

Wordless Functional Analysis Revisited

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Poster Abstract

Wordless Functional Analysis is a music-analytical method that was developed by the Austrian-British musician and musicologist Hans Keller (1919-1985) in the 1950s. The analytical method is unique in that the “analysis” is presented in musical *sound* only, without any words (“wordless”), and without any other analytical representations. For this purpose, Keller would “compose” an analysis in the form of a *Functional Analytical Score* (“FA Score”) written for the same instrumentation as the work being analyzed and structured as a succession of an “analytical prelude,” several “analytical interludes” (in between movements) and an “analytical postlude,” all designed to be performed together with the original music. The ‘analytical music’ is supposed to emphasize procedures and musical material, its unity as well as contrasts, used by the composer of the piece being analyzed. FA Scores are supposed to demonstrate the rich “foreground diversity” of a piece of music, even emphasizing normally hidden aspects of the music. Now a largely forgotten analytical approach, this poster is designed to inform conference participants of its methodology with examples and explanations. Furthermore, this poster will make suggestions on how Wordless Functional Analysis could be integrated into college-level music courses.

References

Hans Keller, *Functional Analysis: The Unity of Contrasting Themes – Complete Edition of the Analytical Scores*, ed. by Gerold Gruber, Peter Lang AG, 2001.