

**Kirnberger's 4/4 Meters and Handel's Basic Paces:  
The Growth of Temporal Narrativity Across Four Decades of Composition**

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Kirnberger's Division of 4/4 time into the large (or, as I call it, the fugal) 4/4, the small 4/4, and the compound 4/4 is matched by characteristic underlying paces and metrical displacements that mark each meter. By tracing the 4/4 meters and their markers in Handel's early and late instrumental music, I show how neutral durational schemes –“plotless narratives” – in the early works give way to more highly organized and more controlled durational schemes in the late works. Tangentially related to the tonal, thematic, and rhetorical narratives of each piece, these durational schemes assume a life of their own. Examples include complete movements from the Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, the Organ Concerto, Op. 4, and the early Flute (Oboe) Concerto in G minor, HWV 287.