perfectly suited to the taste of an English audience.

The Suite in D major opens with a majestic three-part Allegro that sounds a fanfare in the trumpets, answered by the French horns and strings. One of the most recognized dances from the Water Music is the hornpipe from the Suite. Its catchy opening theme features decorative trills in the strings and woodwinds, answered by majestic brass and timpani; this is followed by a more reflective B section set in a minor key. The return of A completes the ternary form that is typical of many Baroque dances. (See Listening Guide 26.)

More than two and a half centuries after it was written, Handel’s Water Music is still a favorite with the public, indoors or out. We need to hear only a few measures of the work to understand why.

A royal sortie on the Thames River in London, as depicted by Giovanni Antonio Canaletto (1697–1768).

**Listening Guide**

**Handel: Water Music, Suite in D major, excerpts**

**DATE OF WORK:** 1717 (first performance)

**GENRE:** Dance suite

**MEDIUM:** Orchestra (2 trumpets, 2 horns, 2 oboes, bassoon, strings, and continuo; timpani added in recording)

**MOVEMENTS:**

- Allegro
- Alla hornpipe
- Minuet
- Lentement
- Bourrée

(Shorter recordings include Allegro only.)

**First Movement: Allegro; A-B-A’ form, 4/4 meter, D major**

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:** Fanfares-like opening with quick exchanges between brass and strings. Distinct timbres of historical brass, woodwinds, and string instruments. 3-part structure (A-B-A’); B section with dotted rhythms, followed by a return of the opening. Percussion (timpani) added to orchestra.
A section—opening fanfare-like theme in trumpets, answered by descending scales in violins, in D major; idea repeated in horns and cellos:

B section—a dotted-rhythm theme announced by trumpets begins in A major:

Dotted-rhythm theme taken over by French horns; short exchanges between strings and brass.

A section—return to opening theme, with varied rhythm, cadence in D major. Gentle, spaced chords lead to next movement.

Second Movement: Alla hornpipe; A-B-A form, 3/2 meter, D major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:   Alternation between strings/woodwinds and brass (trumpets and French horns) in first section.
                        Ascending melody with leaps and trills.
                        B section for strings and woodwinds only (no brass); descending melody in minor key.
                        Return of opening (1-part structure A-B-A), in major key:

A section—disjunct theme in strings and double reeds, with trills, later answered by trumpets and French horns, in D major, at a moderate, spritely tempo:

Continued alternation of motives between brass and strings.

B section—strings and woodwinds only (no brass); fast-moving string part with syncopated winds, in B minor:

A section—repeat of entire first section; ends at close of section in D major.