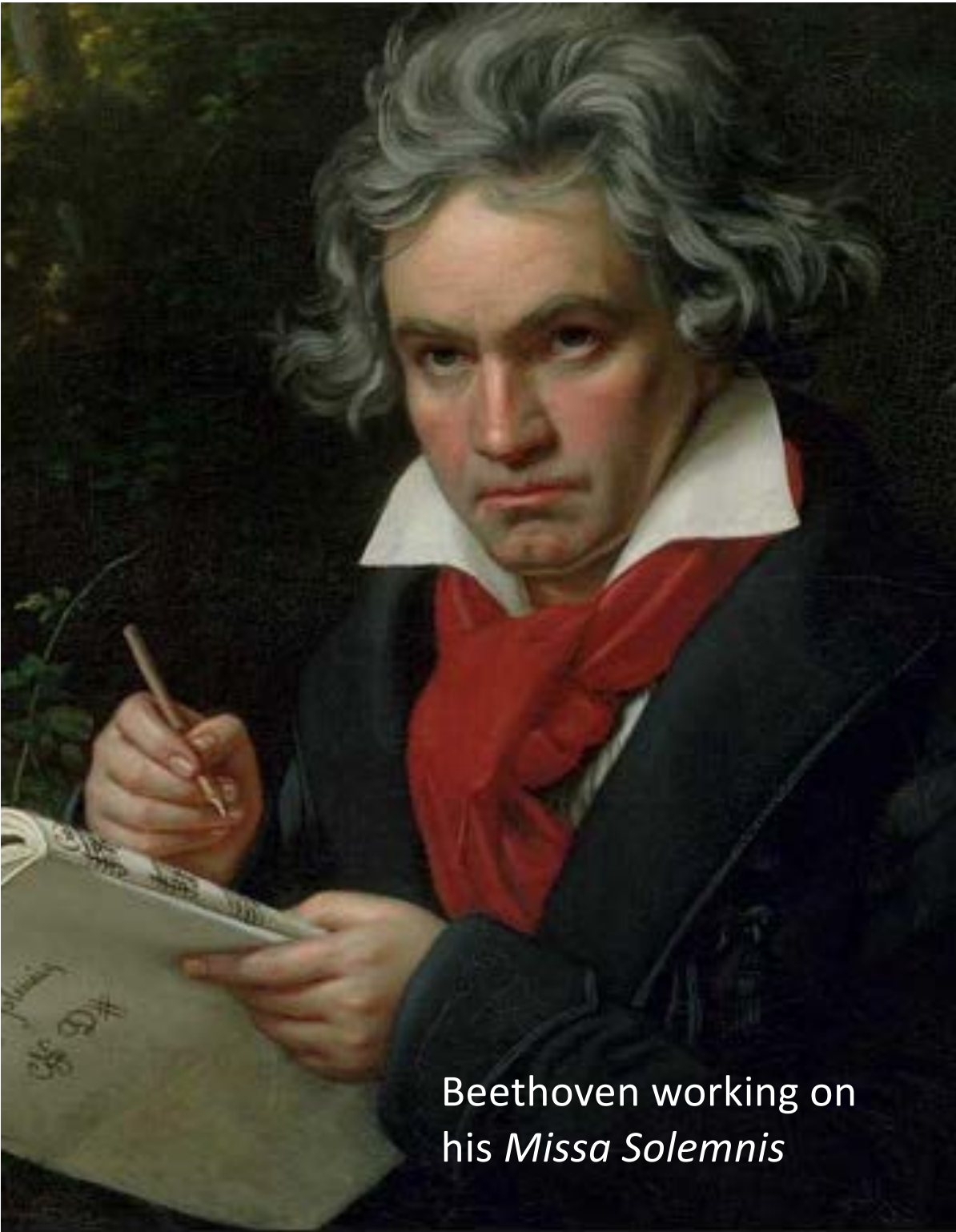


# Music and Society

## The Classical Period 4

Cathrine Blom

OLLI Spring 2021



Ludwig van Beethoven  
1770-1827

The last of the Classical  
and first of the Romantic  
composers

A fantastic pianist

The Shakespeare  
of music – wanted to  
be called a *Tone-Poet*

A master of expressing  
his own feelings in music

An innovator

Never employed by a patron  
(but many benefactors)

Beethoven working on  
his *Missa Solemnis*

**Beethoven's Early period (1790–1802):**  
he continues the Classical style of Haydn and Mozart



**The Middle period (1803–1814), *the Heroic*:**  
he becomes more extreme, moving from violent to solemn, passionate to extremely gentle. Works grow longer, more difficult to play, and his symphonies requires more instruments  
His music reflects his inner turmoil and near total deafness

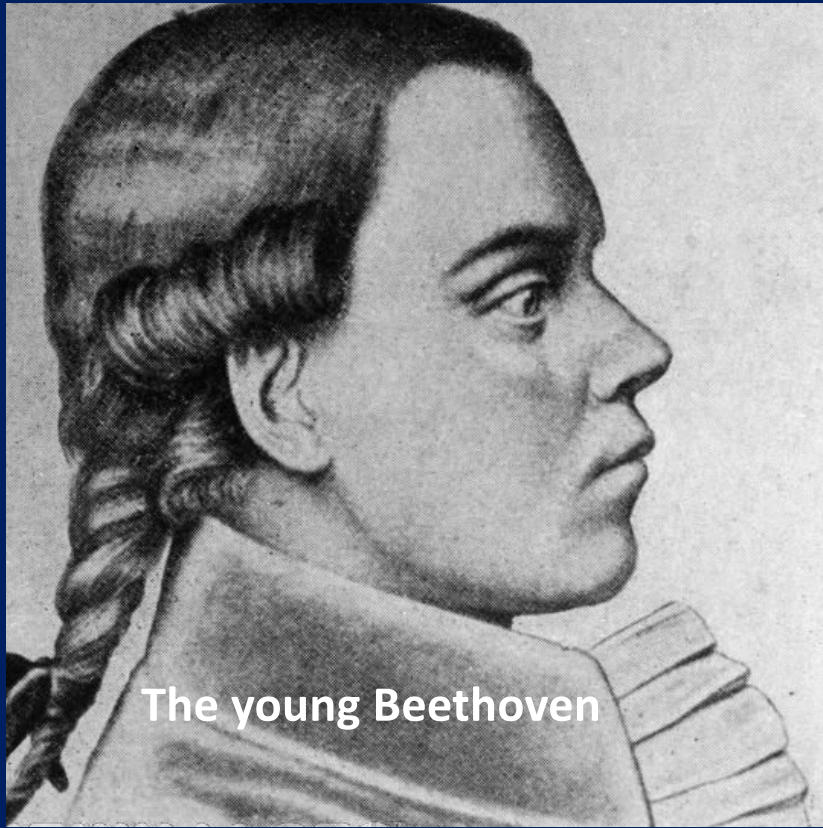
**Late period (1815–1827)**

**Emerges as the first Romantic composer**

his music becomes reflective and introspective, also grander and more difficult, blurring forms, and reaching back to Handel and Bach for inspiration.

The Ninth symphony and final string quartets are highlights of his Romantic legacy

## Upbringing 1770-1890



The young Beethoven

Born to family of court musicians at the Electorate of Cologne in Bonn

His father Johann an alcoholic  
Pretends he is an illegitimate child

His piano teacher introduces him to the Enlightenment movement with its humanistic and liberal ideals

**Age 12:** deputy organist with salary. Writes small works, mainly for piano, dedicated to nobility

**17:** To Vienna. Plays for Mozart.  
Mother dies

**15-20:** court violist, Bonn  
opera harpsichordist, music teacher, and solo performer

**At 16:** becomes head of the family. Gains support from the new elector, Maximilian Franz. Has his father's salary paid to him.



Young Beethoven (17) playing for Mozart

## Beethoven lived in a time of revolution

### French Revolution: 1789-1799

Breaks out when Beethoven is 19, coinciding with the beginning of his Early compositional period

Lives in a progressive part of Germany, not far from France, where Napoleon has many admirers, including Beethoven

A revolutionary in politics and later also in music. Loves the works of Schiller, in particular *Don Carlos*

Loves revolutionary ideals: **liberty, individual freedom, breaking down of class structure based on birth**

Loves French music and composers, in particular the Italian-born French composer Luigi Cherubini, whose use of the C-minor key Beethoven later adapts for heroic music, e.g., the Eroica Symphony

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIZAE8rzFfo>



## Early Period: 1790-1802



Beethoven in his twenties

Described as *the last and finest flower on the Mannheim tree*

**1790-92:** Continues in the footsteps of Haydn and Mozart, writing music in their style

Focuses and has great success with his piano sonatas, trios, and concertos

**1791:** Mozart dies

**1792:** Beethoven settles in Vienna  
Studies with Haydn

Continues working as a virtuosic pianist and giving private lessons

Does not have a permanent position. Instead has patrons:



Joseph Franz  
von Lobkowitz



Prince Karl Lichnowsky



Archduke Rudolph  
youngest son of Leopold II



Gottfried van Swieten



Ferdinand,  
5<sup>th</sup> Prince Kinsky



Count Ferdinand  
von Waldstein



In the period 1798 – 1802 Beethoven wanted to master the Viennese style – the style of Haydn and Mozart – in all genres, e.g., his first piano trio: op. 1 no. 1 in Eb major (1795)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7FG8HJLvng>



Piano Trio in E - flat Major, Op. 1, No. 1  
*Allegro*

Composed by Ludwig Van Beethoven  
Performed by the Gryphon Trio



TIPPETT RISE  
ART CENTER

... his Romance in G major, written 1800-1801

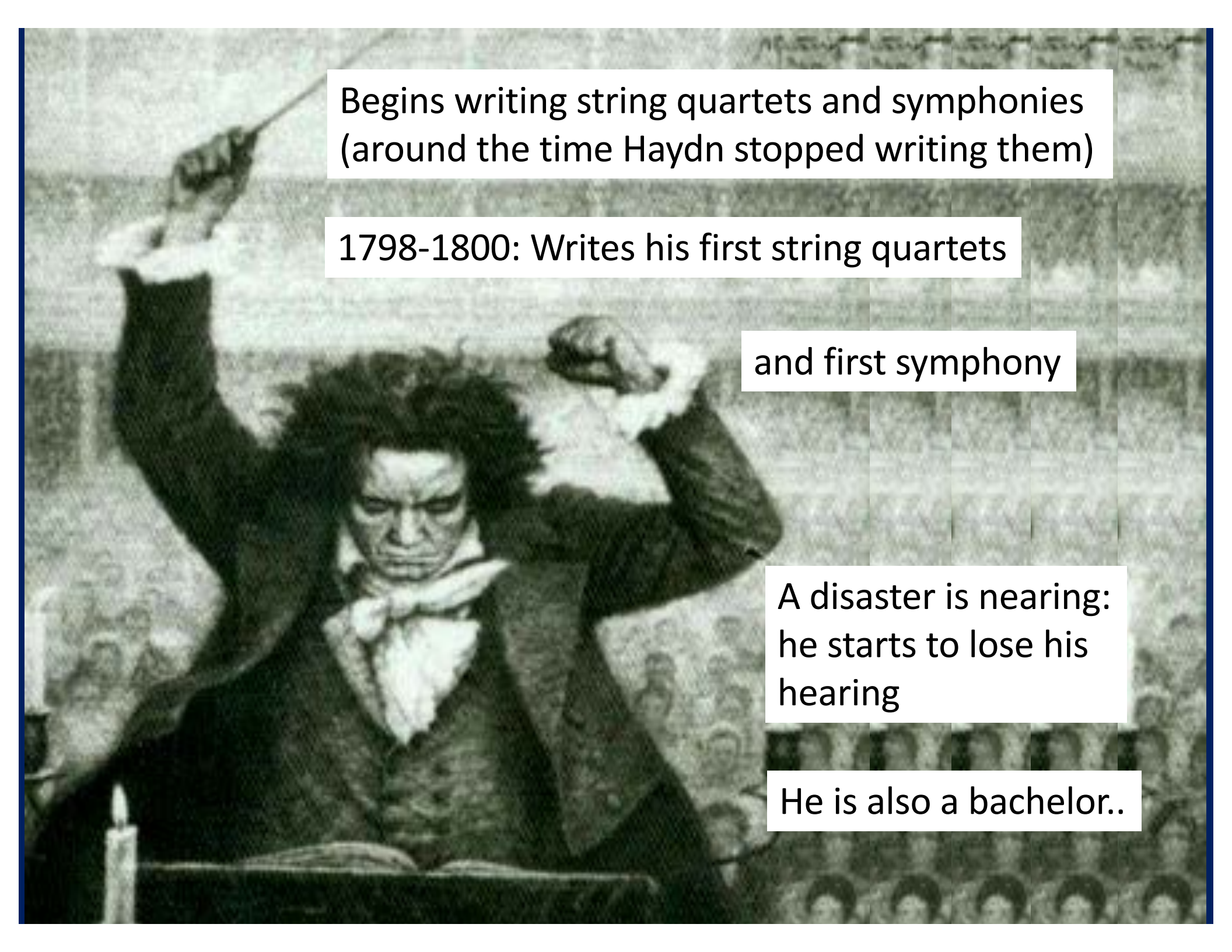


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7B97p7GDpU>

and his Sonata No. 15 in D major, Op. 28, 'Pastorale' (1801)  
(played by Richard Good)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fN-z8ZQXEQw>



Begins writing string quartets and symphonies  
(around the time Haydn stopped writing them)

1798-1800: Writes his first string quartets

and first symphony

A disaster is nearing:  
he starts to lose his  
hearing

He is also a bachelor..

# Beethoven Symphony No. 1, in C-major, premiered April, 1800



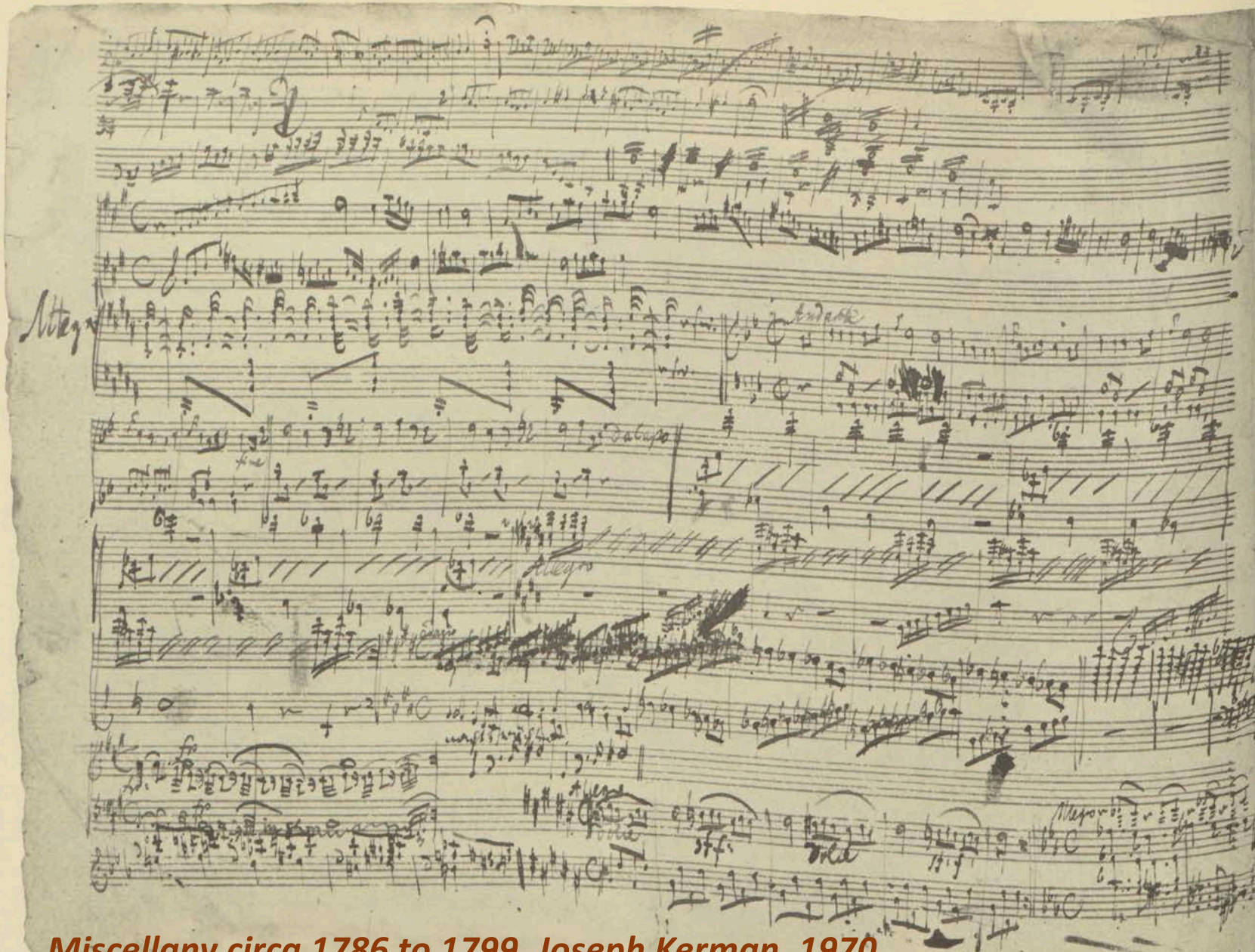
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvN1WvDhKRU>

*You will ask me whence I take my ideas? That I cannot say with any degree of certainty: they come to me uninvited, directly or indirectly. I could almost grasp them in my hands, out in Nature's open, in the woods, during my promenades, in the silence of the night, at the earliest dawn. They are roused by moods which in the poet's case are transmuted into words, and in mine into tones, that sound, roar and storm until at last they take shape for me as notes.*

*I live only in my notes, and with one work barely finished, the other is already started; the way I write now I often find myself working on three, four things at the same time.*

*(Dialogue with pianist Carl Czerny)*

# Beethoven sketches his musical ideas:



**Miscellany circa 1786 to 1799, Joseph Kerman, 1970**

## As a child, Beethoven suffered from:

- \* oppression by his father
- \* hate directed against the adult world
- \* He yearned for freedom

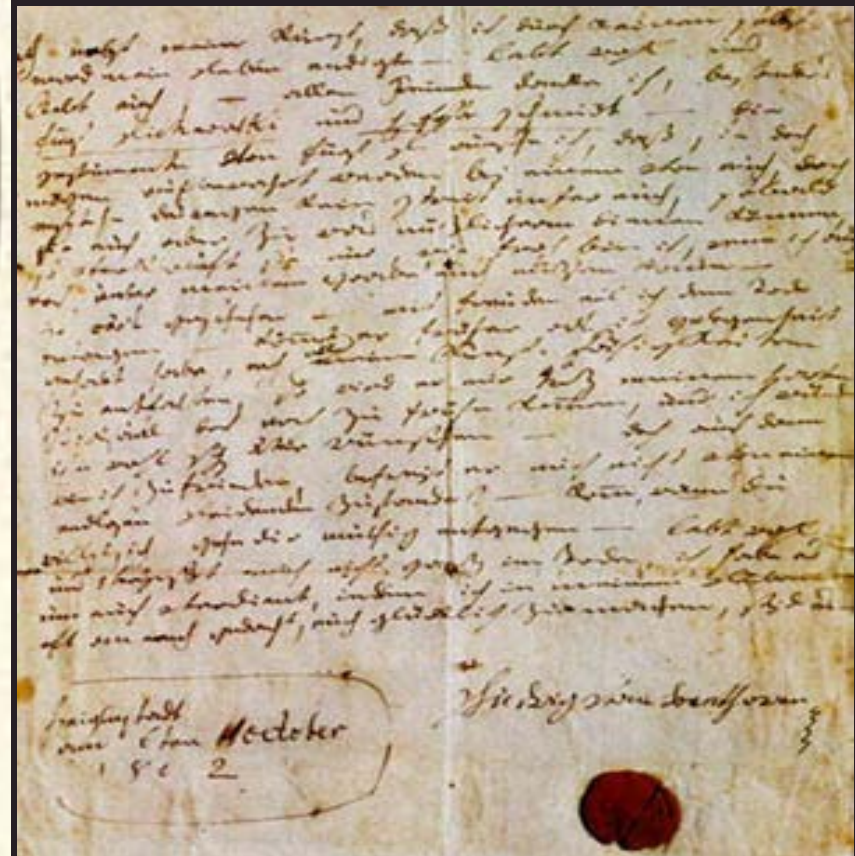
## .. and later suffered from mood swings:

- \* euphoric elation and deep despair
- \* quickly rising enthusiasm
- \* utter hopelessness
- \* sense of loneliness
- \* erotic crushes without reward
- ... and suicidal fantasies





In 1802: enters a deep depression, contemplating suicide. Writes an unsent letter to his two brothers, now called *The Heiligenstadt Testament*



*For my brothers Carl and [Johann] Beethoven*

*..... for me, relaxation in human company, refined conversation, mutual exchange of thought, cannot take place; **almost completely isolated** I may only venture into society when dire necessity requires it, I have to live like an exile; when I approach company, I am assailed by a terrible fear, for I am **afraid to run into the danger of letting my condition be noticed**--what a humiliation when someone stood next to me and heard a flute from afar and I heard nothing, or when someone heard a shepherd sing and I heard nothing, again; such events drove me to the brink of despair and **I was not far from ending my own life**--**only it, my art, kept me back. O, I felt that it was impossible to leave the world before I had brought forth all that I felt that I had to**, and thus I continued this miserable life, truly miserable, such an irritable body, that **a somewhat quick change can transport me from the best condition into the worst**— .... and do not entirely forget me after my death. I deserve this much from you, as I have often thought of you my in my life and how to make you happy. Be thus--*

*Heilgnstadt [Heiligenstadt]*

*The 6th of October  
1802*

*Ludwig van Beethoven*

-- *only it, my art, kept me back. O, I felt that it was impossible to leave the world before I had brought forth all that I felt that I had to*

He sees his talent too great to be extinguished

Emerges from his depression by writing his 3<sup>rd</sup> symphony, the *Eroica*

Says to a friend: *I am only a little satisfied with my previous work. From today on I will take a new path*



## Middle Period: 1803-1814

The Heroic period, breaking away from the Classical style

Wants to pursue a "new path"

Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*, 1803

Originally named *Bonaparte*, dedicated to Napoleon, the heroic symbol of the French Revolution (and Beethoven's hero)

*Eroica* a triumph over death and Beethoven's will to live despite his growing deafness

Beethoven 1804

# From Beethoven's "Eroica" Sketchbook



1- p. 33, et. 4, end]

35

(1)

2- p. 34, et. 10, end]

(2)

(3)

Vocelli

7

8

9

10

11

A page of a printed musical score, likely a vocal score, with ten staves. The notation is in black ink on white paper. It includes various clefs, time signatures, and musical symbols. There are some annotations in red, including a red line under a section of the second staff and some numbers in parentheses. The page is numbered "35" in the top right corner. There are also some markings like "1- p. 33, et. 4, end]", "2- p. 34, et. 10, end]", "Vocelli", and "7" on the staves.

## With this symphony, more demands on players and instruments:

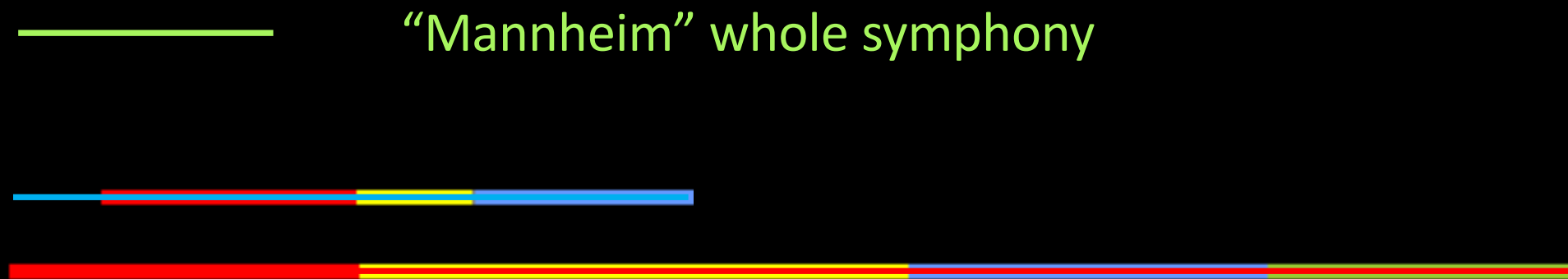
- \* higher and lower registers
- \* sharper rhythms and syncopations (stressing a beat that is usually unstressed)
- \* stronger accents (stress on certain notes)
- \* use of more keys and new resolutions

Much longer and harder to play

Comparative lengths of Mozart's vs. Beethoven's **first movements**:

Mozart's symphonies Nos. 39, 40, 41, vs.

Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony



Note: Not everything in this movie is correct, especially not Haydn referring to “his dear wife” having died. The two women arriving are Josephine, whom Beethoven proposed to, but who rejected his proposal, the other her sister Therese. Josephine was perhaps B.’s immortal beloved.



The *Eroica Symphony* premiere at the Palace of Count Lobkowitz





Napoleon crowning his wife Josephine empress after having crowned himself emperor in 1804

Beethoven, who contemplated moving to Paris, is furious and disappointed – his hero proved to be an ambitious ruler on his way to becoming a tyrant



## Autographed score of the *Eroica* Symphony



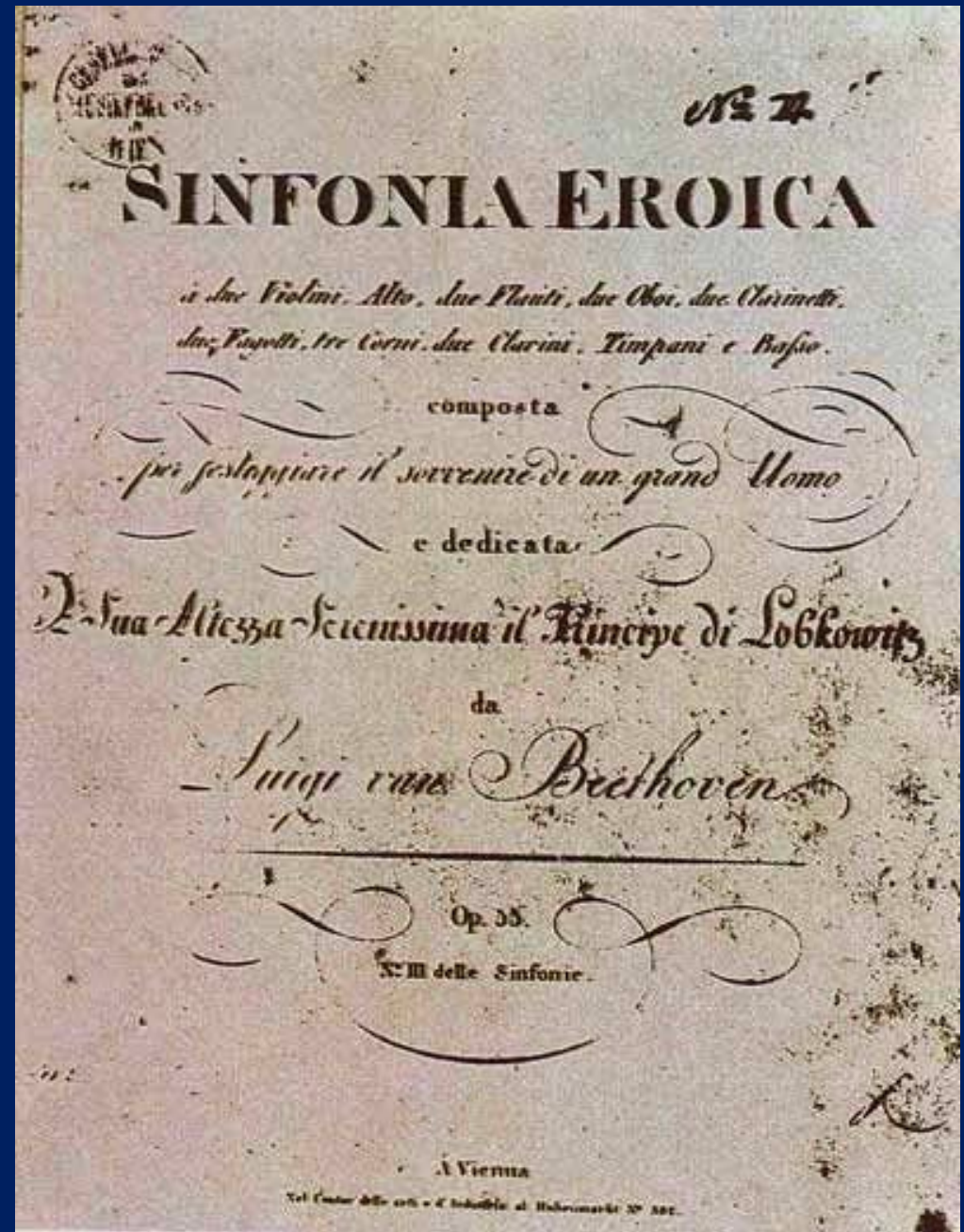
Beethoven does not tear up the title page of his symphony. He erases *Intitulata Bonaparte* (entitled Bonaparte) calling it a symphony *Geschrieben auf Bonaparte* (composed on Bonaparte.) Two years later: *Sinfonia Erotica ... composta per festeggiare il sovvenire di un grand Uomo* (... composed to celebrate the memory of a great man.)

Beethoven decides to stay  
in Vienna, not move to Paris

The first *Eroica Symphony*  
score (1804) was dedicated  
to Beethoven's patron Count  
Franz von Lobkowitz, a strong  
Austrian patriot. It premiered  
at his castle that year

In the final score (1806),  
Napoleon's name is erased

The *Eroica* is the first program  
symphony written, telling the  
story of a hero (Bonaparte ->  
Beethoven) who comes out  
triumphant in the end



"this most difficult of all symphonies"

## *Fidelio*: Beethoven's only opera

Modelled after the French post-Revolutionary rescue opera *Léonore, ou, L'amour conjugal* (Leonore, or Conjugal Love) by Pierre Gaveaux (1798), libretto by J.N. Bouilly, German libretto by Joseph Sonnleithner and Georg Treitschke

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Beethoven conducted himself from the pianoforte  
Premiered just after the French invasion of Vienna  
with French officers in the audience

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Well received by a select audience, but not  
by composers Cherubini and Salieri

Third version: *Fidelio*, two acts (1814)\*

Well received by a the public but not  
by the composer himself

Beethoven wrote *four overtures* for the opera

## The *Razumovsky* Quartets

Dedicated to **Count Razumovsky**, the Russian ambassador to Vienna, who played second violin in the finest quartet in Europe

The music was so new and weird that the musicians thought Beethoven was playing a joke on them

**The composer Clementi to Beethoven:** *Surely you do not consider these works to be music?*

**Beethoven to Clementi:** *Oh, they are not for you, but for a later age*

# String Quartet No. 7, Razumovsky No. 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7vleQm1mg4>

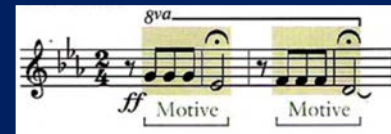


# Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, 1808

Specific **NEW** features: the **cyclic** symphony

\* The opening motive is repeated over and over in all voices in the first movement, and then repeated in the second and third : **La li-ber-TE (French Revolution)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv2WJMVPQi8>



**V = ---. in Morse code => Victory in WWII**

- \* The motive returns **rhythmically** throughout the symphony.
- \* Large parts of the scherzo (third movement) is repeated in the fourth movement
- \* No break between third and fourth movements
- \* The symphony represents a struggle between C minor (the tragic) and C major (the joyful - jubilant)

\* **NOT** music for entertainment!

The absolute end of Beethoven's fifth symphony, or  
*the tale of a composer who doesn't know how to stop*

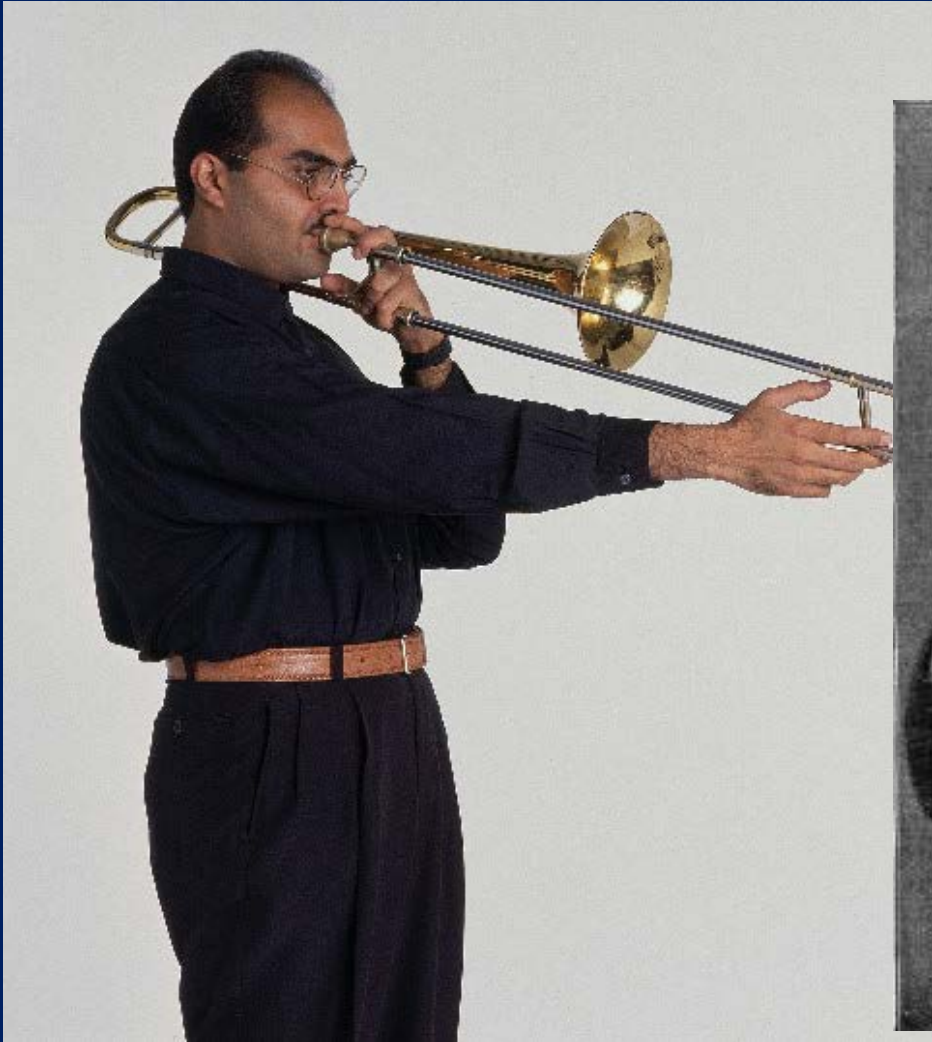


I couldn't find the very funny video I mentioned. Here is a substitute:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULppUVFtiHs>



# Important new instruments in Beethoven's symphonies:

trombone



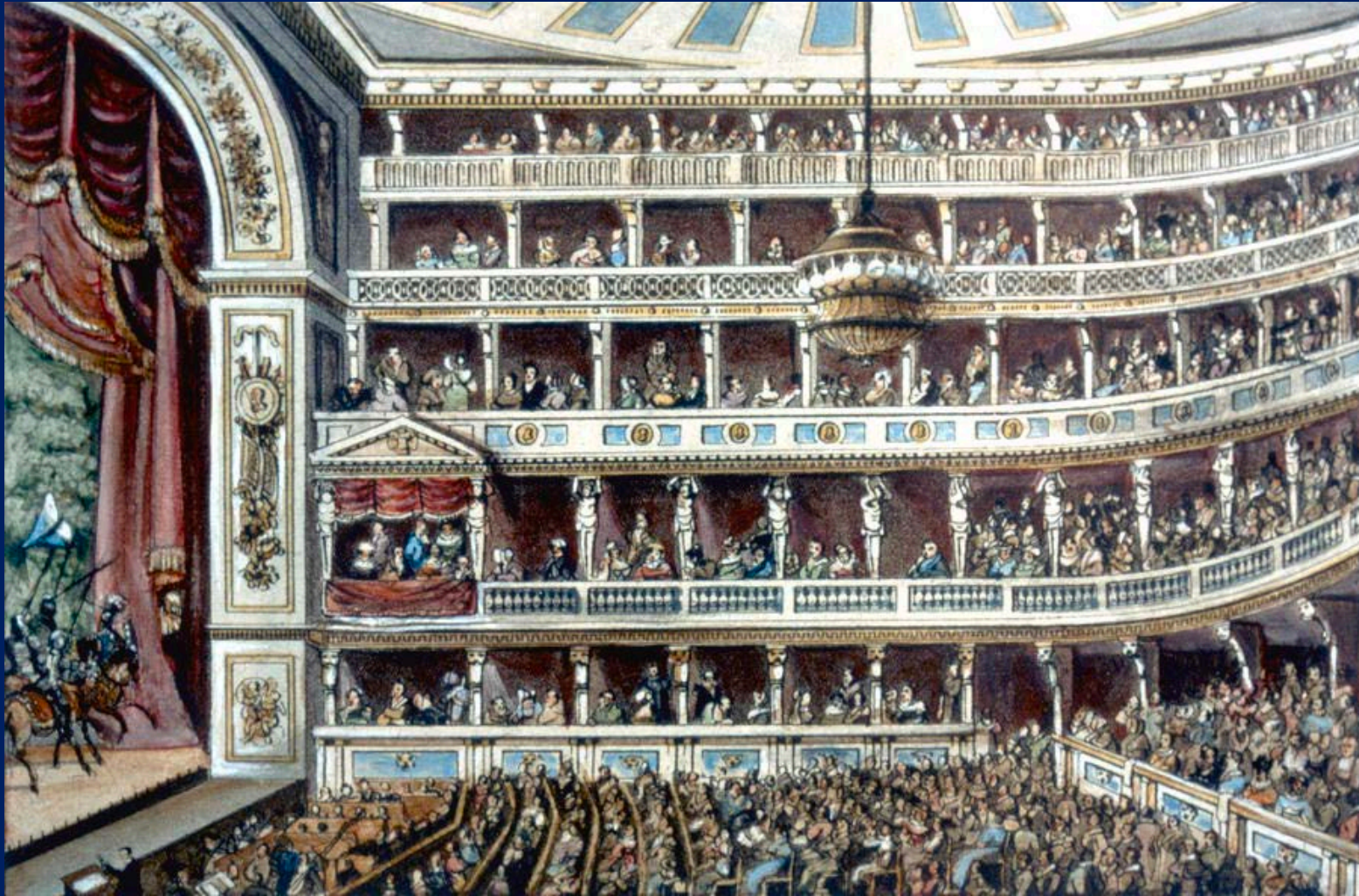
piccolo



contrabassoon



## Theater an der Wien, 20 December 1808



First performance of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Fourth Piano Concerto, and the Coral Fantasy, Op. 80: four hours in an unheated hall in the middle of winter

## Beethoven's Immortal Beloved (*Unsterbliche Geliebte*)

A letter found in a hidden drawer after Beethoven's death shows that he was deeply in love with someone at the time the letter was written, on 6 and 7 July 1812, that he had just seen her and was going to see her within the next days. **Who is she?**

July 6 In the morning-

My angel, my all my self – only a few words today, and indeed with pencil (with yours) – can our love exist but by sacrifices, by not demanding everything, can you change it, that you not completely mine, I am not completely yours – Oh, wherever I am, you are with me. I say to myself and to you, arrange that I can live with you. What a life!!!! as it is!!! without you - so near! so far! is not our love a true heavenly edifice - but also firm, like the firmament – your love makes me the most happy and the most unhappy at once - at my age I would need some conformity regularity of life – can this exist in our relationship? Forever yours/forever mine/forever us

Who is the "Immortal beloved"?



Josephine Brunsvik \*  
early and late? love interest



Antonie Brentano \*\*  
*An die Geliebte*



Giulietta Guicciardi  
marriage proposal  
*Moonlight sonata*



Therese Malfatti  
marriage proposal 1810



Bettina Brentano  
Goethe's muse



Countess Anna  
Marie Erdödy

## *An die Geliebte – To the beloved*

Your silent eye has shed a tear  
that glistens lovingly,  
oh, may I drink it from your cheek  
before the earth imbibes it.

It lingers, hesitating, upon your cheek,  
ardently longing to devote itself to constancy.  
Now that I have received it in a kiss,  
your anguish has become mine.

Poem by J. L. Stoll, set to music by  
Beethoven in December 1811

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBZv4MN8Xg0>

Antonie Brentano wrote on the first page of the autographed score:

*Requested by me from the author on March 2, 1812*

(Also set for guitar so she could play it.)

Miniature of Antonie Brentano  
found among Beethoven's  
personal effects after his death



## Beethoven finishes his 7<sup>th</sup> Symphony in May of 1812

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4788Tmz9Zo>

Happy key of A major, first movement, joyous and liberating, full of spirit

The second movement is a beautiful dance (in A minor) with a captivating theme

**Wagner:** *All tumult, all yearning and storming of the heart, become here the blissful insolence of joy...*

**Beethoven:** *One of the happiest products of my poor talents* (“Poor talents,” he certainly didn’t mean that!)

**His 8<sup>th</sup> symphony is in the same vein:** *a mood of joyous acceptance of life and the world, continuing, the effect upon the listener is precisely that of emancipation from all guilt ...* (finished in October of 1812)

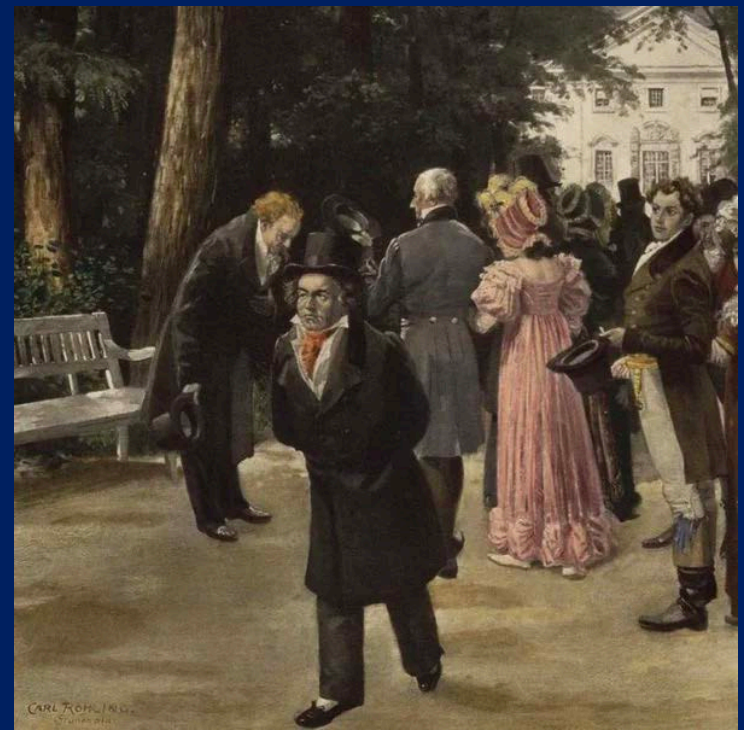
**However, Beethoven enters a two year long depression.** Antonie returns to Frankfurt, never sees her again



Beethoven's meets Goethe in Teplitz, 1812  
The titans of the late 18<sup>th</sup> - early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries  
Beethoven revered Goethe: set his *Egmont* drama to music in 1810, also set several of his songs  
In Teplitz they walk and talk but find no common ground

**Goethe of Beethoven:** *His talent amazed me. However, unfortunately, he is an absolutely untamed personality.* He also finds it hard to understand him

**Beethoven on Goethe:** Finds his position as a courtier and his deference to the aristocracy intolerable – and tells him. Goethe also did not applaud when Beethoven played for him. He preferred Haydn and Mozart to Beethoven



Carl Röhling (1887)

## *Fidelio*: Beethoven's only opera

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# Fidelio – Beethoven's only opera



Overture: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMPJI\\_qzITc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMPJI_qzITc)

Spain, 18th Century. Marzeline, daughter of the jailer, Rocco, is in love with the new errand boy Fidelio – Leonore - a noblewoman of Seville, who is there to rescue her husband Florestan, a political prisoner.

**F**

**Liebig**  
Company's  
FLEISCH-  
EXTRACT.

EXTRACTOR BRAND  
THE LIEBIG'S EXTRACT  
LONDON  
PREPARED BY  
F. LIEBIG & CO.

Gesetzl. geschützt.

**FIDELIO**, Oper von Beethoven – Act 1, Scene 4. 1

Rocco: „ Sie liebt ihn, es ist klar. Ja, Mädchen, er wird dein.“

Rocco: *She loves him, that is clear. Yes, girl, he will be yours.*

Don Fernando (good) is on his way to inspect the fortress. The governor Pizarro (bad) decides to kill Florestan and orders Rocco to dig a grave for the prisoner in the dungeon. Fidelio (Leonore) follows after him.



Pizarro: *Immediately, dig a grave for him in the dungeon*

Chained in the dungeon, Florestan dreams he sees Leonore arrive to free him. Leonore and Rocco start digging. Leonore recognizes Florestan's voice and realizes he is alive



Leonore: How strong my heart beats

Pizarro arrives with dagger drawn to strike, but Leonore stops him with a pistol. A trumpet sounds: Don Fernando has arrived. Rocco leads Pizarro out. Leonore and Florestan rejoice in each other's arms.



Leonore: First kill his wife!

Don Fernando proclaims justice for all. He is amazed to see his friend Florestan. Pizarro is arrested. All the prisoners are freed, and the crowd hails Leonore.

**LIEBIG**  
Company's  
**FLEISCH-EXTRACT.**

**FIDELIO**, Oper von Beethoven – Act 3, Scene 7. 6

*Florestan: „Deine Treu' erhielt mein Leben!”*

Gesetzlich geschützt

Florestan: Your faithfulness saved my life!

## Leonore rescues Florestan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMt5Y1uE4Po>



Christine Mielitz's production of *Fidelio* of 7 October 1989

-- depicts a prisoners' camp in East Germany and the Berlin Wall.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReSwAZ8jNyQ>



**Prisoners' Chorus:** Oh what joy, in the open air, Freely to breathe again!  
Up here alone is life! Speak softly! Be on your guard! We are watched  
with eye and ear. **Oh Freedom! Will you be given us?**



## The Dresden *Fidelio*, last scene – foreshadows fall of Berlin Wall



*Fidelio*, performed at the *Semperoper* in Dresden on 7 October 1989 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the DDR, combined with protests that same night, contributed to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the DDR regime four weeks later

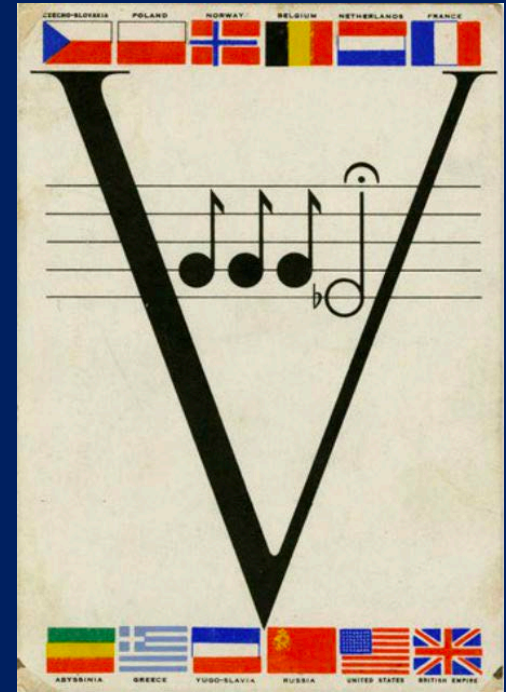
# Beethoven's ongoing societal impact

From 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, as a symbol of resistance to dictatorship in World War II

to adoption of the Ode to Joy (end of Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> symphony) as the Anthem of the European Union

to the influence of Fidelio on the fall of the Berlin Wall and the DDR (East Germany)

his ideals of liberty and individual freedom have had a lasting and powerful influence.



THANK YOU

Beethoven to be continued  
in the Fall!