

Western Classical Music Appreciation Workshop for Senior Secondary- String Quartet

Presented by Cong Quartet, 28th February, 2025.

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Outline

A. Introduction

1. Origin of String Quartet
2. History of String Quartet

B. About String Quartet Music

3. Structure of Classical String Quartet Work
4. Instrumentation of String Quartet
5. Music Comparison: Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven
 - First Movement
 - Second and Third Movement
 - Finale: Fourth Movement

Origin of String Quartet

- Four Parts Chorale of **J.S. Bach** (1685-1750)
- All “instruments” have the same way of sound production

	Bach Chorale	String Quartet	Piano Trio
Instrumentation	Human Voice	String Instruments	Violin, Cello, Piano
Sound Production	Vibration of vocal cord	Vibration of strings by bowing or plucking	Piano: Hammers hitting the strings
	SAME	SAME	DIFFERENT

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

History of String Quartet

- **Baroque Trio Sonata** for two solo instruments with basso continuo
- **Four-part Sonata** by Allegri (1582-1652) and Scarlatti (1660-1725) for two violins, viola and violoncello
- Many other composers of the early 18th century composed “**Divertimento**” or “String Quartet”



**Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)**

Father of String Quartet

- Composed **68** String Quartets
- Standardised the **Structure** of String Quartet
- Innovative use of the instruments in a quartet

****Please refer to the Appendix I:
Timeline of String Quartets by
Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.*

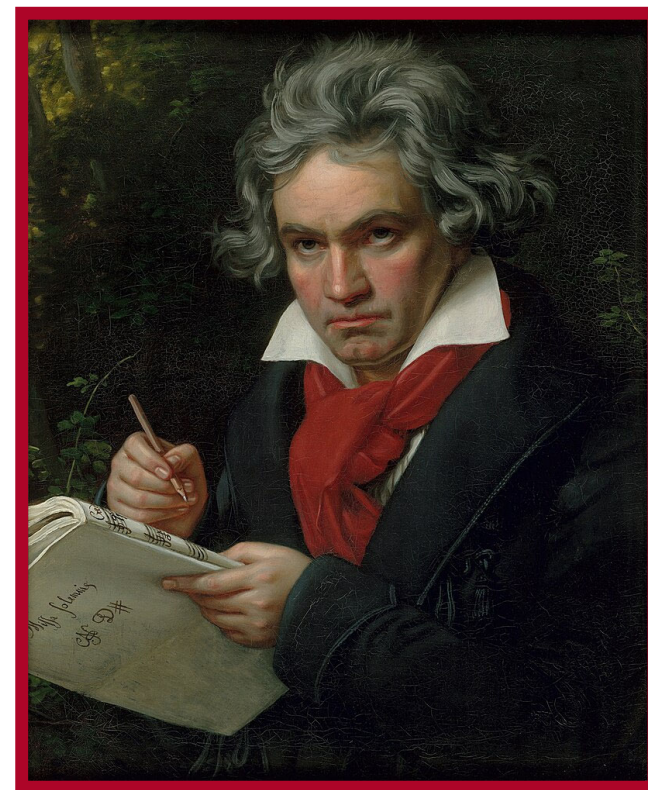
The Three Giants of Classical String Quartet



Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)



Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

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Structure of Classical String Quartet Work

Standard Layout: 4 movements

- First Movement: **Moderate or Fast** in sonata form
- Second Movement: **Slow** in ABA form
- Third Movement: **Dance** (Minuet and Trio/Scherzo and Trio)
- Fourth Movement: **Fast** in sonata or rondo form

Structure of Classical String Quartet Work

Early quartets of Haydn still keep the tradition of Baroque Sonata

- E.g. Most of Haydn Op. 1
 - **Five** Movement Structure:
 - Fast - Minuet - Slow - Minuet - Fast

Structure of Classical String Quartet Work

Haydn String Quartet Op. 20 "Sun"

Earned him the name **"The Father of String Quartet"**

- Standardised **4** movements structure
- Equal importances of the 4 instruments
 - e.g. Cello starts the first theme of Op. 20 no. 2
- Detailed musical direction (Tempo marking)
- Huge creativity in compositional elements
 - Use of Fugue in last movements

****Please refer to the
Appendix II: Haydn Op. 20.*

First Movement

- **Moderate or Fast** tempo
- In **Sonata form**
 - Exposition, Development and Recapitulation
- In **Tonic** key

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"



I. Allegro Moderato

Allegro moderato

Violin I

cantabile

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello



6



The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Instrumentation of String Quartet

- Basic role of each instrument:
 - First Violin: Melodic line
 - Second Violin and Viola: Harmonies and rhythmic drive
 - Cello: Bassline

Instrumentation of String Quartet

- Two Violins, Viola and Cello

Why Two Violins?

Why these four instruments?

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"

I. Allegro Moderato

- Contain **typical classical music features**:
 - Simple Metre: 4/4
 - Short, clear cut phrases (4-bar) with cadences
 - Consonance harmony and diatonic chord progression
 - Homophonic Texture
 - First violin carries the leading voice, with **virtuosic passages**

Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"



I. Adagio - Allegro

Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"

I. Adagio - Allegro

Background:

- Inspired by **Haydn's String Quartet Op. 33**
- Last of the **six "Haydn Quartets"**
- Haydn told Mozart's father, Leopold Mozart:

"Before God, as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer ever known to me either in person or by name."

Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"

I. Adagio - Allegro

Special Features:

- Introduction: **Adagio** (Tonality is ambiguous)
 - Highly Chromatic and **Dissonance**
 - Diminished chords
 - Suspension
 - Appoggiatura

Adagio

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, spanning measures 1 through 6. The tempo is marked 'Adagio' and the time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is characterized by dynamic markings (*p*, *cresc.*, *f*) and phrasing slurs. In measures 1-3, all instruments play a melodic line that rises in pitch, with the Violoncello providing a steady eighth-note accompaniment. In measures 4-6, the instruments play a descending melodic line, with the Violoncello continuing its accompaniment. The dynamics shift from *p* to *cresc.* to *f* in measures 1-3, and then to *f* to *p* in measures 4-6.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

p *cresc.* *f* *p*

6

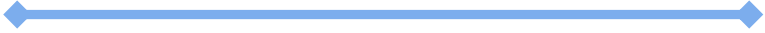
p *cresc.* *f* *p*

p *cresc.* *f* *p*

cresc. *f* *p*

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"



I. Adagio - Allegro

Special Features:

- Core section: **Allegro** in **Tonic** (C Major)
 - Detailed dynamic indication
 - frequent and sudden dynamic changes
 - **sfp (sforzando piano)**
- Prominent Viola and Cello parts
 - **counter melodies** and **melodic fragments**

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4



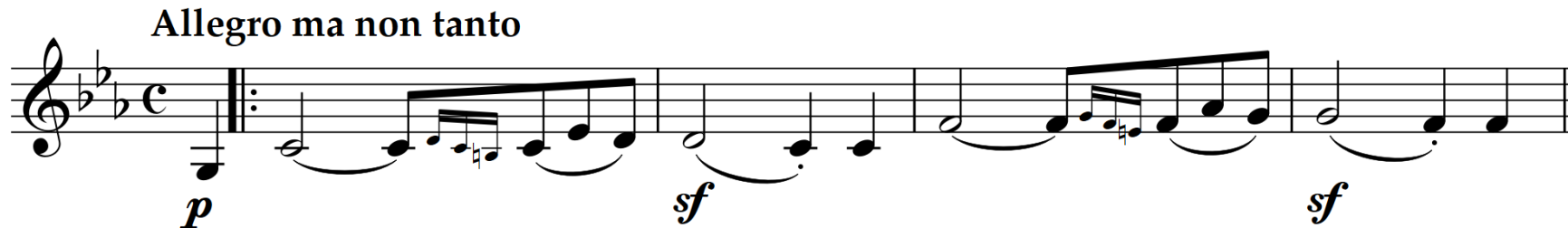
I. Allegro ma non tanto *(ma non tanto: but not too much)*

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4

I. Allegro ma non tanto

Special Features:

- **Distinctive thematic group**
 - First theme: Minor, agitated



- Second theme: **Introduced by Second Violin**, Major, sweet

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

(p)

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4

◆————◆
I. Allegro ma non tanto

Special Features:

- All instruments have very equal melodic role
 - **Second Violin: Introduce second theme**
 - **Viola: Strong rhythmic drive and counter melodies**
 - **Cello: Famous solo of second theme** in the development section

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4

◆————◆
I. Allegro ma non tanto

Special Features:

- Huge dynamic contrast: **pp, ff, sf**
- Long and unbalanced melodic phrases
- **Loud tutti chords** to create symphonic moment
- **Soft unison in pp** to create intense quiet moment

Second and Third Movement

- Second Movement: **Slow** in ABA form
- Third Movement: **Dance**
 - Minuet and Trio
 - Scherzo and Trio

Second and Third Movement

- The order is **not fixed** until later quartets of Haydn and Mozart
 - Haydn: after **Prussian Quartets** Op. 50
 - Mozart: **Prussian Quartets** (K. 575, 589, 590)

Second and Third Movement

- Beethoven followed this model in his six **Op. 18 quartets**
- Later quartets **expanded the structure** of Dance Movement
- Movement structure as an expressive tool
 - **More than 4 movements** for his Late Quartets (op.130, 131, 132)

Second and Third Movement

Beethoven only adopted **Dance style** but not the form

- Dance in **Sonata Form** (e.g. Op. 59 no.1, II. Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando)
- **Double Scherzo Form** (Scherzo-Trio-Scherzo-Trio-Scherzo)
 - Op. 74, III. Presto
 - Op. 95, III. Allegro assai vivace ma serio

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"



II. Andante o più tosto
allegretto

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"



II. Andante o più tosto allegretto

Special Features:

- Use of **pizzicato**
 - Extended techniques rarely used in Classical Period
 - Extensive use of pizzicato in middle movements of Classical and Romantic Period

Andante o più tosto allegretto

Violin I *ten.*

Violin II *mezza voce* *pizzicato* *fz*

Viola *pizzicato* *fz*

Violoncello *pizzicato* *fz*

coll'arco

coll'arco

coll'arco

fz

fz

fz

fz

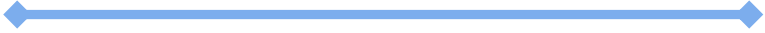
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Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"



II. Andante Cantabile

Mozart: String Quartet in C Major K. 465, "Dissonance"



II. Andante Cantabile

Special Features:

- **Aria-like**
 - Mozart is a very famous opera composer
- **Bel canto writing** in slow movements
 - Melodie embellished by **ornaments**
 - Big leaps
 - Longer phrases

Andante cantabile

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

p *f* *p* *p* *p* *p*

cresc. *f* *p* *p* *p* *p*

cresc. *f* *p* *cresc.* *p* *p*

17

p

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4



II. Andante Scherzoso quasi Allegretto

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4



II. Andante Scherzoso quasi Allegretto

Background:

- Op.18 no. 4 **does not have a slow movement**
 - Second movement: quasi Allegretto in Scherzo style
 - Third movement: Menuetto (Allegro) and Trio

Beethoven: String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 18 no. 4

II. Andante Scherzoso quasi Allegretto

Special Features:

- Use of **compound time: $\frac{3}{8}$** (depicting a faster tempo)
- Texture mixed between **Polyphonic** and **Homophonic**
 - Use of **Fugue** in the Beginning and Recapitulation
- Use of **sf** in **weak beats** to create surprises and humour

Andante scherzoso quasi Allegretto

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

pp

sf

pp

pp

11

First system of the musical score. It consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/8. The first staff (Treble 1) has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff (Treble 2) has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff (Bass 1) has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff (Bass 2) has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The first staff contains the melody with various dynamics including *cresc.*, *sf*, *p*, and *sf*. The second staff contains a harmonic line with dynamics *sf*, *cresc.*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *p*, and *sf*. The third staff contains a harmonic line with dynamics *cresc.*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *p*, and *sf*. The fourth staff contains a harmonic line with dynamics *p cresc.*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *p*, and *sf*.

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Haydn: String Quartet in C major, Op. 76 no. 3, "Emperor"



III. Menuet: Allegro

Menuet
Allegro

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

12

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

23

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

Trio

57

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

66

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

77

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Haydn: String Quartet in C major, Op. 76 no. 3, "Emperor"



III. Menuet: Allegro

Special Features:

- Typical Classical Minuet and Trio
- Use **Tonality** to **shape the musical atmosphere**
 - Minuet: C Major (Tonic), joyful and proud
 - Trio: A minor (Relative minor), cold and sorrowful
 - A major moment in Trio, warm

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"



III. Menuet: Allegro

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"



III. Menuet: Allegro

Special Features:

- **Very Innovative** Minuet and Trio

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"

III. Menuet: Allegro

- Minuet: **Loud (sempre f) Canon**

Menuet
Allegro

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

31

Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op.76, no.2, "Quinten"

III. Menuet: Allegro

- Trio: **Folk dance**
 - Sharp articulation (**sempre staccato**)
 - Extreme dynamic: **p, crescendo, f, ff**

Trio 38

Violin I
p *sempre staccato* *crescendo* *f* (*ff*)

Violin II
p *sempre staccato* *crescendo* *f* *ff*

Viola
p *f* *ff*

Violoncello
p *f* *ff*

Menuet
Allegro

Violin I *f*

Violin II *f*

Viola *f*

Violoncello *f*

31

Trio
38

Violin I *p* sempre staccato *crescendo* *f* (*ff*)

Violin II *p* sempre staccato *crescendo* *f* (*ff*)

Viola *p* *f* (*ff*)

Violoncello *p* *f* (*ff*)

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Theme and Variation

- Found in all 4 movements
 - First movement:
 - Haydn Op. 9 no. 5, **I. Poco Adagio**
 - Mozart K. 170, **I. Andante**
 - Mozart used the skeleton of Haydn's variation theme in his K. 170

Theme and Variation

- Second and Third movement
 - Most commonly used to **replace the slow movement**
 - Beethoven Op. 18 no. 5, III. Andante Cantabile
 - Haydn Op. 76 no. 3 “Emperor”, II. Poco Adagio: Cantabile
 - The theme became the German National Anthem

Theme and Variation

- Fourth movement
 - Beethoven Op. 74 "Harp", IV. Allegretto con variazioni

Fourth Movement

- Finale, Fast or grand ending
- No compositional limitation
- In **Rondo form (ABACA)**, **Sonata Rondo form (ABACABA)** or **Sonata form**

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"



IV. Presto

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"

IV. Presto

Special Features:

- Rondo form

Finale
Presto

The image shows the first five measures of the 'Finale Presto' movement. The score is for four parts: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) and the time signature is 6/8. Violin I has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet in the fifth measure. Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello provide harmonic support with a steady eighth-note pattern. The Viola and Violoncello parts have some rests in the later measures.

The above information is provided by Cong Quartet.

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"

IV. Presto

- The musical **Joke**
- **Sudden Adagio section towards the ending**

Adagio
tenuto

The image shows a musical score for the 'Sudden Adagio' section of Haydn's String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, 'The Joke'. The score is for four parts: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is marked 'Adagio' and 'tenuto'. The key signature is three flats (Eb) and the time signature is 2/4. The score consists of five measures. In each measure, the Violin I and Violoncello parts play a half note, while the Violin II and Viola parts play a half note. The dynamics are marked 'f' (forte) and 'p' (piano) in alternating measures. The first measure is marked 'f' for Violin I and Violoncello, and 'p' for Violin II and Viola. The second measure is marked 'p' for Violin I and Violoncello, and 'f' for Violin II and Viola. The third measure is marked 'f' for Violin I and Violoncello, and 'p' for Violin II and Viola. The fourth measure is marked 'p' for Violin I and Violoncello, and 'f' for Violin II and Viola. The fifth measure is marked 'f' for Violin I and Violoncello, and 'p' for Violin II and Viola. The score ends with a double bar line.

Haydn: String Quartet in Eb Op. 33 no. 2, "The Joke"



IV. Presto

- The musical **Joke**
 - False ending
 - **Ending suddenly in the middle of the theme**
 - **Ending Quietly**

Original theme

**Finale
Presto**

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

This musical score is for the 'Original theme' in 6/8 time, marked 'Finale Presto'. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The Violin I part has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Violin II part provides harmonic support with quarter and eighth notes. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical Joke

Presto

This musical score is for the 'Musical Joke' in 6/8 time, marked 'Presto'. It features the same four staves as the original theme. The key signature remains three flats. The Violin I part has a melodic line. The Violin II part has a harmonic line. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Two large orange ovals highlight specific sections of the score: the first oval covers measures 3-5, and the second oval covers measures 6-8. In these sections, the Violin I part has a melodic line, while the Violin II part has a harmonic line. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Beethoven: String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, "Serioso"



IV. Larghetto espressivo -
Allegretto agitato - Allegro

Beethoven: String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, "Serioso"

IV. Larghetto espressivo - Allegretto agitato - Allegro

Background:

- The **shortest** and most compact string quartet of Beethoven
- Published in 1816
 - Last string quartet of Beethoven in Classical form and structure
 - Stop composing string quartet for 10 years before entering his Late Quartet era (1825)

Beethoven: String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, "Serioso"

IV. Larghetto espressivo - Allegretto agitato - Allegro

Special Features:

- Connected (**Attacca**) from the Third movement
- **Three different sections** in drastically different tempo and atmosphere
- Long phrase
- **"swell mark"** <> to indicate dynamic and emotional turbulence

Beethoven: String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, "Serioso"

IV. Larghetto espressivo - Allegretto agitato - Allegro

Special Features:

- Modulate to distant keys
 - **bVI (Db Major)** before the coda
- End with a coda in F major (Parallel major of tonic)