Felix Diergarten. *"Jedem Ohre klingend": Formprinzipien in Haydns Sinfonieexpositionen*
Laaber: Laber Verlag, 2012. ISBN 9783890076010. 235 pp. €890

Spanning five decades and over 100 works, Joseph Haydn's corpus of music for orchestra spans a tumultuous time in the history of musical form. Imagine you are given the task of analyzing this body of work while also taking into account the various theoretical, historical, and biographical impulses that even today continue to shape its image. Such is the burden that faces Felix Diergarten in his book *"Jedem Ohre klingend": Formprinzipien in Haydns Sinfonieexpositionen*. With its cogent arguments and an innovative structure, Diergarten's text is successful in most of its endeavours.

The popularity of Haydn's symphonies—especially those written in the *Sturm und Drang* style and for the audiences of London—explains their role as a staple in both the concert hall and the university library. Yet apart from a few isolated monographs, which either examine the genre as a whole, such as Ethan Haimo's *Haydn's Symphonic Forms*, or focus intensely on one work, such as James Webster's *Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony and the Idea of the Classical Style*, the bulk of these symphonies have resisted in-depth studies. Wisely, Diergarten combines Haimo's and Webster's strategies: he surveys the entire corpus while also choosing to focus on works from the earliest and most misunderstood era, what he describes as the pre–*Sturm und Drang* period, which equates roughly to the 1760s.

Diergarten's strongest asset is his flexible yet careful approach to the various binary oppositions that dot this musical landscape: Diergarten not only elucidates both sides of each opposition—whether the juxtaposition of "norms" and "deviations," so prevalent in both traditional and new *Formenlehren*, or the evolution from an *interpunktisch* to a *thematisch* conception of musical form—but also brings to light the tension between them. As Diergarten writes:

> The use of different analytical approaches . . . is due to the belief that certain traditional lines of the theory of form, which are distinguished here as the "punctuated" and the "thematic" senses of form, exhibit in their historical genealogy a special affinity for the repertoire treated here and thus a special aptitude for describing the phenomena treated here.

Diergarten's approach is one that seamlessly blends the synchronic and the diachronic, with close readings of specific expositions and their theoretical models as well as general overviews of compositional trends in Haydn's symphonies.

The book consists of two main parts, the first of which ("Zur Genealogie der Formenlehre") investigates the development of musical processes in the eighteenth century. The most remarkable aspect of this discussion is Diergarten's revival of the *interpunktisch* (punctuated) conception of musical form: given its prominence in the *Kompositionslehre* of the eighteenth century, punctuation as a foundation of musical form is sadly underrepresented in the English-language literature. Diergarten attributes its demise to the rising prominence of organicist tendencies:

> While the punctuated theories of form of the eighteenth century invariably conceptualize the construction of musical compositions through the use of metaphors from the field of rhythm and language, in the nineteenth century, new metaphors appear: although the lower levels of the form (the construction of the themes) are often still described in "punctuated" terms, the guiding metaphors in the description of large forms are borrowed from the spheres of "life," "organism," and "drama."

Diergarten promotes this punctuated perspective as a solution for those works—especially in the first third of Haydn's compositional career—that resist a simple analysis under later, more thematically driven theories of form. The roots of this new flowering of thematicism are also linked to another binary opposition, one that Diergarten characterizes in terms of the competing

linked to another binary opposition, one that Diergarten characterizes in terms of the competing desires for plurality (seen in the dominant structure of the Baroque period, the ritornello form) and simplicity (embodied in the Galant's new approach to the musical surface). This evolution from a punctuated to a thematic description of musical processes in the theoretical writings of the eighteenth century is a prominent, successful, and necessary theme in the methodological part of Diergarten's text, and I will return to this aspect of it below.

In the methodological chapter, Diergarten also employs a double-pronged approach wherein he invokes the use of "historically informed" analysis as a counterbalance to the overwhelming presence of norms and deviations in today's analytical and theoretical writings. Given its foundation as a teaching tool, any *Formenlehre* necessarily introduces the dichotomy between norms and deviations. Plumbing this relationship requires a sensitive and careful hand, which Diergarten provides in an analytical approach that prizes the role of the listener. Thus, the local context of a potential deviation must factor into its designation as such. Diergarten writes that "significantly, large form and local context go together frequently, especially when large-scale 'deviations' are marked by local effects." Given the focus of this book, it is no coincidence that James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory* is frequently mentioned in the body of the text. Diergarten rightly asserts that Hepokoski and Darcy's concern for establishing a single standard for composers of a generation hinders their theory; indeed, Diergarten writes, "what is a 'deviation' for a piano sonata in Esterházy can be a 'norm' for a Symphony in Paris." Diergarten also cites Markus Neuwirth, who writes:

> With lesser-known *Kleinmeister*, the typical reaction of many analysts would be to assume a flaw on the part of the composer rather than witty intentions. This suggests that often the analytical assessment is implicitly (or unconsciously) guided by knowledge of the identity of the composer.

This system of norms and deviations, which developed in the nineteenth century in the hands of A. B. Marx as a by-product of the canonization of masterworks, carries with it an inherent imbalance that favours the norm over the deviation. It should be obvious, then, why Haydn's works are yoked to such adjectives as "humorous," "witty," and "unusual." The challenge remains in uncovering what makes these works original and masterful.

The second part of the book ("Die Formen der Sinfonieexpositionen nach chronologischen Gruppen") analyzes Haydn's symphonies in both global and local contexts. Diergarten's main purpose here is the illustration of *interpunktische* musical processes in Haydn's early symphonies. He does so by drawing on Heinrich Christoph Koch's description of "four punctuated principle parts, or four resting points of the spirit," according to which an exposition progresses through full and half cadences in the tonic and dominant keys, respectively. But Diergarten notes a "central feature" of Haydn's early expositions that diverges from Koch's *Hauptform*, that of a full close in the dominant key preceding a later half close in the same key. Although this cadential scheme conflicts with a sonata-form paradigm that Hepokoski and Darcy might describe as "linear," it is justified by the subsequent appearance of contrasting episodes, often coloured by a "fall" into the minor mode. Diergarten's analysis of these early works makes clear that these features, which appear unusual or divergent from our perspective, only seem to be outliers from the perspective of our ahistorical models: he writes, "The freedom and unpredictability of the individual parts in Haydn's early symphonies is not just a deficient precursor of later, 'logical' and stringent' forms."

Diergarten's interdisciplinary approach reinforces the analysis of these early works. After noting that all of the Eisenstadt symphonies (group 2), composed between 1763 and 1776, thwart the expectation of a typical *forte* opening, Diergarten goes on to theorize why Haydn might have made such a compositional choice; it seems, the author suggests, to have grown out of the same impulse that brought about the slow introduction or even an initial slow movement. But he adds that this development also marks a historical stage in the evolution of the symphony, from its initial phase as a noisy opening meant to cut through the din of a large audience to a later role more appropriate for the softer chamber orchestra at Eisenstadt. Thus, Diergarten contextualizes the phenomenon of *piano* openings using analytical, historical, and biographical means.

Similarly, Diergarten notes that the expositions in the third and fourth groups of Haydn's symphonies are characterized by a dramatic increase in overall length. Such structures are made possible by the repetition of musical material and the differentiation of formal functions, both of which Diergarten finds in the first movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 41. That movement

opens with an eighteen-measure "grand antecedent," which is subdivided into eight- and ten-measure phrases; the expected consequent phrase begins in m. 19 and "dissolves" into a transitional passage in mm. 27ff before concluding with a perfect authentic cadence in the new key as a "dissolving postscript" in m. 51. This description obscures the punctuated nature of the material (see, for example, the I:PAC in m. 8 and the I:HC in m. 18); indeed, Diergarten's precise purpose is to underscore the evolution from a punctuated conception of musical form to a thematic one. In doing so, he overlooks an important corollary of this transformation: with the emphasis on melodic material and repeated phrases, it is no coincidence that musical structures grew in length. Haydn's earliest symphonies are clearly built on the punctuated formal processes discussed above, yet within that foundation they incorporate a new and progressive thematic approach to musical composition.

By and large, Diergarten's description of Haydn's earliest symphonies throws into sharp relief the transformation of musical form in the eighteenth century. Whereas in the first part of his text Diergarten thoroughly examines contemporary theoretical writings, the second part sees him analyzing ten separate groups of Haydn's symphonies. Despite this shift in focus from theory to practice, Diergarten does not restrict himself to parsing the works within each group; instead, he complements his analysis with a variety of theoretical topics. These commentaries vary in length from long digressions bearing chapter-like status, which Diergarten calls *Exkurse*, to short asides that are paragraphs merely separated from the body of the text by a smaller line spacing. The most extensive *Exkurs* pertains to monothematicism, a special situation engendered by competing ideological commitments to unity and plurality. According to Diergarten, the monothematic sonata exposition emerged from ritornello form as a kind of foil to the contrast-rich style of the Italian music of the previous generation. Diergarten continues by delineating the various types of monothematicism that Haydn practiced, including among others the "P-based S," the "P-based C," and the continuous exposition. This discussion also features one of Diergarten's small asides, this one pertaining to the "new late theme" in Haydn's Symphony No. 91. The unique status of this exposition results not only from the restatement of the primary theme in both the tonic and new keys (E<flat> and B<flat>, respectively), but also an extremely unusual cadence in D<flat>. Essentially, these asides function in the same manner as block-quoted text and thereby fashion a meta-discourse in which Diergarten not only substantiates his points with examples but also introduces an unusual effect without sidetracking the larger discussion.

Compared with the nearly 30-page discussion of monothematicism, the remaining two *Exkurse* ("The Change of Texture in the 1770s" and "The Principle of Repetition") occupy a mere six pages combined, but both delineate vital aspects of Haydn's compositional process and its evolution to suit the new Galant style. The first shift is easily identified by looking at a score: continuously active bass lines were de rigueur in the Baroque period but were quickly supplanted by much simpler textures in the Galant. This change is easily seen in Haydn's symphonies. Diergarten writes: "[F]or Haydn, essentially none of the symphonies composed *before* 1767 contains even a single whole note in the bass." Whereas this first shift was textural, the second is syntactical. Drawing on the work of Eugene Wolf, Diergarten shows that repetition is the main driver for the gradual growth of phrases from the one- or two-measure motives to eight-measure sentences. The repetition of motives not only engenders a sense of unity that encompasses the entire grouping, but also creates a higher level of hypermeter. In both cases, Diergarten places responsibility on the listener as the ultimate arbiter for determining the definitions of grouping and hypermeter.

In the third *Exkurs*, Diergarten refers in passing to the concept of hypermeter—and, implicitly, to the concept of rhythm in general. Regrettably, this reference is one of the major disappointments in Diergarten's work: it reminds one of how seldom rhythm appears in the text, which often emphasizes the harmonic processes of musical form at the expense of other aspects —not only rhythm, but also texture and orchestration. The absence of rhythmic considerations is curious given the thorough and well-conceived approach Diergarten uses for analysis. Let us consider his discussion of Haydn's Symphony No. 65. Diergarten focuses on the harmonically ambivalent nature of this exposition by illustrating its unusual harmonic profile. For example, see the early incomplete, first-inversion secondary dominant chord in m. 4, and the rare appearance of the dominant minor in m. 32; yet this extraordinary exposition exploits rhythm—especially harmonic rhythm—to underscore its unusual nature too. Functioning as bookends, the

especially harmonic rhythm—to underscore its unusual nature too. Functioning as bookends, the noise-killer chords in mm. 1–2 and mm. 10–11 signal options of harmonic rhythm: initially, they essentially unfold as half notes; later, they conclude the opening phrase with quarter notes (mm. 10–11). This rhythmic acceleration spurs the following active *Fortspinnung* section, whose harmonic rhythm also increases, from one chord per measure to four, as it moves toward the cadence (m. 18). Diergarten asserts that the next phrase (mm. 19ff) recalls the first one melodically, yet it also manifests two important rhythmic differences: first, the harmonic rhythm doubles; and secondly, the melody is shifted onto the first beat of the measure. Both of these alterations funnel the exposition toward what Diergarten calls its "decisive turning point" in mm. 31–32. Just prior to this, however, Haydn once again uses rhythmic details to underscore the importance of this turning point: the harmonic rhythm consolidates its two-chord-per-measure pace, culminating in an extensive circle-of-fifths motion; in addition, the phrase drives toward its cadence with a renewed energy, recalling the dactylic rhythm of the previous *Fortspinnung* phrase. All of these factors combine to pull the listener audibly toward mm. 31–32, in which the key of the dominant (E major) *falls* to its parallel minor (E minor). It is no coincidence that such a dramatic moment is accompanied by a prolongation of the harmonic rhythm. This additional layer of rhythmic information only serves to enhance Diergarten's initial harmonic analysis.

While his decision to downplay rhythmic considerations does little to hinder reader comprehension, Diergarten makes certain choices that obscure his overarching goal. In the appendix, Diergarten includes a separate chapter ("Formskizzen") that uses a series of images and numbers to create graphic representations of each exposition. These "Outlines of Form" are helpful in portraying a global overview of the punctuated structure of the expositions, but they have a fatal design flaw that severely reduces their usefulness. Each outline displays two horizontal rows and a vertical column for each passage. The bottom row of Diergarten's chart ascribes a formal function to each phrase, whether it is a theme, a transition, or a *Fortspinnung* passage. The top row includes black and white squares for full and half cadences, respectively. Roman numerals account for the tonality, and arabic numerals define the length of each phrase. Let us consider once more Haydn's Symphony No. 65, this time from the perspective of the *Formskizze* (see p. 222). The first column is labelled "Theme (in the strings)" and describes a tonic phrase (I), ten bars in length (10), ending in a full cadence (black square).

In and of itself, this is an accurate depiction; but is it useful? If the first phrase ends in m. 10, then how does one account for the return of the noise-killer chords that overrun into m. 11? Furthermore, depicting the unusually ambivalent tonality of this passage with a single roman numeral seems to undo the meticulous work of the previous analysis. These problems are compounded as one travels forward in the outline: references to phrase length in the later columns bear no resemblance to their actual locations in the score. For example, the fourth column in the outline for Symphony No. 65 is labelled "*Fortspinnung*," with the arabic numeral 14. As such, the number "14" only tells the reader the *length* of the passage, not its location. If Diergarten had instead included the measure numbers (in this case, mm. 23–36), the reader would perceive both the length and location. Moreover, the reader must also count forward using the arabic numerals in all the columns to find the starting point of each passage—a cumbersome solution. That said, these flaws do not disqualify the utility of the outlines: they allow for a quick comparison of various criteria in symphony expositions of the same group, and they succinctly illustrate the unfolding of the harmonic shapes of these expositions.

Despite these few missteps, Diergarten's substantial contribution is a welcome addition to the body of research pertaining to Haydn's instrumental music. Diergarten's writing style is clear, concise, and never boring: his colourful writing is seen in the main title, which quotes a passage from Haydn's *Creation*, and the subheading of the first chapter ("Normal Deviations and Deviant Norms"). The book itself is handsomely adorned with a facsimile of Haydn's Symphony No. 102 on its cover, and the editorial choices, including the epigraphs, layout, and chapter headings, are the product of much consideration. A more abstract decision is made regarding Hepokoski and Darcy's aforementioned *Elements of Sonata Theory*: their text is a tool that can be wielded as either a cudgel or a scalpel, a decision with which every scholar must grapple. The ubiquity of Hepokoski and Darcy's work requires that theorists and musicologists alike reckon with its role in their own work, a task that Diergarten handles delicately. Indeed, this finesse is characteristic of Diergarten's approach to the many complicated juxtapositions identified throughout the book. Given its broad scope, this book is heartily recommended to all musicians curious about either

the symphonies of Joseph Haydn or the complex evolution of musical style in the late eighteenth century.

ALEX LUDWIG

About the author
Alex Ludwig is an Assistant Professor of the Liberal Arts at the Berklee College of Music. He holds a Ph.D. in Musicology from Brandeis University and a B.Mus. in String Performance from Boston University. His research interests include the chamber music of Joseph Haydn, the history of musical form, and popular music. Currently he serves as the Secretary of the Haydn Society of North America, a position he has held since 2011.