

P A Siepmann
Uppingham School Music Department
<http://www.petersiepmann.net/teaching>

Upper Fifth Listening

Rondo Form

A photograph of a school orchestra performing in a concert hall. The conductor is at the front, and the orchestra members are seated with their instruments and sheet music. The text 'Rondo Form' is overlaid on the right side of the image.



Upper Fifth Listening: Rondo Form

What is a rondo?

- Remember ternary form?

ABA

- Rondo form is an extension of this:

ABACADA, etc.

i.e., a main section repeated after each episode.

Origins of rondo form – the ritornello

- Ritornello form was often used in the first movement of baroque concertos.
 - *When was the Baroque period?*
 - *Can you name two Baroque composers?*
 - *What is a concerto?*
- In ritornello form, the main section is not always exactly the same – it may return in different keys.

Example: Heinemann, p. 29 – Vivaldi: Violin Concerto in A minor
or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTd5Wg6B9JU>



Upper Fifth Listening: Rondo Form

Rondo in the classical era

When was the classical era?

Can you name two classical composers?

Although in ritornello form, the theme returns in different keys (such as the dominant), in a rondo, it is (almost) always in the tonic key.

The theme is not always repeated in full.

The episodes between the theme may contrast with the theme in many ways, including key.

What keys do you think the episodes might be in? How else might the episodes contrast with the main theme?

In classical pieces, such as string quartets and symphonies, rondo form is a popular structure for the **last** movement:

First movement	Second movement	Third movement	Fourth movement
Fast	Slow	Minuet & Trio	Rondo

Also often used as the last movement of classical concertos:

First movement	Second movement	Third movement
Fast	Slow	Rondo

Example: Heinemann, p. 31/2 – Mozart: Rondo in F, K. 15.



Upper Fifth Listening: Rondo Form

Rondo in the romantic era

When was the Romantic era?

Can you name two Romantic composers?

- The rondo remained a popular form during the Romantic era.
- Sometimes composers added an introduction and/or a coda either side.
- Georges Bizet (1838 – 75) used rondo form in the famous overture to his opera “Carmen” - *Heinemann, p. 33/4*

What is an opera?

What is an overture?

That's it! A nice, short, easy topic. :-)