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Misbehaving Minuets: A Preliminary Theory of Humor and Dance Form in Haydn's Opp. 76 and 77

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MISBEHAVING MINUETS: A PRELIMINARY THEORY OF HUMOR
AND DANCE FORM IN HAYDN'S OPP. 76 AND 77

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
School of Music
at the University of Kentucky.

By
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Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Karen Bottge, Professor of Music Theory

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2017

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

MISBEHAVING MINUETS: A PRELIMINARY THEORY OF HUMOR AND DANCE FORM IN HAYDN'S OPP. 76 AND 77

It is nearly impossible to read scholarship on Franz Joseph Haydn and escape the mention of musical humor. Scholars have long recognized the presence of humorous elements within Haydn's compositions. Current literature delves into various aspects of humor in the composer's works; in this project I focus specifically on humorous aspects of the minuet and trio movements from the late string quartets, Opp. 76 and 77.

I begin by exploring and defining humor itself. Centuries of literature on the topic are generally parsed into three fundamental categories: Superiority Theory, Relief Theory, and Incongruity Theory. More contemporary approaches combine elements of these, creating what I call blended approaches. The burgeoning topic of music aesthetics has invited a wealth of exploration into humor as it specifically pertains to music; I combine traditional philosophical theories with these contemporary discussions in music to develop my analytical model.

The minuet's roles in eighteenth-century Western European culture as a ballroom dance, an emblem of social propriety, a compositional learning tool, and even a parlor dice game make it a complex genre to explore. Alongside its many cultural roles come various connotations and expectations; even those minuets performed away from the ballroom and parlor thus carry layers of suggested meaning. The ubiquity of the minuet dance suggests that listeners during Haydn's career would have been exceedingly familiar with the choreographic conventions and stylistic norms at play. When the music engages with and even contradicts these expectations, it has the potential to arouse affective responses—possibly humor—in its listeners.

Because of their familiarity with the minuet dance, eighteenth-century listeners likely subconsciously engaged with imagined choreographic patterns when hearing a concert minuet. If a musical element (i.e., phrase length, hypermeter, tempo, or surface rhythm) behaved in a way that altered the expected

choreomusical interactions, the listener's response was likely to be strongly embodied. Such heightened physiological reaction to the music, combined with the mental and emotional response to their denied expectations, harbors the potential for multi-faceted humor analyses.

Over the course of ten close musical readings of select Opp. 76 and 77 minuets I explore various devices of musical humor. A large proportion of my analyses focus on hypermeter, as it is strongly related to the minuet choreography; I also explore humor as it relates to stylistic and affective norms. I rely on the expectations of a standard eighteenth-century listener to guide my analyses, and use elements of traditional humor theories to discuss the listener's responses to the music.

KEYWORDS: Joseph Haydn, humor, minuet, string quartet, hypermeter

Jennifer Salamone

January 29, 2017

MISBEHAVING MINUETS: A PRELIMINARY THEORY OF HUMOR
AND DANCE FORM IN HAYDN'S OPP. 76 AND 77

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To Dr. Bolkovac for stoking a fire, and everyone who has helped me learn to love the clay from which I'm made.

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binge watch bad television with them when the stress got overwhelming, I can only thank you from the bottom of my heart for being there and for not judging me for how much ice cream I can consume in one sitting.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	iii
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1. Setting the Stage: Haydn, Humor, and the Minuet	
Convention and Expectation in Instrumental Music	5
Haydn's Musical Discourse	7
Wit, Humor, and Haydn's Music	12
The Minuet as a Vehicle for Humor	19
Chapter 2. Aspects of Humor within Western History and in Tonal Music	
Superiority Theory: Humor as a Moral Compass	31
Pleasure and Pain	31
Deformity and Defect	34
Humor in Self-Reflection	36
Relief Theory: Humor as a Pressure Valve	37
Incongruity Theory: Humor of the Dissimilar	43
Bridging Gaps: Blended Approaches to Humor	46
Humor in Tonal Music	49
Chapter 3. The Minuet and its Roles in Eighteenth-Century Western Europe	
The Minuet in the Ballroom	59
The Minuet as a Compositional Game	63
The Minuet in Transition	69
Overview of Minuet Choreography and Notation	71
Listening to Minuet Music	91
Chapter 4. Hypermetric Disruption Devices	
Blurring the Lines: Elisions and Overlaps	108
Op. 76, no. 1	113
Op. 76, no. 4	121
Hypermetric Addendums and the Six-Measure Phrase	130
Op. 76, no. 4	131
Op. 77, no. 1	134
Chapter 5. Exploring Other Humor Devices	
Hypermetric Disruption Concurrent with Other Devices	145
Hypermetric Disruption and Stylistic Incompetence	145
Hypermetric Disruption and Excessive Repetition	158
Hypermetric Disruption, Excessive Repetition, and Stylistic Incompetence	164

Beyond Hypermetric Disturbance	172
Stylistic Incompetence	172
Stylistic Incompetence and Implausible Delay	175
Unexpected Key Area and Implausible Delay	181
Chapter 6. Conclusions and Looking Ahead	188
Appendices	
Appendix A. Kirnberger's <i>Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist</i>	194
Appendix B. Scores for Works Studied	
Op. 76, no. 1	196
Op. 76, no. 3	199
Op. 76, no. 4	202
Op. 76, no. 6	206
Op. 77, no. 1	211
Bibliography	217
Vita	226

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1, The four bodily humors	40
Figure 2.2, David Huron's ITPRA theory of expectation	53
Figure 3.1, Minuet and trio grid from Johann Kirnberger's <i>Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist</i>	65
Figure 3.2, Composing a minuet with Kirnberger's <i>Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist</i>	66
Figure 3.3, Minuet composed using Kirnberger's <i>Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist</i>	67
Figure 3.4, Z-shaped floor pattern in the minuet	73
Figure 3.5, Pierre Rameau's <i>demi-coupé</i> , from <i>Le Maître à Danser</i>	79
Figure 3.5a, Preparatory position	79
Figure 3.5b, <i>Plié</i> , dance beat one	79
Figure 3.5c, Fourth position, dance beat one	79
Figure 3.5d, First position, dance beat two	79
Figure 3.6, Rameau's <i>demi-coupés</i> in one step cycle, a (2+2+2) subdivision	80
Figure 3.7, Taubert's <i>demi-coupés</i> in one step cycle, a (2+2+2) subdivision	82
Figure 3.8, Illustration of the minuet step from Rameau, "Traité de la cadence"....	86
Figure 3.9, Rameau's minuet step cycle in one dance measure	87
Figure 3.10, Rameau's minuet step cycle with choreomusical accent patterns	89
Figure 3.11, Rameau's step cycle and Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1–8	90
Figure 3.12, Quadruple hypermeter in Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1	95
Figure 3.13, Music, dance, and hypermetric accent patterns in Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1–8	98
Figure 3.14, Hypermetric projections for Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1–8	100
Figure 4.1a, Haydn Symphony No. 84, i, mm. 29–32	110
Figure 4.1b, Grouping overlap in Haydn's Symphony No. 84, i, mm. 41–5	110
Figure 4.2, Left elision in Haydn's Symphony No. 104, i, mm. 29–35	112
Figure 4.3, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 1–5	114
Figure 4.4, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 5–10	115
Figure 4.5, Minuet choreography and hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 7–10	118
Figure 4.6a, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 41–5	123
Figure 4.6b, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 46–50	124
Figure 4.7, Choreographic correspondence for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 41–50	128
Figure 4.8, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 15–9	133
Figure 4.9, Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 86–92	136
Figure 4.10a, Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 164–70	139
Figure 4.10b, Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 170–4	140
Figure 5.1a, Possible hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1–9	147
Figure 5.1b, Possible hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 6–12	148
Figure 5.2, Step cycle interruption in Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 8–12	151
Figure 5.3a, Second hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1–9	152
Figure 5.3b, Second hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 6–12	153
Figure 5.4, Choreomusical accent patterns for Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1–12	155

Figure 5.5, Motivic statements in the minuet theme, Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 1–5	159
Figure 5.6, Preparation for musical arrival and execution of excessive repetition device, Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 23–9	160
Figure 5.7, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 25–9	162
Figure 5.8, Opening theme of Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 1–8	165
Figure 5.9, Choreomusical accent patterns in Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 1–5	166
Figure 5.10, Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 25–30	168
Figure 5.11, Hemiola and minuet choreography in Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 35–9	170
Figure 5.12, Stylistic incompetence device in Op. 76, no. 1	173
Figure 5.13, Minuet theme, Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 1–13	176
Figure 5.14, Preparation for and execution of implausible delay device, Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 21–9	178
Figure 5.15, Trio in an unexpected key area, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 57–64	183
Figure 5.16, Humor devices employed by the trio, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 65–78	184
Figure 5.17, Unexpected key areas, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 77–96	186

1. Setting the Stage: Haydn, Humor, and the Minuet

It is nearly impossible to read current scholarship on Franz Joseph Haydn and escape the mention of musical humor. Scholars have long recognized the presence of humorous elements within Haydn's compositions. Even the composer's contemporaries noted Haydn's penchant for musical humor, as demonstrated by an anonymous essay published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. After witnessing a performance of Haydn's Symphony No. 39 in G minor, Hob. I:39 at the Saal der Freimaurerloge Royal York in Hamburg, this author writes:

I cannot tell you enough what a sense of pure comfort and well-being comes over me when I listen to Haydn's works. . . . The merry, mischievous, good-natured, ingenious humor, combined with a high-spirited fantasy, with strength, learnedness, and fullness—in short, this revelry in a springtime of notes and beautiful modulations—can make life pleasant.¹

The author recognizes and appreciates not only Haydn's technical prowess—his “learnedness”—but also the composer's ability to inject lighthearted elements of humor and mischief into his music. This blend of the serious and learned with the flippant and lighthearted within his musical language is the foundation upon which I build my paper.

This chapter sets the stage with a discussion about general musical aesthetics in the late eighteenth century. In essence, I will identify the musical rules governing the aesthetic of the time so that I can then discuss how Haydn deviates from them. A brief overview of Haydn's musical discourse will follow in order to address the following questions: how does Haydn communicate through his instrumental music,

¹ “Briefe an einen Freund über die Musik in Berlin: zweyter Brief vom 25sten October,” *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3, no. 8 (Nov. 19, 1800): 130–1.

and what ways have scholars found to try and elucidate that communication? Finally, I discuss the minuet as a vehicle for musical discourse and, in particular, humor. Taking the time here to touch upon the musical culture of Haydn's time, Haydn as a musical jester, and the minuet as a conduit for musical discourse will provide the foundation for my theoretical framework and subsequent analytical discussions.

Chapter 2 focuses solely on philosophies of humor. I open with an overview of humor theories from ancient Greece to the present day; this culminates in a discussion of current literature specifically on humor in music. A clear understanding of the history of humor as well as current perspectives on the topic enables me to better discuss how the musical jests in Haydn's minuets may be perceived as funny. When applied to music, elements of various humor theories may help explain how particular compositional tactics could result in laughter from the audience.

Chapter 3 begins with an in-depth look into the minuet's role in eighteenth-century Western European culture. Because the minuet as a ballroom dance was an emblem of the aristocracy, minuets as musical pieces were inherently blanketed in layers of social and cultural implications. There is much to gain from considering Haydn's minuets as reflections of and responses to societal norms and expectations. The second part of Chapter 3 outlines the traditional minuet choreography, focusing on how the constituent *pas de menuet* steps would need to be accompanied musically in order for the choreography and music to make sense to both the dancers as well as the observers. Many of the formal and harmonic oddities in

Haydn's music gain humorous significance only when combined with an understanding of the minuet's choreographic and kinesthetic elements. Considering the minuet's place in eighteenth-century society as well as its specific choreography while simultaneously observing Haydn's minuets through the lens of musical humor allows me to infuse these often-overlooked middle movements with an additional layer of meaning.

Alongside the discussion of minuet choreography in Chapter 3, I also use a prototypical minuet Haydn composed for ballroom dancing to introduce my analytical model. Chapters 4 and 5 then put that model to use as I explore selected minuet and trio movements from Opp. 76 and 77. Although humor is present throughout the chronology of Haydn's work, in his later quartets the composer exercises more adventurous manipulations of salient features such as phrase length and hypermeter. Gretchen Wheelock notes that in Haydn's minuets he "increasingly favors the incongruous as a compositional technique in departures from and exaggerations of conventions associated with the movement as a dance-related form."² Haydn's own contemporaries even noted the uniqueness of his minuets. Consider an anonymous essayist writing in 1798: "Haydn composed little original oddities . . . and called them Minuets."³ Thus by aiming my attention toward the later string quartets I hope to capitalize on Haydn's increasingly radical play with these "little oddities" while elucidating the humorous elements embedded within them.

² Gretchen Wheelock, "Wit, Humor, and the Instrumental Music of Joseph Haydn" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1979), 2.

³ "Bescheidne Anfrage an die modernsten Komponisten und Virtuosen," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1, no. 10 (Dec. 5, 1798): 153.

My musical analysis highlights in particular the elements of phrase length and hypermeter, as these two musical factors are most readily associated with the *pas de menuet* choreography and its sequence of six-beat dance step cycles. Because phrase length and hypermetric regularity were so linked to the minuet choreography, unusual behavior within those musical elements would thus be most discernible to listeners with knowledge of the dance. I also touch upon elements in the musical foreground, especially those of contour and dynamics. Although these aspects of the music would not flagrantly disrupt the minuet choreography *per se*, they nonetheless can be disruptive to the dance when manipulated appropriately. Wye Allanbrook makes a strong case for theorists looking closely at the musical surface, noting “one of the most salient features of late eighteenth-century style is its motivic and stylistic multiplicity; its surface teems with expressive *topoi*.”⁴ The musical surface, then, has the potential to convey significant musical meaning by virtue of its expression of stylistic elements as well as musical motives and topics. Although my analysis leans more toward the larger-scale structural characteristics of Haydn’s minuets, particular surface-level traits do indeed contribute significantly to their humoristic potential.

Finally, once I identify the musical elements that render each of the selected minuets incongruent with the expected form—that is, phrase lengths, hypermeter, and other musical factors that upset the proposed minuet structure—I examine them in terms of musical humor. How does what is presented in the music deviate

⁴ Wye Allanbrook, “Theorizing the Comic Surface,” in *Music in the Mirror: Reflections on the History of Music Theory and Literature for the 21st Century* ed. Andreas Giger and Thomas Mathieson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 195.

from the norm? What would the listener be expecting here? How does this deviation “trip up” the listener’s internalized kinesthetic movements? And ultimately and most importantly, *why is that funny?*

I. Convention and Expectation in Instrumental Music

Music of all epochs functions within specific conventions that composers and performers alike codify. In his 2007 book *Music in the Galant Style*, Robert Gjerdingen details various melodic and harmonic schemata by focusing on eighteenth-century galant music for the court, chapel, and theatre. Each schema possesses its own melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic traits; combinations of schema create increasingly complex musical phrases. After identifying twelve such schema, Gjerdingen uses these musical building blocks to distill entire pieces into their most basic motivic components. Using hundreds of musical works as its basis, Gjerdingen’s schema theory calls attention not only to the various conventions of eighteenth-century galant style but also to how those conventions permeated the musical culture. Although the goal of his book is not to hypothesize on the implications of these findings, Gjerdingen’s work nonetheless raises the question: What was the effect of music saturated with only a handful of elements? Surely audiences accustomed to music steeped in these schemata would readily recognize when motives were manipulated, and composers of that time had the ability to play on those expectations with their music.

While Gjerdingen’s schema theory focuses primarily on the musical surface, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy’s *Sonata Theory* centers on large-scale musical

form. Hepokoski and Darcy develop paradigms for musical form and then discuss the repercussions when those molds are broken. They note that a piece's essence "resides in its individualized dialogue with socially established norms."⁵ Deviations from those norms thus speak on more than just a musical level; they highlight a decision by the composer to go against the grain of recognized social convention. Sonata Theory relies heavily on the concepts of expectation and denial that are historically and culturally determined at a specific time and place. Certain formal processes are so deeply ingrained that listeners subconsciously anticipate them. When those elements fail to manifest, listeners react with various responses: surprise, confusion, or possibly laughter. This recognition of the unexpected will figure heavily into my analysis of humor in the minuet, another musical genre steeped in formal convention.

Thwarted expectations in music will not always result in laughter, of course. Not every formal deviation is meant to be funny, nor is every one composed in a manner that moves the audience to chuckle. Yet as expressed by the anonymous author from the 1800 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Haydn possessed the ability to manipulate the musical syntax of his work in ways that were readily recognized by listeners as "mischievous," "good-natured," and ultimately, humorous.⁶ This notion was not specific to Haydn's contemporaries, however, and academics have continued to write on the topic for over two hundred years. Musical humor falls

⁵ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 244.

⁶ "Briefe an einen Freund über die Musik in Berlin," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 130.

under the umbrella of musical discourse, a topic that has intrigued, invited, and indeed frustrated scholars for decades. To fully understand humor in Haydn's music, then, one must first look into the various ways he engages in musical discourse—not just the humorous discourse but also simply the ways he chooses to communicate musically with the audience.

II. Haydn's Musical Discourse

All music has the potential to convey meaning, be it a specific topic or a more abstract idea, thought, or emotion. Leonard B. Meyer opened the door for discussion on this notion in his influential book *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1956). Meyer's book centers around the idea that "affect or emotion-felt is aroused when an expectation—a tendency to respond—activated by the musical stimulus situation is temporarily inhibited or permanently blocked."⁷ Expectations can be as specific as a particular harmony at a precise time (e.g., a root position tonic chord on the downbeat to conclude an authentic cadence) or they can be much more general, such as the various iterations of music that could satisfactorily fulfill the implications of the title "Minuet." When those expectations are somehow stifled, the listener has an affective response as a result.

Meyer discusses both form and style as they relate to expectation. Once listeners are made aware of the form of a piece—oftentimes simply by knowing its title—their expectations then proceed *ahead* of the listening experience. That is,

⁷ Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 31.

since they know what to expect as dictated by conventions of form, their interactions with the music from that point forward exist against the backdrop of those expectations. Likewise, Meyer considers musical styles to be “complex systems of probability” within which meaning depends on the relationship between the music’s own elements and all other possible elements within that style.⁸ The less probable a musical event is within a particular style, the stronger the listener’s affective response when it does occur.

Meyer’s work initiated a torrent of related scholarship that continues to hypothesize and theorize on how we might define and elucidate the amorphous topic of musical meaning. Recently, Melanie Lowe tackled the topic of musical meaning in the Classical symphony. Lowe makes an especially relevant point in writing that a piece of music may contain multiple, simultaneous meanings by virtue of its interactions with other musical idioms. She writes that musical meanings are always “in a continuous dialogue with the meanings of other musical entities.”⁹ In terms of the minuet, one way to cull significance from the music would thus be to discuss how it interacts with the implications of the minuet as a dance idiom—specifically, the conventions inextricably linked to the title “minuet” itself. How do uncharacteristic elements within the *music* gain extra significance due to their “continuous dialogue” with the accepted, conventional music of the minuet *dance*? Furthermore, how does that dialogue convey humor?

⁸ Ibid., 54.

⁹ Melanie Lowe, *Pleasure and Meaning in the Classical Symphony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 12.

Since humor is a topic naturally linked to the spoken or written word (e.g., jokes, puns, and irony), several scholars have chosen to analyze Haydn's musical play with the help of parallels drawn from literature and linguistics. In a 1991 article, Mark Evan Bonds suggests direct comparisons between Haydn's music and the writings of English novelist Laurence Sterne (1713–68). Interestingly, Bonds is not the first scholar to compare Haydn and Sterne. Writing in 1801 as part of a series of articles for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Johann Karl Friedrich Triest commented that Haydn could most easily be compared “in respect to his humor, his original wit, with Lor. Sterne.”¹⁰ Although he does not elaborate further, Triest's comparison points to a stylistic similarity noted even by Haydn's contemporaries. Nearly two centuries later, Bonds expands upon this similarity in his article.

Sterne was best known for his satirical novel in nine volumes, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–67), which blends melancholic, sympathetic humor with moments of bawdy comedy; it is also a masterful play on the expectations of the readers. Bonds claims that Sterne's use of various types of humor, from subtle to crass, parallels Haydn's application of humor on both deep structural levels as well as the more readily heard musical surface. Likewise, the way Sterne embeds plot twists at nearly every turn throughout the nine volumes is, Bonds argues, a literary analogue to Haydn's compositional style. This latter comparison fuels Bonds's discussion of irony in Haydn's music.

¹⁰ Johann Karl Friedrich Triest, “Bemerkung über die Ausbildung der Tonkunst in Deutschland im achtzehnten Jahrhundert,” *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3, no. 24 (Mar. 11, 1801), 405–10.

Sterne's writings require the reader to reflect upon their passively held assumptions, as those assumptions are challenged at every turn in the plot. Similarly, Haydn's compositions create what Bonds calls "a world of mirrors reflected within mirrors."¹¹ Every violation of convention forces the listener to examine the expectations they hold for the music. Moreover, as Bonds writes, "by violating the conventions of form so flagrantly, Haydn calls attention to them, thereby asserting his presence not only within, but also outside the work."¹² Haydn's various acts of circumventing musical expectations—what George Edwards calls the composer's "ironic distance from goals of formalistic aesthetics"¹³—can be read as a commentary on both the musical work and the art form itself. And as Lowe has argued, this commentary rings especially true for the minuet, a dance that was largely ceremonial and eventually fell out of favor because it was deemed pretentious and stuffy. Any manipulations, blatant or subtle, that would wreak havoc on the dance's execution could be interpreted as Haydn's own acknowledgment of the stodginess of the dance itself and the amusement he would find in overthrowing it. As such, direct "violations" of musical form are extremely important when considering Haydn's minuet movements, as the underlying choreographic conventions dictate a rigid adherence to expected phrase and harmonic rhythms.

¹¹ Mark Evan Bonds, "Haydn, Laurence Sterne, and the Origins of Musical Irony," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 44, no. 1 (1991): 64.

¹² *Ibid.*, 72.

¹³ George Edwards, "The Nonsense of an Ending: Closure in Haydn's String Quartets," *The Musical Quarterly* 75, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 251.

Bonds focuses on the rhetorical process of Haydn's work as a whole, rather than highlighting any one musical form or element, and theorizes on how that process can be perceived as ironic. He furthers this view by building an analogy between musical form and literary narrative: both exist as a conventional framework within which the action proceeds. While literature has a narrator to move the plot along and maintain a clear trajectory of action, purely instrumental music relies instead on its form to act as both boundary and guide to the musical events. In the case of Haydn's work, his music "often calls attention to its own structural rhetoric" by way of large-scale formal deviations.¹⁴ These blatant breaks from the norm call attention to themselves so strongly that listeners are forced not only to take notice but also to examine their own deep-seated expectations for musical form and convention.

Another scholar, Tom Beghin, also analyzes music using the elements of rhetoric, harkening back to the ancient Greeks in his exploration of rhetorical processes in Haydn's keyboard sonatas. Using a variety of rhetorical figures as his basis—in particular, *dubatio*, or casting doubt—Beghin discusses how expectation plays into both performer delivery and audience reception at pivotal moments in the music. Likewise, in her doctoral dissertation, Yifat Shohat uses Classical rhetoric to guide her analysis of Haydn's entire oeuvre. Acknowledging that the use of rhetorical terms as analogies for musical process is not one universally deemed appropriate among scholars, Shohat nonetheless suggests that "given the temporal dimension in which both music and the verbal realm operate, one can regard Haydn

¹⁴ Ibid., 70.

as an orator whose tools are not words but notes, to be crafted with the ongoing aim of positive audience reception.”¹⁵

In his compositions that invoke humor, Haydn’s musical discourse seems to rely a great deal on expectation and denial, often forcing his listeners to reflect upon their ingrained musical and social cultures. Just as Lowe notes that musical meaning is a topic nearly impossible to define, so too can be said for musical humor. Haydn’s listeners have undoubtedly identified elements of humor in his music, a connection recognized by both his contemporaries as well as current scholars; the tantalizing question is not *if* the humor is there, but *how* it works. Several scholars have tackled this question with varying scopes and degrees of success, and I review them in the following pages.

III. Wit, Humor, and Haydn’s Music

In 1979, Jane Perry-Camp embarked on an ambitious attempt to overview the aesthetic of humor in late Classical instrumental music. Her article focuses on the unavoidable “funny” pieces such as Haydn’s Op. 33, no. 2 (Hob. III:38, “The Joke”) and Symphony No. 94 (Hob. I:94, “Surprise”) as well as Mozart’s *Ein musikalischer Spass*, K. 522. One category of humor she highlights results from what she terms “musical onomatopoeia:” the ticking of the clock in Haydn’s Symphony No. 101 (Hob. I:101, “The Clock”), the sleigh bells and horse hooves in Leopold

¹⁵ Yifat Shohat, “Haydn’s Musical Rhetoric: Compositional Strategy, Audience Reception, and Connection with Classical Oration” (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 2006), 1.

Mozart's *Die musikalische Schlittenfahrt*, and the "clucking" of the oboe that gave Haydn's Symphony No. 83 (Hob. I:83, "La Poule") its nickname.¹⁶

Another class of musical humor that Perry-Camp discusses arises from instances of "strange and comical sounds"—the bassoon's braying in the *Largo cantabile* movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 93 (Hob. I:93) and the French horns' trills, sounding "somewhat like an elephant in heat,"¹⁷ in Mozart's *Ein musikalischer Spass*. Like musical onomatopoeia, these moments trigger laughter because of their immediate aural relationship to something surprisingly outside the scope of a Classical symphony. In the case of these particular musical sounds, humor is magnified by their brash and almost vulgar qualities. Although Perry-Camp also makes brief mention of more abstract tactics of musical humor—for example, Haydn's use of silence in the finale of Op. 33, no. 2, or the inescapable theme in the fourth movement of Mozart's "Haffner" Serenade, K. 250—much of her discussion relies on types of humor that, as Bonds puts it, "even the most tin-eared of audience members can appreciate."¹⁸

Perry-Camp's focus is on the musical foreground, the "elephant in heat" that is nearly obscene in its obviousness. This isolation of surface-level effects excludes

¹⁶ Drawing from Peircean semiotics for a moment, perhaps a more accurate description of these musical elements would be "humorous musical icons." They invoke laughter in part because they sound out of place in the context of a concert hall; yet they are also funny because they so closely represent animals and objects one is scarcely expecting to hear reference to in a symphony.

¹⁷ Jane Perry-Camp, "A Laugh a Minuet: Humor in Late Eighteenth-Century Music," *College Music Symposium* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1979): 25–26.

¹⁸ Mark Evan Bonds, "Listening to Listeners," in *Communication in Eighteenth Century Music*, ed. Kofi Agawu and Danuta Mirka (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39.

instances of subtler humor that often occur at deeper structural levels within the music. The moments that she alludes to in her fleeting mentions of false recapitulations and blundered counterpoint exemplify precisely the type of humor that Haydn mastered over the course of his career, and which guides my own research. Several scholars since Perry-Camp have continued to study humor in Classical instrumental music; however, only a small but significant group of them have focused their energies on Haydn.

Without a doubt, Gretchen Wheelock's studies of Haydn and humor adopt the broadest scope to date. Her 1979 dissertation "Wit, Humor, and the Instrumental Music of Joseph Haydn" explores humor from the standpoint of various musical elements, including harmony, melody, phrase rhythm, and form. Wheelock takes a historically informed approach to both her terminology and her analysis of the effects of various musical elements—that is, she seeks to define and experience musical humor as would one of Haydn's contemporaries. Whereas she devotes an entire chapter to the minuet, Wheelock's focus throughout her dissertation remains the symphonic literature, leaving the string quartet minuets still unexplored.

Wheelock chooses the terms *Witz* (wit) and *Laune* (humor) to discuss Haydn's compositional devices. She notes that "neither term implies laughter necessarily, though both may."¹⁹ Laughter, then, is neither the goal nor a failsafe indicator of Haydn purposefully injecting humor into his music. Throughout her paper Wheelock's goal is to execute her research in a historically informed manner.

¹⁹ Wheelock, "Wit, Humor," 11.

Thus she chooses “wit” and “humor” in large part because *Witz* and *Laune* were the terms most commonly used to describe Haydn’s music during his lifetime.

In her subsequent book, *Haydn’s Ingenious Jestings with Art: Contexts of Musical Wit and Humor* (1992), Wheelock expands upon her previous research. The fourth chapter focuses specifically on Haydn’s jesting within the minuet. Because the minuet form contains various repeated sections, “any irregularity, whether egregious or subtle, would be heard twice in fairly quick succession—and, in the minuet da capo, once and perhaps twice more.”²⁰ Thus by virtue of its very form, the minuet gave listeners ample opportunity to catch any musical jests. Wheelock goes on to describe Haydn’s manipulation of phrase rhythm, harmonic closure, and rustic elements, focusing solely on his symphonic minuets. While she notes that “some of Haydn’s boldest experiments occur in the minuets of his string quartets,”²¹ the limited scope of the chapter does not allow for ample exploration of those minuets. In contrast, I will turn all of my energies to Haydn’s “boldest experiments” as I delve into his string quartet literature.

More recent contributions have adopted a narrower approach than Wheelock’s, resulting in several highly specific and in-depth looks into smaller niches within Haydn’s oeuvre. With his focus on the string quartet literature, David VanderHamm works to develop an understanding of Haydn’s musical play from the viewpoint of modern-day listeners. In his 2013 master’s thesis, “The Listening Moment: Ludic Wit in Haydn’s String Quartets,” VanderHamm defines musical wit as

²⁰ Gretchen Wheelock, *Haydn’s Ingenious Jestings with Art: Contexts of Wit and Humor* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 55.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 63.

a phenomenological event occurring “within the lived experience of a perceiving subject,”²² using Haydn’s Op. 33, no. 2 as well as the slow movements of the Op. 76 quartets as his topics for analysis.

Although VanderHamm adopts the same terminology as Wheelock, preferring “wit” as the most specific word for Haydn’s compositional techniques, the decision to analyze Haydn’s music from the ears of a twenty-first-century listener differs significantly from Wheelock’s approach. Wheelock opts to direct her research and analysis through the lens of eighteenth-century listeners who would have been experiencing Haydn’s music at the time it was being composed. In accepting Wheelock’s perspective, the humorous moments become not only phenomenological events but also musical actions that simultaneously reflect and comment upon the social culture of the time. In contrast, VanderHamm defines Haydn’s musical wit as not just what is present in the music itself, but how it is experienced in the actual listening moment. He goes on to write:

Musical wit is a phenomenon that occurs in a singular moment formed by the interaction between listener and music, establishing unusual or surprising relationships between seemingly incongruous elements. Wit is neither completely contained in the music, nor completely outside of it, but is created by the listener’s perceptual relationship to the music.²³

Although VanderHamm does not completely discount historical context in his exploration of wit in Haydn’s music, his focus lies more in the instantaneous interactions between listener and sound.

²² David VanderHamm, “The Listening Moment: Ludic Wit in Haydn’s String Quartets” (master’s thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2013), 2.

²³ *Ibid.*, 8.

VanderHamm chooses the specific term “wit” because it suits his phenomenological approach. His definition “emphasizes wit as *the moment* when relationships between elements are produced within the listener’s perceptual engagement with the music” (emphasis mine).²⁴ In contrast, he defines both irony and humor as larger scale interactions that build over time; thus wit is instantaneous, whereas both irony and humor develop, at times with the help of witty moments, over time and via retrospective self-reflection.

A 2015 article by Timothy Mastic also uses “wit” as the prime descriptor for Haydn’s music. By combining Hepokoski and Darcy’s Sonata Theory with theories of humor, Mastic explores Haydn’s “recomposed recapitulations.”²⁵ Mastic not only approaches his study, as Wheelock did, with the ears of a Classical audience member, he also defines “wit” in the same aesthetic terms that would have been used in the eighteenth century. Contrary to VanderHamm, who develops a definition of wit that relies on reactions as the event occurs, Mastic’s definition uses eighteenth-century writing as its basis.

English and German writers of Haydn’s time defined wit as a pleasing discovery of similarity between two things previously thought to be unrelated. Mastic cites Friedrich August Weber (1753–1806), who claims that wit arises from “the discovery of unexpected similarities between two musical ideas, and on the surprise of their facile and appropriate combination.”²⁶ Mastic makes a strong point

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Timothy Mastic, “Normative Wit: Haydn’s Recomposed Recapitulations,” *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 2 (June 2015), 3.1.

²⁶ Friedrich August Weber, “Über komische Charakteristik und Karikature in praktischen Musikwerken,” *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3 (1800): 9.

that the definition of wit during Haydn's time was thus very different from wit as we in the twenty-first century understand it and apply it to the composer's work. The Classical-era conception of wit focuses on elucidating hidden relationships to please the listener; in contrast, the contemporary understanding of the term relies more on notions of trickery and deception. According to Mastic, the purpose of musical wit was "to please, rather than to deceive, the listener."²⁷ Wheelock likewise notes that "wit in music was thought to display the ingenuity of the composer's art."²⁸ Thus in Haydn's time, wit was not a deceptive device of musical trickery, as much of the current literature asserts.

As Mastic and Wheelock both take great pains to do, I approach Haydn's music as a Classical audience member would—with eighteenth-century ears as well as an eighteenth-century conception of wit. In his article, Mastic studies Haydn's artful construction of recapitulations that meld prior material in ways that audience members would, upon recognition of the recycled material, find witty—witty in the Classical sense. In contrast my focus is on precisely the type of contemporary wit that Mastic highlights as problematic: the blatant manipulation of a highly structured musical form that would be immediately recognized as not a pleasant and unexpected congruence but a startling and, at times, nearly slapstick mangling of an aristocratic dance. Since my goal is to listen *and think* as Haydn's contemporaries would have, "wit" is too subtle a term and does not fully capture the disruption and confusion listeners may have experienced. To borrow again from

²⁷ Mastic, "Normative Wit," 2.2.

²⁸ Wheelock, "Wit, Humor," 2.

Wheelock, “jesting” is a more accurate description of the musical processes I highlight.

Haydn’s ability to jest effectively within the minuet relied heavily on the fact that the idiom itself was steeped in tradition as well as historical, social, and cultural implications. Playing on the expectations of his listeners thus became more than an act of musical jesting; it gave audience members the opportunity to reflect upon their preconceived notions about how the music “should” behave. The musical humor Haydn employed thus functioned in part as a thread of social commentary, with the minuet as its liaison for communication.

IV. The Minuet as a Vehicle for Humor

I discuss the history of the minuet in depth in Chapter 3, but it is important to note here that its status as an aristocratic dance was a ubiquitous feature recognized across Europe. Because of its longstanding history as a courtly dance, the minuet became an emblem of the upper class; this symbolism was a defining feature of even those minuets not meant for the ballroom. As such, it developed into a major component of what Kofi Agawu would call the minuet’s “musical code:” a combination of various musical elements, combined with extramusical factors like social and cultural climate, that infuse a work with meaning.²⁹ In order to fully understand a piece of music, Agawu asserts, one must fully engage with all aspects

²⁹ Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009): 6.

of the work's musical code. In the case of the minuet, its communicative properties rely in large part on its position as a status symbol.

As an emblem of nobility, the minuet carried implications for not only the style of the music itself—stately, uncomplicated, and elegant—but also the relationship of the music to the choreography. In his essay on music and dance in the *ancien régime*, Lawrence Zbikowski discusses the inextricable partnership between the elements of dance music and associated dance steps: “A close affinity between the steps of a dance and the music for that dance is part of the legacy of French noble dance of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, which had as its ideal a perfect alignment of choreography and music.”³⁰ Even as the proliferation of noble dance gave way to more popular rustic dances in the middle and late eighteenth century, the tradition of the *ancien régime* remained, and with it expectations about music related to the noble dances. The minuet in particular was to remain dignified, reserved, and free of popular or even overly sprightly musical elements.

Since dancing was the most popular social activity in Europe in the late eighteenth century, music for dancing permeated the culture. As such, composers had at their fingertips a plethora of dance references to utilize in their music that listeners would readily recognize. These topical references could be explicit—for example the piece or movement's title—or what Eric McKee calls “noncorrelative elements:”

³⁰ Lawrence Zbikowski, “Music and Dance in the *Ancien Régime*,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 145.

Such noncorrelative elements may be agents of social, cultural, and/or expressive meanings (as cued by ornamentation, instrumentation, or the overlay of other topics), or they may be a result of music's tonal syntax and formal conventions (such as cadential types, patterns of thematic repetition, and counterpoint).³¹

Because audience members could easily identify explicit dance topics, composers were then afforded the leeway to experiment with noncorrelative elements as a way to expressively enrich the music. As Michael Klein notes, "topics invite connections among musical texts;"³² any explicit or noncorrelative topics a composer utilizes may thus open the door for listeners to draw associations to otherwise unrelated musical works.

Meaning in the Classical minuet was also a product of the listener's relationship to the dance itself. Although the dance was most closely associated with the aristocratic nobility, members of all social classes would have been at the very least fleetingly familiar with the conventional steps and musical characteristics, and would have known what to expect from a standard minuet. Still, Melanie Lowe argues that a listener's social status would have impacted their listening experience. Whereas a member of the nobility would have likely identified and felt comfortable with the highbrow character of the music and perceived it as "a public musical affirmation of his aristocratic status,"³³ a member of the bourgeoisie may have associated the very same strains of music with oppression and resentment toward a

³¹ Eric McKee, "Ballroom Dances of the Late Eighteenth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 165.

³² Michael Klein, *Intertextuality in Western Art Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 62.

³³ Lowe, *Pleasure and Meaning*, 111.

stifling upper class. Thus by virtue of its strong link to social class and cultural climate, the same piece of music could be received in vastly different ways according to the listener's place in the social hierarchy.

Zbikowski has also written extensively on music's role as an auditory analogy to human life: "The most primary and basic function of music is to provide sonic analogues for various dynamic processes that are central to human experience, processes that include the movements of our body through space."³⁴ Certain musical figures act as sonic representations for human actions or events—an authentic cadence, for example, may be understood as a musical analogue for repose or finality. Many of these musical gestures, such as an arc-like melodic line or a *marcato* fanfare, can also easily transfer to representative kinesthetic actions—the sweep of an arm, the marching of feet. Although none of these associations are explicit, they seem to be universally felt by listeners at all levels of musical training.

In a 2008 essay, Zbikowski looks at the grammar of late eighteenth-century dance music and the ways composers manipulated that grammar to create new expressive possibilities in their work. Zbikowski, like many other scholars, believes that music possesses its own rules of syntax (tonal schema) and grammar (individual melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic events), much like any spoken language. He claims that "tonal syntax—which is often thought of as *the* syntax of music—provides a way to reinforce [musical] grammar,"³⁵ keeping it within the

³⁴ Lawrence Zbikowski, "Musical Gesture and Musical Grammar: A Cognitive Approach," in *New Perspectives on Music in Gesture*, ed. Anthony Gritten and Elaine King (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 91.

³⁵ Lawrence Zbikowski, "Dance Topoi, Sonic Analogues, and Musical Grammar: Communicating with Music in the Eighteenth Century," in *Communication in*

boundaries of what is expected. Zbikowski discusses dance topics—specific rhythmic and melodic gestures associated with such widely known dances as the waltz, minuet, and bourrée—and how composers might use them outside traditional dance movements to infuse the music with external references. Specifically, these dance topics could trigger thoughts of the actual dance, which would in turn conjure up associations to the choreography. As Zbikowski notes, “even when the dances were no longer danced the choreography suggested by their rhythmic patterns provided an expressive resource for the composer.”³⁶ Furthermore, when those topics are used in unexpected ways, such as a minuet with phrase lengths that are incongruent with the minuet dance steps, it can be assumed that the listeners would immediately identify the music as incongruous with their expectations. Even for those minuets not meant for dancing, “departures in the artful minuet from patterns normative in the dance might be especially striking to those involved as participants in that tradition.”³⁷ That is, listeners in the concert hall were just as likely to recognize and understand a topically dissonant minuet from their seats as they would be from the ballroom dance floor.

In her book on the Classical symphony, Melanie Lowe also discusses meaning in the concert minuet, explaining that the major affective characteristic of the minuet was its nobility. This quality, combined with the minuet’s relatively clear and predictable structure, rendered the musical form a model of the Enlightenment

Eighteenth Century Music, ed. Kofi Agawu and Danuta Mirka (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 289.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 292.

³⁷ Wheelock, *Haydn’s Ingenious Jestings*, 56.

aesthetic of *noble simplicité*.³⁸ In this sense, simplicity is seen not as a deficit but as an aesthetic goal. It invokes associations to the majestic, direct, and unadorned—qualities Haydn managed to maintain within his minuets while also slyly inserting twists of humor.

A 2002 article by Lowe also focuses on symphonic minuets, this time exploring specific cases of musical irony in the work of Haydn. Throughout the article Lowe cites the music's conflict with its own title as its deepest incongruity. Simply by virtue of its title, a "Minuet" movement assumes implied musical and expressive elements, all linked to the aristocratic courtly dance. In his 2002 essay "Communication and Verisimilitude in the Eighteenth Century" Paul Cobley agrees, writing: "genre should be understood as a set of expectations on the part of the audiences."³⁹ By the late eighteenth century, the noble and subdued style of the minuet was a deeply rooted expectation held by both the elite social class as well as the middle and lower classes. Haydn's rejection of many of these cultural standards in his symphonic minuets strongly defies the listener's expectations; the movement's violation of its very title thus becomes its most prominent characteristic.

³⁸ Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68) characterized Greek art as possessing "*noble simplicité et calme grandeur*" ("noble simplicity and quiet grandeur") in his 1764 work *l'Histoire de l'Art de l'Antiquité*. This aesthetic included features like clean lines, strong poses, and uncomplicated subjects. Although Winckelmann used the term solely in reference to art, its application to music included such characteristics as clear harmonies, lively and pleasing melodies, and direct emotion. Contrarily, it discouraged such elements as polyphony, fugal writing, and complex counterpoint.

³⁹ Paul Cobley, "Communication and Verisimilitude in the Eighteenth Century," in *Communication in Eighteenth Century Music*, ed. Kofi Agawu and Danuta Mirka (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24.

Lowe specifically chooses the term “irony” to describe the topical interactions within Haydn’s symphonic minuets.

The dance movement whose content remains true to its title appears all the more conservative, restrained, even pompous. In short, its air of refinement and noble character now sound exaggerated and forced, suggesting that the dance, like the *ancien régime* itself, is in jeopardy of collapsing under the weight of its own presumed importance.⁴⁰

In Lowe’s words, the minuet “falls from grace.” The irony she identifies results from a self-consciousness Haydn brings to the minuet movements. By adding in elements of other styles—counterpoint associated with ecclesiastical music, unrestrained *Sturm und Drang* affect, and in the late symphonies, rustic dance topics—he enriches the expressive palette of the music, infusing it with a layer of social commentary absent in “well-behaved” minuets. These elements also clash with the nobility of the courtly dance and the minuet topic itself, thus challenging the music’s stately status. In response, the minuets that abide by the rules now come across to the audience as stuffy and self-righteous; Haydn’s manipulations of the genre become social commentary, rendering a presumably noble dance an ironic parody of itself.

One theorist who stands in strong disagreement to Lowe and Cobley’s statements regarding the implications of the “Minuet” title is Kofi Agawu. He addresses this before analyzing the first of several minuets in his 1991 book *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music*. Agawu states that even though a movement may be titled “Minuet,” “we cannot assume a fixed generic

⁴⁰ Melanie Lowe, “Falling from Grace: Irony and Expressive Enrichment in Haydn’s Symphonic Minuets,” *The Journal of Musicology* 19, no. 1 (winter 2002): 211.

identity; only an inspection of the actual music will reveal whether title and contents are congruent.”⁴¹ He goes on to mention other reasons a piece might hold the “Minuet” name: perhaps the title is simply a “point of departure” for the compositional process,⁴² or a label applied after the fact when the composer realized his creation was quite minuet-like. Both of these situations may have, in fact, happened from time to time; yet neither alters how the *listener* reacts to hearing a piece they assume to be a minuet. My analysis centers upon the *listening experience* of Haydn’s minuets, and as such, I take the approach of a listener who, upon seeing the title “Minuet,” would enter into the listening experience carrying a set of expectations about the music. Any analyst would agree that an “inspection of the actual music” is crucial to assessing its relationship to the title and overall conventions of the genre. However, there also must be at least some, if not a significant amount of weight given to the title itself in order to account for the preconceived expectations listeners could bring into their experience with the music.

Another scholar, Eugene Beenk, also focuses on the symphonic minuets in his 1969 dissertation “Ländler Elements in the Symphonic Minuets of Joseph Haydn.” Specifically, Beenk analyzes Haydn’s use of the Ländler within the trio sections of six of his symphonies. Beenk’s approach is largely quantitative: he studies ninety-seven Ländler for common melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic elements, and then reviews all of Haydn’s symphonic minuets to find those that display enough of the

⁴¹ Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 40.

⁴² *Ibid.*

characteristic Ländler traits to evoke feelings of the folk dance. He identifies various elements, such as melodic fragments that mimic yodeling or bagpipes, which invoke the Ländler and can be perceived as folk references in Haydn's music. Although Beenk doesn't go into detail about the implications of fusing folk music into a traditionally high-brow dance movement, he does allude to the significance of what Lowe would refer to as "topical dissonance," noting that Haydn "weaves these tunes into the fabric of the minuet-and-trio form which places them in a complex setting that greatly surpasses the formal limits of a pure folk Ländler."⁴³ Not only are the limits of the Ländler stretched, but injecting lower class rustic dance topics into an aristocratic dance form also jeopardizes the perceived nobility of the minuet itself.

The crux of my thesis hinges on the acceptance that listeners in Haydn's time would have understood the title "Minuet" to mean a very specific thing: a courtly dance comprised of a series of pre-choreographed steps of a certain length and occurring in a standard order. I propose that when the music behaves in an unexpected way that renders it incompatible with the choreography, listeners would not only recognize but also find humor in these moments. A major component of both the listener's recognition as well as their amusement lies not only in their knowledge of the concept of a minuet, but also of the specific dance steps associated with it. I argue that much of the humor embedded within Haydn's minuets results from the distortion of the relationship between the music and the choreography. Yet since the Opp. 76 and 77 minuets are for listening and not for

⁴³ Eugene Beenk, "Ländler Elements in the Symphonic Minuets of Joseph Haydn" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1969), 90.

dancing, the audience member would have to be internally performing the various *pas de menuet* steps.

Zbikowski and Wheelock have commented on the inextricable link between the music and the choreography, even for those minuets not being explicitly danced; Eric McKee corroborates their claims as well. McKee argues that listeners in the late eighteenth century would have indeed experienced an unconscious internalization of choreography upon hearing music containing dance topics. He states that “topical references to current dances aroused spontaneous mimetic bodily participation” within audience members.⁴⁴ These mimetic responses were an unconscious result of lifelong exposure to a musical culture where dance music indicated a specific set of steps. Zbikowski agrees, noting that “the two were likely inseparable: hearing the music summoned the steps of the dance, and seeing the movements of the dance summoned the sound of the music.”⁴⁵ This inextricable link between music and choreography combined with the listener’s unconscious and internalized kinesthetic reaction to hearing dance music builds the foundation for my study.

Meaning in music is a thorny topic for any theorist to tackle; humor in music is no different. Numerous scholars have attempted to address both, with varying scopes and degrees of success. The minuet presents a particularly tantalizing topic for discussion, as its position within the social and cultural atmosphere of eighteenth century Europe renders it an especially marked musical topic. Although Lowe discusses irony in Haydn’s minuets, and Wheelock briefly touches upon

⁴⁴ McKee, “Ballroom Dances of the Late Eighteenth Century,” 165.

⁴⁵ Zbikowski, “Music and Dance in the *Ancien Régime*,” 156.

elements of humor in a handful of minuet movements, their focus is largely on the symphonic repertoire. Furthermore, while both mention the potential for humor arising from incongruence between the music and the anticipated choreography, they leave the topic rather unexplored. This gap in the literature is precisely where my research fits: I explore not just the *presence* of musical humor within Haydn's string quartet minuets, but the *workings* of that musical humor. Specifically, I discuss how the music of the manipulated minuets struck Classical listeners as funny because of their bungled mimetic processes—the imagined dancing in their minds suddenly failed to match the music presented to them, causing them to internally stumble and scramble to realign choreography and music.

I proceed, then, with a chapter dedicated to humor theory. I explore not only the traditional theories of humor as detailed by philosophers and psychologists, but also how those theories have been applied to music. My survey of current music theoretical approaches to humor culminates in a crucial component of my analytical model: how, precisely, I will discuss humor in the Opp. 76 and 77 minuets, using historical humor theories as well as studies in music aesthetics as the foundation for my narratives.

2. Aspects of Humor Within Western History and in Tonal Music

A clear understanding of humor—what it meant in the past, how that meaning evolved, and what it means today—is necessary for any study of humor in music. The contemporary definition of humor is “the quality of being amusing or comic,”¹ and numerous theories have attempted to explain the intricate conditions under which one might perceive humor or why the body engages in the physical act of laughter. This chapter introduces three theories of humor: Superiority Theory, Relief Theory, and Incongruity Theory. Each identifies a single core factor that leads humans to perceive humor and, oftentimes, to laugh. Although these theories are widely viewed as distinct philosophies, none is mutually exclusive from the others; in some cases, writings from the same philosopher can be used to support multiple theories. Thus, I consider the tripartite framework of humor theories as tenuous at best. After summarizing the three central humor theories I advance to a “blended” approach to humor that amalgamates Superiority, Relief, and Incongruity Theories. Finally, I provide an overview of humor as it pertains specifically to music; I introduce the major proponents of aesthetics in music as well as scholars who have focused specifically on humor in music. This investigation will lead me to provide a theoretical framework for analyzing humor in music, which I then apply to concert minuet music.

Because of its history as a choreographed dance, the minuet as a musical form is steeped in tradition. Audience members during Haydn’s career would have

¹ “Humor,” *Oxford Dictionaries*, Oxford University Press, accessed January 4, 2017, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/humor.

strong expectations for the music of a concert minuet, influenced by their experiences with the dance choreography. These expectations build a scenario ripe with potential for musical incongruities, in the moments when the minuet music contradicts the minuet choreography; in some situations, the denial of expectations may bring the listener amusement. The genre's association with dance steps also links the music intimately to physiological responses beyond those normally associated with the listening experience. This strong association between the body and the music could augment the listener's reaction to musical events.

I. Superiority Theory: Humor as a Moral Compass

Whereas in the modern Western world laughter is perceived as a sign of gaiety and pleasure, many ancient Greeks and early Christians denounced the acts of joking, laughing, and even smiling. Displaying joy and engaging in lighthearted activities were considered signs of weak moral character. Philosophers expounded upon the notion that what one perceives as funny is a reflection upon one's ethical values; many postulated that humor arises when one feels superior to others in some way. Writings on Superiority Theory focus on three primary elements: the simultaneity of pleasure and pain, the necessity of deformity, and the humor one can find in self-reflective hindsight.

Pleasure and Pain

Likely the first documented writings on humor come from Western philosopher Plato (c. 429–347 BCE). One of the harshest critics of laughter, Plato's description of laughter cites the simultaneity of positive and negative emotions. He

writes in *Philebus* (360 BCE): “When we laugh at the folly of our friends,² pleasure, in mingling with envy, mingles with pain, for envy has been acknowledged by us to be mental pain, and laughter is pleasant; and so we envy and laugh at the same moment.”³ Plato clarifies his use of the word “envy” in this context by saying that “the envious man finds something pleasing in the misfortunes of others.”⁴ The mental pain of this envy occurs simultaneously with the pleasure of laughing, and finding pleasure in another’s misfortune places the laughing party in a position of superiority. Plato thus denounces laughter as a sign of diminished morality and undesirable character.

Numerous philosophers since Plato have noted the combination of pleasure and pain as a core element in the complex human emotion of humor. In his 1649 treatise *Les Passions de l’Âme* (*Passions of the Soul*) René Descartes (1596–1650) writes that one of the principal causes of laughter is “part of the blood being driven to the heart by some slight emotion of hatred, assisted by the surprise of wonder.”⁵ For Descartes, laughter arises from the clashing of two emotions: the negative

² As translator Benjamin Jowett (1817–93) would have known it, the word “folly” refers to foolishness. From the Medieval Latin *follus* (adj.) “foolish” and the Vulgar Latin *follis* (n.) “empty-headed person,” the word developed into the Old French *fol* (n.) “madman, idiot, jester.” This evolved into the French *folie* (adj.) “madness, stupidity.” By the 13th century, the Middle English term “folly” came to mean “mental weakness or foolish behavior;” this definition has remained prominent through the present day. Thus Jowett’s use of “folly” here denotes foolishness rather than mental instability, lending it a more innocuous connotation (Douglas Harper, Online Etymology Dictionary).

³ Plato, *Philebus* (360 BCE), in *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 4, trans. Benjamin Jowett (London: Oxford University Press, 1892), 624.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 545.

⁵ René Descartes, *Passions of the Soul* (1649) in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth Haldane and G. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 56.

feelings of hatred and the positive feelings of wonder. In his radical—and rather poorly received—1932 book *The Secret of Laughter*, Anthony Ludovici (1882–1971) writes: “I am going to suggest that there is something sinister in laughter.”⁶ Ludovici does not argue that laughter is wholly evil; rather, he claims that it contains elements of the sinister, thus blending the pleasure of humor with the distress of the something much less desirable. As recently as 1985 Victor Raskin (b. 1944) wrote: “Laughter was born out of hostility . . . All the current types of wit and humor retain evidence of this hostile origin.”⁷

In addition to a focus on pleasure and pain, Ludovici further advances an evolutionary approach to laughter. He states that those in the position of “inferior adaptation” become the subject of laughter by others better adapted for survival.⁸ Those experiencing more desirable adaptation feel immune to the plight of the less adapted, and their laughter stems from a place of superiority. Similarly, Albert Rapp (1904–83) describes the laughter of ridicule as an evolutionary precursor to congenial, lighthearted laughter.⁹ He analyzes the process of many situations that result in laughter: “we find (a) aggressive comparison, (b) realization of the other’s

⁶ Anthony Ludovici, *The Secret of Laughter* (London: Constable, 1932), 17.

⁷ Victor Raskin, *Semantic Mechanisms of Humor* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1985), 11.

⁸ Ludovici, *Secret*, 18.

⁹ The noun “ridicule” derives from the Latin *ridiculum* (n.) “laughing matter, joke.” The contemporary meaning developed in the 1670s: “an absurd thing,” and the subsequent verb, “to make ridiculous.” Similarly, “ridiculous” derives from the Latin *ridiculus* (adj.) “laughable, funny, absurd” and *ridere* (v.) “to laugh” (Douglas Harper, Online Etymology Encyclopedia).

weakness, (c) laughter.”¹⁰ The pleasure of laughter comes only after the hostility of comparison and the subsequent recognition of another’s deficiency.

Deformity and Defect

Ludovici and Rapp’s perspective on humor relies on the idea that the subject of one’s laughter is in some way evolutionarily inferior. Similarly, many philosophers cite the necessity of a defect in the humor’s subject. In *Poetics* (c. 335 BCE) Aristotle (384–23 BCE) writes that one finds humor in “the Ludicrous,”¹¹ which is “a subdivision of the ugly . . . [in that] it consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or destructive.”¹² He continues, explaining that comedies are “an imitation of characters of a lower type,” which exploit “lower type” characters for humorous value.¹³ A particular flaw in the character—for example, a physical deformity or a mental shortcoming—becomes the focus of ridicule throughout the play. From Aristotle’s description, comedy is good-natured; in judiciously choosing those shortcomings that “are not painful or destructive,” the playwright creates humor without harming its subject. The comic mask is an example: “the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain.”¹⁴ Although this type of humor is not

¹⁰ Albert Rapp, “Toward an Eclectic and Multilateral Theory of Humor,” *The Journal of General Psychology* 37 (January 1947): 208.

¹¹ From the Latin *ludicrum* (n.) “a sport, game, toy, joke, source of amusement” and *ludere* (v.) “to play.” By the early 1600s “ludicrous” (adj.) came to mean “pertaining to play or sport;” by the late 1700s a sense of the ridiculous was also attributed to it. The inclusion of the ridiculous in the connotation of “ludicrous” may contribute to the “subdivision of the ugly” referred to in Butcher’s translation (Douglas Harper, Online Etymology Encyclopedia).

¹² Aristotle, *Poetics* (c. 335 BCE), trans. S.H. Butcher (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1902), 21.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

malicious, its perception still relies on the recognition of one's own superiority—laughing at the shortcomings of a character on stage necessitates that one is aware that, by *not* possessing the exploited fault, they are superior by their very immunity to ridicule.

Aristotle's ideas on the ludicrous are echoed by Anthony Cooper, Lord of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), who wrote: “nothing is ridiculous except what is deform'd.”¹⁵ Comparable to Aristotle's “subdivision of the ugly,” Cooper's interpretation requires an element of abnormality for something to be considered ridiculous.¹⁶ Like Plato, Aristotle, and Cooper before him, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) claims that laughter is often a response to the misfortunes or shortcomings of another. He writes: “the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others.”¹⁷ This passion, Hobbes says, has no specific name; it is only identified by “that distortion of countenance which we call laughter.”¹⁸ He continues: “men laugh at mischances and indecencies, wherein there lieth no wit or jest at all.”¹⁹ These shortcomings, mischances, and indecencies highlight one's own

¹⁵ Anthony Cooper, “Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor” (1709) in *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc., 2001), 80.

¹⁶ From the Latin *ridere* (v.) “to laugh,” *ridiculus* (adj.) “that which excites laughter,” and *ridiculosus* (adj.) “laughable.” The slang extension to mean “outrageous” did not develop until the mid-1800s; thus Cooper's use of the term is in line with the Latin meaning rooted simply in that which causes laughter (Douglas Harper, Online Etymology Dictionary).

¹⁷ Thomas Hobbes, “Human Nature, or the Fundamental Elements of Policy” (1650) in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, Vol. 4, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London: J. Bohn, 1840), 46.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

abilities, Hobbes explains: “men laugh at the infirmities of others, by comparison wherewith their own abilities are set off and illustrated.”²⁰ This type of laughter differs slightly from Cooper’s. For Cooper, the trigger for laughter lies in the *perception* of an abnormality; Hobbes, however, describes a laughter more directly connected to *comparison*. The “infirmities” Hobbes alludes to need not be funny *per se*; they only need to be obvious enough to make the observer feel significantly elevated.

Humor in Self-Reflection

Although Hobbes focuses on laughter elicited by the shortcomings of others, he also mentions those moments in which one laughs at a former, and presumably inferior self: “for men laugh at the follies of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance.”²¹ For example, perhaps somebody spends hours mulling over a baffling riddle. Upon finally uncovering the answer, they may find amusement not only in the riddle itself, but also in how they missed the clue for so long. Now revealed, the key to the riddle seems obvious; humor arises from the reflection on one’s inability to solve a problem that, now elucidated, seems simple.

Plato also values self-awareness when he states: “The ridiculous is in short the specific name which is used to describe the vicious form of a certain habit; and of vice in general it is that kind which is most at variance with the inscription at Delphi,”²² which reads “know thyself.” The ridiculous can be summarized as a lack of

²⁰ Ibid., 46.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Plato, *Philebus* (360 BCE), in *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (London, Oxford University Press, Inc., 1982), 622. The original inscription is “γνώθι σεαυτόν.”

self-awareness; those who laugh at the ridiculous laugh in turn at their own absent self-consciousness.

The stigma surrounding laughter slowly faded, making it socially acceptable to openly express pleasure and joy. These changing views were incompatible with a humor theory founded upon the idea that laughter is a sinister expression of superiority. Arguments arose stating that not all laughter results from the misfortune of others, and not all events that elicit a sense of superiority induce laughter. Babies laugh before they are cognitively able to engage in self-reflection or comparison with others; laughing upon being tickled is not derisive but rather a reaction to physical sensation. Thus, in response to the numerous inadequate elements of Superiority Theory philosophers posited two new theories of humor: Relief Theory and Incongruity Theory.

II. Relief Theory: Humor as a Pressure Valve

Relief Theory is largely a physiological approach to humor.²³ Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), a pioneer of the theory, objects to the notion that laughter only occurs when one feels superior to others. He calls this interpretation “open to the fatal objection, that there are various humiliations to others which produce in us anything but laughter; and . . . it does not apply to the many instances in which no

²³ French philosopher Voltaire surmised that laughter is primarily a physical experience, writing: “The cause of laughter, is one of those things more felt than known.” The original text reads: “La cause de rire, est une de ces choses plus sentries que connues.” Voltaire, *L’Enfant Prodigue* (1736) in *Œuvres de M. de Voltaire* ed. Adrien Jean Quentin Beuchot (Paris: Chez Lefèvre, 1830), 302.

one's dignity is implicated."²⁴ Moreover, Superiority Theory fails to mention the physiological responses to humor—facial contortions, spasms of the abdomen, and occasionally uncontrollable contractions of muscles elsewhere in the body.

Spencer's answer to these inadequacies was to construct a humor theory rooted in the physical act of laughter.

A guiding principle of Relief Theory is that the human body constantly seeks equilibrium, using physiological processes to release accumulated emotional and mental energy. During humorous situations the body amasses energy, perhaps in the form of anticipation of a punch line or surprise from an unexpected witticism. In order to return to a balanced state, the body must somehow expel this stored energy; it does so by engaging in bouts of laughter. Contemporary humor theorist John Morreal (b. 1947) thus dubs Relief Theory the study of "humor as a pressure valve."²⁵ He details how laughter is an experience that often takes over the entire body:

Something happens or someone says a few words, and our eyebrows and cheeks go up, as the muscles around our eyes tighten. The corners of our mouths curl upward, baring our upper teeth. Our diaphragms move up and down in spasms, expelling air from our lungs and making staccato vocal sounds. If the laughter is intense, it takes over our whole bodies. We bend over and hold our stomachs. Our eyes tear. If we had been drinking something, it dribbles out our noses. We may wet our pants. Almost every part of our bodies is involved, but none with any apparent purpose. We are out of control in a way unmatched by any other state short of neurological disease.²⁶

²⁴ Herbert Spencer, "On the Physiology of Laughter (1860)," in *Illustrations of Universal Progress: A Series of Discussions* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), 298.

²⁵ John Morreal, *Comic Relief: A Comprehensive Philosophy of Humor* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 15.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

It may be a misnomer, then, to refer to Relief Theory as a theory of humor; perhaps it may be more accurately considered a theory of *laughter*, attempting to explain why bodies engage in this mysterious physiological response to humor.

Although Relief Theory is a contemporary development, the preoccupation with humor's physical aspects began much earlier. The word "humor" derives from "humorism," a term dating back to ancient medical practices that believed one's physical and emotional states were controlled by various substances, or humors, contained within the body.²⁷ In the book "On Humours" ("περι χυμων") within his *Corpus Hippocraticum*, Greek physician Hippocrates (c. 460–370 BCE) develops a set of humoristic tenets.²⁸ According to these tenets, the four bodily humors—phlegm, blood, yellow bile, and black bile—dictate various temperaments. Relative deficits or surfeits of a particular humor were believed to result in illness or mood imbalances that were relieved only when the humors became regulated. Figure 2.1 summarizes Hippocrates' four bodily humors and the temperaments with which each is associated.

Humorism remained a part of European culture for centuries. Playwrights and authors often developed characters based on established associations between the bodily humors and human temperament. William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

²⁷ It is believed that humorism stems from the Ayurveda (Sanskrit: आयुर्वेद) medicine of India. Ayurveda identifies three bodily humors—*Vāta*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—that dictate each individual's natural temperament. A central concept in Ayurveda medicine is that one can only achieve health, both physical and emotional, when these humors are in balance.

²⁸ Hippocrates, "On Humours" (c. 400 BCE) in Elizabeth Craik, *The 'Hippocratic' Corpus: Content and Context* (London: Routledge, 2015), 129–35.

Figure 2.1. The four bodily humors.

Humor	Temperament	Characteristics
Blood	Sanguine	Playful, carefree, energetic, talkative
Yellow Bile	Choleric	Aggressive, ambitious, restless, impulsive
Black Bile	Melancholic	Quiet, serious, despondent, cautious
Phlegm	Phlegmatic	Calm, thoughtful, patient, caring

refers to the choleric temperament in his famous comedy *The Taming of the Shrew* (c. 1590) when the headstrong Petruchio refuses to eat meat because it “engenders choler, planteth anger;”²⁹ eating the choleric food would only exacerbate his aggressive characteristics.

Although the advancement of medical science disproved the tenets of humorism, medical practitioners continued their attempts to explain the physical act of laughter. Seventeenth-century physicians believed the human nervous system consisted of a complex network of tubes carrying various gases and matter throughout the body. Blockages in these tubes resulted in the accumulation of pressure, and one way to relieve the pressure and stabilize the system was by laughing. Descartes writes:

Laughter consists in the fact that the blood, which proceeds from the right orifice in the heart by the arterial vein, inflating the lungs suddenly and repeatedly, causes the air which they contain to be constrained to pass out from them with an impetus by the windpipe, where it forms an inarticulate and explosive utterance.³⁰

²⁹ William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew* (c. 1590) ed. Philip Parker (San Diego: ICON Group International, Inc., 2005), 90.

³⁰ Descartes, *Passions*, 55.

Similarly, Spencer's theory of humor relies on the principle that a human nervous system in "a state of tension" transfers energy from the affected nerves to other places in the body.³¹ Three such channels exist for these transfers: from nerve to nerve, which results in feelings or ideas; from nerve to motor nerve, resulting in muscular contractions; and from nerve to viscera, which leads to changes in the circulatory and respiratory systems such as heart and breathing rates. Laughter, Spencer explains, is the result of energy transferred from the nerves to the motor nerves and viscera. First affected are the speech and respiratory muscles: the jaws, tongue, and lips as well as the diaphragm and other abdominal muscles. If the stimuli are too great to be contained here, the spasms continue a pathway to the upper extremities. Finally, if necessary the impulses overflow to the neck and back. The more intense the nervous disruption—the funnier the situation is perceived to be—the higher number of motor neurons are recruited, accounting for why we merely smile at a witty pun but may clap our hands, slap our knees, and double over at the waist in response to a particularly funny joke.

Psychologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) also discusses laughter as a form of energy. In his 1905 book *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten (Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious)* he calls laughter energetic "discharge," writing: "Whatever brings a psychical process into connection with others operates against the discharge of the surplus cathexis and puts it to some other use."³²

³¹ Spencer, "Physiology," 300.

³² Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Subconscious* (1905), trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1960), 279. Freud defines "cathexis" as the process of attaching psychic energy to a person, idea, or object. He first introduces the term in his 1895 *Studien über Hysterie (Studies in Hysteria)*.

Surplus cathexis can occur when one psychical process is suddenly interrupted by another; the clash of emotions that results from many jokes can thus create a surplus cathexis. Consider, for example, the following poem by Harry Graham (1874–1936). A quatrain composed of two rhyming couplets in iambic tetrameter, the poem is in the voice of an anonymous narrator:

I had written to Aunt Maud
Who was on a trip abroad
When I heard she'd died of cramp,
Just too late to save the stamp.³³

The first two lines are relatively innocuous. The simplicity of the poem and the regular meter and rhythm may also lull the reader into a sense of passive comfort. In line 3, the reader's primary psychical process shifts to sympathy for the poetic persona. With the discovery of the narrator's true feelings in line 4, however, the reader's sympathy clashes suddenly and unexpectedly with a new psychical process: perhaps anger at the persona's insensitivity, or indignation at his/her rudeness. Yet line 4 also causes the reader to reflect back upon the sincere sympathy felt earlier and realize he/she had been duped by a well-spun joke.

The energy overflow necessary in Relief Theory often requires a clash of some sort, such as the conflict of disparate emotions rendered by the unexpected final line of the Graham poem. This contradiction of emotions leads to a surplus of energy, which in turn is discharged by laughter. In this and many other instances, incongruity leads to such a clash; most commonly, the incongruity highlights an

³³ Harry Graham, "Waste" (1899), in *When Grandmama Fell Off the Boat: The Best of Harry Graham* 2nd ed., ed. Simon Rigge (London: Sheldrake Press, 2009), 53.

inconsistency between what is expected and what actually occurs. Incongruity Theory attempts to explain these mechanisms of humor and laughter.

III. Incongruity Theory: Humor of the Dissimilar

Whereas Superiority Theory views laughter and the motivation for laughter as an indicator of moral shortcomings, Relief Theory considers laughter a utilitarian physiological response to surplus energy. In contrast, Incongruity Theory acknowledges that laughter is oftentimes the result of simple enjoyment. Of these three theories, Incongruity Theory alone addresses both humor and laughter as purely joyful expressions. As Voltaire (1694–1778) suggests in his comedic play *L'Enfant Prodigue* (*The Prodigal Son*), “laughter always arises from gaiety, [which is] incompatible with contempt and indignation.”³⁴ In this view, humor is no longer the moral enemy and laughter is not simply a physical necessity; instead, both humor and laughter are pleasant, benevolent phenomena.

The foundational concept of Incongruity Theory is that one laughs when something violates or is inconsistent with expectations. Such incongruities can range from the blatant and absurd—a dog dressed in a suit and tie might strike one as funny because these clothing items are associated with humans—to more subtle instances such as puns or linguistic turns of phrase. One of the simplest yet most effective ways to highlight an incongruity is through metaphor. To illustrate, Aristotle writes in *Rhetoric* (350 BCE): “liveliness is specially conveyed by metaphor,

³⁴ Voltaire, *L'Enfant Prodigue*, 303. The original text reads: “le rire il entre toujours de la gaïeté, incompatible avec le mépris & l’indignation.”

and by the further power of surprising the hearer . . . because the hearer expected something different.”³⁵ Here Aristotle notes the necessity of listener expectations; Cicero (106–43 BCE), in *On Oratory and Orators* (46 BCE), discusses how expectations lay the foundation for humor: “The most common kind of joke is that in which we expect one thing and another is said: here our own disappointed expectation makes us laugh.”³⁶

Later writers also highlight the importance of denied expectations in the creation of humorous situations. In his 1657 *Lettres Provinciales* (*The Provincial Letters*) philosopher Blaise Pascal (1623–62) states: “Nothing is more calculated to produce laughter than a startling contrast between the thing looked for and the thing looked at.”³⁷ Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) pinpoints the “absurd” as the impetus for humorous situations in his 1790 *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (*Critique of Judgment*),³⁸ calling absurdity the cause for a “lively convulsive laugh . . . an affectation arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing.”³⁹ William Hazlitt (1778–1830) writes in “On Wit and Humor” (1818): “The essence of the laughable then is the incongruous, the disconnecting one idea from

³⁵ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 160.

³⁶ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Oratory and Orators* (46 BCE), in *Cicero On Oratory and Orators with Letters to Quintus and Brutus*, trans. J.S. Watson (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1860), 157.

³⁷ Blaise Pascal, *The Provincial Letters* (1657), trans. Thomas M’Crie, (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1860), 100.

³⁸ The word *absurd* (adj.) is from the Latin *absurdus* (adj.), “out of tune; foolish.” While this, interestingly, seems like a musical interpretation of the word, more modern Latin definitions clarify the term to mean “out of harmony with reason or propriety.” Kant’s use of *absurd* in his discussion of humor highlights how incongruities—being “out of harmony”—can lead to humor.

³⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Kant’s Critique of Judgment* (1790), trans. J.H. Bernard, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1914), 171.

another, or the jostling of one feeling against another.”⁴⁰ All three writers specifically mention the contradiction between two opposing elements, and the importance of emotional trajectory. The clash between expectation and actuality as well as the “jostling” of emotions ultimately leads to laughter.

In addition to failed expectations, another aspect of Incongruity Theory is the subject’s recognition of similarity between two disparate objects or ideas. In 1776 James Beattie (1735–1803) noted:

Laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object or assemblage, or as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them.⁴¹

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), one of the principal voices of Incongruity Theory, writes in his 1818 *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Idea*): “The cause of laughter in every case is simply the incongruity between a concept and the real objects which have been thought through it in some relation.”⁴² Finally, Victor Raskin cites the necessity of “script opposition,” stating that a successful joke “describes a certain ‘real’ situation and evokes another ‘unreal’ situation which . . . is fully or partially incompatible with the former.”⁴³ Opposing scripts need to be similar enough that the listener can believably conceive of them as both compatible and different.

⁴⁰ William Hazlitt, “On Wit and Humor” (1819), in *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845), 4.

⁴¹ James Beattie, “An Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition” (1776), in *Essays*, 3rd ed. (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1779), 320.

⁴² Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea* (1818) 2nd ed., trans. R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Company, 1909), 95.

⁴³ Raskin, *Semantic Mechanisms*, 108.

Despite the fact that Incongruity Theory is the most widely accepted humor theory in the twenty-first century, some theorists and philosophers find it inadequate for many of the same reasons they eventually dismissed Superiority Theory and Relief Theory: humor is far too complex an emotion to be explained by one singular cause. In his criticism of current humor theories, Roger Scruton (b. 1944) writes: "Either they cover all examples of amusement by being made so vague as to be insignificant; or else they are given a precise meaning only to exclude many of the things at which we are prone to laugh."⁴⁴ As a result, recent philosophers have attempted to form a more universal conception of humor by combining components of Superiority, Relief, and Incongruity Theories.

IV. Bridging Gaps: Blended Approaches to Humor

To date, no universally satisfying theory of humor exists. Instead, scholars have advanced a variety of lenses through which we can appreciate the many facets of this complex human emotion. In the following discussion I explore the work of three contemporary philosophers, highlighting how they intertwine traditional humor theories in blended approaches that help develop a multilayered understanding of humor.

The primary critique of Incongruity Theory is that incongruity itself is not enough to render something humorous. In response to this flaw, twentieth-century philosopher Michael Clark (b. 1934) develops specific guidelines for *how* an

⁴⁴ Roger Scruton and Peter Jones, "Laughter," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes* 56 (1982): 200.

incongruous situation can lead to amusement. According to Clark, the necessary stages are (1) the perception of an object as incongruous, (2) the perceiver's enjoyment in thinking about the object itself, and (3) the perceiver's enjoyment of the perceived incongruity.⁴⁵ By Clark's conditions, it is not simply the incongruity that elicits humor, but also the subject's recognition, acceptance, and enjoyment of the incongruity. This type of humorous response requires a basic level of knowledge on the part of the perceiver: a verbal pun falls flat on the ears of one not familiar with the language, because he/she does not have enough linguistic proficiency with the semantic rules to realize one has been broken.

Whereas Clark's dissatisfaction with Incongruity Theory is the insufficiency of incongruity alone as an impetus for humor, philosopher Mike Martin (b. 1946) views this situation from the reverse perspective when he asks: why are some incongruities *not* amusing? Martin argues that Clark's theory is "vulnerable to a wide variety of counter-examples which show it to be insufficient for distinguishing amusement from other forms of enjoying incongruities for their own sake."⁴⁶ Thus he reminds that not all humor comes from incongruity, and not all incongruities are necessarily humorous. Martin does admit, however, that incongruity is an imperative component for amusement.

Both Clark and Martin's theories of humor remain largely within the scope of Incongruity Theory. Martin supplements Clark's conditions for amusement with one of his own: spontaneous laughter. The inclusion of laughter as an indicator of humor

⁴⁵ Michael Clark, "Humor and Incongruity," *Philosophy* 45, no. 171 (1970): 23.

⁴⁶ Mike Martin, "Humor and Aesthetic Enjoyment of Incongruities," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 23, no. 1 (Winter 1983): 77.

thus utilizes elements of Relief Theory, echoing another principal voice in Incongruity Theory, Arthur Schopenhauer. Rather than considering laughter an incidental behavior, Schopenhauer identifies it as a “very remarkable phenomenon” that always occurs alongside and in response to incongruities.⁴⁷

In another blended approach to humor, Henri Bergson (1859–1941) fuses elements of Incongruity and Superiority Theories. In his 1900 essay “La Rire: Essai sur la signification du comique” (“Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic”), Bergson comments that longstanding theories of humor “may contain some portion of the truth; but, in the first place, they apply only to certain rather obvious comic effects, and then, even where they do apply, they evidently take no account of the characteristic element of the laughable.”⁴⁸ Laughter arises, Bergson continues, not simply from absurdity but from very specific kinds of absurdity. The comical arises from a clash between intelligence—what the observer witnesses and processes—and habitual behaviors or thoughts. This incongruity is what Bergson calls “a very special inversion of common sense,”⁴⁹ in which one must reconstruct ideas to accommodate the incongruity before them. Martin describes this as a situation that “involves the play of the imagination in getting us to view objects or situations in novel ways.”⁵⁰

Bergson draws upon Superiority Theory in his assertion that comic response is a solely human trait, and that many of the things we laugh at are the result of a

⁴⁷ Schopenhauer, *Will and Idea*, 95.

⁴⁸ Henri Bergson, “Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic” (1900), trans. Wylie Sypher, in *Comedy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 84.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁵⁰ Martin, “Humor,” 80.

perceived human superiority. Any non-human thing people find funny—an object or an animal, for instance—is deemed humorous because it bears some resemblance to or has somehow been manipulated by a human. These incongruities, then, are considered comical because of the unexpected human qualities superimposed on a non-human subject. In this vein, a dog wearing a suit and tie is not funny only because one doesn't expect to see a dog wearing clothing, but also because the human perceiver feels superior that the dog has been manipulated to appear more human-like. Just as with the earliest writings of Superiority Theory, this element of Bergson's interpretation of humor casts a slightly sinister pallor over the topic.

In the work of Clark, Martin, Bergson, and many other contemporary philosophers and humor theorists we learn how difficult and ultimately impractical it is to truly isolate Superiority Theory, Relief Theory, and Incongruity Theory from one another. Indeed, any attempt to satisfactorily address humor in music must by necessity link aspects of all three theories: listening is at once a physiological act (Relief Theory) and a retrospective, self-reflective one (Superiority Theory); musical understanding relies in large part on normative expectations, priming the listener to recognize unexpected deviations (Incongruity Theory).

V. Humor in Tonal Music

Leonard Meyer's 1956 *Emotion and Meaning in Music* rigorously explores the relationship between music and human emotion and invited a wealth of subsequent

literature on the topic.⁵¹ These writings tend to focus on one of two closely related issues: stylistic norms and listener's expectations. I work to combine these two topics and build a more nuanced theory that models the intricate interplay between norms and expectations.

Meyer refers to musical styles as “complex systems of probability relationships.”⁵² Stylistic norms within a musical genre create frameworks based on probability: when various harmonic progressions, phrase lengths, and organizational structures occur with high frequency, they eventually become normative to that genre. Through continuous and consistent exposure to music of a specific style listeners learn to expect various musical events, and they begin to subconsciously predict them. For example, after hearing enough musical instances of a dominant harmony leading to a tonic harmony at the point of cadence, listeners of common practice music become conditioned to expect that musical process because it occurs with the highest probability. When predicted events fail to occur or are altered in some way (i.e., a delayed or deceptive cadence), listeners will likely have an emotive response to this denial of expectations. Meyer specifically explores “those aspects of meaning which result from the understanding of and response to relationships inherent in the musical progress.”⁵³ He builds much of his theory on the fundamental idea that probability, tendency, and expectation are primary components to music's ability to evoke emotion. For music to inherently possess the

⁵¹ Leonard Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956).

⁵² *Ibid.*, 54.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

potential to stir the listener's feelings, it has to somehow arouse psychological activity, and a principal way it does so is by establishing norms and then creating tension (i.e., denying expectations) within that normative framework.

Meyer calls musical forms "special aspects of style . . . each exhibits its own special probability relationship within the total stylistic context."⁵⁴ Thus, the late eighteenth-century minuet and trio contains a collection of probability relationships inherent to the musical style by which it is governed. Due to a process Meyer refers to as "abstraction and generalization,"⁵⁵ these relationships influence the listener's expectations as well as their emotional responses to the music. Their abstract ideas of what constitutes a minuet and trio coalesce into a concept of an *ideal* minuet and trio. The listeners access this generalized ideal form upon every encounter with a new minuet and trio; the normative model governs their expectations of how the music will proceed. Deviations from the established form-defining elements (i.e., phrase length, harmonic rhythm, meter) lead to an affective response as listeners reconcile these abnormalities against their ideal model.

Meyer focuses on various types of meaning inherent to the music itself and divorced from extramusical associations. He writes: "listeners, past and present, have reported with remarkable consistency that music does arouse feelings and emotions in them."⁵⁶ In many instances, listeners experience unconscious emotive reactions to the musical *progress*, without the assistance of referential concepts, actions, or ideas. These responses, Meyer postulates, are a result of musical

⁵⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 7.

occurrences acting upon the expectations listeners have developed in accordance with stylistic norms.

Although Eugene Narmour recognizes that musical style and musical form are macro-level elements that can be governed by norms and expectation, he nonetheless identifies conditions that make it difficult to analyze musical style from the perspective of norms and expectation. He writes:

Because the cognitive knowledge of style differs significantly from listener to listener—in terms of what stylistic structures a given perceiver possesses, in terms of the varying strengths of cognitive structures from listener to listener, and in terms of individual abilities concerning how quickly a given subject can invoke a relevant style—style is, and will always constitute, an extremely problematic source from which to hypothesize *constants* in a perceptual-cognitive theory of implication.⁵⁷

Narmour indicates that each individual “perceiver” approaches the listening experience with unique musical knowledge and thus, unique cognitive structures. This individuality makes it difficult to establish universal stylistic constants—with so many variants at work, developing a single perceptual model becomes an analytical challenge.

Expectation lies at the crux of David Huron’s book *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation*. His ITPRA theory of expectation divides any single event into a series of five responses: the imagination response and the tension responses occur before the event (“pre-outcome”) and the prediction, reaction, and appraisal responses occur after the event (“post-outcome”). Figure 2.2 reproduces Huron’s summary table of his ITPRA theory.

⁵⁷ Eugene Narmour, *The Analysis and Cognition of Basic Melodic Structures: The Implication-Realization Model* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 22.

Figure 2.2. David Huron’s ITPRA theory of expectation.⁵⁸

Response System	Epoch	Biological Function
Imagination response	pre-outcome	Future-oriented behavioral motivation; enables deferred gratification
Tension response	pre-outcome	Optimum arousal and attention in preparation for anticipated events
Prediction response	post-outcome	Negative/positive reinforcement to encourage the formation of accurate expectations
Reaction response	post-outcome	Neurologically fast responses that assume a worst-case assessment of the outcome
Appraisal Response	post-outcome	Neurologically complex assessment of the final outcome that results in negative/positive reinforcements

The pre-outcome responses act as guided preparation governed by established probability schema. With the imagination response listeners create an internalized scenario of what they expect to happen. This allows for either heightened emotional and psychological gratification if the prediction comes true—satisfaction at having accurately foreseen the event—or an opposing reaction in those instances when the prediction fails. The tension response physiologically and mentally prepares the listener for the anticipated event. Huron uses the term “arousal” to describe subtle physiological changes (i.e., quickening of the breath or slightly increased heart rate) that occur as part of the listener’s motor preparation.⁵⁹ Listeners experience arousal simultaneously with heightened perceptual

⁵⁸ David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), 16.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

preparation—what Huron calls “attention”—as they become more attuned to the pending musical event.⁶⁰

Prediction and reaction responses occur concurrently and immediately after the musical event. The prediction response’s goal is to encourage accurate future predictions. If the listener’s imagination response is correct, they can assume that same imagined outcome will be correct in future situations; if it is incorrect the imagination response may be adjusted to ensure a more accurate calculation. The reaction response reflects the veracity of the imagination response, causing the listener to subconsciously respond in either a positively valenced way (if the event concurs with expectations) or a negatively valenced way (if the event denies expectations). Conscious thought enters during the final post-outcome response, the appraisal response, leading to a second wave of emotions. These emotions do not need to be consistent with those of the reaction response—that is, a positive reaction response could lead to a negative emotion such as boredom or exasperation; likewise, a negatively valenced reaction response could lead to pleasant emotions like surprise or awe.

Although Huron’s ITPRA theory deals predominately with the cerebral preparation for and reaction to musical events, physiological responses are also an important part of the listening experience, especially when dealing with a musical genre rooted in dance. This kinesthetic connection to music relates closely to what music theorist Arnie Cox refers to as mimetic motor imagery (MMI). In a 2001 article entitled “Embodying Music: Principles of the Mimetic Hypothesis,” Cox

⁶⁰ Ibid.

hypothesizes that part of musical understanding comes from imagining or performing some behavior related to the music-making itself.⁶¹ The most direct form of MMI involves imitation of the performance (i.e., finger and hand movements to match the performer). Such “direct-matching,” or intra-modal MMI, is highly specific and requires the listener to have a working knowledge of the instrument or instruments being performed.⁶²

More relevant to my analyses are two less specific forms of MMI: cross-modal MMI (also referred to as inter-modal) and amodal MMI. In cross-modal MMI the listener experiences “vocal or subvocal representations of instrumental music.”⁶³ These representations may manifest themselves in various ways such as quickening the breath, pursing the lips, or clenching the jaw. All of these responses use various vocal mechanisms as critical aspects of the listening experience. Amodal MMI is “the most ineffable and yet is perhaps the most powerful.”⁶⁴ It relies on the body’s unconscious use of the abdominal muscles to match the exertion and dynamic levels of the music. Since the abdominal muscles anchor the movement of all the body’s limbs, they are inextricably linked to any internalized dance steps the minuet listener may be performing. Such kinesthetic engagement with the music makes unexpected musical events which effect the choreomusical relationship much more salient to the listener, increasing their potential for humor.

⁶¹ Arnie Cox, “Embodying Music: Principles of the Mimetic Hypothesis,” *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 2 (July 2011).

⁶² *Ibid.*, 37.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

Combining Cox's MMI with Huron's ITPRA responses lays the foundation for a unique perception of musical humor. When music violates the listener's expectations in some way, it has the potential to become humorous. Huron writes: "All of the musical passages that succeed in evoking laughter do so by violating listener expectations."⁶⁵ Of course, not all violated expectations cause laughter. Huron cites nine devices that, in their denial of listener expectations, form a foundation for musical humor.⁶⁶

In the analyses that follow, I apply five of Huron's humor devices to the minuets of Opp. 76 and 77. *Incompetence cues* are "musical passages performed in a crude or unrefined manner,"⁶⁷ including elements such as intentionally poor intonation, crass timbres, or inappropriately loud or brash sounds. This device relies on a transparent boundary between musician and listener; that is, the musician alone is the agent of the humor, and the listener must recognize that humor arises from the player's actions and not from something inherent to the music itself. Thus this strategy is somewhat discordant with the traditions of ballroom and concert

⁶⁵ Huron, *Sweet Anticipation*, 287.

⁶⁶ Four of these devices fall outside of the scope for my analyses of Haydn's Opp. 76 and 77: (1) *incongruous quotations* juxtapose quoted melodies with an incongruous musical style, placing the musical quotation outside of its expected stylistic schema; (2) *misquotations* incorrectly quote another musical works; (3) *incongruous sounds* encompass any auditory occurrence inconsistent with the established timbral schema; and (4) *mixed genres* juxtapose distinctly different musical styles, either by abruptly changing styles or by interjecting an anachronistic or stylistically inappropriate element into the work. Within the minuet genre there is the potential for juxtaposing "high art" and "low art." Scholars such as Eugene Beenk and Melanie Lowe explore the minuet dance's place in society as an aristocratic emblem enabling the dance to clash with "low art" elements such as country dance rhythms and folk elements.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 286.

music of the eighteenth century, when the players were more “invisible” to the overall performance.⁶⁸ Therefore, I reinterpret the device to shift the agency back to the music itself, defining *stylistic incompetence* as the music’s expression of elements far beyond the decorum of a minuet. The violation of minuet traits ingrained in listener expectation (i.e., stately affect, danceable tempo, steady and clear pulse) would fall into this category.

Drifting tonality includes unexpected or sudden key changes as well as the obfuscation of the overall sense of tonality. Because the key areas of the minuet are strongly codified—the minuet in a major key and the trio likely in the dominant—I augment this category to *drifting tonality and unexpected key areas*. While an unusual secondary key area may not obscure the sense of overall tonic *per se*, it would nonetheless strike the listener as non-normative and potentially carry enough emotional weight to become humorous.

The final three humor devices have perhaps the most potential to disrupt the music’s relationship to the choreography. Gretchen Wheelock writes: “Devices most obviously incompatible with the expectations normal in a dance piece are those that interrupt or confuse the regularly marked continuity and organization of time;”⁶⁹ the next three devices threaten the music’s “continuity and organization of time.”

Metric disruption disturbs the listener’s sense of regular meter. A discernible and

⁶⁸ This is not to say that eighteenth-century composers, and even Haydn specifically, did not break the performer-listener boundary from time to time. His Symphony No. 45, Hob. I:45 (“Farewell”) is a prime example: during the final adagio the players leave the stage one at a time, adding not only a visual element to the work but also making the performers more direct and obvious forces behind of the music itself.

⁶⁹ Gretchen Wheelock, “Wit, Humor, and the Instrumental Music of Joseph Haydn” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1979), 174.

regular meter is crucial to the minuet dance; just as critical is a regular hypermeter. Thus the categorical label I adopt is ***metric and hypermetric disruption***. Huron describes ***implausible delays*** as instances when the music withholds a highly expected resolution. I assume a slightly less specific definition including any unexpected suspension of musical progression. Finally, ***excessive repetition*** involves repeating a musical motive or passage so many times—Huron identifies anything over three occurrences as beyond the scope of accepted musical norms—that it leads to a “broken record effect.”⁷⁰ Both excessive repetition and implausible delays have the potential to cause metric or hypermetric disruptions; in these instances two devices are expressed simultaneously.

To build a foundation for my analyses of the Opp. 76 and 77 minuets, I combine a wide breadth of humor study ranging from traditional theories to contemporary interpretations to the recent work of Huron and Cox. By layering these approaches with a deep understanding of the minuet choreography, I develop various nuanced and unique readings of the works. Grounding my interpretations in humor theories helps elucidate and specify why listeners may perceive various musical occurrences as humorous.

⁷⁰ Huron, *Sweet Anticipation*, 286.

3. The Minuet and its Roles in Eighteenth-Century Western Europe

A deep understanding of the minuet's history is an imperative first step in fully appreciating its capabilities as a vehicle for musical humor. This chapter begins with a focus on the minuet's historical context: specifically, I discuss the minuet's primary roles in eighteenth-century Western European culture as a ballroom dance, an emblem of social propriety, a compositional learning tool, and even a lighthearted parlor game. Alongside these roles come various connotations and expectations; even those minuets performed away from the ballroom and parlor carry layers of suggested meaning. When the music engages with and even contradicts these meanings, it has the potential to arouse humor in its listeners.

The subsequent sections of the chapter cultivate familiarity with basic minuet choreography and then applying that choreography to a normative piece of minuet music. I introduce my notation system and analytical methodology through a close reading of Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, a minuet and trio composed for ballroom dancing. Using a normative minuet as a model allows for a clear description of my methodology in its simplest form; the subsequent three chapters apply that analytical procedure to the more idiosyncratic minuets of Opp. 76 and 77. It is there that I draw upon humor theories to further discuss the non-normative elements uncovered in my analyses and how those moments may be perceived as amusing.

I. The Minuet in the Ballroom

Before becoming music intended solely for the concert hall, the minuet was primarily a stylized aristocratic dance integral to ceremonial and social balls in the

eighteenth century.¹ Helen Meredith Ellis writes: “Dance held an important place in the social life at court, and educated people were expected to know how to dance well.”² Tilden Russell adds, “the dance functioned as a formal commencement ceremony as well as a showpiece of galant courtly attainments.”³ Much seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ballroom protocol derived from formalities established during the reign of King Louis XIV (1638–1715), an avid dancer from childhood. According to Wendy Hilton, under Louis XIV “the art of dancing reached a high level artistically, technically, and scientifically.”⁴ Not only did dance develop into a highly respected art form, but it also gained enough recognition to necessitate a codified notation system as well as instructional manuals. Ceremonial balls were entirely formulaic, beginning with a procession to pay respects to the hosts and then continuing with a series of dances: after the introductory *branle* suite and gavotte came the *danses à deux*, consisting of various courantes and minuets.

Ceremonial balls were largely for the purpose of asserting one’s social rank.

Each of the dances was performed one couple at a time: the King and Queen (or the

¹ The terms minuet and *menuet* are often used interchangeably. Originating in France c. 1670, *menuet* is derived from the French *menu* (adj.) “small” and the Old French *menuet* (adj.) “small, delicate, narrow,” both coming from the Latin *minutus* (adj.) “small.” The *menuet* (n.) was thus named because of the small steps required of the dancers. The English spelling of minuet was directly influenced by the Italian *minuetto*. Dance masters and scholars alike borrow either term; for consistency I will exclusively use minuet except in direct quotes that do otherwise.

² Helen Meredith Ellis, “The Dances of J. B. Lully (1632–1687)” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1968), 4.

³ Tilden Russell, “Minuet, Scherzando, and Scherzo: The Dance Movement in Transition, 1781–1825” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1983), 56.

⁴ Wendy Hilton, *Dance of Court & Theater: The French Noble Style 1690–1725*, ed. Caroline Gaynor (Princeton: Princeton Book Company, 1981), v.

highest ranking couple) danced first, and the pairs that followed were successively lower in the social hierarchy. One's placement in the order of dancers as well as one's ability to perform the intricate choreography indicated to the other attendees their social status and sophistication. Since each couple danced individually, the remaining attendees were free to stand and observe; thus each dancer performed under the watchful scrutiny of the rest of the party. In her discussion of Louis Pécour's *Recueil de dances*, Anne L. Witherell writes of the various *danses à deux*: "noble bearing, control, and easy grace are the essential elements of the style."⁵ As one of the more complex dances, the minuet thus became a test of poise and social grace.

Though ceremonial balls played a significant role in Western European culture, other less formal balls permeated the social climate. Public masked balls began to pervade the carnival season in 1716; the advent of the opera ball (referred to as the *ridotto* in Italy and the *redoute* in France) that same year took the carnival ball to a new, grandiose level. Opera balls were open to anyone who could pay the small admission fee, allowing the social classes to intermingle in an informal setting for the first time. Opera houses were the ideal location because the expansive stages allowed for ample dancing space as well as room for buffet tables and musical entertainment. Like the carnival balls, these events were masquerades, allowing members of all social classes to interact with one another under a veil of anonymity. With the rigidity of the social hierarchy weakened, the minuet became a less formal

⁵ Anne L. Witherell, *Louis Pécour's 1700 Recueil de dances* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 2.

experience as the strict ordering of dancing pairs dissolved and dancers were free to choose their partners.⁶

The significance of intermingling social classes cannot be overstated. As Sarah Reichart writes in her 1984 dissertation, “The Influence of Eighteenth-Century Social Dance on the Viennese Classical Style:”

All classes danced, and although class distinctions in dance existed, there was much opportunity for mobility both upward and downward. All classes danced the minuets (the pretensions of the nobility notwithstanding). And the nobility could observe or take part in peasant dances, even if on their own terms.⁷

The potential for mobility between classes has implications for not only dancing, but for the music as well. As Beenk has noted, Haydn infused several of his symphonic minuets with *Ländler* elements, enabled in part because “social conditions in Haydn’s day offered both opportunity and encouragement for folk music to intermingle with art music.”⁸ Perhaps it was not only Haydn’s exposure to folk music but also the audience’s acceptance and enjoyment of it that led him to include more rustic elements in his work. The minuet in particular offered the composer a musical vehicle familiar to all social classes: “If the different dances had such mobility, it may be assumed that they, and their characteristic music, were known to all members of society. Not only did Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven have ample exposure to all types of dance; so did the public for which they wrote.”⁹ In part

⁶ A more thorough discussion of ceremonial, masked, and opera balls and their social implications can be found in Sarah Reichart’s dissertation, “The Influence of Eighteenth-Century Social Dance on the Viennese Classical Style” (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1984) as well as Wendy Hilton’s *Dance of Court & Theater*.

⁷ Reichart, “The Influence of Eighteenth-Century Social Dance,” 74.

⁸ Beenk, “Ländler Elements,” 4.

⁹ Reichart, “The Influence of Eighteenth-Century Social Dance,” 75.

because of the rise and popularity of opera balls, the minuet became accessible to all social classes, and folk elements became permissible additions to composers' musical palettes.

II. The Minuet as a Compositional Game

The formalities of the minuets danced in the ballroom reflected the social hierarchy, with couples dancing in order of descending social rank and the most intricate dances performed predominantly at balls held by aristocrats. However, minuet music was also widely used in the pedagogical training of young composers. Johann Kirnberger (1721–1783), Heinrich Koch (1749–1816), and Joseph Riepel (1709–1782) all draw upon the minuet in their instructional writings.¹⁰ The minuet's simple rhythmic profile, distinct two- and four-measure phrases, and predictable harmonic structure made it an ideal composition assignment for young musicians. Yet these clear musical parameters also suggested an overwhelmingly simple musical genre—if Mozart was composing minuets from the age of five (i.e., K. 1d, 1e, 1f, 4, and 5), how difficult could they possibly be?

The *ars combinatoria* dice games that populated eighteenth-century homes had the potential to further the conception of the minuet as an overly simplistic genre. These games—the first of which Kirnberger created and published in 1757—

¹⁰ Stefan Eckert, "So, You Want to Write a Minuet?"—Historical Perspectives in Teaching Theory," *Music Theory Online* 11, no. 2 (June 2005). This article revisits Joseph Riepel's *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst* (1752–65) as a tool for teaching minuet composition in the modern classroom. Although the content of the article is outside of my study's scope, it nonetheless points to the fact that in the twenty-first century music classrooms continue to utilize the minuet as a pedagogical tool.

allowed even the most amateur musician to “compose” a minuet by following a series of simple steps. Leonard Ratner describes these games as emblems of “pure dilettantism,”¹¹ a frivolous pastime that gave amateur musicians the sense that they were indeed doing the work of a composer. Marketed toward amateurs and meant to be a lighthearted social activity, dice games influenced the public’s perception of the minuet as an uncomplicated musical genre.

Ironically, although these early dice games were designed as flippant parlor entertainment, they were intricately constructed. In order for them to work as prescribed, and for the resultant minuet to sound pleasing and “correct,” various seemingly random measures of music had to interchangeably fit within a strict harmonic framework. What may have seemed to players as a folly of happenstance was precisely constructed, and then the diligent groundwork artfully veiled.

A reproduction of Kirnberger’s 1757 *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist* is shown in Figure 3.1.¹² The table is divided into two sections, corresponding with the two halves of the binary form piece: the first is labelled “Minuet” and the second, “Trio.” Each row of the table corresponds to an individual roll of the die for that section (i.e., m. 1 = roll no. 1, m. 2 = roll no. 2, and so on). The columns, labelled 1–6, indicate the six options available on a standard die. Every cell in the “playing field” of the chart contains a unique number (1–96); this number directs the player to a stack of ninety-six cards. On each numbered card is one

¹¹ Leonard Ratner, “*Ars combinatoria*: Chance and Choice in Eighteenth-Century Music,” in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music: A Tribute to Karl Geringer on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H.C. Robbins Landon (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 345.

¹² Johann Kirnberger, *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist* (Berlin, 1757).

measure of music. The player then uses that measure of music at the appropriate point in the “composition.”



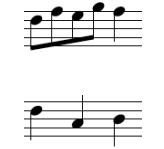

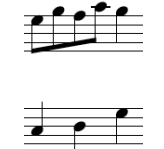

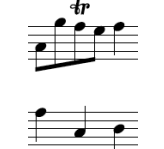

Figure 3.1. Minuet and trio grid from Johann Kirnberger’s *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist*.

Minuet							Trio						
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>m. 1</i>	23	63	79	13	43	32	<i>m. 1</i>	33	55	4	95	38	44
<i>m. 2</i>	77	54	75	57	7	47	<i>m. 2</i>	60	46	12	78	93	76
<i>m. 3</i>	62	2	42	64	86	84	<i>m. 3</i>	21	88	94	80	15	34
<i>m. 4</i>	70	53	5	74	31	20	<i>m. 4</i>	14	39	9	30	92	19
<i>m. 5</i>	29	41	50	11	18	22	<i>m. 5</i>	45	65	25	1	28	17
<i>m. 6</i>	83	37	69	3	89	49	<i>m. 6</i>	68	6	35	51	61	10
<i>m. 7</i>	59	71	52	67	87	56	<i>m. 7</i>	26	91	66	82	72	27
<i>m. 8</i>	36	90	8	73	58	48	<i>m. 8</i>	40	81	24	16	85	96

For example, to begin the game a player rolls the die. Since it is the first roll, the player uses the row marked “m. 1” on the chart. Then, according to the result of their die roll (a number 1–6), the player finds the corresponding column on the “Minuet” side of the table. Following the first row across until it intersects with that column, the player comes to a numbered cell. Upon selecting the matching card, the player copies the measure of music down onto staff paper. The same player rolls the die once more, this time following the row marked “m. 2” across until it intersects with the appropriate column and then drawing the indicated card. On the ninth roll, the player advances to the right half of the table, marked “Trio.” After sixteen total rolls, the result is a minuet and trio ready to be played on any instrument(s) of the group’s choosing.

To fully appreciate Kirnberger’s dice game, I will now “compose” an eight-measure minuet. The full collection of Kirnberger’s ninety-six cards, presented simply as numbered measures, is provided in Appendix A. Figure 3.2 shows my die rolls along with their corresponding card numbers and each individual measure of music.

Figure 3.2. Composing a minuet with Kirnberger’s *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist*.

Measure Number	Die Roll	Card Number	Musical Measure	Measure Number	Die Roll	Card Number	Musical Measure
m. 1	4	13		m. 5	3	50	
m. 2	2	54		m. 6	6	49	
m. 3	1	62		m. 7	1	59	
m. 4	4	74		m. 8	5	58	

Putting the eight measures together results in the passage shown in Figure 3.3. The finished product seems relatively simple. The melody consists largely of repeated eighth-note figurations and the bass line, although active, embellishes a slow and uncomplicated harmonic progression. The antecedent phrase (mm. 1–4)

Figure 3.3. Minuet composed using Kirnberger's *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist*.

prolongs the tonic harmony of D major for two measures before shifting to vii° in m. 3. As the music approaches its arrival at m. 4.3 the harmonic rhythm grows progressively faster, with a V^7 appearing at m. 4.1 and resolving to tonic at m. 4.3. The consequent phrase (mm. 5–8) begins in tonic, but the introduction of G^\sharp in m. 6.2 initiates the music's shift toward the dominant A major. The final two measures lead to and cadence in the dominant, which is the key area in which the trio begins at m. 9. Kirnberger could have easily chosen to keep the music in D major; however, he opts instead to modulate to the dominant in the first eight measures and return to tonic in the next eight.¹³ This harmonic interest likely adds to the satisfaction to those playing the game—not only does the game allow them to “compose” a complete musical work, but it also overcomes a compositional challenge with ease. The resultant sixteen-measure piece is both technically sophisticated and musically satisfying.

¹³ All possible rolls for the first measure of the trio contain a secondary dominant in the new tonal area of A major, introducing another new chromatic pitch with a D^\sharp and thus adding further complexity to the music.

The true artfulness in this game and those like it is its hidden complexity: Kirnberger had to make abundant careful compositional choices in order for the game to “work.” This challenge would have been recognized by other composers (Haydn and Mozart tried their hands at dice games as well) and perhaps advanced musicians, but otherwise likely went unnoticed. Kirnberger likely began by composing a simple minuet and trio as a way of establishing his desired harmonic framework; with that progression as the foundation he then composed several variations for each individual measure and disguised it all as a game of chance. Certain elements remain consistent through each iteration (i.e., the G[#] that ushers in the move to the dominant always occurs in m. 6); other factors such as register and surface rhythm are much more variable. Diverse melodic content gives each piece a fair amount of individuality, allowing players to compose an entirely unique piece each time they play the game. Stephen Hedges writes: “the melody was the real variable . . . there were 11³² possibilities for the minuet and trio.”¹⁴ Ratner notes that the entire population of eighteenth-century Europe could have spent their lives playing Kirnberger’s game and never exhausted all of the melodic possibilities.¹⁵ The vast library of melodic components insured musical diversity while different melodic contours and rhythmic figures masked the underlying formulaic harmonic patterns.

¹⁴ Stephen Hedges, “Dice Music in the Eighteenth Century,” *Music & Letters* 59, no. 2 (April 1978):181.

¹⁵ Ratner, “*Ars combinatoria*,” 344.

Those playing the *ars combinatoria* games saw only the minimal effort required from them—sixteen rolls of a die and some basic musicianship skills on one or two instruments—and not the formidable compositional prowess necessary to construct the game itself. This perception of simplistic minuet music has persisted through centuries of composition and analysis. The eighteenth-century concert hall minuet thus carried multiple connotations: it was expected to be stately, graceful, not too lively, and congruent with the framework set by the traditional ballroom minuet choreography; yet it was also assumed to be structurally uncomplicated and created with minimal effort, like the minuets of parlor dice games. These implications resulted in a musical genre teeming with listener expectations. Just as a closer reading of Kirnberger’s dice game uncovers a sophisticated compositional process, deeper analysis of concert minuets can reveal musical complexities as well as intricate relationships between the music and dance.

III. The Minuet in Transition

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, the formality of ceremonial balls slowly loosened. The introductory *branle* suite and gavotte were excised from the events’ proceedings, leaving the minuet as the cursory opening dance. Although it remained a part of the ball, the minuet became associated with tired tradition and stodgy rules; attendees were much more interested in dancing the livelier *Ländler* and *deutsche Tänze*. Russell writes: “By the end of the eighteenth century, the long and complicated opening ceremony, as well as the minuet itself as a dance, were becoming regarded as unpleasant chores that had to be endured as a necessary

prelude to the more popular and less demanding country dances.”¹⁶ Once a symbol of stately sophistication, the minuet devolved into a cumbersome relic retained solely out of habit and tradition. As the public’s preferences evolved, the minuet was, as Curt Sachs states, “deposed and condemned to death.”¹⁷

Tilden Russell writes extensively about the many changes the minuet faced at the turn of the nineteenth century. According to Russell, it was during this time—precisely the time period during which Haydn composed Opp. 76 and 77—that “the dance movement changed more radically and completely than any other musical genre.”¹⁸ The minuet’s shift from music for the ballroom to music for the concert hall had various ramifications. Although the public no longer danced the minuet, they still listened to it through what Lowe calls a “minuet filter:”¹⁹ a frame of reference built upon the stylistic and formal conventions of the dance to which they were accustomed.

The listener’s internalized dance steps are crucial to my analyses; thus, it is important to understand how minuet dances were performed. For minuets in the ballroom, the dance steps’ interactions with the music were integral to an interesting and satisfying performance for those dancing as well as those observing. Minuet music for the concert hall that did not fit within the dance’s framework of steps thus would have the potential to deeply disturb the listener’s experience. A brief look into the choreography of eighteenth-century minuets, as well as an

¹⁶ Russell, “Minuet, Scherzando, and Scherzo,” 57.

¹⁷ Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance*, trans. Bessie Schönberg (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1937), 407.

¹⁸ Russell, “Minuet, Scherzando, and Scherzo,” 1.

¹⁹ Lowe, “Falling From Grace,” 178.

introduction to standard dance notation, will set the stage for my subsequent analyses.

IV. Overview of Minuet Choreography and Notation

Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne reflect on the many contradictions surrounding the minuet's performance. Although highly popular and known to the vast majority of Western Europe during the eighteenth century, the dance is also plagued by "a bewildering variety of reports, which sometimes appear to conflict" in regards to elements such as tempo, length, and organization of the dance steps.²⁰ These inconsistencies in the literature require that I make various decisions before beginning my analyses. Discussions in subsequent chapters rely on the music's recognizable deviations from the normative minuet model established in eighteenth-century Western European practice. As such, in the following pages I make various decisions in order to establish a musical and choreographic model that will serve as a normative baseline. Although every variation in the dance or the music cannot be accounted for with this methodology, my model encompasses all of the most ubiquitous elements of the eighteenth-century ballroom style.

Intended to be graceful and elegant, performances of the minuet appear effortless despite the complex steps involved. Members of the aristocracy were trained in ballroom dance from a young age, and the minuet was a cornerstone of their studies. Each minuet dance was built upon a prescribed number of *pas de*

²⁰ Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 63.

menuet (“minuet step”); each *pas de menuet* was comprised of four individual dance steps and took six beats of music to complete. The complexity of the minuet choreography depended on the difficulty of the individual steps and the order in which they were used.

In the highest of ceremonial balls, the King or host would dance the first minuet and then remain on an elevated stage at the head of the ballroom, closely assessing the prowess of the subsequent pairs of dancers. The most formal minuets included introductory and closing bows, presentation of the arms, and the tracing of intricate floor patterns. For these complex dances, the couple starts by bowing to the hosts of the party; they then retreat to diagonally opposing corners of the dancing space to begin the task of tracing a Z-shaped pattern across the floor. Figure 3.4 shows a diagram of the basic floor pattern, taken from Gottfried Taubert’s 1717 dance treatise *Rechtshaffener Tantzmeister (The Complete Dance Master)*.²¹

After several passes through the floor pattern (a number decided by the dancers) the couple begins the complicated presentation of the arms: the dancers converge upon the center of the dancing space, extending their right hands, and turn a full circle around one another. Each member of the pair then returns to their respective corners before repeating the same process, this time with left hands extended. Finally, they move to the center of the floor with both hands extended and after turning several circles around one another, make their final bows to both the hosts as well as one another. This complicated process was considered the

²¹ Gottfried Taubert, *Rechtshaffener Tantzmeister* (Leipzig, 1717), 585.

Figure 3.4. Z-shaped floor pattern in the minuet.²²



culmination of the dance; Little and Jenne write that “the climax [of the minuet] is the presentation of both hands.”²³ By drawing close to one another and then retreating several times, the dancers build tension that is at last dissipated by their departing bows.

As the dance became less formal throughout the eighteenth century, and especially as it was integrated into social and opera balls, the only part that remained was the couples’ dancing of the Z-shaped pattern without the formalities of bows or the complicated presentation of arms. For this reason, I limit my

²² The pattern began as an Arabic eight (8), and then was simplified to a reverse-S. The reverse-S evolved into the Z-pattern most commonly referenced by dance masters.

²³ Little and Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, 64.

analytical scope to discussions regarding those portions of the dance and music that were performed most ubiquitously and known to the widest audience.

A central figure in French noble dance throughout much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Louis Pécour served as principal choreographer of the Paris Opéra at a time when a systematized method of dance notation was just beginning to crystallize. Although he did not utilize the new notation system in his 1700 *Recueil de danses (Collection of Dances)*, Pécour writes detailed discussions of various *danses à deux* (“dances of two,” or dances meant to be performed by pairs of dancers). Several subsequent dance masters then used Pécour’s descriptions as material for their own notational models. Perhaps the most well-known of these was Raoul-Auger Feuillet’s 1700 *Chorégraphie (Choreography)*. Feuillet’s notation system was developed using Pécour’s dance descriptions and became the standard for eighteenth-century treatises.

Interestingly, Pécour does not devote a chapter to the minuet itself; he discusses it instead as part of a compound dance, *La Bourrée d’Achille*, which consists of a *bouree* followed by a minuet and then a *bouree* variation. Pierre Rameau later added dance notation to the minuet of *La Bourrée d’Achille* in his 1725 manual *Le Maître à Danser (The Dancing Master)*. In it, Rameau refers to the Z-shaped floor pattern as the *figure principale du menuet* (“principal minuet figure”).²⁴

²⁴ Pierre Rameau, *Le Maître à Danser* (London, 1725), 87.

According to Rameau, the *figure principal* takes six *pas de menuet* [twelve measures of music] to complete in each direction.²⁵

Ten years after Rameau published *Le Maître à Danser*, Kellom Tomlinson discussed a more variable minuet in *The Art of Dancing*, writing: “There is no general Rule in the Performance of this *Dance*, as to its Length or Shortness.”²⁶ He is likely referring to the ambiguity involving the number of Z patterns danced by the couple, as it was widely accepted that each pair of dancers decided upon how many patterns they would complete.²⁷ Tomlinson’s minuet begins with introductory bows and then proceeds to what he calls the “common form of the *Minuet*.”²⁸ This “common” minuet is analogous to Rameau’s *figure principal*—the couple traces a Z pattern on the floor. According to Tomlinson, each floor pattern “consist[s] of eight *Minuet Steps*” [sixteen measures of music],²⁹ contradicting Rameau’s *figure principal* of six *pas de menuet* [twelve measures of music]. Since Tomlinson also writes that the dance ought to be accompanied by “a *Minuet Tune* of the like Number of Bars,”³⁰ this suggests that while Rameau’s minuet music would be twelve measures long, Tomlinson’s would be sixteen.³¹ To further complicate matters, in

²⁵ To avoid confusion, when discussing the length of various minuet components I will include the number of beats or measures of music they contain in brackets immediately following the name of the component or step.

²⁶ Kellom Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing Explained by Reading and Figures* (London, 1735), 126.

²⁷ Little and Jenne, *Dance Music of J.S. Bach*, 64.

²⁸ Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing*, 233.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 126.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ As is already clear from just the works of Rameau and Tomlinson, terminology regarding the minuet is highly individualized and can be, at times, contradictory. Rameau’s *pas de menuet* is the same as Tomlinson’s *Minuet Step*, and both are distinct from the individual dance steps contained *within* them. For that reason, I

his own discussion of the minuet music Rameau states: “in a Menuet Strain there are eight or twelve Barrs [*sic*].”³² Although he describes a *figure principale* consisting of six *pas de menuet* [twelve measures of music], Rameau writes of minuet music either eight or twelve measures in length, suggesting the possibility of music and choreography of differing lengths.

A minuet step cycle can be comprised of any combination of four individual steps, as long as they fit within the six-beat dance measure.³³ Because of its intricate choreography, a thorough exploration of the various possible steps and step cycles involved in a minuet extends far beyond the scope of my project. However, a brief overview of the most common steps, as well as their rhythmic profiles, will provide important preparatory information for my analyses. I use notation borrowed from the dancing manuals of Feuillet, Gottfried Taubert, Rameau, and Tomlinson.

Minuet music commonly begins with an anacrusis in order to accommodate the first beat of the step cycle, during which the dancer performs several preparatory motions to initiate the first forward movement. The most important of these preparatory positions is the *plié* (“crease,” or bend at the knees). Taubert writes: “a cardinal rule to observe in this [the minuet] as in all other dances is that

will refer to all six-beat *pas de menuet* as step cycles, and all individual one- or two-beat dance steps contained within as simply steps, or by their specific names (*plié*, *pas marché*, et cetera).

³² Pierre Rameau, *The Dancing Master*, trans. John Essex (London, 1728), 54.

³³ The terms “dance measure” and “step cycle” occur frequently in the following discussions. Although similar, they are not interchangeable. I use “dance measure” to indicate the temporal unit of six beats; “step cycle” refers specifically to the pattern of dance steps performed *within* the dance measure.

the bend invariably must come before the new measure.”³⁴ Engaging in the *plié* during the anacrusis allows the dancer to rise to the *élevé* position (“elevated,” or on the balls of the feet) directly on the downbeat.

In order to diagram various step cycles in my analyses, I borrow elements of step notation from Helen Meredith Ellis’s dissertation, further adapting them in my work here. The symbol “v” indicates a *plié*; “^” denotes the dancer’s rise to the *élevé* position.³⁵ I then use the symbol “—” to show forward motion; the length of this symbol varies according to the duration of the movement. Nested brackets show individual dance steps and are labeled accordingly (“PM” for *pas marché* and “DC” for *demi-coupé*). An arc above the brackets encompasses the full step cycle.

The simplest and most basic of the minuet dance steps is the *pas marché* (“walking step”), which is one beat in duration. *Pas marchés* proceed entirely in the *élevé* position and with straight legs—for this reason, Taubert refers to them as “stiff steps.”³⁶ The goal of the step is to shift the dancer’s weight from one foot to the other or from both feet to one while also advancing either forward, backward, or to one side. Beginning in first position,³⁷ the dancer rises to *élevé* on one foot, while

³⁴ Gottfried Taubert, *The Compleat Dancing Master* (1717), trans. Tilden Russell (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2012), 524.

³⁵ Ellis, “The Dances of J. B. Lully,” 31–2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 516.

³⁷ The five positions of the feet referred to in all eighteenth-century dance manuals correspond to the classical ballet positions first elucidated by Italian dancer and choreographer Cesare Negri (c. 1535–c. 1605) in his ballet theory text, *Le Grazie d’Amore* (republished later as *Nuove Inventioni di Balli*.) The first and fourth positions are those used in the *pas de menuet à deux mouvements*. First position entails the dancer standing with their heels together and toes turned outward; fourth position involves extending one of the legs forward from first position, keeping the heels in line. In either of these positions, the weight may be in both or just one of the legs.

extending the other leg in their chosen direction. The step is complete when the dancer shifts weight to the other foot; each step takes one beat of music to complete. Although the *pas marché* is the simplest of the minuet steps, Rameau also calls it “the most graceful,”³⁸ likely because of its transparency—the dancer’s carriage and control were at the forefront, left exposed by a most basic dance step.

Various dancing masters treat the slightly more complex *demi-coupé* (“half cut”) differently. Tomlinson considers the *demi-coupé* an embellished version of the *pas marché*: “It is, first of all, to be observed, that the *Half Coupee* . . . is originally nothing more than a single Step, made with either Foot, from one place to another with the additional Ornament of a Movement or Bending or Rising of the Knees.”³⁹ To accompany my description of the step, Figure 3.5 reproduces Rameau’s diagrams from *Le Maître à Danser*.⁴⁰ Figure 3.6 shows how Rameau’s *demi-coupé* fits in one six-beat step cycle.

The dancer begins in fourth position with their weight in the front foot. Although the *demi-coupé* may be danced on either side, Rameau’s illustrations begin with the left foot in front and the right foot behind (Figure 3.5a), establishing a preparatory posture for those minuets beginning with a *demi-coupé*. To begin the step, the dancer moves the right foot up to meet the left in first position; the weight remains in the left foot. A *plié* follows on the first beat of the dance measure (Figure 3.5b); Figure 3.6 shows the symbol “v” to indicate the *plié*. Without rising, the dancer extends the right leg forward into fourth position, simultaneously shifting their

³⁸ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*, trans. Essex, 66.

³⁹ Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing*, 25.

⁴⁰ Rameau, *Le Maître à Danser*, 71–4.

Figure 3.5. Pierre Rameau's *demi-coupé*, from *Le Maître à Danser*.

Figure 3.5a. Preparatory position.



Figure 3.5b. *Plié*, dance beat one.



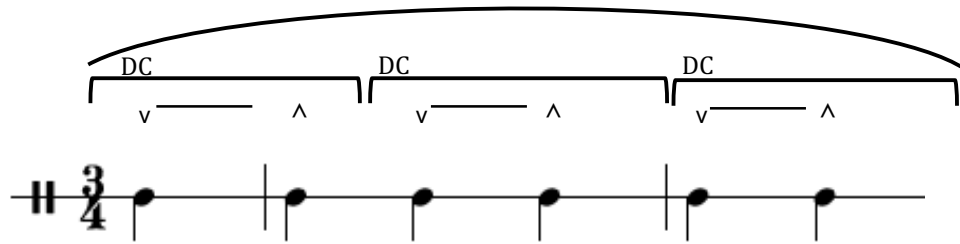
Figure 3.5c. Fourth position, dance beat one.



Figure 3.5d. First position, dance beat two.



Figure 3.6. Rameau's *demi-coups* in one step cycle, a (2+2+2) subdivision.



weight into that foot (Figure 3.5c). In Figure 3.6, the first beat of the *demi-coupe* is notated with “—” right after the *plié*; although the dancer is not moving forward, *per se*, they are engaging in a physical act that promotes forward motion. Once the weight is in the second foot the dancer rises to *élevé* on beat two of the dance step, denoted by “^” (Figure 3.6). The left leg, also extended, comes to meet the right in first position; since the forward motion of the step has already been completed, there is no “—” notation for that beat. The step ends when the dancer lowers the right heel (Figure 3.5d); at this moment they are in position to begin a second *demi-coupe* on the other side directly with a *plié*, if they choose.⁴¹

Because of the *demi-coupe*'s ability to elide with subsequent and previous steps its rhythmic profile is variable, reflected by inconsistencies among dance manuals and subsequent dance research. Rameau writes that a six-beat step cycle ought to be “divided into three equal Parts; the First for the first half Coupee, the Second for the Second, and the Third for the two Walks, which ought to take up no

⁴¹ The initial placement of the feet in fourth position is reserved for the first *demi-coupe* of a dance or other situations when the preceding minuet step leaves the dancer in fourth position. In successive *demi-coups* the subsequent *demi-coupe* steps begin with the *plié* in first position, as shown in Example 5b.

longer Time than a half Coupee.”⁴² Such a step cycle would result in two beats per *demi-coupé* and one beat for each *pas marché*, or a subdivision of (2+2+1+1). In contrast, Tomlinson writes that the *demi-coupé* “usually takes up a Time or Measure of the Tune,”⁴³ implying a step of three beats in length. Taubert’s writes: “every step must have its own particular rhythmic division within the two 3/4 measures, such that in the first measure there are always two beats on the first step and only one on the second, and in the second measure again two beats on the third step and only one on the fourth.”⁴⁴ This adherence to a (2+1+2+1) dance measure often leads to *demi-coupés* of differing lengths.

Figures 3.5 and 3.6 also highlight a crucial aspect of Rameau’s minuet discussions: the musical anacrusis is always designated as beat one of the step cycle. In his “Traité de la cadence,” which appears at the end of *Abbrégé de la Nouvelle Methode*, Rameau writes: “I mean in relation to the note which precedes the measure, that it must be used to raise the foot, to *plié*, and to extend the foot forward, rising on the second note.”⁴⁵ The “second note,” then, is the downbeat of the measure (“frappe la mesure”).⁴⁶ However, Taubert’s discussion of minuet steps all begin at the downbeat of the musical measure. In regards to the *demi-coupé* he writes: “the rise comes on the downbeat . . . and, while the legs remain extended, the

⁴² Rameau, *The Dancing Master*, trans. Essex, 44.

⁴³ Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing*, 25.

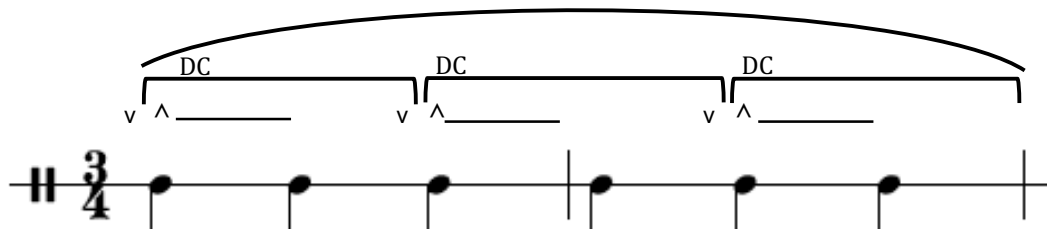
⁴⁴ Taubert, *The Compleat Dancing Master*, trans. Russell, 630.

⁴⁵ Pierre Rameau, *Abbrégé de la Nouvelle Methode* (Paris, 1725), 108. The original text reads: “J’entend par rapport à la note qui deviance la mesure, qu’elle doit être employée pour lever le pied, plier, et passer le pied devant, en se relevant à la deuxième note.”

⁴⁶ Ibid.

right foot steps forward; on the second beat the body holds steady in the raised position.”⁴⁷ This description implies a dance step of two beats, with the *plié* (in order to “rise” the dancer must first bend) coming before the downbeat but not accounted for in the actual step cycle. Figure 3.7 shows Taubert’s *demi-coups* in one step cycle. The *pliés* (v) occur prior to the beat. The rise to *élevé* is on the first beat of the two-beat step, followed by the dancer’s forward step “—” on beat one. According to Taubert’s description, then, the dancer “holds steady in the raised position” for the second beat of the step; this is shown by the absence of any choreographic notation for beat two of each *demi-coupe* until the *plié* occurs at the very end of the beat, leading to the next *demi-coupe*.

Figure 3.7. Taubert’s *demi-coups* in one step cycle, a (2+2+2) subdivision.



The most basic step cycle, the *pas de menuet à deux mouvements* (“minuet step of two movements”), often contains the *pas marché* and the *demi-coupe* in various combinations fitting within the six-beat framework. In “The Dances of J. B. Lully (1632–1687),” Ellis identifies three principal *pas de menuet à deux mouvements* Lully used during the seventeenth century, when the minuet dance

⁴⁷ Taubert, *The Compleat Dancing Master*, trans. Russell, 526.

flourished. Although other combinations of steps were possible, Ellis claims these three were by far the most commonly used. The first step cycle is comprised of two *demi-coups* of unequal length, one *pas marché*, and another *demi-coupe* (1+2+1+2).⁴⁸ Ironically, Taubert declares this sequence wholly disagreeable because “every step has a bend in it, which is excessive.”⁴⁹ The second step cycle is comprised of two *demi-coups* followed by two *pas marchés* (2+2+1+1)—the step cycle Rameau and Tomlinson also outlined in their dance manuals. Finally, the third step cycle is called the “minuet hop.” The most difficult of Ellis’s principal steps, the minuet hop does not use the *pas marché* or the *demi-coupe*. Instead, it consists of a hop, lasting two beats, leading to a *pas jeté* (“throwing step,” or leap) to the opposite foot on beat three; this step pattern is then repeated again during beats four through six of the dance measure (2+1+2+1). Ellis notes that variations and substitutions to the above step cycles were common, but these three made up the majority of ballroom minuets in the seventeenth century.

In perhaps the most extensive dance manual of the eighteenth century, Taubert’s 1717 *Rechtschaffener Tantzmeister (The Compleat Dancing Master)* contains descriptions of four ways to perform the *pas de menuet à deux mouvements*.

⁴⁸ Like Taubert, Ellis allows for various rhythmic treatments of the *demi-coupe*. In the first minuet step she discusses, the initial *demi-coupe* takes just one beat, with the rise to *élevé* occurring on beat one of the step cycle. Her notation shows the *plié* (Figure 3.5b) occurring before the beat; it must be assumed then that the extension of the leg (Figure 3.5c) also occurs before the beat, allowing the dancer to rise directly on beat one. The second and third *demi-coups*, however, each occupy two beats of music and align with Rameau’s standard *demi-coups*. The *pas marché*, occurring on beat four of the step cycle, takes one beat of music to perform. In her second minuet step cycle, both *demi-coups* are treated as two-beat steps.

⁴⁹ Taubert, *The Compleat Dancing Master*, trans. Russell, 527.

Unlike Ellis's step cycles, all of Taubert's consist solely of combinations of the *pas marché* and the *demi-coupé*. A critical criterion for Taubert was the rhythmic subdivisions of the step cycle. This insistence that the dance measure present itself rhythmically as (2+1+2+1) forces the steps into inconsistent and occasionally unnatural durations.

Taubert's four *pas de menuet à deux mouvements* are: (1) a *demi-coupé* followed by three *pas marchés*; (2) two *demi-coupés* followed by two *pas marchés* (the step cycle used by Rameau and Tomlinson); (3) a *demi-coupé* as the first and fourth steps with two *pas marchés* in the middle; and (4) three *demi-coupés* followed by a single *pas marché*.⁵⁰ Of these four step cycles, Taubert recommends the third (*demi-coupé, two pas marchés, demi-coupé*) as the most favorable because of its symmetry. Since he states that every step cycle is to begin on the right foot, this particular combination distributes the two individual steps equally to each side: a *demi-coupé* on the right followed by a *pas marché* on the left, and then a *pas marché* on the right followed by a *demi-coupé* on the left. Interestingly, it also results in a *demi-coupé* of two beats followed by a *pas marché* of one in the first measure, and then a *pas marché* of two beats followed by a *demi-coupé* of one in the second. Perhaps for Taubert the symmetry of the rhythmic treatment overrode the seemingly unnatural and inconsistent lengths of the steps themselves.

Tomlinson and Rameau's *pas de menuet à deux mouvements* is identical to Taubert's second step cycle: two *demi-coupés* followed by two *pas marchés*. Taubert mentions that this step cycle is the most common—presumably why Tomlinson and

⁵⁰ Ibid., 523–7.

Rameau chose it for their manuals. Taubert's distaste for this step cycle lies largely within its lack of symmetry. As he interprets the step, "the two *demi-coupés* are executed in the first measure, and the two stiff steps in the second."⁵¹ This leads to inequality in the note values for each step which, although seemingly unproblematic for Taubert in his preferred step cycle, is now bothersome as he writes that a two-beat *demi-coupé* followed by another *demi-coupé* of only one beat "looks too jumpy."⁵²

Although Taubert's *Rechtschaffener Tantzmeister* is what Tilden Russell calls "a truly encyclopedic work, a cosmology, so to speak,"⁵³ it is plagued by contradictions and inconsistencies, some of which can be seen in Taubert's discussion of the various minuet step cycles. Because Tomlinson and Rameau write of the same minuet step cycle, and because Taubert acknowledges it to be the most popular, I proceed solely with the step cycle of two *demi-coupés* followed by two *pas marchés* for all subsequent analyses. Furthermore, because his writings on the minuet were considered by both his peers and contemporary scholars to be cornerstones of dance instruction, I use Rameau's minuet step cycle as the basis of my discussions.

In Rameau's interpretation of the step cycle, each *demi-coupé* takes two beats of music and each *pas marché*, one. Figure 3.8 shows an illustration from "Traité de la cadence," with Feuillet's choreographic notation below the music. As discussed

⁵¹ Ibid., 525.

⁵² Ibid., 634.

⁵³ Tilden Russell, "The Minuet According to Taubert," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 24, no. 2 (winter 2006): 138.

previously, the step cycle begins on the musical anacrusis (point 1 in Figure 3.8) with a *demi-coupé*. The second *demi-coupé* begins at point 3 (beat two of the first measure) when the dancer lowers the right heel to begin the step, this time a *demi-coupé* on the left. At point 5 the dancer rises to *élevé* and then proceeds with two *pas marchés* to conclude the step cycle: “Rise on the left foot at note 5, and then pass the next two steps on the balls of the feet to the duration of quarter notes 6 and 7.”⁵⁴

Figure 3.8. Illustration of the minuet step from Rameau, “Traité de la cadence.”⁵⁵



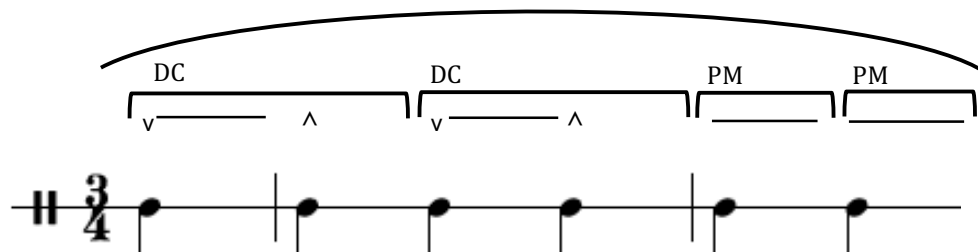
Because each *demi-coupé* occupies two beats of music, this step cycle creates a simple hemiola with the music: the dance steps are grouped in twos and the music, grouped in threes. In Figure 3.9 I show Rameau’s step cycle with my dance notation,

⁵⁴ Rameau, *Abregé de la Nouvelle Methode*, 109. The original text reads: “Relever sur le pied gauche à la note 5, pour ensuite passer les deux pas suivant vite sur la pointe des pied dans l’étendue des noires 6 & 7.”

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

highlighting the important two-against-three choreomusical relationship. The subtle interlocking of the music and dance, realigning with two-measure periodicity, was an expected feature of ballroom minuets.

Figure 3.9. Rameau’s minuet step cycle in one dance measure.



A deeper understanding of the choreography can further enrich our appreciation of the choreomusical interactions. The moment of the rise (*élevé*) is considered a choreographic accent within a step cycle. Ellis writes that “the most important determining agent [for an accent or “thesis”] is the presence of an area of motion, activity, or tension.”⁵⁶ Wendy Hilton refers to the act of shifting to *élevé* as the “stressed rise” within a *demi-coupé*.⁵⁷ When rising to the *élevé* position, the dancer engages in a motion that puts them in a state of heightened physiological tension: working against gravity, they balance tenuously on the balls of their feet. This subtle bodily shift also expands the vertical plane of the dance, drawing onlookers’ eyes to that precise moment and lending it a slight visual accent. Thus in Rameau’s step cycle, choreographic accents occur on the second beat of each *demi-*

⁵⁶ Ellis, “The Dances of J. B. Lully,” 44.

⁵⁷ Hilton, *Dance of Court & Theater*, 263.

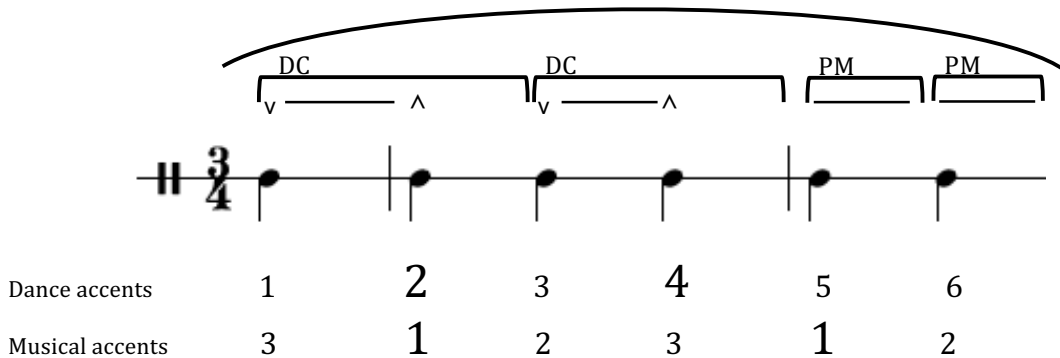
coupé, as the dancer rises to *élevé*; this occurs on beats 2 and 4 of the step cycle [beats 1 and 3 of the music].⁵⁸ (Although the *pas marchés* are also performed in the *élevé* position, they are not considered choreographically accented because they are not preceded by a *plié* and thus there is no change in the elevation of the dancer.) Dance masters cite this important cross-rhythm between the music and choreography as a crucial characteristic of the minuet.

Figure 3.10 shows Rameau's minuet step cycle once again, but below the pulse stream I have added two streams of numbers. The top stream indicates choreographic accents. Notice that beat one of the step cycle occurs on the anacrusis [beat 3 of the musical measure], putting the beginnings of the music and dance pulse streams out of phase with one another. However, because it is the rise of the *demi-coupé* that receives the choreographic accent, the music and dance stresses coincide on the next beat. The stream below indicates the metrical accents inherent to the music; the larger numbers indicate accented beats. Thus in Figure 3.10 the larger "1" shows that the downbeat receives accentual weight, and that the music proceeds in three-beat periodicity (the enumeration runs 1-3).

This model illustrates how the minuet music and dance phase in and out of accentual alignment. The second and fourth beats of the step cycle [beats 1 and 3 of the musical measure] are the strongest choreographic accents. The first of these accents occurs on the musical downbeat (the music and the dance are

⁵⁸ Another feature of Rameau's step cycle is that it begins on the anacrusis. Because of this, beat one of the step cycle is not the same as beat one of the music. To help clarify, I put the musical beats in square brackets following any discussion of beats within the step cycle. I consider each musical unit to be six beats in length, with musical beat six corresponding to the anacrusis.

Figure 3.10. Rameau’s minuet step cycle with choreomusical accent patterns.



accentually in phase); the second occurs on the unaccented musical beat three (the music and dance are now independently accentuated).

Figure 3.11 transfers the annotations from Figure 3.10 to a piano reduction of the first eight measures of Haydn’s Hob. IX:11, no. 1. The dance steps remain enclosed in brackets above the score, and the step cycles, in arcs. The musical downbeats of mm. 1, 3, and 8 are reinforced by changes in the harmonies. Grace notes draw attention to the downbeat of m. 2 just as the introduction of triplets do on the downbeat of m. 4. Agogic accents strengthen the downbeats of mm. 5–7.⁵⁹ This example elucidates the periodicity with which the minuet music and dance proceed. Each step cycle has a characteristic hemiola relationship to the music—dance steps grouped (2+2+2) beginning on the anacrusis, and music grouped as

⁵⁹ All discussions of the music proceed with the understanding that the music itself proceeds independently of the dance. The term “downbeat” points to the first beat of a musical measure, and mentions of specific measures or measure spans refer only to the music contained within the barlines (i.e., “mm. 1–3” refers to the musical material contained from the downbeat of m. 1 through the final beat of m. 3).

Figure 3.11. Rameau's step cycle and Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1-8.

Dance Accents	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1
Musical Accents	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3

Dance Accents	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Musical Accents	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2

(3+3) beginning on the downbeat—that is further enriched by choreographic accents on beats two and four of the step cycle [musical beats one and three of every other measure]. The first four beats of a step cycle are rather complex, with the music and dance accent patterns inconsistent conflict; as the dancer proceeds to the simpler *pas marchés* on beats five and six of the step cycle, the choreomusical conflict quiets slightly before “resetting” at the beginning of the next step cycle. Barring intentional hemiola in the *music*, the accent patterns of the music and dance remain in consistent, subtle conflict throughout the piece.

Perhaps one of the most satisfying moments of the minuet dance is the final step cycle, when the dancers and the music finish their respective phrases simultaneously. Because the music must account for its initial anacrusis, it ends with a measure only two beats in length; this then coincides with the completion of the final step cycle, which also ends on beat five of the two-measure musical unit. It is at this moment that the layers of subtle conflict between the music and the dance finally come to rest.

V. Listening to Minuet Music

Not all minuet dances were paired with a specific composition. Some of the more simplistic minuets could be danced to any triple-meter air of either the dancer or musician’s choosing. For these less complicated minuets—likely indicative of those danced at social or masked balls—it was permissible for dancers to simply perform the same step cycle repeatedly; this eliminated the potential for unexpected

cross-rhythms or embellishments and it also made the dance easily accessible to members of all social classes.

Wendy Hilton writes that most of the sophisticated ballroom minuets were “very varied in their step content, and intricately related to their music.”⁶⁰ Dancers paid close attention to the pulse to signal when to switch to the next step. As Figures 3.10 and 3.11 showed, cross-rhythms between the music and the dance were common and expected. A dancer’s ability to seamlessly navigate these cross-rhythms was recognized as a sign of their superior abilities and admirable social graces.

The following discussion uses Hob. IX:11 to explore how the music would have been perceived by a listener in the late eighteenth century. Specifically, I call attention to various musical elements that cause the music to fit comfortably within the minuet schema set by cultural norms, and discuss its interaction with both the choreography as well as the expectations of the listener. Haydn composed Hob. IX:11, consisting of twelve minuets and twelve *Deutsche Tänze*, for the inaugural ball held by the *Gesellschaft der bildender Künstler* in 1792. An overview of the twelve minuet and trios shows how the music’s phrase structure, hypermeter, and harmonic rhythm all blend synchronously with the repeated *pas de menuet*. Because composers wrote these works specifically for dancing, their phrase lengths fit perfectly with the six-beat step cycles of minuet choreography.

For this musical analysis, I borrow a dialogic approach Stefan Love recently adopted in his article “Historical Hypermetrical Hearing: Cycles and Schemas in the

⁶⁰ Hilton, *Dance of Court & Theater*, 12.

String-Quartet Minuet.” Love approaches his study of expectation and denial in the listening experience from the perspective of an eighteenth-century Viennese audience member. To do this, Love creates Elise, a persona through which the readers can vicariously “hear” the music. Elise is “the young adult daughter of a wealthy family an amateur musician . . . well acquainted with the local style.”⁶¹ Throughout Love’s article, Elise stands for “a community of historical listeners;”⁶² her casual musical knowledge, deep connection to the local music culture, and lifelong immersion in the conventions of Classical Viennese style make her an ideal representation of the eighteenth-century Western European listening public.

Elise frequently attends social and ceremonial balls as well as musical performances. Although she does not have enough formal musical training to be able to articulate the intricacies of the musical works she encounters, she has been exposed enough to the Classical style to recognize musical occurrences outside of the norm. As Janet Schmalfeldt notes in her 2011 book *In the Process of Becoming*, by the late eighteenth century music literacy and basic knowledge of structure and syntax was no longer a privilege reserved for composers and performers; “a well-informed lay audience could also be expected to recognize conventions as well as departures therefrom.”⁶³ Even through conduits as simplistic as minuet dice games and informal parlor dancing, the general concert-going public of the time possessed

⁶¹ Stefan Love, “Historical Hypermetrical Hearing: Cycles and Schemas in the String-Quartet Minuet,” *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 3 (September 2015):1.1–2.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1.3.

⁶³ Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 6.

a conceptual framework of the minuet that included expectations regarding elements of form and harmony.

Elise relies primarily on her experiences of danced minuets to signal when the music of a concert minuet goes awry of her expectations. Her perceptual background creates what David Huron refers to as “schematic expectation:” a type of expectation that uses broader contextual knowledge to make sense of novel situations.⁶⁴ Elise’s experiential knowledge of the ballroom minuet creates a filter through which she conceptualizes minuet music that she is hearing for the first time. As one who has “heard hundreds of minuets, both in chamber performance and while dancing,”⁶⁵ Elise brings several important expectations into her listening experiences, which guide how she responds to various deviations from the normative minuet. They also ensure that, as she listens to Hob. IX:11, no. 1, Elise will enjoy a comfortable musical encounter that fits nicely within her established minuet framework.

Figure 3.12 shows the minuet and trio of Hob. IX:11, no. 1 in piano reduction. The numbers above the staff indicate hypermetric beats; the music exhibits clear and regular four-bar hypermeter with major cadences every eight measures. This “quadruple norm” was so ubiquitous in Classical repertoire that we may assume it became an unconscious perceptual default for listeners.⁶⁶ The opening passage

⁶⁴ David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), 225.

⁶⁵ Love, “Historical Hypermetrical Hearing,” 2.4.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.5.

Figure 3.12. Quadruple hypermeter in Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1.

The image displays a musical score for a Minuet and Trio in G major, Hob. IX:11, no. 1, by Joseph Haydn. The score is presented in four systems, each consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system is labeled "Minuet" and the third system is labeled "Trio". The score is annotated with a quadruple hypermeter structure, indicated by numbers 1 through 4 above the measures. The first system contains measures 1-4, the second system contains measures 5-8, the third system contains measures 9-12, and the fourth system contains measures 13-16. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and phrasing slurs. The quadruple hypermeter structure is clearly visible, with each group of four measures corresponding to a hypermeasure.

presents an eight-measure phrase in a 2+2+4 sentential structure.⁶⁷ This construction, with its two- and four-measure units, corroborates the suggestions of Joseph Riepel and many other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers who argue the supreme importance of *Zweyern* (“twos”) and *Viernern* (“fours”) when composing a minuet.⁶⁸

As with any minuet in her experiences, Elise recognizes the anacrusis of Hob. IX:11, no. 1 as an invitation to begin the dance, allowing her to begin her first *demi-coupé*. The first two musical sub-phrases are two measures apiece, accentuated by both the harmonic rhythm and the strong, repeated quarter notes in mm. 1 and 3. The quarter note pulse, of extreme importance to the minuet dancers, is immediately audible with the homorhythmic texture of the first measure.⁶⁹ Were Elise dancing this minuet, she would have no problem finding and moving to the pulse of the music; even the cross-rhythms between the step cycle and the music would give her little difficulty as the music provides a strong, unambiguous pulse stream. The harmonic rhythm doubles in mm. 5–8, heightening Elise’s anticipation for musical arrival. A strong perfect authentic cadence culminates on the downbeat of m. 8, and the reiteration of tonic in the lowest voice at m. 8.2 coincides with the

⁶⁷ William Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 35.

⁶⁸ Joseph Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst* (Regensburg, 1752), 2. He criticizes his young composer’s work, saying: “Den Anfang, oder das Thema mit kennbaren Zweyern oder Viernern nicht wohl abgesondert und deutlich genug gemacht.” (“The beginning, or a theme with recognizable twos or fours, is not well delineated and made sufficiently clear.”)

⁶⁹ Riepel also declares that, with the exception of the cadence, a minuet should proceed entirely in quarter notes, presumably so that the pulse is consistently discernible to the dancers.

final *pas marché* of the step cycle. This opening strain perfectly encompasses four, six-beat minuet step cycles, while the clear two-measure (mm. 1–2 and mm. 3–4) and four-measure (mm. 5–8) sub-phrases further underscore individual step cycles and the music's final cadence occurring simultaneously with the end of a step cycle.

The hierarchical nature of a hypermeasure may also influence the choreomusical accentual patterns introduced in Figures 3.10 and 3.11. As the strongest bar of the hypermeasure, the hyperdownbeat receives the most perceptual weight. Hypermetric beat three, which bisects the hypermeasure, is often slightly accented as well (although not as strongly as hyperbeat one). The second and fourth beats remain unaccented. Figure 3.13 shows the first eight measures of Hob. IX:11, no. 1 once more. The musical and dance accent streams are replicated from Figure 3.11; in addition I have added a third stream of hypermetric accents directly below the score. The strength of the hyperdownbeat is indicated by the largest of the Arabic numerals; hypermetric beats two and four receive the same accentual weight as any metric downbeat. The moderate stress of hypermetric beat three is indicated by the italicized number. Including the hypermetric accent stream highlights the importance of the step cycle's two-measure periodicity: the first accented beat of every step cycle in a normative minuet coincides with one of the two strongest beats of the hypermeasure (mm. 1.1, 3.1, 5.1, and 7.1 in Figure 3.13). Figure 3.13 also suggests that the hyperdownbeat is the single strongest moment in a four-measure musical span: the metric, dance, and strongest hypermetric accents all align on this one beat.

Figure 3.13. Music, dance, and hypermetric accent patterns in Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1-8.

Hyper- metric Accents	3	1	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	2	3
Dance Accents	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1
Musical Accents	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3

Hyper- metric Accents	1	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	2
Dance Accents	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Musical Accents	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2

For an even deeper consideration of listener expectations I borrow notation from Christopher Hasty as well as Love. Hasty's 1997 book *Meter as Rhythm* explores rhythm, meter, hypermeter, and expectation. He defines projection as "the process in which a mensurally determinate duration provides a definite durational potential for the beginning of an immediately successive event."⁷⁰ Every musical event has "projected potential:" that is, every musical event has the capacity to be replicated in duration by its musical successor.⁷¹ In his analyses of hypermeter Love documents not only the projected length of musical events, but also the events' perceived hypermetric emphases. The quadruple norm establishes a hypermetric framework within which Love's projections function.

In an effort to track not only Elise's phenomenological experience with the music but also the confidence she has in predicting future musical events, I include smaller-scale projections in my analyses. I propose that, as the music begins, Elise's perceptual horizon is quite short; with no musical data yet, she is most focused on the very next downbeat. If that downbeat confirms her schematic expectations, then she will feel increasingly confident in her next projection. If, as the music continues, it remains hypermetrically normative, I argue that Elise will gradually cease thinking downbeat-to-downbeat and instead begin to comfortably predict in two- and four-measure units.

Figure 3.14 shows the first hypermeasure of Hob. IX:11, no. 1. Black circles indicate the first and strongest beat of the quadruple hypermeter, which I

⁷⁰ Christopher Hasty, *Meter as Rhythm* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 84.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Figure 3.14. Hypermetric projections for Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1, mm. 1-8.

The figure displays a musical score for the first eight measures of Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1. Below the score are five levels of hypermetric projections, labeled Level 1 through Level 5. Each level shows a sequence of beats represented by black dots (downbeats) and white circles (upbeats). Solid arrows indicate 'Realization' (downbeats to downbeats), and dashed arrows indicate 'Projection' (upbeats to downbeats). Level 1 shows a projection from the first beat to the third. Level 2 shows projections from the first to the second and from the second to the fourth. Level 3 shows projections from the first to the third and from the second to the fourth. Level 4 shows a projection from the first to the fourth and from the third to the fourth. Level 5 shows a projection from the first to the fifth and from the fourth to the fifth. A legend box on the right defines the symbols: Downbeats (black dot), Projection (dashed arrow), Realization (solid arrow), and Denial (dashed arrow with an X).

	1 of 4	2 of 4	3 of 4	4 of 4
Downbeats	●	○	●	○
Projection	----->			
Realization	—————>			
Denial	-----X			

refer to as the hyperdownbeat; grey circles show the third and next strongest hypermetric beat within the quadruple framework. White circles denote the remaining, regular downbeats. Because the minuet step cycle is two measures long, the black and grey circles also correspond to the beginning of each step cycle, lending those moments choreographic as well as hypermetric emphases. A series of nested arrows connects the circles, as shown in the upper right hand legend. Dashed arrows indicate musical projections; solid arrows show that a projection has been corroborated by musical evidence and is thus realized. In instances when projections are denied, an X appears through the dashed projection arrow.

I use Hasty and Love's notation systems along with Huron's ITPRA theory to track Elise's listening experience. Each numbered level corresponds to the perceptual present; the text above the circle acts as a reminder of where the listener's perceptual focus is in the present moment (i.e., "2 of 4" indicates that the listener is currently attending to hypermetric beat two of four). Level 1 shows the predictions Elise establishes immediately upon the first downbeat. Her imagination response has already allowed her to construct a generalized idea of how the music will proceed, including various hypermetric predictions. Since she has no musical data as of yet, Elise's perceptual focus remains predominately on the level of the downbeat, as shown by the chain of dashed arrows connecting each individual measure. Yet years of intuited minuet knowledge allow Elise to comfortably assume the next relatively strong hypermetric beat will occur at m. 3, simultaneous with the first accented rise of the next step cycle. This projection is indicated by the dashed arrow connecting the hyperdownbeat to the grey circle. Level 1 also shows a dashed

arrow extending toward m. 5, but there is no hypermetric beat present at the head of the arrow. Having only heard one measure of music, Elise is still in perceptual limbo—her schematic expectation tells her that she should hear a hypermetric downbeat at m. 5, but she does not have quite enough musical information yet to be wholly confident in this prediction.

As shown by Level 2, when m. 2 occurs with a regular downbeat and is hypermetrically weaker than m. 1, Elise's one-measure projection is realized and the arrow goes from dashed to solid. With the downbeat confirmed, Elise's perceptual horizon lengthens slightly and she projects that hypermetric beats three and four will be the same as one and two; that is, they will continue to exhibit regular downbeats in a strong-weak pattern. Now, two more one-measure projection arrows appear in Level 2, representing the strengthening of her projection for the next hyperdownbeat and the black circle appears at m. 5.⁷²

The harmonic shift from tonic to dominant as well as the slight textural change at m. 3 support Elise's one- and two-measure projections: a regular downbeat as well as a hypermetric beat stronger than m. 2 but not as strong as m. 1. Level 3 shows these realizations as both arrows become solid. The white circle showing hypermetric beat two also disappears in Level 3; subordinated by the strength of the music at m. 3, the downbeat of m. 2 fades from Elise's retroactive consciousness. Instead, a white circle indicating hypermetric beat four appears, as this is the most immediate event on the perceptual horizon.

⁷² I use the terms "hypermetric downbeat" and "hyperdownbeat" interchangeably. Both refer to the first and strongest hypermetric beat in the quadruple cycle.

Because the music thus far has fulfilled Elise's hypermetric expectations, she begins to feel confident lengthening her projection span. Whereas she began by projecting musical events in one-measure units, the music's expression of a consistent downbeat and schematically normative hypermetric emphases allows for longer, larger-scale projections. Thus at Level 3, when the music confirms both her one- and two-measure projections, Elise's focus begins to shift to two-measure units. She still projects the next immediate downbeat (hypermetric beat four, at m. 4) but her focus is largely now on m. 5, the next expected hyperdownbeat.

At m. 4 the harmony remains on the dominant, rendering the music weaker than m. 3. Thus at Level 4, with the confirmation of a hypermetric beat four that is weaker than beat three, the music continues to support Elise's projections and her confidence strengthens. With the melodic material in mm. 1–4 clearly parsing itself into two-measure units and the descending sixteenth notes at m. 4.3 signaling the imminent beginning of a new musical idea, the projection for the hyperdownbeat at m. 5 is the strongest it has been thus far. All three of Elise's projection levels—the one-measure projection of a regular downbeat, the two-measure projection stemming from the moderately strong beat three, and the four-measure projection that was initiated at the first downbeat and encompasses the entire hypermeasure—are on the cusp of realization. Level 5 shows how the hyperdownbeat is realized, as m. 5 returns to tonic and the texture changes once again; to represent the confirmation of all three projections, the arrows change from dashed to solid.

At the same instant the music of m. 5 confirms the hyperdownbeat, it also initiates a new string of projections for the subsequent phrase. Using the musical information she has already received and combining it with her established schematic expectations, Elise projects another four-bar hypermeasure in mm. 5–8. Now more confident in the music's adherence to the quadruple norm, Elise begins thinking in two- and four-bar units. I propose that the longer the music remains normative, the more confident Elise grows in stretching her perceptual horizon. After several undisturbed hypermeasures, she may even abandon the two-measure sub-phrases and begin thinking exclusively in four-measure units. Her chains of projections will continue until the music runs contrary to them; at this point she will likely revert back to one- and two-measure projection units until the music normalizes enough to warrant longer predictions.

As each passing measure of music confirms her hypermetric predictions, Elise experiences a small sense of gratification that the musical scenarios she cultivated in her imagination response have been realized. Her instantaneous prediction response assesses the confirmed assumptions and then encourages the continued projection of quadruple hypermeter. Likewise, a positively valenced reaction response reflects the accuracy of her hypermetric projections. As the music continues to display a normative hypermeter, Elise likely experiences longer spans between post-outcome responses: what began as small, positively valenced prediction and reaction responses at every confirmed downbeat slowly expand to responses every two measures. Later, if the music continues to express uninterrupted hypermeasures, these post-outcome responses may only be salient

every four measures at the confirmation of each hyperdownbeat. Thus the longer the music abides by the quadruple norm, the less attentive Elise is to the hypermeter and the less frequently she experiences strongly positive reactions to its schematic adherence.

The minuet section of Hob. IX:11, no. 1 expresses four consecutive hypermeasures that fall within Elise's expectations (Figure 3.12, Minuet mm. 1–16). This primes her to expect another, equally normative trio which she likely approaches with predominately two- and four-measure projection spans. The music begins with a four-measure phrase prolonging the tonic harmony (Figure 3.12, Trio mm. 1–4). An agogic accent at m. 3 confirms a hypermetric beat slightly stronger than that of m. 2, and the eighth notes at m. 3.2–3 usher in the end of the phrase on the following downbeat. The textural break at m. 4.2 solidifies Elise's perception of mm. 1–4 as a phrase unit and simultaneously confirms the hypermeasure. A similar phrase in mm. 5–8 exhibits another quadruple hypermeasure, this one ending on a half cadence. The final passage of the trio, like the opening of the minuet, expresses a 2+2+4 sentential structure (Figure 3.12, Trio mm. 9–16). A significantly more active surface rhythm imbues the music with a sense of forward motion, perhaps heightening Elise's anticipation for repose. The music's clear presentation of the T–P–D–T paradigm in the final phrase (mm. 13–6, I–IV–V $\frac{6}{4}$ –I) reinforces the quadruple hypermeter, with the initiating tonic harmony (m. 13) and the cadential dominant (m. 15) receiving more perceptual weight than the predominant (m. 14) and the terminal cadence (m. 16). With its completion at

m. 16, the trio satisfies Elise's hypermetric projections with four consecutive quadruple hypermeasures.

The above analysis highlights an important feature of Haydn's Hob. IX:11, no. 1: as minuet music composed for the purpose of dancing, it interacts seamlessly with the minuet dance's choreography. The music supports the overall dance structure's repeated four- or eight-measure phrases, and further accentuates the individual step cycles with two- and four-measure sub-phrases. A clear and consistent quarter-note pulse pervades the entire work, aiding the dancers in keeping time as they execute their steps. Overall, the music exhibits qualities of a well-behaved minuet; Elise's listening experience is an uneventful yet satisfying one. All of her primary expectations—those regarding phrase length, harmonic rhythm, and cadence placement—are fulfilled.

Hob. IX:11, no. 1 is a normative minuet that fits nicely within the framework of expectations built by the dance steps and even, to some extent, the popular dice games. In contrast, many of Haydn's later minuets deviate from those norms. With the help of Elise and her eighteenth-century experiences, the following chapters' analyses will explore these deviations and how they act contrary to expectations. By examining how those deviations are approached and executed in the music as well as how those musical elements interact with listener expectations, I then discuss how those moments might be perceived as humorous.

Although the minuets I explore in the following two chapters were composed for the concert hall, the implied connection to the danced minuet builds the backbone for much of their suggested humor. In those moments that the music

deviates from the minuet norms, the listener's internalized dance steps suddenly fail to match the accompanying music. Were couples actually dancing, it is possible that in an attempt to acclimate to the music, they would perform a step incorrectly out of confusion or surprise. The resultant *faux pas*—a misstep both literally and figuratively—is the agent of various mental and emotional trajectories that could lead listeners to find humor in the musical devices enacted.

4. Hypermetric Disruption Devices

The analytical model I developed in the previous chapter provides a way to visualize and discuss the implications of minuet music that fails to conform to the four-measure hypermetric schema. Minuet music has a strong potential to engage mimetic processes as the listener internally and subconsciously dances to the music. Because of this strong choreomusical correlation, hypermetric disruption devices lie at the crux of a significant number of humorous moments in the Opp. 76 and 77 minuets. In each of the four instances I consider in this chapter, elements such as the music's preparation for the hypermetric disruption, its execution of the device itself, and music's interaction with the choreography lead to distinctive experiences for the listener. Furthermore, each occurrence also invites a unique humor analysis drawing from various elements of major humor theories.

The first two hypermetric disruption devices I explore obscure the delineation between hypermeasures; that is, the transition from hypermetric beat four and the subsequent hyperdownbeat is in some way veiled. The latter two devices are instances in which the music appends a fragment to the end of an already completed hypermeasure. In all four cases, the music's deviation from the quadruple norm effects not only Elise's listening account but also her engagement with the minuet choreography.

I. Blurring the Line: Elisions and Overlaps

Musical devices that obfuscate the hyperdownbeat present various implications for the clarity of the quadruple norm. Those devices occurring in

minuet music can potentially disturb the listening experience of a seasoned ballroom dancer. In many instances hypermetric disruption results in truncated phrases or a shift in the phrase rhythm, both of which necessitate a plethora of reinterpretations and adjustments for the minuet listener attempting to entrain to the music.

In the first two scenarios I discuss, the music obscures the transition from one hypermeasure to the next. I describe both instances using terms Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff developed: grouping overlap and left elision.¹ Lerdahl and Jackendoff write that during grouping overlap, a musical event is “heard as belonging to two intersecting groups at once.”² These moments function as both the ending of one phrase and the beginning the next; the listener perceives a single event as shared by both phrases. Figures 4.1a–b depict an instance of grouping overlap in the first movement of Haydn’s Symphony No. 84 (Hob. I:84). The piano reduction in Figure 4.1a shows the first instance of the material, which constitutes the latter part of the theme. The hypermeasure begins at m. 29—hypermetric beats are indicated by the numbers between the staves—and the melody is characterized by a repeated triadic motive. The phrase completes a normative four-bar hypermeasure concluding with a half cadence at m. 32. Two beats of rest follow, creating a clear textural break before the theme reenters on the next downbeat.

In contrast, Figure 4.1b shows the second iteration of the passage. The phrase begins at m. 40.2, with the hyperdownbeat falling at m. 41. The introduction

¹ Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983), 55–9.

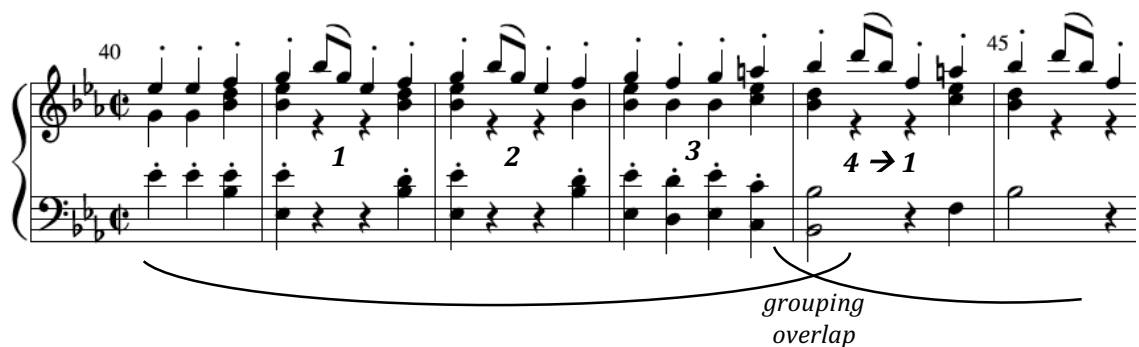
² *Ibid.*, 55.

Figure 4.1a. Haydn Symphony No. 84, i, mm. 29–32.



of A^{\sharp} at m. 43.4 suggests tonicization of the dominant B^{\flat} major. On the downbeat of m. 44, the music not only shifts to the dominant but also initiates a new phrase using the triadic motive established in mm. 29–32. In doing so the music renders m. 44.1 both the final cadence of the first, E^{\flat} major phrase and the first beat of the next phrase, now in B^{\flat} major. The downbeat harmony's dual function is shown by the overlapping arcs beneath the score; the numbers within the score show how hypermetric beat four is simultaneously perceived as the next hyperdownbeat.

Figure 4.1b. Grouping overlap in Haydn's Symphony No. 84, i, mm. 41–5.



The lack of a significant boundary between the two phrases involved in a grouping overlap leads to perceptions of rhythmic and hypermetric continuity. For

minuet listeners this absence of a strong musical arrival can be quite confusing, as minuet music is conventionally organized to cadence at regular intervals.

Furthermore, because of the simultaneous metrical deletion—“a part of the metrical structure, in this case the time-span of a measure, has been deleted”³—the listener may feel they have “lost time” as the grouping overlap eliminates a measure or sometimes measures of music.⁴

An elision is a specific case of grouping overlap. Elisions may be described as being left (material from the end of the first phrase is elided, causing the listener to perceive a strong intruding beginning to a new phrase) or right (material from the beginning of the second phrase is elided effecting a strong overriding end to the first phrase). Because the minuets in Opp. 76 and 77 exhibit only left elisions, I will focus solely on them. In a left elision rather than a musical event perceived as “shared” (as in grouping overlap), the final event of the first phrase is subsumed by the initial event of the subsequent phrase. On a hypermetric level, a left elision involves the elision of latter hypermetric beats (typically beat four) by a new hypermeasure. Figure 4.2 shows an example of a left elision from Haydn’s Symphony No. 104 (Hob. I:104), also in piano reduction. After a D-minor Adagio, the Allegro theme begins in the strings at m. 17. A double period unfolds, with the music of m. 29 beginning the final hypermeasure of the 16-measure phrase. However, the moment of expected cadence (m. 32, the intended hypermetric beat four) is swallowed when the entire ensemble rejoins with a *fortissimo* statement. The textural and dynamic changes

³ Ibid., 101.

⁴ Ibid., 101–4.

cause the music of m. 32 to be perceived as belonging solely to the subsequent phrase (mm. 32–5). Although just as in the grouping overlap studied (Figure 4.1b) a hypermetric beat is lost, in this instance the delineation from one phrase to the next remains clear.

Figure 4.2. Left elision in Haydn's Symphony No. 104, i, mm. 29–35.⁵

The atypical placement of a phrase boundary—in this instance, the latter phrase interjects a hyperdownbeat in place of the much weaker hypermetric beat four—likely effects the minuet listener's interaction with the work. An early hyperdownbeat forces the listener to readjust his/her entrainment to the music in order to maintain a logical choreomusical relationship. I begin my discussion of hypermetric disruption devices with one such instance.

⁵ For further discussion of this passage and the left elision contained therein, see Lerdahl and Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory*, 57–8.

Op. 76, no. 1

The minuet of Op. 76, no. 1 (Hob. III:75) opens with a steady and clear quarter-note pulse, allowing Elise to immediately locate the downbeat.⁶ Figure 4.3 shows her predictions for the first hypermeasure. A one-beat anacrusis serves as a choreographic preparation; downbeats in the lower three voices accentuate the steady harmonic rhythm as it covers the T-P-D-T paradigm (I-IV-V⁷-I). Comprised completely of quarter notes, the musical surface leaves nothing to chance in terms of tactus—Elise would have no problem maintaining the pulse if she were dancing to this music. By fitting easily within the quadruple norm, the phrase fulfills her hypermetric expectations. The music also reinforces an accurate imagination response; the resultant post-outcome responses are thus consistently positively valenced.

Because the first hypermeasure (mm. 1–4) occurs congruent with her expectations, there is no musical evidence to suggest that Elise should alter her hypermetric predictions for subsequent phrases. Similarly, she is comfortable abandoning her one-measure projections in favor of longer (two- and four-measure) spans. Figure 4.4 shows the projection cycle for mm. 5–10. Initially the music continues to abide by the quadruple norm; Levels 1–3 show a chain of realized projections. At Level 3, a weak beat at hyperbeat 4 of 4 (m. 8) appears on Elise’s perceptual horizon. She also likely expects this to be the final measure of the

⁶ This minuet is marked “Presto,” an atypical tempo for a minuet (rendering it more a scherzo). The faster tempo would have its own set of implications for Elise’s listening experience, which I discuss in Chapter 5. For the current example I focus on the hypermetric devices contained in the passage. Any mention of pre- and post-outcome responses refers solely to those related to the music’s hypermeter.

Figure 4.3. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 1–5.

The figure displays a musical score for the first five measures of Op. 76, no. 1, marked 'Presto'. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The first measure is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notes in the first measure are: Treble 1 (quarter note G4), Treble 2 (quarter rest), Bass 1 (quarter note G2), and Bass 2 (quarter note G2). The second measure contains: Treble 1 (quarter note A4), Treble 2 (quarter rest), Bass 1 (quarter note A2), and Bass 2 (quarter note A2). The third measure contains: Treble 1 (quarter note B4), Treble 2 (quarter rest), Bass 1 (quarter note B2), and Bass 2 (quarter note B2). The fourth measure contains: Treble 1 (quarter note C5), Treble 2 (quarter rest), Bass 1 (quarter note C3), and Bass 2 (quarter note C3). The fifth measure contains: Treble 1 (quarter note D5), Treble 2 (quarter rest), Bass 1 (quarter note D3), and Bass 2 (quarter note D3).

Below the score are five levels of hypermetric projections, labeled Level 1 through Level 5. Each level shows a sequence of five measures with various annotations:

- Level 1:** Shows a dashed arrow from the first measure to the third measure, labeled "1 of 4".
- Level 2:** Shows a solid arrow from the first measure to the second measure, labeled "2 of 4". A dashed arrow also spans from the first to the third measure.
- Level 3:** Shows a solid arrow from the first measure to the third measure, labeled "3 of 4". A dashed arrow also spans from the first to the fifth measure.
- Level 4:** Shows a solid arrow from the third measure to the fourth measure, labeled "4 of 4". A dashed arrow also spans from the first to the fifth measure.
- Level 5:** Shows a solid arrow from the first measure to the fifth measure, labeled "1 of 4".

Figure 4.4. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 5–10.

The figure displays a musical score for Op. 76, no. 1, measures 5 through 10. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first four measures (5-8) are marked with a dynamic of *ff*. The last two measures (9-10) are also marked with *ff*. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

Below the score is a hypermetric projection diagram consisting of five levels (Level 1 to Level 5). Each level represents a different hypermetric level of the music. The diagram uses solid black dots for strong hypermetric positions and open circles for weak positions. Dashed arrows indicate the flow of hypermetric time across the levels. Level 1 has a strong position at the beginning of measure 5 and another at the end of measure 8. Level 2 has strong positions at the beginning of measure 5, the end of measure 8, and the beginning of measure 9. Level 3 has strong positions at the beginning of measure 5, the end of measure 8, and the end of measure 9. Level 4 has strong positions at the beginning of measure 9 and the end of measure 10. Level 5 has strong positions at the beginning of measure 9 and the end of measure 10. Some positions are marked with 'X' to indicate a specific hypermetric structure.

standard eight-measure minuet phrase, but instead, at that precise moment the music breaks into a *fortissimo* exclamation of agitated eighth notes. The outburst shatters the *piano* dynamic and steady quarter notes of the preceding measures, erupting aggressively from the musical texture. Yet even more critical to the minuet schema, the eighth-note exclamation acts as a left elision, subsuming the fourth hypermetric beat of the cycle—rather than functioning as an ending, m. 8 now sounds like a beginning. Level 4 shows the denied projection as well as Elise’s simultaneous reinterpretation of m. 8 as the new hyperdownbeat.

Because of the hypermetric disruption, Elise reestablishes her one-measure projections. With m. 8 now a hyperdownbeat, she assumes m. 9 to be the unaccented beat 2 of 4 (Level 4). Yet if she listens closely she recognizes that the first violin plays standard cadential material: a scalar descent from $\hat{4}$ in D major, supported by predominant and dominant harmonies. Checking this musical data against her ballroom minuet knowledge, such a figure in quadruple hypermeter should occur not on hypermetric beat two, but on beat three; once again the music denies Elise’s projections and she must reinterpret the hypermeter (Level 5). The authentic cadence in the dominant on the following downbeat confirms this newest adjustment, and the passage ends at m. 10.

The left elision at m. 8 breaks the chain of positive prediction responses Elise has experienced thus far, likely causing a slight intensification of pre-outcome responses. Her hypermetric prediction denied, Elise must now consider that the

music may not be playing by normative minuet rules.⁷ As her imagination response becomes less certain, her tension may heighten as a consequence of that uncertainty. Furthermore, the music's execution of the elision—a sudden, aggressive interjection that forces a shift in the hypermeter—compounds any increased physiological and mental unrest Elise might feel. These changes in her mental and physical state become even more prevalent when one considers the music's interaction with the minuet dance steps.

In a normative minuet dance, the accented rise to begin each step cycle occurs on hypermetric beats one and three within the quadruple framework. The sudden disruption at m. 8—the expected hypermetric beat four—thus occurs in the middle of a step cycle. By interrupting the six-beat dance measure, the music's outburst could potentially wreak havoc on Elise's mimetic engagement with the dance steps contained therein. Figure 4.5 shows this passage: individual dance steps appear above the score, with step cycles enclosed in arcs. The hypermetric projections from Figure 4.4 are replicated below the score.⁸

⁷ Huron's pre-outcome responses are imagination (creating a mental scenario of what is expected to happen) and tension (the listener's physiological preparation for the event). The tension response contains two elements: arousal (subtle motor preparations) and attention (heightened perceptual preparation). See Chapter 2 for further discussion.

⁸ As discussed in Chapter 3, the *demi-coupé* contains two movements: the *plié* (bend at the knees), indicated by the upward caret (v), occurs on beats one and three of the step cycle; and the *relevé* (rise to the balls of the feet), indicated by the downward caret (^), occurs on beats two and four of the step cycle. The *pas marché*, which is also performed in the *élevé* position, occurs on beats five and six.

Figure 4.5. Minuet choreography and hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 1, mm. 7–10.

The *fortissimo* interjection at m. 8 catches Elise in the middle of a step cycle. Whereas she is fully familiar with the hemiola between the individual dance steps and the music, the sudden presence of a hyperdownbeat in the middle of a step cycle falls significantly beyond that scope. Moreover, this hypermetric disruption falls at a particularly tenuous point in the choreography: the second *demi-coupé* of a step cycle leads directly into two *pas marchés*, all of which are performed in the *élevé* position. Since this transition to the *pas marchés* is precisely the moment when the music veers away from its expected hypermeter, Elise’s internalized dancing persona is left suspended and uncertain in a highly unstable physical posture. The imagined physical tension of a dancer in such a position transfers itself to her body in subtle ways: she may sit slightly straighter in her chair, curious and awaiting

resolution; she may purse her lips or hold her breath; the muscles in her legs may even clench slightly as she empathizes with the plight of her imagined dancer.

When the music breaks from the hypermetric norm Elise is faced with her first negatively valenced prediction and reaction responses, feasibly leading to a negatively valenced appraisal response, as well. The brash nature of the music's hypermetric disruption and its unsettling placement within the choreographic cycle suggest that Elise's primary emotions are more likely to be unfavorable (perhaps she feels frustrated, surprised, or even irritated). As these mental and emotional tensions bloom, so too do a plethora of physiological tensions. Many of her initial physical reactions are subconscious—snapped out of the reverie of a normative listening state, her breathing and heart rates may increase as her body responds to the immediate surprise as well as the subsequent escalation in focus.⁹ In addition, because of her engagement in the minuet choreography Elise's extremities are also affected as she struggles to entrain to the music with her premeditated dance steps. These subtle kinesthetic manifestations of the music's hypermetric device quickly accrue and, according to Relief Theory, need to be dispelled to bring Elise's body back to a state of energetic equilibrium.

However disturbing it may feel, Elise likely continues with her dance steps as a default response; as the dance steps proceed she realizes that with the music and step cycles realign nearly immediately because of the hypermetric adjustment at m. 9 (Level 5, Figures 4.4 and 4.5). The cadence at m. 10 coincides with the

⁹ Arnie Cox describes cross-modal MMI (mimetic motor imagery) as the listener's unconscious response to the music using the muscles related to vocal mechanisms (the lips, jaw, diaphragm, etc.). For more information see Chapter 2.

choreographic cadence that occurs at the end of a step cycle, and the temporarily disjunctive relationship between the music and dance seems to have been repaired. With the choreomusical realignment, Elise may immediately encounter the energetic discharge associated with the return of equilibrium. Her facial muscles relax and her breathing rate returns to normal; she no longer needs to force her dance steps to coincide with the music and any muscle tensions accumulated therein also dissipate as the choreography becomes once again seamless and second nature. As her body relaxes back into a state of comfortable listening, Elise, once again confident in her predictions, may respond with a small expulsion of air—a chuckle or perhaps simply a relieved sigh and a smile. This minute action resets her physiological equilibrium and prepares her for the rest of the music.

As the passage immediately repeats, Elise may listen even more closely than the first time. Her imagination response adjusts to account for the hypermetric disruption, and her tension intensifies slightly in anticipation of the crucial moment at m. 8. Now privy to the music's tactics, she approaches this hearing with the confidence to navigate the hypermetric disturbance. When she does so, she gleans a great deal of satisfaction from the subsequent positive post-outcome responses, and this favorable reinforcement may lead to further appreciation of the music's humorous device.¹⁰

¹⁰ Edward T. Cone discusses the unique characteristics of the first and subsequent listenings of a work in "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo," *The Georgia Review* 31, no. 3 (Fall 1977): 554–74. Elise's second hearing of the minuet passage differs from the first in that she knows the musical plot and may now focus her energies on anticipating the non-normative features. Upon further hearings she may be able to further explore stylistic elements that

Op. 76, no. 4

The second section of the Op. 76, no. 4 (Hob. III:78, "Sunrise") minuet expresses two hypermetric disturbance devices, one of them occurring concurrently with an excessive repetition device. Although I discuss both passages in depth (the first in this chapter; the second, in Chapter 5), it is worth mentioning that once introduced to various humorous devices in the music, and in particular a hypermetric disruption, Elise likely remains more attuned to her hypermetric projections in the event that the music runs awry of them again. These heightened pre-outcome responses could potentially lead to a more intense post-outcome state and more drastic energetic shifts as a result of such acute mental and emotional states.

The moments leading up to the final cadence in any of the formal sections of a minuet and trio are inherently imbued with more emotional energy. The final arrival brings closure, repose, and if the music and dance cadence properly and simultaneously, a sense of satisfaction and competence for the ballroom dancer. Thus as the minuet section of Op. 76, no. 4 approaches its final passages, Elise likely engages a slightly enhanced pre-outcome state: her imagination creates a perceived final cadence and her tension escalates in anticipation of the crucial musical moment.

The music provides several clues that the passage is drawing to a close. At m. 29, after an extensive dominant preparation, the music restates the opening

foreshadow the hypermetric disruption, or ways in which subsequent musical material refers back to that moment.

theme.¹¹ This highly marked moment seems to be signaling pending closure. The cello, however, disregards the potential cadence at m. 36, extending the passage an additional four measures. At m. 41 the music states the opening theme once again, only this time with the violin an octave higher and the dynamic level hushed—it seems as though this will be the final drive toward the cadence. Figures 4.6a–b show Elise’s hypermetric projections and interpretations of this closing passage. She maintains one-measure projections this late in the work because the music has already displayed several hypermetric abnormalities. The music at mm. 41–3 clearly traverses the T–P–D (I⁶–IV–V) framework and the motivic liquidation in the first violin signals pending closure; Elise’s hypermetric projections remain undisturbed (Figure 4.6a, Levels 1–3). A perfect authentic cadence occurs on the downbeat of m. 44, however the first violin and cello ignore the potential closure and continue onward with a two-measure arpeggiation of the tonic triad (mm. 44–5). The strong sense of initiation at this juncture—an arrival on tonic followed by assertive contrary motion in the outer voices that invites further musical discourse—causes Elise to reinterpret m. 44 as a hyperdownbeat. (Figure 4.6a, Level 4).

Following the tonic arpeggiation (mm. 44–5), m. 46 returns to the same musical material as m. 43, reinforcing its designation of hypermetric beat 3 (Figure 4.6b, Level 6). Although this leads to positively valenced post-outcome responses as it seems to confirm Elise’s reinterpretation, the repetition also likely causes heightened tension as she once again anticipates a cadence. The *forte* arrival on the following downbeat, m. 47, could indeed end the section; however, just as in m. 44

¹¹ A full score of the Op. 76, no. 4 minuet can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 4.6a. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 41–45.

The figure displays a musical score for five staves (treble and bass clefs) and five corresponding levels of hypermetric projections. The score is in 4/4 time, marked *p* (piano), and begins at measure 41. The first staff contains a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second and third staves contain harmonic accompaniment with rests and notes. The fourth and fifth staves contain a bass line with notes and rests.

The hypermetric projections are organized into five levels:

- Level 1:** Shows a sequence of four hypermeasures. The first hypermeasure contains one note (solid black dot), and the second contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle). A dashed arrow labeled "1 of 4" spans the first hypermeasure.
- Level 2:** Shows a sequence of four hypermeasures. The first hypermeasure contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle), and the second contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle). A dashed arrow labeled "2 of 4" spans the first hypermeasure.
- Level 3:** Shows a sequence of four hypermeasures. The first hypermeasure contains three notes (one solid black dot, one solid grey dot, one open circle), and the second contains three notes (one solid black dot, one solid grey dot, one open circle). A dashed arrow labeled "3 of 4" spans the first hypermeasure.
- Level 4:** Shows a sequence of four hypermeasures. The first hypermeasure contains one note (solid grey dot), and the second contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle). A dashed arrow labeled "1 of 4!" spans the first hypermeasure. There are two 'X' marks on the level line.
- Level 5:** Shows a sequence of four hypermeasures. The first hypermeasure contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle), and the second contains two notes (one solid black dot, one open circle). A dashed arrow labeled "2 of 4" spans the first hypermeasure.

Figure 4.6b. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 46–50.

The figure displays a musical score for four staves (treble and bass clefs) and five hypermetric projection levels (Level 6 to Level 10). The score is in 3/4 time and begins at measure 46. The first staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves contain accompaniment with rests and notes. The fourth staff contains a bass line. The score ends with a first ending bracket. The hypermetric projections are as follows:

- Level 6:** A dashed line with a solid dot at the start of measure 46, an open circle at the start of measure 47, and a solid dot at the start of measure 48. A dashed arrow points from the first dot to the second, and another from the second to the third. A *f* dynamic marking is placed above the second dot.
- Level 7:** A dashed line with a solid dot at the start of measure 46, an 'X' at the start of measure 47, an open circle at the start of measure 48, and a solid dot at the start of measure 49. A dashed arrow points from the first dot to the circle, and another from the circle to the second dot. A *f* dynamic marking is placed above the circle. Two 'X' marks are placed below the first dot and the 'X' at measure 47.
- Level 8:** A dashed line with a solid dot at the start of measure 46, an open circle at the start of measure 48, a solid dot at the start of measure 49, and another open circle at the start of measure 50. A solid arrow points from the first dot to the circle at measure 48, and another from the circle at measure 48 to the dot at measure 49. A dashed arrow points from the dot at measure 49 to the circle at measure 50. A *f* dynamic marking is placed above the circle at measure 48.
- Level 9:** A dashed line with a solid dot at the start of measure 46, a solid dot at the start of measure 48, and an open circle at the start of measure 50. A solid arrow points from the first dot to the dot at measure 48, and another from the dot at measure 48 to the circle at measure 50. A dashed arrow points from the first dot to the circle at measure 50. A *f* dynamic marking is placed above the dot at measure 48.
- Level 10:** A dashed line with a solid dot at the start of measure 46 and an open circle at the start of measure 50. A solid arrow points from the first dot to the circle at measure 50. A dashed arrow points from the first dot to the circle at measure 50. A *f* dynamic marking is placed above the circle at measure 50.

the first violin and cello disregard any signs of musical conclusion and once again continue onward. Slightly more prepared this second time, Elise adjusts her projections, interpreting m. 47 as a hyperdownbeat (Figure 4.6b, Level 7). Because the music shows no signs of making progress toward the minuet's final cadence, this most recent hypermetric disruption could cause significantly elevated post-outcome responses imbued with frustration and impatience. At m. 49 Elise's tension amplifies further and her imagination juggles two options: the music could continue down the pathway of elision and repetition, requiring yet another hypermetric denial as well as continued uncertainty; or it could finally reach its terminal cadence. After an arrival on the downbeat of m. 50, a full beat of silence on beat two confirms the end of the minuet section. While the subsequent prediction and reaction responses may be ambiguous since Elise was unable to establish a clear pre-outcome imagined scenario, a strongly positive appraisal ensues, and she may finally relax.

Although the music surely demonstrates hypermetric disruption, it also hints toward an excessive repetition device.¹² The three-measure passage at mm. 43–5 stymies the quadruple norm with its left elision at m. 44; this entire musical scenario is then reenacted in almost exact repetition at mm. 46–8. Elise, trying valiantly to reconcile the shifting hypermeter and thus becoming highly attuned to the musical material, may have an exceedingly acute awareness of the repetitive

¹² Huron states that for an excessive repetition device to be enacted, the musical material in question must be repeated more than three times. Thus for this particular instance, the music does not completely fulfill the criterion for the device; I do argue however that the repetition of the musical material is consciously marked because it occurs as part of a hypermetric disruption.

nature of the passage.¹³ This heightened awareness may also lead her to glean a fair amount of humor from the music as it tumbles through these hypermetric disturbances in quick succession.

Unlike the hypermetric disruption device in Op. 76, no. 1, which I posited led to a host of negative emotions for Elise at its onset, I suggest that her experience with the music in Op. 76, no. 4 is not so contentious. As she encounters the first hypermetric disruption at m. 44, she may even enjoy an immediate moment of delight. James Beattie's writings related to incongruity and humor note that "laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts . . . acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them."¹⁴ The music of mm. 43–5 takes two "incongruous parts"—Elise's ideas of "musical ending" and "musical beginning"—and combines them in a "mutual relation" as m. 44 serves as both. This discovery may bring Elise pleasure as she appreciates the musical double entendre at play. Although the specific tool used to enact the hypermetric disruption is essentially the same as in Op. 76, no. 1 (a left elision), it is the musical material's ability to function equally as hypermetric beat four and the hyperdownbeat that amuses Elise. Whatever mental tension she may have experienced from the hypermetric disruption may be mollified by the humor she perceives within the music.

¹³ It is also critical to mention that the passage at mm. 27–31 does indeed enact an excessive repetition device. As such, it is not unlikely that Elise's awareness toward such musical banter is heightened and she is more apt to notice the repetitive nature of the music at mm. 43–50.

¹⁴ James Beattie, "An Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition" (1776), in *Essays*, 3rd ed. (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1779), 320.

Assuming that Elise maintained her internal choreography through this passage, the subsequent hypermetric disruptions have interesting implications for her physiological engagement. Figure 4.7 shows Elise's dance steps labeled in square brackets over the musical score, with step cycles encompassed by arcs above the brackets. The arrows below the score connect congruent musical material. The repeated grouping overlaps and subsequent hypermetric shifts result in inconsistent treatment of the music and dance. For example, the music of m. 43 initially underscores the *demi-coupés* of the step cycle; because of the hypermetric disruption in the next measure and the immediate repetition of musical material, when that same music returns at m. 46 it occurs concurrently instead with the *pas marchés*. For Elise this is likely quite disturbing, as she is accustomed to a consistent relationship between the step cycles and the musical material. Although she is comfortable navigating the metric effect of hemiola in minuet music, this hypermetric hemiola effect—the sudden superimposition of three-measure hypermeasures over two-measure step cycles—may be new and quite disruptive. When the hypermeasure repeats for the first time at m. 46, Elise may suddenly feel as though she is dancing out of time; her normalcy is quickly restored at m. 49, but not without a spike in her mental, emotional, and physiological tensions.

As the music approaches an important terminal cadence, Elise feels increased pressure for her choreography to coincide with the music. This pressure is exacerbated as she grapples with repeated hypermetric reinterpretations while simultaneously trying to maintain a logical relationship between the music and the dance. Elise's tension is maximized because, above all else, she needs her final step

Figure 4.7. Choreographic correspondence for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 41–50.

The image displays a musical score for Op. 76, no. 4, measures 41–50. The score is written for four staves: Treble Clef (top), Treble Clef (second), Bass Clef (third), and Bass Clef (bottom). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The first staff contains a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *f*. The second and third staves contain accompaniment with dynamics *p* and *f*. The fourth staff contains a bass line with dynamics *p* and *f*. Above the first staff, there are annotations: "DC" (Dotted Chord) and "PM" (Piano Motion) with brackets indicating their duration. Above the fourth staff, there are arrows pointing upwards to specific notes, with brackets below them indicating their duration. The score ends with a first ending bracket labeled "1.".

cycle to end at the same time as the music. In preparation for this crucial moment, her levels of concentration likely rise and her focus intensifies as she attempts to comprehend, entrain to, and further predict the music. Her increased mental engagement may also manifest itself physically: a furrowed brow, pursed lips, maybe even small and deliberate movements of the feet mimicking the minuet dance steps. The cadence at m. 50 thus brings palpable relief—despite hypermetric disruptions in the music, Elise’s choreography still cadences appropriately. In the beat of rest before the minuet repeats, she may become suddenly aware of the increased tensions in her body. Realizing that her extreme physiological and mental reactions were for naught, she might unconsciously laugh to herself as she returns to a more relaxed state. Thomas Hobbes writes of how one might find humor in the “follies” of their past self; perhaps here Elise finds humor in this moment of self-reflection.¹⁵

The devices just studied involve egregious interruptions to both the hypermeter and the dance step cycle. By interacting so conspicuously with the minuet choreography—in the case of the left elision in Op. 76, no. 1, a single definitive disturbance; with the grouping overlaps in Op. 76, no. 4, a series of quickly recurring disruptions—the music shamelessly wreaks havoc on Elise’s mimetic processes as she struggles to adjust her choreography appropriately. In slight contrast, the music enacts the final two hypermetric disruption devices I study in this chapter much more subtly. Although they still interact significantly with Elise’s

¹⁵ Thomas Hobbes, “Human Nature, or the Fundamental Elements of Policy” (1650) in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London: C. Richards, 1740), 46.

musical engagement, these devices occur in a way that avoids disrupting the individual dance steps of the minuet step cycle. This leads to unique embodied readings as well as humor analyses focused more toward the cerebral and less, perhaps, toward the physical.

II. Hypermetric Addendums and the Six-Measure Phrase

Hypermetric disruption devices may be enacted in various ways, and not all of them must be categorized to be appreciated. However, a significant trend emerges in the minuets of Haydn's Opp. 76 and 77: in many instances the music expresses a hypermetric disruption device by appending two extra measures to the end of an already complete hypermeasure, resulting into a single, six-measure phrase. William Rothstein refers to such a technique as external phrase expansion; in both cases I study here, the phrases exhibit what Rothstein would call "suffixes."¹⁶ On the surface, these types of hypermetric disruptions may seem as though they would be less disturbing to the listener who is also engaged mimetically with the minuet choreography—because the expansion involves a two-measure phrase occurring after the fourth hypermetric beat, it does not interrupt any one individual step cycle.¹⁷ Yet these hypermetric suffixes still readily disturb Elise's listening state; how deeply they do so is related to various musical factors surrounding their enactment.

¹⁶ William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), 70.

¹⁷ One may contrast this with the left elision from Op. 76, no. 1 discussed earlier in this chapter. Because the elision occurs on hypermetric beat four, it interrupts a step cycle and thus interacts strongly with the individual dance steps.

Op. 76, no. 4

The minuet of Op. 76, no. 4 begins with a completely normative first section. It is a model of typical, danceable minuet music: eight measures in length with a sentential structure, steady pulse, and unmistakable quadruple hypermeter. The music's satisfaction of Elise's predictions results in a chain of positively valenced reaction and appraisal responses. Furthermore, I suggest that her pre-outcome state softens slightly; specifically, her tension responses become less prominent. The perceptual physiological preparations, while still active, are much less engaged than if Elise were immediately faced with non-normative minuet music. This relative lull creates the potential for much greater contrast later in the work if the music suddenly clashes with her expectations.

With its adherence to minuet genre norms firmly established, the music begins the second section of the minuet. After an imitative dialogue between the second violin, viola, and first violin in mm. 9–12, the first violin begins a cascading sequence of arpeggios, propelling the music through the next hypermeasure (mm. 13–6). Elise's musical encounter continues to be normative; she is likely attuned to the consistent surface rhythm and the eighth-note pulse that permeates the music, carried largely by the first violin. Although it is not out of Elise's scope of expectation, the passage at mm. 13–6 may nonetheless slightly heighten her attention and arousal due to the first violin's perpetual motion and its continuous descent through tonal space. Elise continues to internally dance along, perhaps feeling slightly more propelled by the music than previously as the melody seems to pick up momentum toward the next hyperdownbeat.

Despite her slightly intensified tension, Elise is still confident in her musical predictions for the upcoming phrase (mm. 17–20). Figure 4.8 shows a series of projections leading into the music's first hypermetric disruption. Levels 1–2 depict expectations compatible with the quadruple norm, which has thus far gone unchallenged. However, a startling, *fortissimo* exclamation in the upper three voices at m. 16.3 brings the normative hypermeter to a screeching halt. The cello, silent for mm. 13–6, reenters and picks up the first violin's constant eighth notes, its rumbling D2s clashing ferociously with the C#s in the second violin; the cello's low, churning grumble contrasts starkly with the staccato quarter notes in the upper voices.

For Elise this interjection may feel nothing less than aggressive. The *fortissimo* gesture inserts itself stubbornly, almost violently, rejecting her projected hyperdownbeat. Yet despite the obvious interruption, the music hardly sounds as if it is initiating a new hypermeasure: the tritones in the upper three voices beg for resolution, steeping the music in a perceived sensation of pending arrival. Thus Elise immediately and subconsciously identifies m. 17 as hypermetric beat 3 (Level 3); her projection spans shorten to one measure as she anxiously awaits the next downbeat. A harmonic arrival of a half cadence at m. 18 confirms her interpretation with hypermetric beat 4 (Level 4), and the music's return to its previous texture, surface rhythm, and melodic gestures at m. 19 corroborate her projection of a new hyperdownbeat (Level 5).

Like many effective spoken jokes, preparation and delivery are at the crux of the success of this humorous device. The music sets the stage from its onset by complying fully with Elise's minuet expectations. By establishing a norm for the

Figure 4.8. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 15–19.

The figure displays a musical score for five staves (treble and bass clefs) and a corresponding hypermetric projection diagram below it. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The first measure is marked with the number 15. The dynamic marking *ff* (fortissimo) is present in measures 16, 17, and 18. The hypermetric projection diagram consists of five levels, labeled Level 1 through Level 5 on the left. Each level shows a sequence of notes connected by dashed lines, representing hypermetric units. Level 1 starts with a grey dot, followed by a dashed line to a white circle labeled "3 of 4", then a dashed line to a black dot. Level 2 starts with a grey dot, followed by a dashed line to a white circle labeled "4 of 4", then a dashed line to a black dot. Level 3 starts with a grey dot, followed by a dashed line to a white circle labeled "3 of 4?", then a dashed line to a black dot. Level 4 starts with a grey dot, followed by a dashed line to a white circle labeled "4 of 4", then a dashed line to a black dot. Level 5 starts with a grey dot, followed by a dashed line to a white circle labeled "1 of 4", then a dashed line to a black dot. A dashed line with an 'X' over it is shown between Level 3 and Level 4, indicating a specific projection choice. The diagram uses solid lines for the main hypermetric units and dashed lines for the internal structure of these units.

piece—by adhering to the minuet schema—the music not only reinforces Elise’s expectations but also allows her to feel comfortable and confident in the veracity of her predictions. At m. 17, the contrast between expectation and occurrence may be heightened because of the music’s normative behavior thus far in the piece. The surprise is amplified by disruption’s execution: a cacophonous, dissonant interjection that interrupts the hypermetric progress and suddenly inverts the musical texture. The music’s execution of this humorous device does not simply interrupt the hypermeter; it plows into it and pushes the hyperdownbeat back by brute force. The emphatic exclamation contrasts so starkly with Elise’s expectations—expectations that have thus far gone completely unchallenged—that she may immediately find humor in the musical disruption. As Blaise Pascal wrote, “Nothing is more calculated to produce laughter than a startling contrast between the thing looked for and the thing looked at.”¹⁸

Op. 77, no. 1

The final hypermetric device I discuss occurs in the trio of Op. 77, no. 1 (Hob. III:81). It offers an interesting instance of listener adaptation as the music expresses a hypermetric disruption, normalizes it by repetition, and then in the final passages of the work further manipulates that same musical material into a new and different hypermetric disruption. The trajectory of this musical narrative carries the potential for various layers of expectation, denial, and ultimately humor.

¹⁸ Blaise Pascal, *The Provincial Letters* (1657), trans. Thomas M’Crie (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1860), 100.

The first hypermetric disruption occurs almost immediately. The opening four measures (mm. 82–5) enact a normative hypermeasure as the first violin maintains a stepwise melody beneath steady quarter notes in the lower voices. Figure 4.9 shows Elise’s hypermetric projections for the subsequent phrase. The music in mm. 86–9 completes a normative hypermeasure, the lower three voices never straying from their streams of quarter notes on an E^b major triad. At m. 86 the first violin begins an arpeggiated ascent through the tonic triad. The sweeping gesture seems to reach its peak with the B^b5 at m. 88.3 and begins to descend back through the triad. However, the music seems to suddenly get stuck—while the lower voices continue ticking away on their quarter-note pedal tones, the first violin oscillates between $\hat{5}$ and $\hat{3}$, seemingly unable to break free of the dyad. Because of this, the music denies Elise’s projected hyperdownbeat at m. 90 (Level 5). Unsure of how the music is going to proceed and with no harmonic anchors in a sea of tonic harmony, Elise simply shifts her hypermetric expectations forward one measure. Yet the music remains rooted in the same pattern, once again denying her prediction (Level 6). Finally at m. 91.3 the first violin breaks free with a *forte* B^b3 to usher in a new phrase. The lower voices respond on the following downbeat with equal *forte* support, further expressing their approval in a string of enthusiastic eighth notes. With the initiation of a new phrase, the music at m. 92 at last confirms Elise’s hyperdownbeat projection (Level 7).

Figure 4.9. Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 86–92.

The figure displays a musical score for Op. 77, no. 1, measures 86–92, with four staves (treble and bass clefs). The score includes dynamic markings *p* and *f*. Below the score is a hypermetric projection diagram consisting of seven levels (Level 1 to Level 7). Each level is represented by a horizontal line with dots and arrows indicating the flow of hypermetric units. Level 1 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 2 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 3 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 4 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 5 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 6 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. Level 7 starts with a solid dot and an arrow pointing to a solid dot, with a dashed arrow pointing to an open circle. The diagram also includes several 'X' marks and labels such as '1 of 4', '2 of 4', '3 of 4', '4 of 4', '4 of 4?', and '1 of 4!'.

Like in Op. 76, no. 4, this passage exhibits a phrase suffix. However, this instance may best be described as an echo repetition: hypermetric beats three and four (mm. 88–9) are repeated in the subsequent measures (mm. 90–1) with almost exactly the same musical material. The resultant six-measure phrase can be described in hypermetric beats as “1–2–3–4(–3–4).” Unlike the repetition of hypermetric beats three and four that occurred in the previous example, where the interjection introduced completely new musical material by forcefully inserting two extra measures, this time the music simply attaches a two-measure musical echo to the end of the cycle. Although the expansion assuredly disrupts Elise’s hypermetric interpretation, it does so in a much less aggressive manner. Elise’s post-outcome state, while negatively valenced as the music denies two subsequent hypermetric projections, is perhaps not as strongly charged due to the subtler nature of the music’s denial. Furthermore, she can likely make sense of the hypermetric disruption rather easily: the music repeats material she has just heard, in a two-measure unit that accommodates an entire step cycle, before continuing to the next phrase.

When the new musical phrase begins at m. 92, Elise conceivably quickly realizes that it is a repetition of the trio’s opening material. Thus when the first violin begins its E^b major triad arpeggiations at m. 96, Elise may find herself approaching the upcoming musical passage with two simultaneous imagination responses: her default, normative expectation of a quadruple hypermeter; and also an adjusted expectation reflective of the hypermetrically disruptive passage she has just experienced. Because of these two competing expectations her tension

response, and in particular her attention level, is likely slightly heightened. When the music repeats with an echo repetition of hypermetric beats three and four, Elise is likely no longer surprised and may feel compellingly positive appraisal stemming from a strong sense of accomplishment.

As the trio continues, the same musical passage recurs in mm. 126–35; once again, Elise accurately predicts the echo repetition, deepening her satisfaction and sense of musical competence. When, at m. 160, the musical material occurs for the fourth time, she is thus fully confident that this iteration will adhere to her adjusted hypermetric expectations. Figures 4.10a–b depict Elise’s hypermetric projections for this final passage. As the first violin begins tonic arpeggios at m. 164, Elise projects a six-measure hypermetric phrase to coincide with her adjusted schema for this piece. Perhaps she notices the chromatic grace notes before each G5; however, since the trio is nearing its end she may hear them as simply additional flourish as the music ushers in the final cadence. Her familiarity with the musical material allows her to make two-measure hypermetric projections, and mm. 164–70 completely fulfill her hypermetric expectations (Figure 4.10a, Levels 1–7).

At the moment when Elise expects the hyperdownbeat, however, she encounters a musical conundrum similar to the one enacted in the trio’s first phrase: the music once again seems stuck in its pattern. Subtle changes occur—the first violin’s dyad widens slightly as the top pitch shifts from B^b5 to C6, and the second violin likewise moves from B^b4 to C5—but the rhythmic pattern and texture remain the same, making it difficult for Elise to reconcile this as a hyperdownbeat because of its lack of musical arrival. It is feasible that she might, as in mm. 86–92

Figure 4.10a. Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 164–70.

The figure displays a musical score for Op. 77, no. 1, measures 164–70. The score consists of four staves: Treble Clef (top), Treble Clef (second), Bass Clef (third), and Bass Clef (bottom). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure numbers 164 and 168 are indicated at the beginning of the first and third staves, respectively.

Below the score is a hypermetric projection diagram with seven levels, labeled Level 1 through Level 7 on the left. The diagram uses solid black dots for strong hypermetric positions and open circles for weak hypermetric positions. Dashed lines with arrows indicate the flow of hypermetric structure across levels. Solid arrows highlight specific hypermetric groupings:

- Level 1:** 1 of 6 (solid dot)
- Level 2:** 2 of 6 (open circle)
- Level 3:** 3 of 6 (solid dot)
- Level 4:** 4 of 6 (open circle)
- Level 5:** 5 of 6 (solid dot)
- Level 6:** 6 of 6 (open circle)
- Level 7:** 5 of 6? (solid dot)

At the bottom of the diagram, two dashed lines end in an 'X' mark, indicating the end of the projection.

Figure 4.10b. Hypermetric projections for Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 170–4.

The figure displays a musical score for five staves (treble and bass clefs) covering measures 170 to 174. Below the score is a hypermetric projection diagram with five levels, labeled Level 7 through Level 11. The diagram uses solid and dashed arrows to show relationships between notes across measures, with some notes marked with 'X' to indicate they are not part of the projection.

Level 7: *5 of 6?* (solid arrow from m. 170 to m. 172)

Level 8: *6 of 6* (solid arrow from m. 170 to m. 172)

Level 9: *5 of 6?* (dashed arrow from m. 170 to m. 172, with 'X' marks below the path)

Level 10: *6 of 6* (solid arrow from m. 172 to m. 174)

Level 11: *1 of 4!* (solid arrow from m. 172 to m. 174)

(Figure 4.9), shift her hyperdownbeat projection forward another measure.

However, because of the numerous instances of two-measure echo repetitions in this work, I suggest Elise immediately reinterprets m. 170 as another instance of hypermetric beat 5 of 6 (Figure 4.10a, Level 7)—a two-measure phrase suffix appended to the now-normalized six-measure phrase. When the musical material repeats in m. 171, solidifying her prediction, Elise is relatively confident that the hyperdownbeat will occur at m. 172.

The music at m. 172 offers a significant textural change, including the energetic eighth notes in the lower three voices that have heretofore signaled a hyperdownbeat. Perhaps, then, Elise may receive this musical data and confirm a hyperdownbeat projection. However, the C[#]6 in the first violin against the E^b3 in the cello tinges the music with a sense of impermanence; the colorful German augmented sixth harmony, while salient, is nonetheless unstable and unsuitable for a hyperdownbeat (Figure 4.10b, Level 9).¹⁹ By this point Elise is grappling with not only the denial of her projections, but also with the sudden reassessment of what constitutes the norm for this particular piece. At the most recent refute of her expectations (Figure 4.10a, Level 7), she responded with a non-normative readjustment involving an assumed, two-measure hypermetric addendum. Faced again with the same decision at m. 172, she must choose to align with the standard

¹⁹ The harmony in mm. 172–3 is a Ger⁺⁶ leading toward the key of G major. Without access to a score, Elise is unable to tell if this harmony is an Ger⁺⁶ or simply a dominant seventh, V⁷/IV. The exact harmony she detects is not nearly as important as the notion that she senses the harmony is comparatively less stable than the preceding vi chord. The instability she discerns makes m. 172 an unsuitable choice for a hyperdownbeat.

minuet norm, suggesting she simply shift her expected hyperdownbeat forward a measure, or instead opt for the “Op. 77, no. 1 trio norm”— another two-measure hypermetric addition. I once again suggest that Elise chooses to append two measures onto her hypermetric schema, reinterpreting m. 172 as another hypermetric beat 5 of 6. The music reinforces the competence of her decision at m. 173 as it repeats the same material (Figure 4.10b, Level 10). At last, with a resolution to a D major triad and the modulation to G major, the tonic key of the minuet, now complete, m. 174 presents a convincing candidate for the next hyperdownbeat (Figure 4.10b, Level 11).

When the music begins the opening thematic material at m. 160, Elise feels competent and comfortable. She has already solved the hypermetric abnormality of this phrase, and in doing so feels confident in her prediction abilities. Since the goal of a prediction response is to encourage accurate expectations, Elise experiences a succession of positive post-outcome responses. She may also feel a subtle sense of pride in her ability to evaluate and anticipate the music’s devices. This comfortable, confident mental and emotional state is one in which a humorous device, when enacted, could lead to significant affective payoff. Thus when the hypermeter veers off course at m. 170 it causes a sudden spike in Elise’s attention. When she is required to reinterpret the hypermeter once again at m. 172, her mental and emotional cache is nearly full as she attempts to handle a sudden barrage of unexpected hypermetric repetitions.

At m. 174, the music reaches a point of tonal and hypermetric stability and Elise may finally reflect upon this most recent passage. She realizes that music has

taken advantage of her comfort with the six-measure phrase: after presenting the now normalized echo repetition, it enacts another hypermetric disruption of the same type . . . and then another. Indeed, even after the music is hypermetrically normalized with its arrival on the dominant at m. 174, the musical material itself is still largely repetitive and could potentially even further delay Elise's complete confidence in its return to hypermetric normalcy. As she at last relaxes, Elise is able to reflect back upon her listening experience and realize that the music did, in the end, fool her. By capitalizing on the same musical awareness that allowed her to so quickly identify and adjust for the echo repetition, the music is able to exploit her prediction confidence by enacting a chain of similar hypermetric devices at precisely the moment when she expects her most satisfying resolution. Realizing the implications of what has just occurred, Elise finds humor in reflection: as she looks back upon the confidence she felt in her abilities to decode and predict the music, she laughs now knowing that the music was all the while preparing to take advantage of her elevated mental state.

Elise's sense of accomplishment and her increasingly positive appraisal also set the stage for a significant emotional denouement, with further implications from her physiological engagement with the music. Each hypermetric disruption device occurs in a two-measure unit appended to the end of a quadruple phrase; as such, the devices never interrupt a minuet step cycle, thus avoiding alarmingly disturbing interactions with the choreography. However, aspects of the music throughout the passage at mm. 160–74 still engage Elise's kinesthetic interaction. The original echo repetition (mm. 168–9) now normalized, it has a minimal effect on Elise's

embodiment. However, the next hypermetric disruption (mm. 170–1) begins a slow, chromatic widening of the music's range as well as the steady destabilization of its harmony. These musical changes, compounded with the unexpected hypermetric disturbances, likely resound in Elise's body. When the musical arrival at m. 174 finally occurs, Elise's energies and tensions seek equilibrium. In the same moments that she laughs while reflecting upon her early listening persona, she may also laugh as an unconscious tactic to release the tension that had been slowly mounting throughout the chain of hypermetric disruption devices.

The analyses of this chapter sought to uncover the unique ways minuet music can express hypermetric disturbances, and how traditional humor theories can further enrich the readings of those moments. In the following chapter I broaden the analytical scope with a variety of selected studies: instances of hypermetric disruption occurring simultaneously alongside other humor devices, and scenarios where humor devices occur independent from hypermetric manipulations. Each case contains characteristic qualities that lend itself to a distinctive humor analysis.

5. Exploring Other Humor Devices

This chapter contains six close readings of humor devices implemented in Opp. 76 and 77. In many of the scenarios, multiple humor devices are at play either simultaneously or in quick succession, allowing for more complex and varied humor analyses. The first three cases are those of hypermetric disruption occurring concurrent with another humor device; the final three are instances of humor devices occurring within a normative hypermetric framework. Each passage is unique not only in the devices it employs but also in the depth of its choreomusical interaction and the specific humor theories best suited to its analysis.

I. Hypermetric Disruption Concurrent with Other Devices

Hypermetric Disruption and Stylistic Incompetence

The opening phrases of the minuet of Op. 76, no. 3 (Hob. III:77, “Emperor”) simultaneously express hypermetric disruption and stylistic incompetence devices. The concurrent devices force Elise to vascillate between conflicting musical narratives. At various points throughout the passage, she must choose between interpreting the music via quadruple hypermeasures or adjusting for a highly astylistic musical element. This conflict results in a complex, multi-layered listening experience that may be considered from the viewpoints of multiple humor theories.

In eighteenth-century ballroom minuets, dancers customarily performed the first *plié* of the dance during a one-beat anacrusis so that the choreographically accented rise of the *demi-coupé* fell directly on the musical downbeat [beat 2 of the step cycle]. As the minuet transitioned from a ballroom dance to concert music, the

anacrusis remained a standard stylistic element of the genre, suggesting that those minuets violating the one-beat anacrusis norm would strike listeners as atypical.¹ Thus when the minuet music of Op. 76, no. 3 begins and the first violin plays not one but four beats of music before the rest of the ensemble enters, this likely catches Elise's attention. Grappling with what sounds like an extended anacrusis, she must hurriedly decide if her step cycle begins on the first upbeat of the music and the hyperdownbeat falls on m. 1, or if she should delay her dancing until the initiation of the first hypermeasure is clear. To choose the latter would ensure that the first, accented choreographic rise as well as the hyperdownbeat would occur with the lower voices' entrance at m. 2.

One of Elise's main priorities as a minuet listener is to identify an appropriate candidate for the first hyperdownbeat; the music's unusual opening immediately obfuscates this task. With attention and arousal maximized she attends to the music, waiting to hear if it provides a clear hyperdownbeat. It is also likely that her initial appraisal is negative—the unusual musical data may cause frustration, confusion, and even annoyance. Figures 5.1a–b show a possible hypermetric reading of this passage. With the complete absence of underpinning harmony in the first measure, m. 1's status as a hyperdownbeat is uncertain (Figure 5.1a, Level 1.) When the lower

¹ Haydn composed the twelve minuets of Hob. IX:11 for ballroom dancing; Minuet I appeared in Chapter 3 as an example of a normative minuet and trio. Interestingly, half of the minuets (Nos. II, IV, VI, VIII, X, and XII) lack an anacrusis; these are also the only works in the collection without a trio section. Because the trio's main purpose was to provide sufficient music for the dancers to complete all of the necessary components of their choreography (Schwandt, *Grove Music Online*), it is conceivable that these six minuets, spaced evenly throughout the set, were not intended for dancing at all, but were perhaps interlude or background music.

Figure 5.1a. Possible hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1-9.

The image displays a musical score for the first nine measures of Op. 76, no. 3, marked *Allegro*. The score is written for piano and includes a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) at the beginning of the first measure. Below the score, six levels of hypermetric analysis are shown, labeled Level 1 through Level 6. Each level consists of a horizontal line with various markings: solid black dots, open circles, and dashed arrows. Level 1 shows a group of three notes with a solid dot at the first, an open circle at the second, and a solid dot at the third, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. Level 2 shows a group of four notes with a solid dot at the first, an open circle at the second, and a solid dot at the third, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. Level 3 shows a group of four notes with a solid dot at the first, an open circle at the second, and a solid dot at the third, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. Level 4 shows a group of four notes with a solid dot at the first, a solid dot at the second, an open circle at the third, and a solid dot at the fourth, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. Level 5 shows a group of four notes with a solid dot at the first, a solid dot at the second, an open circle at the third, and a solid dot at the fourth, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. Level 6 shows a group of four notes with a solid dot at the first, a solid dot at the second, an open circle at the third, and a solid dot at the fourth, with a dashed arrow pointing to the right. The labels '1 of 4?', '1 of 4!', '2 of 4', '3 of 4', '4 of 4', and '1 of 4?' are placed above the corresponding notes in each level. A small 'X' is marked on the first level of the second measure.

Figure 5.1b. Possible hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 6–12.

The figure displays a musical score for Op. 76, no. 3, measures 6–12. The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes hypermetric levels 6 through 11, which are represented by horizontal lines with various markings and arrows. Level 6 is marked with a solid black dot at measure 6 and a solid grey dot at measure 10, with a dashed arrow labeled "1 of 4?". Level 7 has a solid black dot at measure 6, a solid grey dot at measure 10, and a solid black dot at measure 12, with a dashed arrow labeled "2 of 4". Level 8 has a solid black dot at measure 6, a solid grey dot at measure 10, a solid black dot at measure 12, and a solid grey dot at measure 14, with a dashed arrow labeled "3 of 4". Level 9 has a solid grey dot at measure 6, a solid black dot at measure 10, a solid grey dot at measure 14, and a solid black dot at measure 18, with a dashed arrow labeled "1 of 4!". Level 10 has a solid black dot at measure 10, a solid grey dot at measure 14, and a solid black dot at measure 18, with a dashed arrow labeled "2 of 4". Level 11 has a solid black dot at measure 10, a solid grey dot at measure 14, and a solid black dot at measure 18, with a dashed arrow labeled "3 of 4". There are also two 'X' marks on the Level 9 line, one at measure 10 and one at measure 14.

voices enter at m. 2, she decides that this downbeat, instead, must be the hyperdownbeat. Immediately rejecting her initial projections, she reinterprets m. 2 as the hypermetric beginning (Figure 5.1a, Level 2). This decision also aligns the hypermeter with a tutti texture and a fully-voiced harmony: a four-measure progression of I–ii⁶–V⁶–I in mm. 2–5 fits within the quadruple norm and thus initiates a chain of realized hypermetric projections (Figure 5.1a, Levels 2–5). The harmony’s immediate congruency with the hypermeter leads to a series of positively valenced post-outcome responses.

The opening melody returns at m. 6, confirming the start of a new phrase. However, Elise is still juggling two conflicting musical dialogues: the standard quadruple norm, and the curious five-measure opening passage. While highly atypical, it is not choreographically impossible to conceive of the first measure as an extended upbeat (though she would have to reconcile that decision upon the music’s repeat). Yet here in m. 6, as the opening melody returns, Elise can hardly pause her minuet dance for a full measure; instead, she must weigh the importance of congruent passages receiving the same hypermetric treatment against her previous decision to “omit” a measure from the hypermetric schema altogether. Her interpretation of m. 6 as a hyperdownbeat is thus tentative (Figure 5.1a, Level 6).

Level 6 is replicated in Figure 5.1b. As the music continues in normative fashion, Elise’s confidence strengthens. The brief arrival on the dominant at m. 8 (Figure 5.1b, Level 8) confirms hypermetric beat three of four and anticipates the next hyperdownbeat at m. 10. Yet, at m. 9 the ascending line in the violin indicates the initiation of a new phrase. Because of what William Rothstein would refer to as

“contraction,” the expected four-measure phrase is shortened to three measures by omitting the fourth hypermetric beat.² Elise’s hypermetric schema denied, she reinterprets m. 9 as a hyperdownbeat thus initiating a new set of projections (Figure 5.1b, Level 9). The cadential harmony in m. 11 confirms hypermetric beat 3 of 4 (Figure 5.1b, Level 11), and the cadence at m. 12 announces the end of the hypermeasure.

Figure 5.2 shows the passage from mm. 8–12 along with the hypermetric and dance accents. In normative minuets, the step cycles begin on the anacrusis leading to hypermetric beats one and three, with the rise of the first *demi-coupé* accenting the downbeats of those measures. Because of the phrase contraction, however, the passage now contains two consecutive strong hypermetric beats: hypermetric beat three (m. 8), which is reinforced by the choreographically accented rise of the *demi-coupé* [beat 2 of the step cycle]; and the even more emphatic hyperdownbeat (m. 9), which now occurs on the unaccented *pas marché* [beat 5 of the step cycle]. The deletion of hyperbeat four sets the choreography out of phase with the music; the choreographic accents now fall on the hypermetrically weak beats two and four (mm. 10 and 12). Furthermore, when the hypermeasure ends (m. 12), Elise is in the middle of a step cycle.

This new choreomusical is kinesthetically disturbing. If the pattern continues, the step cycles will remain out of phase with the hypermeter; more crucially, the music and the dance will not finish together. Indeed, the passage

² William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), 58.

Figure 5.2. Step cycle interruption in Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 8–12.

The figure shows a musical score for four staves (treble and bass clefs) covering measures 8 to 12. Below the score, two rows of accents are provided. The first row, labeled 'Hyper-metric accents', shows groupings of measures: 3, **1**, 2, 3, 4. The second row, labeled 'Dance accents', shows a sequence of 13 individual accents: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, 3.

continues with a normative hypermeter, stranding Elise mid-step cycle at the final cadence at m. 20. Her appraisal at this moment is decidedly negative, and in response to the undesirable outcome she uses a process David Temperley calls revision: “the modification of an initial analysis in light of subsequent events.”³ Because the dance and music did not cadence together, Elise must quickly adjust her hypermetric schema in time for the music’s repeat.

Figures 5.3a–b show a revised hypermetric reading of the passage from mm. 1–12, with step cycles in brackets above the score. Elise knows that in order for the music and dance to cadence simultaneously she must include m. 1 in her choreography. However, the music’s harmonic reinforcement of a full hypermeasure in mm. 2–5 is likely too strong to contradict with her hypermetric projections. Her solution is to treat m. 1 as a hypermetric anacrusis (shown by the designation “4 of 4” in Figure 5.3a, Level 1) while simultaneously denoting it a choreographic

³ David Temperley, *The Cognition of Basic Musical Structures* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2001), 210.

Figure 5.3a. Second hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1-9.

The image displays a musical score for the first nine measures of Op. 76, no. 3, marked *Allegro* and *f*. The score is presented in four staves: Treble clef (top), Bass clef (second), Bass clef (third), and Bass clef (bottom). Brackets above the score group the measures into four hypermetric units. Below the score, six levels of analysis are shown, each with a label on the left and a diagram on the right. The diagrams use solid black dots for downbeats and open circles for upbeats, connected by solid and dashed curved arrows to show the flow of the hypermetric structure. Level 1 is labeled '4 of 4' and shows a four-measure unit. Level 2 is labeled '1 of 4' and shows a four-measure unit. Level 3 is labeled '2 of 4' and shows an eight-measure unit. Level 4 is labeled '3 of 4' and shows a twelve-measure unit. Level 5 is labeled '4 of 4' and shows a twelve-measure unit. Level 6 is labeled '1 of 3' and shows a twelve-measure unit.

Figure 5.3b. Second hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 6–12.

The figure displays a musical score for the second hypermetric reading of Op. 76, no. 3, measures 6–12. The score is written in a grand staff (treble, alto, and bass clefs). Above the staff, brackets indicate hypermetric groupings: a group of three measures (6-8) and a group of four measures (9-12). The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs.

Below the score, seven levels of hypermetric structure are shown, labeled Level 6 through Level 12. Each level consists of a horizontal line with dots representing notes. Solid arrows indicate the primary hypermetric structure, while dashed arrows indicate secondary or alternative structures. The levels are defined as follows:

- Level 6: *1 of 3* (solid arrow from measure 6 to 8)
- Level 7: *2 of 3* (solid arrow from measure 7 to 9)
- Level 8: *3 of 3* (solid arrow from measure 8 to 10)
- Level 9: *1 of 4* (solid arrow from measure 9 to 12)
- Level 10: *2 of 4* (solid arrow from measure 10 to 12)
- Level 11: *3 of 4* (solid arrow from measure 11 to 12)
- Level 12: *4 of 4* (solid arrow from measure 12 to 12)

downbeat. Elise also anticipates the hypermetric deletion at m. 9, treating mm. 6–8 as a three-bar hypermeasure (Levels 6–8). In doing so, the hyperdownbeat at m. 9 also realigns the music and the choreography; the addition of m. 1 as a “danceable” measure allows Elise’s choreography to conclude at the same time as the musical cadence at m. 20. Achieving congruency between the step cycles and the final cadence was Elise’s main goal in reinterpreting this opening passage; Figures 5.3a–b show a viable reading of the music.

To further elucidate the complex choreomusical interactions in this passage, Figure 5.4 shows the music (reduced to simply the melody) as well as three accent streams: hypermetric accents, dance accents, and musical accents. The hypermetric designations match those of Elise’s second and most danceable reading, including the hypermetric anacrusis at m. 1 and the contracted phrase in mm. 6–8. The streams show how, in its initial measures, the minuet’s hypermeter is far out of phase with the step cycle and the phrase rhythm. The hyperdownbeats at mm. 2 and 6 occur on beat five of each corresponding step cycle—an unaccented choreographic beat. Similarly, the rise of the first *demi-coupé* of each step cycle [beat 2 of the step cycle] now coincides with the relatively unaccented hypermetric beats two and four. The contracted, three measure phrase of mm. 6–8 rectifies this; Figure 5.4 shows how, because of the missing hyperbeat, the hypermetric and dance accents realign at m. 9 when the hyperdownbeat occurs simultaneously with the accented rise of the *demi-coupé*.

In Elise’s second reading of this passage, the chain of post-outcome responses is intricate and unpredictable. She must endure the contradictory

Figure 5.4. Choreomusical accent patterns for Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 1–12.

Hyper-
metric
accents

4 **1** 2 3 4 **1**

Dance
accents

1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 1

Musical
accents

3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Hyper-
metric
accents

2 3 **1** 2 3 4

Dance
accents

2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6

Musical
accents

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2

relationship between the hypermeter, choreography, and harmony that emerges in the opening measures; in doing so she suspends her prediction and reaction responses. When the choreography and music cadence simultaneously in m. 20, the resultant appraisal is strongly positive. Having experienced the frustration of an unsatisfying first reading, solving the musical puzzle the second time through may result in an augmented level of satisfaction.

Elise's constantly changing expectations of the work contribute to an atmosphere ripe with humorous potential. Upon hearing the initial measures, she may believe the music is incorrect—that a minuet cannot possibly begin in such an disheveled manner. Her solution is to delay the onset of the choreography until m. 1.3, and the quartet's tutti statement of mm. 2–5 immediately supports this decision; Elise's appraisal shifts from negative to positive in response. However, as the music continues the hypermeter exceedingly conflicts with the choreography—the music continually denies her attempts to bring the hypermeter back in step with her dance, leading to a series of negative post-outcome responses. When the cadence at m. 20 leaves Elise in the middle of a step cycle, she realizes that her initial interpretive choice may have been incorrect.

The stakes are thus high for the second iteration of the passage. Elise battles through a disturbing choreomusical relationship for several measures (Figures 5.3a–b), yet when the choreography reaches completion in coincidence with the cadence at m. 20, an emotional dénouement ensues. Elise realizes that the music deceived her not once but twice: first with an opening so unusual she was spurred to treat it as a musical blunder, and next with a chain of hypermetric readjustments

to adjust for the “extra” initial measure. By uncovering these musical complexities, she may find great pleasure in her own deception. Such self-reflection is reminiscent of elements of Thomas Hobbes and Superiority Theory: “for men laugh at the follies of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance.”⁴

Elise’s humor may also be heightened by the vascillating emotional trajectory she undergoes over the course of the passage. William Hazlitt cites the “jostling of one feeling against another” as “the essence of the laughable.”⁵ Elise’s involvement with the music results in an eclectic emotional pathway—she may at various moments feel surprise, pride, frustration, and ultimately, realization and appreciation. When she finds a solution to the stylistic and hypermetric problems, her strongly positive emotions clash starkly with prior, conspicuously negative responses to the music. Now that she is able to reflect back upon her experience, the “jostling” emotions might strike Elise as humorous.

Instances of stylistic incompetence in minuet music further interact with the various cultural norms surrounding the genre. In the case of the minuet of Op. 76, no. 3, Elise’s experience with numerous ballroom minuets influences her reaction to the extended anacrusis that begins the piece. Her recognition of a stylistic abnormality—one that in the context of a ballroom, might have disastrous ramifications for the dancers—sets off a chain of projections and reinterpretations as she juggles various stylistic cues while simultaneously trying to fit the music into

⁴ Thomas Hobbes, “Human Nature, or the Fundamental Elements of Policy” (1650) in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, Vol. 4, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London: J. Bohn, 1840), 46

⁵ William Hazlitt, “On Wit and Humor” (1819), in *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845), 4.

a choreomusical norm. Although kinesthetic connection to the music plays a role in Elise's engagement with this work, a significant portion of her experience relies on navigating conflicting thought processes; this cerebral connection lends itself to a humor analysis rooted in Superiority and Incongruity Theories. In contrast, I discuss the next example predominately from the perspective of embodiment, relying on choreomusical relationships and Relief Theory to describe Elise's musical experience.

Hypermetric Disruption and Excessive Repetition

It is not surprising that excessive repetition at the surface level may carry implications for the music's hypermeter. The following passage from Op. 76, no. 4 (Hob. III:78, "Sunrise") displays an instance of excessive repetition which results in hypermetric disruption. Because both devices interfere with Elise's internalized choreography, they interact strongly with her mimetic participation and kinesthetic responses.

The theme of the minuet strongly emphasizes the motivic unit of three pairs of rising half steps, shown in Figure 5.5. Pairs of eighth notes in both rising and falling half steps occur throughout the minuet, but the iteration of three in a row becomes marked as an indicator of musical beginning. The line behaves much like a Jack-in-the-Box: turning the crank (repetitive eighth notes) winds a spring, and when the spring takes on more tension than it can hold, it releases and the jester leaps out of the box (large melodic ascent to the next downbeat).⁶ Each

⁶ Woody Sobey, *The Way Toys Work: The Science Behind the Magic 8 Ball, Etch A Sketch, Boomerang, and More* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, Inc., 2008), 71–2.

Figure 5.5. Motivic statements in the minuet theme, Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 1-5.

Each iteration of the eighth note pairs initiates a new musical statement.

presentation of the opening motive not only signals the beginning of a new musical phrase and step cycle, but through a subtle accrual of energy it propels Elise through her dance steps. The (2+2+4) sentential structure of the entire phrase (mm. 1-8) ensures that she experiences the choreomusical correlation three consecutive times: the motive's first appearance in m. 1 as the basic idea (bi), its repeated presentation in m. 3 as the basic idea altered (bi'), and its initiation of the continuation in m. 5.⁷ Beats 1-4 of the step cycle, containing the two *demi-coupés*, correspond to the eighth notes; as the music releases its accumulated energy on the downbeat of m. 2 [beat 5 of the step cycle], the more complicated *demi-coupés* give way to the simplistic *pas marchés*, punctuated by two quarter notes in the music.

After a hypermetrically normative opening section (mm. 1-8) cadencing in the dominant F major, the second section of the minuet (mm. 9-28) begins in the

⁷ A full score of the Op. 76, no. 4 minuet is available in Appendix B.

tonic B^b major before beginning a shift toward G minor in m. 16.⁸ As the music transitions out of the G minor passage of mm. 16–23, it hints toward a strong musical arrival. Figure 5.6 shows several musical indicators that Elise would likely recognize: a dominant pedal in the tonic key played by the cello (mm. 24–6), a decline in musical momentum as the second violin then the viola sustain dotted half notes (mm. 24–6), and a gradual diminuendo permeating the phrase.

Figure 5.6. Preparation for musical arrival and execution of excessive repetition device, Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 23–9.

The musical score for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 23–9, is presented in four staves. The key signature is B-flat major and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 23 with a *dim.* marking. A bracket labeled "halting" motivic derivative spans measures 27 to 29. The opening motive is shown in three forms: "opening motive (unresolved)" in measures 27-28, "opening motive (complete)" in measures 29-30, and "opening motive (incomplete)" in measure 31. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*. The Cello part features a dominant pedal in the tonic key from mm. 24–6. The Violin II and Viola parts sustain dotted half notes from mm. 24–6. The music concludes with a gradual diminuendo permeating the phrase.

Although the dominant pedal and the slowing of the lower voices is likely enough musical data to signal a pending formal arrival, motivic liquidation in the first violin beginning in m. 25 further aids in the sense of imminent closure.

Specifically, the motive loses its first note, beginning a half-beat later than expected

⁸ It is notable that at mm. 13–8 the music enacts its first hypermetric disruption device, an expansion from a four-measure phrase to a six-measure phrase. The clear hyperdownbeat at m. 19 reestablishes the 4-bar hypermetric schema.

and on the higher member of the dyad. The result, compounded by the steady long tones in the lower three voices, is a sense that the music is “stalling out” and petering to a halt. As the momentum slows, Elise likely anticipates closure while simultaneously anticipating the return of the opening theme.

Figure 5.7 shows a series of hypermetric projections for this passage; the quadruple hypermeter combines with the altered motivic units to infuse the music with a sense of forthcoming closure. Despite the clear deceleration of musical momentum, m. 25 remains a hypermetrically normative beat 3 of 4 (Level 1). The music’s shift to a V^7 in m. 26 intensifies the drive toward tonic and anticipates the return of the opening theme at m. 26.3, which would then usher in the projected hyperdownbeat at m. 27 (Level 2). However, the musical phrase extends past the expected boundary, remaining firmly rooted in its closing gesture—it has missed the opportunity to restate the opening theme at a hypermetrically appropriate time. As the cello enters in m. 27 with an incomplete opening motive, Elise delays the hyperdownbeat by a measure, interpreting m. 27 as another hypermetric beat 4 (Level 3). The first violin absorbs the cello’s motive at m. 27.3, giving it proper metrical placement (beat 3 of the measure) and thus strongly suggesting a hyperdownbeat at m. 28. Again, however, the pairs of eighth notes continue, reinforced by the second violin and viola and delaying the hyperdownbeat once more (Level 4). With a *forte* entrance by the cello and an increased dynamic level in the upper voices, the music at last confirms this projection, and the hyperdownbeat falls on m. 29 (Level 5). Repetition of the rising half-step motive has led to an

Figure 5.7. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 4, mm. 25–9.

The figure displays a musical score for five staves (treble and bass clefs) and a corresponding hypermetric projection diagram below it. The score is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 25. The first two measures contain a melodic line in the upper voice with a fermata over the second measure. The third measure is a whole rest, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic section in measures 4 and 5, and a forte (*f*) dynamic section in measures 6 and 7. The score concludes in measure 9 with a fermata over the final note.

The hypermetric projection diagram below the score illustrates the hierarchical structure of the music across five levels:

- Level 1:** A dashed arrow connects a grey dot at the start of measure 25 to a black dot at the end of measure 7. An open circle is positioned above the arrow.
- Level 2:** A dashed arrow connects a grey dot at the start of measure 25 to a black dot at the end of measure 7. An open circle is positioned above the arrow.
- Level 3:** A dashed arrow connects a grey dot at the start of measure 25 to a black dot at the end of measure 5. An open circle is positioned above the arrow, and an 'X' is placed below the arrow.
- Level 4:** A dashed arrow connects a grey dot at the start of measure 25 to a black dot at the end of measure 7. An open circle is positioned above the arrow, and an 'X' is placed below the arrow.
- Level 5:** A solid arrow connects a grey dot at the start of measure 25 to a black dot at the end of measure 9. An open circle is positioned above the arrow, and an 'X' is placed below the arrow.

Labels for the levels are: Level 1: 3 of 4, Level 2: 4 of 4, Level 3: 4 of 4?, Level 4: 4 of 4?, Level 5: 1 of 4!

internal phrase expansion, stretching a normative four-measure phrase into six measures.⁹

In the moments leading up to the phrase expansion, the halting derivative of the motive in mm. 25–6 (Figure 5.6) concurrent with a long diminuendo invite sensations of deceleration. Although her attention is attuned to the pending musical arrival, Elise may subconsciously embody the musical cues, her body relaxing slightly as the music seems to slow. The first hypermetric denial at m. 27 causes an immediate increase in tension and unfavorable choreomusical connection, which is quickly rectified as the subsequent reinterpretation realigns the step cycles with the music. Yet in the midst of this quick succession of hypermetric denials and delays, the opening motive appears; the energy of the turning eighth note pairs may further intensify Elise’s kinesthetic response, the music perhaps feeling like it is spinning out of control as she struggles to entrain to an unwieldy passage.

The exaggerated swirling of the musical line in mm. 27–9 may also manifest itself in responses described by Arnie Cox as amodal MMI. Cox suggests that listeners may feel tension or “clenching in the gut” in response to a musical process;¹⁰ perhaps Elise experiences physical sensations as if she were twirling haphazardly across the ballroom floor. Furthermore, she may engage in cross-modal MMI—subvocal responses to the music¹¹—as her exertion and subsequent breathless fatigue match that of her imaginary dancing persona. This embodied

⁹ Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm*, 74.

¹⁰ Arnie Cox, “Embodying Music: Principles of the Mimetic Hypothesis,” *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 2 (July 2011), 43.

¹¹ *Ibid.* Subvocal responses include pursing the lips, increased respiratory rate, or even holding the breath.

experience leaves an impressive cache of mental and emotional energy to be dispelled upon the music's hyperdownbeat at m. 29. As her imagined dancing self finds sure footing once again when the choreomusical relationship returns to normal, Elise may laugh as a final response to a strongly physiological musical experience.

Hypermetric Disruption, Excessive Repetition, and Stylistic Incompetence

The final instance of concurrent devices I explore intertwines hypermetric disruption, excessive repetition, and stylistic incompetence. By expressing these in a single musical passage, the minuet of Op. 76, no. 6 (Hob. III:80) allows for an intensely embodied listening experience. As the hypermetric disruption and excessive repetition engage Elise's mimetic processes, the music's stylistic incompetence interacts with her minuet knowledge by denying her cultural expectations.

Figure 5.8 shows the opening theme of the minuet, whose rhythmic profile becomes exceedingly important as the work progresses. After the first violin's introductory figure in m. 1,¹² a rapid-fire dialogue with the lower three voices ensues: the first violin plays on beats one and three and the lower voices chime in on the second beat of each measure. Beginning with m. 1.3, the first violin expresses a progressively widening dyad over the barline, always arriving on tonic E^b5 on the

¹² Like the minuet of Op. 76, no. 3 studied earlier in this chapter, this minuet too begins with what could initially sound like a four-beat extended anacrusis. However, unlike in Op. 76, no. 3, this opening passage presents clues in mm. 5–8 to reinforce a regular quadruple hypermeter that would be enough to eradicate confusion regarding the hypermetric designation for m. 1.

Figure 5.8. Opening theme of Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 1–8.

downbeat. In contrast, the lower voices interject with a descending pattern, each voice on various members of the tonic triad. The contrary motion against the first violin rapidly opens up the tonal space from an octave and a fifth in m. 2 to three octaves in m. 3 and four octaves and a major third in m. 4. The lower voices' descending line balances out the first violin's quickly rising register while also inviting further musical discourse.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this opening theme is its metric treatment. The quarter note pulse is of prime importance to ballroom minuets; without it, dancers may struggle to accurately perform their tactus-driven dance steps. This minuet dictates the tactus at every beat, yet the emphatic statements by the lower strings on beat two—the weakest beat of a three-beat measure—create a sense of imbalance, the music staggering crookedly toward the forceful dominant at m. 7. Furthermore, the emphatic interjections by the lower voices occur on the step cycle's beats 3 (m. 3.2) and 6 (mm. 2.2 and 4.2), underscoring a choreographically unaccented *plié* [beat 3 of the step cycle] and simplistic *pas marché* [beat 6 of the

step cycle]. Such musical nuances create an unusual and perhaps slightly disturbing relationship between the music and the choreography. Figure 5.9 elucidates this unusual choreomusical relationship, using a piano reduction of the opening passage to show the dance and musical accent patterns. The musical accent stream shows the emphasized second beats in mm. 2–4; each occurs simultaneous with an unaccented dance beat.

Figure 5.9. Choreomusical accent patterns in Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 1–5.

Dance accents	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Musical accents	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3

As with the echo repetition of Op. 77, no. 1 discussed in Chapter 4, Elise likely acclimates to the unusual accentual pattern of the Op. 76, no. 6 minuet after repeated exposure: having heard it four times in the opening section (mm. 2–4 and mm. 10–12, and again with the repeat) she is now able to navigate its jagged meter without much disturbance. The second section of the minuet begins at m. 17 with entirely new thematic material and more normative metrical treatment.¹³ Thus far

¹³ For a full score of the Op. 77, no. 1 minuet see Appendix B.

in the work, the hypermeter has yet to come into question; the music proceeds through a string of normative quadruple hypermeasures. A swirling eighth-note pattern in the first violin beginning in m. 25 initiates musical momentum and may signal that an arrival is imminent; accents in the lower voices on each metric downbeat help drive the music onward. As a result of these musical cues Elise's tension and attention responses may increase slightly.

Figure 5.10 shows hypermetric projections for the passage beginning at m. 25. Because the hypermeter has been unproblematic thus far, projections are in two- and four-measure spans (Levels 1–2). At m. 27, however, the music threatens these schematic expectations. The active surface texture signals pending arrival and suggests that a dominant on hypermetric beat three (m. 27) will cadence on the following downbeat. The first violin and viola do their part in building the outer voices of a cadential harmony, with $\hat{3}$ and $\hat{5}$, respectively; the second violin, however, is a half-step off, playing an A4 rather than a B^b4. Without the strong cadential dominant, Elise becomes unsure of her third hypermetric beat (Level 3). At m. 28 the first violin careens through the downbeat, ignoring the expected moment of cadence and denying hypermetric beat four (Level 4). Although Elise shifts her projections forward by one measure, the V₄⁶ on the downbeat of m. 29 sounds much more like a hypermetric beat three than four (Level 5). The cello rejoins at m. 29.3 to underscore a root position dominant; its motion to $\hat{1}$ on the next downbeat strongly asserts the cadence, confirming the final hypermetric beat of the phrase (Level 6). Once again, repetition within the phrase (the motivic sequencing of mm. 25–7) expands it from four measures to six.

Figure 5.10. Hypermetric projections for Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 25–30.

The figure displays a musical score for Op. 76, no. 6, measures 25–30, with hypermetric projections below it. The score consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The dynamic marking *mf* is present throughout. The score shows melodic lines with slurs and accents, and a bass line with rests and a final chord.

The hypermetric projection below the score is organized into six levels:

- Level 1:** A solid dot at measure 25, a hollow circle at measure 26, and a solid dot at measure 29. A dashed arrow points from the dot at 25 to the dot at 29.
- Level 2:** A solid dot at measure 25, a hollow circle at measure 26, a solid dot at measure 29, and a solid dot at measure 30. A dashed arrow points from the dot at 25 to the dot at 29, and another dashed arrow points from the dot at 29 to the dot at 30.
- Level 3:** A solid dot at measure 25, a solid dot at measure 29, and a solid dot at measure 30. A solid arrow points from the dot at 25 to the dot at 29. A dashed arrow points from the dot at 29 to the dot at 30.
- Level 4:** A solid dot at measure 25, a solid dot at measure 29, a hollow circle at measure 30, and a solid dot at measure 31. A solid arrow points from the dot at 25 to the dot at 29. A dashed arrow points from the dot at 29 to the dot at 31. A dashed arrow points from the dot at 31 to the dot at 30.
- Level 5:** A dashed line with an 'X' at measure 26. A dashed line with an 'X' at measure 29. A dashed line with an 'X' at measure 30.
- Level 6:** A solid dot at measure 30 and a hollow circle at measure 31. A solid arrow points from the dot at 30 to the circle at 31.

Labels for the levels are: Level 1: 1 of 4; Level 2: 2 of 4; Level 3: 3 of 4?; Level 4: 3 of 4?; Level 5: 3 of 4?; Level 6: 4 of 4!

The music at m. 30 is highly reminiscent of the opening theme (Figure 5.8): staccato quarter notes, stalled harmonic rhythm, and three-against-one musical dialogue. However, Elise likely notices an inversion of the musical texture—rather than the first violin engaging in widening dyads over the barline, it is now the cello with this role as the upper voices respond on beat two of each measure. Unlike the opening theme, which contrasts a rising upper line with a compensatory descent in the supporting lower voices, the overarching trajectory of this passage is one of ascent. Perhaps this resounds in Elise’s body as the cello and first violin leap higher and higher, the tenuous nature of their extreme ranges intensified by the slowly tapering dynamic level. Her tension, already heightened in response to the hypermetric disruption of the previous passage, continues to build as she internalizes the current phrase and awaits its resolution.

Figure 5.11 shows the music of mm. 35–9, which expresses both a stylistic incompetence device as well as an excessive repetition device. Choreographic notation shows the individual dance steps contained under labeled brackets (“DC” for each *demi-coupé* and “2 PM” for each pair of *pas marchés*), and the six-beat step cycles under arcs. The smaller, two-beat brackets reveal a stylistically unusual relationship between the choreography and the music: with the music proceeding in two-beat units, it is in perfect coincidence with the two-beat dance steps. An extended period of musical hemiola such as this has profound implications for Elise’s kinesthetic engagement. Standard minuet choreography itself is in part characterized by its hemiola relationship with the music; Elise expects to encounter music with a clear triple meter and subtle conflict between the two-beat dance steps

Figure 5.11. Hemiola and minuet choreography in Op. 76, no. 6, mm. 35–9.

within her choreography. Thus a passage such as mm. 35–8 may result in an undesirable embodied effect: without the clear triple subdivision in the music, the dance steps feel strangely untethered, their complex yet grounding metric relationship with the music suddenly eradicated.

The passage from mm. 30–8 could also be classified as an instance of excessive repetition. Huron focuses on the repetition of discrete and distinct musical events when defining the device, citing the upper limit of normative repetitions as three.¹⁴ I posit a slightly different interpretation of the concept here: in the case of mm. 30–8, it is not any one singular musical unit that is repeated exactly. Rather it is the homogeneity of the passage—several measures of constant staccato quarter notes of similar dynamic level remaining almost entirely within the dominant

¹⁴ David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), 286.

harmony—that leads me to suggest Elise would have an overall perception of excessive repetition in the music.

At m. 38.3, a *forte* assertion in the first violin emphatically declares the return of the theme, thus terminating a passage fraught with stylistic abnormalities. Although her prediction and reaction responses are likely negatively valenced, Elise nonetheless experiences an exceedingly positive appraisal as the music returns to a familiar and manageable choreomusical state. Michael Clark and Mike Martin's humor criterion can help elucidate why, in this moment, Elise may find amusement: she has been able to perceive the stylistic incongruities in the passage; she presumably finds enjoyment in thinking of the minuet music and dance; once rectified, she likely enjoys the music's stylistic incongruities for their interest and for the puzzling musical riddle they pose and then solve.¹⁵ If her enjoyment of the moment is exceedingly strong, she may even break into spontaneous laughter.¹⁶ This intensely favorable affect immediately translates to a kinesthetic reaction: Elise's body relaxes and she releases her breath; her highly concentrated mimetic dance steps become softer and more natural as she now easily navigates the normative minuet music. Her laughter also acts as an equalizer: her mental and physiological tensions having reached a pinnacle at m. 38, laughter acts as a pressure release, allowing her energies to achieve equilibrium once more.

¹⁵ Michael Clark, "Humor and Incongruity," *Philosophy* 45, no. 171 (1970).

¹⁶ Mike Martin, "Humor and Aesthetic Enjoyment of Incongruities," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 23, no. 1 (Winter 1983).

II. Beyond Hypermetric Disturbance

Stylistic Incompetence

As Elise waits for the music of any minuet to begin, she holds a generalized set of expectations for various musical elements. She expects to hear a piece in triple meter with a clear, regular pulse and a moderate and danceable tempo; an anacrusis that allows her to *plié* before the first downbeat; and cadences that coincide with the ends of various step cycles. These preparatory assumptions build the foundation for not only her imagination and tension responses, but also for the quality and intensity of her post-outcome state. This is why, when the music of the Op. 76, no. 1 (Hob. III:75) minuet begins and immediately denies one of Elise's primary stylistic expectations, an opportunity for a humorous outcome ensues.

Marked *presto*, the music flies by at a pace that would likely be impossible for dancers to manage. Yet various additional musical elements highlight the minuet's frenetic tempo; Figure 5.12 shows the opening measures. The *piano* dynamic aids in the music's perceived urgency as it makes a hushed, almost breathless entrance. Incessant quarter notes in the first violin reinforce the unwieldy tempo, making it not only undeniable but also inescapable. Beginning in m. 5 the lower voices become progressively more active, interjecting now on beats one and three of each measure (mm. 5–6) and then on all three beats (m. 7). These statements from the lower voices not only reinforce the pulse and thus the tempo but also slowly thicken the texture, aiding in the forceful forward motion of the phrase.

By the time the music explodes into a *fortissimo* interjection of eighth notes at m. 8, it has enhanced the listener's perception of its unusually fast tempo in

Figure 5.12. Stylistic incompetence device in Op. 76, no. 1.

Presto 1 constant quarter note pulse 5 eighth-note exclamation

p *ff*

p *ff*

p *ff*

p *ff*

p hushed dynamic level gradually increasing activity in lower voices *ff*

numerous ways.¹⁷ The resultant heightened physiological and emotional responses to the passage primes the situation for potential humor. Indeed, Elise likely realizes within seconds that the music undanceably fast; she scrambles to entrain to the music as it barrels onward. In those initial moments, the music behaves in stark contrast to what she conjured in her imagination response. Schopenhauer writes that “the cause of laughter . . . is simply the incongruity between a concept and the real objects which have been thought through it in some relation.”¹⁸ The “concept” is a generic minuet filter, which encompasses all of the stylistic norms and schemas of the genre; the “real object” is the music of the Op. 76, no. 1 minuet. As Elise compares the music she hears to her established concept of “minuet music,” the

¹⁷ For an in-depth discussion of this opening passage and its hypermetric construction, see Chapter 4.

¹⁸ Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea* (1818) 2nd ed., trans. R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Company, 1909), 95.

incongruity is strong enough to potentially evoke laughter. Furthermore, not only does the music violate stylistic expectations, it does so with no preamble and little delicacy. Hazlitt writes of laughter coming from “the jostling of one feeling against another;”¹⁹ when Elise’s relaxed, pre-listening state clashes with her shock and surprise as the music begins, she may immediately laugh in startled response.

I suggest here a secondary wave of humor. Any attempts Elise makes to engage with the minuet choreography would likely be met with great difficulty; however, she is nonetheless able to envision the intended choreography at tempo. In her imagined performance, the two dancers struggle to maintain their carriage and composure as the music flies by. Their delicate dance steps become a comically fast series of *pliés* and *élevés*, morphing their bodies into little more than human pistons bobbing up and down at a frenzied pace. The delicate and precise bodily movements, trained by the dancers to look effortless, become jerky and spasmodic, perhaps even sloppily placed out of time. In his essay on humor, Anthony Cooper writes: “nothing is ridiculous except what is deform’d.”²⁰ Although the music itself is in some way “deform’d,” it is in the imagined performance of the choreography that Elise finds the most glaring defects. The contortions of the choreography create an absurd spectacle, and one that may be greeted with laughter.

¹⁹ William Hazlitt, “On Wit and Humor” (1819), in *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845), 4.

²⁰ Anthony Cooper, “Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor” (1709), in *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc., 2001), 80.

Stylistic Incompetence and Implausible Delay

As we saw in the analysis of Op. 76, no. 3 earlier in this chapter, the preparatory anacrusis is crucial to minuet dancers. In the minuet of Op. 76, no. 3, it was a curiously extended anacrusis that led to conflicting hypermetric narratives. The minuet of Op. 77, no. 1 (Hob. III:81) presents the opposite problem: it begins directly on the downbeat, with no anacrusis at all.²¹ For knowledgeable minuet dancers, the lack of anacrusis could be quite disorienting—the introductory beat is largely a function of the choreography, allowing dancers to *plié* before rising to the balls of their feet for the first *demi-coupé*, occurring directly on the downbeat. Without the anacrusis dancers would have to hastily perform the *plié* on the downbeat before beginning the *demi-coupé*, now slightly out of time.

Beyond the absence of an initial anacrusis, the minuet theme also lacks significant harmonic direction and melodic closure. Figure 5.13 shows the first thirteen measures, encompassing the minuet theme as well as the beginning of its second iteration. The opening gesture—six eighth notes catapulting the melody into a large melodic leap—quickly becomes motivic, initiating new sub-phrases in mm. 5 and 7. The eighth-note gesture remains absent in mm. 9–12, however, as the music focuses instead on the latter half of the motivic unit. As the first violin continues its expansive melodic leaps, the dominant is prolonged through a series of applied harmonies. Yet although the harmony seems to have clearly advanced to a new key, the melody stubbornly remains on the latter half of its motive, robbing the music of a sense of strong closure. Left with no choice the cello neutralizes the dominant

²¹ For a full score of Op. 76, no. 3, see Appendix B.

Figure 5.13. Minuet theme, Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 1–13.

GM: V^7/V V^6_5/V V V^4_2/V V^6 V^7/V V I

tonicization with a $C\sharp$ in m. 12.3, leading the music back to G major and also back to the opening theme.

The theme's lack of tonal direction combined with the absence of an anacrusis may lead Elise to feel unconfident with her choreography. Although it likely only took one step cycle to realign her dance steps to the music after the unwieldy opening, subsequent measures offer minimal confirmation that her choreography remains correct. The first expected harmonic arrival at m. 4 is obscured by a grouping overlap—m. 4 acts simultaneously as hypermetric beat four

and the hyperdownbeat of the second, 5-measure phrase²²—and the second, at m. 8, is weakened significantly by the first violin's stubborn refusal to relinquish the leaping motivic unit. The melody provides stronger choreomusical support, with the eighth-note gesture of m. 1 repeated in mm. 5 and 7 and thus interlocking with the two-measure periodicity of the step cycles. Yet as the music proceeds the melodic support weakens as well; mm. 9–12 remain stuck on the first violin's leaping motive. When the theme returns at m. 13, in coincidence with the first *élevé* of another step cycle, Elise receives definitive confirmation that her choreography is thus far correct. However, I suggest that her confidence remains tenuous as the music lacks many of the stylistic phrase markers to which she is accustomed.

Elise continues to engage mimetically with the music despite its unusual characteristics. Rather than utilizing a repeat sign, the minuet's second iteration is fully composed out, allowing for slight changes in the lower voices.²³ The second violin and viola become much more rhythmically active, providing a nearly constant stream of eighth notes below the melody. Whereas the first presentation of the theme seemed to relinquish its rhythmic power for the first violin's stratospheric

²² Although a grouping overlap is indeed a hypermetric disruption device, I suggest that the one exhibited here has a negligible effect. One is more likely to recognize the eighth notes in m. 5 as similar to those in m. 1 and thus replicate their hypermetric treatment. Although m. 4 may harmonically function as a hyperdownbeat, surface level perceptions prioritize melody over harmony and associate m. 5 with hypermetric beat one. This also coincides with the minuet dance steps, giving the eighth-note gesture the same choreographic treatment in each of its three iterations.

²³ Charles Rosen cites a similar instance in the minuet of Haydn's Symphony no. 97 (Hob. I:97), where he writes: "This minuet is admittedly extraordinary with all of its repeats written out to allow for changes of instrumentation and dynamics." *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1971), 342.

leaps in mm. 8–12, the addition of the eighth-note pulse in the comparable passage (mm. 20–4) causes the music’s energy to build considerably. Figure 5.14 shows this passage as it leads to the next minuet section.

Figure 5.14. Preparation for and execution of implausible delay device, Op. 77, no. 1, mm. 21–9.

21

GM: V^4_2/V V^6 V^7/V V

25

implausible delay device

V^4_2 I^6 $bVII^6$ V^6_5 i^6

Am: VI^6

At m. 22, the constant stream of eighth notes in the second violin and viola embark upon a steady ascent. The energy of their continuous climb combines with

the first violin's wide leaps to create an emphatic drive toward the end of the phrase. As in mm. 8–12, the applied harmonies in mm. 21–4 suggest motion to the dominant, culminating in an assertive V^7/V resolving to V in mm. 23–4. The strong shift toward the dominant likely helps confirm Elise's presumptions that the section is coming to a close; her tension heightens in anticipation. Although the music of m. 24 lacks an articulated third beat, Elise has internalized the pulse and is able to complete the *plié* at m. 24.3 [beat 1 of the step cycle] in time and without trouble. When the next phrase begins at m. 25—again, a theme without an anacrusis—she is prepared and able to assimilate seamlessly.

As the next section begins, the surface rhythm and melodic content are clearly reminiscent of the opening theme; however, the harmonies are much less stable. The outer voices' steady contrary motion increases the musical tension; the salient F-major harmony at m. 27 draws further interest. As the outer voices slip by half-step into m. 28, the diminished fifth between the first violin and cello intensifies the music's need for harmonic and linear repose and increases Elise's arousal and attention. Because she is also nearing the end of another step cycle (m. 28.2), her anticipation for musical arrival heightens further.

As both musical and choreographic clues point toward resolution, the music instead capitalizes on the listeners' wealth of embodied energy by enacting an implausible delay device precisely at this moment (Figure 5.14). Without access to a musical score, Elise is unaware of the *fermata* notated at m. 28; she continues her internalized choreography undisturbed. Having just experienced an instance of an unarticulated third beat in m. 24, she is perhaps less apt to be immediately aware of

the music's stagnation. Thus Elise is likely well into the subsequent step cycle when she realizes something is amiss: not only did the music fail to cadence, but it failed to do *anything*. Now utterly unaware of where in the step cycle she ought to be, her only solution is to wait. When the music continues—the same thematic material, this time in A minor, and still without an anacrusis—Elise is reminded yet again of the stylistically unusual theme and its repercussions for her choreography. Despite potentially being relieved that the disruptive delay has passed, she must scramble to fit a six-beat step cycle into five beats of music once again.

The music maximizes the disruptive capabilities of the *fermata* by coupling it with a non-idiomatic theme. By combining these two devices, the music maximizes its potential incongruity with a standard ballroom minuet. The potential for humor at that moment may be elucidated by the writings of Blaise Pascal: “Nothing is more calculated to produce laughter than a startling contrast between the thing looked for and the thing looked at.”²⁴ Even after acclimating to the unusual theme, Elise is still likely looking—or in this case, listening—for a normative minuet. The unexpected delay caused by the *fermata* is far beyond the scope of a ballroom minuet; the way in which it then highlights the unusual opening gesture forcefully calls Elise's attention to how disparate this minuet is from her expectations. Such a “startling contrast” could be enough to indeed “produce laughter.”

²⁴ Blaise Pascal, *The Provincial Letters* (1657), trans. Thomas M'Crie (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1860), 100.

Unexpected Key Area and Implausible Delay

For my final analysis I return to Op. 76, no. 3 (Hob. III:77, “Emperor”), this time with a focus on the trio. Earlier I discussed the minuet’s simultaneous stylistic incompetence and hypermetric disturbance devices. The trio expresses two concurrent humor devices as well: unexpected key area and implausible delay, which interact with one another throughout the trio to heighten tension and magnify the humorous potential of the work.

The minuet of Op. 76, no. 3 stays grounded firmly in its tonic, C major, and dominant G major.²⁵ Although the second section of the minuet is highly chromatic, it never strays far from the tonic-dominant paradigm. When the music cadences at the completion of the minuet, Elise’s imagination has likely conjured up an abstract collection of expectations for the trio; one of those expectations is the key area. In their study of Haydn’s string quartets, Floyd and Margaret Grave note that “in the vast majority of trios, the tonal center is the same as for the minuet, with the opposite mode being chosen in nearly half these cases.”²⁶ Thus for Haydn’s corpus, a minor mode trio would be well within the scope of expectations. However, a look into Hob. IX:11, a set of twelve minuets composed for a ballroom affair, lends a different perspective. Of the twelve pieces, six are minuet-trios; of those six, every trio begins in the same, major key as its preceding minuet. This trend suggests that, while concert minuets enjoyed significant freedom from a binding tonal scheme, these ballroom minuets were held to more confined standards.

²⁵ A full score is available in Appendix B.

²⁶ Floyd Grave and Margaret Grave, *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 87.

How would the prevalence of major-mode ballroom minuets with major-mode trios effect a concertgoer's expectations? Melanie Lowe writes that "when eighteenth-century listeners expected or perceived a minuet, they heard that music, regardless of its actual expressive content, within the frame of reference of the dance—through a 'minuet filter,' so to speak."²⁷ Elise hears the minuet and trio of Op. 76, no. 3 through her own "minuet filter"—if we assume that the minuet and trio works in Haydn's Hob. IX:11 are a prototypical representation, Elise's minuet filter would tell her to expect a trio in C major, or at the very least in a major key. For this reason, the trio's plunge into A minor is likely to strike her as startling and unexpected.

The trio does not simply shift suddenly to A minor; it does so with a drastic change in affect that magnifies the new tonality. Figure 5.15 shows the first section of the trio. Coming on the heels of the bright and jaunty minuet theme, the sweeping, melancholic A minor gesture at m. 57 seems even more striking in its pensiveness. Unlike the gregarious minuet, the opening segment of the trio is concise: an austere (4+4) parallel period, the lower voices providing only enough substance to solidify the harmonies. The consequent phrase shifts to the dominant E major, ending with an authentic cadence at m. 64 to close the phrase.

²⁷ Melanie Lowe, "Falling from Grace: Irony and Expressive Enrichment in Haydn's Symphonic Minuets," *The Journal of Musicology* 19, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 178.

Figure 5.15. Trio in an unexpected key area, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 57–64.

p 61 *p* *p*
 Am: V i V⁷/V V

Despite the cadence in E major at m. 64, the second section of the trio returns to A minor, this time with a chromaticized theme. Figure 5.16 shows this passage, highlighting the music’s implausible delay (m. 76) and the subsequent key change. A sudden change in dynamic level (m. 69) draws attention to a new phrase. Following a colorful chromatic predominant (m. 72) the music lands decisively on the dominant E major at m. 73; the first violin begins an extended arpeggiation of the chord. However, the clear preparation for a half cadence comes at a curious point in the overall phrase—if Elise has been internally tracking the choreography and hypermeter, she notices that the first violin’s dominant arpeggiation occurs on hypermetric beats one and two (mm. 73–4). The ascent culminates with all voices on $\hat{5}$ at m. 75, hypermetric beat three. The music thus needs to fill both mm. 75 and 76 to complete the hypermeasure, even though it already seems to have met its arrival. Elise continues her dance steps with a new step cycle beginning at m. 74.3, yet after a beat or two she must realize the music has stopped progressing forward:

Figure 5.16. Humor devices employed by the trio, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 65–78.

The musical score consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system covers measures 65 to 70. The second system covers measures 75 to 78. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. Dynamics include *f* and *pp*. Chord symbols are: Am: vii°7/iv, iv, V 1/2, i6, Ger+6, V, and AM: I. Performance directions include 'implausible delay' and 'unexpected key area'. Measure numbers 65, 70, and 75 are indicated. The bottom staff of the second system is annotated with '1 of 4', '2 of 4', '3 of 4', and '4 of 4'.

all voices have stalled on $\hat{5}$, the music seeming to run out of momentum since reaching its harmonic destination. To exacerbate a composed-out musical delay (mm. 75–6), the music contains a *fermata* as well; already likely unsure of how to proceed, Elise is left in limbo. If she is waiting at the end of her current step cycle, her dancing persona is stranded in the tenuous *élevé* position [beat 6 of the step cycle]; only when the music resumes will she be able to release the physiological tension of the pose in favor of relaxing the heels to the floor for the next *plié*.

At last, the music reenters: a *pianissimo* whisper in the first violin, followed by equally hushed entries in the remaining voices at m. 77. Because she was primed to immediately resume her choreography, Elise engages a *plié* immediately upon the first violin's reentrance and her physiological tensions relax. The opening leap from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{3}$ in the first violin invokes the trio theme while also asserting an unexpected new tonality: the C \sharp on the downbeat of m. 77 single-handedly announces A major. Floyd and Margaret Grave refer to the passage as "an island of tranquility . . . relief from the surrounding gloom."²⁸ Yet the music itself, presented in Figure 5.17, seems uncertain of its newfound key: the previously fluid melody has become halting and tentative, frequently interrupted by rests and never growing above the *pianissimo* dynamic level. A sixteen-measure sentential period unfolds (mm. 77–92), ending with a perfect authentic cadence in A major. Elise concludes a step cycle in coincidence with the cadence, and with the pleasing and favorable major mode closure she perhaps believes the work to be complete.

In a final act of humorous play, the music extends the trio by one additional phrase: after a beat of rest following the A major cadence in m. 92, the first violin reenters at m. 92.3, bringing with it the melancholic A minor theme. After the substantial diversion into A major, the plummet back to the opening key is especially accosting and bordering on absurd. If Elise has already relaxed, she must now hurriedly re-engage her mimetic dance participation, slightly behind the music. Perhaps she too felt the passage of mm. 77–92 to be an idyllic oasis, a welcome

²⁸ Grave and Grave, *String Quartets*, 92.

Figure 15.7. Unexpected key areas, Op. 76, no. 3, mm. 77–96.

melodic halting

77 80 85

pp pp pp pp

unexpected key area and theme's return

90 95

p p p p

reprieve from the haunting A minor theme. Her positive response to the key change softens the mental and physiological tensions caused by the music's delay in mm. 75–6 (Figure 5.16); however, the stubborn return of the minor mode clashes against that positivity. The butting of emotions against one another results in what Sigmund Freud would term “surplus cathexis.”²⁹ That is, the conflicting emotions lead to an

²⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Subconscious* (1905), trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1960), 279.

energetic overflow. Indeed, expectations have been jostled several times throughout the trio; additionally, both the implausible delay as well as the unexpected final passage interact with the choreography. According to Freud, the excess energy from these emotional collisions must be dispelled and put to another use. I posit that Elise, in the final moments of the trio, releases her extraneous energy in the form of laughter and the effects of her various denied expectations finally settle into equilibrium.

By moving beyond instances of isolated hypermetric disturbances, this chapter sought to highlight the breadth of humorous devices available for exploration in Haydn's *Opp. 76 and 77*. Even in those cases where the hypermeter remains clear and normative, stylistic abnormalities will still have a significant effect on the learned minuet dancers' kinesthetic engagement with the music. Furthermore, musical humor devices such as unexpected delays and unusual key areas draw upon the listener's ingrained expectations of the genre. The scenarios presented here are by no means exhaustive of the *Opp. 76 and 77* minuets; rather, these specific passages offer a wide variety of devices and thus invite a multitude of both musical, dance, and humor interpretations.

6. Conclusions and Looking Ahead

The intent of this study is to propose an analytical model for identifying and discussing humor in the concert minuet. I choose a specific body of repertoire from Haydn's later years (1796–9) in order to keep the scope of the project focused. Even so, it is impractical to include all of the instances of potential humor present in the minuets of Opp. 76 and 77; I select those that most clearly represented the widest variety of devices and styles of presentation.

Identifying potential musical humor devices necessarily leads to the need to explain how, precisely, music can be perceived as funny. The field of humor theory is overwhelmingly vast; although I strive to be representative of the major voices in the discipline, my overview in Chapter 2 is by no means exhaustive. I outline the history of humor philosophies in the standard tripartite framework—Superiority Theory, Relief Theory, and Incongruity Theory—but fully recognize that a topic so extensive often exists well beyond such categorical boundaries. Continued exploration of humor philosophy, including delving into lesser known philosophers as well as continuing to explore the writings of major contributors, will no doubt further understanding of a complex topic. With deeper comprehension will undoubtedly come more thoughtful and specific humor analyses, which can only enrich our understanding and appreciation of the concert minuet genre.

Perhaps the most complex element of this project concerns the minuet itself. Recent years have seen significant contributions to academic literature regarding the dance, its cultural importance, and especially its choreography and performance practices. The full choreographic vocabulary of the dance expands far beyond what

is discussed here—dance historians have gone to great lengths to elucidate the intricacies of not only the step patterns but also arm movements, hand gestures, and facial expressions.¹ In an effort to “hear” the minuet in the most ubiquitous way possible—that is, to form an experiential analysis that would ring true for the widest population of eighteenth-century listeners—the suggestions I make regarding the listening persona’s mimetic participation are highly generalized. Continuing to cultivate an intimate knowledge of the ballroom culture and the minuet dance will add nuance and specificity to future analyses. Undoubtedly, attempting to assume the role of an eighteenth-century dancer and audience member is a daunting and ultimately insurmountable task; the more knowledge we can acquire, the more accurately we can make these predictions. A broader knowledge base will thus enhance discussions of not only choreomusical interactions but also musical conventions as dictated by the ballroom decorum.

David Huron’s humor devices were an instrumental first step in identifying and categorizing the specific passages I chose to analyze. The vast majority of the devices identified in the Opp. 76 and 77 minuets involve hypermetric disruption; this choice is not to diminish the importance of other humor devices but rather to capitalize on the one that often interacts most saliently with the minuet choreography. Because phrase lengths and regular cadences are significant to the danced minuet, it would stand to reason that hypermetric disturbances would

¹ See recent work by Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne (*Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, 2001) and various studies by Tilden Russell (“The Minuet According to Taubert,” *Dance Research*, 2006; “The Unconventional Dance Minuet: Choreographies of the Menuet d’Exaudet,” *Acta Musicologica*, 1992).

interact the most strongly with the embodied experience of an informed listener. Yet even within the hypermetric disruptions studied, most minuets maintain two-measure periodicity so as not to reach the final cadence out of synchronization with the end of a step cycle. This trend suggests an upper limit to the amount of disarray Haydn, or perhaps any Classical composer, would be comfortable allowing into their minuets. A larger scope of repertoire will certainly reveal hypermetric disruptions of varying degrees; special attention should surely be given to cases of consistent three- and five-measure phrases, as these would remain in undulating synchronization with the two-measure step cycle. An expanded corpus in conjunction with continued examination of ballroom minuet conventions will likely uncover numerous unique analytical readings.

One of the many analytical decisions I make is to approach each piece from the perspective of a first-time hearing. Because of the *da capo* form common to the minuet genre, there are immediate subsequent readings to a single performance, which I often reflect upon in my analyses. More could be gleaned from discussions involving multiple hearings of the same work. Especially in those cases that most strongly deny genre norms, an exploration of the listener's experiential trajectory over repeated exposure could uncover rich new details in regards to perception and appreciation; as the listener solves more and more of the choreomusical puzzle with each subsequent hearing the humorous potential continually develops.²

² I suggest this much in the way that Edward Cone describes distinct waves of appreciation and pleasure cultivated over numerous exposures to the same musical work ("Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo," *The Georgia Review*, 1977).

Approaching the music from the perspective of a listener's first hearing led to another important analytical choice: focusing the choreographic content on one of the more basic minuet step cycles and maintaining that step cycle throughout each piece. Many step cycles and individual dance steps are referenced in the dance manuals of Rameau, Taubert, and Tomlinson; I select the step cycle that appears most frequently in the literature. Although the continuous use of the simplest step cycle is not likely to be indicative of what occurred in the eighteenth-century ballroom, it nonetheless presents a basic default that a first-time listener may rely on to navigate the music. Further study delving into multiple hearings of the same minuet could explore varied choreographic interpretations, including movements of the arms and hands as well as unique combinations of dance steps.

As with any burgeoning analytical design, the initial presentation here likely raises as many questions as it does answers. Choosing Haydn's later and more inventive minuets allowed me to utilize both a composer and a specific body of work that lent themselves to humor analysis. Reception history has already marked Haydn as a humorous composer—from his own contemporaries to current scholars.³ Expanding the scope of the repertoire to both other works in Haydn's corpus as well as minuets by other composers would likely reveal other unique methods of expressing musical humor. Even within Opp. 76 and 77, preliminary trends emerged

³ For examples of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reception see "Briefe an einen Freund über die Musik in Berlin: zweyter Brief vom 25sten October," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3, no. 8 (Nov. 19, 1800): 130–1; and Johann Karl Friedrich Triest, "Bemerkung über die Ausbildung der Tonkunst in Deutschland im achtzehnten Jahrhundert," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 3, no. 24 (Mar. 11, 1801), 405–10. More current literature includes works by Gretchen Wheelock, Mark Evan Bonds, and Timothy Mastic.

(i.e., the specific types of hypermetric devices highlighted in Chapter 4); a deeper look into Haydn's oeuvre may uncover further inclinations, building a vocabulary of musical humor unique to the composer.

Adopting and adapting Huron's humor devices allowed me to concretize how to precisely identify specific instances of musical humor. Just as the theories surrounding humor are constantly evolving, so too are the ways to theorize humor in music. The categories I have identified in this project are by no means absolute; expanding the repertoire base will potentially lead to the discovery of trends worthy of their own label. Furthermore, deepened understanding of the minuet dance may result in the classification of various musical or stylistic elements as stylistically non-normative and potentially humorous.

Of course, the minuet is not the only ballroom dance to enjoy station as a concert piece. Gavottes, allemandes, bourées, sarabandes, and giges all appear in both Baroque and Classical instrumental repertoire.⁴ Although these dance styles did not possess the same longevity in the ballroom as the minuet, they were nonetheless well-known throughout Western European culture and were acknowledged in various dance treatises. A choreographic and historic exploration of these dances would build the framework for choreomusical and humor analyses similar to what I have presented here with the minuet.

⁴ Because these are dances associated with the Baroque style, one is much more likely to find them in the works of composers such as G.F. Handel and J.S. Bach. Later composers often used the dance styles as inspiration, most commonly calling upon rhythmic gestures to inflect a particular piece or movement. Examples can be seen in the gavotte-like influences in the second movement of Haydn's Symphony 104 (Hob. I:104) as well as references to the sarabande rhythm in the second movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 41 in C major, K. 551.

I fully intend for the analytical model I have presented in this project to continue to transform. With continued research and collaboration, I hope to advance, elaborate upon, and nuance the foundations I have built here. As each of the project's constituent parts—humor theory, minuet dance theory, and hypermetric perception studies—evolves, so too will the work I have introduced.

Appendix A: Kirnberger's *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist*

The image displays a musical score for Kirnberger's *Der allezeit fertige Minuetten- und Polonaisencomponist*. The score is written for piano and is organized into six systems, each containing two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is in 3/4 time and G major. The measures are numbered sequentially from 1 to 48. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and trills. The first system (measures 1-8) features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The second system (measures 9-16) continues the piece with similar rhythmic patterns. The third system (measures 17-24) introduces a triplet in measure 17. The fourth system (measures 25-32) includes trills in measures 26 and 31. The fifth system (measures 33-40) features triplets in measures 33, 34, and 39. The sixth system (measures 41-48) concludes the piece with trills in measures 41, 45, and 47. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

System 1: Measures 49-56. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 49-56 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 52, 53, and 56. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 55 and 56.

System 2: Measures 57-64. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 57-64 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 59, 60, and 61. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 61 and 62.

System 3: Measures 65-72. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 65-72 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, and 72. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 71 and 72.

System 4: Measures 73-80. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 73-80 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, and 80. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 76 and 77.

System 5: Measures 81-89. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 81-89 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, and 89. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 87 and 88.

System 6: Measures 90-96. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Measure numbers 90-96 are indicated below the bass line. Trills (tr) are present in measures 91, 92, 93, 94, and 95. Triplet markings (3) are present in measures 91 and 92.

Appendix B: Scores for Works Studied¹

Op. 76, no. 1

Menuetto III
Presto

10

20

30

¹ Franz Joseph Haydn, 1732–1809, “Eleven Late String Quartets” ed. Wilhelm Altmann (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979).

40

Musical score for measures 37-40. The score is in 2/4 time and G major. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Viola, and Bass. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves have accompaniment with slurs. The fourth staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *ff* and *p*.

Trio

Musical score for measures 41-48, labeled "Trio". The score is in 2/4 time and G major. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Viola, and Bass. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second, third, and fourth staves have accompaniment with slurs. Dynamics include *mf* and *pizz.*

50

Musical score for measures 49-53. The score is in 2/4 time and G major. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Viola, and Bass. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second, third, and fourth staves have accompaniment with slurs.

60

Musical score for measures 54-60. The score is in 2/4 time and G major. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Viola, and Bass. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second, third, and fourth staves have accompaniment with slurs.



The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including some beamed sixteenth notes. The second staff is an alto clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords. The third staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords.



The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including some beamed sixteenth notes. The second staff is an alto clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords. The third staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a line of chords. The number "70" is written above the second measure of the top staff. The initials "M. D. C." are written at the bottom right of the system.

III

Op. 76, no. 3

Menuett. Allegro

40

This system contains measures 40 through 49. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 49.

50

This system contains measures 50 through 59. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music continues with similar notation to the previous system, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f*. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 59.

Trio

60

This system is labeled "Trio" and contains measures 60 through 69. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *p*. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 69.

70

This system contains measures 70 through 79. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music continues with notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *pp*. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 79.

80

Musical score for measures 80-89. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Alto, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a melodic line in the Treble staff, a supporting line in the Alto staff, and a bass line in the Bass staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note.

90

Musical score for measures 90-99. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Alto, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a melodic line in the Treble staff, a supporting line in the Alto staff, and a bass line in the Bass staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note. The initials "M.D.C." are printed at the bottom right of the score.

M.D.C.

Menuetto. Allegro

III

Op. 76, no. 4

30

diminuen-do

diminuen-do

diminuen-do

diminuen-do

p *f* *f* *p* *f*

p *f* *f* *p* *f*

40

p *p* *p* *f*

1. 50 2.

f *f* *f* *fz* *fz*

Trio

The first system of the Trio section, measures 55-60. It features four staves: two treble clefs (right hand) and two bass clefs (left hand). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is marked *fz* (forzando). The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of dotted quarter notes.

The second system of the Trio section, measures 61-66. It continues the musical texture from the first system. The right hand has a more active melodic line with sixteenth-note runs, while the left hand maintains the dotted quarter accompaniment. The *fz* marking is present throughout.

The third system of the Trio section, measures 67-72. Measures 67-70 show a continuation of the previous texture. At measure 71, there is a double bar line and a key signature change to one flat (F major). The right hand now plays a more active melodic line with eighth notes, while the left hand continues with dotted quarter notes. The *fz* marking is present.

The fourth system of the Trio section, measures 73-78. The right hand continues with a melodic line of eighth notes. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent with dotted quarter notes. The *fz* marking is present.

80

f *sf* *f* *sf*

80

f *sf* *f* *sf*

f *sf* *p* *f* *p*

100

p

M. D. C.

Menuetto
Presto

III

Op. 76, no. 6

10

20

f *mf* *f* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

30

p *dim.* *p* *f*

p *dim.* *pp*

p *dim.* *pp*

p *dim.*

40

f *mf* *f*

f *mf* *mf*

f *mf* *mf*

f *mf*

50

mf *f* *mf*

f *mf* *mf*

f *mf* *mf*

f *mf*

60

cresc. *ff* *Fine*

cresc. *più f* *ff*

cresc. *più f* *ff*

cresc. *ff* *Fine*

Alternativo

70



Musical score system 1, measures 70-79. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The first two staves are mostly rests, with some notes appearing in the later measures. The third and fourth staves contain a continuous melodic line. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and forte (*f*).

80



Musical score system 2, measures 80-89. It features four staves. The first two staves have notes, while the third and fourth staves are mostly rests. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and forte (*f*).



Musical score system 3, measures 90-99. It features four staves. The first two staves have notes, while the third and fourth staves are mostly rests. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and forte (*f*).

80



Musical score system 4, measures 100-109. It features four staves. The first two staves have notes, while the third and fourth staves are mostly rests. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and forte (*f*).

100

Musical score for measures 100-109. The system consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Piano, and Bass. Measure 100 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a melodic line in the first treble staff with dynamics *f* and *p*, and a piano accompaniment in the piano and bass staves with dynamics *p* and *f*.

110

Musical score for measures 110-119. The system consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Piano, and Bass. Measure 110 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a melodic line in the first treble staff with dynamics *p* and *f*, and a piano accompaniment in the piano and bass staves with dynamics *p* and *f*.

120

Musical score for measures 120-129. The system consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Piano, and Bass. Measure 120 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a melodic line in the first treble staff with dynamics *f* and *p*, and a piano accompaniment in the piano and bass staves with dynamics *f* and *p*.

130

Musical score for measures 130-139. The system consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Piano, and Bass. Measure 130 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a melodic line in the first treble staff with dynamics *p* and *f*, and a piano accompaniment in the piano and bass staves with dynamics *p* and *f*.

140

Musical score for measures 140-149. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) in the first and second staves.

150

Musical score for measures 150-159. The score continues with four staves. The music becomes more active, featuring sixteenth notes and eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) in the second staff and *f* (forte) in the second, third, and fourth staves. The piece concludes with the instruction *Menuetto D.C. al Fine*.

Menuetto
Presto

III

Op. 77, no. 1

10

20

30

p

First system of musical notation, measures 1-6. It features a piano introduction with a treble clef, a bass clef, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is marked with a forte dynamic (*f*) and includes various rhythmic patterns and phrasing.

Second system of musical notation, measures 7-12. It begins with the measure number 40. The music continues with complex rhythmic figures and phrasing, maintaining the forte dynamic.

Third system of musical notation, measures 13-18. It begins with the measure number 50. The music features a piano introduction with a treble clef, a bass clef, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is marked with a piano dynamic (*p*) and includes various rhythmic patterns and phrasing.

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 19-24. It begins with the measure number 80. The music continues with complex rhythmic figures and phrasing, including a forte dynamic (*f*) and a piano dynamic (*p*).

First system of musical notation, featuring four staves (treble, alto, tenor, and bass clefs) with various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *pv*.

Second system of musical notation, starting at measure 70. It features four staves with musical notation and dynamic markings such as *pv*.

Third system of musical notation, starting at measure 80. It features four staves with musical notation, dynamic markings such as *p*, and first/second endings. The system concludes with the word *Fine*.

Fourth system of musical notation, titled **Trio** and starting at measure 90. It features four staves with musical notation and dynamic markings such as *f assai* and *p*.

100

Musical score for measures 100-109. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a prominent eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *p* (piano).

Musical score for measures 110-119. The score continues in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

110

Musical score for measures 120-129. The score continues in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

120

Musical score for measures 130-139. The score continues in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

130

Dynamic markings: *p*, *f*

This system contains measures 130 through 139. It features a four-staff arrangement with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The music is in a minor key. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves have rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The fourth staff has a bass line with slurs. Dynamic markings of *p* (piano) and *f* (forte) are present.

140

Dynamic markings: *p*, *f*

This system contains measures 140 through 149. It features a four-staff arrangement with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The music is in a minor key. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves have rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The fourth staff has a bass line with slurs. Dynamic markings of *p* (piano) and *f* (forte) are present.

150

Dynamic markings: *p*

This system contains measures 150 through 159. It features a four-staff arrangement with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The music is in a minor key. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves have rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The fourth staff has a bass line with slurs. Dynamic markings of *p* (piano) are present.

160

Dynamic markings: *f*

This system contains measures 160 through 169. It features a four-staff arrangement with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The music is in a minor key. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves have rhythmic accompaniment with slurs. The fourth staff has a bass line with slurs. Dynamic markings of *f* (forte) are present.

170

p

180 *G. P.*

p

Musetto D.C. al Fine

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