

Chapter 6: Nineteenth-Century Music and Romanticism

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6.1 OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate knowledge of historical and cultural contexts of nineteenth century music, including musical Romanticism and nationalism
2. Aurally identify selected genres of nineteenth century music and their associated expressive aims, uses, and styles
3. Aurally identify the music of selected composers of nineteenth century music and their associated styles
4. Explain ways in which music and other cultural forms interact in nineteenth century music in genres such as the art song, program music, opera, and musical nationalism

6.2 KEY TERMS AND INDIVIDUALS

- 1848 revolutions
- Antonín Dvořák
- art song
- Augmented second
- Bedřich Smetana
- Beethoven
- Caspar David Friedrich
- chamber music
- chromaticism
- concerto
- conductor
- drone
- Eugène Delacroix
- Exoticism
- Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

- Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
- Francisco de Goya
- Franz Liszt
- Franz Schubert
- Fryderyk Chopin
- Giuseppe Verdi
- *idée fixe*
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
- John Philip Sousa
- leitmotiv
- lied
- Louis Moreau Gottschalk
- Mary Shelley
- mazurka
- nationalism
- opera
- program symphony
- Pyotr Tchaikovsky
- Richard Wagner
- Robert and Clara Schumann
- Romanticism
- rubato
- salon
- scena ad aria (recitative, cantabile, cabaletta)
- soirée
- sonata
- sonata form (exposition, development, recapitulation)
- song cycle
- string quartet
- strophic
- symphonic poem
- Symphony
- ternary form

- through-composed
- V.E.R.D.I.
- William Wordsworth

6.3 INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This chapter considers music of the nineteenth century, a period often called the “Romantic era” in music. Romanticism might be defined as a cultural movement stressing emotion, imagination, and individuality. It started in literature around 1800 and then spread to art and music. By around 1850, the dominant aesthetic (artistic philosophy) of literature and visual art began to shift to what is now often called a time of realism (cultural expressions of what is perceived as common and contemporary). Cultural Nationalism (pride in one’s culture) and Exoticism (fascination with the other) also became more pronounced after 1850, as reflected in art, literature, and music. Realism, nationalism, and Exoticism were prominent in music as well, although we tend to treat them as sub-categories under a period of musical Romanticism that spanned the entire century.

In his Preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1801), English poet William Wordsworth declared that “all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” The power and expression of emotion exalted by literary Romanticism was equally important for nineteenth-century music, which often explicitly attempted to represent every shade of human emotion, the most prominent of which are love and sorrow. Furthermore, the Romantics were very interested in the connections between music, literature, and the visual arts. Poets and philosophers rhapsodized about the power of music, and musicians composed both vocal and instrumental program music explicitly inspired by literature and visual art. In fact, for many nineteenth-century thinkers, music had risen to the top of the aesthetic hierarchy. Music was previously perceived as inferior to poetry and sculpture, as it had no words or form. In the nineteenth century, however, music was understood to express what words could not express, thus transcending the material for something more ideal and spiritual; some called this expression “absolute music.”

As we listen to nineteenth-century music, we might hear some similarities with music of the classical era, but there are also differences. Aesthetically speaking, classicism tends to emphasize balance, control, proportion, symmetry, and restraint. Romanticism seeks out the new, the curious, and the adventurous, emphasizing qualities of remoteness, boundlessness, and strangeness. It is characterized by restless longing and impulsive reaction, as well as freedom of expression and pursuit of the unattainable. There are many parallels between what was going on

historically in society and what was occurring in music. We cannot study one without studying the other because they are so inter-related, though music will be our guiding focus.

Geo-politically, the nineteenth century extends from the French Revolution to a decade or so before World War I. The French Revolution wound down around 1799, when the Napoleonic Wars then ensued. The Napoleonic Wars were waged by Napoléon Bonaparte, who had declared himself emperor of France. Another war was the United States Civil War from 1861-1865. The United States also saw expansion westward as the gold rush brought in daring settlers. Even though the United States was growing, England was the dominant world power at this time. Its whaling trade kept ships sailing and lamps burning. Coal fueled the Industrial Revolution and the ever-expanding rail system. Economic and social power shifted increasingly towards the common people due to revolts. These political changes affected nineteenth-century music as composers who began to aim their music at the more common people, rather than just the rich.

Political nationalism was on the rise in the nineteenth century. Early in the century, Bonaparte's conquests spurred on this nationalism, inspiring Italians, Austrians, Germans, Eastern Europeans, and Russians to assert their cultural identities, even while enduring the political domination of the French. After France's political power diminished with the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815, politics throughout much of Europe were still punctuated by revolutions, first a minor revolution in 1848 in what is now Germany, and then the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. Later in the century, Eastern Europeans, in what is now the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and the Russians developed schools of national music in the face of Austro-German cultural, and sometimes political, hegemony. Nationalism was fed by the continued rise of the middle class as well as the rise of republicanism and democracy, which defines human beings as individuals with responsibilities and rights derived as much from the social contract as from family, class, or creed.

6.3.1 Philosophy

The nineteenth century saw some of the most famous continental philosophers of all time: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900). All responded in some way or another to the ideas of their eighteenth-century predecessor Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who revolutionized the way human beings saw themselves in relation to others and to God by positing that human beings can never see "the thing in itself" and thus must relate as subjects to the objects that are exterior to themselves. Based on the work of Kant, as well as on a revival of ancient philosophical idealism, Hegel proposed some resolution of this subject-object dichotomy

by characterizing human existence as thesis meeting its opposite in antithesis and thus yielding synthesis. Schopenhauer, on the other hand, maintained that Kant had been right to point to the divide between subject and object. (For our purposes here, consider music to be the human phenomenon in which one might experience the thing, or object, in itself.) His ideas influenced the musical philosophy of Richard Wagner, and both of Schopenhauer's and Wagner's ideas shaped Friedrich Nietzsche's early philosophy. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the ideas of Kant and Hegel, and to a lesser extent Schopenhauer, influenced American Transcendentalism, often reflected in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862).

6.3.2 Science

Science and technology made great strides in the nineteenth century. Some of its inventions increased mobility of the individuals in the Western world, such as with the proliferation of trains running across newly-laid tracks and steamships sailing down major rivers and eventually across oceans. Other advances, such as the commercial telegraph (from the 1830s), allowed news to travel more quickly than before. All this speed and mobility culminated in the first automobiles that emerged at the very end of the century. Plate and then chemical photography were invented in the first half of the 1800s, with film photography emerging at the end of the century: we have photographs of several of the composers studied in this chapter. Experiments with another sort of recording, sound recording, would get started in the mid 1800s and finally become commercially available in the twentieth century. The nineteenth century saw ongoing experiments with electricity and electrically powered lamps such as the light bulb that would also blossom as the century turned.



Figure 6.1 | John James Audubon, 1826

Author | John Syme

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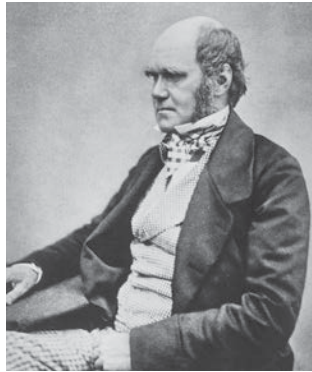


Figure 6.2 | Charles Darwin, 1854

Author | Henry Maull and John Fox

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Romantics were fascinated by nature, and the middle class public followed naturalists, like Americans John James Audubon (1785-1851) and John Muir (1838-1914) and the Englishman Charles Darwin (1809-1882), as they observed and recorded life in the wild. Darwin's evolutionary theories based on his voyages to locales such as the Galapagos Islands were avidly debated among the people of his day.

6.3.3 Visual Art

Romantics were fascinated by the imaginary, the grotesque, and by that which was chronologically or geographically foreign. Emphasis on these topics began to appear in such late eighteenth-century works as Swiss painter Henry Fuseli's *Nightmare* from 1781. Romantics were also intrigued by the Gothic style: a young Goethe raved about it after visiting the Gothic Cathedral in Strasbourg, France. His writings in turn spurred the completion of the Cathedral in Cologne, Germany, which had been started in the Gothic style in 1248 and then completed in that same style between the years of 1842 and 1880.



Figure 6.3 | *The Nightmare*

Author | Henry Fuseli

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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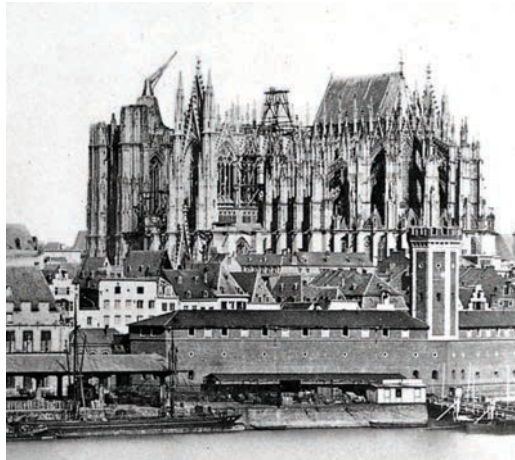


Figure 6.4 | Cologne Cathedral

Author | Johann Franz Michiels

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Romantic interest in the individual, nature, and the supernatural is also very evident in nineteenth-century landscapes, including those of Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840). One of his most famous paintings, *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* (1818), shows a lone man with his walking stick, surrounded by a vast horizon. The man has progressed to the top of a mountain, but there his vision is limited due to the fog. We do not see his face, perhaps suggesting the solitary reality of a human subject both separate from and somehow spiritually attuned to the natural and supernatural.



Figure 6.5 | *The Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*

Author | Caspar David Friedrich

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In France, Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) captured the revolutionary and nationalist fervor of the time in such paintings as *Liberty Leading the People* (1830). He was also a good friend with musicians Frydryk Chopin and Hector Berlioz, whom he immortalized in portraits.



Figure 6.6 | *Liberty Leading the People*

Author | Eugène Delacroix

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Francisco de Goya (1746 -1828) was born in Fuendetodos, Spain. He painted for the Spanish Royal court, producing portraits of nobility. However, he also painted works criticizing the social and political problems of his era.

One of Goya's personal projects, *Disasters of War*, however, was commissioned by no one. It was Goya's private project, which he never even published in his lifetime. *Disasters of War* unflinchingly depicts mutilation, torture, rape, and many other atrocities indiscriminately inflicted on Spanish citizens by French and Spanish alike. In The Third Day of May, Goya commemorated the Spanish resistance to Napoleon's Armies in 1808 in the Peninsular War. It portrays an execution by Napoleon's Troops.



Figure 6.7 | *Disasters of War*, Plate 39

Author | Francisco Goya

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Figure 6.8 | *The Third of May 1808*

Author | Francisco Goya

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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As the nineteenth century progressed, European artists became increasingly interested in what they called “realist” topics, that is, in depicting the lives of the average human, as he or she went about living in the present moment. While the realism in such art is not devoid of idealizing forces, it does emphasize the validity of the everyday life as a topic for art alongside the value of craft and technique in bringing such “realist” scenes to life.

6.3.4 Literature

The novel, which had emerged forcefully in the eighteenth century, became the literary genre of choice in the nineteenth century. Many German novels focused on a character's

development; most important of these novels are those by the German philosopher, poet, and playwright, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who was fascinated with the supernatural and set the story of Faust. Faust is a man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge, in an epic two-part drama. English author Mary Shelley (1797-1851) explored nature and the supernatural in the novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* (1818), which examines current scientific discoveries as participating in the ancient quest to control nature. Later in the century, British author Charles Dickens exposed the plight of the common man during a time of Industrialization. In France, Victor Hugo (1802-1885) wrote on a broad range of themes, from what his age saw as the grotesque in *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) to the topic of French Revolution in *Les Misérables* (1862). Another Frenchman, Gustav Flaubert, captured the psychological and emotional life of a “real” woman in *Madame Bovary* (1856). And in the United States, Mark Twain created *Tom Sawyer* (1876).

Besides novels, poetry continued strong in the nineteenth century with such important English poets as George Gordon, Lord Byron, Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and John Keats. In addition to Goethe, other German literary figures included Friedrich Schiller, Adrian Ludwig Richter, Heidrich Heine, Novalis, Ludwig Tieck, and E. T. A. Hoffmann; their works contributed librettos and settings for nineteenth-century music. Near the end of the century, French symbolism, a movement akin to Impressionism in art and music, emerged in the poetry of Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Arthur Rimbaud.

[View a comprehensive timeline that compares historical events of the Romantic time period to the musical events of the period.](#)

6.3.5 Nineteenth-Century Musical Contexts

We have already alluded to a new respect for vocal and instrumental music that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century. Music’s influence only grew in the nineteenth century, becoming more prominent yet in the education of the still growing middle class; even the United States, which throughout most of the nineteenth century was deemed somewhat a cultural backwaters of the Western world, had music education in the public schools by the end of the century. An increasing number of music magazines was published, and amateur music making in the home and in local civic groups was at a height. Piano music was a major component of private music making. The salons and soirées of upper middle class and aristocratic women drew many of these private musical performances.

More concerts in public venues enjoyed increased attendance; some of these concerts were solo recitals and others featured large symphony orchestras, sometimes accompanied by choirs.

Their performers were often trained in highly specialized music schools called conservatories, which took root in major European cities. By the end of the nineteenth century, traveling virtuoso performers and composers were some of the most famous personalities of their time. These musicians hailed from all over Europe. Some of them became quite wealthy from revenues of ticket sales and publications. Others fit the stereotype of the starving artist, paid in respect though not in the currency of their day.

Romantic aesthetics tended to conceptualize musicians as highly individualistic and often eccentric. Beethoven modeled these concepts and was the most influential figure of nineteenth-century music, even after his death in 1827. His perceived alienation from society, the respect he was given, and the belief in the transformative power of music that was often identified in his compositions, galvanized romantic perceptions. His music, popular in its own day, only became more popular after his death. Subsequent composers looked to his innovations in symphonic compositions, especially his use of recurring motives and themes, as we heard in the Fifth Symphony. For them, Beethoven was also something of a problem: how might one compose in the shadow of such a musical giant?

6.3.6 Musical Timeline

Events in History	Events in Music
1801: Wordsworth publishes his <i>Lyrical Ballades</i>	
1814-1815: Congress of Vienna, ending Napoleon's conquest of Europe and Russia	1815: Schubert publishes <i>The Erlking</i>
1818: Mary Shelley publishes <i>Frankenstein</i>	
1818: Caspar David Friedrich paints <i>Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog</i>	1827: Beethoven dies
	1829: Felix Mendelssohn leads a revival of Bach's <i>St. Matthew</i>

	<p><i>Passion</i>, which leads to a revival of Bach's music more generally</p>
1830s: Eugène Delacroix captures revolutionary and nationalist fervor in his paintings	<p>1830: Hector Berlioz premieres his most famous work, the <i>Symphonie fantastique</i></p> <p>1830s: Clara Wieck and Franz Liszt tour (separately) as virtuoso pianists</p> <p>1831: Fryderyk Chopin immigrates to Paris, from the political turmoil in his native country of Poland</p>
1832: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe dies	
	<p>1840: Clara and Robert Schumann marry</p>
1850s: Realism becomes prominent in art and literature	<p>1853: Verdi composes <i>La Traviata</i></p>
1861-1865: Civil War in the U.S	
1870-71: Franco-Prussian War	
	<p>1874: Bedřich Smetana composes <i>The Moldau</i></p> <p>1876: Johannes Brahms completes his First Symphony</p> <p>1876: Wagner premieres <i>The Ring of the Nibelungen</i> at his Festival Theatre in Bayreuth, Germany</p>
	<p>1882: Tchaikovsky writes the <i>1812</i> Overture</p>

1891-1892: John Philip Sousa tours the U.S. leading the U.S. Marine Band
1892-1895: Antonin Dvořák visits the U.S., helps establish the first American music conservatory, and composes the <i>New World</i> Symphony.

Table 1: Musical Timeline

6.4 MUSIC IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

6.4.1 Music Comparison Overview

Classical Music

- Mostly homophony, but with variation
- New genres such as the symphony and string quartet
- Use of crescendos and decrescendos
- Question and answer (aka antecedent consequent) phrases that are shorter than earlier phrases
- New emphasis on musical form: for example, sonata form, theme and variations, minuet and trio, rondo, and first-movement concerto form
- Greater use of contrasting dynamics, articulations, and tempos

Nineteenth-Century Music

- Lyrical melodies, often with wider leaps
- Homophonic style still prevalent, but with variation
- Larger performing forces using more diverse registers, dynamic ranges, and timbres
- More rubato and tempo fluctuation within a composition
- More chromatic and dissonant harmonies with increasingly delayed resolutions
- Symphonies, string quartets, concertos, operas, and sonata-form movements continue to be written
- Newly important miniature genres and forms such as the *Lied* and short piano composition
- Program music increasingly prominent
- Further development in performers' virtuosity

- No more patronage system

6.4.2 General Trends in Nineteenth Century Music

Musical Style, Performing Forces, and Forms

The nineteenth century is marked by a great diversity in musical styles, from the conservative to the progressive. As identified by the style comparison chart above, nineteenth century melodies continue to be tuneful and are perhaps even more songlike than classical style melodies, although they may contain wider leaps. They still use sequences, which are often as a part of modulation from one key to another. Melodies use more chromatic (or “colorful”) pitches from outside the home key and scale of a composition. Along with the continuing emphasis on tuneful melodies comes predominantly homophonic textures, although as compositions use more instruments, there are also increasing numbers of accompanying, but relatively interesting, musical lines.

Harmonies in nineteenth-century music are more dissonant than ever. More chords add a fourth note to the triad, making them more dissonant and chromatic. These dissonances may be sustained for some time before resolving to a chord that is consonant. One composition may modulate between several keys, and these keys often have very different pitch contents. Such modulations tend to disorient the listening and add to the chaos of the musical selection. Composers were in effect “pushing the harmonic envelope.”

The lengths of nineteenth-century musical compositions ran from the minute to the monumental. Songs and short piano pieces might be only a couple of minutes long, although they were sometimes grouped together in cycles or collections. On the other hand, symphonies and operas grow in size. By the end of the century, a typical symphony might be an hour long, with the operas of Verdi, Wagner, and Puccini clocking in at several hours each. Performing forces reflected similar extremes. There is much nineteenth-century music for solo piano or solo voice with piano accompaniment. The piano achieved a modern form, with the full eighty-eight-note keyboard that is still used today and an iron frame that allowed for greater string tension and a wider range of dynamics. Crescendos and decrescendos became more common, alongside more tempo fluctuations, even within compositions. As we will see, Fryderyk Chopin was the first composer to make prevalent use of rubato as a performance instruction in his musical scores.

During the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution facilitated and enabled marked improvements to many musical instruments besides the piano with its improved and updated iron frame and tempered metal strings. Efficient valves were added to the trumpet and a general improvement in metal works tightened tolerances and metal fittings of all brass instruments.

Along with the many improvements to instruments, new instruments were researched and created, including the piccolo, English horn, tuba, contrabassoon, and saxophone.

Orchestras also increased in size and became more diverse in makeup, thereby allowing composers to exploit even more divergent dynamics and timbres. With orchestral compositions requiring over fifty (and sometimes over 100) musicians, a conductor was important, and the first famous conductors date from this period. In fact, generally-speaking, the nineteenth-century orchestra looked not unlike what you might see today at most concerts by most professional orchestras (see Figure 6.9). Nineteenth-century composers knew well the forms and genres used by their predecessors, most prominently the music of Beethoven, but also the music of composers such as Mozart, Handel, Haydn, and Bach. They continued to compose in these forms and genres, while sometimes transforming them into something quite different, especially among those composers who identified themselves as progressives, as opposed to conservatives. The wider nineteenth-century interest in emotion and in exploring connections between all of the arts led to musical scores with more poetic or prose instructions from the composer. It also led to more program music, which as you will recall, is instrumental music that represents something “extra musical,” that is, something outside of music itself, such as nature, a literary text, or a painting. Nineteenth-century critics and philosophers sustained expansive debates about ways in which listeners might hear music as related to the extra musical. Extra musical influences, from the characteristic title to a narrative attached to a musical score, guided composers and listeners as they composed and heard musical forms.

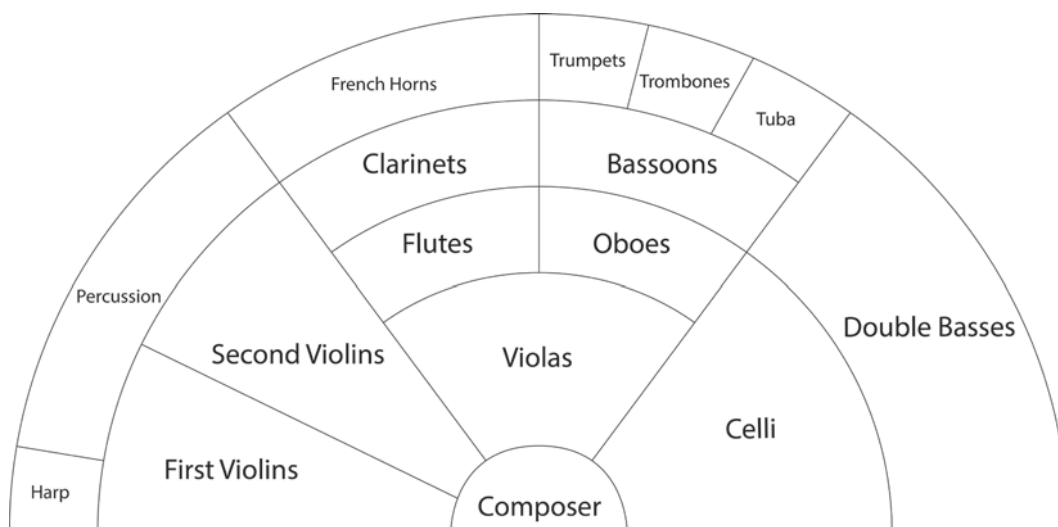


Figure 6.9 | Nineteenth-Century Orchestra Diagram

Author | Corey Parson

Source | Original Work

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Genres of Instrumental Music

Some nineteenth-century compositions use titles similar to those found in classical style music, such as “Symphony No. 3,” “Concerto, Op. 3,” or “String Quartet in C Minor.” These compositions are sometimes referred to as examples of absolute music (that is, music for the sake of music). Program music with titles came in several forms. Short piano compositions were described as “character pieces” and took on names reflecting their emotional mood, state, or reference. Orchestral program music included the program symphony and the symphonic poem (also known as the tone poem). The program symphony was a multi-movement composition for orchestra that represented something extra musical, a composition such as Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* (discussed below). A symphonic or tone poem was a one-movement composition for orchestra, again with an extra musical referent, such as Bedřich Smetana’s *Moldau*.

Genres of Vocal Music

Opera continued to be popular in the nineteenth century and was dominated by Italian styles and form, much like it had been since the seventeenth century. Italian opera composer Giacomo Rossini even rivaled Beethoven in popularity. By the 1820s, however, other national schools were becoming more influential. Carl Maria von Weber’s German operas enhanced the role of the orchestra, whereas French grand opera by Meyerbeer and others was marked by the use of large choruses and elaborate sets. Later in the century, composers such as Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner would synthesize and transform opera into an even more dramatic genre.

Other large-scale choral works in the tradition of the Baroque cantata and oratorio were written for civic choirs which would sometimes band together into larger choral ensembles in annual choral festivals. The song for voice and piano saw revived interest, and art songs were chief among the music performed in the home for private and group entertainment. The art song is a composition for solo voice and piano that merges poetic and musical concerns. It became one of the most popular genres of nineteenth-century Romanticism, a movement that was always looking for connections between the arts. Sometimes these art songs were grouped into larger collections called song cycles or, in German, *Liederkreis*. Among the important composers of early nineteenth-century German *Lieder* were Robert and Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms, and Franz Schubert.

6.5 MUSIC OF FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Franz Schubert lived a short but prolific musical life. Like Joseph Haydn, he performed as a choirboy until his voice broke. He also received music lessons in violin, piano, organ, voice and musical harmony: many of his teachers remarked on the young boy's genius. Schubert followed in his father's footsteps for several years, teaching school through his late teens, until he shifted his attention to music composition fulltime in 1818. By that time he had already composed masterpieces for which he is still known, including the German *Lied*, *Der Erlkönig* (in English, *The Erlking*), which we will discuss.

Schubert spent his entire life in Vienna in the shadow of the two most famous composers of his day: Ludwig van Beethoven, whose music we have already discussed, and Gioachino Rossini, whose Italian operas were particularly popular in Vienna in the first decade.



Figure 6.10 | Franz Schubert

Author | Wilhelm August Rieder

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Inspired by the music of Beethoven, Schubert wrote powerful symphonies and chamber music, which are still played today; his “Great” Symphony in C major is thought by many to be Schubert’s finest contribution to the genre. He wrote the symphony in 1825 and 1826, but it remained unpublished and indeed perhaps unperformed until Robert Schumann discovered it in 1838. Schumann famously remarked on the “heavenly length” of this composition that can take almost an hour to perform. One reason for its length is its melodic lyricism, although the symphony also reflects the motivic developmental innovations of Beethoven.

Schubert also wrote operas and church music. His greatest legacy, however, lies in his more than 600 *Lieder*, or art songs. His songs are notable for their beautiful melodies and clever use of piano accompaniment and bring together poetry and music in an exemplary fashion. Most

are short, stand alone pieces of one and a half to five minutes in length, but he also wrote a couple of song cycles. These songs were published and performed in many private homes and, along with all of his compositions, provided so much entertainment in the private musical gatherings in Vienna that these events were renamed as Schubertiades (see the famous depiction of one Schubertiade by the composer's close friend Moritz Schwind (painted years after the fact from memory in 1868). Many of Schubert's songs are about romantic love, a perennial song topic. Others, such as *The Erlking*, put to music romantic responses to nature and to the supernatural. *The Erlking* is strikingly dramatic, a particular reminder that music and drama interacted in several nineteenth-century genres, even if their connections can be most fully developed in a lengthy composition, such as an opera.



Figure 6.11 | Schubertiade 1868

Author | Moritz von Schwind

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Focus Composition: Schubert, The Erlking (1815)

Schubert set the words of several poets of his day, and *The Erlking* (1815) is drawn from the poetry of the most famous: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *The Erlking* tells the story of a father who is rushing on horseback with his ailing son to the doctor. Delirious from fever, the son hears the voice of the Erlking, a grim reaper sort of king of the fairies, who appears to young children when they are about to die, luring them into the world beyond. The father tries to reassure his son that his fear is imagined, but when the father and son reach the courtyard of the doctor's house, the child is found to be dead.

As you listen to the song, follow along with its words. You may have to listen several times in order to hear the multiple connections between the music and the text. Are the ways in which you hear the music and text interacting beyond those pointed out in the listening guide?

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by baritone Dietrich Fischer Dieskau and pianist Gerald Moore.

Composer: Franz Schubert

Composition: *The Erlkönig* (in English, *The Erlking*)

Date: 1815

Genre: art song

Form: through-composed

Nature of Text:

Original Text

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?

Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind.

Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,

Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.

Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Gesicht?

Siehst Vater, du den Erlkönig nicht!

Den Erlenkönig mit Kron' und Schweif?

Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif.

Du liebes Kind, komm geh' mit mir!

Gar schöne Spiele, spiel ich mit dir,

Manch bunte Blumen sind an dem Strand,

Meine Mutter hat manch gülden Gewand.

Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du nicht,

Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht?

Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind,

In dürren Blättern säuselt der Wind.

Willst finer Knabe du mit mir geh'n?

Translation

Who rides there so late through the night and wind?

The father it is, with his infant so dear;

He holds the boy tightly clasped in his arm,

He holds him safely, he keeps him warm.

“My son, why do you anxiously hide your face?”

“Look, father, is it not the Erlking!

The Erlking with crown and with train?”

“My son, it is the mist over the clouds.”

“Oh, come, dear child! oh, come with me!

So many games I will play there with thee;

On my shoreline, lovely flowers their blossoms unfold,

My mother has many a gold garment.”

“My father, my father, and do you not hear

The words that the Erlking softly promises me?”

“Be calm, stay calm, my child,

The wind sighs through the dry leaves.”

“Will you come with me, my child?”

Meine Töchter sollen dich warten schön,
Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen Reihn
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich ein.

My daughters shall wait on you;
My daughters dance each night,
And will cradle you and dance and sing to you.”

Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du nicht
dort

“My father, my father, and do you not see,

Erlkönigs Töchter am düsteren Ort?

The Erl-King’s daughters in this dreary place?”

Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh’ es genau:

“My son, my son, I see it aright,

Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau.

The old fields appear so gray.”

Ich lieb dich, mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt
Und bist du nicht willig, so brauch ich Gewalt!

“I love you, I’m charmed by your lovely form!
And if you’re unwilling, then force I’ll employ.”

Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er mich an
Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids getan.

“My father, my father, he seizes me fast,
Full sorely the Erl-King has hurt me at last.”

Dem Vater grauset’s, er reitet geschwind,
Er hält in den Armen das ächzende Kind,
Erreicht den Hof mit Mühe und Not,
In seinen Armen das Kind war tot.

The father, horrified, rides quickly,
He holds in his arms the groaning child:
He reaches his courtyard with toil and
trouble,—
In his arms, the child was dead.

Table 2: Original text with the translation

Performing Forces: solo voice and piano

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- It is an art song that sets a poem for solo voice and piano
- The poem tells the story of three characters, who are depicted in the music through changes in melody, harmony, and range.
- The piano sets general mood and supports the singer by depicting images from the text.

Other things to listen for:

- Piano accompaniment at the beginning that outlines a minor scale (perhaps the wind)
- Repeated fast triplet pattern in the piano, suggesting urgency and the running horse
- Shifts of the melody line from high to low range, depending on the character “speaking”

- Change of key from minor to major when the Erlking sings
- The slowing note values at the end of the song and the very dissonant chords

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00	Piano introduction Opens with a fast tempo melody that begins low in the register, ascends through the minor scale, and then falls. Accompanied by repeated triplet octaves. The ascending/ descending melody may represent the wind. The minor key suggests a serious tone. The repeated octaves using fast triplets may suggest the running horse and the urgency of the situation.	
0:24	Voice and piano from here to the end; Performing forces are voice and piano in homophonic texture from here to the end. Melody falls in the middle of the singer's range and is accompanied by the repeated octave triplets.	Narrator: Who rides so late through night and wind?
0:56	Melody drops lower in the singer's range.	Father: My son, why are you frightened?
1:03	Melody shifts to a higher range	Son: Do you see the Erlking, father?
1:19	Melody lower in range.	Father: It is the fog.
1:28	The key switches to major, perhaps to suggest the friendly guise assumed by the Erlking. Note also the softer dynamics and lighter arpeggios in the piano accompaniment	The Erlking: Lovely child, come with me...

1:52	Back in minor the melody hovers around one note high in the singer's register; the minor mode reflects the son's fear, as does the melody, which repeats the same note, almost as if the son is unable to sing another	Son: My father, father, do you not hear it...
2:03	Melody lower in range	Father: Be calm, my child, the wind blows the dry leaves...
2:13	Back to a major key and <i>piano</i> dynamics for more from the Erlking	The Erlking: My darling boy, won't you come with me...
2:30	Back to a minor key and the higher-ranged melody that hovers around one pitch for the son's retort.	Son: My father, can you not see him there?
2:41	Melody lower in range and return of the louder repeated triplets	Father: My son, I see well the moonlight on the grey meadows....
2:58	Momentarily in major and then back to minor as the Erlking threatens the boy	The Erlking: I love you...if you do not freely come, I will use force...
3:09	Back to a minor key and the higher-ranged melody that hovers around one pitch.	Son: My father, he has seized me...
3:22	Back to a mid-range melody; the notes in the piano get faster and louder.	Narrator: The father, filled with horror, rides fast
3:37	Piano accompaniment slows down; dissonant and minor chords pervasive; song ends with a strong cadence in the minor key; Slowing down of the piano accompaniment may echo the slowing down of the horse. The truncated chords and strong final minor chords buttress the announcement that the child is dead.	Narrator: They arrive at the courtyard. In his father's arms, the child was dead.

Table 3: Listening Guide for The Erlkönig (in English, The Erlking)

The next generation of nineteenth-century composers—born in the first two decades of the century—included a number of talented pianists: Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn, Robert and Clara Schumann, Fryderyk Chopin, and Franz Liszt. They were joined by orchestra composer Hector Berlioz and a slightly younger composer who might be considered Berlioz's alter ego, Johannes Brahms.

6.6 MUSIC OF THE MENDELSSOHN

In terms of musical craft, few nineteenth-century composers were more accomplished than Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847). Growing up in an artistically-rich, upper-middle class household in Berlin, Germany, Felix Mendelssohn received a fine private education in the arts and sciences and proved himself to be precociously talented from a very young age. He would go on to write chamber music for piano and strings, art songs, church music, four symphonies, and oratorios as well as conduct many of Beethoven's works as principal director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. All of his music emulates the motivic and organic styles of Beethoven's compositions, from his chamber music to his more monumental compositions. Felix was also well-versed in the musical styles of Mozart, Handel, and Bach.



Figure 6.12 | Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Author | James Warren Childe

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Felix descended from a family of prominent Jewish intellectuals; his grandfather Moses Mendelssohn was one of the leaders of the eighteenth-century German Enlightenment. His parents, however, seeking to break from this religious tradition, had their children baptized as Reformed Christians in 1816. Anti-Semitism was a fact of life in nineteenth-century Germany, and such a baptism opened some, if not all, doors for the family. Most agree that in 1832, the failure of Felix's application for the position as head of the Berlin *Singakademie* was partly due to his Jewish ethnicity. This failure was a blow to the young musician, who had performed frequently with this civic choral society, most importantly in 1829, when he had led a revival of the *St. Matthew Passion* by Johann Sebastian Bach. Although today we think of Bach as a pivotal figure of the Baroque period, his music went through a period of neglect until this revival.

Initially, Felix's father was reluctant to see his son become a professional musician; like many upper-middle class businessmen, he would have preferred his son enjoy music as an amateur. Felix, however, was both determined and talented, and eventually secured employment as a choral and orchestral conductor, first in Düsseldorf, and then in Leipzig, Germany, where he lived from 1835 until his death. In Leipzig, Felix conducted the orchestra and founded the town's first music conservatory.

Felix's music was steeped in the styles of his predecessors. Although he remained on good terms with more experimental composers of his day, including Hector Berlioz and Franz Liszt, he was not fond of their music. It is not surprising, then, that he composed in genres passed down to him, including the symphony, string quartet, and oratorio.

Focus Composition: Mendelssohn, excerpts from Elijah (1846)

One of his last works, his oratorio *Elijah*, was commissioned by the Birmingham Festival in Birmingham, England. The Birmingham Festival was one of many nineteenth-century choral festivals that provided opportunities for amateur and professional musicians to gather once a year to make music together. Mendelssohn's music was very popular in England, and the Birmingham Festival had already performed another Mendelssohn oratorio in the 1830s, giving the premier of *Elijah* in English in 1846.

Elijah is interesting because it is an example of music composed for middle-class music-making. The chorus of singers was expected to be largely made up of musical amateurs, with professional singers brought in to sing the solos. The topic of the oratorio, the Hebrew prophet Elijah, is interesting as a figure significant to both the Jewish and Christian traditions, both of which Felix embraced to a certain extent. (In general, Felix was private about his religious convictions, and interpretations of *Elijah* as representing the composer's beliefs will always

remain somewhat speculative.) This composition shows Felix's indebtedness to both Baroque composers Bach and Handel, while at the same time it uses more nineteenth-century harmonies and textures.

The following excerpt is from the first part of the oratorio and sets the dramatic story of Elijah's calling the followers of the pagan god Baal to light a sacrifice on fire. Baal fails his devotees; Elijah then summons the God of Abraham to a display of power with great success. The excerpt here involves a baritone soloist who sings the role of Elijah and the chorus that provides commentary. Elijah first sings a short accompanied recitative, not unlike what we heard in the music of Handel's *Messiah*. The first chorus is highly polyphonic in announcing the flames from heaven before shifting to a more homophonic and deliberate style that uses longer note values to proclaim the central tenet of Western religion: "The Lord is God, the Lord is God! O Israel hear! Our God is one Lord, and we will have no other gods before the Lord." After another recitative and another chorus, Elijah sings a very melismatic and virtuoso aria.

Elijah was very popular in its day, in both its English and German versions, both for music makers and musical audiences, and continues to be performed by choral societies today.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by the Texas A&M Century Singers with orchestra and baritone soloist Weston Hurt.

Composer: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Composition: Excerpts from *Elijah*

Date: 1846

Genre: Recitative, choruses, and aria from an oratorio

Form: Through-composed

Nature of Text:

Elijah (recitative): O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou, whose ministers are flaming fires: let them now descend!

The People (chorus): The fire descends from heaven! The flames consume his offering! Before Him upon your faces fall! The Lord is God, the Lord is God! O Israel hear! Our God is one Lord, and we will have no other gods before the Lord.

Elijah (recitative): Take all the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape you. Bring them down to Kishon's brook, and there let them be slain.

The People (chorus): Take all the prophets of Baal and let not one of them escape us: bring all and slay them!

Elijah (aria): Is not His word like a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces! For God is angry with the wicked every day. And if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.

Performing Forces: Baritone soloist (Elijah), four-part chorus, orchestra

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- It's an oratorio composed for amateurs and professionals to perform at a choral festival
- It uses traditional forms of accompanied recitative, chorus, and aria to tell a dramatic story

Other things to listen for:

- A much larger orchestra than heard in the oratorios of Handel
- A very melismatic and virtuoso aria in the style of Handel's arias
- More flexible use of recitatives, arias, and choruses than in earlier oratorios
- More dissonance and chromaticism than in earlier oratorios

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00	Solo Baritone (Elijah); Orchestra. Minor key, orchestra punctuates the ends of each of singer's phrases.	Accompanied recitative: O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou, whose ministers are flaming fires: let them now descend!

0:32	Chorus and Orchestra. Very forte and polyphonic until the end, when it becomes homophonic (with rests between phrases) and quieter in dynamics.	Chorus: The fire descends from heaven! The flames consume his offering! Before Him upon your faces fall!
1:29	Chorus and Orchestra. Very homophonic and legato with longer note values: a more deliberate style for central claim of Western faith.	Chorus: “The Lord is God...”
2:25	Soloist and Orchestra. Melody and texture as before.	Accompanied recitative: Take all the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape you. Bring them down to Kishon’s brook, and there let them be slain.
2:40	Chorus and Orchestra. Homophonic, minor key.	Chorus: Take all the prophets of Baal and let not one of them escape us: bring all and slay them!
2:51	Soloist and Orchestra. Minor key and homophonic, with a frantic orchestral accompaniment; melody has a wide range with melismas.	Aria: Is not His word like a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces! For God is angry with the wicked every day. And if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.

Table 4: Listening Guide for Excerpts from Elijah

Felix was not the only musically precocious Mendelssohn in his household. In fact, the talent of his older sister Fanny (1805-1847) initially exceeded that of her younger brother. Born into a household of intelligent, educated, and socially-sophisticated women, Fanny was given the same education as her younger brother ([see figure of Fanny Mendelssohn, sketched by her future husband](#)). But for her, as for most nineteenth-century married women from middle-class families, a career as a professional musician was frowned upon. Her husband, Wilhelm Hensel supported her composing and presenting her music at private house concerts held at the Mendelssohn’s family residence. Felix also supported Fanny’s private activities, although he discouraged her from

publishing her works under her own name. In 1846, Fanny went ahead and published six songs without seeking her husband's or brother's permission.

Musicians today perform many of the more than 450 compositions that Fanny wrote for piano, voice, and chamber ensemble. Among some of her best works are the four-movement Piano Trio in D minor, Op. 11, and several volumes of songs and piano compositions. This piano trio holds its own with the piano trios, piano quartets, piano quintets, and string quartets composed by other nineteenth-century composers, from Beethoven and Schubert to the Schumanns, Johannes Brahms, and Antonin Dvorak.

6.7 MUSIC OF THE SCHUMANNS

Husband and wife Robert and Clara Schumann were another prominent musical pair of the nineteenth century. The couple became acquainted after Robert (1810-1856) moved to Leipzig and started studying piano with Friedrich Wieck, the father of the young piano prodigy Clara (1819-1896). The nine-year-old Clara was just starting to embark on her musical career. Throughout her teens, she would travel giving concerts, dazzling aristocratic and public audiences with her virtuosity. She also started publishing her compositions, which she often incorporated into her concerts. Her father, perhaps realizing what marriage would mean for the career of his daughter, refused to consent to her marriage with Robert Schumann, a marriage she desired as she and Robert had fallen in love. They subsequently married in 1840, shortly before Clara's twenty-first birthday, after a protracted court battle with her father.



Figure 6.13 | Robert and Clara Schumann

Author | Eduard Kaiser

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Once the two were married, Robert's musical activities became the couple's first priority. Robert began his musical career with aims of becoming a professional pianist. When he suffered weakness of the fingers and hands, he shifted his focus to music journalism and music composition. He founded a music magazine dedicated to showcasing the newer and more experimental music then being composed. And he started writing piano compositions, songs, chamber music, and eventually orchestral music, the most important of which include four symphonies and a piano concerto, premiered by Clara in 1846. While Robert was gaining recognition as a composer and conductor, Clara's composition and performance activities were restricted by her giving birth to eight children. Then in early 1854, Robert started showing signs of psychosis and, after a suicide attempt, was taken to an asylum. Although one of the more progressive hospitals of its day, this asylum did not allow visits from close relatives, so Clara would not see her husband for over two years and then only in the two days before his death. After his death, Clara returned to a more active career as performer; indeed, she spent the rest of her life supporting her children and grandchildren through her public appearances and teaching. Her busy calendar may have been one of the reasons why she did not compose after Robert's death.

The compositional careers of Robert and Clara followed a similar trajectory. Both started their compositional work with short piano pieces that were either virtuoso showpieces or reflective character pieces that explored extra musical ideas in musical form. Theirs were just a portion of the many character pieces, especially those at a level of difficulty appropriate for the enthusiastic amateur pianist, published throughout Europe. After their marriage, they both merged poetic and musical concerns in *Lieder*—Robert published many song cycles, and he and Clara joined forces on a song cycle published in 1841. They also both turned to traditional genres, such as the sonata and larger four-movement chamber music compositions.

Focus Compositions: Character Pieces by Robert and Clara Schumann

We'll listen to two character pieces from the 1830s. Robert Schumann's "Chiarina," was written between 1834 and 1835 and published in 1837 in a cycle of piano character pieces that he called *Carnaval*, after the festive celebrations that occurred each year before the beginning of the Christian season of Lent. Each short piece in the collection has a title, some of which refer to imaginary characters that Robert employed to give musical opinions in his music journalism. Others, such as "Chopin" and "Chiarina," refer to real people, the former referring to the popular French-Polish pianist Fryderyk Chopin, and the later referring to the young Clara. At the beginning of the "Chiarina," Robert inscribed the performance instruction "*passionata*," meaning that the

pianist should play the piece with passion. “Chiarina” is little over a minute long and consists of a two slightly contrasting musical phrases.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Played by Daniel Barenboim

Composer: Robert Schumann

Composition: “Chiarina” from *Carnaval*

Date: Published 1837

Genre: piano character piece

Form: aaba’ba’

Nature of Text: The title refers to Clara

Performing Forces: small ensemble of vocalists

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- This is a character piece for solo piano
- A dance-like mood is conveyed by its triple meter and moderately fast tempo

Other things to listen for:

- It has a leaping melody in the right hand and is accompanied by chords in the left hand.
- It uses two slightly different melodies

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00	Forte rising, leaping melody, in homophonic texture throughout	a
0:09	Fortissimo (very loud) rising, leaping melody now doubled in octaves	a
0:19	Mezzo-forte melody has leaps but a smaller range and descends slightly	b

0:28	Played once and then crescendos as it is repeated in octaves	a
0:46	Melody has leaps but a smaller range and descends slightly	b
0:57	Played once and then repeated in octaves	a

Table 5: Listening Guide for “Chiarina” from Carnaval

The second character piece is one written by Clara Schumann between 1834 and 1836 and published as one piece in the collection *Soirées Musicales* in 1836 (a soirée was an event generally held in the home of a well-to-do lover of the arts where musicians and other artists were invited for entertainment and conversation). Clara called this composition Ballade in D minor. The meaning of the title seems to have been vague almost by design, but, most broadly considered, a ballade referred to a composition thought of as a narrative. As a character piece, it tells its narrative completely through music. Several contemporary composers wrote ballades of different moods and styles; Clara’s “Ballade” shows some influence of Chopin.

Clara’s Ballade like Robert’s “Chiarina,” has a homophonic texture and starts in a minor key. A longer piece than “Chiarina,” the Ballade in D minor modulates to D major, before returning to D minor for a reprise of the A section. Its themes are not nearly as clearly delineated as the themes in “Chiarina.” Instead phrases start multiple times, each time slightly varied. You may hear what we call musical embellishments. These are notes the composer adds to a melody to provide variations. You might think of them like jewelry on a dress or ornaments on a Christmas tree. One of the most famous sorts of ornaments is the trill, in which the performer rapidly and repeatedly alternates between two pitches. We also talk of turns, in which the performer traces a rapid stepwise ascent and descent (or descent and ascent) for effect. You should also note that as the pianist in this recording plays, he seems to hold back notes at some moments and rush ahead at others: this is called rubato, that is, the robbing of time from one note to give it to another. We will see the use of rubato even more prominently in the music of Chopin.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by Jozef de Beenhouwer (at 10:21)

Composer: Clara Wieck Schumann

Composition: Ballade in D minor, Op. 6, no. 4

Date: 1836

Genre: piano character piece

Form: ABA

Nature of Text: This is a ballade, that is, a composition with narrative premises

Performing Forces: piano

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- A lyrical melody over chordal accompaniment making this homophonic texture
- A moderate to slow tempo
- In duple time (in this case, four beats for each measure)

Other things to listen for:

- Musical themes that develop and repeat but are always varied
- Musical embellishments in the form of trills and turns

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00 [10:21]	Theme starts three times before taking off; melody ascends and uses ornaments for variations; in D minor. <i>Piano</i> dynamics, slow tempo, duple time.	A
0:55	Transitional idea using trills (extended ornaments).	
1:26	New musical idea repeated a couple of times with variation. Ascending phrases crescendo and descending phrases decrescendo.	
2:09	Transitional idea returns. Slightly louder.	
2:24	Repeated note theme . More passionate and louder then subsiding in dynamics.	
2:50	First theme returns in D minor and then is varied . <i>Piano</i> with a crescendo to fortissimo and then a return to <i>piano</i> .	B

4:19	<i>Piano</i> dynamics quickly altered by crescendos and decrescendos.	A'
4:40	Return of rhythmic motive from opening. A section and then varied Dynamics move from soft to loud to soft.	Coda

Table 6: Listening Guide for Ballade in D minor, Op. 6, no. 4

6.8 MUSIC OF FRYDERYK CHOPIN

Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849) grew up in and around Warsaw, Poland, son of a French father and Polish mother. His family was a member of the educated middle class; consequently, Chopin had contact with academics and wealthier members of the gentry and middle class. He learned as much as he could from the composition instructors in Warsaw—including the keyboard music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven—before deciding to head off on a European tour in 1830. The first leg of the tour was Vienna, where Chopin expected to give concerts and then head further west. About a week after his arrival, however, Poland saw political turmoil in the Warsaw uprising, which eventually led to Russian occupation of his home country. After great efforts, Chopin secured a passport and, in the summer of 1831, traveled to Paris, which would become his adopted home. Paris was full of Polish émigrés, who were well received within musical circles. After giving a few public concerts, Chopin was able to focus his attention on the salons, salons being smaller, semi-private events, similar to soirées, generally hosted by aristocratic women for artistic edification. There and as a teacher, he was in great demand and could charge heavy fees.



Figure 6.8 | Fryderyk Chopin

Author | Eugène Delacroix

Much like Robert and Clara Schumann, Chopin's first compositions were designed to impress his audiences with his virtuoso playing. As he grew older and more established, his music became more subtle. Also, like the Schumanns, he composed pieces appropriate in difficulty for the musical amateur as well as work for virtuosos such as himself. Unlike many of the other composers we have discussed, Chopin wrote piano music almost exclusively. He was best known for character pieces, such as mazurkas, waltzes, nocturnes, etudes, ballades, polonaises, and preludes.

Focus Composition: Chopin Mazurka in F Minor, Op. 7, no. 1 (1832)

The composition on which we will focus is the Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7, no. 1, which was published in Leipzig in 1832 and then in Paris and London in 1833. The mazurka is a Polish dance, and mazurkas were rather popular in Western Europe as exotic stylized dances. Mazurkas are marked by their triple meter in which beat two rather than beat one gets the stress. They are typically composed in strains and are homophonic in texture. Chopin sometimes incorporated folk-like sounds in his mazurkas, sounds such as drones and augmented seconds. A drone is a sustained pitch or pitches. The augmented second is an interval that was commonly used in Eastern European folk music but very rarely in the tonal music of Western European composers.

All of these characteristics can be heard in the Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7, no. 1, together with the employment of rubato. Chopin was the first composer to widely request that pianists use rubato when playing his music.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by Arthur Rubinstein on piano

Composer: Fryderyk Chopin

Composition: Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7, no. 1

Date: 1836

Genre: piano character piece

Form: aaba'ba'ca'ca'

Nature of Text: the title indicates a stylized dance based on the Polish mazurka

Performing Forces: solo piano

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- This mazurka is in triple time with emphasis on beat two
- The texture is homophonic
- Chopin asks the performer to use rubato

Other things to listen for:

- Its “c” strain uses a drone and augmented seconds
- Its form is aaba’ba’ca’ca’

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
8:23	Triple-meter theme ascends up the scale and then descends and then repeats; brief ornaments on beat two of the measure. In F minor, with homophonic boom-chuck texture.	aa
8:57	After a contrasting theme that oscillates, part of the first theme returns in a’.	ba’
9:24		ba’
9:53	Folk-like melody using augmented seconds. Listen for the drone as well as rubato (which Chopin asks for here).	c
9:36		a
9:53	C returns, then a.	ca

Table 7: Listening Guide for Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7, no. 1

6.9 MUSIC OF FRANZ LISZT

Franz Liszt (b. 1811-1886) was born in Doborján, Hungary (now Raiding, Austria). His father, employed as a steward for a wealthy family, was an amateur musician who recognized his son’s talent. A group of Hungarian noblemen sponsored him with a stipend that enabled Franz to pursue his musical interest in Paris. There, he became the friend of Mendelssohn, Hugo, Chopin,

Delacroix, George Sand, and Berlioz; these friends influenced him to become part of the French Romanticism movement.

Also in Paris in 1831, Liszt attended a performance of virtuoso violinist Paganini, who was touring. Paganini's style and success helped make Liszt aware of the demand for a solo artist who performed with showmanship. The ever growing mass public audience desired gifted virtuoso soloists performers at the time. Liszt, one of the best pianists of his time, became a great showman who knew how to energize an audience. Up until Liszt, the standard practice of performing piano solos was with the solo artist's back to the audience. This limited—and actually blocked—the audience from viewing the artist's hands, facial expression, and musical nuance. Liszt changed the entire presentation by turning the piano sideways so the audience could view his facial expressions and the manner in which his fingers interacted with the keys, from playing loud and thunderously to gracefully light and legato. Liszt possessed great charisma and performance appeal; indeed, he had a following of young ladies that idolized his performances. During his career of music stardom, Liszt never married and was considered one of the most eligible bachelors of the time. But he did have several "relationships" with different women, one of whom was the novelist Countess Marie d'Agoult who wrote under the pen name of Daniel Stern. She and Liszt travelled to Switzerland for a few years and they had three children, including Cosima who ultimately married Wagner.

While at the height of his performance career, Liszt retreated from his piano soloist career to devote all his energy to composition. He moved to Weimer in 1848 and assumed the post of court musician for the Grand Duke, remaining in Weimer until 1861. There, he produced his greatest orchestral works. His position in Weimer included the responsibility as director to the Grand Duke's opera house. In this position, Liszt could influence the public's taste in music and construct musical expectations for future compositions. And he used his influential position to program what Wagner called "Music of the Future." Liszt and Wagner both advocated and promoted highly dramatic music in Weimer, with Liszt conducting the first performances of Wagner's *Lohengrin*, Berlioz's *Benevenuto Cellini*, as well as many other contemporary compositions.

While in Weimer, Liszt began a relationship with a woman who had a tremendous influence on his life and music. A wife of a nobleman in the court of the Tsar, Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittenstein met and fell in love with Liszt on his final performance tour of Russia. Later she left her husband and moved to Weimer to be with Liszt. She assisted Liszt in writing literary works, among which included a fabricated biography by Liszt on the *Life of Chopin* and a book on "Gypsy," a book also considered eccentric and inaccurate.

While Liszt had an eventful romantic life, he remained a Roman Catholic, and he eventually sought solitude in the Catholic Church. His association with the church led to the writing of his major religious works. He also joined the Oratory of the Madonna del Rosario and studied the preliminary stage for priesthood, taking his minor orders and becoming known as the Abbé Liszt. He dressed as a priest and composed Masses, oratorios, and religious music for the church.

Still active at the age of seventy-five, he earned respect from England as a composer and was awarded an honor in person by Queen Victoria. Returning from this celebration, he met Claude Debussy in Paris then journeyed to visit his widowed daughter Cosima in Bayreuth and attended a Wagnerian Festival. He died during that festival, and even on his death bed, dying of pneumonia, Liszt named one of the “Music of the Future” masterpieces: Wagner’s *Tristan*.

Liszt’s primary goal in music composition was pure expression through the idiom of tone. His freedom of expression necessitated his creation of the **symphonic poem**, sometimes called a tone poem--a one movement program piece written for orchestra that portrays images of a place, story, novel, landscape or non-musical source or image. This form utilizes transformations of a few themes through the entire work for continuity. The themes are varied by adjusting the rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tempos, instrumental registers, instrumentation in the orchestra, timbre, and melodic outline, or shape. By making these slight-to-major adjustments, Liszt found it possible to convey the extremes of emotion—from love to hate, war to peace, triumph to defeat—within a thematic piece. His thirteen symphonic poems greatly influenced the nineteenth century, an influence that continues through today. Liszt’s most famous piece for orchestra is the three portrait work *Symphony after Goethe’s Faust* (the portraits include Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles). A similar work, his *Symphony of Dante’s Divine Comedy*, has three movements: *Inferno*, *Purgatory*, and *Vision of Paradise*. His most famous of the symphonic poems is *Les Preludes* (The Preludes) written in 1854.

His best known works include nineteen Hungarian Rhapsodies ([Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2](#)), Piano concertos ([Piano concerto No. 1](#)), Mephisto Waltzes, Faust Symphony ([Mephisto from Faust Symphony Part 1](#)), and [Lieberstaumes](#).

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Composer: Franz Liszt

Composition: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2

Date: 1847

Genre: The second of a set of 19 Hungarian Rhapsodies

Performing Forces: Piano solo

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- Widely popular, this piece offers the pianist the opportunity to reveal exceptional skill as a virtuoso, while providing the listener with an immediate and irresistible musical appeal.
- Listen to the dance rhythms and strong pulse even at the slower tempos

Other things to listen for:

- The piece begins with the “lasson”, a brief dramatic introduction that is followed by the “friska”, an energy building section that build to a tempest of sound and momentum.
- This piece was used in many animated cartoons in contemporary culture, “Tom and Jerry”, “Bugs Bunny”, “Woody Woodpecker” and several others.
- Interest in this piece is rooted in the period’s interests in “Exoticism” (music from other cultures).

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture
00:00-04:26	The lason opens at a slow tempo
04:26to the end	The friska follows and builds feverishly. Dance rhythms with heavy pulse.

Table 8: Listening Guide for Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2

We shift now from smaller compositions for small forces to larger-scale compositions written for entire orchestras.

6.10MUSIC OF HECTOR BERLIOZ

Hector Berlioz (b. 1803-1869) was born in France in La Côte-Saint-André, Isère near Grenoble. His father was a wealthy doctor and planned on Hector’s pursuing the profession of a physician. At the age of eighteen, Hector was sent to study medicine in Paris. Music at the Conservatory and at the Opera, however, became the focus of his attention. A year later, his family grew alarmed when they realized that the young student had decided to study music instead of medicine.

At this time, Paris was in a Romantic revolution. Berlioz found himself in the company of novelist Victor Hugo and painter Delacroix. No longer receiving financial support from his parents, the young Berlioz sang in the theater choruses, performed musical chores, and gave music lessons. As a young student, Berlioz was amazed and intrigued by the works of Beethoven. Berlioz also developed interest in Shakespeare, whose popularity in Paris had recently increased with the performance of his plays by a visiting British troupe. Hector became impassioned for the Shakespearean characters of Ophelia and Juliet as they were portrayed by the alluring actress Harriet Smithson. Berlioz became obsessed with the young actress and also overwhelmed by sadness due to her lack of interest in him as a suitor. Berlioz became known for his violent mood swings, a condition known today as manic depression.

In 1830, Berlioz earned his first recognition for his musical gift when he won the much sought-after Prix de Rome. This highly-esteemed award provided him a stipend and the opportunity to work and live in Paris, thus providing Berlioz with the chance to complete his most famous work, the *Symphonie Fastastique*, that year.

Upon his return to Rome, he began his intense courtship of Harriet Smithson. Both her family and his vehemently opposed their relationship. Several violent and arduous situations occurred, one of which involved Berlioz's unsuccessfully attempting suicide. After recovering from this attempt, Hector married Harriet. Once the previously unattainable matrimonial goal had been attained, Berlioz's passion somewhat cooled, and he discovered that it was Harriet's Shakespearean roles that she performed, rather than Harriet herself, that really intrigued him. The first year of their marriage was the most fruitful for him musically. By the time he was forty, he had composed most of his famous works. Bitter from giving up her acting career for marriage, Harriet became an alcoholic. The two separated in 1841. Berlioz then married his long time mistress Marie Recio, an attractive but average singer who demanded to perform in his concerts.

To supplement his income during his career, Berlioz turned to writing as a music critic, producing a steady stream of articles and reviews. He successfully utilized this vocation as a way to support his own works by persuading the audience to accept and appreciate them. His critical writing also helped to educate audiences so they could understand his complex and innovative pieces. As a prose writer, Berlioz wrote *The Treatise on Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration*. He also wrote '*Les Soirées de l'Orchestre*' (Evenings with the Orchestra), a compilation of his articles on musical life in nineteenth-century France, and an autobiography entitled *Mémoires*. Later in life, he conducted his music in all the capitals of Europe, with the exception of Paris. It was one location where the public would not accept his work; the Paris public would read his reviews and learn to welcome lesser composers, but they would not accept Berlioz's

music. As over the years Berlioz saw his own works neglected by the public of Paris while they cheered and supported others, he became disgusted and bitter from the neglect. His last final work composed to gain acceptance by the Parisian audiences was the opera *Béatrice et Bénédict* with his own libretto based upon Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*. But the Parisian public did not appreciate it. After this final effort, the disillusioned and embittered Berlioz composed no more in his seven remaining years, dying rejected and tormented at the age of sixty-six. Only after his death would France appreciate his achievements.

His operas include *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Le Troyens* ([hear and view an excerpt](#)), *Béatrice et Bénédict*, *Les francs-juges* (incomplete), *Grande Messe des morts (Requiem)* ([view and hear the tuba mirum from the Requiem](#)), *La damnation de Faust*, *Te Deum*, and *L'enfance du Christ*.

His major orchestral compositions include *Symphonie fantastique* ([hear the fifth movement](#)), *Harold en Italie*, *Romeo et Juliette* ([hear and view an excerpt](#)), *The Corsair*, *King Lear*, and *Grande symphonie funèbre et triomphale*. Berlioz is credited for changing the modern sound of orchestras.

Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* is important for several reasons: it is a program symphony, it incorporates an *idée fixe* (a recurring theme representing an ideology or person that provides continuity through a musical work), and it contains five movements rather than the four of most symphonies.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by The BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Yan Pascal Tortelier

Composer: Hector Berlioz

Composition: Symphonie Fantastique, Op.14: 1st movement Reveries – Passions

Date: 1830

Genre: Symphony, First movement

Form: Sonata form

Performing Forces: large Romantic symphony orchestra

What we want you to remember about this composition:


- The largo (slow) opening is pensive and expressive, depicting the depression, the joy, and the fruitless passion Berlioz felt. It is followed by a long and very fast



section with a great amount of expression, with the *idée fixe* (a short recurring musical theme/motive associated with a person, place or idea) indicating the appearance of his beloved.

- The title for the movement is “Dreams, Passions.” It represents his uneasy and uncertain state of mind. The mood quickly changes as his love appears to him. He reflects on the love inspired by her. He notes the power of his enraged jealousy for her and of his religious consolation at the end.

Other things to listen for:

- Berlioz is known for being one of the greatest orchestrators of all time. He even wrote the first comprehensive book on orchestration. He always thought in terms of the exact sound (tone or timbre) of the orchestra and the mixture of individual sounds to blend through orchestration. He gave very detailed instructions to the conductor and individual performers in regards to articulations and how he wanted them to play. Listen to the subtleties and nuance of the performance. Berlioz left little up to chance since he was so thorough in his compositions.

Timing	Music Measure (Bar) Numbers	Form, Melody, and Texture
00:12	3-6	<p>The introductory four-bar phrase played by the violin one forms the basis for the following three phrases to bar sixteen, most of the music being played on muted strings. Here the composer portrays both depression and elation.</p> 
1:45	17-71	<p>The key changes from C major to Eb major to C minor and finally arriving to C major with a cadence in measure 62</p>

5:30	72-111	<p>Exposition-Allegro</p> <p>He sees his beloved and is overcome with many different emotions.</p>  <p>[Subject/<i>idée fixe</i>, bars 72-111]</p> <p>The major key of C is established by dominant pedal point.</p>
6:33	133-149	<p>Transition section that provides rising tension in the approach to the dominant.</p>
6:47	150-166a	<p>Second subject introduced and established in the key of G major at measure 160. See Music insert 3 for second subject notation.</p>  <p>[Second Subject found in bars 160-166]</p>



8:36	167-228	<p>Development Section—this section includes recapitulations and further developments. Two new motifs (musical segments) are featured in this section of the first movement. The first has become known as the “sigh motif.” This motif musically represents the sighing figure of a long note followed by a shorter note. See music insert 4 for sighing motif notation.</p>  <p>[Sigh motif notations, measure 87.]</p> <p>The second motif has become known as the “heart beat motif.” It is heard as a pair of detached pulses/quavers. These are brought out dynamically (volume emphasis) and represent heartbeats. See music insert 5 for heartbeat motif notation.</p>  <p>[Heartbeat motif notations, measure seventy-eight]</p>
9:33	232-278	Recapitulation in the dominant key of G major
10:20	278-311	Transitional Passage to upcoming second subject
10:51	311-329	Second subject resolving fortissimo in C major
11:50	358-409	Further development section continues and gradually increased tension setting up next unison section.
12:40	410-439	The full orchestra plays the first subject in C major
13:08	440-474	Further orchestral build up
13:43	475-526	Coda section: The final chords musically representing the consolation of religion ending with a plagal cadence (traditional Amen progression/ending).

Table 9: Listening Guide for Symphonie Fantastique, Op.14: 1st movement Reveries – Passions

6.11 MUSIC OF JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Whereas Berlioz’s program symphony might be heard as a radical departure from earlier symphonies, the music of Johannes Brahms is often thought of as breathing new life into classical forms ([see figure of Brahms](#)). For centuries, musical performances were of compositions by composers who were still alive and working. In the nineteenth century that trend changed. By the time that Johannes Brahms was twenty, over half of all music performed in concerts was by

composers who were no longer living; by the time that he was forty, that amount increased to over two-thirds. Brahms knew and loved the music of forebears such as Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. He wrote in the genres they had developed, including symphonies, concertos, string quartets, sonatas, and songs. To these traditional genres and forms, he brought sweeping nineteenth-century melodies, much more chromatic harmonies, and the forces of the modern symphony orchestra. He did not, however, compose symphonic poems or program music as did Hector Berlioz and Franz Liszt.

Brahms himself was keenly aware of walking in Beethoven's shadow. In the early 1870s, he wrote to conductor friend Hermann Levi, "I shall never compose a symphony." Continuing, he reflected, "You have no idea how someone like me feels when he hears such a giant marching behind him all of the time." Nevertheless, some six years later, after a twenty-year period of germination, he premiered his first symphony. Brahms's music engages Romantic lyricism, rich chromaticism, thick orchestration, and rhythmic dislocation in a way that clearly goes beyond what Beethoven had done. Still, his intensely motivic and organic style, and his use of a four movement symphonic model that features sonata, variations, and ABA forms is indebted to Beethoven.

The third movement of Brahms's First Symphony is a case in point. It follows the ABA form, as had most moderate-tempo, dance-like third movements since the minuets of the eighteenth-century symphonies and scherzos of the early nineteenth-century symphonies. This movement uses more instruments and grants more solos to the woodwind instruments than earlier symphonies did (listen especially for the clarinet solos). The musical texture is thicker as well, even though the melody always soars above the other instruments. Finally, this movement is more graceful and songlike than any minuet or scherzo that preceded it. In this regard, it is more like the lyrical character pieces of Chopin, Mendelssohn, and the Schumanns than like most movements of Beethoven's symphonies. But, it does not have an extra musical referent; in fact, Brahms' music is often called "absolute" music, that is, music for the sake of music. The music might call to a listener's mind any number of pictures or ideas, but they are of the listener's imagination, from the listener's interpretation of the melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and textures written by Brahms. In this way, such a movement is very different than a movement from a program symphony such as Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. Public opinion has often split over program music and absolute music. What do you think? Do you prefer a composition in which the musical and extra musical are explicitly linked, or would you rather make up your own interpretation of the music, without guidance from a title or story?

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by the Berlin Philharmonic Herbert von Karajan conducting

Composer: Johannes Brahms

Composition: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68, III. Un poco allegretto e grazioso [a little allegretto and graceful]

Date: 1876

Genre: Symphony

Form: ABA moderate-tempoed, dancelike movement from a symphony

Performing Forces: Romantic symphony orchestra, including two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, one contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, violins (first and second), violas, cellos, and double basses

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- Its lilting tuneful melodies transform the scherzo mood into something more romantic
- It is in ABA form
- It is in A-flat major (providing respite from the C minor pervading the rest of the symphony)

Other things to listen for:

- The winds as well as the strings get the melodic themes from the beginning

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00	Clarinet solo with descending question phrases answer phrase in the flutes. (sparse string accompaniment)	A
0:26	Strings get the melodic theme with answer in the winds	

1:01	Second theme: starts with a clarinet solo and then with the whole woodwind section. Faster note values in the strings provide increased musical tension	
1:26	Return of opening theme (clarinet solo)	
1:41	New theme introduced and repeated by different groups in the orchestra. Gradually building dynamic and layers of the texture (more brass); phrase ends with hemiola. Climaxes to a forte dynamic	B
3:17	First theme returns answer theme in the strings (varied form). Sparser accompaniment again Softer dynamic	'A'
3:32	Second theme: This time it is extended using sequences	
4:00	Ascending sequential treatment of motives from the movement	Coda

Table 10: Listening Guide for Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68, III. *Un poco allegretto e grazioso* [a little allegretto and graceful]

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, political and cultural nationalism strongly influenced many creative works of the nineteenth century. We have already observed aspects of nationalism in the piano music of Chopin and Liszt. Later nineteenth-century composers invested even more heavily in nationalist themes.

6.12 MUSIC OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism, found in many genres, is marked by the use of folk songs or nationalist themes in operas or instrumental music. Nationalist composers of different countries include Russian composers such as Modest Mussorgsky, Alexander Borodin, and Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (members of the “Kuchka”); Bohemian composers such as Antonin Dvorak and Bedřich Smetana; Hungarian composers such as Liszt; Scandinavian composers such as Edvard Grieg and Jean Sibelius; Spanish composers such as Enrique Granados, Joaquín Turina, and Manuel de Falla; and British composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Composers looked to their native as well as **exotic** (from other countries) music to add to their pallet of ideas. Nationalism was expressed in several ways:

- songs and dances of native people
- mythology: dramatic works based on folklore of peasant life (Tchaikovsky's Russian fairy-tale operas and ballets)
- celebration of a national hero, historic event, or scenic beauty of country

6.13 MUSIC OF BEDŘICH SMETANA

Bedřich Smetana (b. 1824-1884) was born in Litomysl, Bohemia while under Austrian rule (now the Czech Republic). Smetana was the son of a brewer and violinist and his father's third wife. Smetana was a talented pianist who gave public performances from the age of six. Bohemia under Austrian rule was politically very volatile. In 1848 Smetana aligned himself with those seeking independent statehood from Austria. After that revolution was crushed, Prague and the surrounding areas were brutally suppressed—especially those areas and people suspected of being sympathetic to Bohemian nationalism. In 1856, Smetana left for Sweden to accept a conductorship post. He hoped to follow in the footsteps of such music predecessors as Liszt. He thus expresses his admiration, “By the grace of God and with His help, I shall one day be a Liszt in technique and a Mozart in composition.”¹

As a composer, Smetana began incorporating nationalist themes, plots, and dances in his operas and symphonic poems. He founded the Czech national school after he left Sweden and was a pioneer at incorporating Czech folk tunes, rhythms, and dances into his major works. Smetana returned to Bohemia in 1861 and assumed his role as national composer. He worked to open and establish a theatre venue in Prague where performances would be performed in their native tongue. Of his eight original operas, seven are still performed in native tongue today. One of these operas, *The Bartered Bride*, was and is still acclaimed. [Hear Smetana's *Bartered Bride* Overture](#). He composed several folk dances, including polkas for orchestra. These polkas incorporated the style and levity of his Bohemian culture. [Hear his *Louisa's Polka*](#).

Smetana also is known for composing the cycle of six symphonic poems entitled *My Country*. These poems are program music, representing the beautiful Bohemian countryside, Bohemian folk dance and song rhythms, and the pageantry of Bohemian legends. The first of these symphonic poems is called *Má vlast (My Fatherland)* and is symbolic program music representing his birthplace. [Hear Smetana's *My Fatherland*](#).

¹ Taken from his diary, 23 January, 1845 found at www.quotesquotations.com/biography.

The second of these, *Vltava*, (*The Moldau*) is recognized as Smetana's greatest orchestral work. Notes in the conductor's score state

"The Moldau" represents an exceptional expression of patriotic or nationalistic music. The musical poem reflects the pride, oppression, and hope of the Bohemian people. . . .

Two springs pour forth in the shade of the Bohemian Forest, one warm and gushing, the other cold and peaceful. Their waves, gaily flowing over rocky beds, join and glisten in the rays of the morning sun. The forest brook, hastening on, becomes the river Vltava (Moldau.) Coursing through Bohemia's valleys, it grows into a mighty stream. Through thick woods it flows, as the gay sounds of the hunt and the notes of the hunter's horn are heard ever nearer. It flows through grass-grown pastures and lowlands where a wedding feast is being celebrated with song and dance. At night wood and water nymphs revel in its sparkling waves. Reflected on its surface are fortresses and castles—witnesses of bygone days of knightly splendor and the vanished glory of fighting times. At the St. John Rapids the stream races ahead, winding through the cataracts, heaving on a path with its foaming waves through the rocky chasm into the broad river bed— finally. Flowing on in majestic peace toward Prague—finally. Flowing on in majestic peace toward Prague and welcomed by time-honored Vysehrad (castle.) Then it vanishes far beyond the poet's gaze."²

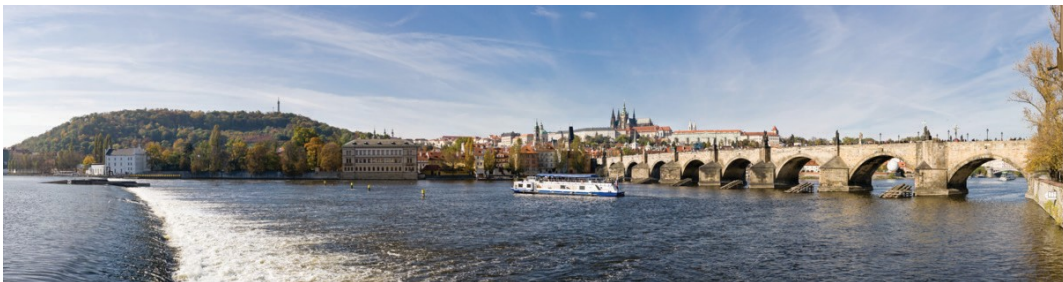


Figure 6.15 | A panoramic view looking north-west across the Vltava River to Prague Castle and the Charles Bridge

Author | User "Diliff"

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

² Preface to the original score, Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, *The Concert Companion* p. 672

Featuring Vilem Tausky conducting the BBC Symphony

Composer: Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)

Composition: The Moldau (*Vlatava*)

Date: 1874


Genre: Symphonic poem





Form: Symphonic Poem (Tone Poem)

Performing Forces: piccolo, two flutes, two oboes , two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, harp, strings

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- *The Moldau (Vlatava)* is a programmatic symphonic poem portraying the story of the main river in Bohemia as it flows through Smetana's homeland countryside. Each section portrays a different scene, often contrasting, that the river encounters.
- This piece is a good representation of Czech nationalism and also of a romantic setting of nature.
- The composer wrote the work following a trip he took down the river as part of a larger cycle of six symphonic poems written between 1874 and 1879 entitled *Má Vlast (My Country)*.
- Note that each section of the work has its own descriptive title in bold print.

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture
0:00	<p>Two Springs.(Source of the river) Flutes begin with a flowing/rippling melodic passage soon joined by the clarinets. The harp and strings (pizzicato) are heard periodically.</p> 
1:06	<p>Rippling notes moves to lower strings that lead to the main river theme.</p>

1:16	<p>The River Theme.</p> <p>Violins present the river theme in a minor key (e minor). Melody moves step-wise with running-note accompaniment in strings. Repeated.</p> 
1:31	River theme repeated.
1:46	Melodic answer to the river theme.
2:11	The river theme is expanded (note the triangle with orchestral crescendos).
2:18	Return of the river theme.
2:35	Answer to river theme.
2:52	Expansion/elaboration of river theme.
3:01	Return of the river theme.
3:20	<p>Forest Hunting Scene. French horns and trumpets, hunting calls.</p> 
4:10	<p>Rippling continues (in strings); dies down to gently rocking motion. Transition to next section (strings). Repeated notes in strings lead to rustic folk tune, staccato in strings and woodwinds</p>
4:38	<p>Peasant Wedding. Strings present a dance-like tune (polka). Closes with repeated single note in strings</p> 
6:15	<p>Moonlight: Dance of Water Nymphs. Woodwinds, sustained tones.</p> 


6:35	Flute passage (similar to opening of work). Rippling figures in flutes; muted string theme with harp, punctuated by French horn; brass crescendo, fanfare
7:02	Muted violins in high register with a legato melody.
9:06	Intensification.
9:29	Violins present the river theme. Played in the minor mode
10:17	River theme reappears in the major mode
10:29	St. John's Rapids. Full orchestra, ff. Brasses, timpani roll, piccolo, cymbal crashes.
12:09	River theme, Full orchestra, Loudest dynamic/volume. <i>The River at its Widest Point.</i> Full orchestra, river theme in major key. Faster tempo.
12:45	The Ancient Castle. The brasses and woodwinds portray Vyšehrad, the ancient castle in a hymn-like melody.  Slow then Accelerates
14:05	River Dies Away, Strings slow down, lose momentum
Final Cadence	Two forceful closing chords.

Table 11: Listening Guide for The Moldau (Vltava)

6.14 MUSIC OF ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Antonín Dvořák (b. 1841-1904) was born in a Bohemian village of Nelahozeves near Prague. Following in Smetana's footsteps, Dvořák became a leading composer in the Czech nationalism music campaign. Indeed, Dvořák and Smetana are considered the founders of the Czech national school. Dvořák, at the age of sixteen, moved to Prague. As a young aspiring violinist, Dvořák earned a seat in the Czech national Theater. Dvořák learned to play viola and became a professional violist; for a time in his career, he performed under Smetana. Dvořák became recognized by Brahms who encouraged Dvořák to devote his energy to composing. Early in his career he was musically under the German influence of Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn. Later, however, Dvořák explored his own culture, rooting his music in the dances and songs of Bohemia. Indeed, he never lost touch with his humble upbringing by his innkeeper and butcher father.



Figure 6.16 | Antonín Dvořák

Author | Unknown

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Dvořák's compositions received favorable recognition abroad and reluctant recognition at home. From 1892 to 1895, Dvořák served as director of the National Conservatory in the United States. During this time his compositions added American influences to the Bohemian. He fused “old world” harmonic theory with “new world” style. Very interested in American folk music, Dvořák took as one of his pupils an African-American baritone singer named Henry T. Burleigh who was an arranger and singer of spirituals. [Hear Harry T. Burleigh sing the spiritual “Go Down Moses”](#). Dvořák's admiration and enthusiasm for the African-American spiritual is conveyed as he stated,

I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. These can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition, to be developed in the United States. These beautiful and varied themes are the product of the soil. They are the folk songs of America and your composers must turn to them.³

The spirituals, along with Native American and cowboys songs, interested Dvořák and influenced his compositions for years to come. His love for this American folk music was contagious and soon spread to other American composers. Up until this point, American

³ Gutmann, Peter. “Dvorak's “New World” Symphony”. *Classical Classics. Classical Notes*. Retrieved 2012-09-09.

composers were under the heavy influence of their European counterparts. Dvořák's influence and legacy as an educator and composer can be traced in the music of Aaron Copland and George Gershwin. Although he gained much from his time in America, Dvořák yearned for his homeland to which he returned after three years away, resisting invitations from Brahms to relocate in Vienna. Dvořák desired the more simple life of his homeland where he died in 1904, shortly after his last opera, *Armida*, was first performed.

6.14.1 Music for Orchestra

During his lifetime, Dvořák wrote in various music forms, including the symphony. He composed nine symphonies in all, with his most famous being the ninth, *From the New World* (1893). This symphony was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic who premiered it in New York on December 16, 1893, the same year as its completion. The symphony was partially inspired from a Czech translation of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *Hiawatha*.

Dvořák also composed a cello concerto for solo instrument and orchestra, a violin concerto, and a lesser known piano concerto. Dvořák received recognition for *Romance* for solo violin and orchestra and *Silent Woods* for cello and orchestra. These two pieces make significant contributions to the solo repertoire for both string instruments.

Dvořák composed several piano duets that he later orchestrated for symphony orchestra. They include his ten *Legends*, two sets of *Slavonic Dances*, and three *Slavic Rhapsodies*. His overtures include *In nature's realm*, *My Home*, *Carnival*, *Hussite*, and *Othello*. He also composed a polonaise *Scherzo capriccioso* and the much admired *Serenade for Strings*. His symphonic poems include *The World Dove*, *The Golden Spinning-Wheel*, and *The Noonday Witch*.

6.14.2 Music for Chamber Ensembles

Dvořák also composed chamber music, including fourteen string quartets. No 12, the "American" Quartet, was written in 1893, the same year as the *New World Symphony*. Also from the American period, Dvořák composed the G major Sonatinas for violin and piano whose second movement is known as "Indian Lament." Of the four remaining found Dvořák piano trios, the *Dumky* trio is famous for using the Bohemian national dance form. His quintets for piano and strings or strings alone for listening enjoyment are much appreciated, as are his string sextet and the trio of two violins and viola, *Terzetto*.

Humoresque in G-flat major is the best known of the eight Dvorak's piano pieces placed in a set. He also composed two sets of piano duets entitled *Slavonic Dances*.

6.14.3 Operas

From 1870 to 1903, Dvořák wrote ten operas. The famous aria ‘O Silver Moon’, 1900) from *Rusalka* is one of his most famous pieces. Dvořák wrote many of his operas with village theatres and comic village plots in mind—much the same as Smetana’s *The Bartered Bride*. Other opera were based upon Czech legend.

6.14.4 Choral and Vocal Works

Several of Dvořák’s choral works were composed for many of the amateur choral societies such as those found in Birmingham, Leeds, and London in England. The oratorio *St. Ludmilla* was composed for such societies, as were settings of the Mass, Requiem Mass, and the *Te Deum* which was first performed in 1892 in New York. Earlier choral works and settings, such as *Stabat Mater* and Psalm CXLIX, were performed in Prague 1879-1880.

Dvořák composed several songs, including the appreciated set of *Moravian Duets* for soprano and contralto. The most famous of his vocal pieces is the “Songs My Mother Taught Me” which is the fourth in the *Seven Gypsy Songs*, opus 55, set.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Composer: Antonin Dvorak

Composition: From the New World, Symphony 9, movement 2 Largo

Date: 1893

Genre: Symphony Orchestra

Performing Forces: Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Sir George Solti, conductor

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- The theme. The “coming home theme” is said to possibly be from a negro spiritual or Czech folk tune. It is introduced in what some call the most famous English horn solo.

Other things to listen for:

- The weaving of these very beautiful but simple melodies. Listen to how “western American” the piece sounds at times. The influence of American (western, spirituals, and folk) had a profound influence on Dvorak’ compositions.

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture
0:00	Brass choral with string chord transition
0:45	English horn solo (theme 1) then woodwind transition to brass chords.
1:41	Theme is passed around then returns to English horn
5:34	Flute and oboe perform theme 2 over string tremolo, then clarinet duet above pizzicato strings. String then perform theme 2 to a transition
8:10	Theme/melody 3 played by violins-very smooth and connected
9:21	Oboe, clarinet , then the flute perform yet another theme, violins, cellos and basses-Light folk dance style in nature
9:47	Trombones enter with the first theme from the first movement-then trumpets and strings overlap with other earlier themes from the work. These style and compositional techniques create a very “western” sounding work.
10:28	English horn solo reintroduced followed by imitations in the strings (two silences) then scored reduction to a trio
11:40	Violin, viola, and cello trio. Transition in winds and strings
12:59	Opening chords without trumpets it is much darker sounding
13:29	Winds and strings pass the melodies around with ascension
13:51	Final three part chord in the double basses

Table 12: Listening Guide for From the New World, Symphony 9, movement 2 Largo

You are encouraged to listen the entire symphony. For more information and a narrative guided tour of the Symphony no. 9 “*From the New World*”, go to:

- [Antonín Dvořák: Symphony no. 9 “From the New World” analysis by Gerard Schwarz Part 1 First movement](#)
- [Antonín Dvořák: Symphony no. 9 “From the New World” analysis by Gerard Schwarz Part 2 Second Movement](#)
- [Antonín Dvořák: Symphony no. 9 “From the New World” analysis by Gerard Schwarz Part 3 Third Movement](#)
- [Antonín Dvořák: Symphony no. 9 “From the New World” analysis by Gerard Schwarz Part 4](#)
- [Another interpretation of the “From the New World”, a commentary \(from literature\) by Joseph Horowitz](#)

6.15MUSIC OF PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY

Pyotr (Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) was born in Votinsk, a small mining town in Russia. He was a son of a government official, and started taking piano at the age of five, though his family intended him to have a career as a government official. His mother died of cholera when he was fourteen, a tragedy that had a profound and lasting effect on him. He attended the aristocratic school in St. Petersburg called the School of Jurisprudence and, upon completion, obtained a minor government post in the Ministry of Justice. Nevertheless, Pyotr always had a strong interest in music and yearned to study it.



Figure 6.17 | Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Author | Nikolai Dmitriyevich Kuznetsov

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At the age of twenty-three, he resigned his government post and entered the newly created Conservatory of St. Petersburg to study music. From the age of twenty-three to twenty-six, he studied intently and completed his study in three years. His primary teachers at the conservatory were Anton Rubinstein and Konstantin Zarembo, but he himself taught lessons while he studied. Upon completion, Tchaikovsky was recommended by Rubinstein, director of the school as well as teacher, to a teaching post at the new conservatory of Moscow. The young professor of harmony had full teaching responsibilities with long hours and a large class. Despite his heavy workload, his twelve years at the conservatory saw the composing of some of his most famous works, including his first symphony. At the age of twenty-nine, he completed his first opera *Voyevoda* and composed the *Romeo and Juliet* overture. At the age of thirty-three, he started supplementing

his income by writing as a music critic, and also composed his second symphony, first piano concerto, and his first ballet, *Swan Lake*.

The reception of his music sometimes included criticism, and Tchaikovsky took criticism very personally, being prone as he was to (attacks of) depression. These bouts with depression were exacerbated by an impaired personal social life. In an effort to calm and smooth that personal life, Tchaikovsky entered into a relationship and marriage with a conservatory student named Antonina Ivanovna Miliukova in 1877. She was star struck and had fallen immediately and rather despairingly in love with him. His pity for her soon turned into unmanageable dislike to the point that he avoided her at all cost. Once in a fit of depression and aversion, he even strolled into the icy waters of the Moscow River to avoid her. Many contemporaries believe the effort was a suicide attempt. A few days later, nearly approaching a complete mental breakdown, he sought refuge and solace fleeing to his brothers in St. Petersburg. The marriage lasted less than a month.

At this darkest hour for Tchaikovsky, a kind, wealthy benefactress who admired his music became his sponsor. Her financial support helped restore Tchaikovsky to health, freed him from his burdensome teaching responsibilities, and permitted him to focus on his compositions. His benefactor was a widowed industrialist, Nadezhda von Meck, who was dominating and emotional and who loved his music. From her secluded estate, she raised her eleven children and managed her estate and railroads. Due to the social norms of the era, she had to be very careful to make sure that her intentions in supporting the composer went towards his music and not towards the composer as a man; consequently, they never met one another other than possibly through the undirected mutual glances at a crowded concert hall or theater. They communicated through a series of letters to one another, and this distance letter-friendship soon became one of fervent attachment.

In his letters to Meck, Tchaikovsky would explain how he envisioned and wrote his music, describing it as a holistic compositional process, with his envisioning the thematic development to the instrumentation being all one thought. The secured environment she afforded Tchaikovsky enabled him to compose unrestrainedly and very creatively. In appreciation and respect for his patron, Tchaikovsky dedicated his fourth symphony to Meck. He composed that work in his mid-thirties, a decade when he premiered his opera *Eugene Onegin* and composed the *1812 Overture* ([excerpt](#)) and *Serenade for Strings*.

Tchaikovsky's music ultimately earned him international acclaim, leading to his receiving a lifelong subsidy from the Tsar in 1885. He overcame his shyness and started conducting appearances in concert halls throughout Europe, making his music the first of any Russian composer to be accepted and appreciated by Western music consumers. At the age of fifty, he

premiered *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Queen of Spades* in St. Petersburg. A year later, in 1891, he was invited to the United States to participate in the opening ceremonies for Carnegie Hall. He also toured the United States, where he was afforded impressive hospitality. He grew to admire the American spirit, feeling awed by New York's skyline and Broadway. He wrote that he felt he was more appreciated in America than in Europe.

While his composition career sometimes left him feeling dry of musical ideas, Tchaikovsky's musical output was astonishing and included at this later stage of his life two of his greatest symphonies: *The Nutcracker* and *Iolanta*, both of which premiered in St. Petersburg. He conducted the premier of his sixth symphony, *Pathétique*, in St. Petersburg as well, but received only a lukewarm reception, partially due to his shy, lack-luster personality. The persona carried over into his conducting technique that was rather reserved and subdued, leading to a less than emotion-packed performance by his orchestra.

A few days after the premier, while he was still in the St. Petersburg, Tchaikovsky ignored warnings against drinking unboiled water, warnings due to the current prevalence of cholera there. He contracted the disease and died within a week at the age of fifty-three years old. Immediately upon his tragic death, the *Symphonie Pathétique* earned great acclaim that it has held ever since.

In the nineteenth century and still today, Tchaikovsky is among the most highly esteemed of composers. Russians have the highest regard for Tchaikovsky as a national artist. Igor [Stravinsky stated](#), "He was the most Russian of us all!" Tchaikovsky incorporated the national emotional feelings and culture—from its simple countryside to its busy cities—into his music. Along with his nationalism influences, such as Russian folk song, Tchaikovsky enjoyed studying and incorporating German symphony, Italian opera, and French Ballet. He was comfortable with all of these disparate sources and gave all his music lavish melodies flooding with emotion.

Tchaikovsky composed a tremendously wide spectrum of music, with ten operas including *Eugene Onegin*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *Queen of Spades*, and *Iolanthe*; internationally-acclaimed ballets, including *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker* ([excerpt](#)), *Snow Maiden*, and *Hamlet*; six symphonies, three piano concertos, various overtures, chamber music, piano solos, songs, and choral works.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Composer: Pyotr (Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky (b. 1840-1893)

Composition: 1812 Overture

Date: 1882

Genre: Symphonic Overture

Form: Two-part overture—Choral and Finale

Performing Forces: Large orchestra, including a percussion section with large bells and a battery of cannons

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- The piece depicts preparation for war, the actual conflict, and victory after the war is ended. It is quite descriptive in nature.
- Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* is one of the most famous and forceful pieces of classical music. The *1812 Overture* is particularly famous for its epic finale.
- It was made famous and mainstream to the public in the United States through public concerts on July 4th by city orchestras such as the Boston Pops.
- Though the piece was written to celebrate the anniversary of Russia's victory over France in 1812, the piece's finale is very often used for the 4th of July during fireworks displays.

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture
0:00–2:14	The Russian hymn “Spasi, Gospodi, Iyudi Tvoya” (“O Lord, Save Thy People”) is performed in the strings
2:14– 3:46	The music morphs into a more suspenseful style creating tension of possible upcoming conflict.
3:46– 4:45	Snare drums set a military tone as the overtures theme is introduced. Listen how the rhythms line up clear and precise.
4:45– 6:39	An energetic disjunctive style portray an attack from the French. Brief motives of La Marseillaise, the French national anthem are heard. The energy continues to build. The tension diminishes.
6:39–8:10	A reference to a lyrical section is heard contrasting the previous war scene.
8:10–8:55	A traditional folkdance -tune “U vorot” (“At the gate”) from Russia is introduced into the work.
8:5–10:26	The energetic conflicting melodies are reintroduced depicting conflict.
10:26–11:11	The lyrical peaceful tune is reintroduced..

11:11–11:31	The folk dance is reintroduced..
11:31–12:05	The French Marseillaise motive appears again in the horns.The tension and energy again build.
12:05–12:56	Percussion and even real cannons are used to depict the climax of the war conflict. This followed by a musical loss of tension through descending and broadening lines in the strings.
12:56–13:59	The Russian Hymn is heard again in victory with the accompaniment of all the church bells in celebration commemorating victory throughout Russia.
13:59–14:11	The music excels portraying a hasty French retreat
14:11–15:09	The Russian anthem with cannons/percussion overpowers the French theme, The church bells join in again symbolic of the Russian victory.

Table 13: Listening Guide for 1812 Overture

6.16MUSIC OF JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

John Philip Sousa, (b. Nov. 6, 1854-1939) was born in Washington, D.C. to a father, John Antonio Sousa, who played trombone in the U.S. Marine band and a mother, Maria Elisabeth Trinkaus, of Bavarian descent. The young Sousa was raised in a very musical environment and began studying voice, violin, piano, flute, baritone, trombone, and alto horn when his peers were just beginning first grade. Sousa was an adventurous young man. At the young age of thirteen, he unsuccessfully tried to run away to join a circus band. Immediately after this episode, his father enlisted him in the Marines as a band apprentice in the Marine Band. There he remained until he reached the age of twenty, complementing his Marine Band training in music by studying composition and music theory with the locally highly acclaimed orchestra leader, George Felix Benkert. During these early years with the Marine Band and under the music mentorship of Benkert, Sousa composed his first piece, *Moonlight on the Potomac Waltzes*.



Figure 6.18 | John Philip Sousa

Author | Elmer Chickering

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Upon his honorable discharge from the Marines in 1875, the twenty-one year old Sousa began performing on violin and touring. While playing violin, Sousa performed under the baton of Jacques Offenbach at the Centenary Exhibition in Philadelphia and Sousa's music later showed Offenbach's influence. While playing the violin in various theater orchestras, Sousa learned to conduct, a skill he would use for the remainder of his career. This period of Sousa's career eventually led to his conducting Gilbert and Sullivan's *H. M. S. Pinafore* on Broadway in New York. In 1879, while conducting in Broadway, Sousa met Jane van Middlesworth whom he married in December of that year. About a year later, Sousa assumed the leadership post of the Marine Band with the couple moving to Washington, D.C. Sousa conducted the Marine Band for the following twelve years, under the presidential administrations of Rutherford Hayes, James Garfield, Grover Cleveland, Chester Arthur, and Benjamin Harrison. Sousa composed and performed repertoire at the request of these presidents and their respective first families.

In 1895, Sousa successfully debuted his first opera. In 1886, *The Gladiator*, using his most recognizable music form of the march, received national recognition from military bandleaders. Two years later, he dedicated his newly composed march *Semper Fidelis* to the officers and men of the Marine Corps; that piece now is traditionally known as the "official" march of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Band made its first recordings under Sousa's leadership. The phonograph had just recently been invented, and the Columbia Phonograph Company, seeking a military band to record, selected the Marine Band. They first released sixty recording cylinders and, within the decade, recorded and released for sale more than 400 different titles. These recordings made Sousa's marches and their performance by the Marine Band among the most popular to be recorded.

Having achieved stardom, the Marine Band went on two limited but successful tours in 1891-92. After completing these tours, promoter David Blakely convinced Sousa to resign his post to organize a civilian concert band. Sousa did so, forming the New Marine Band which was a concert rather than a marching band. After receiving criticism from Washington for using the word "Marine" in the title of his civilian band, Sousa eventually dropped it from its name. The new band's first performance was on September 26, 1892 in Stillman Music Hall in Plainfield, New Jersey. Two days prior to the concert, acclaimed bandmaster, Patrick Gilmore, died in St. Louis. Eventually nineteen former musicians from Gilmore's band joined Sousa's band. The names of many of these nineteen musicians are still recognized today, including Herbert L. Clark on cornet and E. A. Lefebvre on saxophone.

While conducting this new band, Sousa also continued to compose music. When vacationing in Europe with his wife in 1896, he received news that David Blakely had died. The couple immediately departed for home. During this time travelling back to the United States, Sousa wrote his most famous composition, *The Stars and Stripes Forever*.

From 1900 to 1910, the Sousa band toured extensively. Tours included performances in the United States, Great Britain, Europe, South Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Hawaii, and the South Pacific in the Canary Islands. These performances and tours contributed to Sousa's band's reputation as the most admired American band of its time.

After WWI, Sousa continued to tour with his band and became a champion and advocate for music education for all children; he also testified for composer's rights before Congress in 1927 and 1928. His success won him many titles and honorary degrees. Other successes included his serving as guest speaker and conductor for the Marine Band in Washington, D.C. in 1932, performing *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. Later that same year, following a rehearsal of the Ringgold Band in Reading, Pennsylvania, the seventy-seven year old Sousa passed away.

Sousa had composed 136 marches, many on the fly in preparation for a performance in the next town. Sousa's best known marches include [*The Stars and Stripes Forever*](#), [*Semper Fidelis*](#), *The Washington Post*, *The Liberty Bell*, *Daughters of Texas*, [*The Thunderer*](#), [*King Cotton*](#), and *Manhattan Beach*.

Sousa also wrote ten operas, including *El Capitan*, *The Queen of Hearts*, *The Smugglers*, and *Desiree*, as well as a series of music suites and seventy songs. Besides writing music, he authored several articles and letters to the editors on various subjects and wrote three novels, *The Fifth String*, *Pipedown Sandy*, and *The Transit of Venus*. *Marching Along* was his comprehensive autobiography.

A sign of his continuing fame, dedications and recognitions to the Sousa name include: a memory dedication of the newly-built 1939 Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge across the Anacostia River in Washington D.C., renaming of the of the Marine Barracks band hall in his honor in 1974, and many others. In 1987, *The Stars and Stripes Forever* march was designated as the national march of the United States. Sousa became known as the “March King.”

For more information on Sousa, [read his obituary](#).

Focus Composition: The Stars and Stripes Forever by John Philip Sousa (1896)

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

As performed by “The President’s Own” United States Marine Corps Band,
Washington, D.C.

Composer: John Philip Sousa

Composition: *The Star and Stripes Forever*

Date: 1896

Genre: March

Performing Forces: large military band

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- It is the official National March of the United States


Other things to listen for:

- After the march introduction, the sections of the march are called strains and then a trio section. The trio sections often have a contrasting section traditionally called a dogfight strain. These often are representative of a traditional silent movie battle

scene. The “fight scene” is staged between the different sections of the band (upper and lower voices, brass against the woodwind, brass, woodwind and percussion).

The complete form unfolds as follows: (Intro)aabbcdcdc

[A score of the Stars and Stripes.](#)

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
00:00	Brief lecture introduction by the conductor	March Introduction
00:59	Starts in Eb major with the entire band and plays ff (fortissimo, or very loud) 	First Strain
01:03	The first strain remains loud. Notes are quick and detached/separated, and include cymbal crashes. Notice the sudden softness and crescendos (gradually gets louder).	
01:19	The first strain then repeats itself.	Second Strain
01:33	Starts piano (soft volume) the first time, melody has longer notes. Woodwind melody is heard. Euphonium compliments piccolo and woodwinds on the melody.	
01:50	The second strain repeats itself. Volume brought up to f (loud) on the repeat. Brass and percussion are prominent.	Trio
02:05	With key change/pitch center to Ab. P (Piano) soft volume with flowing and connected (legato style) melody in the clarinets and saxophones being heard. The bells compliment woodwind on the melody.	
02:37	The Dog Fight Strain depicts two opposing forcing battling one another musically. In this case, separated articulated accents descending between upper and lower voices in battle with one another. The fight goes back and forth between upper and lower voice. Percussion adds gun/cannon fire sounds to contribute to the battle scene. Then entire band descends to the potential final strain.	

03:00	Final Strain of the Trio Begins softy (p) with the famous and easily recognized piccolo solo above the previously introduced woodwind trio melody. This section features the woodwind section. But instead of ending, the woodwinds set up a repeat back to the dogfight strain.	
03:33	Repeated Dog Fight Strain	Final Strain of the trio and march
03:58	Final Strain of the trio and march-with the full compliment of the brass. The brass compliment and the piccolo solo to the end. Band plays fff (very very loud-fortississimo). Trum- pets on the melody with trombones and eupho- niums on the counter melody (polyphonic).	Stinger
04:29	Stinger—The march ends with the traditional musical exclamation point called the march stinger.	

Table 14: Listening Guide for The Star and Stripes Forever

We conclude this chapter with a consideration of two nationalist composers who made enduring contributions to the opera form. Some critics consider the opera form quintessential to the nineteenth century music world.

6.17 MUSIC OF GIUSEPPE VERDI

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) succeeded Giacomo Rossini as the most important Italian opera composer of his day. Living during a time of national revolution, Verdi's music and name become associated with those fighting for an Italy that would be united under King Emmanuel. A chorus from one of his early operas about the ancient enslaved Hebrews would become a political song for Italian independent fighters. His last name, V.E.R.D.I. would become an acronym for a political call to rally around King Emmanuel. Although Verdi shied away from the political limelight, he was persuaded to accept a post in the Italian parliament in 1861.

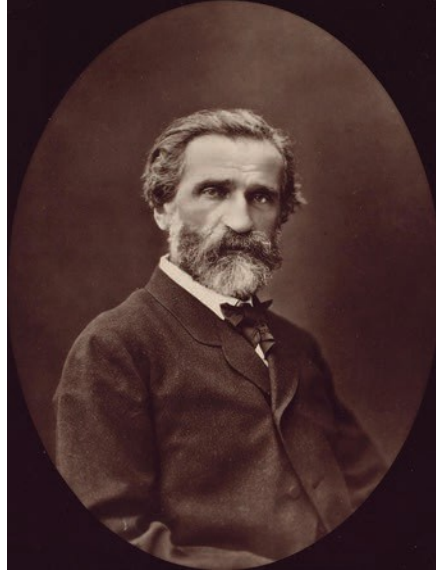


Figure 6.19 | Giuseppe Verdi

Author | Ferdinand Mulnier

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As was the case with many sons of nineteenth-century middle-class families, Verdi was given many and early opportunities to further his education. He began music instruction with local priests before his fourth birthday. Before he turned ten, he had become organist of the local church, and he continued music lessons alongside lessons in languages and the humanities through his adolescence. He assumed posts as music director and then in 1839 composed his first opera. Like his predecessor, Rossini, Verdi would prove to be a prolific composer, writing 26 operas in addition to other large-scale choral works. Like Rossini's music, Verdi's music used recitatives and arias, now arranged in the elaborate *scena ad aria* format, with an aria that contained both slower *cantabile* and faster *cabaletta*. Verdi, however, was more flexible in his use of recitatives and arias and employed a much larger orchestras than previous Italian opera composers, resulting in operas that were as dramatic as they were musical. His operas span a variety of subjects, from always popular mythology and ancient history to works set in his present that participated in a wider artistic movement called *verismo*, or realism.

Focus Composition: Verdi, excerpt from La Traviata (1853)

A good example of his operatic realism can be found in *La Traviata*, or *The Fallen Woman* (1853). This opera was based on a play by Alexandre Dumas. Verdi wanted it to be set in the present, but the censors at La Fenice, the opera house in Venice that would premiere the opera, insisted on setting it in the 1700s instead. Of issue was the heroine, Violetta—a companion-prostitute for the

elite aristocrats of Parisian society—with whom Alfredo, a young noble, falls in love. After wavering over giving up her independence, Violetta commits herself to Alfredo, and they live a blissful few months together before Alfredo's father arrives and convinces Violetta that she is destroying their family and the marriage prospects of Alfredo's younger sister. In response, Violetta leaves Alfredo without telling him why and goes back to her old life. Alfredo is angry and hurt and the two live unhappily apart. A consumptive, that is, one suffering from tuberculosis, Violetta declines and her health disintegrates. Alfredo's father has a crisis of conscience and confesses to his son what he has done. Alfredo rushes to Paris to reunite with Violetta. The two sing a love duet, but it is soon clear that Violetta is very ill, and in fact, she dies in Alfredo's arms, before they can go to the church to be married. In ending tragically, this opera ends like many other nineteenth-century tales.



Figure 6.20 | *La Traviata*: Scene 1

Author | Carl Henning Lutzow d'Unker

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Verdi wrote this opera mid century with full knowledge of the Italian opera before him. Like his contemporary, Richard Wagner, Verdi wanted opera to be a strong bond of music and drama. He carefully observed how German opera composers such as Carl Maria von Weber and French Grand Opera composers such as Giacomo Meyerbeer had used much larger orchestras than had previous opera composers, and Verdi himself also employed a comparably large ensemble for *La Traviata*. Verdi also believe in flexibly using the operatic forms he had inherited, and so although *La Traviata* does have arias and recitatives, the recitatives are more varied and lyrical than before and the alternation between the recitatives, arias, and other ensembles, are guided by the drama, instead of the drama having to fit within the structure of recitative-aria pairs.

A good example is “La follie...Sempre libera” from the end of Act I in which Violetta debates whether she is ready to give up her independence for Alfredo. Although at the end of the aria it seems that she has decided to remain free, Act II begins with the two lovers living happily together, and we know that the vocal injections sung by Alfredo as part of Violetta’s recitative and aria of Act I have prevailed. This piece is also a good example of how virtuoso opera had gotten by the end of the nineteenth century. Earlier Italian opera had been virtuoso in its use of ornamentation. Verdi, however, required a much wider range of his singers, and this wider range is showcased in the scene we’ll watch. Violetta has a huge vocal range and performers must have great agility to sing the melismas in her part. As an audience, we are awed by her vocal prowess, a fitting response, given her character in the opera.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Featuring Edita Bruberova as Violetta, Neil Shicoff as Alfredo, and the Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Italy, conducted by Carlo Rizzi

Composer: Verdi

Composition: “Follie” and “Sempre libera” from *La Traviata*

Date: 1853

Genre: recitatives and aria from an opera

Form: alternates between singing styles of accompanied recitative, with some repetition of sections

Nature of Text:

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave; [Translation](#).

Performing Forces: soprano (Violetta), tenor (Alfredo), and orchestra

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- The virtuoso nature of Violetta’s singing
- The subtle shifts between recitative and aria, now less pronounced than in earlier opera
- A large orchestra that stays in the background

Other things to listen for:

- Alfredo's more lyrical melody in distinction to Violetta's virtuosity

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	Text and Form
0:00	Violetta sings a very melismatic and wide-ranged melody with flexible rhythm; the orchestra provides sparse accompaniment	Accompanied recitative: Follie! follie! Delirio vano è questo! Povera donna, sola, abbandonata in questo popoloso deserto che appellano Parigi. Che spero or più? Che far degg'io? Gioire, di voluttà ne' vortici perir.
0:26	Violetta sings wide leaps, long melismas, and high pitches to emphasize these words	Accompanied recitative: Gioir! (Pleasure!)
1:07	Stronger orchestral accompaniment as Violetta sings a more tuneful melody in a lilting meter with a triple feel	Aria: Sempre libera degg'io folleggiare di gioia in gioia, vo' che scorra il viver mio pei sentieri del piacer. Nasca il giorno, o il giorno muoia, sempre lieta ne' ritrovi, a diletta sempre nuovi dee volare il mio pensier.
2:06	Alfredo sings a more legato and lyrical melody in a high tenor range (this melody comes from earlier in the opera)	Alfredo's melody: Amore, amor è palpito . . . dell'universo intero – Misterioso, misterioso, altero, croce, croce e delizia, croce e delizia, delizia al cor.
2:41	Violetta sings her virtuoso recitative and then transitions into her aria style	Accompanied recitative and then aria: Follie . . . Sempre libera
3:56	Alfredo sings his lyrical melody and Violetta responds after each phrase with a fast and virtuosic melisma	Alfredo and Violetta sing: Repetition of text above

Table 15: Listening Guide for “Follie” and “Sempre libera” from La Traviata

6.18 MUSIC OF RICHARD WAGNER

If Verdi continued the long tradition of Italian opera, Richard Wagner provided a new path for German opera. Wagner (1813-1883) may well have been the most influential European composer of the second half of the nineteenth century. Never shy about self-promotion, Wagner himself clearly thought so. Wagner's influence was both musical and literary. His dissonant and chromatic harmonic experiments even influenced the French, whose music belies their many verbal denouncements of Wagner and his music. His essays about music and autobiographical accounts of his musical experiences were widely followed by nineteenth-century individuals, from the average bourgeois music enthusiast to philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche. Most disturbingly, Wagner was rabidly anti-Semitic, and generations later his writing and music provided propaganda for the Nazi Third Reich.



Figure 6.21 | Richard Wagner

Author | Cäsar Willich

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Born in Leipzig, Germany, Wagner initially wanted to be a playwright like Goethe, until as a teenager he heard the music of Beethoven and decided to become a composer instead. He was particularly taken by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the addition of voices as performing forces into the symphony, a type of composition traditionally written for orchestra. Seeing in this work an acknowledgement of the powers of vocal music, Wagner set about writing vocal music. Coming to age during a time of rising nationalism, Wagner criticized Italian opera as consisting of cheap melodies and insipid orchestration unconnected to its dramatic purposes, and he set about providing a German alternative. He called his operas music dramas in order to emphasize a unity

of text, music, and action; and declared that they would be *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or “total works of art.” As part of his program, he wrote his own librettos and aimed for what he called unending melody: the idea was for a constant lyricism, carried as much by the orchestra as by the singers.

Perhaps most importantly, Wagner developed a system of what scholars have come to call *Leitmotivs*. *Leitmotivs*, or “guiding motives,” are musical motives that are associated with a specific character, theme, or locale in a drama. Wagner integrated these musical motives in the vocal lines and orchestration of his music dramas at many points. Wagner believed in the flexibility of such motives to reinforce an overall sense of unity within his compositions, even if primarily at a subconscious level. Thus, while a character might be singing a melody line using one *leitmotiv*, the orchestration might incorporate a different *leitmotiv*, suggesting a connection between the referenced entities.

Wagner also designed and built a theatre for the performance of his own music dramas. The Festival Theatre in Bayreuth, Germany was the first to use a sunken orchestra pit, and its huge backstage area allowed for some of the most elaborate sets of Wagner’s day. It was here that his famous cycle of music dramas, *The Ring of the Nibelungen*, was performed, starting in 1876. *The Ring of the Nibelungen* consists of four music dramas with over fifteen hours of music. Wagner took the story from a Nordic mythological legend that stems back to the Middle Ages. In it, a piece of gold is stolen from the Rhine River and fashioned into a ring, which gives its bearer ultimate power. The cursed ring changes hands, causing destruction around whoever possesses it. Eventually the ring is returned to the Rhine River, thereby closing the cycle. Into that story, which some may recognize from the much later fiction of

J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, Wagner interwove stories of the Norse gods and men. Wagner’s four music dramas trace the saga of the king of the gods, Wotan, as he builds Valhalla, the home of the gods, and attempts to order the lives of his children, including that of his daughter, the valkyrie warrior Brünnhilde.

Focus Composition: Conclusion to The Valkyrie (1876)

In the excerpt we’ll watch from the end of *The Valkyrie*, the second of the four music dramas, Brünnhilde has gone against her father, and, because Wotan cannot bring himself to kill her, he puts her to sleep before encircling her with flames, a fiery ring that both imprisons and protects his daughter. This excerpt provides several examples of the *Leitmotivs* for which Wagner is so famous. Their presence, often subtle, is designed to guide the audience through the drama. They include melodies, harmonies, and textures that represent Wotan’s spear, the god Loge—a shape shifting life force that here takes the form of fire—sleep, the magic sword, and fate. The

sounds of these motives is discussed briefly below and accompanied by excerpts from the musical score for those of you who can read musical notation. The first motive heard in the video you will watch is **Wotan's Spear**. The spear represents Wotan's power. In this scene, Wotan is pointing it toward his daughter Brünnhilde, ready to conjure the ring of fire that will both imprison and protect here. Representing a symbol of power, the spear motive is played at a *forte* dynamic by the lower brass. Here it descends in a minor scale that reinforces the seriousness of Wotan's actions.



Figure 6.22 | Wotan's Spear

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Wotan commands Loge to appear and suddenly the music breaks out in a completely different style. **Loge's music**—sometimes also referred to as the magic fire music—is in a major key and appears in upper woodwinds such as the flutes. Its notes move quickly with staccato articulations suggesting Loge's free spirit and shifting shapes.



figure 6.23 | Loge's Music (aka The Magic Fire Music)

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Depicting Brünnhilde's descent into sleep, Wagner wrote a chromatic musical line that starts high and slowly moves downward. We call this phrase the Sleep motive:



Figure 6.24 | Sleep

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After casting his spell, Wotan warns anyone who is listening that whoever would dare to trespass the ring of fire will have to face his spear. As the drama unfolds in the next opera of the tetralogy, one character will do just that: Siegfried, Wotan's own grandson. He will release Brünnhilde using a magic sword. The melody to which Wotan sings his warning with its wide leaps and overall disjunct motion sounds a little bit like the motive representing Siegfried's sword.



Figure 6.25 | Siegfried's Sword

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One final motive is prominent at the end of *The Valkyrie*, a motive which is referred to as Fate. It appears in the horns and features three notes: a sustained pitch that slips down just one step and then rises the small interval of a minor third to another sustained pitch.

WOTAN.

Wer mei - nes
la melodia sempre legato

Spee - res Spit - ze fürch -

sempre stacc.

marc.

cresc poco

a poco

Figure 6.26 | Wotan's Warning (subtly alluding to Siegfried's sword)

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pp

pp

Figure 6.27 | Fate (the motive starts in the second measure of the excerpt)

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Now that you've been introduced to all of the leitmotifs in the excerpt, follow along with the listening guide. As you listen, notice how prominent the huge orchestra is throughout the scene, how it provides the melodies, and how the strong and large voice of the bass-baritone singing Wotan soars over the top of the orchestra (Wagner's music required larger voices than earlier opera as well as new singing techniques). See if you can hear the *Leitmotifs*, there to absorb you in the drama. Remember that this is just one short scene from the midpoint of the approximately fifteen-hour-long tetralogy.

LISTENING GUIDE

[Audio](#)

Performed by Donald McIntyre (Wotan) and Gwyneth Jones (Brünnhilde), accompanied by the Bayreuth Festival Orchestra, conducted by Pierre Boulez

(19746), starting at 13:53

Composer: Richard Wagner

Composition: *The Valkyries*, Final scene: Wotan's Farewell

Date: 1870

Genre: music drama (or nineteenth-century German opera)

Form: through-composed, using *Leitmotius*

Nature of Text:

(He looks upon her and closes her helmet: his eyes then rest on the form of the sleeper, which he now completely covers with the great steel shield of the Valkyrie. He turns slowly away, then again turns around with a sorrowful look.)

(He strides with solemn decision to the middle of the stage and directs the point of his spear toward a large rock.)

Loge, hear! List to my word!

As I found thee of old, a glimmering flame, as from me thou didst vanish,
in wandering fire;
as once I stayed thee, stir I thee now! Appear! come, waving fire,
and wind thee in flames round the fell!

(During the following he strikes the rock thrice with his spear.)

Loge! Loge! appear!

(A flash of flame issues from the rock, which swells to an ever-brightening fiery glow.)

(Flickering flames break forth.)

(Bright shooting flames surround Wotan. With his spear he directs the sea of fire to encircle the rocks; it presently spreads toward the background, where it encloses the mountain in flames.)

He who my spearpoint's sharpness feareth shall cross not the flaming fire!

(He stretches out the spear as a spell. He gazes sorrowfully back on Brünnhilde. Slowly he turns to depart. He turns his head again and looks back. He disappears through the fire.)

(The curtain falls.)

Wagner, Richard. *Die Walküre*. [English Transl. By Frederick Jameson; Version Française Par Alfred Ernst]. Leipzig: Eulenburg, 1900. Print. Eulenburgs kleine Partitur-Ausgabe.

Performing Forces: Bass-baritone Wotan, large orchestra

What we want you to remember about this composition:

- It uses Leitmotifs
- The orchestra provides an “unending melody” over which the characters sing

Other things to listen for:

- Listen for the specific *Leitmotives*

Timing	Performing Forces, Melody, and Texture	<i>Leitmotiv</i> and Form
13:53	Descending melodic line played in octaves by the lower brass	Wotan's spear: Just the orchestra
14:06	Wotan sings a motivic phrase that ascends; the orchestra ascends, too, supporting his melodic line	Löge, hör! Lausche hieher! Wie zuerst ich dich fand, als feurige Glut, wie dann einst du mir schwandest, als schweifende Lohe; wie ich dich band
14:29	Appears as Wotan transitions to new words still in the lower brass	Spear again: Bann ich dich heut'!

14:29	Trills in the strings and a rising chromatic scale introduce Wotan's striking of his spear and producing fire introducing the . . .	Fire music: Herauf, wabernde Loge, umlodre mir feurig den Fels! Loge! Loge! Hieher!
15:03	fire music played by the upper woodwinds (flutes, oboes, and clarinets).	Fire music: Just the orchestra
15:36	Slower, descending chromatic scale in the winds represents Brünnhilde's descent into sleep	Sleep: Just the orchestra
16:04	As Wotan sings again, his melodic line seems to allude to the sword motive, doubled by the horns and supported by a full orchestra.	Sword motive: Wer meines Speeres Spitze fürchtet, durchschreite das Feuer nie!
16:31	Lower brass prominently play the sword motive while the strings and upper woodwinds play motives from the fire music; a gradual decrescendo	Sword motive; fire music continues: Just the orchestra
17:42	The horns and trombones play the narrow-raged fate melody as the curtain closes	Fate motive: Just the orchestra

Table 16: Listening Guide for The Valkyries, Final scene: Wotan's Farewell

6.19 CHAPTER SUMMARY

As we have seen, nineteenth-century music was diverse and pervasive. Music was a part of everyday life, as middle class children received music education and as concerts became important social events across social strata. Aesthetic movements of Romanticism, Realism, Exoticism, and cultural nationalism shaped musical styles. Composers such as Franz Schubert, Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn, Robert and Clara Schumann, Fryderyk Chopin, Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz, Johannes Brahms, Bedřich Smetana, Antonín Dvořák, John Philip Sousa, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Giuseppe Verdi, and Richard Wagner wrote eclectic music across German, French, Italian, Czech, Polish, American, and Russian lands. Many of them continued with genres developed in the Baroque and classical periods, such as the concerto, symphony, opera, and oratorio, while others forged new paths, especially as music and poetry, drama, and visual art interacted in such new genres as the art song, piano character piece, program symphony, symphonic poem, and music drama, or opera. Despite the larger performing forces that were available, composers continued to privilege singable melodies, even if they were much more chromatic than before. These transformations of musical form and harmony continued into the

early twentieth century as musicians sought to be more modern than ever before and, in so doing, questioned the very foundations basic to music of the previous two centuries.

6.20 GLOSSARY

Art song – a composition setting a poem to music, generally for one solo voice and piano accompaniment; in German, a Lied

Chamber music – music--such as art songs, piano character pieces, and string quartets--primarily performed in small performing spaces, often for personal entertainment

Chromaticism – use of “colorful,” dissonant pitches, that included in the key of the composition

Concerto – a composition for a soloist or a group of soloists and an orchestra, generally in three movements with fast, slow, and fast tempos, respectively

Conductor – individual who leads an orchestra

drone – a sustained pitch or pitches often found in music of the middle ages or earlier and in folk music

Idée fixe – a famous melody that appears in all five movements of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* to represent the beloved from the program

Leitmotiv – “guiding motive” associated with a specific character, theme, or locale in a music drama, and first associated with the music of Richard Wagner

mazurka – a Polish dance in triple time, with emphasis on beat 2

Nationalism – pride in one’s nation or cultural identity, often expressed in art, literature, and music

Opera – a drama almost entirely sung to orchestral accompaniment, with accompanying costumes and staging

Plagal cadence – ending of a composition that consists of a IV chord moving to a I chord and most often associated with church music

Program music – instrumental music intended to represent a something extra musical such as a poem, narrative, drama, or picture, or the ideas, images, or sounds therein

Program symphony – program music in the form of a multi-movement composition for orchestra

Rubato – the momentary speeding up or slowing down of the tempo within a melody line, literally “robbing” time from one note to give to another

Scena ad aria – nineteenth-century operatic combination of a recitative (“scena”) plus aria; here the aria generally has two parts, a slower cantabile and a faster cabaletta

Sonata – composition for a solo instrument or an instrument with piano accompaniment, generally in three movements with fast, slow, and fast tempos, respectively

Sonata form – a form often found in the first and last movements of sonatas, symphonies, and string quartets, consisting of three parts – exposition, development, and recapitulation

Song cycle – a collection of art songs, unified by poet, narrative, musical style, or composer

String quartet – performing ensemble consisting of two violinists, one violinist, and one cellist that plays compositions called string quartets, compositions generally in four movements

Strophic – a composition that uses the repetition of the same music (“strophes”) for successive texts

Symphonic poem – program music in the form of a single-movement composition for orchestra; sometimes called a tone poem

Symphony – multi-movement composition for orchestra, often in four movements

Ternary form – describes a musical composition in three parts, most often featuring two similar sections, separated by a contrasting section and represented by the letters A – B – A.

Through-composed – a movement or composition consisting of new music throughout, without repetition of internal sections