

1. SYMPHONY NO. 2

COMPOSER Ludwig Van Beethoven 1770-1827
NATIONALITY German

- ♫ Ludwig's father taught him the piano and violin
- ♫ He was 12 when his first composition was published
- ♫ He gave his first piano recital at the age of 13
- ♫ By 17 he was professional pianist and composer
- ♫ 1803 suffered hearing loss and profoundly deaf at 46

THE MUSIC

- ♫ Ludwig composed 9 symphonies
- ♫ The 2nd was written between 1801-1802
- ♫ He conducted the premiere in Vienna during 1803
- ♫ The symphony was dedicated to Prince Lichnowsky
- ♫ 4 expressive movements with touches of humour

LISTENING PLAN

1st Movement - slow / fast

Intro: A slow solemn oboe follows loud orchestral "ta-ra". Flutes skip as musical ideas are passed around the orchestra. Lower strings trot against orchestral echoes before a dramatic statement leads to a faster tempo.

- (A) Lower strings send violins into a spin.
- (B) Second tune arrives in the woodwind section.
- (A) & (B) developed before a chase to a majestic end.

2nd Movement - slow

- (C) Strings and clarinet play a subdued tune.
- (D) Contrasting violins play as various instruments decorate. Orchestral outburst fades to dark strings.
- (C) Oboe returns to (C). The orchestra staggers, strings throb and a delicate flute leads to a grumpy end.

3rd Movement - very fast

- (E) Energetic orchestral dance with echoing horns, swirling violins and moody strings.
- (F) Contrasting violin dance with a bubbly bassoon.
- (E) The 1st dance returns before an abrupt end.

4th Movement - fast

- (G) Giggling violins follow a loud orchestral laugh.
- (H) Strings surge before cello's sway.
- (G) Woodwind intervene, strings spin then tiptoe to (G).
- (I) An intense orchestra dives into a frenzied mood.
- (G) The first tune returns.
- (H) Swaying lower strings answered by graceful horn.
- (G) The opening returns again. Swift orchestral chase leads to a bold statement of (G) to bring the symphony to a close.

Ludwig's Statue-Bonn



SYMPHONY

Large orchestral work - 3 to 5 movements like a "book" of musical ideas rather than A "short story"

DYN-O-METER

Discover contrasting dynamics by moving your finger as the music changes



Noisy



Bearable



Quiet



Silent

2. CANTATE DE NOËL (CHRISTMAS CANTATA)

COMPOSER Arthur Honegger 1892-1955
NATIONALITY Swiss

- ♫ Born in France but adopted parents Swiss nationality
- ♫ Arthur played the violin and piano from an early age
- ♫ Studied in Zurich and at 21 returned to Paris to live
- ♫ Became a member of the French Resistance in WW2
- ♫ He wrote ballets, operas, orchestral and film music

THE MUSIC

- ♫ Completed and 1st performed in Basle during 1953
- ♫ Composed for solo baritone, children's choir, mixed choir, organ and orchestra
- ♫ Inspired by a poem by Swiss writer César Von Arx
- ♫ Music also contains 5 carols from different countries

LISTENING PLAN

Part 1

Intro: Man begins his journey of life from darkness to light as an eerie organ and strings alternate.

- (A) Male voices chant against plodding lower strings. Women's voices are added before a tense "De Profundis" (Psalm 130 - Out of the depths I cry).
- (B) Violent orchestral screams and chant clash before strings interact with lively brass and woodwind.
- (C) Urgent strings rise before choral cries of "O viens Emmanuel" (O come, Emmanuel).
- (D) Angelic children sing with the strings before a dramatic response from the choir and orchestra.
- (E) Trumpet fanfares and organ as the solo baritone tells the shepherds about the birth of Jesus.

Part 2 (Five carols)

- (F) Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen (A spotless rose)
 - (G) Il est né le Divine enfant (The divine infant is born)
 - (H) Stille Nacht (Silent Night)
 - (I) O du fröhliche (O this joyful day)
 - (J) From Heaven on High
- The tunes are woven into a complex sound tapestry accompanied by a variety of instruments.

Part 3

- (K) Strings, oboe and solo baritone (Excelsis Deo) are answered by solo child's voice.
- (L) The harp rises, the choir sings, "Praise the Lord" (Psalm 117) and the children add a chorale. A mega "Amen" leads the orchestra back to the carols before man floats towards a heavenly light.

Arthur on a Swiss bank note - 1996



CANTATA

Choral composition with solo voices, choirs, orchestra or keyboard

MOOD-O-METER

Discover different moods by moving your finger as the music changes



Happy

Sad



Angry

Peaceful



Romantic

Dramatic