

# Classical Favourites

Ulster Orchestra  
Vernon Handley

collect

<b>Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)</b>			
1	<b>Overture to Goethe's 'Egmont', Op. 84</b>	8:58	
Sostenuto, ma non troppo – Allegro – Allegro con brio			
<b>Franz Schubert (1797–1828)</b>			
<b>Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D.759 'Unfinished'</b>			
2	I Allegro moderato	14:09	26:05
3	II Andante con moto	11:56	
<b>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)</b>			
<b>Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K.550</b>			
4	I Allegro molto	7:39	30:45
5	II Andante	12:13	
6	III Menuetto & Trio: Allegretto	4:16	
7	IV Finale: Allegro assai	6:37	
		<b>TT 66:14</b>	

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Egmont was a Flemish Count who took part in the resistance to the Spanish rule of the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. In 1787 (a year before Mozart's G minor Symphony) the great German poet, Goethe, completed a play based on the story of the tragic conflict between Egmont's patriotism and love for Klärchen. In 1809 Beethoven was invited to provide incidental music for the Viennese premiere of the drama in the Burgtheater. Although he accepted the commission with alacrity – he wrote to his revered Goethe of 'this wonderful Egmont which I read and felt and set to music thinking warmly of you' – and was given plenty of time to complete the nine movements, he was apparently unable to finish the Overture in time for the first performance in May 1810. However, it was ready for the fourth performance in June and, with its dramatic portrayal of the emotional content of the play summed up in one continuous movement and culminating in the Victory Symphony which accompanies Egmont's procession to the scaffold, it soon achieved popularity as a concert work in its own right.

Schubert has the reputation for leaving works unfinished. The most famous of these is

the **B minor Symphony** of October 1822, actually known as the 'Unfinished'. But this was not the only work he failed to complete – there are fragments of piano sonatas, a string quartet movement and further symphonies, many of which have seen attempts at completion or reconstruction. The early 1820s were years when Schubert's style was in transition from the precociousness of his early works to the profundity of his final period, and it seems that in making this transition he understandably made many false starts with his compositions.

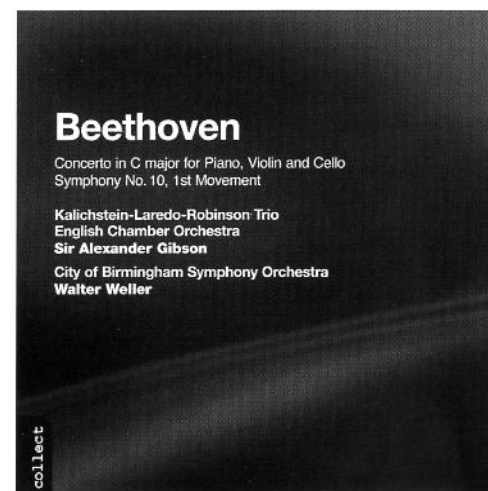
Only two of the expected four movements of the B minor Symphony were completed, an *Allegro moderato* and an *Andante con moto*. Sketches for the subsequent scherzo have survived and attempts have been made to complete this movement; also, various theories regarding the finale have been postulated – one such takes the well-known B major 'Entr'acte' from Schubert's *Rosamunde* to be the originally intended last movement of the Symphony. But opinion today generally accepts the validity of the Symphony's two surviving movements to stand on their own, the pair providing a satisfying balance of unity and contrast.

Mozart's last three symphonies were composed in an amazingly short time in the summer of 1788. What is all the more remarkable is the utter contrast between the three – one in a regal E flat major (No. 39), another in a troubled G minor (No. 40) and the last, the most joyous of all his works, in a sunny C major (No. 41, the so-called 'Jupiter' Symphony). In one sense the three disprove theories that each work of a composer reflects his state of health and mind during its composition – the last two symphonies may well have been worked on simultaneously. Yet there is no denying that the **G minor Symphony** suggests Mozart was going through troubled times. He was, in fact, in dire

financial straits – his operas, although successful, were bringing in very little money, commissions for new works had largely dried up and the necessity of teaching had become a drudgery. Many letters survive from this time in which Mozart begs for money from his Masonic friends in order to keep his wife and children in food and clothing. It has been suggested that Mozart wrote these three last symphonies with an eye on making money from them in subscription concerts of his own promotion in Vienna, but it is unlikely that he ever directed them in concert himself – and he certainly never made any money out of their publication – before he died three years later.

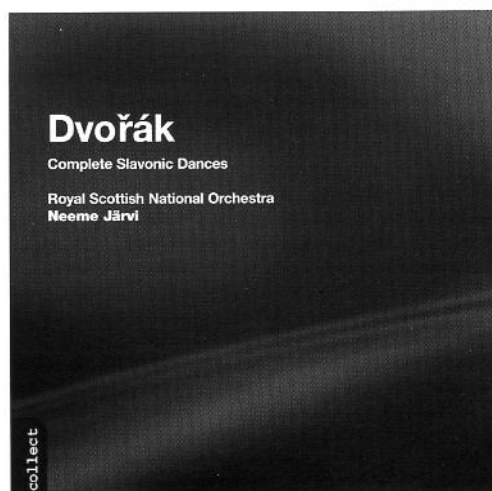
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