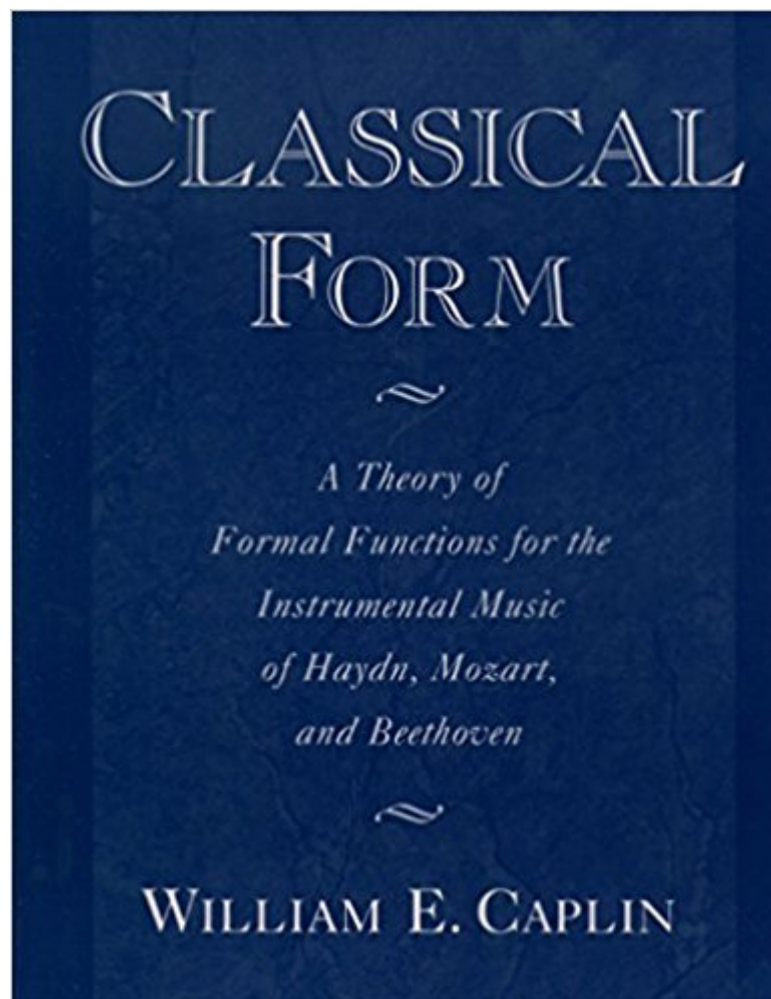


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Classical Form: A Theory Of Formal Functions For The Instrumental Music Of Haydn, Mozart, And Beethoven



Synopsis

Building on ideas first advanced by Arnold Schoenberg and later developed by Erwin Ratz, this book introduces a new theory of form for instrumental music in the classical style. The theory provides a broad set of principles and a comprehensive methodology for the analysis of classical form, from individual ideas, phrases, and themes to the large-scale organization of complete movements. It emphasizes the notion of formal function, that is, the specific role a given formal unit plays in the structural organization of a classical work.

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Customer Reviews

For anyone interested in the music of the Viennese Classicism, this book is a godsend. It basically follows a two-part plan: (1) Teach a new, highly detailed sonata construction terminology, from the smallest parts to parts of whole movements and (2) show how these interrelate most of the time, and why certain instances break the supposed norms (based on the styles of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, which are very much alike and MOSTLY complimentary). It starts with showing how various types of opening phrases are built, and how these relate and differ to later phrases or

themes introduced (all the various kinds are gone through thoroughly). This then leads into a discussion of the nature of the development and recapitulation, and ends up discussing each of the normal "sonata-style" movement forms separately. I think this is a wonderful book both for musicologists and would-be composers (you'll probably need to develop your own exercises on the way, but when you are ready to deal with a book like this, you should handle that). It can probably be read by the enlightened dilettante, but unless you are willing to spend the amount of time needed to recognize each element while listening, I think the book is most useful for people who are actually working with music on paper. Performers who are not put off by theoretical discussions could probably benefit from it as well. The book uses functional harmonic theory in the vein of Schoenberg and Riemann. In my native Norway this method is a lot more widely used than Schenkerian analysis, so I haven't had any problems with it; I've understood that some American readers may have to spend a little time adapting, though.

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