



## **Ludwig van Beethoven – Symphony No. 6 in F major Op. 68, *Pastoral***

The Symphony No. 6 in F major Op. 68 *Pastoral* was composed between 1807 and 1808 at the same time as Symphony No. 5 and together with it was baptized by Beethoven himself on December 22, 1808 in Vienna. To prevent the name from creating misunderstandings, Beethoven wrote after the subtitle "more expression of sentiment than painting", wanting to clarify that his new symphonic creature was inspired more by the impressions aroused by Nature than by musical descriptivism tout court. In the five movements in which the Symphony No. 6 Beethoven listens to Nature by transfiguring the multiple feelings experienced by man in his presence into sound and the result is a page of idyllic beauty in which sensations and memories of rural life have always been so dear to the musician. The delight that restores the heart upon arrival in the countryside comes to life in a first movement - *Allegro ma non molto* - in which for the first time in Beethoven's symphonic production the dialectical clash between the first and second theme is missing in favor of two equally lovable themes that they dialogue harmoniously. The very moved *Andante* seems to want to suspend time in the stream scene with that lulling theme on the rhythm of a *barcarola* interrupted only at the end by the onomatopoeic references of nightingale, quail and cuckoo entrusted to the woods. The *Scherzo* expresses all the joy of a cheerful brigade of peasants who dance joyfully until a storm catches them by surprise: tremolus of the strings, chromatic scales and a sudden change of tonality - from F major to F minor - obscure the fourth movement. bucolic atmosphere of the Symphony. But after the storm, a newfound peace arrives in the last movement - *Allegretto* -. The song that rises in the orchestra is the heartfelt thanks to the Divinity who appeased the fury of the elements, repaying the human soul for any disturbance.

## **Franz Joseph Haydn - *Missa in tempore belli (or Paukenmesse)* in C major Hob. XXII: 9 for solos, chorus and orchestra**

Upon returning from his successful stays in London, Haydn resumed his duties as *Kapellmeister* with the Esterházy family in 1795. In the employ of the new Prince Nicolaus II, Haydn's duties were however more limited and the only official commitment required involved the composition of a mass every year to be performed in Eisenstadt on the occasion of the name day of Princess Maria Ermenegilda. So in the span of six years, between 1796 and 1802, Haydn produced six works of large proportions and sumptuous sounds that testify to the stylistic maturity achieved in the genre. The *Missa in tempore belli* or *Paukenmesse* for solos, choir and orchestra, the second of the six masses, was composed in 1796. The double epithet is linked on the one hand to the war events that involved the Austro-Hungarian Empire at that time, whose army had been defeated in Italy by the armies of Napoleon, and on the other by the particular use of timpani in the score, especially in the *Agnus Dei*. In the *Missa in tempore belli* each section of the *ordinarium Missae* - *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, *Agnus Dei* - is divided into contrasting subsections in which alternate pieces in counterpoint (such as the fugue writing of the *Credo*) and others of distinctly taste profane in which the voices of the soloists emerge (as in the *Sanctus* and the *Benedictus*). The best known and most peculiar piece of the mass remains the final *Agnus Dei* where Haydn inserts military musical elements - the famous timpani interventions and trumpet blasts - to allude to the war events in progress and underline the drama of the choral intonation. A very suggestive page to which Beethoven also looked for his *Missa solennis*.