

THE CLASSICISM AND THE ROMANTICISM

THE CLASSICISM (second half of the 18th century)

The classical period or classicism is music era that took place between the baroque and romantic periods. This means that music from the classical period is music composed between 1750 to 1800.

- The original meaning of “**classical**” refers to “Classical Greece”, and this term was used to name that era because people in that time tried to emulate the ideals of the ancient Greek and Roman arts, that is; Balance, moderation, beauty and serenity.
- In music we will see all these ideals in the music made by **Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809), **Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach** (1714-1788), **Luigi Boccherini** (1743-1805) and specially **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (Austrian, 1756-1791) who is the most important composer from this period. He wrote an incredible number of great compositions and this achievement is particularly impressive because he died so young, at the age of 35.
- Some of the features you can see in music from this period are: **The melodies are not as ornamented as in the Baroque.** They are based on **simplicity, elegance** and **clarity** and structured in symmetrical phrases, organized into two parts (question and answer). They are usually easy to remember, **easy to sing** and **easy to whistle.**
- A new key instrument will become very important. It will be named as **Fortepiano**. It was invented by the Italian instrument maker **Bartolomeo Cristofori** and it was an early version of the **piano**. It was given this name because it was able to play in different dynamics. The harpsichord disappeared from the orchestra and it was substituted for this new instrument. **Other instruments come into fashion** and they will be included in the orchestra (**the clarinet and the French horn**). So, the typical size of the orchestras began to increase. They could have between 35 and 50 members.

THE ROMANTICISM (19th Century)

Romantic music is a term referring to a particular period in European music history from about 1800 to 1900.

- During this period music **is made in a more passionate and expressive way.** Composers turned their attention to the expression of intense feelings and the **personal expression of emotions.** So, fantasy and imagination played an important part.
- To express these emotions the musicians used different resources such as “**the rubato**” (a rhythmic freedom by a slight speeding up and then slowing down of the tempo) or **the exploration of a wide range of pitches, dynamics and timbres.**
- **The first romantic composer was Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770–1827) .Following a romantic attitude Beethoven wrote his music without caring what the audience thought. He only wanted express his own feelings. Other **famous romantic composers** include **Frédéric Chopin** (1810–1849) or **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840–1893)
- **The orchestra reached huge proportions.** Especially **the brass section** experimented an important development. **The percussion section** grew in number of instruments as well. As a result the rest of the sections had to grow to be listened to. So, toward the end of the Romanticism **an orchestra might include close to 100 musicians.**
- In this period the piano **was the most important instrument.** Every composer used it to create music. Also, the piano technology was improved. A cast iron frame was introduced to hold the strings under greater tension. **The piano became bigger and developed a more powerful sound.** It became the most expressive instrument of the Romantic period.