



Sunday 12 January 2020

3.30 p.m.

Curtis Auditorium
CIT Cork School of Music



Cork2020sHaydnSymphoniesSeries I/i

Leader: Elizabeth Charleson Conductor: Geoffrey Spratt

Programme notes

Symphony No. 39 in g (1766/67)

Allegro assai; Andante; Menuet & Trio; Finale: Allegro di molto

The first symphony Haydn is thought to have composed in a minor key is No. 34, dating from around the middle of the 1760s. Although the opening slow movement of that symphony is in foreboding D minor, the rest of the work reverts to sunny D major; nevertheless, the drama of the opening movement is a portent of a new period of development in Haydn's symphonic language. In about 1766 or 1767 Haydn composed a symphony in G minor, No. 39, which, in addition to the normal "classical" orchestra of the time (pairs of oboes and horns with strings and continuo) required third and fourth horns. This was Haydn's first full essay in a new, developing musical language which displayed such features as nervy, syncopated or tremolando string figures, sudden extremes of dynamics, and wide melodic leaps – in all, an unsettling vocabulary of devices which marked out this work as something different from the string of refined, tuneful "entertainment" symphonies that Haydn and his contemporaries across Europe had been composing. This symphony achieved widespread circulation – it is known, for example, in a manuscript copy at the Benedictine Monastery at Göttweig, near Krems, Lower Austria, as early as 1770 – and a number of imitations of the work soon appeared. J. C. Bach published a G minor symphony in 1770 (Op. 6 No. 6) and was soon followed by von Dittersdorf; Vanhal, Rosetti and d'Ordoñez did so also, using, as Haydn had, four horns. In 1773, the seventeen-year-old Mozart added notably to the trend (No. 25, KV183, the "Little" G minor Symphony). Their adoption of this style and its prolongation into the 1770s (especially in the music of Haydn and Vanhal) led Theodore de Wyzewa in 1909 to remark upon what seemed to him to be a musical "malaise" that affected composers around this time; he noted a similar movement in German literature and adopted the title of a play by Maximilian Klinger, *Sturm und Drang* [*Storm and Stress*], to denote the music of this style.

The image above left is of the Haydnsaal 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 right)

Symphony No. 31 in D (“Hornsignal”) (1765)

Allegro; Adagio; *Menuet & Trio*; *Finale*: Moderato - molto presto

Symphony No. 31, the “Hornsignal”, also features the lustrous sound of four horns, rather than the more usual two. There were two periods during which Haydn’s orchestra at Esterházy benefited from the addition of an extra pair of horns: August to December 1763 (during which time he composed Symphonies Nos. 13 & 72), and May 1765 to February 1766, when he wrote Symphonies Nos. 31 & 39. During the latter period, we also know that the orchestra’s flautist was dismissed (on 13 September 1765, for setting fire to a roof while shooting birds), so it is clear that the Hornsignal Symphony was composed between the arrival of the extra horn players in May and the dismissal of the errant flautist in September (along with Nos. 28-30). The horn signal itself frames the work, being heard in both of the outer movements, and is based on military fanfares and posthorn signals. The work exploits the soloistic abilities of the Esterházy players to such an extent that early editions called the work a *sinfonia concertante*; not only are the four horns given a starring role, but the slow movement gives the melodic lead to solo violin and cello, and the variations of the finale also turn the spotlight on the oboes, cello, flute and double bass.

The orchestra

1st Violins	2nd Violins	Violas	Cellos	Double Basses
Elizabeth Charleson	Eithne Willis	Cian Ó Dúill	Hugh McCarthy	Stéphane Petiet
Marja Gaynor	Aoileann Ní Dhúill	Cian Adams	Sharon Nye	
Lesya Iglody	Áine O’Halloran	Niamh Quigley	Maria O’Connor	
Donal O’Shea	Harry O’Connor	Elaine Kenny		
Hugh Murray	Kate Fleming			
Lyn O’Reilly				

Flute	Oboes	Bassoon	Continuo
Éilís O’Sullivan	Coral O’Sullivan	Brian Prendergast	James Taylor
	Catherine Kelly		

Horns: Cormac Ó hAodáin, Conor Palliser, Declan McCarthy & Seán Clinch

Enclosed in your programme today is a summary sheet detailing the dates and programmes for the remainder of the cycle.

Whilst we hope neither venue nor dates will change, minor revisions to programmes might occur if either practicalities or contemporary scholarship dictate. Enjoy the 2020s and Haydn!

Note: The orchestras for which Haydn composed his symphonies

Haydn was given his first official post with Count Karl Joseph Franz Morzin who lived in Vienna, but spent the summer at his palace in Lukavec, Bohemia, where he kept a small orchestra. Haydn became his Music Director in about 1758 or 1759, and composed more than a dozen of his earliest symphonies (including Nos. 1–5, 10–11, 15, 18–19, 25, 27, 32 and “A”) for Morzin’s orchestra. (NB: Haydn’s symphonies are not numbered in strictly chronological order: for example, No. 37 is one of the earliest of the symphonies; the numbering with which we are familiar today is based on the order the symphonies were given in Breitkopf & Härtel’s catalogue - on which their complete edition of Haydn’s works was based - and this was compiled when knowledge of the chronology of the symphonies was scanty and inaccurate: even now a chronological list of the symphonies – especially the earlier ones – must necessarily be to a certain extent conjectural.) Haydn’s symphonies for Morzin generally followed the three-movement model and were scored for an orchestra consisting of pairs of oboes and horns with a small string band. Trumpets were clearly not available to Morzin, but Haydn compensated for this by writing in a trumpet-like manner for the horns: fanfare figures in the upper registers of the instrument’s range give a strident, martial feel to certain passages in the music.

Unfortunately Count Morzin was something of a spendthrift (Griesinger, Haydn’s earliest and most reliable biographer in the early 19th century, reports that ‘the Count in a short time squandered his considerable fortune ... [and] had consequently to disband his orchestra’), and so it was in 1760 or early 1761 Haydn was dismissed. Fortunately Prince Paul Anton Esterházy had been impressed by his music and the young composer was engaged as Vice-Kapellmeister at the Esterházy residence at Burg Forchtenstein in Eisenstadt, about 30 miles south of Vienna, on 1 May 1761. Haydn would remain in the employ of a succession of Esterházy princes until he was an old man, and nearly all of his symphonies henceforward were to be composed for the consumption of the family, until the “Paris” Symphonies (Nos. 82–87) of 1785-86. Esterházy’s orchestra was larger, being able to boast a bassoon and, occasionally, one or two flutes and a pair of trumpets and timpani in addition to the basic band Haydn knew from his work for Morzin. Nevertheless, Haydn did not deploy trumpets and drums in the slow, second movement of a symphony until No. 88 (1787).

Paul Anton Esterházy died less than a year after Haydn had become his Vice-Kapellmeister, and was succeeded by his brother, Nicolaus. Like Paul Anton, Nicolaus was a military man and had been a distinguished colonel during the Seven Years War. He liked to spend his summers at another Esterházy property, a hunting-lodge called Süttör, situated on the Neusiedlersee in Hungary. Although it was built on a swamp virtually in the middle of nowhere, Nicolaus had a special affection for the place and by 1766 had built it up into a “Hungarian Versailles”, a magnificent summer palace that was given the name Eszterháza.

During the early 1780s, Haydn’s music achieved huge success outside Austria – indeed, it was such success in England that led to the composer’s journeys to London in the 1790s. The Parisian nobleman Claude-Francois-Marie Rigoley, Comte d’Ogny, who was involved with the Masonic concert-giving organisation Le Concert de la Loge Olympique, commissioned the six symphonies known as the “Paris” symphonies from Haydn. All six of the “Paris” symphonies are composed for the standard orchestra of the time, which consisted of a flute with pairs of oboes, bassoons (by now emancipated from their previous role of simply playing the bass-line) and horns with strings. Trumpets and timpani are added to this basic band in symphonies Nos. 82 and 86. The orchestra of the Loge Olympique was made up of the finest amateur musicians in Paris and could boast forty violins and ten double basses – a huge orchestra for the eighteenth century. The Parisian orchestras of the time were also noted for their woodwind sections and Haydn pays tribute to this with some stunning exposed woodwind passages. Although the use of trumpets in slow movements was an accepted practice in Austria (in, for example, Mozart’s 36th “Linz” Symphony (KV 425, 1783) and Michael Haydn’s D major *Serenade* of 1785) it was a novelty to the Parisians, and was still being remarked upon as late as 1798. Brahms is reputed to have said of this movement, ‘I want my Ninth Symphony to sound like that’.

Between the completion of the six ‘Paris’ Symphonies in 1786 and his departure for London in 1791, Haydn composed five new symphonies, all of which rapidly found their way to Paris and might, therefore, justly be designated a second set of ‘Paris’ symphonies. Nos. 88 and 89 (both 1787) were carried, either in parts or in manuscript, by the violinist Johann Tost when he visited Paris in 1788. He sold them, along with a symphony by Adalbert Gyrowetz which he passed off as Haydn’s, to the music publisher Sieber, who issued them the following year. Due to the success of these symphonies, added to that of the ‘Paris’ set, Comte d’Ogny commissioned a further three symphonies from Haydn for the Concert de la Loge Olympique. At the same time, Haydn received another commission for three symphonies, this time from a south German patron, Prince Krafft Ernst von Oettingen-Wallerstein. In order to kill two birds with one stone, Haydn composed symphonies Nos. 90 (1788), 91 (1788) and 92 (1789) and sent them to both patrons. Wallerstein, on discovering the

subterfuge, was apparently less than happy to find he was not the sole “owner” of the symphonies! The Paris orchestra had two flutes, as did Wallerstein’s forces; Paris also boasted clarinets, which were still in their infancy and not yet a regular part of most orchestras. But Haydn elected not to write for clarinets or the extra flute, as they were not available at Eszterháza. This also rendered them ‘multi-purpose’ symphonies – not only composed for the two unwitting patrons but also for Haydn’s own, smaller orchestra, and, on their publication soon afterwards, able to be played by any number of small orchestras in Europe and very soon by larger orchestras in London under Haydn’s own direction. A feature of Symphony No. 90 that especially ties it to Eszterháza is Haydn’s use of horns in C alto in the outer movements and the minuet. The notoriously difficult-to-play high horns of these symphonies were an Eszterháza speciality and, as such horn playing was not common elsewhere, these symphonies were published with added trumpet parts playing what was intended for the horns; the horns simply played an octave lower, in C basso. Haydn himself used trumpets when he performed Symphony No. 90 in London due to the inability (or unwillingness?) of the English horn players to play such high parts. It must be said, however, that the use of high horns gives the music a buoyant, flamboyant sound that is missed when the parts are given to the more steely sound of trumpets.

There was popular demand for Haydn’s music and presence in London in the early 1780s, and in 1782 he even composed a set of three symphonies (Nos. 76–78) for a projected visit that for some reason didn’t materialize. Johann Peter Salomon (a German violinist) was on his annual European recruiting trip when he read, in Cologne, of Prince Nicolaus’s death. Having approached Haydn on many previous occasions unsuccessfully, he now sped to Vienna and arrived at Haydn’s rooms with the now celebrated announcement: ‘I am Salomon of London and have come to fetch you. Tomorrow we will arrange an accord.’ On 8 December the accord was arranged; on the 15th Haydn and Salomon departed (following an emotional farewell dinner with Mozart); on New Year’s Day 1791 they arrived in England.

It was customary and expected that Haydn would direct the performances of his “London” symphonies from his square-piano, and he would most probably have “conducted” a little, while simultaneously providing a discreet continuo realization. When Haydn took his twelve new symphonies back to Austria, he not only caused them to be performed in Vienna, but also with his own orchestra in the Grand Hall of Eisenstadt Castle, seat of the Esterházy family who had been his patrons since 1761. Authentic performance material (sometimes scores, sometimes scores and parts, sometimes just parts) exists for Symphonies Nos. 93-103 (and that for No. 96 contains notes in English by the kettledrum player on his part), as well as the *Sinfonia concertante*. Occasionally the changes Haydn made after returning to Austria were of enormous importance; a good example is to be found in Symphony No. 102: the long-held notes in the introduction in the London version were scored gauntly for horns, trumpets, kettledrums and strings, with the woodwind silent. After he returned home, Haydn changed this introduction and took the trouble of entering the changes on the autograph manuscript: in this Vienna-Eisenstadt version, the whole woodwind choir joins in (along with the horns, trumpets and drums). And there is an even more startling change in the second movement: for the Austrian public Haydn caused the trumpets to be muted and the kettledrums covered, thus creating a uniquely curious and slightly sinister sound.

Just once (in Symphony No. 22, “Philosopher”) Haydn deploys a pair of cor anglais instead of oboes. This mellow, tenor-voiced larger cousin of the oboe was a favourite timbre of Haydn’s, and accordingly one he used sparingly for special occasions (e.g. in the “Great Organ Mass”, the *Stabat mater*, and three of his early operas), as Mozart would with the clarinet and basset-horn in the 1780s. Haydn did not write for clarinets until Symphony No. 99 (the seventh of the “London” symphonies, composed in 1793). He only once uses percussion instruments (bass drum, cymbals, triangle and, possibly, a tambourine) in what became known as the “Military” Symphony No. 100) and the “Turkish” effects heartened both English and Austrian audiences because of contemporary political tensions with the Ottoman Empire.

It is gratefully and appropriately acknowledged that the background material in this programme is based, in no small measure, on the writings of H. C. Robbins Landon, David Threasher and Geraint Lewis.

It is our intention to provide a different note about aspects of Haydn, his symphonies, and their context, for each concert. If anyone would like to contribute an essay, please email it to Geoff Spratt (2geoffspratt@gmail.com)

Programme editor: Niamh Murray

Sincere thanks are expressed to Aiveen Kearney (Head of School, CIT CSM) for allowing us to perform here, and to the Facility Management’s Staff for helping us.