



The main difficulty faced by the authors in preparing the catalogue was the dating of sources. To establish a useful chronology, they relied chiefly on Rameau's various addresses indicated on the title pages of the published works (Rameau moved often during his lifetime, so the list of his dwellings given on pages 35–38 will be most useful to scholars), as well as on evidence in newly discovered archival documents, which were brought to light by Érik Kocevar. Watermarks and periodicals were also examined. Consequently, the data concerning 'Date et lieu' (of composition or publication), 'Attribution' and 'Commentaire' offered in each entry are likely to be of the utmost interest for readers still awaiting an updated biography of the composer. Items are catalogued primarily in chronological order. In cases where two or more works were composed at roughly the same period, they appear in alphabetical order, as exemplified by *Les Amants trahis* and *Aquilon et Orithie*, written 'before 1721' and 'between 1715 and 1719' respectively.

Interestingly, the musical incipits of the three *grands motets* and of some unpublished cantatas were not prepared from their main manuscript source, but from a secondary one. This odd choice has led to some errors or incomplete musical entries. For instance, the seven incipits for *Thétis* (RCT28) reproduce the C1771 score in the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris (F-Pn), Vm¹ 508 (with no continuo figures), instead of the more reliable set of parts Vm⁷ 3613 copied in July 1718 (in which the continuo figures are duly provided). Similarly, the musical examples for *Deus noster refugium*, *In convertendo* and *Quam dilecta* (RCT13–15) were drawn from the handwritten score F-Pn Vm¹ 507, even though it is well known that the latter was copied from Vm¹ 508, with some awkward mistakes. It is thus no surprise that the grace note in the second bar of the incipit RCT15.01 (first movement of *Quam dilecta*, page 141) gives an erroneous D (top part) instead of a C, as is rightly found in Vm¹ 508 and in bars 48, 57, 99 and 112 of the ensuing vocal part.

This first volume, together with the second (*Tome 2: Livrets*, published in 2003), has been compiled with great precision and with a sound knowledge and control of the material. It is a potential goldmine and will quickly become the bedside book of all scholars and historically aware performers who desire to know more about the early career and music of the greatest French composer of the eighteenth century. To embark on such an impressive project as the complete edition and cataloguing of this huge and complex repertory is an exhausting and demanding task, and this instalment proves once again that the team led by Sylvie Bouissou is both productive and efficient.

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FLOYD GRAVE AND MARGARET GRAVE

THE STRING QUARTETS OF JOSEPH HAYDN

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In *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* Floyd and Margaret Grave summon up their impressive knowledge of Haydn and his music to create a timely, comprehensive study of one of the most significant repertoires from this composer, offering a fresh approach that synthesizes recent scholarship in the field. Previous authors considered only some of the quartets in their book-length studies: William Drabkin wrote about the earliest quartets; Hans Keller excluded nearly all quartets before Op. 17 as well as Op. 33 No. 4, having found those early works to be something short of 'great'; and W. Dean Sutcliffe's *Cambridge Handbook for Op. 50* necessarily focused on a specific target. Other authors, including H. C. Robbins Landon and Ludwig Finscher, examined Haydn's quartets as part of larger accounts of the composer's life, or pre-dated important reassessments (especially those made by James Webster) of notions such as stylistic evolution, compositional maturity, and even the 'classical style' as these concepts apply to Haydn. David Young's edited



volume, which grew out of a quartet festival at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, in 1999, incorporated some of these more recent arguments, but students and devotees of Haydn's quartets have had to wait until now for an extensive monograph that blends an updated perspective on Haydn's quartet style with a sustained treatment of the repertory in its entirety. With great attention to musical detail and sensitivity to matters of stylistic criticism and aesthetic evaluation, Grave and Grave balance a long view of the sixty-eight authentic quartets with close readings of the most significant details of each movement, always relating the parts back to the whole.

The authors' greatest departure from previous studies comes from their Websterian refusal to project evolutionary narratives across Haydn's quartets. In an attempt to avoid 'any method that allows our evaluation of the quartets to become enmeshed in assumptions about stylistic progression' (3), they propose that 'by maintaining a respectful distance from predetermined evolutionary paths, we can better appreciate the possible range of Haydn's compositional choices at a given time in his career and thereby facilitate an inclusive, detailed portrayal of the oeuvre' (4). Such neutrality is a guiding principle of their project: the authors propose to consider each quartet and each opus on its own terms, without asking different works to 'represent specific stages of advancement' (4).

The book is divided into three parts: the first, 'Points of Departure', begins with a brief biographical sketch of Haydn from the perspective of quartet composition, then compares broad issues across all of the quartets, including generic features, stylistic character and Haydn's idiomatic use of texture, ensemble technique and particular sonorities. Part 2 explores the formal designs of Haydn's quartets, with chapters devoted to sonata form, the dance movement and variation, and a catch-all chapter on other forms, including fugue, rondo and various miscellaneous designs. In this part, the authors delineate certain normative procedures and formal designs with a view towards an evaluation in later chapters of Haydn's 'various anomalies, alternatives, and digressions' (50). In this way, the opening parts construct a foundation for more detailed, specialized treatment of individual cases later in the book, where the authors subsequently trace the recurrence and modification of those techniques and stylistic trends across the repertory.

After establishing the universal features of the string quartets, Grave and Grave focus on the particulars of each work. Part 3, which fills more than half of the total volume, is devoted to a chapter-by-chapter consideration of each opus, with the ten earliest quartets sharing a chapter at the beginning, and Op. 103 grouped with Op. 77 at the end. Each chapter follows a consistent pattern of organization: the authors explore possible biographical explanations for the composition of an entire opus; summarize the sources, dating and early publication history of each work (including handy information about where these documents are held today); characterize the opus in terms of stylistic unity, diversity or idiosyncrasy; track innovations in cyclic profile or movement design; and finally, as a mode of transition between chapters, examine the present group in light of Haydn's habit of recalling or developing the prominent features or techniques of previous groups.

The authors emphasize two elements of Haydn's quartet style throughout their study: the coherence of the opus group and Haydn's experimentation with special tonal colours and effects. They contend that 'the opus group must be recognized as something more than an arbitrary assemblage of unrelated compositions' (25) and that, in conceiving quartets in groups, we can acknowledge Haydn's attention to procedural consistency, balanced diversity and topical contrast. In support of their conclusion that 'the opus group is not so much a *musical* entity (even though ambitious performers might choose to read through an entire opus in one sitting) as an immediate environment or larger artistic inspiration from which an individual quartet may be understood to spring' (25), the authors helpfully sketch what they see as Haydn's principles of grouping within the opus: the composer gives each quartet its own home key, at least one quartet is cast in a minor key and quartets with 'novel, atypical features' are balanced with more conventional works in the same group.

In addition, 'Haydn [often] chooses two or more quartets to embody different perspectives on a certain topic or structural problem – an intraopus theme, in effect, to be explored from different angles' (25). These themes include, for example, the fugues of Op. 20, the rondos of Op. 33 and the introductory gestures in



Opp. 71/74. Furthermore, one opus group can serve as a model for another: the authors connect Opp. 20 and 50 through their serious style and use of fugal technique, Opp. 33 and 64 by virtue of their light character and use of the same home keys, and Opp. 54/55 and 71/74 in their extroverted character and soloistic writing (25). The authors' predilection for assembling tables and charts of data is well suited to the task of drawing these kinds of connections across the repertory.

Issues of colour and effect are treated in the comparative chapters as well as in the opus chapters, especially where unusual colouristic effects test the limits of players' normative roles in the ensemble and challenge normative constraints for the genre. Their analysis strives to explain such 'peculiarities' as important agents of structural articulation and coherence rather than as frivolous or meaningless distractions littering the foreground. At more than one point, the authors stress that a seemingly 'extraneous effect' is, in fact, an integral part of the work's structure. With respect to the use of bariolage in the finale of Op. 50 No. 6, for example, they write that 'far from cluttering the musical surface with aimless or unassimilated detail, [the movement's sound effects] prove essential to the overall coherence of the design, working variously as agents of change, goal-directed motion, and structural delineation' (45). On the one hand, the authors' conclusion persuades the reader that the category of 'effect' is crucial to the structural design of the movement and should be recognized as such; yet, at the same time, in seeking to reconcile potentially 'extraneous' elements such as colours and textures with more 'normal' elements of the musical fabric such as form and structure, their analysis risks reinscribing what might be viewed as a worn-out hierarchy of musical elements. Either way, their attention to such questions is provocative and inspires the authors to strikingly poetic descriptions of such moments: the bariolage effect in the aforementioned finale casts a 'bow-jostling spell' (45), and, later in the book, a half-cadence in the opening theme of the Adagio of Op. 17 No. 3 leads to several bars that 'mark time on the dominant, as if in a trance, before slipping into minor' (164).

The book's tables, figures and musical examples are handsome and clear, and the volume is beautifully produced. The tables are, in fact, one of the most helpful features of the book, not only because they convey so much information at a glance, but because they serve to represent a great diversity of topics in this way. Each of the opus chapters includes a table of 'Summary statistics for the opus', pointing the reader to movements within pieces within groups, while also listing opus numbers, Hoboken numbers, key and time signatures, tempo markings, form types and bar-counts. In addition to these, the book includes several instructive, more creative collections of information in tabular form, such as 'Distribution of home keys among the opus groups', 'First movements of Haydn's string quartets not in sonata form', 'Dance movements with open-ended trios' and 'Intermovement tonal connections in Op. 74/3'. But because of the number of tables distributed throughout the book, and especially with the inclusion of so many that are focused on relatively unexpected topics, it would have been useful for a full list of all the book's tables to have been included in the front matter.

Grave and Grave have provided an excellent and extensive treatment of this repertory. Their book offers a comprehensive introduction for those coming to the quartets for the first time, yet it also provides detailed, thoughtful readings of each piece that are sure to communicate something new to readers already familiar with this music. The organization of the book into roughly two halves presents the reader with multiple paths through the material, although a reading from cover to cover is not necessarily the ideal way to approach this book, as the volume perhaps serves more appropriately as a valuable reference tool. The comparative chapters at the opening are engaging, but if some of the following chapters are to be read consecutively, the book seems to sag. While Grave and Grave have been careful to avoid projecting an evolutionary narrative on to their chronological discussion of the repertory, their goal of taking each opus on its own terms and offering detailed stylistic comparisons between groups makes for a parade of chapters that begin to blur as each careful generalization is immediately neutralized by a caveat. Characteristic of this tendency is a conclusion about Op. 64: 'The general emphasis on surface detail in Op. 64 appears to go hand in hand with a retreat from the large-scale sweep of cyclic integration as witnessed on occasion among previous opus groups. Subtle but intriguing signs of intermovement cohesion may nevertheless be cited as evidence of a persisting concern for this aspect of quartet design' (278). The need to make such qualifications



surely reflects the nuanced, incremental manner of change often attributed to Haydn's experimentation with the genre. And ultimately, this blurring will present fewer problems for those dipping into a chapter here and there for the purposes of preparing a lesson plan, brushing up before an evening's quartet performance or finding out more about how one's favourite work is put together. Indeed, for scholarly and reference purposes, the book is invaluable. But with the (again, justified) abandonment of teleological narratives as applied to this repertory – narratives that reify the idea that the later quartets exhibit Haydn's achievement of ultimate compositional maturity and the 'classical' style, and that the late works are thus aesthetically superior to the quartets that came before – the cover-to-cover reader detects a lack of momentum in the narrative as the authors attempt to focus strictly on the character and quality of each work on its own terms. They might be said to slip into the 'narrative poverty' that Webster acknowledged as a side-effect of stepping away from teleology in his *Haydn's 'Farewell' Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style: Through-Composition and Cyclic Integration in His Instrumental Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 (358)). Perhaps some of the lapses in the narrative might have been tightened by a fuller picture of how the quartets were enjoyed by their earliest audiences and players. More extended inquiry of this sort might have animated the opus chapters, allowing biography and reception to go some way towards filling the void left by the exclusion of evolutionary narratives.

Although it must be acknowledged that Grave and Grave had to define the limits of their study somehow, one cannot help but notice the cursory treatment of the ways in which the quartets figured in the musical life of Haydn's day. One finds very little mention of performance practice of the period (which is, of course, an enormous field), but there is also only passing allusion to Haydn's changing audiences, or contemporary aesthetic issues surrounding the genre, or even the critical reception of the works (although some thoughts on the north German critics' possible effect on Haydn's style and on Op. 20 are briefly entertained). Even in the short discussion of relevant biographical issues at the start of each chapter, the authors seem reluctant to explore anything other than absolutely solid biographical connections with the music: 'To draw connections between the character of the Op. 71/74 quartets and the circumstances under which they were written is a temptation hard to resist' (282). But one wonders why such a temptation should be resisted at all, especially if such speculation, when offered by experts on these works and couched as hypothesis, might illuminate new meaning or a compositional motivation.

Ultimately, however, the book is intelligently organized, mindful of unfair value judgments against earlier works and simply packed full of information. The book benefits from the authors' wide and deep knowledge of the repertory and the scholarly literature, as well as their gift for description and musical analysis. In setting out to provide the reader with a solid foundation for future study of this endlessly fascinating music, the authors accomplish something even more vital: they regard each and every quartet as part of Haydn's 'ongoing exploration of the genre's potentials with no particular destination in sight' (336). By emphasizing the spirit of 'unlimited possibility' throughout this repertory, they invite us to return to this music again and again.

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