

# Music of the Classical Period

1750 – 1825



- A new style in *architecture*, *literature*, and the *arts* developed.
- Sought to emulate the ideals of *Classical Antiquity*, especially *Classical Greece*
- Called "*Classicism*"
- Style reflected simplicity, clarity and symmetry.

Important people and events of the classical era include:

- **1732 – The birth of George Washington**
- **1752 – Benjamin Franklin proves that lightning is electricity**
- **1760 – George III crowned king of England**
- **1770 – James Cook discovered east coast of Australia**

These people contributed to how the society would later function with these discoveries

# Inventions of the classical Era

- **1760 - Industrial Revolution begins**
- **1763 - Watts invents the first steam powered engine**
- **1769 - Watt's steam engine patented**
- **1771 - First edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica**
- **1775 - Electric battery invented by Volta**
- **1788 - Steamboat invented by John Fitch**
- **1796 - First vaccination**
- **1821 - Electric motor and generator invented by Faraday**

## Characteristics of classical music

1. Less complicated texture than Baroque (more homophonic).
2. Emphasis on beauty, elegance and balance.
3. More variety and contrast within a piece than Baroque (dynamics, instruments, pitch, tempo, key, mood and timbre).
4. Melodies tend to be shorter than those in baroque, with clear-cut phrases, and clearly marked cadences.
5. The orchestra increases in size and range. The harpsichord falls out of use. The woodwind becomes a self-contained section.
6. The piano takes over as main keyboard instrument.
7. Importance was given to instrumental music - sonata, trio, string quartet, symphony, concerto.
8. Sonata form was the most important design.

“God has blessed me with a cheerful heart so he will forgive me for serving him Cheerfully.”



# Composers of the Classical Period

## Franz Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809)

- *Austrian* composer (Viennese School)
- Often referred to as “*Papa*” Haydn for:
  1. The development of **Symphonies**
  2. The transformation of **String Quartets**
  3. His influence on *Mozart* and *Beethoven*

- Composed:

**Over 100 Symphonies**

**6 “Paris” Nos. 82-87; 12 “London” Nos. 93-104**

**Concertos, Sonatas, & Chamber Music**

**68 String Quartets**, piano trios and divertimenti

**Sacred & Secular Vocal Music**

14 Masses, Oratorios (*The Creation & The Seasons*), Folk Songs, etc.

**Listening:**

**“Surprise” Symphony no. 94, Mvt 2**

**“Emperor” Quartet Opus 76 No. 3 Mvt 2**

**Trumpet Concerto**

Haydn worked for the Grand Duke Esterhazy for most of his career. His duties included taking care of the instruments and teaching others how to play. He was unable to publish while in their employ.

He was happy in his roll as a servant.

Moved to London late in his life and enjoyed great commercial success.

Was a sought after teacher, he taught both Mozart and Beethoven.

Did more than any other composer to develop the early symphony form and string quartets.

"His Highness expects Mr Haydn to behave as an honorable officer of a princely establishment To wit: to be always sober, to behave not rudely but politely and with consideration towards the musicians under his direction, and to be modest, quiet and honest in his conduct.

Whenever there is music for Hi Highness, Mr. Haydn will be responsible not only for his own but for his musicians' becoming appearance in proper livery, according to instructions, with white stockings, white linen, well powdered, and either with pigtails or with hair-bags, but all in the same attire. .Mr. Haydn will write at the order of his Highness such music as may be commanded...

Mr. Haydn will appear every day, both in the morning and the afternoon, in the ante chamber, to receive his orders for the day regarding the music and having done so, he will communicate them to his musicians and make sure that they arrive punctually according to order..."



**Quartet No. 62 in C major, Op. 76, No. 3, Movement 2**

**“Emperor Quartet”**

## Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser (Haydn)

God save Francis the Emperor, our good Emperor  
Francis!

Long live Francis the Emperor in the brightest splendor  
of bliss!

May laurel branches bloom for him, wherever he goes,  
as a wreath of honor.

God save Francis the Emperor, our good Emperor  
Francis!

(This hymn became the basis for the Emperor string quartet and  
the current German national anthem)

# Composers of the Classical Period

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)



*“I get paid far too much for what I do, and far too little for what I could do.”*

- **Austrian** composer, master of **all genres**  
*Child prodigy, Musical Genius, and an Eccentric*
- Traveled and performed throughout Europe with father and sister, settled in Vienna.
- Eccentricity made life difficult
- Composed:
  - Orchestral Music** - 40 Symphonies  
*Divertimentos, Serenades, Marches, Dances*
  - Concertos** – 27 for Piano, 5 for Violin, etc.
  - Operas** – “The Marriage of Figaro”, “Don Giovanni”, “The Magic Flute”, etc.
  - Choral Music** – Masses, the Requiem K.626  
*Requiem was incomplete, finished by **Franz Süssmayr***

# Composers of the Classical Period

## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)



*“Music is the mediator  
between the spiritual and  
the sensual life.”*

- *German* composer, transitional figure from the Classical to the Romantic Era
- **Enigmatic** composer in a changing world: Unlike *Haydn* and *Mozart*, financial support from patrons became sporadic (unstable)

Depended mainly on concerts and publications. Made his name as a piano player when he first moved to Vienna. Established himself as a composer later.

Produced his most profound works after turning deaf

*Orchestral music:*

*9 Symphonies, Overtures, and Incidental Music*

*Concertos:*

*5 for Piano, 1 for Violin, 1 triple concerto*

# Composers of the Classical Period

## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827) cont.

### *Chamber Music*

*String Quartets, Sonatas, Serenades, etc.*

### *32 Piano Sonatas*

*Op.13 "Pathétique", "Moonlight", etc.*

### *1 Opera*

*"Fidelio"*

### *Choral Music & Songs*

*Including: "Missa Solemnis", song cycle, etc.*



### **Listening:**

**Symphony No. 9 "Choral"**

**Symphony No. 5**

**Piano Sonata "Pathetique"**

**Moonlight Sonata**

**Fur Elise**

# Symphony #3 Eroica

- Was written while Beethoven was coming to terms with his hearing loss
- *Heiligenstadt Testament*-A last will and testament that Beethoven wrote to his brothers in the form of a letter. It showed that during this period Beethoven was depressed and contemplating suicide.
- Eroica was originally dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte. The dedication was changed after Napoleon declared himself Emperor.

## THE CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA (30-40 PLAYERS)

	HAYDN'S ORCHESTRA	BEETHOVEN'S ORCHESTRA
	<i>(Symphony No. 94, 1792)</i>	<i>(Symphony No. 5, 1807-08)</i>
<b>STRINGS</b>	Violins 1 Violins 2 Violas Cellos and Double basses	Violins 1 Violins 2 Violas Cellos Double basses
<b>WOODWINDS</b>	2 Flutes 2 Flutes 2 Oboes	1 Piccolo (4th movement only) 2 Flutes 2 Oboes 2 Clarinets 2 Bassoons 1 Contrabassoon (4th movement only)
<b>BRASS</b>	2 French horns 2 Trumpets	2 French horns 2 Trumpets 3 Trombones (4th movement only)
<b>PERCUSSION</b>	Timpani	Timpani

## Traditional Sonata Allegro Form

### Exposition:

Theme 1 (tonic) Theme 2 (new key)

### Development:

Themes are freely developed, modulates to dominant key

### Recapitulation:

Theme 1 and Theme 2 return in home key followed by a coda(closing material)



- Symphony #5, C minor- four note theme sometimes called “the knock of fate”.
- One of the most recognizable melodies in all of classical music.
- Symphony #9, D minor- Choral Symphony
- First symphony to use a Chorus.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> symphony has become an international symbol for hope and freedom. Played to commemorate the fall of the Berlin wall, played by students during the Tiananmen Square protests, etc...

## Movement scheme for a typical symphony

1. Fast (allegro)
2. Slow (largo, adagio)
3. Minuet (3/4 dance form)
4. Fast (allegro, presto)

## **Symphony**

A long musical work for a symphonic orchestra which usually consists of four contrasting movements

## **Requiem**

A mass for the dead

## **Program Music**

Music that is written to tell a story or portray non-musical ideas

## **String Quartet**

A composition for 2 violins, a viola and a cello, usually consisting of 4 contrasting movements

## **Overture**

A piece played at the beginning of a larger composition such as an opera. In 19<sup>th</sup> century it also referred to a one-movement programmatic work

## **Orchestral Music**

any music composed for an orchestra