MUSIC 233
Two More Forms

Two more forms deserving mention are the **Rondo Form** and the **Theme and Variations Form**. Both of these forms existed well before the Classical era, but we will focus on examples from Beethoven and Mozart for the sake of time.

Rondo

If the basic idea behind ternary form (and Sonata Allegro form) is:

A B A' Statement – Departure – Return

Then the basic idea behind rondo form is:

A B A C A D A... Statement – Multiple Departure and Return

In the Classical era, common rondo forms were:

A B A B A		(Mozart, Sonata K309, iii)
A B A C A		(Beethoven, Sonata op. 13, ii)
A B A – C – A B A	[expansion of ternary form]	(Beethoven, Sonata op. 13, iii) (Mozart, Sonata K311, iii)

The A section is called the **Refrain** and the other lettered-sections are called **Episodes**.

Often: The return of the refrain is abbreviated or modified (**A B A' C A''...**)

Often: each recurring refrain is prepared by a retransition at the end of an episode:

A B (retrans.) A C (retrans.) A...

Theme and Variations: Theme – Variation[1] – Var.[2] – Var[3] – Var[4]....

Simply put: the form is 1) a short theme (possibly binary or ternary form of 16 to 32 bars long with a clear phrase structure, a simple melody and a tonic cadence at the end), 2) followed by variations on that theme.

The variations could include:

Harmonic changes
Changes in the melodic contour
Rhythmic changes
Use of ornamentation and NCTs
Change of mode
Overall change of texture

Mozart: Sonata K284, iii
Beethoven: Variations of a Swiss Song, Diabelli Variations
Bach: Goldberg Variations (of course!!)