

Baroque

In 1600 a new style of music began to evolve, this form of music was later to be called Baroque. Baroque music was very different to the music before its time such as medieval and early renaissance music and the development of new harmonic and melodic lines added difference in pace and variation to the compositions giving them a new shape and form. The structure of the music also changed, different forms such as fugues and canons developed and different instruments were introduced.

There were many composers that wrote music throughout the baroque era, some more significant than others but each contributing a large amount to the development throughout this period.

Corelli was one of the first prominent composers of the Baroque era; he was an Italian composer and violinist writing music in a chamber style and in the form of the late baroque era. Corelli was born in 1653 in Fusignano, Italy and left to Bologna when he was just 13 where he was taught by Leonardo Brugnol who perhaps influenced him to become a teacher of music. He was interested in the form of musical education and this is clearly shown in the development of his musical history. Corelli founded the modern school of violin playing as well as earning titles such as "World's First Great Violinist" and "Founder of Modern Violin Technique"

Corelli was the first composer to be famous for composing using only instruments, and this is one of the points that made him stand out throughout the baroque era especially in Rome where he taught composers such as Vivaldi and Giannini who soon spread his methods too the world. Corelli's work influenced many other musicians and helped bring the violin permanently in its place within the baroque orchestra.

George Friederich Handel was highly successful composer of the Baroque era; he was born in Germany, on February 23rd, 1685. Handel's father disapproved of his composing wanting him to study law; however Handel's intentions were strongly pointed in the direction of his musical talent. Handel became very much involved in the Opera scene developing in London at this time and became key to its development. After leaving Germany he spent a significant amount of time in Florence, Rome, Naples and Venice and in this time he studied with other influential artists such as Arcangelo Corelli. He then left Italy in 1710 and moved to Hanover; here he was given the job of director of music to George Louis, the Elector. Handel was considered as one of England's most influential composers and after his death in 1759 he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born on March 21st 1685 and died in 1750, he was said to have a great ability of bringing the different forms and styles of baroque music to perfection and this helped him stand out as a significant composer during the baroque era and forward till today. Bach came from a family with a large amount of musical history making him well known in his home land of southeast Germany. It was clear that Bach was considered a powerful composer because he was still dominant to the developments made on the baroque style even though he travelled less. After Bach died he left a huge impression on the further development of Baroque music

Antonio Vivaldi was born on March the 4th, 1678 in Venice, Italy and learnt the violin from a young age being taught by his father; he excelled in this and became a skilled player who came to be hired by Cons. Della Pieta to teach homeless girls music. These girls became known for their beautiful music which involved either

singing or using instruments. Vivaldi was known to be an exceptional teacher and he travelled frequently and widely thus causing his music to be even more influential.

Vivaldi is known well for his compositions of violin concerti one being “The Four Seasons” one of his sufficiently better known pieces. He was also credited for his ability to compose music very quickly. All these composers were very much influenced by Neapolitan music and most composers were sure to visit and work within Naples, this town produced many talented musicians.

The Baroque era was not only a key stage for musical development but there were other issues at the time that surrounded this period. 1600 to 1750 was known as an age of opulence, this involved a great amount of wealth and success. At this time the British Commonwealth was lead by Oliver Cromwell who became one of the most dominant men in Parliament controlling much of the revolution that took place in 1648.

Travelling may have seemed a huge effort without all the modern systems we have today but the demand for development of music and the passion from the composers in this time was immense. This was partly due to the price paid for music; it was a popular requirement from many kingly courts and work such as this was highly paid with many composers that were able to travel without having to finance their journeys. They would travel by stagecoach and although this was a slow and drawn out way to travel it was the only way in which composers could compare and discuss music, this developing and structuring the Baroque style.

Science also came to develop within the Baroque era. Galileo Galileo discovered many natural laws such as gravity and oscillation and uniform exelling gravity. He discovered this after carrying out experiments with inclined planes, pendulums and projectiles. He then went on to invent the telescope constructing many theories from what had not been seen before.

The Baroque Era also saw a step in the development of musical instruments, there were mechanical and technical changes made improving and developing the orchestra. The development of the violin family began at the end of the 1600s. The harpsichord was a key instrument to Baroque orchestra as well as the Clavichord, Organ, string and wind instruments as well as Percussion.

The first new type of music to develop was opera; opera was first introduced by a group of Italians studying a way to create the drama of the ancient Greeks, composers began to see that it was possible to involve human emotions within their music and this developed a popular style that drew many audiences as well as singing performers, those most recognised today as Farinelli, La Romanina, Bordoni, Cuzzoni, Senesino, Cafarelli, Carestini. Writers of the day put together words for the vocals of the Opera and this text of a dramatic musical work was called a libretti. The most influential of these writers was Abbate Pietro Metastasio; he was famous for his complex and riveting stories. Operas were written mainly to celebrate specific events, many of these being Royal procedures. The most famous operas that continued to live on after the Baroque era were the compositions of composers such as Scarlatti, Handel, Pergolesi, Hasse and Gluck.

Opera was not the only key form of the Baroque era, the Renaissance forms continued to dominate the musical world and form such as Fugal, variations, Dance Suites, Sonatas and Orchestral Music.

The Classical Era (1750-1825)

Dates

The Classical era stood out as a significant part of musical history. It began to develop in 1750 and even though opera and vocal music were still being written

Although opera and vocal music (both sacred and secular) were still being written, orchestral literature was performed on a much broader basis. The orchestra gained more colour and flexibility as clarinets, flutes, oboes, and bassoons became permanent members of the orchestra.

Composers

The composers of the classical era all contributed to the structure and growth of the music, they wrote music for both instrumentals and vocals.

Haydn created an orchestra of almost twenty three player's while he conducted from the violin or the keyboard. This orchestra went on to be one of the best ensembles in Europe and became a passion of Haydn's.

Mozart was another powerful influence to classical era; he began composing from a very young age and was the first musician to be accepted to play in front of the queen. Without him the vast growth of various instruments would not have been added into the orchestral performances of this period.

Beethoven was famous for his many symphonies and the German composer was able to put across emotion unlike any other composers before him, his music was deep and rich and he was able to create large musical structures that lasted for a great amount of time, people considered him to have a rare gift.

Overall, the classical era was a key part of musical history. The famous composers of the time left a powerful mark and effect on the development of music today. Composers of the 21st century have used many of the themes and structures shaped and created by those influential musicians. And their way of shaping the growth of different themes and melodies has lasted to this day.

The classical era lasted seventy years; it was the final historical part of the "patronage system", the "patronage system" was when musicians would work as servants for powerful noblemen and at this time the noblemen were demanding tuneful and elegant music, the form of the classical style was then based on the form of Classical Greek art which led the music to be simple, balanced and clarified therefore causing it to change and evolve.

The way the classical form grew was different to the start of the previous Baroque era, the classical era cannot be marked and the start cannot be represented, it just began to form as composers came from over Europe to study in Vienna, known as the musical capital of Europe. All the composers who made a difference in the movement of the baroque era to the classical spent a vast amount of time composing and playing in Vienna. It was here where they developed this new and influential style with a light and cheery texture.

one of history's most outstanding military minds waged war across Europe, The Napoleonic wars lasted between 1796 and 1815 taking a great effect on the era.

Another essential new ingredient in 19th-century Europe was the rise and extraordinarily rapid growth of Nationalism this involved the belief that nations would benefit from acting independently rather than together.

The compositions of the classical period were played using many more instruments and the orchestra came to produce a wider and more varied sound with instruments such as clarinets, flutes, bassoons and oboes becoming significant instruments of the time. The piano permanently replaced the harpsichord and the viola developed as well as the strings which became more dominant within the orchestra. The music was not dependant on dance, drama, or poetry it was enjoyed purely for the music itself and this is why the structure or form of a piece of music was very important to the composers.

As classical music evolved, more recognizable characteristics came about, phrases became shorter and perfect cadences became more common. The melodies were considerably more light and compact and the harmony less structured. The music, though simple was elegant and balanced. A popular accompaniment was the Alberti bass, named after Domenico Alberti; this was made up of broken chords. The style of classical music included homophony; this consisted of a single line of melody and an accompaniment, an example of this would be a sonata, an important form of homophony that evolved a great deal during the period.

There were many key forms developing from the baroque era into the classical era involving concertos, sonatas, oratorios, chamber music and overtures, which are effectively introductions to operas- the most famous of which is Mozart's overture to the 'Nozze de Figaro'. Overtures usually contain various themes from the actual opera and are used to bring the audience into the world of that particular one. They set up the performance.

Sonata form was applied to solo sonatas, chamber music, symphonies, and concertos. String quartets were the most popular chamber form of the Classical era. They were made up of one cello, two violins, and a viola and were written in 4 movements, using the sonata form. There was also a wide use of symphonies, large orchestral compositions, generally in three or four movements, symphonies are also in sonata form. Symphonies, Sonatas, and String Quartets were written by some of the most influential composers of the classical era, Franz Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig van Beethoven. They composed music for vocals as well as instrumentals. Other composers included Luigi Boccherini, Hoffman and Hein.

