Part IV

The Classical Period

(1750-1820)
Time-Line

Seven Years’ War-1756-1763
Louis XVI in France-1774-1792
American 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

Fragonard: The Lover Crowned
Chapter 1: The Classical Style

Transition to Period: ~1730-1770

C.P.E. and J.C. Bach—early pioneers

Music and visual arts stress balance and structure

Three main composers:

- Joseph Haydn
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Ludwig van Beethoven
Characteristics of The Classical Style

 Contrast of Mood
   – Contrast both between and within movements

 Flexibility of rhythm
   – Multiple rhythmic patterns in a piece

 Texture
   – Mostly homophonic, but with frequent shifts
Melody

- Tuneful, easy to sing, folk/popular-based

Dynamics

- Emotions expressed in shades of dynamics
  - Use of gradual dynamic changes
  - Related to development of the piano

End of the Basso Continuo
The Classical Orchestra

- Standardization of instrumentation
- Increase in size of orchestra
  - Still smaller than that of today
- Composers made use of various timbres available
  - Instruments not treated as all equal, as in the Baroque
  - Melodies move around between instruments
Classical Forms

- Instrumental works usually in multi-movement form

- Frequently four movements
  - 1st—Fast
  - 2nd—Slow
  - 3rd—Dance-related
  - 4th—Fast

- Multi-movement works for instrumental groups:
  - Symphony—for orchestra
  - String quartet—2 violins, viola, & cello
  - Sonata—usually for one or two instruments
Chapter 2: Composer, Patron, and Public in the Classical Period

Changing society affected musicians

- Breakdown of the patronage system
  - Related to decline of aristocracy and rise of democracy

- Rise of the public (consumer-driven) system
  - Haydn: worked 30 years for aristocratic family
  - Mozart: began at court, broke away, died broke
  - Beethoven: successful as independent musician
Prospeering middle class wanted aristocratic pleasures (theatre, literature, music)
  – Public, ticket buying concerts became common

Middle class children received music lessons
  – Rise of instrument manufacture industry
  – Composers wrote playable music that would sell

Serious compositions flavored by folk and popular music
Vienna

- Became the musical capitol 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
Chapter 3: Sonata Form

- One of, if not *the*, most common Classical forms
  - Form continues up to, and including, the 20th Century
- Also called *sonata-allegro* form
  - *Sonata form* refers to a single movement
  - A *Sonata* is an entire multi-movement work
- Opening movements frequently use sonata form
  - Common in symphony, sonata, and string quartet
- This form also common in 2nd and 4th movements
Sonata form is ternary (A B A)—3 main sections

- Exposition (A)
  - Initial statement of 1st and 2nd themes
  - Entire section usually repeated

- Development (B)
  - Tension building section
  - Themes broken into fragments—motives

- Recapitulation (A)
  - Resolution of tension
  - Re-statement of first and second themes

- Often concludes with a “tag” or tail—Coda
Listening

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
First movement

Listening Outline: p. 166
Brief Set, CD 2:23

Listen for: Sonata Form
- Exposition
- Development
- Recapitulation
- Coda
Chapter 4: Theme and Variations

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

- Basic idea presented, 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, 1791
(Surprise Symphony)
Franz Joseph Haydn
Second Movement

Listening Outline: p. 168
Brief Set, CD 2:32

Listen for: Theme and Variations form
“Surprise” chord near beginning
Chapter 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
  \[\|: \, a \,:||: \, b \, a' \,:||: \, c \,:||: \, d \,\]  \[\|: \, a \, b \, a' \,\]

- Return of the Minuet is usually marked on the music as *da capo*
Listening

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525 (1787)
(A Little Night Music)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Third Movement

Listening Outline: p. 171
Brief Set, CD 2:38

Listen for: Minuet and Trio form

Minuet | Trio | Minuet
Chapter 6: Rondo

- Features a main theme that keeps coming back
- Main theme section 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
- Sometimes combined with sonata form to create the hybrid *sonata-rondo* form
  - Sonata-rondo is a rondo with a development section
Listening

String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4
(1798-1800)
Ludwig van Beethoven
Fourth movement: Rondo (Allegro)

Listening Outline: p. 173
Brief Set, CD 2:41

Listen for: Rondo form (large rondo)
A  B  A  C  A  B  A
Chapter 7: The Classical Symphony

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

Work for instrumental soloist and orchestra lasting 20-45 minutes

Usually three movements:
- Fast—Slow—Fast (no Minuet movement)

Contrasts soloist’s abilities with power and timbres of orchestra
Opens in sonata form with a double exposition
– Orchestra plays first exposition, soloist the second

Break near end of first and sometimes last movement called *cadenza*
– Solo break where orchestra stops and waits
– Originally improvised, Classical composers seldom notated cadenzas
Chapter 9: Classical Chamber Music

- Intended for performance in a room, not a concert hall

- Small group of 4-9 instrumentalists
  - One player to a part
  - Often intended for amateur performers
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)
Chapter 10: 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 family’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 trips to London

Prolific composer
Haydn’s Music

Haydn was a pioneer in the development of Classical forms. Both Mozart and Beethoven were influenced by Haydn's work.

He made use of folk music in serious compositions.

Haydn composed 104 symphonies and 68 string quartets. It is possible that he invented the string quartet form.

Haydn had an extensive output in other forms:

- Piano sonatas
- Piano trios
- Divertimentos
- Concertos
- Operas
- Masses
Listening

Trumpet Concerto in E Flat Major (1796)
Joseph Haydn
Third movement

Listening Guide: p. 178
Basic Set, CD 3:44

Note: Virtuoso trumpet part for soloist
Combination of sonata-allegro and rondo forms called sonata-rondo
Chapter 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—35 years

Wrote in all Classical genres
Mozart’s Music

Masterpieces in all musical forms of his time
- Symphonies, concertos, chamber music, and operas

Compositions sound effortless
- Composed with extreme rapidity
  - Almost like taking dictation

Avoided stereotype characters in his operas
- Created opera figures who think and feel
Don Giovanni (1787)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Act I: Introduction

Vocal Music Guide: p. 183
Brief Set, CD 3:1

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.
Don Giovanni (1787)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Leporello’s catalog aria (*Madamina*)

Vocal Music Guide: p. 187
Basic Set, CD 3:55

Donna Elvira, an earlier conquest of Don Giovanni’s, tries to see him again.

Leporello intercepts her and attempts to discourage her by reading a list, or catalog, of the women Don Giovanni has been with.
Listening

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550 (1788)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mvt. 1—Molto allegro
Listening Outline: p. 166  Brief Set, CD 2:23

Mvt. 2—Andante
Listening Guide: p. 188  Basic Set, CD 3:10

Mvt. 3—Menuetto (Allegretto)
Listening Guide: p. 189  Basic Set, CD 3:13

Mvt. 4—Allegro assai (very fast)
Listening Guide: p. 189  Basic Set, CD 3:16
Listening

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488 (1786)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

First movement

Listening Outline: p. 191
Brief Set, CD 3:5

Listen for: Sonata form

Cadenza near end of movement (one of few notated by Mozart)

Performance Profile: Murray Perahia, pianist/conductor

Listen for performer’s interpretation that attempts to make the piece “…sound spontaneous, so that it never sounds mechanical.”
Chapter 12: Ludwig van Beethoven

- 1770-1827—late Classical, German

- Son of a professional musician
  - Father, Johann, was a singer and 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
  - 5 concertos
  - 1 opera
  - Many sonatas and other works
Beethoven’s Music

- Worked, sometimes for years, on a single piece
  - Carried musical sketchbooks with him jotting down ideas

- Wrote in the Classical forms
  - Gave them new power and intensity

- Bridged gap between Classical and Romantic

- Used dramatic dynamic contrasts
  - Also increased range of pitch

- Expanded Development and Coda sections of sonata form
Listening

Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 13
(Pathetique, 1798)
Ludwig van Beethoven
First movement (Grave-solemn, slow intro.)

Listening Guide: p. 198
Basic Set, CD 4:8

Note: Extreme dynamic contrasts and accents
Unexpected pauses
More use of dissonance than previous composers
Listening

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

Mvt. 1—Allegro con brio
Listening Outline: p. 201
Brief Set, CD 2:45

Mvt. 2—Andante con moto
Listening Outline: p. 204
Brief Set, CD 2:53

Mvt. 3—Allegro (scherzo)
Listening Guide: p. 205
Brief Set, CD 2:59

Mvt. 4—Allegro
Listening Guide: p. 206
Brief Set, CD 2:63