

THE **THERESE M. GROJEAN**  
CLASSICAL SERIES

# Colorado Symphony

## CLASSICS

VILAR PERFORMING ARTS CENTER  
Thursday, February 24, 2022

---

### PROGRAM

BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO. 5  
MARKUS STENZ, CONDUCTOR

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68, “Pastorale”

I. Allegro ma non troppo (Joyful Feelings Upon Arriving in the Country)

II. Andante molto mosso (By the Brook)

III. Allegro (Peasant Merrymaking)

IV. Allegro (The Thunderstorm)

V. Allegretto (The Shepherd’s Song After the Storm)

– *Intermission* –

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

I. Allegro con brio

II. Andante con moto

III. Allegro

IV. Allegro

This evening’s performance is generously supported by  
Presenting Underwriters: Alexia & Jerry Jurschak;  
Performance Underwriters: VPAC Volunteers

MARKUS STENZ, conductor



Markus Stenz has held a number of high-profile positions with international orchestras and opera houses including Principal Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra (2012-2019), Principal Guest of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (2015-2019) and Conductor-In-Residence of the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra (2016-Dec 2020). He was General Music Director of the City of Cologne and Gürzenich-Kapellmeister for 11 years (from 2003-2014), Principal Guest Conductor of the Hallé Orchestra (2010-2014), Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (1998-2004), Principal Conductor of London Sinfonietta (1994-1998) and Artistic Director of the Montepulciano Festival (1989-1995).

Stenz made his opera debut in 1988 at La Fenice in Venice in the first performance of Henze's revised version of *Elegy for Young Lovers*. Since then he has appeared at many of the world's major opera houses and international festivals including Teatro alla Scala Milan, La Monnaie in Brussels, English National Opera, San Francisco Opera, Stuttgart Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera and Edinburgh International Festival. His notable performances in Cologne have included Wagner's *Ring*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, as well as Janacek's *Jenufa* and *Katya Kabanova*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Eötvös's *Love and other Demons*.

Stenz has conducted many world premières including Henze's *Das Verratene Meer* for Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Venus und Adonis* for Bavarian State Opera, and *L'Upupa und der Triumph der Sohnesliebe* at the Salzburg Festival, Wolfgang Rihm's *Die Eroberung von Mexico* and Detlev Glanert's *Caligula* for Frankfurt Opera and *Solaris* at the Bregenz Festival. He recently returned to Bayerische Staatsoper Munich for Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* and, in the 2018-2019 season, conducted the long awaited world première of Kurtág's *Fin de Partie* at La Scala, Milan, and Dutch National Opera.

Guest engagements have led him to major orchestras worldwide, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, NHK, Symphony Orchestra of the Bayerische Rundfunk, Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, London Philharmonic, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Vienna Symphony and the Symphony Orchestras of the Hessische Rundfunk, and NDR. In the United States these have included the Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Houston, San Diego, St Louis Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra and recently his debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony.

Highlights of the 2020-2021 season included the CD release of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony with Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, performances of Kurtág's *Fin de Partie* at Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia and concerts with MDR Sinfonieorchester and Dortmunder Philharmoniker. Despite the pandemic, Markus Stenz has conducted numerous concerts in Asia, including Seoul and Taiwan, and was guest conductor at Teatro La Fenice in Venice.

In 2021-2022 Markus conducts Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* at Deutsche Oper Berlin and the French premiere of Kurtág's opera *Fin de Partie* at Opéra National de Paris. Other guest conducting engagements include performances with the Pacific, Colorado and Jacksonville Symphony Orchestras as well as Orchestra dell'Academia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestra della Toscana in Florence and others.

During his time with the Gürzenich-Orchester Köln, Stenz received a prize for



VILAR PERFORMING  
ARTS CENTER  
BEAVER CREEK

VAIL  
VALLEY  
FOUNDATION

“The Best Concert Programme of the 2003-2004 Season” as well as initiating a number of youth and educational projects such as “Experiment Klassikz,” “3. Akt,” and the concert live-recording project “GO live.”

Stenz’s extensive discography includes many prize-winning recordings including the Gürzenich Orchestra’s complete cycle of Gustav Mahler’s symphonies for Oehms Classics. Their recording of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony received a German Record Critics’ Award in November 2009. Their first recording for Hyperion of Strauss’s *Don Quixote* and *Till Eulenspiegel* received unanimous critical acclaim, and was followed by an equally celebrated recording of Schönberg’s *Gurrelieder* released in 2015, which received the Choral Award at the 2016 Gramophone Awards.

Markus Stenz studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne under Volker Wangenheim and at Tanglewood with Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa. He has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Northern College of Music and the “Silberne Stimmgabel” (Silver Tuning Fork) of the state of North Rhein/Westphalia.

---

### LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770 -1827) Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68, “Pastoral”

*Ludwig van Beethoven was born on December 16, 1770 in Bonn, and died on March 26, 1827 in Vienna. He began his Sixth Symphony during the summer of 1807 and completed it in June 1808. The premiere took place on December 22, 1808 at the Theater-an-der-Wien in Vienna as part of a monumental concert that also included the first performances of the Fifth Symphony, Fourth Piano Concerto, Choral Fantasy, and “Gloria” and “Sanctus” from the C major Mass. Beethoven not only conducted this entire concert, but also served as piano soloist in the Concerto and the Fantasy. The work is scored for woodwinds in pairs plus piccolo, two each of horns, trumpets and trombones, timpani and strings.*

*Duration is about 39 minutes*

Beethoven gave each of the five movements of the “Pastoral” Symphony a title describing its general character. The first movement, filled with verdant sweetness and effusive good humor, is headed *The Awakening of Cheerful Feelings at the Arrival in the Country*. The violins present a simple theme that pauses briefly after only four measures, as though the composer were alighting from a coach and taking a deep breath of the sparkling, fragrant air before beginning his brisk walk along a shaded path. The melody grows more vigorous before it quiets to lead almost imperceptibly to the second theme, a descending motive played by violins over a rustling string accompaniment. Again, the spirits swell and then relax before the main theme returns to occupy most of the development. To conclude the first movement, the recapitulation returns the themes of the exposition in more richly orchestrated settings, a common practice in the 19th-century symphony. It is worth noting that the textural figuration Beethoven supplied for this movement, and for most of this Symphony, contributes an aura of relaxed yet constant motion to the music. Indeed, the “background” throughout this Symphony is of unflinching interest and is as important as the themes in defining the sylvan character of the music. There is a fascination in listening to these inner voices, of perceiving the multiple planes of the texture, an experience comparable in the visual world to discerning the play of light and shade in the layers of foliage of a

great tree or spying a darting fish beneath the shimmering surface of a stream. There is even one extended section in the finale (noted below) where Beethoven dispensed with the “melody” completely and continued with only the “accompaniment.”

The second movement, *Scene at the Brook*, continues the mood and undulant figuration of the preceding movement. The music of this movement is almost entirely without chromatic harmony, and exudes an air of tranquility amid pleasing activity. The opening theme of this sonata form starts with a fragmentary idea in the first violins above a rich accompaniment. The second theme begins with a descending motion, like that of the first movement, but then turns back upward to form an inverted arch. A full development section utilizing the main theme follows. The recapitulation recalls the earlier themes with enriched orchestration, and leads to a most remarkable coda. In the closing pages of this movement, the rustling accompaniment ceases while all Nature seems to hold its breath to listen to the songs of three birds – the nightingale, the dove and the cuckoo. Twice this tiny avian concert is performed before the movement comes quietly to its close. When later Romantic composers sought stylistic and formal models for their works it was to Beethoven that they turned, and when program music was the subject, this coda was their object.

Beethoven titled the scherzo *Merry Gathering of the Peasants*, and filled the music with a rustic bumptiousness and simple humor that recall a hearty if somewhat ungainly country dance. The trio shifts to duple meter for a stomping dance before the scherzo returns. The festivity is halted in mid-step by the distant thunder of a *Storm*, portrayed by the rumblings of the low strings. Beethoven built a convincing storm scene here through the tempestuous use of the tonal and timbral resources of the orchestra that stands in bold contrast to the surrounding movements of this Symphony. As the storm passes away over the horizon, the silvery voice of the flute leads directly into the finale, *Shepherd’s Song: Joyful, Thankful Feelings after the Storm*. The clarinet and then the horn sing the unpretentious melody of the shepherd, which returns, rondo-fashion, to support the form of the movement. It is at the expected third hearing of this theme that the melody is deleted, leaving only the luxuriant accompaniment to furnish the background for imagining the rustic tune. The mood of well-being and contented satisfaction continues to the end of this wonderful work.

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

### Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

*The earliest sketches for the Fifth Symphony date from 1800. Beethoven took up the sketches again four years later, and composed the score largely between 1805 and 1808. He conducted the work’s premiere on December 22, 1808 at Vienna’s Theater-an-der-Wien. The score calls for woodwinds in pairs plus piccolo and contrabassoon, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.*

*Duration is about 31 minutes.*

Surprisingly, for this Symphony that serves as the locus classicus of orchestral music, little is known about its creation. There are hints that it may have been occasioned by an aborted love affair with either Therese von Brunswick or Giulietta Guicciardi. The theory has been advanced that it was influenced by a surge of patriotism fueled by an Austrian loss to the Napoleonic juggernaut. Even the famous remark attributed to Beethoven about the opening motive representing “Fate knocking at the door” is probably apocryphal, an invention of either Anton Schindler or Ferdinand Ries, two young men, close to the composer in his last years, who later published their often-untrustworthy reminiscences of him.



VILAR PERFORMING  
ARTS CENTER  
BEAVER CREEK

It is known that the time of the creation of the Fifth Symphony was one of intense activity for Beethoven. The four years during which the work was composed also saw the completion of a rich variety of other works: Piano Sonatas, Op. 53, 54 and 57; Fourth Piano Concerto; Fourth and Sixth Symphonies; Violin Concerto; the first two versions of *Fidelio*; Razumovsky Quartets, Op. 59; *Coriolan Overture*; Mass in C major, Op. 86; and Cello Sonata No. 3, Op. 69. As was his practice with many of his important works, Beethoven revised and rewrote the Fifth Symphony for years.

So completely did composition occupy Beethoven's thoughts that he sometimes ignored the necessities of daily life. Concern with his appearance, eating habits, cleanliness, even his conversation, all gave way before his composing. There are many reports of his trooping the streets and woods of Vienna humming, singing, bellowing, penning a scrap of melody, and being, in general, oblivious to the people or places around him. (One suspects that his professed love of Nature grew in part from his need to find a solitary workplace free from distractions and the prying interest of his fellow Viennese.) This titanic struggle with musical tones produced such mighty monuments as the Fifth Symphony. With it, and with the Third Symphony completed only four years before, Beethoven launched music and art into the world of Romanticism.

In the history of music, Beethoven stands, Janus-faced, as the great colossus between two ages and two philosophies. The formal perfection of the preceding Classical period finds its greatest fulfillment in his works, which at the same time contain the taproot of the cathartic emotional experience from which grew the art of the 19th century. Beethoven himself evaluated his position as a creator in the following way: "Music is the mediator between intellectual and sensuous life ... the one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge which comprehends mankind but which mankind cannot comprehend." The Fifth Symphony is such a "mediator." Its message of victory through struggle, which so deeply touches both heart and mind, is achieved by a near-perfect balance of musical technique and expressive sentiment unsurpassed in the history of music. This Symphony was the work that won for Beethoven international renown. Despite a few early misunderstandings undoubtedly due to its unprecedented concentration of energy, it caught on very quickly, and was soon recognized in Europe, England and America as a pathbreaking achievement. Its popularity has never waned.

The opening gesture is the most famous beginning in all of classical music. It establishes the stormy temper of the *Allegro* by presenting the germinal cell from which the entire movement grows. Though it is possible to trace this memorable four-note motive through most of the measures of the movement, the esteemed English musicologist Sir Donald Tovey pointed out that the power of the music is not contained in this fragment, but rather in the "long sentences" Beethoven built from it. The key to appreciating Beethoven's formal structures lies in being aware of the way in which the music moves constantly from one point of arrival to the next, from one sentence to the next. It is in the careful weighting of successive climaxes through harmonic, rhythmic and instrumental resources that Beethoven created the enormous energy and seeming inevitability of this monumental movement. The gentler second theme derives from the opening motive, and gives only a brief respite in the headlong rush through the movement. It provides the necessary contrast while doing nothing to impede the music's flow. The development section is a paragon of cohesion, logic and concision. The recapitulation roars forth after a series of breathless chords that pass from woodwinds to strings and back. The stark hammer-blows of the closing chords bring the movement to its powerful close.

The form of the second movement is a set of variations on two contrasting themes. The first theme, presented by violas and cellos, is sweet and lyrical in nature; the second, heard in horns and trumpets, is heroic. The ensuing variations on the themes alternate to produce a movement by turns gentle and majestic.

The following *Scherzo* returns the tempestuous character of the opening movement, as the four-note motto from the first movement is heard again in a brazen setting led by the horns. The *fughetta*, the “*little fugue*,” of the central trio is initiated by the cellos and basses. The *Scherzo* returns with the mysterious tread of the plucked strings, after which the music wanes until little more than a heartbeat from the timpani remains. Then begins another accumulation of intensity, first gradually, then more quickly, as a link to the finale, which arrives with a glorious proclamation, like brilliant sun bursting through clouds.

The finale, set in the triumphant key of C major, is jubilant and martial. (Robert Schumann saw here the influence of Étienne-Nicolas Méhul, one of the prominent composers of the French Revolution.) The sonata form proceeds apace. At the apex of the development, however, the mysterious end of the *Scherzo* is invoked to serve as the link to the return of the main theme in the recapitulation. It also recalls and compresses the emotional journey of the entire Symphony. The closing pages repeat the cadence chords extensively to discharge the work’s enormous accumulated energy.

©2022 Dr. Richard E. Rodda

---

COMING UP in the Therese M. Grojean Classical Series:  
**Monday, March 14, 2022 | Seong-Jin Cho, Piano**



One of the consummate talents of his generation and most distinctive artists on the current classical music scene. His thoughtful and poetic, assertive and tender, virtuosic and colorful playing can combine panache with purity and is driven by an impressive natural sense of balance.