
Beethoven Music History

Ludwig Van Beethoven or better known as Beethoven by his famous pieces of symphonies, concertos, and also sonatas. He was a German composer and the predominant musical figure in the traditional period between the Classical and Romantic eras. Beethoven was born to musical family in Bonn, Germany on December 16th, 1770. At the age of 7, he gave his first public recital on March 26th, 1778. He played impressively but his recital received no press. He had 2 younger brother briefly named Caspar, born in 1774, and Johann, born in 1776. Beethoven's mother, Maria Magdalena Van Beethoven, was a slender, gentle and deeply, moralistic woman. Whilst his father, Johann Van Beethoven, was a mediocre court singer better known for his alcoholism than any music ability. In Vienna, 1792, he studied piano with Hadyn, vocal composition with Antonio Salieri and counterpoint with Johann Albrechtsberger. Although he wanted to learn with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but did not get to because Mozart passed away. But he did in fact met with Mozart before having the opportunity to learn from him directly. All together, Beethoven has composed 9 symphonies, 32 piano sonatas, one opera, 5 piano concertos and many chamber works including some ground-breaking string quartets. And one of it was the infamous Symphony No. 5.

The Fifth Symphony is considered as one of Beethoven's greatest musical works among modern audiences, known for its ominous first four notes. Beethoven composed this work when he was aged in his thirties and his deafness was starting to become a problem. The first sketches for Symphony No. 5 date from the period during 1803-1804 when Beethoven was working on Symphony No. 3 "Eroica", which at the time of its premiere was considered as one of the famous piece among the ninth symphonies. Though several other projects forced him to postpone his writing on this symphony, because of his preliminary work on Symphony No. 4, Symphony No. 6, Piano Concerto No. 4, and Fidelio. Beethoven's first biographer, Anton Schidler, claims that Beethoven made this statement about the opening: "Thus Fate knocks at the door". Symphony No. 5 was to be his first symphony in a minor key. It is likely that he was inspired by minor-key symphonies of Hadyn and, even more directly, by Mozart's great Piano Concerto in C minor. The influence of Hadyn can be heard in the symphony's movement from C minor to C Major. Mozart's influence is exhibited in the tragic mood expressed by the first three movements. The premiere of Symphony No. 5 took place on December 22nd, 1808, at a famous concert which also featured the premieres of Symphony No. 6 and Piano Concerto No. 4, dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz and Count Andreas Rasumovsky. Over the course of the 19th century, the Fifth gradually came to epitomize Beethoven's life and musical style.

The hallmark motif of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has had tremendous appeal well beyond the realm of classical music. During World War II, for instance, Allied forces used it to signal a

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victorious moment, as its rhythm—short, short, short, long—matched that of the letter V in Morse Code. In the mid-1970s, American musician Walter Murphy released "A Fifth of Beethoven," a popular disco recording based on the signature motif and other elements of the symphony's first movement. The "fate" figure has also been featured in many films and has been used in television commercials to promote a range of products and services to an Internet browser.

More than two centuries after its premiere, Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, especially its foundational four-note theme has remained remarkably durable. The symphony has four movements. The first is 'Allegro con Brio' meaning lively and fast with spirit, the second is 'Andante con Moto' meaning at a walking pace but with movement, followed by the third which is called 'Scherzo: Allegro' meaning a light, playful movement in triple time, performed lively and fast and lastly ended with 'Allegro' meaning lively and fast. Throughout the symphony's sonata-form first movement, 'Allegro con Brio' the core motif takes on various characters, sometimes foreboding and sometimes triumphant, as it migrates from one section of the orchestra to another, shifts to different pitch centres, and sounds at different dynamic levels. Late in that movement, a brief oboe solo offers a poignant contrast to the musical storm that surrounds it. The more lyrical second movement, 'Andante con Moto' consists of two alternating themes in variation form. The general rhythm of the "fate" motif is salient in the movement's second theme. The third movement, 'Allegro' is cast as a scherzo and trio. It begins gently, with a theme that uses the "fate" rhythm. That rhythm soon explodes into prominence before shifting to a bold and busy fugal climax in the trio section. The first moods of the scherzo then return very softly before the symphony plunges without pause into the blazing fourth and final movement.

Like the third movement, the finale is labeled 'Allegro' and, like the second movement, it features the "fate" rhythm in its second theme. The finale returns to the sonata form of the first movement but concludes with a high-energy coda that increases in tempo and in volume as it races toward the symphony's closing cadence. The first movement of Symphony No. 5 includes the Exposition (there are two themes, theme 1 and theme 2, and then the exposition is repeated), Development (the themes are adjusted by changing the key from D Major through D minor and then C Major), Recapitulation (the original themes return in the original key), and lastly Coda (completes the movement). The time signature in this piece is two crotchet beats in a bar (2/4). The instrumentation consists of woodwinds (2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 1 contra bassoon), brass (2 french horns, 2 trumpets), percussion (timpani), and lastly the strings section (violins, violas, cellos, and double basses). This form is in Sonata form. The Exposition first theme are played from bar 1-58, second theme from bar 59-95, cadence from bar 96-124, and then the Exposition is repeated from bar 1-124. The Development is from bar 125-373 and lastly the Coda from bar 374-502.

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