IUSB

Recital I
BEETHOVEN SONATA SEMINAR

JOHN OWINGS

Piano

A Presentation of
INDIANA UNIVERSITY AT SOUTH BEND

DANIEL COHEN
Chancellor

ROBERT W. DEMAREE, JR.
Chairman, Division of Music

eight-fifteen o'clock
Friday, June 23, 1989
Campus Auditorium

1988-89 Season, Forty-ninth Program

JOHN OWINGS

BEETHOVEN: SONATA SERIES

First Program

Sonata No. 14 (quasi una Fantasia) in C Sharp Minor,
Op. 27, No. 2 "Moonlight" 1801

Adagio sostenuto
Allegretto
Presto agitato

Sonata No. 13 (quasi una Fantasia) in E Flat Major,
Op. 27, No. 1 ..... 1800/01

Andante - Allegro - Andante
Allegro molto e vivace
Adagio con espressione
Allegro vivace

Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109 1820

Vivace, ma non troppo - Adagio espressivo
Prestissimo
Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 21 in C Major, Op. 53 "Waldstein" 1803/04

Allegro con brio
Introduzione: Adagio molto
Rondo: Allegretto moderato

PROGRAM NOTES

One of the most often heard and played of all Beethoven's Piano Sonatas - the "Moonlight" (a title not coined by the composer) - has captivated listeners from the time it was composed. The mysterious, brooding, nocturne-like first movement was something totally new in piano writing, and a highly unusual way to begin a piano sonata. The title "Sonata quasi una Fantasia" shows that Beethoven was well aware of the novelty of this work. If the graceful second movement sounds somewhat conventional, it is an effective foil for the daring finale, whose relentless, galloping motion suggests a terrifying "night ride."

The lesser-known of these two Sonatas "quasi una Fantasia", the Sonata in E Flat, Op. 27, No. 1, also contains many unusual features. The first movement presents a collection of themes all of them placid-sounding except for the lively middle section and makes no attempt to develop them. The following movements, a Scherzo, Adagio, and final Allegro (the largest movement), are all played without pause and near the end, the theme of the Adagio is recalled, giving the whole work the sense of being one large cyclic movement. The freedom with which Beethoven molds the over-all design of this somewhat experimental work fully justifies the title "fantasy-sonata."

The first of the final three of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas, the Sonata in E, Op. 109, has as its final movement what is perhaps the most radiant theme and variations ever written for piano. After exploring histheme from many different angles, Beethoven returns to a simple re-statement of it in its original form (without repeats) to conclude the work. The first two movements, an improvisatory-sounding prelude with two alternating tempos, and a brief, stormy interlude, set the stage for what follows.

The Sonata in C, Op. 53, dates from the time of the Third Symphony, the "Eroica," an extremely productive period for Beethoven, and is dedicated to his friend and benefactor, Count Ferdinand von Waldstein. As he does with the symphonies and string quartets of this "middle" period, Beethoven here expands the whole concept of the sonata, and invests it with a freedom and harmonic boldness previously unknown (the second theme of the first movement, for example, is in the remote key of E Major). This innovative treatment extends to the use of the resources of the piano Trills, tremulos, octaves, scales, arpeggios, even octave glissandos (in the last movement), are all employed in a virtuoso display of piano sounds and textures unsurpassed anywhere in piano literature.

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