



Listening Guide

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, First Movement

DATE OF WORK: 1788

MOVEMENTS:

- I. Allegro molto; sonata-allegro form, G minor
- II. Andante; sonata-allegro form, E-flat major
- III. Allegro moderato; minuet and trio form, G minor
- IV. Allegro assai; sonata-allegro form, G minor

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: “Romantic” minor-mode setting.
Opening rocket theme that grows out of 3-note motive, with continued motivic development.
Contrasting themes and keys of sonata-allegro form provide drama in movement.

First Movement: Allegro molto; sonata-allegro form, 2/4 meter, G minor

EXPOSITION

Theme 1—in G minor, vigorous melody, develops from 3-note motive (shaded), in violins:



Bridge—vigorous passage, building in a crescendo; modulation to key of relative major (B flat).

Theme 2—in B-flat major; lyrical, relaxed melody in woodwinds and strings:



Codetta—based on 3-note motive from theme 1, leads to closing cadence in B-flat major.

Exposition repeated.

DEVELOPMENT

Short, compact section built on 3-note motive in various guises; in new keys, in the bass part (bassoon and low strings), and as focus of string and woodwind dialogue, in inversion; then returns to tonic of G minor.

RECAPITULATION

Theme 1—in G minor.

Theme 2—in G minor; minor key gives it new character.

Coda—energetic extension of closing, in G minor.