Part V

The Romantic Period

(1820-1900)
Time-Line

- Monroe Doctrine—1823
- Hugo: *Hunchback of Notre Dame*—1831
- Dickens: *Oliver Twist*—1837
- Dumas: *The Three Musketeers*—1844
- Poe: *The Raven*—1845
- Darwin: *Origin of Species*—1859
- American Civil War—1861-1865
- Twain: *Huckleberry Finn*—1884
- Bell invents telephone—1876
Romanticism (1820-1900)

- Stressed emotion, imagination, and individualism
- Emotional subjectivity basis of arts
- Favorite artistic topics:
  - Fantasy and the supernatural
  - Middle Ages/concept of chivalry & romance
    - Architecture revived Gothic elements
  - Nature: as mirror of the human heart
- Period of the Industrial Revolution
  - Resulted in social and economic changes
Chapter 1: Romanticism in Music

Many important Romantic composers

- Franz Schubert
- Robert Schumann
- Clara Schumann
- Frederic Chopin
- Franz Liszt
- Felix Mendelssohn
- Hector Berlioz
- Bedrich Smetana
- Antonin Dvorak
- Peter Tchaikovsky
- Johannes Brahms
- Giuseppe Verdi
- Giacomo Puccini
- Richard Wagner
Continued use of Classical period forms

- Much individual alteration and adjustment

Greater range of tone color, dynamics, and pitch than in Classical period

Expanded harmony—complex chords
Characteristics of Romantic Music

Individuality of Style

- Composers wanted uniquely identifiable music
  - Worked to find their own voice

- In Romantic music, it is far easier to identify individual composers through listening
Expressive Aims and Subjects

All approaches were explored:
– Flamboyance, intimacy, unpredictability, melancholy, rapture, longing, …

Romantic love still the focus of songs and operas
– Lovers frequently depicted as unhappy and facing overwhelming obstacles

Dark topics draw composers
Nationalism and Exoticism

Nationalism: music with a national identity
- Uses folk songs, dances, legends, and history of a land

Exoticism: intentionally implies a foreign culture
- Makes use of melodies, rhythms, and instruments associated with distant lands
- Frequently employed in operas with foreign settings
Program Music

Association with a story, poem, idea, or scene

- Understanding the music is enhanced through reading the program or viewing the associated work

- Though common in the Romantic, concept had been employed for centuries previously
  - E.g., *La Primavera* (from the *Four Seasons*) by Vivaldi

- Many Romantic composers were also authors

- Made possible a “union of the arts”
  - Poets wanted their poetry to be musical
  - Musicians wanted their music to be poetic
Expressive Tone Color

Composers tried to create unique sounds

- Blending of existing instruments
- Addition of new instruments
- Never before had timbre been so important

Enlarged orchestra allowed more instrument colors

- Classical 20-60 members vs. Romantic ~100
- Orchestration came to be regarded as an art form
  - Berlioz: *Treatise on Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration* (1844)

Advances in instrument design allowed more color

- Valved brass instruments could now play melodies
- Piano design improved and range was extended
Colorful Harmony

Chords built with notes not in traditional keys
– Chromatic harmony

Harmonic instability a consciously used device
– Wide use of keys
– Frequent and rapid modulation
Expanded Range of Dynamics, Pitch & Tempo

- Dynamics **ff**, **pp** expanded to **ffff** and **pppp**
- Extremely high and low pitches were added
- Changes in mood frequently underlined by (sometimes subtle) shifts in tempo
  - **Rubato**: slight holding back or pressing forward of tempo
Some composers went on for hours
  – Required hundreds of performers

Others music lasted only a few minutes
  – Written for a single instrument

Composers wrote symphonies, sonatas, string quartets, concertos, operas, and many other Classically traditional works
Chapter 2: Romantic Composers and Their Public

- Demise of the patronage system
  - Composers regarded themselves as “free spirits”
  - Decline in aristocratic fortune—Napoleonic wars

- New urban classes/new musical topics

- Music conservatories founded in Europe and U.S.

- Public was entranced by virtuosity
Private music-making increased

- Piano became fixture in most homes

Composers and audience came from the same social class

Few composers were financially successful

- Most supported themselves through performing, teaching lessons, and/or authoring
Chapter 3: The Art Song

Composition for solo voice and piano
- Accompaniment integral part of the song

Linked to vast amount of poetry in this period
- Composers interpret poem’s, mood, atmosphere and imagery into music
  - Mood often set at beginning with piano introduction and summed up at end with piano *postlude*
Strophic and Through-Composed Form

- *Strophic* form repeats music for each verse
- *Through-composed*—new music for each verse
- Sometimes modified strophic form used

The Song Cycle

- Group of songs unified in some manner
  - Storyline or musical idea may link the songs
Chapter 4: Franz Schubert

- Born in Vienna (1797-1828)
- Early Romantic composer
- Prodigious output
  - When 18 years old wrote 143 songs
  - At 19 years of age, wrote 179 works
    - Included 2 symphonies, an opera, and a mass
- Not financially successful
  - His symphonies were not performed until after his death
Schubert’s Music

- Wrote over 600 songs
  - Also symphonies, string quartets, other chamber music, sonatas, masses, operas, & piano works
    - The *Unfinished Symphony*: only 2 movements, not 4
Listening

Erlkonig (The Erlking; 1815)
Franz Schubert

Vocal Music Guide: p. 224
Brief Set, CD 3:12

Based upon narrative ballad with supernatural topic by Goethe

Listen for: Through-composed form
Piano portrays galloping horse
Different characters have their notes pitched at different levels to emphasize dialog
Dramatic ending
Chapter 5: Robert Schumann

- German, early to mid-Romantic (1810-1856)

- Wanted to be piano virtuoso
  - Problem with hand ended his ambition
    - Treatments and gadget made problem worse

- Married his piano teacher’s daughter

- Temperamentally unsuited for some of the musical positions he attempted

- Committed to asylum where he died
Robert Schumann’s Music

- Wrote piano pieces, art songs, and later symphonies
  - Piano pieces and art songs frequently in cycles

- Known for his gift for melody
Listening

From *Carnaval* (1834), a cycle of program music by Robert Schumann

*Estrella*, for his first fiancée

Ternary form, note syncopation in B section

Listening Guide p. 229  Brief Set, CD 3:18

*Reconnaissance* (Reunion)

Ternary form, note B section shift from homophonic to polyphonic texture

Listening Guide p. 229  Brief Set, CD 3:20
Chapter 6: Clara Wieck Schumann

- German (1819-1896)
- A leading 19th Century pianist
  - One of first well-known women composers
- Married Robert Schumann
  - Stopped composing after his death
  - Focused on performing his works
- Pair was friends with Johannes Brahms
Clara Wieck Schumann’s Music

Stopped composing at age 36

- Considered herself primarily a performer
  - Perhaps related to negative attitude toward women composers
  - Possibly due to her close association with overwhelming geniuses like Brahms and her husband

- Wrote:
  - Songs
  - Piano pieces
  - A piano concerto
  - A trio for piano, violin, and cello
**Listening**

*Liebst du um Schonbeit*

*(If you love for beauty; 1841)*

Clara Wieck Schumann


Brief Set, CD 3:22

Based upon a poem by Ruckert

Listen for: Varied strophic form *(A A’ A”)*

Folk-like quality of melody

Piano fills in spaces in vocal melody at times and at others responds to or continues vocal melody
Chapter 7: Frederic Chopin

- Polish born musician (1810-1849)
- Early to mid-Romantic composer
- Came to Paris at age 21
  - Europe’s Romantic Period artistic capital
- Wrote almost exclusively for piano
  - Made extensive use of piano pedals
- Composed mostly for chamber concert
  - Avoided concert halls
- Affair with Aurore Dudevant (a.k.a. George Sand)
Chopin’s Music

- Developed personal style at early age
  - Not program music, but evokes an image
  - Unique harmonic style influenced others

- Most of his pieces are elegant miniatures
Listening

Nocturne in E Flat Major, op. 9, no. 2
Frederic Chopin (1830-31)

Listening Outline: p. 234
Brief Set, CD 3:26

Nocturne (night piece)—slow, lyrical, intimate piece for piano

Listen for: Expressive, emotional presentation with subtle shifts in tempo and dynamics

Note pedal notation on printed music (p. 235)
Listening

*Etude in C Minor, Op. 10, no. 12* (Revolutionary; 1831?)
Frederic Chopin

Listening Outline: p. 236
Brief Set, CD 3:29

*Etude*—study piece focusing upon a specific performance technique

Listen for: Speed & endurance required of left hand
Not just a study, but interesting music
Polonaise in A Flat Major, Op. 10, no. 12 (1842)

Frederic Chopin

Listening Guide: p. 237
Basic Set, CD 5:13

Polonaise—originated as stately processional dance for Polish nobility

Listen for:  Triple meter

Ternary—A B A’ with coda
Chapter 8: Franz Liszt

- Hungarian born composer (1811-1886)
  - Virtuoso pianist

- Touring concert pianist until age 36
  - Incredible performer and showman—"pop star"
  - Retired from touring & took court position
    - More time to compose
  - Later wrote music foreshadowing 20th Century
Liszt’s Music

- Extremely controversial
  - Some call it “Bombastic” and “vulgar”
  - Others say that it is the ideal music

- Broke away from strict Classical forms

- Created *symphonic poem* (*tone poem*)
Listening

Transcendental etude no. 10 in F Minor (1851)

Franz Liszt

Listening Guide: p. 240
Basic set, CD 5:18

Listen for:
- Shifting tempo
- Extreme emotionalism
- High degree of difficulty for performer
  (virtuoso piece)
- Ternary form with a coda
Chapter 9: Felix Mendelssohn

- German composer (1809-1847)
- Early to mid-Romantic period
- Developed early
  - Wrote symphonies, concertos, sonatas, and other works before being teenager
- Responsible for revival of Bach’s music
- Died of a stroke while touring
Mendelssohn’s Music

- Somewhat more conservative
  - Avoids emotional extremes
  - Projects both elegance and balance

- Wrote enormous amount in all forms of his day, except opera
  - Only a few of his works are regularly performed today
Listening

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E Minor, Op. 64 (1844)
Felix Mendelssohn
First Movement

Listening Guide: p. 242
Basic Set, CD 5:24

Listen for:  Controlled emotionalism
Simple, singing melodies
Cadenza near the end for soloist
Chapter 10: Program Music

- Instrumental music associated with a story, poem, idea, or scene
  - Non-program music is called *absolute music*

- Usually performed with written explanation of the piece—a program
In Romantic Period, program music usually for piano or orchestra

Common types:

- *Program symphony*—multi-movement/orchestral
- *Concert overture*—modeled on opera overture
- *Symphonic poem (or tone poem)*—1 movement, orchestral, flexible form
- *Incidental music*—for use before or during a play
Chapter 11: Hector Berlioz

- French composer (1803-1869)
- Mid-Romantic Period
- Wrote unconventional music
  - Passionate & unpredictable
- Major award for *Fantastic Symphony*
  - Autobiographical—program note p. 247
- Worked as music critic for support
- One of the first of the great conductors
Berlioz’s Music

- Imaginative, innovative orchestrations
  - Required huge resources

- Pioneered concept of *idee fixe*

- As a pioneer, his work was not always understood by his listening public
Listening

Symphonie Fantastique (Fantastic Symphony)
Hector Berlioz (1830)

Fourth Movement: *March to the Scaffold*

Program notes: p. 248
Listening Outline: p. 248
Brief Set, CD 3:30

Listen for:

Program material and how related to the music
Returning melody for *idée fixe*
Listening

Symphonie Fantastique (Fantastic Symphony)
Hector Berlioz (1830)

Fifth Movement: *Dream of a Witches’ Sabbath*

Program notes: p. 250
Listening Guide: p. 250
Basic Set, CD 5:34

Listen for:
- Program material and how related to the music
- Returning melody for *idée fixe*
Chapter 12: Nationalism in 19th Century Music

- National identity grew during the Romantic
  - Citizens, not mercenaries now fought wars
  - Bonds of language, history, and culture formed
    - Led to unifications creating Germany and Italy
Composers deliberately gave their works distinctive national identity

- Use of folksongs and folkdances
- Created original melodies with folk flavor
- Wrote operas and program music inspired by native history, legends, and landscapes

Strongest impact in countries dominated by music of Germany, Austria, Italy and France
The Moldau (1874)
Part of the cycle Ma Vlast (My Country)
Bedrich Smetana

Symphonic poem depicting the main river that flows thorough the Bohemian (Czech) countryside

Program notes: p. 253
Listening Outline: p. 254
Brief Set, CD 3:34

Listen for: Program material and how composer related it to the music
Chapter 13: Antonin Dvorak

Followed Smetana composing Czech national music (1841-1904)
- As teenager, played in orchestra under Smetana
- Got his break when Brahms heard him

Became director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York
- Urged Americans to write nationalist music
- Wrote From the New World during 1st year

Later returned to Prague Conservatory
Listening

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor
(From the New World; 1893)
Antonin Dvorak
First Movement: Adagio; Allegro molto
Listening Guide: p. 257
Brief Set, CD 3:41

Listen for: Based upon American folk melodies
Use of non-major/minor scales
Sonata form (but with 3 themes, not 2)
Chapter 14: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

- **Russian, Late Romantic (1840-1893)**

- **Studied music in Russia**
  - Did not start until age 21
  - By age 30 had a symphony, opera, tone poem and his first great orchestra work

- **Married, divorced two weeks later**

- **Supported by benefactress (patron)**
  - They corresponded but never met

- **Traveled Europe and United States**
Tchaikovsky’s Music

Wrote symphonies, concerti, overtures, operas, and more

Fused Russian folk music and European style
Listening

Romeo and Juliet
Overture-Fantasy
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Listening Guide: p. 260
Basic Set, CD 5:44

Listen for: Depicts events and characters, but is not a re-telling of the story
Different melodies for characters/groups of characters and events
Love theme has become very well known
Chapter 15: Johannes Brahms

- German composer (1833-1897)
- Son of a musician (father played bass)
  - At 13, studied music by day/played gigs by night
- Became close friends with the Schumanns
  - Lived with Clara while Robert in asylum
  - Lifelong friends with Clara, he never married
- Studied earlier composers’ works in detail
  - Especially Bach, Haydn, Mozart & Beethoven
Brahms’s Music

- Considered somewhat conservative due to his use of classical forms
- Wrote in all traditional forms except opera
Listening

Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90
Johannes Brahms
Third Movement: Poco Allegretto

Listening Outline: p. 264
Brief Set, CD 3:48

Listen for: Classical form with Romantic harmonies
Scherzo form (A B A)
Triple meter, as in Classical 3rd movement
Reduced instrumentation for movement
Chapter 16: Giuseppe Verdi

- Italian (1813-1901)
- Mid- and late-Romantic composer
- Studied in Busseto & Milan
  - Supported by patron
  - Married patron’s daughter
- Known for opera
  - Wrote operas with political overtones
    - Nationalist, supported unification of Italy
- Critics blasted him scandalous subjects
  - Seemed to condone rape, suicide, and “free love”
Verdi’s Music

- Wrote for middle-class audience

- Favorite topic: love story w/ unhappy ending
  - Final opera ends with “All the world’s a joke!”
Listening

La donna e mobile (Woman is fickle)
Aria from Rigoletto (1851)
Giuseppe Verdi

Listening Guide: p. 268
Basic Set, CD 6:20

Listen for: Middle class topic, as in Classical period
Text
Familiar melody
Chapter 17: Giacomo Puccini

- Italian (1858-1924)
- Late-Romantic composer
  - Known primarily for operas
- Became wealthy and world famous due to the popularity of his music
  - Opera *La Boheme* his first major success
Made use of Exoticism, setting his operas in foreign places

His operas make use of short melodies, simple phrases, and realistic dialog

– Artistic style *verismo* (reality): “true to life”
Listening

**La Bohème (1896)**

Giocomo Puccini

Act I: Scene between Rodolfo and Mimi through Rodolfo’s aria *Che gelida manina (How cold your little hand is!)*

Storyline of meeting of Rodolfo and Mimi (p. 269)

Vocal Music Guide: p. 271

Brief Set, CD 3:51

Listen for: Dialog is more realistic

Tempo shifts to accentuate music & text

Performance Profile: Luciano Pavarotti, tenor

Listen for performer’s *interpretation* that attempts to make the low notes on words “Che gelida manina” full, while sung softly.
Chapter 18: Richard Wagner

- German (1813-1883)
- Mid to late Romantic composer
- Studied in Germany
  - Later moved to Paris—did not work out
  - Returned to Germany, got in trouble
  - Finally settled and succeeded in Munich, Bavaria
- Lived large off of others—ran up debts
- Wrote in many styles, famous for opera
Wagner’s Music

- His works were large, full blown affairs
- No recitatives & arias—just non-stop music
- Adapted *idée fixe* to *leitmotif* approach
- Huge orchestrations for operas
  - Requires big voices to be heard
Listening

Die Walküre (The Valkyrie, 1856)
Richard Wagner
Act I: Love scene (conclusion)

Storyline of the Ring Cycle & this scene (p. 278)

Vocal Music Guide: p. 280
Brief Set, CD 4:1

Listen for: Huge production, large orchestrations
             Big, powerful voices required
             Use of leitmotif for people, places, things, and ideas