

Haydn Symphonies

NO.44 "Mourning"
NO.49 "La passione"

ACADEMY OF
ST.MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS
NEVILLE MARRINER



Barb Sijpe '77



Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Side 1:

Symphony No. 44 in E minor
“Mourning”

1. Allegro con brio
2. Menuetto (Allegretto)
Canone in Diapason
3. Adagio
4. Finale (Presto)

Side 2:

Symphony No. 49 in F minor
“La Passione”

1. Adagio
2. Allegro di molto
3. Menuet
4. Finale (Presto)

Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
directed by Neville Marriner

From the time he assumed the full office of *Kapellmeister* to Prince Nicolaus Esterházy the Magnificent in 1766 – Prince Paul Anton had died in 1762 – Haydn worked with increasing intensity. Not only had he to compose masses and other church music; the opening of the palace at Esterháza in 1768 with its theatre and opera house was the signal for the number of operas Haydn had begun to compose to be stepped up. In the late 1760's he also turned once more to writing string quartets, and of course continued to write symphonies although less prolifically for the time being. At the same time, control of the musicians, the twice-weekly house concert, the supervision of the whole opera repertoire, and the upkeep of good relations between the prince and the musical establishment all fell to Haydn.

Yet, in spite of all this activity, there is to be noted in his music about this period another kind of intensity – an increase in the profundity and quality of emotional expression which finds echoes in the German literary and Austrian musical *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) movements then current. The description comes from a similarly titled play by Friedrich von Klinger, although it followed 10 years, in Haydn's case, the music in which this mood began to overflow the finer tracteries of Rococo sentimentality.

For Haydn the early keyboard sonatas of C.P.E. Bach with their violent contrasts and dramatic ambience, which he knew as a boy, would already have provided an initial impulse; the visiting troupes of musicians and actors (with their romantic plays inspired by Shakespeare) would have reported and reinforced the trend to individual expression which stemmed largely from the Enlightenment, and led throughout Europe to a new order of thought, government, and society overtaking the old (the year of Klinger's play was at the same time in America the year of the Declaration of Independence); and the isolation in his “desert” allowed Haydn, as his often-quoted statement has it, to experiment, observe effects, improve, expand, cut, and take risks, and in the end required him to be original.

Both symphonies here are in minor keys, a typical feature of this *Sturm und Drang* period, though such keys now signified less a dignified and festive mood, as they had done for Vivaldi and other Baroque composers, than one acknowledging passion and tension. The tendency of a minor third to pull constantly towards resolution in the major underlines this.

Symphony No. 44 in E minor, “Mourning,” of all Haydn's music, is the work from which the composer is said to have wanted the slow movement played at his funeral – hence the title. Its scoring, like that of the Symphony No. 49, is the one most often used by Haydn in his earlier symphonies – two oboes, two horns, and strings, with a bassoon as part of the continuo. From the beginning, a sense of urgency is created in the first movement by the powerful unison opening, a device which figures in several other early symphonies; the first four notes are also the basis of the second subject. The development is lifted along on an increasing tension relieved only by the precipitation into the recapitulation which is eventually closed off by a contrapuntal coda.

Cover illustration: Bab Siljée.

The *Menuetto* which follows as a second movement carries over this concentrated working in a canon at the octave (*Canone in Diapason*) at a one-bar interval. The tension of the minor key is then gratefully relieved by a lyrical trio in E major, which nonetheless reminds us of the drama set in motion by its high horn *tessitura* and sudden *fortissimo* outbreaks in the new dramatic Haydn style.

The *Adagio*, in the tonic major again, is one of Haydn's loveliest slow movements, characteristically scored for muted strings as was Haydn's custom for many slow movements, and sparing of the wind instruments which serve notably to point highlights. The finale, again with a unison opening, is one of the peaks of Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* writing, resuming the dramatic concentration of the symphony's opening movement and reaching a point of tension affirmed by the horns and only just curtailed by the final minor chord.

Symphony No. 49 in F minor, “La Passione,” shares the tension of the previous work. Dating from 1768, it stands firmly in the midst of Haydn's Romantic crisis, as this period has been called, and is a symphony unrelieved at length by any major-key lighting except in the trio of the third movement. The title, applied by posterity, is without specific reference but has religious significance, being associated with the gloom and dramatic mourning of Passion Week in the Church's calendar. Haydn cast the work in *sonata da chiesa* form, the slow movement first, for the last time in a symphony; in future, a slow introduction was to serve his purpose. The emotional unity of the work is supported by the thematic unity the composer has woven into its structure, an achievement which made this symphony one of his most impressive to his contemporary musical world.

NEVILLE MARRINER

Neville Marriner was born in Lincoln, England, in 1924. He studied at the Royal College of Music, London, and at the Paris Conservatoire. In the late 'forties and early 'fifties he worked with the harpsichordist and musicologist, Thurston Dart, and became a founder member of such well-known groups as the Martin String Quartet, the Virtuoso String Trio, and the Jacobean Ensemble. In 1956 he was appointed principal second violin of the London Symphony Orchestra.

The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields was formed by the following year. Marriner has directed the group ever since its formation and, through its recordings and festival performances in England and abroad, it has become associated with the very best in ensemble playing. Numerous international record awards reflect this success. Shortly after beginning work with the Academy, Neville Marriner studied conducting with Pierre Monteux, who was then principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. In 1969 he was appointed conductor-director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and in 1971 associate conductor of the Northern Sinfonia. He is now extending his conducting activities to the larger repertoire of the symphony orchestra, besides making plans to conduct opera and oratorio in the near future. In 1975 he began a three-year appointment as artistic director of London's South Bank Summer Music.



Haydn — Oil painting by Thomas Hardy, 1791.
Royal College of Music, London.

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