I have chosen to compare and contrast two great musical minds Ludwig Van Beethoven and Joseph Bologne, known as Chevalier de Saint-Georges. Beethoven was said to be of Flemish descent and a great pianist who took lesson with Franz Haydn though it was brief. Saint-Georges was of African descent and studied the violin at the age of 5. A unique fact about these composers is that Beethoven suffered from hearing impairment, and Saint-Georges was a masterful fencer. They are both known for their strong work ethics and brilliant composer; though we don't hear much of Saint-Georges 's works mention, he was very accomplished.

The compositional output from the composers is about the same. They contributed numerous symphonies, string quartets, concertos for piano and violins. We will explore the two pieces, " Wellington's Victory; Op.91" by Beethoven and " Symphonie Concertante in G Major, OP. 13 MVMT 1. Allegro" by Chevalier de Saint-Georges. Beethoven's orchestration for Wellington's Victory includes flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, strings, and percussion instruments. He also adds military field artillery such as muskets and cannons. Saint-Georges’ orchestration for Symphonie Concertante was two violins and orchestra.

When listening to a piece for the first time, I close my eyes and imagine myself in the concert hall. Listening to Beethoven's Wellington's Victory, I immediately felt that I was marching with the cadences on the battleground. I appreciate the synchronization with music and reenactment. At times I felt it covered up some good musical moments. I love the way the music changes as the battle intensifies. I'm not sure about the victory music at the beginning of part 2; it seemed boastful. My favorite moment of this piece was gathering the injured soldiers while " My country tis of thee" came back around 11:14-11:29 minute, sound like the horns were playing a trichord. I absolutely love that part!

I believe Chevalier de Saint-Georges is smiling down as Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble plays his music. The passion and energy displayed are extraordinary, especially the two violins solo and how they went back and forth between the melody. I could feel the energy in the room. The cellos and basses did wonderfully keep the pulse moving. This piece by Saint-Georges has become my favorite. This piece seems to be a little advance for high schoolers, but I would love to introduce it to a group of students who can play on an advanced level. The musician in the video played with such pride and feeling. Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble interpreted the piece the way it was intended. Chevalier de Saint-Georges was called the "Black Mozart." Mozart was jealous of the Saint-Georges, and in "The Magic Flute," he created the character Monostatos to depict a villainous black character. Unfortunately, Joseph's music was lost during the French Revolution.

In Closing, I would first say thank you to the parents of Chevalier de Saint-Georges. We would have never heard of him and his impact on Western Classical music. In our current social climate, it feels good to know that African slaves contribute and most likely influence some great composers today.