



Sunday 6 March 2022

3.30 p.m.

Curtis Auditorium
MTU Cork School of Music



Cork2020sHaydnSymphoniesSeries 2/iii

Leader: Elizabeth Charleson

Conductor: Geoffrey Spratt

Programme notes

Symphony No. 26 in d, "Lamentatione" (1768 or 1769)

Allegro assai con spirito; Adagio; Menuet e Trio

Symphony No. 26 is the fourth of eleven symphonies cast in the minor mode, the last of sixteen to consist of only three movements, and the last of five where the finale is labelled as a *Menuet & Trio*. Composed for Easter week, its title in the oldest manuscript is 'Passio et Lamentatio', and Haydn derives melodic material from a drama of the Passion that evolved late in the Middle Ages and was repeatedly printed during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Contemporary audiences would have been very familiar with the liturgical music for all four Passions and the purpose of the symphony would have been immediately apparent. The turbulent energy of the first movement gives way to a more serene slow movement in the key of the relative major, before a distinctly whimsical *Menuet & Trio* that contains melodic patterns highlighting the tritones that characterise the minor mode. The use of church melodies infuses the music with a unifying spiritual message and underpins his constant quest to develop symphonic coherence.



The image top left is of the Haydn Saal in the Esterhazy Palace, Eisenstadt, Austria. With dimensions of 38m (l), 14.7m (w) & 12.4 (h), its volume [6,800 m³] is very similar to that of the Curtis Auditorium (image top right)

The portrait to the left is Ludwig Guttenbrunn's depiction of Haydn c. 1770. The one to the right is Thomas Hardy's of 1791



Symphony No. 79 in F (1784)

Allegro con spirito; Adagio cantabile - un poco allegro; *Menuetto & Trio*: Allegretto; *Finale*: Vivace

The three symphonies that we have already performed consecutively (Nos 76-78, “English”, 1782), began a new trend: they were, (a) as far as we know, the first works written as a series and (b) composed for a foreign performance – even though Haydn’s proposed first visit to London fell through. The next set of three symphonies (all the rest of Haydn’s symphonic *oeuvre* (except possibly Nos 88 and 89) was composed in groups) proved to be as popular as Nos 76-78. The “English” set had appeared, almost simultaneously, in Vienna (Torrice), Paris (Boyer), London (Forster) and Berlin-Amsterdam (Hummel). Nos. 79-81 came out together in Vienna (Artaria), Berlin-Amsterdam (Hummel), while No. 79 was published in London by Bland, and Le Duc of Paris were the agents for the Artaria Edition. Haydn was now an international best-seller.

Each of the 1783-84 set (Nos. 79-81 - written specifically for a Lenten concert performed in Vienna in March 1785) has many details to delight the listener. One of the challenges Haydn now solved to his satisfaction was the character of the finale. The basic difficulty was to create a movement which was musically stimulating and yet sounded like a conclusion and not another first movement. Haydn came more and more to the rondo and a quick metre, but to make it interesting he soon injected elements of the sonata, creating the sonata rondo form which was to be such a brilliant success in the succeeding “Paris” and “London” symphonies. These finales soon came to be the typical products of Haydn’s wit. Robbins Landon describes No. 79 as a ‘cool work ... [with] touches of beauty in every movement’, and makes specific note of how the Rococo exquisiteness, purity and beauty of the slow movement – with an extreme sophistication of orchestration (especially the wind parts) – gives way to a kind of *Kehraus* (“go-home” music of an Austrian dance series) as if Haydn were bringing us back to the *Puszta* (a Hungarian gypsy dance). And the first episode in the Rondo finale also has a strong gypsy flavour. Only six of his symphonies are in F major: Nos. 17, 40 and 58 are all early enough examples (No. 17 has only three movements, the Finale of No. 40 is a baroque-inspired Fugue, and the *Menuet alla zoppa* [“limping”] of No. 58 is distinctive), but it is No. 67 that prepares the ground for the distinctive beauty and maturity of this symphony while No. 89 is the apotheosis of what this tonality inspired.

The orchestra

1st Violins

Elizabeth Charleson
Ríchéal Ní Ríordáin
Harry O’Connor
Aisling McCarthy
Leonie Curtin
Michael Cummins

2nd Violins

Eithne Willis
Aoileann Ní Dhúill
Áine O’Halloran
Sarah Murphy
Áine Ní Shé

Violas

Constantin Zanidache
Elaine Kenny
Ciara Scully

Cellos

Hugh McCarthy
Sharon Nye
Orlaith Ní Challanáin
Gerda Marwood

Double Bass

Stéphane Petiet

Flute

Maria Mulcahy

Oboes

Coral O’Sullivan
Catherine Kelly

Bassoons

Brian Prendergast
Michael Sexton

Horns

Shane O’Sullivan
Stephen Crowley

Continuo

James Taylor

**For all the dates and programme for the remainder of the cycle,
and to use the contact form to reserve your seat, please visit**

www.cork2020shaydnsymphoniesseries.ie or email cork2020shaydnsymphoniesseries@gmail.com

September 2022: Nos: 57 & 80; October 2022: Nos. 66 & 81

Whilst we hope dates and programmes will not change, minor revisions might occur if either practicalities or contemporary scholarship dictate.

Posters: Paul Veale

Programme editor: Niamh Murray

Front-of-house team: Margaret Crowley, Ali Cullinane, Margaret Murphy & Liz Spratt

THE CORK 2020s HAYDN SYMPHONIES SERIES & ORDER OF COMPOSITION

The pre-eminent Haydn scholar, H. C. Robbins Landon, devoted decades of research to finding evidence of when Haydn composed each of his 106 symphonies (see his *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* in five volumes, published by Thames and Hudson, London). The numbering of the first seventy-five symphonies does not meaningfully reflect the order of composition. Sometimes the discrepancy is significant (72 in particular – but also 32, 33 and 37) in terms of Haydn’s move from the employ of Count Morzin to that of the Esterházy family, and although there are occasional (seven) consecutives of two, three or even four, there is little consistency. Robbins Landon’s order of composition is:

1, 37, 18-19, 2, B, 16-17, 15, 4, 10, 32, 5, 11, 33, 27, A, 3, 20 [19]

6-9, 25, 14, 36, 12-13, 40, 72, 21-24, 30, 29, 31, 28, 34 [20]

39, 35, 59, 38, 49, 58, 26, 41 [8]

48, 44, 52, 43, 42, 51, 45-47, 65, 63*, 50, 64, 54-57, 60, 68, 66, 69, 67 [22]

61, 53, 63*, 70, 75, 71, 62, 74, 73 [8/9]

The first tranche (nineteen symphonies) were all composed for Count Morzin (Vienna and Lukavec) between 1758 and 1760. The second tranche (twenty symphonies) were composed between May 1761, when he commenced employment with the Esterházy family (Vienna and Eisenstadt) and 1765 (with dated autographs existing for Nos. 6-9, 12-13, 21-24, and 28-31). The third tranche (eight) date from 1767 to late 1769-early 1770 (with a dated autograph existing for only No. 35), and the fourth tranche (22) were all completed by 1775-76 (with dated autographs existing for Nos. 42, 45-47, 50, and 54-57). The final tranche of symphonies (nine – or eight if you don’t count the revision of No. 63*), up to and including No. 74, were composed between 1776 and 1780-82 (and a dated autograph exists only for No. 61).

[* The differences between the two versions of No. 63 are slight, but subtle in terms of the first movements –essentially expanded scoring for the wind instruments in the second version – and the second movements are identical. The third and fourth movements are entirely different, so our “solution” will be to perform 2i [i.e. version 2 movement i], 1ii, 1iii & 1iv, followed by 2iii & 2iv.]

From No. 76 onwards, we are very aware of “sets” composed for a specific purpose (76-78 [“English”], 79-81 [for London, but ...], 82-87 [“Paris”], and 93-104 [“London”]), but, even though their numbering still does not reflect the compositional order (as detailed below), significant anomalies do not exist.

1782: 76-78; **1784:** 79-81; **1785:** 87, 85, 83; **1786:** 84, 86, 82; **1787:** 88-89; **1788:** 90-91; **1789:** 92

1791: 96, 95, 93, 94; **1792:** 98, Sinfonia concertante, 97; **1793:** 99; **1794:** 100-102; **1795:** 103-104

When planning the Cork 2020s Haydn Symphonies Series, one of the first decisions I made was not to present them either numerically or chronologically, but rather in pairs (hearing two in an afternoon is fine, three would be too much), with an emphasis on the (hopefully) judicious balancing of tonalities and characters. I did wish, however, to unfold the twenty-nine “mature” symphonies (76-104) and the *Sinfonia concertante* in compositional order and specifically to combine many of those with the earliest nineteen symphonies. We commenced this in February 2020 with No. 76 (paired with No. 30) and continued in March 2020 with No. 77 (presented with No. 49). There are also to be a few combinations of three. It was impossible to contemplate not performing Nos. 6-8 (*Le matin*, *Le midi* & *Le soir*) as the set he wrote for Prince Paul-Anton Esterházy upon taking up his appointment at Eisenstadt (which we will do in February 2023); nevertheless, all the concerts (including the handful featuring three) are designed for a Sunday afternoon audience, without a formal interval, and lasting not more than an hour.

When the indefatigable Cormac Ó hAodáin and Declan McCarthy of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra said that they would like to join the orchestra's "resident" horn players (at the time, Conor Palliser and Seán Clinch), I couldn't resist programming No. 31 ("Hornsignal") for the first concert in January 2020 (together with one – No. 39 – of the only other three requiring four horns); that Cormac and Declan are returning to perform the remaining pair (Nos 13 & 72) hopefully signals that we are achieving an acceptable standard.

Now is perhaps the best moment to place on record my profound sense of gratitude to Lindsay Armstrong – one of the most influential movers and shakers of classical music in Ireland for nearly six decades. Quite apart from being the first CEO of the National Concert Hall (1981) and the transformative Director of the Royal Academy of Music (1982-1993), he first founded the New Irish Chamber Orchestra (1970), and, subsequently, the Orchestra of St Cecilia (1995). It was my privilege to conduct the Orchestra of St Cecilia when it accompanied Hugh Tinney performing all of Mozart's Piano Concertos in the NCH (1996-98); I have the fondest memories of performing most of J. S. Bach's orchestral works and concertos with the same orchestra (particularly during 2000) and am still humbled by having been invited to conduct twenty-four of his cantatas during the complete presentation in St Anne's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin. I was thrilled when he and Prionnsías Ó Duinn embarked on a complete Haydn symphonies series with the OSC in 2011 – and envious too, because it was happening in Dublin. When the series came to an end in 2013 after eighteen concerts, presenting fifty-four symphonies, the Cork School of Music's Fleischmann Library became the repository of all the OSC's Bach cantatas and Haydn symphonies performance materials. The MTU Cork School of Music is allowing us to use the parts (and filling the gaps), as well as letting us use the Curtis Auditorium as the performance venue. (The Curtis Auditorium, a medium-sized concert hall with exceptional acoustics, is very similar in shape and size to the Haydnssaal in the Esterházy Palace (Eisenstadt, Austria), where most of these symphonies received their first performance under Haydn's direction.). The Cork Academy of Music is providing the rehearsal venue, and it is these partnerships that are enabling a collective of players, together with a dedicated voluntary front-of-house team, to undertake this project with nobody receiving a fee – it couldn't be done otherwise.

The distinguished violinist Elizabeth Charleson is leading the orchestra, and is highly respected as the founding second violinist of the Vanbrugh Quartet, as a member of Camerata Ireland, and for her teaching in the MTU Cork School of Music. Many of the players teach in the MTU Cork School of Music or the County Cork School of Music; others are graduates of the CSM's BMus and MA (Performance) programmes. Their ability to achieve high standards reflects their commitment to Continuing Professional Development.

Haydn's 106 symphonies ("A", "B", and 1-104) are distinguished by each and every one being of exceptional quality, exhibiting extraordinarily diverse musical character, and being full of vibrant life, so why wouldn't this musical Everest be assailed for the benefit of audiences in Cork who love their classical music? There is already a rich diversity of music-making in our great city, but this is a new, distinctive, and unparalleled offering - and capacity houses suggest it is appreciated. As we emerge from (or at least learn to live with) Covid-19, let us hope the remaining concerts can proceed because extensive research supports the claim that, if this series reaches completion in 2031, it will be the first time that all of the symphonies will have been performed in public by one orchestra in one place, and be another first for Cork!

Geoff Spratt, March 2022

In response to our invitation to members of the audience to submit essays for these programmes, the first of a series written by Margaret Crowley will be featured in the October 2022 programme.

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