

Montgomery Philharmonic 2019 - 2020

Our 14th Season : Editions

Concert 2, January 19, 2020 at 2 PM – The Senior Edition

Mozart | Haydn

About Franz Joseph Haydn

Franz Joseph Haydn was an Austrian composer of the Classical period who was known as the father of the symphony and the string quartet. He spent much of his career as a court musician for the wealthy Esterházy family at their remote estate. Until the latter part of his life, this isolated him from other composers and trends in music so that he was, as he put it, “forced to become original.” In spite of this, his music circulated widely, and for much of his career he was the most celebrated composer in Europe. Haydn’s music is full of character and his sense of humor often finds its way into many of his compositions. Haydn was a friend and mentor to Mozart, a tutor of Beethoven, and the older brother of composer Michael Haydn.

Haydn was the son of a wheelwright and a cook, and his parents realized his musical talent very early on. When he was only 6 years old, they sent him to live with a relative – Johann Matthias Frankh, a schoolmaster and the choirmaster in Hainburg, Austria. Haydn never lived with his parents again. Life in the Frankh household was not easy for Haydn, who later remembered being frequently hungry and humiliated by the filthy state of his clothing. He began his musical training there and could soon play both harpsichord and violin. The people of Hainburg heard him sing treble parts in the church choir.

There is reason to think that Haydn’s singing impressed those who heard him, because in 1739 he was brought to the attention of Georg von Reutter, the director of music in St. Stephen’s Cathedral in Vienna, who happened to be visiting Hainburg and was looking for new choirboys. Haydn passed his audition with Reutter, and after several months of further training moved to Vienna in 1740, where he worked for the next 9 years as a chorister. Haydn lived with von Reutter, von Reutter’s family, and four other choirboys at the cathedral. Interestingly, Haydn’s younger brother, Michael, eventually lived with the von Reutter’s at the cathedral as well. After 9 years, Haydn was dismissed from the choir because his voice had matured and the Empress Maria Theresa complained that he sounded like a crow. The final straw that led to his dismissal was when his pranks finally caught up with him (he cut off the pigtail of another chorister).

Haydn was taken in by Johann Michael Spangler, who shared his family’s watchtower room for a few months. Haydn developed his career as a freelance musician by working many different jobs; he was a music teacher, street serenader, and valet for the Italian composer Nicola Porpora. At this time it became clear that he had not received adequate training in music theory and composition, so he began to work his way through counterpoint exercises in Fux’s *Gradus ad Parnassum* and studied the works of CPE Bach. As Haydn’s skills increased, he began to be known first as an opera composer. This landed him a job as a freelance composer for the court in Vienna.

Haydn eventually found his way to the court of the Esterházy family and was appointed full Kapellmeister. As a “house officer” in the Esterházy establishment, Haydn wore livery, a special uniform, and followed the family as they moved among their various palaces, most importantly the family’s ancestral seat, Schloss Esterházy in Eisenstadt and later on Esterháza, a grand new palace built in rural Hungary in the 1760s. Haydn had a huge range of responsibilities, including composition, running the orchestra, playing chamber music for and with his patrons, and eventually the mounting of operatic productions. Despite this backbreaking workload, the job was, in artistic terms, a superb opportunity for Haydn. The Esterházy princes—Paul Anton and Nikolaus I—were musical connoisseurs who appreciated his work and gave him daily access to his own small orchestra. During the nearly 30 years that Haydn worked at the Esterházy court, he produced most of his compositions, and it was there where his musical style continued to mature.

1779 was a watershed year for Haydn, as his contract was renegotiated. Previously all his compositions were the property of the Esterházy family. He now was permitted to write for others and sell his work to publishers. Haydn soon shifted his emphasis in composition to reflect this (fewer operas, and more quartets and symphonies) and he negotiated with multiple publishers, both Austrian and foreign. His new employment contract acted as a catalyst in the next stage in Haydn’s career—the achievement of international popularity. By 1790 Haydn was in the paradoxical position of being Europe’s leading composer, but also someone who spent his time as a duty-bound Kapellmeister in a remote palace in the Hungarian countryside. The remoteness of Esterháza, which was farther from Vienna than Eisenstadt, led Haydn to gradually feel more isolated and lonely. He longed to visit Vienna, where he had many friendships, and so began to travel a bit to Vienna.

In 1790, Prince Nikolaus died and was succeeded by his son Anton. Following a trend of the time, Anton sought to economize by dismissing most of the court musicians. Haydn retained a nominal appointment with Anton, at a reduced salary of 400 florins, as well as a 1000-florin pension from Nikolaus. Since Anton had little need for Haydn’s services, he was willing to let him travel, and the composer accepted a lucrative offer from Johan Peter Salomon, a German violinist and impresario, to visit England and conduct new symphonies with a large orchestra. He made two journeys to London, one in 1791–92 and another in 1794–95. Audiences flocked to his concerts and he composed several symphonies and string quartets. At the end of these trips, he did some traveling to the English countryside and also to Oxford, where he was awarded an honorary doctorate.

By the end of 1803, Haydn’s health had declined, so he retired. He suffered from dizziness, the inability to concentrate, and painfully swollen legs. In spite of this, he continued to try to compose. Although he was retired, the Esterházy family kept him on salary and paid his pension until the very end.

- **Born:** March 31, 1731, in Rohrau, Austria
- **Died:** May 31, 1809, in Vienna, Austria
- **Full Name:** Franz Joseph Haydn
- **Spouse:** Maria Anna Keller
- **Child:** Alois Anton Nikolaus Polzelli
- **Parents:** Maria nee Koller, Matthias Haydn
- **Compositions:** 104 symphonies, 4 violin concerti, 5 cello concerti, 1 double bass concerto, 5 horn concerti, 1 trumpet concerto, 2 flute concerti (1 is lost), one oboe

Symphony No. 43 in E-flat “Mercury”, Hoboken 1/43 (1771) – Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

The seldom played Symphony No. 43 of Haydn is a gem of Haydn’s orchestral output that that reveals much about his later symphonies. Composed in E-flat, Haydn continues to come to this key often. He first uses this key in 1764 with his Symphony No. 22, *Philosopher*. He comes back to it nine more times in symphonies, ten times for string quartets, eight times in keyboard chamber music, twice in concerti, and ten times in sacred music. During the classic era, the key of E-flat was thought of as being stately and heroic. This symphony took on the sub-title, ‘Mercury’, during the 19th century. The brilliance in the writing for strings and two oboes, bassoon, and two horns becomes apparent immediately in this symphony with three big knocking chords that are repeated in the opening each followed by a short, sublime interlude that launches the first movement into brilliant tutti playing in the violins and violas. These fast scalar passages are contrasted by lighter textured, lyrical themes in the exposition. The thematic material is not typical in that it is not in two, four, or eight bar phrases. The development section is also unusual for the time in that it focuses only on a fragment of the theme – three repeated sixteenth notes followed by two eighth notes. The second movement is performed mostly by the strings and has a long first theme. The third movement is a traditional minuet, but it has a touch of the Austrian Ländler in its feel. The trio of the minuet begins in C minor and moves to B-flat (the dominant of the Minuet). This harmony does not go where we expect, because the second part of the trio begins again on C minor and then moves to E-flat of the return of the Minuet. The final movement is again, not what is expected. It has a log legato theme and the coda is very unusual in that it doesn’t end the symphony with a bang, but rather it ends with lyrical, diminishing passages thus confusing the listener and then, there is a moment of silence. Finally, Haydn composes a final tutti passage to end the symphony.

Instrumentation – 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 horns, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass

Artifacts –

[Haydn’s employment contract with the Court of Esterházy](#)

[Haydn’s Tomb in the Bergkirche, Eisenstadt, Austria](#)



[Haydn: The Complete Symphonies](#)
[Ádám Fischer & Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra](#)

[Haydn: Symphonies 43, 44, & 45](#)
[Royal Philharmonic Orchestra & Stefan Sanderling](#)

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[In Search of Haydn](#)

[The Faber Pocket Guide to Haydn \(Faber Pocket Guides\)](#)

[Haydn: The Life & Work of a Musical Genius](#) Kindle Edition

YouTube.com Links –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dv8nSS1BxoE>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGK_5kPjuw0

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2yEX6y8ECM>