

NAXOS

HAYDN

Piano Variations

Arietta con 12 Variazioni
Capriccio • Il Maestro e lo Scolare

Jenő Jandó



Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Piano Variations

Born in 1732 in the village of Rohrau, near the modern border between Austria and Slovakia, Joseph Haydn was the son of a wheelwright. He had his musical training as a chorister at St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna and thereafter earned a living as best he could from teaching and playing the violin or keyboard. During these earlier years he was able to learn from the old composer Porpora, whose assistant he became. Haydn's first regular employment came in 1759 as Kapellmeister to a Bohemian nobleman, Count von Morzin. This was followed in 1761 by appointment as Vice-Kapellmeister to one of the richest men in the Empire, Prince Paul Anton Esterházy, succeeded on his death in 1762 by his brother Prince Nikolaus. On the death in 1766 of the elderly and somewhat obstructive Kapellmeister, Gregor Werner, Haydn succeeded to his position, remaining in the same employment, nominally at least, until his death in 1809.

Much of Haydn's service of the Esterházy was at the new palace of Esterháza on the Hungarian plains, a complex of buildings to rival Versailles in magnificence. Here he was responsible for the musical establishment and its activities, including regular instrumental concerts and music for the theatre, opera and church. For his patron he provided a variety of chamber music, in particular for the Prince's favourite instrument, the baryton, a bowed string instrument with sympathetic strings that could also be plucked.

On the death of Prince Nikolaus in 1790 Haydn was able to accept an invitation from the violinist-improviser Salomon to visit London, where he already enjoyed a considerable reputation. He was in London for a second time in 1794 and 1795, after which he returned to duty with the Esterházy family, now chiefly at the family residence in Eisenstadt, where he had started his career. Much of the year, however, was spent in Vienna, where he spent his final years, dying as the city fell once more into the power of Napoleon's army.

Haydn's keyboard music was at first written for the harpsichord, with later works clearly intended for the

pianoforte, as dynamic markings show. In addition to some 47 sonatas, he also wrote a number of other works, many of them in the form of sets of variations.

The *Twenty Variations in G major* was written in about 1765 and in 1788-1789 abridged, re-arranged and transposed to the key of A major for publication (Naxos 8.553826). The theme is one of great simplicity in the form of a dance. The first variation decorates the upper part in triplet rhythms, the second offers a derived melody and the third indulges in hand-crossing. The fourth version explores a middle register of the keyboard, the fifth has right-hand semiquavers and the sixth rapid accompanying activity in the left hand. The seventh treatment of the material answers left-hand chords with rapier right-hand figuration, the eighth is at first largely in the upper register of the instrument, the ninth has broken chords, while the tenth and eleventh feature thirds and octaves respectively. The subsequent variations continue the somewhat old-fashioned pattern of what the modern editor Franz Eibner describes as a chaconne, a Baroque dance-variation form, leading to a final version of the material that demands an instrument tuned with a so-called "short octave", making a wider spread of chord a possibility. There has been some disagreement among scholars as to whether this and other works of the period were designed for the harpsichord or for a square piano perhaps newly acquired at Eisenstadt.

Haydn's *Theme and Variations in C major* has been conjecturally dated to November 1790 and its publication was announced by Artaria in Vienna in February the following year. The work was written shortly before the composer left for his first visit to England. The theme itself, marked *Andante*, is of greater interest than the earlier work that had probably been designed for teaching purposes, and the six variations that follow offer a modest challenge to a performer in their figuration. The fifth version of the material is in C minor and there is delicate ornamentation in the final treatment.

The *Capriccio in G major* was written in 1765, perhaps for Haydn's own performance. It takes as its basis a folk-song, *Acht Sauschneider müssen sein* (There must be eight to castrate a boar), a simple melody. The *Capriccio* was published by Artaria in 1788. The theme, after its initial statement, is heard again in the bass, in D major, interrupted by a sudden pause. It is then transformed into A minor, after which it moves into key after key, often unexpectedly related, before a final return to the original G major.

Haydn's *Arietta con 12 Variazioni*, in the key of E flat major, is based on the *Minuet* of his *Quartet, Opus 9, No. 2*, probably written between 1768 and 1770. The variations have been dated to the early 1770s and were first published under the present title by Artaria in 1788/9. The first variation uses the upper register of the instrument, proceeding, in the second, to rapider figuration. The third introduces a chromatic element and the runs and arpeggios of the fourth are followed by dotted rhythms in the fifth version and scale passage in the sixth. The seventh variation brings dramatic changes in dynamics, the eighth introduces a brusque triplet rhythm, the ninth divided octaves. The ornamented tenth version of the material is followed by a variation in which the melody is primarily in a middle register and a final bravura treatment of the theme.

For many years attributed to Abbé Josef Gelinek, after its posthumous publication in 1815, Haydn's *Variations on „Gott erhalte“*, was seemingly the composer's own keyboard arrangement of the variations on the Emperor's Hymn that he had included in his

String Quartet in C major, Opus 76, No. 3, written in 1797, the year of the birthday hymn itself. The well-known theme is heard first, followed by a version in which, originally, the first violin added its own embellishment. The second variation is based on the version in which the cello has the theme, intertwined with the tenor line. The third has the theme in an inner voice, with syncopated accompaniment above and the fourth and final variation further enriches the harmony.

Haydn's F major *Divertimento: Il Maestro e lo Scolare* (The Master and the Pupil), for piano duet, has been dated to 1766-1768. It is in two movements and its material appears in a *Baryton Trio* of about 1767. Obviously designed for teaching purposes, as its title declares, the opening theme, a reminiscence of the Handel keyboard piece that later became known as *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, is played by the master and echoed by the pupil, fragment by fragment. The procedure is broadly followed in the eight subsequent variations, with a third version suggesting the use of 'short octave' tuning in the lower part. The versions of the theme, as they proceed, introduce marginally greater demands for digital dexterity and allow the teacher occasional elaboration that is not echoed above by the pupil. The second of the two movements is a *Tempo di Menuet*. Here the pupil may enjoy a modicum of independence to achieve a satisfactory conclusion to the lesson.

Keith Anderson

Jenő Jandó

The Hungarian pianist Jenő Jandó has won a number of piano competitions in Hungary and abroad, including first prize in the 1973 Hungarian Piano Concours and a first prize in the chamber music category at the Sydney International Piano Competition in 1977. He has recorded for Naxos all the piano concertos and sonatas of Mozart. Other recordings for the Naxos label include the concertos of Grieg and Schumann as well as Rachmaninov's *Second Concerto* and *Paganini Rhapsody* and Beethoven's complete piano sonatas.

Zsuzsa Kollár

Zsuzsa Kollár was born in Budapest in 1959 and at the age of ten was accepted as a pupil at the Liszt Academy, in 1974 winning first prize in the International Piano Competition for Young Musicians in Usti nad Lahen, Czechoslovakia. Three years later she became a pupil of Jenő Jandó at the Liszt Academy. In 1980 she formed a piano duo with Gabriella Láng, studying with Alfons Kontarsky in Munich and Salzburg, and with György Sebök in Banff and Ernen. Competition triumph in Jeseník and Vercelli followed in 1982, with success four years later in the Munich ARD Competition. Recordings and broadcasts, as well as concert engagements also in Germany, Austria and Canada have led to a successful concert career, to which Zsuzsa Kollár has added the performance of contemporary music in the group Componenasamble.

Unlike Mozart, Haydn was no virtuoso pianist, though he shared with his contemporary the necessary technical ability both on the violin and at the keyboard. No less important than his better known orchestral, choral and chamber music, Haydn's works for keyboard include 47 authenticated sonatas and numerous sets of inventive and highly attractive variations. Among the latter is a Capriccio which takes as its theme the popular melody *Acht Sauschneider müssen sein* (It Takes Eight to Castrate a Boar).

Joseph
HAYDN
(1732-1809)

Piano Variations

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|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Twenty Variations in G major, Hob. XVII: 2 | 17:00 |
| 2 | Theme and Variations in C major, Hob. XVII: 5 | 6:31 |
| 3 | Capriccio in G major, Hob. XVII: 1 | 7:10 |
| 4 | Arietta con 12 Variazioni, Hob. XVII: 3 | 16:04 |
| 5 | Variations on „Gott erhalte“ (after Hob. III: 77) | 8:02 |
| 6 | Divertimento: Il Maestro e lo Scolare, Hob. XVIIa: 1 (for piano four hands, with Zsuzsa Kollár) | 11:26 |

Jenő Jandó

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 (with the Trinity column and the dome of St Peter),
 engraving by Johann Adam Delsenbach, around 1750
 (AKG, Berlin)

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Playing Time
66:11



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