Part IV
The Classical Period
1750-1820
The Classical Period

Time Line

• Seven Years’ War-1756-1763
• Louis XVI in France-1774-1792
• Am. Declaration of Independence-1776
• French Revolution-1789
• Napoleon: first French consul-1799
• Napoleonic Wars-1803-1815
• Goethe: Faust-1808
• Austin: Pride and Prejudice-1813
The Classical Era

- Scientific advances changed world view
  - Faith in the power of reason
  - Undermining of traditional authority
    - Social organization
    - Religious establishment
  - Age of Enlightenment
  - Rise of the middle class worker
- Visual Art
  - Moved away from ornate Baroque style
    - Favored light colors, curved lines, & graceful ornaments
Ch. 1 - The Classical Style

• Transition to Period: ~1730-1770
  • C.P.E. and J.C. Bach—early pioneers
  • Concentrated on simplicity and clarity

• Term *classical*
  • Greek and Roman antiquity
  • Supreme accomplishment of lasting appeal
  • Anything that is not rock, jazz, folk, or popular

• Music and visual arts stress balance and clarity of structure

• Three main composers
  • Joseph Haydn
  • Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  • Ludwig van Beethoven
Characteristics of the Classical Style

• **Contrast of Mood**
  • Contrasts both between & within movements

• **Flexibility of rhythm**
  • Multiple rhythmic patterns for variety

• **Texture**
  • Mostly homophonic, but with frequent shifts

• **Melody**
  • Tuneful, easy to remember
  • Composers borrowed popular tunes

• **Dynamics**
  • Emotions expressed in shades of dynamics
  • Use of gradual dynamic changes
  • Related to development of the piano – soft/loud

• **End of the Basso Continuo**
The Classical Orchestra

• Increase in size of orchestra – standard group of four sections
  • Strings: 1st & 2nd violins, violas, cellos, double bass
  • Woodwinds: @2 – flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons
  • Brass: @2 – French horns, trumpets
  • Percussion – 2 timpani

• Composers exploited individual tone colors

• Each section had a special role
  • Strings most important w/ violins taking the melody
  • Woodwinds added contrasting tone
  • Horns & trumpets brought power to loud passages
  • Timpani used for rhythmic bite and emphasis
Classical Forms

- Instrumental works consist of several movements that contrast in tempo & character
  - 1st—Fast
  - 2nd—Slow
  - 3rd—Dance-related
  - 4th—Fast
- The movements might use different forms
  - A B A
  - Theme and Variations
  - Sonata
  - Minuet and Trio
  - Rondo
- Movements often contrast themes vividly
- By movement’s end, musical tensions are resolved
Ch. 2 - Composer, Patron, and Public in the Classical Period

- Changing society affected musicians
  - Haydn: worked 30 years for aristocratic family
  - Mozart: began at court, broke away, died broke
  - Beethoven: successful as independent musician
- Prospering middle class wanted aristocratic pleasures (theatre, literature, music)
  - Public, ticket buying concerts became common
- Demand for printed music, instruments & music lessons
  - Composers wrote playable music that would sell
- Serious compositions flavored by folk and popular music
Vienna

• Became the musical capital of Europe
• Musicians came to study and seek recognition
• Aristocrats wintering there would bring their orchestras
• Musicians, including Mozart and Beethoven, frequently played gigs in wealthy homes
• Many musicians also worked in serenading street bands
Ch. 3 - Sonata Form

- Also called sonata-allegro form
- Refers to form of a single movement
- Ternary form (A B A)—3 main sections
  - Exposition
    - Initial statement of 1st and 2nd themes
    - Entire section usually repeated
  - Development
    - Tension building section
    - Themes broken into fragments—motives
  - Recapitulation
    - Resolution of tension
    - Re-statement of 1st and 2nd themes
    - Often concludes with a “tag” or tail—Coda
Listening
Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
First movement
Listening Outline: p. 163
Basic Set, 3:15           Brief Set, CD 2:34

Note:   Sonata Form
        Exposition
        Development
        Recapitulation
        Coda
Ch. 4 - Theme and Variations

• Single part form—no large contrasting “B” section
  • (A A’ A” A”’…)

• Basic idea presented and then repeated over and over
  • Each repeat alters (varies) the musical idea
  • Each variation is about the same length as the original idea
  • Variations may alter melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, timbre, or all of these
Listening
Symphony No. 94 in G Major  
*(Surprise; 1791)*
by Franz Joseph Haydn
Second Movement
Listening Outline: p. 166
Basic Set, CD 3:37  Brief Set: CD 2:43

Note: Theme and Variations form  
Countermelody
Ch. 5 - Minuet and Trio

- Ternary form based upon stately court dance of the Baroque

- Each ternary part is itself ternary:

  Minuet   Trio   Minuet
  A        B       A


- Return of the Minuet is usually marked on the music as *da capo*
Eine kleine Nachtmusik (A Little Night Music; 1787), K. 525

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Third Movement

Listening Outline: p. 168

Basic Set, CD 3:51
Brief Set, CD 2:49

Note: Minuet and Trio form

Minuet     Trio     Minuet
A          B          A
Ch. 6 - Rondo

- Features a tuneful main theme which returns over and over
  - Lively, pleasing and simple to remember
- Main theme alternates with other contrasting sections
- Common rondo patterns:
  - A B A C A (small rondo)
  - A B A C A B A (large rondo)
    - Note the similarity to modern pop-music form
Listening

String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4 (1798-1800)
by Ludwig van Beethoven

Fourth movement

Listening Outline: p. 170
Basic Set, CD 3:54  Brief Set, CD 3:01

Note: Rondo form
A B A C A B A
Ch. 7 - The Classical Symphony

- Extended, ambitious composition lasting for 20-45 minutes
- Multi-movement instrumental work
  - 1\textsuperscript{st} Fast—frequently Sonata form
  - 2\textsuperscript{nd} Slow—often Sonata form, sometimes Theme and Variations
  - 3\textsuperscript{rd} Dance—usually Minuet and Trio or scherzo (fast, dance-like) form
  - 4\textsuperscript{th} Fast—frequently Sonata or Rondo form
- Themes in one movement rarely appear in another movement
Ch. 8 - The Classical Concerto

• Work for instrumental soloist and orchestra lasting 20-45 minutes
• Usually three movements:
  - Fast—Slow—Fast  (no Minuet movement)
• Combines soloist’s virtuosity with power and timbres of orchestra
• Break near end of 1st and sometimes last movement called *cadenza*
  - Showpiece for the soloist (orchestra waits)
• Originally improvised, Classical composers seldom notated cadenzas
Ch. 9 - Classical Chamber Music

• Designed for the intimate setting of a room, rather than concert hall

• Small group of 4-9 instrumentalists
  • Each player shares thematic material

• Most important setting is string quartet
  • 2 violins, viola, cello
  • Four movements
    • Usually Fast—Slow—Dance—Fast

• Other popular settings:
  • Sonata for violin and piano
  • Piano trio (violin, cello, and piano)
  • String quintet (2 violins, 2 violas, cello)
Joseph Haydn

- 1732-1809—early and mid-Classical Period Austrian composer (long life)
- Talent recognized early
  - Age 8—sent to Vienna to be a choir boy
  - Dismissed from school—voice changed
  - Worked in Vienna and continued studies
- Esterhazy’s composer for 30 years
  - Employment status as skilled servant
  - Became famous in Europe at this time
  - Moved to Vienna at Prince’s death
- Made concert trip to London
- Prolific composer
Ch. 11 - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

- 1756-1791 (mid-Classical composer)
  - Austrian
  - Son of a professional musician
    - Leopold Mozart, violin, worked for Archbishop of Salzburg
  - Child prodigy
- At 25—freelance musician in Vienna
  - Partly due to winning the Emperor’s favor
  - Initially successful, then novelty wore off
- Final piece was a Requiem that was finished by one of his students
- Very prolific; note short life span
- Wrote in all Classical genres
Don Giovanni has slipped into the room of Donna Anna. Leporello worriedly waits outside.

Donna Anna is not happy to see Don Giovanni. Her father, the Commandant, catches him. They fight a duel and the Commandant is killed.
Listening

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major (1786) by Mozart
First movement
Listening Outline: p. 185
Basic Set, CD 4:11 Brief Set, CD 3:09

Note: Sonata form

Cadenza near end of movement (one of few notated by Mozart)
Ch. 12 - Ludwig van Beethoven

- 1770-1827—late Classical, German
- Son of a professional musician
  - Father, Johann, was a singer & abusive alcoholic
  - Forced the boy to study music (wanted $)
- Financially successful as freelance musician
- Believed in period’s societal changes
- Wrote final pieces while totally deaf
- Died in Vienna
  - 20,000 people attended funeral
- Wrote in all Classical genres
  - 9 symphonies
  - 16 string quartets
  - Many other sonatas and other works
  - 5 concertos
  - 1 opera
Listening

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 by Beethoven (1808)

Mvt. 1—Allegro con brio
Listening Outline: p. 193 Basic Set, CD 4:34
Brief Set, CD 3:17

Mvt. 2—Andante con moto
Listening Outline: p. 196 Basic Set, CD 4:42
Brief Set, CD 3:25