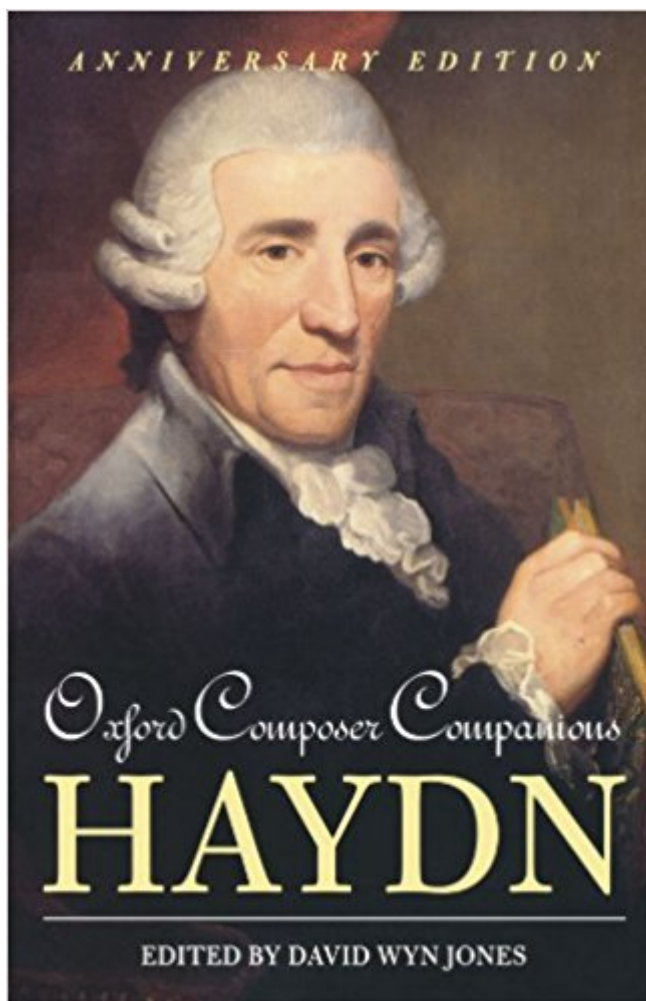


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Oxford Composer Companions: Haydn



Synopsis

Hailed in *Symphony* magazine as "an invaluable aid to scholars," this new paperback edition offers a gold mine of information on the immensely prolific Austrian composer and the father of both the symphony and the string quartet--Joseph Haydn. In more than 900 alphabetical entries, Haydn's world is brought to vivid life. All of his music is highlighted, including his symphonies, concertos, masses, oratorios, operas, string quartets and other chamber works, sonatas, and miscellaneous choral pieces. The volume includes informative entries on Haydn's family, friends, patrons and contemporaries (Mozart and the young Beethoven among them) and it illuminates the many ideas, influences, and aesthetics that played a major role in his life. Published to coincide with the 200th anniversary of Haydn's death, this superb companion is an invaluable resource for students, teachers, and music lovers, offering a wealth of information, complemented by maps, family trees, a chronology, a list of works, and expert assessments of Haydn's compositions and increasing popularity.

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Customer Reviews

This encyclopedia on Haydn's life, works, and influence could provide the basis for a Hollywood biopic on the composer, whose music--along with Mozart's and Beethoven's--defines an era. Jones (music, Univ. of Wales) presents more than 900 authoritative, accessible articles by 41 contributors on the surroundings (Eszterháza, Vienna), people (family, teachers, composers, performers,

patrons), in-the-air ideas (Josephinism, Freemasonry), and musical genres (mass, quartet, symphony) that informed the composer, along with entries on his compositions and the long-range influence of his inventions (on everything from Brahms to the name of a pastry). Within an article, a word may be printed in small capital letters, indicating that it has a separate entry. Two useful appendixes list Haydn's works (with nicknames-Surprise!-and a key to how the works are listed in New Grove) and give text incipits to vocal works cross-referenced to the Hoboken catalog. Though an index would have been preferable, a "Thematic Overview" helps locate entries of like nature, e.g., "Catalogues, Diaries and Iconography" (five entries), "Structures and Style [of Haydn's music]" (ten entries), and "Performers" (53 entries). The front matter also includes family trees and a map of Haydn's world. Formatted much like the first entry in this series (on Bach), this is indeed the first encyclopedia on the composer, and it is highly recommended for all devotees of Western concert music and their libraries. Bonnie Jo Dopp, Univ. of Maryland Libs., College Park Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Similar in format to the Oxford Composer Companions book on J. S. Bach (1999), this well-planned, scholarly encyclopedia is a comprehensive and informative reference source on the life, music, and times of the prolific and influential eighteenth-century composer of classical music. A "Thematic Overview" listing the book's entries under broad topics and then subdivided by specific subjects related to Haydn helps readers focus on the areas of knowledge they are researching (e.g., biography; composers; family, friends, and acquaintances; cities, towns, and villages; individual musical works). This is followed by a Haydn family genealogical chart and a sketchy map of Europe and England. The main body of the encyclopedia consists of almost 1,000 alphabetically arranged entries related to Haydn's life, music, and historical era. Each entry is followed by the initials of the author, whose full name can be determined by referring to a list of contributors located at the beginning of the book. Many entries also cite one or two sources used in the preparation of the entry. In addition, there are several megaentries that give in-depth treatment to subjects like Haydn's life, his compositional method, the keyboard sonata, and the symphony. Appendixes include a list of Haydn's works in chart format, noting details like instruments scored for, musical key, date, and Hoboken number as well as a chart of "text incipits" noting movements in Haydn's vocal music cross-referenced to the Hoboken catalogue. There is unfortunately no index, which would help readers identify specific subjects within the text of entries. This reference source provides comprehensive and accurate information similar to that found in the 100-page article on Haydn in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (2d ed, Groves, 2001). It is most useful as a

complement to The New Grove Dictionary in academic libraries supporting graduate-level programs in music and in large public libraries. RBBCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The amount of information in this volume with anything even remotely connected with Haydn is phenomenal. Its alphabetical organization gave me trouble at first. I bought the book because of my recent rediscovery of Haydn's music. I knew little of his life. I turned to "H" and found a satisfying 17 page biographical sketch. Most of the questions I had about Haydn were answered in the alphabetical listing from Abingdon to Zwettl. I am enjoying browsing through the Haydn related alphabet.

Arranged alphabetically, the articles, mostly short, have all sorts of info that otherwise might be buried in specialized journal articles. Mahler wrote recits for Creation...who knew?

David Wyn Jones, the editor of this outstanding 2002 reference work on Haydn, (1732 -- 1809), notes in his Preface that "Joseph Haydn was the last 'great' composer to be adequately served by scholarship." This book, part of the Oxford Composer Companion series, fulfills its promise of offering a comprehensive guide to Haydn's life, music, and legacy based upon the most up-to-date modern scholarship. David Wyn Jones is senior lecturer in music at the University of Wales and the author of numerous books about Haydn and the Classical Era. The 900 plus entries in this volume were prepared by 41 contributors, each a Haydn scholar in their own right. This book is a treasure-trove of information about Haydn for the lover of his music. I was drawn to this book to help me in my project, completed recently, of listening to CDs of each of Haydn's 104 numbered symphonies and preparing a survey of them in reviews on this site. Thus, the Oxford Companion includes a 34-page essay on Haydn's symphonies by Professor Simon McVeigh, Goldsmith College, University of London. Professor McVeigh's article includes an introduction to symphonic form and traces its development from Haydn's earliest to his final works in nine carefully organized sections. Virtually every symphony is given some individual attention, as McVeigh examines the course of Haydn's symphonic writing throughout the 36 years he employed it. I found this guide indispensable to my project of getting to understand Haydn's symphonies myself in some detail and preparing a survey of them to encourage others to hear them. I supplemented the basic article on the symphony with many others from this volume, including, most basically, a long biography of the composer written by Wyn Jones. I found valuable the many articles about the intellectual climate

of Haydn's day, particularly the articles on Enlightenment, Freemasonry, Sturm und Drang, and Josephism. There are articles on sonata form, the minuet, and variation which are critical to better enjoying the symphonies. The article on performance practices discusses issues in the performance of Haydn from his lifetime up to current debates. There is an excellent article treating "recordings" of Haydn's music and an essay titled "reception" by the dean of Haydn scholars, H.C. Robbins Landon on how Haydn's music has been received and assessed over the years. These are only some of the articles that were of interest to me as I heard and wrote about Haydn's symphonies. This book gives a compelling picture of the breadth and depth of Haydn's output. It includes lengthy essays on every form in which Haydn worked including the string quartet, oratorio, piano sonata, trio, concerto opera, mass, song, baryton music and much more. Many works are discussed in individual entries. Haydn is a composer that one can stay with and love over a long period of time. The book is over 500 pages in length and the entries are organized alphabetically. The book opens with a "thematic overview" which is an index to the entries arranged by subject matter. I found it easy to use, but those coming to the book will want to examine it to find the entries that interest them. Following the detailed entries, an appendix lists Haydn's works organized by type. This appendix impressed me as little else could with the vastness of Haydn's output. A second appendix covers individual numbers in Haydn's vocal works. This book is essential for those wanting to do scholarly work on Haydn. But, perhaps more importantly, it will appeal to lovers of music who want to explore and enjoy the work of this great composer in depth. Robin Friedman

If you're curious about Haydn and have not read any books about him before, I suggest you start with David Wyn Jones's *other* Haydn book, *The Life of Haydn* -- a well-written, up-to-date biography. For the music, I suggest the Haydn chapters of Charles Rosen's remarkable book *The Classical Style*. Then, if you want more, get this book. It seems to have everything, that is, biography (of Haydn and the people he knew), discussion of the music, and cultural background of Haydn's life and work. I read it cover to cover, and was repeatedly rewarded with interesting items that were new to me. The sections providing appreciations of the individual works are helpful and would be good for reading along as you listen to the music. The book is well written. Much of it is by Jones himself, but there are contributions (it seems) from virtually all of the leading contemporary Haydn scholars. Strikingly, the prose style and tone of scholarship are rather uniform throughout the book; Jones as editor must have run a tight ship. Comparing this book to earlier volumes I have read (for example, the biographies of Ferdinand Pohl, Karl Geiringer, and Mary Hughes), I find it to be lot more careful: it doesn't engage in psychological speculation about Haydn, and it doesn't rely very

heavily on the three silly tale-spinners who wrote early unreliable biographies of Haydn (Dies, Carpani, and Framery). Another difference between this book and older biographies is that, in the past few decades, there has been a massive campaign of archival research on Haydn's life and work, whose results are effectively exploited here. In sum, quite an accomplishment. There's no index, grr, which almost led me to leave off my fifth star.

I was not expecting the format used. It was a pleasant surprise because this will be a more useful resource than other books on Haydn. The book contains hundreds of topics and shows how each relate to Haydn-perfect method. I'm hoping to find more on other composers but so far no luck.

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