

The Romantic Period

Key Points

- The French Revolution fostered the rise of a middle- class
- Romantic poets, artists, & musicians turned to passionate and fanciful subjects and exotic settings
- The Industrial Revolution spurred many technical advances in musical instruments, making them more flexible and affordable
- Educational opportunities broadened as music conservatories appeared across Europe and the Americas
- The orchestra grew in size and sound when new and improved instruments were introduced
- Technical improvements to the nineteenth- century piano led to the development of the modern concert grand piano
- Rise of “programmatic” music
- Romantic music is characterized by memorable melodies, richly expressive harmony, and broad, expanded forms
- Women musicians excelled as performers, teachers, composers, and music patrons
- Rise of the “Ballet”. The three ballets of Russian composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky—Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and The Nutcracker—remain favorites today