

Mozart String Quintet in E flat major K 614

First movement: Allegro di molto

This movement is in Sonata form. Many thanks to David McKay for his input into this analysis. Please visit his website at www.aussiemusician.blogspot.com for great teacher and student resources.

Exposition

The first subject begins in E flat major and is stated by first viola, with descending answering phrases from 1st violin.

A bridge passage, played by 2nd viola begins in bar 20. It quickly moves from E flat major to C minor, passes through B flat major (bars 24-25) and F major (bars 26-38), which functions as chord V of B flat major, the dominant chord of the dominant key of the movement. Throughout bars 31-38 there is a dominant pedal point (F) of the dominant key.

This leads into the statement of the second subject in B flat major, which is begun in bar 38 by the first violin, and then taken up by the cello at bar 46.

There is a brief modulation to C minor at bar 66, but by bar 72 we are back in B flat major and a short codetta concludes the Exposition, with a call and response reference to the first subject in the last 9 bars.

Development

The development section begins with a C minor dominant pedal, but then by way of an interrupted cadence moves to A flat major for bars 90-94. We hear subject material based on the descending violin arpeggio figure in bar 16 of the first subject. In bars 96-99 we then hear material from the opening bars of the first subject, in G minor.

With the exception of bars 100 – 105, the first subject material is the focus for the rest of the Development section, with playful ‘call and response’ between the upper parts, resembling the codetta at the end of the Exposition.

The keys in this section centre around C minor and G minor (relative minors of the tonic and dominant keys). The dominant key of B flat major returns in bar 116 and leads to the dominant 7th chord of E flat major in bar 124.

Recapitulation

The Recapitulation commences at bar 125 with a resolution to the tonic key of E flat major and the first subject once again shared between first viola and first violin. The violin’s responses are slightly varied rhythmically and melodically.

A bridge passage from bar 144 begins in E flat major and passes through A flat major (bars 146-47), F minor (bars 148-51), C minor (bars 152-53) and B flat major (bars 154-164). We once again have an extended pedal point passage in preparation for the second subject, this time in B flat major leading to the tonic key of E flat major.

In bar 165 the viola states the second subject (as opposed to violin in the Exposition) in the tonic key (as is usually the case in the Recapitulation in Sonata form). The theme is then taken up by first violin (as opposed to cello in the Exposition).

The bridge passage begins with the viola in bar 180 and remains mostly in E flat major except for a brief modulation to F minor in bars 193-196.

Codetta/Coda

Bars 205-215 form a codetta similar to that in the Exposition, leading to the substantial coda from bar 216 to the end, which features some new thematic material such as sustained notes and upward scale passages from the violins, and the cello taking up the trill motif for the first time in the movement.

In bar 180, the first subject returns and is the basis of the lengthy Coda of the movement.