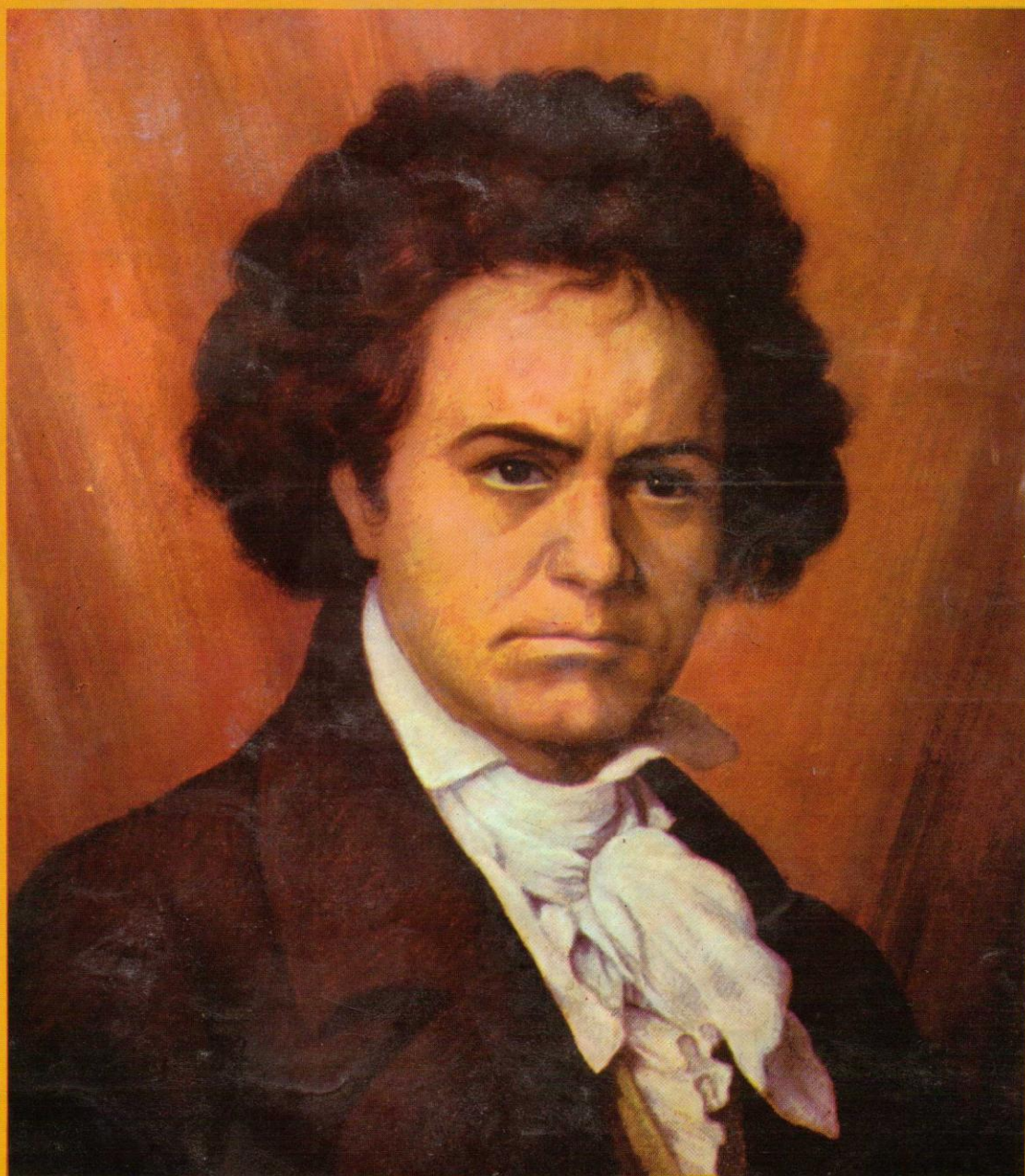


LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

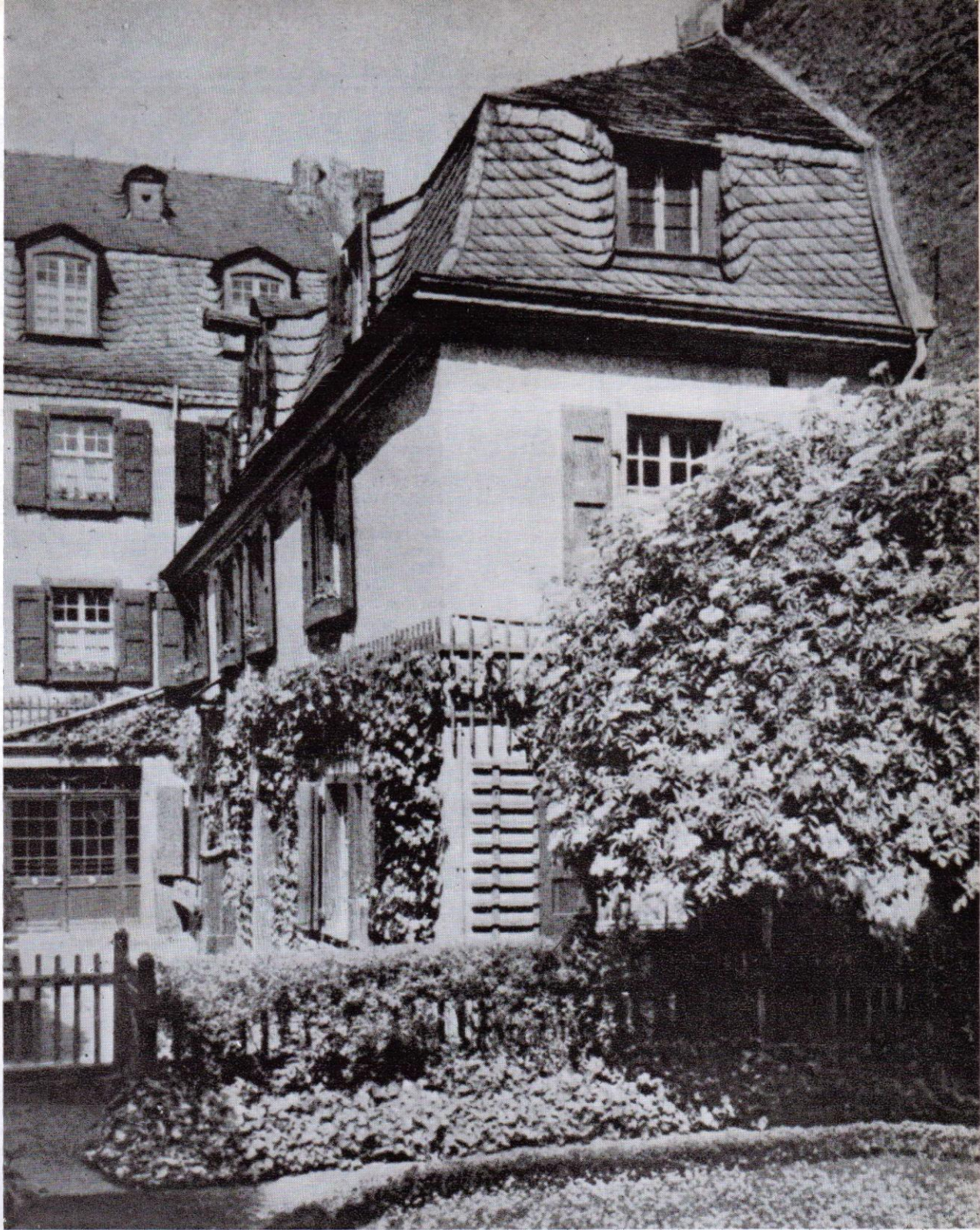
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Beethoven's birthplace, Bonn

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

PRINCIPAL WORKS

OPERA

Fidelio (1803-1814).

MUSIC FOR THE STAGE

Egmont (1809-10); The Ruins of Athens (1811); King Stephen (1811).

CANTATAS AND ORATORIOS

Cantata on the Death of the Emperor Joseph II (1790); Cantata on the Accession of the Emperor Leopold II (1790); Christ on the Mount of Olives (1801-03); The Rebirth of Germany (1814); The Glorious Moment (1814); It is Finished (1815); A Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (1815); Song of the Offering (1824).

MASSES

Mass in C Op. 86 (1807); Mass in D (Missa Solemnis), (1818-22).

ORCHESTRAL

Symphony number 1 op.21 (1799-1800); Symphony number 2 op.36 (1801-02); Symphony number 3 op.55 (Eroica), (1802-04); Symphony number 4 op.60 (1806); Symphony number 5 op.67 (1807-08); Overture Leonora number 1 op.138 (1805); Overture Leonora number 2 op.72b (1805); Overture Leonora number 3 op.72 (1806); Symphony number 6 op.68 (Pastoral), (1807-08); Overture Coriolan op.62 (1807); Symphony number 7 op.92 (1811-12); Symphony number 8 op.93 (1812); The Battle of Vittoria or Wellington's Victory op.91 (1813); Overture Namensfeier op.115 (1814); Overture The Consecration of the House op.124 (1822); Symphony number 9 op.125 (Choral), (1822-24).

WORKS FOR SOLO INSTRUMENT WITH ORCHESTRA

Piano concerto number 1 op.15 (1798); Piano concerto number 2 op.19 (1794-1801); Piano concerto number 3 op.37 (1802); Two romances for violin and orchestra op.40 and 50 (1802); Concerto for piano, violin, cello and orchestra (Triple concerto), op.56, (1803-04); Piano concerto number 4 op.58 (1805-06); Violin concerto op.61 (1806); Piano concerto arranged by Beethoven from violin concerto, op.61 (1807); Fantasy for piano, chorus and

orchestra, op.80 (1808-09); Piano concerto number 5, op.73 (Emperor), (1809).

CHAMBER MUSIC

Three piano quartets (1784-85); Three piano trios op.1 (1793-94); String quintet number 1 op.4 (1795); String trio number 1 op.3 (1792); Serenade for strings op.8 (1792-96); Two cello sonatas op.5 (1796); Wind sextet op.71 (1796-97); Piano and wind quintet op.16 (1796-97); Serenade for flute and strings op.25 (1796-97); 12 variations for piano and cello on a theme from "The Magic Flute" op.66 (1798); String trios numbers 2, 3, and 4, op.9 (1796-98); Piano trio number 4 op.11 (1797-98); Three violin sonatas, op.12 (1798); Septet for strings and wind op.20 (1800); Horn sonata op.17 (1800); Violin sonatas numbers 4 and 5 op.23 and 24 (1800); Six string quartets, op.18 (1798-1800); String quintet number 2 op.29 (1801); Violin sonatas numbers 6, 7 and 8 op.30 (1802); Violin sonata number 9 (Kreutzer) op.47 (1803); String quartets numbers 7, 8 and 9 op.59 (1806); Cello sonata number 3 op.69 (1808); Piano trios numbers 5 and 6 op.70 (1808-09); String quartet number 10 op.74 (1809); String quartet number 11 op. 95 (1810); Piano trio number 7 (Archduke) op.97 (1811); Violin sonata number 10 op.96 (1812); Equal for four trombones (1812); Cello sonatas numbers 4 and 5 op.102 (1815); Fugue for string quintet op.137 (1817); Variations for piano and strings on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu", op.121 A (1815-16); String quartet number 12 op.127 (1822-25); String quartet number 15 op.132 (1824-25); String quartet number 13 op.130 (1825); Grose Fuge for string quartet number 14 op.133 (1825); String quartet number 14 op.131 (1825-26); String quartet number 16 op.135 (1826); Andante maestoso for quintet (1826).

PIANO

Much juvenilia written at Bonn and at Vienna (Variations, Dances, Sonatinas, etc); Three sonatas op.2 (1795); Sonata number 4 op.7 & 1796; Sonata number 20 op.49 No. 2 (1796); Sonata for four hands op.6 (1796); Sonatas numbers 5, 6 and 7 op.10 (1797); Sonata number 19 op.49 No. 1 (1798); Sonata number 8 (Pathétique) op.13 (1798); Sonatas numbers 9 and 10 op.14

(1798); Sonata number 11 op.22 (1800); Sonata number 12 op.26 (1801); Sonatas numbers 13 and 14 (Moonlight), op.27 (1801); Sonata number 15 op.28 (1801); 7 Bagatelles op.33 (1800-02); Sonatas numbers 16 and 17 op.31, (1802); 6 Variations op.34 (1802); 15 Variations (Eroica), op.35 (1803); Sonata number 18 op.31 No 3 (1803); Three marches op.45 (1803); Sonata number 21 (The Dawn), op.53 (1804); Sonata number 22 op.54 (1804); Sonata number 23 (Appassionata), op.57 (1804-05); 32 Variations (1806-07); Variations op.76 (1808); Fantasy op.77 (1808); Sonata number 24 op.78 (1809); Sonata number 25 op.79 (1809); Sonata number 26 op.81 (Les Adieux), (1809); Sonata number 27 Polonaise op.89 (1814); op.90 (1814); Sonata number 28 op.101 (1815-16); Sonata number 29 op.106 (1818-19); Sonata number 30 op.109 (1820); Sonata number 31 op.110 (1820-21); Sonata number 32 op.111 (1820-22); 11 bagatelles op.119 (1820-22); 33 Variations on a theme by Diabelli, op.120 (1822-23); 6 bagatelles op. 126 (1823-24).

SONGS AND ARIAS

About 70, among them Adelaide op.46 (1794-96); Ah! Perfido (1796); 6 Gellert-Lieder op.48 (1802-03); In questa tomba oscura (1807); 6 Lieder op.75 (1809-10); 3 Goethe-Lieder op.83 (1809-10); To hope (1804-15); To the Immortal Beloved, cycle op.98 (1815-16); Resignation (1817).

Silhouette of Beethoven at the age of 16.



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Beethoven's childhood is obscure; his paternal grandmother died in a home for drunkards; his father also drank heavily; his mother had tuberculosis. He had a very sketchy education but learned to read and to count and picked up a little Latin and French. His father was a third-rate tenor, a stupid and violent man without any sense of the value of education. He quickly turned his son's efforts towards music, hoping that he would turn out to be a child-prodigy and thus make a lot of money. Young Ludwig learned the piano and the violin; he had natural talent and it is said that he liked to improvise.

1778

He performed for the first time in public (aged 7) before the Elector of Cologne.

1779

He had piano lessons from an itinerant musician called Tobias Pfeiffer, a drinking companion of his father, who frequently woke the boy up at midnight and made him work until dawn.

1780

He studied the organ and the violin with various teachers.

1781

With his mother, he went on a tour of Holland, which did not however prove very lucrative.

1782

A good year for Beethoven who makes the acquaintance of Franz-Gerhard Wegeler (1765-1848), a young medical student, who will be his confidant and most faithful friend until his death, and who introduces him into the comfortable and cultured milieu of the Breuning family. "Here Beethoven felt again the first and joyous awakenings of youth. He was soon treated as a member of the family . . . everyone contributing cheerfully to the growth of his mind and heart. It was Frau von Breuning who had most connection with this often opinionated and sulky young man" (Wegeler).

Finds a good teacher in the person of Christian-Gottlieb Neefe, Court organist, who reveals to him *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the *Sonatas* of C. P. E. Bach, and teaches him the rudiments of composition. For Neefe, "the laws and the facts of music must be one with the inner life of man, and further, must take this inner life for a very foundation". (Nottebohm). Beethoven now writes his first works, the *Variations on a March by Dressler* and a *Fugue for Organ*. Neefe provides an entree for him into the Court as an occasional substitute for himself.

1783

Dedicates three *Piano Sonatas* to the Elector of Cologne.

1784

Appointed second organist at the Electoral Chapel. He gives numerous lessons, often reluctantly. His relatives are struck by his tendency to melancholy.

1785

Arrives in the Bonn of Count Ernest-Philippe von Waldstein (1764-1823), friend of Mozart and Haydn, who becomes his first patron.

1787

Travels to Vienna (April-June) where he certainly receives some lessons from Mozart (who was then composing *Don Giovanni*) and who seems hardly interested in him, despite a prophecy the implication and significance of which is ambiguous: "Pay attention to this young man, one day he will make a noise in the world". On his return to Bonn, his mother dies of tuberculosis on July 17th. He writes to Wegeler (who had gone to Vienna) on September 15th: "She died having born pain and sadness with fortitude. For me, she was a good woman, a fond mother, my best friend. . . . Here in Bonn Fate is not kind to me." His father drinks more and more; Ludwig, 16 years old, becomes the real head of the family. Their financial situation is not good.

1788

Wegeler notes various amorous inclinations of Beethoven for friends of the Breuning family who are still keeping an eye on him: "In the last days of his life, he named the members of this family as his guardian

angels, and easily remembered the frequent observations of the mistress of the house to him. She knew, he said, how to turn away an insect from a flower" (Schindler). According to Wegeler "Beethoven was never without somebody he was in love with usually, a lady of high rank".

1789

Registers for studies in German literature at the University of Bonn where revolutionary ideas are accepted with enthusiasm.

1790

Writes the *Cantatas on the death of Joseph II* and *On the Accession of Leopold II* which are not performed. At this time it seems that he loved deeply Eleanor von Breuning (he wrote to Wegeler at the end of his life, in 1826, "I still have your Lorchens silhouette; I tell you this so that you can see how dear to me is all the love and happiness of my youth"). Journeys by boat on the Rhine and the Main with the Elector and his orchestra from Bonn to Bad Mergentheim, where he dazzles as a pianist: "I still hear one of the great pianists, the dear good BETHOFEN. One can, to my mind, judge with certainty the virtuosity of this dear, fine man, by considering the almost inexhaustible richness of his ideas, the quite original, nuances of his playing and the perfection with which he played. . . . His is so different from the usual manner of playing on the piano that it seems as though he wanted to beat his own path to the peak of that perfection to which he came today". (Junker, chaplain of Kirchberg).

1792

Haydn, passing through Bonn on his return from London, is interested in his works and invites him to come to study in Vienna. It is at this time that Beethoven decides on his project to set to music *The Ode to Joy* of Schiller. Count Waldstein obtains for him a grant to cover the expenses of his travel and studies in Vienna, and writes in the young man's album: "You are going to Vienna to realise a long-expressed desire: the genius of Mozart is yet in mourning and weeps for the death of her disciple. In the inexhaustible Haydn she has found a refuge but not an occupation; through him she desires still to be united with someone. Through your unceasing application, accept from the hand of Haydn the spirit of Mozart". On the 2nd November Beethoven leaves Bonn and the country of his birth for good, but he ever after remains faithful: "My fatherland, the beautiful country where I first saw the light of day, just as beautiful, just as clear before my eyes as when I left it". (To Wegeler 29/6/1801). On the 10th November, when revolutionary troops were occupying Mayence, he arrives in Vienna. His father dies in December. Beethoven makes the acquaintance of Baron Zmeskall, who will prove a faithful friend, and becomes the pupil of Haydn. Haydn gives him not only lessons but good advice, and although he does not seem very interested by Beethoven, he sees clearly his exceptional gifts.

1793

Studies privately with the composer Johan Schenk. He leads an ordinary enough life, is received by the aristocracy, at the home of Countess de Thun, at the Lichnowskys, the Razumovskis, the Lobkowitz and van Swieten families the Liechtensteins, the Scharzenburgs etc. He stays with Prince Lichnowsky (Beethoven will spend his life on the move and will have about thirty houses in Vienna alone!).

1794

Haydn departing once more for London, Beethoven studies the fugue form with the organist Georges Albrechtsberger whom he will remember as "an insupportable pedant" (B. and J. Massin), vocal music with Salieri and the violin with his friend Krumpholtz. These teachers "used to say that Beethoven was always so opinionated and so rebellious that he must needs teach himself, through harsh experience, since he would never accept the principle of 'a lesson' (Riess). He becomes intimate with Schuppanzigh whose quartet plays each week at the Lichnowsky household.

The Elector of Cologne is obliged, thanks to the Revolution, to disband his orchestra; Beethoven is free, but there are many lessons yet to be learnt.

Fortunately publishers rescue his compositions: "I look only at my notes; when one thing is done, another is already begun. Because of the way in which I write, I am often doing three or four things at once." At this time he settles in Vienna with his brothers Gaspard and Johann.

1795

On the 29th, 30th and 31st of March, Beethoven gives three grand concerts where he plays one of his piano concertos (probably the 2nd in B flat major) finished two days beforehand, and a Mozart concerto. Publication of the three *Trios Op. 1* which, it is said, had aroused Haydn's jealousy. But Beethoven dedicated to him his three first *Sonatas for Piano Op. 2*. His success as a virtuoso and extemporiser weighed upon him: "Often he would return to me sombre and depressed; he complained that he was forced to play even when the blood boiled beneath his fingernails" (Wegeler).

1796

A round of concerts in central Europe and Germany. In Berlin, he plays before Frederick William II to whom he dedicates the first two *Sonatas for Piano and Cello Op. 5*. Feels the first signs of deafness. In November, during the campaign in Italy, he composes the song *Farewell to Vienna's Citizens*, for the Austrian volunteers.

1797

Beethoven is in love with his pupil Barbara von Keglevics, to whom he dedicated his *Sonata Op. 7* and later his *1st concerto*, then with a singer, Christine Gerardi, who writes verses to him, and perhaps also with Magdalena Willman who on April 7th in Vienna sings *Adelaide* and *Ah! perfido*. He asks for her hand in marriage two years later.

1798

Frequents the salons of Bernadotte, ambassador in Vienna, who engages him to write a symphony "to the glory of the hero of the century: Bonaparte" (Schindler). He meets there the French violinist Kreutzer. Between writing another three *Sonatas for Violin and Piano*, he composes the *Pathétique Sonata* and the *Adagio of the First Quartet*. Travels to Prague where he is regarded as "the giant among pianists". Becomes very close friends with the Protestant and future cleric, Karl Amenda.

1799

In May he makes the acquaintance of the Hungarian family, the Brunsviks: he becomes the teacher of their three daughters, Therese (1775-1861), Josephine (1779-1821), Charlotte (1782-1840) and their son Franz (1777-1849) who comes to play an important role in his life. "It was then that an intimate friendship with Beethoven was finalised, a friendship of the heart which lasted to the end of his life. He was received into our Republic of the élite" (Memoirs of Therese de Brunsvik). Beethoven writes "for the albums of the Countesses Therese and Josephine" the *Air and Variations for four hands* on a poem of Goethe, *Ich denke dein*. On the 29th June Josephine is married to Count Deym; when Therese leaves for Hungary, Beethoven becomes a regular visitor at the Deym house.

1800

On the 2nd of April at the National-Hoftheater he gives a grand 'seminar' where he improvises, plays one of his own concertos (perhaps the Third) and conducts his *Septet* and his *1st Symphony*. Prince Lichnowsky grants him an annual income of 600 florins. In October Beethoven welcomes Ferdinand Ries, the son of a friend of the family, who, with Czerny, will be his best pupil and a faithful disciple. The arrival in Vienna (in June) of Giulietta Guicciardi, first cousin of the Brunsvik sisters, to whom, with Josephine, Beethoven gives piano lessons. Finishes the *Spring Sonata* and the *Quartets Op. 18*. His health is mediocre: "For some time now, I have not been well, and it is becoming difficult now even to write music, and even more so, letters" (15-1-1801).

1801

On the 26th March, the presentation of his ballet, *The Creatures of Prometheus* at the Hofbuntheater in Vienna. In June, (certain people date this letter to 1800), he reveals his worries to Amenda: "Your Beethoven is living in a miserable fashion, struggling with Nature and with the Creator; I have already often cursed the latter for leaving his creations to the wiles of Chance, which crushes and kills even the most beautiful flowerings. Know that the most noble part of myself, my hearing, is much weakened . . . But I have resolved that I shall surpass myself in overcoming all that, but how will it be possible?" At the same

time he writes to Wegeler: "I have often already cursed the Creator and my existence: Plutarch has taught me resignation. But if possible I want to be able to face my Destiny; but whatever happens there will be moments in my life when I shall be the most unhappy of all God's creatures". In the summer, at Hetzendorf, he writes *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. In November, in a letter to Wegeler: "I see again, in a gentler manner, that it will be to my advantage to mix with others. You can hardly believe what a solitary, lamentable life I have led for two years. My infirmity flaunted itself before me and I fled from mankind; it seemed I must call myself misanthropic, though I know really I am not. But a fairy, a beloved girl, has effected a change; she loves me and I love her; for the first time in two years, a few moments of happiness; and for the first time I feel that marriage can make me happy; unfortunately she is not of my social class . . . Oh, the world! I would embrace her if I could be delivered from it! It is only now that I feel my youth is taking flight . . . Each day I get nearer to that primal cause of life which I feel inside me, but which I cannot describe . . . I want to seize Destiny by the throat; it surely cannot succeed in humbling me entirely. Oh, to live a thousand times, life is so beautiful!" The girl whom he loves is Giulietta Guicciardi, to whom he dedicates the *Sonata in C sharp minor op. 27, no. 2*, known as 'Clair de Lune'. But for Giulietta Guicciardi it is simply a flirtation, a love affair with no tomorrow.

1802

Around March, Giulietta breaks with Beethoven (the following year she will marry Count Gallenburg, a composer, and live a most frivolous life!) He draws closer to Josephine Deym, who writes to Therese on the subject of the *Sonatas Op. 31*: "These works make worthless anything which has been written before". He composes the three *Violin and Piano Sonatas Op. 30*, dedicated to the Emperor Alexander I, then during the summer at Heiligenstadt, the *2nd Symphony*. In the autumn however he is on the verge of suicidal despair and on the 6th October writes for his brother the famous 'Heiligenstadt Testament' that will be discovered among his papers after his death: "Oh you who think me to be shameful, obstinate, misanthropic, or profess to find me so, how unjust are you! . . . It is art, and art alone, which binds me. Ah! it seems impossible to leave this world before having given to it all that I feel germinating inside myself . . . I must be firm in my resolution to wait until the pitiless Fates are pleased to break the thread." And on the 10th October he notes again: "And so I take leave of you—with much sadness—that beloved hope that I brought here, cured up to a point, and which I must now abandon completely . . . Even this arrogant courage which gives life to me so often in the glorious days of summer—has disappeared. Oh Providence, allow me one more day of pure joy—it is so long since the intimate echo of true joy was not a stranger to me". But from the depths of his despair sprung the *Eroica Symphony*, the outline of which he sketched at Heiligenstadt . . . In Vienna Schikeneder (the librettist of *The Magic Flute*) commissions an opera from him.

1803

On the 5th April a grand Beethoven concert, with the *3rd Concerto*, *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and the *2nd Symphony*. Schikeneder is replaced at the Theater an der Wien by Baron von Braun who confirms the commissioning of an opera from Beethoven. He selects *Leonora, or conjugal love* from a book by Francois Bouilly, and sets to work. He also writes the 'Kreutzer' *Sonata*, which the dedicatee will never play . . .

1804

Count Deym dies in January. Beethoven finished the *Eroica Symphony*, and works on the *Waldstein* and *Appassionata Sonatas* and *Leonora*. He is ill and the long months drag. In August the *Eroica* is performed for the first time, before Prince Lobkowitz. Beethoven is in love with Josephine de Brunsvik, as witness the letters from the youngest sister Charlotte to Therese ("He is extraordinarily nice, he comes every day, he stays with Pepi for hours . . . He gives lessons to Pepi—it's a little risky I must admit"). The following year he publishes, without dedication, the song *An die Hoffnung* (Op. 32) written for Josephine.

1805

During the summer, in Hetzendorf, he finishes the first version of *Leonora*. The production takes place on 20th November before officers attached to Murat and de Lannes who had just entered Vienna after Ulm. Complete failure after three performances. Friends of Beethoven press him to re-write and to shorten his work.

1806

On the 29th March, the now-altered *Leonora* is performed again; a new shock. But in the coming months, Beethoven seems to react to the blow caused by *Leonora*, with a redoubling of his creative activity and by a victorious affirmation of his personality. He even dares to confront human society again. In this year also are sketched out the 5th and 6th *Symphonies*. Beethoven is sure of himself as never before and even if the claque had succeeded in destroying his confidence over opera, they had not succeeded in making him doubt his victory over Destiny" (Massin). This year is extraordinarily fruitful: he composes the 7th, 8th and 9th *Quartets* dedicated to Razumovski, finishes the 4th *Piano Concerto* and the *Appassionata Sonata*, writes the *Violin Concerto*, then the 4th *Symphony* while in Silesia with Lichnowsky. The celebrated episode of the engagement to Therese de Brunswick, at Martonvasar in May, has been shown to be an invention in all respects by Brigitte and Jean Massin.

1807

Beethoven addresses a request to the board of the Theaters an der Wien to obtain "a situation which answers to his determination to live only for art". He proposes to write each year an opera, an operetta, choral works etc., but receives no reply. In revenge he becomes teacher to the Archduke Rudolph of Hapsburg to whom he will dedicate numerous works. Writes the overture to *Coriolan* and the *Mass in C major* for the chapel of Prince Esterhazy in Eisenstadt; on 13th September, after the first performance, he falls out with the prince, who had criticised his work.

1808

A fruitful year in which Beethoven finishes the 5th and 6th *Symphonies*, writes the 3rd *Cello Sonata Op. 69*, the *Fantasy for Piano, Orchestra and Chorus*, an important pointer to the 9th *Symphony*, the two *Trios Op. 70* dedicated to Countess Marie von Erdody with whom he lives for some time and who is connected to him by a very tender friendship: "No-one had such close access to the intimate heart of Beethoven as she did" (Romain Rolland).

Accepts the post of *kapellmeister* to Jerome, King of Westphalia, brother of Napoleon, and gives a farewell concert on the 22nd of December of all his latest, still unedited, works. Despite the ill-will of the orchestra (with whom Beethoven had to start again in the *Fantasy for Chorus*) the success is brilliant.

1809

To get him back to Vienna, Archduke Rudolph, the Princes Lobkowitz and Kinsky, at the instigation of Marie Erdody, combine to grant him an annual income of 4000 florins. Writes the *Sonata Op. 78* dedicated to Therese von Brunswick, sketches out the *Adieux Sonata* and works on the 5th *Concerto*, the composition of which is interrupted by the siege of Vienna and the taking of the city by the French on 13th May. This is a harsh blow to Beethoven. One finds an echo of this in the 10th *Quartet* written in the autumn.

1810

Composes a number of songs (in particular Op. 75, 82 and 83) and the music to accompany Goethe's *Egmont*. Beethoven falls in love with Therese Malfatti his doctor's niece; it seems that he asked her hand in marriage (for he wrote to Wegeler for his baptismal certificate) but had been refused, evidence of which terrible disappointment can be heard in the 'Serioso' *Quartet Op. 95*. It was then that, in May, Bettina Brentano arrived in Vienna. She was a friend of Goethe's and would come to be a ray of light to Beethoven in the middle of his distress. On the 9th July he writes to Zmeskall: "Happiness pursues me and for this very reason I am already afraid of some fresh misery".

1811

Writes the *Trio in B flat* dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph. Spends the summer in Toeplitz, the seaside town in Bohemia, where he leads a pleasant life enjoying the admiration of all. Is smitten with a young singer from Berlin, Amalie Sebald. Writes several occasional pieces (*The Ruins of Athens*, *King Stephen*).

1812

This year marks a turning point in Beethoven's life. It opens with a crisis which is not resolved until six years later. On 13th May he finishes the 7th *Symphony*, begun during the winter. At the end of June, he again

leaves for Toeplitz. It is on the 2nd or 3rd of July that he meets in Prague the 'Immortal Beloved' to whom he writes on the 6th and 7th July from Toeplitz the celebrated letter which will be discovered on his death. The identity of this woman remains unknown (Brigitte and Jean Massin present an imposing file in favour of the hypothesis that it is Josephine de Brunswick, by now remarried to Baron von Stackelberg, cf. pp232-244, but the hypothesis is ardently rejected by the Director of the 'Beethoven House' in Bonn).

In Toeplitz Beethoven finds a brilliant assemblage: The Emperor and Empress of Austria, Marie-Louise, Empress of the French, the King of Saxony and their followers. On July 17th Goethe arrives and he meets him three times; their meeting is courteous, but somewhat mistrustful. Goethe writes to Zelter: "In Toeplitz I made the acquaintance of Beethoven. His talent quite astonishes me. But unfortunately his personality is completely ungovernable. He is doubtless right in finding the world detestable; but really he does nothing to make it any more pleasant for either himself or others" (2-9-1812). At the end of his stay in Toeplitz, he again meets Amalie Sebald, with whom he renews amicable relations. Stays in Linz with his brother Johann where, in the midst of uncomfortable scenes, he finishes the 8th *Symphony*. This same year he writes the 10th *Violin and Piano Sonata*. These works have a serene and relaxed character. Then, in the last months, Beethoven confides to his journal that he is beginning to be troubled again: "You can no longer be a man, for you cannot be a man for yourself alone, only for others; for you there is no other happiness than yourself, in your art. O God! give me the strength to conquer myself! Nothing hereafter can chain me to life. In this way, with . . . everything is destroyed". This despairing entry, most unexpected, indicates that something serious has just happened, without doubt connected with the 'Immortal Beloved'.

1813

Beethoven's financial situation is poor: he has taken Prince Lobkowitz to law (having been granted legal aid) and shortly is in the lists against the heirs of Prince Kinsky, who has just died. On the 13th May appear new and less than public statements in his diary: "Oh, to achieve some great accomplishment which can stand on its own! How different is the shape of my own life! Oh dreadful circumstance which kills my feeling for family life, but which does not extinguish it entirely. Oh God, God let your gaze descend upon poor pathetic Beethoven, do not let him depend for so long upon himself". And later, this comment which he copied out: "Life is like the rhythmic resounding of the senses and man is played like a stringed instrument. If the playing is too strong, the right resonance is lost and can never be regained. Only discords will occur in future and there is no chance of reuniting the choir so that it sings in tune." Beethoven stops writing. His friends are struck by his mental and physical dilapidation: "It is clear that at this time in his life during this period of 1812-1813 there occurred some kind of mental catastrophe—the most horrible of that particular kind which is reserved to us by the pains of love—and that he emerged broken from the experience" (Romain Rolland).

However, at the request of Maelzel, inventor of the metronome, who has just invented a new instrument, the 'Panharmonica' (a large musical box), he accepts the commission to compose an occasional work, the *Battle Symphony*—on the occasion of Wellington's victory at Victoria, and this pretty mediocre work gives him some courage, since like the 7th *Symphony*, it is greeted with enthusiasm on the 8th and the 12th of December. He becomes a musician sanctioned by the State.

1814

Beethoven is downcast for long periods: at the beginning of the year he thinks of committing suicide, believing himself to be the victim of an incurable illness. But he takes part in numerous concerts and writes patriotic works (*Retso*, the Cantata, *The Glorious Moment*, the overture *Namensfeier* for the birthday of the Emperor). The Theater am Karntnerbor requests that he put on *Fidelio* (*Leonora*) on which he has worked considerably since earlier performances, and which is presented with great success on the 23rd May. During the summer in Baden he writes the *Sonata Op. 90*. In October, he is feted by all the world at the Congress in Vienna despite his unattractive character and his 'advanced' ideas. . . . He writes a *Polonaise* for the Empress of Russia.

1815

On the 25th January, he gives his first concert as a pianist before the emperors and assembled royalty in congress. He is reconciled to Marie Erdody to whom he dedicates the two beautiful *Cello Sonatas Op. 102*. This is a year of consolidation and he reads a great deal and fills his journal with resolutions and comments designed to bolster his courage: "Everything that is called Life, must be sacrificed to the Sublime and be a Sanctuary of Art" . . . "Portraits of Handel, of Bach, of Gluck and Mozart and Haydn are in my room—it is they who can help me to patience." . . . "Now Destiny grabs me. Oh that I do not disappear into the dust without having attained glory! No, one must achieve something great which men in times to come will speak of" (Homer) . . . Ask for nothing, it is your acts which must be freely given; sacrifice yourself without thought of reward . . . What should I do?—be more than my Destiny" (Zacharias Werner) .

He reads mostly Indian philosophy—the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

On the 15th November, his brother Gaspard dies, leaving him in charge of his nephew Karl, 9 years old, on whom Beethoven will lavish all his hopes and frustrated affections. But right until the end Karl will be a source of worry and serious concern, for the child is mediocre and Beethoven hardly capable of bringing him up.

For Christmas he sets to music two of Goethe's poems for chorus and orchestra, *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*.

1816

Only two works of value: the song cycle *An die Ferne Geliebte Op. 98* *Sonata Op. 101*. His health is unsteady and he is forced to busy himself over his nephew whom he finally sends to boarding school. In December he falls gravely ill with pulmonary congestion.

1817

He is confined to bed for the greater part of the year; he is very much alone since all his friends and protectors are scattered and the only person near him is Anton Schindler, a young law student, a fairly uninteresting person who had been friendly with Beethoven for some three years. From the point of view of music, it is now two years since 'Italianism' triumphed in Vienna. It is "the dreadful year, the time of agony and moral ruin" (Romain Rolland) which we can see through his journal: "Oh God, help me! You see me abandoned by all humanity . . . O cruel Fate! No, no, this way of life of mine so empty of happiness, will never come to an end". He is still struggling, saying that if he can but travel (to Frankfurt, to see his friends the Brentanos, or even to Italy), he will be saved; but he has no money. He must write a symphony. "To rescue yourself there is no other means of getting away from here; only in this way can you reach again the very summit of your art for here you can only but be submerged in a sea of vulgarity. Only a symphony—and then far, far, far". But he is too ill and little by little his last strength leaves him. In July he repeats to Ries that he hopes to go to London in January and will do so when he has finished "two great and entirely new symphonies on the composition of which I am beginning to work at this moment." But in August his spirits are down again: "I am often in despair and wish my life to end for I can see no end to all these infirmities! God have mercy on me! I look on myself as a lost soul." (21/8)

However on 1st September he writes to the Archduke Rudolph: "God must surely listen to my prayer, he will set me free from this adversity once more. For I have served him since my childhood, have trusted myself to his care and have done the best I can; I trust myself to his hands again, completely and exclusively: I hope that the Omnipotent will not permit me to give way to all the trials and tribulations which are mine".

Little by little Beethoven emerges from the abyss. His only two works during this year are a song, *Resignation* ("Light thyself, my lamp! That which you need has gone, you will not find it here. You must now break loose") and a Monks' Chorus set to words from Schiller's ("Death comes to man in an instant; no respite is allowed him"), written in May on the death of his friend Krumppholz, and which he seems to apply to himself. But in a notebook he begins to copy out the fugues of Bach, and we find sketches for the *Sonata Op. 106*, for the *9th Symphony* and the *Missa Solemnis*. It is the dawn of a resurrection.

1818

Beethoven is restored; he takes Karl back from the Giannatasio Institute to live with him. On the 19th May he goes for convalescence to Modling. Despite his domestic troubles caused by Karl's mother, he seems reborn, "walks with a sheet of paper across mountains, ravines and valleys and scribbles many things for the sake of bread and money". In fact he is working on the *Sonata Op. 106* and is thinking about the *Missa Solemnis* as a hymn of gratitude and discovery: "Sacrifice once more all the pettiness of social life to our Art! Oh God above all". In December begins the interminable legal strife with 'The Queen of the Night' (Karl's mother), which will last for a year and a half.

1819

Completely deaf, Beethoven now keeps his 'Conversation Books' (of which there remain about one third, 11,000 pages, since Schindler destroyed the rest); political subjects are very numerous. The year is devoted entirely to the *Missa Solemnis* (which will be finished only at the end of 1822).

1820

On the 4th March a very beautiful song, *Evening song beneath the starry sky*. The third summer in Modling where he works on the *Missa Solemnis*, finishes the *Sonata Op. 109*, and begins *Op. 110*. In winter a serious relapse (pulmonary congestion and jaundice). New difficulties over money trouble him. He is now fifty years old.

1821

Summer in Dobling and in Baden; he is still ill and does not recover until the end of the autumn. Finishes *Op. 110* which is a new 'return to life'.

1822

Writes the *Sonata Op. 111* (roughed out in 1820), works on the *Mass*, finishes the *Bagatelles Op. 119*, of which some "have an exceptional interest of both art and thought" (Romain Rolland); composes also the overture *The Consecration of the House* for the reopening of the Theatre in Josefstadt. Already he is working on the *9th Symphony*. Rossini visits Beethoven ("This man whom no engraving tool could do justice to, with an indefinable sadness in his face, whilst beneath heavy brows, as though from the depths of caves, there shine eyes which although small, seem to pierce right through one"). On the 3rd November, *Fidelio* is presented again with Wilhelmina Schroder-Devrient: the rehearsal conducted by Beethoven is a catastrophe, but the production is a triumphant success.

1823

The *Missa Solemnis* is finished and sent to Archduke Rudolph on 19th March. Beethoven has the idea of offering it in subscription to the princes and great persons of Europe and takes all the necessary steps but with little success. In April he is visited by the young Liszt and Weber. The whole year is devoted to the *9th Symphony*; in between writing this great work, he produces the marvellous *Diabelli Variations* and the *Bagatelles Op. 126*. He is suffering from acute conjunctivitis.

1824

It is mooted that the *9th Symphony* and the *Missa Solemnis* should be performed in London. In February, thirty Viennese personalities send Beethoven a solemn address begging that the first performances of these works should be in Vienna. The first performances take place on May 7th in the Kärntner Theatre; it is a triumph. Shortly afterwards Beethoven shows Schindler the door. He is writing fast, with enthusiasm, and in the country he composes the *12th Quartet* and roughs out the *15th*.

1825

Composition of the *15th* and *13th Quartets* and the *Great Fugue Op. 133*. From the middle of March to the middle of May, he is again seriously ill. His nephew Karl, who is now 18, is the cause of great, and growing, trouble. His establishment in the Schwarzschanerhaus on October 15th. Begins the *14th Quartet* and the *10th Symphony*.

1826

Finishes the *14th Quartet* in May. From June to September, he is writing the *16th Quartet*. Meanwhile at the beginning of August, there is drama: Karl attempts to commit suicide. Despite a fleeting recovery, his energy is sapped and Beethoven will not recover again. Staying with his brother Johann in Gneixendorf in October, he composes a new

finale for the *13th Quartet* and an *Andante Maestoso* (finished in February 1827) for a *Quintet* commissioned by Diabelli. He writes to Wegeler: "I still hope to give to the world some great works, and then, like an ancient who is still yours, I will finish my career on earth amid the company of a few good men".

On the 2nd December, after a freezing night at an inn, Beethoven catches double pneumonia. He is badly nursed. His health gets rapidly worse (pleurisy and jaundice set in). There is only one comfort: the presence of his 'Ariel', the little Gerhard von Breuning. The repulsive Schindler, 'with his undertaker's solemnity' (Heinrich Heine), reappears.

1827

Beethoven makes his will on the 3rd January, in favour of Karl. Many friends now come to see him and bring him small presents. He reads *The Odyssey* and discovers Schubert's lieder, of which he says (according to Schindler): "In this man Schubert there is truly some divine spark". Perhaps Schubert, conquering his shyness, came to see him eight days before his death. One of his last pleasures was to receive from the Philharmonic Society of London 1000 gold florins (at the suggestion of Moscheles): "This generosity has touched me at deepest part of myself" (18/3) On the 23rd March he asks for a priest. On the 24th he receives the Last Sacrament and tells his friends: "Plaudite, amici, finita est comedia". By the evening he is in agony and on the 26th March he dies during a hail storm, at 5.45 in the afternoon. He is buried on March 29th in the cemetery at Währing.

In a secret drawer are found portraits of Marie Erdody and Giulietta Guicciardi, together with the portrait of a third woman who is thought to be Therese von Brunswick. But the greater part of Beethoven's papers seem to have been plundered (cf. Massin, pp 496-499).



Beethoven in 1818, Portrait by Kloeber

PORTRAIT OF BEETHOVEN

"He was short and thick-set, with very heavy neck and shoulders and an athletic build. A large face, brick-red in colour, except towards the end of his life when his complexion became pale and jaundiced, especially during the winter when he stayed indoors, far from the countryside. A forehead which was powerful and somewhat battered. Very black hair extremely thick, through which it seemed a comb had never passed

and which bristled all over the place . . . His eyes burned with a tremendous fire which struck all who saw him . . . Small and deeply set, they opened wide when he was in a passion or enraged and then, rolling within their sockets they would reflect every thought with incredible fidelity. He had a fine smile, said Moscheles, and, in his conversation a pleasant and encouraging manner. To make up for this his laugh was not agreeable, brief, gaping and violent ' '. (Romain Rolland).



Beethoven on his death bed, lithograph by Danhauser.

SOME THOUGHTS OF BEETHOVEN

"Music must make the fire of the spirit of man burst forth"

"Music is a revelation higher than all wisdom and all philosophy . . . Whoever penetrates the meaning of my music will be free of all those miseries which drag down the rest of mankind"

"Why do I write? What is in my heart must emerge: that is why I write"

"I am happy each time I overcome something"

"I know no other sign of great worth than kindness"

"No-one on earth loves the countryside more than I do . . . I love a tree more than I love a man"

"My sonatas must be declaimed"

"Submission, profound submission to your destiny; you can no longer exist for yourself, but only for others. For you there is no longer any happiness but in your art. Oh God, give me the strength to overcome my weakness"

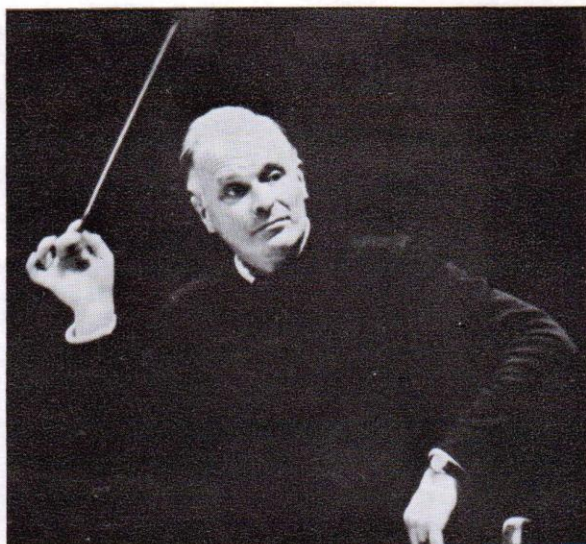
"Oh Providence! Let me see once more one day of pure joy! It is so long now that that deep resonance created by true joy has been a stranger to me". (1803)

"Oh! how beautiful it is to live a thousand times in one life!" (1801)

"Poor Beethoven, there is absolutely no happiness for you in this world. Only in the realm of ideals, can you find peace and happiness" (1808)



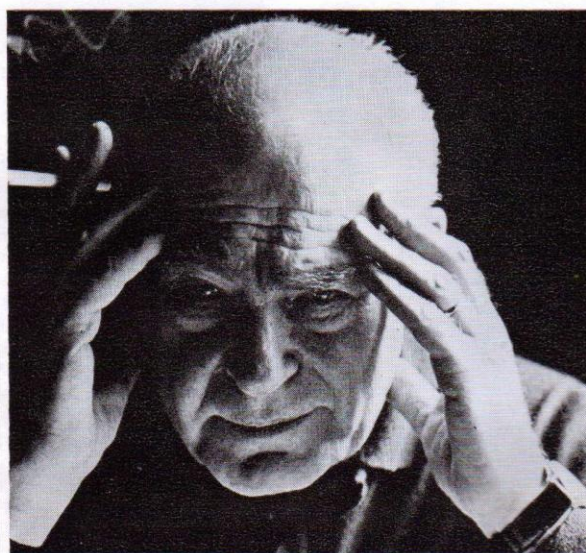
The death of Charles Münch was a great blow to the world of music. The outstanding French conductor of his generation, his reputation transversed far beyond the frontiers of his native land. Born at Strasbourg in 1891 Münch was, while still young, made leader of the famous Gewandhaus Orchestra at Leipzig. Turning to conducting he directed with great success a number of French orchestras. But it was the 13 years which he spent from 1948 with the great Boston Symphony Orchestra which brought him his greatest fame.



Willem Van Otterloo is one of the greatest Dutch conductors. Principal conductor of The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra since 1949, he formed of this group an orchestra of international calibre which rivals the quality of the more famous Concertgebouw of Amsterdam. Under his direction this fine orchestra has made numerous foreign tours, notably in England, Mainland Europe, America and Japan.



For more than 50 years Pierre Monteux was one of the world's most prominent musical figures. Whilst still young he had such a reputation that Diaghilev entrusted him with the musical direction of his famous ballet company, it was thus that Monteux came to give the first performances of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Debussy's *Jeux* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*. Subsequently he conducted successively the orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam and the London Symphony Orchestra.



Lyricism, freedom, generosity of spirit and precise attention to detail—these are the masterly qualities of Paul Kletzki, the famous conductor of Polish origin. Kletzki is not only a conductor who is greatly admired by orchestral musicians and one of the most sought-after of the world's great conductors but he is also a composer who has written several important works. It is a mark of the universal esteem in which he is held when Kletzki was selected to succeed the late Ernest Ansermet as head of the Suisse Romande Orchestra.

THE SYMPHONIES

SYMPHONY No. 1 IN C MAJOR, Op. 21

*I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio II. Andante cantabile con moto III. Menuetto; Allegro molto e vivace
IV. Adagio – Allegro molto e vivace*

The Südwestfunk Symphony Orchestra, Baden-Baden
Paul KLETZKI, conductor

SMS 2313

Beethoven's *Symphony in C major* is less familiar in the concert hall than it deserves to be. In his "Essays in Musical Analysis" of 1935 Sir Donald Tovey wrote "Beethoven's first symphony, produced in 1800, is a fitting farewell to the eighteenth century. It has more of the true nineteenth-century Beethoven in its depths than he allows to appear on the surface. Its style is that of the Comedy of Manners, as translated by Mozart into the music of his operas and of his most light-hearted works of symphonic and chamber music".

Beethoven's first symphony was received with considerable criticism, mainly on account of the free treatment of the wind instruments and its mixed tonality. Even in days when a new work travelled much more slowly than today the *Symphony in C major* was an unusually long time making its way. J. G. Prod'homme listed the following dates for the first performances; Paris, 1807; London, 1813; Russia, 1863; Spain, 1864; Budapest, 1880; and Italy, 1888.

The first movement opens, *Adagio molto*, somewhat mysteriously on the strings, woodwind and horns with a series of modulations which were one of the major causes of criticism when the symphony first appeared. Ignoring the pedants and text books which warned against modulating to the subdominant key until near the end of a composition, Beethoven plunges straight away into a chord in this very key (F major) and it is only after a brief excursion into G major that the home key of C major is established and the stimulating first subject of the main body of the movement, *Allegro con brio*, announced on the strings. The bright and cheerful second subject is very Mozartian both in matter and the interplay between oboe and flute. The development is brief but quite elaborate and the movement ends with a coda of considerable length. The second movement, *Andante cantabile con moto*, starts with a graceful theme which is treated in the style of a fugue but before this playful contrapuntal treatment has proceeded very far a second theme,

in the dominant and first heard on the strings, introduces an atmosphere of tenderness. But again the mood changes when a third theme is subjected to more serious treatment in counterpoint and the movement ends with an elaboration of part of the opening subject. A particular feature to be noted is the *pianissimo* rhythmic accompaniment on the timpani (tuned in C and G) which despite Sir Donald Tovey's suggestion that Beethoven got the idea from Mozart's "Linz" symphony, must have sounded quite sensational at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Although marked "Menuetto" in the score, the third movement, *Allegro molto e vivace*, might equally well have been called a scherzo. Indeed Dr. Ernest Walker called it a great Beethoven scherzo, larger than any in the sonatas and chamber works before the opus fifties and much more important than the corresponding movement in the second symphony. As in the introduction to the first movement, the modulations are bold and unexpected. The litheness and capriciousness of the *Menuetto*, to give it Beethoven's own name, are interrupted in the middle by the more delicate charm of a trio in which chords on the wind instruments and scale passages on the violins predominate.

The *Adagio* opening of the finale is only six bars in length. It begins with a long-held G in the full orchestra and then the violins experiment, as it were, with scale passages preparatory to soaring upwards at the beginning of the main body of the movement, *Allegro molto e vivace*. A later theme is syncopated and when the opening subject returns each half of it is first worked out separately before it reappears in its entirety. A joyful movement, reminiscent of one of the rustic dances which Haydn used so frequently in his final rondos, and a joyful work, end with the persistent repetition of the tonic chord.

W. A. CHISLETT

SYMPHONY No. 2 IN D MAJOR, Op. 36

I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio II. Larghetto III. Scherzo – Allegro IV. Allegro molto

The N.D.R., Symphony Orchestra, Hamburg
Pierre MONTEUX, conductor

SMS 2332

The fact that so exuberant and sparkling a work as the *Second Symphony* should have been composed at the most wretched time of Beethoven's career proves the fallacy of relating his art to his life. He completed the work soon after he had written that most despairing farewell letter to his brothers, known as the Heiligenstadt Testament (6th October, 1802), in which he spoke of the spectre of approaching total deafness threatening to drive him to the point of suicide. It was only the thought that it was impossible for him to leave the world until he had produced all that he felt called upon to produce which prevented him from taking

this desperate step. The Second Symphony bears no trace whatever of this tragic mood and we may imagine that the necessity of completing it had the effect of rallying his troubled spirit.

The work is Janus-faced, looking into two opposite directions: forward to Beethoven's mature style as a symphonist and back to Haydn and Mozart. It is the culmination of the eighteenth-century form, but a new spirit informs the old structures, a new wine is poured into the bottles. For all its indebtedness to the symphonies of his two great predecessors, it speaks a language that is unmistakably Beethoven's and his alone.

It has greater bulk and weight, its fibre is more muscular and it contains the bricks with which he was to build the towering edifices of his later symphonic works.

The first movement opens with an *Adagio* introduction of considerable length and rich in daring modulation; and it strikingly anticipates, in a descending D minor arpeggio in dotted rhythm which is like sheet-lightning, a motive from the first movement of the Ninth Symphony. The ensuing *Allegro* is an admirable example of the composer's art to build an entire movement from the simple elements of scale and arpeggio. No less remarkable is the way he elaborates his material in the development section: with its lively use of canon and double counterpoint, accompanied by swift harmonic changes, it gives the impression of a most spirited combat.

The *Larghetto* unfolds in a continuous flow of beautifully sustained lyrical melody and excels in imaginative orchestral touches, such as the exquisite dove-tailing of strings with woodwind. Significantly, the trumpets and drums of the previous movement here are silent.

The third movement is Beethoven's first symphonic *Scherzo* expressly so called. (In the First Symphony the corresponding movement is

entitled *Minuet* though its character is that of a typically Beethovenian scherzo). The music is fast-moving and grotesquely humorous, as witness the middle section where fragments of the scherzo theme are lustily tossed about while abrupt dynamic changes (*f-p*) add to the droll fun. Even the *Trio*, traditionally a more demure piece, is infected by the Scherzo's boisterousness indulging, in the middle section, in a kind of gruff humour.

It is the *Finale*, however, where Beethoven gives completely free rein to his high spirits. It begins with an explosion of Homeric laughter and in shoots, like a rocket, one of his most sparkling themes. The second subject makes a half-hearted attempt to conduct itself with more decorum, but this is of little avail to damp the general hilarity which reaches its high-point in the startling harmonic and dynamic surprises of the coda.

The Second Symphony was first performed in Vienna on 5th April, 1803, but it was coolly received, the public being much puzzled by the audacities of its utterance.

Mosco CARNER

SYMPHONY No. 3 IN E FLAT MAJOR, Op. 55 ("EROICA")

I. *Allegro con brio* II. *Marcia funebre; Adagio assai* III. *Scherzo; Allegro vivace* IV. *Finale; Molto allegro*

The Südwestfunk Symphony Orchestra, Baden-Baden

Paul KLETZKI, conductor

SMS 2275

Legend has it that as early as 1798 the suggestion was made to Beethoven to write a symphony in honour of Napoleon Bonaparte who was then First Consul of the French Republic and the hope of all liberal minds in Europe. This may or may not be true. The fact is that the *Eroica* first swam into our ken in 1803 when Beethoven began sketches for it, and was completed in 1804. He originally intended to dedicate the work to Napoleon and actually inscribed his name on the outer page of the autograph score. But when in March, 1804 the news reached Vienna that the First Consul had now proclaimed himself Emperor of France, Beethoven, the ardent republican and staunch upholder of the idea of individual freedom, was mortified, and in an access of rage erased the dedication on the title-page. A couple of years later he substituted for it the inscription: *Eroica, composta per festeggiare il sovvenire d'un grand'uomo (composed to celebrate the memory of a great man)*. What Beethoven precisely meant by this is not clear. Could it be that by "the memory of" the disappointed composer intended to imply the death of the "great man" of his republican dreams? If so, how are we to account for the fact that the Funeral March comes second in the sequence of the four movements and that it is followed by a vigorous Scherzo and a triumphant *Finale*? Indeed, the more we reflect on the associations which the *Eroica* might have had in Beethoven's mind with the figure of Napoleon, the more enigmatic becomes the whole problem. Perhaps the best explanation of this puzzle has been provided by J. W. Sullivan in his admirable book on the composer. Sullivan writes: "No amount of brooding over Napoleon's career would have given Beethoven his realization of what we may call the life-history of heroic achievement as exemplified in the *Eroica*. This is obviously a transcription of a personal experience. Beethoven may have thought Napoleon a hero, but his conception of the heroic he had earned for himself".

In Beethoven's symphonic career the *Eroica* occupies a similar position to that of *Tristan* in Wagner's. Just as *Tristan* altered with a stroke the language, the form and the psychological content of opera to such an extent that afterwards "opera" could never be quite what it had been, so it was with the *Eroica*. "Symphony" after that work began

to connote something at once far more subjective in language, far more profound in content and far larger in proportion than before. In comparison with the *Eroica*, Beethoven's first two symphonies, masterpieces though they be, have little in them to indicate the tremendous change that was to come in the third symphony. Merely a year or so separates the *Eroica* from the second symphony yet Beethoven's growth in symphonic stature within this short space of time was nothing short of the miraculous—a most extraordinary and unique phenomenon in the development of a creative artist. It seems that the composer himself was aware that something in him was urging him onwards to the achievement of the *Eroica*. For in 1802 he declared to a friend that was no longer satisfied with the music he had written up to then—"From today", he said, "I mean to take another road". This "other road" was to lead him to the *Eroica*, the first of his fully mature symphonies and the first to have been inspired by a great moral concept.

What strikes us above all in it is to see the enormous widening of Beethoven's symphonic vision. This manifests itself in the long span of his musical thought, the powerful language in which this thought is couched, and the monumentality of the architecture. Yet Beethoven does not abjure the formal structure of the Haydn-Mozart symphony—he only expands it and fills it with details richer and more abundant. And, while the total span of his ideas is tremendously lengthened, the whole is controlled by the supreme logic of his musical thinking. Each movement is of a piece and all ideas subsidiary to the main themes are part and parcel of the overall design. For example, when, towards the end of the development section of the opening movement, Beethoven unexpectedly introduces a fresh idea, its significance in the context is as clear and self-evident as is the meaning of the second development, after the recapitulation is over. These features are the result of the cumulative onward pressure of his thought.

If the first movement conjures up a vision of the imaginary "hero" in life, the Funeral March is a most dignified and noble lament on his death. That it has the character of a military march is suggested by the throb of muffled drums and the horn-trumpet fanfares in the middle. And how terrifying is the development section, with its three-part

fugato which is like a retrospect to the hero's past struggles on earth. The Scherzo, with its mysterious staccato whispers in the strings, the sudden burst into a massive *fortissimo* tutti and the headlong syncopations, is also something quite new in a symphony. The Finale is a combination of variation and fugal form. Beethoven took the theme from his *Prometheus* Ballet (1801), but in the first two variations he uses only the bass of that theme, adding the melody in the third variation. In the fourth, the bass forms the subject of a four-part fugato.

A later variation is in the character of a vigorous march in G minor and presently there comes an expressive *Poco andante* variation which treats the theme in close harmony and develops it at some length. Finally, the *Presto* coda, itself a kind of variation, provides a triumphant conclusion to the whole work which, as we know, was Beethoven's favourite symphony.

Mosco CARNER

SYMPHONY No. 4 IN B FLAT MAJOR, Op. 60

I. Adagio – Allegro vivace II. Adagio III. Allegro vivace IV. Allegro ma non troppo

The N.D.R. Symphony Orchestra, Hamburg

Pierre MONTEUX, conductor

SMS 2332

It was Schumann who spoke of Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony* as standing 'like a slender Greek maiden between two Norse giants', i.e. the *Eroica* and the *Fifth Symphony*. The simile is certainly alluring but anything less apposite it is hard to imagine. At a pinch we might perhaps see in the classical poise and calm serenity of the *Adagio* something like the image of 'slender Greek maiden'. Yet what of the remaining three movements of the symphony? Their impetuosity, their animal vitality, their gusts of mock-fury—how can these qualities be reconciled with a graceful female figure on a Greek frieze? It was these very qualities that so disconcerted Beethoven's contemporaries when they first heard the symphony in 1807. Carl Maria von Weber, then a youth of 21, wrote a mordantly sarcastic article purporting to relate a dream in which the various instruments of the orchestra make some very scathing remarks about 'the symphony by one of our newest composers'. Thus the double-bass declares that in spite of its tolerably good constitution it could only just hold out and 'five minutes more of that music would have shattered my frame and burst the sinews of my life'. And one of the cellos speaks of the work as being a 'musical monstrosity revolting alike to the nature of the instruments and the expression of thought'. Weber later came to regret his diatribe, yet for all its youthful exaggeration the article well illustrates the impression the symphony made on its early audiences.

Beethoven's original intention had been to follow up the *Eroica* with what is now the *Fifth Symphony*, two movements of which he sketched out in 1805. But for an unknown reason he changed horses in mid-stream and embarked on the composition of the *Fourth*, completing it in the following year. It may be that he felt that from the public's

point of view it would have been unwise to succeed so serious and monumental a work as the *Eroica* with another symphony of a similar character. Or we may assume that after the tremendous mental concentration and effort involved in the writing of the *Eroica* he sought relaxation in composing a symphony less weighty in substance and more 'unbuttoned' in mood, as he did after the *Fifth* and *Seventh* symphonies.

The introductory *Adagio*, with its shifts to remote keys and the mysterious, disembodied beauty of its orchestral colour, is one of the finest symphonic prefaces ever penned. Out of it grows the main theme of the *Allegro*, a movement remarkable for its ebullience and rhythmic vigour. The following *Adagio* is serenity itself and provides an exquisite instance of the composer's lyrical vein. The third movement is called *Minuet* though in reality it is a full-grown scherzo, teasing our rhythmic sense by the playful alternation of two-beat and three-beat phrases. The *Finale* is a *moto perpetuo* whose main propelling force resides in the nimble opening theme. There are several humorous touches, such as the sudden changes between extreme dynamics and the swirling figures on bassoon and clarinet before the recapitulation and in the coda. Beethoven reserves his best joke for the end where he introduces the ubiquitous main theme in augmentation (quavers instead of the previous semi-quavers), thus achieving a natural slowing-down of the tempo. The music seems to come to a complete halt on a pause when the composer abruptly resumes its initial impetus and in a few bars brings the movement to an exhilarating close.

Mosco CARNER

SYMPHONY No. 5 IN C MINOR, Op. 67

I. Allegro con brio II. Andante con moto III. Allegro IV. Allegro

The Südwestfunk Symphony Orchestra, Baden-Baden

Paul KLETZKI, conductor

SMS 2313

The concert given by Beethoven at the Theater an der Wein on 22nd December, 1808, is unique in musical history. "All the works are of his own composition" announced the *Wiener Zeitung*, "and absolutely none has yet been heard in public". Not only were the *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies* given their public premieres, but Beethoven, who also conducted, was the soloist in his G major Piano Concerto and

Choral Fantasia, while the concert included as well the *Gloria* and *Sanctus* of the C major Mass, the aria *Ah, perfido* and the Piano Fantasia, Op. 80.

Possibly much of the performance was chaotic. Beethoven had quarrelled with the orchestra at rehearsal, and he also forgot that he had arranged to omit the repeats in the Choral Fantasia. So when he

repeated the first part of a variation, the orchestra played the second part. The ensuing breakdown and second start is the only incident that Beethoven's contemporaries thought worth recording. We do, however, know the disturbing effect this C minor Symphony had on Goethe when Beethoven played it to him. Not until many hours later did the music impress the poet with its full force. The elemental and shattering impact of this Symphony has lost none of its strength today. The opening four-note 'motto' phrase dominates the whole of the first movement, growing into a musical paragraph from which the *fortissimo* horn call (beginning in the same rhythm) forms a prelude to the gentler melody on violins, accompanied in the basses by the 'motto' rhythm. The exposition ends in a triumphant major, immediately shattered by the fateful horn-call. Strings and wind now engage in a conflict of ever-increasing intensity until the motto phrase is again thundered out. Only for a brief moment is there respite, in the oboe's poignant cadenza, but in effect this increases the music's urgency and leads to the inevitable conclusion.

The slow movement is based on variations on two themes, the first being announced by violas and cellos in serene dialogue with the

woodwind, while the second is begun by clarinets and bassoons. The coda, introduced by solo bassoon at slightly quicker speed, is based on the opening theme. The scherzo is hushed and mysterious until suddenly the horns give out a new version of the motto rhythm. The Trio, a *fugato* begun with grotesque agility by cellos and double basses, momentarily relieves the tension, but the scherzo theme returns even more mysteriously on softly plucked strings with the high notes of a bassoon increasing the eerie atmosphere. Over a softly-held string chord the timpani taps out a persistent rhythm and the violins gradually grope their way towards the triumphant outburst of the finale, where, for the first time in symphonic music, trombones add their powerful tones. The music is suddenly hushed, and a memory of the macabre scherzo is heard. Then the triumphant themes burst forth once more, until finally the chord of C major, hammered out again and again, decisively clinches the victory.

"I will take Fate by the throat", Beethoven once wrote, "it shall not entirely overcome me".

Julian HERBAGE

SYMPHONY No. 6 IN F MAJOR, Op. 68 ("PASTORAL")

I. Allegro ma non troppo II. Andante molto mosso III. Allegro IV. Allegro V. Allegretto
The Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra
Charles MUNCH, conductor

SMS 2527

Beethoven did not write "programme music" when in the summer of 1807 he started his 6th the *Pastoral Symphony*. Though he himself gave the Op. 68 its title, he issued the famous and valuable warning: "More expression of feeling than tone-painting". We may think now that this was unnecessary, but Beethoven knew his age and his audience, and he was well aware of the need for a cautionary injunction. His warning has come to be regarded as a kind of *locus classicus* for a proper approach to the work. Even so, it can still be argued that only half the meaning has been taken to heart. We are warned against a naively naturalistic and a disingenuously "programmatic" interpretation of the music. On the other hand, there is the plain admission that this symphony is an "expression of feeling". And that is the point. Before Beethoven, composers certainly expressed feelings and emotion in their symphonies; but the unifying poetic idea, the overt expression of subjective experience—that was Beethoven's particular contribution. Beethoven loved Nature deeply and profoundly. He always felt himself most at ease in natural surroundings. During his long walks in the woods and fields around Vienna, which were infinitely precious to him, many of his most fruitful musical ideas came to him. This love of Nature was essentially the townsman's delight in its solitude and in the release it gives from urban pressures and congestions, rather than the peasant's rugged realism and economic assessment. His attitude was not really pantheistic (or theo-pantheistic), though he drew constant inspiration from natural sights and sounds, and even more from his sense of intimate identity with the underlying creative impulses of the universe. He did not strike a romantic attitude, yet there was a strong vein of Romanticism woven into the texture of his personality.

Beethoven's personal feelings in the presence of Nature are most purposefully expressed in the *Pastoral Symphony*. It is his most direct and permanent authoritative statement on the subject. The Seventh of his symphonies also has certain pastoral or "natural" elements, so that there is a sort of subject-object relationship between the *Pastoral* and the *Seventh Symphonies*.

It is clear from the *Pastoral* that Beethoven's attitude to Nature was conditioned both from within and from without. He possessed many of the natural responses of his age. His feelings were intense and

personal; but they stemmed more from the generalised aspects of nature-feeling of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than from the full flood of the later Romanticism. The progression of the *Pastoral*, as a record of intimate and immediate nature reactions, tells us plainly where Beethoven stood. On the surface, it is almost as though he could surrender himself to the Romantic idea of the "consolations of Nature". But there is a significant difference. Nowhere does Beethoven invest Nature with human emotion or superimpose upon it his own subjective personality. One could speak here of the "purity" of Beethoven's innermost experience, and his projection of it through music. But perhaps the real import of this Symphony is to be found in Kant's dictum that "perceptions without conceptions are blind". That is the secret of it; and that is why the *Pastoral*, as a work of art, is almost entirely free from naive representationalism. The naturalistic elements are, as it were, stuck on from the outside—they are not integral to the symphonic argument.

The *Pastoral Symphony* was written 1807/8, and followed immediately on the completion of the C minor, the Fifth. It was mostly composed in Beethoven's favourite Heiligenstadt district, where he often liked to spend his summers and where a few years earlier he had known the deepest despair and been driven to write the bitter and tragic document known as the Heiligenstadt Testament. But now there was no bitterness and tragedy immediately confronting him; now he could give himself over to the musical expression of his profound delight in and feeling for Nature.

Formally, the *Pastoral* is not among the most adventurous or original of his symphonies. The content more or less precluded the kind of formal concentration and dramatic striving that made the Fifth such a remarkable and imperative composition. But, even though the structure of the *Pastoral* is for, Beethoven, fairly conventional, his inventive powers function freely and potently throughout, and his creative impulse keeps a firm hold on his musical material.

There are five movements, the third, fourth and fifth growing out of and following each other without a break.

1. *Awakening of happy feelings on arriving in the countryside.* Allegro ma non troppo—Like many of Beethoven's symphonic first move-

ments, the material is almost entirely evolved out of the opening bars. The music flows on serenely with an infectious spring in the rhythm. All is light and cheerfulness; yet the structure of sonata form is firmly controlled. Even when indulging his feelings at their happiest, Beethoven's intellectual grasp of form never weakened or became diffuse.

2. *Scene by the Brook*. Andante molto mosso—The slow movement is also in sonata form. A constant motion of gently motion lapping 12/8 emphasises, indeed, establishes from the outset, the mood. The scoring is delicate and imaginative, the whole wonderfully suggestive of the murmurs of multitudinous Nature. At the very end come the famous bird-calls, as a tiny coda. The nightingale, the quail and the cuckoo call in the woodwind. This is the one obvious touch of onomatopoeia in the work, apart from the Storm, which is a little different.

3. *Peasants Merrymaking*. Allegro—This is in effect a Scherzo and Trio, of much humour and ebullience. Beethoven enjoys himself at the expense of a rather sleepy and slow-witted local country band. The bassoon has difficulty in finding more than a few notes on his instrument; and the oboe insists upon coming in a beat late. The Trio section is

more boisterous and perhaps suggests a disturbance in the midst of the merrymaking, a possible momentary flaring of tempers.

4. *Thunderstorm*. Allegro—At the end of the Merrymaking, there is a sudden ominous rumbling in the violoncellos and basses. A storm is approaching. Heavy drops of rain patter downwards in the violins. For a moment, the air is still and sultry. Then the tempest breaks out in full fury. Strings and woodwinds rush hectically about; a piccolo squeals, and the brass interject. This is a brilliant musical impression of a storm; but it remains first and foremost musically conceived and executed.

5. *Shepherds' Hymn of Thanksgiving after the Storm*. Allegretto—The storm dies away, with a magical three bars from the woodwind, as the sky clears and the sun returns. First the clarinet then the horn play a *Ranz des vaches* before the violins sing a long and sinuous theme of gratitude. The form of the movement is a Rondo. Several finely worked out episodes contrast with the main sections before the movement and the Symphony come to a conclusion with a muted horn reiterating the *Ranz* with which the Hymn of Thanksgiving began.

Burnett JAMES

SYMPHONY No. 7 IN A MAJOR, Op. 92

I. Poco sostenuto – Vivace II. Allegretto III. Presto – Assai meno presto IV. Allegro con brio
The Vienna Festival Orchestra
Willem VAN OTTERLOO, conductor

SMS 2283

Although the Fifth Symphony has come to symbolise Beethoven's universal popularity, it is probably the Seventh which is even more frequently performed today. Both share one fundamental feature: a dependence on rhythm as the motivating element in the work as a whole. Think of the familiar motto theme of the Fifth Symphony, or of almost any passage in the Seventh, and it is at once apparent that the music's character is shaped by its rhythm. In No. 5 this is used to build up the customary conflict of moods and musical ideas, but in No. 7 rhythm is exposed for its own sake, not only dominating the work but unifying it through each of the four movements as they find their expression through the rhythms that pervade them.

Not for nothing did Wagner once describe this Symphony as the "apotheosis of the dance", and back up the idea on a famous occasion by dancing to it himself, during a visit to Venice, while Liszt played the Symphony on the piano! More recently, in 1938, Massine created a full-scale ballet to it, but it must be admitted that *Seventh Symphony*, as it was called, was not a successful effort, being overloaded with pretentious choreographic themes. However, as is well known, all music has its ultimate roots in either song or dance, with rhythm a co-product to melody and harmony in the former, and a prime element in the latter to which melody and harmony accommodate themselves. In this respect, Beethoven's A major Symphony is decidedly dance-inspired.

He began sketches for it probably late in 1811, when he was aged 41 and already much troubled by the deafness which had begun to afflict him some ten years earlier. It had taken a turn for the worse in the previous year, and the composer started to pay summer visits to Teplitz in northern Bohemia, in the hope that the medicinal waters might help to improve his hearing. An agreeable circle of friends no doubt contributed to a state of well-being conducive to the birth of musical ideas, and perhaps to the mood of exhilaration the *Seventh Symphony* reflects. It was completed in May 1812 and, as with the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies four years earlier, it was joined by No. 8 before the year was out.

It was more than another 18 months before the *Seventh Symphony* was heard in public, however, and then it was not the chief highlight of the

programme. The concert at Vienna on December 8, 1813, was given for the benefit of Austrian and Bavarian soldiers wounded in the war against Napoleon, and the big success of the evening was a different new symphony by Beethoven, the so-called "Battle Symphony". It was also known as "Wellington's Victory", and was a frank potboiler of a work written at the suggestion of Maelzel (the inventor of the metronome) to celebrate Wellington's triumph against the French at the Battle of Vittoria. Maelzel organised the concert, and Beethoven recognised that this was as good a means as any of getting an audience for the *Seventh Symphony*.

The composer conducted from the keyboard, as was then still the custom. Louis Spohr was one of the first violins in an orchestra that contained many well-known names. It was led by Schuppanzigh, leader of the quartet that played many of Beethoven's Quartets for the first time, with the virtuoso Dragonetti as principal double-bass, and Hummel, Salieri, Meyerbeer and Moscheles among the percussion section. Spohr later recalled that Beethoven was wont "to show expression to the orchestra by all sorts of curious body movements. At a *sforzando* he would throw out both arms violently; at a *piano* he crouched down lower and lower, and when a *crescendo* followed he gradually rose until at the *forte* he jumped high in the air. Sometimes he shouted out, unwittingly, in order to strengthen it".

Spohr also described the Seventh Symphony's performance as "quite masterly". Even though it was overshadowed by the Battle Symphony, it scored a considerable success. The second movement was encored, and Beethoven was later moved to write a personal letter of thanks to the orchestra. He rated the Symphony as one of his best works, and firmly rejected various attempts by commentators to deduce a "programme" or a descriptive meaning from it. There were adverse critics, of course. Weber was so taken aback by the passage in the first movement where the orchestra builds up a massive chord of A on a pedal held by the basses for 22 bars, that he declared Beethoven was "ripe for the madhouse", and somebody else thought the composer must have been drunk when he wrote the finale. The Symphony as a whole certainly evokes a feeling of intoxication, chiefly through the

intensity and vitality of its rhythmic foundation. Although the rhythmic element is not apparent until after the slow, extended introduction, which keeps the listener wondering what might happen next, once the *Vivace* begins it never relaxes its grip throughout the rest of the work. The impact of this music needs no technical analysis to enhance it, but it might be pointed out that the Symphony is another example of the simplest of raw material being made to serve the greatest ends. Most of the melodies are themselves rhythmic tags and repeated phrases, governed by the underlying (or even over-riding) rhythm of each

movement. Contrast and variety is achieved in a novel way—by the use of harmony to change the musical perspective from time to time. Basically the Symphony is a A major, with the haunting *Allegretto* in A minor, but Beethoven makes systematic use all through the work of the keys of C major and F major as well, remote as they are from the main key. It gives the course of the music a resplendently three-dimensional effect to expand and reinforce the rhythmic impetus, exultantly propelled to a finale of the utmost exuberance.

Noel GOODWIN

SYMPHONY No. 8 IN F MAJOR, Op. 93

I. Allegro vivace e con brio II. Allegretto scherzando III. Tempo di Menuetto IV. Allegro vivace

The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra
Willem VAN OTTERLOO, conductor

SMS 2400

The history of the eighth Symphony is intimately tied up with that of No. 7, and indeed there is a close spiritual bond between the two works, which are in many respects complementary: No. 7 expansive in design and by turns ecstatic and pensive in mood; No. 8 (one of the shortest of all Beethoven's symphonies) concise and instinct with Olympian good-humour. It is hard (if not pointless) to attempt to say which is the 'greater' of the two, and even Beethoven himself seems to have thought equally highly of his 'big A major' and his 'little Symphony in F'. Both were sketched during the course of 1811, and serious work seems to have been begun on No. 8 during the summer of 1812, immediately after the completion of No. 7 in May, while Beethoven was taking the waters at Teplitz and Karlsbad in Bohemia. The full score was begun in October that year at Linz. The first performance was given at an 'academy' concert in the Great Redoutensaal in Vienna on 27th February 1814, on which occasion the programmatic 'Battle Symphony', *Wellington's Victory* was also heard and the seventh Symphony received its fourth performance. The new work's indifferent reception elicited a characteristic remark from Beethoven: "That's because it's so much better than the other" (i.e. No. 7)—which shows just how much he respected his public's judgment. No. 8 was published in the early months of 1817 by Steiner in Vienna; it is the only one of Beethoven's nine symphonies to bear no dedication.

The essence of the eighth Symphony's first movement is contained in the tune with which it opens—without preliminaries of any sort—in a friendly exchange between the full orchestra and the woodwinds. There is no shortage of subsidiary themes (a particularly endearing second subject climbs haltingly upwards in its first phrase, only to slip gently backwards again in its second), but it is the very first bar of the opening theme that provides the material for the development section, whose surprisingly vigorous, even angry, second half leaves its mark on the

recapitulation. It is easy enough to see why the second movement is said to be a take-off of the 'Chronometer' invented shortly before this by Johann Nepomuk Malzel (and the precursor of the Metronome). Moreover, the first theme is foreshadowed in a four-part canon on the words 'ta ta ta ta lieber Malzel' which Beethoven is said to have extemporised at a supper party early in 1812. This *Allegretto* is the shortest of all Beethoven's symphonic movements, but its few pages are filled with amusing quips and the most felicitous instrumentation. It is followed, not by a scherzo but, for the first time since the fourth Symphony, by a true Minuet with a melodious Trio in which horns and clarinet sing in dialogue above the mutterings of the cellos.

In the finale we return to the scale and the high spirits of the first movement. Again, it is the first theme, with its mercurial triplets, that carries the weight of the argument, though the second subject, which is reached by way of a characteristic semitonal upward step into A flat, is of singular beauty. A feature that refuses to be ignored is the trenchant C sharp which interrupts the finale statement of the opening theme, only to be forgotten completely the next moment. In the enormous coda, where it makes its third and last appearance, it has the effect of disturbing the orchestra's tonality, sending strings and woodwinds into a remote F sharp minor from which they are only rescued by brass and drums insisting on the tonic key. The other surprises in this splendid movement are legion: there is space only to mention the comic and novel effect obtained in the bridge between the end of the development and the recapitulation, where bassoon and timpani skip up and down in unison (the latter tuned in octaves for the first time ever), and the impressive building up of the coda by the gradual intrusion of scale-passages in contrary motion.

Mosco CARNER

SYMPHONY No. 9 IN D MINOR, Op. 125 ("CHORAL")

I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso II. Scherzo; Molto vivace III. Adagio molto e cantabile IV. Presto - Allegro assai

Maria STADER, soprano – Sophia VAN SANTE, contralto – Eric TAPPY, tenor – Franz CRASS, baritone
Toonkunskoor, Amsterdam
The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra
Willem VAN OTTERLOO, conductor

SMS 2400

Virgil Thomson, the distinguished American critic, recently described Beethoven as the inventor of the 'editorial' symphony. An absurd proposition, might be one's first reaction. But is it so absurd on further reflection? Not if we take Thomson's term to mean the declaration of a 'moral policy', the pronouncement of fundamental ethical principles governing a great artist's attitude to life and expressed through the medium of his particular art. In that sense Beethoven was indeed the first musician to compose 'editorial' symphonies, symphonies that propounded to the world his life's philosophy, the essence of which centred on two related themes. One was his abhorrence of political tyranny and his unshakable belief in human freedom, in the liberty of the individual and the brotherhood of men, a belief inspired by the humanitarian ideas of the French Revolution. Beethoven's second theme might be summed up in the motto *per ardua ad astra*. It was his profound conviction that the spirit of man was capable of triumphing over life's adversities and vicissitudes if supported and fortified by an inner, moral strength. The major catastrophe in Beethoven's life was his deafness. It afflicted him early in his career and was the most cruel stroke of fate that could befall a musician. Yet Beethoven's moral character proved stronger and in this struggle against fearful odds he emerged victor. These, then, were the two ideas to which he gave artistic expression in a number of great creations, works proclaiming a universal human message in the most eloquent and passionate language—the opera *Fidelio*, the *Egmont* overture, the *Eroica*, the Fifth and the Ninth Symphonies.

The Ninth Symphony occupied Beethoven for at least seven years. The first idea for it is to be found in a sketchbook of 1815 where he noted down the theme of what was later to become the *Scherzo*. Serious work on the symphony appears to have begun in 1817 and from then until 1823, the year of its completion, it was hardly absent from the composer's mind. During this same period he was also engaged on several other compositions such as the late piano sonatas (Op. 106, 109, 110, and 111) and the *Missa Solemnis*. Never before (nor since) in the history of music has a composer devoted himself with such intensive concentration to the simultaneous creation of works of such monumental proportions. The emotional and spiritual range compassed and the mental labour and effort involved remain indeed a perennial source of wonder.

A year before the completion of the Ninth Symphony, the London Philharmonic Society (later the Royal Philharmonic Society) commissioned from Beethoven a symphony and duly sent him the fee of £50, stipulating, however, that it was to have the right of its exclusive possession for eighteen months. Beethoven accepted, but subsequently broke the agreement when the first performance was given in Vienna on May 7th 1824 (Beethoven may well have thought that the stipulation applied to England only). The symphony was lamentably under-rehearsed (it had only two rehearsals), yet the reception by the Viennese public was overwhelming. The story is told how the deaf Beethoven, who stood

during the performance behind the conductor Umlauf beating time, was at the end turned round by one of the soloists in order that he might see the tremendous applause which he was unable to hear.

The issues with which Beethoven deals in the Ninth are incomparably vaster than those of all his previous symphonies, and each of the four movements stands unique in constructive power and in the span and magnitude of the musical ideas. The first movement, which opens with bare fifths in a mood of mysterious suspense, unfolds its gigantic structure unhurriedly. Beethoven needs the utmost breadth of ground to say what he has to say, but he still remains within the confines of regular, though vastly expanded, sonata form. The enormous *coda* represents a second development and ends on a terrifyingly dramatic note. The *Scherzo*, though actually not so labelled by Beethoven, goes in scope and power beyond anything that would have been thought possible in those days or has proved possible since. In the following *Adagio* Beethoven reaches out into a sphere of most sublime thought. There are two themes—one in B flat, the other in D—which alternate with each other and are subject to variation treatment.

The *finale* is a setting for chorus and soloists of Schiller's *Ode to Joy* (1785), which Beethoven had intended setting as early as 1793, at the age of twenty-three. The *Ode* is an apostrophe to joy as the reconciling and binding force between man and man and it summed up for Beethoven his passionate sense of universal brotherhood. The decision to attach it to the symphony as a choral *finale* seems to have come late in the genesis of the work; there are sketches suggesting that the composer contemplated an instrumental *finale* as late as summer, 1823, and even after the first performance he is recorded as doubting the wisdom of a choral ending. This ending was certainly a very bold stroke of the imagination. But its justification lies in the fact that after three orchestral movements of such intensity of feeling only a movement with human voices could bring the symphony to its proper culmination. The choral *finale* is the logical and inevitable outcome of the preceding music. Beethoven had to resort to words in order to proclaim his great human theme of the all-embracing power of joy. In the famous transition he solves the problem of introducing the choral voices in a startlingly dramatic manner. He reviews the main themes of the three previous movements but rejects them in instrumental recitatives, until at last the baritone enters with the words *O Freude, nicht diese Töne*. The *finale* is a set of variations on the 'Joy' theme, a simple strain in folk-song style, but no less magical for that. Chorus and soloists now alternate, now sing together. One of the variations is an heroic march, to the accompaniment of 'Turkish music' (bass drum, cymbals and triangle), and another takes the form of a double fugue, based on the 'Joy' theme and a second idea in long notes which had been introduced previously.

Mosco CARNER

Freude, schöner Götterfunken
Tochter aus Elysium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken,
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.
Deine Zauber binden wieder,
Was die Mode streng geteilt,
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen,
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein,
Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,
Mische seinen Jubel ein!
Ja—wer auch nur eine Seele
Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle
Weinend sich aus diesem Bund.

Joy, Elysian daughter of the starry
heavens, we approach, drunk with
fire, thy sacred shrine. Your magic
joins together what custom
separates; all men become brothers
where thy soft wing hovers.

Whoever has had the good
fortune to know true friendship, or
who has won himself a gentle wife,
add his jubilation! Yes, even he
who can call one soul on the earth
his own. But he who has never
achieved this must slink tearfully
away from our band.

Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?
Such ihn überm Sternenzelt!
Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

Freude trinken alle Wesen
An den Brüsten der Natur,
Alle Guten, alle Bösen
Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,
Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod,
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,
Und der Cherub steht vor Gott.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen
Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan,
Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,
Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Brüder—überm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.

Do you fall prostrate, millions? Do
you sense the presence of the
creator, world? Seek him above the
starry vault, for he must dwell
above the stars.

All creatures draw joy from
Nature's breast; good and bad
follow her rosy path. She gave us
kisses and wine, a friend tried even
in death. Blessing was granted even
to the worm, and the cherub
stands in the presence of God.

Gladly, as his suns fly through the
splendour of the heavens, run your
race, brothers, as joyfully as a
hero goes to victory!

I embrace ye, o ye millions; with
this kiss I greet the whole world.
Brothers—above the starry vault
a loving father surely dwells.



Friedrich Schiller

OVERTURE "KING STEPHEN", Op. 117

The Vienna Festival Orchestra
Willem VAN OTTERLOO, conductor

In the same year as Beethoven probably began to sketch the Seventh Symphony (1811), he was asked to write incidental music for two plays by Kotzebue which were to inaugurate a new theatre at Pesth (now part of Budapest). The first play in the double-bill was *King Stephen*, or *Hungary's First Benefactor*, a patriotic *piece d'occasion*, and the second was *The Ruins of Athens*. Beethoven was given only a month to compose the music for both but, as is the way with such things, the opening was eventually postponed until February of the following year, and Beethoven had time to revise what he had written. He came to have a particular affection for the suites of incidental music, referring to them as "my little operas". Many years later, when he was in

financial difficulties, he sold the Overtures to both plays to the Philharmonic Society in London, describing them as new works. A slow introduction opens the *King Stephen* Overture with powerful descending fourths, an elemental feature in native Hungarian music. Decidedly Hungarian in flavour is the first melody proper, with a slow pulse like the *lassu* of Hungarian rhapsodies. The quick section, or *friss*, follows, at one point foretelling the theme of the Ode to Joy in the Ninth Symphony. The fourths return, climbing upwards this time, and the two main sections are repeated before the coda.

Noel GOODWIN



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