

CONCERTO

Arguing and Working Together



Concerto

- ◆ Concerto = musical composition for soloist and orchestra
- ◆ Concerto from root words *concertato* and *concertare*
- ◆ *Concertare* = “To fight (or work) together”
- ◆ Who is fighting/working together? Soloist and orchestra

Concerto

- ◆ Concerto in the Baroque period (1700s) developed by **Antonio Vivaldi**
- ◆ **Orchestral passages** (*ritornelli*) alternate with **passages by the soloist**
- ◆ Ritornello = “**returning thing**” played by Orchestra

Antonio Vivaldi

- ◆ RITORNELLO FORM = Concerto Form for Baroque composers
- ◆ Usually 5 ritornelli alternating with 4 solos





Nigel Kennedy plays Vivaldi's "Summer" concerto, movement III

Piano Concerto

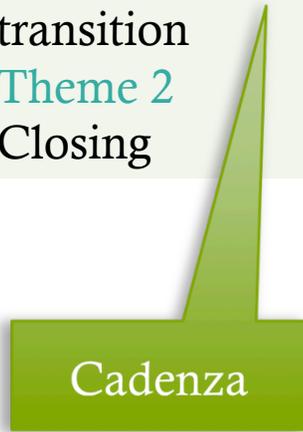
- ◆ Concerto in the Classical and Romantic period (1800s) combines the “solo-ritornello” idea with the use of usually two contrasting themes and the sonata form structure

Piano Concerto

Exposition		Development	Recapitulation
Orchestral Opening	Piano	Piano	Orchestra and Piano
Theme 1 transition	Theme 1 transition	????	Theme 1 transition
Theme 2 Closing	Theme 2 Closing		Theme 2 Closing

Piano Concerto

Exposition		Development	Recapitulation
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Theme 1 transition	Theme 1 transition	????	Theme 1 transition
Theme 2 Closing	Theme 2 Closing		Theme 2 Closing



Cadenza

Piano Concerto

- ◆ The piano becomes one of the most **important solo virtuoso instruments** in the 1800s due to the piano's continual technical developments
- ◆ Many **composers are pianists** and write for the instrument
- ◆ The **piano concerto**—along with the violin concerto—becomes one of the most important genres during the Romantic period

Tchaikovsky, Piano Concerto in B-flat minor



Tchaikovksy

- ◆ Written in 1874-1875
- ◆ Written for pianist [Nikolai Rubenstein](#), who heavily criticizes it (and Tchaikovsky)



Nikolai Rubenstein

Tchaikovsky

- ◆ “I played the first movement. Not a single word, not a single remark! If you knew how stupid and intolerable is the situation of a man who cooks and sets before a friend a meal, which he proceeds to eat in silence! Oh, for one word, for friendly attack, but for God’s sake one word of sympathy, even if not of praise.”

Tchaikovsky

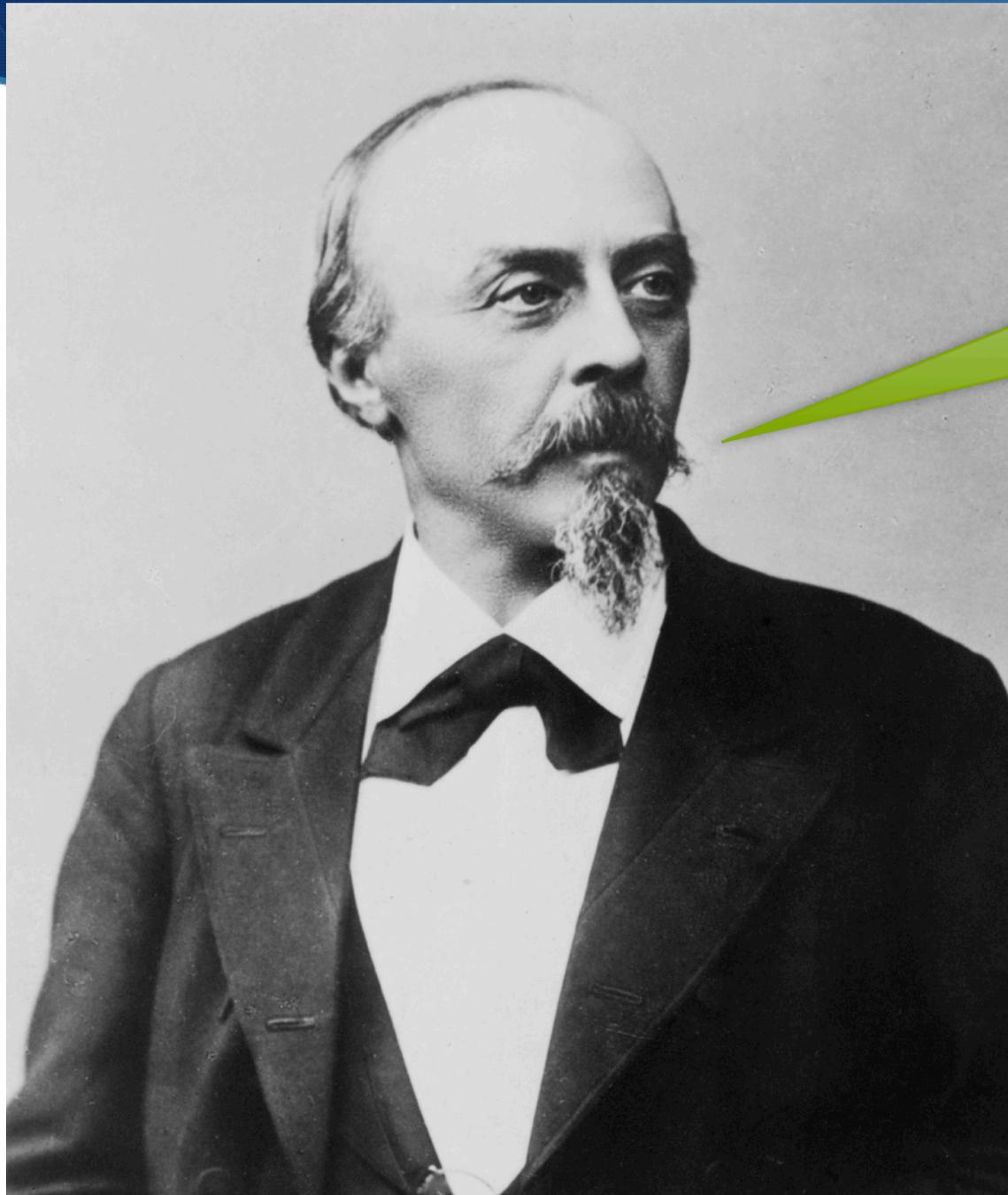
- ◆ “I stood up and asked, “Well?” Then a torrent poured out... It turned out that my concerto was **worthless and unplayable; passages were so fragmented, so clumsy, so badly written that they were beyond rescue**; the work itself was **bad, vulgar**; in places I had stolen from other composers; **only two or three pages were worth preserving**; the rest must be thrown away or completely rewritten. “Here, for instance, this—now what’s all that?” (he caricatured my music on the piano) “And this? How can anyone ...”

Tchaikovsky

- ◆ “The chief thing I can't reproduce is the *tone* in which all this was uttered. In a word, a disinterested person in the room might have thought I was a maniac, a talented, senseless hack who had come to submit his rubbish to an eminent musician.”

Tchaikovksy

- ◆ Tchaikovsky rewrites it in 1879, and again in 1888
- ◆ Tchaikovsky submits it to German pianist Hans von Bülow, who was also a great conductor, who premieres the work in Boston.



I'll play
your
concerto!

Hans von Bülow

Tchaikovksy

- ◆ The concerto was such a hit that von Bülow had to **repeat the final movement as an encore**
- ◆ Tchaikovsky is **astonished** when he hears of it.

Tchaikovksy

- ◆ **Nikolai Rubenstein** later becomes a **fervent champion** of the work, and performs it many times



I'm sorry,
Pytor!

Piano Concerto

Allegro con spirito

Exposition		Development	Recapitulation
Orchestral Opening	Piano	Piano	Orchestra and Piano
Theme 1 transition	Theme 1 transition	????	Theme 1 transition
Theme 2 Closing	Theme 2 Closing		Theme 2 Closing



Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso

Introduction with melody that is only heard here

Tchaikovsky Competition

- ◆ First held in 1958
- ◆ Held every 4 years (like the Olympics)
- ◆ Musicians between 16 and 30
- ◆ Meant to demonstrate the cultural superiority of Soviets during the Cold War (c. 1947 – c. 1991)

Tchaikovsky Competition

- ◆ First year an American—[Van Cliburn](#)—wins the piano category when he is [23 years old](#)
- ◆ Van Cliburn comes from a musical family—his mother studied with [Franz Liszt](#)
- ◆ Enters [Julliard](#) when he is [17](#), and studies with [Rosina Lhévinne](#) (who studied in Moscow)



PIECES to KNOW

- ◆ Vivaldi, *The Four Seasons*, “Summer” movement III, Track 67, *99 Essential Pieces of Classical Music*
- ◆ Tchaikovsky, Piano Concerto in B-flat minor, movement I, Track 30, *99 Essential Pieces of Classical Music*

TERMS to KNOW

- ◆ Concerto
- ◆ Concertare, Concertato
- ◆ Ritornello, Solo
- ◆ Sonata Form
- ◆ Exposition, Development, Recapitulation
- ◆ Tchaikovsky Competition
- ◆ Van Cliburn