

Chapter Outline

Prelude. (CHWM 330)

The new musical idiom of the mid-eighteenth century, developed primarily in opera, became pervasive in instrumental music, which gained new independence. The era saw a rise in works for piano, string quartets, and symphonies, as well as the development of sonata form. The piano replaced the harpsichord and the clavichord. The sonata became the main type of music, the string quartet made its debut and the concerto and symphony excelled, the older baroque styles fell away.

I. Sonata (CHWM 330–33, NAWM 106)

In the Classic period, *sonata* had different meanings, including a compositional form or procedure.

1. Koch's sonata form

German theorist Heinrich Christoph Koch described first-movement form (*sonata form*) as an expanded *binary form*, with both sections normally repeated. The first section, with one main period, presents the movement's main idea in the tonic and modulates to the dominant or relative major. The second section, with two main periods, modulates back to the tonic, then restates material from the first section in the tonic.

2. Keyboard sonata

Keyboard works were in great demand by amateurs in the middle and late eighteenth century, and sonatas were considered the most challenging genre for performers and listeners.

3. Domenico Scarlatti One of the most prominent at this time:

Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757), born in the same year as Bach and Handel, son of Alessandro Scarlatti, worked in Portugal for the king, and Spain (following his student there when she married a Spanish prince)

and composed many keyboard works, including **555 sonatas**. It's said that he was virtually taught because there was no one around Spain to influence him.

4. Sonatas

In his keyboard sonatas, Scarlatti typically used *balanced binary form*, and although his style is not galant, he did use a great variety of figuration. **Music: NAWM 106**

A Closer Look: Binary Forms

Most forms of the Classic era modulate from the tonic to the dominant and then return to the tonic. *Simple binary form* features two sections, each repeated, roughly equal in length, and featuring different musical material. *Balanced binary form* presents new material in the dominant at the end of the first section and repeats it in the tonic at the end of the second section. *Rounded binary form* highlights the return of the tonic by repeating the material that opened the first section.

5. Paired sonatas

After 1745, Scarlatti paired sonatas together in his manuscripts.

II. Symphony (CHWM 334–36, NAWM 108–9)

1. Early symphonies

The earliest *symphonies*, dating from around 1730, originated from the opera overture and were influenced by the late Baroque concerto, the orchestral suite, and the trio sonata.

2. Sammartini

Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1701–1775) was one of the first symphony composers, whose three-movement works contained a variety of contrasting ideas. **Music: NAWM 108**

3. Mannheim orchestra

The *Mannheim* orchestra, led by *Johann Stamitz* (1717–1757), was renowned for its discipline, technique, dynamic range, and crescendos.

4. Johann Stamitz

Stamitz was the first composer to consistently use four movements and a theme after the modulation in his symphonies. **Music: NAWM 109**

5. Berlin

Berlin symphonists preferred less contrast and adopted a more serious tone marked by thematic development and counterpoint.

A Closer Look: Symphony Orchestras

Italian orchestras consisted mostly of strings and were primarily used to support vocalists. By the middle of the eighteenth century, wind and brass instruments were regularly used for doubling the strings, adding color, and filling out harmonies.

6. Vienna and Paris

Vienna and Paris were also important centers of symphonic activity.

III. The Empfindsam Style (CHWM 336–37, NAWM 107)

The *empfindsam style* was adopted by several German composers around the middle of the eighteenth century. The piano forte created in 1700 by Bartolomeo Cristofori, took over in place of the harpsichord and the clavichord.

1. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788) composed in many vocal and instrumental genres, but he is best known for his keyboard works. His last eight works with the Piano forte in mind.

2. *Sturm und Drang*

Empfindsam style reached a climax in the 1760s and 1770s and has been linked to the literary movement *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress). Because of the stuff in the music to catch you by surprise.

3. Main characteristics of empfindsam style

Empfindsam style is characterized by sudden surprising changes. **Music: NAWM 107**

IV. Concerto (CHWM 338–39, NAWM 110)

1. Johann Christian Bach : Among the first to compose piano concertos. He converted from Lutheran to roman Catholic.

Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782), Johann Sebastian Bach's youngest son, studied and worked in Italy before going to London. There, he had a successful career and met the young Mozart, on whom he had a profound influence. The first-movement form of concertos was a combination of Baroque ritornello form (involving orchestral ritornellos alternating with solo episodes) and Classical sonata form (involving contrasts in key and thematic material). **Music: NAWM 110**

2. Cadenza

By the late eighteenth century, the soloist improvised a cadenza just before the final orchestral ritornello.

Postlude (CHWM 340-41)

In the eighteenth century, composers combined new styles of vocal music with existing traditions within the instrumental repertory to create new genres and forms. Individual compositions had wide and instant appeal, but they were replaced quickly and often by new music. The prolonged popularity of a few composers, such as C. P. E. Bach and J. C. Bach, was later overshadowed by Haydn and Mozart.