

# **Concert Masterworks**

## **Part I**

**Mozart: *Piano Concerto No. 25***

**Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 5***

**Professor Robert Greenberg**



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Robert Greenberg has composed over forty works for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal ensembles. Recent performances of Greenberg's work have taken place in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and The Netherlands, where his *Child's Play* for String Quartet was performed at the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam in 1993. Greenberg holds degrees from Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in music composition in 1984. His principal teachers were Edward Cone, Claudio Spies, Andrew Imbrie, and Olly Wilson. Professor Greenberg's awards include three Nicola De Lorenzo Prizes in composition, three Meet the Composer grants, and commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, the Alexander String Quartet, XTET, and the Dancer's Stage Ballet Company. He is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he is chair of the department of music history and literature and director of curriculum of the Adult Extension Division. Greenberg is creator, host, and lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony's "Discovery Series." Greenberg has taught and lectured extensively across North America and Europe, speaking to such corporations and musical institutions as the Van Cliburn Foundation, Arthur Andersen, Bechtel Investments, the Shaklee Corporation, the University of California/Haas School of Business Executive Seminar, the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, the Texas Association of Symphony Orchestras, and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Greenberg's work as a teacher and lecturer has been profiled in the *Wall Street Journal, Inc.* magazine, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Greenberg is an artistic co-director and board member of COMPOSERS INC. His music is published by Fallen Leaf Press and CPP/Belwin and is recorded on the Innova label.

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## **The Classical Piano Concerto:**

**Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 (1786)**

**Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Op. 73 “Emperor” (1809)**

### **Scope:**

The piano concerto, a large, multi-movement composition for piano and orchestra, emerged during the late eighteenth century during a musical period referred to as the “Classical Era.” The lectures in this Concert Masterworks volume will examine the classical piano concerto in general and two exemplary works of Mozart and Beethoven in particular. Supporting our investigation will be considerations of the lives and character of each composer and of the times in which they lived. Topics for discussion will include the Enlightenment, the classical aesthetic ideal, and the Viennese piano (or “fortepiano”). We will look at the Classical Era and its development of pertinent musical forms and trace the evolution of the featured instrument, the piano, during this fascinating period in musical history. Finally, we will consider the place of Mozart’s and Beethoven’s piano concerti within the scope of their overall musical output.

Although he admittedly had his antecedents, we credit Mozart as being the “father” of the piano concerto. Most of his 27 piano concerti are of such stunning compositional quality and expressive breadth that they both set the standard by which piano concerti were measured and served as models for generations of composers. During the final decade of Mozart’s life, which he spent in Vienna, he wrote more piano concerti (seventeen) than any other type of long composition.

No one was more influenced by Mozart’s piano concerti than Beethoven. His own piano concerti, though rooted in “classical” practice, transformed the genre from the relatively civil, conversational works of eighteenth-century Classicism into the dramatic and heroic works of nineteenth-century Romanticism. In this Beethoven and his art are mirrors of his age. While Mozart had lived to see the French Revolution, he was spared its excesses; he died almost a year before the abolition of the monarchy in France and the subsequent execution of Louis XVI. Beethoven, on the other hand, lived to see these events overshadowed by the rise and fall of Napoleon, and followed by the stirrings of modern nationalism.

Our focus for the development of the classical era piano concerto will be on Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 (1786), and Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Op. 73 (1809). The emphasis of these lectures will be on the musical substance of the concerti themselves—their formal structure, thematic relationships, expressive content, and the role of the piano soloist.

In the Mozart lectures, we will examine the role of Enlightenment philosophy in the development of classicism in music. We will consider Mozart’s life and development as a musician, and his career as a performer and composer. Along the way, we will look at the development of the piano, contrasting it with the harpsichord from which it evolved. The fact that Mozart began playing the harpsichord and only later took up the piano is significant.

We will discuss form in music, particularly sonata-allegro and sonata-rondo form. We will see how Mozart uses these forms as he develops and transforms his themes from one movement of his concerto through the next, in a process of elaboration that relates, but does not repeat the thematic material. We will examine this process in some detail with the aid of the “Word Score,” a kind of “talking through” the music that helps us appreciate what is going on from one passage to the next. In the end we will learn that what Mozart does in the three distinct movements of his concerto is to unify the whole in a creative and satisfying manner.

This 25<sup>th</sup> piano concerto is a supreme example of Mozart’s musical genius. It contains extraordinary melodic wealth, exhibits developmental coherence, and is constructed with structural precision. In it Mozart exhibits superb good taste; the concerto is beautifully proportioned, coherent in intent, and expressive in content. In short, it is a work of pianistic brilliance.

In the Beethoven lectures we will also consider the composer’s life and times. We will see Beethoven develop as a child of the new humanism, and as a pianist, first and foremost. We will also learn of the further developments in piano design and construction, and Beethoven’s role in those developments as both a performer and composer. We will discover that Beethoven’s relationship to the piano was very different from that of his older contemporary, Mozart. Indeed, Beethoven’s relationship to Vienna and the musical world there, while having parallels with Mozart’s career, is distinctly different.

Although Beethoven uses the same classical forms in his work as Mozart, what he does both with those forms and with the piano will revolutionize concerto writing ever after. We will learn about Beethoven's heroic period and how he establishes a new relationship between the solo piano and the orchestra. In addition, we will develop an appreciation for Beethoven's use of both melodic and harmonic structures, and how he manipulates the concept of harmonic pitch to create a stunning new effect that continues to delight concertgoers today.

Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> concerto is a revolutionary work written in a revolutionary time. The composer's vision of the piano was a far cry from that of his contemporaries. The "Emperor" is a theatrical work in which the relationship of the piano as a character, to the orchestra as a character realizes the operatic ideal in the music of Beethoven's heroic period.

The Classical Era represents the pinnacle in the development of a musical form that continues to provide hours of enjoyment for audiences today. As such, it not only merits our attention, but also provides us with a fascinating glimpse into the lives and times of two of history's greatest composers. Through our study we share in the excitement of the evolution of the pianos and of the compositions of the age. Best of all, by examining the process of composition in close detail, we get a sense of "being there" as Mozart and Beethoven craft their works.

## Mozart, Lectures One - Four

### The Classical Piano Concerto: Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 (1786)

#### Outline

- I. Classicism in music emerges out of the Age of Enlightenment. We understand music to be a mirror of the social, political, economic, and cultural world of the composer. Since the Age of Enlightenment, Western musical style has exhibited constant, accelerating change.
  - A. The Enlightenment is really a social *evolution*, affecting European religious, political, social, educational, industrial, economic, and artistic institutions.
  - B. The middle class emerges as society adjusts its focus downward from the high clergy and aristocracy.
    - 1. Trade becomes increasingly important as a basis for wealth.
    - 2. The Industrial Revolution also begins to have an impact on socioeconomic structures.
  - C. The concept of the individual person as the basic societal unit emerges.
  - D. Enlightenment humanism postulates the idea that each individual has certain unalienable rights.
    - 1. The aristocracy as well as the middle class embraces this idea.
    - 2. Aristocratic cooperation in the humanistic advance of the middle class is necessary, at least until 1789, when the French Revolution shatters aristocratic power.
  - E. What are the effects of this Enlightenment humanism?
    - 1. The middle class wants education, political power, self-determination, religious and social justice, and an improved quality of life.
    - 2. Growing leisure time results in a demand for entertainment, such as music. We see the beginnings of a genuine musical consumerism and commercial industry.
    - 3. That institution which creates the greatest good for the greatest number is deemed to be a “good” institution. Musical composition evolves to appeal to a broader audience.
    - 4. The arts in general and music specifically are measured by their relevance and accessibility to the idealized, “natural,” individual person. As a result, the Classical era sees
      - a. the perceived complexity of Baroque Era music rejected as hopelessly complex, elitist, and irrelevant to both connoisseur and musician; and
      - b. the development of an elegant, vocally conceived musical style of composition in tune with the new Enlightenment values, known as the “Viennese Classical Style.”
- II. A child prodigy, Wolfgang Christian Gottlieb (“Amadeus”) Mozart is born in Salzburg, Austria, in 1756; he dies in Vienna in 1791.
  - A. Mozart’s father, Leopold, a leading court musician of considerable accomplishment, becomes Wolfgang’s teacher, protector, valet, manager, and disciplinarian.
  - B. Leopold recognizes Wolfgang’s precocious talent, which is considerable.
    - 1. The young Mozart plays the violin and harpsichord at the age of four.
    - 2. At the age of five, he has begun to compose.
    - 3. By the age of seven, he is going on concert tours, managed by his father.
  - C. Leopold’s advice to his son does not sit well with the young man; the father’s somewhat heavy-handed attitude toward his son probably plays a role in Wolfgang’s leaving Salzburg.
  - D. Mozart spent the years 1781–1791 in Vienna.
- III. Mozart wrote a total of twenty-seven piano concerti.
  - A. Nos. 1–4 were arrangements of earlier works and are considered juvenilia.
  - B. Nos. 5–10 were composed between 1782 and 1779 in Salzburg.
  - C. Of the many works Mozart wrote in Vienna, the seventeen piano concertos (Nos. 11–27) were the most numerous. This is in part due to the fact that Mozart, an accomplished keyboard artist, wrote them largely as a vehicle for his own performance.

1. Today Mozart's many compositions are identified by their "K" numbers, a reference to Ludwig Köchel, who catalogued them chronologically in the 1850s and 1860s.
2. The piano concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503, was composed in 1786, between the writing of *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*.

**IV.** Before we get on to Mozart's concerto, let us briefly examine the development of the piano as a musical instrument.

- A. The piano was invented by Florentine harpsichord builder Bartolomeo Cristofori, c. 1709. He called his new instrument a *gravicembalo col piano e forte*, or, "big harpsichord with soft and loud."
- B. The major difference between the piano and its predecessor, the harpsichord, lies in the manner in which each creates sound.
  1. In the harpsichord, the strings are plucked, creating a somewhat tinkly or tinny sound, with no dynamic variation.
  2. In the piano, the strings are struck by a hammer. Not only does this produce a richer, more vibrant tone, but it also allows for dynamic variation (louder or softer sound) depending on the speed at which the keys are depressed.
  3. The piano has a damper, allowing the strings to resonate until the damper is engaged.
- C. In a number of ways, early pianos shared features of the harpsichord.
  1. Each had wooden harps across which the strings were strung, thus limiting the number and type of strings according to the amount of tension a wooden harp can sustain. This contributed to the quiet and tinny sound of the early pianos.
  2. They had small sounding boards of limited sonorous power.
  3. They possessed an extremely light action, conducive to fast passage work.
- D. The piano becomes Mozart's instrument of choice during the early 1770s.
  1. Mozart begins his performing career as a harpsichordist.
  2. Mozart eagerly follows improvements in piano design and construction.
  3. Mozart's own performing experience and the limitations of the early piano profoundly influenced his composing.

**V.** We will now examine in detail Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503.

- A. Let us begin with a discussion of form in music, a cultural given in much the same way that a baseball game has a recognizable form. Although anything is possible within a given form, structure provides a recognizable framework within which a game is played or a composer works.
  1. Most long, single compositions consist of a number of large sections called movements.
    - a. A piano concerto typically has three movements.
    - b. A symphony typically has four.
  2. Sonata-allegro (or, simply, sonata) form is an adaptation of operatic action into instrumental form. This action introduces contrasting characters, has them interact, and separates them in a moment of truth. This instrumental music form consists of
    - a. an exposition, in which the themes are introduced;
    - b. a development section, in which the themes interact;
    - c. a recapitulation, in which the themes are revisited; and
    - d. a coda, which brings the movement to a conclusion.
- B. The first movement of Mozart's Twenty-fifth Piano Concerto is the longest he ever wrote. It displays his use of double exposition form, an adaptation of sonata form in which the soloist does not just repeat themes one and two, but has his own version of them as themes three and four.
  1. Exposition one is provided by the orchestra.
    - a. Theme 1 appears in the dark-sounding key of c minor. The theme is triadic, simple, squarely marchlike, and somewhat unexpected, given the stated key of C Major.
    - b. Theme 2, sinuous and chromatic, is built upon elements of Theme 1.
  2. Exposition two in a double exposition form belongs to the soloist.
    - a. Theme 3, gentle and sweet, combines aspects of both themes 1 and 2 in the contrasting key of E<sup>b</sup> Major.
    - b. Theme 4, almost triadic, simple and square like Theme 1, also alternates between major and minor.

3. These four melodies represent but twenty per cent of Mozart's art. The rest consists in his systematic process of elaboration from theme to theme, and, indeed, from movement to movement throughout the concerto.
  4. The movement begins with an introduction that ends in such a way as to afford the composer great flexibility.
    - a. It begins with a majestic opening in C Major, followed by
    - b. a surprising and profoundly expressive shift to c minor, and
    - c. concludes with the establishment and, ultimately, pervasive use of a rhythm of three rapidly repeated notes, preceded by a pause).
  5. The concerto should be a vehicle for the solo instrument, but not to the extent that it obscures the larger structure of the piece in its progressive elaboration. Thus, the development section is
    - a. collaborative in mood and
    - b. emphasizes Theme 1 and the three-note rhythm.
  6. Finally, the movement ends with the recapitulation, cadenza, and coda.
    - a. The recapitulation reconciles the two expositions. As the development emphasized Theme 1, the recapitulation begins with Themes 3 and 4.
    - b. The cadenza is an unaccompanied solo for the featured instrument. In Mozart's day, it was typical for the soloist to improvise the cadenza; thus, we do not know how Mozart would have played it. In fact, the composer did not even write out large sections of the second movement piano part!
    - c. After the cadenza, the coda brings the movement to its conclusion. Here, Mozart cleverly brings in Theme 2, as it was left out of the recapitulation, *and* it is this theme which Mozart will soon revisit in movement two.
- C. The second movement is a cantilena, a small, beautiful song.
1. The process of thematic elaboration continues in an elaborative tour de force! In this as in Mozart's other piano concerti, the relationship between piano and orchestra is collaborative and friendly, largely because of the small sound of Mozart's pianos.
  2. Theme A, Part 1, consists of three phrases:
    - a. Phrase 1 begins simply and in a declamatory manner and is immediately embellished.
    - b. Phrase 2 is a graceful, rising-falling motive, also immediately embellished.
    - c. Phrase 3 consists of closing material drawn directly from Theme 2 of Movement One, thus providing a bridge between these two movements.
  3. Subsequent appearances of the cantilena theme exhibit ever more elaboration and embellishment.
  4. Theme A, Part 2, consists of a light, trilly, *opera buffa* (comic opera)-style patter melody providing a slight but welcome contrast with the more lyric Part 1.
    - a. Comic opera was understood as a contrast to the previous Baroque period in which more aristocratic themes prevailed.
    - b. A patter song contained rapid dialogue associated with lower- class characters, for example, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*.
  5. The movement ends with cadential material drawn from Movement One, consisting, as it does, of the opening three-note rhythm.
- D. Movement Three concludes this piece in Rondo Form, and, like Movement Two, this movement is clearly related to Movement One.
1. Rondo Form emphasizes a periodic thematic return. Here, we return four times to Theme A, with contrasting material in the form of Themes B, C, and D.
  2. Rondo Theme A begins with a downbeat.
    - a. It is a deceptively simple-sounding theme of great rhythmic and expressive complexity. It ambiguously alternates in its feel of counting between twos and threes.
    - b. Its sudden and unexpected shift towards c minor echoes that same harmonic shift during the opening of Movement One.
  3. Theme B, a graceful, busy theme in the piano and winds, anticipates a greatly satisfying return to the rondo theme (A).
  4. The minor, dramatic, and operatic Theme C alters the mood entirely.
    - a. It provides an extreme contrast to the rest of the material and to Theme D.

- b.** It powerfully explores the darker expressive elements that have thus far been represented by c minor in both Movements One and Three.
- 5.** Theme D follows immediately on the heels of Theme C, richly accompanied by descending strings.
  - a.** In its day the extreme contrast between themes C and D provided a kind of sensory overload to which we have become somewhat inured today.
  - b.** Lyric and gorgeous, Theme D instantly dispels the darkness created by Theme C.
- 6.** Recurrences of Theme A, bold and obvious, provide unity for all the related but contrasting varietal elements.

# WordScore Guide™: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

## Piano Concerto No.25 in C Major, KV.503 (1786)

### MOVEMENT I

"Allegro Maestoso", double exposition form, duple meter

#### Exposition I

##### Introduction

Majestic, powerful opening fanfare begins the concerto on a royal and heroic note; fanfare outlines the tonic (C major) harmony

C Major (I) etc. (V<sub>6</sub>) etc.

7

A serene, pastoral phrase is heard between the bassoon and oboe, immediately presenting, as it does, the more tender, "feminine" side of the music

26

Back to triumphant C major! As suddenly as it came, the minor mood gives way to major

motive in lower strings; scurrying violins f  
motive in violins, scurrying lower strings f  
motive takes over entirely f  
modulatory

51

##### Theme 1

Melodically simple but harmonically (tonally) complex theme, vaguely march-like and initially distant begins with the same motive that the Introduction concluded with

a  
violins  
c minor!  
p

66

##### Cadence/

##### Transition

Jubilant music loudly proclaims "C major" using the motive

the "clouds" of c minor clear instantly!

a<sup>1</sup>

oboes/horns C Major (note graceful countermelody in the flute)

f

9

The opening fanfare returns; it now outlines the dominant (G major) harmony

(V)  
*f*

15

The serene, pastoral exchange between the oboe and bassoon occurs again, softening the tone of the music

(I)  
*p*

17

A sudden shift of mode from C major to c minor clouds the musical sky "The happy, triumphant face shows itself as that of a soul which has suffered and remembers it."\*

- C. Girdlestone

18

A rising motive introduces an important rhythmic figure: 3 fast repeated notes (γ ♪ ♪ ♪); quietly, the minor, melancholy mood works itself out



41

the energy veritably overflows as scurrying 2nd violins join the fray!

*f*

44

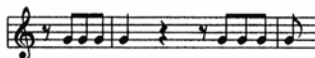
Long, 2 octave descent in the violins

c  
a  
h  
d  
o  
r  
n  
d  
c  
s

Another 2 octave descent

c  
a  
h  
d  
o  
r  
n  
d  
c  
s

An orchestral unison on p the pitch "G" ends the introduction; repeated in the γ ♪ ♪ ♪ rhythm twice



71

### Theme 2

Sinuous and chromatic, this theme is both more "complex" and less rhythmically square than Theme 1



**a**  
violins  
C Major  
*p*

**a<sup>1</sup>**  
winds  
C Major  
*p*

82

### Cadence Material

γ ♪ ♪ ♪ motives are quietly handied about between the violins and double reeds over a lightly pulsing accompaniment

*p*

C  
C  
A  
L  
D  
O  
E  
S  
N  
E  
C  
D  
E

*f*  
C Major

(\* Mozart's "tragic" c minor piano concerto, No. 24, was completed the previous spring and was undoubtedly still in Mozart's "ear")

"The movement" has arrived, and we have a good question: how shall the "star" (soloist) make its entrance? Should the piano enter with bombast and majesty, as the movement began (difficult on a Mozart-era piano)? Should it enter playing the first theme? Forcefully? Timidly?

**91**

### Piano entry/interlude

The piano is begin coy; after a moment's silence the strings go fetch it with a trilly little invitation

*p*

**92**

The piano replies tentatively, with a shy, upper register motive

*p*

**93**

the strings again attempt to nudge the piano onto center stage

*p*

## **Exposition 2**

(after the initial 24 ms., this "solo" exposition follows a very different path than that of the "orchestral" exposition)

**112**

### Introduction

The majestic, powerful opening fanfare returns

C Major (I)

*f*

**118**

The serene, pastoral bassoon/oboe phrase is elaborately embellished by the

piano

(V6)

*p*

**120**

The majestic opening fanfare is played by winds and brass only; alternating piano chords fill the gap

(V)

**126**

The serene oboe/bassoon phrase is again embellished by the piano

(I)

*p*

**146**

### Theme 3 (Piano Theme 1)

Introduction/transition

The piano gracefully exits c minor and modulates to E<sup>b</sup>

Major, all the while using ♪ motives!

**148**

The piano, momentarily free of the orchestra, sings a rich, gentle and lilting theme of its own; note that the 2nd 1/2 of the theme is based on the ♪ ♪ ♪ motive



E<sup>b</sup> Major

*p*

**187**

### Virtuosic piano episode

fast, virtuosic passage work in the piano is supported by quiet strings

(G major)

*p*

**195**

Wind interlude (acts to punctuate this otherwise rhapsodic, piano dominated episode)

*p*

**198**

Virtuosic piano figurations resume, with quiet string support

*p*

**202**

Wind interlude (shorter than before)

*p*

94

The piano responds a bit more confidently  
*p*

95

One last invitation from the strings concludes in a closed cadence; the piano is now on its own!  
*p*

96

Slowly the piano tests the musical waters, finally finding its voice with a soaring and balletic series of scales and figures

128

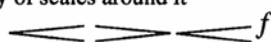
The sudden, darkening shift to c minor is now supported and elaborated by the piano

The rising motive characterized by the ♩ rhythm moves into the strings while the piano weaves an embroidery of scales around it

143

A ringing, dramatic open cadence (based on the ♩ rhythm)

octave A<sub>1</sub>'s in orchestra



162

#### Modulating Bridge

Fast, virtuosic passagework in the piano is quietly supported by winds and strings

170

#### Theme 4 (Piano Theme 2)

A light, simple theme, characterized by groups of repeated notes, more than a little reminiscent of Theme 1!



**a**  
piano  
G Major  
*p*

etc...

**a<sup>1</sup>**  
oboe/  
bassoon/flute  
G Major  
*p*

extended...

g → G  
minor Major

204



Virtuosic piano passage work resumes (note solo flute accompaniment)  
*p*

211


piano trill →

214


### Cadence Material

 motive in lower instruments; scurrying scales in the violins  $f$  →  motive in 1st violins; scurrying 2nd violins  $f$  →

## Development


*Theme 1 and the  are explored, with the piano and orchestra in total collaboration*

228

**PART 1:** The piano momentarily continues the  rhythm/motive which concluded Expo 2, effectively bridging the Exposition and Development sections

230

**PART 2:** Theme 1 is heard in the piano for the first time  
piano  
**a**  
e minor  
 $p$

brief episode  
features  motives in the double reeds and "turns" in the piano  
 $p$

240

**PART 3: Theme 1**  
more fully scored  
winds  
**a**  
a minor  
 $p$

## Recapitulation

*more a mirror of Exposition 2 than 1, owing to the emphasis already placed on Theme 1 in the Development*

290

### Introduction

Majestic, powerful opening fanfare returns

C Major (I)  
 $f$

serene pastoral bassoon/oboe phrase

(V6)  
 $p$

the majestic opening fanfare is played quietly by winds and brass; alternating piano chords fill the gaps  
(V)

the serene bassoon/oboe phrase is embellished by the piano  
(I)

324

### Theme 3

The piano gracefully exits c minor and modulates to  $E^b$  major

326

momentarily free of the orchestra, the piano plays Theme 3

$E^b$  major → c minor →  
 $p$

extended

### Modulating Bridge

Fast, virtuosic passage work in the piano is quietly supported by strings; shorter than the bridge in Expo 2

222

long,  
2 octave  
descent  
in violins

c  
a  
h  
d  
o  
e  
r  
n  
d  
c  
s  
e

2 octave  
descent  
in violins  
and high  
winds

c  
a  
h  
d  
o  
e  
r  
n  
d  
c  
s  
e

orchestral unison sees pitch "G"  
repeated in ♩ rhythm; 2x

252

brief episode  
features ♩  
motives in the  
strings & winds  
*f* ➡ *p*

PART 4: Theme 1 is  
heard in an extended,  
sequential episode; the  
theme is elaborated  
increasingly by the  
piano; the orchestral  
accompaniment  
becomes increasingly  
dense and active

276

PART 5: A  
sequential series  
of upwards scales  
in the piano is  
followed by a  
series of rising  
arpeggios over a  
dominant ("G")  
pedal

strings  
piano

306

The sudden shift to  
minor is supported  
and elaborated by the  
piano

c minor  
(for the remainder of  
the introduction!)

The rising motive, charac-  
terized by the ♩  
rhythm moves into the  
strings, while the piano  
weaves an embroidery of  
delicate scales around it

piano  
arpeggios  
and scales

a ringing, dramatic  
open cadence (based  
on the ♩ rhythm)  
*f*

345

#### Theme 4

A chipper, lightly rhythmic theme  
is characterized by repeated notes

*a*  
C Major  
*p*

353

Flute/bassoon/oboe

*a*<sup>2</sup>  
C Major

A lengthy sequence  
based on the 4 re-  
peated notes extends  
and modulates the  
theme away from and  
then back to C major

360

### Theme 1

A quiet, but joyful version of the theme is heard over a bubbly piano trill  
oboe/horns

**a**

C Major

*p*

(note flute countermelody)

→ arpeggio

372

### Virtuosic episode

quietly accompanied by rising ♩ motives in the strings, piano launches into rhapsodic passage work

*p*

380

wind  
interlude  
*p*

399

### Cadence Material

♩ motive in lower instruments; scurrying scales in the violins

*f*

→

♩ motive in the violins; scurrying scales in the lower instruments

→

411

Stirring, martial fanfares announce the impending end of the movement

C Major  
*ff*

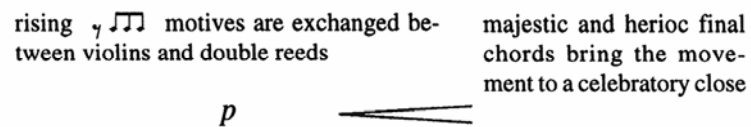
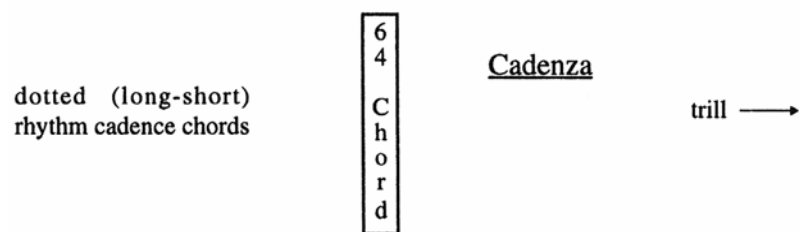
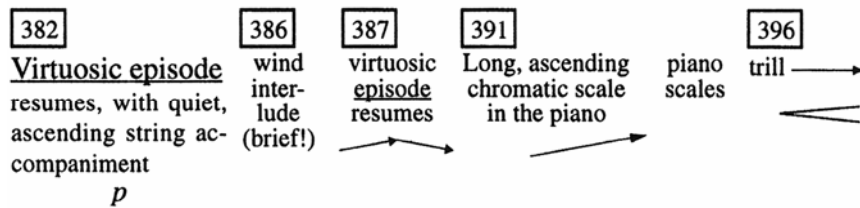
415

### Theme 2

Aha! One last bit of business: the sinuous Theme 2 makes its second (and last!) appearance in the strings

C Major  
*p*

(note: fanfarish trumpet and horns propel the music forward)



## MOVEMENT II

"Andante", triple meter

wind and piano cantilena, an endless succession of interconnected and brilliantly elaborated melody; a lyric movement of great and serious sweep and breadth

**A**

**PART 1:** A seamless, tender melody, built via elaboration of 2 measure units: triadic (3 note) descent, followed by a sustained note



**3**

**Elaboration:**

Faster, scalar descent followed by a melodic "turn"



**5**

graceful, rising/falling motive in the oboe/bassoon, followed by a faster, rising/falling flute



**13**

**PART 2:** Trilly, light, dance-like "buffa" melody in the 1st violins is accompanied by rustling 2nd violins; note the sharply contrasted dynamics – *p/f*, etc, which lends the theme its "buffa" quality

long, staccato descent in the 1st violin

trilling figure in the oboe & flute



**A<sup>1</sup>**

**PART 1:** The piano enters and extends the 3 parts of A considerably

**23**

triadic (3 note) descent, the sustained note and the subsequent elaboration is now in the piano

p  
F Major

**27**

graceful rising/falling motive remains in the winds; subsequent faster rising/falling scale is now in the piano

p

7

Elaboration:

graceful, rising/falling motive in the oboe/bassoon, followed by a more quickly rising flute



9

Concluding figure:

A brief (1 ms. long) figure is heard in a descending sequence 3x (figure is closely related to Theme 2 of Movement 1)



19

PART 3: Cadential Material

"horn call" motives in the horn and 1st violin alternate with ♩ (repeated note) motives (!) to close off this first large section of the movement

*p*

long staccato ascent in the flute and bassoon

31

Concluding figure

initially shared between the piano and winds

section is considerably extended by the solo piano into a "mini-theme"

the music modulated away from F major for the 1st time in the movement; it is the piano that effects this modulation

**43** | **Long Extension/ Episode**  
**PART 2:** initially as before; light, "buffa" dance tune is now in the piano C Major | **features piano and winds**  
 long, 4 octave descent in the piano | **48**  
 slowly rising  
 3 notes in strings and piano →

**63** |  
 orchestral tutti features triadic descents (like the opening of the movement) | piano plays a descent  
 2x  
 f ————— p

## A2

a combination of A and A'

**74** | **Concluding figure** | **86**  
**PART 1:** elaborated triadic descent, sustained note, and subsequent elaboration in the piano F Major | in piano and winds | **PART 2:** Light, "buffa" dance melody in the piano, with string accompaniment F Major  
 p | p | P

**102** |  
**PART 3:** "horn call" in the flute alternates with motive in the oboes and bassoons p →  
 "horn call" in horn and 1st violin alternates with motive in strings; note piano elaboration of harmonies p  
 brief, gentle wind descent pp  
 quiet piano ascent of 1 octave

trilly, upwards  
leaping tune in the  
piano is an exten-  
sion/elaboration  
of motives drawn  
from the "buffa"  
theme

series of rising/falling piano  
scales/arpeggios is accom-  
panied by the winds

piano  
trill

59

upwards reaching  
motives in the piano  
are accompanied by  
string harmonies

66

Concluding figure:  
gentle piano and flute  
version of the Con-  
cluding figure quickly  
gives way to

gently rippling piano  
arpeggios and wind  
motives are heard  
over a long dominant  
pedal

we await the reso-  
lution of the pedal

long, 5 octave  
descent in piano

extension/episode (shorter than before)

slowly  
rising 3  
notes in  
strings and  
piano

trilly, upwards  
leaping tune  
based on  
motives from  
the "buffa"  
melody

series of four  
upwards scales/  
arpeggios in the  
piano

piano  
trill

## MOVEMENT III

"Finale, Allegretto"; Rondo form, duple meter

**A**

### Rondo Theme

The quiet, restrained theme is drawn from a gavotte (dance) sequence from Mozart's 1781 opera, *Idomeneo*; though light in character, the theme lacks the joyful, "unbuttoned" quality of most rondo finale themes; note how complicated phrasing obscures the downbeat and renders the theme more substantial and complex in its impact

a  
strings  
C Major  
p

winds      strings  
b      a<sup>1</sup>

**B**

33

The piano entry quickly develops into a virtuosic solo episode  
C Major

40

upwards reaching motives in the piano

44

upwards moving triplet arpeggios in the pianist's left hand; note string accomp.

47

descending triplet arpeggios in the pianist's right hand

a sequence of rising/falling arpeggios in the piano is accompanied, sparingly, by the strings

moves towards key of V (G)

17

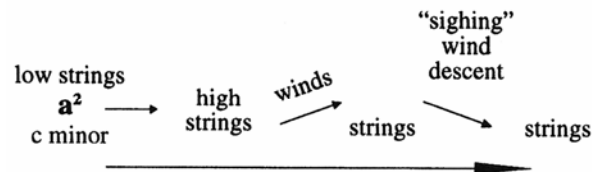
A minor-ish version of the theme clouds the emotional surface of the music; this sudden, darkening shift to minor also occurred in the opening moments of the 1st movement and lends great expressive weight to the music

24

sudden, explosive, celebratory shift back to C major; note fanfarish harmonies and fast, scurrying strings and winds

c  
l  
o  
s  
e  
d

Tutti  
f  
C Major



62

ascending left hand scales are followed by descending right hand scales in the piano; note the quiet wind entrance

c  
o  
p  
e  
n  
c

→ D7 (V7 of G)

76

### Theme B

A graceful, busy new theme is heard in the piano & winds, with string accompaniment



91

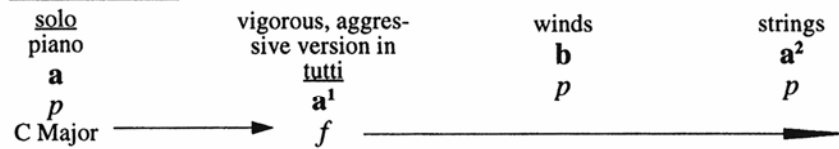
### Extended dominant

Long, virtuosic episode features rising/falling arpeggios in the piano & quiet string/wind accompaniment, all over a pedal “G” (dominant of tonic “C”)

# A<sup>1</sup>

114

## Rondo Theme

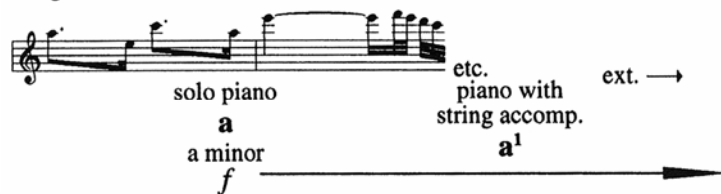


# C

145

## Theme C

Dramatic, operatic theme alters the mood of the movement entirely, plunging it into the tragic, "sturm und drang" mood of the c minor (No.24) concerto



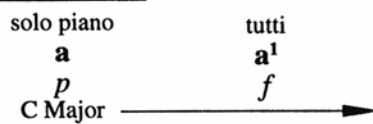
162

tutti cadence suddenly shifts the harmony to F Major!

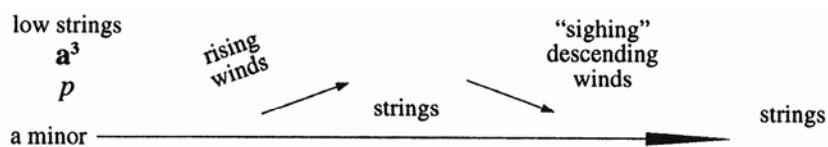
# A<sup>2</sup>

230

## Rondo Theme



(Note: this time around, there is no minorish presentation of the theme! The music moves directly into **B<sup>1</sup>**, & with the move, into a brighter & less complex musical/emotional world)



**163**  
Theme D  
Gorgeous, lyric new theme richly accompanied by descending strings

**171**  
a delicate version of Theme D is shared by:

**179**  
**a<sup>1</sup>** oboe/flute

**187**  
flute/oboe/bassoon begin to develop **b** into a long canon

**b** piano/'cello

**b<sup>1</sup>** the harmony begins to move towards c minor as **b** continues to develop

**a**  
piano  
F Major  
*p*

**206**  
Extended Dominant  
lengthy, striking passage is marked by imitation of Theme D motives over rippling piano arpeggios & quiet, descending low strings

**217**  
only the solo piano remains; it plays:

a long arpeggiated descent

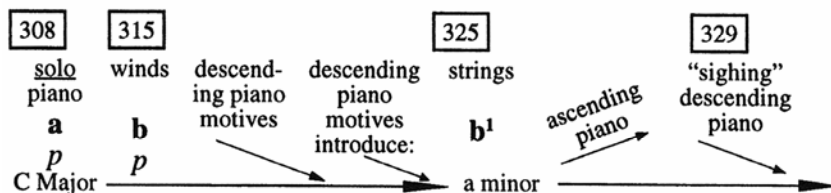
long arpeggiated ascent

c minor pedal "G"

## B<sup>1</sup>

<b>245</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>264</b>	
sequential segment features virtuosic piano arpeggios, with winds & string accomp.	sequence of rising left hand piano scales is followed by a sequence of descending right hand scales	busy cadential segment for piano & strings <i>f</i>	hesitating, playfully coy open cadence in the piano	p a u s e

## A<sup>3</sup>

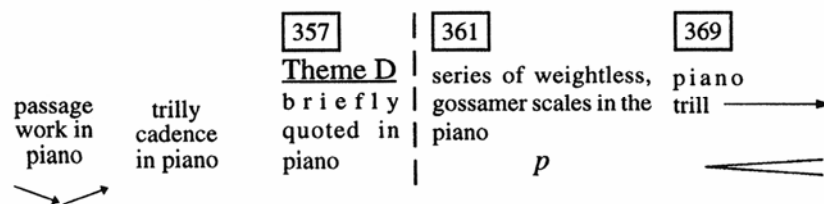
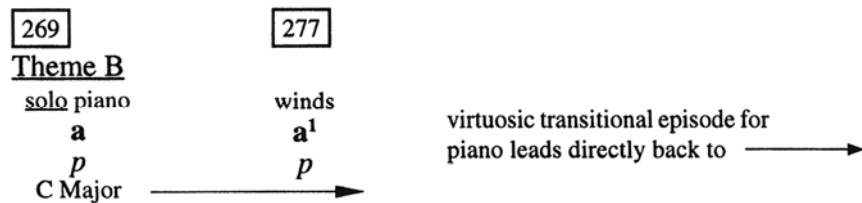


## Coda

<b>331</b>	<b>344</b>
<u>Cadential passage</u> (entirely in C Major)	<u>Cadential passage</u> (repeated)
rising/falling arpeggios in the piano with trilly flute accompaniment	rising/falling arpeggios in the piano with trilly flute accompaniment

suddenly explosive, celebratory tutti (see the end of part A); note fanfarish harmonies & scurrying winds, strings & piano

*f*



**Beethoven, Lectures One - Four**  
**The Classical Piano Concerto: Piano Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Opus 73**  
**“Emperor” (1809)**

**Outline**

- I.** Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) was striking both in appearance and attitude.
  - A.** He was “small and plain-looking” in appearance, sporting an ugly face, shaggy hair, and casual clothes.
  - B.** He was often haughty and arrogant in manner and attitude, and unmannerly in gesture and demeanor.
    - 1.** He studiously avoided the company of those he disliked.
    - 2.** He ignored polite requests.
    - 3.** His behavior was a reflection of Enlightenment attitudes regarding the individual. What is more, in the post-1789 world, no longer would the relationship between the artist and his patron be that of a servant to a master.
  - C.** Did Beethoven’s improvisational genius provide a justification for his haughtiness?
    - 1.** He regularly chastised noble audiences.
    - 2.** Such behavior only increased his fame.
- II.** Beethoven had a very different relationship to the piano from that of Mozart.
  - A.** Beethoven belonged to the first generation of keyboardists to grow up playing the piano. Mozart and others had started on the harpsichord, and tended to play the piano as they would a harpsichord.
    - 1.** Narrow, light-actioned harpsichord keys required a more highly controlled technique than the larger keys of the piano. The piano’s heavier action and ability to adjust the key pressure to play more loudly or softly called for a new technique.
    - 2.** Mozart and Beethoven’s differing approaches and keyboard techniques determined their differing compositional styles.
      - a.** Mozart sees the piano as a quiet, solo voice.
      - b.** Beethoven sees the piano as equivalent to the orchestra—a second band.
  - B.** Beethoven is born into a musical family in Bonn.
    - 1.** His bullying father wants him to become the next Mozart, that is, a child prodigy. Although accomplished, young Ludwig is not up to the task.
    - 2.** In 1781, Beethoven goes to study with Christian Gottlob Neefe, the Lutheran court organist in Bonn. In 1784 Neefe gives Beethoven his first organ job as Neefe’s assistant.
      - a.** Neefe introduces Beethoven to the great Lutheran composers, including Johann Sebastian Bach.
      - b.** Beethoven’s introduction to the organ—a one-person “orchestra”—is extremely significant. As a keyboardist, this experience profoundly influences Beethoven’s attitude toward playing and composing for the piano.
  - C.** Beethoven goes to Vienna, supposedly to study with Haydn, but perhaps more to escape home life.
    - 1.** He makes quite an impression as a pianist, with his forceful playing and improvisational skill.
    - 2.** Beethoven disdains the light, tinny Viennese pianos, and he develops a reputation for smashing them. Reports of his playing style as well as his music itself seem to indicate a desire for a much more powerful, sonorous instrument than is available to him.
- III.** Beethoven wrote his piano concerti as performing venues for his own musical talent.
  - A.** Concerti Nos. 1–3, written from 1793 to 1800, were composed in the “Viennese Classical” style, and within the parameters of Mozart’s classicism.
  - B.** Concerti Nos. 4 and 5, written during Beethoven’s “heroic” period, were at the cutting edge of musical expression and construction for their day. By this time, Beethoven’s artistic tenets were firmly in place.
  - C.** Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Opus 73, is written in 1809.
- IV.** Let us now examine the fifth piano concerto of Beethoven.
  - A.** In this work, the large-scale story line centers on the piano-orchestra relationship as one of confrontation and reconciliation. In the past, this contrast has been between themes. This creates something of an opera for piano and orchestra.

- B.** Beethoven begins Movement One in double exposition form, providing his audience with something familiar to relate to. In his heroic period, however, Beethoven makes mincemeat of his audience's expectations; he does unexpected things with this form.
1. The movement starts with the familiar orchestral exposition of Theme 1, Exposition 1.
    - a. It consists of a strutting, martial theme.
    - b. This theme contains three clearly delineated phrases with recognizable motives.
    - c. Each phrase highlights a different motive of the theme: a turn, Motive A; a fanfare, B; and a descent, C.
  2. Theme 1, Exposition 2, goes to the soloist.
    - a. The piano develops the formerly macho theme of the orchestra in a rhapsodic, lyric manner.
    - b. In an unexpected departure from double exposition form, the orchestra interrupts the piano midway through the theme! There would seem to be a basic disagreement between the orchestra's and the piano's "vision" of the theme. This is remarkable for contemporary listeners.
    - c. The dramatic/expressive result is: *conflict*! This is not a conflict between *themes*, as in the past, but a conflict between the soloist's and the orchestra's *interpretation* of the theme!
  3. There is a stand-off in the recapitulation of Theme 1.
    - a. Both orchestra and piano play the theme "their" way without either interrupting the other.
    - b. Here, the dramatic/expressive result is: *coexistence*.
    - c. Along the way we witness the constant development of Theme 1.
  4. Now we are ready for the coda of Theme 1.
    - a. Here, the orchestra and the piano *share* the theme.
    - b. The dramatic/expressive result is: *consummation* (cohabitation)!
  5. Let us now go back to consider Theme 2, Exposition 1.
    - a. Theme 2 mysteriously appears in the unexpected key of e<sup>b</sup> minor, but soon, in a glorious moment, modulates back into E<sup>b</sup> Major.
    - b. This is a quiet theme, though still marchlike in rhythmic character and phrase structure.
  6. Theme 2 of Exposition 2 is treated like a mini-variations movement.
    - a. The solo piano plays a mysterious, ethereal, gorgeous, and lyric version of the theme in the "wrong" key (according to Classical Era harmonic tradition) of b minor. By then moving into C<sup>b</sup> Major and finally into the "correct" key of B<sup>b</sup> Major, Beethoven creates a stunning harmonic moment, having started in keys unexpected in traditional double exposition form.
    - b. The orchestra reacts to the piano's cheek by playing a "Turkish March" in the "right" key of B<sup>b</sup> Major.
    - c. How much longer will the piano tolerate this orchestral meddling? Not much longer!
  7. A sweet, lyric cadence theme brings Exposition 1 to an end, and will be repeated as cadence material in Exposition 2 and elsewhere.
    - a. Underlying the cadence theme is Theme 1, Motive A.
    - b. Afterward, we hear fanfares drawn from Motive B.
  8. The cadence material for Exposition 1 consists of extensive closing material that includes a reprise of Theme 1, again something of a departure. (Beethoven will use this martial glory again at the end of Exposition 2.)
    - a. Such a revisiting of the theme is normally heard in a development section, but Beethoven is saving something else for that.
    - b. The moment the soloist enters at the beginning of Exposition 2 is normally a big one, but, again, Beethoven has something else in mind, giving the piano a solo episode toward the end.
  9. Finally, the piano gets its solo episode in the cadence material of Exposition 2, which takes on the character of developmental music.
    - a. This extensive piano solo allows the piano time to play without being interrupted by the orchestra.
    - b. It is followed by a slightly abbreviated version of the extended cadence material first heard in Exposition 1.
  10. Beginning with the introduction to the first movement, this concerto is explosive and confrontational!
    - a. The solo piano appears from the start, rather than waiting for the end of the second exposition, pursuing a horizontal (lyric) musical line.
    - b. The orchestra, pursuing a vertical (stentorian and declarative) line, is much chagrined (no wonder the orchestra has it in for the piano).

11. In the development of Exposition 2, a confrontation (conflagration!) occurs as the piano and the orchestra finally, and literally, duke it out.
    - a. Stentorian harmonies in the orchestra are followed by an attempt at melodic lyricism in the piano.
    - b. The piano asserts itself as an equal to the orchestra, but the latter is not yet ready to accept this.
    - c. Yet the piano wins the respect of the orchestra in the course of the development section; their relationship is changed completely and forever.
    - d. This music is unrelated to anything else in the movement. Its purpose is to evoke pure, physical action.
  12. Although Beethoven envisages the piano as a match for the orchestra, this does not quite jive with the realities of the pianos available to him, despite improvements over Mozart's day. By contrast, the modern concert grand has indeed come into its own.
    - a. Beethoven therefore instructs his orchestra to play *piano* and his piano to play *fortissimo*, to make up for what is still something of a mismatch.
    - b. Today we should reinterpret Beethoven's dynamics to accord with advances in piano design and construction.
    - c. Nonetheless, the result is a new relationship between the piano and the orchestra, which will influence composition in a dramatic new way ever after.
  13. Beethoven next turns his sights on the cadenza, usually improvised by the soloist and played at the end of the first and sometimes of the third movement.
    - a. First, Beethoven departs again from tradition by writing out this cadenza, because he has a particular purpose in mind.
    - b. That purpose is to demonstrate the newly discovered equality of the piano and the orchestra. Hence, it's not about a virtuosic display, which would be inappropriate here. Thus this cadenza is very brief, fluid, and *mandatory*.
    - c. Beethoven has just set a trend that other composers will eagerly follow.
  14. In particular, this piece helps us to understand Beethoven's relationship to the piano.
    - a. Beethoven composed this piece well aware of his progressive hearing disability, in which he retained a measure of low-frequency hearing until his death in 1827. It did not put an end to his performing career until 1812–1813.
    - b. During his lifetime the piano had evolved greatly. Pianos were bigger and more resonant than they had been in Mozart's day, and Beethoven was constantly urging builders to pursue improvements in design and construction.
- C. Let us now examine Movement Two, Adagio.
1. For Beethoven, harmonic structure (the use of key changes) is as important as melodic structure, as harmony often effects the expressive message in a piece of music.
    - a. For general audiences, it is the melody that is most easily recognized and remembered.
    - b. For Beethoven, the composer, the use of harmonic structures expands the room in which he has to work and so these structures are at least equally important.
  2. This movement is written in the "distant" key of B Major.
    - a. Beethoven wants to do the unexpected, to astonish his listener.
    - b. The E<sup>b</sup> Major chord, which ended the first movement with the note E<sup>b</sup> on the top, allows Beethoven to pivot on this note, the E<sup>b</sup> flat being enharmonically reinterpreted as the D<sup>#</sup> of the new key of B Major! Although this works, it is hardly what Beethoven's audience would have expected.
    - c. We may remember that earlier, the solo piano was in the supposedly "wrong" key of C<sup>b</sup> Major, (which is another way of saying B Major). What Beethoven has done is to anticipate this second movement, harmonically, in the first!
  3. This is essentially a monothematic movement based on the ongoing elaboration of a single, lyric theme.
    - a. Ever-expanding intervals provide a sense of forward motion as they expand. We get the sense that the theme is going somewhere. All this work within the harmonic structure sets us up for the marvelous transition from Movement Two to Movement Three
    - b. It consists of a melodic layer of woodwinds with the piano providing a decorative accompaniment, while the strings underlie the whole.

4. A brief cadential segment filled with dissonance provides an unfulfilled urge to resolve. This results in an extraordinary transition from Movement Two to Movement Three.
    - a. The held note B drops a half step to a B<sup>b</sup>.
    - b. This B<sup>b</sup> then becomes the dominant of E<sup>b</sup> Major, the key of both the first and third movements!
  5. Thus the second movement provides a harmonic arch from an episode in the first movement, developed in the second, which leads to the third.
  6. In the years 1806–1809, Beethoven is constantly experimenting with this technique.
    - a. Beethoven has carefully prepared this moment of arrival for its dramatic impact. He uses a similar transition from the third to the fourth movements of his fifth symphony (1808).
    - b. He uses the device again between the fifth and sixth movements of his sixth symphony (also 1808).
- D.** Movement Three, Rondo, is written in sonata-rondo form. This is an adaptation of sonata form in which the familiar exposition of a first and second theme, followed by development, recapitulation, and coda sections, are punctuated by a periodic return to Theme 1 (Theme “A” in rondo form).
1. The piano initiates Theme A, a rollicking, extroverted, memorable theme in E<sup>b</sup> Major, consisting of four phrases.
    - a. It begins with rising arpeggios, then
    - b. a chromatic descent, followed by
    - c. a fanfare motive, and concluding with
    - d. a swirling, dance-like tune in the codetta.
  2. Theme B combines both elements of Theme A and the lyric theme of Movement Two, with Theme 1 of Movement One.
    - a. Theme 2 consists of an arpeggiated triad and a chromatic descent, which is just a simpler version of Theme 1!
    - b. To this are added rising three-note units as in Movement Two.
    - c. The turn in this theme comes from Theme 1, Movement 1, as does the outlined E<sup>b</sup> chord!
  3. Section C is a development of Theme A, hence the sonata-rondo form designation.
    - a. A pure rondo would have featured a distinctly new “Theme C” at this point.
    - b. In this development section, Beethoven moves through a number of different keys by major thirds, with interesting variations.
  4. The coda appears in an unexpected relaxation of the musical momentum, which seems to anticipate a quiet and peaceful ending. At the last moment, we realize we’ve been fooled, as the movement (and the concerto) ends vigorously and explosively.

WordScore Guide™: Ludwig van Beethoven  
Piano Concerto No.5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Op.73  
“Emperor” (1809)

MOVEMENT I

Introduction

In a lengthy, dramatic, almost cadenza-like introduction, the adversarial relationship between the piano and orchestra is immediately apparent: explosive, tutti chords goad and bully the piano into long, scurrying arpeggios:

Exposition 1

**Theme 1**  
macho, martial theme is built from 3 motives which play varying roles throughout the movement:  
Motive A: “turn”  
Motive B: “fanfare”  
Motive C: descending arpeggio

7

tutti  
“p” winds play motive A;  
“f” tutti plays motive B  
a<sup>1</sup>  
p/f

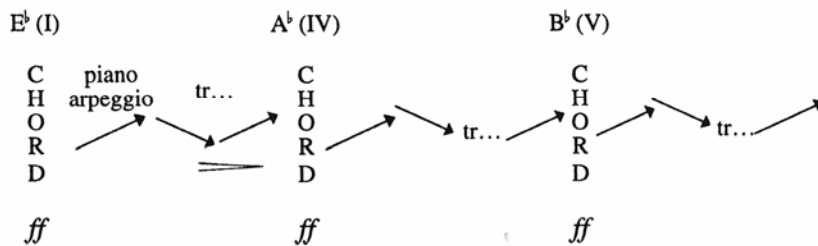
26

**Bridge**  
swaggering, energetic  
Bridge continues the martial mood of Theme 1

**Cadence Material**  
**Theme 1**  
returns in all its martial glory  
tutti  
a  
E<sup>b</sup> Major  
ff

series of 4 note wind descents, each higher than the last  
p

more 4 note wind descents  
dramatic exclamation leads directly into...



38

### Theme 2

suddenly quiet & mysterious, staccato strings intone the theme in the unexpected key of  $e^b$  minor



strings  
**a**  
 $e^b$  minor  
*pp*

54

like clouds suddenly parting, the horns enter playing the theme in major

brief transition based on motive  $\Delta$

horns  
**a<sup>1</sup>**  
 $E^b$  Major  
*p*

*pp*  $\leftarrow$

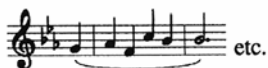
87

climactic tutti passage featuring motive  $\underline{C}$   
*ff*  
(note motive  $\underline{B}$  fanfares)

95

### Cadence Theme

sweet, wistful little tune is heard over accompaniment consisting of motive  $\Delta$ 's



violins  
*p*

99

fanfarish motive  $\underline{B}$  chords announce the piano's entrance

*ff*  $\rightarrow$  *p*

piano scale  $\rightarrow$  trill  $\rightarrow$

## Exposition 2

*"Conflict": the piano has very different ideas concerning the nature of Theme 1, which will become a major source of conflict between it and the orchestra*

### Theme 1

the piano plays a lyric, rhapsodic version of the theme, thus setting it in direct confrontation with the macho, martial tutti verion

piano  
"dolce"  
**a** → extended  
Eb Major  
*p*

123

the disgusted tutti wrests the music away from the piano; "Gimme that theme! I'll show you how to play it!"

**b**  
*f*

the piano plays a mysterious, sequential interlude/extension, as if to quietly say, "I will not be pushed around by you forever..."

**b<sup>1</sup>**  
*p*

171

Lengthy solo episode/transition – features the piano

**PART 1:** ascending piano arpeggios 3x  
*p*

dramatic descent/ascent  
→  
*ff*

181

**PART 2:** dramatic sequence built on motive **A**, heard 3x  
*f*

**PART 3:** falling/rising scales in the piano 2x

falling arpeggios 2x

224

Cadence material

Theme 1 again in all its martial glory

tutti → extended  
**a**  
B<sup>b</sup> Major  
*ff*

via motive **A**

series of 4 note wind descents, each higher than the last  
*p*

ascent in strings

more 4 note wind descents

strings

somewhat less dramatic exclamation leads directly into...

**Development** *"Confrontation": the piano and orchestra duke it out!*

265

**Part 1:** sequence of downward arpeggios and trills in the piano 3x  
*pp*

273

**Part 2:** piano arpeggios accompany a wind sequence based on a minor version of motive **A**:

cl./bsn. – fl./cl. – ob./cl. – bsn./fl.  
*p*

289

**Part 3:** dramatic arpeggio in the piano confronts motive **B** in the orchestra  
*f*

motive **B** chords are violently thrown back and forth between piano and orchestra!

**133**  
**Modulating Bridge**  
 wind/piano dialogue

suddenly aggressive piano solo  
 $\leftarrow ff \rightarrow$

**148**  
**Theme 2**  
 treated like a mini-variations movement

quietly & mysteriously piano	lyric & gentle piano	martial "Turkish March" tutti
<b>a</b>	<b>a<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>a<sup>2</sup></b>
b minor	C <sup>b</sup> Major	B <sup>b</sup> Major
<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>f</i>

**214**  
 series of rustling, downward scales in the piano, pizz. string accomp.

**214**  
 motive **B** in winds

ascending piano arp.  $\nearrow$  2x

ascending piano scale  $\nearrow$

**PART 4:** version of 4 note descent piano  $\rightarrow$  winds *p*

**252**  
**Cadence Theme**  
 sweet, wistful theme is heard over motive **A**'s

*p*

fanfarish motive **B** chords announce the piano's re-entrance

$ff \rightleftharpoons p$

piano scale  $\nearrow$  trill  $\rightarrow$

**308**  
**Part 4: Tussle!**  
 violent sequence of scales indicates a violent clash between the piano and orchestra

*ff*

the adversaries tire and, finally, disengage; each carries a new respect and tolerance for the other

$\rightleftharpoons p$

**330**  
**Part 5:**  
**Cadence Theme** in piano and winds is heard against quiet motive **A**'s in the strings

*pp*  $\rightleftharpoons$  *ff*

Motive **A** into tutti

## Recapitulation

*"Co-existence": piano and orchestra now share the same thematic space, if not the same method of expression*

359

### Introduction

the confrontational mood of the opening introduction is here replaced by a joyful, exuberant energy, ample proof that the hostility between the piano and orchestra has been mostly purged by the development section tussle

369

### Theme 1

martial, macho  
tutti

**a**

E<sup>b</sup> Major

379

lyric, rhapsodic piano

**a**<sup>1</sup> → extended →

390

### Modulating Bridge

wind/piano dialogue

suddenly aggressive  
solo piano

ff

428

Lengthy solo episode/transition – features the piano (more or less as in Expo 2)

PART 1: ascending piano arpeggios  
3x  
*p*

dramatic descent/ascent

ff

PART 2: dramatic sequence built on motive **A** and falling scales, heard 3x  
*f*

PART 3: falling falling/rising piano arpeggios  
2x  
*p*

481

### Cadence Material

Theme 1 martial version  
tutti

**a**

E<sup>b</sup> Major  
*f*

486

piano arps and fanfarish motive **B** chords announce the cadenza

3x

ff

491

6  
4  
C  
H  
O  
R  
D

493

### Cadenza

Brief (the 2 introductions have truly taken the place of the cadenza)

dramatic piano sweep starts with motive **A**

## Coda

*"Consummation"*

526

Theme 1 in a dramatic and extended dialogue, the piano and orchestra share the theme

**a**

*f*

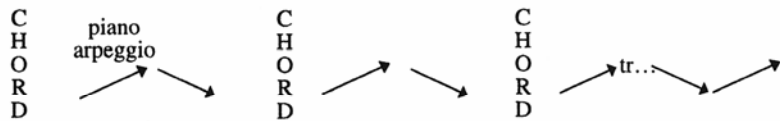
dramatic and exciting buildup

ff

547

### Cadence Theme

the music begins to calm down as the winds enter with the Cadence Theme



405

**Theme 2 – mini-variations**

quietly and mysteriously  
piano  
**a**  
c# minor  
pp

lyric and gentle  
piano  
**a<sup>1</sup>**  
D<sup>b</sup> Major  
p

martial “Turkish March”  
tutti  
**a<sup>2</sup>**  
E<sup>b</sup> Major  
f

**PART 4:** version  
of 4 note descent  
piano → winds  
p

piano ascent  
f

471

series of rustling,  
downward scales in  
the piano, pizz. string  
accomp.

motive **B** in winds

ascending  
piano arp.  
2x

ascending  
piano scale

505

**Theme 2** delicately, music  
box like, the piano plays a  
minor version of the theme  
piano

trills  
→

**a**  
e<sup>b</sup> minor

513

again, the horns blow the clouds  
of minor away as they enter in  
major; a sublime moment!

horns  
**a<sup>1</sup>**  
E<sup>b</sup> Major

strings with  
motive **A**

descending piano scales

piano with  
Cadence  
Theme

piano scale

piano moves  
down  
slowly

566

celebratory  
piano arps  
and motive  
**B** fanfares

566

C  
H  
O  
R  
D

piano C  
H  
O  
R  
D

C  
H  
O  
R  
D

C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E

## MOVEMENT II

"Adagio, un poco mosso"; duple meter, strings "con sordini" (with mutes)

### Lyric Theme

peaceful, hymn-like theme consists of three phrases:

#### Phrase 1

quiet opening phrase features sustained notes and a slow expansion outwards from the starting note:



1st violins  
pizz vc/cb accompaniment

**a**  
B Major  
*p*

#### Phrase 2

brief but intensely moving phrase features two upwards leaps, each followed by a gentle descent:



**b**

### Episode

**16**

the piano enters, trill – playing a series of gently descending triplet scales

*pp*  
"espressivo"

**26**

rising 3 note motives in strings punctuate the episode

*pp*  $\leftarrow \rightarrow$

**28**

another series of gently descending scales and motives in the piano

*pp*

**32**

rising 3 note motives in horns, winds and strings

$\leftarrow \rightarrow$

### Lyric Theme

**45**

"cantabile"  
the piano gently and simply plays the theme over pizz. strings

piano  
**a<sup>1</sup>**  
B Major  
*p*

**b<sup>1</sup>**

**c<sup>1</sup>**

$\leftarrow f \rightarrow$

**54**

arco (bowed) strings and winds take over momentarily from the piano

**f**  
**a**  
**l**  
**s**  
**e**  
**c**  
**a**  
**d**  
**e**  
**n**  
**c**  
**e**

### Phrase 3

closing phrase features a rising three note motive and a gentle, closing cadence:

note: woodwinds enter for the 1st time

*f* *c*  
a a  
l d  
s e  
e n  
c e

brief cadential extension

c c  
l a  
o d  
s e  
e n  
d c  
e

B Major

35

rising/falling scales in the piano ("doubled at the third") slow and become

39

a series of rising trills and chords in the piano over changing harmonies in the strings

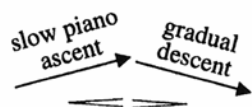
delicate piano descent

*f*



cadential extension  
piano elaboration

pizz. string accomp.  
resumes



descending,  
short, quiet,  
ringing  
motives in the  
piano

note flute  
entrance  
*p*

## Lyric Theme

60

This version of the theme has a sweet, music box sort of charm to it; it is quietly played by flutes/clarinets/bassoons

the piano plays quiet, ringing broken chords in accompaniment

strings underpin all

$a^2$   
B Major  
*p*

$b^2$

$c^2$

f  
a  
l  
s  
e  
c  
a  
d  
e  
n  
c  
e

69

### cadential extension

(longest version)

woodwind notes become shorter and begin to fade; the music seems to be slowly rocking itself to sleep!

*pp*

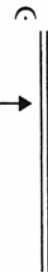
piano & winds  
slowly descend

## Transition to 3rd Movement

Distant and shadowy, the piano tentatively plays 2 groups of rising  $E^b$  Major chords

*pp*

we await the outcome of this quiet musical limbo with baited breath!



79

All motion comes to a halt as the piano, winds & strings quietly settle on the pitch “B”

What next?

80

Aha!

An almost imperceptible, but nevertheless earth-shaking move downward in the strings from B (tonic of this movement) to  $B^b$  (dominant of the next movement) paves the way to the 3rd movement; it is as if the ground has suddenly shifted under our “musical” feet – we stand alert, ears cocked...

## MOVEMENT III

"Allegro"; sonata-rondo form, compound duple meter

"senza sordini" (without mutes)

### Exposition

#### A

##### Theme 1

An extroverted, rollicking theme leaps from the shadows! The theme consists of two phrases:

- phrase a: rising/falling E<sup>b</sup> Major arpeggio, capped by a trill
- phrase b: chromatic descent

note how the highly contrasted dynamics (back and forth between *ff* and *p*) add a giddy, spontaneous element to the theme:



#### B

42

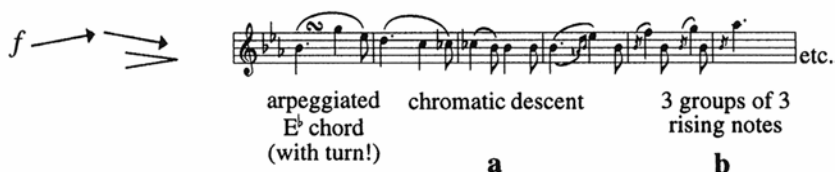
##### Introduction/transition

upwards swirling triplet figuration continues in the solo piano

49

##### Theme 2: "dolce"

lilting, "Viennese" theme is a combination of Theme 1 and the rising 3 note motive of the 2nd movement



1	7	9	13
<b>Theme 1</b>			
piano <b>a</b>	trill → piano <b>a<sup>1</sup></b>	trill → piano <b>b</b>	piano → strings <b>b<sup>1</sup></b>
rising/falling arpeggio	rising/falling arpeggio	chromatic "fanfare" descent motive	chromatic descent
<i>ff</i> <i>p</i>	<i>ff</i> <i>p</i>	<i>p</i> <i>f</i>	<i>f</i> <i>p</i> <
E <sup>b</sup> Major			

17	36
<b>Theme 1</b>	
majestic and triumphant	swirling, dance-like codetta
tutti	tune alternates with "fanfare
<b>a</b> <b>a<sup>1</sup></b> <b>b</b>	motive" (♩ ♯ ♩ ♯) in the brass
<i>f</i> <i>f</i> <i>f</i>	<b>c</b>
E <sup>b</sup> Major	<i>f</i>
extension (in lieu of a repetition of b)	

58	65	72
<b>Cadence Material</b>	suddenly	<b>Cadence Theme</b>
<u>falling step motives</u>	vigorous	based on <u>falling</u>
begin to proliferate,	<u>falling step</u>	<u>step motives</u> ;
bringing a sense of	<u>motives</u> in	the piano moves
downward closure to	tutti	more and more
this section	<i>f</i>	quickly as the
bassoon → clarinet	<i>p</i> <i>f</i>	section rushes
<i>p</i> <i>p</i>		towards its
		conclusion →
		< <i>ff</i>

# A<sup>1</sup>

## Theme 1

piano  
a a<sup>1</sup> b b<sup>1</sup>  
f  
E<sup>b</sup> Major

108

## Cadence/transition

"fanfare motive" heard quietly in the horns and strings

pp

the piano plays its own version of the closing "fanfare motive" and a series of scales, while the strings continue, almost naggingly, to reiterate the "fanfare motive"

p

angry piano descent!

## Development

based essentially on Theme 1 and the "fanfare motive", the development explores a number of new key areas

## C

138

Part 1: Theme 1  
highly abbreviated; note the light pizz. string accomp.

piano

a

f

C Major

trill →

virtuosic piano episode features exciting falling/rising scales in the piano and rising motives in the strings

154

## Codetta

swirling, dance-like violins alternate with the "fanfare motive" in lower strings and winds

ff

"fanfare motive" in the horns

suddenly

pp

(note equally sudden change of harmony)

189

Part 3: Theme 1  
highly embellished (via delicate, lacy arpeggios), only the opening, rising portion of the theme is recognizable

piano

a

pp

E Major

trill →

virtuosic piano episode again features exciting falling/rising scales and rising motives in the strings

f

208

## Codetta

swirling strings alternate with "fanfare motives" in the bassoons

212

## Part 4

sudden and unexpected, turgid piano arpeggios in minor are heard against "fanfare motives" in the strings

e minor

f

modulation

120

tumultuous, minor mode version of the "fanfare motive" in the strings; is the mood of the movement falling into darkness? GASP!

*f*

123

not yet, it's not! Bright winds optimistically intone the "fanfare motive" in major

*p*

126

### Extended Dominant

the piano takes matters into "its own hands" and plays a rousing cadenza-like passage on the dominant ("G") of C Major

*f*  $\Rightarrow$  *pp*  
G7  $\longrightarrow$

162

### Part 2: Theme 1

highly embellished (via scales); only the opening, rising portion of the theme is recognizable; quiet pizz. and bowed string accompaniment

piano

*a*

*p*

A<sup>b</sup> Major

virtuosic piano episode again features falling/rising scales and rising motive in the strings

*pp*

181

### Codetta

again, swirling strings alternate with forceful "fanfare motives"

*ff*

suddenly quiet "fanfare motives" in the oboe and bassoon! The key is about to shift again

*pp*

187

again, another shocking harmonic shift takes us suddenly to...

220

### Part 5: Extended Dominant

the dominant pitch of E<sup>b</sup> major ("B<sup>b</sup>") moves into the bass as a pedal tone; turbulent piano arpeggios alternate with crisp "fanfare motives" in the strings

*ff*

B<sup>b</sup>7

the piano softens its tone and ascends; the mood brightens considerably

$\Rightarrow$

234

### Part 6

a delicate piano trill is heard over hesitant, distant Theme 1 motives in strings...there is here a palpable sense of barely contained energy

*p*

let's go for it! The piano makes its move with a downward scale! Breakout!

$\searrow$

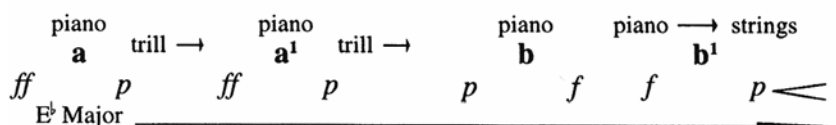
*f*

## Recapitulation

### A

262

#### Theme 1

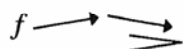


### B

287

#### Introduction/transition

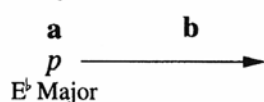
upwards swirling triplet figures  
continue in the piano



294

#### Theme 2

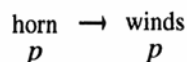
"dolce"  
lilting, "Viennese" theme



305

#### Cadence Material

scalar falling step  
motives



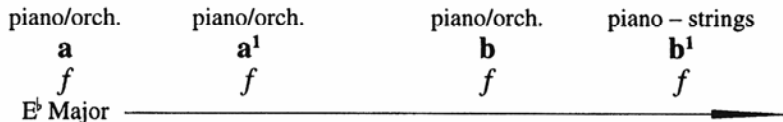
### Coda

#### A<sup>2</sup>

341

#### Theme 1

Like Theme 1 in the Movement 1 coda, the theme is now shared in dialogue between the piano and the orchestra



402

in a rather surprising turn of events, the piano enters with ascending scales in triplets, while the timpani continues to play subdued "fanfare motives"

quiet piano harmonies; the timpani plays "fanfare motives"

rit. -----  
(is this concerto going out like a lamb?)



262

### Theme 1

majestic and triumphant

tutti  
a a<sup>1</sup> b extension  
f f f  
E<sup>b</sup> Major

281

### Codetta

swirling, dance-like strings alternate with "fanfare motive" in the brass

c  
f

c  
a  
l  
o  
s  
e  
n  
c  
e

suddenly vigorous falling step motives in strings and winds

f

312

piano plays 3 falling step motives

p

f

319

Cadence Theme based on the falling step motive, becomes increasingly "trilly" in character

p

ff

357

### Theme 1

precise, powerful version of the theme

tutti  
a a<sup>1</sup> b  
f  
E<sup>b</sup> Major

### Extension:

a lengthy, celebratory extension based on the "fanfare motive"; note the collaborative, dialogue-like character of this music between the piano and orchestra

398

### Codetta

swirling, dancelike strings alternate with "fanfare motives" in the brass

f

419

Yikes! The piano suddenly tears into a series of rippling, upwards moving scales

f

Tutti powerfully intones the opening of Theme 1, and then concludes the concerto with life and joyful energy

f ff

## Glossary

**Aria**—The general term for an extended solo in opera—the equivalent of a soliloquy—which brings the action and “real time” to a temporary halt, and in which the character expresses his or her feelings about the action and events just described. Arias generally have a high melodic profile and are typically accompanied by the full orchestra. By analogy, this term may be applied to writing for a solo instrument.

**Arpeggio**—Literally, “harplike”, playing the notes of a chord in sequence rather than at the same time, in the manner of a flourish on the harp. (This term is sometimes abbreviated in the word score as “arp”.)

**Baritone**—The middle category of male voice, higher in range and lighter in timbre than bass, but lower and heavier than tenor.

**Baroque**—The musical period following the Renaissance, from about 1600 to 1750. Baroque music is characterized by a complex and elaborately ornamented style.

**Bass**—The lowest category of male voice—rich, dark, heavy, and powerful.

**Buffa**—Comedic, a term derived from the Italian *opera buffa* or comic opera, and referring to jocular musical writing in general.

**Chord**—A combination of at least three different notes played together.

**Cadence**—English for the Italian word *cadenza*. A cadence is a series of final notes or chords that indicate that a passage or the entire piece of music is about to resolve into a conclusion. It is distinguished from the Italian word *cadenza*, which has a specialized use in English, as noted below.

**Cadenza**—A florid, improvised passage to be performed by singers before the final bars (cadence—see above) of an aria or movement. In a concerto, the solo instrument assumes this function for the purposes of a similarly virtuosic display. Such a cadenza may be improvised by the soloist or written out by the composer.

**Cantabile**—Literally, “singing”; thus, referring to a singing style in a piece of instrumental music.

**Cantilena**—A small and beautiful song, or instrumental writing in the style thereof.

**Classicism**—The musical style which followed the Baroque, from about 1750–1820, and characterized by a well-ordered harmony emphasizing melody over embellishment.

**Coda**—The final developmental passage in a piece of music which brings a movement to its conclusion.

**Codetta**—A diminutive coda.

**Coloratura**—Literally, “coloration” or “coloring.” As used in music, the term refers to brilliantly ornamented writing for the voice, or to the type of voice agile enough to specialize in such music. By analogy, this term may also be applied to instrumental writing, especially for a solo instrument in a concerto.

**Concerto** (plural, concerti)—A large, multi-movement musical composition for solo instrument accompanied by an orchestra.

**Contralto**—The lowest category of female voice.

**Cristofori, Bartolomeo**—1655–1731. Italian inventor of the *gravicembalo col piano e forte* (grand harpsichord with soft and loud), what we know today as the piano, about 1709.

**Dissonance**—Subjectively speaking, anything we do not like the sound of. In real musical terms, any harmony or melody generated from that harmony that must resolve. In itself a dissonance is unstable, because it wants to resolve.

**Diva**—Derived from a word meaning “goddess”, this word refers to a female singer of great repute and often volatile temperament, as a *prima donna* or first lady (usually, of the opera). Used here to refer to the behavior of a solo instrument.

**Dolce**—A musical direction which means to play or sing, literally, “sweetly”.

**Dominant**—The fifth tone of a scale (do, re, mi, fa, **so**). Symbol: V.

**Double Exposition**—An adaptation of sonata-allegro form featuring two separately composed expositions. Typically in a concerto, these two expositions consist 1) of the orchestra's presentation of its two themes followed by 2) the solo instrument's presentation of two related themes of its own, rather than simply repeating those already introduced by the orchestra.

**Dynamics**—Refers to the intensity and manner of the use of loudness and softness in a musical composition. This may refer to the way an individual note, measure (bar), or entire passage is played. Such playing includes rising and falling intensity or loudness (*crescendo* and *diminuendo*, respectively) and sudden changes in the degree of loudness or softness.

**Enharmonic Pitch**—When a note in the scale is raised or lowered a half-tone in the direction of its neighbor, and that neighboring note is but a half-tone away, the pitch is said to be the same, even though the note has a different name. For example, C raised a half-tone to C<sup>#</sup> approaches D; D, lowered a half-tone to D<sup>b</sup> approaches C; thus C<sup>#</sup> and D<sup>b</sup> are considered to represent the same (enharmonic) pitch, and, in fact, occupy the same key on a piano. This enharmonic pitch enables a composer to move readily from one key to another, using the enharmonic pitch as a pivot.

**Enlightenment**—The Enlightenment was the eighteenth-century social revolution emphasizing especially new ideas in politics, religion, and education. Its philosophy championed human reason and the importance and potential of each individual human being, regardless of status (social class) or condition.

**Exposition**—That section of a musical composition in which the themes are exposed or presented.

**Fermata**—A musical pause indicated by the symbol [of an arc over a dot]. Such a pause may be used to hold a note beyond its usual value or for other players to wait for a soloist to perform a cadenza.

**Forte**—A musical direction that means one is to play loudly (indicated by the symbol *f*).

**Fortissimo**—A musical direction that means to play as loudly as one possibly can (indicated by the symbol *fff*).

**Four-square**—Refers to a triadic theme of equally long phrases.

**Gallant Style**—Refers to a style of composition having many pretty tunes.

**Harp**—That part of a piano upon which the strings are strung. The wooden harps of the Classical Era were unable to withstand the pressures brought to bear by the number and type of strings used in the modern piano.

**Humanism**—An important principle of Enlightenment philosophy which asserts that all people are individuals, and every individual is important.

**Key**—The key of a piece of music is determined by the scale that establishes its basic tonality. A piece written in the key of C Major is composed around a C major scale, in which C is the tonic: C D E F G A B C (see below).

*do re mi fa so la ti do*

**Köchel, Ludwig**—1800–1877. Austrian amateur musicologist who in 1862 published a complete chronological listing of the compositions of Mozart, who did not use opus numbers (see below). Although musical scholarship has since revised Köchel's original chronology, we continue to use K numbers to identify Mozart's compositions.

**Modulation**—A sequence of notes or chords which moves the music in a passage from one key to another.

**Motive** (sometimes motif)—A recurring and sometimes dominant theme or phrase in a piece of music.

**Movement**—A section of a larger musical composition so called because of the progressive development of thematic material from one such section of the composition through to the final section.

**Opus**—Latin for "work". In music, the individual composition or work of the composer. A composer's works are referred to by opus numbers, which are usually assigned upon publication.

**Patter**—Rapid dialogue in an opera, usually the hallmark of a lower-class character, such as a servant. Imitatively used in an instrumental work to create a sense of jocularly, a *buffa* passage.

**Pedal Tone**—A continuously held pitch (note or tone) in the bass, usually a way of signaling that a developmental section is about to come to an end.

**Phrase**—A grouping of notes. A number of phrases make up a melody or tune (theme). Such things as the length of a bow stroke or the single breath of a singer may delineate a phrase.

**Piano**—A musical direction that means one is to play softly (indicated by the symbol *p*).

**Pizzicato**—(Pizz.) Playing a stringed instrument such as a violin by plucking the strings with the fingers rather than using the bow (*arco*).

**Recapitulation**—In sonata form, the final restatement of the exposition before the end of the movement.

**Rondo**—Often the final section of a musical composition in sonata form in which the composer periodically returns to the principal theme of the movement. In between these periodic returns are various contrasting ideas. By returning to the theme, we get a sense of completion.

**Sequence**—A melodic idea that is then repeated at higher or lower pitch values. Such repetition creates musical coherence without being merely repetitive.

**Six-four Chord**—The first of the three chords in a cadential formula, especially one that precedes the cadenza, signaling that the music is about to come to a resolution. In the key of C Major, the six-four chord would be G–C–E, the C being the *fourth* note above the G and the E the *sixth* note above the G.

**Sturm und Drang**—Literally, “storm and stress”. This refers to a movement in eighteenth-century German literature which emphasized the importance of the individual, opposition to accepted norms, and an impetuosity of manner. It is characteristic of Beethoven’s heroic period.

**Sonata-allegro (also Sonata) Form**—An adaptation of the operatic ideal into instrumental form. This means introducing contrasting characters (exposition of themes, usually two), having them interact (development), and having them separated in a moment of truth (recapitulation, coda).

**Sonata-rondo Form**—Incorporates the various themes of sonata-allegro form, but here we have a regular or periodic return to a central main theme.

**Soprano**—The highest category of female voice.

**Staff**—The five horizontal lines and the four spaces between them upon which musical notes are written.

**Tenor**—The highest category of male voice.

**Theme**—A musical idea (a tune or melody) around which a longer musical composition is built.

**Tonic**—The first note (tone) of a scale upon which a given key is based. Also, the central note around which a composition is organized. See key, above.

**Triadic**—Based on a triad, a chord composed of a tone, its major or minor third, and the fifth note (*do*, re, *mi*, fa, *so*).

**Triadic Theme**—A theme based on a triad, a simple chord of three notes, in either a major or a minor key (see above).

**Turkish Style**—This device is a reflection of the Viennese fascination with the strange and foreign world of Austria’s (the Habsburg Empire’s) neighbor and traditional enemy, the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire. It is characterized by unusual ornaments and the use of drums and cymbals associated particularly with Turkish military music.

**Tutti**—Literally, “everyone”; in other words, all players who have a part to play return, as after a cadenza.

# **Concert Masterworks**

## **Part II**

**Antonin Dvorak: *Symphony No. 9***

**Richard Strauss: *Death and Transfiguration***

**Professor Robert Greenberg**



THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

**Robert Greenberg, Ph.D.**  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Robert Greenberg has composed over forty works for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal ensembles. Recent performances of Greenberg's work have taken place in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and The Netherlands, where his *Child's Play* for String Quartet was performed at the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam in 1993. Greenberg holds degrees from Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in music composition in 1984. His principal teachers were Edward Cone, Claudio Spies, Andrew Imbrie, and Olly Wilson. Professor Greenberg's awards include three Nicola De Lorenzo Prizes in composition, three Meet the Composer grants, and commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, the Alexander String Quartet, XTET, and the Dancer's Stage Ballet Company. He is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he is chair of the department of music history and literature and director of curriculum of the Adult Extension Division. Greenberg is creator, host, and lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony's "Discovery Series." Greenberg has taught and lectured extensively across North America and Europe, speaking to such corporations and musical institutions as the Van Cliburn Foundation, Arthur Andersen, Bechtel Investments, the Shaklee Corporation, the University of California/Haas School of Business Executive Seminar, the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, the Texas Association of Symphony Orchestras, and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Greenberg's work as a teacher and lecturer has been profiled in the *Wall Street Journal, Inc.* magazine, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Greenberg is an artistic co-director and board member of COMPOSERS INC. His music is published by Fallen Leaf Press and CPP/Belwin and is recorded on the Innova label.

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## Nationalism and Expressionism in the Late Nineteenth Century:

Antonín Dvorák: *Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 “New World”* (1893)

Richard Strauss: *Death and Transfiguration* (1889)

### Scope:

These lectures focus on a turbulent historical period during which revolution was never far from the surface and occasionally erupted in various ways. The turmoil of the nineteenth century encompassed the Romantic Era, as it is known in music history. It was an age characterized by artistic expression of ever-greater means and extremes. National and ethnic self-identification became an increasingly important and provocative element of Romantic self-expression, particularly in the years after the revolutions of 1848.

Increasingly, the folk elements used by nationalist composers became part of the shared, common language of concert music. This practice was extended by borrowing. Thus the nationalist Czech composer Antonín Dvorák felt perfectly comfortable using “American” elements in his *Symphony No. 9*, the so-called “*New World*” *Symphony*. This use of the folk music of another ethnic group in one’s own compositions is known in music as exoticism.

Other Romantic-era composers, such as Richard Strauss, sought to tell long, involved stories and express ever deeper and more profound emotional and physical states in orchestral compositions variously called “symphonic poems” or “tone poems.” Expressionism—a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century movement that saw inner truth as the only reality—saw its first musical flower in works like Strauss’ tone poem, *Death and Transfiguration* (1889).

This Concert Masterworks volume will examine the two marvelous, though very different, compositions mentioned above. Each is representative of important late Romantic compositional trends. The emphasis of these lectures will be on the lives of Dvorák and Strauss and the musical substance of the “*New World*” *Symphony* and *Death and Transfiguration*.

In order to better understand these composers, their times, and their work, we will explore in detail some other topics. These will include the rise of nationalism and its role in nineteenth-century music, Romanticism, exoticism, the nature of American concert music in the nineteenth century, the methods of motivic transformation, and the development of the symphonic poem or tone poem.

We will begin with a consideration of nationalism and its musical expression in the Romantic Era, during which self-expression took on a new character and increased significance. As we trace the history of the age, we will learn how it influenced developments in music, and how music, in turn, played a role in influencing history. We will see how composer Antonín Dvorák exemplified in his life and music the rise of nationalism, its ties to Romanticism, and the revolutionary implications of nationalism for the old order in Europe.

Dvorák’s visit to America was both a demonstration of exoticism in music and the arrival of musical nationalism to these shores. By following his teaching and example, American music succeeded in weaning itself from its German parentage. His “*New World*” *Symphony* was both a compliment to and inspiration for a truly American music.

The symphony draws on what Dvorák perceived to be American folk music traditions embodied in the Negro spiritual, Stephen Foster-style “plantation” music, and Native American influences. While his use of this material may not have been wholly accurate, his message to “synthesize your own heritage and cease copying the Germans” proved very influential in the subsequent creation of uniquely American styles of composition.

The structure of Dvorák’s masterpiece revolves around a conflict of themes and keys, between e minor and E Major—in the final analysis, how will it end, which will triumph? In its simplicity, energy, physicality, and coexistence of contrasting themes, the symphony captures the vitality of this relatively new nation and reflects something of the American melting pot.

The change from Classicism to Romanticism in music was but another aspect of the revolutionary fervor underway in society at large. Ludwig van Beethoven did more than anyone else to effect this change. Not only did he change the *content* of his compositions from what others had done before him; in the ways in which he manipulated *structure*, Beethoven also paved the way for a whole new generation of composers *and* musical genres. These proliferated as the Romantics’ insistence on following their own inner lights pushed the limits of self-expression. Like so many others, Strauss acknowledged the influence of Beethoven.

For Richard Strauss, his musical revolution was intensely personal; not only did Romanticism exalt the individual generally, but, in Strauss' case, it also clashed with his own father's decided preference for Classicism. The younger Strauss followed in the footsteps of Beethoven, Liszt, and Berlioz. We will learn how each of these predecessors influenced Strauss's musical life and work. We will also see how Strauss's Romantic adherence to his musical and personal predilections cast a cloud over his place in public opinion, from the height of his career to his death.

Along the way, we will examine the concepts of absolute music and program music, and we will see how the symphonic poems of Liszt, Berlioz, and others inspired Richard Strauss to create his tone poems. In *Death and Transfiguration*, Strauss created both the story and its musical expression, rather than basing it on some famous piece of literature. He told of a man's struggle with death, of his life, and how the unfinished business of that life is overcome in his transfiguration. Although it was wholly his own creation, Strauss paid homage to Beethoven in a number of interesting ways.

Perhaps the most profound debt Strauss owed Beethoven lay in the area of thematic development. Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration* is an outstanding example of a through-composed piece, that is, one in which all the motives and themes grow out of material that has preceded them. As we study the piece in greater detail, we shall explore the unfolding of Strauss' creative process and follow his masterful development of motives and themes.

This and Strauss' other quotations of Beethoven evince his admiration, but they by no means indicate that Strauss is a mere imitator. It is in composing this piece of music, in fact, that Richard Strauss established his own unique "sound" or style of composition. At the end of his life, having quoted Beethoven in this earlier work, Strauss quoted himself from this signal piece. As his own end approached, it would seem that Strauss, too, looked for transfiguration.

**Dvorák, Lectures One–Four**  
**Romanticism, Classicism, Nationalism, and Exoticism are Joined:**  
**Dvorák's Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 "New World" (1893)**

**Outline**

- I. Let us begin with a consideration of musical nationalism in the Romantic Era, first by example and then by definition.
  - A. In the following musical demonstration, we will compare Mozart's Symphony No. 29 in A Major, K. 201/186A (1774), the first movement, with Dvorák's Slavonic Dance Op. 49, No. 1 (1878), "Bohemian Furiant." In these excerpts, we want to be aware of three issues regarding what the music does in each piece.
    1. What is the mood or expressive quality? How does the music make us feel?
    2. What is the function or purpose of the music?
    3. Does the music reflect a particular ethnic character?
  - B. Having heard each piece, what did we notice?
    1. Both works are upbeat and vigorous in mood and rhythm.
    2. The Mozart symphony is changing and developing as it goes; a theme is introduced and followed by a transition that brings us to a new theme.
    3. Dvorák's piece is much more repetitive and less rhetorical, and it has a greater emphasis on clear phrases and rhythm.
    4. The Mozart piece sounds like "concert" music—music for listening.
    5. The Dvorák piece sounds more like dance music—music for dancing.
    6. The "sound" of Mozart's symphony is that of the "Classical" style: the homogeneous, pan-national, cosmopolitan style of the late eighteenth century.
    7. By contrast the "sound" of Dvorák's "Furiant" is frankly Bohemian, reflecting the composer's Czech and Slavic origins.
  - C. Self-expression takes on a new character and significance in the Romantic Era.
    1. We identify the Romantic Era in Western music from about 1827 to 1900.
    2. It is characterized in particular by ever greater personal self-expression in the arts.
    3. During the second half of the nineteenth century, national and ethnic self-identification became an important element of musical self-expression for many composers outside the Austro-German musical mainstream.
- II. Let us now investigate the circumstances that led to the explosion of nationalism in general and of musical nationalism in particular.
  - A. In 1753, Jean-Jacques Rousseau helps lay the philosophical groundwork for the Enlightenment with his description of the "natural man."
  - B. From 1776–1782 we experience the American Revolution.
  - C. From 1789–1795 there follows the upheaval of the French Revolution.
  - D. The period 1799–1814 witnesses the age of Napoleon, in two phases.
    1. In phase one, 1799–1804, Napoleon is hailed as liberator who frees Europe of the oppression of its ancient monarchies, particularly of the Habsburg (later Austro-Hungarian) Empire.
    2. In phase two, 1804–1814, Napoleon disappoints many, emerging as nothing more than an imperial conqueror.
  - F. In the years that follow, 1814–1848, nationalist and independence fervor simmers across Europe, based on the model of the French Revolution. This is particularly apparent in the Austrian Habsburg Empire, with its reactionary government and many nationalities.
  - F. During the so-called "March Days" of 1848, the pot boils over!
    1. In Paris an insurrection on February 24 topples the regime of the "bourgeois king" Louis Philippe.
    2. On March 3, an anti-Austrian uprising begins in Budapest, Hungary.
    3. On March 13, there is an insurrection in the very heart of the Habsburg monarchy, in Vienna itself!

4. March 15 sees an anti-Prussian insurrection in Berlin.
  5. On March 18, Bohemia, Milan, and Tuscany declare independence from Austria, and Piedmont-Sardinia declares war, hoping to annex formerly Austrian territories in Italy.
  6. Frightened monarchs grant constitutions as the whole governmental structure based on the model of the Habsburg Empire collapses; independent or autonomous nations struggle into existence.
- G.** But, lacking the support of the armies and the middle classes the revolutions falter and fail by June 1848.
- H.** What are some of the upshots of the failed revolutions of 1848?
1. Political activism and nationalism are crushed, and, in many places, outlawed.
  2. Artistic nationalism develops to an even greater extent to take their place.
- III.** What does this mean in terms of musical nationalism?
- A.** Folk or folk-tinted music from nationalistic themes and folk stories are included in concert works and operas.
1. This stirred nationalistic feelings in the ethnic homelands (imperial provinces).
  2. It also made a strong ethnic impression abroad, inspiring others by example.
- B.** It provided a method by which composers could assert artistic independence over the Austrian-German ideal.
- C.** Nationalism ultimately became an essential part of Romantic self-expression, political aspirations aside. "Nationalist" composers comprised the bulk of active composers between 1860 and 1940.
- D.** We see a heightened emphasis on exoticism, the use by a composer of one nationality of the nationalist music of another; for example:
1. Maurice Ravel (French) composes "Bolero" (Spanish);
  2. Peter Illych Tchaikovsky (Russian) composes "Capriccio Italien" (Italian); and
  3. Johannes Brahms (German) composes "Hungarian Dances" (Magyar).
- IV.** We now turn to the life of Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904).
- A.** Dvorák was as close to being a "common man" as any of the major composers.
1. He occupied his free time as a passionate train enthusiast.
    - a. He memorized railroad timetables.
    - b. He made friends with engineers.
    - c. He liked to query his students when they returned from their train travels.
  2. Bohemian born, he was the least neurotic of any major composer, save perhaps Handel and Haydn.
  3. He was a happy family man with six children.
  4. He came from peasant stock and even served an apprenticeship as a butcher.
  5. In 1875, Dvorák won an Austrian state prize and came to the attention of German composer Johannes Brahms. Brahms made Dvorák something of a protégé and helped him to become known outside of his native Bohemia.
    - a. Brahms recommended Dvorák to his own publisher, Simrock, who published Dvorák's "Moravian Duets." These proved to be very successful.
    - b. Although he alienated others, Brahms maintained his friendship for Dvorák, even proofreading some of his works.
  6. Dvorák, considered a "natural" talent, experienced great fame and success in his lifetime. This remains a rare achievement for a composer.
- B.** What characterized Dvorák's musical style?
1. He was a classicist in terms of genre, form, and compositional technique.
    - a. He wrote symphonies, concerti, and chamber music.
    - b. He used sonata form, rondo, and dance forms of the Classical Era.
    - c. This attachment to classicism was something he shared with Brahms.
  2. Dvorák possessed an extraordinary melodic gift and feeling for harmony and modulation.
  3. His composing was marked by great directness and clarity of expression, equaled only by that of Giuseppe Verdi.

4. He was unselfconsciously nationalistic in his thematic material; Dvorák's effortless themes mirror the music of his native Bohemia (today's Czech Republic).
- C. At the height of his career, Dvorák spent some years in America.
1. In June, 1891, Mrs. Jeanette Thurber invited Dvorák to assume the directorship of the newly formed National Conservatory of Music in New York City, at an annual salary of \$15,000. (Dvorák had been making but \$600 in Prague!) In return, Dvorák was to teach three hours a day, prepare four student concerts a year, and conduct six concerts of his own music.
  2. Dvorák arrived in New York in September 1892 and stayed off and on through 1895.
    - a. His arrival provoked what qualified, at that time, as a media frenzy.
    - b. His coming to America coincided with the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus' "discovery."
  3. Dvorák's invitation was a reflection of the growing sentiment in the United States that American music should be less reliant on European models, and only a great nationalist composer could help to found, by action or example, an "American" national school of composition.
- V. What was the state of American concert music when Dvorák arrived in 1892?
- A. Cultivated concert music had evolved slowly in the United States.
1. The logistics and apparatus of music need a long time to evolve. According to Aaron Copeland, the needs include orchestras, concert halls, piano manufacturers, and music teachers (Professor Greenberg adds the need for educated audiences).
  2. According to historian H. Wiley Hitchcock, the territorial growth that characterized the United States in the nineteenth century produced uneven acculturation and bad attitudes towards the arts. This he attributes to several factors.
    - a. First, there was the ever-moving frontier.
    - b. Second, Eastern urban centers with close contacts to Europe had less and less influence as one moved west.
    - c. Finally, the cities in the middle that *had* become established were dominated by "practical" businessmen who viewed fine art music as the province of women, foreigners, and effetes.
  3. The nature of American materialism and economic Darwinism generally precluded the development of non-decorative art.
    - a. By contrast, music is ephemeral.
    - b. Often, music challenges rather than entertains the listener.
  4. Given the diversity of American culture, what would constitute "American" music, anyway?
- B. Music in nineteenth-century America was dominated by Germans, German music, and German-style academic and performing organizations. This had both positive and negative aspects.
1. The positive aspect was that the Germans brought their musical institutions, educational processes, and organizational models with them.
    - a. In higher music education, Americans adopted the German conservatory model.
    - b. German models ushered music into our public school education.
    - c. Music professors in our universities were often trained by Germans.
    - d. German models influenced the design and construction of our music halls.
  2. The negative aspect was that there was a European-German bias built into American music from a very early time. At this time, all the important music educators and composers were German-trained. George Chadwick and his third symphony provide a cogent example; it is an American composition clearly reminiscent of the works of Brahms.
  3. Despite this drawback, the music of Chadwick, John Knowles Paine, and others deserves a much wider hearing than it gets today.
- VI. So, what is the nature of Dvorák's Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 "New World", and where does it fit into this American musical scene?
- A. To begin with, it is a classically proportioned work in four movements:
1. The first movement, in sonata form, is upbeat and fast.
  2. The second movement provides a lyric respite to the first.
  3. The third is a dance, (if not a classical minuet).
  4. The symphony concludes with a big, powerful, sonata-form movement.

- B. What is the nature of the thematic material in the symphony?
  - 1. It is “exotic,” as in exoticism; certain themes are inspired by
    - a. African-American spirituals,
    - b. Stephen Foster “plantation” songs, and
    - c. what Dvorák takes to be Native American music.
  - 2. Certain other themes are as “Czech” as any Dvorák ever wrote.
  - 3. Let us take the main theme from the second movement as an example.
    - a. It is a beautiful, pastoral melody introduced by the English horn.
    - b. Its simple phrases and the static nature of the harmonies give this theme a folk-like aspect.
  - 4. We may compare it to Stephen Foster’s “My Old Kentucky Home.”
- C. While Dvorák’s “Americanisms” may seem naïve today, the message Dvorák sent to the next generation of American composers was very influential: synthesize your heritage, don’t copy the Germans.
  - 1. Dvorák did not distinguish between true spirituals and Stephen Foster “plantation” songs.
  - 2. Dvorák learned this music by inviting an African-American to sing for him.
  - 3. He got his “Indian” music by visiting Buffalo Bill’s “Wild West Show.”
  - 4. He favorably compared Native- and African-American music, both of which he likened to the folk music of Scotland!

**VII. Let us now examine Movement One in detail.**

- A. It is a movement in sonata-allegro form, one of the four principal Classical-Era forms. This provides a formal basis for communication between the composer and his audience.
  - 1. The other forms are theme and variations, rondo, and sonata-rondo form.
  - 2. These forms and their expected or recognized structures provide the composer with an opportunity for expressive creativity by *deviating* from what the audience expects.
  - 3. In sonata-allegro form, themes are introduced and interact in a development section, concluding with a coda.
- B. At some point, Theme 1 will be heard in all four movements, providing a source of dramatic tension throughout the work.
  - 1. This movement and the symphony itself are heroic, direct, and memorable in character.
  - 2. Theme 1 is a fast, powerful, rising and falling triadic theme in e minor, consisting of four phrases.
  - 3. The piece is imbued with energy, a clear phrase structure, and simple harmonic accompaniments, all of which help to capture the spirit of America.
- C. Theme 2 is rustic, dancelike, and melancholy.
  - 1. Vaguely “spiritualish” in character, it is written in g minor.
  - 2. It grows directly out of Theme 1.
  - 3. In Theme 2, Dvorák demonstrates the importance of key feeling in affecting the mood of the piece.
    - a. This theme moves from the dark and unexpected key of g minor to the brighter, “traditional” key of G Major.
    - b. It develops into a folksy tune reminiscent of “Turkey in the Straw.”
- D. Dvorák creates an effortless and natural modulating bridge that grows directly out of the closing “chatter” portion of Theme 1 and becomes the opening portion of Theme 2.
- E. Theme 3 serves as a cadence theme.
  - 1. It is based on a sweet, “plantation”/Foster-type melody in G Major, and consists of three phrases.
  - 2. This theme brings the exposition to its conclusion.
  - 3. It, too, is closely related to Theme 1.
    - a. Theme 3 is a free inversion of Theme 1.
    - b. That is, it has a falling–*rising* form in a similar rhythm to the rising–*falling* form of Theme 1.
- F. Let me make some general notes on the exposition.
  - 1. It starts with a brief, anticipatory introduction.

2. Aside from the introduction, the exposition exhibits an almost complete lack of purely transitional/cadential music—almost every bit of music has a thematic function and melodic memorability.
- G.** The development section is in six parts.
1. This section is dominated by Theme 1, but it includes features of Theme 2 and especially of Theme 3.
  2. The development ends in e minor, but Dvorák suddenly moves into the “distant” key of A<sup>b</sup> Major. This isn’t really all that much of a departure, as it allows him to move, enharmonically, into E Major.
- H.** Thus the recapitulation is as much as would be expected EXCEPT that Theme 3 is now heard in E Major, rather than in e minor, which raises the possibility that the movement will end in E Major. (The plot thickens!)
- I.** The coda, in four parts, comprises a sort of “duel” between major and minor!
1. Themes 1 and 3 are superimposed, creating a direct confrontation between brightness and darkness.
    - a. Theme 3 returns powerfully and lyrically in E Major.
    - b. Theme 1 clashes in response!
  2. Though the movement finally ends in e minor, the battle lines between E Major and minor are now drawn; the ultimate victor will not be revealed until the symphony ends.

**VIII.** In Movement Two, “Largo,” Dvorák draws on themes that he believes to be African and Native American.

- A.** The movement was reportedly inspired by the “Funeral of Minnehaha” episode from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *Song of Hiawatha*.
1. Despite Dvorák’s inspiration, the themes are actually drawn from pseudo-African American “plantation” songs.
  2. This movement is almost entirely devoid of development, relying instead on two principal themes, A and B.
- B.** Structurally, this is a very simple movement related to Movement One, in four parts.
1. It revolves around the harmonic juxtaposition and confrontation between darkness, represented by e minor, and the brilliance and affirmation represented by E Major.
  2. Given the end of the first movement, this movement opens somewhat ambiguously in E Major. Providing a sense of tension and drama.
- C.** The introduction, in the form of a chorale, provides a quiet, mysterious and profound opening. This effects a harmonic transition from the end of Movement One that will return at the end of Movement Four.
- D.** A beautifully pastoral and justly famous tune emerges out of the haze of the introduction; the movement takes the overall form of A, B, C, A<sup>1</sup>.
1. Part 1, “A,” is a famous spiritual-“plantation” melody for English horn.
    - a. It is characterized by a slow harmonic turnover.
    - b. The melody consists of even phrases.
    - c. Simple, folk-like, and unexpected, it evokes wide-open spaces and the simplicity and naturalness of folk music.
  2. Part 2, “B,” is darkly lamenting, noodling, faux-primitive “Indian”-style music, that calls to mind a funeral procession.
  3. Part 3, “C,” describing a woodland scene, is a large transition in two parts:
    - a. A bird-like theme, created by filling in the notes from theme “A,” reflects in a major key the coming of day’s light.
    - b. A momentary reprise of themes from both the first movement and this, the second movement, pass in quick review and lead directly back to...
  4. Part 4, “A<sup>b</sup>”:
    - a. An abbreviated English horn solo begins this section.
    - b. A dream-like, varied reprise of the opening theme fades in and out.
    - c. The themes are taken up by a solo violin and ’cello, followed by the strings.

- d. Finally, the major chords of the introduction return, providing a sense of optimism as the movement ends.
- IX. Movement Three, a scherzo, was supposedly inspired by the “feast” episode from the *Song of Hiawatha*.
  - A. Wake up and boogie! However, this will not be a traditional dance movement because of the nature of Dvorák’s material.
  - B. The movement will take shape as a large-scale A–B–A form plus a coda: a series of dances consisting of a scherzo, a trio, and a coda
  - C. The scherzo, “A,” was clearly inspired by Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Op. 125, Movement Two (1824).
  - D. The scherzo theme, “A/a”, in its accelerando, reflects the “Dance of the Storm-Fool” from Longfellow’s poem.
    - 1. Although it is extremely physical and powerful, in its rhythmic complexity this is very much music of the concert hall.
    - 2. Dvorák is *very* skilled at composing dance music, a reflection of the ethnic character of his work.
  - E. The scherzo theme, “A/b”, is a somewhat lighter, though still rustic-sounding melody.
    - 1. It is characterized by rhythmic activity and the power of its beat.
    - 2. A quiet transition in three parts leads us into the trio.
  - F. The trio, “B,” is rather more Czech than Cherokee, more Moravian than Mohawk.
    - 1. It is multinational in character.
    - 2. It is based on a punchy rhythmic idea.
    - 3. It is very central European in its sophisticated use of melodic detail, harmonic complexity, and instrumentation.
  - G. The music then goes through a transition into the da capo, “A,” a verbatim reprise of the earlier section ending in e minor.
  - H. This brings us to the coda, where again the ur-issue of the symphony leaps to the forefront:
    - 1. Themes 1 and 2 from Movement One intrude!
    - 2. The keys of E Major and e minor are again juxtaposed.
    - 3. This coda brings us back to the reality of the piece:
      - a. Which theme will dominate?
      - b. Which key will triumph?
- X. Movement Four is designated “*allegro con fuoco*”: fast, with fire.
  - A. Again, it is a movement in sonata-allegro form.
    - 1. It begins with a brief introduction.
    - 2. The first, dramatic theme is followed by a second, contrasting theme.
    - 3. There is a development section.
    - 4. A very special coda, in which all our questions are resolved, concludes the piece.
  - B. The exposition follows very much the same lines as the exposition in the first movement.
    - 1. Theme 1 in this fourth movement is very similar to Theme 1 of Movement One.
      - a. It is magnificent and martial, with a vaguely Slavic accent.
      - b. Dvorák’s use of the smaller (“lowered”) seventh interval from the key of e (natural) minor, gives the music a “modal” feel, or a touch of Slavic spice.
      - c. The exposition is preceded by a brief but furious, accelerating introduction.
    - 2. Theme 2 is a long, lyric theme heard initially in the solo clarinet.
      - a. The clarinet solo adds a note of delicacy and singularity.
      - b. This theme, though heard in the recapitulation at the “expected” moment, remains undeveloped.
      - c. Here, the niceties of sonata form contrast with the “real” action of the symphony, in which Themes 1 of Movements One and Three, respectively, struggle for dominance!
    - 3. As in the first movement, the elements of the modulating bridge/cadence material grow out of the first theme, providing a united whole.
      - a. In the modulating bridge, Dvorák removes five of the eleven notes from Theme 1 and turns the remaining six into two sets of triplets.

- b. For the cadence, Dvorák removes the second note of Theme 1, puts it into major, and sequences it.
  - c. The fragmentation of the cadence theme near the end prepares us for the development section.
- C. The development, in six parts, is what we've been waiting for!
  - 1. The REAL action of this movement slips into gear!
    - a. One theme is pitted against another!
    - b. The "Three Blind Mice" material and the "chattering" triplet material from the modulating bridge are swept aside by Theme 1.
  - 2. Conflict and contrast are created not between Themes 1 and 2 of this movement, but between the principal themes of all four movements.
    - a. In part three, the beautiful English horn spiritual theme from Movement Two appears, alternating with the main scherzo theme (Indian dance).
    - b. In part four, the English horn melody comes back in E<sup>b</sup> Major and e<sup>b</sup> minor, but they've had their day.
  - 3. Parts 5 and 6 of the development section feature a confrontation between what we now know are the main combatants of the symphony:
    - a. Theme 1 of Movement One intrudes.
    - b. Theme 1 of Movement Four is left standing at the end of this section.
    - c. How will it all end?
- D. In the classical model, the recapitulation takes the exposition material and readjusts the key, usually of the second theme and cadence material, to correspond to the home key of Theme 1. Here, Theme 1 has about had it.
  - 1. Theme 1 of Movement Four appears to be on its last legs.
    - a. The theme angrily reasserts its control over the movement but rather quickly collapses from exhaustion, unable to sustain its furious energy; along with it, e minor collapses.
    - b. A bridge in e natural minor brings us back to Theme 2.
  - 2. A very important and impressive recapitulation of Theme 2 occurs.
    - a. A rich, deeply expressive version of the theme in the surprising and energizing key of...
    - b. E Major! is full, powerful, and yet melancholy.
  - 3. The cadence material and cadence theme follow.
    - a. An E pedal in the bass underlies the theme in E Major.
    - b. Theme 1, Movement One, follows very delicately and elegantly in the winds, now in E Major.
    - c. Darkness, tragedy, and e minor now seem behind us, but the horns suggest that the final battle is yet to come in the coda.
  - 4. By the close of the Recapitulation, two questions loom large:
    - a. What key will the symphony conclude in?
    - b. Which Theme 1 (Movement One or Movement Four) will have the last word?
- E. The long-awaited denouement now arrives in the coda, in seven parts.
  - 1. In parts 1-3, Theme 1, Movement One, and Theme 1, Movement Four, alternate; the ultimate confrontation is joined!
    - a. Theme 1, Movement One, gets the ball rolling when its motive outlines a dissonant harmony that cries out for resolution.
    - b. Theme 1, Movement Four, is not about to tolerate this intrusion, and counterattacks with *fff* trumpets!
    - c. Theme 1, Movement One responds with trombones!
    - d. Theme 1, Movement Four returns in the strings!
  - 2. In part 4, like Moses on Mount Sinai, a monumental version of the once quiet and mysterious introduction chorale of Movement Two temporarily stops the thematic bickering.
  - 3. In parts 5-6, the middle movement themes (Theme A of Movement Two and the scherzo of Movement Three) alternate with each other, followed, at first quietly, by Theme 1 of Movement Four, which then grandly reasserts itself.
  - 4. Finally, we have arrived at part 7: THE BIG MOMENT! Theme 1 of Movement One and Theme 1 of Movement Four are heard simultaneously, in E Major!

- a. Their differences remain in an intentional dissonance, but not enough to alter the triumph of E Major.
- b. Their marvelous reconciliation brings the movement and the symphony to a joyful conclusion.
- c. According to English Dvorák biographer John Clapham, the end of the symphony indicates a lapse in Dvorák's judgement, occasioned by the influence of "American" folk music.
- d. Do not the contrasting, coexisting themes in Dvorák's "New World" symphony constitute a metaphor for the American melting pot? The E Major conclusion is one of celebration and hope, hence a very American composition.

WordScore Guide™: Antonín Dvořák, Symphony No.9 in E minor, Op.95 “From the New World” (1893)

MOVEMENT I: SONATA-ALLEGRO FORM, DUPLÉ METER

**Exposition**

**Introduction: Adagio**

quiet, mysterious, descending motives heard in the:

strings → winds  
e minor  
pp

9

Pow! Explosive, compact motives jolt the music awake!  
ff

15

syncopated, almost ragtime winds alternate  
p  
with powerful, rising/falling motive in low strings  
f  
2x

24

**Theme 1: Allegro molto**

- the powerful, rising/falling motive heard in the Intro is followed by a
- chattering, dotted rhythm phrase; together they constitute **Theme 1**

etc.

horn f  
a  
e minor  
winds p  
oboe/winds a<sup>1</sup>  
f p

91

**Theme 2**

rustic, dancelike, melancholy theme grows directly out of the metamorphosis of the **Modulating Bridge**

etc.

a  
flute and oboe  
g minor  
p

99

107

lengthy, almost developmental phrase sees the theme extended in an almost country-fiddle style manner  
note: modulation to G Major!

a<sup>1</sup>  
violins  
ppp  
a<sup>2</sup>  
ppp < f > p < f > p  
g minor →

19

explosive compact motives and tutti chords bring the Intro to its climax and lead directly into...

*f*

23

a shivering and anticipatory violin tremolo

*fpp*

39

*a*<sup>2</sup>  
strings  
*ff*

extended

59

rousing,  
concluding  
version of  
theme 1

*a*<sup>3</sup>  
tutti  
*fff*

67

### Modulating Bridge

grows directly out of the chattering, dotted-rhythm phrase that concludes Theme 1; the music calms and and quiets as the dotted rhythm phrase metamorphoses into a "new" melodic idea:



148

### Theme 3/Cadence Theme

sweet, gorgeous "plantation" tune  
à la Stephen Foster

the momentum  
slows and quiets



climatic version of  
theme is "cut  
short" by the end  
of the Exposition

< *f* > *p* >  
G Major

*a*  
flute (solo)  
G Major  
*p*

*a*<sup>1</sup>  
strings  
*pp*

ext.

*a*<sup>2</sup>  
tutti  
*ff*

## Development

181

### Part 1:

dramatic, transitional music uses motives of Theme 3; the mood calms and the dynamic quiets

*ff* decresc. - - - *pp*

193

### Part 2:

the opening portion of Theme 3 is heard successively in the:

horn → piccolo → trumpet →

*p*

trumpet →

chattering, dotted-note winds of Theme 1 are heard and extended →

(note trumpet fanfares)

cresc. - - -

237

### Part 4: Sequence

trombones and low strings playing opening of Theme 1 alternates with

*ff*

2x

trumpets playing diminished version of opening of Theme 3 and descending strings

253

### Part 5:

dramatic, climactic rising sequence based on the chattering, dotted rhythm portion of Theme 1

*ff*

## Recapitulation

277

### Theme 1

Powerful, rising/falling motive is followed by a chattering, dotted rhythm phrase

**a**

horn/winds  
e minor  
*mf*

285

dramatic, slightly extended phrase segues immediately into the...

**a<sup>1</sup>**

oboe/winds

**a<sup>2</sup>**

strings  
*ff*

304

### Modulating theme

Brief! Based on the falling portion of the opening Theme 1 motive:



etc..

decresc. - - - - -

374

### Theme 3/Cadence Theme

sweet "plantation" tune à la Stephen Foster

**a**

flute (solo)  
A<sup>b</sup> Major (!)  
*p*

**a<sup>1</sup>**

strings  
*pp*

ext.

**a<sup>2</sup>**

tutti  
*f*

climatic version of theme is "cut short" by the advent of the Coda

## Coda

400

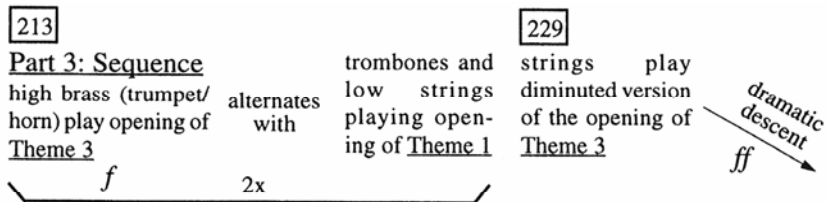
### Part 1:

sudden, extraordinary modulation as:

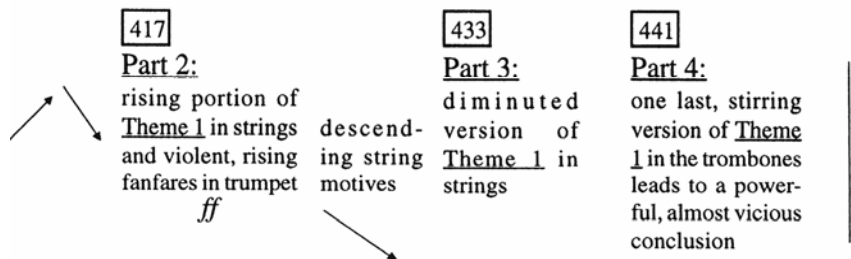
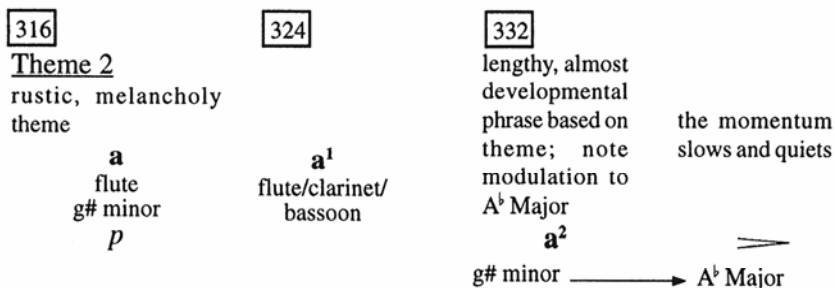
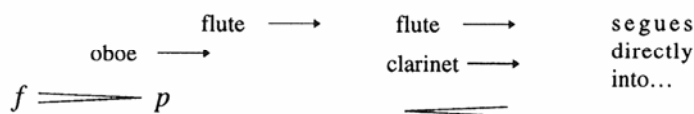
trumpets play Theme 3 →  
trombones play Theme 1 →

*fff*

E Major → e Minor



**261**  
**Part 6: retransition**  
 quiet wind sequence explores the opening, rising motive of Theme 1:



## MOVEMENT II “LARGO”; DUPLÉ METER

### Introduction

A quiet but powerful brass/wind chorale sets a mysterious mood and effects a marvelous harmonic transition, from E major (Movement I ended in E minor) to the distant and unexpected key of D<sup>b</sup> Major:



### Part One

7

**Theme A – Spiritual-ish/plantation-ish**  
a beautiful, pastoral and justly famous tune emerges from the haze:



**a**  
english horn  
D<sup>b</sup> Major  
*p*

**b**  
english horn  
and clarinet

**a<sup>1</sup>**  
english horn  
and bassoon

19

**Interlude**  
(brief)  
in clarinets  
& bassoons

c  
l  
o  
s  
e  
d  
c  
a  
d  
e  
n  
c  
e  
rising  
flutes  
and  
'cellos

### Part Two

46

**Theme B “Un poco più mosso”/ Native American-ish**  
dark, lamenting, rather noodling/  
directionless faux-primitive theme heard  
over shivering string tremolos



**a**  
flute/oboe  
c# natural  
minor/modal  
*pp*

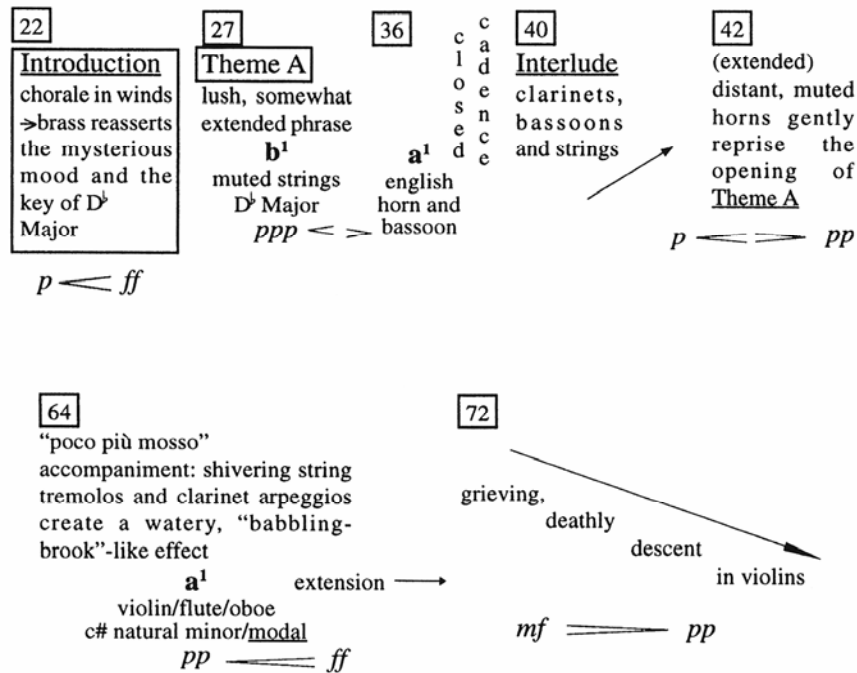
54

**“poco meno mosso”**  
funereal melody in high winds; plodding  
pizzicato basses create a sense of proces-  
sional



**b**  
high winds  
c# minor  
*pp/p*

This movement was reportedly inspired by "The Funeral of Minnehaha" episode from Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha," which Dvořák read in the early 1860's. Despite this attribution, the principal thematic material of the movement draws its inspiration from the pseudo-African/American "Plantation" songs Dvořák heard while in the United States. Irrespective of thematic origin, this movement is almost entirely devoid of development, relying, instead, on the various appearances of two slightly contrasting themes.



78

funereal phrase resumes, in a low,  
instrumentally dark register

**b<sup>1</sup>**

low violins/clarinets  
c# minor

## Part Three

90

### Transition – “Woodland scene”

the clouds part & the mood brightens as twittering, bird-like  
winds & violins intone a tune derived from Theme A:



**87** Codetta

lamenting, noodling opening phrase  
returns, much abbreviated

sudden & striking  
shift to C# Major her-  
alds

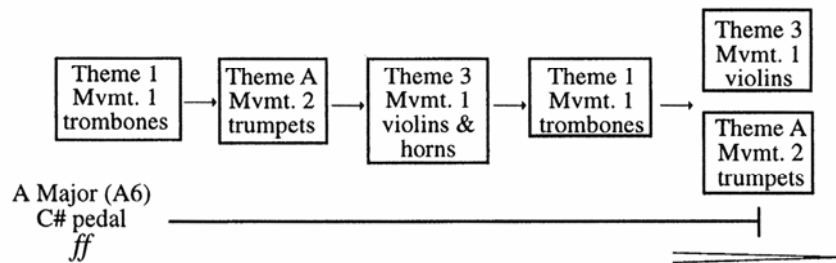
**a<sup>2</sup>**

low violins  
c# natural minor/  
modal

**96**

A thematic family reunion! Well howdy-do, cousins!

(or paradise/lyricism regained after the funereal darkness of Part 2? whatever)  
Brilliant, fanfarish section sees the following themes pass in succession:



**113**

Interlude

thematic fragments in winds, as strings  
gently and dreamily descend

*p*  $\Rightarrow$  *ppp*

**120**

Introduction

quiet chorale in brass  
and bassoons end the  
movement as it be-  
gan – with a sense of  
profound power and  
mystery

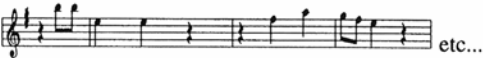
strings

# MOVEMENT III: SCHERZO, "MOLTO VIVACE", TRIPLE METER

**Scherzo**  
Blaring, dramatic introductory gesture owes not a small debt to the opening of the 2nd Movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9!

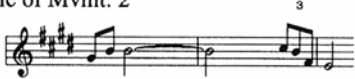
The music quiets as repeated notes prepare the way for ...

**Scherzo Theme**  
simple, rustic tune dominated by falling leaps



e minor *f* → e minor pedal harmony *p* → **a** flute/oboe/clarinet *p* → **a<sup>1</sup>** violins *p* ext. <=

**68**  
a lighter but still rustic melodic phrase, more than a little reminiscent of the dark, noodling **Theme B** "Indian" music of Mvmt. 2



**b**  
flute/oboe  
E Major  
*p*

**76** **b<sup>1</sup>** clarinet

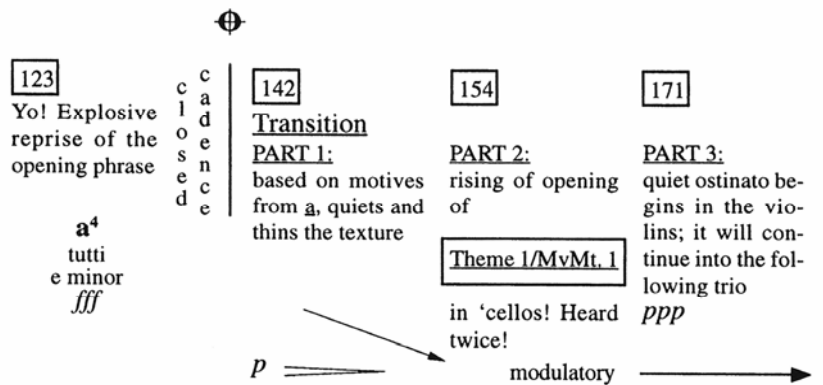
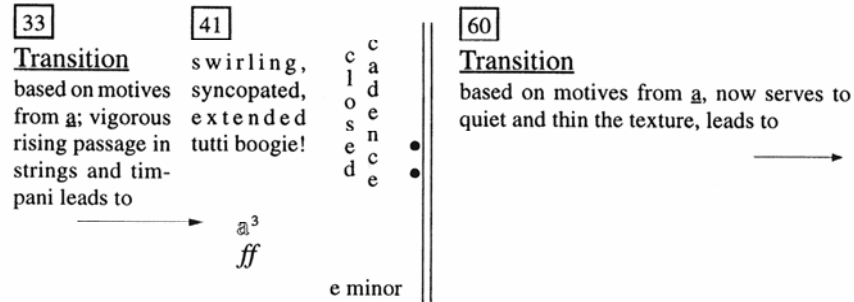
**84** **c** flute/oboe

**92** **b<sup>2</sup>** 'cellos

**99**  
**Transition**  
based on motives from **a**

*ppp* <=


Back to Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha"; this scherzo was supposedly inspired by the "Feast" episode, during which the Indians "danced". According to Dvorak biographer John Clapham, "We can imagine the Pau-Puk-Keewis whirling around the pseudo-canon for woodwind instruments." Well, we're glad he can, at least.



## Trio

**176**

another rustic/country-side tune, bright and airy in mood; characterized by dotted (long-short) rhythms, and sounding decidedly more Czech than Cherokee



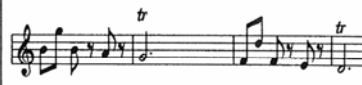
etc...

**d**  
winds  
C Major

violin ostinato continues in accompaniment → *p* →

**193**

trilling, leaping melodic phrase alternates between violins and high winds



etc.

**e**  
G Major  
*mf/p*

c  
l  
o  
s  
e  
d

## ⊕ Coda

**249**

dramatic string tremolo on the utterly unexpected harmony of C4/2  
(B<sup>b</sup> in bass! a tritone from tonic "E"! A gigantic harmonic disruption! WHAT'S UP?)

**253**

Another thematic reunion of sorts:

Theme 1/Mvmt. 1

in horns alternate with

Scherzo Theme/a

motives in winds!

Very unstable, modulatory harmonies underlie the horn/wind exchange

*f* *ff*

216

a series of  
gurgling,  
cooing trills  
in strings  
and winds  
extend and  
close phrase  
e

c  
l  
o  
s  
e  
d  
e  
d'  
tutti  
C Major

240

### Transition

based on motive from a, revs up  
the energy level for the return to  
the scherzo

modulatory →

Da capo al  
coda ⊕

281

A climactic moment is reached as trum-  
pets triumphantly intone the opening of

### Theme 3/Mvmt. 1

E Major → e minor  
(yes! back home!) (what? where to  
now???)

"E" pedal —————  
fff decresc. ----- ppp

the music suddenly & un-  
expectedly dies away, the  
E Major triumph of just  
moments ago being re-  
placed by a quiet uneasi-  
ness – where is the music  
headed? and what key/  
mode are we in?

e  
grand m  
pause i  
n  
o  
r  
c  
h  
o  
r  
d  
ff

# MOVEMENT IV "ALLEGRO CON FUOCO" ("FAST, WITH FIRE")

Sonata-allegro form, duple meter

## Exposition

### Introduction

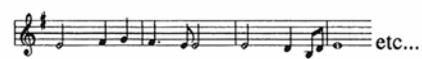
furious, powerful, upwards climbing strings gather momentum like a locomotive picking up speed!

*ff*

10

### Theme 1

a magnificent, martial theme with a vaguely slavic tint due to its modal (flat) 7th



26 34 44 62

**Modulating Bridge**  
triplet-dominated version of **Theme 1** creates a busy, almost dance-like effect

the texture thins and quiets →

**b** strings **a<sup>2</sup>** violins/winds ext. →

strings *ff* → winds → (ext.) →

92 122

**Cadence Material**  
**Cadence Theme**  
like the bridge, based on **Theme 1**

**Cadence Theme**  
is slowly reduced to its last 3 notes: "3 blind mice"

high string tremolo →  
descending, "3 blind mice" motives in clarinet/bassoon/pizzicato strings

tutti G Major *ff*

190 198

**Part 5: sequence**

**Part 6:**

Theme A/Mvmt. 2 (brass) *ff pp* *e<sup>b</sup> minor* strings →

Theme 1/Mvmt. 1 (brass/low strings/bassoon)  
alternates two times with

Theme 1/Mvmt. 4 (violins)  
*ff* → string extension and buildup !

Theme 1/ Mvmt. 4  
trumpets and horn

## Recapitulation

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">208</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Theme 1</div> furiously and magnificently <div style="text-align: center;"><b>a</b></div> horns e natural minor (e 6/4)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">214</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Collapse!</div> in a stunning and remarkable passage, the theme collapses on itself, unable to sustain its furious energy; a quiet, almost tragic version ensues <div style="text-align: center;"><b>a<sup>1</sup></b></div> oboe/horn	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">220</div> (Bridge) violins pick up the tragic ver- sion of the theme and effect a transition to... modulatory $\longrightarrow$ <div style="text-align: center;"><math>\text{ppp}</math></div>
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## Coda

again, we will hear themes from previous movements "on parade", and we will finally find out what key this movement/symphony is in!

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">275</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Part 1:</div> Uh-oh! Don't head for the E Major doors just yet! As dramatic <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 1</div> motives outline an extremely disso- nant $E^{\circ}7$ harmony <div style="text-align: center;"><math>ff</math></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">281</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Part 2:</div> "No – this is <u>my</u> movement!" <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 4</div> bursts forth amid trumpet fanfares; a battle royale be- tween 1st themes is joined!!! <div style="text-align: center;"><math>fff</math></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">289</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Part 3:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 1</div> (in trombones) again tries to assert itself; it is an- swered immedi- ately by...	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">293</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 4</div> in strings
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">321</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Part 6:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 4</div> in horn with tolling timpani accompani- ment <div style="text-align: center;"><math>pp</math></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">333</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Part 7:</div> "poco meno mosso" Finally, the inevitable comes to pass: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Themes 1 from Mvmt. 1 &amp; Mvmt. 4 are heard <u>simultaneously</u>, both in E Major:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 1/trombones and horns</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">Theme 1/Mvmt. 4/trumpets</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"><math>\longrightarrow</math> "E" pedal <math>\longrightarrow</math></div>		

**227**  
**Theme 2**  
 a rich & deeply expressive version of the theme would seem to respond to the tragic collapse of **Theme 1**

**251**  
**Cadence**  
**Material**  
**Cadence Theme**  
 winds  
 E Major  
 "E" pedal in timpani and basses  
*p*

amid quiet **Cadence Theme** motives in the winds, horns play **Theme 1/Mvmt.** the continued presence of E major is having a cathartic effect on the music; darkness, tragedy & e minor seem increasingly far behind

horn fanfares pave the way for the...

strings E Major

E Major

**299**  
**Part 4:**  
**Introduction Chorale/Mvt. 2**  
 Monumental & earth shaking, puts an end to the bickering of the Theme 1's, striding as it does over a furious string accomp.  
*ff*

descending strings dissipate the energy

**313**  
**Part 5:**  
**Theme A/Mvt. 2 (clarinets)**  
 alternates with  
**Scherzo theme/Mvt. 3 (strings and flutes)**  
*p*

(this marvelous reconciliation is not without a hint of rancor – note the fantastic dissonance created by the E#'s of **Theme 1/Mvmt. 4**):

reduction:



**337**  
 "in tempo"  
 hint of rancor notwithstanding, **E Major** has been firmly and unequivocally established as the movement (and symphony) moves to its rollicking conclusion

**Strauss, Lectures One–Four**  
**Romantic Era Program Music and Expressionism:**  
**Strauss's *Death and Transfiguration* (1889)**

**Outline**

- I. Let us begin with a consideration of Romanticism and the rise of nineteenth-century program music.
  - A. By way of introduction, let's make a musical comparison between Mozart's Symphony No. 29 in A Major, K. 201/186A (1774), and Tchaikovsky's love theme from *Romeo and Juliet* (1869).
    1. Mozart's piece is what we would call absolute music.
      - a. Although it is upbeat and energetic, the symphony doesn't really tell a story or describe a scene.
      - b. It is clearly written in the Viennese Classical style.
      - c. Here, music is viewed as a decorative art, "an improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing."
    2. Tchaikovsky's piece, on the other hand, is what we would call program music.
      - a. It tells of the passionate young love of Romeo and Juliet.
      - b. The climbing phrases in the music rise to a metaphoric climax, providing a clear sense of build-up and release.
      - c. This music clearly has an extra-musical content creating visual and literary imagery that evokes worlds of experience and emotion.
  - B. What brought about the change from Classicism to Romanticism?
    1. Art and music provide a mirror in which the dramatic changes in society are reflected. What happens during this period?
      - a. Enlightenment values solidify.
      - b. The French Revolution occurs.
      - c. The Age of Napoleon follows.
      - d. The Industrial Revolution gathers steam.
      - e. We witness the complete emergence of the middle class.
      - f. The Enlightenment occasions a loss of faith in established religious institutions and in those monarchs who claim to rule by divine right.
    2. Ludwig van Beethoven appears on the scene—the right man at the right time—and pushes forward changes in music consonant with the spirit of the age.
      - a. He is a revolutionary composer in a revolutionary age, mirroring the French Revolution and Napoleon.
      - b. The symphony is held up to be the most important instrumental genre. The suave, urbane, and emotionally restrained classical style is the music of the era into which Beethoven is born, and which he will change forever.
      - c. Beethoven believed in music as self-expression. His Fifth Symphony is a good example.
      - d. Again, in Beethoven's Fifth, music is seen as a metaphor. Whatever the composer meant, certain emotions and meaning comes through.
    3. Both in his life and in his composing, Beethoven espouses Romantic ideals.
      - a. In his composing, content and feeling define form. Expressive needs must be the final arbiter—structure and form must *follow*.
      - b. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with its clear text, is the revolutionary model for music to follow.
      - c. In his life, the idea that anything goes, dedication to personal self-expression, and individuality in all things are the heritage of Enlightenment humanism carried forward into the Romantic Era.
      - d. The instrumental composition coupled with poetry in Beethoven's Ninth has an explicit program, hence program music.
      - e. Each composer to follow Beethoven seeks to create his own style—with Beethoven, the composer abandoned the role of servant craftsman for that of artistic creator.

- II.** Composers of the Romantic Era engender new instrumental genres to accommodate program music.
- A.** Cultivated at this time, the instrumental miniature is one response that does not rely on large-scale structure. Let us take as a musical example Chopin's *Étude in E Major, Op. 10 (1832)*.
    - 1. It provides a single "whiff" of emotion.
    - 2. It avoids large-scale formal problems of departure, contrast, and return.
  - B.** Larger works include the program symphony, which tells a story and is based on Beethoven's models. For example, we have Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830), in which a young man is desperately in love with a woman who doesn't know he exists.
    - 1. It is a multi-movement orchestral work that tells a single story, i.e., it has a program.
    - 2. For our musical example, let's look at the first movement, Theme 1, the "Idée Fixe", which represents the woman. This theme will change as the man's attitude towards her changes, but it will remain recognizable.
    - 3. The example of Beethoven's symphonies, plus an explicit literary story, gives us the program symphony.
    - 4. Berlioz takes this one step further and gives us a printed program that explains what he is doing.
  - C.** The concert or symphonic overture is another important nineteenth-century genre. Let us revisit Tchaikovsky's *Overture-Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet* (1869), the love theme, which is the second theme of a sonata-form movement.
    - 1. The piece itself is a single-movement orchestral work.
    - 2. It is based on a literary program.
    - 3. It is written in sonata-allegro form.
  - D.** The most avant-garde of all these nineteenth-century musical genres is the symphonic poem. Let's use Liszt's *Totentanz* (1849), the opening, for our musical example.
    - 1. The piece, again, is a single-movement orchestral work.
    - 2. It is based on a literary program, representing the Angel of Death "harvesting" humankind during the Bubonic Plague of the fourteenth century.
    - 3. The form of the music *follows* the program:
      - a. In the music, we get a sense of collapsing skeletons.
      - b. We also hear a quotation of the *Dies Irae* (day of judgement) theme from the funeral Mass for the dead.
- III.** Let's examine the symphonic poem at greater length.
- A.** The term "symphonic poem" was invented by Franz Liszt during his composing years at Weimar (after 1848). Liszt's symphonic poems include *Totentanz*, *Les Preludes*, *Orpheus*, *Hamlet*, and *Mazeppa*.
  - B.** They embrace the concept of "thematic unity."
    - 1. This is utterly necessary if such literature-derived works are to make any purely musical sense.
    - 2. This concept states that thematic material should evolve from a common musical root.
    - 3. It is based on the evolutionary/organic thematic developments of Beethoven.
    - 4. How, without a pre-existing form, are we, the audience, to be able to follow such a piece?
      - a. Liszt argues that thematic unity must be present on a purely musical level.
      - b. Beethoven provides the artistic model. The piece grows out of a theme that is continually developed (through- composed) throughout the piece.
    - 5. We can see this in a motivic analysis of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 (1807), the first movement.
      - a. The gestalt of the movement is birth, growth, near death, and the temporary triumph of darkness in the face of great hope!
      - b. Beethoven manages to "tell" this story (and achieve unity) in purely musical terms.
        - 1. The exposition introduces motives of birth, development, growth, and celebration in a process of thematic elaboration.
        - 2. The development section is about death and disintegration in a purely musical way.
        - 3. The recapitulation is a mirror to the development section, providing a reflection of its near-death experience, yet with overtones of resuscitation and hope.
        - 4. Because the theme has disintegrated, the coda begins as another development section. Yet life comes back to the shattered landscape through the musical ideas.

5. By leaving a note out of the original theme, we get a new-sounding theme through a series of sequences, and life, indeed, returns. The coda may now bring the movement to a close on a fairly positive note, in C Major.
6. Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration* will also begin in c minor and end in C Major, a clear reference to the Beethoven symphony.
6. Now let's consider another musical comparison: thematic unity and development as witnessed in Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, the first movement, versus Berlioz's use of the "Idée Fixe" in the *Symphonie Fantastique*.
  - a. In Beethoven's Fifth, the developmental transformation occurs in such a way that the opening of the movement and part four of the coda, if compared in isolation, would not seem to be related unless one has heard the constant development of the former into the latter throughout the movement. Beethoven accomplishes this within the framework of sonata form, and so we speak of his process of developmental transformation as purely musical.
  - b. In Berlioz's work, the "beloved" theme of the first movement is still recognizable in the fourth; the variation occurs *within* the recognizable theme, and that's what we call a "leitmotif". This allows the composers of program music to tell their story *without* relying on strict musical forms.

#### IV. Other notable composers of symphonic poems include

- A. Richard Wagner,
- B. Camille Saint-Saens,
- C. Antonín Dvorák,
- D. César Franck, and
- E. Richard Strauss, a master of program music.
  1. Strauss designated his works "Tone Poems" to distinguish them from those of Liszt and Liszt's followers.
  2. Strauss' tone poems include some of the most famous and popular works composed during the late nineteenth century:
    - a. *Don Juan*, Op. 20 (1888),
    - b. *Death and Transfiguration*, Op. 24 (1889),
    - c. *Macbeth*, Op. 23 (1890),
    - d. *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, Op. 28 (1895),
    - e. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Op. 30 (1894),
    - f. *Don Quixote*, Op. 35 (1897),
    - g. *A Hero's Life*, Op. 40 (1898),
    - h. *Sinfonia Domestica*, Op. 53 (1903), and
    - i. *An Alpine Symphony*, Op. 64 (1915).
  3. Having written so many "operas without words," Strauss turned, finally, to opera itself. His major operas include:
    - a. *Feuersnot*, Op. 50 (1901),
    - b. *Salome*, Op. 54 (1905),
    - c. *Elektra*, Op. 58 (1908),
    - d. *Der Rosenkavalier*, Op. 59 (1910),
    - e. *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Op. 60 (1912),
    - f. *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Op. 65 (1918), and
    - g. *Capriccio*, Op. 85 (1944).

#### V. Let's examine the life and times of Richard Strauss (1864-1949).

- A. Strauss had an interesting, one might say controversial, upbringing.
  1. He was born and raised in Munich, the son of Franz Strauss, a celebrated and opinioned French horn player who detested Romantic "modernism" and adored classicism.
    - a. Despite his preference, the elder Strauss played in many important premiers.
    - b. He openly criticized composers and conductors alike, but his highly accomplished performance artistry led them to tolerate him.
  2. Richard was precocious, but he wasn't pushed.

- a. He began piano and violin studies at four years of age and was composing at six.
  - b. His father provided him a good classical music education.
- 3. In 1884, the noted conductor Hans von Bülow instructed Strauss in conducting, at which, along with composing, Strauss came to make his living.
- 4. During the years 1884–1887, von Bülow put his own orchestra at Strauss’ disposal. Strauss’ classical style of composing dissipated as von Bülow increased the young man’s exposure to the music and ideals of the music-of-the-future group, which included Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner.
- B. As Strauss matured, his fame increased.
  - 1. From 1888 to 1911, Strauss was the most talked-about and controversial musician in Europe. His operas *Salome* and *Elektra* scandalized people.
  - 2. Strauss, along with composer Gustav Mahler, pushed German Romanticism to the brink of musical anarchy.
  - 3. He inherited the mantle of Liszt as a wild-haired, shocking composer and as a virtuoso (in Strauss’ case, as a virtuoso composer).
  - 4. As a media “hero,” Strauss was the object of great public scrutiny, criticism, and idolatry.
  - 5. Again, as a media “hero,” Strauss made a lot of money; he himself noted the value of his own notoriety.
  - 6. However, after *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910), Strauss increasingly became a musical anachronism.
    - a. He continued to compose in a tonal, late Romantic style.
    - b. He was no longer the “young Turk” of the music world.
  - 7. Strauss’ relationship with the Nazis remains controversial to this day; many thought that a composer, indeed, a celebrity of his stature ought not to have been so apolitical.
    - a. He had no qualms about using Jewish librettist Stefan Zweig, much to the Nazis’ discomfort.
    - b. Yet he remained in Germany during Nazi rule and did not speak out against it, busying himself with his music and other private concerns.
  - 8. His last major work, the “Four Last Songs,” was completed in 1948 at the age of eighty-four, just before his death in 1949.

VI. We now turn to consider Strauss’ *Death and Transfiguration* (1889).

- A. What constitutes the program of this work?
  - 1. In 1894, Strauss wrote about the piece. It is about a man on his deathbed suffering the agonies of his final illness as he recounts, in a dream state, his life’s victories and disappointments. After his death he is ultimately transfigured.
  - 2. It is written in a quasi-sonata-allegro form, although the form is truly an outgrowth of the story.
    - a. In the introduction, we learn of the dying man and his two states: an inner, mental state and an outer, physical state.
    - b. In the exposition, the pain of the body is most apparent.
    - c. The development focuses on dreams of his life, in particular, his childhood.
    - d. In the recapitulation, his pain returns and he dies.
    - e. In the coda, the man is transfigured—his soul is converted into something metaphysical.
  - 3. The printed program, inserted into the score after the work was completed, was written by poet Alexander Ritter. It covers in some detail the points outlined above.
  - 4. The music depicts the three states of being described in the piece:
    - a. The inner state focuses on the imagination, memories, emotions, and feelings.
    - b. The outer state deals with the disintegrating body wracked with pain.
    - c. The transcendental state describes the transfiguration after death.
  - 5. The array of these states creates the large-scale structure of the composition. In the back-and-forth motion between the inner and the outer states lies the tension and drama of the work.
    - a. In the introduction we get the first sense of struggle between outer and inner states.
    - b. This carries over into the exposition, which focuses on the outer state.
    - c. The development focuses on the inner state.
    - d. The recapitulation returns to the outer state.
    - e. In the coda we finally experience transfiguration.
- B. We now start moving our way through this very complicated piece. The five-part introduction plays a dual role and begins with the outer state.

1. Parts 1, 3, and 5 depict the outer state.
    - a. These are characterized by pain and fragments—music of gesture reflecting a sense of dislocation.
    - b. The piece begins in c minor and quotes a descending three-note motive “Lebewohl” (“farewell”) from Beethoven’s Piano Sonata Op. 81A, “Les Adieux”.
    - c. The irregular rhythm reflects an irregular heartbeat which will culminate in a seizure—a brutal moment.
  2. In parts 2 and 4 we will actually hear themes—music of melody reflecting the inner state.
    - a. These parts are characterized by sweet harmonies and steady beats. A strumming harp softens everything, provides a steady contrast to the irregular heartbeat of the other parts, and leaves behind the darkness of c minor.
    - b. We hear the following themes and motives all related via careful thematic development: the childhood theme, the innocence motive, and the love motive.
      1. The innocence motive is the first real melody we hear in the piece. It is a reduced melodic descent based on the “Lebewohl” quotation.
      2. Inverted, the innocence motive becomes the love motive!
      3. Together, these form the childhood theme, bittersweet, gentle, and attractive; it is the flipside of innocence.
- C. The exposition focuses on the outer state.
1. This is music more of mood or “gesture” than of melody.
  2. Strauss introduces specific themes and motives new to the exposition, dealing with the man’s struggle to live.
    - a. In resistance to pain and death, the defiance theme rips upwards, creating a sense of struggle.
    - b. The will-to-live motive moves downward with an upward rebound in conjunction with the defiance theme. Its dissonance and polyphony create a sense of complexity and disruption.
    - c. The gasping theme, a rising theme that drops at the end, represents a supreme struggle against pain and death.
- D. Based on Beethoven’s thematic development model, Strauss has managed to grow everything from some very basic ideas at the beginning of the piece.
1. Descending and ascending thematic material represents different ideas.
    - a. Resignation is associated with descending musical ideas; the things that represent memory and the past (innocence and childhood) descend.
    - b. Love and struggle are associated with ascending musical ideas. The defiance motive can be heard as an extension of the love theme *or* an inversion of the childhood theme; the gasping theme, re-rhythmicized, is related to the love theme.
  2. These themes and what Strauss does with them, in their turn, play into the transfiguration theme, a rising theme coming from the bottom of the orchestra and promising something much better.
    - a. In so doing, Strauss creates terrific continuity and rhetorical logic.
    - b. This is the essence of Strauss’ craft.
- E. The development section depicts a series of episodes in the man’s life, in four parts.
1. Childhood is remembered; the defiance theme intrudes but is quickly overcome by rising strings and winds.
  2. The man then has a memory of young adulthood.
    - a. He indulges in memories of youthful vigor and freedom from pain.
    - b. This section consists of a combination of the innocence motive and the childhood theme.
  3. Our young man finds love.
    - a. This section is an extension and development of the love theme introduced earlier. It is here that the composer establishes what will become recognized as the “Richard Strauss” sound.
    - b. A heroic struggle to transcend pain through remembered love and innocence ensues. This presages the final struggle with death.
  4. Writhing, struggling upward drives culminate in the transfiguration theme.
    - a. A quiet moment of repose is followed by yet another transfiguration.
    - b. The man’s physical pain drops away momentarily as the beyond is glimpsed.

- c. The innocence motive is finally attached to the transfiguration theme, resulting in the full apotheosis of the transfiguration theme.
  - d. A real sense of arrival, of wholeness, occurs.
- F. The outer state returns in a vicious, violent recapitulation that leads to the heartbeat, seizure, and death.
  - 1. First, we hear the defiance theme.
  - 2. The will-to-live theme returns.
  - 3. This is followed by the gasping theme.
  - 4. Finally, with the return of the heartbeat material, life slips away with a stroke of the tam-tam.
- G. The transfiguration theme begins the five-part coda.
  - 1. We experience a transition from darkness to light.
    - a. “Lebewohl,” inverted, becomes a welcome to transformation in the metaphysical plane.
    - b. We get a glimpse of it in the return of the childhood theme.
  - 2. We enter the light.
  - 3. The childhood theme and the innocence motive now dominate the musical landscape.
  - 4. We have achieved ecstasy—a glittering, ecstatic vision of heavenly light accompanied by harp arpeggios.
  - 5. The final sections, in major, keep shifting between C and A<sup>b</sup> Major.
    - a. The transfiguration theme slowly rises, bringing us into a musical heaven.
    - b. By moving from c minor to C Major in the course of the piece, Strauss evokes Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.
    - c. This coda anchors the work in an amazing way—all the complexities wash away in this long and fairly static section—the music really becomes transformational.
- H. As great as this piece is, Strauss actually outdoes himself in his *Four Last Songs* (1948), especially in the fourth, “Sunset.” The text is a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff. “Oh broad, still peace, so deep in the sunset.”
  - 1. There are two larks ascending, a metaphor in two flutes that represents two souls walking hand in hand. As they approach their own sunset, they become the common soul of humankind.
  - 2. When the singer sings the last words, “Ist dies etwa der Tod?” (“Is this, perhaps, death?”), what theme does Strauss quote? — *Transfiguration*.

## Death and Transfiguration, Op.24 (1889)

### INTRODUCTION: SUBDUED, PASSIVE

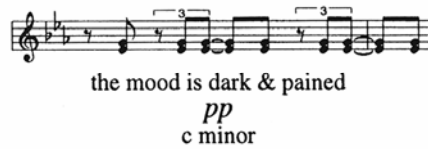
*"the sick man...lies in bed, asleep, with heavy, irregular breathing."* – R. Strauss

#### Part 1

outer reality: sickness/pain

"Largo"

strings (con sordino) play irregular breathing/heartbeat rhythm:



#### Part 2

inner reality: innocence, memory, and a yearning for peace & transfiguration (to metamorphose, change shape, become one with the cosmos, go to "heaven")

16

sudden & unexpected move to a dominant D<sup>b</sup>4/2 harmony, creating a sense of anticipation which is not, at this point in the movement, resolved.

Note: harp arpeggios – the harp represents inner reality, a "cushion" of ethereal sounds which stands in opposition to the irregular heartbeat rhythm of Part 1 (outer reality)

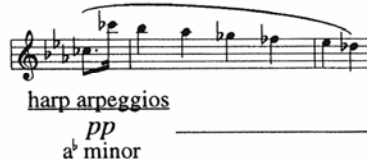


#### Part 4

inner reality: bittersweet memories of childhood, "conjure a smile on the features of the deeply suffering man." – R. Strauss

29

Childhood Theme: oboe



35

Innocence Motive  
in flute; note  
"sweetened"  
harmonies

Childhood Theme in lyric  
solo violin



C Major


*quasi sonata form*

**6**

timpani take over the heartbeat rhythm

“sighing” strings are accompanied by pathetic little “wheezes” in the flutes

note: Lebewohl motive in 1st violins!



**10**

strings resume heartbeat rhythm

more sighs and wheezes

timpani resume heartbeat rhythm

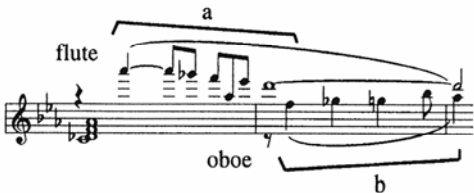
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**17**

two important new motives are introduced:

a: Innocence Motive

b: Love Theme Motive



**21**

**Part 3**

Outer Reality

suffering music resumes with sighs and wheezes

heartbeat rhythm in timpani → strings →

**42**

flute: Innocence Motive –

oboe: Love Theme Motive –

clarinet: Innocence Motive

C7 (F Major)

→

**Part 5**

Transition to Outer State

pain begins to intrude on the dreamy reverie;

sighing strings and heartbeat rhythm vs Innocence Motives *pp*

ominous string tremolo on pedal “G” accompanies mournful double reeds, sighs, and quiet rising Love Theme Motives


“G” pedal tremolo → *ppp*

**EXPOSITION: OUTER, PHYSICAL STATE**  
*the fight between suffering and the will to live becomes the overall "theme" of the exposition*

## Theme Group 1

*"He wakes up; he is once more racked with horrible agonies." – R. Strauss*

<p><b>67</b></p> <p>"Allegro molto agitato"  a savage onslaught of physical pain is depicted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upward writhing low strings and winds</li> <li>• <u>heartbeat rhythm</u> in upper winds</li> <li>• dramatic violin tremolo</li> </ul> <p><i>ff</i> c minor</p>	<p>the pain momentarily subsides</p> <p><math>\text{&gt;}</math></p> <p><i>p</i></p>	<p><b>78</b></p> <p>another attack of pain, longer than the last</p> <p>note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• writhing upwards motive starts in low strings and moves upwards</li> <li>• <u>heartbeat rhythm</u> in various instruments</li> <li>• strings tremolos</li> <li>• pained sighs in flutes and violins</li> </ul> <p><i>p</i>    cresc. - - - - -</p>
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**109**



*"The urge for life & the power of death, what a horrible struggle!" – A. Ritter*

intense, dramatic passage sees a huge, defiant buildup based upon use of the Defiance Theme & Will-To-Live Motive

*f*    cresc. - - - - -

## Theme Group 2

<p><b>124</b></p> <p>rising <u>Gasping Theme</u> in winds</p>  <p>is heard over swooping, throbbing strings</p> <p><i>ff</i> g minor</p>	<p><b>128</b></p> <p><u>Gasp- ing Theme</u> in low strings</p>	<p><b>132</b></p> <p>"molto adagio"  <u>Gasping Theme</u> moves into brass</p>	<p>big dramatic buildup</p> <p><math>\nearrow</math></p>	<p><b>147</b></p> <p><u>Defiance Theme/Will-To-Live Motive</u> return explosively</p> <p><i>fff</i> c minor</p>	<p>another descent into pain</p>
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Pedal "G"  $\longrightarrow$

**96**  
Defiance Theme

rising theme represents the suffering man's determination to withstand the onslaught of pain & approach of death

*fff*  
c minor

**100**  
Will-To-Live Motive

a less staunch but still positive element, this motive combines a downward "teardrop" motion with a positive upwards rebound

*f* p

**121**  
Awful reality intrudes! A massive, pounding, 3 measure version of the irregular heart-beat rhythm crushes the previous mood of defiance

tutti  
*fff*

**157**  
Gasping Theme in brass represents a supreme effort against pain and death

*f* ff

**161**  
a climactic moment is reached; the force of will is so strong that out of the pain emerges

**167**  
Transfiguration Theme

rises out of the orchestra

*fff*  
B<sup>b</sup> Major

spent, but still alive, the man sinks into an exhausted sleep

*pp*

violins move up to an ethereal high "D"

(modulation) →

## DEVELOPMENT: INNER STATE

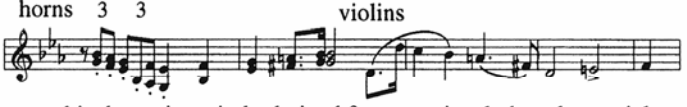
"His thoughts wander through his past life..." – R. Strauss

the development consists of a series of episodes representing, chronologically, phases of the man's life

### Part 1: Childhood

<p><b>186</b>  <u>Childhood Theme</u>          flute          note: "cushion of memory" arpeggios          now in strings  <i>pp</i>          G Major</p>	<p><b>200</b>  <u>Childhood Theme</u>          overlaps in various solo strings          E Major</p>	<p><b>206</b>  <u>Interlude</u>          • ringing, childlike harp/wind motives (drawn from the <u>Defiance Theme</u>!)          • gentle version of the <u>Innocence Motive</u> in solo strings &amp; flute  <i>p</i>          D Major</p>
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### Part 2: Young Adulthood

<p><b>235</b>          A "hunting horn" march represents the dashing young man filled with youthful hopes and aspirations          horns 3 3 violins            note: this theme is entirely derived from previously heard material  <i>f</i>          E<sup>b</sup> Major          (heroic key)</p>	<p><b>246</b>          fast <u>Inno-</u>  <u>cence</u>  <u>Motives</u>          proliferate!</p>
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<p><b>270</b>  <u>Outer state</u>          reality intrudes!  <u>Heartbeat Rhythm</u> in trombones [in the score Strauss instructs the trombones to point their bells towards the audience for maximum impact] and timpani  <i>ff</i></p>	<p><b>272</b>  <u>Inner state</u>          the pain passes and the <u>Love Theme</u> memory resumes  <i>p</i></p>	<p><b>278</b>  <u>Outer state</u>          pain and irregular <u>Heartbeat Rhythm</u> again intrude  <i>mf ff</i></p>	<p><b>280</b>  <u>Inner state</u>          the <u>Love Theme</u> resumes  <i>f</i></p>
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214

### Childhood Theme

resumes in various instruments  
"cushion of memory" arpeggios in strings

*pp*  
G Major

230

### Defiance Theme

a sudden burst of pain shakes the  
childhood dream, but is overcome  
quickly by rising strings & winds

*mf* (modulation)

## Part 3: The Young Man in Love

253

a long string  
of intercon-  
nected

Innocence  
Motives acts  
as a transition  
to...

*ff*  
(modulation)

256



a furiously passionate, upwards yearning love theme is  
an extension/development of the Love Theme Motive  
heard in the intro

*ff*  
B Major

higher and  
higher the  
memory  
soars, until  
its power  
becomes  
too strong!

282

Outer state  
pain

*ff*

284

### Inner/Outer state "molto appassionato"

Extraordinary and moving passage in which pain and memory are  
both constantly present; this heroic struggle to transcend pain through  
remembered love (and Innocence, for the love theme is partly a prod-  
uct of the Innocence Motive); this presages the final struggle with  
death, only moments away

*ff*

## Part 4: The Final Struggle

309

Innocence Motive in brass vs. upwards writhing strings and Heartbeat Rhythm in winds!

*ff*  
E<sup>b</sup> Major

ascent

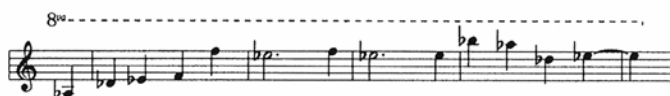
another writhing, surging ascent representing the last ties to the outer world leads climactically to

*ff*

355

Transfiguration Theme: climactic episode

this 3rd and most powerful statement of the Transfiguration Theme features an extension (the Innocence Motive!) which gives it a sense of completeness heretofore missing:



D Major

## RECAPITULATION: OUTER STATE

### Theme Group 1

*highly condensed*

378

a savage attack of pain siezes the man – the final moments have come!

*ff*

Defiance Theme appears briefly and violently

tutti

*ff*

c minor

("A" pedal)

320

**Transfiguration Theme**  
a sudden, magnificent vision of transfiguration!

*ff*  
A<sup>b</sup> Major

*>* *p*

a quiet moment of repose builds quickly to

334

**Transfiguration Theme**  
another glowing vision

*ff*  
B Major

338

"poco agitato" this lengthy, dark-hued, tired passage cannot destroy the man's joyful delirium; he summons his strength one last time to experience

*p*

359

utterly spent, the vision complete, the music descends as consciousness drifts away...

*pp*

pedal "A"

365

pained, introductory music returns; the sick body is resting in dreamless sleep

note:

- heartbeat rhythm in timpani,
- sighing strings

381

**Will-To-Live Motive**  
bravely carries on, but as the music descends life slips away

*fff*  
timpani roll

"G" pedal (dominant of tonic "c")

389

**Gasping Theme**  
in horns

*fff*  
c minor

390

a series of ghastly, syncopated heart palpitations signal the final seizure

low brass  
timpani  
*fff*

life slips away; in a ghostly, mysterious ascent, the "soul" departs the body of the man

*>*  
molto

## CODAL: TRANSFIGURATION

### Part 1: Through the tunnel of darkness to light

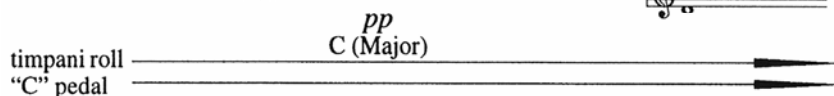
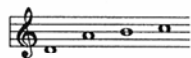
passage reminiscent of “after death” experiences describing “a dark tunnel with a brilliant light at its end” (and the transition between the 3rd & 4th movements of Beethoven’s Symphony No.5, like this, a transition from c minor to C major)

**395**

death comes with the 1st stroke of the tam-tam

awesome, mysterious waiting passage in which tolling tam-tam, rolling timpani & a sustained open 5th pedal (C-G) mark the moments between death & transfiguration

slowly, the Transfiguration Theme begins to rise from the depths of the orchestra  
note: opening of Transfiguration Theme is Lebewohl in reverse!!!

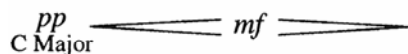


### Part 2: The Light

“tranquillo”

**429**

profoundly calm and beautiful vision of the transfigured soul; note that this music is consistent with the dying man’s earthly vision of transfiguration



### Part 3

**451**

Childhood Theme (strings) and Innocence Motive (winds) now dominate a magical musical landscape

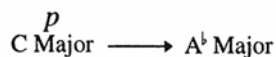
“molto espressivo”

*p*

### Part 5: Finale

**481**

Transfiguration Theme is heard over gently shifting harmonies



**484**

The Transfiguration Theme slowly and magnificently rises into a musical heaven; the work ends on a note of sublime calm and peace

C Major

409

Childhood Theme  
appears in low strings  
childhood = inno-  
cence = purity =  
transfiguration!

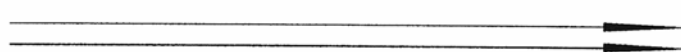
*p*  
C Major

the sound builds, glow-  
ing & radiant, as Child-  
hood Theme emerges,  
overlapping in various  
instruments

soaring strings reach a quiet and  
profound high "G"

*f* *pp*

(timpani roll)  
("C" pedal)



## Part 4: Ecstasy

469

Glittering, ecstatic vision of heavenly light

note: harp arpeggios tremolo strings Transfiguration Theme

ascent  
cresc. -----

*ff*  
C Major  
pedal (dominant "G" of C) → *fff*  
"C" pedal →

**Classicism**—The musical style which followed the Baroque, from about 1750–1820, and characterized by a well-ordered harmony emphasizing melody over embellishment.

**Closed Cadence**—indicates the end of a distinct section within a movement. See cadence, above.

**Coda**—The final developmental passage in a piece of music which brings a movement to its conclusion.

**Codetta**—A diminutive coda at the end of a movement, or, more commonly, closing coda-like material within a movement, such as at the end of an exposition.

**Con Sordino (Sordini)**—Italian for “with a mute” (mutes); various devices that mute the sound of different instruments. (When the mutes are to be removed, the direction is *senza*—without—sordino/sordini.)

**Concert Overture**—A self-standing composition in sonata form that tells a single literary story.

**Da Capo al Coda**—Italian for “from the top to the coda”; in other words, return to the beginning of the movement and play through, usually without repeats, to the coda.

**Diminished Chord**—A chord in which both the third *and* the fifth (the middle and top notes, respectively) are lowered a half step.

**Dissonance**—Subjectively speaking, anything we do not like the sound of. In real musical terms, any harmony or melody generated from that harmony that must resolve. In itself a dissonance is unstable, because it wants to resolve.

**Dolce**—A musical direction which means to play or sing, literally, “sweetly”.

**Dominant**—The fifth tone of a scale (do, re, mi, fa, *so*). Symbol: V

**Dynamics**—Refers to the intensity and manner of the use of loudness and softness in a musical composition. This may refer to the way an individual note, measure (bar), or entire passage is played. Such playing includes rising and falling intensity or loudness (*crescendo* and *diminuendo*, respectively) and sudden changes in the degree of loudness or softness.

**English Horn**—A double-reed, oboe-like woodwind instrument larger and of lower pitch than an oboe, having a distinctive ovate form at the lower end. It is an outdoors instrument of piercing timbre built to be heard at great distances and thus provides an outdoor, rustic kind of sound.

**Enharmonic Pitch**—When a note in the scale is raised or lowered a half-tone in the direction of its neighbor, and that neighboring note is but a half-tone away, the pitch is said to be the same, even though the note has a different name. For example, C raised a half-tone to C<sup>♯</sup> approaches D; D, lowered a half-tone to D<sup>♭</sup> approaches C; thus C<sup>♯</sup> and D<sup>♭</sup> are considered to represent the same (enharmonic) pitch, and, in fact, occupy the same key on a piano. This enharmonic pitch enables a composer to move readily from one key to another, using the enharmonic pitch as a pivot.

**Enlightenment**—The Enlightenment was the eighteenth-century social revolution emphasizing especially new ideas in politics, religion, and education. Its philosophy championed human reason and the importance and potential of each individual human being, regardless of status (social class) or condition.

**Exoticism**—Exoticism occurs when a composer of one nationality and ethnicity writes in a manner evoking the sound of another nationality or ethnicity to give the composition an intriguing foreign “flavor”.

**Exposition**—That section of a musical composition in which the themes are exposed or presented.

**Forte**—A musical direction that means one is to play loudly (indicated by the symbol *f*).

**Fortissimo**—A musical direction that means one is to play extremely loudly (indicated by the symbol *ff*).

**Fortississimo**—A musical direction that means to play as loudly as one possibly can (indicated by the symbol *fff*). Some composers have been known to add yet another *f* or two for even more emphasis!

**Foursquare**—Refers to a triadic theme of equally long phrases.

**Grand Pause**—a place in the music where everything stops for dramatic effect, for an indeterminate length of time; the music resumes at the discretion of the conductor.

**Inversion**—In music, an inversion, harmonic or melodic, means simply to take the same structure and repeat it either in its mirror image or in some other rearrangement of its component parts. Thus a six-four chord (see below) in C Major: G-C-E, is an inversion of a C Major chord: C-E-G. A rising melody, inverted, would be the same notes in reverse order, thus creating a descending melody out of the same material, but with a different effect.

**Key**—The key of a piece of music is determined by the scale that establishes its basic tonality. A piece written in the key of C Major is composed around a C major scale, in which C is the tonic (see below): C D E F G A B C

*do re mi fa so la ti do*

**Largo**—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing slowly, or, in fact, *very* slowly.

**Leitmotif**—A melody, theme, or musical idea that represents a person, a place, an object, a feeling, or the like.

**Liszt, Franz** (1803–1869)—Hungarian piano virtuoso, Romantic composer, and prolific author, famous for his innovations in piano playing and composition, and for his colorful life. Creator of the symphonic poem, Liszt maintained contacts with the major artists of his day, championed the music of Bach, Beethoven, and others, and promoted the careers of his younger contemporaries.

**Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth** (1807–1882)—The most popular of nineteenth-century American poets, Longfellow was also a novelist and educator. His epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*, provided much of the inspiration for Antonín Dvořák’s “*New World*” *Symphony*.

**Meno mosso**—Italian for less rapidly.

**Mesto**—Italian for sad or mournful.

**“Modal” Seventh**—As used in these lectures, the use of a smaller (“lowered”) seventh interval than one would normally have expected. The distance from the tonic (first) to the seventh note of a scale (the interval) is called a seventh. In a C Major scale, a seventh would be C–B, as it would be in a *c harmonic* minor scale; in a *c natural* minor scale, however, a seventh would be C–B<sup>b</sup>, which is a half step smaller (lowered from B). See natural minor, below.

**Modal**—From “mode”, the system of scales that predominated before the more modern major–minor key system. In the twentieth century, some composers have returned to this system in their own interpretations and for various purposes, alongside the use of major and minor keys. Any music reminiscent of this older system is said to have a “modal” sound.

**Modulation**—A sequence of notes or chords which moves the music in a passage from one key to another.

**Molto Appassionato**—Italian for “very passionately”.

**Motive** (sometimes motif)—A recurring and sometimes dominant theme or phrase in a piece of music.

**Movement**—A section of a larger musical composition so called because of the progressive development of thematic material from one such section of the composition through to the final section.

**Nationalism**—The belief that one’s own ethnic or national group is unique and therefore has an inalienable right to promote the interests of that group without interference from, or regard for, outsiders. Politically, it means the right to live in one’s own homeland and to govern oneself within the borders thereof, thus giving rise to movements for national and ethnic independence. (See Austro-Hungarian Empire, above.) Musically, it means to consciously incorporate folk tunes and other ethnic traditions from one’s own group in one’s compositions.

**Natural Minor**—The basic form of the minor scale. A minor scale differs from a major scale in two ways: in the arrangement of half steps and whole steps *and* in the fact that there are *three* versions of a minor scale, each with a *separate* arrangement of half and whole steps. In addition to the natural minor exist the melodic and harmonic minor scales. A *c natural* minor scale would be: C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> C. See key, above.

**Opus**—(Op.) Latin for “work”. In music, the individual composition or work of the composer. A composer’s works are referred to by opus numbers, which are usually assigned upon publication.

**Ostinato**—Italian for “obstinate”. In music, this refers to a constantly recurring melodic fragment.

**Paine, John Knowles** (1839–1906)—German-trained American composer, organist, and educator who became the first professor of music at an American university (Harvard, in 1862).

**Pedal Tone**—A continuously held pitch (note or tone) in the bass, usually a way of signaling that a developmental section is about to come to an end.

**Phrase**—A grouping of notes. A number of phrases make up a melody or tune (theme). Such things as the length of a bow stroke or the single breath of a singer may delineate a phrase.

**Piano**—A musical direction that means one is to play softly (indicated by the symbol *p*).

**Pizzicato**—(Pizz.) Playing a stringed instrument such as a violin by plucking the strings with the fingers rather than using the bow (arco).

**Poco Agitato**—Italian for “a little agitated”.

**Poco meno mosso/poco più mosso**—Italian for “a little more rapidly”/“a little less rapidly”.

**Polyphony**—(literally, many sounds) Before modern notions of harmony, in which the notes of a chord are *meant* to be sounded together, composers worked to create independent melodic lines which *could* be sounded together without clashing. This was a major advance over Gregorian chant or plainsong, which has just one voice or musical line going on at a time. It depends in large degree on whether you think of music as happening as a unified whole, vertically (harmonically), or horizontally (polyphonically), where a number of things “happen” to be going on at once. Music referred to as polyphonic, therefore, has a feel of greater melodic independence among its various parts.

**Program Music**—Composition intended to tell a story by evoking specific visual or literary imagery, that is, music with a program. (See absolute music, above).

**Recapitulation**—In sonata form, the final restatement of the exposition before the end of the movement.

**Romanticism**—A movement in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century literature, art, and music which emphasized individual creativity and freedom of expression in reaction to the more formal nature of Classicism (see above). Nationalists came to associate Romanticism’s emphasis on individual uniqueness with the uniqueness of their own ethnic group (see nationalism).

**Rondo**—Often the final section of a musical composition in sonata form in which the composer periodically returns to the principal theme of the movement. In between these periodic returns are various contrasting ideas. By returning to the theme, we get a sense of completion.

**Scherzo** (literally, “joke”)—A movement (usually the third in a symphony) of jocular, dance-like music.

**Sequence**—A melodic idea that is then repeated at higher or lower pitch values. Such repetition creates musical coherence without being merely repetitive.

**Six-four Chord**—The first of the three chords in a cadential formula, especially one that precedes the cadenza, signaling that the music is about to come to a resolution. In the key of C Major, the six-four chord would be G–C–E, the C being the *fourth* note above the G and the E the *sixth* note above the G.

**Sonata-allegro (also Sonata) Form**—An adaptation of the operatic ideal into instrumental form. This means introducing contrasting characters (exposition of themes, usually two), having them interact (development), and having them separated in a moment of truth (recapitulation, coda).

**Sonata-rondo Form**—Incorporates the various themes of sonata-allegro form, but here we have a regular or periodic return to a central main theme.

**Staff**—The five horizontal lines and the four spaces between them upon which musical notes are written.

**Symphonic Poem**—A term coined by Franz Liszt to mean a single-movement composition in which the formal musical structure is completely dependent on the story line.

**Tchaikovsky, Peter Illych (1840–1893)**—Russian Romantic composer perhaps most famous for his ballets, although many of his works in other categories are equally outstanding. A master of melody and orchestration, Tchaikovsky is recognized as Russia’s greatest nineteenth-century composer.

**Theme**—A musical idea (a tune or melody) around which a longer musical composition is built.

**Theme and Variations**—A musical composition in which a theme is presented in a straightforward manner and then repeated in a number of cleverly related but intriguingly different ways.

**Tone Poem**—Because Richard Strauss didn't want his works associated with those of Franz Liszt, (see “symphonic poem”, above), Strauss called his symphonic poems “tone poems”. Any piece of instrumental music that describes in tones (musical notes) a literary story, may be said to be a tone poem.

**Tonic**—The first note (tone) of a scale upon which a given key is based. In the solfeggio (do-re-mi) system, “do” is always the tonic, whatever note begins the scale. Also, the central note around which a composition is organized. See key, above.

**Tremolo**—Italian for “trembling”. This indicates a rapid variation of the pitch of a note, slightly above and below its value, for dramatic effect. Some instruments and the human voice are capable of producing tremolos.

**Triadic**—Based on a triad, a chord composed of a tone, its major or minor third, and the fifth note (*do*, re, *mi*, fa, *so*).

**Triadic Theme**— A theme based on a triad, a simple chord of three notes, in either a major or a minor key (see above).

**Trill**—A rapid alternation of two adjacent tones.

**Trio**—A contrasting section in a dance movement. In the Baroque Era, this was quite literally for three instruments. This practice has seldom, if ever, been followed since the Baroque, but such contrasting sections remain in use, so the name has stuck.

**Tritone (Augmented Fourth or Diminished Fifth)**—An interval of three whole tones, such as C–F<sup>#</sup> (as opposed to C–F, a fourth, or C–G, a fifth). This interval was considered so dissonant before the twentieth century that it was known as the “devil’s interval” and was almost always avoided in composition.

**Tutti**—Italian for “everyone”; in other words, all players who have a part to play return, as after a cadenza or other solo.

***Un poco più mosso***—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing a little faster, but not too much faster.

**Ur-issue**—“Ur” is a learned borrowing from German which means “original”, “fundamental”, or “from time immemorial”. As used in these lectures, the “ur-issue” is the main or fundamental issue around which this piece of music is composed.

## Glossary

**Absolute Music**—Abstract composition intended as “an improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing” that is, music as a decorative art. (See program music, below).

**Accelerando**—Italian for “accelerate”; a musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing increasingly faster.

**Adagio**—Italian for “slowly”. This indicates the speed at which a piece of music is to be played.

**Arpeggio**—Italian, meaning literally, “harplike”, playing the notes of a chord in sequence rather than at the same time, in the manner of a flourish on the harp. (This term is sometimes abbreviated in the word score as “arp”.)

**Austro-Hungarian Empire** (1867–1918; sometimes also Habsburg Empire)—The large, multi-ethnic state in central Europe governed by the Habsburg (German-Swiss) dynasty and ruled from Vienna. The empire consisted of Austria, which was largely German, plus territories inhabited by Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Serbs, Croats, Italians, and other ethnic minorities, who had no countries of their own. As nationalism (see below) became a force to be reckoned with, the empire became untenable, breaking up into many smaller countries at the end of World War I.

**Baroque**—The musical period following the Renaissance, from about 1600 to 1750. Baroque music is characterized by a complex and elaborately ornamented style.

**Beethoven, Ludwig van** (1770–1827)—German Classical composer whose innovations made a major contribution in bringing about the transition from Classicism to Romanticism in music. For a more extensive treatment, see “Concert Masterworks Part 1, The Classical Piano Concerto: Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 (1786), and Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Op. 73 (1809).”

**Berlioz, Hector** (1803–1869)—French Romantic composer, critic, and conductor famous for his symphonic poems and great breadth of expression; for each of his major works, Berlioz created a style unique to the piece.

**Bohemia**—Today’s Czech Republic and homeland of the Czech people. Long ruled by the Habsburg dynasty, it was once considered part of German Central Europe, although mainly inhabited by the Czechs, a Slavic people.

**Brahms, Johannes** (1833–1897)—German composer of the Romantic Era, famous for the quality and quantity of his output and the influence of Classicism in his works. Together with Bach and Beethoven, Brahms was recognized as one of the three great “B’s” in nineteenth-century concert-hall repertoire, a distinction that persists to this day. Extremely successful financially, Brahms lived modestly and was very generous with family and struggling young composers. He was a great friend of Antonín Dvořák.

**Bülow, Hans von** (1830–1894)—German pianist, conductor, and music journalist who promoted the music of Richard Wagner and of other rising young composers of the era, including Richard Strauss. For a time von Bülow was married to Franz Liszt’s daughter, Cosima. Although she later left him for Richard Wagner, von Bülow continued to promote the latter’s music.

**Cadence**—English for the Italian word *cadenza*. A cadence is a series of final notes or chords that indicate that a passage or the entire piece of music is about to resolve into a conclusion. It is distinguished from the Italian word *cadenza*, which has a specialized use in English, as noted below.

**Cadenza**—A florid, improvised passage to be performed by singers before the final bars (cadence—see above) of an aria or movement. In a concerto, the solo instrument assumes this function for the purposes of a similarly virtuosic display. Such a cadenza may be improvised by the soloist or written out by the composer.

**Chadwick, George** (1854–1931)—German-trained American composer, music educator, and conductor who followed the European Romantic tradition, both in style and in his use of program music. A prolific composer, Chadwick was director of the New England Conservatory until his death.

**Chord**—A combination of at least three different notes played together. Based on the scale of C Major, a C Major chord consists of the notes C, E, and G (*do*, re, *mi*, fa, *so*—the first, third, and fifth notes of the scale). A c minor chord consists of C, E<sup>b</sup>, and G. In other words, by lowering the E a half step to E<sup>b</sup>, we get that distinctive, dark, “minor” sound.

# Concert Masterworks

## Part III

Beethoven, *Violin Concerto in D Major*

Brahms, *Violin Concerto in D Major*

Professor Robert Greenberg



THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

**Robert Greenberg, Ph.D.**  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Robert Greenberg has composed over forty works for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal ensembles. Recent performances of Greenberg's work have taken place in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and The Netherlands, where his *Child's Play* for String Quartet was performed at the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam in 1993. Greenberg holds degrees from Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in music composition in 1984. His principal teachers were Edward Cone, Claudio Spies, Andrew Imbrie, and Olly Wilson. Professor Greenberg's awards include three Nicola De Lorenzo Prizes in composition, three Meet the Composer grants, and commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, the Alexander String Quartet, XTET, and the Dancer's Stage Ballet Company. He is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he is chair of the department of music history and literature and director of curriculum of the Adult Extension Division. Greenberg is creator, host, and lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony's "Discovery Series." Greenberg has taught and lectured extensively across North America and Europe, speaking to such corporations and musical institutions as the Van Cliburn Foundation, Arthur Andersen, Bechtel Investments, the Shaklee Corporation, the University of California/Haas School of Business Executive Seminar, the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, the Texas Association of Symphony Orchestras, and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Greenberg's work as a teacher and lecturer has been profiled in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Inc.* magazine, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Greenberg is an artistic co-director and board member of COMPOSERS INC. His music is published by Fallen Leaf Press and CPP/Belwin and is recorded on the Innova label.

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#### Part 3

#### Great Nineteenth-Century Violin Concerti:

Beethoven: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61 (1806)

Brahms: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 (1878)

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**Great Nineteenth-Century Violin Concerti:**  
**Beethoven: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61 (1806)**  
**Brahms: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 (1878)**

**Scope:**

Rarely has the term “masterwork” been used more appropriately than when referring to the two great violin concerti of Ludwig van Beethoven and Johannes Brahms. Together, they constitute the backbone of nineteenth-century violin concerto repertoire, and for good reason: each is an intensely moving and superbly crafted work of the highest order.

It is also worth our while to note that Beethoven and Brahms form a fascinating and complementary pair of composers, working at either end of the century. Beethoven was a composer trained in the structures and techniques of eighteenth-century Classicism, yet his mature music exhibits the sort of unrestrained and individual expressive language we associate with nineteenth-century Romanticism. Brahms was a nineteenth-century composer whose music exhibits all the expressive power and individuality of Romanticism, but one whose formal structures and techniques are clearly derived from Beethoven and eighteenth-century Classicism.

These lectures will focus on the lives and times of Beethoven and Brahms and the musical substance of the concerti themselves. Other topics to be explored in detail include the development and elements of Beethoven’s “Heroic Style,” Classical traditionalism versus Romantic modernism, contemporary attitudes toward our composers and their innovations, and absolute music versus program music in the nineteenth century.

In exploring Beethoven’s “Heroic” style, we will examine some of his other works that provide the setting within which the violin concerto was written. We will also see how Beethoven was influenced by his own personal circumstances to move in this direction, and how these inner tendencies were encouraged and driven by the turbulent times in which he lived. By studying the musical techniques that Beethoven created to realize this development, we can better understand not only the composer’s more mature works, but also how his “Heroic” compositions helped to pave the way for the Romantic Era and the program music that followed.

The Beethoven concerto was requested by violinist Franz Clement. It is instructive to see how this famous virtuoso’s input and performing style influenced what Beethoven wrote. It is also interesting to consider how the concerto fared in the concert repertoire of the early nineteenth century, and how it was received by the listening public.

Although the concerto was written in Classical double exposition form, Beethoven employed musical ideas that were far from Classical expectations. It is fascinating to see how Beethoven developed these striking ideas, staying mostly within the framework of the form while exploring the limits of harmonic and rhythmic possibilities. Both the second and third movements exhibit the same willingness to manipulate Classical forms by the introduction of novel material, and by giving the standard form itself an occasional tweak. The concerto has deservedly become a standard in concert hall repertoire.

No less than Beethoven, Johannes Brahms was an opinionated individualist whose forthright comments often alienated others. It seems that Brahms’ critics were no more sparing than he; nonetheless, the composer enjoyed considerable success with his work during his lifetime.

One of our topics deals with the great musical debate then going on regarding the merits of absolute versus program music. Brahms’ exclusive preference for absolute music put him at odds with most other nineteenth-century composers. They tended to write both absolute pieces *and* program music, and they believed that program music was the epitome of Romantic expression. This is something of a paradox, as Brahms, in his individuality and in the type of material he chose for his compositions, was otherwise very much the Romantic.

Brahms’ life was both unusual and poignant. Born into a solid middle-class family, he was catapulted into fame as a result of his very first concert tour. While this helped him to be recognized as a composer, it also made him overly cautious as to what he was willing to publish. It is during this tour that he met renowned violinist Joseph Joachim, for whom Brahms later wrote his violin concerto. As in the case of Beethoven and Clement, Joachim’s influence on Brahms’ composing was significant. Both Joachim and Clara Schumann became and remained lifelong friends of

the composer at this time, but otherwise Brahms usually experienced difficulties in his relationships with others. His later friendship with Antonín Dvořák was a notable exception.

The first movement of Brahms' violin concerto was a highly complex developmental *tour de force*, and not a little challenge to our ability to follow what the composer is doing. Our efforts will be rewarded by a better understanding of the work and a greater appreciation for Brahms' genius; there is something very satisfying in observing how a musician of Brahms' stature plies his craft. Like Beethoven, Brahms delights us with the unexpected things he does within the context of the Classical-era forms.

In the second movement, we are treated to the full extent of Brahms' lyric and expressive qualities. It is fascinating to compare Brahms' concerto to that of Beethoven. In no way does Brahms consciously follow what Beethoven did, yet these two definitely distinct pieces nonetheless have quite a bit in common, right down to the involvement of the soloists for whom they were written.

Like Beethoven, Brahms wrote a lively rondo for his third movement. Here as elsewhere, he capitalized on the gypsy melodies, harmonies, and rhythms he learned from the Hungarian refugees of his youth in Hamburg. He even made use of the sound of certain Hungarian folk instruments. In one bit of homage to the "giant," Brahms quoted Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* by incorporating a Turkish march in the final permutation of his rondo theme.

Brahms' concerto is a work of Classical proportion and design, but also a work of great Romantic scope, melody, harmony, and pathos, and not a small bit of humor. It is well worth our attention.

## Beethoven, Lectures One–Four

### Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61 (1806)

#### Outline

- I. During the years between 1803 and 1807, Beethoven develops what we now refer to as his “Heroic” style.
  - A. The Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61 (1806) is written during this period. In it, Beethoven pushes the formal givens and niceties of the Classical style irretrievably aside.
    1. Beethoven’s first “Heroic” work is his Symphony No. 3, Op. 55 (1803).
      - a. Approximately fifty-five minutes long, this symphony is about twice the length of any which had preceded it.
      - b. It is marked by incredible expressive extremes, from the magnificent to the maudlin, from the grieving to the giddy.
      - c. Contemporary reviews of this work, however, were mixed at best. Some reviewers thought it excessive in scope and “dangerously immoral.” Even an admirer of Beethoven wrote that while the symphony had “no lack of striking and beautiful passages,” it nonetheless “seems to lose itself in utter confusion” What is Beethoven up to?
    2. The Violin Concerto, Op. 61, is contemporary with:
      - a. The Symphonies Nos. 4, (Op. 60) 5 (Op. 67), and 6 (Op. 68); and
      - b. The String Quartets Op. 59, Nos. 1, 2 and 3.
      - c. Of the string quartets, the critic Razumovsky noted that they were “lost on their essential audience,” an ominous tribute to their temerity and unprecedented individuality.
  - B. What are the sources of Beethoven’s “Heroic” style, and why does he go beyond Classicism?
    1. Let us examine what we might call the internal circumstances that led to this development.
      - a. Beethoven certainly had a dysfunctional family upbringing. As a result of his bullying by a brutal and alcoholic father, he developed a survivor’s attitude and had great difficulty dealing with authority figures.
      - b. Together with these factors, his musical talents engendered in him a huge musical ego.
      - c. In 1802, Beethoven underwent a tremendous emotional crisis due to his progressive hearing disability, resulting in outbursts of rage and a sense of isolation. He wrote what we now call his “Heiligenstadt Testament,” in which he hints that he was contemplating suicide. Nonetheless, he begins work on his third symphony.
    2. What were the external circumstances?
      - a. The internal, personal factors mentioned above were encouraged by the new emphasis on the individual being promoted by Enlightenment humanism.
      - b. The spirit of revolutionary change as engendered by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Age profoundly affected Beethoven and contributed to his iconoclasm.
      - c. Inspired by Napoleon as liberator, Beethoven originally entitled his third symphony “Bonaparte,” but he ripped up the title page when he discovered that Napoleon had crowned himself emperor. Deeply disappointed, Beethoven’s love for Napoleon turned to hatred.
      - d. He began to search for other sources for lofty and heroic expression in an increasingly secular age.
  - C. Beethoven develops his tenet of “music as self-expression.”
    1. The quintessential example of Beethoven’s heroism, struggle, and individuality is his fifth symphony, which struck contemporaries as utterly outrageous.
    2. In the violin concerto, Classicism is still the musical staple; the Fifth Symphony is shocking by comparison.
  - D. What are the technical innovations of Beethoven’s “Heroic” style?
    1. Beethoven’s contextual use of form gives us something to follow in which new ideas may be expressed.
      - a. He continues, at least outwardly, to use the Classical forms: theme and variations, minuet and trio, rondo, and sonata form.

- b. But he also says that forms should be used only to serve expression; if the form doesn't fit, get rid of it!
    2. The movements of a piece should have a dramatic progression.
      - a. For Beethoven, the four movements of a symphony are no longer seen as four self-standing pieces of music.
      - b. He sees them as having the same continuity as a four-act opera. This understanding imbues his music with a literary quality.
    3. Beethoven's use of rhythm goes beyond restraint and the other niceties of Classicism.
      - a. Sometimes he uses rhythm by itself to create identity and excitement.
      - b. His use of rhythm creates a sense of forward momentum and narrative.
    4. Beethoven uses motivic (thematic) development to create utterly unified works with rhetorical logic.
      - a. For our musical demonstration, let us examine Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67, Movement 1, the exposition, and see if we can follow this practice of motivic development.
        - ① Theme 1 consists of the famous four-note "fate" motive in unison octaves, followed by a repetition of the motive sequenced downward.
        - ② The modulating bridge consists of a horn call derived from the opening "fate" motive.
        - ③ The lyric second theme sounds new, but it is actually a free inversion of the horn call, melodized.
        - ④ The cadence material brings the movement to a conclusion with a positive, effervescent sort of music somewhat removed from the turgid opening of the piece, yet not without echoes of the opening motive.
      - b. Beethoven follows the same process in his violin concerto.
      - c. Does Beethoven employ this technique of thematic development on purpose?
        - ① Of course he does!
        - ② The incredible power of this music has as much to do with its rhetorical logic, unity, and organic growth as with the surface, the opening melody—everything belongs.
        - ③ Beethoven is an architect, a storyteller, and so builds his tale through the device of motivic development.
- II. Now let us look at the background, gestation, and response to Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61.
- A. The concerto was requested by the well-known Viennese violinist Franz Clement (b. 1781).
    1. Clement was first violinist and orchestra director of the *Theater an der Wien*.
    2. A famous child prodigy whom Beethoven had met in 1794, Clement was twenty-five years old in 1806.
    3. Beethoven wrote the concerto with Clement's skills in mind.
    4. Clement was known best for his dexterity and intonation; his style was not vigorous, nor did he possess a powerful tone.
  - B. Critical response to the concerto's premiere was mixed.
    1. Beethoven was late in finishing the manuscript.
      - a. Did Clement have to sight-read the concerto?
      - b. Did this factor have a negative impact on the performance? We don't know.
    2. The work was praised for its originality and wealth of beautiful passages, but it was also denigrated as being too repetitious.
  - C. Beethoven wrote only one violin concerto, as it could not serve as a vehicle for his own performance (Beethoven was a pianist).
  - D. The concerto has had an interesting history. Despite the work's uniqueness in Beethoven's *oeuvre*, and Beethoven's popularity during the nineteenth century, the concerto remained obscure until its "revival" by Joseph Joachim in 1844.
    1. In 1828, a French violinist played the concerto in Paris.
    2. A performance in Berlin in 1812 was only the second performance since its premiere in Vienna in 1806.

3. The concerto was performed again in Vienna in 1834.
4. When it was performed in London by child prodigy Joachim in 1844, the concerto became established in the concert repertoire.
  - a. During Joachim's performance, the first movement was interrupted repeatedly by applause.
  - b. His talents helped establish the piece in the repertoire.
  - c. The concerto's greatness had not been acknowledged in Beethoven's lifetime.
  - d. As late as 1855, composer Ludwig Spohr denigrated the work.
  - e. In this concerto, the violin is not used for display; the concerto is an integrated, unified symphonic work featuring musical substance over empty virtuosity. It has survived the test of time.

III. What was the "sound world" of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61? In other words, what did concert-goers of the time expect of a violin concerto?

- A. It was governed by a vision of the solo violin as a soprano "diva."
- B. The concerto as a musical form has a gentle vocal lyricism at its core.
- C. It was written in double exposition form, a variation of sonata-allegro form with which all Beethoven's contemporaries were familiar.
  1. Sonata-allegro form is an adaptation of the operatic ideal into instrumental form, in four parts. This means introducing contrasting characters (exposition of themes, usually two), having them interact (development), and having them separated in a moment of truth (recapitulation, coda).
  2. Double exposition form is an adaptation of sonata-allegro form to the uses of the concerto.
    - a. There are two **expositions** (hence, double) instead of one. In the first, the orchestra exposes its two themes. In the second, the soloist exposes two additional themes of its own.
    - b. The exposition is followed by **development** of the thematic material.
    - c. The development is followed by the **recapitulation**, in which the themes are revisited.
    - d. The **coda** provides a conclusion.

IV. The first movement of the Beethoven concerto is a gentle, vocally conceived composition.

- A. The first exposition, as expected, is for the orchestra.
  1. Theme 1 begins with a gentle, peaceful opening phrase played by a woodwind choir.
    - a. This quiet, lyric theme is introduced by the winds.
    - b. A second phrase answers the first, also in the winds, because Beethoven wants the first string playing of the theme to be in the solo violin.
    - c. The "drum-tap" introduction plays a hugely important role in the movement.
      - ① It initiates the theme and acts as an interlude between its two phrases.
      - ② It provides a unifying element throughout.
    - d. Let us briefly visit Theme 1 in the solo violin to see what Beethoven does with it.
      - ① It enters in a sweet, high register.
      - ② This and other aspects of Beethoven's writing for the violin in this concerto are purposely done to showcase Clement's talents and style.
    - e. A very different version of Theme 1 returns in the recapitulation, in D Major.
    - f. There is more to Theme 1, but we will come back to that.
  2. Like Theme 1, Theme 2 is serene and pastoral and, again, is introduced by the winds.
    - a. Whereas the drum-tap motive previously introduced the first theme, here it acts as an accompaniment.
    - b. The second phrase of this theme moves us into d minor. This harmonic shift adds depth, texture, and complexity, and moves us away from the light, lyric opening.
    - c. If there is to be contrast (and conflict) in this movement, it will not be between these two quiet themes!
    - d. These themes belong to Clement's lyric, quiet violin style.
- D. Sharp contrasts, drama, and conflict will be achieved via the drum-tap motive, transitional music, and strange and shocking shifts of harmony and key. For example:
  1. Isolated and harmonically ambiguous drum taps suddenly appear out of nowhere at measure 10 (Theme 1/phrase "b").

- a. A really weird D<sup>#</sup> suddenly appears in the drum tap!
    - b. The strings in the orchestra try to return things to D Major.
    - c. Will Beethoven harmonize the D<sup>#</sup>? When? How?
    - d. Having left those D<sup>#</sup>s, can we really be sure that we are back in the home key (D major)?
  2. There is a sudden and explosive shift to B<sup>b</sup> Major at measure 28!
    - a. We find ourselves in a powerful, scary harmonic world of B<sup>b</sup> Major.
    - b. How did we get here?— D<sup>#</sup> !
    - c. What will happen next?
  3. The real action of the movement lies not in the lyric themes, but in the D<sup>#</sup> drum taps, the transitional material, and the unexpected harmonic implications.
- E. A thematic “home” is found for the D<sup>#</sup>. Beethoven “grows” his themes through the use of lyric and scalar cadence themes and motivic connections between themes.
1. Theme 1/phrase “a” is essentially scalar in contour. Everything proceeds step-wise in the key of D Major.
  2. Theme 1/phrase “c” focuses those scalar elements. It consists, essentially, of an ascending D Major scale in two halves—an antecedent that rises, and a consequent that falls.
  3. Theme 2 consists of the scalar elements of Theme 1/phrase “c,” rearranged.
  4. In the cadence material, part 1, the cadence theme takes the “b” phrase of Theme 1, where we heard the D<sup>#</sup>s, and incorporates them into a theme. This provides unity and thematic relevance.
  5. The dialogue in the cadence material, part 3, is drawn from scalar elements of Theme 2, which are themselves an outgrowth of Theme 1.
    - a. In other words, by combining the rising arpeggios from the bridge with Theme 2, we get part 3 of the cadence material.
    - b. This sounds “new,” but as it “grew” out of previous material, we get a sense of rhetorical context.
  6. Exposition I thus lays out everything for what is to follow.
  7. In some ways, this is a “double” movement.
    - a. On one level, Beethoven keeps one foot in the Classical Era—exhibiting the restraint, lyricism, and memorable melodies of that era, and having the themes exposed first by the orchestra and then by the soloist.
    - b. On another level, the rest of the body is firmly in the nineteenth century—we experience unexpected harmonic areas, violent and stirring transitions, and that compulsively rhythmic drum-tap motive popping up where we least expect it.
    - c. This element of surprise, of the unexpected, is real Beethoven.
    - d. The fact that we also have a balance of the lyric with the more shocking harmonic element may well be due to Clement’s more lyric performing style.
- F. In Exposition II, the material unfolds more or less as in the first exposition.
1. This exposition is joined by the solo violin, which adds its elaboration and extension of previous themes to the exposition.
    - a. Theme 1 is restated in two phrases, each preceded by a drum tap.
    - b. We have those mysterious D<sup>#</sup>s again.
    - c. Phrase “c” of the theme appears at measure 118.
    - d. This is followed by a modulating bridge, though not as shocking or as unexpected as before.
    - e. Theme 2 appears in A Major, as expected. What does this mean?
      - ① In traditional double exposition form, the two themes of the first exposition are supposed to be in the same key; Beethoven does this.
      - ② Tradition also expects that there will be a new key area for the second exposition that will be related to the first, in this case, A Major; Beethoven does this, too.
      - ③ Thus the large-scale outline of this exposition is traditional until...
  2. The cadence material arrives, now much extended (in seven parts), and ending in an extraordinary series of disruptive harmonies.
    - a. Part 1 features the cadence theme.
    - b. Part 2 features the tutti.
    - c. Part 3 features a dialogue as before, but

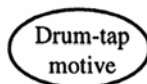
- d. In Part 4, things change; we hear recitative-like lines in the solo violin.
  - e. These lead to the really big departure in Part 5. Destabilizing harmonies move through a number of keys, apparently preparing to resolve in Part 6, but...
- 3. Beethoven returns us to the bridge/transition of Exposition I (the *orchestral* exposition)! Part 7 of the cadential material moves *away* from the expected resolution in A Major to the key of F Major!
- 4. Exposition II now proceeds as if it were Exposition I!
  - a. The solo violin drops out.
  - b. Theme 2 appears for the second time in this exposition.
  - c. This is so unusual that only a Beethoven can get away with it, but why does he do this?
    - ① The harmonic ambiguity and the drum-tap motive constitute the heart, the drama and conflict of this music.
    - ② Harmonic sleight-of-hand is followed by structural sleight-of-hand.
  - d. The cadence material and violin entry ensue as they did in Exposition I, with some important harmonic differences—the bottom drops out of the harmony and we are now in the unexpected and distant key of C Major!
  - e. Beethoven continues his musical tease, refusing to resolve the material into anything we would expect.
- G. We are now ready to move on to the development section.
  - 1. The typical role of a development section is to present fragments and metamorphoses of the themes and to create harmonic instability.
  - 2. The role of this development is ultimately, and finally, to get the music *back* to D Major!
  - 3. The development proceeds in four parts.
    - a. Part 1 does not resolve to C Major as we would expect; instead, Beethoven leads us into yet another harmonic instability.
    - b. Part 2 is a particularly beautiful section of shifting harmonies in the solo violin accompanied by the drum-tap motive.
      - ① We do not hear the conventional, heroic virtuosic display of technical brilliance typical of other contemporary violin concerti.
      - ② Instead, this is a rather more demanding passage requiring great artistic interpretation and control.
    - c. The violin continues an exquisite filigree.
    - d. Chromatic triplets in the solo violin over a pedal A prepares a real resolution and *finally* brings us back to Theme 1 in D Major, at the beginning of the recapitulation.
- H. The recapitulation proceeds in a straightforward fashion to the cadenza.
  - 1. We experience a triumphant return to D Major.
  - 2. Although it is a fairly typical recapitulation, the cadence material is vastly extended.
- I. Before Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto (1809), composers did not write the cadenza in a concerto.
  - 1. Beethoven was not an accomplished violinist; this fact and tradition meant that Clement would have improvised the cadenza for the premier.
  - 2. In the context of this piece, there are two requirements for the cadenza:
    - a. If you want an opportunity for virtuosic display, you'd better do it here because there are no other places to do so in the piece.
    - b. You will need to end quietly, because when the coda begins, the beautiful, quiet version of the theme—based on Theme 2 without the drum tap—needs an opportunity to blossom.
  - 3. The three most often-played cadenzas are those of Joachim, Auer, and Kreisler; it is the latter's that we will hear in these lectures.
- J. The coda brings this monumental movement to a close.
  - 1. The coda begins with Theme 2 in D Major, gentle and serene without the drum-tap motive.
  - 2. The cadence material, itself an outgrowth of Theme 2, weaves a grand and joyful dialogue among the solo violin, bassoons, and 'cellos.
  - 3. The thunderous and satisfying conclusion wraps up a movement that is a monumental twenty-four to twenty-six minutes long; the meat of this concerto is in the first movement.
- V. Movement Two provides a lyric respite we desperately need.

- A. The movement follows the theme and variations form (with some wrinkles) as outlined below:
    - 1. Beethoven begins within the fairly standard format—the theme is stated and each subsequent repetition is a variation of the theme (but not so as to be unrecognizable).
    - 2. After the third, standard variation, Beethoven can't stand the conventionality any more. Also, the soloist has done a lot of playing on the top (E) string, which is rather taxing and hard to keep in tune.
    - 3. As a result, we get some departure from the form—a recitative is followed by what is almost a second theme.
    - 4. We return to a variation of Theme 1, but then a *second* recitative is followed by a second playing of “Theme 2,” culminating in a violent passage in which the reverie is broken and the harmony is forced back to D Major!
  - B. The harmonically static gaps in the theme allow Beethoven to fill them melodically to create the variations.
    - 1. The emphasis is on violin/orchestral lyricism; harmonic variation occurs *within* the theme.
    - 2. There are no departures from the key of G Major.
    - 3. Muted strings in the orchestra allow the soloist to shine.
  - C. There are four straightforward variations interspersed with brief interludes and a slightly new sounding melody—“Theme 2”—for the solo violin (the wrinkles).
    - 1. Interlude II features a recitative-like, singing, solo violin.
    - 2. Theme 1 returns, but suddenly things get ugly!
  - D. At the end of the movement, Beethoven shakes us free of the static, quiet mood and paves the way for the third movement finale by introducing an unstable harmony that wants to resolve.
- VI. A sudden attack leads directly into a transparent and straight-ahead Movement Three, in rondo form.
- A. The structure of this rondo is quite Classical, even if the material Beethoven uses is not.
  - B. The rondo theme brings us back to D Major.
    - 1. And a rollicking theme it is, in three phrases: a, a<sup>1</sup>, and a<sup>2</sup>.
    - 2. The violinist appears as a “country fiddler,” in a kind of “beer-hall boogie-woogie.”
    - 3. The rondo theme (A) returns pretty much as is two more times (it will be heard three times in all) in the form A–B–A–C–A–B, followed by a cadenza and coda.
  - C. Let's look at the first contrasting episode, Theme “B.”
    - 1. This theme begins with a rustic open fifth interval that quiets the music and creates a sense of anticipation.
    - 2. The solo violin tosses this theme high into the air and Beethoven *finally* indulges a virtuosic solo violin passage.
  - D. The second contrasting episode, “C,” offers a new kind of contrast.
    - 1. This wistful, folk-like tune provides the only time in the movement that we really go into minor.
    - 2. It embodies a certain degree of *schmerz*; it's a semi-weepee little pop tune.
  - E. Let us finish with some additional notes regarding some of the more exciting moments in this movement.
    - 1. In measure 218, Theme “B,” we are struck by the only use of solo violin pizzicato in the concerto—an unexpected, nice touch.
    - 2. At measure 279 we have the cadenza, typically brief.
    - 3. In the four-part coda, the key changes to the extremely distant key of A<sup>b</sup> Major (a reference to the first movement) when we least expect it.
      - a. In Part 1, the solo violin, trilling on an E, seems quite unaware how far the low strings have traveled from a resolution to D Major.
      - b. In Part 2, the violin catches up and everyone is in the extremely distant key of A<sup>b</sup> Major; as far from D Major as you could go in Beethoven's day—how is he going to get out of this?
      - c. Beethoven manages to modulate back to the rondo theme and on to a trio (Part 3) which returns us to D Major.
      - d. In Part 4, rising motives from the rondo theme bring the movement to its dramatic conclusion.

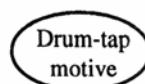
WordScore Guide™: Ludwig van Beethoven  
**Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61 (1806)**  
**MOVEMENT I** *“Allegro ma non troppo”; double exposition form, duple meter*

**Exposition I** *Orchestral Exposition*

Theme I: serene and quiet



A remarkably unremarkable and unexpected series of five timpani strokes (taps) nudges the movement forward into action.



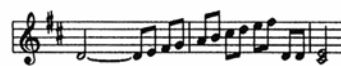
Gentle, peaceful opening phrase is played by a wind choir, “dolce”



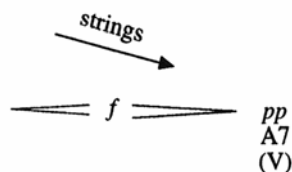
**a**  
D Major  
*p*

18


A gently rising woodwind phrase fully restores both the tonic key and the quiet, serene mood of the opening of the movement, “dolce”



**c**  
D Major  
*p*



A second, consequent phrase answers the first



**a<sup>1</sup>**

10

Things suddenly get weird! Out of the blue, a quiet, isolated, unaccompanied, unharmonized D# in tap-motive rhythm in the upper strings; both times followed by a forceful harmony which is clearly trying to push the music back to D major! What's this utterly foreign (to D major) D# doing here?

Drum-tap motive

violins  
*p*

A7  
(V of D)  
strings  
*f*

Drum-tap motive

violins  
*p*

A7  
(V of D)  
strings  
*f*

**b**

13

A quiet, descending string phrase unambiguously shifts the harmony back towards D major, though the mysterious appearance of the D# remains in our memory

28

**Bridge/Transition**

**PART 1:** Hello! Another bolt from out of the blue! A vigorous, downright explosive tutti passage obliterates the serenity and quietude of the gently rising woodwind phrase (Theme 1, C) and unexpectedly yanks the harmony into the distant key of B<sup>b</sup> major

*ff*

B<sup>b</sup> → g minor → d minor  
(<sup>b</sup>VI of D)

35

**PART 2:** A short, compact motive gradually dissipates the energy as it leads towards Theme 2

Tutti  
*ff*  
d minor

→

1st violins  
*p*

43

### Theme 2

Like Theme 1, Theme 2 is smooth, serene, lyric, almost pastoral, and is initially presented by woodwinds (LvB wants the solo violin to be the first string instrument to play the themes).

Note: Theme 2 is accompanied by the increasingly ubiquitous Drum-tap motive

Drum-tap motive

a  
D Major  
p

a<sup>1</sup> extended →  
d minor  
violins  
p

51

A rich, dark hued version of theme with triplet accompaniment in violas and 'cellos

### Solo Violin Entry

This broad and spacious passage allows the violin to traverse virtually its entire range while commenting on the various melodic elements just heard in Exposition 1

89

The violin plays a version of the rising dialogue just heard in PART 3 of the Cadence Material

## Exposition II

*Solo & Tutti (!) Exposition*

101

### Theme 1

Drum-tap motive  
D Major

Gentle, serene theme in the winds is now also played and decorated by a sweet, high-register solo violin

Drum-tap motive  
Winds and solo violin

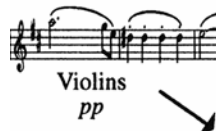
a  
D Major  
p

a<sup>1</sup>

64

### Cadence Material

**PART 1: Cadence Theme**  
Aha and yo! The mysterious and ambiguous D# of ms.10 is explained! It is now part of a cadence theme which helps to re-direct the harmony back to D major



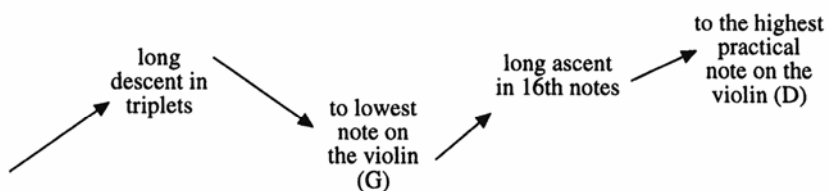
73

**PART 2:** The vigorous, explosive tutti passage from the opening of the bridge here returns in a version firmly rooted in D major

Tutti  
ff

77

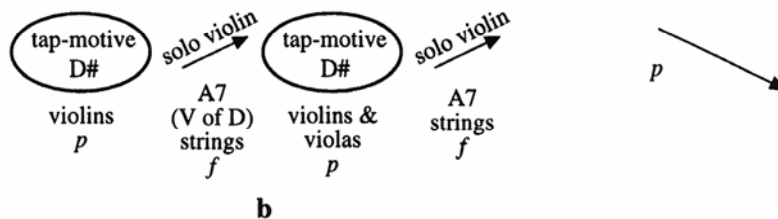
**PART 3:** A grand and joyful violin/'cello dialogue based on the ascending first motive of **Theme 2** brings the orchestral exposition to its conclusion, the music quiets in anticipation of the soloist's entrance



110

The now not-so-mysterious D# **Drum-tap motive** re-appears; the solo violin decorates in rising triplets the "harmonic response" to the D#'s

Quiet, descending string phrase is decorated by the solo violin as the music settles back towards D major



118

Gently rising woodwind phrase momentarily restores both the tonic key and the quiet, serene mood of the opening

### Modulating Bridge

Hello? Hello!! In the 1st big departure from Exposition 1, the gently rising woodwind phrase (ms 118) now initiates a lengthy modulating bridge:

c  
D Major

144

### Theme 2: (now heard *without* the Drum-tap Motive)

smooth and serene

clarinets  
and  
bassoons

solo  
violin

(solo violin  
trill  
continues)

a  
A Major

152

Rich, dark hued version of the theme with triplet-dominated embellishment in the solo violin

a<sup>1</sup>  
A Major extended

165

### Cadence Material

#### PART 1: Cadence Theme

More or less as before, though now embellished by the solo violin

A Major extended

205

PART 5: Solo violin trill (on a high B<sup>♯</sup>)

Drum-tap  
motives  
in  
violins

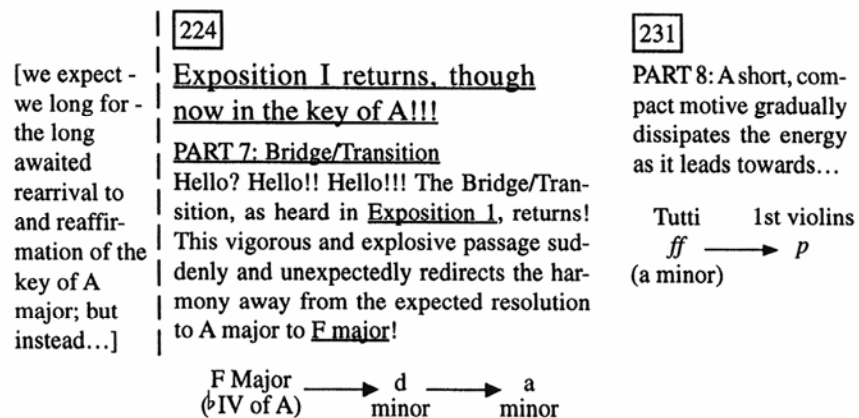
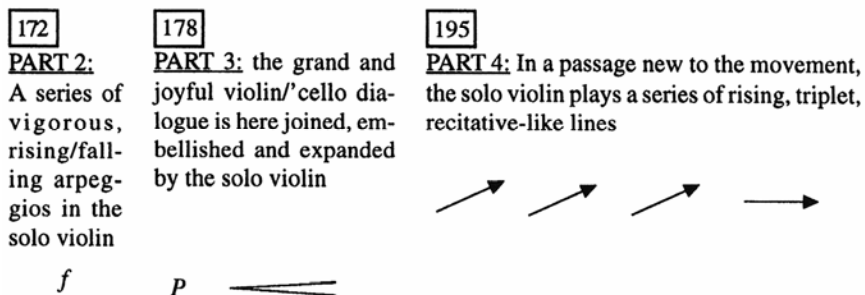
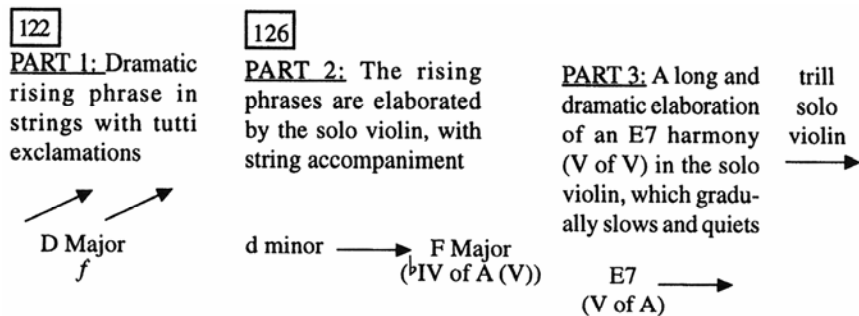
Huh? Wierd, dissonant F<sup>♯</sup> in the bass completely destabilizes the harmony

Now what??  
Spurred on by the bass, the violin trills upwards as the harmony moves through a number of different keys, finally arriving at...

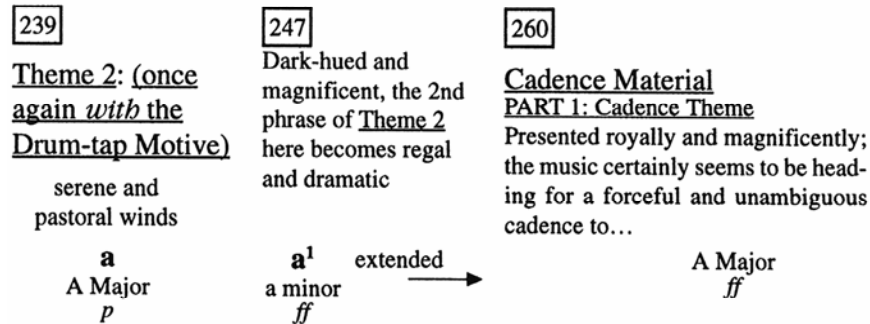
217

PART 6: Solo violin plays a long, sweeping elaboration of an

E7  
(V7 of A)



The remainder of Exposition 2 is in actuality a varied reprise of Exposition 1, heard *without* the solo violin until the solo violin re-entry at measure 284

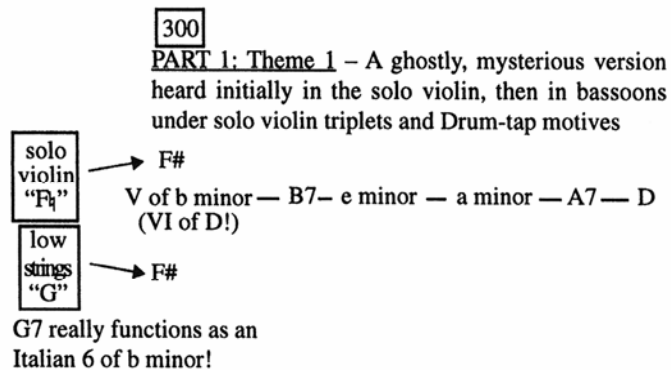


Violin re-entry – As before, but now in the still surprising key of C major!:

## Development

*Truly, the emotional & lyric core of the movement*

Yet another harmonic surprise initiates the development; implied G7 chord does not resolve to C, but rather...



264

Goodbye Mr. Spalding!

The harmony suddenly and without an indication shifts to

C major!  
(How-do-you-do!?!)

PART 2: Vigorous, explosive tutti passage consolidates the grip of

C major  
*ff*

PART 3: The grand and joyful dialogue finally brings this long and frankly

C Major

*ff*  $\Rightarrow$

The music quiets in preparation for, once again, the entrance (re-schizo Exposition entrance) of the solo violin

284

A version of the rising dialogue just heard at the conclusion of the Cadence Material

long decent in triplets

long ascent in 16th notes

high "F<sub>4</sub>"

G7 (V7 of C, or so it would seem...)

(down to a "G")

'cellos and basses

low "G"

315

long ascent in violins

trill  $\rightarrow$

Drum-tap motive in horns

g minor

cresc. ---- decresc. ----

331

PART 2:

"An entirely new cantabile in the vein of the tenderest pathos." - Donald Tovey

"This extraordinary romantic section is as expansive as a Chopin nocturn and yet as [elegantly] simple as Mozart." - Antony Hopkins

The violin quietly weaves a melody of exquisite melancholy through slowly shifting harmonies, accompanied by Drum-tap Motives in the bassoons and horns

g minor  
*pp*

$\rightarrow$  E<sup>b</sup> Major  $\rightarrow$

346

**PART 3:** Trumpets and timpani enter with the Drum-tap motive as the violin continues its exquisite filigree

note: chromatically descending bass:

$D C\# C\flat B B\flat$

d minor  $\longrightarrow$

## Recapitulation

365

### Theme 1

The glorious and long awaited return to D major is celebrated by the entire orchestra, which plays a stirring Drum-tap Motive to initiate a magnificent version of the theme

Tutti  
**a**  
D Major  
*ff*

**a'**

374

The once ambiguous "D#" episode and the descending phrase which follows it now sounds completely natural and contextual

**b**

*ff*  $\longrightarrow$  *f*

382

### Modulating Bridge

**PART 1:** The gently rising (formerly woodwind) phrase first heard at ms. 18 initiates a lengthy bridge to Theme 2

vigorous	rising
rising	solo
violins	violin
<i>f</i>	<i>p</i>
D Major	$\longrightarrow$

418

### Theme 2

winds and violins	solo violin
-------------------------	----------------

**a**  
D Major  
*p*

426

Rich, dark hued version of the theme with triplet-dominated embellishment in the solo violin

**a'**  
d minor  
*p*

extended

$\longleftarrow$   $\longrightarrow$

439

### Cadence Material

**PART 1:**  
Cadence Theme  
Embellished by the solo violin

D Major

357

**PART 4:** Solo violin plays a series of chromatically ascending triplets over pedal "A" in strings



orchestral  
s t r i n g  
pizzicatti  
cresc. - - -

From darkness to light: a resolution - clean and unambiguous - finally seems imminent and inevitable!

390

**PART 2:** A series of rising/falling solo violin lines over a spare and simple accompaniment

**PART 3:** Gently rising phrase moves through a number of different instruments and key areas

**PART 4:** Mysterious B<sup>b</sup> major triplets give way to the dominant (V) chord of D major as Theme 2 approaches

trill  
solo →  
violin

G Major

bsn. → cl. → vc/cb

B<sup>6/5</sup> → e mi → A<sup>7</sup> → B<sup>b</sup> → A  
(V                      <sup>b</sup>VI                      V)

446

**PART 2:** A series of vigorous, rising/falling arpeggios in the solo violin

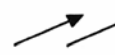
 *f*      *P*

452

**PART 3:** The grand and joyful violin/cello dialogue is again joined, embellished and expanded by the solo violin

469

**PART 4:** The solo violin plays a series of rising, triplet, recitative-like lines

 *f*      D Major

479

**PART 5:**  
Solo violin  
trill on "E"

Drum-Tap  
Motive

in violins

Huh? Dissonant  
B $\flat$  in the bass  
completely  
destabilizes the  
harmony

spurred on by  
the dissonance  
in the bass, the  
violin trills up-  
wards through a  
number of dif-  
ferent key areas  
before arriving  
back on an  
A7 chord  
(V of D major)

491

**PART 6:**  
Solo violin  
plays a long,  
swooping  
elaboration  
of an  
A7 chord

(Again, we  
anticipate a  
resolution to D  
major, though,  
by now, we  
should know  
enough not to  
expect it.  
Good for us.)

cresc.-----

510

D 6  
4  
  
C  
H  
O  
R  
D

CADENZA

[Beethoven wrote no cadenza for this con-  
certo. There are over 30 extant cadenzas writ-  
ten by others for this movement, of which the  
most commonly heard are those by Joachim,  
Auer, and Kreisler, in that order]

## Coda

511

**PART 1: Theme 2** (without Drum-tap Motive)

Gentle and serene, played by the solo vio-  
lin with simple and elegant string and wind  
accompaniment

solo violin  
ascent

extended

D Major  
*p*

497

**PART 7:** Hello, already! We should be used to this! Once again, a vigorous and explosive tutti yanks the harmony bodily away from D major

B<sup>b</sup>major → g minor → d minor  
(<sup>b</sup>VI of D)  
*ff*

504

**PART 8:** A short, compact motive grows in intensity even as the music slows, leading towards...

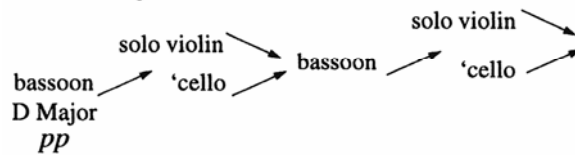
*ff*

523

**PART 2:** The grand and joyful dialogue of the Cadence Material (itself an outgrowth of Theme 2) is heard between

bassoons  
and  
'cellos

with the violin weaving a descending melody over the 'cello response



531

**PART 3:** Rapidly rising solo violin brings the movement to a thunderous and satisfying conclusion

cresc. ----- *ff*

## MOVEMENT II

*Larghetto; Theme and Variations Form (with a couple of significant wrinkles!),  
duple meter*

"[A movement] of sublime inaction" – Donald Tovey

### Theme

*A gorgeous and lyric theme, with not a small bit of majesty in its dotted rhythms*

#### Note:

- the long, "pregnant" pauses which are quite rhetorical in effect and typical of LvB's most profound moments and moods
- the great harmonic variety within the theme which gives harmonic color and variety to what are otherwise decorative variations, all occurring in the key of G major
- the orchestral strings are muted (con sordino) through the entire movement

11

### Variation I

#### Theme:

- in horns, clarinets and violins (middle register)

#### Solo violin:

- decorates the theme in 16th notes high above the other instruments

21

### Variation II

#### Theme:

- in bassoons, violas and 'cellos (low register)

#### Solo violin:

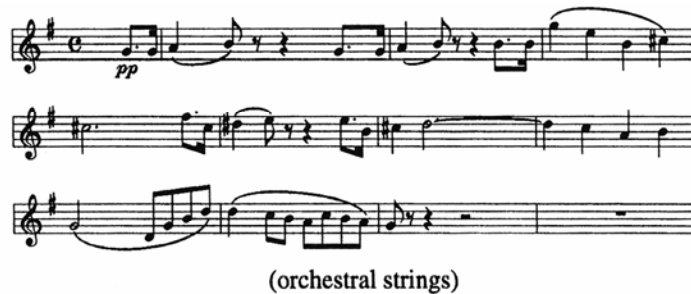
- decoration faster and more ornate, still tending towards the upper register

31

### Variation III

#### Theme:

- richly and powerfully scored for clarinets, bassons, horns, and full string section



Note:

- the stratospheric violin has an ethereal, almost other-worldly quality, which in turn imbues the theme with a somewhat less regal, more mystical mood
- the gaps/pregnant pauses serve more than a rhetorical effect - they provide space for the decorating violin to fill!

Note:

- the pizzicato (plucked) violins and bass which add a measure of lightness and point to the variation
- the crescendo and spectacular three octave solo violin ascent which concludes the variation

Note:

- the solo violin does not play during this variation
- echoing winds and horns are heard in the gaps/pregnant pauses
- this loud and forceful variation acts cadentially, bringing the first half of the movement to its conclusion

40

### **Interlude I**

#### Solo violin:

- in the manner of a recitative, a free, almost improvisational solo violin decoration of a G major and D major harmony:



45

### **“Theme 2”**

#### Solo violin:

- Plays a delicate and singing theme which, though it bears in some aspects a resemblance to the Theme, is best heard as a slight by definite contrast with the Theme; compared to the Theme, Theme 2's phrases are less obvious, its rhythms more fluid and flexible, its harmonic content less varied, its effect more decorative and spontaneous:

56

### **Variation IV**

#### Theme:

- pizzicato (plucked) strings

#### Solo violin:

- Decorates and embellishes the theme, often lagging very slightly behind the plucked strings

#### Note:

- the violin solo again returns to its upper register, again creating an ethereal effect
- the spare, almost chamber-like effect of the orchestration creates a marvellous delicacy and intimacy
- this is the most languid and flexible sounding of the variations thus far; it is almost as if the stiff formality of the variations process has “lightened up” due to the unexpected but welcome appearance of the Interlude and Theme 2



[This slight, soloistic contrast having been provided, the variations resume, our ears refreshed. Musical gatorade.]

From this point on to the end of the movement the variations process breaks down completely; the remainder of the movement will focus on the solo violin and the long, flexible and lyric phrases of the Interlude and Theme 2-like material

65

## Interlude II

### Solo Violin:

- Rather more developed than Interlude I, Interlude II nevertheless still has the character of an “intermezzo”; it is quietly accompanied by *bowed* strings and horns; the horns play a dotted rhythm figure drawn from the Theme

71

## Theme 2

### Solo violin:

- plays an embellished, but slightly abbreviated version of Theme 2

79

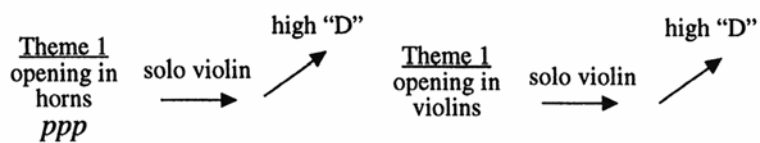
## Interlude II

### Solo violin:

- Extended and embellished; the dynamic is reduced to near silence (*ppp*)

87

We are poised to the verge of paradise!



Ah...



**Note:**

- increasingly fluid, languid mood
- incredibly spare, indeed, almost minimalistic accompaniment
- end-of-cadenza-like solo violin trill that concludes this theme

88

**Argh!**

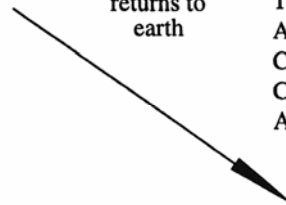
The formerly quiet dotted rhythms of the Theme opening suddenly and unexpectedly become the hammerstrokes of mortal reality! An equally sudden modulation breaks the paradisaical mood and shoves/shifts/slams the harmony back toward D major

strings  
(without mutes)  
*ff*

brief  
solo  
violin  
cadenza

the violin  
returns to  
earth

A S  
T T U  
T B  
A I  
C C T  
C O  
A



# MOVEMENT III

Rondo form, compound duple meter

## A

### Rondo Theme

This rollicking, harmonically and motivically simple, registrally restricted theme is just the sort of melody one might expect to hear in a pub or out in the countryside:



1

### Rondo Theme

in solo violin; only the 'cellos seem prepared to follow "the fiddler", playing a rudimentary (almost crude!) accompaniment

brief! orchestral interlude

a  
D Major  
p

(  
O  
P  
E  
N  
  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E

## B

41

### Transition/Introduction

Rustic tonic-to-dominant open fifth quiets the music and creates a sense of anticipation



decresc. - - - - -

45

### Theme B

The solo violin takes its cue from the rustic Transition/Introduction, picking it up and literally tossing it high into the musical air to create a new and brilliant tune



(note hunting horns in accompaniment)

a  
D Major  
p

## A

93

### Rondo Theme

solo violin with 'cello accompaniment

brief  
orchestral  
interlude

a  
D Major  
p

(  
O  
P  
E  
N  
  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E

103

### Rondo Theme

solo violin with violin accompaniment

brief  
orchestral  
interlude

a<sup>1</sup>  
pp

(  
O  
P  
E  
N  
  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E

The delicacy and lyricism of Movement II are simply blown away by this irreverent, beer-hall boogie-woogie!

**11**

Rondo Theme

in solo violin, two octaves higher; accompanied by quiet and tentative violins

**a<sup>1</sup>**  
*p*

brief  
orchestral  
interlude

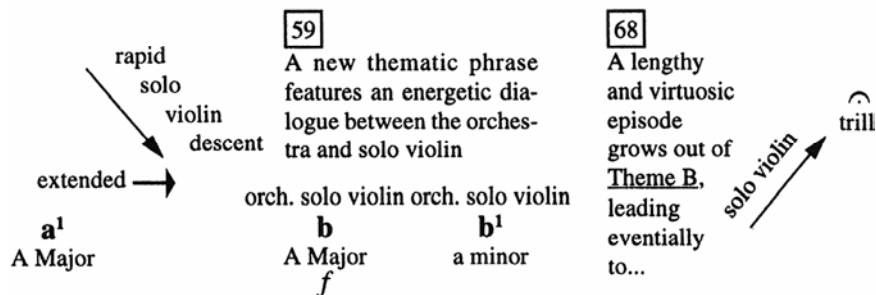
OPEN  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E

**21**

Oh, hell! Let's go for it! The orchestra pulls up its musical pants and, won over by the solo violin, indulges in a joyful, footstomping version of the theme

**a<sup>2</sup>**  
*ff*

vigorous,  
trilling  
thematic  
extension  
→



**113**

Rondo Theme

Joyful, footstomping tutti version begins as it did before until...

**a<sup>3</sup>**  
*ff*

an extraordinary series of modulations begins 1/2 way through the theme!

**123**

solo violin plays a quiet, "waiting" passage, which leads to...

# C

127

## Theme C

A wistful, folk-tune like theme is played initially by the solo violin



**a**  
g minor  
*p*

135

bassoon  
(with solo violin  
embroidery)

**a<sup>1</sup>**

143

solo violin

**b**  
B<sup>b</sup> Major –  
g minor

151

bassoon  
(with solo  
violin  
embroidery)

**b<sup>1</sup>**  
B<sup>b</sup> Major –  
g minor

# A

174

## Rondo Theme

solo violin with  
'cello accompani-  
ment

**a**  
D Major  
*p*

brief  
orchestral  
interlude

(  
O  
P  
E  
N  
  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E  
)

184

## Rondo Theme

solo violin with  
violin accompa-  
niment

**a<sup>1</sup>**

brief  
orchestral  
interlude

(  
O  
P  
E  
N  
  
C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
C  
E  
)

# B

214

## Transition/Introduction

Rustic, tonic-dominant open  
fifth quiets the music and cre-  
ates a sense of anticipation

decresc. -----

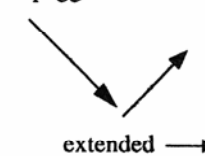
218

## Theme B

Great-moments-we-must-  
live-for: solo violin plays the  
first two notes of Theme B  
pizzicato, virtually the only  
time it plays pizz. in the en-  
tire concerto! Gotta love it!

**a**  
D Major  
(note horn accompaniment)

violin  
arpeggio



**a<sup>1</sup>**  
G Major

158

Transition

PART 1: Rapid solo violin  
“fiddle” motives are heard  
against thematic fragments in  
oboes

167

PART 2: solo violin and strings: take  
turns in pulling, almost hand-over-  
hand, the opening notes of the Rondo  
Theme up from the depths

cresc. -----

194

tutti with joyful, foot-  
stomping version

**a<sup>2</sup>**  
*ff*

vigorous  
trilling  
thematic  
extension  
→

233

Energetic dialogue between  
orchestra and solo violin

orch. solo  
violin

**b**  
D Major  
*f*

orch. solo  
violin

**b<sup>1</sup>**  
d minor

243

A lengthy and  
virtuosic episode  
grows out of  
Theme B, leading  
eventually to...

269

solo violin  
trill →  
“horn call” mu-  
sic builds in  
intensity, lead-  
ing to...

279

D	6
D	4
C	
H	
O	
R	
D	

C  
A  
D  
E  
N  
Z  
A

## Coda

280

**PART 1:** Solo violin trill (on "E") that concluded cadenza continues, blithely unaware, or so it would seem, that the low strings have managed to carry the harmony far, far away from the expected resolution in D major!

solo violin gets it! the trill moves to an E $\flat$



315

### **PART 3: Rondo Theme**

A marvelous trio between oboe, horn and solo violin re-establishes and solidifies the key of D major

*p*

323

**PART 4:** Rapid solo violin scales and arpeggios signal the beginning of the end, as rising motives from the beginning of the Rondo Theme appear with increasing vehemence from the orchestra  
cresc. ----- *ff*

two rising, syncopated lines in the tutti push the music forward

293

**PART 2: Rondo Theme**

Hello indeed! The harmony is firmly ensconced in A<sup>b</sup> major, as far away from the tonic D major as LvB's tonal language can take him. How is Beethoven going to get out of this?

solo violin  
with  
orch. violin accomp.  
**a<sup>4</sup>**  
A<sup>b</sup> Major

The bassline begins to descend, and with it the harmonic fortunes of A<sup>b</sup> major

**a<sup>5</sup>**

modulatory →

solo violin  
as-  
cent

trill →

gently  
descend-  
ing solo  
violin

A7  
(V of D)

*pp*

349

Rising Rondo Theme motives climb upwards and then, rather to our surprise, lose their energy and quiet down

*ff*

solo violin  
quietly  
grasps  
ahold of  
the rising  
Rondo  
Theme

*pp*

tutti  
cadence

D Major  
*ff*

## Brahms, Lectures One–Four

### Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 (1878)

#### Outline

- I. It is useful to begin these lectures by examining some of the contemporary (and hostile) criticisms of the music of Johannes Brahms.
  - A. In *The World* (1893), noted author and critic George Bernard Shaw described Brahms as “a sentimental voluptuary.”
  - B. Composer Hugo Wolf sniped in the *Salonblatt* (1886) that Brahms “could never rise above the mediocre.”
  - C. Edgar Stillman Kelley wrote in the *San Francisco Examiner* (1894): “Brahms gives us nothing in the way of beautiful themes and lovely harmonies, preferring rather to twist and torture a series of commonplace tunes and chords.”
  - D. During his lifetime, many considered Brahms an arch-modernist.
    - 1. Today we consider him a Classicist, one of the “Three Bs” of standard concert hall repertoire (together with Bach and Beethoven).
    - 2. In 1878, Brahms was called “a modern of the moderns” and his music “a remarkable expression of this anxious, over-earnest age.”
  - E. It should be noted that “new music” was just as controversial in the nineteenth century as it is in the twentieth.
- II. Classicism versus Romanticism in nineteenth-century music was one of the great musical debates of the nineteenth century.
  - A. At one extreme were the modernists, the so-called “Music-of-the-Future” group and their followers.
    - 1. This group included Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, and Richard Wagner.
    - 2. They believed in individuality in all things, including musical structure. Other tenets included these notions:
      - a. Form should be determined by the content (the program).
      - b. Expression is more important than structure.
      - c. They preferred the “heart over the head,” or, to put it another way, the *ingredients* determined the recipe.
    - 3. They also believed that the future of concert music was tied to combining it with literature and the visual arts, creating a “composite” art form (program music). A good example would be the “love theme” from Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*.
  - B. At the other extreme were the traditionalists, the so-called “Classicists.”
    - 1. They believed that the genres and formal structures of eighteenth-century Classicism were still viable in the nineteenth century.
      - a. This does not mean that they copied Haydn and Mozart. As our example from Haydn shows, the earlier Classicists practiced considerable restraint.
      - b. By contrast, Brahms’ Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68, written between 1862 and 1876, exhibits extraordinary dramatic sweep and passion.
        - ① It begins with a funereal pounding.
        - ② This is followed by a quiet and tearful second episode.
        - ③ The music is extreme in its expressive and harmonic content.
      - c. Both excerpts are from the beginnings of sonata-form movements; Brahms uses the same structures, even if his material is quite different.
    - 2. The Classicists believed in the coherent manipulation of thematic material. They held to the following precepts.
      - a. Content should ultimately be determined by form.
      - b. Structural clarity is an important element of musical expression.
      - c. They preferred the “head over the heart,” or, to put it another way, the *recipe* determined the ingredients.

- C. Many nineteenth-century composers moved freely between “program” works and classically structured works. For example:
  - 1. Robert Schumann wrote symphonies and concertos, but he also wrote program music for the piano.
  - 2. Peter Illych Tchaikovsky wrote symphonies and chamber music, but he also wrote concert overtures such as *Romeo and Juliet*.
  - 3. Camille Saint-Saens wrote symphonies and concertos, but he also wrote tone poems.
- D. Brahms was perhaps unique as the only major late nineteenth-century composer never to have written any explicitly programmatic works.
  - 1. He rejected program music as sloppy and haphazard.
  - 2. For Brahms, program music was the refuge of compositional scoundrels who needed to resort to literary or extra-musical meaning to explain what they were doing.
- E. In his own writing, Brahms employs the extended harmonies, melodies, and expressive angst of the late nineteenth century, but always within the architectural context of classical form and structure.

### III. What were the life and times of Johannes Brahms like?

- A. Brahms was born in the city-state of Hamburg, in May 1833, into a solid Lutheran family. He died in Vienna in 1897.
- B. At the age of nineteen he was still living at home with mom and dad.
  - 1. An accomplished pianist, Brahms was working as a music teacher, accompanist, and arranger.
  - 2. His parents considered this a respectable profession, but they did not want him to compose.
- C. In April, 1853, Brahms left home as an accompanist on his first concert tour with the Hungarian violinist Eduard Rimenyi.
  - 1. Rimenyi, a talented but irascible fellow, was one of many Hungarian refugees who had left Hungary after the failure of the 1848 revolutions. (Hamburg was a major port for central Europeans going to America.)
  - 2. Brahms had been exposed to the folk tunes and gypsy music which such refugees brought with them, and he fell in love with it, as demonstrated in his *Hungarian Dances*, the third movement of the violin concerto, and other works.
  - 3. A young unknown from a provincial city, Brahms may have seen this tour as an opportunity to get away from home; at any rate, his fame will be established in but seven months!
- D. In Hanover in late May 1853, Brahms met the great and famous violinist Joseph Joachim, a conservatory classmate of Rimenyi's.
  - 1. It was Joachim who had revived the Beethoven violin concerto in London in 1844. Although only two years older than Brahms, he was by far the more famous.
  - 2. Joachim was greatly impressed by Brahms' piano playing and compositions.
  - 3. A lifelong friendship began between them. Joachim provided Brahms with a letter of introduction to Franz Liszt, and later Brahms wrote his violin concerto for Joachim.
- E. Next, Rimenyi and Brahms visited Franz Liszt at Weimar, a “pilgrimage” made by musicians and musical sycophants from all over Europe.
  - 1. Liszt was the Hungarian-born “god” of modernism and musical Romanticism, holding court at Weimar.
  - 2. Brahms managed to insult Liszt by bluntly stating his views of program music.
  - 3. Mortified by Brahms's behavior, Rimenyi abandoned him and their tour in Weimar.
  - 4. Brahms returned to Joachim for a two-month stay in Göttingen.
    - a. During this time they concertized locally.
    - b. Brahms sought to have a couple of his compositions succeed so that he could convince his parents of his career choice.
    - c. Concerned, Brahms' parents wrote, and Joachim replied, praising Brahms highly and touting the merits of his compositions.
    - d. The fact that Joachim was Jewish encouraged some people to indulge in innuendo; Brahms's parents nonetheless were very proud and showed Joachim's letter all around.
- F. With a letter of introduction from Joachim, Brahms next met Robert and Clara Schumann in September, 1853, in Düsseldorf.

1. Schumann was the living composer Brahms admired most.
  2. Like Joachim, Robert and Clara Schumann were completely taken with Brahms, his piano playing, and his compositions. They welcomed him as a friend into their family.
  3. In October 1853, Robert Schumann, world-famous composer and music critic, wrote an article praising Brahms to the sky.
    - a. The article was published in the *Neue Zeitung*, a music paper that Schumann had helped to get started.
    - b. Schumann had not written anything in the paper in a long time. This in itself was news, and it attracted more than the usual attention.
    - c. While the article instantly established Brahms' reputation, Schumann's high praise put a great deal of pressure on him. Hereafter Brahms could ill afford a flop.
  4. At this point, Brahms was but six-and-a-half months out of the complete obscurity of his parents' house in Hamburg.
    - a. Great things were suddenly expected of him, though he was only twenty years old.
    - b. He had made the three great friends of his life: Joachim, Robert Schumann, and Clara Schumann.
- G. Brahms eventually settled in Vienna.
- H. The legacy of Beethoven weighed heavily upon Brahms, and, with the exception of his first piano concerto, he composed his large-scale orchestral works only later in his career.
1. Brahms wrote twenty complete string quartets before he would allow them to be published, and he burned a vast quantity of material that he was worried about, just before his death.
  2. The dam broke with the publication of his first symphony, the composition of which was a fourteen-year struggle in the shadow of Beethoven.
    - a. Brahms wrote, "You can't have any idea what it's like always hearing the giant [Beethoven] marching behind you."
    - b. Finally released in 1876, the symphony was widely acknowledged as "Beethoven's Tenth."
    - c. Symphony No. 2 followed in 1877, the violin concerto in 1878, Piano Concerto No. 2 in 1883, and Symphony No. 4 in 1884—a very active and productive eight-year period which included chamber music as well.
- I. The mature Brahms was known as something of a curmudgeon; he may have had a heart of gold, but it was disguised by his gruff exterior.
1. He never hesitated to speak his mind.
  2. He was unkind to Max Bruck.
  3. Yet he was very generous with his family and with struggling young composers, and he could be very kind to those he liked, e.g., Dvorák.
  4. Brahms was in love with Clara Schumann, and even though they lived together for a time, this love was unrequited (she remained in mourning for Robert). Brahms died only a few weeks after she did.
- IV. Now let us have a look at the historical context of Brahms' Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 (1878).
- A. It was written for and with the collaboration of Joseph Joachim.
1. Joachim advised Brahms on how to write for the violin in terms of what was and was not possible.
  2. Joachim also wrote the cadenza for the first movement, something rare by this time, but understandable in this case.
- B. Like Beethoven, Brahms rejected empty virtuosity.
1. The solo violin part is extremely difficult, but it is virtuosity in service of the music, not of the virtuoso him or herself, as in many other nineteenth-century concerti.
  2. The Romantic notion of the artist as god tended to encourage this kind of empty virtuosity.
- C. The work premiered January 1, 1879.
- D. The concerto was originally a four-movement work. Brahms destroyed the middle two movements and replaced them with a single "miserable adagio"—his words; Brahms was his own worst critic—two months before the premiere.
- V. What is the form and content of Movement One?

- A. A Classicist, Brahms will follow double exposition form for Movement One, since this is a concerto.
  - 1. The use of particular forms is understood as a cultural given—it provides us with a basis of understanding within which creativity can occur. Having this frame of reference, the composer is now free to delight and challenge us by presenting the unexpected *within* the recognized form.
  - 2. Double exposition form is an adaptation of sonata-allegro form; the latter being based on the operatic act.
  - 3. A movement in double exposition form typically consists of an exposition for the orchestra, an exposition for the soloist (hence *double* exposition), a development section, a recapitulation, and a coda.
- B. Our game plan for this movement is to come to grips with the extraordinary variety of thematic ideas contained therein.
  - 1. This is quite a challenge, as it is not at all clear how many themes this movement has.
  - 2. We will see how Brahms' incredible developmental craft transforms but one theme into many musical ideas.
- C. Our first assumption is that there are but three "main" themes in the movement: Theme 1 (consisting of phrases "a", "b", "c", and "a<sup>1</sup>"), Theme 2, and a cadence theme.
- D. Our second assumption is that Theme 1 is actually a *group* of thematic ideas, all of which are derived from phrase "a". This is ongoing developmental music.
  - 1. We should note that Brahms is a rhetorical German composer, developing his themes based on parts of what has gone before.
  - 2. Unless you think as Brahms does, you'll miss the relatedness.
    - a. Theme 1, phrase "a", is simply the tune in an orchestral unison up to the last two notes. It is a simple yet memorable "ur" melody that lends itself to great creative development.
    - b. This theme is mainly triadic, built on the D–F<sup>#</sup>–A or the central (tonic) chord of the key of D Major.
    - c. A composer like Tchaikovsky would begin with a beautiful, fleshed-out melody; but this would be too elaborate to be developed.
    - d. Like Bach, Haydn, and Beethoven before him, Brahms likes to start out with the simple and memorable in order to be *able* to then develop it.
- E. Let us examine Theme Group 1, and in our musical demonstration, try to listen for the phrase derivations.
  - 1. Phrase "a" is a simple, unharmonized triadic phrase.
  - 2. An unexpected shift from D Major to C Major, phrase "b" is an inversion and intervallic diminution of phrase "a". Because of the harmonic and structural changes, the relationship to Theme 1 is a little obscure, but it's there!
  - 3. Dramatic and rather stentorian, phrase "c" combines the contour of phrase "a" with the stepwise motion of phrase "b", and heads us back in the direction of D Major.
  - 4. Phrase "a<sup>1</sup>" celebrates the theme in its original permutation, now back in D Major.
- F. The bridge/transition material in two parts is derived from Theme 1, phrase "c" (note: no "Theme 2" grows out of this transitional music; this orchestral exposition simply heads for its concluding/cadential material and ends with the entry of the solo violin). Everything grows out of the original idea.
  - 1. In sonata form, the music between the themes is called the bridge. It implies both a transition *and* a modulation (change of key). In a double exposition, the key usually does not change until Exposition II, hence we do not really have a modulating bridge, but a *transition* where we would normally *find* a bridge; thus the term "bridge/transition."
  - 2. The first part of the transition theme is not a new idea, but a further development of Theme 1, phrase "c", the harmonic instability of which makes it more transitional.
  - 3. It is also related to phrase "a"! It's varied enough to *sound* different, but the relatedness provides unity.
  - 4. This is not just beautiful music, but exciting, *well-crafted* music!
  - 5. The repeated fragment creates an atmosphere of expectation.
  - 6. But—Brahms gives us nothing! Instead we get a melancholy version of the transition theme, part two.

- G. Next the cadence theme arrives, but it is not the lyric second theme we expect; instead it is a fanfare-like call to attention which announces...
  - H. the forceful entry of the solo violin.
    - 1. The solo violin enters grandly and heroically, an extraordinary entrance for a lyric instrument!
    - 2. The violin outlines Theme 1, phrase “a” (D Major), now in d *minor*!
    - 3. The orchestra objects; the solo violin simply overwhelms, then calms, the orchestra in preparation for Exposition II, the solo exposition. This is unheard of in the violin concerto repertoire!
  - I. Exposition II, the solo exposition, proceeds more or less as expected.
    - 1. The solo violin embellishes and extends the phrases of Theme 1, heard here in the orchestra.
    - 2. The bridge/transition material occurs more or less as before, but now it leads directly to...
    - 3. Theme 2 in two phrases, radiant and gorgeous. Brahms has saved this theme for the solo violin. It fills the void felt at measure 69 of Exposition I.
      - a. The theme is undergirded by pizzicato strings.
      - b. It consists of a passage of cross-rhythms and melodic leaps in which the harmonic action moves toward minor.
  - J. The development section plumbs a full range of expression in seven episodes (outlined in the WordScore), in which the solo violin demonstrates that this piece belongs to *it*.
  - K. The recapitulation follows more or less as expected, with the exception of a foray into the key of F<sup>#</sup> Major.
  - L. Next, we have Joachim’s cadenza.
    - 1. The English word “cadenza” refers to a harmonic formula of three chords with which a piece of music ends, in a tradition going back at least to the Baroque Era.
      - a. The six-four chord sets up the dominant chord.
      - b. The dissonant, dominant chord needs to resolve.
      - c. The music concludes with the tonic chord, which reestablishes the tonal center in the “home” (original) key.
    - 2. The Italian word “*cadenza*” as used in English, refers to a solo improvisation that interrupts the cadence right after the six-four chord.
    - 3. Joachim wrote this cadenza at Brahms’ request.
    - 4. The cadenza relies on Brahms’ thematic material and, though virtuosic, continues to avoid empty, for-display-only virtuosity.
    - 5. Like the cadenzas for Beethoven’s violin concerto, this one ends quietly, so as not to overpower the sublime and tranquil orchestral reentry at the
  - M. Coda.
    - 1. The quietude with which the movement opened is restored.
    - 2. At the urging of the solo violin, the coda gathers steam, picks up the orchestra, and brings the movement to a rousing conclusion.
- VI. In Movement Two we have Brahms’ “miserable adagio,” which is actually graceful, gentle, and Italianate.
- A. The overall structure is A–B–A<sup>1</sup> (da capo), in which “B” provides a contrasting thematic section and a slight return to the original (“A”) idea.
  - B. This movement features a “reduced” orchestration, reliant especially on the winds.
  - C. Theme A, presented by the wind choir, is light, serene, and stately.
    - 1. It has the character of a wind serenade, featuring an oboe singing the main theme in phrase “a”.
    - 2. The solo violin extends and elaborates the theme.
  - D. Theme B is perhaps less a theme and more a mood, featuring a lyric, deeply expressive, coloratura solo violin. Note the rising bassoon and horn arpeggios.
    - 1. It is based on the falling, three-note concluding motive from phrase “a” of Theme A.
    - 2. Brahms creates a long filigree of melody in a riveting, Romantic recitative, developing by itself over a simple accompaniment.

3. The violin builds an increasingly dramatic section, which would seem to be reaching for a very dark side of the emotional spectrum.
  - E. Theme A<sup>1</sup> (da capo), is luminous and utterly serene.
    1. It is reminiscent of the coda in the first movement.
    2. It ends gently and quietly on a high, ringing note in the violin.
- VII.** Now let us compare Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61, to Brahms' Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77.
- A. Both feature long, complex, highly varied first movements in double exposition form.
  - B. Both feature lyric, operatic second movements.
  - C. Both feature buoyant, dance-like third-movement rondos based on "popular" elements.
    1. What makes Beethoven's rondo "popular"?
      - a. It has a punchy, concise, short theme.
      - b. Its range is very restricted, with a simple harmonic accompaniment.
      - c. It consists of clear phrases in both the solo violin and the orchestra.
    2. The same things can be said of Brahms' third-movement rondo.
      - a. It has a raucous, rhythmically energized theme in four clear phrases.
      - b. Its structure is *not* developmental.
  - D. Where Brahms and Beethoven depart lies in how they treat the solo violin in their *first* movements:
    1. Beethoven treats his as a lyric character.
    2. Brahms treats his as both a lyric *and* a heroic character, and one of great breadth and variety at that.
    3. These discrepancies are very likely due in large part to the differing styles of Franz Clement and Joseph Joachim, the violinists for whom these pieces were written.
- VIII.** Movement Three is a rondo form movement in which the rondo theme is treated like a refrain.
- A. Theme A (the rondo theme) sweeps in.
    1. It is a brilliant, dancing, Hungarian gypsy-tinged theme.
    2. It will return three times (and is heard four times in all).
    3. The fourth (and final) version is of particular interest as it takes the form of a Turkish March! Let's consider a couple of musical examples (notice the use of triplets and grace notes):
      - a. Brahms may very well have been inspired by a similar passage in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, fourth movement.
      - b. Compare that to the Brahms violin concerto.
  - B. We next have the contrasting episode, "B":
    1. Light, brilliant arpeggios in the solo violin lead to...
    2. the cadence theme, which is again vigorous and gypsy-tinged.
      - a. Note that this cadence theme will be used again, elsewhere.
      - b. The Hungarian tinge is brought out by the use of the cimbalom—Brahms really liked its sound.
      - c. We may compare this to the use of the cimbalom in Zoltán Kodály's *Háry János*.
    3. Next, the rondo theme returns.
  - C. The second contrasting section, "C", is a kind of multinational episode in G Major.
    1. The solo violin gets "Viennese," and begins playing a waltz (triple meter).
    2. The orchestra tries to get the violin back to duple meter.
    3. At last, via a vigorous hemiola, the orchestra succeeds in restoring the original duple meter, and the cadence theme ensues.
  - D. Finally, there is a third contrasting episode, "D".
    1. It begins with a "fake" cadenza, for which the music has prepared us; it just does not materialize.
      - a. The solo violin begins, as if to play a cadenza, but the orchestra joins in!
      - b. We return once again to the rondo theme, but just enough to say so.
    2. The rondo theme returns in its "Turkish march" variation, alternating with the cadence theme, and the movement comes to a buoyant conclusion.

WordScore Guide™: Johannes Brahms

# Violin Concerto in D Major, Op.77 (1878)

## MOVEMENT I:

*“ALLEGRO NON TROPPO”, DOUBLE EXPOSITION FORM, TRIPLE METER*

### Exposition 1

#### Theme Group 1

A series of rich and seemingly diverse melodic phrases share so much in common that they must be considered versions of the same thematic substance despite their surface differences

A pastoral, triadic theme of great beauty and majesty emerges without introduction or fanfare



**a**

strings/bassoons/horns  
D Major  
*mp*

**9**

oboe intones a gentle, step-wise phrase which answers and “fills in” the open intervals of phrase **a**; note quietly rolling strings in accomp.:

**27**

a triumphant, powerful and extended return to the opening phrase brings Theme 1 to its conclusion

**a<sup>1</sup>**

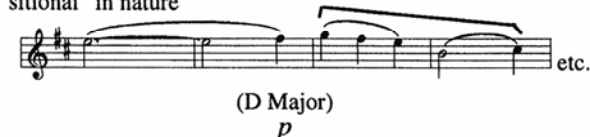
D Major  
tutti  
*ff*

**41**

#### Bridge/Transition

##### Transition Theme

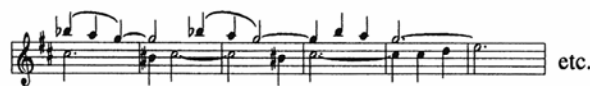
PART 1: the Transition Theme is itself an outgrowth of Theme 1’c”, though its relative harmonic instability marks it as “transitional” in nature



(D Major)  
*p*

**69**

Nothing! Nothing?!? We’ve arrived back where we started in the Bridge/Transition! Instead of the expected “something” we hear an exquisitely melancholy version of the Transition Theme/Part 2, now divided into 3 falling and 2 rising notes



d minor-ish  
more “dissonant”, waiting music, hushed, mysterious and dark

**b**  
oboe  
*p*  
C Major (!)

**17**  
vigorous, rising/falling phrase in orchestra  
extends and elongates aspects of phrase **b**  
(which is itself an elaboration of phrase **a**!)

*f* modulatory *c* (back towards D Major)

**53**  
PART 2: the last five notes of Transition Theme, part 1 (see last musical example) are repeated, creating a five note hemiola!

*pp* etc.

**61**  
quiet, arpeggiated descent in the winds reminds us of Theme 1/a; we anticipate the arrival of an important event

**65**  
serpentine rising motives in winds – strings outline a dissonant (unstable) harmony (c#°7, VII/d minor) leading to...

**78**  
Cadence Theme  
a bold, fanfare-like theme abruptly (and dramatically!) breaks the mysterious mood; it would seem to herald an event of signal importance

d minor  
*f* etc.

**82**  
a vigorous series of falling four-note motives in the violins and rising winds announce the long-awaited entrance of...

90

The solo violin enters! And what an entrance! No quiet, violin-as-lyric-element this!  
The solo violin entry is electrifying and heroic; it embellishes Theme 1/a

violin entry: 

Theme 1/a: 

etc.

d minor  
f

"D" pedal —————→

timpani roll —————→

## Exposition 2

The solo violin will embellish and extend, and in doing so, transform, the thematic material heard in Exposition 1

136

### Theme Group 1

gorgeous, shimmering richly harmonized opening phrase features a now lyric violin soloist and accompanying orchestra fully at peace with each other

a<sup>2</sup>  
D Major  
p

142

a lengthy, langorous solo violin phrase extends the theme and spans the entire width of the violin's range

182

### Bridge/Transition

#### Transition Theme

PART 1: again, the solo violin elaborates the theme while the original version is heard in the orchestral violins

(A Major)  
p

190

PART 2: played by the orchestra and embellished/ decorated by the solo violin

again, an air of mystery and expectancy pervades the music

pp


94

Defiant, aggressive orchestral interjections (drawn from the bold, fanfare-like Cadence Theme) would seem to both challenge and goad the solo violin, which ultimately manages to fight off the orchestra's challenge for musical supremacy

(This sort of confrontation between soloist and orchestra is unheard of in violin concerti, where the violin is typically treated as a lyric instrument)

102

Finally, the orchestra accepts the presence of the soloist; the solo violin settles in with a long series of arpeggios and scales accompanied by fragments of Theme 1/a in winds and strings

*f*  *p*

("D" pedal)

(timpani)

"A" pedal  
(V of D)

152

"dolce"

the solo violin extends and embellishes the second phrase, which is heard in its original form in the accompanying violins

**b<sup>1</sup>**

C Major

modulatory



164

dramatic triple stops and swooping arpeggios in the solo violin embellish and transform this phrase, which is heard in its original form in the orchestral strings

**c<sup>1</sup>**

a minor

*f*

198

quiet, arpeggiated descent in the winds, as before, gently lowers and reduces the musical texture to near nothing; this is waiting music and, again, we anticipate the arrival of something important

202

more waiting music!!! Gentle, dissonant, serpentine rising motive moves from:

yes?

yes??

yes???

winds

solo  
violin

E7 (V of A Major)

note distant drum roll

206

"This radiant theme appears like a newly opened flower." – A. Hopkins  
**Theme 2**

Brahms has saved this greatest & most beautiful melodic treasure for the solo violin; this exquisite, melodically and rhythmically complex lyric theme fills the void felt at ms 69 of Exposition 1, making its arrival now all the more sweet



**a**  
 solo violin  
 A Major  
*p*

This second phrase features a lengthy solo violin extension of the closing portion of the theme; the passage is characterized by cross-rhythms and melodic leaps

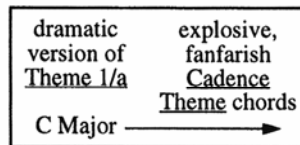
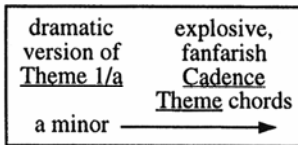
harmonic motion towards minor

**a<sup>1</sup>** → solo violin  
 orchestral violins

## Development

272

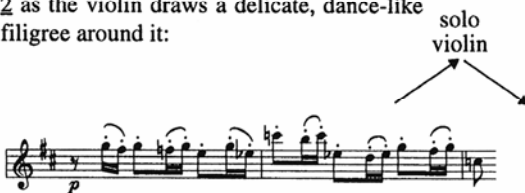
**PART 1:** Sequence



312

**PART 4:**

The orchestra continues to play the 5-note motive drawn from the Transition Theme/Part 2 as the violin draws a delicate, dance-like filigree around it:



solo violin

332

**PART 5:** the music becomes violent! The delicate, dance-like music turns savage as the orchestra attempts to contain and restrain dramatic trills and arpeggios in the solo violin!

*f* ————— *ff*

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">236</div> <p>The quiet, melancholy five-note melody from <u>Transition Theme/Part 2</u> reappears as heard at 92: 3 falling notes in violins and 2 rising notes in solo violin</p> <p>d minor <i>pp</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">246</div> <p><b>Cadence Theme</b> Bold, fanfarish in ferocious, solo violin triple-stops breaks the quiet mood and hurls the music forward!</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">250</div> <p>fast, impassioned scales in the solo violin lead directly to...</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">260</div> <p>orchestral version of the scalar passage, reduced to a 4-note descending motive</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">266</div> <p>climactic descent/ascent for solo violin</p> <p>E7 (V of a minor)</p>	O P E N  C A D E N C E
--	--	---	---	---	---

solo violin  
a minor  
*f*

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">288</div> <p><u>PART 2: Sequence</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <u>Theme 2</u> strings </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u> 5-note unit; 3 falling notes in flute/ oboe 2 rising notes in viola </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <u>Theme 2</u> strings </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u> </td> </tr> </table> </div>	<u>Theme 2</u> strings	<u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u> 5-note unit; 3 falling notes in flute/ oboe 2 rising notes in viola	<u>Theme 2</u> strings	<u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">304</div> <p><u>PART 3:</u></p> <p>rich, low-voiced solo violin shares and extends the 5-note <u>Transition Theme/Part 2</u> with the 'cellos</p> </div>
<u>Theme 2</u> strings	<u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u> 5-note unit; 3 falling notes in flute/ oboe 2 rising notes in viola	<u>Theme 2</u> strings	<u>Transition Theme, Part 2</u>		

C Major-ish → c minor-ish

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">348</div> <p><u>PART 6: Theme 1/c</u> Massive rising/falling motives in the solo violin stride heroically above the orchestra, enveloping it and conquering it! <i>f</i></p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">360</div> <p><u>PART 7:</u> The now ferocious solo violin wields fanfarish <u>Cadence Theme</u> motives</p> </div>
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
solo violin → high C#

t  
w  
o  
c  
h  
o  
r  
d  
s  
i  
n  
v  
e

## Recapitulation

As in Exposition 2, the solo violin embellishes and extends thematic phrases which generally appear in their original (Exposition 1) form in the orchestral strings

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">381</div> <b>Theme Group 1</b> a magnificent and triumphant reprise <b>a<sup>3</sup></b> tutti D Major <i>ff</i>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">389</div> lyric and gentle <b>b<sup>2</sup></b> C Major <i>p</i> $\Rightarrow$ <i>pp</i> $\Leftarrow$	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">405</div> dramatic triple-stops in solo violin modulatory $\rightarrow$ <b>c<sup>2</sup></b> solo violin d minor <i>f</i>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">417</div> solo violin dissipates the energy with a series of arpeggios A Major $\rightarrow$ a minor
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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">445</div> <b>Theme 2</b> Exquisite and lyric, in the unexpected key of <u>F# Major</u> <b>a<sup>2</sup></b> solo violin <i>p</i>	orchestral violins <b>a<sup>3</sup></b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">453</div> as before, this second phrase of <u>Theme 2</u> is extended via a lengthy solo violin extension of the closing portion of the theme modulatory $\longrightarrow$	solo violin 
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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">513</div> <b>Theme Group 1</b> raucous, explosive and magnificent! <b>a<sup>4</sup></b> B <sup>b</sup> Major (°VI/false cad. of D Major)	modulatory $\longrightarrow$	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">Cadenza</div> Written by Brahms' great friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim, for who the concerto was composed. Joachim's cadenza is a masterpiece of restraint, relying, as it does, on thematic material already introduced and devoid, thankfully, of empty passage work and gratuitous virtuosity
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## Coda

"tranquillo"

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 5px;">527</div> The calm serenity of the concerto's opening returns here at the "sunset" of the 1st movement	extended by solo violin over long-sustained orchestral harmonies
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**a<sup>5</sup>**  
solo violin  
D Major (finally!)  
*p*

**423**  
**Bridge/Transition**  
**Transition Theme**

**PART 1:** embellished by the solo violin (D Major)  
**PART 2:** 5-note motive

**437**  
 anticipatory, arpeggiated descent in winds  
 gentle, dissonant, serpentine rising motives  
 orch. strings → solo violin →

(C#7, V of F# Major/III° of D Major)

**445**  
 quiet, melancholy version of the 5-note motive of **Transition Theme Part 2** shared between solo violin and orchestral strings  
 d minor  
*p*

**487**  
**Cadence Theme**  
 bold and fanfarish, in solo violin triple stops and orchestral strings  
 d minor  
*f*

**491**  
 fast, impassioned scales in the solo violin

**499**  
 orchestral version of the scale passage  
 solo violin →

**509**  
 climactic solo violin descent/ascent  
 →

o  
p  
e  
n  
  
c  
a  
d  
e  
n  
c  
e  
(A7)

Perhaps most important, this cadenza ends quietly; in doing so, the sublime orchestral re-entry that follows is neither masked nor seems anti-climatic →

**548**  
 gentle solo violin arpeggios slowly pick up speed and get louder  
*p* <

stringendo

**559** “animato”  
**Theme Group 1**  
 one last, energized passage based on a brings the movement to a thrilling and completely satisfying conclusion

D Major

*"Adagio", duple meter*

Lyric, serene and stately, this theme is presented by the wind choir and takes on the lightness and elegance of a serenade theme

15

abbreviated  
version

 $\mathbf{a}^1$ 

22

a haunting,  
deeply expres-  
sive phrase  
note: rising  
bassoon and  
horn arpeggios

**b**

mf

*“più largamente”*

56

impassioned, rhapsodic, coloratura melody  
based on the falling, 3-note motive heard  
in the 2nd measure of Theme A

8va



solo violin  
f# minor  
*f*

60

(“concluding figure” continues in accompanimental sequence in winds)

REST

*“Tempo I”: “dolce”*

78

heard much as before, with solo violin now embellishing the oboe melody

91

gentle and glowing elaboration and extension of the lyric Theme A in the solo violin

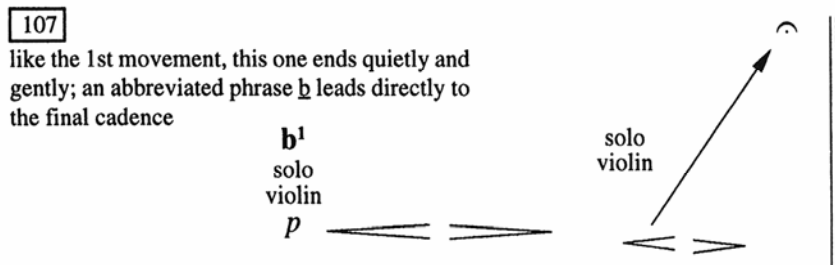
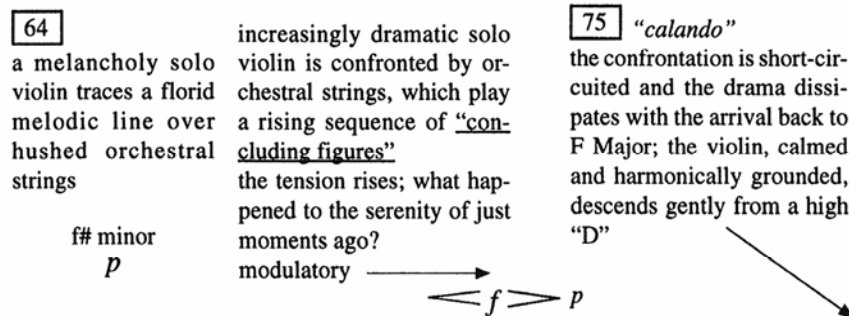
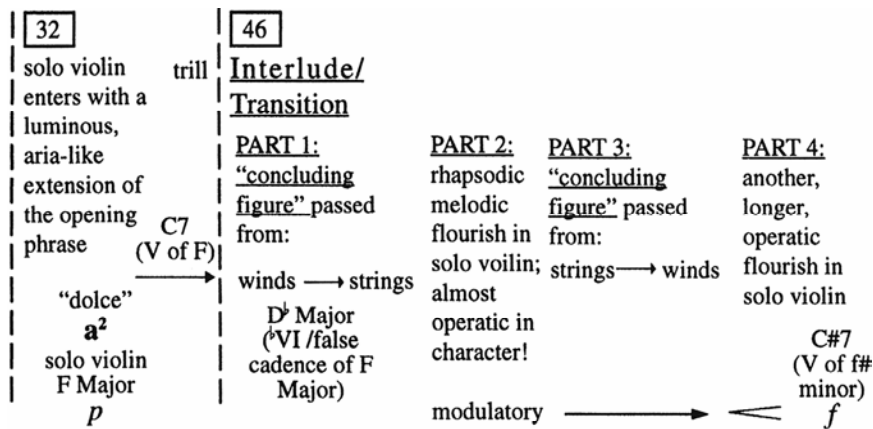
 $a^4$ 

solo violin

**a<sup>3</sup>**  
oboe  
F Major  
*p*

"concluding figure"  
in strings  
and winds

(note: the delicate, serenade-like pizzicato string accompaniment – like the gentle plucking of a guitar or mandolin)



### MOVEMENT III

*"Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace": ("fast & playful, but not too fast [lively])"*  
*Gypsy-fiddlin' mania! Rondo form, duple meter*

#### A

##### Rondo Theme

After sitting out the openings of Movements I and II, the solo violin gets to take this one from the top! A brilliant, dancing, Hungarian gypsy-like tune sweeps aside the quietude of the 2nd movement's conclusion

upwards  
swoop in  
orchestral  
strings



#### B

35

light, brilliant arpeggios in the solo violin give way to

*p*

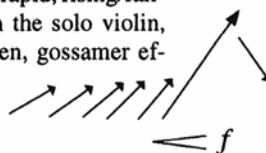
D Major

modulatory

49

increasingly rapid, rising/falling scales in the solo violin, create a silken, gossamer effect...

E Major



#### A'

93

##### Rondo Theme

solo violin

a

D Major

*f*

swoop in  
orchestral  
strings

abbreviated  
phrase!

a<sup>3</sup>

tutti

*f*

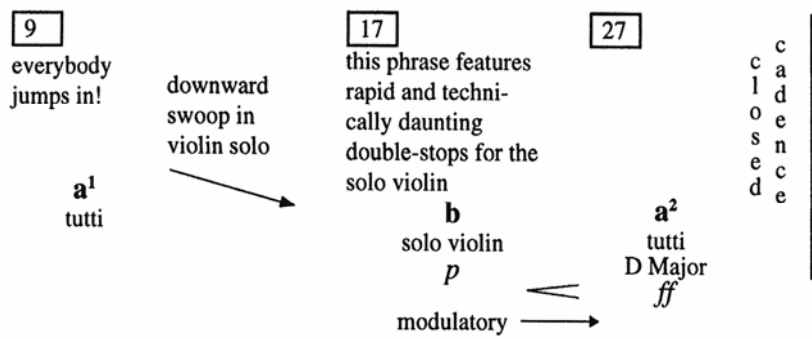
108

rising/falling solo violin arpeggios unexpectedly calm the music in preparation for...

a<sup>4</sup>

G Major

*p*



**57**  
Cadence Theme  
 (Gypsy octaves!)  
 rising, dotted rhythm (long-short)  
 double stopped solo violin octaves burst forth; the orchestra enthusiastically turns the melody upside down and descends with it



(note: the cembalom-like effect created by the violin and viola tremolos)  
 E Major  
*ff*

**73**  
Cadence Theme  
 exhilarating, teeth rattling  
 rising/falling octave passage pre the return of the Rondo Theme  
 E <sup>4</sup>/<sub>2</sub> modulatory

## C

120

### 3 Waltz Theme

4 "dolce"

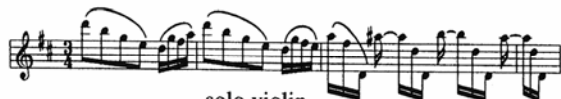
The solo violin plays an engaging new theme in triple meter, much to the consternation of the orchestra!

124

2 Excuse us! The orchestra, a bit miffed, shifts the meter back to duple

128

3 solo violin blithely returns to the Waltz Theme and rather quickly infects the orchestra with waltz/triple meter fever



solo violin  
G Major  
*p*

## A<sup>2</sup>

187

### Rondo Theme

joined "in progress"; the modulatory phrase b drags the harmony far afield in a development-like passage

**b<sup>1</sup>** solo violin modulatory → extended → **a<sup>5</sup>** tutti D Major a thrilling, climatic and extended version of the theme →

## D

222

### Cadenza?

sounding for all the world like the beginning of a cadenza, the solo violin is quickly joined by more and more of the orchestra (DMajor)

231

a series of swooping arpeggios and trills in the solo violin is answered by fragment of the Rondo Theme in the orchestra

Rondo Theme fragments in the solo violin

## A<sup>3</sup>

"poco più presto"

267

jangling, marchlike introduction features triplets and grace notes (this does not sound like gypsy music!)

271

Rondo Theme:  
Turkish March! (or hunting music, take your pick)

the theme undergoes a major permutation, sound now like a buoyant, Turkish March!



**a<sup>6</sup>**  
solo violin  
D Major  
*p*

**a<sup>7</sup>**  
solo violin  
extended →

141

the orchestra gets a grip on itself and plays a stern melisma, which effectively shifts the meter back to duple



143

2 increasingly rapid rising/falling scales in solo violin lead, as before, to...

150

### Cadence Theme

solo violin *ff* tutti solo violin  
D Major

solo violin arpeggios

255

### Extended Dominant

an ostinato in the horns and a low string pedal tone articulate an A7 harmony, the dominant chord of D Major

*p* crescendo -----  
A7 pedal harmony →

265

huge, sustained A7 chord

*f*

long, descending flourish in the solo violin

292

Cadence Theme embellished in the solo violin

Turkish March (Rondo Theme)

327

Rondo Theme

Turkish March version, one last time

tutti *ff* D Major

solo violin

*f* > *p*

gentle, quiet descent in winds & solo violin

C  
F A  
I D  
N E  
A N  
L C  
E

*ff*

## Glossary

**Absolute Music**—Abstract composition intended as “an improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing”—that is, music as a decorative art. (See program music, below).

**Accelerando**—Italian for “accelerate”; a musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing increasingly faster; such a change in tempo is usually temporary.

**Adagio**—Italian for “slowly.” This indicates the speed at which a piece of music is to be played.

**Allegro ma non troppo**—Italian for “fast, but not too fast”; another indicator of the speed at which a piece of music is to be played.

**Animato**—Italian for “animated,” indicating the manner in which a piece of music is to be played.

**Aria**—The general term for an extended solo in opera—the equivalent of a soliloquy—which brings the action and “real time” to a temporary halt, and in which the character expresses his or her feelings about the action and events just described. Arias generally have a high melodic profile and are typically accompanied by the full orchestra. By analogy, this term may be applied to writing for a solo instrument.

**Arpeggio**—Italian, meaning literally, “harplike,” playing the notes of a chord in sequence rather than at the same time, in the manner of a flourish on the harp. (This term is sometimes abbreviated in the word score as “arp.”)

**Attacca**—Italian for “attack,” indicating the manner in which a piece of music is to be played, usually at the beginning. It can mean either to heavily accent the first note, or to continue into the next movement without a pause.

**Baroque**—The musical period following the Renaissance, from about 1600 to 1750. Baroque music is characterized by a complex and elaborately ornamented style.

**Bass**—The lowest category of male voice—rich, dark, heavy, and powerful. In instrumental writing, the lower part or musical line, played by similarly low-sounding instruments.

**Cadence**—English for the Italian word *cadenza*. A cadence is a series of final notes or chords that indicate that a passage or the entire piece of music is about to resolve into a conclusion. It is distinguished from the Italian word *cadenza*, which has a specialized use in English, as noted below. A final cadence ends on the tonic and thus completes a movement and, ultimately, the entire composition. See also closed and open cadence, below.

**Cadenza**—A florid, improvised passage to be performed by singers before the final bars (cadence—see above) of an aria or movement. In a concerto, the solo instrument assumes this function for the purposes of a similarly virtuosic display. Such a cadenza may be improvised by the soloist or written out by the composer.

**Calando**—Italian for “becoming quieter.” This direction means just what it says—a kind of dying away. It may also indicate a slowing of the tempo.

**Cimbalom**—A table harp-like folk instrument from central Europe, especially Hungary. It is very similar to the hammered dulcimer, having strings that are struck by a hammer.

**Chord**—A combination of at least three different notes played together. Based on the scale of C Major, a C Major chord consists of the notes C, E, and G (*do*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *so*—the first, third, and fifth notes of the scale). A c minor chord consists of C, *E<sup>b</sup>*, and G. In other words, by lowering the E a half step to *E<sup>b</sup>*, we get that distinctive, dark, “minor” sound.

**Classicism**—The musical style which followed the Baroque, from about 1750–1820, and characterized by a well-ordered harmony emphasizing melody over embellishment.

**Closed Cadence**—(also “full” or “perfect” cadence) A closed cadence indicates the end of a distinct section within a movement by resolving to (ending on) the tonic chord. See cadence, above, and open cadence, below.

**Coda**—The final developmental passage in a piece of music which brings a movement to its conclusion.

**Coloratura**—Literally, “coloration” or “coloring.” As used in music, the term refers to brilliantly ornamented writing for the voice, or to the type of voice agile enough to specialize in such music. By analogy, this term may also be applied to instrumental writing, especially for a solo instrument in a concerto.

**Con Sordino (Sordini)**—Italian for “with a mute” (mutes); various devices that dampen the sound of different instruments. (When the mutes are to be removed, the direction is *senza*—without—sordino/sordini.)

**Concerto** (plural, concerti)—A large, multi-movement musical composition for solo instrument accompanied by an orchestra.

**Contralto (also alto)**—The lowest category of female voice.

**Da Capo**—Italian for “from the top”; in other words, return to the beginning of the movement and play through, usually without repeats, to the end.

**Da Capo al Coda**—Italian for “from the top to the coda”; in other words, return to the beginning of the movement and play through, usually without repeats, to the coda.

**Dissonance**—Subjectively speaking, anything we do not like the sound of. In real musical terms, any harmony or melody generated from that harmony that must resolve. In itself a dissonance is unstable, because it wants to resolve.

**Diva**—Derived from a word meaning “goddess,” this word refers to a female singer of great repute and often volatile temperament, as a *prima donna* or first lady (usually, of the opera). Used here to refer to the behavior of a solo instrument.

**Dolce**—A musical direction which means to play or sing, literally, “sweetly.”

**Dominant**—The fifth tone of a scale (do, re, mi, fa, *so*). Symbol: V

**Double Exposition**—An adaptation of sonata-allegro form featuring two separately composed expositions. Typically in a concerto, these two expositions consist 1) of the orchestra’s presentation of its two themes followed by 2) the solo instrument’s presentation of two related themes of its own, rather than simply repeating those already introduced by the orchestra.

**Dynamics**—Refers to the intensity and manner of the use of loudness and softness in a musical composition. This may refer to the way an individual note, measure (bar), or entire passage is played. Such playing includes rising and falling intensity or loudness (*crescendo* and *diminuendo*, respectively) and sudden changes in the degree of loudness or softness.

**Enharmonic Pitch**—When a note in the scale is raised or lowered a half-tone in the direction of its neighbor, and that neighboring note is but a half-tone away, the pitch is said to be the same, even though the note has a different name. For example, C raised a half-tone to C<sup>#</sup> approaches D; D, lowered a half-tone to D<sup>b</sup> approaches C; thus C<sup>#</sup> and D<sup>b</sup> are considered to represent the same (enharmonic) pitch, and, in fact, occupy the same key on a piano. This enharmonic pitch enables a composer to move readily from one key to another, using the enharmonic pitch as a pivot.

**Enlightenment**—The Enlightenment was the eighteenth-century social revolution emphasizing especially new ideas in politics, religion, and education. Its philosophy championed human reason and the importance and potential of each individual human being, regardless of status (social class) or condition.

**Exoticism**—Exoticism occurs when a composer of one nationality and ethnicity writes in a manner evoking the sound of another nationality or ethnicity to give the composition an intriguing foreign “flavor.”

**Exposition**—That section of a musical composition in which the themes are exposed or presented.

**Forte**—A musical direction that means one is to play loudly (indicated by the symbol *f*).

**Fortissimo**—A musical direction that means one is to play extremely loudly (indicated by the symbol *ff*).

**Fortississimo**—A musical direction that means to play as loudly as one possibly can (indicated by the symbol *fff*). Some composers have been known to add yet another *f* or two for even more emphasis!

**Grace Note**—A very light, short note that immediately precedes a more powerfully played note.

**Habsburg Empire** (1806–1918; also—from 1867—Austro-Hungarian Empire)—The large, multi-ethnic state in central Europe, successor to the Holy Roman Empire, governed by the Habsburg (German-Swiss) dynasty, and ruled from Vienna. The empire consisted of Austria, which was largely German, plus territories inhabited by Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Serbs, Croats, Italians, and other ethnic minorities, who had no countries of their own. As nationalism became a force to be reckoned with, the empire became untenable, breaking up into many smaller countries at the end of World War I.

**Hemiola**—A hemiola occurs when we accent the “wrong” beats and create the sense that we’ve changed meter, say, from duple to triple, at least temporarily. Usually, the meter is contained *within* a measure or bar; a hemiola often stretches the meter across the bar line into the next measure.

**Intonation**—Playing or singing in tune, that is, establishing the proper relationship between pitches in a given key or mode. A pianist has no control over intonation; a string player or singer does.

**Inversion**—In music, an inversion, harmonic or melodic, means simply to take the same structure and repeat it either in its mirror image or in some other rearrangement of its component parts. Thus a six-four chord (see below) in C Major: G-C-E, is an inversion of a C Major chord: C-E-G. An ascending melody, inverted, would be the same notes in reverse order, thus creating a *descending* melody out of the same material, thus having a different effect.

**Key**—The key of a piece of music is determined by the scale that establishes its basic tonality. A piece written in the key of C Major is composed around a C major scale, in which C is the tonic (see below): C D E F G A B C

*do re mi fa so la ti do*

**Largo**—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing slowly, or, in fact, *very* slowly.

**Larghetto**—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing slowly, but not as slowly as *largo*.

**Leitmotif**—A melody, theme, or musical idea that represents a person, a place, an object, a feeling, or the like.

**Modal**—From “mode,” the system of scales that predominated before the more modern major–minor key system. In the twentieth century, some composers have returned to this system in their own interpretations and for various purposes, alongside the use of major and minor keys. Any music reminiscent of this older system is said to have a “modal” sound.

**Modulation**—A sequence of notes or chords which moves the music in a passage from one key to another.

**Molto Appassionato**—Italian for “very passionately”; the manner in which a piece or passage is to be played.

**Motive** (sometimes motif)—A recurring and sometimes dominant theme or phrase in a piece of music.

**Movement**—A section of a larger musical composition so called because of the progressive development of thematic material from one such section of the composition through to the final section.

**Octave**—An octave is the interval (distance) from one end of the scale to the other, e.g., C–C (or do–do), the second C being the eighth note above the first. The range of individual human voices and instruments is usually measured in octaves.

**Open Cadence**—(also “half” or “semi-” cadence) An open cadence outlines a section within a movement by partially resolving to (ending on) the dominant chord. Since the dominant is only a partial return to the tonic, this incomplete resolution leaves us wanting more, thus affording the composer an opportunity for further development, somewhere farther to go. See cadence and closed cadence, above.

**Opus**—(Op.) Latin for “work”. In music, the individual composition or work of the composer. A composer’s works are referred to by opus numbers, which are usually assigned upon publication.

**Ostinato**—Italian for “obstinate.” In music, this refers to a constantly recurring melodic fragment.

**Pedal Tone**—A continuously held pitch (note or tone) in the bass, usually a way of signaling that a developmental section is about to come to an end.

**Phrase**—A grouping of notes. A number of phrases make up a melody or tune (theme). Such things as the length of a bow stroke or the single breath of a singer may delineate a phrase.

**Piano**—A musical direction that means one is to play softly (indicated by the symbol *p*).

**Più largamente**—Italian for “more broadly.” It means to play more expansively and stately, and, perhaps, slowing in tempo.

**Pizzicato**—(Pizz.) Playing a stringed instrument such as a violin by plucking the strings with the fingers rather than using the bow (arco).

**Poco Agitato**—Italian for “a little agitated.”

**Poco meno mosso/poco più mosso**—Italian for “a little more rapidly”/“a little less rapidly”; the manner in which a piece or a passage is to be played.

**Poco più presto**—Italian for “a little less than rapidly.” The distinction between this and *poco più mosso* “a little less rapidly,” is that the latter is a temporary direction; the former is intended to set the tempo for an entire movement or section.

**Program Music**—Composition intended to tell a story by evoking specific visual or literary imagery, that is, music with a program. (See absolute music, above).

**Recapitulation**—In sonata form, the final restatement of the exposition before the end of the movement.

**Recitative**—A style of writing for the voice in which the rhythms and inflections of speech are retained. In opera, it is used for action, dialogue, and narrative. In instrumental writing, this would refer to playing which is almost operatic in its looseness and freedom.

**Romanticism**—A movement in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century literature, art, and music which emphasized individual creativity and freedom of expression in reaction to the more formal nature of Classicism (see above).

**Rondo**—Often the final section of a musical composition in sonata form in which the composer periodically returns to the principal theme of the movement. In between these periodic returns are various contrasting ideas. By returning to the theme, we get a sense of completion.

**Sequence**—A melodic idea that is then repeated at higher or lower pitch values. Such repetition creates musical coherence without being merely repetitive.

**Sight-Reading**—Sight-reading occurs when a performer plays or sings a piece of music for the first time (on sight) without having had an opportunity to practice it beforehand. The chances of making mistakes are much greater for even the most talented musicians, because you don’t know what to expect.

**Six-four Chord**—The first of the three chords in a cadential formula, especially one that precedes the cadenza, signaling that the music is about to come to a resolution. In the key of C Major, the six-four chord would be G–C–E, the C being the *fourth* note above the G and the E the *sixth* note above the G.

**Sonata-allegro (also Sonata) Form**—An adaptation of the operatic ideal into instrumental form. This means introducing contrasting characters (exposition of themes, usually two), having them interact (development), and having them separated in a moment of truth (recapitulation, coda).

**Sonata-rondo Form**—Incorporates the various themes of sonata-allegro form, but here we have a regular or periodic return to a central main theme.

**Soprano**—The highest category of female voice.

**Stringendo**— Italian for “compress”; a musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing progressively faster. Such a change in tempo is usually a permanent shift from one tempo to another within a movement or section.

**Subito**— Italian for “suddenly”; a musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing in the manner indicated at once, rather than gradually build up to a change.

**Symphonic Poem**—A term coined by Franz Liszt to mean a single-movement composition in which the formal musical structure is completely dependent on the story line.

**Tárogató**—A Hungarian musical instrument, something like a cross between a clarinet and a saxophone.

**Tchaikovsky, Peter Illych** (1840–1893)—Russian Romantic composer perhaps most famous for his ballets, although many of his works in other categories are equally outstanding. A master of melody and orchestration, Tchaikovsky is recognized as Russia’s greatest nineteenth-century composer.

**Tenor**—The highest category of male voice.

**Theme**—A musical idea (a tune or melody) around which a longer musical composition is built.

**Theme and Variations**—A musical composition in which a theme is presented in a straightforward manner and then repeated in a number of cleverly related but intriguingly different ways.

**Tone Poem**—Because Richard Strauss didn’t want his works associated with those of Franz Liszt, (see “symphonic poem” above), Strauss called his symphonic poems “tone poems.” Any piece of instrumental music that describes in tones (musical notes) a literary story, may be said to be a tone poem.

**Tonic**—The first note (tone) of a scale upon which a given key is based. In the solfeggio (do-re-mi) system, “do” is always the tonic, whatever note begins the scale. Also, the central note around which a composition is organized. See key, above.

**Tonic Triad**—A chord of three notes, the first of which is the tonic of the scale upon which a given key is based. See key and tonic, above, and triadic, below.

**Tranquillo**—Italian for “tranquil.” This indicates the manner in which a passage in a piece of music is to be played.

**Triadic**—Based on a triad, a chord composed of a tone, its major or minor third, and the fifth note (*do*, re, *mi*, fa, *so*).

**Triadic Theme**—A theme based on a triad, a simple chord of three notes, in either a major or a minor key (see above).

**Trill**—A rapid alternation of two adjacent tones.

**Trio**—A contrasting section in a dance movement. In the Baroque Era, this was quite literally for three instruments. This practice has seldom, if ever, been followed since the Baroque, but such contrasting sections remain in use, so the name has stuck.

**Tremolo**—Italian for “trembling.” This indicates a rapid variation of the pitch of a note, slightly above and below its value, for dramatic effect. Some instruments and the human voice are capable of producing tremolos.

**Triplet**—A special playing of three notes in the same timespan in which the stated rhythm would indicate is meant for but two notes. If one were to subdivide these note values according to the *stated* rhythm, the result would be four notes, not three (e.g., two quarter notes equal four eighth notes in the same timespan). Thus the triplet is a (recognized) departure from the usual rhythm.

**Turkish March**—This device is a reflection of the Viennese fascination with the strange and foreign world of the Habsburg Empire’s (Austria’s) neighbor and traditional enemy, the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire. It is characterized by unusual ornaments and the use of drums and cymbals associated particularly with Turkish military music.

**Tutti**—Italian for “everyone”; in other words, all players who have a part to play return, as after a cadenza or other solo.

**Un poco più mosso**—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing a little faster, but not too much faster.

**Ur Melody**—“Ur” is a learned borrowing from German which means “original,” “fundamental,” or “from time immemorial.” As used in these lectures, the “ur” melody is the one from which other thematic ideas are drawn.

# Concert Masterworks

## Part IV

**Felix Mendelssohn:** *Incidental Music and  
Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream*

**Franz Liszt:** *Totentanz*

**Professor Robert Greenberg**



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Robert Greenberg has composed over forty works for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal ensembles. Recent performances of Greenberg's work have taken place in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and The Netherlands, where his *Child's Play* for String Quartet was performed at the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam in 1993. Greenberg holds degrees from Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in music composition in 1984. His principal teachers were Edward Cone, Claudio Spies, Andrew Imbrie, and Olly Wilson. Professor Greenberg's awards include three Nicola De Lorenzo Prizes in composition, three Meet the Composer grants, and commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, the Alexander String Quartet, XTET, and the Dancer's Stage Ballet Company. He is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he is chair of the department of music history and literature and director of curriculum of the Adult Extension Division. Greenberg is creator, host, and lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony's "Discovery Series." Greenberg has taught and lectured extensively across North America and Europe, speaking to such corporations and musical institutions as the Van Cliburn Foundation, Arthur Andersen, Bechtel Investments, the Shaklee Corporation, the University of California/Haas School of Business Executive Seminar, the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, the Texas Association of Symphony Orchestras, and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Greenberg's work as a teacher and lecturer has been profiled in the *Wall Street Journal, Inc.* magazine, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Greenberg is an artistic co-director and board member of COMPOSERS INC. His music is published by Fallen Leaf Press and CPP/Belwin and is recorded on the Innova label.

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## Early Romantic Era Program Music

**Felix Mendelssohn: *Incidental Music*, Op. 61 (1842) and  
*Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 21 (1826)**

**Franz Liszt: *Totentanz* (1849; revised 1853–59)—*Virtuosity*,  
The Macabre and Romantic Era Excess**

### Scope:

The part of the nineteenth century extending from the death of Beethoven in 1827 to the turn of the twentieth century is referred to in music history as the Romantic Era. Used in this way, the word “romantic” refers not to romantic love but to something boundless, far off, fantastic, and removed from present-day routine. In the literature-dominated Romantic Era, many composers sought to tell fantastic stories, paint vivid pictures, and describe ever more complex states of emotion in purely instrumental terms. These “operas without words” are examples of what is today called program music. Felix Mendelssohn’s *Overture to A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1826) and Franz Liszt’s *Totentanz* (1849) are both program compositions. Though they differ greatly in form and content, they represent the artistic cutting edge of their day.

We begin this discussion of Mendelssohn and his *Overture to A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with a brief account of historicism in the early nineteenth century. We see that the concept of historicism was virtually non-existent before the nineteenth century. We also see that the Romantics, with their fascination for the past, revived, studied and appreciated masterworks of the past, such as Shakespeare’s plays and (thanks to Mendelssohn) Bach’s great choral works. Mendelssohn’s career is outlined. His position as the first modern conductor and the first conductor to create a basic orchestral repertoire are discussed. We learn that he was a child prodigy whose youthful compositions were superior even to those of Mozart. Yet his compositional development was quite different. The paradox of Mendelssohn is that he did not live up to the promise of his ingenious youthful works. He became conservative at far too young an age.

Mendelssohn’s *Incidental Music to A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and its relationship to Shakespeare’s play are examined, before we turn to a study of his youthful and ingenious *Overture*, composed in 1826 when he was only seventeen years old. It is a brilliant and endearing interpretation of Shakespeare’s comedy. It is a work that also demonstrates the Shakespeare revival that was sweeping across Europe at that time.

Liszt’s *Totentanz* is altogether different. It is a transcendently virtuosic work for piano and orchestra of great expressive extremes, written by the greatest piano virtuoso of the age, a man who lived his life at the edge.

A brief history of virtuosity precedes this study of the Hungarian piano virtuoso and composer Franz Liszt and the Romantic-era fascination with excess. Virtuosity was much prized by the ancient Greeks, but it was discouraged in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It began to be cultivated again in the Baroque and Classical Eras. The nineteenth-century cult of the individual artist and the artist as hero led to the rise of virtuoso superstars. We meet the legendary, nineteenth-century Italian violin virtuoso Niccolò Paganini, who revolutionized the art of violin playing and inspired Liszt to become a piano virtuoso second to none. Liszt’s phenomenal career is summarized. His extraordinary piano technique and compositional innovations are discussed. Liszt’s influence on the succeeding generation of composers was enormous. He created the symphonic poem and the concept of thematic transformation—innovations that became an integral part of the Romantic vocabulary.

Finally, we will analyze his marvelous contribution to Romantic Era excess, the symphonic poem/piano concerto/theme and variations *Totentanz*. As a work based upon the Black Death of the fourteenth century, *Totentanz (Dance of Death)* demonstrates the Romantic Era fascination with things “Gothic,” with horror, the macabre, and the supernatural. Where Mendelssohn’s *Overture to A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is childlike and joyful, Liszt’s *Totentanz* is grotesque and terrifying. Liszt’s “Angel of Death” is to Mendelssohn’s “Puck” what Godzilla is to Bambi. No nineteenth-century composer is more representative of the Romantic-era fascination with extreme virtuosity, the macabre, and the flamboyant than Franz Liszt.

## Mendelssohn, Lectures One–Four

### Early Romantic Era Program Music

Felix Mendelssohn: *Incidental Music*, Op. 61 (1842) and  
*Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 21 (1826)

### Outline

- I. We will begin with a look at historicism in the early nineteenth century.
  - A. Which of the following musical works would have been heard at a concert in Leipzig in 1790? Musical excerpts are as follows:
    1. Johann Sebastian Bach's Chaconne from his Partita in D Minor for solo violin (1720);
    2. Palestrina's "Agnus Dei" from the *Pope Marcellus Mass* (1555);
    3. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Symphony No. 29 in A Major (1774).
  - B. The answer is that none of the above works would have been performed. In 1790 only contemporary music was in the concert repertoire.
  - C. Which of the above works would have been heard at a concert in Leipzig in 1840? The answer is: all of them. The concept of repertoire emerges during the early nineteenth century as Romantic Era musicians and audiences became fascinated with the past and began to revive early "Gothic" music. In the 1820s, for example, there was a massive Bach revival.
  - D. "Romanticism" emerged, initially, as a literary movement.
    1. The pre-Romantic German "Sturm und Drang" ("Storm and Stress") literary group included Goethe and Schiller, who sought greater freedom of expression in their writing.
    2. Early nineteenth century English writers were fascinated with the ancient, the Gothic and the fantastic. They included Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley.
    3. Earlier authors were "resurrected." They included Cervantes (1547–1616) and Shakespeare (1564–1616).
    4. The loose form and emotional world of Shakespeare's plays—the extreme expression, the realism, the insights into the human character—resonated with the most progressive artistic minds of the Romantic Era.
  - E. Romanticism plumbed extreme states and extreme emotions. The Romantic mind showed an impulse to examine the human type in its darkest and most inner sense.
  - F. Romantic composers sought inspiration in literature and, as a result, musical form became subservient to the literary or programmatic content of the work.
- II. We now turn to a discussion of the life and work of Felix Mendelssohn (-Bartholdy) (1809–47).
  - A. Mendelssohn's music straddles Classicism and Romanticism.
    1. Let us begin with some musical demonstrations. We will compare the opening of his Symphony No. 4 (*Italian*), Op. 90 of 1833 with music by three other composers:
      - a. the opening of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Op. 67 of 1807;
      - b. an excerpt from the fifth movement ("Dream of a Witches' Sabbath") from Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* of 1830, and
      - c. and an excerpt from Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* of 1787.
    2. We can see that Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4 is a throwback to the Classical Era in terms of its form and restrained expressive content. However, some of Mendelssohn's early music, in particular the *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream*, demonstrates clear Romantic, although controlled, content.
  - B. As a conductor, however, Mendelssohn was on the cutting edge.
    1. He became the first modern virtuoso conductor.
    2. He was among the first conductors to use a baton.
    3. He was the first conductor to consciously create a basic orchestral repertoire, consisting of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven.

4. As a conductor/historicist Mendelssohn revived the works of many long-dead or neglected composers. These included Lassus, Palestrina, and Johann Sebastian Bach, whose great *St. Matthew Passion* he revived when he was only twenty years old!
- C. The following is an outline of Mendelssohn's career.
1. He was born in Hamburg, Germany on February 1, 1809.
  2. His mother, Lea, was highly cultured and well-educated. His father, Abraham, was a well-to-do banker.
  3. His family moved to Berlin and converted to Christianity in order to protect themselves from the anti-Semitism prevalent there. They adopted the surname "Bartholdy."
  4. Mendelssohn demonstrated prodigious talents for music, languages, drawing, and writing at an extremely young age. In this he can be compared with Mozart. He was writing musical masterpieces at the same early age as Mozart; indeed, Mendelssohn's early pieces were superior to those of Mozart.
  5. He began his conducting career around 1828.
  6. In 1835 he became music director of the renowned Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig. Under his direction the orchestra became the best in Europe (which meant the world at that time).
  7. He married in 1837.
  8. In 1842 he established, with Robert Schumann, the Leipzig Conservatory in 1842.
  9. He died of a stroke in November 1847 at the age of thirty-eight.
- D. The paradox of Mendelssohn is that he never realized the potential of his youth. While Mozart developed stunning originality in his mature works, Mendelssohn never realized the potential of his youthful *Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He became conservative at too young an age. Why was this so? He was brought up in anti-Semitic Berlin and taught not to give offense. He lived a comfortable lifestyle, a happy guy with no chips on his shoulder; he was not angry enough to feel alienated and defy authority.
- III. We now turn to an examination of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Mendelssohn's incidental music for this play.
- A. Shakespeare's play was a favorite of the young Mendelssohn.
- B. Aside from his *Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream* of 1826, Mendelssohn supplied his sister Fanny with incidental music, commissioned by the King of Prussia, to accompany an 1842 production of Shakespeare's play. This incidental music is designated as Mendelssohn's Op. 61.
- C. The following is a synopsis of the play, with musical examples from Mendelssohn's *Incidental Music*, Op. 61.
1. In Act One we are introduced to the palace, mortals, and mortal problems.
    - a. Scene 1:
      1. Theseus (King of Athens) and Hippolyta (Queen of the Amazons) await their marriage.
      2. A dispute is brought before Theseus. Egeus wants his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius. She wants to marry Lysander. Unbeknownst to Egeus, Hermia and Lysander are planning to elope.
      3. The jealous Helena is in love with Demetrius, who professes to love Hermia.
      4. Hermia and Lysander tell Helena of their plan to elope (a mistake) and swear her to silence (fat chance).
    - b. In Scene 2 a group of rough, comedic workmen prepare a play in celebration of the impending royal wedding.
  2. In Act Two we enter the magic forest and meet the fairies and their problems.
    - a. Let us begin with the music that sets the scene: the magical *Scherzo* from the *Incidental Music*, Op. 61.
    - b. Scene 1
      1. Oberon and Titania (king and queen of the forest) are having a spat.
      2. Oberon and his hench elf Puck (Robin Goodfellow) plan revenge on Titania. A love potion will render her in love with whomever or whatever she first sees upon awakening.
      3. Demetrius and Helena appear in the wood. Helena has told Demetrius of Lysander and Hermia's plot to elope and they are now searching for the elopers.
      4. Oberon witnesses the scene between Demetrius and Helena (she fawning and he resisting). He instructs Puck to administer the potion to Demetrius as well, as that he may love Helena as she appears to love him.

- c. Scene 2
  - 1. Titania calls for a fairy song.
  - 2. The fairies sing the exquisite “You Spotted Snake,” Op. 61, No. 3 (musical example).
  - 3. Titania falls asleep. Oberon administers the potion to Titania.
  - 4. Puck mistakenly administers the potion to Lysander instead of Demetrius.
  - 5. Lysander awakes to see Helena. He falls in love and leaves Hermia all alone.
  - 6. Musical example: “Hermia seeks Lysander and the entrance of the rude mechanicals” from Act Three, Op. 61, No. 5
- 3. Act Three also takes place in the forest.
  - a. Scene 1
    - 1. The actors enter.
    - 2. Puck watches their rehearsal.
    - 3. Puck transforms the head of Timothy Bottom, the weaver, into the head of an ass. The other actors flee in terror.
    - 4. Puck leads Bottom to Titania. She awakes and falls instantly in love with him.
  - b. Scene 2
    - 1. Puck informs Oberon as to Titania’s new squeeze.
    - 2. The mistake regarding the lovers is discovered. Oberon insists that the mistake be undone.
    - 3. All fall asleep and Puck puts the lovers right: Lysander with Hermia and Demetrius with Helena.
- 4. Act Four is again set in the forest.
  - a. Scene 1
    - 1. All are asleep.
    - 2. Mendelssohn wrote a magical entr’acte for this scene. This music goes beyond the mere sweetness of a simple lullaby. It has an exquisite, mysterious, redemptive quality, a sense that all can be put right and all can be forgiven. Musical example: *Entr’acte* Op. 61, No. 7
    - 3. The spell is lifted from Titania. The quarrel between Oberon and Titania is settled and Bottom is given back his head.
    - 4. Theseus, Hippolyta and Egeus enter, hunting for the lost young couple.
    - 5. The kids awake, and the couplings, now settled, are made known to all.
- 5. Act Five is set in the palace where the royal wedding and playlet take place.
  - a. Everybody gets married. This is the moment of the magnificent, very royal wedding march, which is in rondo form: A-B-A-C-A (musical example).
  - b. The play is performed.

#### IV. We now turn to Mendelssohn’s *Overture to A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

- A. Shakespeare’s play is about the foibles of people: their foolishness, pride, jealousy and lust, as well as their ability to love and forgive each other. Mendelssohn’s youthful and naïve overture (he was only seventeen when he wrote it) is about magic, pomp, and comedy. He does not take account of the adult situations and ironies. The *Overture* is a masterpiece, nonetheless.
- B. This is a concert overture: a self-standing, single-movement program work in sonata-allegro form. Mendelssohn was a classicist and he did not abandon eighteenth-century Classical-era structures and musical technique.
- C. Sonata form is the most important structure of the Classical Era and the most dramatic. It is like an operatic act. We are introduced to the characters and they interact with each other.
  - 1. In the exposition we meet the “characters” (themes).
  - 2. In the development these themes are chopped up and interspersed, and they interact with each other.
  - 3. In the recapitulation the “characters” come back and restate their feelings.
  - 4. In the coda everyone leaves.
- D. The *Overture* contains four themes, each describing a character or situation. To keep within the bounds of sonata form, Themes 1 and 2 act as one main theme. Themes 2 and 3 act as a second theme.
  - 1. Theme 1 introduces us to the enchanted forest and Puck. It is mysterious, light, and elfin in tone and in the key of E Minor (musical examples).

2. Theme 2 is Theseus's theme. It is royal and vigorous. It has an accompaniment with a rhythm that is traditionally evocative of hoof beats. It is in the key of E Major (musical examples).
  3. Theme 3 represents the lovers and love. It is gentle, though not sentimental and lacks the passion with which an adult composer might have imbued it. It is in the key of B Major (musical examples).
  4. Theme 4 is Bottom's theme. It is rustic, foot-stomping music and clearly depicts Bottom with its ass-like braying! It is in B major (musical examples).
- E.** The development does not follow the details of the play.
1. It is based almost entirely on Theme 1, evoking Puck and the enchanted forest.
  2. It lacks the kind of overblown expressive content that we might otherwise expect in a Romantic Era development section. Mendelssohn chooses to depict the quietude and mystery of the story. He stays closer to a Classical sense of restraint.
  3. It ends with a slow, unhappy version of the love theme (Theme 3). This is Hermia alone and abandoned at the end of Act Three.
- F.** In the recapitulation the order of the themes is changed to accommodate the action depicted at the close of Acts Four and Five: Theme 1 is followed by Themes 3, 4 and 2.
- G.** In the Coda Mendelssohn creates the musical equivalent of Puck's epilogue at the end of the play. It is very dreamlike. There is no self-conscious stretching out of ideas.
- H.** For the 1842 production of the play, Mendelssohn wrote a piece of choral music to end the play after Puck's epilogue. The words are from the final chorus of Titania and her fairies (musical example).
- I.** The *Overture* is sublime, spellbinding and innocent. It hovers over the forest long after the characters have departed the scene.

# Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op.21 (1826)

concert overture (quasi-sonata form)

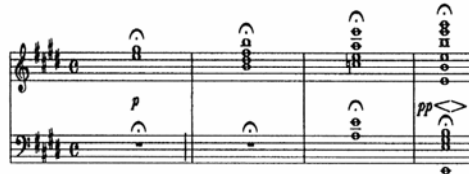
## EXPOSITION

"Allegro di molto" (Acts I and II)

### Introductory chords

Four mysterious, sustained, rising harmonies in winds set a child-like, magical mood

*p*  
E Major



8

### Theme 1

#### The Enchanted Forest/Puck Theme

Fluttering, darting, elfin music at once evokes a dark, firefly-filled enchanted forest, and its elves and fairies, most notably Puck (Robin Goodfellow)

Note: this e minor music represents the magical realm of Oberon, King of the Forest.

E Major music represents the mortal realm of Theseus, King of Athens



"sempre staccato"

*pp*  
e minor

62

### Theme 2

#### Theseus theme

vigorous, royal theme explodes from the orchestra



**a**  
*ff*  
E Major

70


Fanfarish segment depicts the royal horn calls of the King's hunting party

**b**  
*ff*

	[39]	[41]	[56]	[58]
	Mysterious, sustained harmony in the winds	<u>Puck Theme</u> resumes	Another mysterious, sustained harmony momentarily interrupts the action	<u>Puck Theme</u> resumes
pizzicati slowly begin to appear behind the <u>Puck Theme</u>				

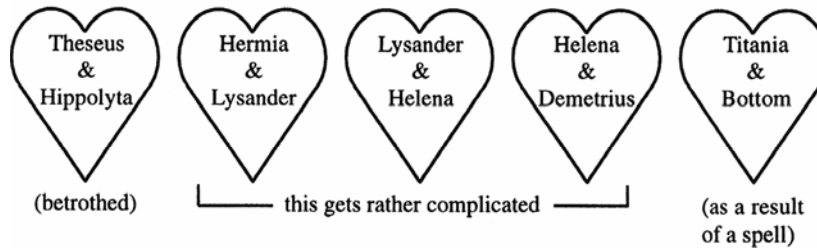
[78]	[98]	[122]
Overlapping, descending woodwind scales are heard over "hoofbeat" strings as the hunting party rides through the wood	<u>Modulating Bridge</u> <u>PART 1:</u> Sequence built on a vigorous version of the previously fluttering <u>Puck Theme</u>	<u>PART 2:</u> The music calms as quiet repeated notes in the winds are punctuated by elfin motives in various strings
		<i>p</i>

**c**    **c<sup>1</sup>** extended...  
*ff*

1x	2x	3x	
b minor	c# minor	E Major	
			(note hunting fanfares in background!)

### Theme 3. Love Theme

This gentle ( though not sappy or sentimental) theme represents the various love interests of the play, which, indeed, are the heart and soul of the story:



194

### Theme 4

Footstomping, drone-like open 5th introduces the clumsy workmen/clowns (actors!): Quince, Bottom, Flute, Snout, Snug and Starveling

### Bottom's Theme

rambunctious, rustic theme features a fair representation of Bottom's ass-like braying...



*ff*  
B Major

*ff*  
B Major

Hee-Haw!  
Hee-Haw!

## DEVELOPMENT

*Deals entirely with the enchanted forst and the goings-on therein; the music is not so specific as to the physical action of the play as it is impressionistic of the magical scene itself (Acts II and III)*

250

### PART 1: Puck Theme

In sequence; fluttering, elfin theme resumes, followed by a mysterious descent and sustained harmonies

1x *pp* b minor      2x *pp* f# minor

note  
quiet  
fan-  
fares

290

### PART 2: Puck Theme

Thematic fragments are punctuated with fanfares and ominous blasts in the horns (3x)

*pp*

316

### PART 3: Puck Theme

Briefly heard in D Major; note quiet fanfares in the accompaniment

*pp*



**130**

clarinets  
**a**  
*p*  
B Major

**138**  
lush, "sighing"  
phrase in the  
strings  
**b**  
*p*

**b<sup>1</sup>**  
ext...

2 brief fanfares punctuate the Love Theme

build-up  
*f*

**222**  
Cadence Material  
PART 1: The royal fanfares of Theseus's hunting party resume in brass and winds  
*f*  
B Major

**230**  
PART 2: Theseus Theme – vigorous, stirring version closes the exposition  
**a**  
*ff*  
B Major

**b**

**322**  
PART 4: Puck Theme  
Quiet chords punctuate an ominous, rumbling version of the theme in the low strings  
*p*

**334**  
PART 5:  
Mysterious tremolo accompanies pizz. descents  
*pp*

winds  
strings

**373**  
PART 6: Love Theme  
A slow, unhappy version of the Love Theme accompanies the unfortunate Hermia as she falls into an exhausted sleep  
(End of Act III)

## RECAPITULATION

(Act IV)

394

### Introductory chords

#### Theme 1

##### Puck Theme

note rather ominous pedal notes in low winds; Puck's latest spell, meant to correct the bedlam of Act III (Development) is cast upon the sleeping lovers

*pp*  
e minor

442

#### Modulating Bridge (brief!)

the orchestration becomes less dense and repeated notes appear in the winds (the lovers awaken)

*p*

514

#### Theme 4

##### Bottom's Theme (End of Act IV)

Bottom awakens and the workers/clowns/actors are reunited at Quince's house

footstomping,  
drone-like  
introduction  
*ff*  
E Major

rustic tune/  
braying  
*ff*  
E Major

Hee-  
haw!  
Hee-  
haw!

542

#### Theme 2

##### Theseus's Theme (Act V: Palace of Theseus)

Overlapping, descending winds and brass over "hoofbeat" strings

*c*  
*f*  
E Major

*c*<sup>1</sup> ext...

modulatory →

620

#### Coda

PART 1: Puck Theme (final entrance of Puck, Titania, Oberon and their entourage)

suddenly and unexpectedly, Puck's elfin music resumes

*pp*  
e minor

643

Another long, gentle slowdown, like the one that concluded the Development; reflects the dream-like state characteristic of so much of the play

winds/horns

*pp* —————→

663

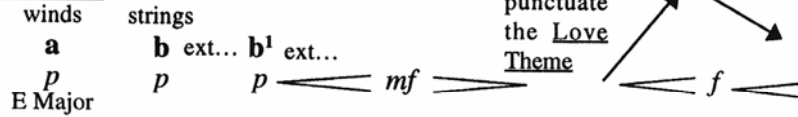
#### PART 2: Theseus Theme (lullaby)

sweet, dream-like version of this formerly royal theme

*pp*  
E Major

450

**Theme 3**  
**Love Theme**

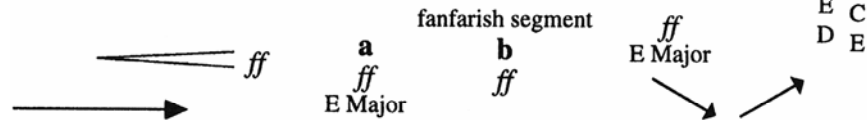


joyful, climatic passage; not macho or bombastic but climatic in a naïve, childlike sort of way

586

**Theseus Theme**  
vigorous, royal opening returns

theme concludes with a series of powerful arpeggios



*Exuent [all but Robin Goodfellow].*

*Rob.* If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended –  
That you have but slumb'ed here  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend.  
If you pardon, we will mend.  
And, as I am an honest Puck,  
If we have unearned luck  
Now to scape the serpent's tongue,  
We will make amends ere long;  
else the Puck a liar call.  
So, good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands, if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends.

*[Exit.]*

introductory  
chords

final, rising  
motive  
seems to be  
saying "good  
night" (Gute  
Nacht!)  
ethereal  
and  
gentle,  
conclude  
the  
overture

**Liszt, Lectures One–Four**  
**Virtuosity, The Macabre and Romantic Era Excess**  
**Franz Liszt's *Totentanz* (1849; revised 1853–59)**

**Outline**

- I. We begin our exploration of nineteenth century virtuosity with a brief history of virtuosity in earlier ages.
  - A. To demonstrate what we mean by virtuosity, we will hear a musical example: Liszt's *La Campanella*, No. 3 from *Six Etudes after Paganini* for solo piano of 1838. This piece contains a programmatic description of bells but its focal point is the astounding virtuosity required of the pianist.
  - B. Our history of instrumental virtuosity begins in ancient Greece, where such virtuosity was prized. Instrumental virtuosos competed at the Panhellenic games side-by-side with athletes for prize money and awards.
  - C. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (600–1600) there was no tradition of virtuosity. For the most part instruments were relegated to the role of vocal and dance accompaniment.
  - D. In the Baroque Era (1600–1750) virtuosity was cultivated for the first time since the ancient Greek era. In the 1650s–1660s, as opera became increasingly popular, virtuosity began to be celebrated for its own sake.
    - 1. Operatic virtuosity influenced instrumental music of the time. Vivaldi's violin concerti are examples of this influence. Musical example: third movement of "Winter" from *The Four Seasons* of 1725 by Antonio Vivaldi
    - 2. Another kind of virtuosity in the Baroque Era came from the style of Baroque music itself. It is very flamboyant, detailed music that is full of a tremendous number of notes, and therefore just to play it is difficult. Musical example: third movement from Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto*, No. 2
    - 3. The Baroque Era did not, however, celebrate virtuosity for its own sake. The individual performer was not glorified. All players were expected to play difficult music equally well. Baroque virtuosity is not "display" virtuosity.
  - E. In the Classical Era (1750–1827) there was a developing desire on the part of audiences for more instrumental showmanship and flash from the performers. The concept of individual virtuosity resonated well with the developing ideal of the individual as espoused by the Enlightenment.

**II.** Romantic Era was about the development of the cult of the individual artist and the concept of the artist as a hero. It was about ever more extreme expression, ever more personal expression, ever less discipline and restraint, and an increasing desire on the part of many composers to describe increasingly complex emotions in pure music. There was a correlation between the decline of monarchies and religious spirituality and the growth of secular heroes.

**A.** Niccolò Paganini (1782–1840)

1. He was born in Genoa, Italy.
2. He was a transcendent violin virtuoso, the prototype of the modern rock superstar.
3. He wrote works specifically intended to showcase his prodigious (and at that time unrivaled) violin technique.
4. He created a sensation across Europe as a result of a series of concert tours begun in 1828.
5. Paganini made the violin sound like a whole orchestra. Musical examples: *Caprice*, No. 9 and his *Caprice*, No. 5 for solo violin
6. In April, 1832 Paganini's second concert in Paris is attended by a young Hungarian pianist named Ferenc (Franz) Liszt.
7. Liszt is galvanized by the concert and swears to become the Paganini of the piano.

**B.** Franz Liszt (1811–86)

1. Liszt was born in Raiding, Hungary.
2. By the time he was seven years old he was an able pianist. He was composing at eight and he made his concert debut at nine.
3. His career began when he went to Vienna at age ten to study with Carl Czerny and Antonio Salieri.
4. He concertized from the age of twelve.
5. He settled in Paris in 1830 at the age of nineteen.
6. In Paris he came directly into contact with his three great influences: Hector Berlioz, Frederic Chopin, and Niccolò Paganini.
  - a. From Berlioz he learned the concept of combining literature and music into a greater art form.
  - b. From Chopin he learned that the piano is capable of great poetry as well as bravura.
  - c. In 1832 he met Paganini and set to work to translate the Italian violin virtuoso's technique to the piano.
7. From 1832 until 1838 Liszt set goals for himself that no pianist had ever set before. He created a virtuosic pianistic technique and then went on to create music that would showcase his new technique. For this approach to composition, Liszt has come under a lot of criticism.
8. Liszt resumed concert touring between 1838 and 1847. He created an even greater sensation as a showman and virtuoso than did Paganini.
9. Much of his concert repertoire was, like Paganini's, composed by himself to show off his astounding technical virtuosity. He dazzled his audiences with numerous adaptations of preexisting orchestral music for the piano (transcriptions and paraphrases). His transcription of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* is among the most famous.
10. Liszt was inspired to write a set of virtuoso piano studies (*Etudes*) on themes by Paganini. We will compare his adaptations with Paganini's original music. Musical examples:
  - a. Paganini's *Caprice*, No. 1 in E Major is compared with
  - b. Liszt's *Etude*, No. 4 from *Six Etudes after Paganini* (1838)
  - c. Paganini's *Caprice*, No. 24 is compared with
  - d. Liszt's *Etude*, No. 6
  - e. Brahms' *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* is compared with Paganini's *Caprice*, No. 24.
  - f. Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* is compared with Paganini's *Caprice* No. 24.
11. In 1839 Liszt gave the first solo recital ever. He called his recitals "musical soliloquies."
12. While Liszt's public concerts were all bravado and showmanship, his performances at private gatherings demonstrated that he was, in fact, a consummate interpreter of all music.
13. In 1848 Liszt retired from the concert stage and never played for money again.
14. He became music director at the Weimar court, which then became a rallying point for the so-called Music-of-The-Future group, which included Berlioz and Wagner.
15. At Weimar, Liszt turned composer.
  - a. He invented the symphonic poem: a one-movement, free-form composition based on a literary story.

- b. He developed the concept of thematic transformation: a theme or series of themes that constantly develop across the span of a piece. This is very important to Liszt's style. It imbues a symphonic poem with a sense of abstract coherence and logic, which it would otherwise not have.
- 16. He continued to teach piano to the end of his life and never charged a penny for the thousands of lessons he gave.

### III. *Totentanz* (Paraphrase on the "Dies irae")

- A. One of the first works of Liszt's Weimar years, *Totentanz* was written in 1849 and revised between 1853 and 1859.
- B. It is half symphonic poem, half piano concerto and half theme and variations!
- C. Liszt gave his work the form of a theme and variations so that it would make sense by itself, without the listener having to know the story to figure it out. It becomes coherent because the theme is present throughout the piece.
- D. The program of *Totentanz* is based on fifty-four woodcuts by the Renaissance artist Hans Holbein.
  - 1. The woodcuts depict the "Dance of Death"—a portrayal of a skeletal grim reaper harvesting humanity during the black plague of the fourteenth century.
  - 2. This subject is perfectly suited to the Romantic fascination with Gothic and macabre subject matter.
- E. The music of *Totentanz* is based on the "Dies irae," the famed thirteenth-century chant about the Day of Judgment from the Catholic Mass for the Dead. Its melody, written by Thomas of Celano, became an iconograph for death, and in particular, ugly death. In 1830 Berlioz caused a scandal when he used the Catholic "Dies irae" melody for his very secular *Symphonie fantastique*. Musical example: "Dies irae"
- F. We will analyze *Totentanz*, using the WordScore™ Guide and musical examples.
  - 1. Theme 1 presents the "Dies irae." It is in three parts: phrases a, b and c, constituting the basis of the subsequent variations. Liszt's version of the "Dies irae" is vulgar and brutal. His dissonant harmonies imbue the melody with a real ugliness that goes well beyond the quietude and holiness of the original plainchant. What is potentially controversial about this work (and Liszt loved controversy!) is that Liszt seems to be saying that the angel of death and God's throne are one and the same thing.
  - 2. There are three virtuosic cadenzas in the work. (A cadenza is a solo for the soloist in a concerto.) They organize the work into larger shapes.
    - a. The first cadenza comes near the beginning. It makes very clear that the piano plays the role of the grim reaper, with its clattering, "bone-like" chords. Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, Op. 73 of 1809 also begins with a cadenza. Both Liszt's and Beethoven's cadenzas create a confrontation between the piano and the orchestra (musical example).
    - b. Another example of the concept of rattling bones in nineteenth-century music is Saint-Saens' "Fossils" from *The Carnival of Animals* of 1886 (musical example).
    - c. The second cadenza comes after Theme 1, Variation 9. It features a weird, hunting march, evocative of death's "hunt" for his prey. This is rude, tasteless, "heavy metal band" music.
    - d. The third, finger-busting cadenza comes immediately before the Coda.
  - 3. Variations 1–9 are "character studies." They portray death in its various guises claiming various victims.
    - a. In Variation 1 slithery, slimy music evokes death in the soil.
    - b. Variation 2 evokes sounds of spectral fanfares.
    - c. Variation 3 portrays vicious death. From this point on the internal form of the variations becomes increasingly free.
    - d. Variation 4 functions as a slow movement might in a multi-movement composition. It is in two parts, the first is a quiet canon and the second brings a delicacy and harmonic richness that is new to the piece; but it is a "fake" lyricism.
    - e. In Variation 5 the almost ghastly, saccharine-sweet reverie is violently broken as the dance of ugly death resumes.
    - f. Variation 6 evokes the image of nails driven into a coffin lid!
    - g. Variations 7 and 8 have the character of a development section, exhibiting, as they do much, modulation and textural variety based on ever smaller fragments of the thematic idea. The rustic, dance-like third part of Variation 8 parodies the "common man," who is no more immune from the ravages of death than anyone else. The "staggering" piano descents evoke a grisly scene of people dying in the streets!

- h. Variation 9 presents an effete, almost polka-like piano, which is violently interrupted by the orchestra. People are still partying before their deaths! This variation is followed by the second cadenza.
  - 4. After the second cadenza a new theme is introduced. (This is unusual for traditional Theme and Variations form.)
    - a. The new theme sounds vaguely like the “Dies irae.” It contains three phrases, each punctuated by horn calls. In general it and its six variations are less violent and demonic, and more spectral and fanciful than the preceding music.
    - b. Variation 2 of the new theme is memorable for its startling and macabre violin motives. Death and the demonic are traditionally represented by a violin, as exemplified by Saint-Saens’ *Dance macabre* (musical example).
    - c. Variation 5 is a fantastically virtuosic variation, featuring an intense chromatic elaboration of the new theme.
    - d. Variation 6 of the new theme brings back the gruesome mood of the work’s opening pages.
    - e. The demonically virtuosic third cadenza is followed by the finale, Variation 10. This presents a terrifying final version of “Dies irae” in the brass under rising wind trills and string tremolos. A furious death march leads to a cataclysmic chromatic descent to the depths.
- IV. Conclusion: Liszt’s *Totentanz* is a *tour de force*, especially for the pianist. It shows tremendous variety, yet everything is unified by the careful use of the “Dies irae” theme. Both friends and foes of *Totentanz* call it vulgar, crude, rude and base; yet, it is also magnificent, pure Romantic excess at its very best. Tremendous virtuosity is something that nineteenth-century audiences and performers wanted and pursued. No nineteenth-century composer is more representative of all these marvelous and extreme aspects of composition and performance than Franz Liszt.

WordScore Guide™  
 Franz Lizst  
 Totentanz (“Dance of Death”) for Piano and  
 Orchestra (1849, rev. 1853-59)

*Quasi-Theme and Variations Form*  
 Based on the medieval Catholic plainchant “Dies Irae” (The Day of Wrath) by  
 Thomas of Celano, which describes in graphic detail the terror and anguish of  
 Judgement Day

Lizst’s version of the “Dies Irae” features 3 distinct phrases:



### **THEME**

#### **PART 1: “Andante”**

3

Ominous sounding piano outlines diminished chord in rising falling, low register arpeggio

“Pesante”

Blaring, funereal low brass, winds and strings intone phrases a and b of the “Dies Irae”

*p* cresc. poco a poco ----- *f*

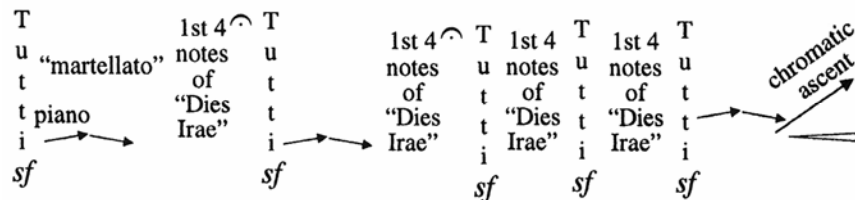
d minor (dorian)

11

#### **PART 2: “Presto”**

##### **Cadenza I**

barking tutti exclamations alternate with vicious rising/falling piano lines to create a dramatic, confrontational mood



**16**  
**PART 3: "Allegro"**  
 Driving version of the entire  
 "Dies Irae"

*f*  
 Note: clattering, bonelike  
 tremolo high in the piano  
*ff*

**a**  
 d minor  
 (dorian)

**24**  
 bassoon, tuba  
 and basses

**b**

**c**  
 Note: accompanying  
 trill in high  
 strings

**c<sup>1</sup>**

**32**  
 Tutti

**c<sup>2</sup>**  
 Note: timpani  
 roll

*ff*

the  
 vicious  
 mood  
 exhausts  
 itself;  
 the  
 music  
 quiets  
 and  
 stops

( P a u s e )


**41**  
**PART 3: "Allegro moderato"**  
Solo piano plays a lyric, mournful version of the "Dies Irae"

**a**  
*f*  
d minor  
(dorian)

**b**

### **VARIATION 1**

**51**  
**"Allegro moderato"**



"Dies Irae" in pizz. basses under quirky,  
 somewhat spooky dotted rhythm melody  
 in the bassoon, violas, and 'celli

**a**  
*mf*  
 d minor

**b**

**59**  
**"capriccioso"**  
solo piano plays  
 the "Dies Irae"  
 and the quirky  
 melody

**a**  
*mf*

S  
t  
r  
i  
n  
g  
a  
m  
&  
a  
t  
t  
i  
o  
n  
B  
r  
a  
s  
s

"Dies Irae" in  
 pizz. strings un-  
 der slithery,  
 c h r o m a t i c  
 melody in bas-  
 soons and clari-  
 nets

**c**

P  
i  
a  
n  
o

E  
x  
a  
m  
p  
l  
e

solo piano plays  
 "Dies Irae" and  
 slithery chro-  
 matic melody

**c**

## VARIATION 2

75

"Dies Irae" in piano and pizz. strings under: fast, spectral falling/rising scales in the piano

Note: horn

**a**      **b**  
*mf*  
d minor (dorian)

83

fanfarish version of "Dies Irae" in arco strings under: long, dramatic, upwards, sweeping glissandi in piano

**a**      **b**  
*f*

91

"un poco animato"  
brassy, fanfarish version of "Dies Irae" heard against huge, rising/falling piano glissandi

**c**      **c**  
*ff*

## VARIATION 3

*"molto vivace"*

96



frightening, increasingly demonic triple meter dance features:

- "Dies Irae" in long short/staccato rhythms in piano (see above)
- rising tremolo strings and winds
- as variation progresses, more and more instruments join the devilish fray!

**a**      **b**      **a**      **b**      **c**      **c**  
*p*      *cresc. ----- f ----- ff*  
d minor (dorian)

Note: from this point on the internal form of the variations becomes increasingly free

## VARIATION 4

*"canonique, lento"*

*for solo piano*

124



**PART 1:** Quiet gentle canon on the various phrases of "Dies Irae"

*p*  
d minor  
(dorian, with tonal cadences)

2 quiet arpeggiated ascents

144

**PART 2:** "dolce"; ringing, upper register version of phrase *a* of "Dies Irae" reflects a delicacy and harmonic richness new to the piece

*pp*  
B Major  
(1st key change of piece!)

## **VARIATION 5**

"dolcissimo"

151



Flowing, idyllic, rather saccharine version of "Dies Irae" seems out of place, creating as it does an almost ghastly contrast with what has gone before (and what is soon to come)

*a* *b*  
*pp*  
B Major

160

Deathly "sweet" clarinet joins the piano

*a* *b*  
B $\flat$  Major-ish

167

"presto"



solo piano suddenly and brutally redirects the mood of the music! The reverie is broken and the dance of ugly death resumes

*c*  
*p*  
d minor  
(dorian)

*c*

## **VARIATION 6**

*"Vivace" (fugue)*  
*solo piano*

183



riveting, repeated note version of the "Dies Irae" phrases **a** and **b** is treated fugally; this variation has tremendous power and rhythmic drive; the repeated notes lend it a xylophone/bone-like effect

d minor  
(dorian)  
*f*

## **VARIATION 7**

*"staccato, scherzando"*

219

fast, playful, highly elaborated version of the "Dies Irae" in piano and orchestra

Note: Variations 7 and 8 have the character of a development, exhibiting as they do much modulation and textural variety

**PART 1:** sequence features: low/high piano version of "Dies Irae" accompanied, respectively, by violins/flute

235

**PART 2:** sequence of short long version of "Dies Irae" in piano with dramatic string tremolos in accompaniment

251

**PART 3:** big buildup as piano ascends

**a** **a**  
2x

**a** **b**  
2x

## **VARIATION 8**

259

**PART 1:**



forceful, majestic version of the "Dies Irae"

**a** **b** ext. - - -  
B Major

271

**PART 2:** fast, exciting sequence uses motive drawn from a and b of "Dies Irae"

**Note:** ascending piano part defines each sequential unit

1x 2x 3x ext. ----  
*f* *f* *f*  
 B<sup>b</sup> Major D<sup>b</sup> Major E Major

345

**Horn** loudly intones the opening 4 notes of the "Dies Irae", like the "Angel of Death" passing sentence on all

*ff*  
**VARIATION 9**  
*"vivace"*

349



an effete, almost polka-like piano is violently interrupted by the orchestra (real "mask of the red death" type stuff, this!)

piano **orch.** piano **orch.** piano **orch.**  
**a b a b a b** ext. ---- **c c c**  
*pp ff pp ff pp mf*  $\leq \geq$  *p ff*  
 d minor

359 *"marcato"*

huge, trilling buildup; note ascending piano and orchestra

C  
A  
O  
D  
P  
E  
N  
C  
E

**Cadenza II**  
*solo piano*

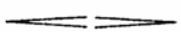
393

**PART 1:** a series of violent trills and exclamatory chords continues the music which concluded Variation 9

trills chords  
 4x  
*ff*

409

**PART 2:** "presto" clattering, bone-like descent would seem to depict a skeletal grim reaper striding downward to claim its mortal victims



418

**PART 3:** "animated, quasi corni da caccia" (animated, like hunting horns) a wierd and incongruous hunting march based on the "Dies Irae" would depict the reaper's "hunt" for his prey  
 F# Major

447

PART 4: aha! Death shows its true face! A terrifying, awe-inspiring version of the "Dies Irae" shatters the comic/bizarre mood of the hunting march!

"Dies Irae" in high register

**a** **b**  
*ff*  
 f# minor  
 (dorian)

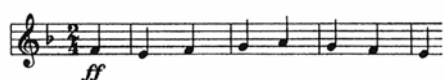
in low register

**a** **b**  
*fff*  
 d minor  
 (dorian)

### **NEW THEME**

*"maestoso (majestically), sempre allegro ma non troppo"*

466



Note: in general, this Theme and its variations are less violent and demonic, more spectral and fanciful, than the "Dies Irae" and its variations

new theme sounds vaguely like "Dies Irae" though is clearly different; the theme has a hymn-like quality to its melodic profile, harmony and its clear, 3 phrase structure

strings/winds

**a**  
*f*  
 d minor  
 (not modal)

horn  
calls

*ff*

**b**

C Major

horn  
calls

**c**

modulates  
back to - - - - d minor

### **NEW THEME: VARIATION 1**

*"leggiero" (lightly)*

484

Light, bell-like variation for high piano, pizz. strings, solo flute and triangle

**a**  
*p*  
 d minor

**b**

modulates  
to - - - - C Major

**c**

modulates  
to - - - - d minor

## NEW THEME: VARIATION 2

499



faster, more elaborate variation is still bell-like in its effect

Note: startling and macabre violin motives (the reaper!?) where the horn calls were in the Theme

<b>a</b>	violin	<b>b</b>	violin	<b>c</b>	violin
<i>p</i>	interjection	<i>p</i>	interjection	<i>p</i>	interjection
d minor	<i>f</i>	modulates	<i>f</i>	modulates	<i>f</i>
		to	---- C Major	to	---- d minor

## NEW THEME: VARIATION 3

516



increasingly active texture sees an incredibly light, ghost-like elaboration of the new theme in the piano

Note: spectral, nearly invisible elves and goblins as described by strings, winds, and triangle as they flit about the piano

<b>a</b>	piano	<b>b</b>	piano	<b>c</b>	piano
<i>mf</i>	arpeggio	modulates	arp.	modulates	arp.
d minor		to	---- C Major	to	---- d minor

## NEW THEME: VARIATION 4

*"marcato"*

532



the light, luminous mood evaporates as the piano heavily intones an elaborated version of the new theme

Note:

- sustained, chorale-like version of the theme in the winds
- *"col legno"* (with the wood side of the bow) version of the theme in strings, which adds a strange, clicking timbre to the variation

**a** *f* d minor modulates to **b** C Major modulates to **c** d minor

## NEW THEME: VARIATION 5

*"meno f e piacevole" (less f and smoothly)*

*solo piano*

547



fantastic, virtuosic variation features an intense chromatic elaboration of the new theme

Note: strange, threatening chromatic ascents which conclude each phrase

**a** d minor chromatic ascent modulates to **b** C Major modulates to **c** d minor

## NEW THEME: VARIATION 6

565



slightly extended variation brings back the turgid, gruesome mood of the piece's opening pages with a loud, course, dance-like version of the New Theme

Note: tutti plays for the first time since measure 392 ("Dies Irae", variation 9)!

**a** *f* twisting, chromatic rise/fall in piano  
d minor  
**b** modulates to C Major  
**c** modulates to B<sup>b</sup> Major  
piano → tutti *sf* → tutti *sf*

## Cadenza III

*solo piano*

590

**PART 1:**  
clattering, skeletal diminished chords set an ominous mood  
*fff*



**PART 2:** "Dies Irae" is heard deep in the piano's low register against huge, rippling glissandi

**a** *fff* e minor  
**b** d minor

591

**PART 3:**  
"presto"  
fast, demonic motives initiate  
*f*

a furiously rising march based on the "Dies Irae" theme



jagged, violent ascent

## FINALE: "DIES IRAE" VARIATION 10

*"allegro animato"*

**601**

*col legno* strings and winds intone "Dies Irae" under searing upwards piano glissandi

**c**                      **c**                      **c**                      **c**  
*p*                      cresc. poco a poco - -   
d minor              Note: timpani 

**609**

rousing, terrifying final version of "Dies Irae" in the brass under rising wind trills and string tremolos

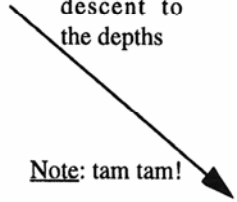
**a**                      **b**  
*ff*  
d minor

**617**

at last, a furious "death march" is followed by a...

*ff*

cataclysmic  
chromatic  
descent to  
the depths

Note: tam tam! 



## Glossary

**Absolute Music**—Abstract composition intended as “an improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing” that is, music as a decorative art. (See program music, below).

**Accelerando**—Italian for “accelerate”; a musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing increasingly faster.

**Adagio**—Italian for “slowly”. This indicates the speed at which a piece of music is to be played.

**Arpeggio**—Italian, meaning literally, “harplike”, playing the notes of a chord in sequence rather than at the same time, in the manner of a flourish on the harp. (This term is sometimes abbreviated in the word score as “arp”.)

**Austro-Hungarian Empire** (1867–1918; sometimes also Habsburg Empire)—The large, multi-ethnic state in central Europe governed by the Habsburg (German-Swiss) dynasty and ruled from Vienna. The empire consisted of Austria, which was largely German, plus territories inhabited by Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Serbs, Croats, Italians, and other ethnic minorities, who had no countries of their own. As nationalism (see below) became a force to be reckoned with, the empire became untenable, breaking up into many smaller countries at the end of World War I.

**Baroque**—The musical period following the Renaissance, from about 1600 to 1750. Baroque music is characterized by a complex and elaborately ornamented style.

**Beethoven, Ludwig van** (1770–1827)—German Classical composer whose innovations made a major contribution in bringing about the transition from Classicism to Romanticism in music. For a more extensive treatment, see “Concert Masterworks Part 1, The Classical Piano Concerto: Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 (1786), and Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 5 in E<sup>b</sup> Major, Op. 73 (1809).”

**Berlioz, Hector** (1803–1869)—French Romantic composer, critic, and conductor famous for his symphonic poems and great breadth of expression; for each of his major works, Berlioz created a style unique to the piece.

**Bohemia**—Today’s Czech Republic and homeland of the Czech people. Long ruled by the Habsburg dynasty, it was once considered part of German Central Europe, although mainly inhabited by the Czechs, a Slavic people.

**Brahms, Johannes** (1833–1897)—German composer of the Romantic Era, famous for the quality and quantity of his output and the influence of Classicism in his works. Together with Bach and Beethoven, Brahms was recognized as one of the three great “B’s” in nineteenth-century concert-hall repertoire, a distinction that persists to this day. Extremely successful financially, Brahms lived modestly and was very generous with family and struggling young composers. He was a great friend of Antonín Dvořák.

**Bülow, Hans von** (1830–1894)—German pianist, conductor, and music journalist who promoted the music of Richard Wagner and of other rising young composers of the era, including Richard Strauss. For a time von Bülow was married to Franz Liszt’s daughter, Cosima. Although she later left him for Richard Wagner, von Bülow continued to promote the latter’s music.

**Cadence**—English for the Italian word *cadenza*. A cadence is a series of final notes or chords that indicate that a passage or the entire piece of music is about to resolve into a conclusion. It is distinguished from the Italian word *cadenza*, which has a specialized use in English, as noted below.

**Cadenza**—A florid, improvised passage to be performed by singers before the final bars (cadence—see above) of an aria or movement. In a concerto, the solo instrument assumes this function for the purposes of a similarly virtuosic display. Such a cadenza may be improvised by the soloist or written out by the composer.

**Chadwick, George** (1854–1931)—German-trained American composer, music educator, and conductor who followed the European Romantic tradition, both in style and in his use of program music. A prolific composer, Chadwick was director of the New England Conservatory until his death.

**Chord**—A combination of at least three different notes played together. Based on the scale of C Major, a C Major chord consists of the notes C, E, and G (*do*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *so*—the first, third, and fifth notes of the scale). A c minor chord consists of C, *E<sup>b</sup>*, and G. In other words, by lowering the E a half step to E<sup>b</sup>, we get that distinctive, dark, “minor” sound.

**Classicism**—The musical style which followed the Baroque, from about 1750–1820, and characterized by a well-ordered harmony emphasizing melody over embellishment.

**Closed Cadence**—indicates the end of a distinct section within a movement. See cadence, above.

**Coda**—The final developmental passage in a piece of music which brings a movement to its conclusion.

**Codetta**—A diminutive coda at the end of a movement, or, more commonly, closing coda-like material within a movement, such as at the end of an exposition.

**Con Sordino (Sordini)**—Italian for “with a mute” (mutes); various devices that mute the sound of different instruments. (When the mutes are to be removed, the direction is *senza*—without—sordino/sordini.)

**Concert Overture**—A self-standing composition in sonata form that tells a single literary story.

**Da Capo al Coda**—Italian for “from the top to the coda”; in other words, return to the beginning of the movement and play through, usually without repeats, to the coda.

**Diminished Chord**—A chord in which both the third *and* the fifth (the middle and top notes, respectively) are lowered a half step.

**Dissonance**—Subjectively speaking, anything we do not like the sound of. In real musical terms, any harmony or melody generated from that harmony that must resolve. In itself a dissonance is unstable, because it wants to resolve.

**Dolce**—A musical direction which means to play or sing, literally, “sweetly”.

**Dominant**—The fifth tone of a scale (do, re, mi, fa, *so*). Symbol:  $\vee$

**Dynamics**—Refers to the intensity and manner of the use of loudness and softness in a musical composition. This may refer to the way an individual note, measure (bar), or entire passage is played. Such playing includes rising and falling intensity or loudness (*crescendo* and *diminuendo*, respectively) and sudden changes in the degree of loudness or softness.

**English Horn**—A double-reed, oboe-like woodwind instrument larger and of lower pitch than an oboe, having a distinctive ovate form at the lower end. It is an outdoors instrument of piercing timbre built to be heard at great distances and thus provides an outdoor, rustic kind of sound.

**Enharmonic Pitch**—When a note in the scale is raised or lowered a half-tone in the direction of its neighbor, and that neighboring note is but a half-tone away, the pitch is said to be the same, even though the note has a different name. For example, C raised a half-tone to  $C^\sharp$  approaches D; D, lowered a half-tone to  $D^\flat$  approaches C; thus  $C^\sharp$  and  $D^\flat$  are considered to represent the same (enharmonic) pitch, and, in fact, occupy the same key on a piano. This enharmonic pitch enables a composer to move readily from one key to another, using the enharmonic pitch as a pivot.

**Enlightenment**—The Enlightenment was the eighteenth-century social revolution emphasizing especially new ideas in politics, religion, and education. Its philosophy championed human reason and the importance and potential of each individual human being, regardless of status (social class) or condition.

**Exoticism**—Exoticism occurs when a composer of one nationality and ethnicity writes in a manner evoking the sound of another nationality or ethnicity to give the composition an intriguing foreign “flavor”.

**Exposition**—That section of a musical composition in which the themes are exposed or presented.

**Forte**—A musical direction that means one is to play loudly (indicated by the symbol *f*).

**Fortissimo**—A musical direction that means one is to play extremely loudly (indicated by the symbol *ff*).

**Fortississimo**—A musical direction that means to play as loudly as one possibly can (indicated by the symbol *fff*). Some composers have been known to add yet another *f* or two for even more emphasis!

**Foursquare**—Refers to a triadic theme of equally long phrases.

**Grand Pause**—a place in the music where everything stops for dramatic effect, for an indeterminate length of time; the music resumes at the discretion of the conductor.

**Inversion**—In music, an inversion, harmonic or melodic, means simply to take the same structure and repeat it either in its mirror image or in some other rearrangement of its component parts. Thus a six-four chord (see below)

in C Major: G-C-E, is an inversion of a C Major chord: C-E-G. A rising melody, inverted, would be the same notes in reverse order, thus creating a descending melody out of the same material, but with a different effect.

**Key**—The key of a piece of music is determined by the scale that establishes its basic tonality. A piece written in the key of C Major is composed around a C major scale, in which C is the tonic (see below): C D E F G A B C

*do re mi fa so la ti do*

**Largo**—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing slowly, or, in fact, *very* slowly.

**Leitmotif**—A melody, theme, or musical idea that represents a person, a place, an object, a feeling, or the like.

**Liszt, Franz** (1803–1869)—Hungarian piano virtuoso, Romantic composer, and prolific author, famous for his innovations in piano playing and composition, and for his colorful life. Creator of the symphonic poem, Liszt maintained contacts with the major artists of his day, championed the music of Bach, Beethoven, and others, and promoted the careers of his younger contemporaries.

**Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth** (1807–1882)—The most popular of nineteenth-century American poets, Longfellow was also a novelist and educator. His epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*, provided much of the inspiration for Antonín Dvořák’s “*New World*” *Symphony*.

**Meno mosso**—Italian for less rapidly.

**Mesto**—Italian for sad or mournful.

**“Modal” Seventh**—As used in these lectures, the use of a smaller (“lowered”) seventh interval than one would normally have expected. The distance from the tonic (first) to the seventh note of a scale (the interval) is called a seventh. In a C Major scale, a seventh would be C–B, as it would be in a *c harmonic* minor scale; in a *c natural* minor scale, however, a seventh would be C–B<sup>b</sup>, which is a half step smaller (lowered from B). See natural minor, below.

**Modal**—From “mode”, the system of scales that predominated before the more modern major–minor key system. In the twentieth century, some composers have returned to this system in their own interpretations and for various purposes, alongside the use of major and minor keys. Any music reminiscent of this older system is said to have a “modal” sound.

**Modulation**—A sequence of notes or chords which moves the music in a passage from one key to another.

**Molto Appassionato**—Italian for “very passionately”.

**Motive** (sometimes motif)—A recurring and sometimes dominant theme or phrase in a piece of music.

**Movement**—A section of a larger musical composition so called because of the progressive development of thematic material from one such section of the composition through to the final section.

**Nationalism**—The belief that one’s own ethnic or national group is unique and therefore has an inalienable right to promote the interests of that group without interference from, or regard for, outsiders. Politically, it means the right to live in one’s own homeland and to govern oneself within the borders thereof, thus giving rise to movements for national and ethnic independence. (See Austro-Hungarian Empire, above.) Musically, it means to consciously incorporate folk tunes and other ethnic traditions from one’s own group in one’s compositions.

**Natural Minor**—The basic form of the minor scale. A minor scale differs from a major scale in two ways: in the arrangement of half steps and whole steps *and* in the fact that there are *three* versions of a minor scale, each with a *separate* arrangement of half and whole steps. In addition to the natural minor exist the melodic and harmonic minor scales. A *c natural* minor scale would be: C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> C. See key, above.

**Opus**—(Op.) Latin for “work”. In music, the individual composition or work of the composer. A composer’s works are referred to by opus numbers, which are usually assigned upon publication.

**Ostinato**—Italian for “obstinate”. In music, this refers to a constantly recurring melodic fragment.

**Paine, John Knowles** (1839–1906)—German-trained American composer, organist, and educator who became the first professor of music at an American university (Harvard, in 1862).

**Pedal Tone**—A continuously held pitch (note or tone) in the bass, usually a way of signaling that a developmental section is about to come to an end.

**Phrase**—A grouping of notes. A number of phrases make up a melody or tune (theme). Such things as the length of a bow stroke or the single breath of a singer may delineate a phrase.

**Piano**—A musical direction that means one is to play softly (indicated by the symbol *p*).

**Pizzicato**—(Pizz.) Playing a stringed instrument such as a violin by plucking the strings with the fingers rather than using the bow (arco).

**Poco Agitato**—Italian for “a little agitated”.

**Poco meno mosso/poco più mosso**—Italian for “a little more rapidly”/“a little less rapidly”.

**Polyphony**—(literally, many sounds) Before modern notions of harmony, in which the notes of a chord are *meant* to be sounded together, composers worked to create independent melodic lines which *could* be sounded together without clashing. This was a major advance over Gregorian chant or plainsong, which has just one voice or musical line going on at a time. It depends in large degree on whether you think of music as happening as a unified whole, vertically (harmonically), or horizontally (polyphonically), where a number of things “happen” to be going on at once. Music referred to as polyphonic, therefore, has a feel of greater melodic independence among its various parts.

**Program Music**—Composition intended to tell a story by evoking specific visual or literary imagery, that is, music with a program. (See absolute music, above).

**Recapitulation**—In sonata form, the final restatement of the exposition before the end of the movement.

**Romanticism**—A movement in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century literature, art, and music which emphasized individual creativity and freedom of expression in reaction to the more formal nature of Classicism (see above). Nationalists came to associate Romanticism’s emphasis on individual uniqueness with the uniqueness of their own ethnic group (see nationalism).

**Rondo**—Often the final section of a musical composition in sonata form in which the composer periodically returns to the principal theme of the movement. In between these periodic returns are various contrasting ideas. By returning to the theme, we get a sense of completion.

**Scherzo** (literally, “joke”)—A movement (usually the third in a symphony) of jocular, dance-like music.

**Sequence**—A melodic idea that is then repeated at higher or lower pitch values. Such repetition creates musical coherence without being merely repetitive.

**Six-four Chord**—The first of the three chords in a cadential formula, especially one that precedes the cadenza, signaling that the music is about to come to a resolution. In the key of C Major, the six-four chord would be G–C–E, the C being the *fourth* note above the G and the E the *sixth* note above the G.

**Sonata-allegro (also Sonata) Form**—An adaptation of the operatic ideal into instrumental form. This means introducing contrasting characters (exposition of themes, usually two), having them interact (development), and having them separated in a moment of truth (recapitulation, coda).

**Sonata-rondo Form**—Incorporates the various themes of sonata-allegro form, but here we have a regular or periodic return to a central main theme.

**Staff**—The five horizontal lines and the four spaces between them upon which musical notes are written.

**Symphonic Poem**—A term coined by Franz Liszt to mean a single-movement composition in which the formal musical structure is completely dependent on the story line.

**Tchaikovsky, Peter Illych (1840–1893)**—Russian Romantic composer perhaps most famous for his ballets, although many of his works in other categories are equally outstanding. A master of melody and orchestration, Tchaikovsky is recognized as Russia’s greatest nineteenth-century composer.

**Theme**—A musical idea (a tune or melody) around which a longer musical composition is built.

**Theme and Variations**—A musical composition in which a theme is presented in a straightforward manner and then repeated in a number of cleverly related but intriguingly different ways.

**Tone Poem**—Because Richard Strauss didn't want his works associated with those of Franz Liszt, (see “symphonic poem”, above), Strauss called his symphonic poems “tone poems”. Any piece of instrumental music that describes in tones (musical notes) a literary story, may be said to be a tone poem.

**Tonic**—The first note (tone) of a scale upon which a given key is based. In the solfeggio (do-re-mi) system, “do” is always the tonic, whatever note begins the scale. Also, the central note around which a composition is organized. See key, above.

**Tremolo**—Italian for “trembling”. This indicates a rapid variation of the pitch of a note, slightly above and below its value, for dramatic effect. Some instruments and the human voice are capable of producing tremolos.

**Triadic**—Based on a triad, a chord composed of a tone, its major or minor third, and the fifth note (*do*, re, *mi*, fa, *so*).

**Triadic Theme**— A theme based on a triad, a simple chord of three notes, in either a major or a minor key (see above).

**Trill**—A rapid alternation of two adjacent tones.

**Trio**—A contrasting section in a dance movement. In the Baroque Era, this was quite literally for three instruments. This practice has seldom, if ever, been followed since the Baroque, but such contrasting sections remain in use, so the name has stuck.

**Tritone (Augmented Fourth or Diminished Fifth)**—An interval of three whole tones, such as C–F<sup>#</sup> (as opposed to C–F, a fourth, or C–G, a fifth). This interval was considered so dissonant before the twentieth century that it was known as the “devil’s interval” and was almost always avoided in composition.

**Tutti**—Italian for “everyone”; in other words, all players who have a part to play return, as after a cadenza or other solo.

***Un poco più mosso***—A musical direction indicating that one is to play or sing a little faster, but not too much faster.

**Ur-issue**—“Ur” is a learned borrowing from German which means “original”, “fundamental”, or “from time immemorial”. As used in these lectures, the “ur-issue” is the main or fundamental issue around which this piece of music is composed.