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Nota di contenuto

Paradise lost: Dittersdorf's Four ages of the world and the crisis of Austrian enlightened despotism -- Preaching without words: reform Catholicism versus divine mystery in Haydn's Seven last words -- Boundaries of the art: characteristic music in contemporary criticism and aesthetics -- Paradise regained: time, morality, and humanity in Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony -- Making memories: symphonies of war, death, and celebration -- Appendixes: 1. Thematic index of characteristic symphonies -- Pastoral symphonies and movements -- Symphonies and movements by subject.

Sommario/riassunto

Associated through descriptive texts with literature, politics, religion, and other subjects, 'characteristic' symphonies offer an opportunity to study instrumental music as it engages important social and political debates of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This first full-length study of the genre illuminates the relationship between symphonies and their aesthetic and social contexts by focussing on the musical representation of feeling, human physical movement, and the passage of time. The works discussed include Beethoven's Pastoral and Eroica Symphonies, Haydn's Seven Last Words of our Savior on the Cross, Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf's symphonies on Ovid's Metamorphoses, and orchestral battle reenactments of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras. A separate chapter details the aesthetic context within which characteristic symphonies were conceived, as well as their subsequent reception, and a series of appendixes summarises bibliographic information for over 225 relevant examples.
