

Performing Arts

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Recordings

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BEETHOVEN

Complete works for cello and piano

David Finckel, cello; Wu Han, piano

ArtistLed

The Emerson String Quartet recently recorded the complete Beethoven cycle in Aspen, a factor that undoubtedly led its cellist Finckel to return to the new Joan and Irving Harris Concert Hall there with well-considered, stunningly performed accounts of the composer's substantial cello music.

Wu Han, the cellist's wife, is the stylishly bright, pertinent pianist in collaborations that tell us much about Beethoven and perfectly meshed instrumentalism. The playing of both is fully articulate and expressive, light but by no means frail in sound, and robust in spirit.

The five sonatas and three sets of variations composing this self-produced project are ordered chronologically, and the accompanying booklet includes the artists' own notes on the music, generously dotted with timing references to specific moments on the recordings.

—JOHN HENKEN