

The Heroic Beethoven and the Birth of Musical Romanticism



Beethoven's middle period works (the heroic Beethoven) comprise the single most influential repertory in the history of Western music. The "Eroica" symphony, the mighty Fifth, the "Emperor" piano concerto and other works permanently established the model of artist as hero, artist as liberator, artist as sacrifice. The Romanticism of Schumann, Berlioz, Mendelssohn, Wagner, Mahler, and the contemporary image of musical genius is unthinkable without Beethoven's achievement. This course contextualizes these great works and assesses their impact on the course of music history.

Recommended Readings

Jan Swafford, *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph*

Syllabus

- **Week 1: C Minor Moods**
 - String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4 (1799)
 - 3rd Piano Concerto (1801)
 - *Coriolan* overture (1807)
 - Choral Fantasy (1808)
 - 32 Variations in C Minor (1806)
- **Week 2: Road to the Eroica**
 - *Creatures of Prometheus* (1801)
 - "Eroica" Variations Op. 35 (1802)
 - 3rd Symphony ("Eroica" - 1805)
- **Week 3: The Sublime Eccentric**
 - 4th Symphony (1806)
 - Razumovsky Quartets (1806), part 1
- **Week 4**
 - The Razumovsky Quartets, part 2
 - 4th Piano Concerto (1807)
 - *Egmont* overture (1810)
- **Week 5: 5th Symphony (1808)**
 - The 5th in historical perspectives
 - Legacy of the 5th
- **Week 6: The Sublime Pastoral**
 - The 6th Symphony ("Pastoral" - 1808)
 - The 10th Violin Sonata ("Cockcrow" 1812)
 - Readings from and about Beethoven about nature and God



- **Week 7: The Sublime Dionysian**
 - The 7th Symphony (1813)
 - Piano Sonata Op. 106 (“Hammerklavier” – 1819)
- **Week 8: The Sublime Neoclassic**
 - 8th Symphony (1814)
 - Decline of a style: Piano Sonata Op. 90 (1814), String Quartet Op. 95 (“Serioso” – 1810)

