

# A Comparative Analysis of Musical Cues for Emotion in Classical and Romantic Era Preludes



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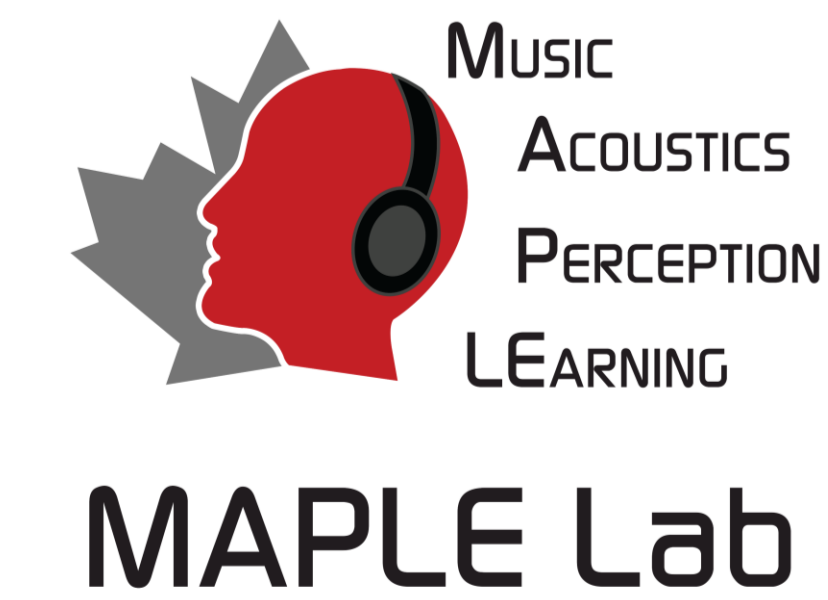
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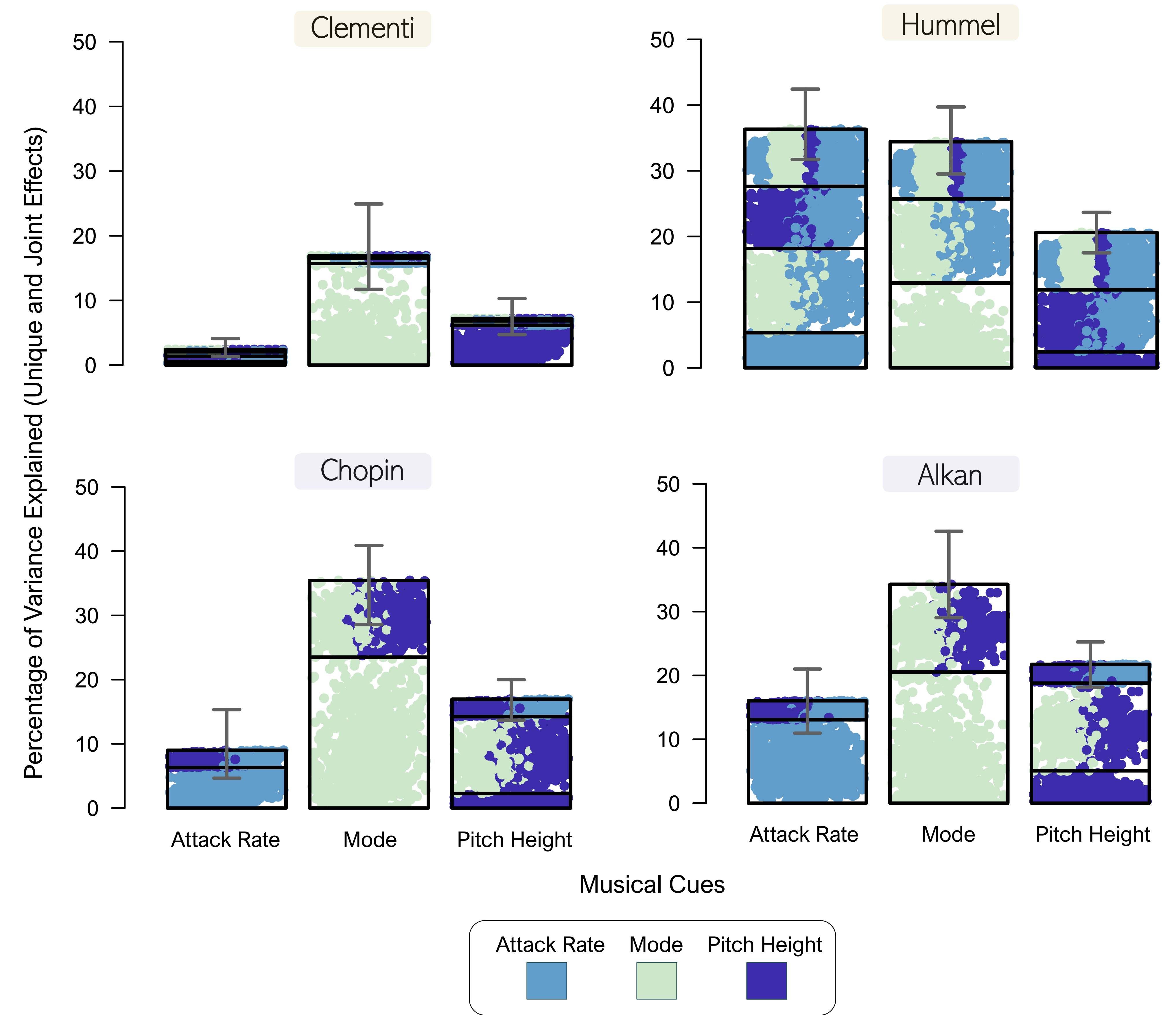
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## Background

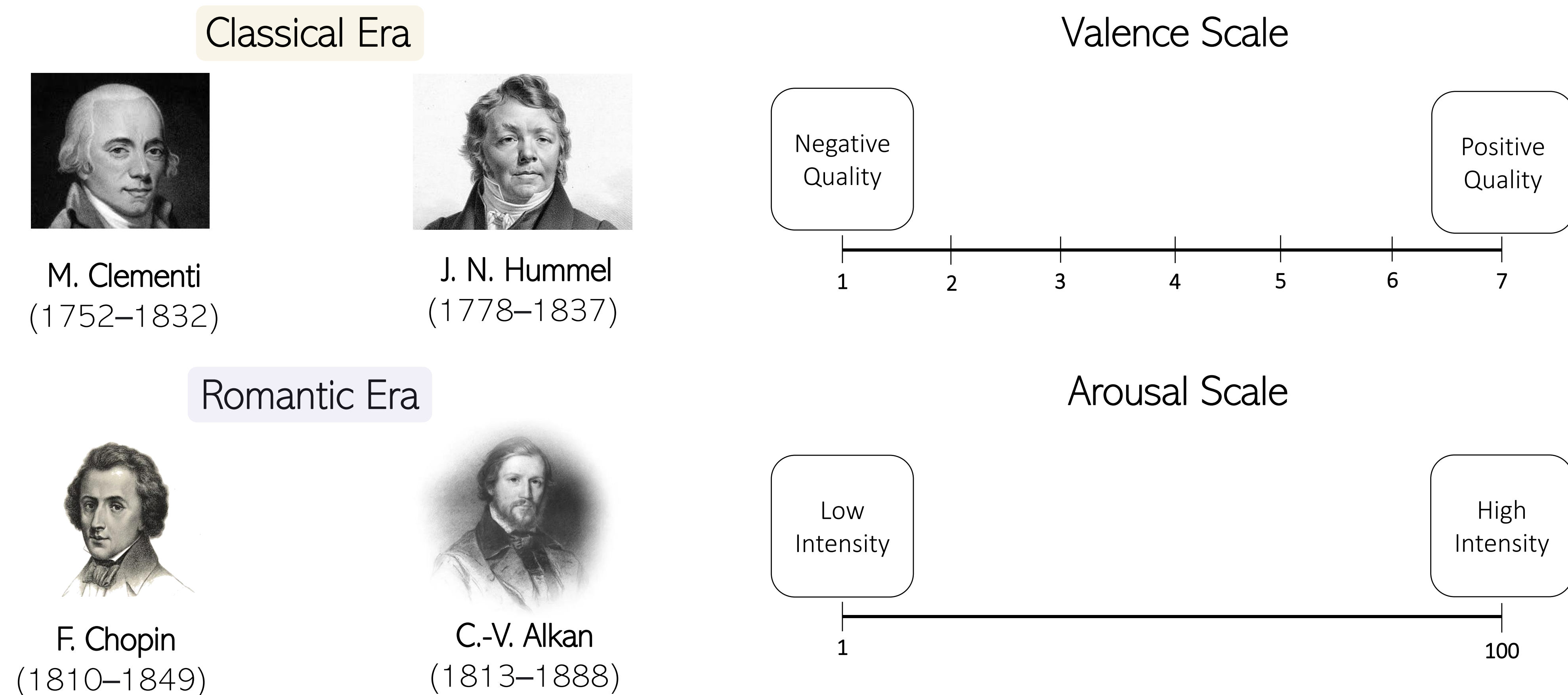
- Composers convey emotion in music by manipulating musical cues.
- Psychoacoustic cues like timing and pitch height are normally linked with perceived arousal (low—high emotional intensity), whereas structural cues like mode are normally linked with valence (negative—positive quality; Quinto & Thompson 2013).
- Musicological studies suggest that composers' use of these cues changed markedly between different musical periods (Post & Huron, 2009).
- We explore how variations in composers' use of musical cues influence perceived emotions by examining prelude sets from two Classical and two Romantic composers.

## Findings

Percentage of Variance Explained by Musical Cues on Valence Ratings



## Methods



## Summary

- Musical cue use seems to be more consistent in the Romantic era than in the Classical Era in our analyses examining four composers.
- The unique effect of mode, and the joint effect between mode and pitch height seem to be most important in determining valence ratings in the Romantic Era.
- We aim to examine more musical cues and composers to further explore how they influence perceived emotion in Classical and Romantic era pieces.

## Selected References

Post, O., & Huron, D. (2009). Western Classical Music in the Minor Mode Is Slower (Except in the Romantic Period). *Empirical Musicology Review*, 4(1), 2–10. <https://doi.org/10.18061/1811/36601>

Quinto, L., & Thompson, W. F. (2013). Composers and performers have different capacities to manipulate arousal and valence. *Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, and Brain*, 23(3), 137–150. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034775>

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