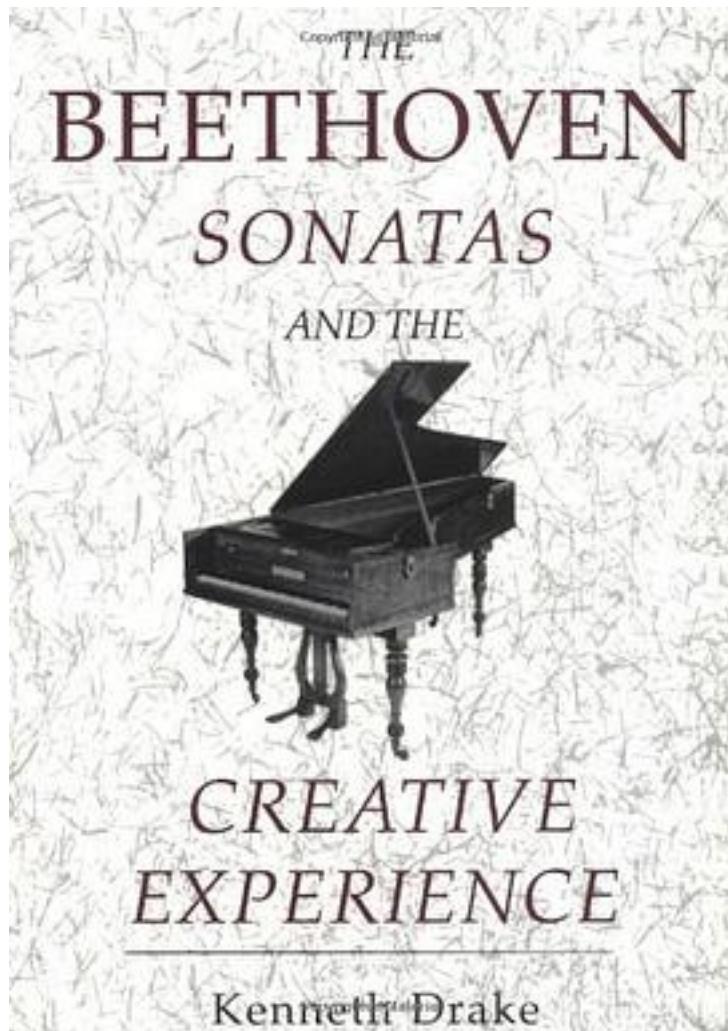


The Beethoven Sonatas and the Creative Experience



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Instead of following the traditional chronological order in studying the Beethoven piano sonatas, Kenneth Drake places them in categories that reflect certain qualities of the music. Approaching the sonatas as an interpreter's search for meaning, he begins with the Classic composers' expressive treatment of the keyboard - such as touches, articulation, line, colour, silence, and the pacing of musical ideas. He then analyses individual Beethoven sonatas, exploring such qualities as motivic development, colour, philosophic overtones, and technical facility. Juxtaposing sonatas of like characteristics, regardless of where they fall in Beethoven's oeuvre, Drake places the very early "Op. 2 No. 2" and the monumental "Op. 101" in the chapter entitled Line and Space. Under the heading 'Descriptive Music', he discusses "Op. 81a and Op. 13" under 'Motivic Development', "Op. 2 No. 1, Op. 57", and "Op. 110" and under 'Movement as Energized Colour', "Op. 53". The chapter entitled 'Quasi una Fantasia' encompasses not only the "Sonata Op. 27 No. 2", to which Beethoven gave that title, but also "Sonatas Op. 26" and "Op. 27 No. 1". Drake pursues the emotional and interpretative implications of such elements as rhythm, dynamics, slurs, harmonic effects, and melodic development. He provides hundreds of musical examples and points out the specific measures in which Beethoven so skilfully employed these compositional devices. Kenneth Drake regards the Beethoven sonatas as products of an inner necessity that pianists share with the composer. He encourages musicians to exercise intuition and independence of thought in studying the '32' and to seek no just performance skills but logical conclusions about ideas and relationships within the score.

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