

Beethoven, Symphony No.9 op.125, version for piano by Franz Liszt  
Re-transcription for orchestra, movements 1-3 op. 133  
by Eberhard Kloke

Eleven years after the "Eighth", Beethoven completed the Ninth Symphony. The symphony is so far removed from the prevailing political conditions and musical conventions of the time. It is the consequence, not the intention, of his new conception. The dividing line of this symphony runs through the introduction to the finale. Beethoven marks the beginning with unusual, harsh dissonant insertions. He defines the boundary between the different parts of the symphony as the vanishing point of the temporal perspective.

In doing so, he points out the main ideas of the first three movements by rejecting them.

For almost thirty years the task of transcription occupied Liszt intermittently. In 1836 - in his heyday as a young virtuoso and entirely dedicated to the memory of Beethoven - Liszt had begun work on the Fifth Symphony, possibly without thinking that he would one day tackle the entire work of nine symphonies.

The impetus for completing the entire series came from the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel. Aware of what Liszt had already achieved, they urged him to tackle the other symphonies as well. Liszt agreed, on the condition that he was allowed to revise his earlier works and publish all nine symphonies at once. To make it easier for him to get started, Breitkopf sent Liszt the orchestral scores in their own "critically revised" editions.

No one understood the art of transcription better than Liszt, but even he considered these symphonies a difficult endeavour for one pair of hands. In his preface of the collection, he dedicated himself to his goals:

"I shall consider my time well spent when I have succeeded in transferring to the piano not only the broad outlines of Beethoven's compositions, but also that multitude of details and subtleties which make such a significant contribution to the perfection of the whole."

What fuelled his imagination was the challenge of reproducing these symphonies with ten fingers without violating Beethoven's ideas. The results were spectacular and exemplary.

The present re-transcription of the first three movements of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony takes up Liszt's piano version and sets it anew for orchestra. From today's perspective, this results in new and different ideas that give the work sections a new perspective - especially with regard to the re-composed 4th movement.

Eberhard Kloke Status: 16.10.2024

Piano transcription of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor op. 125  
by Franz Liszt, movements 1-3

Re-transcription for orchestra op. 133 by Eberhard Kloke

4th movement, re-transcription op. 134 by Eberhard Kloke

Orchestration:

Flute 1, Flute 2 (also picc)

Oboe 1, Oboe 2

Clarinet 1 in Bb/C/A, Clarinet 2 in Bb/C/A/Bass clar. in Bb, Kb clar. in Bb

Bassoon 1, bassoon 2 (also contrabassoon)

3 horns in F (Mr 2 and 3 also in E in the 3rd movement)

1 trumpet in C and Bb

2 trombones

Timpani

2 perc: 4th movement

Harp

Strings (min: 10/8/6/4/3, max: 12/10/8/6/4)

Eberhard Kloke, Berlin, October 2024