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## Artur Schnabel Beethoven Piano Sonatas, Vol. 5

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"How characteristic is that gruff but musically refusal in Op. 27 No. 2 of all undue solemnity, all notion of romantic, moonlit effusion. Such robust eloquence will hardly appeal to those who long for a prolonged gaze into the infinite (the first movement is over almost before you realize it), but the balance of sense and sensibility provides a superbly authoritative alternative. Of course, there are moments when Schnabel's impetuosity, his crabbed rather than fluent resolution of purely pianistic problems, can cause momentary confusion. As the opening Allegro of the Pastoral Sonata approaches its climax he loses his grip on the lethead quavers, and in the whirling finale of Op. 31 No. 3, altogether too many corners are taken on two wheels. Yet the odd staccato phrase or telescoped rhythm pales into oblivion when you consider Schnabel's overall achievement, his salty brio and the profound eloquence of his slow movements...

His technique, while undeniably erratic, was, in the words of his distinguished student, Claude Frank, "so brilliant"; and every page pulses with a vividness and rough-hewn vitality that are somehow pure Schnabel, pure Beethoven... Time and again he wears his immense learning lightly and in, say, the dazzling wit and repartee of Op. 31 No. 1 the dust of ages seems to fall away before one's very eyes and ears."

*Bil. Gramophone magazine, November 1994*

### Recording and restoration notes

This set of sonatas has presented one of the greater challenges in the series so far, with the difficulty of reconciling the sensitivity and gentleness Schnabel brings to one of the most famous sonata movements in the classical repertoire - the first movement of No. 14 which inspired the "Moonlight" epithet in 1952 from the music critic Ludwig Krelstab, who compared it to real moonlight shimmering upon Lake Lucerne - with the recording of it.

The problem here was of excessive surface noise. Recorded the day before the second and third movements, it seems years apart from them in technical terms, and took up much of the overall remastering time in my efforts to reduce background noise as much as possible without harming the music, such that it could be finally brought into the foreground and heard properly and clearly, something only now possible to this degree with new restoration tools unavailable to my predecessors, thanks to the onward march of digital remastering technology.

Thereafter the restoration of each movement went ahead reasonably smoothly. Except for some exceptionally quiet, single note passages, the pitch stability achieved using Capstan software on Schnabel's Bechstein is astounding, and only occasionally does a slight surface noise "fizz" remind the listener of the vintage of these exceptional recordings.  
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Full Programme Notes can be found online at [www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)  
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# BETHOVEN

## PIANO SONATAS VOLUME 5

No. 14 in G Sharp Minor, Op. 27 No. 2  
"MOONLIGHT"

No. 15 in D Major, Op. 28  
"PASTORALE"

No. 16 in G Major, Op. 31 No. 1

### ARTUR SCHNABEL

RECORDED 1933 & 1935

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BEETHOVEN PIANO SONATAS VOLUME 5 - Nos. 14-16  
ARTUR SCHNABEL

## Beethoven Piano Sonatas Volume Five

### BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 2 *"Moonlight"*

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio sostenuto (4:59)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Allegretto (2:15)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Presto agitato (6:39)

Recorded 10 & 11 April 1933, issued as HMV DB 2089-90  
Matrix Numbers 2B.6602-04. All 1st takes

### BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata No. 15 in D major, Op. 28 *"Pastorale"*

- 4 1st mvt. - Allegro (7:18)
- 5 2nd mvt. - Andante (7:21)
- 6 3rd mvt. - Scherzo - Allegro vivace (2:06)
- 7 4th mvt. - Rondo - Allegro non troppo (4:38)

Recorded 3 February 1933, issued as HMV DB 1953-55  
Matrix Numbers 2B.2674-79. Takes 4, 3, 4, 3, 4, 3

### BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata No. 16 in G major, Op. 31 No. 1

- 8 1st mvt. - Allegro vivace (5:52)
- 9 2nd mvt. - Adagio grazioso (12:34)
- 10 3rd mvt. - Rondo - Allegretto - Presto (5:34)

Recorded 5 & 6 November 1935, issued as HMV DB 3154-57  
Matrix Numbers 2EA.2499-2505. Takes 1, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 3A

**Artur Schnabel** piano

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BEETHOVEN PIANO SONATAS VOLUME 5 - Nos. 14-16  
ARTUR SCHNABEL

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on  
photographs of **Artur Schnabel**

Total duration: **59:16**

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