

## Baroque (1600–1750)

### I. Early Baroque (1600–1640)

#### *A. Historical developments*

1. Early opera begins in Florence, ca. 1500
2. Monteverdi's *Orfeo* performed in Mantua, 1607
3. Expression of emotional content of text through dissonance as well as melodic ornamentation with expressive values
4. Figured bass begins as accompaniment to monody, shifting emphasis from horizontal to vertical structure
5. Madrigals take on new expressiveness
6. Independent orchestral accompaniments develop, but instrumentation not yet standardized
7. Independent keyboard forms begin to develop
8. Baroque influences from Italian opera spread to Germany, France

#### *B. Representative composers and works*

1. Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643): *Madrigals, Books 1–7*, *Coronation of Poppea* (1643), *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (1640)
2. Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643): *Fiori Musicali* (1635)
3. Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672) *Symphoniae Sacrae* (1629, 1647, 1650)

## II. Middle Baroque (1640–1680)

### *A. Historical developments across Europe*

1. Multi-movement non-staged choral works: cantata, oratorio further develop from stylistic elements of opera
2. Major-minor tonality replaces modal tonality
3. Instrumental music for opera (overture, dances, battle scenes) influences instrumental suites
4. Protestant chorales serve as basis for multi-movement vocal works (cantatas) as well as instrumental music (chorale prelude)

### *B. Representative composers and works*

1. Antonio Cesti (1623–1669): *La Don* (1663), *Il pomo d'oro* (1668)
2. Jeanne Baptiste Lully (1632–1687): *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (1681), *Armide* (1686)
3. Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707): numerous chorale preludes and cantatas

## III. Late Baroque 1680–1750

### *A. Historical developments: vocal music*

1. Opera continues to develop, plots usually based on mythological themes
2. *Da capo* aria (A B A form) continues to develop, becomes vehicle for elaborate vocal display.
3. Word painting used increasingly (i.e. descending chromatic line for lament), vocal ornamentation becomes standardized, but still retains expressive value (example of lament: “When I am Laid in Earth” from Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas*)

*B. Historical developments: instrumental music*

1. Violin family develops, gradually replaces viols and becomes basis for orchestra
2. Makeup of orchestra of 10–40 players becomes more standardized: strings and harpsichord (basso continuo) often with addition of recorders, flutes, oboes, bassoon, trumpets, horns, trombones, timpani
3. Development of multi-movement instrumental forms: orchestral and keyboard suites, solo concerto, concerto grosso, trio sonata, solo sonata
4. Keyboard music encompasses a great variety of forms: variations on recurring bass line (chaconne, passacaglia), fugue, ricercare, invention

**IV. General stylistic characteristics of mid to late Baroque music**

*A. One basic mood throughout, but contrast introduced between sections via dynamic contrasts and contrasting instrumental groups (concerto grosso principle)*

*B. Rhythmic continuity, with strong sense of forward motion*

*C. Melodic sequence used as unifying device*

*D. Elaborate ornamentation*

## V. Representative composers and works

- A. Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713): trio sonatas, developed early concerto grosso, Concertos, Opus 12 (1714)*
- B. Henry Purcell (1659–1695): Dido and Aeneas (opera, 1689)*
- C. François Couperin le Grand (1668–1733): French keyboard music*
- D. Antonio Vivaldi (ca. 1680–1743): developed solo concerto, The Seasons*
- E. Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767): suites, sonatas, instrumental music*
- F. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750): both instrumental and vocal music; developed chorale, cantata; Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 1–6, Mass in B Minor, St. Matthew Passion, numerous chorales, cantatas, and organ works*
- G. George Frideric Handel (1685–1759): Messiah (oratorio ), Rinaldo (opera)*
- H. Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764): French opera composer; first to systematically describe functional harmony (Traité de l'harmonie, 1722)*

## VI. Historical references

*A. Era of absolute monarchies, aristocracy in power, with lavish court entertainment*

*B. Rise of middle class (merchants, doctors)*

*C. Important scientific discoveries (Galileo, Newton) and advances in mathematics*

*D. Role of music and musicians:*

1. Musicians were servants of the aristocracy if employed by court
2. Italy had commercial opera houses, but few public concerts in other parts of Europe
3. Church music remained main opportunity for hearing music for most people

*E. Artists/sculptors: Caravaggio, Rubens, Rembrandt, Bernini, Watteau*

*F. Writers: Cervantes (Don Quixote), Milton (Paradise Lost)*