

MUSIC REVIEWS

Joseph Haydn
28 Divertimenti a tre
für Baryton (Viola da Gamba, Violine),
Viola und Violoncello
Hob XI: 97-126

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Joseph Haydn 28 Divertimenti a tre. Urtext edition, edited by Günter and Leonore von Zadow. (Edition Güntersberg: Heidelberg, 2009).

Score and four partbooks:

Score - G179 (150 pages - €44.00) ISMN M-50174-179-3

Baryton (Violine) treble clef - G180 (80 pages – €23.50) ISMN M-50174-180-9

Baryton (Viola da Gamba) alto clef - G181 (80 pages – €23.50) ISMN M-50174-181-6

Viola - G 182 (82 pages – €23.50) ISMN M-50174-182-3

Violoncello - G183 (74 pages – €23.50) ISMN M-50174-183-0

The Edition

It seems highly appropriate that this late set of 28 Divertimenti a tre for Baryton, Viola and Violoncello should be published as an Urtext playing edition in 2009, the bicentenary of Haydn's death, bringing to the playing public the culmination of his baryton oeuvre, and complementing the release of the first complete recording of all the baryton works of Haydn.

This edition makes available not only a playing edition of the Late Divertimenti, but also one that has been produced in a manner such that the baryton part can be played on a wider range of instruments e.g. violin or viola da gamba, thus making it available to a much wider audience. The concept of a transferable baryton repertoire is not unique, and is indeed authentic. It is evidenced in the St. Petersburg 'Swan'¹ and Kassel² baryton manuscripts, the Krause³ nine partitas for solo baryton, and in the baryton works of Haydn, where transcriptions of the baryton part were made for violin, viola da gamba

¹ The St. Petersburg 'Swan' Manuscript, Library of the Academy of Sciences, BAN, 0 No. 124.

² The Kassel Collection, D-K1 2° Ms. Mus. 61 L2.

³ J.G. Krause, IX Partien auf die Viola Paradon, D-DL 2132-v-1.

and even the flute. Indeed some of the baryton works have survived in such an alternate scoring only.

This Güntersberg edition is A4, portrait in format, with a soft back and spiral binding, making page turning easy and sits well on the music stand. The covers are attractively decorated with an anonymous engraving of Haydn on the front and an engraved image of the Esterházy Palace at Fertöd on the back, the venue for performances of many of these works.

The score is prefaced by an introduction in both German and English, whilst a shorter version, confined to editorial practice, is incorporated into the part-books. It gives only the briefest account of the commissioning of the divertimenti for baryton and the principle of the transferable repertoire, but gives precise detail of the ten sources upon which this edition has been based, including locations and shelf marks. It details the differences between the sources, referring in particular to the works where the extant manuscript is for a combination other than with baryton, and issues of editorial addition, where it has been necessary to add the numbers for the strings of the lower, plucked manual of the baryton. Finally it addresses details of editorial practice, noting that the part books have inconsistencies born from the variety of sources accessed, particularly with regard to details of articulation, which have been preserved. Minor issues of editorial practice, in keeping with those proposed in the editorial accompanying the Henle Edition⁴ of the Haydn baryton works, have been retained.

The introductory pages have been further enhanced by the addition of facsimile pages providing exemplars of a divertimento title page, and extracts from a partbook. These additions are not just decorative but give a real sense of the vibrancy of the music, which production in printed notation perhaps does not. Whilst standardized notational practice has been adopted e.g. for dynamics, accidentals, appoggiaturas, movement headings, lengths of final notes and omitted da capo repeats, the edition captures some of the momentum of Haydn's notational practices by retaining the vertical stroke to indicate staccato. There are other notational niceties. The provision of a score to accompany the parts enables the players to access an overview of the music and to make informed decisions as to the detail of ensemble realization of the performance in a way that parts alone do not. Cues are also incorporated to aid ensemble where movements start with an individual instrument e.g. Divertimento 101, movement three, Finale – *Fuga a 3 soggetti in Contrapuncto doppio*.

Where the application of the transferable repertoire principle leads to impossible passages for the violin or viola da gamba, with regard to the realisation of the plucked tones in solo polyphonic sections for the baryton, the plucked tones are given to the violoncello e.g. Divertimento 107, movement three, Trio. This is an effective solution, although I would suggest that these tones be plucked to achieve the contrast of texture conceived by Haydn when composing for the baryton.

⁴ S. Gerlach, 'Critical Edition' in J. Haydn, *Baryton Trios Nr. 49-72*, (München, 1958), 9ff.

The substitution of violin or viola da gamba for the baryton creates other issues of texture and timbre when in combination with the viola and violoncello. Whilst the baryton is of a similar register, sounding as it does, an octave lower than notated, its nasal bowed tone, enhanced by the coupled vibration and harmonic resonance of the lower manual strings and the occasional plucked tones, ensures that it emerges confidently from within the texture. Whilst the violin playing at notated pitch would soar above the viola and violoncello in true string trio manner, the more reserved and lower pitched tone of the viola da gamba could well be lost. Attention needs therefore to be given to issues of balance if this combination is to be utilised.

The Music

Although a detailed chronology of the Haydn baryton trios is far from being conclusively determined, these late divertimenti, numbers 97 to 126, were composed between 1772 and 1774. Divertimento 105, for example, bears the date 1772. Certainly all the trios had been finished by November 8 1778, when the final set of trios was bound, and Haydn's attention was refocused on opera at the behest of Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, who commissioned all Haydn's baryton music.

The immediate impression of these late works is of their sophistication and variety, of both form and style. It is almost as if the trios were Haydn's playground where he felt free to experiment, to investigate and to trial. Originality however is confined to the music and not to the baryton writing itself which is far from innovative, particularly in relation to the plucked manual.

One significant difference between these and earlier baryton trios is the choice of key. We see a broader range of keys which include D, G, F, C and A majors, still relatively limited, but with modulations, which are predominantly to the dominant and relative minor keys and more numerous than in earlier trios. This paucity of modulation is in part due to the limited opportunities offered by the tuning of the lower manual and the use made of it, which is largely confined to just six pitches A, D E, F, G, A, and possibly still to the relatively limited playing technique of Prince Nikolaus.

An examination of the baryton parts reveals some interesting and imaginative uses of the instrument, even if not demanding a virtuoso playing technique. Plucked notes are integrated into a bowed melody line, punctuating longer passages often on a weak beat, and the melody line is characterised by a greater attention to detail with sforzandos, trills and pianissimo. The baryton takes on the role variously of dominance, accompaniment to the viola, and equal partners with it.

The first work in this edition, Divertimento 97, is of particular interest as it is a substantial work with seven contrasting movements, and for me, the apotheosis of Haydn's works for baryton. Composed in celebration of the birthday of Prince Nikolaus in 1771, it is a work of great maturity and contrast, from the dark tones of the opening Adagio cantabile to the playful exuberance of the Polonaise, concluding in a confident and brilliant fugue. Even here, the

use of the lower manual is sparing but musically sensitive. Although not notably more demanding for the baryton in technical terms, this is a work of great sophistication. Certainly the bowed upper manual part demands a competent level of technique in both variety of style, figurative work, ornamentation and some accompanying passage work, but there is little that is typically idiomatic of the baryton.

A survey of the baryton parts of these final works reveals some sensitive writing for the baryton, but for an instrument where the lower manual is used sparingly, yet to great effect, and with the upper manual contributing its characteristic and contrasting plaintive, rather nasal tone, as an integral member of the classical trio timbre. Some imaginative textures are achieved from this marrying of tone colours. The baryton is complemented in Divertimento 107, movement one, by the viola *con sordino*, perhaps to emphasise the tonal quality of the bowed manual of the baryton and in preparation for the Trio of movement two, where the baryton plays alone. Notated on two staves, the lower manual is used relatively sparingly, often complementing rather than accompanying and delineating cadences. Its range is limited to an octave, and movement between adjacent ascending strings predominates. In Divertimento 111, the lower manual appears more frequently, and becomes an integral part of the baryton's persona. In the first movement the lower manual is integrated into the melody line, not as an accompaniment, but alternating with the bowed tones, again over a limited range of only D (2) to B (7), and generally in ascending stepwise motion and in quavers at only a moderate pace.

Where one might have expected to see the apotheosis of technique on the baryton in these the final trios by Haydn, one instead observes the baryton as a mere shadow of its former self, compounded in no small part by the limited technical skills of its major exponent, Prince Nikolaus, but also as it fought to compete on equal terms with the richer tones of the violin family.

This is a much welcomed publication, for it not only enhances the very limited printed repertoire currently available for the baryton, but also makes it readily available to exponents of the string trio. A great deal of care and attention to detail has been invested in the preparation of this playing edition of the 28 Divertimenti a tre, and the result is an authentic, Urtext and authoritative publication that will be most welcomed by both baryton and Haydn enthusiasts alike.

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