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**BEETHOVEN**  
SYMPHONY No.3, 'EROICA'  
SYMPHONY No.5

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# BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY No.3, 'EROICA' • SYMPHONY No.5

**Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770-1827)

CD 1

**Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55 'Eroica'**

|   |                              |       |
|---|------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Allegro con brio             | 17.17 |
| 2 | Marcia funèbre: Adagio assai | 15.08 |
| 3 | Scherzo: Allegro vivace      | 5.43  |
| 4 | Finale: Allegro molto        | 11.55 |
|   | Total timings                | 50.03 |

CD 2

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

|   |                  |       |
|---|------------------|-------|
| 1 | Allegro con brio | 7.15  |
| 2 | Andante con moto | 9.18  |
| 3 | Scherzo: Allegro | 5.06  |
| 4 | Allegro          | 11.20 |
|   | Total timings    | 32.59 |

**PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA**  
**CHRISTOPH VON DOHNÁNYI CONDUCTOR**

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# BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY No.3, 'EROICA'  
SYMPHONY No.5

I have composed two sets of [piano] variations, one consisting of eight variations and the other of thirty. Both sets are worked out in quite a new manner and each in a separate and different way ... Usually I have to wait for other people to tell me I have new ideas, because I never know this myself. But this time – I myself can assure you that in both these works the method is quite new so far as I am concerned ... You may regard it as a kind of favour that I myself have made you this offer before making it to anyone else ...

In October 1802, with these words, the 31-year-old Beethoven informed the esteemed publisher Breitkopf & Härtel, in no uncertain terms, of the new direction he was taking his music. Posterity now knows the following decade (roughly 1803 to 1812) as Beethoven's 'middle' or 'heroic' period, a phase which is suffused with works that mark Beethoven's 'new manner' as a turning point in the history of music: six symphonies, the last three piano concertos, the Triple and Violin concertos, five string quartets, several piano sonatas and his sole opera, *Leonore (Fidelio)*. Beethoven's musical scope had now widened considerably, the complexity and density of his musical ideas, and their

psychological impact, is altogether remarkable – the idea of the composer as a sublime romantic artist, a force of nature, was emerging.

The first truly 'heroic' work of this middle period was his **Symphony No. 3 in E flat Major Op. 55, 'Eroica'**. It was composed following the penning of his famous Heiligenstadt Testament, an occasionally melodramatic, quasi-legal letter to his brothers outlining his despair at his encroaching deafness and the possibility of his imminent death. But the letter remained unsent and in a matter of weeks later he was again in the rough and tumble of Viennese life, writing the above letter concerning the Piano Variations Op. 34 and 35 and taking verbal swings at publishers, badgering friends and cajoling counts.

The following summer work on the Third Symphony began in Oberdöbling, a rural village outside Vienna and the work was completed by the spring of 1804. The symphony is entirely without precedent, being almost twice the size of most classical models previously composed. The opening movement is titanic in its scale and in the abundance and density of the musical ideas presented and developed. The two monolithic opening chords

herald an absolute turning point in musical history - an epic musical battle played out in the grandest theatre. The second movement is another grand surprise, a funeral march which contains references to French revolutionary music. The Scherzo is likewise a novelty, bringing a greater sense of lusty, full-blooded rambunctiousness in contrast to the Trio section's grace and poise. The final movement is a set of variations based on a theme Beethoven had previously used in the Piano Variations Op. 35 (later known as the *Eroica* Variations) and in his ballet, *The Creatures of Prometheus*.

This following recollection by Beethoven's devoted pupil, copyist and general dogs-body, Ferdinand Ries was published in 1838, some 35 years after the completion of the symphony:

In this symphony Beethoven had Bonaparte in mind, but as he was when he was First Consul. Beethoven esteemed him greatly at the time and likened him to the greatest Roman consuls. I as well as several of his more intimate friends saw a copy of the score lying upon his table with the word 'Buonaparte' at the extreme top of the title page, and at the extreme bottom 'Luigi van Beethoven,' but not a word more. Whether and with what the space between was to be filled out, I do not know. I was the first to bring him the intelligence that Bonaparte had proclaimed himself emperor, whereupon he flew into a rage and cried out: 'Is he then, too, nothing more than an ordinary human

being? Now he, too, will trample on all the rights of man and indulge only his ambition. He will exalt himself above all others, become a tyrant!' Beethoven went to the table, took hold of the title page by the top, tore it in two, and threw it on the floor. The title page was re-written, and only then did the symphony receive the title *Sinfonia eroica*.

There seems to be little reason to doubt the broad brushstrokes of Ries's story, most notably because a surviving manuscript copy of the symphony bears witness to Beethoven's fury at Napoleon announcing that he was to crown himself as Emperor of the French. The title page of the manuscript is headed 'Sinfonia Grande Intitulata Bonaparte', but the last two words have been so violently scratched out that the paper is severely punctured. Confusingly, under the composer's name remain the words, in Beethoven's own hand, 'Geschrieben auf Bonaparte' ('written on Bonaparte'). This seeming incongruity rather displays Beethoven's ambivalent attitude towards Napoleon, and indeed to royalty and nobility, too. His letters are peppered with slogans emanating from the French Revolution and his republican sympathies were similarly frequently put to paper. But the practicalities of being a composer meant that significant dedications to the nobility and royalty, even to Emperors, were a fact of life for even a composer of Beethoven's stature, who could count many of the great and the good as friends rather than strictly patrons.

The dedication of compositions to those at the top end of the social scale aided patronage, massaged egos and eased a composer's path toward an appointment at court. They might also act as a useful calling card when travelling abroad. A composer had to play smart. Indeed, during the Third Symphony's composition, Beethoven had considered the possibility of moving to Napoleonic France, and would, in 1808, consider a generous offer from Napoleon's youngest brother to become court composer at Kassel. And in 1813 he dedicated his *Wellingtons Sieg* Op. 91 to the future King George IV of England; Wellington's Victory being an orchestral work which celebrates an early victory by that nemesis of the Bonaparte family, the Duke of Wellington.

When the orchestral parts were finally published in 1806, they bore the new title, *Sinfonia Eroica composta per festeggiare il Souvenire di un grand' Uomo* ('Heroic Symphony composed to celebrate the memory of a great man'). The eventual dedicatee was one of Beethoven's extraordinarily generous and patient Viennese patrons, Prince Lobkowitz. The rights to the work were secured by the prince for six months and the earliest performances were given in his palace in 1804 and 1805. These performances allowed Beethoven to make numerous corrections before the work was finally set before the public on 7 April 1805. Naturally, such a challenging work could hardly be an unmitigated triumph on early hearings, but

complaints aside, the smarter European critics were quite aware that they were in the presence of genius.

From 1804, when he first began preliminary sketches for what would become his **Symphony No. 5 in C Minor Op. 67**, to its premiere in 1808, Beethoven was composing at full tilt, producing a series of masterful works, including Symphonies 4 and 6, the Violin Concerto, the *Rassumovsky* String Quartets, the C Major Mass, a couple of versions of *Fidelio*, and the *Waldstein* and *Appassionata* Piano Sonatas, to name but the greatest masterpieces of the period. And when the premiere finally did arrive it was not only, in terms of its programme, the most important concert of Beethoven's career, but one of the most extraordinary events in concert programming ever brought to fruition. The lengthy concert bill at the Theatre an der Wien on 22 December 1808 ran as follows:

1. Symphony No. 6 in F Major Op. 68, *Pastoral*
2. Aria: *Ah, perfido* Op. 65
3. Gloria from Mass in C Major Op. 86
4. Piano Concerto in G Major Op. 58  
INTERMISSION
5. Symphony No. 5 in C Minor op. 67
6. Sanctus & Benedictus from Mass in C Major Op. 86
7. An improvisation for solo piano [played by Beethoven]
8. *Choral Fantasy* in C Minor Op. 80

Not only was this the premiere of the Fifth Symphony, but also of the *Pastoral* Symphony, the Fourth Piano Concerto and the *Choral Fantasy*. Needless to say, rehearsals had been difficult to arrange and a full rehearsal became impossible, the fact that the *Choral Fantasy* was barely complete on the night hardly helped matters. The composer J.F. Reichardt was in attendance:

*I accepted the kind offer of Prince Lobkowitz to let me sit in his box ... There we continued, in the bitterest cold, too, from half past six to half past ten, and experienced the truth that one can have too much of a good thing – and still more of a loud.*

Although the concert appears to have attracted scant critical response, reception for the Fifth Symphony grew in a relatively short period of time. By July 1810 the Symphony was beginning to receive plaudits, including the following from one of the Romantic movement's great authors and critics, E. T. A Hoffman:

*Radiant beams shoot through the deep night of this region, and we become aware of gigantic shadows which, rocking back and forth, close in on us and destroy all within us except the pain of endless longing—a longing in which every pleasure that rose up amid jubilant tones sinks and succumbs. Only through this pain,*

*which, while consuming but not destroying love, hope, and joy, tries to burst our breasts with a full-voiced general cry from all the passions, do we live on and are captivated beholders of the spirits.*

From this point on the Fifth Symphony grew to become what it remains to this day, the single most popular piece of classical music in the Western canon – its opening four notes enough to spark immediate recognition in even the most classically allergic individual. Composers have naturally fallen over themselves in its praise: Berlioz thought that it 'emanates directly and solely from the genius of Beethoven. It is his own intimate thought that is developed', while Schumann wrote that it 'will be heard in future centuries, nay, as long as music and the world exist.' As the Nineteenth Century progressed, it became the touchstone of symphonic construction and expression – the model composition for pretty much every symphonist, from Schumann to Mahler and, in some respects, up to Sibelius and beyond. With this one work the symphony ceases to consist of four separate musical essays, structures or dances held together by style and key structures. Instead we are given a completely considered whole. The Fifth Symphony takes us through a psychological journey from beginning to end, with the triumphant Finale being a logical conclusion of the preceding struggle.

That the Symphony (unlike the *Eroica*) has comparatively few contemporary notices, legends or otherwise extra-musical appendages speaks the more of its power to connect immediately and powerfully with the listener. Its musical and extra-musical appendages tend to emanate not from Beethoven's time, but from ours. Its famous opening notes are, co-incidentally, the Morse code for 'V', which was used to represent

victory for the Allies in World War II, and were used in BBC news bulletins. From its use in solemn state occasions through advertising and right up to Walter Murphy and the Big Apple Band's disco hit, *A Fifth of Beethoven* it seems that Schumann might yet have it right: 'it will be heard ... as long as music and the world exist.'

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## BIOGRAPHIES

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### CHRISTOPH VON DOHNÁNYI

Christoph von Dohnányi held the position of Principal Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra from 1997 to 2008, prior to which he served for three years as their Principal Guest Conductor. He took up the title of Honorary Conductor for Life in September 2008.

Christoph von Dohnányi has also held the position of Chief Conductor of the NDR Symphony Orchestra since September 2004. As well as giving concerts in major venues throughout Europe (including Lucerne, Cologne, Frankfurt, Bonn, Warsaw and Luxembourg), Dohnányi and the orchestra toured South

America in 2005, and were subsequently voted Best Orchestra 2005 and Best Conductor 2005 by the Association of Critics of Buenos Aires.

Born in Berlin, Christoph von Dohnányi began to study law in Munich. After two years he chose to join the Munich Academy of Music to study composition, piano and conducting. At the end of his studies he was awarded the Richard Strauss Prize for conducting by the City of Munich and continued to study with his grandfather, Ernst von Dohnányi, at Florida State University.

In 1953 Christoph von Dohnányi was hired as repetiteur and conductor at the Frankfurt Opera by Sir Georg Solti. At the age of 27 he moved to

Lübeck where he became Germany's youngest General Music Director, before becoming Chief Conductor first in Kassel and then of the Westdeutsche Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra in Cologne. From 1968 he served as General Music Director in Frankfurt and, from 1972, as Director of the Frankfurt Opera. From 1977 to 1984 he was Intendant and Chief Conductor of Hamburg Opera. In Frankfurt and Hamburg he aimed to balance traditional opera productions with innovative music theatre.

Christoph von Dohnányi made his debut with The Cleveland Orchestra in December 1981. He was Music Director Designate from 1982 to 1984 and served as its sixth Music Director from September 1984 to August 2002, becoming the orchestra's first Music Director Laureate in September 2002. During Dohnányi's tenure, they toured extensively around the USA, Asia and Europe, performing concerts for the Salzburg Festival, BBC Proms and Edinburgh Festival and were in residence at Carnegie Hall, New York a number of times. In 1998, they performed in China for the first time in the orchestra's history. His many recordings with the orchestra include the complete symphonies of Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann, and Wagner's *Die Walküre* and *Das Rheingold*, as well as symphonies by Mahler, Bruckner, Dvořák,

R. Strauss, Mozart and works by Adams, Ives and Webern. During his tenure, the Cleveland Orchestra's home, Severance Hall, was renovated and extended to bring back one of America's biggest organs into the musical life of Cleveland. Since 2002 he has been guest conducting the orchestras of Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

Christoph von Dohnányi's discography with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra includes *Fidelio*, *Wozzeck*, *Lulu*, *Erwartung*, *Salome*, *Der fliegende Holländer* and symphonic works by Mendelssohn, R. Strauss and Tchaikovsky. He has recorded the violin concertos of Glass and Schnittke with Gidon Kremer, the Dvořák Piano Concerto with András Schiff and orchestral transcriptions of chamber music by Brahms and Mahler.

Christoph von Dohnányi has been a guest conductor with all the major orchestras and opera houses in the US as well as in Europe. As a regular guest at the Salzburg Festival, Christoph von Dohnányi has led the Vienna Philharmonic in several new productions including *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Salome*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Erwartung*, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*, as well as the world premières of Henze's *Die Bassariden* and Cerha's *Baal*.

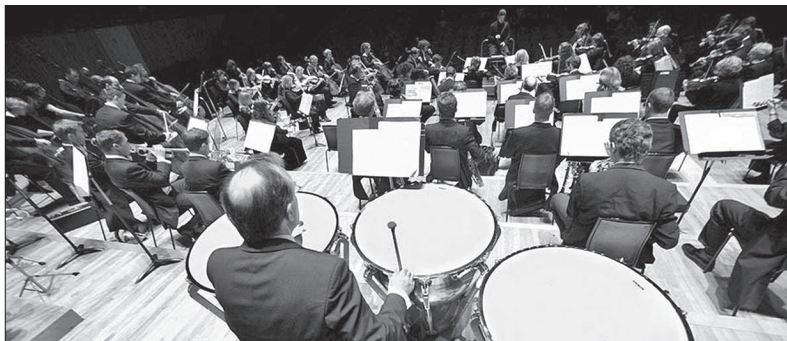
The Philharmonia Orchestra is one of the world's great orchestras. Acknowledged as the UK's foremost musical pioneer, with an extraordinary recording legacy, the Philharmonia leads the field for its quality of playing, and for its innovative approach to audience development, residencies, music education and the use of new technologies in reaching a global audience. Together with its relationships with the world's most sought-after artists, most importantly its Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor Esa-Pekka Salonen, the Philharmonia Orchestra is at the heart of British musical life.

Today, the Philharmonia has the greatest claim of any orchestra to be the UK's National Orchestra. It is committed to presenting the same quality, live music-making in venues throughout the country as it brings to London and the great concert halls of the world. Every year the Orchestra performs more than 200 concerts, as well as presenting chamber performances by the Soloists of the Philharmonia Orchestra, and recording scores for films, CDs and computer games. Since 1995 the Orchestra's work has been underpinned by its much admired UK Residency Programme, which began with the launch of its residencies at the Bedford Corn Exchange and London's Southbank

Centre, and now also includes De Montfort Hall in Leicester, the Anvil in Basingstoke and a series of partnerships across Kent and the Thames Gateway, based in Canterbury. The Orchestra's international extensive touring schedule each season involves appearances at the finest concert halls across Europe, the USA and Asia.

During its first six decades, the Philharmonia Orchestra has collaborated with most of the great classical artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Conductors associated with the Orchestra include Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Toscanini, Cantelli, Karajan and Giulini. Otto Klemperer was the first of many outstanding Principal Conductors, and other great names have included Lorin Maazel (Associate Principal Conductor), Riccardo Muti (Principal Conductor and Music Director) and Giuseppe Sinopoli (Music Director). As well as Esa-Pekka Salonen, current titled conductors are Christoph von Dohnányi (Honorary Conductor for Life), Sir Charles Mackerras (Principal Guest Conductor), Kurt Sanderling (Conductor Emeritus) and Vladimir Ashkenazy (Conductor Laureate).

The Philharmonia Orchestra continues to pride itself on its long-term collaborations with the finest musicians of our day, supporting new as



well as established artists. This policy extends into the Orchestra itself, where many of the players have solo or chamber music careers as well as their work with the Orchestra. The Philharmonia's Martin Musical Scholarship Fund has for many years supported talented musicians at the start of their careers and a new Orchestral Award, inaugurated in 2005, allows two young players every year to gain performing experience within the Orchestra.

The Orchestra is also recognised for its innovative programming policy, at the heart of which is a commitment to performing and commissioning new works by leading composers, among them the Artistic Director of its Music of Today series, Julian Anderson. Since 1945 the

Philharmonia Orchestra has commissioned more than 100 new works from composers including Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Mark-Anthony Turnage and James MacMillan. The Philharmonia Orchestra's joint series with *SBC, Clocks and Clouds: The Music of György Ligeti*, won the Royal Philharmonic Society's Best Concert Series Award in 1997 and *Related Rocks: The Music of Magnus Lindberg*, was nominated for an RPS Award. Other recent awards for the Orchestra include the RPS Large Ensemble Award and two *Evening Standard* Awards for Outstanding Artistic Achievement and Outstanding Ensemble. In May 2007 PLAY.orchestra, a 'virtual Philharmonia Orchestra' created in partnership with Southbank Centre and Central St Martin's College of Art, won the RPS Education Award.

Throughout its history, the Philharmonia Orchestra has been committed to finding new ways to bring its top quality live performance to audiences worldwide, and to using new technologies to achieve this. Many millions of people since 1945 have enjoyed their first experience of classical music through a Philharmonia recording, and in 2007 audiences can engage with the Orchestra through webcasts, podcasts, downloads, computer games and film scores as well as through its unique interactive music education website launched in 2005, The Sound Exchange ([www.philharmonia.co.uk/thesoundexchange](http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/thesoundexchange)), which is now visited by almost 2 million people a year. In 2005 the Philharmonia became the

first ever classical music organisation to be shortlisted for a BT Digital Music Award, and in the same year the Orchestra presented both the first ever fully interactive webcast and the first podcast by a UK orchestra. In September 2005 computer games with Philharmonia scores were at No.1 and No.2 in the national charts, while the Orchestra's scores for the last two Harry Potter computer games have both been nominated for BAFTA Awards. Recording and live broadcasting both also continue to play a significant part in the Orchestra's activities: since 2003 the Philharmonia has enjoyed a major partnership with Classic FM, as The Classic FM Orchestra on Tour, as well as continuing to broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

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**Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55, 'Eroica'** recorded live at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall Hall, London, 26 October 2008  
 Engineer - Jonathan Stokes, Classic Sound Ltd      Producer - Misha Donat

**Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67** recorded live at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall Hall, London, 17 April 2008  
 Engineer - Jonathan Stokes, Classic Sound Ltd      Producer - Misha Donat

Photo credit - Richard Haughton  
 Design - Richard Slaney (for the Philharmonia Orchestra) and Andrew Giles

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