

The Polyphonic *Ursatz*

Channan Willner

With few exceptions, Schenkerian theorists regard the fundamental structure as two-voiced, or in two parts. In 1987, David Neumeier made a persuasive case for a three-part *Ursatz* that contained a structural soprano and a structural alto part. In the present paper I make a case for a four-part *Ursatz* in which a migrating and sometimes disjunct tenor part offers indispensable contrapuntal and structural support, most often by taking over temporarily the part of the bass. Examples focus on Handel's keyboard music.