

3.30 p.m., Sunday 20 October 2024

Curtis Auditorium, MTU Cork School of Music

Cork2020sHaydnSymphoniesSeries 4/v

Cork Haydn Orchestra

Leader: Lesya Iglody

Conductor: Geoffrey Spratt



Haydnsaal, Esterházy Castle, Eisenstadt

## Programme notes

### Symphony No. 22 in E<sup>b</sup> (1764)

Adagio; Presto; *Menuetto – Trio*; *Finale*: Presto

The composition date of 1764 appears on the surviving autograph manuscript. At the time, Haydn was Vice-Kapellmeister at the court of Prince Nicolaus Esterházy. As Vice-Kapellmeister he was in charge of all but religious music in the Esterházy household; in particular he was responsible for the orchestra and expected to compose symphonies for it to perform. The intended audience (except on special occasions such as the Prince's name day) consisted of the Prince and his guests in what is today called the "Haydnsaal", a large hall at the family palace in Eisenstadt.

The title ("the Philosopher") is not on the original manuscript and is unlikely to have come from Haydn himself. "Der Philosoph" appears on a manuscript copy in Modena, dated 1790; thus the nickname does date from the composer's own lifetime. The title is thought to derive from the melody and counterpoint of the first movement (between the horns and cor anglais), which musically alludes to a question followed by an answer and paralleling the *disputatio* system of debate. Be this as it may, the form is a free adaptation of the Baroque choral prelude. The movement's use of a tick-tock effect (the violins are muted, and the violas, cellos and basso are instructed to play "piano staccato") also evokes the image of a philosopher deep in thought while time passes by. Nevertheless, the title becomes less appropriate as the symphony proceeds and earnestness gives way to high spirits and a consistent lessening of tension typical of these early symphonies.

The last movement is one of the earliest examples of a "hunting finale" that would later be used in symphonies such as No. 65 and No. 73 ("La chasse"). For a contemporary audience, the horn calls spoke to the key features of the chivalrous-courtly ideals of the aristocracy.

The slow-fast-slow-fast sequence of tempos corresponds to the sonata da chiesa of the Baroque era, but the musical language of the piece is purely Classical. As with other early Haydn symphonies that use this tempo scheme (Nos 5, 11, 18, 21, 22, 34 and 49), all of the movements are in the same key (i.e. the work is homotonal).

This is the only symphony in which Haydn writes for "Corni inglesi" rather than oboes, but his fondness for the instrument is reflected by his use of them in some of his operas and his setting of the *Stabat Mater*. The horns play a prominent role in all but the second movement, and Haydn's choice of E<sup>b</sup> major may have been dictated by the fact that the valveless horns of the time sounded best when played as E<sup>b</sup> instruments (that is, with E<sup>b</sup> crooks inserted).

## Symphony No. 52 in c (1771-73)

Allegro assai con brio; Andante; *Menuetto*: Allegretto – *Trio*; *Finale*: Presto

This is one of the last Sturm und Drang symphonies written while the composer was in residence at Esterházy during the period 1771-73. It is one of a number of minor-key symphonies that Haydn composed in the late 1760s and early 1770s, the others being Symphonies Nos. 39 (“Tempesta de mara”), 44 (“Trauersymphonie”), 45 (“Farewell”), and 49 (“La passione”).

The symphony has several distinct features. The first movement highlights the contrast between an agitated and *forte* opening theme in C minor, and a lyrical and *piano* second theme in the relative major, E<sup>b</sup>. Somewhat unusually, Haydn presents the second theme twice, with transitional material between its appearances. As with his Symphony No. 45 (“Farewell”), the movement features deceptive progressions in both the exposition and recapitulation, and the anger and vehemence established by the minor mode surpasses Haydn's earlier minor key symphonic efforts. The second movement is a perfect foil: a stately dance, with muted violins and sparse writing for the wind instruments.

It is possible that, as with several other symphonies by Haydn and Mozart, this work was written for the purpose of being incorporated into the Catholic liturgy. Haydn's early biographer Giuseppe Carpani noted: ‘Some other of Haydn's symphonies were written for the holy days. They were played in the chapel at Eisenstadt, in the chapel of the Imperial Court, and in other churches on such sacred feast days. They are written in G major, D major, and C minor.’ It is thought that the “C minor” symphony is No. 52, based both on the date of composition (which coincided with the Austrian practice of performing symphonies during the liturgical service) and the fact that unlike Haydn's other C minor symphony to which Carpani might have been alluding (Symphony No. 78 of 1782), No. 52 is a distinctly more serious work.

## The next concert: Sunday 19 January 2025, Symphonies Nos 23 in G and 50 in C

### The orchestra

#### Violin 1

Lesya Iglody  
Richéal Ní Riordáin  
Donal O'Shea  
Cillian Ó Cathasaigh  
Selena McCarthy  
Nuala Ní Chanainn

#### Violin 2

Eithne Willis  
Carol Daly  
Áine Ní Shé  
Helen McGrath  
Seán Looney  
Brefni Burke

#### Viola

Constantin Zanidache  
Ciara Moloney  
Irina Riedewald  
Cian Rae Adams Gibson

#### Cello

Hugh McCarthy  
Sharon Nye  
Órla Mhic Athlaoich  
Gerda Marwood

#### Double Bass

Stéphane Petiet

#### Oboes

Coral O'Sullivan  
Catherine Kelly

#### Bassoon

Brian Prendergast

#### Horns

Shane O'Sullivan  
Stephen Crowley

#### Harpichord

James Taylor

Please visit our website, [www.cork2020shaydneysymphoniesseries.com](http://www.cork2020shaydneysymphoniesseries.com), for the dates and programmes for the remainder of the cycle and use the contact form to reserve your seat for the next concert. Whilst we hope dates and programmes will not change, minor revisions might occur if either practicalities or contemporary scholarship dictate.

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## Elaine Blackhurst on Haydn – the second of two essays

(The first essay was contained in the programme for the previous concert, 15 September 2024)

*Elaine Blackhurst frequently attempts to correct factual errors and enlighten those who post comments in the electronic media that lack even basic moderation, let alone the quality control characteristics of printed material. What follows are some of her postings – the expression is direct, facts are accurate, and the perspectives illuminating.*

### Italian style

Italian composers and musicians were to be found in every part of Europe throughout the eighteenth century, even around the edges in London and Dublin, St Petersburg, and Lisbon and Madrid for example - not just occasionally, but in significant numbers for very long periods. Many composers went to study in Italy, the greatest pedagogue of the age (Padre Martini) lived in Bologna, the greatest operatic centre was in Naples, and Italian became the musical *lingua franca* - it was an astonishing conquest of the entire continent, and was clearly evident even in countries more resistant to foreign influence such as France. The sights and sounds of Italy was the ultimate destination of the Grand Tour for every educated European citizen in the eighteenth century, from wherever they originated - much of these experiences and tastes were then brought back home. In short, Vienna, being full of Italian influences, was little different from almost any other comparable city; even the court of Frederick the Great in Berlin was completely dominated by Italian style music, with CPE Bach reduced to being a very poorly paid continuo harpsichord player for nearly thirty years. I think it likely that Haydn did hear a lot of Vivaldi - yet another Italian émigré in Vienna - and we know that when Haydn arrived at Eisenstadt there was a set of parts of, for example, *Le quattro stagione* [*The Four Seasons*].

Haydn also knew intimately a significant number of CPE Bach's works: he studied many of the keyboard works, asked his publisher Artaria to send him everything they had by CPE over many years; he undoubtedly heard some of CPE's other music at Baron van Swieten's Sunday morning concerts in Vienna. It is clear that Haydn and CPE ran a mutual admiration society from afar, and each knew a significant number of works by the other.

The only problem that has arisen amongst recent scholars (especially A. Peter Brown), is that CPE's *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* was not published in Vienna until 1763 and very little of his music was available. This has raised some questions regarding early influence, though Haydn was always adamant that - apart from perhaps Porpora in the very early years - CPE Bach was the only mentor or model that he ever recognised or acknowledged.

I think it perfectly reasonable to speculate that Porpora helped Haydn with his essentially private study of counterpoint - and much more - when he was working his way through Fux. The two main sources for this are: i) 'I wrote diligently, but not entirely correctly, until I had the good fortune to learn the true foundations of composition from the celebrated Porpora' (Haydn: Autobiographical sketch, 1776); ii) There was no want of 'Asino' [donkey], 'Coglione' [balls], 'Birbante' [rascals] and pokes in the ribs; but I put up with all of it because I greatly profited from Porpora in singing, in composition, and in the Italian language'. (see Griesinger's biography).

I think Baron van Swieten's interest in "old" music is a complicated issue. There was something of a reaction in the second half of the eighteenth century not so much towards Italian music, but more against the lightweight *galant/rococo* style evident across the continent (some of which was indeed associated with Italy). The Baron's response was to go back to Bach and Handel. Haydn's initial response was to integrate contrapuntal movements into instrumental works - hence the fugues in Symphonies Nos. 3, 13 and 40, and three of the Op. 20 quartets; this inevitably made the works more weighty, and they balanced the *galant* lightness, though they were occasionally incongruous - not the perfect solution. From about 1780, and the string quartets Op. 33 in particular, Haydn found a better way of integrating counterpoint into his thematic working-out and development - the famous '... written in a new and special way'. This technique moved Haydn onto a totally different plane from his *galant* contemporaries. Mozart similarly integrated his counterpoint studies into his sonata-type music, particularly evident after his move to Vienna, and the contact with Haydn. Unlike the Baron who saw the answer in going back to the past, both Haydn and then Mozart saw the solution as taking from the past and integrating it into progressive modern music - a key to understanding the greatness of both.