

Music 429a: Classical Sonatas

An examination of standard formal procedures and features of the sonata, c. 1760-1800—mostly Mozart and Haydn—viewed from the perspective of “Sonata Theory” (norms, generic options, expressive/dramatic trajectories toward cadences, and so on). We shall be concerned especially with dramatic expositional arrangement and individual movement and multimovement architecture—symphony, quartet, sonata, overture, and so on—coupled with discussions of current writings and understandings of “sonata form.” This seminar is score-specific, devoted primarily to problems of analytical method and the interpretation of musical “meaning.” Toward the end of the seminar we shall examine a few compositions in more depth: Mozart, Symphonies Nos. 38 [“Prague”] and 41 [“Jupiter”], and perhaps a Haydn symphony or two, to be determined.

Our principal goal is to acquire the ability to use the methods of “Sonata Theory” to carry on an informed dialogue with the major repertory-pieces stemming from the decades around 1800. These are methods that: 1) are attentive to issues of convention, rhetorical surprise, or possible eccentricity within these pieces; 2) are open to issues of meaning and expressive content in instrumental music; 3) may be adapted and applied (with some modifications) also to the standard sonata, chamber, and symphonic repertory, 1800-1914.

Required scores:

Beethoven, Ludwig van. *Complete Piano Sonatas*. Volume 1. Ed. Heinrich Schenker. New York: Dover, 1975.

Haydn, Joseph. *Complete London Symphonies in Full Score*. Series II, Nos. 99-104. New York: Dover, 1985.

Mozart, W. A. *Complete String Quartets*. New York: Dover, 1970.

Mozart, W. A. *Later Symphonies*. New York: Dover, 1974.

Mozart, W. A. *Sonatas and Fantasies for the Piano*. Ed. Nathan Broder. Bryn Mawr: Presser, 1956, 1960.

Required books:

Hepokoski, James and Darcy, Warren. *Elements of Sonata Theory*. (Draft) Bound typescript. (Available at TYCO, 262 Elm St. \$20.00)

Rosen, Charles. *Sonata Forms*. Rev. ed. New York: Norton, 1988.

Sisman, Elaine. *Mozart: The “Jupiter” Symphony*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993.

Seminar expectations:

- Weekly listening, preparation, and analysis; participation in class discussion; occasional reading (especially from *The Elements*—the handbook for the course—plus Sisman and parts of Rosen)
- Occasional brief class presentations—or responses to questions—to launch discussion (typically on the basis of assigned score-analysis from the past week)
- Mozart Piano-Sonata Worksheet, due Week 4 (to shore up some basic aspects of your facility with Sonata Theory).
- Shorter, mid-semester paper (1200-1500 words) on a classical sonata movement to be determined, due Week 7
- Brief Book-Review (1000-1300 words): Elaine Sisman, due around Week 9 or 10 (to be announced)—in conjunction with our study of the “Jupiter” Symphony
- Longer, final paper on a major instrumental work of Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven (2500-3000 words); due during exam week; exact date to be determined

Class Procedure: Normally, each class session will be concerned with analyzing and discussing groups of compositions that illustrate features of one or more sonata- or exposition-types. On the average, we shall try to cover from four to six individual movements (or portions of movements) in each class session. Always bring the relevant scores and *Elements of Sonata Theory* with you to class.

As much as is possible and productive, the students will be responsible for the seminar discussions and initial analyses. You can expect to be called upon, randomly, to initiate discussion of a piece by presenting an overview-analysis of portions of it. (“Take us through the first 24 measures of this piece: anything unusual about them?” or “Tell us about the exposition’s medial caesura treatment”—or something of that sort.) In principle, for each seminar session you must have familiarized yourself thoroughly with the assigned pieces and must be prepared to present or discuss your own analytical understandings of the various sections that will come up for discussion in the seminar. Approximately half of your grade will depend on your general participation in class discussions. You are also expected to remember the various pieces and analyses (along with the principles in the *Elements*) from session to session: one thing builds on another. (A common question: “Where have we seen something like this before?”)

The course will advance from topic to topic as efficiently as possible, although it is difficult—and constraining—to specify in advance just where we will be in each seminar session.

General order of topics (subject to modification):

One should be aware that none of these topics can be treated in isolation. In practice, we shall be discussing all or many of these things simultaneously, though with a pattern of emphasis on certain general sonata issues.

1) Introduction to Sonata Theory

2) Exposition Theory

- a) the two-part exposition (with medial caesura)
 - 1) different types of medial caesuras (MC) and their expressive functions within the exposition
 - 2) medial caesura declined
 - 3) unusual medial caesura treatment: V:PAC, blocked caesuras, etc.
 - 4) essential expositional closure (EEC): conventions, problems, exceptions
 - 5) different types of S-rhetoric (secondary themes)
- b) the continuous exposition (without an effective medial caesura)
- c) genre and the issue of expositional repeats

3) Type-3 Sonatas: Development, Recapitulation, and Coda

- a) “Rotation” and the concept of development
 - 1. Double and Triple Rotation Sonatas
 - 2. Incomplete or Blocked Rotational Developments
- b) Nonrotational developments
- c) Episodes within the Development
- d) Recapitulations:
 - 1) Crux; pre-crux and post-crux alterations
 - 2) Irregular Recapitulations
 - 3) Nonresolving Recapitulations
- e) Introductions

4) Double-Rotation Sonatas

- 1) Type 1 Sonatas
- 2) Type 2 Sonatas

5) The multimovement cycle as a whole

Supplemental / Related Reading

(individual passages from these works may be handed out as supplemental material during the seminar)

Allanbrook, Wye J. "Two Threads through the Labyrinth: Topic and Process in the First Movements of K. 332 and K. 333." *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner*. Ed. Wye J. Allanbrook, Janet M. Levy, and William P. Mahrt. Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon, 1992. Pp. 125-71.

Bonds, Mark Evan. "The Paradox of Musical Form." *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991. Pp. 13-52.

Churgin, Bathia. "Francesco Galeazzi's Description (1796) of Sonata Form." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21 (1968), 181-97.

Caplin, William E. Excerpts from *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. New York: Oxford, 1998.

Haimo, Ethan. Excerpts from *Haydn's Symphonic Forms: Essays in Compositional Logic*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995. [Symphony No. 99]

Irving, John. Excerpts from *Mozart's Piano Sonatas: Contexts, Sources, Style*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997.

Koch, Heinrich Christoph. "The Symphony." In *Introductory Essay on Composition: The Mechanical Rules of Melody*, Sections 3 and 4. Trans. Nancy Kovaleff Baker. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1983. Pp. 197-202.

Momigny, Jérôme-Joseph de. [Discussion of Haydn, Symphony No. 103, "Drumroll," in] *Cours complet de composition*. Extract, trans., Ian Bent, in *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century. Volume II: Hermeneutic Approaches*. Ed. Ian Bent. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. Pp. 127-40.

Ratner, Leonard G. "Topics" and excerpt from "Rhetoric." *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. New York: Schirmer, 1980. Pp. 9-29, 91-108.

Sisman, Elaine. "Gesture, Genre, and Meaning in Mozart's 'Prague' Symphony." In *Mozart Studies*. Ed. Cliff Eisen. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997. Pp. 27-84.

Wolf, Eugene K. "Sonata Form." *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*. Ed. Don Michael Randel. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1986. Pp. 764-67.