Chapter 14

Other Classical Genres

Key Terms

- Sonata
- Fortepiano
- Rondo
- Classical concerto
- Double-exposition form
- Orchestra exposition
- Solo exposition
- Cadenza
- String quartet
- Chamber music
- Opera buffa
- Ensemble

Classical Genres

- Symphony
- Other genres that borrow features from symphony
  - Sonata
  - Concerto
  - String quartet
  - Opera buffa

The Classical Sonata

- A genre, *not* a form!
- A work in several movements for one or two instruments
  - Piano sonata = For piano alone
  - Violin sonata = For violin and piano
- Designed for private performance

Sonatas

- Less uniform than symphonies
- Never more than three movements
- Movements always shorter than symphony movements

Review of Symphony Movement Plan

- I – Moderate to fast; sonata form
- II – Slow; various forms
- III – Moderate tempo; minuet form
- IV – Fast; sonata or rondo form

Sonata Movement Plan

- I – Moderate to fast; sonata form
- II – Slow; various forms
- III – Fast; sonata or often rondo form

Francesca LeBrun (1756–1791)

- Born in Mannheim to musical family

- Daughter of famous cellist

- Became well-known opera diva and composer

- Married an oboe virtuoso

LeBrun, Sonata in F, II

- Second movement in rondo form
    A (major)
    B (some motives from **A**)
    A
    C (minor, different rhythms)
    D
    C
    Transition (back to tonic key)
    A B A
    Coda

The Classical Concerto

- Some features of Baroque concerto
  - Three movements—fast, slow, fast
  - Solo virtuosity
  - Contest between soloist and orchestra
- Contest heightened in Classical concerto
  - Soloist's agility and expressiveness
  - Orchestra's power and variety

Concerto Movement Plan

- I: Moderate to fast tempo
  - Double-exposition form
  - Long movement with cadenza
- II: Slow tempo, various forms
- III: Fast tempo, rondo form favored
  - Or variation form, never sonata form

Double-Exposition Form

- Extended variant of sonata form
- Two expositions
  - Orchestra exposition
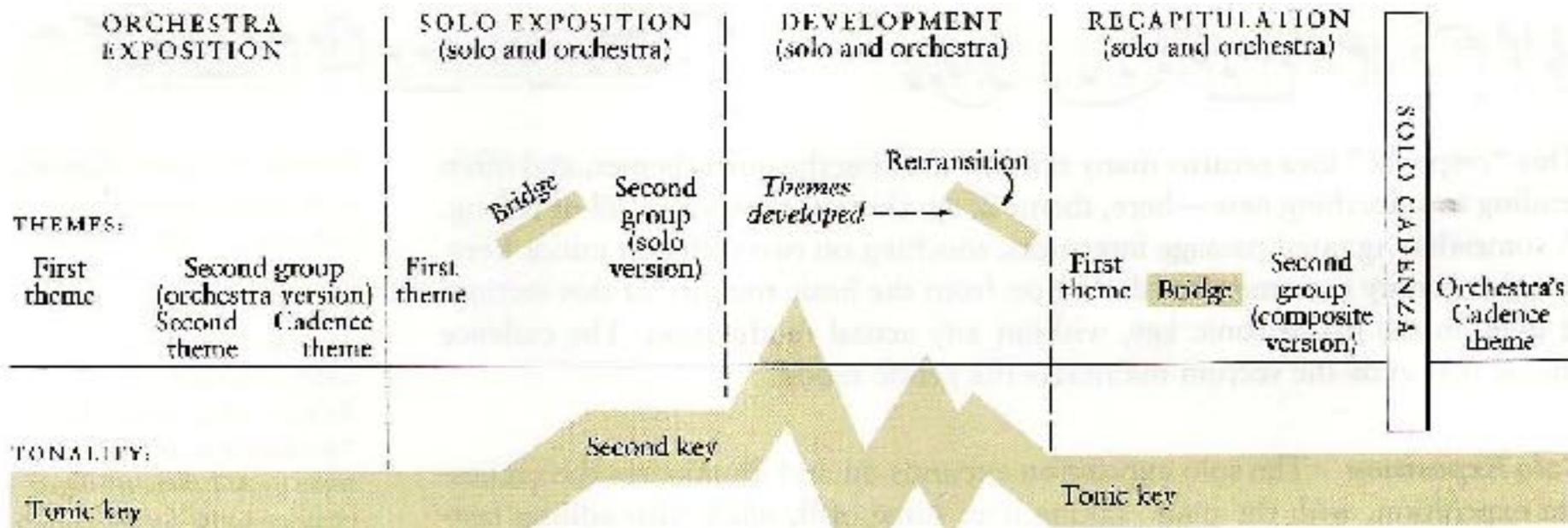 - Solo exposition
- Development
- Recapitulation

Double-Exposition Form

- Orchestra exposition
  - Announces main themes in tonic key
- Solo exposition
  - Presents main themes and new themes
  - Adds a real bridge; modulates to second key
  - Often longer than orchestra expositions

Double-Exposition Form

- Development
  - Heightens contest
- Recapitulation
  - A composite of orchestra and solo expositions
  - Solo cadenza
- Ends with orchestra's cadence theme

Double-Exposition Form

ORCHESTRA EXPOSITION

SOLO EXPOSITION (solo and orchestra)

DEVELOPMENT (solo and orchestra)

RECAPITULATION (solo and orchestra)

SOLO CADENZA

THEMES:

First theme | Second group (orchestra version) Second Cadence theme theme | First theme | Bridge Second group (solo version) | *Themes developed* ---→ Retransition | First theme Bridge Second group (composite version) | Orchestra's Cadence theme

TONALITY:

Tonic key | Second key | Tonic key

Mozart, Piano Concerto in A, I

- Written in 1786 during his Vienna years

- Typical Classical concerto

  I: One of his most gentle and songful first movements

  II: Almost tragic in mood

  III: Exuberant and sunny finale

Mozart Concerto, Orchestra Exposition

- Presents themes 1 and 2 and cadence theme

Cadence theme

- Frequent contrasts between gentle theme and agitated answer

"Response"

Mozart, Piano Concerto in A, I

- Solo exposition
  - Expands on orchestra exposition
  - Adds modulating bridge and theme

New theme

- Development emphasizes contest
  - Rapid-fire dialogue
  - Theme fragments
  - Frequent modulations

Mozart, Piano Concerto in A, I

- Recapitulation blends the two expositions
  - Piano and orchestra share theme 1
  - Bridge returns to tonic key
  - Extension of new theme
  - Varied solo cadenza
  - Orchestra answer with *f* response
  - Ends with cadence theme from first exposition

Unique Features of Classical Concerto

- Profusion of themes—"pleasing variety"

- Dramatic contest between piano and orchestra

- Virtuoso, "operatic" writing for solo piano

- Improvisatory nature of cadenza

Chamber Music

- Designed for small, informal audiences
- Written for small ensembles
- Many different genres
  - String quartet the most important

The String Quartet

- A work in several movements for 2 violins, 1 viola, and 1 cello
- Compared with the symphony
  - Smaller range of volume and tone color
  - Gains in spontaneity, intimacy, nuance, delicacy, and subtlety
  - "The art of cultivated conversation"

Opera Buffa

- Comic opera now equally important as serious opera
- Flexible Classical style well suited to comedy
- Italian opera buffa popular and influential throughout Europe

Seria vs. Buffa

Opera seria
- Ancient history or mythology
- Ancient heroes and nobility
- Recitatives and arias
- Three or four acts
- Slow, drawn-out pacing

Opera buffa
- Contemporary subjects
- Ordinary, lower-class folk
- Added ensembles
- Two or three acts
- Quicker, livelier, more lifelike

Seria vs. Buffa

At its best
- Gripping, profound drama
- Powerful emotional expression
- Timelessness of myth

At its worst
- Far-fetched plots
- Exaggerated emotion
- No continuity

At its best
- Fast-paced, nonstop entertainment
- Pointed social commentary
- Realism

At its worst
- Trivial plots and music
- Unbelievable situations

The Ensemble

- A fully musical number for two or more soloists
- Depicts dialogue, action, and emotions simultaneously (unlike static aria)
- Often several contrasting sections
- Provides forward momentum
- More drama possible than in Baroque era

Mozart, *Don Giovanni*

- Perhaps Mozart's greatest opera
- Written for Prague in 1787
- Technically an opera buffa *but*
  - Neither wholly comic nor wholly tragic
  - A "dark comedy"
  - Mixture happens musically, dramatically, and in characters

Don Giovanni Characters

- Serious roles
  - Donna Anna and Don Ottavio, a noble couple
  - The Commandant, Donna Anna's father
- Comic roles
  - Leporello, Don Giovanni's servant
  - Zerlina and Masetto, a peasant couple
- Mixed roles
  - Don Giovanni (Don Juan)
  - Donna Elvira, a noblewoman loved and left by Don Giovanni

Don Giovanni Plot

- Comic elements: Don Giovanni's bawdy escapades
- Serious elements: his compulsions
  - Promises women anything, but leaves when he gets his way (Donna Elvira)
  - Kills the father of a victim (Donna Anna)
  - Attempts to seduce a peasant (Zerlina) as she celebrates her betrothal (to Masetto)
  - Blasphemes God and the dead (Commandant)
  - Defies rules of society, morality, and God

Don Giovanni, Act I, scene iii

- Note aristocrat vs. peasant distinctions
- Chorus of peasants celebrate the betrothal of Zerlina and Masetto
- Don Giovanni decides to seduce Zerlina
- Masetto confronts Don Giovanni

"Ho capito"

- Short repeated phrases and frequent strong cadences
- Helps define Masetto's character
- Not a static aria—the singer interacts

"Alfin siam liberati"

- Secco recitative with continuo only
- Dialogue between Don Giovanni and Zerlina
- Don Giovanni begins his seduction
  – Zerlina worries about betraying Masetto
  – Giovanni tells her she was not meant to be a peasant and flatters her beauty
  – She fears his intentions
  – He promises to marry her immediately
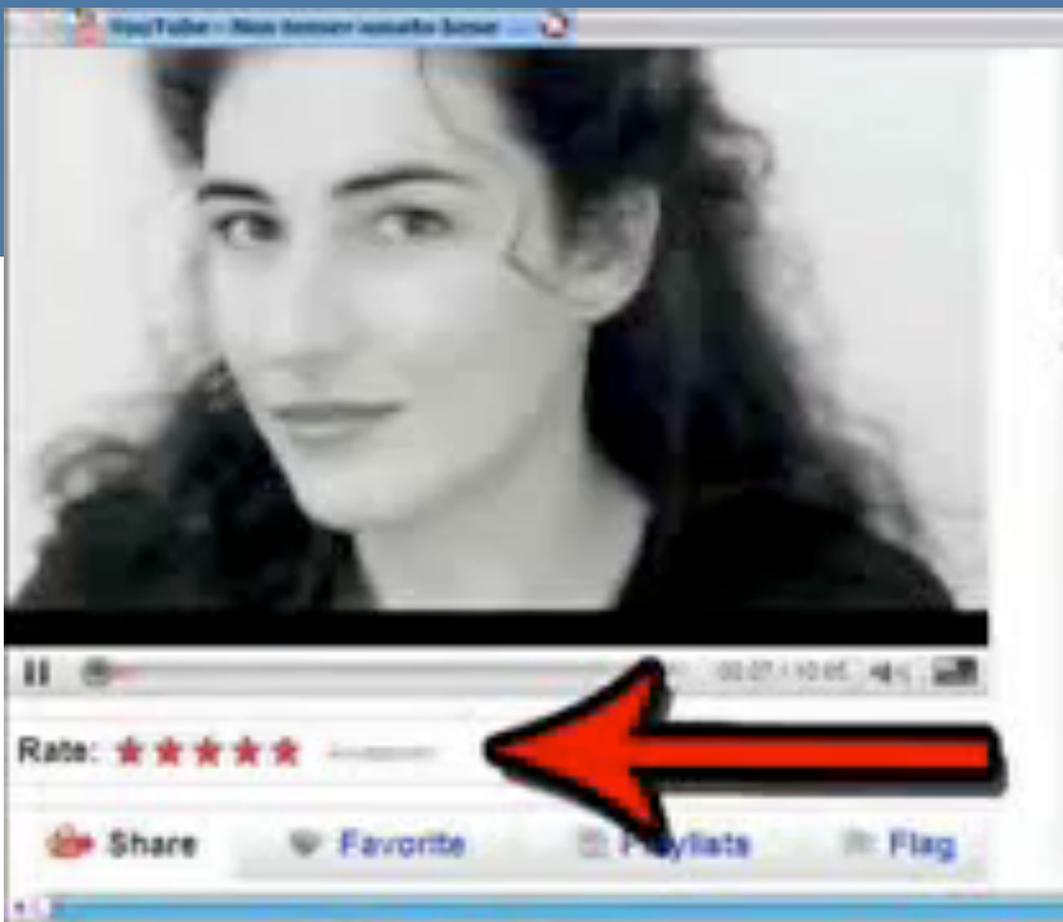
"Là ci darem la mano"

- Ensemble for Don Giovanni and Zerlina
- One of Mozart's best-known tunes
  - Simple and direct, apt for wooing a peasant

Andante

Là ci darem la mano, Là mi di-rai di si; Ve-di, non è lon-ta-no, Par-tiam, ben mio, da qui.

- Dialogue alternates more and more rapidly
  - Final unison depicts their agreement

Don't Forget to rate!

Zingspiel- Opera