

The Classical Symphony: First Movements

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91)

"Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (Serenade in C)": Movement #1

Extremely straightforward demonstration of the sonata-allegro form.

For strings only.

This is a serenade rather than a true symphony.

"Symphony #40 in G minor": Movement #4

Although a final movement, this is also in sonata-allegro form.

Scored for strings, clarinets, French horns, bassoons, flutes, etc.

Regular form; much of the movement is based on transformations of parts of the main theme; a little bit of counterpoint.

Simple and dramatic.

Franz Josef Haydn (1732-1809), "Symphony #104 in D ('London')," Movement #1

Sonata-allegro form: slow introduction; form is less regular and mainstream than Mozart's; short intense development; several sections based on 'hammer blows' taken from second part of main theme.

Haydn more 'inventive', perhaps less emotional, sensitive.

Scored for strings, oboes, bassoons, flutes, French horns, trumpets, timpani, etc.

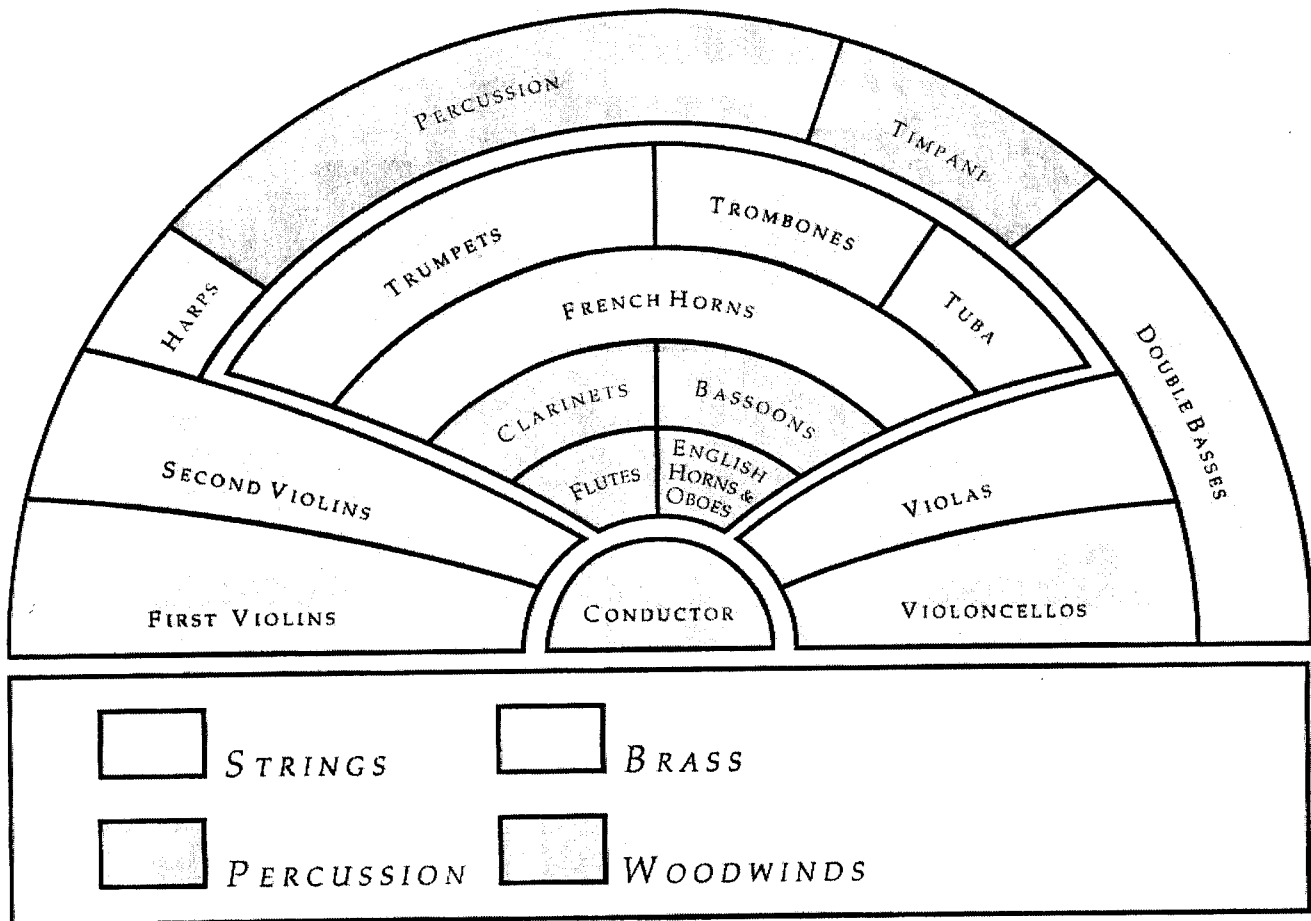
Mood as sunny, relaxed, fun-filled; with a few moments of intensity.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), "Symphony #5 in C minor," Movement #1

Sonata-allegro form; no introduction; almost entirely monothematic (one theme dominates throughout) except for short second subject soon drowned out; has extended dramatic coda.

High drama: life's challenges! "Fate knocking at the door!"

How structural rigor becomes Romantic!



Analyze the evolution of classical symphonic music

- Form:** What is the organizational structure of the movement, based on thematic material, key relationships, etc. Is the piece in song form, sonata-allegro form, rondo form, ritornello form, etc.?
- Texture:** What does the music sound like? How big is the orchestra (small in early Classical period or big in Romantic period)? What instruments is the piece scored for -- standard classical symphony or new colorful instruments brought in in the Romantic period? What is the *color* of the music?
- Meaning:** To what extent does the piece attempt to be dramatic, to be human, tell a story? 1) Is the music abstract (tells no story and its emotive content is hard to pin down)? 2) Does it have an identifiable emotional content -- heroic, depressive, celebratory, etc.? 3) Does it actually tell a story? (The last stage affects only the Romantic period.)

c) Sonata-Allegro Form (principal movements of symphonies and concertos - classical period,

(Introduction) - sets mood; prepares audience.

A. Exposition

(concerto = orchestra only first)

Subject I - cadence(s) - Subject II -

cadence(s) - Closing Subject.

B. Development = free form; based on exposition material

eg. fragmentation, variation, modulation, inversion.

A. Recapitulation - repeat of Exposition; usually abbrevi-

ated; with significant small differences.

Coda - "tail" - rounds off the movement; (short in

classical period; extended in romantic).