

3.30 p.m., Sunday 16 February 2025

Curtis Auditorium
MTU Cork School of Music

Cork2020sHaydnSymphoniesSeries 5/ii

Cork Haydn Orchestra
Leader: Lesya Iglody
Conductor: Geoffrey Spratt



Haydnsaal, Esterházy Castle, Eisenstadt

Programme notes

Symphony No. 61 in D (1776)

Vivace; Adagio; *Menuetto & Trio*; *Finale*: Prestissimo

The two symphonies we are performing today were written at a time when Haydn's symphonic works were influenced to a significant extent by the operas he was writing for the theatre at Eisenstadt.

The autograph manuscript for this symphony has survived so we can be sure of the year when it was composed, albeit not for what occasion. The concentrated and dramatic style of Haydn's symphonies from the late 1760s and early 1770s has now become more placid, more elegant, and the humour is more gentle. The craftsmanship remains the same, and the slow movement of this symphony exhibits his ability to be poetic and elegiac.

The opening movement is colourfully orchestrated; particularly notable is the second theme which starts with repeated quavers for the oboes and bassoon before the flute enters with a falling motif. The expositional coda also features a pulsating accompaniment against a chromatic rise in the strings. Daniel Heartz has noted Haydn's greater mastery of rondo form in the final movement compared to earlier symphonies, and it's "hunt"-like character, but it is perhaps the sound of the "cuckoos" who have been disturbed by the hunt that linger in the memory!

Symphony No. 62 in D major (1780 or 81)

Allegro; Allegretto; *Menuetto & Trio*: Allegretto; *Finale*: Allegro

During the five to six years between the composition of symphonies nos. 61 and 62, Haydn was the *Capellmeister* in charge of opera productions at Esterháza, and the responsibilities consumed much of his time. Of the ten symphonies he composed between 1776 and 1782 (in chronological order: 61, 53 ("L'Impériale"), 63 ("La Roxelane"), 70, 75, 71, 62, 74 and 73 ("La Chasse")), several are *pasticcios* (i.e. based on pre-existing non-symphonic material) – notably nos 53, 63 and 73. For the first movement of this symphony, Haydn reworked an earlier *Sinfonia* (*Overtura*) in D, Hob. Ia/7 – and this movement had already been reworked as the *Finale* of his Symphony No. 53 (although the latter has come down to us in many versions).

The slow movement has a *barcarole*-like accompaniment, but instead of the typical Venetian gondolier melody over the top, Haydn presents only melodic fragments, teasing us (in a highly theatrical way) into thinking a melody is near, but always interrupting before one takes shape. It is also remarkable because it is cast in D major (rather than G major).

The Trio features solo bassoon and violins, with the downbeat frequently displaced - a trick he would later play to even greater effect in the corresponding movement of his “Oxford” symphony (No. 92).

Another strikingly theatrical gesture is the way the *Finale* opens softly with ambiguous tonality for the first six bars before the tutti loudly establishes the tonic key in the seventh bar. The movement proceeds in Italian style, with the second thematic group characterised by “Lombard” rhythms (or “Scotch snaps”, where a short, accented note is followed by a longer one) that are worked extensively in the development. The ambiguous tonality returns for the first six bars of the recapitulation, this time accentuated by counterpoint, before the tonic key re-asserts itself and drives the movement to its conclusion.

The next concert: Sunday 23 March 2025: Symphonies Nos 55 in E^b (“The Schoolmaster”) & 68 in B^b

The orchestra

Violin 1

Lesya Iglody
Richéal Ní Riordáin
Donal O’Shea
Aisling McCarthy
Sarah Murphy
Caitríona O’Mahoney

Violin 2

Eithne Willis
Aoileann Ní Dhúill
Áine Ní Shé
Helen McGrath
Selena McCarthy
Diana Cherevychna

Viola

Hilda Leader
Ciara Moloney
Irina Riedewald
Cian Rae Adams Gibson

Cello

Hugh McCarthy
Sharon Nye
Órla Mhic Athlaoich
Gerda Marwood

Flute

Maria Mulcahy

Bassoons

Brian Prendergast
Michael Sexton

Horns

Shane O’Sullivan
Stephen Crowley

Double Bass

Stéphane Petiet

Oboes

Coral O’Sullivan
Catherine Kelly

Timpani

Dylan Tierney

Harpichord

James Taylor

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: Margaret Crowley, Alison Cullinane, Margaret Murphy, Liz Spratt



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Other composers writing about Haydn

Brahms

Near the end of his life Brahms said: 'Haydn, when he was about my age, after he had seen something of the world and had already composed so much, developed yet further and to immense greatness. What a man! Beside him we are just wretches.'

Chopin

Chopin held Haydn in high regard as a composer and was inspired by his works. In a letter to his friend Tytus Woyciechowski, Chopin wrote: 'Haydn is the greatest, the most original, the most instructive composer.'

Dukas

'The peace of mind it [*The Seasons*] expresses is far however from being priceless and I love its simplicity and ingenious grace. Especially since, having borne in his chest a pure heart, the good Haydn has not been less of a man with a true genius, a musician like the history of our art has scarcely a dozen for the fertility of invention, mastery of writing [*mise en oeuvre*] and naturalness of expression.'

Mozart

Mozart and Haydn seem to have crossed paths for the first time at a musicians' benefit concert in December 1783 which featured works by both. It is clear from contemporary accounts that Mozart and Haydn admired each other and that the two men quickly developed a deep friendship. Through the 1780s in Vienna, the two composers played together in impromptu string quartets, with Haydn playing the violin and Mozart the viola.

'Melt us two together, and we still will fall far short of making a Haydn', Mozart is reported as saying to the pianist Leopold Kozeluch who had triumphantly pointed out a few slips due to carelessness in Haydn's compositions.

‘Nobody can do everything—jest and terrify, cause laughter or move profoundly—like Joseph Haydn’ (Mozart, as reported by Nissen, the biographer who married his widow).

The depth of their friendship is reflected by the fact that the music played at Haydn's funeral included Mozart's *Requiem*, written just a few years before the latter's death.

In Mozart's correspondence to Haydn, he is more formal. His dedication of six quartets to Haydn reflects this customary formality, but Mozart is clearly respectful of him, and his esteem for him is evident.

‘A father who had decided to send his sons out into the great world thought it his duty to entrust them to the protection and guidance of a man who was very celebrated at the time, and who happened moreover to be his best friend. In the same way I send my six sons [quartets] to you Please, then, receive them kindly and be to them a father, guide, and friend! ... I entreat you, however, to be indulgent to those faults which may have escaped a father's partial eye, and in spite of them, to continue your generous friendship towards one who so highly appreciates it.’

‘O my dear friend Haydn. A father who had decided to send out his sons into the great world, thought it his duty to entrust them to the protection and guidance of a man who was very celebrated at the time and who, moreover, happened to be his best friend. In like manner I send my six sons [quartets] to you, most celebrated and very dear friend. They are, indeed, the fruit of a long and laborious study; but the hope which many friends have given me that this toil will be in some degree rewarded, encourages me and flatters me with the thought that these children may one day prove a source of consolation to me.’

‘During your last stay in this capital you yourself, my very dear friend, expressed to me your approval of these compositions. Your good opinion encourages me to offer them to you and leads me to hope that you will not consider them wholly unworthy of your favour. Please then receive them kindly and be to them a father, guide and friend! From this moment I surrender to you all my rights over them. I entreat you, however, to be indulgent to these faults which may have escaped a father's partial eye, and, in spite of them, to continue your generous friendship towards one who so highly appreciates it. Meanwhile, I remain with all my heart, dearest friend, your most sincere friend, W. A. Mozart.’