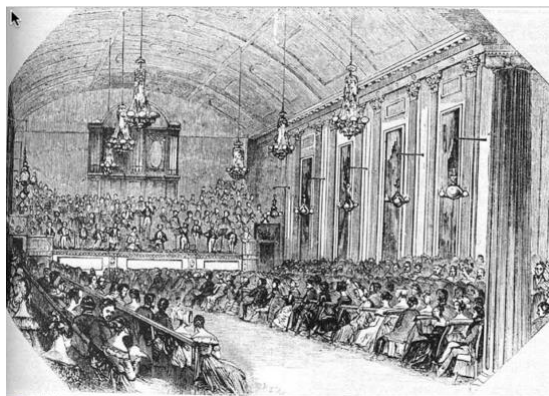


3.30 p.m., Sunday 11 February 2024

CORK2020SHAYDNSYMPHONIESERIES 4/ii

Cork Haydn Orchestra
Leader: Lesya Iglody
Conductor: Geoffrey Spratt



The Hanover Square Rooms, from the Illustrated London News

Programme notes

Symphony No. 32 in C (? 1757-63)

Allegro molto; Menuet – Trio; Adagio ma non troppo; Finale: Presto

The exact date of composition is unknown; it has been suggested by the noted Haydn scholar H. C. Robbins Landon that it could have been written as early as 1757 and as late as 1763. More recent scholars have suggested it was composed in either 1760 or 1761. Regardless, the work is one of the few symphonies of the Classical era to place the *Minuet* second (others being Haydn's own 37th and 44th symphonies, and Nos. 15 and 16 composed by his brother Michael). Scholars, conductors and players still debate whether the horn parts are intended to be C alto or C basso. If the parts are played as alto horn parts, they sound the same pitches as the trumpets; if they are played an octave lower (as basso horn parts), the sound world is immeasurably richer. We have opted for the latter, but will re-engage with the debate when we perform later symphonies where the information is more complicated.

The first movement is a large-scale movement and introduces us to the blazingly festive world of Haydn in C major, and contains a development section of real substance. The *Minuet* (Haydn's pre-1760 spelling) is a symphonic embryo and stands in stark contrast to the *Trio*, which is distinctly old-fashioned. The winds are silent for the slow movement; and the 3/8 time signature for the *Finale* is consistent with an early date for its composition.

Symphony No. 94 in G (“Surprise”) (1791)

Adagio – Vivace assai; Andante; Menuet: Allegro molto - Trio; Finale: Allegro di molto

This was the fourth of the twelve “London” symphonies to have been composed, and was first performed in London's Hanover Square Rooms on 23 March 1792, with Haydn directing the orchestra while seated at a fortepiano.

Haydn's music contains many jokes, and this symphony includes probably the most famous of all: a sudden fortissimo chord at the end of the “pianissimo” repetition of the opening “piano” theme in the variation-form second movement. The music then returns to its original quiet dynamic as if nothing has happened, and the ensuing variations do not repeat the joke. In German, the work is referred to as the “Symphony mit dem Paukenschlag” [Symphony with the kettledrum stroke], and when it is appreciated that the manuscript copy of this Andante (NB not Allegretto) movement did not contain the “surprise”, the reason for this is revealed and unmistakable in the *Finale*.

Robbins Landon notes that this symphony has long been Haydn's most celebrated work and, in his opinion, over-played and, indeed, hackneyed. He also dismisses the vast individual literature about this work as 'mostly worthless'. Rightly he points to the significance of its key (the "pastoral" G major) – preceded in Haydn's canon only by Nos 54, 88 and 92 ("Oxford") – the "piano" introduction to the first movement (the only occurrence in the 12 "London" symphonies), the innovatory re-tuning of one of the timpani required in the development section of the opening movement, the quick tempo of the *Menuet* (the only precedent being the corresponding movement of Nos. 28 of 1765), and the ultra-sophisticated sonata rondo form of the *Finale*.

In Haydn's old age, his biographer Georg August Griesinger asked him whether he wrote the "surprise" in the second movement to awaken the audience. Haydn replied: 'No, but I was interested in surprising the public with something new, and in making a brilliant début so that my student Pleyel, who was at that time [1792] engaged by an orchestra in London, and whose concerts had opened a week before mine, should not outdo me. The first Allegro of my symphony had already met with countless Bravos, but the enthusiasm reached its highest peak at the Andante with the Drum Stroke. Encore! Encore! sounded in every throat, and Pleyel himself complimented me on my idea.'

The work was indeed popular at its première, with the critic writing in Woodfall's Register: 'The third piece of Haydn was a new Overture [Symphony], of very extraordinary merit. It was simple, profound, and sublime. The andante movement was particularly admired.' The Morning Herald's critic wrote: 'The Room was crowded last night ... A new composition from such a man as Haydn is a great event in the history of music. His novelty of last night was a grand Overture [Symphony], the subject of which was remarkably simple, but extended to vast complication, exquisitely modulated and striking in effect. Critical applause was fervid and abundant.'

The next concert: 3.30pm, Sunday 10 March 2024, Symphonies Nos 11 in E^b & 98 in B^b

The orchestra

Violin 1

Lesya Iglody
Rícheal Ní Ríordáin
Donal O'Shea
Aisling McCarthy
Michael Cummins
Lyn O'Reilly

Violin 2

Eithne Willis
Aoileann Ní Dhúill
Áine Ní Shé
Helen McGrath
Megan Chan

Viola

Caitríona O'Mahony
Hilda Leader-Galvin
Irina Riedewald
Cian Rae Adams Gibson

Cello

Hugh McCarthy
Sharon Nye
Órla Nic Athlaoich
Gerda Marwood

Double Bass

Stéphane Petiet

Harpichord

James Taylor

Trumpets

Ross O'Hea
Paul Sheerin

Flute

Maria Mulcahy
Éilís O'Sullivan

Oboe

Coral O'Sullivan
Catherine Kelly

Bassoon

Michael Dooley
Michael Sexton

Horn

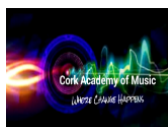
Shane O'Sullivan
Stephen Crowley

Timpani

Dylan Tierney

Please visit our website, www.cork2020shaydnsymphoniesseries.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.

Orchestra Manager & Social media co-ordinator: Ciara Moloney Programme editor: Niamh Murray
Front-of-house team: Ali O'Mahony & Liz Spratt



Sincere thanks to the
Cork Academy of Music and the MTU Cork School of Music for making these concerts possible



The editions we are using for our performances

In 1907, the German firm of Breitkopf & Härtel published the first three volumes of its new Haydn Gesamtausgabe (Complete Edition), which was destined to remain unfinished. The volume devoted to his symphonies Nos 1-40 was edited by the Austrian Felix von Weingartner (1863-1942), now known primarily as a conductor, composer, and pianist. For a variety of reasons, this edition made very little impact, either on the scholarly or the practical worlds of music – indeed, scarcely a hundred copies were sold of each volume. This meant that most conductors knew of these forty works only through such reprints as were made available by the publishers. Only a few were ever printed in parts, mainly dating from the early 1930s.

Textually, the Breitkopf & Härtel edition was of varying quality: when an autograph was available to the editor, the result was generally satisfactory; but when no autograph was known, the first available copy was taken, and the edition prepared from it. Occasionally two (or at most three) old copies were used; in such cases, the texts were often appalling. Movements were reversed (e.g. Nos 5 & 18), instruments omitted (e.g. the horns in No. 16, the oboes in No. 17, and the trumpets and drums in No. 33), and there were literally hundreds of wrong notes – indeed, the old Gesamtausgabe is full of such fundamental mistakes. The editor of Nos. 41-49, Helmut Schultz, was far more competent, and prepared them with the meticulous care for which he is justly renowned - but even his edition of No. 44 contains far-reaching errors, and more reliable sources have emerged for Nos. 43 and 48 than those used by him.

After World War Two it was accepted that a new, critical edition of the first fifty symphonies was urgently needed. The examination of the sources, which are spread over most of Europe and North America was begun by H. C. Robbins Landon in 1950, and, apart from studying the manuscripts in situ, microfilms of most of the principal sources were made to verify the many doubtful or problematical textual points. He personally examined more than one thousand sources in preparing his new texts. Every major library of music in Europe, and many smaller and private collections, were made available to him, and the critical reports detail every aspect of this laborious task.

For the early symphonies (in order of composition: 1, 37, 18-19, 2, B, 16-17, 15, 4, 10, 32, 5, 11, 33, 27, A, 3, 20) a new collection of especially important sources was found in Budapest: the library of Colonel Fürnberg, who seems to have been a distant relation of Haydn's first patron, Count Morzin. They are old parts by Viennese copyists, some of them well-known to scholars of later eighteenth-century music, and Robbins Landon recognised them as textually among the most accurate in existence. Their value increased exponentially when he discovered that Haydn himself had made corrections to the horn parts of one of them (No. 11 in E^b). The new edition he prepared had the added advantage offered by these "new" manuscripts, and, in the case of the symphonies for which no autograph survives, almost invariably became the primary source.

In preparing his new editions, H. C. Robbins Landon followed the best of editorial practices. When an autograph was available, every slur presumed missing was dotted, and in those symphonies where only secondary sources exist, such slurs were added only based on parallel passages – albeit without placing them in dotted lines or brackets. Occasionally a doubtful passage was dotted, or a phrase which he added entirely on his own initiative (e.g. over one of those typical figures with a trill and a dotted note followed by a "tail" of semiquavers or hemidemisemiquavers), and any dynamics he added are all placed in square brackets. He did standardize the instrumentarium: "fagotto" [bassoon] was added to the bass line throughout, as was Haydn's practice; often a manuscript consulted calls for a bassoon "con basso"; often it appears only with a relatively small solo passage (as in the third movement of No. 8 in G).

The only decision Robbins Landon made with which I am not in agreement is the addition of the word “alto” to all the B^b horn parts, and to all C horn parts used in conjunction with trumpets and timpani. In the case of the former, the horn parts are not merely punishingly high for players – whether playing “period” (i.e. natural horn) or modern instruments – but a vital “middle ground” of the texture is missing. Of the symphonies in C, Nos 2, 7, 9 and 25 have only horn parts because trumpets and drums were not a feature of Haydn’s orchestra in Esterházy; Nos 30 and 37 have parts for “clarini” (trumpets), but not horns; and from a close examination of Nos 20, 32, 33, 63, and 69, where horns, trumpets and drums are deployed, it does not seem aurally “correct” for the horns to double the trumpets by playing “alto” rather than “basso”. Indeed, if they do, they would frequently double the oboes in No. 32, and the violins in No. 33! Although the autographs or authentic parts for the C major symphonies Nos. 41, 48, 50, 56, and 60, do specify “alto” horn parts, other research suggests that only if no trumpets (and drums) were available, would the horn parts be “alto”. The players must have been extraordinarily able, and we know from at least two (Nos 31, “Hornsignal”, and 72) of the four symphonies that have four rather than the standard two horn parts, such players were, occasionally, available to Haydn. Nevertheless, “alto” horn parts were probably unknown in either Paris or London, so it is not surprising that an examination of the scores and parts for Nos 82, 90 and 97 prove that they are “basso” parts. The same is true for the symphonies requiring horns in D – the textures of No. 57 – which we performed for you in September 2022 – would not have constantly delighted the ear if the editorial “alto” had been observed.

When Robbins Landon published his edition of the first fifty symphonies, he stated that a harpsichord is required for Nos. 1-40, and for No. 49 (wrongly placed in the chronological order), and a part was published. (His later chronological ordering would have those figures revised to include Nos 59, 58, 41 & 72.) Later in his career, he took a less doctrinaire stance; nevertheless, controversy continues to rage on this issue, and it will be examined in some detail in the essay next month.

There is a fundamental difference between a *staccato* (literally ‘each note sharply detached or separated from the others’) dot and a *staccato* stroke, or “wedge”. The former does indeed require a note to be shortened, but by how much depends on understanding the difference between the concept of *staccato* in late eighteenth-century music and what has become the norm in nineteenth- and twentieth-century music. Put simply, in music from the latter half of the eighteenth century a note can be short, or the gap between one note and the next can be short – quite different! – and context is everything. The “wedge” on the other hand is quite different, requiring, simultaneously, a slight shortening and an increased intensity.

Another of Robbins Landon’s views was that Haydn would sometimes have had *detaché* (separately articulated) passages played with slurs and slurred passages played with every note articulated; to this end Robbins Landon erred on the side of adding ‘... rather too few slurs than too many.’ Context in this regard embraces the size of the forces deployed and, critically, the acoustics. Ensuring that every detail can be heard as well as realised is our guiding principle.

The scores and parts for symphonies Nos. A, B, & 1-50 are published by Doblinger, and for Nos. 51-104 by the Haydn-Mozart Presse (now Universal Edition) – all based in Austria. We are fortunate indeed that all the material purchased by the Orchestra of St Cecilia for the performances it gave in Dublin as part of its proposed complete cycle (2011-13) was from these two publishers and is now housed in the Fleischmann Library of the MTU Cork School of Music (see the March 2022 programme). Although the members of the Cork Haydn Orchestra do not play on period instruments, you can take comfort from the fact that they aspire to play in a period-performance sensitive way, and from Urtext parts.