

Season 2019-2020

**Thursday, March 12,
at 7:30**

**Saturday, March 14,
at 8:00**

Sunday, March 15, at 2:00

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Habibi *Jeder Baum spricht*

World premiere—Philadelphia Orchestra commission

Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67 

I. Allegro con brio

II. Andante con moto

III. Allegro—

IV. Allegro

Intermission

Beethoven Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 (“Pastoral”) 

I. Awakening of Cheerful Feelings upon

Arriving in the Country (Allegro ma non troppo)

II. Scene by the Brook (Andante molto moto)

III. Merry Gathering of Peasants (Allegro—
Presto)—

IV. Tempest, Storm (Allegro)—

V. Shepherd’s Hymn—Happy and Thankful
Feelings after the Storm (Allegretto)

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

 LiveNote® 2.0, the Orchestra’s interactive concert guide for mobile devices, will be enabled for these performances.

The March 12 concert celebrates our partnership with the **Bravo! Vail Music Festival** since 2007.

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The March 14 concert is also sponsored by

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These concerts are part of The Philadelphia Orchestra’s BeethovenNOW celebration.

Please join us following the March 15 concert for a free Chamber Postlude featuring members of The Philadelphia Orchestra and special guest Natalie Zhu.

Beethoven Three Equali, WoO 30, for trombone quartet

- I. Andante
- II. Poco adagio
- III. Poco sostenuto

Nitzan Haroz Trombone
Matthew Vaughn Trombone
Eric Carlson Trombone
Blair Bollinger Trombone

Koetsier Five Impromptus, Op. 55, for trombone quartet

- I. Andante con moto
- II. Allegro molto
- III. Allegretto grazioso
- IV. Adagio
- V. Allegro molto vivace

Nitzan Haroz Trombone
Matthew Vaughn Trombone
Eric Carlson Trombone
Blair Bollinger Trombone

Hough *Was mit den Tränen geschieht*, for piccolo, contrabassoon, and piano

- I. Lento giusto
- II. Allegro brillante
- III. Andante

Erica Peel Piccolo
Holly Blake Contrabassoon
Natalie Zhu Piano

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM, and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



Celebrating our partnership with the Bravo! Vail Music Festival

Since 2007, The Philadelphia Orchestra has been proud to be part of the Bravo! Vail Music Festival, performing six concerts each summer in the breathtaking setting of the Rocky Mountains and Vail, Colorado. The Festival began as a chamber music series in 1987, and while it continues to honor that past today, it also hosts four top-tier orchestras annually, becoming one of the world's great festivals.

The Orchestra is grateful for the inspired leadership of Bravo! Vail Executive Director Caitlin Murray, Artistic Director Anne-Marie McDermott, and the entire Board of Trustees. We welcome them and other special guests from Colorado to Bravo! Vail Day at The Philadelphia Orchestra on March 12, 2020.

Please join us for our 2020 Bravo! Vail summer residency, July 10–18, when we bring our BeethovenNOW and WomenNOW celebrations to the Rockies. Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin leads the Orchestra along with Principal Guest Conductor Stéphane Denève in such highlights as Valerie Coleman's *Umoja*, *Anthem for Unity*; Dvořák's "New World" Symphony; Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25 with Anne-Marie McDermott; and Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth symphonies paired with a new work by Iman Habibi, creating contemporary context and fresh perspectives on the relevance of Beethoven's legacy in his 250th birth year.

Photo credit: Zach Mahone

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



Getting Started with LiveNote[®] 2.0

- » Please silence your phone ringer.
- » Make sure you are connected to the internet via a Wi-Fi or cellular connection.
- » Download the Philadelphia Orchestra app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
- » Once downloaded open the Philadelphia Orchestra app.
- » Tap “OPEN” on the Philadelphia Orchestra concert you are attending.
- » Tap the “LIVE” red circle. The app will now automatically advance slides as the live concert progresses.

Helpful Hints

- » You can follow different tracks of content in LiveNote. While you are in a LiveNote content slide you can change tracks by selecting the tabs in the upper left corner. Each track groups content by a theme. For example, “The Story” track provides historical information about the piece and composer. “The Roadmap” track gives the listener more in-depth information about the orchestration and music theory behind the piece. *Note: Some pieces only contain one track.
- » Tap in the middle of the screen to display player controls such as Glossary, Brightness, Text Size, and Share.
- » Tap a highlighted word in yellow or select the “Glossary” in the player controls to take you to an in-depth glossary of musical terms.
- » If during the concert the content slides are not advancing, or you have browsed to other slides, you can tap the “LIVE” button in the bottom right corner to get to the current live slide.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Jessica Griffin



The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the world's preeminent orchestras. It strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust educational initiatives, and an ongoing commitment to the communities that it serves, the ensemble is on a path to create an expansive future for classical music, and to further the place of the arts in an open and democratic society.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his eighth season as the eighth music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, from Verizon Hall to

community centers, the Mann Center to Penn's Landing, classrooms to hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The Orchestra continues to discover new and inventive ways to nurture its relationship with loyal patrons.

The Philadelphia Orchestra continues the tradition of educational and community engagement for listeners of all ages. It launched its **HEAR** initiative in 2016 to become a major force for good in every community that it serves. **HEAR** is a portfolio of integrated initiatives that promotes **H**health, champions music **E**ducation, enables broad **A**ccess to Orchestra performances, and maximizes impact through **R**esearch. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as Play!Ns, side-by-sides, PopUP concerts, Free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, sensory-friendly concerts, the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program, and All City Orchestra Fellowships.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich history of touring, having first performed outside Philadelphia in the earliest days of its founding. It was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China in 1973, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

The Orchestra also makes live recordings available on popular digital music services and as part of the Orchestra on Demand section of its website. Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording, with seven celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music Director

Jessica Griffin



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** will lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through at least the 2025–26 season, an extraordinary and significant long-term commitment. Additionally, he became the third music director of New York's Metropolitan Opera in August 2018. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His intensely collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.”

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000, and in summer 2017 he became an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world's most revered ensembles and has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with seven CDs on that label. His upcoming recordings will include projects with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique. Additionally, he has recorded with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records, and the London Philharmonic for the LPO label.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal's Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick's honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; *Musical America's* 2016 Artist of the Year; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, and the University of Pennsylvania.

To read Yannick's full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1807

Beethoven

Symphony

No. 5

Music

Spontini

La vestale

Literature

Byron

Hours of

Idleness

Art

Turner

Sun Rising in a

Mist

History

Britain abolishes

slave trade

1808

Beethoven

Symphony

No. 6

Music

Weber

Silvana

Literature

Goethe

Faust, Pt. I

Art

Ingres

La Grande

Baigneuse

History

France invades

Spain

During the next four weeks, The Philadelphia Orchestra presents BeethovenNOW to celebrate the composer's 250th anniversary with performances of his transformational nine symphonies.

The concerts commence with the Fifth and Sixth symphonies, which might be considered unidentical twins, or at least kissing cousins. Beethoven composed them around the same time, they have the same dedicatees, were published within weeks of one another, and premiered on the same concert in 1808. They share some musical features, such as the linked final movements and withholding certain instruments until late in the work to produce a particularly powerful effect.

Yet the overall mood of the two symphonies is very different. The Fifth, from its famous opening to its triumphant conclusion, offers an intense journey that somehow seems to mirror aspects of Beethoven's personal struggles. He titled the Sixth Symphony "Pastoral" and said that it was "more an expression of feeling than painting." The work reflects Beethoven's great love of nature and the countryside, where he would frequently go for walks.

The Philadelphian's cycle of Beethoven's complete symphonies is accompanied by the world premieres of works by contemporary composers who were commissioned to create pieces in dialogue with Beethoven. Iman Habibi wrote *Jeder Baum spricht* (Every Tree Speaks)—a phrase Beethoven jotted down in one of his sketchbooks—as "a commentary on the environmental catastrophe that we're living today" and the piece ends in hope that the crisis can be addressed.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

The Music

Jeder Baum spricht

Darko Simean



Iman Habibi
Born in Tehran,
September 10, 1985
Now living in Toronto

Iman Habibi is an Iranian-Canadian composer and pianist, born in Tehran in 1985, in the middle of the Iran-Iraq War. "Unlike most other children who came to know music through nursery rhymes and dance, my childhood was filled with nationalistic music that celebrated the Islamic Revolution and glorified the war," he wrote. "I discovered the enormous moving power of music at a very young age."

Habibi's father was a chemist and his mother was an English teacher and translator, and in the years after the war they noticed their son's fascination with a small electric keyboard they owned. After some debate, his parents "went against all cultural norms and wise counsel to hire me a private piano teacher." Then, as now, music education and public performances were discouraged and restricted, though not forbidden, by the Iranian government. At age 11, Habibi attended a strict Islamic middle school by day, but found a separate world in secretive piano studies on the side. For him, the classical piano repertoire offered "a fresh alternative to the Persian pop and traditional music with which I was constantly bombarded. More importantly, it was *my* music ... I loved living with music that I felt belonged exclusively to me, and discovering it one composer at a time."

At age 17, Habibi and his family immigrated to Canada by way of Turkey. After piano studies at the University of British Columbia, he was drawn increasingly toward composition, earning a doctorate in 2017 from the University of Michigan, where he studied with Evan Chambers, Michael Daugherty, and Bright Sheng. Now based in Toronto, he has been commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and has collaborated with the Vancouver and Winnipeg symphony orchestras; the JACK, Chiara, Del Sol, and Calidore string quartets; and has had works programmed by Carnegie Hall, the Canadian Opera Company, and Tapestry Opera.

Beethoven in the Anthropocene The Philadelphia Orchestra commissioned *Jeder Baum spricht* (Every Tree Speaks) in celebration of Beethoven's 250th birthday, and it receives its premiere with this week's performances. The title comes from a note Beethoven jotted in a sketchbook that alludes to his famous walks through the parks and

Jeder Baum spricht was
composed in 2019.

This is the world premiere of the piece, and the first time The Philadelphia Orchestra has performed any work by the composer.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, timpani, and strings.

Performance time is approximately five minutes.

countryside around Vienna: “Almighty in the forest! I am blessed, happy in the forest! Every tree speaks through you!” (Jeder Baum spricht durch dich!). His biographer Maynard Solomon notes the curious inversion in the phrase: It would have been more usual, more obvious, for Beethoven to exclaim to God, “You speak through every tree!” Instead he finds the opposite: every tree speaking through God.

Although Beethoven’s own perspective was that of Romanticism, in modern terms he might be described as an environmentalist. With this in mind, Habibi wondered how Beethoven would respond to 21st-century climate change. He describes *Jeder Baum spricht* as “an unsettling rhapsodic reflection on the climate catastrophe, written in dialogue with Beethoven’s Fifth and Sixth symphonies.” Both pieces have ties to nature—most explicit, of course, in the “Pastoral” Symphony, but the Fifth Symphony’s opening theme was once associated with birdsong (perhaps a yellowhammer) in addition to its now-famous association with fate. “I am hoping that *Jeder Baum spricht* can allow us to listen to these monumental works with a renewed perspective,” Habibi writes, “that is, in light of the climate crisis we live in, and the havoc we continue to wreak on the nature that inspired these classic masterpieces.”

A Closer Look Scored for the same instruments as Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, *Jeder Baum spricht* opens with a rising sweep that culminates in an angular, cut-off climax. “The piece shifts focus rapidly,” Habibi describes, “and attempts to achieve its goal time and time again through different means, only to be faced with similar obstacles.” He develops the angular material in a section marked “Relentless and unsettling” between the strings and timpani, before mournful horns lead to lighter, cascading pizzicato in the strings. Fragments of longer melodic lines emerge, but are thwarted, eventually reaching a passage marked “Drowning in sound,” where a heavy bed of strings lie under rippling woodwinds. A shimmering clarinet comes to the fore, as the second half of the piece increasingly contrasts different choirs—woodwinds alone, then strings, and back again.

“Like much of Beethoven’s music, this piece begins ambiguously and unsettlingly, but offers a vision of hope towards the end,” Habibi says. “I am panicking about the climate crisis, but at the same time I want to convey a message of hope, one that can drive our collective will towards immediate impactful change.”

—Benjamin Pesetsky

The Music

Symphony No. 5



Ludwig van Beethoven
Born in Bonn, probably
December 16, 1770
Died in Vienna, March 26,
1827

Beethoven's Fifth did not immediately become the world's (or even the composer's) most famous symphony. During his lifetime the Third, the mighty "Eroica," was performed more often and the second movement of the Seventh (movements were often heard separately) deemed "the crown of instrumental music." But over the course of the 19th century the Fifth gradually came to epitomize both Beethoven's life and musical style. It often appeared on the inaugural concerts of new orchestras, such as when The Philadelphia Orchestra first performed in November 1900. The Fifth Symphony picked up further associations in the 20th century, be they of Allied victory during the Second World War or through its frequent appearances in popular culture.

It is not hard to account for both the popularity and the representative status of the Fifth. The celebrated music critic Donald Francis Tovey called it "among the least misunderstood of musical classics." With the rise of instrumental music in the 18th century, audiences sought ways to understand individual works, to figure out their meaning. One strategy was to make connections between a piece of music and the composer's life. In this regard, no life and body of work has proved more accommodating than Beethoven's, whose genius, independence, eccentricities, and struggles with deafness were already well known in his own time.

Music and Meaning In the fall of 1801, at age 30, Beethoven revealed for the first time the secret of his increasing hearing loss and stated in a letter that he would "seize Fate by the throat; it shall not bend or crush me completely." It has not been difficult to relate such statements directly to his music. The struggle with "Fate" when it "knocks at the door," as he allegedly told his assistant Anton Schindler happens at the beginning of the Fifth, helped endorse the favored label for the entire middle period of his career: heroic.

The Fifth Symphony seems to present a large-scale narrative. According to this view, a heroic life struggle is represented in the progression of emotions, from the famous opening in C minor to the triumphant C-major

coda of the last movement. For Hector Berlioz, the Fifth, more than the previous four symphonies, “emanates directly and solely from the genius of Beethoven. It is his own intimate thought that is developed; and his secret sorrows, his pent-up rage, his dreams so full of melancholy oppression, his nocturnal visions and his bursts of enthusiasm furnish its entire subject, while the melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and orchestral forms are there delineated with essential novelty and individuality, endowing them also with considerable power and nobility.”

In Beethoven’s Time Beethoven composed the Fifth Symphony over the course of some four years, beginning in the spring of 1804, during the most productive period of his career. Among the contemporaneous works were the Fourth and Sixth symphonies, Fourth Piano Concerto, Violin Concerto, Mass in C, three “Razumovsky” string quartets, and the first two versions of his opera *Fidelio*. Large-scale pieces like the opera, or commissions like the Mass, interrupted his progress on the Fifth, most of which was written in 1807 and early 1808.

The Symphony premiered later that year on December 22 together with the Sixth (their numbers and order reversed) at Beethoven’s famous marathon concert at Vienna’s Theater an der Wien. This legendary event also included the first public performance of the Fourth Piano Concerto (the composer was soloist), two movements from the Mass, the concert aria *Ah! Perfido*, and the “Choral” Fantasy, Op. 80. Reports indicate that all did not go well as the under-rehearsed musicians struggled with this demanding new music and things fell apart during the “Choral” Fantasy. But inadequate performance conditions did not dampen enthusiasm for the Fifth Symphony, which was soon recognized as a masterpiece. The novelist, critic, and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann wrote a long and influential review in which he hailed “Beethoven’s Romanticism . . . that tears the listener irresistibly away into the wonderful spiritual realm of the infinite.”

A Closer Look Another reason for the great fame and popularity of the Fifth Symphony is that it exemplifies the fingerprints of Beethoven’s heroic style. One of these identifying features is its “organicism,” the notion that all four movements seem to grow from seeds sown in the opening measures. While Beethoven used the distinctive rhythmic figure of three shorts and a long in other works from this time (Tovey remarked that if this indeed represents fate knocking at the door it was also knocking at many other doors), here it unifies the entire Symphony.

Beethoven composed his *Symphony No. 5* from 1807 to 1808.

Fritz Scheel conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the *Fifth*, in November 1900, as part of the Orchestra's first concert. A series of eminent conductors have led the piece here over the years: Artur Rodzinski, Fritz Reiner, Otto Klemperer, José Iturbi, Erich Leinsdorf, Klaus Tennstedt, Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Michael Tilson Thomas, and, of course, Leopold Stokowski, Eugene Ormandy, Riccardo Muti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Most recently on subscription concerts, Christoph Eschenbach led the work in February 2018.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has recorded the *Symphony* four times: in 1931 with Stokowski for RCA; in 1955 and 1966 with Ormandy for CBS; and in 1985 with Muti for EMI. A live performance from 2005 with Eschenbach is also available as a digital download.

The piece is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.

The *Fifth Symphony* runs approximately 35 minutes in performance.

After the most familiar of all symphonic openings (**Allegro con brio**), the piece modulates to the relative major key and the horns announce the second theme with a fanfare using the “fate rhythm.” The softer, lyrical second theme, first presented by the violins, is inconspicuously accompanied in the lower strings by the rhythm. The movement features Beethoven's characteristic building of intensity, suspense, a thrilling coda, and also mysteries. Why, for example, does the oboe have a brief unaccompanied solo cadenza near the beginning of the recapitulation? Beethoven's innovation is not simply that this brief passage may “mean” something, but that listeners are prompted in the first place to ask themselves what it may mean.

The second movement (**Andante con moto**) is a rather unusual variation form in which two themes alternate, the first sweet and lyrical, the second more forceful. Beethoven combines the third and fourth movements, which are played without pause. In earlier symphonies he had already replaced the polite minuet and trio with a more vigorous scherzo and trio. In the *Fifth* the **Allegro** scherzo begins with a soft ascending arpeggiated string theme that contrasts with a loud assertive horn motif (again using the fate rhythm). The trio section features extraordinarily difficult string writing, in fugal style, that defeated musicians in early performances. Instead of an exact return of the opening scherzo section, Beethoven recasts the thematic material in a completely new orchestration and *pianississimo* dynamic. The tension builds with a long pedal point—the insistent repetition of the same note C in the timpani—that swells in an enormous *crescendo* directly into the fourth movement **Allegro**, where three trombones, contrabassoon, and a piccolo join in for the first time in the piece. This finale, like the first movement, is in sonata form and uses the fate rhythm in the second theme. The coda to the *Symphony* may strike listeners today as almost too triumphantly affirmative as the music gets faster, louder, and ever more insistent. Indeed, it is difficult to divest this best known of symphonies from all the baggage it has accumulated through two centuries and to listen with fresh ears to the shocking power of the work and to the marvels that Beethoven introduced into the world of orchestral music.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

The Music

Symphony No. 6 (“Pastoral”)



Ludwig van Beethoven

Most of the familiar titles attached to Beethoven's works were first applied by someone other than the composer. Critics, friends, and publishers invented the labels “Moonlight,” “Tempest,” and “Appassionata” for popular piano sonatas. Prominent patrons' names—Archduke Rudolph, Count Razumovsky, Count Waldstein—became wedded to compositions they either commissioned or that were dedicated to them, thereby winning a sort of immortality for those who supported the composer.

Beethoven himself crossed out the heading “Bonaparte” from the title page of the Third Symphony, but later wrote in “Sinfonia eroica” (Heroic Symphony), and it is his only symphony besides the Sixth to bear an authentic title. To be sure, stories about “fate knocking at the door” in the Fifth and the choral finale of the Ninth have encouraged programmatic associations for those works, beginning in Beethoven's own time. But, in the end, it is the Sixth Symphony, the “Pastoral,” that stands most apart from his others, and indeed from nearly all of Beethoven's instrumental and keyboard music, in its intentional, publicly declared, and often quite audible extramusical content. Beethoven's full title is: “Pastoral Symphony, or Recollections of Country Life.”

“More an Expression of Feeling than Painting”

And yet the Sixth Symphony does not aspire to the level of musical realism found in a work like Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* or in Richard Strauss's tone poems. Beethoven famously noted that the “Pastoral” contained “more an expression of feeling than painting.” He had earlier objected to some of the musical illustration in Haydn's oratorios *The Creation* (1798) and *The Seasons* (1801), with their imitations of storms, frogs, and other phenomena. He might not have cared much for what the “New German School” of Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner would later advocate and create.

Beethoven's “Pastoral” Symphony belongs to a tradition, going back to the previous century, of “characteristic” symphonies. Indeed, the titles for the movements that Beethoven provided closely resemble those of *Le Portrait musical de la nature*, written nearly 25 years earlier by the

Rheinish composer Justin Heinrich Knecht. (It is doubtful Beethoven knew the music of the piece, but he may have known the titles.) Scattered comments that Beethoven made in his sketches for the Symphony are revealing: "The hearers should be allowed to discover the situations / Sinfonia caratteristica—or recollection of country life / All painting in instrumental music is lost if it is pushed too far / Sinfonia pastorella. Anyone who has an idea of country life can make out for himself the intentions of the composer without many titles / Also without titles the whole will be recognized as a matter more of feeling than of painting in sounds."

Regardless of the musical and aesthetic implications that the "Pastoral" Symphony raises with respect to program music—a key issue for debate during the 19th century—the piece unquestionably offers eloquent testimony to the importance of nature in Beethoven's life. He often took walks in Vienna's parks and in the large field just outside the city walls. For part of each year he moved to a suburban village or retreated to a spa. ("To stay in the city in summer is torture for me," he once remarked.) As Beethoven wandered about he would not only soak in nature but also compose. While he worked out his most detailed ideas for compositions in large-format sketchbooks at home, he typically carried around small pocketbooks as well. The artist August von Kloeber undertook a portrait of the composer in 1818 and later recalled observing Beethoven strolling around the country: "It was most interesting to see him, a sheet of music paper and a stump of pencil in his hand, stop often as though listening, and then write a few notes on the paper."

Being amidst nature was crucial to Beethoven's existence. In the summer of 1809, when Napoleon's troops occupied Vienna for the second time, he was unable to leave the city and wrote to his publisher: "I still cannot enjoy life in the country, which is so indispensable for me." Booming cannon fire caused particular distress to his ears. By the following May he was eagerly anticipating leaving Vienna: "How delighted I will be to ramble for a while through the bushes, woods, under trees, through grass, and around rocks."

The idea of Beethoven communing with birds and flowers may seem somewhat at odds with the eccentric genius shaking his fist at fate, but the two images are complementary sides of his personality, traits he powerfully evoked in the Fifth and Sixth symphonies. These works are so different in many respects and yet might be considered as twins, albeit unidentical ones.

The “Pastoral” Symphony was composed from 1807 to 1808.

Fritz Scheel conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Sixth, in December 1901. Most recently on subscription, Cristian Măcelaru led the work here in March 2015. Some of the conductors who have led the Symphony with the Orchestra include Leopold Stokowski, Eugene Ormandy, Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, George Szell, Otto Klemperer, Georg Solti, Riccardo Muti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Christoph Eschenbach, and Simon Rattle. Most recently on subscription it was led by Gianandrea Noseda in November 2016.

The Orchestra has recorded Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony five times: in 1939 in an abridged version with Stokowski for RCA; in 1946 with Walter for CBS; in 1966 with Ormandy for CBS; and in 1978 and 1987 with Muti for EMI. A live recording from 2006 with Eschenbach is also available as a digital download.

The “Pastoral” is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 40 minutes.

Not only did both have the same period of genesis around 1808 and the same dedicatees (Count Razumovsky and Prince Lobkowitz), but they were also published within weeks of one another in the spring of 1809. They premiered together (in reverse order and with their numbers switched) at Beethoven’s famous marathon concert of December 22, 1808, at the Theater an der Wien. Despite their overall contrasting mood, there are notable points of musical convergence, such as the innovations in instrumentation (the delayed and dramatic introduction of piccolo and trombones in the fourth movements) and the splicing together of the final movements.

A Closer Look Beethoven’s descriptive movement titles for the “Pastoral” were made public to the audience before the premiere. The first movement, **Awakening of Cheerful Feelings upon Arriving in the Country**, engages with a long musical tradition of pastoral music. From the initial drone of an open fifth in the lower strings to the jovial coda, the leisurely and often repetitive pace of the movement is far from the intensity of the Fifth Symphony. The second movement, **Scene by the Brook**, includes the famous birdcalls: flute for the nightingale, oboe for the quail, and two clarinets for the cuckoo (Berlioz copied the effect for two of the birds in the pastoral third movement of his *Symphonie fantastique*).

This is Beethoven’s only symphony with five movements and the last three lead one into the next. The third is entitled **Merry Gathering of Peasants** and suggests a town band of limited ability playing dance music. The gaiety is interrupted by a **Tempest, Storm** that approaches from afar as ominous rumblings give way to the full fury of thunder and lightning. The storm is far more intense than other well-known earlier depictions, such as by Vivaldi and Haydn. Just as the storm had approached gradually, so it passes, leaving some scattered moments of disruption before the **“Shepherd’s Hymn—Happy and Thankful Feelings after the Storm”** brings the work to its close. Regardless of Beethoven’s declared intentions, this music seems to function on both descriptive and expressive levels, which has helped to fuel arguments about program music ever since his time.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Arpeggio: A broken chord (with notes played in succession instead of together)

Cadenza: A passage or section in a style of brilliant improvisation, usually inserted near the end of a movement or composition

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Coda: A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

Diatonic: Melody or harmony drawn primarily from the tones of the major or minor scale

Equale: A piece for equal (i.e. similar) voices or instruments

Fifth: An interval of five diatonic degrees

Fugue: A piece of music in which a short melody is stated by one voice and then imitated by the other voices in succession, reappearing throughout the entire piece in all the voices at different places

Harmonic: Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

Impromptu: A composition for solo instrument, usually

the piano, the nature of which may occasionally suggest improvisation

Minuet: A dance in triple time commonly used up to the beginning of the 19th century as the lightest movement of a symphony

Op.: Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output

Oratorio: Large-scale dramatic composition with text usually based on religious subjects. Oratorios are performed by choruses and solo voices with an instrumental accompaniment, and are similar to operas but without costumes, scenery, and actions.

Pizzicato: Plucked

Recapitulation: See sonata form

Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo in triple time, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts.

Sonata form: The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are often

cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then "developed." In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Allegretto: Between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Brillante: Sparkling, spirited

Con brio: Vigorously, with fire

Con moto: With motion

Giusto: Exact, strict

Grazioso: Graceful and easy

Lento: Slow

Moto: Motion, speed, movement

Presto: Very fast

Sostenuto: Sustained

Vivace: Lively

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Ma non troppo: But not too much

Molto: Very

Poco: Little, a bit

DYNAMIC MARKS

Crescendo: Increasing volume

Pianississimo: Very, very soft

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