

Musical Form

Module 2 of *Music: Under the Hood*

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Outline

- Musical forms
- Sonata allegro form
- Example – Mozart *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*

Musical Forms

- The main point is not the specific form
 - The main point is that the music must be **intelligible**
 - The listener should not get **lost**



Musical Forms

- **Most common musical structure**
 - **Exposition**
 - Introduce the main musical ideas
 - Tonic key
 - **Development**
 - Explore implications of main ideas
 - Other keys
 - **Recapitulation**
 - Return to original ideas with sense of closure
 - Tonic key

Musical Forms

- Some basic forms
 - Binary – AB
 - Common in dances, pop music (verse-chorus)
 - Sonata allegro – AABA with B = development
 - Best known form in Western music
 - Chorus-verse-chorus in pop music
 - Rondo – ABACA
 - Theme and variations
 - Passacaglia/chaconne
 - Variations over repeating bass
 - For example, Richard Rogers' *Blue Moon*

Musical Forms

- **Block structure** common in “classical” period
 - Haydn, Mozart, etc.
 - Organic development more common in “Baroque” period
- Blocks correspond to keys
- Makes for easy listening
 - **Still the standard today**
- **Sonata Allegro** form is best known
 - 121 of Beatles’ 211 songs have more or less this form



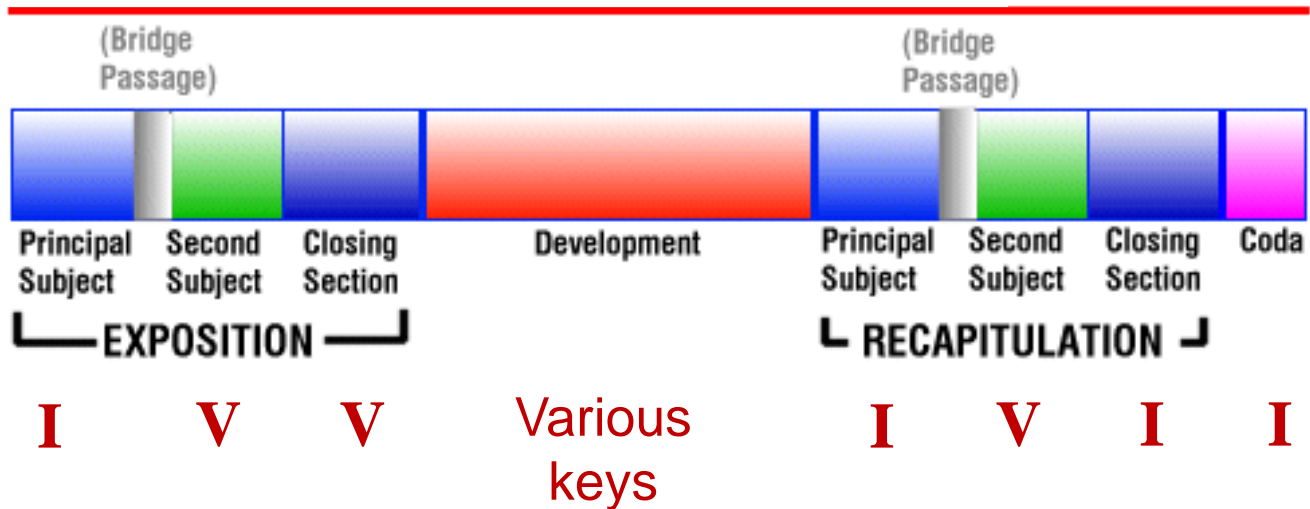
Sonata Allegro Form

- **AABA structure**
 - **AA: Exposition, repeated**
 - Main theme in tonic
 - Secondary theme in dominant
 - **B: Development**
 - Multiple keys, usually minor
 - **A: Recapitulation**
 - Main theme returns in tonic
 - Secondary theme in dominant
 - **Many variations!**



Sonata Allegro Form

Diagram of sonata allegro form



Sonata Allegro Form

- Basic contradiction?
 - Secondary theme in recapitulation is in dominant key.
 - How to return to tonic?



Example

- Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (1787)
 - “A little serenade”
 - 1st movement (Allegro)



- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)

- Theme in tonic key 0:00

- Modulate to dominant key

- 2nd theme in dominant key

- Development

- Variations in dominant key, etc.

- Recapitulation (repeated)

- Theme in tonic key

- Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!

- 2nd theme in tonic key

- Closing section

[Audio file](#)

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key 0:30
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key 0:48
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key 1:36
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key 2:07
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key 2:24
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc. 3:12
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key 3:47
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic! 4:17
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key 4:31
 - Closing section

- Exposition (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key
 - 2nd theme in dominant key
- Development
 - Variations in dominant key, etc.
- Recapitulation (repeated)
 - Theme in tonic key
 - Modulate to dominant key... but end up in tonic!
 - 2nd theme in tonic key
 - Closing section 5:11