

GLOSSARY

(Source: The Oxford Dictionary of Music, Revised Edition; 1994)

Speed:

Tempo: Time. The speed at which a piece of music is performed.

Adagio: At ease. Slow.

Andante: Moving along, flowing (slowish but not slow).

Allegro: Merry, ie. quick, lively, bright.

Rhythm: Covers everything pertaining to the *time* aspect of music.

Volume:

Dynamics: The graduations of volume in music.

Piano (dynamic): Soft, quiet. Opposite of *forte*, loud.

Mezzo forte: Half-loud, i.e. neither loud nor soft.

Forte: 'Strong', i.e. loud.

Crescendo: Growing. Directive used by composers to indicate that a passage should gradually increase in loudness.

Diminuendo: Diminishing, i.e. gradually getting quieter.

More terms:

Ensemble: Together. Any combination of performers, but especially a small group playing individual parts.

Harmony: The simultaneous sounding (i.e. combination) of notes, giving what is known as vertical music, contrasted with horizontal music.

Melody: A succession of notes, varying in pitch, which have an organized and recognizable shape.

Melody is 'horizontal', i.e. the notes are heard consecutively, whereas in harmony notes are sounded simultaneously ('vertical').

Pitch: The location of a sound in the tonal scale, depending on the speed of vibrations from the source of the sound, fast ones producing a high pitch and slow ones a low.

Unison: Sounding of the same note by all performers.

Legato: Bound together. Performed so that there is no perceptible pause between notes, i.e. in a smooth manner, the opposite of *staccato*.

Staccato: Detached. Method of playing a note (shown by a dot over the note) so that it is shortened - and thus 'detached' from its successor - by being held for less than its full value.