

Bach – Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D major

Concerto Grosso	A Baroque concerto style featuring a contrast between a small group of soloists and a larger ensemble	
Ripieno	The larger group of instruments in a <i>concerto grosso</i> . They provide fuller texture and contrast with the soloists	
Fugue	A contrapuntal composition in which a main theme (the subject) is introduced and then imitated by different voices.	
Gigue	A lively Baroque dance in compound time (often 6/8 or 12/8). Some Brandenburg movements—particularly finales—use gigue-like rhythms and lively tempos.	
Figured bass	A bass line with numbers (figures) indicating the chords to be realised by a harmony instrument (often the harpsichord).	
Canon	A strict form of imitation where one musical line repeats another exactly after a delay.	
Modulation	A change from one key to another. Bach uses modulation frequently to create contrast, tension, and structural clarity.	
Stretto	A technique in fugue writing where entries of the subject overlap more closely than before, increasing intensity. Bach uses stretto to build excitement in fugal sections.	
Subject	The main theme of a fugue. It is first introduced by one voice, then imitated by others.	
Concertino	A small group of solo instruments in a <i>concerto grosso</i> .	

Purcell – Music for a While

Suspension	A dissonant note that is held over (or “suspended”) from the previous chord and then resolves down by step to a consonance.	
Tierce de Picardie	A common Baroque device where a piece in a minor key ends with a major chord . Purcell sometimes employs this to provide brightness at the end of otherwise dark or mournful sections.	
Ground bass	A repeated bass pattern that continues throughout a piece while melodies and harmonies change above it. <i>Music for a While</i> is built on a descending three-bar ground bass, giving the piece its hypnotic, calming quality.	
Lament	A musical expression of sorrow, typically using descending bass lines . Purcell draws on the Baroque lament tradition—the ground bass in <i>Music for a While</i> uses a descending pattern reminiscent of standard lament bass lines.	
Melisma	A vocal technique where several notes are sung on a single syllable . Purcell uses melisma for expressive word setting, for example on the word “wond’ring,” where the vocal line wanders and circles.	
Word painting	When the music reflects the meaning of the text . In <i>Music for a While</i> , Purcell paints words like “drops,” “wond’ring,” and “eternal” using musical gestures such as falling shapes, extended lines, or ornaments.	
Conjunct movement	A melody that moves mainly in steps rather than leaps . The vocal line in <i>Music for a While</i> is predominantly conjunct, contributing to its smooth, flowing, and calming character.	

Queen – Killer Queen

Extended chords	Chords that include extra notes beyond the basic triad (e.g., 7ths, 9ths, 11ths). <i>Killer Queen</i> features many jazz-influenced extended harmonies , such as Bb6 , Eb9 , and C7 chords, giving the song its sophisticated, theatrical sound.	
Overdubbing	A studio recording technique where multiple takes are layered on top of each other. Queen make extensive use of overdubbing for stacked vocal harmonies, guitar choir effects, and layered piano parts . This creates the lush, multi-layered texture characteristic of the song.	
Portamento	A smooth slide from one note to another. In <i>Killer Queen</i> , portamento appears in vocal lines and guitar licks , adding expressiveness and a glam-rock character.	
Piano vamp	A short, repeated chord pattern used as an accompaniment. The opening of <i>Killer Queen</i> features a piano vamp built on elegant, swinging rhythmic patterns that set the song's cabaret-influenced style.	
Tonal ambiguity	When the music doesn't clearly identify one key as "home," often because of chromatic chords or unexpected progressions. <i>Killer Queen</i> begins with tonal ambiguity due to its non-functional chords, frequent modulations , and use of extended harmonies , which makes the key sound fluid and shifting.	
Slash chord	A chord where the bass note is different from the root , written as "Chord/Bass note" (e.g., C/G).	
Anacrusis	One or more notes that come before the first strong beat of a phrase (a musical "pickup"). Freddie Mercury's opening vocal line ("She keeps her Moët...") begins with an anacrusis, giving the phrase forward momentum.	
Panning	Distributing sound between the left and right stereo channels.	

Beethoven – 1st movement from the ‘Pathétique’ Piano Sonata, no. 8 in C minor

Alberti Bass	A broken-chord accompaniment pattern where notes are played low–high–middle–high repeatedly.	
Diminished 7 th chord	A tense, dramatic chord built from stacked minor thirds. Beethoven uses diminished 7ths extensively in this movement to heighten drama, modulation, and stormy tension —for example in the Grave introduction and during transition passages .	
Murky Bass	A rapid, repeating broken-octave pattern in the left hand, often used to create agitation.	
Cadential 6/4	A I ^c –V–I progression where the I chord appears in 2nd inversion (I ⁶ ₄). Beethoven uses cadential 6/4 chords in the exposition and recapitulation to prepare strong perfect cadences ,	
Chromatic harmony	Harmonies that use notes outside the key to add colour, tension, or facilitate modulation. The <i>Pathétique</i> uses rich chromaticism —particularly in the Grave introduction —to create its dark and dramatic character.	
Dominant preparation	A passage that highlights the dominant harmony (V) before a cadence or modulation.	
Enharmonic change	Reinterpreting a note or chord with a different name (e.g., G# = Ab) to facilitate modulation. Beethoven uses enharmonic reinterpretation of diminished 7ths to pivot smoothly between keys.	
Sonata form	A large-scale structure consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposition (1st theme, transition, 2nd theme, closing theme) • Development (motivic transformation, modulation, tension) • Recapitulation (return of themes in the home key) Beethoven’s <i>Pathétique</i> follows sonata form but	

	innovates dramatically with its slow Grave introduction , high contrast between themes, and unusually intense development section.	
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