

RECORDINGS IN REVIEW



D E W E Y F A U L K N E R

The recording industry has created and met numerous goals over the past century: setting down Richard Wagner's complete *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, all the operas of Giuseppe Verdi, all the cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach. Much of this was enabled and driven by the emergence of the long-playing record (LP) in 1948, which created a huge need for product to fill those longer sides. Another goal was recording the complete 106 canonical symphonies of Joseph Haydn, partly because of their excellence and variety, partly because they were just there. Fortuitously, the rise of the LP coincided with the postwar growth of serious investigation into and publication of accurate scores of these pieces. Unsurprisingly, the issuing of LPs of Haydn followed the changing market fortunes of the LP and later the compact disc (CD), particularly after the commercial emergence of stereo recording just before 1960.

Many of these recordings have come and gone, but most are recently available again on CDs from two kinds of source: smaller reissue houses that provide such music as backups to regrettably vanished or worn LPs, and the recording industry itself through its twenty-first-century obsession with re-releasing its older re-

cordings in massive boxes at bargain prices. New Haydn symphony series have started appearing since 2000, but the older ones continue to return in these formats, usually with minimal or no notes.

Joseph Haydn's symphonies more than justify the attention. They were written over four decades, from 1757 to 1796, and they eventually made Haydn the leading symphony composer of the eighteenth century. He was born in Rohrau, Austria, not far southeast of Vienna. He and his younger brother, Michael, trained at St. Stephen's in Vienna, although he was thrown out early for playing a practical joke. At twenty-five he entered the service of Count Ferdinand Morzin, where he wrote his first seventeen or so symphonies. When Morzin dissolved his musical group in 1761, Haydn was recommended to the musical Prince Anton Esterházy, in whose household he was assistant to the conservative Kapellmeister Gregor Werner. Less than a year later, Prince Anton died and his brother Nikolaus assumed the title. If Anton loved music, Nikolaus adored it, and he realized what a treasure he had in Haydn. When Werner retired in 1765, Haydn became full Kapellmeister. He essentially had an audience of one, Prince Nikolaus, and the prince was open to progressive musical changes that Werner would never have tolerated, something Haydn exploited fully.

Nikolaus was extraordinarily wealthy and thus also able to indulge his other mania, building. His late brother had expanded and modernized Schloss Eisenstadt, southeast of Vienna; in 1766 Nikolaus began converting a hunting lodge of his father's into Schloss Esterháza, farther southeast across the Neusiedler See from Eisenstadt in what today is Hungary. This was very much grander than Eisenstadt, and it would be Haydn's home for many years. (There was also an Esterházy residence in Vienna, for the winter season.) In 1768 the prince built an opera house at Esterháza, and in 1773 he added a marionette theater, in which operas could be performed by puppets. Haydn wrote operas for both, as well as symphonies, string quartets, and other music.

By 1776 opera had become the prince's consuming mania, and the opera season, which Haydn managed, expanded. Unfortunately, in that year the opera house burned, but this allowed the prince to build an even larger one, completed only in 1781. By 1780

the season already consisted of 93 performances of eight operas, four of them new; six years later the season ran for eleven months, mounted seventeen operas, nine of them new, in 125 performances. Unsurprisingly, Haydn's symphonic production dropped off during this period.

But Haydn's situation had otherwise improved. In a new contract dated 1779 he was allowed to write music for publication and keep the proceeds, which formerly had gone to the prince. In 1782 Haydn was able to take full advantage of this with a commission to write three symphonies (nos. 76–78) for London's Professional Concerts. Three years later he was commissioned to write six symphonies (82–87) for the Parisian Masonic Loge Olympique's concerts; these were premiered there in 1787 and led to five further symphonies for Paris (88–92). None of these (except possibly 76–78) was simplified. Thirty years into his productive career, Haydn could assume that his advanced symphonies written originally for one man could and would now be accepted by concert audiences all across Europe.

But two disastrous events then occurred: in July 1789 the French Revolution began eliminating his French patrons; then in late 1790 Prince Nikolaus died, to be succeeded by his unmusical son Anton. Prince Anton closed down Esterháza and its musical establishment, leaving the now pensioned Haydn to accept almost immediately an imperious invitation from Johann Peter Salomon to come to London and write for an English audience at the Salomon Concerts, rival to the Professionals. Between 1791 and 1796 Haydn wrote twelve "London" symphonies, 93–104, but the death of Prince Anton in 1794 impelled him to return home. The new Prince Nikolaus, brother to Anton, was modestly musical, but he required Haydn to write only a mass a year from 1798 to 1802. There would be no more symphonies. During this period Haydn returned to composing string quartets and created his great oratorios, *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, both drawn from English sources (John Milton and James Thompson). He died in Vienna in the midst of the noise of Napoleon's siege of 1809.

Haydn wrote at least 106 symphonies, each containing something of interest and a great many of them masterpieces. Although Haydn himself kept lists of his works, the first full purportedly

chronological listing of these symphonies appeared only in a 1908 edition by Eusebius Mandyczewski, who located and numbered 104. Mandyczewski's sequence was known to be inaccurate, but it was retained in Anthony van Hoboken's 1957 Haydn catalog, in which dates (but not numbers) of the earlier symphonies in particular were adjusted in line with the extensive researches of the wealthy American musicologist H. C. Robbins Landon (hereafter HCRL). Corrected datings for the Hoboken catalog have continued to appear, reflecting the researches of such later scholars as James Webster and Sonja Gerlach. A current listing of the "new chronology" can be found on the Haydn107.com website. Some dates are fixed: Haydn always listed number 1 (1757) as his first symphony for Count Morzin and numbers 6–8 as his first for Prince Anton Esterházy. A few dates were wildly off, such as Symphonies 40 and 72, both of which date from an early year at Eisenstadt (apparently 1763). Other dates have been more moderately tweaked, and two new early symphonies have been found, designated "A" (written for Morzin) and "B" (written for Eisenstadt). Of such things are scholarly reputations made.

The stylistic changes in these 106 symphonies – and in the string quartets of which Haydn was also a master – largely depended on whom he worked for at what stage of his career. Unlike his young friend Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Haydn thrived in the patronage system of the Habsburg nobility, but only because he had the most sympathetic and receptive of patrons. Late in life he remarked, "My prince was satisfied with all my works; I received approval; as head of an orchestra, I could undertake experiments, could observe that which enhanced an effect and that which weakened it, thus improving, adding to it, taking away from it, taking risks. I was cut off from the world; there was no one in my vicinity to make me unsure of myself or to persecute me; and so I had to become original." Count Morzin and Prince Anton Esterházy, Haydn's employers from 1757 to 1762, were "musical"; Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, for whom he worked from 1762 to 1790, was musically obsessed. As an Enlightenment noble he supported the latest musical trends, many of which were being devised or worked out by Haydn himself in the rustic, if luxurious, isolation Nikolaus preferred.

From at least 1767 through 1772, Haydn's originality man-

ifested itself in a series of exceptional symphonies, today called *Sturm und Drang* works – although they had nothing to do with the German literary movement of that name, which came later. These symphonies (and the string quartets opp. 9, 17, and especially 20) are characterized by complex textures and counterpoint, the use of church modes and melodies, and especially the use of minor keys, which had not appeared in Haydn’s symphonies as overall tonalities before 1763 (no. 34) but informed many major symphonies between 1768 and 1772 (chronologically, 49, 26, 44, 52, 45). Symphonies became long, serious, cunningly crafted pieces. From music for conversational backgrounds they were transformed into an evening’s central attraction. The *Sturm und Drang* movement, which spread among Viennese composers, was satirized by Haydn’s friend Carl Ditters (von Dittersdorf) in his symphony in A minor, *The Delirium of the Composers; or, The Taste of Today*. By the time the seventeen-year-old Mozart played at it in his Symphony no. 25 in G Minor of 1773, the game was largely over.

The new game at Schloss Esterháza starting in 1776 was opera, particularly *dramma giocoso*, part serious and part comic. Haydn’s symphonies (and operas) from 1773 on reflect the compositional techniques that he had learned in his serious phase, but they are almost all brighter (no minor keys), more cheerful works that HCRL termed “entertainment” symphonies. Perhaps the earliest, Symphony no. 50 in C Major (1773) re-introduced slow introductions, not used since Symphonies 6 and 7, and these would become a hallmark of Haydn’s later symphonies – especially in the minds of his friend Mozart (whose 1783 Symphony no. 36 in C major has Haydn stamped all over it, including the introduction) and his pupil Ludwig van Beethoven (who dedicated his First Symphony, with its long, odd introduction, to Haydn in 1800).

Prince Nikolaus’s new contract of 1779 liberated Haydn to write these popular symphonies for publication, and string quartets as well (they sold better), leading to the op. 33 quartets of 1781 that would have such a profound impact on Mozart, newly settled in Vienna. From the first trio of London symphonies in 1782 through the final London symphonies of 1796, Haydn was in demand as the leading symphonist in Europe. HCRL has suggested that when Mozart was looking for an entrée into English musical cir-

cles, his good friend Haydn suggested using the first three of his “Paris” symphonies (82–84) as models, advice that Mozart took in his Symphonies 39–41. (The keys are identical.) And Haydn’s pupil Beethoven synthesized Mozart’s and Haydn’s musical practices in his Second Symphony in D Major (1802), the last masterpiece of the late-eighteenth-century Viennese tradition.

Haydn’s music was swept aside by the excesses of nineteenth-century Romanticism and recovered only in the twentieth century, particularly after World War II. In 1949 Robbins Landon founded the Haydn Society, which put lesser-known Haydn works on LP. (HCRL also published the era’s most influential book on the symphonies in 1955, and began editing and restoring their scores.) Most of these recorded performances were primitive and have vanished, but they launched a series of other attempts to record all, or significant groups, of the symphonies. Many of these have also vanished, but a good number of the best have returned on CD in recent years, in box sets, in privately issued CDs, and in downloads.

First (1960–62) was Max Goberman and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra (essentially the Vienna Philharmonic), whose lavish albums on his Library of Recorded Masterpieces label included scores and notes by HCRL. Goberman died of a heart attack in 1962 after recording only forty-five symphonies. Columbia Records (now Sony) bought the lot in the mid-1960s and began reissuing them in numerical order on its budget label, Odyssey. But it was soon discovered that past Symphony 27 there were huge gaps, which the company proposed first to fill with new recordings by Charles Mackerras. Then, in a move that would become familiar, Columbia stopped its releases at Symphony 22. Making belated amends, all of Goberman’s Haydn symphonies were reissued in Europe by Sony in 2015 (14 CDs).

Budget release was part of a 1960s movement that lowered the price of LPs without seriously compromising production values. Haydn fit right in: since his symphonies require a relatively small orchestra, costs could be reduced in recording them – and a lot of LPs could be filled. Ernst Maerzendorfer and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra did this on inexpensive (subscription) Musical Heritage Society LPs during the 1960s and succeeded in completing a set of all the symphonies. (They are available as downloads from Haydn

House, which only distributes online, at haydnhouse.com.) These tend to be a bit rough-and-ready at times, but there are some thrilling performances, such as the horns opening Symphony no. 31.

More scattershot were the LP recordings by Leslie Jones and the Little Orchestra of London, originally on British Pye Records but released as budgets in the United States by Nonesuch. Jones appears to have recorded what he and his group liked and had prepared, at least until they were commissioned in the early 1970s to record the “Paris” and “London” symphonies directly for Nonesuch. Many of us learned a lot about early Haydn from these recordings. Jones’s forty-four symphonies were never commercially re-released, but they are available on thirteen CDs from Haydn House, though not as originally coupled.

The greatest Haydn monument from the late 1960s was the Antal Dorati complete set with the Philharmonia Hungarica. This was sensibly released in the United States by Decca on its budget label London Stereo Treasury, so the LPs could be competitive with others on the market. The set has been re-released on Decca CDs three times, the latest in a thirty-three-CD set, released in 1996 (still available) and again in 2009. The orchestral sound is full, and the playing is generally quite good. The only serious charges laid against it have been that the minuets are infuriatingly slow, and the order of the symphonies is numerical, denying the listener a true picture of Haydn’s development. Owners of the set tend to love it in their online reviews – but they seem to love every Haydn set out there. Its appeal today is to those who prefer “big-band” Haydn, and those who remember it fondly from its first appearances between 1969 and 1974. The best thing about the LPs was their extensive, scholarly, and quite brilliant notes on each symphony by HCRL, which are long vanished.

The musical movement of the 1980s was using period instruments (then termed “original instruments”) to perform, first, baroque music, then music of the later eighteenth century. It reached Haydn with the symphony recordings by Derek Solomons and L’Estro Armonico and by Trevor Pinnock and the English Concert. Solomons intended a complete set of symphonies in chronological order, which he started with volumes 1 and 2 on the British Saga label. This was so successful (in Europe) that the effort was bought out by CBS (now Sony), which jumped directly into releas-

ing volume 7, the first of a series of middle-period symphonies, which were produced from 1764 on. The five LP boxes issued were elegant, the notes by HCRL informative, if briefer than those for Dorati, and all continued through volume 11 in 1989 (symphonies from 1775). In the interim the compact disc had appeared, only two of the LP volumes fit comfortably onto CD sets – and the LPs weren't selling well. So the series, like the Goberman, was dropped by CBS. All the issued symphonies unreleased on CD have been made available on nine CDs from Haydn House, though again not in their original couplings.

Except for an excursion into Symphonies 6–8, Pinnock between 1988 and 1989 stuck with the true *Sturm und Drang* symphonies, mostly those written from 1768 to 1772, initially released on six CDs. (The set was re-released by DG Archiv in a six-CD box in 2002.) This limited set was much admired when it was released and continues to have its vocal adherents.

Haydn came fully into his own on CD in the early 1990s, before the classical market crashed around the middle of the decade. The era's major monument was the completed recording of all the Haydn symphonies (in numerical order) on Nimbus by Adam Fischer and his composite Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, playing modern instruments and recorded in the Haydnssaal at Schloss Eisenstadt. Released through 2001 in multiple volumes, the entire set was in 2006 made available in a Brilliant Classics box (33 CDs) and is now included in a 2009 Brilliant complete Haydn set (150 CDs).

Completion of the Fischer set preceded Nimbus's essentially vanishing as a label. Three incomplete Haydn series of the 1990s merely stopped production. In 1992 Sony tried yet again to record the symphonies, this time on its (now defunct) Vivarte label, which specialized in Historically Informed Practice (HIP) performances on period instruments: Bruno Weil and the Canadian Tafelmusik recorded the *Sturm und Drang* symphonies and most of those written for Paris in the late 1780s. Never completed, the series was reissued in 2012 on seven Sony CDs.

In 1994 a similar fate overcame the complete Haydn symphonies on Hyperion, performed on period instruments by the Hanover Band, conducted by Roy Goodman. The group recorded the first twenty-five symphonies in numerical order (6 CDs),

jumped to the middle symphonies (3 CDs), then moved to Symphonies 70–93 (with two gaps; 7 CDs). A final CD contained Symphonies 101 and 102. Contractual differences with Goodman outraged Hyperion sufficiently to end the series prematurely. The seventeen CDs have since been reissued, and again deleted. Once more, Haydn and the public were the true losers.

Yet these losses pale before the doom inflicted by Decca on their superb period instrument series led by Christopher Hogwood with the Academy of Ancient Music, which released the first seventy-five symphonies (plus A and B) in chronological order on thirty CDs between 1990 and 1996. James Webster contributed excellent, informative notes. Issued luxuriously in ten volumes (3 CDs each) the set fell victim to economics. Volume 11 was begun but halted, a folly Decca would attempt to remedy two decades later.

Our new century has brought both less corporate ambition and greater interpretative changes to period instrument and HIP playing. Marc Minkowski and his Musiciens du Louvre–Grenoble have produced a set of the twelve “London” symphonies (Naïve, 4 CDs) very much in the modern manner. On modern instruments, Sony finally released in 2009 a complete Haydn symphony set in strict chronological order, using the modern instruments of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra led by Dennis Russell Davies (37 CDs), all performances thoroughly “historically informed.”

Also on modern instruments we have the ongoing (since 1999) and quite HIP series from Thomas Fey and the Heidelberg Symphony (Hänssler). Financial and health issues almost stopped these, but they resumed in 2017 with a double-CD release (volume 23), half conducted by Fey and half led by concertmaster Benjamin Spillner. Hänssler reportedly is determined to finish the complete set, among the most engaged (and engaging) of such efforts. So far sixty-three symphonies have been released.

More important is Decca’s 2016 attempt to complete its Hogwood series. To the symphonies already released they added Hogwood’s 76 and 77 (previously released with *BBC Music Magazine*), had Symphonies 78–81 newly recorded by Ottavio Dantone and the Accademia Bizantina (separately released in 2016 on two CDs), then added the late-1990s Philips recordings of Symphonies 82–104 by Frans Brüggen and the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century. In this set, Brüggen’s recordings of the middle-period

symphonies have been substituted for Hogwood's, and the whole has been foolishly reordered numerically (35 CDs). The result is neither fish nor fowl, and not at all aided by the disparate approaches to interpretation and sound of the three conductors.

Finally there is the newest attempt to employ period instruments, "Haydn2032." This project of the privately funded Joseph Haydn Stiftung in Basel presents two "Haydn Nights" concerts annually in Basel, Vienna, and Rome that feature three or four symphonies each, as well as one or more other works of the period. Giovanni Antonini leads either *Il Giardino Armonico* or the Basel Chamber Orchestra, and each concert is recorded and released by Alpha Classics, based in Paris, in a luxurious album containing notes, artsy photography (unrelated to Haydn), and essays good (volumes 2 through 4) and French (volume 1). Starting in 2014 four CDs have been released, the concerts for the next two have been given, and the seventh set of concerts is in preparation. (Volume 3 is even on vinyl – how cool is that?) All is to be completed on thirty-eight CDs for the Haydn birth tercentennial in 2032. Even more than the Fey series, which has ambled on for nineteen years, Haydn2032 has something of a quixotic, "to infinity and beyond" vibe. One can only hope that Antonini's interest, the sponsor's money, and Alpha Classics (which is expanding) continue to exist – and the CD format as well.

Because there are so many symphonies, detailed discussion of performances is impractical, but the various sets and series do have individual characteristics. To start with those on modern instruments, Sony's Max Goberman set overly emphasizes strings, with slow tempi and only approximate articulation. Their Viennese players treat them as business as usual. This is for memory-lane listeners only.

Leslie Jones and his chamber orchestra have great sonic clarity and play the pieces with life and spirit. The increase in orchestral size for the "Paris" and "London" symphonies adds appropriate weight without losing the works' excellent balances and vivacity. (They remain the only group who "get" the outrageous wit of Symphony no. 80 in D Minor.) Haydn House has restored them splendidly, and the Solomons too.

The Adam Fischer set, like Dorati's, is characterized by middle-of-the-road Haydn performances with a big-band sound. Even so,

Fischer elicits much interesting detail, primarily in the symphonies prior to the “Paris” sets. It is cleanly played in a warm, resonant acoustic and is historically aware and informed. It’s comfortable and familiar – and it’s all there.

Dennis Russell Davies’s Stuttgart performances are all live (ap-
plause ends each one), recorded in a dry acoustic, well balanced, and well played. But except for frequent bursts of insight from the players, most are characterized by the poker-faced approach typical of Davies’s performances of everything. All is efficient, more Prussian than Swabian, and not Viennese. But, like the Fischer set, they’re all there.

Thomas Fey’s Bavarian group is temperamentally the opposite of Davies. Fey actually has fun with the pieces and encourages wit and imagination in his players. Tempos are fast, except for lamentably dragged trios in many minuets, balances are excellent, and playing is alert and accomplished. If it is ever completed, the series will rank among the greatest on record. At present it contains the most consistently amusing and delightful Haydn playing on records.

Use of period instruments changed Haydn playing and interpretation radically. Brüggem, Weil, Pinnock, Hogwood, and Solomons all were revelatory in the 1980s and 1990s because of their novel sounds and faster tempi. With their small orchestras Haydn’s inner lines emerged, although several conductors simply did not know how to balance the strings and winds against the assertive horns, trumpets, and drums of which the composer grew increasingly fond. (Brass players were not always available to Haydn early on.) On modern instruments these elements overwhelm all and must be kept in check; on eighteenth-century instruments, reining them in too much, as many conductors do, destroys their intended function as integral components of Haydn’s texture. They, like the softer-than-modern winds, must be heard making Haydn’s musical points. There are no truly subordinate or supporting lines in mature Haydn, and strings are but one set of sonic strands within his overall textures.

Sadly, no attempt at a full set on period instruments has yet been completed. The major revelations of Derek Solomons’s groundbreaking series with *L’Estro Armonico* were the then novel sounds of the instruments and the balances within the ensemble.

But what Solomons does with those voices and lines is not often exceptional or memorable. Roy Goodman and the Hanover Band had all of Solomons's clarity, plus greater vitality and an often brilliantly playful approach to the music. This series could have fulfilled our hopes for an ideal Haydn symphony set, and many of the issued performances remain close to ideal – although the often audible continuo is obtrusive and unnecessary.

Greatest regrets are for the Christopher Hogwood sets, which gave us 83 of the 106 symphonies before being terminated by Decca. Hogwood set lively tempi that are quick but not hard driven (a besetting fault of our century), clarified and balanced textures splendidly, generally using smaller orchestras, and gave what are arguably the best overall readings of those many scores he recorded. His earlier recordings of Symphonies 94, 96, and especially 100 and 104 give a glimpse of what we have lost through Decca's halting the series: most of the greatest of Haydn's achievements in symphony. Of the late four, Symphony 96 is omitted from Decca's 2016 set, which by replacing Hogwood's middle symphonies with Frans Brüggen's makes a total muddle of Hogwood's considerable achievement.

Ottavio Dantone's four-symphony continuation of Hogwood's efforts at least accords in general with the earlier group. The set is far faster, brighter, and more hard-edged than Hogwood's, and a good bit more hard pressed. But we are still dealing with a similar approach to the symphonies.

Brüggen and his Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century take a more moderate, centrist approach to tempi and balances, and his resonant environments tend to make his group sound mellow and soft-edged, like the recorders on which he began his career. His speeds accord with Hogwood's, but sharp attacks, clear articulation, and firm outlines are not often to be found. In Decca's 2016 box Brüggen gets all the great late symphonies, and the middle-period *Sturm und Drang* ones as well. It's all here, but it's not a unified, coherent sequence.

Of the period-instruments sets with a more limited scope, Bruno Weil and Tafelmusik's performances are lively, clear, insightful, and well balanced. Trevor Pinnock and the English Concert are more focused in their limited mission and complete it admirably. DG Archiv's recording for them is close and clear, and

the orchestra's playing is lively and well balanced, except for overly reticent brass and drums where they occur.

Moving into this century, we have the twelve final "London" symphonies played by Marc Minkowski and his Musiciens du Louvre–Grenoble. These recent live recordings are fully in line with current thinking and practice: lucid, fast (even slightly hectic at times), brilliant. Minkowski can be slow and stately, as in the Adagio of Symphony 98, and he always clarifies Haydn's lines, with excellent brass balances and imaginative reductions of player numbers at appropriate moments. He is excellent at projecting Haydn's often infectious rhythms, especially useful since many of Haydn's motifs are rhythmic rather than harmonic or melodic. There are also problems. Minkowski's demented interpretation of the opening drum roll in Symphony 103 is off-putting. Worse, his indulgence in an additional joke in Symphony 94 (*Surprise*) may strike many as tasteless at first and intolerable on repetition.

Finally there is Giovanni Antonini and Haydn2032, a project that may or not continue but one that commands the attention of all Haydn lovers. Overshadowed by their Euro-luxurious presentations, Antonini's performances are very much in the current Haydn style: fast tempi, clearly articulated lines, perfect balance of instruments, and splendid playing. What sets them apart is that wit and insight are included in them. (Try the revelatory performance of Symphony no. 39 in G Minor on volume 1.) They set a new standard in Haydn performance – even if Fey has a better realization of the composer's quirky, often ironic, though genial humor.

Using period instruments has had the effect of ghettoizing Haydn (and Mozart, and every other pre-nineteenth-century composer), allowing most orchestral planners to remove his symphonies from normal programming. Admittedly, Haydn does sound better with a smaller numbers of players and the sounds that Haydn presumably heard, but modern instruments can perform his symphonies convincingly, as Fey and Davies (at his best) demonstrate. For a start, modern orchestras need to stop thinking that Haydn should sound like immature Brahms or Bruckner – and badly interpreted Brahms and Bruckner at that.

Even in excellent performances, Haydn's symphonies will not inspire hearers to go out and conquer Poland. They are intended

to entertain, uplift, amuse, and charm, to elicit equally thought and laughter. Haydn himself stated his goals in 1802 in a letter to far-off admirers on the island of Rügen in the Baltic Sea: “Often, when contending with obstacles of every sort that interfered with my work, often when my powers both of body and mind were failing and I felt it a hard matter to persevere in the course I had entered on, a secret voice within me whispered, ‘There are but few contented, happy peoples here below; everywhere grief and care prevail; perhaps your labors may one day be the source from which the weary and worn, or the man burdened with affairs, may derive a few moments’ rest and refreshment.’” Especially in our distressed and distressing world, Haydn’s symphonies may be just what we need.