

Clustering Classical Music Performances

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THE QUESTION:

- Easy to describe musical characteristics you like: “up-tempo”, “strong beat”, “good lyrics”, “jazzy”, etc.



- Harder to describe characteristics of a **performance** that you like.
- In classical music, there are hundreds or thousands of recordings of the **same** piece.
- Why do we like some better than others?

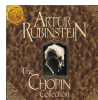
EXAMPLE

3.
(1830)

Allegro ma non troppo. ($\text{♩} = 132$)

Red. * Red. * Red. * Red. *

Red. *



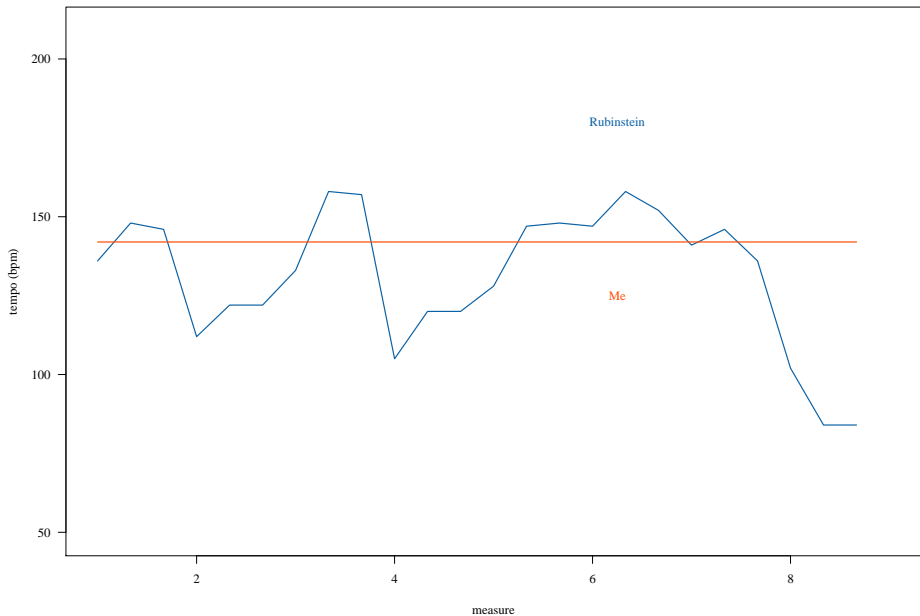
WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

- 1 Mistakes
- 2 Extraneous noise
- 3 Recording quality
- 4 Articulation/Legato/Bowing/Breathing
- 5 Dynamics
- 6 Rubato/Tempo

The first three are mostly uninteresting, but the rest are about **interpretation**.

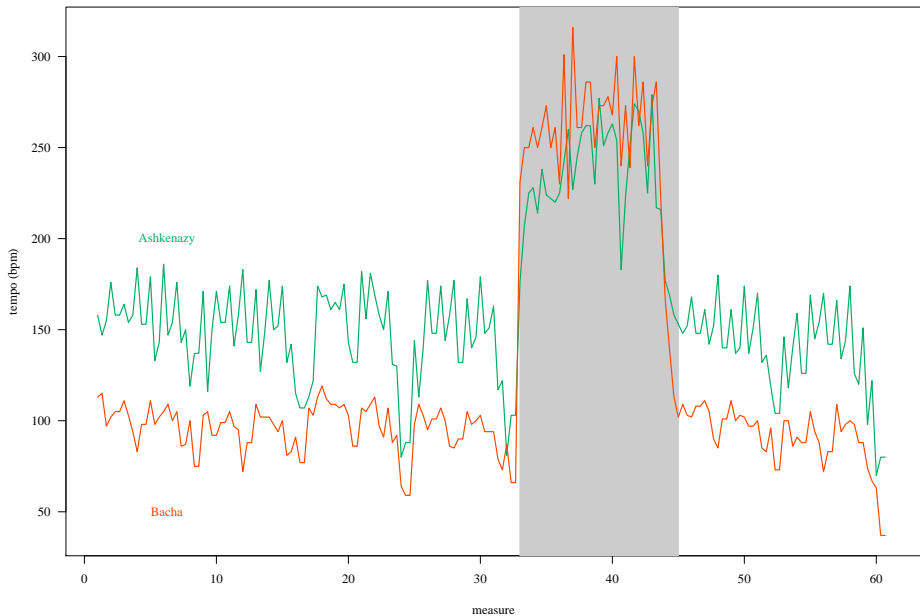
We like performances with “better” interpretations.

PERFORMANCES

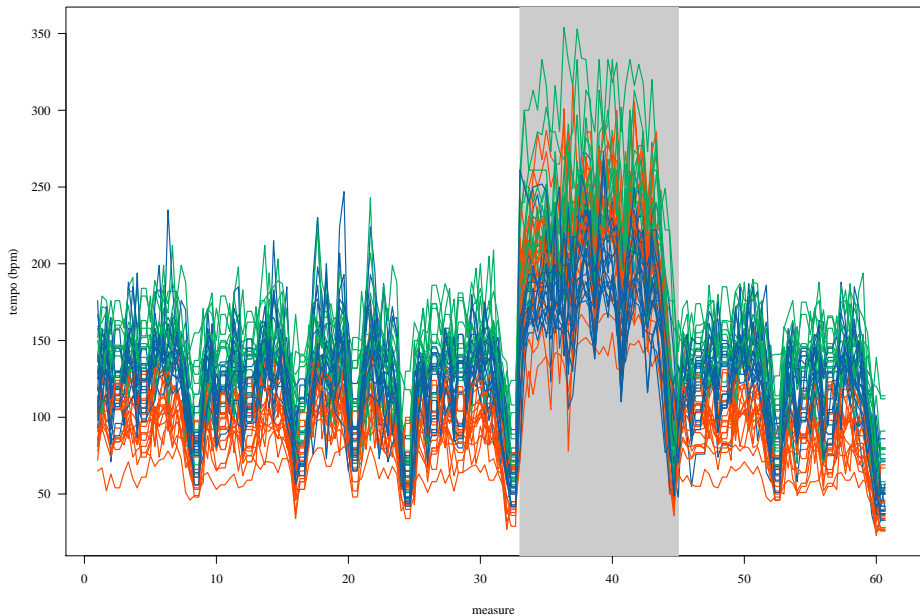


- CHARM Mazurka Project
- Focus on timing only (dynamics also available)
- 50 recordings: Chopin Mazurka Op. 68 No. 3
- Recorded between 1931 and 2006
- 45 different performers

CLUSTERING



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For details: see the poster