Methodology

Analysis of beat durations was carried out using the Sonic Visualiser\(^1\) software to map inter-onset intervals.

Beat onsets were entered manually during playback of each recording (by ‘tapping along’) and then adjusted visually to align as accurately as possible with beat onsets by observing the waveform. Inter-onset interval values were then exported to Microsoft Excel, and graphs generated from the data.

These graphs have an informative purpose from two perspectives:

1. to show the degree of tempo flexibility employed by a player in a single performance
2. in comparison with each other, to show similarities and differences in use of tempo flexibility by various performers

Reading these graphs

Here we can see tempo flexibility in my new recording of Mozart’s Violin Concerto No. 5 (first movement) compared with that of Marie Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). Although my performance is at a faster tempo overall, parity of approach to tempo manipulation is immediately obvious.

---

Mozart Violin Concerto No. 5 first movement (from A) - Cadenza
by Joachim (Milsom, 2009)

Mozart Violin Concerto No. 5 first movement (from A) - Cadenza
by Joachim (Soldat c.1928)