

Introduction

This first detailed study of the art and culture of arranging music in the early nineteenth century takes arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies as a case study. These canonical works are often considered to be paradigmatic musical works, touchstones for the development of the musical work that reside essentially in the complete orchestral versions left by the composer, which correspondingly demand fidelity to the composer's intentions in editing, performance, and study. The works are, thus, often studied in terms of their genesis – numerous sketch studies chart how Beethoven's works evolved into fully formed wholes. This book studies this central repertoire from a new angle, looking at their reception in the nineteenth century, rather than their making, and exploring the ways in which arrangements extended the works in terms of their meaning and accessibility. In doing so, the book takes part in current debates on the nature of the musical work, the status of the composer, and the roles of music, especially chamber music, in nineteenth-century society. It adds to our understanding of private-sphere music-making in this era, but with a new emphasis on arrangements rather than original works.

The book deals mainly, although not solely, with the early nineteenth century, partly because arrangements at that time were more varied in terms of genre, and partly because this was a crucial period of development regarding canon formation and the conception of the musical work. The degree to which musical arrangements shaped the social, musical, and ideological landscape in this era deserves considerably more attention than it has had. Beethoven's symphonies make ideal case studies here, helping us to explore a tension that can be observed between two different ways of experiencing classical music at this time. Early to mid-nineteenth-century composers, publishers, and writers erected influential ideals of Beethoven's symphonies, in particular, as untouchable masterpieces. Meanwhile, many and various arrangements of symphonies, principally for amateur performers, fostered diverse, 'hands-on' cultivation of the same works. The focus here is on arrangements of entire symphonies, rather than excerpts, which were certainly popular for 'hands-on' cultivation in the home. But arrangements of excerpts from Beethoven's symphonies became more prevalent in

the late nineteenth century, and fascinatingly various in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Epilogue considers this development.

The culture of arrangement in Beethoven's Vienna is a principal focus in this book. Domestic performance of arrangements thrived in Vienna, where large public assemblies, including concerts, were often forbidden, particularly under the Metternich System. The Viennese culture of musical arrangement rearranged music to suit consumers, promoting consumers' preferred performance modes, reflecting their reception, and promulgating the socio-cultural meanings to which they subscribed. So Vienna was, in the early nineteenth century, an important centre for musical arrangements in terms of production and publication. Considering the Viennese social contexts of arrangements, Wiebke Thormählen has shown how arrangements played a part in aesthetic and moral education in the late eighteenth century.¹ This book deals largely with the next generation of arrangers, musical amateurs, and publishers. This book also considers how practices, cultures, and markets for musical arrangement developed in other places, including London, Paris, and various German cities. Reception and canon-forming processes in different centres are compared, as are practices and aesthetics related to arrangement, the details of which are left for future studies.

I explore a selection of arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies by a cross-section of the finest arrangers of the era, which will help students and scholars to consider both the *art* and the *culture* of arrangement in this period, rather than dismissing it as the low-quality work of hacks, as has typically been the case in musicology. After all, some of the leading musicians of the time, including Beethoven and Liszt, produced numerous arrangements. The work of five important arrangers who worked in Beethoven's lifetime are discussed and compared, including prominent musicians such as Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) and Ferdinand Ries (1784–1838). Hummel, for one – who had worked closely with Beethoven, conducted his symphonies, and was one of the most outstanding pianists of the day – made arrangements of the first seven of Beethoven's symphonies for piano with the optional accompaniment of flute, violin, and cello. Ries, a friend, pupil, and secretary to Beethoven, scored Beethoven's Second Symphony for nonet (alternatively quintet), and he also rearranged several of Beethoven's chamber works more than once, for alternative chamber ensembles.

¹ Wiebke Thormählen, 'Playing with Art: Musical Arrangements as Educational Tools in Van Swieten's Vienna', *Journal of Musicology* 27/3 (2010), pp. 342–76.

Other well-known musicians and composers of the time who produced first-rate arrangements were Michael Gottlieb Fischer, William Watts, and Carl Zulehner. Zulehner was indeed notorious for his editions, not all of which were authorised; but he was also known for the quality ('completeness' and playability) of his arrangements, explored in Chapter 2. These musicians produced arrangements of works by canonical and non-canonical composers, and sometimes more than one kind of arrangement of a given work; occasionally, too, they produced a series of related arrangements, as did Hummel, Ries, and Watts. The 'age of arrangements' had its own practices, cultures, and networks.

Arrangements of large-scale works for smaller forces and private use were tremendously popular in Beethoven's time. Composers and publishers alike recognised arrangements as a vital means of disseminating symphonies and theatrical works to a large and eager amateur market, in a time of high theatre ticket prices and limited opportunities for large-scale performances. Chamber arrangements of large-scale works were so prevalent in the nineteenth century that to ignore them, as has often been done, is to miss an essential part of the reception or 'life history' of the works in question. The reason they have been ignored is tied up with anachronistic ideas about 'the work', which arrangements ask us to revise. Arrangements, rather than the original version of a given work, were often an essential means by which a work was disseminated and (in the case of composers such as Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven) canonised before the age of the gramophone.

This book shows *how* this domestic-sphere aspect of canon formation took place, and how it changed during the nineteenth century with shifting contexts of reception and in tandem with changing ideas of the musical work.² This calls into question the anachronistic idea that the music of Beethoven and his contemporaries resides essentially in 'complete', unified works, in their original form as left by the composer – the so-called *Fassung letzter Hand*. Performance and pragmatism were central to the understanding and realisation of the musical work in the early nineteenth century. One sees this pragmatism, along with a recognition of the importance of arrangements to the reception of given works, in the tendency to re-issue certain works in diverse formats. Arrangements helped to *extend* the meanings of musical works – for example, by repurposing symphonic music as

² A central study here is James Parakilas, 'The Power of Domestication in the Lives of Musical Canons', *Repercussions* 4/1 (1995), pp. 5–25; on the emergence of the 'work' concept in Beethoven's day, see in particular Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

small-scale chamber music – inviting the social interaction of the domestic sphere. But arrangements also supported new developments in canon formation, especially insofar as they were considered to be clear-cut ‘derivatives’.

The book also enriches understanding of the status of the symphony in Beethoven’s time. David Wyn Jones describes ‘the reluctance of publishers to issue symphonies’ as a major feature of Vienna’s musical life in the early nineteenth century.³ This was largely due to the decline in large-scale *Kapellen* at the time, brought on by the Napoleonic wars, the invasion of Vienna (1809), and very high, related inflation. But this raises that question of what filled the apparent gap in the publication of symphonies, and why. All the multifarious forms in which symphonies could be published around 1800 are pertinent, but especially the many and various arrangements. The detailed discussion of contemporary publishing catalogues in this book illuminates this ‘repackaging’ of symphonies. It explores how arrangements of this music allowed participants (performers and listeners both) to engage with aesthetic ideas prominent in the period, such as the sublime.

A study of early nineteenth-century arrangements has considerable relevance today for students, scholars, and performers. Christopher Hogwood observes: ‘many of [the early arrangers’] better-wrought products could easily be taken into the repertoire of today’s performers’.⁴ The interest in and use of these arrangements for modern-day performers relates not only to their potentially good quality. The balance and the relative popularity of genres represented among arrangements, discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 in particular, helps to round out our understanding of chamber music in the era. Repertoire of the Classical era for larger chamber groupings of mixed winds and strings might seem relatively scarce, for instance, until one looks at arrangements. There is attention in the book to the most popular ensemble types for arrangement in Beethoven’s day: quartets of various kinds, string quintets, and larger chamber ensembles; and an emphasis towards the end of the book on the social and musical reasons behind the terrific popularity of piano transcriptions, which increased during the nineteenth century but was already evident in Beethoven’s day.

³ David Wyn Jones, *The Symphony in Beethoven’s Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 27.

⁴ Christopher Hogwood, ‘In Praise of Arrangements: The “Symphony Quintetto”’, in Otto Biba and David Wyn Jones (eds.), *Studies in Music History Presented to H.C. Robbins Landon on His Seventieth Birthday* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996), p. 83.

Studying arrangements also gives us insights into how chamber music functioned to foster sociability and education. As Hans Größ observes, arrangements of the time direct us to a usefully close connection between the work and its receiver: arrangements helped one to get to know the works by means of a ‘hands-on’ approach.⁵ The book touches on questions of musical literacy, inquiring into the nature of the ‘inside knowledge’ that was (and is) achieved through playing and was (is) less readily available through listening to recordings and attending concert performances. Chapter 3 raises the important issue of arrangements as a ‘performance’ or ‘rehearing’ of a work, a topic that also receives further attention in Chapter 5, where the role of the listener in constructing the work, based on an arrangement, is considered.

Musical case studies of diverse early to mid-nineteenth-century arrangements of Beethoven’s symphonies draw out aspects of domestic music-making and performance which have been little discussed before, despite the extensive attention chamber music around 1800 has attracted. Several of the case studies demonstrate the flexibility of arrangement that was common for the time: arrangements were often designed to be adaptable to various ensemble sizes. Chapter 4 includes a telling case study. In 1816, Beethoven and Steiner decided to issue *Wellington’s Victory* and the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies in arrangements for various combinations of chamber group simultaneously, and concurrently with the original orchestral edition in parts and score.⁶ Important here, and moving well beyond publishing’s ‘business as usual’, was the issuing of complete scores. These demonstrate the evolving conception of the musical work: silent score study would gradually replace the hands-on reception and construction of the musical work via arrangements for chamber ensemble.

Comparing the work of various arrangers in Beethoven’s Europe, exploring their backgrounds, and looking at their relations to each other and to the composers whose works they arranged, one starts to build up a sense of how canonical composers were variously understood and interpreted during Beethoven’s lifetime and immediately thereafter. Chapters 5 and 6, in particular, turn to these questions of reception. For example, Liszt and many Beethoven admirers of his time tended to turn Beethoven into a

⁵ Hans Größ, ‘Bearbeitung – Arrangement – Instrumentation als Form der Aneignung musikalische Werke von Beethoven bis Schubert’, in Andreas Michel (ed.), *Ansichtssachen: Notate, Aufsätze, Collagen* (Altenburg: Kamprad, 1999), p. 49.

⁶ See, for example, Sieghard Brandenburg (ed.), *Briefe, 1783–1807, Ludwig van Beethoven. Briefwechsel: Gesamtausgabe*, 7 vols. (Munich: Henle, 1996–98), vol. 3 (1997), p. 109.

deity. But through Hummel's arrangements, among others, we glimpse a more down-to-earth view of Beethoven, through the eyes of a musician who revered him but also had to deal with the reality of him.⁷ Studying early arrangements does not necessarily bring us closer to a given composer's work than would otherwise be possible, but we get closer to an understanding of how a composer's contemporaries viewed that composer.

Piano transcriptions (for two hands, four hands, and two pianos) became ever more prominent, completely taking over the field after Beethoven's lifetime. As Eduard Hanslick put it in *History of Concert Life in Vienna* (1869): 'music instruction in the home is completely absorbed by the piano'.⁸ The book's final chapters chart the story of how and why this shift occurred.

⁷ Mark Kroll, 'On a Pedestal and Under the Microscope: The Arrangements of Beethoven Symphonies by Liszt and Hummel', in Markéta Štefková (ed.), *Franz Liszt und seine Bedeutung in der europäischen Musikkultur* (Bratislava: DIVIS-Slovakia, 2012), pp. 123–44.

⁸ Eduard Hanslick, *Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1869), p. 202.