

HAYDN

Late Symphonies • 1

Nos. 93–95

Danish Chamber Orchestra

Adam Fischer



Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Late Symphonies • 1: Nos. 93–95

For us, the musicians of the Danish Chamber Orchestra and myself, it is a great and beautiful artistic challenge to be able to re-record the last 25 symphonies of Franz Joseph Haydn. We can use all the experiences we have gained in recent years with the complete symphonic recordings of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms to play this Haydn series in as exciting and colourful a way as possible. An imaginative and stimulating interpretation is crucial for all composers, but I believe that it is slightly more crucial for Haydn than for the others. Haydn's popularity has lagged behind Mozart and Beethoven's to this day, and that cannot be due to Haydn's music, only to how it is often played today. We all have to think about that!

If we know that he had the greatest success with audiences at the time, if we know that there was an atmosphere at his concerts that is only felt at rock concerts today, then we must accept that a performance that does not achieve a similar effect with a contemporary audience cannot be called truly authentic! We will almost never achieve such an effect as Haydn did back then, but we must at least strive for it again and again. Our playing must be powerful, stormy, exciting. How we will realise that is the big question. Each interpreter must find the answers for themselves.

I would like to mention some concrete examples here – list some of the technical solutions that we use increasingly in Copenhagen to achieve this artistic effect, which I believe have characterised the unmistakably stormy character of the playing of the Danish Chamber Orchestra for years. With the strings, we often use a series of fast, short strokes at the bow frog for *marcato* effects. We also constantly vary the playing styles *sul tasto*, *sul ponticello*, *flautando*, etc. To achieve greater variation in expression, we deliberately use different bow techniques such as *battuta* and *ricochet*, which have a more lively effect than 'normal' bowing. With the winds, we often vary the swelling and decreasing sound with sustained notes. We use 'quiet *forte*' and 'loud *piano*' because we are convinced that the character of the sound, not its decibel value, determines the dynamics, among other elements.

I have also found, however, that the special bow strokes we use in Copenhagen, for example, do not work properly in any other orchestra than the Danish Chamber Orchestra. This once again proves that technique is only a means. It must serve the individual, specific musical style, and enable a personal statement. I believe that over the years we have jointly developed a uniquely subjective and powerfully passionate style of playing in Copenhagen, which is particularly important for Haydn's music. The most important commandment of the Danish Chamber Orchestra at our concerts is that to play a wrong note is a venial sin, but to play a right note uninspired is a mortal sin. We believe that boredom must be declared war upon. And I hope that with our recordings we can captivate the audience just as much as we do with our concerts. We want to show everyone how great, dramatic, lively and emotional this music is. We owe that to Haydn.

Adam Fischer

Joseph Haydn was born in the village of Rohrau in 1732. After training at the choir school of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, he spent some years earning a living as best he could from teaching and playing the violin or keyboard, and was able to learn from the old musician Porpora, whose assistant he became. Haydn's first appointment was in 1759 as Kapellmeister to a Bohemian nobleman, Count Morzin. This was followed in 1761 by employment as Vice-Kapellmeister to one of the richest men in the Empire, Prince Paul Anton Esterházy, succeeded on his death in 1762 by his brother Prince Nikolaus. On the death in 1766 of the elderly and somewhat obstructive Kapellmeister, Gregor Werner, Haydn succeeded to his position, to remain in the same employment, nominally at least, for the rest of his life.

On the death of Prince Nikolaus in 1790, Haydn was able to accept an invitation to visit London. Haydn landed in England for the first time on New Year's Day 1791, shortly afterwards reaching London, where he lodged with the violinist-impresario Johann Peter Salomon, who had arranged the visit. The Salomon concert season began eventually on 11 March in the Hanover Square Rooms, where Johann Christian Bach and his colleague Carl Friedrich Abel had earlier established a series of subscription concerts. Salomon's orchestra at this time consisted of some 40 highly competent performers and it was for them that Haydn wrote the first of his Salomon or London symphonies.

A second successful visit to London in 1794 and 1795 was followed by a return to duty with the Esterházy family, the new head of which had settled principally at the family property in Eisenstadt, where Haydn had started his career. Much of the year, however, was to be spent in Vienna, where Haydn passed his final years, dying in 1809, as the French armies of Napoleon approached the city yet again.

Keith Anderson

Haydn in London: Art, Women and Consultants

We love the story of Joseph Haydn's difficult path to London's music scene: he worked for the Esterházy court in the 1760s and 1770s, far from the musical capitals. He then received more tolerable conditions in the 1780s and also enjoyed the company of his friend Mozart and the Viennese music environment in general. Finally, he conquered London in 1791 and again in 1794 with overwhelming success on all levels, composing a total of twelve symphonies. But what did he do in Britain's pulsating capital? Apart from composing in the annex of one of the city's piano shops?

One of his activities was the same as all tourists in London, both then and now: he went shopping. He considered goods, compared prices, and bought nice things to take home. According to his diary, the ten shillings for a concert ticket corresponded to the price of a turkey or two plucked ducks. He fell in love with the local art market and purchased two prints with satirical portraits of an audience in which the city's ladies and gentlemen looked anywhere but at the poor lecturer. Did he recognise the pleasure-seeking and chatty listeners from his own events? In any case, he had both drawings framed and hung on his wall after his return to Vienna.

Joseph Haydn *may* also have been looking at women. His marriage to Maria Anna was never a happy one, and he had already made at least one singer at home on the continent pregnant. We do not know the details of his affairs with British women. Surgeon John Hunter treated him for some polyps in his nose shortly after his first arrival in the city. The colourful celebrity surgeon was, at the time, married to poet Anne Hunter (née Home), and was the owner of a cabinet of curiosities with deformities and skeletons. John Hunter died of a heart attack in October 1793. The grieving widow may have possibly become romantically involved with her husband's old patient on his second trip to the city the following year. Anne was, in any case, fond of the famous composer, and allowed him to set music to a handful of her poems.

The composer himself was finally preoccupied with people's expectations of new music. He wanted to make a good impression, and not just compose his works in the usual way. The British capital in Haydn's time had twice as many inhabitants as Vienna and many more cosmopolitan habits. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach – the otherwise well-known son of 'old' Bach – was rejected by London's music bosses due to his lack of experience with listeners in a big city!

So Haydn smartly and thoroughly oriented himself with his British friends and acquaintances, using, for example, the ubiquitous Charles Burney as a consultant. The genial music historian had always been fond of Haydn and had never been able to arrange a meeting! Burney had also, as a boy, seen Handel sitting over a cup of coffee on his way to the oratorio *Messiah* in Dublin, and had been a fan ever since. His infectious enthusiasm for Handel's fantastic oratorios led more or less directly to Haydn's own *The Creation* a few years later.

And one could not imagine Haydn's symphonies from his time in London without Johann Peter Salomon's advice and action. The enthusiastic violinist, conductor, and impresario was a down-to-earth type with a nose for both the audience's needs and financial matters. Joseph Haydn ate countless dinners with Salomon, and took many of his straightforward attitudes into account along the way. For example, the composer heard that people were not so fond of his *Symphony No. 95* because it was in a 'boring' minor key – so he made sure that the rest of his symphonies for the good British folk were in major keys!

Søren Schausser

Symphony No. 93 in D major, Hob.I:93 (1791)

Symphony No. 93 in D major was performed at the first of the second season of Salomon concerts in which Haydn was concerned, on 17 February 1792. The programme was of the usual variety, including concertos for oboe, for harp and for violin, songs and a new *Grand Overture* by Haydn, the first of his symphonies for London, acclaimed by one critic as 'grand, scientific, charming and original'. Scored for pairs of flutes and oboes, bassoons, horns, timpani and strings, the symphony was presumably written in London in the preceding year, relying now on Haydn's familiarity with the abilities of the players at his disposal. The work opens with a slow introduction, based on a figure derived from the descending notes of the triad. The strings announce the first subject of the following *Allegro assai*, with a transition based again on the notes of the arpeggio. A violin scale introduces the string presentation of the second subject. The repetition of the exposition is followed by the central development, now moving into the minor. There are surprises, with sudden pauses, the last of which precedes the expected recapitulation. The G major slow movement starts with a solo string quartet. The rest of the string section enters, with the theme now doubled by the bassoon. This theme is used in various forms, interrupted by other material. There is a robust D major *Menuetto*, after which the wind repeat the tonic to announce the *Trio*, the theme of which starts in B minor, changing key after each series of repeated notes. The strings state the principal theme of the *Finale*, continued with the help of the rest of the orchestra. A development of the theme then allows its re-appearance in the dominant, before a second theme is entrusted to oboe and bassoon. There is a brief contrapuntal elaboration of material, ending with the hushed sound of a solo cello, capped by the same rhythmic and melodic figure from the whole orchestra, a prelude to the return of the main theme, followed by subtle modulation. The second theme appears in the oboe, leading to a definitive coda.

Symphony No. 94 in G major, Hob.I:94 'The Surprise' (1791)

Symphony No. 94 in G major was first performed at a subscription concert at the Hanover Square Rooms on 23 March 1792, the sixth of the new series, and proved to have an enduring popularity. The first movement opens with a slow introduction, followed by a gentle enough first subject and a double second subject. The well-known C major slow movement provides the 'surprise' of a sudden burst of sound, interrupting the steady progress of the melody, which is then varied. The *Menuetto* is much quicker than is usually the case, its *Trio* opening with first violins and bassoon in octaves. The *Finale* is launched, as usual, by the strings, with a cheerful first subject, succeeded by a contrasting second subject in sonata form.

Symphony No. 95 in C minor, Hob.I:95 (1791)

Haydn's *Symphony No. 95 in C minor* was also written in London in 1791, and was performed at some time during Haydn's first season there. The strong opening figure of the first movement is announced by woodwind and strings, followed by a gentler answer from the strings. The second subject, in E flat major, is derived from the descending arpeggio. The opening figure starts the central development, now used in transposition and contrapuntally. The gentle first subject appears in recapitulation, followed by the second theme, now in C major, with brief additions, as it proceeds, from a solo violin. The E flat major *Andante cantabile*, without trumpets or drums, is introduced by the strings. The first variation uses a solo cello, followed by semiquaver triplets from the first violins, echoed by the solo cello. The next variation is in E flat minor, the melody offered by the first violins, and leads to a further version of the theme that allows the violins rapid demi-semiquavers, before a final moving re-appearance of the theme. The *Menuetto* welcomes back the trumpets and drums, in a sinister C minor. The *Trio*, however, is in C major, with a solo cello accompanied by plucked strings in cheerful contrast. C major is the key of the *Finale*, opened by the strings, later joined by horns and woodwind, with a particularly delightful accompanying figure for the bassoons. A fugal passage follows, after which the principal theme returns in recapitulation, with a touch more counterpoint to come before the firm conclusion.

Adam Fischer

Photo: Toke Bjørneboe



The Hungarian-born conductor Adam Fischer (b. 1949) graduated from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest and undertook further studies in Vienna. He is much in demand within both the opera and concert repertoire and has cooperated with a great number of leading international concert halls and opera houses, including the Vienna State Opera, La Scala and The Metropolitan Opera as well as such orchestras as the Wiener Philharmoniker, London Philharmonic Orchestra and Berliner Philharmoniker. Adam Fischer has been associated with the Danish Chamber Orchestra since 1997, serving as chief conductor from 1998, where he still is a major driving force and initiator both in Denmark and internationally. In 2019, he was awarded the international Wolf Prize for Music, was nominated Conductor of the Year by Presto Classical in the UK, and received the *BBC Music Magazine* Awards Orchestral Award for his recording of Mahler's *Symphony No. 1* with the Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra. In 2022, he received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Classical Music Awards (ICMA).

www.adamfischer.at

Danish Chamber Orchestra

Photo: Toke Bjørneboe



The Danish Chamber Orchestra is unrivalled in Danish musical life. Its roots go back more than 80 years to its foundation in 1939, and in 2014 the orchestra changed from being part of DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) to an independent orchestra, fully owned by the musicians. The Danish Chamber Orchestra combines symphonic music at the highest international level with a broad popular appeal. The orchestra's chief conductor, Adam Fischer, has worked closely with the orchestra since 1997. Together with him, the ensemble has developed a sophisticated, energetic style of playing – especially in music of the Classical period. The orchestra has a tradition for bridging various musical genres and traditions, which has resulted in exciting collaborations with major Danish and international artists. The Danish Chamber Orchestra binds Denmark together through memorable musical experiences and its insistence on the social relevance of music. It is deeply committed to the development of talent, and the communicating and development of new concert formats.

underholdningsorkester.dk

Fresh from their critically acclaimed series of the complete symphonies of Beethoven (8.505251) and Brahms (8.574465-67), the Danish Chamber Orchestra and Adam Fischer turn to Haydn's late symphonies, beginning with the first three of the twelve 'London' symphonies, composed during Haydn's first visit to the capital. Arguably his greatest achievements in the genre, they include the enduringly popular 'surprise' in the slow movement of *No. 94*. Fischer and his orchestra, who have performed together for over two decades, employ varied bowing and playing styles in the strings and innovative dynamic techniques in the winds that bring new levels of excitement to these masterpieces.

Franz Joseph
HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No. 93 in D major, Hob.I:93 (1791) 20:28

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|---|---|-------------|
| 1 | I. Adagio – Allegro assai | 6:49 |
| 2 | II. Largo cantabile | 4:55 |
| 3 | III. Menuetto – Trio | 3:43 |
| 4 | IV. Finale: Presto ma non troppo | 4:54 |

Symphony No. 94 in G major, Hob.I:94 'The Surprise' (1791) 21:12

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|---|---|-------------|
| 5 | I. Adagio cantabile – Vivace assai | 7:55 |
| 6 | II. Andante | 5:11 |
| 7 | III. Menuetto – Trio | 4:12 |
| 8 | IV. Finale | 3:46 |

Symphony No. 95 in C minor, Hob.I:95 (1791) 18:35

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|----|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 9 | I. Allegro | 6:12 |
| 10 | II. Andante | 4:19 |
| 11 | III. Menuetto – Trio | 4:12 |
| 12 | IV. Finale: Vivace | 3:46 |

Danish Chamber Orchestra • Adam Fischer

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