



BEETHOVEN Symphonies

1 AND 3

Gianandrea
Noseda



National Symphony Orchestra
The Kennedy Center



National Symphony Orchestra

Gianandrea Noseda conductor

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21

- | | |
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| 1. Adagio molto - Allegro con brio | 9:05 |
| 2. Andante cantabile con moto | 7:46 |
| 3. Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace | 3:58 |
| 4. Finale: Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace | 5:41 |

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 “Eroica”

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| 5. Allegro con brio | 16:42 |
| 6. Marcia funebre: Adagio assai | 14:21 |
| 7. Scherzo: Allegro vivace | 5:20 |
| 8. Finale: Allegro molto | 11:18 |

Beethoven, Symphony No. 1 was recorded live on January 13 and 15, 2022 and Beethoven, Symphony No. 3 was recorded live on January 27, 28, and 29, 2022 in the Concert Hall of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.

Recording producer Blanton Alspaugh, *Soundmirror*.

Recording engineer Mark Donahue, *Soundmirror*. **Mastering engineer** Mark Donahue, *Soundmirror*.

Executive Producers Nigel Boon and Genevieve Twomey, *National Symphony Orchestra*.

BEETHOVEN Symphonies Abstracted Art, © 2019 Mo Willems **Cover design** Scott Sosebee.

Orchestra photos Scott Suchman. **Gianandrea Noseda photo** Stefano Pasqualetti. **Mo Willems photo** Trix Willems.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21 (1800)

The energy with which the 22-year-old Beethoven threw himself into Viennese music life was truly astounding. As he was leaving his native Bonn for Vienna in 1792, one of his patrons, Count Waldstein, inscribed the following in the young man's book of souvenirs: "With the help of assiduous labor you shall receive Mozart's spirit from Haydn's hands." Thus, Waldstein became the first person to mention Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in the same breath. The prophecy came true: Beethoven soon became the most talked-about musician in the imperial capital, equally famous as a composer and a pianist, courted by the aristocracy and admired by the public.

Beethoven's first 20 opus numbers, published between 1795 and 1801, cover just about every current genre of instrumental music: two piano concertos, sonatas for solo piano, for violin and piano, for cello and piano, string trios, piano trios, string quartets, quintets, as well as the Septet in E flat which became the most popular of all his works. One

significant type of music was still missing from this list, however, and Beethoven knew he couldn't fully be an heir of Haydn and Mozart until he had written a symphony.

There is certainly plenty of Haydn and Mozart in Beethoven's first symphony, finished a few months after his 29th birthday. But the young composer's originality is evident in every bar. Beethoven clearly took over where Haydn and Mozart had left off; and if he remained within the Classical symphonic framework established by his elders (something he would never do again in a symphony), he spoke the inherited language in such an individual way that no contemporary could fail to notice the arrival of a major new voice on the musical scene.

The First Symphony was introduced at the Court Theatre on April 2, 1800. The program was made up entirely of works by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; this was the first time the composers now known as the three Viennese classics appeared

together on a concert bill.

Right at the beginning of his symphony, the indomitable young man made a gesture that has been cited ever since as a sign of artistic independence. The very first chord of the symphony is one that, instead of establishing the home key as one would expect, immediately destabilizes it and leads away from it. This opening sets the stage for a brilliant movement filled with many more musical surprises.

The second movement, in a gently rocking rhythm, grows from unaccompanied violins to a full orchestral sound. Haydn and Mozart often left out the trumpets and kettledrums from their slow movements (although there are significant exceptions!). Beethoven chose to retain them here, but asked them something they were not often required to do, namely to play softly. The pianissimo (extremely soft) notes of the trumpets and timpani add a special element of mystery to this music.

The third movement is called “Menuetto” but it is much too fast to be a dance. It is more like a “Scherzo” (the word means “joke”); in other words, it is one of those witty, humorous fast movements that already appear in Haydn but acquired a special significance for Beethoven from his earliest Viennese works on. Beethoven liked to base his scherzos on single musical gestures, often consisting of only two or three notes; the treatment of these gestures was full of surprises, sudden key changes, offbeat accents, and other unexpected events. This delightful movement is no exception. Scherzos also have contrasting sections called Trios, as do minuets. In the Trio of Beethoven’s First Symphony, the harmonies change remarkably slowly; this relative calm contrasts markedly with the hectic pace of the main section.

The last movement starts with another delicious Beethovenian joke. The theme of the movement, which starts with a fast upward scale, is born gradually before our eyes (or ears), as the notes of the scale are added, one after the other, in a solemn slow tempo. Once the top note of the scale has been reached, the tempo becomes lively, and there is never a moment of rest until the end.

Notes by Peter Laki



Symphony No. 1 by Mo Willems

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 “Eroica” (1802-1804)

Beethoven’s Third Symphony represents a quantum leap within the composer’s oeuvre as it does in the history of music in general. The sheer size of the work—almost twice the length of the average 18th-century symphony—was a novelty, to say nothing of what amounted to a true revolution in musical technique and, even more importantly, in musical expression.

Music had never before expressed the idea of struggle in such a striking way. Beethoven’s encroaching deafness is surely part of the reason why that idea took center stage in the composer’s thinking at the time, and it is fair to assume that his physical affliction was behind the spectacular change that Beethoven’s style underwent in what has come to be called his “heroic” period. Yet in the case of the Third Symphony, the personal crisis was compounded by the dramatic political events of the day, and in particular by Beethoven’s ambivalent relationship with the leading political figure of era—Napoleon Bonaparte.

Beethoven was at the impressionable age of 19 when the French Revolution broke

out, and his letters from the 1790s attest his support of the republican cause. Like many intellectuals of his time, he was fascinated by the reforms Napoleon introduced as First Consul. At the same time, he despised tyranny in all its forms, and when Napoleon crowned himself Emperor, he felt that the revolution had been betrayed. He had planned to dedicate his new symphony to Bonaparte, but, according to the well-known story, he flew into a wild rage when he heard the news of the coronation. He tore up the title page, replacing the dedication with a new inscription that was more impersonal but also more universal: *Sinfonia Eroica, composta per festeggiare il Sovvenire di un ‘grand Uomo, or “Heroic Symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man.”*

The Third Symphony proceeds from intense drama to the final victory. The opening *Allegro con brio* is Beethoven’s longest symphony movement aside from the finale of the Ninth. In it, some of the basic procedures of Classical sonata form (presentation and transformation of themes; traversal of various keys before a

return to the initial tonality) are carried to a point where they take on an entirely new meaning: they become elements of a drama of unprecedented intensity. The themes are shorter than in most earlier symphonies and more open-ended, lending themselves particularly well to modifications of various sorts. It is by transforming, dismembering and reintegrating his motifs that Beethoven expresses the idea of struggle that is so unmistakably present throughout this movement.

The second movement bears the title *Marcia funebre* (“Funeral March”). The music begins softly and rises to a powerful, dramatic climax. After some extensive contrapuntal development in the middle of the movement, the main theme’s final return is interrupted by rests after every three or four notes, as if the violins were so overcome by grief that they could barely play the melody.

In the third and fourth movements, Beethoven managed to ease the feeling of tragedy without letting the tension subside. The third-movement *Scherzo*

begins with two notes repeated in an undertone that evolve into a theme only gradually. In the somewhat more relaxed Trio, the three horns take center stage.

The main theme of the last movement appears in no fewer than four of Beethoven's compositions. We first hear it in a simple contra-dance for orchestra, then in the last movement of the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* (both in 1800-01), followed by the *Variations for Piano, Op. 35* (1802), and lastly, in the *Third Symphony*. The elaborate set of variations in the "Eroica" finale are integrated into a single, continuous musical form. There is a minor-key variation with a distinct Hungarian flavor, and another one that turns the contra-dance theme into a slow aria. An enormous crescendo leads to the short *Presto* section that ends the symphony.

Notes by Peter Laki



Symphony No. 3, "Eroica" by Mo Willems

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Gianandrea Noseda

Conductor

Gianandrea Noseda is one of the world's most sought-after conductors, equally recognized for his artistry in both the concert hall and opera house. Noseda's artistic leadership has inspired the NSO and in 2019, he and the National Symphony Orchestra earned rave reviews for their first concerts together at New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. The 2019–2020 season saw their artistic partnership continue to flourish with the launch of a new NSO recording label distributed by LSO Live for which Noseda also records as Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra.

In September 2021, Noseda began his tenure as General Music Director of the Zurich Opera House. During his first season he led new productions of *Il trovatore* and *Das Rheingold*, as well as revivals of *Falstaff* and *Tristan und Isolde*. The centerpiece of his tenure in Zurich is a new Ring Cycle.

Noseda has conducted the most important orchestras and at the leading opera houses and festivals including the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Edinburgh Festival, La Scala, Munich Philharmonic, Met Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, NHK Symphony, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, Philadelphia Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Royal Opera House (UK), Salzburg Festival, Verbier Festival, Vienna Philharmonic, Vienna State Opera, and Vienna Symphony.

From 2007 until 2018, Noseda served as Music Director of Italy's Teatro Regio Torino where he ushered in a transformative era for the company matched with international acclaim for its productions, tours, recordings, and film projects. His leadership resulted in a golden era for this opera house.



Other institutions where he has had significant roles include the BBC Philharmonic which he led from 2002 to 2011; Principal Guest Conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra from 2011 to 2020; the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, where the Victor de Sabata Chair was created for him as principal guest conductor from 2010–2014; and the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, which appointed him its first-ever foreign Principal Guest Conductor in 1997, a position he held for a decade. He served as Artistic Director of the Stresa Festival from 2000 to 2020. He was also Principal Guest Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 1999 to 2003; Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI from 2003 to 2006; and Principal Conductor of the Cadaqués Orchestra from 1994 to 2020.

Nosedà's intense recording activity counts more than 60 CDs, many of which have been celebrated by critics and have received awards.

Gianandrea Nosedà's cherished relationship with the Metropolitan Opera dates back to 2002. At the Met he has conducted 13 operas and nearly 100 performances of mainly new productions, most recently *Adriana Lecouvreur* featuring Anna Netrebko. Many of his critically acclaimed performances have been broadcast on radio, Met Live in HD and released as DVDs.

A native of Milan, Nosedà is Commendatore al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, marking his contribution to the artistic life of Italy. He has been honored as Musical America's Conductor of the Year (2015) and International Opera Awards Conductor of the Year (2016). In December 2016, he was privileged to conduct the Nobel Prize Concert in Stockholm.

*The NSO Music Director Chair is generously endowed by **The Sant Family**.*

Funding for NSO recordings is provided by generous Nosedà Era Fund supporters.



National Symphony Orchestra

In 2022 the National Symphony Orchestra celebrated its 91st anniversary, and Gianandrea Noseda's fifth season as its music director. The Italian conductor serves as the Orchestra's seventh music director, joining the NSO's legacy of such distinguished leaders as Christoph Eschenbach, Leonard

Slatkin, Mstislav Rostropovich, Antal Doráti, Howard Mitchell, and Hans Kindler. Its artistic leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Steven Reineke and Artistic Advisor Ben Folds.

Since assuming the leadership of the NSO,



Gianandrea Noseda has brought a renewed sense of energy and focus to the orchestra, which has resulted in wide-ranging recognition from local, national, and international publications, increases in subscription and single ticket sales, and the expansion of the Orchestra's reach through live streamed concerts and recordings. The *New York Times* called the NSO and Noseda's 2019 Carnegie Hall appearance "Spectacular," while the Washington Post wrote that "There's a certain flair going on at the National Symphony Orchestra," consistently reinforcing that this artistic partnership continues to gain momentum. 2019 also marked Gianandrea Noseda's first recording with the NSO of Dvorák's Symphony No. 9 and Copland's *Billy the Kid*, released in 2019 on the NSO's new label, distributed by LSO Live.

Founded in 1931, the Orchestra has always been committed to artistic excellence and music education. In 1986, the National Symphony became an artistic affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where it has performed a full season of subscription concerts since the Center opened in 1971. The 96-member NSO regularly participates in events of national and international importance, including

official holiday celebrations through its regularly televised appearances on PBS on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol for Capital Concerts, livestreamed performances from the Kennedy Center Concert Hall on medici.tv, and local radio broadcasts on Classical WETA 90.9FM, making the NSO one of the most-heard orchestras in the country.

Additionally, the NSO's community engagement projects are nationally recognized, including NSO In Your Neighborhood, an annual week of approximately 50 performances in schools, churches, community centers, and other unexpected venues; Notes of Honor, which offers free performances for active, veteran, prior service, and retired members of the military and their families; and Sound Health, a collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its affiliated organizations. Career development opportunities for young musicians include the NSO Youth Fellowship Program and its acclaimed, tuition-free Summer Music Institute.

For more information, visit
nationalsymphony.org

BEETHOVEN Symphonies Abstracted

Mo Willems



Mo Willems is an author, illustrator, animator, playwright, and the inaugural Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence, where he collaborates in creating fun new stuff involving classical music, opera, comedy concerts, dance, painting, and digital works with the National Symphony Orchestra, Ben Folds, Yo-Yo Ma, and others. Willems is best known for his #1 *New York Times* bestselling picture books, which have been awarded three Caldecott Honors (*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny*, *Knuffle Bunny Too*), two Theodor Geisel Medals, and five Geisel Honors (*The Elephant & Piggie* series). Willems' art has been exhibited around the world, including major solo retrospectives at the High Museum (Atlanta) and the New-York Historical Society (NYC).

Over the last decade, Willems has become the most produced playwright of Theater for Young Audiences in America, having written or co-written four musicals based on his books. He began his career as a writer and animator on PBS's *Sesame Street*, where he garnered six Emmy Awards (writing). Other television work includes two series on Cartoon Network: *Sheep in the Big City* (creator and head writer) and *Codename: Kids Next Door* (head writer). Willems is creating new TV projects for HBOMax, where his live action comedy special *Don't Let the Pigeon Do Storytime!* and *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed: The Underground Rock Experience* currently streams.

“Beethoven’s symphonies have moved millions of people. One evening, at a concert almost 250 years after his birth, Beethoven’s work moved me to paint them. The idea of creating art specifically to view while listening to Beethoven’s symphonies, compelled me to spend a year researching, listening, and painting. The result is nine abstractions, a visual art piece for each symphony, rendered in panels, whose sizes represent the lengths of each movement.”

Through this project, I got to know Beethoven in a new way. When you listen to a symphony you are invited to a dialogue with its creator. I had the opportunity to see his technique change over his career and to feel the journey of his musical notes.

I hope these abstractions will spark something in you, as a listener and a viewer. Maybe you’ll even respond to Beethoven with your own art!”

National Symphony Orchestra

Violins

Nurit Bar-Josef
Concertmaster
Ying Fu
*Associate Concertmaster, The
Jeanne Weaver Ruesch Chair*
Ricardo Cyncynates
Assistant Concertmaster
Jane Bowyer Stewart
Teri Hopkins Lee
Pavel Pekarsky
Heather LeDoux Green
Joel Fuller
Lisa-Beth Lambert
Wanzhen Li
Jing Qiao

Marissa Regni *Principal*
Dayna Hepler
Assistant Principal
Desimont Alston
Cynthia R. Finks
Deanna Lee Bien
Glenn Donnellan
Natasha Bogachek
Carole Tafoya Evans

Jae-Yeon Kim
Hanna Lee
Benjamin Scott
Malorie Blake Shin
Marina Aikawa
Peiming Lin
Angelia Cho
Derek Powell

Violas

Daniel Foster *Principal*
Abigail Evans Kreuzer
Assistant Principal
Lynne Edelson Levine
Denise Wilkinson
James Francis Deighan
Eric deWaardt
Nancy Thomas
Jennifer Mondie
Tsunaka Sakamoto
Ruth Wicker
Mahoko Eguchi

Cellos

David Hardy *Principal*
Glenn Garlick
Assistant Principal
Steven Honigberg
David Teie
James Lee
Rachel Young
Mark Evans
Eugena Chang
Loewi Lin
Britton Riley

Basses

Robert Oppelt *Principal*
Richard Barber
Assistant Principal
Jeffrey Weisner
Ira Gold
Paul DeNola
Charles Nilles
Alexander Jacobsen
Michael Marks

Harp

Adriana Horne *Principal*



Flutes

Aaron Goldman *Principal*
 Leah Arsenault Barrick
Assistant Principal
 Alice Kogan Weinreb
 Carole Bean *Piccolo*

Oboes

Nicholas Stovall *Principal*
 Jamie Roberts
Assistant Principal
 Harrison Linsey
 Kathryn Meany Wilson
English Horn

Clarinets

Lin Ma *Principal*
 Eugene Mondie
Assistant Principal
 Paul Cigan
 Peter Cain *Bass Clarinet*

Bassoons

Sue Heineman *Principal*
 Steven Wilson
Acting Assistant Principal
 Lewis Lipnick *Contrabassoon*

Horns

Abel Pereira *Principal*
 Laurel Bennert Ohlson
Associate Principal
 Markus Osterlund
 James Nickel
 Scott Fearing
 Robert Rearden

Trumpets

William Gerlach *Principal*
 Tom Cupples
 Keith Jones

Trombones

Craig Mulcahy *Principal*
 Kevin Carlson
Assistant Principal
 David Murray
 Matthew Guilford
Bass Trombone

Tuba

Stephen Dumaine *Principal*

Timpani

Jauvon Gilliam *Principal*
 Scott Christian
Assistant Principal

Percussion

Eric Shin *Principal*
 Scott Christian
 Joseph Connell *

Keyboards

Lambert Orkis *Principal*
 Lisa Emenheiser *

Organ

William Neil *

Librarians

Elizabeth Cusato Schnobrick
Principal
 Susan Stokdyk *Associate*
 Karen Lee *Assistant*



* Regularly engaged extra

** Temporary position

BEEHOVEN





BEETHOVEN
Symphonies

4 AND **5**

Gianandrea Nosedà



National Symphony Orchestra
The Kennedy Center



BEETHOVEN
Symphonies

2 AND **7**

Gianandrea Nosedà



National Symphony Orchestra
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BEETHOVEN
Symphonies

6 AND **8**

Gianandrea Nosedà



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BEETHOVEN
Symphony No.

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