

Classical Period 1750 – 1820

Three generations of composers:

Joseph Haydn, W. A. Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven

Haydn- worked as a “servant” for a prince, also published music and later gave public concerts of his symphonies to great acclaim

Mozart- struggled to make a living, never got court appointment

Beethoven- never had royal appointment, gave public concerts, published music, died a public hero

The Classical Period straddles the change from aristocratic or church support to public support for composers

Melody- simpler, more like the dance melodies of the Baroque

Harmony- homophonic texture, melody with chords- rhythmic accompaniment figures

Dynamics- gradual changes *crescendo* (gradually increasing volume)

Drama- dramatic contrasts within the same movement (sometimes changing gradually, sometimes quickly)

Form- structure, especially in instrumental pieces, became much more important. This allowed composers to be creative but have a basic structure audiences knew

Multi-movement cycle: a plan used for most instrumental pieces

Name of genre	Who plays it
Sonata	one instrument accompanied by piano (or just piano)
Symphony	orchestra
String quartet	chamber music group with 2 violins, 1 viola, and 1 cello
String trio	1 violin, 1 viola 1 cello
Concerto	solo instrument accompanied by orchestra

Four movements- each is a self-contained piece of music with its own themes

Minuet and Trio (Minuet – Trio – Minuet)- Compound ternary (ABA, where each of the three sections is in binary form)

Haydn String Quartet Op. 76, No.3, 3rd movement (of four)

Mozart: Symphony No. 40, 3rd movement (of four)

Sonata-allegro (Exposition, Development, Recapitulation)

Mozart: Symphony No. 40, 1st movement (of four)

Mozart: Symphony No. 40, 2nd movement (of four)

Mozart: Symphony No. 40, 4th movement (of four)

Rondo- ABACADA...

Haydn Trumpet Concerto 3rd movement (out of three)

Theme and Variations

Beethoven: Variations on "God Save the King"

Mozart: Clarinet Quintet 4th movement (out of four)

Cadenza- improvisation by a solo instrument to delay a cadence

Beethoven: Fifth Symphony follows the multi-movement plan, but increased drama

Motive- three short notes followed by a long note, shows up in disguised form in the third and fourth movements (this is new)

Opera

As with Baroque opera, it consists of a series of separate numbers

Instrumental (overture)

Recitatives (accompanied by just keyboard or by the orchestra)

Arias, duets, larger ensembles, etc.

Don Giovanni

Comic and serious elements