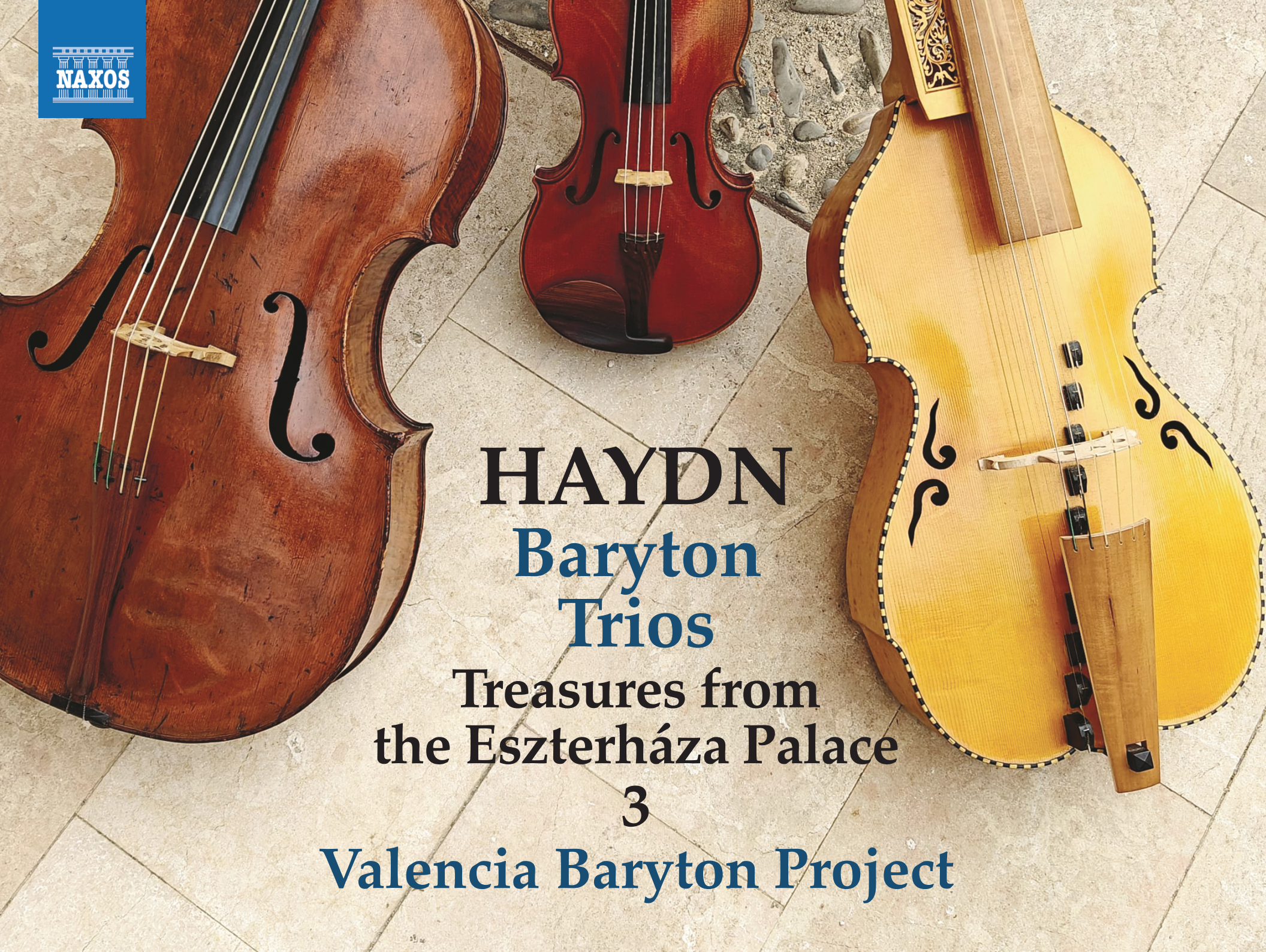


The NAXOS logo is located in the top left corner, featuring the word "NAXOS" in white capital letters on a blue rectangular background. Above the text is a stylized white graphic of a classical building facade with columns.

NAXOS

The background of the entire image is a photograph of three violins lying on a light-colored, square-tiled floor. On the left is a large, dark brown wooden double bass. In the center is a smaller, reddish-brown violin. On the right is a light-colored, possibly spruce, violin with a decorative black and white border around the body. The violins are arranged in a semi-circle, with their necks pointing towards the top of the frame.

HAYDN

Baryton Trios

Treasures from
the Eszterháza Palace

3

Valencia Baryton Project

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) Baryton Trios, Hob.XI: Nos. 26, 50, 57, 72, 80 and 82

If it were not for Prince Nikolaus of Esterházy, the baryton would surely have faded into obscurity long before the end of the Classical period. Yet the instrument assumed an unexpected importance in the career of the prince's Kapellmeister, Franz Joseph Haydn.

Though a prolific and highly respected composer, Haydn was nonetheless attracting criticism for his management of the music in the Esterházy family palace in the mid-1760s. The previous incumbent, Gregor Werner, had drawn the prince's attention to what he saw as unruly practices, with the negligence of the castle chapel, spiralling costs and the 'lazy idleness of the musicians', all addressed in a damning letter shortly before his death. The prince issued Haydn with a reprimand, instructing his administrator Peter Ludwig von Rahier to oversee the rehabilitation of the establishment.

As part of his musical rehabilitation, Haydn turned his attention to the baryton trio, in order for his work to directly benefit the prince, who had recently developed an affection for the instrument. Referring to it as a 'gamba', the prince wanted Haydn to write works for private and public performance. He was rewarded with an unprecedented body of work, with 125 baryton trios published in short order. They feature typical Haydn traits of originality and a lack of repetition between works, all the while being mindful of the prince's developing technical acumen.

The works were published in large volumes, making exact composition dates uncertain, but averaging at least two per month. Indeed, from 1766 to 1768 Haydn published four volumes of 24 baryton trios, each set 'richly bound in leather and gold', as described by Haydn scholar Elaine Sisman.

Haydn was writing for an instrument that, while resembling a bass viol, aligns more closely with the viola d'amore. One of its distinctive features is a number of extra strings positioned behind the neck, enhancing the resonance of the instrument and also offering extra effects for plucking with the left thumb. Despite playing the baryton himself, Haydn vacated the lead position for the prince, taking the subservient role of viola, while the bass part is thought to have been provided by cellist Andreas Lidl.

Due to the instrument's scarcity, Haydn's works for baryton trio are among the least recorded areas of his extensive compositional output, yet they contain some of his most intimate music.

The consistency of invention in the trios must have impressed the prince, particularly as Haydn's endeavours continued in the fast-evolving forms of symphony, string quartet, piano trio and piano sonata. As the prince gained in confidence, so the trios featured more adventurous writing for the baryton, with Haydn often working in melodic intervals of thirds or sixths in the viola and increasingly exploring the use of plucking. *The New Grove Dictionary* notes the 'remarkable account of fine detail in melody, texture and interplay of instruments', drawing the conclusion that 'Haydn's musicianship, indeed his genius, is perhaps felt particularly strongly in these bagatelles, not least in the way he achieved such variety of form and expression in so many pieces with such circumscribed possibilities.'

In sympathy with the baryton's expressive and technical capabilities, many trios are in A, D or G major, though Haydn visits more remote tonal centres while developing melodic themes. The first movements are dominant, typically two-thirds of the work's duration, and often use a slow tempo to contrast with the lively second movements. The third movements are often minuets, suitable for both private and semi-public performance.

The *Trio in G major, Hob.XI:80* is thought to date from 1769, and is heavily weighted towards its *Moderato* first movement, whose elegance is enhanced by tasteful ornamentation. The *Menuetto* has a spring in its step, though its minor key trio has a less certain gait before a quickstep *Presto*, with clever syncopations.

The *Trio in A major, Hob.XI:57* has a firm date of 1768, by which time Haydn was writing some of his finest 'Sturm und Drang' symphonies. The *Adagio* has a flavour of the contemporaneous *Symphony No. 49 in F minor 'La Passione'*, with chromaticism and a heavier tone, despite the major key. This time the short but richly scored *Menuetto* is placed second, before a lively triple-time finale brings a typically catchy theme.

In the *Trio in G major, Hob.XI:26*, Haydn makes the second movement the emotional centre, in contrast to the purposeful first movement *Presto assai* and a chatty *Menuetto*, whose mellow trio shifts gracefully to G minor. The second movement, an elegant *Andante* in C major, deviates to the tonic minor key for phrases that complement the otherwise playful exchanges.

The *Trio in D major, Hob.XI:72* begins with a deeply expressive *Adagio* that could be of Baroque origin. The second movement enjoys a rustic theme, while a central episode is given to the baryton alone, a plucked recitative with the instrument allowed free rein. The short *Menuetto* again includes a brief dalliance in the minor key during its trio.

The *Trio in C major, Hob.XI:82*, from *Book 4*, is thought to have been published in December 1771. Beginning with a slow, majestic *Adagio*, Haydn revels in the colours of the three instruments in close proximity, like a viol consort. The *Allegro* enjoys assertive counterpoint, while the fresh-faced *Menuetto* is tempered by a shadowy three-note motif in the trio, its wariness lingering after the *Menuetto* returns.

The theme of the first movement of the *Trio in D major, Hob.XI:50* is marked *Andante* but is nonetheless quite perky, the nucleus for an inventive set of four variations. The fourth of these adds extra colouring with the plucking of the baryton's strings, while Haydn cleverly manoeuvres through more distant keys. A spirited *Allegro di molto* follows, busily exchanging ideas, before the tempo relaxes for a lightly poised *Menuetto*, contrasted again with a pensive trio in the minor key before ending cheerfully.

Ben Hogwood

*The Valencia Baryton Project would like to thank Wiedoeft Rosin for its ongoing support.
Many thanks to the Ayuntamiento of Riba-roja de Túria for kindly granting the use of the Sala Noble
of the Castillo de Riba-roja de Túria.*

Valencia Baryton Project

The Valencia Baryton Project is an international collective founded in Valencia, Spain with the vision of performing the nearly 160 works written by Franz Joseph Haydn for the baryton as well as pieces by other composers, both modern and Classical. At the heart of the ensemble is the traditional baryton trio of baryton, viola and violoncello.

Led by Matthew Baker, one of only a handful of baryton performers in the world, the Valencia Baryton Project has inspired audiences in sold-out concerts and festivals throughout the Americas and Europe. Its work with the baryton, considered to have been the pinnacle of aristocratic instruments of the Classical era, has garnered wide acclaim, with the project being featured in full length articles in major international publications such as *The Strad* and *Ritmo*. The project's educational work has brought the instrument to a wide range of institutions, from country farm schools to the Royal College of Music.

Beyond performing and recording the works of Haydn and his contemporaries, the Valencia Baryton Project is committed to the creation of new compositions for this forgotten instrument, and has collaborated with contemporary composers David Gorton, Steve Zink, Ivan Moody, John Pickup, José Zárate and Julian Calarco to expand the repertoire and incorporate this novel soundscape into modern composition.

www.valenciabaryton.com

Photo © Brett Walfish



It was Prince Nikolaus of Esterházy's increasing infatuation with the baryton that compelled Haydn, the prince's Kapellmeister, to write an unprecedented body of 125 works for baryton trio. The instrument is more like a viola d'amore than a bass viol and has extra strings behind the neck that provide resonance and opportunities for plucking effects. The six works in this album are intimate expressions of great beauty with a sustained level of invention, all of which reflect the prince's increasing confidence in the instrument. Volumes 1 and 2 are available on 8.574188 and 8.574504.



AJUNTAMENT de
RIBA-ROJA DE TÚRIA

**Franz Joseph
HAYDN**
(1732–1809)



Baryton Trio in G major, Hob.XI: 80 (1769?)		11:01	Baryton Trio in D major, Hob.XI: 72 (date unknown)		11:34
1	I. Moderato	7:27	10	I. Adagio	5:44
2	II. Menuetto: Allegretto – Trio	1:26	11	II. Allegro assai (cadenza by Matthew Baker)	3:40
3	III. Finale: Presto	2:03	12	III. Menuetto: Allegretto – Trio	2:06
Baryton Trio in A major, Hob.XI: 57 (1768)		8:49	Baryton Trio in C major, Hob.XI: 82 (pub. 1771?)		14:15
4	I. Adagio	5:32	13	I. Adagio	7:57
5	II. Menuetto: Un poco allegretto – Trio	1:36	14	II. Allegro	3:33
6	III. Finale: Presto	1:39	15	III. Menuetto: Allegretto – Trio	2:44
Baryton Trio in G major, Hob.XI: 26 (date unknown)		11:19	Baryton Trio in D major, Hob.XI: 50 (date unknown)		13:26
7	I. Presto assai	3:03	16	I. Andante (cadenza by Matthew Baker)	7:14
8	II. Andante	6:05	17	II. Allegro di molto	3:17
9	III. Menuetto: Allegretto – Trio	2:05	18	III. Menuetto: Moderato – Trio	2:52

Valencia Baryton Project

Matthew Baker, Baryton • Brett Walfish, Viola • Ismar Gomes, Cello

Recorded: 8 ~~16–18~~, 9 ~~1–3~~ ~~7–9~~, 10 ~~4–6~~ ~~13–15~~ and 11 ~~10–12~~ May 2025 at the Castillo de Riba-roja de
Túria, Spain • Producers: Matthew Baker, Phil Rowlands • Engineer and editor: Phil Rowlands
Booklet notes: Ben Hogwood • Publisher: G. Henle Verlag • Cover photo: Ismar Gomes