



HAYDN

VIOLIN CONCERTOS

LISA JACOBS
VIOLIN

THE
STRING
SOLOISTS





Garden Façade of the Esterházy Palace, Eisenstadt (1812). Painting by Albert Christoph Dies

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JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1 C Major Hob.VIIa: 1

- 1 Allegro moderato (10:32)
- 2 Adagio (5:50)
- 3 Finale. Presto (4:18)

VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 3 A Major Hob.VIIa: 3

- 4 Moderato (12:42)
- 5 Adagio moderato (8:19)
- 6 Allegro (6:08)

VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 4 G Major Hob.VIIa: 4

- 7 Allegro moderato (9:00)
- 8 Adagio (6:38)
- 9 Allegro (4:11)

Total Playing Time 68:02 min.

Cadenzas by Lisa Jacobs

Almost every commencing violinist comes in contact with the violin concertos of Joseph Haydn. Who among us has not practiced the first movement of his cheerful G-major concerto? However, these wonderful gems of Haydn's extensive oeuvre are now rarely heard on the concert stage.

After the death of Haydn, his violin concertos unfortunately became used more as study material for young violinists than concert pieces. Perhaps this is due to the lack of a certain grandeur, extraversion, and obvious virtuosity for the violin soloist, but these concertos are Haydn at his best; full of simplicity, elegance, and an abundance of charm. The transparency of these works and the lack of obvious virtuosity actually makes them a great challenge for performers.

For The String Soloists and I, the study, investigation, and frequent performing of these concertos has been a true revelation over the past season. Initially written for the Esterhazys and presumably for the solo violinist of the court ensemble at that time, Luigi Tomasini, as a listener you will feel drawn back into the 18th century.

As was common at the time, I have written my own cadenzas for these concertos in which I try to briefly express my thoughts on the musical material and add a shimmer of my own character to every movement.

We hope you enjoy these wonderful concertos by Joseph Haydn and that this recording can contribute in their public revival and return into the concert hall!

Lisa



'He alone has the secret of making me smile and touching me to the bottom of my soul' W.A. Mozart

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (Rohrau 1732 - Vienna 1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn was born in the small Austrian border village of Rohrau to Maria and Matthias Haydn, a simple wheelwright. Matthias was an enthusiastic folk musician who had taught himself to play the harp. Haydn would later reminisce about how his childhood home was extremely musical and how they would frequently sing together.

Haydn's parents soon noticed their son's musical talent, and knew that Rohrau offered no possibility for any serious musical training. They therefore accepted a proposal from their relative Johann Matthias Franck, a choirmaster in Hainburg, that Joseph would live in his home and begin his musical education. Thus the young Joseph went with Franck to Hainburg; at that time he was not yet six years old.

Though life itself at the Franck household was not easy, Haydn began his musical training and was soon able to play both violin and harpsichord. As well, he also performed as a soprano in the church choir of Hainburg.

He apparently made quite the impression with his singing; two years later in 1740 he moved to Vienna to join the famous boys choir of St. Stephen's Cathedral under the guidance of its music director Georg von Reutter.

Although full of great musical opportunities, Joseph Haydn's youth was overshadowed by poverty and hunger. Like Franck before him, Reutter did not always make sure Haydn was sufficiently fed. During his time in Vienna the young Haydn always looked forward to performances for aristocratic families, where the singers sometimes had the opportunity to satisfy their hunger by 'devouring the refreshments'.

By 1749 Haydn had matured physically to the point where he was no longer able to sing high choral parts. He was sent away from St. Stephen's and began to pursue a career as a freelance musician. During this period, which lasted almost ten years, he supported himself by teaching and playing violin while simultaneously studying counterpoint and harmony. In this period he also became an assistant to the Italian composer Nicola Porpora in exchange for lessons; it is from Nicola Porpora that he later said he learned '*the true fundamentals of composition*'.

In 1761 Haydn became assistant-Kapellmeister to the Eszterházy family, one of the wealthiest and most important families in Austria. When the old Kapellmeister passed away in 1766, Haydn was appointed Kapellmeister.

As a servant of the Eszterházys Haydn followed the family as they moved between their three residences; to Eisenstadt, Vienna, and to Eszterháza, a grand palace built in a desolate area of Hungary. He had a great range of responsibilities including composition, running the orchestra, and playing chamber music with and for his patrons. Despite the incredible workload, Haydn considered himself a fortunate man to hold this position. The Eszterházy princes, in particular Nikolaus I, appreciated his work and provided him with the conditions needed for his artistic development, including daily access to his own small orchestra.

During the nearly thirty years that Haydn worked for the Eszterházys he produced an incredible number of compositions, and his musical style became more and more developed. Much of his career as a court musician was spent at the Esterhaza residence. Being isolated from other composers until the later part of his life, he was '*forced to become original*' as he put it.



Joseph Haydn playing Quartets, by Anonymous, painted before 1790

Around 1781 Haydn established a close friendship with Mozart, who had already been admiring Haydn as a composer for many years, and used to affectionately call him 'Papa' Haydn. The two occasionally enjoyed playing in a string quartet together. Haydn was hugely impressed with Mozart's work and praised it to others. After getting to know the young Mozart, Joseph Haydn ceased to compose operas and concertos: two of the genres where Mozart was at his best. But by then Haydn already had written his violin concertos.

In 1790 Prince Nikolaus I died and was succeeded by his son Anton, an unmusical prince who 'retired' Haydn. Because of this, Haydn was able to accept an offer to visit England.

His London period (1791-1795) was a great success. Audiences loved Haydn's concerts and he quickly achieved fame and wealth. Musically, his visit to England generated some of Haydn's best-known works including the 'Surprise', 'Military', and of course the 'London' symphonies.

After the death of prince Anton in 1795, Haydn returned to Vienna and took up his former position with the Esterházy at their request, although only part-time. He had a large house built for himself and began composing extended religious works for chorus and orchestra. At this point he had become a public figure in Vienna, and when he wasn't at home composing he was making frequent public appearances.

In 1802 an illness from which Haydn had been suffering deteriorated quickly to the point that it became physically impossible for him to compose. This must have been very difficult because, as he acknowledged, the flow of fresh musical ideas waiting to be worked out as compositions had not disappeared. His biographer Dies reported a conversation from 1806:

"I must have something to do—usually musical ideas are pursuing me, to the point of torture, I cannot escape them, they stand like walls before me. If it's an allegro that pursues me, my pulse keeps beating faster, I can get no sleep. If it's an adagio, then I notice my pulse beating slowly. My imagination plays on me as if I were a clavier." Haydn smiled, the blood rushed to his face, and he said "I am really just a living clavier."

During his illness, Haydn often found solace by sitting at the piano and playing his 'Emperor's hymn'. This melody later was used for the Austrian and German national anthems.

Franz Joseph Haydn died in 1809, aged 77.

Haydn was known among his contemporaries for being optimistic and kind. He had a strong sense of humor, often apparent in his music, and was respected by both his employers as well as his fellow musicians and composers.

It was in his early Esterhazy years that Joseph Haydn wrote 4 violin concertos; most likely dedicated to the concertmaster of the court orchestra at that time, Luigi Tomasini.

Unfortunately, only 3 of them have survived to the present day.

All written between 1760-1770, they embody Haydn's transition and search from a neo-Baroque style of writing into a 'Sturm und Drang'-style, with clear influences by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, of whom he wrote *'without him, we know nothing'*.

A central characteristic of Haydn's music is the development of larger structures out of very short, simple musical motifs. The music is often quite formally concentrated, and the important musical events of a movement can unfold rather quickly.

While the C major concerto (written somewhere between 1761-1765) is still structured in a somewhat 'old fashioned' way, both harmonically and melodically, and sometimes tends to touch the intellect more than the soul (despite its heavenly slow movement), one can hear in his later A major concerto (composed around 1770) a more intense and expressive language; it is a more passionate work and therefore also more approachable for its audience.

Much of Joseph Haydn's music was written to please and delight his employers, and its emotional tone is therefore often upbeat. This tone also reflects, perhaps, Haydn's personality.

Haydn's fast movements tend to be rhythmically propulsive and are often full of energy, especially in the finales. And his early slow movements are usually not too slow in tempo, relaxed, and reflective, all of which can be seen and heard in these 3 violin concertos.



LISA JACOBS

Dutch violin virtuoso Lisa Jacobs is known for her passionate performances, interesting programs and communicative qualities on stage. She is equally at home on the concert stage with concertos, chamber music, recitals and solo works.

At the age of only 17, Lisa made her successful debut with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra under the baton of Riccardo Chailly. She has played several times in all the major concert halls of the Netherlands and all around the world ever since, both as a soloist with renowned orchestras and conductors, as a recitalist with her pianist Ksenia Kouzmenko and at chamber music festivals, always to highly critical acclaim, receiving brilliant reviews and finding ecstatic audiences.

She receives much attention in both national and international media, with live radio concerts, television broadcasts and interviews.

Lisa has won several top prizes in both national and international competitions, one of them being at the 2nd International Jascha Heifetz Violin Competition, where she received the Audience prize as well.

She collaborated with amongst others Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Brussels Philharmonic, Bremer Philharmoniker, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfonica del Estado de Mexico, Joensuu Symphony Orchestra and respected conductors such as Neeme Järvi, Riccardo Chailly, Massimo Quarta, Dirk Brossé, Juozas Domarkas, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Jan Willem de Vriend and Toby Hoffman.

Lisa plays a Rugieri violin from 1683, given to her on loan by a private person for which she is very grateful. This years engagements include concerts with the Beethoven, Bruch, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Locatelli and Vivaldi concertos, including concert tours to Mexico, Italy, Germany and of course The Netherlands.

November 2013, her debut cd with works by Franck and Ysaye was highly successfully released on Challenge Records International. Her second album with Locatelli violin concertos on Cobra Records was released summer 2016 and made it already to No. 1 Bestselling album on Native DSD worldwide within two weeks after its release, beside many raving reviews in the international press. It was chosen Best Album by the leading magazine Luister and received a Cum Laude (Best album) of Classic FM. Future releases comprise works by Paganini (2018) and Nielsen's violin concerto with the Bremer Philharmoniker (2019).

Miss Jacobs graduated cum laude and with the highest distinction for both her bachelor and masterstudies at the Amsterdam Conservatory as a pupil of Ilya Grubert. She continued her studies with Christoph Poppen at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Munich where she successfully finished her Konzertexam. This has been supported by the foundation Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds. Further musical enrichment was achieved in several lessons with Thomas Brandis, Herman Krebbers, David Takeno, Nelli Shkolnikova, Julian Rachlin, Philip Graffin and Maxim Vengerov.

Besides her concert career, Lisa Jacobs greatly enjoys teaching and is regularly invited to give masterclasses at conservatories in The Netherlands, Portugal and Germany.

*Dutch violinist Lisa Jacobs performs three of Locatelli's concertos
with bold characterisation, and meets their formidable technical
challenges with commendable athleticism and élan.*

The Strad, UK

Spectacular well played concertos

Fanfare, USA

Style and sensitivity meets the exquisite and sophisticated

MusicWeb International, UK

Their interpretation is a little miracle of artfully-expressive playing

Pizzicato, Luxembourg

Gorgeous, graceful and spot on

De Volkskrant, NL

THE STRING SOLOISTS

The String Soloists is an international dynamic string ensemble based in Amsterdam, comprising 14 string players who perform under the leadership of its concert-master Janneke van Prooijen and artistic leader Lisa Jacobs. Their approach to music-making without a conductor is what distinguishes the group from the regular chamber orchestras. It demands intensive involvement from all the musicians.

Founded in 2015, The String Soloists have already performed at major venues in the Netherlands, Germany and Italy and were invited several times to perform live on Dutch radio and television.

Highlights of next season include their debut in the prestigious sunday morning series of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and concert tours to Italy and Portugal.

The repertoire of The String Soloists encompasses a variety of styles, ranging from Baroque to contemporary works. Alongside performances of the mainstream repertoire, the ensemble focusses on performing unjustly neglected works.

The composition of the ensemble enables them to play both as ensemble member and a soloist within the group. Besides their involvement in the String Soloists, all musicians individually are active members of the international music scene, both as chamber musicians and solo players.

Their approach to playing without a conductor distinguishes them from mainstream chamber orchestras. It demands an intensive involvement from all musicians and the result is phenomenal.

***** Klassiek Centraal, Belgium



THE STRING SOLOISTS

VIOLIN 1

Janneke van Prooijen concertmaster
Saverio Gabrielli
Tessel Hersbach

VIOLIN 2

Emma Roijackers
Panos Charalampidis
Wan-Ru Cheng / Ivo Meinen

VIOLA

Katya Woloshyn
Maria Sofia Espiga

CELLO

Aleksandra Kaspera
Antonis Pratsinakis/ Eilidh Martin

DOUBLE BASS

Yussif Barakat / Benjamin Ziai

HARPSICHORD

Jan van Grootheest

Recording: **Mediatrack**

Producer/sound engineer: **Tom Peeters**

Microphones: Brüel & Kjaer 4003, Neumann modified by Rens Heijnis

Microphone cables, interlinks: Acoustic Revive

Recorded location: **Cunerakerk, Rhenen, The Netherlands**

Recording dates: **April 19 & 21, 2017**

Text: **Lisa Jacobs**

Translations: **Katya Woloshyn**

Photography: **Ronald Knapp**

Artwork design: **Egbert Luijs (studioEGT)**

*With special thanks to Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam,
Janneke van Prooijen, Katya Woloshyn, Laurens Houtman,
Serge Stam, Henk van Ginkel & Klassiek aan de Rijn*

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