

Multimovement Form

Number of Movements

- ▶ Most sonata-related compositions of the common practice period have either three movements or four movements
- ▶ In general, concertos have three movements while symphonies and chamber works (such as string quartets) have four movements
- ▶ Piano sonatas (and other types of sonatas) before Beethoven are generally in three movements—but after Beethoven, they could have three *or* four

Three Movement Plans

- ▶ There is no one standard plan for the structure of movements, but there are some common plans
- ▶ In works with three movements, the ordering is usually *fast-slow-fast*
 - ▶ The first movement is usually in sonata form—presenting and developing thematic material
 - ▶ The contrasting slower second movement might be in binary or ternary form, sonatina form, sonata form, or theme and variations
 - ▶ The last movement is usually energetic and in a lighter mood, using rondo form, sonata-rondo form, or sonata form (it may also be theme and variations or even a fugue)

Four Movement Plans

- ▶ In four-movement works, a minuet or scherzo is added to the three movement plan, often between the slow movement and the finale as the third movement: *fast-slow-minuet-fast*
 - ▶ First movement: usually in sonata form
 - ▶ Second movement: slow, in binary, ternary, sonatina, sonata, or theme and variations
 - ▶ Third movement: composite ternary (minuet and trio)
 - ▶ Fourth movement: rondo, sonata-rondo, sonata, etc.
- ▶ Sometimes the middle two movements are reversed: *fast-minuet-slow-fast*

Key Plans

- ▶ The key plans for multimovement works can generally be summarized as a motion away from and back to the tonic
- ▶ The first and last movements are in the tonic key
- ▶ The middle movements are usually in related keys, such as the dominant, subdominant or relative key, but they may also be in a less-closely related key
- ▶ In four-movement works, the minuet is often in the tonic key (perhaps in the opposite mode)—thus, only the slow movement would be in a contrasting key