

Montgomery Philharmonic 2018 - 2019 Our 13th Season : They Changed The World

Concert 3, March 17 , 7 PM – Symphonic Revolution

Beethoven | **Mozart** | Haydn

About Ludwig van Beethoven –

Ludwig van Beethoven was a German composer and pianist. A crucial figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras in Western art music, Beethoven remains one of the most famous and influential of all composers. He started his professional study as a pianist in 1779 in Bonn with Neefe, who was appointed Court Organist. Neefe also taught him composition. Beethoven's first job was working as Neefe's assistant. During this time, his first works were published—a set of piano variations and three sonatas. Soon afterward, Beethoven moved to Vienna, intending to study with Haydn. It is not clear how much he actually studied with him, but Beethoven did study counterpoint with Haydn. At the same time, Beethoven established himself as a piano virtuoso and violinist.

In the early 1800s, Beethoven began to write symphonies, chamber music, and piano sonatas, and he also accepted piano students. The first signs of tinnitus began to appear also at this time, and by 1811, he was having great difficulty playing his own work, the *Emperor Concerto*; by 1814, he was completely deaf. Beethoven's deafness has been attributed to lead poisoning. He kept his wine in a ceramic container that had a lead-based glaze, and a recent analysis of a few strands of his hair found that it contained abnormally high levels of lead.

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- **Born:** December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany
- **Died:** March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria
- **Full name:** Ludwig van Beethoven
- **Parents:** Maria Magdalena Keverich, Johann van Beethoven
- **Siblings:** Kaspar Anton Karl van Beethoven, Nikolas Johann van, Ludwig Maria van Beethoven
- **Compositions:** 9 symphonies, 7 concerti, 1 opera, numerous works for piano including 32 piano sonatas, 16 string quartets, and dozens of other chamber music works

Symphony No. 6 in F major, Opus 68 (1808) – Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

It is often argued which of Beethoven's nine symphonies is his most brilliant composition. Each time the argument comes up, the *Sixth Symphony* is always part of the discussion. This symphony is the only one that is clearly about nature, an important part of Beethoven's life. Sketches of the *Sixth Symphony* began to appear in 1802. It was composed alongside the *Fifth Symphony* and premiered in a very long and under-rehearsed concert in Vienna on December 22, 1808.

Although it is felt that Beethoven began to move away from the traditional symphony form with the *Ninth Symphony*, it was actually the *Sixth Symphony* when Beethoven started to move away from the traditional form. This symphony has five movements, which we did not see happen again until Schumann wrote his *Symphony No. 3*. Beethoven named each movement with a description of the movement.

- I. Awakening of cheerful feelings on arrival in the countryside
- II. Scene by the brook
- III. Merry gathering of country folk
- IV. Thunderstorm
- V. Shepherd's song, cheerful and thankful feelings after the storm

The last three movements segued from one to the next, so there are no pauses between the third, fourth, and fifth movements.

The first movement is calm and cheerful in nature and in sonata form. The themes of this movement are well developed and Beethoven uses repeated patterns to develop a more complex orchestral texture. The second movement is also in sonata form and shifts its key center from the F major first movement to B-flat major. There is a special part for two cellos, and the rest of the cello section plays mostly pizzicato along with the basses during the movement. There is an unusual cadenza-like section toward the end of the movement that involves the flute (nightingale), oboe (quail), and two clarinets (cuckoos). This is also new to a symphony.

The third movement is a lively scherzo that depicts country dancing, as its title implies. It goes back to F major and, in another unusual twist, the trio is played twice. The final return of the first theme conveys a lively, riotous atmosphere in a faster tempo that goes right into the fourth movement. The fourth movement is in F minor and depicts the famous thunderstorm. The storm starts with just a few drops of rain and climaxes in claps of thunder, raging wind, and massive amounts of rain. There is an almost imperceptible transition to the final fifth movement. This movement is in a sonata/rondo form. With the main theme back in F major, this movement, like many classical finales, emphasizes a symmetrical eight-bar theme, in this case representing the shepherds' song of thanksgiving. The coda ending starts very quietly and builds into a dramatic climax that ends with two F major chords.

Instrumentation – 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in Bb, 2 bassoons, 3 horns in Eb, C & F, 2 trumpets in Eb & C, timpani, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass

Artifacts –

[Manuscript page of Beethoven *Symphony No. 6*](#)

[Original manuscript of the entire *Symphony No. 6* – Ludwig van Beethoven](#)



Beethoven: Symphony No. 6, Op. 68 "Pastoral" - Schubert: Symphony No. 5, D. 485
Vienna Philharmonic

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68 "Pastoral" - Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 93
Leonard Bernstein

Beethoven : Symphony No.6, 'Pastoral'
Berliner Staatskapelle

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Beethoven: The Music and the Life

[Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph](#)

Beethoven's Conversation Books: Nos. 1 to 8 (February 1818 to March 1820)

YouTube.com Links –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aW-7CqxnAQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6w-oEQ_QqGA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcSuSk4d6Gs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQGm0H9I9I4>