

BEETHOVEN SONATAS VOL.4  
COSTANTINO MASTROPRIMIANO

01. Rondo in B-flat major, Kinsky-Halm Anh. 6 06:32

3 Piano Sonatas, WoO 47 - Sonata in E-Flat Major No. 1

02. Allegro cantabile 05:08

03. Andante 05:30

04. Rondo. Vivace 03:13

3 Piano Sonatas, WoO 47 - Sonata in F Minor No. 2

05. Maestoso - Allegro assai 05:31

06. Andante 07:40

07. Presto 03:42

3 Piano Sonatas, WoO 47 - Sonata in D Major No. 3

08. Allegro 07:34

09. Minuet with 6 variations 08:42

10. Scherzando. Allegro, ma non troppo 05:04

Total Time: 58:36

Recording 2022 October 28 - 29 Smarano Organ Academy - Concert Hall (Trento - Italy)

Recording Producer **Rosella Clementi** | Artistic Supervisor **Rosella Clementi**

Recording **Federico Mastroprimiano** | Editing and Mastering **Rosella Clementi**

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The three WoO 47 sonatas were presumably composed by the summer of 1783 in Bonn and dedicated to Maximilian Friederich von Königsbegg-Rothenfels, Prince-Elector of Cologne, hence the name *Kurfürsten-Sonaten* (Elector's sonatas). These compositions represent the young Beethoven's first attempt to tackle the keyboard sonata form in an accomplished and organic manner. Only since the last few decades have the three WoO 47 sonatas been reintegrated within Beethoven's sonatas corpus and we have begun to speak of thirty-five keyboard sonatas and not the canonical thirty-two as handed down to us by post-Romantic culture. Their reintegration within the list of sonatas seems perfectly in line with what was understood in Beethoven's time. The composer from Bonn considered the WoO 47 sonatas fully worthy and appropriate in representing the incipit of his compositional path so much so that thirty-five keyboard sonatas were included in the first anthological collection of his works (1817-1822), put together by Tobias Haslinger and supervised by Beethoven himself. Böslér's first published edition of Spira from October 1783 was announced in the *Magazin der Musik*. There is an interesting printed copy of the Böslér edition containing autograph fingerings and corrections, absent from the first edition, preserved today in the British Library. Beethoven's early production was partly addressed and influenced by Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748-1798) especially from an aesthetic point of view. Through his teacher, the young composer from Bonn came into contact with the ideals of the *Sturm und Drang* culture and the *Empfindsamer Stil*, whose greatest exponent at the time was Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Through Neefe, Beethoven had access to the rhetorical and expressive tools hinged on the new sensibility theorised by Carl Philipp's *Versuch*. Beethoven studied Bach's treatise in depth and even in the 19th century (as testified by Czerny) used it for lessons to his pupils. The new aesthetics proposed a style closely related to the communication of affections through a series of compositional strategies that could range from the use of close contrasting dynamics, to agogic freedom, to metric scansion different from the norm and even to certain structural, notational or tonal choices. The choice of tonality, specifically, is very important for the characterisation of affects; in the mid-1880s, Christian Friederich Daniel Schubart, in his *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* - formulating in an organic manner a knowledge widespread in Vienna and the Austro-German areas - assigned specific meanings to each tonality. Obviously Neefe and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach were not the only points of reference for the young composer who, even at the time of the composition of these sonatas, was already familiar with part of the contemporary sonata production represented especially by the composers of the Mannheim school, Clementi, Haydn and Mozart. For the *Kurfürsten-Sonaten* Beethoven adopted the usual choice of the set of three sonatas, so that he could characterise, precisely through the choice of tonality, a wide range of affections. The composer adopted the scheme that he would reuse in later collections: one sonata in a minor key and two in a major (normally one key was chosen with sharps and one with flats). The WoO 47 sonatas present such a succession: E-flat major, F minor and D major. From the choice of tonality and compositional instruments we mentioned earlier, therefore, a precise communicative pattern emerges. As an example, consider the slow introduction of the sonata WoO 47 No.2 in which Beethoven fuses the typical figurations of patheticism with the tonality that best lent itself to telling them: F minor. According to Schubart, in fact, F minor represents the weeping of the dead and an elegiac nostalgia arousing deep melancholy in the listener. In addition to the aesthetic and ideological choices, from a formal point of view Beethoven also followed the Austro-German model by modelling his sonatas on the canonical three movements and not on the four we are used to (a choice he made from his early Viennese years). He did not, however, use the usual sequence *Allegro, Adagio*; there is in fact a theme and variations of clear Mozart inspiration in sonata WoO 47 No. 3 and the already mentioned slow introduction in WoO 47 No. 2. A copy made by Monica May based on a Stein model belonging to the third production phase of the Augsburg master (1781-1792) according to M. Latcham's classification was chosen for the recording. The organological nature of the instrument allows the performer to chisel out the numerous articulations marked by the young Beethoven and to restore the 'speaking nature' of the musical discourse. We are in a period when musical composition, especially the construction of the sonata form, is still closely related to the techniques and practices of the rhetorical and oratorical arts. The essential prerequisite for an analogy between music and rhetoric is

the perception that music is a language and that as such it is a vehicle of a message capable of moving the listener; an idea we find in many eighteenth-century theorists. Mattheson, for example, defines music as *Klang-Rede* ('played speech'), while Quantz describes it as «nient'altro che un linguaggio artificiale con il quale cerchiamo di far conoscere le nostre idee musicali a chi ci ascolta» ('nothing more than an artificial language by which we try to make our musical ideas known to the listener'). The nature of Stein's pianos helps the performer in this direction and leads him to consider the signs on the score and the boldness of some of the fingerings marked out by the composer, especially in the fast movements, not only as technical problems, but above all as communicative elements. In the *Versuch* Carl Philipp Emanuel wrote: «La velocità non deve essere l'unico scopo dell'esecutore. [...] troppo spesso chi ascolta grandi tecnici e virtuosi, pur dotati, può non recepire alcuna sensazione: essi suscitano stupore, ma non emozioni, generando anzi un senso di noia» sarà necessario «comunicare al cuore, parlando all'immaginazione [...]» ("Speed must not be the sole aim of the performer. [...] all too often those who listen to great technicians and virtuosi, however gifted, may not perceive any sensation: they arouse amazement, but not emotions, rather generating a sense of boredom" it will be necessary to "communicate to the heart", speaking to the imagination [...]). The Rondo in B flat major Hess Anh. 20- Kinsky Halm Anh.6 is a keyboard composition that, thanks to studies of the manuscript's handwriting, was for some time attributed to Kaspar Karl van Beethoven, Ludwig's brother. The manuscript, which also includes the trio *Anhang 3* and the three four-hand pieces *Anhang 8*, is preserved in the British Library. Recent studies reassign the authorship of the piece to Ludwig. It was not until 1926 that the first edition appeared under the name Ludwig van Beethoven by Georges de Saint-Foix, for the French musicological society, who included the Rondo in the '*Ouvres inédites de Beethoven*'. The year of composition of the piece is not known with certainty, but the compositional stylistic devices used would seem to suggest a date close to that of the WoO 47 sonatas. A further element confirming this hypothesis could be the evident affinity of writing, as well as the use of the same tonality, between the Rondo in question, the III movement of the Second Concerto Op.19 and the Rondo for keyboard and orchestra WoO 6. Both the finale of the Second Concerto Op.19 and the Rondo WoO 6 present, at least from a keyboard point of view, characteristics closer to the compositional period in Bonn that, as we have already mentioned, are focused in the best possible way on J.A.Stein's instruments.

Jacopo Sibilla



**Costantino Mastropimano** is one of the leading experts in historical piano performance internationally. After his studies in piano and chamber music with Michele Marvulli, Guido Agosti and Riccardo Brendola, devoted himself to the Fortepiano (historical piano). His vast discography features compositions by Chopin, Alkan, Burgmüller, Staehle, Moscheles, Ries, Hummel, Beethoven, Kraus, and in particular the complete piano sonatas by Muzio Clementi and by Hummel for Brilliant Classics. He is currently recording all Beethoven piano sonatas for Aulic Classics. He is frequently invited to give concerts (Accademia Filarmonica Romana, I Concerti della Normale, Società del Quartetto di Milano, Accademia Cristofori in Firenze, Micat in Vertice, etc.) and abroad (Les Nuits de Septembre – Liège, Noites de Queluz, Mozarteum of Salzburg, Salle Cortot, Musikfestspiele Potsdam Sans Souci, Haydn Geburtshaus Rohrau, la Grange aux Planos, Ignaz Pleyel Zentrum, PBA Charleroi, etc.). He regularly teaches masterclasses in Italy, Europe, the US and Russia (APM Saluzzo, Ecole Normale de Paris, Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag, Universität – Mozarteum Salzburg, Conservatorio di Stato P. I. Čajkovskij, CSM di Malaga, Sam Houston State University – Texas). He teaches Historical Keyboards and Chamber Music in the Conservatory of music in Perugia (Italy).