

# LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

## Sonata No. 25 in G Major ("Sonatine"), Op. 79

Edited by Stewart Gordon

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### About This Edition

#### Foreword

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) is often regarded as a link between the balance and clarity of Classicism and the emotional intensity and freedom of Romanticism.

In his 32 piano sonatas, he experimented constantly with structure and content. These works span a period of almost 30 years of Beethoven's mature creative life. He used the sonatas as a workshop in which to try out innovations, many of his compositional techniques appearing in the sonatas first and then later in chamber or symphonic works.

Beethoven was negotiating with two publishers during the period of time the Op. 78 and 79 were published. Correspondence with Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig that refers to these works begins on September 19, 1809, in which the composer states "*I don't like to spend much time composing sonatas for pianoforte solo, but I promise to let you have a few....*"<sup>1</sup> Further communications on February 4 and July 2, 1810, negotiate payment for these piano works as part of a package of new works.<sup>2</sup> The Op. 79 was announced by Breitkopf & Härtel in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Intelligenz-Blatt* in December 1810 as "sonatine pour le pianoforte."

Meanwhile, on April 20, 1807, Beethoven had consummated a contract with Muzio Clementi (1752–1832), the London-based composer, pianist, piano-builder, and publisher. Clementi met Beethoven for the first time during Clementi's stopover in Vienna en route to Italy. The Op. 79 was part of an agreement made at that time, along with other works, including the *Fantasie*, Op. 77, and the *Sonata*, Op. 78. Clementi did not receive the piano music, however, until a return trip to Vienna in 1809. These piano works were registered at Stationers Hall (London's copyright registry) on August 31, 1810, by the publisher Clementi, Banger, Collard, Davis & Collard. It is not possible to ascertain exactly when the English edition was available to the public, but it may be that the Clementi edition predates the Breitkopf & Härtel.



Ludwig van Beethoven, 1815, by Joseph Willibrord Mähler (1778–1860)  
*Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna*

That Breitkopf & Härtel was sensitive to foreign publication of Beethoven's works is apparent in a letter the composer wrote to the Leipzig publisher dated August 21, 1810. "*I have by no means made arrangements with Paris or France for all these works... A copy on the Continent is absolutely out of the question; and I think it highly improbable that these works have now arrived in London. For at the moment the blockade is even stricter than it has ever been; and an Englishman has to pay enormous sums for letters to Germany; and heavier parcels are even more expensive.... In short, I am convinced that by September not a single note of the works I sent you will have yet been published....*"<sup>3</sup> Referring to the Op. 79, the composer instructs in the same letter "*you must describe the one in G major as sonate facile or sonatine.*"<sup>4</sup>

Although the Op. 79 bears no dedication, the composer may have planned to use it as a gift for Therese Malfatti (1792–1851), a woman to whom Beethoven was

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<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of Beethoven*, vol. I, ed. and trans. Emily Anderson (London: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260, 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 283–84.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

# Sonata No. 25 in G Major

## (Sonatine pour le pianoforte)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)  
Op. 79

**Presto alla tedesca** <sup>(a)</sup>

**f** **(sf)** **p leggiermente** **cresc.**

<sup>(b)</sup> <sup>(c)</sup>

<sup>(a)</sup> The term *alla tedesca* means “in the style of a German dance.” At the time this work was written, this style was associated with the *Ländler*, typically a fast, energetic dance in triple meter.

<sup>(b)</sup> There is no **sf** mark on the downbeat of measure 2 in either the autograph or the first edition, unlike other statements of this theme (compare with measures 54, 125, 186, 190, and 194). Most editors add the mark here, some editorially.

<sup>(c)</sup> The autograph and the first edition show differences in the LH pattern of measure 5 and the patterns in measures 57 and 128. D’Albert, Arrau, Bülow, Casella, Köhler, and Krebs alter the LH in these measures in some way to achieve a consistent pattern. (Casella footnotes the original versions.) Hauschild, Martienssen, Schenker, Schnabel, Taylor, Tovey, Wallner, and this editor follow the early sources. (Schenker, Schnabel, Taylor, and Tovey provide footnotes arguing for strict observance of the differences.)

Andante

*p espressivo*

(a)

4

(b)

7

10

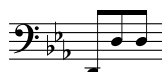
(c)

- (a) Neither the autograph nor the first edition shows LH articulations in this movement. D'Albert, Bülow, Casella, Köhler, Schnabel, and Taylor add it in some way, outlining the following pattern:



Tovey cautions against using this pattern, stating his belief that Beethoven would have marked such an “obvious” phrasing had he wanted it.

- (b) The text shows the LH of measure 6, beat 2, as it appears in the first edition, a version most editors follow. The autograph differs:





- (c) Of the referenced editors, only Taylor provides an opinion with regard to the execution of the grace notes in measures 11 and 12, stating that they should be played on the beat.

Musical score for "The Swan" by Camille Saint-Saëns, measures 7-21. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a piano (p) and forte (f) dynamic range. The melody is in the right hand, and the accompaniment is in the left hand. The score includes fingerings, articulation marks, and dynamic markings.

Measures 7-14: The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 14 includes a first ending bracket.

Measures 15-21: The melody continues with a quarter note C5, followed by a quarter note D5, and a quarter note E5. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 21 includes a first ending bracket.

- Ⓐ Ten of the referenced editors indicate that the ornament in measures 7 and 42 should begin on the principal note. Bülow, Casella, Schnabel, and Taylor realize the ornament on the beat, as would this editor:


 or
 

Tovey calls for it before the beat:

The first measure of the song 'The Sound of Silence' is shown on a five-line musical staff. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of a quarter note on G4, followed by an eighth note on A4, and then a half note on B4. The bass line consists of a half note on G3.

Arrau's fingering suggests he would start it on the upper note.

- ⓑ The grace notes in measures 11, 46, 91, 101, 103, and 105 are represented in both the autograph and the first edition as small sixteenth notes. They may be played rapidly before the beat.