



Robert Schumann - *Hermann und Dorothea*, Overture in B minor Op. 136

In 1851 Robert Schumann composed the overture in B minor *Hermann und Dorothea*. In his intentions, that piece of music represented the first piece of a theatrical project, never completed, inspired by the homonymous poem by Goethe where the flight of the Lutherans from Salzburg is narrated, a fact that really happened in 1732 but carried by Goethe at the end of Eighteenth century, in full war and revolutionary climate. In that context, love arises between Dorothea, a young refugee, and Hermann, the son of a rich landowner from a country on the border with France. The theme of the impossible love between two young people from different social backgrounds immediately emotionally and personally involved Schumann, having himself been a victim of the hostilities of his father-in-law for a long time. The overture, in sonata form, sees two opposing themes, the first more lyrical and painful and the second built on the theme of the *Marseillaise*, which characterize both the sentimental element and the historical background in which the story unfolds.

Robert Schumann – Concerto in A minor Op. 54 for piano and orchestra

In the midst of stylistic maturity and after the numerous and beautiful pages dedicated to the solo piano, the idea of the solo concert makes its way into Schumann's mind. As he confides in a letter to his wife Clara from 1839, Schumann knows that he cannot write a concert as a keyboard virtuoso and that he must aim for something different, an opera "halfway between symphony, concert and great sonata". The project for the concert for piano and orchestra involved him on several occasions, from 1841 to 1845, in one of the happiest creative periods of his career. In 1841 he made the Fantasia in A minor for piano and orchestra, a piece in a single movement performed privately by Clara who, as a good counselor and excellent musician, invited her husband to continue on the path traced by the Fantasia. In 1845 Schumann adds two movements (Andantino and Rondò) which together with what has already been composed will form the defined structure of the Concerto in A minor op. 54. At a time when the solo concert was characterized by spectacularity and technical skill, Schumann chose to subordinate virtuosity to poetic inspiration, but not only. In the Concerto in A minor he also goes beyond the canons of form, renouncing thematic development in favor of a motivic unity animated by the humoral and passionate impulses typical of his piano writing and creating a balanced dialogue between piano and orchestra and free from any traditional constraint.

Sergej Prokof'ev - *Romeo and Juliet*, suite Op. 64

Considered Prokofiev's ballet masterpiece, *Romeo and Juliet* was composed between 1935 and 1936 and first performed at the Brno Opera in December 1938. Having reached his fifth experience in the genre of ballet, Prokofiev chose to follow faithfully the Shakespearean tragedy, outlining with a marked lyricism not only the two protagonists, but also the secondary characters and some peculiar situations of the drama. "I'm sure people will find there the melody they expect" - asserted the author - and he was not wrong. Just think of the moments of musical poetry and elegance of writing that accompany the events of *Romeo and Juliet*, for example. But in addition to a very intense lyrical vein, Prokof'ev also fielded a rhythmic vivacity and a plastic drama of immediate involvement. From *Romeo and Juliet* the composer extrapolated three orchestral suites - op. 64 bis. op. 64 ter and op.101 - which collect the best known passages in a free way with respect to the development of the plot. For this reason it is not uncommon to listen to musical episodes in concert taken from the various suites and combined according to the taste of the interpreter.