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The Romantic Era dates from 1800 to 1900. This period brought about greater freedom of music. The name indicates the music was more emotional and romantic in feeling and sound. Important types of music in this period were the character piece for piano, art song for voice, and the opera. The great composers of this era were the German operas (musical dramas) of Wagner were also from this era.	
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THE MEANING OF ERAS

As the story of the history of music unfolds, the word era is used over and over again. An era is a fixed period of time in history that is distinctive or notable because of different people and events. In other words, things such as styles of clothes, customs of celebrating, certain types of musical instruments, ways of governing countries, and many other life styles belong to that period of history and no other.

There are many of these eras in history, but four of them have particular significance in music. They are the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary Eras.

The **Baroque Era** dates from 1600 to 1750. It is characterized by elaborate ornaments (different kinds of melodic trills and turns), scrolls, musical chromaticism, and flourishes in the music. Instruments of the Baroque Era were the harpsichord, as well as softer sounding orchestral instruments, including strings, woodwinds, and brass. Typical of this time were one movement sonatas, dance forms, marches, and opera and oratorio with recitative. The musical texture is frequently polyphonic (more than one voice).

The **Classical Era** dates from 1750-1800. It includes music written during the last half of the eighteenth century. Although the piano was actually invented during the Baroque Era, its development during this period gave composers the opportunity to create fuller sounding compositions. This sound was achieved by striking the strings, instead of plucking them and by using the pedals. Music of the Classical Era included Classical sonata form, concertos, symphonic compositions, and larger operatic works.

The **Romantic Era** dates from 1800 to 1900. This period brought about greater freedom of musical form. As its name indicates, the music was more emotional and romantic in feeling and sound. Important types of music in this period were the character piece for piano, art song for voice and piano (often called Lieder), and the symphonic poem (tone poem) for orchestra. The great Italian operas of Verdi and the German operas (musical dramas) of Wagner were also from the Romantic Era. Romanticism has supplied a large portion of repertoire (compositions learned) for modern performers.

The **Contemporary Era** dates from 1900 to the present. New sounds, rhythms, and styles developed during this time. Notable among these are atonal music, serial music, American jazz, and electronic music.

It is now the 21st century which, will probably be named a new era. It will be exciting to watch and experience what the new era will be called and what new sounds and styles it will bring to the *World of Music!*

FAMOUS COMPOSERS

Baroque Era

François Couperin (1668-1733) France

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Germany

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Germany*

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) Italy

George Frederic Handel (1685-1759)

Germany/England

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) Poland

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) Germany

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) Hungary

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) Germany

Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) Russia

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) Norway

Edward MacDowell (1860-1908) United

States

Contemporary Era

Béla Bartók (1881-1945) Hungary

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) Russia

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) Russia

Ferde Grofé (1892-1972) United States

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) Germany

George Gershwin (1898-1937) United States

Aaron Copland (1900-1991) United States

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904-1987) Russia

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) Russia

Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007) United States

Norman Dello Joio (1913-2008) United States

Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) Argentina

Classical Era

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) Austria

Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782)

Germany/England*

Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) Italy/England

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Austria*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) Germany

Romantic Era

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) Austria

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) Germany

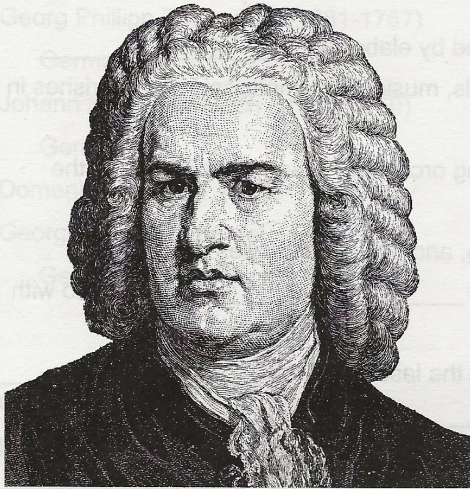
* Composers discussed in this text

REVIEW ACTIVITY

1. A fixed period of time in history is called an _____.
2. The period is distinctive or notable because of its new or different _____ or _____.
3. The _____ Era is characterized by elaborate _____ (different kinds of melodic trills and turns), scrolls, musical chromaticism, and flourishes in the music.
4. The _____ and softer sounding orchestral instruments belong to the _____ Era.
5. One movement sonatas, dance forms, marches, and polyphonic styles are from the _____ Era. Also included are _____ and oratorio with _____.
6. The Classical Era includes music written during the last half of the _____ century. The dates are _____ to _____.
7. During the Classical Era, the further development of the _____ gave composers opportunity for fuller sounding compositions. This sound was achieved by _____ the strings instead of _____ them and by using the _____.
8. Classical music styles include: _____, _____, and _____ compositions.
9. The _____ Era dates from 1800-1900.
10. The music of this period was more _____ and _____ in feeling and sound.
11. Music of the Romantic Era includes the _____ piece for piano, _____ song for voice and piano, also called _____, and the _____ poem for orchestra, also called the _____ poem.
12. Also developed in the Romantic Era were the great German operas of _____.
13. _____ is compositions learned.
14. The Contemporary Era dates from _____ to _____. Music of this time includes _____ music, _____ music, American - _____, and _____ music.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

1685 – 1750



Johann Sebastian Bach is a famous composer of the Baroque Era (1600-1750). Bach composed a great deal of sacred choral and organ music, but no operas. He also composed works for orchestra and for small instrumental ensembles. Many of Bach's compositions, which were originally written for harpsichord, are played today.

During his lifetime, Bach was not famous as a composer. Baroque musicians were expected to compose music, conduct, perform, and teach. Bach became well-known as a skilled organist and harpsichordist. A harpsichord, a favorite instrument of the Baroque Era, had strings that were plucked rather than struck with a hammer like the modern piano. Bach could improvise (create during a performance) music on the harpsichord and organ in fascinating ways.

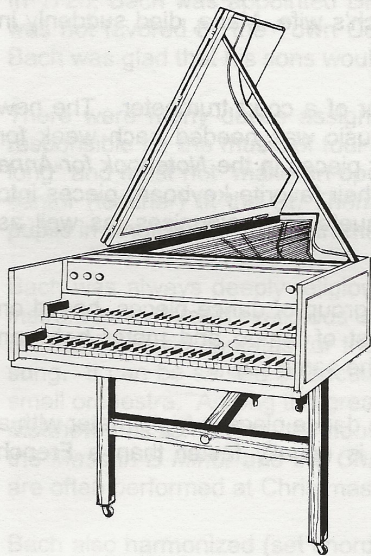
Johann Sebastian was born in the small town of Eisenach, in central Germany. Germany was a land of small, independent states ruled by monarchs, electors, or dukes. Catholic states in southern Germany were ruled by nobility or church officials. Some large towns and cities had independent governing bodies, called Town Councils. Outside the walled town of Eisenach were fields where produce was grown and herds were kept. On a distant hill, the royal castle of the ruling nobility could be seen.

The Bach family had been church and town musicians for many generations. Johann Sebastian's father worked as a town musician, playing wind instruments and stringed instruments. As a child, Johann received violin lessons from his father.

Johann attended the Eisenach Latin School. He studied singing, quickly moving up to the advanced choir. His school day began at six o'clock every morning. Music lessons and practice lasted into the late evening every day.

Johann Sebastian's parents died in 1695. He was only ten. Johann and his brother Jakob went to live with an older, married brother, Johann Christoph. Johann Christoph worked as a church organist in the small town of Ohrdruf, and he gave organ and harpsichord lessons to his young brother, Johann Sebastian.

Johann Sebastian learned so quickly that Johann Christoph became jealous of his young brother's talents in performing and composing music. To learn composing, Johann Sebastian copied down music by other composers. He made new arrangements of music that he heard and loved. Johann Christoph hid the manuscripts which Johann Sebastian had laboriously copied by hand. The music was locked away in a cupboard. Johann Sebastian recovered his manuscripts only after his older brother died.



At the age of fifteen, Johann Sebastian left home to work as a professional church singer in Lüneburg. He was allowed to continue his education, and in return, he sang at church services and for civic celebrations. During his time at Lüneburg, Bach worked hard at his musical studies. He walked a great distance to the city of Lübeck to hear the famous organist, Buxtehude, perform. He also walked to the city of Celle to hear orchestral music and Italian operas performed at the royal court there.

From 1703 to 1723, Bach worked at various royal courts and churches. He performed at court concerts on violin and harpsichord (left). As was the custom, Bach would improvise a "basso continuo" or "filler part" on harpsichord to accompany the orchestra or instrumental ensemble he was conducting. He would read a notated bass-line with numbers written underneath. The numbers indicated which intervals were to be played above the notated bass-line notes. The other basso continuo player was a cellist or bassoonist who would play only the notated bass-line part.

Violin melody

Basso continuo

Bb: 6 5 # 6 6 7 5

Basso continuo becomes

In 1707, Bach became an organist at Mühlhausen. He married his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach. The Bach Family later moved to Weimar where Johann worked as court organist and Director of Instrumental Music. Many of his compositions for organ were composed at this time.

Listen to a recording of Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*. The *Tocatta* has rushing scale passages and broken-chord figures. The contrapuntal fugue builds to a grand climax, and then returns to the free-style music of the *Tocatta*.

In 1717, Bach moved to the royal court at Cöthen, where he composed orchestral and ensemble music for his royal employer, Prince Leopold. Bach's wife, Maria, died suddenly in 1720, leaving him to care for their seven children.

In 1721, Bach married Anna Magdalena Wilcke, the daughter of a court trumpeter. The new Mrs. Bach hand-copied her husband's music, since new music was needed each week for chapel services and court concerts. There are many popular pieces in the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach*. Mrs. Bach and the Bach children copied their favorite keyboard pieces into this family collection of music. Dance pieces, such as minuets and polonaises, as well as marches and chorales are included in the collection.

Two suites are found in the *Notebook*. A Baroque suite is a group of dance pieces, based on traditional dances of different countries. There is a contrast of tempo and meter between movements (pieces) of a Baroque suite, but each dance is in the same key.

The example below shows the beginning of a French courante dance piece in triple meter with a moderately fast tempo. An Italian courante, in 3/2 time, is usually faster than a French courante.

Bach: Courante

The musical score for Bach's Courante in B-flat major, BWV 817, is presented in three systems. Each system consists of two staves, a treble staff and a bass staff, joined by a brace on the left. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The first system begins with a 'C:' time signature. The melody in the right hand is characterized by eighth-note patterns, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. A trill is marked in the right hand in the second measure of the first system.