

RiverArts
Music Tour 2018

June 2, 2018

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN



The Sonatas for Violin & Piano

The Sonatas for Cello & Piano

The 'Archduke' Trio

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Violinists

Kate Ashby	Samuel Cohen
Joyce Balint	Silvia Grendze
Larissa Blitz	Lori Horowitz
Barbara Carlsen	Jill Schultz

Cellists

Erika Boras-Tesi
Seth Jacobs
Teresa Kubiak
Lisa Olsson

Pianist: Alan Murray

RiverArts Music Tour 2018

Ludwig van Beethoven
The Sonatas for Violin & Piano
The Sonatas for Cello & Piano
The 'Archduke' Trio

Session 1 - Noon

Sonata No. 1 for Violin & Piano in D major, Op. 12 No. 1

Allegro con brio
Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto
Rondo: Allegro

Barbara Carlsen, violin
Alan Murray, piano (*all works*)

Sonata No. 1 for Cello & Piano in F major, Op. 5 No. 1

Adagio sostenuto; Allegro
Adagio – presto – adagio
Rondo: Allegro vivace

Erika Boras-Tesi, cello

Session 2 - 1:00 pm

Sonata No. 2 for Violin & Piano in A major, Op. 12 No. 2

Allegro vivace
Andante più tosto allegretto
Allegro piacevole

Joyce Balint, violin

Sonata No. 2 for Cello & Piano in G minor, Op. 5 No. 2

Adagio sostenuto e espressivo: Allegro molto più tosto presto
Rondo: Allegro

Erika Boras-Tesi, cello

Sonata No. 3 for Violin & Piano in E-flat major, Op. 12 No. 3

Allegro con spirito
Adagio con molt'espressione
Rondo: allegro molto

Samuel Cohen, violin

Session 3 – 2:00 pm

Sonata No. 4 for Violin & Piano in A minor, Op. 23

Presto
Andante scherzoso, più allegretto
Allegro molto

Joyce Balint, violin

Sonata No. 3 for Cello & Piano in A major, Op. 69

Allegro ma non tanto
Scherzo: Allegro molto
Adagio cantabile
Allegro vivace

Teresa Kubiak, cello

Session 4 – 3:00 pm

Sonata No. 5 for Violin & Piano in F major ('Spring'), Op. 24

Allegro
Adagio molto espressivo
Scherzo: Allegro molto
Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

Kate Ashby, violin

Sonata No. 6 for Violin & Piano in A major, Op. 30 No. 1

Allegro
Adagio
Allegretto con variazioni

Lori Horowitz, violin

Session 5 – 4:00 pm

Sonata No. 7 for Violin & Piano in C minor, Op. 30 No. 2

Allegro con brio
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo: Allegro
Finale: Allegro

Lori Horowitz, violin

Sonata No. 8 for Violin & Piano in G major, Op. 30 No. 3

Allegro assai
Tempo di minuetto, ma molto moderato e grazioso
Allegro vivace

Jill Schultz, violin

Session 6 - 5:00 pm

Sonata No. 4 for Cello & Piano in C major, Op. 102 No. 1

Andante
Allegro vivace
Adagio
Allegro vivace

Lisa Olsson, cello

Sonata No. 9 for Violin & Piano in A major ('Kreutzer') Op. 47

Adagio sostenuto; Presto
Andante con variazioni
Finale: Presto

Samuel Cohen, violin

Session 7 - 6:00 pm

Sonata No. 5 for Cello & Piano in D major, Op. 102 No. 2

Allegro con brio
Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto
Allegro – allegro fugato

Seth Jacobs, cello

Sonata No. 10 for Violin & Piano in G major. Op. 96

Allegro moderato
Adagio espressivo
Scherzo: Allegro
Poco allegretto

Larissa Blitz, violin

Session 8 – 7:00 pm

Trio in B-flat major (The “Archduke”), Op. 97

Allegro moderato
Scherzo: Allegro
Andante cantabile ma però con moto – poco più adagio
Allegro moderato - presto

Silvia Padegs Grendze, violin
Erika Boras-Tesi, cello

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Our Distinguished Musicians (for their generous musical contributions)

OUR PERFORMERS

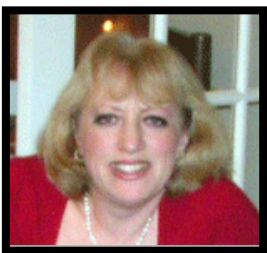


KATE ASHBY, violinist, is Music Program Director at RiverArts and studied violin in England with Clifford Bibby. Kate enjoys playing chamber music with friends in the Rivertowns and has performed at Hudson Valley Music Club, Irvington Presbyterian Church and with Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra. As a singer, Kate has performed with a variety of chamber ensembles, and highlights include Monteverdi Vespers at Concordia, St. John Passion at Lincoln Center and Die Zauberflöte with John Eliot Gardiner.



JOYCE BALINT, violinist and mandolinist, has been the mandolin soloist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra since 1974. One of the country's foremost classical mandolinists, she has performed many solo recitals and orchestral performances, including the Paris Opera, Dallas Opera, and the Boston Symphony. As a violinist, she has been an active free-lance performer in the New York metropolitan area, including the MET Opera, the Caramoor Festival Orchestra, the Westchester Symphony, and several opera companies. She currently performs with the Amore Opera in New York City. She also performed duo recitals with her late

husband Sandor Balint, as the Balint Duo. "Joyce Balint Shines in a String Recital" was the headline in the New York Times of her Carnegie Recital Hall debut where it said her playing of the mandolin "came close to the ideal" and she played with a "musicianly verve" on the violin. Ms. Balint lives in Bronxville, is on the faculty of the Mozartina Musical Arts Conservatory in Tarrytown, and is the current president of the Westchester County Federation of Women's Clubs. More information about Joyce's career and pursuits, including video recordings, can be found at www.joycerasmussen.com



LARISSA BLITZ, violinist and violist, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia and received her BA from St. Petersburg's Conservatory. While in Russia she worked in the Opera House of St. Petersburg and was an assistant to her violin professor as well as having a private teaching studio of her own. In 1987 she received her Masters degree in violin performance from Manhattan School of Music where she studied with renowned professors Rafael Bronstein and Arianna Brone. Since then Ms. Blitz

has had an extensive performing and teaching career playing in orchestras such as Brooklyn Philharmonic, North Eastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, Springfield Symphony, Stamford Symphony, Savannah Symphony, Berkshire Opera, Manchester Music Festival Chamber Orchestra, Tchaikovsky Chamber Orchestra and many others. She also has worked on Broadway and in the recording studio. From 1994 to 1996 she was concertmaster for a touring production of "Fiddler on the Roof" starring Theodore Bikel. As a teacher, Ms. Blitz enjoys a large private studio in New Jersey and since January 2001 teaches violin for the Spring Creek Youth Orchestra in Brooklyn, NY. She also has been a violin coach in a special school program in Long Island. In 2004 she joined the faculty of the RiverArts Music Program, where she gives private lessons on violin and viola. In February 2005 Ms. Blitz joined the part-time faculty of Franklin Pierce University, teaching viola.



ERIKA BORAS-TESI, cellist, maintains an active bi-coastal performing career based in New York and San Diego, California. Highlights of her career as a cellist include principal cellist for the Bolshoi Ballet's American Tour performing in Lincoln Center's State Theatre, Chicago and Los Angeles. Solo performances at the State Theater include Giselle and Swan Lake. Principal cellist at the State Theatre for D'Oyle Carte; Berlin Opera Ballet; and principal cellist for Rudolph Nureyev and the Boston Ballet company at the Uris Theatre in New York. Mrs. Tesi

also performed at Lincoln Center with the Joffrey Ballet, The Canadian National Ballet, Radio City Music Hall, Roland Petite, The National Ballet of Marseilles, and Makarova and Company. She is a member of the Eterni Quartet and was a founding member of The All Seasons Chamber Players. Chautauqua Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Principal cellist of the Newburgh Symphony, Broadway pit orchestras have all been a part of Ms. Boras Tesi's performance history.

Mrs. Tesi started her conducting studies at The Boston Conservatory, and The New England Conservatory of music and went on to conduct student orchestras in Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey. She was chosen as recipient of the 2000 Tenafly Middle School's Governor's Award as Teacher of the Year and was a featured teacher on television's NJN Classroom Close-up Program. Not only have her chamber music groups consistently been chosen to perform at Lincoln Center in the Young People's Ensembles Concerts but she was accepted to compete and won the 2006 American String Teachers National Orchestra Festival held in Kansas City where she took first place with the only Superior rating in her category.

Since retiring from her position as an orchestra director in the Tenafly Public Schools in New Jersey she was part of the effort to create a successful El Sistema program in Paterson, NJ and was a conductor for the Interschool Orchestras of

New York City. Mrs. Tesi is a teaching artist in the "Summer Music In Tuscany" festival. www.summermusicintuscany.com



BARBARA CARLSEN, violinist, is currently in her 40th year of teaching and directing student string programs and orchestras. She has taught in school districts that include Brooklyn, Hastings on Hudson and Chappaqua, and is currently a member of the music faculty at the Trinity School in Manhattan, where she teaches string players in grades 4-6 and directs the chamber ensembles. Barbara is active as both violinist and violist in orchestral and chamber music ensembles. She is a member of the Riverside Orchestra as well as several amateur chamber

groups. Barbara feels lucky that during the course of her life music has been both vocation and avocation, a blend that she finds very rewarding and exciting!



SAMUEL COHEN, violinist, was born in Iasi, Romania in 1945 and began his professional career as a violinist at the age of fourteen with the Iasi National Opera Orchestra. He emigrated to Israel in 1961 where he studied music and violin with Professor Eden Partosh at the Tel Aviv Music Academy. Mr. Cohen was a member of the Jerusalem Radio Orchestra from 1967-69 and then became a member of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under Maestro Zubin Mehta from 1969 to 1974. Samuel Cohen emigrated to the USA in 1974, joining the Baltimore Symphony. In 1978, Mr. Cohen auditioned for and won a first violin position with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 1978, a

position he has held up to his retirement just weeks ago! Besides looking forward to teaching/coaching and performing more chamber music now, he also is a real estate agent.



SILVIA PADEGS GRENDZE, violinist, is a freelance performer and violin teacher originally from the Rivertowns, raised in Hastings-on-Hudson, and currently residing in Irvington, NY. Ms. Grendze's violin studies began at the age of three years studying with disciples of Mr. Suzuki in Hastings. She received her Bachelor of music degree from Manhattan School of Music studying with Erick Friedman and

Burton Kaplan. Silvia Padegs Grendze has been freelancing primarily, although not exclusively, on the East coast, playing with orchestras and ensembles of various sizes in cities from Boston to Charleston. She also has sung

professionally with choirs and is currently assistant conductor of the NY Latvian Concert Choir, a choir specializing in performing new cantatas. Silvia Padegs Grendze has played in major music centers such as Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and Boston's Symphony Hall. She has played, and continues to perform internationally in such countries as Canada, Austria, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Venezuela, and Australia. Ms. Grendze currently resides in Irvington, NY where she offers private lessons. Silvia Padegs Grendze plays on a 1864 Samuel Nemessanyi violin.



LORI HOROWITZ, violinist, is a Westchester native whose musical training began at the Westchester Conservatory of Music with Gabriel Banat. During a foreign exchange program in Brazil during her senior year of high school, she served as a volunteer member of the Sao Paulo State Symphony Orchestra. Lori continued her musical studies at Oberlin College before embarking on a medical career. While in medical school she was a founding member of, and soloist with, the Albert Einstein Symphony Orchestra. During her medical and post-medical training she could also be found serving in the ranks of the Riverside Orchestra, the New Amsterdam Symphony, The 92nd Street Y Orchestra, and the Bronx Chamber

Orchestra. After settling back in Westchester, she has performed in numerous chamber music concerts around the county and has played with several amateur and semi-professional orchestras, such as The Chappaqua Orchestra. Lori has enjoyed a longstanding involvement with the Westchester-based St. Thomas Orchestra and serves as their concert-master. Lori returned to school several years ago to pursue her musical studies more formally at Purchase College, studying first with Calvin Wiersma and later with Carmit Zori. She received a Performer's Certificate in 2014 and completed a Master's Degree in 2016. She now studies privately with Eriko Sato. When not playing her violin, Lori maintains a part-time practice of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.



SETH JACOBS, cellist, studied with Alexander Goldfield, Donald McCall and William Klenz. He has been a member of the Chappaqua Orchestra, Westchester Collegium, and St. Thomas Orchestra. In recent years he has appeared in Westchester with a number of professional chamber music ensembles. Seth is also a lawyer at Pfizer and lives in Cortlandt Manor with his wife, the pianist Cynthia Peterson.



TERESA KUBIAK, cellist, is a concert artist and freelance musician working in and around the New York City area. She is the principal cellist of the Bronx Opera Company and the Orchestra of The Bronx. She is well-versed as a recital artist and chamber musician. Ms. Kubiak teaches cello privately in Westchester County, NY, where her students also participate in her long-standing cello ensemble classes. She has been incorporating Skype lessons into

her practice for the past several years and works with students from around the globe. Her teaching combines elements of the Suzuki approach with the principals of Feldenkrais, Tai Chi, and a cutting edge understanding of the human nervous system and its relationship to music and the process of learning. www.teresakubiak.com



ALAN MURRAY, pianist, has appeared in solo and chamber recitals and as concerto soloist with orchestra. The 2017/18 season marks his sixth consecutive as concerto soloist with a recent performance of *Rachmaninoff's 2nd Piano Concerto* in Philadelphia and upcoming performances of *Prokofiev's 2nd* (June 3, in Newark, Delaware), *Saint-Saëns'* and *Chopin's 2nd* (August, at the Vidin, Bulgaria music festival) and *Bartók's 1st piano concertos* (September, in Washington, DC). Prior season performances comprised those of Bartók (No. 2), Brahms (Nos. 1 & 2), Chopin (No. 1), Prokofiev (No. 3), Rachmaninoff (No. 3), Saint-

Saëns (No. 4) and Tchaikovsky (No. 1), under the auspices of Moxart.org. This year marks his second appearance in the *Rivertowns' Annual Music Tour*.

In prior seasons, Mr. Murray presented the *Masters Series* and *Sunrise Series* Concerts, comprising the cycles of solo piano music of Chopin, Schumann, Debussy, Ravel and J.S. Bach, as well as Beethoven's 32 Sonatas and Diabelli Variations and major works of Schubert, Brahms, Liszt, Albéniz (*Iberia*), Granados (*Goyescas*), Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. In 2014, together with RiverArts, Alan initiated *Collectanea* with another Rivertowns artist, a series of multi-media performances, combining art/poetry/dance-inspired classical piano masterpieces with simultaneous on-stage illuminated displays of paintings, live modern dance and poetry readings. Details of his previous and upcoming performance schedule, as well as his complete live concerto performance video/audio recording links can be found at www.studio-hollywood.com.

A member of the Financial Institutions Group management team at Moody's Investors Service in New York, Alan oversees ratings and quantitative analytics in

the Insurance sector, and for many years managed the firm's operations in the Latin America region. He resides in Hastings with his wife Amada (owner/manager of *Galápagos Books* in Hastings), and daughter Celia (recent graduate of Hofstra University). Alan studied piano with Frances Wazeter, Allen Weiss, and continues today with his long-time coach, Robert Preston. He holds a degree in physics and languages from Cornell University, where he also received a special University Award for distinguished piano soloist.



LISA OLSSON, cellist, is also a poet and artist, who grew up in Hastings and lives in Dobbs Ferry. She studied at the School for Strings in NYC and teaches cello in her home studio and at the Hudson River School of Music. She was formerly the Design Director at Pearson Education, for whom she designed textbook programs. Her poems have been published online and in print, and she is recently a winner in the "Poetry in the Pavement" contest in Sleepy Hollow. On weekends she likes to explore the metropolitan area on foot with her friends.



JILL SCHULTZ, violinist, holds a Bachelor's degree from City College, a Masters of Music degree from Stony Brook University and an EdD from Teachers College of Columbia University. She has performed with the Goldovsky and Lake George Opera Companies, the New Jersey Symphony, the Stamford Symphony and the NYC Ballet. She has taught at the Manhattan School of Music, Mannes College, and the Lucy Moses School, and has served as an educational consultant to the Lincoln Center Institute and the Little Orchestra Society. She is currently teaching in the Scarsdale (NY) school district, which, in 2009, was named the Best Community for Music

Education by NAMM. Dr. Schultz has just received an award from Live at Lincoln Center for "Outstanding Student Performances" as demonstrated by her student orchestra.

The Composer & The Music

Beethoven was a pianist, so of course nothing came more naturally to him than his sonatas and chamber works – for solo piano, and for violin or cello and piano – except (perhaps) for one thing: extemporization. The young pianist-composer made his way with the Viennese aristocracy in the 1790s not only by composing, but also by improvising and winning improvisation contests, which had an immediacy that the deliberate process of publication did not. While still a child, he is said to have exasperated his father by rambling away at the piano making things up instead of practicing. We know of occasions when Beethoven comforted unhappy women by sealing in quietly and just playing for them. It's doubtful he played the 'Moonlight' Sonata, as in the 1994 film 'Immortal Beloved'. More likely, he started out like the 'Moonlight' and advanced to soundscapes of fantasy we can never know.

So the feeling of improvisation permeates Beethoven's sonatas and chamber music. Cadenzas or cadenza-like passages appear from the first sonata, trio or quartet opus to the last. And many of his works begin with or are interspersed with improvisatory fantasia-like passages, ostensibly fixing extemporization within the musical notation. Contrasts abound in these works – 2nd themes (aka 'characteristic themes') invariably contrast from the opening melodic themes, melodies clearly stated in minor keys are suddenly transformed to a major key, straight-forward harmonic progressions are invariably followed by sometimes eyebrow-raising modulations and surprises, and more relaxed rhythmic patterns are answered by more driven (e.g. 'Alberti' bass) or spikier (dotted-note) patterns, (the reverse order of all the above also fully applies) all of which infuse the musical line with tension and anticipation.

We hear the frequent, sometimes even jarring, stops and starts in the music, *accelerandos* and *ritardandos*, *fermatas*, melodic ornamentation presented in myriad ways, wayward modulations seemingly being experimented with and reconsidered along the way, or else searching for (and always ultimately finding) their way back to the home key signature, *crescendos* that culminate in *pianissimos*, *diminuendos* suddenly interrupted by *fortissimos*, and of course the non-stop interplay among duo and trio instruments, with one frequently taking the lead in a melodic or rhythmic statement, only moments later to be replied to, or perhaps even mocked or having its thought stolen by, the other, and the like, as links to the whims and wonders of improvisation. Works (even individual movements and passages, for that matter) beginning in a darker character are almost certain to find a moment of sunshine, and darkness is seldom far away from what starts out in a sunnier mood. We hear such things in his other works too, because Beethoven found ways to make even his symphonies sound improvisatory. A pervasive sense of spontaneity, stemming ultimately from piano improvisation, lies at the heart of Beethoven's music.

Few composers have launched their careers with such a splash - dare one say arrogance (certainly Beethoven's contemporaries said it) – as Beethoven. His music bristles with passages planned for effect, which achieve with a force unknown up to that time. Nor is subtlety lacking, nor grace, wit, intellect, or emotion. In a stroke, Beethoven commandeered and aggrandized genres – including the sonatas for violin & piano and for cello & piano, as well as the trios – that in general had been taken less seriously than the symphony or the string quartet.

Beethoven was a tiny, unimpressive-looking man, with a pock-marked face, messy hair and questionable hygiene. And yet his personality never ceases to capture the imaginations of music-lovers to this day. Even during his lifetime, when he was writing music that was so many light-years ahead of its time that it must have sounded like gobbledygook to the vast majority of listeners, he was recognized as the embodiment of creative genius. There is really no more powerful figure in the history of the arts. [3]

The Sonatas for Violin & Piano

During the first half of the 18th century (and earlier) the vast majority of sonatas for "one-line" instruments such as the violin, the cello, the flute and the oboe, with keyboard accompaniment, were written on two staves, with the melodic line on top and a figured bass below it, to be amplified by the harpsichordist largely at his/her own discretion, and supported by a bass instrument such as a cell, a viola da gamba or a bassoon. The attention was therefore focused on the melodic instrument, the accompaniment being of secondary importance, though of more or less prominence depending on the skill of the harpsichordist. All of Handel's sonatas, except for one follow this formula, as do several of Bach's. The more important of Bach's sonatas, however, anticipate later practice in that they contain fully written-out harpsichord parts and that the two instruments are of equal importance.

In the second half of the century, when the severity of the contrapuntal style yielded to the insinuating charm of the gallant, the earlier relationship was reversed: the keyboardist became the dominating factor in the partnership.

In Beethoven's 10 sonatas for violin and piano the process is continued, and the stringed instrument achieves its full emancipation in the "Kreutzer" Sonatas, composed in 1802-03. Their composition spans a period of 25 years, from 1797 to 1812, and although they neither offer such a representative picture of his attitude to the duo sonata as do his five sonatas for cello and piano (which, though only half as numerous, coverage a wider time span (1796 to 1815) and are more evenly spaced) nor, since some of them were designed for various virtuoso acquaintances and not for Beethoven's own exclusive performance, form such an

impressive and inexhaustible compendium of his are as do his 32 Piano Sonatas, they nevertheless include works that are among the very finest of their kind. [4]

A complete survey of Beethoven's violin sonatas isn't as exhausting and worthy an undertaking as one might fear. By the time the 27-year old Beethoven got round to his first sonatas for piano and violin his musical and pianistic voice was already well-honed - the first violin sonatas couldn't be further from derivative juvenilia, they're self-confident utterances of a composer already enjoying his originality. All ten violin sonatas hail from a relatively short (if incredibly transformative) period in Beethoven's creative life, with the first nine composed within six years, and the final work in the form almost a decade later. Still to come were all of the late quartets and sonatas. [1a]

The **first three Sonatas**, all part of op. 12, (in D major, A major and E flat major) composed in 1799 are dedicated to Antonio Salieri, the *capelmaestro* of the Viennese court and Beethoven's professor after Albrechtsberger.

The fourth and fifth Sonatas, Op. 23 and 24 (in A minor and F major) were composed in 1801 and they bring clarity to the concerto style. A special place is held by the fifth sonata, also known as the "*Spring*" Sonata, through which Beethoven frees himself from the restraints of the norms imposed by previous work.

The sixth, seventh and eighth Sonatas, all part of Op. 30 (in A major, C minor and G major) composed in 1802, represent an important step in the evolution of the sonata form, each sonata constituting an antithesis for the former and a synthesis of the acquired experience.

The ninth Sonata, Op. 47, in A major, also known as the "*Kreutzer Sonata*", because it was dedicated to the well-known violinist Rudolph Kreutzer, represents a genuine center of attraction especially due to the concerto character of both instruments, thing that made certain commentators to assert that it is a double concerto. Here we notice Beethoven's tendency towards monumental architectonic constructions, most evident due to the sonata structure in the extreme parts of the work. It's worth mentioning that Sonata op. 47 was composed the same year as Symphony III, The Heroic (1803).

The tenth and final Sonata, Op 96, in G major, concludes the sonata cycle for piano and violin. Written in 1812 and dedicated to French violinist Pierre Rode, the sonata has a special form and expression through the miniature character of the first part but also through avoidance of the concerto character with the treatment of instruments. [1]

The Sonatas for Cello & Piano

Beethoven was the first great composer of cello sonatas, and he remained really the only one until Brahms wrote two at the end of the last century, and in the twentieth century Martinu wrote three. Aside from the monumental solo cello Suites by Bach – sonatas of a different form – and a few individual distinguished works by subsequent composers (Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Barber, and Britten). And works for cello and piano are a challenging medium, because the low notes of the cello tend to get covered by the bass of the piano, making balance between the two instruments always somewhat precarious. [1b]

Performing Beethoven's entire oeuvre for cello and piano in sequence is a very different experience from playing any of the works separately; it is a journey through a life. One wonderful aspect of the sonatas is that they represent all of Beethoven's three major creative periods. The first two, in F major and G minor, Op 5, were written at a time when the composer was carving out a career for himself as a virtuoso pianist; in those days, of course, most performers composed.

Beethoven performed these pieces with the famous French cellist Jean-Pierre Duport in Berlin, at the court of King Friedrich II of Prussia (an amateur cellist himself, for whom Haydn and Mozart had written quartets). This was in 1796, when Beethoven was just 25 years old, not yet suffering from the deafness that would transform his whole existence.

The first two Sonatas – Op. 5 in F major and G minor - are real concert pieces, large in scale, full of exciting effects that would have left Berliners gasping. (In both these works the absence of a slow middle movement is, to some extent, compensated by a long, texturally varied harmonically exploratory slow introduction to the first movement, and the presence of more than one theme adds further weight to the introduction.[5]) There are also unexpected flights to high registers for the cello (as there are in all three sets of variations for cello and piano that Beethoven wrote between 1796 and 1801), and Beethoven – always the virtuoso pianist and not to be overshadowed by a mere cellist! - makes it clear from the get-go that these are truly duo-sonatas; at times feuding or wrestling control of the musical line from one another, and at others complementing or collaborating with one another.

The third Sonata - Op. 69 in A major - inhabits a different world altogether. Beethoven worked on this sonata between 1806 and 1808; by then, his deafness was acute, if not quite complete. In his tragic letter known as the Heiligenstadt Testament, written in October 1802, Beethoven had admitted that he had harbored thoughts of suicide. "It was only my art that held me back. Oh, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had produced all that I felt was within me." Yet this sonata - in common with several other works from the same period - is one of the most positive works imaginable; from the opening phrase, it radiates

serenity, humor and joy. There is not a note that is trivial, however. The A major Sonata is a thoroughly classical work, its proportions carefully measured, the themes answering each other in perfect symmetry. Here, every theme is perfectly conceived for both instruments; Beethoven had invented a new genre.

The "late" period of Beethoven's creative life is generally said to have begun around 1815. If so, the two cello sonatas Op 102, both dating from that year, would be among the first examples of that miraculous group of masterpieces. They certainly exude the atmosphere of other-worldliness, of transcendent spirituality, that characterizes his last utterances. The differences between these two sonatas and their predecessors are immediately striking. For a start, they are far shorter - approximately half as long as either of the first two. Everything here is concentrated, each gesture kept to its bare essentials. They are also far more closely argued, each note occupying an important place in the overall structure.

The fourth Sonata, in the "basic" key of C major, opens with a simple two-bar phrase. It is from this apparently straightforward beginning, however, that the entire work develops; practically every note is derived from those two bars. (This work introduces a more pervasive element of fantasy than the prior sonatas, with its 2-movement form, but distinct due to both movements being in sonata form and marked *Allegro vivace*. Significantly, Beethoven entitled the autograph score *Freye Sonate*, or "free sonata". [5])

The fifth and final Sonata, in D major, takes off in other new directions. After the dramatic opening movement, Beethoven gives us, for the first time in these works, a full slow movement, a prayer that must surely be the most beautiful movement ever written for cello and piano. But after that glimpse of eternity, he returns us to earth with a fugue that is positively rollicking. And yet for all its sense of fun - and it is fun - the fugue also conveys a strong sense of achievement, of defiant finality; after struggles that would have destroyed a lesser being, Beethoven has emerged in heroic triumph and we can hear him exulting as he bids farewell to the cello sonata. [3]

Piano Trio, Op. 97 ('The Archduke')

When he was living in Bonn, Beethoven was especially attracted by the sonorities of the chamber music. We could hence conclude that the beginnings of Beethoven's creation are marked by numerous attempts to establish the perfect sonorities of chamber music.

In 1785, Beethoven composes three quartets (C major, E flat major and D major) for piano, violin and cello, the role of the piano being more than predominant. These works can effectively be considered piano sonatas with a three-instrument accompaniment. But this formula does not satisfy him, so he will later eliminate the viola attempting a formula with a piano trio (piano, violin and cello). He thus

composes in 1795 in Vienna three works considered to be op. 1, i.e. Trio in E flat major, Trio in G major and Trio in C minor. They were presented at the court of prince Lichnowski, Haydn being one of the people invited at that time. He had some reservations with regard to the third trio and advised Beethoven not to publish it as such. Even at that time, Beethoven's creativity and originality was explicitly evident. On this occasion Haydn is said to have exclaimed: "*You give me the impression of a man with more than one head, more than one heart and more than one soul!*" (*Alsvang, Beethoven, 1961*).

The music for wind instruments was very popular at the time, so up to the end of the century, Beethoven composed many works with numerous elements of novelty in the field. A first example would be the *Octet in E flat major for 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 fagots and 2 horns, then three Duets for clarinet and fagot, a Trio for 2 oboes and English horn, a Sextet for 2 horns and a string quartet, a Sextet for 2 clarinets, 2 fagots and 2 horns, then a Quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet and cello op. 16 and a Trio in B flat major for piano, clarinet and cello op. 11*.

But the work that was to remain most famous in this respect is the *Septet in E flat major for clarinet, horn, fagot, violin, viola, cello and double bass op. 20 (1800)*, a work considered to be a landmark of Beethoven's creation. Experimentation with wind instruments was over. From now on, these instruments will appear only as a part of symphonic works. With the three trios, op. 9, for string instruments, composed in 1798 (G major, D major and C minor), Beethoven goes through a preliminary stage in the approach of the string quartet. Starting now, the composer's chamber music will illustrate two divergent fields: the string quartet on one hand and the music for piano and string instruments on the other. [1]

The **Piano Trio in B-flat major, Op. 97**, was completed in 1811, and is commonly referred to as the '**Archduke Trio**', because it was dedicated to Archduke Rudolf of Austria, the youngest of twelve children of Leopold II, Holy Roman Emperor. Rudolf was an amateur pianist and a patron, friend, and composition student of Beethoven. Beethoven dedicated a total of fourteen compositions to the Archduke, who dedicated one of his own to Beethoven in return. The trio was written late in Beethoven's so-called "middle period". He began composing it in the summer of 1810, and completed it in March 1811. Although the "Archduke Trio" is sometimes numbered as "No. 7", the numbering of Beethoven's twelve piano trios is not standardized, and in other sources the Op. 97 trio may be shown as having a different number, if any.

The first public performance was given by Beethoven himself at the piano, Ignaz Schuppanzigh (violin) and Josef Linke (cello) at the Viennese hotel *Zum römischen Kaiser* on 11 April 1814, as his deafness continued to encroach upon his ability as a performer. After a repeat of the work a few weeks later, Beethoven did not appear again in public as a pianist.

The violinist and composer Louis Spohr, witnessed a rehearsal of the work, and wrote: "On account of his deafness there was scarcely anything left of the virtuosity of the artist which had formerly been so greatly admired.

In *forte* passages the poor deaf man pounded on the keys until the strings jangled, and in *piano* he played so softly that whole groups of notes were omitted, so that the music was unintelligible unless one could look into the pianoforte part. I was deeply saddened at so hard a fate."

The pianist and composer Ignaz Moscheles attended the first performance, and wrote about the work: "In the case of how many compositions is the word "new" misapplied! But never in Beethoven's, and least of all in this, which again is full of originality. His playing, aside from its intellectual element, satisfied me less, being wanting in clarity and precision; but I observed many traces of the grand style of playing which I had long recognized in his compositions." [2]

Sources (with additional edits):

[1] All-about-Beethoven.com; Matthew Shorter [1a]; David Hurwitz [1b]

[2] Wikipedia.org

[3] Steven Isserlis (cellist); "Beethoven Day" interview

[4] Robin Golding; liner notes from Philips #412 570-2

[5] William Drabkin; liner notes from Deutsche Grammphon #439 934-2

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