

SONATA

in A-flat Major

Ludwig van Beethoven
Op. 110

Moderato cantabile molto espressivo. (♩ = 69.) a)

31.

p con amabilità. (sanft)

p b) a piacere.

cresc.

a) Czerny's tempo-mark ♩ = 76 strikes the Editor as too lively, as he is wholly in accord with A. B. Marx's opinion touching the *Adagio* character of this "Allegro"; though admitting, at the same time, that in the more passionately agitated passages the direction ♩ = 69 may be transcended, while on the other hand numerous opportunities are offered for decided retardation. On this head we beg to quote C. M. von Weber's eloquent words, which elucidate with exhaustive clearness the question of the elasticity (relativity) of the tempo, — a question often touched upon in the course of our edition.

"The time (tempo) should be no trip-hammer, tyrannically restraining or urging forward, but rather, in a composition, what the pulse is in man. There is no slow tempo in which passages do not occur that demand a more rapid movement, to avoid a sensation of dragging; nor is there any *Presto* which does not equally require by way of contrast a tranquil execution of certain passages, that it may not be deprived, by overhaste, of the resources of expression. — Furthermore, neither the urging nor the restraining should ever produce the effect of constraint, or of progression by fits and starts; it must invariably affect whole periods or phrases."

(See Preface of the new Berlin Edition in Score of the opera "Euryanthe.")

b) The measure with the hold must be played, or rather sung, very freely, with a sufficient prolongation of the trill to fully bring out, without haste, the gradations < >, which depend on its duration.

c) An accentuation (though by no means an obtrusive one) of the bass tones beginning each measure or each new harmony is recommended:



The musical score consists of six systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The notation includes various musical elements:

- System 1:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* (forte) and *p leggiermente* (piano, lightly).
- System 2:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* and *p*.
- System 3:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* and *p*.
- System 4:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* and *p*.
- System 5:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* and *p molto legato e tranquillo*.
- System 6:** Treble staff has a melodic line with a slur. Bass staff has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamics: *f* and *p*.

Other markings include *cresc.* (crescendo), *espr.* (espressivo), *poco slentando* (slowing down a little), and various articulation marks like asterisks and slurs.

a) This peculiar movement-figure occurred previously on the last pages of Sonata Op. 109; compare what is said there concerning its execution.

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of staves. The notation includes various musical elements such as notes, rests, trills, and dynamic markings. Key markings include 'a) p', 'ten.', 'poco ritard.', 'a tempo.', 'c) p', and 'con Pedale.'.

a) The Author's shading (each first measure in a perfectly even *piano*, the second with a slight swell) must be strictly observed in both hands. This by no means precludes a certain variety of tone-color in the execution of the principal melody. The player's imagination should borrow from the variety of the orchestral wind-instruments.

b) The trills must here begin both times on the principal note, for the special reason that the auxiliary for both B^1 and B^1 being C^2 , it would have a monotonous effect. Further, to avoid a dangerous collision of the contrary motion with the bass, reduce the second trill to a quintuplet: ; the 16th-

rest, which ought not to be too conspicuous, will promote distinctness in what follows.

c) A smooth execution of the movement-figure in the left hand requires some practice, the more so, because the return of the first motive can preponderate with but an ethereal effect.

The musical score consists of six systems of staves. The first system shows a piano introduction with a *cresc.* marking. The second system features a *p* (piano) dynamic and a *cresc.* marking, with a *ten.* (tension) marking in the bass. The third system includes a *f* (forte) dynamic and a *dolce. tranquillo.* marking. The fourth system shows a *cresc.* marking and a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking. The fifth system includes a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic and a *poco rit.* (poco ritardando) marking. The sixth system continues the *poco rit.* marking. The notation is in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The piece concludes with a final chord marked with an asterisk.

a) The entrance of the principal theme in the bass should be played with some animation; the next measure may even be accelerated; while in the third there must be a decided decrease, both qualitative and quantitative.

b)  The first half of this figure must not be taken with mathematical literalness, but played

like a triplet, — or the whole like a quintuplet. The player may, or rather must, allow himself a similar liberty (to avoid all angularity) in meas. 1 of the Adagio of the “Sonata quasi una Fantasia”, Op. 27 No 1, in E $\flat$, and also in meas. 2 in the second movement of the C-minor Piano-Concerto, Op. 38.

p a tempo.

a)

cresc.

b)

p molto legato.

c)

cresc.

ritenente.

a) In case the character of the instrument permits, the soft pedal may be used to enhance the mysterious effect of this disguised F $\flat$ -major. The new division of the figure between the hands will prove more practical, because more convenient, than the old.

b) The incomprehensible descent of the spirited ascending figure on the third beat, as given in the Original Edition, may be explained (like some analogous incongruities in Op. 111) by a mere external circumstance. While engaged in composing these last pianoforte-sonatas, the Master used a grand piano furnished him by the London firm of Broadwood, the compass of which extended from contra-C only to C 4 , its extension downward beyond the Vienna pianos being made up for by an equally considerable loss above. Now, although it cannot be denied that the Master's lofty genius transformed every limitation of the means of representation at his disposal into a well-spring of new and characteristic beauties and refinements—we occasionally meet with cases wherein these limitations, which since then have succumbed to mechanical improvements, exercised a disturbing and disfiguring influence on the poetic intention. A proper discrimination of such cases is precisely the task of reverent criticism.

c) These 2 eighth-notes, in which the enharmonic retrogression to the fundamental key is completed, would be more perspicuous to the reader if written thus:  But we must not forget, that the whole preceding episode is properly in F $\flat$, not in E, the latter key being chosen simply on account of convenience in notation.

a tempo.

p espressivo.

poco slentando. *ten.* *ten.* *a tempo.*

mf *p* *cresc.* *p* *cresc.* *sf*

a) *(con Pedale.)*

(♩ = 76.) (♩ = 69.)

f *f* *sf* *f* *p*

cresc. *dim.* *p* *dolce.*

molto espr. *ten.* *d) cresc.* *ten.*

a) Comp. Note a) on page 645.

b) The new Leipzig Edition exhibits in the first 16th-note a conspicuous mistake, which we can explain only by supposing that there must have been an accidental blot in the manuscript.

c)  The left-hand lower part should be slurred, and more strongly emphasized than the higher parts, which must be very lightly played.

d) The direction *crescendo* continues in force through three full measures (to the *dimin.*; and each separate figure should be executed with a swell—of course without exaggeration.

8

poco rit.

dimin. mf

a) *p*

dim.

pp

a tempo.

p leggiermente.

b) *cresc.*

c)

p

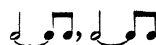
cresc.

p

cresc. -

f = p

pp d)

- a) Lift the hand a trifle before each half-note, so as to plainly show the continuity of the group 
- b) Both in this and the next measure the earlier editions have divergent figurations, for which no intelligible reason is discoverable.
- c) Here the right hand should take the D^b in the left-hand part, to render a closer *legato* possible.
- d) Let the next movement follow without pause. It is probable, that the uninterrupted succession which we advocated before in Op. 101 and 109 was really intended by the composer, from the circumstance, that thesecond movement commences with the closing note of the first—in the soprano.