

# Edinburgh International Festival 2020

## Beethoven's Music and Moods

### Learning Resource Pack



Resource pack created by Rachel Leach and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra

## **Beethoven Piano Concert No 2**

These resources are designed to complement the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's filmed performance of Beethoven Piano Concerto No 2 as part of the Edinburgh International Festival's *My Light Shines On* celebration of Edinburgh's enduring festival spirit.

In the performance film lasting about 30 minutes, the Orchestra is directed by pianist Paul Lewis.

You can watch the full performance film here –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FD8i1gAupeM>

Rachel Leach presents the resource films and introduces the music for upper primary school pupils.

You can watch the resource films on the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's (SCO) website at [www.sco.org.uk/beethoven](http://www.sco.org.uk/beethoven)

This Resource Pack contains background information about Beethoven, and listening, drawing and composition activities. We suggest that you use some elements to prepare for viewing the performance film, and to continue exploring some of the themes afterwards.

## **Composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)**

### Quick background facts

- Ludwig van Beethoven born Bonn, Germany 1770, died Vienna 1827
- Classical composer using a similar style to Mozart and Haydn
- Considered to be one of the best composers who ever lived
- Was profoundly deaf from the age of about 25 and only heard his greatest pieces in his imagination
- Was scruffy, rude, angry and often bad-tempered

### Piano Concerto no 2

- Beethoven began work on this, his first concerto, when he was just 19
- Wrote it as a vehicle for himself to promote his talent as pianist
- Finally allowed it to be published in 1801 after his official 'first' concerto therefore it is known as number 2
- A concerto is a piece for soloist (piano) with orchestra in a largely accompanying role
- In three movements (large sections):
  1. Allegro con brio = Fast tempo with spirit
  2. Adagio = Slow
  3. Rondo, Molto allegro = Rondo, very fast

## Listening Task – Movement 1

For this task you will need art materials – paper and pens – plus access to the SCO's recording of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 2 with Paul Lewis (piano)

1. Tell your class about Beethoven and his Piano Concerto 2 or watch our short introductory film about it.
2. Print enough copies of the Beethoven head below (last page) so that everyone has at least three. You might like to print double-sided to save paper. Or alternatively, ask your students to draw Beethoven's head with no features.
3. Remind the class that Beethoven was a man of many contrasting moods. He was known to be ecstatically happy one minute and terrifyingly angry the next. These emotions made their way into his music.
4. Watch the beginning of SCO's recording of Piano Concerto No 2, **Movement 1** – just the first 30 seconds or so. Explain that the opening idea sounds like Beethoven is saying 'Ah! I'm feeling really cross':



... and ask the children to say it with you (and Beethoven) in rhythm.

5. As you listen to this extract again, ask your children to draw Beethoven's **angry** expression on their blank face template. As they work listen onwards until about 4'15" when the music changes mood
6. Later in the piece, the music becomes calmer. Listen to this section –

Extract 2: Movement 1 (4'16" – 4'51")

You can find these extracts by scrolling through the SCO's recording or watch them in our teachers' resource film

Words for this tune could be –



7. Can your children draw Beethoven's **calm** face on another blank template?
8. Finally, here's a section of sadder music. On a third template, ask your children to draw Beethoven's **sad** face.

**Extract 3 (sad): Movement 1 (4'51" – 5'05")**



9. Now watch the whole movement. As you listen encourage your children to finish off their artwork by adding details - angry Beethoven could have fire coming out of his ears for example. Sad Beethoven could be weeping huge tears etc.

#### Taking it further

When your faces are finished, watch the movement one more time and encourage your children to hold up their angry face every time they spot the angry tune.

If this feels like an overwhelming task, begin with the cadenza. This is a section towards the end of the movement where the piano plays alone. It occurs at 11'50" in our recording and you can clearly hear the angry tune whenever it occurs

You could even make your Beethoven faces into masks by cutting out eye holes and fixing them to a stick, that way the children can still watch our performance whilst holding up their mask!



## Classroom Composition Task – Movement 3 RONDO

1. Tell your class about Beethoven and his Piano Concerto 2 or watch our short introductory film about it. Also watch and listen to the **third** movement it occurs at 9'52" in our full performance
2. Explain that this movement is a 'rondo'. This is a shape in music with one idea that keeps returning. Watch the first 10 seconds again – the short piano tune is the idea that keeps returning throughout Beethoven's piece.

### What's a rondo?

Here's a quick game to help your children understand with what a rondo is -

- Stand or sit in a big circle.
- Ask one child to suggest a gesture or a sound. Ask the rest of the class to copy it (whatever it is)
- Ask two more children to suggest something (ideally positioned far apart from each other) and copy each time
- Discuss which is your favourite gesture and name it 'A'. Name the other three 'B' and 'C'
- Perform the following structure using your gestures (whatever they are):  
A – B – A – C – A

This is a rondo – a musical shape with one idea that keeps returning.

Beethoven actually uses a 'palindrome rondo' (i.e. it is the same backwards as forwards). This is his overall structure –

A – B – A – C – A – B – A

Challenge your class to make this structure using their gestures from above.

3. Teach the rhythm of Beethoven's tune to your class –



*'Ron - do rhy - thm keeps com - ing back Ron - do rhy - thm keeps you on track'*

*(The beginning of this rhythm is actually known as a 'Scottish snap')*

Begin by teaching the words, then replace each syllable with a clap.

4. Challenge the class to make their own version of this tune. You can use whatever resources you have – body percussion, classroom percussion, instruments, voice. Here's a list of techniques you might like to use –
  - a. Split the rhythm in half and create a call and response:

Player 1 (woodblock):

Player 1 (triangle):

keeps com-ing back

keeps you on track!

- b. Add a pulse or invent some new rhythms:

'Ron-do rhy-thm' keeps com-ing back Ron-do rhy-thm keeps you on track'

pulse:

new rhythm:

- c. Invent a new ending, for example:

'Ron-do rhy-thm keeps com-ing back Ron-do rhy-thm keeps you on track'

- d. If using pitched instruments, limit the pitches to just C, D, E, F, G

5. Fix this section so it is the same every time and name it 'A'. This is going to be the tune that keeps returning.

*It may help to record this or write down what happens and who plays what. You will need it again later*

6. Split the class into 2 teams and name them 'B' and 'C'. (You can split into more teams, but your resulting rondo will get more complicated!). Ask each team to make their own short piece of music. Here are some rules -

- They must use the same instruments/ resources as for the A section – no instrument swapping!
- They must create a contrast to the A section - if the A section is fast and loud, this new section should be slow and soft for example.
- The new piece must be no longer than 1-minute max!
- Perhaps use different pitches for contrast – i.e. black notes, if you have them, or G, A, B, C, D

7. When this is achieved, bring the groups back together and hear their efforts. You now have everything you need to complete your rondo:

- 'A' section performed by everyone
- 'B' and 'C' performed by two different groups

Challenge your children to structure their sections into a 'palindrome rondo' with the exact same shape as Beethoven's (A-B-A-C-A-B-A)

8. Record your final composition or perform it to another class.

### Taking it further

Rondo form is a really satisfying way to structure ideas. Once your class understand it, they can use it in all of their compositions - a pop song is really just another version of rondo for instance. You could even challenge your children to make rondo form artwork or poetry.



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## BIOGRAPHIES

### RACHEL LEACH – Presenter

Rachel Leach was born in Sheffield. She started playing the piano aged four and began composing at 11. She studied composing at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and has written music for most of the UK's top orchestras and opera companies.

Alongside this, Rachel leads creative music workshops with people of all ages and presents children's concerts all over the UK.

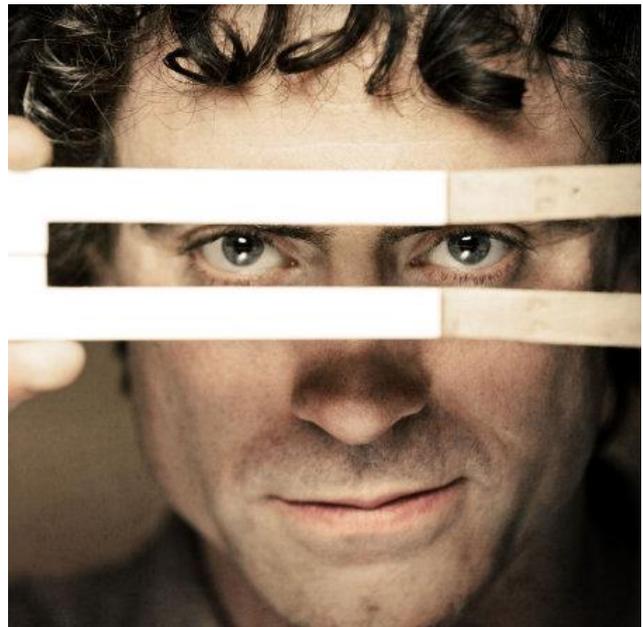
Rachel's music is always written with the performers in mind and is often written in collaboration with the performers. She has written more pieces for the London Symphony Orchestra than any other composer (all but one include a part for children), and has completed hundreds of silly songs and tutor pieces for young musicians.



Rachel Leach (Photo: racheleachmusic.com)

### PAUL LEWIS – PIANIST

Paul Lewis is internationally regarded as one of the leading musicians of his generation. His cycles of core piano works by Beethoven and Schubert have received unanimous critical and public acclaim worldwide, and consolidated his reputation as one of the world's foremost interpreters of the central European classical repertoire.



## SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The world-renowned Scottish Chamber Orchestra is made up of a unique collection of talented musicians who inspire and connect with people of all ages. The SCO aims to provide as many opportunities as possible for people to hear their music by touring the length and breadth of Scotland and around the world as proud ambassadors for Scottish cultural excellence. In recent years, the Orchestra has travelled throughout Europe, the Far East, India and the USA.

The SCO makes a significant contribution to Scottish life both on the concert platform and beyond, working in schools, universities, hospitals, care homes and community centres through its award-winning Creative Learning programme. For more information about SCO concerts and projects, and to explore our range of online resources, please visit [www.sco.org.uk](http://www.sco.org.uk).



The Scottish Chamber Orchestra (Photo: Marco Borggreve 2016)

## THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Edinburgh International Festival is an unparalleled, city-wide, celebration of the performing arts for three weeks each August in Scotland's capital. Created in 1947 to celebrate the human spirit and bring people together through art, the International Festival remains dedicated to creative excellence and as a point of annual cultural exchange for a global audience exceeding 400,000 per year.

Committed to virtuosity and innovation, the International Festival presents some of the finest performers and ensembles from the worlds of dance, opera, music and theatre. It also connects with local artists and communities through a range of programmes year-round and you can find out more about our Learning and Engagement work over on the website: <https://www.eif.co.uk/about/learning-and-engagement>



Art of Listening workshop, Edinburgh International Festival © Ryan Buchanan