

3. Beethoven, the Ninth Symphony and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* Using Pre-existing Music in Anime

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In present-day Japan, the music from the seminal television anime *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (*EVA*), which aired in 26 episodes between 1995 and 1996, is just as recognizable and easily encountered in daily life as images from the anime itself. The catchy melodies of the score by Shirō Sagisu are found in unexpected places, heard as background music in furniture stores, as punctuation for Japanese comedy and news broadcasts and spilling out of pachinko parlors to herald the arrival of the latest game machines featuring the anime's characters. Similar to many TV anime today, the budget for *EVA* was tight, and the application of Sagisu's score reflects a certain economy of means where pieces of music are repeated and recycled from episode to episode, getting the maximum practical use out of each track and allowing for less time in the recording studio. This reuse of musical material is valuable because it creates a sense of continuity for the viewer as the series progresses through its weekly episodes. Some characters, primarily women, have musical themes that represent them—think of Misato's jazzy, laid-back flute melody, the Debussyesque harmonic planing of Rei's pensive theme or the rootin'-tootin' country-western music that accompanies Asuka—and battle scenes or scenes of daily life are colored by a handful of specially crafted tracks that capture the essence of those moments.

Given the amount of musical repetition found in *EVA*, scenes where the music deviates from what the viewer expects serve to foreground the music's relationship to the images and the narrative, drawing

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attention to these new connections. This process is what makes the 24th episode of *EVA* so remarkable in its use of only a single musical idea in the entire episode, the fourth movement from Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, colloquially referred to as the "Ode to Joy" after the name of Friedrich Schiller's poem that serves as the textual basis for the movement. *EVA* director Hideaki Anno's choice to select a mode of presentation that would highlight one of the most well-known pieces in the repertoire of Western classical music raises many questions: Why did Anno choose a piece of pre-existing music rather than having his staff composer Shirō Sagisu write something new for that episode? Why did Anno choose Beethoven's Ninth Symphony rather than the Third or the Fifth or a symphony by a different composer? Is there a connection between the Ninth Symphony and the Japanese audience for whom *EVA* was originally intended? How can this meaning-laden combination of music and images be interpreted from an audience-oriented perspective? Before attempting an analysis of the musical, cultural and cinematic elements found in the 24th episode of *EVA*, two levels of groundwork need to be laid: the first placing Beethoven and the Ninth Symphony in the context of modern Japan; and the second defining the interpretive and expressive issues that a director must consider when using a piece of pre-existing music in anime.

Beethoven in Context

Since Beethoven's death in 1827, most people in Europe and North America have possessed a basic familiarity with the composer's primary traits, having learned about him through school music classes, youth orchestra programs, television shows or even feature-length films (Yang 2014). Beethoven's well-known portrait, painted by Joseph Karl Stieler in 1820, captures his demeanor perfectly, depicting a scowling man with unkempt hair wearing a dark suit coat, a crisp white shirt and a red scarf, balancing a writing pen in his hand

poised over the manuscript score of his *Missa Solemnis*. This portrait was Beethoven's personal favorite of the many likenesses produced in his lifetime, and he regularly had prints of it made to distribute to his admirers. Most notable in Stieler's portrayal is the composer's wild hair, which he refused to cover with the tightly curled wigs that were part of formal attire in 18th-century Vienna. This rebellious spirit, found both in his tumultuous life and in his adventurous music, was one of the composer's most admired traits and became the subject of many apocryphal tales. His lack of a wife or children, his failed romance with the mysterious Immortal Beloved and his struggles to conceal his deafness all contributed to Beethoven's image as a suffering artist, a mindset of self-sacrifice reinforced by his famous words from the *Heiligenstadt Testament* of 1802, in which he wrote:

But what a humiliation for me when someone standing next to me heard a flute in the distance and I heard nothing, or someone standing next to me heard a shepherd singing and again I heard nothing. Such incidents drove me almost to despair; a little more of that and I would have ended my life – it was only my art that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me. So I endured this wretched existence . . .
(cited in Fisk & Nichols 1997: 59)

The premiere of the Ninth Symphony on 7 May 1824 in Vienna marked the pinnacle of Beethoven's compositional achievements, containing a utopian vision of hope for mankind. The high point of the symphony was the fourth movement, a massive setting of Schiller's popular ode *An die Freude*—with a few textual additions by Beethoven himself—composed for an expanded orchestra with a full chorus and four vocal soloists. Adding words to the instrumental genre of the symphony was a new idea that came as a revelation to audiences at the premiere, and Schiller's text about brotherhood and human achievement was an ideal choice that resonated strongly with the citizens of Vienna in the decade following the Napoleonic Wars.

Beethoven's legacy was transformed during the Romantic era, elevating him to the position of the ultimate creative master whose utter devotion to his art was to be emulated by anyone claiming to be an artist themselves. His superhuman persona was furthered by numerous biographical recountings of his life—some more reliable than others—that appealed to a broad general public, most notably Alexander Wheelock Thayer's *Life of Beethoven*, a multi-volume set written in the 1860s and 1870s, and later Romain Rolland's *Beethoven the Creator* from 1903. This god-like image of Beethoven was introduced to Japan during the period of rapid modernization that characterized the early Meiji era, when Japanese leaders invited European and American experts into the country to overhaul many aspects of Japanese life and society (Wade 2014). As part of this push to modernize, prominent German music professors were installed in newly founded music universities, where they imparted an immense respect for German music to their Japanese students—a respect that remains today (Galliano 2002: 40–42). At the primary level, Japanese compulsory education for children was modified to mirror Western pedagogical models. Music became a required subject nationwide and didactic school singing books were created that included pieces drawn from a variety of sources, containing mostly European and American traditional music and themes from masterpieces of Western classical music that were fitted with newly written Japanese lyrics, as well as a handful of Japanese folk melodies set to a tonal harmonic accompaniment, all designed to expose Japanese children to the sound of Western classical music from an early age (Eppstein 1994). Modern versions of these singing books continue to form the cornerstone of Japanese musical education today, with the “Ode to Joy” still featuring prominently among the hand-picked repertoire.

Of all the Western classical composers, Beethoven is treated with a special reverence in Japan, largely due to the national phenomenon of listening to and performing the Ninth Symphony (Jp. *Daiku*) as part of the celebratory period leading up to the New Year. This music,

especially the “Ode to Joy” movement, has become deeply intertwined with notions of self-betterment connected to the New Year, which in Japan is traditionally considered to be an important time of rebirth and renewal spent with close family and friends. Speaking to the *New York Times*, Naoyuki Miura, long-time Artistic Director of the New York-based association Music from Japan, explained: “For Japanese, listening to Beethoven’s Ninth at the end of the year is a semi-religious experience. People feel they have not completed the year spiritually until they hear it” (cited in Weisman 1990: 13). Miura is definitely excessive in his description, but it is true that the “Ode to Joy” serves as an important aural marker of the holiday season, similar to the role of Christmas songs heard in many Western countries. The *Daiku* is broadcast on television and radio shows, while the “Ode to Joy” accompanies commercials, sounds through the speaker systems in public areas, and plays in shopping malls, convenience stores and supermarkets, making for a pervasive presentation that continually reminds listeners of the imminent arrival of the New Year, with its themes of rejuvenation and personal transformation.

One particularly unique feature of Japan’s New Year season is the tradition of amateur choirs giving performances of the *Daiku* during the month of December, a group activity that has been well documented in the works of Kerry Candaele (2013), Eddie Chang (2007, 2009) and Michel Wasserman (2006). Although concerts featuring the Ninth Symphony can be confirmed as having been held in Japan as far back as World War I, its current form as an end-of-year staple originated primarily in the 1980s, a time of affluence in Japan due to the bubble economy when many professional orchestras, community music groups and state-of-the-art concert halls were founded. The *Daiku* can be performed year round, but the vast majority of concerts occur during the last two weeks of December, with the frequency of performances numbering well into the hundreds across the country. Concert halls nationwide are booked solid for these events, and venues in large cities may host as many as four per

day, each given by a different ensemble. Certain *Daiku* concerts are especially famous for their larger-than-life presentation, particularly the Suntory *Daiku* in Osaka, which boasts a chorus of a staggering 10,000 members, and the slightly smaller Sumida Ward *Daiku* in Tokyo, with an impressive 5,000 singers. *Daiku* concerts are usually spectacular affairs organized by large corporations, local governments or amateur choral groups, who frequently join forces to share the expenses of renting a hall and hiring a professional orchestra and soloists. Choir members are predominantly non-professional volunteers who come from a wide range of ages and socio-economic backgrounds, making the complement of the Japanese *Daiku* quite different from the Ninth Symphony, which is a piece reserved for professionals in the Western performance context. Choristers choose to participate in *Daiku* concerts for many different reasons, but there are two overarching ideas that serve as their primary motivation. First, singers perceive a close connection between Schiller's jubilant lyrics and the festive celebrations of the approaching holiday, heightening the joyful atmosphere of the New Year season. Second, chorus members feel that singing Beethoven, who overcame substantial personal struggles to write enduring masterpieces, will give them the inner strength to overcome their own troubles in the coming year. Learning the difficult music and memorizing the complicated German text is seen as a short-term challenge that the choristers conquer together by encouraging and supporting one another, believing that withstanding these difficulties and working as a team will be a catalyst for success in their future goals. As choir director Yutaka Tomizawa told *The Japan Times*:

Of course there are many choral works we could do . . . But there's nothing like the Ninth. It seems impossible for amateurs to sing, but Beethoven casts a spell on you. Many start off thinking, 'I can't do this,' but then other members urge them to try harder, and working together they get it done. The feeling of accomplishment is sublime. (cited in Brasor 2010: n.p.)

It is this fighting spirit that *Daiku* singers want to channel into their own activities, drawing on Beethoven's example to overcome hardships in both the musical arena and in their personal lives.

In Japan, the "Ode to Joy" carries a strong aural reminder of the festive end-of-year celebrations, but also evokes themes of personal rejuvenation connected to the New Year and serves as an anthem to hard work, dedication to self-betterment and achieving success by relying on the mutual support of others who are also struggling in their own way. Modern Japanese are definitely familiar with the formidable image of Beethoven and the Ninth Symphony present in the Western historical context, but they also think of Beethoven in a more personal, intimate way as a composer whose music they sang from their school songbooks with their classmates and whose admirable ability to surmount his individual hardships can provide inspiration for overcoming the trials of daily life.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Pre-existing Music

There is no doubt that the musical score of an anime exerts a powerful influence on the images and narrative, forming an integral part of the viewer's experience. This impression is heightened when directors choose to include a piece of pre-existing music as part of the score, creating a wide variety of interpretive and expressive perspectives that must be considered carefully in relation to how the music is understood by the viewer. Claudia Gorbman describes the use of pre-existing music in Western film as the director's attempt to create "a point of experience for the spectator" (1987: 2), a cinematic moment that is memorable, unique and imbued with powerful expressive meaning. The ways in which pre-existing music can influence a scene are greatly dependent on factors stemming from the viewpoint of both the director and the viewer, inspiring many possible interpretations in the complex counterpoint between music and image. Gorbman has outlined three distinct ways in which music functions to create meaning

in film, methods that can also be applied to anime (1987: 13). First, meaning is generated through purely musical codes, the vocabulary and syntax of musical discourse. These include tonality, tempo, key, meter, structure, form, orchestration and other elements. At the risk of oversimplifying, is the music fast or slow, loud or soft, happy or sad, elaborate or simple, and how do these elements interact with what appears on the screen? These components can be observed and analyzed directly from the printed score, but are most often acquired through direct listening in the case of anime because the original scores are not available in archives or commercially. Second, meaning can come from recognizing cultural musical codes, which stem from the viewer's reactions to the music based on their own particular cultural conventions (Anderson 2016). Viewers understand what types of music are appropriate or inappropriate for certain settings, know which music represents high-class or low-class values, can identify music that represents other time periods or a stereotyped view of another culture or social group and so on. Third, meaning comes from cinematic musical codes that govern the interaction between music and image based on the conventions of visual media. For example, music is impacted by techniques of sound editing and image editing, the necessity to prioritize the dialogue, the manner in which the position of the sound source is understood spatially and many other factors. These three forms of meaning-making work together to influence the viewer's interpretation of anime's music, images and narrative.

When pre-existing music appears in anime, it almost always exists alongside the images as an equal, not as a subordinate in the manner of the original score. This comment is not meant to belittle the role of the original score in the experience of watching anime, but to convey that original scores are often treated as a secondary form of expression working in the background to support the images, what Gorbman refers to as the "bath of affect" that "lessens the awareness of the frame; it relaxes the censor, drawing the spectator further into

the fantasy-illusion suggested by filmic narration . . . a catalyst in the suspension of judgement” (1987: 6). In contrast, using pre-existing music is a way of foregrounding a particular piece and its contribution to the narrative, giving both pre-existing music and the original score important, but different, roles in anime. These roles are distinct from music’s position as diegetic or non-diegetic sound, offering the director a wide variety of ways to position music in relation to the images to create many types of expressive meaning. Pre-existing music functions actively as part of the storytelling mechanism, rather than as an inconspicuous assistant, because every piece carries a host of extramusical associations from the life, history and culture of the piece outside the anime that impose a meaning on the images. These extramusical associations are inescapable, but also imperative to the director’s artistic vision. As Royal S. Brown wrote:

. . . [T]he excerpts of classical music compositions that replace the original film score no longer function purely as a backing for key emotional situations, but rather exist as a kind of parallel emotional/aesthetic universe . . . [T]he affect . . . tends to remain within the music itself, which sheds its traditional invisibility rather than being transferred onto a given diegetic situation to which it is subordinated. Put another way, the music, rather than supporting and/or coloring the visual images and narrative situations, stands as an image in its own right, helping the audience read the film’s other images as such rather than as a replacement for or imitation of objective reality. (1994: 239–240)

Here, Brown is writing specifically about the use of Western classical music in Western film, but his ideas can easily be applied to all genres of music in any visual media, anime included. Using a pre-existing piece puts the music in the expressive foreground, showing off the referential aspects of the piece and allowing viewers to compare the life of the music from outside the anime with its role inside the anime, hopefully leading the viewer to understand why the director chose that particular piece in the first place. Adding to the opinions of Brown, Jonathan Godsall wrote:

By comparing (our conception of) what the quoted text [pre-existing music] *is*, and what it *means*, *outside* of the film, with the form and placement of the quotation *within* the film, we can come to an understanding of the latter's purpose and effect . . . the *referentiality* of the music within the film is central to the deployment and interpretation of pre-existing music in the cinema. (2019: 92; emphasis in the original)

There are many reasons an anime director might choose to use pre-existing music in an anime. To give a few examples: if the piece is in the public domain in Japan, then it might be inexpensive or even free to use; the music can evoke ideas of culture or class that give a sense of authenticity to the anime world; the music can give an impression of a character's personality; or perhaps the director feels that pre-existing music is less risky because it is a fixed entity that he or she can control rather than depending on the whims of a composer who may not 'get' the director's artistic vision. A director also chooses pre-existing music based on the way the piece conveys meaning when removed from its original musical context and is given a new context in the anime. For example, in the concert setting, the "Ode to Joy" movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is understood in the context of the musical material that came before it as the culmination of the three preceding movements. But when the "Ode to Joy" is excerpted from the symphony and placed into an anime, it now stands alone and works as a discrete entity. Again, turning to Claudia Gorbman:

What all these set-pieces have in common is not any one function of music, or its narrative status as diegetic or nondiegetic, or its historical provenance or form. Rather, once heard they are all choices that seem ineluctable, at once wittily detached and emotionally appropriate and poignant. Welding themselves to visual rhythms onscreen, they become the music of the specific movie scene rather than the piece one may have known before. (2006: 4)

Every viewer carries with them a unique, highly personal set of extramusical associations about pieces of pre-existing music that are expanded when the viewer experiences that music in the new context

of the anime, adding to their overall image of the piece itself. The director takes on a substantial responsibility when using these works because the piece will be changed forever in the mind of the viewer through these new associations. For example, the 15th episode of *EVA* includes a scene where the main character Shinji Ikari plays the cello, performing the opening of the “Prelude” movement from J. S. Bach’s *Cello Suite #1 in G major*, BWV 1007. Some Japanese viewers reported that they had been unfamiliar with the First Cello Suite and had heard it for the first time in that particular scene, inspiring them to find out more about Bach’s music based on their positive impressions of the piece. For those viewers, Bach’s First Cello Suite became indelibly linked to *EVA* as its primary context and the piece’s role in music history was secondary, whereas the interpretation would be the opposite for a musician who was already familiar with the First Cello Suite and its existing 300-year history.

The various levels of knowledge brought by the viewer to the experience of hearing a piece of pre-existing music in an anime creates an artistic risk a director must face, since there is no guarantee that the viewer’s interpretation will be the same from person to person given the wide range of historical and cultural associations available. Technically, it is not necessary for the viewer to recognize the piece at all, since they can still enjoy the music under the assumption that it is part of the original score, but this situation is clearly not what the director desires. Most risky for the director’s artistic vision are personal associations. Perhaps this particular piece of pre-existing music played when the viewer walked down the aisle on their wedding day or was on the radio when their boyfriend broke up with them, coloring their viewpoint in a way the director could not have imagined or controlled. Conversely, the viewer recognizes that a film is not made by chance, but through intentional acts, meaning that they are also guessing about the director’s intent (Godsall 2019: 70–82). Foregrounding the music by using a pre-existing piece signals to the viewer that the director is trying to communicate a meaningful

relationship between the music and images, but the message itself may seem ambiguous unless the director has provided an interpretation publicly, which they rarely do.

Including pre-existing music in an anime can be a blessing and a curse given the many factors influencing the viewer's interpretation. This inherent unpredictability makes *EVA* director Hideaki Anno's use of the "Ode to Joy" especially notable because he was able to assume that Japanese viewers would possess a fairly similar set of historical, cultural and personal associations for this particular piece, an uncommon situation when interacting with a wide range of audience members possessing many different life experiences. By using such ubiquitously understood music, Anno could be reasonably confident that viewers would recognize the artistic message he was trying to convey, taking advantage of a clear line of musical communication that is rare in anime or any type of visual media.

Scene Analyses

As mentioned previously, the musical underscore for the 24th episode of *EVA* is made up entirely of portions of the fourth movement from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Long segments of the episode contain no music at all, drawing attention to three specific scenes where the "Ode to Joy" is heard, and the episode contains none of Sagisu's original score, temporarily abandoning the music to which the viewer has become accustomed and highlighting the "Ode to Joy" as a key component of interpreting the visual and narrative events. The "Ode to Joy" theme is used to represent the character Kaworu Nagisa, who makes his first appearance in this episode, and to signal his great importance to the story. It is extremely uncommon for a major character to be introduced at the very end of an anime series, but the utopian vision of the "Ode to Joy" combined with Japan's seasonal ideas of personal renewal and the collaborative tradition of the *Daiku*, communicate to the viewer that Kaworu will have substantial impact

on the world of *EVA* despite his last-minute arrival. This momentous relationship between character and music necessitates a close reading of each scene with its musical context in mind.

Encounter at the Crater Lake

Kaworu is introduced in this scene, which opens with the main character Shinji standing at the edge of a huge lake formed in a bomb crater. Shinji gazes over the lake with his back to the viewer as we hear a voice-over of his thoughts in which he expresses his anguish that there is no one in his life that he can consider a friend. The burning light of the setting sun directly behind his head emphasizes the intensity of his mental pain. His anxiety rises, but the sound of someone humming the “Ode to Joy” theme breaks his train of thought. The melody sneaks into the scene so that the beginning of the tune is not audible, giving the impression that Shinji was so wrapped up in his self-torment that he did not immediately notice when his unknown companion started humming. Since the tune is so well-known, viewers can recognize it easily even though they are not hearing it from the beginning. Following the tradition of *Daiku* singing where the “Ode to Joy” is an uplifting collaborative music meant to be performed with the help of others, used in combination with this aural reminder of Schiller’s text concerning brotherhood and mutual support, this theme provides a clue that the unidentified singer might be the solution to Shinji’s loneliness and be able to renew his spirit. Shinji and Kaworu are the only two characters shown making music in *EVA*, so this special skill immediately forges a unique connection between them in the mind of the viewer and suggests that they would be a good match as friends.

Shinji looks to his left to find the source of the sound and sees Kaworu seated on a tall piece of concrete rubble staring out over the water. He finishes humming the first part of the “Ode to Joy” theme before acknowledging Shinji, establishing a firm link between

the character and Beethoven's famous tune. Kaworu finally speaks while continuing to look out over the lake. "Singing is good," he says, "It brings joy and revitalizes the soul. I think that song is the greatest achievement of Lilim [human] culture." This statement shows Kaworu's recognition of the prominent position of the "Ode to Joy" worldwide as a message of brotherhood and compassion, as well as calling on the seasonally inspired idea that performances of this piece serve to promote personal rejuvenation. Kaworu, who is actually an enemy creature called an Angel created to mimic humans, seeks to experience feelings of intimacy that he has never encountered among his own species by using the "Ode to Joy" to communicate his wish for meaningful companionship.

Suddenly, the image shifts to Shinji's viewpoint as Kaworu turns toward the camera, showing his face for the first time, and asks, "Don't you agree, Ikari Shinji?" Kaworu is waiting for Shinji's opinion on his assessment of the "Ode to Joy" as the greatest human achievement, but as Kaworu stares into the camera, he seems to be speaking to the viewer. This is the first of a number of examples in this episode in which Kaworu appears to recognize the world outside the anime, as if he is asking the viewers themselves, not just Shinji, whether the act of singing or the music known as the "Ode to Joy" are powerful forces in their own lives.

Kaworu and Shinji continue to talk as the camera pulls back to show the entire setting, with Kaworu perched on the tall concrete block on the left-hand side of the screen, towering over Shinji on the right-hand side, and the reflection of the red setting sun in the lake making a sort of visual barrier between them. Kaworu's physical position above Shinji, the fact that he knew Shinji's name when Shinji did not know his and Kaworu's easy confidence in the face of Shinji's crippling self-doubt puts Kaworu in a position of superiority. Musically, this superiority had already been established from the opening of the scene based on the type of music associated with each of the two boys. Although Shinji has been presented as weak

and lacking confidence, his ability to play the cello as demonstrated in the 15th episode endears him to the viewer by revealing that he is capable of feeling personal satisfaction and emotional depth. On the other hand, by selecting the “Prelude” from Bach’s First Cello Suite, an unaccompanied solo piece for a single player, Shinji can make music while avoiding any interaction with other musicians, embracing a kind of self-imposed isolation that is inclined to be viewed as suspect in Japan, where joining in group activities has long been thought of as necessary for good mental health and social acceptance. Conversely, Kaworu has opted for the “Ode to Joy,” the performance of which requires a large chorus and orchestra to perform and which promotes collaboration and a sense of community, traits that draw attention to Kaworu’s seemingly better-adjusted worldview. Bach and Beethoven are both composers who are strongly connected to the idea of the power of the human spirit: Bach as a man working in the service of God who accepted that his music had to conform to certain artistic parameters to fulfill his role as a musical servant—much like Shinji obediently following the orders of the adults to save humanity; and Beethoven as a man working in the service of his own artistic ideals who refused to accept the limitations of the musical status quo—similar to Kaworu’s decision to reject his destiny as humanity’s destroyer later in the episode. In today’s world, a genius rebel is generally preferred to a brilliant conformist, elevating the independent, confident Kaworu with his Beethovenian spirit over the compliant, Bachian Shinji.

Waiting in the Wings

Shinji’s next encounter with Kaworu and the “Ode to Joy” comes later in the episode as he waits for Kaworu to finish his Eva robot pilot training at the NERV military headquarters. The first shot in the scene is an extreme close-up of Shinji’s left ear with a small, black earbud headphone inside. Although Shinji’s face is not visible, he

has been shown using his black headphones to listen to music on his SDAT cassette player frequently throughout the series, making him easy to recognize here. The close-up image of his ear and headphone emphasizes the act of listening, encouraging the viewer to take notice of the music. In earlier episodes, Shinji's choice of listening material has been barely audible to the viewer, consisting of peppy, upbeat Japanese pop songs engineered to sound thin and dull as if his headphones were the sound source and the viewer is hearing the music from the outside. Since Shinji's preference for popular music has been established in numerous scenes, this moment in the 24th episode comes as a surprise because the sound coming from his headphones is not pop music, but a recording of an orchestra performing the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The sound is only audible for about one and a half seconds, just long enough for the violins to play a mere seven notes of the "Ode to Joy" theme, but the excerpt is perfectly cut to include a portion of the theme that the viewer can recognize immediately even in the incredibly short time frame. Shinji opting to replace his usual Japanese pop tunes with the "Ode to Joy" is significant because it is a clear sign of Kaworu's developing influence over him. It is the first time in the anime that Shinji has taken an active interest in getting to know another person and he has sought out a cassette recording of the Ninth Symphony as a way of learning more about Kaworu, showing that Shinji is not as closed off to the possibility of human relationships as he may claim. Following the ideas of collaborative *Daiku* singing and seasonal rebirth, this scene contains the second musical suggestion that these two boys might be able to sustain and encourage each other as friends.

Kaworu emerges from behind a set of formidable-looking steel doors and enters the long, grey corridor where Shinji is waiting. Shinji was listening to "Ode to Joy" with his head down, as if concentrating carefully on the music, but now he looks up and removes the headphones from his ears, blushing as Kaworu greets him. The camera momentarily adopts Shinji's point of view, again giving the impression

that Kaworu is speaking directly to the viewer, as he asks if Shinji was waiting for him. As Kaworu and Shinji chat, the “Ode to Joy” continues to stream unobtrusively out of Shinji’s headphones, accompanying their awkward conversation with music representing personal renewal and the power of working together for mutual support. Initially, this musical passage, which is excerpted from the opening orchestral material of the fourth movement, is played only by the strings with the “Ode to Joy” theme in the violins, making for a purposefully understated section that remains quietly under the dialogue and hints at their budding friendship. But when Kaworu suggests that they go to the facility’s large communal bath together so that they can continue talking, the wind and brass sections join the strings, taking over the “Ode to Joy” theme with a triumphal, soaring quality that reveals Shinji’s sense of elation that Kaworu wants to spend time with him. Even though the music is limited in volume and emotional impact by being restricted to Shinji’s headphones as the sound source, hearing the instruments of the orchestra come together in the “Ode to Joy” theme offers up a genuine hope that Kaworu and Shinji can come together as companions.

The Final Battle

Ultimately, Kaworu reveals his true identity as the enemy Angel that Shinji will have to destroy to save humanity, crushing any hope of their developing friendship. The entire final battle scene between the two boys is accompanied by the fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony in the role of the non-diegetic underscore, serving as the climax of an orchestrational crescendo that has mirrored the narrative pacing of the episode: Kaworu’s simple diegetic solo humming of the “Ode to Joy” marked his first meeting with Shinji, after which the piece grew within the diegetic realm to include an orchestra emanating from Shinji’s headphones, and finally moved into the non-diegetic realm, using a full recording of the symphony with both orchestra and

chorus in the final battle to save humanity. The events of the battle are not specifically timed to match the music, nor has the music endured any substantial cuts or adjustments to fit the images, but there are certain points where the two elements are carefully synchronized to great narrative effect.

The full orchestra sounds the “Ode to Joy” theme as Kaworu lowers his mental protective shield and allows the humans’ defensive sensors to identify him as an enemy, triggering an extended series of quick cuts showing the flurry of intense activity in the NERV military headquarters as the humans rush to protect themselves. This musical statement is harmonically stable, a somewhat strange match for the chaotic images, but the tension of the scene aligns with the music as the piece begins to modulate to other keys, creating a sense of harmonic instability. The moment when Kaworu passes through an important defensive checkpoint has been timed to correspond with a highly dissonant chord that represents artistic chaos, displaying the true horror of his seemingly effortless progress through the supposedly impenetrable military structure.

Thus far, the underscore has only included instruments, but Shinji’s arrival on the scene in his Eva robot is accompanied by the singers, marking Shinji as the spokesman for humanity. The solo baritone, singing alone, sounds his declamatory lines “O Freunde, nicht diese Töne! Sondern lasst uns angenehmere anstimmen und freudenvollere” (Oh friends, not these tones! Rather let us sing more cheerful and more joyful ones), as we see Kaworu descending through the NERV military headquarters and witness Shinji, alone inside his Eva robot, screaming angrily at Kaworu, “You betrayed me and hurt my feelings . . . just like my father did!” Both the solo baritone and Shinji are attempting to cope with the musical and emotional uncertainty they are experiencing, but the baritone will be able to rely on the help of the orchestra, chorus and other soloists, while Shinji has no one to aid him during his struggle and is forced to endure his internal turmoil alone.

The baritone sings the lyrical “Ode to Joy” theme and its famous text “Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium . . .” (Joy, beautiful divine spark, Daughter of Elysium . . .) as Shinji and Kaworu come face to face and engage in combat, recalling moments from earlier in the episode when this melody was a symbol of their developing friendship. Various scenes unfold during which the humans plan to self-destruct the NERV military headquarters and Kaworu rhapsodizes about fate, all taking place as the “Ode to Joy” theme continues to develop in the orchestra and chorus with a text about brotherhood and utopian ideals. There is another convergence of music and image as Kaworu unlocks the final defense system to open “Heaven’s Door” and enters the underground chamber where he can destroy humanity. The timing of this event coincides with the chorus and orchestra as they rise to a fever pitch for a huge fortissimo arrival on a massive fermata with the text “vor Gott!” (before God!), a fitting prelude to Kaworu’s encounter with the Angel Lilith in the underground chamber, a god-like creature that will determine humanity’s final judgement.

Beethoven’s score has remained intact so far, but now a large cut skips over the stylized Turkish march to a choral statement of the “Ode to Joy” found later in the movement accompanied by regal triplet figures in the strings. This triumphant music accompanies the progression of the next scene as Shinji intensifies his attacks and Kaworu questions the Angel Lilith about the future of humanity. The musical arrival at Beethoven’s ponderous *Andante maestoso* section—scored for men’s voices, trombones and low strings—corresponds with Shinji using his Eva robot to smash his way into the underground chamber, after which he approaches Kaworu menacingly and grabs him with the robot’s massive armored hand. Trombones were an uncommon instrument for use in the symphony in Beethoven’s era, but they were a mainstay of the opera world as the harbingers of the underworld and the presence of death, a role Beethoven calls on here. The text concerns “Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt” (This kiss for the whole world), the idea that a loving God will provide salvation to all mankind,

but the sound of the trombones serves as a reminder that a cold death awaits anyone who does not receive this blessing. The trombones and their ominous underworld sounds pervade this entire scene, during which Kaworu rejects his destiny and begs Shinji to kill him to save humanity, making Kaworu's death an event that is foretold in the orchestra long before it takes place on screen.

Finally, this extended battle scene reaches one of the most exceptional moments in anime history, a still shot lasting an entire minute in duration that pauses the images at the most climactic point in the action. We see a single shot of Shinji's Eva robot clutching the tiny body of Kaworu in its hand as the *Andante maestoso* section continues to play, forcing the viewer to focus their full attention on what they are hearing and engage with this musical commentary on the events of the narrative. This particular moment in the *Andante maestoso* contains a textual assurance of the existence of a kind, forgiving God, with choral passages that are hymn-like and reflective sung in stately dotted rhythms over insistent, shimmering figures in the strings in their upper register, reminiscent of the glimmering canopy of stars mentioned in Schiller's poem. It is a spellbinding moment in the symphony, with rich harmonies and brilliant orchestration that comprises some of Beethoven's most beautiful music. But this passage is not the most famous music from the Ninth Symphony and is likely not a section that most viewers recognize, so why is it used to underscore this pivotal scene?

Imagine how this scene might be interpreted if it was instead underscored by the bombastic finale section from the end of the movement, where Beethoven pounds away enthusiastically on the tonic chord for an unmistakably jubilant finish. By the final measures of the symphony, everything has reached its logical conclusion musically: all the themes have been developed properly, dissonances are revolved, harmonies are stabilized and returned to the tonic key and everything is predictably orderly. This well-ordered closing material makes a wonderfully satisfying end to the musical journey of the Ninth Symphony,

but highlighting such tidied-up music during the still shot would shift the focus away from the psychology of the main character to the abstract idea of ‘winning,’ retreating into the anime genre’s well-worn story of an insecure boy who pilots his giant robot to victory with the help of some cute girls and crazy classmates. These types of conventional anime tropes are what the *EVA* series has actively tried to subvert, meaning that such an ending would go against the overall thrust of the series and render the controversial 25th and 26th episodes, during which Shinji finds forgiveness and accepts the love and support of his friends and family, completely unnecessary.

Instead, the viewer is presented with Beethoven’s deeply introspective, religious-sounding music to foster a meditation on the profound events that have taken place in the series. The focus is on the internal: loss, acceptance, grief, forgiveness and all of the other complex emotions *EVA* has explored. The viewer is asked to consider what is tragic and personally life-changing for Shinji and the other characters, who have endured very real struggles in their lives, much like Beethoven did. We share the full depth of Shinji’s last private, intimate moment with his first true friend and realize how hard-earned mankind’s salvation from the Angels really is in terms of the personal costs to the survivors. Beethoven’s *Andante maestoso* is a glorious requiem to the living and dead that offers the viewer the opportunity to contemplate the many emotions generated in this series by means of the powerful musical underscore, an experience that is far more meaningful to the human spirit than reveling in a clichéd act of winning.

Conclusion

Kaworu’s connection to the “Ode to Joy” from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony clearly has a substantial impact on the scope and interpretation of *EVA*. Of course, the profound music of the *Andante maestoso* that accompanies the culminating still-shot scene also serves as a requiem for Kaworu, honoring his choice to sacrifice

his life for humanity in Beethovenian defiance of his destiny to be mankind's destroyer. At the moment Shinji makes the choice to kill his friend, the still shot suddenly cuts to a black screen and the music stops jarringly mid-measure, revealing Kaworu's fate to the viewer before witnessing his decapitated head splashing into the liquid covering the floor of the underground chamber where the final battle took place.

To return briefly to an idea mentioned earlier, Kaworu often seems to be aware of the viewer, and his manipulation of the "Ode to Joy" is part of this perception. As a music maker, Kaworu has the ability to communicate ideas and emotions that cannot be expressed in words or images, allowing him to transcend the borders of the narrative and reach the viewer in a uniquely powerful way. When Kaworu is introduced in the crater lake scene, he manipulates the division between the viewer's world and the narrative world by addressing the camera directly when it assumes Shinji's point of view, appearing to ask the viewer if they agree that the "Ode to Joy" is the greatest human creation. Later in the NERV military headquarters, Kaworu appears to address the viewer again when asking if Shinji was waiting for him and does the same a third time in the final battle scene, looking directly into the camera to make important philosophical statements about the nature of human life and to tell Shinji that knowing him has made his life meaningful.

Kaworu has been given the privilege of speaking directly to the viewer and, in doing so, has been granted a seemingly directorial power to manipulate the border between the narrative world and the viewer's world. He can also traverse the diegetic and non-diegetic musical realms, enacting a process of musical replacement to express the intensity of his search for companionship. When Shinji is shown listening to the "Ode to Joy" on his headphones, it is possible to interpret this act as something willed by Kaworu, who has used his directorial ability to control the music to which Shinji listens. Kaworu does not comment on hearing his favorite piece streaming out of

Shinji's headphones, as if he already knew what Shinji was listening to because he had chosen the music himself.

A similar form of musical replacement occurs in the final battle, where Sagisu's original score, with its tried-and-true battle music heard in almost every previous episode, is completely absent because Kaworu has crossed the boundary between musical realms and replaced the non-diegetic music of the viewer with his beloved "Ode to Joy," essentially dictating his own requiem. The *Andante maestoso* takes on a fascinating character when understood as the music selected by Kaworu for his own death, resulting in a quiet, reflective end, rather than a heroic finale. Finally, connecting Kaworu to the "Ode to Joy" allows him to spread his Beethovenian spirit widely inside and outside the *EVA* world. Like Beethoven himself, whose life and death empowered the next generation of composers to write music inspired by their personal convictions rather than societal expectations, Kaworu's death passes the Beethovenian torch to Shinji and to the viewer, asserting the seasonally driven, *Daiku*-inspired message to stay true to your beliefs and find people to support you in your struggles on your path to rejuvenation.

The decision to accompany the 24th episode of *EVA* with a single piece of music is certainly a unique, one-of-a-kind phenomenon in anime, but the use of Western classical music itself is a common technique employed regularly by anime directors. A wide range of Western classical pieces appear in anime, spanning a range of almost 300 years from the Baroque masters Antonio Vivaldi and J. S. Bach, to the stark modernism of Dmitri Shostakovich in the 20th century. Naturally, the viewer expects to hear a wide variety of music drawn from this repertoire in anime about music schools and conservatories—*Nodame Cantabile*, *Hibike! Euphonium*, *Your Lie in April*, *Kids on the Slope*—or in anime concerning ballet or ice skating—*Princess Tutu*, *Yuri on Ice*—where the presence of Western classical music forms are an important part of authenticating the diegetic sound-world of the narrative, but this music is also heard in many genres of

anime (even pornographic anime!) that are not related specifically to music in any way. The “Ode to Joy,” for instance, features prominently as an important expressive element in *Psycho-Pass*, *Tokyo Godfathers* and *Gunslinger Girls*, to name a few of the more notable anime from the many available examples. Anime directors often elect to use pieces of pre-existing music in their works, drawing from Western classical music, jazz, pop, rock, religious pieces and folk music just as often as they choose pieces from Japanese folk, traditional and popular music sources. The decision to use pre-existing music in anime is a meaningful act that necessitates special attention to the director’s artistic intent. By making use of the extramusical associations connected to the life, history and culture of the piece outside of the anime, the director can impose a multilayered meaning rich with complexity on the images and the narrative that adds powerfully to the viewer’s experience, enriching the art that is anime and the viewer’s interpretation of it.

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