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ARTUR PIZARRO

Artur Pizarro plays a Blüthner concert grand piano model 1 (280cm / 9'2")
supplied courtesy of the Blüthner Piano Centre, London – www.bluthners.co.uk

Artur Pizarro uses the Heinrich Schenker edition
originally published by Universal-Edition A.G., Vienna
in the republication by Dover Publications, Inc.

Since winning the Leeds International Piano Competition in 1990, Artur Pizarro pursues a truly international career. Renowned for his lyrical poeticism and outstanding virtuosity, Artur Pizarro performs regularly throughout the world with the leading orchestras and the world's most distinguished conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Sir Andrew Davis, Charles Dutoit, Franz Welser-Möst and Sir Simon Rattle.

Artur regularly appears as a recitalist and chamber musician. As a recitalist Artur has performed at many of the world's most prestigious venues and festivals including Washington's Kennedy Centre, The Wigmore Hall, the Aldeburgh Festival, Neues Gewandhaus, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Théâtre du Châtelet, Musée D'Orsay, Zurich Tonhalle, the BBC Proms, and the NHK and Orchard Halls in Japan. Artur's regular chamber music appearances have partnered him with Raphael Oleg, Christian Altenburger, Truls Mörk, Toby Hoffmann, the St Lawrence and the Muir Quartets.

Artur Pizarro has recorded extensively for Collins Classics to great critical acclaim. Artur has also released a disc of two piano works by Milhaud with Stephen Coombs for Hyperion. With Joan Enric Lluna Artur has released a CD for Harmonia Mundi of Spanish music for clarinet and piano. Artur's recording of Rachmaninov's third piano concerto with Martyn Brabbins and the NDR Orchestra has been particularly well received. Also with Martyn Brabbins, Artur recently recorded the premiere CD of the 'Dramatic Fantasy' and 'Concerto for Piano & Orchestra' by Jose Vianna da Motta with the Gulbenkian Orchestra. This CD is Artur's debut album for Linn Records.

recorded at **Potton Hall**, Suffolk 16 - 18 October 2002
produced and engineered by **Philip Hobbs**
post-production by **Julia Thomas**
piano technician **Bruno Torrens**
original photograph of Artur Pizarro by **Mike Owen**
cover Beethoven with the manuscript of the "Missa solemnis" – painting, 1819, by Joseph Karl Stieler (1781-1858). Photo **AKG** London.
design and photo-touching by **John Haxby**, Knaresborough
Artur Pizarro's Worldwide Management : **Tom Croxon Management**

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ARTUR PIZARRO

Beethoven piano sonatas

pathétique
moonlight
tempest
appassionata

Beethoven piano sonatas

1-3 sonata no.8 - *pathétique* in C minor : **Op.13** (1798)
1 Grave; Allegro di molto e con brio (9.05)
2 Adagio cantabile : 4.55
3 Rondo (Allegro) : 3.48

4-6 sonata no.14 - *moonlight* in C# minor : **Op.27/2** (1801)
4 Adagio sostenuto : 6.41
5 Allegretto : 2.10
6 Presto agitato : 6.39

7-9 sonata no.17 - *tempest* in D minor : **Op.31/2** (1802)
7 Largo : 8.32
8 Adagio : 8.44
9 Allegretto : 5.01

10-12 sonata no.23 - *appassionata* in F minor : **Op.57** (1804)
10 Allegro assai : 9.56
11 Andante con moto : 5.42
12 Allegro ma non troppo – Presto : 7.07

"The popularity of these sonatas can probably be attributed to the public's liking for titles, since those with titles are among the best loved." So said the pianist Edwin Fischer; however unfair it may be on those Beethoven sonatas (or Haydn symphonies for that matter) lacking a sobriquet, the memorable nicknames undoubtedly helped to establish these works in the public imagination, where they have remained since Beethoven's day.

Unlike the other works on this recording, the *Grande Sonate Pathétique* was so titled by its composer. Its mood of high seriousness is established in the *Grave* introduction, which turns out to be rather more than that. Its reappearance in the development and recapitulation looks forward to the "arrest/movement" polarization of the Op. 31/2 *Tempest* sonata. The popularity of the *Pathétique* is due in part to the straightforward appeal of the *Adagio cantabile*, a simple rondo whose memorable theme is sung out in the rich tenor register of the instrument. The concluding *Rondo*, despite the defiant "Beethoven-in-C-minor" final gesture, is lighter in mood than its preceding movements; its rather elusive theme, which Beethoven is said to have played "humorously", is a world away from the brow-furrowed sentiments of the opening movement.

The *Moonlight* title derives from a striking image from the pen of the poet and critic Ludwig Rellstab – "a boat visiting the wild places on Lake Lucerne by moonlight". The predominantly low sonorities of the opening *Adagio sostenuto* certainly conjures up a crepuscular scene. Timothy Jones has suggested that the constant *piano* (or softer) dynamic and the desolate, tolling melody could be "a representation of Beethoven's impaired auditory world and – at the same time – a lament for its loss". The brief *Allegretto* – "a flower between two abysses" in Liszt's telling phrase – is directed to be played *attacca* from the *Adagio* and serves as a moderately-paced bridge between the slow opening movement and the climactic finale. Beethoven employed a similar formal strategy both in Op. 27 No. 1 (like the *Moonlight* entitled *Sonata quasi una fantasia*) as well as the preceding Op. 26 sonata. In all of these works, Beethoven finds new ways of interconnecting materials between movements and of transferring weight to the finales. The concluding *Presto agitato* of the *Moonlight* transforms material from the *Adagio sostenuto* in a movement of astonishing drive and force.

Indirectly, we have Beethoven to thank for the *Tempest* tag to his D minor sonata Op. 31 No. 2. Anton Schindler, one of Beethoven's circle, reported that he once asked Beethoven to explain the "key" to the Opp. 31/2 and 57 sonatas, to be gnomically advised "just read Shakespeare's Tempest." The story has a ring of truth about it; it was not the only time that Beethoven made reference to Shakespeare with regard to hidden "programmes" in his music. If it was his intention to link his genius with Shakespeare's, it worked; during the nineteenth century, the notion became a critical commonplace. The D minor sonata opens with a stark opposition of materials; a soft, arpeggiated chord, marked *Largo*, followed by a nervous burst of active music, which has more than a hint of the opera house about it. The arpeggios take on an unsettling quality when they reappear at the beginning of the recapitulaion. They flower into strange recitatives, their poetry intensified by their very wordlessness. As Charles Rosen has remarked, Beethoven's direction to hold down the sustaining pedal at this point lends them "a hollow and even cavernous quality like a voice from the tomb". Both the arpeggiated chord and elements of the recitatives are employed in the succeeding *Adagio,* in which the concept of opposites is also continued. Here, the farthest reaches of Beethoven's piano are exploited in a dialogue of extreme registers. In the concluding *Allegretto,* the arpeggio is transformed into the material for a nagging *perpetuum mobile* in which the intimation of the human voice, ever present during the first two movements, seems entirely absent.

Czerny declared Beethoven's Op. 57 sonata to be "much too magnificent" for its *Appassionata* title. Beethoven disliked the nickname provided by his publisher, although he declared himself satisfied by the work itself. The enormous scale of its opening movement is symphonic both in structure and sheer volume; for the first time, a work for solo piano could challenge the power of an orchestra. The *Appassionata* could only have been conceived for a state-of-the-art instrument. In 1803, Beethoven acquired an Erard grand piano, which afforded him an extended treble range as well as considerably increased robustness. The Walter fortepiano on which he performed the *Pathétique* would have been reduced to matchwood by the shattering power of the *fortissimo* chordal assaults which Beethoven unleashes at various points in this stormy movement. The *Andante con moto* presages Beethoven's visionary slow movements in his final sonatas. A stately, chorale-like theme is subjected to three variations, which ascend by degrees into higher registers of the instrument. As Donald Francis Tovey remarked, the *Andante* is "…a dream that must be shattered at the first hint of action." The finale, a tumultuous *Allegro ma non troppo,* is a sonata form in which Beethoven directs the performer to repeat both the development and recapitulation, thereby creating an effective counterweight to the massive opening movement. In the coda, the pulse is further increased to a *Presto* for a savage, Dionysiac dance that breaks into a final, frenzied statement of the opening material.

Programme note by
Sandy Matheson, Edinburgh, January 2003