

but the first movement, and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo has presented a dance version of the entire work. French composer Vincent D'Indy, however, disagreed, saying, "Nothing less than a pastoral symphony! The rhythm of the piece has nothing of the dance about it." As for the composer himself, if he had any extra-musical concepts in mind, he never divulged his intentions; all we know is that he was very pleased with this work and called it "a grand symphony in A, one of my best works."

Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92* was written in 1812, at the time when the Napoleonic War was raging. (This fact has led some commentators to espouse the far-fetched theory that this event had some influence in the conceptual content of the work.) The work was premiered in Vienna the following year. The occasion was a benefit concert for disabled Austrian and Bavarian soldiers who tried to cut off Napoleon's retreat but were defeated at Hanau. Beethoven himself conducted the performance, "hardly, perhaps," says Grove, "to its advantage, considering the symbolical gestures described by [Ludwig] Spohr, since he was by then very deaf, and heard what was going on around him with great difficulty." Spohr's account of the event is interesting:

*"At this concert, I first saw Beethoven conduct. Often as I had heard of it, it surprised me extremely. He was accustomed to conveying the marks of expression by the most peculiar motions of his body. Thus at a sforzando he tore his arms, which were before crossed on his breast, violently apart. At a piano he crouched down, bending lower the softer the tone. At a crescendo he raised himself by degrees until at the forte he sprang up to his full height; and, without knowing it, would often at the time shout aloud."*

Marked *Poco sostenuto*, the introduction to the first movement is of striking beauty, yet based simply on the major scale, setting the stage for a movement of tremendous force and energy. The main body of the movement is marked *Vivace* and is built upon a sonata form. The main theme is ushered in on the pitch of E, exchanged from one instrument to another 61 times before finally opening up to its full development. The movement concludes with an elaborate coda in which fragments of the main theme are heard with its characteristic rhythm, steadily growing from a *pianissimo* to a powerful fortissimo at the close.

The march-like *Allegretto*, again with a steady rhythm, provides a major contrast. Originally Beethoven had intended this movement for the third "Rasumovsky" String Quartet, but rightly expanded it for this symphony. Following the development of several counter-melodies, the clarinet announces a new melody that dispels the somber mood preceding it. The opening theme returns as the movement concludes.

The third movement, a *Scherzo* marked *Presto*, is a charming example of lightness and grace. The main theme is full of humor and receives buoyant development. In the *Trio (Assai meno presto)* the violins hold a high pitch against a pleasant melody said to be an old pilgrim chant of Southern Austria. The first part of the scherzo is repeated, as is the hymn, leading to the coda and joyful conclusion of the movement.

In the *Finale* the symphony reaches its peak with an unceasing pulse and sense of ecstatic joy. Both the first and second themes are truly frenzied and contagious, forcefully driving to a remarkable coda of inimitable invention. It is an exuberant climax to a work of great power, beauty and charm.

It is ironic that this joyful, sunny and impetuous whirl of motion, which many after Wagner have called "The Apotheosis

of the Dance," was written during one of the darkest and most difficult periods in the composer's life.

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## DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC

With its approximately 80 concerts in Dresden, the Dresden Philharmonic is the busiest symphonic orchestra in Dresden and essentially characterizes the cultural life of the city. The orchestra plays in the festival hall of the Dresden Kulturpalast am Altmarkt- right in the heart of the city. The concerts of the orchestra have emerged as an attraction for thousands of Dresdeners and for visitors to Dresden, 'the metropolis on the Elbe', often called 'Florence on the Elbe.'

The Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra is sought after on concert stages worldwide and their tours have occurred throughout Europe, China, Japan, Israel, South America and the USA.

The Dresden Philharmonic traces its formation back to the formal opening of the first concert hall in Dresden on November 29, 1870. This marked a social change in the city from concerts for the aristocracy to the concerts for the general public. From 1885, the then, "Gewerbehausorchester" gave full seasons of symphonic concerts in Dresden, which earned them the title, "Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra" in 1915.

Historically the great composers such as Johannes Brahms, Piotr Tchaikovsky, Antonin Dvorak and Richard Strauss, have conducted and often premiered their works with the orchestra. Included among the great conductors who have led the orchestra are Hans von Buelow, Anton Rubinstein, Bruno Walter, Fritz Busch, Arthur Nikisch, Hermann Sherchen, Erich Kleiber, and Willem Mengelberg.

Previous Music Directors have included Paul van Kempen, Carl Schricht, Heinz Bongartz, Kurt Masur, Guenther Herbig, Joerg-Peter Weigle and Michael Plasson, nearly all of whom have recorded with the orchestra. Kurt Masur, Laureate Conductor of the orchestra, also founded the three choirs: the Philharmonic Choir, the Philharmonic Children's Choir, and the Philharmonic Youth Choir in 1967.

## RAFAEL FRÜHBECK DE BURGOS

Born in Burgos, Spain, in 1933, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos studied violin, piano, music theory and composition at the conservatories in Bilbao and Madrid, and conducting at Munich's Hochschule für Musik, where he graduated summa cum laude and was awarded the Richard Strauss Prize. He has served as general music director of the Rundfunkorchester Berlin, principal guest conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, DC, and music director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Vienna Symphony, Bilbao Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Spain, the Düsseldorfer Symphoniker, and the Montreal Symphony. For many seasons, he was also guest conductor of the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo. He is the newly named principal conductor of the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI in Turin.

Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos has conducted virtually all of the major orchestras in the United States and Canada. He is a regular guest conductor with most of the major European ensembles, including all of the London orchestras, the Berlin, Munich, and Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestras, the German Radio Orchestras, and the Vienna Symphony. He has also conducted the Israel Philharmonic and the major Japanese orchestras.