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THE SYMPHONY IN BEETHOVEN'S VIENNA

An original study of the history of the symphony in Vienna during Beethoven's lifetime, this book explores the context in which the composer worked. Based on an extensive study of the wider symphonic repertoire of the period and of the characteristics of musical life that shaped the changing fortunes of the genre, from manuscript and printed dissemination to concert life, David Wyn Jones provides a multi-faceted account of the development of the symphony at one of the most crucial periods in its history. The volume offers a wide perspective on musical development in the period, and will be of interest to musicologists and cultural historians. As well as dealing with unfamiliar works by Czerny, Eberl, Krommer, Reicha, Anton Wranitzky, Paul Wranitzky and others, it charts the changing reception of the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and offers new insights into the symphonic careers of Beethoven and Schubert.

DAVID WYN JONES is Reader in Music at Cardiff University and has written extensively on music and musical life in the Classical Period. He is the author of *The Life of Beethoven* (1998), *Beethoven: The Pastoral Symphony* (1996) and is the editor of *Music in Eighteenth-Century Austria* (1996), all published by Cambridge University Press. His *Companion to Haydn* (2002) was awarded the C. B. Oldman Prize by IAML UK. He is on the Advisory Board of the journal *Eighteenth-Century Music*, a council member of the Royal Musical Association and chairman of the Music Libraries Trust. He has contributed to several programmes on BBC Radio 3 and Radio 4.

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To my wife, Ann

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Preface

The image of Beethoven as the key figure in the history of the symphony is a fundamental one in Western culture. For over 150 years his nine symphonies have been accepted as the cornerstone of the repertoire and the foundation for the development of the genre in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This image has been probed and enhanced by a scholarly tradition that is almost as long, as generations of writers have sought to understand the individual works, from sketch studies to hermeneutic analysis, and to offer a view of the composer's unique creativity. But the iconic status of the composer has always tended to emphasize his individuality at the expense of the musical environment that nurtured him. While commentators have always remarked that Beethoven's symphonies build on a tradition established by Haydn and Mozart, there is no real or systematic understanding of musical life in Vienna in the composer's time and how it influenced his development as a symphonist. We understand how Beethoven moulded the future of the symphony, but not the factors that moulded Beethoven's symphonies.

Rather than making Beethoven the focus of the study, this book explores the development of the symphony in Vienna from c.1790 through to c.1830, giving attention to changing patterns of patronage, the repertoire, its musical characteristics and the perceived status of the genre. Beethoven's name figures alongside those of less familiar composers, Eberl, Hoffmeister, Krommer, Paul Wranitzky and others, while the unfolding narrative also sheds light on the early reception history of the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and the peculiarly self-enclosed environment in which Schubert composed his symphonies. By exploring this complex, often insecure, sometimes contradictory history the book reveals too how the modern image of the symphony in Vienna first emerged, including Beethoven's mythical status.

Ideas for this book have been simmering in my mind for several years and former undergraduate and postgraduate students at Cardiff University will

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Preface

recognize many of its preoccupations, even if the part they played in helping to develop and refine them may not be so apparent. Two grants from the Arts and Humanities Research Council enabled me to pursue and complete the project: a Small Grant in the Creative and Performing Arts (2001–3), and a Research Leave Award for the academic year 2004–5. During that sabbatical year the Research Committee of the School of Music, Cardiff University provided welcome supplementary financial assistance.

I am grateful to the staff of the following libraries for their assistance, either in person or by correspondence: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; British Library, London; Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna (Otto Biba and Ingrid Fuchs); Henry Watson Music Library, Manchester (Ros Edwards); Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies, San José (Patricia Stroh); Roudnice Lobkowicz Library, Nelahozeves, Czech Republic (Laura De Barbieri and Sona Cernocka); Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung; Prague Conservatoire (Miloslav Richter); and the Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, Vienna. The staff of the Music Library at Cardiff University, in particular Gill Jones and Judith Hurford, were unfailingly helpful and co-operative, even when I tested their patience (not to mention borrowing regulations) to the limit.

Numerous individuals have helped the project in various ways, from supporting grant applications, engaging in casual discussion, to answering particular queries. I am grateful for the assistance and interest of the following while relieving them of any responsibility for the use I have made of their views and expertise: Christine Barley, Derek Carew, David Charlton, Britta Constapel, Tia DeNora, Cliff Eisen, Jutta Grub, Anke Henkel, Nick Jones, Else Radant Landon, Emma Peters, Rita Steblin, John A. Rice, Rupert Ridgewell, Julian Rushton and the late Eugene Wolf. Above all, Otto Biba, the director of the archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna, must be thanked for his support, for drawing my attention to material in the archive, sharing his profound knowledge of musical life in Vienna and patiently questioning some of my ideas. He, probably more than anyone else, will recognize the shortcomings of this volume; at the same time I hope he will regard it as a valiant attempt by a non-Viennese to get to grips with one of the most important chapters in the history of music in that city.

Finally I thank my wife Ann for her support throughout the project, in particular for reminding me of life beyond the concerns of this book.

Cardiff
September 2005