

The *Creatures of Prometheus* ballet was composed in 1801, shortly after Beethoven's First Symphony, in what would be his theatrical introduction to Vienna in a performance for the Empress. The choreographer Viganò was an established Viennese fixture (normally composing his own music), and selected a very dramatic allegorical ballet subject, of Prometheus, the Greek god who defied Zeus by introducing humanity to fire (and to other arts and dances, from Apollo, Orpheus and Bacchus).

Beethoven was attracted to the concept of challenging established order - his first Symphony had opened with a very unconventional progression of unstable chords resolving. The Prometheus overture's opening dissonance intensifies before a brief pastoral moment, followed by an energetic *Allegro molto con brio*.