

Music Views and Reviews by Kathy Wolfe

Haydn's musical revolution on discs

Haydn, The Complete Symphonies: Roy Goodman, conductor, Hanover Band; The Hyperion Haydn Edition

Haydn, The Complete Symphonies: Adam Fischer, conductor, Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra; Nimbus Records

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) made a revolution in music during 1781-82, inventing both the classical string quartet and symphony. His "Russian" quartets Op. 33 (1781), which inspired Mozart's "Haydn" quartets (1782-5), trailblazed this revolution, but recordings are scarce.

However, three new CD sets of complete Haydn symphonies are now appearing. Roy Goodman on Hyperion uses original instruments performing well at the classical pitch of A=430. Adam Fischer on Nimbus has the fine musicians of the Vienna and Budapest Philharmonics, but at the modern A=440 pitch. Both are superior to Christopher Hogwood's original instrument CDs on L'Oiseau-Lyre, which are just plain fast.

To hear Haydn's breakthrough, and so appreciate Mozart's subsequent revolution, it is necessary to compare a broad array of Haydn's early, and later, works. To hear the revolution in Haydn's 1781 "Russian" quartets Op. 33, for example, it is best to compare his 1771 Op. 20 "Sun" quartets, ten years earlier.

Here the complete Haydn symphonies are very useful. Compare Haydn's 1771-3 Symphony No. 52 in C minor, to his Symphony No. 78 in C minor of 1782, following the Op. 33 quartets. No. 52 opens with a short theme, striking, but never fully developed, which seems not to give rise to new themes in the first movement, or to other movements. No. 78 however

opens with what Norbert Brainin of the Amadeus Quartet calls Haydn's *Motivführung* principle, appearing first in the Op. 33 quartets. Best translated "leading principle" or "seed concept," this is a particular musical statement containing the germ of an already-growing idea, which generates new ideas at an ever-increasing rate of development. This creates an "integrated" composition which from beginning to end is a single, indivisible, unified conception, developed from a single *seminal idea*, a specific notion of *ordered development*.

Early symphonies

Adam Fischer's new release on Nimbus (NI 5331) has some of Haydn's earliest symphonies, Nos. 14, 15, 16, and 17. Most seem to have been written at Count Morzin's Lucavek castle, before 1761, when Haydn moved to Esterhazy Palace, or shortly thereafter. "Whoever knows me must discover I owe a great deal to Emmanuel Bach," Haydn wrote, and these early works give a clear idea of what music was like before Haydn's revolution.

Adam Fischer, although working with modern pitch and instruments, gives us a great deal of what Haydn put there, with loving expression. Born in Budapest and trained in Vienna, he formed the Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra just to perform Haydn's works in the Esterhazy palaces where they were written, where these technically fine recordings are made.

Those who love the Vienna Philharmonic, as I do, will also enjoy the Fischer "London Symphonies No. 93-104," Haydn's last 12 symphonies (NI 5200-4, 5-CD set), also on single CDs with two of Haydn's London symphonies on each. Symphonies No. 52 and 78 are forthcoming.

Later Haydn works

While most original instrument recordings speed to a quick musical death, Roy Goodman's Haydn symphonies are excellent. Despite the fact that Goodman is measurably 4-5 minutes faster on a given symphony than Fischer, he gets a truly "singing" phrasing from some of the better early instrumentalists in Europe. The Hanover Band's name refers to instruments of that era, 1714-1830.

It helps that Goodman was a highly trained boy soprano soloist at the Cambridge King's College Choir. Haydn was also a famous boy soprano.

The lower Haydn-Mozart A=430 pitch makes the differences among instruments more obvious, more robust. It is fascinating to compare the same works on modern instruments.

Hyperion's latest CD includes London Symphonies No. 101 in D and No. 102 in B-flat (CDA 66528) from 1794, which come off well in comparison. Goodman places the first violins and second violins on either side of the podium, and so their original dialogue can be heard. He conducts from a 1798 fortepiano, as did Haydn, whose continuo adds sparkle with its clear shaping of tone.

Most revealing, every type of instrument sounds crisply distinct from every other, something which simply cannot be done with modern instruments. The comic tone of the bassoon walking continuo, which earned No. 101 the nickname "The Clock," and its contrast against the strings, is wonderful.

Haydn's breakthrough Symphony No. 78 is also available on Hyperion CDA 66525; No. 52 is forthcoming. Also recommended are Haydn's 1785-6 symphonies composed for Paris, Nos. 82, 83, and 84 on CDA 66527.