



THE MULTI-FACETED BEETHOVEN

Program suggestion: The multi-faceted Beethoven

Beethoven / Bierey – *Kyrie* (no. 25)*
Beethoven / Götsche – *Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur* (no. 9)
Beethoven / Seyfried – *Drei Equale* (no. 13)
Beethoven / Klink – *Bitten* (no. 4)
Beethoven / Bierey – *Agnus Dei* (no. 1)
Beethoven – *Welten singen Dank und Ehre* (no. 41)

INTERVAL

Beethoven – *Ich bitt dich* (Kanon) (no. 21)
Beethoven – *Nei campi e nelle seve* (no. 27)
Beethoven – *Elegischer Gesang* [Elegiac Song] (no. 11)
Beethoven / Eriksson – *Freude-Quodlibet* (no. 15)
Beethoven – *Chorfantasie* [Choral fantasy] (no. 37)

ENCORE: Beethoven / Heim / Silcher – *Hymne an die Nacht* (no. 22)

Concert duration: 30 minutes / 25-30 minutes

All works are available in the *Choral Collection Beethoven* ([Carus 4.025/00](#)).

*The numbers are those found in the *Choral Collection Beethoven* (Carus 4.025/00).

Even during Beethoven's lifetime his new compositions were presented in extensive concerts, often in combination with earlier, thematically varied works. So it was perfectly usual to contrast sacred and secular pieces in a concert program (at the first performance of *the 9th Symphony*, for example, three movements from the *Missa solemnis* were performed). Following this example, I have compiled a program which gives equal prominence to both sides of his output. The first half, structured like a mass, begins with an arrangement of the first movement of the *Moonlight Sonata*, to which Beethoven's contemporary Gottlob Benedict Bierey added the liturgical text of the *Kyrie*, thereby providing an atmospheric opening to a concert. After the song of praise *Die Himmel rühmen des ewigen Ehre*, the unknown but extremely worthwhile *Drei Equale* stand at the center of the first half. Initially intended by Beethoven for four trombones, but arranged for male voice chorus during his lifetime, they have now been published for the first time for mixed choir, and despite their short duration, create a very expressive, almost dark atmosphere. *Bitten* and the Bierey arrangement of the slow movement of Beethoven's fifth piano sonata pick up on the tranquillity of the *Equale*, but convey a much more positive and confident atmosphere. The final chorus from *Christus am Ölberge* [The Mount of Olives], with a celebratory but challenging fugue, concludes the first half of the concert.



To make the transition into the secular part of the evening as easy as possible for the audience, I would mark the stylistic change with the canon *Ich bitt dich, sag mir die Es-Skala auf* at the beginning of the second half. Here we can show an almost humorous side of the composer, something which most people may not know and which may not fit into the classical image of this most versatile man. (If the audience happens to consist exclusively of sopranos and tenors, they could even join in!) *Nei campi e nelle seve* and the version of the more than recommendable *Elegischer Gesang* [Elegiac Song] with piano accompaniment are two of the few original choral compositions by Ludwig van Beethoven which should definitely be included in this program.

In the *Freude-Quodlibet*, Swedish composer Gunnar Eriksson has combined what is probably Beethoven's best-known melody, the *Ode an die Freude* [Ode to Joy], with several well-known international folksong melodies. A compilation which would certainly have greatly pleased Beethoven, the true European. Here, the audience can definitely join in in certain places. If a competent pianist is available, the *Choral Fantasy* could form the brilliant and celebratory conclusion to the concert. And if you've done everything right and there's an opportunity for an encore, I would warmly recommend the *Hymne an die Nacht* (which is often wrongly described as a Christmas carol). Hardly any other work is more suitable to send your audience on their homeward journey, inspired by what they have heard.



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Tristan Meister was born in 1989 and received his first musical training as a member of Limburg Cathedral Boys' Choir. He studied choral conducting with Georg Grün, Harald Jers and Frieder Bernius as well as orchestral conducting with Klaus Arp at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Mannheim. He serves as the director of several choirs including the Ensemble Vocabella Limburg, with which he won first prize at the German Choir Competition in 2014, the Vox Quadrata chamber choir, the Jugendchor Hochtaunus and the boys' choir Cantus Juvenum Karlsruhe. Alongside these commitments he lectures at the Heidelberg University, where he is an assistant to the university's music director. With his choirs Tristan Meister is regularly invited to festivals at home and abroad. He frequently collaborates with ensembles such as the Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz,

the Baden-Badener Philharmoniker and the Kurpfälzische Kammerorchester, and holds workshops and courses for choir singers and conductors.

