

MUSIC OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD



The Classical Period 1750-1825

What does the term Classical mean?



- From 1750 artists, musicians and architects wanted to get away from the strange opulence of the Baroque period and move to emulate the clean, uncluttered style of Classical Greece.
- The period is called Classical because of that desire to emulate the works of the ancient Greeks

Characteristics of the classical period



- The Church and Monarchs were no longer the principle benefactors of the arts due to the political upheaval in Europe at the time.
- The aristocracy were the main patrons of the arts. They wanted impersonal but tuneful music from their composers. This led to the term “absolute” music - which is music that is written for music’s sake.



- All of the Classical composers were employed by various wealthy patrons. Much of their music was written for parties, ceremonies, or simply as a commission for a new work.
- The center of Classical music was Vienna, which is where all of the major composers lived and worked.
- There was also a sense of Nationalism in the compositions.

Musical Characteristics



- Great attention to musical form
- Use of dynamics as thematic material
- Inclusion of percussion instruments
- Strong sense of tension and release
- Use of modulation
- Opera
- Use of comic and witty melodies

Music Innovations



- Symphonic form
- Sonata form
- String Quartets
- Huge popularity of the Opera
- Invention of the modern Piano, as well as many other instruments Theme and Variations

The Symphonic Form



- Mastered by Franz Joseph Haydn - he wrote 104 of them.
- An extended work for orchestra - usually 20 - 40 minutes in length.

The Symphonic Orchestra



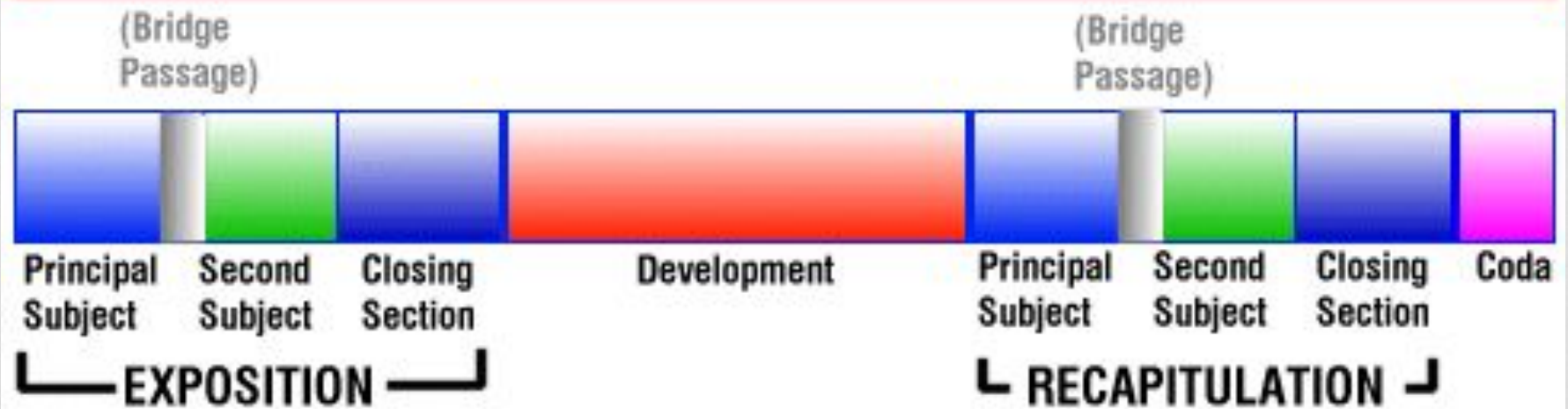
The Sonata Form



- The Sonata Form A one-movement piece for a solo instrument, usually accompanied by a piano - as opposed to a concerto, which is a multi-movement piece accompanied by an orchestra.
- There are three sections of a sonata-
- Exposition, Development, Recapitulation.
- All sonatas follow this form.



A Diagram of Sonata Form



The String Quartet



- A composition for four solo string instruments: -2 Violins –1 Viola 1 Cello
- Each part is equally important.
- Haydn was the first to write one - he also mastered them.
- Piece usually has four movements similar to that of the symphonic form.

Opera



- While opera was invented much earlier in musical history, it was during this period and the one that followed that most of the most famous operas were written - including:
 - ◆ The Magic Flute
 - ◆ The Marriage of Figaro
 - ◆ Don Giovanni
- All of these operas were written by Mozart. Beethoven, Haydn and Schubert has no success with writing operas.
- An opera is basically a musical play with all of the words sung instead of spoken

The Opera



Famous Classical Composers



- Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)
- Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
- Ludwig Von Beethoven (1770-1827)
- Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Christoph Willibald Gluck



Franz Joseph Haydn



Wolfgang
Amadeus
Mozart



Ludwig Von Beethoven



Franz Schubert



Instruments of the Classical Period

- Modern Flute
- Clarinet
- French Horn
- Valved Trumpet
- Trombone
- Percussion
- Piano

Conclusions



- Most of the most famous composers in history come from this era.
- By 1825, the modern orchestra was almost fully in place (except for the tuba and low woodwinds).
- It was during this era that many of the most famous pieces of music were written, including symphonies and operas.