

Classical Music Appreciation—Intermediate

Session 2 notes

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Tonight's agenda

Form and Structure (continued)

Haydn, Symphony No. 102 [sonata form]

Historical Periods, Round 1

Major periods in classical music development

Plainsong (Gregorian chant) [Medieval period]

Holborne, The Fairy Round [Renaissance period]

Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 [Baroque period]

Boyce, Concerto Grosso in B flat [Baroque period]

JC Bach, Symphony Op 18 No 2 [music on the Baroque/Classical cusp]

Berlioz, Les Francs Juges [Romantic period]¹

Josef Haydn (1732-1809) (Austria) Symphony No. 102

Symphony (Classical Period, Symphony Orchestra)



Haydn was very famous and successful in his day, and was employed by Prince Esterhazy in his native Austria. When the prince died in 1790, Haydn became a free agent, and was swiftly invited to London by the impresario Johann Salomon. Haydn made two visits to the English capital, each lasting a year and a half. He produced six symphonies on each visit, to be played at Salomon's concerts. No. 102 dates from Haydn's second London visit in 1795. So well received was this symphony that its first-performance audience applauded until the finale movement was replayed.

¹ Yes, this one is out of chronological sequence. It's to accommodate the clock and the schedule.

The **first movement** follows a straightforward sonata form:

<i>bar</i>	<i>time</i> ²	
1	0:00	slow introduction
		exposition
23	2:08	first subject
57	2:42	second subject
23	3:38	repeat of exposition
111	5:09	development
		recapitulation
227	7:07	first subject
243	7:22	second subject
287	8:10	coda

The slow **second movement** is constructed as a miniature sonata form. The first theme (in the dominant key of F major) and second theme are stated and then repeated. Then comes a miniature development, beginning with the first theme in Ab major. After a mere 12 bars we enter a very compressed recapitulation with the return of the first theme in F major. A brief but surprisingly bold and loud coda concludes the movement. Interestingly, Haydn originally wrote this movement as a movement for piano trio.

Second movement map:

<i>bar</i>	<i>time</i>	
		exposition
1	0:00	first subject
9	0:43	second subject
17	1:23	exposition repeats
33	2:46	development
		recapitulation
45	3:49	first subject
54	4:39	coda (based on second subject)

The **third movement** is in straightforward minuet-and-trio form. Straightforward perhaps, but involving a great deal of repetition. Every section is heard at least twice, with the bulk of the movement being repeated three times. The plan of the movement looks like this:

A₁ A₁ A₂ A₂ B₁ B₁ B₂ B₂ A₁ A₂

² Timings are relative to the recording by Antal Dorati with the Philharmonia Hungarica, on Decca 452 259-2 1

In the **fourth movement**, Haydn is at his jocular best. The movement is essentially a rondo, but with some sonata-form elements such as a brief development section (**bar 166 2:41**), which takes us through some swift modulations before we arrive at an equally brief recapitulation. A short coda (**bar 261 3:54**) concludes the work.

Major periods in classical music development

-1450	Medieval	<p>The music we know about from this period emerged from religious roots. Musical notation was developed during this period—music that emerged before notation did not generally survive. Earliest music consisted of unison voices (“plainsong” or “Gregorian chant.” Basic harmonies (4th, 5th, octave) appeared, and more complex music with interacting multiple parts (polyphony) became possible with the development of notations for indicating rhythm.</p> <p>We know little about instrumental music from this period. No such written music survives, and very few actual instruments of the period survived. We are left with pictures, drawings, and written descriptions. The fiddle and harp were apparently the most respectable instruments, being played by the troubadours and associated with courtly love. Other instruments of the time included shawms (double-reed ancestors of the oboe and bassoon), natural trumpet, lute, bagpipe, hurdy-gurdy. The professional musicians of the day were the minstrels. Whereas troubadours were usually of noble birth and were primarily concerned with song and poem, the minstrels were artisan secular professional musicians, many of whom were, of necessity, itinerant.</p>
1450-1600	Renaissance	<p>Instruments of course continued to develop towards their present-day descendants, but new keyboard instruments—the harpsichord and clavichord—emerged (the organ appeared long before).</p> <p>The increasing use of polyphony and instrumentation characterize the transition to the Renaissance era. Ideas on harmony evolved, with the 3rd and 6th becoming the accepted basic concord.</p> <p>Notation became widely adopted, allowing the preservation for posterity of the music of the day.</p>
1600-1750	Baroque	<p>The characteristics that distinguish the Renaissance from the Baroque are rather technical and esoteric. Indeed, it was not until 1919 that musicologists drew the demarcation line and</p>

		<p>put a name on the Baroque period. Generally, the Baroque period moves more towards an integrated harmonic structure, as opposed to the Renaissance period's emphasis on polyphony, its harmony being an almost accidental by-product. Baroque music is also more technically challenging, and characterized by ornamentation, which the musicians sometimes improvised. During the baroque period keyboard instruments took on a more prominent role, and the predecessors of modern orchestral instruments—particularly the violin family—were by now beginning to look much more like their eventual descendants.</p>
1730-1820	Classical	<p>The term “Classical” music has both a general and a more-specific meaning. This class is about “classical music” in its broader sense (my definition: “classical music” is what you think it is.) However, <i>classical</i> in the narrower sense refers the period following the Baroque, in which more-complex musical designs (forms) began to crystallize.</p> <p>Perhaps the best known of these design is the sonata form. It was Joseph Haydn who drew together earlier ideas and formalized the sonata form (also known as “first-movement form”), earning for himself the moniker “father of the symphony.” Sonata form lent an intellectual manageability to symphonies of more substantial duration than the works of the Baroque period. Haydn's symphonies asked the audience to follow a dramatic trajectory over a broader time span than was previously required, and the “roadmap” that sonata form provided helped listeners keep their bearings.</p>
1815-1910	Romantic	<p>The traits that distinguish Romantic music from the Classical era are the subject of ongoing debate. As far as structure is concerned, the Romantic era generally employs the same basic templates as the Classical, although those forms tend to be extended, sometimes considerably. In addition, harmonies and harmonic structure break new ground, with much more use of chromatic devices and freer modulation to distant keys.</p> <p>Although it is true that much Romantic-era music is programmatic (i.e. tells a story, or frankly evokes mood or picture etc.), this descriptive quality is not generally regarded as an essential quality of music claiming Romantic heritage. However, opinions vary, and this variety is what keeps the debate alive.</p>
1900-	Modern, 20 th Century	<p>Modern music. 20th Century music. Not very descriptive labels, are they? Recall that it took the musicology world until 1919 before it could label and characterize the Baroque</p>

		<p>period that ended 150 years earlier. We can't really see the field while we're standing in it. We need the passage of time to give us the perspective we need to appreciate the music in its total historical context.</p> <p>Music written since 1910 runs the gamut, from the neo-classical, through Romantic-style symphonies, through such inflection points as Debussy's <i>L'après midi d'un faune</i>, Stravinsky's <i>Rite of Spring</i>, to Schoenberg, Berg and Webern's 12-note compositions.</p> <p>It has to be recognized that most people find new music discordant, devoid of tunes, and generally unpalatable. We should, however, try to keep an open mind and remember that, as WRTI likes to remind us, "all music was once new."</p>
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To pursue this topic further, a good place to start is http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_classical_music

Gregorian Chant

We hear two short pieces. Both are sung in unison (i.e. with no harmony). The first, *Hodie Christus resurrexit* (Christ is risen today) has a solemn mood and is consistent with the image many of us have of Gregorian Chant from our casual acquaintance with it through such media as films. In contrast, the second, *Aeterne rerum Conditor* (Eternal maker of things) is rather energetic and optimistic sounding.

Anthony Holborne (c.1548-1602) (England) The Fairy Round

Renaissance period

This piece is typical of the Renaissance period, in that it portrays a single mood (in contrast, for example, to the third movement of the Holst suite we heard earlier). The melody on this recording is played on a recorder, with accompaniment by hammer dulcimer and guitar. The recorder of today, being a very simple instrument, is very similar to its modern-day equivalent recorder. Likewise, today's guitar is easily recognizable in its Renaissance-era counterpart, the lute. Most other instruments of the period (particularly the brass family) have seen very significant evolution through the ages, and much renaissance music is still performed today on modern instruments that give far superior tone and tuning.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) (Germany) Brandenburg Concerto No. 2

Baroque period

The six Brandenburg Concertos have a very interesting history³. All of them are assembled and reworked from material Bach had composed earlier. His purpose in putting together this set was to apply for a job! Unhappy at his current position, he approached the Margrave of Brandenburg by sending him the carefully copied manuscripts of these six concertos. The Margrave, however, was apparently unimpressed, and neither acknowledged Bach's gift nor had the concertos performed. Indeed, the manuscripts lay undiscovered until the Margrave's death some thirteen years later. And it was another 150 years before the name "Brandenburg" was applied to the works, after their rediscovery in the Bach library.



All of the concertos feature multiple soloists. In the case of No. 2, the soloists are trumpet, recorder (nowadays this part is almost always played on flute), oboe, and violin. The music is quite difficult to play, which may explain why the Margrave's orchestra never tackled it. The trumpet part in particular is of prodigious difficulty, even on today's modern instruments⁴. It boggles the mind that a trumpet player of Bach's time could even attempt the piece on the instruments of the day, which had no valves.

³ <http://inkpot.com/classical/bachbrandenburg.html> and <http://www.npr.org/programs/specials/milestones/991214.motm.brandenburg.html> will tell you more, if you're interested.

⁴ Trivia item: The Selmer Bach (no relation) company makes a piccolo trumpet in G for the *specific* purpose of performing this concerto. As Dave Barry would say, I am not making this up.

William Boyce (1711-1779) (England) Concerto Grosso in B flat major

Baroque period



Boyce was an admirer of Handel, some 25 years his senior, and there is some evidence of Handel's influence in this concerto. The suffix "grosso" is customarily used to indicate that more than one "soloist" is involved. In this case the "solo" instruments are violin and cello. There is also a prominent but lesser role for the viola.

This piece is rather typical of the Baroque era, its differences from Haydn-style classical-era symphonies being quite apparent. It's almost in the style of a Baroque dance suite, except that only one of the movements (the last) is an actual dance. The brevity of the movements makes for ready accessibility.

The date of composition of Boyce's concerti grossi (three of them) is unclear, for the manuscripts did not come to light until after his death. He may have been intending to complete a set of six, following Handel's example.

Here is an outline of the five-movement piece.

- I Marked *Moderato Maestoso*, this is more in the character of a slow introduction than a proper movement. It is only 19 bars long.
- II This movement, marked *Allegro*, is the most musically complex of the piece. I don't normally analyze modulations (key changes) in depth, but this movement is so straightforward in design—being built from a single melodic idea—that it's not going to tax our brains from a structural angle, so just for fun let's try to follow its tonal wanderings:

bar	time ⁵	
1	1:36	starts in the home key of B flat major
13	1:55	F major
39	2:33	C minor
51	2:51	a tonally ambiguous section as we work towards G minor via D

⁵ The timings are relative to Chandos recording CHAN 6665, by Cantilena directed by Adrian Shepherd. All five movements are recorded as a single track.

		major
69	3:16	okay, we landed firmly on G minor, but take off immediately into E flat major on the way back home to B flat
74	3:24	B flat—we're baaaack
94	3:53	a very brief burst of F...
97	3:58	...and back to B flat
107	4:11	F makes its last very brief appearance, and we come straight back to B flat to finish off

- III [4:28] Here's another movement—marked *Adagio*—that's so short (12 bars) it doesn't really have legitimate claim on that status. I regard this section more as an interlude.
- IV [5:25] Here's an *Allegro* fugue, and quite entertaining. Tonally, it stays close to its B flat home, but makes occasional forays into G minor, the relative minor.
- V [8:26] And here's a tasteful dessert to finish off. It's a Gavotte, a gentle dance in 4/4 time. It's constructed with two trio-like sections, giving it the character of a rondo. The anchor subject is in the home key of B flat, with the first "trio" in F (the dominant) [at 9:14] and the second [at 10:02] in G minor, the relative minor.

Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782) (Germany) Symphony Op. 18 No. 2

Baroque/Classical period



Historical context

Johann Christian, the youngest son of Johannes Sebastian and his second wife Anna Magdalena, was actually more than three years younger than Joseph Haydn, the giant of the classical era, yet the youngest Bach's music is firmly rooted in the Baroque tradition. The Baroque is clearly evident in this symphony, which appeared in 1776, well into the classical era on the chronological scale

After studying with his father and older brother Carl Phillip Emanuel, JC went to Italy to further his studies, where he composed a number of sacred works. He was, however, soon drawn to the theatre, composing a number of operas that rapidly earned him international fame. In May 1762 he was appointed composer to the King's Theatre in London, where he consolidated his reputation and enjoyed a prosperous life style. With the benefit of royal patronage, he composed prolifically in all the principal instrumental genres of the time: keyboard sonatas, chamber works, concertos, and symphonies.

His first love, however, continued to be opera, and he visited Mannheim, Milan, and Paris for premieres of his work. His opera *Lucio Silla* was premiered in Mannheim in 1776, but the opera was not a great success. However, as so often was the case with failed operas, the overture was salvaged to enjoy an independent life of its own. That overture became the Symphony Op. 18 No. 2.

The Music

In the Baroque era, the term “symphony” came into use as a synonym for “overture.” The large-scale works of the day were operas, with suites and concertos being the largest scale purely instrumental works. “Overtures,” as their name suggests, were originally opening pieces to operas, being wholly instrumental and designed to present a taste of the themes to come in the opera itself. However, the term “overture” crept up in scale and became an alternative label for keyboard or orchestral suites or symphonies.

The structure of this symphony is very straightforward, and displays more of the characteristics of an overture, being an uncomplicated presentation of themes with a minimum of development. Contrast its plain structure with, for example, that of Haydn’s Symphony No. 102, which appeared 19 years later.

Another Baroque trait evident in this symphony is the one-dimensional nature of its movements. Each movement maintains the same mood and feel throughout, there being no attempt to introduce contrasting sections (like, for example, the trio section of a scherzo-and-trio movement, or even a slow introduction preceding an allegro movement) such as we would expect in a classical or romantic symphony.

First Movement

<i>bar</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>structure</i>	<i>remarks</i>
1	0:00	theme A	B flat major
20	0:30	B	unison C introduces F maj
43	1:09	C₁	B flat major
50	1:21	C₂	
64	1:44	A	B flat major
75	2:01	B	unison G introduces C minor, moving to E flat major
98	2:38	C₁	E flat moving to B flat
105	2:50	C₂	
118	3:11	coda	

Second Movement

Rondo form

<i>bar</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>structure</i>	<i>remarks</i>
1	0:00	theme A	E flat major
17	0:45	B	B flat major
35	1:40	A	E flat
52	2:30	C	C minor
65	3:09	A	E flat

Third Movement

Rondo form

<i>bar</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>structure</i>	<i>remarks</i>
1	0:00	theme A	B flat major
17	0:20	B	F major
48	0:42	A	B flat
64	0:52	C	B flat major/G minor
116	1:28	A	B flat

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) (France) *Les Francs Juges*

Overture (Romantic Period; Symphony Orchestra)



Berlioz' overture *Les Francs Juges*⁶ is indeed a “proper” overture, in the sense that it was composed to introduce an opera. However, history has been kinder to the overture than to the opera, and it is only the overture that now survives. But what a very fine overture it is.

To make better sense of my narrative below, here is a chart of the major themes of the overture.

A	
B	
C	<p>Allegro assai. (♩ = 60.)</p>
D	

⁶ For reasons I have been unable to discover, *Les Francs Juges* is always translated as *The Judges of the Secret Court*. But my French sources tell me that *juge* = judge, and *franc* = frank, as in candid. I have to guess that the intrigue described by the opera, which indeed involves a secret court, somehow in this context ascribes this much richer meaning to the word *franc*.

The overture begins slowly, mysteriously, and very quietly with a fragmented kind of theme (A), which is [1] brusquely interrupted by unison brass announcing a new theme (B) in stentorian fashion. Together, these themes form a short introduction to the *allegro* that follows and takes us the rest of the way through the overture. The *allegro* begins with a busy theme (C) in violins. Then comes [4]+3⁷ a more relaxed and very pretty theme (D) (marked *dolce e legato* (sweet and smooth)) that is to form the basis of much of the material that follows. [5] Berlioz then cleverly combines the two themes (C) (violins) and (D) (woodwinds). Next comes one of the most hauntingly beautiful passages of music ever written⁸ [5]. Flutes and clarinets play a very extended and very sustained variation (marked *dolce espressivo* (sweet and expressive)) on theme (D), while violins play an aggressive and fragmented variation of theme (C). Berlioz gives very explicit directions on how this passage is to be played, and I think you'll find it fascinating. I quote:

The Orchestra takes a double character here. The stringed instruments must, without covering the Flutes, play with a rude and wild accent, the Flutes and Clarinets however with a soft and melancholic expression.

The haunting flute-and-clarinet theme is scored very creatively as a triple duet involving only four instruments. It's a duet in the sense that there are two parts. And there are two additional duets going on, because each of those parts is played by one flute and one clarinet. Their combined sound is quite beautiful.

At length, theme (D) reappears in its original guise [10]+7 as Berlioz takes us off on a free fantasia on themes (C) and (D). There is a brief recapitulation [16] as most of the orchestra delivers theme (D) with second violins and violas desperately trying to make an impression with a frantic accompaniment derived from theme (C).

The overture concludes with a powerful coda [17] that's built on some new material but also sees the first and only return of theme (B). You can also hear fragments of theme (A) in there too if you apply a vivid enough imagination.

⁷ The notation [1] denotes a rehearsal number in the score. +n or -n indicates a number of bars beyond or before it.

⁸ In my humble opinion, of course.