

# Musical structures

## ...explained

### Binary Form:

The word Binary comes from the Latin word 'Bi' which means TWO. (for example: bi-cycle which has two wheels, bi-plane which has two wings, bi-noculars which consists of two telescopes). In music Binary form is a composition which has two main sections. (idea A which is followed by idea B). Binary form was very popular in dance music during the Renaissance (1450-1600) and Baroque (1600-1750) periods.

### Ternary Form:

Ternary form refers to music which is built of three sections. (idea A followed by idea B and then a repetition of idea A) Often idea B is a development of idea A, sometimes modulating (changing) into another key, developing the rhythm, or extending the tune. The Italian musical term 'Da Capo' originates from the development of Ternary form. As section A is an identical repetition, many composers used 'Da Capo' as a short hand way of telling the composer to 'Go back to the beginning'.

### Rondo Form:

Rondo is a natural extension of Ternary form. It is a form which uses idea A as a recurring theme, whilst in between there are episodes (idea B, idea C, idea D etc...)

The rondo form may look like this: A, B, A, C, A, D, A.

When composers write Rondos they always try to make each episode different, often exploring different keys (major, minor), changing the time signatures, tempos, dynamic variations. In the Romantic period (1800-1900) many composers used the episodes to show virtuosity, and pitch range for the instruments they were writing for. Often a Rondo would be used as the last movement of a sonata, or a concerto. (for example: Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) the last movement of his piano concerto No 1 'Rondo Vivace'.

