

Renaissance Music (1450-1600)

Renaissance means rebirth. They were interested in Ancient Greece and Rome. There were many voyages of discovery, and scientific advances.

Composers of the Period

Composer	Nationality	Composer	Nationality
Josquin	Netherlands	Downland*	English
Lassus	Netherlands	Welkes	English
Tallis*	English	Gibbons	English
Byrd*	English	Palestrina*	Italy
Morley*	English	G. Gabriella*	Italy
Bull	English	Monteverde*	Italy

The composers marked with asterisks are the most important to know.

Church Music

The style of renaissance church music is described as choral polyphony (polyphonic, counterpoint, contrapuntal), meaning more than one part. Homophonic means moving in chords. Monophonic means one melody line. Choral polyphony was intended to be sung a cappella (without instruments). The main forms were the mass and the motet. They had four parts, based on modes, but composers gradually added more accidentals.

One of the most noticeable differences between Medieval and Renaissance styles, is that of musical texture. Whereas a Medieval composer tended to contrast the separate strands of his music, a Renaissance composer aimed to blend them together. Instead of building up the texture layer by layer, he worked gradually through the piece, attending to all parts simultaneously. The key device used to weave this kind of texture is called imitation. Composers were becoming more interested and aware of harmony (how notes fit against each other).

German Chorales

German Chorales are Protestant hymns.

Secular Music

This was music independent of churches (i.e. none religious). The main type was the song, lied (German), frottola (Italian), chanson (French), madrigal (Italian) and villancico (Spanish).

Elizabethan Madrigals

In 1588 a collection of Italian Madrigals with English words was published in England, and it sparked off an interest in English Madrigal writing. They were performed in rich people's homes. There are three kinds of madrigal:

1. The Madrigal Proper - This kind was 'through-composed' (The music is different all the time.) There is a lot of word-painting music that illustrates words. E.g. Thomas Weelkes 'As Vesta was from Latmos Hill descending.
2. The Ballett - It was sometimes danced as well as sung. The texture is mainly chordal. Whereas a madrigal proper is through-composed, a ballett is strophic (two or more verses set to the same music. The most noticeable feature of a ballett is the 'fa-la-la' refrain.
3. The Ayre - An Ayre could be performed in a variety of ways: By solo voice with lute accompaniment; by a solo voice with other accompaniment (e.g. viols); all the parts sung by voices (with or without instruments).

16th Century Venice

Lots of polychoral (more than one choir) music.

Instrumental Music

Until the beginning of the 16th Century, instruments were considered to be less important than voices. They were used for dances, and to accompany vocal music - but here they only doubled the voices. During the 16th Century, however, composers took greater interest in writing music for instrument. A lot of these instruments were intended for outside. Some examples:

- Lute
- Viol
- Crumhorn
- Rackett
- Sackbut (Early trombone)
- Trumpet (Valveless)

English Consorts

A consort is a group of instruments playing together. A whole consort consist of instruments all from the same family, but a broken consort has instruments from more than one family.

Variations and the Ground Bass

A ground is a tune repeated over and over in the bass, with musical material changing above. Variations are alterations in the tune. You can of course do variations on the bass.

Elizabethan Keyboard Music

A popular instrument was the virginal, and a famous collection was the 'Fitzwilliam Virginal Book', which contained over 300 pieces for the virginal. A lot of the music was programmatic (It tells a story, is descriptive), e.g. 'The King's Hunt', by John Bull.

The Main Characteristics of Renaissance Music

1. Music still based on modes, but gradually more accidentals creep in.
2. Richer texture in four or more parts. Bass part is added below the tenor.
3. Blending rather than contrasting strands in the musical texture.
4. Harmony. Greater concern with the flow and progression of chords.
5. Church music. Some pieces were intended for 'a cappella' performance. Mainly contrapuntal. Lots of imitation. Some church music was accompanied by instruments - for example polychoral pieces in antiphonal style (Antiphonal - Questions and Answers, Stereo Effect).
6. Secular music (none-religious music. Sacred music is to do with the church) There was lots of vocal pieces and dances, and lots of instrumental pieces (However a lot of the instrumentals were in a vocal style, but some were suited to instruments. Vocal music was by far the more important.)
7. The characteristic timbres of Renaissance musical instruments - many forming families.

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Baroque Music (1600-1750)

It was during the 17th Century that the system of modes finally crumbled away. By adding accidentals the Major/Minor key system developed. The 17th Century also saw the invention of several new forms and designs, such as:

- Opera
- Sonata
- Oratorio
- Suite
- Fugue
- Concerto

The orchestra started to take shape, mainly in the strings, and the violins became the dominant instrument, and most important in orchestras.

Composers of the Period

Composer	Nationality	Composer	Nationality
Vivaldi	Italian	Handel	German
A. Scarlatti	Italian	Couperin	French
D. Scarlatti	Italian	Lully	French
Corelli	Italian	Rameau	French
Monteverdi	Italian	Purcell	English
Bach	German		

Monody

A monody is a single voice line supported by an instrumental bass line, upon which chords were constructed. The voice line followed the natural speech rhythms of the words. This style of writing for the voice (half singing and half reciting) became known as recitative. All the composer wrote down beneath the melody was a bass line to be played by a low stringed instrument, such as a cello. This was called the 'basso continuo', but the composer expected another continuo player on harpsichord, organ or lute, to build up chords upon the bass line. As these chords had to be improvised, the player had to be very skillful. Figures below the notes indicated which chords to play. This is called a figured bass.

Early Opera

The first opera was written in 1597, called 'Dafne', and was composed by Peri. It had choruses, dances and instrumental pieces, all done by a small orchestra. It contained music and drama (i.e. Music-Drama). The first truly great opera was composed by Monteverdi in 1607, and was called 'Orfeo'. The music heightens the dramatic impact. The music and drama blend together well. There was a lot of instrumental ritornello (Italian for return, and means when a section returns). Before each verse of the aria (song), we hear an instrumental ritornello.

The Italian Overture

Scarlatti's operas often began with an overture in three sections: quick, slow, quick. This was the Italian Overture. Scarlatti designed the arias in his operas in da capo form, i.e. ABA. Another name for this is ternary form.

The French Overture

Lully's operas began with a French Overture.. slow, quick, slow. This is the other way round to an Italian Overture.

Baroque Opera in England

The one great English opera of the 17th Century is 'Dido and Aeneas', and was composed by Purcell.

Oratorio

Born about the same time as opera, this vocal music was at first very similar to operas. (They had arias, choruses and recitatives) They were acted out with scenery and costumes. The main difference was that an Oratorio was based on a sacred story. Eventually oratorios ceased to be acted out, and were given musical presentation only. Handel's Messiah, Samson, Israel and Egypt are all Oratorios.

Passion

A passion is a special oratorio telling the story of Christ's crucifixion. Besides recitatives, arias and choruses, Bach also included settings of chorales (German hymn tunes.)

Cantata

Bach composed more than 200 church cantatas (cantata means sung, sonata means played). These are for soloists and choruses, accompanied by orchestra and continuo, and are like miniature oratorios. A fine example is Number 140, by Bach, based upon the chorale, 'Sleepers, Wake'.

Instrumental Music

During the Baroque period, instrumental music became equally as important as vocal music.

Fugue

A fugue is a contrapuntal piece, based upon the idea of imitation. It is usually written in 3 or 4 parts, called 'voices', and these are referred to as Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. The detailed structure of a fugue can be rather complicated. The entire piece grows mainly from a single brief tune of strong musical character. This is called the subject. Then it is repeated by the other voices in

turn each at its appropriate pitch. The most famous collection is the 48 preludes and fugues by Bach.

The Chorale Prelude

These are usually for organ, and most of them were composed in Germany. It is based on a chorale, could be in Fugal style, or a set of variations.

The Suite

A suite is a collection of dances for one or more instruments. Many were written for harpsichord. They contain:

1. A German Allemande, in 4/4 time, at a moderate speed.
2. A French Courante, in 3/2 time, at a moderately fast speed (the Italian version is a Corrente).
3. A Spanish Sarabande, in a slow triple time.
4. A Gigue, usually in compound time

However, before or after the Gigue a composer might introduce dances such as the minuet (in 3 time, a slow and stately waltz), a bourde, a gavotte or a passepied. Sometimes a suite began with a prelude (opening piece).

The pieces were usually in the same key, and in binary form (AB). French composers, however, often wrote in Rondo form (ABACADA etc.)

Baroque Sonatas

Sonata means sounded (to be played.) Many Baroque sonatas were for two violins and continuo (usually cello and harpsichord.) Composers called these trio sonatas (There are only three music lines - the harpsichord plays the figured bass.) A violin was sometimes replaced with a flute or an oboe. There were two types:

1. The Sonata da camera (Chamber sonata: camera is Italian for chamber). These were meant to be played in people's homes. The continuo would be played by harpsichord or lute.
2. The Sonata da chiesa (Church sonata: chiesa is Italian for Church). These were played in churches. The continuo was played by organ. These were far more serious than chamber sonatas.

Purcell, Corelli, Bach, Handel, Scarlatti and Couperin all composed sonatas.

The Concerto Grosso

The word concerto means get together. The idea of opposition and contrast led to two contrasting groups of instruments: A small group of soloists (Usually two violins and a cello), called the concertino, and an orchestra of strings called either the ripieno or the tutti (meaning everyone).

The Solo Concerto

This grew out of the Concerto Grosso, and has a single instrument solo, and a string orchestra. There are solo sections and tutti sections. The quick movements were often in ritomello form: Tutti 1, Solo 1, Tutti 2, Solo 2, Tutti 3, etc.

Vivaldi wrote more than 500 concertos, both concerto grossos and solo concertos, his most famous being 'The Four Seasons'.

The Orchestra

During the Baroque period, the orchestra started to take shape. The string section became a self-contained unit. To this composers would add other instruments in ones and twos: Flutes, Recorders, Oboes, Bassoons, Horns, and occasionally trumpets and kettle drums.

There was still a continuo. There was a lot of contrast, especially in the dynamics. Sometimes there were also echo effects.

The Main Characteristics of Baroque Music

1. The Basso Continuo (Figured Bass).
2. One mood throughout the entire piece.
3. Important String sections.
4. Modes were replaced by the Major/Minor key system.
5. Many different forms are used (e.g. Binary, Fugue)
6. Many types of music, e.g. The Chorale, Opera, the Dance Suite.
7. Energetic rhythms (Exuberance), long melodies, many ornaments, contrasts (especially dynamics, but also in timbres)

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Classical Music (1750-1810)

Classical with a 'c' means anything that is top class, and particularly refers to the ancient Greeks and Romans. With a 'C' it means a specific style of composers. The term classical is commonly and incorrectly applied to any music which is not modern. The correct term for this is actually art music.

Composers of the Period

Composer	Nationality	Composer	Nationality
Stamitz	German (Bohemian)	Beethoven (1770-1827)	German
Gluck (1714-1787)	German	Haydn (1732-1809)*	Austrian
C.P.E. Bach	German	Mozart (1756-1791)*	Austrian
J.C. Bach	German		

The composers marked with an asterisk are the most important to remember.

Style Galant

This is an early classical style, and a very courtly style. It was meant to please the listener, as opposed to making the listener think. C.P.E. Bach and J.C. Bach were the main composers who made use of this style.

Later Classical Style

This style made more of balance and control, grace and beauty of melody, and the form or design became important.

Texture

Classical music is basically homophonic. (Baroque music was polyphonic.)

The Orchestra

The Orchestra began to grow. The harpsichord continuo gradually fell out of use. Wind instruments became more important, especially the horns to bind the texture. Strings were still the main instrument to which were added two horns, one or two flutes, or a pair of oboes. Gradually, composers added one or two bassoons, and occasionally a pair of trumpets, or a pair of kettle drums. Clarinets were introduced towards the end of the 18th Century. Mozart was the composer responsible for popularising the clarinet. The woodwind section became a self-contained section:

- One or two flutes
- Two oboes
- Two clarinets
- Two bassoons
- Two horns

- Two trumpets
- Two kettledrums
- Strings

Music for Piano

Invented as early as 1698, by Cristofori in Italy. This instrument allows soft and loud notes to be played. The strings were hit by hammers, as opposed to being plucked. More expression could be played (e.g. Legato, staccato, cantabile.)

The Alberti Bass is simple broken chords, repeated in the left hand, which keeps the music going, and outlines the harmony.

C.P.E. Bach was one of the first piano composers, and started composing around 1750. J.C. Bach gave the first piano performance in London. A lot of music was printed for harpsichord or piano, but the harpsichord gradually faded out of use.

Sonata

A Sonata is a work, in several movements, for one or two instruments. With three instruments it is a trio, with four it is a quartet, and with five it is a quintet.

The Symphony

Symphony means a sonata for orchestra. It grew from the Italian Overture, but the Symphony has three movements, instead of three sections. Later on, a fourth movement was added (commonly a minuet in trio). Stamitz was the first famous symphony composer, and the father of this style, Haydn and Mozart perfected the Symphony in the second half of the 18th Century. The Symphony can be broken down into:

- **First movement:** Usually fast, and in sonata form.
- **Second movement..** Usually slower and more song-like. It could be in sonata form or ternary form, and perhaps with variations.
- **Third movement:** Haydn and Mozart wrote a minuet in trio at this point. Beethoven later turned this into a Scherzo (A direct translation is joke.)
- **Fourth movement:** Fast, often light hearted, perhaps in Rondo form, or sonata form, or with variations.

Haydn wrote numerous sonatas, including the Surprise Symphony, the Drum Roll Symphony and the London Symphony. Trios and quartets were also in four movements. Sonatas might have three or four movements. The Classical Concerto did not include the minuet, so only had three movements.

Sonata Form

Sonata form is a way of building up an individual movement, not a piece. It consists of three sections:

1. **The Exposition:** The composer exposes his musical ideas. The main ideas are called subjects. The first subject is in the tonic, which modulates (changes key) near the end to a bridge (transition) passage, which leads

to the second subject. The second subject is in a new, but related, key, often the dominant (Sta) or relative major (If the first subject is in a minor key). The second subject is usually more tuneful.

2. **Development:** Here the ideas are developed. It creates a feeling of tension and conflict. The climax may be in this section.
3. **Recapitulation:** The music is repeated from the beginning, but the second subject is now in the tonic. Finally, the music may have a coda (A direct translation is tail), which rounds off the music.

The Concerto

It contains a solo instrument and an orchestra. There are three movements (slow, fast, slow). The first movement has a double-exposition. The first is for the orchestra alone, followed by the soloist. The second, with the second subject group in the related key. Then comes the development and the recapitulation, for both the orchestra and the soloist. Towards the end, the orchestra pauses, and the soloist plays a cadenza (a short passage, based on themes heard earlier, which displays the brilliance of the player.) When the soloist finishes, the soloist ends with a trill, which signifies the orchestra should come in and finish off the piece. The orchestra plays the coda to end.

Opera

Classical composers wrote much vocal music, especially opera. Gluck was an important opera composer. Orfeo ed Euridice is one of his works. He made the actions more important in the opera. At the start of the opera, the overture prepared the audience for what was to come, Mozart wrote operas including The Marriage of Figaro, The Magic Flute and Don Giovanni. The Magic Flute is an example of singspiel (an opera in which singing is mixed up with dialogue). The orchestra mirrors the mood and drama of the action. Don Giovanni is an example of 'opera buffa' (comic opera).

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Beethoven composed to please himself. He wrote 32 piano sonatas, nine symphonies. The 9th Symphony is the Choral Symphony. He wrote one opera, called Fidelio. Towards the end of his life he became deaf. He could still compose, and hear the sounds in his head, but had great difficulty in conducting his works.

Beethoven modified Classical music. His music is weightier, and on a larger scale. There is more emotion in his music, and his last movements are usually the most important. He uses more discords, more dynamic contrast and more contrast in pitch. He increased the size of the orchestra, for example, he often added a 3rd horn and a piccolo, and also added a choir in his 9th symphony.

The Main Characteristics of Classical Music

1. Less complicated texture than Baroque (more homophonic).
2. Emphasis on beauty, elegance and balance.
3. More variety and contrast within a piece than Baroque (dynamics, instruments, pitch, tempo, key, mood and timbre).

4. Melodies tend to be shorter than those in baroque, with clear-cut phrases, and clearly marked cadences.
5. The orchestra increases in size and range. The harpsichord falls out of use. The woodwind becomes a self-contained section.
6. The piano takes over, often with Alberti bass accompaniment.
7. Importance was given to instrumental music - sonata, trio, string quartet, symphony, concerto.
8. Sonata form was the most important design.

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Romantic Music (1850-1900)

The word romanticism was first used to describe new ideas in painting and literature, towards the end of the 18th century. This word was later taken up by musicians, to describe the changes in musical style, which took place soon after the turn of the century. Unlike Classical composers, Romantic composers aimed for a more powerful expression of emotion, often revealing their innermost thoughts and feelings. Romantic music is not just about the emotion of love, it can also be about hate or death (positive or negative feelings). Many Romantic composers took an interest in art and literature:

- Far off lands
- The distant past
- Dreams
- Night and moonlight
- Rivers, lakes and forests
- Nature and the seasons
- The joy and pain of love
- Fairy tales
- The supernatural
- Magic

Composers of the Period

Composer	Lived	Composer	Lived
Beethoven	1770-1827	Smetana	1824-1884
Schubert	1797-1828	Brahms	1833-1897
Berlioz	1803-1869	Tchaikovsky	1840-1893
Mendelssohn	1809-1847	Dvorak	1841-1904
Chopin	1810-1849	Grieg	1843-1907
Schumann	1810-1856	Rimsky-Korsakov	1844-1908
Liszt	1811-1886	Elgar	1857-1934
Wagner	1813-1883	Mahler	1860-1911
Verdi	1813-1901	Richard Strauss	1864-1949

The Orchestra

As Romantic composers widened the range of their musical material, we find richer harmonies, more passionate melodies, and greater use of chromaticism. (Chroma is Greek for colour). There was an enormous increase in the size of the orchestra. The tuba was added to the brass section, valves were invented, giving the brass more flexibility. Composers wrote for woodwind instruments in threes or even fours. The piccolo, cor anglais, bass clarinet and double bassoon were added.

A larger string section was formed, to accommodate the extra sound. More varied percussion (e.g. bongos) were added. A larger range of pitch and volume was now possible. New combinations of instruments were brought about. A rich

variety of compositions resulted, ranging from piano pieces and songs to large spectacular works, (The majority of large works were by: Wagner, Berlioz, Mahler and Richard Strauss).

The German Lied

The plural is lieder. Songs began to develop in the Romantic period for solo voice and piano. There were two types:

1. Strophic - same music for every verse
2. Through-composed - different music for each verse. The voice and words fit very closely together (reflect each other.)

The piano is more than just an accompaniment in these compositions, it is a partner to the voice. Schubert is perhaps the greatest composer of German Lieds, he wrote over 600 (including: The Earl King, The Trout, To Sylvia). Other composers of this style were Schumann, Brahms, Wolf and Richard Strauss. Sometimes a composer might set a whole group of poems linked to the same idea, perhaps even sketching a story, for example, Schubert's Winter Journey.

Music for Piano

Several improvements were made to the piano in the 19th Century. E.g. more notes, metal frame as opposed to wood. The piano gained a richer sound, and gradually, a wider range of notes. The sustaining pedal began to be used to a much wider extent. The most famous piano composers of the time were: Schubert, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt and Brahms. They wrote sonatas (for one instrument, or a soloist with one accompanying instrument.), and short pieces such as the

- waltz
- mazurka
- polonaise
- mood and character pieces:
 - the impromptu
 - the romance
 - the song without words - the prelude
 - the nocturne
 - the ballade
 - the intermezzo
 - the rhapsody

Many pieces shared contrasting moods, and were in Ternary form. Another piece of the time was the etude (study). It was meant to improve the playing technique of the player. This period saw the rise of the virtuoso, a person with extraordinary musical skill, such as Paganini (violinist people thought he had made a pact with the devil, because he was so good), and Liszt (pianist he was very concerned with showmanship.)

Programme Music

As links were formed between music, painting and literature, composers started to compose programme music. - music that tells a story. (The opposite is

absolute music - music without a story.) There are three main types of programme music for orchestra:

1. The Programme Symphony - e.g. Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, The Symphonic Fantastique (About a young man who is in love. He dreams about her, and she becomes a melody in his mind. This melody is an 'idée fixe', it keeps coming round again, a recurring theme. It is by Berlioz.)
2. The Concert Overture - It is a one movement programme piece for orchestra, intended for performance at a concert. E.g. Fingal's Cave by Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, Romeo and Juliet.
3. The Symphonic Poem (The Tone Poem) - It was invented by Liszt. It is a one movement programme piece for orchestra. Liszt used a device called thematic transformation (a basic theme that is continually being changed in mood and character, like the 'idée fixe'). Liszt wrote a thematic piece called Hamlet. Other examples are: Danse Macabre (by Saint-Saëns), Vltava (by Smetana), A Night on the Bare Mountain (by Mussorgsky), The Sorcerer's Apprentice (by Dukas), and Till Eulenspiegel (by Richard Strauss).

Incidental Music

It is music specially composed to be heard at certain points during the performance of a play. (To set the mood, to cover the scenery changed or as background music)

Suites

These are several pieces of incidental music gathered together, intended for a play, e.g. Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, The Nutcracker (All three by Tchaikovsky), A Midsummer Nights Dream (by Mendelssohn), Peer Gynt (by Grieg)

The Concerto

Changes were made to the form of the Concerto during the Romantic period. Instead of a double-exposition, there was now a single exposition, usually with the soloist entering immediately, sharing the themes with the orchestra. The cadenza was now written out by the composer. Other changes included:

- Different numbers of movements were used by different composers (Mendelssohn wrote pieces with three movements, Liszt did pieces with one movement.
- Larger orchestra
- Growth of the virtuoso
- More excitement and 'drama'. More 'competition' between the orchestra and the soloist.
- Piano and violin became the main Concerto instruments

Wagner

Wagner wrote many operas, especially German operas. People said Wagner was the 'most powerful force since Beethoven.' His operas are called music dramas. Some examples of his works are: Rhinegold, The Master Singers and

the Valkyrie. Wagner was a master of orchestration. He had a huge orchestra. The operas were on a large scale, and sometimes took four or five hours to perform. Woven into the texture are many short themes called Leitmotiv. Each one represents a character, emotion, object or place.

19th Century Nationalism

By the middle of the 19th Century, music was dominated by Germany. However, composers from other countries began to feel they should break away. They used folk tunes, dance rhythms and local legends for this purpose. Some examples of 19th Century Nationalism are:

Russia:

- Mussorgsky - A Night on the Bare Mountain
- Rimsky-Korsakov - Scheherazade
- Borodin - Prince Igor

Bohemia:

- Smetana - Ma Vlast (Vltava)

Norway:

- Grieg - Peer Gynt

Spain:

- Albiniz
- Granados
- Falla

Late Romanticism

Mahler and Strauss wrote in a Romantic style, into the 20th century. Richard Strauss' 'Also Sprach Zarathustra', written in 1896, is an example of later romanticism.

The Main Characteristics of Romantic Music

1. Freedom of form and design. It was more personal and emotional.
2. Song-like melodies (lyrical), as well as many chromatic harmonies and discords.
3. Dramatic contrasts of dynamics and pitch.
4. Big orchestras, due mainly to brass and the invention of the valve.
5. Wide variety of pieces (i.e. songs up to five hour Wagner operas)
6. Programme music (music that tells a story)
7. Shape was brought to work through the use of recurring themes.
8. Great technical virtuosity.
9. Nationalism (a reaction against German influence)

Modern Period of Music

1900 to present

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The transition from nineteenth-century Romanticism to twentieth-century "Modernism" is, perhaps, as violent an upheaval as was the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque. Because the speed of twentieth-century innovation in all areas has been so accelerated, music has also moved from one new idea to another with such speed that no previous era can be compared with the diversity and extremes of its expressions. The search for originality on the part of every composer has led to a great variety of expression, reversion to past historical styles, neo-Classicism, neo-Romanticism, serial composition, electronic music, microtonal music, etc. The insistence of originality is so compelling that its end results often appear questionable.

Technology and scientific discovery are probably the basic influences on musical creativity and production. The inventions and methods of rapid sound communication (such as the telephone and telegraph in the nineteenth century) led to further developments in sound transmission. This in turn led to radio, television, computers, the phonograph, and tape recording -- all of which have a vital effect on music. By the middle of the twentieth century, music had become available to almost every human being -- and has become a constant accompaniment at all waking (and even sleeping) hours. It is now possible to have musical performance at every social activity. In the past, even the wealthiest individuals didn't have access to the variety of music we now have at our simple disposal.

Other major discoveries that have influenced music are nuclear physics, space travel, the laser beam -- just to name a few. In the area of social concerns, such events as the Holocaust of World War II, Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, Women's Liberation and even environmental issues have contributed to musical development. Composers often try to express their own personal concerns and feelings in terms of their art.

Musical recordings and publishing has made music highly available to the public. As a result, recorded musical performances (tape, film, phonograph, and compact disc) have sometimes been erroneously regarded as "replacement" for attendance at live performances. The invention of electronic instruments, such as the synthesizer, began around 1950. This has led to a wide variety of differing sound qualities -- and new tools of the contemporary composer. Even rhythmic complexities completely beyond human capabilities are easy to achieve on electronic instruments. Pre-programmed computers are also being used to compose music.

Finally, even the environment has contributed to music composition. Modern man lives in an environment which is much more acoustically disturbing than that of any past era. Automobiles, tractors, mechanical construction equipment, office machinery, factories -- all have brought about a high level of nervous tension which expects and demands a high level of acoustical stimulus in any type of communication. For example: less than 50 years ago, speakers with enough power to address large audiences are now found within the confines of a small automobile!

Composers today are mindful of the fact that it is through the medium of recorded sound that they have the greatest opportunity to reach their audience. As a result, they compose with recording in mind. But, then, recorded music tends to make it "unnecessary" for the listener to leave the house to attend a concert or opera. There are many enthusiastic music lovers who rarely hear music "in the flesh". Recordings are capable of almost perfect technical performances, since all mistakes can be erased and repaired through editing, cutting and splicing of the original tape. This, of course, is a drawback in the sense that composers and performers come to expect perfect performances of themselves, despite all difficulties in the composition. On the other hand, performers have reached higher levels of technical and interpretive proficiency than ever before.

Function of Music: There is now, more than ever, a commercial aspect in music. Organized concert series and "Seasons of Star Performances" are commonplace. The general public, as a result, has raised its musical taste. Music for motion picture and television are outlets for living composers. But after almost 80 years of motion picture music, there have been very few pieces of music that might be said to be distinguished as artistically noteworthy. Neither incidental motion picture music nor that which is written for a musical picture has distinguished itself. Most audiences, however, are being introduced to a variety of contemporary musical styles through the media of motion pictures and television. European and public television devote a large amount of time to the broadcasting of concert and operatic performances.

A great part of the world's population is constantly bombarded with musical sounds from recordings and radio. Such performances are to be heard in the home, the market, the office, at the dentist, the factory, playgrounds, the telephone (when placed on "hold"), sports fields, etc. Even as an antidote, music has come in the medical arena.

Festivals and concerts sponsored by institutions and societies organized expressly for the purpose of presenting the works of contemporary composers provide one of the most important opportunities for composers to have their works heard. There has been a continued tendency to employ composers as teachers in musical institutes and universities in all countries. In many instances, such positions are announced as "Composers-in-residence", and parallel the situation in the Baroque and Classical periods when composers were attached to courts. Colleges and universities have such resources, and become a grand climate for experimental composing. In fact, some of the most elaborate resources for electronic music in the United States are to be found in education institutions.

Visual Arts: Duchamp, F.L. Wright, Matisse, Kadinsky, Braque, Picasso, Klee, Rivera, Dali, Orozco, Rouault, Mondrian, Miro, Chagall, Lipchitz, Pollock, Moore.

Literature: G.B. Shaw, Masfield, Mann, Lawrence, Frost, Maugham, Lewis, T.S. Eliot, Joyce, Dreiser, Fitzgerald, France, Malraux, Hemingway, O'Neill, Huxley, Benet, Faulkner, Sandburg, Stein, Steinbeck, Thomas, Williams, Miller, Orwell, Cummings, Auden.

Philosophy: Dewey, Pierce, James, Spengler, Russell, Santanaya, Sartre, Camus.

Prominent Composers: Janacek, Satie, Vaughn Williams, Schoenberg, Ives, Ravel, deFalla, Bloch, Bartok, Stravinsky, Berg, Webern, Varese, Billa-Lobos, Prokofiev, Honneger, Milhaud, Orff, Hindemith, Sessions, Gershwin, Krenek, Copland, Dallapiccola, Shostakovich, Messiaen, Carter, Cage, Britten, Poulenc, Ibert, Reger, Kodaly, Respighi, Khatchaturian, Kabalevsky, Turina, Piston, Babbitt, Barber, Hovhaness, dello Joio, Persichetti, Gottschalk.

Characteristics of Style: Composers felt it necessary to find new ways to say new things. Musically, this meant that melody, harmony, rhythm and tone quality had to be reassessed. First attempts at a new mode of composition in any age are likely to be of more educational interest than artistic. New techniques and devices must first be tried in the fires of experimental creativity until those less effective are weeded out. As a result, the octave was split into smaller intervals than the twelve traditional semitones. This was known as "microtonality", resulting in "quarter-tone" pianos and the use of traditional instruments which could play intervals smaller than the semitone. Also, advances in the electronic tone production have developed instruments of very sophisticated types.

Practice and Performance: Notation and dynamic directions are increasingly specific. The performer is given very detailed directions as to tempi, dynamics, expression, and even tonal quality. Notation is often expressed in terms of graphs, charts and symbols which are specifically defined for the particular composition. The rise of jazz as a vehicle for creative and improvisatory expression of the performer is markedly important. Chance (aleatory) music became popular as well -- such as a composition for twelve radios tuned to different stations!

Prominent Musical Characteristics: Counterpoint is again significant; new chord patterns; polytonality (several tonalities used simultaneously); atonality (where tonal centers move too rapidly to be recognized by the listener); tone-row technique; polyrhythms; primitivism; notor-element; mixed-meters; dissonance; modes; variation principle; short themes and overall brevity; aleatory ideas; wide intervals; humor and satire; omission of barlines; sound blocks; clusters; constellations.

Instrumentation: Small ensembles, large orchestras, revival of the harpsichord, guitar, mandolin, many percussion instruments, electronic instruments and devices, tape recorder, synthesizer.

Vocal Compositions: Art song, choral works, opera, oratorio, and liturgical music.

Small Instrumental Forms: Overture, Symphonic poem, variation, dances, poetic pieces, electronic forms.

Large Instrumental Forms: Sonata, chamber music, symphony, concerto, suite, ballet, incidental music for film and drama.

20th Century music: where to start

From Elgar's Victorian stiff upper lipped symphonies, through to Stravinsky's spiky tunes, and John Williams' atmospheric film scores, there's a lot of diverse music to discover in the 20th Century. Listen to the best of Serialism, Minimalism, film music, songs, and symphonies of the past 100 years.

20th Century symphonies

As the 20th Century kicked off, composing massive stately symphonies was very much in fashion. **Elgar's** First Symphony from 1908, complete with dignified melody and march-like bass line gives you an idea, but that's only the tip of the iceberg. Symphonic kings like Mahler and **Sibelius** were also composing their greatest works - try Mahler's **Symphony No. 8** for an impressively grand choral extravaganza, or Sibelius' Symphony No. 3 for a light, folksy melody underpinned by hefty orchestral forces.

Serialism

In the increasingly hostile political climate, these idealistic symphonies seemed more than a little out of place. Musicians like **Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern** reacted against the establishment and stripped music back to its bare bones. By putting each of the 12 notes in the scale in a particular order, they produced angular mathematical music known as Serialism. Brace yourselves for Schoenberg's eerie fluttering melodies of *Pierrot Lunaire* from 1912, or his *Variations for Orchestra*.

American music and Minimalism

Once the reign of the massive symphony had been toppled, the door was flung wide open for radical new musical ideas. A group of American composers distilled music down even further and experimented with simple pitches and increasingly complex rhythms, creating beautifully hypnotic music known as Minimalism. Why not explore Philip Glass' Violin Concerto, Steve Reich's amazing *Different Trains*, or John Adams' *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* showing the depth of possibilities in **Minimalism**.

It's not just the Minimalists who reigned supreme in America. Composers like **Copland** produced the toe-tappin' *Rodeo*, and the iconic *Fanfare for the Common Man*, played at every American presidents' inauguration. And who could forget **Gershwin**, with his rollicking jazz-inspired rhythms and big American tunes. Take a whirlwind trip to Europe in music with *An American in Paris* to get an idea:

Russian music

Stravinsky shook up the musical establishment with his unconventional style, even causing a near-riot with the premiere of his ground-breaking ballet, *The Rite of Spring*. Unexpected violent rhythms and controversial musical opinions set Stravinsky apart, but if you're looking for something slightly less in-your-face, you might not be in luck with other Russian masters. Soviet genius **Shostakovich's** 15 symphonies document a life battling against the Soviet regime, as he fell in and out of favour with the authorities. His opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* didn't go down well with Stalin, but he quickly regained his popularity with his Symphony No. 5:

Prokofiev, too, was a Russian master, as famous for his ballet music as his brilliant tunes. Why not start with the beautiful *Peter and the Wolf*, where each character in the music is characterised by a different instrument?

Film and video game music

Shostakovich composed a fair amount of film music, and with the rise of technology and the increased popularity of cinema, it was only a matter of time before movie soundtracks exploded onto the scene. And if you had to pick only one film composer, John Williams is your man, responsible for the soundtracks to the century's blockbuster smash films: E.T., Star Wars, and Superman. His score to Jurassic Park gives us an idea as to what makes him so successful. With the invention of iconic game, PONG, in 1972, and Tetris in 1984, with its well-known Russian tune, video game music became increasingly popular towards the end of the 20th Century. Like film music, video game music can sound increasingly classical in style, like this piece from Final Fantasy VII:

Choral music

If you're looking for a catchy tune, two choral stars of the 20th Century include **John Rutter** and **Karl Jenkins**, whose music is hugely popular with modern choirs. Listen to Jenkins' *Adiemus: Songs of Sanctuary* from 1995, or Rutter's *Gaelic Blessing* for two strikingly different examples of late 20th Century choral music. Or, there's Eric Whitacre, an American choral composer famous for his dense cluster chords and rich harmonies. Here's a recording of his *Sleep*, to give you an idea of what he was up to at the turn of the century.