



Classical Music  
1750 - 1800

Higher Music

# Characteristics



- A less complicated texture than had been evident in Baroque times (less Polyphonic)
- More use of expression through Dynamics. Greater Dynamic contrast were evident
- An elegant character
- Clear use of phrasing
- Clear use of cadences
- Changing themes and emotions within one piece of music
- Harmony changes were slower, less frequent unlike Baroque music which often changed chords 2 or 3 times per bar
- The replacement of the Harpsichord with the Piano
- Less use of Continuo
- The use of Alberti Bass in Piano music

# Mozart

## Symphony No 40



Listen carefully to the opening movement of this work and try to answer the following questions.

1. Is the piece in a major or minor key?
2. Which family of instruments play the opening theme?
3. What playing technique are the strings using?





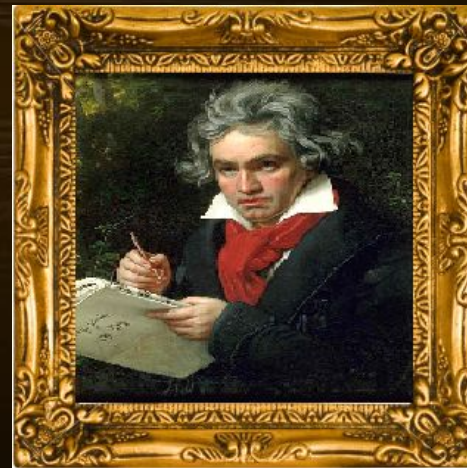
# Composers



Mozart:  
1756-1791



Haydn:  
1732-1809



Beethoven:  
1770-1827

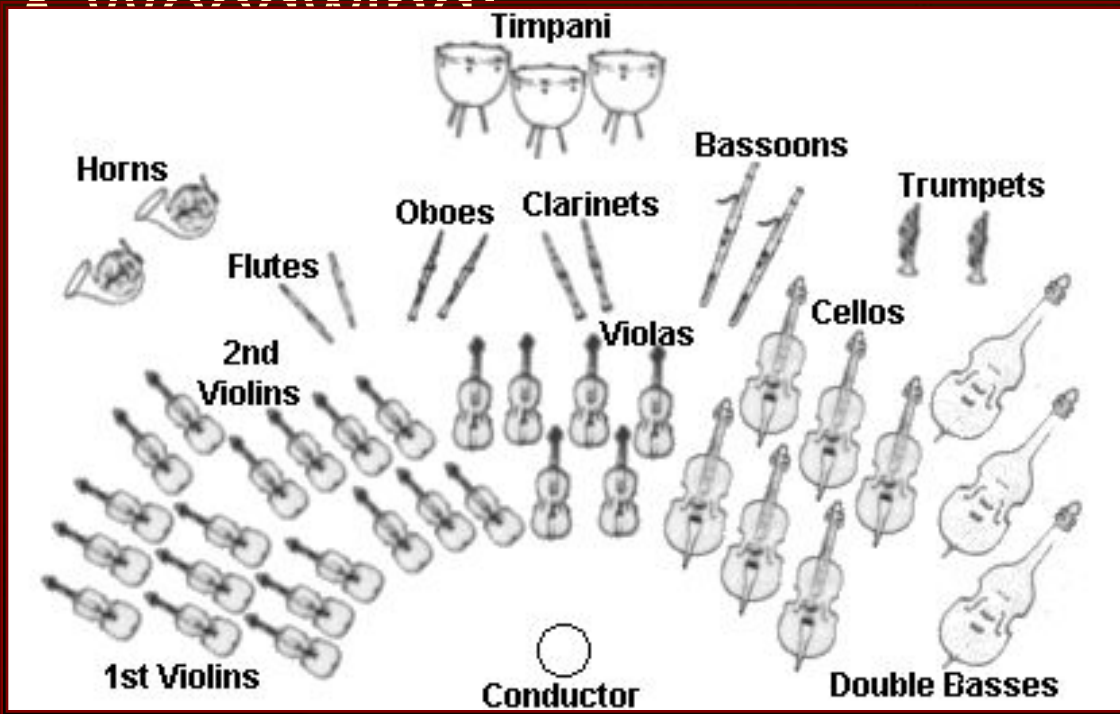


# Classical Orchestra

- **Strings:**

- Violins, Violas, Cellos, Double Bases

- **Woodwind:**



ns



# Orchestral Music



# Symphony

- The Symphony was an emerging style of composition for an Orchestra.
- The symphony was usually written in four movements
- No soloist and no voices.
- The movements took the following format:

Movement 1 – Fast

Movement 2 – Slow

Movement 3 – Minuet & Trio

Movement 4 – Fast



Haydn  
Symphony No 104 – D major

Listen carefully for the following features

- Timpani rolls at beginning
- Arco Strings
- Question and Answer
- Contrasting dynamics
- Repetition of theme





# Solo Concerto

In the Classical period the solo Concerto emerged and was written for an Orchestra and one important solo instrument.



The main features of the Solo Concerto:

- Orchestra
- 1 Solo Instrument
- Question and Answer between orchestra and soloist
- Use of Imitation between orchestra and soloist
- The Cadenza where the soloist gets to show off their skills and can be allowed some degree of Improvisation within this.

Movement 1 – Fast,  
Movement 2 – Slow,  
Movement 3 – Fast

Mozart

Piano Concerto No 9 - E major

Listen carefully for the following features

- Ascending sequence
- Question & answer between piano and orchestra
- Trills
- Imitation
- Time signature?

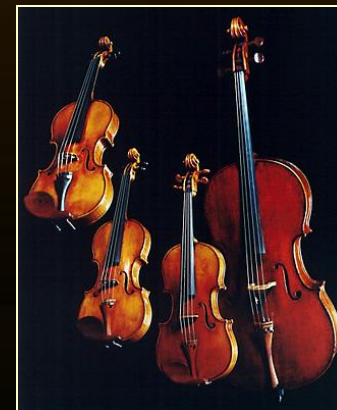


# Chamber Music



- Chamber Music is music written for a small group of musicians and intended to be played in a room (chamber) rather than a large Concert Hall.
- There were various groups of musicians which Chamber music was written for such as a Quartet or a Quintet.
- In the Classical period the most popular group written for was the String Quartet, Haydn wrote many of these ensembles. The String Quartet used the following instruments;

1st Violin  
2nd Violin  
Viola  
Cello



Beethoven  
String QRT No 11 – F minor

Listen carefully for the following features

- Tempo is Allegro
- Simple Time
- Repetition of opening theme
- Arco Strings





## Minuet and Trio

The Minuet and Trio was an extension of this form in the Classical period and involved the addition of the Trio which was basically a 2<sup>nd</sup> Minuet.



- The Minuet and Trio has the following features:
  - A graceful French dance
  - 3 beats in the bar
  - Ternary Form



## Scherzo



- A lively movement (a 'joke')
- Triple time
- Usually found as 3<sup>rd</sup> movement in a symphony, sonata or chamber work.

# Overture



- Orchestral music which introduces a large scale work such as Opera or Oratorio
- Listen carefully for the concepts as they appear on the screen
  - Repetition of opening theme on strings
  - Allegro Tempo
  - Question and Answer between woodwind instruments
  - Counter melody on flute

## Alberti Bass



- As we have already discovered the Piano was the Keyboard instrument of choice during the Classical period. Many composers wrote Piano Sonatas for solo piano as well as using the piano as the solo instrument in a Solo Concerto.
- A common feature in both was the use of the Alberti Bass in the left hand of the piano part. This involved alternating between the notes of the chord. For example, if the chord is C the notes which could be used are C, E and G. They would be played in the following order:





Handwritten text: *Handwritten musical notation*

A musical staff in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of two measures. The first measure contains four quarter notes: C (middle C), G (below staff), E (below staff), and G (below staff). The second measure contains four quarter notes: C (middle C), G (below staff), E (below staff), and G (below staff). Brackets are placed under the first four notes and the last four notes of the staff.

C G E G C G E G

- Played on piano in the left hand



- Alternates the notes of the chord

  - E.g C E G in the order C G E G

- Common feature of the Sonata and Solo Concerto



# Sonata



- Work for solo piano  
or
- Solo instrument plus piano
- Both parts are technically demanding
- Listen out for the Alberti Bass

# Forms

- Sonata form
- Minuet and trio
- Theme and variation
- Rondo







## Sonata Form



- Sonata form has 3 main sections:
- Exposition
- Development
- Recapitulation

## Exposition

The main tune (Subjects) are played for the 1<sup>st</sup> time. There are usually 2 subjects, one in the Tonic key and the 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Dominant key.

## Development

Composer develops or changes the subjects in different ways with the use of frequent modulations.



## Recapitulation

The Subjects are played again with the 2<sup>nd</sup> subject in the Tonic key

# Exposition



- First subject (tonic)
- Bridge (modulating passage)
- Second subject (related key eg dominant)
- Often the exposition is marked with repeats

## Development



- Composer 'develops' ideas from the exposition
- Moves through many keys eventually working back to the tonic in preparation for the .....

## Exposition

- Repeats or 'recapitulates' music from the exposition
- First subject (tonic)
- Bridge (altered)
- Second subject (tonic)
- Coda finishes off the movement





# Theme and Variation



- The 'theme' is the main melody
  - A 'variation' of this theme is when the composer plays the main melody again but has slightly altered it.
- 
- The 5 main ways to vary a theme
    1. The melody
    2. The Rhythm
    3. The Time-Signature
    4. The Harmony
    5. The Tonality

# Twinkle Twinkle Little Star



## Zwölf Variationen in C

über das französische Lied *Ah, vous dirai-je Maman?*  
KV 365 (300#)

49

Entstanden wahrscheinlich Paris, 1778

Thema

The image shows the musical score for the theme of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system is labeled 'Thema' and the second system is labeled 'Endstanden'. The music is in C major and 3/4 time. The first system contains 11 measures, and the second system contains 11 measures. The notes are simple and rhythmic, typical of a children's song.

## Rondo Form



- The main theme 'A' is repeated after each new section of music.

A

B

A

C

A