

Beethoven - Piano Concerto No.1 Sonata No. 26 (1990)

Written by bluesever

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Concerto No. 1 For Piano and Orchestra in C Major, Op. 15 1. *I. Allegro con brio* 16:59 2. *II. Largo* 10:59 3. *III. Rondo: Allegro scherzando* 9:17

Sonata No. 26 in E-flat Major for Piano, Op. 81a "Les Adieux"

4. *I. Les Adieux. Adagio Allegro* 7:34 5. *II. L'absence. Andante espressivo* 3:25 6. *III. Le retour. Vivacissimamente* 6:03

Rudolf Serkin – piano Philadelphia Orchestra Eugene Ormandy – conductor (CBS Masterworks – Great Performances 70)

Besides my dear wife's wonderful playing, this is the best sounding Beethoven piano I have ever heard! The first few times I listened to the concerto piece I thought that there were at least three - four hands playing. The tone of the right hand side of the instrument is like crystal, and the looming murmur on the left is like lead. Each black and white that gets touched will clearly explain this to you as you listen. The orchestra is tops as well, with the airy piping of the fife (flute, that is) and the sometimes actual audible sound of strings being strummed from north to south with the tips of fingers (thumb or other I cannot tell) is something to look forward to at each listen. This is powerful, lively, and real playing in hitherto unmatched sound production (even the tape sounds good played real loud in your average ten-year-old car on stock-stereo speakers).

The sonata is rightly titled "The Good-bye," ("Les Adieux") and not "The 'Tragic' Good-bye" It is that morose, but playful music with which most of us are acquainted by way of good-byes (this one is as sad as usual). The piece is recorded live, but because of the mature and articulated playing of Mr. Rudolph, the clear striking sound of the keys corresponds to that of the studio recorded Concerto No 1. If you listen closely, you can hear Serkin breathing. Altogether superb. --- William D. Sell (United States of America)

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