Mp3 Cyberchambermusic - Late-period Beethoven
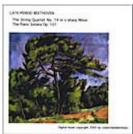
Chamber music without the chamber. 6 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Virtual Orchestra, CLASSICAL: Traditional Details: CYBER MUSIC MIDI AND SAMPLING In order to specify a note, in the scientific sense, four things are needed. First is the pitch. Second the volume or loudness. Third is the length of the note. These three properties are called the MIDI data. The size of the file for the midi data is small, only a few kilobytes. Fourth is the timbre or tone of the note. Technically speaking, this property of the note is the combination of the overtones unique to the instrument. Our ears hear quite different tones when we hear an oboe and a violin even though they may be playing the same note. The file needed to assign timbre to a note is very large indeed. It is measured in megabytes. A SHORT HISTORY OF SAMPLING In the 60's RCA Victor was studying the question of whether an electronic circuit could be made to generate the overtones needed to make a pure sine wave input come out sounding like an oboe. The goal was to synthesize the sounds of the orchestral instruments. Where did this lead? Today we have the electronic piano which can be switched from piano tones to others like violin sounds. The piano is passable but not so the violin. Stradivari it is not. Enter the computer. With the computer and digital signal processing comes a new way to look at the question. The solution is this: use a real oboe. Have an oboist play a note like A-440 and record the sound as a digital WAV file on the computer. When the midi sequence comes to the place where it requires an oboe to play A-440, have the computer play the recorded oboe. Have the oboist play each note in the range of his instrument and record these SAMPLES on the computer. Do this for all the orchestral instruments. Now type the midi data sequence needed to play Beethoven's 5th symphony into the computer and run the sequence through the sampler and - out comes cyber music - a performance produced on the computer. A performance where one person, call him the sequencer, alone is responsible for the tempo, the dynamics, the rubato, the timbre and all the

rest. Literally, one person can perform Beethoven's symphony on the computer. WHY? The disadvantage of a traditional live recording is the reverberation in the concert hall. The sound reaching your ear in the audience comes both from the instrument that made it but also from reflections off the walls and other surfaces. The reflections arrive at your ear late because the path traveled is longer. The resulting sound is muddy, garbled, not clear. Did Beethoven have clear music in his head when he was composing - or reverberations? I think the answer is clear. Complicated pieces (Prokofiev) can never be clearly heard in live performance. Too much is going on all at the same time. PRODUCTION NOTES The music on this CD was produced on the computer. There is no orchestra, no players, no conductor, no concert hall. There is only the sequencer with the composer's score. To hear more cyber music go to download.com/cyberchambermusic. ABOUT THIS CD Beethoven's C-sharp minor quartet goes in five new directions. The piece is very difficult technically to play. Not only because it is in the awkward key of c# minor, but also because the many passages are complex in rhythmic patterns and at the same time sounding note-combinations are strange (and delightful) to the ear. If it is not carefully sorted out, it sounds chaotic - which it surely is not. Beethoven has abandoned the usual sonata-form pattern altogether. For example, passages are almost never repeated. There are only two places in the score where the repeat symbol occurs and it is only for 8 bars and 46 bars. In this work, each passage is a transition into the next. Part 4, for example, has eight clearly defined sections while often a section will have less well-defined subsections. Usually a quartet will have extensive passages where one instrument is playing a solo and the other three are giving accompaniment (the "Harp" quartet is a good example). While that sometimes is the case here, what is in fact typical is that each of the four voices contribute equally to the interest of the passage. Part 1 for example begins with the first violin alone singing a baptizing. He is joined then by the second violin but playing a recognizable version of the first violin's opening statement. Beethoven holds our interest even though only two instruments are playing. Then comes the viola in the same manner and then, right on schedule, the cello. By now Beethoven has left the shore and is boating in deep uncharted waters near the edge of the earth with all four rowing. And he boldly presses on. While all Beethoven's works are unified, the c# minor quartet is a conscious effort to achieve an organic, unified whole. His listener can hear what an inspection of the score reveals; that the piece does not have stand-alone movements in the usual sense but is intended to be heard as a whole, from start to finish without pause. How he achieves this miracle of unity is Beethoven's artistic secret.

However, it may be so because the mood (dream state revelation) and tone (intellectual) are the same throughout. It is clear that the intention here is not like Beethoven's middle-period [the 5th symphony] day-light goal of emotional drama. Rather, the piece is a contemplative late-period [the 9th symphony] moon-light intellectual drama string quartet masterpiece. In summary, the work is complete in the artistic sense. It has wholeness, harmony and radiance. The last passage, while it does climax the work, can also serve as the transition into the first passage. It is a work that lends itself well to cyberchambermusic's computer performance.

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