

The renaissance era



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Historical Events 1500 1600:

DL:

African Slaves are taken across the Atlantic to work on sugar plantations

1510.

ED :

University of Valencia founded 1500

RP :

Ahmed ad Mansur leads Moroccans into a battle against the Songhai 1500

VA :

Nuts and Bolts are first used in Europe 1550s.

M :

William Shakespeare is born 1564.

PH :

Elizabeth I begins her reign as Queen of England 1588.

ST :

The First toilet is invented 1589.

LT:

Sir Walter Raleigh born - 1552

PH : Politics and History

M : Music

VA : Visual Arts

ST : Science and Technology

RP : Religion and Philosophy

ED : Education

DL : Daily Life

LT : Literature and Theatre

The Musical Style:

The Renaissance era was a period of history between 1500 and 1600 A. D. The word Renaissance means rebirth and in this period there were massive discoveries in medicine, music, literature and many other fields, hence the name given to this period. As many discoveries were made, in all fields, composers were inspired and took a more keen interest in music and writing. Mostly they turned their attention onto the church and its music so many of the pieces composed in this era was written as church music or for mass choirs. Another name for this music is Choral polyphony choral meaning voice and polyphony meaning layers e. g. polyphonic ring tones. This is what made the music in the renaissance era noticeably different from previous periods. Music was written in layers that overlapped or layered each other. This new technique of overlapping had never been used before so was unique to the church and its choirs. Originally Choral Polyphony was meant to be sung without instruments but Sackbuts (early Trombones) and valve less Trumpets began to be used and other instruments of the same type began to be used with mass choirs. There were several characteristics of the Renaissance music period that makes it unique from the other periods.

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These characteristics are that music was still based on modes, but gradually more accidentals creep in. Another is that the composers paid more attention to the flow and progression of chords and harmonies. A third characteristic is that in secular music (non-religious music) more instruments were used with vocals than sacred music (religious music). The bass line began to feature in music, in this period, below the tenor. Finally most of the instruments in the Renaissance period were divided up into families like they are today.

Thomas Tallis (1505 1585):

Thomas Tallis was born in England during the year of 1505 and became a composer and organist. He composed and played for five decades under four monarchs and wrote music for both Catholic and Protestant churches, although he himself was a Catholic.

He began to write pieces of music for humble church choral societies and was recognised as a composer so rose to the leading member of Englands Chapel Royal.

In recognition of his work people now refer to him as The Father of English Church Music. He wrote many pieces of church music in his life but his most famous is the 40-part *Monet; Spem in alium*.

Tallis studied with William Byrd, another famous English composer, and in 1575 they were granted exclusive permission from Elizabeth I to print music. Together they printed/published *Cantiones Sacrae*; this is a collection of 38 Latin motets.

Ten years after this piece was published Thomas Tallis sadly died at the age

of 80.

Pieces:

The Renaissance period brought with it many famous pieces of music written in the era.

Such as:

- o Spem in Alium by Thomas Tallis in ?
- o Mass for Three Voices by William Byrd in 1594.
- o Mass for Four Voices by William Byrd in 1592.
- o Mass for Four Voices by William Byrd in 1592.
- o Kyrie by William Byrd in ?
- o Gloria by William Byrd in ?

Pictures:

Music composed by

Tallis

William Byrd

Thomas Tallis

Historical Events (1600 1750):

DL :

Dutch establish trading settlements in Brazil export sugar and silver - 1630

ED :

Harvard College founded - 1636

RP :

English Baptist Church established in Amsterdam - 1609

VA :

Rubens appointed court painter to Archduke Albert and Archduchess

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Isabella, Antwerp - 1609

M :

William Byrd, Gradualia - 1605/1607

PH :

James I (James VI of Scotland) becomes King of England (until 1625) - 1603

ST :

Newton discovers the spectrum - 1666

LT:

Shakespeare, Hamlet - 1600/1601

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The Musical Style: The Baroque period was an era stretching for about one hundred and fifty years from 1600 1750. What makes this period unique is that the Major/Minor key was developed due to more accidentals appearing in pieces of music. During this time several other forms of music and entertainment (using music) were developed; like Opera, Sonata, Oratorio, Suite, Fugue and Concerto. Also the Baroque period saw the rise in popularity of Orchestras, which meant that the Violin and other stringed instruments became a more dominant figure in music and was a more thought of instrument during the composing of pieces. As instrumental music

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was considered as equal as vocal music the characteristics of the Baroque period differed immensely from those of the Renaissance. The characteristics are that;

- o The Basso Continuo (Pieces Figured Bass).
- o One mood was used throughout the entire piece.
- o Important String sections were introduced.
- o Modes were replaced by the Major/Minor key system.
- o Many different forms are used (e. g. Binary, Fugue).
- o Many types of music, e. g. The Chorale, Opera, the Dance Suite were invented.
- o Energetic rhythms, long melodies and contrasts (especially dynamics, but also in timbres) are introduced into piece of music. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach (March 25, 1685-July 28, 1750) was a German Baroque composer. He was one of the greatest composers of all time, but during his lifetime, he was little-known and was mostly recognized for performing on the organ. Bach composed in many established musical forms, including, for example, the cantata and fugue, and developed them into complex and sublime pieces. He composed over 1, 100 works in almost every musical genre (except opera).

Bach was born and died in Germany, and spent his entire life there, working as an organist, teacher, and composer. During his life he had more than 20 children and four of them became composers themselves!

Bachs father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, was also a local town musician and it is thought that he gave him his first music lessons. Sadly when Bach was 10,

his mother and father died (within a year of each other). Johann moved in with his brother and learnt to play the organ.

In 1707 Bach married his cousin, and they eventually had seven children. Shortly after the marriage in 1708, Bach was appointed organist and chamber musician to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. During the next nine years Bach composed many of his finest organ compositions, and was known as a very talented organist.

In 1717, Bach became Kapellmeister (the chapel master, who directed and/or composed music for a church or chapel) in the court of the music-lover Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cothen.

During this time, Bach composed some of his major works such as; the Brandenburg Concertos (1721), The Well-Tempered Clavier (first book, 1722). In 1721, the Prince married a woman who did not share the Prince's interest in music, and the Prince's support of Bach lessened. Bach would soon leave.

In 1740, Bach's eyesight was failing and two eye operations resulted in Bach's complete blindness. These operations also damaged his health and may have resulted in his death. He died of a stroke on July 28, 1750. Bach is buried at St. John's cemetery, Leipzig. Bach's death in 1750 marked the end of the Baroque period in music.

Pieces:

Most of the major pieces in this era were composed by Bach such as;
o Act III, Scene 7 from The Coronation of Poppea - by Claudio Monteverdi in 1711

- o " Dido's Lament" from Act III of Dido and Aeneas - by Henry Purcell in 1689
- o Henry Purcell - Antonio Vivaldi - Spring Violin Concerto (No. 1 from The Four Seasons, Op. 8) - by Henry Purcell in 1725
- o Prelude & Fugue No. 2 in C minor (from The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I) by J. S. Bach in
- o Suite in D Major, Water Music by G. F. Handel in

Pictures:

J. S. Bach

J. S. Bach

Manuscript of Bach

Historical Events (1750 1800):

DL :

Great Britain adopts the Georgian Calendar - 1752

ED :

Moscow University founded - 1755

RP :

Qaja Dynasty begins and lasts until 1925 1794.

VA :

Beginning of Construction of St. Pauls Cathedral, London; architect, Christopher Wren (1632-1723) - 1675

M :

W. A. Mozart performs in London - 1764

PH :

The Industrial Revolution (Britain) - 1760s 1830s

ST :

First manned flight, in a hot air balloon - 1783

LT:

The Dictionary of the English Language is published by Samuel Johnson - 1755

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The Musical Style:

The Classical Period saw the rise of all orchestras and Operas and they both began to expand. The orchestra, in this period, consisted of; one or two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two kettledrums and the string instruments and so was very popular with the upper class as was opera. The harpsicord began to fall out of use and gradually wind instruments became very popular.

Unlike in the Baroque and late Renaissance periods the music was once again homophonic as opposed to polyphonic and the texture of the music produced in this time was slow and graceful.

A symphony is a sonata for an orchestra but instead of having three sections it had three movements, later a fourth was added. Stamitz was the first main symphony composer but Haydn and Mozart perfected his work later in the

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18th century. The first movement was usually fast and in a sonata form.

The second movement Slower and used more vocals. The third movement
Hayden and Mozart write a minute trio here. The fourth movement Fast and
light-hearted.

As the music was homophonic (had one layer) the characteristics changed.

The main characteristics of this period were;

- o Less complicated texture than Baroque (more homophonic).
- o Emphasis on beauty, elegance and balance.
- o More variety and contrast within a piece than Baroque (dynamics, instruments, pitch, tempo, key, mood and timbre).
- o Melodies tended to be shorter than those in baroque, with clear-cut phrases.
- o The orchestra increases in size and range. The harpsichord falls out of use. The woodwind becomes a self-contained section.
- o The piano takes over, often with Alberti bass accompaniment.
- o Importance was given to instrumental music - sonata, trio, string quartet, symphony, concerto.
- o Sonata form was the most important design.

Mozart (1756 1791):

Wolfgang Amadeud Mozart was born in 1756, in Salzburg and was the son of a composer. He was to become the biggest musical prodigy ever!

From a very early age his father saw his talent and exhibited the young boy in Paris, Munich and Vienna. Whilst Mozart was on his Tour of Europe with his father he was exposed to a wide variety of music and at the age of twelve (1768) wrote his first opera Bastien und Bastienne and a year later finished his second La Finta Semplice.

In 1775 Mozart had a very unrewarding position at Salzburg Court and travelled with his mother to find a more exciting and rewarding position. In 1781, after composing the opera Idomeneo he resigned from his post in Salzburg hoping to work in a court in Vienna.

In Vienna he wrote the hugely famous Marriage Of Figaro and was appointed at the court in Vienna but he had financial difficulties and his health was deteriorating. He died in 1791 at the age of 35 in Vienna.

Pieces:

The classical yielded many great pieces of music from both Haydn and Mozart;

- o The Marriage of Figaro by Mozart in 1786.

- o Mass in Time of War By Haydn in 1796.

- o Idomeneo By Mozart in 1781.

- o The Magic Flute By Mozart in 1791.

- o Women are like that by Mozart in 1790.

- o Don Giovanni by Mozart in 1787.

Pictures: SHAPE * MERGEFORMAT

Mozart

A Manuscript of one of Mozarts operas