

Vienna 1783, London 1792, and a Box of Toys

Saturday, January 23, 2027 · 19:30 · Großes Festspielhaus

Adam Fischer, conductor · Igor Levit, piano

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	HAYDN 1732–1809 <i>Symphony No. 97 in C major, Hob. I:97</i>	25'
2	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Piano Concerto No. 13 in C major, K. 415</i>	25'
3	MOZART 1719–1787 <i>Cassation in G major, LMV VIII:7</i>	
4	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. 385, 'Haffner'</i>	20'
TOTAL MUSIC		70'

Joseph Haydn

1732–1809

Symphony No. 97 in C major, Hob. I:97

THE COMPOSER

Joseph Haydn was born in 1732 in the Lower Austrian village of Rohrau, the son of a wheelwright, and rose from rural poverty to become the most famous composer in Europe. After years as a chorister at St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna and a precarious freelance youth, he entered in 1761 the service of the immensely wealthy Esterházy princes, for whom he would work for nearly three decades, much of it at the remote palace of Eszterháza in rural Hungary. There, as he later put it, he was 'cut off from the world' and 'forced to become original'. Out of that isolation came the body of work that effectively defined the Classical style: he is rightly called the father of both the symphony and the string quartet, having brought each to maturity over a long, experimental career of more than a hundred symphonies and almost seventy quartets. Genial, witty, and deeply professional, Haydn was admired across Europe, befriended and influenced the young Mozart, and taught the young Beethoven. After his prince's death in 1790 he travelled twice to London, where his late 'London' symphonies and the oratorio *The Creation* made him a celebrity. He died in Vienna in 1809, having lived through, and shaped, an entire era of music.

25 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Joseph Haydn wrote this symphony in London in 1792, towards the end of his first visit to England. He had been brought there by Johann Peter Salomon, a violinist and impresario who put on concerts at the Hanover Square Rooms and also led the orchestra from the first desk. The twelve symphonies Haydn composed for London across two visits are numbered 93 to 104. No. 97 is the fifth of them by number, though it was the last to be written of the first group of six.

The first performance took place at the Hanover Square Rooms at the beginning of May 1792, either at Haydn's own benefit concert on the 3rd or at Salomon's concert on the 4th: the records do not settle which. Haydn directed. The symphony is in C major, and the scoring is for pairs of flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns and trumpets with timpani and strings.

Two details show how closely Haydn was writing for the people in front of him. The minuet has no repeat signs: every repeat is written out in full, because he changes the instrumentation each time round. And at the very end of the trio he marked a few bars for 'Salomon solo', sending his concertmaster an octave above the rest of the first violins, quietly, so that the man who had brought him to London could be heard on his own for a moment.

The symphony had an afterlife. The young Beethoven took it as the model for a C major symphony that he sketched and never finished. It lasts about twenty-five minutes.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Adagio. Vivace. The slow introduction is soft and searching and takes its time to settle in the home key. Then the Vivace bursts in with a fanfare that simply spells out the C major chord, the kind of gesture that usually ends a movement rather than starting one. The second theme is a Ländler, an Austrian country waltz, over plucked basses.

II. Adagio ma non troppo. A set of variations in F major on a quiet, strolling tune. A stormier variation in the minor interrupts. In the variation that comes after it Haydn asks the violins to play close to the bridge (*sul ponticello*), which gives a thin, glassy, slightly metallic sound.

III. Menuetto and Trio: Allegretto. A broad, public minuet in which the scoring keeps changing. In the last eight bars of the trio, listen for the single violin riding above the others: that is Salomon's solo.

IV. Finale: Presto assai. A quick, playful finale, full of stops, starts and conversations between the sections, rounded off with trumpets and drums.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

25 minutes

1756–1791

Piano Concerto No. 13 in C major, K. 415

THE COMPOSER

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart needs little introduction. Born in Salzburg in 1756, he was a prodigy whose talents were cultivated and exhibited across Europe by his father Leopold. By the time he composed this concerto in 1779, the twenty-three-year-old Mozart was restless in provincial Salzburg, dreaming of Vienna and larger stages. Within two years he would make the move that defined his mature career.

Less well known is his sister Maria Anna, called “Nannerl,” five years his senior. She was an equally brilliant pianist as a child, and the siblings toured together as wonders of nature until Nannerl’s touring career ended when she was about seventeen. Following the customs of the time, she stayed at home while Wolfgang continued traveling with their father. The brother and sister remained close, and this concerto was written for the two of them to play.

ABOUT THE WORK

When Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart settled in Vienna as a freelance musician, his best way of earning money and a name was to appear as soloist in his own piano concertos. In the winter of 1782 to 1783 he wrote a set of three for his subscription concerts: K. 413 in F, K. 414 in A and this one in C, which he himself called the third of them. They were the first concertos he composed for those concerts.

The C major is the grandest of the three. Its orchestra includes trumpets and timpani alongside the oboes, bassoons, horns and strings, and the opening has a military swagger. Mozart played it at the academy (a benefit concert for himself) that he gave at the Burgtheater in late March 1783. The date usually given is 23 March, although a newspaper report of the time implies the 22nd. Emperor Joseph II was in the audience and, contrary to his habit, stayed for the whole evening. The same concert included the new ‘Haffner’ Symphony, which closes tonight’s programme.

Commentators have sometimes been cool about this concerto, complaining that the piano’s material in the first movement does not quite live up to the promise of the orchestral opening. The finale is the most unusual part of the piece. Mozart had first thought of a slow

movement in C minor, set the idea aside in favour of a lighter one in F major, and then found a place for the minor-key music inside the finale instead.

The concerto lasts about twenty-five minutes.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro. The orchestra begins quietly, with the violins entering one after another in imitation, and builds to a full, festive tutti with trumpets and drums. When the piano comes in, it brings its own, more decorative ideas. Listen for a rising unison figure, like a rocket going up, that recurs in the closing sections.

II. Andante. A simple song in F major, with the melody spun out in long, ornamented lines by the soloist.

III. Allegro. A cheerful rondo in 6/8 time that is twice stopped in its tracks by a short Adagio in C minor, as if a scene from a serious opera had wandered into a comedy. After the last return of the rondo tune the music does not build to a loud finish. It thins out, scatters and ends pianissimo.

Leopold Mozart

1719–1787

Cassation in G major, LMV VIII:7

THE COMPOSER

Leopold Mozart, born in Augsburg in 1719, is remembered above all as the father and teacher of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but he was a considerable musician in his own right. He came to Salzburg as a student, joined the orchestra of the Prince-Archbishop as a violinist in 1743 and rose to become deputy Kapellmeister, a rank he never exceeded. In 1756, the year Wolfgang was born, he published his *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, a treatise on violin playing that was reprinted and translated for decades. He and his wife Anna Maria Pertl had seven children, of whom only Wolfgang and his sister Maria Anna, known as Nannerl, survived infancy. He died in Salzburg in 1787.

ABOUT THE WORK

The piece on tonight's programme comes with a question mark attached, and the festival's own listing says so: a Cassatio in G major catalogued among Leopold Mozart's works, 'probably' his arrangement of the so-called Toy Symphony, which is itself now attributed to someone else.

A cassation was an eighteenth-century entertainment piece in several short movements, a cousin of the serenade and the divertimento. In 1953 the scholar Ernst Fritz Schmid published a seven-movement Cassation in G under Leopold Mozart's name. Three of its movements turned out to be the music long known as the Toy Symphony, a piece in which a string band is joined by children's instruments: a cuckoo, a quail call, a toy trumpet, a drum and a rattle among them. Such toys were a speciality of Berchtesgaden, a town in the mountains not far from Salzburg, and early copies call the piece 'Berchtesgaden music'.

For most of the nineteenth century the Toy Symphony was printed and performed as a work by Joseph Haydn. Later his brother Michael was proposed, then Leopold Mozart on the strength of the cassation. In the 1990s a manuscript came to light that points to Edmund Angerer (1740 to 1794), a Benedictine monk and choirmaster in the Tyrol, as the composer of a version in C major from the 1760s. On the current view Leopold did not write the toy movements but took them over, transposed, into a larger piece of his own and supplied the remaining movements. Scholars add that the matter may never be fully settled.

None of this affects the pleasure of the thing. The toy movements are plain, tuneful music for strings, a quick movement, a minuet and a finale, in which the bird calls and rattles arrive on cue like guests at a children's party.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen for which instruments the players produce and who is asked to play them: the falling two-note call of the cuckoo, the chirp of the quail, the dry clatter of the rattle, a trumpet with one note, a drum. Around the toy movements, the cassation is light entertainment music of the kind that Salzburg musicians were regularly asked to supply.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791

Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. 385, 'Haffner'

THE COMPOSER

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart needs little introduction. Born in Salzburg in 1756, he was a prodigy whose talents were cultivated and exhibited across Europe by his father Leopold. By the time he composed this concerto in 1779, the twenty-three-year-old Mozart was restless in provincial Salzburg, dreaming of Vienna and larger stages. Within two years he would make the move that defined his mature career.

20 minutes

Less well known is his sister Maria Anna, called “Nannerl,” five years his senior. She was an equally brilliant pianist as a child, and the siblings toured together as wonders of nature until Nannerl’s touring career ended when she was about seventeen. Following the customs of the time, she stayed at home while Wolfgang continued traveling with their father. The brother and sister remained close, and this concerto was written for the two of them to play.

ABOUT THE WORK

In July 1782 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, newly established in Vienna, received a request from his father in Salzburg. Sigmund Haffner the Younger, of Salzburg, was about to be raised to the nobility, and a serenade was wanted for the celebrations. Mozart had written the Haffners a serenade once before, for a wedding in 1776. This time the timing could hardly have been worse. He was busy, and he was about to get married himself, on 4 August. He wrote the music in haste and sent it home to Salzburg a movement at a time.

A few months later he asked for the score back. He needed a new symphony for the academy he was planning at the Burgtheater in March 1783, and the serenade could be turned into one. He removed the opening march and one of its two minuets and added pairs of flutes and clarinets to the first and last movements to fill out the sound. The result was the Symphony in D major that still carries the Haffner name.

It was first heard at that academy, the date of which is usually given as 23 March 1783, with Emperor Joseph II in the audience. As was normal at the time, the symphony framed the evening: the first three movements opened the concert and the finale was held back to close it, with other works in between. The Piano Concerto K. 415, heard earlier tonight, was among them.

The scoring is for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets, with timpani and strings. The symphony lasts about twenty minutes.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro con spirito. Mozart told his father that this movement should be played with fire. It opens with the whole orchestra leaping up in octaves, and that single idea drives nearly everything that follows: even the second theme is the first one in new clothes, a habit more typical of Haydn than of Mozart.

II. Andante. In G major, relaxed and graceful, serenade music at its most amiable. In the middle, where a development would normally go, the woodwind play a short passage like a quiet chorale.

III. Menuetto and Trio. A bright, emphatic minuet in D, almost all of it loud, with a smoother, gentler trio in A major.

IV. Presto. Mozart's instruction for the finale was that it should go as fast as possible. It starts quietly in the strings and then explodes. Listeners have often noticed its kinship with the overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* and with Osmin's gloating aria in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, the opera Mozart had staged in Vienna only weeks before he wrote this movement. Watch for the sudden silences and the bursts of sound that follow them.

Tonight's artists

Igor Levit *piano*

Levit is the soloist in the C major Concerto K. 415, a piece Mozart wrote to play himself at his own Vienna concerts.

Igor Levit was born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1987 and moved with his family to Germany when he was eight. He studied in Hanover, where he has been a professor of piano since 2019. He received the Gilmore Artist Award in 2018, released a complete recording of the Beethoven piano sonatas in 2019 and was named Artist of the Year by Gramophone in 2020. During the lockdown of 2020 he became widely known for the house concerts he streamed from his home in Berlin.

FURTHER READING

ACCESSIBLE **Mozart: The Reign of Love**

Jan Swafford, Harper Perennial 2021

Swafford's life of Mozart is good on the first Vienna years, when the Haffner Symphony and the concertos K. 413 to 415 were written, and on Leopold's part in his son's career.

ACCESSIBLE **The Faber Pocket Guide to Haydn**

Richard Wigmore, Faber and Faber 2009

A compact companion to Haydn's life and works, including the symphonies he wrote for London.

DEEPER **Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception**

Neal Zaslaw, Oxford University Press 1991

Zaslaw's study treats each Mozart symphony in the setting it was written for, including the path of the Haffner from Salzburg serenade to Vienna symphony.

SOURCES

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3. Mozart Week 2027: Mozart & 'Mozarts', Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum. https://mozarteum.at/en/press_release/mozart-week-2027-mozart-mozarts
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13. 23 March 1783: Mozart's academy in the Burgtheater, Mozart: New Documents. <https://www.mozartdocuments.org/documents/23-march-1783>
14. Toy Symphony, Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toy_Symphony
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17. Leopold Mozart, All Classical Radio. <https://research.allclassical.org/composer/mozart-leopold/>
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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart ·Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. 385, 'Haffner'

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<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/wp-2027-01-23-fischer>

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