

# MUSIC 324: MUSIC HISTORY II

## *Test 3 Review*

- I. The “Golden Age” of Opera
  - A. The years between 1820-1900 are considered the “golden” age of opera
    - 1. 70% of the opera that is performed today was written in this 80 year span
  
- II. Early Italian Opera
  - A. Background
    - 1. Melody was by far the most important compositional and dramatic element
    - 2. Because of its tradition, Italian opera was conservative
    - 3. Two distinct styles still existed
      - a. Opera seria
      - b. Opera buffa
    - 4. Plots usually centered around adventure and emotion
  - B. Gioachino Rossini
    - 1. Most famous composer of in all of Europe
      - a. In the 1820s and 1830s, Rossini was *far* more famous than Beethoven or Schubert
    - 2. Compositional Output
      - a. 39 operas (both serious and comic)
      - b. Opera Seria
        - (1) *William Tell*
          - (a) His only truly successful serious opera
      - c. Opera Buffa
        - (1) *Italian in Algiers*
        - (2) *La gazza ladra*
        - (3) *The Barber of Seville*
          - (a) Considered his comic masterpiece
        - (4) Abruptly stopped writing operas at the height of his success
          - (a) Wrote no operas for the remaining 40 years of his life
    - 3. Style Characteristics
      - a. Very tuneful, accessible melodies
      - b. Clear phrases
      - c. Clean and creative use of orchestra
      - d. “Rossini” crescendo
        - (1) Trademark where he would repeat a 1-2 measure phrases continuously while executing a crescendo
      - e. Most important trait was, like Mozart, he was effortlessly able to convey drama and humor while still making everything entertaining
  - C. Opera after Rossini
    - 1. Vincenzo Bellini
      - a. Important Work
        - (1) *Norma*
    - 2. Gaetano Donizetti
      - a. Important Works
        - (1) *Lucia di Lammermoor*
        - (2) *Don Pasquale*

### III. Late Italian Opera

#### A. Giuseppe Verdi

1. Background
  - a. After Donizetti, the next fifty years of Italian Opera was dominated by Verdi
2. 1<sup>st</sup> Style Period (1839-1849)
  - a. Influenced by Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini
  - b. Innovations
    - (1) Less recitative and more compressed arias
    - (2) Increased use of chorus
  - c. Important Work
    - (1) *Nabucco*
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Style Period (1850-1855)
  - a. Innovations
    - (1) Characters depicted with finer psychological distinction
    - (2) Fewer arias
    - (3) Increased duets
  - b. Important Works
    - (1) *Rigoletto*
      - (a) Based on Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*
    - (2) *La Traviata*
4. 3<sup>rd</sup> Style Period (1855-1871)
  - a. Innovations
    - (1) Increased chromaticism/more adventurous harmonically
    - (2) Dictates that drama must unfold without interruption
  - b. Important Works
    - (1) *La Forza del Destino*
    - (2) *Aida*
5. 4<sup>th</sup> Period (1880-1901)
  - a. Innovations
    - (1) Disappearance of set numbers
    - (2) Rise of constant music
  - b. Important Works
    - (1) *Otello*
    - (2) *Falstaff*
6. Overall Innovations
  - a. Retention of characterization in ensemble numbers
    - (1) First use of ensemble numbers in serious opera
    - (2) Characters retain their character throughout instead of in isolated flashes
  - b. Musical Depiction of Character
    - (1) Writes small sections representing different emotions
    - (2) Usually achieved by presenting the motives in the orchestra and then incorporating them into the vocal line
7. Nationalism
  - a. Verdi was uncompromising in his Italian nationalism and firmly believed that each nation should cultivate the kind of music that was native to it
  - b. In his operas until 1871 (end of 3<sup>rd</sup> Period), many choruses were thinly veiled appeals to the patriotism of his countrymen for national unity and against foreign domination
  - c. Verdi's name became a patriotic symbol and rallying cry with "Viva Verdi"
    - (1) Stood for "Viva Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia" (Long Live Victor Emanuel, King of Italy)

## B. Verism in Opera

1. Movement in Italian Opera in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century towards realism
  - a. Librettos presented everyday people in familiar situations acting violently on the impulse of primitive emotions

## C. Giacomo Puccini

1. Important Works
  - a. *La boheme*
  - b. *Tosca*
  - c. *Madama Butterfly*

## D. Ruggero Leoncavallo

1. Important Work
  - a. *I Pagliacci*

## IV. Early German Opera

### A. Evolution

1. First 19<sup>th</sup> century country to develop a style independent of the French and Italian styles
2. Evolved from *Singspiel*

### B. Carl Maria von Weber

1. Father of German opera
2. Almost single-handedly bridged the gap from the simple *Singspiel* to the operas of Wagner
3. Characteristics of Early German Opera
  - a. Disregarded plots of love and intrigue
  - b. Used a plot that borrowed from legends of his own country
  - c. Characters represent ideals like good vs. evil
  - d. Music is based on folk music
  - e. Synthesis of all the dramatic elements
    - (1) Text
    - (2) Scenery
    - (3) Costumes
    - (4) Vocal music
    - (5) Instrumental music
  - f. Much more involved use of orchestra
    - (1) Instruments portray emotions or characteristics
4. *Der Freischütz* ("The Free-Shooter") (1821)
  - a. Turned to the *Faust* story of Goethe which was the original tale of a man selling his soul to the devil for wishes in return
    - (1) The opera is at the heart of the Romantic movement
      - (a) Employs the supernatural
      - (b) Dealt with mythology
      - (c) Occurs in the middle of nature

## V. Late German Opera

### A. Richard Wagner

1. Operas Pre-1850
  - a. Innovations
    - (1) Begins to stretch "formlessness"
      - (a) Move away from set numbers
    - (2) Use of "reminiscence" motives
    - (3) Specific keys are assigned specific characters
    - (4) Increased use of chorus

- b. Important Works
  - (1) *Rienzi*
  - (2) *Flying Dutchman*
  - (3) *Tannhauser*
  - (4) *Lohengrin*
- 2. Operas Post-1850
  - a. Philosophy
    - (1) *Gesamtkunstwerk* (“Total Art Work”)
      - (a) Incorporation of an poetry, scenic design, staging, action, and music
    - (2) Subject matter
      - (a) Used German/Norse mythology for several reasons because of an overuse of Greek and Roman mythology and he wanted to bring the folk heritage of the people to the people
    - (3) Opera as social change
      - (a) Wanted his works to echo the virtues of the future so his audiences could learn from his message and institute future social changes
  - b. Innovations
    - (1) Form
      - (a) Broke from tradition notion—shunned set numbers in favor of “formlessness”
    - (2) Harmony
      - (a) Typical progressions will lead to an anticipated climax or resolution
    - (3) *Leitmotif*
      - (a) Distinguished his romantic operas (pre-1850) from his musical dramas (post-1850)
      - (b) Musical motive representing a character, emotion, or situation
    - (4) *Verse melody* (Verse Melody)
      - (a) Vocal line expresses the surface meaning of the present
    - (5) *Orchestermelodie* (Orchestra melody)
      - (a) Orchestra represents what is unspoken or subconscious (through the leitmotif)
  - c. Important Texts
    - (1) *Art and Revolution*
    - (2) *The Artwork of the Future*
    - (3) *Opera and Drama*
      - (a) Stated his new philosophies for *Gesamtkunstwerk*
  - d. Important Works
    - (1) *Tristan und Isolde*
    - (2) *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*
    - (3) *Der Ring des Nibelungen*
      - (a) *Das Rheingold* (“The Gold of the Rhine”)
      - (b) *Die Walküre* (“The Valkyrie”)
      - (c) *Siegfried*
      - (d) *Die Götterdämmerung*
    - (4) *Parsifal*

## B. Comparison between Wagner and Verdi

### 1. Know Comparison Chart

## VI. The Symphonic Poem

### A. Program Music

1. Symphonic Poem (Tone Poem)
  - a. Created by Liszt
  - b. The main form of program music in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century
    - (1) The character piece and the symphonic poem are the two new genres created in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
  - c. Definition
    - (1) A one-movement orchestral work whose inspiration came from literature, history, paintings, or an extra-musical event
  - d. Characteristics
    - (1) Form
      - (a) The form of the symphonic poem was dictated by the musical depiction of its program
    - (2) Thematic Transformation
      - (a) Composers turned to thematic transformation to help unify their symphonic poems
2. Examples
  - a. *Les Preludes* (1854)
    - (1) Musical depiction of the Lamartine poem, *Poetic Meditations*
  - b. *Don Quixote* (1896-1897)
    - (1) Musical dramatization of Cervantes' book by the same name
    - (2) Each main character has its own key area
    - (3) Each character has its own characteristic instrument

## VII. The Origins of Musical Nationalism

### A. Began in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and brought about through political changes in Europe

1. Throughout most of the early part of the century there were few true large countries
2. Instead, a lot of Europe was made up of small principalities or city-states
3. As the century progressed, Europe became organized into around a dozen strongly unified, centrally governed nation-states
4. With this unification, a type of national pride in heritage, language, and culture grew within each country
5. Distinct national cultures grew not only in the more powerful countries like Germany and Italy but in the smaller nations like Russia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Finland
6. This spawned a movement within individual countries to create its own style of music, separate from the Germans and Italians
  - a. Composers felt their countries own traditions were being compromised
  - b. Also realized that if they were ever to be considered as equals, it would not be by copying German and Italian music
7. Each of these countries began to develop unique, artistic individual styles based on a foundation of folk traditions (i.e. stories, dances, songs, etc.)
8. The growth of these national styles is known as Nationalism

## VIII. Russian Nationalism

- A. Russia was one of the first countries to develop its own national style of music separate from the German orchestral tradition and the Italian opera tradition
- B. Russian nationalism was led by an interesting group known as the *kuchka* or “Russian Five”
  - 1. Mily Balakirev
  - 2. Alexander Borodin
  - 3. Cesar Cui
  - 4. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
  - 5. Modeste Mussorgsky
  - 6. These five were close friends and dedicated themselves to give Russian music a distinctive voice with their interest in folksong and legend
- C. Modest Mussorgsky
  - 1. Considered to be the most talented of the five
  - 2. Compositional Style
    - a. Melodies in a narrow range (derived from Russian folk songs)
    - b. Repetition of rhythmic motives (derived from Russian folk songs)
    - c. Use of mixed meter (derived from Russian folk songs)
    - d. Modality
      - (1) Most important contribution—greatly influenced 20<sup>th</sup> century composers
    - e. Non-functional harmony
      - (1) Didn’t study European harmony, so he had no knowledge of traditional harmonic progressions
  - 3. Important Works
    - a. *Boris Gununov* (1874)
    - b. *A Night on Bare (Bald) Mountain* (1867) (orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov)
    - c. *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874)
      - (1) Piano work was inspired by the sudden death of Mussorgsky’s close friend, artist and architect Victor Hartmann
      - (2) In 1922, French composer and master orchestrator Maurice Ravel adapted Mussorgsky’s piano work for full orchestra

## IX. Other Nationalism

- A. Background
  - 1. Russia was not the only country to produce popular nationalist composers
  - 2. Many newly established countries throughout Europe were embracing their own nationalism and developing their own unique style
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- C. Jean Sibelius (Finland)
  - 1. Most important figure in the musical history of Finland
  - 2. *Finlandia* (1899)
    - a. Sibelius’ most popular work
    - b. Originally used as incidental music for a nationalist fundraising festival
    - c. The work became the musical rallying cry against the Russians, who eventually took control of the country
    - d. The work still continued to be performed, but under the generic title of “Impromptu”
    - e. Hymn-like middle section was eventually adopted as the Finnish national anthem

## X. Impressionism

### A. Background

1. Around the turn of the century, there was an anti-German feeling throughout Europe
2. Most powerful opposition came from France
  - a. They now viewed his music as too sentimental and too heavy
3. Movement against German Romanticism was called Impressionism
  - a. Began as a movement in art in the 1870s with young French painters living in Paris
  - b. Their art was the first to turn against the representational (the idea that things should be painted exactly as they appear in reality)

### B. Claude Debussy

1. Pitch Materials
  - a. Use of exotic scales and modes
2. Melody
  - a. Melodic fragments (no long lines)
3. Harmony
  - a. Most innovative features
  - b. Planing
  - c. Tertian chords
  - d. Chords w. added tones
  - e. Non-traditional cadences (or no cadence at all)
4. Rhythm
  - a. Avoidance of recognizable meter or metric accents
  - b. Expressive use of silence
5. Orchestration
  - a. Harp (prominently featured)
  - b. Low register of flute
  - c. Extensively muted brass and strings
6. Texture
  - a. Although he employed a very large orchestra with an extensive percussion section he rarely used them at the same time

