





possibilities here, and in contrast to transcriptions by some others, I'm going to argue for the following reading of the opening:

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The first staff contains measures 1 through 8. The second staff, starting with a measure rest (9), contains measures 9 through 16. The melody consists of quarter notes and half notes, with some accidentals (sharps and naturals) appearing in measures 5, 10, and 15. The notation is clear and legible.

This is eminently compatible with the sketch, though if your only goal were to transcribe Beethoven's scrawl as faithfully as possible you'd likely end up with alternative reading, probably including an Eb in place of the D in measure 5. My goal here has been to decipher what Beethoven might have actually had in mind. The sketch is the focus, but its messiness leaves considerable room for ambiguity, and there's a lot of other, surrounding musical evidence to be had both within the piece (in the motive discussed above), and elsewhere in Beethoven's oeuvre. As the 2/4 theme's parallel with the *Pathétique* sonata indicates, and as many commentators have noted, Beethoven does seem to have been interested in re-using the same material across works at this time. We turn now to that surrounding evidence.

### **Within the piece ...**

We begin within the piece – indeed, within this single page of sketch material and the potentially motivic outlining of fourths. As discussed, the Trio proceeds by filling in fourths from 1–5, 5–1, and 1–4 successively; this already connects nicely to this reading of the Scherzo, which centres on successive leaps of a fourth.

Zooming out, we see a strong connection here to the thematic basis of the opening of the symphony's 2/4 Andante theme (discussed above – the 'Pathétique' Sonata one) and its characteristic 3-2-5 motif. This 3-2-5 shape is evident on those specific scale degrees in measures 4–6 of this scherzo (again, as transcribed above) and is also naturally present throughout that opening, which is built on the same figure several time, in a 'sequence' (a kind of musical tessellation pattern). This Scherzo theme could thus be thought of as emerging backwards out of the 2/4 theme via a little sequential 'fortspinning' (composing out) as the musical term usual goes, or rather in this case, 'rückspinnung' (composing backwards!).

In short, the dramatic scherzo seems still to adopt the opening motif (the one requiring 'resolution'), while the paired Trio (ever an opportunity for reducing tension) turns those fourths into a conjunct melodic line that leads more towards the 'resolved' finality of the 3-2-1 finale. This makes the Scherzo-Trio pair a great for the centre of this multi-movement work and motivic process.

### **... and between works**

What's more, the figure is also highly redolent of certain other, highly significant, late works of the period. Indeed, this very pattern seems to recur in every possible variant of this configuration. Here are some examples that we'll go through in turn. All the fourths are identified by brackets:

Our scherzo (10th Symphony)

... inverted (9th Symphony)

op.110 Sonata

... inverted

Es Muss Sein!

Firstly, the slow movement theme of the 9<sup>th</sup> symphony (top right of the figure above) also alternates between fourths and steps in a pattern which is the inversion of our Scherzo and in the configuration made (in)famous by Pachelbel's Canon.

Are these inverse relationships credible? Absolutely! Witness the highly relevant case of the op.110 Sonata on the second line of the figure above. The last movement features two fugal passages based a common subject which is presented 'straight' at the first time of asking (m.27ff.) ...

Allegro ma non troppo

... and then in inversion (m.137ff.) ...

The difference here is that the alternating interval is now a third, with a sequence in steps, rather than the other way round. With that small change we also integrate our old friend, the 'Es Muss Sein!' (3-5-2, 2-4-1) as shown on the last system of the figure. Could it be that these motives are connected? It could be!

Motivic unity has been a long-standing focus of Beethoven scholarship and many scholars have pointed specifically to the op.110 sonata as key example of unity across a multi-movement work (Dahlhaus, Kinderman). Cooper references these thematic connections within the op.110 in the

context of his discussing those in the 10<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Yet this is the first time that the Scherzo has found a place in all of this: both within the potential motivic trajectory of the 10<sup>th</sup> symphony, and within this wider nexus of significant, late works. Cooper may have overlooked it partly because of his primary interest in the first movement, but also partly because it doesn't fit his transcription. So it all comes back to that first process of transcribing, even though it might take a thousand words to make the case for a single note!