

MUSICMAP NOTES

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Beethoven's Sonata for Cello & Piano No. 3 in A Major, Op. 69 – 1807-08

“Beethoven’s five sonatas for cello and piano stand out in the relatively small repertoire for these two instruments as the first significant works of their kind and still the most often performed. Unlike the violin sonatas, which are concentrated toward the early and middle periods of Beethoven’s life, the cello sonatas span all three of his periods. All five are interesting, but the Cello Sonata No. 3...has attracted by far the most performers and audiences. It is an appealing work, adventurous but approachable in form and richly expressive in feeling. Like the *Kreutzer* [violin sonata], Op. 69 marks an unprecedented level of freedom and prominence for the stringed partner in a musical form that was traditionally presented as a sonata for piano with stringed accompaniment. For some reason, Beethoven avoided writing slow movements for his first three cello sonatas. The two earlier works are each in two movements. Op. 69 has three fast or moderately fast movements, but the serene, slow introduction to the finale serves, briefly, the same sort of function as do the deeply affecting, slow measures that occasionally interrupt that movement’s headlong flight.” (Joseph McLellan)

“The Sonata in A dates mainly from 1807, but was completed early in 1808 and published in Leipzig by Breitkopf & Härtel in April 1809... It is therefore exactly contemporaneous with most of Beethoven’s work on the Fifth Symphony, and there are subconscious allusions to two other works of the same period: the trio of the Seventh Symphony and the beginning of the first ‘Rasoumovsky’ Quartet.” (Robin Golding)

“...[The] Sonata in A is part of a package he had sold to his publishers...that also included the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and the Piano Trios in D and E-Flat, Op. 70.” (CBS Records)

“...[The A major’s] interesting blend of graceful buoyancy and profound depth, falls midway between the Op. 5 sonatas and those of Op. 102 in both time and character. One of the most striking features of Op. 69 is its much more important and fully realized cello part as compared with the Op. 5 sonatas.

“The sonata is dedicated to Baron Ignaz von Gleichenstein, a young amateur cellist and Beethoven’s best friend for several years. Gleichenstein was probably chosen for the dedication because he handled much of Beethoven’s business affairs and helped to arrange the pensions from the several nobles who helped to support the composer.

“Beethoven’s words, written in Latin on the manuscript, ‘Amid tears and sorrow,’ have led to speculation about possible extramusical associations. One possible reference has to do with the fact that Gleichenstein and Beethoven were courting the two Malfatti sisters at the time the piece

was written. Gleichenstein's suit was successful; Beethoven's failed. Since the sonata's restrained emotional content can hardly be described as being between 'tears and sorrow,' many believe Beethoven's comment refers to his despair over being rejected in love." (Melvin Berger)

Because all three movements of this sonata have the tonic of A, A minor in the case of the middle movement, there is an unusual degree of harmonic unity and concentration throughout.

Movement I – Sonata form, Allegro, ma non tanto (fast, but not so much), Cut-time, A Major

Though not a short movement, this sonata form seems unusually clear and concise in its presentation, its sections and themes neatly set off without a lot of transition or organic extension. For mature Beethoven, we encounter the master in an Apollonian mood.

"The theme that the unaccompanied cello presents to open the sonata has been described by some as a 'perfect' melody; it is calm, noble, and warm, although not without a certain agitated and active quality. The imaginative working-out of this melody, the simple triadic and scalar second theme, and the richly romantic concluding theme, follow the dictates of traditional sonata-allegro form, including a triumphant unison statement of the main theme before the ending." (Berger)

Exposition:

Main theme: Statement, Antecedent – 12 bars (6+6), a balanced contrasting period. (A noteworthy peculiarity of this movement is that, rather than the usual division into 4 and 8-bar lengths, the phrase structure here is based on 6 and 12-bar units.) What a great start as Beethoven immediately foregrounds the voice of the cello softly singing *a cappella* in its rich lower register. This 6-bar phrase can be seen as consisting of three separate motives that will prove important as the movement progresses. The very opening is motive 'X', a brief slow-moving three-note rise that jumps a 5th from the tonic to the dominant and then continues up to the 6th. With that we have already reached the highest point and the rest of the phrase will meander gently downward. Motive 'Y' immediately follows and its shorter note values give a sense of acceleration setting up a contrast with 'X' of slowly up, faster down. After 'Y' the antecedent concludes with motive 'Z' which lies the lowest of all and contains the first chromatic motion. The cello ends on a long E, the dominant, and will softly sustain this as a pedal into the piano's following consequent.

Statement, Consequent – It is now time for the piano to respond and the R.H. starts off with a jump to the treble register, taking up and varying motive 'Z' (hence 'Z'). Now the motive has the same rhythm and sense of undulation but the intervals are very different. 'Z' is repeated up an octave and then continues with an insistent trilling rhythmic figure strengthened by a crescendo and ending on a *f* block chord. From the start of the consequent we have experienced a fuller texture because now the melody is accompanied by a L.H. pattern of broken-chord 8th-notes while at the same time the cello's base pedal is a subtle presence that also crescendos most effectively towards the end. The final bar seems to exist outside of time with fermatas at both the beginning and the end. Following the loud chord and trill we quickly diminuendo to *dolce* for a scalar piano cadenza that sweeps the full expanse of the keyboard. Beethoven has designed this theme to effectively introduce and contrast his two protagonists, but he also accomplishes far more. The antecedent provides an unadorned introduction to the

seminal idea. The consequent grows from it, riffs on it, breaks up into short insistent gestures and then finally expands into slowed down, a-thematic, seemingly free improvisation. Counter-statement – Beethoven is careful to affirm the equality of both instruments by going through the same material again, but this time with the roles reversed and some felicitous adjustments that reflect the character of the two instruments. Now the antecedent is played by the piano, with the noble sound of both hands rendering it so that the unharmonized tune is heard simultaneously in four different octaves. The piano also has its own approach to the following dominant pedal, which is now enlivened by octave oscillations. A nice avoidance of too much regularity has the cello enter sooner than expected and double the piano's 'Z', then continue smoothly on into the expected consequent, though this time 'Z' does not move up an octave when repeated. Also the accompaniment, aside from the pedal, consists of separated 8th-note chords in the L.H. that complement the cello's melody. At the end it is the string instrument's turn for a complementary cadenza rewritten to favor its technical capabilities. Each time the antecedent has been spare and unaccompanied, the consequent not just a switch of lead but a progression to fuller texture, stronger dynamics and a coming together of both instruments - in short, an evolution from simple monody to sonic profusion. If we then take the statement and counter-statement together, this process is expanded over a larger scale with the effect of cumulative incremental enlarging of sonority. The richly scored consequent of the counter-statement provides the final culmination.

Between the relaxed character of this theme and the cadenzas and fermatas, we don't yet have a sense of having really established strong forward movement. In fact, this main theme can almost seem reminiscent of a slow introduction. Thus, the brisk and bracing start of the following bridge arrives with special impact.

Bridge: Suddenly, we are plunged into the minor mode and an exciting steady pulse of 16th-note triplets. This boldly assertive music starts *f* and features dynamic contrasts and frequent *sfs*. The cello and R.H. trade passionate, rhythmically compelling utterances that seem to hint at a heroic style theme, but before this can really come together, the modulatory process has progressed to the point of relaxing and settling in to prepare our arrival at the new key.

Subordinate theme: E major (the dominant and thus the orthodox choice). This enchanting music emerges with wonderful gentleness and suavity from the end of the bridge.

Statement – 13 bars (8[4+4]+5)...an interesting exception to the preponderance of 6 and 12-bar units. Once again we have a theme that emphasizes the equal partnership between the soloists, but this time instead of each presenting half of the theme, they share it simultaneously with complementary melodic lines. While the L.H. starts a melody in longer notes that takes the form of a descending arpeggio (imitated by the R.H.), the cello counters with faster-moving rising scales that end with graceful flourishes. These ideas mesh so beautifully that it is hard to decide which is the lead melody and which is a subordinate counter-melody. The antecedent presents the basic material for 4 bars and then repeats the gist of it sequenced to different pitch levels. The 5-bar consequent provides contrast with a sinuous new line for the cello that is complimented by the R.H.'s flow of meandering 8th-notes. The effect is of two magically twining and interlacing strands of sound.

Counter-statement – We now enjoy the pleasure of hearing the same theme again, but with the cello and piano exchanging parts - another and very different instance of equal treatment. The material is also adjusted to suit the new distribution by changes of octave, the elimination of the earlier imitations, and the harmonization of the piano's rising scales by both hands in 10ths. This time the consequent is lengthened by a one bar extension.

Closing material: Part I – After the genial subordinate theme, the *f* arrival here offers a jolt similar to the start of the bridge. This is a stirring new theme in Beethoven's heroic style. At 12 bars (6 & 6) for both statement and counter-statement, it is no more than half as long as the previous themes, which contributes to the impression of compressed intensity as this mostly rather mellow movement briefly seems to channel the spirit of the Kreutzer sonata.

Statement – For the first time the R.H. gets to set its initial stamp upon a theme, as it projects a melody, accented by frequent *sfs*, featuring trills and dotted rhythms over continuous L.H. rising triplets and almost bardic style cello pizzicati.

Counter-statement – The cello takes the lead, sounding marvelously gruff and even fierce two octaves lower, while the piano accompaniment moves up to treble range to avoid competition. Now, both hands in octave unison have switched to roiling 16th-note figures. Instead of ending with a normal close, a diversion of the harmony leads into...

Part II – Extension/transition. A nebulous, unstable passage where, for the only time except perhaps the bridge, we encounter music that is irregular and not clearly thematic. However, it is still 12 bars long, and thus in a way acts to balance the compactness of Part I. Over the course of this free, gestural music, there is a sense of struggle, disorientation, searching, and final arrival.

It starts with a seamless *f* continuation of the piano's 16ths and the cello's descending line, which comes to rest on a single repeated pitch. But almost immediately, a diminuendo shifts things down to *pp* for a switch to triplet motion as the R.H. and cello trade graceful falling and rising runs. Yet suddenly it's *f* and then *ff* again with contrary motion keyboard scales leading to an insistent pair of climactic trills.

Part III – *Dolce*, 6 bars. With another marked contrast, there now arrives the shortest theme of all, a tender snatch of tune that almost sounds like a closing lullaby. Singing below a delicate R.H. descant, the cello has the lead throughout, flowing smoothly into the exposition repeat.

Development:

For a development section, this is unusually lyrical, almost operatic, and it is shot through with an atmosphere of mystery and drama. A short second ending rechannels the end of the cadence theme into...

Part I: ...which uses various elements of the main theme to create a feeling of introduction and preparation. In the L.H., there is the familiar oscillating octave pedal point, while above it the R.H. and cello treat motive 'X' in canonic imitation. This is all presented as a gradual crescendo, leading to a *f tutti* derived from 'Z'. As the new idea continues more softly, it is combined with the trilling rhythmic figure from the main theme's consequent. A long, high cello note starts a romantic descending phrase that delivers us into...

Part II: (Starts in F-sharp minor, the relative minor.) This long passage is really the heart of the development, and it is based almost exclusively on varied repetitions of motive 'Y', wringing

every possible drop of expression from it as one moment it sounds like a premonition of Chopin, and the next it storms with furious ardor. Often the R.H. and the cello seem like idealized protagonists engaged in a continuously metamorphosing duet. A brusquely repeated staccato figure accented with grace notes brings the central section to a close.

Part III: Retransition. This is much shorter and *pp* almost throughout as motive 'X' returns, treated in close imitation. The effect is of a solemn, tranquil preparation to the approaching recapitulation. The final moment of arrival is heralded by a crescendo and a preparatory trill.

Recapitulation:

Main theme: Statement only – Here Beethoven abbreviates by traversing this material just once, but with significantly new scoring that gives prominence to both instruments simultaneously. This is the first time we hear the cello sing the entire melody, both antecedent and consequent (cadenza included), while the R.H. decorates from the very start with a garland of tinkling triplet figuration. In this way, the former austerity of the unadorned solo line is now enriched and transformed.

Bridge: While very recognizable, this is somewhat rewritten and compressed, in addition to the expected transpositions.

Subordinate theme: (As expected, in the tonic A major) The return of this contrary-motion-based theme is very respectful of the original, while still embellishing it with a few new grace notes and trills.

Closing material: Except for some minor touches during Part II, this is all very regularly transposed to the tonic.

Coda:

Part I gives us another taste of the iconic opening melody, but this time in D major (the subdominant). Once again, it is unharmonized and played *pp* by the cello with the hands of the piano doubling an octave above and below. We hear motives 'X' and 'Y', but instead of going on to 'Z', we arrive at...

Part II, a long extension and transition based on 'Y' and slowly crescendoing up to *ff*. After a brief R.H./cello dialogue, the R.H. takes the bit between its teeth and spins out a freely-evolving extended "improvisation" over long notes from the cello and a steady pattern of L.H. 8th-notes.

Part III: This is the tremendous climax of Part II's buildup and a triumphant affirmation of the home key, as the entire main theme antecedent is thundered out in *tutti* unison.

Part IV follows with a sudden hush and a repetition of motive 'Z', which is then further developed at some length in a manner parallel to Part II's treatment of 'Y' (equal time for motive 'Z'!). This time it is the cello that takes the initiative after the opening dialogue, eventually leading into a rhythmically smoothed out restatement of 'X' and part of 'Y', with L.H. imitation. This part ends with the instruments exchanging an expectant series of *pp* trills.

Part V: After this quiet lull, Beethoven rouses us at the end with 4 bars of *f* closing gestures, featuring a piano trill and upward-sprinting run leading to repeated cadence chords.

Movement II – Scherzo and Trio (but with Trio repeated, thus ABABA-Coda), Allegro Molto (very fast), 3/4, A Minor

“The second movement is a brisk scherzo...more notable for syncopation than melody, framing a ‘trio’...in A major, strikingly anticipating the Seventh Symphony.” (Golding)

“The lighthearted and rhythmically piquant Scherzo creates the illusion of a melody one beat out of phase. The first section occurs three times - before, between, and after the two appearances of the quiet, pensive trio, with its double stops (two notes at the same time) in the cello part.” (Berger)

With its simple alternation of major and the parallel minor, the key scheme here is unusually straightforward. Beethoven seems eager to focus our attention on all the fun he is having with rhythm and meter and thus is careful to avoid a lot of distracting key changes. A wild kinetic onslaught happily rules the day. This movement relies heavily on literal repetitions and soon settles us into a pattern of minor mode frenzy relieved by peaceful hiatuses in major.

Scherzo (Principal song):

More than mere syncopation, this starts with such extreme metrical displacement that one would never know where the down-beats really are, were it not for the places that the music briefly rights itself. Beethoven does not use the traditional rounded binary form phrase structure, and there are no literal repeats within this section, sensibly enough, as we will hear it all over again more than once anyway.

Theme I: Part I – 8 bars, piano only, with R.H. lead over offset sounding L.H. chords. The melody describes a gradual rise of an octave from the dominant to the dominant, followed by a brief descent to the tonic. For Part I’s varied repeat, the cello takes over the lead down an octave, and the freed R.H. enriches the scoring of the L.H.’s chords.

Part II – 14 continuous bars without a repeat. This seems to naturally grow out of Part I as a climactic response, marked by stronger dynamics. There is rapid interaction between the instruments now as the R.H. and cello engage in a dialogue of brief contrasting fragments. Through this the L.H. provides an immediate echo to the R.H. and then synchronizes with the cello. Part II is essentially a development of the materials introduced in Part I.

Theme II: 26 bars that seem to forge continuously onward without clear internal divisions. Its contrapuntal texture is in marked contrast to Theme I. The R.H. plays an insistent stream of staccato quarter-note octaves above a legato cello counter-melody in longer notes. The contrapuntal effect is further enriched by brief L.H. imitations of the cello’s line. During the last few bars, the various parts move into step with each other as a forceful setup to...

Transition/buildup (based on theme I) – This is almost as long as theme II, but it sounds more developmental in style. The passage is hushed and begins in the relative major, and even though the material is that of theme I (Part I), the new key and mode effectively rob it of a feeling of

return. This serves instead as a teasing preparation, and as we make our way back to A minor, a virtuoso R.H. acts as a scout through the foreign terrain. Just at the brink of our arrival, the last few bars quickly crescendo up to *f* for the...

Theme I climactic return – This is deeply satisfying and thrills us with the spine-tingling sonority of the R.H. and cello playing the melody together for the first time, with the cello up in the R.H.'s original octave and the R.H. an octave above that. Where earlier the theme was *p* with *sf* interventions, now it is hurled out in a continuous *f*. After the original 8 bars of the theme, it continues in free extension as if it has built up such a head of steam that it has to just keep going. Extension/transition – This brief, 9-bar passage is marked by a diminuendo and serves to prepare the contrasting mood and mode of the following...

Trio: A Major

Unlike the scherzo with its contrasting themes, this exhibits a more lulling uniformity, content to explore a single theme in a leisurely style.

Part I introduces us to the theme in its most straightforward form. Over a rustic-sounding L.H. tonic pedal (presented as a slow-motion trill), the cello's double-stops intone a calm 8-bar melody (4+4), mostly in dotted quarter-notes. This is immediately given a varied repeat by the R.H. playing it in quarter-notes, as the L.H.'s trilling pedal speeds up to 8th-notes. As befits the peaceful mood, this entire 16 bars is then given a literal repeat.

Part II provides mild contrast as this time the piano starts the familiar melody, but moved to the dominant, and the cello takes over the droning trill (a couple of octaves higher than the L.H. had it and deftly nudged up a step to serve as a dominant pedal here). After the L.H. plays the first 4 bars up in the treble range, the R.H. joins in, doubling an octave higher. We then seem to go on to the quarter-note variation (still piano lead and the first *f* so far), but now it is freely altered and launches a transitional passage. The last bars (*p* again) are characterized by the cello turning its trill into a gradual descent and bringing us back to the tonic for...

Part III: The regular presentation of the theme in the home key gives this a rounding-out feeling of return. New scoring has the piano playing the melody from the start, sounding fuller in both hands, while the cello continues its droning 8th-notes but back on the tonic. The piano goes on into the quarter-note variation, but after a while turns into a *f* climax that fragments and extends the material.

Transition – An additional 15 bars are used to bring the Trio to a close via a diminuendo and simulated deceleration, furnishing maximum contrast to the return of the scherzo's strenuous, off-kilter dance.

Literal repeat of Scherzo & Trio

Final repeat of Scherzo:

Again, a literal repeat except for a slight adjustment to start the...

Coda:

pp throughout.

Part I: A very spare continuation of the end of the Scherzo, as hushed minimalism builds mild suspense.

Part II: At this point, if Beethoven were following his usual pattern when writing one of these scherzos with the trio repeated, he would tease us with a final bit of trio material suggesting the possibility of yet another round! Instead we get a very short, skeletal deconstruction of the Scherzo's theme I, a ghostly dying-away of this formerly boisterous material, enhanced by hollow-sounding pizzicati.

Movement III

“An eloquent *Adagio cantabile* in E major sounds as though it is going to be a fully fledged slow movement but is only a brief prelude to the brilliant, compact, sonata-form finale, whose exuberant main theme is so reminiscent of the first movement of the first ‘Rasoumovsky’ Quartet (Op. 59, No. 1).” (Golding)

“At the conclusion of the Scherzo the piano starts a poised, deliberate melody that suggests the beginning of a proper slow movement, perhaps a theme and variations. But after the cello statement of the same melody, the music hesitates, and it becomes clear that this is nothing more than an introduction to the fast finale. Beethoven sets off on a gay, sparkling romp... with a main subject that is as beautifully crafted as the first-movement theme. With but a few brief interruptions, the high-spirited music bubbles through to a brilliant conclusion.” (Berger)

Slow Introduction, Adagio cantabile (slow and singingly), 2/4, E Major

The fact that this starts in E major, a contrasting key, rather than the tonic of the ensuing sonata form, increases the impression that we may be embarked on an actual slow movement. Also the charming melody presented is far from the fragmentary gestures, harmonic instability, and developmental style that usually characterize a slow introduction. Still, it is soon apparent that the key of E is merely used as dominant preparation for our old friend A major.

Theme: Statement – 8 bars (4+4), a mildly contrasting period. R.H. lead over a regular 16th-note broken chord L.H. accompaniment. Though not in the spotlight, the cello is not obliged to wait this out either; after 1 bar of piano solo, it enters with a beautifully tender harmony part that sometimes is quite independent, and at others moves in sync with the melody. The last half of the consequent features R.H. trills progressing to cadenza-like closing gestures, including an elegant lead-in to the cello's...

Counter-statement – This is a great opportunity for the string instrument to show off its capacity for vocal-style lyricism, as it sings and decorates the tune an octave lower but still excitingly high in its range. After the first bar of the consequent, the melody and harmony start to veer off into a new, free transition that extends longer than the theme would and ends up changing the E-major context to E-dominant 7th in preparation for a resolution to A major and the start of the...

Sonata form, Allegro vivace (fast and lively), Cut-time, A Major

Exposition:

Main Theme: Statement – 8 bars (4+4), a balanced parallel period starting *pp* and gradually crescendoing to *f*. The cello is given the honor of first whack at this suave and high-spirited theme, supported by a lively piano accompaniment of throbbing 16th-note chords. The start of the consequent is basically identical to the opening of the theme, except this time the piano plays continuously without the effective breaks that punctuated the antecedent. Because all of this will prove so important, we should take a moment to look more closely at its melodic content. The opening features four legato quarter-notes followed by a long note (dotted half-note). The rhythm here seems to harken back to motive ‘Z’ from Movement I. This motive particularly will furnish most of the material for subsequent development. The bouncy continuation consists of 8th-notes in alternating staccato, legato pairs, after which, a lightening 16th-note rise provides a deft lead-in to the consequent. As mentioned, these second 4 bars faithfully reproduce the same melody line, except that it now stops short at the very start of the final bar giving way to a rippling 16th-note flourish. This is a luxuriant elaboration of the simple idea just mooted via the consequent lead-in, and its wonderfully fluid rising sweep guides us elegantly to the...

Counter-statement, with the R.H. continuing straight into the melody, up two octaves higher, and this time accompanied by a L.H. broken-chord, 8th-note pattern. Adding especially to the novelty of the scoring here is a long cello tonic pedal. Now, instead of the run that ended the statement, we encounter a sense of something new, which signals the start of the...

Bridge: This brief transitional episode is a fine example of bustling passagework, juxtaposing quicksilver 16th-note runs against distinctive repeated-note rhythmic patterns. After a crescendo from *p* to *ff* culminates in energetically rising scales, the music seems to settle back down in a slower-moving, staccato descent.

Subordinate theme: Here we might reasonably expect to have landed in the new key (presumably the dominant E major), but in fact we’re not there yet. From a strictly harmonic point of view, this exquisite passage of lyricism is merely a second part of the bridge that progressively continues to modulate before ultimately delivering us to the proper key. But that is missing the entire point, because clearly Beethoven is having some creative fun and using this to serve as a most unusual sub-theme. For 15 bars (8[4+4]+7[4+3]), the cello and piano engage in what starts as an expressive dialogue and then turns into a more simultaneous duet.

Antecedent – The cello’s *dolce, a cappella* questions, initiated by a yearning grace-note octave leap, are each time answered by a murmur of repeated piano chords.

Consequent – Now the two voices interact more freely and passionately, especially with the crescendo up to *f* at the end as the modulation to E major is finally accomplished.

Closing material: This very emphatically and unambiguously proclaims the new key, but to further confirm that this is not the true sub-theme, we get busy passagework that has “closing material” written all over it.

Part I – 4 bars. Over an exciting 32nd-note L.H. chordal pattern, the cello and R.H. trade scurrying, rising/falling 32nd-note scales.

Part II – 6 bars. Continues the sense of bustling commotion, but now the runs have moved down to the L.H. while the cello and R.H. join in an emphatic new rhythmic pattern. This passage

initiates a crescendo that climaxes with a *ff* extension, creating a plateau of suspense that is resolved by the quiet and strongly contrasting...

Part III – A cadenza-like R.H. solo in flowing 8th-notes describes a gently meandering descent which is answered in kind by a cello rise that proceeds seamlessly into the exposition repeat.

Development:

Part I starts softly in A minor as the cello sequences repetitions of the main theme's opening motive, enhanced by brief L. H. imitations. The segments are fused by means of the 16th-note consequent lead-in, but soon the cello gives way to an obsessive rumination on just the quarter-notes themselves. All of this is set against throbbing piano chords derived from the theme's original accompaniment. The entire process builds with a crescendo to a peak of intensity that launches...

Part II: *ff*. This is happy, exuberant music in major that dispels the anxiety of Part I. Adding further to the contrasting effect, theme I is no longer present, but instead, a bold new rhythmically-charged motive is alternated with 16th-note runs taken from the start of the closing material. Before long both ideas are more freely overlapped, and eventually the ebullient atmosphere fades with a diminuendo just prior to...

Part III: Retransition. This is the shortest section of the development, and returns us to the main theme's opening motive, the quarter-notes only, and this time worked over by both hands of the piano in octave unison, sounding ominous with their placement low on the keyboard. Throughout, the cello is limited to nervous repeated-note figures, essentially keeping it in reserve for the launching of the main theme at the start of the approaching...

Recapitulation:

Main theme: This launches with particular *élan* out of a *ritard* during the last 2 bars of the development. Beethoven preserves both the statement and the counter-statement with their leads and melody lines unchanged, but he provides fresh interest through new accompaniments for each. As the cello plays the statement, the familiar throbbing 8th-note chords are now replaced with a dazzling 16th-note broken chord pattern in the R.H. This 16th-note pulse continues through the counter-statement, shifted to the L.H., while the cello is given somewhat more to do than its previous tonic pedal.

Bridge: Basically we encounter the material from before but expanded through extra bars and skillfully reworked to provide an effect of enhanced brilliance.

Sub-theme: Aside from its new harmonic placement, this eccentric modulating theme is very much as it was except that, interestingly, it has been shorn of its "meowing" grace-note octave leaps.

Closing material: Part I is much as we remember, but after the mid-point of Part II, the music switches to a new series of upward-racing runs in preparation for the...

Coda:

Part I: The opening of this is essentially a reconfigured version of Part III of the original closing material, and, as we've learned to expect, it segues smoothly into the start of the main theme. The cello launches the theme as usual, but now very soon the R.H. takes over the melody and starts spinning it out repetitively, progressing to a *f* unresolved ending.

Part II: Begins with a second cycle of the material used in Part I but with the scoring swapped so that now the cello goes first and is answered by the piano. Thus the R.H. now continues into the main theme and it is the cello that takes it over. However this time, unlike the cello in Part I, the R.H. does not just drop into the background but jumps up the keyboard for some ringing high notes which are each preceded by a grace-note octave leap in a nod to the sub-theme. This bright new idea progresses directly into...

Part III: R.H. lead throughout, supported by a continuous accompaniment of L.H. 16ths. We get a stirring climactic passage, sounding almost like a new theme, but largely derived from the as-yet-underutilized staccato/legato 8th-note portion of the main theme. This sense of fresh melodic flowering just as the piece is drawing to its close looks ahead to Mendelssohn and many of his codas. Here the material is spun out through repetition over the course of a long crescendo, reaching a 2-bar *ff* plateau from which Part IV triumphantly emerges.

Part IV: We are back now to the opening motive of the theme played in imitative dialogue by the cello and L.H. and here incorporating the familiar consequent lead-in. Meanwhile the unstoppable 16th-note commotion has moved to the R.H. and accompanies from above. However, a gradual diminuendo eventually quiets this wild jubilation down to *pp*, and we wonder if Beethoven is perhaps going to give us one of his rare soft endings. But no, it's just a temporary lull to make the final rousing close that much more effective. Except for the resounding cadence chords, the cello has doggedly insisted on the main theme's legato quarter-notes and, not unreasonably, given their paramount motivic importance.