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Harry Christophers & Handel and Haydn Society
Gillian Keith, Tove Dahlberg, Thomas Cooley, Nathan Berg

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GRAMOPHONE RECOMMENDED

Mozart: Requiem
Harry Christophers & Handel and Haydn Society
Elizabeth Watts, Phyllis Pancella, Andrew Kennedy, Eric Owens

“A Requiem full of life… Mozart's final masterpiece has never sounded so exciting.”
CLASSIC FM MAGAZINE

Mozart: Coronation Mass
Haydn: Symphony No. 85 La Reine
Harry Christophers & Handel and Haydn Society
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“This disc captures the vitality and theatricality Christophers has made a hallmark of his work with the H&H chorus.”
THE BOSTON GLOBE

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Mozart: Requiem
Harry Christophers & Handel and Haydn Society
Elizabeth Watts, Phyllis Pancella, Andrew Kennedy, Eric Owens

“A Requiem full of life… Mozart's final masterpiece has never sounded so exciting.”
CLASSIC FM MAGAZINE
Of the many delights of being Artistic Director of America’s oldest continuously performing arts organisation, the Handel and Haydn Society, is that I am given the opportunity to present most of our concert season at Boston’s glorious Symphony Hall. Built in 1900, it is principally the home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, but it has been our primary performance home since 1900 as well, and it is considered by many, with some justification I would add, to be one of the finest concert halls in the world. It is that classic ‘shoebox style’ reminiscent of the Musikverein in Vienna; the acoustics are quite superb and, despite its size – c.2500 capacity, perfect for playing on period instruments.

On this live recording, we present a programme devoted to that Master of the Symphony, Franz Joseph Haydn, where you can witness first hand the development from his early symphony Le matin to his much later Paris symphony L’ours. The first concert I ever gave with H&H was at the Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt in September 2006. We performed Le matin in the Haydnsaal on the very stage Haydn first performed it for his new employer, Prince Paul Anton Ersterhazy, under the ceiling paintings of Le matin, Le midi and Le soir – a very clever way for Haydn to impress his new employer. These are very much concertante symphonies with the flute, bassoon and violin taking centre stage. Thirty years later and Haydn’s fame had spread across Europe. Although he was still employed at court, Parisians in particular had taken Haydn’s music to their hearts. Symphony No. 82 shows just how much his symphonies had transformed from those early years, not only in orchestral size but also in individuality. It’s been nicknamed ‘The Bear’, and if you listen to the opening of the finale there is an animal-like vigour and excitement in that heavy drone-like bass line; this is a very European symphony full of French grace and German rusticity.

Over the next few years, our inspirational concert master, Aisslinn Nosky, will be recording all of Haydn’s violin concertos. They were not published until the 20th century and sadly are still seldom performed. We are here to redress that and we start with his G major. Aisslinn’s stylistic awareness and her inventiveness is a constant delight and inspiration to us all and her rendition certainly brings Haydn’s intentions to life.

I feel very privileged to take this august Society towards its Bicentennial; yes, the Handel and Haydn Society was founded in 1815. Handel was the old, Haydn the new (he had just died in 1809), and what we can do is continue to perform the music of the past but strip away the cobwebs and reveal it anew. This recording of music by Haydn was made possible by individuals who are inspired by the work of the Handel and Haydn Society. Our sincere thanks go to all of them.

"... Handel and Haydn pulled all this off with vivid color, a crisp attention to detail, and a palpable joie de vivre – which is everything in Haydn...."

Thomas Garvey / THE HUB REVIEW

"This was a wonderful performance. Nosky was marvelous, exhibiting stimulating rapport with the audience, and excellent communication with the orchestra."

Michael E. Ruhling, President, Haydn Society of North America

"Christophers offered a reading of dramatic contrasts, from the thunder-and-lightning timpani and waltzing strings of the first movement to the hopping sparrows of the allegretto second to the sly false endings of the finale. The bear that danced to this performance would have to be very light on its feet."

Jeffrey Gantz / THE BOSTON GLOBE
One can readily imagine the easy-going composer enjoying a pleasantly relaxed working relationship with the musicians under his command, even if we did not know that in 1765 the jealous, increasingly marginalised Werner wrote to the Prince to complain about ‘the lazy idleness of the whole band, the principal responsibility for which must be laid at the door of the present director, who lets them get away with everything, so as to receive the name of a good Heyden’.

Happier evidence, though, is provided by the fact that ‘Heyden’ was raised to the Kapellmeister’s job on Werner’s death in 1766, and also by the music he wrote.

When Haydn joined the service of Prince Paul Anton Esterházy in 1761, his post as Vice-Kapellmeister carried very clearly defined duties, one of which was ‘to compose such pieces of music as his Serene Princely Highness may command’ for performance at his palatial residences in Vienna and at Eisenstadt, some 25 miles outside the city. In effect, this meant that while the ageing Kapellmeister, Gregor Joseph Werner, looked after the church music, Haydn’s job was to write for and direct a small orchestra recently recruited from among the ranks of Vienna’s freelance players. Haydn himself had formerly made a living in this way, and many members of the band were his friends.
had already written for the ensemble, which includes concertos for the violinist Luigi Tomasini, the cellist Joseph Weigl, the double-bass player Johann Georg Schwenda, and the horn players Johann Knoblauch and Thaddeus Steinmüller. In addition, several of the symphonies of the early 1760s made a point of providing these talented musicians with solo passages, many of which have something of the air of private jokes. These symphonies include the popular trilogy *Le matin* (Morning), *Le midi* (Midday) and *Le soir* (Evening), believed to have been first performed at the Prince’s palace in Vienna in May or June 1761 and thus among the very first works Haydn composed for him. The titles were Haydn’s own, their use of French a nod to modish affectation. The implied pictorial element is not followed through with any great degree of consistency, most of it being contained in the first movement of *Le matin*. No one familiar with Haydn’s oratorios *The Creation* and *The Seasons* could fail to recognise the slow introduction as descriptive of a sunrise, to note the brief, cockerel-like second theme on violins or smile at the subsequent birdish chirpings from the woodwind. Perhaps these were enough in themselves to give Haydn the idea for the trilogy of titles, but certainly he did not normally need to rely on such stimuli; solid and engaging musical argument was quite enough for him to work with. The main body of the first movement gains much colour and energy by its instrumentation, too, from the setting out of the first theme shared between solo flute and oboe, to the horn’s premature announcement of that theme’s recapitulation, a composer’s joke used more famously over 40 years later by Beethoven in his ‘Eroica’ Symphony.

The wind instruments are silent in the second movement, which has an A-B-A structure in which two adagio sections frame a longer central andante. The adagios, in 4/4, display an elegant skill in overlapping, slow-moving counterpoint reminiscent of Corelli’s concerti grossi, while the 3/4 andante is dominated by solos for violin and cello in a more dainty and up-to-date galant manner. Was this a deliberate juxtaposition of old and new styles to bring a smile to the lips of the Prince, a lover of earlier Italian composers such as Vivaldi, Albinoni and Tartini? Wind colourings then return for the Menuet, whose central Trio with solos for bassoon and double-bass has something of the dark but jaunty grotesquery of a Rameau dance, and the Finale sees outbursts of virtuosity from flute, cello, horns and, particularly, violin.

Paul Anton died in 1762, to be succeeded by his brother Nicolaus. Nicolaus turned out to be a sympathetic employer, and when Haydn’s contract as Kapellmeister came up for renewal in 1779 a small change was made that was to have a profound effect on his fortunes. Previously, anything Haydn composed became the exclusive property of the Prince, but from now on this would no longer be the case. The concession not only bestowed official recognition on Haydn’s growing international reputation, it also enabled him to profit from it for the first time by selling his works abroad, where they were already known and admired via unauthorised publications and performances from which he had received little or no income. Ultimately it would lead to the triumphs of the London visits of the 1790s, but for the time being Haydn was happy to work from Austria, maintaining an astute business correspondence with publishers and patrons in Vienna, London and Paris.

It was from the last of these cities that, in the mid-1780s, he received the
most prestigious commission of his career so far: six symphonies for one of Paris's most important and fashionable concert societies, the Concert de la Loge Olympique. Haydn's music had been enjoyed in Paris for 20 years by the time the commission came, and his high standing among his French admirers is shown by the fact that his fee was 25 louis d'or for each symphony, an unusually high figure which the composer himself was said to have found 'colossal'. The symphonies (Nos. 82–87) were written during 1785 and 1786, and supplied in time for performance during the 1787 season. Their premieres must have been quite a spectacle: the orchestra wore sky-blue coats with fancy ruffles and dress swords, and the performances were directed by Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, the West Indian-born violinist, composer and swordsman whose eventful career pretty much sums up the difference between the respective musical milieux of fashionable Paris and the semi-feudal surroundings of the Esterházy palaces.

The six ‘Paris’ symphonies were received with great acclaim: 'beautiful of character and astonishing in craftsmanship ... Haydn's name resounds to their extraordinary merit' wrote the Mercure de France. They were indeed Haydn's finest symphonies for more than a decade, blending an approachable and popular style with an inventiveness and broad emotional range that revealed new possibilities in what was still a relatively youthful genre. Parisian orchestras were generally larger than the little band Haydn was used to back at the Esterházy court – the Loge Olympique's orchestra enjoyed the services of 40 violins and 10 double basses – and it seems likely that the rich expressiveness of the new works was inspired not only by the composer's growing awareness of his respected position in the musical world, but also by the thought of a large ensemble in action.

The first movement of Symphony No. 82 cries out for just such an ensemble, not just for the effective projection of its muscular opening theme, but also to convey the sinewy strength with which this material is subsequently developed. Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins Landon has called this movement 'among the most aggressive and powerful Haydn ever wrote', extending the description to include also the work's firmly driven Finale, a creation which won the admiration of Wagner and whose dance-like drone-bass effects are responsible for the symphony's nickname (acquired during the 19th century) of *L'ours* 'The Bear'. In between come two no-less Haydnesque movements: an attractive set of 'double variations', a favourite form of the composer's in which two distinct but related moderately paced themes (in this case one in the major and one in the minor) are varied in alternation; and a Menuetto whose seemingly grand ambitions are undermined by cheeky solos from the oboe, who then leads its woodwind colleagues in occupation of the central Trio.

Haydn's concertos do not occupy quite the same crucial position in his output as do his symphonies and string quartets. The latter were nothing less than central to the development both of Haydn as an artist and, by extension, of Western music itself, but the concertos marked no such progress, the burden of the genre's status as the most popular instrumental form of the previous 50 years proving rather hard, perhaps, for their composer to shake off. As a result, Haydn's output of concertos – most of which dates from the 1760s – is small and comparatively conservative, for all its charm, seemingly content with adopting the received and trusted formal procedures of the Baroque.
The G major Violin Concerto is just such a work, though no-one could deny its personality or craft. Although its authorship is not completely certain – there are no sources in Haydn's hand and the earliest mention of it is an appearance in 1769 in the catalogue of the printer and music-seller Breitkopf, a publication in which misattributions are not uncommon – most Haydn scholars seem happy to accept it as genuine. The date of the piece, however, is generally thought to be considerably earlier, not least because the writing for the soloist is less technically demanding than that found in Haydn's other two surviving violin concertos, both of which are from the 1760s and closely associated with Tomasini. This G major Concerto, it is reasoned, is most likely a work from before the time of Haydn's employment by the Esterházys, perhaps written for a violinist at the court of his previous patrons, the Morzin family, whose service he joined as Kapellmeister in 1757 and for whom he composed his first symphonies.

The work is conventional in construction, adopting the Vivaldian ritornello style that still dominated solo concerto-writing in the 1750s, in which an opening orchestral statement containing much of the movement's significant melodic material reappears in variously altered and shortened forms to frame freer solo passages that may or may not refer to that theme. This method is at its most clearly defined and unquestioning in the first movement, though the strong character and sure hand of Haydn is certainly present. His warm spirit then emerges further in the effortlessly decorated lyricism of the Adagio, in which the soloist is more dominant, before bursting unmistakably into life in the beguiling dash and élan of the finale.

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Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra
Harry Christophers Artistic Director

VIOLIN I
Aisslinn Nosky *
Susanna Ogata
Abigail Karr
Krista Buckland Reisner
Joan Plana
Jessica Park

VIOLIN II
Christina Day Martinson §
Guionmar Turgeon
Jane Starkman
Julia McKenzie
Jesse Irons
Lena Wong
Tatiana Daubek

VIOLA
David Miller §
Susanna Ogata
Abigail Karr
Krista Buckland Reisner
Linda Quan

CELLO
Guy Fishman §
Sarah Freiberg
André O'Neil
Colleen McGary-Smith

BASS
Robert Nairn §
Colleen McGary-Smith

FLUTE
Christopher Krueger §

OBOE
Stephen Hammer §

HORN
John Boden §

TIMPANI
John Grimes §

FORTEPIANO
Ian Watson $
Harry Christophers

Appointed Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society (H&H) in 2008, Harry Christophers began his tenure with the 2009–2010 Season and has conducted H&H each season since September 2006, when he led a sold-out performance in the Esterházy Palace at the Haydn Festival in Eisenstadt, Austria. Christophers and H&H have since embarked on an ambitious artistic journey towards the organisation’s 2015 Bicentennial with a showcase of works premiered in the United States by H&H since 1815, education programming, community outreach activities and partnerships, and the release of a series of recordings on the CORO label.

Christophers is known internationally as founder and conductor of the UK-based choir and period instrument ensemble The Sixteen. He has directed The Sixteen throughout Europe, America, and the Far East, gaining a distinguished reputation for his work in Renaissance, baroque, and 20th- and 21st-century music. In 2000, he instituted The Choral Pilgrimage, a tour of British cathedrals from York to Canterbury. He has recorded over 120 titles for which he has won numerous awards, including a Grand Prix du Disque for Handel Messiah, numerous Preise der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik (German Record Critics Awards), the coveted Gramophone Award for Early Music, and the prestigious Classical Brit Award (2005) for his disc entitled Renaissance. In 2009 he received one of classical music’s highest accolades, the Classic FM Gramophone Awards Artist of the Year Award; The Sixteen also won the Baroque Vocal Award for Handel Coronation Anthems, a CD that also received a 2010 Grammy Award nomination.

Harry Christophers is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Granada Symphony Orchestra and a regular guest conductor with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. In October 2008, Christophers was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Leicester. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford and also of the Royal Welsh Academy for Music and Drama and was awarded a CBE in the 2012 Queen’s Birthday Honours.
Handel and Haydn Society

Handel and Haydn Society (H&H) is a professional Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus and an internationally recognised leader in the field of Historically Informed Performance, a revelatory style that uses the instruments and techniques of the composer’s time. Founded in Boston in 1815, H&H is considered the oldest continuously performing arts organization in the United States and has a longstanding commitment to excellence and innovation: it gave the American premieres of Handel’s Messiah (1818), Haydn’s The Creation (1819), Verdi’s Requiem (1878), and Bach’s St. Matthew Passion (1879).

H&H today, under Artistic Director Harry Christophers’ leadership, is committed to its mission to enrich life and influence culture by performing baroque and classical music at the highest levels of artistic excellence, and by providing engaging, accessible, and broadly inclusive music education and training activities. H&H is widely known through its local subscription series, tours, concert broadcasts on WGBH/99.5 Classical New England and National Public Radio, and recordings. Its recording of Sir John Tavener’s Lamentations and Praises won a 2003 Grammy Award and two of its recordings, All is Bright and Peace, appeared simultaneously in the top ten on Billboard Magazine’s classical music chart. Since the release of its first collaboration with Harry Christophers on the CORO label in September 2010, it has made available three live commercial recordings of works by Mozart – Mass in C Minor (2010), Requiem (2011), and Coronation Mass (2012) as well as Haydn, Vol. 1 (September 2013) and An American Christmas (October 2013). The 2010–2011 Season marked the 25th anniversary of H&H’s award-winning Karen S. and George D. Levy Educational Outreach Program, which brings music education, vocal training, and performance opportunities to 10,000 students annually throughout Greater Boston and beyond.
Aisslinn Nosky violin & leader

Aisslinn Nosky was appointed Concertmaster of the Handel and Haydn Society in 2011. With a reputation for being one of the most dynamic and versatile violinists of her generation, Nosky is in great demand internationally as a soloist, leader, and concertmaster. Recent collaborations include the Thunder Bay Symphony, the Lameque International Baroque Festival Orchestra, Arion Baroque Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, Collegium Musicum Hanyang, and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.

Nosky is also a member of I FURIOSI Baroque Ensemble. For over a decade, this innovative Canadian ensemble has presented its own edgy and inventive concert series in Toronto and toured Europe and North America turning new audiences on to Baroque music.

With the Eybler Quartet, Nosky explores repertoire from the first century of string quartet literature on period instruments. The Eybler Quartet's latest recording of Haydn's Opus 33 string quartets was released to critical acclaim in 2012.

Since 2005, Nosky has been a highly active member of Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and has toured and appeared as soloist with this internationally renowned ensemble.

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This recording has been made possible through the generous support of the following:

Peter G. Manson & Peter A. Durfee
Peacewoods Charitable Fund
Elizabeth & Robert Wax
An anonymous member of H&H's Board of Governors
King’s Chapel, Boston

The cover of this CD features the beautiful vaulted ceiling of King’s Chapel in Boston. The Chapel, the first Anglican church and only the fifth church of any denomination built in colonial Boston, was originally named for King James II. The original church was a wooden structure built in 1688; by the 1740s that building needed extensive repairs and church officials decided to erect a new building in stone. Designed by Peter Harrison, the new church was constructed around the original wooden one while the latter continued to be used for services. During the American Revolution, King’s Chapel was renamed Stone Chapel in an effort to remove its association with the British monarchy and therefore protect it from being damaged. In the 1780s, the church reopened as King’s Chapel, now named for Christ the King.

The Handel and Haydn Society presented its first oratorio (or concert) in King’s Chapel on December 25, 1815; six other performances followed between 1816 and 1817. Within two decades of its first concert, the Handel and Haydn Society gave the first complete American performances of Handel’s *Messiah* (1818) and Haydn’s *The Creation* (1819) and performed 138 concerts in all.

In addition, the Society published its own collections of music beginning in 1818 and inspired the formation of more than 20 other musical societies in New England and the United States.

Teresa M. Neff, May 2013