The most renowned figure of late 18th-century opera is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who began with opera seria but is most famous for his Italian comic operas, especially The Marriage of Figaro (Le nozze di Figaro), Don Giovanni, and Così fan tutte, as well as Die Entführung aus dem Serail (The Abduction from the Seraglio), and The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte), landmarks in the German tradition.

The first third of the 19th century saw the high point of the bel canto style, with Gioachino Rossini, Gaetano Donizetti and Vincenzo Bellini all creating signature works of that style. It also saw the advent of grand opera typified by the works of Daniel Auber and Giacomo Meyerbeer as well as Carl Maria von Weber's introduction of German Romantische Oper (German Romantic Opera).