

Baroque Dance Suites

Binary Form: Form created in large part by harmonic structure: it is important to keep track of strength and key areas of cadences. Rounded forms are possible, but not as likely as in later music. Balanced binaries are common. A review of terms:

- **Simple:** little to no relation between two halves, or second half is a literal repeat
- **Rounded:** material from start of first half returns at end of second
- **Balanced:** material from end of first half returns at end of second (rhyme)
- **Sectional:** first half closes on tonic
- **Continuous:** first half closes away from tonic, often on V in major, III or v in minor

PACSOOG: acronym to remember the names and order of the dance suite

1. Prelude

- a. Improvisatory, “tuning up,” free style and texture

2. Allemande

- a. Duple meter (often 4/4)
- b. Upbeat start
- c. Texturally complex; often imitative, contrapuntal, motivic

3. Courante

- a. Italian style “corrente”: fast triple meter dance, balanced phrases, virtuosic
- b. French style “courante”: “majestic” and “grave” triple-meter dance, usually in 3/2, characterized by rhythmic and metrical ambiguities, especially hemiola, and contrapuntal texture
- c. Names given by composers do not always match the implied national genres

4. Sarabande

- a. Originates from Latin America and Spain
- b. Italian/Spanish/English style: slow or fast, often with characteristic rhythms below, esp. Ex. 4b with faster tempo
- c. French/German style: intense, serious affect, slow triple meter with balanced four-bar phrases

Ex. 4 Sarabande rhythms

(a) 

(b) 

5. Other

- a. Minuet: triple meter, balanced phrases
- b. Bourrée: duple meter, often starts with eighth-note upbeat, moderate to fast tempo, four-bar phrases
- c. Gavotte: duple meter, moderate tempo, four-bar phrases, which often begin halfway through a bar

6. Gigue

- a. Mostly in compound meter and in binary form
- b. Italian style: faster tempo yet slower harmonic rhythm, often 12/8 with an imitative, contrapuntal texture
- c. French style: moderate to fast tempo (6/4, 3/8, or 6/8)