HAYDN

Late Symphonies • 3

Nos. 99, 100 ‘Military’ and 101 ‘The Clock’

Danish Chamber Orchestra

Adam Fischer

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Late Symphonies • 3: Nos. 99–101

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

When the Symphony Became ‘Great’ Music

Joseph Haydn’s last symphonies, first performed in 1794 and 1795, were created for his second visit to the British capital. He had captivated London during his first trip in 1791/92, with countless premieres and ensuing worldwide fame. The splendid monument to Haydn in the square of his birthplace, Rohrau, was erected as early as 1793, while he was still very much alive and well.

What considerations might he have pondered while working on these six pieces? We are quite familiar with those months from his *London Notebooks*, containing observations on various subjects. The passionate affair from his first visit to the city with the wealthy Rebecca Schroeter apparently ended. However, in the town of Bath, he met both a ‘charming’ Miss Brown and her ‘exceptionally beautiful’ mother.

A fire at London Bridge in July 1794 devastated the neighbourhood, leaving many residents homeless. The community therefore set up 120 tents to accommodate the poor families. Haydn writes about it, not without warmth of heart.

His bold humour is recognisable in the 1795 account of the wedding between a young organist and an even younger bride. Both are wonderful looking, but they were both born blind. Haydn calls it a ‘waste of their good looks’. The once poor groom even ‘received a nice dowry and hence has not played the organ since’!

London’s music scene could generally be challenging for him. For instance, in July 1794, he attended a performance with dance and song: the dancing Scots in kilts performed the same ‘manure’ as everywhere else. One of the evening’s arias was even sung ‘with so many grimaces that I began to sweat’ – after which the audience, of course, demanded that very aria as an encore!

And an event on 30 March 1795 was downright irritating: the Freemasons were to entertain with ‘one of my great symphonies’ in their banquet hall. ‘But the orchestra did not want any rehearsals’ he writes. ‘So I refused to participate. I was actually completely absent.’

The demand for quality reflects not only his care for the works as such. His demand also expresses a new era. Pieces for orchestra are on their way to win the same status as operas. Something as simple as a symphony can henceforth have artistic weight. Joseph Haydn’s symphonies from his second visit to London thus stand as a milestone in the transition from Viennese Classicism to Romanticism.

No. 99 was composed in Vienna just before his departure, and it is his first symphony ever to include clarinets. *No. 100* is often called *‘The Military Symphony’* because of its grand second movement featuring both cymbals and triangle. *No. 101* has long been nicknamed *‘The Clock’* due to the ticking rhythm in the second movement for plucked strings and bassoons.

The work on these three pieces, plus *Nos. 102*, *103* and *104* drained his energy. Joseph Haydn did not write symphonies in the last decade and a half of his life. He repeatedly expressed fatigue and even thoughts of stopping music making altogether. The wording in the contract from 27 February 1796 between himself and the impresario Johann Peter Salomon is thought-provoking: ‘I hereby give Salomon all rights to my six last symphonies, three of which were first performed in 1794 and three in 1795’ he writes. His use of the words ‘my six last’ – rather than just the ‘latest’ or a similar expression – indicates that his decision to decline further exhausting work on symphonies is a definitive one.

Søren Schauser

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 new concert formats.

underholdningsorkester.dk

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

Franz Joseph Haydn's last great symphonies electrified his London audiences, and with these recordings Adam Fischer and the Danish Chamber Orchestra recreate the powerful, stormy and exciting effects that caused such a sensation in the 1790s. *Symphony No. 99 in E flat major* was Haydn's first ever symphony to use clarinets; *No. 100 in G major* gained its *'Military'* appellation due to its grand second movement featuring cymbals and triangle; and *No. 101 in D major* has long been nicknamed *'The Clock'* due to the ticking rhythm in the second movement for plucked strings and bassoons. Previous volumes in the series are available on 8.574516 and 8.574517.

Franz Joseph
HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No. 99 in E flat major, Hob.I:99 (1793)		**24:03**
1	**I. Adagio – Vivace assai**	8:02
2	**II. Adagio**	7:17
3	**III. Menuet: Allegretto – Trio**	4:34
4	**IV. Finale: Vivace**	4:10
Symphony No. 100 in G major, Hob.I:100 'Military' (1794)		**22:32**
5	**I. Adagio – Allegro**	7:18
6	**II. Allegretto**	5:19
7	**III. Menuet: Moderato – Trio**	4:54
8	**IV. Finale: Presto**	5:01
Symphony No. 101 in D major, Hob.I:101 'The Clock' (1794)		**26:21**
9	**I. Adagio – Presto**	7:39
10	**II. Andante**	6:53
11	**III. Menuet: Allegretto – Trio**	7:13
12	**IV. Finale: Vivace**	4:36

Danish Chamber Orchestra • Adam Fischer

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