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Tempo agreement in Beethoven sonatas

2 messages

Ignasi Solé Piñas <ignasicellista@gmail.com>
To: Steven Isserlis <steven@stevenisserlis.com>

1 October 2021 at 16:15

Dear Maestro Isserlis,

I hope you are doing well.

Going into a tempo chapter and talking to Professor Noordwind, I wonder if between you and Levin, there was an agreement in every single movement, regarding specific tempo.

e.g. you both decided to play the Adagios very slow, in a specific bpm on the metronome, as for example Czerny suggested, or you just played along and see what fit you best?

I am trying to understand if the fact that the cello sonatas have been getting faster over the years, but the slow movements slower, is because the cellist and pianist have agreed to do so, instead of just following a trend.

Could you please let me know your Beethoven tempo decisions with Levin, and if that changes with other pianists?

All the best,

Ignasi,

Head of Music at St. James Prep and The Falcons School

Steven Isserlis <steven@stevenisserlis.com>
To: Ignasi Solé Piñas <ignasicellista@gmail.com>

4 October 2021 at 13:24

I don't actually remember any disagreement re tempi with Bob. I HAVE had disagreements re tempi, in Beethoven and other music - but not with Bob, as far as I can recall. We certainly don't stick to Czerny's suggestions - but are aware of them, as 'messages'. I do like the fact that he marks the opening andante of the 4th sonata very slowly.

Perhaps the tempi might be slightly slower with modern piano, but I've never been particularly conscious of it.

Sorry not to be more informative.

Best wishes from Steven

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