozart attempted to resign and was refused. The following month, permission was granted, but in a grossly insulting way: the composer was dismissed literally "with a kick in the arse" administered by the archbishop's steward, Count Arco. Mozart decided to settle in Vienna as a freelance performer and composer.

Figure 4. The Mozart family ca. 1780. The portrait on the wall is of Mozart's mother.

The quarrel with the archbishop went harder for Mozart because his father sided against him. Hoping fervently that he would obediently follow Colloredo back to Salzburg, Mozart's father exchanged intense letters with his son, urging him to be reconciled with their employer. Mozart passionately defended his intention to pursue an independent career in Vienna. The debate ended when Mozart was dismissed by the archbishop, freeing himself of both his employer and his father's demands to return. Solomon characterizes Mozart's resignation as a "revolutionary step," and it greatly altered the course of his life.

Early Years

Mozart's new career in Vienna began well. He performed often as a pianist, notably in a competition before the emperor with Muzio Clementi on 24 December 1781, and he soon "had established himself as the finest keyboard player in Vienna." He also prospered as a composer, and in 1782 completed the opera *Die Entfhrung aus dem Serail* ("The Abduction from the Seraglio"), which premiered on 16 July 1782 and achieved a huge success. The work was soon being performed "throughout German-speaking Europe" and fully established Mozart's reputation as a composer.

Near the height of his quarrels with Colloredo, Mozart moved in with the Weber family, who had moved to Vienna from Mannheim. The father, Fridolin, had died, and the Webers were now taking in lodgers to make ends meet. Aloysia, who had earlier rejected Mozart's suit, was now married to the actor and artist Joseph Lange. Mozart's interest shifted to the third Weber daughter, Constanze. The courtship did not go entirely

smoothly; surviving correspondence indicates that Mozart and Constanze briefly separated in April 1782. Mozart faced a very difficult task in getting his father's permission for the marriage. The couple were finally married on 4 August 1782 in St. Stephen's Cathedral, the day before his father's consent arrived in the mail.

The couple had six children, of whom only two survived infancy:

- Raimund Leopold (17 June–19 August 1783)
- Karl Thomas Mozart (21 September 1784–31 October 1858)
- Johann Thomas Leopold (18 October–15 November 1786)
- Theresia Constanzia Adelheid Friedericke Maria Anna (27 December 1787–29 June 1788)
- Anna Maria (died soon after birth, 16 November 1789)
- Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart (26 July 1791–29 July 1844)

In the course of 1782 and 1783, Mozart became intimately acquainted with the work of Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel as a result of the influence of Gottfried van Swieten, who owned many manuscripts of the Baroque masters. Mozart's study of these scores inspired compositions in Baroque style and later influenced his personal musical language—for example, in fugal passages in *Die Zauberflöte* ("The Magic Flute") and the finale of Symphony No. 41.

In 1783, Mozart and his wife visited his family in Salzburg. His father and sister were cordially polite to Constanze, but the visit prompted the composition of one of Mozart's great liturgical pieces, the Mass in C minor. Though not completed, it was premiered in Salzburg, with Constanze singing a solo part.

Mozart met Joseph Haydn in Vienna around 1784, and the two composers became friends. When Haydn visited Vienna, they sometimes played together in an impromptu string quartet. Mozart's six quartets dedicated to Haydn (K. 387, K. 421, K. 428, K. 458, K. 464, and K. 465) date from the period 1782 to 1785 and are judged to be a response to Haydn's Opus 33 set from 1781. Haydn in 1785 told Mozart's father, "I tell you before God, and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer known to me by person and repute, he has taste and what is more the greatest skill in composition."

From 1782 to 1785, Mozart mounted concerts with himself as soloist, presenting three or four new piano concertos in each season. Since space in the theaters was scarce, he booked unconventional venues: a large room in the Trattnerhof (an apartment building) and the ballroom of the Mehlgrube (a restaurant). The concerts were very popular, and the concertos he premiered at them are still firm fixtures in the repertoire. Solomon writes that during this period, Mozart created "a harmonious connection between an eager composer-performer and a delighted audience, which was given the opportunity of witnessing the transformation and perfection of a major musical genre."

With substantial returns from his concerts and elsewhere, Mozart and his wife adopted a rather plush lifestyle. They moved to an expensive apartment with a yearly rent of 460 florins. Mozart bought a fine fortepiano from Anton Walter for about 900 florins and a billiard table for about 300. The Mozarts sent their

son Karl Thomas to an expensive boarding school and kept servants. Saving was therefore impossible, and the short period of financial success did nothing to soften the hardship the Mozarts were later to experience.

On 14 December 1784, Mozart became a Freemason, admitted to the lodge Zur Wohltatigkeit ("Beneficence"). Freemasonry played an important role in the remainder of Mozart's life: he attended meetings, a number of his friends were Masons, and on various occasions he composed Masonic music—e.g., the Maurerische Trauermusik.

1786–87: Return to opera

Despite the great success of *Die Entfahrung aus dem Serail*, Mozart did little operatic writing for the next four years, producing only two unfinished works and the one-act *Der Schauspieldirektor*. He focused instead on his career as a piano soloist and writer of concertos. Around the end of 1785, Mozart moved away from keyboard writing and began his famous operatic collaboration with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte. The year 1786 saw the successful premiere of *The Marriage of Figaro* in Vienna. Its reception in Prague later in the year was even warmer, and this led to a second collaboration with Da Ponte: the opera *Don Giovanni*, which premiered in October 1787 to acclaim in Prague but less success in Vienna in 1788. The two are among Mozart's most important works and are mainstays of the operatic repertoire today, though at their premieres, their musical complexity caused difficulty for both listeners and performers. These developments were not witnessed by Mozart's father, who had died on 28 May 1787.

In December 1787, Mozart finally obtained a steady post under aristocratic patronage. Emperor Joseph II appointed him as his "chamber composer," a post that had fallen vacant the previous month on the death of Gluck. It was a part-time appointment, paying just 800 florins per year, and required Mozart only to compose dances for the annual balls in the Redoutensaal. This modest income became important to Mozart when hard times arrived. Court records show that Joseph's aim was to keep the esteemed composer from leaving Vienna in pursuit of better prospects.

In 1787, the young Ludwig van Beethoven spent several weeks in Vienna, hoping to study with Mozart. No reliable records survive to indicate whether the two composers ever met.

Later Years and Death

1788–90

Toward the end of the decade, Mozart's circumstances worsened. Around 1786, he had ceased to appear frequently in public concerts, and his income shrank. This was a difficult time for musicians in Vienna because of the Austro-Turkish War, and both the general level of prosperity and the ability of the aristocracy to support music had declined.

Figure 5. Drawing of Mozart in silverpoint, made by Dora Stock during Mozart's visit to Dresden, April 1789.

By mid-1788, Mozart and his family had moved from central Vienna to the suburb of Alsergrund. Although it has been thought that Mozart reduced his rental expenses, research shows that by moving to the suburb, Mozart had not reduced his expenses (as claimed in his letter to Puchberg) but merely increased the housing space at his disposal. Mozart began to borrow money, most often from his friend and fellow Mason Michael Puchberg; "a pitiful sequence of letters pleading for loans" survives. Maynard Solomon and others have suggested that Mozart was suffering from depression, and it seems that his output slowed. Major works of the period include the last three symphonies (Nos. 39, 40, and 41, all from 1788), and the last of the three Da Ponte operas, *Così fan tutte*, premiered in 1790.

Around this time, Mozart made long journeys hoping to improve his fortunes: to Leipzig, Dresden, and Berlin in the spring of 1789 and to Frankfurt, Mannheim, and other German cities in 1790. The trips produced only isolated success and did not relieve the family's financial distress.

1791

Mozart's last year was, until his final illness struck, a time of great productivity and, by some accounts, one of personal recovery. He composed a great deal, including some of his most admired works: the opera *The Magic Flute*; the final piano concerto (K. 595 in B-flat); the Clarinet Concerto K. 622; the last in his great series of string quintets (K. 614 in E-flat); the motet Ave verum corpus K. 618; and the unfinished Requiem K. 626.

Mozart's financial situation, a source of extreme anxiety in 1790, finally began to improve. Although the evidence is inconclusive, it appears that wealthy patrons in Hungary and Amsterdam pledged annuities to Mozart in return for the occasional composition. He is thought to have benefited from the sale of dance music written in his role as imperial chamber composer. Mozart no longer borrowed large sums from Puchberg and made a start on paying off his debts.

He experienced great satisfaction in the public success of some of his works, notably *The Magic Flute*

(which was performed several times in the short period between its premiere and Mozart's death) and the Little Masonic Cantata K. 623, which premiered on 15 November 1791.

Final Illness and Death

Mozart fell ill while in Prague for the 6 September 1791 premiere of his opera *La clemenza di Tito*, written in that same year on commission for the emperor's coronation festivities. He continued his professional functions for some time and conducted the premiere of *The Magic Flute* on 30 September. His health deteriorated on 20 November, at which point he became bedridden, suffering from swelling, pain, and vomiting.

Mozart was nursed in his final illness by his wife and her youngest sister and was attended by the family doctor, Thomas Franz Closset. He was mentally occupied with the task of finishing his Requiem, but the evidence that he actually dictated passages to his student Franz Xaverssmayr is minimal.

Mozart died in his home on 5 December 1791 (aged 35) at 1:00 am. The *New Grove* describes his funeral:

> Mozart was interred in a common grave, in accordance with contemporary Viennese custom, at the St. Marx Cemetery outside the city on 7 December. If, as later reports say, no mourners attended, that too is consistent with Viennese burial customs at the time; later Jahn (1856) wrote that Salieri, Süssmayr, van Swieten and two other musicians were present. The tale of a storm and snow is false; the day was calm and mild.

The expression "common grave" refers to neither a communal grave nor a pauper's grave but to an individual grave for a member of the common people (i.e., not the aristocracy). Common graves were subject to excavation after ten years; the graves of aristocrats were not.

The cause of Mozart's death cannot be known with certainty. The official record has it as "hitziges Frieselfieber" ("severe military fever," referring to a rash that looks like millet seeds), more a description of the symptoms than a diagnosis. Researchers have posited at least 118 causes of death, including acute rheumatic fever, streptococcal infection, trichinosis, influenza, mercury poisoning, and a rare kidney ailment.

Mozart's modest funeral did not reflect his standing with the public as a composer: memorial services and concerts in Vienna and Prague were well attended. Indeed, in the period immediately after his death, his reputation rose substantially: Solomon describes an "unprecedented wave of enthusiasm" for his work; biographies were written (first by Schlichtegroll, Niemetschek, and Nissen); and publishers vied to produce complete editions of his works.

Appearance and Character

Mozart's physical appearance was described by tenor Michael Kelly in his *Reminiscences*: "a remarkably small man, very thin and pale, with a profusion of fine, fair hair of which he was rather vain." As his early biographer Niemetschek wrote, "There was nothing special about [his] physique. [...] He was small and his countenance, except for his large intense eyes, gave no signs of his genius." His facial complexion was pitted, a reminder of

his childhood case of smallpox. There is a photofit of Mozart created from four contemporary portraits. He loved elegant clothing. Kelly remembered him at a rehearsal: "[He] was on the stage with his crimson pelisse and gold-laced cocked hat, giving the time of the music to the orchestra." Of his voice, his wife later wrote that it "was a tenor, rather soft in speaking and delicate in singing, but when anything excited him, or it became necessary to exert it, it was both powerful and energetic."

Mozart usually worked long and hard, finishing compositions at a tremendous pace as deadlines approached. He often made sketches and drafts; unlike Beethoven's, these are mostly not preserved, as his wife sought to destroy them after his death.

He was raised a Catholic and remained a loyal member of the Church throughout his life.

Mozart lived at the center of the Viennese musical world and knew a great number and variety of people: fellow musicians, theatrical performers, fellow Salzburgers, and aristocrats, including some acquaintance with the Emperor Joseph II. Solomon considers his three closest friends to have been Gottfried von Jacquin, Count August Hatzfeld, and Sigmund Barisani; others included his older colleague Joseph Haydn, singers Franz Xaver Gerl and Benedikt Schack, and the horn player Joseph Leutgeb. Leutgeb and Mozart carried on a curious kind of friendly mockery, often with Leutgeb as the butt of Mozart's practical jokes.

He enjoyed billiards and dancing and kept pets: a canary, a starling, a dog, and a horse for recreational riding. He had a startling fondness for scatological humor, which is preserved in his surviving letters, notably those written to his cousin Maria Anna Thekla Mozart around 1777–1778, and in his correspondence with his sister and parents. Mozart also wrote scatological music, a series of canons that he sang with his friends.

Works, Musical Style, and Innovations

Style

Listen: Mozart

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Symphonie No. 40 g-moll, K. 550. Movement: 1. Molto allegro.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-28

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Overture to *Don Giovanni*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-29

Mozart's music, like Haydn's, stands as an archetype of the Classical style. At the time he began composing, European music was dominated by the *style galant*, a reaction against the highly evolved intricacy of the Baroque. Progressively, and in large part at the hands of Mozart himself, the contrapuntal complexities of the late Baroque emerged once more, moderated and disciplined by new forms and adapted to a new aesthetic and social milieu. Mozart was a versatile composer and wrote in every major genre, including symphony, opera, the solo concerto, chamber music (including string quartet and string quintet), and the piano sonata. These forms were not new, but Mozart advanced their technical sophistication and emotional reach. He almost single-handedly developed and popularized the Classical piano concerto. He wrote a great deal of religious music, including large-scale masses, as well as dances, divertimenti, serenades, and other forms of light entertainment.

The central traits of the Classical style are all present in Mozart's music. Clarity, balance, and transparency are the hallmarks of his work, but simplistic notions of its delicacy mask the exceptional power of his finest masterpieces, such as the Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491; the Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550; and the opera *Don Giovanni*. Charles Rosen makes the point forcefully:

> It is only through recognizing the violence and sensuality at the center of Mozart's work that we can make a start toward a comprehension of his structures and an insight into his magnificence. In a paradoxical way, Schumann's superficial characterization of the G minor Symphony can help us to see Mozart's daemon more steadily. In all of Mozart's supreme expressions of suffering and terror, there is something shockingly voluptuous.

Especially during his last decade, Mozart exploited chromatic harmony to a degree rare at the time, with remarkable assurance and to great artistic effect.

Mozart always had a gift for absorbing and adapting valuable features of others' music. His travels helped in the forging of a unique compositional language. In London as a child, he met J. C. Bach and heard his music. In Paris, Mannheim, and Vienna, he met with other compositional influences, as well as the avant-garde capabilities of the Mannheim orchestra. In Italy, he encountered the Italian overture and opera buffa, both of which deeply affected the evolution of his own practice. In London and Italy, the galant style was in the ascendent: simple, light music with a mania for cadencing; an emphasis on tonic, dominant, and subdominant

to the exclusion of other harmonies; symmetrical phrases; and clearly articulated partitions in the overall form of movements. Some of Mozart's early symphonies are Italian overtures, with three movements running into each other; many are homotonal (all three movements having the same key signature, with the slow middle movement being in the relative minor). Others mimic the works of J. C. Bach, and others show the simple rounded binary forms turned out by Viennese composers.

As Mozart matured, he progressively incorporated more features adapted from the Baroque. For example, the Symphony No. 29 in A major K. 201 has a contrapuntal main theme in its first movement and experimentation with irregular phrase lengths. Some of his quartets from 1773 have fugal finales, probably influenced by Haydn, who had included three such finales in his recently published Opus 20 set. The influence of the *Sturm und Drang* ("Storm and Stress") period in music, with its brief foreshadowing of the Romantic era, is evident in the music of both composers at that time. Mozart's Symphony No. 25 in G minor K. 183 is another excellent example.

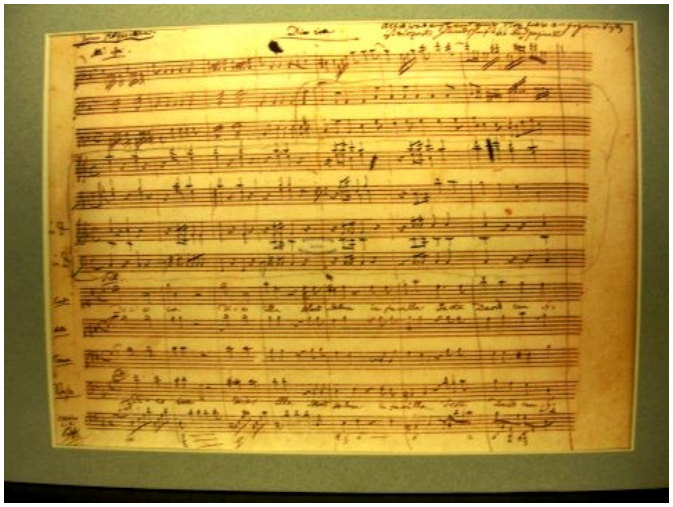

Figure 6. A facsimile sheet of music from the Dies Irae movement of the Requiem Mass in D minor (K. 626) in Mozart's own handwriting. It is located at the Mozart house in Vienna.

Mozart would sometimes switch his focus between operas and instrumental music. He produced operas in each of the prevailing styles: opera buffa, such as *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Cosa-fan tutte*; opera seria, such as *Idomeneo*; and Singspiel, of which *Die Zauberflute* is the most famous example by any composer. In his later operas, he employed subtle changes in instrumentation, orchestral texture, and tone color for emotional depth and to mark dramatic shifts. Here his advances in opera and instrumental composing interacted: his increasingly sophisticated use of the orchestra in the symphonies and concertos influenced his operatic orchestration, and his developing subtlety in using the orchestra to psychological effect in his operas was in turn reflected in his later nonoperatic compositions.

Influence

Mozart's most famous pupil, whom the Mozarts took into their Vienna home for two years as a child, was probably Johann Nepomuk Hummel, a transitional figure between Classical and Romantic eras. More important is the influence Mozart had on composers of later generations. Ever since the surge in his reputation after his death, studying his scores has been a standard part of the training of classical musicians.

Ludwig van Beethoven, Mozart's junior by 15 years, was deeply influenced by his work, with which he was acquainted as a teenager. He is thought to have performed Mozart's operas while playing in the court orchestra

at Bonn, and he traveled to Vienna in 1787 hoping to study with the older composer. Some of Beethoven's works have direct models in comparable works by Mozart, and he wrote cadenzas (WoO 58) to Mozart's D minor piano concerto K. 466. For further details, see Mozart and Beethoven.

A number of composers have paid homage to Mozart by writing sets of variations on his themes. Beethoven wrote four such sets (Op. 66, WoO 28, WoO 40, WoO 46). Others include Fernando Sor's Introduction and Variations on a Theme by Mozart (1821), Mikhail Glinka's Variations on a Theme from Mozart's Opera Die Zauberflute (1822), Frederic Chopin's Variations on "La ci darem la mano" from *Don Giovanni* (1827), and Max Reger's Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Mozart (1914), based on the variation theme in the piano sonata K. 331.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote his Orchestral Suite No. 4 in G, "Mozartiana" (1887), as a tribute to Mozart.

Köchel Catalog

For unambiguous identification of works by Mozart, a *Köchel catalog number* is used. This is a unique number assigned, in regular chronological order, to every one of his known works. A work is referenced by the abbreviation "K." or "KV" followed by this number. The first edition of the catalog was completed in 1862 by Ludwig von Köchel. It has since been repeatedly updated, as scholarly research improves knowledge of the dates and authenticity of individual works.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Along with Mozart, Beethoven is likely one of the best-known composers, and his 5th symphony is undoubtedly one of the best known works of classical music. Of the three composers we study in the Classical era, Beethoven exerted the greatest influence on the composers of the Romantic period that followed. Beethoven's music represents a transition from Classical to Romantic style.

Biography

Background and early life

Beethoven was the grandson of Lodewijk van Beethoven (1712–1773), a musician from Mechelen in the Southern Netherlands (now part of Belgium), who at the age of 20 moved to Bonn. Lodewijk (the Dutch cognate of German *Ludwig*) was employed as a bass singer at the court of the Elector of Cologne, eventually rising to become Kapellmeister (music director). Lodewijk had one son, Johann (1740–1792), who worked as a tenor in the same musical establishment and gave lessons on piano and violin to supplement his income. Johann married Maria Magdalena Keverich in 1767; she was the daughter of Johann Heinrich Keverich, who had been the head chef at the court of the Archbishopric of Trier.

Figure 1. Beethoven's birthplace at Bonngasse 20, now the Beethoven House museum.

Beethoven was born of this marriage in Bonn. There is no authentic record of the date of his birth; however, the registry of his baptism, in a Roman Catholic service at the Parish of St. Regius on 17 December 1770, survives. As children of that era were traditionally baptized the day after birth in the Catholic Rhine country, and it is known that Beethoven's family and his teacher Johann Albrechtsberger celebrated his birthday on 16 December, most scholars accept 16 December 1770 as Beethoven's date of birth. Of the seven children born to Johann van Beethoven, only Ludwig, the second-born, and two younger brothers survived infancy. Caspar Anton Carl was born on 8 April 1774, and Nikolaus Johann, the youngest, was born on 2 October 1776.

Beethoven's first music teacher was his father. Although tradition has it that Johann van Beethoven was a harsh instructor and that the child Beethoven, "made to stand at the keyboard, was often in tears," the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* claimed that no solid documentation supported this, and asserted that "speculation and myth-making have both been productive." Beethoven had other local teachers: the court organist Gilles van den Eeden (d. 1782), Tobias Friedrich Pfeiffer (a family friend, who taught Beethoven the piano), and Franz Rovantini (a relative, who instructed him in playing the violin and viola). Beethoven's musical talent was obvious at a young age. Johann, aware of Leopold Mozart's successes in this area (with son Wolfgang and daughter Nannerl), attempted to exploit his son as a child prodigy, claiming that Beethoven was six (he was seven) on the posters for Beethoven's first public performance in March 1778.

Some time after 1779, Beethoven began his studies with his most important teacher in Bonn, Christian

Gottlob Neefe, who was appointed the Court's Organist in that year. Neefe taught Beethoven composition and by March 1783 had helped him write his first published composition: a set of keyboard variations (WoO 63). Beethoven soon began working with Neefe as assistant organist, at first unpaid (1781) and then as a paid employee (1784) of the court chapel conducted by the Kapellmeister Andrea Luchesi. His first three piano sonatas, named "Kurfurst" ("Elector") for their dedication to the Elector Maximilian Friedrich (1708–1784), were published in 1783. Maximilian Frederick noticed Beethoven's talent early and subsidized and encouraged the young man's musical studies.

Maximilian Frederick's successor as the Elector of Bonn was Maximilian Franz, the youngest son of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, and he brought notable changes to Bonn. Echoing changes made in Vienna by his brother Joseph, he introduced reforms based on Enlightenment philosophy, with increased support for education and the arts. The teenage Beethoven was almost certainly influenced by these changes. He may also have been influenced at this time by ideas prominent in freemasonry, as Neefe and others around Beethoven were members of the local chapter of the Order of the Illuminati.

Figure 2. A portrait of the 13-year-old Beethoven by an unknown Bonn master (ca. 1783).

In March 1787, Beethoven traveled to Vienna (possibly at another's expense) for the first time, apparently in the hope of studying with Mozart. The details of their relationship are uncertain, including whether they actually met. Having learned that his mother was ill, Beethoven returned about two weeks after his arrival. His mother died shortly thereafter, and his father lapsed deeper into alcoholism. As a result, Beethoven became responsible for the care of his two younger brothers and spent the next five years in Bonn.

Beethoven was introduced in these years to several people who became important in his life. Franz Wegeler, a young medical student, introduced him to the von Breuning family (one of whose daughters Wegeler eventually married). Beethoven often visited the von Breuning household, where he taught piano to some of the children. Here he encountered German and classical literature. The von Breuning family environment was less stressful than his own, which was increasingly dominated by his father's decline. Beethoven also came to the attention of Count Ferdinand von Waldstein, who became a lifelong friend and financial supporter.

In 1789, Beethoven obtained a legal order by which half of his father's salary was paid directly to him for support of the family. He also contributed further to the family's income by playing viola in the court orchestra. This familiarized Beethoven with a variety of operas, including three by Mozart that were performed at court in this period. He also befriended Anton Reicha, a flautist and violinist of about his own age who was a nephew of the court orchestra's conductor, Josef Reicha.

Establishing His Career in Vienna

From 1790 to 1792, Beethoven composed a significant number of works (none were published at the time, and most are now listed as works without opus) that demonstrated his growing range and maturity. Musicologists have identified a theme similar to those of his Third Symphony in a set of variations written in 1791. Beethoven was probably first introduced to Joseph Haydn in late 1790, when the latter was traveling to London and stopped in Bonn around Christmastime. A year and a half later they met in Bonn on Haydn's return trip from London to Vienna in July 1792, and it is likely that arrangements were made at that time for Beethoven to study with the old master. With the Elector's help, Beethoven left Bonn for Vienna in November 1792, amid rumors of war spilling out of France; he learned shortly after his arrival that his father had died. Mozart had also recently died. Count Waldstein, in his farewell note to Beethoven, wrote, "Through uninterrupted diligence you will receive Mozart's spirit through Haydn's hands." Over the next few years, Beethoven responded to the widespread feeling that he was a successor to the recently deceased Mozart by studying that master's work and writing works with a distinctly Mozartean flavor.

Beethoven did not immediately set out to establish himself as a composer but rather devoted himself to study and performance. Working under Haydn's direction, he sought to master counterpoint. He also studied violin under Ignaz Schuppanzigh. Early in this period, he also began receiving occasional instruction from Antonio Salieri, primarily in Italian vocal composition style; this relationship persisted until at least 1802 and possibly 1809. With Haydn's departure for England in 1794, Beethoven was expected by the Elector to return home. He chose instead to remain in Vienna, continuing his instruction in counterpoint with Johann Albrechtsberger and other teachers. Although his stipend from the Elector expired, a number of Viennese noblemen had already recognized his ability and offered him financial support, among them Prince Joseph Franz Lobkowitz, Prince Karl Lichnowsky, and Baron Gottfried van Swieten.

By 1793, Beethoven had established a reputation as an improviser in the salons of the nobility, often playing the preludes and fugues of J. S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. His friend Nikolaus Simrock had begun publishing his compositions; the first are believed to be a set of variations (WoO 66). By 1793, he had established a reputation in Vienna as a piano virtuoso, but he apparently withheld works from publication so that their publication in 1795 would have greater impact. Beethoven's first public performance in Vienna was in March 1795, a concert in which he first performed one of his piano concertos. It is uncertain whether this was the First or Second. Documentary evidence is unclear, and both concertos were in a similar state of near-completion (neither was completed or published for several years). Shortly after this performance, he arranged for the publication of the first of his compositions to which he assigned an opus number, the three piano trios, Opus 1. These works were dedicated to his patron Prince Lichnowsky and were a financial success; Beethoven's profits were nearly sufficient to cover his living expenses for a year.

Musical Maturity

Beethoven composed his first six string quartets (Op. 18) between 1798 and 1800 (commissioned by, and dedicated to, Prince Lobkowitz). They were published in 1801. With premieres of his First and Second Symphonies in 1800 and 1803, Beethoven became regarded as one of the most important of a generation of young composers following Haydn and Mozart. He also continued to write in other forms, turning out widely known piano sonatas like the "Pathétique" sonata (Op. 13), which Cooper describes as "surpass[ing] any of his previous compositions, in strength of character, depth of emotion, level of originality, and ingenuity of motivic and tonal manipulation." He also completed his Septet (Op. 20) in 1799, which was one of his most popular works during his lifetime.

For the premiere of his *First Symphony*, Beethoven hired the Burgtheater on 2 April 1800 and staged an extensive program of music, including works by Haydn and Mozart as well as his Septet, the First Symphony, and one of his piano concertos (the latter three works all then unpublished). The concert, which the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* described as "the most interesting concert in a long time," was not without difficulties; among the criticisms was that "the players did not bother to pay any attention to the soloist."

Mozart and Haydn were undeniable influences. For example, Beethoven's quintet for piano and winds is said to bear a strong resemblance to Mozart's work for the same configuration, albeit with his own distinctive touches. But Beethoven's melodies, musical development, use of modulation and texture, and characterization of emotion all set him apart from his influences and heightened the impact some of his early works made when they were first published. By the end of 1800, Beethoven and his music were already much in demand from patrons and publishers.

In May 1799, Beethoven taught piano to the daughters of Hungarian Countess Anna Brunsvik. During this time, Beethoven fell in love with the younger daughter, Josephine, who has therefore been identified as one of the more likely candidates for the addressee of his letter to the "Immortal Beloved" (in 1812). Shortly after these lessons, Josephine was married to Count Josef Deym. Beethoven was a regular visitor at their house, continuing to teach Josephine and playing at parties and concerts. Her marriage was by all accounts happy (despite initial financial problems), and the couple had four children. Her relationship with Beethoven intensified after Deym died suddenly in 1804.

Figure 3. Ludwig van Beethoven: detail of an 1804–5 portrait by Joseph Willibrord Mahler. The complete painting depicts Beethoven with a lyre-guitar.

Beethoven had few other students. From 1801 to 1805, he tutored Ferdinand Ries, who went on to become a composer and later wrote *Beethoven Remembered*, a book about their encounters. The young Carl Czerny studied with Beethoven from 1801 to 1803. Czerny went on to become a renowned music teacher himself, instructing Franz Liszt, and gave on 11 February 1812 the Vienna premiere of Beethoven's fifth piano concerto (the "Emperor").

Beethoven's compositions between 1800 and 1802 were dominated by two large-scale orchestral works, although he continued to produce other important works, such as the piano sonata Sonata quasi una fantasia, known as the "Moonlight Sonata." In the spring of 1801 he completed *The Creatures of Prometheus*, a ballet. The work received numerous performances in 1801 and 1802, and Beethoven rushed to publish a piano arrangement to capitalize on its early popularity. In the spring of 1802, he completed the Second Symphony, intended for performance at a concert that was canceled. The symphony received its premiere instead at a subscription concert in April 1803 at the Theater an der Wien, where Beethoven had been appointed composer in residence. In addition to the Second Symphony, the concert also featured the First Symphony, the Third Piano Concerto, and the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. Reviews were mixed, but the concert was a financial success; Beethoven was able to charge three times the cost of a typical concert ticket.

Beethoven's business dealings with publishers also began to improve in 1802 when his brother Carl, who had previously assisted him casually, began to assume a larger role in the management of his affairs. In addition to negotiating higher prices for recently composed works, Carl also began selling some of Beethoven's earlier unpublished works and encouraged Beethoven (against the latter's preference) to also make arrangements and transcriptions of his more popular works for other instrument combinations. Beethoven acceded to these requests, as he could not prevent publishers from hiring others to do similar arrangements of his works.

Loss of Hearing

Around 1796, by the age of 26, Beethoven began to lose his hearing. He suffered from a severe form of tinnitus, a "ringing" in his ears that made it hard for him to hear music; he also tried to avoid conversations. The cause of Beethoven's deafness is unknown, but it has variously been attributed to typhus, auto-immune disorders (such as systemic lupus erythematosus), and even his habit of immersing his head in cold water to stay awake. The explanation from Beethoven's autopsy was that he had a "distended inner ear," which developed lesions over time.

As early as 1801, Beethoven wrote to friends describing his symptoms and the difficulties they caused in both professional and social settings (although it is likely some of his close friends were already aware of the problems). Beethoven, on the advice of his doctor, lived in the small Austrian town of Heiligenstadt, just outside Vienna, from April to October 1802 in an attempt to come to terms with his condition. There he wrote his Heiligenstadt Testament, a letter to his brothers that records his thoughts of suicide due to his growing deafness and records his resolution to continue living for and through his art. Over time, his hearing loss became profound: at the end of the premiere of his Ninth Symphony in 1824, he had to be turned around to see the tumultuous applause of the audience because he could hear neither it nor the orchestra. Beethoven's hearing loss did not prevent him from composing music, but it made playing at concerts, a lucrative source of income, increasingly difficult. After a failed attempt in 1811 to perform his own Piano Concerto No. 5 (the "Emperor"), which was premiered by his student Carl Czerny, he never performed in public again until he conducted the Ninth Symphony in 1824.

Figure 4. Beethoven in 1815 portrait by Joseph Willibrord Mähler.

A large collection of Beethoven's hearing aids, such as a special ear horn, can be viewed at the Beethoven House Museum in Bonn, Germany. Despite his obvious distress, Czerny remarked that Beethoven could still hear speech and music normally until 1812. Around 1814, however, by the age of 44, Beethoven was almost totally deaf, and when a group of visitors saw him play a loud arpeggio of thundering bass notes at his piano, remarking, "Ist es nicht schan?" (Is it not beautiful?), they felt deep sympathy considering his courage and sense of humor (he lost the ability to hear higher frequencies first).

As a result of Beethoven's hearing loss, his conversation books are an unusually rich written resource. Used primarily in the last ten or so years of his life, his friends wrote in these books so that he could know what they were saying, and he then responded either orally or in the book. The books contain discussions about music and other matters and give insights into Beethoven's thinking; they are a source for investigations into

how he intended his music should be performed and also his perception of his relationship to art. Out of a total of 400 conversation books, it has been suggested that 264 were destroyed (and others were altered) after Beethoven's death by Anton Schindler, who wished only an idealized biography of the composer to survive. However, Theodore Albrecht contests the verity of Schindler's destruction of a large number of conversation books.

Patronage

While Beethoven earned income from publication of his works and from public performances, he also depended on the generosity of patrons for income, for whom he gave private performances and copies of works they commissioned for an exclusive period prior to their publication. Some of his early patrons, including Prince Lobkowitz and Prince Lichnowsky, gave him annual stipends in addition to commissioning works and purchasing published works.

Perhaps Beethoven's most important aristocratic patron was Archduke Rudolph, the youngest son of Emperor Leopold II, who in 1803 or 1804 began to study piano and composition with Beethoven. The cleric (Cardinal-Priest) and the composer became friends, and their meetings continued until 1824. Beethoven dedicated 14 compositions to Rudolph, including the Archduke Trio (1811) and his great Missa Solemnis (1823). Rudolph, in turn, dedicated one of his own compositions to Beethoven. The letters Beethoven wrote to Rudolph are today kept at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. Another patron was Count (later Prince) Andreas Razumovsky, for whom the String Quartets Nos. 7–9, Op. 59, *Rasumovsky*, were named.

In the Autumn of 1808, after having been rejected for a position at the royal theater, Beethoven received an offer from Napoleon's brother Jérôme Bonaparte, then king of Westphalia, for a well-paid position as Kapellmeister at the court in Cassel. To persuade him to stay in Vienna, the Archduke Rudolph, Prince Kinsky, and Prince Lobkowitz, after receiving representations from the composer's friends, pledged to pay Beethoven a pension of 4,000 florins a year. Only Archduke Rudolph paid his share of the pension on the agreed date. Kinsky, immediately called to military duty, did not contribute and soon died after falling from his horse. Lobkowitz stopped paying in September 1811. No successors came forward to continue the patronage, and Beethoven relied mostly on selling composition rights and a small pension after 1815. The effects of these financial arrangements were undermined to some extent by war with France, which caused significant inflation when the government printed money to fund its war efforts.

The Middle Period

Beethoven's return to Vienna from Heiligenstadt was marked by a change in musical style and is now designated as the start of his middle or "heroic" period. According to Carl Czerny, Beethoven said, "I am not satisfied with the work I have done so far. From now on I intend to take a new way." This "heroic" phase was characterized by a large number of original works composed on a grand scale. The first major work employing

this new style was the Third Symphony in E flat, known as the *Eroica*. This work was longer and larger in scope than any previous symphony. When it premiered in early 1805, it received a mixed reception. Some listeners objected to its length or misunderstood its structure, while others viewed it as a masterpiece.

Listen: Symphony No. 5

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Symphony No. 5, Op. 67 (1st movement), composed during Beethoven's middle period.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=568#audio-568-30

The "middle period" is sometimes associated with a "heroic" manner of composing, but the use of the term "heroic" has become increasingly controversial in Beethoven scholarship. The term is more frequently used as an alternative name for the middle period. The appropriateness of the term "heroic" to describe the whole middle period has been questioned as well: while some works, like the Third and Fifth Symphonies, are easy to describe as "heroic," many others, like his Symphony No. 6, *Pastoral*, are not.

Some of the middle period works extend the musical language Beethoven had inherited from Haydn and Mozart. The middle period work includes the Third through Eighth Symphonies, the Rasumovsky, *Harp* and *Serioso* string quartets, the "Waldstein" and "Appassionata" piano sonatas, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, the opera *Fidelio*, the Violin Concerto, and many other compositions. During this time, Beethoven's income came from publishing his works, from performances of them, and from his patrons. His position at the Theater an der Wien was terminated when the theater changed management in early 1804, and he was forced to move temporarily to the suburbs of Vienna with his friend Stephan von Breuning. This slowed work on *Fidelio*, his largest work to date, for a time. It was delayed again by the Austrian censor and finally premiered in November 1805 to houses that were nearly empty because of the French occupation of the city. In addition to being a financial failure, this version of *Fidelio* was also a critical failure, and Beethoven began revising it.

During May 1809, when the attacking forces of Napoleon bombarded Vienna, according to Ferdinand Ries, Beethoven, very worried that the noise would destroy what remained of his hearing, hid in the basement of his brother's house, covering his ears with pillows.

The work of the middle period established Beethoven as a master. In a review from 1810, he was enshrined

by E. T. A. Hoffmann as one of the three great "Romantic" composers; Hoffman called Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* "one of the most important works of the age."

Personal and Family Difficulties

Beethoven's love life was hampered by class issues. In late 1801, he met a young countess, Julie ("Giulietta") Guicciardi through the Brunsvik family at a time when he was giving regular piano lessons to Josephine Brunsvik. Beethoven mentions his love for Julie in a November 1801 letter to his boyhood friend, Franz Wegeler, but he could not consider marrying her due to the class difference. Beethoven later dedicated to her his *Sonata No. 14*, now commonly known as the *"Moonlight sonata"* or *"Mondscheinsonate"* (in German).

His relationship with Josephine Brunsvik deepened after the death in 1804 of her aristocratic first husband, the Count Joseph Deym. Beethoven wrote Josephine 15 passionate love letters from late 1804 to around 1809/10. Although his feelings were obviously reciprocated, Josephine was forced by her family to withdraw from him in 1807. She cited her "duty" and the fact that she would have lost the custodianship of her aristocratic children had she married a commoner. After Josephine married Baron von Stackelberg in 1810, Beethoven may have proposed unsuccessfully to Therese Malfatti, the supposed dedicatee of "Für Elise"; his status as a commoner may again have interfered with those plans.

In the spring of 1811, Beethoven became seriously ill, suffering headaches and high fever. On the advice of his doctor, he spent six weeks in the Bohemian spa town of Teplitz. The following winter, which was dominated by work on the Seventh symphony, he was again ill, and his doctor ordered him to spend the summer of 1812 at the spa in Teplitz. It is certain that he was at Teplitz when he wrote a love letter to his "Immortal Beloved." The identity of the intended recipient has long been a subject of debate; candidates include Julie Guicciardi, Therese Malfatti, Josephine Brunsvik, and Antonie Brentano.

Beethoven visited his brother Johann at the end of October 1812. He wished to end Johann's cohabitation with Therese Obermayer, a woman who already had an illegitimate child. He was unable to convince Johann to end the relationship and appealed to the local civic and religious authorities. Johann and Therese married on 9 November.

In early 1813, Beethoven apparently went through a difficult emotional period, and his compositional output dropped. His personal appearance degraded; it had generally been neat as did his manners in public, especially when dining. Beethoven took care of his brother (who was suffering from tuberculosis) and his family, an expense that he claimed left him penniless.

Beethoven was finally motivated to begin significant composition again in June 1813, when news arrived of the defeat of one of Napoleon's armies at Vitoria, Spain, by a coalition of forces under the Duke of Wellington. This news stimulated him to write the battle symphony known as *Wellington's Victory*. It was first performed on 8 December, along with his Seventh Symphony, at a charity concert for victims of the war. The work was a popular hit, probably because of its programmatic style, which was entertaining and easy to understand. It received repeat performances at concerts Beethoven staged in January and February 1814. Beethoven's renewed

popularity led to demands for a revival of *Fidelio*, which, in its third revised version, was also well received at its July opening. That summer, he composed a piano sonata for the first time in five years (No. 27, Opus 90). This work was in a markedly more Romantic style than his earlier sonatas. He was also one of many composers who produced music in a patriotic vein to entertain the many heads of state and diplomats who came to the Congress of Vienna that began in November 1814. His output of songs included his only song cycle, "An die ferne Geliebte," and the extraordinarily expressive second setting of the poem "An die Hoffnung" (Op. 94) in 1815. Compared to its first setting in 1805 (a gift for Josephine Brunsvik), it was "far more dramatic....The entire spirit is that of an operatic scena."

Custody Struggle and Illness

Between 1815 and 1817, Beethoven's output dropped again. Beethoven attributed part of this to a lengthy illness (he called it an "inflammatory fever") that afflicted him for more than a year, starting in October 1816. Biographers have speculated on a variety of other reasons that also contributed to the decline, including the difficulties in the personal lives of his would-be paramours and the harsh censorship policies of the Austrian government. The illness and death of his brother Carl from tuberculosis may also have played a role.

Carl had been ill for some time, and Beethoven spent a small fortune in 1815 on his care. After Carl died on 15 November 1815, Beethoven immediately became embroiled in a protracted legal dispute with Carl's wife Johanna over custody of their son Karl, then nine years old. Beethoven, who considered Johanna an unfit parent because of her morals (she had an illegitimate child by a different father before marrying Carl and had been convicted of theft) and financial management, had successfully applied to Carl to have himself named sole guardian of the boy. A late codicil to Carl's will gave him and Johanna joint guardianship. While Beethoven was successful at having his nephew removed from her custody in February 1816, the case was not fully resolved until 1820, and he was frequently preoccupied by the demands of the litigation and seeing to Karl's welfare, whom he first placed in a private school.

The Austrian court system had one court for the nobility and members of the Landtafel, the Landrecht, and many other courts for commoners, among them the Civil Court of the Vienna Magistrate. Beethoven disguised the fact that the Dutch "van" in his name did not denote nobility as does the German "von," and his case was tried in the Landrecht. Owing to his influence with the court, Beethoven felt assured of the favorable outcome of being awarded sole guardianship. While giving evidence to the Landrecht, however, Beethoven inadvertently admitted that he was not nobly born. On 18 December 1818, the case was transferred to the Magistracy, where he lost sole guardianship.

Beethoven appealed and regained custody. Johanna's appeal to the emperor was not successful: the emperor "washed his hands of the matter." During the years of custody that followed, Beethoven attempted to ensure that Karl lived to the highest moral standards. Beethoven had an overbearing manner and frequently interfered in his nephew's life. Karl attempted suicide on 31 July 1826 by shooting himself in the head. He survived and

was brought to his mother's house, where he recuperated. He and Beethoven were reconciled, but Karl insisted on joining the army and last saw Beethoven in early 1827.

Late Works

Beethoven began a renewed study of older music, including works by J. S. Bach and Handel that were then being published in the first attempts at complete editions. He composed the overture *The Consecration of the House*, which was the first work to attempt to incorporate these influences. A new style emerged, now called his "late period." He returned to the keyboard to compose his first piano sonatas in almost a decade: the works of the late period are commonly held to include the last five piano sonatas and the *Diabelli Variations*, the last two sonatas for cello and piano, the late string quartets (see below), and two works for very large forces: the *Missa Solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony.

By early 1818, Beethoven's health had improved, and his nephew moved in with him in January. On the downside, his hearing had deteriorated to the point that conversation became difficult, necessitating the use of conversation books. His household management had also improved somewhat; Nanette Streicher, who had assisted in his care during his illness, continued to provide some support, and he finally found a skilled cook. His musical output in 1818 was still somewhat reduced but included song collections and the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, as well as sketches for two symphonies that eventually coalesced into the epic Ninth. In 1819, he was again preoccupied by the legal processes around Karl and began work on the *Diabelli Variations* and the *Missa Solemnis*.

Figure 5. A modern medallion bearing the face of Beethoven.

For the next few years, he continued to work on the *Missa*, composing piano sonatas and bagatelles to satisfy the demands of publishers and the need for income, and completing the *Diabelli Variations*. He was ill again for an extended time in 1821 and completed the *Missa* in 1823, three years after its original due date. He also opened discussions with his publishers over the possibility of producing a complete edition of his work, an idea that was arguably not fully realized until 1971. Beethoven's brother Johann began to take a hand in his business affairs, much in the way Carl had earlier, locating older unpublished works to offer for publication and offering the *Missa* to multiple publishers with the goal of getting a higher price for it.

Two commissions in 1822 improved Beethoven's financial prospects. The Philharmonic Society of London offered a commission for a symphony, and Prince Nikolas Golitsin of St. Petersburg offered to pay Beethoven's price for three string quartets. The first of these commissions spurred Beethoven to finish the Ninth Symphony, which was first performed, along with the *Missa Solemnis*, on 7 May 1824 to great acclaim at the

Karntnertortheater. The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* gushed, "Inexhaustible genius had shown us a new world," and Carl Czerny wrote that his symphony "breathes such a fresh, lively, indeed youthful spirit . . . so much power, innovation, and beauty as ever [came] from the head of this original man, although he certainly sometimes led the old wigs to shake their heads." Unlike his more lucrative earlier concerts, this did not make Beethoven much money, as the expenses of mounting it were significantly higher. A second concert on 24 May, in which the producer guaranteed Beethoven a minimum fee, was poorly attended; nephew Karl noted that "many people [had] already gone into the country." It was Beethoven's last public concert.

Listen: Piano Sonata No. 32

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111 (1st movement), written between 1821 and 1822, during Beethoven's late period.

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Beethoven then turned to writing the string quartets for Golitsin. This series of quartets, known as the "Late Quartets," went far beyond what musicians or audiences were ready for at that time. One musician commented, "We know there is something there, but we do not know what it is." Composer Louis Spohr called them "indecipherable, uncorrected horrors." Opinion has changed considerably from the time of their first bewildered reception: their forms and ideas inspired musicians and composers including Richard Wagner and Béla Bartók and continue to do so. Of the late quartets, Beethoven's favorite was the Fourteenth Quartet, Op. 131 in C-sharp minor, which he rated as his most perfect single work. The last musical wish of Schubert was to hear the Op. 131 quartet, which he did on 14 November 1828, five days before his death.

Beethoven wrote the last quartets amid failing health. In April 1825, he was bedridden and remained ill for about a month. The illness, or more precisely, his recovery from it, is remembered for having given rise to the deeply felt slow movement of the Fifteenth Quartet, which Beethoven called "Holy song of thanks ('Heiliger Dankgesang') to the divinity, from one made well." He went on to complete the quartets now numbered 13th, 14th, and 16th. The last work completed by Beethoven was the substitute final movement of the Thirteenth Quartet, which replaced the difficult *Groae Fugue*. Shortly thereafter, in December 1826, illness struck again, with episodes of vomiting and diarrhea that nearly ended his life.

In 1825, his nine symphonies were performed in a cycle for the first time by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Johann Philipp Christian Schulz. This was repeated in 1826.

Illness and Death

Beethoven was bedridden for most of his remaining months, and many friends came to visit. He died on 26 March 1827 at the age of 56 during a thunderstorm. His friend Anselm Hattenbrenner, who was present at the time, said that there was a peal of thunder at the moment of death. An autopsy revealed significant liver damage, which may have been due to heavy alcohol consumption. It also revealed considerable dilation of the auditory and other related nerves.

Figure 6. Beethoven's grave site, Vienna Zentralfriedhof.

Beethoven's funeral procession on 29 March 1827 was attended by an estimated 20,000 Viennese citizens. Franz Schubert, who died the following year and was buried next to Beethoven, was one of the torchbearers. Beethoven was buried in a dedicated grave in the Wahring cemetery, north-west of Vienna, after a requiem mass at the church of the Holy Trinity (Dreifaltigkeitskirche). His remains were exhumed for study in 1862 and moved in 1888 to Vienna's Zentralfriedhof. In 2012, his crypt was checked to see if his teeth had been stolen during a series of grave robberies of other famous Viennese composers.

There is dispute about the cause of Beethoven's death: alcoholic cirrhosis, syphilis, infectious hepatitis, lead poisoning, sarcoidosis, and Whipple's disease have all been proposed. Friends and visitors before and after his death clipped locks of his hair, some of which have been preserved and subjected to additional analysis, as have skull fragments removed during the 1862 exhumation. Some of these analyses have led to controversial assertions that Beethoven was accidentally poisoned to death by excessive doses of lead-based treatments administered under instruction from his doctor.

While musicologists and music historians delve into details that are often too obscure for the purposes of our class, it's worth reviewing this information on Beethoven's 5th symphony.

Form

A typical performance usually lasts around 30–40 minutes. The work is in four movements.

First Movement: Allegro con brio

Listen: First Movement

Please listen to the first movement performed by the Fulda Symphony.

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The first movement opens with the four-note motif discussed above, one of the most famous in Western music. There is considerable debate among conductors as to the manner of playing the four opening bars. Some conductors take it in strict allegro tempo; others take the liberty of a weighty treatment, playing the motif in a much slower and more stately tempo; yet others take the motif *molto ritardando* (a pronounced slowing through each four-note phrase), arguing that the fermata over the fourth note justifies this. Some critics and musicians consider it crucial to convey the spirit of [pause] and-two-and *one*, as written, and consider the more common one-two-three-*four* to be misleading. To wit:

> About the "ta-ta-ta-Taaa": Beethoven begins with eight notes. They rhyme, four plus four, and each group of four consists of three quick notes plus one that is lower and much longer (in fact unmeasured). The space between the two rhyming groups is minimal, about one-seventh of a second if we go by Beethoven's metronome mark; moreover, Beethoven clarifies the shape by lengthening the second of the long notes. This lengthening, which was an afterthought, is tantamount to writing a stronger punctuation mark. As the music progresses, we can hear in the melody of the second theme, for example (or later, in the pairs of antiphonal chords of woodwinds and strings), that the constantly invoked connection between the two four-note units is crucial to the movement. . . . The source of Beethoven's unparalleled energy here is in his writing long sentences and broad paragraphs whose surfaces are articulated with exciting activity. Indeed, we discover soon enough that the double "ta-ta-ta-Taaa" is an open-ended beginning, not a closed and self-sufficient unit. (Misunderstanding of this opening was nurtured by a 19th-century performance tradition in which the first five measures were read as a slow, portentous exordium, the main tempo being attacked only after the second hold.) What makes this opening so dramatic is the violence of the contrast between the urgency in the eighth notes and the ominous freezing of motion in the unmeasured long notes. The music starts with a wild outburst of energy but immediately crashes into a wall. Seconds later, Beethoven jolts us with another such sudden halt. The music draws up to a half-cadence on a G-major chord, short and crisp in the whole orchestra, except for the first violins, who hang on to their high C for an unmeasured length of time. Forward motion resumes with a relentless pounding of eighth notes.

The first movement is in the traditional sonata form that Beethoven inherited from his classical predecessors, Haydn and Mozart (in which the main ideas that are introduced in the first few pages undergo elaborate development through many keys, with a dramatic return to the opening section—the recapitulation—about three-quarters of the way through). It starts out with two dramatic fortissimo phrases, the famous motif, commanding the listener's attention. Following the first four bars, Beethoven uses imitations and sequences to expand the theme, with these pithy imitations tumbling over each other with such rhythmic regularity that they appear to form a single, flowing melody. Shortly after, a very short *fortissimo* bridge, played by the horns, takes place before a second theme is introduced. This second theme is in E major, the relative major, and it is more lyrical, written *piano* and featuring the four-note motif in the string accompaniment. The codetta is again based on the four-note motif. The development section follows, including the bridge. During the recapitulation, there is a brief solo passage for oboe in quasi-improvisatory style, and the movement ends with a massive coda.

Second Movement: Andante con moto

Listen: Second Movement

Please listen to the second movement performed by the Fulda Symphony.

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The second movement, in A major, is a lyrical work in double variation form, which means that two themes are presented and varied in alternation. Following the variations, there is a long coda.

The movement opens with an announcement of its theme, a melody in unison by violas and cellos, with accompaniment by the double basses. A second theme soon follows, with a harmony provided by clarinets, bassoons, and violins, with a triplet arpeggio in the violas and bass. A variation of the first theme reasserts itself. This is followed up by a third theme, thirty-second notes in the violas and cellos with a counter phrase running in the flute, oboe, and bassoon. Following an interlude, the whole orchestra participates in a fortissimo, leading to a series of crescendos and a coda to close the movement.

Third Movement: Scherzo, Allegro

Listen: Third Movement

Please listen to the third movement performed by the Fulda Symphony.

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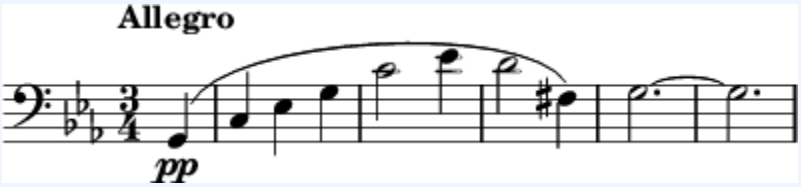
The third movement is in ternary form, consisting of a scherzo and trio. It follows the traditional mold of Classical-era symphonic third movements, containing in sequence the main scherzo, a contrasting trio section, a return of the scherzo, and a coda. However, while the usual Classical symphonies employed a minuet and trio as their third movement, Beethoven chose to use the newer scherzo and trio form.

Listen: Theme

The movement returns to the opening key of C minor and begins with the following theme, played by the cellos and double basses:



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The opening theme is answered by a contrasting theme played by the winds, and this sequence is repeated. Then the horns loudly announce the main theme of the movement, and the music proceeds from there.

The trio section is in C major and is written in a contrapuntal texture. When the scherzo returns for the final time, it is performed by the strings pizzicato and very quietly.

"The scherzo offers contrasts that are somewhat similar to those of the slow movement in that they derive from extreme difference in character between scherzo and trio. . . . The Scherzo then contrasts this figure with the famous 'motto' (3 + 1) from the first movement, which gradually takes command of the whole movement."

The third movement is also notable for its transition to the fourth movement, widely considered one of the greatest musical transitions of all time.

Fourth Movement: Allegro

Listen: Fourth Movement

Please listen to the fourth movement performed by the Fulda Symphony.

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The fourth movement begins without pause from the transition. The music resounds in C major, an unusual choice by the composer, as a symphony that begins in C minor is expected to finish in that key. In Beethoven's words:

> Many assert that every minor piece must end in the minor. Nego! . . . Joy follows sorrow, sunshine rain.

The triumphant and exhilarating finale is written in an unusual variant of sonata form: at the end of the development section, the music halts on a dominant cadence, played fortissimo, and the music continues after a pause with a quiet reprise of the "horn theme" of the scherzo movement. The recapitulation is then introduced by a crescendo coming out of the last bars of the interpolated scherzo section, just as the same music was introduced at the opening of the movement. The interruption of the finale with material from the third

"dance" movement was pioneered by Haydn, who had done the same in his Symphony No. 46 in B from 1772. It is not known whether Beethoven was familiar with this work.

The Fifth Symphony finale includes a very long coda, in which the main themes of the movement are played in temporally compressed form. Toward the end, the tempo is increased to presto. The symphony ends with 29 bars of C major chords, played fortissimo. In *The Classical Style*, Charles Rosen suggests that this ending reflects Beethoven's sense of Classical proportions: the "unbelievably long" pure C major cadence is needed "to ground the extreme tension of [this] immense work."

It was shown recently that this long chord sequence was a pattern that Beethoven borrowed from the Italian composer Luigi Cherubini, whom Beethoven esteemed the most among his contemporary musicians. Spending much of his life in France, Cherubini employed this pattern consistently to close his overtures, which Beethoven knew well. The ending of his famous symphony repeats almost note by note and pause by pause the conclusion of Cherubini's overture to his opera *Eliza*, composed in 1794 and presented in Vienna in 1803.

Fate Motif

The initial motif of the symphony has sometimes been credited with symbolic significance as a representation of Fate knocking at the door. This idea comes from Beethoven's secretary and factotum Anton Schindler, who wrote, many years after Beethoven's death,

> The composer himself provided the key to these depths when one day, in this author's presence, he pointed to the beginning of the first movement and expressed in these words the fundamental idea of his work: "Thus Fate knocks at the door!"

Schindler's testimony concerning any point of Beethoven's life is disparaged by experts (he is believed to have forged entries in Beethoven's conversation books). Moreover, it is often commented that Schindler offered a highly romanticized view of the composer.

There is another tale concerning the same motif; the version given here is from Antony Hopkins's description of the symphony. Carl Czerny (Beethoven's pupil, who premiered the "Emperor" Concerto in Vienna) claimed that "the little pattern of notes had come to [Beethoven] from a yellow-hammer's song, heard as he walked in the Prater-park in Vienna." Hopkins further remarks that "given the choice between a yellow-hammer and Fate-at-the-door, the public has preferred the more dramatic myth, though Czerny's account is too unlikely to have been invented."

In his Omnibus television lecture series in 1954, Leonard Bernstein has likened the Fate Motif to the four-note coda common to classical symphonies. These notes would terminate the classical symphony as a musical coda, but for Beethoven, they become a motif repeating throughout the work for a very different and dramatic effect, he says.

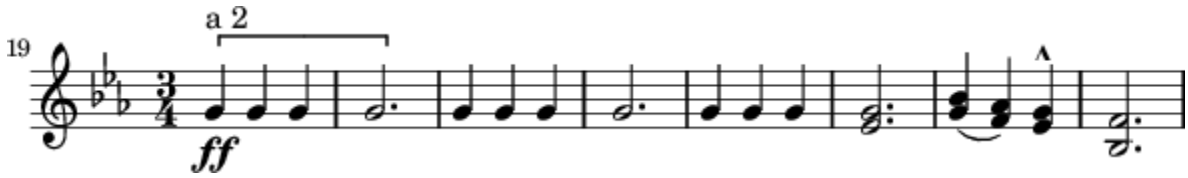
Evaluations of these interpretations tend to be skeptical: "The popular legend that Beethoven intended this grand exordium of the symphony to suggest 'Fate Knocking at the gate' is apocryphal; Beethoven's pupil,

Ferdinand Ries, was really author of this would-be poetic exegesis, which Beethoven received very sarcastically when Ries imparted it to him." Elizabeth Schwarm Glesner remarks that "Beethoven had been known to say nearly anything to relieve himself of questioning pests"; this might be taken to impugn both tales.

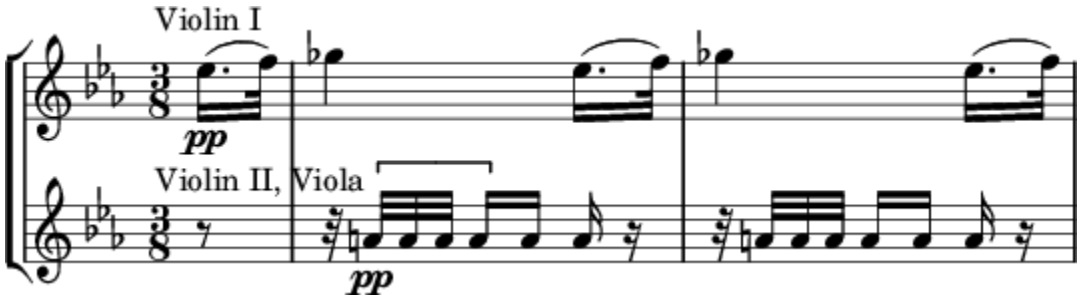
Repetition of the Opening Motif

It is commonly asserted that the opening four-note rhythmic motif (short-short-short-long; see above) is repeated throughout the symphony, unifying it: "It is a rhythmic pattern (dit-dit-dit-dot*) that makes its appearance in each of the other three movements and thus contributes to the overall unity of the symphony" (Doug Briscoe); "a single motif that unifies the entire work" (Peter Gutmann); "the key motif of the entire symphony"; "the rhythm of the famous opening figure...recurs at crucial points in later movements" (Richard Bratby). The *New Grove* encyclopedia cautiously endorses this view, reporting that "the famous opening motif is to be heard in almost every bar of the first movement and, allowing for modifications, in the other movements."

There are several passages in the symphony that have led to this view. For instance, in the third movement, the horns play the following solo in which the short-short-short-long pattern occurs repeatedly:



In the second movement (at measure 76), an accompanying line plays a similar rhythm:



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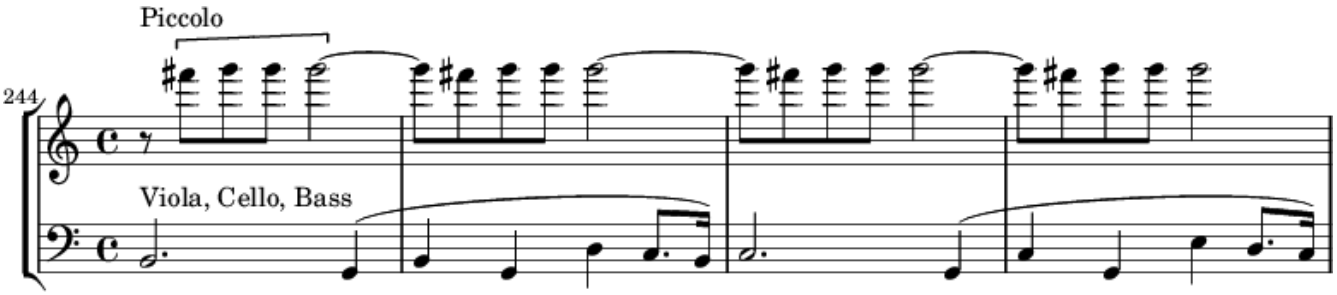
In the finale, Doug Briscoe (cited above) suggests that the motif may be heard in the piccolo part, presumably meaning the following passage:



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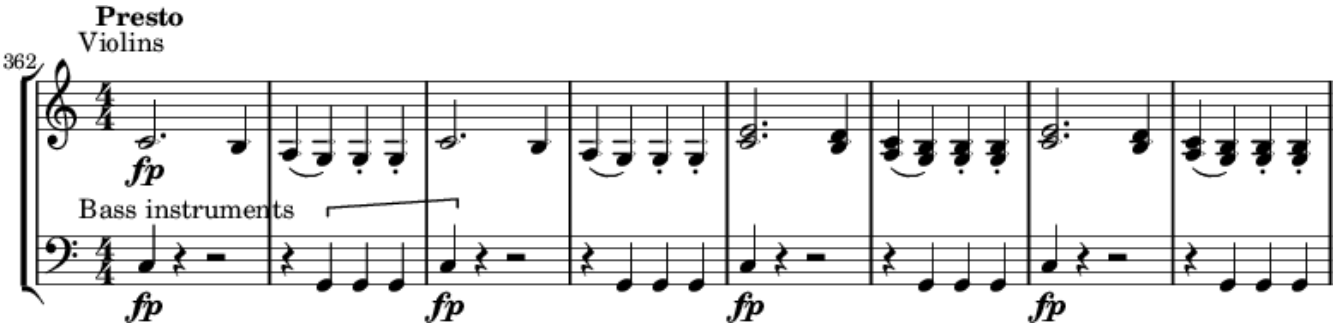
Later, in the coda of the finale, the bass instruments repeatedly play the following:



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On the other hand, some commentators are unimpressed with these resemblances and consider them to be accidental. Antony Hopkins, discussing the theme in the scherzo, says "no musician with an ounce of feeling could confuse [the two rhythms]," explaining that the scherzo rhythm begins on a strong musical beat, whereas the first-movement theme begins on a weak one. Donald Francis Tovey pours scorn on the idea that a rhythmic motif unifies the symphony: "This profound discovery was supposed to reveal an unsuspected unity in the work, but it does not seem to have been carried far enough." Applied consistently, he continues, the same approach would lead to the conclusion that many other works by Beethoven are also "unified" with this

symphony, as the motif appears in the "Appassionata" piano sonata, the Fourth Piano Concerto, and in the String Quartet, Op. 74. Tovey concludes, "The simple truth is that Beethoven could not do without just such purely rhythmic figures at this stage of his art."

To Tovey's objection can be added the prominence of the short-short-short-long rhythmic figure in earlier works by Beethoven's older Classical contemporaries Haydn and Mozart. To give just two examples, it is found in Haydn's "Miracle" Symphony, No. 96, and in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25, K. 503. Such examples show that "short-short-short-long" rhythms were a regular part of the musical language of the composers of Beethoven's day.

It seems likely that whether or not Beethoven deliberately, or unconsciously, wove a single rhythmic motif through the Fifth Symphony will (in Hopkins's words) "remain eternally open to debate."

Franz Joseph Haydn

While Haydn is not well represented in our current listening playlist, his historical importance cannot be overstated. He was an innovator and a master. His influence on younger composers such as Mozart and Beethoven was substantial. He is known colloquially as "Papa Haydn."

Biography

Early Life

Joseph Haydn was born in Rohrau, Austria, a village that at that time stood on the border with Hungary. His father was Mathias Haydn, a wheelwright who also served as "Marktrichter," an office akin to village mayor. Haydn's mother Maria, née Koller, had previously worked as a cook in the palace of Count Harrach, the presiding aristocrat of Rohrau. Neither parent could read music; however, Mathias was an enthusiastic folk musician who, during the journeyman period of his career, had taught himself to play the harp. According to Haydn's later reminiscences, his childhood family was extremely musical and frequently sang together and with their neighbors.

Haydn's parents had noticed that their son was musically gifted and knew that in Rohrau he would have no chance to obtain serious musical training. It was for this reason that they accepted a proposal from their relative Johann Matthias Frankh, the schoolmaster and choirmaster in Hainburg, that Haydn be apprenticed to Frankh in his home to train as a musician. Haydn therefore went off with Frankh to Hainburg, 12 kilometers (7.5 mi) away, and never again lived with his parents. He was about six years old.

Life in the Frankh household was not easy for Haydn, who later remembered being frequently hungry and humiliated by the filthy state of his clothing. He began his musical training there and could soon play both harpsichord and violin. The people of Hainburg heard him sing treble parts in the church choir.

There is reason to think that Haydn's singing impressed those who heard him, because in 1739 he was brought to the attention of Georg von Reutter, the director of music in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, who happened to be visiting Hainburg and was looking for new choirboys. Haydn successfully auditioned with Reutter and, after several months of further training, moved to Vienna (1740), where he worked for the next nine years as a chorister.

Haydn lived in the Kapellhaus next to the cathedral, along with Reutter, Reutter's family, and the other four choirboys, which after 1745 included his younger brother Michael. The choirboys were instructed in Latin and other school subjects as well as voice, violin, and keyboard. Reutter was of little help to Haydn in the areas of music theory and composition, giving him only two lessons in his entire time as chorister. However, since St. Stephen's was one of the leading musical centers in Europe, Haydn learned a great deal simply by serving as a professional musician there.

Like Frankh before him, Reutter did not always bother to make sure Haydn was properly fed. As he later told his biographer Albert Christoph Dies, Haydn was motivated to sing very well in hopes of gaining more invitations to perform before aristocratic audiences, where the singers were usually served refreshments.

Figure 1. St. Stephen's Cathedral. In the foreground is the Kapellhaus (demolished 1804) where Haydn lived as a chorister.

Struggles as a Freelancer

By 1749, Haydn had matured physically to the point that he was no longer able to sing high choral parts. Empress Maria Theresa herself complained to Reutter about his singing, calling it "crowing." One day, Haydn carried out a prank, snipping off the pigtail of a fellow chorister. This was enough for Reutter: Haydn was first caned, then summarily dismissed and sent into the streets. He had the good fortune to be taken in by a friend, Johann Michael Spangler, who shared his family's crowded garret room with Haydn for a few months. Haydn immediately began his pursuit of a career as a freelance musician.

Haydn struggled at first, working at many different jobs: as a music teacher, as a street serenader, and eventually, in 1752, as valet accompanist for the Italian composer Nicola Porpora, from whom he later said he learned "the true fundamentals of composition." He was also briefly in Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Haugwitz's employ, playing the organ in the Bohemian Chancellery chapel at the Judenplatz.

While a chorister, Haydn had not received any systematic training in music theory and composition. As a remedy, he worked his way through the counterpoint exercises in the text *Gradus ad Parnassum* by Johann Joseph Fux and carefully studied the work of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, whom he later acknowledged as an important influence.

As his skills increased, Haydn began to acquire a public reputation, first as the composer of an opera, *Der krumme Teufel*, "The Limping Devil," written for the comic actor Johann Joseph Felix Kurz, whose stage name was "Bernardon." The work premiered successfully in 1753 but was soon closed down by the censors due to "offensive remarks." Haydn also noticed, apparently without annoyance, that works he had simply given away were being published and sold in local music shops. Between 1754 and 1756, Haydn also worked freelance for the court in Vienna. He was among several musicians who were paid for services as supplementary musicians at balls given for the imperial children during carnival season and as supplementary singers in the imperial chapel (the *Hofkapelle*) in Lent and Holy Week.

With the increase in his reputation, Haydn eventually obtained aristocratic patronage, crucial for the career of a composer in his day. Countess Thun, having seen one of Haydn's compositions, summoned him and engaged him as her singing and keyboard teacher. In 1756, Baron Carl Josef Fürnberg employed Haydn at his country estate, Weinzierl, where the composer wrote his first string quartets. Fürnberg later recommended Haydn to Count Morzin, who, in 1757, became his first full-time employer.

The Years as Kapellmeister

Haydn's job title under Count Morzin was Kapellmeister—that is, music director. He led the count's small orchestra and wrote his first symphonies for this ensemble. In 1760, with the security of a Kapellmeister position, Haydn married. His wife was the former Maria Anna Theresia Keller (1730–1800), the sister of Therese (b. 1733), with whom Haydn had previously been in love. Haydn and his wife had a completely unhappy marriage, from which the laws of the time permitted them no escape. They produced no children. Both took lovers.

Figure 2. The Morzin palace in Dolní Lukavice, Czech Republic.

Count Morzin soon suffered financial reverses that forced him to dismiss his musical establishment, but Haydn was quickly offered a similar job (1761) by Prince Paul Anton, head of the immensely wealthy Esterházy family. Haydn's job title was only Vice-Kapellmeister, but he was immediately placed in charge of most of the Esterházy musical establishment, with the old Kapellmeister, Gregor Werner, retaining authority only for church music. When Werner died in 1766, Haydn was elevated to full Kapellmeister.

As a "house officer" in the Esterházy establishment, Haydn wore livery and followed the family as they moved among their various palaces, most importantly the family's ancestral seat, Schloss Esterházy, in Eisenstadt and later on Esterháza, a grand new palace built in rural Hungary in the 1760s. Haydn had a huge range of responsibilities, including composition, running the orchestra, playing chamber music for and with his patrons, and eventually the mounting of operatic productions. Despite this backbreaking workload, the job was, in artistic terms, a superb opportunity for Haydn. The Esterházy princes (Paul Anton, then from 1762 to 1790 Nikolaus I) were musical connoisseurs who appreciated his work and gave him daily access to his own small orchestra. During the nearly thirty years that Haydn worked at the Esterházy court, he produced a flood of compositions, and his musical style continued to develop.

Figure 3. Portrait by Ludwig Guttenbrunn, painted ca. 1791–2, depicts Haydn c. 1770.

Much of Haydn's activity at the time followed the specific musical interest of his patron Prince Nikolaus. Thus, in about 1765, the prince obtained, and began to learn to play, the baryton, an uncommon musical instrument similar to the bass viol but with a set of plucked sympathetic strings. Haydn was commanded to provide music for the prince to play and over the next ten years produced about 200 works for this instrument in various ensembles, of which the most notable are the 126 baryton trios. But around 1775, for unknown reasons, the prince abandoned the baryton and took up a new hobby. Opera productions, previously a sporadic event for special occasions, became the focus of musical life in the prince's court, and the opera theater he built at Esterháza came to host a major season, with multiple productions, each year. Haydn served as director of the company, recruiting and training the singers and preparing and leading the performances. He also wrote several of the operas performed (see List of operas by Joseph Haydn) and wrote substitution arias to insert into the operas of other composers.

The year 1779 was a watershed year for Haydn, as his contract was renegotiated: whereas previously all his compositions were the property of the Esterházy family, he now was permitted to write for others and sell his work to publishers. Haydn soon shifted his emphasis in composition to reflect this (fewer operas and more quartets and symphonies), and he negotiated with multiple publishers, both Austrian and foreign. Of Haydn's new employment contract Jones writes,

> This single document acted as a catalyst in the next stage in Haydn's career, the achievement of international popularity. By 1790 Haydn was in the paradoxical, if not bizarre, position of being Europe's leading composer, but someone who spent his time as a duty-bound Kapellmeister in a remote palace in the Hungarian countryside.

The new publication campaign resulted in the composition of a great number of new string quartets (the six-quartet sets of Op. 33, 50, 54/55, and 64). Haydn also composed in response to commissions from abroad: the Paris symphonies (1785–1786) and the original orchestral version of *The Seven Last Words of Christ* (1786), a commission from Cadiz, Spain.

The remoteness of Esterháza, which was farther from Vienna than Eisenstadt, led Haydn gradually to feel more isolated and lonely. He longed to visit Vienna because of his friendships there. Of these, a particularly important one was with Maria Anna von Genzinger (1754–93), the wife of Prince Nikolaus's personal physician in Vienna, who began a close, platonic relationship with the composer in 1789. Haydn wrote to Mrs. Genzinger often, expressing his loneliness at Esterháza and his happiness for the few occasions on which he was able to visit her in Vienna; later on, Haydn wrote to her frequently from London. Her premature death in 1793 was a blow to Haydn, and his F minor variations for piano, Hob. XVII:6, may have been written in response to her death.

Another friend in Vienna was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, whom Haydn had met sometime around 1784. According to later testimony by Michael Kelly and others, the two composers occasionally played in string quartets together. Haydn was hugely impressed with Mozart's work and praised it unstintingly to others. Mozart evidently returned the esteem, as seen in his dedication of a set of six quartets, now called the "Haydn" quartets, to his friend. For further details, see Haydn and Mozart.

The London Journeys

In 1790, Prince Nikolaus died and was succeeded as prince by his son Anton. Following a trend of the time, Anton sought to economize by dismissing most of the court musicians. Haydn retained a nominal appointment with Anton at a reduced salary of 400 florins, as well as a 1,000-florin pension from Nikolaus. Since Anton had little need of Haydn's services, he was willing to let him travel, and the composer accepted a lucrative offer from Johann Peter Salomon, a German violinist and impresario, to visit England and conduct new symphonies with a large orchestra.

Figure 4. The Hanover Square Rooms, principal venue of Haydn's performances in London.

The choice was a sensible one because Haydn was already a very popular composer there. Since the death of Johann Christian Bach in 1782, Haydn's music had dominated the concert scene in London; "hardly a concert did not feature a work by him" (Jones). Haydn's work was widely distributed by publishers in London, including Forster (who had their own contract with Haydn) and Longman & Broderip (who served as the agent in England for Haydn's Vienna publisher Artaria).

Efforts to bring Haydn to London had been undertaken since 1782, though Haydn's loyalty to Prince Nikolaus had prevented him from accepting.

After fond farewells from Mozart and other friends, Haydn departed Vienna with Salomon on 15 December 1790, arriving in Calais in time to cross the English Channel on New Year's Day of 1791. It was the first time that the 58-year-old composer had seen the ocean. Arriving in London, Haydn stayed with Salomon in Great Pulteney Street, working in a borrowed studio at the Broadwood piano firm nearby.

It was the start of a very auspicious period for Haydn; both the 1791–1792 journey and a repeat visit in 1794–1795, were greatly successful. Audiences flocked to Haydn's concerts; he augmented his fame and made large profits, thus becoming financially secure. Charles Burney reviewed the first concert thus: "Haydn himself presided at the piano-forte; and the sight of that renowned composer so electrified the audience, as to excite an attention and a pleasure superior to any that had ever been caused by instrumental music in England." Haydn made many new friends and, for a time, was involved in a romantic relationship with Rebecca Schroeter.

Musically, Haydn's visits to England generated some of his best-known work, including the *Surprise*, *Military*, *Drumroll,* and *London* symphonies; the *Rider* quartet; and the "Gypsy Rondo" piano trio.

The great success of the overall enterprise does not mean that the journeys were free of trouble. Notably, his very first project, the commissioned opera *L'anima del filosofo* was duly written during the early stages of the trip, but the opera's impresario John Gallini was unable to obtain a license to permit opera performances in the theater he directed, the King's Theatre. Haydn was well paid for the opera (300 pounds), but much time was wasted. Thus only two new symphonies, No. 95 and No. 96 "*Miracle*," could be premiered in the 12 concerts of Salomon's spring concert series.

The end of Salomon's series in June gave Haydn a rare period of relative leisure. He spent some of the time in the country (Hertingfordbury) but also had time to travel, notably to Oxford, where he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the university. The symphony performed for the occasion, No. 92 has since come to be known as the *Oxford Symphony*, although it had been written in 1789.

While traveling to London in 1790, Haydn had met the young Ludwig van Beethoven in his native city of Bonn. On Haydn's return, Beethoven came to Vienna and during the time up to the second London visit was Haydn's pupil. For discussion of their relationship, see Beethoven and his contemporaries.

Years of Celebrity in Vienna

Haydn returned to Vienna in 1795. Prince Anton had died, and his successor Nikolaus II proposed that the Esterházy musical establishment be revived with Haydn serving again as Kapellmeister. Haydn took up the position on a part-time basis. He spent his summers with the Esterházys in Eisenstadt and over the course of several years wrote six masses for them.

By this time, Haydn had become a public figure in Vienna. He spent most of his time in his home, a large house in the suburb of Windmühle, and wrote works for public performance. In collaboration with his librettist and mentor Gottfried van Swieten, and with funding from van Swieten's Gesellschaft der Associierten, he composed his two great oratorios, *The Creation* (1798) and *The Seasons* (1801). Both were enthusiastically received. Haydn frequently appeared before the public, often leading performances of *The Creation* and *The Seasons* for charity benefits, including Tonkünstler-Societät programs with massed musical forces. He also composed instrumental music: the popular *Trumpet Concerto* and the last nine in his long series of string quartets, including the *Fifths*, *Emperor*, and *Sunrise*. A brief work, "Gotterhalte Franz den Kaiser" (the "Emperor's Hymn"; 1797), achieved great success and became "the enduring emblem of Austrian identity right up to the First World War" (Jones); in modern times it became (with different words) the national anthem of Germany.

Figure 5. The house in Vienna (now a museum) where Haydn lived in the last years of his life.

During the later years of this successful period, Haydn faced incipient old age and fluctuating health, and he had to struggle to complete his final works. His last major work, from 1802, was the sixth mass for the Esterházys, the *Harmoniemesse*.

Retirement, Illness, and Death

By the end of 1803, Haydn's condition had declined to the point that he became physically unable to compose. He suffered from weakness, dizziness, inability to concentrate, and painfully swollen legs. Since diagnosis was uncertain in Haydn's time, it is unlikely that the precise illness can ever be identified, though Jones suggests arteriosclerosis.

The illness was especially hard for Haydn because the flow of fresh musical ideas waiting to be worked out as compositions (something he could no longer do) continued unabated. His biographer Dies reported a conversation from 1806:

> [Haydn said] "I must have something to do—usually musical ideas are pursuing me, to the point of torture, I cannot escape them, they stand like walls before me. If it's an allegro that pursues me, my pulse keeps beating faster, I can get no sleep. If it's an adagio, then I notice my pulse beating slowly. My imagination plays on me as if I were a clavier." Haydn smiled, the blood rushed to his face, and he said "I am really just a living clavier."

The winding down of Haydn's career was gradual. The Esterházy family kept him on as Kapellmeister to the

very end (much as they had with his predecessor Werner long before), but they appointed new staff to lead their musical establishment: Johann Michael Fuchs in 1802 as Vice-Kapellmeister and Johann Nepomuk Hummel as Konzertmeister in 1804. Haydn's last summer in Eisenstadt was in 1803, and his last appearance before the public as a conductor was a charity performance of *The Seven Last Words* on 26 December 1803. As debility set in, he made largely futile efforts at composition, attempting to revise a rediscovered *Missa brevis* from his teenage years and complete his final string quartet. The latter project was abandoned for good in 1805, and the quartet was published with just two movements.

Haydn was well cared for by his servants, and he received many visitors and public honors during his last years, but they could not have been very happy years for him. During his illness, Haydn often found solace by sitting at the piano and playing his "Emperor's Hymn."

A final triumph occurred on 27 March 1808, when a performance of *The Creation* was organized in his honor. The very frail composer was brought into the hall on an armchair to the sound of trumpets and drums and was greeted by Beethoven, Salieri (who led the performance), and other musicians and members of the aristocracy. Haydn was both moved and exhausted by the experience and had to depart at intermission.

Figure 6. The Bergkirche in Eisenstadt, site of Haydn's tomb.

Haydn lived on for 14 more months. His final days were hardly serene, as in May 1809, the French army under Napoleon launched an attack on Vienna and on 10 May bombarded his neighborhood. According to Griesinger, "Four case shots fell, rattling the windows and doors of his house. He called out in a loud voice to his alarmed and frightened people, 'Don't be afraid, children, where Haydn is, no harm can reach you!' But the spirit was stronger than the flesh, for he had hardly uttered the brave words when his whole body began to tremble." More bombardments followed until the city fell to the French on 13 May. Haydn, was, however, deeply moved and appreciative when on 17 May a French cavalry officer named Sulmy came to pay his respects and sang, skillfully, an aria from *The Creation*.

On 26 May, Haydn played his "Emperor's Hymn" with unusual gusto three times; the same evening, he collapsed and was taken to what proved to be his deathbed. He died peacefully at 12:40 a.m. on 31 May 1809, aged 77.

On 15 June, a memorial service was held in the Schottenkirche at which Mozart's Requiem was performed. Haydn's remains were interred in the local Hundsturm cemetery until 1820, when they were moved to Eisenstadt by Prince Nikolaus. His head took a different journey; it was stolen shortly after burial by phrenologists, and the skull was reunited with the other remains only in 1954; for details, see *Haydn's head*.

Character and Appearance

James Webster writes of Haydn's public character thus: "Haydn's public life exemplified the Enlightenment ideal of the *honnete homme* (*honest man*): the man whose good character and worldly success enable and justify each other. His modesty and probity were everywhere acknowledged. These traits were not only prerequisites to his success as Kapellmeister, entrepreneur and public figure, but also aided the favorable reception of his music." Haydn was especially respected by the Esterházy court musicians whom he supervised, as he maintained a cordial working atmosphere and effectively represented the musicians' interests with their employer; see Papa Haydn and the tale of the "Farewell" Symphony. Haydn had a robust sense of humor, evident in his love of practical jokes and often apparent in his music, and he had many friends. For much of his life, he benefited from a "happy and naturally cheerful temperament," but in his later life, there is evidence for periods of depression, notably in the correspondence with Mrs. Genzinger and in Dies's biography, based on visits made in Haydn's old age.

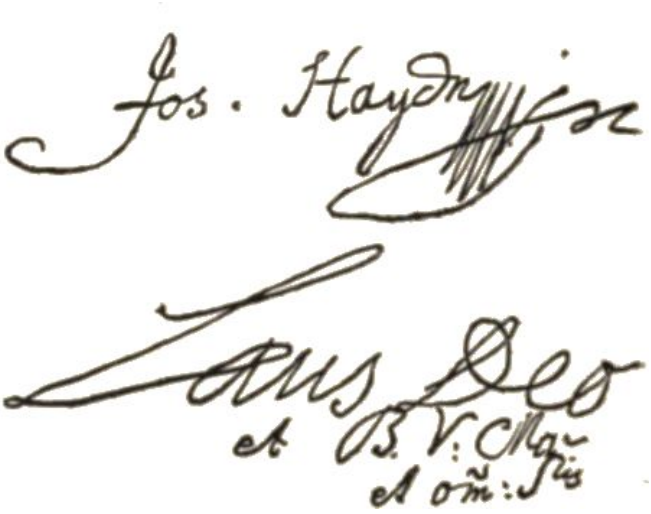

Figure 7. "Laus Deo" ("praise be to God") at the conclusion of a Haydn manuscript.

Haydn was a devout Catholic who often turned to his rosary when he had trouble composing, a practice that he usually found to be effective. He normally began the manuscript of each composition with "in Nomine Domini" ("in the name of the Lord") and ended with "Laus Deo" ("praise be to God").

Haydn's primary character flaw was greed as it related to his business dealings. Webster writes: "As regards money, Haydn was so self-interested as to shock [both] contemporaries and many later authorities....He always attempted to maximize his income, whether by negotiating the right to sell his music outside the Esterházy court, driving hard bargains with publishers or selling his works three and four times over; he regularly engaged in 'sharp practice' and occasionally in outright fraud. When crossed in business relations, he reacted angrily." Webster notes that Haydn's ruthlessness in business might be viewed more sympathetically in light of his struggles with poverty during his years as a freelance and that outside of the world of business; in dealings, for example, with relatives and servants and in volunteering his services for charitable concerts, Haydn was a generous man.

Haydn was short in stature, perhaps as a result of having been underfed throughout most of his youth. He was not handsome, and like many in his day, he was a survivor of smallpox; his face was pitted with the scars of this disease. His biographer Dies wrote: "He couldn't understand how it happened that in his life he had been loved by many a pretty woman. 'They couldn't have been led to it by my beauty.'"

His nose, large and aquiline, was disfigured by the polypus he suffered during much of his adult life, an agonizing and debilitating disease that at times prevented him from writing music.

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15.

CHAPTER 15: MUSIC OF THE ROMANTIC ERA

Romantic Era Explored

Introduction

When people talk about "Classical" music, they usually mean Western art music of any time period. But the Classical period was actually a very short era, basically the second half of the 18th century. Only two Classical-period composers are widely known: Mozart and Haydn.

The Romantic era produced many more composers whose names and music are still familiar and popular today: Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Schumann, Schubert, Chopin, and Wagner are perhaps the most well-known, but there are plenty of others who may also be familiar, including Strauss, Verdi, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Puccini, and Mahler. Ludwig van Beethoven, possibly the most famous composer of all, is harder to place. His early works are from the Classical period and are clearly Classical in style. But his later music, including the majority of his most famous music, is just as clearly Romantic.

The term Romantic covers most of the music (and art and literature) of Western civilization from the 19th century (the 1800s). But there has been plenty of music written in the Romantic style in the 20th century (including many popular movie scores), and music isn't considered Romantic just because it was written in the 19th century. The beginning of that century found plenty of composers (Rossini, for example) who were still writing Classical-sounding music. And by the end of the century, composers were turning away from Romanticism and searching for new idioms, including post-Romanticism, Impressionism, and early experiments in Modern music.

Background, Development, and Influence

Classical Roots

Sometimes a new style of music happens when composers forcefully reject the old style. Early Classical

composers, for example, were determined to get away from what they considered the excesses of the Baroque style. Modern composers also were consciously trying to invent something new and very different.

But the composers of the Romantic era did not reject Classical music. In fact, they were consciously emulating the composers they considered to be the great classicists: Haydn, Mozart, and particularly Beethoven. They continued to write symphonies, concertos, sonatas, and operas, forms that were all popular with classical composers. They also kept the basic rules for these forms as well as keeping the rules of rhythm, melody, harmony, harmonic progression, tuning, and performance practice that were established in (or before) the Classical period.

The main difference between Classical and Romantic music came from attitudes toward these "rules." In the 18th century, composers were primarily interested in forms, melodies, and harmonies that provided an easily audible structure for the music. In the first movement of a sonata, for example, each prescribed section would likely be where it belonged, of the appropriate length, and in the proper key. In the 19th century, the "rules" that provided this structure were more likely to be seen as boundaries and limits that needed to be explored, tested, and even defied. For example, the first movement of a Romantic sonata may contain all the expected sections as the music develops, but the composer might feel free to expand or contract some sections or to add unexpected interruptions between them. The harmonies in the movement might lead away from and back to the tonic just as expected, but they might wander much further afield than a Classical sonata would before making their final return.

Different Approaches to Romanticism

In fact, one could divide the main part of the Romantic era into two schools of composers. Some took a more conservative approach. Their music is clearly Romantic in style and feeling, but it also still clearly does not want to stray too far from the Classical rules. Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Brahms are in this category.

Other composers felt more comfortable with pushing the boundaries of the acceptable. Berlioz, Strauss, and Wagner were all progressives whose music challenged the audiences of their day.

Where to Go after Romanticism?

Perhaps it was inevitable, after decades of pushing at all limits to see what was musically acceptable, that the Romantic era would leave later composers with the question of what to explore or challenge next. Perhaps because there was no clear answer to this question (or several possible answers), many things were happening in music by the end of the Romantic era.

The period that includes the final decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th is sometimes called the post-Romantic era. This is the period when many composers, such as Jean Sibelius, Bela Bartok, and Ralph Vaughan-Williams, concentrated on the traditions of their own countries, producing strongly

nationalistic music. Others, such as Mahler and Strauss, were taking Romantic musical techniques to their utmost reasonable limits. In France, Debussy and Ravel were composing pieces that some listeners felt were the musical equivalent of impressionistic paintings. Impressionism and some other -isms, such as Stravinsky's primitivism, still had some basis in tonality; but others, such as serialism, rejected tonality and the Classical-Romantic tradition completely, believing that it had produced all that it could. In the early 20th century, these Modernists eventually came to dominate the art music tradition. Though the sounds and ideals of Romanticism continued to inspire some composers, the Romantic period was essentially over by the beginning of the 20th century.

Historical Background

Music doesn't happen in a vacuum. It is affected by other things that are going on in society; ideas, attitudes, discoveries, inventions, and historical events may affect the music of the times.

For example, the "Industrial Revolution" was gaining steam throughout the 19th century. This had a very practical effect on music: there were major improvements in the mechanical valves and keys that most woodwinds and brass instruments depend on. The new, improved instruments could be played more easily and reliably and often had a bigger, fuller, better-tuned sound. Strings and keyboard instruments dominated the music of the Baroque and Classical periods, with small groups of winds added for color. As the 19th century progressed and wind instruments improved, more and more winds were added to the orchestra, and their parts became more and more difficult, interesting, and important. Improvements in the mechanics of the piano also helped it usurp the position of the harpsichord to become the instrument that to many people is the symbol of Romantic music.

Another social development that had an effect on music was the rise of the middle class. Classical composers lived on the patronage of the aristocracy; their audience was generally small, upper-class, and knowledgeable about music. The Romantic composer, on the other hand, was often writing for public concerts and festivals, with large audiences of paying customers who had not necessarily had any music lessons. In fact, the 19th century saw the first "pop star"–type stage personalities. Performers like Paganini and Liszt were the Elvis Presleys of their day.

Romantic Music as an Idea

But perhaps the greatest effect that society can have on an art is in the realm of ideas.

The music of the Classical period reflected the artistic and intellectual ideals of its time. Form was important, providing order and boundaries. Music was seen as an abstract art, universal in its beauty and appeal, above the pettinesses and imperfections of everyday life. It reflected, in many ways, the attitudes of the educated and the

aristocratic of the "Enlightenment" era. Classical music may sound happy or sad, but even the emotions stay within acceptable boundaries.

Romantic-era composers kept the forms of Classical music, but the Romantic composer did not feel constrained by form. Breaking through boundaries was now an honorable goal shared by the scientist, the inventor, and the political liberator. Music was no longer universal; it was deeply personal and sometimes nationalistic. The personal sufferings and triumphs of the composer could be reflected in stormy music that might even place a higher value on emotion than on beauty. Music was not just happy or sad; it could be wildly joyous, terrified, despairing, or filled with deep longings.

It was also more acceptable for music to clearly be from a particular place. Audiences of many eras enjoyed an opera set in a distant country, complete with the composer's version of exotic-sounding music. But many 19th-century composers (including Weber, Wagner, Verdi, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Grieg, Dvořák, Sibelius, and Albeniz) used folk tunes and other aspects of the musical traditions of their own countries to appeal to their public. Much of this nationalistic music was produced in the post-Romantic period, in the late 19th century; in fact, the composers best known for folk-inspired classical music in England (Holst and Vaughan Williams) and the U.S. (Ives, Copland, and Gershwin) were 20th-century composers who composed in Romantic, post-Romantic, or Neoclassical styles instead of embracing the more severe Modernist styles.

Music can also be specific by having a "program." Program music is music that, without words, tells a story or describes a scene. Richard Strauss's tone poems are perhaps the best-known works in this category, but program music has remained popular with many composers through the 20th century. Again, unlike the abstract, universal music of the Classical composers, Romantic-era program music tried to use music to describe or evoke specific places, people, and ideas. And again, with program music, those Classical rules became less important. The form of the music was chosen to fit with the program (the story or idea), and if it was necessary at some point to choose sticking more closely to the form or to the program, the program usually won.

As mentioned above, post-Romantic composers felt ever freer to experiment and break the established rules for form, melody, and harmony. Many modern composers have, in fact, gone so far that the average listener again finds it difficult to follow. Romantic-style music, on the other hand, with its emphasis on emotions and its balance of following and breaking the musical "rules," still finds a wide audience.

Art Song

Art songs are not new to the Romantic era. Many composers of earlier historical periods composed songs that would fit the definition of art song as listed on this page. We study art songs now because they were such an integral part of the Romantic repertoire, particularly that of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms. Because so many art songs in a Romantic style were composed by German composers, we often use the German word for songs, "lieder," when studying this genre.

Introduction

An **art song** is a vocal music composition, usually written for one voice with piano accompaniment, and usually in the classical tradition. By extension, the term "art song" is used to refer to the genre of such songs. An art song is most often a musical setting of an independent poem or text "intended for the concert repertory" "as part of a recital or other relatively formal social occasion."

Art Song Characteristics

While many pieces of vocal music are easily recognized as art songs, others are more difficult to categorize. For example, a wordless vocalise written by a classical composer is sometimes considered an art song and sometimes not.

Other factors help define art songs:

- Songs that are part of a staged work (such as an opera or a musical) are not usually considered art songs. However, some Baroque arias that "appear with great frequency in recital performance" are now included in the art song repertoire.
- Songs with instruments besides piano and/or other singers are referred to as "vocal chamber music" and are usually not considered art songs.
- Songs originally written for voice and orchestra are called "orchestral songs" and are not usually considered art songs, unless their original version was for solo voice and piano.
- Folk songs are generally not considered art songs unless they are concert arrangements with piano accompaniment written by a specific composer. Several examples of these songs include Aaron Copland's two volumes of *Old American Songs*, the Folksong arrangements by Benjamin Britten, and the *Siete canciones populares españolas* (*Seven Spanish Folksongs*) by Manuel de Falla.
- There is no agreement regarding sacred songs. Many song settings of biblical or sacred texts were composed for the concert stage and not for religious services; these are widely known as art songs (for example, the Vierernste Gesange by Johannes Brahms). Other sacred songs may or may not be considered art songs.
- A group of art songs composed to be performed in a group to form a narrative or dramatic whole is called a song cycle.

Languages and Nationalities

Art songs have been composed in many languages and are known by several names. The German tradition of art song composition is perhaps the most prominent one; it is known as *Lieder*. In France, the term *Melodie*

distinguishes art songs from other French vocal pieces referred to as chansons. The Spanish Cancian and the Italian Canzone refer to songs generally and not specifically to art songs.

Art Song Formal Design

The composer's musical language and interpretation of the text often dictate the formal design of an art song. If all of the poem's verses are sung to the same music, the song is strophic. Arrangements of folk songs are often strophic, and "there are exceptional cases in which the musical repetition provides dramatic irony for the changing text, or where an almost hypnotic monotony is desired." Several of the songs in Schubert's Die schone Mullerin are good examples of this. If the vocal melody remains the same but the accompaniment changes under it for each verse, the piece is called a "modified strophic" song.

In contrast, songs in which "each section of the text receives fresh music" are called through-composed. Some through-composed works have some repetition of musical material in them.

Many art songs use some version of the ABA form (also known as "song form"), with a beginning musical section, a contrasting middle section, and a return to the first section's music.

Art Song Performance and Performers

Performance of art songs in recital requires some special skills for both the singer and pianist. The degree of intimacy "seldom equaled in other kinds of music" requires that the two performers "communicate to the audience the most subtle and evanescent emotions as expressed in the poem and music." The two performers must agree on all aspects of the performance to create a unified partnership, making art song performance one of the "most sensitive type(s) of collaboration."

Even though classical vocalists generally embark on successful performing careers as soloists by seeking out opera engagements, a number of today's most prominent singers have built their careers primarily by singing art songs, including Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Thomas Quasthoff, Ian Bostridge, Matthias Goerne, Susan Graham, and Elly Ameling.

Pianists, too, have specialized in playing art songs with great singers. Gerald Moore, Graham Johnson, and Martin Katz are three such pianists who have specialized in accompanying art song performances.

Prominent Composers of Art Songs

British

- John Dowland
- Thomas Campion

- Hubert Parry
- Henry Purcell
- Frederick Delius
- Ralph Vaughan Williams
- Roger Quilter
- John Ireland
- Ivor Gurney
- Peter Warlock
- Michael Head
- Gerald Finzi
- Benjamin Britten
- Morfydd Llwyn Owen
- Michael Tippett
- Ian Venables
- Judith Weir
- George Butterworth
- Francis George Scott

American

- Amy Beach
- Arthur Farwell
- Charles Ives
- Charles Griffes
- Ernst Bacon
- John Jacob Niles
- John Woods Duke
- Ned Rorem
- Richard Faith
- Samuel Barber
- Aaron Copland
- Lee Hoiby
- William Bolcom
- Daron Hagen
- Richard Hundley
- Emma Lou Diemer

Austrian and German

- Joseph Haydn
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Franz Schubert
- Hugo Wolf
- Gustav Mahler
- Alban Berg
- Arnold Schoenberg
- Erich Wolfgang Korngold
- Viktor Ullmann
- Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
- Ludwig van Beethoven
- Johann Carl Gottfried Loewe
- Fanny Mendelssohn
- Felix Mendelssohn
- Robert Schumann
- Clara Schumann
- Johannes Brahms
- Richard Strauss
- Hanns Eisler
- Kurt Weill

French

- Hector Berlioz
- Charles Gounod
- Pauline Viardot
- César Franck
- Camille Saint-Saëns
- Georges Bizet
- Emmanuel Chabrier
- Henri Duparc
- Jules Massenet
- Gabriel Fauré
- Claude Debussy
- Erik Satie

- Albert Roussel
- Maurice Ravel
- Jules Massenet
- Darius Milhaud
- Reynaldo Hahn
- Francis Poulenc
- Olivier Messiaen

Spanish

19th-Century Composers

- Francisco Asenjo Barbieri
- Raman Carnicery Batlle
- Ruperto Chapa
- Antonio de la Cruz
- Manuel Fernandez Caballero
- Manuel Garcia
- Sebastian de Iradier
- Josa Lean
- Cristóbal Oudrid
- Antonio Reparaz
- Emilio Serrano y Ruiz
- Fernando Sor
- Joaquín Valverde
- Amadeo Vives

20th-Century Composers

- Enrique Granados
- Manuel de Falla
- Joaquín Rodrigo
- Joaquín Turina

Italian

- Claudio Monteverdi

- Gioachino Rossini
- Gaetano Donizetti
- Vincenzo Bellini
- Giuseppe Verdi
- Amilcare Ponchielli
- Paolo Tosti
- Ottorino Respighi
- Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco
- Luciano Berio
- Lorenzo Ferrero

Eastern European

- Franz Liszt—Hungary (nearly all his art song settings are of texts in non-Hungarian European languages, such as French and German)
- Antonín Dvořák—Bohemia
- Leoš Janáček—Bohemia (Czechoslovakia)
- Béla Bartók—Hungary
- Zoltán Kodály—Hungary
- Frédéric Chopin—Poland
- Stanisław Moniuszko—Poland

Nordic

- Edvard Grieg—Norway (set German as well as Norse and Danish poetry)
- Jean Sibelius—Finland (set both Finnish and Swedish)
- Yrjö Kilpinen—Finland
- Wilhelm Stenhammar—Sweden
- Hugo Alfvén—Sweden
- Carl Nielsen—Denmark

Russian

- Mikhail Glinka
- Alexander Borodin
- Caesar Cui
- Nikolai Medtner

- Modest Mussorgsky
- Petr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
- Alexander Glazunov
- Sergei Rachmaninoff
- Sergei Prokofiev
- Igor Stravinsky
- Dmitri Shostakovich

Ukrainian

- Vasyl Barvinsky
- Stanyslav Lyudkevych
- Mykola Lysenko
- Nestor Nyzhankivsky
- Ostap Nyzhankivsky
- Denys Sichynsky
- Myroslav Skoryk
- Ihor Sonevytsky
- Yakiv Stepovy
- Kyrylo Stetsenko

Other

Filipino

- Marco Cahulogan
- Carlo Roberto Quijano
- Nicanor Abelardo
- Juan dela Cruz

Afrikaans

- Jellmar Ponticha
- Stephanus Le Roux Marais

Franz Schubert

Schubert's life seems to follow, tragically, the cliché of the Romantic artist: a suffering composer who languishes in obscurity, his genius only appreciated after his untimely death. While Schubert did enjoy the respect of a close circle of friends, his music was not widely received during his lifetime. Though we study him in our Romantic module, Schubert does not fit neatly into the Romantic period. Like Beethoven, Schubert is a transitional figure. Some of his music, particularly his earlier instrumental compositions, tends toward a more classical approach. However, the melodic and harmonic innovation in his art songs and later instrumental works sit more firmly in the Romantic tradition. Because his art songs are so clearly Romantic in their inception, and because art songs make up the majority of his compositions, we study him as part of the Romantic era.

Introduction

Franz Peter Schubert (31 January 1797–19 November 1828) was an Austrian composer.

Schubert died at 31 but was extremely prolific during his lifetime. His output consists of over six hundred secular vocal works (mainly Lieder), seven complete symphonies, sacred music, operas, incidental music, and a large body of chamber and piano music. Appreciation of his music while he was alive was limited to a relatively small circle of admirers in Vienna, but interest in his work increased significantly in the decades following his death. Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, Johannes Brahms, and other 19th-century composers discovered and championed his works. Today, Schubert is ranked among the greatest composers of the late Classical era and early Romantic era and is one of the most frequently performed composers of the early 19th century.

Figure 1. Oil painting of Franz Schubert by Wilhelm August Rieder (1875), made from his own 1825 watercolor portrait.

Music

Schubert was remarkably prolific, writing over 1,500 works in his short career. The largest number of these are songs for solo voice and piano (over 600). He also composed a considerable number of secular works for two or more voices—namely, part songs, choruses, and cantatas. He completed eight orchestral overtures and seven complete symphonies, in addition to fragments of six others.

While he composed no concertos, he did write three concertante works for violin and orchestra. There is a large body of music for solo piano, including fourteen complete sonatas, numerous miscellaneous works and many short dances. There is also a relatively large set of works for piano duet. There are over fifty chamber works, including some fragmentary works. His sacred output includes seven masses, one oratorio and one requiem, among other mass movements and numerous smaller compositions. He completed only eleven of his twenty stage works.

Style and Reception

In July 1947, the 20th-century composer Ernst Krenek discussed Schubert's style, abashedly admitting that he had at first "shared the wide-spread opinion that Schubert was a lucky inventor of pleasing tunes . . . lacking the dramatic power and searching intelligence which distinguished such 'real' masters as J. S. Bach or Beethoven." Krenek wrote that he reached a completely different assessment after close study of Schubert's pieces at the urging of friend and fellow composer Eduard Erdmann. Krenek pointed to the piano sonatas as giving "ample evidence that [Schubert] was much more than an easy-going tune-smith who did not know, and did not care, about the craft of composition." Each sonata then in print, according to Krenek, exhibited "a great wealth of technical finesse" and revealed Schubert as "far from satisfied with pouring his charming ideas into conventional molds; on the contrary he was a thinking artist with a keen appetite for experimentation."

Figure 2. Franz Schubert Memorial by Carl Kundmann in Vienna's Stadtpark.

That "appetite for experimentation" manifests itself repeatedly in Schubert's output in a wide variety of forms and genres, including opera, liturgical music, chamber and solo piano music, and symphonic works. Perhaps most familiarly, his adventurousness manifests itself as a notably original sense of modulation, as in the second movement of the String Quintet (D 956), where he modulates from E major, through F minor, to reach the tonic key of E major. It also appears in unusual choices of instrumentation, as in the Sonata in A minor for arpeggione and piano (D 821), or the unconventional scoring of the *Trout Quintet* (D 667).

While he was clearly influenced by the Classical sonata forms of Beethoven and Mozart (his early works, among them notably the 5th Symphony, are particularly Mozart), his formal structures and his developments tend to give the impression more of melodic development than of harmonic drama. This combination of Classical form and long-breathed Romantic melody sometimes lends them a discursive style: his *Great C major*

Symphony was described by Robert Schumann as running to "heavenly lengths." His harmonic innovations include movements in which the first section ends in the key of the subdominant rather than the dominant (as in the last movement of the *Trout Quintet*). Schubert's practice here was a forerunner of the common Romantic technique of relaxing, rather than raising, tension in the middle of a movement, with final resolution postponed to the very end.

Listen: Sonata

Please listen to Sonata in A minor for arpeggione and piano, D 821, performed by Hans Goldstein (cello) and Clinton Adams (piano).

I. Allegro Moderato

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II. Adagio and III. Allegretto

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=575#audio-575-2

It was in the genre of the Lied, however, that Schubert made his most indelible mark. Leon Plantinga remarks, "In his more than six hundred Lieder he explored and expanded the potentialities of the genre as no composer before him." Prior to Schubert's influence, Lieder tended toward a strophic, syllabic treatment of text, evoking the folksong qualities engendered by the stirrings of Romantic nationalism. Among Schubert's treatments of the poetry of Goethe, his settings of "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (D 118) and "Der Erlkönig" (D 328) are particularly striking for their dramatic content, forward-looking uses of harmony, and use of eloquent pictorial keyboard figurations, such as the depiction of the spinning wheel and treadle in the piano in "Gretchen" and the furious and ceaseless gallop in "Erlkönig." He composed music using the poems of a myriad of poets, with Goethe, Mayrhofer, and Schiller being the top three most frequent, and others like Heinrich Heine,

Friedrich Rückert, and Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, among many others. Also of particular note are his two song cycles on the poems of Wilhelm Müller, "Die schone Mullerin" and "Winterreise," which helped to establish the genre and its potential for musical, poetic, and almost operatic dramatic narrative. His last song cycle published in 1828 after his death, "Schwanengesang," is also an innovative contribution to German lieder literature, as it features poems by different poets—namely, Ludwig Rellstab, Heine, and Johann Gabriel Seidl. The *Wiener Theaterzeitung*, writing about "Winterreise" at the time, commented that it was a work that "none can sing or hear without being deeply moved." Antonín Dvořák wrote in 1894 that Schubert, whom he considered one of the truly great composers, was clearly influential on shorter works, especially Lieder and shorter piano works: "The tendency of the romantic school has been toward short forms, and although Weber helped to show the way, to Schubert belongs the chief credit of originating the short models of piano forte pieces which the romantic school has preferably cultivated. [. . .] Schubert created a new epoch with the Lied. [. . .] All other songwriters have followed in his footsteps."

Schubert's compositional style progressed rapidly throughout his short life. A feeling of regret for the loss of potential masterpieces caused by his early death at age 31 was expressed in the epitaph on his large tombstone written by his friend the poet Franz Grillparzer: "Here music has buried a treasure, but even fairer hopes." Some have disagreed with this early view, arguing that Schubert in his lifetime did produce enough masterpieces not to be limited to the image of an unfulfilled promise. This is in particular the opinion of pianists, including Alfred Brendel, who dryly billed the Grillparzer epitaph as "inappropriate."

Schubert's chamber music continues to be popular. In a poll, the results of which were announced in October 2008, the ABC in Australia found that Schubert's chamber works dominated the field, with the *Trout Quintet* coming first, followed by two of his other works.

The *New York Times* music critic Anthony Tommasini, who ranked Schubert as the fourth greatest composer, wrote of him,

> You have to love the guy, who died at 31, ill, impoverished and neglected except by a circle of friends who were in awe of his genius. For his hundreds of songs alone—including the haunting cycle Winterreise, which will never release its tenacious hold on singers and audiences—Schubert is central to our concert life. . . . Schubert's first few symphonies may be works in progress. But the *Unfinished* and especially the *Great C major* Symphony are astonishing. The latter one paves the way for Bruckner and prefigures Mahler.

If you'd like a deeper understanding of the life experiences of Franz Schubert, you can read the entirety of the Wikipedia article on him from which this has been drawn.

Der-Erlkönig

Please read this page on our first art song, "Der Erlkönig." This piece is one of the best-known lieder of the Romantic era and certainly one of Schubert's most famous compositions. It is through-composed in form, and the dramatic text is heightened by the fact that singers generally give the four characters featured in the poem

slightly different tone qualities, a bit like an actor playing multiple parts. As the music is so expressive of the poem's text, I'd encourage you to listen to the piece on the playlist as soon as you've read the article.

Introduction

"**Erlknig**" (also called "**Der Erlknig**") is a poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. It depicts the death of a child assailed by a supernatural being, the Erlking or "Erlknig" (suggesting the literal translation "alder king," but see below). It was originally composed by Goethe as part of a 1782 Singspiel entitled *Die Fischerin*.

The poem has been used as the text for Lieder (art songs for voice and piano) by many classical composers.

Figure 1. "Erlknig" illustration, Moritz von Schwind.

Summary

An anxious young boy is being carried home at night by his father on horseback. To what sort of home is not spelled out; German *Hof* has a rather broad meaning of "yard," "courtyard," "farm," or (royal) "court." The lack of specificity of the father's social position allows the reader to imagine the details.

As the poem unfolds, the son seems to see and hear beings his father does not; the reader cannot know if the father is indeed aware of the presence, but he chooses to comfort his son, asserting reassuringly naturalistic explanations for what the child sees—a wisp of fog, rustling leaves, shimmering willows. Finally the child shrieks that he has been attacked. The father makes faster for the *Hof*. There he recognizes that the boy is dead.

Text

Original German	Literal translation	Adaptation

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?
Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,
Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.
"Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Gesicht?"—
"Siehst, Vater, du den Erlkönig nicht?
Den Erlenkönig mit Kron und Schweif?"—
"Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif."
"Du liebes Kind, komm, geh mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich mit dir;
Manch' bunte Blumen sind an dem Strand,
Meine Mutter hat manch gülden Gewand."—
"Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du nicht,
Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht?"—
"Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind;
In dürren blättern säuselt der Wind."—
"Willst, feiner Knabe, du mit mir gehn?
Meine Töchter sollen dich warten schön;
Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen Reihn,
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich ein."—
"Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du nicht dort
Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort?"—
"Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh' es genau:
Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau."—
"Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt;
Und bist du nicht willig, so brauch' ich Gewalt."—
"Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er mich an!
ErlkÖnig hat mir ein Leids getan!"—
Dem Vater grauset's, er reitet geschwind,
Er hält in Armen das ächzende Kind,
Erreicht den Hof mit Müh' und Not;
In seinen Armen das Kind war tot.

Who rides, so late, through night and wind?
It is the father with his child.
He has the boy well in his arm
He holds him safely, he keeps him warm.
"My son, why do you hide your face in fear?"
"Father, do you not see the Elfking?
The Elfking with crown and cape?"
"My son, it's a streak of fog."
"You dear child, come, go with me!
(Very) beautiful games I play with you;
many a colorful flower is on the beach,
My mother has many a golden robe."
"My father, my father, and hearest you not,
What the Elfking quietly promises me?"
"Be calm, stay calm, my child;
Through scrawny leaves the wind is sighing."
"Do you, fine boy, want to go with me?
My daughters shall wait on you finely;
My daughters lead the nightly dance,
And rock and dance and sing to bring you in."
"My father, my father, and don't you see there
The Elfking's daughters in the gloomy place?"
"My son, my son, I see it clearly:
There shimmer the old willows so gray."
"I love you, your beautiful form entices me;
And if you're not willing, then I will use force."
"My father, my father, he's touching me now!
The Elfking has done me harm!"
It horrifies the father; he swiftly rides on,
He holds the moaning child in his arms,
Reaches the farm with great

Who rides there so late through the night dark and drear?
The father it is, with his infant so dear;
He holdeth the boy tightly clasp'd in his arm,
He holdeth him safely, he keepeth him warm.
"My son, wherefore seek'st thou thy face thus to hide?"
"Look, father, the Erl-King is close by our side!
Dost see not the Erl-King, with crown and with train?"
"My son, 'tis the mist rising over the plain."
"Oh, come, thou dear infant! oh come thou with me!
For many a game I will play there with thee;
On my strand, lovely flowers their blossoms unfold,
My mother shall grace thee with garments of gold."
"My father, my father, and dost thou not hear
The words that the Erl-King now breathes in mine ear?"
"Be calm, dearest child, 'tis thy fancy deceives;
'Tis the sad wind that sighs through the withering leaves."
"Wilt go, then, dear infant, wilt go with me there?
My daughters shall tend thee with sisterly care;
My daughters by night their glad festival keep,
They'll dance thee, and rock thee, and sing thee to sleep."
"My father, my father, and dost thou not see,
How the Erl-King his daughters has brought here for me?"
"My darling, my darling, I see it aright,
'Tis the aged gray willows deceiving thy sight."
"I love thee, I'm charm'd by thy beauty, dear boy!
And if thou'rt unwilling, then force I'll employ."
"My father, my father, he seizes me fast,
For sorely the Erl-King has hurt me at last."
The father now gallops, with terror half wild,

difficulty;
In his arms, the child was dead.

He grasps in his arms the poor shuddering child;
He reaches his courtyard with toil and with dread,—
The child in his arms finds he motionless, dead.

The Legend

The story of the Erlkönig derives from the traditional Danish ballad *Elveskud*: Goethe's poem was inspired by Johann Gottfried Herder's translation of a variant of the ballad (Danmarks gamle Folkeviser 47B, from Peter Syv's 1695 edition) into German as "Erlkönigs Tochter" ("The Erl-king's Daughter") in his collection of folk songs, *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (published 1778). Goethe's poem then took on a life of its own, inspiring the Romantic concept of the Erlking. Niels Gade's cantata *Elverskud* opus 30 (1854, text by Chr. K. F. Molbech) was published in translation as *Erlkönigs Tochter*.

The Erlkönig's nature has been the subject of some debate. The name translates literally from the German as "Alder King" rather than its common English translation, "Elf King" (which would be rendered as *Elfenkönig* in German). It has often been suggested that *Erlkönig* is a mistranslation from the original Danish *elverkonge*, which does mean "king of the elves."

In the original Scandinavian version of the tale, the antagonist was the Erlkönig's daughter rather than the Erlkönig himself; the female elves or *elvermøer* sought to ensnare human beings to satisfy their desire, jealousy, and lust for revenge.

Settings to Music

The poem has often been set to music with Franz Schubert's rendition, his Opus 1 (D. 328), being the best known. Other notable settings are by members of Goethe's circle, including the actress Corona Schröter (1782), Andreas Romberg (1793), Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1794), and Carl Friedrich Zelter (1797). Beethoven attempted to set it to music but abandoned the effort; his sketch, however, was complete enough to be published in a completion by Reinhold Becker (1897). A few other 19th-century versions are those by Václav Tomášek (1815), Carl Loewe (1818), Ludwig Spohr (1856, with obbligato violin), and Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (Polyphonic Studies for Solo Violin). The 21st-century examples are pianist Marc-André Hamelin's "Etude No. 8 (after Goethe)" for solo piano, based on "Erlkönig," and German rock singer Achim Reichel on his album *Wilder Wassermann* (2002).

The Franz Schubert Composition

Listen: Erlkönig

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Ernestine Schumann-Heink perform.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=575#audio-575-3

Franz Schubert composed his Lied, "Der Erlkönig," for solo voice and piano in 1815, setting text from Goethe's poem. Schubert revised the song three times before publishing his fourth version in 1821 as his Opus 1; it was cataloged by Otto Erich Deutsch as D. 328 in his 1951 catalog of Schubert's works. The song was first performed in concert on 1 December 1820 at a private gathering in Vienna and received its public premiere on 7 March 1821 at Vienna's Theater am Kärntnertor.

The four characters in the song—narrator, father, son, and the Erlking—are usually all sung by a single vocalist; occasionally, however, the work is performed by four individual vocalists (or three, with one taking the parts of both the narrator and the Erlking). Schubert placed each character largely in a different vocal range, and each has his own rhythmic nuances; in addition, most singers endeavor to use a different vocal coloration for each part. The piece modulates frequently, although each character changes between minor or major mode depending how each character intends to interact with the other characters.

1. The Narrator lies in the middle range and begins in the minor mode.
2. The Father lies in the lower range and sings in both minor and major mode.
3. The Son lies in a higher range, also in the minor mode.
4. The Erlking's vocal line, in a variety of major keys, undulates up and down to arpeggiated accompaniment, providing the only break from the ostinato bass triplets in the accompaniment until the boy's death. When the Erlking first tries to take the Son with him, he sings in C major. When it transitions from the Erlking to the Son, the modulation occurs, and the Son sings in g minor. The Erlking's lines are typically sung in a softer dynamic in order to contribute to a different color of sound than that which is used previously. Schubert marked it pianissimo in the manuscript to show that the color needed to change.

A fifth character, the horse, is implied in rapid triplet figures played by the pianist throughout the work, mimicking hoof beats.

"Der Erlkönig" starts with the piano rapidly playing triplets to create a sense of urgency and simulate the horse's galloping. The left hand of the piano part introduces a low-register leitmotif composed of successive triplets. The right hand consists of triplets throughout the whole piece, up until the last three bars. The constant triplets drive forward the frequent modulations of the peace as it switches between the characters. This leitmotif, dark and ominous, is directly associated with the Erlkönig and recurs throughout the piece. These motifs continue throughout. As the piece continues, each of the son's pleas become louder and higher in pitch than the last. Near the end of the piece, the music quickens and then slows as the father spurs his horse to go faster and then arrives at his destination. The absence of the piano creates multiple effects on the text and music. The silence draws attention to the dramatic text and amplifies the immense loss and sorrow caused by the son's death. This silence from the piano also delivers the shock experienced by the father upon the realization that he has just lost his son to the elf king, despite desperately fighting to save the son from the elf kings grasp. The piece is regarded as extremely challenging to perform due to the multiple characters the vocalist is required to portray, as well as its difficult accompaniment, involving rapidly repeated chords and octaves that contribute to the drama and urgency of the piece.

Der Erlkönig is a through-composed piece, meaning that with each line of text, there is new music. Although the melodic motives recur, the harmonic structure is constantly changing, and the piece modulates within characters. The elf king remains mainly in major mode due to the fact that he is trying to seduce the son into giving up on life. Using a major mode creates an effect where the elf king is able to portray a warm and inviting aura in order to convince the son that the afterlife promises great pleasures and fortunes. The son always starts singing in the minor mode and usually stays in it for his whole line. This is used to represent his fear of the elf king. Every time he sings the famous line "Mein Vater," he sings it one step higher in each verse, starting first at a D and going up to an F on his final line. This indicates his urgency in trying to get his father to believe him as the elf king gets closer. For most of the Father's lines, they begin in minor and end in major as he tries to reassure his son by providing rational explanations to his son's hallucinations and dismissing the elf king. The constant in major and minor for the father may also represent the constant struggle and loss of control as he tries to save his son from the elf king's persuasion.

The rhythm of the piano accompaniment also changes within the characters. The first time the elf king sings in measure 57, the galloping motive disappears. However, when the elf king sings again in measure 87, the piano accompaniment is arpeggiating rather than playing chords. The disappearance of the galloping motive is also symbolic of the son's hallucinatory state.

Der Erlkönig has been transcribed for various settings: for solo piano by Franz Liszt; for solo voice and orchestra by Hector Berlioz; and for solo violin by Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst.

The Carl Lowe Composition

Carl Loewe's setting was published as Op. 1, No. 3 and composed in 1817–18, in the lifetime of the poem's author and also of Schubert, whose version Loewe did not then know. Collected with it were Op. 1, No. 1, *Edward* (1818; a translation of the Scottish ballad) and No. 2, *Der Wirthin Töchterlein* (1823; *The Innkeeper's Daughter*), a poem of Ludwig Uhland. Inspired by a German translation of Scottish border ballads, Loewe set several poems with an elvish theme; but although all three of Op. 1 are concerned with untimely death, in this set only the "Erlkönig" has the supernatural element.

Loewe's accompaniment is in semiquaver groups of six in nine-eight time and marked *Geschwind* (fast). The vocal line evokes the galloping effect by repeated figures of crotchet and quaver, or sometimes three quavers, overlying the binary tremolo of the semiquavers in the piano. In addition to an unusual sense of motion, this creates a very flexible template for the stresses in the words to fall correctly within the rhythmic structure.

Loewe's version is less melodic than Schubert's, with an insistent, repetitive harmonic structure between the opening minor key and answering phrases in the major key of the dominant, which have a stark quality owing to their unusual relationship to the home key. The narrator's phrases are echoed by the voices of father and son, the father taking up the deeper, rising phrase, and the son a lightly undulating, answering theme around the dominant fifth. These two themes also evoke the rising and moaning of the wind. The Elf king, who is always heard pianissimo, does not sing melodies but instead delivers insubstantial rising arpeggios that outline a single major chord (that of the home key), which sounds simultaneously on the piano in *una corda* tremolo. Only with his final threatening word, "Gewalt," does he depart from this chord. Loews implication is that the Erlking has no substance but merely exists in the child's fevered imagination. As the piece progresses, the first in the groups of three quavers are dotted to create a breathless pace, which then forms a bass figure in the piano driving through to the final crisis. The last words, *war tot*, leap from the lower dominant to the sharpened third of the home key, this time not to the major but to a diminished chord, which settles chromatically through the home key in the major and then to the minor.

Robert Schumann

The early Romantic composer Robert Schumann was, like Schubert, a prolific composer of art songs. Also like Schubert, his life was tragically cut short, though unlike the younger composer, Robert enjoyed a good deal more success and recognition. This short introduction is a good summary of the composer's career. If you'd like to know more, I'd certainly encourage you to read the rest of the article here. The article includes links to additional pieces not on our listening exam. It also tells the story of Robert and Clara Schumann, which is one of the great love stories of music history. Clara Schumann was as formidable a musician as her husband, and as a performer (concert pianist), she was quite famous. She and her husband were both very influential in the life of one of the other composers we will study in this period: Johannes Brahms.

Robert Schumann (8 June 1810–29 July 1856) was a German composer and influential music critic. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest composers of the Romantic era. Schumann left the study of law, intending to pursue a career as a virtuoso pianist. He had been assured by his teacher Friedrich Wieck that he could become the finest pianist in Europe, but a hand injury ended this dream. Schumann then focused his musical energies on composing.

Figure 1. Robert Schumann in an 1850 daguerreotype.

Schumann's published compositions were written exclusively for the piano until 1840; he later composed works for piano and orchestra; many Lieder (songs for voice and piano); four symphonies; an opera; and other orchestral, choral, and chamber works. Works such as Kinderszenen, Album die Jugend, Blumenstack, the Sonatas, and Albumbltter are among his most famous. His writings about music appeared mostly in the *Neue Zeitschrift Musik* (New Journal for Music), a Leipzig-based publication that he jointly founded.

In 1840, against the wishes of her father, Schumann married Friedrich Wieck's daughter Clara following a long and acrimonious legal battle, which found in favor of Clara and Robert. Clara also composed music and had a considerable concert career as a pianist, the earnings from which formed a substantial part of her father's fortune.

Schumann suffered from a lifelong mental disorder, first manifesting itself in 1833 as a severe melancholic depressive episode, which recurred several times alternating with phases of "exaltation" and increasingly also delusional ideas of being poisoned or threatened with metallic items. After a suicide attempt in 1854, Schumann was admitted to a mental asylum, at his own request, in Endenich near Bonn. Diagnosed with "psychotic melancholia," Schumann died two years later in 1856 without having recovered from his mental illness.

"Du Ring an Meinem Finger" is part of a larger cycle of songs called Frauenliebe und Leben. You can download this scan of a public domain score to the song cycle if you would like to review the printed music.

Introduction

Frauenliebe und Leben (*A Woman's Love and Life*) is a cycle of poems by Adelbert von Chamisso written in 1830. They describe the course of a woman's love for her man, from her point of view, from first meeting, through marriage, to his death, and after. Selections were set to music as a song-cycle by masters of German Lied—namely, Carl Loewe, Franz Paul Lachner, and Robert Schumann. The setting by Schumann (his opus 42) is now the most widely known.

Schumann's Cycle

Schumann wrote his setting in 1840, a year in which he wrote so many lieder (including three other song cycles: *Liederkreis* Op. 24 and Op. 39, *Dichterliebe*) that it is known as his "year of song." There are eight poems in his cycle, together telling a story from the protagonist first meeting her love, through their marriage, to his death. They are:

1. "Seit ich ihn gesehen" ("Since I Saw Him")
2. "Er, der Herrlichste von allen" ("He, the Noblest of All")
3. "Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben" ("I Cannot Grasp or Believe It")
4. "Du Ring an meinem Finger" ("You Ring Upon My Finger")
5. "Helft mir, ihr Schwestern" ("Help Me, Sisters")
6. "Süßer Freund, du blickest mich verwundert an" ("Sweet Friend, You Gaze")
7. "An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust" ("At My Heart, At My Breast")
8. "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan" ("Now You Have Caused Me Pain for the First Time")

Schumann's choice of text was very probably inspired in part by events in his personal life. He had been courting Clara Wieck but had failed to get her father's permission to marry her. In 1840, after a legal battle to make such permission unnecessary, he finally married her.

The songs in this cycle are notable for the fact that the piano has a remarkable independence from the voice. Breaking away from the Schubertian ideal, Schumann has the piano contain the mood of the song in its totality. Another notable characteristic is the cycle's cyclic structure, in which the last movement repeats the theme of the first.

"Du Ring an meinem Finger" from *Frauenliebe und Leben*

Composer: Robert Schumann
Tempo: Score markings indicate "intimate" (suggesting slow tempo) with the second half marked "gradually faster"
Voice part: Mezzo-soprano or soprano
Form: Rondo

German	English
Du Ring an meinem Finger,	You ring on my finger
Mein goldenes Ringelein,	My little golden ring,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,	I press you with devotion to my lips
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.	With devotion to my heart.
Ich hatt ihn ausgeträumt,	I had dreamed it
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,	The beautiful, peaceful dream of childhood
Ich fand allein mich, verloren	I found myself alone, lost
Im öden, unendlichen Raum.	In the barren, infinite space.
Du Ring an meinem Finger	You ring on my finger
Da hast du mich erst belehrt,	You have first taught me,
Hast meinem Blick erschlossen	Have opened my eyes
Des Lebens unendlichen, tiefen Wert.	Life's infinite, deep value.
Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,	I want to serve him, live for him
Ihm angehören ganz,	Belong to him completely
Hin selber mich geben und finden	Giving and finding myself
Verklärt mich in seinem Glanz.	Transformed in his glory.
Du Ring an meinem Finger,	You ring on my finger
Mein goldenes Ringelein,	My little golden ring,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen	I press you with devotion to my lips
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.	With devotion to my heart.

The Piano

This seems like a good time to examine the history of the piano. The pianos played by the composers of the Romantic era had evolved considerably from those played by Mozart and even Beethoven. This page will give you a sense of that historical development.

History of the Piano

The piano was founded on earlier technological innovations that date back to the Middle Ages. By the early Baroque, there were two primary stringed keyboard instruments: the clavichord and the harpsichord. The invention of the piano is credited to Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655–1731) of Padua, Italy, who was an expert harpsichord maker and was well acquainted with the body of knowledge on stringed keyboard instruments. The instruments of Cristofori's day possessed individual strengths and weaknesses. The clavichord allowed expressive control of the sound volume and sustain but was too quiet for large performances. The harpsichord produced a sufficiently loud sound but had little expressive control over each note. These tonal differences were due to the mechanisms of the two instruments. In a clavichord, the strings are struck by tangents, while in a harpsichord, they are plucked by quills. The piano was probably formed as an attempt to combine loudness with control, avoiding the trade-offs of available instruments.

Cristofori's great success was solving, with no prior example, the fundamental mechanical problem of piano design: the hammer must strike the string, but not remain in contact with it (as a tangent remains in contact with a clavichord string) because this would damp the sound. Moreover, the hammer must return to its rest position without bouncing violently, and it must be possible to repeat a note rapidly. Cristofori's piano action was a model for the many approaches to piano actions that followed. His early instruments were made with thin strings and were much quieter than the modern piano, but much louder and with more sustain in comparison to the clavichord—the only previous keyboard instrument capable of dynamic nuance via the keyboard.

Cristofori's new instrument remained relatively unknown until an Italian writer, Scipione Maffei, wrote an enthusiastic article about it in 1711, including a diagram of the mechanism. This article was widely distributed, and most of the next generation of piano builders started their work due to reading it. One of these builders was the organ builder Gottfried Silbermann, who showed Johann Sebastian Bach one of his early instruments in the 1730s. Bach did not like it at that time, claiming that the higher notes were too soft to allow a full dynamic range. Although this earned him some animosity from Silbermann, the criticism was apparently heeded. Bach did approve of a later instrument he saw in 1747 and even served as an agent in selling Silbermann's pianos.

Piano-making flourished in late 18th-century Vienna. Viennese-style pianos were built with wood frames, two strings per note, and had leather-covered hammers. Some of these Viennese pianos had the opposite coloring of modern-day pianos; the natural keys were black and the accidental keys white. It was for such instruments that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed his concertos and sonatas, and replicas of them are built today for use in authentic-instrument performance of his music. The pianos of Mozart's day had a softer, more ethereal tone than today's pianos, with less sustaining power. The term *fortepiano* is now used to distinguish the 18th-century instrument from later pianos.

In the period lasting from about 1790 to 1860, the Mozart-era piano underwent tremendous changes that led to the modern form of the instrument. This revolution was in response to a preference by composers and

pianists for a more powerful, sustained piano sound and made possible by the ongoing Industrial Revolution with resources such as high-quality piano wire for strings and precision casting for the production of iron frames. Over time, the range of the piano was also increased from the five octaves of Mozart's day to the 7⅓ or more octaves found on modern pianos. This growth can be heard over the course of Beethoven's career. Beethoven's later piano works feature a wider range of pitches than earlier works as the instrument's pitch range grew. To understand the impact of this expansion more clearly, a numeric illustration may be helpful. A five-octave piano would have roughly 60 keys, while today's pianos generally feature 88.

Technical innovations continued to be added to the piano as various instrument makers experimented with ways to improve the instrument's mechanical function and tonal expression. By the late 19th century, the piano had evolved into the powerful 88-key instrument we recognize today. It is important to remember that much of the music of the Classical era was composed for a type of instrument (the fortepiano) that is rather different from the instrument on which it is now played. Even the music of the Romantic period, including that of Chopin, Schumann, and Brahms, was written for pianos substantially different from modern pianos.

Frederic Chopin

Frederic Chopin's compositional output was relatively small but had an enormous influence, particularly on piano music. All his music featured the piano in one capacity or another.

Introduction

Frédéric François Chopin (22 February or 1 March 1810–17 October 1849), born **Frederic Francois Chopin**, was a Polish composer and virtuoso pianist of the Romantic era who wrote primarily for the solo piano. He gained and has maintained renown worldwide as one of the leading musicians of his era, whose "poetic genius was based on a professional technique that was without equal in his generation." Chopin was born in what was then the Duchy of Warsaw and grew up in Warsaw, which after 1815 became part of Congress Poland. A child prodigy, he completed his musical education and composed many of his works in Warsaw before leaving Poland at the age of 20, less than a month before the outbreak of the November 1830 Uprising.

Figure 1. Photograph of Chopin by Bisson, ca. 1849.

At the age of 21, he settled in Paris. Thereafter, during the last 18 years of his life, he gave only some 30 public performances, preferring the more intimate atmosphere of the salon. He supported himself by selling his compositions and teaching piano, for which he was in high demand. Chopin formed a friendship with Franz Liszt and was admired by many of his musical contemporaries, including Robert Schumann. In 1835 he obtained French citizenship. After a failed engagement to a Polish girl, from 1837 to 1847 he maintained an often troubled relationship with the French writer George Sand. A brief and unhappy visit to Majorca with Sand in 1838–39 was one of his most productive periods of composition. In his last years, he was financially supported by his admirer Jane Stirling, who also arranged for him to visit Scotland in 1848. Through most of his life, Chopin suffered from poor health. He died in Paris in 1849, probably of tuberculosis.

All of Chopin's compositions include the piano. Most are for solo piano, though he also wrote two piano concertos, a few chamber pieces, and some songs to Polish lyrics. His keyboard style is highly individual and often technically demanding; his own performances were noted for their nuance and sensitivity. Chopin invented the concept of instrumental ballade. His major piano works also include sonatas, mazurkas, waltzes, nocturnes, polonaises, études, impromptus, scherzos, and preludes, some published only after his death. Many contain elements of both Polish folk music and of the classical tradition of J. S. Bach, Mozart, and Schubert, the music of all of whom he admired. His innovations in style, musical form, and harmony and his association of music with nationalism were influential throughout and after the late Romantic period.

Both in his native Poland and beyond, Chopin's music, his status as one of music's earliest superstars, his association (if only indirect) with political insurrection, his love life, and his early death have made him, in the

public consciousness, a leading symbol of the Romantic era. His works remain popular, and he has been the subject of numerous films and biographies of varying degrees of historical accuracy.

Nocturne in C# Minor

Before we dive into this nocturne, let's get a little background on the genre itself. Here is a quote from the Wikipedia article on the musical genre Nocturne:

> In its more familiar form as a single-movement character piece usually written for solo piano, the nocturne was cultivated primarily in the 19th century. The first nocturnes to be written under the specific title were by the Irish composer John Field, generally viewed as the father of the Romantic nocturne that characteristically features a cantabile (songlike) melody over an arpeggiated, even guitar-like accompaniment. However, the most famous exponent of the form was Frederic Chopin, who wrote 21 of them.

Nocturnes, as the name suggests, generally exhibit a brooding or melancholy mood. There is relatively little to read on this page, and the first of the two paragraphs is more informative for our purposes, as it focuses on musical elements such as tempo and form rather than on critical opinion. However, I think there is value in reading both paragraphs, as the descriptive language provided by the cited critics may provide associations that will help you with identification.

Nocturne in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 1

The *Nocturne in C-sharp minor* is initially marked *larghetto* and is in 4/4 meter. It transitions to *pi mosso* (more movement) in measure 29. The piece returns to its original tempo in measure 84 and ends in an *adagio* beginning in measure 99. The piece is 101 measures long and written in ternary form with coda; the primary theme is introduced, followed by a secondary theme and a repetition of the first.

The opening alternates between major and minor and uses arpeggios, commonly found in other nocturnes as well, in the left hand. It sounds "morbid and intentionally grating." James Friskin noted that the piece requires an "unusually wide extension of the left hand" in the beginning and called the piece "fine and tragic." James Huneker commented that the piece is "a masterpiece," pointing to the "morbid, persistent melody" of the left hand. For David Dubal, the *pi mosso* has a "restless, vehement power." Huneker also likens the *pi mosso* to a work by Beethoven due to the agitated nature of this section. The coda "reminds the listener of Chopin's seemingly inexhaustible prodigality," according to Dubal, while Huneker calls it a "surprising climax followed by sunshine" before returning to the opening theme.

Listen

Please listen to the following audio file to listen to Nocturne No. 7.

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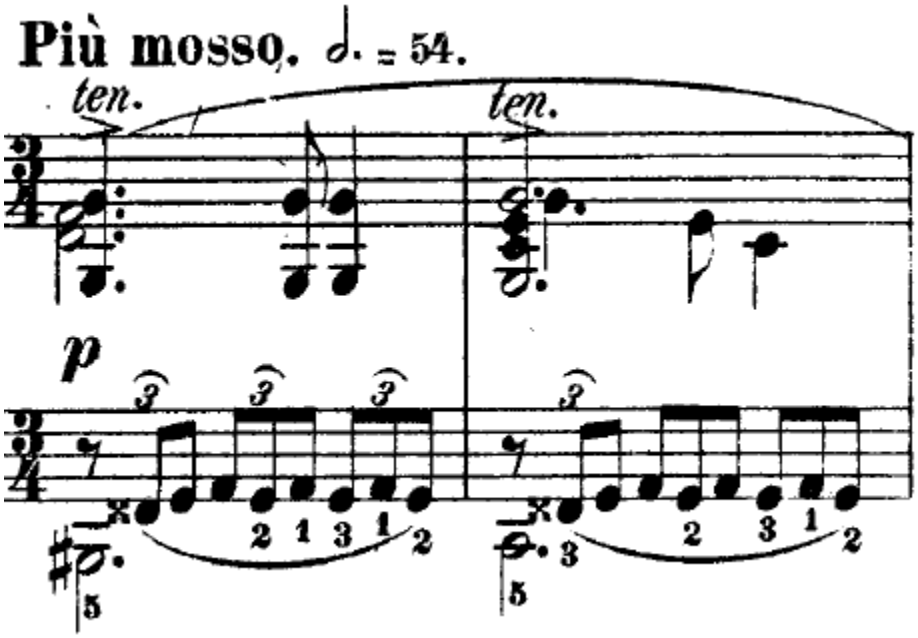
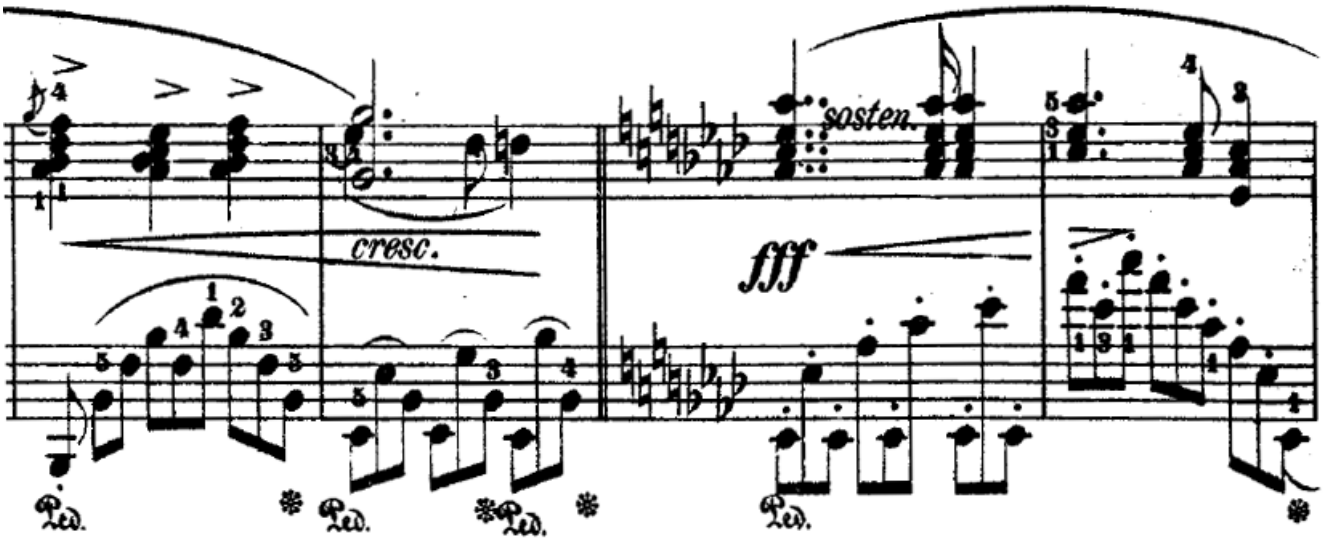
Excerpts



The second theme of No. 1 in C♯ minor



Modulation to A ♭ major

Program Music and the Program Symphony

Program Music

Program music or **programme music** (British English) is music that attempts to depict in music an extra-musical scene or narrative. The narrative itself might be offered to the audience in the form of program notes inviting imaginative correlations with the music. A well-known example is Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, which relates a drug-induced series of morbid fantasies concerning the unrequited love of a sensitive poet involving murder, execution, and the torments of Hell. The genre culminates in the symphonic works of Richard Strauss that include narrations of the adventures of *Don Quixote*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, the composer's domestic life, and an interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy of the Superman. Following Strauss, the genre declined, and new works with explicitly narrative content are rare. Nevertheless, the genre continues to exert an influence on film music, especially where this draws upon the techniques of late Romantic music.

The term is almost exclusively applied to works in the European classical music tradition, particularly those from the Romantic music period of the 19th century, during which the concept was popular, but programmatic pieces have long been a part of music. The term is usually reserved for purely instrumental works (pieces without singers and lyrics) and not used, for example for Opera or Lieder. Single-movement orchestral pieces of program music are often called symphonic poems.

Absolute music, in contrast, is to be appreciated without any particular reference to anything outside the music itself.

Program Symphony

Any instrumental genre could be composed in such a way as to tell a story or paint a picture in the mind's eye of the listener. A program symphony is the result of a composer applying the principle of program music to the genre of the symphony. A program symphony, like any other work of that genre, would consist of multiple movements, usually four or five, and would likely follow to some extent the standard characteristics of symphonic construction. For example, the second movement would likely be slower than the first, and the third movement would be based on a dance. The fifth movement would serve as a kind of grand finale. Traditional forms would be of less concern to a composer of programmatic music, as the form of a movement would likely be influenced by the subject matter being depicted. Hector Berlioz's *Symphony Fantastique* is one of the best-known examples of a program symphony.

Hector Berlioz

Hector Berlioz was an early Romantic innovator. His music was not always appreciated in his day, though he certainly enjoyed a fair amount of success. Prone to sudden emotional swings, his personality seems to come through in the music in his ability to draw unusual sounds out of the orchestra. He is still studied today as a master orchestrator. His instrumental music was often programmatic, and his *Symphonie Fantastique* is one of the quintessential examples of orchestral storytelling. The final movement of that program symphony is on our playlist. Read this biography to learn about his life.

Symphonie Fantastique

This page article provides an excellent overview of one of Berlioz's best known works, *Symphonie Fantastique*. I encourage you to read through the description of each of the movements of the piece, but of course the one that will be most important for you in our class is the description of the 5th and final movement, as that is the piece on our playlist. Try listening to the piece while you review the outline of the fifth movement to see if you can hear all the unusual orchestral effects described there.

Introduction

Symphonie fantastique: (*Fantastical Symphony: An Episode in the Life of an Artist, in Five Parts*) Op. 14 is a program symphony written by the French composer Hector Berlioz in 1830. It is an important piece of the early Romantic period and is popular with concert audiences worldwide. The first performance was at the Paris Conservatoire in December 1830. The work was repeatedly revived after 1831 and subsequently became a favorite in Paris.

Leonard Bernstein described the symphony as the first musical expedition into psychedelia because of its hallucinatory and dream-like nature, and because history suggests Berlioz composed at least a portion of it under the influence of opium. According to Bernstein, "Berlioz tells it like it is. You take a trip, you wind up screaming at your own funeral."

In 1831, Berlioz wrote a lesser known sequel to the work, *Lélio*, for actor, orchestra and chorus. Franz Liszt made a piano transcription of the symphony in 1833 (S.470).

Outline

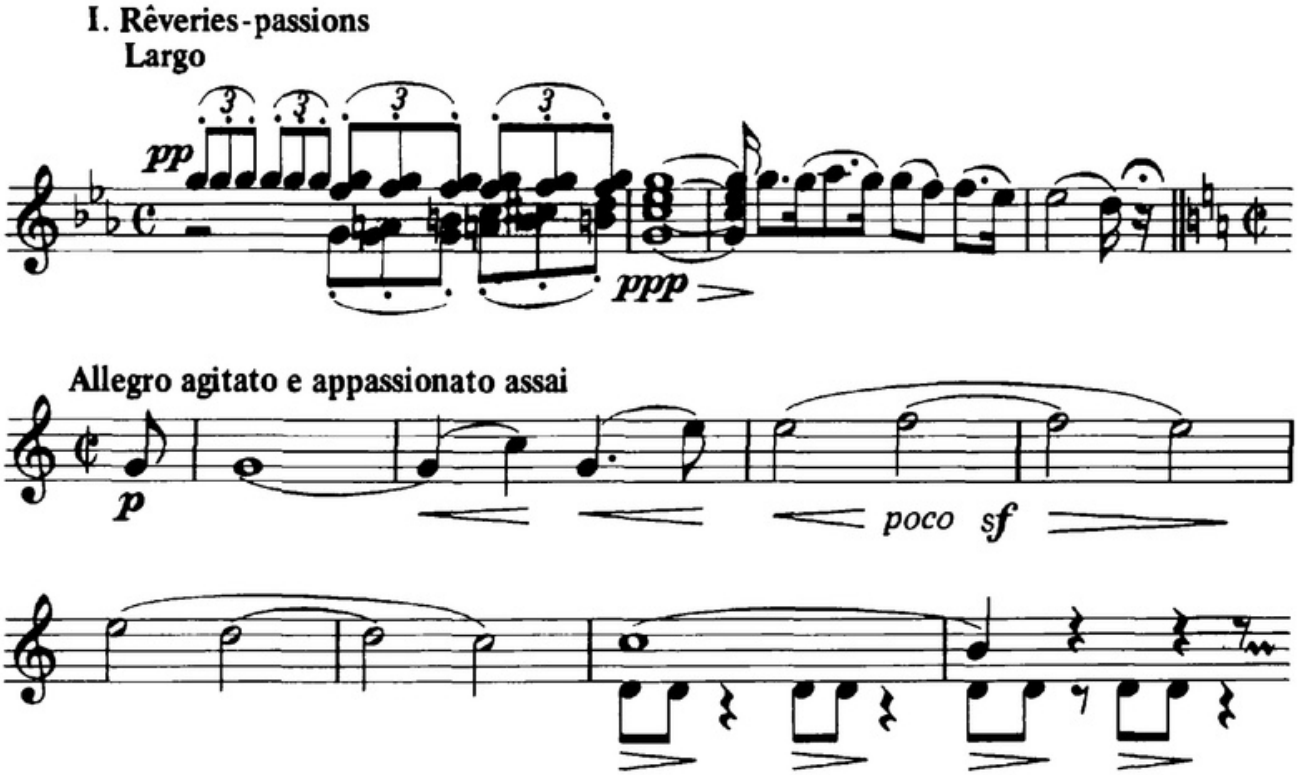
The symphony is a piece of program music that tells the story of an artist gifted with a lively imagination who has poisoned himself with opium in the depths of despair because of hopeless love. Berlioz provided his own program notes for each movement of the work (see below). He prefaces his notes with the following instructions:

> The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, in so far as they lend themselves to musical treatment. As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following programme must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.

There are five movements instead of the four movements that were conventional for symphonies at the time:

1. Rêveries—Passions (Reveries Passions)
2. Un bal (A Ball)
3. Scène aux champs (Scene in the Fields)
4. Marche au supplice (March to the Scaffold)
5. Songe d'une nuit du sabbat (Dream of the Night of the Sabbath)

First Movement: "Rêveries—Passions" (Reverie—Passions)



In Berlioz's own program notes from 1845, he writes:

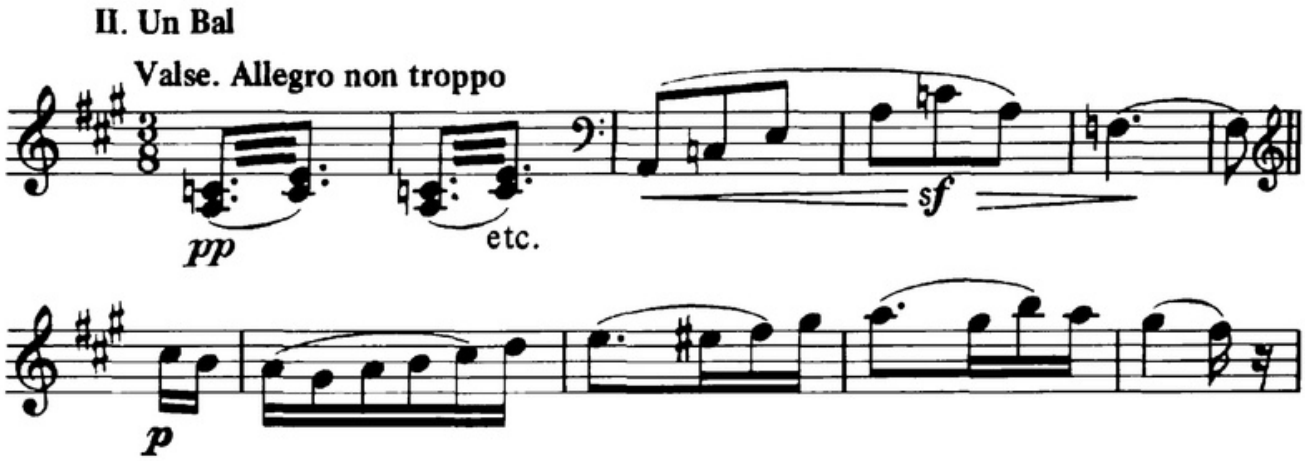
> The author imagines that a young musician, afflicted by the sickness of spirit which a famous writer has called the vagueness of passions [*le vague des passions*], sees for the first time a woman who unites all the charms of the ideal person his imagination was dreaming of, and falls desperately in love with her. By a strange anomaly, the beloved image never presents itself to the artist's mind without being associated with a musical idea, in which he recognizes a certain quality of passion, but endowed with the nobility and shyness which he credits to the object of his love.
>
> This melodic image and its model keep haunting him ceaselessly like a double idée fixe. This explains the constant recurrence in all the movements of the symphony of the melody which launches the first allegro. The transitions from this state of dreamy melancholy, interrupted by occasional upsurges of aimless joy, to delirious passion, with its outbursts of fury and jealousy, its returns of tenderness, its tears, its religious consolations all this forms the subject of the first movement.

"The first movement is radical in its harmonic outline, building a vast arch back to the home key; while similar to the sonata form of the classical period, Parisian critics regarded this as unconventional. It is here that the listener is introduced to the theme of the artist's beloved, or the *idée fixe*. Throughout the movement there is a simplicity in the way melodies and themes are presented, which Robert Schumann likened to 'Beethoven's epigrams' ideas that could be extended had the composer chosen to. In part, it is because Berlioz rejected

writing the more symmetrical melodies then in academic fashion, and instead looked for melodies that were 'so intense in every note as to defy normal harmonization,' as Schumann put it." —Hector Berlioz: The Complete Guide

The theme itself was taken from Berlioz's *scene lyrique* "Herminie," composed in 1828.

Second Movement: "Un bal" (A Ball)



Again, quoting from Berlioz's program notes:

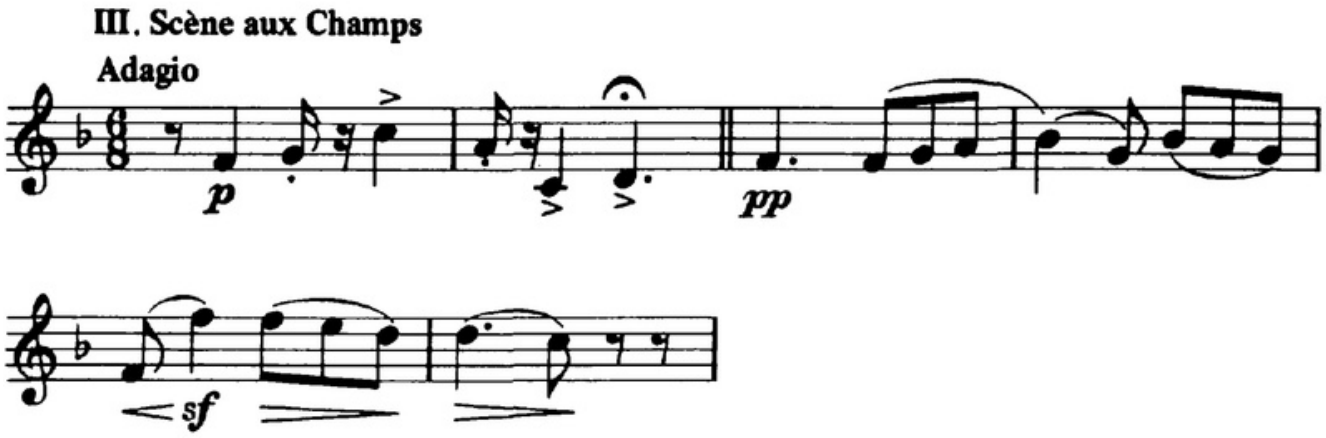
> The artist finds himself in the most diverse situations in life, in the tumult of a festive party, in the peaceful contemplation of the beautiful sights of nature, yet everywhere, whether in town or in the countryside, the beloved image keeps haunting him and throws his spirit into confusion.

The second movement has a mysterious-sounding introduction that creates an atmosphere of impending excitement, followed by a passage dominated by two harps; then the flowing waltz theme appears, derived from the *idée fixe* at first, then transforming it. More formal statements of the *idée fixe* twice interrupt the waltz.

The movement is the only one to feature the two harps, providing the glamour and sensual richness of the ball, and may also symbolize the object of the young man's affection. Berlioz wrote extensively in his memoirs of his trials and tribulations in having this symphony performed due to a lack of capable harpists and harps, especially in Germany.

Another feature of this movement is that Berlioz added a part for solo cornet to his autograph score, although it was not included in the score published in his lifetime. The work has most often been played and recorded without the solo cornet part. Conductors Jean Martinon, Sir Colin Davis, Otto Klemperer, Gustavo Dudamel, and Leonard Slatkin have employed this part for cornet in performances of the symphony.

Third Movement: "Scène aux champs" (Scene in the Fields)

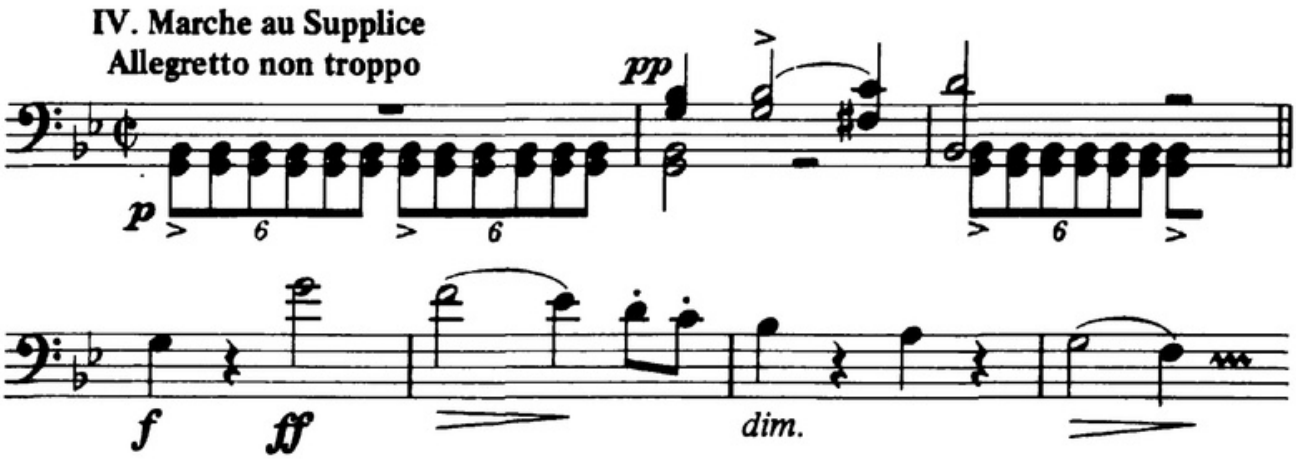


From Berlioz's program notes:

> One evening in the countryside he hears two shepherds in the distance dialoguing with their "ranz des vaches"; this pastoral duet, the setting, the gentle rustling of the trees in the wind, some causes for hope that he has recently conceived, all conspire to restore to his heart an unaccustomed feeling of calm and to give to his thoughts a happier colouring. He broods on his loneliness, and hopes that soon he will no longer be on his own . . . But what if she betrayed him! . . . This mingled hope and fear, these ideas of happiness, disturbed by dark premonitions, form the subject of the adagio. At the end one of the shepherds resumes his "ranz des vaches"; the other one no longer answers. Distant sound of thunder . . . solitude . . . silence.

The two "shepherds" Berlioz mentions in the notes are depicted with a cor anglais (English horn) and an offstage oboe tossing an evocative melody back and forth. After the cor anglais oboe conversation, the principal theme of the movement appears on solo flute and violins. Berlioz salvaged this theme from his abandoned *Messe solennelle*. The *idée fixe* returns in the middle of the movement, played by oboe and flute. The sound of distant thunder at the end of the movement is a striking passage for four timpani.

Fourth Movement: "Marche au supplice" (March to the Scaffold)

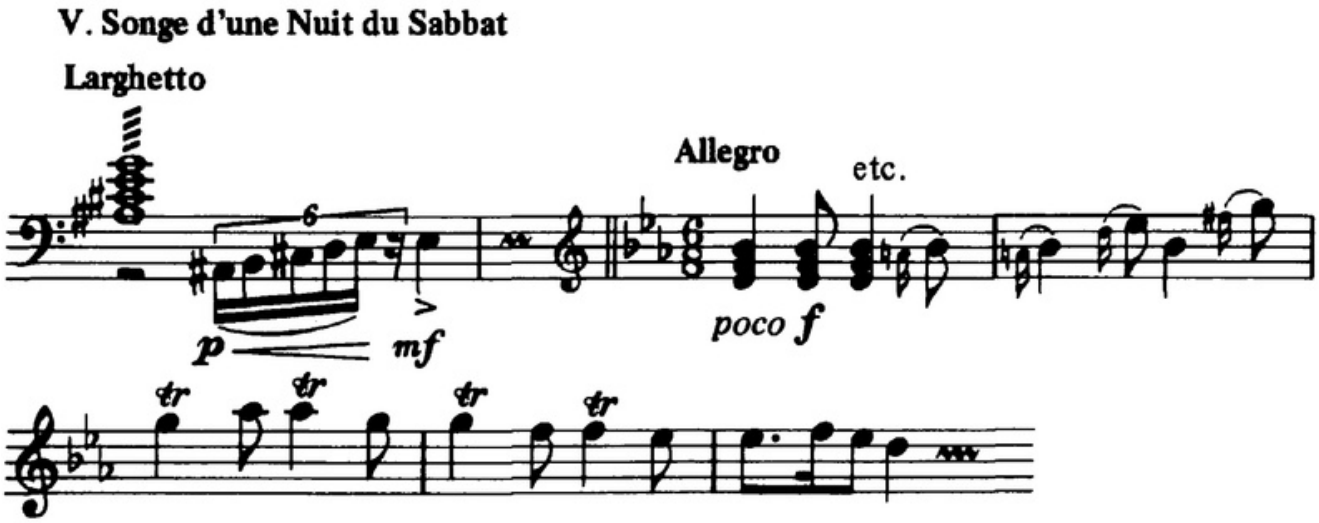


From Berlioz's program notes:

> Convinced that his love is unappreciated, the artist poisons himself with opium. The dose of narcotic, while too weak to cause his death, plunges him into a heavy sleep accompanied by the strangest of visions. He dreams that he has killed his beloved, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold and is witnessing his own execution. As he cries for forgiveness the effects of the narcotic set in. He wants to hide but he cannot so he watches as an onlooker as he dies. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is sometimes sombre and wild, and sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a dull sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the idée fixe reappear like a final thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow when his head bounced down the steps.

Berlioz claimed to have written the fourth movement in a single night, reconstructing music from an unfinished project—the opera *Les francs-juges*. The movement begins with timpani sextuplets in thirds, for which he directs, "The first quaver of each half-bar is to be played with two drumsticks, and the other five with the right hand drumsticks." The movement proceeds as a march filled with blaring horns and rushing passages and scurrying figures that later show up in the last movement. Before the musical depiction of his execution, there is a brief, nostalgic recollection of the *idée fixe* in a solo clarinet, as though representing the last conscious thought of the soon-to-be-executed man. Immediately following this is a single, short *fortissimo* G minor chord—the fatal blow of the guillotine blade, followed by a series of pizzicato notes representing the rolling of the severed head into the basket. After his death, the final nine bars of the movement contain a victorious series of G major brass chords, along with rolls of the snare drums within the entire orchestra, seemingly intended to convey the cheering of the onlooking throng.

Fifth Movement: "Songe d'une nuit du sabbat" (Dream of the Night of the Sabbath)



From Berlioz's program notes:

> He sees himself at a witches sabbath, in the midst of a hideous gathering of shades, sorcerers and monsters of every kind who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, outbursts of laughter; distant shouts which seem to be answered by more shouts. The beloved melody appears once more, but has now lost its noble and shy character; it is now no more than a vulgar dance tune, trivial and grotesque: it is she who is coming to the sabbath. . . . Roar of delight at her arrival. . . . She joins the diabolical orgy . . . The funeral knell tolls, burlesque parody of the Dies irae, the dance of the witches. The dance of the witches combined with the Dies irae.

This movement can be divided into sections according to tempo changes:

- The introduction is Largo, in common time, creating an ominous quality through dynamic variations and instrumental effects, particularly in the strings (tremolos, pizz, sf).
- At bar 21, the tempo changes to Allegro and the metronome to 6/8. The return of the *idée fixe* as a "vulgar dance tune" is depicted by the C clarinet. This is interrupted by an Allegro Assai section in cut common at bar 29.
- The *idée fixe* then returns as a prominent E-flat clarinet solo at bar 40, in 6/8 and Allegro. The E-flat clarinet contributes a sharper, more shrill timbre than the C clarinet.
- At bar 80, there is one bar of *alla breve*, with descending crotchets in unison through the entire orchestra. Again in 6/8, this section sees the introduction of tubular bells and fragments of the "witches' round dance."
- The "Dies irae" begins at bar 127, the motif derived from the 13th-century Latin sequence. It is initially stated in unison between the unusual combination of four bassoons and two tubas.

- At bar 222, the "witches' round dance" motif is repeatedly stated in the strings, to be interrupted by three syncopated notes in the brass. This leads into the *Ronde du Sabbat* (Sabbath Round) at bar 241, where the motif is finally expressed in full.
- The Dies irae et Ronde du Sabbat Ensemble section is at bar 414.

There are a host of effects, including eerie *col legno* in the strings—the bubbling of the witches' cauldron to the blasts of wind. The climactic finale combines the somber Dies Irae melody with the wild fugue of the *Ronde du Sabbat*.

> The aim of the second kind of imitation, as we have said before, is to reproduce the intonations of the passions and the emotions, and even to trace a musical image, or metaphor, of objects that can only be seen. The continual interruption of the Dies irae motif by the strings symbolizes this continual fight of death until the movement and piece eventually, as we all do given in to the Dies irae theme and our eventual but necessary deaths.

He later adds:

> Emotional (imitation) is designed to arouse in us by means of sound the notion of the several passions of the heart, and to awaken solely through the sense of hearing the impressions that human beings experience only through the other senses. Such is the goal of expression, depiction or musical metaphors.

As part of this, he uses an example of cyclical structure—an idea drawn from Beethoven's use of similar rhythmic structures in his Fifth Symphony, and the idea of musical "cycles," such as a "song cycle." Berlioz did not know of Mendelssohn's Octet, which also uses this device.

Introduction to Romantic Opera

This section contains information on major trends and composers in Romantic opera. We will be focusing our study on developments in the Italian and German operatic traditions. There was also a good deal of innovation taking place in Paris in the 19th century, but Verdi (Italian) and Wagner (German) were the most influential composers of the era, so we'll be limiting our reading to those two national styles.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slide Show: Romantic Opera
- Early Romantic Opera
- Later Romantic Opera
- Trends in German and Italian Opera
- Giuseppe Verdi
- Rigoletto

- La donna e mobile
- Verdi's Requiem
- Richard Wagner
- Tristan und Isolde
- Liebestod
- Verismo
- Giacomo Pucinni
- La Boheme
- Che gelida manina
- Si, mi chiamano Mimi

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Early Romantic Era

As you read about the composers and operas we study in this class, you'll hear frequent references to other earlier composers. Please read this brief background on the composers and trends that led to the later Romantic operas we will focus on. This site uses the term "vamp" to refer to the simple chordal accompaniment heard supporting bel canto arias. In the United States, that term tends to refer to a repeated accompaniment or ostinato, but the Scottish site we're linking to uses it to mean a particular way of repeating a simple chord. View their site's definition of vamp here along with a music example.

Later Romantic Era

While this article doesn't cover all the operatic composers that we listen to in our class, it does provide a helpful summary of the Italian and German operatic traditions in the late 19th century. It also provides some helpful listening prompts for understanding the characteristics of the music of Verdi and Wagner. Please read this article carefully, and be sure to look up any musical terms that are unfamiliar using the site's "A to Z Dictionary." The link for that dictionary is found on the lower left of the page. Terms like *leitmotif*, *bel canto*, or *rubato* may appear on Exam 4 Terminology.

Trends in German and Italian Opera

These few paragraphs drill down a bit deeper into the styles of the three opera composers we'll study: Verdi, Wagner, and Puccini. I don't want to give the impression that nothing was happening in opera outside of Italy and Germany. Paris was a major center of opera composition in the 19th century, and there were world-class opera houses in Prague and London that are still operating today. We simply have to pare down our focus in a one-semester survey course like this, and Verdi and Wagner were the biggest names in the business.

Bel canto, Verdi, and Verismo

Listen

La donna è mobile

Please listen to the following audio file to hear Enrico Caruso sing "La donna è mobile" from Giuseppe Verdi's Rigoletto (1908).

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No Pagliaccio non son

Please listen to the following audio file to hear an aria from Ruggero Leoncavallo's Pagliacci, performed by Enrico Caruso.

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The bel canto opera movement flourished in the early 19th century and is exemplified by the operas of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Pacini, Mercadante, and many others. Literally "beautiful singing," *bel canto* opera derives

from the Italian stylistic singing school of the same name. Bel canto lines are typically florid and intricate, requiring supreme agility and pitch control. Examples of famous operas in the bel canto style include Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Cenerentola*, as well as Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Following the bel canto era, a more direct, forceful style was rapidly popularized by Giuseppe Verdi, beginning with his biblical opera *Nabucco*. Verdi's operas resonated with the growing spirit of Italian nationalism in the post-Napoleonic era, and he quickly became an icon of the patriotic movement (although his own politics were perhaps not quite so radical). In the early 1850s, Verdi produced his three most popular operas: *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore* and *La traviata*. But he continued to develop his style, composing perhaps the greatest French Grand Opera, *Don Carlos*, and ending his career with two Shakespeare-inspired works, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, which reveal how far Italian opera had grown in sophistication since the early 19th century.

After Verdi, the sentimental "realistic" melodrama of verismo appeared in Italy. This was a style introduced by Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* and Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* that came virtually to dominate the world's opera stages with such popular works as Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot*. Later Italian composers, such as Berio and Nono, have experimented with modernism.

German-Language Opera

The first German opera was *Dafne*, composed by Heinrich Schütz in 1627, but the music score has not survived. Italian opera held a great sway over German-speaking countries until the late 18th century. Nevertheless, native forms would develop in spite of this influence. In 1644, Sigmund Staden produced the first *Singspiel*, *Seelewig*, a popular form of German-language opera in which singing alternates with spoken dialogue. In the late 17th century and early 18th century, the Theater am Gensemarkt in Hamburg presented German operas by Keiser, Telemann, and Handel. Yet most of the major German composers of the time, including Handel himself, as well as Graun, Hasse, and later Gluck, chose to write most of their operas in foreign languages, especially Italian. In contrast to Italian opera, which was generally composed for the aristocratic class, German opera was generally composed for the masses and tended to feature simple folk-like melodies, and it was not until the arrival of Mozart that German opera was able to match its Italian counterpart in musical sophistication.

Figure 1. The Queen of the Night in an 1815 production of Mozart's Die Zauberflöte.

Mozart's *Singspiele*, *Die Entfhrung aus dem Serail* (1782) and *Die Zauberflute* (1791), were an important

breakthrough in achieving international recognition for German opera. The tradition was developed in the 19th century by Beethoven with his *Fidelio*, inspired by the climate of the French Revolution. Carl Maria von Weber established German Romantic opera in opposition to the dominance of Italian bel canto. His *Der Freischütz* (1821) shows his genius for creating a supernatural atmosphere. Other opera composers of the time include Marschner, Schubert, and Lortzing, but the most significant figure was undoubtedly Wagner.

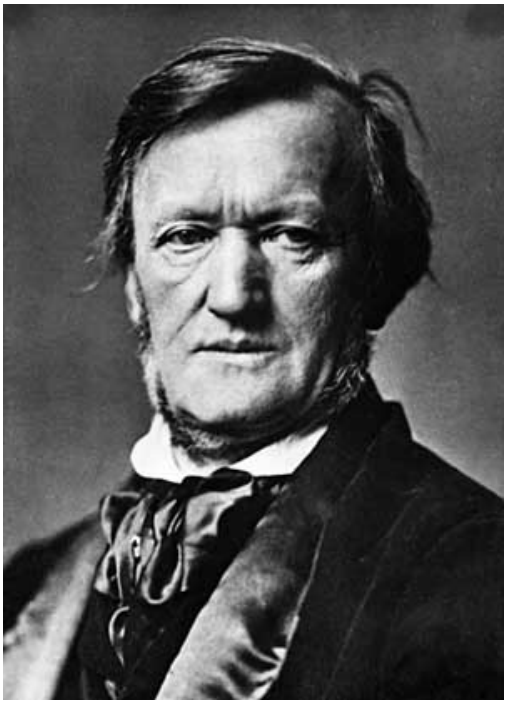

Figure 1. Richard Wagner.

Wagner was one of the most revolutionary and controversial composers in musical history. Starting under the influence of Weber and Meyerbeer, he gradually evolved a new concept of opera as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a "complete work of art"), a fusion of music, poetry, and painting. He greatly increased the role and power of the orchestra, creating scores with a complex web of leitmotifs, recurring themes often associated with the characters and concepts of the drama, of which prototypes can be heard in his earlier operas such as *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Lohengrin*; and he was prepared to violate accepted musical conventions, such as tonality, in his quest for greater expressivity. In his mature music dramas, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and *Parsifal*, he abolished the distinction between aria and recitative in favor of a seamless flow of "endless melody." Wagner also brought a new philosophical dimension to opera in his works, which were usually based on stories from Germanic or Arthurian legend. Finally, Wagner built his own opera house at Bayreuth with part of the patronage from Ludwig II of Bavaria, exclusively dedicated to performing his own works in the style he wanted.

Opera would never be the same after Wagner, and for many composers, his legacy proved a heavy burden. On the other hand, Richard Strauss accepted Wagnerian ideas but took them in wholly new directions. He first won fame with the scandalous *Salome* and the dark tragedy *Elektra*, in which tonality was pushed to the limits. Then Strauss changed tack in his greatest success, *Der Rosenkavalier*, where Mozart and Viennese waltzes became as important an influence as Wagner. Strauss continued to produce a highly varied body of operatic works, often with libretti by the poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Other composers who made individual contributions to German opera in the early 20th century include Alexander von Zemlinsky, Erich Korngold, Franz Schreker, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weill, and the Italian-born Ferruccio Busoni. The operatic innovations of Arnold Schoenberg and his successors are discussed in the section on modernism.

During the late 19th century, the Austrian composer Johann Strauss II, an admirer of the French-language operettas composed by Jacques Offenbach, composed several German-language operettas, the most famous of which was *Die Fledermaus*, which is still regularly performed today.[18] Nevertheless, rather than copying the

style of Offenbach, the operettas of Strauss II had a distinctly Viennese flavor to them, which have cemented the Strauss II's place as one of the most renowned operetta composers of all time.

Giuseppe Verdi

Verdi is considered one of the greatest operatic composers of the 19th century, and his works are widely performed today around the world. He also defies the cliché of the tragic life of the Romantic artist. While his life was not free from sorrow, he was widely appreciated and enormously successful throughout his long life.

Introduction

Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi (9 or 10 October 1813–27 January 1901) was an Italian Romantic composer primarily known for his operas.

He is considered, with Richard Wagner, the preeminent opera composer of the 19th century. Verdi dominated the Italian opera scene after the eras of Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini. His works are frequently performed in opera houses throughout the world and, transcending the boundaries of the genre, some of his themes have long since taken root in popular culture, examples being "La donna è mobile" from *Rigoletto*, "Libiamo ne' lieti calici" (The Drinking Song) from *La traviata*, "Va, pensiero" (The Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves) from *Nabucco*, the "Coro di zingari" (Anvil Chorus) from *Il trovatore*, and the "Grand March" from *Aida*.

Moved by the death of compatriot Alessandro Manzoni, Verdi wrote *Messa da Requiem* in 1874 in Manzoni's honor, a work now regarded as a masterpiece of the oratorio tradition and a testimony to his capacity outside the field of opera. Visionary and politically engaged, he remains—alongside Garibaldi and Cavour—an emblematic figure of the reunification process (the *Risorgimento*) of the Italian Peninsula.

Please read the introduction and all the subsections of the biographical portion of the article (section 1).

Rigoletto

To study an aria, you simply have to know the larger story of which it is a part. Our aria, "La donna è mobile," is heard in the beginning of act 3.

Synopsis

Place: Mantua
Time: The sixteenth century

Act 1

Scene 1: A room in the palace

Act 1, sc. 1: Victor Hugo's Le Roi s'amuse

At a ball in his palace, the Duke sings of a life of pleasure with as many women as possible: "Questa o quella" ("This woman or that"). He has seen an unknown beauty in church and desires to possess her, but he also wishes to seduce the Countess of Ceprano. Rigoletto, the Duke's hunchbacked court jester, mocks the husbands of the ladies to whom the Duke is paying attention and advises the Duke to get rid of them by prison or death. Marullo, one of the guests at the ball, informs the noblemen that Rigoletto has a "lover," and the noblemen cannot believe it. The noblemen resolve to take vengeance on Rigoletto. Subsequently Rigoletto mocks Count Monterone, whose daughter the Duke had seduced. Count Monterone is arrested at the Duke's order and curses the Duke and Rigoletto. The curse genuinely terrifies Rigoletto.

Scene 2: A street, with the courtyard of Rigoletto's house

Act 1, Scene 2 stage set by Giuseppe Bertoja for the world premiere of *Rigoletto*

Thinking of the curse, Rigoletto approaches his house and is accosted by the assassin Sparafucile, who walks up to him and offers his services. Rigoletto considers the proposition but finally declines; Sparafucile wanders off, after repeating his own name a few times. Rigoletto contemplates the similarities between the two of them: "Pari siamo!" ("We are alike!"); Sparafucile kills men with his sword, and Rigoletto uses "a tongue of malice" to stab his victims. Rigoletto opens a door in the wall and returns home to his daughter Gilda. They greet each other warmly: "Figlia!" "Mio padre!" ("Daughter!" "My father!"). Rigoletto has been concealing his daughter from the Duke and the rest of the city, and she does not know her father's occupation. Since he has forbidden her to appear in public, she has been nowhere except to church and does not even know her own father's name.

When Rigoletto has gone, the Duke appears and overhears Gilda confess to her nurse Giovanna that she feels guilty for not having told her father about a young man she had met at the church. She says that she fell in love with him but that she would love him even more if he were a student and poor. As she declares her

love, the Duke enters, overjoyed. Gilda, alarmed, calls for Giovanna, unaware that the Duke had sent her away. Pretending to be a student, the Duke convinces Gilda of his love: "È il sol dell'anima" ("Love is the sunshine of the soul"). When she asks for his name, he hesitantly calls himself Gualtier Maldè. Hearing sounds and fearing that her father has returned, Gilda sends the Duke away after they quickly trade vows of love: "Addio, addio" ("Farewell, farewell"). Alone, Gilda meditates on her love for the Duke, whom she believes is a student: "Gualtier Maldè! . . . Caro nome" ("Dearest name").

Later, a preoccupied Rigoletto returns: "Riedo!. . . perché?" ("I've returned! . . . why?"), while the hostile noblemen outside the walled garden (believing Gilda to be the jester's mistress, unaware she is his daughter) get ready to abduct the helpless girl. Convincing Rigoletto that they are actually abducting the Countess Ceprano, they blindfold him and use him to help with the abduction: "Zitti, zitti" ("Softly, softly"). With her father's unknowing assistance Gilda is carried away by the noblemen. Upon realizing that it was in fact Gilda who was carried away, Rigoletto collapses, remembering the curse.

Act 2

The Duke's Palace

The Duke is concerned that Gilda has disappeared: "Ella mi fu rapita!" ("She was stolen from me!") and "Parmi veder le lagrime" ("I seem to see tears"). The noblemen then enter and inform him that they have captured Rigoletto's mistress. By their description, he recognizes it to be Gilda and rushes off to the room where she is held: "Possente amor mi chiama" ("Mighty love beckons me"). Pleased by the Duke's strange excitement, the courtiers now make sport with Rigoletto, who enters singing. He tries to find Gilda by pretending to be uncaring, as he fears she may fall into the hands of the Duke. Finally, he admits that he is in fact seeking his daughter and asks the courtiers to return her to him: "Cortigiani, vil razza dannata" ("Accursed race of courtiers"). Rigoletto attempts to run into the room in which Gilda is being held, but the noblemen beat him. Gilda rushes in and begs her father to send the people away. The men leave the room, believing Rigoletto has gone mad. Gilda describes to her father what has happened to her in the palace: "Tutte le feste al tempio" ("On all the blessed days"). In a duet, Rigoletto demands vengeance against the Duke while Gilda pleads for her lover: "Sì! Vendetta, tremenda vendetta!" ("Yes! Revenge, terrible revenge!").

Act 3

A street outside Sparafucile's house

Listen: "Bella figlia dell'amore"

Please listen to the following audio file to hear the 1907 Victor Records recording with Enrico Caruso, Bessie Abott, Louise Homer, and Antonio Scotti.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=575#audio-575-7

A portion of Sparafucile's house is seen, with two rooms open to the view of the audience. Rigoletto and Gilda, who still loves the Duke, arrive outside. The Duke's voice can be heard singing "La donna è mobile" ("Woman is fickle"), laying out the infidelity and fickle nature of women. Rigoletto makes Gilda realize that it is the Duke who is in the assassin's house attempting to seduce Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena: "Bella figlia dell'amore" ("Beautiful daughter of love").

Rigoletto bargains with the assassin, who is ready to murder his guest for money, and offers him 20 scudi to kill the Duke. He orders his daughter to put on a man's clothes to prepare to leave for Verona and states that he plans to follow later. With falling darkness, a thunderstorm approaches and the Duke determines to remain in the house. Sparafucile assigns to him the ground floor sleeping quarters.

Gilda, who still loves the Duke despite knowing him to be unfaithful, returns dressed as a man. She overhears Maddalena begging for the Duke's life, and Sparafucile promises her that if by midnight another can be found in place of the Duke, he will spare the Duke's life. Gilda resolves to sacrifice herself for the Duke and enters the house. She is immediately mortally wounded and collapses.

At midnight, when Rigoletto arrives with money, he receives a corpse wrapped in a sack and rejoices in his triumph. Weighting it with stones, he is about to cast the sack into the river when he hears the voice of the Duke singing a reprise of his "La donna è mobile" aria. Bewildered, Rigoletto opens the sack and, to his despair, discovers his mortally wounded daughter. For a moment, she revives and declares she is glad to die for her beloved: "V'ho ingannato" ("Father, I deceived you"). She dies in his arms. Rigoletto's wildest fear materializes when he cries out in horror: "La maledizione!" ("The curse!")

As you read this page on this aria from Verdi's *Rigoletto,* pay particular attention to the information on the theme and the form of the piece.

Introduction

"**La donna è mobile**" (*The woman is fickle*) is the Duke of Mantua's canzone from the beginning of act 3 of Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Rigoletto* (1851). The inherent irony is that the Duke, a callous playboy, is the one who is *mobile* ("inconstant"). Its reprise toward the end of the opera is chilling, as Rigoletto realizes from the sound of the Duke's lively voice coming from within the tavern (offstage) that the body in the sack over which he has grimly triumphed is not that of the Duke after all: Rigoletto had paid Sparafucile, an assassin, to kill the Duke, but Sparafucile deceived him by killing Gilda, Rigoletto's beloved daughter, instead.

The canzone is famous as a showcase for tenors. Raffaele Mirate's performance of the bravura aria at the opera's 1851 premiere was hailed as the highlight of the evening. Before its first public performance (in Venice), it was rehearsed under tight secrecy: a necessary precaution, because it proved to be catchy, and soon after its first public performance every gondolier in Venice was singing it.

The Music

The almost comical-sounding theme of "La donna è mobile" is introduced immediately and runs as illustrated (transposed from the original key of B major). The theme is repeated several times in the approximately two to three minutes it takes to perform the aria, but with the important—and obvious—omission of the last bar. This has the effect of driving the music forward as it creates the impression of being incomplete and unresolved, which it is, ending not on the tonic or dominant but on the submediant. Once the Duke has finished singing, however, the theme is once again repeated; but this time it includes the last, and conclusive, bar, finally resolving to the tonic. The song is strophic in form with an orchestral ritornello.

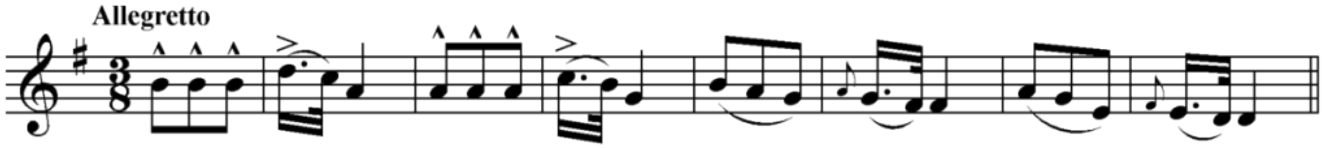

Figure 1. Theme (transposed down by a major third).

Libretto

Italian	Prosaic translation	Poetic translation
1. La donna è mobile Qual piuma al vento, muta d'accento e di pensiero. Sempre un amabile, leggiadro viso, in pianto o in riso, è menzognero. *Refrain* La donna è mobil'. Qual piuma al vento, muta d'accento e di pensier'! 2. È sempre misero chi a lei s'affida, chi le confida mal cauto il cuore! Pur mai non sentesi felice appieno chi su quel seno non liba amore! *Refrain* La donna è mobil' Qual piuma al vento, muta d'accento e di pensier'!	Woman is flighty. Like a feather in the wind, she changes in voice and in thought. Always a lovely, pretty face, in tears or in laughter, it's untrue. *Refrain* Woman is flighty. like a feather in the wind, she changes in voice and in thought! Always miserable is he who trusts her, he who confides in her his unwary heart! Yet one never feels fully happy who from that bosom does not drink love! *Refrain* Woman is flighty. Like a feather in the wind, she changes her words, and her thoughts!	Plume in the summer wind Waywardly playing Ne'er one way swaying Each whim obeying; Thus heart of womankind Ev'ry way bendeth, Woe who dependeth On joy she spendeth! *Refrain* Yes, heart of woman Ev'ry way bendeth Woe who dependeth On joy she spends. Sorrow and misery Follow her smiling, Fond hearts beguiling, falsehood assoiling! Yet all felicity Is her bestowing, No joy worth knowing Is there but wooing. *Refrain* Yes, heart of woman Ev'ry way bendeth Woe who dependeth On joy she spends.

Verdi's Requiem

Although in this module we are focusing on opera, this piece shows that our operatic composers wrote in other genres as well. The Romantic tendency toward grand gestures and the operatic composer's tendency toward dramatic expression impacted other genres. Though this article discusses a movement from a Requiem Mass, it has all the potency of a dramatic production. This brief essay on Verdi's towering Requiem provides an engaging overview of it's historical origins and emotional power.

Richard Wagner

I'm going to make you jump around this article a bit, as it is more lengthy and detailed than is necessary for our purposes. That said, if you want to read a biography that makes the latest season of [insert favorite teen angst television drama title here] look like an innocent kindergarten playground, dive right in and read the whole

thing. Pay special attention to the impact Wagner's music has had on film scoring. Wagner has always inspired strong feelings among his supporters and detractors, and you'll see that clearly in this page.

As a side note, how often would you say the phrase "the father of heavy metal" has appeared in our study of classical composers? Never? Really? Well, the wait is over. Read on.

Introduction

Wilhelm Richard Wagner (22 May 1813–13 February 1883) was a German composer, theater director, polemicist, and conductor who is primarily known for his operas (or, as some of his later works were later known, "music dramas"). Unlike most opera composers, Wagner wrote both the libretto and the music for each of his stage works. Initially establishing his reputation as a composer of works in the romantic vein of Weber and Meyerbeer, Wagner revolutionized opera through his concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("total work of art"), by which he sought to synthesize the poetic, visual, musical, and dramatic arts, with music subsidiary to drama and which was announced in a series of essays between 1849 and 1852. Wagner realized these ideas most fully in the first half of the four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*).

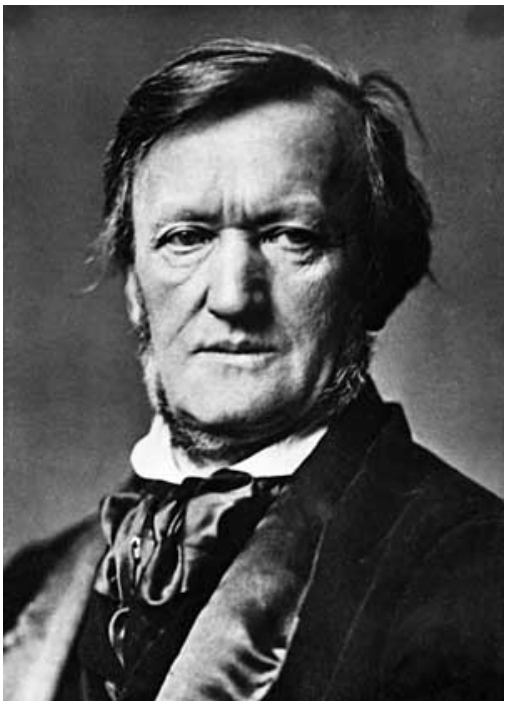

Figure 1. Richard Wagner.

His compositions, particularly those of his later period, are notable for their complex textures, rich harmonies and orchestration, and the elaborate use of leitmotifs—musical phrases associated with individual characters, places, ideas, or plot elements. His advances in musical language, such as extreme chromaticism and quickly shifting tonal centers, greatly influenced the development of classical music. His *Tristan und Isolde* is sometimes described as marking the start of modern music.

Wagner had his own opera house built, the Bayreuth Festspielhaus, which embodied many novel design features. It was here that the *Ring* and *Parsifal* received their premieres and where his most important stage works continue to be performed in an annual festival run by his descendants. His thoughts on the relative contributions of music and drama in opera were to change again, and he reintroduced some traditional forms into his last few stage works, including *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (*The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*).

Until his final years, Wagner's life was characterized by political exile, turbulent love affairs, poverty, and repeated flight from his creditors. His controversial writings on music, drama, and politics have attracted extensive comment in recent decades, especially where they express antisemitic sentiments. The effect of his ideas can be traced in many of the arts throughout the 20th century; their influence spread beyond composition into conducting, philosophy, literature, the visual arts, and theater.

Works

Starting the Ring

Wagner's late dramas are considered his masterpieces. *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, commonly referred to as the *Ring* or "*Ring* cycle," is a set of four operas based loosely on figures and elements of Germanic mythology—particularly from the later Norse mythology—notably the Old Norse *Poetic Edda* and *Volsunga Saga* and the Middle High German *Nibelungenlied*. Wagner specifically developed the libretti for these operas according to his interpretation of *Stabreim*, highly alliterative rhyming verse-pairs used in old Germanic poetry. They were also influenced by Wagner's concepts of ancient Greek drama, in which tetralogies were a component of Athenian festivals and which he had amply discussed in his essay "Oper und Drama."

The first two components of the *Ring* cycle were *Das Rheingold* (*The Rhinegold*), which was completed in 1854, and *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*), which was finished in 1856. In *Das Rheingold*, with its "relentlessly talky 'realism' [and] the absence of lyrical 'numbers,'" Wagner came very close to the musical ideals of his 1849–51 essays. *Die Walküre*, which contains what is virtually a traditional aria (Siegmund's *Winterstürme* in the first act), and the quasi-choral appearance of the Valkyries themselves, shows more "operatic" traits but has been assessed by Barry Millington as "the music drama that most satisfactorily embodies the theoretical principles of 'Oper und Drama.' . . . A thoroughgoing synthesis of poetry and music is achieved without any notable sacrifice in musical expression."

Tristan und Isolde and Die Meistersinger

While composing the opera *Siegfried*, the third part of the *Ring* cycle, Wagner interrupted work on it and between 1857 and 1864 wrote the tragic love story *Tristan und Isolde* and his only mature comedy *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (*The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*), two works that are also part of the regular operatic canon.

Figure 2. Franz Betz, who created the role of Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger* and sang Wotan in the first complete *Ring* cycle.

Tristan is often granted a special place in musical history; many see it as the beginning of the move away from conventional harmony and tonality and consider that it lays the groundwork for the direction of classical music in the 20th century. Wagner felt that his musico-dramatical theories were most perfectly realized in this work with its use of "the art of transition" between dramatic elements and the balance achieved between vocal and orchestral lines. Completed in 1859, the work was given its first performance in Munich, conducted by Bülow, in June 1865.

Die Meistersinger was originally conceived by Wagner in 1845 as a sort of comic pendant to *Tannhäuser*. Like *Tristan*, it was premiered in Munich under the baton of Bülow on 21 June 1868 and became an immediate success. Barry Millington describes *Meistersinger* as "a rich, perceptive music drama widely admired for its warm humanity"; but because of its strong German nationalist overtones, it is also cited by some as an example of Wagner's reactionary politics and antisemitism.

Completing the Ring

When Wagner returned to writing the music for the last act of *Siegfried* and for *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the Gods*), as the final part of the *Ring*, his style had changed once more to something more recognizable as "operatic" than the aural world of *Rheingold* and *Walküre*, though it was still thoroughly stamped with his own originality as a composer and suffused with leitmotifs. This was in part because the libretti of the four *Ring* operas had been written in reverse order so that the book for *Götterdämmerung* was conceived more "traditionally" than that of *Rheingold*; still, the self-imposed strictures of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* had become relaxed. The differences also result from Wagner's development as a composer during the period in which he wrote *Tristan*, *Meistersinger*, and the Paris version of *Tannhäuser*. From act 3 of *Siegfried* onward, the *Ring* becomes more chromatic melodically, more complex harmonically, and more developmental in its treatment of leitmotifs.

Wagner took 26 years from writing the first draft of a libretto in 1848 until he completed *Götterdämmerung* in 1874. The *Ring* takes about 15 hours to perform and is the only undertaking of such size to be regularly presented on the world's stages.

Influence on Music

Wagner's later musical style introduced new ideas in harmony, melodic process (leitmotif), and operatic structure. Notably from *Tristan und Isolde* onward, he explored the limits of the traditional tonal system, which gave keys and chords their identity, pointing the way to atonality in the 20th century. Some music historians date the beginning of modern classical music to the first notes of *Tristan*, which include the so-called Tristan chord.

Wagner inspired great devotion. For a long period, many composers were inclined to align themselves with or against Wagner's music. Anton Bruckner and Hugo Wolf were greatly indebted to him, as were César Franck, Henri Duparc, Ernest Chausson, Jules Massenet, Richard Strauss, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Hans Pfitzner, and numerous others. Gustav Mahler was devoted to Wagner and his music; aged 15, he sought him out on his 1875 visit to Vienna and became a renowned Wagner conductor, and his compositions are seen by Richard Taruskin as extending Wagner's "maximalization" of "the temporal and the sonorous" in music to the world of the symphony. The harmonic revolutions of Claude Debussy and Arnold Schoenberg (both of whose *oeuvres* contain examples of tonal and atonal modernism) have often been traced back to *Tristan* and *Parsifal*. The Italian form of operatic realism known as verismo owed much to the Wagnerian concept of musical form.

Figure 3. Gustav Mahler.

Wagner made a major contribution to the principles and practice of conducting. His essay "About Conducting" (1869) advanced Hector Berlioz's technique of conducting and claimed that conducting was a means by which a musical work could be re-interpreted rather than simply a mechanism for achieving orchestral unison. He exemplified this approach in his own conducting, which was significantly more flexible than the disciplined approach of Mendelssohn; in his view, this also justified practices that would today be frowned upon, such as the rewriting of scores. Wilhelm Furtwängler felt that Wagner and Bülow, through their interpretative approach, inspired a whole new generation of conductors (including Furtwängler himself).

Among those claiming inspiration from Wagner's music are the German band Rammstein and the electronic composer Klaus Schulze, whose 1975 album *Timewind* consists of two 30-minute tracks, *Bayreuth Return* and *Wahnfried 1883*. Joey DeMaio of the band Manowar has described Wagner as "the father of

heavy metal." The Slovenian group Laibach created the 2009 suite *VolksWagner*, using material from Wagner's operas. Phil Spector's Wall of Sound recording technique was, it has been claimed, heavily influenced by Wagner.

Again, I want you to understand the story in which our Wagnerian aria is set. The opera is based on a medieval German telling of an ancient Celtic legend set in the British Isles. Lots of sword fighting, betrayal, magic potions, and doomed lovers. The "Liebestod," the piece on our playlist, is the final aria from the opera.

Introduction

Tristan und Isolde (*Tristan and Isolde*, or *Tristan and Isolda*, or *Tristran and Ysolt*) is an opera, or music drama, in three acts by Richard Wagner to a German libretto by the composer, based largely on the romance by Gottfried von Straßburg. It was composed between 1857 and 1859 and premiered at the Königliches Hof- und Nationaltheater in Munich on 10 June 1865 with Hans von Bülow conducting. Wagner referred to the work not as an opera but called it "eine Handlung" (literally *a drama*, *a plot* or *an action*), which was the equivalent of the term used by the Spanish playwright Calderón for his dramas.

Wagner's composition of *Tristan und Isolde* was inspired by the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer (particularly *The World as Will and Representation*) and Wagner's affair with Mathilde Wesendonck. Widely acknowledged as one of the peaks of the operatic repertoire, *Tristan* was notable for Wagner's unprecedented use of chromaticism, tonality, orchestral color, and harmonic suspension.

The opera was enormously influential among Western classical composers and provided direct inspiration to composers such as Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, Karol Szymanowski, Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, and Benjamin Britten. Other composers like Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and Igor Stravinsky formulated their styles in contrast to Wagner's musical legacy. Many see *Tristan* as the beginning of the move away from common-practice harmony and tonality and consider that it lays the groundwork for the direction of classical music in the 20th century. Both Wagner's libretto style and music were also profoundly influential on the Symbolist poets of the late 19th century and early 20th century.

Synopsis

Act 1

Isolde, promised to King Marke in marriage, and her handmaid, Brangäne, are quartered aboard Tristan's ship being transported to the king's lands in Cornwall. The opera opens with the voice of a young sailor singing of a "wild Irish maid" (*"West-wärts schweift der Blick"*), which Isolde construes to be a mocking reference to herself. In a furious outburst, she wishes the seas to rise up and sink the ship, killing herself and all on board (*"Erwache mir wieder, kühne Gewalt"*). Her scorn and rage are directed particularly at Tristan, the knight responsible for taking her to Marke, and Isolde sends Brangäne to command Tristan to appear before her (*"Befehlen liess' dem Eigenholde"*). Tristan, however, refuses Brangäne's request, claiming that his place is at the helm. His henchman, Kurwenal, answers more brusquely, saying that Isolde is in no position to command Tristan and reminds Brangäne that Isolde's previous fiancé, Morold, was killed by Tristan (*"Herr Morold zog zu Meere her."*)

Figure 1. *Isolde* by Aubrey Beardsley, 1895 illustration for The Studio magazine of the tragic opera heroine drinking the love potion.

Brangäne returns to Isolde to relate these events, and Isolde, in what is termed the "narrative and curse," sadly tells her of how, following the death of Morold, she happened upon a stranger who called himself Tantris. Tantris was found mortally wounded in a barge (*"von einem Kahn, der klein und arm"*), and Isolde used her healing powers to restore him to health. She discovered during Tantris's recovery, however, that he was actually Tristan, the murderer of her fiancé. Isolde attempted to kill the man with his own sword as he lay helpless before her. However, Tristan looked not at the sword that would kill him or the hand that wielded the sword but into her eyes (*"Er sah' mir in die Augen"*). His action pierced her heart, and she was unable to slay him. Tristan was allowed to leave with the promise never to come back, but he later returned with the intention of marrying Isolde to his uncle, King Marke. Isolde, furious at Tristan's betrayal, insists that he drink in atonement to her and from her medicine-chest produces a vial to make the drink. Brangäne is shocked to see that it is a lethal poison.

Kurwenal appears in the women's quarters (*"Auf auf! Ihr Frauen!"*) and announces that the voyage is coming to an end. Isolde warns Kurwenal that she will not appear before the King if Tristan does not come before her as she had previously ordered and drink in atonement to her. When Tristan arrives, Isolde reproaches him about his conduct and tells him that he owes her his life and how his actions have undermined

her honor, since she blessed Morold's weapons before battle and therefore she swore revenge. Tristan first offers his sword but Isolde refuses; they must drink in atonement. Brangäne brings in the potion that will seal their pardon, Tristan knows that it may kill him, since he knows Isolde's magic powers (*"Wohl kenn' ich Irland's Königin"*). The journey is almost at its end. Tristan drinks and Isolde takes half the potion for herself. The potion seems to work, but it does not bring death but relentless love (*"Tristan! Isolde!"*). Kurwenal, who announces the imminent arrival on board of King Marke, interrupts their rapture. Isolde asks Brangäne which potion she prepared, and Brangäne replies, as the sailors hail the arrival of King Marke, that it was not poison but rather a love potion.

Act 2

King Marke leads a hunting party out into the night, leaving Isolde and Brangäne alone in the castle, who both stand beside a burning brazier. Isolde, listening to the hunting horns, believes several times that the hunting party is far enough away to warrant the extinguishing of the brazier—the prearranged signal for Tristan to join her (*"Nicht Hörnerschall tönt so hold"*). Brangäne warns Isolde that Melot, one of King Marke's knights, has seen the amorous looks exchanged between Tristan and Isolde and suspects their passion (*"Ein Einz'ger war's, ich achtet' es wohl"*). Isolde, however, believes Melot to be Tristan's most loyal friend and, in a frenzy of desire, extinguishes the flames. Brangäne retires to the ramparts to keep watch as Tristan arrives.

The lovers, at last alone and freed from the constraints of courtly life, declare their passion for each other. Tristan decries the realm of daylight, which is false, unreal, and keeps them apart. It is only in night, he claims, that they can truly be together, and only in the long night of death can they be eternally united (*"O sink' hernieder, Nacht der Liebe"*). During their long tryst, Brangäne calls a warning several times that the night is ending (*"Einsam wachend in der Nacht"*), but her cries fall upon deaf ears. The day breaks in on the lovers as Melot leads King Marke and his men to find Tristan and Isolde in each other's arms. Marke is heartbroken not only because of his nephew's betrayal but also because Melot chose to betray his friend Tristan to Marke and because of Isolde's betrayal as well (*"Mir—dies? Dies, Tristan—mir?"*).

When questioned, Tristan says he cannot answer to the king the reason for his betrayal since he would not understand, he turns to Isolde, who agrees to follow him again into the realm of night. Tristan announces that Melot has fallen in love with Isolde too. Melot and Tristan fight, but, at the crucial moment, Tristan throws his sword aside and allows Melot to severely wound him.

Act 3

Kurwenal has brought Tristan home to his castle at Kareol in Brittany. A shepherd pipes a mournful tune and asks if Tristan is awake. Kurwenal replies that only Isolde's arrival can save Tristan, and the shepherd offers to keep watch and claims that he will pipe a joyful tune to mark the arrival of any ship. Tristan awakes (*"Die alte Weise—was weckt sie mich?"*) and laments his fate—to be, once again, in the false realm of daylight, once more

driven by unceasing unquenchable yearning (*"Wo ich erwacht' Weilt ich nicht"*). Tristan's sorrow ends when Kurwenal tells him that Isolde is on her way. Tristan, overjoyed, asks if her ship is in sight, but only a sorrowful tune from the shepherd's pipe is heard.

Tristan relapses and recalls that the shepherd's mournful tune is the same as was played when he was told of the deaths of his father and mother (*"Muss ich dich so versteh'n, du alte, ernst Weise"*). He rails once again against his desires and against the fateful love potion (*"verflucht sei, furchtbarer Trank!"*) until, exhausted, he collapses in delirium. After his collapse, the shepherd is heard piping the arrival of Isolde's ship, and, as Kurwenal rushes to meet her, Tristan tears the bandages from his wounds in his excitement (*"Hahei! Mein Blut, lustig nun fliesse!"*). As Isolde arrives at his side, Tristan dies with her name on his lips.

Isolde collapses beside her deceased lover just as the appearance of another ship is announced. Kurwenal spies Melot, Marke, and Brangäne arriving (*"Tod und Hölle! Alles zur Hand!"*); he believes they have come to kill Tristan; and, in an attempt to avenge him, furiously attacks Melot. Marke tries to stop the fight to no avail. Both Melot and Kurwenal are killed in the fight. Marke and Brangäne finally reach Tristan and Isolde. Marke, grieving over the body of his "truest friend" (*"Tot denn alles!"*), explains that Brangäne revealed the secret of the love potion and has come not to part the lovers but to unite them (*"Warum Isolde, warum mir das?"*). Isolde appears to wake at this and, in a final aria describing her vision of Tristan risen again (the "Liebestod," "love death"), dies (*"Mild und leise wie er lächelt"*).

Liebestod

This very brief Wikipedia article contains the original German text of the aria and an English translation. I'd definitely suggest listening to the aria with the translation in front of you. It's much more meaningful if you understand what's being sung.

Introduction

"**Liebestod**" (['li:bəsˌto:t] German for "love death") is the title of the final dramatic music from the 1859 opera *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner. When used as a literary term, *liebestod* (from German *Liebe*, love, and *Tod*, death) refers to the theme of erotic death or "love death," meaning the two lovers' consummation of their love in death or after death. Other two-sided examples include *Pyramus and Thisbe*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and to some degree *Wuthering Heights*. One-sided examples are *Porphyria's Lover* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. The joint suicide of Heinrich von Kleist and lover Henriette Vogel (de) is often associated with the *Liebestod* theme.

The aria is the climactic end of the opera as Isolde sings over Tristan's dead body.

Partial Text

German	English Translation
Mild und leise wie er lächelt, wie das Auge hold er öffnet —seht ihr's, Freunde? Seht ihr's nicht? Immer lichter wie er leuchtet, stern-umstrahlet hoch sich hebt? Seht ihr's nicht? ertrinken, versinken,— unbewusst,— höchste Lust!	Softly and gently how he smiles, how his eyes fondly open —do you see, friends? do you not see? how he shines ever brighter. Star-haloed rising higher Do you not see? *[. . . and ends . . .]* to drown, to founder— unconscious— utmost bliss!

Verismo

Verismo, which in this context means "realism," is the name for a movement that arose in opera near the end of the 19th century. Composers of versimo operas chose realistic settings, often depicting the struggles and drama of common people. In this they were reacting against the grandiosity and mythological focus of Romanticism. Verismo, like Impressionism, is part of the transition from the Romantic to the Modern era and could justifiably be studied as part of either period. Just as we studied Beethoven in the Classical era and Schubert in the Romantic era, we will examine verismo opera (and one of its greatest practitioners, Giacomo Puccini) in our study of the Romantic period and Impressionism in our study of the 20th century.

Introduction

In opera, **verismo** (meaning "realism," from Italian *vero*, meaning "true") was a post-Romantic operatic tradition associated with Italian composers such as Pietro Mascagni, Ruggero Leoncavallo, Umberto Giordano, and Giacomo Puccini.

Verismo as an operatic genre had its origins in an Italian literary movement also called "verismo" (see Verismo [literature]). The Italian literary movement of *verismo*, in turn, was related to the international literary movement of Naturalism as practiced by Émile Zola and others. Like naturalism, the *verismo* literary movement sought to portray the world with greater realism. In so doing, Italian *verismo* authors such as

Giovanni Verga wrote about subject matter, such as the lives of the poor, that had not generally been seen as a fit subject for literature. A short story by Verga called *Cavalleria rusticana* ("Rustic Chivalry"), then developed into a play by the same author, became the source for what is usually considered to be the first verismo opera: *Cavalleria rusticana* by Mascagni, which premiered on 17 May 1890 at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. Thus begun, the operatic genre of *verismo* produced a handful of notable works, such as *Pagliacci*, which premiered at Teatro Dal Verme in Milan on 21 May 1892, and Puccini's *Tosca* (premiering at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome on 14 January 1900.) The genre peaked in the early 1900s and lingered into the 1920s.

In terms of subject matter, generally "[v]erismo operas focused not on gods, mythological figures, or kings and queens, but on the average contemporary man and woman and their problems, generally of a sexual romantic, or violent nature." However, two of the small handful of verismo operas still performed today take historical subjects: Puccini's *Tosca* and Giordano's *Andrea Chénier*. "Musically, verismo composers consciously strove for the integration of the opera's underlying drama with its music." These composers abandoned the "recitative and set-piece structure" of earlier Italian opera. Instead, the operas were "through-composed," with few breaks in a seamlessly integrated sung text. While *verismo* operas may contain arias that can be sung as stand-alone pieces, they are generally written to arise naturally from their dramatic surroundings, and their structure is variable, being based on text that usually does not follow a regular strophic format.

The most famous composers who created works in the *verismo* style were Giacomo Puccini, Pietro Mascagni, Ruggero Leoncavallo, Umberto Giordano, and Francesco Cilea. There were, however, many other *veristi*: Franco Alfano, Alfredo Catalani, Gustave Charpentier (*Louise*), Eugen d'Albert (*Tiefland*), Ignatz Waghalter (*Der Teufelsweg* and *Jugend*), Alberto Franchetti, Franco Leoni, Jules Massenet (*La Navarraise*), Licinio Refice, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (*I gioielli della Madonna*), and Riccardo Zandonai.

The term *verismo* can cause confusion. In addition to referring to operas written in a realistic style, the term may also be used more broadly to refer to the entire output of the composers of the *giovane scuola* ("young school"), the generation of composers who were active in Italy during the period that the *verismo* style was created. One author (Alan Mallach) has proposed the term "plebian opera" to refer to operas that adhere to the contemporary and realistic subject matter for which the term *verismo* was originally coined. At the same time, Mallach questions the value of using a term such as *verismo*, which is supposedly descriptive of the subject and style of works, simply to identify an entire generation's music-dramatic output. For most of the composers associated with *verismo*, traditionally veristic subjects accounted for only some of their operas. For instance, Mascagni wrote a pastoral comedy (*L'amico Fritz*), a symbolist work set in Japan (*Iris*), and a couple of medieval romances (*Isabeau* and *Parisina*). These works are far from typical *verismo* subject matter, yet they are written in the same general musical style as his more quintessential veristic subjects. In addition, there is disagreement among musicologists as to which operas are "verismo" operas and which are not. (Non-Italian operas are generally excluded.) Giordano's *Andrea Chénier*, Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, and Puccini's *Tosca* and *Il tabarro* are operas to which the term verismo is applied with little or no dispute. The term is sometimes also applied to Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and *La fanciulla del West*. Because

only three *verismo* works not by Puccini continue to appear regularly on stage (the aforementioned *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, and *Andrea Chénier*), Puccini's contribution has had lasting significance to the genre.

Some authors have attempted to trace the origins of verismo opera to works that preceded Cavalleria rusticana, such as Georges Bizet's *Carmen* or Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata*.

Verismo Singers

The verismo opera style featured music that required singers to perform more declamatory singing, in contrast to the traditional tenets of elegant, 19th century bel canto singing that had preceded the movement. Opera singers adapted to the demands of the new style. The most extreme exponents of verismo vocalism sang habitually in a vociferous fashion, often forfeiting legato to focus on the passionate aspect of the music. They would "beef up" the timbre of their voices, use excessive amounts of vocal fold mass on their top notes, and often employ a conspicuous vibrato in order to accentuate the emotionalism of their ardent interpretations. The results could be exciting in the theater, but such a strenuous mode of singing was not a recipe for vocal longevity. Some prominent practitioners of full-throttle verismo singing during the movement's Italian life-span (circa 1890 to circa 1930) include the sopranos Eugenia Burzio, Rosina Storchio, and Adelaide Saraceni; the tenors Aureliano Pertile, Cesar Vezzani, and Amadeo Bassi; and the baritones Mario Sammarco and Eugenio Giraldoni. Their method of singing can be sampled on numerous 78-rpm gramophone recordings. See Michael Scott's two-volume survey *The Record of Singing*, published in London by Duckworth in 1977/79, for an evaluation of most of these singers, and others of their Ilk, and a discussion of the adverse impact that verismo music had on singing standards in Italy.

Such great early 20th-century international operatic stars as Enrico Caruso, Rosa Ponselle, and Titta Ruffo developed vocal techniques that harmoniously managed to combine fundamental bel canto precepts with a more "modern," straightforward mode of ripe-toned singing when delivering verismo music, and their example has influenced operatic performers down to this day (see Scott).

Introduction

La bohème is an opera in four acts composed by Giacomo Puccini to an Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, based on *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by Henri Murger. The world premiere performance of *La bohème* was in Turin on 1 February 1896 at the Teatro Regio, conducted by the young Arturo Toscanini. Since then, *La bohème* has become part of the standard Italian opera repertory and is one of the most frequently performed operas worldwide.

In 1946, fifty years after the opera's premiere, Toscanini conducted a performance of it on radio with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. This performance was eventually released on records and on CD. It is the only recording of a Puccini opera by its original conductor (see *Recordings* below).

Synopsis

Place: Paris
Time: Around 1830

Act 1

In the four bohemians' garret

Marcello is painting while Rodolfo gazes out of the window. They complain of the cold. In order to keep warm, they burn the manuscript of Rodolfo's drama. Colline, the philosopher, enters shivering and disgruntled at not having been able to pawn some books. Schaunard, the musician of the group, arrives with food, wine, and cigars. He explains the source of his riches: a job with an eccentric English gentleman who ordered him to play his violin to a parrot until it died. The others hardly listen to his tale as they set up the table to eat and drink. Schaunard interrupts, telling them that they must save the food for the days ahead: tonight they will all celebrate his good fortune by dining at Cafe Momus, and he will pay.

Figure 1. Rodolfo's garret—set design for act 1 of *La bohème* for the world premiere performance.

The friends are interrupted by Benoît, the landlord, who arrives to collect the rent. They flatter him and ply him with wine. In his drunkenness, he begins to boast of his amorous adventures, but when he also reveals that he is married, they thrust him from the room—without the rent payment—in comic moral indignation. The rent money is divided for their evening out in the *Quartier Latin*.

Marcello, Schaunard, and Colline go out, but Rodolfo remains alone for a moment in order to finish an article he is writing, promising to join his friends soon. There is a knock at the door. It is a girl who lives in another room in the building. Her candle has blown out, and she has no matches; she asks Rodolfo to light it. She is briefly overcome with faintness, and Rodolfo helps her to a chair and offers her a glass of wine. She thanks him. After a few minutes, she says that she is better and must go. But as she turns to leave, she realizes that she has lost her key.

Her candle goes out in the draught and Rodolfo's candle goes out too; the pair stumble in the dark. Rodolfo, eager to spend time with the girl, to whom he is already attracted, finds the key and pockets it, feigning innocence. He takes her cold hand (*Che gelida manina*—"What a cold little hand") and tells her of his life as a poet, then asks her to tell him more about her life. The girl says her name is Mimì (*Sì, mi chiamano Mimì*—"Yes, they call me Mimì") and describes her simple life as an embroiderer. Impatiently, the waiting friends call Rodolfo. He answers and turns to see Mimì bathed in moonlight (duet, Rodolfo and Mimì: *O soave fanciulla*—"Oh lovely girl"). They realize that they have fallen in love. Rodolfo suggests remaining at home

with Mimì, but she decides to accompany him to the Cafe Momus. As they leave, they sing of their newfound love.

Listen: Act I

"Sì, mi chiamano Mimì"

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=575#audio-575-8

"O soave fanciulla"

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=575#audio-575-9

"Che gelida manina"

Here are the lyrics, both the original Italian and an English translation, for "Che gelida manina" from Puccini's *La bohème*. This is a commercial site, but the translation will be helpful to understand what Rodolfo says when he first meets the woman he falls in love with, Mimì.

"Sì, mi chiamano Mimì"

Here are the lyrics, both the original Italian and an English translation, for "Sì, mi chiamano Mimì" from Puccini's *La bohème*. This is a commercial site (about.com) so unfortunately there are some ads that get in the way, but the translation will be helpful to understand what Mimì says in response to Rodolfo's aria "Che gelida manina."

As on the last test, the question I would like you to ask yourself when you are listening to a piece is "What am I hearing?" I think a really good way to start is to listen for characteristics that might narrow down your choice to one or two possible genres. This exam is similar to Exam 2 in that there is a mixture of vocal and instrumental music, so the first thing to determine is whether or not there is singing.

I Hear Singing

If you hear singing then that immediately rules out the instrumental genres, such as Program Symphony or Nocturne. It must be an opera, a requiem, or an art song. How do you narrow it down? Again, ask yourself, "What am I hearing?"

I hear a male soloist with orchestra.

This narrows it down to two pieces, both of which are tenor arias. Don't let this similarity worry you, however. These two arias are quite different from each other.

- **La donna è mobile, *La Traviata*.** First of all, this is a very familiar tune that I suspect most of you have heard. It has become such a part of our culture that it's not just a concert piece. It's been featured in television commercials and comedy sketches many times. Another musical element to listen for is the "boom-chick-chick" accompaniment of the orchestra. This is a classic Verdi accompaniment, though in this case it is meant to represent the Duke, the character singing the aria, strumming his guitar. Lastly, the tempo is moderately fast, and the piece has an energetic swagger to it. You can almost picture the Duke strutting around the stage as he sings.
- **Che gelida manina, *La Bohème*.** This piece has a very different quality as compared with the aria from *Rigoletto*. It has a slower tempo and a smooth, flowing feel. There is not a clearly defined and frequently repeated catchy tune. The music builds gradually to an emotional climax near the end.

I hear a female soloist with an orchestra.

This also narrows it down to two pieces, both of which are soprano arias and feature moderately slow tempos. The differences between these two works are subtle, so you'll want to listen for a combination of less-obvious musical elements.

- **Die Liebestod, *Tristan Und Isolde*.** The first thing I suggest you listen for in this piece is the importance of the orchestra. Remember that Wagner gave his all-important leitmotifs to both the orchestra and the singer, so both entities are on an equal dramatic footing. The orchestra is almost singing a duet with the soprano. In the other two pieces, especially the Mahler, you'll get a stronger sense

that the orchestra is backing up (or accompanying) the singer, not standing side by side with her as it does in Liebestod. Second, in Wagner's operas, we do not hear separate recitatives and arias. He strove for an "endless melody" that I think is particularly evident in Liebestod. As you listen to the piece, you don't get the sense that particular phrases of text or individual melodic ideas have begun, then ended. The music seems to flow continuously toward the emotional climax heard around the 5-minute mark that follows the text "In dem wogenden Schwall, in dem tönenden Schall" (In the growing swell, the surging sound).

- **Sì, mi chiamano Mimì, *La Bohème*.** Puccini, like Wagner, preferred to blur the distinction between recitative and aria. Unlike Wagner, you will hear clear phrases begin and end. This fits the setting of the piece. The poor seamstress Mimì is introducing herself to Rodolfo after he has sung "Che gelida manina." They are having a conversation, so it is fitting that in the beginning of "Sì, mi chiamano Mimì," the singing is more speech-like and syllabic (one note per syllable of text). As the piece progresses, the intensity builds and the melody soars in the longer notes and emotional heights we'd expect from any aria. In addition to the more conversational delivery and clearer phrasing, there is a lighter, more hopeful emotion being expressed than in the Wagner. Listening for these differences in character and phrasing should assist in the identification of this piece.

I hear chorus and orchestra.

Once again we have multiple pieces that fit this description. There are three works that feature orchestra and choir: two Requiems and a Choral Symphony.

- ***Messa da Requiem*, II "Dies Irae."** This piece should be easily recognized for its fast tempo and ferocious intensity. "Dies Irae" means "day of wrath," and in Verdi's composition, that wrath represents the fear in the hearts of the wicked on judgment day. There is relatively little in the way of dynamic or expressive contrast within this piece. It is loud and aggressive almost all the way through. When the choir is not singing, you will hear extensive use of trumpets.
- **Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, *Ein Deutches Requiem*.** This piece provides quite a contrast to the Verdi. Contemplative in expression and moderate in tempo, this movement from Brahm's German Requiem has none of the fire and brimstone of Verdi's "Dies Irae." There are contrasting textures within the piece. Homophonic sections alternate with polyphonic ones, with the second-to-last section of the piece featuring a mini-fugue.
- **Symphony No. 8, Finale.** Mahler was not one to go for small gestures. He felt that the symphony was a musical universe that needed to encompass many other genres, both vocal and instrumental, on a grand scale. His 8th symphony is often called "Symphony of a Thousand" because of the size of both the orchestra and choruses—that's right, multiple choirs. I think the massive size of the performing forces for this piece will serve as a means of distinguishing this piece from the other two choral/orchestral

works. It's also worth noting that this piece features vocal soloists along with the choirs. Depending on the excerpt, you may hear those soloists. If you do, that's a dead giveaway for the finale of Mahler's 8th symphony. While both the full works by Verdi and Brahms feature soloists, they are not heard in the movements on our playlist.

I hear a soloist with a piano.

This is an art song. There are two of these on your exam, and there is a very straightforward way to tell them apart: the gender of the singer. Because of this, I'm going to list them by that characteristic rather than by title as I did for the arias and the choral/orchestral works.

- **The singer is male.** Schubert's *Erlking* is the only art song that features a male (tenor) vocalist. That characteristic alone makes this an easy piece to identify, but again there are some other unique aspects to this song worth mentioning. First, it is a through-composed piece. That means that there are not multiple verses of text set to the same tune. The tune just keeps rolling forward with no structural repetition. There is a repeated figure in the accompaniment, however. The piano keeps playing a rapidly repeated note in the right hand. This is meant to represent the horse's hooves as the father and son gallop home through the forest. Speaking of galloping, this is a piece with a fast tempo. Lastly, this song features four different characters: narrator, father, son, and erlking. While there is only one singer, he sings each of these parts in a slightly different voice
- **The singer is female.** Robert Schumann's "Du Ring an meinem Finger" is the only art song that features a female (mezzo-soprano) vocalist. Once again the singer's voice will give away this piece, but you should still keep an ear out for some of the other significant musical characteristics of the song. The meter is duple and the tempo is slow. It is written in rondo form (ABACA), which is a bit unusual for an art song.

I Hear Instruments Only

If you hear only instruments, then that rules out the vocal genres like opera and art song/lied. As always, ask yourself, "What am I hearing?"

I hear solo piano.

This narrows it down to just one piece: Chopin's Nocturne. All Chopin's Nocturnes are generally brooding and introspective, and this piece is no exception. While the tempo of the piece is relatively slow, many students mistake the intensity and activity in the left hand as a faster tempo. The basic pulse or beat of the piece, though it speeds up and slows down somewhat (this is known as rubato), is uniformly slow and restrained. There are

three basic themes over the course of the piece. The first theme is the most subdued, and it both opens and closes the piece. With its melancholy quality, it best typifies the mood of all Chopin's Nocturnes. The second theme and third themes become progressively more active and passionate. The third theme shifts from the minor mode of the earlier two themes to a more heroic major. But regardless of the theme, the instrumentation of the piece, solo piano, will make this easy to identify should it appear on your exam.

I hear a violin soloist playing against an orchestra.

This is Brahms's Violin Concerto, 3rd mvmt. You should not have difficulty identifying the piece, as it is the only concerto on the listening list. If you hear solo violin vs. orchestra, it's got to be the Brahms. Though form may not be easy to hear in a short excerpt, remember that Brahms was a late-Romantic traditionalist and as such made use of the traditional forms from the Classical era. In this case that means rondo form for the final movement of a concerto, just as we heard in the Classical era with Mozart's concerto for horn. One more thing to listen for is the extensive use of double stops, the playing of two strings at once, by the violin soloist. Normally when we hear solo violin, we hear one note at a time. Double stops make possible two notes at a time. This is very difficult to do, and this movement features some truly virtuosic playing.

I hear an orchestra.

There are three purely orchestral pieces on this test. Two are clear examples of program music—namely, the program symphony (Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*) and the symphonic poem (Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*). The third is an example of absolute music and nationalism—namely, a symphony (Dvořák's Symphony No. 9) meant to evoke American folk elements. Remember that even though Mahler's Symphony No. 8 seems like it ought to be in this list, the finale, which is the piece on our listening list, features a choir and vocal soloists, so it is not purely instrumental. Let's talk about the characteristics of each and how you can tell them apart. Because there aren't single characteristics, such as tempo or instrumentation, that makes these pieces clearly identifiable. I'm going to list them by title and review each piece (just as we did with the operatic works).

- **Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, 5th mvmt.** The fantastic, supernatural scene being depicted in this program symphony allows Berlioz to give free rein to one of his greatest talents: orchestration. Berlioz was a master at pulling all sorts of different sounds out of the orchestra. You'll hear the idée fixe, a lyrical tune found in each of this symphony's movements, transformed into a crude dance played by the clarinet; tolling funeral bells precede another preexisting tune, the dies irae, in the tubas and bassoons (low brass and woodwind instruments); and strings playing with the wood of the bow (col legno) create a crackling sound meant to depict the flames of hell. Knowing the story of the piece and listening for the unusual instrumentation used to depict it will help you ID this orchestral work. The overall tempo of this piece is fast, though to better tell the story, it sometimes briefly slows down or pauses. Even in the

slower moments, Berlioz maintains the intensity and foreboding for which this movement is so well known. That dark intensity, generally fast tempo, and unique orchestration sets the piece apart from all the other orchestral works on this exam.

- **Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*.** The composer here has taken the well-known play and boiled its contents down to three themes. You should definitely familiarize yourself with all three, though the third theme truly stands out. The three themes each have their own tempo and character. The first theme is the Friar Lawrence theme, which is slow and sad (minor). The woodwinds are the dominant instruments in this theme. The second theme represents the Capulets and Montagues and their blood feud. The fast, agitated theme, complete with cymbal crashes, is played by the full orchestra and calls to mind the various duels we see in the play. The third theme, the love theme, is extremely well-known and probably the easiest to recognize. It is slow and sweeping, with an almost overpowering sweetness. You've probably heard it during a commercial or a comedic scene in a movie when two people are running toward each other in slow motion through a field. Unfortunately, in popular culture, this orchestral theme has become the default soundtrack for any romantic moment that is over-the-top or cheesy. Don't let that association ruin the piece for you (though it should make it easier to identify). This is powerfully expressive orchestral melodic writing by a composer that knew how to weave emotional music better than almost anyone else.
- **Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World," 2nd mvmt.** Like Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, this movement has a theme that has taken on a life of its own. Many people know this tune as the song "Goin' Home." When they hear the symphony, they think, "Oh he wrote that song into the symphony," but of course they've got it backward—the symphony came first. Only after the symphony had become popular was this theme separated from the larger work and turned into a song. This theme will be played by different instruments at different times (English horn, full strings, solo cello), so you'll want to familiarize yourself with the tune, not the instrumentation. The tempo of this movement is slow, and the character is nostalgic and sweet. You will definitely not get this piece mixed up with the Berlioz.

Titles, Composers, and Genres for Exam 4

Title	Composer	Genre
Erlking	Franz Schubert	Art Song/Lied
Du Ring an meinem Finger	Robert Schumann	Art Song/Lied
Symphony Fantastique, 5th mvmt.	Hector Berlioz	Program Symphony
Romeo and Juliet	Peter Tchaikovsky	Symphonic Poem
Nocturne in C# minor	Frederic Chopin	Nocturne
La donna è mobile, *La Traviata*	Giuseppe Verdi	Opera
Messa da Requiem, II "Dies Irae"	Giuseppe Verdi	Requiem
Die Liebestod, *Tristan Und Isolde*	Richard Wagner	Opera
Che gelida manina, *La Bohème*	Giacomo Puccini	Opera
Sì, mi chiamano Mimì, *La Bohème*	Giacomo Puccini	Opera
Symphony No. 9 "From the New World," 2nd mvmt.	Antonin Dvořák	Symphony
Violin Concerto, 3rd mvmt.	Johannes Brahms	Concerto
Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, *Ein Deutches Requiem*	Johannes Brahms	Requiem
Symphony No. 8, Finale	Gustav Mahler	Choral Symphony

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

I suspect that if you conducted a survey where you played a variety of classical works for a group of fellow students and asked them to indicate whether they'd heard each piece before, Tchaikovsky's music would rank as some of the most recognized. While many could only name his ballet "The Nutcracker," it is likely that many will have heard portions of the 1812 Overture, *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Romeo and Juliet* (the piece on our playlist). He had a gift for writing melodies that were immediately captivating. This did not always earn him the praise of critics, but it has ensured ongoing popularity. Please read this biographical summary of Tchaikovsky.

These paragraphs provide a useful explanation of the three main melodic themes of the piece, *Romeo and Juliet*. Don't worry too much about the discussion of harmony (what keys each theme is in). Just focus on how Tchaikovsky uses the three melodic ideas to depict elements of Shakespeare's play.

Romeo and Juliet: Musical structure

Although styled as an "Overture-Fantasy" by the composer, the overall design is a symphonic poem in sonata form with an introduction and an epilogue. The work is based on three main strands of the Shakespeare story. The first strand, written in F-sharp minor, following Mily Balakirev's suggestion, is the introduction representing the saintly Friar Laurence. Here there is a foreboding of doom from the lower strings. The Friar Laurence theme is heard in F minor, with plucked strings, before ending up in E minor. The introduction is chorale-like.

Figure 1. An 1870 oil painting by Ford Madox Brown depicting Romeo and Juliet's famous balcony scene.

Eventually, a single B minor chord with a D natural in the bass passed back and forth between strings and woodwinds grows into the second strand in B minor, the agitated theme of the warring Capulets and Montagues, including a reference to the sword fight, depicted by crashing cymbals. There are agitated, quick sixteenth notes. The forceful irregular rhythms of the street music point ahead to Igor Stravinsky and beyond. The action suddenly slows, the key changing from B minor to D-flat (as suggested by Balakirev), and we hear the opening bars of the "love theme," the third strand, passionate and yearning in character but always with an underlying current of anxiety.

The love theme signifies the couple's first meeting and the scene at Juliet's balcony. The English horn represents Romeo, while the flutes represent Juliet. Then the battling strand returns, this time with more intensity and build-up, with the Friar Laurence Theme heard with agitation. The strings enter with a lush, hovering melody over which the flute and oboe eventually soar with the love theme once again, this time loud and in D major, signaling the development section and their consummated marriage, and finally heard in E major, and two large orchestra hits with cymbal crashes signal the suicide of the two lovers. A final battle theme is played, then a soft, slow dirge in B major ensues, with timpani playing a repeated triplet pattern and tuba holding a B natural for 16 bars. The woodwinds play a sweet homage to the lovers, and a final allusion to the love theme brings in the climax, beginning with a huge crescendo B natural roll of the timpani, and the orchestra plays homophonic shouts of a B major chord before the final bar, with full orchestra belting out a powerful B natural to close the overture.

Introduction to the Late Romantic Era

This section contains all the readings on important composers and genres of the later portion of the Romantic

era. Since we covered composers whose primary focus was opera in a separate module, our emphasis now will be on composers who tended to work in larger orchestral genres. We will also examine the role of nationalism in late Romantic music.

This section includes the following pages:

- Slide Show: Late Romantic Era
- Symphonic Poem
- Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- Romeo and Juliet
- Nationalism
- Antonin Dvořák
- Symphony No. 9, From the New World
- Johannes Brahms
- Brahms's Violin Concerto
- German Requiem
- Gustav Mahler
- Symphony No. 8, Symphony of a Thousand

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Symphony No. 9 from the New World

Dvořák's "New World Symphony" is one of his best-known works. It was an immediate success in its day and has been widely performed since. Please pay special attention to the section titled "Influences," as it explores his use of American folk elements in the piece.

Introduction

The **Symphony No. 9** in E minor, "From the New World," Op. 95, B. 178 (Czech: *Symfonie č. 9 e moll „Z nového světa"*), popularly known as the ***New World Symphony***, was composed by Antonín Dvořák in 1893 while he was the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America from 1892 to 1895. It is by far

his most popular symphony and one of the most popular of all symphonies. In older literature and recordings, this symphony was often numbered as Symphony No. 5. Neil Armstrong took a recording of the *New World Symphony* to the Moon during the Apollo 11 mission, the first Moon landing, in 1969.

Instrumentation

This symphony is scored for an orchestra of at least the following:

- 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo)
- 2 oboes (one doubling English horn)
- 2 clarinets in A
- 2 bassoons
- 4 horns in E, C and F
- 2 trumpets in E, C and E ♭
- 2 tenor trombones
- Bass trombone
- Tuba (second movement only)
- Timpani
- Triangle (third movement only)
- Cymbals (fourth movement only)
- Strings

Listen: Movements

The piece has four movements. Please listen to each of the movements to hear the entire symphony.

Adagio, 4/8—Allegro molto, 2/4, E minor

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Largo, common time, D-flat major, then later C-sharp minor

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Scherzo: Molto vivace—Poco sostenuto, 3/4, E minor

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Allegro con fuoco, common time, E minor, ends in E major

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Influences

Dvořák was interested in Native American music and the African-American spirituals he heard in America. As director of the National Conservatory, he encountered an African-American student, Harry T. Burleigh, later a composer himself, who sang traditional spirituals to him and said that Dvořák had absorbed their "spirit" before writing his own melodies. Dvořák stated:

> I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. These can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition, to be developed in the United States. These beautiful and varied themes are the product of the soil. They are the folk songs of America and your composers must turn to them.

The symphony was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and premiered on December 16, 1893, at Carnegie Hall, conducted by Anton Seidl. A day earlier, in an article published in the *New York Herald* on December 15, 1893, Dvořák further explained how Native American music had been an influence on this symphony:

> I have not actually used any of the [Native American] melodies. I have simply written original themes embodying the peculiarities of the Indian music, and, using these themes as subjects, have developed them with all the resources of modern rhythms, counterpoint, and orchestral colour.

In the same article, Dvořák stated that he regarded the symphony's second movement as a "sketch or study for a later work, either a cantata or opera . . . which will be based upon Longfellow's [*The Song of*] *Hiawatha*" (Dvořák never actually wrote such a piece). He also wrote that the third movement scherzo was "suggested by the scene at the feast in *Hiawatha* where the Indians dance."

In 1893, a newspaper interview quoted Dvořák as saying, "I found that the music of the negroes and of the Indians was practically identical" and that "the music of the two races bore a remarkable similarity to the music of Scotland." Most historians agree that Dvořák is referring to the pentatonic scale, which is typical of each of these musical traditions.

In a 2008 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, prominent musicologist Joseph Horowitz asserts that African-American spirituals were a major influence on Dvořák's music written in America, quoting him from an 1893 interview in the *New York Herald* as saying, "In the negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music." Dvořák did, it seems, borrow rhythms from the music of his native Bohemia, as notably in his Slavonic Dances, and the pentatonic scale in some of his music written in America from African-American and/or Native American sources. Statements that he borrowed melodies are often made but seldom supported by specifics. One verified example is the song of the Scarlet Tanager in the Quartet. Michael Steinberg writes that a flute solo theme in the first movement of the symphony resembles the spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." Leonard Bernstein averred that the symphony was truly multinational in its foundations.

Dvořák was influenced not only by music he had heard but by what he had seen in America. He wrote that he would not have composed his American pieces as he had if he had not seen America. It has been said that Dvořák was inspired by the American "wide open spaces," such as prairies he may have seen on his trip to Iowa in the summer of 1893. Notices about several performances of the symphony include the phrase "wide open spaces" about what inspired the symphony and/or about the feelings it conveys to listeners.

Dvořák was also influenced by the style and techniques used by earlier classical composers, including Beethoven and Schubert. The falling fourths and timpani strokes in the *New World Symphony*'s Scherzo

movement evoke the Scherzo of Beethoven's Choral Symphony. In his fourth movement, Dvořák's use of flashbacks to prior movements is reminiscent of Beethoven quoting prior movements as part of the opening Presto of the last movement.

Reception

At the premiere in Carnegie Hall, the end of every movement was met with thunderous clapping, and Dvořák felt obliged to stand up and bow. This was one of the greatest public triumphs of Dvořák's career. When the symphony was published, several European orchestras soon performed it. Alexander Mackenzie conducted the London Philharmonic Society in the European premiere on June 21, 1894. Clapham says the symphony became "one of the most popular of all time," and at a time when the composer's main works were being welcomed in no more than ten countries, this symphony reached the rest of the musical world and has become a "universal favorite." It is performed [as of 1978] more often "than any other symphony at the Royal Festival Hall, London," and is in "tremendous demand in Japan."

Several themes from the symphony have been used widely in films, TV shows, anime, video games, and advertisements.

The Song "Goin' Home"

The theme from the Largo was adapted into the spiritual-like song "Goin' Home," often mistakenly considered a folk song or traditional spiritual, by Dvořák's pupil William Arms Fisher, who wrote the lyrics in 1922.

Symphonic Poem

We have already explored the interest of early Romantic composers in program music and the application of programmatic principles to traditional genres like the symphony. On this page you'll read about later Romantic composers' pursuit of a new structure in which to use instrumental music as a means of depicting a story, picture, or landscape. As you'll read, composers turned from the symphony to the overture. We have encountered overtures in previous eras. An overture is a prelude to a larger work, usually a staged work such as an opera or ballet, that often previews some of the important melodic themes that will be heard over the course of the work. Overtures from popular operas were often later performed as stand-alone concert pieces. Audiences enjoyed the musical reminder of the story and production they had previously seen. In time, composers began to write overtures that were not connected to a larger musical work but rather referred to some other well-known story or scene. The linked article details how this practice evolved into the genre known as the symphonic poem.

Introduction

A **symphonic poem** or **tone poem** is a piece of orchestral or concert band music, usually in a single continuous section (a movement), that illustrates or evokes the content of a poem, short story, novel, painting, landscape, or other (non-musical) source. Hungarian composer Franz Liszt first applied the term to his 13 works in this vein. In its aesthetic objectives, the symphonic poem is in some ways related to opera. While it does not use a sung text, it seeks, like opera, a union of music and drama.

While many symphonic poems may compare in size and scale to symphonic movements (or even reach the length of an entire symphony), they are unlike traditional classical symphonic movements in that their music is intended to inspire listeners to imagine or consider scenes, images, specific ideas, or moods and not to focus on following traditional patterns of musical form (e.g., sonata form). This intention to inspire listeners was a direct consequence of Romanticism, which encouraged literary, pictorial, and dramatic associations in music. Musical works that attempt to inspire listeners in this way are often referred to as program music, while music that has no such associations may be called absolute music.

Some piano and chamber works, such as Arnold Schoenberg's string sextet *Verklärte Nacht*, have similarities with symphonic poems in their overall intent and effect. However, the term symphonic poem is generally accepted to refer to orchestral works. A symphonic poem may stand on its own, or it can be part of a series combined into a symphonic suite. For example, *The Swan of Tuonela* (1895) is a tone poem from Jean Sibelius's *Lemminkäinen Suite*. A symphonic poem can also be part of a group of interrelated works, such as *Vltava* (*The Moldau*) as part of the six-work cycle *Má vlast* by Bedřich Smetana. Also, while the terms "symphonic poem" and "tone poem" have often been used interchangeably, some composers such as Richard Strauss and Jean Sibelius have preferred the latter term for pieces that were less symphonic in design and in which there is no special emphasis on thematic or tonal contrast.

According to Macdonald, the symphonic poem met three 19th-century aesthetic goals: it related music to outside sources; it often combined or compressed multiple movements into a single principal section; and it elevated instrumental program music to an aesthetic level that could be regarded as equivalent to or higher than opera. The symphonic poem remained popular from the 1840s until the 1920s, when the genre suffered a severe decline in popularity.

Background

In the second quarter of the 19th century, the future of the symphonic genre came into doubt. While many composers continued to write symphonies during the 1820s and '30s, "there was a growing sense that these works were aesthetically far inferior to Beethoven's. . . . The real question was not so much whether symphonies could still be written, but whether the genre could continue to flourish and grow." Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, and Niels Gade achieved successes with their symphonies, putting at least a temporary stop to the debate as to whether the genre was dead. Nevertheless, composers increasingly turned

to the "more compact form" of the concert overture "as a vehicle within which to blend musical, narrative and pictorial ideas." Examples included Mendelssohn's overtures *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1826) and *The Hebrides* (1830).

Between 1845 and 1847, Franco-Belgian composer César Franck wrote an orchestral piece based on Victor Hugo's poem *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*. The work exhibits characteristics of a symphonic poem, and some musicologists, such as Norman Demuth and Julien Tiersot, consider it the first of its genre, preceding Liszt's compositions. However, Franck did not publish or perform his piece; neither did he set about defining the genre. Liszt's determination to explore and promote the symphonic poem gained him recognition as the genre's inventor.

Liszt

The Hungarian composer Franz Liszt desired to expand single-movement works beyond the concert overture form. The music of overtures is to inspire listeners to imagine scenes, images, or moods; Liszt intended to combine those programmatic qualities with a scale and musical complexity normally reserved for the opening movement of classical symphonies. The opening movement, with its interplay of contrasting themes under sonata form, was normally considered the most important part of the symphony. To achieve his objectives, Liszt needed a more flexible method of developing musical themes than sonata form would allow, but one that would preserve the overall unity of a musical composition.

Nationalism

The 19th century saw a rise in nationalist sentiment, and this cultural current was mirrored in the music of the day. Many composers used program music to depict nationalist themes. Others used elements of folk music in their compositions.

History

As a musical movement, nationalism emerged early in the 19th century in connection with political independence movements and was characterized by an emphasis on national musical elements such as the use of folk songs, folk dances, or rhythms or on the adoption of nationalist subjects for operas, symphonic poems, or other forms of music (Kennedy 2006). As new nations were formed in Europe, nationalism in music was a reaction against the dominance of the mainstream European classical tradition as composers started to separate themselves from the standards set by Italian, French, and especially German traditionalists (Miles n.d.).

More precise considerations of the point of origin are a matter of some dispute. One view holds that it began with the war of liberation against Napoleon, leading to a receptive atmosphere in Germany for Weber's opera

Der Freischütz (1821) and, later, Richard Wagner's epic dramas based on Teutonic legends. At around the same time, Poland's struggle for freedom from Czarist Russia produced a nationalist spirit in the piano works of Frédéric Chopin, and slightly later Italy's aspiration to independence from Austria resonated in many of the operas of Giuseppe Verdi (Machlis 1979, 125–26). Countries or regions most commonly linked to musical nationalism include Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Scandinavia, Spain, UK, Latin America, and the United States.

Symphony No. 8—Symphony of a Thousand

Mahler's Eighth Symphony is a symphony in only the loosest sense. One of his best-known works, it follows almost none of the standard conventions for a symphony. For example, it has only two movements, and it calls for multiple choirs in addition to an enormous orchestra.

Introduction

The **Symphony No. 8 in E-flat major** by Gustav Mahler is one of the largest-scale choral works in the classical concert repertoire. Because it requires huge instrumental and vocal forces, it is frequently called the "**Symphony of a Thousand,**" although the work is often performed with fewer than a thousand, and Mahler himself did not sanction the name. The work was composed in a single inspired burst at Maiernigg in southern Austria in the summer of 1906. The last of Mahler's works that was premiered in his lifetime, the symphony was a critical and popular success when he conducted its first performance in Munich on 12 September 1910.

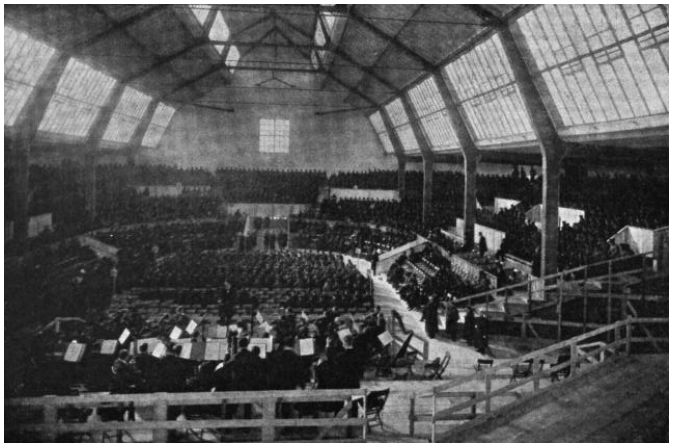


Figure 1. Munich, September 1910. Final rehearsal for the world premiere of Mahler's Eighth Symphony, in the Neue Musik-Festhalle.

The fusion of song and symphony had been a characteristic of Mahler's early works. In his "middle" compositional period after 1901, a change of direction led him to produce three purely instrumental symphonies. The Eighth, marking the end of the middle period, returns to a combination of orchestra and voice in a symphonic context. The structure of the work is unconventional; instead of the normal framework of several movements, the piece is in two parts. Part I is based on the Latin text of a 9th-century Christian hymn for Pentecost, *Veni creator spiritus* ("Come, Creator Spirit"), and Part II is a setting of the words from the closing scene of Goethe's *Faust*. The two parts are unified by a common idea, that of redemption through the power of love, a unity conveyed through shared musical themes.

Mahler had been convinced from the start of the work's significance; in renouncing the pessimism that had marked much of his music, he offered the Eighth as an expression of confidence in the eternal human spirit. In the period following the composer's death, performances were comparatively rare. However, from the mid-20th century onward, the symphony has been heard regularly in concert halls all over the world and has been recorded many times. While recognizing its wide popularity, modern critics have divided opinions on the work; Theodor W. Adorno, Robert Simpson, and Jonathan Carr found its optimism unconvincing and considered it artistically and musically inferior to Mahler's other symphonies. However, it has also been compared—by Deryck Cooke—to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as a defining human statement for its century.

Part II: Closing scene from Goethe's Faust

The second part of the symphony follows the narrative of the final stages in Goethe's poem—the journey of Faust's soul, rescued from the clutches of Mephistopheles, on to its final ascent into heaven. Landmann's proposed sonata structure for the movement is based on a division, after an orchestral prelude, into five sections, which he identifies musically as an exposition, three development episodes, and a finale. Since we only have the finale on our playlist, we'll skip discussing the other episodes of Part II.

Finale

The final development episode is a hymn-like tenor solo and chorus, in which Doctor Marianus calls on the penitents to "Gaze aloft." A short orchestral passage follows, scored for an eccentric chamber group consisting of piccolo, flute, harmonium, celesta, piano, harps, and a string quartet. This acts as a transition to the finale, the Chorus Mysticus, which begins in E-flat major almost imperceptibly—Mahler's notation here is *Wie ein Hauch*, "like a breath." The sound rises in a gradual crescendo as the solo voices alternately join or contrast with the chorus. As the climax approaches, many themes are reprised: the love theme, Gretchen's song, the Accende from Part I. Finally, as the chorus concludes with "Eternal Womanhood draws us on high," the off-stage brass re-enters with a final salute on the Veni creator motif to end the symphony with a triumphant flourish.

Johannes Brahms

Brahms is one of the greats of musical history. He had a gift for combining the more complex harmonic practices of the Romantic era with the clear musical structures of the Classical era. Because he composed primarily absolute music (as opposed to the program music that had become so popular in the 19th century), he is considered a more conservative composer. As you read, pay special attention to his interactions with other composers we have studied, such as Robert Schumann and Anton Dvořák.

Introduction

Johannes Brahms (7 May 1833–3 April 1897) was a German composer and pianist. Born in Hamburg into a Lutheran family, Brahms spent much of his professional life in Vienna, Austria. In his lifetime, Brahms's popularity and influence were considerable. He is sometimes grouped with Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven as one of the "Three Bs," a comment originally made by the 19th-century conductor Hans von Bülow.

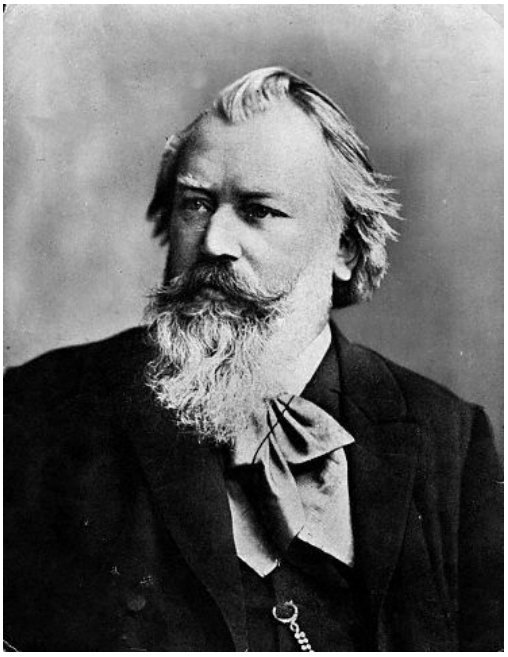


Figure 1. Johannes Brahms.

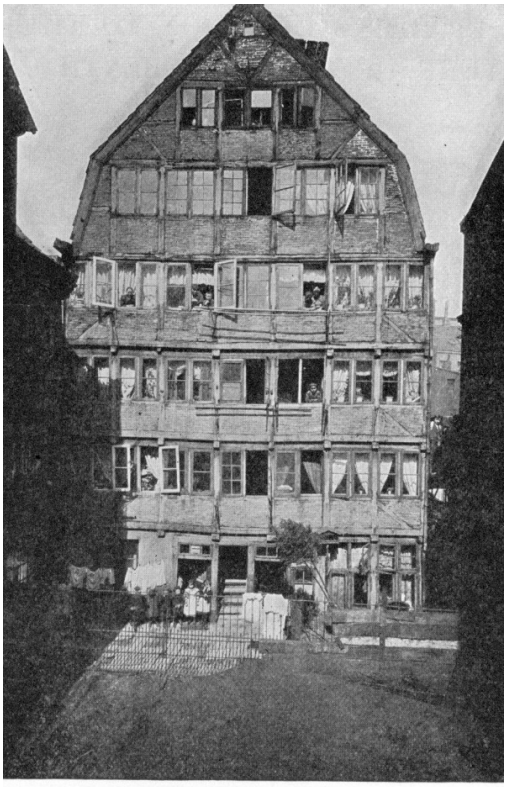
Brahms composed for piano, chamber ensembles, symphony orchestra, and voice and chorus. A virtuoso pianist, he premiered many of his own works. He worked with some of the leading performers of his time, including the pianist Clara Schumann and the violinist Joseph Joachim (the three were close friends). Many of his works have become staples of the modern concert repertoire. Brahms, an uncompromising perfectionist, destroyed some of his works and left others unpublished.

Brahms is often considered both a traditionalist and an innovator. His music is firmly rooted in the structures and compositional techniques of the Baroque and Classical masters. He was a master of counterpoint, the complex and highly disciplined art for which Johann Sebastian Bach is famous, and of development, a compositional ethos pioneered by Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and other composers. Brahms aimed to honor the "purity" of these venerable "German" structures and advance them into a Romantic idiom, in the process creating bold new approaches to harmony and melody. While many contemporaries found his music too academic, his contribution and craftsmanship have been admired by subsequent figures as diverse as Arnold Schoenberg and Edward Elgar. The diligent, highly constructed nature of Brahms's works was a starting point and an inspiration for a generation of composers.

Life

Early Years

Brahms's father, Johann Jakob Brahms (1806–72), came to Hamburg from Dithmarschen, seeking a career as a town musician. He was proficient in several instruments but found employment mostly playing the horn and double bass. In 1830, he married Johanna Henrika Christiane Nissen (1789–1865), a seamstress never previously married, who was seventeen years older than he was. Johannes Brahms had an older sister and a younger brother. Initially, they lived near the city docks, in the Gängeviertel quarter of Hamburg, for six months, before moving to a small house on the Dammtorwall, a small street near the Inner Alster.



HOUSE IN HAMBURG WHERE BRAHMS WAS BORN

Figure 2. Photograph from 1891 of the building in Hamburg where Brahms was born. Brahms's family occupied part of the first floor (second floor to Americans), behind the two double windows on the left-hand side. The building was destroyed by bombing in 1943.

Johann Jakob gave his son his first musical training. He studied piano from the age of seven with Otto Friedrich Willibald Cossel. Owing to the family's poverty, the adolescent Brahms had to contribute to the family's income by playing the piano in dance halls. Early biographers found this shocking and played down this portion of his life. Some modern writers have suggested that this early experience warped Brahms's later relations with women, but Brahms scholars Styra Avins and Kurt Hoffmann have questioned the possibility. Jan Swafford has contributed to the discussion.

For a time, Brahms also learned the cello. After his early piano lessons with Otto Cossel, Brahms studied piano with Eduard Marxsen, who had studied in Vienna with Ignaz von Seyfried (a pupil of Mozart) and Carl Maria von Bocklet (a close friend of Schubert). The young Brahms gave a few public concerts in Hamburg but did not become well known as a pianist until he made a concert tour at the age of nineteen. (In later life, he frequently took part in the performance of his own works, whether as soloist, accompanist, or participant in chamber music.) He conducted choirs from his early teens and became a proficient choral and orchestral conductor.

Meeting Joachim and Liszt

He began to compose quite early in life but later destroyed most copies of his first works; for instance, Louise

Japha, a fellow-pupil of Marxsen, reported a piano sonata that Brahms had played or improvised at the age of 11 had been destroyed. His compositions did not receive public acclaim until he went on a concert tour as accompanist to the Hungarian violinist Eduard Reményi in April and May 1853. On this tour, he met Joseph Joachim at Hanover and went on to the Court of Weimar where he met Franz Liszt, Peter Cornelius, and Joachim Raff. According to several witnesses of Brahms's meeting with Liszt (at which Liszt performed Brahms's Scherzo, Op. 4, at sight), Reményi was offended by Brahms's failure to praise Liszt's Sonata in B minor wholeheartedly (Brahms supposedly fell asleep during a performance of the recently composed work), and they parted company shortly afterward. Brahms later excused himself, saying that he could not help it, having been exhausted by his travels.

Brahms and the Schumanns

Joachim had given Brahms a letter of introduction to Robert Schumann, and after a walking tour in the Rhineland, Brahms took the train to Düsseldorf and was welcomed into the Schumann family on arrival there. Schumann, amazed by the 20-year-old's talent, published an article entitled "Neue Bahnen" (New Paths) in the 28 October 1853 issue of the journal *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* alerting the public to the young man, who, he claimed, was "destined to give ideal expression to the times."[7] This pronouncement impressed people who were admirers of Robert or Clara Schumann; for example, in Hamburg, a music publisher and the conductor of the Philharmonic,[8] but it was received with some skepticism by others. It may have increased Brahms's self-critical need to perfect his works. He wrote to Robert, "Revered Master," in November 1853, that his praise "will arouse such extraordinary expectations by the public that I don't know how I can begin to fulfil them . . ."[9] While he was in Düsseldorf, Brahms participated with Schumann and Albert Dietrich in writing a sonata for Joachim; this is known as the "F-A-E Sonata—Free but Lonely" (German: *Frei aber einsam*). Schumann's wife, the composer and pianist Clara, wrote in her diary about his first visit that

> [Brahms] is one of those who comes as if straight from God.—He played us sonatas, scherzos etc. of his own, all of them showing exuberant imagination, depth of feeling, and mastery of form . . . what he played to us is so masterly that one cannot but think that the good God sent him into the world ready-made. He has a great future before him, for he will first find the true field for his genius when he begins to write for the orchestra.

After Robert Schumann's attempted suicide and subsequent confinement in a mental sanatorium near Bonn in February 1854, Clara was "in despair," expecting the Schumanns' eighth child. Brahms hurried to Düsseldorf. He and/or Joachim, Dietrich, and Julius Otto Grimm visited Clara often in March 1854 to divert her mind from Robert's tragedy by playing music for or with her. Clara wrote in her diary,

> That good Brahms always shows himself a most sympathetic friend. He does not say much, but one can see in his face . . . how he grieves with me for the loved one whom he so highly reveres. Besides, he is so kind in seizing every opportunity of cheering me by means of anything musical. From so young a man I cannot but be doubly conscious of the sacrifice, for a sacrifice it undoubtedly is for anyone to be with me now.

Later, to help Clara and her many children, Brahms lodged above the Schumann apartment in a three-story house, setting his musical career aside temporarily. Clara was not allowed to visit Robert until two days before his death. Brahms was able to visit him several times and so could act as a go-between. The Schumanns employed a housekeeper, "Bertha" in Düsseldorf and later Elisabeth Werner in Berlin. There was also a hired cook in Berlin, "Josephine." When the Schumanns' oldest child and daughter, Marie, born 1841, was of age, she took over as housekeeper and, when needed, as cook. Clara was often away on concert tours, some lasting months, or sometimes in the summer for cures, and in 1854–1856, Brahms also was away part of the time, leaving the staff to manage the household. Clara much appreciated Brahms's support as a kindred musical spirit.

In a concert in Leipzig in October 1854, Clara played the Andante and Scherzo from Brahms's Sonata in F minor, Op. 5, "the first time his music was played in public."

Brahms and Clara had a very close and lifelong but unusual relationship. They had great affection but also respect for one another. Brahms urged in 1887 that all his and Clara's letters to each other should be destroyed. Actually Clara kept quite a number of letters Brahms had sent her and, at Marie's urging, refrained from destroying many of the letters Brahms had returned. Eventually correspondence between Clara and Brahms in German was published. Some of Brahms's earliest letters to Clara show him deeply in love with her. Clara's preserved letters to Brahms, except for one, begin much later, in 1858. Selected letters or excerpts from them, some to or from Brahms, and diary entries of Clara's have been translated into English. The earliest excerpted and translated letter from Brahms to Clara was in October 1854. Hans Gál cautions that the preserved correspondence may have "passed through Clara's censorship."

Brahms felt a strong conflict between love of Clara and respect for her and Robert, leading him to allude at one point to suicidal thoughts. Not long after Robert died, Brahms decided he had to break away from the Schumann household. He took leave rather brusquely, leaving Clara feeling hurt. But Brahms and Clara kept up correspondence. Brahms joined Clara and some of her children for some summer sojourns. In 1862, Clara bought a house in Lichtental, then adjoining, since 1909 included in Baden-Baden, and lived there with her remaining family from 1863 to 1873. Brahms from 1865 to 1874 spent some summers living in an apartment nearby in a house which is now a museum, the "Brahmshaus" (Brahms house). Brahms appears in later years as a rather avuncular figure in Eugenie Schumann's account. Clara and Brahms took a concert tour together in November–December 1868 in Vienna, then in early 1869 to England, then Holland; the tour ended in April 1869. After Clara moved from Lichtental to Berlin in 1873, the two saw each other less often, as Brahms had his home in Vienna since 1863.

Clara was 14 years older than Brahms. In a letter to her on 24 May 1856, two and a half years after meeting her and after two years either together or corresponding, Brahms wrote that he continued to call her the German polite form "Sie" of "you" and hesitated to use the familiar form "Du." Clara agreed that they call one another "Du," writing in her diary, "I could not refuse, for indeed I love him like a son." Brahms wrote on 31 May:

> I wish I could write to you as tenderly as I love you, and do as many good things for you, as you would like. You

> are so infinitely dear to me that I can hardly express it. I should like to call you darling and lots of other names, without ever getting enough of adoring you.

The rest of that letter, and most later preserved letters, are about music and musical people, updating one another about their travels and experiences. Brahms much valued Clara's opinions as a composer: "There was no composition by Brahms that was not shown to Clara the moment it was in shape to be communicated. She remained his faithfully devoted adviser." In a letter to Joachim in 1859, three years after Robert's death, Brahms wrote about Clara:

> I believe that I do not respect and admire her so much as I love her and am under her spell. Often I must forcibly restrain myself from just quietly putting my arms around her and even—I don't know, it seems so natural that she would not take it ill.

Brahms never married, despite strong feelings for several women and despite entering into an engagement, soon broken off, with Agathe von Siebold in Göttingen in 1859. It seems that Brahms was rather indiscreet about the relationship while it lasted, which troubled his friends. After breaking off the engagement, Brahms wrote to Agathe, "I love you! I must see you again, but I am incapable of bearing fetters. Please write me whether I may come again to clasp you in my arms, to kiss you, and tell you that I love you." But they never saw one another again.

Detmold and Hamburg

After Robert Schumann's death at the sanatorium in 1856, Brahms divided his time between Hamburg, where he formed and conducted a ladies' choir, and Detmold in the Principality of Lippe, where he was court music-teacher and conductor. He was the soloist at the premiere of his Piano Concerto No. 1, his first orchestral composition to be performed publicly, in 1859. He first visited Vienna in 1862, staying there over the winter and, in 1863, was appointed conductor of the Vienna *Singakademie*. Though he resigned the position the following year and entertained the idea of taking up conducting posts elsewhere, he based himself increasingly in Vienna and soon made his home there. From 1872 to 1875, he was director of the concerts of the Vienna *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*; afterward, he accepted no formal position. He declined an honorary doctorate of music from the University of Cambridge in 1877 but accepted one from the University of Breslau in 1879 and composed the *Academic Festival Overture* as a gesture of appreciation.

He had been composing steadily throughout the 1850s and '60s, but his music had evoked divided critical responses, and the first Piano Concerto had been badly received in some of its early performances. His works were labelled old-fashioned by the "New German School," whose principal figures included Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, and Hector Berlioz. Brahms admired some of Wagner's music and admired Liszt as a great pianist, but the conflict between the two schools, known as the War of the Romantics, soon embroiled all of musical Europe. In the Brahms camp were his close friends: Clara Schumann, Joachim, the influential music critic Eduard Hanslick, and the leading Viennese surgeon Theodor Billroth. In 1860, Brahms attempted to

organize a public protest against some of the wilder excesses of the Wagnerians' music. This took the form of a manifesto, written by Brahms and Joachim jointly. The manifesto, which was published prematurely with only three supporting signatures, was a failure, and he never engaged in public polemics again.

Years of Popularity

It was the premiere of *A German Requiem*, his largest choral work, in Bremen, in 1868, that confirmed Brahms's European reputation and led many to accept that he had conquered Beethoven and the symphony. This may have given him the confidence finally to complete a number of works that he had wrestled with over many years, such as the cantata *Rinaldo*, his first string quartet, third piano quartet, and most notably his first symphony. This appeared in 1876, though it had been begun (and a version of the first movement seen by some of his friends) in the early 1860s. The other three symphonies then followed in 1877, 1883, and 1885. From 1881, he was able to try out his new orchestral works with the Meiningen Court Orchestra of the Duke of Meiningen, whose conductor was Hans von Bülow. He was the soloist at the premiere of his Piano Concerto No. 2 in 1881 in Pest.

Brahms frequently traveled, both for business (concert tours) and pleasure. From 1878 onward, he often visited Italy in the springtime, and he usually sought out a pleasant rural location in which to compose during the summer. He was a great walker and especially enjoyed spending time in the open air, where he felt that he could think more clearly.

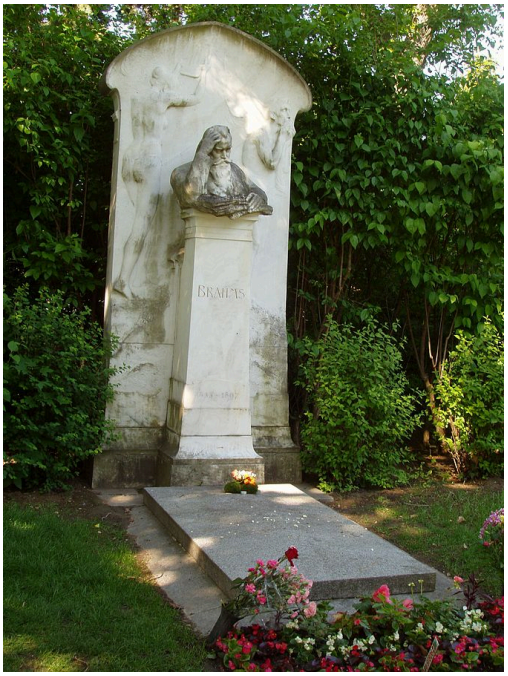


Figure 3. Brahms's grave in the Zentralfriedhof (Central Cemetery), Vienna.

In 1889, one Theo Wangemann, a representative of American inventor Thomas Edison, visited the composer in Vienna and invited him to make an experimental recording. Brahms played an abbreviated version of his first Hungarian dance on the piano. The recording was later issued on an LP of early piano performances (compiled by Gregor Benko). Although the spoken introduction to the short piece of music is quite clear, the piano playing is largely inaudible due to heavy surface noise. Nevertheless, this remains the earliest recording made by a major composer. Analysts and scholars remain divided, however, as to whether the voice that introduces the piece is that of Wangemann or Brahms. Several attempts have been made to improve the quality of this historic recording; a "denoised" version was produced at Stanford University that claims to solve the mystery.

In 1889, Brahms was named an honorary citizen of Hamburg, until 1948 the only one born in Hamburg.

Brahms and Dvořák

In 1875, the composer Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) was still virtually unknown outside the Prague region. Brahms was on the jury that awarded the Vienna State Prize for composition to Dvořák three times, first in February 1875 and later in 1876 and 1877. Brahms also recommended Dvořák to his publisher, Simrock, who commissioned the highly successful *Slavonic Dances*. Within a few years, Dvořák gained world renown. In 1892, he was appointed Director of the newly established National Conservatory in New York.

Later Years

In 1890, the 57-year-old Brahms resolved to give up composing. However, as it turned out, he was unable to abide by his decision, and in the years before his death, he produced a number of acknowledged masterpieces. His admiration for Richard Mühlfeld, clarinetist with the Meiningen orchestra, moved him to compose the Clarinet Trio, Op. 114; Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115 (1891); and the two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120 (1894). He also wrote several cycles of piano pieces, Opp. 116–119, the *Vier ernste Gesänge* (Four Serious Songs), Op. 121 (1896), and the Eleven Chorale Preludes for organ, Op. 122 (1896).

While completing the Op. 121 songs, Brahms developed cancer (sources differ on whether this was of the liver or pancreas). His last appearance in public was on 3 March 1897, when he saw Hans Richter conduct his Symphony No. 4. There was an ovation after each of the four movements. His condition gradually worsened, and he died a month later, on 3 April 1897, aged 63. Brahms is buried in the Zentralfriedhof in Vienna, under a monument by Victor Horta and the sculptor Ilse von Twardowski-Conrat.

Tributes

Later that year, the British composer Hubert Parry, who considered Brahms the greatest artist of the time, wrote an orchestral *Elegy for Brahms*. This was never played in Parry's lifetime, receiving its first performance at a memorial concert for Parry himself in 1918.

From 1904 to 1914, Brahms's friend, the music critic Max Kalbeck, published an eight-volume biography of Brahms, but this has never been translated into English. Between 1906 and 1922, the Deutsche Brahms-Gesellschaft (German Brahms Society) published 16 numbered volumes of Brahms's correspondence, at least 7 of which were edited by Kalbeck. An additional 7 volumes of Brahms's correspondence were published later, including two volumes with Clara Schumann, edited by Marie Schumann.

Style and Influences

Brahms maintained a Classical sense of form and order in his works—in contrast to the opulence of the music of many of his contemporaries. Thus many admirers (though not necessarily Brahms himself) saw him as

the champion of traditional forms and "pure music" as opposed to the "New German" embrace of program music.

Brahms venerated Beethoven: in the composer's home, a marble bust of Beethoven looked down on the spot where he composed, and some passages in his works are reminiscent of Beethoven's style. Brahms's First Symphony bears strongly the influence of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, as the two works are both in C minor and end in the struggle toward a C major triumph. The main theme of the finale of the First Symphony is also reminiscent of the main theme of the finale of Beethoven's Ninth, and when this resemblance was pointed out to Brahms, he replied that any dunce could see that. In 1876, when the work was premiered in Vienna, it was immediately hailed as "Beethoven's Tenth." However, the similarity of Brahms's music to that of late Beethoven had first been noted as early as November 1853, in a letter from Albert Dietrich to Ernst Naumann.

Figure 4. Brahms in mid-career.

A German Requiem was partially inspired by his mother's death in 1865 (at which time he composed a funeral march that was to become the basis of Part Two, *Denn alles Fleisch*), but it also incorporates material from a symphony that he started in 1854 but abandoned following Schumann's suicide attempt. He once wrote that the Requiem "belonged to Schumann." The first movement of this abandoned Symphony was re-worked as the first movement of the First Piano Concerto.

Brahms loved the Classical composers Mozart and Haydn. He collected first editions and autographs of their works and edited performing editions. He studied the music of pre-classical composers, including Giovanni Gabrieli, Johann Adolph Hasse, Heinrich Schütz, Domenico Scarlatti, George Frideric Handel, and, especially, Johann Sebastian Bach. His friends included leading musicologists, and, with Friedrich Chrysander, he edited an edition of the works of François Couperin. Brahms also edited works by C. P. E. and W. F. Bach. He looked to older music for inspiration in the art of counterpoint; the themes of some of his works are modeled on Baroque sources such as Bach's The Art of Fugue in the fugal finale of Cello Sonata No. 1 or the same composer's Cantata No. 150 in the passacaglia theme of the Fourth Symphony's *finale*.

The early Romantic composers had a major influence on Brahms, particularly Schumann, who encouraged Brahms as a young composer. During his stay in Vienna in 1862–63, Brahms became particularly interested in the music of Franz Schubert. The latter's influence may be identified in works by Brahms dating from the period, such as the two piano quartets Op. 25 and Op. 26 and the Piano Quintet, which alludes to Schubert's String Quintet and Grand Duo for piano four hands. The influence of Chopin and Mendelssohn on Brahms is less obvious, although occasionally one can find in his works what seems to be an allusion to one of theirs

(for example, Brahms's Scherzo, Op. 4, alludes to Chopin's Scherzo in B-flat minor; the scherzo movement in Brahms's Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 5, alludes to the finale of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in C minor).

Brahms considered giving up composition when it seemed that other composers' innovations in extended tonality would result in the rule of tonality being broken altogether. Although Wagner became fiercely critical of Brahms as the latter grew in stature and popularity, he was enthusiastically receptive of the early Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel; Brahms himself, according to many sources, deeply admired Wagner's music, confining his ambivalence only to the dramaturgical precepts of Wagner's theory.

Brahms wrote settings for piano and voice of 144 German folk songs, and many of his lieder reflect folk themes or depict scenes of rural life. His *Hungarian Dances* were among his most profitable compositions.

Brahms Violin Concerto

Rather than having you read about this great violin concerto, I'd like you to listen to this discussion of the work on NPR. They spend some time talking about the particular recording that they are reviewing, but most of the discussion focuses on the work itself. There is one term that, while not mentioned in the recorded discussion, is very important to know when listening to this piece: *double-stop*. Double-stop is the term used when a violinist (or other bowed stringed instruments such as viola or cello) plays two strings at once instead of playing a single string, which is the norm. You'll hear extensive use of double stops in both the 1st and 3rd movements of this concerto (the 3rd is the only movement on our playlist).

Antonin Dvořák

Antonin Dvořák is an excellent example of a nationalist composer, as he not only incorporated folk elements from his Czech homeland into his music but actively encouraged other composers to do the same with the music of their own lands. His nationalism was a musical philosophy—not just a political gesture. Interestingly, he spent roughly three years in the United States for the purpose of exploring American music. While there, he encouraged his students to explore American folk idioms such as African-American music, such as the spiritual along, with Native American music.

Introduction

Antonín Leopold Dvořák (September 8, 1841–May 1, 1904) was a Czech composer. Following the nationalist example of Bedřich Smetana, Dvořák frequently employed aspects, specifically rhythms, of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia (then parts of the Austrian Empire and now constituting the Czech Republic). Dvořák's own style has been described as "the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition, absorbing folk influences and finding effective ways of using them."

Dvořák displayed his musical gifts at an early age, being an apt student of violin playing from age 6. The first public performances of his works were in Prague in 1872 and, with special success, in 1873, when he was age 31. Seeking recognition beyond the Prague area, he first submitted a score of his *First Symphony* to a prize competition in Germany, but he did not win, and the manuscript, not returned, was lost until rediscovered many years later. Then in 1874 he first made a submission for the Austrian State Prize for Composition, including scores of two further symphonies and other works. Brahms, unbeknownst to Dvořák, was the leading member of the jury and was highly impressed. The prize was awarded to Dvořák in that year and again in 1876 and in 1877, when Brahms and the prominent critic Eduard Hanslick, also a member of the jury, made themselves known to him. Brahms recommended Dvořák to his publisher, Simrock, who soon afterward commissioned what became the *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46. These were highly praised by the Berlin music critic Louis Ehlert in 1878, the sheet music (of the original piano 4-hands version) had excellent sales, and Dvořák's international reputation at last was launched.

Dvořák's first piece of a religious nature, his setting of *Stabat Mater*, was premiered in Prague in 1880. It was very successfully performed in London in 1883, leading to many other performances in the United Kingdom and United States. In his career, Dvořák made nine invited visits to England, often conducting performances of his own works. His *Seventh Symphony* was written for London. After a brief conducting stint in Russia in 1890, Dvořák was appointed as a professor at the Prague Conservatory in 1891. In 1890–1891, he wrote his *Dumky Trio*, one of his most successful chamber music pieces. In 1892, Dvořák moved to the United States and became the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York City. While in the United States, Dvořák wrote his two most successful orchestral works. The Symphony *From the New World* spread his reputation worldwide.[3] His Cello Concerto is the most highly regarded of all cello concerti. Also, he wrote his *American String Quartet*, his most appreciated piece of chamber music. But shortfalls in payment of his salary, along with increasing recognition in Europe and an onset of homesickness, led him to leave the United States in 1895 and return to Bohemia.

Dvořák's ten operas all have librettos in Czech and were intended to convey Czech national spirit, as were some of his choral works. By far the most successful of the operas is *Rusalka*. Among his smaller works, the seventh *Humoresque* and the song "Songs My Mother Taught Me" are also widely performed and recorded. He has been described as "arguably the most versatile . . . composer of his time."

United States

From 1892 to 1895, Dvořák was the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He began at a then-staggering $15,000 annual salary. Emanuel Rubin describes the Conservatory and Dvořák's time there. The Conservatory had been founded by Jeannette Thurber, a wealthy and philanthropic woman, who made it open to women students as well as men and to blacks as well as whites, which was unusual for the times. Dvořák's original contract provided for three hours a day of work, including teaching and conducting, six days a week, with four months' vacation each summer. The Panic of 1893, a severe economic depression, depleted the assets of the Thurber family and other patrons of the Conservatory. In 1894, Dvořák's salary was cut to $8,000 per year and moreover was paid only irregularly. The Conservatory was located at 126–128 East 17th Street but was demolished in 1911 and replaced by what is today a high school.

Figure 1. Dvořák with his family and friends in New York in 1893. From left: his wife Anna, son Antonín, Sadie Siebert, Josef Jan KovařÍk, mother of Sadie Siebert, daughter Otilie, Antonín Dvořák.

Dvořák's main goal in America was to discover "American Music" and engage in it, much as he had used Czech folk idioms within his music. Shortly after his arrival in America in 1892, Dvořák wrote a series of newspaper articles reflecting on the state of American music. He supported the concept that African-American and Native American music should be used as a foundation for the growth of American music. He felt that through the music of Native Americans and African-Americans, Americans would find their own national style of music. Here Dvořák met Harry Burleigh, who later became one of the earliest African-American composers. Burleigh introduced Dvořák to traditional American spirituals.

In the winter and spring of 1893, Dvořák was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write Symphony No. 9, "From the New World," which was premiered under the baton of Anton Seidl to tumultuous applause. Clapham writes that "without question this was one of the greatest triumphs, and very possibly the greatest triumph of all that Dvořák experienced" in his life, and when the Symphony was published, it was "seized on by conductors and orchestras" all over the world.

Two months before leaving for America, Dvořák had hired Josef Jan KovařÍk, who had just finished violin studies at the Prague Conservatory and was about to return to the United States, to serve as his secretary and to live with the Dvořák family. He had come from the Czech-speaking community of Spillville, Iowa, where his father, Jan Josef KovařÍk, was a schoolmaster. Dvořák decided to spend the summer of 1893 in Spillville, along with all his family. While there, he composed the String Quartet in F (the "American") and the String Quintet

in E-flat, as well as a Sonatina for violin and piano. He also conducted a performance of his Eighth Symphony at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago that same year.

In the winter of 1894–1895, Dvořák wrote his Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104, B. 191, completed in February 1895. However, his partially unpaid salary, together with increasing recognition in Europe—he had been made an honorary member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna—and a remarkable amount of homesickness made him decide to return to Bohemia. He informed Thurber that he was leaving. Dvořák and his wife left New York before the end of the spring term with no intention of returning.

Dvořák's New York home was located at 327 East 17th Street, near the intersection of what is today called Perlman Place. It was in this house that both the B minor Cello Concerto and the New World Symphony were written within a few years. Despite protests from Czech President Václav Havel, among others, who wanted the house preserved as a historical site, it was demolished in 1991 to make room for a Beth Israel Medical Center residence for people with AIDS. To honor Dvořák, however, a statue of him was erected in nearby Stuyvesant Square.

Brahms continued to try to "clear a path for" Dvořák, "the only contemporary whom he considered really worthy." While Dvořák was in America, Simrock was still publishing his music in Germany, and Brahms corrected proofs for him. Dvořák said it was hard to understand why Brahms would "take on the very tedious job of proofreading. I don't believe there is another musician of his stature in the whole world who would do such a thing."

German Requiem

This page describes the historical context of Brahms's most famous work and the textual difference between it and a Requiem mass. Remember that the only portion of this piece on our playlist is the fourth movement, perhaps the best known of all the movements from the piece.

Introduction

A German Requiem, To Words of the Holy Scriptures, Op. 45 (German: ***Ein deutsches Requiem, nach Worten der heiligen Schrift***) by Johannes Brahms, is a large-scale work for chorus, orchestra, and a soprano and a baritone soloist, composed between 1865 and 1868. It comprises seven movements, which together last 65 to 80 minutes, making this work Brahms's longest composition. *A German Requiem* is sacred but non-liturgical, and unlike a long tradition of the Latin *Requiem*, *A German Requiem*, as its title states, is a *Requiem* in the German language.

History

Brahms's mother died in February 1865, a loss that caused him much grief and may well have inspired *Ein deutsches Requiem*. Brahms's lingering feelings over Robert Schumann's death in July 1856 may also have been a motivation, though his reticence about such matters makes this uncertain.

His original conception was for a work of six movements; according to their eventual places in the final version, these were movements 1–4 and 6–7. By the end of April 1865, Brahms had completed the first, second, and fourth movements. The second movement used some previously abandoned musical material written in 1854, the year of Schumann's mental collapse and attempted suicide and of Brahms's move to Düsseldorf to assist Clara Schumann and her young children.

Brahms completed all but what is now the fifth movement by August 1866. Johann Herbeck conducted the first three movements in Vienna on 1 December 1867. This partial premiere went poorly due to a misunderstanding in the timpanist's score. Sections marked as *pf* were played as *f* or *ff*, essentially drowning out the rest of the ensemble in the fugal section of the third movement. The first performance of the six movements premiered in the Bremen Cathedral six months later on Good Friday, 10 April 1868, with Brahms conducting and Julius Stockhausen as the baritone soloist. The performance was a great success and marked a turning point in his career.

In May 1868, Brahms composed an additional movement, which became the fifth movement within the final work. The new movement, which was scored for soprano soloist and choir, was first sung in Zürich on 12 September 1868 by Ida Suter-Weber, with Friedrich Hegar conducting the Tonhalle Orchester Zürich. The final, seven-movement version of *A German Requiem* was premiered in Leipzig on 18 February 1869 with Carl Reinecke conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Chorus and soloists Emilie Bellingrath-Wagner and Franz Krükl.

Text

Brahms assembled the libretto himself. In contrast to the traditional Roman Catholic Requiem Mass, which employs a standardized text in Latin, the text is derived from the German Luther Bible.

Brahms's first known use of the title *Ein deutsches Requiem* was in an 1865 letter to Clara Schumann in which he wrote that he intended the piece to be "eine Art deutsches Requiem" (a sort of German Requiem). Brahms was quite moved when he found out years later that Robert Schumann had planned a work of the same name. *German* refers primarily to the language rather than the intended audience. Brahms told Carl Martin Reinthaler, director of music at the Bremen Cathedral, that he would have gladly called the work "Ein menschliches Requiem" (A human Requiem).

Although the Requiem Mass in the Roman Catholic liturgy begins with prayers for the dead ("Grant them eternal rest, O Lord"), *A German Requiem* focuses on the living, beginning with the text "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." from the Beatitudes. This theme—transition from anxiety to

comfort—recurs in all the following movements except movements 4 and 7, the central one and the final one. Although the idea of the Lord is the source of the comfort, the sympathetic humanism persists through the work.

Brahms purposely omitted Christian dogma. In his correspondence with Carl Reinthaler, when Reinthaler expressed concern over this, Brahms refused to add references to "the redeeming death of the Lord," as Reinthaler described it, such as *John 3:16*. In the Bremen performance of the piece, Reinthaler took the liberty of inserting the aria "I know that my Redeemer liveth" from Handel's *Messiah* to satisfy the clergy.

Gustav Mahler

While Mahler made his career as an orchestral conductor and his compositions often received a mixed critical response in his lifetime, he is now viewed as an extremely influential composer in the transition between the Romantic and Modern eras.

Introduction

Gustav Mahler (7 July 1860–18 May 1911) was an Austrian late-Romantic composer and one of the leading conductors of his generation. As a composer he acted as a bridge between the 19th-century Austro-German tradition and the modernism of the early 20th century. While in his lifetime his status as a conductor was established beyond question, his own music gained wide popularity only after periods of relative neglect, which included a ban on its performance in much of Europe during the Nazi era. After 1945, the music was discovered and championed by a new generation of listeners; Mahler then became one of the most frequently performed and recorded of all composers, a position he has sustained into the 21st century.

Figure 1. Gustav Mahler, photographed in 1907 at the end of his period as director of the Vienna Hofoper.

Born in humble circumstances, Mahler displayed his musical gifts at an early age. After graduating from the Vienna Conservatory in 1878, he held a succession of conducting posts of rising importance in the opera houses of Europe, culminating in his appointment in 1897 as director of the Vienna Court Opera (Hofoper). During his ten years in Vienna, Mahler—who had converted to Catholicism to secure the post—experienced regular opposition and hostility from the antisemitic press. Nevertheless, his innovative productions and insistence on the highest performance standards ensured his reputation as one of the greatest

of opera conductors, particularly as an interpreter of the stage works of Wagner and Mozart. Late in his life, he was briefly director of New York's Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic.

Mahler's *œuvre* is relatively small; for much of his life, composing was necessarily a part-time activity while he earned his living as a conductor. Aside from early works such as a movement from a piano quartet composed when he was a student in Vienna, Mahler's works are designed for large orchestral forces, symphonic choruses, and operatic soloists. Most of his twelve symphonic scores are very large-scale works, often employing vocal soloists and choruses in addition to augmented orchestral forces. These works were often controversial when first performed, and several were slow to receive critical and popular approval; exceptions included his Symphony No. 2, Symphony No. 3, and the triumphant premiere of his Eighth Symphony in 1910. Some of Mahler's immediate musical successors included the composers of the Second Viennese School, notably Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern. Shostakovich and Benjamin Britten are among later 20th-century composers who admired and were influenced by Mahler. The International Gustav Mahler Institute was established in 1955 to honor the composer's life and work.

Antecedents and Influences

Mahler was a "late Romantic," part of an ideal that placed Austro-German classical music on a higher plane than other types through its supposed possession of particular spiritual and philosophical significance. He was one of the last major composers of a line that includes, among others, Beethoven, Schubert, Liszt, Wagner, Bruckner, and Brahms. From these antecedents Mahler drew many of the features that were to characterize his music. Thus, from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony came the idea of using soloists and a choir within the symphonic genre. From Beethoven, Liszt, and (from a different musical tradition) Berlioz came the concept of writing music with an inherent narrative or "programme" and of breaking away from the traditional four-movement symphony format. The examples of Wagner and Bruckner encouraged Mahler to extend the scale of his symphonic works well beyond the previously accepted standards, to embrace an entire world of feeling.

Early critics maintained that Mahler's adoption of many different styles to suit different expressions of feeling meant that he lacked a style of his own; Cooke, on the other hand, asserts that Mahler "redeemed any borrowings by imprinting his [own] personality on practically every note" to produce music of "outstanding originality." Music critic Harold Schonberg sees the essence of Mahler's music in the theme of struggle, in the tradition of Beethoven. However, according to Schonberg, Beethoven's struggles were those of "an indomitable and triumphant hero," whereas Mahler's are those of "a psychic weakling, a complaining adolescent who . . . enjoyed his misery, wanting the whole world to see how he was suffering." Yet, Schonberg concedes, most of the symphonies contain sections in which Mahler the "deep thinker" is transcended by the splendor of Mahler the musician.

16.

CHAPTER 16: MUSIC OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Introduction to Impressionism, Expressionism, and Twelve-Tone

This section includes readings that will provide an overview of major trends in the Modern era. The readings will specifically focus on impressionism, expressionism, and twelve-tone technique. It also provides specific information on composers and pieces created in those styles.

This section includes the following pages:

- Music of the 20th Century
- Impressionism
- Claude Debussy
- Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun
- Maurice Ravel
- Daphnis et Chloe
- Expressionism
- Arnold Schoenberg
- Pierrot Lunaire
- Sprechstimme
- Twelve-Tone Technique
- Suite for Piano

Music of the 20th Century

Let's begin the study of our final historical period with an overview of major trends and composers from the era. As you read this page, please pay special attention to the fact that this description focuses on compositional techniques and very little is said about dominant genres. The 20th century was clearly a period of widespread experimentation, and many composers wanted the freedom to explore new compositional approaches without

the restrictions and expectations that accompany traditional genres. Even when longstanding genres were used, composers felt very comfortable abandoning the traditional structures of those genres.

History

At the turn of the century, music was characteristically late Romantic in style. Composers such as Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, and Jean Sibelius were pushing the bounds of Post-Romantic Symphonic writing. At the same time, the Impressionist movement, spearheaded by Claude Debussy, was being developed in France. The term was actually loathed by Debussy: "I am trying to do 'something different'—in a way realities—what the imbeciles call 'impressionism' is a term which is as poorly used as possible, particularly by art critics"; and Maurice Ravel's music, also often labeled with this term, explores music in many styles not always related to it (see the discussion on Neoclassicism below).

Many composers reacted to the Post-Romantic and Impressionist styles and moved in quite different directions. The single most important moment in defining the course of music throughout the century was the widespread break with traditional tonality, effected in diverse ways by different composers in the first decade of the century. From this sprang an unprecedented "linguistic plurality" of styles, techniques, and expression. In Vienna, Arnold Schoenberg developed atonality out of the expressionism that arose in the early part of the 20th century. He later developed the twelve-tone technique, which was developed further by his disciples Alban Berg and Anton Webern; later composers (including Pierre Boulez) developed it further still. Stravinsky (in his last works) explored twelve-tone technique, too, as did many other composers; indeed, even Scott Bradley used the technique in his scores for the Tom and Jerry cartoons.

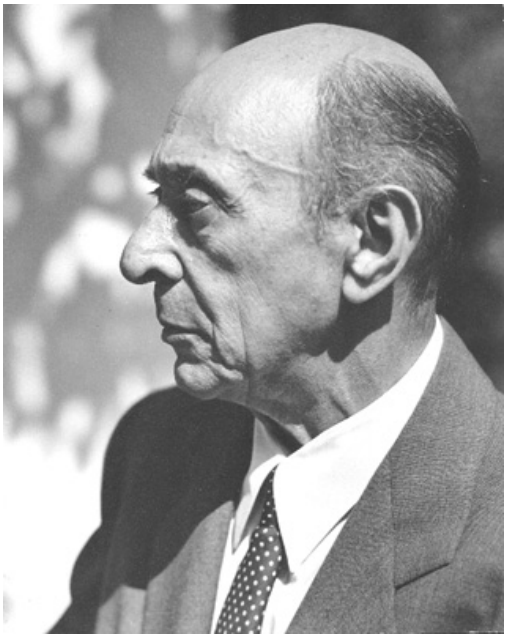


Figure 1. Arnold Schoenberg, Los Angeles, 1948.

After the First World War, many composers started returning to the past for inspiration and wrote works that draw elements (form, harmony, melody, structure) from it. This type of music thus became labeled neoclassicism. Igor Stravinsky (*Pulcinella* and *Symphony of Psalms*), Sergei Prokofiev (*Classical Symphony*), Ravel (*Le tombeau de Couperin*), and Paul Hindemith (*Symphony: Mathis der Maler*) all produced neoclassical works.

Italian composers such as Francesco Balilla Pratella and Luigi Russolo developed musical Futurism. This style often tried to recreate everyday sounds and place them in a "Futurist" context. The "Machine Music" of George Antheil (starting with his Second Sonata, "The Airplane") and Alexander Mosolov (most notoriously his *Iron Foundry*) developed out of this. The process of extending musical vocabulary by exploring all available tones was pushed further by the use of Microtones in works by Charles Ives, Julián Carrillo, Alois Hába, John Foulds, Ivan Wyschnegradsky, and Mildred Couper among many others. Microtones are those intervals that are smaller than a semitone; human voices and unfretted strings can easily produce them by going in between the "normal" notes, but other instruments will have more difficulty—the piano and organ have no way of producing them at all, aside from retuning and/or major reconstruction.

Figure 2. Igor Stravinsky.

In the 1940s and '50s, composers, notably Pierre Schaeffer, started to explore the application of technology to music in musique concrète. The term electroacoustic music was later coined to include all forms of music involving magnetic tape, computers, synthesizers, multimedia, and other electronic devices and techniques. Live electronic music uses live electronic sounds within a performance (as opposed to preprocessed sounds that are overdubbed during a performance), Cage's *Cartridge Music* being an early example. Spectral music (Gérard Grisey and Tristan Murail) is a further development of electroacoustic music that uses analyses of sound spectra to create music. Cage, Berio, Boulez, Milton Babbitt, Luigi Nono, and Edgard Varèse all wrote electroacoustic music.

From the early 1950s onward, Cage introduced elements of chance into his music. Process music (Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Prozession*, *Aus den sieben Tagen*; and Steve Reich's *Piano Phase*, *Clapping Music*) explores a particular process which is essentially laid bare in the work. The term experimental music was coined by Cage to describe works that produce unpredictable results, according to the definition "an experimental action is one the outcome of which is not foreseen." The term is also used to describe music within specific genres that pushes against their boundaries or definitions, or else whose approach is a hybrid of disparate styles, or incorporates unorthodox, new, distinctly unique ingredients.

Important cultural trends often informed music of this period, romantic, modernist, neoclassical, postmodernist, or otherwise. Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Prokofiev were particularly drawn to primitivism in their early careers, as explored in works such as *The Rite of Spring* and *Chout*. Other Russians, notably Dmitri Shostakovich, reflected the social impact of communism and subsequently had to work within the strictures of

socialist realism in their music. Other composers, such as Benjamin Britten (*War Requiem*), explored political themes in their works, albeit entirely at their own volition. Nationalism was also an important means of expression in the early part of the century. The culture of the United States of America, especially, began informing an American vernacular style of classical music, notably in the works of Charles Ives, John Alden Carpenter, and (later) George Gershwin. Folk music (Vaughan Williams's *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus;* Gustav Holst's *A Somerset Rhapsody*) and Jazz (Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, and Darius Milhaud's *La création du monde*) were also influential.

In the latter quarter of the century, eclecticism and polystylism became important. These, as well as minimalism, New Complexity, and New Simplicity, are more fully explored in their respective articles.

Impressionism

The first post-Romantic movement we'll study is Impressionism. As you'll see from the linked article, Impressionism was a movement in the visual arts, namely painting, centered in Paris in the late 19th century. The term was later applied, not always to the liking of the composers, to the music of early 20th-century French composers who were turning away from the grandiosity of late Romantic orchestral music.

Introduction

Impressionism is a 19th-century art movement that originated with a group of Paris-based artists whose independent exhibitions brought them to prominence during the 1870s and 1880s. Impressionist painting characteristics include relatively small, thin, yet visible brush strokes; open composition; emphasis on accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities (often accentuating the effects of the passage of time); ordinary subject matter; inclusion of *movement* as a crucial element of human perception and experience; and unusual visual angles.

The Impressionists faced harsh opposition from the conventional art community in France. The name of the style derives from the title of a Claude Monet work, *Impression, soleil levant* (*Impression, Sunrise*), which provoked the critic Louis Leroy to coin the term in a satirical review published in the Parisian newspaper *Le Charivari*.

The development of Impressionism in the visual arts was soon followed by analogous styles in other media that became known as impressionist music and impressionist literature.

Music and Literature

Musical Impressionism is the name given to a movement in European classical music that arose in the late 19th century and continued into the middle of the 20th century. Originating in France, musical Impressionism

is characterized by suggestion and atmosphere and eschews the emotional excesses of the Romantic era. Impressionist composers favored short forms such as the nocturne, arabesque, and prelude and often explored uncommon scales such as the whole tone scale. Perhaps the most notable innovations of Impressionist composers were the introduction of major 7th chords and the extension of chord structures in 3rds to five- and six-part harmonies.

The influence of visual Impressionism on its musical counterpart is debatable. Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravelare are generally considered the greatest Impressionist composers, but Debussy disavowed the term, calling it the invention of critics. Erik Satie was also considered in this category, though his approach was regarded as less serious, more musical novelty in nature. Paul Dukas is another French composer sometimes considered an Impressionist, but his style is perhaps more closely aligned to the late Romanticists. Musical Impressionism beyond France includes the work of such composers as Ottorino Respighi (Italy); Ralph Vaughan Williams, Cyril Scott, and John Ireland (England); and Manuel De Falla and Isaac Albeniz (Spain).

Claude Debussy

One of the towering figures of impressionism in music, though he did not approve of that term being applied to his music, is Claude Debussy. A child prodigy and difficult personality, his innovations are seen as the beginnings of modernism in music.

Introduction

Claude-Achille Debussy (22 August 1862–25 March 1918) was a French composer. Along with Maurice Ravel, he was one of the most prominent figures associated with Impressionist music, though he himself disliked the term when applied to his compositions. He was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in his native France in 1903. Debussy was among the most influential composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and his use of non-traditional scales and chromaticism influenced many composers who followed.

Debussy's music is noted for its sensory content and frequent usage of atonality. The prominent French literary style of his period was known as Symbolism, and this movement directly inspired Debussy both as a composer and as an active cultural participant.

Figure 1. Claude Debussy in 1908.

Early Life

Debussy was born **Achille-Claude Debussy** (he later reversed his forenames) on 22 August 1862 in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France, the oldest of five children. His father, Manuel-Achille Debussy, owned a china shop there; his mother, Victorine Manoury Debussy, was a seamstress. The family moved to Paris in 1867, but in 1870, Debussy's pregnant mother fled with Claude to his paternal aunt's home in Cannes to escape the Franco-Prussian War. Debussy began piano lessons there at the age of 7 with an Italian violinist in his early 40s named Cerutti; his aunt paid for his lessons. In 1871, he drew the attention of Marie Mauté de Fleurville, who claimed to have been a pupil of Frédéric Chopin. Debussy always believed her, although there is no independent evidence to support her claim. His talents soon became evident, and in 1872, at age 10, Debussy entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he spent the next 11 years. During his time there, he studied composition with Ernest Guiraud, music history/theory with Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, harmony with Émile Durand, piano with Antoine François Marmontel, organ with César Franck, and solfège with Albert Lavignac, as well as other significant figures of the era. He also became a lifelong friend of fellow student and distinguished pianist Isidor Philipp. After Debussy's death, many pianists sought Philipp's advice on playing Debussy's works.

Musical Development

Debussy was argumentative and experimental from the outset, although clearly talented. He challenged the

rigid teaching of the Academy, favoring instead dissonances and intervals that were frowned upon. Like Georges Bizet, he was a brilliant pianist and an outstanding sight reader who could have had a professional career had he so wished. The pieces he played in public at this time included sonata movements by Beethoven, Schumann, and Weber and Chopin's Ballade No. 2, a movement from the Piano Concerto No. 1, and the *Allegro de concert*.

During the summers of 1880, 1881, and 1882, Debussy accompanied Nadezhda von Meck, the wealthy patroness of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, as she traveled with her family in Europe. The young composer's many musical activities during these vacations included playing four-hand pieces with von Meck at the piano, giving music lessons to her children, and performing in private concerts with some of her musician friends. Despite von Meck's closeness to Tchaikovsky, the Russian master appears to have had minimal effect on Debussy. In September 1880, she sent Debussy's *Danse bohémienne* for Tchaikovsky's perusal. A month later, Tchaikovsky wrote back to her: "It is a very pretty piece, but it is much too short. Not a single idea is expressed fully, the form is terribly shriveled, and it lacks unity." Debussy did not publish the piece, and the manuscript remained in the von Meck family; it was eventually sold to B. Schott's Sohne in Mainz and published by them in 1932.

A greater influence was Debussy's close friendship with Marie-Blanche Vasnier, a singer he met when he began working as an accompanist to earn some money, embarking on an eight-year affair together. She and her husband, Parisian civil servant Henri, gave Debussy emotional and professional support. Henri Vasnier introduced him to the writings of influential French writers of the time, which gave rise to his first songs, settings of poems by Paul Verlaine (the son-in-law of his former teacher Mme. Mauté de Fleurville).

Figure 2. Debussy at the Villa Medici in Rome, 1885, at center in the white jacket.

As the winner of the 1884 Prix de Rome with his composition *L'enfant prodigue*, Debussy received a scholarship to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, which included a four-year residence at the Villa Medici, the French Academy in Rome, to further his studies (1885–1887). According to letters to Marie-Blanche Vasnier, perhaps in part designed to gain her sympathy, he found the artistic atmosphere stifling, the company boorish, the food bad, and the monastic quarters "abominable." Neither did he delight in Italian opera, as he found the operas of Donizetti and Verdi not to his taste. Debussy was often depressed and unable to compose, but he was inspired by Franz Liszt, whose command of the keyboard he found admirable. In June 1885, Debussy wrote of his desire to follow his own way, saying, "I am sure the Institute would not approve, for, naturally it regards the path which it ordains as the only right one. But there is no help for it! I am too enamoured of my freedom, too fond of my own ideas!"

Debussy finally composed four pieces that were sent to the Academy: the symphonic ode *Zuleima* (based on

a text by Heinrich Heine); the orchestral piece *Printemps*; the cantata *La damoiselle élue* (1887–1888) (which was criticized by the Academy as "bizarre," although it was the first piece in which the stylistic features of Debussy's later style began to emerge); and the *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra, which was heavily based on César Franck's music and therefore eventually withdrawn by Debussy. The Academy chided him for "courting the unusual" and hoped for something better from the gifted student. Although Debussy's works showed the influence of Jules Massenet, Massenet concluded, "He is an enigma."

During his visits to Bayreuth in 1888–89, Debussy was exposed to Wagnerian opera, which would have a lasting impact on his work. Debussy, like many young musicians of the time, responded positively to Richard Wagner's sensuousness, mastery of form, and striking harmonies. Wagner's extroverted emotionalism was not to be Debussy's way, but the German composer's influence is evident in *La damoiselle élue* and the 1889 piece *Cinq poèmes de Charles Baudelaire*. Other songs of the period, notably the settings of Verlaine—*Ariettes oubliées*, *Trois mélodies*, and *Fêtes galantes*—are all in a more capricious style.

Around this time, Debussy met Erik Satie, who proved a kindred spirit in his experimental approach to composition and to naming his pieces. Both musicians were bohemians during this period, enjoying the same cafe society and struggling to stay afloat financially.

In 1889, at the Exposition Universelle in Paris, Debussy first heard Javanese gamelan music. He incorporated gamelan scales, melodies, rhythms, and ensemble textures into some of his compositions, most notably *Pagodes* from his piano collection Estampes.

Music Style

Rudolph Reti points out the following features of Debussy's music, which "established a new concept of tonality in European music":

1. Glittering passages and webs of figurations that distract from occasional absence of tonality;
2. Frequent use of parallel chords which are "in essence not harmonies at all, but rather 'chordal melodies,' enriched unisons," described by some writers as non-functional harmonies;
3. Bitonality, or at least bitonal chords;
4. Use of the whole-tone and pentatonic scale;
5. Unprepared modulations, "without any harmonic bridge."

He concludes that Debussy's achievement was the synthesis of monophonic based "melodic tonality" with harmonies, albeit different from those of "harmonic tonality."

The application of the term "Impressionist" to Debussy and the music he influenced is a matter of intense debate within academic circles. One side argues that the term is a misnomer, an inappropriate label which Debussy himself opposed. In a letter of 1908 he wrote: "I am trying to do 'something different'—an effect of reality . . . what the imbeciles call 'impressionism,' a term which is as poorly used as possible, particularly by

the critics, since they do not hesitate to apply it to [J. M. W.] Turner, the finest creator of mysterious effects in all the world of art." The opposing side argues that Debussy may have been reacting to unfavorable criticism at the time and the negativity that critics associated with Impressionism; it could therefore be argued that he would have been pleased with application of the current definition of Impressionism to his music.

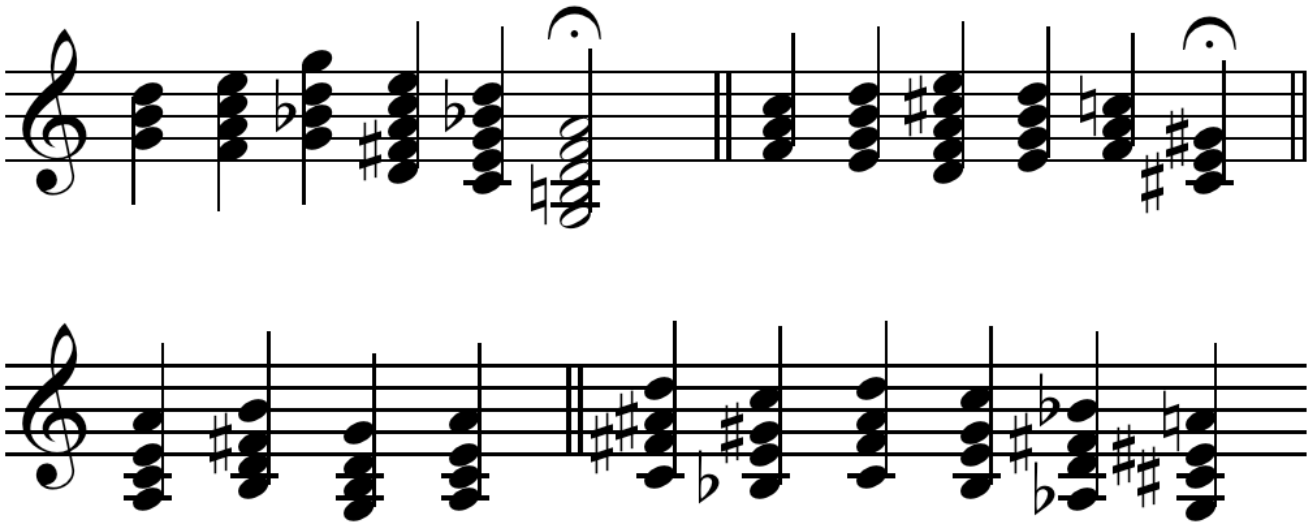


Figure 3. Chords, featuring chromatically altered sevenths and ninths and progressing unconventionally, explored by Debussy in a "celebrated conversation at the piano with his teacher Ernest Guiraud."

Prelude to the Afternoon of the a Faun

Though the piece was composed in the late 19th century, *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* is seen by no less a figure of modernism as Pierre Boulez as the beginning of modern music. If you're interested, here is an English translation of the Mallarme poem upon which Debussy based his composition.

Introduction

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune (*L. 86*), known in English as ***Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun***, is a symphonic poem for orchestra by Claude Debussy, approximately 10 minutes in duration. It was first performed in Paris on December 22, 1894, conducted by Gustave Doret.

Background

The composition was inspired by the poem *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* by Stéphane Mallarmé. Debussy's work later provided the basis for the ballet *Afternoon of a Faun*, choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky. It is one of Debussy's most famous works and is considered a turning point in the history of music; Pierre Boulez

has said he considers the score to be the beginning of modern music, observing that "the flute of the faun brought new breath to the art of music." It is a work that barely grasps onto tonality and harmonic function.

About his composition Debussy wrote:

> The music of this prelude is a very free illustration of Mallarmé's beautiful poem. By no means does it claim to be a synthesis of it. Rather there is a succession of scenes through which pass the desires and dreams of the faun in the heat of the afternoon. Then, tired of pursuing the timorous flight of nymphs and naiads, he succumbs to intoxicating sleep, in which he can finally realize his dreams of possession in universal Nature.

Paul Valéry reported that Mallarmé himself was unhappy with his poem being used as the basis for music: "He believed that his own music was sufficient, and that even with the best intentions in the world, it was a veritable crime as far as poetry was concerned to juxtapose poetry and music, even if it were the finest music there is."

However, Maurice Dumesnil states in his biography of Debussy that Mallarmé was enchanted by Debussy's composition, citing a short letter from Mallarmé to Debussy that read: "I have just come out of the concert, deeply moved. The marvel! Your illustration of the Afternoon of a Faun, which presents a dissonance with my text only by going much further, really, into nostalgia and into light, with finesse, with sensuality, with richness. I press your hand admiringly, Debussy. Yours, Mallarmé."

The opening flute solo is one of the most famous passages in the orchestral repertoire, consisting of a chromatic descent to a tritone below the original pitch and the subsequent ascent.

Composition

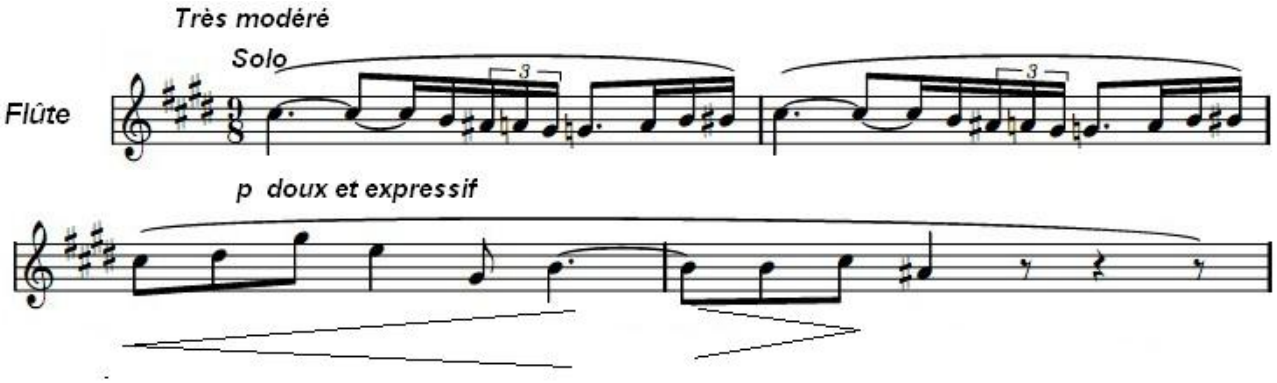


Figure 1. Principal theme.

The work is scored for three flutes, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets in A and Bb, two bassoons, four horns, two harps, two crotales, and strings.

Although it is tempting to call this piece a tone poem, there is very little musical literalism in the piece;

instead, the slow and mediated melody and layered orchestration as a whole evoke the eroticism of Mallarmé's poem.

> [This prelude] was [Debussy's] musical response to the poem of Stephane Mallarmé (1842–1898), in which a faun playing his pan-pipes alone in the woods becomes aroused by passing nymphs and naiads, pursues them unsuccessfully, then wearily abandons himself to a sleep filled with visions. Though called a "prelude," the work is nevertheless complete—an evocation of the feelings of the poem as a whole.

The *Prélude* at first listening seems improvisational and almost free-form; however, closer observation will demonstrate that the piece consists of a complex organization of musical cells, motifs carefully developed and traded between members of the orchestra. A close analysis of the piece reveals a high amount of consciousness of composition on Debussy's part.

The main musical themes are introduced by woodwinds, with delicate but harmonically advanced underpinnings of muted horns, strings, and harp. Recurring tools in Debussy's compositional arsenal make appearances in this piece: extended whole-tone scale runs, harmonic fluidity without lengthy modulations between central keys, and tritones in both melody and harmony. The development of the slow main theme transitions smoothly between 9/8, 6/8, and 12/8 meters. Debussy enacts voicings and shading in his orchestration to a high degree, allowing the main melodic cell to move from solo flute to oboe, back to solo flute, then two unison flutes (yielding a completely different atmosphere to the melody), then clarinet, etc. Even the accompaniment explores alternate voicings; the flute duo's crescendo during their melodic cells accompany *legato* strings with violas carrying the soprano part over alto violins (the tone of a viola in its upper register being especially pronounced).

Maurice Ravel

Like Debussy, Ravel is considered one of the leading composers of impressionist music, though, like Debussy, he disliked that label. Unlike Debussy, at least in my opinion, there are numerous pieces by Ravel that clearly do not follow impressionistic practice. However, his ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* is a clear example of impressionist style, so we will disregard the artists preference and study him as part of our consideration of the impressionist movement.

Introduction

Joseph-Maurice Ravel (7 March 1875–28 December 1937) was a French composer, pianist, and conductor. He is often associated with impressionism along with his elder contemporary Claude Debussy, although both composers rejected the term. In the 1920s and '30s, Ravel was internationally regarded as France's greatest living composer.

Figure 1. Ravel in 1925.

Born to a music-loving family, Ravel attended France's premier music college, the Paris Conservatoire; he was not well regarded by its conservative establishment, whose biased treatment of him caused a scandal. After leaving the conservatoire, Ravel found his own way as a composer, developing a style of great clarity, incorporating elements of baroque, neoclassicism, and, in his later works, jazz. He liked to experiment with musical form, as in his best-known work, *Boléro* (1928), in which repetition takes the place of development. He made some orchestral arrangements of other composers' music, of which his 1922 version of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is the best known.

As a slow and painstaking worker, Ravel composed fewer pieces than many of his contemporaries. Among his works to enter the repertoire are pieces for piano, chamber music, two piano concertos, ballet music, two operas, and eight song cycles; he wrote no symphonies or religious works. Many of his works exist in two versions: a first piano score and a later orchestration. Some of his piano music, such as *Gaspard de la nuit* (1908), is exceptionally difficult to play, and his complex orchestral works such as *Daphnis et Chloé* (1912) require skillful balance in performance.

Ravel was among the first composers to recognize the potential of recording to bring their music to a wider public. From the 1920s, despite limited technique as a pianist or conductor, he took part in recordings of several of his works; others were made under his supervision.

Ravel and Debussy

Around 1900, Ravel and a number of innovative young artists, poets, critics, and musicians joined together in an informal group; they came to be known as Les Apaches ("The Hooligans"), a name coined by Viñes to represent their status as "artistic outcasts." They met regularly until the beginning of the First World War, and members stimulated one another with intellectual argument and performances of their works. The membership of the group was fluid and at various times included Igor Stravinsky and Manuel de Falla, as well as their French friends.

Among the enthusiasms of the Apaches was the music of Debussy. Ravel, 12 years his junior, had known Debussy slightly since the 1890s, and their friendship, though never close, continued for more than 10 years. In 1902, André Messager conducted the premiere of Debussy's opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Opéra-Comique. It divided musical opinion. Dubois unavailingly forbade Conservatoire students to attend, and the conductor's friend and former teacher Camille Saint-Saëns was prominent among those who detested the piece. The Apaches were loud in their support. The first run of the opera consisted of 14 performances: Ravel attended all of them.

Debussy was widely held to be an impressionist composer—a label he intensely disliked. Many music lovers began to apply the same term to Ravel, and the works of the two composers were frequently taken as part of a single genre. Ravel thought that Debussy was indeed an impressionist but that he himself was not. Orenstein comments that Debussy was more spontaneous and casual in his composing, while Ravel was more attentive to form and craftsmanship. Ravel wrote that Debussy's "genius was obviously one of great individuality, creating its own laws, constantly in evolution, expressing itself freely, yet always faithful to French tradition. For Debussy, the musician and the man, I have had profound admiration, but by nature I am different from Debussy . . . I think I have always personally followed a direction opposed to that of [his] symbolism." During the first years of the new century, Ravel's new works included the piano piece *Jeux d'eau* (1901), the String Quartet, and the orchestral song cycle *Shéhérazade* (both 1903). Commentators have noted some Debussian touches in some parts of these works. Nichols calls the quartet "at once homage to and exorcism of Debussy's influence."

The two composers ceased to be on friendly terms in the middle of the 1900s, for musical and possibly personal reasons. Their admirers began to form factions, with adherents of one composer denigrating the other. Disputes arose about the chronology of the composers' works and who influenced whom. Prominent in the anti-Ravel camp was Lalo, who wrote, "Where M. Debussy is all sensitivity, M. Ravel is all insensitivity, borrowing without hesitation not only technique but the sensitivity of other people." The public tension led to personal estrangement. Ravel said, "It's probably better for us, after all, to be on frigid terms for illogical reasons." Nichols suggests an additional reason for the rift. In 1904, Debussy left his wife and went to live with the singer Emma Bardac. Ravel, together with his close friend and confidante Misia Edwards and the opera star Lucienne Bréval, contributed to a modest regular income for the deserted Lilly Debussy, a fact that Nichols suggests may have rankled with her husband.

Daphnis et Chloé

Daphnis et Chloé was commissioned in or about 1909 by the impresario Sergei Diaghilev for his company, the Ballets Russes. Ravel began work with Diaghilev's choreographer, Michel Fokine, and designer, Léon Bakst. Fokine had a reputation for his modern approach to dance, with individual numbers replaced by continuous music. This appealed to Ravel, and after discussing the action in great detail with Fokine, Ravel began composing the music. There were frequent disagreements between the collaborators, and the premiere

was under-rehearsed because of the late completion of the work. It had an unenthusiastic reception and was quickly withdrawn, although it was revived successfully a year later in Monte Carlo and London. The effort to complete the ballet took its toll on Ravel's health; neurasthenia obliged him to rest for several months after the premiere.

Ravel composed little during 1913. He collaborated with Stravinsky on a performing version of Mussorgsky's unfinished opera *Khovanshchina*, and his own works were the *Trois poèmes de Mallarmé* for soprano and chamber ensemble and two short piano pieces, *À la manière de Borodine* and *À la manière de Chabrier*. In 1913, together with Debussy, Ravel was among the musicians present at the dress rehearsal of *The Rite of Spring*. Stravinsky later said that Ravel was the only person who immediately understood the music. Ravel predicted that the premiere of the *Rite* would be seen as an event of historic importance equal to that of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Music

Marcel Marnat's catalog of Ravel's complete works lists eighty-five works, including many incomplete or abandoned. Though that total is small in comparison with the output of his major contemporaries, it is nevertheless inflated by Ravel's frequent practice of writing works for piano and later rewriting them as independent pieces for orchestra. The performable body of works numbers about sixty; slightly more than half are instrumental. Ravel's music includes pieces for piano, chamber music, two piano concerti, ballet music, opera, and song cycles. He wrote no symphonies or religious works.

Ravel drew on many generations of French composers from Couperin and Rameau to Fauré and the more recent innovations of Satie and Debussy. Foreign influences include Mozart, Schubert, Liszt, and Chopin. He considered himself in many ways a classicist, often using traditional structures and forms, such as the ternary, to present his new melodic and rhythmic content and innovative harmonies. The influence of jazz on his later music is heard within conventional classical structures in the Piano Concerto and the Violin Sonata.

> Whatever sauce you put around the melody is a matter of taste. What is important is the melodic line.
> —Ravel to Vaughan Williams

Ravel placed high importance on melody, telling Vaughan Williams that there is "an implied melodic outline in all vital music." His themes are frequently modal instead of using the familiar major or minor scales. As a result, there are few leading notes in his output. Chords of the ninth and eleventh and unresolved appoggiaturas, such as those in the *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, are characteristic of Ravel's harmonic language.

Dance forms appealed to Ravel, most famously the bolero and pavane, but also the minuet, forlane, rigaudon, waltz, czardas, habanera, and passacaglia. National and regional consciousness was important to him, and although a planned concerto on Basque themes never materialized, his works include allusions to Hebraic, Greek, Hungarian, and gypsy themes. He wrote several short pieces paying tribute to composers he

admired—Borodin, Chabrier, Fauré, and Haydn, interpreting their characteristics in a Ravellian style. Another important influence was literary rather than musical: Ravel said that he learned from Poe that "true art is a perfect balance between pure intellect and emotion," with the corollary that a piece of music should be a perfectly balanced entity with no irrelevant material allowed to intrude.

Daphnis et Chloe

Please read this article on Ravel's ballet *Daphnis et Chloe*. This page just discusses Part III, as that is the portion of the ballet that our listening example comes from. If you'd like to read about the entire scenario of the ballet—which I hope you will—you can read the rest of the Wikipedia article here.

Part III

Scenario

Morning at the grotto of the Nymphs. There is no sound but the murmur of rivulets produced by the dew that trickles from the rocks. Daphnis lies, still unconscious, at the entrance of the grotto. Gradually the day breaks. The songs of birds are heard. Far off, a shepherd passes with his flock. Another shepherd crosses in the background. A group of herdsmen enters looking for Daphnis and Chloe. They discover Daphnis and wake him. Anxiously he looks around for Chloe. She appears at last, surrounded by shepherdesses. They throw themselves into each other's arms. Daphnis notices Chloe's wreath. His dream was a prophetic vision. The intervention of Pan is manifest. The old shepherd Lammon explains that if Pan has saved Chloe, it is in memory of the nymph Syrinx, whom the god once loved. Daphnis and Chloe mime the tale of Pan and Syrinx. Chloe plays the young nymph wandering in the meadow. Daphnis as Pan appears and declares his love. The nymph rebuffs him. The god becomes more insistent. She disappears into the reeds. In despair, he picks several stalks to form a flute and plays a melancholy air. Chloe reappears and interprets in her dance the accents of the flute. The dance becomes more and more animated, and in a mad whirling, Chloe falls into Daphnis's arms. Before the altar of the Nymphs, he pledges his love, offering a sacrifice of two sheep. A group of girls enters dressed as bacchantes, shaking tambourines. Daphnis and Chloe embrace tenderly. A group of youths rushes on stage and the ballet ends with a bacchanale.

Structure

- *Lever du jour*
- *Pantomime (Les amours de Pan et Syrinx)*
- *Danse générale (Bacchanale)*

Expressionism

Expressionism is a term that, like impressionism, originated in the visual arts and was then applied to other arts, including music. Expressionism can be considered a reaction to the ethereal sweetness of impressionism. Instead of gauzy impressions of natural beauty, expressionism looks inward to the angst and fear lurking in the subconscious mind. In music, expressionism is manifest in the full embrace of jarring dissonance.

Introduction

Expressionism was a modernist movement, initially in poetry and painting, originating in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century. Its typical trait is to present the world solely from a subjective perspective, distorting it radically for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists sought to express meaning or emotional experience rather than physical reality.

Expressionism was developed as an avant-garde style before the First World War. It remained popular during the Weimar Republic, particularly in Berlin. The style extended to a wide range of the arts, including expressionist architecture, painting, literature, theater, dance, film, and music.

The term is sometimes suggestive of angst. In a general sense, painters such as Matthias Grünewald and El Greco are sometimes termed expressionist, though in practice, the term is applied mainly to 20th-century works. The Expressionist emphasis on individual perspective has been characterized as a reaction to positivism and other artistic styles such as Naturalism and Impressionism.

Music

The term expressionism "was probably first applied to music in 1918, especially to Schoenberg," because like the painter Kandinsky, he avoided "traditional forms of beauty" to convey powerful feelings in his music. Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and Alban Berg, the members of the Second Viennese School, are important Expressionists (Schoenberg was also an Expressionist painter). Other composers that have been associated with expressionism are Krenek (the Second Symphony), Paul Hindemith (*The Young Maiden*), Igor Stravinsky (*Japanese Songs*), and Alexander Scriabin (late piano sonatas) (Adorno 2009, 275). Another significant expressionist was Béla Bartók in early works, written in the second decade of the 20th-century, such as *Bluebeard's Castle* (1911), *The Wooden Prince* (1917), and *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1919). Important precursors of expressionism are Richard Wagner (1813–83), Gustav Mahler (1860–1911), and Richard Strauss (1864–1949).

Theodor Adorno describes expressionism as concerned with the unconscious and states that "the depiction of fear lies at the centre" of expressionist music, with dissonance predominating so that the "harmonious, affirmative element of art is banished." *Erwartung* and *Die Glückliche Hand* by Schoenberg and *Wozzeck*, an

opera by Alban Berg (based on the play *Woyzeck* by Georg Büchner), are examples of Expressionist works. If one were to draw an analogy from paintings, one may describe the expressionist painting technique as the distortion of reality (mostly colors and shapes) to create a nightmarish effect for the particular painting as a whole. Expressionist music roughly does the same thing, where the dramatically increased dissonance creates, aurally, a nightmarish atmosphere.

Arnold Schoenberg

Arnold Schoenberg is one of the most influential composers of the 20th century. He championed atonality in music composition, first through freely composed, expressionist works such as *Pierrot Lunaire* (one song from that cycle, "Madonna," is on our playlist) and later through his own system of composition commonly referred to as twelve-tone music (the Piano Suite, a portion of which is on our list, was composed using this method). This system of atonal composition became the dominant musical idiom at music conservatories in America and Europe during the latter half of the 20th century. Though the influence of twelve-tone composition appears to be waning, its impact on the music of the last century is enormous. Love it or hate it, the music of Schoenberg walks large on the stage of history.

Biography

Early Life

Arnold Schoenberg was born into a lower middle-class Jewish family in the Leopoldstadt district (in earlier times a Jewish ghetto) of Vienna at "Obere Donaustraße 5." His father Samuel, a native of Bratislava, was a shopkeeper, and his mother Pauline was native of Prague. Arnold was largely self-taught. He took only counterpoint lessons with the composer Alexander von Zemlinsky, who was to become his first brother-in-law.

Figure 1. Arnold Schönberg in Payerbach, 1903.

In his twenties, Schoenberg earned a living by orchestrating operettas while composing his own works, such as the string sextet *Verklärte Nacht* ("Transfigured Night"). He later made an orchestral version of this, which became one of his most popular pieces. Both Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler recognized Schoenberg's significance as a composer—Strauss when he encountered Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder*, and Mahler after hearing several of Schoenberg's early works.

Strauss turned to a more conservative idiom in his own work after 1909 and at that point dismissed Schoenberg. Mahler adopted him as a protégé and continued to support him, even after Schoenberg's style reached a point Mahler could no longer understand. Mahler worried about who would look after him after his death. Schoenberg, who had initially despised and mocked Mahler's music, was converted by the "thunderbolt" of Mahler's *Third Symphony*, which he considered a work of genius. Afterward he "spoke of Mahler as a saint."

In 1898, Schoenberg converted to Christianity in the Lutheran church. According to MacDonald, this was partly to strengthen his attachment to Western European cultural traditions and partly as a means of self-defense "in a time of resurgent anti-Semitism." In 1933, after long meditation, he returned to Judaism, because he realized that "his racial and religious heritage was inescapable" and to take up an unmistakable position on the side opposing Nazism. He would self-identify as a member of the Jewish religion later in life.

In October 1901, he married Mathilde Zemlinsky, the sister of the conductor and composer Alexander von Zemlinsky, with whom Schoenberg had been studying since about 1894. Mathilde bore him two children, Gertrud (1902–1947) and Georg (1906–1974). Gertrud would marry Schoenberg's pupil Felix Greissle in 1921. During the summer of 1908, his wife Mathilde left him for several months for a young Austrian painter, Richard Gerstl. This period marked a distinct change in Schoenberg's work. It was during the absence of his wife that he composed "You lean against a silver-willow" (German: *Du lehnest wider eine Silberweide*), the 13th

song in the cycle *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, based on the collection of the same name by the German mystical poet Stefan George. This was the first composition without any reference at all to a key. Also in this year, he completed one of his most revolutionary compositions, the String Quartet No. 2, whose first two movements, though chromatic in color, use traditional key signatures, yet whose final two movements, also settings of George, daringly weaken the links with traditional tonality. Both movements end on tonic chords, and the work is not fully non-tonal. Breaking with previous string-quartet practice, it incorporates a soprano vocal line.

During the summer of 1910, Schoenberg wrote his *Harmonielehre* (*Theory of Harmony*; Schoenberg 1922), which remains one of the most influential music-theory books. From about 1911, Schoenberg belonged to a circle of artists and intellectuals who included Lene Schneider-Kainer, Franz Werfel, Herwarth Walden, and the latter's wife, Else Lasker-Schüler.

In 1910, he met Edward Clark, an English music journalist then working in Germany. Clark became his sole English student, and in his later capacity as a producer for the BBC, he was responsible for introducing many of Schoenberg's works, and Schoenberg himself, to Britain (as well as Webern, Berg, and others).

Another of his most important works from this atonal or pantonal period is the highly influential *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21, of 1912, a novel cycle of expressionist songs set to a German translation of poems by the Belgian-French poet Albert Giraud. Utilizing the technique of *Sprechstimme*, or melodramatically spoken recitation, the work pairs a female vocalist with a small ensemble of five musicians. The ensemble, which is now commonly referred to as the Pierrot ensemble, consists of flute (doubling on piccolo), clarinet (doubling on bass clarinet), violin (doubling on viola), violoncello, speaker, and piano.

Wilhelm Bopp, director of the Vienna Conservatory from 1907, wanted a break from the stale environment personified for him by Robert Fuchs and Hermann Graedener. Having considered many candidates, he offered teaching positions to Schoenberg and Franz Schreker in 1912. At the time, Schoenberg lived in Berlin. He was not completely cut off from the Vienna Conservatory, having taught a private theory course a year earlier. He seriously considered the offer, but he declined. Writing afterward to Alban Berg, he cited his "aversion to Vienna" as the main reason for his decision, while contemplating that it might have been the wrong one financially, but having made it, he felt content. A couple of months later he wrote to Schreker suggesting that it might have been a bad idea for him as well to accept the teaching position.

World War I

World War I brought a crisis in his development. Military service disrupted his life when at the age of 42 he was in the army. He was never able to work uninterrupted or over a period of time, and as a result, he left many unfinished works and undeveloped "beginnings." On one occasion, a superior officer demanded to know if he was "this notorious Schoenberg, then"; Schoenberg replied: "Beg to report, sir, yes. Nobody wanted to be, someone had to be, so I let it be me" (according to Norman Lebrecht [2001], this is a reference to Schoenberg's apparent "destiny" as the "Emancipator of Dissonance").

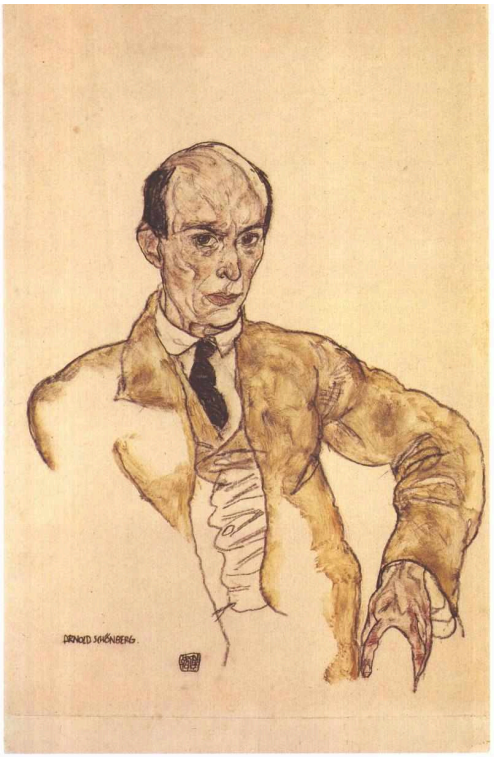


Figure 2. Arnold Schoenberg, by Egon Schiele 1917.

In what Ross calls an "act of war psychosis," Schoenberg drew comparisons between Germany's assault on France and his assault on decadent bourgeois artistic values. In August 1914, while denouncing the music of Bizet, Stravinsky, and Ravel, he wrote: "Now comes the reckoning! Now we will throw these mediocre kitschmongers into slavery, and teach them to venerate the German spirit and to worship the German God."

The deteriorating relation between contemporary composers and the public led him to found the Society for Private Musical Performances (*Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen* in German) in Vienna in 1918. He sought to provide a forum in which modern musical compositions could be carefully prepared and rehearsed and properly performed under conditions protected from the dictates of fashion and pressures of commerce. From its inception through 1921, when it ended because of economic reasons, the Society presented 353 performances to paid members, sometimes at the rate of one per week. During the first year and a half, Schoenberg did not let any of his own works be performed. Instead, audiences at the Society's concerts heard difficult contemporary compositions by Scriabin, Debussy, Mahler, Webern, Berg, Reger, and other leading figures of early 20th-century music.

Development of the Twelve-Tone Method

Later, Schoenberg was to develop the most influential version of the dodecaphonic (also known as twelve-tone) method of composition, which in French and English was given the alternative name serialism by René Leibowitz and Humphrey Searle in 1947. This technique was taken up by many of his students, who constituted the so-called Second Viennese School. They included Anton Webern, Alban Berg, and Hanns Eisler, all of whom were profoundly influenced by Schoenberg. He published a number of books, ranging from his famous *Harmonielehre* (Theory of Harmony) to *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, many of which are still in print and used by musicians and developing composers.

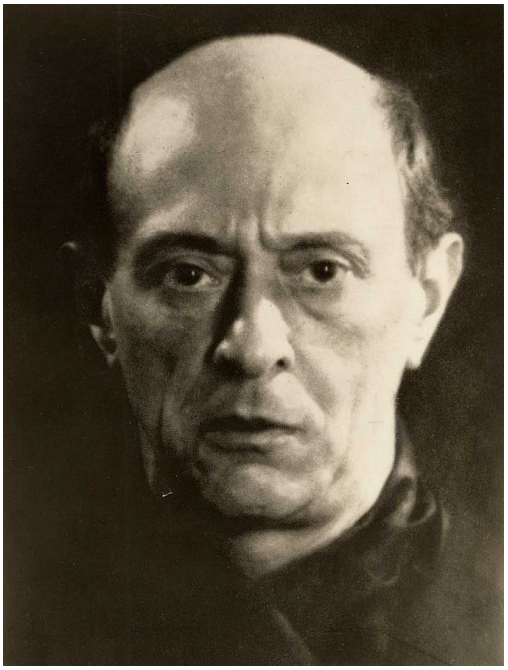


Figure 3. Arnold Schoenberg, 1927, by Man Ray.

Schoenberg viewed his development as a natural progression, and he did not deprecate his earlier works when he ventured into serialism. In 1923, he wrote to the Swiss philanthropist Werner Reinhart:

> For the present, it matters more to me if people understand my older works. . . . They are the natural forerunners of my later works, and only those who understand and comprehend these will be able to gain an understanding of the later works that goes beyond a fashionable bare minimum. I do not attach so much importance to being a musical bogey-man as to being a natural continuer of properly-understood good old tradition!

His first wife died in October 1923, and in August of the next year, Schoenberg married Gertrud Kolisch (1898–1967), sister of his pupil, the violinist Rudolf Kolisch. She wrote the libretto for Schoenberg's one-act opera *Von heute auf morgen* under the pseudonym Max Blonda. At her request, Schoenberg's (ultimately unfinished) piece *Die Jakobsleiter* was prepared for performance by Schoenberg's student Winfried Zillig. After her husband's death in 1951, she founded Belmont Music Publishers, devoted to the publication of his works. Arnold used the notes G and E ♭ (German: Es, i.e., "S") for "Gertrud Schoenberg," in the *Suite*, for septet, Op. 29 (1925).

Following the 1924 death of composer Ferruccio Busoni, who had served as Director of a Master Class in Composition at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin, Schoenberg was appointed to this post the next year but because of health problems was unable to take up his post until 1926. Among his notable students during this period were the composers Roberto Gerhard, Nikos Skalkottas, and Josef Rufer.

Along with his twelve-tone works, 1930 marks Schoenberg's return to tonality, with numbers 4 and 6 of the Six Pieces for Male Chorus Op. 35, the other pieces being dodecaphonic.

Third Reich and Move to America

Schoenberg continued in his post until the Nazis came to power under Adolf Hitler in 1933. While vacationing in France, he was warned that returning to Germany would be dangerous. Schoenberg formally reclaimed membership in the Jewish religion at a Paris synagogue, then traveled with his family to the United States. However, this happened only after his attempts to move to Britain came to nothing. He enlisted the aid of his former student and great champion Edward Clark, now a senior producer with the BBC, in helping him gain a British teaching post or even a British publisher, but to no avail.

His first teaching position in the United States was at the Malkin Conservatory in Boston. He moved to Los Angeles, where he taught at the University of Southern California and the University of California, Los Angeles, both of which later named a music building on their respective campuses Schoenberg Hall. He was appointed visiting professor at UCLA in 1935 on the recommendation of Otto Klemperer, music director and conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and the next year was promoted to professor at a salary of $5,100 per year, which enabled him in either May 1936 or 1937 to buy a Spanish Revival house at 116 North Rockingham in Brentwood Park, near the UCLA campus, for $18,000. This address was directly across the street from Shirley Temple's house, and there he befriended fellow composer (and tennis partner) George Gershwin. The Schoenbergs were able to employ domestic help and began holding Sunday-afternoon gatherings that were known for excellent coffee and Viennese pastries. Frequent guests included Otto Klemperer (who studied composition privately with Schoenberg beginning in April 1936), Edgard Varèse, Joseph Achron, Louis Gruenberg, Ernst Toch, and, on occasion, well-known actors such as Harpo Marx and Peter Lorre. Composers Leonard Rosenman and George Tremblay studied with Schoenberg at this time.

After his move to the United States in 1934, the composer used the alternative spelling of his surname *Schoenberg*, rather than *Schönberg*, in what he called "deference to American practice," though according to one writer, he first made the change a year earlier.

He lived there the rest of his life, but at first he was not settled. In around 1934, he applied for a position of teacher of harmony and theory at the New South Wales State Conservatorium in Sydney. The director, Edgar Bainton, rejected him for being Jewish and for having "modernist ideas and dangerous tendencies." Schoenberg also at one time explored the idea of emigrating to New Zealand. His secretary and student (and nephew of Schoenberg's mother-in-law Henriette Kolisch) was Richard (Dick) Hoffmann Jr., Viennese-born but who lived in New Zealand 1935–47, and Schoenberg had since childhood been fascinated with islands, and with New Zealand in particular, possibly because of the beauty of the postage stamps issued by that country.

During this final period, he composed several notable works, including the difficult Violin Concerto, Op. 36 (1934/36); the *Kol Nidre*, Op. 39, for chorus and orchestra (1938); the *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, Op. 41 (1942); the haunting Piano Concerto, Op. 42 (1942); and his memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46 (1947). He was unable to complete his opera *Moses und Aron* (1932/33),

which was one of the first works of its genre written completely using dodecaphonic composition. Along with twelve-tone music, Schoenberg also returned to tonality with works during his last period, like the Suite for Strings in G major (1935), the Chamber Symphony No. 2 in E ♭ minor, Op. 38 (begun in 1906, completed in 1939), and the Variations on a Recitative in D minor, Op. 40 (1941). During this period his notable students included John Cage and Lou Harrison.

In 1941 he became a citizen of the United States.

Later Years and Death

Schoenberg's superstitious nature may have triggered his death. The composer had triskaidekaphobia (the fear of the number 13), and according to friend Katia Mann, he feared he would die during a year that was a multiple of 13. He dreaded his 65th birthday in 1939 so much that a friend asked the composer and astrologer Dane Rudhyar to prepare Schoenberg's horoscope. Rudhyar did this and told Schoenberg that the year was dangerous, but not fatal.

Figure 4. Schoenberg's grave in the Zentralfriedhof, Vienna.

But in 1950, on his 76th birthday, an astrologer wrote Schoenberg a note warning him that the year was a critical one: 7 + 6 = 13. This stunned and depressed the composer, for up to that point, he had only been wary of multiples of 13 and never considered adding the digits of his age. He died on Friday, 13 July 1951, shortly before midnight. Schoenberg had stayed in bed all day, sick, anxious, and depressed. His wife Gertrud reported in a telegram to her sister-in-law Ottilie the next day that Arnold died at 11:45 p.m., 15 minutes before midnight. In a letter to Ottilie dated 4 August 1951, Gertrud explained, "About a quarter to twelve I looked at the clock and said to myself: another quarter of an hour and then the worst is over. Then the doctor called me. Arnold's throat rattled twice, his heart gave a powerful beat and that was the end."

Schoenberg's ashes were later interred at the Zentralfriedhof in Vienna on 6 June 1974.

Music

Listen: Second String Quartet

Please listen to the following audio file to hear the fourth movement played by the Carmel Quartet with soprano Rona Israel-Kolatt in 2007.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-1

Schoenberg's significant compositions in the repertory of modern art music extend over a period of more than 50 years. Traditionally, they are divided into three periods, though this division is arguably arbitrary, as the music in each of these periods is considerably varied. The idea that his twelve-tone period "represents a stylistically unified body of works is simply not supported by the musical evidence," and important musical characteristics—especially those related to motivic development—transcend these boundaries completely. The first of these periods, 1894–1907, is identified in the legacy of the high-Romantic composers of the late 19th century, as well as with "expressionist" movements in poetry and art. The second, 1908–1922, is typified by the abandonment of key centers, a move often described (though not by Schoenberg) as "free atonality." The third, from 1923 onward, commences with Schoenberg's invention of dodecaphonic, or "twelve-tone," compositional method. Schoenberg's best-known students—Hanns Eisler, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern—followed Schoenberg faithfully through each of these intellectual and aesthetic transitions, though not without considerable experimentation and variety of approach.

First Period: Late Romanticism

Beginning with songs and string quartets written around the turn of the century, Schoenberg's concerns as a composer positioned him uniquely among his peers in that his procedures exhibited characteristics of both Brahms and Wagner, who for most contemporary listeners, were considered polar opposites, representing mutually exclusive directions in the legacy of German music. Schoenberg's Six Songs, Op. 3 (1899–1903), for example, exhibit a conservative clarity of tonal organization typical of Brahms and Mahler, reflecting an interest in balanced phrases and an undisturbed hierarchy of key relationships. However, the songs also explore

unusually bold incidental chromaticism and seem to aspire to a Wagnerian "representational" approach to motivic identity. The synthesis of these approaches reaches an apex in his *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4 (1899), a programmatic work for string sextet that develops several distinctive "leitmotif"-like themes, each one eclipsing and subordinating the last. The only motivic elements that persist throughout the work are those that are perpetually dissolved, varied, and re-combined, in a technique, identified primarily in Brahms's music, that Schoenberg called "developing variation." Schoenberg's procedures in the work are organized in two ways simultaneously, at once suggesting a Wagnerian narrative of motivic ideas as well as a Brahmsian approach to motivic development and tonal cohesion.

Second Period: Free Atonality

Schoenberg's music from 1908 onward experiments in a variety of ways with the absence of traditional keys or tonal centers. His first explicitly atonal piece was the second string quartet, Op. 10, with soprano. The last movement of this piece has no key signature, marking Schoenberg's formal divorce from diatonic harmonies. Other important works of the era include his song cycle *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 (1908–1909); his Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16 (1909); the influential *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21 (1912); as well as his dramatic *Erwartung*, Op. 17 (1909). The urgency of musical constructions lacking in tonal centers, or traditional dissonance-consonance relationships, however, can be traced as far back as his Chamber Symphony No. 1, Op. 9 (1906), a work remarkable for its tonal development of whole-tone and quartal harmony and its initiation of dynamic and unusual ensemble relationships, involving dramatic interruption and unpredictable instrumental allegiances; many of these features would typify the timbre-oriented chamber music aesthetic of the coming century.

Third Period: Twelve-Tone and Tonal Works

In the early 1920s, he worked at evolving a means of order that would make his musical texture simpler and clearer. This resulted in the "method of composing with twelve tones which are related only with one another," in which the twelve pitches of the octave (unrealized compositionally) are regarded as equal, and no one note or tonality is given the emphasis it occupied in classical harmony. He regarded it as the equivalent in music of Albert Einstein's discoveries in physics. Schoenberg announced it characteristically, during a walk with his friend Josef Rufer, when he said, "I have made a discovery which will ensure the supremacy of German music for the next hundred years." This period included the *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31 (1928); *Piano Pieces*, Opp. 33a & b (1931); and the Piano Concerto, Op. 42 (1942). Contrary to his reputation for strictness, Schoenberg's use of the technique varied widely according to the demands of each individual composition. Thus the structure of his unfinished opera *Moses und Aron* is unlike that of his *Fantasy for Violin and Piano*, Op. 47 (1949).

Ten features of Schoenberg's mature twelve-tone practice are characteristic, interdependent, and interactive:

1. Hexachordal inversional combinatoriality
2. Aggregates
3. Linear set presentation
4. Partitioning
5. Isomorphic partitioning
6. Invariants
7. Hexachordal levels
8. Harmony, "consistent with and derived from the properties of the referential set"
9. Meter, established through "pitch-relational characteristics"
10. Multidimensional set presentations

Pierrot Lunaire

Pierrot Lunaire is a song cycle. It is written in three parts, with each part containing seven songs. The piece on our playlist, "Madonna," is song number 6 from Part I. It was composed during Schoenberg's second period after the composer had turned to atonality but before he developed his twelve-tone method. The inward psychological focus of the text and the eerie combination of atonality and sprechstimme mark this as a clearly expressionist work. Sprechstimme is an expressionist technique in which the singer performs the musical line in a half-sung, half-spoken style. The written notes on the page are used as a guide but are only approximated by the singer.

Introduction

Dreimal sieben Gedichte aus Albert Girauds "Pierrot lunaire" ("Three times Seven Poems from Albert Giraud's 'Pierrot lunaire'"), commonly known simply as ***Pierrot Lunaire*****, Op. 21** ("Moonstruck Pierrot" or "Pierrot in the Moonlight"), is a melodrama by Arnold Schoenberg. It is a setting of 21 selected poems from Otto Erich Hartleben's German translation of Albert Giraud's cycle of French poems of the same name. The première of the work, which is between 35 and 40 minutes in length, was at the Berlin Choralion-Saal on October 16, 1912, with Albertine Zehme as the vocalist.

The narrator (voice-type unspecified in the score, but traditionally performed by a soprano) delivers the poems in the Sprechstimme style. Schoenberg had previously used a combination of spoken text with instrumental accompaniment, called "melodrama," in the summer-wind narrative of the *Gurre-Lieder*, and it was a genre much in vogue at the end of the 19th century. The work is atonal but does not use the twelve-tone technique that Schoenberg would devise eight years later.

History

The work originated in a commission by Zehme for a cycle for voice and piano, setting a series of poems by the Belgian writer Albert Giraud. The verses had been first published in 1884 and later translated into German by Otto Erich Hartleben. Schoenberg began on March 12 and completed the work on July 9, 1912, having expanded the forces to an ensemble consisting of flute (doubling on a piccolo), clarinet (doubling on bass clarinet), violin (doubling on viola), cello, and piano. After forty rehearsals, Schoenberg and Zehme (in Columbine dress) gave the premiere at the Berlin Choralion-Saal on October 16, 1912. Reaction was mixed. According to Anton Webern, some in the audience were whistling and laughing, but in the end "it was an unqualified success." There was some criticism of blasphemy in the texts, to which Schoenberg responded, "If they were musical, not a single one would give a damn about the words. Instead, they would go away whistling the tunes." The show took to the road throughout Germany and Austria later in 1912. It was performed for the first time in the Western Hemisphere at the Klaw Theatre in New York City on February 4, 1923, with George Gershwin and Carl Ruggles in attendance.

Structure

Pierrot Lunaire consists of three groups of seven poems. In the first group, Pierrot sings of love, sex, and religion; in the second, of violence, crime, and blasphemy; and in the third of his return home to Bergamo, with his past haunting him.

Part I	**Part II**	**Part III**
1. *Mondestrunken* (Moondrunk) 2. *Columbine* 3. *Der Dandy* (The Dandy) 4. *Eine blasse Wäscherin* (An Ethereal Washerwoman) 5. *Valse de Chopin* (Chopin Waltz) 6. *Madonna* 7. *Der kranke Mond* (The Sick Moon)	1. *Nacht (Passacaglia)* (Night) 2. *Gebet an Pierrot* (Prayer to Pierrot) 3. *Raub* (Theft) 4. *Rote Messe* (Red Mass) 5. *Galgenlied* (Gallows Song) 6. *Enthauptung* (Beheading) 7. *Die Kreuze* (The Crosses)	1. *Heimweh* (Homesickness) 2. *Gemeinheit!* (Vulgarity) 3. *Parodie* (Parody) 4. *Der Mondfleck* (The Moonspot) 5. *Serenade* 6. *Heimfahrt (Barcarole)* (Homeward Bound) 7. *O Alter Duft* (O Ancient Fragrance)

Schoenberg, who was fascinated by numerology, also makes great use of seven-note motifs throughout the work, while the ensemble (with conductor) comprises seven people. The piece is his opus 21, contains 21 poems, and was begun on March 12, 1912. Other key numbers in the work are 3 and 13: each poem consists of 13 lines (two 4-line verses followed by a 5-line verse), while the first line of each poem occurs 3 times (being repeated as lines 7 and 13).

Music

Pierrot Lunaire uses a variety of classical forms and techniques, including canon, fugue, rondo, passacaglia, and free counterpoint. The poetry is a German version of a rondeau of the old French type with a double refrain. Each poem consists of three stanzas of 4 + 4 + 5 lines, with line 1 a Refrain (A) repeated as line 7 and line 13, and line 2 a second Refrain (B) repeated for line 8.

The instrumental combinations (including doublings) vary between most movements. The entire ensemble plays together only in the 11th, 14th, and final 4 settings.

The atonal, expressionistic settings of the text, with their echoes of German cabaret, bring the poems vividly to life. *Sprechgesang*, literally "speech-singing" in German, is a style in which the vocalist uses the specified rhythms and pitches but does not sustain the pitches, allowing them to drop or rise in the manner of speech.

Analysis

Pierrot Lunaire is a work which can be interpreted through the sixth song, "Madonna." In this song, the only person who could save Pierrot, Jesus, is presented as dead. After a brief period of sorrow in "Der kranke Mond," Pierrot in Part II of the song cycle becomes more depraved in his exploits and by the end is crucified for his sins in "Die Kreuze." Hoping to redeem himself in Part III, Pierrot tries to go back to previous persona as the "old pantomime from Italy" but ultimately fails without much hope of redemption by the end of the work.

Nacht

Pitch Structures

Everything in "Nacht" is generated from a ten-note motif, introduced in canon starting in the fourth bar. This piece predominantly uses the pitch collection (014). This collection gets introduced in the very first measure with the piano. If you take into account every note the piano plays in the first three measures, you get an octatonic scale (0134679T). This is just four groups of (014) transposed by T3. In measure 4, we see one set of (014) in the bass clarinet line. Whenever we see this pitch collection, it is usually in one of two rhythms. The first, as illustrated by the bass clarinet in measure 4, is three half notes. Later it shows up as three quarter notes, simply a compressed version of the original. The other rhythm is three eighth notes; usually this comes in groups of three. For example, in measure 8 the bass clarinet has the collection three times, each time as an eighth note rest followed by three eighth notes. If you look at that measure as a whole, and any other time this pattern shows up, we see that the second group is transposed from the first by T4. The third group of notes is transposed from the first group by T1. Thus, the entire measure is actually using (014), not just in each group,

but within each group. In other words, if you take the first note of each three you get (014), if you take the second note of each you get (014), and if you take the third note you also get (014). For the first two stanzas of text, we only ever see (014) transposed by various Tx. Starting in the third stanza, we begin to see inversions of (014). In measure 19, the right hand in the piano starts off with an inversion of (014) and then goes to a transposition of (014). This continues on for the entirety of the run in both hands of the piano.

Formal Structure

Following a brief introduction, the movement falls into three strophes of seven, six, and seven bars, with section breaks occurring at measures 11 and 17, articulated by a change of tempo to *etwas rascher* for the second strophe, and back again to the initial tempo for the third. These follow the stanzas of the poem and are followed by a coda. The first strophe is canonic in four voices; the second is also canonic, but in just three voices; the third strophe consists of a rapid succession of ambiguous canonic fragments.

Although the pitch-class sets are virtually the same throughout the whole movement, each section has distinct musical elements that differentiate them from each other. When looking at the transition from the first section to the second section, a couple important changes take place. First, the tempo marking *Etwas rascher* marks an increase in speed and rhythmic energy. This is further exaggerated by the increased rhythmic density in the piano, clarinet, and cello parts. In addition to the rhythmic changes, the registers of the cello, piano, and vocal lines are notably higher in the second section. The third section returns to the original tempo, and the register and rhythmic density change again to closely resemble the first section. This analysis provides evidence for organizing the piece into an ABA' form, as the first and last sections have many similar elements, while the middle section differs substantially. However, because of the pitch-class set similarities, the argument could be made for a quasi theme-and-variation organization, with A, A', and A *sections.*

Musical Structure to Extramusical Elements

Expressionism is a modernist movement that began in Germany and Austria in the early 20th century. Schoenberg, Austrian in descent, was associated with the expressionist movement in German poetry and art. Being from Austria at this time, his music was often labeled as degenerate music, since Schoenberg is Jewish. Expressionistic music is dominated by dissonance rather than consonance and can create an "unsettling" feeling among its listeners. For many, expressionistic music meant a rejection of the past and an acceptance of the innovative, unfamiliar future. The text of "Nacht" can be described as ominous and depicts the wings of black moths covering the sun. These views are characteristic of expressionistic poetry.

"Nacht" also employs the occasional use of word painting through his music, where he uses the music to illustrate the literal meaning of a particular word [4]. These text expressions make general associations between the text and musical setting. This can be seen with the word "duft" translating to "scent" in measure 12. The full poetic phrase "Steigt ein Duft" means "arises a scent," and this is depicted by a leap upward in voice from

A to G ♭ . Likewise, the word "verschwiegen" loosely translates to "mutely" or "hushed" and is performed by conventional singing rather than *Sprechstimme*, along with prolonged silence with a fermata, though the word more precisely means "discreetly" or "closed-mouthed."

Notable Recordings

Notable recordings of this composition include:

Sprechstimme	**Ensemble**	**Conductor**	**Record Compan**
Erika Stiedry-Wagner		Arnold Schoenberg	Columbia Record
Helga Pilarczyk	Members of the Conservatory Society Concert Orchestra	Pierre Boulez	Ades
Bethany Beardslee	Columbia Chamber Ensemble	Robert Craft	Columbia / CBS
Jan DeGaetani	Contemporary Chamber Ensemble	Arthur Weisberg	Nonesuch
Yvonne Minton	Ensemble InterContemporain	Pierre Boulez	Sony Music
Barbara Sukowa	Schoenberg Ensemble	Reinbert de Leeuw	Koch Schwann
Jane Manning	Nash Ensemble	Simon Rattle	Chandos
Phyllis Bryn-Julson	Ensemble Modern	n/a	BMG
Phyllis Bryn-Julson	New York New Music Ensemble	Robert Black	GM Recordings
Karin Ott	Cremona Musica Insieme	Pietro Antonini	Nuova Era
Christine Schäfer	Ensemble InterContemporain	Pierre Boulez	Deutsche Gramm
Anja Silja	Twentieth Century Classics Ensemble	Robert Craft	Naxos

Arnold Schoenberg himself made test recordings of the music with a group of Los Angeles musicians from September 24 to 26, 1940. These recordings were eventually released on LP by Columbia Records in 1949 and reissued in 1974 on the Odyssey label.

The avant-pop star Björk, known for her interest in avant-garde music, performed *Pierrot Lunaire* at the 1996 Verbier Festival with Kent Nagano conducting. According to the singer in a 2004 interview, "Kent Nagano wanted to make a recording of it, but I really felt that I would be invading the territory of people who sing this for a lifetime." Only small recorded excerpts (possibly bootlegs) of her performance have become available.

The jazz singer Cleo Laine recorded *Pierrot Lunaire* in 1974. Her version was nominated for a classical Grammy Award. Another jazz singer who has performed the piece is Sofia Jernberg, who sang it with Norrbotten NEO.

In March 2011, Bruce LaBruce directed a performance at the Hebbel am Ufer Theatre in Berlin. This

interpretation of the work included gender diversity, castration scenes, and dildos, as well as a female-to-male transgender Pierrot. LaBruce subsequently filmed this adaptation as the 2014 theatrical film *Pierrot Lunaire*.

Legacy as a Standard Ensemble

The quintet of instruments used in *Pierrot Lunaire* became the core ensemble for The Fires of London, who formed in 1965 as "The Pierrot Players" to perform *Pierrot Lunaire* and continued to concertize with a varied classical and contemporary repertory. This group performed works arranged for these instruments and commissioned new works especially to take advantage of this ensemble's instrumental colors, up until it disbanded in 1987.

Over the years, other groups have continued to use this instrumentation professionally (current groups include Da Capo Chamber Players, eighth blackbird, and the Finnish contemporary group Uusinta Lunaire) and have built a large repertoire for the ensemble.

Sprechstimme

The earliest compositional use of the technique was in the first version of Engelbert Humperdinck's 1897 melodrama *Königskinder* (in the 1910 version, it was replaced by conventional singing), where it may have been intended to imitate a style already in use by singers of lieder and popular song, but it is more closely associated with the composers of the Second Viennese School. Arnold Schoenberg asks for the technique in a number of pieces: the part of the Speaker in *Gurre-Lieder* (1911) is written in his notation for *sprechstimme*, but it was *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912) where he used it throughout and left a note attempting to explain the technique. Alban Berg adopted the technique and asked for it in parts of his operas *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*.

History

In the foreword to *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912), Schoenberg explains how his *Sprechstimme* should be achieved. He explains that the indicated rhythms should be adhered to, but that whereas in ordinary singing a constant pitch is maintained through a note, here the singer "immediately abandons it by falling or rising. The goal is certainly not at all a realistic, natural speech. On the contrary, the difference between ordinary speech and speech that collaborates in a musical form must be made plain. But it should not call singing to mind, either."

For the first performances of *Pierrot Lunaire*, Schoenberg was able to work directly with the vocalist and obtain exactly the result he desired, but later performances were problematic. Schoenberg had written many subsequent letters attempting to clarify, but he was unable to leave a definitive explanation, and there has been much disagreement as to what was actually intended. Pierre Boulez would write, "The question arises whether

it is actually possible to speak according to a notation devised for singing. This was the real problem at the root of all the controversies. Schoenberg's own remarks on the subject are not in fact clear."

Schoenberg would later use a notation without a traditional clef in the *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte* (1942), *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1947), and his unfinished opera *Moses und Aron*, which eliminated any reference to a specific pitch but retained the relative slides and articulations.

Notation

In Schoenberg's musical notation, *Sprechstimme* is usually indicated by small crosses through the stems of the notes, or with the note head itself being a small cross.

Schoenberg's later notation (first used in his *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1942) replaced the 5-line staff with a single line having no clef. The note stems no longer bear the *x*, as it is now clear that no specific pitch is intended, and instead relative pitches are specified by placing the notes above or below the single line (sometimes on ledger lines).

Berg notates several degrees of *Sprechstimme*, e.g., in *Wozzeck*, using single-line staff for rhythmic speaking, 5-line staffs with x through the note stem, and a single stroke through the stem for close-to-singing *sprechstimme*.

In modern usage, it is most common to indicate *Sprechstimme* by using x's in place of conventional noteheads.

Twelve-tone Technique

Introduction

Twelve-tone technique—also known as **dodecaphony**, **twelve-tone serialism**, and (in British usage) **twelve-note composition**—is a method of musical composition devised by Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951). The technique is a means of ensuring that all 12 notes of the chromatic scale are sounded as often as one another in a piece of music while preventing the emphasis of any one note through the use of tone rows, orderings of the 12 pitch classes. All 12 notes are thus given more or less equal importance, and the music avoids being in a key. The technique was influential on composers in the mid-20th century.

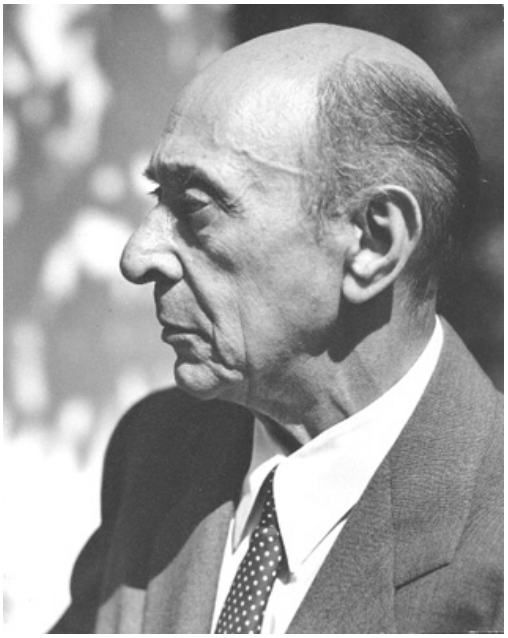


Figure 1. Schoenberg, inventor of twelve-tone technique.

Schoenberg himself described the system as a "Method of composing with twelve tones which are related only with one another." It is commonly considered a form of serialism.

Schoenberg's countryman and contemporary Josef Matthias Hauer also developed a similar system using unordered hexachords or *tropes*—but with no connection to Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique. Other composers have created systematic use of the chromatic scale, but Schoenberg's method is considered to be historically and aesthetically most significant.

Tone Row

Listen: "Sehr langsam"

Please listen to the following audio file to hear a sample of "Sehr langsam" from String Trio Op. 20 by Anton Webern, an example of the twelve-tone technique, a type of serialism.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-2

The basis of the twelve-tone technique is the **tone row**, an ordered arrangement of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale (the twelve equal tempered pitch classes). There are four postulates or preconditions to the technique that apply to the row (also called a **set** or **series**) on which a work or section is based:[17]

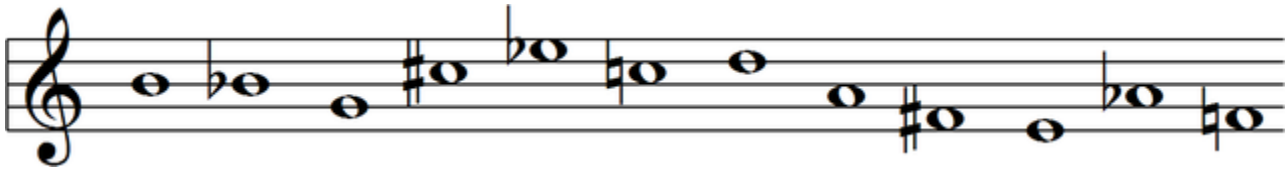
1. The row is a specific ordering of all twelve notes of the chromatic scale (without regard to octave placement).
2. No note is repeated within the row.
3. The row may be subjected to interval-preserving transformations—that is, it may appear in **inversion** (denoted I), **retrograde** (R), or **retrograde-inversion** (RI), in addition to its "original" or **prime** form (P).
4. The row in any of its four transformations may begin on any degree of the chromatic scale; in other words, it may be freely transposed. (Transposition being an interval-preserving transformation, this is technically covered already by 3.) Transpositions are indicated by an integer between 0 and 11 denoting the number of semitones: thus, if the original form of the row is denoted P_0, then P_1 denotes its transposition upward by one semitone (similarly, I_1 is an upward transposition of the inverted form, R_1 of the retrograde form, and RI_1 of the retrograde-inverted form).

(In Hauer's system, postulate 3 does not apply.)

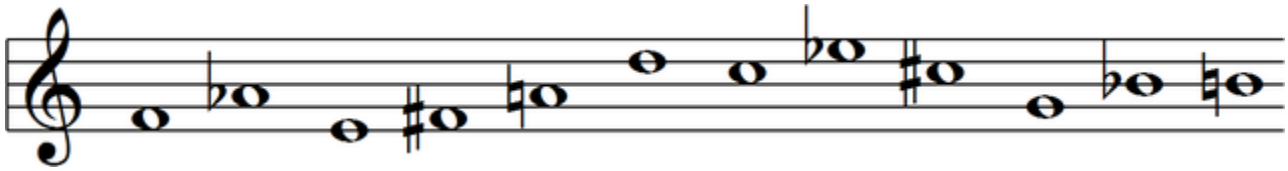
A particular transformation (prime, inversion, retrograde, retrograde-inversion) together with a choice of transpositional level is referred to as a *set form* or *row form*. Every row thus has up to 48 different row forms. (Some rows have fewer due to symmetry; see the sections on *derived rows* and *invariance* below.)

Example

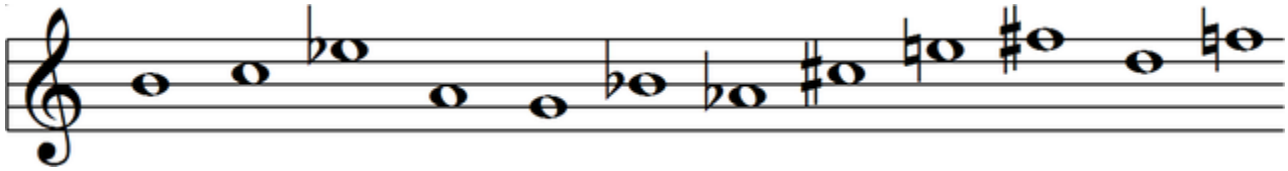
Suppose the prime form of the row is as follows:



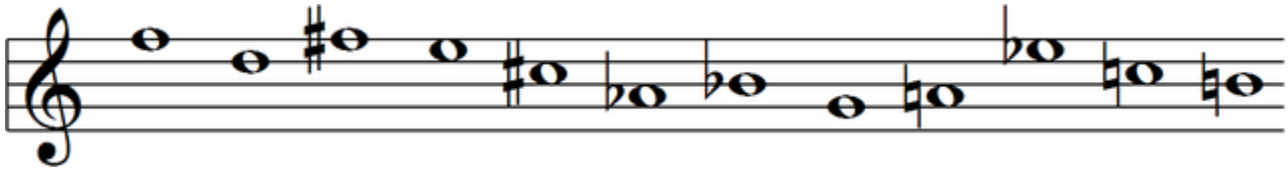
Then the retrograde is the prime form in reverse order:



The inversion is the prime form with the intervals inverted (so that a rising minor third becomes a falling minor third, or equivalently, a rising major sixth):



And the retrograde inversion is the inverted row in retrograde:



P, R, I, and RI can each be started on any of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale, meaning that 47 permutations of the initial tone row can be used, giving a maximum of 48 possible tone rows. However, not all prime series will yield so many variations because transposed transformations may be identical to each other. This is known as *invariance*. A simple case is the ascending chromatic scale, the retrograde inversion of which is identical to the prime form and the retrograde of which is identical to the inversion (thus, only 24 forms of this tone row are available).

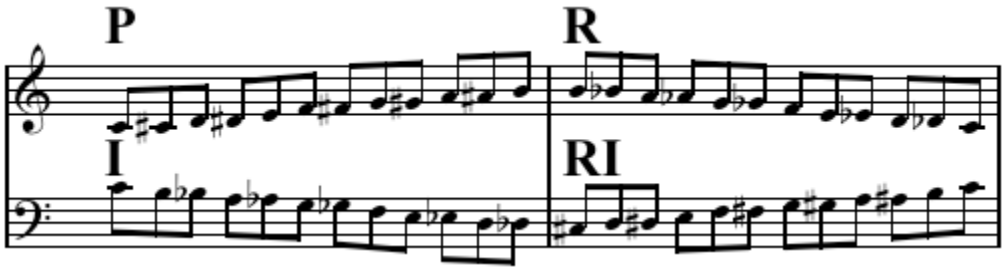


Figure 2. Prime, retrograde, inverted, and retrograde-inverted forms of the ascending chromatic scale. P and RI are the same (to within transposition), as are R and I.

In the above example, as is typical, the retrograde inversion contains three points where the sequence of two pitches are identical to the prime row. Thus the generative power of even the most basic transformations is both unpredictable and inevitable. Motivic development can be driven by such internal consistency.

Suite for Piano

Here is some additional information on Schoenberg's Suite for Piano. Our playlist features the Trio, which is a portion of movement 5. Please note that this suite was the first piece composed entirely in Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique. It's also worth noting the connection via genre to the suites we studied in the Baroque era.

Arnold Schoenberg's **Suite for Piano** (German: Suite für Klavier), Op. 25, is a twelve-tone piece for piano composed between 1921 and 1923.

The work is the earliest in which Schoenberg employs a row of "12 tones related only to one another" in every movement: the earlier *5 Stücke*, Op. 23 (1920–23) employs a 12-tone row only in the final Waltz movement, and the *Serenade*, Op. 24 uses a single row in its central *Sonnet*.

The Basic Set of the *Suite for Piano* consists of the following succession: E–F–G–D ♭ –G ♭ –E ♭ –A ♭ –D–B–C–A–B ♭ .

In form and style, the work echoes many features of the Baroque suite.

Schoenberg's Suite has six movements:

1. Präludium (1921)
2. Gavotte (1923)
3. Musette (1923)
4. Intermezzo (1921–1923)
5. Menuett. Trio (1923)
6. Gigue (1923)

A performance of the entire *Suite für Klavier* takes around 16 minutes.

In this work, Schoenberg employs transpositions and inversions of the row for the first time: the sets employed are P-0, I-0, P-6, I-6, and their retrogrades. Arnold Whittall has suggested that "the choice of transpositions at the sixth semitone—the tritone—may seem the consequence of a desire to hint at 'tonic-dominant' relationships, and the occurrence of the tritone G-D ♭ in all four sets is a hierarchical feature which Schoenberg exploits in several places."

The *Suite for Piano* was first performed by Schoenberg's pupil Eduard Steuermann in Vienna on 25 February 1924. Steuermann made a commercial recording of the work in 1957. The first recording of the *Suite for Piano* to be released was made by Niels Viggo Bentzon some time before 1950.

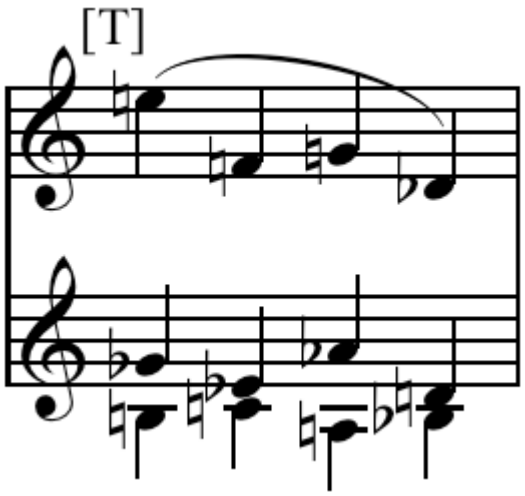


Figure 1. Polyphonic complex of three tetrachords from early sketch for Schoenberg's Suite for Piano, Op. 25 (Whittall 2008, p. 34). The bottom is the BACH motif in retrograde: HCAB.

The Gavotte movement contains "a parody of a baroque keyboard suite that involves the cryptogram of Bach's name as an important harmonic and melodic device (Stuckenschmidt 1977, 108; Lewin 1982–83, n. 9)" and a related quotation of Schoenberg's Op. 19/vi.

Edward T. Cone (1972) has cataloged what he believes to be a number of mistakes in Reinhold Brinkmann's 1968 revised edition of Schoenberg's piano music, one of which is in measure number five of the Suite's "Gavotte", G ♭ instead of G ♮. Henry Klumpenhouwer invokes Sigmund Freud's concept of parapraxes (i.e., mental slips) to suggest a psychological context explaining the deviation from the note predicted from the tone row.

Introduction to Primitivism Nationalism and Neoclassicism

In this section we'll explore some other important trends of the early and middle years of the 20th century: primitivism, nationalism, and neoclassicism. More importantly, we'll examine the lives and compositional styles of significant composers who worked in or were influenced by those styles: Stravinsky, Bartók, Shostakovich, and Copland.

This section includes the following pages:

- Primitivism
- Igor Stravinsky
- Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*
- Nationalism
- Béla Bartók
- Concerto for Orchestra

- Aaron Copland
- Rodeo
- Neoclassicism
- Dmitri Shostakovich
- Symphony No. 5

Primitivism

Like so many other movements of the early 20th century, primitivism had its origins in the visual arts. Painters like Paul Gauguin and Pablo Picasso became disillusioned with Western art traditions and sought inspiration in the works of indigenous cultures, untrained painters, and children's art. They depicted their subjects using non-traditional perspectives. As composers tried to explore this same sense of non-Western perspective through music, they often emphasized the musical element of rhythm in their effort to express an ancient or aboriginal attitude. Unlike other musical movements in the early 1900s, such as impressionism, we cannot point to a large body of significant works in this style that remain in the concert repertoire. However, primitivism did give rise to one of the greatest works of the early 20th century, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. The subject of this ballet is an imagined pagan sacrificial rite in ancient Russia. It features jarring, repetitive rhythms, and extensive use of percussion to evoke an older, less civilized time. So even though the vast majority of Stravinsky's output does not fall into the category of primitivism, the importance of *The Rite of Spring* is such that the movement bears some examination. To be clear, in the visual arts, primitivism had many important adherents who produced a large number of major works. In music, on the other hand, when we speak of primitivism, it is almost always in connection to *The Rite of Spring*.

Figure 1. Paul Gauguin, Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?), 1892, sold for a record US $300m in 2015.

Igor Stravinsky

Igor Stravinsky is a towering figure of 20th-century music. He and Schoenberg represent two major streams of compositional thought in the modern era: Schoenberg's twelve-tone atonality on the one hand and Stravinsky's neo-classicism (the style in which he wrote a good deal of his music, though not *The Rite of Spring*) on the other. It is interesting to note that both men, as a result of upheaval in Europe and Russia, not only made the United States their home but lived a short distance from each other in Los Angeles for years.

There was a good deal of animosity between the two composers, a fact that was well known at the time, just as there was tension in the musical community between the supporters of their two compositional styles. The proponents of Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique took it as proof that they had been right all along when near the end of his career, and only after Schoenberg's death, Stravinsky experimented with twelve-tone composition. If you would like to read an archived article from the *Atlantic*, written by Stravinsky's longtime personal assistant Robert Craft, on this professional animosity and the circumstances of Stravinsky's late excursion into Schoenberg's techniques, click here. The struggle between these two musical camps aside, there is no question that Stravinsky was one of the great masters of the era. He enjoyed considerable fame in his lifetime and traveled the world conducting his works, works that are extensively studied and performed to this day.

When you come to the section herein called "Music," you don't need to read it in detail; I just want you to get an overview of the stylistic evolution over the course of Stravinsky's career.

Introduction

Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky (17 June 1882–6 April 1971) was a Russian (and later, a naturalized French and American) composer, pianist, and conductor. He is widely considered one of the most important and influential composers of the 20th century.

Stravinsky's compositional career was notable for its stylistic diversity. He first achieved international fame with three ballets commissioned by the impresario Sergei Diaghilev and first performed in Paris by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes: *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911), and *The Rite of Spring* (1913). The last of these transformed the way in which subsequent composers thought about rhythmic structure and was largely responsible for Stravinsky's enduring reputation as a musical revolutionary who pushed the boundaries of musical design. His "Russian phase" was followed in the 1920s by a period in which he turned to neoclassical music. The works from this period tended to make use of traditional musical forms (concerto grosso, fugue, and symphony). They often paid tribute to the music of earlier masters, such as J. S. Bach and Tchaikovsky. In the 1950s, Stravinsky adopted serial procedures. His compositions of this period shared traits with examples of his earlier output: rhythmic energy, the construction of extended melodic ideas out of a few two- or three-note cells, and clarity of form, of instrumentation, and of utterance.

Life and Career

Early Life in the Russian Empire

Stravinsky was born on 17 June 1882 in Oranienbaum, a suburb of Saint Petersburg, the Russian imperial capital, and was brought up in Saint Petersburg. His parents were Fyodor Stravinsky, a bass singer at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, and Anna (née Kholodovsky). His great-great-grandfather, Stanisław Strawiński, was of Polish noble descent, of the Strawiński family of Sulima. According to Igor Stravinsky, the name "Stravinsky" (Polish: *Strawiński*) originated from "Strava" (Polish: *Strawa*), a small river in eastern Poland, tributary to the Vistula. He recalled his school days as being lonely, later saying that "I never came across anyone who had any real attraction for me." Stravinsky began piano lessons as a young boy, studying music theory and attempting composition. In 1890, he saw a performance of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Mariinsky Theatre. By age 15, he had mastered Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor and finished a piano reduction of a string quartet by Glazunov, who reportedly considered Stravinsky unmusical and thought little of his skills.

Figure 1. Igor Stravinsky, 1903.

Despite his enthusiasm for music, his parents expected him to study law. Stravinsky enrolled at the University of Saint Petersburg in 1901, but he attended fewer than fifty class sessions during his four years of study. In the summer of 1902, Stravinsky stayed with composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and his family in the German city of Heidelberg, where Rimsky-Korsakov, arguably the leading Russian composer at that time, suggested to Stravinsky that he should not enter the Saint Petersburg Conservatoire but instead study composing by taking private lessons, in large part because of his age. Stravinsky's father died of cancer that year, by which time his son had already begun spending more time on his musical studies than on law. The university was closed for two months in 1905 in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday: Stravinsky was prevented from taking his final law examinations and later received a half-course diploma in April 1906. Thereafter, he concentrated on studying music. In 1905, he began to take twice-weekly private lessons from Rimsky-Korsakov, whom he came to regard as a second father. These lessons continued until Rimsky-Korsakov's death in 1908.

In 1905, he was betrothed to his cousin Yekaterina Gavrilovna Nosenko (called "Katya"), whom he had known since early childhood. In spite of the Orthodox Church's opposition to marriage between first cousins, the couple married on 23 January 1906: their first two children, Fyodor (Theodore) and Ludmila, were born in 1907 and 1908, respectively.

In February 1909, two orchestral works, the *Scherzo fantastique* and *Feu d'artifice* (*Fireworks*), were performed at a concert in Saint Petersburg, where they were heard by Sergei Diaghilev, who was at that time involved in planning to present Russian opera and ballet in Paris. Diaghilev was sufficiently impressed by *Fireworks* to commission Stravinsky to carry out some orchestrations and then to compose a full-length ballet score, *The Firebird*.

Life in Switzerland

Stravinsky became an overnight sensation following the success of *The Firebird's* premiere in Paris on 25 June 1910.

The composer had traveled from his estate in Ustilug, Ukraine, to Paris in early June to attend the final rehearsals and the premiere of *The Firebird*. His family joined him before the end of the ballet season, and they decided to remain in the West for a time, as his wife was expecting their third child. After spending the summer in La Baule, Brittany, they moved to Switzerland in early September. On the 23rd, their second son, Sviatoslav Soulima, was born at a maternity clinic in Lausanne; at the end of the month, they took up residence in Clarens.

Over the next four years, Stravinsky and his family lived in Russia during the summer months and spent each winter in Switzerland. During this period, Stravinsky composed two further works for the Ballets Russes: *Petrushka* (1911) and *Le Sacre du printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*; 1913).

Shortly following the premiere of *The Rite of Spring*, Stravinsky contracted typhoid from eating bad oysters and was confined to a Paris nursing home, unable to depart for Ustilug until 11 July.

During the remainder of the summer, Stravinsky turned his attention to completing his first opera, *The Nightingale* (usually known by its French title, *Le Rossignol*), which he had begun in 1908 (that is, *before* his association with the Ballets Russes). The work had been commissioned by the Moscow Free Theatre for the handsome fee of 10,000 roubles.

The Stravinsky family returned to Switzerland (as usual) in the fall of 1913. On 15 January 1914, a fourth child, Marie Milène (or Maria Milena), was born in Lausanne. After her delivery, Katya was discovered to have tuberculosis and was confined to the sanatorium at Leysin, high in the Alps. Igor and the family took up residence nearby, and he completed *Le Rossignol* there on 28 March.

In April, they were finally able to return to Clarens. By then, the Moscow Free Theatre had gone bankrupt. As a result, *Le Rossignol* was first performed under Diaghilev's auspices at the Paris Opéra on 26 May 1914, with sets and costumes designed by Alexandre Benois. *Le Rossignol* enjoyed only lukewarm success with the public and the critics, apparently because its delicacy did not meet their expectations of the composer of *The Rite of Spring.* However, composers including Maurice Ravel, Béla Bartók, and Reynaldo Hahn found much to admire in the score's craftsmanship, even alleging to detect the influence of Arnold Schoenberg.

In July, with war looming, Stravinsky made a quick trip to Ustilug to retrieve personal effects, including his reference works on Russian folk music. He returned to Switzerland just before national borders closed

following the outbreak of World War I. The war and subsequent Russian Revolution made it impossible for Stravinsky to return to his homeland, and he did not set foot upon Russian soil again until October 1962.

In June 1915, Stravinsky and his family moved from Clarens to Morges, a town 6 miles southwest of Lausanne on the shore of Lake Geneva. The family continued to live there (at three different addresses) until 1920.

Stravinsky struggled financially during this period. Russia (and its successor, the USSR) did not adhere to the Berne convention, and this created problems for Stravinsky when collecting royalties for the performances of all his Ballets Russes compositions. Stravinsky blamed Diaghilev for his financial troubles, accusing him of failing to live up to the terms of a contract they had signed. He approached the Swiss philanthropist Werner Reinhart for financial assistance during the time he was writing *Histoire du soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*). Reinhart sponsored and largely underwrote its first performance, conducted by Ernest Ansermet on 28 September 1918 at the Théâtre Municipal de Lausanne. In gratitude, Stravinsky dedicated the work to Reinhart and gave him the original manuscript. Reinhart supported Stravinsky further when he funded a series of concerts of his chamber music in 1919: included was a suite from *Histoire du soldat* arranged for violin, piano, and clarinet, which was first performed on 8 November 1919 in Lausanne. In gratitude to his benefactor, Stravinsky also dedicated his *Three Pieces for Clarinet* (October–November 1918) to Reinhart, who was an excellent amateur clarinetist.

Life in France

Following the premiere of *Pulcinella* by the Ballets Russes in Paris on 15 May 1920, Stravinsky returned to Switzerland. On 8 June, the entire family left Morges for the last time and moved to the fishing village of Carantec in Brittany for the summer while also seeking a new home in Paris. On hearing of their dilemma, couturière Coco Chanel invited Stravinsky and his family to reside at her new mansion "Bel Respiro" in the Paris suburb of Garches until they could find a more suitable residence; they arrived during the second week of September. At the same time, Chanel also guaranteed the new (December 1920) Ballets Russes production of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*) with an anonymous gift to Diaghilev, said to have been 300,000 francs.

Stravinsky formed a business and musical relationship with the French piano manufacturing company Pleyel. Pleyel essentially acted as his agent in collecting mechanical royalties for his works and provided him with a monthly income and a studio space at its headquarters in which he could work and entertain friends and business acquaintances. Under the terms of his contract with the company, Stravinsky agreed to arrange (and to some extent re-compose) many of his early works for the Pleyela, Pleyel's brand of player piano. He did so in a way that made full use of all of the piano's 88 notes, without regard for human fingers or hands. The rolls were not recorded but were instead marked up from a combination of manuscript fragments and handwritten notes by Jacques Larmanjat, musical director of Pleyel's roll department. Among the compositions that were issued on the Pleyela piano rolls are *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka*, *The Firebird*, and *Song of the Nightingale*. During

the 1920s, Stravinsky recorded Duo-Art rolls for the Aeolian Company in both London and New York, not all of which have survived.

Patronage was never far away. In the early 1920s, Leopold Stokowski gave Stravinsky regular support through a pseudonymous benefactor.

Stravinsky met Vera de Bosset in Paris in February 1921 while she was married to the painter and stage designer Serge Sudeikin, and they began an affair that led to Vera leaving her husband.

Figure 2. Vera de Bosset Sudeikin.

In May 1921, Stravinsky and his family moved to Anglet, near Biarritz, in the south of France. From then until his wife's death in 1939, Stravinsky led a double life, dividing his time between his family in southern France and Vera in Paris and on tour. Katya reportedly bore her husband's infidelity "with a mixture of magnanimity, bitterness, and compassion."

In September 1924, Stravinsky bought "an expensive house" in Nice: the Villa des Roses.

The Stravinskys became French citizens in 1934 and moved to the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré in Paris. Stravinsky later remembered this last European address as his unhappiest, as his wife's tuberculosis infected both himself and his eldest daughter, Ludmila, who died in 1938. Katya, to whom he had been married for 33 years, died of tuberculosis a year later, in March 1939. Stravinsky himself spent five months in the hospital, during which time his mother died. During his later years in Paris, Stravinsky had developed professional relationships with key people in the United States: he was already working on his Symphony in C for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and he had agreed to deliver the prestigious Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard University during the 1939–40 academic year.

Life in the United States

Despite the outbreak of World War II on 1 September 1939, the widowed Stravinsky sailed (alone) for the United States at the end of the month, arriving in New York City and thence to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to fulfill his engagement at Harvard. Vera followed him in January, and they were married in Bedford, Massachusetts, on 9 March 1940.

Stravinsky settled in West Hollywood. He spent more time living in Los Angeles than any other city. He became a naturalized United States citizen in 1945.

Stravinsky had adapted to life in France, but moving to America at the age of 57 was a very different prospect. For a while, he maintained a circle of contacts and emigré friends from Russia, but he eventually found that this did not sustain his intellectual and professional life. He was drawn to the growing cultural life

of Los Angeles, especially during World War II, when so many writers, musicians, composers, and conductors settled in the area: these included Otto Klemperer, Thomas Mann, Franz Werfel, George Balanchine, and Arthur Rubinstein. Bernard Holland claimed Stravinsky was especially fond of British writers, who visited him in Beverly Hills, "like W. H. Auden, Christopher Isherwood, Dylan Thomas. They shared the composer's taste for hard spirits—especially Aldous Huxley, with whom Stravinsky spoke in French." Stravinsky and Huxley had a tradition of Saturday lunches for the West Coast avant-garde and luminaries.

Stravinsky's unconventional dominant seventh chord in his arrangement of "The Star-Spangled Banner" led to an incident with the Boston police on 15 January 1944, and he was warned that the authorities could impose a $100 fine upon any "rearrangement of the national anthem in whole or in part." The police, as it turned out, were wrong. The law in question merely forbade using the national anthem "as dance music, as an exit march, or as a part of a medley of any kind," but the incident soon established itself as a myth, in which Stravinsky was supposedly arrested, held in custody for several nights, and photographed for police records. A widely known photograph of Stravinsky, supposedly his mug shot, has been shown to be for a passport application.

Figure 3. Grave of Stravinsky in San Michele Island, Venice.

Stravinsky's professional life encompassed most of the 20th century, including many of its modern classical music styles, and he influenced composers both during and after his lifetime. In 1959, he was awarded the Sonning Award, Denmark's highest musical honor. In 1962, he accepted an invitation to return to Leningrad for a series of concerts. During his stay in the USSR, he visited Moscow and met several leading Soviet composers, including Dmitri Shostakovich and Aram Khachaturian.

In 1969, Stravinsky moved to the Essex House in New York, where he lived until his death in 1971 at age 88 of heart failure. He was buried at San Michele, close to the tomb of Diaghilev.

He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and in 1987 he was posthumously awarded the Grammy Award for Lifetime Achievement. He was posthumously inducted into the National Museum of Dance's Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Hall of Fame in 2004.

Music

Stravinsky's output is typically divided into three general style periods: a Russian period, a neoclassical period, and a serial period.

Russian Period (ca. 1907–1919)

Aside from a very few surviving earlier works, Stravinsky's Russian period began with compositions undertaken under the tutelage of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, with whom he studied from 1905 until Rimsky's death in 1908, including the orchestral works Symphony in E-flat major (1907), *Faun and Shepherdess* (for mezzo-soprano and orchestra; 1907), *Scherzo fantastique* (1908), and *Feu d'artifice* (1908/9). These works clearly reveal the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov, but as Richard Taruskin has shown, they also reveal Stravinsky's knowledge of music by Glazunov, Taneyev, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Dvořák, and Debussy, among others.

Performances in St. Petersburg of *Scherzo fantastique* and *Feu d'artifice* attracted the attention of Sergei Diaghilev, who commissioned Stravinsky to orchestrate two piano works of Chopin for the ballet *Les Sylphides* to be presented in the 1909 debut "Saison Russe" of his new ballet company.

The Firebird was first performed at the Paris Opéra on 25 June 1910 by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Like Stravinsky's earlier student works, *The Firebird* continued to look backward to Rimsky-Korsakov not only in its orchestration but also in its overall structure, harmonic organization, and melodic content.

According to Taruskin, Stravinsky's second ballet for the Ballet Russe, *Petrushka*, is where "Stravinsky at last became Stravinsky."

The music itself makes significant use of a number of Russian folk tunes in addition to two waltzes by Viennese composer Joseph Lanner and a French music hall tune (*La Jambe en bois* or *The Wooden Leg*).

In April 1915, Stravinsky received a commission from Winnaretta Singer (Princesse Edmond de Polignac) for a small-scale theatrical work to be performed in her Paris salon. The result was *Renard* (1916), which he called "a burlesque in song and dance." *Renard* was Stravinsky's first venture into experimental theater: the composer's preface to the score specifies a trestle stage on which all the performers (including the instrumentalists) were to appear simultaneously and continuously.

Neoclassical Period (ca. 1920–1954)

Apollon (1928), *Persephone* (1933), and *Orpheus* (1947) exemplify not only Stravinsky's return to the music of the Classical period but also his exploration of themes from the ancient Classical world, such as Greek mythology. In 1951, he completed his last neo-classical work, the opera *The Rake's Progress*, to a libretto by W. H. Auden that was based on the etchings of William Hogarth. It premiered in Venice that year and was produced around Europe the following year before being staged in the New York Metropolitan Opera in 1953. It was staged by the Santa Fe Opera in a 1962 Stravinsky Festival in honor of the composer's 80th birthday and was revived by the Metropolitan Opera in 1997.

Serial Period (1954–1968)

In the 1950s, Stravinsky began using serial compositional techniques such as dodecaphony, the twelve-tone technique originally devised by Arnold Schoenberg. He first experimented with non-twelve-tone serial techniques in small-scale vocal and chamber works such as the *Cantata* (1952), the Septet (1953), and *Three Songs from Shakespeare* (1953). The first of his compositions fully based on such techniques was *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954). *Agon* (1954–57) was the first of his works to include a twelve-tone series, and *Canticum Sacrum* (1955) was the first piece to contain a movement entirely based on a tone row. Stravinsky expanded his use of dodecaphony in works such as *Threni* (1958) and *A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer* (1961), which are based on biblical texts, and *The Flood* (1962), which mixes brief biblical texts from the Book of Genesis with passages from the York and Chester Mystery Plays.

Innovation and Influence

Stravinsky has been called "one of music's truly epochal innovators." The most important aspect of Stravinsky's work, aside from his technical innovations (including in rhythm and harmony), is the "changing face" of his compositional style while always "retaining a distinctive, essential identity."

Stravinsky's use of motivic development (the use of musical figures that are repeated in different guises throughout a composition or section of a composition) included additive motivic development. This is where notes are subtracted or added to a motif without regard to the consequent changes in meter. A similar technique can be found as early as the 16th century, for example, in the music of Cipriano de Rore, Orlandus Lassus, Carlo Gesualdo, and Giovanni de Macque, music with which Stravinsky exhibited considerable familiarity.

Figure 4. Stravinsky with Wilhelm Furtwängler, German conductor and composer.

The Rite of Spring is notable for its relentless use of ostinati, for example, in the eighth note ostinato on strings accented by eight horns in the section "Augurs of Spring (Dances of the Young Girls)." The work also contains passages where several ostinati clash against one another. Stravinsky was noted for his distinctive use of rhythm, especially in *The Rite of Spring*. According to the composer Philip Glass, "The idea of pushing the rhythms across the bar lines . . . led the way. . . . The rhythmic structure of music became much more fluid and in a certain way spontaneous." Glass mentions Stravinsky's "primitive, offbeat rhythmic drive."

According to Andrew J. Browne, "Stravinsky is perhaps the only composer who has raised rhythm in itself to the dignity of art." Stravinsky's rhythm and vitality greatly influenced the composer Aaron Copland.

Over the course of his career, Stravinsky called for a wide variety of orchestral, instrumental, and vocal forces, ranging from single instruments in such works as *Three Pieces for Clarinet* (1918) or *Elegy for Solo Viola* (1944) to the enormous orchestra of *The Rite of Spring* (*Le Sacre du printemps*; 1913), which Aaron Copland characterized as "the foremost orchestral achievement of the 20th century."

Stravinsky's creation of unique and idiosyncratic ensembles arising from the specific musical nature of individual works is a basic element of his style.

Following the model of his teacher, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky's student works such as the Symphony in E-flat, Opus 1 (1907); *Scherzo fantastique*, Opus 3 (1908); and *Fireworks* (*Feu d'artifice*), Opus 4 (1908) call for large orchestral forces. This is not surprising, as the works were as much exercises in orchestration as in composition.

The Symphony, for example, calls for 3 flutes (3rd doubles piccolo); 2 oboes; 3 clarinets in B-flat; 2 bassoons; 4 horns in F; 3 trumpets in B-flat; 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, and strings. The *Scherzo fantastique* calls for a slightly larger orchestra but completely omits trombones: this was Stravinsky's response to Rimsky's criticism of their overuse in the Symphony.

The three ballets composed for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes call for particularly large orchestras. *The Firebird* (1910) requires winds in fours, 4 horns, 3 trumpets (in A), 3 trombones, tuba, celesta, 3 harps, piano, and strings. The percussion section calls for timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, tamtam, tubular bells, glockenspiel, and xylophone. In addition, the original version calls for 3 onstage trumpets and 4 onstage Wagner tubas (2 tenor and 2 bass).

The original version of *Petrushka* (1911) calls for a similar orchestra (without onstage brass but *with* the addition of onstage snare drum). The particularly prominent role of the piano is the result of the music's origin as a *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra.

The Rite of Spring (1913) calls for the largest orchestra Stravinsky ever employed: piccolo, 3 flutes (3rd doubles 2nd piccolo), alto flute, 4 oboes (4th doubles 2nd cor anglais), cor anglais, piccolo clarinet in D/E ♭, 3 clarinets (3rd doubles 2nd bass clarinet), bass clarinet, piccolo clarinet, 4 bassoons (4th doubles 2nd contrabassoon), contrabassoon, 8 horns (7th and 8th double tenor Wagner tubas), piccolo trumpet in D, 4 trumpets in C (4th doubles bass trumpet in E-flat), 3 trombones (2 tenor, 1 bass), and 2 tubas. Percussion includes 5 timpani (2 players), bass drum, tamtam, triangle, tambourine, cymbals, antique cymbals, guiro, and strings. (Piano, celesta, and harp are not included.)

Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*

It is hard to understate the impact of *The Rite of Spring* on the music that came afterward. The jarring rhythms and the use of traditional instruments in non-traditional ways paved the way for the experiments of later composers. This brief article at the website for the PBS program *Keeping Score* gives a very accessible account

of the historical context of the first performance. More importantly, you can watch the entire *Rite of Spring* episode for free on the page. While you can get all the information you need for our course from the article, I encourage you to watch the program either now or in the future. You'll learn a great deal more about the music of the day, and you'll see both the orchestral musicians and the ballet dancers in action. The work was, after all, originally written to be performed in combination with the dance.

Here is some material to supplement the *Keeping Score* website. It provides a scene-by-scene breakdown of the music we listen to. The music is telling, and the dancers are depicting a story. It is important that you know the specifics of that story. You should also remember that even though *Rite of Spring* consists of two parts, we only have the first part on our playlist.

Introduction

The Rite of Spring (French: ***Le Sacre du printemps***, Russian: **«Весна священная»**,*Vesna svyashchennaya*) is a ballet and orchestral concert work by the Russian composer Igor Stravinsky. It was written for the 1913 Paris season of Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes company; the original choreography was by Vaslav Nijinsky, with stage designs and costumes by Nicholas Roerich. When first performed, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 29 May 1913, the avant-garde nature of the music and choreography caused a sensation and a near-riot in the audience. Although designed as a work for the stage, with specific passages accompanying characters and action, the music achieved equal if not greater recognition as a concert piece and is widely considered to be one of the most influential musical works of the 20th century.

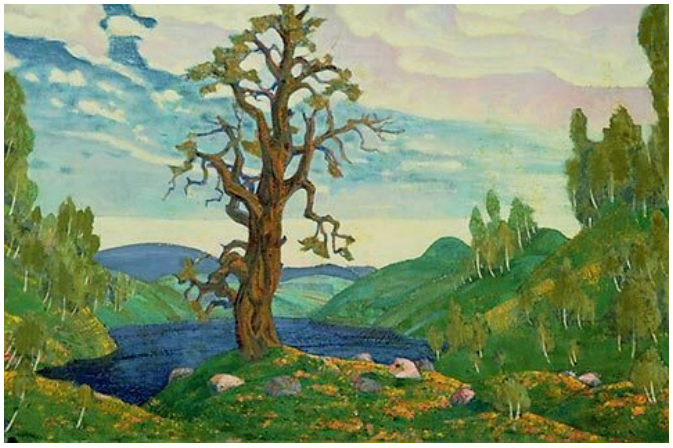


Figure 1. Part of Nicholas Roerich's designs for Diaghilev's 1913 production of *Le Sacre du printemps.*

Stravinsky was a young, virtually unknown composer when Diaghilev recruited him to create works for the Ballets Russes. *The Rite* was the third such project, after the acclaimed *Firebird* (1910) and *Petrushka* (1911). The concept behind *The Rite of Spring*, developed by Roerich from Stravinsky's outline idea, is suggested by its subtitle, "Pictures of Pagan Russia in Two Parts"; in the scenario, after various primitive rituals celebrating the advent of spring, a young girl is chosen as a sacrificial victim and dances herself to death. After a mixed critical reception for its original run and a short London tour, the ballet was not performed again until the 1920s, when a version choreographed by Léonide Massine replaced Nijinsky's original. Massine's was the forerunner of many innovative productions directed by the world's leading ballet masters, which gained the work worldwide acceptance. In the 1980s, Nijinsky's original choreography, long believed lost, was reconstructed by the Joffrey Ballet in Los Angeles.

Stravinsky's score contains many novel features for its time, including experiments in tonality, meter, rhythm, stress, and dissonance. Analysts have noted in the score a significant grounding in Russian folk music, a relationship Stravinsky tended to deny. The music has influenced many of the 20th century's leading composers and is one of the most recorded works in the classical repertoire.

Synopsis and Structure

In a note to the conductor Serge Koussevitzky in February 1914, Stravinsky described *The Rite of Spring* as "a musical-choreographic work, [representing] pagan Russia . . . unified by a single idea: the mystery and great surge of the creative power of Spring." In his analysis of *The Rite*, Pieter van den Toorn writes that the work lacks a specific plot or narrative and should be considered as a succession of choreographed episodes.

The French titles are given in the form provided in the four-part piano score published in 1913. There have been numerous variants of the English translations; those shown are from the 1967 edition of the score.

Episode	English Translation	Synopsis
Part I: *L'Adoration de la Terre* (Adoration of the Earth)		
Introduction	Introduction	Before the curtain rises, an orchestral introduction resembles, according to Stravinsky, "a swarm of spring pipes [*dudki*]."
Les Augures printaniers	Augurs of Spring	The celebration of spring begins in the hills. An old woman enters and begins to foretell the future.
Jeu du rapt	Ritual of Abduction	Young girls arrive from the river, in single file. They begin the "Dance of the Abduction."
Rondes printanières	Spring Rounds	The young girls dance the *Khorovod*, the "Spring Rounds."
Jeux des cités rivales	Ritual of the Rival Tribes	The people divide into two groups in opposition to each other and begin the "Ritual of the Rival Tribes."
Cortège du sage: Le Sage	Procession of the Sage: The Sage	A holy procession leads to the entry of the wise elders, headed by the Sage, who brings the games to a pause and blesses the earth.
Danse de la terre	Dance of the Earth	The people break into a passionate dance, sanctifying and becoming one with the earth.
Part II: *Le Sacrifice* (The Sacrifice)		
Introduction	Introduction	
Cercles mystérieux des adolescentes	Mystic Circles of the Young Girls	The young girls engage in mysterious games, walking in circles.
Glorification de l'élue	Glorification of the Chosen One	One of the young girls is selected by fate, being twice caught in the perpetual circle, and is honored as the "Chosen One" with a martial dance.
Evocation des ancêtres	Evocation of the Ancestors	In a brief dance, the young girls invoke the ancestors.
Action rituelle des ancêtres	Ritual Action of the Ancestors	The Chosen One is entrusted to the care of the old wise men.
Danse sacrale (L'Élue)	Sacrificial Dance	The Chosen One dances to death in the presence of the old men in the great "Sacrificial Dance."

Premiere

Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées was a new structure that had opened on 2 April 1913 with a program celebrating the works of many of the leading composers of the day. The theater's manager, Gabriel Astruc, was determined to house the 1913 Ballets Russes season and paid Diaghilev the large sum of 25,000 francs per performance, double what he had paid the previous year. Ticket sales for the evening, ticket prices being doubled for a premiere, amounted to 35,000 francs. The program for 29 May 1913 also included *Les Sylphides*, Weber's *Le Spectre de la Rose*, and Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances*.

PARISIANS HISS NEW BALLET

Russian Dancer's Latest Offering, "The Consecration of Spring," a Failure.

HAS TO TURN UP LIGHTS

Manager of Theatre Takes This Means to Stop Hostile Demonstrations as Dance Goes On.

By Marconi Transatlantic Wireless Telegraph to The New York Times.

PARIS, June 7.—"Bluffing the idle

Figure 2. The *New York Times* reported the sensational Rite premiere, nine days after the event.

At the time, a Parisian ballet audience typically consisted of two diverse groups: the wealthy and fashionable set, who would be expecting to see a traditional performance with beautiful music, and a "Bohemian" group, who, the poet-philosopher Jean Cocteau asserted, would "acclaim, right or wrong, anything that is new because of their hatred of the boxes." Final rehearsals were held on the day before the premiere in the presence of members of the press and assorted invited guests. According to Stravinsky, all went peacefully. However, the critic of *L'Écho de Paris*, Adolphe Boschot, foresaw possible trouble; he wondered how the public would receive the work and suggested that they might react badly if they thought they were being mocked.

On the evening of 29 May, the theater was packed: Gustav Linor reported, "Never . . . has the hall been so full, or so resplendent; the stairways and the corridors were crowded with spectators eager to see and to hear." The evening began with *Les Sylphides*, in which Nijinsky and Karsavina danced the main roles. *The Rite* followed. Some eyewitnesses and commentators said that the disturbances in the audience began during the Introduction and grew into a crescendo when the curtain rose on the stamping dancers in "Augurs of Spring." But music historian Richard Taruskin asserts, "It was not Stravinsky's music that did the shocking. It was the ugly earthbound lurching and stomping devised by Vaslav Nijinsky." Marie Rambert, who was working as an assistant to Nijinsky, recalled later that it was soon impossible to hear the music on the stage. In his autobiography, Stravinsky writes that the derisive laughter that greeted the first bars of the Introduction disgusted him and that he left the auditorium to watch the rest of the performance from the stage wings. The demonstrations, he says, grew into "a terrific uproar," which, along with the on-stage noises, drowned out the voice of Nijinsky, who was shouting the step numbers to the dancers. The journalist and photographer Carl Van Vechten recorded that the person behind him got carried away with excitement and "began to beat

rhythmically on top of my head," though Van Vechten failed to notice this at first, his own emotion being so great.

Monteux believed that the trouble began when the two factions in the audience began attacking each other, but their mutual anger was soon diverted toward the orchestra: "Everything available was tossed in our direction, but we continued to play on." Around 40 of the worst offenders were ejected—possibly with the intervention of the police, although this is uncorroborated. Through all the disturbances, the performance continued without interruption. Things grew noticeably quieter during Part II, and by some accounts, Maria Piltz's rendering of the final "Sacrificial Dance" was watched in reasonable silence. At the end there were several curtain calls for the dancers, for Monteux and the orchestra, and for Stravinsky and Nijinsky before the evening's program continued.

Figure 3. Dancers in Nicholas Roerich's original costumes. From left, Julitska, Marie Rambert, Jejerska, Boni, Boniecka, Faithful.

Among the more hostile press reviews was that of *Le Figaro*'s critic, Henri Quittard, who called the work "a laborious and puerile barbarity" and added, "We are sorry to see an artist such as M. Stravinsky involve himself in this disconcerting adventure." On the other hand, Gustav Linor, writing in the leading theatrical magazine *Comoedia*, thought the performance was superb, especially that of Maria Piltz; the disturbances, while deplorable, were merely "a rowdy debate" between two ill-mannered factions. Emile Raudin, of *Les Marges*, who had barely heard the music, wrote: "Couldn't we ask M. Astruc . . . to set aside one performance for well-intentioned spectators? . . . We could at least propose to evict the female element." The composer Alfredo Casella thought that the demonstrations were aimed at Nijinsky's choreography rather than at the music, a view shared by the critic Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi, who wrote: "The idea was excellent, but was not successfully carried out." Calvocoressi failed to observe any direct hostility to the composer—unlike, he said, the premiere of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1902. Of later reports that the veteran composer Camille Saint-Saëns had stormed out of the premiere, Stravinsky observed that this was impossible; Saint-Saëns did not attend. Stravinsky also rejected Cocteau's story that, after the performance, Stravinsky, Nijinsky, Diaghilev, and Cocteau himself took a cab to the Bois de Boulogne, where a tearful Diaghilev recited poems by Pushkin. Stravinsky merely recalled a celebratory dinner with Diaghilev and Nijinsky, at which the impresario expressed his entire satisfaction with the outcome. To Maximilien Steinberg, a former fellow pupil under Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky wrote that Nijinsky's choreography had been "incomparable: with the exception of a few places, everything was as I wanted it."

Nationalism-2

Béla Bartók

Bartók is significant not only for his compositions but for his contribution to the field of ethnomusicology. He spent considerable time and energy going into the countryside to record the folk music of specific regions in eastern Europe. His study of these folk traditions greatly influenced his composition, as he increasingly incorporated the scales and rhythms he studied in the countryside into his own concert music. Though he was influenced by both Schoenberg and Stravinsky and like them was forced by conflict in Europe to move to the United States, he stated that his music remained tonal. This, of course, would be tonality in a loose sense, as he often built his music using scales derived from folk idioms rather than the major and minor scales of tonal music. Nevertheless, we hear in Bartók's music a mixture of modernist dissonance and nationalist elements.

Introduction

Béla Viktor János Bartók (March 25, 1881–September 26, 1945) was a Hungarian composer and pianist. He is considered one of the most important composers of the 20th century; he and Liszt are regarded as Hungary's greatest composers. Through his collection and analytical study of folk music, he was one of the founders of comparative musicology, which later became ethnomusicology.

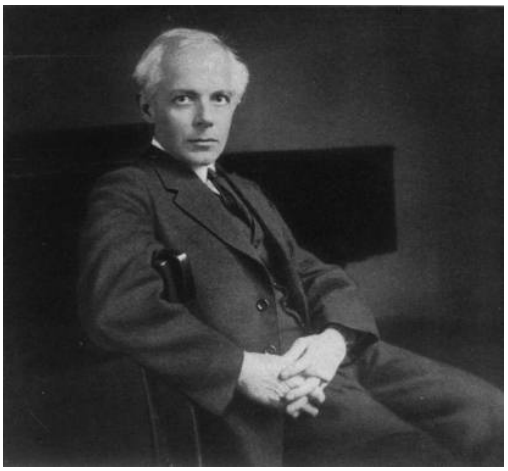


Figure 1. Béla Bartók in 1927.

Biography

Childhood and Early Years (1881–98)

Béla Bartók was born in the small Banatian town of Nagyszentmiklós in the Kingdom of Hungary, Austria-Hungary (since 1920 Sânnicolau Mare, Romania) on March 25, 1881. Bartók's family reflected some of the ethno-cultural diversities of the country. His father, Béla Sr., considered himself thoroughly Hungarian, because on his father's side, the Bartók family was a Hungarian lower noble family originating from Borsod county (Móser 2006a, 44; Bartók 1981, 13), though his mother, Paula (born Paula Voit), had German as a mother tongue but was ethnically of "mixed Hungarian" ancestry (Bayley 2001, 16) of Danube Swabian origin. Among her closest forefathers, there were families with such names as Polereczky (Magyarized Polish or Slovak) and Fegyveres (Magyar).

Béla displayed notable musical talent very early in life: according to his mother, he could distinguish between

different dance rhythms that she played on the piano before he learned to speak in complete sentences. By the age of four, he was able to play 40 pieces on the piano, and his mother began formally teaching him the next year.

Béla was a small and sickly child and suffered from severe eczema until the age of 5. In 1888, when he was seven, his father (the director of an agricultural school) died suddenly. Béla's mother then took him and his sister, Erzsébet, to live in Nagyszőlős (today Vinogradiv, Ukraine) and then to Pozsony (German: Pressburg, today Bratislava, Slovakia). In Pozsony, Béla gave his first public recital at age 11 to a warm critical reception. Among the pieces he played was his own first composition, written two years previously: a short piece called "The Course of the Danube." Shortly thereafter, László Erkel accepted him as a pupil.

Early Musical Career (1899–1908)

From 1899 to 1903, Bartók studied piano under István Thomán, a former student of Franz Liszt, and composition under János Koessler at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest. There he met Zoltán Kodály, who influenced him greatly and became his lifelong friend and colleague. In 1903, Bartók wrote his first major orchestral work, *Kossuth*, a symphonic poem which honored Lajos Kossuth, hero of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848.

The music of Richard Strauss, whom he met in 1902 at the Budapest premiere of *Also sprach Zarathustra,* strongly influenced his early work. When visiting a holiday resort in the summer of 1904, Bartók overheard a young nanny, Lidi Dósa from Kibéd in Transylvania, sing folk songs to the children in her care. This sparked his lifelong dedication to folk music.

From 1907, he also began to be influenced by the French composer Claude Debussy, whose compositions Kodály had brought back from Paris. Bartók's large-scale orchestral works were still in the style of Johannes Brahms and Richard Strauss, but he wrote a number of small piano pieces that showed his growing interest in folk music. The first piece to show clear signs of this new interest is the String Quartet No. 1 in A minor (1908), which contains folk-like elements.

In 1907, Bartók began teaching as a piano professor at the Royal Academy. This position freed him from touring Europe as a pianist and enabled him to work in Hungary. Among his notable students were Fritz Reiner, Sir Georg Solti, György Sándor, Ernő Balogh, and Lili Kraus. After Bartók moved to the United States, he taught Jack Beeson and Violet Archer.

In 1908, he and Kodály traveled into the countryside to collect and research old Magyar folk melodies. Their growing interest in folk music coincided with a contemporary social interest in traditional national culture. They made some surprising discoveries. Magyar folk music had previously been categorized as Gypsy music. The classic example is Franz Liszt's famous *Hungarian Rhapsodies* for piano, which he based on popular art songs performed by Romani bands of the time. In contrast, Bartók and Kodály discovered that the old Magyar folk melodies were based on pentatonic scales, similar to those in Asian folk traditions, such as those of Central Asia, Anatolia, and Siberia.

Bartók and Kodály quickly set about incorporating elements of such Magyar peasant music into their compositions. They both frequently quoted folk song melodies *verbatim* and wrote pieces derived entirely from authentic songs. An example is his two volumes entitled *For Children* for solo piano, containing 80 folk tunes to which he wrote accompaniment. Bartók's style in his art music compositions was a synthesis of folk music, classicism, and modernism. His melodic and harmonic sense was profoundly influenced by the folk music of Hungary, Romania, and other nations. He was especially fond of the asymmetrical dance rhythms and pungent harmonies found in Bulgarian music. Most of his early compositions offer a blend of nationalist and late Romantic elements.

Middle Years and Career (1909–39)

Personal Life

In 1909, at the age of 28, Bartók married Márta Ziegler (1893–1967), aged 16. Their son, Béla III, was born on August 22, 1910. After nearly 15 years together, Bartók divorced Márta in June 1923.

Two months after his divorce, he married Ditta Pásztory (1903–1982), a piano student, ten days after proposing to her. She was aged 19, he 42. Their son, Péter, was born in 1924.

Opera

In 1911, Bartók wrote what was to be his only opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*, dedicated to Márta. He entered it for a prize by the Hungarian Fine Arts Commission, but they rejected his work as not fit for the stage. In 1917, Bartók revised the score for the 1918 première and rewrote the ending. Following the 1919 revolution, he was pressured by the new Soviet government to remove the name of the librettist Béla Balázs from the opera, as he was blacklisted and had left the country for Vienna. *Bluebeard's Castle* received only one revival, in 1936, before Bartók emigrated. For the remainder of his life, although he was passionately devoted to Hungary, its people, and its culture, he never felt much loyalty to the government or its official establishments.

Folk Music and Composition

After his disappointment over the Fine Arts Commission competition, Bartók wrote little for two or three years, preferring to concentrate on collecting and arranging folk music. He collected first in the Carpathian Basin (then the Kingdom of Hungary), where he notated Hungarian, Slovakian, Romanian, and Bulgarian folk music. He also collected in Moldavia, Wallachia, and (in 1913) Algeria. The outbreak of World War I forced him to stop the expeditions, and he returned to composing, writing the ballet *The Wooden Prince* (1914–16) and the String Quartet No. 2 (1915–17), both influenced by Debussy.

Figure 2. Béla Bartók using a gramophone to record folk songs sung by peasants in what is now Slovakia.

Raised as a Roman Catholic, by his early adulthood, Bartók had become an atheist. He believed that the existence of God could not be determined and was unnecessary. He later became attracted to Unitarianism and publicly converted to the Unitarian faith in 1916. As an adult, his son later became president of the Hungarian Unitarian Church.

Bartók wrote another ballet, *The Miraculous Mandarin*, influenced by Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, as well as Richard Strauss. A modern story of prostitution, robbery, and murder, it was started in 1918 but not performed until 1926 because of its sexual content. He next wrote his two violin sonatas (written in 1921 and 1922, respectively), which are harmonically and structurally some of his most complex pieces.

In 1927–28, Bartók wrote his Third and Fourth String Quartets, after which his compositions demonstrated his mature style. Notable examples of this period are *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (1936) and *Divertimento for String Orchestra BB 118* (1939). The Fifth String Quartet was composed in 1934 and the Sixth String Quartet (his last) in 1939.

In 1936, he traveled to Turkey to collect and study folk music. He worked in collaboration with Turkish composer Ahmet Adnan Saygun, mostly around Adana.

World War II and Last Years in America (1940–45)

In 1940, as the European political situation worsened after the outbreak of World War II, Bartók was increasingly tempted to flee Hungary. He was strongly opposed to the Nazis and Hungary's siding with Germany. After the Nazis came to power in the early 1930s, Bartók refused to give concerts in Germany and broke away from his publisher there. His anti-fascist political views caused him a great deal of trouble with the establishment in Hungary. Having first sent his manuscripts out of the country, Bartók reluctantly emigrated

to the US with his wife Ditta in October that year. They settled in New York City. After joining them in 1942, their son, Péter Bartók, enlisted in the United States Navy, where he served in the Pacific during the remainder of the war and later settled in Florida, where he became a recording and sound engineer. His oldest son, Béla Bartók III, remained in Hungary, where he survived the war and later worked as a railroad official until his retirement in the early 1980s.

Although he became an American citizen in 1945, shortly before his death, Bartók never became fully at home in the US. He initially found it difficult to compose. Although well known in America as a pianist, ethnomusicologist, and teacher, he was not well known as a composer. There was little American interest in his music during his final years. He and his wife Ditta gave some concerts, although demand for them was low. Bartók, who had made some recordings in Hungary, also recorded for Columbia Records after he came to the US; many of these recordings (some with Bartók's own spoken introductions) were later issued on LP and CD (Bartók 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 2003, 2007, 2008).

Supported by a research fellowship from Columbia University, for several years, Bartók and Ditta worked on a large collection of Serbian and Croatian folk songs in Columbia's libraries. Bartók's economic difficulties during his first years in America were mitigated by publication royalties, teaching, and performance tours. While his finances were always precarious, he did not live and die in poverty as was the common myth. He had enough friends and supporters to ensure that there was sufficient money and work available for him to live on. Bartók was a proud man and did not easily accept charity. Despite being short on cash at times, he often refused money that his friends offered him out of their own pockets. Although he was not a member of the ASCAP, the society paid for any medical care he needed during his last two years. Bartók reluctantly accepted this.

The first symptoms of his health problems began late in 1940, when his right shoulder began to show signs of stiffening. In 1942, symptoms increased and he started having bouts of fever, but no underlying disease was diagnosed, in spite of medical examinations. Finally, in April 1944, leukemia was diagnosed, but by this time, little could be done.

As his body slowly failed, Bartók found more creative energy, and he produced a final set of masterpieces, partly thanks to the violinist Joseph Szigeti and the conductor Fritz Reiner (Reiner had been Bartók's friend and champion since his days as Bartók's student at the Royal Academy). Bartók's last work might well have been the String Quartet No. 6 but for Serge Koussevitzky's commission for the Concerto for Orchestra. Koussevitzky's Boston Symphony Orchestra premièred the work in December 1944 to highly positive reviews. The Concerto for Orchestra quickly became Bartók's most popular work, although he did not live to see its full impact. In 1944, he was also commissioned by Yehudi Menuhin to write a Sonata for Solo Violin. In 1945, Bartók composed his Piano Concerto No. 3, a graceful and almost neo-classical work, as a surprise 42nd birthday present for Ditta, but he died just over a month before her birthday, with the scoring not quite finished. He had sketched his Viola Concerto but had barely started the scoring at his death.

Figure 3. Statue of Bartók in Makó, Hungary.

Béla Bartók died at age 64 in a hospital in New York City from complications of leukemia (specifically, of secondary polycythemia) on September 26, 1945. His funeral was attended by only ten people. Among them were his wife Ditta, their son Péter, and his pianist friend György Sándor.

Bartók's body was initially interred in Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York. During the final year of communist Hungary in the late 1980s, the Hungarian government, along with his two sons, Béla III and Péter, requested that his remains be exhumed and transferred back to Budapest for burial, where Hungary arranged a state funeral for him on July 7, 1988. He was reinterred at Budapest's Farkasréti Cemetery, next to the remains of Ditta, who died in 1982, the year after his centenary.

The Third Piano Concerto was nearly finished at his death. For his Viola Concerto, Bartók had completed only the viola part and sketches of the orchestral part. Both works were later completed by his pupil, Tibor Serly. György Sándor was the soloist in the first performance of the Third Piano Concerto on February 8, 1946. Ditta Pásztory-Bartók later played and recorded it. The Viola Concerto was revised and polished in the 1990s by Bartók's son Peter; this version may be closer to what Bartók intended.

Concurrently, Peter Bartók, in association with Nelson Dellamaggiore, worked to re-print and revise past editions of the Third Piano Concerto.

Compositions

Bartók's music reflects two trends that dramatically changed the sound of music in the 20th century: the breakdown of the diatonic system of harmony that had served composers for the previous two hundred years

and the revival of nationalism as a source for musical inspiration, a trend that began with Mikhail Glinka and Antonín Dvořák in the last half of the 19th century. In his search for new forms of tonality, Bartók turned to Hungarian folk music, as well as to other folk music of the Carpathian Basin and even of Algeria and Turkey; in so doing he became influential in that stream of modernism that exploited indigenous music and techniques.

One characteristic style of music is his Night music, which he used mostly in slow movements of multi-movement ensemble or orchestral compositions in his mature period. It is characterized by "eerie dissonances providing a backdrop to sounds of nature and lonely melodies." An example is the third movement (Adagio) of his *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*.

His music can be grouped roughly in accordance with the different periods in his life.

Youth: Late-Romanticism (1890–1902)

The works of his youth are of a late-Romantic style. Between 1890 and 1894 (9 to 13 years of age), he wrote 31 pieces with corresponding opus numbers. He started numbering his works anew with "opus 1" in 1894 with his first large-scale work, a piano sonata. Up to 1902, Bartók wrote in total 74 works, which can be considered in Romantic style. Most of these early compositions are either scored for piano solo or include a piano. Additionally, there is some chamber music for strings.

New influences (1903–11)

Under the influence of Richard Strauss, Bartók composed in 1903 *Kossuth*, a symphonic poem in ten tableaux. In 1904 followed his *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra,* which he numbered opus 1 again, marking it himself as the start of a new era in his music. An even more important occurrence of this year was his overhearing the 18-year-old nanny Lidi Dósa from Transylvania sing folk songs, sparking Bartók's lifelong dedication to folk music. When criticized for not composing his own melodies, Bartók pointed out that Molière and Shakespeare mostly based their plays on well-known stories too. Regarding the incorporation of folk music into art music he said:

> The question is, what are the ways in which peasant music is taken over and becomes transmuted into modern music? We may, for instance, take over a peasant melody unchanged or only slightly varied, write an accompaniment to it and possibly some opening and concluding phrases. This kind of work would show a certain analogy with Bach's treatment of chorales. . . . Another method . . . is the following: the composer does not make use of a real peasant melody but invents his own imitation of such melodies. There is no true difference between this method and the one described above. . . . There is yet a third way. . . . Neither peasant melodies nor imitations of peasant melodies can be found in his music, but it is pervaded by the atmosphere of peasant music. In this case we may say, he has completely absorbed the idiom of peasant music which has become his musical mother tongue.

Bartók first became acquainted with Debussy's music in 1907 and regarded his music highly. In an interview in 1939, Bartók said,

> Debussy's great service to music was to reawaken among all musicians an awareness of harmony and its possibilities. In that, he was just as important as Beethoven, who revealed to us the possibilities of progressive form, or as Bach, who showed us the transcendent significance of counterpoint. Now, what I am always asking myself is this: is it possible to make a synthesis of these three great masters, a living synthesis that will be valid for our time?

Debussy's influence is present in the Fourteen Bagatelles (1908). These made Ferruccio Busoni exclaim, "At last something truly new!" Until 1911, Bartók composed widely differing works that ranged from adherence to romantic-style, to folk song arrangements, to his modernist opera *Bluebeard's Castle*. The negative reception of his work led him to focus on folk music research after 1911 and to abandon composition with the exception of folk music arrangements.

New Inspiration and Experimentation (1916–21)

His pessimistic attitude toward composing was lifted by the stormy and inspiring contact with Klára Gombossy in the summer of 1915. This interesting episode in Bartók's life remained hidden until it was researched by Denijs Dille between 1979 and 1989. Bartók started composing again, including the Suite for piano opus 14 (1916) and *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1918), and he completed *The Wooden Prince* (1917).

Bartók felt the result of World War I as a personal tragedy. Many regions he loved were severed from Hungary: Transylvania; the Banat, where he was born; and Pozsony, where his mother lived. Additionally, the political relations between Hungary and the other successor states to the Austro-Hungarian empire prohibited his folk music research outside of Hungary. Bartók also wrote the noteworthy *Eight Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs* in 1920 and the sunny *Dance Suite* in 1923, the year of his second marriage.

"Synthesis of East and West" (1926–45)

In 1926, Bartók needed a significant piece for piano and orchestra with which he could tour in Europe and America. In the preparation for writing his First Piano Concerto, he wrote his Sonata, *Out of Doors*, and *Nine Little Pieces*, all for solo piano. He increasingly found his own voice in his maturity. The style of his last period—named "Synthesis of East and West"—is hard to define let alone put under one term. In his mature period, Bartók wrote relatively few works, but most of them are large-scale compositions for large settings. Only his voice works have programmatic titles, and his late works often adhere to classical forms.

Among his masterworks are all the six string quartets (1908, 1917, 1927, 1928, 1934, and 1939), the *Cantata Profana* (1930; Bartók declared that this was the work he felt and professed to be his most personal

"credo"), the *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (1936), the Concerto for Orchestra (1943), and the Third Piano Concerto (1945).

Bartók also made a lasting contribution to the literature for younger students: for his son Péter's music lessons, he composed *Mikrokosmos*, a six-volume collection of graded piano pieces.

Musical Analysis

Paul Wilson lists as the most prominent characteristics of Bartók's music from late 1920s onward the influence of the Carpathian basin and European art music and his changing attitude toward (and use of) tonality, but without the use of the traditional harmonic functions associated with major and minor scales.

Figure 4. Béla Bartók memorial plaque in Baja, Hungary.

Although Bartók claimed in his writings that his music was always tonal, he rarely uses the chords or scales of tonality, and so the descriptive resources of tonal theory are of limited use. George Perle (1955) and Elliott Antokoletz (1984) focus on alternative methods of signaling tonal centers via axes of inversional symmetry. Others view Bartók's axes of symmetry in terms of atonal analytic protocols. Richard Cohn argues that inversional symmetry is often a byproduct of another atonal procedure, the formation of chords from transpositionally related dyads. Atonal pitch-class theory also furnishes the resources for exploring polymodal chromaticism, projected sets, privileged patterns, and large set types used as source sets such as the equal tempered twelve-tone aggregate, octatonic scale (and alpha chord), the diatonic and *heptatonia secunda* seven-note scales, and less often the whole tone scale and the primary pentatonic collection.

He rarely used the simple aggregate actively to shape musical structure, though there are notable examples, such as the second theme from the first movement of his Second Violin Concerto, commenting that he "wanted to show Schoenberg that one can use all twelve tones and still remain tonal." More thoroughly, in the first eight measures of the last movement of his Second Quartet, all notes gradually gather with the twelfth (G ♭) sounding for the first time on the last beat of measure 8, marking the end of the first section. The aggregate is partitioned in the opening of the Third String Quartet with C♯–D–D♯–E in the accompaniment (strings) while the remaining pitch classes are used in the melody (violin 1) and more often as 7–35 (diatonic or "white-key" collection) and 5–35 (pentatonic or "black-key" collection) such as in no. 6 of the *Eight Improvisations*. There, the primary theme is on the black keys in the left hand, while the right accompanies with triads from the white keys. In measures 50–51 in the third movement of the Fourth Quartet, the first violin and cello play black-key chords, while the second violin and viola play stepwise diatonic lines.

On the other hand, from as early as the Suite for piano, Op. 14 (1914), he occasionally employed a form of serialism based on compound interval cycles, some of which are maximally distributed, multi-aggregate cycles.

Ernő Lendvai (1971) analyzes Bartók's works as being based on two opposing tonal systems, that of the acoustic scale and the axis system, as well as using the golden section as a structural principle.

Milton Babbitt, in his 1949 critique of Bartók's string quartets, criticized Bartók for using tonality and non-tonal methods unique to each piece. Babbitt noted that "Bartók's solution was a specific one, it cannot be duplicated." Bartók's use of "two organizational principles"—tonality for large scale relationships and the piece-specific method for moment-to-moment thematic elements—was a problem for Babbitt, who worried that the "highly attenuated tonality" requires extreme non-harmonic methods to create a feeling of closure.

Catalogs and Opus Numbers

The cataloging of Bartók's works is somewhat complex. Bartók assigned opus numbers to his works three times, the last of these series ending with the Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1, Op. 21 in 1921. He ended this practice because of the difficulty of distinguishing between original works and ethnographic arrangements and between major and minor works. Since his death, three attempts—two full and one partial—have been made at cataloging. The first, and still most widely used, is András Szőllősy's chronological Sz. numbers, from 1 to 121. Denijs Dille subsequently reorganized the juvenilia (Sz. 1–25) thematically as DD numbers 1 to 77. The most recent catalog is that of László Somfai; this is a chronological index with works identified by BB numbers 1 to 129, incorporating corrections based on the Béla Bartók Thematic Catalog.

Listen: Works

Please listen to the following audio files.

Sonata for two pianos and percussion, first movement (excerpt)

This segment of Bartók's Sonata for two pianos and percussion features pedal glissandos during a timpani roll.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-3

Concerto for Orchestra (excerpt)

In this passage from the Intermezzo interrotto movement of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, the timpanist plays a chromatic bass line, which requires using the pedal to change pitches.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-4

Concerto for Orchestra

The *Concerto for Orchestra* was completed just months before Bartók died of leukemia. It is one of his best-known works, though in it he adopts a style that is less dissonant and modern than he had been known for in previous works. Please listen to the discussion of the piece at this NPR site. The two commentators spend a good deal of time talking about the movement we have on our playlist, the fourth movement titled "Interrupted Intermezzo." One claim made in the audio discussion is that Bartók is parodying a piece by another one of our composers, Shostakovich. As you can see from the Wikipedia article on the piece, that view is not universally held.

Aaron Copland

Copland represents a first in our studies: an American-born composer. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Aaron Copland studied in Paris, then returned to the United States where he was influenced by the composer Aaron Stieglitz. Stieglitz felt that American artists should create work that gave expression to American democracy. Copland certainly did this in several popular ballets that made use of American folk tunes, particularly cowboy songs. The ballet *Rodeo*, and the movement from that work featured on our playlist, "Hoedown," is

unmistakable in its reference to the American West. This American nationalism stands in stark contrast to the modernist music of Copland's contemporaries.

Introduction

Aaron Copland (November 14, 1900–December 2, 1990) was an American composer, composition teacher, writer, and later in his career a conductor of his own and other American music. Instrumental in forging a distinctly American style of composition, in his later years he was often referred to as "the Dean of American Composers" and is best known to the public for the works he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s in a deliberately accessible style often referred to as "populist" and which the composer labeled his "vernacular" style. Works in this vein include the ballets *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, and *Rodeo*; his *Fanfare for the Common Man*; and Third Symphony. The open, slowly changing harmonies of many of his works are archetypical of what many people consider to be the sound of American music, evoking the vast American landscape and pioneer spirit. In addition to his ballets and orchestral works, he produced music in many other genres, including chamber music, vocal works, opera, and film scores.

Figure 1. Aaron Copland as subject of a Young People's Concert, 1970.

After some initial studies with composer Rubin Goldmark, Copland traveled to Paris, where he studied at first with Isidor Philipp and Paul Vidal, then with noted pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. He studied three years with Boulanger, whose eclectic approach to music inspired his own broad taste in that area. Determined upon his return to the US to make his way as a full-time composer, Copland gave lecture-recitals, wrote works on commission, and did some teaching and writing. He found composing orchestral music in the "modernist" style he had adapted abroad a financially contradictory approach, particularly in light of the Great Depression. He shifted in the mid-1930s to a more accessible musical style that mirrored the German idea of *Gebrauchsmusik* ("music for use"), music that could serve utilitarian and artistic purposes. During the Depression years, he traveled extensively to Europe, Africa, and Mexico; formed an important friendship with Mexican composer Carlos Chávez; and began composing his signature works.

During the late 1940s, Copland felt a need to compose works of greater emotional substance than his utilitarian scores of the late 1930s and early 1940s. He was aware that Stravinsky, as well as many fellow composers, had begun to study Arnold Schoenberg's use of twelve-tone (serial) techniques. In his personal style, Copland began to make use of twelve-tone rows in several compositions. He incorporated serial techniques in some of his later works, including his Piano Quartet (1951), Piano Fantasy (1957), *Connotations*

for orchestra (1961), and *Inscape* for orchestra (1967). From the 1960s onward, Copland's activities turned more from composing to conducting. He became a frequent guest conductor of orchestras in the US and the UK and made a series of recordings of his music, primarily for Columbia Records.

Popular Works

Impressed with the success of Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, Copland wrote *El Salón México* between 1932 and 1936, which met with a popular acclaim that contrasted the relative obscurity of most of his previous works. It appears he intended it to be a popular favorite, as he wrote in 1955: "It seems a long long time since anyone has written an *España* or *Bolero*—the kind of brilliant orchestral piece that everyone loves." Inspiration for this work came from Copland's vivid recollection of visiting the "Salon Mexico" dancehall, where he witnessed a more intimate view of Mexico's nightlife. For Copland, the biggest impact came, not from the music of the people dancing, but from the spirit of the environment. Copland said that he could literally feel the essence of the Mexican people in the dance hall. This prompted him to write a piece celebrating the spirit of Mexico using Mexican themes. Copland derived freely from two collections of Mexican folk tunes, changing pitches and varying rhythms. The use of a folk tune with variations set in a symphonic context started a pattern he repeated in many of his most successful works right on through the 1940s. This work also marked the return of jazz patterns to Copland's compositional style, though they appeared in a more subdued form than before and were no longer the centerpiece. Chávez conducted the premiere, and *El Salón México* became an international hit, gaining Copland wide recognition.

Copland achieved his first major success in ballet music with his groundbreaking score *Billy the Kid*, based on a Walter Noble Burns novel, with choreography by Eugene Loring. The ballet was among the first to display an American music and dance vocabulary, adapting the "strong technique and intense charm of Astaire" and other American dancers. It was distinctive in its use of polyrhythm and polyharmony, particularly in the cowboy songs. The ballet premiered in New York in 1939, with Copland recalling, "I cannot remember another work of mine that was so unanimously received." John Martin wrote, "Aaron Copland has furnished an admirable score, warm and human, and with not a wasted note about it anywhere." It became a staple work of the American Ballet Theatre, and Copland's 20-minute suite from the ballet became part of the standard orchestral repertoire. When asked how a Jewish New Yorker managed so well to capture the Old West, Copland answered, "It was just a feat of imagination."

In the early 1940s, Copland produced two important works intended as national morale boosters. *Fanfare for the Common Man*, scored for brass and percussion, was written in 1942 at the request of the conductor Eugene Goossens, conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. It would later be used to open many Democratic National Conventions and to add dignity to a wide range of other events. Even musical groups from Woody Herman's jazz band to the Rolling Stones adapted the opening theme. Emerson, Lake & Palmer recorded a "progressive rock" version of the composition in 1977. The fanfare was also used as the main theme of the fourth movement of Copland's *Third Symphony,* where it first appears in a quiet, pastoral manner, then

in the brassier form of the original. In the same year, Copland wrote *A Lincoln Portrait*, a commission from conductor André Kostelanetz, leading to a further strengthening of his association with American patriotic music. The work is famous for the spoken recitation of Lincoln's words, though the idea had been previously employed by John Alden Carpenter's "Song of Faith" based on George Washington's quotations. "Lincoln Portrait" is often performed at national holiday celebrations. Many Americans have performed the recitation, including politicians, actors, and musicians and Copland himself, with Henry Fonda doing the most notable recording.

Continuing his string of successes, in 1942, Copland composed the ballet *Rodeo,* a tale of a ranch wedding, written around the same time as *Lincoln Portrait*. *Rodeo* is another enduring composition for Copland and contains many recognizable folk tunes, well-blended with Copland's original music. Notable in the final movement is the striking "Hoedown." This was a recreation of Appalachian fiddler W. H. Stepp's version of the square-dance tune "Bonypart" ("Bonaparte's Retreat"), which had been transcribed for piano by Ruth Crawford Seeger and published in Alan Lomax and Seeger's book *Our Singing Country* (1941). For the "Hoedown" in *Rodeo*, Copland borrowed note for note from Seeger's piano transcription of Stepp's tune. This fragment (lifted from Ruth Crawford Seeger) is now one of the best-known compositions by any American composer, having been used numerous times in movies and on television, including commercials for the American beef industry. "Hoedown" was given a rock arrangement by Emerson, Lake & Palmer in 1972. The ballet, originally titled "The Courting at Burnt Ranch," was choreographed by Agnes de Mille, niece of film giant Cecil B. DeMille. It premiered at the Metropolitan Opera on October 16, 1942, with de Mille dancing the principal "cowgirl" role, and the performance received a standing ovation. A reduced score is still popular as an orchestral piece, especially at "Pops" concerts.

Copland was commissioned to write another ballet, *Appalachian Spring*, originally written using 13 instruments, which he ultimately arranged as a popular orchestral suite. The commission for *Appalachian Spring* came from Martha Graham, who had requested of Copland merely "music for an American ballet." Copland titled the piece "Ballet for Martha," having no idea of how she would use it on stage, but he had her in mind. "When I wrote 'Appalachian Spring' I was thinking primarily about Martha and her unique choreographic style, which I knew well. . . . And she's unquestionably very American: there's something prim and restrained, simple yet strong, about her which one tends to think of as American." Copland borrowed the flavor of Shaker songs and dances and directly used the dance song "Simple Gifts." Graham took the score and created a ballet she called *Appalachian Spring* (from a poem by Hart Crane that had no connection with Shakers). It was an instant success, and the

Figure 2. Martha Graham in 1948.

music later acquired the same name. Copland was amused and delighted later in life when people would come up to him and say: "Mr. Copland, when I see that ballet and when I hear your music I can see the Appalachians and just feel spring." Copland had no particular setting in mind while writing the music; he just tried to give it an American flavor and had no knowledge of the borrowed title, in which "spring" refers to a spring of water, not the season Spring.

Rodeo

Just as Bartók's recordings of Hungarian and Romanian folk songs influenced his later compositions, a particular recording of an old cowboy tune had an impact on the "Hoedown" movement of Copland's *Rodeo*. Listen to this NPR story on that tune and its transformation from a western march to an orchestral dance. To see what other folk tunes appear in "Hoedown," read the paragraph on that movement from the Wikipedia article on *Rodeo*. The link will take you directly to that paragraph.

Neoclassicism

Neoclassicism was a reaction to both the emotional excesses of late Romanticism and the radical dissonance of modernism. Before you review this 20th-century musical movement, however, I want to explain an apparent contradiction with regard to our playlist and neoclassicism. There is no question that the most significant composer to write in a neoclassical style was Igor Stravinsky. However, I didn't include any of his neoclassical compositions on our playlist for the simple reason that *Rite of Spring*, which he composed prior to his efforts in neoclassical style, is his most significant work historically. *Rite of Spring* just had to be on the list even though it meant that the most significant neoclassical composer would be representing primitivism instead of neoclassicism on our playlist. Because of this, we will listen to a symphonic movement by Shostakovich that exhibits some elements of neoclassical style, though it is not strictly speaking a neoclassical piece. Once again, the historical and musical significance of the work has trumped purity of style.

As you will soon read, Shostakovich was composing during Stalin's reign of terror in Russia. Stalin's Soviet establishment demanded a kind of classicism from composers, as it was felt that dissonant, modernist music, known in the USSR as "formalism," was evidence of the decadence and corruption of the West. Composers who fell out of favor with the establishment could find themselves in a labor camp or worse, so Shostakovich, in composing his 5th symphony, had to write in a more classically influenced tonality and structure. This simplified musical language is in keeping with the principles of neoclassicism. However, those same Soviet authorities demanded music that was grand and epic in scope as a means of representing what they saw as the superiority of communist ideals. In this sense, Shostakovich's 5th symphony does not mesh with the neoclassical focus on smaller performances. So my hope in making the selections that I did is that you will (a) be exposed to historically significant pieces such as *Rite* and Symphony No. 5; and (b) be able to recognize the neoclassical elements that are a part of the Shostakovich listening example.

Introduction

Neoclassicism in music was a 20th-century trend, particularly current in the period between the two World Wars, in which composers sought to return to aesthetic precepts associated with the broadly defined concept of "classicism"—namely, order, balance, clarity, economy, and emotional restraint. As such, neoclassicism was a reaction against the unrestrained emotionalism and perceived formlessness of late Romanticism, as well as a "call to order" after the experimental ferment of the first two decades of the 20th century. The neoclassical impulse found its expression in such features as the use of pared-down performing forces, an emphasis on rhythm and on contrapuntal texture, an updated or expanded tonal harmony, and a concentration on absolute music as opposed to Romantic program music. In form and thematic technique, neoclassical music often drew inspiration from music of the 18th century, though the inspiring canon belonged as frequently to the Baroque and even earlier periods as the Classical period—for this reason, music which draws inspiration specifically from the Baroque is sometimes termed *Neo-Baroque music*. Neoclassicism had two distinct national lines of development, French (proceeding partly from the influence of Erik Satie and represented by Igor Stravinsky) and German (proceeding from the "New Objectivity" of Ferruccio Busoni and represented by Paul Hindemith). Neoclassicism was an aesthetic trend rather than an organized movement; even many composers not usually thought of as "neoclassicists" absorbed elements of the style.

Dmitri Shostakovich

As has already been mentioned, Shostakovich dealt with political concerns that none of the other composers we have studied faced. During the time of Stalin, a Soviet artist whose work was denounced by the communist party apparatus could have faced imprisonment or execution. Pay close attention to the adjustments he had to make to his musical style, particularly in connection with the 5th Symphony, out of fear for his and his family's safety. Also notice the number of his friends and colleagues who were executed during the period known as the Great Terror.

Introduction

Figure 1. Dmitri Shostakovich in 1942.

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (25 September 1906–9 August 1975) was a Russian composer and pianist and a prominent figure of 20th-century music.

Shostakovich achieved fame in the Soviet Union under the patronage of Soviet chief of staff Mikhail Tukhachevsky but later had a complex and difficult relationship with the government. Nevertheless, he received accolades and state awards and served in the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (1947–1962) and the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union (from 1962 until his death).

A poly-stylist, Shostakovich developed a hybrid voice, combining a variety of different musical techniques into his music. Shostakovich's music is characterized by sharp contrasts, elements of the grotesque, and ambivalent tonality; the composer was also heavily influenced by the neo-classical style pioneered by Igor Stravinsky and (especially in his symphonies) by the post-Romanticism associated with Gustav Mahler.

Shostakovich's orchestral works include 15 symphonies and six concerti. His chamber output includes 15 string quartets, a piano quintet, 2 piano trios, and 2 pieces for string octet. His piano works include 2 solo sonatas, an early set of preludes, and a later set of 24 preludes and fugues. Other works include 3 operas, several song cycles, ballets, and a substantial quantity of film music; especially well known is *The Second Waltz*, Op. 99, music to the film *The First Echelon* (1955–1956), as well as the Suites composed for *The Gadfly*.

Biography

Early Life

Born at Podolskaya Ulitsa in Saint Petersburg, Russia, Shostakovich was the second of three children of Dmitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich and Sofiya Vasilievna Kokoulina. Shostakovich's paternal grandfather, originally surnamed Szostakowicz, was of Polish Roman Catholic descent (his family roots trace to the region of the town of Vileyka in today's Belarus), but his immediate forebears came from Siberia. A Polish revolutionary in the January Uprising of 1863–64, Bolesław Szostakowicz would be exiled to Narym (near Tomsk) in 1866 in the crackdown that followed Dmitri Karakozov's assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander II. When his term of

exile ended, Szostakowicz decided to remain in Siberia. He eventually became a successful banker in Irkutsk and raised a large family. His son, Dmitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich, the composer's father, was born in exile in Narim in 1875 and studied physics and mathematics in Saint Petersburg University, graduating in 1899. He then went to work as an engineer under Dmitri Mendeleev at the Bureau of Weights and Measures in Saint Petersburg. In 1903, he married another Siberian transplant to the capital, Sofiya Vasilievna Kokoulina, one of six children born to a Russian Siberian native.

Their son, Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich, displayed significant musical talent after he began piano lessons with his mother at the age of nine. On several occasions, he displayed a remarkable ability to remember what his mother had played at the previous lesson and would get "caught in the act" of playing the previous lesson's music while pretending to read different music placed in front of him. In 1918, he wrote a funeral march in memory of two leaders of the Kadet party, murdered by Bolshevik sailors.

In 1919, at the age of 13, he was allowed to enter the Petrograd Conservatory, then headed by Alexander Glazunov, who monitored Shostakovich's progress closely and promoted him. Shostakovich studied piano with Leonid Nikolayev after a year in the class of Elena Rozanova, composition with Maximilian Steinberg, and counterpoint and fugue with Nikolay Sokolov, with whom he became friends. Shostakovich also attended Alexander Ossovsky's history of music classes. Steinberg tried to guide Shostakovich in the path of the great Russian composers but was disappointed to see him wasting his talent and imitating Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Prokofiev. He also suffered for his perceived lack of political zeal and initially failed his exam in Marxist methodology in 1926. His first major musical achievement was the First Symphony (premiered 1926), written as his graduation piece at the age of 19.

Early Career

After graduation, Shostakovich initially embarked on a dual career as concert pianist and composer, but his dry style of playing was often unappreciated (his American biographer, Laurel Fay, comments on his "emotional restraint" and "riveting rhythmic drive"). He nevertheless won an "honorable mention" at the First International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1927. After the competition, Shostakovich met the conductor Bruno Walter, who was so impressed by the composer's First Symphony that he conducted it at its Berlin premiere later that year. Leopold Stokowski was equally impressed and gave the work its US premiere the following year in Philadelphia and also made the work's first recording.

Thereafter, Shostakovich concentrated on composition and soon limited his performances primarily to those of his own works. In 1927, he wrote his Second Symphony (subtitled *To October*), a patriotic piece with a great pro-Soviet choral finale. Due to its experimental nature, as with the subsequent Third Symphony, the pieces were not critically acclaimed with the enthusiasm granted to the First.

The year 1927 also marked the beginning of Shostakovich's relationship with Ivan Sollertinsky, who remained his closest friend until the latter's death in 1944. Sollertinsky introduced the composer to the music of Gustav Mahler, which had a strong influence on his music from the Fourth Symphony onward.

While writing the Second Symphony, Shostakovich also began work on his satirical opera *The Nose*, based on the story by Gogol. In June 1929, the opera was given a concert performance, against Shostakovich's own wishes, and was ferociously attacked by the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM). Its stage premiere on 18 January 1930 opened to generally poor reviews and widespread incomprehension among musicians.

Shostakovich composed his first film score for the 1929 silent movie *The New Babylon,* set during the 1871 Paris Commune.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Shostakovich worked at TRAM, a proletarian youth theater. Although he did little work in this post, it shielded him from ideological attack. Much of this period was spent writing his opera, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, which was first performed in 1934. It was immediately successful, on both popular and official levels. It was described as "the result of the general success of Socialist construction, of the correct policy of the Party," and as an opera that "could have been written only by a Soviet composer brought up in the best tradition of Soviet culture."

Shostakovich married his first wife, Nina Varzar, in 1932. Initial difficulties led to a divorce in 1935, but the couple soon remarried when Nina became pregnant with their first child.

First Denunciation

In 1936, Shostakovich fell from official favor. The year began with a series of attacks on him in *Pravda*, in particular an article entitled "Muddle Instead of Music." Shostakovich was away on a concert tour in Arkhangelsk when he heard news of the first *Pravda* article. Two days before the article was published on the evening of 28 January, a friend had advised Shostakovich to attend the Bolshoi Theatre production of *Lady Macbeth*. When he arrived, he saw that Joseph Stalin and the Politburo were there. In letters written to his friend Ivan Sollertinsky, Shostakovich recounted the horror with which he watched as Stalin shuddered every time the brass and percussion played too loudly. Equally horrifying was the way Stalin and his companions laughed at the love-making scene between Sergei and Katerina. Eyewitness accounts testify that Shostakovich was "white as a sheet" when he went to take his bow after the third act.

The article condemned *Lady Macbeth* as formalist, "coarse, primitive and vulgar." Consequently, commissions began to fall off, and his income fell by about three quarters. Even Soviet music critics who had praised the opera were forced to recant in print, saying they "failed to detect the shortcomings of *Lady Macbeth* as pointed out by *Pravda.*" Shortly after the "Muddle Instead of Music" article, *Pravda* published another, "Ballet Falsehood," that criticized Shostakovich's ballet *The Limpid Stream*. Shostakovich did not expect this second article because the general public and press already accepted this music as "democratic" – that is, tuneful and accessible. However, *Pravda* criticized *The Limpid Stream* for incorrectly displaying peasant life on the collective farm.

More widely, 1936 marked the beginning of the Great Terror, in which many of the composer's friends and relatives were imprisoned or killed. These included his patron Marshal Tukhachevsky (shot months after

his arrest); his brother-in-law Vsevolod Frederiks (a distinguished physicist, who was eventually released but died before he got home); his close friend Nikolai Zhilyayev (a musicologist who had taught Tukhachevsky; shot shortly after his arrest); his mother-in-law, the astronomer Sofiya Mikhaylovna Varzar (sent to a camp in Karaganda); his friend the Marxist writer Galina Serebryakova (20 years in camps); his uncle Maxim Kostrykin (died); and his colleagues Boris Kornilov and Adrian Piotrovsky (executed). His only consolation in this period was the birth of his daughter Galina in 1936; his son Maxim was born two years later.

Withdrawal of the Fourth Symphony

The publication of the *Pravda* editorials coincided with the composition of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony. The work marked a great shift in style for the composer due to the substantial influence of Gustav Mahler and a number of Western-style elements. The symphony gave Shostakovich compositional trouble, as he attempted to reform his style into a new idiom. The composer was well into the work when the fatal articles appeared. Despite this, Shostakovich continued to compose the symphony and planned a premiere at the end of 1936. Rehearsals began that December, but after a number of rehearsals, Shostakovich, for reasons still debated today, decided to withdraw the symphony from the public. A number of his friends and colleagues, such as Isaak Glikman, have suggested that it was in fact an official ban that Shostakovich was persuaded to present as a voluntary withdrawal. Whatever the case, it seems possible that this action saved the composer's life: during this time, Shostakovich feared for himself and his family. Yet Shostakovich did not repudiate the work; it retained its designation as his Fourth Symphony. A piano reduction was published in 1946, and the work was finally premiered in 1961, well after Stalin's death.

During 1936 and 1937, in order to maintain as low a profile as possible between the Fourth and Fifth symphonies, Shostakovich mainly composed film music, a genre favored by Stalin and lacking in dangerous personal expression.

"A Soviet Artist's Creative Response to Just Criticism"

The composer's response to his denunciation was the Fifth Symphony of 1937, which was musically more conservative than his earlier works. Premiering on 21 November 1937 in Leningrad, it was a phenomenal success: many in the Leningrad audience had lost family or friends to the mass executions. The Fifth drove many to tears and welling emotions. Later, Shostakovich wrote in his supposed memoirs, *Testimony:* "I'll never believe that a man who understood nothing could feel the Fifth Symphony. Of course they understood, they understood what was happening around them and they understood what the Fifth was about."

The success put Shostakovich in good standing once again. Music critics and the authorities alike, including those who had earlier accused Shostakovich of formalism, claimed that he had learned from his mistakes and had become a true Soviet artist. The composer Dmitry Kabalevsky, who had been among those who disassociated himself from Shostakovich when the *Pravda* article was published, praised the Fifth Symphony

and congratulated Shostakovich for "not having given in to the seductive temptations of his previous 'erroneous' ways."

It was also at this time that Shostakovich composed the first of his string quartets. His chamber works allowed him to experiment and express ideas that would have been unacceptable in his more public symphonic pieces. In September 1937, he began to teach composition at the Leningrad Conservatory, which provided some financial security but interfered with his own creative work.

Second World War

In 1939, before the Soviet forces attempted to invade Finland, the Party Secretary of Leningrad, Andrei Zhdanov, commissioned a celebratory piece from Shostakovich, entitled *Suite on Finnish Themes* to be performed as the marching bands of the Red Army would be parading through the Finnish capital Helsinki. The Winter War was a bitter experience for the Red Army, the parade never happened, and Shostakovich would never lay claim to the authorship of this work. It was not performed until 2001.

After the outbreak of war between the Soviet Union and Germany in 1941, Shostakovich initially remained in Leningrad. He tried to enlist for the military but was turned away because of his poor eyesight. To compensate, Shostakovich became a volunteer for the Leningrad Conservatory's firefighter brigade and delivered a radio broadcast to the Soviet people. The photograph for which he posed was published in newspapers throughout the country.

But his greatest and most famous wartime contribution was the Seventh Symphony. The composer wrote the first three movements in Leningrad and completed the work in Kuibyshev (now Samara), where he and his family had been evacuated. Whether or not Shostakovich really conceived the idea of the symphony with the siege of Leningrad in mind, it was officially claimed as a representation of the people of Leningrad's brave resistance to the German invaders and an authentic piece of patriotic art at a time when morale needed boosting. The symphony was first premiered by the Bolshoi Theatre orchestra in Kuibyshev and was soon performed abroad in London and the United States. However, the most compelling performance was the Leningrad premiere by the Radio Orchestra in the besieged city. The orchestra had only 14 musicians left, so the conductor Karl Eliasberg had to recruit anyone who could play a musical instrument to perform the symphony. The Leningrad Shostakovich reportedly had in mind was not the one that withstood the German siege. Rather, it was the one "that Stalin destroyed and Hitler merely finished off."

In spring 1943, the family moved to Moscow. At the time of the Eighth Symphony's premiere, the tide had turned for the Red Army. Therefore, the public, and most importantly the authorities, wanted another triumphant piece from the composer. Instead, they got the Eighth Symphony, perhaps the ultimate in somber and violent expression within Shostakovich's output. In order to preserve the image of Shostakovich (a vital bridge to the people of the Union and to the West), the government assigned the name "Stalingrad" to the symphony, giving it the appearance of a mourning of the dead in the bloody Battle of Stalingrad. However, the symphony did not escape criticism. Shostakovich is reported to have said: "When the Eighth was performed,

it was openly declared counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet. They said, 'Why did Shostakovich write an optimistic symphony at the beginning of the war and a tragic one now? At the beginning we were retreating and now we're attacking, destroying the Fascists. And Shostakovich is acting tragic, that means he's on the side of the fascists.'" The work was unofficially but effectively banned until 1956.

The Ninth Symphony (1945), in contrast, was much lighter in tone. Gavriil Popov wrote that it was "splendid in its joie de vivre, gaiety, brilliance, and pungency!" By 1946, however, it was the subject of criticism. Israel Nestyev asked whether it was the right time for "a light and amusing interlude between Shostakovich's significant creations, a temporary rejection of great, serious problems for the sake of playful, filigree-trimmed trifles." The *New York World-Telegram* of 27 July 1946 was similarly dismissive: "The Russian composer should not have expressed his feelings about the defeat of Nazism in such a childish manner." Shostakovich continued to compose chamber music, notably his Second Piano Trio (Op. 67), dedicated to the memory of Sollertinsky, with a bittersweet, Jewish-themed *totentanz* finale.

Second Denunciation

In 1948, Shostakovich, along with many other composers, was again denounced for formalism in the Zhdanov decree. Andrei Zhdanov, Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, accused Shostakovich and other composers (such as Sergei Prokofiev and Aram Khachaturian) for writing inappropriate and formalist music. This was part of an ongoing anti-formalism campaign intended to root out all Western compositional influence as well as any perceived "non-Russian" output. The conference resulted in the publication of the Central Committee's Decree "On V. Muradeli's opera *The Great Friendship*," which was targeted toward all Soviet composers and demanded that they only write "proletarian" music, or music for the masses. The accused composers, including Shostakovich, were summoned to make public apologies in front of the committee. Most of Shostakovich's works were banned, and his family had privileges withdrawn. Yuri Lyubimov says that at this time "he waited for his arrest at night out on the landing by the lift, so that at least his family wouldn't be disturbed."

The consequences of the decree for composers were harsh. Shostakovich was among those who were dismissed from the Conservatoire altogether. For Shostakovich, the loss of money was perhaps the largest blow. Others still in the Conservatory experienced an atmosphere that was thick with suspicion. No one wanted their work to be understood as formalist, so many resorted to accusing their colleagues of writing or performing anti-proletarian music.

In the next few years, he composed three categories of work: film music to pay the rent, official works aimed at securing official rehabilitation, and serious works "for the desk drawer." The latter included the Violin Concerto No. 1 and the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry.* The cycle was written at a time when the post-war anti-Semitic campaign was already under way, with widespread arrests, including of I. Dobrushin and Yuditsky, the compilers of the book from which Shostakovich took his texts.

The restrictions on Shostakovich's music and living arrangements were eased in 1949, when Stalin decided that the Soviets needed to send artistic representatives to the Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace

in New York City and that Shostakovich should be among them. For Shostakovich, it was a humiliating experience culminating in a New York press conference where he was expected to read a prepared speech. Nicolas Nabokov, who was present in the audience, witnessed Shostakovich starting to read "in a nervous and shaky voice" before he had to break off, and the speech was continued in English by a suave radio baritone. Fully aware that Shostakovich was not free to speak his mind, Nabokov publicly asked the composer whether he supported the then recent denunciation of Stravinsky's music in the Soviet Union. Shostakovich, who was a great admirer of Stravinsky and had been influenced by his music, had no alternative but to answer in the affirmative. Nabokov did not hesitate to publish that this demonstrated that Shostakovich was "not a free man, but an obedient tool of his government." Shostakovich never forgave Nabokov for this public humiliation. That same year, Shostakovich was obliged to compose the cantata *Song of the Forests,* which praised Stalin as the "great gardener." In 1951, the composer was made a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of RSFSR.

Stalin's death in 1953 was the biggest step toward Shostakovich's rehabilitation as a creative artist, which was marked by his Tenth Symphony. It features a number of musical quotations and codes (notably the DSCH and Elmira motifs, Elmira Nazirova being a pianist and composer who had studied under Shostakovich in the year prior to his dismissal from the Moscow Conservatoire), the meaning of which is still debated, while the savage second movement, according to *Testimony*, is intended as a musical portrait of Stalin himself. The Symphony ranks alongside the Fifth and Seventh as one of his most popular works; 1953 also saw a stream of premieres of the "desk drawer" works.

During the forties and fifties, Shostakovich had close relationships with two of his pupils: Galina Ustvolskaya and Elmira Nazirova. In the background to all this remained Shostakovich's first, open marriage to Nina Varzar until her death in 1954. He taught Ustvolskaya from 1937 to 1947. The nature of their relationship is far from clear: Mstislav Rostropovich described it as "tender." Ustvolskaya rejected a proposal of marriage from him after Nina's death. Shostakovich's daughter, Galina, recalled her father consulting her and Maxim about the possibility of Ustvolskaya becoming their stepmother. Ustvolskaya's friend, Viktor Suslin, said that she had been "deeply disappointed" in Shostakovich by the time of her graduation in 1947. The relationship with Nazirova seems to have been one-sided, expressed largely through his letters to her, and can be dated to around 1953 to 1956. He married his second wife, Komsomol activist Margarita Kainova, in 1956; the couple proved ill-matched and divorced three years later.

In 1954, Shostakovich wrote the Festive Overture, opus 96, that was used as the theme music for the 1980 Summer Olympics. In addition, his "Theme from the film *Pirogov*, Opus 76a: Finale" was played as the cauldron was lit at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece.

In 1959, Shostakovich appeared on stage in Moscow at the end of a concert performance of his Fifth Symphony, congratulating Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra for their performance (part of a concert tour of the Soviet Union). Later that year, Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic recorded the symphony in Boston for Columbia Records.

Joining the Party

The year 1960 marked another turning point in Shostakovich's life: he joined the Communist Party. The government wanted to appoint him General Secretary of the Composers' Union, but in order to hold that position, he was required to attain Party membership. It was understood that Nikita Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party from 1958 to 1964, was looking for support from the leading ranks of the intelligentsia in an effort to create a better relationship with the Soviet Union's artists. This event has been interpreted variously as a show of commitment, a mark of cowardice, the result of political pressure, or his free decision. On the one hand, the apparat was undoubtedly less repressive than it had been before Stalin's death. On the other, his son recalled that the event reduced Shostakovich to tears, and he later told his wife Irina that he had been blackmailed. Lev Lebedinsky has said that the composer was suicidal. Once he joined the Party, several articles denouncing individualism in music were published in *Pravda* under his name, though he did not actually write them. In addition, in joining the party, Shostakovich was also committing himself to finally writing the homage to Lenin that he had promised before. His Twelfth Symphony, which portrays the Bolshevik Revolution and was completed in 1961, was dedicated to Vladimir Lenin and called "The Year 1917." Around this time, his health also began to deteriorate.

Shostakovich's musical response to these personal crises was the Eighth String Quartet, composed in only three days. He subtitled the piece, "To the victims of fascism and war," ostensibly in memory of the Dresden fire bombing that took place in 1945. Yet, like the Tenth Symphony, this quartet incorporates quotations from several of his past works and his musical monogram: Shostakovich confessed to his friend Isaak Glikman, "I started thinking that if some day I die, nobody is likely to write a work in memory of me, so I had better write one myself." Several of Shostakovich's colleagues, including Natalya Vovsi-Mikhoels and the cellist Valentin Berlinsky, were also aware of the Eighth Quartet's biographical intent.

In 1962, he married for the third time, to Irina Supinskaya. In a letter to Glikman, he wrote, "Her only defect is that she is 27 years old. In all other respects she is splendid: clever, cheerful, straightforward and very likeable." According to Galina Vishnevskaya, who knew the Shostakoviches well, this marriage was a very happy one: "It was with her that Dmitri Dmitriyevich finally came to know domestic peace. . . . Surely, she prolonged his life by several years." In November he made his only venture into conducting, conducting a couple of his own works in Gorky; otherwise he declined to conduct, citing nerves and ill health as his reasons.

That year saw Shostakovich again turn to the subject of anti-Semitism in his Thirteenth Symphony (subtitled *Babi Yar*). The symphony sets a number of poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, the first of which commemorates a massacre of Ukrainian Jews during the Second World War. Opinions are divided as to how great a risk this was: the poem had been published in Soviet media and was not banned, but it remained controversial. After the symphony's premiere, Yevtushenko was forced to add a stanza to his poem that said that Russians and Ukrainians had died alongside the Jews at Babi Yar.

In 1965 Shostakovich raised his voice in defense of poet Joseph Brodsky, who was sentenced to five years of exile and hard labor. Shostakovich co-signed protests together with Yevtushenko and fellow Soviet artists

Kornei Chukovsky, Anna Akhmatova, Samuil Marshak, and the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. After the protests, the sentence was commuted, and Brodsky returned to Leningrad. Shostakovich also joined a group of 25 distinguished intellectuals in signing a letter to Leonid Brezhnev asking not to rehabilitate Stalin.

- (Russian) Original: "Pismo 25-ti deyatelei kulturi Brezhnevu o tendezii reabilitazii Stalina" [About the tendency toward Stalin's rehabilitation: The letter to Brezhnev signed by twenty-five intellectuals], Sobranie Documentov Samizdata [Collection of Samizdat Documents, SDS], vol. 4, AC no. 273 (1966).
- (Russian) Online: "Письмо 25 деятелей советской науки, литературы и искусства Л. И. Брежневу против реабилитации И. В. Сталина". Институт истории естествознания и техники им. С.И. Вавилова РАН. Retrieved 26 February 2013.

Later Life

In 1964, Shostakovich composed the music for the Russian film *Hamlet*, which was favorably reviewed by the *New York Times*: "But the lack of this aural stimulation—of Shakespeare's eloquent words—is recompensed in some measure by a splendid and stirring musical score by Dmitri Shostakovich. This has great dignity and depth, and at times an appropriate wildness or becoming levity."

In later life, Shostakovich suffered from chronic ill health, but he resisted giving up cigarettes and vodka. Beginning in 1958, he suffered from a debilitating condition that particularly affected his right hand, eventually forcing him to give up piano playing; in 1965 it was diagnosed as poliomyelitis. He also suffered heart attacks the following year and again in 1971 and several falls in which he broke both his legs; in 1967, he wrote in a letter:

> Target achieved so far: 75% (right leg broken, left leg broken, right hand defective). All I need to do now is wreck the left hand and then 100% of my extremities will be out of order.

A preoccupation with his own mortality permeates Shostakovich's later works, among them the later quartets and the Fourteenth Symphony of 1969 (a song cycle based on a number of poems on the theme of death). This piece also finds Shostakovich at his most extreme with musical language, with twelve-tone themes and dense polyphony used throughout. Shostakovich dedicated this score to his close friend Benjamin Britten, who conducted its Western premiere at the 1970 Aldeburgh Festival. The Fifteenth Symphony of 1971 is, by contrast, melodic and retrospective in nature, quoting Wagner, Rossini, and the composer's own Fourth Symphony.

Shostakovich died of lung cancer on 9 August 1975 and after a civic funeral was interred in the Novodevichy Cemetery, Moscow. Even before his death he had been commemorated with the naming of the Shostakovich Peninsula on Alexander Island, Antarctica.

He was survived by his third wife, Irina; his daughter, Galina; and his son, Maxim, a pianist and conductor who was the dedicatee and first performer of some of his father's works. Shostakovich himself left behind

several recordings of his own piano works, while other noted interpreters of his music include his friends Emil Gilels, Mstislav Rostropovich, Tatiana Nikolayeva, Maria Yudina, David Oistrakh, and members of the Beethoven Quartet.

His last work was his Viola Sonata, which was first performed on 28 December 1975, four months after his death.

Shostakovich's musical influence on later composers outside the former Soviet Union has been relatively slight, although Alfred Schnittke took up his eclecticism and his contrasts between the dynamic and the static, and some of André Previn's music shows clear links to Shostakovich's style of orchestration. His influence can also be seen in some Nordic composers, such as Lars-Erik Larsson. Many of his Russian contemporaries, and his pupils at the Leningrad Conservatory, however, were strongly influenced by his style (including German Okunev; Boris Tishchenko, whose 5th Symphony of 1978 is dedicated to Shostakovich's memory; Sergei Slonimsky; and others). Shostakovich's conservative idiom has grown increasingly popular with audiences both within and beyond Russia, as the avant-garde has declined in influence and debate about his political views has developed.

Symphony No. 5

The **Symphony No. 5 in D minor**, Op. 47, by Dmitri Shostakovich is a work for orchestra composed between April and July 1937. Its first performance was on November 21, 1937, in Leningrad by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra under Yevgeny Mravinsky. The premiere was a huge success and received an ovation that lasted well over half an hour.

The symphony is approximately 45 minutes in length and has four movements:

1. **Moderato**

   The symphony opens with a strenuous string figure in canon, initially leaping and falling in minor sixths then narrowing to minor thirds. The sharply dotted rhythm of this figure remains to accompany a broadly lyric melody played by the first violins. Variants of this theme return throughout the 3rd and 4th movements. The second theme is built out of octaves and sevenths. Whereas the first theme is based on a sharp dotted rhythm, the second relies on a static long-short-short pattern. With that is found all the musical material for this movement—one that is tremendously varied, its climax harsh. The coda, with the gentle friction of minor in strings against chromatic scales in celesta, ends on a note of haunting ambiguity.
2. **Allegretto**

   The opening motif in this waltz-like scherzo is a variation of the first theme in the first movement; other variations can be detected throughout the movement. The music remains witty, satirical, and raucous while also nervous.
3. **Largo**

After the assertive trumpets of the first movement and the raucous horns of the second, this movement uses no brass at all. The strings are divided throughout the entire movement (3 groups of violins, violas in 2, cellos in 2, basses in 2). Shostakovich fills this movement with beautiful, long melodies—one of them again based on the first theme of the first movement—punctuating them with intermezzi of solo woodwinds. Harp and celesta play prominent roles here as well. The music is emotive and even elegiac in tone; it returns to the sober mood that the scherzo has interrupted.

4. **Allegro non troppo**

   This movement, in an abbreviated sonata-allegro form, picks up the march music from the climax of the opening movement, at least in manner if not in specific material. A tense conclusion leads to the quieter section of the piece. This section ends and the short snare drum and timpani solo introduces a brief militaristic introduction to the finale of the movement—an extended and obsessive reiteration of the D major tonality.

Magnificat

This brief article describes our listening example by Arvo Pärt, *Magnificat*. Please pay special attention to the compositional technique of tintinnabuli, which refers to a ringing or bell-like sound—you can follow this link for more of an explanation. You definitely hear that in *Magnificat* when a triad is sung by three voice parts while a fourth sings a simple stepwise melody. Do you remember the Notre Dame-style organum we studied back in our coverage of the Middle Ages? Those passages in Magnificat featuring a drone against a melodic line reflect the direct influence of that medieval genre on this modern composition.

Introduction

Magnificat was composed in 1989 by Arvo Pärt. A setting of the Latin Magnificat text, it is in tintinnabuli style, which was invented by Pärt in the mid-1970s. It is scored a cappella for mixed choir: soprano solo, sopranos I and II, alto, and tenor and bass divisi. It lasts approximately seven minutes.

Composition

Stylistic Aspects

Tintinnabulation is the most important aspect of Pärt's *Magnificat*. According to Pärt's biographer and friend Paul Hillier, the *Magnificat* "displays the tintinnabuli technique at its most supple and refined." Pärt also uses drones; a second-line G in the alto near the end of the piece as well as the third-space C (on which the soprano solo line always stays), which provides a tonal center for the piece. Hillier says that "many pieces [by Pärt] tend

through length and repetition to establish a sense of timelessness or a continual present; the use of drones (which are in a sense a continuous repetition) reinforces this effect."

Arvo Pärt's wife Nora has said of his music,

> The concept of tintinnabuli was born from a deeply rooted desire for an extremely reduced sound world which could not be measured, as it were, in kilometres, or even metres, but only in millimetres. . . . By the end the listening attention is utterly focused. At the point after the music has faded away it is particularly remarkable to hear your breath, your heartbeat, the lighting or the air conditioning system, for example.

Structure

Structurally, the work can be divided into what Hillier refers to as "verse" and "tutti" sections. The verse sections include one voice (often a soprano solo) that remains constantly on third-space C, as well as a lower, melodic line. The tutti sections make use of either three, four, or six voice parts. The soprano soloist joins in the tutti sections at times. The progression of sections is:

Section style	Voices	Textual incipit
Verse	SS	Magnificat anima mea
Tutti	TTB	et exultavit
Verse	S solo, T	quia respexit
Tutti	STB	ecce enim
Verse	S solo, B	Quia fecit
Tutti	SSA	qui potens est
Tutti	SATB	et sanctum
Tutti	SSATTB	et misericordia
Verse	S solo, B	Fecit potentiam
Tutti	SSA	dispersit superbos
Verse	S solo, A drone, T	deposuit
Tutti	ATB	et exaltavit
Verse	SS	esurientes
Tutti	TTB	et divites
Tutti	S solo, SSATB	Suscepit Israel
Tutti	SSATTB	puerum suum
Verse	SS	recordatus
Tutti	SII drone, TTB	sicut locutus
Verse	S solo, SII drone, T	Abraham et semini
Tutti	SATBB	Magnificat anima mea
Tutti	S solo, SATBB	Dominum

Text Setting

Setting text to music can be accomplished in many different ways. Hillier says that Pärt "works outwards from the structure of the text." In the tutti sections, "the number of syllables determines the notes to be used . . . the stressed syllable is alternately the pitch centre and, in the next word, the note furthest away from it." In verse sections, Pärt "seems to have allowed himself an unusual degree of freedom . . . the stressed syllables do frequently coincide with a change of melodic direction."

While the texture is mainly homophonic, a new rhythmic device is introduced when the choir sings "dispersit superbos." As if taking instruction from the text, the choir does, in fact, divide; while all voices begin

the word together, only the melodic voice continues immediately onward. The other voices rest a beat before continuing with the second syllable.

Minimalist Music

Minimalism arose later in the 20th century as a reaction to the complexity, structure, and perception of twelve-tone serialism as it developed at the hands of Schoenberg's disciples. As you'll see when you start reading, the aesthetic of minimalism means different things to different composers. It is safe to say that all who compose in this style are striving for greater simplicity in the music. This article will provide an explanation of the musical style known as minimalism as well as a brief history of the techniques involved in minimalist composition. The author(s) sometimes get a little heavy-handed in their use of fancy terms. "Non-teleological" for example—gimme a break. In a musical context, that means that the music is not progressing toward a clear conclusion. In even simpler terms, it means the music can seem to wander around without a clear sense of direction. Nevertheless, there is valuable information here on what is arguably the most significant musical movement of the late 20th century.

Introduction

Minimal music is an aesthetic, a style, or a technique of music associated with the work of American composers La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass. It originated in the New York Downtown scene of the 1960s and was initially viewed as a form of experimental music called the *New York Hypnotic School.* As an aesthetic, it is marked by a non-narrative, non-teleological, and non-representational conception of a work in progress and represents a new approach to the activity of listening to music by focusing on the internal processes of the music, which lack goals or motion toward those goals. Prominent features of the technique include consonant harmony, steady pulse (if not immobile drones), stasis or gradual transformation, and often reiteration of musical phrases or smaller units such as figures, motifs, and cells. It may include features such as additive process and phase shifting, which leads to what has been termed phase music. Minimal compositions that rely heavily on process techniques that follow strict rules are usually described using the term process music.

The movement originally involved dozens of composers, although only five (Young, Riley, Reich, Glass, and later John Adams) emerged to become publicly associated with American minimal music. In Europe, the music of Louis Andriessen, Karel Goeyvaerts, Michael Nyman, Gavin Bryars, Steve Martland, Henryk Górecki, Arvo Pärt, and John Tavener exhibits minimalist traits.

It is unclear where the term *minimal music* originates. Steve Reich has suggested that it is attributable to Michael Nyman, a claim two scholars, Jonathan Bernard and Dan Warburton, have also made in writing. Philip Glass believes Tom Johnson coined the phrase.

Brief History

The word "minimal" was perhaps first used in relation to music in 1968 by Michael Nyman, who "deduced a recipe for the successful 'minimal-music' happening from the entertainment presented by Charlotte Moorman and Nam June Paik at the ICA," which included a performance of *Springen* by Henning Christiansen and a number of unidentified performance-art pieces. Nyman later expanded his definition of minimalism in music in his 1974 book *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*. Tom Johnson, one of the few composers to self-identify as minimalist, also claims to have been first to use the word as new music critic for *The Village Voice*. He describes "minimalism":

> The idea of minimalism is much larger than many people realize. It includes, by definition, any music that works with limited or minimal materials: pieces that use only a few notes, pieces that use only a few words of text, or pieces written for very limited instruments, such as antique cymbals, bicycle wheels, or whiskey glasses. It includes pieces that sustain one basic electronic rumble for a long time. It includes pieces made exclusively from recordings of rivers and streams. It includes pieces that move in endless circles. It includes pieces that set up an unmoving wall of saxophone sound. It includes pieces that take a very long time to move gradually from one kind of music to another kind. It includes pieces that permit all possible pitches, as long as they fall between C and D. It includes pieces that slow the tempo down to two or three notes per minute.

Already in 1965 the art historian Barbara Rose had named La Monte Young's *Dream Music*, Morton Feldman's characteristically soft dynamics, and various unnamed composers "all, to a greater or lesser degree, indebted to John Cage" as examples of "minimal art" but did not specifically use the expression "minimal music."

The most prominent minimalist composers are John Adams, Louis Andriessen, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and La Monte Young. Others who have been associated with this compositional approach include Michael Nyman, Howard Skempton, John White, Dave Smith, John Lewis, and Michael Parsons.

The early compositions of Glass and Reich are somewhat austere, with little embellishment on the principal theme. These are works for small instrumental ensembles, of which the composers were often members. In Glass's case, these ensembles comprise organs, winds—particularly saxophones—and vocalists, while Reich's works have more emphasis on mallet and percussion instruments. Most of Adams's works are written for more traditional classical instrumentation, including full orchestra, string quartet, and solo piano.

The music of Reich and Glass drew early sponsorship from art galleries and museums, presented in conjunction with visual-art minimalists like Robert Morris (in Glass's case) and Richard Serra, Bruce Nauman, and the filmmaker Michael Snow (as performers, in Reich's case).

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This exam contains such a wide variety of musical styles that it may seem overwhelming. However, that can actually work to your advantage. Because many modernist composers (at least in the West) were determined to sound completely different from anything in the past or any of their contemporaries, there are often very obvious characteristics to listen for. In fact, there are two pieces on this exam that can be identified by a single characteristic. That will make it easy if you ask yourself, "What am I hearing?" We'll start with some of these "single issue" pieces.

I Hear Electronic Noises (No Traditional Instruments)

This is Poeme Electronique by Edgard Varese. Whatever you may think of this piece, there is no questioning Varese's postmodernist aim. He is completely leaving melody, and most of the other elements of music, behind in favor of a single-minded focus on color and texture using electronically generated sounds along with electronically altered recordings of sounds.

I Hear Solo Piano (Traditional)

This is the Trio from Schoenberg's Suite for Piano. If you look at the table below, you'll see that even though this is technically a suite, I'm calling the genre "Twelve-tone music." This compositional style was so influential that I wanted to highlight it by listing it as the genre. While this piece will be easy to recognize because it's the only piece for solo piano, I hope you'll take the time to really understand the information in your reading assignment on Schoenberg's twelve-tone system as it relates to the music. Whatever one's opinion of twelve-tone music may be, there's no denying the ingenuity of the compositional method Schoenberg developed.

I Hear Prepared Piano

This is John Cage's "Sonata V" from Sonatas and Interludes. While technically there are two works for solo piano on our playlist, this piece involves prepared piano. This means that the sound of the piano has been altered by laying objects across and/or wedging objects between the piano strings to create non-traditional sounds. Depending on the degree of preparation, the piano may not sound like a piano at all. This is certainly the case in this piece, where the modifications to the piano result in an assortment of tinny, percussive effects.

I Hear Sprechstimme (Alternate Title: I Hear Some Really Funky Singing/Talking)

If you hear any singing, it can only be Madonna from *Pierrot Lunaire*, also by Arnold Schoenberg, an example of atonal music composed prior to his development of the twelve-tone method. Sprechstimme is a kind of half-spoken, half-sung vocal style that maintains the rhythm of notated music but slides around the pitch. While the Sprechstimme is the obvious characteristic, it is worth noting that the singer in this piece is female, and she is accompanied by a small chamber ensemble. That's it for the most straightforward examples. Now let's dive into some of the other pieces that will require an understanding of more than one musical element for identification.

I Hear an Orchestra

We've got a whole lot of orchestra on this exam. This is where this exam gets a bit challenging. Do keep in mind that some of these pieces are quite long, and you're only hearing a 1-minute clip on the exam, so I'll try to describe multiple musical elements to listen for. It is likely that not all the characteristics I list will be in the clip, but at least one of them will be.

I Hear a Cowboy Dance

This is "Hoedown" from Aaron Copland's *Rodeo*. It is by far the most tonal and least dissonant of all the orchestral works on the exam. Copland intended for the western folk elements to be immediately recognizable. If you find yourself thinking that this music sounds like something from the soundtrack of a Hollywood western, that's because the composers of film scores for Hollywood westerns have been copying Aaron Copland ever since he tried to capture American landscapes and traditions in orchestral music for ballet. I think the American cowboy flavor of this piece will make it relatively easy to identify.

I Hear Impressionist Music

Debussy and Ravel are our two Impressionist composers. Impressionism in music generally has an indistinct quality. It seems to meander gently rather than driving toward a clear melodic or harmonic conclusion. I tend to think of this music as hazy or shimmering. Impressionists also tended to favor the woodwinds over the strings. Classical and Romantic orchestras were dominated by the strings, so Impressionists wanted to take the tone quality of their orchestral works in a different direction. The instruments of the woodwind family—flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons, etc.—produce a wider variety of timbres than the strings, so in addition to simply being different tonally from previous eras, the emphasis on winds gave these composers

more colors with which to paint their music. Lastly, you'll also notice that it is difficult to tap your foot along with the beat. Impressionists generally tried to obscure the basic pulse of their music, as that contributed to the overall indistinct and gauzy sensibility mentioned earlier. If you hear Impressionism in a listening example, you'll need to listen for some characteristics that are specific to either Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* or Ravel's *Daphis et Chloé*.

- **I hear lengthy solo passages for individual instruments (flute, clarinet). I hear more contrasting sections within the piece. I hear more variations in orchestration.** This is Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*. This piece is a symphonic poem that attempts to depict Mallarmé's poem of the same name. Let me start with the second characteristic listed above—namely, the contrasting sections. Almost any work of literature or poetry is going to involve some contrasting elements, ideas or scenes that are different from each other, so a musical work that tries to render those elements is going to feature some similarly contrasting material. Those contrasts can be seen in the structure of the work (a more sectionalized form) and in the orchestration (different combinations of instruments at different times). Our listening example from Ravel, on the other hand, is just the first scene of the third act of the ballet. Since it's just a small portion of a story, there is less need for contrast. While the musical contrasts can be heard throughout Prelude, the solo passages mentioned above are heard in the beginning of the piece. The piece starts with flute all by itself, and then as it gets underway, you hear long flute solos over the orchestral texture. Within a few minutes, those solos are handed off to a clarinet. Speaking of the use of different instruments, that characteristic is not limited to the solo passages. You'll hear different combinations of instruments throughout the piece as those contrasting sections come and go. In fact, the changes in orchestration from one section to the next are one of the ways Debussy provides that sense of contrast. Once again, depending on where the musical excerpt on the exam comes from, you may or may not hear every single musical characteristic listed above, but you'll definitely hear at least one.
- **I hear a sweet, shimmering orchestral quality. I hear a chorus singing along with the orchestra (no words). I hear homogeneous orchestration and musical structure.** This is "Lever du jour" (daybreak) from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*. As an impressionist composer, he, like Debussy, wanted to create a kind of hazy, ethereal sound by emphasizing the woodwinds over the strings. But instead of the lazy, meandering of Prelude, we hear sparkling patterns of high notes meant to represent trickles of dew from the rocks. This "shimmering" quality can be heard through a great deal of our listening example and serves as a difference you can listen for between the two impressionist works. As also noted in the description of the Debussy piece above, our listening example by Ravel represents a small portion of the larger ballet. As a result, you won't hear contrasting sections to the same degree. The musical structure and the instrumental combinations are more homogeneous throughout this listening example. Lastly, if the excerpt on the listening exam contains a choir singing wordless harmonies along with the orchestra, you are definitely hearing "Lever." Ravel uses a chorus as a kind of fifth orchestral family (strings, winds,

brass, percussion, and choir). The chorus does not sing any text, so you have to listen carefully to pick out the vocal color, but it does provide a very convenient way to tell the two pieces apart.

I Hear Music That Is Loud, Aggressive, and Bold

There are three pieces that involve at least some big, bold passages and a healthy dose of dissonance: Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Part 1; Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5, 4th mvmt.*; and Bartók's "Interrupted Intermezzo" from *Concerto for Orchestra*.

- **I hear lengthy passages of ominous, dissonant woodwinds. I hear a repeated, pounding chord in the orchestra. I hear irregular, almost violent rhythms punctuated by brass and percussion.** This is *The Rite of Spring*, a ballet by Stravinsky. Like the two impressionist pieces, this work brings the woodwinds to the forefront of the orchestral color, but I don't think anyone will mistake this for an ethereal, impressionist piece. Of the three pieces that I'm categorizing as bold and aggressive, *Rite of Spring* contains passages that are the most dissonant and harsh. Remember, this is an example of primitivism. While there are milder passages of woodwinds, in the more active passages, Stravinsky is trying to depict ancient, imaginary, and pagan Russia, complete with human sacrifice. Perhaps this is why, in 1940 when Disney animators were creating a concert feature called *Fantasia*, they drew scenes of primordial life and dinosaur predators as a visualization for this work. The piece opens with ominous woodwinds and then graduates to crashing drums and harsh chords in the brass. Notice too that while there is a very clear beat to the piece (again, unlike the impressionists), those groups are not always grouped into a regular triple or duple meter. Stravinsky used irregular rhythms and accents to heighten the sense of primitivism. Just as a reminder, our listening example is the first half of the ballet.
- **I hear a more traditional orchestral sound—almost Romantic. I hear clear, though at times dissonant, melodic ideas in the strings and brass. I hear extensive use of orchestral brass. I hear a slower, quieter contrasting section.** This is Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, 4th mvmt. Like *The Rite of Spring*, this piece features bold, aggressive passages. However, I think you'll easily distinguish it from the other two in this group. That's because of the three it is the most traditional; no surprise there since Shostakovich is making use of a traditional genre—namely, the symphony. Also, while the composer incorporated dissonance into the piece, he had to keep it restrained to avoid getting in trouble with the Soviet authorities. The middle section of this symphonic movement is slower and more subdued than the opening and closing sections. While that might make it easy to confuse with some other slower, ominous-sounding pieces, I would consider that overly misleading to give you an excerpt that just featured the middle section because the big, bold, brassy triumphant sound is such a big part of what this piece is about. If your excerpt features the middle section, it will also have a portion of the opening or closing fanfare.
- **I hear irregular meter. I hear lots of short, folk-like solos by woodwind instruments. I hear a**

lush melody—a serenade—in the strings. I hear harsh "interruptions" of a clarinet tune. This is "Interrupted Intermezzo" from *Concerto for Orchestra* by Béla Bartók. This movement is very sectional so you will likely hear more than one section of the piece. Remember that the solo-like passages for the woodwinds in the A section are why Bartók calls this a concerto for orchestra. The solos are short and played by lots of different instruments. You'll hear a clarinet, then a flute, then back to the clarinet, then a horn, then an oboe. That should stand out if you hear that section. The interruptions are also pretty striking. They mainly involve percussion instruments such as cymbals, but after the first interruption of the C section, we hear a trombone sliding upward. This piece has a very clear story that should assist in keeping all the different sections tied together in your mind.

I Hear Minimalism

This is John Adams's *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*. This has a lot of the elements of the other two pieces: the rhythmic emphasis of the Stravinsky and the big, brassy sound of the Shostakovich. Adams also doesn't shy away from dissonance. At least in the middle section of the piece, he uses dissonance freely. However, the repeated chords in this piece are lighter and more active than in the Stravinsky. Think of it this way: Stravinsky stomps and Adams skips. However, there are a number of key elements that will help you identify this piece. A steady beat is played on a woodblock almost constantly. Listen for that woodblock. It really ties the piece together and helps give the sense of a steam train (that's the fast machine that comes to my mind) chugging along the track. John Adams got his start as a minimalist, and minimalism uses a lot of repetition and patterns. Listen for chords and rhythmic patterns that are repeated several times, followed by a new chord/pattern that is repeated several times.

I Hear a Choir

There are two pieces for unaccompanied choir on our playlist for the 20th century: György Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna* and Arvo Pärt's *Magnificat*. While a cappella choral singing can sound similar, in the case of these two pieces, the composer has created very different effects with the same kind of ensemble. I don't think you'll have much difficulty distinguishing these two totally awesome pieces. Sorry, my inner choir geek got the better of me there.

- **I hear long passages of dissonant clusters of pitches. I hear no clear melody. I think I heard this in *2001: A Space Odyssey* or the trailer for *Godzilla*.** This is Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna*. Ligeti is known for his dissonant choral music. He developed a compositional technique called micropolyphony where each singer in the ensemble sings the same set of pitches but at their own pace. This creates a wall of dissonant tone color without any melodic line. He is primarily concerned with timbre (tone color) rather than melody. Stanley Kubrick used a number of Ligeti pieces in his films, including *Lux Aeterna*.

The eerie choral music in the trailer for the recent *Godzilla* movie (playing while soldiers HALO drop into New York) is also a Ligeti piece, but not *Lux Aeterna*.

- **I hear organum-like passages—one voice sings a melody against repeated notes in another voice. I hear minimal dissonance and a medieval quality. I hear repeated melodic and harmonic patterns.** This is Arvo Pärt's *Magnificat*. Much of Pärt's music is inspired by medieval choral music, including organum. As you'll recall, organum involved the use of a pre-existing chant tune that was held out in very long notes while a new, active melody was added as a counterpoint to those long sustained pitches. In this piece there are many passages where two voices sing the same text (no long held out notes), but one of them sings on a repeated pitch while the other moves melodically. Because of the influence of medieval music, there is little of the dissonance so common to the music of other 20th century composers, but it tends to be very restrained. Minimalism is another influence on Pärt's music. His works are often labeled as "holy minimalism," though he does not use that label himself. This influence manifests itself primarily through short repeated pitch sets in the melody or repeated harmonic progressions.

Titles, Composers, & Genres for Exam 5

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun	Claude Debussy	Symphonic Poem
Daphnis et Chloë, Part 3 "Lever du jour"	Maurice Ravel	Ballet
Rite of Spring, Part 1	Igor Stravinsky	Ballet
Pierrot Lunaire, Madonna	Arnold Schoenberg	Art Song/Lied
Suite for Piano, Trio	Arnold Schoenberg	Twelve-Tone Music
Symphony No. 5, IV	Dmitri Shostakovich	Symphony
Concerto for Orchestra, Interrupted Intermezzo	Béla Bartók	Concerto
Rodeo, Hoedown	Aaron Copland	Ballet
Lux Aeterna	György Ligeti	Micropolyphony
Sonatas and Interludes, Sonata V	John Cage	Prepared Piano
Poeme Electronique	Edgard Varese	Electronic Music
Short Ride in a Fast Machine	John Adams	Minimalism
Magnificat	Arvo Pärt	Holy Minimalism

Introduction to Aleatoric, Electronic, and Minimalist-Music

In this section, we will look into some of the more significant musical trends of the second half of the

20th century. Aleatoric music incorporates random chance or performer choice into the composition. No performance of an aleatoric piece will be the same due to that indeterminate element. Electronic music is something we take for granted in the pop world today, but there were some interesting experiments in the art music arena with early electronic recording and sound generation technologies. Minimalism is the most recent musical approach to gain prominence. It generally involves a return to a simpler, tonal style and an emphasis on repeated patterns.

This section includes the following pages:

- György Ligeti
- Micropolyphony
- Lux Aeterna
- John Cage
- Prepared Piano
- Aleatoric Music
- Sonatas and Interludes
- Electronic Music
- Musique Concrète
- Edgard Varese
- Poeme Electronique
- Minimalist Music
- John Adams
- Short Ride in a Fast Machine
- Holy Minimalism
- Avro Pärt
- Magnificat

György Ligeti

Ligeti was a very influential innovator in the second half of the 20th century. He experimented with a number of different styles (including some of his own creation), including electronic music, micropolyphony, and polyrhythm.

Introduction

György Sándor Ligeti (28 May 1923–12 June 2006) was a composer of contemporary classical music. He has been described as "one of the most important avant-garde composers in the latter half of the twentieth century" and "one of the most innovative and influential among progressive figures of his time."

Born in Transylvania, Romania, he lived in Hungary before emigrating and becoming an Austrian citizen.

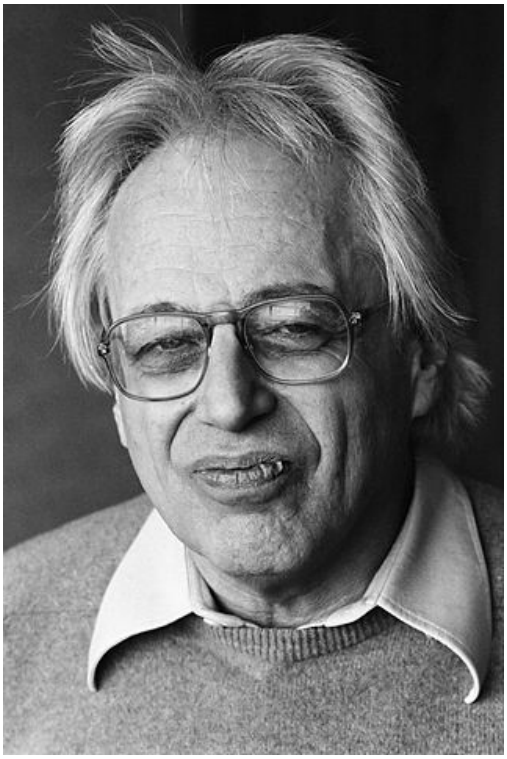

Figure 1. György Ligeti (1984).

Biography

Early Life

Ligeti was born in Dicsőszentmárton, which was renamed Târnăveni in 1945, in Transylvania to a Hungarian Jewish family. Ligeti recalls that his first exposure to languages other than Hungarian came one day while listening to a conversation among the Romanian-speaking town police. Before that, he hadn't known that other languages existed. He moved to Cluj (Kolozsvár) with his family when aged six, and he was not to return to the town of his birth until the 1990s.

Ligeti received his initial musical training at the conservatory in Cluj and during the summers privately with Pál Kadosa in Budapest.

In 1940, Northern Transylvania was occupied by Hungary following the Second Vienna Award. In 1944, Ligeti's education was interrupted when he was sent to a forced labor brigade by the Horthy regime. His brother, age 16, was deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, and both of his parents were sent to Auschwitz. His mother was the only other survivor of his immediate family.

Following the war, Ligeti returned to his studies in Budapest, Hungary, graduating in 1949 from the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. He studied under Pál Kadosa, Ferenc Farkas, Zoltán Kodály, and Sándor Veress. He went on to do ethnomusicological research into the Hungarian folk music of Transylvania but after a year returned to his old school in Budapest, this time as a teacher of harmony, counterpoint, and musical analysis, a position he secured with the help of Kodály. As a young teacher, Ligeti took the unusual step of regularly attending the lectures of an older colleague, the conductor and musicologist Lajos Bárdos, a conservative Christian whose circle represented for Ligeti a safe haven and whose help and advice he later acknowledged in the prefaces to his own two harmony textbooks (1954 and 1956). However, communications between

Hungary and the West by then had become difficult due to the restrictions of the communist government, and Ligeti and other artists were effectively cut off from recent developments outside the Soviet bloc.

After Leaving Hungary

In December 1956, two months after the Hungarian revolution was violently suppressed by the Soviet Army, Ligeti fled to Vienna with his ex-wife Vera (whom he was soon to remarry) and eventually took Austrian citizenship in 1968. He would not see Hungary again until he was invited to judge a competition in Budapest 14 years later. On his journey to Vienna, he left most of his Hungarian compositions in Budapest, some of which are now lost; he only took with him what he considered to be his most important pieces. He later explained, "I considered my old music of no interest. I believed in twelve-tone music!"

A few weeks after arriving in Vienna, he left for Cologne. There he met several key avant-garde figures and learned more contemporary musical styles and methods. These included the composers Karlheinz Stockhausen and Gottfried Michael Koenig, both then working on groundbreaking electronic music. During the summer, he attended the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt. Ligeti worked in the Cologne Electronic Music Studio with Stockhausen and Koenig and was inspired by the sounds he heard there. However, he produced little electronic music of his own, instead concentrating on instrumental works that often contain electronic-sounding textures.

After about three years working with them, he finally fell out with the Cologne School, this being too dogmatic and involving much factional infighting: "There were [*sic*] a lot of political fighting because different people, like Stockhausen, like Kagel wanted to be first. And I, personally, have no ambition to be first or to be important."

From about 1960, Ligeti's work became better-known and respected. His best-known works include those in the period from *Apparitions* (1958–59) to *Lontano* (1967) and his opera *Le Grand Macabre* (1978). In recent years his three books of Études for piano (1985–2001) have become better-known through recordings by Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Fredrik Ullén, and others.

In 1973, Ligeti became professor of composition at the Hamburg Hochschule für Musik und Theater, eventually retiring in 1989. In the early 1980s, he tried to find a new stylistic position (closer to "tonality"), leading to an absence from the musical scene for several years until he reappeared with the Trio for Violin, Horn and Piano (1982). His output was prolific through the 1980s and 1990s. Invited by Walter Fink, he was the first composer featured in the annual Komponistenporträt of the Rheingau Musik Festival in 1990.

Death

However, his health problems became severe after the turn of the millennium. On 12 June 2006, Ligeti died in Vienna at the age of 83. Although it was known that Ligeti had been ill for several years and had used a wheelchair for the last three years of his life, his family declined to release the cause of his death. Ligeti's funeral was held at the Vienna Crematorium at the Zentralfriedhof, the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Hungary represented by their respective cultural affairs ministers. The ashes were finally buried at the Zentralfriedhof in a grave dedicated to him by the City of Vienna.

Figure 2. Ligeti's grave in Zentralfriedhof, Vienna.

Apart from his far-reaching interest in different types of music from Renaissance to African music, Ligeti was also interested in literature (including the writers Lewis Carroll, Jorge Luis Borges, and Franz Kafka), painting, architecture, science, and mathematics, especially the fractal geometry of Benoît Mandelbrot and the writings of Douglas Hofstadter.

Ligeti was the grand-nephew of the violinist Leopold Auer and cousin of Hungarian philosopher Agnes Heller. Ligeti's son Lukas Ligeti is a composer and percussionist based in New York City.

Music

Years in Hungary

Many of his very earliest works were written for chorus and included settings of folk songs. His largest work in this period was a graduation composition for the Budapest Academy, entitled *Cantata for Youth Festival*, for four vocal soloists, chorus, and orchestra. One of his earliest pieces now in the repertoire is his Cello Sonata, a work in two contrasting movements that were written in 1948 and 1953, respectively. It was initially banned by the Soviet-run Composer's Union and had to wait a quarter of a century before its first public performance.

Ligeti's earliest works are often an extension of the musical language of Béla Bartók. Even his piano cycle *Musica ricercata* (1953), though written according to Ligeti with a "Cartesian" approach in which he "regarded all the music I knew and loved as being . . . irrelevant," has been described by one biographer as inhabiting a world very close to Bartók's set of piano works, *Mikrokosmos*. Ligeti's set comprises 11 pieces in all. The work is based on a simple restriction: the first piece uses exclusively one pitch A, heard in multiple octaves, and only at the very end of the piece is a second note, D, heard. The second piece then uses three notes (E♯, F♯, and G), the third piece uses four, and so on, so that in the final piece, all 12 notes of the chromatic scale

are present. Shortly after its composition, Ligeti arranged six of the movements of *Musica ricercata* for wind quintet under the title "Six Bagatelles for Wind Quintet." The Bagatelles were performed first in 1956, but not in their entirety: the last movement was censored by the Soviets for being too "dangerous."

Because of Soviet censorship, his most daring works from this period, including *Musica ricercata* and String Quartet No. 1 *Métamorphoses nocturnes* (1953–1954), were written for the "bottom drawer." Composed of a single movement divided into seventeen contrasting sections linked motivically, the First String Quartet is Ligeti's first work to suggest a personal style of composition. The string quartet was not performed until 1958, after he had fled Hungary for Vienna.

From 1956 to *Le Grand Macabre*

Upon arriving in Cologne, he began to write electronic music alongside Karlheinz Stockhausen and Gottfried Michael Koenig at the electronic studio of West German Radio (WDR). He completed only two works in this medium, however—the pieces *Glissandi* (1957) and *Artikulation* (1958)—before returning to instrumental music. A third work, originally entitled *Atmosphères* but later known as *Pièce électronique Nr. 3*, was planned, but the technical limitations of the time prevented Ligeti from realizing it completely. It was finally realized in 1996 by the Dutch composers Kees Tazelaar and Johan van Kreij of the Institute of Sonology.

Aventures, like its companion piece *Nouvelles Aventures*, is a composition for three singers and instrumental septet to a text semantically without meaning of Ligeti's own devising. Each of the singers has five roles to play, exploring five areas of emotion, and they switch from one to the other so quickly and abruptly that all five areas are present throughout the piece.

Ligeti's music appears to have been subsequently influenced by his electronic experiments, and many of the sounds he created resembled electronic textures. The texture used in the second movement of *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères* Ligeti would later dub "micropolyphony."

The *Requiem* is a work for soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists, 20-part chorus (4 each of soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, and bass), and orchestra. Though, at about half an hour, it is the longest piece he had composed up to that point, Ligeti sets only about half of the Requiem's traditional text: the *Introitus*, the *Kyrie* (a completely chromatic quasi-fugue, where the parts are a montage of melismatic and skipping micropolyphony), and the *Dies irae*—dividing the latter sequence into two parts, *De die iudicii* (Day of Judgement) and *Lacrimosa* (Weeping).

Lux Aeterna is a 16-voice *a cappella* piece whose text is also associated with the Latin Requiem.

String Quartet No. 2 consists of five movements. They differ widely from each other in their types of motion. In the first, the structure is largely broken up, as in *Aventures*. In the second, everything is reduced to very slow motion, and the music seems to be coming from a distance, with great lyricism. The *pizzicato* third movement is another of Ligeti's machine-like studies, hard and mechanical, whereby the parts playing repeated notes create a "granulated" continuum. In the fourth, which is fast and threatening, everything that happened before is crammed together. Lastly, in strong contrast, the fifth movement spreads itself out. In each

movement, the same basic configurations return, but each time their coloring or viewpoint is different so that the overall form only really emerges when one listens to all five movements in context.

Ramifications, completed a year before the Chamber Concerto, is scored for an ensemble of strings in 12 parts—7 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos and a double bass—each of which may be taken by one player or several. The 12 are divided into two numerically equal groups but with the instruments in the first group tuned approximately a quarter-tone higher (4 violins, a viola, and a cello). As the group plays, the one tuned higher inevitably tends to slide down toward the other, and both get nearer to each other in pitch.

In the Chamber Concerto, several layers, processes, and kinds of movement can take place on different planes simultaneously. In spite of frequent markings of "senza tempo," the instrumentalists are not given linear freedom; Ligeti insists on keeping his texture under strict control at any given moment. The form is like a "precision mechanism." Ligeti was always fascinated by machines that do not work properly and by the world of technology and automation. The use of periodic mechanical noises, suggesting not-quite-reliable machinery, occurs in many of his works. The scoring is for flute (doubling piccolo), oboe (doubling oboe d'amore and English horn), clarinet, bass clarinet (doubling second clarinet), horn, trombone, harpsichord (doubling Hammond organ), piano (doubling celesta), and solo string quartet.

From the 1970s, Ligeti turned away from total chromaticism and began to concentrate on rhythm. Pieces such as *Continuum* (1968) and *Clocks and Clouds* (1972–73) were written before he heard the music of Steve Reich and Terry Riley in 1972. But the second of his *Three Pieces for Two Pianos*, entitled "Self-portrait with Reich and Riley (and Chopin in the background)," commemorates this affirmation and influence. During the 1970s, he also became interested in the polyphonic pipe music of the Banda-Linda tribe from the Central African Republic, which he heard through the recordings of one of his students.

In 1977, Ligeti completed his only opera, *Le Grand Macabre*, 13 years after its initial commission. Loosely based on Michel de Ghelderode's 1934 play *La balade du grand macabre*, it is a work of Absurd theater—Ligeti called it an "anti-anti-opera"—in which Death (Nekrotzar) arrives in the fictional city of Breughelland and announces that the end of the world will occur at midnight. Musically, *Le Grand Macabre* draws on techniques not associated with Ligeti's previous work, including quotations and pseudo-quotations of other works and the use of consonant thirds and sixths. After *Le Grand Macabre*, Ligeti would abandon the use of pastiche but would increasingly incorporate consonant harmonies (even major and minor triads) into his work, albeit not in a diatonic context.

After *Le Grand Macabre*

After *Le Grand Macabre*, Ligeti struggled for some time to find a new style. Besides two short pieces for harpsichord, he did not complete another major work until the Trio for Violin, Horn and Piano in 1982, over four years after the opera. His music of the 1980s and 1990s continued to emphasize complex mechanical rhythms, often in a less densely chromatic idiom, tending to favor displaced major and minor triads and polymodal structures. During this time, Ligeti also began to explore alternate tuning systems through the use of natural harmonics for horns (as in the Horn Trio and Piano Concerto) and scordatura for strings (as in the Violin Concerto). Additionally, most of his works in this period are multi-movement works rather than the extended single movements of *Atmosphères* and *San Francisco Polyphony*.

Figure 3. From left to right: György Ligeti, Lukas Ligeti, Vera Ligeti, Conlon Nancarrow, and Michael Daugherty at the ISCM World Music Days in Graz, Austria, 1982.

From 1985 to 2001, Ligeti completed three books of Études for piano (Book I, 1985; Book II, 1988–94; Book III, 1995–2001). Comprising 18 compositions in all, the Études draw from a diverse range of sources, including gamelan, African polyrhythms, Béla Bartók, Conlon Nancarrow, Thelonious Monk, and Bill Evans. Book I was notably written as preparation for the Piano Concerto, which contains a number of similar motivic and melodic elements.

In 1988, Ligeti completed his Piano Concerto, a work that he described as a statement of his "aesthetic credo." Initial sketches of the Concerto began in 1980, but it was not until 1986 that he found a way forward and the work proceeded more quickly. The Concerto explores many of the ideas worked out in the Études but in an orchestral context.

In 1993, Ligeti completed his Violin Concerto after four years of work. Like the Piano Concerto, the Violin Concerto uses the wide range of techniques he had developed up until that point as well as the new ideas he was working out at the moment. Among other techniques, it uses "microtonality, rapidly changing textures, comic juxtapositions. . . . Hungarian folk melodies, Bulgarian dance rhythms, references to Medieval and Renaissance music and solo violin writing that ranges from the slow-paced and sweet-toned to the angular and fiery."

Other notable works from this period are the Viola Sonata (1994) and the *Nonsense Madrigals* (1988–93), a set of six a cappella compositions that set English texts from William Brighty Rands, Lewis Carroll, and Heinrich Hoffman. The third Madrigal is based on the alphabet.

Ligeti's last works were the *Hamburg Concerto* for solo horn, four natural horns, and chamber orchestra (1998–99, revised 2003, dedicated to Marie Luise Neunecker); the song cycle *Sippal, dobbal, nádihegedüvel*

("With Pipes, Drums, Fiddles," 2000); and the eighteenth piano étude "Canon" (2001). After *Le Grand Macabre*, Ligeti planned to write a second opera, first to be based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and later on Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but neither piece ever came to fruition.

Polyrhythm

Ligeti's music from the last two decades of his life is unmistakable for its rhythmic complexity. Writing about his first book of Piano Etudes, the composer claims this rhythmic complexity stems from two vastly different sources of inspiration: the Romantic-era piano music of Chopin and Schumann and the indigenous music of sub-Saharan Africa.

The difference between the earlier and later pieces lies in a new conception of pulse. In the earlier works, the pulse is something to be divided into two, three, and so on. The effect of these different subdivisions, especially when they occur simultaneously, is to blur the aural landscape, creating the micropolyphonic effect of Ligeti's music.

On the other hand, the later music—and a few earlier pieces such as *Continuum*—conceives of the pulse as a musical atom, a common denominator, a basic unit which cannot be divided any further. Different rhythms appear through multiplications of the basic pulse rather than divisions: this is the principle of African music seized on by Ligeti. It also appears in the music of Philip Glass, Steve Reich, and others; and significantly, it shares much in common with the additive rhythms of Balkan folk music, the music of Ligeti's youth.

Micropolyphony

Our listening example by Ligeti features a compositional technique he developed called micropolyphony. You'll find a number of musical terms referenced in this article. Two that I particularly want you to understand are canon and cluster chord. Canon is a strict form of imitative polyphony (linear or horizontal), while a cluster chord is a harmonic structure (vertical).

Once again, we're seeing the importance of texture in the compositional process. What's interesting here is that Ligeti is using a polyphonic texture (lots of little imitated lines) to create a sound that is very similar to a tightly clustered chord or stack of pitches. You might ask, why not simply write a cluster chord? You'll hear some cluster chords or tone clusters later in the music of Arvo Pärt. I believe Ligeti would say that the constant movement of the lines in his micropolyphony creates a dynamic quality where a cluster chord seems more static. I encourage you to compare the dissonant structures of the two composers to see if you agree that there is a difference.

Micropolyphony is a kind of polyphonic musical texture developed by György Ligeti and then imitated by some other 20th-century composers, which consists of many lines of dense canons moving at different tempos or rhythms, thus resulting in tone clusters vertically. According to David Cope, "micropolyphony resembles

cluster chords, but differs in its use of moving rather than static lines"; it is "a simultaneity of different lines, rhythms, and timbres."

Differences between micropolyphonic texture and conventional polyphonic texture can be explained by Ligeti's own description:

> Technically speaking I have always approached musical texture through part-writing. Both *Atmosphères* and *Lontano* have a dense canonic structure. But you cannot actually hear the polyphony, the canon. You hear a kind of impenetrable texture, something like a very densely woven cobweb. I have retained melodic lines in the process of composition, they are governed by rules as strict as Palestrina's or those of the Flemish school, but the rules of this polyphony are worked out by me. The polyphonic structure does not come through, you cannot hear it; it remains hidden in a microscopic, underwater world, to us inaudible. I call it micropolyphony (such a beautiful word!).

The earliest example of micropolyphony in Ligeti's work occurs in the second movement (mm 25–37) of his orchestral composition *Apparitions* (Steinitz 2003, 103). His next work, *Atmosphères* for orchestra; the first movement of his later *Requiem*, for soprano, mezzo-soprano, mixed choir, and orchestra; the unaccompanied choral work *Lux aeterna*; and *Lontano* for orchestra also use the technique. Micropolyphony is easier with larger ensembles or polyphonic instruments such as the piano, though the *Poème symphonique* for a hundred metronomes creates "micropolyphony of unparallelled complexity." Many of Ligeti's piano pieces are examples of micropolyphony applied to complex "minimalist" Steve Reich and Pygmy music–derived rhythmic schemes.

Lux Aeterna

This article on the San Francisco Symphony website can be a bit heavy—the writer assumes advanced knowledge of music on the part of his readers—but I think it's a great introduction to Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna* for two reasons. First, it connects Ligeti's micropolyphony to his tragic childhood experiences during the Holocaust. It is important to remember that at the time the piece was composed, the twelve-tone system was the dominant system of "classical" composition in Western Europe and the United States. The atonal avant-garde had taken over the musical institution—speaking of art music, of course, not pop music. The fact that Ligeti was forging his own path with micropolyphony was an act of artistic independence, and I think this writer does a good job of pointing that out. Second, although the writing is heavy on terminology, I really like his description of how the performers (16 singers) arrive at Ligeti's signature "sonic fog," or what other writers refer to as a "wall of sound," and how that technique (as modern as it sounds) hearkens back to the Renaissance.

John Cage

John Cage's influence is based as much on his ideas about music as it is on his music itself. He was a music philosopher as well as a composer, challenging readers and listeners alike with questions about the nature of sound versus that of music and whether there is any difference. This page provides a concise overview of his impact on the world of music and aesthetics and touches upon the two concepts I want you to understand in connection with Cage: prepared piano and aleatoric music. We'll read about these two concepts next.

Introduction

John Milton Cage Jr. (September 5, 1912–August 12, 1992) was an American composer, music theorist, writer, and artist. A pioneer of indeterminacy in music, electroacoustic music, and non-standard use of musical instruments, Cage was one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde. Critics have lauded him as one of the most influential American composers of the 20th century. He was also instrumental in the development of modern dance, mostly through his association with choreographer Merce Cunningham, who was also Cage's romantic partner for most of their lives.

Cage is perhaps best known for his 1952 composition *4′33″*, which is performed in the absence of deliberate sound; musicians who present the work do nothing aside from being present for the duration specified by the title. The content of the composition is not "four minutes and 33 seconds of silence," as is sometimes assumed, but rather the sounds of the environment heard by the audience during performance. The work's challenge to assumed definitions about musicianship and musical experience made it a popular and controversial topic in both musicology and the broader aesthetics of art and performance. Cage was also a pioneer of the prepared piano (a piano with its sound altered by objects placed between or on its strings or hammers), for which he wrote numerous dance-related works and a few concert pieces. The best known of these is *Sonatas and Interludes* (1946–48).

His teachers included Henry Cowell (1933) and Arnold Schoenberg (1933–35), both known for their radical innovations in music, but Cage's major influences lay in various East and South Asian cultures. Through his studies of Indian philosophy and Zen Buddhism in the late 1940s, Cage came to the idea of aleatoric or chance-controlled music, which he started composing in 1951. The *I Ching*, an ancient Chinese classic text on changing events, became Cage's standard composition tool for the rest of his life. In a 1957 lecture, *Experimental Music*, he described music as "a purposeless play" that is "an affirmation of life—not an attempt to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply a way of waking up to the very life we're living."

Prepared Piano

The concept of a prepared piano is a fairly simple one, but the range of tonal possibilities a prepared piano can produce is nearly infinite.

Introduction

A **prepared piano** is a piano that has had its sound altered by placing objects (called *preparations*) on or between the strings.

John Cage

The invention of the "prepared piano," *per se*, is usually traced to John Cage. Cage first prepared a piano when he was commissioned to write music for "Bacchanale," a dance by Syvilla Fort in 1938. For some time previously, Cage had been writing exclusively for a percussion ensemble, but the hall where Fort's dance was to be staged had no room for a percussion group. The only instrument available was a single grand piano. After some consideration, Cage said that he realized it was possible "to place in the hands of a single pianist the equivalent of an entire percussion orchestra. . . . With just one musician, you can really do an unlimited number of things on the inside of the piano if you have at your disposal an exploded keyboard."

Aleatoric Music

Aleatoric music involves the use of chance in either the composition or performance of the piece. John Cage became a strong proponent of aleatoric techniques, even going so far as to use them in lectures as well as musical compositions. To be clear, the *Sonatas and Interludes* are not aleatoric works, so the John Cage piece on our playlist does not incorporate aleatoric elements. However, John Cage is so associated with chance music that it would seem odd not to study this important 20th-century technique in connection with Cage.

Introduction

Aleatoric music (also **aleatory music** or **chance music**; from the Latin word *alea*, meaning "dice") is music in which some element of the composition is left to chance and/or some primary element of a composed work's realization is left to the determination of its performer(s). The term is most often associated with procedures in which the chance element involves a relatively limited number of possibilities.

Types of Indeterminate Music

Some writers do not make a distinction between aleatory, chance, and indeterminacy in music and use the terms interchangeably. From this point of view, indeterminate or chance music can be divided into three groups: (1) the use of random procedures to produce a determinate, fixed score; (2) mobile form; and (3) indeterminate notation, including graphic notation and texts.

The first group includes scores in which the chance element is involved only in the process of composition so that every parameter is fixed before their performance. In John Cage's *Music of Changes* (1951), for example, the composer selected duration, tempo, and dynamics by using the *I Ching*, an ancient Chinese book which prescribes methods for arriving at random numbers. Because this work is absolutely fixed from performance to performance, Cage regarded it as an entirely determinate work made using chance procedures. On the level of detail, Iannis Xenakis used probability theories to define some microscopic aspects of *Pithoprakta* (1955–56), which is Greek for "actions by means of probability." This work contains four sections, characterized by textural and timbral attributes, such as glissandi and pizzicati. At the macroscopic level, the sections are designed and controlled by the composer, while the single components of sound are controlled by mathematical theories.

Sonatas and Interludes

Introduction

Sonatas and Interludes is a collection of twenty pieces for prepared piano by American avant-garde composer John Cage (1912–1992). It was composed in 1946–1948, shortly after Cage's introduction to Indian philosophy and the teachings of art historian Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, both of which became major influences on the composer's later work. Significantly more complex than his other works for prepared piano, *Sonatas and Interludes* is generally recognized as one of Cage's finest achievements.

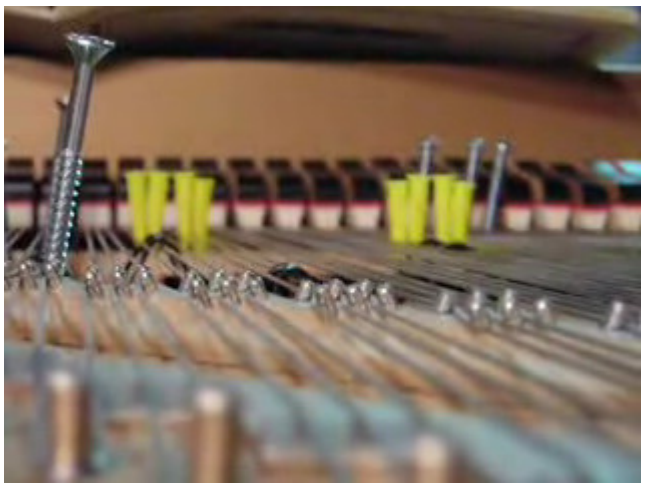

Figure 1. A piano prepared for a performance of *Sonatas and Interludes.*

The cycle consists of 16 sonatas (13 of which are cast in binary form, the remaining three in ternary form) and 4 more freely structured interludes. The aim of the pieces is to express the eight permanent emotions of the rasa Indian tradition. In *Sonatas and Interludes*, Cage elevated his technique of rhythmic proportions to a new level of complexity. In each sonata a short sequence of

natural numbers and fractions defines the structure of the work and that of its parts, informing structures as localized as individual melodic lines.

History of Composition

Cage underwent an artistic crisis in the early 1940s. His compositions were rarely accepted by the public, and he grew more and more disillusioned with the idea of art as communication. He later gave an account of the reasons: "Frequently I misunderstood what another composer was saying simply because I had little understanding of his language. And I found other people misunderstanding what I myself was saying when I was saying something pointed and direct." At the beginning of 1946, Cage met Gita Sarabhai, an Indian musician who came to the United States concerned about Western influence on the music of her country. Sarabhai wanted to spend several months in the US, studying Western music. She took lessons in counterpoint and contemporary music with Cage, who offered to teach her for free if she taught him about Indian music in return. Sarabhai agreed, and through her, Cage became acquainted with Indian music and philosophy. The purpose of music, according to Sarabhai's teacher in India, was "to sober and quiet the mind, thus rendering it susceptible to divine influences," and this definition became one of the cornerstones of Cage's view on music and art in general.

At around the same time, Cage began studying the writings of the Indian art historian Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. Among the ideas that influenced Cage was the description of the rasa aesthetic and of its eight "permanent emotions." These emotions are divided into two groups: four white (humor, wonder, erotic, and heroic—"accepting one's experience," in Cage's words) and four black (anger, fear, disgust, and sorrow). They are the first eight of the *navarasas* or *navrasas* ("nine emotions"), and they have a common tendency toward the ninth of the *navarasas*: tranquility. Cage never specified which of the pieces relate to which emotions or whether there even exists such direct correspondence between them. He mentioned, though, that the "pieces with bell-like sounds suggest Europe and others with a drum-like resonance suggest the East."

Listen: Sonatas

Sonata II

Please listen to a short excerpt from Sonata II, which is clearly inspired by Eastern music.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-5

Sonata XVI

Please listen to a short excerpt from Sonata XVI, the last of the cycle, which is "clearly" European. It was the signature of a composer from the West.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=578#audio-578-6

Cage started working on the cycle in February 1946, while living in New York City. The idea of a collection of short pieces was apparently prompted by the poet Edwin Denby, who had remarked that short pieces "can have in them just as much as long pieces can." The choice of materials and the technique of piano preparation in *Sonatas and Interludes* were largely dependent on improvisation: Cage later wrote that the cycle was composed "by playing the piano, listening to differences [and] making a choice." On several accounts he offered a poetic metaphor for this process, comparing it with collecting shells while walking along a beach. Work on the project was interrupted in early 1947, when Cage made a break to compose *The Seasons*, a ballet in one act also inspired by ideas from Indian philosophy. Immediately after *The Seasons*, Cage returned to *Sonatas and Interludes*, and by March 1948 it was completed.

Figure 2. John Cage with the pianist Maro Ajemian, to whom he dedicated *Sonatas and Interludes.*

Cage dedicated *Sonatas and Interludes* to Maro Ajemian, a pianist and friend. Ajemian performed the work

many times since 1949, including one of the first performances of the complete cycle on January 12, 1949, in Carnegie Hall. On many other occasions in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Cage performed it himself. Critical reaction was uneven, but mostly positive, and the success of *Sonatas and Interludes* led to a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation, which Cage received in 1949, allowing him to make a six-month trip to Europe. There he met Olivier Messiaen, who helped organize a performance of the work for his students in Paris on June 7, 1949; and he befriended Pierre Boulez, who became an early admirer of the work and wrote a lecture about it for the June 17, 1949 performance at the salon of Suzanne Tézenas in Paris. While still living in Paris, Cage began writing *String Quartet in Four Parts*, yet another work influenced by Indian philosophy.

Electronic Music

We take electronic music for granted today, but we have to remember that the ability to produce tone using purely electronic means (as opposed to an acoustic instrument) and the ability to record music electronically using magnetized film or tape developed during this time period. For many composers, this opened up a new world of sounds and compositional techniques. In the 1950s, electronic music was divided into two main camps, and as we've seen earlier in the century, those camps tended to divide along French/German lines. French composers began creating works using tape recordings that included acoustically produced tones and sounds (called musique concrète), while German composers created works using tape recordings of electronically produced tones and sounds (called elektronische musik).

The piece of music on our playlist, Poeme Electronique, is an example of musique concrète. Technological developments later in the century progressed in such a way that electronic music became much more the domain of popular song, but it is worthwhile to remember the musical experiments of the middle of the century, when electronic tone generation and recording seemed like a brave new frontier.

Introduction

Electronic music is music that employs electronic musical instruments and electronic music technology in its production, an **electronic musician** being a musician who composes and/or performs such music. In general, a distinction can be made between sound produced using electromechanical means and that produced using electronic technology. Examples of electromechanical sound-producing devices include the telharmonium, Hammond organ, and the electric guitar. Purely electronic sound production can be achieved using devices such as the theremin, sound synthesizer, and computer.

The first electronic devices for performing music were developed at the end of the 19th century, and shortly afterward, Italian Futurists explored sounds that had previously not been considered musical. During the 1920s and 1930s, electronic instruments were introduced and the first compositions for electronic instruments were composed. By the 1940s, magnetic audio tape allowed musicians to tape sounds and then modify

them by changing the tape speed or direction, leading to the development of electroacoustic tape music in the 1940s in Egypt and France. Musique concrète, created in Paris in 1948, was based on editing together recorded fragments of natural and industrial sounds. Music produced solely from electronic generators was first produced in Germany in 1953. Electronic music was also created in Japan and the United States beginning in the 1950s. An important new development was the advent of computers for the purpose of composing music. Algorithmic composition was first demonstrated in Australia in 1951.

In America and Europe, live electronics were pioneered in the early 1960s. During the 1970s to early 1980s, the monophonic Mini-Moog became the most widely used synthesizer in both popular and electronic art music.

In the 1970s, electronic music began having a significant influence on popular music, with the adoption of polyphonic synthesizers such as the Yamaha GX-1 and Prophet-5, electronic drums, and drum machines such as the Roland CR-78, through the emergence of genres such as krautrock, disco, new wave, and synthpop. In the 1980s, electronic music became more dominant in popular music, with a greater reliance on synthesizers and the adoption of programmable drum machines such as the Roland TR-808 and TR-909 and the Linn LM-1 and bass synthesizers such as the Roland TB-303. In the early 1980s, a group of musicians and music merchants developed the Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), and Yamaha released the first FM digital synthesizer, the DX7.

Electronically produced music became prevalent in the popular domain by the 1990s, because of the advent of affordable music technology. Contemporary electronic music includes many varieties and ranges from experimental art music to popular forms such as electronic dance music.

Musique Concrète

It wasn't long before composers in Paris also began using the tape recorder to develop a new technique for composition called *musique concrète*. This technique involved editing together recorded fragments of natural and industrial sounds. The first pieces of *musique concrète* in Paris were assembled by Pierre Schaeffer, who went on to collaborate with Pierre Henry.

On 5 October 1948, Radiodiffusion Française (RDF) broadcast composer Pierre Schaeffer's *Etude aux chemins de fer*. This was the first "movement" of *Cinq études de bruits* and marked the beginning of studio realizations and musique concrète (or acousmatic art). Schaeffer employed a disk-cutting lathe, four turntables, a four-channel mixer, filters, an echo chamber, and a mobile recording unit. Not long after this, Henry began collaborating with Schaeffer, a partnership that would have profound and lasting effects on the direction of electronic music. Another associate of Schaeffer, Edgard Varèse, began work on *Déserts*, a work for chamber orchestra and tape. The tape parts were created at Pierre Schaeffer's studio and were later revised at Columbia University.

In 1950, Schaeffer gave the first public (non-broadcast) concert of musique concrète at the École Normale de Musique de Paris: "Schaeffer used a PA system, several turntables, and mixers. The performance did not

go well, as creating live montages with turntables had never been done before." Later that same year, Pierre Henry collaborated with Schaeffer on *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1950), the first major work of musique concrète. In Paris in 1951, in what was to become an important worldwide trend, RTF established the first studio for the production of electronic music. Also in 1951, Schaeffer and Henry produced an opera, *Orpheus*, for concrète sounds and voices.

Elektronische Musik

Karlheinz Stockhausen worked briefly in Schaeffer's studio in 1952 and afterward for many years at the WDR Cologne's Studio for Electronic Music.

Figure 1. Karlheinz Stockhausen in the Electronic Music Studio of WDR, Cologne, in 1991.

In Cologne, what would become the most famous electronic music studio in the world was officially opened at the radio studios of the NWDR in 1953, though it had been in the planning stages as early as 1950 and early compositions were made and broadcast in 1951. The brainchild of Werner Meyer-Eppler, Robert Beyer, and Herbert Eimert (who became its first director), the studio was soon joined by Karlheinz Stockhausen and Gottfried Michael Koenig. In his 1949 thesis *Elektronische Klangerzeugung: Elektronische Musik und Synthetische Sprache*, Meyer-Eppler conceived the idea to synthesize music entirely from electronically produced signals; in this way, *elektronische Musik* was sharply differentiated from French *musique concrète*, which used sounds recorded from acoustical sources.

"With Stockhausen and Mauricio Kagel in residence, it became a year-round hive of charismatic avante-gardism [*sic*]," on two occasions combining electronically generated sounds with relatively conventional orchestras—in *Mixtur* (1964) and *Hymnen, dritte Region mit Orchester* (1967). Stockhausen stated that his listeners had told him his electronic music gave them an experience of "outer space," sensations of flying, or being in a "fantastic dream world." More recently, Stockhausen turned to producing electronic music in his own studio in Kürten, his last work in the medium being *Cosmic Pulses* (2007).

chapter/musique-concrete/
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Musique Concrète

This page has a little more information on the style of music exemplified by our listening example, *Poeme Electronique.*

Introduction

Musique concrète (meaning "concrete music") is a genre of electroacoustic music that is made in part from acousmatic sound. It can feature sounds derived from recordings of musical instruments, voice, and the natural environment, as well as those created using synthesizers and computer-based digital signal processing. Also, compositions in this idiom are not restricted to the normal musical rules of melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, and so on. Originally contrasted with "pure" *elektronische Musik* (based solely on the production and manipulation of electronically produced sounds rather than recorded sounds), the theoretical basis of *musique concrète* as a compositional practice was developed by Pierre Schaeffer, beginning in the early 1940s.

Musique Concrète

By 1949, Schaeffer's compositional work was known publicly as *musique concrète*. Schaeffer stated: "When I proposed the term 'musique concrète,' I intended . . . to point out an opposition with the way musical work usually goes. Instead of notating musical ideas on paper with the symbols of solfege and entrusting their realization to well-known instruments, the question was to collect concrete sounds, wherever they came from, and to abstract the musical values they were potentially containing." According to Pierre Henry, "Musique concrète was not a study of timbre, it is focused on envelopes, forms. It must be presented by means of non-traditional characteristics, you see. . . . One might say that the origin of this music is also found in the interest in 'plastifying' music, of rendering it plastic like sculpture. . . . Musique concrète, in my opinion . . . led to a manner of composing, indeed, a new mental framework of composing." Schaeffer had developed an aesthetic that was centered upon the use of sound as a primary compositional resource. The aesthetic also emphasized the importance of play (*jeu*) in the practice of sound-based composition. Schaeffer's use of the word *jeu*, from the verb *jouer*, carries the same double meaning as the English verb play: "to enjoy oneself by interacting with one's surroundings" as well as "to operate a musical instrument."

Edgard Varèse

Varèse produced a relatively small amount of music but he was influential as an early innovator in electronic music.

Introduction

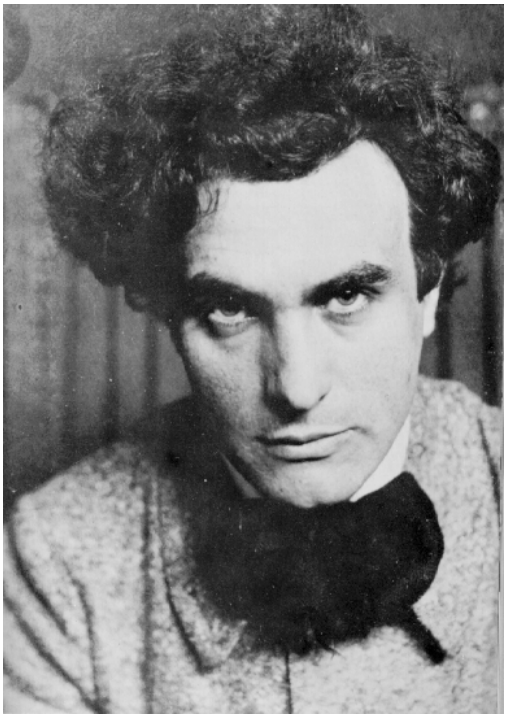


Figure 1. Edgard Varèse.

Edgard Victor Achille Charles Varèse (December 22, 1883–November 6, 1965) was a French-born composer who spent the greater part of his career in the United States.

Varèse's music emphasizes timbre and rhythm, and he coined the term "organized sound" in reference to his own musical aesthetic. Varèse's conception of music reflected his vision of "sound as living matter" and of "musical space as open rather than bounded." He conceived the elements of his music in terms of "sound-masses," likening their organization to the natural phenomenon of crystallization. Varèse thought that "to stubbornly conditioned ears, anything new in music has always been called noise," and he posed the question, "What is music but organized noises?"

Although his complete surviving works only last about three hours, he has been recognized as an influence by several major composers of the late 20th century. Varèse saw potential in using electronic mediums for sound production, and his use of new instruments and electronic resources led to his being known as the "Father of Electronic Music," while Henry Miller described him as "the stratospheric Colossus of Sound."

Poème électronique

Here is a brief article on our playlist example of electronic music.

Introduction

Poème électronique (English Translation: "Electronic Poem") is an 8-minute piece of electronic music by composer Edgard Varèse written for the Philips Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. The Philips corporation commissioned Le Corbusier to design the pavilion, which was intended as a showcase of their engineering progress. Le Corbusier came up with the title *Poème électronique*, saying he wanted to create a "poem in a bottle." Varèse composed the piece with the intention of creating a liberation between sounds and as a result uses noises not usually considered "musical" throughout the piece.

Sequence of Events

The images in Le Corbusier's film are all black-and-white still photographs and willfully abstract. The first image is a bull's head in a spotlight. The final image is a woman holding an infant. Le Corbusier assigned thematic sections to the film:

0 – 60″	Genesis
61 – 120″	Spirit and Matter
121 – 204″	From Darkness to Dawn
205 – 240″	Man-Made Gods
241 – 300″	How Time Moulds Civilization
301 – 360″	Harmony
361 – 480″	To All Mankind

The sequence of sounds in Varèse's composition:

0″	1.	a.	Low bell tolls. "Wood blocks." Sirens. Fast taps lead to high, piercing sounds. 2-second pause.
43″		b.	"Bongo" tones and higher grating noises. Sirens. Short "squawks." Three-tone group stated three times.
1'11"		c.	Low sustained tones with grating noises. Sirens. Short "squawks." Three-tone group. 2-second pause.
1'40"		d.	Short "squawks." High "chirps." Variety of "shots," "honks," "machine noises." Sirens. Taps lead to
2'36"	2.	a.	Low bell tolls. Sustained electronic tones. Repeated "bongo" tones. High and sustained electronic tones. Low tone, crescendo. Rhythmic noises lead to
3'41"		b.	Voice, "Oh-gah." 4-second pause. Voice continues softly.
4'17"		c.	Suddenly loud. Rhythmic percussive sounds joined by voice. Low "animal noises," scraping, shuffling, hollow vocal sounds. Decrescendo into 7-second pause.
5'47"		d.	Sustained electronic tones, crescendo and decrescendo. Rhythmic percussive sounds. Higher sustained electronic tones, crescendo. "Airplane rumble," "chimes," jangling.
6'47"		e.	Female voice. Male chorus. Electronic noises, organ. High taps. Swooping organ sound. Three-note group stated twice. Rumble, sirens, crescendo (8 minutes and 5 seconds).

John Adams

John Adams is one of the best-known composers who works in a minimal style, though as you'll read in the linked article, he is less rigid in his application of minimalism than some earlier composers such as Phillip Glass or Steve Reich. As you read the section entitled "Musical Style," pay special attention to his feelings about twelve-tone composition and the influence of John Cage.

Introduction

John Coolidge Adams (born February 15, 1947) is an American composer with strong roots in minimalism.

His works include *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* (1986); *On the Transmigration of Souls* (2002), a choral piece commemorating the victims of the September 11, 2001, attacks (for which he won a Pulitzer Prize in 2003); and *Shaker Loops* (1978), a minimalist four-movement work for strings. His operas include *Nixon in China* (1987), which recounts Richard Nixon's 1972 visit to China, and *Doctor Atomic* (2005), which covers Robert Oppenheimer, the Manhattan Project, and the building of the first atomic bomb.

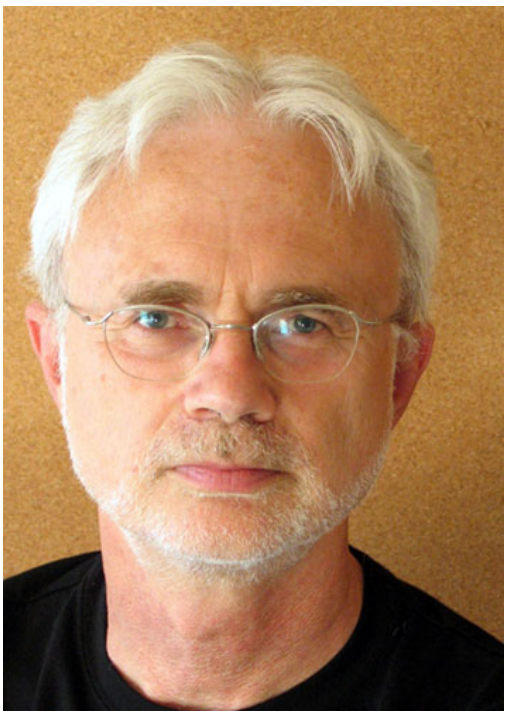


Figure 1. John Adams.

The Death of Klinghoffer is an opera for which he wrote the music, based on the hijacking of the passenger liner *Achille Lauro* by the Palestine Liberation Front in 1985 and the hijackers' murder of wheelchair-bound 69-year-old Jewish-American passenger Leon Klinghoffer. The opera has drawn controversy, including allegations by some (including Klinghoffer's two daughters) that the opera is antisemitic and glorifies terrorism. The work's creators and others have disputed these criticisms.

Musical Style

The music of John Adams is usually categorized as minimalist or post-minimalist, although in interviews, he has categorized himself as a "post-style" composer. While Adams employs minimalist techniques, such as repeating patterns, he is not a strict follower of the movement. Adams was born ten years after Steve Reich

and Philip Glass, and his writing is more developmental and directionalized, containing climaxes and other elements of Romanticism. Comparing *Shaker Loops* to minimalist composer Terry Riley's piece *In C,* Adams says,

> Rather than set up small engines of motivic materials and let them run free in a kind of random play of counterpoint, I used the fabric of continually repeating cells to forge large architectonic shapes, creating a web of activity that, even within the course of a single movement, was more detailed, more varied, and knew both light and dark, serenity and turbulence.

Many of Adams's ideas in composition are a reaction to the philosophy of serialism and its depictions of "the composer as scientist." The Darmstadt school of twelve-tone composition was dominant during the time that Adams was receiving his college education, and he compared class to a "mausoleum where we would sit and count tone-rows in Webern."

Adams experienced a musical epiphany after reading John Cage's book *Silence* (1973), which he claimed "dropped into [his] psyche like a time bomb." Cage posed fundamental questions about what music was and regarded all types of sounds as viable sources of music. This perspective offered to Adams a liberating alternative to the rule-based techniques of serialism. At this point, Adams began to experiment with electronic music, and his experiences are reflected in the writing of *Phrygian Gates* (1977–78), in which the constant shifting between modules in Lydian mode and Phrygian mode refers to activating electronic gates rather than architectural ones. Adams explained that working with synthesizers caused a "diatonic conversion," a reversion to the belief that tonality was a force of nature.

Some of Adams's compositions are an amalgamation of different styles. One example is *Grand Pianola Music (1981–82)*, a humorous piece that purposely draws its content from musical clichés. In *The Dharma at Big Sur,* Adam's draws from literary texts such as Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, and Henry Miller to illustrate the California landscape. Adams professes his love of genres other than classical music; his parents were jazz musicians, and he has also listened to rock music, albeit only passively. Adams once claimed that originality wasn't an urgent concern for him the way it was necessary for the minimalists and compared his position to that of Gustav Mahler, J. S. Bach, and Johannes Brahms, who "were standing at the end of an era and were embracing all of the evolutions that occurred over the previous thirty to fifty years."

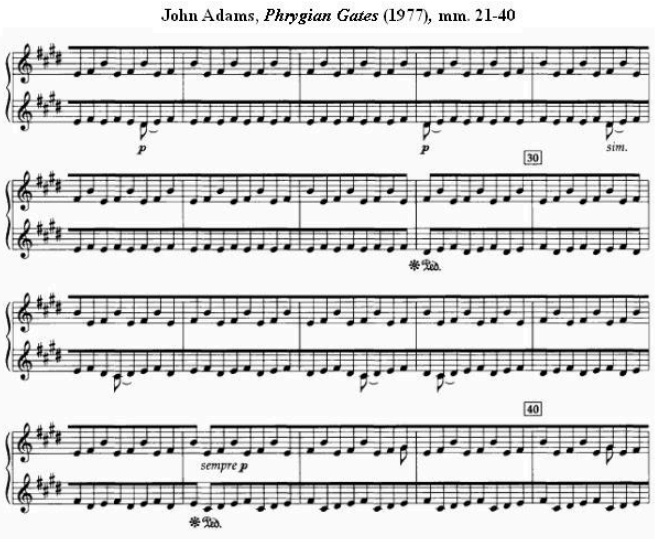


Figure 2. John Adams, *Phrygian Gates*, mm 21–40 (1977).

Style and Analysis

Adams, like other minimalists of his time (e.g., Philip Glass), used a steady pulse that defines and controls the music. The pulse was best known from Terry Riley's early composition *In C*, and slowly more and more composers used it as a common practice. Jonathan Bernard highlighted this adoption by comparing *Phrygian Gates*, written in 1977, and *Fearful Symmetries*, written 11 years later in 1988.

Violin Concerto, Mvt. III "Toccare"

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Adams started to add a new character to his music, something he called "the Trickster." The Trickster allowed Adams to use the repetitive style and rhythmic drive of minimalism yet poke fun at it at the same time. When Adams commented on his own characterization of particular minimalist music, he stated that he went joyriding on "those Great Prairies of non-event."

Short Ride in a Fast Machine

As you read this page on *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*, our playlist example of John Adams's music, please pay attention to both the ways in which the piece exemplifies the principles of minimalism and the ways in which it expands on those principles (note the references to "post-minimalism"). One of the main elements in this piece is rhythm—in particular, the repeated beat played by the woodblock. Note in that section that Adams plays other rhythmic patterns against that beat that shift the listener's sense of pulse.

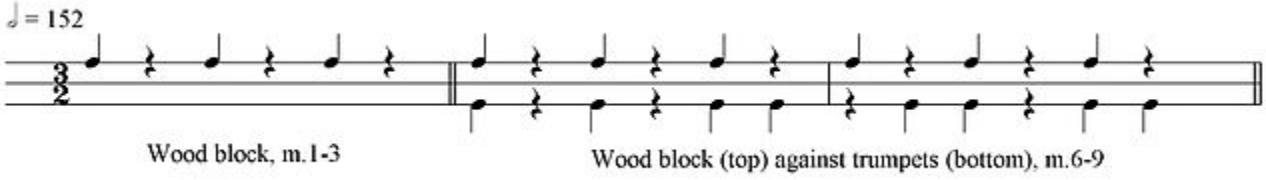
Introduction

John Adams completed *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* in 1986. He applies the description "fanfare for orchestra" to this work and to the earlier *Tromba Lontana* (1985). The former is also known as *Fanfare for Great Woods* because it was commissioned for the Great Woods Festival of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. As a commentary on the title, Adams inquires, "You know how it is when someone asks you to ride in a terrific sports car, and then you wish you hadn't?" This work is an iconic example of Adams's postminimal style, which is utilized in other works like *Phrygian Gates*, *Shaker Loops*, and *Nixon in China*. This style derives from minimalism as defined by the works of Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and Philip Glass, although it proceeds to "make use of minimalist techniques in more dramatic settings."

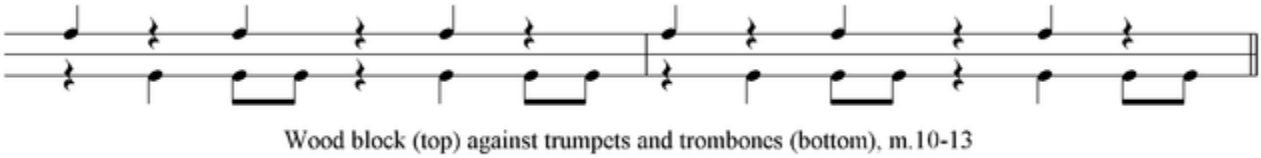
Rhythmic Devices

In terms of rhythm, this work follows the main precepts of minimalism, which focus on repeated material,

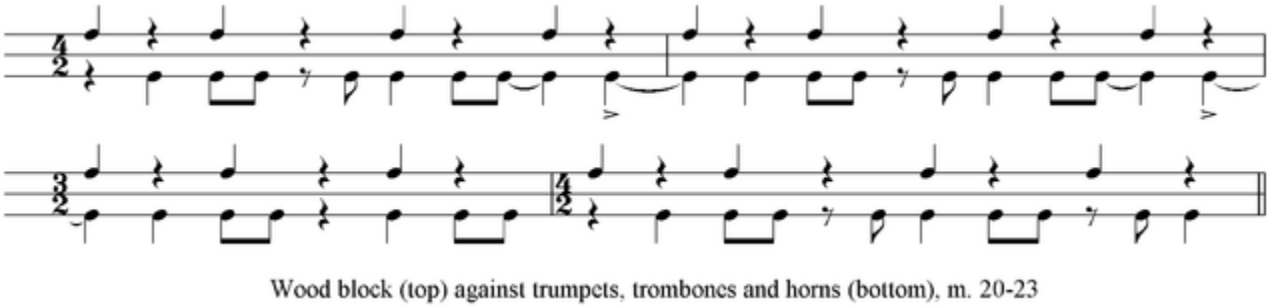
generally in the form of ostinati. There is also a strong sense of pulse, which Adams heavily enforces in *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* in his scoring of the wood block. Adams claims that "I need to experience that fundamental tick" in his work. Throughout the course of the work, Adams experiments with the idea of rhythmic dissonance as material begins to appear, initially in the trumpets, and gravitates the listener to a new sense of pulse. As shown below, the manifestation of rhythmic dissonance is akin to Adams's method of creating harmonic dissonance as he adds conflicting rhythms to disrupt the metronomic stability of the wood block. Adams himself admits that he seeks to "enrich the experience of perceiving the way that time is divided" within his works. Later in the work (see Example 4), Adams introduces a simple polyrhythm as a means of initiating a new section that contrasts the rhythmic dissonance of the first section.



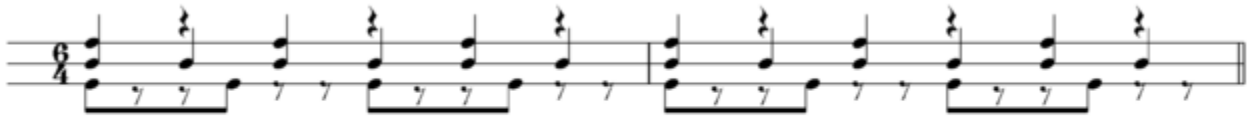
Example 1. Initial rhythmic dissonance



Example 2. Development of rhythmic dissonance



Example 3. Result of rhythmic dissonance



Wood block (top) with oboes, English horn, and bassoons (middle) against contrabassoon and tuba (bottom), m. 82-100

Example 4. Polyrhythmic dissonance at a later section

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226
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https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/holy-minimalism/
Tue, 24 Mar 2020 04:52:09 +0000
https://library.achievingthedream.org/alamomusicappreciation/chapter/holy-minimalism/

Holy minimalism is a name for a compositional style that combines the principles of minimalism with Medieval or Renaissance influences and religious subject matter. It is a fairly recent stylistic trend within the larger minimalist movement, and as you'll read in the article, the composers most often labeled in this manner frequently do not appreciate the term. As holy minimalism often involves compositions for choral ensembles, this musical trend brings us full circle. We began the semester studying music of the Middle Ages that was almost entirely choral/vocal. We now end the semester with a modern choral tradition that draws inspiration from that same literature.

Holy minimalism, **mystic minimalism**, **spiritual minimalism**, and **sacred minimalism** are terms used to describe the musical works of a number of late-20th-century composers of Western classical music. The compositions are distinguished by a minimalist compositional aesthetic and a distinctly religious or mystical subject focus.

With the growing popularity of minimalist music in the 1960s and 1970s, which often broke sharply with prevailing musical aesthetics of serialism and aleatoric music, many composers, building on the work of such minimalists as Terry Riley, Philip Glass, and Steve Reich, began to work with more traditional notions of simple melody and harmony in a radically simplified framework. This transition was seen variously as an aspect of musical post-modernism or as neo-romanticism—that is, a return to the lyricism of the 19th century.

In the 1970s and continuing in the 1980s and 1990s, several composers, many of whom had previously worked in serial or experimental milieux, began working with similar aesthetic ideals—radically simplified compositional materials, a strong foundation in tonality or modality, and the use of simple, repetitive melodies—but included with them an explicitly religious orientation. Many of these composers looked to Renaissance or medieval music for inspiration or to the liturgical music of the Orthodox Churches of the East,

some of which employ only a cappella in their services. Examples include Arvo Pärt (an Estonian Orthodox), John Tavener (a British composer who converted to Greek Orthodoxy), Henryk Górecki (a Polish Catholic), Alan Hovhaness (the earliest mystic minimalist), Sofia Gubaidulina, Giya Kancheli, Hans Otte, Pēteris Vasks, and Vladimír Godár.

Despite being grouped together, the composers tend to dislike the term and are by no means a "school" of close-knit associates. Their widely differing nationalities, religious backgrounds, and compositional inspirations make the term problematic, but it is nonetheless in widespread use, sometimes critically, among musicologists and music critics, primarily because of the lack of a better term. "Neo-Contemplative Music" is one example of a suitable alternative.

Recordings have played a major role in the popularization of the term, as all three of the most well-known "holy minimalists" (Arvo Pärt, Henryk Górecki, Sir John Tavener) have had significant success with CD sales. A 1992 recording of Górecki's 1976 piece, *Symphony No. 3*, sold over a million copies. John Tavener has had several recordings of his works nominated for the Mercury Music Prize, and Pärt has a long-term contract with ECM Records, ensuring consistent and wide distribution of recordings of his works.

Arvo Pärt

Arvo Pärt enjoys enormous popularity for a "classical" composer. His works are often categorized as holy minimalism, though he does not use that term when speaking of his own music. Notice the impact and influence in his personal history of composers and styles we have already studied: early 20th-century techniques (including twelve-tone), Soviet artistic repression, minimalism, Medieval chant, and Renaissance polyphony.

Introduction

Arvo Pärt (born 11 September 1935) is an Estonian composer of classical and sacred music. Since the late 1970s, Pärt has worked in a minimalist style that employs his self-invented compositional technique, tintinnabuli. His music is in part inspired by Gregorian chant.

Compositions

Pärt's works are generally divided into two periods. He composed his early works using a range of neo-classical styles influenced by Shostakovich, Prokofiev, and Bartók. He then began to compose using Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique and serialism. This, however, not only earned the ire of the Soviet establishment but also proved to be a creative dead-end. When early works were banned by Soviet censors, Pärt entered the first of several periods of contemplative silence, during which he studied choral music from the 14th to 16th centuries. In this context, Pärt's biographer, Paul Hillier, observed that "he had reached a position of complete despair in which the composition of music appeared to be the most futile of gestures, and he lacked the musical faith and willpower to write even a single note."

Figure 1. Arvo Pärt in 2011.

The spirit of early European polyphony informed the composition of Pärt's transitional Third Symphony (1971); thereafter, he immersed himself in early music, reinvestigating the roots of Western music. He studied plainsong, Gregorian chant, and the emergence of polyphony in the European Renaissance.

The music that began to emerge after this period was radically different. This period of new compositions included *Fratres*, *Cantus In Memoriam Benjamin Britten*, and *Tabula Rasa*. Pärt describes the music of this period as tintinnabuli—like the ringing of bells. *Spiegel im Spiegel* (1978) is a well-known example that has been used in many films. The music is characterized by simple harmonies, often single unadorned notes, or triads, which form the basis of Western harmony. These are reminiscent of ringing bells. Tintinnabuli works are rhythmically simple and do not change tempo. Another characteristic of Pärt's later works is that they are frequently settings for sacred texts, although he mostly chooses Latin or the Church Slavonic language used in Orthodox liturgy instead of his native Estonian language. Large-scale works inspired by religious texts include *St. John Passion*, *Te Deum*, and *Litany*. Choral works from this period include *Magnificat* and *The Beatitudes*.

Of Pärt's popularity, Steve Reich has written: "Even in Estonia, Arvo was getting the same feeling that we were all getting. . . . I love his music, and I love the fact that he is such a brave, talented man. . . . He's completely out of step with the zeitgeist and yet he's enormously popular, which is so inspiring. His music fulfills a deep human need that has nothing to do with fashion." Pärt's music came to public attention in the West largely thanks to Manfred Eicher, who recorded several of Pärt's compositions for ECM Records starting in 1984.

Invited by Walter Fink, Pärt was the 15th composer featured in the annual Komponistenporträt of the Rheingau Musik Festival in 2005 in four concerts. Chamber music included *Für Alina* for piano, played by himself; *Spiegel im Spiegel*; and *Psalom* for string quartet. The chamber orchestra of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra played his *Trisagion*, *Fratres* and *Cantus* along with works of J. S. Bach. The Windsbach Boys Choir and soloists Sibylla Rubens, Ingeborg Danz, Markus Schäfer, and Klaus Mertens performed

Magnificat and *Collage über B-A-C-H* together with two cantatas of Bach and one of Mendelssohn. The Hilliard Ensemble, organist Christopher Bowers-Broadbent, the Rostock Motet Choir, and the Hilliard instrumental ensemble, conducted by Markus Johannes Langer, performed a program of Pärt's organ music and works for voices (some *a cappella*), including *Pari Intervallo*, *De profundis*, and *Miserere*.

A new composition, *Für Lennart*, written for the memory of the Estonian president, Lennart Meri, was played at Meri's funeral service on 2 April 2006.

In response to the murder of the Russian investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya in Moscow on 7 October 2006, Pärt declared that all of his works performed in 2006 and 2007 would be in honor of her death, issuing the following statement: "Anna Politkovskaya staked her entire talent, energy and—in the end—even her life on saving people who had become victims of the abuses prevailing in Russia."

Figure 2. Arvo Pärt and Nora Pärt in 2012.

Pärt was honored as the featured composer of the 2008 RTÉ Living Music Festival in Dublin, Ireland. He was also commissioned by Louth Contemporary Music Society to compose a new choral work based on "St. Patrick's Breastplate," which premiered in 2008 in Louth, Ireland. The new work is called *The Deers Cry*. This is his first Irish commission, having its debut in Drogheda and Dundalk in February 2008.

Pärt's 2008 *Symphony No. 4* is named "Los Angeles" and was dedicated to Mikhail Khodorkovsky. It was Pärt's first symphony written since his *Symphony No. 3* written in 1971. It premiered in Los Angeles, California, at the Walt Disney Concert Hall on 10 January 2009 and has been nominated for a Grammy for Best Classical Contemporary Composition.

On 10 December 2011, Pärt was appointed a member of the Pontifical Council for Culture for a five-year renewable term by Pope Benedict XVI.

On 26 January 2014, Pärt's *Adam's Lament* won a Grammy for Best Choral Performance.

17.

CHAPTER 17: INTRODUCTION TO DANCE

Fig. 1. Word Cloud Generated image created by the Dance Cohort CC BY.

Fig 2. “Children dancing, Overture Center for the Arts, Madison” by ali eminov is marked with CC BY-NC 2.0.

Learning Objectives

With this chapter, you will begin working toward:

- Demonstrating a culturally informed dance aesthetic.
- Identifying the purposes of dance.

> “Dance evaporates—everything goes. . . we just have this little hint. The deterioration actually adds to the meaning of it.” —dancer and film director Connie Hochman on trying to capture the ephemera

Introduction

There are many definitions of dance, with people defining dance in their own way. In this chapter, you will consider your personal definition of dance. You will learn the purposes of dance. You will reflect on your experiences and upbringing to determine their influence on your dance aesthetic.

- Poetry, prose, and music are arts that exist in time. It is through the manipulation of rhythm and tempo that these arts are created.
- Painting, sculpture, and architecture are arts that exist in space. It is through the design of space that these arts are created.
- Dance is the only art that is a creation in both time and space.

How do you define dance?

Elements of Dance

Dance can be studied in terms of its raw materials. We can describe movement thoroughly by breaking dance down into its basic components. A complete understanding of the building blocks of dance allows us to analyze, interpret, and speak about dance in a thorough and understandable way. To increase dance literacy

and appreciate dance as an art form, we must look at the elements of dance. Through the manipulation of these elements by the human body, dance happens. The elements of dance will be discussed in more detail later in Chapter 2. To describe dance, it is useful to analyze it in terms of these Elements of Dance:

- **Body**
- **Energy**
- **Space**
- **Time**

Purposes of Dance

Dance can be studied in terms of its purpose and function within a culture. Cultures impact how people engage with the world, as environmental influences, societal behaviors, and attitudes are intertwined within the development and shaping of dance forms. In this respect, dance is a carrier of culture. The purposes of dance include:

- Religious Dance / Dance to Please the Gods
- Social Dance / Dance to Please Ourselves
- Performance Dance / Dance to Please Others
- Protest Dance / Dance to Affect Social Change

Fig. 4. "DTH" by Blinkofanaye is marked with CC BY-NC 2.0.

Religious Dance

The earliest dances were likely religious in nature. Some religions embrace dance and use it as a part of their rituals. Other religions have eschewed dance or banned it for a number of different reasons.

The Ancient Greeks and Africans used to dance to solidify their community. Ancient Greek dance, as well as ancient African dance, was divinely inspired. Everyone participated in religious ceremonies as cultivated amateurs and upstanding citizens. A big part of the program was processions and circle dances. The realities of the cosmos ruled the symbolism of the dances, and references to the sun, moon, and constellations figured into the movements.

Types of Religious Dance:

1. Dances of Imitation
2. Medicine Dances
3. Commemorative Dances
4. Dances for Spiritual Connection

Dances of Imitation

Particularly in primitive and indigenous cultures, dances of imitation are performed. Dancers imitate animals and natural phenomena to embody specific qualities, like channeling the prowess of an animal. The dances serve various purposes, often promoting favorable outcomes, such as good weather and hunting.

Medicine Dances

Shamans, as spiritual leaders, serve as intermediaries between the human and spirit worlds. Both men and women may be Shamans. The religion is animistic (attributes a spirit to all things), and rituals address medicine, religion, a reverence for nature, and ancestor worship. On the summer solstice, Shamans perform a fire ritual at night. The Shaman drums carry the ancestral spirits of the Shaman.

Commemorative Dances

Dances are created to remember a special day, event, and meaningful moment. Some commemorative dances are very old. Maypole dances have early pagan roots. It is a celebration of the rebirth of spring. The Second Line is a West African form of dance that is a ritual to celebrate the life of the recently departed. After the slaves were brought to the New World, this dance became more of a celebration for parties and Mardi Gras festivals.

Dances for Spiritual Connection

In some cultures, the dancers seek to suppress their ego to find oneness with God. In others, dance may be used to connect with dead ancestors spiritually. Some religions use dance to tell their origin stories and preserve their heritage.

Social Dance

In social dance, we establish a connection with others. Social dance can be sorted into four general categories based on the purpose of the dance.

Fig 5. "Social Dancing" by Destinys Agent is marked with CC BY-NC 2.0.

Types of Social Dance

1. Courtship Dances
2. Work Dances
3. War Dances
4. Communal Dances

Courtship Dances

In cultures where marriages are arranged, men and women do not engage in courtship dances. In other cultures, dance may serve as simple flirtation or involve more complex rituals.

Work Dances

Some dances are centered around the work that groups perform. Dances that mimic work routines were used in past times to help build unity and continuity among the crew.

War Dances

Fig. 6. "War Dance, Bawomataluo Village, South Nias" by ILO in Asia and the Pacific is marked with CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

Dance has always been used in conjunction with training for war. Several cultures throughout history used dance as grounds for war preparation. The Greeks participated in pyrrhic dances and used weapons to mimic war tactics in preparation for battle. Capoeira was created by enslaved Africans in Brazil using dance as a guise for practicing fighting. The Māori of Aotearoa / New Zealand dance the Haka as an intimidation tactic that instills warriors with ferocious energy. In South Africa, the Indlamu dance was inspired by Zulu warriors during the Anglo-Zulu wars, was derived from the war dances of amabutho (warriors), and was mainly used to motivate

the men before they embarked on their long marches into battles barefoot. Today, cultures continue to pass down these traditions to new generations as tradition.

Communal Dances

Communal dances are often a part of festivals and parties. Dances like springtime's Maypole dance and the Jewish hora bring a whole community together to share happy times. Communal dances also can be a way for a community to share grief and memories, like the Table of Silence performed at Lincoln Center every year to commemorate 9/11.

Performance Dance

Performance dances are presentational and often are entertainment for an audience. Some amateur dancers put on shows, but there are also professional dancers who attain highly polished technique.

Types of Performance Dance

1. Ballet
2. Modern
3. Tap
4. Jazz
5. Musical Theater
6. Hip Hop

Fig. 7. "Ballet de Moscú 2011" by ExpoMeloneras is marked with CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Protest Dance

Protest dance is a response to social situations and the human condition. For slaves of the American South, the cakewalk was a way to mock their white oppressors. Kurt Joos created the modern dance The Green Table after World War I. It reflected hard truths about society and the price of war. Bill T. Jones creates ensemble dances that reveal realities of social injustice. Jo'Artis "Big Mijo" Ratti uses krumping to express his rage and frustration in response to the killing of George Floyd.

Dance Aesthetic

Fig. 8. www.pictaram.com tag/africa, first found on Sep. 28, 2016.

Your **aesthetic** is that which you find pleasing or beautiful. It is your tastes and preferences, your "likes" and "dislikes." Your perception of dance will be informed by your aesthetic, which might result in subjective judgments about the dances you see. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge when these biased opinions emerge to be receptive to the dances you are witnessing and objectively respond to them. By keeping an open mind, we can better our understanding of the uniqueness of each dance as an art form.

Cultural Traditions

Culture is shared values, beliefs, and customs shared among a group of people that contribute to a person's dance aesthetic. The rhythms of West Africa or Argentina that you grew up listening to can also play a part in shaping rhythmic tastes. Dance is an important way that the lore and traditions of a culture are preserved over time as they are passed down from generation to generation.

Different religions incorporate dance into their worship. Some religions include it as an intrinsic part of their ritual and even link dance to the spiritual experience. Other religions eschew dance altogether. Your religious upbringing and experiences may influence your dance aesthetic.

The program on **Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in formal and non-formal education** is a UNESCO initiative, which recognizes that:

- Education plays a key role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.
- Intangible cultural heritage can provide context-specific content and pedagogy for education programs and thus act as leverage to increase the relevance and quality of education and improve learning outcomes.

UNESCO considers dance an intangible cultural resource. UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage division recognizes the following in its Summary Report on education: "The creative process of inter generational transmission is at the center of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding."

Family Influence

Different generations may prefer different dances. The dances your parents and their friends do are probably different from what you and your friends like. Maybe you have a grandparent who can teach you some older dances.

Media

Do you watch dance on television, in movies, online, in live concerts and shows, at half-time? The many factors of your experiences influence your dance aesthetic.

Personal Response

You will also have a personal response to dance. Do you prefer to move fast or slow, bouncy or gliding, all over the room, or just a little bit? Do you want your dance to demonstrate emotion, or do you prefer a show of virtuosity?

Kinesthetic

Consider your physical response to dance as you think about your dance aesthetic. Dance is capable of eliciting joy, sorrow, and a wide spectrum of emotions. What aspect of the dance spoke to your personal experiences?

Dance is a beautiful and meaningful stand-alone art. It can be performed without any ancillary arts. But it is also an art that partners successfully with other arts. Costume, scenery, poetry, drama, and music are often a part of the spectacle. As you watch dances this semester, be aware of the music, costumes, and staging that help to lend color and meaning to the dance.

In preserving a culture's dances, one is able to preserve its stories and other art forms as well.

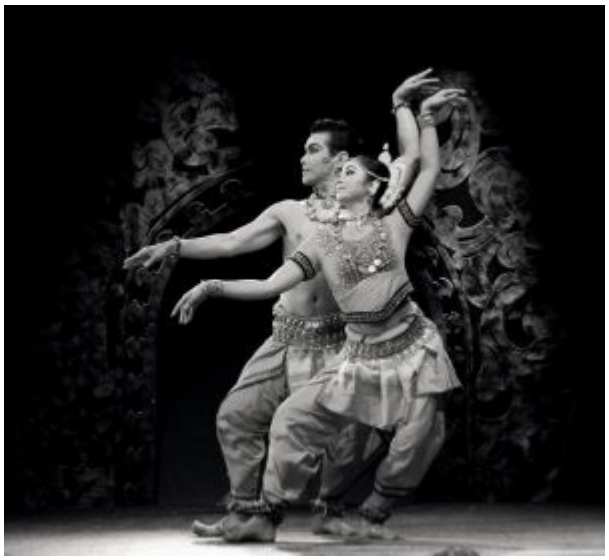

Fig. 9. "Odissi" by Iqbal Saggu is marked with CC BY 2.0.

Summary

People have different ideas about how to define dance. One way to understand dance is to analyze its movement elements: body, energy, space, and time.

We can also study dance in terms of its purpose. Religious dances serve to imitate animals or natural elements, to achieve healing, to commemorate an occasion, or to reach spiritual connection. Social dances can serve in courtship, to find unity in work, unity in war, or camaraderie in the community. Performance dance is created and practiced for presentation to an audience. Western performance dance forms that have developed include ballet, modern, tap, jazz, musical theater, and hip hop. Protest dance can be created to effect social change.

One's dance aesthetic is shaped and influenced by numerous factors. Family, media, personal response, and kinesthetic response are all contributors to a personal aesthetic.

Resources

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in education; UNESCO; https://ich.unesco.org/en/education-01017

18.

CHAPTER 18: ELEMENTS OF DANCE

Fig. 1. Word Cloud Generated image created by the Dance Cohort CC BY.

Learning Objectives

- Recall the Elements of Dance
- Distinguish between the Elements of Dance
- Analyze, identify, and describe the Elements of Dance

"A dance, as a work of art, must be constructed as well as a beautiful building. . . . A dance must have a beginning, development, and climax—just as a building has foundations, walls, and roof."
—Ted Shawn

What Are the Elements of Dance?

The Elements of Dance are the basic building blocks of dance that help us identify and describe movement, assisting in the ability to analyze, interpret, and speak/write about dance as an artistic practice. When viewing dance, we want to put into words what we are witnessing by analyzing its most important qualities. The elements of the dance provide us with the tools to do so.

In dance, the body can be in constant motion and even arrive at points of stillness. However, even in stillness, the dancers are inherently aware of themselves. No matter the case, all forms of dance can be broken down into their primary elements: BODY, ENERGY, SPACE, and TIME. To easily remember the dance elements, we use the acronym B.E.S.T., which stands for BODY, ENERGY, SPACE, and TIME. Dance can be seen as the use of the BODY with different kinds of ENERGY moving through SPACE and unfolding in TIME.

Let's take a quick look at the elements of dance before we dig in further.

Watch This

Randy Barron, Teaching Artist on the Kennedy Center's National Roster, made this video to explain the Elements of Dance:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-1

Body

The body is the dancer's instrument of expression. When an audience looks at dance, they see the dancer's body and what is moving. The dance could be made up of a variety of actions and still poses. It could use the whole body or emphasize one part of the body. Exploring body shapes and movement actions increases our awareness of movement possibilities.

Fig 2. photos/ dancer-performer-theatre-acting-5420494/ – Attributed Clarence Alford First found on Jul 24, 2020 Filename: dancer-5420494_640.jpg (599 x 640, 61.9 kB) CC-BY.

Body Shapes

The choreographer who is designing a dance may look at their dancers as sculpture. They choose shapes for the dancers to make with their bodies. These can be curved, straight, angular, twisted, wide, narrow, symmetrical, or asymmetrical. These shapes can be geometric designs, such as circles or diagonals. They could make literal shapes such as tree branches or bird wings. They can also make conceptual shapes (abstract) such as friendship, courage, or sadness. Sometimes a choreographer emphasizes the negative space or the empty area around the dancers' bodies instead of just the positive space the dancer occupies. Look at the positive and negative spaces in Fig. 2.

Fig 3. www.orenda.net.in/ – First found on Nov 17, 2019 Filename: coach-1-550×380.jpg (550 x 380, 19.1 kB).

Body Moves/Actions

Dance movements or actions fall into two main categories:

- Locomotor: (traveling moves) walk, run, jump, hop, skip, leap, gallop, crawl, roll, etc.
- Nonlocomotor: (moves that stay in place) melt, stretch, bend, twist, swing, turn, shake, stomp, etc.

Below is an example of body movements and shapes by Modern Dance choreographer Paul Taylor.

Watch This

Excerpt from Modern Dance choreographer Paul Taylor's *Esplanade*. Observe how the dancers use locomotor movement as they run and form circular formations and create lines in space.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-2

Body Parts

Each part of the body (head, shoulders, elbows, hips, knees, feet, eyes, etc.) can move alone (isolated) or in combination. In the classical Indian dance form Bharatanatyam, dancers stomp their feet in a percussive rhythm. At the same time, the dancer performs hand gestures, known as mudras—codified hand gestures that are important in the storytelling aspect of Bharatanatyam to communicate words, concepts, or feelings.

Observe in the video below how the dancer alternately emphasizes her feet and legs with her hand and arm gestures. In Classical Indian dance forms, facial expressions and hand gestures play an important role in storytelling.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Pushpanjali*; choreographer Savitha Sastry performs a Classical Indian dance solo called Bharatanatyam. Observe how the dancer alternately emphasizes their feet and legs with hand and arm gestures.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-3

In the next video, dancers are participating in the GAGA technique developed by Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin. In this movement language, dancers are directed to listen to their inner sensations to elicit physical responses or movement. Notice how the dancers are integrating the entire body to create fluid and successive movement.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-4

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#h5p-13

Energy

An exploration of "how" a movement is done rather than "what" it is gives us a richer sense of dance as an expressive art. A dancer can walk, reach for an imaginary object, and turn, making these movements look completely different by changing the use of Energy. For example, anger could be shown with a loud quick walk, a sharp reach, and a strong twisting turn. Happiness could be depicted by using a delicate gliding walk, a gentle reach out, and a smooth, light turn. Energy is what brings the dancer's intent or emotion to the audience. The element of Energy is sometimes called efforts or Movement Qualities.

Dancer and movement analyst Rudolf Laban broke it down into four efforts, each of which is a pair of opposites:

1. Space (direct or indirect use of space): When the dancer is paying attention to the use of space, they can

be direct, single-focused, and targeted in their use of space. Conversely, they can be indirect, multi-focused, and aware of many things in the space around them.
2. Weight or force (strong or light use of weight): The dancer can emphasize the effort or use of force by fighting against it, throwing their weight and strength into movements. The opposite is using a yielding, light sense of weightlessness in their movements.
3. Time (sudden or sustained use of time): Not to be confused with tempo, the dancer's use of time can be reflected in their movement. It can appear hurried, as though fighting against time. Conversely, the dancer can have a relaxed attitude toward time as though they have all the time in the world.
4. Flow (bound or free use of the flow of movement): When the dancer's flow is bound up, they can appear to be careful and cautious, only allowing small amounts of flow. The opposite is when the dancer appears to throw the movement around without inhibition, letting the movement feel carefree.

Another way we can define Energy is by looking at the Movement Qualities. Movement Qualities are energy released during various time spans to portray distinct qualities. There are six dynamic Movement Qualities:

1. Sustained (slow, smooth, continuous)
2. Percussive (sharp, choppy, jagged)
3. Swinging (swaying, to and fro, pendulum-like)
4. Suspended (a moment of stillness, the high point, a balance)
5. Collapsed (fall, release, relax)
6. Vibratory (shake, wiggle, tremble)

Notice the kinds of Energy the dancers are displaying in the examples below.

In the first video, the dancers are using efforts of direct, strong, sudden, and bound movements. In terms of Movement Qualities, the dancers are using percussive, vibratory, and moments of collapse.

Watch This

Hip Hop dance crew Kaba Modern uses the efforts of direct, strong, sudden, and bound movements. In terms of Movement Qualities, the dancers use percussive, vibratory, and moments of collapse.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-5

In the National Opera of Ukraine's preclude from *Chopiniana*, the dancers are using efforts of light and free. The Movement Qualities are sustained and suspended.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-6

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#h5p-14

Space

Let's look at where the dance takes place. Is the dance expansive, using lots of space, or is it more intimate, using primarily personal space? An exploration of space increases our awareness of the visual design aspects of movement.

1. Personal Space: The space around the dancer's body can also be called near space. A dance primarily in personal space can give a feeling of introspection or intimacy.
2. Negative Space/Positive Space: Sometimes, a choreographer emphasizes the negative space or the empty area around the dancers' bodies instead of just the positive space the dancers occupy. Look at the positive and negative space in the photograph below.
3. General Space: The defined space where the dancer can move can be a small room, a large stage, or even an outdoor setting.
4. Levels: Dancers use a variety of levels: high, middle, or low. High movements can reach upward using jumps, leaps, or when lifting each other. A middle-level move is generally a move that takes place between the height of the dancer's shoulders and knees. Low-level moves can include sitting, kneeling, sinking to the ground, rolling, or crawling.

Fig 5. Français : Épreuve gélatino-argentique 1925 24,5 x 21 cm 18 May 2017 Mathildemultiple. CC Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

5. Directions: While dances made for the camera often have the performers facing forward as they dance, they can also change directions by turning, going to the back, right, left, up, or down.
6. Pathways or Floor Patterns: Where the dancer goes through space is often an important design element. They can travel in a circle, figure eight, spiral, zig-zag, straight lines, and combinations of lines.
7. Range: Movements or shapes can be near reach, mid-ranged, or far reach. Range is associated with one's kinesphere. Kinesphere is the immediate area surrounding the body and is described as a three-dimensional volume of space. Imagine a bubble around the dancer's body, with their arms and limbs extended to their fullest extent in every possible direction without moving from a fixed spot; this is considered a personal kinesphere. Movement occurs in a person's kinesphere and includes near reach (movement that is close to the body, small, or condensed), mid-reach (movement that is neither near not far but comfortably in the middle), and far reach (large and expansive movement).

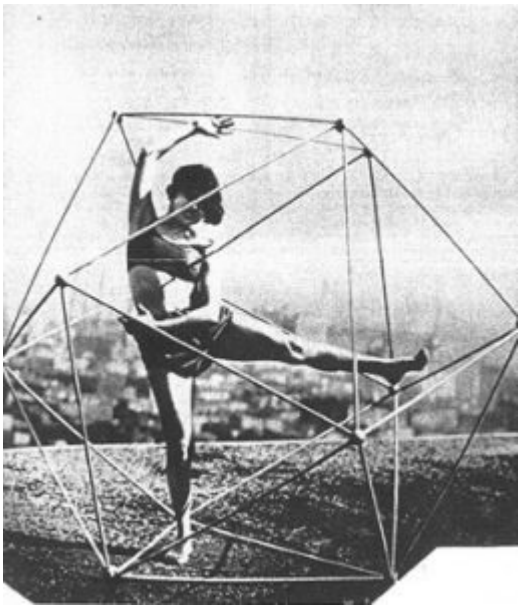

Fig 5. Français : Épreuve gélatino-argentique 1925 24,5 x 21 cm 18 May 2017 Mathildemultiple. CC Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

8. Relationship: Dancers can explore the relationship between different body parts, the relationship of one dancer to another dancer or a group of dancers, or the relationship to a prop or to objects in the dance space.

Fig. 6. Egyptian Modern Dance Theatre in performance "devil hope." 27 September 2016, 21:43:59 Esraa abd el khalla. CC Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

Watch This

Excerpt from George Balanchine's ballet *Apollo*. Notice the interlocking of circles of the dancers' arms and the straight lines made by the dancers' legs.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-7

In this next video, notice various floor patterns such as circular pathways and straight lines that are made by the group of dancers. Observe the dancers' use of gestures that go from near to far reach from personal space to filling the general space. The choreography also uses levels from low to high.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-8

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#h5p-15

Time

Dance is a Time art; movement develops and reveals itself in Time. Adding a rhythmic sense to movement helps transform ordinary movement into dance and informs when the dancer moves.

1. Pulse: The basic pulse or underlying beat.
2. Speed (tempo): Fast, moderate, slow.
3. Rhythm Pattern: A grouping of long or short beats, accents, or silences.
4. Natural Rhythm: Timing that comes from the rhythms of the breath, the heartbeat, or natural sources like the wind or the ocean.
5. Syncopation: Accents the off-beat in a musical phrase.

Compare the different uses of Time in the two videos below.

In the first video, the dancers have no musical accompaniment and use their breath to initiate movement and cue each other for the timing. Their movement is also slow to moderate tempo and imitates the natural rhythm of the ocean.

Watch This

Excerpt from Modern Dance choreographer Doris Humphrey's *Water Study*. In this video, the dancers have no musical accompaniment and use their breath to initiate movement and cue each other for the timing. Their movement is also slow to moderate tempo and imitates the natural rhythm of the ocean.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-9

Promo clip of Step Afrika! The dancers are creating rhythm patterns with body percussion. There is an emphasis on syncopation and varying tempos with accents.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#oembed-10

Summary

All dance forms share foundational concepts known as the Elements of Dance. The Elements of Dance are overarching concepts and terminology that are useful when observing, creating, analyzing, and discussing dance. Dance can be broken down into its primary elements: Body, Energy, Space, and Time. It can be easily recalled through the acronym B.E.S.T.

The body is the mobile instrument of the dancer and helps inform us of what is moving. The body category includes shapes, actions, and whole-body and part-body movements. Energy is how the body moves. When speaking about Energy, we can refer to effort or movement qualities. Space is where movement occurs and includes personal and general space, levels, directions, pathways, floor patterns, various sizes of movements, range of movement, and relationships. Time is when the dancers move. The Time category includes pulse, speed, rhythmic patterns, natural rhythm, and syncopation.

As observers of dance, it can be easy to allow our biases to influence how we perceive dance. By using dance vocabulary and stating what we observe, we can be more objective in our discussions of dance. Using the Elements of Dance, we can view dance through an unbiased lens to consider its structural elements to deepen our understanding and appreciation of dance as an art form.

Check Your Understanding

1. Try making shapes that depict literal and abstract concepts. Some examples of literal shapes

might be a flower, a seashell, or a rainbow. Some abstract shapes might be circles, diamonds, or even concepts such as friendship, heroism, or depression.

2. Make a short (10-second) dance phrase and perform it twice with two different types of energy.

3. On paper, draw a map with a continuous pathway without lines overlapping. After mapping your pathway, try adding locomotor movement on various levels that complements your pathway design.

4. Make a sentence introducing yourself and your favorite food. For example: "Cissy Whipp likes chips and guacamole." or "Vanessa Kanamoto likes grilled shrimp." Now try clapping the rhythm your sentence makes. (Notice how the two examples have very different rhythms.) Create a movement pattern that matches the rhythm pattern of your sentence. Practice until you can repeat it four times in a row.

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=549#h5p-16

Resources

The Elements of Dance website from Perpich Center for Arts Education in partnership with University of MN Dance Program https://www.elementsofdance.org/

19.

CHAPTER 19: DANCE HISTORY AND STYLES

Learning Objectives

- Explain the function of court dance and the development of ballet.
- Summarize the development of ballet from its professionalization through Romantic, Classical, Avant-Garde, Neoclassical, and Contemporary Ballet.
- Associate major ballet milestones with the works and choreographers responsible.

"Nothing resembles a dream more than a ballet, and it is this which explains the singular pleasure that one receives from these apparently frivolous representations. One enjoys, while awake, the phenomenon that nocturnal fantasy traces on the canvas of sleep; an entire world of chimeras moves before you."

—Theophile Gautier, French poet

What Is Ballet?

Ballet is the epitome of classical dance in Western cultures. Classical dance forms are structured, and stylized techniques developed and evolved throughout centuries requiring rigorous formal training. Ballet originated with the nobility in the Renaissance courts of Europe. The dance form was closely associated with appropriate behavior and etiquette. Eventually, ballet became a professional vocation as it became a popular form of

entertainment for the new middle-class to enjoy. Ballet spread throughout the world as dance masters refined their craft and handed their methods down from generation to generation. Over 500 years, it has developed and changed. Dancers and choreographers worldwide have contributed new vocabulary and styles, yet ballet's essence remains the same.

Ballet Characteristics

Codified Technique

Ballet is a **codified** dance form ordered systematically and has set movements associated with specific terminology. Ballet is a rigorous art and requires extensive training to perform the technique correctly. The first ballet creators' principles have survived intact, but different regional and artistic styles have emerged over the centuries. Ballet classes follow a standard structure for progression and are composed of two sections.

The first part of ballet class typically begins with a warm-up at the barre. The **barre** is a stationary handrail that dancers hold while working on balance, allowing them to focus on placement, alignment, and coordination. The second half of the ballet class is performed in the center without a barre. Dancers use the entire room to increase their spatial awareness and perform elevated and dynamic movements.

Fig. 1. www.sortiraparis.com scenes/danse/agenda/33610-le-grand-ballet-de-cuba-au-casino-de-paris-le-18-11-2010 – First found on Jun 7, 2015 Filename: 52529-le-grand-ballet-de-cuba.jpg.

Alignment and Turnout

Ballet emphasizes the lengthening of the spine and the use of turnout, an outward rotation of the legs in the hip socket. This serves both to create an aesthetically pleasing line and increase mobility.

Foot Articulation

Ballet demands a strong articulated foot to perform demanding movements and create an elongated line.

Pointe shoes, a ballet staple, add to the illusion of weightlessness and flight. They are constructed with a hard, flat box to enable dance on the tips of the toes; it is a technique called en pointe that requires years of training and dedication to develop the needed strength in the feet, ankles, calves, and legs.

Fig.3. Modern pointe shoes, modeled by Daria L. The edge of the toe pad, which is inserted between the foot and toe box for cushioning, can be seen on the right foot. CC Public Domain Public Domain.

Elevated Movement

Traditionally, ballet favors a light quality, called ballon, with elevated movements. Dancers seem to overcome gravity effortlessly and achieve great height in their leaps and jumps.

Pantomime and Storytelling

Ballet can tell a story without words through a language of gestures called pantomime. Some movements are easily understood or have simple body language, but more abstract concepts are given specific gestures of their own to convey meaning. The facial expressions, the musical phrasing, and dynamics all play a role in communicating the story. Pantomime developed in ballet's Romantic period and was further incorporated during the Classical era.

Fig 2. Original file (4,236 × 2,549 pixels, file size: 2.47 MB, MIME type: image/jpeg); ZoomViewer This file is made available under the Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication. CC0

Watch This

The Royal Ballet dancers demonstrate and decode ballet pantomime for *Swan Lake.* David Pickering addresses the audience in the basics of pantomime, and audience members mimic the movement. In the second part of the clip, principal dancers Marianele Nunez and Thiago Soares reenact Act 2 as David Pickering narrates the pantomime.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-1

Court Dance: Italy and France

In medieval Italy, an early pantomime version featured a single performer portraying all the story characters through gestures and dance. A narrator previewed the story to come, and musicians accompanied the pantomime. Pantomimes were quite popular, but they were sometimes over-the-top in their efforts to be comedic, often resulting in lewd and graphic reenactments. Dance was a part of everyday life. Peasants danced at street fairs, and guild members danced at festivals, but it was in the royal courts that ballet had its genesis.

Fig. 4. Unknown author – http://www.peopleplayuk.org.uk/collections/object.php?object_id=285&back=%2Fguided_tours%2Fpantomime_tour%2Fearly_pantomime%2Fharlequin.php%3F CC Public Domain.

European Renaissance: Ballet de Cour

Catherine de' Medici

Catherine de' Medici, a wealthy noblewoman of Florence, Italy, married the heir to the French throne, King Henri II. In 1581, she went to Paris for a royal wedding accompanied by Balthazar de Beaujoyeulx, a dance teacher and choreographer. Catherine de' Medici commissioned Beaujoyeulx to create **Ballet Comique de la Reine** in celebration of the wedding, and it became widely recognized as the first court ballet. The **ballet de cour** featured independent acts of dancing, music, and poetry unified by overarching themes from Greco-Roman mythology. The ballet included references to court characters and intrigues. After the Ballet Comique de la Reine production, a booklet was published with libretto telling the ballet's story. It became the model for ballets produced in other European courts, making France the recognized leader in ballet.

Fig. 5. Representation of a Ballet before Henri III and his Court, in the Gallery of the Louvre. Re-engraving from an original on Copper in the Ballet comique de la Royne by Balthazar de Beaujoyeulx (Paris: Ballard,1582). According to T. E. Lawrenson, *The French Stage and Playhouse in the Seventeenth Century* (2nd ed., 1986), p. 184, this performance took place in the Petit Bourbon. CC Public Domain.

Fig. 6. Painted Portrait of Catherine de' Medici (1519–1589) CC Public Domain.

King Louis XIV

During King Louis XIV's reign, France was a mighty nation. King Louis XIV kept nobility close at hand by moving his court and government to the Palace of Versailles, where he could maintain his power. At court, it

was necessary to excel in fencing, dance, and etiquette. Nobility vied for an elevated position in court, as one's abilities in the finer arts reflected success in politics.

King Louis XIV was a great patron of the arts and vigorously trained in ballet. He performed in several ballet productions. His most memorable role was Apollo, gaining the title the "Sun King" from "Le Ballet de la Nuit," translated to "The Ballet of the Night."

Louis XIV's love of dance inspired him to charter the Académie Royal de Musique et Danse, headed by his old dance teacher Pierre Beauchamps and thirteen of the finest dance masters from his court. In this way, the king assured that "la danse classique"—that is to say, "ballet"—would survive and develop. The **danse d'ecole** provided rigorous training to transition from amateur performance to seasoned professionals. This also opened the door for non-nobility to pursue ballet professionally. For the first time, women were also allowed to train in ballet. Women were only allowed to participate in court social dances until this point. Men performers took on all the roles in court ballets, wearing masks to dance the roles of women.

Fig. 7. Louis XIV dans Le Ballet de la nuit. The ballet was choreographed in 1653. It was significant because Louis XIV made his debut at court. This court ballet lasted 12 hours, beginning at sundown and lasting until morning, and consisted of 45 dances. Louis XIV appeared in 5 of them. The most famous dance of Ballet de la Nuit portrays Louis XIV as Apollo the Sun King. CC Public Domain.

Transitioning from the ballet de cour, dances of the Renaissance ballroom grew into the ballet a entrée, a series of independent episodes linked by a common theme. Early productions of the academy featured the opera-ballet, a hybrid art form of music and dance. Jean-Philippe Rameau served as both composer and choreographer for many early opera-ballets.

At this time, there was a differentiation of characters that dancers assumed. These roles were generally categorized as:

1. **danse noble**: regal presentation suitable for roles of royalty
2. **demi-charactere**: lively, everyday people; "the girl next door"
3. **comique**: exaggerated, caricatured characters

Some significant developments aided in the progression of ballet as an art form at the Académie Royale de Musique et Danse. Pierre Beauchamps significantly contributed to ballet by developing the five basic positions of the feet used in ballet technique. He also laid the foundation for a notation system to record dances. Raoul Auger Feuillet refined the notation and published it in 1700; then, in 1706, John Weaver translated it into English, making it globally accessible.

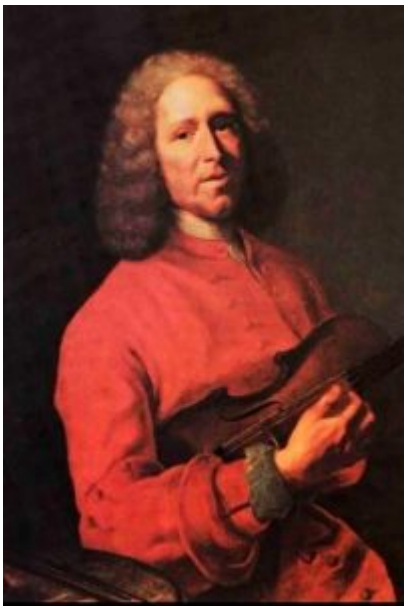

Fig. 8. File: Attribué à Joseph Aved, Portrait de Jean-Philippe Rameau (vers 1728) – 002.jpg Joseph Aved: Portrait of Jean-Philippe Rameau Artist artist QS:P170,Q489437,P5102,Q230768 Title Portrait of Jean-Philippe Rameau Object type painting CC Public Domain.

Watch This

In this split-screen, Feuillet's dance notation is shown on the left side while dancers perform the Baroque dances on the right side.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-2

The Académie Royale de Musique et Danse was the place to train classical dancers. Dancers and dance masters alike traveled to the great centers of Europe, bringing French ballet to the continent. Today's Paris Opera Ballet is the direct descendant of the Académie Royal de Musique et Danse.

Fig. 9. Paris Opera Ballet: flickrhivemind.net Tags/ académienationaledemusique,palaisgarnier/ Interesting – First found on Jan. 27, 2019 Filename: 3769637899_a409d8c5ab_b.jpg (1024 x 768, 319.3 kB) CC Public Domain.

Watch This

This TED-Ed animated video clip summarizes the origins of ballet.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-3

Dance in the Age of Enlightenment

The Age of Enlightenment was a philosophical movement that emphasized freedom of expression and the eradication of religious authority. These ideas caused criticism among philosophers who believed art forms should speak to meaningful human expression rather than ornamental art forms.

Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810)

Ballet master and choreographer Jean-Georges Noverre challenged ballet traditions and made ballets more expressive. In his famous writings, *Letters on Dancing and Ballet*, Noverre rejected dance traditions at the Paris Opera Ballet and helped transform ballet into a medium for storytelling. The masks that dancers traditionally wore were stripped away to show dramatic facial expressions and convey meaning within ballets. Pantomime helped tell the story of the ballet. In addition, plots became logically developed with unifying themes, integrating theatrical elements. From Noverre's concepts, **ballet d'action** emerged.

Carlo Blasis (1797–1878)

Carlo Blasis was particularly influential in shaping the vocabulary and structure of ballet techniques. He invented the "attitude" position commonly used in ballet from the inspiration of Giambologna's sculpture of Mercury. He published two major treatises on the execution of ballet, the most notable being "An Elementary Treatise upon the Theory and Practice of the Art of Dancing." Blasis taught primarily at LaScala in Milan, where he was responsible for educating many Romantic-era teachers and dancers.

Fig. 10. A picture of Bologna's Mercury on a Russian stamp (public domain; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f0/1988_CPA_6022.jpg); a dancer performs an attitude (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_ballet#/media/File:Yamamoto_Mashiko_-_Le_Corsaire_-_Prix_de_Lausanne_2010-4.jpg; CC BY-SA).

Costume Changes

During the Renaissance, men and women wore elaborate clothing. Women wore laced-up corsets around the torso and panniers (a series of side hoops) fastened around the waist to extend the width of the skirts. Men wore breeches and heeled shoes. The upper body was bound by bulky clothing and primarily emphasized footwork. By the 18th century, there were changes in costuming. Two dancers helped revolutionize costumes.

Fig. 11. Adelaïde Simonet as the Princess in the pantomime-ballet *Ninette à la Cour*, first produced by the Paris Opera Ballet in 1778 with choreography by Maximilien Gardel, as performed in London in 1781. CC Public Domain.

Marie Sallé (1707–1756)

Marie Sallé was a famous dancer at the Paris Opera, celebrated for her dramatic expression. Her natural approach to pantomime storytelling influenced Noverre. She traded the elaborate clothing that was fashionable at the time to match the subject of the choreography. In her self-choreographed ballet *Pygmalion*, she wore a less restrictive costume, wearing a simple draped Grecian-style dress and soft slippers. This allowed for less restricted movement and expression.

Fig. 11. Garnier, After Nicolas Lancret (1690–1743). Mademoiselle Sallé CC Public Domain.

Marie Camargo (1710–1770)

Marie Camargo, a contemporary of Sallé, exemplified virtuosity and flamboyance in her dancing. She shortened her skirt to just above the ankles to make her impressive fancy footwork visible. She also removed the heels from her shoes, creating flat-soled slippers. This allowed her to execute jumps and leaps that were previously considered male steps.

Fig. 12. La Camargo Dancing ca. 1730, Nicolas Lancret (1690–1743). Andrew W. Mellon Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/7/77/La_Camargo_Dancing.jpg. CC Public Domain.

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-17

Romantic Ballet

From France and the royal academy, dance masters brought ballet to the other courts of Europe. These professional teachers and choreographers attended London, Vienna, Milan, and Copenhagen, where the monarchs supported ballet. During the 18th century, the French Revolution ended the French monarchy, and Europe saw political and social changes that profoundly affected ballet. By the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution resulted in middle-class people working in factories. Art shifted from glorifying the nobility to emphasizing the ordinary person.

The Romantic era of ballet reflected this pivotal time. Ballets had now become **ballet d'action**, ballets that tell a story. The Romantic era was a time of fantasy, etherealism, supernaturalism, and exoticism. Artistic themes included man versus nature, good versus evil, and society versus the supernatural. The dancers appeared as humans and mythical creatures like sylphs, wilis, shades, and naiads. Women were the stars of the ballets, and men took on supporting roles. Choreography now included pointework, pantomime, and the

illusion of floating. Romantic ballets most often appeared as two acts. The first act would be set in the real world, and dancers would portray humans. In contrast, the second act was set in a spiritual realm and often would include a tragic end.

Theater Special Effects

Fig. 13. Stage of the Garnier Opera House, Paris, France. scarletgreen from Japan – operagarnier12f. CC BY 2.0.

The opera houses featured stages with prosceniums, a stage with a frame or arch. The shift of performance venues had a significant effect on ballet in the following ways:

1. In ballrooms, geometric floor patterns were appreciated by audiences who sat above. The audience's perspective changed to a frontal view with the introduction of the proscenium stage, and the body became the composition's focus.
2. Turned-out legs were emphasized, allowing dancers to travel side-to-side while still facing the audience. This required dancers to have greater skill and technique.
3. The proscenium stage separated the audience and performers, transitioning from its social function to theatrical entertainment.
4. Curtains allowed for changes in scenery.
5. The flickering of the gas lights in the theaters gave a supernatural look to the dancing on the stage.
6. Theaters also enabled rigging to carry the dancers into the air, giving the illusion of flying.

The stagecraft of the time lent itself to creating the scenes that choreographer Filippo Taglioni would use in his ballets.

La Sylphide

In 1824, ballet master Filippo Taglioni (1777–1871) choreographed *La Sylphide*. His daughter Marie portrayed the sylphide, an ethereal, spirit-like character. Marie Taglioni (1804–1884) wore a white romantic tutu with a bell-shaped skirt that reached below her knees, creating the effect of flight and weightlessness. Taglioni also removed the heels from her slippers and rose to the tips of her toes as she danced to give her movement a floating and ethereal quality. Taglioni is recognized as one of the first dancers to perform en pointe.

La Sylphide features a **corps de ballet**, a group of dancers working in unison to create dance patterns. Because the corps de ballet is dressed in white romantic tutus (as is the norm with sylphs, fairies, wilis, and other creatures that populate the worlds of Romantic ballet), *La Sylphide* is known as a **ballet blanc**.

Fig. 14. Alfred Edward Chalon (1780–1860; artist), Lane, Richard James (A.R.A.) (1800–1872; lithographer), J. Dickinson (publisher). This file was derived from: Marie Taglioni in Zephire et Flore.jpg: Marie Taglioni as Flore in Charles Didelot's ballet Zephire et Flore. Hand colored lithograph, circa 1831. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

Watch this video of the Royal Scottish Ballet that describes and shows excerpts from *La Sylphide*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-4

Auguste Bournonville (1805–1879)

Auguste Bournonville, a French-trained dancer, served the Royal Danish Ballet as a choreographer and

director. Four years after the original *La Sylphide* production, Bournonville re-choreographed the ballet. Bournonville's dances feature speed, elevation, and beats where the legs "flutter" in the air. He also expanded the lexicon of male dancing by adding ballon for men and stylized movements for women that portrayed them as sweet and charming. Bournonville created many dances for the Danish ballet, and the company has preserved his choreography through the centuries.

Watch This

The Bournonville variation from Napoli demonstrates movements of elevation.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-5

Giselle

Giselle is a ballet masterwork that is still performed worldwide. It is inspired by the literary works of Heine and Hugo that referenced the supernatural wilis. *Giselle* was choreographed by Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot and composed by Adolphe Adam. It is almost a template for the traditional Romantic ballets. Act 1 is set in a village, and act 2 is in a graveyard, an otherworldly place populated by the ghosts of young girls who died before their wedding day, willis. Giselle falls in love with a young man, Albrecht, who pretends to be a local but is really a nobleman. Distraught by his deception, she dies from grief. When Albrecht visits her grave, the wilis conspire to dance him to death. Giselle, now a wili herself, intervenes to save him.

Coppélia

Not all Romantic era ballets were tragic and supernatural. Arthur St. Léon created the great comedic ballet

Coppélia: The Girl with the Enamel Eyes. The ballet is based on a tale by E. T. A. Hoffman. It tells the story of a village boy, Franz, enamored by the girl Coppélia. Unbeknownst to him, she is an automaton. His jealous girlfriend Swanilda discovers the deception created by the doll's creator, and when the old toymaker tries to animate his doll with magic, she takes the doll's place and pretends to come to life. The characters' antics were great hits with audiences, and the ballet remains popular today.

Classical Ballet: Imperial Russia

About the time King Louis XIV was sponsoring the creation of ballet in his court, Peter the Great became tsar of Russia (1682–1725). He embraced science and Western social ideas in an effort to bring "the Enlightenment" to Russia. Peter built the imperial city of St. Petersburg and established his court there. His successor, Empress Anna, retained Jean-Baptiste Lande in 1738 to establish a ballet school at the military academy she had established. This school became the home of the Mariinsky Ballet. The Bolshoi Ballet was a rival school and company later established in Moscow.

Following Lande's lengthy directorship in St Petersburg, many of Europe's most important ballet masters and choreographers took a turn at the helm in creating dance in Russia, including Jules Perrot, Filippo Taglioni, and Arthur St Léon.

Marius Petipa (1818–1910)

Marius Petipa was the most influential choreographer of this era, known as "The Father of Classical Ballet." A dancer from a family of French ballet dancers, he moved to St. Petersburg as a minor choreographer. He rose to great importance in Russian ballet as the director and choreographer of the Mariinsky Ballet for nearly sixty years (1847–1903). He created over sixty ballets in his career, restaging a number of the great Romantic-era ballets (much of the existing choreography of ballets like *Giselle* and *Coppélia* is the work of Marius Petipa's restaging). Petipa also created new original ballets, beginning with *The Pharaoh's Daughter*, a five-act ballet complete with an underwater scene and livestock onstage.

Fig. 15. Photograph of Marius Petipa by an unidentified photographer. Photo collection of Adam Lopez, wikipedia user [1] CC Public domain.

Characteristics of Classical Ballets

Marius Petipa is responsible for the defining characteristics of classical ballets. Petipa's creations told stories using ballet, character dance, and choreographic structures that highlighted the most technical dancers of the company.

Classical Ballet Choreographic Structure

Petipa developed a standard choreographic structure. He used character dances, folk dances that depicted various cultures, to add variety to the performance. Unlike the Romantic ballets that consisted of two acts, classical ballets expanded to three or four acts. Many dances that had nothing to do with moving the plot forward were included in these ballets to make them longer. These extra dance numbers are called **divertissements** (diversions). Divertissements were often character dances. The end of the ballet usually features the **grand pas de deux**, a duet for the principal dancers. The grand pas de deux has four sections:

1. Adagio: The principal dancers perform slow movement together that is fluid and controlled.
2. Man's Variation: Males display their technical virtuosity by performing leaps, turns, and jumps.
3. Woman's Variation: Females often perform quick footwork and turns.
4. Coda: The principals dance together to display impressive movements.

Watch This

The *Sleeping Beauty* grand pas de deux featuring Robert Bolle and Diana Vishneva.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-6

Contextual Connections

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed three great ballets. He was already a recognized and respected composer in Russia when Petipa asked him to compose the ballet score for *The Sleeping Beauty*. Petipa gave Tchaikovsky specific instructions on the music he required for the ballet. The ballet was lavishly produced and became an enormous success.

Tchaikovsky's second ballet, *The Nutcracker*, was choreographed by Petipa's choreographic assistant, Lev Ivanov (1834–1901). Ivanov worked alongside Petipa in the creation of many ballets. He created entire portions of Petipa ballets and ballets of his own.

The Nutcracker was not admired in Russia at the time—it was seen as frivolous and trivial. It was in America in the middle of the 20th century that the Nutcracker found popularity as a vehicle for local dancers in communities around the country.

The third well-known ballet Tchaikovsky composed was *Swan Lake*. Marius Petipa choreographed the first and third acts of the ballet—those set in the environs of Prince Siegfried, the town and ballroom, and the world of people. Lev Ivanov choreographed acts 2 and 4, the beautiful scenes set at the lake with the swans.

Fig. 16. Corps de ballet by Jack Devant ballet photography CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

After the revolution of 1917, the Russian populace embraced ballet. Rather than discarding it as a symbol of the tsars, the working class adopted it as their own, and ballet became a symbol of national pride.

At the end of the 19th century, Russia was at the apex of the ballet world, and this continued well into the 20th century. The Vaganova Choreographic Institute in St Petersburg employs Russia's finest teachers to train its dancers. The life of a ballet dancer in Russia brings privileges and opportunities that make acceptance into the school highly desirable.

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-18

Ballet Russes: Dance and the Avant-Garde

Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929)

Sergei Diaghilev, a Russian art lover, organized the Ballet Russes in 1909. He identified ballet as the ideal vehicle to present the Russian arts to the West. Diaghilev's troupe included some of Russia's finest dancers and choreographers recruited from the Vaganova Institute and the Mariinsky ballet. He promoted collaborations with avant-garde composers and artists of the time. The tour to Paris extended 20 years as the Ballet Russes performed for Paris, Europe, and the Western world. The Ballet Russes introduced a new and modern form of ballet, revitalizing ballet in the West.

Fig. 17. George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress). This image is available from the United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division under the digital ID ggbain.20797. CC Public Domain.

Michel Fokine (1880–1942)

The first choreographer of Ballet Russes was Michel Fokine. Like Jean-Georges Noverre, Fokine developed principles to reform ballet. Fokine focused on ballet's expressiveness rather than physical prowess. He believed movement should serve a purpose to the theme, and costumes should reflect the dress of the time and setting. Fokine also stripped away pantomime in his ballets, emphasizing movement and self-expression as the catalyst for storytelling. His one-act ballet *Les Sylphides* was reminiscent of the earlier ballet *La Sylphide* in its use of the ethereal sylph. But Fokine's ballet had no plot. A single man, a poet, dances among a group of sylphides in a ballet that evokes a dreamlike mood.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Les Sylphides* (ca. 1928). This black-and-white clip is some of the only footage of the

company that exists. Diaghilev did not want his ballet company to be filmed because he was afraid of losing income from box office sales.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-7

Fokine's *The Firebird* was based on tales from Russian folklore. His *Petrouchka* told the story of a trio of puppets at a Russian street fair.

Vaslav Nijinsky (1889–1950)

Fig. 18. The dancer Vaslav Nijinsky in the ballet *Le spectre de la rose* as performed at the Royal Opera House in 1911. CC Public Domain.

Vaslav Nijinsky was a principal dancer of the company and is remembered for his astonishing gravity-defying jumps and poignant portrayals. When Fokine left the company, Nijinsky became the principal choreographer. He choreographed the *Rite of Spring: Tales from Russia*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, and *Jeux*. Nijinsky's dances were controversial because the themes, movement aesthetics, and music were unconventional for the time. *The Rite of Spring* portrays a pagan ritual and fertility rites that left the audience in an uproar on its opening night.

Watch This

Excerpt from *The Rite of Spring*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-8

Léonide Massine (1895–1979)

Léonide Massine followed Nijinsky as a choreographer, where he expanded on Fokine's innovations, focusing on narrative, folk dance, and character portrayals in his ballets. *Parade* is a one-act ballet about French and American street circuses. Pablo Picasso designed the cubist sets and costumes.

Watch This

Excerpt of *Parade*. The characters are introduced in three groups as they try to entice an audience into the performance. The giant cubist figures portray business promoters.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-9

Bronislava Nijinska (1891–1972)

Bronislava Nijinska, the fourth Ballet Russes choreographer, was Vaslav's sister and stands out as one of the few recognized women choreographers. Her ballet *Les Noces*, set to music by Stravinsky, was noted for its

architectural qualities. She created several ballets known for being Riviera chic, portraying the carefree lifestyle of Europe's idle rich.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Le Train Bleu*; you can see the costumes designed by Coco Chanel.

George Balanchine (1904–1983)

George Balanchine was the fifth and last choreographer of Diaghilev's Ballet Russes. He created ten ballets for the company. The *Prodigal Son* is a retelling of the Bible story. *Apollo* shows the birth of the god Apollo and his tutoring in the arts by the three muses. Those two ballets remain in the repertory of the New York City Ballet.

Watch This

Excerpt from Balanchine's *Apollo* performed by Pacific Northwest Ballet.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-74

Watch This

This short clip features pictures and footage with commentary by Lynn Garafola, Nancy Reynolds, and Charles M. Smith.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-10

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Original Ballet Russe

Diaghilev died in 1929, and his company disbanded with him. Two other companies emerged in its wake, the Original Ballet Russe and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. They would hire several of the dancers of the parent company and travel Europe and the Americas throughout the 1930s, '40s, and '50s. They spread ballet around the world, and their dancers would become the next generation of dancing masters.

The Five Moons

Many American dancers found work with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Original Ballet Russe. Five exceptional Native American dancers who became ballerinas with these companies hailed from Oklahoma. Known as the Five Moons, a reference to their tribes, these women gained fame and success at the highest levels of ballet and were foundational in the development of Oklahoma dance institutions.

Maria Tallchief (Osage Nation, 1925–2013) went on to dance with the New York City Ballet. She married George Balanchine and worked with him for many years. Balanchine's *Firebird* was a signature role for her.

Marjorie Tallchief (Osage Nation, 1926–2021), Maria's sister, was known for her great versatility as a dancer. She had a successful dancing career in Europe and the States, then served as director at Dallas Civic Ballet Academy, Chicago's City Ballet, and Harid Conservatory in Boca Raton.

Moscelyne Larkin (Peoria/Eastern Shawnee/Russian, 1925–2012) first learned ballet from her dancer mother. She starred at Radio City Music Hall and founded Tulsa Ballet Theatre with her husband.

Yvonne Chouteau (Shawnee Tribe, 1929–2016) joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the age of 14,

where she danced many roles from the Ballet Russe repertory. She served as an artist in residence at the University of Oklahoma and founded Oklahoma City Ballet with her husband.

Rosella Hightower (Choctaw Nation, 1920–2008) danced with these major companies and with American Ballet Theatre, but she later found her work in France as director of Marseilles Opera Ballet and then Ballet de Nancy. Hightower was the first American director of the Paris Opera Ballet.

Fig. 19. Two of the Five Moons sculptures at the Tulsa Historical Society. From left to right: Marjorie Tallchief, Rosella Hightower. Attributed to Peter Greenberg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

Neoclassical Ballet

Neoclassical dance utilizes traditional ballet vocabulary, but pieces are often abstract and have no narrative. Several choreographers were experimenting with the neoclassical style. Balanchine's work is regarded as neoclassical, embracing both classical and contemporary aesthetics. Balanchine wanted the attention to be on the movement itself, highlighting the relationship between music and dancing by creating movement that mirrored the music. Balanchine also employed freedom of the upper body, moving away from the verticality of the spine for a more expressive movement that drew inspiration from vernacular jazz dance styles that became prominent.

American Ballet in the 20th Century

At the invitation of Lincoln Kirstein, George Balanchine went to New York City when the Ballet Russes ended in 1929. In 1934, they established the first ballet school in the United States, the forerunner of the School of American Ballet. It expanded into a short-lived dance company. In 1948, Balanchine established a small

company that ultimately grew to become the New York City Ballet (NYCB). New York City Ballet is the resident company of Lincoln Center in NYC and one of the most recognized ballet companies in the country.

George Balanchine was a prolific choreographer with a long career. Due to his contributions to the development of ballet in the United States, Balanchine is known as "the father of American ballet." He wanted to express modern 20th-century life and ideas to capture the spirit and athleticism of American dancers. Some of his most famous ballets include *Serenade*, *Jewels*, *Stars and Stripes*, and *Concerto Barocco*.

Watch This

Excerpt of the Rubies pas de deux from the ballet *Jewels*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-11

American Ballet Theatre (ABT)

Fig. 20. KCB Dancers, George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*. Photography by Steve Wilson CC By 2.0

American Ballet Theatre (ABT), a New York City Ballet contemporary, is also recognized as a premier ballet company. Its mission is to preserve the classical repertoire, commission new works, and provide educational programming.

Its directors have included Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith, Mikail Baryshnikov, and Kevin McKenzie. Hundreds of renowned choreographers have created works with ABT. Antony Tudor created intimate psychological ballets, Agnes de Mille created ballets of Americana, and Jerome Robbins produced ballets across a range of styles.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Rodeo* by Agnes de Mille. The dancers mimic the bowed legs of cowboys and trot about as if they are astride horses. Aaron Copland composed the music.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-12

Ballet grew in other cities of America as well. San Francisco Ballet was founded by Adolphe Bolm, a Ballet Russes dancer. Chicago and Utah both established ballet companies early on.

Other Notable American Ballet Artists

Mid-20th Century

Jerome Robbins (1918–1998)

Jerome Robbins was an American-born dancer and a significant choreographer in ballet, musical theater, and film. Robbins contributed modern ballets to the repertory of New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. His artistic works are influenced by ordinary people and reflect current times.

Watch This

Short documentary that highlights scenes of *Fancy Free* with commentary by Daniel Ulbricht and Ella Baff. *Fancy Free* is set in the 1940s; this ballet is about the escapades of sailors onshore. *Fancy Free* is the precursor for the musical *On the Town*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-13

Robert Joffrey (1930–1988)

In 1953, Robert Joffrey began his company, Joffrey Ballet, as a small touring group traveling in a single van. It is primarily known for its pop-culture ballets, like *Astarte*, and historical recreations of ballets like Nijinsky's *Rite of Spring*, Fokine's *Petrouchka*, and Massine's *Parade*.

Arthur Mitchell

Fig. 21. Portrait of Arthur Mitchell from the United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division under the digital ID cph.3c16603. CC Public Domain.

Arthur Mitchell was the first African-American principal dancer to perform with a leading national ballet company, New York City Ballet. In 1969, in response to news of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, Mitchell created a ballet school in his childhood neighborhood. The Dance Theatre of Harlem rose from the ballet school, a classical ballet company composed primarily of African-American dancers.

Mitchell wanted to produce ballets that would raise the voices of people of color and create opportunities for them to dance professionally. He used his company as a platform for social justice. In his Creole *Giselle*, Mitchell reimagined the romantic ballet and set it in Louisiana during the 1840s. According to the Dance Theatre of Harlem's program notes, "During this time, social status among free blacks was measured by how far removed one's family was from slavery. Giselle's character is kept the same; her greatest joy is to dance. Albrecht is now Albert, and the Wilis are the ghosts of young girls who adore dancing and die of a broken heart."

Watch This

This archival material from Creole *Giselle* includes pictures and dancing clips narrated by the dancers of the original ballet, Theara Ward, Augustus Van Heerden, and Lorraine Graves.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-14

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-19

Contemporary Ballet: Ballet in the 21st Century

Fig. 22. Dance Theatre of Harlem. Photo credit: Matty Stern/U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv CC By 2.0.

Contemporary ballet is a dance genre that uses classical techniques (French terminology) that choreographers manipulate and blend with other dance forms, such as modern dance.

Alonzo King LINES Ballet

Alonzo King is an American choreographer who initially studied at the ABT. King also danced with notable choreographers Alvin Ailey and Arthur Mitchell before founding his company, LINES Ballet. LINES Ballet is located in California, where King uses Western and Eastern classical dance forms to create contemporary ballets.

BalletX

BalletX was founded in 2005 by Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan and is located in Philadelphia. The mission of BalletX is to expand classical vocabulary through its experimentation to push the boundaries of ballet.

Watch This

Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan discuss the mission of BalletX. The footage shows clips of the company's performances, pictures, and interviews with the company members.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-15

Complexions Contemporary Ballet

In 1994, Complexions was founded by Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson. The mission of Complexions is to foster diverse and inclusive approaches in the making and presentation of their works to inspire change in the ballet world.

Watch This

Excerpt from *WOKE* that uses music from Logic to explore themes of humanity in response to the political climate.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-16

Other Notable Contemporary Ballet Artists

- **Nederlands Dans** Theater, founded in 1959, is a Dutch contemporary dance company
- **William Forsythe** founded the Forsythe Company (2005–2015), integrating ballet with visual arts.
- **Jiří Kylián** blends classical ballet steps with contemporary approaches to create abstract dances.
- **Amy Hall Garner** combines ballet, modern, and theatrical dance genres.
- **Trey McIntyre** founded the Trey McIntyre Project in 2005, combining ballet and contemporary dance with visual arts.
- **Ballet Hispánico**, founded by Tina Ramirez in 1970, blends ballet with Latinx dance to create more opportunities for dancers of color, known as one of America's Cultural Treasures.
- **Justin Peck** is the resident choreographer for New York City Ballet, creating new works, and earned a Tony Award for his choreography in the revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*.

Inclusivity

From its origins in the elite white-only courts of France and Italy and well into the present day, Western dance forms had a history of exclusionism. In the United States, the first black ballet dancer who broke the color barrier in 1955 to dance in a major ballet company was Raven Wilkinson. Wilkinson danced and toured with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Racial segregation was at its height during this time, forcing Wilkinson to deny her race when performing at most venues. After facing years of discrimination, Wilkinson eventually left the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. After facing rejection from several American ballet companies, Wilkinson was hired to dance with the Dutch National Ballet. Wilkinson later became a mentor to Misty Copeland.

Fig. 23. Ballerina Raven Wilkinson speaks about Misty Copeland in *Glamour* / *Vogue* magazine video. CC By.

In 2015, Misty Copeland became the first African-American female principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre. Copeland is also the first woman of color to take the lead role of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*. Her road to principal dancer was difficult, as many claimed she had the wrong skin color to dance professionally. Due to the racism faced throughout her life, Misty Copeland uses her platform to bring awareness to the challenges people of color face in the ballet world by advocating for diversity.

Watch This

Misty Copeland's interview on race in ballet.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-17

Misty Copeland

Fig. 24. Gilda N. Squire Gildasquire – Extracted from File:From the ballet Coppelia.jpg CC By-SA 4.0.

Racial barriers have caused choreographers to challenge the traditional Eurocentric forms of ballet. Hiplet, a fusion of ballet movement and hip-hop, was created by Homer Hans Bryant to provide opportunities for dancers of color to connect to ballets and express themselves in a contemporary and culturally relevant way.

Watch This

In this video, Hiplet creator Homer Hans Bryant discusses how he developed this dance style.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-18

Gender Roles

Ballets historically tend to follow stereotyped gender roles that emphasize femininity and masculinity. These conventional standards are reinforced in the movements, roles, costuming, and partnering displayed in ballets. In pas de deuxs in classical ballets, female dancers are paired with male dancers. Female dancers are often portrayed as delicate, complacent, ethereal beings. In contrast, male dancers are presented as dominant and strong; they lift their female partners, enforcing the image of men supporting women.

Fig. 25. "George Balanchine's *Apollo* – David Ingram & Traci Gilchrest – photo by Peter Zay" by Charlotte Ballet is marked with CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

Mathew Bourne

In 1995, Matthew Bourne took a contemporary approach to classical ballet in his reimagined *Swan Lake*. Bourne disrupts societal expectations by replacing the female swans with men. In the male-male pas de deux, the dancers lift and support each other, shifting the power dynamics to emphasize equality in the movement.

Watch This

"The New Adventures" excerpt of *Swan Lake*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-19

LGBTQIA+ Representation

Ballets have also reinforced heterosexual norms and narratives. Societal ideals of feminine and masculine stereotyped gender roles have caused inequality in the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community. Although there are openly gay male dancers in ballet, their roles pressure them to adhere to rigid ideas of masculinity. The chivalrous prince rescues the helpless female character. Historically, the Romantic era brought the ballerina to the forefront, and ballet became perceived as a feminine art form. Dancers who identify as lesbians are excluded from the ballet narrative because movement qualities reinforce binary norms.

The representation gap for all sexual orientations has excluded people in the LGBTQIA+ community. Many feel the pressure to conform to rigid gender stereotypes. LGBTQIA+ artists today are using their platforms to address the lack of representation and challenge ballet traditions to include a wide spectrum of sexuality.

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo adds a twist of humor in classical ballets. The company, founded in 1974, features men performing en travesti (in the clothing of the opposite sex). The dancers in this company challenge the gender norms of ballet by assigning men to traditionally female roles.

Watch This

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo's version of *Swan Lake*. In the pas de quatre, or dance of four, the dancers perform a parody of the "Dance of the Little Swans."

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-20

Ballez

Ballez is a ballet company founded by Katy Pyle in 2011. Ballez aims to dismantle the patriarchal structure of ballet to create inclusive spaces for the representation of queer dancers. In 2021, Pyle reimagined the romantic ballet *Giselle*. In Ballez's production *Giselle of Loneliness*, Ballez highlights the experiences of queer and gender non-conforming, non-binary, and trans dancers. The dancers perform an audition solo inspired by the "mad scene" from the original *Giselle* that comments on the personal challenges and experiences affecting their relationship with ballet from an LGBTQIA+ lens.

Watch This

An interview with Katy Pyle.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-21

Body Types

Fig. 26. CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0) Public Domain Dedication.

Generally, ballet centers on European aesthetics, including the ideal body shape. George Balanchine, the founder of New York City Ballet, favored a ballet dancer with a long neck, sloped shoulders, a small rib cage, a narrow waist, and long legs and feet. These ideals have resulted in the pressure to maintain a slender physique and have caused body dysmorphia in many dancers. Copeland has stated that at the age of 21, artistic staff commented on how her body "changed" and their hopes to see her body "lengthen." According to Copeland, "That, of course, was a polite, safe way of saying, 'You need to lose weight.'" In 2017, Misty Copeland released her health and fitness book *Ballerina Body: Dancing and Eating Your Way to a Leaner, Stronger, and More Graceful You*. Copeland shares her health-conscious approaches to developing healthier and stronger bodies in this book.

Ballet Timeline

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-20

Summary

Ballet is a Western classical dance form with a rich history—beginning in the Renaissance as a royal court entertainment infused with social and political purposes, eventually developing into a codified technique. Over time, ballet transformed, experiencing costume changes in the Enlightenment that led to dancers being able to express themselves without being confined to restrictive clothing. In the Romantic era, ballet d'action emerged, emphasizing emotions over logic to help communicate the ballet's story. There were also technical elements such as flying machines that gave the impression of dancers floating onstage. The unique theater effects led to female dancers beginning to dance en pointe. During the Classical period, Russia became the leader of ballet, with government support to establish ballet schools. Ballet shifted in pursuit of virtuosity, demanding greater technique from dancers. The Ballet Russes made a significant impact by modernizing ballets, bringing ballet to other world regions, and helping establish ballet in America, and a new ballet style was formed, neoclassical. Today, choreographers challenge the ballet traditions and embrace various dance genres to blend with ballet, known as contemporary dance.

Check Your Understanding

1. Ballet Pantomime

Choreograph a short pantomime that tells a story through dialogue. You may either choose to ask a friend or family member to exchange dialogue or perform your dance alone. Use a combination of traditional pantomime gestures from the selected videos and add original gestures and facial expressions. Record your pantomime and share the link on the discussion board (minimum of 20 seconds). Include a script summarizing what your pantomime says.

Video 1

Video 2

Video 3

Here are some topic examples you might consider:

- Activities or sports you like to participate in and why.
- What makes you happy (taking walks, spending time with friends, etc.).
- Aspects about your day.
- A place you've traveled to and what you saw.

- Words of encouragement/affirmation.

2. Elements of Dance in Ballet

DIRECTIONS: Utilizing the Elements of Dance, watch two videos from different ballet eras (Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Romantic period, Classical, Avant-Garde, Neoclassical, and Contemporary) and write a reflection speaking to the salient qualities observed. Answer the following prompts:

- Compare and contrast the aesthetics observed using the Elements of Dance.
- How does the movement reflect the ballet era? How does the period reflect the movement?

3. Dear Catherine de' Medici

DIRECTIONS: Write a letter to Catherine de' Medici that speaks to the current discourse in the ballet world. Select one of the discussion topics found in Chapter 3 and watch the associated video (race in ballet, gender roles, LGBTQIA+ representation, or body types) to reflect, respond, and advocate how the ballet world can address these issues. Please reference the class book or use the internet to conduct further research. Post your assignment on the discussion board and cite references (minimum of 150 words).

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Learning Objectives

- Explain the similarities and differences between ballet and modern dance.
- Identify key techniques and prominent figures in modern dance history.
- Understand the history of Western performance dance and summarize major events in the course of its development.

"Dance is the hidden language of the soul." —Martha Graham

What Is Modern Dance?

In the early 20th century, choreographers broke away from the strict traditions of ballet to develop dance as varied and rich as the American melting pot. Choreographers drew upon the styles of many cultures to create a new dance form as diverse as the citizens and expressive of the independence of the American spirit. Black dancers and choreographers explored their African and Caribbean roots and shaped their own form of expressive modern dance. Others sought new movement to depict the human condition. Inevitably, dances were shared, merged, and reimagined. No matter the case, early pioneers of modern dance explored new ways to express themselves in more natural and free form while conveying the spirit of their times.

Modern Dance Characteristics

Modern dance technique is unlike ballet's codified set of movements used worldwide. Modern dance styles are

individualized and, for the most part, named after the person who developed them; for instance, José Limón created the Limón Technique. Although modern dance techniques vary, movement concepts are embedded throughout techniques, sharing overarching principles. Let's take a look at the movement concepts in modern dance.

Dynamic Alignment and Flexibility

All dancers use dynamic alignment. However, in Modern dance, emphasis is given to the core along with the pelvis, which is the center from which all movement originates. The core keeps the dancer grounded and stable. Modern dancers also use freer or unrestrained movement of the torso that allows for flexibility in all directions.

Watch This

Graham Technique with dancers demonstrating contractions. The torso is in a concave shape created by the core contracting (abdominals); as a result, the pelvis "tucks under" and the chest reacts by rounding forward.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-22

Gravity

In modern dance, gravity is accepted, which acts as a partnership with the body utilizing the dancer's weight paired with momentum.

Watch This

An example of the Limón Technique called fall and recovery that uses the body's weight with momentum to surrender into gravity. The dancer is demonstrating arm swings, known as release swings. In this action, the dancer begins with the body in a vertical position and the arms swing in any direction. The dancer allows the momentum from the swing to propel the body in the direction of the arm, giving in to gravity.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-23

The Tanz Theater Münster company dancers interact with the floor. They can quickly move between floor work and standing movement.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-24

Breath

The use of breath is a prominent component of modern dance. Dancers do not always attempt to hide their

breathing. The inhalation and expiration of breath provide a natural physical rhythm that assists in executing movement.

Bare Feet, Flexed Feet, and Parallel Feet

Modern dance is often performed barefoot. Many exercises utilize the feet in a parallel position. Unlike traditional ballet, modern dance can use a flexed foot instead of a pointed foot.

Improvisation

Improvisation is the practice of unplanned movement. Many choreographers use improvisation as the basis for generating movement ideas for choreography. Through active investigation, choreographers select and further develop the movements explored from their improvisation to consider how they can be applied in their dance concept.

Watch This

The dancer improvises movement that includes floor work and standing movement.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-25

The Pioneers: First and Second Generations

Historical Context

Modern dance appeared in Germany and the United States in the early 20th century. In the late 19th century,

the second Industrial Revolution brought significant changes. The rise of people who lived and worked in cities, mainly middle-class or white-collar workers, meant they lived less active lifestyles, resulting in the task of public health officials to prevent the spread of diseases caused by sedentary lifestyles. Emphasis on the benefits of maintaining a regular exercise regimen, such as dance, gymnastics, and sports, were highly praised. European theorists Delsarte and Dalcroze introduced methods for understanding human movement that were presented to colleges as "aesthetic dance." These theorists made an impression on emerging modern dancers as they provided new ways to uncover the expressive qualities of the body by responding to internal sensations with greater freedom in movement possibilities.

Loie Fuller (1862–1928)

Loie Fuller was a former actress and skirt dancer, a popular dance form in Europe and America mainly found in burlesque and vaudeville. Fuller is known for her dramatic manipulation of fabrics and lighting designs, creating visual effects such as butterfly wings and fire images. She made these effects by shining light onto her voluminous silk costumes. Fuller also experimented with electrical lighting, colored gels, and projections.

Fig. 1. Loie Fuller Dancing – photograph by Samuel Joshua Beckett (MET, 2005.100.952) CC Public Domain.

Watch This

Fuller's debut as a dancer in *Serpentine Dance*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-26

Isadora Duncan (1877–1927)

Isadora Duncan rejected her early training in ballet technique, feeling the movement and costumes were restrictive and lacked personal expression. Instead, she explored more natural movements, such as walking, running, skipping, and jumping. Instead of ballet attire, she emulated the Greeks when she wore tunics, danced barefoot, and performed dances about nature. It gave her movement a sense of freedom and abandonment.

Historically, modern dance has been tied to cultural forces that reflect society. Duncan's dances expressed the human condition, especially women's rights. She traveled throughout America and eventually settled in Europe, where she founded her school. Duncan trained dancers and called them "Isadorables."

Watch This

Duncan performs outdoors.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-27

"Denishawn"

Ruth St. Denis (1879–1968)

Ruth St. Denis became fascinated with cultures worldwide when she saw an advertisement for Egyptian Deities cigarettes. The image of the goddess on the cigarettes inspired her dances honoring goddesses and deities based on her impressions of Indian, Egyptian, Spanish, and Javanese dance forms that weren't culturally accurate. Instead, they were a reflection of her aesthetics.

Watch This

Denis's East Indian Nautch Dance inspired by the dance practiced by the nautch girls of India.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-28

Fig 2. Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn in an out-of-doors photo, in costume, for *National Geographic Magazine*, April 1916, reprinted May 1951. 1915. Notes: National Endowment for the Arts Millennium Project. CC Public Domain.

Ruth St. Denis married Ted Shawn; this also began a creative partnership. Together they founded the Denishawn School, creating a diverse curriculum that included ballet, Asian dances, and dance history. They encouraged dancers to connect their dancing body to their mind and spirit. Through their school emerged the first generation of modern dancers.

Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn parted ways. St. Denis turned her attention to religion and continued teaching South Asian dance forms. Ted Shawn went on to found Jacob's Pillow in Massachusetts, the nation's oldest dance festival.

Ted Shawn (1891–1972)

Ted Shawn formed an all-male dance company called Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers, hoping to make modern dance a respected profession for male dancers.

Watch This

Kinetic Molpai is a dance work in 12 parts; it features Ted's all-male company, who form a chorus. A solitary man, the leader, joins them sporadically. Fun fact: Shawn recruited athletes from Springfield College that had no experience in dance and trained them.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-75

First Generation: Discovering Personal Voices

Dancers from the Denishawn school began to branch out as they grew restless with the company's artistic vision, which focused on exotic themes that proved to be moreso entertainment on the vaudeville circuit. Instead, the first-generation dancers wanted to express their creative voice and push the art form's boundaries, resulting in various codified modern techniques.

Martha Graham (1894–1991)

Fig. 3. Dancer Martha Graham, on page 54 of the April 1922 *Shadowland*. CC Public Domain

Martha Graham studied dance at Denishawn but left to form her own company and develop her own technique. She believed that dance should show the struggle and pain that comes with life. She developed "contract and release," a technique that shows movement initiating from the center of the body meant to embody conflict. This technique involves percussively tightening the body's core muscles (centered on the lower abdominals and pelvis), followed by a release of tension (the spine lengthens to return to an elongated neutral posture). This technique utilizes breath to support the movement; the dancer begins with an inhale, then an exhale, allowing the body to contract, and lastly is followed by an inhale to release and return the body to vertical/neutral alignment.

Graham's repertoire included dances based on Americana, such as *Frontier* and *Appalachian Spring*. She also created dances based on Greek myths, as in *Night Journey*, and emotional dances.

Watch This

Lamentation is a signature solo performed by Graham. Graham embodies grief as she contorts her body within the stretchy fabric.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-29

Humphrey-Weidman

Doris Humphrey (1895–1958) and Charles Weidman (1901–1975)

Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman were former Denishawn students who had a creative partnership and together founded the Humphrey-Weidman company. In collaboration with Weidman, Humphrey created a movement technique based on the body's reaction to gravity and weight called "fall and recovery." Humphrey believed the body constantly moves in between the "arc between two deaths," in which the body moves in a successive pattern responding to gravity.

Fig. 4 from "Doris Humphrey Modern Pioneer" YouTube CC By

Watch This

Weidman discusses the concept behind "fall and recovery."

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-76

Lester Horton (1906–1953)

Fig. 5. Lester Horton from "A Tribute to Lester Horton." YouTube CC BY.

Lester Horton became interested in dance when he saw Native Americans doing indigenous dances. He is most renowned for his technique called the "Horton Technique." This technique embeds strength-building and flexibility principles in fortification exercises (set exercises designed to increase technical skills underpinned with anatomy principles).

Horton also had a company that is credited with founding the first racially integrated dance company in America. His choreography drew inspiration from Native American and African dance forms.

Watch This

Students perform the Horton Technique, working on a flat back series that aims to strengthen and stretch the legs, core, and back.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-30

(Osborne) Hemsley Winfield (1907–1934)

(Osborne) Hemsley Winfield was an African-American modern dancer who sought ways to create equitable opportunities for Black dancers. Winfield was inspired by the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement that brought African-American artists to the forefront as changemakers. In 1931, he co-founded the Bronze Ballet Plastique with the help of Edna Guy, later to be renamed the New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group, which was the first African-American modern dance company in the United States. Winfield also established a dance school to provide dance instruction. After Winfield passed away, the New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group dissolved due to a lack of financial support.

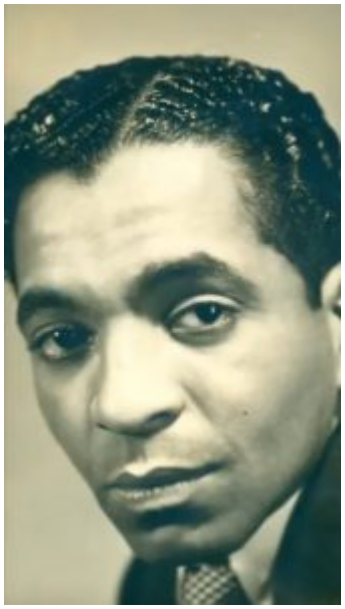

Fig. 6. (Osborne) Hemsley Winfield from "The Unknown Pioneer of Modern Dance." YouTube CC BY.

Edna Guy (1907–1983)

Fig. 7. Edna Guy from "Black Past" by Nelson Neal. https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/edna-guy-mccully-1907-1983/ CC BY.

In 1924, Edna Guy was the first African-American to study with Denishawn. However, due to the prevalent racial segregation, she was only able to perform for in-house recitals. She later co-founded the New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group alongside Hemsley Winfield. In 1937, Guy and Allison Burroughs staged Negro Dance Evening, highlighting African diaspora dances.

Second Generation: Expanding the Horizons of Modern Dance

The second-generation modern dancers either continued following their predecessors' work or went in a different direction by creating new dance techniques, styles, and unorthodox choreographic approaches.

José Limón (1908–1972)

José Limón, originally from Mexico, danced with Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. Eventually, Limón would form his own company and ask his mentor, Humphrey, to be the artistic director. Limón expanded on Humphrey's "fall and recover" technique and emphasized fluid, sequential movement and the use of breath as the origin and facilitator for movement as a way to approach organic movement. Limón's legacy is still alive today. His company continues to perform, dancing the repertory of Limón along with new works from artists.

Fig. 8. José Limón from "Jose Limon Bio" YouTube CC BY.

Watch This

There Is a Time, based on the historic poem from the Bible, "Ecclesiastes." This dance contains universal themes describing the human experience.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-31

Katherine Dunham (1909–2006)

Fig. 9. Photograph shows Katherine Dunham, dancer, full-length portrait, facing right, wearing dance costume. Alfredo Valente (1899–1973, photographer). CC Public domain.

Katherine Dunham was a dancer and trained anthropologist who studied the dances of Haiti and other Caribbean islands. She performed and choreographed for Broadway musicals, movies, and concerts with the company. Dunham developed her technique that drew on principles of the African dance movement, called the "Dunham Technique." Dunham sought to create dances that represented her African American heritage. Her work extended outside of modern dance, where she choreographed for Hollywood films. She founded a school of dance in New York City in the mid 1940s.

Watch This

Katherine Dunham's *Carnival of Rhythm*, 1941.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-32

Students participate in the Dunham Technique. The Dunham Technique utilizes classical lines and free movement of the torso that utilizes isolations and undulations paired with a dynamic range of tempos and rhythmical styles.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-33

L'Ag'Ya. This was Dunham's signature piece, a story-based folk ballet set in Martinique that combines many dance styles.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-34

Pearl Primus (1919–1994)

Pearl Primus was a trained anthropologist. She secured funding to study dance abroad in Africa and the Caribbean. Primus became a strong voice of African American dance by addressing racism in the United States. One of her most noted works is "Strange Fruit," based on the poem by Lewis Allan about the lynching of Black people. In 1979, she and her husband established the Pearl Primus Dance Language Institute, which centered classes in various African dance styles. Primus also founded her company Earth Theatre, which toured nationally.

Fig. 10. Pearl Primus, Daniel Rock. Barbra Morgan Archives CCBY 3.0.

Watch This

Pearl Primus performing solo tabanka teach.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-35

Talley Beatty (1918–1995)

Talley Beatty is a Louisiana native born in Shreveport. He was initially a dancer and student of Katherine Dunham and appeared in Broadway shows and films. In 1952, he established his company that toured in the United States and Europe with a program called "Tropicana," featuring African and Latin American dance styles. Beatty's choreography centered on themes of African-American life. Renowned dance companies, like the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Dance Theatre of Harlem, have restaged his works.

Fig. 11. Talley Beatty from "80 Faces Talley Beatty." YouTube CC BY.

Watch This

In this video, former ADF scholarship student and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater member Hope Boykin and choreographer and dancer Duane Cyrus speak about their pivotal experiences working with Mr. Beatty on his classic piece *Road of the Phoebe Snow* (1959).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-36

Donald McKayle (1930–2018)

Donald McKayle was one of the pioneering African-American modern dancers to focus on socially conscious works speaking to the experience of Black people in the United States. During the span of his career, McKayle choreographed several masterworks, including "Rainbow Round My Shoulder," exposing the harsh working conditions of imprisoned Black men set to chain-gang songs. For his tireless contributions, he holds honorable mentions as "one of America's irreplaceable dance treasures" from the Dance Heritage Coalition.

Fig. 12. Portrait of Donald McKayle in 1963. New York Public Library. CCSA 4.0.

Watch This

This dance is a staging from the Labanotation score.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-37

Alvin Ailey (1931–1989)

Alvin Ailey is another important second-generation dance artist. He studied with Lester Horton, Katherine Dunham, and Martha Graham. His independent career began after the death of his mentor, Lester Horton. In 1958, he formed the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, based in New York. Ailey became an influential voice that brought awareness to the inequalities faced by African-Americans. Ailey was dedicated to highlighting and preserving the African-American experience by drawing inspiration from his heritage, including spirituals, blues, and jazz.

Fig. 13. Portrait of Alvin Ailey in 1955. CREDIT: Carl Van Vechten, photographer. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

"Sinner Man," an excerpt from *Revelations*. Ailey used Lester Horton's technique in many of his dances.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-38

Ailey sought out other African-American choreographers to set dances for his company. In the video below, you will see Wayne McGregor's *Chroma*, Ronald K. Brown's *Grace,* and Robert Battle's *Takademe*. It also has Alvin Ailey's masterpiece *Revelations*. If you have not seen *Revelations* before, please watch that at the least.

Watch This

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre video online.

https://www.alvinailey.org/performances-tickets/ailey-all-access

Ailey choreographed myriad works. His work *Revelations* is an American classic. He received many honors in his career for his work in the arts and in civil rights, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Watch This

By turns muscular and lyrical, *The River* is a sweeping full-company work that suggests tumbling rapids and meandering streams on a journey to the sea.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-39

Erick Hawkins (1909–1994)

Erick Hawkins initially studied at the School of American Ballet, eventually meeting Martha Graham. Hawkins was the first man invited to perform with Graham's company. Hawkins created a dance technique that integrated kinesiology principles coupled with what would be later known as somatic studies that connect the body, mind, and soul. He was interested in the body's natural movements and was inspired by Zen principles, Native Americans, and the beliefs of Isadora Duncan.

Fig. 14. Erick Hawkins and unknown dancer from "Erick Hawkins Here and Now with Watchers Like Darling Clip." YouTube CC BY.

Watch This

Plains Daybreak, inspired by Native American dances and stories.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-77

Paul Taylor (1930–2018)

Paul Taylor danced with Graham's company for several years. In 1959, he formed the Paul Taylor Dance Company. His choreographic works in modern dance ranged from abstract to satire themes. Eventually, Paul Taylor found his niche in classical modern training with remnants of ballet or a lyrical dance style underpinning the movement. His piece *Esplanade* has choreography couched in **pedestrian movements** (plain, everyday movements like walking, skipping, running). You may remember seeing a sample of this in Chapter 2: Elements of Dance.

Fig. 15. Paul Taylor photo taken by Carl Van Vechten, photographer Jan. 12, 1962. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

Taylor's *Airs.*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-40

Merce Cunningham (1919–2009)

Merce Cunningham initially danced with Martha Graham; however, he left to follow his own artistic vision. He formed a creative collaboration with his life partner, John Cage. They experimented with avant-garde ideas that emphasized that dance could be independent of music and narrative or as a separate entity. Cunningham developed "chance dance," in which fragments of choreography were randomly shuffled to create new and spontaneous dances determined by chance acts of rolling dice or flipping a coin. Cunningham also used computer software to aid in generating movement.

Fig. 16. Flickr: Merce Cunningham, April 16, 1919–July 26, 2009. CCSA 2.0.

Watch This

The contributions Cunningham made to modern dance.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-41

Merce Cunningham's Work Process

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-42

Alwin Nikolais (1910–1993)

Alwin Nikolais explored the geometries of form and dance. He created painted glass slides to light his dances like in this video of *Crucible*. He created his own costumes and props and most of the music for his dances, thereby controlling the whole stage environment.

Fig. 16. Alwin Nikolais from "ALWIN NIKOLAIS 'HONOREE' – (COMPLETE) 10th KENNEDY CENTER HONORS, 1987." YouTube CC BY.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Crucible.*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-43

Third Generation: The Postmodern Movement

The Postmodern movement emerged during the early 1960s and reflected the revolutionary mood of the times. Postmodern choreographers began to question the reasons for dance-making, who could dance (Can untrained people be performers?), what could be used as music (Can silence be music?), and experimented with where dance could occur. Performances began featuring ordinary movements with non-dancers and were done in non-traditional settings such as art galleries, churches, outdoor settings, and even on the sides of buildings. Another feature that emerged in the postmodern period was the rise of dance collectives with no one named choreographer. Judson Dance Theater and Grand Union are great examples of this trend.

Robert Dunn (1928–1996)

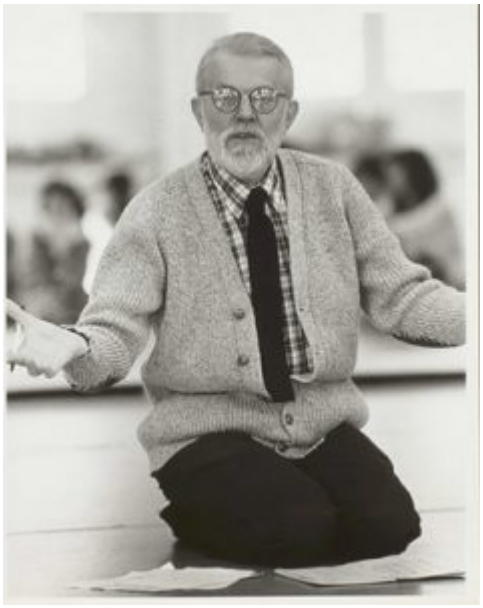

Fig. 17. Library of Congress. RED kneeling on the floor, wearing his signature sweater and tie. CC Public Domain.

Robert Dunn was a musician that played piano for Merce Cunningham's classes. Dunn was drawn to the radical principles of John Cage and attended his classes on composition. Eventually, he would use the concepts learned from Cage and apply them to dance in choreography workshops attended by Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, and Tricia Brown, among others. Dunn encouraged them to be risk-takers by encouraging ongoing experimentation.

Judson Dance Theater

Dunn's dance composition classes found residency at Judson Memorial Church and adopted the name of Judson Dance Theater for their dance collective. The Judson Dance Theater dancers met weekly and were given assignments, performed their choreographic works, and critiqued each other. The artists mainly used improvisation as the source for generating movement. The Judson Dance Theater eventually disbanded, and the Grand Union emerged, created by several of the Judson Dance Theater dancers and new members.

Grand Union

The Grand Union was a collaborative effort with all dancers contributing to the artistic process of the group. They experimented with multimedia performance art and improvisation. Their creative research encouraged artists to expand their definitions of dance to include pedestrian movement (e.g., walking and running) and task-oriented movement (e.g., dancers must maintain physical contact throughout the entire dance). These allowed for the participation of both trained and untrained dancers. In addition, the artists sought out alternative spaces for dancing, such as warehouses and lofts. Choreographers made statements with their works rather than storytelling.

Fig. 18. Photo of the Grand Union. A still image from "Skirball TV: The Alchemy of Grand Union, with Wendy Perron & Douglas Dunn." YouTube CC BY.

Yvonne Rainer (1934–)

Yvonne Rainer studied with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham. Robert Dunn's choreography workshop influenced her work as a choreographer. She was interested in the use of repetition, games, tasks, and partnering, which would become common choreographic practices employed in dance-making.

Fig. 19. From What is dance? "Spontaneity," 6 November 2014, Daniel Assayag, photographer. CCSA 4.0.

Watch This

Rainer's *Trio A*, a solo dance featuring pedestrian movement.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-44

Steve Paxton (1939–)

Steve Paxton studied and performed with Limón and Cunningham. He was inspired by the improvisation techniques explored during the Judson Dance Theater and Grand Union collaborations. Paxton developed "**contact improvisation**," which has principles based on weight-sharing, touch, and movement awareness paired with pedestrian movement.

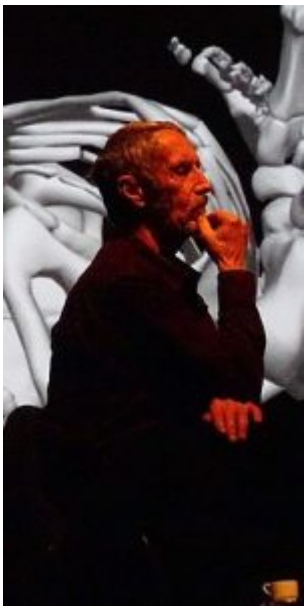

Fig. 20. Steve Paxton in the Grand Auditorium of Culturgest (Lisboa, Portugal) talking about dance at the opening of his retrospective exhibition. March, 10 2019. Nos Papillons. CCSA 4.0.

Watch This

An example of contact improvisation. The dancers maintain a point of contact and trade off weight sharing.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-45

Trisha Brown (1936–2017)

Trisha Brown studied with several notable teachers, including Merce Cunningham. In the early 1970s, she founded the Trisha Brown Company, engaging in "site-specific" works. These are performance spaces outside the conventional theater, such as dances on rooftops. She also explored avant-garde and postmodernist ideas to experiment with pure movement and repetitive gestures in dance.

Fig. 21. Trisha Brown. Walking on the Wall, 1971. Carol Gooden. Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Watch This

Brown's *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building.*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-46

Fourth Generation: Contemporary Modern Dance

During the mid 1970s, there was a shift back to more technical-based movements with a return to the proscenium stage. We are using the term **Contemporary Modern** to refer to this current genre.

Remember that the term **Modern** refers to those early choreographers who broke away from old-world ballet and developed an original abstract modern point of view. After a while these early modern choreographers codified their technique styles. At this time, modern refers to any of the choreographers who studied with or were influenced by the first- or second-generation modern dancers and are now codifying their own technique. **Postmodern** dance broke away from modern technique and used pedestrian movement (everyday gestures or actions such as walking, sitting, or opening a door).

Contemporary Dance is an expansive term meaning current, what's happening now. It is a broader, more individualistic, expressive style of dance.

Contextual Connections

Dance Magazine's Victoria Looseleaf helps to define the difference between Contemporary and Modern Dance

https://www.dancemagazine.com/modern_vs_contemporary/

"Perhaps modern and contemporary genres have taken on new meanings because the global village has created a melting pot of moves, a stew of blurred forms that not only break down conventions and challenge definitions, but, in the process, create something wholly new, but as yet unnamed."

Looseleaf went on to speak with several dance professionals about their thoughts on the topic.

Contextual Connections

Mia Michaels, Choreographer for *So You Think You Can Dance* and various pop stars and dance companies, Los Angeles

"I'm a little responsible for *So You Think You Can Dance* co-opting the term 'contemporary.' When we first started the show, Nigel [Lythgoe] was calling it lyrical. I said, 'It's not lyrical, it's contemporary.' We've created a monster. Contemporary is an easy way out—it's when you don't know what to call it, you call it contemporary. I feel like dance is fusing all the forms and that the uniqueness of each genre is starting to be muddled. It feels regurgitated and I want it to change desperately. I'm wanting to see where these new legends and voices—like Fosse, Robbins, Graham—are going to pop up."

Jennifer Archibald, Founder/Director, Arch Dance, New York City

"Contemporary is a collection of methods that have been developed from modern and postmodern dance. It's also a cycle of shedding techniques we've learned in favor of personal expression of movement. Where modern dance moved against the grain of ballet, contemporary moves against the grain of classical modern techniques.

"Contemporary is not a technique, it's a genre associated with a philosophy and exploration of different natural energies and emotions. There's a physicality that's appealing today, but there's a spirituality of the contemporary movement that has been lost with the new generation in this free-for-all of different methods."

Twyla Tharp

Twyla Tharp trained with the American Ballet Theatre, modern dance artists Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham, and Luigi and Matt Mattox jazz dance educators. Tharp began choreographing dances that blend dance genres, such as modern dance, jazz, tap, and ballet. Tharp has choreographed "more than one hundred sixty works: one hundred twenty-nine dances, twelve television specials, six Hollywood movies, four full-length ballets, four Broadway shows and two figure skating routines. She received one Tony Award, two Emmy Awards, nineteen honorary doctorates, the Vietnam Veterans of America President's Award, the 2004 National Medal of the Arts, the 2008 Jerome Robbins Prize, and a 2008 Kennedy Center Honor." *Bio | twyla tharp*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 27, 2022, from https://www.twylatharp.org/bio

Fig. 22. The image of American dancer/ choreographer Twyla Tharp, 2004 National Medal of Arts Recipient. 2004. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

Tharp's *Deuce Coupe*, danced to music by the Beach Boys and considered the first crossover between ballet and modern dance.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-48

Twyla Tharp's Famous "Eight Jelly Roll" Dance from *Twyla Moves*, American Masters, PBS.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-78

Garth Fagan

Garth Fagan developed the "Fagan Technique," blending modern dance, Afro-Caribbean dance, and ballet. He received his training from Limón, Ailey, and Graham. Fagan has created works for notable companies like Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and New York City Ballet.

Fig. 23. This image has been extracted from another file: Garth Fagan, NYS Assemblyman Joseph Morelle, NYS Senator James Alesi, and Nazareth College President Daan Braveman.jpg. 2009 Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic.

Watch This

Fagan's *From Before*, performed by the Alvin Ailey Dance Company.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-49

Contextual Connections

Disney's *The Lion King*

Fagan is perhaps best known for his legendary work on Disney's Broadway musical *The Lion King* (1997) in which he brought the animals to life by combining clever costume pieces with dance evocative of the animals in the story. In this video you will get a glimpse of the man and his choreography.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-50

Pilobolus

Pilobolus is a dance collective created in the late 1970s by Dartmouth college-student athletes Robby Barnett, Martha Clarke, Lee Harris, Moses Pendleton, Michael Tracey, and Jonathan Wolken with the guidance of

their teacher Alison Chase. Pilobolus branched from a choreography class experimenting with gymnastics and improvisation to create images by sculpting bodies.

Fig. 24. Pilobolus Dance Theater. Anselm Hook. 2007 CCBY 2.0.

Watch This

Pilobolus performs *Shadowland.*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-51

Mark Morris

In the early years of his career, Mark Morris performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. The Mark Morris Dance Group was formed

in 1980 when he was just 24. Since then, Morris has created over 150 works for the company. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov.

Fig. 25. Mark Morris, American modern dancer, choreographer, and director. Taken at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center, September 24, 2006. Charles Haynes CCBY SA 2.0.

Watch This

Reporter Jeffrey Brown talks to the famed choreographer on his production of "L'Allegro" on PBS's *Great Performances*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-52

Bill T. Jones

Bill T. Jones is known for blending controversial subjects into his modern dance choreography. Bill T. Jones and his life partner, Arnie Zane, founded the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company in the early 1980s. Their creative works explored LGBTQIA+ themes of identity and racial tensions. Following the death of Zane, who succumbed to AIDS, Jones continued their work with the company. Bill T. Jones uses his platform as socio-political activism using dance, autobiographical elements with narrative, and theatrical components.

Fig. 26. Choreographer Bill T. Jones at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. 2009. Russell Jenkins. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

An excerpt from *D-Man in the Waters* performed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. *D-Man in the Waters* is a political response to the AIDS epidemic honoring those who have succumbed to the disease.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-53

His piece *What Problem?* in which Bill T. Jones explores current events and questions racism, equality, brutality, and change.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-54

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

In the early 1980s, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar founded Urban Bush Women. Her training began with the Dunham technique and studying various African diaspora dance forms. Urban Bush Women started as an all-women group and predominantly centered their work from women's perspectives; however, the company has included male dancers. The mission of Urban Bush Women is to raise the voices of people of color to advocate for social change addressing issues of race and gender inequalities. Jawole Willa Jo Zollar blends personal testimonies from the company members to create narratives (text) combined with African and contemporary dance forms.

From "Urban Bush Women with Jawole Willa Jo Zollar Black America." YouTube. 2017. CC BY.

Watch This

"Hair and Other Stories," exploring body image, gender identity, and race through conversations about hair care.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-55

Lorenzo "Rennie" Harris

Lorezno "Rennie" Harris brings Hip-Hop to the concert stage, often telling stories of the human condition. In 1992, Harris founded his company, Puremovement, located in Philadelphia, in an effort to preserve hip-

hop culture. Harris has choreographed contemporary dance works for modern companies like the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. His works will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

Fig. 25. Photo of Rennie Harris. Lugenbee. 2011 CC BY SA 3.0.

Watch This

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre performs an excerpt from Harris's *Exodus*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-56

Robert Battle

Robert Battle is the current Artistic Director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. He was a choreographer for the Ailey company. A graduate of Juilliard, he joined the Parsons Dance Company and

founded his own company, Battleworks Dance. Battle has received numerous prestigious awards, such as being honored in 2005 by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as one of the "Masters of African-American Choreography."

Fig. 26. A still of Robert Battle from "Black History Month: Robert Battle and the History of Dance." YouTube. 2021. CC BY.

Watch This

Takademe, choreographed in 1999.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-79

Sean Dorsey

Sean Dorsey is a transgender and queer choreographer. Dorsey founded the Sean Dorsey Dance Company based in San Francisco, centering his work on LGBTQIA+ themes. In 2002, Dorsey established Fresh Meat

Production, a non-profit organization that advocates for equity in gender-nonconforming communities through commissions of new dances and community engagement programs.

Watch This

An excerpt of *Boys in Trouble*, a social commentary on the rigid ideas of gender and masculinity.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-57

AXIS Dance

In the late 1980s, AXIS Dance was co-founded by Thais Mazur, Bonnie Lewkowicz, and Judith Smith. AXIS dance is one of the first dance companies to create inclusive spaces for dancers of all physical abilities. Through collaborative efforts, the company developed dance known as physically integrated dance, which aims to broaden the idea of dance and who a dancer is through movement that respects a "wide spectrum of physical attributes and disabilities" (Axis dance company, 2022. In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=AXIS_Dance_Company&oldid=1074988620).

Fig. 27. Demo performance by AXIS. At Ganei Aviv Community Center, Lod. 2016. Creative Commons Attribution 2.0.

Watch This

AXIS Dance's rehearsal process, featuring commentary by Artistic Director Marc Brew.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-80

Camille A. Brown

Camille A. Brown blends African dance and social dances with vernacular jazz dance forms. In 2006, she founded Camille A. Brown & Dancers with choreographic works speaking to issues of race, culture, and identity. Brown's creative works have been commissioned for renowned companies such as the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater.

Fig. 28. headshot of Camille A Brown. DarralynnHutson. 2016. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0.

Watch This

New Second Line, inspired by the events of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. A celebration of the culture of New Orleans and the perseverance of Black people in the midst of devastation.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-81

Victor Quijada

Victor Quijada is a Mexican-American contemporary choreographer from Los Angeles, California. He began as a B-Boy and further expanded his dance background as a student at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, where he was introduced to modern dance and ballet. In 2002, Victor Quijada founded RUBBERBAND, blending Hip-Hop ideology with various dance forms and theatrical elements.

Fig. 29. Victor Quijada photographed in Montreal, Quebec, Canada at the Pauline-Julien theatre. Bull-Doser. 2016. CC Public Domain.

Watch This

Victor Quijada's RUBBERBAND.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-58

Louisiana Connection

Fig. 30. A still of Dianne Maroney-Grigsby from "The Choreographer's Last Dance-April 23, 2022," YouTube. 2021. CC BY.

Dianne Maroney-Grigsby performed with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for several years. She also served as the company's assistant artistic director and taught full-time at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. Maroney-Grigsby later took the position of Artistic Director of Grambling State University's Orchesis Dance Company. During her career, she has taught at Louisiana Dance Foundation's Summer Dance Festivals, where she has choreographed for their resident dance company, Louisiana Dance Theatre (LDT). Some of her most noted works include "I Won't Let Go of My Faith" and "World Hunger."

Contextual Connections

Other Notable Contemporary Modern Artists

- Dallas Black Theatre, based in Texas, was founded in 1976 by Ann Williams, dedicated to producing contemporary modern dance works that use a blend of modern, ballet, and jazz dance styles.
- Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, based in Utah, was founded in 1968 with the intent to raise more opportunities for people of color, with dances speaking to the African-American experience.

- Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, located in Colorado, is considered a cultural ambassador for their work speaking to social injustices rooted in the African Diaspora.
- Doug Varone and Dancers was founded in 1986 and is based in New York, with choreographic works that are musically driven.
- Stephen Petronio Company was founded in 1984 and is located in New York. The company aims to preserve the postmodern dance lineage.
- Ohad Naharin is the artistic director of the Israeli Batsheva Dance Company and creator of Gaga, a movement language responding to one's internal sensations.
- Shen Wei is a Chinese-American choreographer and founder of Shen Wei Dance Arts, a company using Western and Asian aesthetics, including dance, multimedia, and art.
- Akram Khan is an English choreographer who blends contemporary dance with Kathak, a traditional Indian dance.
- Crystal Pite founded Kidd Pivot in 2002, intertwining contemporary dance and storytelling with theatrical elements.
- Kyle Abraham founded his company in 2006, called A.I.M, by Kyle Abraham (formally known as Abraham.In.Motion), blending ballet with other dance forms, like modern dance and hip-hop, to speak to the human condition.
- Mia Michaels is primarily known for her choreography featured on *So You Think You Can Dance*. In 1997, Michaels founded the company RAW (Reality at Work), choreographing contemporary and jazz dance styles.

MODERN DANCE TIMELINE

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-21

SUMMARY

Modern Dance emerged as a contrast or rejection of the rigid constraints of Ballet. From individual free expressions to Contemporary Modern Dance, just like its beginnings, Modern Dance is forever changing. Today, combining unifying elements of other genres of dance (African, Ballet, Jazz, Hip-Hop), Modern Dance is interested in the communication of emotional experiences through basic and uninhibited movement. Currently, through all of its variations, it has become whatever the choreographer would like it to be according to the artist's background, teachings, technique, style, and imagination. Because it is so personal and individualistic, this artform will remain popular and viable for years to come.

Check Your Understanding

Elements of Dance

DIRECTIONS: Using the Elements of Dance, select a ballet video from Chapter 2 and a modern dance video from Chapter 3. Compare and contrast its important qualities to reflect the aesthetic values placed on ballet and modern dance (minimum 150 words).

H5p Dates timeline activity

DIRECTIONS: Select two videos from Chapter 4. Answer the following prompts (minimum 150 words):

- Using the Elements of Dance, compare and contrast both videos' important qualities to reflect the aesthetic values placed by the modern dance choreographers.
- Reflect how the dance reflects the time in which it was choreographed and how the time influenced the dance.

Modern dance Quiz 1:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online

here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-24

Modern dance Quiz 2:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-25

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Fig. 1. Banksy Hip Hop Rat, London. March 11, 2008. Attributed to Tim fuller CC-BY 2.0.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate a culturally informed dance aesthetic.
- Examine the origins of Hip-Hop
- Analyze the Hip-Hop cultural elements with pop culture
- Identify influential Hip-Hop artists

"Hip-Hop is the culture of oppressed Black and Latino people that has, I guess, kind of flipped the political end of music and art on its head. Hip-Hop is the opposite of politics. Politics separates people. Hip-Hop brings people together." —Emilio "Buddha Stretch" Austin

What Is Hip-Hop?

Hip-hop is an umbrella term that includes several dance styles that are highly energetic and athletic. Hip-hop dance forms began as social dances that expanded to respond to socioeconomic conditions faced by marginalized African-American and Latinx youth in inner cities. These dance styles hold the meaning and values of the community, resulting in a cultural movement that gained widespread attention through media that has led to its global popularity today.

Fig. 2. DontHitMamasDanceParty_MichaelPremo. Don't Hit Mama's DANCE PARTY CC-BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Watch This

The History of Hip-Hop in the Bronx.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-59

Hip-Hop Characteristics

Africanist Aesthetics

Hip-Hop dance forms are situated in Africanist aesthetics that communicate the culture's traditions, values, and heritage. Dance scholar E. Moncell Durden identifies the cultural characteristics as "individuality, creativity, improvisation, originality, spirituality, stylization, dance posture (bending forward from the waist with the knees bent and the spine slightly curved), vocalization, pantomime, percussion, competition, polyrhythm, and polycentrism."

Cultural Connections

For more information, see the *New World Encyclopedia* entry for African Dance.

https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/african_dance

Fig. 3. Members of a Rwandan dance troupe perform at the Mountain Gorillas Nest lodge. Photo by Rob Verhoeven. CC-BY-NC 2.0.

The Components of Hip-Hop Dance

Hip-Hop is a cultural expression characterized primarily by five foundational components: graffiti, deejaying, emceeing, breaking, and knowledge.

Graffiti is "the visual language of the hip-hop community" (Durden). Graffiti gained attention in the late 1960s when political activists illegally "tagged" or marked public places in defiance of government policies. Later, crews used graffiti to claim territories.

Deejays (DJs), or disc jockeys, emerged as "the sounds and memories of the community" (Durden). DJs initially hosted dance parties as part of social events. Through their experimentation with turntables and records, DJs found innovative ways to manipulate, isolate, extend, and loop the musical rhythms for dance.

Fig. 4. Queens, rear of five pointz. Attributed to Vinnebar CC-BY-SA-3.0.

Emcees (MCs) are also known as the Master of Ceremonies. It was the emcees' responsibility to pump up the crowd during parties. They became the community's voice, using improvised spoken words and rhymes to tell the social conditions and experiences of the community, often shedding light on social injustices. This is known as rap today. Rapping has roots in West Africa, where griots, or storytellers, were responsible for preserving their people's "genealogies, historical narratives, and oral traditions" (Britannica).

Fig. 5. A performer at "Don' t Hit mamas dance party." Presented in partnership with Harlem Stage. CC-BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Breaking is considered the original street dance associated with the Hip-Hop subculture. Breaking is improvisational and emphasizes the dancer's style and athleticism while responding to the musical accompaniment, typically funk music.

Knowledge is the culmination of the Afro-diasporic cultural components to recover power from oppressive systems through spiritual and political awareness. This refers to having gratitude for your heritage that will give you insight into your future and self-understanding.

During the 1950s, residents living in the East Coast boroughs of the Bronx, New York City, struggled to survive in dire socio-economic conditions caused by poor city management. The community was plagued by the decay caused by the destruction of homes with the Cross Bronx Expressway construction. Families lost their homes and left the city to move into the suburbs. As people left, local businesses closed, and job opportunities became scarce, causing high unemployment rates. Government-subsidized houses known as the projects were built to provide affordable housing to low-income families. These became overrun by gangs and a rampant drug scene.

By the 1970s, poverty among residents had significantly increased. In the 1977 World Series between the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers, Howard Cosell announced, "The Bronx is burning" (Wikipedia). "For a couple of years, fires had routinely erupted in the South Bronx" as people burned down

buildings hoping to collect insurance money (Wikipedia). From 1973 to 1966, the Bronx "lost 600,000 jobs, more than 5,000 families were displaced, and some 30,000 fires were set in the area" (Durden).

Hip-Hop emerged from this socio-economic turmoil in the early 1970s. Marginalized inner-city African-American and Latinx youth found an outlet to release frustrations through a lifestyle informed by shared living experiences that brought the community together.

Fig. 6. Urban decay. Falsas Promesas Broken Promises, John Fekner, Charlotte Street Stencils, South Bronx, NY 1980 CC-BY-SA 3.0.

Louisiana Connection

Fig. 7. Terrence Morgan performing. Copyright Paul Kieu Photography. Used with permission.

Terrance Michael Morgan: Born and raised in Louisiana, he is on a mission to improve the lives of today's youth by promoting positive youth development through the act of art, dance, speaking and more. Morgan began as a self-taught dancer doing mostly free-style (improvisation), where he was introduced to the hip hop dance style of B-Boying. This led to him becoming an original member of a local dance group, Kabuki Kru. He began traveling throughout the U.S. to participate in underground B-Boy Battles and continued learning about a variety of dance styles. He currently travels as a motivational and educational speaker/artist who performs in schools, libraries, festivals, and more weekly to spread his message of positivity. He has been affiliated with the Acadiana Center for the Arts since 2004 and is also currently a touring artist for Young Audiences of Louisiana.

Terrance Morgan Website

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-60

Clive Campbell

One of the earliest known DJs is Jamaican immigrant Clive Campbell, known as DJ Kool Herc. Kool Herc is considered a pioneer of Hip-Hop for developing a style of music that would lay the foundation for hip-hop music, giving him credit as the "Father of Hip-Hop."

DJ Kool Herc hosted parties where he invented the "merry-go-round" technique. Unlike other DJs, Kool Herc didn't play songs continuously; instead, using two turntables, he isolated the instrumental break in the music and extended them by replaying them continually on a loop. This musical innovation made the songs danceable and encouraged people to dance at house parties. Kool Herc would promote the interaction of dancers, whom he called "breakers," "b-boys," and "b-girls." The term breaking meant "going off" on the dance floor, which he incorporated into the name of breakers. Breakers began practicing and honing their skills to battle or compete against one another for bragging rights of "best dancer."

Fig. 8. DJ Kool Herc spins records in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx at an event addressing "The West Indian Roots of Hip-Hop," February 28, 2009. CC-public Domain.

Universal Zulu Nation

Originally called the "Organization," the Universal Zulu Nation was formed in the 1970s by reformed gang members discouraging youth from the lifestyle. Lance Taylor, also known as Afrika Bambaataa, is one of hip-hop culture's most influential pioneers who helped establish this organization. He used music to illustrate hip-hop's youth culture and its global potential. Universal Zulu Nation was founded on ideas of "peace, love, unity, and having fun" to promote change in the community. The Universal Zulu Nation is credited with establishing the five foundational components of Hip-Hop. Today, the organization has branches in several world regions, including Japan, France, and South Africa.

Watch This

Original Hip-Hop pioneers discuss the house parties hosted by Kool Herc.

https://youtu.be/_g1G9QkXp0s

House parties became extremely popular and outgrew their spaces. They moved to the streets, where they were called block parties. DJs plugged their sound systems into the street lamps, creating a greater interaction among the neighborhood youth, Breakdancers began practicing their skills on the streets, and dance crews emerged. Dance crews became a second family to the youth, where older members acted as mentors helping newer members with their dancing. The dance crews practiced for hours, perfecting their skills and styles and developing new moves, and inadvertently stayed out of trouble because they did not have the time to engage in other activities. Disputes were settled in dance battles rather than resorting to violence. These block parties laid the foundations of Hip-Hop as a movement, and Hip-Hop dance forms were established.

Hip-Hop Dance Types

The Hip-Hop movement began on the East Coast of New York City; however, it was not isolated to this location. Other street dances emerged on the West Coast in California.

East Coast

Fig. 9. B-boy Pumba (Urban Force) dancing in the cipher of Rock Steady crew 30th Anniversary – Concrete Battle (The Bronx – July 2007). Attributed to NexusMoves. CC-BYSA 3.0.

Breaking, also called breakdance by the media, is the original street dance associated with Hip-Hop. This dance form is generally performed as a solo and is highly improvisational, emphasizing the dancer's style and flair. Breaking consists of four primary components: toprocking, downrocking, power moves, and freezes.

Toprock refers to the movement that is performed from a standing position. Toprock highlights quick, percussive footwork paired with a relaxed upper body. Breakers generally begin with toprock to enter the cipher, a circle formation of people, where individual breakers take turns dancing.

Downrock is weight-bearing movement performed on the floor, where the dancers support their body with their hands and feet.

Watch This

The 6-Step, a basic footskill sequence used in breaking.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-61

Power moves are physically demanding acrobatic moves borrowed from gymnastics and martial arts requiring strength and endurance, such as spins, floats, slides, and windmills.

Watch This

Floorwork and power moves were popularized by the Latinx community.

https://youtu.be/z86n7G7BgyQ

Freeze or a held position consists of the breaker halting the body from movement to achieve a challenging body pose, such as a headstand.

Fig. 10. An individual executing a freeze. Attributed to Cbshadley. CC-BY-SA 2.0.

WEST COAST

Locking

Don "Campbellock" Campbell created a funk dance style called locking. Locking consists of briefly freezing movement into a held position before continuing. Locking is highly performative, using comedic mime-like actions by using large and exaggerated gestures. Dancers interact with the audience by giving high fives and performing acrobatic moves like knee splits.

In the early 1970s, Campbell founded a group of dancers called "The Campbellock Dancers," later shortening the name to the "Lockers." The Lockers received wide attention as they performed on several television shows, including *The Tonight Show*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, and *Soul Train*. Locking as a dance style has been featured in films, music videos, and hip-hop competitions.

Watch This

Don Campbell explains the creation of Locking.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-62

Boogaloo and Popping

Sam "Boogaloo Sam" Solomon created two dance styles, called boogaloo and popping. Boogaloo is an improvisational street dance that uses a fluid upper body movement to give the illusion of the body not having bones. Popping is a funk dance style involving contracting and releasing the muscles to cause a jerking effect. These actions produce a robotic-like quality. Movements associated with popping include waving, ticking, strobing, scarecrow, and tutting.

Solomon formed the dance crew the Electric Boogaloos and made television appearances on *Soul Train* that further popularized the dance style.

Watch This

The Electric Boogaloos perform on *Soul Train*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-63

Other Hip-Hop Dance Styles

Waacking

Waacking was created by the LGBTQIA+ community in the 1970s disco era. Waacking uses striking arm movements, poses, and footwork, with an "emphasis on expressiveness" (Wikipedia). The moves are inspired by classic Hollywood film actors/actresses, 1960s comic book heroes, and 1970s martial art films. Waacking has undergone several name changes throughout its development and was originally called "Posing." The first posers included Arthur Goff, Tinker Toy, Andrew Frank, and Lamont Peterson.

Waacking gained attention from the television show *Soul Train* featuring a battle between Tinker of the Outrageous Waackers and Shabba-Doo from the Lockers. Waacking lost attention during the 1980s and 1990s and was revived in 2003. Brian "Footwork" Green began teaching Waacking as a formal dance style, and in 2011, Kumari Surjai choreographed a Waacking routine on *So You Think You Can Dance?*

Watch This

Kumari Suraj discusses the history of Waacking.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-64

Uprock

Uprock is known by several other names, such as Rocking or Brooklyn Rock. Uprock is considered a precursor to breaking. It is an urban street dance with opposing dancers or crews facing off in a line formation to challenge each other. The objective is to "undermine" their rival using movements that imitate fighting, such as burns, gestures used to ridicule opponents typically mimicking weaponry, like the bow and arrow or shotgun, and jerks, sudden body movements. In the early 1970s, Uprock was associated with gang culture as a way to settle disputes and gain recognition and bragging rights.

Stepping

Stepping, also spelled steppin', also called blocking, is a complex synchronized dancelike performance that blends African folk traditions with popular culture. Stepping involves clapping, body slapping, vocalizations, and dramatic movements. The movements in this style of dance are discussed in Chapter 5 and are related to hambone. This form of dance became extremely popular in the 1980's with African American fraternities and sororities and has been fused with hip-hop and other forms of dance.

Watch This

Stepping examples featuring Omega, Alpha, Zeta, Delta, Sigma, Kappa, Phi Beta Sigma—Tribute for Eddie Robinson NAACP Awards.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-65

Clowning

Thomas Johnson, "Tommy the Clown," created clowning, a dance style of energetic and humorous movements wearing a clown costume. Following the 1992 Los Angeles race riots, when excessive force was used in the arrest of Rodney King, Johnson wanted to do something positive for the youth in the community. He attended birthday parties and encouraged the kids to take an interest in dance. Johnson founded his dance crew called the Hip Hop Clowns, performing at parties. His motto is "No gangs, No drugs, Do well in school (grades, attendance, and behavior) and be a role model by living a positive lifestyle at all times" (https://www.tommytheclown.com/copy-of-home).

Watch This

See how Tommy the Clown and his squad of Clowns use this form of dance to express themselves and invite others to join in.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-66

Krumping

Clowning is the predecessor of Krumping, created in the early 2000's by Ceasare "Tight Eyez" Wills and Jo'Artis "Big Mijo" Ratti, former members of Tommy the Clown's dance crew. Krumping uses aggressive improvised movements such as "stomps, jabs, chest pops, jumps, and arm swings" that mimic fighting (Wikipedia). However, the dance form does not condone physical violence. Dancers challenge each other to battles as an alternative to gang culture.

Watch This

Choreography from the Urban Dance Camp featuring Krumping.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-67

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-22

Mainstream Media and Globalization

In the 1980s into the early 1990s, Hip-Hop gained attention through mainstream media primarily due to the rise of popularity of rap music. Two biopic films introduced Hip-Hop culture to the world. *Style Wars* and *Wild Style* featured Bronx's breakers, rappers, deejays, and graffiti artists. The Hollywood film *Flashdance* also featured a brief scene of the Rock Steady Crew dancing on the streets.

Rock Steady Crew

The Rock Steady Crew was founded in 1977 by Joe Torres and Jimmy D. The crew is credited with creating original breaking moves and helped popularize breaking. They became well-known in 1981 when they battled the Dynamic Rockers at the Lincoln Center Outdoors Program, garnering media coverage from National Geographic and 20/20.

Watch This

The Rock Steady Crew.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-68

These films were the onset of what would become a global phenomenon. Companies began capitalizing on the culture for monetary gains, selling instructional manuals and video tutorials on breaking. Breaking soon declined in popularity, as many felt the media was trying to "sell the culture they had created back to them" (Durden, 2019). Around this time, music artists shifted the direction of Hip-Hop by using party dances or social dance movements to associate with specific songs in their music videos, like the Cabbage Patch and Running Man. As a result, Hip-Hop dance styles began appearing in commercials, television shows, documentaries, and movies that drew national recognition.

Watch This

Breakers discuss the influence the media had on breaking.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-69

Hip-hop dance styles continue to be popularized through film and television shows. Competition-based television shows like *America's Best Dance Crew* and *So You Think You Can Dance?* feature dancers competing for the title of "best" dancer or crew.

Watch This

The Jabbawockeez perform on *America's Best Dance Crew*.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-70

Cultural Connections

Influential Hip-Hop Artists

Lorenzo "Rennie" Harris

In 1992, Rennie Harris founded the professional Hip-Hop dance company Rennie Harris Puremovement, bringing street dance to the concert stage. To preserve the history and cultural influences of the dance form, he founded the Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works (RHAW), an organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities, master classes, and mentorship to youth in 2007.

Steffan "Mr. Wiggles" Clemente

Steffan "Mr. Wiggles" Clemente is a member of the Rock Steady Crew and the Electric Boogaloos. He has appeared in several music videos, dancing for Missy Elliot, Usher, and Madonna. Today, Mr. Wiggles holds outreach programs to teach youth about Hip-Hop culture.

Fatima Robinson

Fatima Robinson was described in the *New York Times* as "one of the most sought-after hip-hop and popular music choreographers in the world" and was once named by *Entertainment Weekly* as one of the 100 most creative people in the world of entertainment. She has choreographed for Michael Jackson's "Remember the Time," NAACP Image Awards, VH1 Hip-Hop Honors, the 2006 movie *Dreamgirls*, Pepsi, Gap, Verizon, 2005's *The Wiz Live!* and the 2022 Super Bowl, just to name a few.

Emilio "Buddha Stretch" Austin

Emilio "Buddha Stretch" Austin created a Hip-Hop dance style called freestyle. He combines old-school with new-school moves that were popularized in Hip-Hop music videos. Buddha Stretch has choreographed and performed in several music videos in the 1990s, including those of Michael Jackson and Will Smith.

Check Your Understanding

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#h5p-23

Summary

Hip-Hop is an umbrella term encompassing several sub-genres. Breaking is considered the original form of hip-hop dance. The Hip-Hop cultural movement of the 1970s was spawned from African-American and Latinx youth in marginalized, inner-city neighborhoods. During the 1980s, the media helped increase hip-hop's popularity, gaining it widespread attention. In the 1990s, hip-hop culture, including dance, music, art, fashion, speech, and behavior, became a component of rap music. Hip-hop dance forms are now taught in dance studios and schools and have absorbed other dance influences like jazz dance, which incorporates codified dance techniques. It is essential to recognize that these Hip-Hop dance styles may not be in their most authentic form that respects the cultural values and traditions from which they emerge. For the people who created Hip-Hop, it was a lifestyle.

Check Your Understanding

Directions: Please answer the following questions and cite any sources you use in your response.

1. Breaking began as a male-dominated dance form, causing B-Girls to advocate for equality. Research a B-Girl and speak to their influences in hip-hop as a dancer. Here are a few suggestions: Asia One, Momz-N-Da-Hood, B-Girl Firefly (Andrea Parker), Lady Jules (Julie Ulrich), and Shana Busmente.

2. Select a Hip-Hop dance from today (from YouTube, Google, TikTok etc.) and reflect on whether it holds the cultural aspects Hip-Hop is rooted in. Explain.
3. Hip-Hop is grounded in self-expression. Create a 30-second video representing your Hip-Hop aesthetic informed by your individuality and upload. Please credit any artists that you use for inspiration.

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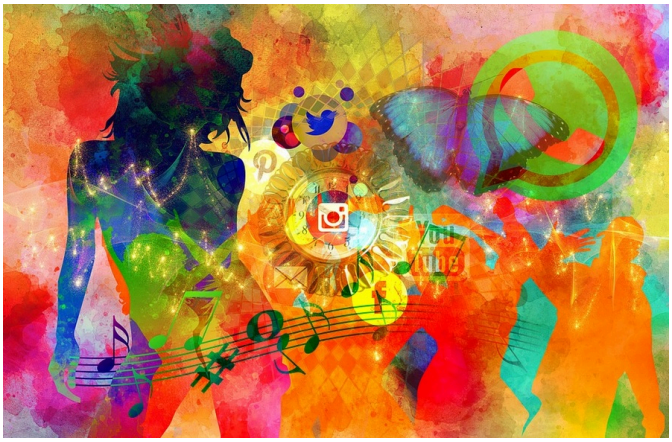

Fig. 1. Social Media Abstract. Free for use at Pixaby.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss current trends in dance
- Analyze cultural elements in current dance trends
- Identify influential multimedia artists

"Dancemakers have naturally gravitated toward technological innovations that enable a deeper understanding of the human body in motion. Through the use of portable computers, wearable technologies, and software apps dancers may create, design, participate and move in new modes of performance. Opportunities between dancers and choreographers inherently explore new methods out of a desire to expand their imagination, talent, and intellect." —Carl D. Sanders, Jr.

Dance and Technology

Many changes have come about in the dance world since the COVID-19 pandemic. Dancers have learned to work remotely, taking classes online and even staging Zoom performances. Social media platforms were already popular, but there was a surge in dance videos during the pandemic as well.

Social Media

What exactly is social media? Social media can be defined as the creation or sharing of content, such as photos, videos, or written information, through the use of websites or similar platforms that users post and share this content for social networking, business, or just to be seen. This platform has increased visibility for everything,

but dance in particular. Because of the use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, and TikTok, dance has received so much more press and viewership. If you want to get noticed or seen as a dancer by others, if you have a dance studio and want others to see what you have to offer, or if you just want to showcase your work for classes that you teach, social media, with the use of the platforms mentioned above, is a great way to do it. The majority of people use at least one or more of these social media platforms to gather information on the latest dance craze (TikTok), to watch a dance class or participate in one (YouTube), or just simply to be entertained without having to attend a dance concert or performance in person. Social media has clearly changed the way in which we have structured our lives, but more importantly, it has created a generation of quicker accessibility to advertise, promote, and create dance on a much larger scale than ever before.

Dance Hybrids

One way that dance teachers, studios, choreographers, and dance companies are surviving the changing times is by making the crossover to a hybrid model. They might teach in person or on the internet. Instead of a studio, they use a phone or tablet in their living room. They might create asynchronous material and sell the same class on-demand over and over. Or a dance company might offer a workshop or performance for online viewing for a small fee. It is called omnichannel or integrated marketing, "a marketing approach that provides your customers with integrated shopping experiences, such as by providing a seamless experience between desktop, mobile, and brick-and-mortar." In order to survive, dance entrepreneurs have to be flexible and create hybrid forms to deliver their dance content to the public.

Louisiana Connection

Fig. 2. Helanius J. Wilkins. Photography by Christopher Michael Carruth © 2019 Used with Permission.

Helanius J. Wilkins, a native of Lafayette, Louisiana, is an award-winning choreographer, performance artist, innovator, and educator. Rooted in the interconnections of American contemporary performance, cultural history, and identities of Black men, Wilkins's creative research investigates the raced dancing body and the ways that ritual can access forms of knowledge. Intrigued by ideas about indeterminacy, he approaches performance-making and pedagogy as a means of re-framing perspectives and creative practices, linking the arts and social justice, and blurring the lines between performer and audience. As a choreographer for stage and as a filmmaker, he draws inspiration from his upbringing in Lafayette, Louisiana, one shaped by resilience and his identity as a Black American to create original works that allow for moments of recognition and transformation. In his inter media collaborations he works with artists from a wide range of disciplines, including film, video, and design.

Grounded in a belief that embodied practices give us ways of knowing ourselves and our communities, dance, for Wilkins, becomes a vehicle for understanding complex issues around race, culture, and inclusivity. He embraces the fullness of his identity, including his Creole heritage and being a Lafayette, Louisiana, native as rich resources for defining an "American identity" shaped by hybridity, resilience, and co-existence.

https://www.helaniusj.com/

Remote Work

At the start of the pandemic in 2020, dance classes went online. Students used Zoom or other virtual mediums to continue their training. Teachers equipped themselves with microphones and learned how to present class online. Students found a space at home where they could dance. Thus, a new way to learn dance has opened up, making it possible to study all forms of dance with teachers around the world. A lot of dance class videos

can be found on YouTube, Vimeo, and Twitch. In addition, dance teachers, companies, and organizations offer live fee-based virtual classes for anyone to take.

Technology

The use of technology in the 21st century has been difficult to remove dance from. It is so prevalent that almost all forms of auditions for scholarships, dance companies, dance lines, and even dance studios will require an uploaded video of your dance presentation. It has been made possible through technology for the dancer to develop their artistry with various technological outlets to express themselves on a larger and definitely a much more creative scale. The effects are limitless. Lighting, costuming, and special effects, along with great editing techniques, can make a dance performance or show very impressive and truly grab hold of a viewing audience.

Screendance

Screendance combines dance and filmmaking to create a cinematic experience. Screendance focuses on the "dancing body as the primary subject of creative expression" (ACDA). The movements created are explicitly devised with the camera in mind, and the camera captures the performance and directs the viewers' eyes. Through various editing techniques, the dance is further manipulated to bring an element of storytelling. Close-ups of the dancers can provide a sense of intimacy, while speeding the time of a frame can give a sense of urgency. Today, several dance film festivals occur worldwide, offering a platform for artists to share their works.

Watch This

The San Francisco Dance Film Festival trailer.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-71

The TikTok Era

TikTok has become a viral social media platform in the 21st century, providing a way for people to create and share dances. However, the app, launched in 2016, became popular during the quarantine period of the pandemic. People began participating in dance-challenge videos, learning short routines set to popular songs and reposting. The dances used on the app have become dance crazes featuring hip-hop-inspired movements, like the Dougie and the Dice Roll and Throw. TikTok dances are based on the premise that "everyone can do it," with movements being repetitive, "recognizable and easily reproducible" (Burke). This has allowed people to come together to learn the dances, providing a social aspect. It has also offered a space to connect with people worldwide by enabling users to follow each other, share and download content, and make comments. Popular TikTok users who have gone viral may have financial opportunities with companies endorsing them to promote their products. Although TikTok has become an accessible way for people to engage with dance, issues concerning choreography and intellectual copyrights have become increasingly important in protecting artists' work.

Contextual Connections

https://www.dancemagazine.com/popular-tiktok-dances/

Additional Trends:

The Trend of Dance as Competition

Prior to the 20th century, most dance was a social activity or was performance based. Dance as a competitive sport is fairly new. Competition dance today is a lucrative business for traveling dance competition companies. It is a widespread sport in which competitive teams from different dance studios or schools perform in styles such as tap, jazz, ballet, modern, lyrical, contemporary, hip hop, acro, and musical theater before a common group of judges. Dance competition events bring dancers together to showcase their talents, receive feedback from judges, and compete to earn recognition, typically by awards. The number of national competitions has ballooned into the hundreds since the 1980s. For individual competitors, the costs can easily top $1,000 per month.

In 2005, a dance competition reality show called *So You Think You Can Dance?* premiered and spurred a number of dance-themed competition reality shows such as *Dance Moms*, *Dancing with the Stars*, and *World of Dance*. Shows like this were highly influential in both the dance industry and with aspiring dancers as well.

Dance as competition has changed the way many young dancers see dance. Dance as an art form or for personal expression is not as valued in the competition world, which stresses dazzling technical feats, group precision, high energy, and over-the-top facial expressions to catch the eye of the judges. It is not until these dancers enter a college dance program or begin to audition for professional concert dance companies that they begin to understand the complexities of dance aesthetics. Fortunately, there seems to be a trend merging the two seemingly opposite camps. Dancers who understand the commercial world as well as the concert world and who are trained in a wide variety of styles are increasingly sought after by film directors, music artists, TV productions, and Broadway shows, as well as by professional dance companies.

Dance Health and Wellness

Dance is beneficial to our health and fitness. The exercise it provides leads to a strong and toned body, the endorphins it releases contribute to an improved mental outlook, and the socialization of shared dancing offers us support and community. Public dance classes are available in traditional genres. In addition, new hybrid dance classes aimed specifically at fitness have developed. Zumba uses salsa steps and rhythms in a dance class of non-stop movement. Jazzercise is a dance franchise that uses jazz dance in its fitness program. Other dance fitness trends emerge continually.

Around the globe, there are organizations aimed at developing community dance programs. People Dancing, a UK group, supports dance programs all across the country, including therapeutic dance, like dance for people with Parkinson's. Similar programs exist world-wide, including the US.

Dance and Movement Therapy

There are a variety of ways that dance and movement therapy can be used to enhance the quality of life among people. The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) describes these techniques as "psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration to improve a person's overall well-being" (ADTA). Dance therapists work in a wide variety of settings, from hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, and drug treatment facilities to schools, nursing homes, community centers, and prisons. They can also work as freelancers or by founding private practices.

Contextual Connections

https://www.headway.org.uk/about-brain-injury/individuals/brain-injury-and-me/dancing-after-brain-injury/

An article in *Headway*, a journal for brain injury, quoted research fellow Dr Gemma-Collard Stokes. She said, "What we have in dance is a uniquely rich sensorial experience that combines physical, cognitive and socially stimulating activities....Stimulating our sensory systems through dance can assist in the process of rebuilding the pathways between cognition and our motor skills..."

https://www.dancemagazine.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-becoming-a-dance-therapist/

Watch This

Dance/Movement Therapy Video

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=628#oembed-72

Dance for Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects a person's ability to move, causing freezing and unintended or uncontrollable movement of the muscles. Several programs offer specialized classes to aid people with Parkinson's, helping to improve aspects such as balance, flexibility, coordination, and forming a mind-body connection.

Dance for Parkinson's classes empower participants to explore movement and music in ways that are stimulating, refreshing and creative. The classes are designed for people with PD and their companions, offering a fun and creative outlet to them in the form of dance.

The Dance for PD® program was developed and implemented by the Mark Morris Dance Group of Brooklyn, New York. Dance for PD is internationally active and acknowledged as an effective way to manage symptoms of Parkinson's through movement, music, imagery, and socialization. Extensive information on the program and its effectiveness, along with scientific research to support the work, can be found on the Dance for PD website. People suffering from other complaints like neuropathy, dementia, and traumatic brain injury also find benefit in attending these dance classes.

Watch This

Meet members of Brooklyn's flagship Dance for PD® class and learn why the program has become such an important part of their lives—and why you belong here too.

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People Dancing is "the UK development organization and membership body for community and participatory dance." They promote dance as a fun and healthy activity for all people by engaging "the general public in creating and performing dance with friends and families."

National and Global Dance Initiatives

Through various initiatives, national and global dance events have allowed people to connect to the broader dance community. These events include celebrating dance as an art form, honoring dance artists, fundraising, and spreading awareness on important issues.

- International Dance Day was established in 1982 by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI). This event occurs annually on April 29, the birth date of Jean-Georges Noverre, in honor of his early contributions to ballet. International Dance Day aims to promote dance worldwide to heighten awareness and value in society.
- In the United States, National Dance Day celebrates all dance forms and is held on the third Saturday in September. It was established in 2010 by Nigel Lythgoe and Adam Shankman of the dance competition show *So You Think You Can Dance?* with support from American congresswoman Eleanor Holmes. Every year, the Dizzy Feet Foundation creates a dance tutorial and uploads it online, encouraging people to learn the movement to support dance's artistic expression and health benefits.
- Global Water Dances emerged from a 2008 Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies (LIMS) conference, addressing the theme "Dance and the Environment." In 2011, Global Water Dances held its first event with 57 locations over 24 hours. Participants join a Movement Choir, "events that use

community dance to create social cohesion through non-verbal communication," dancing near a body of water to address local water issues for environmental and social change (Global Water Dances).

- National Water Dance is held annually, using dance as a platform for social change, advocating for awareness of water-related environmental issues in participants' respective geographic areas, like cleanliness, accessibility, and sustainability. Through the medium of dance and site-specific performance, participants begin their dance with the same opening and beginning movements to acknowledge that "shared movements link all of us together, which is the spirit and power of a movement choir" from the National Water Dance Project (NWDP). Performances are held virtually, and all are invited to participate.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion emerged in response to the 1960s civil rights movement as people of color protested for fair treatment as citizens. Social changes began in education and workplaces to increase awareness and respect for racial differences. In a society encompassing people of varying backgrounds, consideration of diversity to include representation of people came underway to embrace individual differences. This led to the implementation of creating equity, equal opportunities, and resources for all persons and inclusion to ensure people feel valued. In recent years, issues surrounding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) have surfaced in the dance field. Historically, dance has drawn from Euro-centric values and traditions that have caused barriers in the profession in areas like hiring and casting. Discriminatory factors of ethnicity, race, gender, age, body weight, sexuality, or disability have left dancers marginalized in the dance profession. Today, dance artists and educators strive to increase awareness of these issues to improve all realms of DEI.

Summary

There is no doubt that the world of dance has been changing rapidly and will continue to adapt in response to new circumstances in our social, political, and economic situations, as well as with advancements in technology. Dance and technology have partnered to create new ways of choreographing, performing, teaching, and dancing. Dancers around the world are more connected than ever before, and this sharing means that the dance community is more diverse and inclusive than ever. Whether it's through Zoom, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Twitch, Vimeo, TikTok, Pinterest, Reddit, Tumblr, or a new app that's yet to

be invented, dancers will continue to share their passion for the artform and to explore new ideas inspired by what they see.

National and global dance events have also allowed people to connect to the broader dance community. The world is learning that dance is not just fun but beneficial to our health and fitness. The exercise it provides leads to a strong and toned body, the endorphins it releases contribute to an improved mental outlook, and the socialization of shared dancing offers us support and community.

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PART II

SUMMARY

20.

SUMMARY

Art surrounds us all day, everywhere we look, from print to digital, ads to entertainment, the chairs we sit in and switches we turn on. All of the previous art movements and periods have guided us to expand, create, and express our thoughts, lives, and feelings. As humans, we use everything we have to express ourselves and to open the eyes and hearts of the audience. We use dance, music, theater, and art to get our message out into the world. Art is the gift of life.

One of the groups doing this today is **Playing for Change**, which includes New Orleans musician Grandpa Elliot. This group includes singers and musicians from all over the globe to promote education and peace and also to build music and art schools for children. See the video below:

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Art is about creation, connection, reflection, and curiosity. The specific disciplines of art include visual arts, film and media art, music, theater, dance, creative writing, the study of languages, culture, race and gender, classics, history, religion, and other facets of life. Art is communication, collaboration, and creative problem solving, and it deals with the rapidly changing world. Art is an essential ingredient to empowering the hearts of people and bringing life into perspective. When an artist creates music and movies, they entertain people around the world. Art is making a difference in society through experiences, attention, innovation, and many collaborative efforts. It touches our emotions, and it can influence thinking, culture, politics, education, and even the economy. That is what these students in the Netherlands were hoping to achieve by getting together to bring people's attention to the suffering in Africa with hopes of raising money for donations for the African people. Social media has many faults, but one of the positives is that it has allowed for a worldwide audience and possibly brings us all a bit closer.

Young students in the Netherlands getting together to help and show support for Africa:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=807#oembed-2

Sometimes art or performance can be just about promoting itself. The Rijksmuseum did just that after reopening to bring awareness to something that has been there for a while but out of mind: Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*, his most famous artwork.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=807#oembed-3

Art created to give hope and peace in the middle of poverty, destruction, and hate can only bring blessings to those who see it, like a light shining in the darkest of places.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://louis.pressbooks.pub/exploringarts/?p=807#oembed-4

APPENDIX A: CHECKLIST FOR ACCESSIBILITY

Organizing Content

- Content is organized under headings and subheadings.
- Headings and subheadings are used sequentially (e.g., Heading 1, Heading 2).

Images

- Images that convey information include alternative text (alt text) descriptions of the image's content or function.
- Graphs, charts, and maps also include contextual or supporting details in the text surrounding the image.
- Images do not rely on color to convey information.
- Images that are purely decorative do not have alt text descriptions. (Descriptive text is unnecessary if the image doesn't convey contextual content information).

Links

- The link text describes the destination of the link and does not use generic text such as "click here" or "read more."
- If a link will open or download a file (like a PDF or Excel file), a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [PDF]).
- Links do not open in new windows or tabs.
- If a link must open in a new window or tab, a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [NewTab]).
- For citations and references, the title of the resource is hyperlinked, and the full URL is not hyperlinked.

Tables

- Tables are used to structure information and not for layout.

- Tables include row and column headers.
- Row and column headers have the correct scope assigned.
- Tables include a caption.
- Tables avoid merged or split cells.
- Tables have adequate cell padding.

Multimedia

- All audio content includes a transcript. The transcript includes all speech content and relevant descriptions of non-speech audio and speaker names/headings where necessary.
- Videos have captions of all speech content and relevant non-speech content that has been edited by a human for accuracy.
- All videos with contextual visuals (graphs, charts, etc.) are described audibly in the video.

Formulas

- Equations written in plain text use proper symbols (i.e., −, ×, ÷).[1]
- For complex equations, one of the following is true:
  - They were written using LaTeX and are rendered with MathJax (Pressbooks).
  - They were written using Microsoft Word's equation editor.
  - They are presented as images with alternative text descriptions.
- Written equations are properly interpreted by text-to-speech tools.[2]

Font Size

- Font size is 12 point or higher for body text in Word and PDF documents.
- Font size is 9 point for footnotes or endnotes in Word and PDF documents.
- Font size can be enlarged by 200 percent in webbook or ebook formats without needing to scroll side to side.

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1. For example, a hyphen (-) may look like a minus sign (−), but it will not be read out correctly by text-to-speech tools.
2. Written equations should prioritize semantic markup over visual markup so text-to-speech tools will read out an equation in a way that makes sense to auditory learners. This applies to both equations written in LaTeX and equations written in Microsoft Word's equation editor.

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