Program Notes
By Mark Eliot Jacobs

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 1 in C major, opus 21 (1800)

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 2 horns, timpani, and strings
Duration: 26 minutes

Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany in December of 1770. Nestled along the Rhine river in the Rhine-Ruhr region, Bonn was founded in the 1st century BC as a Roman colonial town. In the late 18th century AD it was the capital of the Electorate of Cologne under the Holy Roman Empire and enjoyed a degree of independence from that empire. It was the residence of the Archbishops and Prince-electors of Cologne. Beethoven’s father and grandfather were both musicians at the court there.

To get an idea of the seemingly eternal provincial nature of Beethoven’s hometown, fast forward a bit to the post-World War II era—long after Beethoven’s death. From 1949 to 1990 Bonn was the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany (a.k.a. West Germany). Many have opined that Bonn did not fit the ideal of a world capital—it was too much of a backwater. From 1982 to 1990 Helmut Kohl was the prime minister of this “Bonn Republic” and Ignaz Kiechle was his Minister of Agriculture. Herr Kiechle was once quoted as saying that the “the best thing about Bonn is the train to Munich.” Bonn’s rustic nature through history certainly shows Beethoven to be the quintessential “small town boy who made good.”

At age sixteen Beethoven made a trip to Vienna and played piano for Mozart who was fifteen years his senior. Mozart said of the teenage Beethoven, “Keep an eye on him, he’ll make a big noise in the world someday.” Haydn stopped in Bonn five years later and heard some of Beethoven’s music. Haydn expressed such praise for the young composer that the Elector of Bonn sent Beethoven on to study in Vienna. In November 1792 Beethoven left Bonn never to return.

By the time of the completion of his first symphony (opus 21) in 1800 Beethoven, not yet 30 years old, was a published composer and a true rock star in the musical life of Vienna. He had published ten piano sonatas, six string quartets, and more. Additionally, he was much in demand as a piano teacher to the children of the rich and powerful. These teaching engage-
ments often served as conduits to commissions for new works.

The opening of Symphony No. 1 is unique in the literature. It likely surprised the listening public. This work—in the key of C major—starts with chords in the first measure which strongly establish the key of F major. The second measure seems to promise a correction into the key of C, only to dodge into A minor through a deceptive cadence. Measure three sets up a move to the key of G major, which turns into an early example of one of Beethoven’s favorite harmonic games, a “dominant prolongation.” In this case the G major tonality is eventually reestablished as the dominant chord in the home key of C major, which we so far have not experienced. After this wild twelve-measure ride of an introduction, we finally set out on a sonata allegro movement in the key of C.

The strings dominate the first theme of the Allegro in the key of C. The second theme contrasts the first with scoring in solo winds and the expected G major tonality long established by tradition from Haydn and Mozart. Things are following tradition until some B-flat minor skullduggery between the oboe and low strings. An adventurous and far-flung episode (in terms of key at least) ensues. In the recapitulation, the second theme is presented in the home key of C major, satisfying the doctrine of conflict followed by resolution prevalent in so many art forms in addition to music.

The F major second movement, also a sonata allegro form, is closely related to the corresponding movement in his opus 18 No. 4 string quartet. This movement in 3/8 time has an exposition closing theme accompanied in 2/8 time—more than 150 years before Dave Brubeck’s It’s a Raggy Waltz.

The third movement is marked as a minuet, but it is in reality a speedy one-beat-to-the-bar scherzo. This may be an influence from Haydn’s string quartets of the 1790’s which also contain third movements marked minuet which are in reality scherzos, a movement whose name means “joke”. The movement is in C major with some side trips into the rather distant key of D-flat major.

The finale begins with a slow introduction like the first movement. The introduction literally creates the principal theme from a three-note scale adding one note at a time until it fills the octave from G to G. This is of course yet another dominant prolongation. The development plays brilliantly with this scale theme, putting it into different keys, inverting it and juxtaposing it in many sequences.
HE ZHANHAO AND CHEN GANG
The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto (1959)

**Instrumentation:** solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons,
4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, harp, piano, strings, and percussion

**Duration:** 29 minutes

The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto was written in 1959 by He Zhanhao and Chen Gang. They were both born in the 1930’s and in 1959 were students at the Shanghai conservatory of music. The piece was premiered in Shanghai in 1959, but was soon censored by the Cultural Revolution, essentially making it disappear until the 1970’s. Today it is considered a cultural treasure. Melodies from the eponymous Chinese Opera and folk melodies figure prominently. The work uses traditional Chinese pentatonic melodies set in traditional western harmony. The solo violin employs techniques associated with the Erhu, a characteristic Chinese bowed string instrument.

The legend of the butterfly lovers is one of the most beloved stories in all of Chinese literature. It is held in esteem similar to that of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* in the West. The story is set in the Jin Empire sometime between the third and the fifth century AD. The violin concerto is a single movement work divided into seven large sections, each depicting a different part of the story.

1. *Adagio Cantabile.* Zhu Yingtai is the daughter of a rich family. Although it was not traditional for females, Zhu gets permission from her father to attend school. She must disguise herself as a male to attend the school in Hangzhou. At school she meets Liang Shanbo, a male student, and secretly falls in love with him. They become “blood brothers” and are inseparable. Zhu cannot bring herself to reveal her identity to Liang. The solo violin represents Zhu, while Liang is depicted by solo cello.

2. *Allegro.* A cheerful section representing the lovers’ three busy years at school.

3. *Adagio assai doloroso.* At the end of their school time together, the two must say goodbye. Zhu invites Liang to visit her and her family so that he can court his sister. Liang does not understand that this is Zhu’s way of hinting that she is a woman and wants to marry him herself.

4. *Pesante – Piu mosso – Duramente.* When Zhu returns to her family, she is angry to discover that she has been betrothed to another. The violin is pitted against the orchestra depicting Zhu’s struggle with her family.

5. *Lagrimoso.* When Liang pays a visit and discovers Zhu’s true identity, he falls in love with her. There is a beautiful love duet between the violin and the cello.
6. *Presto resoluto*. The love duet between the two is replaced by anger as Liang learns that in his absence, Zhu has been betrothed to another. The solo violin launches into a brilliant and difficult passage, supported by chords from the orchestra, but eventually returns to the original melody representing love, accompanied again by the cello solo. Liang becomes sick and dies as the duet draws to a close. Another virtuosic section for the solo and orchestra combines both the slow melodies and the fast, energetic passages introduced before. The section ends with the suicide of Zhu as the solo violin ends with an abrupt high note. At Liang’s funeral a mighty thunderstorm occurs, and the grave opens up. Zhu leaps into the grave, disappearing from sight.

7. *Adagio cantabile*. After the storm subsides, two beautiful butterflies emerge from the funeral flowers and take to the sky. They represent the souls of the two lovers now united for all time.

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**

*Symphony No. 2 in D Major, opus 36 (1802)*

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 2 horns, timpani, and strings

**Duration:** 32 minutes

Work on the second symphony in D Major, opus 36 began in 1801, hard on the heels of the completion of the first. It was finished in 1802. Beethoven conducted the premiere in April 1803. The premiere shared the stage with performances of the first symphony, his third piano concerto, and his oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*.

1802 was indeed a very busy year for the young composer. In his own words,

For a while now I have been gaining more than ever in physical strength and in mental strength too. Every day I come closer to my goal, which I can sense but don’t know how to describe. I live only in my notes, and with one work barely finished, the other is already started; the way I write now I often find myself on three, four things at the same time.

Dark clouds on the composer’s horizon found expression in October of the same year in a letter to his brothers Carl and Johann: his *Heiligenstadt Testament* in which he came to grips with his despair on his increasing deafness:

... as the leaves of autumn fall and are withered—so likewise has my hope been blighted. ... Even the high courage—which has so often
inspired me in the beautiful days of summer—has disappeared.

Beethoven kept the letter hidden for the rest of his life. It only saw the light of day after it was discovered among his effects after his death. Even under the influence of this strong sadness, Beethoven evoked the energy to craft a work of great lyricism, wit and passion as the second symphony. Three of the four movements are in sonata allegro form. The exception is the third movement, a scherzo labeled as such in the score (unlike in the first symphony).

Well known today as the composer of *Symphonie Fantastique*, in his day Hector Berlioz (1803–1869) was also widely read as a music journalist. He had the opportunity to write the following about Beethoven’s second symphony. His comments are preserved in the book *Au Travers Chants* (The Art of Music and Other Essays.)

Everything in this symphony is noble, energetic and proud; the introduction (largo) is a masterpiece. The most beautiful effects follow in quick succession, always in unexpected ways but without causing any confusion. The melody has a touching solemnity; from the very first bars it commands respect and sets the emotional tone. Rhythms are now more adventurous, the orchestral writing richer, more sonorous and varied. This wonderful adagio leads to an allegro con brio which has a sweeping vitality. …

The [second movement] is not treated in the same way as that of the first symphony; instead of a theme developed in canonical imitation it consists of a pure and innocent theme, presented at first plainly by the strings, then exquisitely embellished with delicate strokes; they faithfully reproduce the tender character of the main theme. This is the enchanting depiction of innocent joy, scarcely troubled by passing touches of melancholy.

The scherzo is as openly joyful in its capricious fantasy as the [Larghetto] was completely happy and calm. Everything in this symphony smiles, and even the martial surges of the first allegro are free from any hint of violence; they only speak of the youthful ardor of a noble heart which has preserved intact the most beautiful illusions of life. The author still believes in immortal glory, in love, in devotion... What abandonment in his joy, what wit, what exuberance! The various instruments fight over particles of a theme which none of them plays in full, yet each fragment is colored in a thousand different ways by being tossed from one instrument to the other. To hear this is like witnessing the enchanted sport of Oberon’s graceful spirits.

The finale is of the same character: it is a scherzo in double time, perhaps even more delicate and witty in its playfulness.
The First Southern Oregon Chinese Diaspora

A first wave of Chinese immigrants contributed significantly to the development of Oregon between 1850 and the first decades of the 20th Century. They built railroads, mined, and worked as domestic servants and cooks, laborers, factory-men, businessmen, and doctors. Over 370 Oregon place names reflect their presence; at least 30 in Jackson, 21 in Josephine, and 14 each in Curry and Coos counties. But these place names, often assigned by Euro-Americans, are far fewer than the sites settled, built, and worked by Chinese immigrants in Oregon. Chinese built such places as the Sterling Ditch, mined for nephrite jade near Gold Beach, and dug tunnels and built railroad grades that allowed completion of the north-south link of the Oregon and California Railroad closing, on December 17, 1887, the loop of tracks around the United States. That railroad link provided market access essential to the success of orchards, milling, manufacturing, and livestock industries. Much of the wealth of the Rogue Valley was made possible in large part by immigrant labor, including the large population of Chinese workers.

The Chinese arrived on the heels of the gold rush, but were by law largely confined to re-working mines already exhausted by Euro-American miners. Rework them they did. As a famous example, Gin Lin and his laborers built the workings at Flumet Flat at Palmer Creek on the Applegate River, including a wall of mine tailings 300 feet in length, 12-15 feet in height and 6-9 feet wide at its top. A five mile ditch carrying water from Yale Creek past Bunkum was built by the same crew. Gin Lin rose to prominence and respect in Jacksonville and was one of the few gold rush miners to return home a wealthy man.
By the 1860s, Chinese, mostly men, made up a substantial proportion of Southern Oregon’s population at least where gold was to be mined or railroads built. “The Weekly Oregonian for October 31, 1857 ran a letter to the editor stating that there were between 1,000 and 2,000 Chinese miners working in Josephine County and ‘buying out the Americans at big prices.’” (Quoted from Rose & Johnson, et al., p. 16) At that time some 300 of the 400 miners along Sucker Creek near Cave Junction were Chinese, as were something over a thousand Jacksonville residents. Their purchases of daily necessities helped build the town’s economy, as did their services as laundrymen, lumber workers, and, no doubt, day laborers.

Complaints about the noisy Chinese festivals and “heathen” religious practices appeared regularly in the press reporting on and around Chinese holidays but one does not find reports of violence perpetrated by the Chinese on their neighbors.

Discrimination and violence against the Chinese was common, but not universal. Most newspaper reports of the day referred to the Chinese in unapologetically racist language and tone, but some report amicable relations across the divide. State laws banned Chinese arriving after 1857 from citizenship, owning property, and voting. They were subjected to heavy and racially specific taxes and had to fight for, but sometimes won, recourse to the courts. When the panic of 1873 ushered in at least six years of economic recession the Chinese were scapegoated by Euro-American workers and legislators. The federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 banned Chinese immigration outright and was not relaxed until 1943 nor repealed until the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

Nonetheless, the dwindling Chinese population continued to make contributions well into the 20th Century. Tsi Quoy, known locally as “China Mary,” old and footbound, earned the awe and, by her treats, the affection of some
of the children of Jacksonville. Wah Chung’s laundry and store became a center of a small Chinese settlement in Ashland. The Drs. Chan & Kong and J. H. Leong served Medford until the 1950s.

There is much more to the story, much of which has yet to be rediscovered. The references below can help you get started. The Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) has worked to create the Oregon Chinese Diaspora Project, which is actively researching the stories and contributions of Chinese immigrants to Oregon.

John Richards, with help from Chelsea Rose and Karen Gernant

2. OCHALP.blogspot.com/2014/08/Jackson_county.html
4. Rose, Chelsea and Katie Johnson et al., 2016. “Rising from the Ashes: Jacksonville Chinese Quarter Site (35JA737) Data Recovery Excavations.” SOULA research report 2013.09; Prepared for The Oregon Department of Transportation
7. Rose and Johnson, 19-20.

For further exploration:
The Chinese Material Culture Collection (an online artifact collection of Chinese artifacts recovered from Southern Oregon and Northern California):
soda.sou.edu/Chinese/

And a short video about the 2013 excavations in Jacksonville done as part of the 2016 Making Archaeology Public Project in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act:
https://vimeo.com/160673762