

# Unit 3: Baroque Music



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## basic vocabulary

To borrow: tomar prestado

Capable of: capaz de

Deal: a menudo

Distinguishable: distinguible

Joy: alegría

Plot: argumento

Rage: furia

Sorrow: pena

Subject matter: temática

Such as: como

Suffering: sufrimiento

Tends to: tender

Utmost: sumo/a

Whereas: mientras que



### **-Contrast and movement**

Contrast (between instrumental and vocal groups, different timbres, tempos, etc.) is one of the most important characteristics of baroque music. The *concertato style* involves contrast between opposing groups of voices and groups of instruments. In the *concerto grosso* there is contrast between large and small groups of similar composition.

### **-Affections**

Composers tried to express the *affections*. *Affections* were not their own emotions but were the states of the soul, such as rage, heroism, sorrow, or joy. Meter and rhythm were united to the feeling the composer wished to evoke.

## 2. vocal music

### 2.1. SEcular vocal music

Opera was invented in the late Renaissance for the Florentine Camerata, the musicians who worked for the Count Bardi in Florence. Their ideals were based on their perception of ancient Greek musical drama, in which the declamation of the text was of utmost importance. The first important opera was *The Orfeo* of Monteverdi (1607).



Opera is an art form in which singers and musicians perform a dramatic work combining text (called a libretto) and musical score. Opera incorporates many of the elements of spoken theatre, such as acting, scenery and costumes and sometimes includes dance. The performance is typically given in an opera house, accompanied by an orchestra or smaller musical ensemble.

## 2.2. RELIGIOUS vocal music



An oratorio is a large musical composition including an orchestra, a choir, and soloists. The oratorio and the opera were formally very similar (including the use of a choir, soloists, an ensemble, various distinguishable characters, and arias). However, opera is a musical theatre composition, while oratorio is strictly a concert piece. A particularly important difference is in the typical subject matter of the text. Opera tends to deal with history and mythology whereas the plot of an oratorio often deals with sacred topics, making it appropriate for performance in the church. George Friedrich Handel was the most important oratorio composer of the baroque period.

A passion is an oratorio about the suffering of Jesus leading up to the Crucifixion.

A cantata (literally 'sung', derived from the Italian word 'cantare') is a vocal composition with an instrumental accompaniment and often containing more than one movement. It doesn't tell a story and can be religious as well as secular. The most important cantata and passion composer was J.S. Bach.

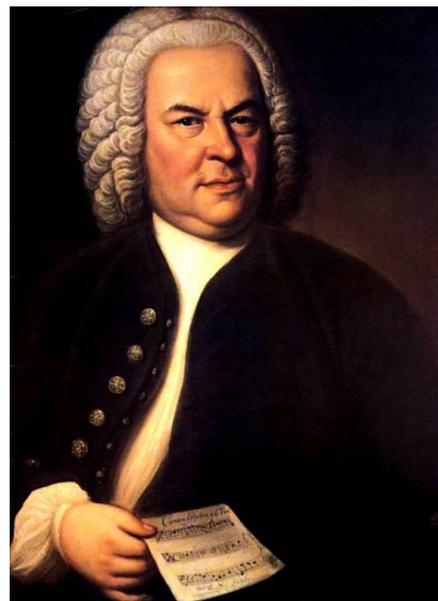
## 3. INSTRUMENTAL music

Instrumental music achieved a definitive independence from vocal music during this period. Musicians composed music specifically for instruments and the early instrumental genres began to appear.

### 3.1. CONCERTO

The *concerto grosso* is a form of baroque music in which the musical material is passed between a small group of soloists (the concertino) and full orchestra (the ripieno). The first major composer to use the term concerto grosso was Arcangelo Corelli.

In a *concerto a solo* there's just one soloist. Normally, the concerto alternated between fast and slow movements (FAST – SLOW – FAST)



## 3.2. suite

In the Baroque era the suite was defined by its pieces and consisted of dances usually preceded by a prelude or overture. The suite was also known as *suite de danses*. The main dances were:

- **Allemande** - Literally translates from French as the word 'German'. It is a stately German dance with a meter of 4/4.
- **Courante or Corrente** - A Courante is a lively French dance in 3/4 time, while the Corrente is an Italian dance in quick 3/4.
- **Sarabande** - A Sarabande is a slow, stately Spanish dance in 3/4 time.
- **Gigue or giga** - The Gigue or 'Jig' originated in England, and is a fast dance, normally with a meter of 6/8. The Italian giga is rarer than the gigue, and is faster, with running passages over a harmonic basis.



## WORLD MUSIC: MUSIC FROM LATIN AMERICA



When we talk about music from Latin America, we refer to Central and South American music, more specifically indigenous folk music.

However, the Latin American countries are characterized by an enormous mixture of crossbreed music. The main musical styles are Cuban *son*, Argentine *tango*, Brazilian *samba*, and the Trinidad and Tobago *calypso*.

To comprehend this music we have to talk about their three main influences:

- Pre-Columbian music (before the European colonization): the indigenous folk music is

characterized by the use of woodwind instruments like *pan pipes*, *reed flute* or *ocarinas* and percussion instruments like drums and rattles. They compose 95% using the pentatonic scale.



Pan pipe



Reed flute



Ocarina

- The music of European colonizers and missionaries: they introduced the guitar, the violin, etc. and the Occidental tonal system.
- The music of African slaves introduced the marimba (very important in Central America) and their own unique complex rhythms.

## EXERCISES

1) Look at the staff below. What do the numbers and accidentals under the staff indicate?




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2) List the differences between opera and oratorio:

OPERA	ORATORIO

3) Explain the different suite dances:

-Allemande: \_\_\_\_\_

-Courante: \_\_\_\_\_

-Sarabande: \_\_\_\_\_

-Gigue: \_\_\_\_\_

4) Complete the following sentences:

-The \_\_\_\_\_ involves contrast between opposing groups of voices and groups of instruments. In the \_\_\_\_\_ there is contrast between large and small groups of similar composition.

-Affections were not the \_\_\_\_\_ of the composers but the range of human emotions, states of the \_\_\_\_\_, such as rage, heroism, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_. Meter and \_\_\_\_\_ were united to the affection the composer wished to evoke.

-\_\_\_\_\_ is an art form in which singers and musicians perform a dramatic work combining \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

-A \_\_\_\_\_ is a vocal composition with an \_\_\_\_\_ and often containing more than \_\_\_\_\_ movement.