

Essay on 19th century symphony and piano music

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



Music has greatly evolved through time, it defines one aspect of the arts cultivated in all cultures around the world, but one of the most distinct music genres had established the epitome of supreme musical character.

Beethoven's eight symphony embodied the 1st movement that combines both the romantic and classical era. The Oxford dictionary of music defined classical as term applied to the type of music that has specified meaning. From 1750 to 1830 which is known to be the post-baroque transitioning to pre-romantic period covered the classic concerts and symphony. This is kind music that combines qualities such as balance and clarity which emphasizes beauty instead of emotional expression. This development is evident in many works of known masters of classical music.

Padre Giovanni Battista Martini a renowned Italian music historian and teacher, he used textures in treble dominance instead of using bass in slow movement. Although his vocabulary of chords was restricted, the melodies he created reflected various banal formulas that are still being used.

Martini's development and manipulation of formulas was an evidence of his skills which also interested Mozart during that time who even visited him in Bologna several times in 1770. Johan Wenzel Stamitz have also made remarkable development in assembling his own orchestra, he pays a lot attention to the development of his technique which is often called as the mosaic of fragment. Recapitulations were intended to be complete to compliment tender and slow movements; it has extended variations of movement to four the andante (slow), allegro (fast), presto (rapid) and minuet. The precise performance is dictated by disciplines by writing all parts rather than leaving some of it before the players can realize.

Melodic development with emphasized expression of emotions and ornamentation which is an aesthetic approach referred to as “Empfindsamkeit” or sensitivity was created by Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach the son of J. S. Bach in Berlin. Together with other musicians they have developed a tradition of formal conservatism and rigorous counterpoint. The method is by maintaining three format movement and contrasting themes are strongly avoided. They have retained contrapuntal interplay using textures of homophonic prevalence.

Georg Matthias Monn together with Georg Christoph Wagenseil further experimented with orchestration tone color. They put emphasis on the melodic rules of the violin and popularly displayed influences in the minuets. Monn used the four movement symphony by utilizing horns and oboes, continuo and strings. He believes that those instruments are worthy of gracious melody and dynamic range in wider characteristics. In this symphony development the fist movement recurs within recapitulation which then transformed into a horn duet virtuoso which in effect will reflect the player’s skills.

A familiar name also made contributions to the development of symphony in the romantic era. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart expanded the development section by introducing themed materials and modulations over a field of wider tones. His straightforward capitulation became expressive and unified by means of fuller imitation free instrument and more on singing figuration (Encyclopedia Britannica, Symphony).

Franz Liszt combined qualities of images, moods and scenes to capture overture forms that inspire listeners in imagining the aforementioned elements. It also includes characteristics of musical complexity and scale reserved normally in opening the movement for the classical symphonies. The movements used for this overture consist of a single continuous segment which depicts the elements of a novel, poem, a landscape and a painting. This is often referred to as tone poem or symphonic poem. Liszt applied these principles in his 13 works. The same symphonic poem development were used in Russian and Czech inspired by Liszt. The genre holds a delicate balance that produces a sense of timelessness and unreality, just like telling a fairy tale, it is also called fantasy overture. The music of Romeo and Juliet is sometimes classified as fantasy overture instead of symphonic poem because of the unreality that holds the story together through its music.

In many musical compositions, live concerts and most especially in a symphony orchestra, piano never fails to exist. Piano is an important musical instrument in the western classical, film, jazz and other complex genres of music. In the midst of 19th century when Romantic period is at its peak, piano became a popular instrument of music because of its encouraging expression of emotion in an art form. Because of the distinct characters of the instrument most musicians preferred piano among other musical instruments. In fact, most of the greatest classical artists are pianists, composers started to create music using piano and the concert halls are all always jam packed in every solo piano concerts. Piano was also an avenue that paved the way for other musical genres, because of the fact that piano

is popular among composers it became a significant tool for creating other forms of musical discoveries (Piano-keyboard-guide, Piano History - Part Two).

Because of the ever growing popularity of the piano instrument in the romantic era, several other genres emerged for solo piano performances. The evolution of music evolved in the creation of new styles and techniques. The program symphony which was first pioneered by one of the greatest musician of all time Beethoven was developed by Hector Berlioz, while Franz Liszt developed symphony poem. Concert overture composed by Felix Mendelssohn was rewritten by other composers to be played in bourgeois salons in Europe. The traditions of Bel Canto shaped the works of master composer Giuseppe Verdi and in Germany, Richard Wagner have developed music drama. Generally in the romantic era, composers have used the elements of emotions to transform the musical arts into literature, drama and poems by using symphony and sonata as starting guides (Sherrane, Robert Music History 102).

In relation to the popularity of the piano instrument in the romantic era, solo piano performance has its own distinct genre which is the piano sonata. This genre was very popular in the previous two eras before the romantic period. Baroque and classical era gave piano sonata the height of its popularity, but as the romantic period approaches and new developments in musical technique gave birth to new genres piano sonata endured a near extinction in the musical arts. Although it is still being composed their number have dramatically declined, this is because of the stiff competition

with shorter genres that rhymes better compatibility with the compositional methods of romantic musical style. But the genre had persevered until the 20th century and was continued to be written even until today.

Since piano had become an integral instrument of music even to this day its role in the society has changed through the years, but its importance in concert stage is inevitable. A symphony orchestra performance cannot be complete without a piano being a part of the strings accompaniment. Solo piano performances are also very particular in establishing the importance of the instrument in the performance settings. A performer in a solo piano concert cannot replace the acoustic made instrument with an electronic keyboard. This is because of the different tone that only the wooden box piano can provide. In symphony orchestra concerts, piano adds the special timber tone or color; it also highlights the clear and sharp sound to emphasize percussive lines. Piano also magnifies the sound of other string instruments that might be too soft for the sound to hear. In choir performances, piano is also being used to establish the starting key notes to position the singer's pitch. For solo piano concerts, it is as important because the instrument will be the guiding tool in setting the mood for dazzling virtuosity. In general the piano's wide pitch characteristic allows a freedom of simultaneous playing of harmonic lines.

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