

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism

Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Introduction

MARY HUNTER AND RICHARD WILL

It is finally and mercifully a boring truism to say that Haydn's reputation no longer rests on his position as precursor to Mozart and Beethoven or as the jolly but superficial "Papa" Haydn. Another truism, frequently found in introductions to Haydn volumes,¹ is that the composer is finally getting both the quantity and quality of attention he richly deserves. However, since one of the qualities of a truism is truth, it is worth pointing out that this volume builds on a scholarly tradition, spanning the second half of the twentieth century and showing no signs of diminishing today, which contests the still-extant and historically incomplete (at best) tendency to think of the eighteenth century as the century of Bach and Mozart rather than of Handel and Haydn.²

The move to a more complex, nuanced and serious view of this composer rests on the foundational mid twentieth-century work of Jens Peter Larsen, which largely established the corpus of authentic Haydn works and their basic chronology;³ on the unparalleled editorial and source work of the Joseph Haydn Institut in Cologne, whose Gesamtausgabe, *Joseph Haydn: Werke*, begun in 1955, is within sight of completion;⁴ and on the multifaceted achievements of the late H.C. Robbins Landon, who was responsible for not only the massive *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* but also many landmark editions and recordings.⁵ On these foundations, and with the additional inspiration of a steady stream of transformative performances and recordings (no composer has benefited more from the historical

¹ The obvious English-language comparisons to the present volume are Elaine Sisman, ed., *Haydn and His World* (Princeton University Press, 1997); W. Dean Sutcliffe, ed., *Haydn Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), and Caryl Clark, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

² See James Webster, "The Century of Handel and Haydn," in Sean Gallagher and Thomas Forrest Kelly, eds., *The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance, in Honor of Christoph Wolff* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 297–316.

³ Jens Peter Larsen, *Die Haydn-Überlieferung* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1939).

⁴ The current state of the edition is available through the Haydn Institut at www.haydn-institut.de/JHW/JHW_Stand/jhw_stand.html (accessed June 8, 2011).

⁵ H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 5 vols. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976–80).

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism

Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will

Excerpt

[More information](#)

performance movement),⁶ scholars have turned both to re-evaluating unfamiliar genres – operas, songs, keyboard music⁷ – and to considering the long-canonical symphonies, quartets, late oratorios and late masses, as well as Haydn's oeuvre as a whole, from a variety of new perspectives.⁸ Several volumes of essays published since the mid-1990s register the changing paradigms. Elaine Sisman's edited volume *Haydn and His World* (1997) includes not only transcriptions of documents, in the long-established tradition of *Haydn Yearbook* and *Haydn-Studien*, but essays on the reception of Haydn's works, his aesthetics, the social meaning of his music, and the potential of oratorical rhetoric as a framework for understanding the music. W. Dean Sutcliffe's *Haydn Studies* (1998) engages many of the same issues, but also includes more formal analysis along with essays considering Haydn's relationship to sensibility, *Sturm und Drang* and "Classical style." Caryl Clark's *Cambridge Companion to Haydn* (2005) includes short essays on all the genres, several essays on reception, and work on Haydn's exoticism in addition to more traditional essays on his historical context and his humor. And most recently, Tom Beghin's and Sander Goldberg's *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric* (2007)⁹ builds both on earlier work about

⁶ Assessment of the recorded legacy has only recently begun; see Andreas Friesenhagen, "Eine Haydn-Diskographie als Werkzeug der Rezeptionsforschung," *Haydn-Studien* 9 (2006), 68–81; Melanie Lowe, "Recorded Performances: A Symphonic Study," in Clark, ed., *Cambridge Companion*, 249–63.

⁷ Recent books and dissertations include: on the operas, Caryl Clark, *Haydn's Jews: Representation and Reception on the Operatic Stage* (Cambridge University Press, 2009); on the songs, Mekala Padmanabhan, "Joseph Haydn's German Lieder: Context – Criticism – Reception" (Ph.D. diss., University of Nottingham, 2007); Sarah Day-O'Connell, "Anatomy, Industry, and the English Canzonet (1770–1820): Placing Women in the Private Sphere" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2004); Caroline Grigson, ed., *The Life and Poems of Anne Hunter: Haydn's Tuneful Voice* (Liverpool University Press, 2009); and on the keyboard music, Ulrich Leisinger, *Joseph Haydn und die Entwicklung des klassischen Klavierstils bis c. 1785* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1994); László Somfai, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Joseph Haydn: Instruments and Performance Practice, Genres and Styles*, trans. Charlotte Greenspan and the author (University of Chicago Press, 1995); Bernard Harrison, *Haydn's Keyboard Music: Studies in Performance Practice* (Oxford University Press, 1997); Federico Celestini, *Die frühen Klaviersonaten von Joseph Haydn: Eine vergleichende Studie* (Tutzing: Schneider, 2004).

⁸ This literature encompasses numerous essays and collections, many cited elsewhere in this introduction, as well as monographs including James Webster, *Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style: Through-Composition and Cyclic Integration in His Instrumental Music* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Elaine R. Sisman, *Haydn and the Classical Variation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Thomas Tolley, *Painting the Cannon's Roar: Music, the Visual Arts and the Rise of an Attentive Public in the Age of Haydn, c. 1750 to c. 1810* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁹ Tom Beghin and Sander M. Goldberg, eds., *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric* (Chicago University Press, 2007).

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism

Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Haydn and rhetoric, and more general topical theory, to figure Haydn as immensely knowing about his role as a composer, as well as very interested in the interfaces between composer, performer, and composer-as-performer; themes that are taken up in the current volume.

A glance through the Haydn Institut's latest bibliography, listing work published between 2002 and 2010, gives more evidence of newer notions of Haydn, which affected among other things the many conferences and "Haydn-days" of 2009, the first Haydn-year since his refurbished reputation has taken hold.¹⁰ Documentary and editorial work of course continue, as does the kind of musical close-reading that Haydn's works have long stimulated. Discussions of the composer as the originator of or influential source for the course of some musical genres continue as well. But Haydn is also now routinely seen as a canny (and not always straightforward) businessman, a bold and audience-savvy musical innovator,¹¹ and an observant participant in a turbulent era of European history who – probably both consciously and not – recorded in his music his engagement with the great debates of his time.¹² In addition, perhaps because his posthumous fortunes have changed so radically in the past decades, the topics of his reception and reputation remain vital.¹³

No scholar has been more central to the re-evaluation of Haydn's life and music than James Webster, to whom this volume is dedicated by the authors (a collection of students, a former teacher, and a longstanding colleague). Indeed, the importance of Webster's work is marked by his appearance in all the volumes described above, sometimes with two essays.¹⁴ Since his enormously influential work on the history and scoring of Viennese chamber

¹⁰ Available online at www.haydn-institut.de/Bibliographie/bibliographie.html (accessed June 11, 2011).

¹¹ James Webster, with Georg Feder, s.v. "Haydn, Joseph," *Grove Music Online*, www.oxfordmusiconline.com (accessed June 9, 2011) takes this view fully on board. Gretchen Wheelock, *Haydn's Ingenious Jestings with Art: Contexts of Musical Wit and Humor* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992) uses Haydn's manipulation of his audience as a foundational principle. The essays in Beghin and Goldberg, eds., *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric* also assume an awareness of audience.

¹² Books based on this presumption include Tolley, *Painting the Cannon's Roar*, and David P. Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment: The Late Symphonies and Their Audience* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

¹³ Many writers deal perfunctorily with the twentieth-century evaluation of Haydn, but two essays by Leon Botstein address its nineteenth-century background: "The Demise of Philosophical Listening," in Sisman, ed., *Haydn and His World*, 255–85, and "The Consequences of Presumed Innocence: The Nineteenth-Century Reception of Joseph Haydn," in Sutcliffe, ed., *Haydn Studies*, 1–34.

¹⁴ In Sutcliffe, ed., *Haydn Studies*: "Haydn's Sacred Vocal Music and the Aesthetics of Salvation," 35–69, and "Haydn's Symphonies between *Sturm und Drang* and 'Classical Style': Art and Entertainment," 218–45; in Sisman, ed., *Haydn and His World*: "The Creation, Haydn's Late Vocal Music, and the Musical Sublime," 57–102; in Clark, ed., *Cambridge Companion*: "Haydn's Aesthetics," 30–44, and "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*,"

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism

Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will

Excerpt

[More information](#)

music between 1750 and 1780, concentrating especially on early Haydn,¹⁵ Webster has moved “outward” to the prizewinning Haydn’s *“Farewell” Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style*, to a magisterial and moving biography for the revised *New Grove*,¹⁶ and to considerations of the largely unexplored realm of Haydn’s aesthetics, especially in the late sacred music, and especially dealing with the notion of the sublime.¹⁷ All this work and more has formed the spine – both intellectual and personal – of modern Haydn studies, consistently opening up new perspectives and challenging received wisdom. Haydn’s *“Farewell” Symphony* subjects a famous but not well-studied work to thoroughgoing analysis, and as a consequence argues for the full “maturity” of this and other relatively early works, and questions the historiography of the “Classical” style as defined by Charles Rosen and others. That questioning has led to a broader critique of prevailing periodizations of eighteenth- (and early nineteenth-) century music, while the work on Haydn’s aesthetics puts unprecedented emphasis on the composer’s sophisticated artistic thought, his consciousness of his place in history, and the relation between religion and aesthetics.¹⁸ With their characteristic refusal to let any assumption go unchallenged, and their careful marshaling of historical, biographical, and music-analytical evidence, these writings have changed the discourse on Haydn again and again.

The present volume in many ways mirrors the larger field of Haydn scholarship, both in its retention of certain traditional habits and in the new directions it suggests. For example, despite the many marvels of early and middle works, attested to by Webster and many others, those contributors to this volume who concentrate on one or a couple of works continue the more traditional emphasis on the works from London and the late Viennese period: the last two complete string quartets (Lockwood), *The Creation* (Mathew and Clark), *L’anima del filosofo* (Clark), the songs in English (Will and Komlós), and two late Masses (Beghin). Along similar lines, the close analysis of the music that has long been part of Haydn studies is also represented here. Studies of retransitions, particular harmonic features,

150–63; and in Beghin and Goldberg, *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric*, “The Rhetoric of Improvisation in Haydn’s Keyboard Music,” 172–212.

¹⁵ “Towards a History of Viennese Chamber Music in the Early Classical Period,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 27 (1974): 212–47; “Violoncello and Double Bass in the Chamber Music of Haydn and His Viennese Contemporaries 1750–1780,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 29 (1976): 413–38; “The Chronology of Haydn’s String Quartets,” *The Musical Quarterly* 61 (1975): 17–46; “The Bass Part in Haydn’s Early String Quartets,” *The Musical Quarterly* 63 (1977): 390–424.

¹⁶ Webster, “Haydn, Joseph.” ¹⁷ See note 14.

¹⁸ See also “Between Enlightenment and Romanticism in Music History: ‘First Viennese Modernism’ and the Delayed Nineteenth Century,” *19th-Century Music* 25 (Fall/Spring 2001–02): 108–26.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism

Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will

Excerpt

[More information](#)

variation procedures, etc., continue to be written in some numbers, now in the context of a resurgent study of form occasioned by the recent publications of William E. Caplin, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, and others.¹⁹ Close attention to Haydn's musical means are warranted, partly because the brilliance of his invention demands it, and partly because many of the broader issues raised by Haydn's music are helpfully illuminated and supported by close analysis.²⁰ Several essays in this volume continue that tradition: those by Lockwood and Fillion attest to Haydn's "inexhaustible" powers ("inexhaustibility" was a common descriptor of Haydn from the very beginning), while the essays by Polzonetti and Beghin use detailed readings to support broader cultural points. On the other hand, the collection differs from its predecessors in putting vocal music at the center of attention in more than half the essays: not only the much-studied *Creation* (Mathew) and the late Masses (Beghin), but also the songs (Will and Komlós), which, having been dismissed as purely commercial creations, are now enjoying a small renaissance of interest.²¹ The operas – since the 1980s never exactly forgotten but also never at the forefront of attention²² – are also addressed in three essays (Clark, Sisman, Waldo).

One does not necessarily expect a book of essays to present any single argument or to address a coherent set of themes. Nevertheless, this collection does evince some common overarching ideas, overtly or implicitly; ideas, moreover, that reflect or suggest the current direction of Haydn

¹⁹ William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford University Press, 1998); James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

²⁰ For contrasting examples of analysis made to serve broader points about Haydn's life, aesthetics, or style, see the analytical sections of Nicholas Temperley, *Haydn: The Creation*, Cambridge Music Handbooks (Cambridge University Press, 1991); László Somfai, "'Learned Style' in Two Late String Quartet Movements of Haydn," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 28 (1986): 325–49; and Gretchen Wheelock, "The 'Rhetorical Pause' and Metaphors of Conversation in Haydn's Quartets," in Georg Feder and Walter Reicher, eds., *Internationales Musikwissenschaftliches Symposium, "Haydn und das Streichquartett" im Rahmen des "Haydn Streichquartett Weekend": Eisenstadt, 1–5 Mai 2002; Referate und Diskussionen* (Tutzing: Schneider, 2003), 67–88.

²¹ See note 7; also *Haydn's Bearbeitungen schottischer Volkslieder: Bericht über das Symposium 21–22 Juni 2002*, a complete issue of *Haydn-Studien* 8, no. 4 (2004); Marshall Brown, "The Poetry of Haydn's Songs: Sexuality, Repetition, Whimsy," in Beghin and Goldberg, eds., *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric*, 229–50; and Sarah Day-O'Connell, "The Composer, the Surgeon, His Wife, and Her Poems: Haydn and the Anatomy of the English Canzonetta," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 6 (2009): 77–112.

²² See, however, Gerhard J. Winkler, ed., *Joseph Haydn und die Oper seiner Zeit. Bericht über das internationale Symposium im Rahmen der "Haydn-Tage Winter 1988" Eisenstadt, 8–10 Dezember 1988* (Eisenstadt: Burgenländisches Landesmuseum, 1992).

research. The most obvious, and the most general of these is the notion that Haydn's music is absolutely of its time and place: not in the sense of being shackled to it (though Leon Botstein notes that Haydn's nineteenth-century reception tended to figure him as more "dated" than Mozart or Beethoven),²³ but rather in taking account of and embodying the broader cultural issues and trends of his time. With respect to musical culture itself, Neal Zaslaw points out that as a young man, Haydn kept an orchestra that was entirely in line with other European small ensembles, and that the non-local players would have brought habits and repertory from their places of origin. Pierpaolo Polzonetti invokes literary culture in arguing that the narrative and thematic processes of Haydn's mature instrumental music are indebted to the narrative and rhetorical processes in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a text with which the vast majority of educated eighteenth-century listeners would have been familiar, and which Haydn owned. With respect to political culture, this volume suggests that Haydn was aware of, and embedded in, a wider field than authors who have explored his connection to mainly Enlightenment currents might suggest.²⁴ Caryl Clark proposes not only that Haydn's last (and unperformed) opera, *L'anima del filosofo, ossia Orfeo ed Euridice* anticipates the high biblical register of *The Creation*, but also that the two works together respond to the terrors and resolution of the French Revolution. Richard Will situates Haydn within the late eighteenth-century debate about the nature of "folk" culture and its relation to proto-Romantic notions of national identity. And with respect to the culture of Catholicism, on which Haydn's position has not been very closely investigated, Tom Beghin performs interpretative archeology on two settings of the Credo text, from the "Creation" Mass and the "Nelson" Mass, and determines from the details of the text setting that they represent two theologically distinct readings of the Creed.

A less pervasive but nonetheless significant overall theme of the book is the performative quality of Haydn's music. Mary Hunter's essay on Haydn's fingerings in the string quartets addresses this topic most literally, but Michelle Fillion's essay on Haydn's amazingly various rondo practices argues that, with its easily remembered main theme and improvisatory elements, as well as a more general "rhetoric of improvisation," the rondo invokes the act of performance, even when the performer is not actually required to add any notes to what is written in the score. And in analyzing the contrasting theological implications of two Credos, Beghin asserts that

²³ Botstein, "The Demise of Philosophical Listening," 257.

²⁴ E.g., Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*.

for Haydn, as for all Christians, the Credo was a performative “speech act,”²⁵ and thus suggests that the compositions “perform” particular qualities of belief.

Finally, some of the essays show Haydn more or less explicitly engaging in the end-of-century debates about the aesthetic reach of musical works and genres, and the role of the soon-to-be-canonical composer. Pierpaolo Polzonetti suggests that Haydn’s instrumental works might have been heard (and possibly written) in a kind of multimedia (both literary and musical) manner which goes beyond the relatively straightforward and non-narrative referentiality of topoi to a kind of rhetoric of narrativity that would have connected both individual stories by Ovid and the whole *Metamorphoses* to the progress of the music. Polzonetti’s argument also implies that Haydn may have been likening himself to Ovid in his capacity to effect transformations before the audience’s very ears. With respect to Haydn’s own opinion of his compositions, he was quite explicit about the value he placed on *The Creation*, partly because of its sacred and sublime subject matter, but partly because he thought of this work as living on beyond him in the manner that we now take for granted with canonical works. Nicholas Mathew argues that this work, which cemented Haydn’s status among his contemporaries, exhibits all the characteristics of what Lydia Goehr has called the “work-concept” before Beethoven wrote any of his symphonies, the works in which Goehr and others tend to find the first full instantiation of that concept. This was of course in part a matter of reception, but it also involved Haydn’s sense of himself as a composer capable of writing a work “for the ages.” Mary Hunter finds in Haydn’s fingering indications, which are almost never merely helpful, a composer who, as he started to write his quartets for a large and unknown public, wanted to leave, as it were, his physical impress on the music. And Richard Will discovers in the myriad Scottish songs, a genre often dismissed as commercial and trivial, the marks not only of Haydn’s invention, but, in a genre not essentially “about” invention and not for connoisseurs, evidence of Haydn’s will to stamp his identity as a composer on the music.

In other words, Haydn may be emerging as a composer who had as ambitious a sense of his abilities as Mozart, if less tactlessly asserted, and as grand a sense of himself as Beethoven, if less adversarial in presentation. The editors hope this volume will contribute in some small way to the growing agreement with Haydn’s perfectly justified sense of his own worth.

²⁵ The concept of the “speech act” comes from J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism
Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will
Excerpt
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism
Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will
Excerpt
[More information](#)

PART I

Cultures of vocal music

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01514-2 - Engaging Haydn: Culture, Context, and Criticism
Edited by Mary Hunter and Richard Will
Excerpt
[More information](#)
