

**The Critical Reception  
of Beethoven's Compositions  
by His German Contemporaries,  
Op. 125**

*Translated and edited by Robin Wallace*

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## CONTENTS

	Foreword	6
125.1	Friedrich August Kanne. “Performance of Mr. Ludwig van Beethoven.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung mit besonderer Rücksicht auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat</i> 8 (5 June, 9 June, 16 June 1824): 149–51, 157–60, and 173–74.	8
125.2	Gottfried Weber. Excerpt from “Glances at the Most Recent Appearances in Musical Literature.” <i>Caecilia</i> 1 (October 1824): 373.	21
125.3	Johann Baptist Rousseau. Excerpt from “Rhenish Music Festival in Aachen.” <i>Rheinische Flora</i> , no. 82 (April 1825).	22
125.4	<i>Rheinische Flora</i> , no. 61. (17 April 1825).	24
125.5	Excerpt from “News: Frankfurt am Main.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 27 (27 April 1825), col. 279–80.	25
125.6	Excerpt from “News: From the Lower Rhine.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 27 (29 June 1825), col. 444–47.	26

125.7	F. “The Lower Rhine Music Festival, 1825 in Aachen.” <i>Caecilia</i> 4 (1826), 66–67.	28
125.8	Gottfried Weber. Excerpt from “Germany in the First Quarter of the 19th Century: Views of a Friend of Music.” <i>Caecilia</i> 4 (1826), 109–10.	30
125.9	Adolf Bernhard Marx. “Symphony with Concluding Chorus on Schiller’s Ode to Joy.” <i>Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 3 (22 November 1826), 373–78.	31
125.10	Adolf Bernhard Marx. “Sundries. To the Friends of Art in Berlin. From Someone in Your Midst.” <i>Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 3 (22 November 1826), 383–84.	40
125.11	The Musical correspondent from Leipzig and Adolf Bernhard Marx. “Sundries. Several Words on the Understanding of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony,” and “Response.” <i>Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 3 (29 November 1826), 414–16.	43
125.12	“News. Leipzig—to 10 December.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 28 (27 December 1826), col. 853–54.	47
125.13	“Correspondence. Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, in Stettin (in February).” <i>Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 4 (14 March 1827), 84–87.	48
125.14	Adolf Bernhard Marx. “Reviews.” <i>Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 4 (11 April 1827), 124–25.	54

125.15	Joseph Fröhlich and Christian Grossheim. “Two Reviews.” <i>Caecilia</i> 8 (1828), 231–56 and 256–60.	58
125.16	“News. Vienna. Musical Diary of the Month of December.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 30 (13 February 1828), col. 107–8.	78
125.17	“Another Word about Beethoven.” <i>Allgemeine Musikzeitung zur Beförderung der theoretischen und praktischen Tonkunst für Musiker und für Freunde der Musik überhaupt</i> 1 (1 March 1828), 142–43.	79
125.18	“News. From Leipzig. From 18 February until April.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 30 (9 April 1828), col. 245–46.	80
125.19	“Mixed. A Judgment from London of Beethoven’s Last Symphony.” <i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> 30 (9 April 1828), col. 245–46.	81

## FOREWORD

This online resource contains work completed after the first two volumes of *The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions by His German Contemporaries* were published by the University of Nebraska Press in 1999 and 2001. Those volumes concluded with the reviews of *Fidelio*, Op. 72. Since then I have received many inquiries, from Beethoven scholars and others, about the reviews of Beethoven's remaining works: whether and when they would also appear in translation. This publication is offered in response to that broad and continuing interest.

The 9th symphony is one of Beethoven's most important and controversial works, and the amount of press coverage it received in the few years after its first performance in 1824 far exceeds that devoted to any of the earlier symphonies. No concert report previously published matches Friedrich August Kanne's lengthy description, in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung mit besonderer Rücksicht auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat*, of the 9th's premiere at the Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor in Vienna and the repeat performance a few weeks later at the Grand Redoutensaal. Likewise, no previous review—not even that of the 5th symphony by E. T. A. Hoffmann—can match in length and analytical detail the review of the 9th symphony published by Joseph Fröhlich in *Caecilia* in 1828. The extensive back and forth between Adolf Bernhard Marx, one of the 9th's earliest champions, and more skeptical writers in the *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* makes fascinating reading. The many shorter concert reports show that both at its premiere and at various performances over the next few years, the work was received with a mixture of perplexity, fascination, and awe.

Some of the initial critical reaction to the 9th symphony is not included here because it appeared in articles that also give substantial attention to other late works by Beethoven. These include Ignaz Xaver Seyfried's 1828 review in *Caecilia*, which covered the 9th symphony, the *Missa Solemnis*, and the string quartet Op. 131. They also include the lengthy denunciation of Beethoven's late work by Ernst Woldemar, also in *Caecilia*, and the responses it provoked. These will appear later as this online resource is expanded to include the full reception of Beethoven's work from Op. 73 on.

As with the earlier *Critical Reception* material, I have stopped at 1830 (the latest text included here is from 1828), so as to limit the sources covered to those that originated during

Beethoven's lifetime and the few years that immediately followed his death. This means that later controversies and trends in Beethoven reception are not reflected here; these sources are truly contemporary and reflect the musical thought of Beethoven's own time.

I would like to thank Wayne Senner and William Meredith for their central role in initiating this project. Baylor University graciously granted me a summer sabbatical to work on this material. I also acknowledge the Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals (RIPM) for permission to copy the music examples as they appeared in the original sources. This is intended to be the first installment in a series of online publications that will finally make the remainder of the entire body of German-language Beethoven reception prior to 1830 easily accessible to English-speaking readers.

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# Op. 125. Symphony no. 9 in D minor

## 125.I.

Friedrich August Kanne.<sup>1</sup>

“Performance of Mr. Ludwig van Beethoven.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung mit besonderer Rücksicht  
auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat* 8

(5 June, 9 June, 16 June 1824): 149–51, 157–60, and 173–74.<sup>2</sup>

(With Op. 123, *Missa Solemnis*, and Op. 124, *Consecration of the House* Overture;  
mentioned: Op. 116, Trio for soprano, tenor, and bass, “Tremate, empi, tremate”)

After waiting for the second performance of the most recent creations of this celebrated master, and having examined their intensive beauties, which on first hearing it was impossible to observe precisely—somewhat more closely, we want to try to give our readers a description of them, which, however, should be judged completely according to the standard of the short time that was allowed for the inspection of such gigantic works.

Beethoven’s creative genius shows itself in these, his most recent works, in two ways.

His earlier works, especially the keyboard and instrumental compositions, all already more or less indicate his serious striving for an inner necessity, going along with freedom of imagination, and often develop this direction in such a powerful and original manner that one notices here as well how he always kept firmly in view the words spoken over him in his cradle by the genius of art.

If his richly blooming imagination in the realm of notes often shakes the die of the moment of inspiration with a mood bordering on the peculiar, and seems to surrender to an unbounded outward striving in the most adventurous forms, his sublime presence of mind<sup>3</sup> still always reawakens over the subject that he has mastered, and joins together those spiritual links of necessity and organic interweaving in such a way that that dualism advanced as an

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<sup>1</sup>Friedrich August Kanne (1778–1824) was a Viennese writer and composer, and is considered one of the most important figures in the reception of Beethoven’s late works. For a commentary on this article as it pertains to the 9th symphony, see Robin Wallace, *Beethoven’s Critics: Aesthetic Dilemmas and Resolutions during the Composer’s Lifetime* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 74–77.

<sup>2</sup>This report describes two separate concerts, with slightly different programs, on 7 May and 23 May 1824. The first performance of the 9th symphony took place on 7 May at the Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor, on a program that also included the *Consecration of the House* overture, Op. 124, and the Kyrie, Credo, and Agnus Dei from the *Missa Solemnis*. The second took place on 23 May at the Grand Redoutensaal, and the Credo and Agnus Dei were replaced by the trio and Rossini’s “Da tanti palpiti” from *Tancredi*. By far the most extensive account of the circumstances surrounding these two performances is to be found in David Benjamin Levy, *Early Performances of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony: A Documentary Study of Five Major Cities* (Ph.D. diss.: Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 1979), 43–107.

<sup>3</sup>Kanne uses the word *Besonnenheit*, which E. T. A. Hoffmann also used extensively in his Beethoven criticism.



essential postulate by the philosophers of art of the past thirty years appears in its most original form.

Beethoven's genius has become great precisely through the organic interlinking of all his musical ideas, in which the variety reduced to unity is reflected in such a peculiar manner. It has so justified the bold originality with which it not infrequently rejects all forms esteemed by earlier times and by our own, and creates itself completely anew, that even those who are only concerned with preserving the old—taking the opportunity also to preserve their own worthy individuality along with it—could not deny him their esteem or refuse him their approval.

Thus he created his magnificent keyboard compositions, testifying to the greatest spirit of invention, in which the true spirit of art not only often expresses itself in pure beauty, but also represents at the same time the spirit of the times, to which they owe their origin, in such a decisive and truly transfiguring manner.

In all of his works there is never a trace of the excess of passagework that has unfortunately gained ground for several years in the works of the most recent composers, with such decisive vehemence that one truly does not know whether more to be amazed by the insipidity and charlatanism of their inventors or to execrate the manifest lack of depth of soul that could yield with such reprehensible eagerness to this spiritless mannerism, impressive only through brilliant effects and fitness of the fingers.

When one glances impartially at many productions of recent times, one feels repelled by the sight of the backbreaking figurations running ceaselessly onward, by the white page completely blackened with passagework in thirty-second and sixty-fourth notes, since it is nearly impossible to find any point of rest within them, by means of which a form could be perceived that would give the fingers, as well as the soul, space in which to recover from the breathless convulsive spasms and gain new strength.

The poverty of spirit unfortunately speaks only all too clearly within them. What is just as clear to the observer, though, is the degradation that musical art must inevitably suffer from such striving for purely external effect, which is certainly brilliant, but only blinds people's inner sensibilities. In the future one will no longer need any soul at all for the execution of such athletic pieces (for "bravura pieces" seems too noble to us), but only fingers to which tightrope-walking and gymnastic speed and elasticity are as well suited as to the frame of the Indian tightrope-walker and gymnast Mooty Saame.<sup>4</sup> In a word, with the progress of the simple excess of passagework, the beautiful art of keyboard playing will soon be able to be called only a gymnastic art. Beethoven's noble genius always remained free of this great mistake, and the highest touchstone for the excellence of his works may perhaps soon be found in the judgment of those who constantly, and with predilection and devotion springing from spiritual kinship, dedicate all their attention to such brilliant, sensational pieces of bad taste.

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<sup>4</sup>The *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* of 10 November 1824, 1080, described Mooty Saame as "a true wizard, for whom it is quite something that he can come to Germany even now; seventy years ago he would probably have been burned."

Just as in Shakespeare's or Goethe's works the pleasing charm, the grace, and the spiritual beauty of many seemingly completely insignificant passages is sufficiently esteemed by few, and even despised by many—since in general only related spirits can perceive and thus attract each other—countless such forms likewise lie in Beethoven's productions, disguised by their seeming insignificance, which, like diamonds in the rough, cast precious rays if the beholder brings along the necessary depth of soul.

It is true that in all arts the characteristic tendencies of every striving spirit will bestow a form and coloration that not infrequently contradicts quite noticeably the taste observed in the works of other masters. The very enthusiasm of such a faction can be explained by this, since one-sided striving toward a goal among so many other possibilities succumbs to the law of repulsion. But the calm, true connoisseur of art, who examines the entire world of art before him with open eyes, who disdains letting his eyes be struck, through a biased predisposition for this or that master, by the blindness of enthusiasm against all others—who ultimately finds it unworthy to let his eyes be covered by blinders like a draft-horse, which takes away his disturbing view toward the side; that is, toward the beauties of other masters—will always know how to seek out joyfully the spiritual sparks of this kind in Beethoven's earlier and later works. Even if this original spirit's boldness were to shatter all the barriers before him, he would still follow his interesting flight with the sort of calm to which passionate, biased blindness is foreign, and which can only be considered a property of the highest spiritual development.

Now if, as was said above, we find in the great store of Beethoven's works of the spirit a generally dominant poetic depth, a creative power streaming forth in such a variety of forms, despising the above-mentioned mistakes of contemporary taste and rising only toward that goal of the ideal, if we particularly praised them for the organic construction that prevails in them, for their beautiful, meticulous interweaving, the latest productions of this celebrated master stand out particularly through truly gigantic form and the beauties of imitation that are often brought about in them with a completely characteristic boldness.

The grand overture that the composer wrote for the opening of the new theater in the Josephstadt<sup>5</sup> stands out favorably by virtue of the grandness of its style and the inspired flight of the imagination that prevails within it. This opened both of the performances, the first of which took place in the Imperial Royal Court Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor, the other in the Imperial Royal Grand Redoutensaal, in a very imposing manner. The brilliant life with which the violins move forward is made most interesting through the grandiose strides of the bass, which does not just accompany, but truly sings. Beethoven's bubbling imagination steps forward in the most variegated figurations with ever new creative power.

The ordering of his principal and secondary periods is heightened even further through the charm with which Beethoven, as master and inventor, invested the instrumentation of most of his creations. The alternation of the wind and string orchestras is, however, customarily enhanced, and its impression heightened, by the novelty of the figurations.

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<sup>5</sup>Kanne is referring to Op. 124, the *Consecration of the House* Overture.

The intrada for trumpets that precedes the whole is explained by the specific circumstance to which this piece of music owes its origin, the consecration of a new theater.<sup>6</sup>

The execution of this piece of music, carried out by so many excellent instrumentalists with such energetic fire under Mr. Schuppanzig's<sup>7</sup> direction, aroused the most decisively joyous enthusiasm of all listeners.

In regard to acoustics, we must give preference to the Grand Redoutensaal for this piece of music, since the grand, quickly moving mass of notes spread out with their full power through a broad focus, and were able to fill up the grand spaces.

Here the effect in the theater was the opposite, for the grand mass of sound was diffused by the open cornices and the stage, which was not closed off by any artificial means. It is true that the strength of the sound of so many instruments resounding at once was dampened as though by a lowered piano-lid, whereby many figurations that are carried through the grand mass of instruments naturally became more rounded off, and gained in clarity.

This is clearly apparent with the four movement long symphony. The first Allegro in D minor,<sup>8</sup> which, if one wanted to label it precisely, one would have to call a gigantic fantasy for the orchestra, now likewise offers opportunities for brilliantly effective moments, determined again by the power of the instruments. Beethoven's powerful imagination springs up there like a fire-spewing mountain from out of the earth that hems in his raging inner fire. With an often strange perseverance, it manipulates figurations whose peculiar form at first glance not infrequently expresses an almost bizarre character, but which under the capable hand of the master who molds it, is transformed into a stream of graceful turns of phrase, which does not want to end, but rises step by step to an ever more brilliant height.

With inexhaustible powers of invention the master rolls ever new obstacles into his upward rushing stream of fire, hemming it in with ties that meet again and again in the imitative forms, which thus run obliquely parallel, turning his phrases around, and pressing them down into a terrifying depth, from which his ignited genius now leads them against the clouds, united in a single beam, letting them vanish upward into a gentle, completely unexpected Unisono, which then also raises itself stepwise above its high vantage point. But he allows the eye no rest! New forces soon develop from the middle, streaming in from all sides, soon rolling away again in gentle planes like the waves of a stream.

In the midst of this marvelous tumult of all the elements of art, Beethoven's masterful hand performs with great artistry a musical sleight of hand, and like a decorator transforms his entire mass of figurations into a transfiguring blue fire.

There are actually several such completely unexpected coups of modulatory art in this grand work, through which the entire tone color is suddenly so charmingly transformed that one must involuntarily break off one's quiet admiration and give room to a loud bravo.

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<sup>6</sup>Kanne is referring to the *Un poco più vivace* section that begins at m. 37.

<sup>7</sup>The different spellings of Schuppanzigh's name in the translation correspond to those in the original text.

<sup>8</sup>Actually Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso.

The beautiful, tasteful use of the singing wind instruments, which, however, is nearly always characterized by a coloration of rapturous melancholy, is usually very cleverly sought out by Beethoven after moments of the highest, often stormy life as a means of soothing the all-too-excited soul, rocking it to sleep in blissful dreams, from which it will only be awakened by frightful new forms.

Thus does the master's ignited genius rage ceaselessly on, and give the listener back his peace of mind in a Scherzo.<sup>9</sup> It seems to us almost a necessity for the disturbed soul to let this powerful Allegro be followed by the gentle, songful Adagio,<sup>10</sup> and to save the Scherzo for later.

Whoever has never come to know Beethoven's humor from one of his works will find its quintessence, in all degrees and potentialities, in this Scherzo. Who will ask if the tempo is furious? Our metrical sense can scarcely follow the rapid flight of figurations, the colorful alternation of the comical world of harmonies, often alternating in marvelous forms!

The unusual tuning of the timpani, which, however, announces the humorous style right at the beginning, already discloses to the listener what he has to expect.<sup>11</sup> The running, continually tripping theme, which gains even more character through the pointed delivery, shows the peculiar, naive mood that Beethoven felt in his spirit as he wrote it.

The grotesque leaps that Beethoven's genius makes in the above-mentioned Scherzo are often of such a bold nature, and are performed with such rapid strength, that one can well understand how he could mix in an Allebreve in the midst of this tempo, from which the ear seems to draw new strength.<sup>12</sup>

In the staccato course of the oboe, flute, bassoon, etc., one really sees the little Colombine tripping along with Harlequin, who springs with daring leaps from one modulatory land to another, and changes every moment. Indeed, whoever brings to listening an imagination as inspired as Beethoven did to writing will certainly not be astonished if, in the humorous striking of both F-timpani, which he usually makes leap from the upper to the lower one, we perceive again the merry strokes with which Harlequin's wooden sword knows how to enliven his surroundings. What is more, the basses, with their broad steps and metrical syncopations, represent the long-armed Pierrot.

In this movement the inexhaustible composer gives full scope to all his moods and comical fancies. The teasing and provocative imitations of the instruments—which here quickly run on obliquely after one another, then perform magical harmonic tricks, hurry off in completely opposite directions, turn suddenly around again, and with apparent hesitation trip back up against one another—make such an interesting effect that the inventiveness of this movement, drawn out to such extraordinary lengths, must delight the ear of the most serious connoisseur of music. The passing notes, as well as the neighboring notes, that Beethoven's

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<sup>9</sup>Actually *Molto vivace*—*Presto*.

<sup>10</sup>Actually *Adagio molto e cantabile*.

<sup>11</sup>The two timpani are tuned in octaves on F, the mediant of D minor, instead of the more usual tonic and dominant, a fact that is announced by the timpani solo in the third measure of the movement.

<sup>12</sup>Kanne is referring to the middle section of the movement, which is marked *Presto* and is in duple meter.

free sculptor's spirit tends to bring into sight in the course of the hopping melody, sometimes by necessity, sometimes through his feats of anticipation and delay, excite again at every moment our already eager attentiveness.

We must also mention just in passing to all those wishing to study such daring masterworks, or such masterful works of daring, and imitate them, that they certainly also want to bring along just as much genius.

The performance of this movement went far more auspiciously in the Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor, which resists the sound of the notes (since, it goes without saying, the orchestra was moved up to the stage), than in the Grand Redoutensaal, since in it the staccato, pointed notes seemed far better rounded off as individual bodies of sound, and could not cast an echoing shadow that darkened the contour. The large crowd of people who were assembled there was very auspicious for the sound of the orchestra, which was strengthened by the assistance of many dilettantes. It is scarcely necessary to add that such a composition, invented with the utmost freedom of spirit and uninhibited inspiration, often scarcely leaves time for an experienced violinist to think up an appropriate fingering, so that players who are usually weak, that is to say those who may play variations or concertos, but are unfamiliar with the rapid pace of orchestral playing, are at first usually terrified by such difficult passages, then put down their bows and stop playing for so many measures, taking the opportunity to pass over difficult playing techniques, until they start in again at easier passages and can take refuge again under the active orchestra. During such periods the ones who could keep time and had true artistic expression usually had to compensate for the note-devouring players by playing what they left out more loudly.<sup>13</sup>

The truth of this must seem to many laymen to be terribly difficult to prove, but the connoisseur, which is to say our true reader, will completely understand us and find no jot unnecessary.

The Adagio in B-flat [is] a most heartfelt, soulful song, flowing along in rapturous melancholy, in which Beethoven's magnificence appears in great clarity. A short affirmative period, which the composer appends like an echo to every such melody as it melts away in graceful ecstasy, makes the whole very delightful. He breathes his longing in the most flowing melodies, which gently die away through harmonies not interrupted by excessive alternation. In particular, shortly before the final cadence, they rise again to a higher register from the comfort-seeking sixth, still always lingering, until they quiet the soul through the long withheld comfort.<sup>14</sup>

The graceful alternations in the instrumentation also grant a particular satisfaction to this beautiful movement, distinguished by an expressive cantilena, and Beethoven often

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<sup>13</sup>This entire passage is an extended play on words. Kanne says that less accomplished players "sich entsetzen" by the more difficult passages, "absetzen" their bows, "aussetzen" several measures, "hinwegsetzen" difficult fingerings, then again "ansetzen" and once again "sich versetzen" underneath the active orchestra. While they are sitting out, the other players "ersetzen" what they omit.

<sup>14</sup>Kanne is apparently referring to mm. 149 ff., in which the first violins play an expressively significant G—the sixth degree of the B-flat major scale—two measures in a row, the second time rising an octave higher, then leading to a final outpouring of fast triplets that descend to the tonic and precipitate the final cadence.

heightens the expression very cleverly by giving the bright colors of the higher instruments a half-obscure reflection in a singing bass instrument—for example, the cello or bassoon.

His sudden transition to the related key of D major<sup>15</sup> is not one of those which many magicians of the day seemingly blurt out; rather, it is brought about gently, and yet made striking by means of foreign half-tints. The violins perform in this movement a melody used several times, which cannot be surpassed by anything in sweet euphony and sincerity. The violoncellos sing along as well, with the beautiful power of the tenor, in the beautiful harmonic song of the Adagio, and augment the melting expression of the composition.

We frankly acknowledge that Mr. Schuppanzigh affirmed his position as first violinist in this execution, taking it up completely within his spirit, to which we owe the inspired performance of so many earlier works of Beethoven. The unsurpassable Kapellmeister Umlauf,<sup>16</sup> however, who directed the entire symphony from the score, documented in an evident manner his truly outstanding skill, for his eye, moving always with lightning speed, met every solo at the beginning, and heightened every power to energetic exertion.

Both served particularly well in the finale, due to the unbelievable fact that in it Beethoven undertakes something like a recapitulation of his earlier themes, so varied in meter, and presents them one after another. Indeed, when one considers that he has even given the basses a recitative that recurs quite often, which all the other instruments listen to in silence, and that what is more, at the end the full choir, singing, also weaves in Schiller's celebrated Ode to Joy, and that the composer has tried to bring unity to all these varied, nearly incompatible materials, one becomes permeated from within by the gigantic design that his imagination took up in the first moments of its conception, and which is more or less powerfully stamped on the plan and working out of each movement.

The serious calm and power with which the bass introduces the words "Freude, schöner Götterfunken!" likewise characterizes the spirit with which Beethoven meets Schiller's genius. The quartet later enters, and in this realization as well the composer's style, so seriously maintained, in which he took pains to express the stamp of classicism through organic interweaving and meticulous inevitability, shows itself once again. All his phrases are connected with a great presence of mind through the chains of imitation, and thus the liberties that he has not infrequently allowed himself in this creation are covered by a nimbus that gives the whole work its requisite worth.

Many will admittedly be alarmed when considering the figurations that Beethoven sometimes gives the choir to perform, and whose range not infrequently lays claim to the extremes of high and low. Singers who are not skilled at singing in the style will treat the performance

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<sup>15</sup>Mm. 23 ff. and 63 ff.

<sup>16</sup>Michael Umlauf (also Umlauff; 1781–1842) was an Austrian Kapellmeister and composer in Vienna. He had a long association with Beethoven, at whose funeral he served as a wreath-bearer. He also directed the 1814 revival of *Fidelio*. What Kanne neglects to mention at this point—although he alludes to it later—is that Beethoven also participated in the direction of the 9th symphony, but that, unable to hear, he yielded the most important conducting functions to Umlauf.



of their parts as a dangerous test, for here Beethoven's genius has for once not turned back at any barrier, but rather has created for itself a world completely its own, and has moved therein with such powerful strength and freedom that one sees how the present world appears too small for him, and he must build a new one for himself with completely new forms.

For this reason, as has been said already, all the movements of this work bear in their entire economy the stamp of the gigantic, of the monstrous; for this reason, furthermore, its powerful tempos sweep the listener along as though in a storm from one emotion to another, and scarcely let him come to his senses. For this reason, the observant listener feels thoroughly exhausted after this symphony ends, and longs for rest, because his innermost being has had all too much excitement.

Beethoven felt that such an expenditure of variegated powers, along with such a piling up of much apparently heterogeneous material, must give rise to an even greater use of all his powers. For this reason he let the Turkish music enter in the midst of his chorus.

Probably no one will be so foolish as to maintain that the composition remains in a so-called Turkish style. The shrill and thundering percussion instruments strengthen the effect even of works like this, which arise from genuinely German breasts with genuinely German consecration. Many a composer, despite dealing with genuinely Christian subjects, writes in a genuinely Turkish manner, and thus could be called a musical renegade, for the sublime religion of art was either unknown to him, or not yet sufficiently holy for him to perform his duty in accordance with its fundamental principles. One often finds such Islamic qualities in arias, duets, etc. with very sparse accompaniment, but even more often in those that are dedicated to the service of the church, but which unfortunately all too often flow from atheistic pens. For the genuinely Turkish lies in the recklessness with which a composer puts to the sword all the laws of art that cultivated nations embrace.

Beethoven's oriental percussion orchestra remains in very good agreement with good taste, as well as with the more noble style, since he only allows their strengthening potential to enter at times of great emphasis and on syllables of particular significance. His imagination is constantly creating, and perhaps is not satisfied with a mere system of continual reinforcement. Rather, the spirit finds ever new material with which to reveal the depth of the diversely varying, rich inventive spirit.

If a capable spirit sets all the powers of music loose from their mystical ambush-point, he may finally also make use of the greatest forces that his spirit and sagacity can command in order to give more emphasis to his more deeply based and newly chosen language.

In short, the master wanted it, even if it has not pleased many of those who censure everything that they have not yet tried.

The passionate essence of the finale, which fights and struggles with all the elements and powers of music, cannot, in fact, be grasped at first hearing. For this reason, it may have happened that among the number of listeners who were enthusiastic, there were also those whose judgment could not completely concur with the enthusiastic applause of Beethoven's devoted admirers.

The more such a work goes beyond the norm of all others, the more freedom it develops in its course, the less one finds in it of the familiar that one has already grown to love, the more it ultimately stretches expectation through its length, the easier it is for various viewpoints to take shape among those to whom the public has allowed a voice, either because of their position, their arrogance, or even custom. For this reason, many viewpoints, like those that other journals have already expressed, were not completely sympathetic to it.<sup>17</sup>

However, those who, in agreement with the more educated world of music, consider Beethoven's originality and free peculiarities to be a splendid manifestation of this century, declared themselves all the more decisively.

We come now to the three pieces which were taken from his new mass, specially distinguished through the humanity and the liberality toward art of several European monarchs.

One must first grant here that distinguished works of such a great composer may exceed the customary norm in regard to length, since the master's creative power saw fit to sacrifice the barriers required by the rite to his inspiration and powerfully prevailing creative pleasure.

We admit that such a [setting of the] high office is not appropriate to the allotted time of one hour. Art may assert its rights, however, by bringing out its work as a new artistic production, without any other purpose, and renouncing the suitability required or stipulated by other laws.<sup>18</sup>

Beethoven, however, has accustomed the world per *praescriptionem regularem*—that is, for thirty years—to paying him the favor of conforming to his whims. He possesses such great privileges that one gladly forgives him such *licentias poeticas*. His works that have appeared for the last thirty years, however, also stand in such an honored position that no one will readily give way to the impulses of a fault-finding pedantry. Time and experience, those two great Areopagites, will have far more right to judge it.

If, then, these movements of the holy Mass surpass what is customary in extent, at least they do not do this in regard to other requirements, for example the strict style.

Beethoven's genius has understood how to impart to the solo, as well as the quartet and the combined effect of the other voices, a completely outstanding, elevated religiosity, and has worked with very great diligence in precisely these pieces.

The Kyrie, written in a brilliant style that is nevertheless wonderful and free of any excess of concertizing passagework, exhibits several beautiful *canti firmi*, which are enlivened and made interesting in a very inventive manner through contrapuntal countersubjects. The deep,

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<sup>17</sup>It is hard to know which reports Kanne is referring to here, since this was one of the earliest published commentaries on the 9th symphony.

<sup>18</sup>The original plan for the concert involved a performance of the *Missa Solemnis* in its entirety; this was rejected on the grounds of the length of the program. The censors, however, almost prevented the music from being performed at all, objecting to a performance of liturgical music in a theatrical setting. The ultimate description of the three movements as "hymns" (a designation that was also used when portions of the Mass in C were performed at the Niederrheinisches Musikfest in Cologne) resulted from an attempted compromise in this regard. See Elliot Forbes, rev. and ed., *Thayer's Life of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), henceforth Thayer-Forbes, 906–7.



agreeable, and often soulful progression of the melodies presses upon the listener's heart, but the working out of this movement, as well as of the following, is not perhaps a so-called thankful work, taken in the sense of "the singer by trade." The execution here demands great attentiveness, the strictest intonation, and a sense of meter that is beyond question.

A Kapellmeister will have his hands full with it, for our admirable Umlauf quite needed all of his skill, despite the participation of so many individual accomplished choral singers, along with several dilettantes, in order to give all the entrances the requisite fiery power, hold all the ties firmly, and keep all the syncopations—in which Beethoven often attempts the utmost right from his earliest periods—precisely in place.

How it came about that the singers by trade, who practice constantly, were not always completely firm in the stirrups, but sometimes let themselves be thrown from the saddle when the pace was at its calmest—we do not know how to account for this.

A principal cause is probably the fact that such music can only first be properly understood, and then well executed, through many rehearsals. The choir of the Imperial Royal Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor, however, deserves an honorable mention in this regard, for its achievement gave clear proof of the ability of its members.

If the solo singing did not always go well for those individuals accustomed to the operatic style, despite their otherwise acknowledged bravura, this must be ascribed either to too few rehearsals or to a manner of singing too much at variance with their customary style.<sup>19</sup>

Mr. Seipelt pleased most of all. At a few places the remaining voices stood out in momentary beauty.<sup>20</sup> This applies to all three movements of the mass.

The Credo, B-flat major, is distinguished, along with just as dignified a handling of the singing voices, which always proceed in the strict style, through a very graceful treatment of the violoncellos, which, in a beautiful exchange, repeatedly occupy the upper positions with lyrical melodies. Beethoven has given a special meaning to the word *descendit* by making the syllable *de*, which seemingly has the character of an upbeat, into a long one, and taking the relative weight away from the two following syllables, *scendit*. In the "Incarnatus est" there is a particularly beautiful exchange between the voices and the instruments; the Crucifixus presses on the soul with expressive melody, and fills it with all the shuddering premonition of that great catastrophe.

"Et ascendit in coelum" is beautifully fugal, but treated more freely. In the "Et vitam venturi" etc., on the contrary, the master steps forth with a *Fuga a due soggetti* in which he unites all his artistry with all the boldness of the inventive spirit.

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<sup>19</sup>Describing the performance at the Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor, Thayer-Forbes records that the solo singers studied the music under Beethoven's supervision. "Accustomed to Rossini's music, the principal singers found it difficult to assimilate the Beethovenian manner. ... They pleaded with the composer for changes which would lighten their labors, but he was adamant. Unger called him 'a tyrant over all the vocal organs' to his face, but when he still refused to grant her petitions she turned to Sontag and said: 'Well, then we must go on torturing ourselves in the name of God!'" (Thayer-Forbes, 907).

<sup>20</sup>The vocal soloists in the performances of the Missa and 9th symphony were Henriette Sontag (1806–1854), Caroline Unger (1803–1877), Anton Haitzinger (1796–1869), and Seipelt (first name unknown), who, according to Thayer-Forbes, 906, substituted at the last minute for Josef Preisinger (1792–1865).

As regards the performance of the three hymns and the symphony in general, and the cooperation of the individuals, we acknowledge with satisfaction the laudable zeal of most of those who offered their powers. Every individual must feel honored to be able to apply his talents in due proportion to such a great work of such a great master.

If, now, this takes place with the appropriate seriousness and with the respect due to such a work in every detail, then it will also be evident as regards the work as a whole; in particular, however, the degree of its artistic consecration and excellence becomes visible thereby.

The admirable Capellmeister Mr. Umlauf, who took over the direction of these great works, and performed with such aptitude, discretion, and energy, stands in first place in every respect, since on both performance days, the mostly auspicious success of such a difficult undertaking was owing to his artistic skill. The same applies to Mr. Schuppanzigh. He is an acknowledged master.

The impossibility of holding as many rehearsals as would have been necessary to give such difficult, artistic music with brilliant effect, with a precision that predominates in all individual parts, and particularly with the observation, so important in this regard, of the pianos and fortes, has such a variety of causes, which would be difficult to eliminate.

First of all, there is certainly no means to assure the contractor of such a performance from the start of a favorable prospect that the great, nearly inconceivable costs will be covered. This would mean the return of that former time in which a van Swieten<sup>21</sup> knew how to animate Haydn's genius to such activities.

Only an inspired Maecenas, or union of several, could bring about the opportunity to hear such a work in a manner worthy not only of the artistic product, but also of the great imperial city.

It is very natural that the practicing musicians by trade, who truly set the example at such a grand execution through energetic attacks, through truly fiery meter and the necessary skills, since they are played together—it is very natural, we say, that with frequent repetitions of the rehearsals these must neglect the business, so necessary to their livelihood, of giving instruction in the various branches of music, and see their daily income diminish—one cannot thus also demand that, without prejudice to their veneration of the great masters of composition, they should hold long-lasting and tiring rehearsals gratis. Whoever has a conception, though, of the yet further costly preparations that are demanded of the bold spirit who wants to bring his work to performance at his own risk, will find it understandable if, at such an opportunity, a composer would rather have a Croesus for a friend, or if he would prefer to see

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<sup>21</sup>Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733–1803) was an Austrian diplomat and important patron of music. He is credited with stimulating a widespread interest in the music of Handel and Bach in the last few decades of the 18th century. Haydn and Mozart were among his acquaintances, and the increasing evidence of neo-Baroque contrapuntal writing in many of their later works can be partially ascribed to van Swieten's influence. He also organized the commissioning and first performances of the choral version of Haydn's *Seven Last Words* in 1796, of *The Creation* in 1798, and of *The Seasons* in 1801, and he prepared their German texts, which in the latter case was largely his own invention. Beethoven was also a member of his circle during his early years in Vienna, and his Symphony no. 1, Op. 21, is dedicated to van Swieten.

himself promoted to the position of a Nero, the most noteworthy virtuoso of all time, who, as is well known, not only had his own orchestra consisting of several thousand artists, but who also took several thousand listeners with him everywhere, who increased and spread the fame of their protector once and for all.

For the cash-box of an artist like Beethoven, who has never abandoned his Viennese fatherland,<sup>22</sup> the grand, internationally recognized cradle of the arts, even if other lands may have offered him a brilliant fortune in regard to his external destiny—who preferred to create for himself, through his ingenious works, the brilliant opinion of the society of great artists of all kinds that has blossomed here for thirty years, rather than improving his luck in unfamiliar surroundings—for such an unselfish artist, who strives only for the elevation of art, the material and inherently odious business of having a score copied out in so many parts is already a troublesome effort, but a particularly troublesome sacrifice.

What feeling person, who was present at both performance days and saw the transfigured master at the side of the directing Capellmeister Umlauf, reading along in the score, feeling doubly every small nuance and gradation of delivery and almost indicating them<sup>23</sup>—what person who loves musical art in general will not wish from the heart that the reward for his exertions, whose size and value is unfortunately determined during the artist's lifetime by such unartistic occasions, causes, and motivations, and which is often endangered by completely unexpected external influences—might cheer the master and lift him beyond troublesome circumstances! The extent of the enthusiasm of the nation's most educated people puts in perspective the judgment of those who do not perceive in art anything more than a means of heightening sensual pleasure—and who were absent.

We have yet to mention the participation of Signora Dardanelli, Signor Donzelli,<sup>24</sup> and Signor Botticelli in the production, and candidly admit that we have left this subject almost to the end, since it is a joy when the critic can express his praise completely without reservation, completely freely.

Since the contractors of the Imperial Royal Theater Near the Kärnthnerthor took on this second performance at their fortune and their risk, and in the process had allotted to

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<sup>22</sup>A footnote to the original report reads: "We understand by this that, through his longstanding activity within the walls of this city, he has formed for himself here a second fatherland, which venerates him."

<sup>23</sup>Kanne's description of Beethoven at these performances is somewhat at variance with the account that has become legendary, according to which Henriette Sontag had to pry the composer from the score at the end of the performance and turn him around so he could see the cheers of the audience. If Beethoven was as aware of what was happening as Kanne suggests, he would certainly have realized that the performance was over on his own. Kanne thus gives credence to the alternative suggestion: that this famous incident occurred at the end of the scherzo, and not of the entire symphony.

<sup>24</sup>Domenico Donzelli (1790–1873) was a prominent Italian tenor. Rossini composed the male title role in *Torvaldo e Dorliska* for him, as did Mercadante in *Elisa e Claudio*, whose premiere in 1821 was one of Donzelli's greatest successes. He also sang Pollione at the first performance of Bellini's *Norma* in 1831. See K. J. Kutsch and Leo Riemens, *Großes Sängerlexikon* (Bern: A. Francke, 1987), 770–71.

Mr. van Beethoven a specified Aversional Quantum,<sup>25</sup> the aforementioned, celebrated singers were brought into participation by them.

Beethoven therefore entrusted them with the performance of one of the older works of his composition, a very beautiful, expressive trio in the Italian language.

The blindest enthusiast for everything that is German and against everything that is Italian would here have called out a loud bravo and bestowed his most unambiguous approval in glad enchantment—so admirable, so artistically correct, so fiery and tasteful was the delivery of this trio, beautifully composed in every regard.

The imposing tenor voice of Mr. Donzelli resounded like pure bronze in the powerful and beautiful oscillations of the melody, and echoed in every heart throughout the broad hall. Signora Dardanelli declaimed her part with the highest taste and the greatest vocal dexterity. Mr. Botticelli stood as firm as a pilaster, and it seemed as if his powerful notes carried the entire world of charming sounds all by themselves. The great clarity in the recitative, the correctness and expressive passion reflected in the singing of all three individuals made this piece of music into a highlight. Signor David also appeared in an aria that is all too well known both to him and to us, and developed his skill and artistic chains of trills.<sup>26</sup>

The celebrated Beethoven can consider this day one of the most beautiful of his life, for the enthusiasm of the listeners attained the highest degree conceivable after every piece of music by his masterful hand.

It was a day of celebration for all true friends of music.

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<sup>25</sup>The concert on 23 May lost money, but Beethoven reluctantly accepted 500 florins that he had been guaranteed beforehand. See Thayer-Forbes, 912–13.

<sup>26</sup>The aria was “Di tanti palpiti” from Rossini’s *Tancredi*. This already well known piece remained one of Rossini’s most popular compositions throughout the 19th century. It was even quoted by Wagner in the chorus of tailors in Act III of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

## 125.2.

Gottfried Weber.

Excerpt from “Glances at the Most Recent Appearances in Musical Literature.”

*Caecilia* 1

(October 1824): 373.

There are great things to announce in the area of instrumental music as well;<sup>1</sup> truly and literally speaking, the press has already reported gigantic things to us about Beethoven’s newest symphony with choruses. “The symphony,” says the previously mentioned Morgenblatt, “concludes with the greatest that this highest genre of instrumental works has to show” etc., and the mentioned Leipz. Mus. Ztg.<sup>2</sup> almost places this work of music above all previous ones, particularly in regard to the Andante, and pre-eminently to the finale. The passages in question may be reprinted here.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This statement follows a description of the *Missa Solemnis*, Op. 123.

<sup>2</sup>That is, *Leipziger Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*.

<sup>3</sup>There follows a quotation from *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 26 (1824), col. 440f.:

Whoever proceeds from the premise that certainly no more exquisite Andante could be devised than that in the seventh symphony, let him hear this one (in B-flat), and he will at least start to waver in his contention. What heavenly melody; how surprising the turns and combinations of the motives; what artistic and tasteful working out; how natural is everything, with the most plentiful abundance; what sublimity of expression and imposing simplicity! The master expects much, very much, of his instrumentalists, almost surpassing human ability; in return, though, he brings forth such magical effects, for which others, indeed with the same means, but without the rays of Promethean fire, will always struggle in vain!—The finale (D minor) announces itself like a shattering thunderclap, with the harshly piercing minor ninth above the dominant chord. All previously heard principal themes are brought out before us once again in short periods, in colorful succession in the manner of a potpourri, as though reflected from a mirror. Then the contrabasses growl a recitative that sounds symbolically like the question: ‘What should happen now?, and answer themselves with a gently rolling motive in the major mode, from out of which an all-powerful crescendo develops in measured gradations through the gradual entry of all the instruments in wondrously magnificent combinations, without Rossinian Alberti bass and third progressions. When, though, after an invitation from the bass soloist, the full choir also joins into the majestic splendor of the song of praise to joy, the happy heart opens itself wide to the delightful feeling of soulful enjoyment, and a thousand throats rejoice: ‘Hail! Hail! Hail! to godlike musical art! Praise! Glory! And thanks to your most worthy high priests!’—The reviewer now sits coolly at his writing desk, but this moment will remain unforgettable for him; here art and truth celebrate their most brilliant triumph, and one could rightfully say: non plus ultra!—Who could succeed in surpassing this unnameable point?

## 125.3.

Johann Baptist Rousseau.

Excerpt from “Rhenish Music Festival in Aachen.”

*Rheinische Flora*, no. 82

(April 1825).<sup>1</sup>

(Mentioned: Op. 55, Symphony no. 3; Op. 67, Symphony no. 5;  
Op. 68, Symphony no. 6; and Op. 80, Choral Fantasy)

Beethoven's most recent (ninth) symphony opened the second evening of the festival. It has until now been given, first in Vienna, in Paris and in London, and certainly everywhere with the most thunderous applause of the connoisseurs. In London, specifically, there was so much interest in its composer that Beethoven received an invitation to come there with an annual income of 3,000 pounds.<sup>2</sup>

As little as it is possible to state a precise judgment of the symphony after hearing it two or three times, which can never be the case with Beethoven's music in general, I will nevertheless try to say a few words in evaluation of this ingenious, gigantic work.<sup>3</sup>

His most recent symphony is just as new and original as every earlier one by Beethoven, not only through the fact that the musical ideas hurry upon each other,<sup>4</sup> but also through its form, since the finale consists of choruses from Schiller's “Hymn to Joy.” Earlier, Beethoven had already accomplished something similar, namely in his fantasies with choruses, only with the difference that these fantasies were designated for the keyboard, while the symphony is, on the contrary, a grand instrumental piece. Perhaps it was his intention to make an attempt

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<sup>1</sup>This is an excerpt from a report on the same performance described in 125.4, 125.6, and 125.7, which also included selections from Mozart's *Davidde penitente* and overture to *The Magic Flute*, as well as Beethoven's *Christus am Ölberge*, Op. 85.

<sup>2</sup>A footnote to the original report reads: “Beethoven declined this offer; he may well not have wanted to stand beneath Rossini with the English, to whom they paid such enormous sums.” For details of this second invitation to London, see Thayer-Forbes, 929–31. It is not clear how Rousseau arrived at the figure of 3,000 pounds.

<sup>3</sup>“What has been reported so far in the press amounts to simple praise; a critique of the symphony has yet to appear. The second book volume of *Cäcilia*, p. 200, provides the earliest report from Vienna on the first performance.” Rousseau seems unaware of Kanne's report in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung mit besonderer Rücksicht auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat* 8 (5 June, 9 June, 16 June 1824): 149–51, 157–60 and 173–74.

<sup>4</sup>A footnote to the original report reads: “If Beethoven has ever made an exception to this, and varied a theme, this can most readily be admitted to have happened in the first movements of the third (E-flat major), fifth (C minor), and sixth (F major).”

When the author speaks of Beethoven varying a theme, he evidently means not the process of thematic variation as now understood, but rather that of motivic development, which can (as in these symphonies) lead to long-range concentration on a small amount of musical material.

to reproduce in words that which he had already expressed in earlier symphonies, namely in the fifth.<sup>5</sup> Although it will not be easy for another musician to imitate Beethoven in this form and take the same freedom unto himself, I cannot help observing that, were this to happen, pure instrumental music could lose a great deal, since the symphony (which, moreover, is an original German production) should remain the most brilliant and best part of it, and should certainly not be blended together with vocal music.

But I repeat that this fear is not likely to be fulfilled, since the sublime flight of genius is inimitable.

Apart from Beethoven, there has probably never lived anyone who understands how to treat the orchestra as he does, and who does what he wants with the instruments. His new symphony is once again strong proof of this. How magnificently is the whole laid out, how ingeniously the details distributed! From beginning to end there struggles forth from the chaos of notes, now gently, now stormily, a harmony that will only arise in its full glory if the symphony is heard more often and better understood.

At the performance the scherzo was omitted, although it had been rehearsed, since lack of time made abridgment necessary. Otherwise, the union accomplished as much as was possible after clearing away the unspeakable difficulties connected with the performance of this symphony. In the solos and choruses the whole joyous heaven of divinity smiled down upon the world; it is no giddy enthusiasm for me to maintain that the setting of the passage “happy as his suns fly” is music of the spheres. With these divine notes, the flowery fetters of harmony embraced all beings, and the kiss of love applied to the whole world.

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<sup>5</sup>It is interesting that Rousseau mentions the 5th symphony, which is the only previous symphony of Beethoven to trace a long-range progression from minor to major.



**125.4.**

*Rheinische Flora*, no. 61  
(17 April 1825).

**I**t is most gratifying that, apart from Mozart, only pieces of music by masters from our homeland are being performed there: for Beethoven and Ries grew up artistically in the Rhineland. ... Beethoven's most recent symphony, with choruses from Schiller's "Song to Joy" (manuscript) introduces the second day. The public is very curious about this work in particular, which was received in Vienna with the most extraordinary applause on the part of all connoisseurs, and found just evaluation in all musical journals, particularly in the beginning of *Cäcilia*. Considering the zeal of the directors and the ceaseless activity of all musical lovers and participants in the festival, it can be expected that it will be executed in a manner worthy of the composer.



## 125.5.

Excerpt from “News: Frankfurt am Main.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 27

(27 April 1825), col. 279–80.<sup>1</sup>

A novelty that greatly interested all connoisseurs and closer friends of musical art was Beethoven’s most recent symphony, whose finale is written with choruses, to which the composer underlaid the words of Schiller’s *Hymn to Joy*. This work is not yet familiar to the public; it will, however, appear soon at the publishing house of the Schott music shop in Mainz. It seems to us—as far as it is suitable for us to judge this composition after one hearing—that the genius of the great master was not present at its conception, and that it missed the right path with a purely formal and combinatorial striving.

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<sup>1</sup>This is an excerpt from a report on a Grosse musikalische Akademie given on Good Friday, 1 April, by Kapellmeister Carl Guhr (1787–1848), one of the leading conductors in Germany at the time. Although the entire program is not specified, the correspondent complains that “Rossiniana and other Italian musical amusements” were heard in place of the Passion oratorio that the previous music director would have performed on this occasion. It is certainly reasonable to suppose that he was judging the 9th symphony by the same standards, and found the last movement, at least, to be too light in tone for a performance on the most solemn holiday of the church year.

## 125.6.

Excerpt from “News: From the Lower Rhine.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 27

(29 June 1825), col. 444–47.

The musical association of the lower Rhine, which has made it its task to prepare a yearly festival on Pentecost to the muse of musical art through performance of the most significant works of older and more recent times, had chosen Aachen as its gathering place for the year 1825, and this city to be sure for the first time. For, although all of the bigger cities of the lower Rhine have been admitted to the association, the performances had until now taken place only in the three cities of Cologne, Düsseldorf and Elberfeld, for these were more suited to the purpose through their location and accommodations. The newly built playhouse in Aachen, however, offered an equally comfortable site, and its love of art the remaining means to lure the festival, and so the wish of Aachen’s friends of music to celebrate Cäcilia’s happy festival within the walls of the old imperial city was gladly granted. ...

The concert on the second day began with Beethoven’s new symphony with choruses. I scarcely know what to say about this colossal work, for the judgment of which I certainly feel that the customary standards are completely insufficient. What is more, it was not given in its entirety, since the Adagio<sup>1</sup> was partially cut, and the minuet and trio<sup>2</sup> completely so. It was exactly these omitted pieces that, in the judgment of all those who heard them at the rehearsals, are the *most outstanding*. The ones that were given, however, can also be called extraordinary in every regard, and if at first hearing much seems baroque and strange to the unbiased listener, the eye is nevertheless struck soon and often enough by the lightning bolts that Beethoven’s spirit lets loose throughout. This applies particularly to the first Allegro<sup>3</sup> and the Adagio. The former begins with a tremolo in the string instruments, out of which individual wind instruments gradually emerge, like foggy forms from the calm sea, and then at once becomes powerful and grandiose with a series of self-sufficient chords. The Adagio seems to me (at least in the first half) to portray a separation of the two kinds of instruments, with the wind instruments breathing deep melancholy, and the horn in particular resounding with an

<sup>1</sup>Actually Adagio molto e cantabile—Andante moderato.

<sup>2</sup>The second movement is actually a scherzo and trio marked Molto vivace.

<sup>3</sup>Actually Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso.

extremely melancholy call, so that all seems to join together only in a quietly weeping lament. In the finale, however, joy breaks loose in an unrestrained storm, which, at the performance under discussion here, was certainly somewhat unexpected, but is undoubtedly appropriately prepared by the intervening scherzo.<sup>4</sup> It is not to be denied that this finale with its choruses is the weaker part of the ingenious work. Here as well, incomparable individual scenes and passages are not lacking, but on the other hand—I do not hesitate to express it, since not to speak from the heart concerning Beethoven would be unpardonable—the whole is lacking in just proportion and practicability. The singing voices, namely soprano and bass, lie almost without interruption in their highest possible range, and the bass drum with triangle and piccolo, and likewise the contrabassoon and contrabass, are treated in a very obligato manner, and lay claim to more than is rightly theirs. Nevertheless, what has been said of Händel can be said of Beethoven: even in error—great!

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<sup>4</sup>The writer seems unaware that Beethoven placed the scherzo before the slow movement.

## 125.7.

F.

“The Lower Rhine Music Festival, 1825 in Aachen.”

*Caecilia* 4

(18246): 66–67.<sup>1</sup>

For the second day of the festival, 23 May, was chosen for performance:

1. Symphony by Beethoven with choruses from Schiller’s “Hymn to Joy.”<sup>2</sup>
2. Nos. 1. 2. 5. 6. 9. from *Davidde penitente*, cantata by Mozart.
3. Overture from his Magic Flute.
4. Christus am Ölberge, oratorio by Beethoven.

The symphony was a difficult problem, which was nevertheless suitably solved. In no. 17 of the Leipz. mus. Ztg.<sup>3</sup> it was said, after the performance of this work that took place in Frankfurt am Main,<sup>4</sup> that the genius of the great master seems not to have been present at the conception of the same, etc. This judgment seems to us somewhat hasty, since with Beethoven, easily comprehensible presentation and immediate intelligibility are not as customary as becoming intimately familiar with him on repeated acquaintance. It is not to be denied, however, that the latter can scarcely happen as cordially here as with other compositions of his, particularly his symphonies, that are dear to every friend of instrumental music. It seems to us that the master wanted to portray, in these instrumental movements (of which we did not, however, hear the scherzo, since it was omitted in Aachen due to time considerations), confusion, the driving and urgency of great crowds—for example, at a folk festival—in which at times a powerful voice asserts itself here and there, but soon sinks in the confusion, in the giddiness and wild jubilation, until the singer finally succeeds in stilling the tumult. His summons is now followed by all, and now begins the song of joy, in which the whole people joins. The melody of this song can only be effective if sung by the greatest possible forces. This was less noticeable here.—The composer is just as unclear to us in the inserted solo parts, since their effect, after the employment of such great power, remained imperfect. On the other hand,

<sup>1</sup>The author of this report is identified only by the initial F.

<sup>2</sup>A footnote to the original report reads: “Just now appearing at B. Schott in Mainz.”

<sup>3</sup>*Leipziger musikalische Zeitung*.

<sup>4</sup>*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 27 (27 April 1825), col. 279–80.

individual passages are always alive to us, among which we signify in particular those where, before the final chorus, the four solo singing voices suddenly emerge from the most powerful fortissimo and Allegro of the whole, and perform a cadenza at the words “all people become brothers, where your gentle wing carries.” We remember its extraordinary effect with joy.

## 125.8.

Gottfried Weber.

Excerpt from “Germany in the First Quarter of the 19th Century:  
Views of a Friend of Music.”

*Caecilia* 4  
(1826), 109–10.<sup>1</sup>

What other nation has anything to set beside the symphonies of our Haydn and Mozart? Or the even more boldly heightened ones of the great hero of the instrumental music of our time, our Beethoven, whose last grand symphony with choruses (just now appearing in parts and score at Schott in Mainz) even seems to hint at the ominous culmination and turning point of this area of tone poetry. Which nation, I repeat, has something to put beside these instrumental works of our great masters?—or even just their violin quartets and quintets etc.?—and are not Händel’s and Haydn’s oratorios (I do not need to lay on the scales several that would be worthy to be named next to these, namely Mozart’s, Händel’s, Beethoven’s, Fr. Schneider’s and Spohr’s, Weber’s, and yet many others in addition)—are not all of these our German national property?

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<sup>1</sup>A note accompanying the extended article from which this is excerpted explains that it was originally intended for the English-language publication *European Review*, and thus contains much that is already familiar to Germans. The fact that it was intended for an English audience, however, makes the final evocation of Handel’s oratorios, which had long been considered a part of England’s cultural heritage, all the more provocative. Cf. the discussion of Hiller’s revival of Handel’s *Messiah* in Germany in Friedrich Rochlitz’s commentary on Beethoven’s Op. 131, which appeared in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 30 (23 and 30 July 1828), col. 485–495 and 501–9.

## 125.9.

Adolf Bernhard Marx.

“Symphony with Concluding Chorus on Schiller’s Ode to Joy.”

*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3

(22 November 1826), 373–78.<sup>1</sup>

(With Op. 123, *Missa Solemnis*, and Op. 124, *Consecration of the House* Overture;  
Op. 80, Fantasy for keyboard, choir, and orchestra; mentioned:  
*Fidelio* and various other works)

Surely, without being aware of it, Beethoven has twice elevated his own artistic individuality into the content of a work of art. The compositions in which this has happened gain thereby a special significance beyond that of the expression that prevails in them in general. This is all the more important the greater is the man who presents himself to us in them, and the more the traits of his likeness reappear in other musical artists—according to their kinship with him, the model of his temporal and artistic peers.

The first of the works meant here is Beethoven’s Fantasy with Orchestra and Choir. The title, which joins together apparent extremes—the freedom of an individual artist completely left to himself and the strict fetters that are indispensable to the working together of orchestral and choral voices—should already, at the first appearance of this work, have made the musical world attentive to the fact that something entirely new in conception was to be expected here, and that every previous standard had to be set aside. This is all the more true since the fantasy is not merely a free prelude for the pianist, before the beginning of an orchestral and choral movement; rather, its character is as earnestly maintained by the solo player, and likewise observed by the orchestra, as one has only ever been able to expect from the best improvisers. Frequent misinterpretation and unjust judgment would thereby have been avoided, and the work would long have been better known to the greater public. Its content, however, as has already once been expressed, is nothing other than the depiction of the spirit of the musical artist rising up in improvisation to free creation and unlimited control over all the orchestral and singing voices. As far as we see our master extend his flight beyond the limited and limiting keyboard, that is the point from which we can trace the ascent of the greatest, if not of all. —This would be the extended meaning of this work, and only through its particular content (about which nothing more specific will be reported here) does it signify that Beethoven is its author and nearest original. It is also noteworthy that it was exactly he, the greatest instrumental composer, above all musical artists, whose source of creativity remained so far within himself, and who was so filled thereby, that it urged him to preserve it,

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<sup>1</sup>This is the first formal review written after the publication of the 9th symphony, by Schott, in August 1826.

as though as an historical hieroglyph, in a particular work of new construction. Two artists, more celebrated as performers than as composers, followed in his footsteps, and through the irresistible impulse of the idea that lay in this new form, one (Hummel) has formed bravura variations with singing (Körner's "faithful death")—the other (Fränzl) a violin concerto with choir.<sup>2</sup>—

The second work belongs even more characteristically to Beethoven's individuality; this is the above-mentioned (ninth) symphony with choir, which is now beginning to be known to the public.

The first glance at the score already instructs us that an entirely new construction has been completed here, which can only be derived and recognized from a new fundamental idea. As soon as instruments and singing voices come together, the former subordinate themselves to the latter, just as everything surrounding them does to people; for in song, which encompasses speech and the world of sounds dwelling within people, the human is portrayed, contrasting with the instruments as with the nonhuman. —Now, to whoever imagined that this new Beethovenian creation would be a vocal composition in the hitherto customary sense, the accomplishment must appear incomprehensible and incomplete. Such a long prelude (four grand symphonic movements)<sup>3</sup> to a moderately long cantata appears incomprehensible; the treatment, indeed even the dismemberment of the poem, appears unsatisfying and incomplete. After these introductory words:

“Oh friends, not these sounds! Let us rather strike up more agreeable and more joyful ones!”

Beethoven used only the following strophes from it:

“Joy, beautiful divine spark,  
Daughter of Elysium,  
We enter, drunk with fire,  
Heavenly one, into your sanctuary!  
Your magic binds back together,  
What custom in its strictness has separated;  
All people become brothers,  
Where your gentle wing carries.

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<sup>2</sup>*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 22, 465, reports on a performance in Munich of a set of variations by Hummel for violin, cello, and piano with choral refrain; several later performances are also cited. Ferdinand Fränzl's *Der Reich der Töne* was written for violin with orchestral and choral accompaniment.

<sup>3</sup>Marx is describing the orchestral introduction to the finale as a separate movement, with the choral section that follows constituting the “moderately long cantata.”



Whoever has succeeded in the great chance,  
Of being a friend to a friend,  
Whoever has won a gracious woman,  
Should join in with jubilation!  
Indeed—even whoever has only a soul,  
To call his own upon the earth!  
And whoever has never been able to do this, should steal  
Weeping from this band.

All beings drink joy  
At the breast of nature;  
All the good, all the evil  
Follow in her rosy footsteps.  
She gave us kisses and grapes,  
A friend tested in death.  
Ecstasy was given to the worm  
And the cherub stands before God.

Happy, as his suns fly,  
Through the sumptuous plane of heaven,  
Joyous, like a hero to victory,  
Run, brother, your path.

Joy beautiful divine spark etc.

Be embraced, millions!  
This kiss for the whole world,  
Brothers, over the tent of stars  
A loving father must dwell.  
Do you bow down, millions,  
Can you sense the creator, world?  
Seek him above the tent of stars,  
He must dwell above the stars.

Joy beautiful divine spark etc.  
Be embraced millions etc.

After this we must thus already recognize that we are dealing with something other than a vocal composition, and we must expect something more elevated than a cantata on Schiller's

ode if we see the grand musical work as being divided into two halves, a self-sufficient symphony and a solo and choral song fastened onto the completed symphony.

And this double edifice, this deliberate and thoroughgoing separation of the two kingdoms in the world of music, which required these introductory words to join them together—

“Oh friends, not these sounds” etc.

this mode of perception leads us to Beethoven’s characteristic essence, setting it forth for us so precisely that we dare to express it: as that fantasy is the history of his artistic beginnings, portrayed through the medium of art, so is the symphony with choir the artistically expressed recognition of his action.

This is, signified in brief, his involvement and full immersion in instrumental music. As magnificent as is what he has given us in his opera *Fidelio*, in his masses and other vocal pieces, in general one has nevertheless had to recognize the circle of his highest and most individual accomplishments precisely in instrumental music. It could even be suggested that the greatest beauties in his vocal composition belong in essence to the instrumental world. He has finally even been torn away from all living influence of human speech, from all fellowship, by the misfortune, unheard of for a creative musical artist, of deafness, in order to submerge himself, completely undisturbed, in the contemplation of the instrumental, and, in his last works, to explore and reveal in it hitherto unsuspected depths. The constructions and combinations in the instrumental world are endless, as in scenic and otherwise non-human nature. Now the life of nature touches on human expression and song, and one attempts to hear human meaning and song-speech in it; now what is formed dissolves into its element, simple sound, and the simplest, lost form shapes itself thereby in manifold combinations back into a great, meaningful whole, as leaf upon leaf portrays a tree to us. In contrast to this, pure song, the highest development in nature, is given to people as their own, conquering in its simplicity the protean instrumental, with its highest spiritual content.

Beethoven now seems to have expressed this mode of perception in the symphony with choir. He himself, ruling in the magical instrumental world, listens to a simple song from a human throat, and he raises up the true, guiltless song manner, humanity’s own language—she, the preserver and the most spiritual expression of blessed fellowship—to the throne from which he himself stands farther apart, in order to open up and win new kingdoms for the human spirit. He has not sought out a random concluding chorus for an instrumental piece (which needed no foreign conclusion), nor a composition of Schiller’s ode, nor the musical expression of its content, or even of its words—just song, the simplest manner of human musical speech, in order to glorify it with the victory over the world of instruments. This elevation seemed to him so certain and unavoidable, singing in itself such an intimate attribute of humanity, and so powerful within him, that he let the voices go ahead and rule, so that they should win as though by themselves, independent of any care taken by the composer for the declamatory, melismatic, and harmonic meaning of the song.

And so, in order not to misunderstand the singing in this symphony, for example the first melody (see Figure 1), one must certainly keep in mind the fundamental idea of the work: the opposition of the two kingdoms of sound—as we have tried to indicate above—but also the powerful separation of the whole.

From out of the simple sonorities of the second violins, violoncellos, horns, later also the oboes, flutes, bassoons (see Figure 2), the idea flashes forth and forms itself mightily before our eyes—to the above accompaniment (see Figure 3). For now, one can imagine how every-



FIGURE 1. *Op. 125, 4th movement, mm. 241–48, bass solo*



FIGURE 2. *Op. 125, 1st movement, m. 1, reduction*



FIGURE 3. *Op. 125, 1st movement, mm. 2–5, reduction of string parts, with one measure line omitted; mm. 17 (with upbeat)–21, theme as stated by the strings in unison at the octave*

thing takes shape from here on by recalling Beethoven's greatest works. The instrumental multitudes have never been called up more mightily or with more freedom; they have never been more decisively contrasted in their grand divisions into string and instrumental choirs, as for example in the second principal phrase (see Figure 4)—and their storm has never been conjured up more powerfully than at the conclusion of this titanic movement (see Figure 5)—

The image shows a musical score for two systems. The first system is labeled 'Bläser' (winds) and 'Saiten' (strings). The wind part is in the upper staff, marked 'piano', and features a melodic line with some grace notes. The string part is in the lower staff, marked 'piano', and features a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The second system continues the same parts, with the wind part showing more complex rhythmic patterns and the string part providing a steady accompaniment.

FIGURE 4. *Op. 125, 1st movement, 80–83 (with upbeat), reduction of wind and string parts*

The image shows a musical score for two systems. The first system is labeled 'Alle übrigen Blasinstrumente' (all other wind instruments) and 'Alle Saiteninstrumente und Fagotte' (all string instruments and bassoons). The wind and brass part is in the upper staff, marked 'pp', and features a melodic line with some grace notes. The string and bassoon part is in the lower staff, marked 'pp', and features a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The second system continues the same parts, with the wind and brass part showing more complex rhythmic patterns and the string and bassoon part providing a steady accompaniment. The text 'u. s. w.' is visible at the bottom right of the score.

FIGURE 5. *Op. 125, 1st movement, mm. 513–16, reduction showing strings and bassoons on the lower staff and wind and brass instruments on the upper staff*



until finally, after eighteen measures, in the fortissimo of the whole orchestra (see Figure 6), whereupon the first theme concludes in an even more powerful form.

If the multitude of the instrumental world is taken up here by its true ruler, he now permeates it in the scherzo and boldly calls each individual instrument to its own independent life. He rules each individual with such assurance that they are all granted the freest course, and all of their melodies weave together in an airy, inexhaustible round dance and join in the most variegated connections—all at the restlessly urgent call (see Figure 7) of the master, who has won and keeps control of the whole in the first movement and the direction of each individual in the second.

Only now has he produced the world which he can dedicate to and infuse with his innermost feelings and life, in which his most intimate song can secretly resound. This leads to the Adagio, in which the most delicate and most intimate longing and the sweetest calming alternately permeate the soul.

Thus far the course of a symphony, conceived in the grandest spirit, has been firmly maintained, and what we have hitherto brought up should serve only to signify it. Each of its movements brought high satisfaction, but implied an ever higher one. Man can transfer his entire soul onto the nature that surrounds him, animating it, as it were, in human terms—and nevertheless, desire for humanity inevitably penetrates him at last. The instrumental multitude is mastered, each one permeated by its own life, each one resounding with what the artist felt in his innermost soul, and now he tears himself powerfully upward through their harmony to human expression, to song. The basses take up the form of a recitative, in order to prepare the way for language itself, but only after such grand occurrences in powerful configuration, and after a mighty prelude by all the winds (see Figure 8). The principal ideas of all parts of the



FIGURE 6. *Op. 125, 1st movement, mm. 532–535, reduction*

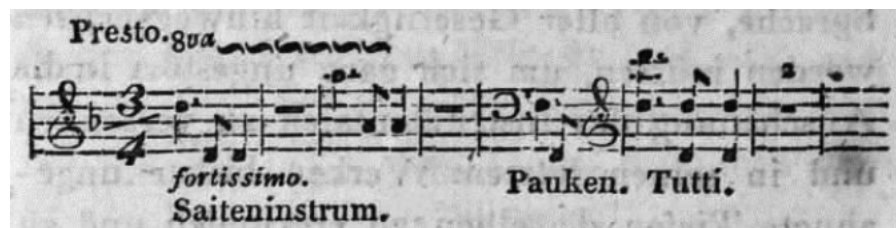


FIGURE 7. *Op. 125, 2nd movement, mm. 1–6, string, timpani, and tutti parts shown on single staff*



FIGURE 8. *Op. 125, 4th movement, mm. 8–16, cello and bass parts*

symphony rush by as interludes in this grand and broadly worked out discourse—the first, the scherzo, the Adagio—a glance backward, as though such a presentation spontaneously occurred to him as well. Finally, the melodies are heard that will soon resound from the human breast and in human speech, and are touched on joyously and continued with devotional solemnity by the instruments, self-sufficient for the last time, as the last movement of the symphony. This does not lead to a conclusion, however, but rather back to that recitative, which is now sung by the bass singer to the introductory words in similar, grand melismas that surpass the dimensions of all customary recitative—thus did it summon the development of human song from that of instruments.

The content of the cantata that now follows is not these words, nor the special content of the verses, printed earlier, but rather the portrayal of prevailing human nature alone, of blessed human community in song and singing together. As severely as one would, in our opinion, mistake the intentions of the great artist if one did not understand this recitative as the direct emanation of the great work, but judged it rather according to the general declamatory principals of recitative composition, notwithstanding the fact that it did not come to the fore, like most others, from speech, just as little does it seem permissible to us to place the principles of text treatment and song composition before the original intention of the artist's ear. For this intention, he needed words for the song. Unconcerned with everything else that might lie within them, or perhaps could also be found wrong with them, he helped himself to them as material to serve *his* goal *alone*, without having any other meaning. —This procedure seems to us to shine forth so unambiguously from the construction of the whole, that we would not even give up our understanding if it were possible to substantiate doubts as to whether Beethoven might originally have pursued a completely different purpose, that of actually composing Schiller's poem.

If, however, we survey the plan of the symphony hitherto indicated, recalling the meaning of what follows merely as material:

Opposition and combination of instrumental and vocal music:

- I. Grand symphony:
  1. Summoning and mastering of the instrumental multitude;
  2. Animation of all individuals, each to its own life;

3. Transference of human emotion onto them and longing for genuine satisfaction;
  4. Striving outward from the world of instruments, urging of the instruments toward speech as all earlier phenomena disappear;
  5. Speech and advance celebration of song.
- II. Grand symphonic celebration with the influence of all the instruments; —or purely formal
1. Grand symphony—
  2. Instrumental recitative with reappearance of all movements of the symphony—
  3. This changed into vocal recitative with the melody as introduction—
  4. Grand cantata—

we recognize in it the grandest and boldest intention and disposition that has ever been conceived in the domain of instrumental composition.

This should first of all be set forth at the performances of the great work that are certainly now under preparation in many places.

## 125.10.

Adolf Bernhard Marx.

“Sundries. To the Friends of Art in Berlin. From Someone in Your Midst.”

*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3

(22 November 1826), 383–84.

The press has already announced the artistic celebration that our worthy music director Möser prepared for us in the performance of the symphony with choruses by Beethoven, discussed in somewhat more detail at the beginning of this issue.<sup>1</sup> Given the interest of the friends of music in Berlin in the symphony, and particularly in those of Beethoven, the highest accomplishments in instrumental composition, which has been growing visibly for some years, only the announcement was necessary to gather all true lovers of art for the elevated work. Moreover, the Möser concerts, at which masterworks have always been offered to us in worthy performances, have such good and established credit with the public that one can be assured in advance that they will fill the hall to overflowing. In this respect, therefore, a more detailed discussion of the present music festival would be superfluous.

With regard to the work alone, a few words may be timely. Namely, it seems that a portion of the public has been prejudiced for some time by excessive enthusiasm for it. In Vienna, the friends of art seem, in all love toward Beethoven, to have looked forward to an artistic enjoyment like that granted by earlier works of Beethoven. To a portion of them, though, the disappointment of this expectation must have been odd and disturbing. In Leipzig, the most outstanding place in northern Germany (perhaps at the present moment in all Europe) for concert music, the excessive eagerness for the grand work could not even be held in check until the receipt of the score, and the difficult, always complicated music—nearly incomprehensible to experts on music—was performed from the parts without a score. Perhaps this became the origin of the dissatisfaction that the highly esteemed correspondent of this journal in Leipzig shared with the public there.<sup>2</sup> —We see in this, however, an invitation to the public in Berlin to dedicate itself with full concentration and fidelity to the greatest work of our greatest master now living, and to cause it to be said that Beethoven found here spirits and hearts ready even for his highest intentions.

Fortunately, the north German character is so capable that there is and will remain a general familiarity with the difference between the confectionary titillation of the senses in

<sup>1</sup>See Marx's review in *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (22 November 1826), 373–78.

<sup>2</sup>See *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (28 June and 5 July 1826), 203–4 and 213–17.



Italian and French music and the spiritual enjoyment of works of musical art. Thus, in general, whoever wants to hear a Beethoven symphony here knows that he will bring upon himself a spiritual baptism of fire, and that any idea of dissipation and sensory enjoyment must be banished. Listeners to Beethoven will thus not fail to concentrate on receiving the spirit that lives in the work of art. In our time, though, the duty of fidelity toward the artist is all the more often broken.

The expression “fidelity” is used here to signify sustained awareness and attention to the nature of the creative artist and of public receptivity, and to their reciprocal relationship.

The creator of a work of art must above all have the lively and enlivening creative impulse that awakens him to deeds that others leave unattempted in advance of the public that receives the work of art from him. He must have the capability—talent, or genius—in advance. This will be admitted both by those who have never attempted it as well as by those who have attained some success in some sphere. He must have knowledge and practice in advance, to the attainment of which he has usually employed the best time and strength of his life. Everyone who has become qualified in some sphere will grant this and must acknowledge the superiority of the artist over those who have not constantly dedicated themselves to art. If we now apply this to a particular work of art, it is the artist in whom the first impulse stirs toward its creation, in whom the idea is set up, matured through inspiring ardor and penetrating reflection, nourished with the noblest powers, perfected and realized in the hours of greatest beauty and capability.

How can the receiving public, with no original artistic calling, no advance training or practice, whose activities are in a completely divergent direction, whose comprehension is not prepared in advance, believe itself called to the judgment of a work of art? How can it wish to dispose in one or two hours of something that has cost the artist, with his vast capabilities, the best time of his life? Nobody would mistake the frivolity of such an undertaking if the detrimental consequences were as clearly evident as the injustice itself. The greatest detriment, however, occurs to the public, which, insofar as it adopts this attitude, sacrifices its devotion and receptivity. The one question for all those who have not dedicated themselves to the study and practice of art, is only how far they are capable and prepared to take up a work of art wholly or in part. If one held fast to this notion, one would exert oneself to pursue the artist’s spirit. Instead of being inclined, as is often now the case, toward a kind of opposition to him, behind which is often hidden only the inability or disinclination to follow the artist, one would not immediately look for the reason that a work of art did not make the right impression in the work, but rather within oneself. One would not turn away at the first incomprehensible or repugnant part, but rather follow the artist’s path indefatigably. If a work by a proven, or only trustworthy, artist had no immediate effect, one would turn back to it often, wishing for and bringing about repeat performances. One would shortly get used to the fact that a work on which the artist employed months is not always accessible to us in the first hour, but needs to be sought out more often. One will acknowledge that exactly the deepest and most worthy works, which are newest in idea and construction, are the most difficult to grasp and understand, since they stand furthest from the opinions already disseminated.

It is this fidelity and piety that are now desired, for their own sake, of all those who visit Möser's concerts. The symphony by Beethoven is too grand, too rich, and too deep to be grasped in its entirety and full magnificence the first time. Each listener will feel doubts arise along with a presentiment of its idea; for each one there will remain, next to endless beauties, passages that are incomprehensible, indeed repugnant. Let us not forget, though, that it is the deepest and most mature instrumental work by the most ingenious, mature musical artist now living; then, what is incomprehensible will itself awaken the wish for a repetition of the artistic celebration. Thus will we be worthy and capable of taking a great step forward on the path of artistic education in Beethoven's hand.

## 125.II.

The musical correspondent from Leipzig and Adolf Bernhard Marx.

“Sundries. Several Words on the Understanding of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony,”  
and “Response.”

*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3  
(29 November 1826), 414–16.

What I read in the 47th number of this journal<sup>1</sup> about Beethoven’s most recent symphony demands from me a justification of what I expressed in no. 27.<sup>2</sup>

A friend of art there rightly demands that the musical public in Berlin, which will shortly become acquainted with this symphony through a public performance, surrender itself to the work with full concentration and fidelity, and cause it to be said that Beethoven found there spirits and hearts ready even for his highest intentions. In connection with what had just previously been said in that essay about the reception of this work in Vienna and Leipzig, this would seem to indicate that these necessities for the reception of a great work of art are not present among us. Now, however, the friend of art has probably not remembered that for several years, all the symphonies and most of the overtures by Beethoven that are in print have been heard in various successions at the Leipzig subscription concerts every winter, so that our musical public has become so familiar with the characteristic spirit of this master that it is always a holiday for the greatest portion of the participants in that institution when they hear a Beethoven symphony again—while at many other places, even great ones, performances of only some of the symphonies of Beethoven have been attempted. Thus, the ability to understand without bias was generally present here; with some, even a blind partiality disappearing into artistic idolatry. The striving to grasp this work more precisely was evident from the fact that, shortly after the first performance, which was preceded by many rehearsals, a second one was arranged. —Since the author of this essay could not doubt this, he prefers to accuse us of impulsiveness, arising “from the excessive eagerness” for the grand work, and finds it in the fact that this difficult work was performed from the parts, without a score. —Not to mention that, as they were being rehearsed, there was likewise no score available to the public of most of the earlier symphonies of Beethoven. The concert orchestra here, under the direction of the valiant and musically experienced Matthäi,<sup>3</sup> which has had an extraordinary

<sup>1</sup>See *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (22 November 1826), 383–84.

<sup>2</sup>See *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (28 June and 5 July 1826), 203–4 and 213–17.

<sup>3</sup>Heinrich August Matthäi (1781–1835) was a prominent violinist in Leipzig, who at the time this report was written served as concertmaster of its famed Gewandhaus Orchestra.

amount of practice with Beethoven's works, arranged for so many precise and painstaking rehearsals of the work under discussion that the great difficulty that is certainly inherent in it was overcome as far as possible. —But I ask here: if that friend of art is suspicious of the impression that this work brought forth in Leipzig after a double performance, and of the opinion of the undersigned, since it does not agree with his, on what, then, does he base his opinion that it is the deepest and most mature work of the most ingenious composer, before it has been publicly performed in Berlin even a single time? Perhaps on the score? Inspecting it, though, can only substitute for hearing it to a certain degree, on account of which much in musical compositions is easier to see than to hear, and in this case, to pass judgment after a mere inspection of the score might well be even more impulsive than to do so on the basis of a twofold performance from the parts. To conclude from the greatness of the artist? The aforementioned friend of art can have no more heartfelt respect for this than I, but such a conclusion would be precisely that *petitio principii* mentioned on p. 216,<sup>4</sup> which could easily cause those who make use of it to become known as a Beethoven Corax.<sup>5</sup>

Yet there is still something imprecise in speaking about the total impression that a work has made on any public. Moreover, our public showed greater interest at the repeated performance of the colossal work. Since this is the case, I do not find that the word “dissatisfaction,” used by the friend of art, expresses either the mood of our public or my own opinion. Rather, since in the place mentioned I described the first impression of it in its entirety, and also respectfully acknowledged its great merits, and since then have become more precisely familiar with these, I will leave what has been touched on hitherto undecided, and stick to what in particular I cannot, in all respect for the great master, reconcile with the ideal of musical art, and that is the concluding movement of this symphony. Since, however, I believe that I gave factual justification there for my opinion of it, it only remains for me to give notice as to why I cannot agree with a contrary opinion which the editor has likewise advanced in no. 47 of this journal.<sup>6</sup>

[“]As soon as instruments and singing voices come together,[”] it goes, [“]the former subordinate themselves to the latter, just as everything surrounding them does to people; for in song, which encompasses speech and the world of sounds dwelling in people, the human is portrayed, contrasting with the instruments.[”] The formation of the musical world, in which song itself finally rises up in victory over the instruments, whereby the kingdom of humanity appears as the apex of everything, or, to express it more precisely in the sense of that opinion: musical art lifts itself above nature in instrumentation and aspires toward song—this, we assume, is the idea of the work, or—it could be. But that does not yet justify the manner in which it is worked out. First there is the question: do the instruments really subordinate

<sup>4</sup>The author is referring to his earlier commentary on the Leipzig performances of the 9th symphony in *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (28 June and 5 July 1826), 203–4 and 213–17.

<sup>5</sup>Corax of Syracuse is remembered as one of the founders of the art of rhetoric. The author presumably means that Beethoven's merits would be paradoxically defended solely on the basis of what could be expected from him.

<sup>6</sup>See *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (22 November 1826), 373–78.

themselves to the voices there? I will leave it to other, unbiased connoisseurs to decide this question. If song is further to be designated, as it were, as the blossom toward which everything strives, song must come forward in its characteristic nature and, in connection with the language of poetry, it must yet appear in the most perfect harmony with the poetry. Human voices may not go beyond the range of what can be sung, and may not be drowned out or stifled by the instruments. The editor says, on the contrary (for I can treat only the following words as a contradictory opinion): “he has not sought the musical expression of the content of Schiller’s ode, or even of its words—just song, the simplest manner of human musical speech.” But how is song possible, in its true and essential nature, without the expression of what is sung? He has sought it out “in order to glorify it with the victory over the world of instruments.” But how can song win over the instruments when song scarcely penetrates through the instrumental multitude[?] “He let the voices go ahead and rule, so that they should win as though by themselves, independent of any care taken by the composer for the declamatory, melismatic, and harmonic meaning of the song.” I must confess that I cannot imagine any song at all without these rightly understood conditions, much less comprehend how song is to win over the instruments without this meaning. However, I will gladly concede the fact that this master, unconcerned with everything else that might lie within the words, helped himself to them as material to serve his goal alone, without having any other meaning. If one wishes to say, though, that the great artist abolishes all hitherto applicable laws and has to be measured by an entirely new standard that he himself brings along, then this tenet is certainly true in general with regard to the historical progress of art and of criticism. It cannot be extended so far, though, as to overturn all the fundamental concepts of an art, which is in any case out of the question with human judgment and understanding in general. Neither I nor anyone else would be able to make a judgment on such a subject, since there would be no recognizable distinction between the nature of art and the subjective capriciousness of the artist, and every intimation expressed with such grand power would have to be regarded as the best and highest of art.

#### RESPONSE

Since the “Invitation to the friends of art in Berlin, the undersigned in that invitation and, moreover, very often from someone in your midst”<sup>7</sup> has struck the highly honored author of the preceding in reference to his report and to Leipzig, the undersigned names himself first of all as the author of that invitation, and hopes thereby to have removed every misunderstanding of this kind. The honored correspondent knows the sincere respect of the undersigned for his musical merits. If he does not agree with him about Beethoven’s symphony, it goes without saying that among men who are far from being disputatious, and only serve the matter at hand, such differences of opinion can lead to nothing less than disagreement and misjudgment.

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<sup>7</sup>This is a literal translation of the text, which seems to contain a misplaced phrase due to a typographical error.

As for the musical affairs of Leipzig, his highest respect has outspokenly portrayed Leipzig to Berliners, particularly in the area of concerts, as enviable, as a model for Berlin and for all other cities. The great talent and merit of the concert director Mr. Matthäi has also always found the most fitting acknowledgment from him, which everyone who has come to know his directing and virtuosity in Leipzig must give him as well. It should thus not be imagined that that invitation impugns his or anyone else's merit, or fails to appreciate Leipzig's most admirable artistic institution. —

Only when the question arises of who deserves the greater confidence in a musical matter (for the essay was intended solely to awaken this among the Berliners): Beethoven, or all the musically knowledgeable people of Leipzig, or of Berlin, or of any other city—will the undersigned always decide for Beethoven, who indeed has undeniably given more and greater proof of mastery than all of them combined. Naturally, though, that confidence should not be elevated to such authoritativeness that inquiry into Beethoven's works themselves stands opposed to it. How far removed the reviewer is from this is proved by the review of "Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt," among others.<sup>8</sup>

Now two more short responses.

1. The performance of grand symphonies without a score seems to the reviewer to be particularly awkward since the director has no means of assimilating himself in advance to the idea of the work through abstract study and drawing up a plan for performance and rehearsal. Experience has taught that, with all previous symphonies, it is nevertheless possible to get ready without a score, if one has as admirable an orchestra at hand as the one in Leipzig, and a capable, experienced director like Mr. Matthäi. But the ninth symphony of Beethoven is so complicated and so variable, free running and finely nuanced in its progress and expression that in all these respects it can scarcely be compared to earlier works.

2. Whether a secure judgment can be passed on a composition as yet unheard on the basis of the score has already often been called into doubt, and this doubt has been raised not merely by friends of art, but frequently by proven connoisseurs and people learned in music, indeed by composers. The undersigned will only recall in opposition to this how the composer himself provides an example of how one can securely imagine a specific orchestral combination without having heard it. Or are we to believe that the composer perhaps tests the novelties that he provides in this field in advance, or writes them down at random? Now a score must be read, however, in the manner in which it is conceived, and then often grants a purer impression than a performance, whose effect is made up from the composition, direction, and execution, and which rushes by without pause, while reading allows for review and repetition.

The objections to the undersigned's understanding of the symphony will gratefully be made use of in the continuation of the review in the next volume.<sup>9</sup>

A. B. Marx

<sup>8</sup>A footnote to the original text reads: "No. 46, page 391, of the first volume of this journal." See *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (17 November 1824), 391–97.

<sup>9</sup>It is not clear whether this refers to Marx's review in *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 4 (11 April 1827), 124–25, or to some other review that Marx intended to write.

## 125.12.

“News. Leipzig—to 10 December.”  
*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 28  
(27 December 1826), col. 853–54.

(Mentioned: Op. 93, Symphony no. 8)

Symphonies were given: by Mozart two, in E-flat and in D major;<sup>1</sup> by Joseph Haydn two, in E-flat and D major;<sup>2</sup> very pleasing, but were also very well declaimed; by Beethoven two, no. 9 in D minor and no. 8 in F major—a few words on the first of these to follow—by J. W. Kalliwoda,<sup>3</sup> heard with pleasure, as in the previous year: it was declaimed very beautifully—no. 2 in C major by Ries<sup>4</sup> and no. 2 by Spohr<sup>5</sup> were played extraordinarily well. We have now heard the new symphony by Beethoven three times, and, consider it as we may, we cannot fully count it among the celebrated master’s most outstanding works. Whether it comes down to the judgment of one individual, or to the judgment of a great portion of the listeners, it doesn’t matter how much our Beethoven—highly celebrated by us as well—may be as a tone poet; our commitment to truth is always the most important thing. Thus, at the risk of being counted among those who are incapable of grasping great things, we candidly admit that it does not please us. It sounded to us as if music were supposed to walk on its head instead of on its feet. We know that the second movement is greatly celebrated by not a few; indeed, we openly acknowledge that the third contains much that is ingenious. But the details still do not make up a whole that is worthy of the master. In the second movement, one must regret that, despite its many beauties, its length is too much felt. The last movement, which one time was completely omitted, takes place entirely in the unhappy dwelling places of those who have fallen from heaven. It is as if the spirits of the deep were making a mockery of everything that gives people happiness. With gigantic power the dangerous hoard steps forth and ruptures the human heart and ruins the divine spark with noisy, monstrous scorn. —Nevertheless, every musician must own the work, in order to get an idea of how they become lost down below in the terrible depths. The master, however, remains what he is, a conjuror of spirits, who this time was pleased to demand something superhuman from us. I do not approve.

<sup>1</sup>These were probably K. 543 and K. 504—the “Prague” symphony.

<sup>2</sup>These were probably symphonies no. 103, the “Drumroll,” and no. 104, the “London.”

<sup>3</sup>The Czech composer Jan Krtitel Václav Kalivoda (1801–1866) published his symphony no. 1 in F minor, in 1826; six more symphonies would follow.

<sup>4</sup>Ries’s symphony no. 2 in C minor, Op. 80, was published in 1814.

<sup>5</sup>Spohr’s symphony no. 2 in D minor, Op. 49, was published in 1820.



125.13.

“Correspondence. Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, in Stettin (in February).”

*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 4

(14 March 1827), 84–87.<sup>1</sup>

(Mentioned: Piano Sonata in B-flat major, Op. 106 “Hammerklavier”)

In the well-known *Konzerstück* in F by Maria von Weber (Leipzig, Peters),<sup>2</sup> which he declaimed without the music, Mr. Mendelssohn now developed a surprising dexterity, agility, and elegance of playing. This caused the audience, which until now, according to an old and praiseworthy custom, has tended never to clap during these concerts (since they are supported and sustained by highly honored dilettantes of both sexes<sup>3</sup> of the highest standing in our city out of the most disinterested and devotional love of art), broke into thunderous applause to show their gratitude to the artist.—

In private gatherings in our city that took place while he was here, he also displayed things that exceeded his previous reputation. He very charmingly disclosed the breadth of his education in clever conversation, revealing it as well through his comprehension of all the great masters who have written for the keyboard, almost all of whom he played from memory. I will name for you only Beethoven’s colossal B-flat major sonata,<sup>4</sup> Weber’s grand sonatas, etc.

The young, eighteen-year-old artist does not promise extraordinary things; he delivers them. How greatly may his worthy theory teacher, Mr. Prof. Zelter,<sup>5</sup> rejoice at such a student! How respectfully did the disciple speak about his master and his methods, which never restricted his accomplishments, but always promoted and led them! How seldom does one hear that from students! The young artist’s esteem for Mr. Berger<sup>6</sup> likewise speaks for itself.

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<sup>1</sup>This is an excerpt from a description of a program that began with Mendelssohn’s overture to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and one of his concertos for two pianos, which he performed together with Carl Loewe, who directed the concert.

<sup>2</sup>Weber’s *Concert-Stück* in F minor was written in 1821, and the parts were published by Peters in 1823, although the full score was not published until 1856.

<sup>3</sup>The German specifies “Dilettanten und Dilettantinnen,” indicating that dilettantes of both sexes were involved.

<sup>4</sup>This presumably refers to Op. 106, the “Hammerklavier” sonata: a work that seems to have baffled Beethoven’s contemporaries, judging from the lack of references to it in the press.

<sup>5</sup>Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832) was one of Mendelssohn’s primary teachers, beginning around 1819.

<sup>6</sup>Ludwig Berger (1777–1839) was Mendelssohn’s piano teacher from about 1818. Like Zelter, he is widely associated with the Berlin Song School.



The second part of the concert was taken up by Beethoven's most recent grand symphony in D minor, in which Mr. Mendelssohn elicited the esteem of his neighbors as a combatant on the first violin.<sup>7</sup>

What shall I tell you about this ingenious, gigantic work of the still ever-growing hero of notes? It gripped us all powerfully. The very beginning, with the indeterminate dominant fifths, which the violins, along with the D horns, brought in as though from a great distance, almost like an optical illusion, is like an invocation. The first violins flash through it, along with the basses, like nerves stretched joyfully until they can no longer contain themselves, and eagerly take up the grand, noble theme in D minor. The serious first Allegro seems to us to be joy, which develops from manly power in unending activity. The emotions often take the shape of happy but important daily work (Figure 9), often of terror at the memory of past obstacles or dangers, which, however, lie underfoot (Figure 10), since, with sublime peace, our face now reflects serious clarity, through which the clarinets sing out this naive figure in firm syncopations (Figure 11).



FIGURE 9. 1st movement, mm. 261–63, cello part



FIGURE 10. 1st movement, repeated cello part beginning at mm. 513–14, with measure line omitted



FIGURE 11. Op. 125, 1st movement, mm. 519–22, although the transcription is imprecise and two measure lines are omitted

<sup>7</sup>On Mendelssohn's later reaction to and "misreading" of the 9th symphony in his own final symphony, the *Lobgesang* of 1840, see Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 73–108.

The scherzo, with its simple, skipping rhythm (Figure 12), and the droll kettledrum in F (Figure 13) is a characteristic picture of abundantly blooming and high-spirited, boyish youthfulness, which holds every motion and position that gives it the most pleasure to be the best. Health, liveliness, freedom from care breathe everywhere; they grow up to the Presto C, where the play seems to turn in a specific direction, everything stands in rank and file, and a soldierly rabble sounds forth (Figure 14). Everything remains, however, within the harmless but lively games of youth.

The Adagio has the most elevated, blessed, and ennobled joys of life. It is joy in God and the blessings of religion, which resolves into thankfulness, melancholy, feelings of unworthiness and of endless love—resignation, acceptance of the unchangeable, surrender. A smile emerges through tears. The banners of holiest joy blow from the sunny mountain of hope. — The richly figured themes, which unfold ever more expansively at the end, might well be a worthy fit for the theme of the divine Mass service, and by no means contrast with it, even if it may first seem this way to the listener.

This much seems to me to make up the first part of the symphony, which treats joy, in these three individual movements, in the most general sense. The finale, however, as the second principal part of the symphony, might be said to deal in particular with “the state of joyfulness.” Could the composer, then, instill intentions into his notes in any other way, be happy in any other way, than by describing the very way and manner in which he gives free



FIGURE 12. *Op. 125, 2nd movement, mm. 1–2*



FIGURE 13. *Op. 125, 2nd movement, m. 5*



FIGURE 14. *Op. 125, 2nd movement, mm. 414–20*

rein to his own joy, to his own cheerfulness? He may have first imagined this finale within his own social brotherhood, at table, while drinking. Since, in the first three movements, the genius worked through the three most important and most interesting stages of joy within the elevated kingdom of notes, it is now time to create a final perspective for the finale: one taken especially from life. —His choice hit upon Schiller’s “Ode to Joy,”<sup>8</sup> that dithyramb which, to the sober, quiet thinker, is not just barely comprehensible, but, in regard to the joining together of the most heterogeneous things and ideas, can be called almost inconceivable. For now the poet speaks of gods, whom he finds it fine to resemble; now he speaks in the most specific manner about God, whom he believes he can surmise, now adjusting the scales, now as loving father; then he swears, first by golden wine, and finally also by the celestial judge—*Quid hoc sibi vult*,<sup>9</sup> celestial judge? In fact, whoever holds all these jumbled manners of speaking up together calmly, as, for example, this reviewer has done, could easily lose faith in that genius who created them. —And nevertheless, it cannot be denied that there are moments of excitement in life when one has understood this strange poem, even if one does not continually understand it.

There is certainly no doubt that Beethoven composed in this excited state of mind, or at least imagined it. And, seen from this perspective, it also cannot be denied that the great tone poet, in exactly this finale, has recorded his own manner of enjoying himself in a most ingenious and surprising manner. And who would begrudge him our gratitude for this? What smooth and polished artist surrenders his inmost being to the world as naturally as Beethoven does in this finale? Can one not see, in all the piles of notes that come from the press, that they are aiming for the applause and shouts of the crowd? In the current, polished times, do not nearly all of our great poets aim, in their productions, to choose a kind of dramatic garment, even for their lyrical emotions, which seeks first to arouse the emotion, rather than putting the emotion itself down on paper straight from the heart, in the moment of inspiration, as Schiller does in this ode? That polished manner of writing poetry and music<sup>10</sup> may be more artificial, clever, and comprehensible, but a more natural effusion of the heart must not be coldly rejected on this account, even if it engenders mistakes and inadvertencies. This finale, too, certainly has its weak, questionable aspects: for example, choice of themes, unruliness in the working out of the fieriest passages through the rawest sonorities, monstrous angles in the progression of intervals, a teasing up of the noble human voices almost to the point of screaming, etc. Everything granted, this finale is nevertheless the most interesting, deeply felt, and original work ever to flow from the great artist’s pen, for it reveals his individuality more than any of his other works. —Where has one ever heard anything like it?

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<sup>8</sup>The text reads “Ode an die Freude.” As noted earlier, the title of Schiller’s poem is simply “An die Freude.”

<sup>9</sup>Latin, “What does this mean?” (Literally “What does this want for itself?”)

<sup>10</sup>“zu dichten und zu komponieren.” Both words can refer to the composition of a poem, but traditionally only “komponieren” had been used for the composition of music.

An impetuous fanfare of kettledrums, wind instruments, and churning trumpets opens the scene. String bass recitatives follow that are just as violent,<sup>11</sup> but that resist and summon up gentler emotions. We thus find ourselves in an almost overheated company, whose tumult and riot, however, are better subdued by a reasonable song and guided toward more noble emotions (even if only Schiller's admittedly highly enthusiastic ones). Even with this commotion at the table, a great deal passes through the soul of an unrestrained, happy person. Namely, from life—manly activity, youthful years, probably also a delicate, more elevated idea—(repetition of or allusion to the first three movements of the symphony), and the song adapts itself to heart and ear. First several people hum the folk melody to themselves without text, it arouses sympathy, and from all corners of the company the folksong "Joy, beautiful divine spark" is taken up. The women as well eventually take part when the conversation turns in a delicate and better direction: "Whoever has won a gracious woman." —Full chorus: "She gave us kisses and grapes, a friend tested in death. Delight was given to the worm, and the cherub stands before God." —At these words: "before God," the ingenious artist's imagination led him beyond the range of the joy created by him to share in the emotions of the cherubim, who see the worlds run their colossal path within the firmament far beneath them, in order to bring the harmony of the spheres, about which Plato dreamed, into the repertory once again, at which God himself must take pleasure (my readers will forgive Plato, and thus also Beethoven, this anthropomorphism). Deep, hollow massed strokes of the bass drum, backed up by the bassoons on B-flat, indicate the planetary bodies, and heavenly delicate clarinet melodies envelop them.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the cymbals enter softly, softly, along with the triangles, and, with their mingled sounds, indicate the crowd of shimmering suns in the firmament, unrecognizable without a telescope. Then a solo tenor sings the magnificent: "Happy, as his suns fly, through the sumptuous plane of heaven, joyous, like a hero to victory, run, brother, your path," with the final words repeated by the men's choir. Now a long orchestral interlude runs a gigantic path, and the modulations hint at an endlessness, and also at a security and bold courage, since the creative genius's ideas commanded them to go this way. They become lost in distant, still barely perceptible horn calls, and suddenly, with a magical stroke we are once again amid our happy company, singing their "Joy, beautiful divine spark."

There now follows a chant-like passage, accompanied by four violas and trombones, which has a powerful effect, but is certainly also hard to understand. It does indicate a dizzy height with the extremely high bass notes at the words: "He must rule above the stars."<sup>13</sup> The composer has also made a fugue from the folk theme, spun out in ever longer notes, apparently to

<sup>11</sup>The original bass recitative is marked "selon le caractère d'un Récitatif, mais in Tempo." The "in tempo" refers to the original marking of "Presto," and subsequent recitatives are clearly marked "Tempo I." This reviewer's description of these recitatives as violent (heftig) makes sense if these markings are observed, as they usually are not in modern performances.

<sup>12</sup>This is a description of the beginning of the "Alla marcia" section. The melody actually starts in the piccolo, clarinets, and horns, which are quickly joined by the oboes.

<sup>13</sup>The reviewer misquotes the text, giving "Ueber Sternen muß er thronen," (he must rule above the stars) instead of "Über sternem muss er wohnen" (he must dwell above the stars).



FIGURE 15. *Op. 125, 4th movement, mm. 855–58, soprano part. The last note is actually a quarter note followed by a quarter rest.*

indicate the abundance of the increasingly sympathetic company. At last the work rises to a Presto whose theme likewise cannot be called choice (Figure 15).

Nevertheless, there is nothing to choose here; all people are already brothers, it is coming to an end, and it is as though the whole company has arisen in whirling rhythms and figurations, and the whole has risen to a gigantic Maestoso, in which the bass drum is struck three times, like a battery mounted on the open space below. The violin figurations in 32nd notes have an even faster tempo than the 8th notes in the Presto, and the pounding postlude subsides amid the clank of glasses and loud cries.—

This much is certain: that nay-sayers have here a splendid field on which to let their light and philosophical calm shine before the people, just as the unprejudiced and youthfully happy, life-loving listener will gladly follow the genius to his personal happiness, for which he is so much in his debt. Indeed, one often learns to know someone better in one happy hour, than if he accompanied us all year long through customary everyday life.

## I25.I4.

Adolf Bernhard Marx.

“Reviews.”

*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 4  
(11 April 1827), 124–25.

(Reduction of the last movement for keyboard and four singing voices)<sup>1</sup>

The Schott firm has performed such a service through the publication and sumptuous presentation of the grand symphony with choir in score and voices that we would have wished that the above-named edition had also been made worthy of the undertaking as a whole. This, however, is unfortunately not the case.

There are works that are so grand that it is neither possible nor appropriate for them to be found on every little keyboard instrument; Beethoven’s symphony is one of these. It is only accessible to those who can study it from the score. If these extensively intertwined voices are squeezed into the narrow limitations of a keyboard reduction, one is faced with a wretched outline, and can scarcely imagine a picture of the whole on such a basis. The reduction distracts those more comfortable with doing so from studying the score even more than is the case already, while among the ignorant it establishes inaccurate and unworthy conceptions of the work. It is certainly possible that many cannot play more, or even as much, from the score as the keyboard reduction has to offer. However, they have the opportunity to read more and, even with lesser abilities, to single out exactly those features that in their view are the most important.

One would have to admit this, even if the present keyboard reduction were ever so good. Unfortunately, however, it is not. All of our keyboard reductions try to do nothing other than to reproduce the principal melodies—where possible all the voices—in a way that is playable and not too difficult. With melody and harmony, and the rhythmic aspects of both, far from all of the elements of a Beethoven composition are expressed. The combination of instruments, at times their mere sound and resonance, are likewise eloquent tongues for its ideas. It would certainly be superfluous to demonstrate the former; for the latter we find a grand example in the symphony, at the *Andante maestoso* (p. 168 of the score) where, after the intonation of the men’s voices

Be embraced, millions!

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<sup>1</sup>The anonymous keyboard reduction on which this review is based was published by Schott in Mainz in August 1826.



the whole orchestra rushes forth like the volle Werk of a majestic organ in an empty cathedral. Neither the melody of the chorus (which prefigures the Prestissimo on p. 212) nor the figure in the violins and basses, which certainly seems to stand out to the eye, but rather the mighty sonority of the long chords (Figure 16); and the united voices of the choir is the predominant element here, and one can scarcely obtain an inkling of the effect of this scoring from the keyboard reduction, which preserves the string figurations. We know of scarcely any keyboard reduction that does not have similar deficiencies, but such a work deserved outstanding treatment, an arrangement that bore witness to the arranger's love for the work and to conscientious treatment, but also to his talent for reproduction. We miss this as well, when, for example, the powerful predominant figure, which from p. 160 to 167 is set against the principal melody by the full choir of string instruments, is supposed to be portrayed by a flimsy run in the bass, while the right hand takes up full chords in a high register (portraying the wind instruments) which do not resound fully there. The arranger might have dared to give the same figure to both hands in octaves or double octaves at the keyboard, as Beethoven did in the orchestra, leaving the melody, which has already been impressed upon us, to the closely scored choir.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, he lacked audacity at the recitative in the introduction, and did not take into

The image shows a musical score for wind instruments and a keyboard reduction. The top section is for wind instruments, with parts for Flöten (Flutes), Oboen und Klarinetten (Oboes and Clarinets), Posaunen (Trumpets), and Fagotte (Bassoons). The bottom section is a keyboard reduction, with the right hand (u. s. w.) and left hand (u. s. w.) parts. The score is in 3/2 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#).

FIGURE 16. *Op. 125, 4th movement, mm. 602–05, reduction of the wind parts*

<sup>2</sup>Marx is referring to the passage beginning at m. 213, in which the familiar “Joy” melody is repeated with a full and active orchestral accompaniment.



consideration the power of the individual instruments, which to Beethoven were suitable heralds. This even led him, it seems to us, into a misrepresentation. Beethoven's opening gesture is this (Figure 17),



FIGURE 17. *Op. 125, 4th movement, upbeat to m. 1, reduction of the wind parts*

along with which trumpets and kettledrums take up (Figure 18);



FIGURE 18. *Op. 125, 4th movement, upbeat to m. 1, reduction of the trumpet and timpani*

and nobody, even if they have not heard the symphony, will doubt that these instruments overpower the F in the bassoons, making A appear to be the lowest note in the chord. For this powerful harmony, the keyboard reduction gives



instead of

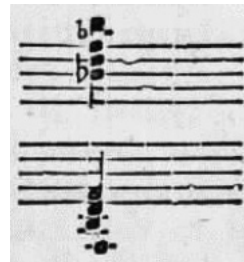


FIGURE 19. *Op. 125, 4th movement, upbeat to m. 1, as transcribed for piano*

FIGURE 20. *Op. 125, 4th movement, upbeat to m. 1, as Marx suggests it should have been transcribed*

and, either through an unworthy, profane bowdlerization or through an inexcusable printing error, resolves B-flat to A on the downbeat, whereas Beethoven boldly and confidently sustained it until the beginning of the agitated figure. Even the recitative of all the basses and violoncellos appears stunted in a flimsy middle voice, instead of in octaves in the bass.

This wretched beginning of the keyboard reduction, however, makes the principal misconception clear: that of giving only the last movement of a strictly self-contained, inseparable work. These preliminary judgments point out how completely incomprehensible this very work is without the preparation provided by the earlier movements, upon which it rests. This very fact may have made the arranger discouraged at the daunting task. In that case, though, he might rather have made the publishers aware of the deficiency and faultiness of the undertaking, and retreated from its unworthiness. In this way, he has weakened Beethoven's accomplishment, without thereby making it any more comprehensible.

It would have been most appropriate, if a keyboard reduction were going to be given at all, for it to be four-handed. However, the estimable publishers should complete their keyboard reduction through the addition of the earlier movements and—improve it.

## 125.15.

Joseph Fröhlich and Christian Grossheim.

“Two Reviews.”

*Caecilia* 8

(1828), 231–56 and 256–60.<sup>1</sup>

### “FIRST REVIEW,” BY PROFESSOR FRÖHLICH

We have here before us a work made by one of the greatest artists who has ever lived, in the last period of his activity rich in great accomplishments and crowned with honor: a work upon which he employed his full power, and in which he strove to display the highest reaches of his artistic ability. Such a production demands our full attention, and the less judgments about the work have so far agreed with each other—indeed, one might say the less favorable they have been, the greater the present challenge to answer the question: can Beethoven, this extraordinary spirit to whom music—particularly instrumental music—owes its greatest progress in recent times, indeed a completely new direction; can this outstanding genius, after having delivered an abundance of unsurpassable works of art of every kind, have gone so far astray in his last years from the true contemplation of art that exactly his last grand work of this kind, in which he aimed to accomplish the utmost, became an incoherent, baroque, and bombastic production, which certainly attests in individual parts to an uncommon power of mind and the practiced hand of an experienced composer, but otherwise says nothing overall? For these are the expressions that the reviewer has heard from many men of proven musical knowledge. And if judgments about it have also been found in published writings, most of them have been of the kind that certainly acknowledged the traits of genius to be observed in the whole, without, however, explaining the specific way in which these were discharged in the formation of the whole and of the details. Indeed, it was not hard to observe how, held back only through respect for the celebrated man, they did not dare to

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<sup>1</sup>These two extended reviews, along with two similar ones of the *Missa Solemnis* in the next volume of *Caecilia*, seem almost to have been written in response to the challenge issued the previous year in *Allgemeiner musikalischer Anzeiger* I, 372–74. Franz Joseph Fröhlich (1780–1862), who lived in Würzburg and taught at the university there, was a teacher and composer who was also broadly familiar with contemporary aesthetic theories. Grossheim (1764–1841) was likewise a teacher and composer resident in Kassel, who also edited the journal *Euterpe* (Stefan Kunze, *Ludwig von Beethoven: die Werke im Spiegel seiner Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1987), 430). Their writings, and Fröhlich’s in particular, constitute some of the most significant early evaluations of Beethoven’s late works. For more on these reviews, see Robin Wallace, *Beethoven’s Critics, Aesthetic Dilemmas and Resolutions during the Composer’s Lifetime*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 77–88, 95–100.

express their dissatisfaction with the way it was worked out overall. And the reviewer confesses that on first looking through this work, he was less favorably disposed toward it. He then let it be performed by a large orchestra, but then as well, no aesthetic whole was at first apparent. Now he rehearsed each individual passage long enough for the entire character and the specific soul-portrait found within it to emerge. The deeper were the outlines with which the great master indicated each individual part and displayed it full of life through glowing colors, the more these were brought to the fore by the stark contrasts inherent in them; the more these individual pictures joined together in his contemplation into a whole through continuous, diligent study, the clearer did it become to him that Beethoven did not wish to write here a symphony of the customary kind—as the reviewer later read in no. 1 of the *Allgem. musik. Zeitung*<sup>2</sup> for the year 1828—that he was aiming for something extraordinary, completely new.

Familiar with Beethoven's individual manner of composing,<sup>3</sup> how he has found stimulus and momentum for his magnificent productions in outer nature and its grand manifestations, and likewise in the world of ideas, indeed even in great political events; how—as a biographer says of him—he could be inspired now by a brilliant action, now by a poem that he read; considering the text of the poem “To Joy,” which is pronounced by the choir, giving a clearer indication of the meaning of the whole, and which, with its grand ideas, must have particularly appealed to the master; the author finally arrived at the idea which he most likely had in mind when he made this symphony, as the following precise development will show. He now compared this with the working out of the whole and of the details, down to the smallest components—and the most ingenious work of this kind ever written lay before him. The symphony had reached its high point, and a new sphere for the most magnificent creations had been attained, in which the two favorite sisters, poetry and music, could combine into the most beautiful structures without mutually constraining each other. It thereby became clear to the reviewer how Beethoven, impelled by his genius to seek and conquer new prospects, came upon this idea, as the following brief account of the formation of the symphony will show.

It is presupposed here that, as is well-known, the symphony, moving before Haydn either in stiffly contrapuntal form, or in general developing ideas that say little, was elevated by Haydn's genius to the value of a true rhetorical artistic structure. His great contemporary Mozart stepped in together with him. Surpassing him in the expenditure of his full intellectual and spiritual power, combining these with the most refined taste, supported in the richest and most admirable effects by outstanding knowledge in the use of the instruments, he brought the symphony to a point which, according to this approach, could scarcely be surpassed. It is true that

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<sup>2</sup>That is, the *Leipzig Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.

<sup>3</sup>Fröhlich uses the word “Ton-Dichtungswiese.” Forms of the verb “dichten,” which normally refers to the composition of poetry, were rarely applied to music, at least in critical writings, before the 1820s. Its use at the beginning of this article sets the tone for what will be one of Fröhlich's main themes: the new relationship between music and poetry established by Beethoven in this work.

Beethoven provided much that was interesting in this direction, which was not inferior to the best of those masters, as he showed, for example, in the symphony in C major. This was not sufficient, though, to the impulses of his spirit, which sought a new path onto which he could pour out his characteristic power and fullness.

Blessed by nature with an uncommon power of imagination, which he proclaimed already in his earliest works, written in his eleventh year,<sup>4</sup> lord of all the means of his art as are few other composers, familiar with all the great things that had been accomplished before him, particularly in the field of instrumental music, this cannot have been hard for him. And already in his symphony in D major we perceive, for all the regularity of the thematic working out, such a novelty of ideas, such a soaring and bold flight of imagination, such a use of all the instruments toward the most gripping, most genuine effects as, in a similar manner, in this direction, was not to be found in any earlier work. Now the path had been broken, and one must be astounded at the power with which his genius conjured up new creations that surpassed one another in excellence. The most advanced practice of free improvisation and masterly, often hour-long working through of some theme, whereby his spirit constantly became lost in new regions, conquering undreamed-of standpoints and prospects in the impulsive outpouring, not only persuaded him of his uncommon creative power, but also granted him the ability and the skill to form every mood of his soul into a perfect soul picture. Thus, he had now brought things to the point where he could make use of every idea that sorrow and joy excited in him, indeed of the impression that every important event in his life made on him, along with the principles he developed thereby and fleshed out in his versatile soul into definite feeling pictures, as material for his works, and was thus able to elevate firmly delineated musical discourse into the freest poetic structure. Only music, which lives in the otherworldly ether, uses for its material the most spiritual element of the physical world, and has the human soul as the source of its endless creations—in which the worldly and the otherworldly are wondrously united—was capable of this.

Observation. Thus Beethoven's biographer, Schlosser, in analyzing the various periods into which he divided his accomplishments, says quite rightly on pp. 83 and 84: "The fifth symphony emphatically announces Beethoven's entry into the third period. Indeed, in its connection of reminiscent and prophetic sounds, it describes the artist's inner history. It begins with a fiery *Allegro*, which sounds the keynote of a powerful life with its ominous seriousness. The melancholy sorrow of the following *Andante* is uplifted by a glance, full of hope, toward eternity. In the next *Allegro* one hears the storm

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<sup>4</sup>Beethoven's earliest published works are the Variations in C minor for keyboard on a March by Ernst Christoph Dressler, WoO 63, written in 1782 and published the same year by Götz in Mannheim, and the three keyboard sonatas (in E-flat major, F minor, and D major: the so-called Kurfürstensonaten), WoO 47, written in 1782–1783 and published in 1782–1783 by Bossler in Speyer.

of fate breaking in, until with the entry of the *Finale* every worldly burden falls away and the victorious spirit soars into the clear ether of eternal freedom.” Compare this with what E. T. A. Hoffmann says in the first part of his *Phantasiestücke*, pp. 74 ff.<sup>5</sup>

And thus it is easy to explain how Beethoven arrived at the idea for his magnificent pastoral and heroic symphonies, how he hit upon the idea of making general ideas tangible in musical works, of fleshing out primeval spirituality, led perhaps by some poet or an inspired work to contemplate the relationship between the laws of the world-all, and the great phenomena that these brought forth, and the free structures of the human spirit. It is precisely the representation of these that leads art to its highest level, to be the proclaimer<sup>6</sup> of the divine mysteries, as the ancients already recognized and expressed. Indeed, Beethoven himself is supposed to have stated that each of his works is founded on a psychological idea, and we may rightly regret not knowing what these are, and what intellectual stimulus led him to the composition<sup>7</sup> of each of his countless pieces of music.

There may be no work, though, in which this is as clearly present as in the symphony under discussion. Perhaps here no external stimulus was needed; the experiences of his own life could have presented him with the idea and the manner of its working out, so that one might call this work Beethoven’s autobiography written in music.

Fitted out with extraordinary power of spirit and soul; sensitive and receptive to all impressions in the highest degree; full of fiery urgency to do great things, to make things better; ennobled by a will that despised and abhorred all that was commonplace and unworthy; nursing noble pride in his powerful spirit, which at the same time is so tender, feeling the value of art and of a life consecrated to it too deeply to be able to deny itself for base gain or any other unworthy goal, or to pander to the sensibilities of the world at large; seeking in people the noble image of humanity, uprightness, sincerity—in short, the tendency toward goodness; untroubled by the various forms and relations to which most people sacrifice their better self, indeed neglecting these to some extent; Beethoven, living among people, only too often had to feel sick at heart, to be disappointed in his longing to find rest and happiness. Add to this the growing deafness, which distanced him more and more from other people, many imagi-

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<sup>5</sup>This and the other two paragraphs marked “Observation” (German “Anmerk.”) appear as indented insertions within the text; they presumably represent editorial comments. The 1827 biography of Beethoven by Johann Aloys Schlosser is available in an English translation: *Beethoven: The First Biography*, edited and with an introduction and notes by Barry Cooper, translated from the German by Barry Cooper (Portland, OR: Amadeus, 1996). The Hoffmann reference is to his article on Beethoven’s instrumental music, which was based on his reviews of the 5th symphony and the Op. 70 piano trios published in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 12: cols. 630–42 and 652–59 and 15: cols. 141–54, respectively.

<sup>6</sup>The German reads “Verkünderin,” indicating a prophetic messenger of female gender.

<sup>7</sup>Once again, Fröhlich uses the word “Dichtung,” a term usually applied to the composition of poetry. He then uses the more familiar “Compositionen” to describe the result; for the sake of clarity, this is rendered here as “pieces of music.”

nary illnesses, but also many established ones, insufficient attention to his works, etc.: in short, so much that clouded the sunshine of his life. So, looking in vain here below for the source of his heart's desire, he found it in his religious soul, which pursued the prescribed path with resignation, but full of courage and power. He found it in his heart, that glowed with noble love for all better things, and, like the warming sun, gave help so gladly, even with the greatest sacrifice; found it particularly in the special feeling with which he learned to understand nature—his place of refuge from the afflictions of life, the rich source of his artistic stimuli—to recognize its elevated purpose of giving all creatures blessedness, the harmonic working together of all structures through the power of joy that leads all things. What he enclosed within his own breast could easily be broadened into a general idea, particularly when we assume that Schiller's magnificent poem—whose preeminent impression on his soul is clear from its working out in this symphony—gave him, if not the impetus, then more or less stimulus and direction. Thence what was most likely the idea at the basis of this symphony:

A person enters upon life full of power and courage, with mighty longing for an elevated goal, from whose attainment he expects satisfaction and blessedness. Given over to various impressions of this goal, now amid the harsh struggle against oppressive powers that often grasp him powerfully and sweep him along with them, now rocked to sleep by the gentlest, most heartfelt feelings, often kissing the hem of fleeting joy and dreaming himself blessed, he yet never attains true rest and blessedness; his heart is always oppressed by dismal, dissatisfied emotions, by longing and the variegated feelings of pain, if he does not find the spring of true joy, that divine spark. It is the wheel that drives the kingdom of nature, as it does that of the spirit. It unites all people, as well as all creatures, lending courage and power in the progress along the designated path of life. It elevates and propels our feelings, so that, according to the example of the Creator, who blesses all things, they glow only in love, thereby bringing us near to the Father of all, who reigns above the stars. Or, if we want to express it in more general terms: unrest and night cloud life, wherever the spring of true joy does not flow, and the greatest power and the most delicate soul bloom without fertile seeds—they bear no true fruit if they are not animated by that spring. The former disperses, the latter melts away without a trace.

### *First Section*

And this symphony, deeply thought out and even more deeply felt, develops the magnificent contemplation of such a soul, fitted out with the greatest power of mind and heart, fighting its way toward life's highest goal. Finally, after long struggles, unsatisfied with every other course, it finds this much-desired goal in the life-giving spring of pure joy. Thus the choice of the fundamental key of D. —And just as the symphony as a whole, in accordance with the idea, divides into two parts: the striving, the seeking—and the attainment of what is striven for, likewise it moves in the first half mostly in D minor and the related keys, while in the second half the sumptuous and more joyous D major predominates.



Observation. Thus, as involved as this work appears at first glance, it is just as simple in layout and the manner in which the ideas are constructed. This is very similar to the arrangement of Mahlmann's poem: Saul and David. The poet's idea here is: true blessedness can only reign in a pure soul, in a childlike heart. The poet lets this idea emerge by means of presenting us with Saul, blessed with all the world's magnificence and yet unhappy, since his heart is not at rest. In sharp contrast, he lets David, the poor shepherd boy, appear happy, simply by means of his pure, childlike soul, which lives in God. And the reader's correct comprehension of the poet's idea is subject to no doubt. Beethoven, as already mentioned, sketched his symphony and laid it out in the same simple manner: dissatisfaction through all the fighting and seeking—first part—; blessedness where joy's animating spring is found, and through it worthy and powerful stimulus of the strength to run a courageous course in a noble life—second part.—

For this reason also, the symphony begins with a fifth, which, through the lack of the third, signifies so much that is indeterminate, hinting at the longing of melancholy feelings that move lightly in the heart. As these increase in intensity, the depiction becomes ever more urgent, until in the 17th and following measures a soul full of power and courage proclaims itself, capable of the greatest things, equal to all life's struggles. Thus the unison with its grand character, expressing the stirring idea that forms, as it were, the focus of the whole, both as a whole and with its individual secondary ideas and rhythmic caesuras—as a form of the life force that confronts all obstacles. Meanwhile, the first idea, with which the symphony begins, is admirably used in the working out to signify the most delicate, most melancholy, most oppressed feelings. —If the unison, with the powerful, so deeply gripping accents that follow, has presented us with the picture of an uncommonly powerful soul, the tender passages that are mingled in develop for us, in the 28th–30th measures, the mild feelings of the noble breast, which strives longingly toward a beautiful goal. Power comes to the fore again, but it is quickly lost again in a mood of gentle melancholy, until finally, with the unison in B-flat, an even greater expenditure of energy develops a majestic picture of the noble breast, and the soul's powerful urgency proclaims itself in the fiery ideas that, brought to prominence through effective imitations in the individual sections of the orchestra, make a powerful impression by means of the strong accents and effective modulations that are mixed in, arousing the soul's interest in the development to come like the solemn introduction to a speech. And this is given, according to the idea discussed above, with a mastery such as we can expect only from a Beethoven, with a genius that was his alone. Imagine the difficulty of the task: description of an uncommonly powerful nature, which, now in the mightiest onrush, now in the most melting emotions, always striving, never satisfied, had to be portrayed interestingly enough that our spirit and heart would become not only actively engaged, but captivated. In the working out of the music, it thereby had to bring with it necessary, ever-shifting development, with,

however, no confusion of the ideas; on the contrary, it had to combine the principal and secondary ideas in artistic unity, which is what the master did! In this regard let us study the work and the manner in which the great soul is presented to us, now in aspiring, unconquerable heroic power, now in the effusion of the tenderest, most longing feelings, here in the delicate joy of sweet emotions, there in the highest tragic pathos; —this colossal picture of great humanity as it proclaims itself in one soul, which storms Olympus with titanic power and still lets us see heavenly mildness in the delicate effusions, like the unrest and never-satisfied longing of earthly life! —If this is grasped by the performers—under the direction of a deeply feeling, aesthetically educated man—with spirit and soul, portrayed in the powerful as well as the delicate parts with the emotional truth and ardor demanded by such an extraordinary work, which presents us with the richest and most admirable imaginative pictures in the boldest transitions, in unusual connections and successions, and extends the spirit's power almost into the far distance in the firm development of the principal and interesting secondary ideas, along with the soul's magnificent blossoms and unending depth in the unfolding of its variegated impulses, in order to allow the grand poetic structure to appear in its magnificence, in the magical fragrance of romanticism—what a great effect must it produce on the listeners! —

Observation. From what has already been said it should be clear how much depends, with this work in particular, on deep comprehension and a soulful, true delivery. To indicate it more precisely for every passage would, however, be going to far; what has already been said may thus suffice to hint at such a comprehension of all the remaining pieces and passages. Besides, the following discussion will clarify and determine the manner and kind of working out with which Beethoven developed his ideas.

If we are presented in the first piece with the picture of a power that offers its heroic voice to the struggles of life, and which is also capable of great tenderness, we find its urgency heightened in the next one, the *Molto vivace*, 3/4, as it practically tumbles into the billows of life in order to find satisfaction. Here it propels itself from point to point. All situations, from the greatest power to the most intimate stirring, from feelings of pain to solemn ones of joy, are gone through here. Only one wish animates the soul: attainment of a state of mind that guarantees rest and blessedness. After the pause in the 8th measure, before the *stringendo*, the soul's urgency rises; it strides forward with firm steps—superbly characterized in the *Presto* 2/2. The storm subsides; delicate stirrings burst forth in the breast, signified by the lovely melody of the wind instruments in D major. Pictures of joy, presentiments of the happy condition that will also be his, are mingled in.

In vain! The true spring of joy is not yet at hand. The beautiful mood vanishes, the soul is again overcome with indeterminate urgency, and the momentum toward power, the rocking in gentle feelings—everything disappears like a dream image. The desired satisfaction is

not found in this direction, and the piece concludes with the sharp accents that signify the unappeased urgency of an energetic soul.

The soul then turns, in the following piece—*Adagio molto*,<sup>8</sup> 3/4—toward the sphere of tender, intimate emotions, which is already superbly shown by the key, B-flat major, and by the pious melody, signifying so much restfulness, by the interesting effusion of the string and wind instruments in alternation. From this mood that loses itself in delicacy, the soul propels itself into the domain of gentle joy—in the *Andante moderato* 3/4 D major—which, with various excitements, now rising in ardor, now disappearing into the lightest breath, can still not quiet the longing that is still always unsatisfied. Accordingly, the previous mood is taken up again—hence the *Tempo primo*, the same key and time signature—which, however, is now given more urgently. As it did before, the depiction rises again into the domain of joy—in the *Andante moderato*—only in a new direction. Hence the fundamental key of G, and the excursion in the following *Adagio*, 4/4 into E-flat major. The gentle mood is mixed with seriousness, which in the *Adagio* pours forth in feelings of holiness; a new, deep spring has opened up to the longing heart. But this one, too, is insufficient. A heightening—which is shown particularly in the wind instruments with much truth and characteristic speech—leads directly to the first emotion, which is signified here by the declamation of the same theme in the wind instruments. The whole is more agitated, though; hence the 12/8 time and the livelier figurations, principally in the first violin. From here it rises to accents of the greatest power, returns directly again to gentle joy, propels itself once more to the greatest energy, leads suddenly into a mood of solemn melancholy. It takes up the previous soul-state of happy stirring again, and pours itself out at the conclusion of this piece, after the most variegated risings and fallings—without having built up anything firmly in the soul. An accurate picture of a soul that, along with a fundamental orientation toward delicacy, finds no satisfaction, whether it cultivates the gentlest moods of the heart, opens it up to pleasure, or lifts it up toward strength, until the animating spring of true joy flows for it. It is then overcome by the full power of pain, as Beethoven so truly signified in the following *Presto* 3/4. The lament of unappeased longing—that in all the directions that were tried no full satisfaction was to be attained—is expressed by the bass in both recitatives. The composer sensibly presents these various principal directions to us once again in the short *Allegro non troppo* 2/3, the *Vivace* 3/4, and the *Adagio* 4/4, always mixing in such a recitative. Then, in the *Allegro assai* 4/4 D major, the lovely picture of joy hovers before him, as the bass expresses with such exaltation in the following *Tempo primo* 3/4, supported by such warm sympathy from the accompanying instruments.

Now at last appears the long hoped-for goal of these desires; the spring of true joy, of true blessedness, is found. It flows deep in the breast, even if still in weak effusions, as Beethoven very beautifully expresses by letting the theme of the following jubilant chorus be declaimed by the solemn basses without any accompaniment. The same theme is then taken up, with the same delicate bearing, by the violas and violoncellos, while the bass performs a

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<sup>8</sup>Actually *Adagio molto e cantabile*.

countersubject and the bassoon lets us feel its heartfelt sympathy with a third phrase. Hereupon the first violin takes up the theme, which is accompanied by the remaining string instruments according to the rules of counterpoint, very intimately, elevated through interesting harmonic progressions and effective intermingling of the voices, to which the bassoon speaks strengthening phrases. In the last eight measures it is intensified, and with the conclusion of the theme all the wind instruments enter, taking it up with a tone of jubilation, which acquires a solemn character through the accompanying trumpets and kettledrum, strengthened by the string instruments through their simple, rhythmically weighty accompaniment. Then urgent forces join in that threaten to destroy the full outpouring of joy. Hence the figurations in the second violin and viola, with which the first violin also later joins in, while the wind instruments are still continuing the previous melody, until they too are powerfully swept away in the current that more and more overcomes the soul. But there is a sudden interruption at the *poco ritenente*, which sinks back into the *poco Adagio*; the previously powerful inward strength sinks, crippled. It seeks to rise up again in the *Tempo primo* that follows, but in vain. Harshly affected by this, the soul is most urgently assailed in the coming *Presto 3/4* by the greatest pain, which Beethoven has already brought to bear earlier, after the *Adagio molto*, in B-flat major, with the wind instruments supported by the imposing effect of the timpani. Here, though, it is given with great power by all the instruments, thus is completely the picture of a soul that, when dejected over many failures, nourished grief in the breast based on the greatest assaults of pain, where everything that it turned to for help appears fruitless, disappointment is everywhere, and it no longer believes that it can find any basis for consolation. There then resounds, like the voice of a helpful genius from the higher regions, a singing voice in recitative with the words of consolation: “Oh friends, not these sounds! Banish the harsh lament of grief; the eternally bubbling spring of uplifting joy flows for all of us!”<sup>9</sup> And there immediately resounds from the oboes, clarinets, bassoons, supported by the horns, an imitation of the joyful idea already performed earlier by the basses and raised by the other instruments to the highest jubilation, whereupon the solo voice—a baritone—in a happy outcry, as though he has now found the spring of longed-for blessedness, sings: “Joy!,” which is repeated by the basses of the choir in a likewise happy, powerful outcry. And now begins the hymn of joy:

Joy, beautiful divine spark,  
 Daughter of Elysium,  
 We enter, drunk with fire,  
 Heavenly one, into your sanctuary!  
 Your magic binds back together,  
 What custom in its strictness has separated;  
 All people become brothers,  
 Where your gentle wing carries.

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<sup>9</sup>The first sentence is a literal quotation of Beethoven’s text, but the second is an extremely loose paraphrase, perhaps reflecting the dissatisfaction with the original words that Fröhlich expresses at the conclusion of the article.

sung in *unisono* by the same solo voice according to the melody previously proclaimed by the basses, along with which the first oboe and clarinet perform distinctive, previously used contrapuntal figurations. The choir then repeats enthusiastically, *unisono*: “Your magic binds back together, What custom in its strictness has separated etc.,” and now we are in the lovely countryside of joy.

### *Second Section*

After a short instrumental transition that reinforces what has come before, alto, tenor, and bass solos, later joined by the soprano as well, develop the sources of joy in greater detail in the text: “Whoever has succeeded in the great chance, of being a friend to a friend, whoever has won a gracious woman, should join in with jubilation! Indeed—even whoever has only a soul to call his own, etc.” This last is then again reinforced by choral repetition, while the instruments pour out their sympathy in characteristic figurations. The spring of joy rises even higher with the following passage: “All beings drink joy at the breast of nature,” declaimed by tenor and bass solos with a fugal theme, accompanied by the wind instruments and heightened by the lively figuration performed in alternation by the string instruments, while first the second horn, then even the timpani also play a role. At the passage “All the good, all the evil, follow in her rosy footsteps,” the alto enters; at “She gave us kisses and grapes, a friend tested in death,” the soprano; and the final “Ecstasy was given to the worm, and the cherub stands before God” is performed by all four solo voices with mounting enthusiasm. This is taken up by the entering choir, which repeats the last four lines, particularly bringing out: “the cherub stands before God” with increased power in simple, grand accents, and, with the cooperation of the instrumental accompaniment, leaps to the most sublime jubilation.

The sudden close in F major is striking, extremely significant for the development of the principal idea of the whole symphony and of the way in which Beethoven here understood the text of the poem and joined it into a whole in an original manner.— A multifarious spring of joy is given to us in the text already developed, which is at its purest when people, laying aside the commonplaces of this world—ecstasy was given to the worm—transfiguring them through the radiance from above—and the cherub stands before God—live in the momentum toward divinity, and, animated by this idea with high courage, wander through the path of life full of strength and rich in blessing for themselves and the whole. This is the great goal of his existence; —it is what all created things have in common: for everything, lifeless or animated, everything should lift itself up, improve itself, and propel itself step-by-step.

And this magnificent drama, how every creature, elevated by the animating power of joy, begins and continues its course with joyousness, is what the ingenious master now portrays for us.

Just as Dante let us descend into the greatest depths of hell in order to propel us to the delightful contemplation of the highest rapture in paradise, so does Beethoven begin here with

his poetic description, which he raises into the fieriest general hymn of joy, through which, enraptured, we see all creation join together in the magnificent life of high exuberance.

And then the master's poetic spirit<sup>10</sup> first leads us into the depths of the earth, where we perceive the muffled harmonies of the secretively stirring life. To that end he sensibly lets the bass drum, whose indefinite sound receives firm harmonic support from the bassoon accompanying in the depths, begin very quietly with isolated strokes, in a fundamental rhythm—very characteristically marked *alla Marcia*—into which everything later flows, combining the richest life, streaming forth in various directions, as though by a holy decree of wholeness. —In the 9th measure the harmony receives more definition through the entry of the clarinets, which state the third. In the 13th measure a joyous song of jubilation already resounds from feeling beings, as yet in a delicate effusion. At the same time, triangles and cymbals join in; —animate and inanimate nature begin the holy dithyramb. In the 15th measure the oboes join in, in the 17th the second trumpet, in the 28th the string instruments. And so all the various instruments gradually join together into a harmonic whole with the same fundamental rhythm, with the same fundamental melody, which binds all creation into a wonderful unity. At the same time, it illustrates the way that all beings of inorganic and organic nature pursue the same goal, set in motion by the same power—the joyful urge to traverse the assigned path worthily. After this splendid introductory painting, the tenor solo then enters, clarifying the hitherto magnificent picture through words:

Happy, as his suns fly  
Through the sumptuous plane of heaven,  
Run, brother, your path,  
Joyous, like a hero to victory!

to which the instruments declaim the melody raised earlier.

The jubilation, the rapturous urgency, mount continuously, and at the *piu forte* the full men's choir enters in summons, as a worthy representative of humanity, repeating the two last lines.

And now begins the magnificent race, illustrated here by the choir of instruments. Then, maintaining the same fundamental rhythm, a new theme is built up out of the first melody into a fugue, which carries the whole enthusiastic flight within itself. This is heightened by a second, lively theme that is combined with it. And so all the voices gradually join in; all the subjects are combined; the most effective imitations enter, heightened by the rapturous sound of the other accompanying instruments. And so jubilant melodies resound as one through the various kingdoms of creation; all of this passes through various keys, until it is all united in the powerful *unisonus*, in the key of F-sharp—what an excursion from B-flat major! After a very characteristic transition, expressing something like holy wonder—*p.pp.*, so that

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<sup>10</sup>The German “dichtender Geist” uses a form of the same verb that was used above, uncharacteristically, to refer to the composition of music.



the powerful passage that follows stands out appropriately—the full choir of singers enters most imposingly with simple rhythmic accents in sumptuous D major—the principal key of the more joyful section of the symphony, striking up the hymn of joy: “Joy, beautiful divine spark, etc.,” the spring that animates everything, and, to be sure, according to the first melody, only in the present heightened, lively rhythm. It is lifted up by the solemn unison of the string instruments, as also by the effective rhythmic accompaniment of the wind instruments, clearly expressing that true joy only blesses us when we worthily pursue our goal, that of living for all people as for ourselves in God. Then love is kindled in our hearts, with which we encompass the entire world; then we worthily approach God, the loving father. Then, only then, do we celebrate the triumph of our greatness—we propel ourselves from earth above the tent of stars as children of God. Hence the following text:

Be embraced, millions!  
This kiss for the whole world!  
Brothers—over the tent of stars  
A loving father must dwell.  
Do you bow down, millions?  
Can you sense the creator, world?  
Seek him above the tent of stars,  
He must dwell above the stars.

As magnificent as is this interpretation and connection of the text, its working out is just as grand, and if these passages are given with that sublime, holy expression that lies within them, the impression is indescribable.

In the interest of brevity the reviewer will now call attention only to the treatment of the last four lines and to the thoughtful apprehension of their spirit. Only he who pursues his path worthily and courageously, ennobling his days through blessed love, seeing and feeling this spring of joy in the entire kingdom of nature, only he senses the creator, who reigns above the stars, and—he falls down in worship. Let this now be compared with the working out of this passage, the falling back in the holy feeling of reverence, of wonder, of being lost in the contemplation of God, of his greatness and love. —

Thus is the kingdom of God, the kingdom of blessedness, opened up. Lamenting disappears; everything shouts for joy in the holy jubilation, and praise and worship and highest delight resound from the eternal, from the inconceivable, that combined all beings, all powers, in one great and magnificent goal. —

How deeply has Beethoven grasped the admirable poem! How ingenious is the shaping of the musical-poetic structure up to this point, and from there to the end! Beginning with the *Allegro energico* 3/4, this is worked out in a new manner, with inspired attention to the principles of musical rhetoric. In accordance with these, at the conclusion of the fugal passages—as is also frequently the case with other pieces of music—the principal and more



important secondary ideas are densely interconnected, in order to let them stand out with their full significance and produce the greatest possible effect. Beethoven now does the same in regard both to the musical phrases and to the treatment of the words; only here the working out is longer and grander, and the enthusiasm increases with admirable power.

The alto begins in a solemn tone of jubilation, supported by wind instruments and the second violin, to which the soprano proclaims the first theme of: “Joy, beautiful divine spark,” while the first violin performs a lively figuration from the third movement, which is later worked through at the same time as the other two—now strictly, now more freely. It thus offers the material for a most lively painting of joy and jubilation, which is interrupted only by the pious feeling of worship at the lines: “Do you bow down, millions? etc.” — The passage “Seek him above the tent of stars” gives the opportunity for intensification, and in the outcry “Brothers, brothers!,” as in the treatment of “over the tent of stars a loving father must dwell,” the master’s childishly pious, deep soul is transfigured.

If the arrangement to this point, from the cadence on the fifth leading into the *Allegro energico*, has been treated as a newly reinvigorated discussion after the preceding organ point, the composer has further ensured a great effect by letting the energetic phrases just mentioned enter in full force after the *pp*. There now occurs, in the *Allegro ma non tanto* that follows, a long intensification from the *pp* to the utmost power. What is more, the alternating solo voices—which later move in contrapuntal phrases; —the choir entering with its mounting *unisonus*—a canonic imitation of the principal phrases worked through earlier in the solo voices; —the warm and effective participation of the remaining instruments, brought out by the unison; the entry of the choir at the *ff*; the characteristic little *Adagio*; the elevation into the *tempo primo* that follows; the warm and deep outpouring of the solo voices in the *poco Adagio*—which can be given so effectively—develop a significance and abundance of representation such as could only be conceived within the spirit of such a master.

In the following *poco Allegro 2/2*, which begins *pp*, and also heightens its power by accelerating the tempo, the leap to the highest jubilation finally takes place, which gushes forth in the *Prestissimo*. Everything rejoices, everything joins together as the creation of the same loving father. Hence the working together of all the instruments (triangle, drum, cymbal) toward the harmonic outpouring of inanimate and animate nature. There are no longer any solo voices; everything joins together in the solemn hymn of high blessedness and rapture, which joy, this daughter of Elysium—which resounds from the cries raised up in the *Andante maestoso 3/4*—spreads over everything. In the final *Prestissimo* the full measure of the greatest delight gushes forth, beginning with the same song of jubilation that made the transition to joy, and that now also concludes the magnificent hymn.

How grand, according to the discussion so far, is the idea of the whole, how ingenious its construction! —What a sublime song of praise is sung in the beautiful unison of two great spirits through the united power of poetry and music! What a new path is opened up here for great accomplishments by outstanding spirits, as well as in regard to the manner in which the

symphony—the great choir of instruments—can be used for the construction of characteristic paintings, as voices and instruments can be combined into the most magnificent products of art! There follows something in brief about this last-mentioned.

### *Third Section*

Even educated people have already often complained that the symphony, though it may speak to the soul, though it may cause the feelings of the public, aroused in its totality, to swing back and forth in gentle billows between slight contrasts—to quote the very words of the author of the essay: “Should one think about something with instrumental music?” (in no. 31 of the *Allg. mus. Zeitung* for the year 1827)<sup>11</sup>—still does not offer the material for more definite modes of perception.

It also cannot be denied that highly educated spiritual powers are required in order to understand works of free music, with no explanatory text, correctly: that is, not to find either too much or too little in them.

This may be one of the principal reasons why, in general, symphonies consisting of four longish movements are not customarily much loved. Indeed, if one may trust the reports from many regions, it is to be feared that this species of musical work, in which, to the honor of the German nation, its great spirits have accomplished such magnificent things, will gradually be driven from our concert halls. We may not blame the public for this; it is up to us to educate them to the point where they can grasp these works, penetrating as close as possible to the source of their excellence. This must then be brought about either through training beginning in the public schools and then continued, or, as was the case in the religious ones, by letting the star shine from above that showed the three wise men the way. That is certainly no small task, even for excellent composers.

But Beethoven has shown the way in the piece of music under discussion. It is up to us to continue on it with spirit, and to create works of art that outshine the earlier ones in every regard.

The work would be greatly facilitated, moreover, if an inspired poet were to join forces with a capable composer. The text of the poetic painting or of individual ideas—be they poetic prose or poetry in the narrower sense—designated more precisely for individual movements, would be printed along with the symphony, and they would then be found at the performance on the customary concert program. It scarcely need be recalled that this poetic material should be written only as general indications, as briefly as possible, in order to allow musical art to develop the principal feelings connected to the fundamental idea without constraint, and thus

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<sup>11</sup>*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. The anonymous article “Soll man bey der instrumental-Musik Etwas denken?” appeared in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 29, 529ff. and 545ff. For a discussion of this important article, and of the journalistic and intellectual context in which it appeared, see Wallace, *Beethoven's Critics*, 78–82.

to combine all the individual parts in a single soul painting. In this way the two sister arts would offer each other a friendly hand; poet and composer would receive the opportunity to let their spiritual power flow out, stimulating the people; —and how many poems already in existence can be used according to the model established by Beethoven! Each art form would remain in its own sphere, producing, only on a greater scale, the same thing that Haydn already accomplished so long ago in his Seven Words.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the spiritually correct manner of declamation would be signified for the conductor of the music as well as for the performers, which could have the salutary repercussion of leading them to deeper understanding and presentation of other instrumental works. —

At the same time, the symphony would not be a mongrel, but would rather be raised to new heights, such as we owe to the developed musical works of Beethoven's genius. The firmly rhetorical artistic structure that we find in Haydn's and Mozart's admirable symphonies would become at once bearer and proclaimer of an elevated poetic mode of perception, in which the essence of rhetoric in the language of words would have fused with that of the language of notes.

If one employed vocal music here in order to clarify or heighten the depiction previously worked out through the instrumental parts, as Beethoven did, what a new field for great accomplishments would be opened up, particularly through the combination of the instrumental and vocal choirs, where now one, now the other developed the fullness of its power and its characteristic essence in the interesting contest! In combination, both would be able to produce those great and rich effects that lie within the scope of each individually, not to mention the many ways in which an ingenious master would be able to use every part, both in the individual instruments and voices and in the full ensemble, to obtain new, as yet undreamed of effects! —The symphony would then have to receive new and great interest, and most likely be raised from its current neglect to become the favorite musical form. —At the same time, those hearers not yet well-versed in the art of music would be ever more occupied in mind as well as in soul and accustomed in general not to take up works of free music under the empty form of mere harmony, but rather to understand the individual stimuli, modes of perception, and preeminently the firmly developed rhetorical structures, as a beautiful whole.

Thus would the natural transition be established to a deeper penetration of the essence of pieces of free music—symphonies, quartets, sonatas, etc.—: the star from above showed the way. An incalculable gain for culture in general, as well as for art in particular!

This would allow the great accomplishments of the great masters from the past until our own period, in vocal as well as instrumental music, to be combined here, and the concert hall would be the highest abode of art. For it would not only present us with individual artistic

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<sup>12</sup>Haydn's "Musica instrumentale sopra le 7 ultime parole del nostro Redentore in croce," popularly known as the Seven Words or Seven Last Words, was written in 1786 or 1787 for orchestra, and was also published in an arrangement for string quartet. It consists of independent instrumental movements designed to illustrate each of the sayings the Gospel writers attribute to Christ on the cross, preceded by an introduction and followed by a musical description of an earthquake.

talents, splendid accomplishment in the voices and in the instruments, as well as individual instrumental and vocal works—e.g., symphonies, overtures, concertos, concertantes,<sup>13</sup> arias, duets, quartets, and so forth, choruses with and without accompaniment—but rather would bring into contemplation, in this new kind of symphony, the highest that the united power of all the artistic means of music is able to give, so that one could rightly designate it a choral symphony, since the whole choir of instruments and voices works together toward a single great effect.

And if Beethoven erected, in the work under discussion, an immortal monument to his great spirit and beautiful soul, this would find its most honorable recognition in the way he would shine forth as the founder of this new splendid kind of work in the history of music.

It is thus all the more deserving of being known and studied by all who have any interest in musical art; and the entire world of art, particularly every German patriot, will know how to give the fullest thanks to the publishers who have already made such a great sacrifice to the demands of art, letting this work appear in such a beautiful edition at such significant expense.

If, moreover, this piece of music is to have the intended effect that lies within it, diligent study and ceaseless effort is necessary in rehearsing it, until each individual part stands out and appears according to its character. The above discussion was treated at such length in order to facilitate this, but the reviewer believes that he must also call attention to the following.

In the *Presto* 3/4 that follows the *Adagio molto* in B-flat major C, there occurs a passage in the character of a recitative, to be declaimed by the basses alone, and *forte* at that. —If this is not sung out with beautiful tone, so that one believes one is hearing a trained, inspired bass singer, it—along with the similar passages that follow—can only produce a bad effect. If an orchestra does not have any outstanding contrabass players, the violoncellos—or one of them alone—may perform this. Many of these passages could also be given by the bassoons, or by the deeper instruments in alternation, for example the clarinets in the lower octave. This would also agree with the principal idea, according to which the human powers that seek in vain for satisfaction on other paths than that of joy break out into laments, which would become more general and more penetrating through the common participation of various instruments.

It should also be seen to that the basses sing out with deep feeling the theme to the following: “Joy, beautiful divine spark,” which they proclaim alone in the *Allegro assai* D major, with great delicacy, full of warm speech, raised into individual rhetorical caesuras and turns of phrase through  $\leftarrow$  and  $\rightarrow$ .

Furthermore, the text of the recitative: “Oh friends, not these sounds, let us rather strike up more agreeable and more joyful ones!” is far too prosaic. Because of this the reviewer would choose other words. An uplifting poetic text could be inserted; indeed, even the melody might be changed to advantage, particularly toward the close.

If many of the pieces seem too long, many passages could also be cut, for example in the first *Molto vivace* 3/4 and in the following *Adagio molto* 4/4, as long as this was done in such a way that the idea of the whole, developed above, stood out appropriately.

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<sup>13</sup>That is, concertos for multiple instruments.

Finally, the individual pieces—whose metronomic tempo indications are to be found in the 22nd book of *Caecilia* on p. 158<sup>14</sup>—must follow each other rapidly from the 2nd on, in order not to interrupt the development of the idea, but rather to allow one picture to follow quickly upon another.

If attention is paid to what has been said so far, the work must bring about a great effect. Every orchestra, as well as every capable leader of one, will do itself honor by a spirited presentation of it, and the diligence of the participants will be rewarded not only with a magnificent artistic enjoyment, but also—if they are not already accomplished artists—with significant strengthening of their artistic powers, as well as with a heightened contemplation of the capabilities of the magnificent art of notes.

J. Fröhlich



**“SECOND REVIEW,” BY DR. GROSSHEIM**

Only amid feelings of greatest pain over our loss do we sketch out the most perfect representation of it; the amalgamation with the principal subject generates the purity of the counter-subject. It is thus no paradox to expect a hymn to freedom from a prisoner, or the highest song of joy from a mourner. We see at least the latter possibility in the present work.

We know with what physical suffering the now transfigured one had to struggle: that the most terrible thing that a master of notes could experience, the loss of his hearing, was Beethoven's unhappy fate. But the depression that arose from this was augmented by further spiritual suffering, such as only a philanthropist can know.<sup>15</sup> It is no wonder, then, that the fearsome measure of the artist's own grief seized him even more mightily as he wished to present us with the beaker of joy; no wonder that he here placed a picture of a joyless world before that of a joyful one.

But will we, to whom the representations of Sophokles and Euripides seem too cruel, not shrink back from the dreadfulness of the first image? —An Iphigenia, an Idamant, who,

<sup>14</sup>Beethoven's own metronome markings for the 9th symphony were published in *Caecilia* 6 (December 1826), 158.

<sup>15</sup>A footnote to the original review reads: “His thoughts at Seume's grave, which I preserve like a noble gem, give precise information about Beethoven's high sensibility for worldly happiness.”

Johann Gottfried Seume (1763–1810) was an important German poet who died in Teplitz in 1810 and was buried there. It appears likely that Beethoven visited Seume's grave when he stayed in Teplitz the following year. It is not clear whether the “thoughts” to which Grossheim refers were written or merely spoken. Grossheim does, however, mention Seume in a surviving letter to Beethoven, dated 10 November 1819, suggesting that Beethoven “marry” Seume by setting his poem “Die Beterin” to the music of (presumably the first movement of) the piano sonata Op. 27, no. 2—the so-called Moonlight Sonata, although it was not known by this title at the time). See Sieghard Brandenburg, ed., *Ludwig van Beethoven: Briefwechsel Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 5, 338–39 (letter no. 1352), and Theodore Albrecht, trans. and ed., *Letters to Beethoven and Other Correspondence*, vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 169–71 (letter no. 263).

in a triumph of childlike love, proffered her bare breast to the murderous steel that the angry deity put in her father's hand. An Alceste, who staggers to Erebus on the glowing ground in order to sacrifice herself for her husband. These images have been almost banished from our gallery of tone-paintings, and jokes have taken the stage, which all too easily verge into foolishness, indeed into insanity. Will we not therefore flee if the curtain now falls on this image of mourning? — By no means! For we may be able to wean ourselves from the misleading proclamations of skepticism and partisanship, but a glimmer of the knowledge of good and evil protects us from being spoiled. And if art declines here and there, and if the artist himself is to blame, we despise such an assault and follow more closely the certified sons of the Son of God. No artist of our century has stooped less to us than has Beethoven; well, then, let us rise to meet him!! —

On staggering feet, on trembling ground, we enter into the arena where the joyless one leads us. No ray of sunlight warms the frozen earth here. Everything is barren and unfruitful. A crape of mourning covers all of creation. Mildew has poisoned the plant kingdom. The forests are stripped of leaves. The forest birds are silent, and only the croaking of birds of prey, the howling of wolves, makes its way to our ears. Soon the power of excited imagination leads us to the sad parade of the legions of killjoys who destroy our heaven. Their armor is impenetrable to mortals, their bowstrings strong, their arrows poisoned. Envy, malice, hypocrisy, betrayal, and the most terrible of monsters, cold possessiveness, are their ringleaders. Their fixed gaze is directed only toward where the divine image of joy breaks through the clouds, in the delusion that they can block it with a fatal blow at the first ray that it seeks to send to the waiting world. Madmen! They do not suspect that the father of love has taken the heavenly daughter into eternal shelter, and their arrows turn back upon them. They sink. But still, and quickly, their ranks are filled, and with redoubled rage they begin their terrible business anew.

This is the tone-painting that Beethoven first sets up, but, moved by a voice that calls out to him “Away with this!,” he now takes it down from the easel, so that he may, at Schiller's side, set up the picture of joy that is sublime beyond all description.

If poetry and music step forth together, the first is mistress, the second servant;<sup>16</sup> let us thus cast only a glance at the composer and his relationship to the poet. —

A vocal contingent consisting of a choir and four solo voices has united itself here with the most full-voiced orchestra. The deeper voice among the solo singers carries the first stanza of the poem in worthy, manly tones, while the word “joy” alone is sung a few times by the basses of the choir. Finally, the second section of this stanza resounds from all of the men's voices.<sup>17</sup> B. does not yet, however, give us the “Be embraced, millions.”<sup>18</sup> — Hereupon the solo

<sup>16</sup>The German words are “Herrin” and “Dienerinn,” both feminine-gendered.

<sup>17</sup>The final two lines of the stanza are actually sung by the altos, tenors, and basses of the choir.

<sup>18</sup>The original text of Schiller's “An die Freude” is divided into eight-line stanzas, each of which is followed by a four-line chorus. Beethoven's setting not only rearranges the text; it also ignores this distinction. The text “Seid umschlungen, Millionen! / Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt! / Brüder—überm Sternenzelt / Muß ein lieber Vater wohnen” was originally the chorus following the first stanza.



singers give the second stanza, in which the descant first enters at the words “whoever has won a gracious woman.” The chorus likewise repeats the second half of this stanza, and once again the “that which inhabits the great arena” is kept in reserve, so that later on the artist’s splendid economy may be recognized, along with the power that he knows how to give to his conclusion.<sup>19</sup>— In the third stanza, which, like these, is repeated first by the solo singers and then, in the second section, by the choir, joy now begins to be ever more resoundingly audible; meanwhile, we perceive, broadly stretched out and in long notes, the words: “and the cherub stands before God.” Jumping over the following chorus of the poem, as well as the stanza: “Joy is the name of the powerful spring,”<sup>20</sup> B. lays claim to the chorus: “Happy, as his suns fly.” The rhythm of this chorus, sung by the tenor and bass, the full instrumentation for battle music, the movement, with its prolonged resonance, all of this shows clearly that B. was thinking here of a war hero.

Not needing the entire content of the poem for his purpose, the composer returns only to its first stanza. The melody as before, the accompaniment now more powerful, though, unity and intensification compete here for the prize. He has now taken up the chorus “Be embraced, millions!” as well. In it resounds, and certainly here for the first time, the peal of the mighty trombone, which advances with the singing voices in long sustained notes. Immediately afterward now follows also the “Do you bow down, millions?” without violins, accompanied only by violas, trombones, and other wind instruments. At the words “He must dwell above the stars,” the greatest possible intensification of the whole begins with outer and inner strength. Painting with ever more brilliant colors, the composer surrenders himself from now on solely to the feeling of highest joy, repeating those stanzas of the poem that seemed sufficient for his present need with full use of the orchestra, now the solo voices, then the choir.

Be embraced, millions!  
This kiss for the whole world

resounds unceasingly. Indeed, he now repeats

Joy, beautiful divine spark,  
Daughter of Elysium

unceasingly, as if he cannot separate himself from the all-embracing words with which Schiller begins his song, cannot leave the millions whom he has embraced in spirit. When he has once

<sup>19</sup>Beethoven completely omits the chorus that follows the second stanza, which reads, “Was den großen Ring bewohnt, / Huldige der Sympathie! / Zu den Sternen leitet sie, / Wo der Unbekannte thronet.”

<sup>20</sup>The chorus of the third verse is the text beginning with the words “Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen,” which Beethoven sets later in the movement. It is followed in Schiller’s poem by another stanza that Beethoven omitted, which reads, “Freude heißt die starke Feder / In der ewigen Natur. / Freude, Freude treibt die Räder / In der großen Weltenuhr. / Blumen lockt sie aus den Keimen, / Sonnen aus dem Firmament, / Sphären rollt sie in den Räumen, / Die des Sehers Rohr nicht kennt.”



again cried out “Joy, beautiful divine spark!” the pen falls from the exhausted hand; the son of sorrow has accomplished the virtuous task of dispensing the full measure of joy to his brothers.

Truly! Whoever does not here raise his cup higher and higher still, melting with the highest enjoyment, wishing to bring Schiller and Beethoven the purest libation, unashamed of the tear that runs down his cheek at the thought of an irreparable loss, must belong among those pitiable ones whom Schiller excludes from his band.

The edition, score as well as keyboard reduction, leaves nothing to be desired at any point, and the Schott brothers in Mainz have thereby earned once again our gratitude and respect.

Cassel in March 1828.  
Grossheim Dr.

## 125.16.

“News. Vienna. Musical Diary of the Month of December.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 30  
(13 February 1828), col. 107–8.

In the royal imperial grand Redouten-Saal: second society concert of the friends of music of the Austrian empire, wherein were given: 1. From Beethoven's symphony with choirs, no. 9, in D minor, the first Allegro. With such a variety of intensive difficulties, truly no small task for such a large orchestra, which nevertheless succeeded marvelously. The two prudent directors at the conductor's desk and on the first violin, Schmiedel and Piringer,<sup>1</sup> played a decisive part in this. We are gradually beginning to learn to disentangle the threads of this artistic web of tones; the strange outlines are standing out ever more clearly, and scarcely will a pair of years have passed before this gigantic work is as generally known and understood as its predecessors, which at their appearance were also decried like Egyptian hieroglyphs. ...

4. Scherzo from the above-mentioned symphony. Electrified through its frivolous wantonness. Here the most unbridled imagination prevails; and yet, what determined order in the whole layout; what an uninterrupted chain of ideas; how all parts worked together toward a total unity!

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<sup>1</sup>Ferdinand Piringer (1780–1829) was the dedicatee of Beethoven's Allegretto in B minor, WoO 61. He is described in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* as a violist, even though he occupied the concertmaster position at the Concerts spirituels, which he and Schmiedel, who cannot be further identified, helped to revive after the death of their founder, Franz Xaver Gebauer, in 1822 (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 26, 189). A biographical sketch of Piringer, describing him as a talented dilettante, appeared after his death in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 31, 845.

## 125.17.

### “Another Word about Beethoven.”

*Allgemeine Musikzeitung zur Beförderung der theoretischen und praktischen Tonkunst  
für Musiker und für Freunde der Musik überhaupt* 1

(1 March 1828), 142–43.

In the 7th issue of this year’s Leipzig *musikalische Zeitung*, the following was written from Vienna about Beethoven’s symphony with choirs, no. 9 in D minor:<sup>1</sup>

“We are gradually beginning to learn (!) to disentangle the threads of this artistic web of tones[;] the strange outlines are standing out ever more clearly, and scarcely will a pair of years (!! ) have passed before this gigantic work is as generally (?) known and understood as its predecessors (??), which at their appearance were also decried like Egyptian hieroglyphs (rightfully!).” What can one say to such a judgment? Must one remain silent when one sees that there are people whose blind idolatry goes so far that they defend a rhapsody which so far nobody has understood, and which they themselves hope first to understand after several years? Is the goal of musical art, then, to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs? Shall it, instead of granting pleasure, become a painstaking work of the intellect? Shall ear and heart go away from it empty-handed? —And how many people are there who—if anything else were possible—are capable of solving such a problem? Is true music destined only for a few initiates in the depths of mysticism, or for all educated people? —But it is not worth the effort of saying more about the foolishness of those who deny all feeling in order to do homage to a false art that, like algebra, occupies only the head, and lets the heart grow numb.

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<sup>1</sup>See *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 30 (13 February 1828), col. 107–8. The parenthetical insertions in the quotation are by the author of this article.

## 125.18.

“News. From Leipzig. From 18 February until April.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 30

(9 April 1828), col. 245–46.

(Mentioned: Op. 84, Music to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Egmont*)

Symphonies that were given at our subscription concerts: by Eberl, no. 1; by Ries, his last; by Beethoven, no. 9, Op. 125, D minor, the grand symphony with choirs, on Schiller’s “Song to Joy”; in the very next concert, on 20 March, the same master’s magnificent music to Goethe’s *Egmont*, with poetic commentary by Fr. Mosengeil,<sup>1</sup> spoken by Mr. Stein. —We know how to recognize our Beethoven for what he is; we often feel elevated by him, indeed inspired. As regards this last of his symphonies, however, that in D minor, we admit quite openly that we do not belong among those who were charmed by it. On the contrary, we hold the entire work to be a most notable mistake of the now redeemed man, made unfortunate by his complete deafness. We are not so blind that we do not see the strange web of musical figurations heaped over one another and the peculiar masses of notes; we recognize the overly artificial construction and advise every composer to become as familiar as possible with art on paper. We must, however, compare the whole to the site of Luxor in upper Egypt, which is built on the sumptuous ruins of the old, fabulously magnificent Thebes, where the celebrated pillar of Memnon still sometimes resounded strangely at the first ray of sunlight, before the head had been removed to the rich island.<sup>2</sup> Now, if the children of the village played in the venerable pillared halls, a melancholy horror strikes us at the thought, and the memory of the frailty of all earthly grandeur comes upon us like a shadow of night, toward which Young’s spirit hovers contemplatively with downcast eyes.<sup>3</sup> The Scherzo would be beautiful if it did not destroy the good impression through its length. The rest, not even excepting the Andante,<sup>4</sup> in which Beethoven elsewhere had such unsurpassable things to give, fills us all the more with pain, the more we know how much we have lost in Beethoven.

<sup>1</sup>This poetic commentary by Friedrich Mosengeil (1773–1839) was published in a supplement *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 23.

<sup>2</sup>The head of the so-called young Memnon (actually Pharaoh Ramses II) was taken from the ruins of Thebes to the British Museum in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Young (1773–1829) worked on the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone.

<sup>4</sup>The third movement is actually marked *Adagio molto e cantabile*, although the tempo later changes to *Andante moderato*.

## 125.19.

### “Mixed. A Judgment from London of Beethoven’s Last Symphony.”

*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 30  
(14 May 1828), col. 329–30.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This article appears to be based on two reports that appeared in volume 3 (1825) of the British journal *Harmomonicon*. The first, reporting on a rehearsal of the 9th symphony by the Philharmonic Society, for which the British author proudly points out that it was composed, appeared in the March issue, no. 27. The second, which appeared in the April issue, no. 28, reports on a public performance. The present author is thus mistaken in his assertion that the symphony was heard twice in one evening, and his summary of the writer’s comments is also inaccurate. The two reports read as follows:

No. 27, p. 47–48: Previously to the re-commencement of these concerts, the Philharmonic Society had three private meetings in the months of January and February, for the purpose of trying, with the full orchestra, new compositions, and deciding on their fitness for public performance. Amongst these were, a symphony by Mr. Cipriani Potter, an overture by Mr. Goss, Weber’s overtures to *Preciosa* and *Euryanthe*, and a Grand Symphony recently composed for the society, by Beethoven. All of these we shall have to notice when they are regularly before the public. But much curiosity having been excited by the latter composition, from the pen of so great a master, we shall anticipate in part our regular criticism on it, by observing that it manifests many brilliant traits of Beethoven’s vast genius; that it embodies enough of original matter, of beautiful effects and skillful contrivances, to form an admirable symphony of ordinary duration: but that unfortunately, the author has spun it out to so unusual a length, that he has “drawn out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument,” and what would have been delightful had it been contained within moderate limits, he has rendered wearying by expansion, and diluted his subjects till they became weak and vapid. When we add that the time which it is calculated this composition will take in performing cannot be much less than an hour and twenty minutes, our readers, though they have not heard it, may almost judge for themselves of its inadequacy to fix the attention of any audience, or to produce such an effect as the admirers of Beethoven must earnestly wish.

No. 28, p. 69: The new symphony of Beethoven, composed for and purchased at a liberal price by this society, was now first publicly produced. In our last number we mentioned it, and we see no reason for altering the opinion we there offered. We must, however, correct our statement as to its duration. At a rehearsal, where so many interruptions occur, it is next to impossible to ascertain exactly the length of a piece: we now find this to be precisely one hour and five minutes; a fearful period indeed, which puts the muscles and lungs of the band, and the patience of the audience, to a severe trial. In the present symphony we discover no diminution of Beethoven’s creative talent; it exhibits many perfectly new traits, and in its technical formation shews amazing ingenuity and unabated vigour of mind. But with all the merits that it unquestionably possesses, it is at least twice as long as it should be; it repeats itself, and the subjects in consequence become weak by reiteration. The last movement, a

In the March issue of the *Harmonicon* (no. 3) one reads this about it: A little while ago Beethoven's last symphony was played twice in one evening at the Philharmonic Society. It is a bizarre composition, and the warmest admirers of this great master, if they have any common sense, must regret that it has been made public. Indeed, what piece of music that lasts an hour and twenty minutes could be heard without exhaustion, even if it were full of beauties of the first rank? What, though, when it is otherwise? — It is impossible, to be sure, that such a great composer as Beethoven could write hundreds of pages without letting one spark of genius shine through; in this work, though, they are so small in number that one lacks the courage to seek them out. "Protect me from my friends; I will take care to protect myself from my enemies" — said a man once who knew the world. Beethoven vindicates the truth of this saying. The friends who advised him to publish this absurd piece are indeed the fiercest enemies of his reputation.

We must admit that this judgment offends us due to its overly sharp harshness. In it, as in so many other things English, cutting exaggeration is not to be mistaken. If the British judge finds so little spark of inspiration in it that he can take the work as dangerous to the reputation of such a man, then we cannot help but suspect that he has not understood how to perceive the way in which the whole is artificially put together. The work will not do the slightest damage to the reputation of his art; it is much more to be regretted that it is overly artificial, like palaces built on top of one another. One mass crushes another, and where the brightest spirit predominates, as in the Scherzo, the length to which it is drawn out is to blame for the fact that we cannot take pure joy in it throughout. It is easy to see that we by no means belong among those who are charmed by the work; we have already candidly expressed our judgment about it twice in these pages, in vol. 28 p. 853, and vol. 30 p. 245.<sup>2</sup> Even if this work is little able to offer pure musical enjoyment, though, the author of this judgment should have been more humane, and shown more respect for the misfortune of a man to whom we all owe such elevated enjoyment of art through very many of his other works.

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chorus, is heterogeneous, and though there is much vocal beauty in parts of it, yet it does not, and no habit will ever make it, mix up with the three first movements. This chorus is a hymn to joy, commencing with a recitative, and relieved by many soli passages. What relation it bears to the symphony we could not make out; and here, as well as in other parts, the want of intelligible design is too apparent. In our next we shall give the words of the chorus, with a translation; in the present number our printer has not been able to find room for them. The most original feature in this symphony is the minuet, and the most singular part, the succeeding trio, — striking, because in duple time, for which we are not acquainted with anything in the shape of a precedent. We were also much pleased by a very noble march, which is introduced. In quitting the present subject, we must express our hope that this new work of the great Beethoven may be put into a produceable form; that the repetitions may be omitted, and the chorus removed altogether; the symphony will then be heard with unmixed pleasure, and the reputation of its author will, if possible, be further augmented.

Despite the author's promise, the text of Beethoven's finale was apparently not printed in the *Harmonicon*.

<sup>2</sup>See *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 28 (27 December 1826), col. 853–54 and 30 (9 April 1828), col. 245–46. Although it is not specified in the heading, this report was apparently written by the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung's* Leipzig correspondent.