

BEETHOVEN

Music for Winds

Wind Octet in E flat major, Op. 103

Wind Sextet in E flat major, Op. 71

Shifrin • Cho • Morelli • Olegario

Purvis • Hunt • Taylor • Chen



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
March in B flat major, WoO 29 (1797–98)
Wind Octet in E flat major, Op. 103 (1792)
Wind Sextet in E flat major, Op. 71 (1796)
Rondino in E flat major, WoO 25 (1792)

In 1792 Beethoven left his native city of Bonn to seek his fortune in the imperial capital, Vienna. Five years earlier his patron, the Archbishop of Cologne, a scion of the imperial family, had sent him to Vienna, where he had hoped to have lessons with Mozart. His plans were frustrated by the illness and subsequent death of his mother, which made it necessary to return to Bonn and before long to take charge of the welfare of his younger brothers. Beethoven's father, overshadowed by the eminence of his own father, Kapellmeister to a former Archbishop, had proved inadequate both as a musician and in the family, of which his son now took control.

As a boy Beethoven had been trained to continue family tradition as a musician and had followed his father and grandfather as a member of the archiepiscopal musical establishment. In 1792 he arrived in Vienna with introductions to various members of the nobility and with the offer of lessons with Haydn, from whom he later claimed to have learned nothing. There were further lessons from the court composer, Antonio Salieri, and from Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, and an initial career of some brilliance as a keyboard virtuoso. He was to establish himself, in the course of time, as a figure of remarkable genius and originality and as a social eccentric; no respecter of persons, his eccentricity all the greater for his increasing deafness. This last disability made public performance, whether as a keyboard player or in the direction of his own music, increasingly difficult, and must have served to encourage the development of one particular facet of his music, stigmatised by hostile contemporary critics as 'learned' – the use of counterpoint. He died in Vienna in 1827.

Works for wind ensemble formed a regular element of contemporary entertainment. Beethoven's *Octet*, later published as *Op. 103*, was written by 1792, to be played by the musicians of his patron, the Archbishop-Elector in

Bonn. It seems to have been among the works that caused some embarrassment for Beethoven and for his teacher, Haydn. Beethoven's initial stay in Vienna, where he had arrived in November 1792, was paid for by the Elector, and lessons with Haydn were supposed to help him develop his abilities. To illustrate his pupil's progress Haydn had sent examples of his work to Bonn, including the *Octet*, together with a plea for money. The Elector, in his reply to Haydn, pointed out that the works sent had been written before Beethoven left for Vienna and suggested that he ought perhaps to return to his duties as a musician in Bonn. The Elector's reservations may be well understood. Whatever the talents of Beethoven may have been, his family had a bad name in Bonn, and his earlier sponsored visit to Vienna, to study with Mozart, had, for no fault of his own, come to nothing but debts.

Beethoven's *March in B flat major, WoO 29*, for two clarinets, two horns and two bassoons, was written in 1797–98 and only published many years after the composer's death. A march often opened a wind partita, and here makes a suitable introduction to the more substantial works recorded.

The *Octet in E flat major, Op. 103*, scored for pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons, completed by 1792, is motivically related to the *String Quintet, Op. 4*, advertised by the publisher, truthfully enough, as a completely new work. The competence of the wind ensemble in the Archbishop-Elector's service in Bonn, now with clarinets as well as oboes, will have provided a stimulus for Beethoven's early skill in instrumental writing, immediately apparent in the opening *sonata-allegro* movement, in which a motif first heard from the oboe has a significant part to play. In the B flat major second movement an oboe first takes the lead, followed by the bassoon. The *Minuet* and *Trio* have more of a *scherzo* about them and the piece ends with a vigorous and lively *Presto*.

The *Sextet in E flat major, Op. 71*, scored for pairs of clarinets, horns and bassoons, was written in 1796, a further example of Beethoven's interest in wind instruments at this time. The first movement starts with a slow ten-bar introduction, after which the clarinet leads into the first subject of a *sonata-allegro* movement. The second movement is a B flat major *Adagio*, led initially by the first bassoon, and the *Minuet*, marked *Quasi allegretto*, is started by the horns, with a *Trio* in which the second clarinet enters in imitation of its fellow. The work ends with

a lively *Rondo*, with duly contrasting episodes.

Beethoven's *Rondino in E flat major, WoO 25*, for wind sextet, was originally intended as the finale to the *Octet*, composed in Bonn, before his departure for Vienna in November 1792. With the tempo indication *Andante*, the *Rondino* lacks the ebullience generally expected in a *rondo-finale*. Here the *Rondo* provides a framework for music of more meditative appeal.

Keith Anderson

Stephen Taylor

Stephen Taylor holds the Mrs John D. Rockefeller III Solo Oboe Chair with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and teaches at the Yale, Manhattan, and The Juilliard schools of music. He has more than 300 recordings under his belt, has been nominated for a GRAMMY®, and was awarded a performer's grant by the Fromm Foundation at Harvard University. Steve plays principal oboe with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and is in the New York Woodwind Quintet. He summers at popular festivals and, being obsessed with buoyancy, spends his free time on his old wooden boats in Maine.

Hsuan-Fong Chen

Oboist Hsuan-Fong Chen performs in New York and around the world. Recently heard in *Rocktopia* on Broadway, Chen has performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, The Knights, Novus NY, Talea Ensemble, and the Albany, Princeton, Huntsville, and New Haven Symphony Orchestras. Chen has attended the Aspen Music Festival and School, Pacific Music Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, Lake George Music Festival, and Kingston Music Festival, and participated in the New York Symphonic Ensemble's tour of Japan. Chen has degrees from The Juilliard School, the Yale School of Music, and the Manhattan School of Music. **[Hsuanfongchen.com](http://hsuanfongchen.com)**

David Shifrin

Winner of the 2000 Avery Fisher Prize, clarinetist David Shifrin has appeared with The Philadelphia and Minnesota Orchestras and the Seattle and Houston Symphonies, and the Dallas, Milwaukee, Detroit and Denver Symphony Orchestras. He has appeared in recital at Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in venues around the world. A faculty member at the Yale School of Music since 1987, Shifrin is professor in the practice of clarinet and chamber music, and serves as artistic director of the Oneppo Chamber Music Series and the Yale in New York concert series. **www.davidshifrin.com**

William Purvis

William Purvis pursues a multifaceted career both in the US and abroad as horn soloist, chamber musician, conductor, and educator. He is a member of the New York Woodwind Quintet, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Yale Brass Trio, and the Triton Horn Trio, and is an emeritus member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. He is currently professor in the practice of horn and chamber music at the Yale School of Music, where he is also coordinator of winds and brasses, and serves as director of the Yale Collection of Musical Instruments.

Paul Wonjin Cho

Paul Wonjin Cho, principal clarinetist of the Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra, has been praised for his stylish playing by *The New York Times*. He serves as guest principal with the American, New Haven, and Vermont Symphony Orchestras, and has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and at Tanglewood Music Center. Upon completing the Ensemble Connect fellowship programme, Cho became a core member of Decoda, the affiliate ensemble of Carnegie Hall. He is a faculty member at Adelphi University and Horace Mann School. Cho has degrees from the University of Southern California and the Yale School of Music, and is a Yamaha Artist.

www.bereitedich.com

Frank Morelli

Frank Morelli, the first bassoonist to be awarded a doctorate by The Juilliard School, has made nine solo appearances at Carnegie Hall, and performed at the White House during the Clinton presidency. Principal bassoonist of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, retired principal bassoon of the New York City Opera (27 years), and member of woodwind quintet, Windscape, he teaches at the Yale School of Music, The Juilliard School, the Manhattan School of Music, and SUNY Stony Brook. With more than 175 albums to his credit, his playing has been acclaimed by *Gramophone* magazine and the *American Record Guide*. Publications include *Stravinsky: Difficult Passages* (Boosey & Hawkes) and *The Weissenborn Method and Studies* (Carl Fischer). **www.morellibassoon.com**

Marissa Olegario

Marissa Olegario is the bassoon professor at the University of Arizona. She performs in the US and abroad in solo, chamber, and orchestral settings and has collaborated with artists from the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Berliner Philharmoniker, and The Breaking Winds Bassoon Quartet. Inspired by community engagement efforts and innovation, she has partnered with Dance for Parkinson's, performs in unconventional spaces, and commissions new works. A semi-finalist at the 2016 Matthew Ruggiero International Woodwind Competition and a recipient of a New York City Council on the Arts grant, Olegario has degrees from Northwestern University and the Yale School of Music. **www.marissaolegario.com**

Lauren Hunt

Lauren Hunt is assistant professor of horn at Utah State University. Winner of the International Horn Competition of America in 2013, Hunt has appeared at music festivals including the Artosphere Festival, Marlboro Music Festival, and Spoleto Festival USA, and the Youth Orchestra of the Americas. A graduate of the Global Leaders Program, Hunt has taught extensively around the globe, giving masterclasses and recitals in Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Belize, Ecuador, Canada and the US. She formerly taught horn at Illinois State University. Hunt has degrees from the New England Conservatory, Yale School of Music, and the University of Georgia. **www.laurenhunthorn.com**



David Shifrin



Hsuan-Fong Chen *Photo: Lauren Desberg*



William Purvis *Photo: Bob Handelman*



Marissa Olegario *Photo: Lance Thom*



Stephen Taylor



Lauren Hunt *Photo: Steven Riskind*



Paul Wonjin Cho *Photo: Matthew Fried*



Frank Morelli *Photo: Paul Horton Visuals*

Music for wind ensemble was a regular part of entertainment in Beethoven's day, and his *Octet* was composed for the skilled players in the service of his patron, the Archbishop-Elector in Bonn. The charming and skilfully written *Sextet* is also 'from my early things and, what's more, was written in one night'; impressing a critic of the time 'by its splendid melodies, leisurely harmonic flow, and wealth of new and surprising ideas'. Wind partitas often opened with a *March*, and the *Rondino* was originally intended as the *Finale* to the *Octet*, two suitable pieces to complete this fashionable Beethoven soirée.

**Ludwig van
BEETHOVEN**
(1770–1827)
Music for Winds

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| 1 March in B flat major, WoO 29
for wind sextet (1797–98) 1:23 | Wind Sextet in E flat major,
Op. 71 (1796) 20:10 |
| Wind Octet in E flat major,
Op. 103 (1792) 21:22 | 6 I. Adagio – Allegro 9:55 |
| 2 I. Allegro 7:32 | 7 II. Adagio 3:44 |
| 3 II. Andante 6:41 | 8 III. Minuet: Quasi allegretto 2:44 |
| 4 III. Menuetto 3:23 | 9 IV. Rondo: Allegro 3:41 |
| 5 IV. Finale: Presto 3:43 | 10 Rondino in E flat major,
WoO 25 for wind sextet
(1792) 7:06 |

David Shifrin, Paul Wonjin Cho, Clarinet
Frank Morelli, Marissa Olegario, Bassoon
William Purvis, Lauren Hunt, Horn
Stephen Taylor, Hsuan-Fong Chen, Oboe 2–5

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50:07



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