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History of Composition

Ludwig Van Beethoven’s Symphony 9 – Second Movement

As a lot of people may already be aware, Beethoven gradually began losing his hearing at a young age and became completely deaf by the end of his life. Symphony 9, one of the greatest music compositions of all time, was completed in 1824, which was just three years before the death of Ludwig Van Beethoven. In his last living years, Beethoven constructed symphony 9 with almost no hearing abilities (just based off of his extraordinary musical knowledge and talents). This work is considered to be a masterpiece all over the world and is an influence on music throughout history. The second movement in Symphony 9 lasts about 12 minutes long and is in D minor. This movement was used to answer all the people who criticized Beethoven for being unable to adhere to standard form for his compositions, partially due to his deafness.

Beethoven began writing the first two movements of symphony 9 in 1817. Ever since he was young, Ludwig found interest in a poem written by Friedrich Schiller entitled *Ode an die Freude*. In 1822, in the final works of Symphony 9, Beethoven decided to incorporate Schiller’s poem into the last movement. However, what made the second movement unique was that the piece was written in triple time, but it is punctuated in a way that, when coupled with the speed of the meter, makes it sound as though it is in quadruple time. The majority of other compositions from this time era, including Beethoven’s, were easy to distinguish what meter they were played in. Also, other works did not have the same influence on people as symphony nine did, specifically movement two. Symphony nine was the first example of a major composer using voices in a symphony, thus making it a choral symphony. It has also been adapted as use for the European anthem.

The 1800’s were known as the age of revolutions, so as you could imagine the music during the time had a strong influence on its crowds. Obviously, the major contribution to symphony nine was Ludwig Van Beethoven. But, there were a few others that helped assemble and organize this work into its final form. The influence of Beethoven’s mentors had an impact on how he composed his work as well as the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the people around him. At this time in history, there were many revolutions because many people had contrary opinions to what was going on in the eastern region of the world. You can see the correlation between real world negativity and Beethoven’s work because it is in D minor. Although there are parts played in major, this composition left audiences with a feeling of estranged longing for something more and it does the same today.

When Symphony 9 was first performed in its final form, Beethoven became so deaf that he could not hear the applause from the audience at the end until he turned around and saw the ecstatic cheers coming from the standing crowd. In other words, his loss of hearing misconstrued him to believe that he received no applause from the audience. After symphony 9 was exposed for the public to see/hear people had nothing but good words about it. To this day, symphony 9 still stands as one of the most historical and influential compositions in the music world. It is a rather popular piece of work that has lasted through generations and has proven that it will stand the test of time.

Works Cited

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