

This section continues for fifty-two bars, with the D repeated in the bass throughout. Then, however, a crescendo from the whole orchestra leads into A major, and in this key the horns again take up a lively fanfare which is repeated by the entire orchestra.

The structure of the whole overture follows the pattern of this opening: ever more forcefully surging crescendos from the whole orchestra follow the horn fanfares without any admixture of contrasted figures affecting either the forward motion or rhythmical pattern; these then die away again in *pianissimo* single notes, and repeatedly alternate with spirited horn passages until the piece reaches its exuberant conclusion. Because of this structure the modulations in the overture are also kept simple (D major, A major, D minor, B flat major, D major), and for the same reason it is hardly surprising to find that contrapuntal devices have no place here.

The reviewer has often heard this overture, well known to be a favourite work of Parisian concert-audiences, in performances by very good orchestras, and has found that despite its uncomplicated style there are certain difficulties in obtaining really effective ensemble playing. In particular it calls for four good horn players, capable of performing their fanfares, on which the effect of the whole piece so largely depends, with facility, vigour, and the utmost purity. It is the firm conviction of the reviewer that this excellent composer, who has proven his worth in much profound and serious music (one thinks, for example, of his *Joseph*), has furnished in his brisk and brilliant hunting-piece a reliable model for those who wish, in striving to conjure forth particular pictures from the imagination, to paint in music. This gives the work a deeper significance for every student who aspires to further initiation in the temple of art, as well as providing pleasurable entertainment in the theatre and concert-hall.

Review of Beethoven's Piano Trios, Op. 70 Nos. 1 and 2

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Unsigned

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Hoffmann soon became aware of the publication of these trios, in summer 1809,¹ since he ordered the second one on 30 May 1810 from the publisher. On 2 August 1811 he confirmed to the AMZ his continuing intention to review both trios, but

¹ Three separate parts were issued, for piano, violin, and cello; the trios were sold separately, with the following title page: Deux / TRIOS / Pour Pianoforte, Violon / et Violoncelle / composés et dédiés / à Madame la Comtesse Marie d'Erdödy / née Comtesse Niszky / par / Louis van Beethoven. / Propriété des Editeurs / Oeuv. 70 N^o 1. [or 2] Pr. 1 Rth. 12 gr. [or 2]

through various delays he began work only in September 1812, completing half the essay;² it was finished on 2 February 1813. In length, the review rivals those of symphonies by Beethoven, whether Hoffmann's own of the Fifth, or those by others of the Third and the Sixth.³

On one level, the whole review springs from a contradiction observed near the beginning: namely that the fortepiano (i.e. early piano) is very limited as a melody instrument but, at the same time, every Beethoven movement is based on 'a simple but fruitful and lyrical theme'. This leads Hoffmann throughout to consider (a) Beethoven's style both generally and in Op. 70, and (b) the piano as a medium, both generally and in Op. 70. Also acting as a unifying force is his simple concern to proselytise. The groundswell of this review builds on that of the Fifth Symphony by taking Beethoven's supreme Romanticism as a given fact, and then seeking to persuade the unconverted by stressing the traditional values in Op. 70, rather than any frightening aspects of its Romanticism. (The outstanding example of this is the treatment of the slow movement of Op. 70 No. 1, later to inspire the sobriquet 'Ghost Trio'.) Thus the factors of thematic unity and of counterpoint find much mention, as does the music's accessibility: 'the really musical listener will easily follow . . .'; 'no great difficulty in the piano part . . .'; the listener 'follows its amazing twists and turns' or 'understands all the most mysterious presentiments'; Op. 70 No. 1 'is less gloomy than many' Beethoven instrumental works. Allied to this is Hoffmann's determination to cite as much music in score as possible, since he knows that the publisher has issued only the parts; indeed he complains at the end of the near-universal absence of printed scores of Beethoven's music, which holds up the progress of knowledge and enlightenment.

Because it was so radically shortened for its incorporation into the fourth essay in *Kreisleriana*, this review gains commensurately more by being read in its totality. A few detailed changes, often only of a single word, are to be found between the two versions, so far as they may be compared.

The Op. 70 Trios were composed and first performed in 1808, the year of the completion of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. Op. 70 No. 1 has three movements, and Op. 70 No. 2 has four. Their outer movements are all in sonata form (subdivided as usual by Hoffmann into a first and second 'half'), but with sometimes marked idiosyncrasies.⁴

Some time ago the present writer reviewed one of Beethoven's most important works, the profoundly great Fifth Symphony in C minor. In doing so he tried to express as fully as possible his feelings about the spirit and style of

Rthlr.] / Chez Breitkopf & Härtel / à Leipsic. The plate numbers were 1339 (first trio) and 1340 (second trio).

² Hoffmann reviewed No. 1 first (*HTB*, 174-5), even though he was sent it only that August: *HBW*, i, 345.

³ The Third Symphony review (18 February 1807) spread over fifteen columns; the Sixth Symphony review (17 January 1810) spread over twelve columns. See the table in Schnaus, *Hoffmann als Beethoven-Rezensent*, 16-17.

⁴ See the discussion in Kerman, 'Tändelnde Lazzi'.

this highly gifted master. After a keen study of his works the reviewer made the statement in that article that Beethoven, more than any other, is a purely *romantic* composer, and that this is why his vocal music, which does not permit a mood of vague yearning but can only depict from the realm of the infinite those feelings capable of being formulated in words, is less successful, and why his instrumental music is not understood by the multitude. The reviewer went on to say that even this multitude will not deny him a high degree of invention; that on the contrary it is usual to regard his works merely as the product of a genius who ignores discrimination and shaping of thought and blindly surrenders to his overpowering creative fervour and the passing impulses of his imagination. He is nevertheless fully the equal of Haydn and Mozart in rational awareness, his controlling self detached from the inner realm of sounds and ruling it in absolute authority.

The reviewer finds all these judgements increasingly substantiated with every new work by this composer that reaches his eyes and ears. These two splendid trios demonstrate once more how deeply in his heart Beethoven carries the romantic spirit of music, and with what sublime originality, what authority he infuses it into his works. Every true pianist must be overjoyed when a new work for his instrument appears from this composer, who is himself a virtuoso on the fortepiano and thus writes not only with a deep knowledge of what is performable and effective but also with a visible partiality for it.

The fortepiano is and will remain an instrument more appropriate for harmony than for melody.⁵ The most refined expression of which the instrument is capable cannot bring a melody to life with the myriad nuances that the violinist's bow or the wind player's breath is able to call forth. The player struggles in vain with the insuperable difficulty presented to him by the mechanism, which by striking the strings causes them to vibrate and produce the notes. On the other hand there is probably no instrument (with the exception, that is, of the far more limited harp) that is able, like the piano, to embrace the realm of harmony with full-voiced chords and unfold its treasures to the connoisseur in the most wonderful forms and shapes. When the composer's imagination has struck upon a complete sound-painting with rich groupings, brilliant highlights, and deep shadows, he is able to bring it into being at the piano so that it emerges from his inner world in shining colours. A full score, that true musical book of charms preserving in its symbols all the miracles and mysteries of the most heterogeneous choir of instruments, comes to life at the piano under the hands of a master; and a

⁵ Hoffmann here refers to the contemporary grand piano as 'Fortepiano', but subsequently just as 'Flügel', translated 'piano'. No difference of emphasis was intended between the two terms.

piece skilfully performed from a score, including all its voices, may be compared to a good copper engraving taken from a great painting. For improvising, then, for playing from a score, for individual sonatas, toccatas, etc., the piano is excellently suited. Trios, quartets, quintets, and so on, with the usual stringed instruments added, also belong fully in the realm of piano compositions, because if they are composed in the proper manner, that is to say genuinely in four parts, five parts, and so forth, then they depend entirely on harmonic elaboration and automatically exclude brilliant passages for individual instruments. The reviewer feels this to be an extremely important principle, and for this reason has an aversion to all piano concertos;⁶ they are supposed to exploit the virtuosity of the individual player in solo passages and in melodic expressiveness, but the very best player on the very finest instrument strives in vain to equal what the violinist, for example, can achieve with little effort. Every solo, after a full tutti of strings and winds, sounds stiff and flat, and although one admires the facility of the fingers and suchlike, the heart is not really touched at all.

From what has been said about the spirit and character of Beethoven's music in general, and from the clearly indisputable assertion that he, a consummate master of composition and a virtuoso on the piano, will seize upon the most essential character of the instrument and cast it in the most appropriate form, one can abstract the underlying idea and the structure of all his piano trios, quartets, etc.⁷ It is hardly possible to mistake it in fact, even if one has not yet seen or heard any works of this type by the composer. A simple but fruitful and lyrical theme, susceptible of the most varied contrapuntal treatments, abbreviations, etc., forms the basis of every movement. All the secondary themes and figures are closely related to the main idea, and everything is interwoven and arranged so as to produce the utmost unity between all the instruments. This describes the overall structure, but within this artful edifice there is a restless alternation of the most marvellous images, in which joy and pain, melancholy and ecstasy, appear beside and within each other. Strange shapes begin a merry dance, now converging into a single point of light, now flying apart like glittering sparks, now chasing each other in infinitely varied clusters. And in the

⁶ In *Kreisleriana*, I-4, Hoffmann added a parenthesis at this point in which he excepted from this generality the concertos of Mozart and Beethoven, which he characterised as 'symphonies with piano obbligato'.

⁷ The three piano and string Trios Op. 1 (1795) were the only true precedents for Op. 70. Beethoven had published a trio for piano, clarinet/violin, and cello Op. 11 (1798); and arranged his famous Septet for a piano trio with either violin or clarinet, as Op. 38. The only piano quartet issued so far was the (authentic) arrangement of the Op. 16 piano and wind quintet (1801). The youthful piano quartets WoO 36 were published posthumously in 1828.

midst of this spirit-realm that has been revealed, the enraptured soul perceives an unknown language and understands all the most mysterious presentiments that hold it in thrall. A composer has truly penetrated the secrets of harmony only if he can use its power to affect the human heart. For him the numerical relationships⁸ that remain lifeless formulas for the pedant without genius become magical prescriptions from which he conjures forth an enchanted world.

The reviewer has found it necessary to preface all these remarks to his appraisal of the individual trios in order to make it absolutely plain how incomparably great Beethoven is in his piano works. He turns first to the Trio No. 1 in D major and quotes the opening of it here so that what he intends to say about it may be more closely seen.

Allegro vivace e con brio.

Violino. *ff* *stacc.*

Violoncello. *ff* *stacc.*

Pianoforte. *ff* *stacc.*

dolce

dolce

p

p

Ex. XVI

The first four bars contain the main theme, and the seventh and eighth bars in the cello part contain the secondary theme. With the exception of a few subordinate figures inserted between appearances of the main material, the entire Allegro is woven from these two phrases. It is particularly useful, therefore, to have the idea that dominates the whole movement played in

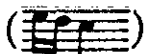
⁸ numerical relationships: harmony can be expressed and taught in numbers as 'figured bass'.

four octaves in unison; it impresses itself firmly and distinctly upon the listener, who does not then lose sight of it but follows its amazing twists and turns as though it were a silvery stream. This theme also completely epitomises the character of the trio, which is less gloomy than many of Beethoven's other instrumental works and expresses a genial serenity, a cheerful, confident awareness of its own strength and substance. Apart from the canonic imitation of the second theme there are no other contrapuntal passages in the first half of the Allegro, which is only seventy-three bars long. The concluding idea, played first by the piano [bar 44] against the cello and violin in octaves, and then by the latter instruments against quavers from the piano in octaves, returns at the end of the second half in an undeveloped though altered form. The first half in fact contains merely the exposition of the piece. In the second half an ingenious, contrapuntal texture now begins and continues until the entry of the main theme in D major in its original form. The bass part in the piano takes up a figure that seems almost like the second bar of the secondary theme (played in the first half by the cello)⁹ in contrary motion, while the cello and the upper part of the piano alternately play an abbreviated version of the main theme, and the violin adds an even shorter extract from the main theme in canonic imitation.

The image shows a musical score for piano, cello, and violin. It consists of six systems of staves. The first system has three staves (piano, cello, violin) with dynamics *pp*. The second system has three staves with dynamics *pp* and *sf*. The third system has three staves with dynamics *pp* and *sf*. The fourth system has three staves with dynamics *pp* and *sf*. The fifth system has three staves with dynamics *pp* and *sf*. The sixth system has three staves with dynamics *pp* and *sf*. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature.

⁹ See bar 8 of Ex. XVI.

In the ninth bar [bar 82] the main theme played in unison in the bass of the piano and of the cello leads from D major to B flat major, and in this key it is immediately joined by the secondary theme. This is extended by the right hand of the piano against a held pedal point while cello and violin repeat the first bar of the secondary theme in thirds. Now a new theme enters, moving up and down the scale as far as the seventh and alternating between the upper and lower parts of the piano, while violin and cello further develop an idea from the secondary theme in alternation. The piano and the other instruments imitate this idea, which is only one bar long, until the musical argument seems to be dying away in a canonic stretto.¹⁰ But it soon becomes livelier again; the violin takes up the first bar of the main theme, the upper part of the piano does likewise, and the cello plays the second bar of the secondary theme. A battle royal now develops between all the parts. Two bars, one bar, three notes of the main theme,



both forwards and backwards, are interwoven with each other in canonic imitation. This is the most original and ingenious part of the whole Allegro and the reviewer quotes it here for convenient inspection by the reader [bar 124].

¹⁰ This 'canonic stretto' is at bars 120-4; the music is *fortissimo*, so Hoffmann's phrase 'dying away' refers to the reduced two-part texture.

The main theme now returns in its original key, and according to the usual pattern followed by instrumental pieces of this type one would expect the first half to return and to remain in the tonic for the entry of the secondary theme. This is not the case, however. The ingenious composer surprises us with a sudden turn into D minor, in which key the [main] theme is repeated, whereupon the music moves into B flat major for the entry of the lyrical secondary theme. By means of a chromatically rising bass the music moves into A major and then back into D major [bars 181-98].

The closing theme of the first half follows in an altered form, in that the quaver figure is played first¹¹ by violin and cello in octaves, then by the upper part of the piano, and lastly in the bass of the piano. Following the repeat of the second half the secondary theme is heard once more¹² in G

¹¹ The violin and cello octave quavers at bar 203 actually follow a cello statement at 199. But in any case, Hoffmann's reference to 'closing theme' (*Schlussstema*) at this point is characterised solely in terms of the quavers, whereas in the exposition, his 'concluding idea' (*Schlussgedanke*) was characterised in terms of what occurred against those quavers. We shall find a similar inconsistency concerning the last movement of Op. 70 No. 2.

¹² The coda, here referred to, is twenty-one bars long.

major in canonic imitation between the three instruments, which leads the music back into D major, and the movement ends with the first bar of the main theme in unison.



The reviewer hopes that by precisely elucidating the progress of this outstanding piece he has not only given a sufficient impression of the trio to those still unfamiliar with it, but has also enabled the informed reader, when he hears or plays it, more deeply to appreciate the genius of the music, which emerges in its very diversity of contrapuntal treatments of a short, straightforward theme. To achieve this aim he has not hesitated to illustrate the most complicated and difficult part of the score in full.

The second movement, a *Largo assai ed espressivo*, bears a character of gentle, soothing melancholy. The theme is again composed in true Beethovenian style of two quite simple figures, only one bar long, divided between the piano and the other instruments.

Largo assai ed espressivo.

Beethoven's Piano Trios

These few harmonically fertile bars again contain the material from which the whole movement is fashioned. Primarily it is the cello figure in the ninth bar, with its counter-theme in the piano which blends in so beautifully, that repeatedly appears in imitation. The main theme in the second bar of the piano is also of potent effect when it is taken up and further developed by the cello [bar 26].



The modulation is not at all complicated, and the reviewer makes mention of only one other feature that distinguishes this movement from so many piano compositions. When the main theme is played by the violin and cello the piano usually accompanies it with a part in hemidemisemiquaver sextuplets to be played *pianissimo* and *leggiermente*.



This is almost the only way in which the *tone* of a good piano can be brought out in an arresting manner. If these sextuplets are played with a dexterous, light touch with the soft pedal down and the dampers raised, a susurrant effect is produced that recalls the aeolian harp and glass harmonica¹³ and has a quite wonderful effect when combined with the bowed notes of the other instruments. To the soft pedal and the sustaining pedal the reviewer added the so-called harmonica pedal.¹⁴ As is well known this device shifts the keyboard sideways so that the hammers strike only one string, and from the beautiful

¹³ Beethoven left no pedal indications at all. Although many piano pedals were available at the time (see p. 141 n. 244), the three that Hoffmann used here were considered the essential ones by Czerny and others. (1) The 'soft pedal' (*Pianozug, jeu céleste, jeu de buffle*) operated 'a strip of wood to which are glued tongues of leather about 2.50 cm in length which are interposed between the hammers and the strings to the extent of half their length for *piano* and produced to their full extent to muffle a further length of string for *pianissimo*.' (2) The 'sustaining pedal' (*Forte, grande pédale*) raised the dampers to prolong the tone. Rosamund Harding, *The Piano-forte: its History Traced to the Great Exhibition of 1851* (Cambridge, 1933), 44, 413-14. Jean-Louis Adam (*Méthode de Piano, 1804/5*) noted exactly the same effect of a glass harmonica produced by exactly Hoffmann's means. Harding, *The Piano-forte*, 125.

¹⁴ The 'harmonica pedal' (*Verschiebung, Una Corda, shift*) slid the keyboard sideways 'so that one only out of a pair of unison strings is struck'. *Ibid.*, 44.

Streicher piano¹⁵ floated sounds that surrounded the soul like hazy figures in a dream, enticing it into a magical world of curious presentiments.

The closing movement, Presto, in D major, again has a short, original theme that appears in a constant alternation of various transformations and ingenious allusions throughout the piece.

Presto.

Just as the storm-wind drives the clouds before it producing abrupt alternations of light and dark, and just as figures take shape amid the ceaseless buffeting, then melt away and form again, so the music hurries impetuously forward after the second fermata. The music veers towards A major, F major, etc. with an octave passage in the piano, while violin and cello canonically imitate a new figure that ascends through the scale to the fifth. There follow imitations of the main subject, as for example [bar 76]

¹⁵ The Austrian firm Streicher was founded in 1802 and became the leading Viennese piano manufacturer. Their surviving grand pianos usually have four pedals: Una Corda, Bassoon, Soft, and Sustaining. See *The New Grove*, xviii, 267.

until in B flat major the whole first theme seems to be coming in but is extended in an original way that more than ever displays Beethoven's style, seen in his final movements particularly as a constant increase in intensity and momentum. The close of the first half leads into the main theme in such a way that there is absolutely no perceptible break separating the first half from the second,¹⁶ as befits the restlessly driving character of the whole movement.

The second half begins with a development and imitation of the octave passage in the first half, and it would really lead the reviewer too far astray to analyse all the new devices and the original structure of the entire second half in sufficient detail to be understood; this could be done only through examples. He therefore contents himself with quoting from the second half just a single canonic imitation of a figure in crotchet triplets, which have not previously appeared, since it again epitomises the unmistakable characteristics of this composer [bar 194].

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piano trio. The first system consists of three staves: a treble clef staff with a whole note chord, a middle staff with a melodic line marked *dolce*, and a bass clef staff with a harmonic accompaniment marked *(p dolce)*. The second system also consists of three staves: a treble clef staff with a whole note chord, a middle staff with a melodic line marked *cresc.* and featuring triplet markings, and a bass clef staff with a harmonic accompaniment marked *cresc.*

¹⁶ Slight inaccuracy here again exists in the formal description: the 'main theme' is led into only when the exposition ('first half') is repeated. But the essential continuity obtains after both playings of the exposition.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system has two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The second system has one treble and one bass clef. The third system has two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'f', 'più forte', and 'ff', and performance instructions like '8va'.

Despite the geniality that prevails throughout the trio, not even excluding its melancholy Largo, Beethoven's spirit remains serious and solemn. The master seems to be implying that the deeper mysteries can never be spoken of in ordinary words, even when the spirit feels itself joyfully uplifted in moments of intimate familiarity with them, but only in expressions of sublime splendour. The dance of the High Priests of Isis can only be a hymn of exultation. The reviewer is convinced too that purely instrumental music, when its dramatic effect is to be achieved solely by itself as music rather than by some particular application, should avoid facetiousness and clowning.¹⁷ The profounder mind seeks intimations of that joy, sublimer than the confines of this world allow, which comes to us from an unknown domain and kindles in the breast an inner bliss, a higher significance than feeble words, confined to the expression of banal earthly pleasures, can communicate. The reviewer intends to come back to this point again after

¹⁷ clowning: Hoffmann uses 'Lazzi', properly signifying 'stage business', particularly in the improvising parts of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* performance. So his meaning might include the mimetic aspects of playing showy piano music, as well as applying metaphorically to its substance. Kerman ('Tändelnde Lazzi') wonders whether Hoffmann half-alludes to the finale of Op. 70 No. 1.

reviewing the second trio, to which he now turns, in connection with the justified complaint that he must raise about the fact that so many good pianists can hardly be persuaded to perform Beethoven's compositions.

In the second trio, the flowing theme of the introductory section in E flat major, *Poco sostenuto*, common time, establishes a tranquil mood: it is played by the three instruments in canonic imitation.



In the eleventh bar, however, while the violin and cello only have single notes, livelier figures in semiquavers and semiquaver triplets appear in the upper part of the piano, until another pleasantly expressive theme leads to a pause on the dominant; thereupon an *Allegro ma non troppo* begins, in E flat major, 6/8 time.



Despite the 6/8 time, which normally produces a skipping, light-hearted effect, this movement maintains both in its initial form and in its various transformations a serious and – if one may use the expression – aristocratic character. The reviewer was inevitably reminded of several works by

Mozart in a similar rhythm, particularly the Allegro of the splendid symphony in E flat major, known as the 'Swan Song'.¹⁸ He will speak, however, exclusively of the theme and not of the further development or structure of the movement, which again displays Beethoven's genius in the most original way. After a number of ideas in the upper part of the piano and violin taken from the main theme, such as the following:



a splendid second theme follows in the twenty-first bar [bars 39–40], still in the main key of E flat major, played first by the cello with piano accompaniment and then by the right hand of the piano and the violin *all'ottava*. The music now moves towards the dominant, and the theme of the introductory section, merely transposed into 6/8 time although allotted to different instruments, is heard again in canonic imitation [bar 53].

The way in which the music is arranged here makes it sound like an unexpected chorale that suddenly breaks through the artfully woven

¹⁸ 'Swan Song': once-popular name for Symphony 39 (1788), K V 543. See p. 97 n. 159.

venture and stirs the spirit like a strange and wonderful vision. Only the more practised ear will immediately recognise the introductory section, so utterly different and new does it seem. It evinces the master's boundless wealth of invention and his penetration of the harmonic depths, that from a single idea a few bars long so many motives are generated, springing from it like the luxuriant blossom and fruit of a fertile tree. The first half ends in B flat major with a triplet figure from the piano while cello and violin allude briefly to the main theme, and the close leads straight back to the beginning of the first half. After the repeat the triplet figure is continued, with the cello and violin in imitation playing first a four-note then a two-note extract from the main theme.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano trio. Each system consists of three staves: the top staff is for the violin, the middle for the cello, and the bottom for the piano. The first system begins with a *(dolce)* marking and a triplet of eighth notes in the violin part. The piano part starts with a *(p)* dynamic. Both systems include *cresc.* markings and feature intricate rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note passages. The notation is in a key with one flat (B-flat major) and a 3/4 time signature.

The reviewer would also mention the enharmonic transition from D flat minor into B major in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth bars [of the development] which, though not remotely as crude as many modulations of this type in recent compositions, nevertheless has the most striking effect. In the twentieth bar the composer notates the piano and cello in C flat major, but has already allowed the violin to adopt B major [bars 113-15].

Clearly this was done because the violinist's intonation is greatly facilitated after the preceding rests, and because the piano can in any case be tuned only in equal temperament, which permits no distinction between B major and C flat major. The return to E flat minor is quickly achieved by three chords [bars 124-6].

After the main theme has re-entered in the tonic, the further working-out is with minor differences similar to that in the first half, except that the music remains in the tonic after the entry of the second main theme. Before the close the introductory section in common time comes back again, but after only nine bars the 6/8 time signature resumes, and the main theme in abbreviated form brings the Allegro to an end. The elements of which this movement consists are more heterogeneous than one is otherwise accustomed to in Beethoven's music, in that the second subject of the Allegro bears little relation to the first, and the third theme, taken from the introduction, appears to be totally unfamiliar.¹⁹ Nevertheless it all constitutes a perfect and compelling whole, and the really musical listener will easily follow the admittedly complicated course of the Allegro, even if many things may not perhaps be clear at first to the less practised ear.

The following movement, Allegretto, in C major, 2/4 time, has an agreeably songlike theme and is fashioned in the manner employed by Haydn for many of his andantes, particularly in symphonies, consisting of varied intermediate sections in the minor, after each of which the main theme enters luminously in the major.

¹⁹ The 'third theme' occurs at bar 53, so the 'second subject' meant here is the cello theme at bars 39-40.



In this Allegretto too the composer remains faithful to the true style of this genre, in that the three instruments are interwoven in such a way that only together can they render the overall conception of the music. Every figure is carefully weighed and effectively inserted in the appropriate place. Even the opening figure



frequently recurs in the subsequent working-out, more sharply defining the character of the piece, as for example at the end of the first minor section and in the conclusion. In order to avoid becoming too expansive the reviewer must advise the reader, both here and in the following Allegretto ma non troppo, in A flat major, 3/4 time, to make a thorough study of the work, which will delight and elevate every true musician. Only musical examples exceeding the reasonable limits of a review could make clear the further observations he would like to make. May he merely say that the splendid theme of this Allegretto, which is actually the piquant middle movement introduced by Haydn under the name 'Menuetto', again reminded him of the noble eagle's flight of Mozart's music.



The Trio²⁰ has a totally original structure, consisting of fragmented phrases alternating between the cello and violin and the piano.

²⁰ Trio: Beethoven indicates neither 'Menuetto' nor 'Trio'. The likeness which Hoffmann notices was more apparent from the way the music was printed out in the first edition than it is in some later editions, namely ABABA where 'B' is the 'Trio'.

In this same Trio the composer executes the following modulation, audaciously confident of his power to rule the world of sounds [bar 97]:

Ex. XVII

One can see what a wealth of piquant effects the enharmonic system offers, but the reviewer may well share the view of every musician of taste when he entrusts the use of these devices only to the profoundly experienced master, and strongly warns against it all those not yet initiated into the innermost magic circle of the art. Only the artist who has bridled the eccentric flight of his genius by the most painstaking study of his art, who has thereby acquired the highest degree of rational awareness, and now rules the inner world of sounds, only he possesses the full and confident

ability to apply to their maximum effect the boldest devices that art affords him. The pupil or the blind imitator without genius or talent is most likely to blunder precisely where he intends to be most forceful.

In the final movement, Allegro, in E flat major, 2/4 time, everything the reviewer has said in his remarks about the last movement of the first trio again applies. There is a constant increase in intensity and momentum; ideas and images rush past in ceaseless flight, coruscating and vanishing like flashes of lightning; the most fevered imaginings are given free rein. And yet this movement is again fashioned from a few short ideas and closely related figures.

[Finale.]
Allegro.

The musical score consists of four systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The second system includes the instruction *p dolce* in both the treble and bass staves. The third system also features *p dolce* markings. The fourth system continues the piece with similar notation. The score includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The first six bars seem merely to form an introduction to the simple theme itself which does not enter until the seventh bar; but it is this introductory idea, with its loudly punctuating chords from the violin, cello, and piano left hand, which is subsequently treated with the most varied transformations and allusions. After the violin takes up the theme, followed by the piano again, the cello merely plays the first bar while the violin imitates it in notes twice the speed (semiquavers); then in the thirty-first bar the introductory passage comes in again. A sort of cadenza from the piano in triplets leads into C minor, then the introductory passage again; a cadenza from the violin in G minor, and once again the introductory passage; then a cadenza from the cello. Now follows a new theme [bar 49] in crotchets, the comparative tranquillity of which lasts for only a few bars, however, since a new storm drives the music through G minor, G major, and C major, until the passage with which the Allegro began leads back again through G minor and C minor into the main key and the repeat of the first half. The second half begins with the same figure, and now it is the punctuating chords from the opening as well as the semiquaver figure, played by all three instruments in imitation, which give rise to the most artful and striking development through the most audacious of modulations. No proper conception of this original treatment is possible without seeing the score; the reviewer therefore quotes here the entire passage, since by so doing he hopes, even for those who know the trio, to facilitate the study and stimulate a deeper awareness of this great work [bars 128-66; see Ex. XVIII]. After an interruption of only eight bars, which themselves hint at the figure from the opening passage, the latter appears once more and with the gentle main theme leads back into the tonic.²¹ The subsequent structure corresponds to

Ex. XVIII

The musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are for Violin and Piano, and the bottom two are for Cello and Piano. The music is in 3/4 time and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. A dynamic marking 'all' ova alta' is present above the third staff.

²¹ The retransition at bar 174 uses opening material, culminating in the recapitulation at bar 186 and the 'gentle main theme' at bar 192.

Beethoven's Piano Trios

The image shows a page of musical notation for Beethoven's Piano Trios, page 321. The score is written for two pianos and a cello/bass. It consists of 14 staves of music, arranged in pairs. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two flats, and various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A 'loco' marking is present above the sixth staff. The music is in a complex, multi-measure structure, typical of Beethoven's late piano trios.

This musical score is arranged in six systems, each containing three staves. The top two staves of each system are for a vocal line, and the bottom two are for a piano accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The score features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piano part includes chords and arpeggiated figures. The vocal line consists of a single melodic line with some rests. The notation includes various note heads, stems, and beams, as well as dynamic markings like 'f' and 's'.

the first half, but with different modulations, and the lyrical middle section which occurred in G major in the first half [bar 89]²²

²² This theme, heard first at bar 83 without the semiquavers shown here, has not actually found mention before; thus Hoffmann gives the original pitch-level of the exposition rather than that of the recapitulation, where it occurs at bars 281ff. and 341ff., in C and then E flat majors. Conversely, Hoffmann does not mention the recapitulation of the tranquil theme 'in crotchets', originally used at bar 49.

is not only repeated in C major but also, when the section returns to the tonic, further developed by all the instruments in imitation. Eventually it appears abbreviated in a sort of strettò, and then the introductory passage bursts forth again, alternating with the main theme and finally leading to the brilliant, breathless closing phrases with semiquavers in all the instruments.

In terms of mere dexterity, of the sort employing breakneck passages up and down the keyboard with both hands executing all sorts of odd leaps and whimsical flourishes, there is in these trios no great difficulty in the piano part, since the few runs, triplet figures and the like must be within the powers of any practised player; and yet they are in many ways extremely difficult to perform. Many so-called virtuosos dismiss Beethoven's piano works, not only complaining 'Very difficult!' but adding 'And most ungrateful!' As far as difficulty is concerned, the proper performance of Beethoven's works demands nothing less than that one understands him, that one penetrates to his inner nature, and that in the knowledge of the performer's own state of grace one ventures boldly into the circle of magical beings that his irresistible spell summons forth. Whoever does not feel this grace within him, whoever regards music solely as amusement, as a pastime for idle hours, as a passing gratification for jaded ears, or as a vehicle for his own ostentation, let him keep away from it. Only such a one could utter the reproach 'And most ungrateful!' The true artist lives only in the work that he conceives and then performs as the composer intended it. He disdains to let his own personality intervene in any way; all his endeavours are spent in quickening to vivid life, in a thousand shining colours, all the sublime effects and images the composer's magical authority enclosed within his work, so that they encircle us in bright rings of light, inflaming our imaginings, our innermost soul, and bear us speeding on the wing into the far-off spirit-realm of music.

That there are few such artists, such genuine virtuosos (for regrettably even in the world of art egoism and empty ostentation are rife), is no less certain than that one comes across few music lovers who feel appreciably moved or elevated by the profound genius of this composer. Since it became the fashion to use music as an incidental beguilement of boredom in society, everything is expected to be simple and pleasant, that is to say devoid of all significance and depth; and because, sadly, there are composers in plenty upon the earth who pander to the spirit of the age, a great deal of this flimsy stuff exists. Many not entirely bad musicians complain about the incomprehensibility of Beethoven's compositions, and of Mozart's too; this is the result, however, of subjective imbecility which prevents the whole from being seen and grasped as the sum of its parts. Thus weak compositions are

Beethoven's Mass in C

always praised for their great *clarity*. The reviewer has been fortunate enough to hear a gifted lady, who plays the piano with virtuosity, perform several of Beethoven's compositions so excellently that it became very clear to him that only what the *spirit* provides is to be paid regard, and that all the rest cometh of evil.²³

It is to be hoped that happier circumstances in the world of art will make it possible for publishers to issue Beethoven's instrumental works in score. What an inexhaustible storehouse for the proper study of music that would offer the artist and the knowledgeable listener! With this wish the reviewer concludes his essay, in which he has sought to express many of the feelings lying so deeply in his heart.

Review of Beethoven's Mass in C

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Unsigned

As the Napoleonic era came to a close, the conditions developed for a period of religious feeling and renewal. Catholic and Protestant Europe alike were affected. Although not a worshipper, Hoffmann was bound to be concerned, as a Romantic thinker, with impulses that affected man's perception of the divine purpose. His concern with religious music and art eventually led to memorable results in the survey 'Old and New Church Music' (p. 351) and the story *Die Jesuiterkirche in G.* (*The Jesuit Chapel in G.*) in 1816. In the latter, his character of the Maltese painter speaks of the relation between these things in a passage that also recalls the final pages of *Kreisleriana*: 'To see Nature in her profoundest significance, the higher purpose which inspires all creatures to yearn for the higher life - such is the divine purpose of art . . . the power descends [on the initiated artist] like the Holy Spirit itself, to portray this divine glimpse in his works.'¹ As an amateur painter himself and a visitor of art-galleries, Hoffmann would have been only too aware of the success of an artist like Caspar David Friedrich in creating a visual language that was devotional, based on powerful feeling for nature, and suggestive of the infinite. To attempt to define the character of an authentic 'religious music' was of importance to him.

However, the tide of feeling in general had been flowing strongly against any vital form of religious music. When Beethoven tried to sell the present Mass to Breitkopf & Härtel in 1808 they responded bluntly, 'No demand for church works', and the composer gave them the score without fee, acknowledging 'the utterly frigid attitude

²³ Matthew 5, 37 (Sermon on the Mount): a favourite adage of Hoffmann's.

¹ *The Jesuit Chapel in G.*, tr. Ronald Taylor (London, 1985), 136.