



Ludwig van Beethoven – Symphony No. 9 in D minor Op. 125 for soloists, chorus and orchestra

Beethoven's last symphonic creature, the Symphony n. 9 in D minor op. 125 "Corale" marked a point of no return in the history of music; after the Ninth, no composer was able to try his hand at the genre without having to deal with that unsurpassed model of art bequeathed by the Maestro from Bonn. The genesis of Beethoven's last symphony starts a long time ago, since, in 1793, the author expressed his desire to set Friedrich Schiller's Ode to Joy to music. The message of freedom and brotherhood contained in the verses of the ode settled in the mind of the young composer so much so that in 1795 he composed a lied, *Gegenliebe*, in which the melody appears in the embryonic state which would later take final form in the Ode to joy of Symphony n. 9. Even more evident analogies are found years later in the Choral Fantasy op. 80, a sort of preparatory laboratory for the Ninth Symphony to whose composition Beethoven devoted himself from 1822 to the first months of 1824. The debut - at the Theater an der Wien on 7 May 1824 - was preceded by exhausting rehearsals, made even more difficult by the fact that conducting was Beethoven himself, now completely deaf and no longer able to lead the orchestra. However, this did not affect the success of his latest symphony, which was immediately hailed as an absolute masterpiece. As a litmus test, Symphony No. 9 summarizes in fact all the musical achievements matured over the years by Beethoven: from the freedom of form - with the fourth movement in which for the first time in the symphonic setting instrumental music gives way to the human voice - to the masterful use of variation and counterpoint, from the thematic affinities that run after each other in the work, giving a sense of cyclicity and unity to the score, up to the universal message of brotherhood sung by the soloists and the choir in the final movement.