

# Achievement in Music Level 12 Exam

August 31, 2021

## Program Notes by Maddy Aquino

**Johann Sebastian Bach, French Suite V in G Major BWV 816: Allemande & Courante** An Allemande is known as the opening piece in a Baroque Suite. In Bach's Allemande from French Suite V, a beautiful melodic line is introduced with a countermelody of running sixteenth notes. There is mainly a soprano and bass line with an occurrence of a middle melody intertwined between the two voices. While an allemande is commonly played with a moderate 2/4 or 4/4 tempo, courantes are often performed with a faster, more upbeat tempo. Another contrast is that a Courante is in triple time. The vivace tempo of Courante, French Suite V is pushed with running notes, contrasted by two voices. Allemande and Courante are two of seven pieces in the Suite V. In total, Sebastian Bach composed six French Suites. Though begun in 1722, French Suite V in G Major, BWV 816 wasn't completed until 1723.

**Ludwig van Beethoven, Sonata in G, Op. 14, No. 2, mvt 1** Beethoven's Sonata in G Major presents multiple themes and patterns through the illusion of simplicity. The beginning presents us with the main subject, with a motif that would be heard throughout the piece, but with different keys and voices. The development modulates from the major key into a minor key as it also has a segment with triplets played with the right hand, and sixteenth notes played with the left. The reposition begins not with its original key in G major, but actually with Bb major. Though there aren't any major contrasts within this movement, Beethoven includes many technical passages, like running thirty-second notes, a wide range of dynamic contrasts, and polyrhythms. Sonata in G Major, movement 1: Allegro, was composed in 1799, one of the early works of Beethoven, dedicated to Baroness von Braun.

**Frédéric Chopin, Scherzo No. 4** Romantic composer, Frederic Chopin, composed four scherzos in his lifetime. The final scherzo, Scherzo no. 4 in E Major, was composed in 1842; it is proudly known for its vibrant and unique brilliance as it embodies the meaning of a scherzo, "vigorous, light, and playful". The 650+ measure piece begins with presenting the main motif in octaves. From simplistic to vivacious, the motif is varied throughout the Scherzo, rhythmically, tonally, and musically. The first section plays around with the definition of a scherzo – there are light and quick moments like the quarter note rising inversions, the eighth notes give a playful feel as it runs around in some segments, and we also have sharp and vigorous passages from the octaves. Barely midway through the Scherzo, Chopin transitions from its fast, technical tempo into a nocturnal-style, lyrical section of the piece. We feel the rise and fall of the bass line, as well as a rise and fall with the beautiful melodic passages. As the lyrical section ends, Chopin adds in a counter melody: a trill that supports the motif that returns once more. The last 100 measures are unexplainable with only words. It not only wraps up the Scherzo itself, but also brings back themes from the previous three scherzos to bring this collection to a close.

**Aaron Copland, The Cat and The Mouse** The Twenty First century repertoire was an age of exploration with music. Many of these pieces had disjunct rhythms, asymmetrical phrases, and non-singable melody lines - all while telling us a story. A prime example is Aaron Copland's piece The Cat and The Mouse, also known as Scherzo Humouristique. This piece brings the life of a cat and a mouse: fast and angular motifs represent the back and forth high-speed chase. Then, a dance-like intermission gives us a breather as the mouse successfully escapes its predator. But we return to their rapid chase, resulting in loud crashing chords which later resolve to a small prideful ending that wraps up the story of The Cat and The Mouse. Aaron Copland is an American composer. Born in 1900, he is well-known for his piano repertoire, as well as various orchestrations and band selections. Some popular pieces include, Hoedown, Appalachian Springs, and of course, The Cat and The Mouse published in 1920