

DT501/1 History of Music: Classical/Romantic

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Lecture 2: Orchestral Music (1): The
Symphony

The Origins of the Symphony

At the beginning of the 18th century the term 'symphony' could have several meanings including:

- The *symphoniae sacrae* – a work which mixed vocal and instrumental forces over basso continuo, associated with northern Italy
- The Italian *sinfonia avanti l'opera* – short three movement (fast-slow-fast) overtures played before operas. Often performed separately in concerts.

However the origins of the symphony as we know it today are related to the change in music's social function that occurred at this time.

- The growth of public concerts across Europe. These concerts contained an ad-hoc variety of musical 'entertainments' with a symphony usually providing the opener.
- Commissions for aristocratic gatherings.

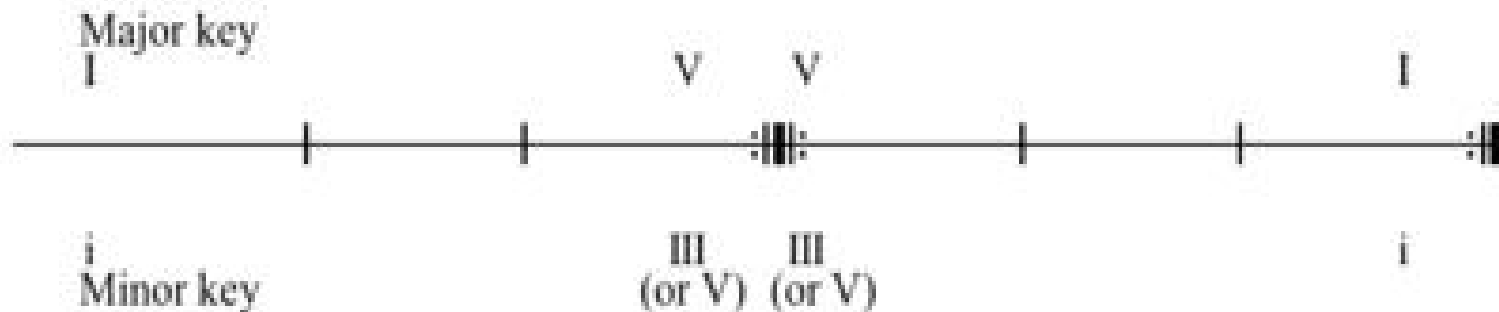
Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1700-1775)



- Born in Milan.
- *Maestro di cappella* at the city's cathedral and a leading composer of operas at the ducal theatre.
- Director of music at the *academie di sinfonie e di canto* series of lenten concerts in the city.
- Adapted his operatic overtures for use at these concerts but later wrote works specifically for this purpose.
- Important figure in the symphony's early development.

Sammartini: Symphony in F Major, No. 32, *Presto*

- Orchestra size: Strings (violins I and II, violas and cello) and basso continuo consisting of bass viol and harpsichord.
- Distinctive but compact themes – most are between 2 and 3 bars in length.
- Three movement format: fast – slow – fast
- Form: binary/sonata (?) some elements prefigure what later became known as sonata form e. g. the double return: opening fanfare returns in the tonic in the second section. Not elaborate enough to be called a full sonata form.



Sonata Form

- Not to be confused with the Italian term *sonata* which means 'to sound' and has several meanings.
- The term 'sonata form' refers to the structure of an individual movement..
- Anachronistic – theories about 'sonata form' or 'first movement form' began to appear in the mid-19th century.
- Composers in the 18th would have conceived the form as more akin to an expanded binary form with the major subdivisions conceived primarily in terms of tonal areas.
- See the comparative discussion in the *Norton History of Western Music* between the theories of Heinrich Christoph Koch and later 19th century views on sonata form.

Major differences between binary and sonata form:

- Distinct development section with retransition.
- 'Double return' – the simultaneous return of the first subject in the tonic in the recapitulation
- The full recapitulation of the second subject group in the tonic in the recapitulation.

<u>First Section</u>	Key	Bars
A – Fanfare	I	1
B – Lyrical	I	3
C – Rising	Modulates to V	6
C – Rising	V	11
Codetta	V	13
<u>Second Section</u>		
A	V	15
D – New	V	17
C	Re-transition to V	22
A	I	25
B	I	28
E – New triplet figure	Brief modulation to IV	30
C	I	33
Coda	I	37

Johann Stamitz (1717-1757)



- The Mannheim Orchestra – the most famous orchestra in Europe.
- Under the Elector Karl Theodore it acquired the finest players from across the continent.
- Stamitz, a virtuoso violinist from Bohemia was appointed *Kapellmeister* in 1750.
- Every member a virtuoso in his own right.
- Famously described as ‘An Army of Generals’ by Dr Charles Burney.

Innovations of the Mannheim Orchestra

Orchestral Proportions:

- In addition to strings and continuo, the Mannheim orchestra included pairs of oboes, horns and clarinets (clarinets did not become standard until the end of the 18th century).

Effects:

- The *coup d'archet* – an aggressive opening stroke of the bow to get underway.
- 'Steamrollers' – a drawn-out crescendo over ostinatos.
- The 'Mannheim Rocket' – quick rising passages, often arpeggiated.
- The 'Grand Pause' – a dramatic pause followed by a dramatic resumption.

<u>First Section/Exposition (?)</u>		
First subject area	I	1
Transition	modulates to V	27
Second subject area	V	47
Closing Section	V	67
<u>Second Section/Development (?)</u>		
Development	Begins briefly on I (!) before modulating through several closely related keys	74
Recapitulation (?): begins with second subject group	I	108

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)



The Esterházy Princes



Prince Paul Anton (1711–62)

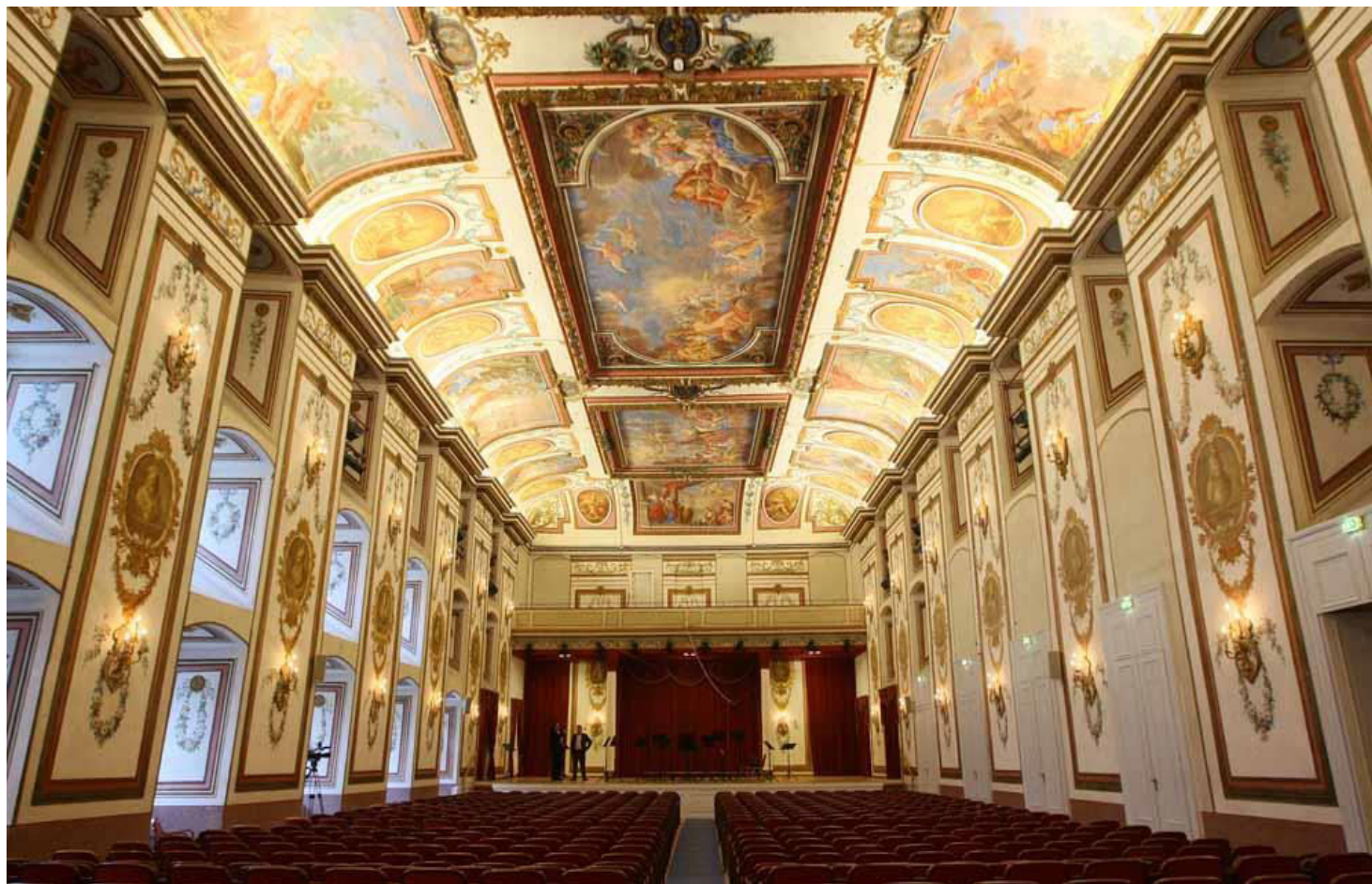


Prince Nikolaus Esterházy (1738–94)

Schloss Esterházy at Eisenstadt



The Concert Hall – The Haydnsaal



Esterháza Palace

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Esterháza Palace



The Esterházy Years: Part I 1760-67

Symphony No. 6 'Le Matin' (1761)

- Part of the concertante symphonies 6-8 'Le Matin', 'Le Midi', 'Le Soir'.
- In four movements with the format that Haydn would establish as standard:
 - 1) Fast: *Adagio*, 4/4 – *Allegro*, 3/4.
 - 2) Slow: *Adagio*, 4/4 – *Andante*, 3/4 – *Adagio*, 4/4.
 - 3) Minuet and Trio: *Minuet e Trio*, 3/4.
 - 4) Fast: *Allegro*, 2/4.
- Orchestral scoring: strings (violins I and II, viola, cello) with basso continuo, woodwind (flute, 2 oboes, bassoon), horns in D.
- Much more prominent role give to the woodwind and horn parts, particularly the flute. (Possibly to keep members of the orchestra happy!).
- First movement in sonata form preceded by a slow introduction.

Innovations

‘As head of the orchestra, I could make experiments, observe what enhanced an effect and what weakened it, thus improving, adding to it, taking away from it, and running risks. I was cut off from the world, there was nobody in my vicinity to make me unsure of myself or interfere with me in my course, and so I was forced to become original’.

The Esterházy Years: Part II (1768-74)

- Often known as the *Sturm und Drang* ('Storm and Stress') period after the literary movement of the same name.
 - glorification of the 'state of nature'.
 - portrayal of violent, subjective moods.
 - Haydn's direct involvement with the movement disputed.
- The symphonies from this period include an unusual number in a minor key.
 - No. 39 G minor.
 - No. 44 E minor 'Trauer'.
 - No. 45 F-sharp minor 'Farewell'.
 - No. 49 'Passion' slow movement is first.
- Music becomes much more emotionally charged.
- Period of formal experimentation. Haydn disrupts many of the conventional expectations that he himself had helped to establish.

Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp minor 'Farewell' (1771)

1st movement – *Allegro assai*

- Extremely unusual key – F-sharp minor
- Stormy opening – notice syncopations in the violin II
- Highly unusual treatment of sonata form – in the exposition the 'expected' relative major key of A major is prepared and then cancelled with the music going to A minor.
- Exposition ends with a cadence in C-sharp minor. Development section begins in the originally 'expected' key of A major.
- New theme appears in the development section in D major. Not prepared by a transition. Approached and left by silences on either side.

Finale – *Presto, Adagio*

- The stormy presto fades, replaced by a minuet where the members of the ensemble drop out one by one until only two violins are left.
- Concludes in the key of F-sharp major (six sharps! !!– the parallel major of F-sharp minor).

The London Visits 1791-92 and 1794-95



Johann Peter Salomon

The London Symphonies: The Symphony Goes Public

- Orchestral size: about 40 players – strings, 2 each of flutes, oboes, clarinets (sometimes omitted e.g. No. 102) bassoons, horns, trumpets as well as timpani.
- All except one, No. 95 in C minor, are in a major key and preceded by slow introductions.

Many contain novel effects clearly with the aim of public appeal in mind.

- Symphony No 94 in G major ‘The Surprise’, second movement.
 - a set of variations on a simple theme.
- Symphony No 98 in B flat major.
 - theme of the second movement references ‘God Save the King’.
- Symphony No 100 in G major, ‘Military’.
 - second movement contains a military march tune.
 - most popular of all his symphonies with London audiences.
- Symphony No 103 in E flat major ‘Drumroll’.
- Folk tune melodies: Symphony no. 103 and finale of finale of no. 104.

Symphony No. 104 'London'

Orchestra: strings, 2 flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani.

First movement

- Slow introduction: begins in D minor and modulates to the dominant to prepare for the first subject in D major.
- Sonata form but monothematic, first theme appears again in the second subject group.
- *Thematische Arbeit* – **thematic development**. Listen in particular to how the repeated notes, first introduced in bar 27, pervade the texture in the development.
- Confirms a rigorous intellect that always operating behind the novel surface effects.

Prescribed Listening

Sammartini:

Symphony in F Major, No. 32, (1st movement)

Stamitz:

Sinfonia in E-flat Major, Op. 11, No. 3, (1st movement)

Haydn:

Symphony no. 45 'Farewell' (1st and last movements)

Symphony no. 104 'London' (1st movement)

Prescribed Reading

Chapter 10 'Instrumental Music Lifts Off' in Taruskin, Richard, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 497–588.

Chapter 23 'Classic Music in the Late Eighteenth Century' *Norton History of Western Music*.

David Schroedar, 'Orchestral music: symphonies and concertos', in *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) pp. 95-111.

Specific topics of interest introduced in this lecture may also be consulted in David Wyn Jones, *Oxford Composer Companions: Haydn*