

The Development of the Modern Orchestra and its Instruments

Part II: Put Them All Together

March 25, 2021

The Development of the Modern Orchestra

- Quick Review: The History of Instruments
- Put Them All Together They Spell Orchestra
- Q&A

As a Reminder...

- We covered the 4+ sections of the Orchestra
 - Strings, Winds, Brass, Percussion, and Keyboards
 - Origins and development
- Brought them up to the end of the Baroque
- We discussed mostly the instruments itself
 - Not much about specific techniques
 - Not much about a composer's use
 - A possible topic for a future MSOL Connect event?

Brief Review

- **Medieval**
 - Dance music
 - Self accompanying
- **Renaissance**
 - Church (not much at first--not always allowed in the building)
 - Canzona
 - Dance/Variations
- **Baroque**
 - Idiomatic writing
 - Almost equal of voices
 - Middle class amateurs began to use
 - How to structure when there are no words?

Put them all together...

- **What does the word “orchestra mean”**

- Before the 17th Century = “consort”
- Early 17th Century term revived from Greek word
 - *orkheisthai* ‘to dance’
 - 1. A group of instrumentalists, especially one combining string, woodwind, brass, and percussion sections and playing classical music.
 - 2. The part of a theater where the orchestra plays, typically in front of the stage and on a lower level than the audience. [North American: the seats on the ground floor in a theater.]
 - 3. The semicircular space in front of an ancient Greek theater stage where the chorus danced and sang. [Literally “the dancing place”]

- **Symphony vs. Philharmonic?**

- No difference really
- Sometimes “philharmonic” came from society organizations
- Often just a choice of the group

Who is on stage?

● Baroque

- Mostly small ensembles of 10-20
- Harpsichord and strings
- Winds mostly as soloists (or in a wind band)

● Classic

- Instrumentation and size started to become standardized
- 20-40 players
 - Mostly strings
 - Added winds
 - Pair of oboes, single bassoon (doubled cello), pair of horns later
 - Single flute for solos and color (later pair)
 - Then pair of trumpets and timpani
 - Clarinet(s) became more common by 1790s

Who is on stage?

● Romantic

- Began with the late Haydn/early Beethoven orchestra
 - 30-40, mostly strings, pairs of winds
- Extra horns (4 total) and sometimes cornets
- Trombones added
 - From church music, became a part of standard orchestra
- Steadily added string section to add volume and power and color
- Added extra winds/brass/percussion
 - Piccolo, English horn, contrabassoon, bass clarinet
 - Tuba
 - Percussion like triangle, bass/snare, sometimes others for special effects
- Then all sorts (bass oboe, bass trumpet, saxophone, euphonium, etc.)

Examples of Instrumentation

- Haydn

- No.1 [1757] = 0-2-0-1/2-0-0-0/-/BC/S
- No.102 [1794] = 2-2-0-2/2-2-0-0/timp/S

- Mozart

- No.25 [1773] = 0-2-0-2/4-0-0-0/-/S
- No.39 [1788] = 1-0-2-2/2-2-0-0/timp/S

- Beethoven

- No.1 [1801] = 2-2-2-2/2-1-0-0/timp/S
- No.5 [1808] = 2+1-2-2-2+1/2-2-3-0/timp/S
- No.9 [1824] = 2+1-2-2-2+1/2-2-3-0/timp+BD+CC+tri/S + chorus

- Berlioz

- SF [1830] = 2(+1)-2(+1)-2(+1)-4/4-2+2-3-2/2timp+BD+SD+CC+bells/2harp/S

- Schumann

- No.3 [1847] = 2-2-2-2/2-2-3-0/timp/S

Examples of Instrumentation

- **Brahms**
 - No.1 [1876] = 2-2-2-2+1/4-2-3-0/timp/S
- **Tchaikovsky**
 - No.5 [1888] = 3(+1)-2-2-2/4-2-3-1/timp/S
- **Bruckner**
 - No.7 [1885] = 2-2-2-2/4-3-3-1+4WT/timp+CC+tri/S
- **Rimsky-Korsakov**
 - Scheherazade [1888] = 2+1-2(+1)-2-2/4-2-3-1/timp+BD+CC+SD+tri+tamb+tam/harp/S
- **Mahler**
 - No.1 [1888] = 4(+2)-4(+1)-4(+3)-3(+1)/7-5-4-1/2timp+BD+CC+tri+tam/harp/S
 - No.8 [1910] = 4+2-4+1-3+2-4+1/8-8-7-1/timp+BD+CC+tri+tam+glock+bells/ organ, celeste, piano, harmomium/mando+2 harp/S + 8 solos + 2 SATB + children
- **Stravinsky**
 - RoS [1913] = 3+1+1(+1)-4+1(+1)-3+3(+1)-4+1(+1)/8(+2)-4+1(+1)-3-2/
2timp+BD+CC+tri+tamb+crot+tam+guiro/S

Where the Instruments Sit

- **Strings in front, others behind**
 - Remnant of Baroque
- **In the time of Haydn: Around 40 musicians [20-30 strings, the rest winds/brass]**
 - Violins on opposite sides, violas & cellos in the center
 - Winds/Brass in back because of volume
 - The opposed violins were rather standard for most of Classic & Romantic
 - Much writing through Mahler/Elgar shows clearly the use of this
 - EXAMPLES (Tchaik,
- **During the Romantic, the size grew to 60-100**
 - Necessitated a conductor
 - Replaced concertmaster or composer at keyboard
 - Violins remained opposed

Where the Instruments Sit

- **Stokowski and H. Wood experimented with the placements**
 - Both went with High → Low as you go left → right
 - “Stokowski Shift” became 20th Century standard
 - For example, Copland and Shostakovich writing indicates need for joined violin sections {EXAMPLES?}
- **What about the Viola/Cello/Bass?**
 - Cellos on the outside right = High → Low arrangement, keeps Violas/Violin 2 together, and avoids the basses in the way
 - Violas on the outside right = Keeps fundamental low in center for better listening/tuning
 - This was more common before the shift--remains of a Baroque concept of basso continuo near keyboard

Who Leads?

- **Composer at Keyboard/Concertmaster**
 - Bach from harpsichord or viola
 - Few performances were of others' music, so most often composer
- **Composer/Conductor**
 - As ensemble grew, there was a greater need for a conductor
 - As composers became more involved in the performance process, they desired more control over their performances
 - Lully, Haydn, Beethoven sometimes took over
 - Dedicated c/c's include Spohr, Mendelssohn, Weber
 - Some ascended to maestro status: Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, Mahler, R. Strauss

Who Leads?

- **Conductor/Maestro**
 - Dedicated conductor known as conductor
 - Grew in fame almost to same level as soloists or composer
 - Interpreter of music
 - 1st Wave: Von Bülow, Richter, Nikisch, Furtwängler, Weingartner, Toscanini
 - 2nd Wave: Koussevitzky, Walter, Beecham, Stokowski, Klemperer
 - Later: Reiner, Szell, Ormandy
 - And then: Karajan, Solti, Bernstein, others

Wouldn't this make a good future topic for MSOL Connect events?

Interpretation Evolution

- We often talk about changes in composition but rarely talk about changes to orchestral interpretation.
 - This did not exist before the Romantic since until that point most performed music was newly written rather than historic.
 - We do not know too much about the changes during the Romantic because we do not have sound recordings in existence from that period.
- We do have evidence of this evolution from the 20th-21st Centuries.
 - Represents changes in the use of Western Classical Art Music
 - Represents changes in current scholarship
 - Represents changes in aesthetic of the time
 - Examples: Brandenburg, Repeats in trios

Q & A

- Please unmute if you have a question.
- If you feel more comfortable, type into the Chat.
- I will answer all of your questions!

Coming Soon to an **INBOX** Near You...

- You will be receiving an email from the MSOL
 - Link to these SLIDES
 - Link to recording of tonight's presentation
- Also my email if you have any follow up questions or comments
 - smkurr@gmail.com

Up Next:

- **April 22**
 - Film Scores
- **May 20**
 - MSOL Annual Meeting
- **Summer**
 - TBA--stay tuned!

Thank you!

These slides were created by Steve Kurr for the Madison Symphony Orchestra League Connect Events. Please direct comments and questions to smkurr@gmail.com.

Minuet

Trio

Da capo

||:A:||:B:||:C:||:D:||:A:||:B:||