

Copying Beethoven – Review

In Agnieszka Holland's **fanciful** 2006 **reimagining** of Ludwig van Beethoven's final years there are surprises aplenty, not least the **presence** of a **talented** young copyist named Anna Holtz, who is employed to help the composer finish his famous Ninth Symphony before its first **performance**.

Beethoven and Holtz are played with **brio** by Ed Harris and Diane Kruger respectively, and the film does a lot to make their relationship feel like something very real, **replete** with all the volatility and frustration that often exists among those possessed with **genius** artistic talent. Their initial encounters prove **awkward** and belittling for Holtz, but *Copying*



Beethoven tells the story of how the two **eventually** learn to accept, respect and appreciate each other.

Perhaps most impressive is how the **pair's** involvement is arguably never depicted as a romantic one; Holtz is **engaged** to Martin Bauer (Matthew Goode, in an early **role**), and although she and Beethoven could be interpreted as **sharing** a chaste romance, really the film focuses on **friendship** and a mutual appreciation of art, all against the **backdrop** of a sumptuously presented 1800s Vienna.



Holland has more recently been involved in some of American television's most critically **acclaimed offerings**, from *The Wire* and *The Killing* to *Treme* and *House of Cards*, and her film *In Darkness* was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the 2011 Academy Awards, representing her native Poland. *Copying Beethoven* is a little **rough** around the

edges, perhaps, but is sure to reward those with even a passing interest in one of classical music's most **compelling**, influential figures.