

variation, exaggerating the leaps in the theme over a repeated-note accompaniment in the piano. Leaps are the salient feature of the cello part in Variation No. 3; the busy piano part fills any and all melodic gaps created by the cello. Variation No. 4, the first of the two minor variations, returns to a more recognizable form of the theme while probing the pathetic possibilities of the minor mode. In the fifth and sixth variations, Beethoven divides material between the two instruments, perhaps preparing for the very active cello part of Variation No. 7. The shape of the theme all but disappears in No. 8, the second minor variation, in which phrase lengths are delineated by rising and falling scales in the piano. After a calm, contrasting ninth variation that reduces the theme to its bare bones, an agitated tenth variation erupts that features a soaring, cello part. The 11th variation is technically difficult and highly ornamental, and is followed by a meter change to 3/8, which drastically alters the rhythmic aspects of the theme.

When Beethoven wrote these charming variations on Mozart's aria ("In Men Who Know the Feeling of Love") about love sweetening every trouble, he was 31. Some have speculated that he shared Papageno's yearning for a soulmate. Ferdinand Ries quipped that he'd heard Beethoven had been in love for a particularly long time, "seven whole months." Whatever the case, Mozart's music must have impressed Beethoven more than its words. For the sake of thematic consistency, he even leaves out the aria's tenderest moment (when Papageno and Pamina sing "Mann und Weib"). His variations create a beguiling variety of moods: melancholic, haunting, determined. The final one seems related to the drama and melody of his Sonata for Cello and Piano in F major, Op. 5 (written a few years earlier) and to the glistening musculature his later works.



Beethoven Music For Piano And Cello

Sonata No. 3 In A Major, Op. 69

12 Variations - Handel

7 Variations - Mozart

12 Variations - Mozart

Cello – Pierre Fournier

Piano – Friedrich Gulda

Completed in 1808, the same year as his Fifth and Sixth symphonies, Beethoven's Cello Sonata No. 3 in A Major, Op. 69, bears the heading "Inter Lacrimas et Luctum," (Amid Tears and Sorrow). While this richly melodic work does not immediately strike the listener as doleful, there is some melancholy behind its reflective lyricism. True, the first movement, *Allegro ma non tanto*, is darkly shaded, but for the most part it is characterized by the pensive, cantilena melody that the cello introduces in the beginning. This theme veers into a more aggressive episode, then makes way for the second subject, which is also in two parts. Again, the first is highly lyrical while the second surges forward energetically. The development section breaks these themes into their component parts and gives each a brief elaboration, alternating the contentious material with the more reflective passages, often in the lower registers of the instruments. The recapitulation allows all the basic material to reappear without incident.

The Scherzo, marked *Allegro molto*, finds the two instruments trading fragments of a syncopated melody, lurching from A minor to E minor and C major until tripping into a more songlike trio section featuring arresting dynamic contrasts and a bass drone. This whole structure is repeated, with the final appearance of the scherzo proper sneaking away on cello pizzicati.

The *Adagio cantabile* is technically only the introduction to the last movement, but it could almost stand alone on its 18 bars of gentle lyricism for the cello. An *Allegro vivace* breaks in; it's a sonata-form movement, with the first subject a happy whirl and the second a reminiscence of the *cantabile* material from the first movement. The development provides a virtuosic workout for both instruments, especially the piano, but the gentler coda ends the sonata on a note of noble jubilation.

By the end of his life, Beethoven had composed nearly seventy sets of

variations. Most of the early ones were based on themes by other composers and were not given opus numbers, which Beethoven reserved for what he considered more substantial, important works. Beethoven composed his variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen," Op. 66, in the wake of a surge in popularity of Mozart's works in the years following his death. They were first published in September 1798 by Traeg in Vienna; after they were taken over by Artaria, they were designated "Opus 66."

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From May–July 1796, Beethoven was in Berlin as part of a concert tour. While there, he composed, or at least began, a number of important works, including the Cello Sonatas, Op. 5, and the Variations for cello and piano in G major on "See the conqu'ring hero comes" from Handel's oratorio, *Judas Maccabaeus*, WoO 45. The variations are dedicated to Princess Christiane von Lichnowsky, wife of Prince Karl von Lichnowsky, one of Beethoven's most important patrons in Vienna, in whose home Beethoven lived between 1793 and 1795. The Variations, WoO 45, were published in 1797 by Artaria in Vienna. As Handel's oratorios were not performed in Vienna at this time, it is likely that the suggestion of the theme came from Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733–1803), a champion of the works of both Bach and Handel and one of Beethoven's early patrons.

Handel's theme is rounded binary structure with a central section that emphasizes the relative minor, E minor, a harmony Beethoven stresses from the first variation. The cello makes its first appearance in the second

continued

Beethoven Music For Piano And Cello

Sonata No. 3 In A Major, Op. 69

Cello - Pierre Fournier Piano - Friedrich Gulda

Sonata For Cello And Piano No. 3 In A Major

1. Allegro Ma Non Tanto 12:56
 2. Scherzo - Allegro Molto 5:22
 3. Adagio Cantabile - Allegro Vivace 8:38

 4. 12 Variations on "See The Conquering Hero Comes" Handel 12:27
 5. 7 Variations On "Bei Männern, Welche Liebe Fühlen" Mozart 9:20
 6. 12 Variations On "Ein Mädchen Oder Weibchen" Mozart 10:56
- Total Time: 59:39

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