

Music appreciation: piece analysis



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Beethoven Piano Concerto No 4 in G major Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 4 in G major was written at the beginning of the Romantic Era and is sometimes considered as a transitional piece from the Classical Period. The purpose of the music was originally scored for a private concert in Vienna for solo piano and orchestra and is still regarded as one of the most complex pieces of Beethoven. The structure of the music follows the classical style of the concerto. There are 3 movements to the concerto, including the Allegre Moderato, Andante con moto and Rondo. The unity of the piece is in the key signatures that are used. As the concerto is played, it is heard going back to the main key of G major. The change in this is seen in the second movement as it moves into E minor, the relative minor of G major. However, it then goes back to the main key to end with the third movement. Further unity and variety is heard with the motifs, which are heard at the beginning of the piece then used as sub-melodies in other parts of the concerto. The melody in each section is repeated with the main form in each movement, such as A, B, A, C, A in the Rondo movement.

The tempo of the piece begins with a moderate sound in 4/4. The andante keeps the same 4/4 sound with a contrast because of the slower tempo. The rondo takes the tempo of a dance and is based on a fast, rhythmic pace that drives the last movement to the end. The rhythm in this movement not only is used for a faster pace but also becomes a part of the motif of the main concerto. The volume of each movement follows the rhythmic structure. The faster and more moderate movements are met by louder and more dynamic contrasts based on moving into louder and more dominant sounds of both the piano and the orchestra. The slower pace is matched by softer dynamics that create a different statement in the music (Freed, 1).

Schumann Symphony No 4 in d minor

Schumann's Symphony Number 4 in d minor was written in the Romantic era with the date of 1841. However, it was revised until 1851 before going into publication. The purpose of the symphony was only for the performance of an orchestra. Schumann was also interested in connecting each of the movements together for a better and more effective set of transitions that had an overall statement. The final structure of the music published includes four movements; *Ziemlich Langsam*, *Romanze*, *Scherzo* and *Langsam*, all which are to be performed without pausing in between movements. More than other types of symphonies, Schumann designated this as one that was slightly experimental with form and structure while using specific romantic era techniques.

The unity in the piece is noted through the harmony and melody. Schumann uses a reoccurring motif in each of the movements, either as a melody or submelody. However, the harmonies alter as well as the effects of the motifs that are used. For instance, in the second movement, the motif is heard as a countermelody while the driving motif is one that is based on the theme of *romanze*. The harmony combines with the different movements for unity and variety. The first movement is in d minor and is followed with the second movement in a minor. The diversity of the harmony is then unified as Schumann goes back to d minor and ends in d major. The transitions are heard as modulations, as opposed to significant key changes. The tempo also adds to the unity and variety with the first movement at a moderate pace, the second movement at a slow pace, the *scherzo* at a rapid pace and the *langsam* at a moderate tempo. The volume also follows this, with the *romanze* having the quietest volume and following a piano dynamic most of

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the time. The *Ziemlich Langsam* and *Langsam* in the fourth movement have a mezzo-piano to mezzo – forte volume and range more in dynamics. The scherzo has a forte sound through most of the piece, which combines with the tempo (Schumann, 27).

Works Cited

Freed, Richard. *Piano Concerto No 4 in G Major Op 58*. 2006.

Schumann Robert. *Complete Symphonies in Full Score*. New York: Dover Publications, 1980.