

Beethoven premiered the Ninth Symphony on 7 May 1824 in the Theater am Kärntnertor in Vienna. This was Beethoven's first onstage appearance since 1812 and the hall was packed with an eager and curious audience with a number of noted musicians and figures in Vienna including Franz Schubert, Carl Czerny, and the Austrian chancellor Klemens von Metternich.

The premiere of the Ninth Symphony involved an orchestra nearly twice as large as usual and required the combined efforts of the Kärntnertor house orchestra, the Vienna Music Society (Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde), and a select group of capable amateurs. While no complete list of premiere performers exists, many of Vienna's most elite performers are known to have participated.

Although the performance was officially conducted by Michael Umlauf, the theatre's Kapellmeister, Beethoven shared the stage with him. However, two years earlier, Umlauf had watched the composer's attempt to conduct a dress rehearsal for a revision of his opera Fidelio end in disaster. For the Ninth's premiere, he instructed the singers and musicians to ignore the almost completely deaf Beethoven. At the beginning of every part, Beethoven, who sat by the stage, gave the tempos. He was turning the pages of his score and beating time for an orchestra he could not hear.

There are a number of anecdotes concerning the premiere of the Ninth. Based on the testimony of some of the participants, there are suggestions that the symphony was under-rehearsed (there were only two complete rehearsals) and somewhat uneven in execution. On the other hand, the premiere was a great success. In any case, Beethoven was not to blame, as violinist Joseph Böhm recalled:

Beethoven himself conducted, that is, he stood in front of a conductor's stand and threw himself back and forth like a madman. At one moment he stretched to his full height, at the next he crouched down to the floor, he flailed about with his hands and feet as though he wanted to play all the instruments and sing all the chorus parts. – The actual direction was in [Louis] Duport's hands; we musicians followed his baton only.

Reportedly, the scherzo was completely interrupted at one point by applause. Either at the end of the scherzo or the end of the symphony (testimonies differ), Beethoven was several bars off and still conducting; the contralto Caroline Unger walked over and gently turned Beethoven around to accept the audience's cheers and applause.

According to the critic for the Theater-Zeitung, "the public received the musical hero with the utmost respect and sympathy, listened to his wonderful, gigantic creations with the most absorbed attention and broke out in jubilant applause, often during sections, and repeatedly at the end of them." The audience acclaimed him through standing ovations five times; there were handkerchiefs in the air, hats, and raised hands, so that Beethoven, who they knew could not hear the applause, could at least see the ovations.

source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Symphony_No._9_\(Beethoven\)&oldid=1326646638#Premiere](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Symphony_No._9_(Beethoven)&oldid=1326646638#Premiere)