Beethoven in love

Returning to Lenox in the wake of last season’s successful production of “None But The Lonely Heart: The Strange Story of Tchaikovsky and Madame von Meck,” the New York City-based Ensemble for the Romantic Century — an outfit founded by pianist/writer Eve Wolf that combines theater with chamber music — is staging a new work, “Beethoven Love Elegies,” through Aug. 3 at the Stables Theater on the grounds of Edith Wharton’s estate, The Mount.

“Tragicomic” is a term Beethoven biographers might use to summarize the myriad amorous forays of the young composer during his early years in Vienna; and “tragicomic” is the term Wolf has applied to her script, which — based on Beethoven’s letters and diaries and accounts by his contemporaries — details various of the composer’s ardent (if equivocal) entanglements with his aristocratic female students. The production features selections from relevant works produced by Beethoven during the period, including the “Moonlight” Sonata, the “Ghost” Trio and some rarely perform lieder that chart his inner emotional drama.

“It is moving to witness Beethoven at this younger age, when he was boisterous, flirtatious and sociable, and then to see his gradual descent into isolation when his deafness became more extreme,” says Wolf. “He was very spiritual and never lost hope, in spite of this adversity. The music reveals his struggle.”

The show is directed by Don Sanders — known locally as artistic director of the Holyoke-based Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts — who has worked with the Ensemble for the Romantic Century since 2005.

“As Director of Theatrical Production I devise the theatrical setting and work with integrating the musicians into the production,” says Sanders. “Musicians in ERC shows aren’t accompanists or background music. They — and the way they play the music — are directly influenced by the actors. What makes ERC events special is they are individually conceived as fully staged theatrical concerts.”

Remaining performances are Fri., July 25 and Aug. 1, and Sat., July 26 and Aug. 2, at 8:30 p.m.; Wed., July 30, 8:30; and Sun., July 27 and Aug. 3, at 4 p.m. $55. 800-838-3006, romanticcentury.org

— Dan DeNicola