

BEETHOVEN

SELECTED INTERMEDIATE TO EARLY ADVANCED PIANO SONATA MOVEMENTS

EDITED BY MAURICE HINSON

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This edition is dedicated
to Dr. David Dennis with
admiration and
appreciation.

Maurice Hinson

Second Edition

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*Cover art: A detail from an oil portrait of Beethoven
by Joseph Willibrord Mähler, 1804
The Granger Collection, New York*

Foreword

The 32 piano sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) are his most significant and revealing biography, worth more than all the thousands of pages that have been written about him. In them we see not the exterior events of day-to-day life, as we do in most biographies, but the infinitely more important life within. In these sonatas lie the stages of a great composer's journey, which paradoxically began with the complete confidence of a young man who knew he had the stuff of genius, and which ended in loneliness, with the composer cut off from the world by a barrier of silence, pushing bravely but sometimes gropingly into a new era. Beethoven has been described as a cautious revolutionary, but there is certainly no doubt that he changed the entire course of music. The first and last sonatas seem to belong to different worlds, and I doubt if any other composer in history so transformed his own musical language.

Beethoven's sonatas through the early part of the 19th century contain movements and some complete works the advancing piano student can play. The two volumes in this collection contain these movements and sonatas.

Beethoven did not seem to mind having his sonatas adjusted (movements left out, changed from the original order, and so on) for various situations. From his point of view, what could audiences be expected to accept—or endure? He once wrote to his student Ferdinand Ries about the Hammerklavier Sonata, Op. 106:

Should the sonata not be suitable for London, I could send you another one; or you could omit the Largo and begin straightaway with the Fugue, which is the last movement; or you could use the first movement and then the Adagio, and then the third movement, the Scherzo—and omit entirely No. 4 with the Largo and Allegro Risoluto. Or you could take just the first movement and the Scherzo and let them form the whole sonata. I leave it to you to do what you think best.¹

Accordingly, each of the movements in these two volumes may be played separately.

1. Harrison, pages 106-107.

2. Fischer, page 18.

Beethoven and the Piano Sonata

Beethoven's piano sonatas are rather like a library of classic piano music, ranging as they do from simply formed, unpretentious pieces for the amateur to magnificent works for the virtuoso. One has to be careful about superlatives in dealing with Beethoven because they are so soon exhausted, but these piano sonatas are so perfect an expression of the composer's genius—of his profound mind and noble character, of his rich and very human personality—that it is no exaggeration to say that music, even life itself, would be immeasurably the poorer without them.

Beethoven wrote best in large forms and sonata form was the ideal framework for his musical thinking. The forceful stamp of his personality is already evident in the mixture of musical ideas in his first piano sonatas.

What is it that distinguishes Beethoven's work from that of other composers? It is the structural element, the organic growth of his forms. There is, with him, no mere juxtaposition of beautiful musical ideas, no spinning out of atmospheric moods, no unnecessary repetition, no empty rhetoric. His sonatas (in fact, all of his works) are built, as it were, stone upon stone—each based on the one below and bearing the weight of the one above. Every measure, every section of a Beethoven movement acquires its full meaning only in relation to the whole work. Such is the architecture that every element has full significance only at, and by virtue of, the place where it occurs. Beethoven appeals to the listener's sense of logical construction.

There are two extremes for the interpreter: one consists of using Beethoven's language to express the interpreter's own passions and the other is simply to reproduce slavishly the notes and directions of the score. It is necessary to steer between both, avoiding the Scylla of presenting an extravagant portrayal of oneself through the music and the Charybdis of an excess of terrified respect for the "letter" of the music.

The best counsel I can give in this respect is Edwin Fischer's:

Love [Beethoven] and his work, and you will inevitably become his servant and interpreter and yet remain yourself. Your energy, your warmth and your love will kindle his energy, his spirit and his love in the hearts of men and women and make them shine therein.²



Ludwig van Beethoven in 1802. From a miniature painted on ivory by Hornemann.
Courtesy of the Beethoven-Haus, Bonn.

How Beethoven Played

We know from Carl Czerny (1791–1857) how Beethoven performed, for Czerny studied with Beethoven for a time and was his lifelong friend. In his Op. 500, *Theoretical and Practical Piano-Forte School* (1839?), Czerny writes:

Meantime, in 1790, appeared Beethoven, who enriched the piano-forte by new and bold passages, by the use of the pedals, by an extraordinary characteristic manner of execution, which was particularly remarkable for the strict legato of the full chords, and which therefore formed a new kind of melody; and by many effects not before thought of. His execution did not possess the pure and brilliant elegance of many other pianists; but on the other hand it was energetic, profound, noble, with all the charms of smooth and connected cantabile and particularly in the Adagio, highly feeling and romantic. His performance, like his compositions, was a musical painting of the highest class, esteemed only for its general effect. The means of expression is often carried to excess, particularly in regard to humor and fanciful levity.³

Beethoven produced new effects in his playing, broke all the rules, used an extraordinarily wide dynamic palette, and was highly expressive. All these pianistic traits linked him directly to the Romantic pianists. Unlike the highly disciplined Mozart or Cramer, Beethoven played as he felt (as Chopin later suggested to his students), unclassically, wrong notes and all. But his friend and student Anton Schindler (1795—1864) admitted that “all music produced by Beethoven’s hands appeared to undergo a new creation. These wonderful effects were, in a great degree, produced by his uniform legato style, which was one of the most remarkable peculiarities of his playing.”⁴

Czerny’s Suggestions for Performing Beethoven’s Piano Works

In his book *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven’s Works for the Piano*, Czerny discusses most of Beethoven’s piano compositions. In one passage he writes:

The general character of Beethoven’s works is fervent, grand, energetic, noble, and replete with feeling; often also humorous and sportive, occasionally even eccentric, but always intellectual; and though sometimes gloomy, yet never effeminately elegant, or whiningly sentimental. Each of his pieces expresses some particular and well-supported idea or object, to which, even in the smallest embellishment, he always remains true. *The melody everywhere pervades the musical thought*; all rapid passages and figures are only employed as a *means*, never as the *end*; and if (particularly in his earlier works) many passages are found which demand *the so-called brilliant style of playing, this must never be rendered principal*. He who should only display his agility of finger therein, would entirely miss the intellectual and aesthetic, and prove that he *did not understand* these works.⁵

About This Edition

Beethoven: Selected Intermediate to Early Advanced Piano Sonata Movements is a performance- and teaching-oriented edition, and is based on the first Complete Edition, published in Leipzig between 1862 and 1865. The new Complete Edition (Munich and Duisburg, from 1961) was also consulted for textual differences.

Fingerings (except for those shown in italics, which are Beethoven’s), pedal marks and metronome indications are editorial unless otherwise indicated.

Pedaling is a highly subjective matter, and any of the editor’s pedal indications should be taken as only one person’s suggestion. Either more or less pedal may be used than is indicated in some movements, depending on the instrument, room acoustics and other criteria that must be taken into consideration to achieve artistic pedaling. We know that Beethoven used the pedals much more frequently than is indicated in the score.⁶ The editor’s metronome marks

3. Newman, page 79.
4. Biancolli and Scherman, page 106.
5. Czerny, page 21.
6. Newman, page 78.

indicate only the general or overall tempo of a given composition or section and must not be too rigorously adhered to from measure to measure.

Certain fingerings—such as an occasional thumb on a black key—may not feel comfortable to the player at first. After repeated trying, however, the fingerings marked will probably be accepted, since they enable the pianist to bring out the character of the music more successfully: its rhythm, the underlying harmonies and the relationship of sequences.

Indications in parentheses are editorial. Most ornaments have been realized in the score or in footnotes. History, performance problems, and suggestions related to each sonata and sonata movement are discussed in "About the Music." Beethoven was rather detailed in notating his music; therefore, the editor has added very little. Much is still left to the musical judgment, understanding and intuition of the pianist. Above all, the objective of the editor has been to reflect on the printed page Beethoven's true intention so far as it can be determined.

These movements are not to be taught one after the other. According to the age and capacity of the student, they should be interspersed with other Classical sonatas, with variations, and with shorter Baroque, Romantic and contemporary works. Only when the technique is adequate, and the musical understanding evolved, can the student proceed.

Sources Consulted for This Edition

- I wish to thank the authors and editors of the works quoted in this collection.
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For Further Reading

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Suggested Order of Study

(in increasing order of difficulty)

- Tempo di Menuetto, Op. 49, No. 2
- Allegro, ma non troppo, Op. 49, No. 2
- Andante, Op. 79
- Presto alla tedesca, Op. 79
- Menuetto—Moderato e grazioso, Op. 31, No. 3
- Vivace, Op. 79
- Andante, Op. 14, No. 2
- Adagio cantabile, Op. 13
- Allegro, Op. 14, No. 2
- Scherzo—Allegro assai, Op. 14, No. 2
- Rondo—Allegro, Op. 13
- Grave—Allegro di molto e con brio, Op. 13

Title page of Sonata in C Minor ("Pathétique"), Op. 13, published in 1799 in Vienna by Joseph Eder



About the Music

Sonata in C Minor ("Pathétique"), Op. 13 (1798–99)

The popularity of this sonata may be partly due to the public's affection for titles. The title "Pathétique" came from Beethoven, who possibly wanted it to be understood in the sense of pathos or suffering. It is also possible that the title was related to Beethoven's recent awareness of his deteriorating hearing. Written in 1798 in Vienna, this quasi-tragic sonata always created a deep impression on listeners in Beethoven's day. It appears to this editor to be a deliberate, artistically successful attempt, carefully thought out in all its particulars, to create a unified expression of pathos. Young pianists should play this marvelous sonata only if they are willing to give it the steady and cautious work that it requires. The player's first ambition should be to acquire a good tremolo. The left-hand part of measures 11–26 of the Allegro di molto e con brio, and all other eighth-note tremolos in either hand, will need long and habitual practice with a loose wrist and carefully graduated crescendos at a very moderate and steady pace, always with the exact number of notes as written.

Grave—Allegro di molto e con brio10

Keep 16th notes in mind as the rhythmic background throughout the dramatic introduction, realizing that the 32nd notes, such as in measure 1, are no mere clicks but real melodic notes. At the tempo indicated, the nine 128th notes at the end of measure 4 will need to be hurried slightly, but this should be done unobtrusively.

Before playing anything else, try measures 9–10, counting aloud sixteen 16ths and taking a tempo that will easily get eight notes of the final chromatic scale (measure 10) into each. This tempo will be a little too slow as already suggested; but as long as you feel insecure as to the length of the rests and the position of each of the sixteen 16th beats, you must be content to play metronomically. Be disciplined at first, and understand the result by its effect. Underline the harmonic changes in measure 6. This introduction is built on the motive found in measure 1. Two measures of cadenzalike passagework (measures 9–10) lead directly into the body of the movement.

In the Allegro di molto e con brio, the tempo must not be too fast to accommodate the rhythm and harmony of measure 13. If you cannot play measures 31–88 as fast as the opening, then your opening tempo is too fast. It is unimportant whether you take six months or six years to adjust this tempo upward until you can break speed records, but it is very important that you not play it badly at any stage of your practice. The repeat at measure 132 is from the beginning of the Allegro, measure 11. The last chord in measure 296 must be released with an abruptness that makes a rhythmic event of the silence at the beginning of measure 297. Count sixteen 16ths here as in the original introduction.

Sonata form: exposition = measures 11–132; development = 133–196; recapitulation = 197–296; coda = 297–312.

Adagio cantabile22

This movement is perfect in every respect and is surely one of Beethoven's most glorious inspirations. Take your tempo from measure 22. The triplets in measure 8 should be a guidepost for your sense of rhythm. Treat them like a new voice beginning with the first low C. Despite this movement's emotionalism, it has to have classical balance, and despite its classical simplicity, it has to be full of feeling. The best way to achieve both is to give an expressive tone to the melody and obtain simplicity and symmetry by keeping the rhythm even.

Rondo form: **A** = measures 1–16; **B** = 17–28; **A**¹ (melody stated once only) = 29–36; **C** = 36–50; **A**² = 51–66; coda = 66–73.

Rondo—Allegro26

The tempo is a very different *alla breve* (♩) from that of the first movement. The triplet eighths in measures 33–41 must not be scrambled. The grace notes in measures 5–6 must be on the beat, not before. Measure 41 is a good rhythmic guide. The lead-in eighths in measure 78 should enter with a clean gesture. Mark the entry of the left-hand new idea at measures 94–95. Be careful to observe the *subito piano* at measure 189. Do not *ritard* the tempo at measures 202–210.

Rondo form: A = measures 1–17; B = 18–60; A = 61–78; C = 78–120; A = 120–133; B = 134–170 (134–157 in tonic major); A = 171–182; coda = 182–210.

Sonata in G Major, Op. 14, No. 2 (1799?)

Edwin Fischer feels this “sunlit forest-scene might be called ‘The Bird as Prophet,’ so prophetic is it of Schumann.”⁷ All the movements are written in a relaxed style and seem to have an intimate feeling for nature that anticipates the Romantic composers. It is an excellent sonata for small hands.

Allegro.....34

The exposition opens with a quiet, flowing theme that features syncopations and is accompanied by broken chords. As a whole, this section (measures 1–63) is predominantly quiet and has a subtly shifting texture—no single figuration is used for any great length of time. Although the development section (measures 63–124) is obviously based on material from the exposition, it contrasts with the previous section in two ways: first, it is predominantly loud, and second, each texture or pattern tends to be used for a greater length of time than in the exposition, giving a greater sense of continuity. The movement, after a brief coda (measures 187–200), ends as unobtrusively as it began.

Andante44

This short set of variations is a somewhat heavy march. Its theme (measures 1–20) would ordinarily be made up of two repeated parts, but here only the second half is repeated. Beethoven was worried about the pianist’s force of habit and wrote at the beginning of the movement, “The first part without repeat.” Measures 1–8 suggest string instruments playing *pizzicatos*; measures 9–12 are *cantabile legato* phrases.

Variation 1 (measures 21–42) features the middle voice *cantabile*. Variation 2 (43–67) requires a light and airy left hand to support the nonlegato melody. Variation 3 (68–87) presents the melody in a 16th-note design. Measures 88–93 are the coda. Be careful not to play the *sforzandos* too violently in this movement.

Scherzo—Allegro assai48

The duple rhythm within the triple meter (3/8) of this cheerful and sprightly movement should free the pianist from the measure line. Playfully, like insects, the motifs dart about in the clear air of this G major tonality. This movement is a delightful cross between a rondo and a scherzo with three trios; it has the continuity and the elaborate transitions of a rondo, but each episode has the form and character of a little dance. Measures 1–22 present the main theme with a humorous passage at measures 8–16 that features light and fast scales plus leaping chords. The first episode (E minor) is heard at measures 23–41 and uses challenging brilliant triplets in scales and broken intervals. The main theme returns at measures 42–64. The second episode (measures 64–138) includes a pleasant theme (measures 73–124). The second return of the main theme occurs at measures 138–189. A new episode or epilogue enters at measures 189–237. The final return of the main theme enters at 237 over a drone bass.

The presence of a *sforzando* on the main note, as in measures 7, 49, 121 and 123, suggests playing the grace note ahead of the beat. “Mischievous” is the character of this movement, which should go no faster than a comfortable waltz. Translate *Allegro assai* as “Lively enough.” Do not accent the *staccatos* in measures 1–22. Take the short slurs in measures 209–212 and 233–236

literally, separating each triplet by lifting the hand. The long pedals from measure 237 to the end should be shallow pedals, depressed just enough to have a few vibrations sound pianissimo throughout except for the punctuated sforzandos.

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 31, No. 3 (1802)

Menuetto—Moderato e grazioso55

This graceful movement contains a Trio that should be taken at the same tempo and phrased with deliberation. Camille Saint-Saëns used this Trio as the basis for a set of variations for two pianos. Keep the whole movement steady, relying on tone control for your expression, instead of letting the rhythm sag. Play all of Beethoven's repeats.

Czerny says, "This Minuet must be played with that amorous delicacy and gentle grace which characterizes the stately dance. The time is tranquil, as in the real dance-minuet."⁸

Sonata in G Major, Op. 49, No. 2 (1795–96)

This sonata is easier than Op. 49, No. 1. I have always appreciated Donald Francis Tovey's remarks on this work in his edition of the Beethoven sonatas: "This sonata will probably be among the first pieces of classical music that the young player will attempt when the hands are capable of fluent playing for ten minutes without undue fatigue. And this will not be too soon for learning it as a piece of shapely and sensible music."⁹

Allegro, ma non troppo.....58

This movement is in sonata form: exposition = measures 1–52; development = 53–66; recapitulation = 67–122. Point up the simplicity of this movement and do not try to make it overly dramatic. Let the opening chord and triplets serve to call attention and then treat the melody following (measures 2–4) at a lower dynamic level. On the repeat of the section (measures 1–52), highlight repeated segments, such as measures 13 and 14, 15–16 and 17–18, 20–22 and 22–24, with dynamic changes. In measures 15–20, the quarters are the most important notes; keep the left-hand triplets quieter than the right-hand theme. Play the grace notes clearly and on the beat in measures 36–40, but accent the first note of the triplet. Measures 59–67 present a fine opportunity to think orchestrally—perhaps two flutes (or oboes) and bassoon.

Tempo di Menuetto63

The form is a rondo (on a theme afterward used in the Menuet of the Septet, Op. 20, composed 1799–1800): **A B A C A** coda. Main theme (**A**) = measures 1–20; episode (**B**) = 21–47; main theme (**A**) 47–67; episode (**C**) = 67–87; main theme (**A**) = 87–107; coda = 107–120. At the opening, the two-note legato slurs must be carefully articulated without making the 16th note too short and accented. A slight emphasis on the third left-hand eighth in measures 1–6 and similar places will help create a more dancelike quality. This would also be true of measures 68–71 and 76–79. The two pianissimos (measures 46 and 86), Beethoven's only two dynamic marks in the whole sonata, must be taken very literally. These two *pp*'s are carefully placed near the end of the transition to the **A** theme: they tell the performer to return to a quiet sonority for the theme, which also implies louder volume for the preceding episodes. Play the final two chords (measures 119–120) with a good sound but not strongly accented.

Sonata G Major, Op. 79 (1809)

Composed in 1809, this sonata is a lighthearted romp in its two outer movements, but these enclose a romantic and lyrical Andante.

Presto alla tedesca.....67

In its rhythmic flow—bouncy and joyous—this sonata-form movement suggests the Austrian peasant-type dances that were the forerunners of the Viennese waltz. Cuckoo calls in various keys can be heard in this landscape picture. Be sure the passages marked *leggiermente* are played with a very clear, pearly, and equal touch (measures 12–23, and 196 to the end of the movement). The sforzando markings in the development seem designed to cancel out the ländler effect, since

8. Czerny, page 55.

9. Tovey, *Beethoven Sonatas*, Vol. 2, page 251.

they emphasize the second beat instead of the first. However, in the recapitulation of the main theme the emphasis is suddenly returned with characteristic zest to the first beat. In measures 60–123 Beethoven heightened the contrast of texture by indicating the pedal in the piano passages but omitting it in the forte passages with their jabbing sforzandos. The movement has a delightful dancing coda, heightened with appoggiaturas, when the main theme is answered by a consequent (measure 189 forward) that has been implied all along, with much merry interplay between treble and bass. Hand crossings assist the lilt of this Austrian dance. Security in playing octaves is necessary for this movement.

Form: exposition = measures 1–52; development = 53–123; recapitulation = 124–180; coda = 181–206.

Andante74

A melodious barcarolle in **A B A** design serves as the middle movement, which in its short span manages to become quite expansive in its lyrical expression.

Form: **A** = measures 1–8; **B** = 9–21; **A**¹ = 22–34.

Vivace77

This fun movement, in rondo form, contains no overly difficult problems except perhaps the cross-rhythms at measures 36–42, 48, 68–72, and 81–88, 93–95 and 110–113. These are only difficult in a slow tempo. At the final tempo of this movement the difficulty is minimized as soon as slow practice, gradually speeded up, has made the left-hand part clear and fluent at full speed by itself. Until this has been achieved it is not wise to add the right hand at all. There is no other rule for the mastery of quick cross-rhythms.

With two against three, think and count in triplets, like this:

Three against two is:

Four against three is seldom so slow as to become difficult. The following might help:

Three against four is:

Bach **-zart** **and**

12
8

1 | 2 | 3 |

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

(Bach) Mo- Brahms Liszt

And four against three is:

Bach **Mo-** **Brahms** **Liszt**

3
4

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 | 2 | 3 |

(Bach) -zart and

With two hands, tap the above exercises, saying the words aloud. Also, for measures 81–88 and 93–95, reduce the left hand to quarter-note chords and play triplets in the right hand before putting them together:

etc.

Sonata in G Major

(1799?)

Allegro (♩ = ca. 84)

Op. 14, No. 2

(*p*) *legato*

4

8

12

16

(a)

(b)

cresc.

sf

sf

p

cresc.

p

(a) Short appoggiatura

(b) The turn should be played in the previous measure.