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My Country, 'Tis of Thee: Part 2 BEETHOVEN 7 Variations on 'God Save the King', WoO 78



MAJOR AND MINOR



In this episode, Buddy and guest pianist Benjamin Rossen trade off playing a set of variations written by Beethoven around the famous theme, "God Save the King," also known as "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." In each variation, the composer challenges the pianist in different ways. One of the variations—variation 5—has a very different character than the other variations, because it is in a **minor** key.

Minor keys tend to sound sad or serious, while **major** keys generally sound happy or upbeat, even grand. Even if you are unfamiliar with these terms, you will certainly recognize the difference in sound!. Let's explore!

MAJOR AND MINOR

At 2:13 in the video, Buddy shows us the difference between major and minor sounds. Listen closely to the difference!

First he shows us a major sound. How does that sound make you feel?

Next, Buddy shows us a minor sound. What is the mood of this sound? How is different from the major sound he played first?

Major sounds in music are bright, happy, and hopeful, and minor sounds in music are usually sad, serious, and even mysterious!



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LET'S DRAW!

Let's listen to some musical examples of major and minor and draw how they make us feel!

Listen to this nocturne in a minor key by Chopin: <https://youtu.be/cykgz9nIRtl?t=33>

Now draw a scene in the box below. What kind of scene does this sound bring to mind?

Let's listen to something a little more upbeat! This waltz by Chopin, nicknamed the "Minute Waltz" for its short length, is a very happy tune: https://youtu.be/ToeH-sSM_lk

Now draw a scene in the box below reflecting its mood.