



THE BAROQUE PERIOD

(1600 - 1750)

The word “baroque” originally meant oddly shaped or bizarre. But today we use it to describe an exciting period in art, architecture, and music that led to the creation of many famous pieces of music that we still enjoy today.

Characteristics of the Baroque period:

Baroque music was often dramatic and highly ornamented. It was common to hear more than one melody being played at once (an idea called polyphony). Composers often explored the idea of contrast by alternating loud and soft sounds or different instrument groups. During this time period, composers began writing pieces centered around the 12 major and minor scales that we still use today.

Popular Instruments:

Organ, harpsichord, clavichord, strings, flute, oboe, bassoon.

Popular Types of Music:

Dance suites, opera, oratorio, cantata, sonata, concerto.

Famous Composers:

J.S. Bach, George Frideric Handel, Antonio Vivaldi, Domenico Scarlatti, Johann Pachelbel, Henry Purcell, Georg Philipp Telemann, Barbara Strozzi, Elisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre.

Famous Baroque Pieces You Might Recognize:

“Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor” (J.S. Bach)

“Hallelujah Chorus” from *The Messiah* (George Frideric Handel)

“Spring” from *The Four Seasons* (Antonio Vivaldi)

“Canon in D” (Johann Pachelbel)