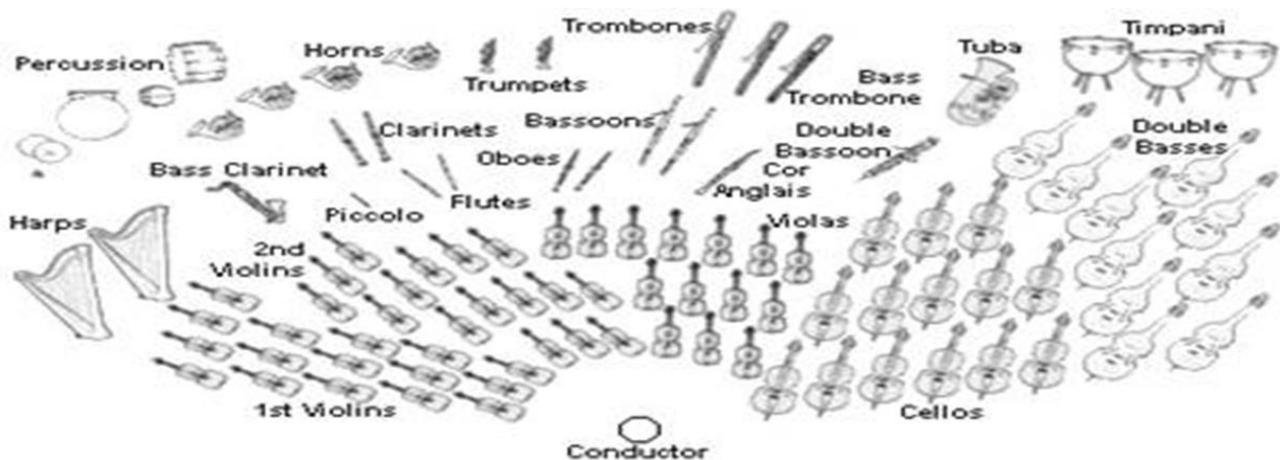


The Romantic Era 1820-1900

On the heels of the balanced, form focused Classical era, the Romantic era is a major pendulum swing in music history. Most music heard and performed today was either written during the Romantic period or directly influenced by it. The dictionary defines the term *Romantic* as originally pertaining to the literature and art of the middle ages. It is characterized by freedom of individualism, passion, emotion, nationalism, and mystery. It is almost entirely in contrast with the controls of Classicism. Forms are useful, but form **should not** dominate emotion. Use the forms as a springboard to emotional expression.

Characteristics of Romanticism

- Emphasis on emotion, personal expression, individualism
- Nationalism becomes important within compositions
 - Nationalism - Music composed with the intent of being identified with a certain nationality. Often using musical ideas associated with the folk music of that country/region.
- Program vs. Absolute music
 - Absolute music – instrumental music which exists in and for itself. No *extra musical* ideas will be suggested in the title.
 - Examples: Symphony No. 5 in c minor/Concerto No. 2 for Trumpet and Orchestra in C Major.
 - Program music – instrumental music which suggests to the listener something extra musical, something tangible or real. Based on an extra musical idea. Very descriptive titles guide the listener in what they should imagine (or see) as they listen.
 - Example: [Flight of the Bumblebee](#)/ [In the Hall of the Mountain King](#)
- Orchestra grows in size – more brass, woodwind and percussion means that the string section must also get larger. The Romantic orchestra will vary in size from 60 up to over 100 instruments.



- Music moves from PALACE into the CONCERT HALL – music being written for the people. There is still patronage, but because of Beethoven, the “musical servant to aristocracy” does not exist.
- Emphasis on the virtuosity of the performing artist
 - Virtuoso – one who exhibits great technical brilliance on a musical instrument. The highest degree of musical excellence.

- Emphasis on orchestration
 - Composition – conceiving of musical ideas – melody, harmony, rhythm, form – and writing those ideas down on paper. The person who does this is known as a composer.
 - Orchestration – assigning musical ideas which have been composed to be played by specific instruments of the orchestra. Who in the orchestra will play what, and when? The person who does this is often known as an arranger.

CONCERTO N° 5

J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Allegro

Flauto traverso
Violino principale
Violino di ripieno
Viola di ripieno
Violoncello
Contrabbasso
Cembalo concertato

Mozart
Symphony No. 40
in G minor
K. 550

Allegro molto.

Oboi.
Clarinetti in B.
Flauto.
Oboi.
Fagotti.
Corno in Balto.
Corno in G.
Violino I.
Violino II.
Viola.
Violoncello e Basso.

IV. Finale

Allegro con fuoco

Flauto I
Flauto II
Clarinetti in B.
Fagotti
Corno in G.
Corno in F.
Violino I
Violino II
Viola
Violoncello
Basso
Tutti
Cembalo

- Shorter forms increase in popularity
 - Art Song – a musical setting of a poem for solo voice + piano accompaniment
 - Shorter piano pieces (ballade, nocturne, fantasy, romanza)
 - Concert overture – individual concert piece in a single movement without reference to a stage performance, generally based on a literary theme.
 - Symphonic Poem – a single movement orchestral work which creates an atmosphere or mood based on a painting, landscape, or a novel (an expansion of the concert overture). Sometimes called a Tone Poem.
- New harmonic sounds (more dissonance). Compare Baroque Classic Romantic
- Opera becomes a far more serious and grand form; takes on a nationalistic diversity.