

Chapter 4

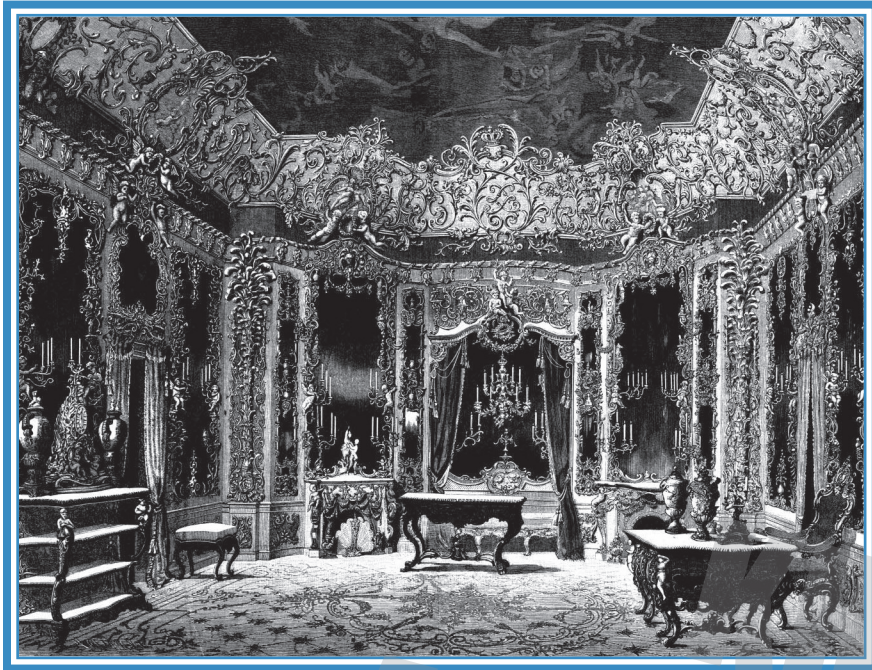
The Baroque Era

“The aim and final end of all music should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul.”

J. S. Bach

It has been said that for every successful revolution there must be an eventual evolution that incorporates elements of both the old and new styles.¹ That statement certainly applies to much of the music written during the Baroque era. Around 1600, most composers adopted a new system of harmonic organization, built on major and minor scale patterns to the exclusion of the rest of the older “church” modes. Of course, as you saw in Chapter 3, this was something of a gradual process, as composers for the past 100 years had been hinting more and more at tonic/dominant axis harmony. Beyond harmony issues, many composers, particularly the Italians, began to alter the basic texture of music, and these texture and harmony changes together led to the development of a new style of accompaniment called *basso continuo*. For the first time in music, there was a wide divergence in compositional styles. Due to religious conflicts (Catholics vs. Protestants) that eventually led to the Thirty Years War, composers in northern and central Europe continued to write in the older polyphonic styles of the Renaissance. In particular, there was an expanded focus on polyphonic vocal music for the Protestant church, but most composers did embrace the new harmonic ideas of the Baroque era. Meanwhile, the Italians were busy developing a thinly textured style called *monody* (one song) that made use of one clear melodic idea supported by a simple accompaniment called *basso continuo* (continuous bass). The older, polyphonic styles were referred to as *prima pratica* or *stile antico*, while the more modern styles were called *seconda pratica* or *stile moderno*. As music during the Baroque era continued to evolve, transitional composers such as Claudio Monteverdi and later masters including J. S. Bach and George Frideric Handel moved freely between these two styles.

Purely instrumental music became much more important during the Baroque era. Instrumental techniques (as well as the instruments themselves) were improving



Example of Baroque architecture. The intricate scrollwork found in Baroque architecture would eventually be expressed musically in the complex counterpoint of composers such as J. S. Bach. This image is actually from Linderhof Castle in Bavaria and is a nineteenth-century copy of the Baroque style. Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

quickly, and composers wrote a great deal of music for use in both court performances and church services. Amateur music making was on the rise, and playing instrumental music was viewed as an enjoyable pastime in many wealthy and aristocratic households. In addition to music designed purely for performance, composers such as J. S. Bach created a wealth of music to be used for instruction as well. Vocal music also continued to be very popular, playing a major role in all church services and many secular court functions. For court entertainment (and later for public consumption), a new style of drama set to music called opera became the popular style of entertainment in many of the great European palaces.

For the Catholic church, composers continued to write new settings of the five sections of the mass Ordinary, while J. S. Bach composed hundreds of cantatas for use in the Protestant church. Meanwhile, Handel began writing large oratorios for vocal soloists, chorus, and orchestra, which were somewhat similar to his operas but based on sacred topics and performed without most of the dramatic trappings found in a typical Baroque opera.

Giulio Caccini (ca. 1545–1618)

Caccini was a member of the *Florentine Camerata*, which was an informal group of writers, artists, philosophers, and musicians that met in the home of Count Giovanni de' Bardi. Other members of this group included humanist Girolamo Mei, Vincenzo Galilei (Galileo's father), and Jacopo Peri. Mei in particular had done research into how the ancient Greeks might have used music in their dramas. In an attempt to revive this style of setting drama to music, the members of the Camerata basically created the first operas. Oddly enough, it turns out that history has proven the Camerata incorrect regarding their theories about the Greeks, but the happy mistake has become one of the most dominant formats for music performance from then until now. Caccini is normally credited with the creation of **monody**, which is best defined as a single melody over a simple accompaniment. Without the dense polyphonic melodies common in the Renaissance, the text of a song could now be clearly understood, thus making it possible to set drama to music. The accompaniment developed for this new style is usually referred to as *basso continuo*. Originally, the *continuo* would have been one instrument such as a harpsichord or a lute, but it quickly evolved into a two-instrument ensemble that most frequently featured a harpsichord and some sort of bass instrument. For many sacred works, the continuo instrument would be the pipe organ, on which a performer had the ability to play chords with their hands on the main keyboards while their feet played the bass line on a pedal keyboard. With the adoption of the major/minor tonal system, a style of musical shorthand quickly developed called **figured bass**. In this system, the bass

monody

basso continuo

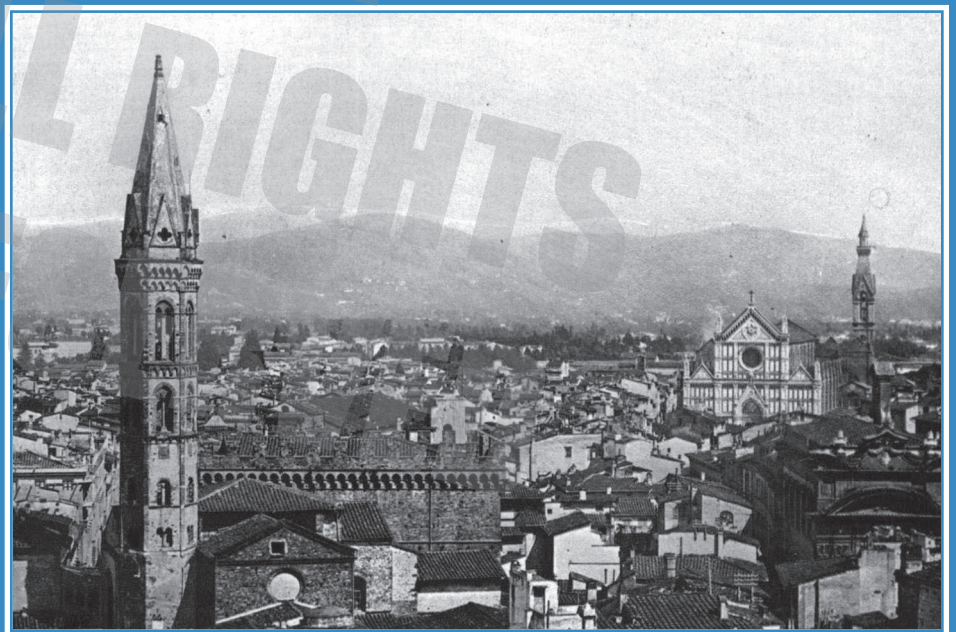
figured bass

line would be written out along with numbers and musical symbols to indicate what notes the harpsichord was to play above the bass. The actual accompaniment would be improvised, or *realized*, during the performance according to the standard musical styles of the day. Caccini also takes credit for developing a style of singing referred to as *stile rappresentativo*, which, particularly in opera, turned into **recitative**, a singing pattern closer to speech that allowed the drama to unfold at a much faster pace. In 1601, Caccini published a collection of songs titled *La Nuove musiche* (The New Music). The following article is an excerpt from the introduction Caccini wrote for the collection.

recitative

The Birth of New Music by Caccini

In the days when the most excellent Camerata of the Very Illustrious Mr. Giovanni Bardi, Count of Vernio, was thriving in Florence, where not only much of the nobility but also the city's first musicians, intellectuals, poets, and philosophers met together, I can state, having frequented it myself, that I learned more from their savant speeches than I had in over thirty years' study of counterpoint. For those most knowledgeable gentlemen were always urging me, and with the clearest arguments persuading me, not to prize the sort of music which, by not letting the words be properly understood, spoiled both the sense and the verse, now lengthening, now shortening syllables to suit the counterpoint (that mangler of poetry), but rather to adhere to the manner so much praised by Plato and other philosophers, according to whom music consists of speech, rhythm, and, last, sound—not the contrary. They further urged me to aspire that it might penetrate the minds of others, working those wonders so admired by the ancient writers, which counterpoint, in modern compositions, rendered impossible: and especially so when singers sang alone to a stringed instrument, and the words could not be understood for the profusion of embellishments on both short and long syllables, and in any sort of music whatever, provided by this means the multitude exalted them and cried them up for worthy songsters. Having, I say, observed that such music and musicians afforded no other pleasure than that which the harmony might impart to the sole sense of hearing (the intellect being unaffected so long as the words were incomprehensible), it occurred to me to introduce a



View of Florence from the home of Count Bardi.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

sort of music in which one might, so to say, speak musically, making use (as I have said elsewhere) of a certain noble negligence in the singing, passing occasionally through a dissonance, the bass staying firm, and the middle parts reduced to instrumental harmony that expressed some affection, for otherwise they are useless. Wherefore, having made a beginning with songs for one voice alone, since it seemed to me they had more power to delight and move than songs for several voices together, I composed in those days certain madrigals and, in particular, an aria in the very style which was to serve me later for the stories put on stage with singing in Florence (i.e., the first operas). These madrigals and this aria, having been heard by the Camerata with loving applause and with exhortations to me that I pursue my goal by that path, prompted me to go to Rome so that they might be sampled there too. There I performed the madrigals and aria at Mr. Nero Neri's house in the presence of many gentlemen who frequented it, and all can testify how much they urged me to continue my undertaking, saying that they had never before heard music sung by a single voice to a mere stringed instrument that had as much power to move the soul's affections as did those madrigals, both because of their novel style and because, it being then the fashion to sing many-voiced madrigals with a single voice, it seemed to them that a soprano thus singled out from the other parts was wholly devoid of any affection, the parts having been designed to act upon each other reciprocally. Returning to Florence, and seeing that in those days, too, musicians were accustomed to certain little songs (set for the most part to vile words) which I felt were improper and not relished by connoisseurs, it occurred to me, in order occasionally to lift men's drooping spirits, to compose some little songs by way of airs, to be used with consorts of strings; and having imparted this thought to many gentlemen of the city, I was obligingly favored by them with many rhymes in a variety of meters, all of which I set to different airs from time to time, and they have proved welcome enough to all of Italy, their style having now been found serviceable by anyone wishing to compose for a single voice, particularly here in Florence.

It should be observed that passages (of embellishment) were not invented because they were necessary to the right way of singing, but rather, I think, for a certain titillation they afford the ears of those who do not know what it is to sing with affection; for were this understood, then passages would no doubt be abhorred, since nothing can be more contrary to producing a good effect.

From *Le Origini del melodramma: testimonianze dei contemporanei*, Turin: Fratelli Bocca, 1903.
translated by P.W.

Ave Maria

The following musical selection is an interesting example of hoaxes in the world of music and the power of the printed word on CD liner notes, program notes, and the Internet. The following *Ave Maria* was most likely first attributed to Baroque composer Giulio Caccini sometime in the late 1980s or early 1990s. It was actually written in the early 1970s by Russian composer Vladimir Vavilov, who was known for creating new works in an older style and attributing them to an

earlier composer or simply to “Anonymous.” Vavilov labeled this *Ave Maria* composition as being written by “Anonymous,” but at some point another performer credited Caccini with the composition. The work was recorded several times and became quite popular in the world of classical music. Within a few years, it had been recorded by the likes of Inessa Galante, Lesley Garrett, Charlotte Church, Andrea Bocelli, and cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, among many others. After the first published attribution to Caccini, everyone else simply took the composition as an authentic early Baroque masterpiece.²

As the author of this text, I will admit that I was also taken in by the deception when I used it in the first edition of this book. In this new edition of the text, I have elected to keep this example in the book and on the accompanying recordings for two simple reasons—almost everyone really loves this piece, and it is still a solid example of early Baroque monody. It was just written a few hundred years too late! This is a fairly straightforward version of what Caccini and the other composers of the Florentine Camerata intended, and it offers a good example of the clarity of text with monody as compared to the polyphonic styles of the Renaissance. For a quick comparison of styles, listen back and forth a few times between Josquin’s motet version of *Ave Maria* found in Chapter 3 and this example. Baroque composers often wrote simple melodic lines, all the while expecting performers to add their own embellishments or, less commonly, adding their own in the manuscript (as Caccini liked to do). Notice how a few simple groups of extra notes added later in the following performance enhance the composer’s original melody.

Listening Guide

Ave Maria

Vladimar Vavilov (1925-1973)

Attributed to Anonymous and Giulio Caccini (ca. 1545-1618)

Format: Aria

Performance: Elżbieta Towarnicka, Soprano; Marek Stefański, organ

Recording: *Ave Maria: w Bazylice Mariackiej w Krakowie* (DUX 0196)

Performance Notes: Recorded June 2000 at St. Mary’s Basilica in Cracow, Poland.

- :00 Rather than set the entire *Ave Maria* text, the composer simply focuses on the first two words. The direct translation of “*Ave Maria*” is “Hail, Mary.” The melody is in two parts (8 bars each), and the entire structure is performed twice through. In between the two full melodic statements there is a 4-bar instrumental interlude.
- 1:17 Instrumental interlude.
- 1:36 Second melodic statement. Text remains the same.

Focus on Form

Opera

In the movie *Pretty Woman*, when Richard Gere takes Julia Roberts out for their big night on the town, it is a Romantic period opera by Verdi, *La traviata*, they attend. She asks, “You said this is in Italian, so how am I gonna know what they’re saying?” He replies, “You’ll know, believe me, you’ll understand—the music is very powerful. Peoples’ reactions to opera the first time they see it, it’s very dramatic . . . they either love it or they hate it. If they love it, they will always love it. If they don’t, then they may learn to appreciate it, but it will never become part of their soul.”³ Opera truly is a unique art form, combining music with drama in a way never seen before the dawn of the Baroque era in music.

As you read previously, the first real operas were created by the Florentine Camerata in an attempt to recreate ancient Greek dramas set to music. Along the way, the Camerata developed a musical texture called *monody*, which abandoned the polyphonic styles of the Renaissance in favor of a clear, melodic vocal line with a simple accompaniment. The **aria** became the popular solo vocal style, of which there are several different types including *da capo* (ABA) and *strophic* (same melody over and over). Composers wrote some of their most dramatic music in these solo aria sections, and a great singer could stop the show cold. As operatic styles progressed, popular singers would sometimes go so far as to substitute one of their favorite arias from another opera because they could sing it more dramatically. The fact that the audience rarely noticed speaks to the thinness of some of these early opera plots. Composers also developed a technique called **recitative**, which is close to normal patterns of speech, thus allowing the singers to deliver the dramatic text quickly in order to keep the story moving along. Eventually, two types of recitative were created: *secco* (dry), with a very basic accompaniment usually played on the harpsichord, and *accompagnato* (accompanied), in which the singer still had a lot of words but the composer wrote out a more elaborate accompaniment for the orchestra.

The Italians created both dramatic and comic opera styles. Later, the French borrowed some operatic concepts from the Italians but developed their own unique styles of opera, which often incorporated ballet scenes along with all of the other spectacles of opera. Most German composers copied both the style and language of the Italians, though eventually there were some operas with both spoken dialogue and music sung in German called *Singspiele* (song plays). Plots for these early operas were based on well-known figures from history or on stories drawn from mythology. Storylines could be quite complex (though they didn’t always make a lot of sense), and most of the characters were usually very two-dimensional, that is, really good or really bad. Stage designs frequently included huge mechanical devices to add more “spectacle” to the proceedings.

Of particular interest was the growth in popularity, especially in Italy, of the use of *castrato* singers as the heroic male operatic leads. Young boys who displayed a gift for music and (hopefully) had a beautiful soprano or alto voice would be castrated before they reached puberty and their voices changed. This process led to the development of a high-pitched voice in the normal range of a female singer, coupled with the power and endurance of an adult male. The most famous castrato singers became international celebrities and, oddly enough, the occasional objects of

aria

recitative

female sexual desire. The practice was always controversial, as British historian Charles Burney discovered when he visited Italy during the Baroque era.

I enquired throughout Italy at what places boys were chiefly qualified for singing by castration, but could get no certain intelligence. I was told at Milan that it was at Venice; at Venice, that it was at Bologna, but at Bologna the fact was denied, and I was referred to Florence; from Florence to Rome, and from Rome I was sent to Naples. The operation most certainly is against (the) law in all these places, as well as against nature; and all the Italians are so much ashamed of it, that in every province they transfer it to some other.⁴

The bottom line is, someone was doing it. Great castrato singers were available, and composers wrote a wealth of opera roles for them throughout the Baroque era. Today these roles are performed by women or by male counter-tenors who have trained their naturally high voices to sing in falsetto, meaning they are simply forcing their voices into a woman's normal vocal range.

With the exception of the castrato singers, most of the conventions developed for opera during the Baroque era continue to be used in one form or another even today. As you will learn in subsequent chapters of this book, opera undergoes numerous changes and alterations during the next four centuries. Nonetheless, the basic concept of drama set to music will continue to be around for many years to come.



DIG DEEPER

MOVIE

Farinelli

WEBSITES

www.metoperafamily.org;
<http://opera.stanford.edu>

BOOKS

Who's Afraid of Opera
by Michael Walsh;
Opera For Dummies by
David Pogue

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Monteverdi's compositions bridge the Renaissance and Baroque periods in music. His early works are polyphonic and are built on modal harmonic patterns, whereas his later compositions are based on monody, with *basso continuo* accompaniments using major/minor harmonic patterns. Today he is best remembered for his nine books of madrigals and his works for the operatic stage. His first five books of madrigals are in the Renaissance style of unaccompanied vocal polyphony (usually five voices), but a few songs in book five begin making use of *basso continuo* accompaniment. From book six forward Monteverdi makes more use of monody, composing mostly solos and duets with clear melodies and simple accompaniments. Monteverdi composed a number of ballets and operas though many of the scores to these works are now lost. His two most famous operas still in existence are *L'Orfeo* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (The Coronation of Poppea). Building on the traditions of the Florentine Camerata, Monteverdi increased the size of the orchestra and added some polyphony back to his music. The text is still quite clear, but for modern ears, the music seems to hold more interest. In modernized versions, both of these operas are still performed from time to time. In addition, several modern composers have created performing versions of another Monteverdi opera titled *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (Ulysses's Return to his Native Land). *Ulysses* is somewhat interesting in that Monteverdi does away with some of the already established norms of aria and recitative in favor of a more continuous drama.

Si dolce è 'l tormento (So Sweet the Torment)

strophic

This aria example demonstrates Monteverdi's adaptation to the principles of monody at the beginning of the Baroque era. This particular solo aria comes from a collection of solos and duets Monteverdi published in 1632 titled *Scherzi musicali*. This aria is composed in a format referred to as **strophic**, meaning that the same melody keeps repeating over and over. There are four verses, all of which use exactly the same melody, each with new text.

Listening Guide

Si dolce è 'l tormento (So Sweet the Torment)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Format: Strophic Aria

Performance: Ilaria Geroldi, Soprano

Recording: *Monteverdi: motetti e madrigali a 2 soprani* (Christophorus 77189)

Performance Notes: Recorded June 10-12, 1993 in Cremona, Italy.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| :00 | Verse One Si dolce è 'l tormento che in seno mi sta ch'io vivo contento per cruda beltà. Nel ciel di bellezza s'accreschi fiera et manchi pietà, che sempre quel scoglio all'onda d'orgoglio mia fede sarà. | So sweet the torment in my breast, that I am joyful despite my cruel lovely one. In the heaven of beauty pride may wax and pity be lacking; this cliff - for ever lashed by breakers of pride - shall remain my assurance. |
| :29 | Verse Two La speme fallace rivolgami il piè, diletto nè pace non scendano a me. E l'empia ch'adoro mi nieghi ristoro di buona mercè. Tra doglia infinita tra speme tradita vivrà la mia fè. | Vain hope has turned her back on me, so neither joy nor peace may enter me. And she, perfidious one whom I love, in recompense denies me all comfort; twixt constant pangs of hope betrayed, persists my faith. |
| :57 | Verse Three (Note: the "bump" in the sound at this point is actually a bad edit on the original source recording.) Per foco e per gelo riposo non ho, nel porto del cielo riposo haverò. Se colpo mortale con rigido strale il cor m'impiegò cangiando mia sorte, col dardo di morte il cor sanerò. | Nor in fire nor in ice can rest I find, in the haven of heaven I shall at last find peace. And though the fatal thrust with unyielding arrow may pierce my heart and change my fate, I will heal my heart with the love-dart of death. |
| 1:26 | Verse Four Se fiamma d'amore già mai non senti quel rigido core ch'il cor mi rapì. Se nega pietate la cruda beltate che l'alma invaghì, ben fia che dolente pentita e languente sospirmi un dì. | That hard heart has never felt the flame of love which robbed me of mine. If pity's withheld by my hard-hearted beauty, who entrances my soul, it shall serve me right when, suffering, and with remorse and waning strength I do some day perish. |

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Henry Purcell is frequently referred to as the last great English composer until the twentieth century, and his opera *Dido and Aeneas* is considered the first great opera written in the English language. Purcell's father was one of the King's musicians, and young Henry quickly entered the family business. By the age of 18 he was tuning the organ at Westminster Abbey, and a few years later he replaced John Blow (yes, that was really his name) as organist at Westminster. Purcell wrote instrumental music for the King's Violins (a small string orchestra), keyboard music for both harpsichord and organ, and sacred music for the church. Among his other compositional gifts, Purcell was a master at writing music over a ground bass, which is a simple repeated pattern over which the rest of the work is created. The aria *When I am Laid in Earth* found in the following listening guide is a very famous example of a song composed upon a ground bass.

Dido and Aeneas

Purcell based his opera on a portion of the old Roman epic tale *Aeneid* by Virgil. Your listening selection comes from late in the opera where the Carthaginian Queen, Dido, must release her true love, Aeneas, so that he may travel to Italy. The gods have decreed that Aeneas is to be the founder of Rome. She would rather die than live without him, and in this aria she prepares to meet her fate. The recitative here is pretty straightforward, with the accompaniment growing more active throughout. As mentioned above, this aria is composed above a ground bass. Count the first ten notes you hear at the start of the aria. This is the ground bass pattern. Notice also that it descends in a chromatic pattern, which was often used as a symbol of grief in music of the Baroque period. You will hear this pattern ten more times as the aria progresses.



Baroque era tapestry depicting Dido and Aeneas.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

Listening Guide

Dido and Aeneas

Act III—*Thy Hand, Belinda/When I am Laid in Earth*

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Format: Recitative, followed by an aria over ground bass

Performance: Le Concert Spirituel, Laura Pudwell, mezzo-soprano

Recording: *Purcell: Dido & Aeneas* (Glossa 921601)

Performance Notes: Recorded May 2000 in Paris, France. Le Concert Spirituel is an authentic performance practice group based in France. They perform on original or reproduction seventeenth- and eighteenth-century instruments tuned to the lower pitch used during the Baroque period. While some modern singers find low-pitched recordings like this one a bit unnerving, they offer our ears a very different view of how this music should be sung. Because the voice parts are lower in a given singer's range, the parts can sound more “earthy” and direct.

Accompanied Recitative

- :00 Thy hand, Belinda, darkness shades me,
On thy bosom let me rest.
More I would, but death invades me.
Death is now a welcome guest.

Aria

- :37 Ground bass functions as introduction to the aria. Ten notes total, with the voice entering simultaneously over note number ten of the first ground bass statement.
- :49 When I am laid in earth, may my wrongs create
No trouble in thy breast,
Remember me, but ah! forget my fate.
- 2:58 Coda. Orchestra only.

Focus on Form

Instrumental Music

Original compositions for instrumental forces became very popular during the Baroque period. Unlike the Renaissance, a time when instrumental music was usually something of an afterthought, instrumental music in the Baroque period became a very popular form of entertainment in homes, concert halls, and even in many churches. Again, unlike the Renaissance, Baroque composers usually specified which instruments were to be played, though in some instances instrumental forces did remain somewhat interchangeable. For example, most keyboard works could be played on harpsichord, clavi-chord (a much smaller instrument), or pipe organ. With instrumental forces, it was very popular to compose for one or two violins with continuo accompaniment; however, again, flutes or oboes could sometimes be substituted for the violins. Early versions of the cello, string bass, and bassoon could substitute for one another in both solo works and works where their job was to provide the bass line in a continuo ensemble.

For keyboard instruments, there were a number of popular single-movement formats including sonata (sound piece), toccata (touch piece), prelude, fugue, *ricercar*, and fantasia. To make things more confusing, the term *sonata* could also indicate a multi-section or multi-movement work for solo keyboard or instrumental ensemble. One of the most popular instrumental formats during the Baroque era was the **Trio Sonata**, which generally consisted of two violins with continuo accompaniment. Two important terms to be familiar with are ***Sonata da Chiesa*** (church sonata) and ***Sonata da Camera*** (chamber sonata). Whether they use these titles or not, most multi-movement instrumental works composed in the Baroque era adhere to one of these two formats. Most of the “church” sonatas featured alternating slow and fast movements, several of which usually had some contrapuntal writing. “Chamber” sonatas most commonly had some sort of generic introductory movement followed by a series of dance movements. Be clear on the fact that while rhythms and formal structures were “borrowed” from older styles of dance music, this was music for listening, not for dancing. A few common dance movement styles included *allemande*, *courante*, *sarabande*, *gigue*, *minuet*, *gavotte*, *bourrée* and *passepied*.

Two other popular instrumental formats during the Baroque era were the solo concerto and the concerto grosso. The **solo concerto** was usually a three-movement work (fast-slow-fast) for one solo instrument, such as violin, flute, or oboe, with an orchestral accompaniment. By modern standards, Baroque orchestras were quite small, and today are usually referred to as chamber orchestras. The **concerto grosso** was similar, but it pitted a small group of instruments (the *concertino*) against the full orchestra (the *tutti* or *ripieno*). Generally, the small group of soloists also played along during the tutti orchestral sections. With just a few exceptions, the concerto grosso fell out of favor after the Baroque era.

Trio Sonata

Sonata da Chiesa

Sonata da Camera

solo concerto

concerto grosso

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)
Allessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725)
Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

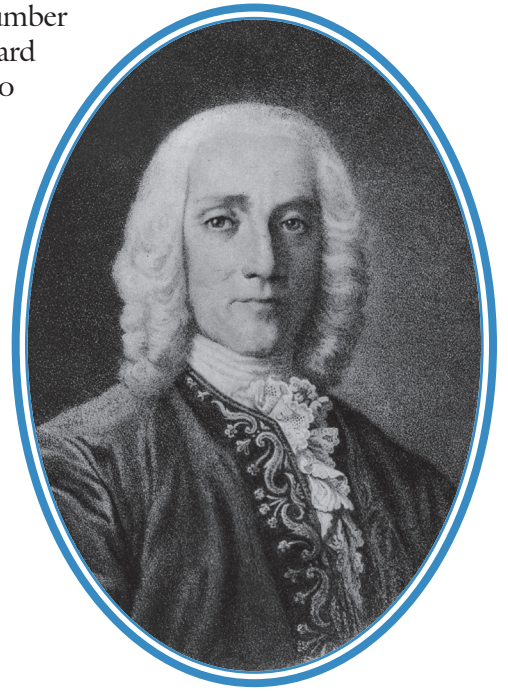
All totaled, these three prolific Italian composers turned out thousands of compositions for both instrumental and vocal forces. Arcangelo Corelli's strengths were in performing and composing for the violin. In fact, he is frequently referred to as the father of modern violin technique. Among other innovations, he developed new techniques for playing double stops (more than one note at once) and other bowing techniques designed for improved virtuosity. His most famous works include several sets of trio sonatas, written for two violins and continuo accompaniment, and a set of 12 *Concerti grossi* for two violins and cello with chamber orchestra. Allessandro Scarlatti divided his compositional life between Naples and Rome, moving back and forth between the two cities several times during his career. He was an extremely prolific vocal composer, writing well over 100 operas, 20 oratorios, a large number of masses and motets, and at least 600 solo vocal works with continuo he called cantatas. Of particular note in his operas was his use of the **Italian Overture**, used to introduce his productions. These overtures followed a three-section pattern of fast-slow-fast, which laid the groundwork for the development of the multi-movement sonata cycle popular in almost all instrumental forms of the Classical era.

Italian Overture



Arcangelo Corelli.
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Alessandro also composed for purely instrumental forces, including a number of chamber concertos and a wide array of keyboard works. As a keyboard composer, however, he can't hold a candle to his son, Domenico, who wrote over 550 single-movement sonatas for harpsichord. Many of these works were designed as teaching pieces, and although Domenico labeled them *Essercizi* (*Exercises*), don't be fooled by the title: these works are very appropriate for the concert stage. Several historians later tried to catalog Domenico's keyboard works, and some of the individual movements were grouped into pairs. It is not unusual in concert today to hear a solo pianist play an even larger group of these single-movement pieces as a set. These works broke new ground in keyboard performance techniques with more complex embellishments, rapid repetitions of notes, and frequent crossing of the right and left hand (which doesn't sound all that hard but really is). Taken together, these three composers will offer even the casual listener a solid introduction to Italian Baroque musical styles.



Domenico Scarlatti.
Source: © 2009
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Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687)
François Couperin (1668-1733)
Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre
(ca. 1666-1729)

One of France's most famous Baroque composers, Jean-Baptiste Lully, was actually Italian (his real name was Giovanni Battista Lulli), but he changed his name to better suit French tastes. Perhaps most famously, Lully has the unfortunate honor of being the first orchestral conductor to accidentally kill himself with his baton. Back in those days, conductors helped the orchestra keep time by banging a big walking stick (or *bâton* in French) on the floor. One day Lully missed the floor and hit his foot instead. He contracted blood poisoning and died a few days later. Prior to his untimely death, Lully excelled in the composition of music for the stage. He wrote works for the ballet, and he also composed a number of successful operas. His early compositional style was Italian in nature, but his later works embraced the lighter French styles popular during the Baroque period. Lully is credited with establishing a true French operatic style with shorter arias and more crowd scenes that involved processions, dances, or staged battles.



Jean-Baptiste Lully.
Source: © 2009
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French Overture

Both his ballet and opera scores made use of the **French Overture**, which is something of a mirror to the Italian Overture in that the section tempos are slow, fast, slow.



French Suite

François Couperin.
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François Couperin (sometimes referred to as *Le Grand* to distinguish him from other family members who were also composers) was a fan of both the French and Italian styles of composition, and many of his works bring together musical elements of the two. He composed a number of trio sonatas for two violins and continuo, as well as several volumes of works for harpsichord titled *Pièces de Clavecin*. Couperin made use of the **French Suite** format in some of his works, composing an overture for the first movement followed by a number of individual dance movements, which might include styles such as the *allemande*, *courante*, *sarabande*, *gigue*, or several other popular dance rhythms. Remember, however, that these were compositions for listening, not for dancing. They simply

borrowed the rhythm of the dance as a basis for composition.

As with Couperin, Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre is best remembered today for her keyboard compositions (mostly French suites), but she also composed at least one opera, three volumes of cantatas, and a variety of instrumental pieces. In her day, she was widely regarded as one of the finest keyboard players in all of France, and if the difficulty of her compositions is any indication, she did possess amazing technique. Historians today are particularly interested in the fact that she was a woman in what was a totally male-dominated profession, but her works stand the test of time regardless of gender. As with the three Italian composers grouped together in the previous section, the music of these three composers will offer even the casual listener a good view into the world of French Baroque music.

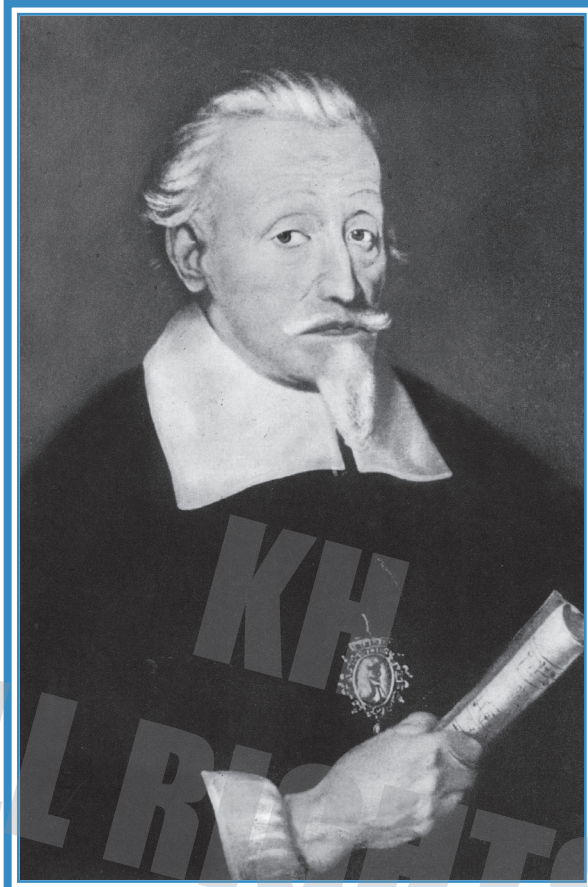
Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

German composer Henrich Schütz is best remembered today for his polyphonic vocal music. He studied with Giovanni Gabrieli, embracing the polyphonic styles of the old master but moving forward to the modern system of major/minor tonality in most of his compositions. It has been suggested that Schütz may have written the first German opera, *Dafne*, but no such score currently exists. Most of Schütz's music available today displays his gifts as a composer of sacred, multi-voiced, and often multi-choir compositions. His numerous works include pieces for a cappella choir, as well as compositions for both vocal and instrumental forces. Some of his most important compositions come from a series of pieces

he labeled *Symphoniae sacrae* (Sacred Symphonies). The earliest of these compositions were for trio sonata and choir, and many of his later works added more instruments to the accompaniment. Finally, Schütz also created two well-known oratorios, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* and a work originally titled *Die Historia von der freuden und gnadenreichen Geburth Gottes und Marien Sohnes, Jesu Christi* (Story of the Birth of God's and Mary's Son, Jesus Christ) but universally known as the *Christmas Oratorio*.

During his lifetime, Georg Phillipp Telemann was considerably more famous than J. S. Bach both in Germany and throughout much of Europe. He was also more prolific (though one can argue that he kept writing the same basic composition over and over and over), composing more than 4,000 works that we know about. Like Bach, Telemann's music represents the culmination of the late Baroque style, but some of Telemann's compositions actually go even farther, embracing elements of the pre-Classical styles that will lead us to the music of Haydn and Mozart. During his long career as a musician, composer, and teacher, he worked in Leipzig, Sorau (Poland), Eisenach, Frankfurt, and Hamburg. Telemann's compositional output contains important works in almost every genre, including more than 1,100 sacred cantatas, 56 secular cantatas (and bits and pieces of many more), seven complete operas, oratorios, passions, keyboard music, and a wealth of instru-



Heinrich Schütz.
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Georg Phillipp
Telemann.
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mental music including over 600 Italian Overtures, solo concertos, *concerti grossi*, suites, trio sonatas, and a series of lighter works he called *Tafelmusik* (Table Music).

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

J. S. Bach lived and worked during the second half of the Baroque era, and today he is generally considered to have been the period's greatest composer. During his day, however, Bach was best known for his ability to improvise on keyboard instruments, particularly the pipe organ. His compositions were frequently performed but

sparsely published during the Baroque era, and his music was not widely known outside the circle of his current employment. At the time, both Handel and Telemann were considerably more famous. Bach came from a long line of musicians, and several of his sons were famous composers well into the Classical period. J. S. Bach composed extensively in every genre of music, both sacred and secular, with the exceptions of ballet and opera. He was a master of polyphonic composition, and he



Commemorative postage stamp featuring Johann Sebastian Bach.

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was also able to appreciate more modern styles of composition. Arias, recitatives, and a number of other contemporary techniques (at least by Baroque standards) find their way into his music on a regular basis.

Here is a brief overview of Bach's career. His first real job was as a violinist at the court of Duke Johann Ernst in Weimar, beginning in 1703. He quickly left that position, however, to become organist at the *Neukirche* (New Church) in Arnstadt. While there he composed a number of his most famous works for that instrument. After a few years on the job, Bach requested some time off to travel to Lübeck so he could hear organist (and composer) Dietrich Buxtehude perform. He was given a four-week leave of absence, but to the consternation of his employers Bach stayed away over four months. The truth of the matter was that Bach was hoping to replace the aging Buxtehude in Lübeck, but when he found out that a marriage to one of Buxtehude's unattractive, middle-aged daughters went with the gig, he thought better of it. (Several other musicians, including Handel, turned the job down for the very same reason.) Bach returned to Arnstadt for a brief time until he won the post of organist at Mühlhausen, where he would stay for just over one year. Next he returned to Weimar, where he became court organist for Duke



Wilhelm. In 1714, he was also named concertmaster, taking over the duties of managing and composing new music for the court orchestra. At this time, he developed a lifelong friendship with Telemann, who was working in nearby Eisenach. In 1717, Bach moved on to the position of *Kapellmeister* at the court of Prince Leopold in Cöthen. In both Weimar and Cöthen, Bach composed a great deal of secular instrumental music, including the suites for cello and violin as well as the famous *Brandenburg Concertos*. In 1722, Bach applied for a job opening in the City of Leipzig. The job included work in several churches, preparing performances and providing new compositions, as well as some teaching duties. City officials offered the job first to Telemann and next to a man named Graupner. Bach was their third choice, as the committee considered his talents mediocre at best. Bach would stay in Leipzig for the rest of his life, a place where he would compose or complete many of his most famous masterpieces. The following document features an English translation of Bach's job description in Leipzig.



Bach's Duties at Leipzig

Their worships, the Council of this town of Leipzig, having accepted me to be Cantor of the School of St. Thomas, they have required of me an agreement as to certain points, namely:

1. That I should set a bright and good example to the boys by a sober and secluded life, attend school, diligently and faithfully instruct the boys.
2. And bring the music in the two chief churches of this town into good repute to the best of my ability.
3. Show all respect and obedience to their worships the Council, and defend and promote their honor and reputation to the utmost, and in all places; also, if a member of the Council requires the boys for a musical performance, unhesitatingly to obey, and besides this, never allow them to travel into the country for funerals or weddings without the foreknowledge and consent of the burgomaster in office, and the governors of the school.
4. Give due obedience to the inspectors and governors of the school in all they command in the name of the Worshipful Council.
5. Admit no boys into the school who have not already the elements of music or who have no aptitude for being instructed therein, nor without the knowledge and leave of the inspectors and governors.
6. To the end that the churches may not be at unnecessary expense I should diligently instruct the boys not merely in vocal but in instrumental music.
7. To the end that good order may prevail in those churches I should so

J. S. Bach at the piano, surrounded by his family.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

arrange the music that it may not last too long, and also in such wise as that it may not be operatic, but incite the hearers to devotion.

8. Supply good scholars to the New Church.
9. Treat the boys kindly and considerately, or, if they will not obey, punish such in moderation or report them to the authority.
10. Faithfully carry out instruction in the school and whatever else it is my duty to do.
11. And what I am unable to teach myself I am to cause to be taught by some other competent person without cost or help from their worships the Council, or from the school.
12. That I should not quit the town without leave from the burgomaster in office.
13. Should follow the funeral processions with the boys, as is customary, as often as possible.
14. And take no office under the University without the consent of their worships.

And to all this I hereby pledge myself, and faithfully to fulfill all this as is here set down, under pain of losing my place if I act against it, in witness of which I have signed this duplicate bond, and sealed it with my seal.

Johann Sebastian Bach
Given in Leipzig, May 5, 1723

From *Johann Sebastian Bach*, translated by C. Bell and J. A. Fuller-Maitland, III, 1885.



*Marktplatz in Leipzig,
the final home of
J. S. Bach.*

Source: Jupiterimages,
Corp.

able to improvise intricate three- and four-voice fugues from a melody someone in the audience had just given him. The fugues he actually wrote down (and there are many) are even better.

Finding your way in Bach's music is really not that difficult: you just have to listen. The clarity of form and the directness of his melodic writing are immediately accessible by almost everyone. About the only complaint one ever hears about Bach's compositions is that sometimes the polyphony is a bit too complex, leaving some listeners confused about where to focus their attention first. One of Bach's greatest gifts as a composer of polyphonic music lay in the creation of fugues. As a formal structure, the fugue had been around since the early Renaissance, but in the hands of J. S. Bach, the fugue reached its zenith as a compositional tool. In performance, Bach was

Focus on Form

The Fugue

Some of Bach's most famous compositions are fugues. He wrote two books of 24 preludes and fugues (two each in every major and minor key center) titled *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* (The Well-Tempered Clavier), along with a number of fugues both large and small for the organ. He also made use of fugues in many of his sacred cantatas and some of his secular orchestral writing. People usually think of the fugue as a formal structure, but, in truth, the fugue is really more of a texture than a formal structure. Particularly with Bach's fugues, there were some pretty hard and fast rules about how the fugue was supposed to start and end, but inventing complex ways to deliver all the fun material in the middle of the work was left up to the composer. The only real "rule" was that once a voice entered at the beginning of the piece, it rarely stopped being played or sung until the very end of the composition.

To get a basic idea of how a fugue begins, think of a group of people singing a round such as *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* or *Frère Jacques*, and you are on the right track. In a fugue by Bach, that would be called the **exposition**, a place where the main **subject** (or melody) and **countersubject** (a contrasting melody designed to complement the first melody) would be presented in each individual voice of the fugue. Most fugues typically have three, four, or, in some cases, five individual voices, or melodic lines. During the exposition, there is one more term you should be aware of called an *answer*. The **answer** follows the same melodic shape as the subject, but it usually starts on the dominant note (up the interval of a fifth). As each voice enters one after the other, it makes its first statement of the subject or answer, quickly followed by a statement of the countersubject *while* another voice enters with its own statement of the subject or answer, and so on. As the individual voices enter and stack up, they alternate subject, answer, subject, answer until all of the voices are in. Unlike a simple round, however, Bach would keep going, spinning out new material, usually built on little motives and figures from the original subject and countersubject. These sections of the work are called **episodes**. The rest of the fugue would then alternate between these developmental *episodes* and full statements of the original melody starting at various pitch levels, and ultimately culminating in one final statement of the full subject at the original pitch level.

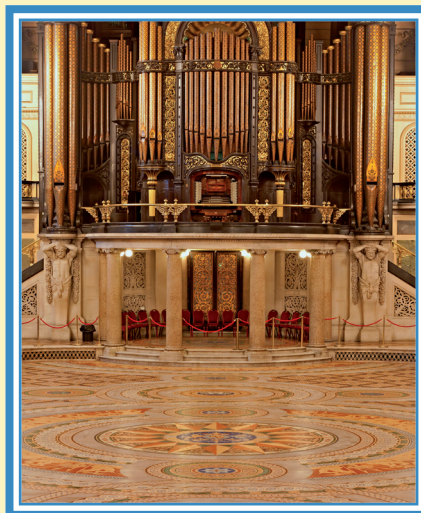
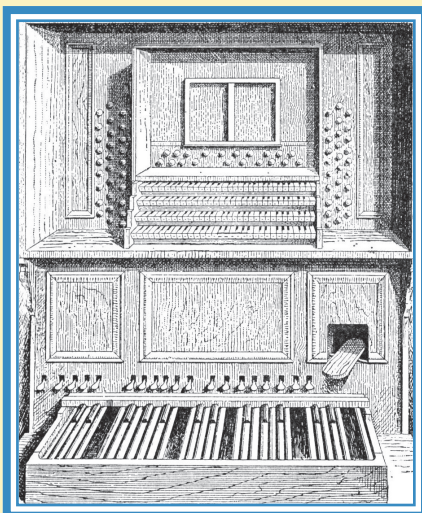
exposition

subject

countersubject

answer

episodes



The illustration on the left side of this page is a typical Baroque pipe organ console, and the image on the right is a full view of a large pipe organ.

Left:

Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.
Right: © Shutterstock.com

Bach's Keyboard Compositions

As a composer of challenging polyphonic keyboard works, Bach had no equal. It is a mistake, however, simply to think of Bach as a technical composer. His works are also full of beautiful melodies of great elegance. A short list of his most famous keyboard compositions includes the *Goldberg Variations*, collections of *Two- and Three-Part Inventions*, and two volumes of preludes and fugues titled *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* (The Well-Tempered Clavier). For organ, Bach composed several collected sets of works, including books of preludes and fugues, chorale preludes, and sonatas. There are also many famous independent works such as the *Tocatta and Fugue in d minor* and the “Little” *Fugue in g minor* (featured below).



Detail of a Baroque pipe organ case in the Grote Kerk (Great Church) in Haarlem, North Holland.

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Pipe organs in the Baroque era came in all sizes. In his day, Bach was best known for his skills as an organist.

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Fugue in g minor, “Little,” BWV 578

Bach’s “little” *Fugue in g minor* is so named because he also composed a much longer organ fugue in the same key. This particular work was written in Bach’s earlier years as an organist, but an actual date of composition is unknown. The main four-bar melody, or subject, of this fugue is frequently referred to as “catchy,” and it is often used as a teaching piece because the melody is so clearly identifiable throughout the composition. This is a four-voice fugue, featuring a standard exposition, followed by alternating episodes and full statements of the subject.

Listening Guide

Fugue in g minor, “Little,” BWV 578

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Format: Four-voice fugue

Performance: Ton Koopman, organ

Recording: *Bach: Organworks IV* (Novalis 150052-2)

Performance Notes: This particular performance was recorded in 1989 on the historic *Trinity* organ at the basilica in Ottobeuren, Germany. The instrument, completed in 1766, was built by Karl-Joseph Riepp, who modestly exclaimed, “I’ll be damned if better ones are found in [all of] Europe.” Over the centuries the instrument fell into disrepair but was restored to its former glory in 1914. Unlike most of our “best guesses” when it comes to authentic performance practice sounds from other instruments, this is pretty much what a late Baroque organ would have sounded like at the hands of a master performer/composer like J. S. Bach.

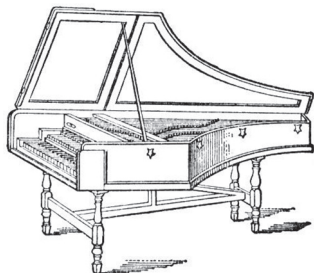
Liner notes from Novalis 150052-2

- :00 First voice enters with subject.
- :16 Answer (statement of the subject at the dominant) in a second, lower voice. First voice continues on with a new, contrasting melody above called a countersubject.
- :37 Third voice enters with subject. Second voice plays the countersubject while the first voice carries on with some free material and periods of rest.
- :52 Fourth voice enters with another statement of the answer played on the pedals (lowest voice). Third voice carries on with a statement of the countersubject while the first and second voices present free, contrapuntal material along with periods of rest in voice two.
- 1:07 As the exposition ends, the first episode begins. In this section, Bach experiments with the thematic material presented above. The rest of the fugue will be alternating sections of episodes like this one and statements of the original theme (the subject) at various pitch levels.
- 1:16 False entry of subject statement in voice three. Main subject presented in the top voice.
- 1:33 Episode.
- 1:41 Main subject presented in a middle voice.
- 1:56 Episode.
- 2:06 Main subject presented in the bottom voice.
- 2:20 Episode.
- 2:35 Main subject presented in the top voice, but this time in a minor key.
- 2:49 Episode.
- 3:14 Final statement of the subject, again presented in the bottom voice and played on the pedals. On the very last chord, Bach slips in a G major chord in place of the expected g minor tonic by simply raising the middle note of the chord by one half step. This is a little trick Bach picked up from the French called a *tierce de Picardie*, or Picardy third.

The Well-Tempered Clavier, Books 1 & 2, BWV 846 – 893

Here is one of Bach's most famous prelude and fugue sets from one of his most famous teaching works. Both keyboard and composition students have been studying this work for over two centuries now. In Bach's original copy of his manuscript he wrote about his intentions for its use as a teaching piece:

*The Well-Tempered Clavier,
or Preludes and Fugues through all the tones and semitones
For the Use and profit of the Musical Youth Desirous of Learning
as well as for the Pastime of those Already Skilled in this Study
drawn up and written by Johann Sebastian Bach,
Capellmeister to His Serene Highness the Prince of
Anhalt-Cöthen, etc. and Director of His Chamber Music.
Anno 1722⁵*



Typical example of a two-manual harpsichord.

Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

Beyond its use as a teaching piece, however, it is simply a beautiful collection of music. The following example is the first prelude and fugue in book one. The prelude is a harmonic study of subtly shifting chords within a steady rhythmic pattern. As with the Fugue in g minor, this fugue demonstrates Bach's ability to weave a simple theme into a dense polyphonic texture. This fugue, however, is more compact, taking only about two minutes to work out.

Listening Guide

The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1, BWV 846 *Prelude and Fugue in C Major*

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Format: Free-form prelude and three-voice fugue

Performance: Masaaki Suzuki, harpsichord

Recording: J. S. Bach: *Das wohltemperierte Klavier, Book 1* (BIS 813/814)

Performance Notes: Recorded May 1996 at the Kobe Shoin Women's University in Japan. Masaaki Suzuki is playing a harpsichord built by Willem Kroesbergen in 1982. The instrument is a modern copy based on an enlarged 2 manual (2 keyboard) Rukers harpsichord.

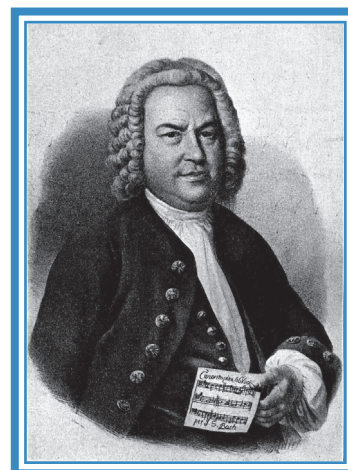
- :00 *Prelude.* This simple 35-measure work is basically a meditative harmonic study. A broken chord is played over a group of eight 16th-notes that are then repeated to form one measure of music. Then the harmony shifts while the rhythmic pattern remains constant from the beginning until measure 33. Measures 33 and 34 are still one chord per bar, but the melodic structure is altered as we come to the end of the composition. The last bar, measure 35, is a simple whole note tonic chord.
- :00 *Fugue.* Voice one enters, followed six seconds later by the answer played in a higher voice. A third voice enters at :13 while the other two voices carry on with a countersubject and other contrapuntal material. The last entrance comes in the lowest voice a few seconds later.
- :25 The first episode seamlessly begins here, and the rest of this densely polyphonic composition is a rapid series of alternating statements of the main theme with brief developmental episodes.
- 1:36 A pedal point is established in the lowest voice while the counterpoint continues to unfold above. If you listen carefully, at this same point in the music Bach offers the last full statement of the subject on tonic in the voice just above the long pedal point note. This can be tough to pick out at first because both ideas start on the very same note.

Bach's Instrumental Compositions

Bach's instrumental works include collections of solo suites for violin and cello, solo sonatas, solo concertos, *concerti grossi*, and a number of orchestral suites in both French and English styles. As with most of his compositions, Bach relies heavily on polyphonic writing techniques, but he is also willing to explore the latest compositional styles, including elements drawn from Italian, French, and even English music. The following two examples will serve as a brief introduction to Bach's instrumental compositions.

Suite No. 1 in G Major for solo cello, BWV 1007

Bach wrote a set of six multi-movement suites for solo cello in Cöthen, probably in 1722. Each suite is made up of a prelude followed by a series of dance movements in various rhythmic styles and tempos. The following listening example is for the first movement of the first suite. Bach also wrote a similar set of works for solo violin. In both cases, he uses double-stops (playing harmony on more than one string at once). He also writes lines that imply polyphonic counterpoint even though there is only a single instrument playing a single line of music. This prelude is an excellent example of Bach's "implied" counterpoint.



Reproduction of a famous oil painting of J. S. Bach by Elias Gottlieb Haussmann.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

Listening Guide

Suite No. 1 in G Major for solo cello, BWV 1007

Prelude

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Format: Free-form prelude from a six-movement suite

Performance: Martin Burkhardt, baroque cello

Recording: *Bach Solosuiten f. Violoncello BWV 1007-1012* (Amati 9903/2)

Performance Notes: Recorded in 1999 at the *Evangelische Kirche*, Honrath, Germany. Cellist Martin Burkhardt writes:

The established way of playing the cello today is based primarily on the ideals of "sound" and "line". This, however, seems to me inappropriate when confronting the **harmonically** and **vertically** orientated conception of these suites. For this reason I use instruments which come close to those of Bach's day when interpreting this music: a **short [fingerboard]** instrument with **gut strings**, tuned at **415 Hertz** (in contrast to the customary 440-442 Hertz), with a **Baroque bow** (with a convex shape instead of the modern concave), . . . I accept a general sound with more excess noise than is usual today in the hope that you, the listener, will find that the advantages to this approach outweigh the disadvantages. The advantages are a longer lingering sound, a richer overtone spectrum and more varied degrees of articulation.

Liner notes from Amati 9903/2

- :00 This simple, through-composed prelude consists almost entirely of a gentle series of running broken chords. Close your eyes and you can feel the harmonic shifts as they pass by. As you focus your mind on all of the different high, low, and middle notes you hear flashing by, notice how little melodies and countermelodies begin to suggest themselves to your ear.

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, BWV 1047

This work is an excellent example of the *concerto grosso* concept of pitting a small group of soloists (the *concertino*) against the forces of the full orchestral group (the *tutti* or *ripieno*). The six works that comprise the *Brandenburg Concertos* are dedicated to the Margrave of Brandenburg, but the chances are very good that Bach did not originally compose them for the nobleman. On a visit to Cöthen, the Margrave met Bach and casually requested that Bach send some new music his way at some point in the future. It would appear that Bach had these concertos lying around, so he collected them into a set (six being a common number for collections of works intended for presentation) and shipped them off. Each of the works called for different instrumental forces, and a few of them required instruments the Margrave did not have at his court. There is some question as to whether the works were ever performed in Brandenburg during Bach's lifetime; however, there is no question that all of the six concertos are frequently performed today. The six *Brandenburg Concertos* are among Bach's most famous compositions.

Listening Guide

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, BWV 1047

Movement 3—*Allegro assai*

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Format: Orchestral suite

Performance: Ars Rediviva Orchestra, Milan Munclinger, conductor

Recording: *Bach: Brandenburg Concertos/Suites for Orchestra* (Supraphon 11 1875-2 013)

Performance Notes: This orchestra is not an authentic performance practice group as they are playing on modern instruments at today's standard pitch, but they do play with proper Baroque musical styles and with an appropriately sized orchestra. In particular, notice how the piccolo trumpet part is performed with great accuracy, which, while still very challenging today, is much more difficult on the types of instruments Bach's players had at their disposal. Given the difficulty of this part, Bach must have had access to a *really* good trumpet player. Recorded in 1965 at the Domovina Studios in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

- :00 Primary melody introduced by solo trumpet accompanied by orchestra and continuo.
- :08 Oboe joins trumpet, creating a duet with simple accompaniment.
- :25 Subsequent statements of melody passed around to various solo instruments with accompaniment. In this section, Bach begins to cut up his melodic ideas into smaller fragments.
- :50 Trumpet returns with an altered statement of the main theme.
- 1:11 Episode featuring flute and violin.
- 1:22 Oboe enters with theme in a minor key. Other instruments follow.
- 1:56 As trumpet enters, piece begins to gravitate back to a major key center.
- 2:14 Duet between oboe and trumpet returns, followed quickly by a strong flute entrance. Lower voices follow as work builds to a final climax.
- 2:51 Final statement of the main melody played by the trumpet, accompanied by all the other soloists along with the full orchestra and continuo instruments.

Bach's Vocal Compositions

Bach's cantatas number over 200 today, but researchers believe he actually composed many more that were lost or simply destroyed after the old master's death. In a way, Bach's sacred cantatas can be viewed as the Lutheran equivalent to musical settings of the Catholic mass, but there are significant differences between the two. Bach essentially composed a new cantata for every week of the year, creating works with texts drawn mostly from Biblical sources that were appropriate for use at their appointed time in the liturgical calendar, which means that we have around four years worth of Bach's cantatas still in existence! In his cantatas, Bach explored every style of composition popular during the Baroque period. Obviously there is a great deal of inventive contrapuntal writing, but you can also find examples of aria and recitative styles taken right out of the opera house, as well as instrumental writing that borrows from the latest Italian and French fashions. Bach also composed secular cantatas, most of which are written for a few solo voices and instrumental accompaniment. Many of Bach's secular cantatas have been lost to history, but two that remain very popular (and frequently appear together on recordings) are the *Coffee* cantata and the *Peasant* cantata.

While we are on the topic of Bach's vocal writing, it should also be noted that Bach composed a powerful series of independent sacred choral works he labeled *motets*. He also wrote oratorios for Easter and Christmas, a *Magnificat* in D Major, the *St. John Passion* and the *St. Matthew Passion*, and the monumental *Mass in b minor*. This mass is written in the Catholic tradition of setting the text of the five movements of the mass Ordinary, but Bach composed this work for the concert hall, not for use in a church service. Of particular interest in a number of his vocal works, and particularly in the *Mass in b minor*, is Bach's extensive use of instrumental writing in what were "supposed" to be vocal works. Bach was a deeply religious man, and he felt that the power of music was such that it could convey deep emotions with or without words.

Cantata No. 147 - Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147

As you read in the previous historical document, one of Bach's main jobs in Leipzig was to provide new music for church services. Because of this enormous demand for "new" material, Bach sometimes recycled older works by adding new lyrics, new melodies, and/or creating extra movements for a work that already existed. *Cantata No. 147*, excerpts of which are found in the following listening guide is a good example of how Bach might rework an older piece of music. The original *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* cantata was completed at Weimar in 1716 and was intended for use in the church service on the Sunday before Christmas. When Bach got to Leipzig, however, it was the custom there to *not* perform a cantata just before Christmas. Bach added three recitatives and the chorale as we know it today for use at the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which took place in early July.⁶

These three movements are from one of Bach's longer cantatas, and the title is from the lyrics of the first movement, which translates to *Heart and Mouth and Deed and Life*. The entire work is only moderately famous among Bach's vast



Memorial statue of J. S. Bach in front of St. Thomas Church, Leipzig.

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catalog of works, but the accompanying melody (or counter-melody if you prefer) that Bach uses for both of his chorale movements in this cantata represents one of his most frequently adapted tunes. It is most commonly referred to as *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, and you frequently hear it used during the Christmas holidays, at funerals, and at big church weddings when the grandmothers are being seated. As you will hear when you listen to movement 10, the running line we all think of as the melody is actually a beautifully elaborate accompaniment for the real melody being sung by the choir.

Listening Guide

Cantata No. 147 - Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147 Movements 1, 8, and 10

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Format: Sacred cantata originally for the Lutheran church

Performance: Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki, director

Recording: *Johann Sebastian Bach: Cantatas Vol. 12* (BIS 1031)

Performance Notes: The Bach Collegium Japan is an authentic performance practice group. Their splendid performance here is just one more testament to the universality of Bach's music. In fact, their performances are receiving widespread acclaim for both their historical accuracy and spectacular musicianship, and they are currently in the process of recording all of Bach's cantatas for the BIS label. Recorded June 1999 at the Kobe Shoin Women's University, Japan.

Movement 1 – Chorus

- :00 Introduction featuring the trumpet and bassoon.
- :30 The four voice parts enter one after the other in the manner of a fugue. The sopranos enter first, followed by the altos. Next the tenors enter, with the basses joining close behind. As the movement develops, polyphonic episodes are contrasted by some brief homophonic passages and instrumental interludes.
- 2:41 At this point, Bach copies the fugal exposition heard when the voices first entered. This time, however, the voices enter in reverse order, with the basses going first, followed by the tenors, then the altos, and the sopranos entering last.
- 3:37 To close the movement, Bach returns to the same instrumental material heard at the beginning of the movement.

Full Text

Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben
Muß von Christo Zeugnis geben
Ohne Furcht und Heuchelei,
Daß er Gott und Heiland sei.

Heart and Mouth and Deed and Life
Must bear witness to Christ
Without fear or hypocrisy
That he is God and Saviour.

Movement 8 – Accompanied Recitative for solo alto**Robin Blaze, countertenor**

Performance Note: Although Bach wrote this movement for a female alto voice, it is actually sung here by a man trained to sing in the same musical range. Most countertenors have naturally high voices, which they then develop to sing well into their falsetto range. To explore your own “falsetto” range, alter your voice as you would when you are trying to imitate the voice of a small child. What you are really doing is changing the basic natural function of your vocal chords, causing them to vibrate in a different pattern.

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| :00 | Der höchsten Allmacht Wunderhand Wirkt im Verborgenen der Erden. Johannes muß mit Geist erfüllet werden, Ihn zieht der Liebe Band Bereits in seiner Mutter Leibe, Daß er den Heiland kennt, Ob er ihn gleich noch nicht Mit seinem Munde nennt, Er wird bewegt, er hüpfet und springet, Indem Elisabeth das Wunderwerk ausspricht, Indem Mariä Mund der Lippen Opfer bringet. Wenn ihr, o Gläubige, des Fleisches Schwachheit merkt, Wenn euer Herz in Liebe brennet, Und doch der Mund den Heiland nicht bekennet, Gott ist es, der euch kräftig stärkt, Er will in euch des Geistes Kraft erregen, Ja Dank und Preis auf eure Zunge legen. | The miraculous hand of the almighty Acts in the secrecy of the world. John had to be filled with the spirit, The bond of love drew him While he was still in his mother's womb, So that he knew the saviour, Though he did not yet Name him with his mouth. He was moved, he skipped and hopped, While Elizabeth expressed the miracle, While Mary's mouth brought offerings to the lips. For you, O faithful, perceive the weakness of the flesh, When your heart burns with love, And yet your mouth does not proclaim the saviour, God it is who mightily strengthens you, He wants to excite in you the power of the Spirit, Yes, to lay thanks and praise on your tongue. |
|-----|--|--|

Movement 10 – Chorale

This same melody and accompaniment also appear in movement 6 with a different set of lyrics. The hymn melody sung by the choir is one that everyone in the congregation would have known.

- :00 Movement begins with an instrumental version of the melody everyone knows as *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. This is actually the accompaniment, and it will continue throughout the movement.
- :19 Voices enter with the actual chorale melody of this movement. Portions of the chorale melody will be interspersed throughout the entire movement as the continues unbroken from beginning to end.

| | |
|---|--|
| Jesus bleibet meine Freude, Meines Herzens Trost und Saft, Jesus wehret allem Leide, Er ist meines Lebens Kraft, Meiner Augen Lust und Sonne, Meiner Seele Schatz und Wonne; Darum laß ich Jesum nicht Aus dem Herzen und Gesicht. | Jesus is ever my joy The comfort and sap of my heart, Jesus defends me against all ills, He is the strength of my life, The joy and sunshine of my eyes, The jewel and delight of my soul; Therefore I never let Jesus Out of my heart and my view. |
|---|--|



George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

When compared to J. S. Bach, as he often is, George Frideric Handel is frequently identified as being the more “cosmopolitan” of the two. Here was a German, trained in Italy, who spent almost fifty years of his life as a star of the London musical scene. As with Telemann, Handel was much better known to the general public throughout Europe when compared to Bach, both as a composer and a performer. Handel’s early years were spent in Halle and Hamburg. In 1706 he traveled to Italy, where he mastered the local operatic style and began composing his first oratorios. Handel returned to Germany in 1710 to become *Kapellmeister* for the Elector of Hanover. Over the course of the next few years, he took several trips to London, where his compositions met with great success. When Queen Anne died in 1714, the Elector of Hanover (Handel’s employer) became the next king of England (King George I), and Handel stayed in London for the rest of his life. He became

Commemorative postage stamp featuring George Frideric Handel. As you can see from the spelling on the stamp, Handel’s name has undergone a number of different spelling variations over the years, mostly due to the different countries with which he was associated.

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the toast of the town, composing successful operas in the Italian style for the Royal Academy of Music, new music commissioned for the English court and Royal Chapel, and, toward the end of his career, some of the most famous oratorios ever written, most notably, *Messiah*.

Handel approached composition with a flair for improvisation and innovation but also with a businessman’s eye for potential commercial success. When Italian operas were in favor in London, that was what he composed. When they fell out of favor, he switched to oratorios, which offered him the double commercial advantage of being performed during Lent (when the opera houses were dark) and being written in the local language, which gave the works more mass audience appeal. Again, a comparison with J. S. Bach proves interesting. When Bach died, his compositions were largely forgotten, but today, almost everything he wrote is considered a masterpiece. Because of his enormous popularity during his lifetime, a great deal more of Handel’s music was published and, therefore, preserved for history. Nonetheless, much of Handel’s music has since fallen out of favor. Today he is best remembered for the previously mentioned oratorio, *Messiah*, and a handful of other works including the two orchestral pieces *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and *Water Music*. Of his 40 plus operas and 30 plus oratorios, only a few are still performed today. Handel also composed over 150 cantatas, of which 100 are still extant, but they are rarely performed today outside of academic and historic performance circles. Likewise, there are hundreds of purely instrumental compositions by Handel, but outside of the previously mentioned orchestral works, a few of his *concerti grossi*, and some of his solo concertos for organ and orchestra, only a few of them are performed on a regular basis.

Focus on Form

Cantata and Oratorio

The terms *cantata* and *oratorio* are general terms used throughout the Baroque era to refer to an array of vocal works both sacred and secular. The biggest thing all of them have in common is that they are clearly not operas. The two terms are featured here because both the cantata and the oratorio reach the height of their artistic creativity in the hands of the late Baroque masters Bach and Handel. As was previously mentioned, Bach composed well over 200 sacred and secular cantatas, and Handel composed more than 30 popular oratorios, including *Messiah*, which is one of the most famous compositions of all time.

The first cantatas were solo vocal works accompanied by a lute or *basso continuo*. Some were similar to early Baroque madrigals, where as others began to incorporate elements of operatic composition—particularly the aria and recitative. These early cantatas were based on both sacred and secular subjects. When Bach began using the format, he raised the level of composition and overall scope of his sacred works to the point where they have actually been referred to as short oratorios. Bach made use of impressive contrapuntal writing for both voices and orchestra; he also incorporated operatic-style arias, duets, and recitatives. All of his sacred cantatas are written for solo voices, chorus, and orchestral accompaniment with *basso continuo*. Many of his sacred cantatas are based on pre-existing hymn tunes, which usually show up written as a four-part chorale in the last movement. Most of Bach's cantatas were written to be performed during the course of a church service just before the sermon. Some are longer (such as the *Cantata No. 147*) and would have been split into two parts before and after the sermon. Today they are most frequently heard in the concert hall rather than the church. After Bach, the term *cantata* again diversified, being applied to a variety of works for the combined forces of voice(s) and orchestra.

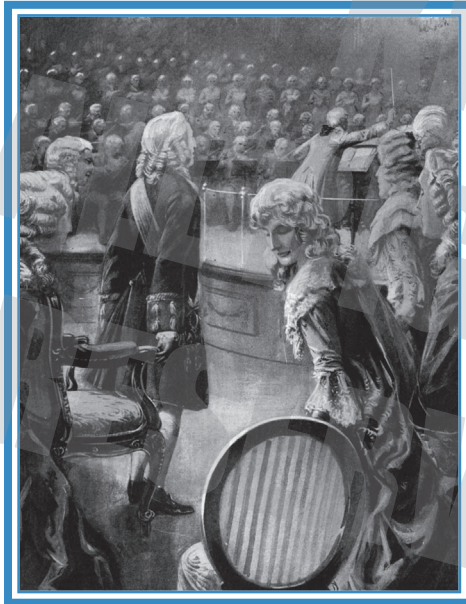
The strict definition for oratorio is a vocal work with many of the same characteristics as an opera but based on a sacred topic and containing little or no dramatic action on the stage (no sets, costumes, or drama). In practice, most oratorios during the Baroque era adhered to this principle though there were exceptions. For example, some of the earliest oratorios were liturgical dramas (morality plays) that did include some costumes and acting. As the style progressed, however, the oratorio became a work for the concert hall. Handel had composed oratorios throughout his long career in music, and in the late 1730s when Italian opera fell out of favor in London, he began to focus more of his attention toward them. In most cities, it was forbidden for operas to be composed on overtly religious topics. Also, during the Lenten season, many opera houses were closed, producing no revenue. Handel took all of these issues into account and began mounting oratorio performances based on sacred topics, written in the local language of English, during Lent. At first, works with sacred topics being performed in the concert hall were considered in bad taste, but audiences eventually came around and Handel's oratorios became very popular.



Scene from *The Beggar's Opera* by John Gay. This work was one of the major reasons Italian opera fell out of favor in England during the late Baroque era. The artwork is by Hogarth. Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.



Detail from a publication of Handel's music.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.



Depiction of King George standing during the Hallelujah Chorus.
Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

Messiah (HWV 56)

Today, Handel's *Messiah* is generally thought of as a work for Christmas, but it actually tells stories from the entire life of Christ. The work is over two and a half hours long and is rarely performed in its entirety today. Now it is common for ensembles to extract the Christmas portions of the work, stick the *Hallelujah Chorus* on the end, and perform the work only during the Christmas season. Handel composed the work in less than a month, but he continued to revise the oratorio until his death in 1759. The work makes use of all the conventions found in operatic compositions of the day, including *secco* and *accompagnato* recitatives, arias, duets, and dramatic choruses such as the famous *Hallelujah Chorus*. Over the years, it has become a tradition for the audience to stand during a performance of the *Hallelujah Chorus*, and there are several interesting stories as to how that tradition came to be. In the oratorio's original format, this movement happens

about two-thirds of the way through the work. The basic story goes that the King stood up during the performance of the *Hallelujah Chorus*, so quite naturally the rest of the audience stood with the King. One theory has it that the King had fallen asleep, and the loud chorus woke him with a start. More recent scholarship has suggested that the King had a new girlfriend seated in the audience below, and he stood up to get a better look at her.

During Handel's day, oratorio performances were marathon events, which frequently included the performance of other works during the intermissions between the different parts of the main work. In a letter home, a French traveler named Madame Fiquet wrote of her experience attending a performance of Handel's greatest oratorio:

London, April 15, 1750

The Oratorio, or pious concert, pleases us highly. HANDEL is the soul of it: when he makes his appearance, two wax lights are carried before him, which are laid upon his organ. Amidst a loud clapping of hands he seats himself, and the whole band of music strikes up exactly at the same moment. At the interludes he plays concertos of his own composition, either alone or accompanied by the orchestra. These are equally admirable for the harmony and the execution. The *Italian* opera, in three acts, gives us much less pleasure.⁷



Listening Guide

Messiah (HWV 56)

from **Part one:** *Ev'ry valley shall be exalted*—tenor aria

from **Part two:** *Hallelujah*—chorus

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Format: Oratorio

Performance: Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki, director

Recording: *Handel: Messiah* (BIS 891/892)

Performance Notes: Recorded December 1996 at the Kobe Shoin Women's University, Japan. In the liner notes for this particular recording, Bach Collegium Japan Director Masaaki Suzuki writes:

The difficulty of performing *Messiah*, in sincerity, lies in the fact that Handel himself changed the instrumentation and the vocal parts each time he performed it, and consequently he never performed it the same way as in the 1741 première. In short, one has to face the problem of which version one should revive today, when even the composer's performances let the work evolve like a living creature. In his day, Handel probably chose the most appropriate way, bearing in mind the merits of the singers and the characteristics of the choir and orchestra that were available to him on each occasion. This recording is based on the performance at Covent Garden in 1753 with four soloists, a choir of the same size and an orchestra with probably slightly fewer oboes and bassoons.

Liner notes from BIS 891/892

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted – tenor aria

- :00 Orchestral introduction that introduces both major melodic ideas.
- :20 Singer enters with letter A melody and the text "Ev'ry valley shall be exalted . . ."
- :32 Two extended melodic extensions over the word "exalted." These extensions are an example of text painting, bringing extra melodic attention to one specific word.
- :52 New text painting ideas are introduced with the text " . . . and ev'ry mountain and hill made low." The disjunctive melody imitates the shape of mountains and hills. Notice also that the singer ends this passage on the word "low," and he is singing the lowest note of the passage as he does so.
- :58 New melodic idea, letter B, begins with the text "The crooked straight and the rough places plain." Text painting techniques continue to be clearly evident in this section of the aria.
- 1:35 Letter A melodic ideas return.
- 2:12 Letter B melodic ideas return.
- 2:54 Work concludes with the orchestra repeating the same material it presented in the introduction to the aria.

Full Text

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted,
and ev'ry mountain and hill made low,
the crooked straight and the rough places plain.
(text drawn from Isaiah 40:4)

Hallelujah! – chorus and orchestra

- :00 "Hallelujah" presented in a homophonic fashion sung by full choir with orchestral accompaniment.
- :23 "For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth" sung in unison with homophonic statements of "Hallelujah."
- :45 Texture changes to polyphonic as different voices of the choir, with orchestral accompaniment, enter one after the other.
- 1:09 Homophonic texture returns for "The kingdom of this world . . ."
- 1:26 Polyphonic texture returns for "and he shall reign . . ."
- 1:47 Unison statements of "King of Kings and Lord of Lords . . ."
- 2:26 Polyphonic texture returns for more statements of "and he shall reign . . ."
- 2:36 Work culminates with alternating unison and homophonic statements of "King of Kings . . ." together with "and he shall reign . . ."

Full Text

Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!
 Hallelujah! (Revelations 19:6)
 The kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom
 of our Lord and of His Christ,
 and he shall reign for ever and ever. (Revelations 11:15)
 King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (Revelations 19:16)

Music for the Royal Fireworks (HWV 351)

Handel composed two extended suites of instrumental music for the English court. The first was the *Water Music*, which was actually played on the water. King George I liked to float down the river out to the countryside for picnics, so Handel wrote music for the court's outdoor enjoyment. The king and his party would be on one barge while the musicians floated along behind, functioning as a sort of late eighteenth-century boom box. The music was a hit, and, in modern orchestrations, it continues to be popular in concert today. Later, King George II commissioned Handel to compose some new music for a huge out-

door event planned to celebrate the signing of a treaty with Austria. This time, however, the first performance didn't go so well.

For this special occasion, the king hired an architect to build a huge backdrop for the concert, which was to culminate with a spectacular fireworks display. The architect obliged with a building 400 feet long and 100 feet



The court of King George as they float down the river listening to Handel's Water Music. Notice the musicians on the second barge in the background.

Source: Jupiterimages, Corp.

high, crowned with an enormous sun on a 200-foot pole. . . . When the day came, Handel himself began conducting the piece. Everything went great for the first half of the piece. And then the fireworks began. Handel was probably annoyed enough that the fireworks were shooting off during his lovely music. But to make matters worse, some of the fireworks landed on the brand new building, which responded the only way it knew how: by catching fire. The crowd panicked, running for their lives as Handel doggedly continued conducting. Handel was livid. He had a notoriously explosive temper, so we're guessing that he provided the king with a display of private fireworks the next morning.⁸

As with the previously mentioned *Water Music*, modern orchestrations of *Music for the Royal Fireworks* remain quite popular in the concert hall and on recordings. The following recording, however, attempts to recreate the music as it might have sounded at that first performance (minus the fireworks, the collapsing building, and the crowd noises, of course). This is the concept of authentic performance practice taken to the extreme. While this is an interesting historical exercise, rest assured that if you buy any other recording of *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, it won't sound like this one.

Listening Guide

Music for the Royal Fireworks (HWV 351)

La Réjouissance

George Friedrich Handel (1685-1759)

Format: Orchestral suite

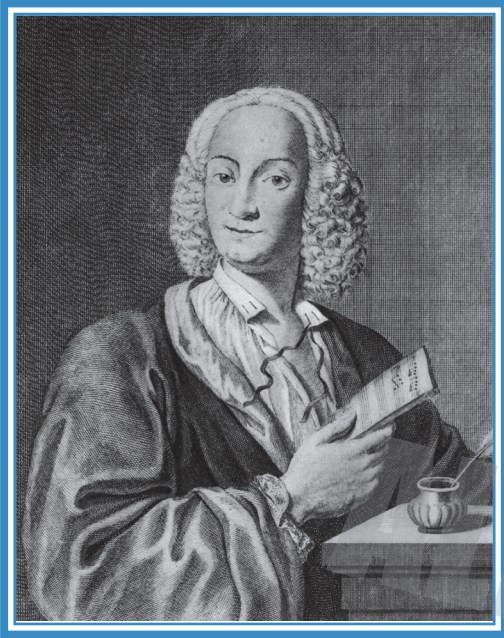
Performance: Le Concert Spirituel, Hervé Niquet, conductor

Recording: *Haendel: [sic] Water Music & Fireworks* (Glossa 921606)

Performance Notes: This performance represents an attempt to recreate the sound Handel's orchestra created at the premiere of this work. The musicians of Le Concert Spirituel commissioned the creation of a number of exact reproductions of the types of instruments musicians of Handel's day would have used. This performance features 24 oboes, 15 soprano and alto recorders, 12 bassoons, 2 contrabassoons, 9 natural trumpets (no valves), 9 natural horns, 2 percussionists, and a full string section with 42 players. Remember that the premiere performance took place outside and needed to be heard by an enormous audience. The only sound reinforcement of 1749 was the addition of extra instruments. This recording is historically accurate both in ensemble size and instrumental tone colors Handel used at the premiere. Recorded September 2002 at l'Arsenal de Metz, France.

- :00 Letter A, 16 measures, repeated. Count in groups of 2 beats-per-measure and be aware that each section begins with an eighth-note pick-up. Think "and 1, 2; 2, 2; 3, 2; etc . . ."
- :35 Letter B, 20 measures, repeated.
- 1:20 Letter A, 16 measures.
- 1:37 Letter B, 20 measures.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)



Antonio Vivaldi.
Source: © 2009
Jupiterimages, Corp.

Vivaldi was another very prolific composer during the Baroque era. He composed over 50 operas, more than 40 works for choir and orchestra, around 100 works for orchestra, and 500 or so concertos for a variety of solo instruments with orchestral accompaniment. Vivaldi was very true to his stylistic ideal, leading twentieth-century composer Igor Stravinsky to offer one of the most famous insults in all of classical music when he suggested that Vivaldi didn't write 500 concertos, but rather, he just kept writing the same one over and over again. Born in Venice, Vivaldi entered the priesthood as a young man, where his bright red hair earned him the nickname "The Red Priest." Vivaldi, however, was not a very *good* priest. Apparently, he would sometimes leave church during the middle of a worship service to write down his latest musical idea. Eventually, the church stopped allowing him to say Mass, and Vivaldi devoted the rest of his life to composition and teaching. He took a job as violin teacher at the *Ospedale della Pietà*, which, among other things, was an orphanage for indigent, illegitimate, and orphaned girls. The girls received extensive training in music performance, and Vivaldi composed a great deal of his music for performances held at the orphanage. The concerts became popular social events, and Vivaldi's music became well known. Outside the orphanage, Vivaldi pursued an active career as an opera composer and producer. Today, many of his operas are lost or incomplete, and they are rarely performed. Perhaps more than any other composer besides Couperin, Vivaldi gave many of his works programmatic titles such as *Storm at Sea*, *The Hunt*, and, of course, his most famous composition, *The Four Seasons*.

The Four Seasons

This work is actually a series of four individual three-movement concertos for violin and chamber orchestra. Vivaldi wrote introductory poems for each of the concertos found in *The Four Seasons*. The music vividly portrays the images in the poem although some recent research indicates that he actually wrote the poems after he composed the music. Either way, Vivaldi included hints in the score as to what the music represented, and, in turn, the music clearly imitates the sentiments of the text. For example, in the first movement of *Spring* (which can be found in the following listening example), bird songs, the wind, and sounds of thunder and lightning are clearly heard in both the solo and orchestral parts. The following is an English translation of an excerpt from Vivaldi's poem for *Spring*:

Spring
(excerpt)

Spring has come, and joyfully
the birds welcome it with cheerful song,
and the streams at the breath of zephyrs
flow swiftly with sweet murmurings.
But now the sky is cloaked in black
and thunder and lightning announce themselves;
when they die away, the little birds
turn afresh to their sweet song.⁹

Listening Guide

The Four Seasons, Op. 8

La Primavera (Spring)—Movement 1

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Format: Solo concerto

Performance: The Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble, Nils-Erik Sparf, Baroque violin

Recording: *Antonio Vivaldi: The Four Seasons* (BIS 275)

Performance Notes: Recorded in 1984 at the Petrus Church in Stocksund, Sweden.

- :00 Theme one. "Spring has come . . ."
- :13 Theme two (ritornello). Violin soloist featured with orchestral accompaniment. Get to know this theme well, as it is the one Vivaldi will continue to use throughout the movement.
- :27 Effect of bird calls introduced in main solo part along with 1st violins. ". . . joyfully the birds welcome it with cheerful song . . ."
- 1:00 Theme two returns.
- 1:07 Quiet, smooth melody represents a small stream.
- 1:29 Theme two returns, this time in a new (but closely related) key center.
- 1:36 Bold rhythmic melody represents a thunderstorm. Fast ascending passages in violins represent lightning strikes. Broken note patterns in solo violin represent rain falling. "But now the sky is cloaked in black and thunder and lightning announce themselves . . ."
- 2:01 Theme two returns, but this time played in a sad sounding minor key center.
- 2:08 Bird calls return. ". . . the little birds turn afresh to their sweet song."
- 2:51 Theme Two returns to close out the movement.

Endnotes

1. Joseph Sylvan, "History of Baroque Music" (lectures, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, Fall, 1987).
2. "Vladimir Vavilov," "Giulio Caccini," and "Ave Maria," articles posted on *Wikipedia*, <http://www.wikipedia.org> (accessed July 27, 2009). This story has become quite common in the world of classical music, and there are numerous, and sometimes conflicting, tales of the "Ave Maria hoax" on the Internet.
3. *Pretty Woman*, videocassette, directed by Gary Marshall (Burbank, CA: Touchstone Home Video D410272, 1990).
4. Charles Burney, "Castrato Singers," in *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, eds. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin (New York: Schirmer Books, 1984), 225.

5. J. S. Bach, *Das wohltemperiete Klavier*, Book 1, introduction translated and quoted in *Johann Sebastian Bach: Complete Keyboard Works*, Vol. 1, Masaaki Suzuki, compact disc liner notes, BIS 813/814.
6. Tadashi Isoyama, *Bach Cantatas, Vol. 12*, Bach Collegium Japan, compact disc liner notes, BIS 1031, 6-7.
7. Madame Fiquet to her sister, London, April 15, 1750, in *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, eds. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin (New York: Schirmer Books, 1984), 246.
8. David Pogue and Scott Speck, *Classical Music for Dummies* (Foster City, CA: IDG Books Worldwide, 1997), 23.
9. Stig Jacobsson, translated by John Skinner, *Antonio Vivaldi: The Four Seasons*, The Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble, compact disc liner notes, BIS CD 275.

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Study Guide

Chapter 4 Review Questions

True or False

- ___ 1. Henry Purcell is frequently referred to as the last great English composer until the twentieth century.
- ___ 2. J. S. Bach composed about 25 sacred cantatas.
- ___ 3. Compared to J. S. Bach, Handel was considered more "cosmopolitan."
- ___ 4. Most oratorios used sets and costumes in their productions.
- ___ 5. Vivaldi was nicknamed "The Red Priest."
- ___ 6. Religious conflicts led to the Thirty Years War.
- ___ 7. Purely instrumental music was not very popular during the Baroque era.
- ___ 8. Monody features 3-5 individual voice parts.
- ___ 9. Alessandro Scarlatti's operas made use of the Italian Overture.
- 12. Frequently referred to as the father of modern violin technique.
 - a. Arcangelo Corelli
 - b. Alessandro Scarlatti
 - c. Domenico Scarlatti
 - d. Joseph Sylvan
 - e. none of the above
- 13. Conductor who died after accidentally hitting his foot with his baton.
 - a. Jacquet de la Guerre
 - b. François Couperin
 - c. Jean-Baptiste Lully
 - d. Gregory-Baptiste Lisemby
- 14. Prolific German composer who wrote over 4,000 works, including a series of lighter works he called *Tafelmusik*.
 - a. Heinrich Schütz
 - b. Georg Phillipp Telemann
 - c. J. S. Bach
 - d. J. C. Bach
- 15. Handel's *Messiah* is an:
 - a. opera.
 - b. oratorio.
 - c. art song.
 - d. organum.

Multiple Choice

- 10. The first operas were created by the:
 - a. Greeks.
 - b. Germans.
 - c. Notre Dame School.
 - d. Florentine Camerata.
- 11. Popular instrumental form during the Baroque era.
 - a. Trio Sonata
 - b. Sonata da Camera
 - c. Sonata da Chiesa
 - d. Concerto grosso
 - e. All of the above
- 16. Caccini is normally credited with the creation of _____.
- 17. _____'s compositions bridge the Renaissance and Baroque periods in music.
- 18. Purcell based his opera *Dido and Aeneas* on a portion of the _____ by Virgil.
- 19. The _____ pitted a small group of instruments against the full orchestra.
- 20. The _____ was usually a three-movement work for one solo instrument with an orchestral accompaniment.
- 21. Handel was born in _____, trained in _____, and spent most of his adult life working as a professional composer in _____.

Short Answer

22. List the five major parts of a typical fugue.
23. List three important operas by Claudio Monteverdi.
24. List four towns where J. S. Bach worked.
25. Other than opera, list three vocal forms popular during the Baroque era.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the development of opera during the Baroque era.

2. Discuss the development of instrumental music during the Baroque era.