

# Historical Movements through Art: Enlightenment to Romanticism

## COMPOSERS + WRITERS

<b>Mozart</b>	Vienna (Abduction, Figaro (1786), Giovanni, Così, Flute, Tito) 1781 – 1791(d)
<b>Beaumarchais</b>	Wrote Trilogy: (Figaro, Barber, Guilty Mother) in parts 1775 – 1792
<b>Rossini</b>	<i>Barber of Seville</i> 1816
<b>Beethoven</b>	b. 1770 - d. 1787 / <i>Fidelio</i> – 1804 / 1805 / 9 <sup>th</sup> – 1824 (Attended by Schubert 17y)
<b>Schiller</b>	b. 1759 - d. 1855 <i>Ode to Joy</i> (poem): 1803 revised: 1824 <i>Maria Stuart</i> 1800 (play)
<b>Jean-Nicolas Bouilly:</b>	<i>Fidelio</i> source: 1798 book – Leonore (orig French Revolution - moved to Seville)
<b>Donizetti</b>	b. 1797 – d. 1848 <i>Maria Stuarda</i> : 1834
<b>Verdi</b>	b.1813 – d.1901 <i>Don Carlo</i> : 1867    ( <i>Nabucco</i> : 1842 - + <i>Risorgimento</i> )

## REVOLUTIONS

<b>Revolutions:</b>	American – 1776	French – 1789-1799
<b>World at War:</b>	War of the First Coalition (Total War / nations in arms) – 1793-1797 (episodic) Napoleonic Wars: 1799-1815	

## BEETHOVEN NOTES

<b>Beethoven's Fidelio:</b>	Sonnleithner (librettist) <b>1805 / 1806 / 1814</b>
<b>Jean-Nicolas Bouilly:</b>	1798 book – Leonore (French Revolution but moved to Seville)
<b>Beethoven's ninth (1824) Ode to Joy (text by historian and playwright Schiller 1785)</b>	

## THEMES

**Enlightenment / Romanticism Themes:** Common man upheld beyond others, brotherhood, unity, equality, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. (Education)

**Rise of Nationalism** (see wars and revolutions)

**Industrial Revolution** – man's efficiency at work and at war

**Beaumarchais: *Le Barbier* premiered in 1775.** Its sequel ***Le Marriage* was initially passed by the censor in 1781, but was soon banned from performance by Louis XVI** after a private reading. Queen Marie-Antoinette lamented the ban, as did various influential members of her entourage. Nonetheless, the **King was unhappy with the play's satire on the aristocracy and over-ruled the Queen's entreaties to allow its performance.** Over the next three years Beaumarchais gave many private readings of the play, as well as making revisions to try to pass the censor. **The King finally relented and lifted the ban in 1784.** The play premiered that year and was enormously popular even with aristocratic audiences. Mozart's opera premiered just two years later. Beaumarchais's final play ***La Mère Coupable (The guilty mother)* was premiered in 1792** in Paris.

## QUOTES

**Thomas May, Lucerne Festival's program annotator**

Despite its melodramatic trappings, *Fidelio's* story of the power of courageous love to topple a regime based on cruelty and injustice is an archetype that has only gained in urgency since Beethoven introduced the opera he called his "child of sorrow." The walled grimness of its prison setting has remained distressingly relevant, in ways that can still shock us: both as metaphor and literal setting for the condition in which humanity finds itself. Audiences have long drawn on *Fidelio's* moral and emotional capital for sustenance in troubled times.

**Conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler** remarked in Salzburg in 1948, not long after the end of World War II and fall of Nazism:

"The conjugal love of Leonore appears, to the modern individual armed with realism and psychology, irremediably abstract and theoretical.... Now that political events in Germany have restored to the concepts of human dignity and liberty their original significance, this is the opera which, thanks to the music of Beethoven, gives us comfort and courage.... **Certainly, *Fidelio* is not an opera in the sense we are used to, nor is Beethoven a musician for the theater, or a dramaturgist. He is quite a bit more, a whole musician, and beyond that, a saint and a visionary. That which disturbs us is not a material effect, nor the fact of the 'imprisonment'; any film could create the same effect. No, it is the music, it is Beethoven himself. It is this 'nostalgia of liberty' he feels, or better, makes us feel; this is what moves us to tears.** His *Fidelio* has more of the Mass than of the Opera to it; the sentiments it expresses come from the sphere of the sacred, and preach a 'religion of humanity' which we never found so beautiful or necessary as we do today, after all we have lived through. Herein lies the singular power of this unique opera.... Independent of any historical consideration ... the flaming message of *Fidelio* touches deeply.

We realize that for us Europeans, as for all men, this music will always represent an appeal to our conscience. <sup>[3]</sup>

**Leonard Bernstein:** This music speaks in universality of thought, brotherhood, and love. No composer ever lived to speak to so many people. This music succeeds where people and words fail because it makes us fail. In the time of world agony, we love his music and we need it. We cannot listen to the 9<sup>th</sup> symphony without being changed.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZJ1Tgf4JL8&feature=related> – *Ode to Joy* and remembering Beethoven.