

# A Comparative Study of Chamber Music Groups, Orchestras & Bands

Ravipathi Uthpala Kandage\*

*School of Music, Sri Lanka Technological Campus (SLTC Research University), Padukka 10500, Sri Lanka  
University of the Visual & Performing Arts (Faculty of Music)*

\*ravipathikandage@gmail.com

**Abstract** - The late 14th to early 16th century Italian Renaissance, a time of intellectual and artistic growth. The Italians were particularly fascinated by music, poetry, literature, and the arts. Despite the fact that composers produced more intricate music, it only stated the notes that were to be played and could essentially be played on a wide range of instruments. Then, in 1607, Claudio Monteverdi, an Italian composer and the father of opera, made the decision that he understood exactly how he wanted his music to sound. In order to get the instruments, he desired, he composed music expressly for them: two violins, four flutes, two cornets, one harp, etc. This enormous group, which had distinct functions for each instrument, was the precursor of the orchestra we know today. When studying different aspects of music, one finds a variety of instrumental combinations. Suggestions have been made about Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra and the band. But it is possible to identify the special features of these combinations in the study or use of comparison of each of these categories. That is, similar features and unequal features can be added to this balance. In this study, I will focus on the three elements of orchestral composition mentioned above. Thus, the balance here is studied through the special features of these three elements.

**Keywords:** *Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, Band, Instruments, Combination.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, instrumental music was gradually becoming emancipated from being no more than an imitation of vocal music; but nonetheless, this long remained the model for instrumental composition. The history of instrumental music in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries is largely the story of the establishment of a truly independent instrumental idiom [3].

Instrumental music evolved into a variety of styles, genres, and forms between the years 1450 and 1550 [2]. There was independent instrumental music before in the shape of dances, fanfares, and the like, however, musicians performed from memory or with improvised embellishments, the music has either not survived or has only remained in a rough form. Although there seems to be more focus on instrumental music after 1450, this may be an illusion caused by the fact that more instrumental music was recorded. Additionally, instrumental music found in Renaissance texts and prints is quite rare nowadays.

## II. METHODOLOGY

For this study, I'm going to follow the combination of musical instruments that includes three main parts,

- Chamber Music Groups

- Orchestras
  - Bands
1. Literary research - Books were written about instruments' history.
  2. Internet Sources - Browse information by studying websites, watching web pages, and YouTube online videos.
  3. Participatory observations - Participating as a cellist in various types of orchestras in Sri Lanka.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. CHAMBER MUSIC GROUPS

The essential difference between chamber music and music for an orchestra or band is that in chamber music there is only one player for each part: the instruments are not duplicated, so if a player is missing there is a gap in the music. Because chamber music is played by soloists it has a particularly intimate quality. Although often performed nowadays in concert halls, it is really music designed to be played in a room rather than in a large public auditorium. The word 'Chamber' is actually derived from the Latin word for 'Room' [10].

A 20th-century term implying an orchestra of modest size consisting, for example, of a small body of strings together with a selection of wind instruments, either singly or in pairs (though trombones and tuba are normally excluded). Such an orchestra is ideal for performing 18<sup>th</sup>- Century works such as the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and also 20<sup>th</sup>- Century works specifically written for a small orchestra rather than a full symphony orchestra [1].

Of course, there aren't many participants. The term "chamber music" is not typically used to describe music that is performed by just one or two musicians, such as a piano sonata or a violin and piano sonata. At the low end, there are almost never more than three players, and the norm is that there are at least three participants. A trio, quartet, quintet, sextet, septet, or octet is made up of three musicians. A quartet, quintet, sextet, or septet is made up of five players. The terms "trio," "quartet," and so on, have two distinct meanings, denoting both the number of musicians and the type of music that is being referred to. A sonata for four string instruments or a group of four string players are both acceptable definitions of the term "string quartet," for instance.

Open scores are used by composers while writing chamber music; nevertheless, each musician often just have their own part in front of them (as they do in an orchestra). When the piano is playing in a group with other instruments, its part is

printed in the score underneath theirs. The pianist performs from this score. Bar lines are drawn uninterruptedly through every stave that belongs to an instrument of the same sort (wind, strings, or keyboard), but not across staves that belong to different kinds of instruments.

### *B. Orchestras*

Even if the boundary separating a chamber music ensemble from an orchestra might be subtle, it nevertheless exists. Today, the term "orchestra" refers to a collection of musicians that always includes strings (but typically also other instruments), with each string part being played by many musicians rather than a single soloist. First and second violins, violas, cellos, and double basses make up a string orchestra, which is composed entirely of strings. Each component has several players; therefore, it is possible to break it into smaller parts. When this occurs, the music is designated as *divisi* (or simply *div.*), and when they reunite, it is designated as *unis* ('in unison').

A tiny orchestra including additional instruments in addition to strings is simply referred to as a "chamber orchestra" to avoid needless confusion; the music it performs is not chamber music. Early orchestras were all tiny orchestras by today's standards. They were erratic ensembles of instruments at the start of the 17th century, but with time they become more uniform. By the time of J.S. Bach, strings and a continuo instrument had established themselves as the foundation to which other instruments could be added; by the end of the 18th century, the continuo had been dropped, and the orchestra had settled into what is essentially its modern form—even though it was still to become much larger. Strings, woodwind, brass wind, and percussion are the four parts of the "full orchestra" or "symphony orchestra" in this contemporary configuration.

There are several ambiguities in the divisions. Horns, for instance, form a distinct group of instruments because, while it is obvious that they do not belong in the woodwind section of the orchestra, neither are they typically thought to belong in the brass section, which only consists of the so-called "heavy brass" instruments, such as trumpets, trombones, and tubas. Similar to the percussion section, the timpani are not typically included. Additionally, several instruments that were added to the orchestra in the 19th or 20th century cannot be easily classified into any of the traditional categories. A good example is the harp, which, while undeniably a string instrument, clearly differs from violins and other string instruments and does not belong in the orchestra's string section.

Although additional strings have had to be employed as other, more powerful instruments have been introduced to the orchestra, composers seldom specify the exact number of strings needed. A modern orchestra would typically have around 12 violas, 10 cellos, 14 first violins, 14 second violins, and 8 double basses. Some instruments only have one performer each, such as "2 flutes," which designates two flutists playing the first and second flute parts, respectively.

### *C. Bands*

'Band' is a rather vague word that in the past has been used to refer to almost any sizeable collection of instrumentalists, even to what we would now call an orchestra. In modern usage,

the word generally implies a large group of wind and percussion players, such as a **brass band** or a **military band**. Neither of these includes strings (for the very good reason that they normally play out of doors, where strings would be ineffective), but they are not the same. The essential difference is that brass bands do not include woodwind instruments but military bands do. Both include many instruments not normally found in the symphony orchestra (though usually related to those that are); both also vary somewhat from one country to another in the particular mixture of instruments [10].

A name which may be given to any fairly large combination of instrumentalists, but often referring in particular to a group which consists mainly of wind players – such as a brass band, a military band, or a symphonic band. The word 'band' may also be applied to particular groups of instruments, such as accordion band, steel band, percussion band, and so on. The word has also been widely used in jazz and popular music (e.g. jazz band, dance band, big band) [1].

The symphonic wind band (also known as a concert band) is comparable to a military band in that both woodwind and brass instruments are used, but unlike a military band, it has no links with parade grounds. Since about the middle of the 20th century, several notable composers have been inspired to write for it in a broad range of styles, including Prokofiev, Schoenberg, and Copland.

Jazz bands, dance bands, and the ensembles that eventually took their place as popular entertainment are significantly more diverse and frequently feature instruments besides wind and percussion, such as the double bass, guitar, and piano (or, more recently, electronic keyboard instruments). The West Indian "steel bands" are primarily percussion ensembles, but their instruments, which were expertly crafted from the most basic materials, most notably oil drums, can generate surprisingly complex tones.

## IV. CONCLUSION

In a clever way, the general aim of orchestra and band performers is the same. To please the audience, they work to maintain the symphony, credibility, and immaculate melody and rhythm. Musicians must arrange a variety of musical instruments for performance. The band and orchestra still differ from one another. A musician in the ensemble is without a stringed instrument to play. To keep a seamless tone impact with the best clarity in resonance and credibility, two groups utilize distinct instruments.

Marching on the stage or the floor are the band members. The same conventional design is maintained. With a variety of musical instruments, an orchestra troupe is discovered seated on the ground. A competent leader is clearly observed playing instruments in a band to keep everyone engaged. It's not required for the conductor to play any instruments when leading the orchestra. Standing on the concrete floor, he leads the ensemble.

In discussing the findings of this study, a general consensus can be reached on these three aspects. That is, playing the instruments, which is the common denominator of these three elements. It also shows the size of the instruments used for each

component and the volume of sound it emits. The volume emitted by a large orchestra is greater than the volume emitted by a chamber orchestra. Also, the sound of bands is determined by the instruments used for those bands and what type of band it is. In this research, however, we focused on each of these three aspects individually. It made it possible to explore the similarities and differences between these three elements.

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