

# Interpreting and Performing Musical Narrativity: A Performance Study of Musical Actors in Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata Op.53

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## Abstract

The analysis of musical narrativity has important purposes in performance studies of Beethoven's piano sonatas and the narrative approach to analyzing Beethoven's piano sonatas shows a compelling connection between music and literature. The purpose of this practice-led research is to discuss musical narrativity in Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata. Specifically, the current performance study analyzes four musical actors penetrating in Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata and discusses the assimilation of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's literature, *Wilhelm Meister*, *Faust*, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and his concepts of desire, compromise, and sublimation into interpreting Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata from the perspective of musical actors. The result of this study is to subsequently discuss the unique design and interpret the storytelling characteristic and musical plots in Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata from the perspective of musical narrativity through various intonations, dynamics, and musical expression. The *Waldstein* sonata manifests Beethoven's narrative compositional strategy and depicts the musical realization of the literary convention of Goethe's literacy concepts. The current study realizes the goal of studying and interpreting Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata in a new scope of view. Through the analysis of musical narrativity, pianists will have an additional perspective upon which to base their interpretive performance.

**Keywords:** Musical Narrativity, Musical Actors, Storytelling Characteristic, Musical Plots, Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata

## Introduction

Musical narrativity refers to the mode of expressive organization in instrumental compositions (Grabócz, 2009). Existing musical narrativity academic studies of Beethoven's non-titled piano sonatas are not many and the analysis of musical narrativity has numerous

important purposes in performance studies of Beethoven's piano sonatas. There is some implied musical narrativity in Beethoven's sonatas and the narrative approach to analyzing Beethoven's piano sonatas and concertos will show a compelling connection between music and literature. For instance, Charles Rosen (1927-2012) pointed out that Ludwig van Beethoven's *Tempest* sonata derived from Shakespeare's "The Tempest" (Rosen, 2002) and the second movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto in G major, Op. 58 was related to the ancient legend of Orpheus and Eurydice (Rosen, 1973). Beethoven recognized and exploited the narrative potential in his structure of sonata form—exposition, development, recapitulation/coda—through musical actors. He also unified musical actors into a larger, unified framework within a multi-movement sonata. The analyses of musical narrativity are usually combined with traditional musical analysis of musical structure about the musical themes or motives, harmony, and texture (Grabócz, 2016). Through the analysis of musical narrativity, pianists may understand how the music textures were laid out, and how the music motives were developed and then synthesized into narrative plots. In doing so, pianists will have an additional perspective upon which to base their interpretive performance.

The motivation behind this study comes from Eero Tarasti's analysis of the generative course of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata. In this study, Tarasti examined the first movement of the *Waldstein* sonata based on A.J. Greimas's semiotic model. He proposed four actors at the beginning of the first movement, analyzed the modal grammar through musical actors (motifs and themes), and proposed the hypothesis that:

a musical actor does not disappear "from the stage" even though it is not "saying" something, just as theater performances in dialogue do not disappear when the speaker changes. A musical theme-actant might disappear from the score, say at moments when its opponent theme occurs in another register; but it does not disappear from the listener's mind. (Tarasti 1991, p. 101)

Tarasti stated that communication often occurs between two actors in a musical composition. They alternately modalized each other and followed a certain narrative program like a plot (Tarasti, 1991). Tarasti analyzed and provided four musical actors in the first movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein*. Beethoven was good at developing small melodic and rhythmic motifs and extending them into the complete musical composition. Therefore, these four musical actors presented at the beginning of the first movement also appear in the rest of the first movement, the second movement, and the third movement. The author of this study will study, analyze, and assimilate Eero Tarasti's musical actors and concepts of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's literature into subsequently discussing the unique design and interpreting the expressive meaning of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata from the perspective of musical narrativity through a performance study.

### **Ludwig van Beethoven and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

Beethoven was born during the mid-18th-century and it was during the Enlightenment when the impacts of the European social and cultural revolution on musical style were profound. The ornate and intellectually complex music of the Baroque period was rejected as being overly complicated and elitist. A new, more melodically and expressively flexible classical musical style evolved, one that resonated with the new spirit of individualism that lies at the heart of the Enlightenment doctrine (Greenberg, 2005).

At the beginning of the 19th century, three German giants appeared and had a profound impact on the entire human thought and culture. These three giants were Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) in literature, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in philosophy, and Ludwig

van Beethoven in music (Geck, 1976). Literature, philosophy, and music relate with each other and the turn of the 18th century saw the re-emergence of the Medieval Bildungsroman, or developmental novel, as a popular genre. Most musicians in the early 19th century, including Beethoven, were influenced by the great German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Goethe represents three essential concepts in romantic literature: desire, compromise, and sublimation (Geck, 1976). Many of his major works such as *Faust*, *Wilhelm Meister*, and *The Sorrows of Young Werther* are based on these three concepts, especially *Wilhelm Meister*, which tells the story of the protagonist's transition from youth to adulthood, from an innocent state to experiencing different kinds of tribulations in the world and finally achieving relief. Although the result was not perfect, the protagonist had allowed himself to enter a higher realm and achieve sublimation through experience. Beethoven was familiar with these concepts in Goethe's works, especially *The Wilhelm Meister*. He wrote a letter to his close friend Therese Malfatti in 1807 and recommended Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* to her. Since it was in 1807, it was very close to the composition time of his *Waldstein* sonata. The *Waldstein* sonata was published a year after completion in 1805, Vienna, and it was a work of Beethoven's "hero period" (Rosen, 1973).

Beethoven's musical innovations in his piano sonatas have their analogues in Goethe's literature. Beethoven often included Goethe's philosophies, including the pursuit of truth, introspection, the struggle with fate, the process of desire, compromise, and sublimation, and victory, into his musical compositions. Beethoven assimilated the concepts of Goethe's Bildungsroman into his *Waldstein* sonata, and there is indeed an expression of desire, compromise, and sublimation in Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata through the interaction of musical actors from the beginning of this sonata. Since the concepts of desire, compromise, and sublimation often appear in Beethoven's late piano sonatas, the musical ideas behind his *Waldstein* sonata are advanced.

Besides Beethoven's musical compositions being influenced by Goethe's literature, Beethoven's "The Heiligenstadt Testament" was said to be written under the influence of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) which expressed the struggle and misery the protagonist suffers from an unrequited love. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, an epistolary novel, was one of the masterpieces of Goethe's, reflecting the dissatisfaction, depression and resistance of young people to reality at that time (Geck, 1976).

### **Musical Actors in the First Movement**

Eero Tarasti identified four musical actors at the beginning of the first movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata. Musical actor *a* is a truly catalyzing agent that possesses a strong inner will toward dissonance. This main theme-actor contains a doubly tensional moment. It begins on the third scale degree, which has a tensional, leading-tone urge toward upward melodic motion. Musical actor *a* is characterized by ascending thirds which imply the feeling of desire in Beethoven's art song *Sehnsucht* WoO 146 (see Excerpt 1).

### The meaning of ascending thirds in Beethoven's *Sehnsucht* WoO 146

The image shows a page of a musical score for Beethoven's *Sehnsucht* WoO 146. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The lyrics are in German and describe a longing for a loved one. The score includes dynamic markings like *pp* and *ppp*, and articulation like *acc.* and *rit.*. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/C minor) and the time signature is 3/4.

Excerpt 1. The meaning of ascending thirds in Beethoven's *Sehnsucht* WoO 146

The ascending thirds go beyond expectations since E3 proceeds not to F3 but to F-sharp 3, which itself has a strong leading-tone quality that strives for and demands further resolution to G3 (Tarasti, 1991, p.114). As the author of this study interprets the reason why the music goes to F-sharp 3 instead of F3 might relate to the expression of the desire. Beethoven may use two major thirds to establish the feeling of continuous major triads in the C Major key which stands for the meaning of happiness in his Bagatelle *Lustig and Traurig* WoO 54. Beethoven composed Bagatelle in C Major *Lustig-Traurig* WoO 54 for piano in 1802. In this composition, Beethoven gave specific definitions of C Major and C Minor keys by defining C Major as *Lustig* (Happy) and C Minor as *Traurig* (Sad) (see Excerpt 2).

### The meaning of C Major & C Minor keys in Beethoven's *Lustig-Traurig* WoO 54

The image shows a page of a musical score for Beethoven's *Happy-Sad (Bagatelle) in C major* WoO 54. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The lyrics are in German and describe a longing for a loved one. The score includes dynamic markings like *pp* and *ppp*, and articulation like *acc.* and *rit.*. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/C minor) and the time signature is 3/4.

Excerpt 2. The meaning of C Major & C Minor keys in Beethoven's *Lustig-Traurig* WoO 54

In a rhythmic sense, musical actor *a* likewise contains a double-tension followed by a resolution. At first, prolonged as part of the drumming accompaniment, the musical actor *a* remains on E3 for a whole-note value. The faster motion of two eighth notes on F-sharp 3 leading to G3 then compensates for this prolongation. This G3 serves as both the end of musical actor *a* and the beginning of the next musical actor *c* (Tarasti, 1991, p.114).

In a small-scale rhythmic sense, the shape of musical actor *a* is repeated by the next motif, which is the musical actor *c*: prolonged tone, two sixteenth notes, final tone. With

regard to pitch, musical actor *c* seeks a return to balance by twining around G3. Still, the listener does not experience musical actor *c* as a satisfactory resolution of the great tension E—F sharp—G in musical actor *a* (Tarasti, 1991, p.114). The resolution musical actor *d* occurs in mm. 12-13, a descending arpeggiated triad in C minor, which stands for unwilling compromise, resignation, and failure. Beethoven defined descending thirds as resignation in his art song *Resignation* WoO 149 (see Excerpt 3).

**The meaning of descending thirds in Beethoven’s *Resignation* WoO 149**

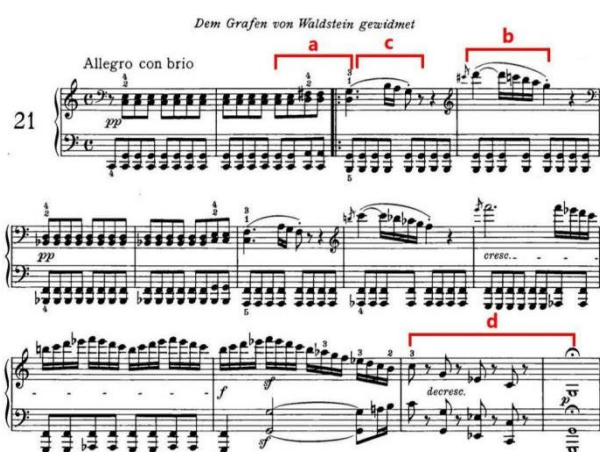


Excerpt 3. The meaning of descending thirds in Beethoven’s *Resignation* WoO 149

Next, in the upper register sounds another musical actor, musical actor *b*, as a reminiscence of or ‘answer’ to musical actor *c*, though condensed into a relatively brief reply. Musical actor *b* leads the narration back to G3 (the register of the opening) in m.13 (Tarasti, 1991, p.114).

The current study summarizes the function of each musical actor at the beginning of Beethoven’s *Waldstein* sonata (see Excerpt 4 and Table 1).

**Eero Tarasti’s identification of four musical actors at the beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata**



Excerpt 4. Eero Tarasti’s identification of four musical actors at the beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata

**Functions of each musical actor at the beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata**

Musical Actor	Music Texture	Function/Meaning	Measures
Actor <i>a</i>	The ascending-scale motif	The meaning of the desire	mm.2-3
Actor <i>b</i>	The descending-scale motif	Answer to the question raised by musical actor <i>c</i>	m.4
Actor <i>c</i>	The returning-note motif	Raise the question	m.3
Actor <i>d</i>	The arpeggiated-triad motif	The meaning of the compromise/resignation	mm.12-13

Table 1. Functions of each musical actor at the beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata

To summarize, the first 13 measures of the *Waldstein* sonata consist of four musical actors. The beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata contains the energy of drive and musical actor *a* (the ascending-scale motif) expresses the concept of desire. Musical actor *b* (descending-scale motif) is the answer to musical actor *c* (the returning-note motif) which proposes the question, and musical actor *d* (The arpeggiated-triad motif) is the concept of the resignation. As the author of this study interprets, the entire plot of the first beginning is a synthesized story of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, musical actor *a* expresses the protagonist's desire to find a breakthrough, musical actor *c* proposes the question of whether the protagonist could succeed, and the answer of musical actor *c* is musical actor *b* which indicates the protagonist might not success since musical actor *d* is descending thirds that imply the meaning of compromise or resignation. Music actor *d* further demonstrated that the protagonist had not achieved what he wanted. To summarize the beginning of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata, four musical actors express the process from a state of desire to uncertainty and eventually comprise or resignation.

Before analyzing musical actors in the rest of the first movement, it is essential to list the structure of the first movement (see Table 2).

**The structure of the first movement of the *Waldstein* sonata**

Area	Measures
Exposition	mm.1-86
1st thematic area or isotopy	mm.1-13
1st transition	mm.14-34
2nd thematic area or isotopy	mm.34-50
2nd transition	mm.50-74
codetta or closing theme	mm. 74-86
Development	mm. 87-156
Recapitulation	mm. 156-249
Coda	mm. 249-302

Table 2. The structure of the first movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

Four musical actors, appearing at the beginning of the *Waldstein* sonata, penetrate throughout the movement and the current study provides the summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the first movement (see Table 3).

### Summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the first movement

Actors	Measures
Actor <i>a</i>	mm.2-3; mm.15-6; mm.31-4; m.49; mm.50-3 (accompaniment); mm.62-5 (left-hand accompaniment); mm.91-2; mm.112-141: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.142-155: sharpening of the relation between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.171-73; mm.296-97
Actor <i>b</i>	m.4; m.11: the second beat to the fourth beat; m.17; m.21; m.22; mm.35-6; m.74 (right-hand melody); m.78 (right-hand melody); m.95; m.297
Actor <i>c</i>	m.3; m.16; m.94; mm.96-103 (b+c themes, b+c, b+c, b+c + c+c moving from G minor to C minor; mm.298-99
Actor <i>d</i>	mm.12-3; mm.50-3 (triplets): mm.66-7; mm.76 (from the third beat)-7; mm.80 (from the third beat)-9; mm.112-141: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>b</i> ; mm.142-155: sharpening of the relation between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>b</i> ; mm.167-170; mm.300-302

Table 3. The summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the first movement

As mentioned in Beethoven's autobiography, his personality was not someone who gave up easily, so after the first narrative statement of desire and resignation in mm.1-13, Beethoven immediately followed up with a repeated narrative interaction of these four musical actors in mm.14-34.

Music actor *b* appears in mm.35-6. It is the variation of musical actor *b* with slow harmonic progression. The musical texture of the slow harmonic progression generally represents the hymn-choral style of German religious music. Therefore, pianists may have a melting touch to feel the peaceful and pious state to express the protagonist's acceptance of the failure and the resignation to fate.

The next appearance of musical actor *a* appears in m.49. Pianists may accent the first two notes which form the ascending thirds of every triplet and make a *crescendo* to express the desire. The bass line (accompaniment) in mm.50-3 is the musical actor *a*, whereas the triplets in mm.50-3 are musical actor *d*. The musical plot of this section may express continuous mental transitions from desire to resignation. The climax of this section is in mm.62-5 which is the appearance of musical actor *a* with the *crescendo* followed by musical actor *d* in mm.66-7, which functions as the transition to the closing part of this section mm.68-74. Pianists may play the entire section in the dynamic of *forte* to express the conflict between musical actor *a* and musical actor *d*. Also, pianists may emphasize the repeated accompaniment in the left hand in mm.62-5 with each first note accented and the melody in the right hand in mm.66-7 with each first note *sforzando*. Moreover, pianists may play the dynamic of *piano* in mm.68-71 to express the feeling of compromise and resignation and make a *crescendo* in mm.73-4 to imply the protagonist's urgent but unsuccessful desire.

Next appearance of musical actor *b* appears in m.78 which implies failure (compromise), so it is important to play *sforzando* and then suddenly *pianissimo* here to express the state of failure and to foretell music actor *d* which indicates the feeling of compromise and

resignation. It is interesting here to point out mm.82-85 the alternation between *crescendo* to *pianissimo* which may express the state of unwillingness, desire to try again, compromise, and resignation.

The next appearance of musical actor *b* and musical actor *c* is from mm.94-103. The measure 94 is the answer to the measure 95 and mm. 96-103 is the question and answer between musical actor *b* and musical actor *c*. Pianists may concentrate on the dynamic changes (*p-crescendo-f*) which depict the protagonist's uncertainty about success and his urgent desire.

The next appearance of musical actor *a* and musical actor *d* is in the development section from mm.112-141 which depicts the dialogue between two musical actors.

Generally speaking, the development section of the sonata from the early classical period usually stays in the contrast key. For instance, if it is a major key, it stays in the dominant key, whereas if it is a minor key, it stays in the relative major. However, the musical key of the development of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata modulates from F major to B-flat major, E-flat major, E-flat minor, C-flat minor, C minor, G-flat major and F-sharp major (Tovey, 1931, p.152-53). In the development section of the first movement, Beethoven may use frequent modulation as a way to create a kind of desire, hesitation, and uncertainty.

In mm.142-155, the music sharpens the relation between musical actor *a* and musical actor *d*, the function of two musical actors conforms to the structure of the sonata in which the composer lays out the principle musical ideas which are the concept of desire and resignation in the *Waldstein* sonata and modulate to different keys. Beethoven began to repeat trial and failure continuously. The dialogue between musical actor *a* and musical actor *d* implies that the protagonist has not found what he wants and is still exploring and pursuing.

The next appearance of musical actor *d* is in mm.167-170 which expresses the feeling of hesitation that is expressed by the latter three measures (mm.171-73), a variation of musical actor *a*, functioning as the transition to the recapitulation.

The analysis leaves out the recapitulation section.

In the coda, Beethoven presented all four musical actors in their original order of appearance from mm.295-302 in which he expressed a transition of feeling between desire and resignation. Listeners may feel the possibility of sublimation from the auditory sense of the final appearance of musical actor *d* which gradually proceeds to the higher register in mm.300-02.

### Musical Actors in the Second Movement

The second movement is an *Introduzione* and musical actors presented in the first movement also appear in the second movement. The structure of this movement is in A-B-A form (see Table 4).

#### The structure of the second movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

Three Parts	Measures
First Part	mm.1-9
Second Part	mm.9-17
Third Part	mm.17-28

Table 4. The structure of the second movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

The current study provides a summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the second movement (see Table 5).



**Summary of the Appearance of each musical actor in the second movement**

Actors	Measures
Actor <i>a</i>	m.1; m.3; m.5; m.9; m.17; m.19; mm.21-3; m.28
Actor <i>b</i>	Fifth and sixth beat of m.10; Fifth and sixth beat of m.12
Actor <i>c</i>	First four beats of m.10; m.11; First four beats of m.12; m.13
Actor <i>d</i>	m.8; m.16; mm.23-4

Table 5. Summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the second movement

The second movement begins with musical actor *a* in mm.1-9 and it is a monologue. It is a standard 4+4-bar phrase. The second movement also includes four musical actors and expresses the concepts of desire, compromise, and sublimation. There is a dialogue between music actor *b* and music actor *c* in mm.10-6. Pianists may imagine two kinds of intonation here: m.10 is vocal soloist (music actor *c*); m.11 is orchestral interlude (music actor *b*), m.12 is vocal soloist (music actor *c*); and m.14 is orchestral interlude music actor *b*). It is not difficult to find that Beethoven certainly used opera and vocal music as inspiration through the dialogue between musical actor *b* and musical actor *c*.

The end of the second movement is special. It has fermata on the last note G with *sforzando*, and the dynamic is *decrescendo* but sudden *sforzando* in fermata G. One of the reasons Beethoven wrote this ending is that this movement served as the introduction of the third movement and the final note G was the bridge between the second movement and the third movement. Another reason was that the second movement ended with a descending scale, and it stopped on a conflicting sound that needed to be resolved. Here, the interaction of musical actor *d* and musical actor *a* might express desire and resignation. The execution of fermata was rarely used in Beethoven's piano sonatas and Beethoven may point out the possibility of sublimation through this fermata G.

**Musical Actors in the Third Movement**

The third movement is a *Rondo* and musical actors presented at the beginning of the first movement also appear in the third movement. The structure of this movement is in A-B-A-C-A-B'-Coda (see Table 6).

**The structure of the second movement of the *Waldstein* sonata**

Three Parts	Measures
First Part	mm.1-62
1st transition	mm.63-113
repeated first theme	mm.114-175
Second Part	mm.176-220
development section	mm.221-312
Third Part	mm.313-344
codetta or closing theme	mm. 345-402
Coda	mm.401-543

Table 6. The structure of the second movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

The current study provides a summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the third movement (see Table 7).

### Summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the third movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

Actors	Measures
Actor <i>a</i>	mm.1-24; mm.31-50; mm.62-69: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.251-268; mm.296-300; mm.344-378: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.403-411; mm.419-426; mm.427-440: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.465-484: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.486-543 (sublimation)
Actor <i>b</i>	mm.56-8; mm.60-1; mm.271-72; mm.275-76; mm.279-286; the second beat of m.305 to the first beat of m.306; the second beat of m.307 to the first beat of m.308; mm.400-02; mm.378-385: a dialogue between musical actor <i>c</i> and musical actor <i>b</i> ; mm.442-460: a dialogue between musical actor <i>c</i> and musical actor <i>b</i>
Actor <i>c</i>	m.55; m.59; mm.269-270; mm.273-74; mm.277-78; m.301 to the first beat of m.305; the second beat of m.306 to the first beat of m.307; mm.308-09; mm.378-385: a dialogue between musical actor <i>c</i> and musical actor <i>b</i> ; mm.442-460: a dialogue between musical actor <i>c</i> and musical actor <i>b</i>
Actor <i>d</i>	mm.29-30; mm.51-4; mm.62-9: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.287-294; mm.344-378: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.386-394; mm.427-440: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i> ; mm.465-484: a dialogue between musical actor <i>a</i> and musical actor <i>d</i>

Table 7. Summary of the appearance of each musical actor in the third movement of the *Waldstein* sonata

Most listeners' first impressions of the third movement are that it is not related to the first two movements in terms of sonata structure, except that it is connected to the second movement in form. However, the function of this movement is to answer the unresolved uncertainty left by the first two movements. The third movement starts with four musical actors in the same order as those at the beginning of the first movement. The appearance of musical actor *a* expresses the protagonist's urgent desire, the appearance of musical actor *d* expresses resignation, and the appearance of repeated notes may imply sublimation. However, Beethoven did not solve the uncertainty aroused by the first two movements at the beginning of this movement because if listeners listen carefully to the structure of this movement, it is a form of *rondo* and the protagonist might go through the feeling of desire and resignation several times until he finally achieves the real sublimation.

The pedal use of the third movement also indicates the protagonist's wish for sublimation. From the beginning of this movement, Beethoven marked the sustained pedal to keep the pedal depressed for seven measures which rarely appeared before. The pedal marking and the musical texture of the third movement remind listeners of another symbolic meaning of musical narrativity which is "pastoral style". Beethoven often used "pastoral style" in his piano sonatas, symphonies, and concertos to express the feeling of sublimation. Some referential examples include Piano Sonata No.15 in D Major 'Pastoral', Op.28, Symphony No.6 in F Major 'Pastoral', Op.68, and the third movement of Piano Concerto No.4 in G Major, Op.58. The characteristics of "pastoral style" include major key, slow harmonic

progression, sustained bass, long pedal, and *pianissimo* dynamic. The beginning of the third movement includes characteristics of the “pastoral style”.

Four musical actors appear in their original order in the coda of the third movement. The musical actor *a* appears in mm.403-411 and mm.419-426, then Beethoven expresses the alternation between desire and resignation through the dialogue between musical actor *a* and musical actor *d* in mm.427-440 and mm.465-484, and finally achieved the sublimation in mm.486-543. Beethoven used the “pastoral style” to express the concept of sublimation as the result of the dilemma aroused from trials of desire and resignation which lasted for two-thirds of the entire third movement.

The reason why the author of this study interprets the protagonist as achieving sublimation rather than the perfect solution or the victory over his dilemma is because the concepts of desire, compromise, and sublimation involved in this sonata are retrieved from Goethe's novels: *Faust*, *Wilhelm Meister*, and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. The endings of protagonists in these novels are usually not perfect and triumphant; however, one of the most important philosophies in these novels is that the protagonist has reached a higher state of sublimation (rebirth) after experience. The case is similar to Beethoven's life. As indicated in his “The Heiligenstadt Testament”, Beethoven had undergone the tragedy of deafness in his life. He wanted to overcome his deafness by stating in this document that: “I was ever eager to accomplish great deeds, but reflect now that for six years I have been in a hopeless case, made worse by ignorant doctors, yearly betrayed in the hope of getting better, finally forced to face the prospect of a permanent malady whose cure will take years or even prove impossible” (Geck, 1976). The document indicated that Beethoven had to surrender and live with deafness. Beethoven said in his “The Heiligenstadt Testament”: “But only Art held back; for, ah, it seemed unthinkable for me to leave the world forever before I had produced all that I felt called upon to produce” (Geck, 1976), which implied that Beethoven had achieved a state of sublimation instead of victory of overcoming his deafness. The final coda of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata depicts Beethoven's mental change from a desire to overcome deafness, through resignation to accept fate, to finally achieve a state of sublimation to live for art vividly. The last few chords are reflections of the first appearance of musical actor *a* (ascending thirds) at the beginning of the first movement and they imply the answer of desire which is his achievement of sublimation.

Beethoven started his *Waldstein* sonata with the musical actor *a* and ended the sonata with the musical actor *a* too, therefore the significance can be imagined. Pianists may not use overly exaggerated body gestures when they play the last three chords because the result of sublimation in the end is not the final end. Beethoven used an upward harmonic progression motion to express the sublimation at the end of this sonata.

### Significance

The current study of musical narrativity is beneficial to the expressive performance of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata. One of the recurrent themes in treatises on music is that music is expressive (Davies, 1994) and “a musician cannot move others unless he too is moved” (Bach, 1778, p.152). Therefore, it is essential for pianists to interpret the expressive meaning and musical plots while practicing Beethoven's piano sonatas. Expression plays an important role in Beethoven's music. Beethoven wrote performance instructions and programmatic descriptions for different piano sonatas and he demanded the right interpretation. Beethoven's pupil Ferdinand Ries once said in his *Biographical Reminiscences of Beethoven* that:

If I made a mistake in passages or missed notes and leaps which he frequently wanted emphasized he seldom said anything; but if I was faulty in expression, in crescendos, etc., or in the character of the music, he grew angry because, as he said, the former was accidental while the latter disclosed lack of knowledge, feeling or attentiveness. (Ries, 1838, p.16)

As a pupil of Beethoven, Carl Czerny (1791-1857) provided a long list of words (see Table 8) in his *Pianoforte-Schule*, Op.500. The list can be used to express the musical effects of Beethoven's musical compositions and to indicate how rich Beethoven's musical expressions were (Czerny, 1839).

#### Czerny's summary of expression marks in Beethoven's musical compositions

unruly	peaceful	melancholy
serious	capriciously	speaking
tragic	tender	elegant
teasing	lively	graceful
weighty	touching	merry
fantastic	Chorale-like	stormy
humorous	witty	mournful
pathetic	light	shrill
lulling	gentle	murmuring
firm	delicate	agitated
intimate	good-natured	energetic
bewitching	charming	grand
determined	jocose	mischievous
fleeting	dramatic	profound
complaining	powerful	resolute
religious	virile	serene
brilliant	flattering	naive
joyous	exalted	dreamy
strong	sparkling	lofty
roaring	marked	heroic
singing	dejected	unaffected
pious	simple	sensitive
noisy	expressively	

Table 8. Czerny's summary of expression marks in Beethoven's musical compositions

When teaching, Beethoven often used analogies from life to provide imagination, thereby sharing with his pupils the musical images that inspired his creation. Schindler said that one of Beethoven's motivations for revising his piano sonatas was to tell performers the implied musical meaning behind them (Greenberg, 2005). Therefore, vivid expression plays a vital role in the performance of Beethoven's piano sonatas and the analysis of musical narrativity can provide the basis for vivid expression. The significance of this study is to provide a performance guide of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata in a new scope of view to foster expressive performance.

### Conclusion and Suggestions

Beethoven's musical innovations in his piano sonatas have their analogues in the literature. Among them are the Greek classics, William Shakespeare, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Beethoven recognizes and exploits the narrative potential in the structures of sonata form. Although most classical piano sonatas are not program music and without referential titles, they still have musical narrativity. James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy believed that absolute music, especially sonata-form music, was narrative and sonata-form music could be perceived as a literary form, having an exposition, development, and recapitulation, similar to the literature (Hepokoski & Darcy, 2006). In a traditional classical sonata, starting from the exposition (usually the primary theme), the structure and harmony go through diverse musical adventures and lead to a generic conclusion of resolution and confirmation. Hepokoski and Darcy regarded this generative course as similar to human action and believed that "A sonata is a metaphorical representation of a perfect human action. It is a narrative 'action' because it drives through a vectored sequence of energized events toward a clearly determined, graspable goal, the ESC (essential structural closure)" (Hepokoski & Darcy, 2011, p.252). Ernst Cassirer believed that music as a whole may be considered as one of the "symbolic forms" of man, and it can be studied as a kind of profound metaphor for the process of life itself (Cassirer, 1925). Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata can be perceived as a masterpiece of music assimilating Goethe's literature concepts from the perspective of musical actors. Moreover, the assimilation of the concept of the literature and the analysis of the interaction of musical actors in Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata may provide musical narrativity and musical plots that are worth studying and essential to vivid performances. From the analysis of musical narrativity and the interaction of musical actors, pianists may grasp in a logical way the core of the *Waldstein* sonata and therefore have a more thorough understanding and provide more vivid interpretations of this piano sonata.

A good musical narrativity analysis can point out the origin of where music retrieves from and develops and its musical plot. Some musical narrativity comes from Beethoven's other music genres, for instance, art songs and symphonies, and may point out the intertextuality between musical compositions and provide opportunities for future studies. Beethoven's significance is that he assimilated literature and philosophy into his musical compositions. An analysis of musical narrativity may study and discuss the implied concepts of literature behind the studied work and thus enrich the performer's understanding. One of the most fascinating aspects of the analysis of musical narrativity for most pianists is that such an analysis can be perfectly integrated with practice and performance and therefore provide numerous insightful inspirations for performances.

In conclusion, there are numerous performance studies of Beethoven's musical compositions. However, although composers, musicians, and musicologists all study Beethoven, their studies of Beethoven are relatively not comprehensive. For instance, singers may not study symphonies, and pianists may not study string quartets. However, as the current study indicates that there is intertextuality in Beethoven's musical compositions and there is a connection between Goethe's literature and Beethoven's music. Therefore, the combination of possibilities for detailed analysis and varied interpretation is one of the great strengths of theories of musical narrativity. It is also a feature of particular interest to performers, who may see it as a way of articulating their interpretations and deepening their understanding of works over time. The author of this study summarizes the two rules in studying musical narrativity. First, it is beneficial for pianists and musical scholars to pay attention to the representative musical motives including melody, harmony, rhythm

structure, various expression marks, and various marks that may express the composer's direct and indirect musical ideas. In addition, pianists and musical scholars also need to concentrate on the comparison of the musical contrast. Such comparisons can be two musical motives, two harmonies, or two rhythmic patterns, and the range can be as small as a few tones, a few bars, a few phrases, to as large as a few sections, a few movements or a few musical compositions of similar musical style. It is beneficial for pianists and musical scholars to pay attention to these two rules so that they may discover many implied musical ideas which may further provide a new understanding and interpretation of musical compositions.

Future researchers may study Beethoven's innovations in piano sonatas from the perspective of musical gesture or intertextuality. Pianists and scholars may study the way Beethoven wrote the transition, when he started using pianissimo, hairpin notation, crescendos and decrescendos. These are the characteristics that distinguish Beethoven from his predecessors, and if these characteristics can be found and studied in the score and applied to the performance, pianists will have a better understanding of the piano sonata they are going to practice and perform.

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