



Franz Schubert – Symphony in C major, *Die Grosse*

That Schubert wished to try his hand at a large-scale symphonic work - in the manner of Beethoven to be understood - was well known during the last years of his life. After the symphonies composed in his youth, a sort of apprenticeship in the highest instrumental genre, Schubert felt ready for a symphony in grand style and in 1828 he signed the Symphony in C major called, precisely, '*Die Grosse*'. Offered to the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna, the new composition would have been officially performed in that same year if the complexity and length of some passages had not frightened the orchestra, which, judging it too difficult, refused to perform it. The symphony was thus sent back to the sender, who placed it, as has already happened for his other precious musical jewels, in a drawer. Only years after Schubert's death, Robert Schumann discovered it by chance during a visit to the brother of the deceased musician and did his utmost to send it to Mendelssohn in Leipzig, where that hitherto unknown masterpiece regained new life in the first performance of 1839. The Symphony in C major it owes its name not only to the expansion of the ensemble, with three added trombones, but also to the language already aimed at late romantic solutions. While adhering to the classical constructive rules, Schubert modifies the internal balances by dampening the classical thematic contrast in favor of a continuous expansion of the melodic materials used, according to a narrative logic internal to the dilated and digressive composition, defined by Schumann as 'divine length'.