

The Classical Era

1750-1825

WHAT WAS HAPPENING AROUND THE WORLD?

- 1751—Benjamin Franklin “discovers” electricity.
- 1775-1781—American Revolution
- 1781—Uranus discovered.
- 1789—George Washington inaugurated
- 1789-1795—French Revolution
- 1803—The Louisiana Purchase
- 1804—Napoleon crowns himself Emperor.
- 1812-1814—War of 1812
- 1822—The Rosetta Stone is deciphered

FAMOUS PEOPLE OF THE ERA

- King Louis XIV of France
- Napoleon Bonaparte of France
- George Washington of America

Louis XIV

King of France (1638-1715)



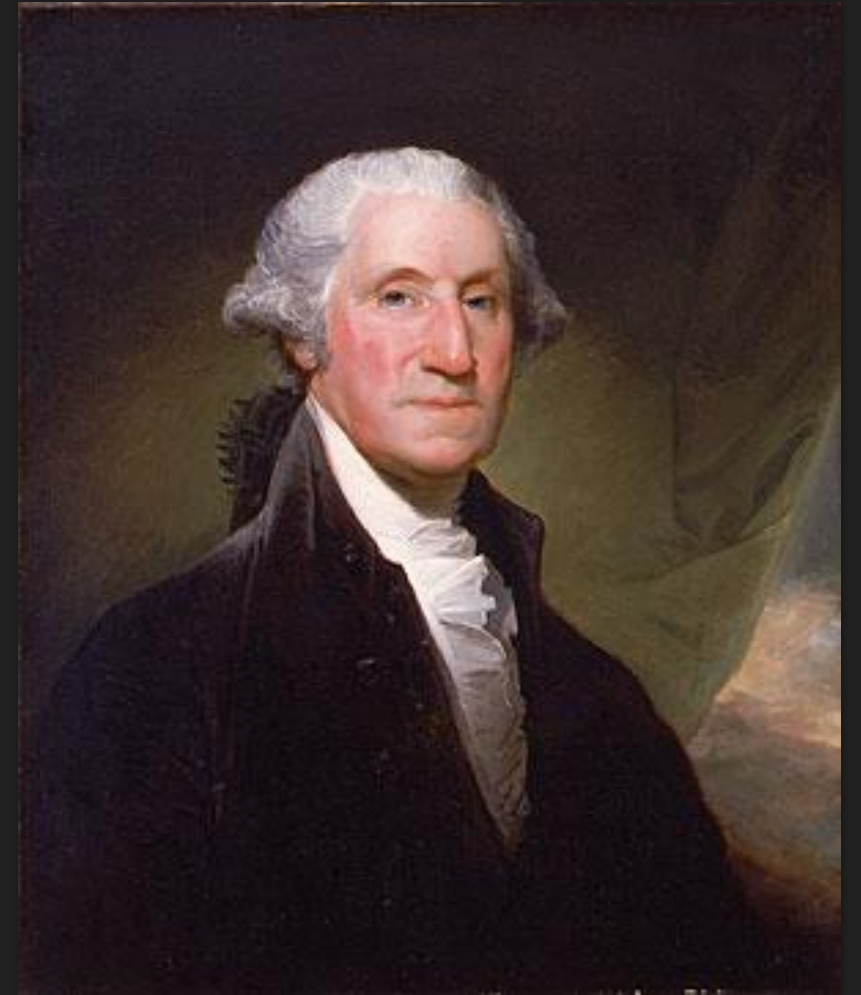
Napoleon Bonaparte

French Military Leader & Emperor (1769-1821)



George Washington

First President of the United States (1732-1799)

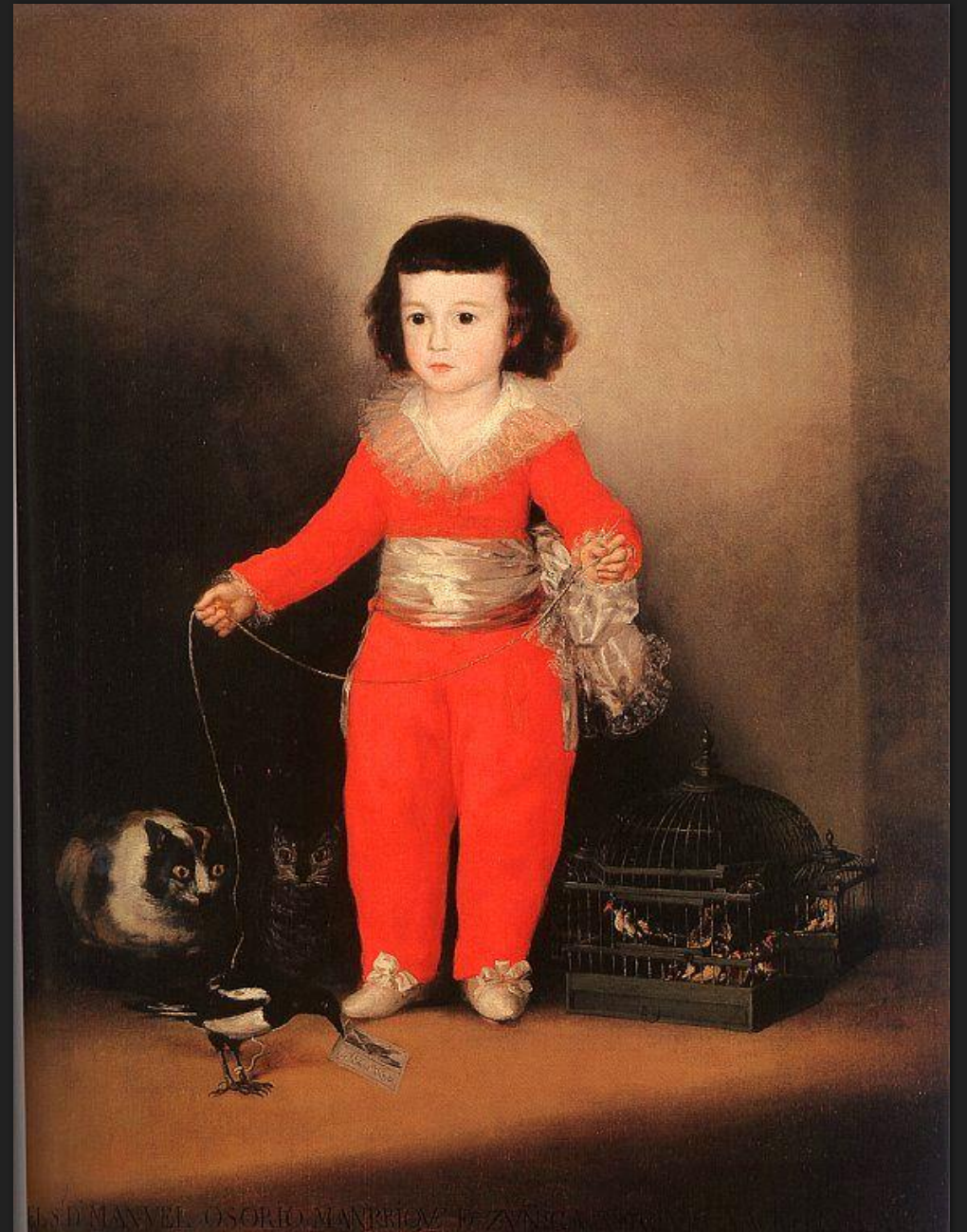


FAMOUS CLASSICAL ARTISTS

- Fransisco de Goya
- John Constable
- Eugene Delacroix
- Jean-Honore Fragonard

Don Manuel Osorio Manrique De Zuniga

Francisco De Goya y Lucientes



**Salisbury Cathedral from
the Bishop's Grounds**

John Constable



Le verrou

Jean-Honoré Fragonard



WHAT DOES THE TERM CLASSICAL MEAN?

- From 1750 on, artists, musicians, and architects wanted to get away from the strange opulence of the Baroque period and move to emulate the clean, uncluttered style of Classical Greece.
- This period is called Classical because of that desire to emulate the works of the ancient Greeks.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

- The Church and Monarchs were no longer the principle benefactors of the arts due to the political upheaval in Europe at the time.
- The aristocracy were the main patrons of the arts. They wanted impersonal but tuneful music from their composers. This led to the term “absolute” music - which is music that is written for music’s sake.

CHARACTERISTICS (continued)

- All of the Classical composers were employed by various wealthy patrons. Much of their music was written for parties, ceremonies, or simply as a commission for a new work.
- The center of Classical music was Vienna, which is where all of the major composers lived and worked.
- There was also a sense of Nationalism in the compositions.

MUSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Great attention to musical form
- Use of dynamics as thematic material
- Inclusion of percussion instruments
- Strong sense of tension and release
- Use of modulation
- Opera
- Use of comic and witty melodies

MUSICAL INNOVATIONS

- Symphonic form
- Sonata form
- String Quartets
- Huge popularity of the Opera
- Invention of the modern piano, as well as many other instruments
- Theme and Variations

THE SYMPHONIC FORM

- Mastered by Franz Joseph Haydn - he wrote 104 of them.
- An extended work for orchestra - usually 20 - 40 minutes in length.
- Usually contains three or four movements which contrast each other. In a four movement symphony the order usually is a fanfare type or fast opening movement, followed by a slower movement. The third movement is usually a dance, and the final movement is fast.



SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA

Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra

THE SONATA FORM

- A one-movement piece for a solo instrument, usually accompanied by a piano - as opposed to a concerto, which is a multi-movement piece accompanied by an orchestra.
- There are three sections of a sonata:
 - Exposition
 - Development
 - Recapitulation
- All sonatas follow this form.

THE STRING QUARTET

- A composition for four solo string instruments:
 - 2 Violins
 - 1 Viola
 - 1 Cello
- Each part is equally important.
- Haydn was the first to write one—he also mastered them.
- Piece usually has four movements similar to that of the symphonic form.

OPERA

- While opera was invented much earlier in musical history, it was during this period and the one that followed that most of the most famous operas were written, including:
 - The Magic Flute
 - The Marriage of Figaro
 - Don Giovanni
- All of these operas were written by Mozart. Beethoven, Haydn and Schubert has no success with writing operas.
- An opera is basically a musical play with all of the words sung instead of spoken.



THE OPERA

The Marriage of Figaro

FAMOUS CLASSICAL COMPOSERS

- Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)
- Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
- Ludwig Von Beethoven (1770-1827)
- Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Christoph Willibald Gluck



Franz Joseph Haydn



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



Ludwig von Beethoven



Franz Schubert



INSTRUMENTS OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

- Modern Flute
- Clarinet
- French Horn
- Valved Trumpet
- Trombone
- Percussion
- Piano

Modern flute



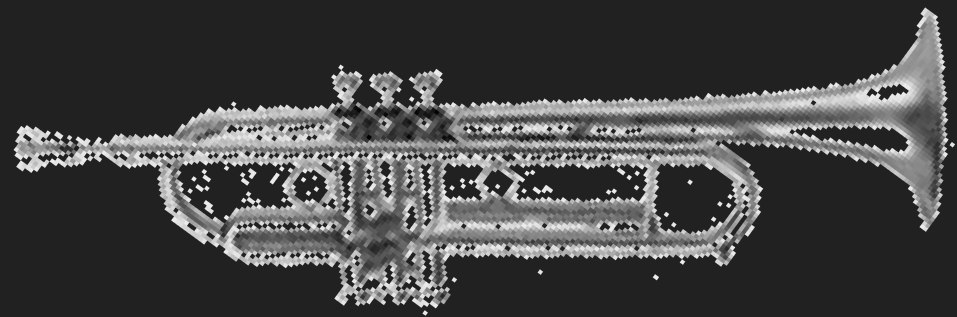
Clarinet



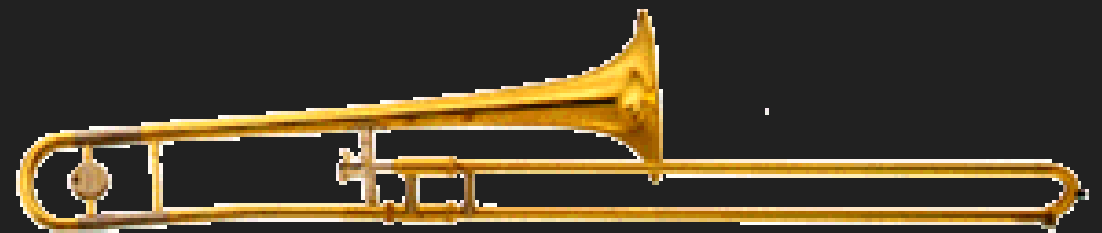
French horn



Valved trumpet



Trombone



Percussion



Piano





Vienna



Palace of Versailles

CONCLUSIONS

- Most of the most famous composers in history come from this era.
- By 1825, the modern orchestra was almost fully in place (except for the tuba and low woodwinds).
- It was during this era that many of the most famous pieces of music were written, including symphonies and operas.