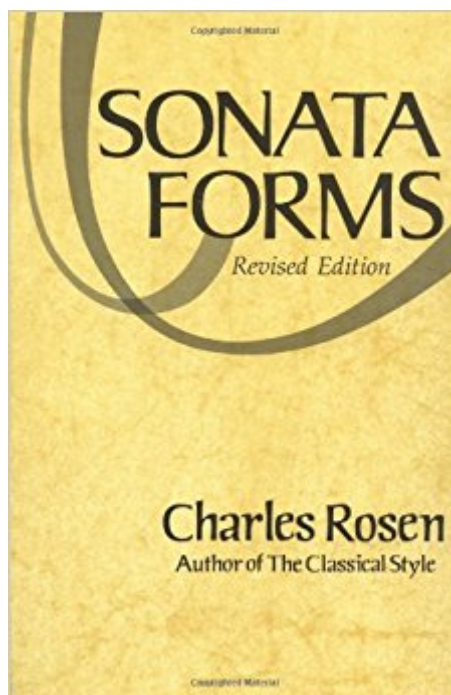


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# Sonata Forms (Revised Edition)



## Synopsis

"Nobody writes better about music .... again and again, unerring insight into just the features that make the music special and fine." •The New York Review of Books Charles Rosen says of sonata form: "[It] is not a definite form like a minuet, a da capo aria, or a French overture; it is, like the fugue, a way of writing, a feeling for proportion, direction, and texture rather than a pattern."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Everything you always wanted to know about the sonata, but were afraid to ask, answered at surprising length and with copious musical illustrations. Sonatas are generally thought of as being always organized into exposition, development, and recapitulation, but, writes Rosen, "...it is very dubious that a unique sonata form can be so defined even for a single decade of the late eighteenth-century," and he goes on to prove why it can't. Important reading for the serious musician.

Charles Rosen, professor of music and social thought at the University of Chicago, has also taught at the State University of New York-Stony Brook and delivered the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard University. His recitals and other performances have won the highest critical acclaim, as have his books, *The Classical Style* and *The Romantic Generation*. When he is not concertizing, Rosen lives in New York.

I purchased this book for a class and preferred to the others assigned reading. It is a clear and

helpful guide to learning about the history of the sonata form and other forms of the Classical/Romantic periods of music. The listening guide is excellent as well as a discography of the form from early to later recordings. This revised edition includes compositions by more recent composers and an bibliography. A must for students and teachers of classical music.

Highly technical survey of the sonata's historical development. Not a book for casual readers, you'll need a strong background in reading and understanding notated music, but if you're the intended reader you may well learn an awesome amount about the sonata forms. Recommended to students and masters.

Not an easy read, but wonderfully logical. He takes a point of view I had never considered, nor had any theory teacher put forth, as to the relationship of Sonata form to other, earlier forms.

Thanks for this Rosen is a legendary scholar and even piano player and I'm learning a lot from this for my school and music theory classes. Some of his writing can be a bit brainy, but it really isn't. It just means you're not prepared or haven't taken any Music History or Theory classes yet. All the terms are introduced when you first take your Music Baroque history classes, so not a big deal. Things go over your head for a reason, it means there's valuable knowledge being shared. My favorite composer right now is CPE Bach so I also recommend the PDF upload readings and introductions from [www.cpebach.org](http://www.cpebach.org). Just google CPE Bach and the work of your choice (usually a concert since he wrote a lot of those) and PDF, and you'll come up with tons of free introductions and well-written analyses. Good luck everyone and all students of music! And RIP C-Rosen, he was a great man, and not just a scholar like everyone thinks he is, and a wonderful modern day teacher.

This book is chuck-full of information. He gives musical examples which I was unable to follow, but that was probably because I was not reading carefully enough. Rosen does not always define terms as he should. I would like to know what a "counterstatement" is, because he uses the term several times. On page 388, he speaks of Berlioz' *idée fixe*, but does not tell us what it is. On page 393, he categorizes intra-movement thematic relations as "explicit" and "implicit," but will not define the two. I would like to know what the two terms mean. On page 403, he tells us that the Stravinsky piano sonata is in the "concerto grosso form." What does that mean? While we are on the subject of terminology, this is the arena where Rosen throws a couple of boomerangs. He scorns the terms "first" and "second theme," preferring the terms "first" and "second group," but then he forgets and

uses those terms himself. He also denies that Haydn's sonata movements are "monothematic," and charges users of this term of misanalysis. But then he forgets and uses this term himself. In the last chapter, he answers a question which I have been wondering: why does discussion of the sonata form usually ignore every composer since Beethoven. Rosen tells us that there has been little contribution to the form since Beethoven. He uses a composition by Schumann as a bad example and gives only a couple of good examples. He accredits Brahms with a few redeeming features, and give several other composers a cursory mention. I hope to compose good sonata movements despite the handicap of living after Beethoven.

item as described

Excellent

This book is quite effective, in exploring a subject, that is difficult at best, due the actual complete lack of any defined specific form for Sonata composition. Each composer had thier own deffiction of what a Sonata was, and that Deffinition varies, even from Sonata to Sonata by individual composers. So it is hard to define the form in the first place.

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