Egmont Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)
Arranged by David Marlatt

Instrumentation:
- Piccolo - 1
- Flute 1 - 4
- Flute 2 - 4
- Oboe 1 - 1
- Oboe 2 - 1
- Bb Clarinet 1 - 4
- Bb Clarinet 2 - 4
- Bb Clarinet 3 - 4
- Eb Alto Clarinet - 1
- Bb Bass Clarinet - 1
- Bassoon 1 - 1
- Bassoon 2 - 1
- Eb Alto Saxophone 1 - 2
- Eb Alto Saxophone 2 - 2
- Bb Tenor Saxophone - 1
- Eb Baritone Saxophone - 1
  - Bb Cornet 1 - 2
  - Bb Cornet 2 - 2
  - Bb Cornet 3 - 2
  - Bb Trumpet 1,2 - 2
- F Horn 1,2 - 2
- F Horn 3,4 - 2
- Trombone 1 - 2
- Trombone 2 - 2
- Trombone 3 - 2
- Baritone Bass Clef - 1
- Baritone Treble Clef - 1
- Tuba - 4
- Timpani - 1
Egmont is a stirring dramatization of a quintessentially romantic subject: a heroic individual's fatal struggle against injustice. Beethoven composed incidental music to the play (something like a modern film score) in 1809. The overture, rather than merely introducing themes from the later music, recapitulates the plot of the drama. Egmont, a sixteenth-century Flemish nobleman and devout Catholic, protested the cruel persecution of the Protestants of his country by their Spanish rulers. The Spanish Duke of Alba accused him of treason, denied him a fair trial, and had him publicly beheaded. The Flemish people's response to this outrage led to open rebellion and their eventual freedom from the Spanish yoke.

After an opening unison F, the overture introduces a menacing F-minor sarabande rhythm (a slow dance originating in sixteenth-century Spain) that represents the Spanish oppressors. The answering theme in the winds is associated with the spirit of the Flemish people, as well as with Egmont's true love. These two themes battle throughout the piece—until Egmont's life comes to its abrupt end when he is beheaded by the violins. The end of Egmont's life is not the end of the story, though, and the overture concludes with a stirring hymn to the eventual triumph of liberty.
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Op. 84

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EGMONT OVERTURE pg. 7
EGMONT OVERTURE pg. 13
EGMONT OVERTURE pg. 17

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