

Baroque style of period

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It's easy to play any musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself. -Johann Sebastian Bach Well, yes, it's easy to play any musical instrument, but unfortunately for most, it IS hard finding the "right key" and putting your finger, or mouth, or bow on the "right time" is almost impossible. But Bach always found the right time to play, and it wasn't during the right second or on the right beat. It was the right century. 1600 officially began the Baroque period, and I mention Bach because it seems this period ended with his death in 1750. Stay tuned (all puns intended) to learn what was going on, who else had the magic touch, and the characteristics of the Baroque time. Several events took place in the one hundred and fifty year period of the Baroque period. Presumably the most influential was that the Age of Enlightenment began. That meant you had an increased chance not to be killed for being different, which was great for entertainers trying to make a name for themselves. Great philosophers and writers flourished in this time, including Francis Bacon, Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Milton, Jonathan Swift, William Shakespeare, and John Donne. All of which high school students are forced to read about. Science was also explored, and from it, gravity- the enemy of all women standing on a scale- was discovered. Sir Isaac Newton developed laws of physics, including the Laws of Motion and, as noted above, gravity. The first opera, *Eurydice*, and opera house, Theater San Cassino, opened in 1600 and 1637, respectively. King James Version of the Bible, the most widely distributed version today, was published and reduced in 1611, and probably the greatest moment for you and me, the pilgrims landed here in America in 1620. Go Thanksgiving!

So needless to say, none of the great composers of this time came from America, and consequently, have rather difficult names for the average American to pronounce. Such as Archangel Cornell, Claudio Monteverdi, Jean-Philippe Rammer, Alexandra and Domenici Scarlatti, and Heimlich Scouts (You should see how many red squiggly lines Word has up for those).

There are less complicated ones, such as Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederic Handel, Henry Purcell, and Antonio Vivaldi. Vivaldi... I love Vivaldi; his works are outstanding and seem to fit every occasion. Most commercial companies have realized this as well, regrettably, and overuse his masterpiece, The Four Seasons. Some of the other more notable works were Toccata and Fugue in D minor by Bach, The Messiah by Handel, Marcher Royals by Lully, and Coracle's trio sonatas such as Sonata for Violin and Lute.

Speaking of trio sonatas, they were a popular form of the Baroque period, as were concertos, concerto grosses, suites (a set of instrumental compositions to be played in succession or a set of selected pieces from an opera or musical, arranged to be laded as one instrumental work), oratorios, cantatas, operas, fugues (a contrapuntal composition in which a short melody or phrase is introduced by one part and successively taken up by others and developed by interweaving the parts), and toccatas (a musical composition for a keyboard instrument designed to exhibit the performer's touch and technique).

While some of these forms may have been used in periods before them, the Baroque period definitively had its definitive characteristics that made it unique and created things that made it memorable. In general, the music was

a bit like " how it feels to chew 5 gum". Lying on a bed of vibrating metal balls, suspended from wires hit with a hammer, while shooting way up into the air all combined into one.

The music had complicated rhythms and expansive movements; it was heavy and thick with texture, including singers and instruments in polyphonic heaven. Sounds were echoed and imitated, creating a very elaborate piece without any crescendos or diminuendos to make it dynamically different. It did have dependable meters though, usually two, three, four, or six main beats. In just a century and a half, more than two dozen people made artistic history. The Baroque period was a great time of advancement in several areas, especially music.

Numerous composers, such as Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Vivaldi, Corelli, and Lully, and their work, like The Messiah, and The Four Seasons, survive to this day. The Baroque era has its own defining characteristics, such as complicated rhythms, elaborate melodies, pieces thick with harmony, and syrupy textures. It was also during a time of great change and many new discoveries, such as gravity, the first opera and opera house, and the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment. Hopefully this essay did some justice to the Baroque era. That's all folks.