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**Conducting Class T-Th 10am**

**Beethoven’s 9th symphony**

I listened to this symphony three times in its completeness. I never could make sense out of it until I actually read the translation of the lyrics as they were being sung. Although according to my research most of them are from a poem by [Friedrich Schiller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Schiller) in 1785, I understand that the poem was added to by Beethoven. After hearing the lyrics I now understand the 1rst and second movements to stand for the wonderment of Creation. The third movement is like a love song portion, and the fourth is of course the proclamation that there is a loving Father who is responsible for it all and He loves us. “do you bow down? Do you sense the Creator, world?” I personally feel that Beethoven has made a symphony that tells the story of God with man. The First movement represents Creation. The Second, God and mans relationship as represented in the old testament. The third, the coming of Christ-the love song. The Fourth, the proclamation of the Loving Father doing all the previous work and praising Him. I evern heard a couple of Alleluias in there.

**First movement** Allegro ma non troppo, un poco [maestoso](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maestoso). Duration approx. 15 mins. The first movement is in [sonata form](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonata_form)(wik)

The Beginning was soft(*pianissimo*), I’ve read that this sound is like the tuning sound of an orchestra and I must agree. Then entered the in ff horns booming a full orchestra to establish a repeating theme that will be played throughout the first and second movements. The [recapitulation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recapitulation_%28music%29) section, it returns *fortissimo* in D major, rather than the opening's D minor, and The coda employs the [chromatic fourth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chromatic_fourth) interval.(wik). After the repeating of the theme melody piece came in the bass, and flutes. This section sort of reminded me of a spring day. I first noticed that Beethoven really loves dynamics, going often from forte to piano, also in noticed he likes to go from a full orchestra playing in forte to one lone instrument in piano using lots of crescendos and decrescendos. I loved the underlying French horns as they came in and added melodic support allowing a free style for the soprano instruments. The strings also brought a playful jesting feeling, at this point I almost felt like it was a dance. However, this music in this motion leaves me with a feeling of confusion. I can’t really tell what the composer is trying to communicate at this point. The wonder of the this movement is amazing, it’s complexity, as well as the fact that just when you think you know where he is going next you find he went somewhere else in it’s own self a more excellent and glorious place. Maybe he was just trying to make music spectacular. Enter in the violas and the contra Basses, a change in melodic form and key. This part made me feel sort of sneaky. The only common parts seem to be the reoccurring melodic theme that was introduced in the very beginning, it’s here and there some times as an under tone, and of course the unmistakable fortes of the entire orchestra. The fluctuations and different areas push me toward the cartoon “Tom and Jerry”, no doubt my first experience with classical music of any kind.

**Second Movement**. Scherzo: Molto vivace – Presto. Duration approx. 12 mins. The second movement, a [scherzo and trio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scherzo), is also in D minor, with the introduction bearing a passing resemblance to the opening theme of the first movement, a pattern also found in the [Hammerklavier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piano_Sonata_No._29_%28Beethoven%29) piano sonata, written a few years earlier.(wik)

Of course we start with the Theme melody, this time it seems to be mostly held up by the string section. I also notice that the orchestral Drums seem much more pronounced. I also noticed what seemed to be some sort of rhythm change with a pronounced pattern. This almost feels like a march; Going to Victory. This rhythmic change brought some excitement to me. I also noticed in this movement several parts where He goes from one lone instrument and grows it to the whole orchestra over a few measures. The most exciting part in this movement for me, however, is where the flutes do the trills; I loved it. After this the French horns come in and support and then at one point even take the lead. Another thing that I am noticing Beethoven doing a lot is migrating from a minor to a major in the same key, then a key change to another minor, and them back to the major of the new key. This had to be revolutionary, as it would be even today to do it so much and still sound so coherent. At this point I will always remember da da…. Da da…. Da da ….. da da….. the theme melody is used to tie the first and second movements together.

 I found this comment also interesting in Wik. “Beethoven had been criticized before for failing to adhere to standard form for his compositions. He used this movement to answer his critics. Normally, scherzi are written in triple time. Beethoven wrote this piece in triple time, but it is punctuated in a way that, when coupled with the speed of the metre, makes it sound as though it is in quadruple time.”

**Third movement** Adagio molto e cantabile – Andante Moderato – Tempo Primo – Andante Moderato – Adagio – Lo Stesso Tempo. Duration approx. 16 mins; loose [variation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Variation_%28music%29) form. (wik)

Horns come in softly. At this point I notice that the common melodic theme has been left behind. Very slow and melodic, its very romantic and like a love song. I love the Strings how they move in and out. I also like how they will be doing a scale of some sort and then come together into a harmonic cord. The variations are twice broken by areas in which loud fanfares of orchestra are answered by violins playing octaves with a [horn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horn_%28instrument%29) solo.

**Fourth movement** Presto; Allegro molto assai (Alla marcia); Andante maestoso; Allegro energico, sempre ben marcato. Duration approx. 24 mins.(wik)

This movement seems to have several movements of its own. However, I will not go into detail on that area but will keep it general. The first thing I noticed was the intro. You really don’t expect ode to joy from hearing the first few measures, but then very softly the low strings begin to play the recognizable melody. The main difference about this movement of course is the Vocal parts. The solo vocalists are the first on the scene. I notice one part Beethoven wrote the vocalist melody like he would for a regular instrument, you can defiantly tell the change, but I only hear it for a short time and then back to melodies that seemed to be written for vocalist. I love the way that the song repeats the different parts of the poem, over in different ways, tenor, soprano, etc. All at once the full choir comes is singing. Just reading the little part of the lyrics that we conducted is not enough for us to understand what Beethoven was trying to communicate. Truly I didn’t get it until after the third time of listening and reading the translated words at the same time. The addition of the Choral had to be there, as the bible states that we are the glory of God. Without the human element the creation picture would be incomplete. I am in wonder at the effort and talent of Beethoven to write such a symphony. After slightly understanding this piece I think I have seen a little piece of His heart. His crowning achievement in music is a wondrous work dedicated to God. His hearts of thanksgiving for the gifts of God in his talents are evident to me. Of Course I may be biased. But that’s my story and I’m Sticking to it.

Cited Works. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony\_No.\_9\_%28Beethoven%29