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BEETHOVEN

SYMPHONY No. 9 'CHORAL', IN D MINOR, OP. 125

NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTED BY ARTURO TOSCANINI

EILEEN FARRELL, SOPRANO; NAN MERRIMAN, MEZZO

JAN PEECE, TENOR; NORMAN SCOTT, BASS

ROBERT SHAW CHORALE

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AUDIO
XR

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TOSCANINI

PRISTINE
AUDIO
XR

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso (13:41)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Molto vivace (13:20)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Adagio molto e cantabile - Andante moderato (14:33)
- 4 4th mvt. - Presto - Allegro assai (23:32)

Recorded in Carnegie Hall, New York March 31st and April 1st, 1952

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Cover artwork based on a photograph of Arturo Toscanini

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The Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 "Choral" is the last complete symphony composed by Ludwig van Beethoven. Completed in 1824, the choral Ninth Symphony is one of the best known works of the Western repertoire, considered both an icon and a forefather of Romantic music, and one of Beethoven's greatest masterpieces.

Symphony No. 9 incorporates part of *An die Freude* ("Ode to Joy"), an ode by Friedrich Schiller, with text sung by soloists and a chorus in the last movement. It is the first example of a major composer using the human voice on the same level with instruments in a symphony, creating a work of a grand scope that set the tone for the Romantic symphonic form.

Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 plays a prominent cultural role in the world today. In particular, the music from the fourth movement (Ode to Joy) was rearranged by Herbert von Karajan into what is now known as the official anthem of the European Union. Further testament to its prominence is that an original manuscript of this work sold in 2003 for \$3.3 million USD at Sotheby's, London. The head of Sotheby's manuscripts department, Dr. Stephen Roe stated, "*it is one of the highest achievements of man, ranking alongside Shakespeare's Hamlet and King Lear.*"

The Philharmonic Society of London (later the Royal Philharmonic Society) originally commissioned the symphony in 1817. Beethoven started work on his last symphony in 1818 and finished it early in 1824. This was roughly twelve years after his eighth symphony. However, he was interested in the Ode to Joy from a much earlier time, having set it to music as early as 1793; that setting is lost.

The theme for the scherzo can be traced back to a fugue written in 1815. The introduction for the vocal part of the symphony caused many difficulties for Beethoven. It was the first time he—or anyone—had used a vocal component in a symphony. Beethoven's friend, Anton Schindler, later said: "*When he started working on the fourth movement the struggle began as never before. The aim was to find an appropriate way of introducing Schiller's ode. One day he [Beethoven] entered the room and shouted 'I got it, I just got it!' Then he showed me a sketchbook with the words 'let us sing the ode of the immortal Schiller'.*" However, that introduction did not make it into the work, and Beethoven spent a great deal of time rewriting the part until it had reached the form recognizable today.

NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FULL NOTES ON THIS RECORDING CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM