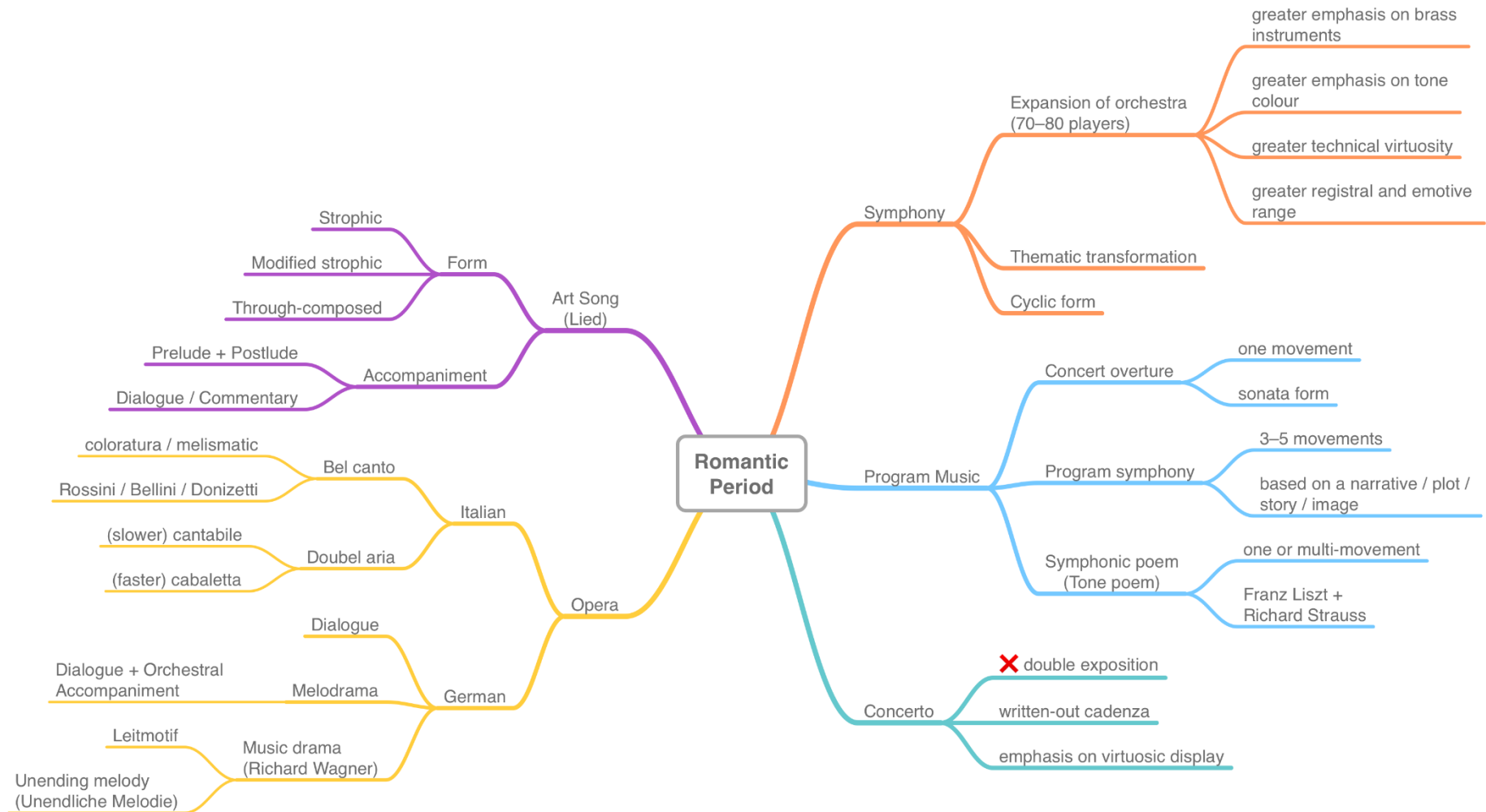


HKDSE Music – Listening (Form 6)

Week 3 Revision – Romantic Music



Characteristics of Romantic music

- Greater use of **chromaticism** / **chromatic harmonies**
- Modulation to **distant keys** / **remote keys**
- Use of a **larger orchestra** (around 70–80 players), more emphasis on the **brass** section
- Greater emphasis on **tone colors**
- **Lyrical** and songlike melodies, with longer lines and expanded registral range
- Use of **recurring themes** as a unifying device: (Berlioz) *idée fixe*, (Liszt) thematic transformation, (Wagner) Leitmotif, (Tchaikovsky/Brahms) motto theme
- Frequent change of tempo; tempo **rubato**
- Greater emotive and dynamic range (from *ppp* to *fff*)
- **Programme music**: music that tells a story or describe a scene
- Greater technical **virtuosity**
- Use of **national** elements (folk songs, folk lores, and native language)

Word painting

Melody

- Goes up → ascending, climbing, joyful, hopeful, striving
- Goes down → descending, falling, sad, mourning

Tonality

- Major → spring, brightness, joyful, lively, pleasant, peaceful
- Minor → winter, darkness, sorrowful, deathly, unpleasant, disturbing

Dynamics

- Getting louder → energetic, striving, more intense/excited
- Getting softer → relaxed, lethargic, enervated, peaceful/calm

Texture

- Homophonic → light-hearted, expressive, lyrical/songlike
- Polyphonic (fugal style) → serious, solemn, majestic, religious/spiritual

Instrumentation

- Horn → pastoral, countryside, nature, hunting
- Trumpet → fanfare, military, war
- Trombone → religious, solemn, underworld

Art Song (Lied)

Form:

- **Strophic:** two or more stanzas of a poem sung to the same melody
- **Through-composed:** each stanza of a poem sung to a different melody
- **Modified strophic:** strophic form, but the melody of the last stanza is altered

Text-setting:

- **Syllabic:** each note per syllable
- **Melismatic:** one syllable is set to several notes

Program Symphony

Program music: Any instrumental work that is connected with a story or idea that lies outside the music itself

Absolute music: Instrumental music without a program or any other indication of a possible extramusical content

Examples:

- Hector Berlioz's *Symphony Fantastique* and *Harold in Italy*
- Gustav Mahler, Symphony No. 1 "Titan"

Concert Overture & Symphonic Poem (Tone Poem)

Concerto overture: A single-movement work for orchestra associated with a programmatic idea of some kind. The genre grew out of the 18th-century tradition of performing opera overtures in the concert hall.

Symphonic poem: A term coined by Franz Liszt in 1854 to replace the generic name of what had previously been called the **concert overture**, a one-movement work for orchestra with some kind of programmatic association.

Examples:

- Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (Op. 35)
- Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Fantasy Overture
- Bedřich Smetana's *Má Vlast* (My Fatherland)
- Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (Op. 30), *Don Quixote* (Op. 35), and *Ein Heldenleben* (Op. 40)

Romantic Concerto

Mostly feature the **piano** or the **violin** as the solo instrument, which features highly virtuosic passages with high technical demand. Some romantic composers dispense with the double exposition form and even eliminate breaks between movements into a continuous form.

Examples:

- Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 (Op. 25)
- Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 (Op. 23) and Violin Concerto (Op. 35)
- Brahms's Piano Concertos No. 1 & 2 and Violin Concerto (Op. 77)
- Rachmaninoff's Piano Concertos No. 1–4