A Viennese in London: English Reception

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Franz Josef Haydn stayed in London in the 1790s, where he developed as a musician in a city that embraced him in many ways. As befitting a cultural center, London’s concerts were highly advertised in the newspapers and handbills. Within this active musical landscape, Haydn performed benefit concerts in popular opera houses and theatres in London. His patrons helped him both financially and in displaying his performances. He also benefited from the literary and musical patrons he met in London, many of whom shared his views of the moral functions of music. Even his critics helped him to develop his compositional style of combining elements of vocal and instrumental music. Haydn took inspiration from London in developing his already developed musical style, which English audiences were able to relate with.

As Haydn arrived in London, he had to adjust to the established concert setting the city had built up. While they were becoming a fashionable trend amongst London’s elite class, concerts had to be advertised to attract these audiences. Naturally, newspapers and handbills posted around town were the main sources of advertisement. Newspapers would apply to many groups of people—*The Public Advertiser* for businessmen; *The World* for high-class entertainers—and concerts would be advertised throughout all of them to allow for a wide-reaching audience.\(^1\) *The Morning Post*, founded in 1772, used gossip and scandal during concerts as an alternative way to advertise them, also building the foundation for concert reviews.\(^2\) The content of the advertisements started out by simply sharing the performers’ names, but as the 1790’s arrived, complete program lists of the music that was to be performed were also provided.

Besides advertising regular concerts, newspapers ran ads for subscription concerts, which were an important part of concert life. There were 16 rivaling subscription concert series

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1 Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 75.
2 Ibid., 54.
happening in 1792 offered to the public.\textsuperscript{3} Subscription series were important because they allowed the public to witness an entire season of music for a fixed price. From a social perspective, the main concert series, such as the Bach-Abel or Salomon-Haydn series, would be just behind the opera as the most fashionable entertainment.\textsuperscript{4} Because of this, members of the royal family, such as the King, the Duke of Cumberland, and the Prince of Wales, would attend the big subscription concerts as well. Theoretically, this would cause everyone to witness an entire season of music, spreading the city’s enjoyment of music further. However, black markets would run advertisements selling individual tickets, and eventually, the whole concept of the concert series was either dropped or changed to partial subscriptions throughout parts of London.\textsuperscript{5} Even if they did not function well in practice, subscription series still helped establish the norms of the concert scene for London and the rest of the world. Ultimately, it would still be down to advertisements to sell the concerts.

There were several ways to go about writing an advertisement. While Englanders were less keen on foreign performers, they did allow foreign music to be performed by English musicians.\textsuperscript{6} Italian sacred music was the first to be accepted in 1750, and by the 1770s Austro-German symphonic music dominated alongside English theatrical overtures. Londoners became aware that England had no great composers to show off to the rest of the world, so foreign music gave the city stature. Despite preferring English performers, some foreign performers, such as Italian singers, were often the stars throughout this period.\textsuperscript{7} For a time in the 1790’s, several concert series were dedicated entirely to the voice.\textsuperscript{8} Due to the large amount of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 3-4.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{6} McVeigh, Concert Life, 94.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., 81.
\textsuperscript{8} McVeigh, “The Professional Concert,” 2.
\end{footnotesize}
musicians looking for work, subscribers would write advertisements specifically for them. As publishing became more popular, musicians could subscribe to a list for a new composition, providing them with new music which they could take to the concert hall.9

Another popular way to advertise a concert for the general public was by boasting about new techniques and sounds that could be achieved on existing instruments. Chromatic scales, larger scopes for dynamic contrasts, or further instrumental ranges were some of the new features exemplified in the early 1700’s.10 However, audiences cared more about new solo instruments. Some instruments, such as the viola, double bass, trumpet, timpani (kettle drums), and newly chromatic French horn had not been given the opportunity to play many solos. New techniques by specific instrumentalists were also advertised: oboists showed off by swelling a long note from pianissimo to forte and back; violinists displayed “Harmonic Stops”; singers and oboists prided themselves in extended ranges.11 The Welsh development of the pedal-harp reached London in 1769, giving it a new status to accompany songs, and the clarinet slowly gained acceptance for small groups of woodwinds in garden concerts. These new techniques and instruments worked well in attracting audiences.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, London had been established as the largest musical capital in the world. Londoners thought it imperative to provide several leisure activities within their city, so the inclusion of concerts along with other forms of entertainment seemed fitting. The sheer scope and variety of concerts offered within the city borders attracted foreign audiences, musicians, and composers—such as the increasingly popular Franz Josef Haydn.

10 McVeigh, Concert Life, 87-88.
11 Ibid., 90-91.
A prominent friend and admirer of Haydn in London was Charles Burney, who wrote of his enthusiasm for Haydn in his Verses on the Arrival of Haydn in England and his entry on Haydn in A General History of Music. Burney had strong views about art as an instrument for moral instruction, which he expressed in his Metastasio Memoirs published in 1796, a project of which Haydn had interest. Although these memoirs of the eighteenth-century poet were not directly about Haydn, Burney made comparisons between Metastasio and Haydn, noting that both were able to highlight the sublime and evoke virtue in their works. A friend of Charles Burney, the Rev. Thomas Twining, was also an admirer of Haydn who believed in the moral capacities of music. These patrons and their interest in the moral capacity of music would factor into Haydn’s focus on instrumental music as a means of exhibiting Enlightenment morals and ideas.

Perhaps Haydn’s most important patron and supporter was Johann Peter Salomon, a violinist and concert producer who convinced Haydn to come to London the first time. He had heard the news of Nicolaus Esterházy’s death and took this opportunity to bring Haydn from Vienna to London. As Haydn’s closest friend in London, Salomon spent many evenings with Haydn in both professional and social settings. However, little is documented about Salomon’s personality and social, political, or religious views, which is odd given that he may have been the person with the most influence over Haydn’s knowledge of English audience taste. Most importantly, what is known is that the English public appreciated Salomon for bringing Haydn to London and that he and Haydn probably shared similar views on the social function of music.

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13 Ibid., 62-63.
15 Schroeder, 64.
Salomon was perhaps the most important musical and artistic figure in Haydn’s circle while he was in London for his efforts to introduce Haydn to the London musical scene.

Beginning their first season together, Salomon and Haydn created a contract which required Haydn to compose six symphonies during his time in London.\(^\text{16}\) Prior to this contract, Salomon had taken initiative to advertise that Haydn would be composing a new piece of work every night. This seemed to be a challenge for Haydn because he was working on an opera that would be unsuccessful at the theatre during this time.\(^\text{17}\) For their public performances, Haydn had used his Symphonies No. 90 and 92, which were composed in Paris, to help fulfill Salomon’s advertisement. Public and private concerts incorporated small ensembles such as the quartet: Haydn’s String Quartet No. 64 was performed in the fall of 1790.\(^\text{18}\) Aside from composing and performing for their season, Haydn was able to explore the music presented in London.

Prior to Haydn’s arrival to London, there were the two main opera houses, the King’s Theatre and the Pantheon Theatre.\(^\text{19}\) The two opera houses were in competition with one another for revenue. The King’s Theatre suffered from a fire in 1789. When the theatre was rebuilt and under new management, the theatre hired Haydn to compose and perform his works. As for the Pantheon Theatre, its management tried to hire Mozart, but failed. The Pantheon Theatre was unsuccessful when it came to revenue. The theatre was very costly and only had fifty-five performances.\(^\text{20}\)

While in London, Haydn performed for two seasons alongside Johann Salomon.\(^\text{21}\) At the King’s Theatre, Haydn performed for middle-class audiences who were appreciative of his

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17 Ibid., 148.
18 Ibid., 148-149.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
works. Only two of his symphonies were performed at the theatre, the “Miracle” Symphony and Symphony No. 102 in B♭ Major. Since the theatre was newly renovated, the concert hall was fairly large; therefore, Haydn was able to have a larger-sized orchestra during his time. The Sheldonian Theatre was another important theatre where he attended the three-day Grand Music Festival for a performance of his Symphony No. 92. Towards the end of Haydn and Salomon’s season, Haydn attended the Handel Commemoration Festival, which was held the last week of May. The program consisted of Handel’s works such as *Israel in Egypt*, *Messiah*, and extracts from the other oratorios. Attending this program made an impression on Haydn that would encourage him to compose more of his works using the idea of nationalism. Haydn also attended a charity service in St. Paul Cathedral. He heard a large group of children sing an Anglican chant composed by John Jones, which educated him about London’s musical style.

After settling into their second season of concerts, Salomon and Haydn would complete their concert series with the help of their benefit concerts and participation with the Professional Concerts in the Hanover Square. At the Professional Concerts on Monday nights, Haydn and his pupil, Ignaz Pleyel, would feature music at these events. The venue would also hold Salomon’s concerts at which Haydn would direct one of Pleyel’s symphonies. Continuing on with their season, Haydn would complete four more symphonies that were ready to be performed: nos. 93, 94, 97 and 98. After performing nearly thirteen concerts at Hanover Square, Haydn would prepare for his benefit concert in May. His program consisted of the last movement of the *Seven Last Words*, his *Symphonie Concertante*, and the performance of Symphony No. 95. With his benefit concert he brought in three hundred and fifty pounds when he was only expecting two

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23 Ibid., 151.
24 Ibid., 155.
25 Ibid., 156.
hundred. To conclude the end of their second season, Salomon prepared his own benefit concert a month after Haydn’s. Prior to Salomon’s benefit concert, Haydn tried to convince Prince Anton, his employer, to extend his stay in London to carry out more performances, but that was denied. Haydn stayed in London to attend Andrew Ashe’s concert in July and shortly after returned to Vienna.

Contemporary reception of Haydn was informed by a perception in England that instrumental music did not have as strong an ability to serve a moral function as vocal music. For instance, vocal composer Thomas Busby considered Haydn’s symphonies as original but lacking in the poetry of vocal music. Similarly, William Crotch thought that sacred music was the most superior type of music and that vocal music was the best combination of poetry and music. He did concede that Haydn was the best instrumental composer, but he gave the honorific of greatest modern composer to Mozart for his Requiem. However, writers who ascribed to the Romantic view of art, such as E.T.A. Hoffmann, believed that instrumental music surpassed vocal music because it did not attempt to represent anything definite. This same indescribable quality was in fact the attraction for this group and the reason for them that music was best able to capture the core of Romanticism.

Although Haydn did choose to focus on the medium of instrumental music (because of criticism of his vocal music), his symphonies were inspired by the Enlightenment, not Romanticism. In doing so, he had a desire to create a new intelligibility in his music that in the past was ascribed exclusively to vocal music. With this new intelligibility also came complexity that was not well received by critics who were used to melody and simplicity. Music of the past

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28 Ibid., 67.
29 Ibid.
tended to be preferred by the nobility, while subscription concerts of new music were better attended by the middle class. Haydn therefore intended works inspired by the Enlightenment for an audience receptive to the Enlightenment. In order to achieve this, he had to develop a specific new symphonic language for his audience, one full of drama and dualities, such as stability and instability, simplicity and complexity, consonance and dissonance, and serious and comic features. Especially in his late symphonies, Haydn used less heroic material and more motives inspired by folk, dance, and hymn music, exemplified in his slow movements and allegro themes in first movements. Haydn’s focus on instrumental music aligned with Romantic views of music, but his purpose was to advance the Enlightenment rather than Romanticism.

To this end, Haydn was interested in the wordless qualities of instrumental music, yet he still took some inspiration from vocal music, despite criticism leveled against the supposed non-vocal aspects of his music. Two critics of Haydn, William Jackson and William Crotch, both opposed Haydn’s emphasis on harmony rather than melody. Jackson was particularly harsh regarding Haydn’s use of complex harmonies instead of recognizable melodies like in ancient and vocal music. Charles Burney published a counterattack to Jackson’s review, noting that ancient music was also based on complex counterpoint and that melody cannot be created without an understanding of harmony.

Partly in response to these criticisms of his music, Haydn incorporated intricate harmony with flowing melody, much like the Enlightenment concept of combining simplicity and complexity. The progression of his adaptation to the tastes and tolerance for complexity of his audience can be traced through his twelve London Symphonies written, which can be further divided into four segments. The first three, Nos. 93, 95 and 96, demonstrate a need to please the

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30 Schroeder, 68.
31 Ibid., 69.
audience. The second set of three, Nos. 94, 98 and 97, incorporate only slight experimentation with complexity. After Haydn’s brief time out of London, his next three London Symphonies (No.s 99, 100 and 101) balance a mixture of complex and popular features. The final three symphonies, with their high level of complexity, represent that Haydn no longer needed to win approval. In the end, Haydn was able to respond to his critics in order to shape his reception with audiences while still writing to his own satisfaction.

In 1780, as Haydn drew closer to appearing in London, his music received more coverage from the press, Salomon advertising him as Europe’s greatest composer. The anticipation was strong in that the most popular composer of the day was coming to visit the largest musical city in the world. Immediately upon his arrival, Haydn was sought out as an acquaintance and as a teacher. After a successful benefit concert in May 1791 shortly after he arrived in London, one report highly praised Haydn for his ability to “move and govern the passions at will” and lauded his new symphony as “a most wonderful composition.” Charles Burney, Haydn’s good friend, also noted how the appearance of the well-known composer electrified and excited the audience and the fact that all the slow middle movements of the premiered symphony were encored, an unusual occurrence at the time. Haydn may have evolved his compositional style in London, but the anticipation of and immediate response to his arrival were unequivocally enthusiastic.

There were various traits that Londoners particularly liked in his music. Contrapuntal techniques, particularly fugal writing, were already widely loved throughout London, which Haydn had in his scores. His String Quartet Op. 74 No. 3 (“The Rider”), written specifically for Salomon’s concerts, contains a distinct chorale texture in the Largo movement reminiscent of a

32 Schroeder, 70.
33 McVeigh, Concert Life, 79.
34 Ibid., 53.
35 Webster, “Haydn, Joseph,” 2.
36 McVeigh, Concert Life, 150.
hymn that London audiences would have particularly gravitated toward (see Ex. 1a).\textsuperscript{37} Because of Haydn’s unpredictable (and, to them, novel) style, his excursions in unrelated tonal areas were more accepted by audiences.\textsuperscript{38} In his Symphony No. 101 ("The Clock"), for example, Haydn begins the work with an Adagio in D minor, which leads into the main Presto in D major (see Ex. 2). This particular “dark-light” setting would follow Haydn into the opening of The Creation, another piece he worked on in England.\textsuperscript{39} While this is interesting, the two diminished seventh chords six bars before the Presto show Haydn’s unexpected excursion in tonality very well for a late London symphony. When Haydn first introduced these ideas to the British public, the view that they were strange and unpleasant ideas quickly evaporated as the majority of the city fell in love with his style.

While perhaps he inflected his own personal style into the city, Haydn was in turn sensitive to the proper tastes of London, and, similarly to Handel, was able to alter a piece to align with the city’s general desires.\textsuperscript{40} For example, the violin melody in his “The Lark” Quartet is more elaborate than the one in his “Rider” Quartet. As he wrote “The Lark” before he arrived in London, being in the city clearly simplified his melodic technique (see Ex. 1ab).\textsuperscript{41} The criticism of Jackson and Crotch is valid, but Haydn’s interests in harmony ultimately still came down to counterpoint (see Ex. 1b). The ninth bar with the violin’s sixteenth notes was even written for Salomon, as he was the leader of the quartet that premiered the work.\textsuperscript{42} While both pieces have similar textures, the difference in the violin signals Haydn’s response to his new audience in London.

\textsuperscript{37} Somfai, 163.
\textsuperscript{38} McVeigh Concert Life, 159.
\textsuperscript{39} Somfei, 166.
\textsuperscript{40} McVeigh, 119.
\textsuperscript{41} Somfei, 163.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
In his “London” symphonies, Haydn made a very obvious addition in the openings of his works: the “noise-killer” effect. This would often be *fortissimo* orchestral unisons held out at the beginning of an *Adagio*. His previous slow introductions began more melodically and did not have the same effect as the ones his London audiences demanded. Haydn would even omit something that did not get a good reception. For example, Haydn dropped the Symphony 95 in C Minor because the audience did not meet his expectations. This piece represents his pre-London style well, before Haydn knew what London’s music scene was truly like. In all of these circumstances, Haydn took a factor he discovered London audiences wanted and integrated it into the music he wrote for performance in the city. This helped to popularize both his music and, in turn, the city itself in premiering it.

London’s influence on Haydn had a direct impact on his music. Criticism from his patrons helped shape the direction of his ideas, and his London Symphonies in particular show his absorption of the city’s musical culture of the time. Learning about London’s concert life at the time allows us to see why Haydn’s music developed into his new style: his successful concerts, help from Salomon, and popularity throughout the city led him into being a very popular composer to this day.

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43 Ibid., 166.
44 Somfiz, 162.
Example 1a


Example 1b

Joseph Haydn, String Quartet in G Minor, Hob.III:74 (Mvt. II) (Moscow: Muzyka, 1968), 160,
Example 2

Joseph Haydn, Symphony No. 101 in D Major, Hob.I:101 (Mvt. I) (Leipzig: Ernst Eulenburg, 1934), 127,

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Focusing on the process of traveling and preparing concerts in London, David Wyn Jones describes Haydn’s encounters with many colleagues who enhanced Haydn’s stay in London. Jones emphasizes the importance of Haydn’s trip to London and how it helped establish Haydn’s fame and later his legacy. Johann Peter Salomon presented many opportunities to Haydn which would later result in Haydn going to London and continue composing operas and symphonies for patrons. These references are supported by letters written by Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart. The book’s layout is clear and in chronological order, which is helpful in finding specific information about Haydn’s life. David Wyn Jones is a professor of music and Head of School at Cardiff University. Jones has written other works concentrating on the music and musical life of the Classical Period.


Focusing on the latter half of the eighteenth century, Simon McVeigh devises a social analysis of musical life in London, describing the city’s concerts, in terms of the people involved in music-making, advertisement, and its effects on social class and economics. McVeigh capitalizes on London’s importance in expanding the public’s interest in attending concerts. The popularity and variety of concerts allowed the city to attract virtuosic foreign musicians and usher the public into its concert halls. Referencing plentiful journals from people in this time helped McVeigh glean a sharper picture of this subject. This subject is helpfully laid out in a manner by organizing this body of information. McVeigh focuses on several important composers in his analysis; describing Haydn’s particular fame in this city several times helps keep the focus on Haydn amidst the rest of London. McVeigh lectures about music at the University of London, specializing in British musical life mostly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.


By focusing on a single concert series—(the Salomon-Haydn concert series)—McVeigh offers a detailed description of an example of concert life. The article’s first section analyzes how this series handled general concert attributes such as advertisements, audience, and repertoire. The rest shows all the repertoire that was performed for all the concerts of the series, providing readers with a better idea of the time period. With an established template of how other concerts would have to function, McVeigh is able to fit his analysis of the Salomon-Haydn
concerts into this mold. Providing detail on a single example will help make any abstract elements easier to grasp in this paper. McVeigh lectures about music at the University of London, specializing in British musical life mostly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.


David P. Schroeder attempts to fill in a gap in Haydn scholarship by examining the effect that London audiences had on Haydn’s compositions, in addition to the effect Haydn’s music had on his audiences. He also examines how Haydn’s style changed in correlation to his audiences’ expectations. Using Haydn’s *London Symphonies* as a case study, Schroeder tracks the musical changes Haydn made as he gained audience approval. Schroeder indicates that Haydn’s relationship with his English audience was demonstrated through discussions of his works in publications and his personal contacts in England. Haydn was well aware of audience preference for music with a moral, as this would ensure that his music would be better received. Although Schroeder’s article is mainly focused on Haydn’s response to his audiences, it also frequently cites Haydn’s reception by critics and friends. Schroeder offers a relevant take on Haydn’s time in London and a good foundation for understanding Haydn’s relationship with the city of London. Schroeder teaches at the Fountain School of Performing Arts and has written numerous journal articles on Haydn and Mozart.


Seares seeks to extend an analysis of subscription concerts to discussing the relationship between composers, subscribers, and publishers. She explains these concerts with an analysis of James Nares’ subscription list based on the subscribers’ professions. This shows how many composers, performers, musicians, and publishers utilized the subscription service. By providing plentiful examples of advertisements written to illustrate the actual subscriptions occurring, one sees how these events would have unfolded. In examining Haydn’s time, this article provides a foundation explaining the London Haydn would have inhabited. Seares teaches at the University of Western Australia, focusing her research on other topics of music within the eighteenth century.

It has been known that Haydn’s London scores differ from those he was writing for the Esterhazy estate. Through analysis of Haydn’s late musical output, Somfai argues that Haydn’s larger audience in London impacted his musical style. He offers several musical examples from this period, presenting their characteristics and defining the elements that make up Haydn’s London style. This is useful in uncovering the musical differences between Haydn’s styles by focusing on the text itself. Lázló was a Hungarian musicologist focusing on the music of the eighteenth century, especially analyzing notation and performance practice in the works of Haydn.


Describing the chronology of New King’s Theatre, the Pantheon, and concert life in London, Robert D. Hume discusses the rivaling opera houses, New King’s and Pantheon Theatre, and their attempt to remain open to the public, while Simon McVeigh, describes the concert life in London in the two theatres, illustrating Haydn’s influence in the success of the New King’s Theatre. This source is helpfully laid out chronologically, and includes detailed information on Haydn’s journey to London. Robert D. Hume is a Professor of English at Penn State University. He concentrates on eighteenth century British literature. Simon McVeigh is a professor of music at the University of London. McVeigh’s concentration is in British music style in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.


By exploring various operas in terms of social context, William Weber attempts to understand exactly how music was perceived three centuries ago. While it may feel that the audience of the eighteenth century should be completely condemned for their inattentiveness, there were some people who did focus on the music at concerts. The author explains that some people actually listened more than they admitted in writing, just as modern audiences sometimes lose focus during the piece. Lady Mary Coke’s letters offer a wonderful link that show how certain aspects of concerts interest her. Weber sums up the social norms of the general society in the eighteenth century throughout Europe. This broad viewpoint on audiences is important in fully understanding Haydn’s audiences. Weber has written other books on the development of musical tastes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in London and Paris.
Webster's article gives a broad overview of Haydn’s time in London, including his reception, types of compositions completed and performed, contracts, and relationships. Interestingly, Haydn was not in London continuously from 1791 to 1795, but spent about 18 uneventful months in Vienna between 1792 and 1794. Webster emphasizes what an advantage London was for Haydn as a composer because of its position as a global economic and cultural capital. The impetus for Haydn to come to London in the first place was the directive of Johann Peter Salomon, violinist and concert producer, who traveled to Vienna to persuade Haydn to make the journey to London. Most importantly, Webster quotes from contemporary sources regarding reviews of Haydn’s compositions premiered while he was in London. While Webster’s article is more about Haydn and his interactions and work in London, it is also useful because it provides a succinct account of audience reactions to Haydn and his contemporary reception by critics. The Goldwin Smith Professor of Music at Cornell University, Webster specializes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music history and theory, with a particular focus on Haydn.
Abstract

In a culture conducive to refining his compositions, Haydn was able to find success through his patrons and musical techniques. London was the largest musical city at the time, where advertising played a key role in the attendance at concerts. Haydn attended performances there which educated him on London’s music. His patrons (such as violinist Johann Peter Salomon and author Charles Burney) were immensely helpful in his growing musical career in London. Haydn’s shift in compositional style accordingly reflected his stay in London. He combined the music he heard in the city with his own musical language to create his new style. Through studying London’s concert life and Haydn’s interaction with it, one can understand why Haydn’s style changed while within a new city.

Keywords: Haydn, The Creation, London, concert, symphony, string quartet, Salomon