

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Track list	4
<i>Music of the Classical Era</i> , by Stephen Johnson	9
I. What was the Classical Era?	10
II. Nature versus Reason	18
III. Sensitive Style	21
IV. New Means to New Ends	26
V. The Emergence of the Orchestra	30
VI. Old and New: Conflict or Co-existence?	35
VII. Revolution in the Opera House	41
VIII. Mass Movements and Secret Societies	48
IX. Surprises and Subversion	56
X. Democracy moves centre stage	66
XI. The First Romantics?	71
XII. Prometheus Unbound	73
Sources of featured panels	81
A Timeline of the Classical Era (music, history, art and architecture, literature)	82
Further Listening	94
Composers of the Classical Era	97
Map	99
Glossary	100
Credits	103

Track List

CD 1

- Roman Hoffstetter (1742–1815)**
String Quartet in F major, Op. 3 No. 5
[1] Movement 2: Andante cantabile 5.04
Kodály Quartet 8.555704
- Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)**
Symphony No. 45 in F sharp minor, 'Farewell'
[2] Movement 1: Allegro assai 5.40
Capella Istropolitana / Barry Wordsworth 8.550382
- Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788)**
'Hamburg' Symphony No. 3 in C major
[3]–[4] Movements 1 and 2: Allegro assai; Adagio 6.02
Capella Istropolitana / Christian Benda 8.553285
- Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739–1799)**
Sinfonia in A minor, 'The Delirium of the Composers'
[5] Movement 4: Presto (non troppo) 4.33
Failoni Chamber Orchestra / Uwe Grodd 8.553975

- Franz Joseph Haydn**
 6 Piano Variations in F minor 14.56
 Jenő Jandó, piano 8.550845
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)**
 7 Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K491
 Movement 1: Allegro 12.52
 Jenő Jandó, piano / Concertus Hungaricus / Mátyás Antál 8.550204
- Carl Stamitz (1745–1801)**
 8 Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F major
 Movement 2: Andante moderato 6.10
 Kálmán Berkes, clarinet & director / Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia 8.553584
- Johann Stamitz (1717–1757)**
 9 Symphony in D major, Op. 3 No. 2
 Movement 1: Presto 3.08
 New Zealand Chamber Orchestra / Donald Armstrong 8.553194
- Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (1736–1809)**
 10 Prelude and Fugue in C major for Organ, Four Hands 5.01
 Phoebe Payne & Joseph Payne, organ 8.550964
- Leopold Mozart (1719–1787)**
 11 Trombone Concerto in G major
 Movement 3: Allegro 5.09
 Alain Trudel, trombone & director / Northern Sinfonia 8.553831
- Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805)**
 12 Cello Concerto No. 3 in G major, G480
 Movement 2: Allegro 6.36
 Tim Hugh, cello / Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Anthony Halstead 8.553571

TT: 76:16

CD 2

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Serenata notturna, K239

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 1 | Movement 2: Menuetto – Trio | 4.17 |
| | Capella Istropolitana / Wolfgang Sobotka | 8.550026 |

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Missa in angustiis, 'Nelson Mass'

- | | | |
|---|---|----------|
| 2 | Movement 1: Kyrie | 4.25 |
| | Viktoria Loukianetz / Gabriele Sima / Kurt Azesberger / Robert Holzer /
Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus and Orchestra / Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia /
Béla Drahós | 8.554416 |

Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782)

Sinfonia in B flat major, Op. 18 No. 2, 'Lucio Silla'

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 3 | Part 3: Presto | 1.48 |
| | Failoni Chamber Orchestra / Hanspeter Gmür | 8.553367 |

Christoph Willibald von Gluck (1714–1787)

Orfeo ed Euridice

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 4 | Act I, Scene 1: Ah, se intorno a quest'urna funesta | 3.06 |
| 5 | Act III, Scene 1: Che farò senza Euridice? | 3.29 |
| | Ann-Christine Biel / Drottningholm Court Theatre Orchestra / Arnold Östman | 8.660064 |

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Die Zauberflöte

6	Act II, No. 15: In diesen heil'gen Hallen	3.55
	Kurt Rydl / Failoni Chamber Orchestra / Michael Halász	8.660031

7	Act II, No. 14: Der Hölle Rache	2.54
	Helen Kwon / Failoni Chamber Orchestra / Michael Halász	8.660031

François-Joseph Gossec (1734–1829)

Grande Messe des morts

8	9	Dies irae (Grave maestoso); Tuba mirum (Grave – Allegretto)	7.36
		Radio Svizzera Choir and Orchestra / Diego Fasolis	8.554750

Franz Joseph Haydn

Symphony No. 94 in G major, 'Surprise'

10	Movement 2: Andante	5.34
	Capella Istropolitana / Barry Wordsworth	8.550114

Franz Joseph Haydn

String Quartet in E flat major, Op. 33 No. 2, 'The Joke'

11	Movement 4: Finale	3.36
	Kodály Quartet	8.550788

Franz Joseph Haydn

String Quartet in D major, Op. 33 No. 6

12	Movement 3: Scherzo (Allegretto)	2.16
	Kodály Quartet	8.550789

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

String Quartet No. 16 in E flat major, K428

- [13] Movement 4: Allegro vivace 5.29
Éder Quartet 8.550540

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Le nozze di Figaro

- [14] Act I, No. 3: Se vuol ballare, signor Contino 2.42
Soloists / Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia / Michael Halász 8.660102

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Don Giovanni

- [15]–[18] Act I, Scene 20: finale 9.16
Soloists / Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia / Michael Halász 8.660081

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K550

- [19] Movement 4: Allegro assai 5.05
Capella Istropolitana / Barry Wordsworth 8.550299

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2 No. 1

- [20] Movement 1: Allegro 5.37
Jenő Jandó, piano 8.550150

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36

- [21] Movement 4: Allegro molto 6.41
Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia / Béla Drahós 8.553476

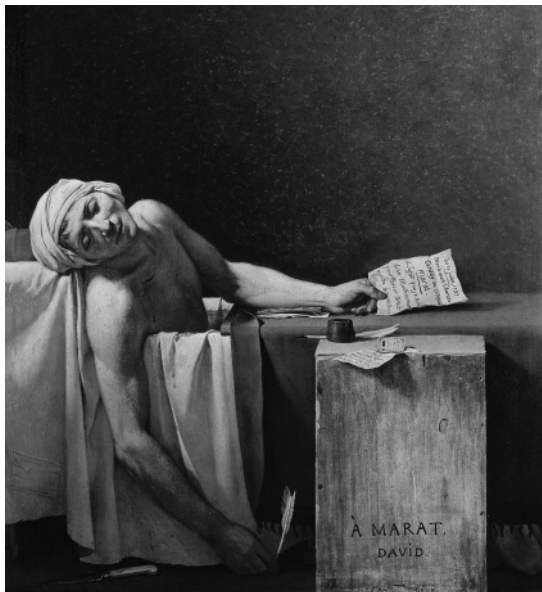
TT: 79:18

Music of the **Classical Era**

by

Stephen Johnson

I. What was the Classical Era?



The Death of Marat (stabbed in his bath by Charlotte Corday, Paris, 13 July 1793)
Painting, 1793, by Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825). © AKG Images / Erich Lessing

Broadly speaking, music historians are agreed about when the Classical era occurred. It was that time of extraordinary creativity, dominated by composers from the German-speaking countries, which saw the creation of the masterpieces of Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), and the first mature works of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827). In other words, it's a period that stretches from the second half of the eighteenth century to around the first decade of the nineteenth. This was a time of unprecedented social and political upheaval, with the French Revolution of 1789 as its climax and central turning point. It was also a time in which many of the features of the modern world first became defined. While France was purging itself of its old order and establishing the republic, Britain was experiencing the beginnings of its own Industrial Revolution. Both of these phenomena were to have immense consequences for the rest of the western world. So this was an age of epochal transition – or what the much-quoted old Chinese curse calls 'interesting times'.

It's when you get to the question of *what* it is that distinguishes the music of this so-called 'Classical' era, that the arguments start. In the visual arts, commentators tend to be reassuringly clear about what 'Classical' means. One of the most important theorists of the Renaissance, Leon Battista Alberti, defined Classical beauty in painting and architecture as 'the harmony and concord of all the parts achieved by following well-founded rules and resulting in a unity such that nothing could be added or taken away or altered except for the worse'. As an ideal it has frequently been contrasted with Romanticism – not least by the Romantics themselves. The poet John Keats, for example, offers a hymn to ancient Classical beauty in his *Ode to a Grecian Urn* (1819):

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time

The German Romantic composer Robert Schumann heard these kind of qualities in Mozart's Fortieth Symphony (1788, see CD 2, track 19), which he praised for its 'Grecian lightness and grace'. In another of his writings he extended the image to Mozart's music as a whole:

Serenity, repose, grace, the characteristics of the antique works of art, are those of Mozart's school. The Greeks gave to 'The Thunderer' [Zeus] a radiant expression, and radiantly does Mozart launch his lightnings.

Mozart's first biographer, Franz Xaver Niemetschek, also extolled him for his 'Classical' qualities: 'The masterpieces of the Romans and Greeks please more and more through repeated reading, and... the same applies for both connoisseur and amateur with regard to the hearing of Mozart's music'. However one of the greatest of all Romantic critics, E.T.A. Hoffmann – a man who loved Mozart so much that he changed one of his forenames from Friedrich to Amadeus – saw it very differently. For Hoffmann, Mozart and Haydn were the first Romantics. What struck him above all else about their music was not 'harmony and concord', but the way it challenged 'well-founded rules', springing dramatic surprises, giving a new freedom to the imagination and allowing the expression of emotions with unprecedented intensity and directness. In an essay written in 1814, Hoffmann groups Haydn and Mozart with Beethoven, contrasting them with what he felt to be their superficial and often false contemporaries:

Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven developed a new art, whose origins first appear in the middle of the eighteenth century. Thoughtlessness and lack of understanding husbanded the acquired treasure badly, and in the end, counterfeiters tried to give the impression of the real thing with their tinsel, but it was not the fault of these masters in whom the spirit was so nobly manifest.



Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

*‘Friends often flatter me that I have some genius,
but Mozart stands far above me.’*

Franz Joseph Haydn



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

***‘Melody is the very essence of music.
When I think of a good melodist, I think of a fine
race-horse. A contrapuntist is only a post-horse.’***

Mozart to Michael Kelly, Letter (1786)

The German composer and critic Johann Mattheson, writing in *The Perfect Kapellmeister*, offers advice to budding Mozarts:

A composer must know how to express truly all the heart's inclinations by means merely of carefully chosen sounds and their skilful combination without words, so that a listener can completely grasp and clearly understand the motive, sense, meaning and force, with all the phrases and sentences pertaining thereto, as if it were a real speech. Then it is a delight! Much more art and a stronger power of imagination belong to this achievement without words than with their help.

Clearly Schumann and Hoffmann can't both be right – or can they? Following the tracks for the two CDs that accompany this booklet, listeners may well find they are pulled alternately in both directions. There are times when one is very much aware of an order, balance and elegance that the Romantics seemed intent on destroying. In such moments we are reminded that the eighteenth century was also the era of the intellectual movement known as the 'Enlightenment', which emphasised rationality, the primacy of scientific method. It was the period in which educated men widely believed that the laws of a divinely ordered universe had been laid bare in the theories of Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). There was no place in this universe for mind-boggling concepts like quantum mechanics or Einsteinian relativity: order and harmony reigned. This serenely rational view of the universe is beautifully expressed in the words of the hymn by the English essayist Joseph Addison (1672–1719):

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim.
The unwearied sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand...

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found;
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
'The hand that made us is divine'.

The eighteenth century was also a period in which the writings, art and architecture of ancient Greece and Rome were being rediscovered and re-evaluated. The ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum were excavated, sketched and pondered on by many. This in turn exerted a formative influence on the new art of the age. Many of the great houses and gardens of the royalty and nobility are pervaded by this sense of grand design, underlined with images and symbols drawn from Classical antiquity. And if one wanted to imagine a kind of musical soundtrack to accompany a tour of one of these Arcadian palaces and their exquisitely landscaped surroundings, it might well be the Serenade from the String Quartet published as Haydn's Op. 3 No. 5 (c1777), but probably composed by a minor contemporary, Roman Hoffstetter (1742–1815): in the late eighteenth century the name 'Haydn' on a publication was a virtual cast-iron guarantee of sales. This elegant, tastefully mannered aria for muted violin with simple, regular pizzicato accompaniment is untroubled from first to last. Nothing mars its gentle continuity; sweet reason prevails (**CD 1, track 1**).

This is the introductory chapter of Discover Music of the Classical Era.
The full booklet, illustrated with photographs and accompanied by two CDs,
is available to buy from www.naxos.com.