Unraveling Narrativity: A Reflexive Paradigm

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In the first movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5, the V–I cadential gesture revealed at the very outset proves to be a defining structural property throughout the movement. The anachronistic and seemingly impulsive entry of the initial cadence intimates closure, and its successive restatements function as intermittent signposts along the way toward true closure at the end of the movement. Presumably, the listener experiences these recurring gestures as moments of foreshadowing, and navigates through the movement following clear points of reference to arrive at an increasingly predictable resolution. But suppose that the listener instead hears the initial cadence as a more explicit presentation of a future event, as an "effect" known prematurely, or as a goal actualized before its motivation or rationale has been established. In this sense, the listener may hear the closing statement not so much as a subtle foreshadowing suggested in actual time, but rather as an abrupt flash-forwarding to an end point definitively announced within implied or imagined time; thus, musical material subsequently heard from that point on works to peel away moments of the present, and to revise the past so as to justify what is already known to be inevitable in the future.

If the music elides or sidesteps the expected point B on the way from points A to C, such a disruption would prompt the listener to rationalize the discontinuity by providing the missing association—in other words, to fill in the musical gap created by the disruption. The musical design of a work such as the first movement of Op. 33, No. 5 all but insists that the listener exercise a fluid listening strategy in order to reconcile its perceived surface disconnections. This essay explores such a listening strategy within the context of narrativity in tonal music. In so doing, I focus on specific *processes* that constitute or help construct narratives to illuminate how the listener draws seemingly disassociated parts of music together; how musical gestures accrue meaning, are clarified, or become recontextualized in the listener's mind; and how the listener's heightened sense of anticipation and reflection helps achieve this synthesis.

My exploration of musical narrativity is concerned less with questions of agency and content (important though these questions are) than on some of the active forces underlying and motivating the formation of narrative structures. The mechanisms I discuss reside neither exclusively within the musical work nor entirely within the listener's more subjective realm of nar-

rative construction or reenactment; rather, they rest in both, and are largely dependent on each other. I concentrate on one concept in particular—what I ultimately call "reflexivity"—that enhances musical narrativity when latent within the structure of the work and apprehended by the listener. Developing the idea of musical reflexivity in and of itself necessitates a wider perspective on musical events and presupposes a liberal interpretation of certain spatiotemporal parameters that delineate or influence them. Toward this end, I treat reflexivity as a concept that also subsumes the broadly construed phenomenon of "backward causation."[1]

The idea of reflexivity is rooted in a point of view I share with Lawrence Kramer—namely, that "music can produce narratographic effects only in relationship to strategies of principled disruption: either as those strategies themselves or, reactively, as strategies of containment" (1995:101).[2] Accordingly, I limit my musical examples to those that contain a high degree of destabilization of musical order, or disruptions. Four of my six examples are drawn from Haydn's quartets from the late eighteenth century. I chose this repertory because it manifests reflexive properties, or what George Edwards has deemed "temporal dyslexia, as though before and after, cause and effect, could be reversed at will" (1998:318). In particular, I examine the exposition from the first movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 at greater length to apply these ideas more concretely.

Musical Narrativity Redux

Investigating narrativity, either as a theory or as a principle within any subject is a complex undertaking. Its foundation in history is deeply rooted, and notably so in the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods, which have sought narrative models to circumscribe historical knowledge and explanation; the non-fiction narrative in particular has often been thought to offer "objective truth" via a configuration of facts and events as observed by the historian (who, in essence, assumes the role of the narrator). Twentieth-century Russian Formalist and French Structuralist schools codified theories of narrativity, and subsequently many of the humanistic disciplines have recognized various narrative models as vehicles through which time, voice, and plot structure are ordered and made to seem coherent. Given the extensive role of narratives in the formation of communal identity, artistic legitimacy, and cultural memory, narratives—both as constructs and as conceptual frameworks—are thus more often than not difficult to define or even identify. When are narratives misleading or incomplete reductions of a story? What makes narratives fictional, non-fictional, or mere rhetorical strategies? Is a narrative's text ever completely finite or authoritative in some epis-

temological sense? These are just of a few of the more obvious questions that invariably arise as part of any methodological inquiry into the subject.

Our experience of narratives as well as the degree of interpretation required to recognize them also vary and are constrained by the media that convey them. For instance, narratives are made tangible when played out as stage dramas, rendered virtual when expressed as literary works, and left implicit while remaining temporally static when represented pictorially. On a more basic or practical level, I may recall and retell the distinct events that I experienced throughout the course of a day in the form of a narrative simply by connecting the events in a purposeful or meaningful way, by relating the collection of those events to those of a "prototypical day" (e.g., a typical workday), and by establishing a sense of coherence among the events within their total presentation. For the proceeding discussion, I am considering a narrative to be such an "instance" of a more general story (real or implied) as well as the mechanism by which that story is conveyed. The story's discourse, or mode of presentation, and the story's plot or plotting, which accounts for the method or ordering of events within the presentation, also regulate narrative structures.[3] Following this very general systematization, *Don Juan* constitutes a story, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is its narrative (Mozart and Da Ponte are, albeit arguably, its co-authors), the opera itself is the story's discourse, and Mozart's sequencing of events constitutes the plot. Such simple denotations are nevertheless hazy at best within the context of instrumental or "absolute" music. Most significantly, the identities of the "players" (i.e., characters, author, or narrator) often blur without the presence of textual cues.[4] Textless music might also seem to lack a specific content, and resist being decoded into ordinary propositional statements (e.g., "this music is about X or Y"). Judging its propositional content to be severely impaired and obscured, Peter Kivy, for example, has declared that "[absolute] music is, for all intents and purposes, propositionally dumb" (1984:159).

In questioning the very premise that textless music possesses an appreciable content, the issue of whether such music conforms or is analogous to a narrative structure has at times been obviated. The fundamental suspicion is not necessarily an unreasonable one, but the matter lies outside the scope of this essay. It is more often the case that the wholesale rejection of music's narrative potential has been fueled by placing an undue emphasis on delimiting questions, or by asking them prematurely—specifically, questions concerning "what is being said?" or "who is speaking?" in music.[5] We should suspend temporarily the idea that a musical narrative needs to have a tangible content or reify something in order to be understood as a narrative, and postpone the more usual and often imponderable questions in-

volving agency or authorial intention. Instead, we should explore narrativity primarily as a process by which music may be, in a more figurative sense, appearing to narrate.[6]

The specific process that I take up re-evaluates the connectivity of various musical elements within a work. This connectivity, though, should not be construed as moving in any single "direction." Specifically, "forward-moving" connective chains seek goals (examples of which include cadential points reached through harmonic progressions) and in turn, reconcile discrete or discursive aspects of a work; yet "backward-moving" ones may also be latent within a work, and have the power to reveal the origins of more intricate musical material (such as motives or gestures revealed as the sources of more elaborate themes). I suggest that as listeners, we process many works by hearing them through forward-moving progressions, but come to understand these works retrospectively and more heuristically by perceiving them through a series of backward-moving associations.[7] The interaction between these multidirectional forces suggests a type of reflexivity in music, not unlike the sentence "I introduced myself" implies a reciprocal gravitational pull between the subject ("I") and its reflexive pronoun ("myself"); the reflexive pronoun in such a sentence reinforces and refers back to the subject while reflecting the action of the verb.

A similar paradigm—and more to the point, the action contained or suggested within the paradigm—may be gleaned from many passages of tonal music. Patrick McCreless proposes such a model in his discussion of narrative designs in music (1988). Drawing on Roland Barthes's theory of five culturally learned codes (i.e., semic, symbolic, referential, proairetic, and hermeneutic) as narrative tools within music, McCreless's observations on the proairetic and hermeneutic codes in particular relate to what I suggest is a part of music's narrative process. In the broadest definition, the proairetic code follows a narrative's plot and governs the sequencing of events in linear time; it encourages a reading strategy in which we establish a chronological ordering and make logical sense out of events. The hermeneutic code, by contrast, entails suspense, implies question and answer, and introduces a puzzle along with an eventual solution; it poses an enigma at the beginning of the story, and prolongs it by delaying and complicating its own solution through a series of narrative devices. Texts that capitalize on the proairetic code are "readerly," whereas those that exploit the hermeneutic code are "writerly" in that they force readers to "write texts" as they go along.[8]

Proairetic and hermeneutic codes also imply a reciprocal gravitational pull similar to the concept that I am calling reflexivity; specifically, the hermeneutic code works outwardly against the story's unfolding and fulfillment

of closure, but in so doing, offers an even more heuristic understanding of the story as a whole. The concept is applicable to a great deal of tonal music: as we actively pursue the goals of previously heard musical material, our understanding of the work in its totality is shaped by the gradual uncovering of the origins of that material—in essence, our understanding is processed retroactively. Though reflexivity is essentially a perceived phenomenon by the listener, the concept is not exclusively an illusion or even necessarily hypothetical; in some instances, reflexivity may be inscribed in the structure of the musical work in and of itself. To investigate this possibility, I now turn to a more detailed discussion of musical events, key aspects of time that order or shape musical events, and finally backward causation.

Events Unfolding

Generally speaking, events demarcate the modes of action within a narrative. Mieke Bal, for instance, defines an event as "the transition from one state to another state, caused or experienced by actors" (1997:182). The latter part of his definition, however, is overly restrictive for it suggests that events exist only insofar as agents enact or witness them. This is not necessarily the case in that many phenomena could be defined as events without the presence of actors (consider the Big Bang phenomenon as an obvious example). Moreover, claiming that an event entails a transition from one state to another state presupposes that those changes are readily detectable in the event's outward manifestation. This precondition needs further qualification. It could be argued that a calendar week, while comprised of smaller, "transitioning states" (i.e., days of the week), is essentially experienced as though it is one continuous event evolving through a discrete period of time. Likewise, a baseball game is experienced as a constant, aggregate event even though it is subjected to smaller, internal transformations (e.g., the individual innings of the game).[9]

    A finer distinction can instead be made between "interior" and "exterior" events; together they bear a hierarchical relationship in establishing order. Interior events submit to an ordering of temporally finite elements, whereas exterior events subsume interior events, and generalize or "abstract" their order. A clear example of this is a simple, diatonic chord progression, such as I–IV–V–vi–ii–V–I, that outlines six discrete events—specifically, the chord changes from I → IV, IV → V, etc. (or "transitioning states" if we follow Bal's definition). While one event in particular may seem harmonically conspicuous (i.e., V → vi), we are accustomed to systematize this as well as the other smaller, or what I am calling interior events, and interpret the progression as a prolongation of I. This prolongation may be regarded

as an encompassing exterior event. The beginning measures in the first move-
ment of Beethoven's Violin Sonata Op. 12, No. 1 offer a more concrete ex-
ample: the opening chord confidently asserts a D Major tonality, while the
harmony is reinforced as it reverberates through a series of punctuated me-
lodic fragments, or afterthoughts (ex. 1). We hear the five-measure har-
monic progression as the larger, unmediated exterior event within which
the central harmonic idea unfolds through time. While obviously critical in
establishing an overall melodic contour of the opening gesture, the particu-
lar ordering of these triadic afterthoughts (i.e., the interior events) could be
reordered without altering the exterior event. That is to say, as Beethoven
sketches out a D Major harmonic space expansively, it is experienced that
way by the listener, and may be explained formally as a spatial event con-
ceptually independent of the individual or progressive ordering of its con-
stituent elements. Accordingly, events may be isolated as discrete periods of
duration with beginnings and ends, but may also be treated as more glo-
bally conceived phenomena.

Time may be construed as the framework, measurement, or overall space
within which a single event or series of ordered events unfold, and several
time orderings may exist simultaneously within a narrative structure. The
potential friction between multiple orderings heightens the narrative ef-
fect.[10] More specifically, chronological deviations that arise between any two
separate sequential orderings are frequently labeled "anachronies." Among
the more recognizable anachronies typically used in narrative structures
are analepsis (flashback), in which the past is described; and prolepsis (an-
ticipation or flash-forward), in which future events are surmised or ex-
plicitly known.[11] Many musical works also employ such techniques, or at
the very least, give the illusion of doing so. We might consider these and
other anachronies within a musical context to be more along the lines of
"temporal distortions," since they not only challenge, but also potentially
subvert our sense of more conventional expectations of musical time.[12]
Jonathan Kramer describes several different ways to experience musical time
in both tonal and atonal music: goal-directed time, nondirected linear time,
multiply-directed linear time, moment time, and vertical time—all of which
may be explored through paradigms of linear and nonlinear progressions
(1988:57–58). Here we should pause to examine Kramer's "vertical time"
formulation a little further.

Vertical time threatens a sense of music's forward momentum by halt-
ing rhythmic or temporal articulation and by stretching "a single present
into an enormous duration that feels like an instant" (55). "Vertical music"
gives the impression of near static immobility, and is "that in which
nonlinearity predominates over linearity" (57). Kramer juxtaposes vertical

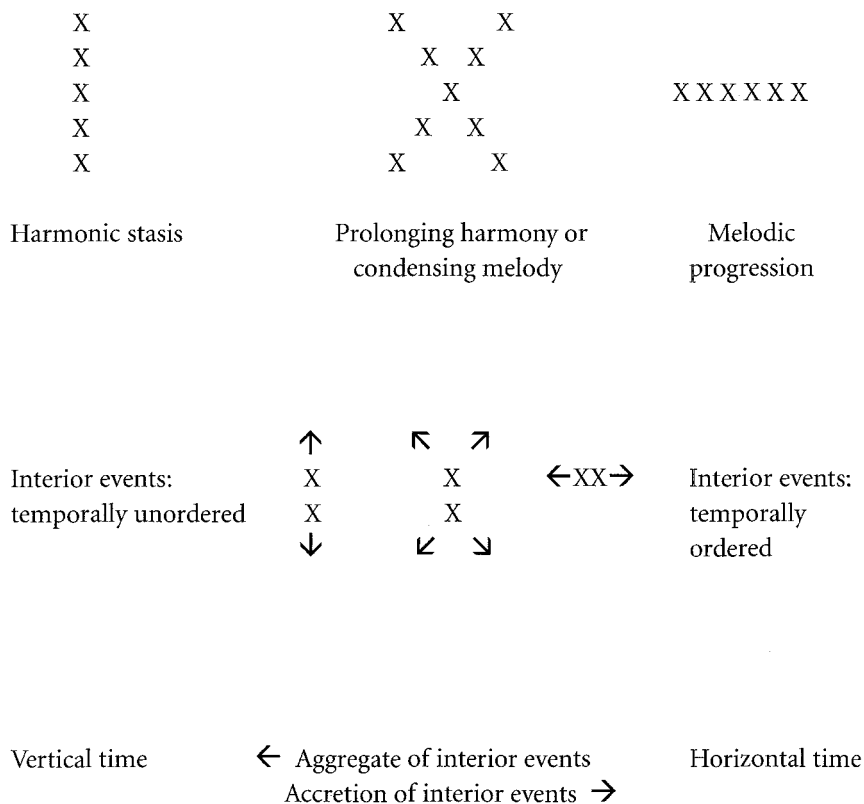**Example 1:** Beethoven, Violin Sonata Op. 12, No. 1 (I), mm. 1–5.

time with horizontal time, in which goal directedness characterizes the latter. Vertical music (and the vertical time that distinguishes it) bears a conceptual similarity to the *Klangfläche,* or "sound-sheet," which Carl Dahlhaus describes as "outwardly static but inwardly in constant motion" (1989:307). While Dahlhaus reserves the *Klangfläche* primarily for nineteenth-century landscape depiction in music and Kramer's formulation is by comparison broader in applicability (he identifies a number of Minimalist compositions, for instance, as among the more obvious examples of music to possess vertical time), both might appear to counteract equally the principle of teleological progression in music.

Vertical time is for the most part a conceptual idea rather than a literal property of a musical structure or syntax, and is best thought of as a metaphor to describe a particular kind of listening experience. Yet as I read Kramer, we might also hear vertical time implied within more tangible musical phenomena, such as static harmonies, in a manner not unlike horizontal time is intuited within melodies, or sequences of pitches. Both vertical time and horizontal time are also interconnected as the interior events within one may be prolonged or condensed into the other. A simple conceptual diagram may help to illustrate the point (fig. 1).

Measures 15–22 in the third movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 77, No. 2 capture an arresting moment of vertical time. Beginning in measure 16, the first violin ascends through the first half of an embellished D Major scale until the forward propulsion is seemingly thwarted in mm. 18–20 (ex. 2). Here scale degrees five and six are pulled into the ensemble's "vertical" sonority and expand within moments of stasis, or vertical time. In this particular case, we might rephrase Kramer's description of vertical time as "an instant that feels like a duration." Several factors enhance this

Figure 1. Diagram comparing vertical and horizontal time.

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X                        X        X
X                          X    X
X                             X                    X X X X X X
X                          X    X
X                        X          X
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Harmonic stasis   Prolonging harmony or   Melodic
                           condensing melody   progression


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              ↑          ↖   ↗
Interior events:     X          X        ←XX→      Interior events:
temporally unordered X          X                  temporally
              ↓          ↙   ↘                     ordered
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Vertical time   ← Aggregate of interior events   Horizontal time
                      Accretion of interior events →

effect within these measures: an emphasis on chordal resonance; a halting
of harmonic rhythm; and perhaps most pointedly, an interruption of the
first violin's melodic line in m. 19, resulting in an abrupt textural displace-
ment. The harmonies spelled out in these three measures—I, IV, and ii—
dramatize the motion from I to IV and to (a harmonically ambiguous) ii in
the first, second, and fourth eighth notes of m. 17 by decelerating the pace
of harmonic and rhythmic change, and through its emphasis on a more
vertical sonority. Vertical time also engages with horizontal time and sug-
gests an otherwise spatial phenomenon throughout these measures. Spe-
cifically, the downbeats of mm. 15, 17, 18, and 22 emphasize the D Major
tonic harmony, and the first violin's pitches of F♯, F♯, A, and D within the
respective measures carry out an unfolding of the D Major triad (we could

Example 2: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 2 (III), mm. 15–22.

also include m. 16 if we separated the pitch, D, from its immediate harmonic context). Once the D Major triad is fully consummated in m. 22, we may hear the entire progression in retrospect as an expanse or "spatialization" of vertical time. This triadic region, or what I am calling more specifically an exterior event, engages with the horizontal, forward-moving D Major scalar progression in the first violin, which itself follows a sequential and temporal ordering of interior events.

A critical question is how we hear, and eventually come to regard, the progression as a single D Major exterior event. Conceptually, we cannot know that the triad will "resolve" on D until we hear it in m. 22 (though our expectations of stylistic convention relative to this example lead us to believe that anything other than D is unlikely). The answer lies in our potential to listen to the progression in a retroactive or backward manner. An example of this impulse is also suggested within the concluding section of the finale of "The Joke" String Quartet Op. 33, No. 2, in which Haydn confuses the listener by ostensibly deleting musical material and creating multiple temporal ellipses between false endings (ex. 3). During these moments of silence or "omission," Haydn inscribes a level of disorientation seemingly within the music itself and in turn asks the listener either to fill in time and seek forward-moving continuity by splicing musical material, or to suspend time and reach some sort of resolution through backward-moving retrospection. The listener's response may ultimately be to do both as the two seemingly contradictory impulses work synergistically in a multidirectional, or reflexive, pull. In a manner of speaking, then, time in this example seems to progress and retrogress simultaneously.

Kramer also gives consideration to the potential for forward as well as

Example 3: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 33, No. 2 (IV), mm. 153–72.

backward listening, and proposes that musical meaning arises from our ability to listen both "forwardly" and "backwardly" (1988:168). Though backward listening in particular is essentially a conceptual listening strategy, at times it may also be established by more explicit musical syntax. Consider for example the first movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 387, one of the "Haydn" quartets. The gestures that close the exposition (mm. 52–55) return near the conclusion of the development section (mm. 97–100), and function as musical bookends. In between these boundaries, the ordering of harmonic material that begins the development section essentially reverses toward the development's end. After the move from D Major to its dominant (mm. 56–58), E minor oscillates with its own dominant (mm. 59–63), and finally leads into a descending fifths sequence of dominant seventh chords (E, A, D, G, and C in mm. 64–72). Following an ex-

tended section in E minor, the initial passage is presented "backwardly" as the descending fifths sequence becomes an ascending fifth sequence of dominant seventh chords (G, D, and A in mm. 90–92), returns to the exchange between E minor and its dominant (mm. 93–96), and concludes with the initial statement in D Major (m. 97). In essence, Mozart gives the impression of backward listening throughout a significant portion of the development section, during which the progression as a whole unfolds almost in the manner of a harmonic palindrome. The effect of exiting the development section is also presented, and in some guise, "known" to us prior to its occurrence, and soon after this exit is in fact heard, we acquire a recontextualized understanding of the beginning of the development once later events give earlier ones a rationale.

Causal Rewind

The development section in Mozart's K. 387 outlines what I consider an instance of backward causation in music, problematic though the formulation may seem.[13] For my purposes, I require two general conditions to define an occurrence of backward causation: that a future event appears to us or is implied before some present or past event; and that experiencing a future event influences our understanding of a present or past event. Consider a real life analogy to illustrate the first condition: if I walk from point A to point B, I could easily say that walking from point A to point B caused the effect of reaching point B. But I could also say that if my goal to arrive at point B precedes walking there from point A, then point B as an intended effect precedes the act of walking there. In this sense, I know the effect (point B) prior to its cause (walking from point A to point B). The second condition is more interpretive in nature. Simply put, if I state that I will have a kitchen filled with groceries (a future event), this then presupposes that I will need to purchase those groceries (a "nascent past" event). An implied future event in this case influences and gives shape to a present or past event.[14] In *Narration and Knowledge,* Arthur Danto explains that:

> We are always revising our beliefs about the past, and to suppose them 'fixed' would be unfaithful to the spirit of historical inquiry. In principle, any belief about the past is liable to revision, just in the same way perhaps as any belief about the future. Actually we are sometimes more certain about the future than we are about the past. At a given moment I am far more certain where a falling pine-cone will land that I am with regard to where it fell from. (1985:145)

I do not wish to claim that backward causation in music can necessarily

Example 4a: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5 (I), mm. 1–10.

be proven; it may be at times only inferred, or offered as an interpretive strategy when listening to music. Backward "causal listening," moreover, engages with a forward causal listening in a reciprocal manner that connotes the concept of reflexivity, and my more modest claim is to suggest that musical narrativity is enhanced once the listener is encouraged to formulate reflexive causal chains of musical events.[15] A reflexive causal chain within a narrative framework may involve the following conceptualizations, (arrows pointing to the right represent a forward direction and left ones a backward direction):

(Implied) Future event ← Present or past event → Future event
(Intended) Effect ← Cause → Effect
(Anticipated) Goal ← Origin → Goal
(Intimated) Closure ← Openings or beginnings → Closure

The first movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5 establishes a reflexive causal chain among the repeated closing gestures interspersed throughout the movement. The gesture's first appearance at the movement's outset (mm. 1–2) is ambiguous and inconclusive because its two measures outline a seemingly displaced cadential move from V to I without any preparation (ex. 4a). Kofi Agawu suggests that "when a composer begins a piece with a closing gesture, he may well be hinting at one aspect of its rhetorical structure that is to be subsequently played with" (1991:59). This is clearly the case here as Haydn entices the listener to proceed in a forward-moving direction so as to clarify or justify the purpose of the device, while at the same time to progress in a backward-moving direction so as to uncover the cause of the effect, or future event, which has already appeared to us in

Example 4b: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5 (I), mm. 29–32.

Example 4c: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5 (I), mm. 100–03.

some guise. The irony, however, is that as each cadence subsequently appears, it becomes increasingly "problematic." Measures 1–2 sound abrupt not only because they begin with the unanticipated dominant harmony, but also because of the dominant's lack of preparation. Measures 7–10 seek to reconcile this issue as the V–I cadence is introduced by a subdominant preparation of vi and ii in mm. 7 and 8. The more complete progression is repeated in mm. 29–32, reinforced this time by the tonic and the "dominant" of ii in m. 29 (ex. 4b). Once we enter the development section, however, what appeared to be moving toward a "resolution" of the closing ges-

Example 4d: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 33, No. 5 (I), mm. 180–91.

ture becomes even more complicated. Measures 100–03 "distort" the effect of the V–I cadence by introducing it with the unforeseen harmonies of ♭VI and ♭II in mm. 100 and 101 (ex. 4c). Thus, the arrival of the two-measure pause just before the recapitulation (m. 180) presents a period of confusion and uncertainty, yet paradoxically, a moment of clarity (ex. 4d). As we were seeking a rationalization for the initial closing gesture, we are drawn back to, and possibly made to accept more fully, its original straightforwardness. These multidirectional pulls—toward (de)familiarization—and the causal chains that are created as part of the listening process, ultimately confirm the movement's reflexivity.

A Case Study: Haydn's String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1

I now turn my attention to the exposition in the first movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 to consider how the principal concepts covered so far—exterior and interior events, backward causation, and the more in-clusive concept of reflexivity—contribute to the piece's sense of narrativity (ex. 5). Charles Rosen observes that "Haydn is interested in the directional power of his material, or, what is much the same thing, its dramatic possi-bilities. He found ways of making us hear the dynamic force implicit in a musical idea" (1997:129). In this sense, Op. 77, No. 1 is exemplary—the music proceeds in both a linear progression and in a more circular unfold-ing of the material; in the process, the exposition is gradually revealed to be a self-contained unit that dramatizes the conventional necessity of its own repeat.

The entire exposition may be understood as a linear progression from G Major to D Major, and at the same time, as a retrogressive preparation for the G Major closing gesture, intimated at the beginning of the movement and announced more emphatically in mm. 13–14. This linear progression is constituted by the sequential ordering of interior events, and may be represented summarily by I → V/V → V. The retrogressive preparation is more spatially oriented, suggests vertical time (or a "duration that feels like an instant"), and forms an expansive or more temporally fluid exterior event, represented by I ← de-emphasis of V ← V. The two, multidirectional pulls operate synergistically, creating a sense of reflexivity within the exposition.

The forward-moving causal chain that may be traced throughout the exposition is almost self-evident, and therefore should need only a general description to account for it. It is steered largely by the three broad types of temporal progressions that Edward Lippman outlines in *The Philosophy and Aesthetics of Music*: sheer continuity or succession; motivation or impulsion; and structural necessity or consecution (1999:43). The march topic, in particular, provides an overt and additional rationale for the music's strong sense of continuity, whereas its motivation is maintained by its clear rhythmic pulse as well as its distinct sense of momentum.[16] Aspects concerning structural necessity obviously relate to the exposition's function within a conventional, late eighteenth-century sonata form; here the initial key area—in this case G Major—will invariably modulate to its secondary key area, or the dominant harmony of D Major in this instance.

A backward-moving causal chain is implied as D Major is to some extent weakened, while at the same time G Major is subtly reinforced along the way as the exposition draws to a close before its anticipated repeat. More specifically, throughout the transition between the two key areas (mm. 14–27) D Major is established rather unconvincingly. The V_2^4 – I^6 cadence in mm. 18–19 is notably weak, and the following cadence falls on D minor (m. 21, in which the D minor harmony is prolonged until m. 25). While D Major arrives more forcefully in the second (mono)thematic area (m. 27), the emphatic chords that worked so effectively to sustain the forward momentum in the first theme have exploded in retrospect and become dispersed into mere shards in the second violin and viola. While forward momentum may still in fact exist, it is notably diminished. The second theme requires two additional measures of dominant preparation (mm. 31 and 32), resolves to the tonic on a weak, third beat (m. 37), and withholds the tonic for two more measures until it resolves more conclusively in m. 39. The deceptive cadence that soon follows (mm. 42–43 and 43–44) further elides and weakens D Major while adding rhetorical weight to G Major in m. 44.

The passage in mm. 46–54 attempts to dissolve D Major as the triads

Example 5. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 (I), mm 1–17.

Example 5 (cont.). Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 (I), mm 18–29.

Example 5 (cont.). Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 (I), mm 30–41.

Example 5 (cont.). Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 (I), mm 42–54.

Example 5 (cont.). Haydn, String Quartet Op. 77, No. 1 (I), mm 55–62.

begin to break apart into smaller triplet fragments in the first violin. After a series of cadences on D, as well as a deceptive cadence in m. 50, each triadic triplet with the exception of the G Major ones that began mm. 51 and 52 loses the fifth degree of its chord. G Major is further emphasized in mm. 51–53 as each statement is approached by a series of dominant harmonies (i.e., E → A → D → G). This harmonic motion from D to G deepens in mm. 55–56, and does so once again in mm. 58–59 as the rhythms accelerate. In a series of gestures that anticipate a strong closing statement in D Major, the ensemble begins to coalesce into the same unified rhetorical voice that launched the exposition. The anticipated D Major chord on the downbeat of m. 62, however, is incomplete as it lacks a fifth. While the subsequent chord is complete, it falls on a relatively weak, third beat, and is immediately absorbed into the initial G Major closing gesture as part of a pronounced cadence from D to G contained by the exposition's repeat. As lis-

teners, then, we come to understand only in hindsight that the forward-moving progression from G Major to a subsidiary goal of D Major was operating reflexively in connection with a backward-moving progression from D Major to a primary goal of G Major; or to put it in a different way, D Major proved to be merely an interior event on its way back into G Major—the larger and more temporally fluid exterior event of the exposition.

One could argue that Op. 77, No. 1 simply dramatizes the inherently circular mechanism that underlies many tonal compositions; that is to say, most tonal music that begins in one key will surely return to it at some critical point. Following this line of thought, the exposition of this quartet merely states the obvious. One could even go a step further by concluding that tonality is Op. 77, No. 1's story, tonality's "ordinariness" is its narrative, and Haydn himself is the narrator. But such matters concerning content and agency while suggestive, if not otherwise significant in establishing the quartet's narrativity, are tangible insofar as the listener can outline a narrative process that makes their recognition possible. Moreover, though the rudiments of narrativity may be revealed within a number of musical works—as the foregoing musical examples have ideally demonstrated—the listener ultimately bears the responsibility of (re)creating narratives and filling in perceived narrative gaps if and when necessary.

I have drawn some additional perspective for my interpretation of Op. 77, No. 1 as well as the preceding musical examples from Edward Cone. In his essay, "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo," Cone theorizes that multiple readings of a (literary) story yield different results. In a "First Reading," following Cone, the reader is simply motivated to find out what happens in a story, and processes the events while they are recounted in chronological order; a "Second Reading" entails an analysis of the work's structure, and treats the story as a static art object that can be contemplated timelessly; finally, a "Third Reading," though similar to the First, is characterized by a more informed appreciation of the story, while at the same time suppressing knowledge of key events in order to preserve a necessary level of interest (1989:77–81). Cone continues that a Second Reading in music entails hearing a composition atemporally, and arriving at a "spatially oriented view of the composition as a whole . . . [where the listener] may have to separate adjacent ideas and juxtapose distant ones in his attempt to uncover all the relationships governing the musical structure" (85). This conceptualization in particular bears a distinct similarity to how I characterize the listener hearing smaller-scale or interior musical events successively, but comprehending larger-scale or exterior musical events collectively. In Op. 77, No. 1, more specifically, the consecutive hearings of the exposition (i.e., the initial presentation, its repeat, and the eventual reca-

pitulation) would seem to correspond ideally to the three respective readings that Cone outlines.

The subject of musical narrativity is clearly vast and open for much debate, and I have chosen to explore only one means by which its many complexities are unraveled. Ideally, a new spectrum of issues will have emerged throughout the course of this essay. It is not insignificant, for example, that the foregoing discussion presupposes and is predicated on music exclusively from the tonal repertory, and that the tonal idiom by design generally accords such music the sense of anticipation and retrospection on which the concepts I have outlined depend. Yet I leave the issue of whether non-tonal music is potentially responsive to any of these theories or approaches for a later discussion. My objective has instead been to recast narrativity as a process that encourages a dynamic listening strategy—namely, one that reevaluates how musical events unfold through time, are connected to each other in unanticipated and innovative ways, and are organized in some totalizing manner. At its core, musical narrativity may be thought of as a wide-ranging metaphor for a sense of order, coherence, connectivity, and in many cases, ingenuity within a musical work. What I have called music's reflexivity is therefore neither a rule nor a stipulation in reaffirming the potential for narrativity in music; rather it is a concept that ultimately enhances it. Recognizing this connection, in turn, may promote a more nuanced listening experience and a deeper understanding of many works from the tonal repertory.

Notes

1. Debating the competing philosophies of causation would be an exhaustive undertaking and ultimately lead this essay too far astray. Theories of causation (including those put forth by Hume and Kant) are also complex, and vary in degrees of epistemic certainty or applicability. For present purposes, I suggest that causation be understood as a stronger and more necessary connection between events than coincidence, contiguousness, and contingency might imply.

2. I limit the present discussion, however, to using the terms narrative and narrativity (the latter designating the theory or dynamic principle underlying the former) and bypass the more intricate term "narratography," which Lawrence Kramer defines as "the practice of writing through which narrative and narrativity are actualized, the discursive performance through which stories get told" (1995:100).

3. My use of certain elements related to a narrative generally follows the definitions that

Mieke Bal provides. For more concise definitions of this terminology, including aspects of text, fabula, and actors, see Bal (1997:5–10).

4. Edward Cone maintains that while persona and agent are indeed applicable to absolute music as verbally unspecified and unidentifiable concepts, these "characters" may be permanent or temporary, unitary or implicit, or else leading or subordinate (1974:94–96).

5. The influence of poststructuralism and postmodernism in general has undoubtedly had much to do with the abandonment of narrative paradigms by some scholars; this important issue, however, also lies outside the scope of the present discussion.

6. Jean-Jacques Nattiez offers some interesting thoughts on music's narrative semblance. He begins with the idea that the composer is speaking to us, further suggests that music has a "prenarrative quality of experience," and concludes that a (musical) story is brought out of its inchoate state through the listener's "narrative impulse." Though Nattiez also maintains that a narrative link cannot be inscribed in musical syntax, he also concedes by implication that a musical narrative exists in some rudimentary form prior to the listener's recognition or "manufacturing" of it. See Nattiez (1990:242–45,250). For a related perspective, see Anthony Newcomb (1987–88:65). Here, Newcomb characterizes musical narrativity not only by virtue of the listener's drive to ascribe plots to works, but also by the potential to deduce and identify "paradigmatic plot" configurations—the standard or conventional series of functional events in a prescribed order.

7. This idea has been suggested implicitly by Edward Cone (1989:77–93).

8. For a concise summary of this process, see McCreless (1988:6–15).

9. See Arthur C. Danto (1985:147) for additional discussion about the "fairly chaotic" use of the term "event" (e.g., applying it to occurrences of "null duration").

10. This is frequently the case when a significant disparity exists between a narrative's "story time" and "discourse time" (the former refers to the overall time span of plot events, whereas the latter corresponds to the designated time within which events are told, specific to the particular text). See Seymour Chatman (1978:62–84) for additional perspective on this. For a probing and more philosophical consideration of temporal organization, including story time, narrative time, and historical time, see Paul Ricoeur (1980:170–71).

11. For a detailed description, see Gérard Genette (1980:48–79).

12. Foreshadowing is a particularly commonplace device and used rather explicitly in the opening movements of Haydn's String Quartets Op. 76, No. 1 and Op. 50, No. 4. In the latter example, Haydn outlines an F♯ minor triad, pauses on $\hat{3}$, and continues a downward scalar descent through two octaves in the first violin to reach $\hat{1}$. Ten measures before the close of the movement, Haydn resumes and expands upon this gesture with an increased rhythmic urgency.

13. Karol Berger, for one, states that "causation is an asymmetrical or, more precisely, irreversible, relationship in which time plays an indispensable role: an earlier a causes a later b, but b does not cause a, it results from it" (1992:460).

14. In his discussion of backward causation specifically, Graham Oddie proposes that a backward causal link would allow for a later cause to "fix" an earlier effect; that is to say, "there may be a past event the occurrence of which is not yet fixed, but will be fixed by some future event" (1990:82). The implications for Oddie's proposition in music should be apparent, much like Cone's suggestion that "a single chord can have no function [in which its] functions merge only during the course of a progression, and our identification of them can shift according to what the progression reveals" (1989:86).

15. Seymour Chatman, in fact, claims that causation in a narrative is either overt (i.e., explicit) or covert (i.e., implicit) (1978:45). I would concede, however, that backward causation is undoubtedly more covert than overt.

16. For a brief discussion of the march topic, see Leonard G. Ratner (1980:16).

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