Music of the Romantic Era
Revolution and Change
Revolution and Change

- French Revolution (1789-99)
- French Republic (1799-1804)
Revolution and Change
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- Napoleon crowns himself emperor (1804)
Revolution and Change
Revolution and Music

- The French government established the Paris Conservatoire in 1795.
- The Conservatoire established a standard curriculum for student musicians.
- As the first modern conservatory, it became a model for other schools throughout Europe.
Revolution and Music
Revolution and Industry

- **Technology** transformed Western economy from agriculture to manufacturing.
  - Begins in the **British textile industry**.
- **Other industries** followed, including instrument-making firms.
- **The middle class** flourished at the expense of the aristocracy and the poor.
Revolution and Industry
BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)
BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

- Beethoven’s career is traditionally divided into three periods
- The Early period (1770-1802) his youth in Bonn and his early years in Vienna.
- The Middle Period (1803–1814) when Beethoven began to compose in a new style
- The Late Period (1815–1827) when Beethoven becomes increasingly isolated due to his deafness
EARLY BEETHOVEN
EARLY BEETHOVEN

- Studied music with his father (who was alcoholic) and other local musicians.
- Entered the service of Maximilian Franz, elector of Cologne.
- Attracted attentions as a virtuoso pianist.
- Praised by Franz Joseph Haydn, who urges the elector to send Beethoven to Vienna—one of the major musical capitals of Europe.
EARLY BEETHOVEN

- Studies with Haydn
- Beethoven establishes himself as a pianist and composer
- Begins to earn additional income publishing his compositions
- Most of Beethoven’s earliest works are for piano.
- His early works were aimed at amateurs, though he begins to compose more technically difficult works
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**EARLY BEETHOVEN**

- *Sonate pathétique* (Sonata with Pathos), Op. 13 in C Minor (published in 1799)
- The title a *tragic* mode of expression.
- The sonata has typical *three* movements.
- Like Mozart, Beethoven used strong *contrasts of style* to delineate form and to expand the expressive range.
EARLY BEETHOVEN

• Beethoven waited until he was established before composing string quartets and orchestral works.
• His first quartets, Op. 18 (1800)
• Symphony No. 1 in C Major (1800)
• Modeled on the works of Haydn and Mozart, these works bear Beethoven’s stamp of individuality.
MIDDLE PERIOD

- Around 1803, Beethoven began to compose in a new style
- Supported by several patrons—including Archduke Rudolph—who joined together to keep Beethoven in Vienna.
- Publishers competed for Beethoven’s music
- Beethoven often dodged deadlines, giving him time to revise his works
MIDDLE PERIOD
MIDDLE PERIOD

- Beethoven composed with deliberation, and with significantly less than that of Haydn and Mozart.
- Beethoven jotted down ideas in notebook.
- Notebooks allow us to follow the genesis and progress of his ideas.
- Beethoven continually revised works.
MIDDLE PERIOD

- Beethoven realized that he was going **deaf** in 1802
- Considered **suicide**, but resolved to work for art, as described in an undelivered letter to his brothers (**Heiligenstadt Testament**)
- **Unknown** until after Beethoven’s death
MIDDLE PERIOD

- “Now that for six years I have been a hopeless case, aggravated by senseless physicians, cheated year after year in the hope of improvement, finally compelled to face the prospect of a lasting malady (whose cure will take years or, perhaps, be impossible)”
- How could I possibly admit such an infirmity in the one sense which should have been more perfect in me than in others, a sense which I once possessed in highest perfection, a perfection such as few surely in my profession enjoy or have enjoyed—O I cannot do it”
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MIDDLE PERIOD

- Many of Beethoven’s compositions seem to reflect the struggle of his own life
MIDDLE PERIOD

- The *Eroica Symphony*, No. 3, in E-flat Major (1803–4)
- Because of the *Eroica*, 1803 often seen as the beginning of the Romantic period in music
MIDDLE PERIOD

• Longer than any previous symphony
• The title suggests that the symphony is a celebration of a hero
• Beethoven originally named the symphony “Bonaparte,” but reportedly tore up the title page when Napoleon declared himself emperor
MIDDLE PERIOD

• The themes can be seen as characters in a drama
• The **first movement** of the *Eroica* can be seen as a story of challenge, struggle, and final victory
• The **slow movement** is a funeral march full of tragedy and pathos, and has links to Revolutionary music in France
MIDDLE PERIOD

- The **third movement** is a quick **scherzo** prominent horn calls in the trio.
- The **finale** mixes variations, fugues, development, and marches using a theme from Beethoven’s ballet music in *The Creatures of Prometheus*
MIDDLE PERIOD

- Beethoven’s only opera, *Fidelio*, is based on a “rescue” plot, where Leonore, dressed as a man, rescues her husband from prison.
- The opera glorifies *heroism* and the ideas of the French Revolution.
- Beethoven *revised* the opera several times.
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MIDDLE PERIOD

- CHAMBER MUSIC
  - Two violin sonatas
  - Cello sonata
  - Three piano trios
  - Five string quartets

- Written for “amateurs,” Beethoven continued to test their technical abilities
MIDDLE PERIOD

- CONCERTOS
  - Three piano concertos, including the “Emperor”
  - Violin concerto
MIDDLE PERIOD

- SYMPHONIES
- Symphony No. 5 (1807–8)
- The work, moving from C minor to C major, symbolizes a struggle for victory.
- The first movement is dominated by a famous four-note motive, and is heard in all four movements.
MIDDLE PERIOD

• SYMPHONIES
• Symphony No. 5 (1807–8)
  • The symphony has a transition (with the timpani)
  • playing the motive) between the scherzo and the final movement.
• The entrance of the full orchestra at the beginning of the final movement includes the trombones on a C-major chord
• Beethoven adds piccolo and contrabassoon.
MIDDLE PERIOD

- SYMPHONIES
- Symphony No. 6 (the Pastoral, 1808)
- “Programmatic” symphony
- Each of the movements has a title describing life in the country.
- The woodwinds imitate birdcalls in the coda of the second movement
- An extra movement (Storm) precedes the finale.
LATE PERIOD
LATE PERIOD

- His deafness became increasingly profound: went further into isolation, and became suspicious of friends.
- Suffered from family problems, ill health, and fear of poverty.
- Abandoned the “heroic” style of middle period.
- Vienna suffered from a repressive government instituted by Count Metternich.
- Vienna’s postwar depression made it difficult to produce large-scale works.
LATE PERIOD

- LATE STYLE
- Works suggest they were to be studied as well as played
- Establishes tradition that a performer must seek out the composer’s vision
- Introspective mood; dense and concentrated musical language
LATE PERIOD

- LATE STYLE
- Classical forms remained, but were subject to great expansion and upheaval, featuring a high degree of contrast
- Variation structures focused on the substance of a theme.
LATE PERIOD

- LATE STYLE
- Emphasis on **continuity**: blurred divisions between phrases; successive movements are often played without pause.
- Creates **song cycle** with *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved), which songs sung without breaks.
LATE PERIOD

- LATE STYLE
- Explored unusual sonorities and ranges in late works
- Works featuring imitative counterpoint and fugues
- Often altered the tradition number and arrangement of the movements.
LATE PERIOD

- **String Quartet in C-sharp Minor, Op. 131**
- Beethoven thought this was his greatest quartet.
- Typical of many late works, this quartet appeals primarily to the connoisseur.
LATE PERIOD

- **String Quartet in C-sharp Minor, Op. 131**
- The work has 7 movements played without breaks

1. Fugue in C-sharp minor
2. Sonata-rondo in D major
3. Recitative in B minor
4. Theme and variations in A major
5. Scherzo in E major
6. Introduction in G-sharp minor
7. Sonata form in C-sharp minor
LATE PERIOD

- The late period include two major public works:
  - Missa solemnis
  - Symphony No. 9
LATE PERIOD

- The late period include two major public works:
  - Missa solemnis
  - Intended as a mass for the elevation of Archduke Rudolph to archbishop
  - Too long for liturgical use
  - 5 movements are unified into a symphonic structure
  - Functions as a concert piece
LATE PERIOD

- The late period include two major public works:
  - **Symphony No. 9 (1824)**
  - The first three movements, lasting more than an hour, are on a **grand scale**
  - The final movement follows an **unorthodox format**
  - Innovation of the use of **voices** in the finale, to set Schiller’s poem *Ode to Joy*
BEETHOVEN: CULTURAL HERO

- Life story defines the *Romantic view of the “outcast” artist*
- Many of his works were immediately *popular* and remain central to the performing repertoires of soloists and ensembles
- Beethoven greatly *influenced later composers*
BEETHOVEN: CULTURAL HERO
THE ROMANTIC GENERATION
Political upheavals of 1789–1815 brought about numerous changes.

Ideas of liberty, equality, and national identity spread across Europe.

The Congress of Vienna (1814–15) redefined national boundaries.

Nationalistic feelings became more pronounced.

Composers incorporated national traits in song, opera, and instrumental music.
THE NEW ORDER

- Patronage dwindled as the aristocracy declined
- Merchants and entrepreneurs became economic leaders
- Music-making became an important outlet for the middle class
THE NEW ORDER

- Musicians turned to public performance, teaching, and composing for commissions and publication for money
- Virtuoso performers, such as violinist Nicolò Paganini and pianist Fryderyk Chopin, were among the most prominent musicians.
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THE NEW ORDER

- Music was used for **social control**
- State-sponsored operas carried **political messages**
- Churches and factories created amateur ensembles for **diversion**
- Music kept **women occupied** at home
THE NEW ORDER

- The piano became a central part of the home
- Many women played the piano
- Pianist-composers, like Chopin and Liszt, gave lessons to wealthy women
- Most women used piano-playing for social purposes

- A number of professional women pianists appeared in the early nineteenth century, such as Clara Wieck.
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ROMANTICISM

• The division between the Classic and Romantic periods have been viewed in a variety of ways

• It can be seen as starting with Beethoven’s *Eroica* (1803) or

• Circa 1815
ROMANTICISM

- The term “romantic” has several meanings.
- From the medieval romance: a poem or tale about **heroic events** or persons.
- Connoted something **distant, legendary, and fantastic**
- Suggested something **imaginary**, far away from reality
ROMANTICISM

• The focus was on the *individuality* of expression
• *Not bound by rules and limits*, expressed insatiable longing and the richness of nature.
In the nineteenth century, the term was applied to literature, music, and art. The term contrasted with "classic," which was applied to things considered objectively beautiful.
ROMANTICISM

- In a society newly driven by technology, Romanticism provided refuge in
  - The past (rather than the techno present)
  - The supernatural (rather than the natural)
  - The irrational (rather than the rational)
  - The exotic (rather than the prosaic)
  - Solitude (rather than society)
ROMANTICISM

- With the rise of a “national” concept, Romanticism viewed the embodiment of the nation in
  - Myths (esp. national myths)
  - The “folk” (common people, esp. peasants)
ROMANTICISM

- In a capitalist society, artists began pursuing their dreams not for money but for art
  - Dreams (rather than reality)
ROMANTICISM

- **Music** was seen as the “ideal art”
- Instrumental music was seen as the ideal art because it was **free from words and images**
ROMANTICISM

- Distinctions were made between types of instrumental music:
  - **Absolute music** refers to music with no programmatic or descriptive aspects
  - **Programmatic music** recounts a story, which is often given in an accompanying text
  - **Character piece** suggests a mood, personality, or scene that is usually indicated in the title
ABSOLUTE MUSIC

- **ORGANICISM**
- The poet Goethe argued that artists should unify their works like a plant metamorphosis; **all the parts** should derive from a **common source**
- In music, the **organic relationship** of themes, sections, and movements is more important than rhetorical structure or persuasive force.
- Motivic links contribute more to **unity** than a harmonic plan or conventional form.
Many composers were also writers or had friends who were writers

Instrumental pieces were often linked to literary works

Literary associations often led to musical innovations that enhanced the appeal of the composition

Literary associations and descriptive titles were added after a work was created
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- First master of the Romantic Lied
- Born and spent his entire career in Vienna
- Composed with great speed: wrote over 140 songs in 1815.
- Composed over 600 Lieder
- Many of his songs were performed at “Schubertiads,” home concerts for friends
- Never secured a patron and lived off of his publications
- Died at the age of 31, possibly from syphilis.
The Lied

- The ballad was a new type of Lied whose subject was usually a romantic adventure or supernatural incident.
- Length of ballads encouraged composers to vary the musical material.
- And the role of the piano changed from accompaniment to equal partner in illustrating the story of the poem.
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- Schubert set poetry by many poets
- Attempted to make the music equal to the words
- Wrote two song cycles on poems by Wilhelm Müller
  - *Die schöne Müllerin* (The Pretty Miller-Maid, 1823)
  - *Winterreise* (Winter’s Journey, 1827)
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- Song forms:
  - Strophic
  - Modified strophic
  - Ternary form (ABA)
  - Bar form (AAB)
  - Through-composed
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- HARMONY
- Uses harmony to reinforce the mood and meaning of the poetry
- Some settings are deliberately harmonically simple
- Characteristic technique is to mix minor and modes
- Many songs have complex modulations
- Modulations by third rather than by fifth are frequent in Schubert’s works.
- Schubert’s harmonic practice greatly influenced later composers.
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- PIANO MUSIC
- Style exemplified by short lyrical pieces. Such as the *Moments musicaux* (1823–28) and the 8 *Impromptus* (1827)
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- PIANO MUSIC
- 11 sonatas show a conflict between his song-inspired style and the demands of a multi-movement sonata.
- Themes tend to be expansive melodies that do not lend themselves to thematic development
- Sonata-form movements use three keys in the exposition
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

- ORCHESTRAL MUSIC
- Maintained the outward form of a symphony, but infused it with the new Romantic style
  - Tuneful melodies
  - Adventurous harmonies
  - Colorful instrumentation
  - Strong contrasts
  - Heightened emotions
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- ORCHESTRAL MUSIC
- “Unfinished” Symphony (1822)
- “Great” C major Symphony (1825)
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

• ORCHESTRAL MUSIC
• “Unfinished” Symphony (1822)
  ◦ Only completed only two of the planned four movements.
• “Great” C major Symphony (1825)
  ◦ Blends Romantic lyricism and Beethovenian drama within an expanded Classic form
  ◦ 3-key exposition: C major, E minor, G major
• None of these performed during his lifetime
ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- Wanted to be a concert pianist but injured his hand.
- Turned to composition and criticism, as the editor of *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (New Journal of Music) from 1834-44
- Opposed empty virtuosity and urged the study of older music
ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- Prior to 1840, all of Schumann’s published music was for piano
- Short character pieces, often grouped in sets with colorful names.
  - Papillons
  - Carnaval
  - Fantasiestücke
  - Kinderscenen
  - Kreisleriana
ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- Most important composer of Lieder after Schubert
- Schumann’s song-writing was inspired both emotionally and financially by an impending marriage to Clara Wieck
- In 1840, Schumann composed over 120 songs and married Clara Wieck, an outstanding pianist and composer
CLARA WIECK
ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- Believed that the piano and voice were equal partners and often gave the piano long preludes, interludes, or postludes.
- Often used a single figuration to convey a central emotion or idea in a poem.
ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- Suffered from hallucinations and tried to commit suicide in 1854
- Was confined to an asylum and died in 1856
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Born near Warsaw in Poland.
- Moved to Paris in 1831.
- Met leading musicians in Paris
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Had a tempestuous nine-year affair with novelist George Sand (the pseudonym of Aurore Dudevant)
GEORGE SAND
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Died from tuberculosis in 1849
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- His idiomatic writing opened new possibilities for the piano that appealed to both amateurs and connoisseur.
- Wrote almost exclusively for the piano, including:
  - 200 solo piano pieces
  - 6 works for piano and orchestra
  - 20 songs
  - 4 chamber works with piano
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Important works:
  - The first with significant artistic content and can be called “concert études”
  - In all the major and minor keys.
  - Brief mood pieces illustrate an astounding inventiveness of figuration
  - Rich chromatic harmonies and the varied textures influenced many later composers.
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Important works:
  - Dances:
    - Polonaises
    - Mazurkas
    - Waltzes
  - Nocturnes (“Night pieces”)
  - Modeled on the nocturnes of the Irish pianist-composer John Field (1782–1837).
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Important works:
  - Ballades and scherzos are longer and more demanding than Chopin’s other piano works.

- Ballades
  - Chopin first to use the name for an instrumental work.
  - Based on Polish narrative ballads.

- Scherzos
  - The scherzos are not playful, but serious
  - Tricky and quirky, particularly in their rhythm and thematic material.
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FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

- Important works:
  - 3 Piano Sonatas
  - Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor, Op. 35, includes the famous funeral march
CHOPIN’S ACHIEVEMENT

- Concentration on piano music only
- Creation of an idiomatic piano sound
- Mix of virtuosity with elegant lyricism
- Incorporation of Polish nationalistic traits
- Originality in melody, harmony, and pianism
- Appeal to both amateurs and connoisseurs
THE ORCHESTRA
THE ORCHESTRA

- The number of orchestras increased rapidly in the nineteenth century
- Professional orchestras were established
  - London Philharmonic (founded 1813)
  - New York Philharmonic (1842)
  - Vienna Philharmonic (1842)
THE ORCHESTRA

- Most major European and American cities had orchestras by the end of the century.
- Orchestras also appeared in opera houses, theaters, cafes, and dance halls.
- During the century, the size of the orchestras increased from about 40 players to as many as 90.
THE ORCHESTRA

- Some orchestras consisted of amateurs only
THE ORCHESTRA

- Changes were introduced to wind instruments
- Flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons acquired elaborate systems of keys, enabling them to play faster and better in tune
- Horns and trumpets added valves, enabling them to reach chromatic notes
THE ORCHESTRA

- The **piccolo**, **English horn**, **bass clarinet**, and **contrabassoon** were used occasionally.
- **Tubas** began to appear in orchestras in the 1830s
- The **bass drum**, **triangle**, and other **percussion instruments** were used in some works
- The new, fully **chromatic pedal harp** was also added
THE ORCHESTRA

- In the eighteenth century, a violin or harpsichord player led the orchestra.
- A conductor took over these duties in the nineteenth century using a baton to beat time and cued entrances.
- By the 1840s, conductors like Louis Jullien began to assert themselves as interpreters of music and became stars in their own right.
CONCERTS and the CANON

- In the 1780s, about 85 percent of the pieces performed by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra were newly composed.
- By 1879, nearly 75 percent of the repertoire was from earlier generations.
CONCERTS and the CANON

- The shadow of Beethoven’s orchestral masterpieces touched almost all later composers.
- Some composers, such as Haydn and Mozart, achieved such popularity during their life that their music continued to be performed.
- Critics used music of the past to measure contemporary music.
- Many performers established themselves as interpreters of past music.
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- Born in southeastern France, he taught himself harmony and began composing in his teens
- Played flute and guitar, but not piano
- Won the Prix de Rome from the Paris Conservatoire in 1830
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- One of the most literary of composers (loves Shakespeare and Walter Scott) he often based his compositions on great works of literature
  - *Roméo et Juliette* (Shakespeare)
  - *Harold en Italie* (Byron)
  - *Les Troyens* (Virgil)
  - *Béatrice et Bénédict* (Shakespeare)
  - *La damnation de Faust* (Goethe)
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

• Sees Irish actress Harriet Smithson as Ophelia in English-language production of Hamlet

• Becomes infatuated with her: they marry, but soon divorce
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- Used musical criticism as his chief profession.
- Produced his own concerts, and later became a conductor
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- *Symphonie fantastique* (1830)
- A 5-movement symphony
- Berlioz subtitled the work “*Episode in the Life of an Artist*” and wrote a program for the work
- Inspired by relationship with Smithson, deals with the passions aroused for a woman.
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- **Symphonie fantastique** (1830)
  - 1. “Dreams and passions”
    - Introduction with sonata form
  - 2. “At a Ball”
    - Waltz
  - 3. “In the Country”
    - Pastoral dialogue with piping shepherds
  - 4. “March to the Scaffold”
    - Nightmare about the Artist’s execution
  - 5. “Witches’ Sabbath”
    - Nightmare about his love as the leader of a coven
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- *Symphonie fantastique* (1830)
- Berlioz employs a recurring melody, which he called the *idée fixe* (fixed idea) representing the hero’s beloved
- The theme appears in each movement and is transformed to suit the mood and situation of the story
- It is first heard as the extended first theme of the first movement
HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

- *Symphonie fantastique* (1830)
- Originality of *Symphonie fantastique* in using the symphony for a narrative
- Unifying a work through a recurring theme and its developmental transformation
- Astonishing array of instrumental timbres
BERLIOZ’S ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Symphonie fantastique* and other works made him the leader of the radicals in the Romantic era.
- All subsequent composers of program music were indebted to him.
- *Idée fixe* inspired other cyclical works in the century.
BERLIOZ’S ACHIEVEMENTS

• Enriched orchestral music with new harmonies, *timbres*, expression, and form
• His orchestration initiated an era in which instrumental color rivaled harmony and melody as *expressive tools* for composers
• Wrote the first book on orchestration: *Treatise on Instrumentation and Orchestration* (1843)
• The *Grande symphonie funèbre et triomphale* (1840), for military band is one of the early masterpieces of *band music*