The Viennese Classical Style

Music for an Enlightened Age
Five Symphonies

1: Antonio Caldara

- An opening ‘Sinfonia’ to a cantata, from the 1720s
  - Essentially Baroque
  - Contrapuntal texture
  - Use of harpsichord continuo
  - Static rhythmic style of the Baroque
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2: Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1732)

- Overture, or ‘Sinfonia’, to the opera *Lo frate ‘nnamurato*, written in 1732
  - Baroque-style rhythm
  - Harpsichord continuo
  - Lack of counterpoint
  - Clear-cut phrases
  - Immediate surface appeal
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3: Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1700–1775)

A ‘Sinfonia’ (concert work) from the 1740s

- More noticeably homophonic
- Rhythmic variety, although still more like Baroque
- Clear-cut phrases
- Tune-like melodies
- Contrast between sections
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4: Johann Stamitz (1717–1757)

- A Symphony written for the famed Mannheim orchestra, from the 1750s
  - Sharp dynamic contrasts
  - Long crescendo
  - Orchestral effects
  - Thicker, more modern orchestra
  - More Classical Style than not
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5: Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 41 in C Major

- Exemplifies the ideals of the Viennese Classical Style in its early maturity as of the 1770s.
  - Balance
  - Variety
  - Structural integrity
  - Imagination and wit
  - Brilliant sonority
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- Balance
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The Enlightenment and Music
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- Humanism
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- Humanism
- The Pursuit of Happiness
The Enlightenment and Music

- Humanism
- The Pursuit of Happiness
- Cosmopolitanism
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- Humanism
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- Musical Consumerism
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- Music as Entertainment
The Rise of the Concert Hall
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- Instrumental music became the staple, instead of vocal and/or sacred music.
- The concert hall tended to replace the church (and to a lesser extent) the opera house as the center of musical life.
Rhythm

Remember that Baroque rhythm tends to be static, somewhat mechanistic.
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Haydn: Symphony No. 97, 2nd Movement

- Note the two-part nature of the theme
- Nothing ever stays the same for very long
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- Haydn: Symphony No. 97, 4th Movement
- The theme is also in two clear parts.
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Haydn: Symphony No. 98, 1st movement

Especially note the contrast between the first two measures (slow) and the rest of the theme.
Rhythm

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Rhythm

- Haydn: Symphony No. 98, 1st Movement
- Another theme from later in the first movement
- Note the contrast between the rhythm of this theme and that of the previous one
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Dynamics

- Classical dynamics are highly changeable
  - Changes can be terraced as in the Baroque, but with much greater contrast
  - Changes may also be gradual, making use of crescendo and decrescendo
Dynamics

- Mozart: Overture to *Don Giovanni*, opening
- Extreme terraced dynamics
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The orchestra underwent a dramatic expansion. Instruments were increasingly given ‘character’ roles, treated almost like actors in a drama.
Tone Color

- Haydn: Symphony No. 88, 4th Movement
  - Opens with a prominent bassoon melody
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Another statement of the same melody, but this time adding a flute
Tone Color

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The number and type of brass instruments in the orchestra were increased.
Tone Color

- Mozart: Mass in C Minor, K. 427: Gloria, *Cum sancto spiritu*
- Use of trumpets and trombones together
Tone Color

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Tone Color

- Percussion remains the same as in the Baroque
  - Timpani only
  - Occasional use of other instruments
Tone Color

The harpsichord died out and was replaced by the **fortepiano**

- Precursor of the modern *pianoforte*
- Lighter construction, with a bright, penetrating sound
Tone Color

- Mozart: Piano Sonata in B-flat Major, 3rd Movement
- Viennese-style 18th century *fortepiano*
Tone Color

- Mozart: Piano Sonata in B-flat Major, 3rd Movement
- Viennese-style 18th century fortepiano
The continuo began to die out in orchestral music.

However, it was still used in some places until the end of the century.
The continuo did not disappear in the opera house, but was still employed for recitatives.

This usage continued until the 1820s.
Tone Color

- Mozart: *Così fan tutte*
- Fortepiano is used for the continuo
Tone Color

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- Fortepiano is used for the continuo
Melody

- The serpentine melodies of the Baroque are far less common
- More and more ‘tunes’ appear, which are easily remembered
- Not simplistic
- It’s difficult to write simply and well
Melody

- Haydn: Symphony No. 88, 1st Movement
Haydn: Symphony No. 88, 1st Movement
Melody

Haydn: Symphony No. 53 “L’Imperiale”, 2nd Movement
Melody

Haydn: Symphony No. 53 “L’Impériale”, 2nd Movement
Melody

- It is an oversimplification to think of *all* Classical melodies as little tunes.
- The Viennese Classical style is radiant, not superficial—and waxes abundant in melodic opulence.
Melody

- Mozart: *Così fan tutte*, “Soave all’ vento”
Melody

Mozart: *Così fan tutte*, “Soave all’ vento”
The Viennese Classical is an era in which form and structure were critically important elements in music.

A ‘stream-of-consciousness’ approach to composition was extremely unusual.
Form

- Repetition and Cadence
  - Themes tend to be repeated immediately upon being stated
Form

Haydn: Symphony No. 97, 2nd Movement
Form

- Haydn: Symphony No. 97, 2nd Movement
Form

- Transitional Passages
  - These tend to be obviously non-melodic, and serve as connectors from one thematic block to another
Form

• Haydn: Symphony No. 98, 1st Movement
Form

Haydn: Symphony No. 98, 1st Movement
Form

Cadences

These have a tendency to repeat—usually twice—making three statements of the cadence in all
Form

- Haydn: Symphony No. 97, 2nd Movement
Form

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