

## No.V: Three Bagatelles

This set of three pieces was assembled in 2020 for the call for scores “Bagatelles for Beethoven” by the organization Kaleidoscope MusArt. Independently composed, one as far back as 1975 and the other two in 2019 and 2020, they all have one thing in common: the music of Beethoven.

A more detailed description of each of them follows the following general introduction.

The first of them, *quarantasette estratti da un vicolo ludofilo* was written in 2019 in response to an invitation by the German pianist Susanne Kessel, starting in 2013, extended to 250 composers of contemporary music including myself to each write a new piano piece to celebrate Beethoven’s 250<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary in 2020. The premieres of the pieces have been taking place since 2013 and somewhat disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic are currently on temporary hold. See <http://250-piano-pieces-for-beethoven.com/en/>.

I wrote the second bagatelle, *Klavierstück Für Luise*, in 1975 for a long tape-piece, broadcast the following year on German Radio. As the title may suggest, it is derived from Beethoven’s bagatelle *Klavierstück Für Elise*, by humoristically twisting the harmonic modulations of the original piece.

Ideas for the third bagatelle, *Fantasy Prelude Miscibly Interfused*, had been in my mind for several years before I finally committed them to paper in January and February 2020 for the Kaleidoscope MusArt call for scores 2020. The pitches of Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” are set to the rhythms of J. S. Bach’s Prelude No.1 of the Well-Tempered Clavier Book 1. In a simultaneous counterpoint the pitches of Bach’s Prelude are set to the rhythms of Beethoven’s sonata.

As I frequently do, I have adapted my name in the three scores to the language of the three titles: Chiarenzo Barlo, K.-Lorenz von Bärlöwen and Clarence Barlow. The title of all three pieces together as *No.V: Three Bagatelles* has a number of anagrams containing the name “Beethoven”. Here are some of them:

Beethoven All Greats  
Beethoven Altar Legs  
Beethoven Last Glare  
Beethoven Legal Arts  
Beethoven Legal Star  
Beethoven Raga Tells  
Beethoven Rages Tall  
Beethoven Regal Salt

A more detailed description of the three bagatelles follows below.

Clarence Barlow, Barcelona, May 4th 2020.

## quarantasette estratti da un vicolo ludofilo

“Beethoven”, “Sonatas”, “E-flat”, in that order, were the first terms that came to mind for Susanne Kessel’s piece. Beethoven wrote four sonatas in E-flat major. 47 harmonically selected excerpts of varying lengths from these four sonatas – Nos. 4, 13, 18 and 26 – constitute the sound material for the resulting piece *quarantasette estratti da un vicolo ludofilo* or “forty-seven excerpts from a playful alley” («ludo» and «vico» yield the Italian form «ludovico» of “Ludwig”, «es» is German for E-flat).

The two-part piece – one part slow, one fast – of about two minutes is characterized by successive harmonically dovetailed links: the end of each excerpt harmonizes with the usually overlapping start of the next.

At the end, the final bars of all four sonata movements sound simultaneously.

## Klavierstück Für Luise

Composed in 1975 as part of a collection of humorous collages, pastiches and parodies all packed into a large 88-minute tape piece for German Radio with mostly satirical, deliberately misleading commentaries, this piece is based on the highly popular bagatelle listed as Beethoven’s “Work without Opus Number” #59 known as *Klavierstück Für Elise* (“piano piece for Elise”). The basic device used for *Für Luise* is simple: transpose all *Für Elise* phrases in the tonic – usually A minor or C major – to the dominant and vice versa. Thus we find *Luise* in the title instead of *Elise*.

The entire German text of the tape piece – quizzically entitled *Reidosklopädie? Enzykloskoport?* (“*Reidosclopedia? Encycloscoport?*”) – was printed in 1983 in Herbert Henck’s Neuland series.

Under the heading “Necromusicology – the study of the music of the dead”, the accompanying commentary in the radio piece goes as follows in an English translation:

Ladies and gentlemen, it is almost frightening how music in its entirety is constantly increasing. This is not only happening in the field of New Music - we refer here to the work of countless thousands of living composers without however wishing to demean their excellent achievements in the art of imitation. But in addition, new, previously unknown works by deceased masters constantly appear, partly due to the sudden discovery of lost scores, but also recently due to the suspected direct mediation from the hereafter. This new path of communication has led to the birth of yet another science, necromusicology, which examines works of music that are said to have flowed from the quills of the dead, such as the following piece: entitled “For Luise”, it is for piano, and it is assumed that the initials “LvB” found on the score are identical to those of the almost anonymous composer Lorenz or Karl-Lorenz von Bärlöwen.

## Fantasy Prelude Miscibly Interfused [ LvB Op.27/2 «» JSB BWV 846 ]

is a piece for solo piano of 2020 derived entirely from the first movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Sonata No.14 Op.27 No.2 in C-sharp minor (Sonata quasi una Fantasia)*, popularly known as the "*Moonlight Sonata*", and Johann Sebastian Bach's *Prelude No.1 in C Major* from Book 1 of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, BWV 846.

The piece faithfully interfuses the above-named music, whereby Bach's rhythms invariably carry Beethoven's pitches and vice versa. According to the principle pitch→rhythm (pitch carried by rhythm), these two interfusing processes are here labeled "Beethoven→Bach" (which launches the piece) and "Bach→Beethoven" (which starts in the eighth bar). Varied is only the extent to which the interfused notes are muted or presented. For instance, though "Bach→Beethoven" starts in bar 8, it is audibly evident only from bar 9.

The following illustration shows the first bar of *Fantasy Prelude* (lower left) derived in *rhythm* from Bach bar 1 (upper left) and in *pitch* from Beethoven bar 1 (upper right), as the gray arrows indicate. It also shows bar 12 (lower right) with "Bach→Beethoven" material derived in *pitch* from Bach (upper left) and in *rhythm* from Beethoven (upper right); "Beethoven→Bach" notes are not shown here. However, according to the tempi chosen for Bach's quarter-notes (MM90) and Beethoven's triplets (quarter = MM40), the durations in bar 12 are notated with dotted eighths, which when played at quarter = MM90 result in a factual note-group tempo of MM40. Thus the bars shown here at upper and lower right in the treble are identical in durational values.

The illustration shows four musical staves. The top row contains two staves: J.S. Bach: Prelude No. 1, WTC Bk.1, bar 1 (♩ = 90) and Beethoven: "Moonlight" I, bar 1 (♩ = 40). The bottom row contains two staves: C. Barlow: Fantasy Prelude, bar 1 (♩ = 90) and C. Barlow: Fantasy Prelude, bar 12 (♩ = 90). Gray arrows indicate the derivation of rhythm and pitch between the source and target pieces. The arrows show that the rhythm of Barlow's bar 1 is derived from Bach's bar 1, and its pitch is derived from Beethoven's bar 1. Similarly, the rhythm of Barlow's bar 12 is derived from Beethoven's bar 1, and its pitch is derived from Bach's bar 1. The tempo markings are ♩ = 90 for Bach and Barlow, and ♩ = 40 for Beethoven.

Prior to the realization of the piece, the varying degree of sensory dissonance caused by the simultaneity of unmuted Bach and Beethoven pitches from bars 8 to 49 was calculated pursuant to work by the psychoacousticians Plomp & Levelt (1965). "Bach→Beethoven" ends in bar 49, previously having run concurrently with – but now leaving the final 20 bars entirely to "Beethoven→Bach". Decisions as to how much of this dissonance be evident in any given bar from 8 to 49 – in addition to considerations of playability and of form – determined how many notes resulting from each of the two processes would be muted in the given bar.