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AMY BEACH'S SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO IN A MINOR, OP.34: ANALYSIS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR VIOLIN PERFORMANCE

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A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach (1867–1944) is a largely forgotten American master composer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her Sonata for Violin and Piano in A minor, op. 34 dates from 1896 and is a masterwork worthy of study and performance. Presently, the Sonata remains under-appreciated, which is a significant loss.

This document consists of the following components: 1) Beach's biographical sketch; 2) Beach's general compositional style and background on her Violin Sonata; 3) theoretical analysis of four movements; 4) technique difficulties in each movement; 5) three different interpretations played by Gabrielle Lester duo, Tasmin Little duo, and Vera Vaidman duo.

The historical overview, analysis, and performing editions into Beach's Violin Sonata serve to aid performers to learn and form their own interpretations of this Sonata.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Need for Study

Beach's music was well regarded by leading composers and musicians during her lifetime, and her fame was truly international. However, after her death, her music began to seem out-of-date. It has been neglected under the impact of modernism such as the use of atonal harmonic language and electronic music.

Most of her chamber works are now underplayed and deserve rediscovery. However, only six documents treat Beach's chamber music and even they lack detailed discussion. The Sonata for Violin and Piano in A minor, op.34 was her first large-scale chamber work. This document will investigate that work, identifying in it some principal characteristics of her chamber music and her compositional style generally.

Purpose of Study

This study will combine numerous analytical tools and will demonstrate how analysis can assist performers better understanding Beach's musical meaning behind the notes. The purpose of this study is to foster an appreciation and understanding of Beach's Violin Sonata through an overview of her life, a description of her general compositional style, a close look at some specific traits of the Sonata, and a consideration of how that analysis might inform the performance of this work. I hope this study will serve as a helpful resource for those who are interested in romantic and lyrical sonatas.

Procedure

The study will start with the research on Beach's life and compositions in Chapter 2, relying on the published sources listed in the Literature Review section of this document. The analysis in Chapter 3 will adopt numerous approaches including formal, motivic, topical, rhythmic, and Schenkerian. Then, in Chapter 4, I will compare the recordings of Gabrielle Lester and Diana Ambache, Tasmin Little and John Lenehan, Vera Vaidman and John Lenehan. The suggestions of techniques and interpretation will be based on analysis of recordings, scores, and personal observation from my own performance preparation. Finally, in Chapter 5, based on two interpretive modes, the analysis-based and performance-based, the comparison will focus on certain aspects, such as tempo, vibrato, articulation, and dynamic changes.

Limitations

The analysis of Beach's Sonata will be selective, focusing on the most salient characteristics. An in-depth description of every one of Beach's chamber music output is beyond the scope of this study and her Violin Sonata will not embody every aspect of her compositional style.

Organization of the Study

This document will comprise an introduction followed by five chapters.

Chapter 2 will provide historical background information pertinent to Beach's life, compositional style, and her Violin Sonata. Then follows an overview of each movement's structure, which will serve as a prelude to a more detailed analysis of Beach's use of melody, harmony, and form. Schenkerian graphs, formal charts, and annotated musical examples will be used to support my observations. The close analysis will lead to performance considerations.

Chapter 3 will focus on performing techniques such as fingerings, bowings, and bow strokes. Chapter 4 will offer interpretive suggestions by comparing Gabrielle Lester duo, Tasmin Little duo, and Vera Vaidman duo's recordings. The last chapter will conclude the results of the research.

Review of Related Literature

Books

In 1906, Arthur P. Schmidt Company released an analytical sketch of Beach by Percy Goetschius entitled "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach" in order to advertise Beach's newly published music. Goetschius briefly writes about Beach's childhood, education, and compositional style, then lists a vast collection of newspaper reviews of her compositions. This early document affirmed Beach's success during her lifetime and concluded that her style was "serious, scholarly, with technical treatment which is as effective as it is always refined."[1] To support his opinion, Goetschius chose her Sonata for Violin and Piano as an example. He emphasized that her Sonata reflected effective development of the structural design and the contrapuntal texture in the greatest mastery of tone.[2]

In 1994, Jeanell Wise Brown published *Amy Beach and her Chamber Music: Biography, Documents, Style*. This book is of great importance and relevance to this study because not only does it contain a lengthy biography, it also carefully investigates Beach's chamber music. Brown's book divides Beach's life into six periods and uncovers her stylistic features in each of her chamber works. Brown draws on specific passages in Beach's work and compares them with the works of other Romantic composers who possibly influenced her. In the analysis of Beach's

[1] Percy Goetschius, *Biographical sketch: Mrs. H.H.A. Beach*. (New York: Arthur P. Schmidt Company, 1906), 16.
[2] Ibid., 14.

Sonata for Violin and Piano, for example, Brown points out that the syncopated chordal pattern in the third movement was a technique she seemed to have adopted from Brahms.[3] My study will also relate Beach's compositional style to those of other Romantic composers, such as Brahms, Liszt, and Wagner.

1994 also saw the publication of Walter Jenkins' book, *The Remarkable Mrs. Beach, American Composer: A Biographical Account Based on her Diaries, Letters, Newspaper Clippings, and Personal Reminiscences*. As a biographical account, not a true biography, it enumerates important events in Beach's life but makes no attempt to analyze her compositions or to evaluate her influence in the history of woman composers or American music. Jenkins met Amy Beach at MacDowell Colony.[4] When Beach died, he took it on himself to be Beach's biographer out of respect and admiration for her. It is touching that he wrote a section entitled "Some Recollections of Mrs. H. H. A. Beach" in memory of her. Unfortunately, Jenkins' dream of a published biography of Amy Beach was left unfulfilled at the time he died. Jenkins' colleague, John Baron edited and completed the book. The book reproduced Beach's manuscript, diaries, letters, and newspaper reviews. These well-organized materials secure a good foundation for this study. But it is surprising that Jenkins, both as a composer and theorist, did not discuss any of Beach's outstanding works or her compositional styles.

Following Brown and Jenkins' work, Adrienne Fried Block made a big stride in Beach scholarship, taking up Beach's cause in a number of scholarly publications. She reviewed the biographies by Brown and Jenkins. Moreover, she, along with musicologist E. Douglas

[3] Walter Jenkins, *The remarkable Mrs. Beach, American composer: a biographical account based on her diaries, letters, newspaper clippings, and personal reminiscences,* edited by John H. Baron. (Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1994), 117.

[4] MacDowell is an artist's residency program in Peterborough, New Hampshire, supported through a nonprofit association in honor of composer Edward MacDowell.

Bomberger, wrote an entry on Amy Beach in *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. In 1998, Block published one of her most valuable books, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American composer, 1867—1944*. Block's biography is the most comprehensive account of Beach's life and analyzes many of her prominent compositions. Thoroughly researched, Block's substantial work not only compiles plentiful clippings, manuscripts, and photocopies but also includes an extensive bibliography and seventy pages of notes. She challenges the myths of a prodigy and depicts a normal woman, not "blowing her up to superwoman size."[5] Her writing successfully combines historical facts with musical analysis. Perhaps the chapter most relevant to this study is Chapter 11, "The Composer at the Keyboard: Beach plays Beach." Block characterized the Violin Sonata as "a strenuous and impassioned work."[6] Her analysis was just a short overview on themes, harmony, and form.

Besides the literature regarding Amy Beach, there are several books that examine the relationship between analysis and performance, of which I mention two.

Wallace Berry's *Musical Structure and Performance* (1989) focuses on different analytical approaches and performative issues that arise from analysis. His analysis of different music examples for interpretive questions is based on tonal and harmonic functions, continuities of line, motivic developments, and so on. Berry points out that understanding the music's structure is indeed a prerequisite for performance and that interpretation must focus on details as understood in the context of broad continuities.[7] In terms of interpretive choices, Berry says that performers often rely on what "feels" right in matters of tempo and articulation, which can

[5] Ibid., 297.
[6] Adrienne Fried Block, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 113.
[7] Wallace Berry, *Musical Structure and Performance*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 7.

distort and suppress essential elements.[8] In his opinion, analysis must often tell the performer "what should not be done". The interpretations should be "as neutral as possible," so the notes are allowed to speak for themselves. [9] My study will compare different interpretations and see if the performers present a "neutral" version. The balance between analysis and intuition, in my opinion, should be on a case-by-case basis.

Jeffrey Swinkin's *Performative Analysis: Reimagining Music Theory for Performance* (2016) proposes a model that integrates both analysis-based and performance-based modes. In Chapter Two, Swinkin mentions two interpretive functions of analysis: first, "analysis exposes ambiguities or gaps in the text, serving them up to the performer"; second, "it offers metaphors for physical and emotional experience".[10] Contrary to Berry's view, Swinkin emphasizes that performers should "choose from among a work's several inherent structural and expressive possibilities and present a definitive way to hear the piece on a given occasion".[11] Accordingly, my study willfocus on those ambiguities that arise from tempo, dynamic, and articulation markings.

Articles

There are two articles that were both written when Amy Beach was still alive. The rest of the articles are mainly book reviews of Beach's biographies by the authors mentioned in the previous section.

In January 1928, Mrs. Crosby Adams' article, "An American genius of world renown: Mrs. H. H. A. Beach" appeared in *The Etude.* Adams reported several important events in

[8] Ibid., 8.
[9] Ibid., 10.
[10] Jeffrey Swinkin, *Performative Analysis: Reimagining Music Theory for Performance,* (Eastman Studies in Music. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 42.
[11] Ibid., 45.

Beach's musical development and reproduced many positive reviews from her friends and critics. Promoting Beach's music, Adams hailed her Mass in E flat major, in particular, as a "noble work"[12], and said that her song "The Year's at the Spring" "touched most the hearts of her hearers"[13]. Adams gives an overview of Beach's accomplishments but does not reference her compositional style.

More comprehensive is an article by Burnet C. Tuthill, who was personally acquainted with Beach. "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach" provides a catalog of her works as of 1939 and also provides details of her marriage and career. Due to his focus on Beach's compositions, this essay features centrally in my document. Contrary to the view of many critics, Tuthill considered Beach's music "modern." He argued that the late Romanticism found its "best and most convincing expression" in her music and produced works with "great beauty and variety."[14] Tuthill discussed Beach's "Gaelic" Symphony, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, and String Quartet, although his remarks on her pieces are more descriptive than truly analytical. He does not discuss her Violin Sonata.

Dissertations

E. Lindsey Merrill's 1963 dissertation, "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach: Her Life and Her Music" is the earliest existing dissertation on the life and works of Beach. Merrill assembles a brief biography of Beach and analyzes her music based on specific musical elements. Her research progresses from a general survey of merely enumerating different genres, to a more detailed harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, and formal analysis of selected works. Beach's Sonata for Violin and Piano is one of the works analyzed. In the harmony section, Merrill notes that Beach's

[12] Crosby Adams, "An American genius of world renown: Mrs. H.H.A. Beach," *The Etude*: 34.
[13] Ibid., 61.
[14] Burnet Tuthill, "MRS. H. H. A. BEACH." *Journal of The Musical Quarterly* 26, no.3 (1940): 302.

Sonata often evades the tonic harmony in cadences and uses the enharmonic transformation of chords in the service of modulation.[15] Beach's melody, she notes, contains many fifths in ascending patterns.[16] The document is well-researched but of limited relevance to this study, as Merrill's work lies in her summarizing Beach's compositional features among so many different music genres. The discussions of Beach's Violin Sonata are dispersed across several sections, which makes it hard to keep track of it.

Yu-Hsien Hung's dissertation "The Violin Sonata of Amy Beach," is the only one that concentrates on Beach's Violin Sonata. This document will serve as a key reference for my own document, as it provides a historical, analytical, and stylistic study of the Sonata. Hung's writing includes numerous formal charts, musical examples, and most notably, a bass-line sketch of each movement. Hung emphasizes the chromaticism, thematic transformation, and conventional forms in Beach's Sonata. However, it takes three chapters to go through historical matters, leaving just one chapter for musical analysis. Consequently, the analysis is just an overview of the structure and the style of the work. The performance considerations that follow do not demonstrate how the analysis assists interpretation. My study will fill this void by presenting an analysis that informs and potentially enhances performance.

The books regarding Amy Beach mostly focus on her biography. The articles mainly advertise her newly published music. In dissertations, only general analysis of Beach's selective works is included. Despite the limited literature on Beach's music, Beach has lived a remarkable life, one that deserves to be dissected in detail.

[15] Lindsey Merrill, *Mrs. H. H. A. Beach: her life and her music* (Ph.D. dissertation, Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1963), 82.
[16] Ibid., 243.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL MATTERS

This chapter includes a historical overview of Amy Beach's life, of her works and compositional style, and also background on her Violin Sonata.

Biographical Sketch of Amy Beach

American pianist and composer Amy Marcy Cheney Beach was born on September 5th, 1867, in West Henniker, New Hampshire. Her father was Charles Abbott Cheney (1844-1895), the owner of a paper mill, and her mother was Clara Imogene Marcy Cheney (1846-1911), a pianist and singer.

A precocious child, Amy Beach had remarkable musical memory and was very sensitive to musical sounds. When she heard a melody, she memorized it so accurately that she could tell how its intervals and rhythms were altered upon its repetition.[17] It soon became obvious that this little girl had absolute pitch, and she associated certain colors with specific keys.[18] One might suppose that being parents to a prodigy was a joyful thing for the Cheneys, however, it was a trial. As Charles Cheney was a Baptist and Clara Cheney was a Calvinist, they believed that a child should learn self-submission, should be obedient.[19] Lest Amy become too self-assured, they kept Amy from the piano; she was not allowed access to it until age four. Two years later, Clara started to give her piano lessons.

The Cheneys carefully nurtured their daughter's normalcy as much as her talent. In 1875, the family moved to Boston, an apt environment for Amy's musical growth. As Amy said,

[17] Tuthill, Burnet. "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach." *Journal of The Musical Quarterly* 26, no.3 (1940): 298.
[18] Merrill, E. Lindsey. *Mrs. H. H. A. Beach: her life and her music* (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1963), 1.
[19] Adrienne Fried, Block. *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6.

Boston was a "very musical" city, and it supported local musicians.[20] At seven, Amy gave her first public appearance at the Unitarian Church in Chelsea, Massachusetts and started to play some of her own pieces as the encore.[21] A dual career of pianist and composer seems to have started. Her earliest music in print, *Mamma's Waltz*, was composed at the age of four.

To promote Amy's well-roundedness, her parents enrolled her in a private school where she learned math, philosophy, German, and French. Not following the then prevalent musical practice of European training, she studied piano with Ernst Perabo and later with Carl Baermann, two of the most distinguished teachers in Boston.[22] Her only formal study of harmony was with Junius Hill, a professor at Wellesley College, for one year.[23] In 1883, she made her professional debut performing Moscheles' Piano Concerto No.3 under the baton of Adolf Neuendorff.[24] In the same year, she played Chopin's F minor Concerto with the Boston Symphony.[25] The performance was a success, and the reviews were positive.

While people were expecting more public appearances from this promising young pianist, in December 1885, Amy married Dr. H. H. A. Beach, who was 24 years her senior. A prominent physician and surgeon, Beach was also an amateur musician.[26] In him, Amy found a good poet and singer and in fact she set some of Dr. Beach's poems to music. As Mary Kelton notes, "Their collaborations on songs had lasted for twenty-five years, their entire married life."[27] Amy took his name, which precluded her from concertizing more. She engaged herself in composition,

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[20] Ibid., 7.
[21] Yu-Hsien Hung, *The Violin Sonata of Amy Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 2005), 3.
[22] Jean Reigles, *The Choral Music of Amy Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1996), 6.
[23] Ibid., 17.
[24] Mary Katherine Kelton, *The songs of Mrs. H. H. A. Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1992), 12.
[25] Burnet C Tuthill, "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach." *Journal of The Musical Quarterly* 26, no.3 (1940): 6.
[26] Adrienne Fried Block, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 42.
[27] Ibid., 174.

which, compared to public performance, was considered more domestic and thus more suitable for women.[28] Much to Amy's disappointment, Dr. Beach objected to her studying with a composition teacher. Consequently, Amy embarked on a self-guided study of counterpoint, fugue, musical form and orchestration.[29] It is an open question as to how much Dr. Beach ultimately helped or hindered the development of her musical skills and career, and what she would have accomplished had she been guided by a composition teacher. As Beach biographer Adrienne Block points out:

> There is evidence in her music of unsolved compositional problems: occasionally a work displays a certain lack of discipline, a tendency to go on too long and to introduce unnecessary complications, practices that a vigilant composition teacher might have helped her overcome.[30]

Then again, it was during those years of marriage that Amy composed most of her important works. If she had remained unmarried, she would have had to remain an active pianist and thus perhaps would have composed less. In Amy's words, the outcome of this arrangement is that "I was happy, and Dr. Beach was content."[31]

Amy's hard work had paid off. Her early major composition was a large choral work, the cantata, *Festival Jubilate* for Soli, Chorus, Orchestra and Organ, op. 17 (1892), a psalm commissioned for the dedication of the Women's Building of the Columbia Exposition in Chicago.[32] The *Chicago Tribute* praised the work as "a masterpiece of musical composition."[33]

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[28] Kara Anne Gardner, "Reviewed Work(s): Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American Patron of Music by Cyrilla Barr and Gunther Schuller; Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944." *Journal of American Music* 17, No. 2 (1999): 221.

[29] Merrill Lindsey, *Mrs. H. H. A. Beach: her life and her music* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1963), 4.

[30] Block, 52.

[31] Jeanell Wise Brown, *Amy Beach and her Chamber Music: Biography, Documents, Style. Metuchen*, N. J (The Scarecrow Press, 1994), 23.

[32] Ibid., 24.

[33] Walter Jenkins, *The remarkable Mrs. Beach, American composer: a biographical account based on her diaries, letters, newspaper clippings, and personal reminiscences*, edited by John H. Baron (Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1994), 31.

In 1893, violinist Maud Powell joined Beach in the premier of the Romance for Violin and Piano, op. 23 at the Woman's Musical Congress during the World's Columbia Exposition. This work earned Amy a medal from the Congress.[34] In 1896, the Boston Symphony premiered her "Gaelic" Symphony, op. 32, the first published symphony by a woman composer. As a milestone in music history, this piece established Beach's position as the youngest and the only female of the "Boston Six", a group of art music composers gathered in New England who were known by historians as the Second New England School. Shortly after completing her Symphony, she composed the Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Minor, op. 34, which was another triumph. In 1900, She premiered her Piano Concerto in C-sharp Minor, op. 45 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Emil Paur. The Boston Saturday Evening Gazette commented that "Judging from the applause, the work won approval of the large audience present to hear it."[35] 1900 also saw the publication of her Three Browning Songs, op.44, including her most famous song "The Year's at the Spring." The Browning Society of Boston had commissioned Beach to compose these songs on Robert Browning's famous work, Pippa Passes, in honor of his birthday.[36] Beach's romantic melodies well interprets its religious content, which had made "The Year's at the Spring" one of most frequently performed art songs. Her Quintet for piano, two violins, viola and cello, was published in 1909 and the Hoffman String Quartet premiered the piece.[37] It was well received and regarded as an important chamber work.

In 1910, Amy Beach's husband died, and her mother died few months later. The loss of two most important people of her life ended her most prolific period as a composer. It was during

[34] Mary Katherine Kelton, *The songs of Mrs. H. H. A. Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1992), 28.
[35] Percy Goetschius, *Biographical sketch: Mrs. H.H.A. Beach* (New York: Arthur P. Schmidt Company, 1906), 121.
[36] Rebekah Planalp, *Amy Beach and the Poetry of Robert Browning*. (B.A thesis, Ball State University, 2020), 4.
[37] Jeanell Wise Brown, *Amy Beach and her Chamber Music: Biography, Documents, Style* (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1994), 197.

this tough time that Amy joined Emmanuel church. Walter Jenkins stated that Amy's new faith helped her continue her career.[38] Having little inclination to compose, Amy closed her Boston home and decided to set sail for Europe where she resumed her performing.[39] After a year of grieving, Beach made her European debut, playing her Violin Sonata and some of her songs in Dresden.[40] Besides concertizing, Amy composed eleven songs; a festival choral hymn which was commissioned for the Panama-Pacific Exposition; six sacred chorus; and two works for solo piano.[41] Her European appearances established her reputation aboard both as composer and performer and bolstered her music sales and paves the ways for future tours in the States.

Because of the outset of World War I, Beach left returned to the United States in 1914, ready for a second chapter in Boston. Once she arrived home, she maintained an active concert schedule and was busy meeting friends and attending festivals. During her first week in Boston, the MacDowell Club welcomed her with a concert and reception, and she played four concerts.[42] In 1915, Amy moved to New York, a place she saw "a keener appreciation of the highest music."[43] Thereafter, she maintained a two-pronged career, as both pianist and composer. During the main season, she toured performing almost exclusively her own compositions; during the summer months, she composed in Hillsboro, New Hampshire and Centerville, Massachusetts.[44] During the 1920s, Amy reduced her public appearances and began to spend some of each summer as a fellow at the MacDowell Colony, "a working retreat for composers, writers, and

[38] Jenkins, 66-68.
[39] Block, 179.
[40] Yu-Hsien Hung, *The Violin Sonata of Amy Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 2005), 8.
[41] Block, 189.
[42] Block, 199.
[43] Marmaduke Sidney Miles, *The Solo Piano Works of Mrs. H. H. A. Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, The Peabody Conservatory of Music of the Johns Hopkins University, 1985), 14.
[44] Kelton, 48.

artists."[45] From 1921 on, this quiet enclave bought many new compositions to life. Among them were the *Thrush Pieces for Piano*, op. 92 and *Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello*, op. 150.[46] The Trio, composed in 1938, was her last major chamber music work she was completed at the Colony.[47]

After 1940, Amy's declining health prevented her from traveling. Instead, she edited and revised some of her compositions. In 1942, for example, she finished a two-piano version of her *Variations on Balkan Themes*, op. 60. In 1944, Amy Beach died in New York City at the age of 77. In her will, she authorized the MacDowell Colony to receive royalties from her compositions.[48]

Works and Compositional Style of Amy Beach

Romanticism, with its emphasis on emotion and individualism, formed the musical environment in which Amy Beach had found herself. Writing in Romantic style, a large percentage of her output consists of art songs and choral works. As a concert pianist herself, she also composed many important piano solo works. Though her chamber music takes up only a small part, it includes some of her most famous compositions and tracks the changes her compositional style underwent.

Beach is an inspired creator of melody. In general, she wrote two types of themes: one with long, and lyrical lines, the other motivic melodies are more instrumental. The former is more vocal in nature, the latter more instrumental. Her harmonic language is rooted in nineteenth-century practices and never changed dramatically. She frequently uses augmented

[45] Arnold T. Schwab, revised by David Macy. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (New York: Groves Dictionaries, Inc., 2001).
[46] Reigles, 29.
[47] Merrill, 30.
[48] Hung, 12.

sixth chords, Neapolitan chords, chords including the flattened submediant, and many other altered chords. Compared to early Romantic composers, like Beethoven, there is greater tonal flexibility in Beach's music such as modal mixture, use of the submediant key, and enharmonic modulation. Her own harmonic language influences the formal structure. In some four-movement works, Beach sometimes reverses the order of scherzo and slow movement. Although tempo usually remains constant throughout a whole piece, there are occasionally sudden tempo or dynamic changes that induce marked emotional shifts. Metric dissonance due to rhythmic displacement is commonly used. As her music grows stylistically uneven, it is hard to divide her works into periods. But one can observe her evolving compositional style through writings in different genres.

Art Songs

Amy Beach's first published pieces were songs. Song writing lies at the core of her style. She has composed over 100 songs and uses some of her songs as themes in her later instrumental works, such as her Piano Concerto. In her own words, "song composing freshens me up; I really consider that I have given myself a special treat when I have written a song."[49]

As Adrienne Block notes, "a number of Beach's songs begin with nature images or human love and end by invoking the divine."[50] Her most famous song, "The Year's at the Spring", aptly exemplifies for Block's note.

"The Year's at the Spring" is the first in the set of Three Browning Songs, op.44. Based on Robert Browning's *Pippa Passes*, the texts, says David Rieda, explore "incidents in the development of the soul."[51] As the contents fill with symbolism and moral questions, Pippa

[49] Hazel Gertrude Kinscella, *Musical America* 28 (1918): 9.
[50] Block, 154.
[51] David G Riede, "Genre and Poetic Authority in 'Pippa Passes.'" *Victorian Poetry*, 27 no. 3/4 (1989): 52.

becomes the messenger from God. Beach uses a triplet figure to start the song and lets it move underneath constantly throughout the whole piece, such that it creates driving motion like the sense of rejuvenation in Spring. The entire song is in one single emotional sweep from A^b to A^b in D^b major key. Because of its directiveness and uplifting power, the melodies are extraordinarily compelling.

Piano works

Beach's piano output includes not only a grand piano concerto, but also short character pieces, such as, *A Hermit Thrush*, op. 92.

Influenced by Lisztian virtuosity, Beach's piano works, especially her piano concerto, are technically demanding. Says Adrienne Block, "most of the performances of the concerto were by Beach; she succeeded therefore in writing a vehicle for herself."[52] Indeed, this concerto reveals her talent as both a pianist and a composer.

Beach makes this concerto her own by using her songs as themes in each movement of this concerto. She invokes her own songs, which are highly personal in nature, in her concerto and lends the latter a sentimental, personal quality. She quotes "Jeune fille et jeune fleur" op. l, no.3 in the first movement, a song that her husband had sung shortly before they were married.[53] In the second movement, she quoted her song "Empress of Night" op. 2, no.3, based on a text of her husband. This is the only song that Beach dedicated to her mother and was composed for her to sing. "Empress" indicates the moon, a female symbol, and her mother was her "empress," an arbiter of her music career before her marriage. The third movement is derived from Beach's song "Twilight" in which she again uses her husband's poem, a lament at dark and cold night.

[52] Block, 141.
[53] Block, 132.

The entire technical devices in the piano part are used to create an orchestral sound. The devices include thick chromatic block chords, octaves doublings, wide ranging scales and arpeggios, and two-hand trills. Each movement sports a cadenza, which seamlessly connects to the following tutti part. The orchestral part is equally exciting. The orchestration follows the texture changes and brings abrupt switches between different instrumental groups. The melodies are often reharmonized or reorchestrated when they return.

The natural world exerts a profound influence on Mrs. Beach's music. Her love of nature had been cultivated since her early fascination with birds. Because of that sweet memory of stealing bird's melodies, Beach became a lifelong curator of birdsongs, which infuse two original piano short pieces: "A Hermit Thrush at Eve, op. 92, no. 1" and "A Hermit Thrush at Morn, op. 92, no.2" (1922). They notate the birdcalls exactly, even down to the correct key. Nature is numinous for Beach in that she valued her accurate birdsong transcription as a devotion. The Hermit Thrush sang out Beach's own hymn of rapture, a reflection of "her religiously inflected understanding of the natural world."[54]

"A Hermit Thrush at Eve" is a reflective piece in E-flat minor, and its form is ABA′B′. In A, Beach uses a three-note descending motive to form a long-lined melody that closely emulates the singing. For the birdsong in B, by contrast, she uses melismas in a very high register, most based on seventh chord harmonies. "A Hermit Thrush at Morn", begins with a four-measure waltz-like introduction. The piece is in D minor key and is set in rondo form (ABACA′). The bird call serves as the refrain. Instead of presenting the birdsong as filigree, as in "A Hermit Thrush at Eve," Beach places it into regular phrases supported by D pedal tone.

[54] Denise Von Glahn, *Music and the Skillful Listener: American Women Compose the Natural World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 44.

The use of birdsongs illustrates Beach's exploration of new melodic content which contributes to Beach's two of most colorful writings of piano solo works.

Choral Works

Beach's successful early attempts at large-scale writing were of her choral works. She composed anthems, cantatas, part-songs and one mass. Her cantatas are among her most important choral output and include works for men's chorus, women's chorus, mixed chorus with piano, and mixed chorus with orchestral accompaniment such as *Festival Jubilate,* op.17, *Sylvania,* op. 46, and *The Sea Fairies,* op. 59. Since Beach was highly religious, composing such works was presumably a spiritual experience for her. Her cantatas possess great beauty and fully express her devotional feeling and her sincere love of God. In contrast with her piano compositions, Beach's choral music is fairly simple, the better to serve the texts, and is accessible for average church choirs. The music-formal divisions often follow the divisions of the texts and are often in ternary form. The accompaniment, key relationships and textures are all used to enhance the meaning of the texts. In short, in Beach's writing, the music serves the text.

Festival Jubilate, op. 17 (1892) is her first cantata, scored for four voices and a large orchestra in 1892. As being premiered at grand ceremony of the Woman's Building, for the sake of clarity, *Jubilate* includes extended sections of unison singing without any passages for vocal soloists. The texts were chosen from sacred Psalm 100. Thematic transformations are a unifying factor in this piece. As a one-movement choral work in ternary form, the thematic materials are presented at the beginning, then followed motivic development, and rounded out with the final statement of the first theme in the tonic key of D major.

"Gaelic" Symphony

Beach wrote only one symphony: the "Gaelic" in E minor, op. 32. As a member of Second New England School, a group in search of a distinctly American music, her "Gaelic" Symphony is her answer: it infuses Irish idioms into an otherwise German Romantic language. Inspired by Antonín Dvořák's "New World" Symphony, the "Gaelic" symphony is also in the key of E minor and features oboe and English horn solos in the second movement. Instead of borrowing African American spirituals and work songs, as Dvorak had proposed, she draws on Irish history and Gaelic life. In Beach's opinion, old English and Irish songs are far more likely to represent American sound as they had been part of the American musical mainstream for a century.[55]

Celtic tunes generate a program for her Symphony, just as her song quotations did for her Piano Concerto; Amelia Kuby described the program as "a musical representation of the struggles and sufferings of the Irish people, their laments, their romance, and their dreams."[56] In order to bridge Celtic folk music and the German symphonic tradition, Beach employed a familiar Beethoven symphonic device: to pair the four movements into two parts. The outer movements portray an embattled hero from struggle to triumph, while the inner movements are based on the Celtic tunes.

Although the "Gaelic" uses elements of folklore, it is Beach's symphonic approach embodies "Gaelicness." Grounded in the middle movements, the outer movements express the battle and passion of Celtic people. The Finale, especially, reveals the character and its resulting actions toward hardships, which makes this symphony Gaelic.

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[55]Block, 88.

[56] Kathryn Amelia Kuby, *Analysis of Amy Cheney Beach's Gaelic Symphony, Op. 32.* (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2011), 29.

Chamber Works with Piano and Strings

A successful symphony has brought fame to Beach, but the small chamber works alone would have accomplished that. Besides her Violin Sonata, some of her other most important chamber works are her Romance, op. 23 and Piano Quintet in F Sharp Minor, op. 67. As with her art songs, the melodies here for piano and strings are rather rangy. The use of diminished chords and third key relationships are pervasive. Beach is also fond of syncopated rhythms and tempo change, which becomes an important means of contrast. Multi-movement chamber works, like her Piano Quintet, often use sonata-allegro forms and fugal writing is a developmental tool. By contrast, many of her small-scale chamber pieces, like her Romance op. 23 are in ternary form. Piano parts often play thick chords in octaves to produce an orchestral effect in Lisztian style. In string sections, Beach typically uses trills and tremolos to accompany the piano part.

The *Romance* is Beach's earliest chamber work for violin and piano; it inherited the lyricism from her vocal works and exploits the extreme ranges of violin. It is in ternary form and begins with a piano introduction. The first theme consists of two symmetrical four-bar phrases in conjunct motion accompanied by syncopated chordal pattern. Its opening phrase is derived from her song "Sweetheart, Sigh no More," op. 14, no. 3. Its appoggiatura-laden violin melody, along the pulsating accompaniment, conveys longing that suits for a romance.[57]

Beach performed Brahms Quintet for Piano and strings, op. 67 with Kneisel Quartet in 1904, and five years later, her own Piano Quintet was finally published.[58] The varied thematic material is reminiscent of something similar in Brahms and its formal structure presents a cyclic construction. As Beach evidently links keys and colors in the way she composes, F-sharp minor

[57] Block, 113.
[58] Block, 129.

is a dark color that fuses the entire piece. But the man characteristic is its emotional intensity. By giving the piano the primary role, this three-movement quintet is like a piano concerto in miniature. There are many ensemble passages where strings play tremolo in unison with Liszt-like figurations in the piano.

The thematic materials of this quintet recall the second theme of the last movement of Brahms quintet.[59] Brahms's influence is also evident in Beach's use of developing variation. Furthermore, Beach forms a broader cyclic structure across the movements by restating the slow introduction to the first movement within the recapitulation of the last movement. Following an unresolved diminished chord and a long pause, the return of the opening *Adagio* should be no surprise. The quintet concludes *fortissimo* on an $F^{\#}$ major chord.

Background on the Violin Sonata

Beach's Violin Sonata in A minor, op. 34 is acclaimed as one of her most important chamber works. Finished right after her Gaelic Symphony in 1896, this magnificent work traveled with Beach from Boston to New York, and then all the way to Europe.

In 1897, prior to its publication, Beach and violinist Franz Kneisel performed the Sonata on the Kneisel Quartet series in Boston and at the New England Conservatory.[60] The *Morning Journal* reviewed the Sonata as "an eminently sincere, spontaneous and able work, and one that bears the stamp of originality, as well as scholarship of surpassing merit."[61] In 1899, after its official publication by the Arthur Schmidt Company, Beach and Kneisel soon introduced the Sonata to New York City audiences. William Henderson commented that the slow movement

[59] Block, 127.
[60] Jeanell Wise Brown, *Amy Beach and her Chamber Music: Biography, Documents, Style.* (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1994), 171.
[61] Jenkins, 44.

was the most beautiful, the Scherzo the most successful, but the finale the weakest of the four.[62] Henry Finck complained that "all the material it contains could have been condensed."[63] Seemingly, these local critics in New York City were harder to please.

Contrary to the critical reception in New York, the next three European performances were a big success. Its European debut was given in Berlin in 1899 by violinist Carl Halir and pianist Teresa Carreño. As the dedicatee of Beach's Piano Concerto, Teresa wrote to Beach after the premier:

> It is not necessary for me to enter into detailed accounts of how your beautiful Sonata was received by the public, but perhaps, it will please you to know from an experienced old artist as I am, that it really met with a decided success, and this is said to the credit of the public.[64]

In 1900, the second overseas performance was by the famous Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe and the pianist Raoul Pugno in Paris.[65] The New York newspapers reported "Ysaÿe and Pugno chanced upon the sonata in a bundle of music, scanned it, liked it and added it to their repertory."[66] Violinist Sigmund Beel and pianist Henry Bird played the third concert in St. James Hall in London.[67] The *Times* of London praised it as "a sonata of remarkable beauty."[68]

Despite its conflicting reception, the Sonata has been performed by many leading musicians both in United States and Europe. Because of its popularity, Roger Hannay transcribed this Sonata for viola and piano, which was published by Henmar Press in 1984.[69]

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[62] Block, 121.
[63] Henry Finck, "Music: The Kneisel Quartet." *New York Evening Post*2, (1899): 46.
[64] Jenkins, 46.
[65] Yu-Hsien Hung, *The Violin Sonata of Amy Beach* (D.M.A. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 2005), 43.
[66] Block, 122.
[67] Hung, 44.
[68] Ibid, 44.
[69] Brown, 188.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS

Beach's Sonata for Violin and Piano in A minor, op. 34 serves as her only contribution to the sonata genre. This chapter employs several methods, including harmonic, formal, motivic, and Schenkerian to analyze each movement.

Overview of Entire Work

The sonata consists of four movements: Allegro moderato, Scherzo: Molto vivace, Largo con dolore, and Allegro con fuoco. Its colorful and even adventurous harmonic schemes, well-designed structures, lyrical melodies, and distinctive motives display Beach at her compositional finest.

Beach's harmonic language in this sonata typifies late-Romanticism, which is to say, it is highly chromatic, replete with modal mixture, modulation (including enharmonic modulation), the use of remote key areas, and so on. The tour of different tonal key centers is indicated through flexible pivot points rather than V–I progressions confirmed via cadences. Beach favors third-related over fifth-related key centers, which appear in all four movements. For example, in the first movement's recapitulation, the secondary theme returns in the submediant, F major, instead of the tonic, A minor. In the second movement, in G major, the Scherzo theme modulates to the flat submediant, E^{b} major soon before the trio.

The formal structure of four movements is logically balanced. The outer movements are both in sonata-allegro form and in A minor; the inner movements are in ternary form. Beach also favors bar form, another late-Romantic phenomenon.

In a manner similar to Brahms, Beach focuses on and develops motives more than entire themes; put another way, her thematic conception and process is motivic through and through. All four movements feature the same three motivic families (Ex. 3-1): the ascending fifth motion

(A), the neighbor figure (B), and the stepwise fourth progression (C). As the building blocks for all the thematic materials, these motives interact and mingle with each other, thereby unifying the entire sonata. In general, the motive A is often couched in I–V harmonic progression and signals the tonal center; motive B, either an upper-neighbor or a lower-neighbor, shapes the melodic contours; motive C is usually enlarged and used as the filling material for the previous two motives by turning the disjunct motion into the conjunct motion.

Ex 3-1 Three motives

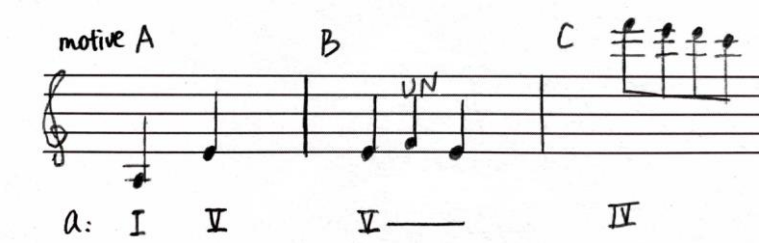


Table 1 Rotational Diagram, I. Allegro moderato

Sonata-Allegro Form Diagram

m. 1 16 55 64 85 101 113 148 164 190 219 251 271 287 303 335

Rotation 1 **Rotation 2** **Rotation 3** **Rotation 4 (incomplete)**

|----------Exposition----------| |----------Development----------| |----------Recapitulation----------| |----Coda---|

|--------P--------||-----Variat. ----| |---- Trans.---| |------S-----| |--Vatiat. --| |--Closin. ---| |-----P----| |------S------| |---Retrans. ---| |---------P---------| |-----Trans. ---| |----S----| |--Variat. --| |--Trans. --|

a a’ b Ant.+Cons.

a: V^6 (MC) vi--I Np-V-i V-I (EEC) i-III-^bVI-i VI I V-i (ESC) ii6—V—i

i ---------- V ---------- i ---------- ii^6—V—i

Legend	
P—Primary Theme	Variat. —Variation
Trans. —Transition	S—Secondary Theme
Closin. —Closing Section	Retrans. —Retransition
MC—Medial Caesura	

Movement I: Allegro moderato

Harmonic and Formal Dimensions
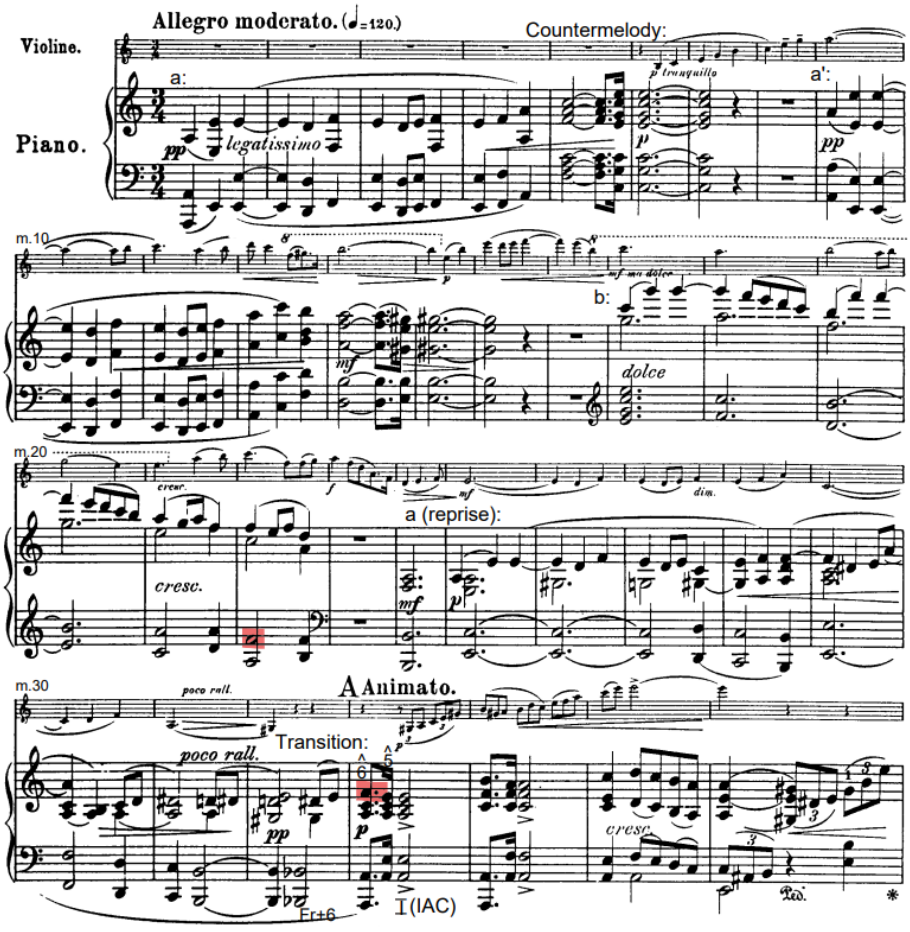
The first movement is in sonata-allegro form: exposition (mm. 1–116), development (mm. 117–189), recapitulation (mm. 199–301), and coda (mm. 302–335). However, typical for the late-Romantic style, Beach's appropriation of sonata form is idiosyncratic. In the exposition, Beach uses loose sentential structure. The development is concise but extended. In the recapitulation, the secondary theme is initially presented in submediant key.

The exposition consists of primary area (mm. 1–32), modulating transition (mm. 33–64), secondary area (mm. 65–100), and closing section (mm. 101–116). In the primary area, the piano plays the majestic primary theme in A minor which is structured in bar form, reminiscent of Wagner (Ex. 1-1). Alfred Lorenz introduces the concept of Bar form, usually represented as AAB in the first volume of *Das Geheimnis der Form bei Richard Wagner*.[70] He claims that Wagner "especially loves this form since it is better suited for the dramatic momentum than any other."[71] Probably influenced by Wagner, Beach presents a general reprise bar form of AABA' schema: a six-bar basic idea, a six-bar repetition, a brief section of fragmentation, and a reprise of the basic idea. The theme concludes with an IAC, which is approached via a "tritone sub": the dominant E chord is replaced by the French augmented sixth, B^{b}–D–E–$G^{\#}$, whose bass lies a tritone away from the original (Ex. 3-2). Since these two chords share two common tones, E and $G^{\#}$, the augmented sixth itself functions as dominant chord. Both phrases delineate a perfect fifth at the beginning: the first phrase leads by A–E while the second begins on C–E. The use of I–V relationship creates a harmonic ambiguity between C major and A minor. This opening fifth
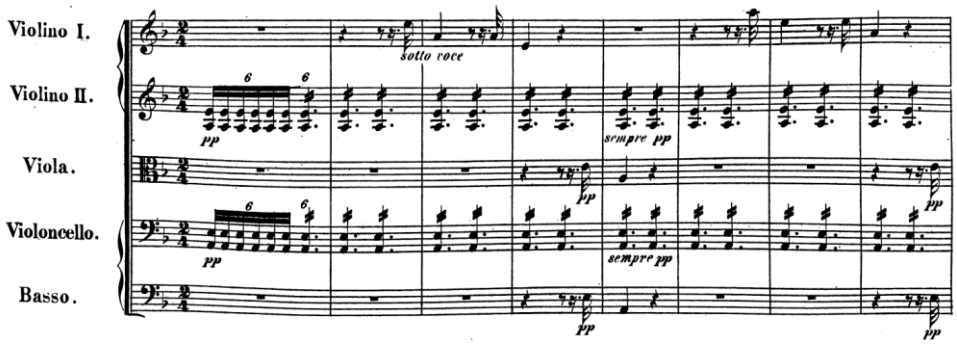
[70] Bailey Shea, Matthew. "Wagner's Loosely Knit Sentences and the Drama of Musical Form" Journal of *Intégral*, Vol. 16/17 (2002/2003): 1-34.
[71] McClatchie, Stephen. *Analyzing Wagner's Operas: Alfred Lorenz and German Nationalist Ideology*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1998.

might also be an allusion to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in which the same open fifths, A and E, quietly emerge at the beginning of the first movement, played pianissimo by tremolo strings (Ex. 3-3). The submediant F insinuates itself into these fifths, a foreshadowing of its important role later in the movement. At m. 22, submediant F intrudes into the i chord, lending it a special color.

Ex 3-2 Primary theme in the first movement mm. 1–32



Ex 3-3 The opening of Beethoven Symphony no. 9, op. 125



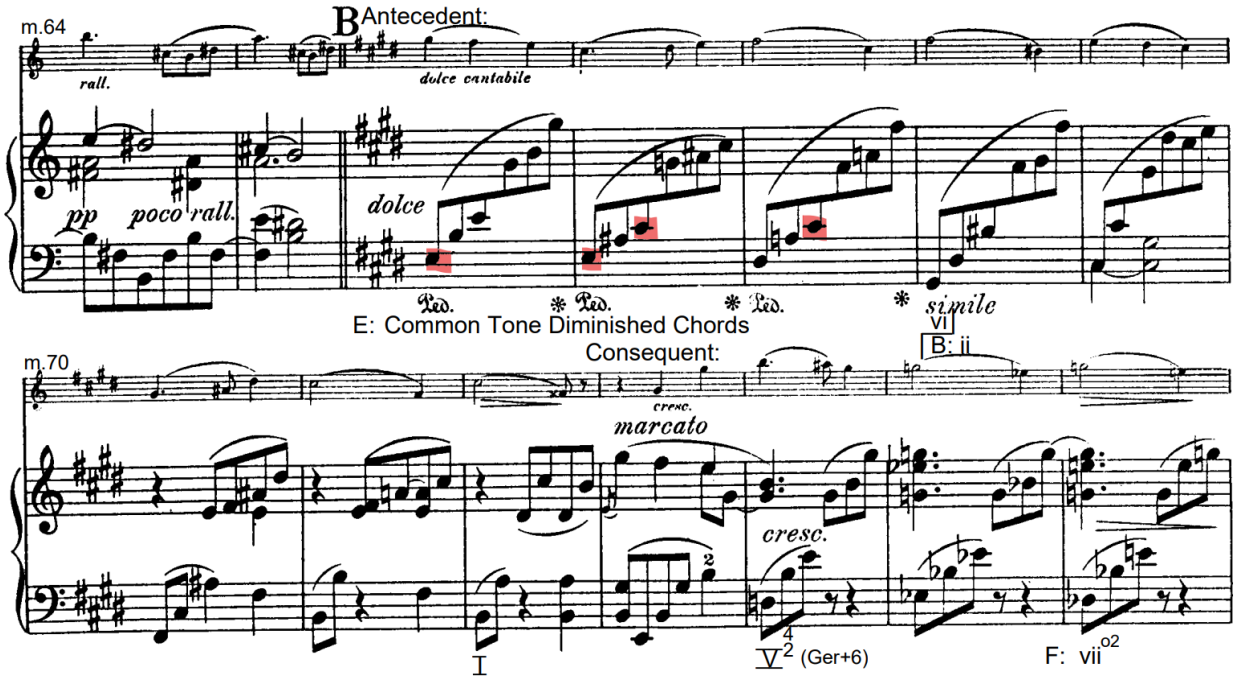
For the violin part, Beach writes a continuous countermelody that enters on the second beat of m. 6 as the piano fades away, filling in the gap between the two phrases. This melody presents a line full of tied notes cross the bar lines stringing together all phrases. It leads to metric displacement by starting on the weak beat and using syncopated rhythms. It sets up rhythmic tension as violin and piano parts coincide. The piano's chordal progressions and violin's melodic infinity move on their own rhythmic pulses. This kind of contrast within a contrapuntal structure becomes one of the main characteristics of the first movement.

In the Animato transition, Beach keeps the sentential AAB bar form. The basic idea and its repetition last eight bars; B (at m. 41) provides a sense of emotional discharge. Starting from m.41, the music rhythmically accelerates and a tour of tonicized key areas ensues, from A to D and C to G, until the appearance of $F^{\#}$, another intruder that breaks the pattern. G to $F^{\#}$ forms the harmonic progression ^{b}VI–V of B major, which leads to the dominant preparation of the secondary theme in E Major.

In contrast to the stern primary theme, the lyricism of secondary theme is particularly violinistic. This theme is a 20-measure period, on account of the consequent expanding the 8-measure antecedent to 12 measures by means of more chromatic and modulatory harmonic progression (Ex. 3-4). Its harmonic structure sets out from E major, modulates to the Neapolitan

F♮, arrives on dominant B major, and finally returns to E major. Diminished 7th chords play an important role. In the antecedent, the Piano first plays diminished arpeggios with one common tone. Subsequently, Beach uses C-sharp minor as the pivot chord: it is simultaneously vi in E and ii in B major. The phrase concludes with a half cadence. Then Beach employs enharmonic modulation. At m. 74, the V4/2 of IV is enharmonically reinterpreted as a German augmented sixth, which resolves to E♭. The Eb then moves up a half step to E, which supports a vii7/F, the Neapolitan, which lands in m. 77. This consequent phrase concludes with another IAC in E major. Then ensues a variation of the entire S theme, with the piano gracing that theme with chromatic embellishments. Mm. 112–113 bring essential expositional closure, with a V–I in E.
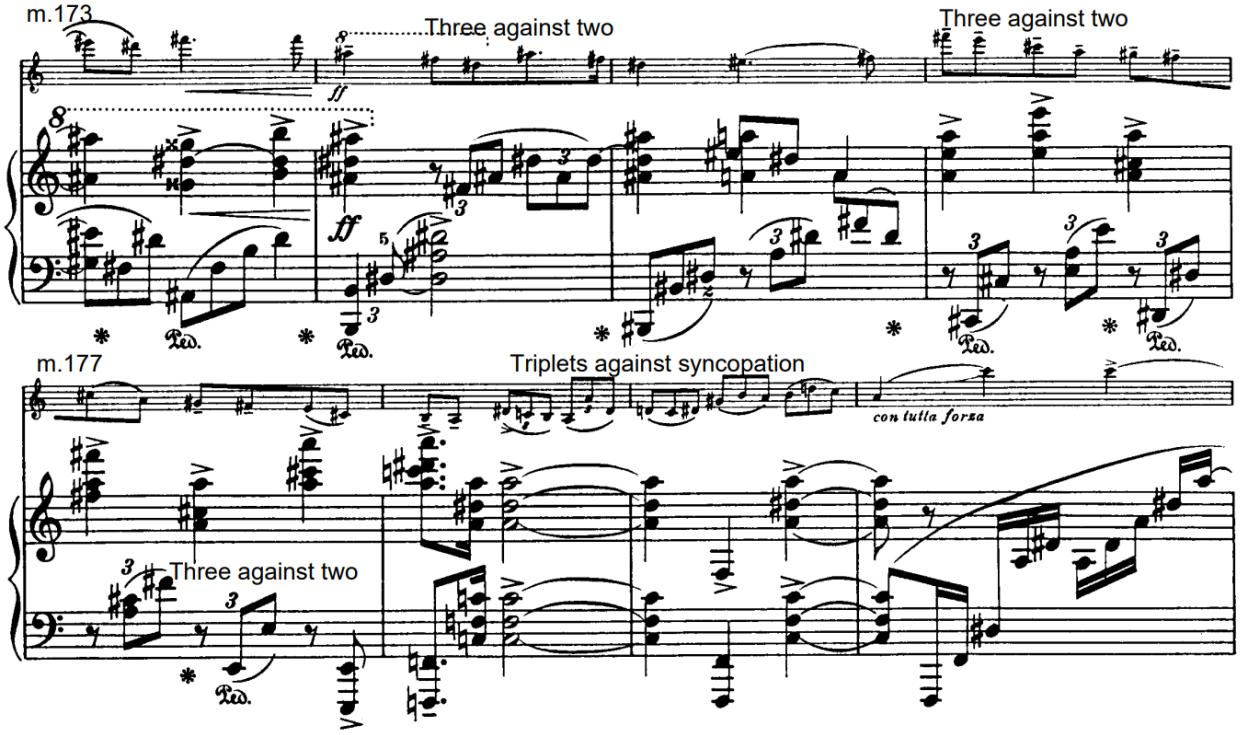
Ex 3-4 Secondary theme of the first movement mm. 67–84





By the standards of Beethoven in Romantic period, Beach's development section (mm. 117–189) is relatively short. It includes thematic materials from primary theme, secondary theme, and transition, and, Schubertian in spirit, it doesn't rigorously develop those themes but rather states them whole and subjects them to far-reaching modulations. The tour of tonicized key areas modulate by thirds, starting on E minor (at m. 117), alternating with submediant note C in triplet at bass, then includes C (m. 125), A^b (m. 130), F^b (m. 132), and ends on E again. Enharmonic modulations are used extensively in the secondary theme through diminished seventh chords. Additionally, the transitional materials are developed by using metric dissonance, another of Beach's important tools. For example, Beach uses triplet, along with the syncopations in the violin. As shown in Example 3-5, the unexpected rests on the first note of each triplet and syncopation causes metrical disorder and aggravates the dissonance.
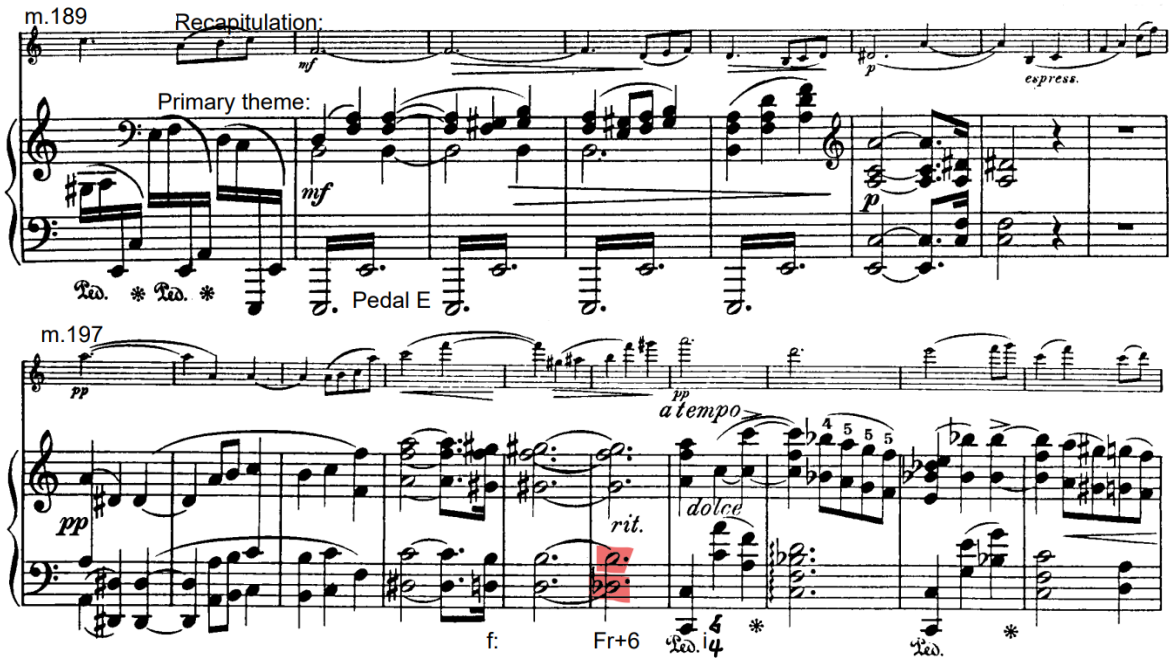
Ex 3-5 Rhythmic complexity in the development part in the first movement



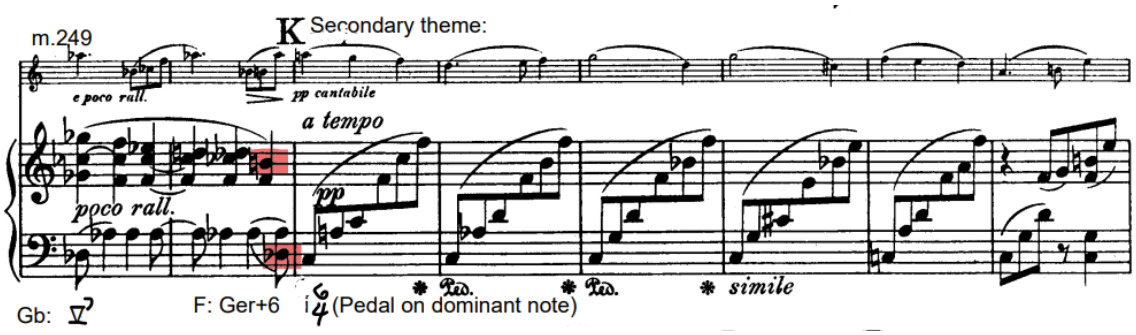
Beach's recapitulation is modulatory, as if it were an extension of the development section. Although the first phrase of the primary theme harmonically returns over pedal E, the melody opens with a perfect fifth D–A, not A–E. Its second phrase modulates to F minor through a French augmented sixth chord (Ex. 3-6). The violin plays the transition in A minor at m. 219. After staying in home key for only four measures, a new round of modulation starts. The Ab pedal implies Db major at m. 243, though when Db arrives, it is destabilized by the D^{b} chord, which briefly implies Gb major. At the last second, D^{b7} is enharmonicized to become a German augmented sixth. Similar to the exposition, D^{b} resolves to C, the two of which describe the $^{b}6$–5 in F (Ex. 3-7). Importantly, the anomalous setting of secondary theme in the submediant key serves to resituate F: what was once an intrusive pitch now becomes more centralized as the secondary tonal center. In a larger sense, the secondary theme is expected to be in E major. The

use of F major here again emphasizes the submediant key. The secondary theme is finally presented in A major in the piano's restatement. At m. 299, the resolution from V–I in A major as ESC closes the recapitulation and moves onto the coda. By fragmenting the secondary theme over a descending bass line, Beach delays the final conclusion to the tonic A minor until the last measure.

Ex 3-6 Recapitulation in the first movement



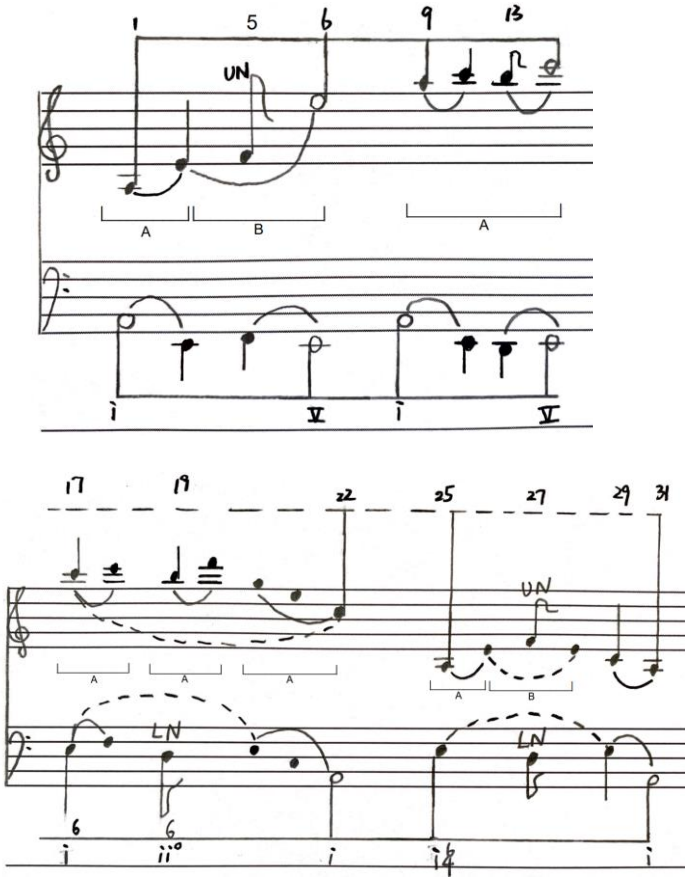
Ex 3-7 Secondary theme in recapitulation of the first movement



Motivic and Schenkerian Dimensions

Example 3-8 provides a motivic synopsis of the primary theme. It starts on ascending 5th following an upper neighbor figure F to embellish the dominant E. The piano plays the monophonic basic idea (mm. 1-7). In the repetition section, the basic idea becomes the inner voice as violin adds a countermelody at the soprano. The two voices converge at the high C in m. 12 and thenceforth, the main theme shifts from piano to violin along with the register transfer from f^2 to f^3. The repetition ends on the dominant of A minor, whereas m. 17 begins with a III. Incidentally, the rapid alternation between A minor and C major points to the two forming a "tonal pair."

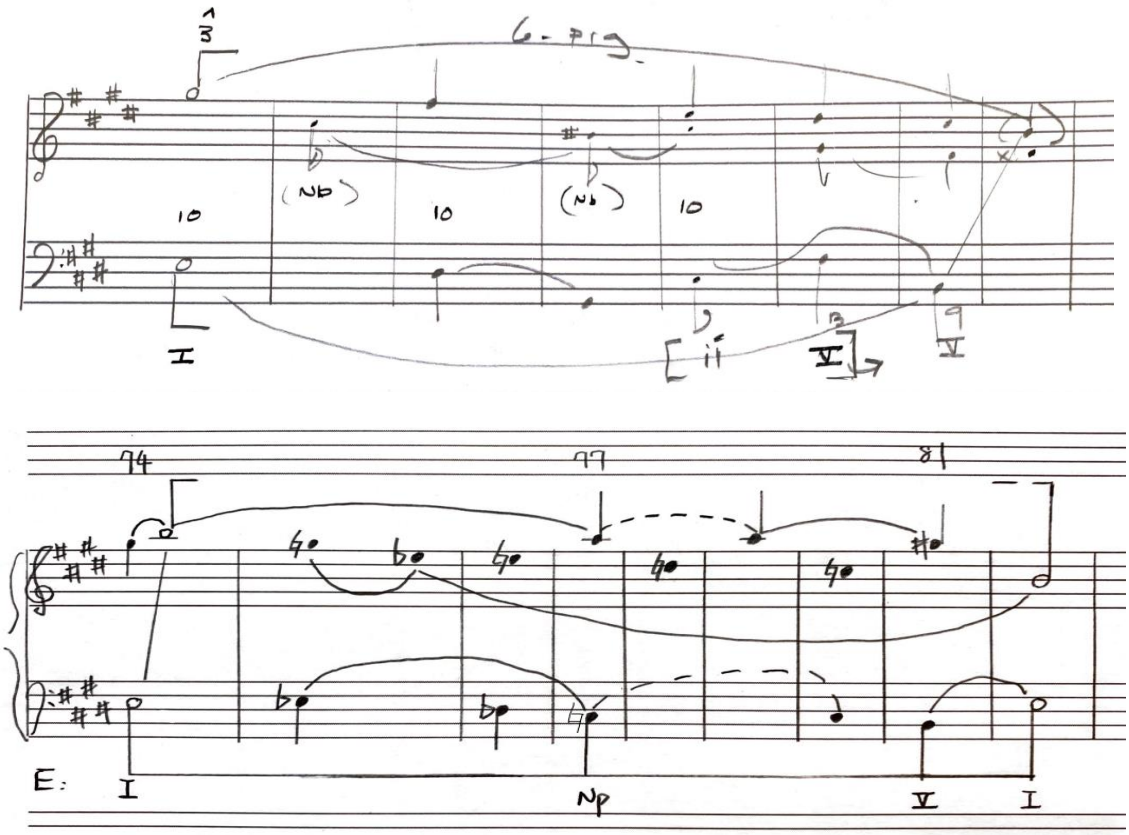
Ex 3-8 Motivic synopsis of primary theme mm. 1–33[72]



[72] Devised in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Swinkin.

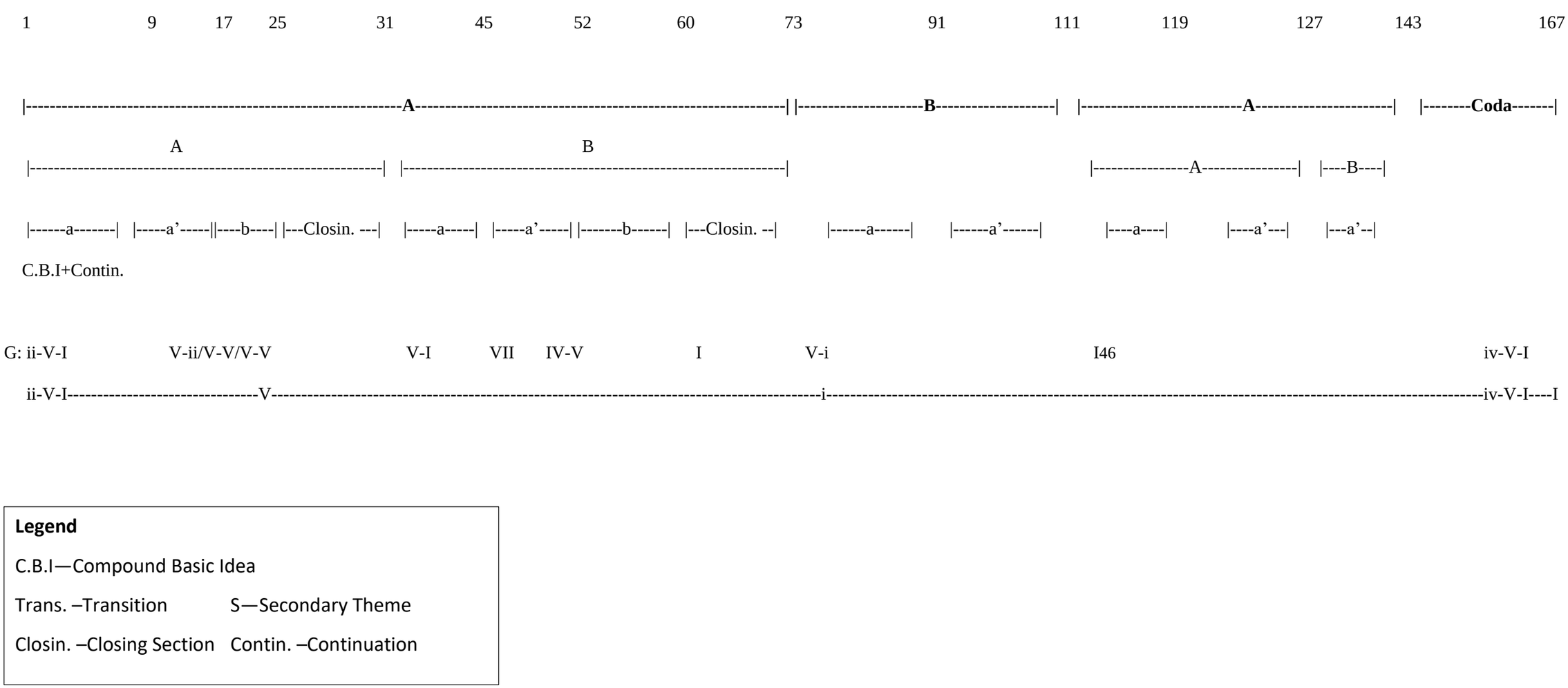
The lyrical secondary theme focuses more on linear progression of motive C (Ex. 3-9). In the antecedent, Beach launches a descending sixth-progression in the soprano, interacting with neighbor tones in the inner voice. As the music tonicizes the dominant B major at the end of this phrase, both the V^9 chord and the delayed appearance of B in the soprano contribute to the expanded dominant function. In the consequent phrase, the chromatic descending line moves into the inner voice. The overlap of different descending lines obscures the phrase boundaries, creating the effect of incessant flow.

Ex 3-9 Motivic synopsis of the secondary theme mm. 65–84[73]



[73] Devised in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Swinkin.

Table 2 Ternary Form Diagram, II. Scherzo



Legend	
C.B.I—Compound Basic Idea	
Trans. –Transition	S—Secondary Theme
Closin. –Closing Section	Contin. –Continuation

Movement II: Scherzo

Harmonic and Formal Dimensions

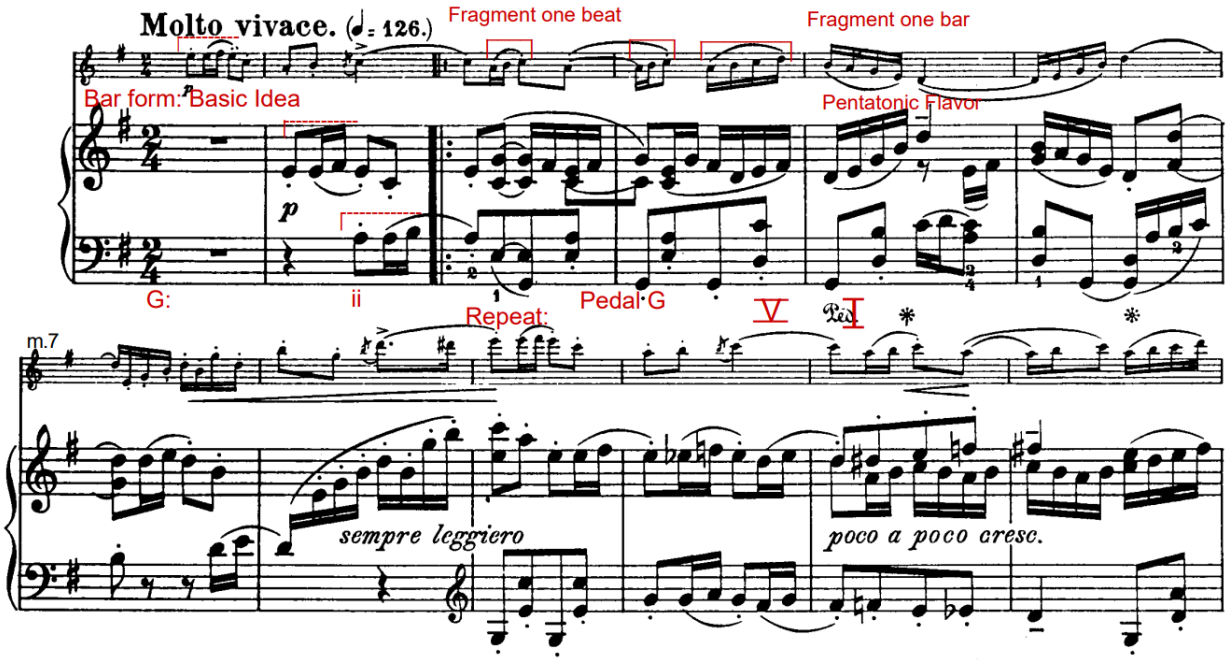
The form is A (scherzo) B (trio) A (scherzo). The scherzo parts are in rounded binary form and the trio part includes two statements of the thematic materials. What makes the movement distinctive is the folklike nature of the scherzo theme as contrasted with the soothing quasi-chorale texture of the trio.

The first part of the scherzo's binary form presents the main melodic materials in G major. As in the first movement, Beach uses bar form: a is an 8-bar basic idea (mm. 1–8), a′ a repetition one octave higher (mm. 9–16), b a continuation (mm. 17–24). A codetta follows (mm. 25–30). The theme starts with motive B, which is imitated in stretto fashion by the piano on both hands (Ex. 3-10). Beach's simple canonic counterpoint helps create a folkish atmosphere, along with the pentatonic-like melody, which is mainly made up by five notes, E–G–A–C–D ($F^{\#}$ is an upper neighbor, B as passing tone), and the tonic pedal point. The spiccato articulation offers a dance-like quality, which reinforces these folklike traits.

This scherzo theme is also distinctive in that it begins already "in progress," so to speak. That is, it starts on ii, not the I; ii and then V (over a tonic pedal) defer the tonic even as they point to it; I (G) fully arrives in m. 5. Such an "auxiliary cadence" creates a sense of disorientation and shifts the weight of the progression toward the end. The motivic materials are dispersed in accordance with this auxiliary progression: the core part of the basic idea is harmonized by ii for only two bars (mm. 1–2). In the next two bars, leading to V, Beach fragments the opening sixteenth rhythmic pattern A–B–C over pedal G. Once the tonic G chord appears, she offers a somewhat novel 4-sixteenth-note idea (m. 5), inverts it (m. 6) and then
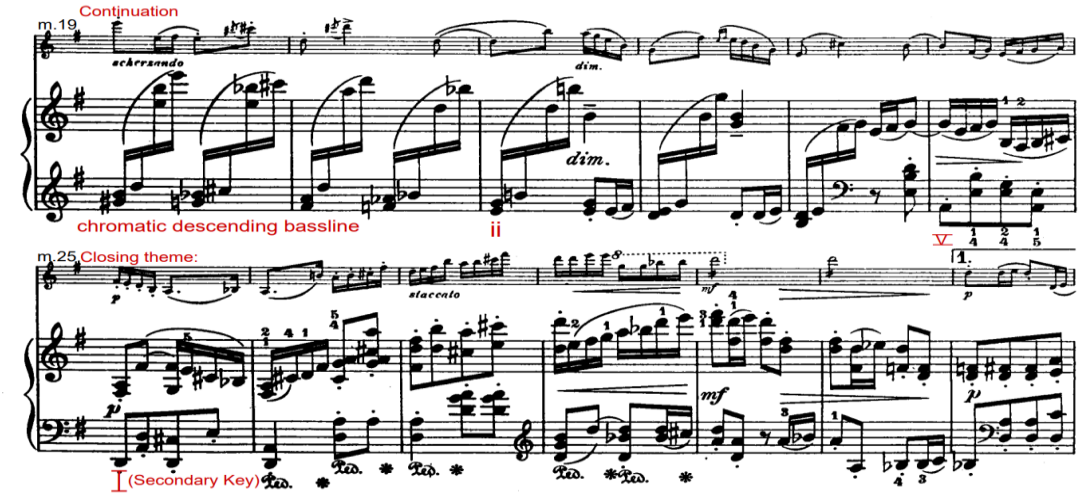
liquidates it over two bars—transforming the distinctively pentatonic fragment into a more generic arpeggio.

Ex 3-10 Scherzo Theme mm. 1–12
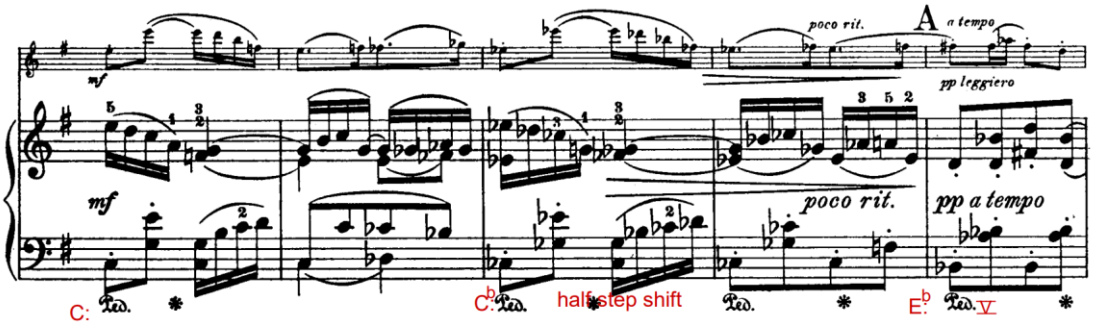


In the b section of the bar form, the tonal shift is broached at the downbeat of m. 17, with the arrival of A (V/D). The new key is solidified with the IAC at m. 25, where the D becomes the tonic pedal tone across this closing section (Ex. 3-11).

Ex 3-11 Scherzo Theme mm. 19–31



After the double-bar repeat, the B section of the binary form ensues. It follows the loose sentential format of A, and develops its thematic materials as well. Beach uses sequential motivic fragmentations in conjunction with myriad tonicizations. Starting in F major, the music then modulates to C major at m. 37. At mm. 41–44, we see a bold harmonic shift. Music transposes down a half step to C^{b}, a passing tone en route to Bb, as if Beach jokes about C major being the wrong key (Ex. 3-12). This sudden shift to a flat key prepares B-flat, V of E-flat, which initiates the second small "a" part. Beach then implements another bold key change: she first goes up a minor third from E^{b} to the mediant key G^{b}, then enharmonically respells it, and suddenly drop to D major with sharp 5^{th}, starting the small b section at m. 53. Upon the return of the G major, violin reprises the continuation phrase motive and concludes the scherzo part on offbeat tonic chord.

Ex 3-12 Half-step modulation in the second ending of Scherzo part
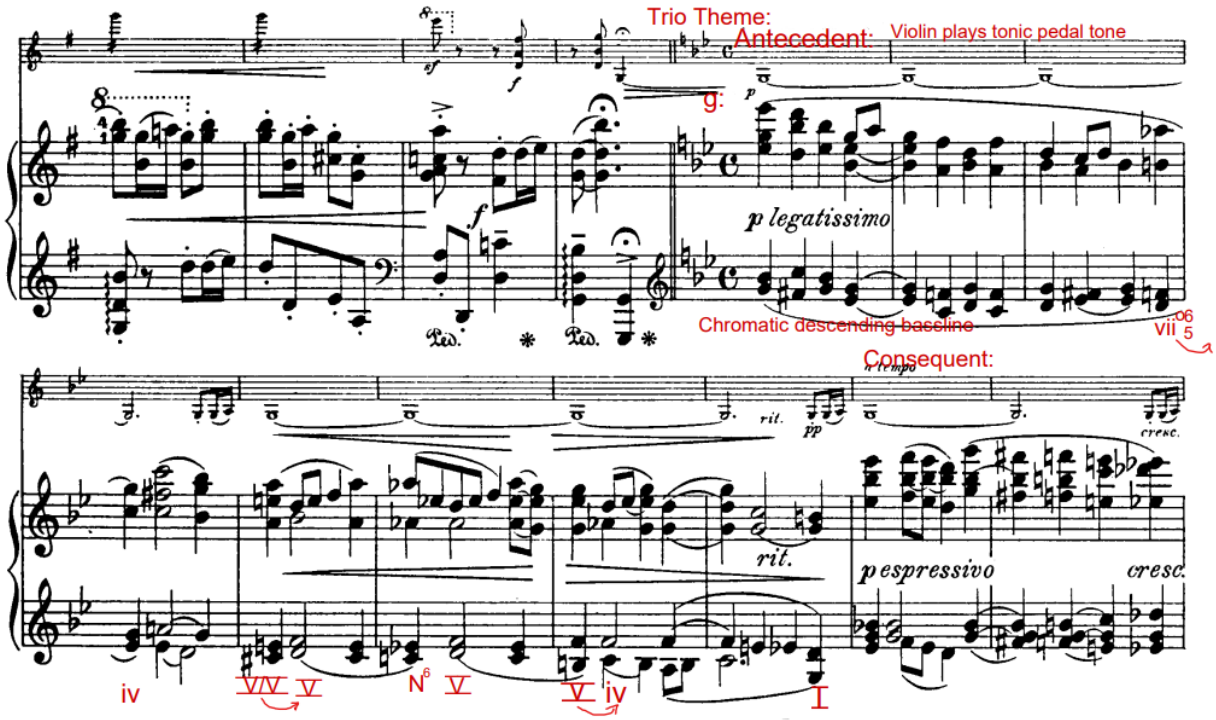


The trio theme, in the parallel minor (g), is stated separately by piano and violin in symmetrical period structure (Ex. 3-13). The piano's progression and descending chromatic bass lines pull against the violin's tonic pedal drone. William Caplin considers such pedals as "the most perceptually forceful way of prolonging a harmony"[74] The bass line in the antecedent spans

[74] William E Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 25.

an octave, leading to the cadence in m. 81. Beach's penchant for such dynamic, descending bass lines might be an inheritance from another great female composer: Clara Schumann.[75]

Ex 3-13 Trio Theme

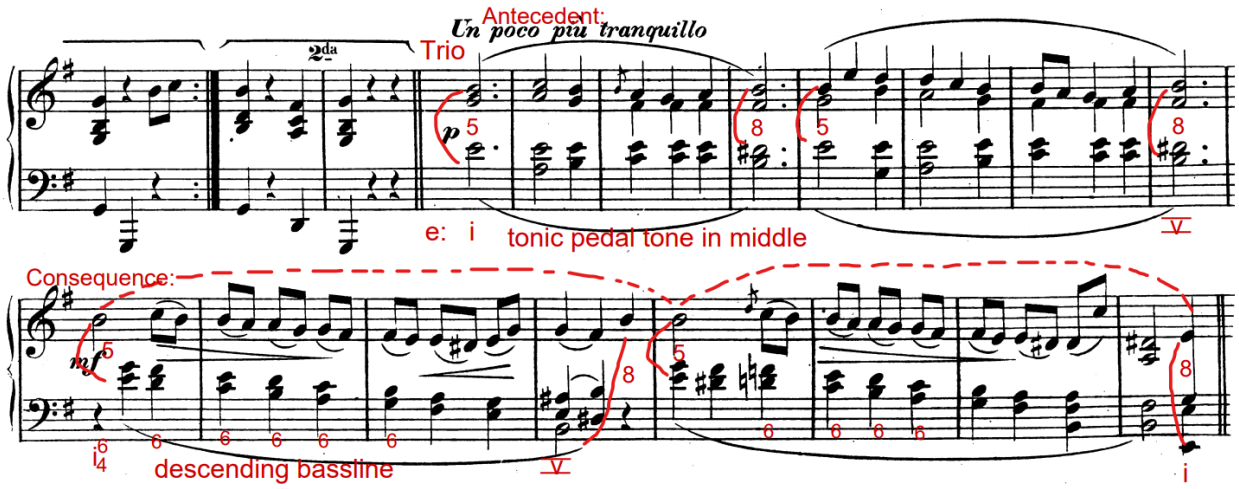


Clara Schumann's *Four Fugitives Pieces*, Op. 15, consists of four short character pieces of contrasting moods. The last piece is, coincidentally, a playful Scherzo in G Major and its trio section exhibits a tone as well, in an inner voice (Ex. 3-14). Another similarity is that Schumann structures her theme as a symmetrical period in which the harmonic progression i–V–i is prolonged by descending linear progression over the sustained drone switching from the tonic E to the dominant B. Compared to Clara's trio theme, Beach's theme includes more overlapped descending layers in thick texture. Above the tonic drone houses richer harmonies that tonicizes

[75] Julie Pedneault-Deslauriers, "Bass-Line Melodies and Form in Four Piano and Chamber Works by Clara Wieck-Schumann." *Music Theory Spectrum* 38 (2016): 133–154.

different tonal centers with tonal mixture. The character of Beach's trio owes greatly to the juxtaposition of more different layers.

Ex 3-14 Trio theme of Clara Schumann's Fugitives op.15, no 4



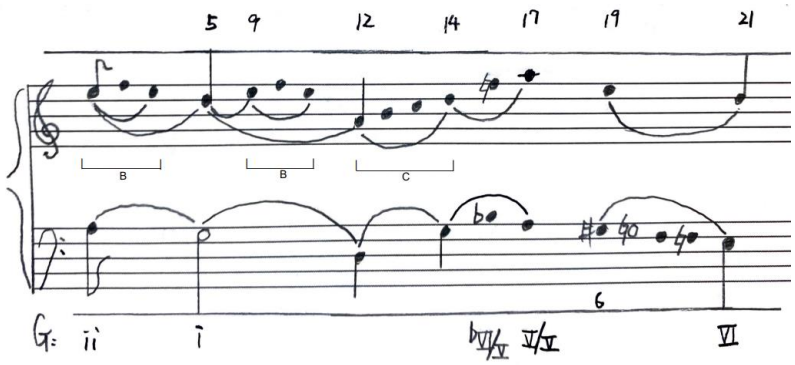
By playing another chromatic scale as lead-in material, the violin brings back the scherzo theme in G major at m. 111. After the restatement of the basic idea and its repetition, Beach expands the scherzo theme by hearkening back to the development part, a sort of secondary development, to borrow from sonata-form terminology. Namely, Beach transplants the music from mm. 45–60 to mm. 127–142. After the same series of modulations, Beach turns the reprise part into a coda. This coda is mainly based on the scherzo theme, supported by the G pedal tone, reminiscent of the trio theme. Appropriate to the Scherzo genre, Beach ends the movement with some lighthearted Lisztian flourishes. The piece finishes in one final bravura playing.

Motivic and Schenkerian Elements

Example 3-15 illustrates the motivic arrangement of the scherzo theme. In which, motive B and motive C receive massive use. Motive B starts the theme on ii and the appearance of tonic in root-position delays until the beginning of m 5. In order to highlight its brisk characteristic,

Beach sequentially fragments motive B by playing it in different registers, shifting back and forth in octaves. At surface, Beach fills the scalar progression of motive C with more intervallic varieties. In other words, instead of only having the seconds, Beach adds the thirds and the fourths but still keeps the four-note frame (mm.12–14).

Ex 3-15 Motivic synopsis of Scherzo theme mm. 1–17



The trio theme possesses longer chromatic melodic lines spanned to three octaves (Ex. 3-16). The theme first presents the inverted motive A, D–G, setting up the new tonal center, G minor. In the first phrase, motive A alternates with motive B including upper and lower neighbor tones and the lowered supertonic A. This flattened A appears twice. The first A^{b} as an altered note forms a tritone D–A^{b} resolved to G at surface level; the second as the root of Neapolitan chord and part of the fourth progression at the lower level. The consequent phrase includes more chromatic lines, embellished by neighbor motions.

Ex 3-16 Motivic synopsis of the trio theme movement mm. 73–90
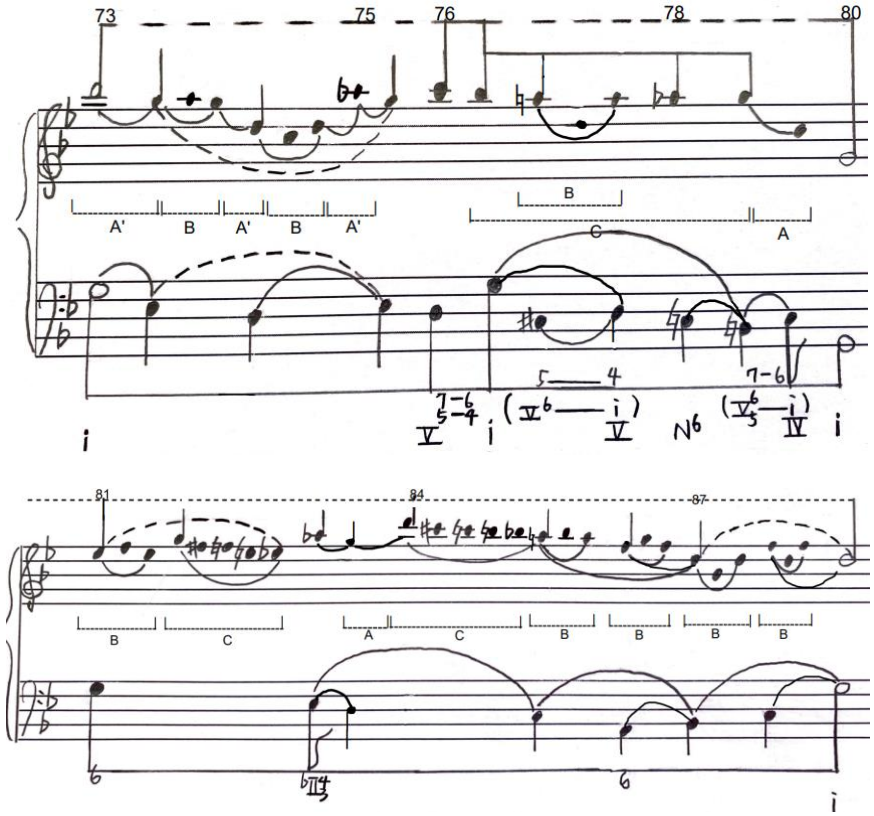


Table 3 Monothematic Ternary Form Diagram,

III. Largo con dolore

1 9 17 25 53 61 69 77 89

|----------A ----------| |----------B----------| |----------A----------| |-------Coda-------|

|---------P--------| |------Restat. ------| |-----Trans-----| |----------Frag. ----------| |----P----| |--Restat. --| |--Trans. --| |------P------|

Ant.+Contin.

VI vi-I^6 ($vii^{o\ b3}$-I) (^{b}vi-I)

e: i V III vi I^6 V-i VI-V I V—i

i----------V----------i----------V---i

Legend	
P—Primary Theme	Ant. –Antecedent
Trans. –Transition	Contin. —Continuation
Closin. –Closing Section	Retrans. —Retransition
Frag. –Fragmentation	
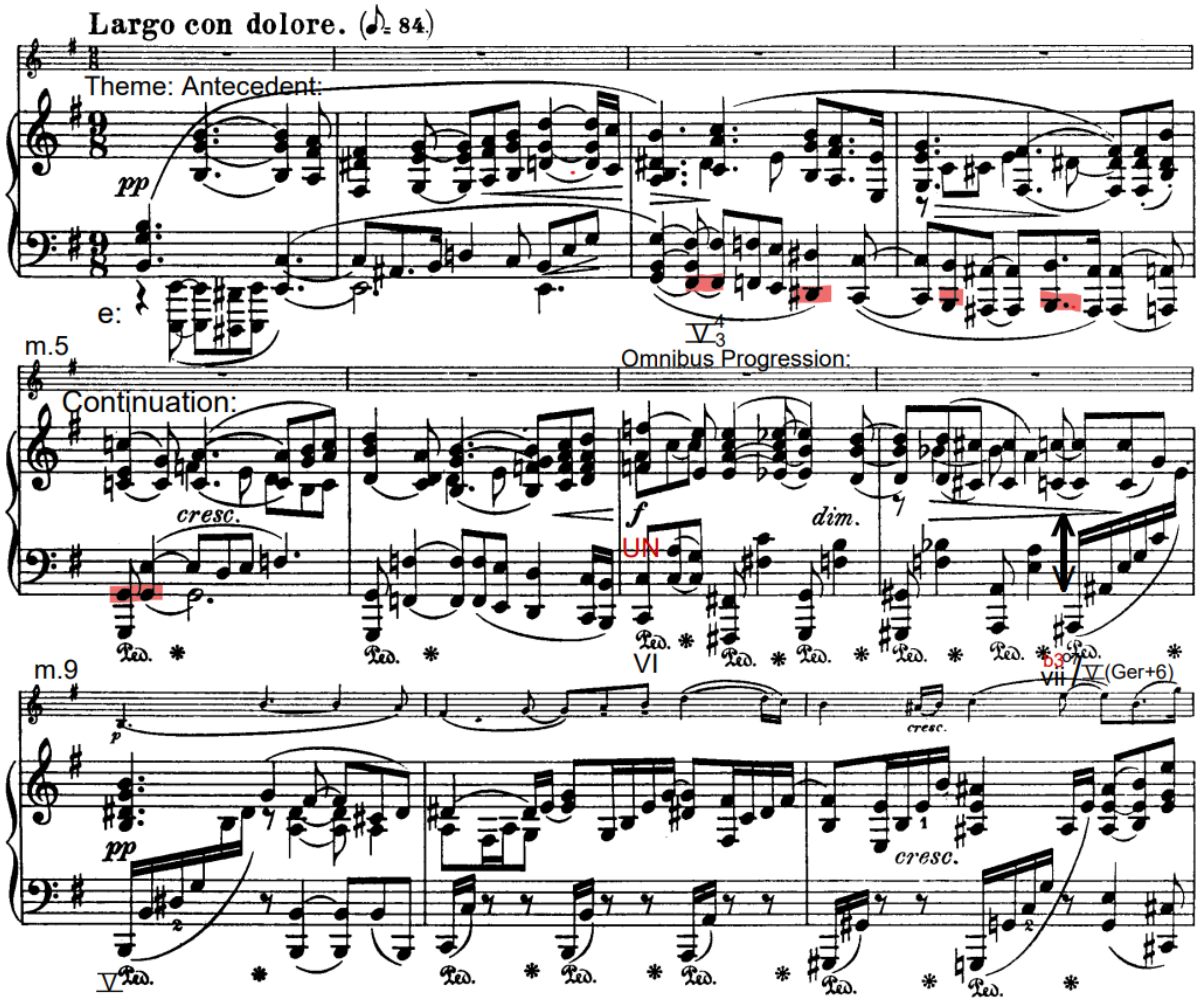
Movement III: Largo con dolore

Harmonic and Formal Elements

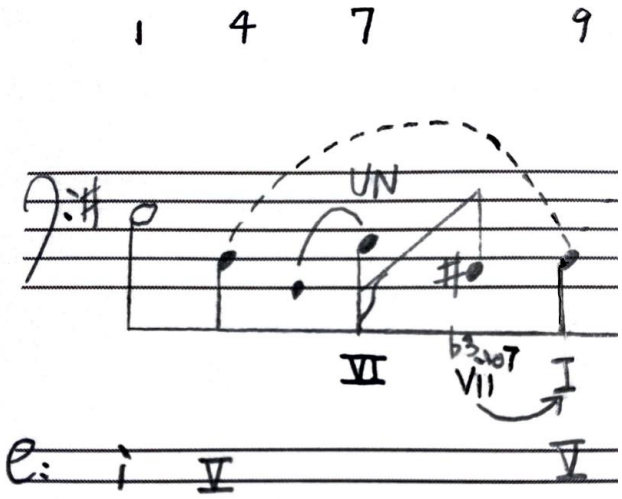
This ternary is somewhat anomalous in that the B section is less an interior theme than a developmental section. Locating formal boundaries is a bit difficult, due to ambiguous cadential points and constant evaded cadences. For this reason, this music, in the manner of "endless melody, carries this longing for resolution to the very last chord.

The piano alone presents a symmetrical two-phrase theme at the opening. This period-length theme exemplifies a hybrid structure: antecedent and continuation. As a continuation rather than a consequent, the second phrase presents mostly different thematic materials, and the rhythmic pattern of the continuation has been fragmented (Ex. 3-17). Harmonically, the antecedent begins on the tonic, E minor, and ends on the dominant, B major. The bass line composes out the dominant B passing from B to G. Such that C major first appears over its own dominant pedal G to start the continuation. The C major seamlessly connects to the violin's restatement back to E minor through chromatic contrary motion in outer voices, indicating "omnibus" progression (mm. 7–8). The graph (Ex. 3-18) reveals that, this densely chromatic passage ultimately composes out VI, which itself composes out V (the C chord is an upper neighbor to B).

Ex 3-17 Theme of the third movement
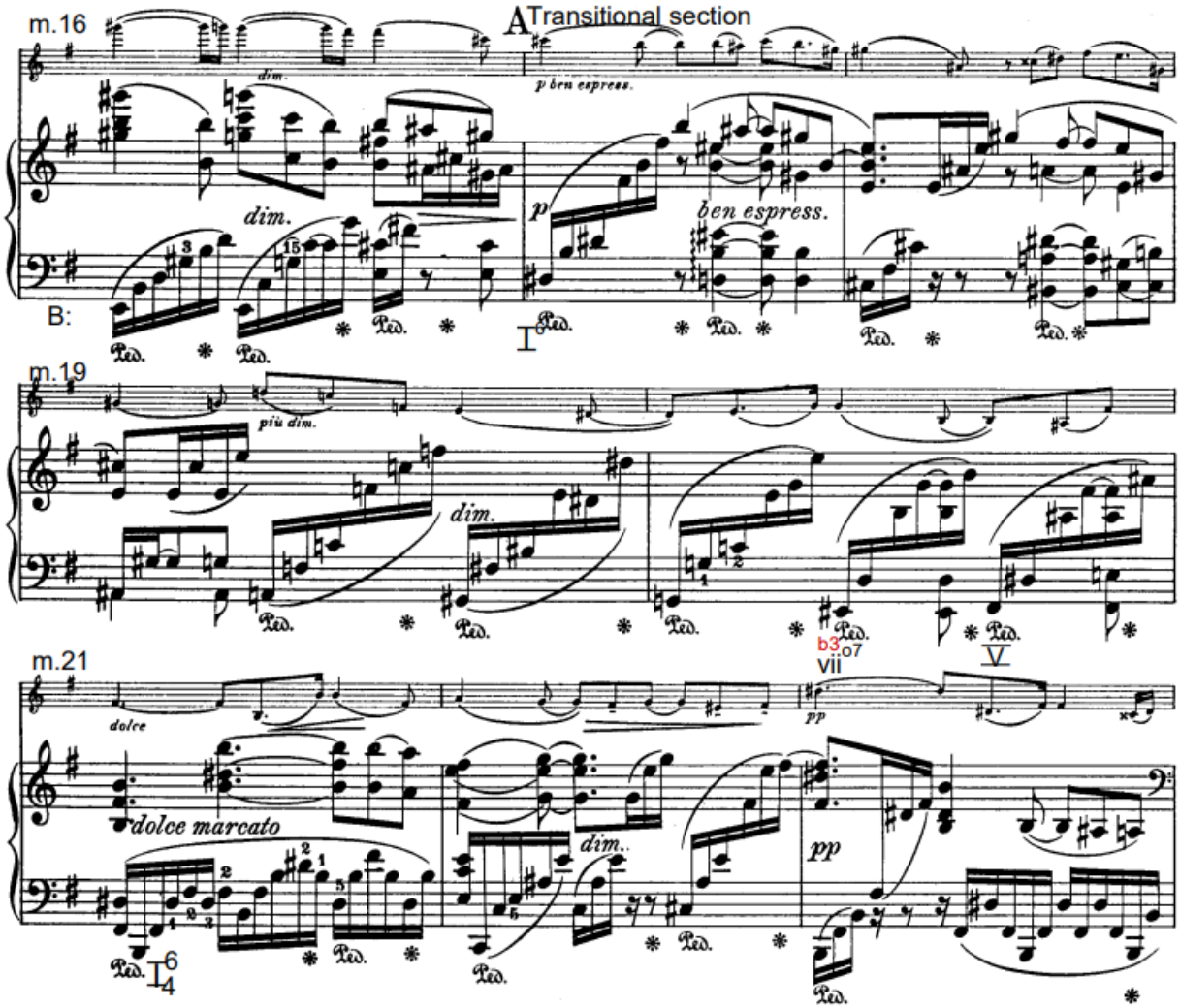


Ex 3-18 Harmonic Scheme for the main theme mm. 1–9



Due to the absence of the expected contrasting theme, there are two possible starting points of the development part. First, it can be marked on the tonic B major chord at m. 21. Although the resolution is unsatisfactory, it is the first time that the dominant B appears in the bass line (Ex. 3-19).
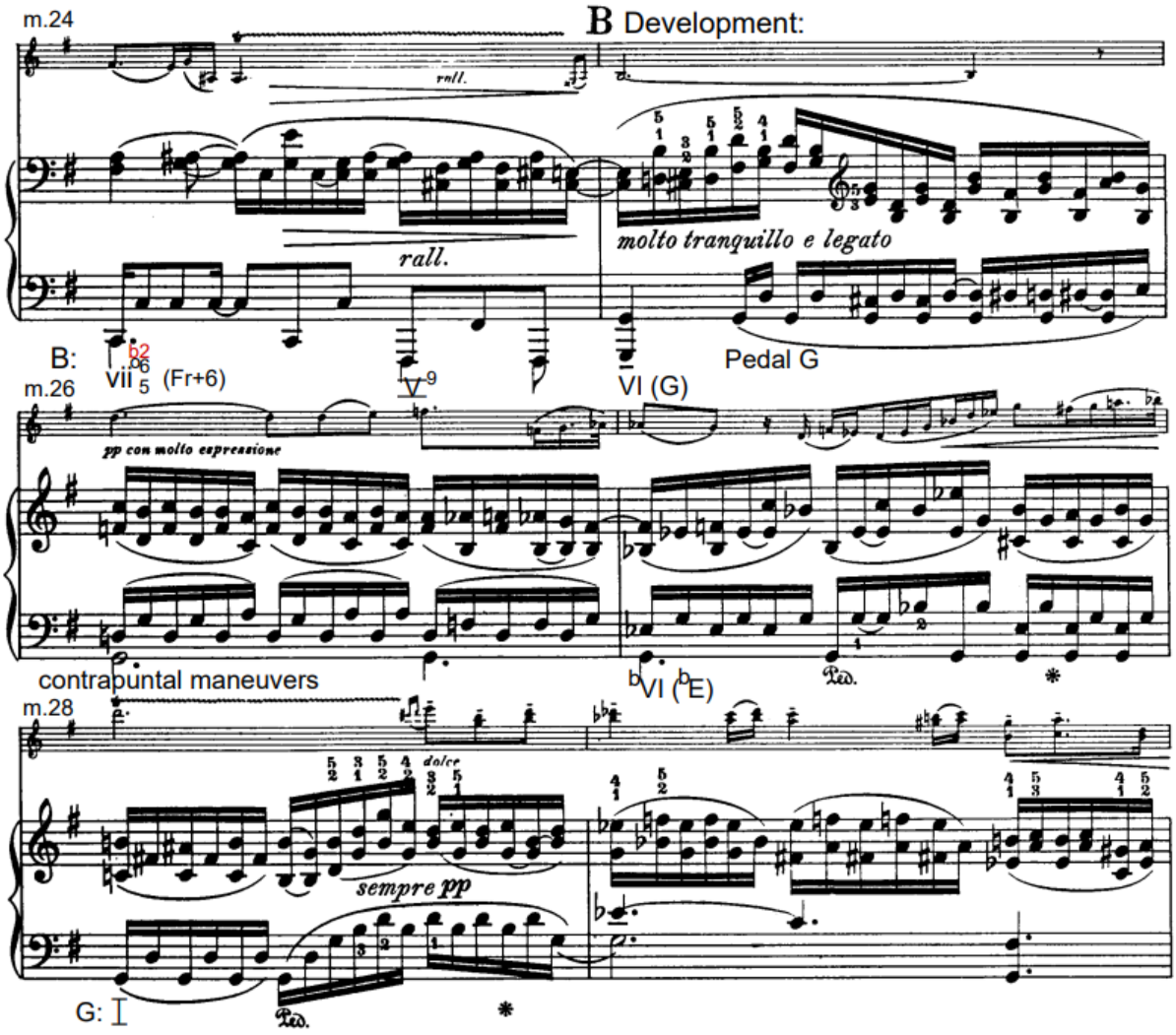
Ex 3-19 First possible starting point of the development in the third movement



Alternatively, the entire B major key area can serve as a cadential closure of A section and then at m. 26, the development commences (Ex. 3-20). Preceded by a V9, G major as the VI of B major becomes the local tonic. This G major starting point is more satisfactory than the one

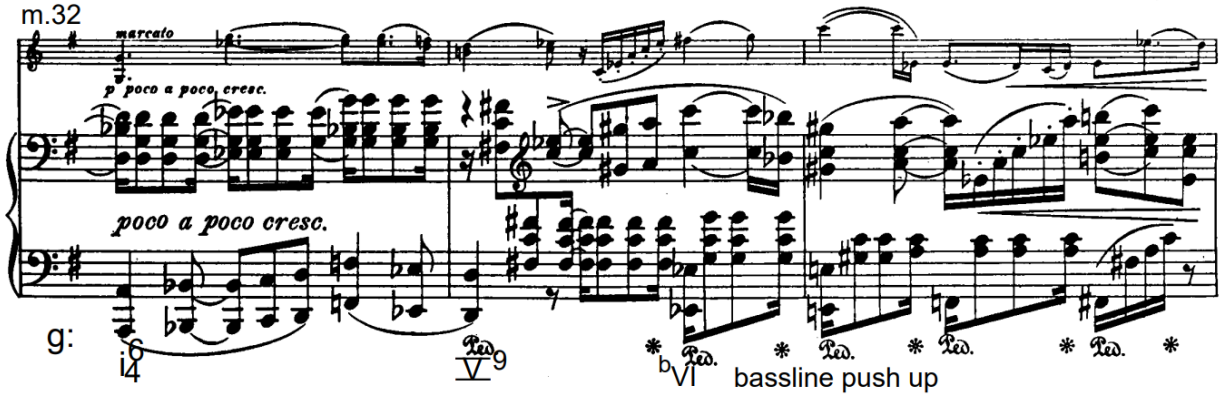
in the first reading as Beach uses the violin to trill on A for an entire measure in rallentando creating a grand new beginning of the development part. Above the tonic pedal G, the piano starts a series of contrapuntal maneuvers as the accompaniment which becomes a vitalizing juxtaposition of violin's melody. As Beach widens the intervallic distances, the expected octave is replaced by E^{b} as ^{b}VI and finally resolves to I at m. 28.

Ex 3-20 Second possible starting point of the development in the third movement

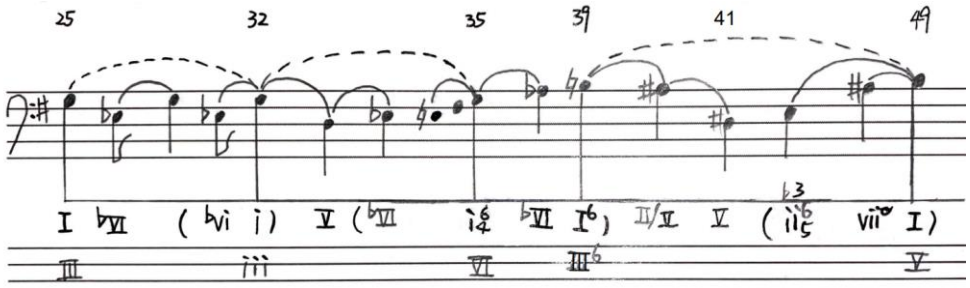


The entire development section composes out the mediant, G (Ex. 3-21). Within G, Beach uses modal mixture, using ^{b}VI starting in m. 27. That, in turn, prepares for the minor tonic itself—G minor in m. 31 (Ex. 3-22). That leads to V9 in m. 33, from which point the bass pushes upward chromatically until reaching i^{6} in m. 36, and then, after more chromatic divagations, the major I^{6} in m. 39. The dominant preparation of B major anticipates the arrival of A section in E minor.

Ex 3-21 The development part mm. 32–34



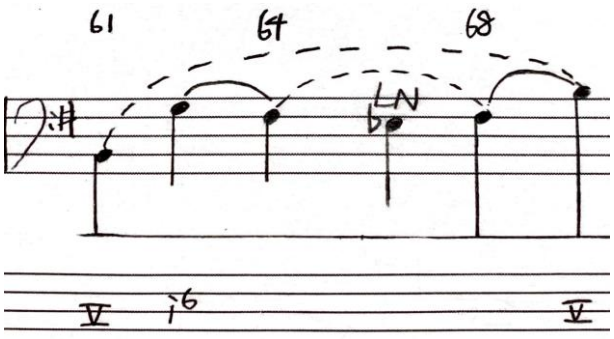
Ex 3-22 Harmonic Scheme of the development part mm. 25–49



The violin trills into the A′ section at m. 53. The landing on tonic E minor chord brings back the theme played by piano, along with violin's countermelody. At m. 61, the violin restates the theme as a prolongation of the dominant B (Ex. 3-23). In the first A section (Ex. 3-8), Beach
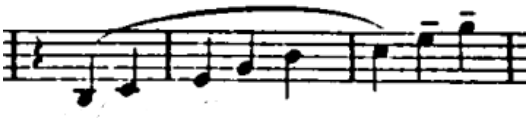
uses the upper neighbor to embellish the dominant. This time, Beach adopts the E^{b} as the lower neighbor to embellish the dominant.

Ex 3-23 Harmonic scheme of the main theme in the second A section mm. 61–69



The entire coda is devoted to affirming the tonic, whose presence throughout the movement has been rather obscure. Once the dominant B chord appears at m. 79, the i of the PAC is prolonged for the next ten measures. Beach starts the theme in C major at m. 77, and then, remarkably, alludes to the violin's countermelody in the first movement at m. 82 (Ex. 3-24). The final chord, a Picardy third, appears at m. 85, where the violin ascends to the peak of its range (Ex. 3-25).

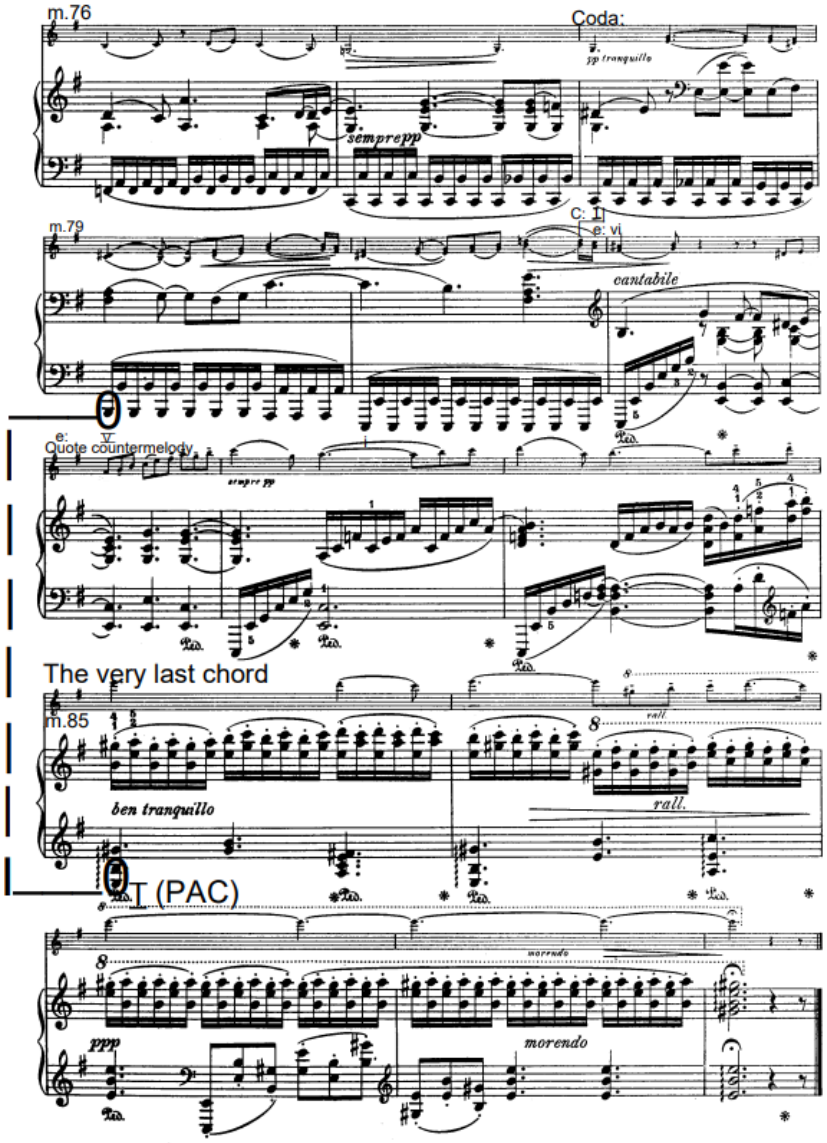
Ex 3-24 Violin melody mm. 81–82



Violin's countermelody in the first movement



Ex 3-25 Coda of the third movement

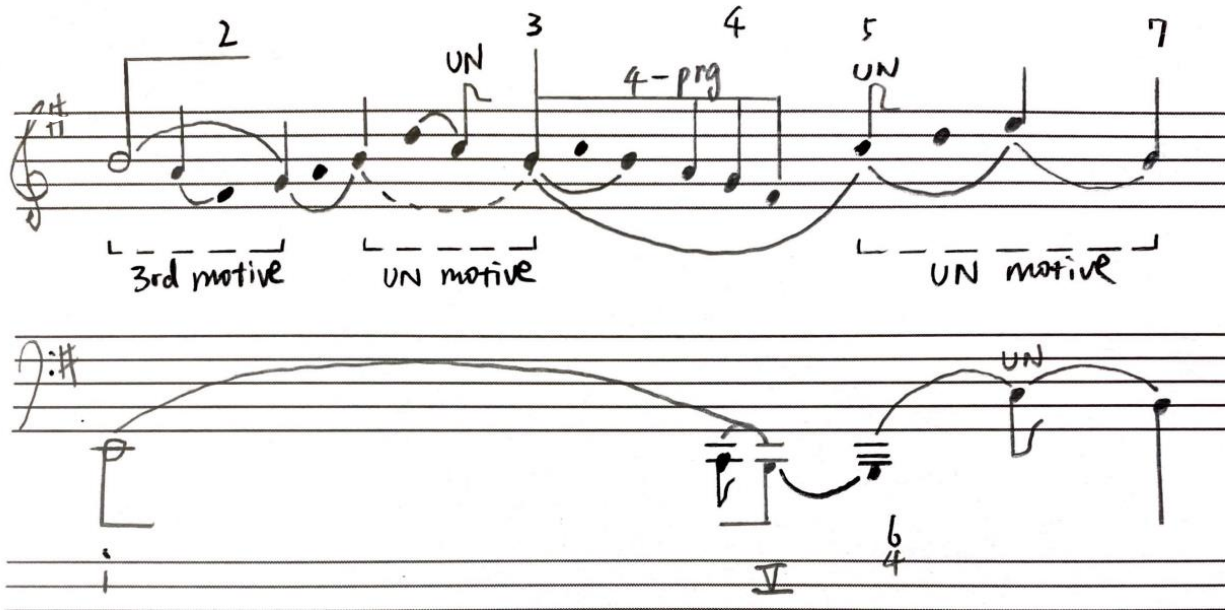


Motivic and Schenkerian Elements

The motivic arrangement illustrates the ambiguity of this movement as well (Ex. 3-26). The prevalent use of fifths together with upper neighbor motives composes out the tonic E minor. The melody first goes down, shaped by the third motive. The Kopfton B is prolonged by an upper neighbor C and then a descending fourth progression from B to $F^{\#}$. An arpeggiation of

the dominant B in the bass ends the antecedent phrase. In the continuation, the third motive, instead of falling like before, rises to E, from which it then chromatically descends to B as an upper neighbor motive. On a larger scale, neighbor motives are expanded in both voices.

Ex 3-26 Main theme of the third movement mm. 1–8[76]



[76] Devised in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Swinkin.

Table 4 Sonata-Allegro Form Diagram, IV. Allegro con fuoco

1 13 33 43 65 75 83 95 125 156 183 187 193 209

|----------Exposition----------| |-----Development----| |----------Recapitulation----------|

|-----Intro----| |-----P-----| |---Trans.---| |--S--| |--Varia.--| |---Closin. ---| |----Fugue---| |--Retrans. ---| |------S-----| |---Trans. --| |----P---| |---Coda----|

Ant.+Contin. Ant.+Cons.

(V-I) (V-I) (V-I) (V-I)

(MC) (EEC) (ESC)

a: ii-V-i III v ^{b}VI III i iv V I III —I

ii-V-i----------III----------i----------V----------I----------I

Legend	
P—Primary Theme	Ant. –Antecedent
Trans. –Transition	Contin. —Continuation
MC. –Medial Caesura	Intro. –Introduction
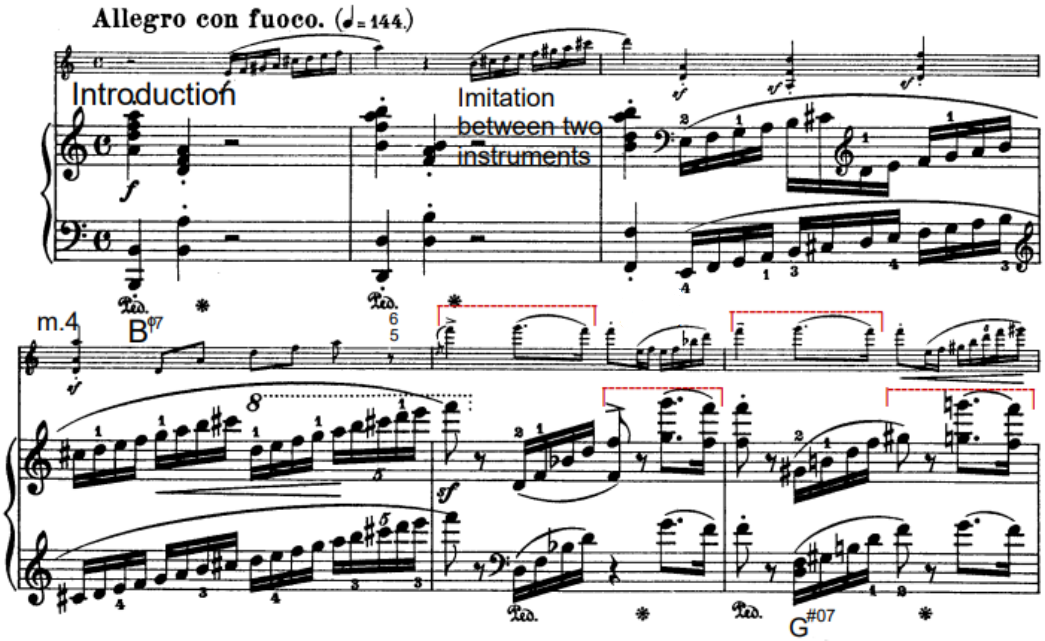
Movement IV: Allegro con fuoco

Harmonic and Formal Dimensions

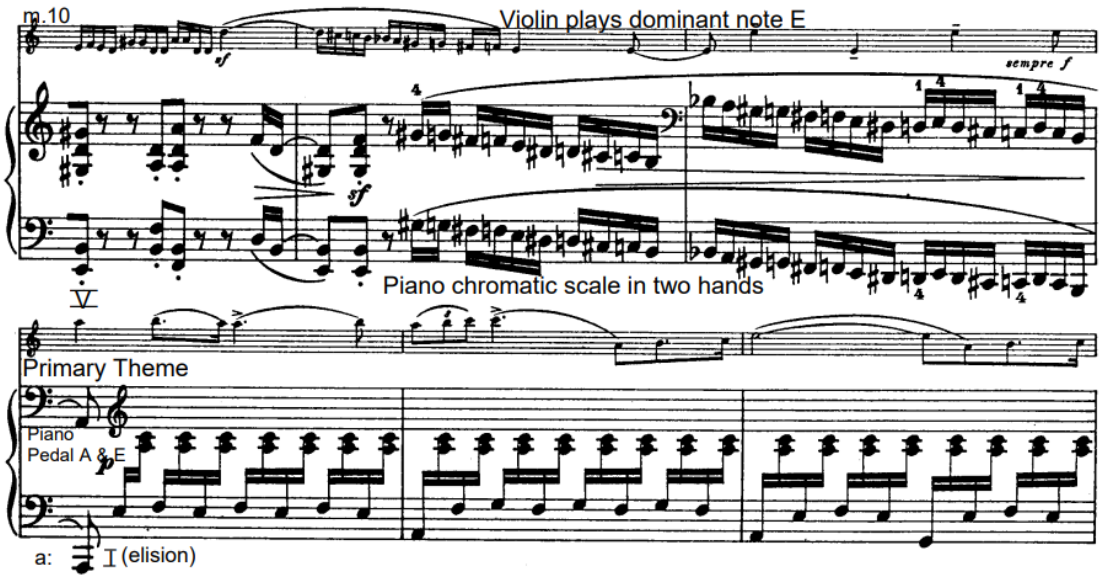
The fourth movement, the Finale, rehearses some characteristics of the previous three movements.

The final movement, like the first, is set in sonata-allegro form. Like the second, it opens with an auxiliary cadence. At m. 5, the violin unveils the dotted rhythmic figure that will form the motto common to both the primary and secondary themes (Ex. 3-27); that march-like motto recalls the similar one in the first movement's primary theme and transition. At m. 11, under the violin's repeated dominant E, the piano's chromatically cascades into the exposition proper, where the tonic finally arrives together with the primary theme (Ex. 3-28).

Ex 3-27 The beginning of the introduction mm. 1-6
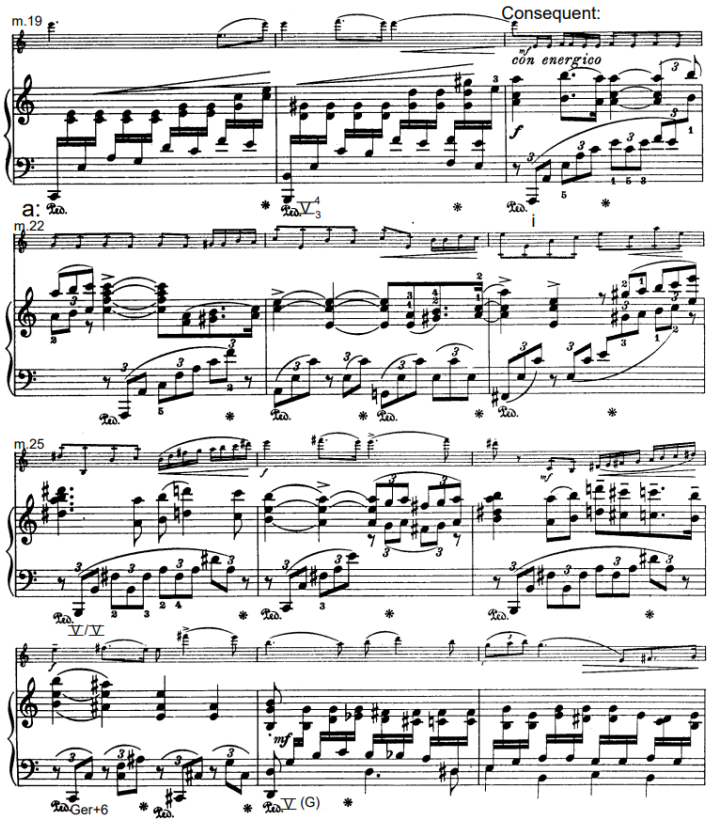


Ex 3-28 Introduction to primary theme mm. 10-15

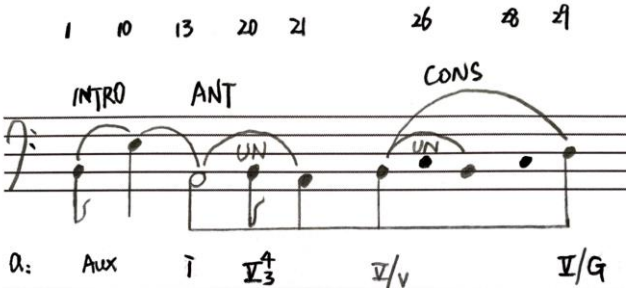


The primary theme includes two phrases in a period form. The violin has the melody in the antecedent phrase, the piano in the consequent phrase. As Ex. 3-29 shows, the antecedent starts on i and ends on V4/3 (an unstable, so-called 19th-century half cadence). The consequent phrase (Ex. 3-30) is expanded as a result of fragmenting the dotted motto. Harmonically, it turns to the V/v using a C upper neighbor (a more local upper-neighbor figure than what occurred in the previous phrase). Yet, instead of going to v (E minor), the phrase tacts toward G, as the German augmented sixth chord in m. 28. It does not resolve to V/v, as expected, but instead pushes up chromatically to V/G. The entire first theme, in short, is harmonically restive and projects a bold and vibrant quality.

Ex 3-29 The consequent phrase of the main theme mm. 19–30



Ex 3-30 Harmonic scheme of the primary theme mm. 1–32[77]

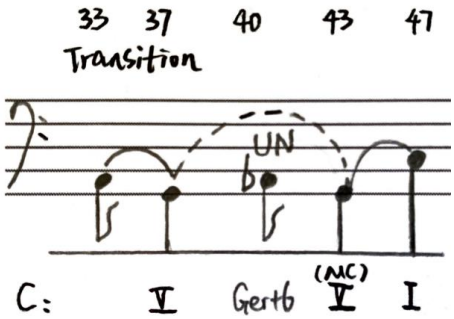


The thematic material of the transition is borrowed from the introduction (Ex. 3-31). But, instead of using a half-diminished 7th chord, Beach adopts A^7 acting as V/V within G major. However, instead of resolving to D, A is chromatically displaced by $A^{\#}$ in m. 34, where the $A^{\#o7}$

[77] Devised in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Swinkin.

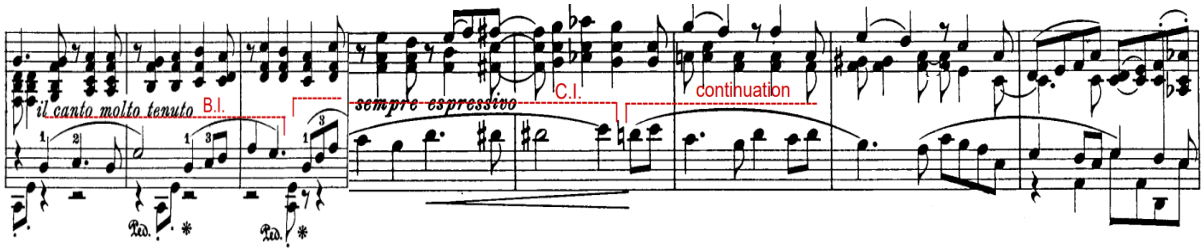
basically serves as a common-tone diminished 7th in relation to G (V/III), which arrives in m. 37. The A♭ as an upper neighbor, forms the augmented sixth chords to decorate the dominant G. V/III demarcates the medial caesura, and the II arrives with the onset of the secondary theme.

Ex 3-31 Harmonic scheme of the transition mm. 33–47



The secondary theme is in C major, the mediant of A minor, and is lyrical as one would expect of a traditional secondary theme (Ex. 3-32). This new theme is a compound period, each phrase of which features a compound basic idea (a basic idea at mm. 47–49 and a contrasting idea without a cadence at pickups to mm. 50–51) followed by a continuation at pickups to m. 52. The consequent phrase, where the violin takes up the melody leads to the dominant of E minor (m. 64).

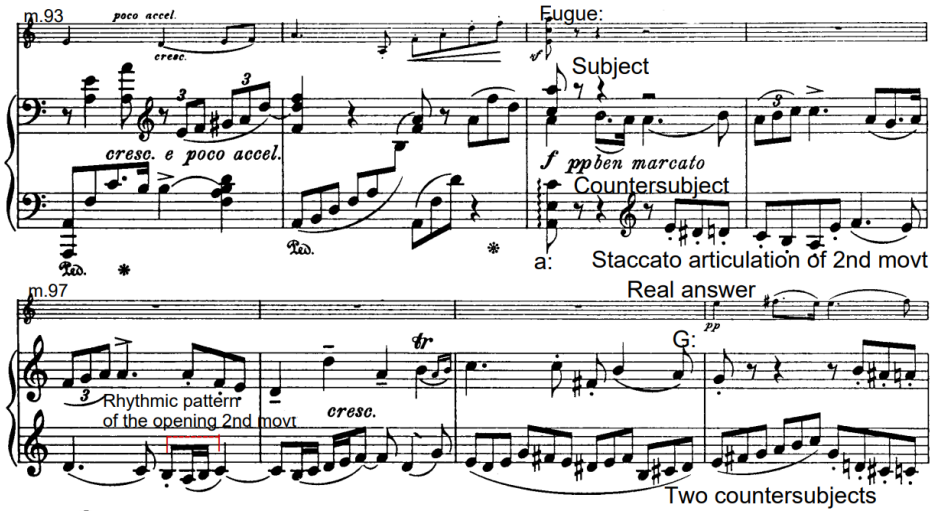
Ex 3-32 The secondary theme
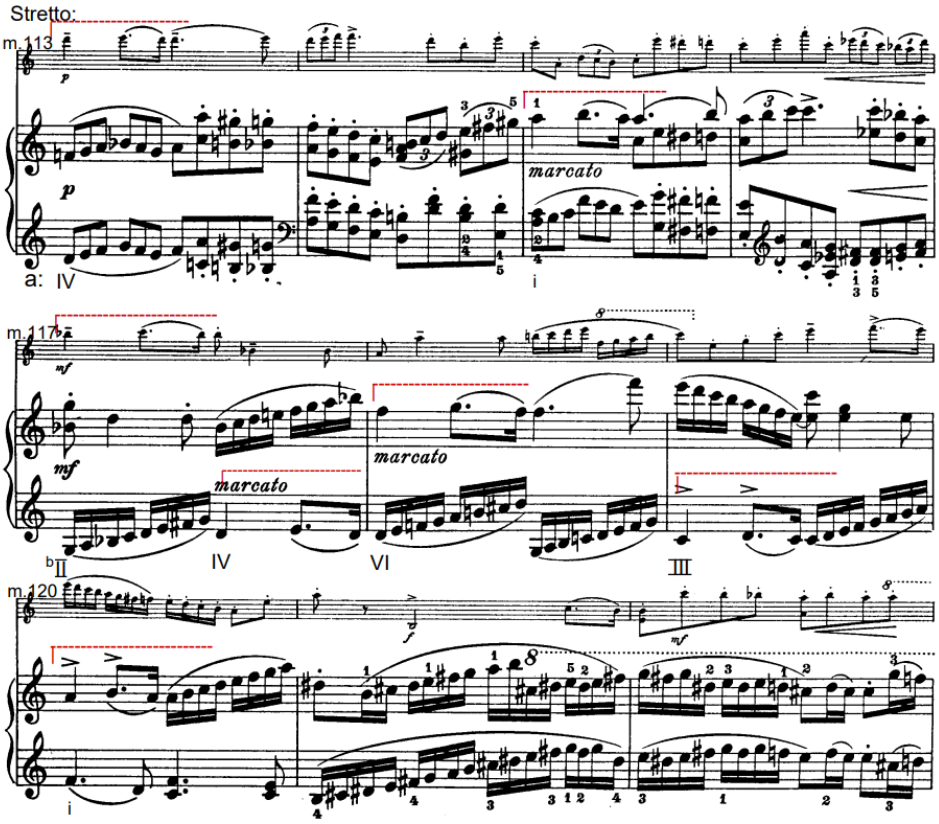


The development section is shorter but distinctive because Beach writes it in a fugal style, using almost solely primary thematic material; that is, she turns the primary theme into a

subject (Ex. 3-33). However, Beach's fugue is fairly loose, as befits its incorporation into a sonata-form context. For instance, instead of presenting the subject alone in the piano, a countersubject appears underneath it. When the violin states a real answer at the fifth above, one countersubject becomes two, and two-voice counterpoint becomes three-voice. Their staccato articulation and rhythmic patterns are reminiscent of the second movement. After the violin's answer, the piano restates the subject in the bass voice; an episode follows at m. 109. This episode includes a series of imitations on the triplet component based on the subject in stretto (Ex. 3-34). This passage in particular fully displays Beach's contrapuntal prowess. The fugue leads climactically to a restatement of the entire primary theme undergirded by an E pedal, as part of the retransition.

Ex 3-33 The beginning of fugal section mm. 93–100
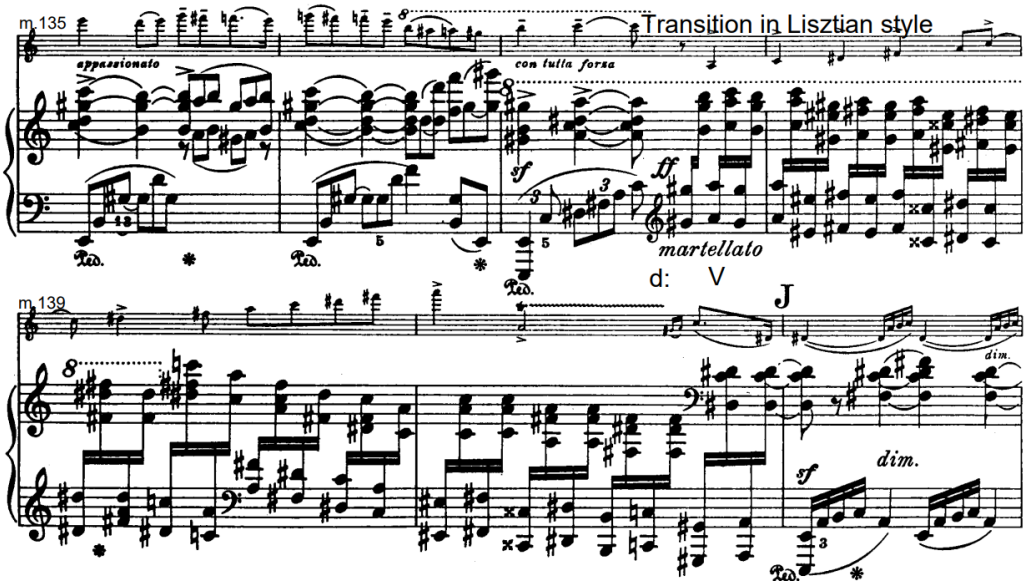


Ex 3-34 Stretto in fugue section mm. 113–122



Beethoven also wrote a fugato development in the finale of his piano sonata no. 28 in A major, op. 101. Written in 1816, this sonata is the first of his five late period piano sonatas and is also a great debut for Beethoven's fusions of sonata and fugues. Dominated by complex contrapuntal textures, this sonata-form finale demonstrates the challenges that Beethoven set for himself during his final decade. The fugue begins in A minor. The subject is closely related to the primary theme and consists of ascending motives. The countersubject includes series of descending arpeggios, creating tension. Compared to Beach's fugal section, Beethoven follows a more conventional way of writing fugues. It contains exposition, a middle section, and a coda. The exposition contains four entries, and the episodes are all derived from the subject.

After the fugal section and thematic restatement, Beach turns to Lisztian chordal writing, as she did at the end of the second movement. Here, Beach uses it as a modulatory passage (Ex. 3-35). Rather than going from low to high, this chordal progression goes downward and serves as a bridge from dominant A of D minor to the dominant E of A major.

Ex 3-35 Lisztian chordal writing in transition
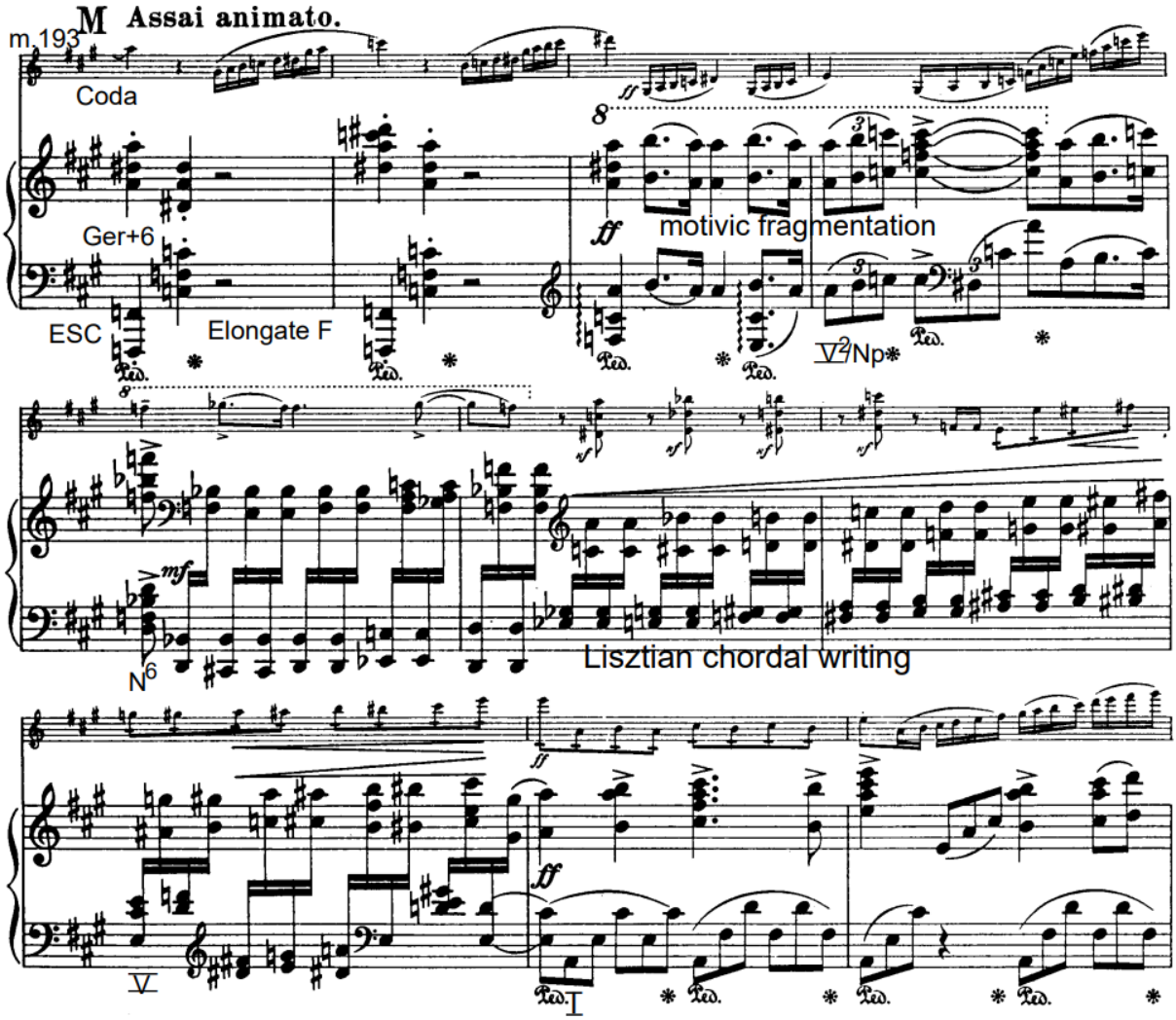


Over the dominant pedal at m. 143, Beach fragments the primary theme, pacing it more slowly, and combines it with the piano's countermelody over the dominant E pedal. Without piano's sixteenth notes as driving force in exposition, this theme as the retransition becomes calmer and peaceful, more leaning on linear progression for lyricism which is the characteristic of the secondary theme. Thus, the lyric quality of this sonata stands out more.

For Beach, to recapitulate seems to mean more than merely returning to something old. It seems that what she wants to recapitulate is the advanced version of both themes after going through the previous sections. First, A minor is replaced by A major and never comes back. Beach changes the key signature, signaling a new start. Second, both themes are varied but the contrast between them has been weakened. The secondary theme in the recapitulation seems to

have picked up the triplet-driven rhythmic momentum from the development. And the primary theme, when it does briefly return, at m. 189, rides that triplet train as well. The violin and piano now closely collaborate, such that the contrapuntal passages are pervasive. Third, Beach presents a "reverse recapitulation" of sorts, in which she changes the order of thematic areas: secondary theme, then primary theme, and then the introduction. When the secondary theme returns at m.157, Beach keeps its two statements in A major. By using another chromatic scale as the transition, the primary theme comes back. After being lyricized at the dominant preparation section, that bold and vibrant primary theme finally reappears in grand A major.

Hence, up to this point, only the introduction remains to be stated in unresolved in A minor; this Beach saves for the coda, starting at m. 193. Compared to the opening introduction (Ex. 3-27), harmonically, it still is vague. The German augmented $D^{\#}$ elongates F, which is then enharmonicized as V^7/Np at m. 196. The N^6 (m. 197) eventually goes to V and that to I (m. 201). Hence, Beach uses an auxiliary cadence just as at the beginning. Melodically, it also fragments the dotted rhythmic motive, but uses a Lisztian chordal texture to replace the chromatic scales as the accompaniment (Ex. 3-36). Beach again sweeps through almost the entire keyboard for the very last double scale to end this sonata in magnificent A major.

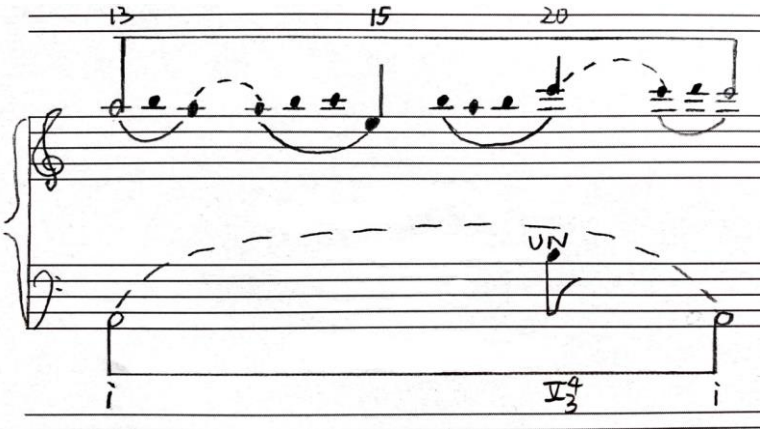
Ex 3-36 Beginning of Coda



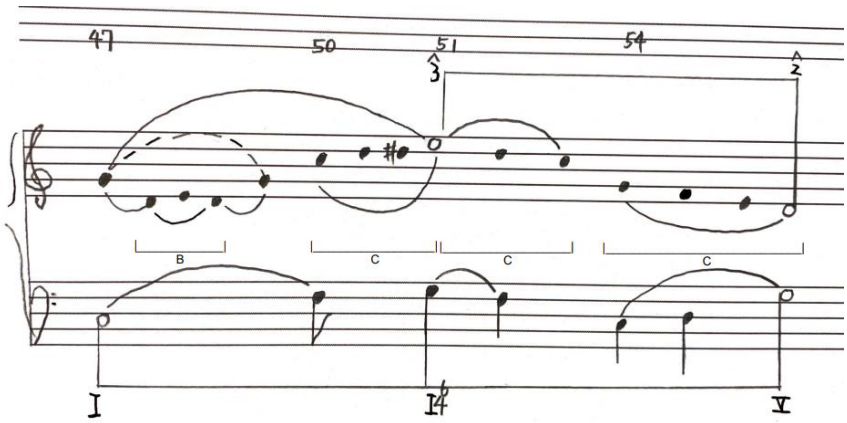
Motivic and Schenkerian Elements

As shown by Ex. 3-37 and Ex. 3-38, both themes start with motive B which composes out the tonic triad and the dominant triad, clearly harmonizing the A minor. The opening neighbor figure A–B–A is parallel with the bass progression which includes the dominant B chord in third inversion as the neighbor motion, embellishing the tonic A. The third motive follows pushing up the register into the dominant E. In the secondary theme, motive C plays the leading role. The consecutive motive C prolongs the final resolution from V–I in C major.

Ex 3-27 Primary theme of the fourth movement mm. 13-20[78]



Ex 3-38 Secondary theme of the fourth movement mm. 47-55



[78] Devised in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Swinkin.

CHAPTER FOUR: PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE

Having identified salient harmonic, formal, motivic, and Schenkerian features, this chapter will discuss the performance techniques that arise from the analysis of each movement. Additionally, Beach meticulously marks tempi, dynamics, expression, and articulation on the score, all of which are bound to influence one's playing. This survey of basic performance considerations is based on pedagogical books such as *Basics* by Simon Fischer, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* by Ivan Galamian, and *Problems of Tone Production in Violin Playing* by Carl Flesch. These performance considerations are also meant as preparatory to the more in-depth interpretive applications of analysis in the next chapter.

Movement I: Allegro moderato

In the exposition, as mentioned before, the violin plays a lyrical countermelody in a continuous flow above piano's primary theme. In this melody, Beach specifically marks dynamics every two measures which requires quick adjustments of violin techniques on both hands.

Flesch, in his book *Problems Tone Production in Violin Playing*, illustrates five parts of the string situated between the bridge and the fingerboard: at the bridge, neighborhood bridge, at the central point, neighborhood of fingerboard, and at the fingerboard.[79] Fischer points out in *Basics* that, when playing in high positions, the sound points have to be squeezed closer and closer to the bridge; when playing in low positions, the G and D strings are too thick and hard to respond if the bow is very close to the bridge.[80] In Beach's Violin Sonata, there are two different

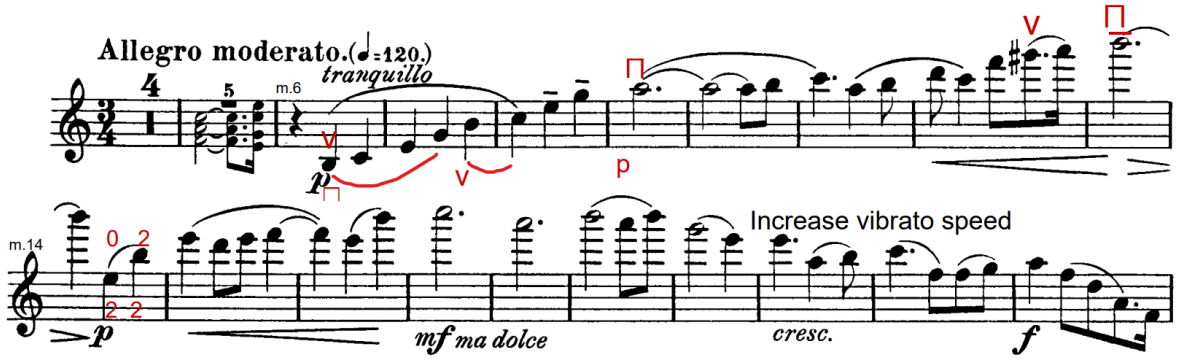
[79] Carl Flesch, *Problems Tone Production in Violin Playing* (New York: Carl Fischer Inc, 1934), 8.
[80] Simon Fischer, *Basics: 300 exercises and practice routines for the violin* (London: Peters Edition Limited, 2007), 41.

bowings for the beginning of violin's countermelody that I have come up with. It works fine to start it on an up-bow for a tranquil and quiet opening. Significantly, a tranquil start does not mean to sneak in. Thus, in order to remain the core of the sound, the sound point can remain at the central for the opening B and C on the G string, then gradually move towards the bridge as the melody is ascending to higher register. Alternatively, the melody can start on an up-bow but break the big slur from B to C. Therefore, the violin's entry becomes more determined, and the piano's ending seems to have been interrupted. Getting into m. 9 and m. 12, these two bowings certainly lead themselves nicely to the sustained A played on the down beat with the down-bow, and an up-bow to slurred $G^{\#}$–A crescendo to high B with the down-bow. As the crescendo has been precisely written at m.12, the violin should let the piano crescendo first then help the piano to reach the apex. The high B at m. 13 should seamlessly connect to other notes; one should create a long, legato line rather than place an accent on the B as an ending that impacts the phrasing of the piano's theme.

Similarly at mm. 15–23, Beach clearly marks *ma dolce* with another long crescendo from piano to forte which illustrates her exploitation of violin's capacity to create a loud tone with intensity and sweetness. Therefore, this gradual increase in volume demands more bow with added pressure and faster bow speed, playing close to the bridge. For such a wide dynamic span, changing the vibrato style would help bring out the crescendo. Fischer emphasizes three important elements of vibrato: speed, width, and continuity.[81] Here, the left hand can start quietly with narrow and continuous vibrato, then build the intensity by using widened and faster vibrato as well as the dynamics, which will add much contrast to the phrase.

[81] Fischer, *Basics*, 221-224.

Ex 4-1 The violin's countermelody of the primary theme mm. 6–24

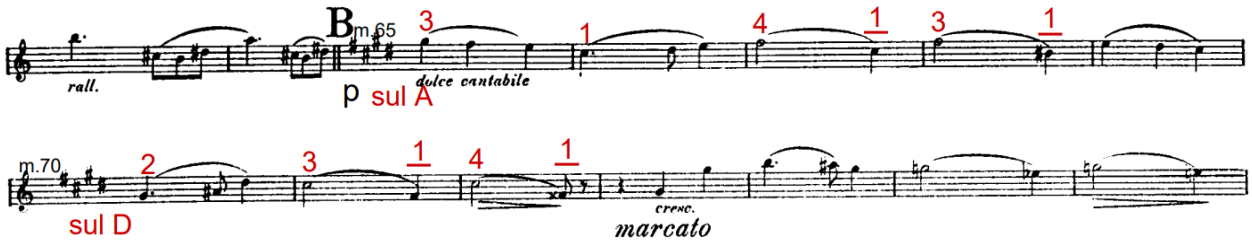


Speaking of phrases, the important component, motive A, the ascending fifth, brings two possible fingering patterns. As violin's four strings are also tuned in fifths, this interval can be played on two strings with string crossing or on one string with shifting so that performers need to evaluate both fingerings on a case-by-case basis. For instance, at m.14 in Example 4-1, the perfect fifth E–B can be fingered in two ways: playing E on the open string and A on the second finger at the third position; alternatively, playing both E–B on the second finger at the third position but switching from A string to E string. Since this perfect fifth is approached by a sudden registral descent from B^4 to E^3, the open E guarantees enough time for shifting, and keeps the melody on the same bright E string. Alternatively, the string crossing of the second finger pattern requires placing the second finger between the two strings.

The motive A appears in the secondary theme as well, this time not an ascending perfect fifth but two descending diminished fifths, like a sigh (Ex. 4-2). They are $F^{\#}$-$B^{\#}$ at m. 68, immediately resolved to the minor third and $C^{\#}$–F^{x} at m. 72 going to $G^{\#}$. Such dissonant tritones should stand out through contrast by different fingerings, fast bow speed, and intense vibrato. When playing the descending motives at mm. 67–68 and mm. 71–72, the two common notes $F^{\#}$ and $C^{\#}$ can be alternatively played by third or fourth finger and shifts to $B^{\#}$ and F^{x} with more vibrato. In order to let the tritones come out little more, my finger suggestion is to play the

melody on the same string as much as possible for a generally unified tone color, i.e. the first five measures of the antecedent phrase can all stay on the A string, starting on the fifth position with the third finger and shifting down to the second position at m.66, and from m.70, turns to D string with the second finger on $G^{\#}$. The rich A and D strings would also contrast the bright E string playing the following consequent phrase but also remains in the *piano* dynamic. Once the tritone arrives, the faster bow speed couples with the intense vibrato properly emphasized the dissonance. Additionally, the downward shifting of the tritones should not result in a decay or accent on two notes because the sustained lines would well convey the resolution from the dissonance to the consonance. The key to playing this theme is to maintain a constant line with continuous vibrato, thus allowing the phrases to ebb and flow.
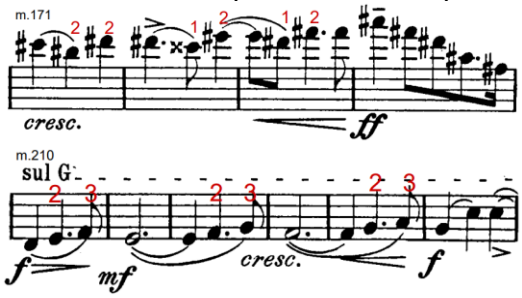
Ex 4-2 Secondary theme in the first movement mm. 63–76



In the development section, as the music becomes highly modulatory and chromatic, Beach uses sequential progressions in dotted rhythmic patterns to spin out the motive C with a crescendo. Using the same finger patterns to shift in such sequential passage helps to bring out motivic development. For instance, at m. 171, the fourth chromatic progression, $C^{\#}$–$D^{\#}$–$E^{\#}$–$F^{\#}$, begins and bridges a big leap from $C^{\#}$–$A^{\#}$ which consists of a series of descending seconds, including $C^{\#}$–$B^{\#}$, $D^{\#}$–C^{X}, and $E^{\#}$–$D^{\#}$. Shifting on second finger, as shown in Example 3, ensures the accuracy of intonation and the same tone color at high E string. Similarly, Beach features another sequential development at m. 210 on the G string (Ex. 4-3). The fourth progression starts

on E in the fifth position and gradually arrives at the low C through the sequential progression by ascending seconds, E–F, F–G, and G–A, approached by the second finger as well. Galamian points out that, "one of the commonest faults found in shifting is that the preceding note has often been shortened."[82] Here, it is the eighth notes and the doted long notes that should not be shortened.

Ex 4-3 Two excerpts in the development



Movement II: Scherzo

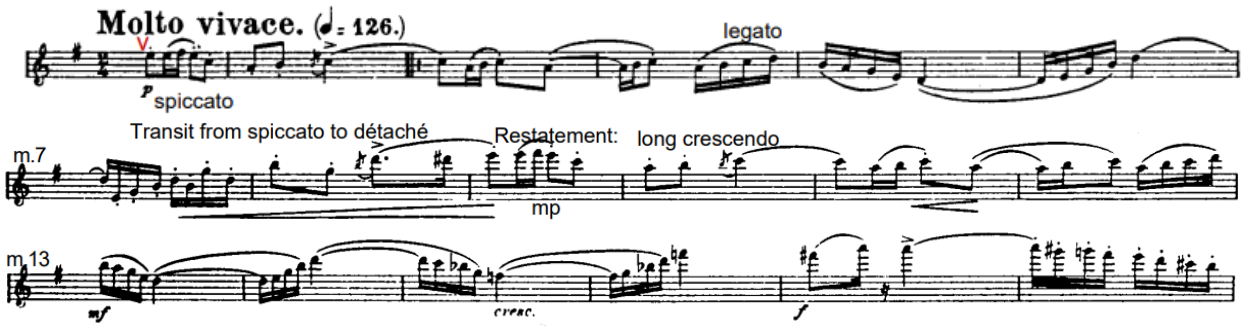
The challenge for this movement is to be able to play fast facilely through different bow strokes along with sudden dynamic and tempo changes.

With her typical meticulousness, Beach clearly marks dots above the notes (playing off-the-string) in a *piano* dynamic to start the scherzo theme, following an accent on the long C, and legato stroke for slurred sixteenth notes (Ex. 4-4). It would be a good choice to use the up-bow from the string for the opening E using spiccato stroke. That is because the bow strokes alternate between off-the-string and on-the-string at a fast tempo and require evenness and clarity. Fischer points out that to sustain the sound on-the-string requires doing, i.e., pushing against the springiness of the wood of the bow, bow hair and string. Off-the-string requires letting, i.e., not resisting the natural bounce of the bow.[83] The wrist motion is essential to control the bouncing in

[82] Ivan Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* (New Jersey, 1962), 26.
[83] Fischer, *Basics*, 70.

a light-hearted manner, the arm motion needs to be involved for legato bowing which contrasts the detached bounces at the beginning. My practice suggestion is to check the spiccato passages by playing them legato and to examine slurred passages by playing them spiccato to show up any unevenness. Until the end of the theme, it includes a crescendo into the high D at m. 8, therefore, the spiccato should gradually transit from spiccato to martele, and off string to more on-the-string as the crescendo widens. However, the spiccato passage at m. 7 just begins a wide range of dynamic changes from p–mf–f so that the high D needs to remain *mp*. As the restatement transcribes the theme one octave higher and the crescendo is approaching forte, the performer should gradually use more bow and open up the right arm.
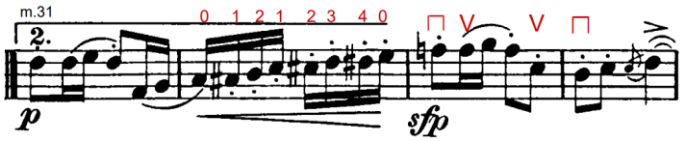
Ex 4-4 Scherzo theme mm. 1–15



A good example of sudden dynamic change is at the beginning of the restatement, a change completed by quick adjustments from the right hand (Ex. 4-5). As Beach marks *sfp* at the end of the crescendo on F natural with spiccato, in order to surprise the audiences, the bow would start in the middle using the wrist, then gradually involve the arm motion with less vertical bouncing but more horizontal motion moving towards the heel of the bow, and finally plays the note F to the upper half on the string using bow speed, rather than bow pressure. The bowing of this *sfp* passage (m. 33) must be adjusted with two up-bows on the two last two eighth notes F and C to arrive on a down bow for B at the next bar. My fingering suggestion of the
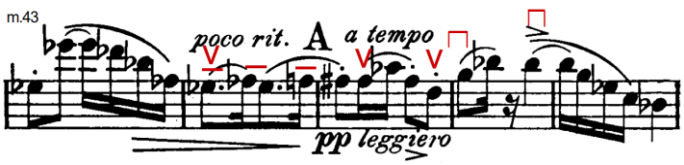
chromatic crescendo at m.32 is to start in half position and take the hand to the second position finishing the scale. It is wise to practice with the metronome using subdivided rhythms to avoid rushing when playing spiccato crescendo. To achieve evenness, keeping the same bouncing point is essential. It is helpful to look at the contact point of the bow and lightly bounce in repeated sixteenth notes. If the performer just plays the bowings as it comes, the evenness on the eighth notes becomes more demanding.

Ex 4-5 The restatement of the scherzo theme mm.31–34



As for the sudden tempo change, Beach employs a one-measure ritardando getting into the transition ascending from F^{b}, F natural to $F^{\#}$ at m. 45 (Ex. 4-6). Its leggiero mood stands out from the "dragging" legato bow stroke and the returned light spiccato bowing in the original tempo. As the ritardando is accompanied by diminuendo to *pp*, the bow length should remain within the middle part using more wrist. At the beginning of the transition, my bowing suggestion is to use two up bows on $F^{\#}$ and D, and two down-bows on G and B^{b} at m. 46. Since there is a sixteenth note rest in which to retake the bow, the accent on B^{b} will speak out more with a downward motion.

Ex 4-6 Transition part mm. 43–47
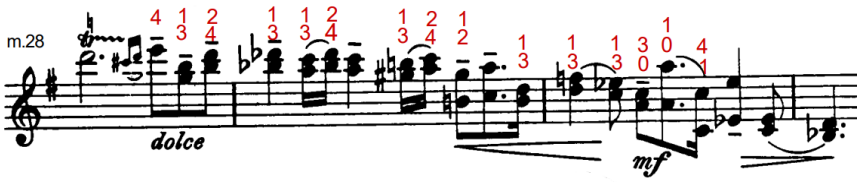


Movement III: Largo con dolore

When the lyricism is pushed to an extreme, Beach explores the violin's high register, but also introduces a new technical challenge, the double stops.

Beach writes two long series of double stops at the development and the coda, which demands different stretches and contractions on two fingers at the same time. In its first appearance, Beach combines motive C, a chromatic scale from E^3 to E^{b2}, and motive B, neighbor tones including consonant intervals such as thirds, sixths and octaves (Ex. 4-7). Following the patterns of neighbor figures, the finger patterns for thirds alternate between 1–3 and 2–4, shifting on 1–3 in seconds, for example B^b–D^b to A–C. As Beach also marked dolce, it is essential to produce a singing tone with precise intonation and continuous vibrato. However, shifting seems to bring problems for intonation, especially in double stops passages. Fischer states in *Basics* that the most important part of chord playing is to place the fingers on the string quickly enough, in time before the bow moves.[84] The key for correct timing is to place the next chord as the final action of playing the previous chord.[85] In order to shift in time, it is essential to keep the correct hand shape throughout and practice slow in broken double stops with a tuner. As sixths and octaves are added later, more finger patterns are involved such as 1–2 on B–G and 1–4 on octaves, it is advisable to always keep the common fingers down. When shifting from the octave A to C, the fingers need to jump over a string, which requires the precise collaboration between two hands, placing the fingers prior to moving the bow.
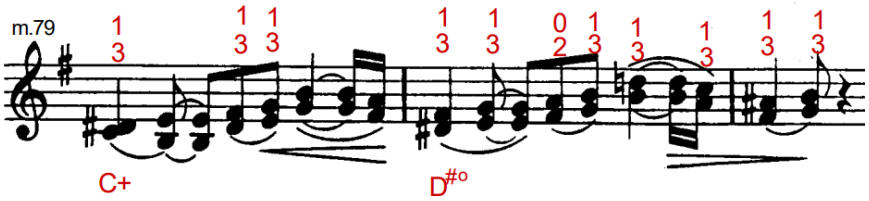
[84] Fischer, *Basics*, 86.
[85] Ibid., 87.

Ex 4-7 Double-stop passage in the development part mm. 28–31



The second double-stop passage progresses from dissonant augmented second resolved to perfect fourth and diminished third to minor third (Ex. 4-8). Therefore, the bow needs to maintain a sustained line for resolution and a smooth bow change without interruption by left hand shifting. Keeping the same finger pattern can be helpful when shifting in half steps, which helps to accomplish consistent and even vibrato. For example, the minor third $D^{\#}$–$F^{\#}$ to E–G appears twice, the first one at m. 79 crescendos into another at m. 80. In this case, both hands need to help each other to build up the intensity. The left hand starts on little vibrato along with slow bow speed, and then gradually widens the vibrato with the bow moving faster.

Ex 4-8 Double-stop passage in the coda mm. 79–81
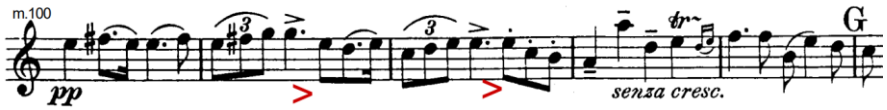


Movement IV: Allegro con fuoco

The Finale, as mentioned, features a fugal section as the development. Due to its polyphonic texture, this movement puts a special emphasis on a mutual sense of musicianship and understanding between the violinist and pianist, which results in a different sort of challenge from other textures.

It is very necessary to check the score for the discrepancies between seemingly similar phrases in the violin and piano parts. For instance, when playing the subject, Beach marks *pp* and senza crescendo both in the piano's first statement of the subject at m. 95 and violin's immediate answer. The articulations and dynamics of the two instruments should remain consistent throughout. Even in a soft dynamic, each entrance of the subject should be clearly stated retaining the core of the sound. In the violin, the tilt of the bow can also be altered frequently to adjust the dynamic levels. Fischer explains that more hair is used for the strongest, thickest and deepest tone, and less hair for playing more *p* or *dolce*.[86] Here, besides maintaining the central sound point, tilt hair can help to keep the soft dynamic. As piano cannot sustain the notes, to line up the articulation, the off-beat accents on G and E should switch from the tilt hair to flat hair. The accents rely on pinch-release motion from the index finger with a diminuendo after the sudden acceleration of bow speed at mm. 101–102 (Ex. 4-9). Following the accent, Beach requires spiccato on eighth notes and tenuto on quarter notes at mm.102–103. Thus, the violin needs to state the contrasts between the off-string and on-the-string—that is—separation and smoothness. To manifest the difference, the right hand might first use wrist and finger motion for spiccato and then involve the arm motion with more bow.

Ex 4-9 Violin's fugal subject mm. 100–106



Unlike the consistency in the fugal exposition between two instruments, at the stretto part, the two instruments race brilliantly (Ex. 4-10). Based on the score, Beach writes marcato in
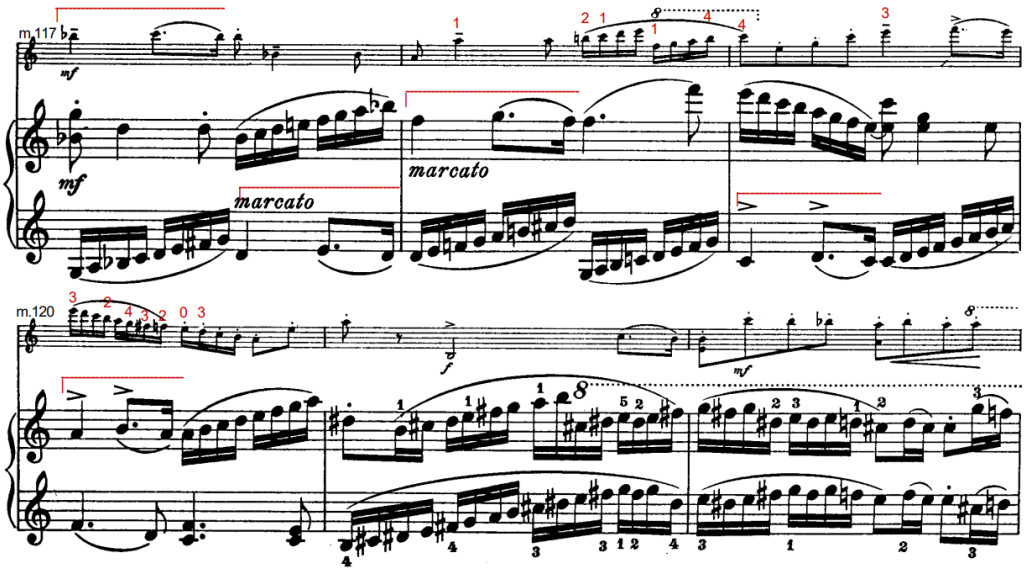
[86] Fischer, *Basics*, 38.

the piano's subject and accentuates motive B's entry but in violin part, she notes tenuto without accent. Thus, surprisingly, the articulation of the two instruments is supposed to be different. As music moves in fast sixteenth notes, the violin and piano need to keep the same rhythmic pulse, knowing when to jump on the train. My fingering suggestion for such a rapid sixteenth-note passage is to use more finger extensions and open strings than shifting but shift only at half-step intervals. In this case, it is B–C (Ex. 4-10). As the sixteenth notes progress stepwise, it is easy to play the ascending scales on the sharp side and the descending scales on flat side. Therefore, I would suggest practicing each note on détaché stroke slowly, one note per bow at first. Once the intonation has been fixed, play the scale in subdivided groupings such as two-note slurred, and three-note slurred with clarity and evenness.

As shown in Example 4-10, the scalar passages are usually followed by the eighth notes, which demand alternating between détaché and martele stroke. Fischer mentioned in *Basics* that, when practicing détaché to martele, the transition of two bow stroke starts from simple détaché, to accented détaché, and then martele.[87] First each stroke should be connected, then increase the bow speed and pressure at the beginning of each stroke, later gradually make the stroke shorter with a pause between each stroke. Here, the détaché should not use up the whole bow but ends at the upper half so the following martele can quickly return to the middle part of the bow.
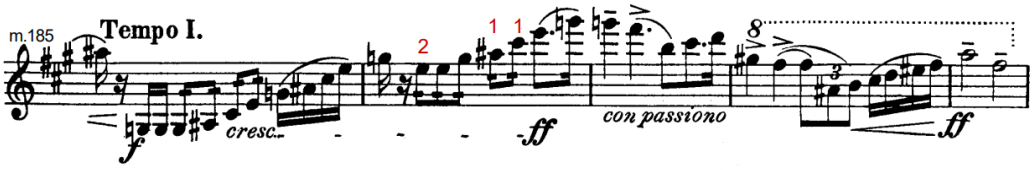
[87] Fischer, *Basics*, 61.

Ex 4-10 The stretto part of fugal section mm. 117–122



As the music transitions into the closing section, another fast sixteenth-note passage in unison would also challenge a good duo ensemble at m. 185 (Ex. 4-11). Under the piano's consistent, almost metronomic rhythmic pattern, the violin part includes short rests and a dramatic crescendo from *f* to *ff*. In order to keep up with the fast tempo, those sixteenth note rests are more like an indication of diminuendo on A$^{\#}$ and G than a real stop. The string crossing itself would provide sufficient rest, but the right arm should keep moving all the time. In order to crescendo into high G, my suggestion is to play the note E using the second finger on A string at m. 186 which avoids long distance shifting but also saves the bright E string for the high notes in *ff*.

Ex 4-11 Transition into the closing section mm. 185–189



CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATION

Both analysis and performance are modes of interpretation. The analysis, as primarily a rational endeavor, can provide strategic and insightful guidance for the use of articulation, dynamics, tempo, etc. The performance, as primarily a physical and emotional endeavor, is more spontaneous and intuitive but can nonetheless influence analytical understanding as much as the reverse. These two modes, in my opinion, should not be foreign to each other as they both are capable of offering equally valid interpretations. After clearing away the possible technique obstacles in the performance, this chapter aims to reveal how the analysis influences performer's compelling readings of the score. Based on which, I will present three interpretations by comparing Gabrielle Lester, Tasmin Little, and Vera Vaidman's recordings. I use my naked ear and metronome to examine the recordings without a sonic visualizer and other such technologies.

English violinist Gabrielle Lester serves as the violin professor at the Royal College of Music in London and the leader of several leading chamber orchestras in Europe, such as Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Ambache Chamber Ensemble.[88] The Ambache is a flexible group ranging from two to thirty players and is renowned for its interpretations of music by female composers.[89] It is remarkable that Ambache has already released their first album of Beach's music featuring all Beach music in 1999 and was awarded a Rosette in the Penguin Guide.[90] In 2003, Lester led the Ambache Ensemble again, recording four chamber pieces by

[88] Royal College of Music official website, "Gabrielle Lester." https://www.rcm.ac.uk/strings/professors/details/?id=03434, Accessed February 25, 2023.
[89] Lewis, Dave. "Ambache Chamber Ensemble Biography." https://www.allmusic.com/artist/ambache-chamber-ensemble-mn0002164538 , Accessed February 25, 2023.
[90] ArkivMusic, "AMY BEACH: VIOLIN SONATA, DREAMING, ETC / AMBACHE." https://arkivmusic.com/products/amy-beach-violin-sonata-dreaming-etc-ambache-70564 , Accessed February 25, 2023.

Beach— Violin sonata; Pastorale for Wind Quintet, Op. 151; Quartet for Strings, Op. 89; and Sketches for Piano, Op. 15: no 3, Dreaming for prestige British Chandos label. Collaborating with the pianist Diana Ambache, Lester programmed Beach's Violin Sonata first. This second album was another hit. *The Strad* declared, "the recorded sound is warm and vibrant, and the disc is thoroughly recommended for the groups perceptive and idiomatic approach to this delicate, enchanting music."[91]

Another leading English recitalist and chamber musician, Tasmin Little has made great contributions to the advocacy of woman composers. She received her early music education at the Yehudi Menuhin School. Then she went on to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she obtained a Performance Diploma.[92] As a Chandos' recording artist, among her numerous albums, there is a special album in 2019 that features a line-up of chamber works for violin and piano exclusively by three female composers—Amy Beach, Clara Schumann, and Dame Smyth—played with her longtime collaborator, John Lenehan. Beach is perhaps the star of this album because her Violin Sonata starts the album and her Invocation, Op. 55 served as the conclusion. Jonathan Blumhofer [93] comments: "in Little's hands, the incisive violin writing really catches fire, while the introspective moments (like the first movement's second theme) simply float."[94]

The third recording is by Vaidman Krasovsky duo. Vera Vaidman is a Russian-born Isaraeli violinst and violist. A graduate of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, her major teachers

[91] Chandos official website, "AMY BEACH." https://www.chandos.net/products/catalogue/CHAN%2010162 , Accessed February 25, 2023.
[92] Michael White, "Little goes a long way." *Journal of The Daily Telegraph*8, (2003): 1.
[93] Jonathan Blumhofer is an American composer, violist, and music critic who was born in New York and currently resides in Massachusetts.
[94] Tasmin Little official website, "Album Review: Tasmin Little plays Clara Schumann, Dame Ethel Smyth & Amy Beach." https://tasminlittle.org.uk/pages/02_pages/02_discography-01-2013_main.htm#89 , Accessed February 26, 2023.

include Boris Belenky and David Oistrakh.[95] As a soloist with orchestra, recitalist, and chamber musician, she has performed with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Zubin Mehta and Andre Kostelanetz, and has toured Europe playing regularly with pianist Emanuel Krasovsky.[96] Krasovsky is a Lithuanian-born Israeli pianist. He completed his DMA at the Juilliard School and often appears as a soloist with Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under Leonard Bernstein, Carlo Rizzi, and Sidney Harth. This duo recorded the Beach Violin Sonata and shared it on their YouTube channel in 2020. It has become one of the most popular recordings of Beach Violin Sonata on YouTube and has received more than nine thousand hits.
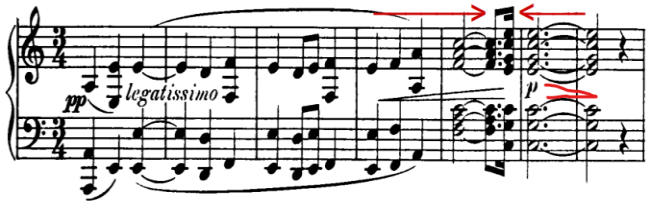
Movement I: Allegro moderato

The primary theme is structured in bar form. Both Lester and Vaidman's rendition maintain a stable tempo throughout a continuous music flow. Their dynamic changes range from *pp* to *p*, achieved by the speed changes on the bow and the vibrato. By contrast, Little and the pianist Lenehan's reading uses the temporal and dynamic tools to shape a melody as one single expression by pairing crescendo with accelerando in ascending line and diminuendo with ritardando in descending line. The dramatic tempo and dynamic shifts reveal the unstable quality of continuation within its internal sentential structure. The continuation is characterized by a faster rate of motivic fragmentations of the neighbor figures (motive B). As shown in Ex. 5-1-1, Lenehan alone initiates a huge crescendo from A to high E, including neighbor tone D and F, and decrescendos on E; In its repetition (Ex. 5-1-2), the violin and piano accomplishes a big hairpin together supported by the tempo change. Little's compelling reading really catches fire but contradicts Beach's marking "*tranquillo*" at the beginning of violin's countermelody at m. 6. I
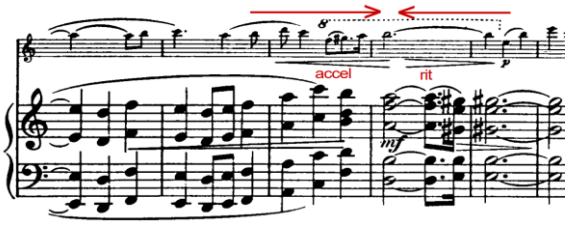
[95] Living live official website, "Vaidman Krasovsky duo." https://viveraovivo.pt/vaidman-krasovsky-duo/ , Accessed February 26, 2023.
[96] Ibid., 1.

would keep the same pacing for the two statements of the basic idea and switch dynamic levels through vibrato and bow speed. It is difficult to line up with each other in a duo ensemble.

Ex 5-1-1 Basic idea of the primary theme mm.1-7



Ex 5-1-2 Repetition of basic idea mm.10-15



The violin plays the countermelody alone as a brief transition into the continuation section of the bar form, and each of the three violinists plays its starting point differently. Lester chooses to fade away together with the piano on the half cadence at m.14 (Ex. 5-2-1). After a brief pause, she initiates a new beginning starting on E. Under a stable speed, her legato bowing in conjunction with continuous vibrato carefully carries on Beach's expressions from *tranquillo* to *ma dolce*.

Little's interpretation is still characterized by pushing and pulling the tempo (Ex. 5-2-2). She sustains B on the half cadence moving into the violin's solo melody. After playing a mighty crescendo from p to mf in m.15-16, following Beach's marking, she promises a powerful discharge of high B into C. However, Little pulls back dynamically and elongates B, as if it were longing for the high C, until she cannot hold it. When the high C finally appears, the dynamic level returns to mf which symbolizes the starting point of the continuation section along with the piano's return contributed to harmonic ambiguity between C major and A minor. Little's reading deviates from Beach's markings but relates to the harmonic progressions.
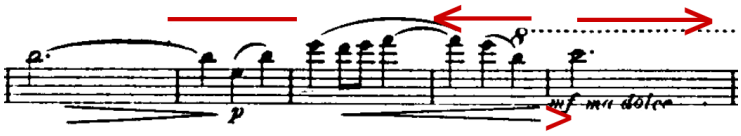
In Vaidman's interpretation, when the piano rests, she plays with rubato which allows the music to be freer and more expressive, a typical way of interpreting late Romantic pieces (Ex. 5-

2-3). Edward Cross mentioned in his dissertation *Musical timing in the adagio from brahms' violin concerto, op 77: an empirical study of rubato in recorded performances dating from 1927-1973* that rubato from the late-nineteenth exhibits the performers' own unique sound and manner of delivery[97]. As Beach does not mark rubato on the score, Vaidman carefully returns to ordinary one measure before the entry of the piano. Instead of pausing or dropping the dynamics, she lets the music speak for itself by shifting from the dissonant to the consonant, polyphonic to monophonic, through the sustained melodic line. In general, the three performers find their own ways of keeping the momentum in a continuous sentential bar form.

Ex 5-2-1 Lester's interpretation mm.13-17



Ex 5-2-2 Little's interpretation mm.13-17



Ex 5-2-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm.13-17



When the violin plays the secondary theme, three violinists seem to relate to Beach's lyricism. In its symmetrical period structure, both antecedent and consequent phrases have been evenly divided into two four-bar units. Lester indicates this structure by pushing and pulling the

[97] Edward William Cross, *Musical Timing in the Adagio from Brahms' Violin Concerto, Op 77: An Empirical Study of Rubato in Recorded Performances Dating from 1927-1973.* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2014), 1.

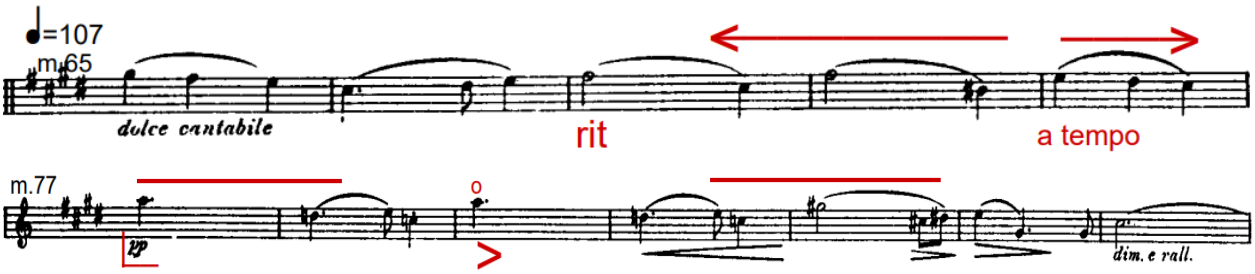
tempo along with the small range of dynamic changes (Ex. 5-3-1). After a rallentando transition, instead of picking up the original tempo (♩ =120), Lester keeps the slower pacing (approximately ♩ =107) and gradually holds back the tempo even more at the end of the first unit with diminuendo (m. 68). Similarly, in the second unit, she pushes music forward and then pulls back. In the consequent phrase, she follows Beach's marking and plays a subito pp on A at m.77 as a sudden color change for Neapolitan F♮ chord. When the A reappears at m.79, she plays the harmonic A in decay, which prepares the subsequent crescendo. In general, Lester uses continuous vibrato with even speed producing a sweet and stable secondary theme.

Little's playing exaggerates Lester's interpretation (Ex. 5-3-2). She starts with rubato on the first note G using fast and intense vibrato and then returns to the original tempo. Similar to her dramatic interpretation of the primary theme, she follows the contour of the melody making a wide range of dynamic changes. She pushes music forward in crescendo and pulls back the pacing in diminuendo. It forms two big hairpins in the first two four-bar units in which the diminished fifths, F#-B# and C#-F^{x}, receive a dramatic dynamic drop. However, Little does not drop to pp on the first Neapolitan note A but maintains a sustained line with her fast and intense vibrato. While holding the second A, Little already starts the crescendo. Accordingly, after reaching the high point $G^{\#}$, she again starts the diminuendo and rallentando earlier which brings more time to gradually quiet down. Little produces a passionate secondary theme full of flexibility in tempo and dynamic. Apparently, Little plays what feels right rather than analyzing what is on the score.

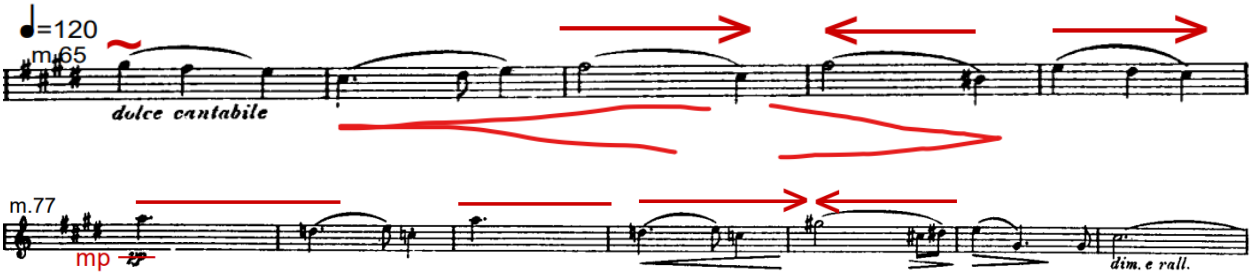
On the contrary, Vaidman's playing follows the markings without adding many personal readings (Ex. 5-3-3). Under the stable original tempo, she phrases the antecedent phrase into two four-bar units by raising the dynamic level from p to mp. Instead of emphasizing Beach's

"Neapolitan pp", she highlights the high $G^{\#}$. After adding repeated dynamic drops on two long As, she places the high $G^{\#}$ with sfz, which is another important harmonic turn from Neapolitan chord to the dominant B chord of E major. In general, Vaidman just introduces a simple and delightful melody with less tempo and dynamic changes unless Beach requires it.

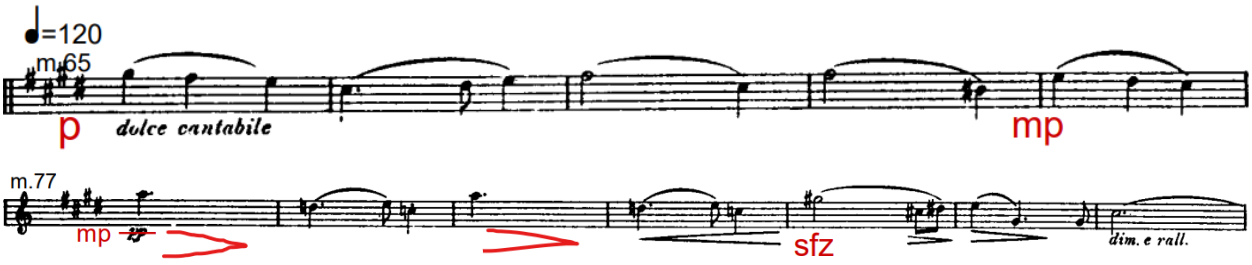
Ex 5-3-1 Lester's interpretation mm. 65-69, 77-83



Ex 5-3-2 Little's interpretation mm. 65-69, 77-83



Ex 5-3-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm. 65-69, 77-83



Movement II: Scherzo

As the most delightful movement of the four, three violinists find their own way to amuse the audiences. Based on its bar form, Lester's approach relies on the different articulations under a consistent pacing to keep one unitive entirety. According to Beach's tempo marking ♩ =126, it seems that Lester deliberately takes a slower tempo (♩ =120) to show the clearer articulation switches by using legato bowing for slurred notes and even spiccato on notes with a dot above. Other than that, she carefully follows Beach's dynamic layout and accurately presents her ideas. With Lester's exquisite bow techniques, the unexpected articulatory contrast between the two bow strokes combined with syncopated irregular rhythms really surprises the audience in the unknown. However, Little chooses another path. Since the scherzo shares the sentential formal structure of the primary theme in the first movement, she continues to use tempo change as an expressive tool. As a result, Little plays in a lighter and agile way more swiftly (♩ =130) than Lester does. She even pushes tempo forward at the consecutive sixteenth-note passages to follow the rhythmic acceleration but pulls back the tempo if there is long note decelerating the rhythmic pulse. Little's virtuosic but effortless playing absolutely catches the audience's attention. Vaidman's interpretation is more based on the harmonic progressions and motivic fragmentations. Especially in the sequential passages, she uses temporal, dynamic, or articulatory tools to vary the repeated patterns. Among the three violinists, she is the only one who follows Beach's tempo marking.

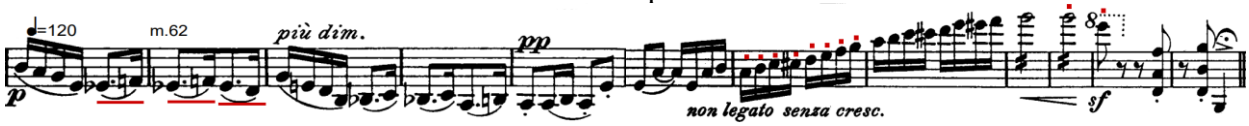
Example 5-4-1 shows the important reprise passage that ends the scherzo getting into the trio section and exemplifies three different interpretations. Served as a harmonic return from D major back to G major, this passage includes repeated two-bar rhythmic pattern (mm. 61-64), and a chromatic scale marked "non legato senza cresc". Lester makes articulatory contrast by

playing the slurred rhythmic pattern in legato while playing the chromatic scale in spiccato. Even though Beach marks cresc on high G and E, Lester keeps the bow off the string at the stable speed within a small range of dynamic changes.

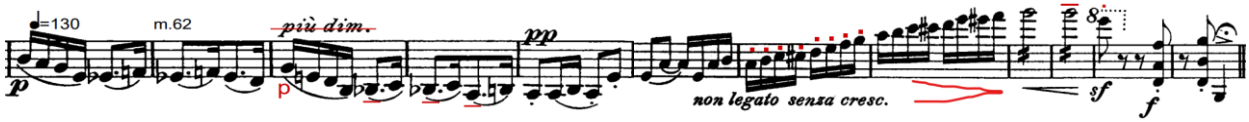
Little employs the same bow stroke as Lester does but in a fiery speed (Ex. 5-4-2). Her music has a strong sense of direction as she holds back the tempo at the repeated rhythmic pattern (mm. 63-64) to emphasize ^{b}B resolved to low A and pushes forward at sixteenth-note chromatic passages. Instead of being "piu dim" for the resolution, she maintains the same dynamic level, but drop down at the end of "senza cresc" chromatic scale by which music starts a new round of dramatic crescendo from piano to forte, spiccato to legato, accelerating into a magnificent conclusion.

Vaidman's playing is closely related to her harmonic and formal analysis (Ex. 5-4-3). She divides the reprise into three four-bar units. As the harmony resolves to tonic G chord at the beginning (m. 61), Vaidman gradually slows down in piu dim until reaching the lowest A. Then, she returns to the original tempo signaling the return of motive B (neighbor figure) in the scherzo theme. After going through the chromatic scale in spiccato without crescendo, Vaidman switches from off the string to on the string and uses sforzando with whole bow to accomplish a grand ending.
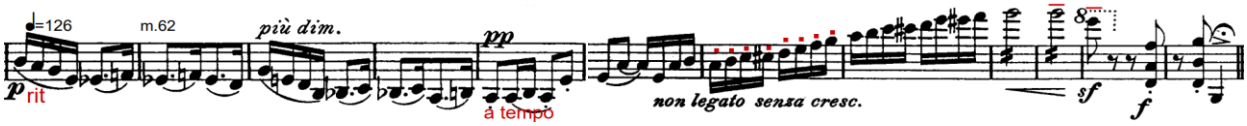
Ex 5-4-1 Lester's interpretation mm. 61-72



Ex 5-4-2 Little's interpretation mm. 61-72



Ex 5-4-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm. 61-72
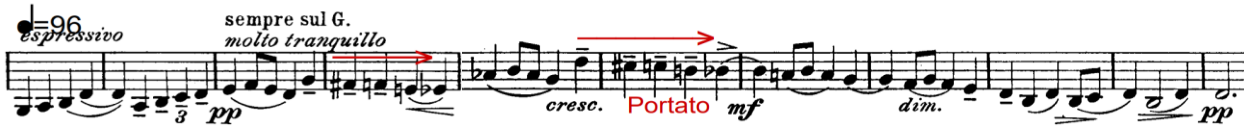


After the grand conclusion of the scherzo part, piano presents the trio theme first in paralleled g minor. Taking over from the pianist, three violinists react differently as shown in Example 5-5. Lester and her collaborator Ambache both strictly follow Beach's markings. Ambache's playing stays at lento tempo (♩ =96) and maintains in the piano dynamic, depicting a melancholic minor key. Consistent with Ambache's pacing, Lester emphasizes the chromatic passages (motive C) through different articulations (Ex. 5-5-1). Taking melody chromatically from G to E^{b} (m.93), Lester gradually accelerates the bow speed and vibrato, connecting each note with a sense of direction. In order to crescendo in the second chromatic scale, Lester uses portato bowing to rearticulate each note which achieves a kind of undulation into the new dynamic level. In general, Lester avoids dramatic dynamic and tempo shifts presenting a continuous melody in molto tranquillo as marked on the score.

By contrast, Little's interpretation focuses more on the *expressivo* than *molto tranquillo* (Ex. 5-5-2). Probably influenced by Little, Lenehan's first statement also fills with tempo fluctuations. He starts the trio slightly faster but gradually slowing down at the end (♩ =85). Little considers that slower tempo as a chance to show off the rich tone of G string by playing with certain rubato. She pushes music back to its original tempo at chromatic passages using consistent legato bowing with intense vibrato. In her reading, two chromatic passages are connected by three tonic G and ends on D at m.99 where she places the diminuendo as Lenehan plays $F^{\#o}$ resolved to G chord. Little plays these three G with successive increase in tempo, dynamic, and intensity by accelerating bow speed and using faster vibrato. Thereafter, music
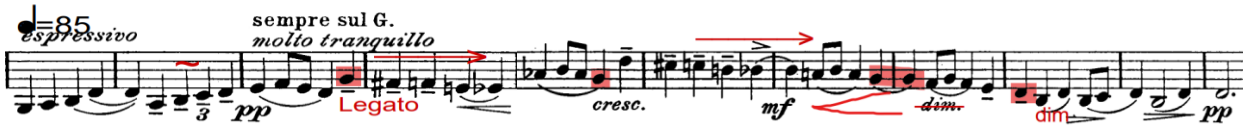
relaxes into a transitional mode. Little offers her understanding of the trio theme on different scope. In macro scale, she combines two chromatic passages into one six-bar crescendo line which leads to her delay of the dynamic drop. In micro scale, she miraculously interprets the same notes differently. Her rich and heavy tone on G string and long melonic lines contrasts very well with her light scherzo theme.

Vaidman's rendition contains some characteristics from both Lester's and Little's playing (Ex. 5-5-3). The pianist Krasovsky first states the trio theme at tempo ♩=96, close to Ambache's playing, and Vaidman stays at the same tempo throughout. She also uses the portato stroke throughout her playing, even for slurred notes, which is closer to piano's articulation. Instead of putting the two chromatic passages into one big phrase in crescendo, Vaidman phrases the theme into three parts including three rounds of crescendo and diminuendo which clearly maps out the development of two chromatic progressions. The first two parts support the ebb and flow of the melody. Vaidman delineates the neighbor figure (motive B) fairly clearly, diminuendo in just one motive. However, in the third part, motive C combines with motive B forming a larger scale of descending chromatic progression. As a result, Vaidman prolongs the crescendo and delays the diminuendo, just as Little does. Vaidman's interpretation is more based on motivic development and delineates different motives through dynamic changes.
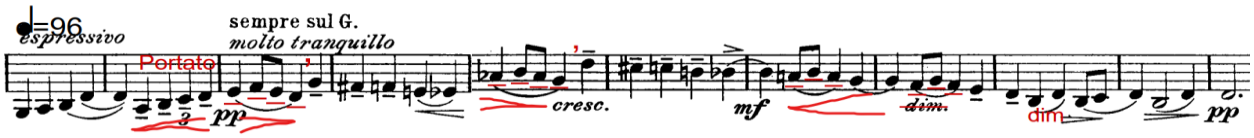
Ex 5-5-1 Lester's interpretation mm. 91-101



Ex 5-5-2 Little's interpretation mm. 91-101



Ex 5-5-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm.91-101



Movement III: Largo con dolore

Due to Beach's monothematic Wagnerian writing, how to phrase this ongoing melody becomes the main challenge for every violinist. Example 6 shows the continuation phrase of the theme harmonized through progression V/V-vi-V-I^6 until letter A in its expanded dominant function. Three violinists find their own way to interpret this passage.

Although Beach marks ♪=84, Ambache plays the theme at a faster tempo ♪=94 by which music gains momentum. She keeps an intimate sound with less dynamic change. When Lester takes over, as shown in Example 5-6-1, she keeps the same pacing. Since Beach first uses deceptive cadence vi to replace I, Lester follows the crescendo marking pushing up the melody from *mf* to *f*. Once the dominant comes back, Lester sustains the chromatic descending scale A-F which causes the delay of the diminuendo. At the resolution to I^6, not I, she pulls back dynamically to avoid a triumphant arrival on B. In general, besides the faster tempo, Lester and Ambache present a stable and sustained theme that follows the dynamic instructions marked on the score.
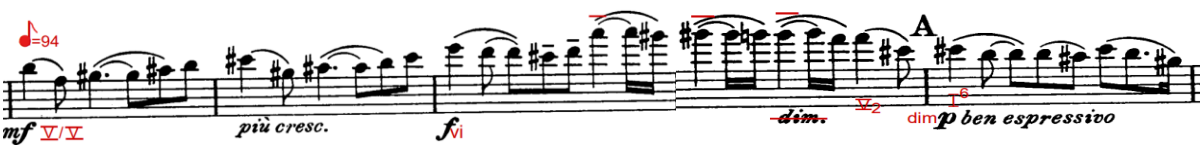
By contrast, Little and Lenehan present the theme in Largo con appassionato, rather than Largo con dolore. Lenehan's rendition clearly outlines the melodic tour and features dramatic dynamic ups and downs along with tempo changes, a typical performance-based interpretation. After pushing up in crescendo, in the bass line of omnibus progression, he places a subito piano

on German augmented sixth $G^{\#}$-B^{b} as a special color change (Ex. 5-6-4). Correspondingly, in violin's restatement, Beach turns the omnibus progression into two parallel chromatic descending lines shared by two instruments. Little puts an accent on each downbeat to line up with Lenehan and gradually get soft (Ex. 5-6-2). Little elongates the two $C^{\#}$ at letter A as a conclusion of the wild dynamic changes into the calm but expressive piano. Even they both starts at ♪=84, the tempo push and pull dramatizes the dynamic changes, which reveals the nature of the continuation.

Vaidman duo plays under the steady original tempo. Same as Ambache's interpretation, Krasovsky maintains an intimate tone. In omnibus progression, opposite to Lenehan's rendition, he gives the German augmented chord a brighter tone. Vaidman phrases the on-going melody based on the motivic fragmentation. For example, she divides the continuation phrase into 1+1+2 structure. Each part features the dynamic changes in hairpin (Ex. 5-6-3). Each new round of hairpin steps up to a higher level of intensity. At the beginning of the ascending, Vaidman decays the doted $G^{\#}$ and $A^{\#}$. When melody reaches its climax, high A, Vaidman sustains each note in descending chromatic line and diminuendo right on time which shows the great control on her right hand.

The key to playing the continuous melody is to keep the momentum without dragging. Both Lester duo and Little duo maintain the music flow through tempo changes. Lester duo picks up an overall faster tempo while Little's pacing is based on dynamic shifts. Vaidman plays under a steady speed but exaggerates the dynamic changes.
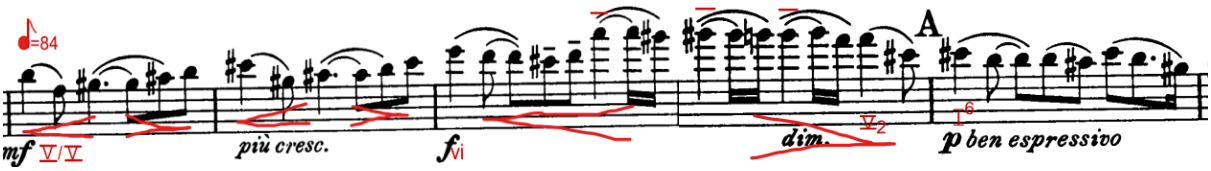
Ex 5-6-1 Lester's interpretation mm.13-17
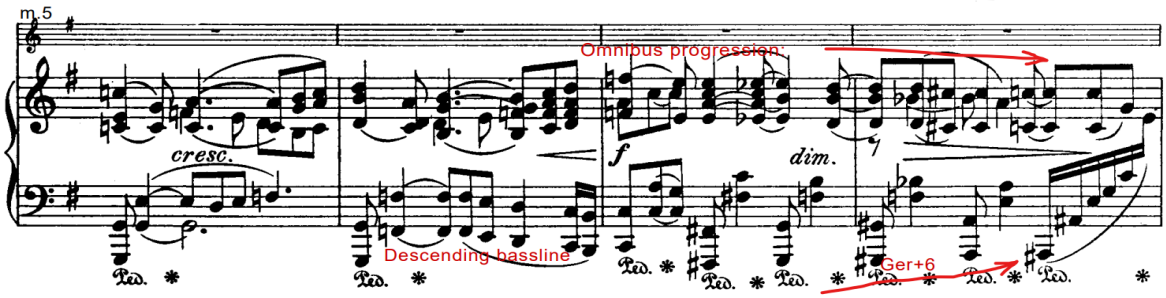


Ex 5-6-2 Little's interpretation mm.13-17



Ex 5-6-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm.13-17



Ex 5-6-4 Piano's statement of continuation phrase mm.5-8



Movement IV: Allegro con fuoco
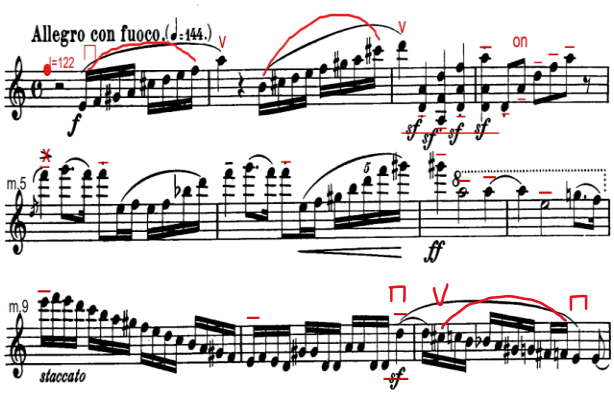
As a magnificent finale, Beach adopts a terrific speed ♩=144 for its virtuosic orchestra sounding. However, none of the three violinists follows her tempo marking. Lester duo plays at ♩=122, Little chooses ♩=135, and Vaidman duo is at ♩=130. As the introduction is a huge expansion of the dominant function into the tonic, due to the temporal varieties, they find their own way to deal with those fast notes.

Under the slower pacing, Lester duo well presents the melodic content. Lester plays on the string using detache most of time and sustains each note as much as possible for a clear articulation (Ex. 5-7-1). Instead of breaking the chords, she relies on the bow speed to play the three notes all at once without adding extra bow pressure to emphasize the chords. However, at
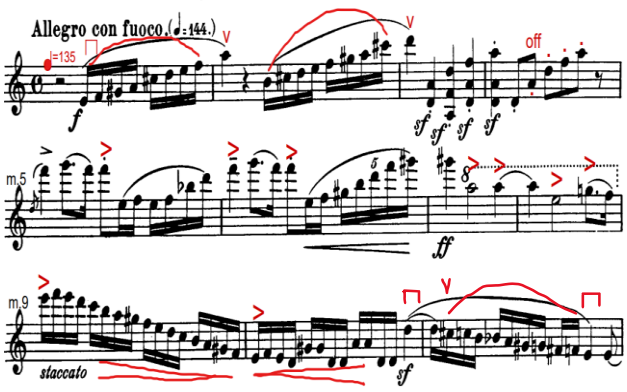
m.9, she lengthens the downbeat of this long series of sixteenth notes in staccato. In general, Lester focuses on a continuous music flow using consistent on-the-string bow stroke and weakens the dramatic effects of sforzando.

Little and Lenehan continue their passionate rendition. Contrary to Lester's playing, Little's bow strokes are more on the off side with accents on the long note (Ex. 5-7-2). Following Beach's markings, she plays chords short and aggressive, then D arpeggio in spiccato transits into high F with prominent stress at m. 5. Instead of pushing or pulling the tempo, Little chooses different bow strokes to collaborate with the dynamic changes to phrase the long sixteenth-note series offering a sense of direction. By switching to staccato, Little accents the downbeat E decrescendo into next bar and emphasizes the E again crescendo to D in sforzando. Such dynamic changes not only differentiate all these sixteenth notes but also mirror the contour of the melody.

Ex 5-7-1 Lester's interpretation mm. 1-11



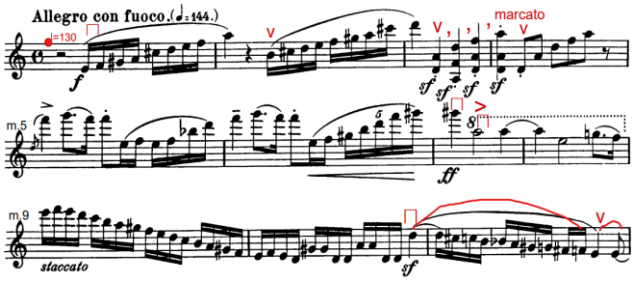
Ex 5-7-2 Little's interpretation mm. 1-11



Vaidman follows the original bowings as much as possible which includes more notes in one bow and less bow changes (Ex. 5-7-3). She plays the opening fast motives in one single sweep. Starting on an upbow for the next four chords, she gradually uses more bow and accelerates the bow speed in marcato stroke which has achieved a dramatic crescendo into *ff*.

Once music hits the high G$^{\#}$, Vaidman uses two downbows to accentuate the syncopated rhythm. Moving into the staccato sixteenth-note passage, each note has been treated evenly. At the end of this passage, she follows Beach's big slur seamlessly connecting to the dominant E.

Ex 5-7-3 Vaidman's interpretation mm. 1-11



CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Amy Beach is nonetheless a first-rate pianist and composer. Her violin sonata is a masterwork in its own right and is a gift that violinists are to be thankful for. As a Boston-trained musician, Beach is an outstanding phenomenon in the history of American music.

As the first woman composer published her symphony, Beach demonstrates a talent for music at an early age, which has been cautiously cultivated by her parents, later by Ernst Perabo and Carl Baermann in Boston. Summarily developing her talent, Beach started her promising music career as a concert pianist and debuted in Boston and New York at the age of sixteen. However, her marriage to Henry Beach suspended her performance career and altered the trajectory of her music path from being a pianist to a composer. She then lived a traditional domestic home-life with her husband and her mother. The loss of these two loved ones became another defining moment that closes her most prolific period as a composer. She traveled to Europe and resumeed her acclaimed concert life. From then on, she lived the life of two people, one a pianist, the other a composer. In her late years, she diminished her public appearances and focused on composition as a fellow at the MacDowell Colony. Although Beach was an accomplished pianist and composer during her lifetime, her popularity dwindled within a generation following her death and her compositions remains greatly under-appreciated.

Deeply rooted in late Romanticism, Beach adopts a more conservative approach. Although she initiates her compositional career with art songs and choral music, Beach's chamber music includes some of her most famous compositions, like her violin sonata, and also contains an abundance of lyrical melodies, distinctive motives and sequential fragmentations as her vocal works. Her use of harmony is based on nineteenth-century practices and has never changed dramatically. Altered chords such as augmented sixths, Neapolitan chords, and flat

sixths are still crucial pivot points for modulations. Learned from the masters, Beach's violin sonata assembles a diverse array of great characteristics. The beginning of the first movement recalls the opening of Beethoven ninth symphony; the delight scherzo possesses Haydn's humor; The chromaticism in the trio probably is influenced by Faure or Franck Violin Sonata; the monothematic form inherits Wagnerian rich and endless melodies in third movement; her use of motivic figures for thematic development rather than the entire theme is similar to that of Brahms; the magnificent passages in the finale are probably influenced by Liszt's virtuosic writing in his concertos creating an orchestral sounding.

The performer's duty is to show all these features. Gabrielle Lester, Tasmin Little, and Vera Vaidman demonstrate their unique understandings of Beach's Romanticism using temporal, dynamic, or articulatory tools. Their renditions involve both analysis-based and performance-based interpretations. Lester's playing includes contrasts in dynamic and articulation at certain crucial harmonic turns but with fewer tempo fluctuations. Under the steady pacing, she portrays the linear progressions by sustaining long notes and follows the dynamic markings on the score. However, she adjusts the overall tempo for the sake of melodic contents. Little duo's interpretation is more intuitive but also reveals the performative nature of the analysis. Little's passionate playing exaggerates the tempo and dynamic changes, sometimes even going against Beach's markings. For instance, she plays what feels right as she pushes the tempo dramatically in continuation phrases although Beach marks pp and when the harmony progresses to the tonic. She also pulls back the tempo to emphasize the resolution. Vaidman duo's playing leans more on the analysis. They pay a lot of attention to the motivic fragmentations and divide the thematic materials into smaller melodic patterns. Especially in a sequential passage, with each motivic repetition, Vaidman makes it different either in dynamic or in articulations. Vaidman also prefers

steady pacing just as Lester does, but she performs some of her solo passages with rubato, which becomes her special way to reveal Beach's romanticism.

The Violin Sonata by Amy Beach clearly demonstrates her artistic excellence of violin music and is worthy of attention from the broader art music community. It is my sincere hope that the current study will generate sufficient interest in Beach's violin sonata so that this masterwork will begin to become known and will be counted among the standard violin repertory sooner rather than later.

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