

## 8 The quartets

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Haydn's sixty-eight string quartets<sup>1</sup> span essentially his whole compositional life, from the "Opus 0" and "Opus 1" works of the late 1750s and early 1760s to the unfinished "Opus 103" of 1803. (The traditional opus numbers are retained here for convenience.) They naturally reflect the changes both in Haydn's own compositional habits and in the status and meaning of the string quartet during that near-half-century. The works do become increasingly grand over time, but the extent to which many of the traits of the later quartets are discernible – albeit *in nuce* – in the early ones is quite remarkable. Haydn's compositional modes in these works range from galant to learned and passionate, from intensely original and inward looking to approachably public, and from folklike to sublime. Although this oeuvre mirrors many of the stylistic concerns of the period and of Haydn's music overall, the features that most distinguish the quartets are their use of "conversational" textures and devices, their persistent elevation and seriousness, which is intensified rather than undercut by their pervasive wit, and their strikingly tactile and performative use of the medium.

### Origins and sources

Works specifically for two violins, viola, and cello with this last as a solo participant rather than as the written-out representative of a continuo group,<sup>2</sup> were already by c.1760 not unusual in southern Germany, Austria, and Bohemia, as well as in Italy, albeit in a rather different style.<sup>3</sup> In France, the *quatuor concertant*, or *quatuor dialogué* – a genre distinguished by its conspicuously evenhanded distribution of thematic material to all the parts – was also on the rise.<sup>4</sup> The oft-repeated story of Baron Fürnberg's request for the Haydn works eventually known as Op. 1 – namely that he wanted some music for a particular combination of players (Haydn himself, Fürnberg's estates manager, the local pastor, and the cellist J. A. Albrechtsberger)<sup>5</sup> – suggests that the medium at least was in some sense familiar, and that the genre was viewed as congenial for friendly, if not completely amateur, music-making. Nevertheless, despite the undoubted pre-existence of the medium, it is not inaccurate to portray Haydn as "inventing" a version of the string quartet that laid the compositional, aesthetic, and cultural foundations of

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the genre both for subsequent composers (most famously Mozart, who dedicated his first six mature quartets to Haydn) and for Western musical culture more broadly.

Haydn's quartets were so influential not only because they are great works in a genre whose time had evidently come, but also because they were so immediately and widely published. Parts for all the quartets regularly appeared in at least three countries as soon as the first print or copy was made available. Indeed, the early publications were in fact unauthorized by Haydn: it was not until the Op. 33 set of 1781 that Haydn was contractually permitted to sell his works to publishers and thus to have some control over the disseminated text. But authorized or not, the first publications, all in parts, sold vigorously, from which the logical conclusion is that across Northern Europe there were significant numbers of players both eager and able to tackle this often challenging music. From Op. 9 onwards the quartets were typically published in the sets of six or three designed by Haydn in conformance with longstanding practice for both small and large-scale instrumental works. The original opus numbers were, however, often not the ones familiar to us now, and in any case differed from one publisher to the next. In addition to the nine sets of six (Opp. 9, 17, 20, 33, 50, 54/55, 64, 71/74, 76) there are three independent works: "Op. 0" (c.1760), Op. 42 (1785), and the unfinished Op. 103 (1803). Op. 77, a set of two, was evidently intended for Prince Lobkowitz as a full opus, but was, for reasons unknown, never completed.<sup>6</sup>

By and large the sets were published with the individual works in the order familiar to us today, though Opp. 54 and 64 had alternative orders well into the nineteenth century. The published order, however, was typically not the order in which Haydn composed the works, but rather an arrangement calculated to make the best impression on potential buyers.<sup>7</sup> There are certain compositional features common to all the sets: in none of the nine sets of six are there two works in the same key, and all sets but Op. 20 include one work in the minor mode (Op. 20 includes two). In addition, each of the nine sets of six has a more or less distinct compositional "character," as if Haydn was looking at a particular set of compositional strategies from six points of view. Op. 20, for instance, is famous for its fugal finales and its "Sturm und Drang" intensity. In Op. 33 the minuet and trio movements are all entitled "Scherzo," (joke) and as many commentators have noted, the set as a whole is particularly full of witticisms. The Opp. 50 and 54/55 sets include works of striking and conspicuous originality, and the Op. 71/74 set is often noted for its public character, which includes the "noise killing" opening measures – which of course also have a variety of internal structural functions.<sup>8</sup> Op. 76 includes the longest and most obviously grand works of all, with extraordinarily solemn and reflective slow movements (including,

most famously, if not most sublimely, the variations on the “Kaiser” hymn in the slow movement of no. 3). At the same time, the sets are by no means monolithic: within Op. 76, for example, the grandeur of the Kaiser hymn movement and the long-breathed opening of the “Sunrise” quartet, no. 4, are offset by the exoticism and grotesquerie of the finale to the “Quinten” quartet, no. 2 in d minor, and the apparent naivety of the opening variation movements in nos. 5 in D and 6 in Eb.

The circumstances prompting Haydn to write any given set of quartets are, apart from the story about Baron Fürnberg, not terribly clear. The early works, and Opp. 9, 17, and 20, are not dedicated (except by implication, to Prince Nicolaus), were published only in unauthorized editions, and we do not know what external factors, if any, stimulated their composition. Op. 33 has no dedication, but was written directly for publication soon after the famous change in Haydn’s contract, which removed the condition that Haydn’s work belonged to Prince Nicolaus.<sup>9</sup> Op. 50 was dedicated to King Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia, a keen (and evidently accomplished) cellist. Opp. 54/55 and 64 were sold to the violinist and perhaps over-entrepreneurial merchant Johann Tost, who may or may not have arranged for their publication in Paris. Op. 71/74 was written with the impresario and violinist Johann Salomon in mind, for Haydn’s second visit to London, quartets from Opp. 54/55 and 64 having been of interest in public concerts before and during the first London visit.<sup>10</sup> The late quartets (Opp. 71/74, 76, and 77) have dedications (to Count Apponyi, to Count Erdödy, and to Prince Lobkowitz, respectively). Erdödy, at least, is said to have “ordered” – i.e., commissioned – his set.<sup>11</sup> Whatever the circumstances of commission, Haydn had excellent players – especially first violinists – for whom to write, and it is generally assumed that the earlier works (up to and including Op. 33) would have been written with Eszterháza concertmaster Luigi Tomasini in mind. It is possible but by no means certain that Tost was the violinist Haydn had in mind as a first performer of Opp. 54/55 and 64. It is not clear whom (if anyone) he might have intended as the first performers of the last works; there is a reference to a performance of Op. 77 at Eisenstadt in October 1799: it is not out of the question that Luigi Tomasini (and possibly his sons Alois and Anton), who were part of the Eisenstadt orchestra, might have performed.

Given the striking absence of clear circumstantial stimuli for the composition of the quartets, it is tempting to think of them as a private compositional laboratory, as “art for art’s sake,” prompted only by the desire to work out particular generic and compositional problems.<sup>12</sup> There is surely something to this, but the notion of the compositional hothouse is enriched and complicated both by Haydn’s desire to sell these works as broadly as possible, and by their brilliantly tactile use of the medium: even if they were a kind

of laboratory, intended as much for himself as for an unknowable audience, it is hard to believe that Haydn did not have both the sounds of particular players and the interests of particular kinds of buyers in mind as he wrote.

Unlike Haydn's large-scale or public works – symphonies, masses, operas, oratorios – the quartets did not have highly publicized premiere performances. The occasions for which they were written were more generic than particular, and the kinds of occasions differed sharply in Vienna and London. As many commentators have noted, string quartets are not found on the programs of any public concerts in Vienna during Haydn's lifetime; nevertheless, production and consumption of quartet publications during the latter part of the century in Vienna were extraordinarily strong.<sup>13</sup> This suggests an active private life for this genre. The notion of the quartet as a private genre, in conjunction with the pervasive (and contemporary) notion of the quartet as conversation, might suggest that this genre belonged in the parlour, with its connotations of domesticity and femininity. This may have been the case for lighter *quatuors concertants*, and perhaps for *quatuors brillants*, which would have required only one truly excellent player. But in fact the few records of Viennese quartet occasions that have so far been unearthed<sup>14</sup> suggest that the performers of quartets such as Haydn's tended to be at least partly professional, overwhelmingly though not uniformly male,<sup>15</sup> and the whole enterprise self-consciously high-minded in a way that other kinds of chamber music (chamber music with piano, and Lieder, for example) were not, or at least not so consistently. Ludwig Finscher points out that the study score seems to have been invented for Haydn's quartets;<sup>16</sup> there is no evidence that Haydn himself was in on this invention (though of course his autographs, like those of other quartet composers, were in score); but the notion of a venue in which a relatively small audience could follow a performance along, and for which performers could have studied the work in a more holistic and disinterested way than a single part might allow, fits extraordinarily well with the many refined compositional devices – and many of the witticisms – in these works. It also connects with the increasingly pervasive notions about “true” quartets (as opposed, presumably, both to quartet arrangements and to aesthetically lighter works for the medium);<sup>17</sup> Haydn's quartets in Vienna both helped form, and responded to, this construction.

The place of quartets in London musical life was quite different from that in Vienna. There were, of course, also private quartet parties, but quartets – increasingly of the broadly structured *brillant* type – were also heard in public concerts, by a large audience accustomed to programs mixing all genres of music from symphony to solo aria.<sup>18</sup> Thus it is not surprising that part of Haydn's London lionizing consisted of performances (by Salomon and his quartet) of pieces from the Opp. 54/55 and 64 sets.<sup>19</sup> It also fits

that certain kinds of obvious effects (e.g., staccato homophony, pregnant pauses, unison passages) in Op. 71/74 (written for public performance in London), either make their first appearance, or are particularly frequent in these works.

## The nature of the genre

### Genre as a topic

By the end of Haydn's life the string quartet was considered a genre distinct from and superior to other kinds of chamber music. Griesinger's introduction to his biography of Haydn lists the quartets second, immediately after the symphonies.<sup>20</sup> And Dies's summary of Haydn's early life notes that he "wrote quartets and other pieces that won him increasing favor . . . until he was known all over as a genius."<sup>21</sup> This elevation of the string quartet above other chamber genres was perhaps incipient in Johann Georg Sulzer's notion in his 1772–79 dictionary that four-part chamber music writing was absolutely the most difficult kind of composition,<sup>22</sup> but he does not specify the string quartet in particular. It is not clear exactly how and when the string quartet found its high place, but it is generally agreed that Haydn's work in this genre crucially affected the change in status. The qualities of the canonized string quartet included not only the special sound of four solo string instruments, but also the "conversational" relations among the four parts (that is, the sharing of important material among the parts), the intellectualism of the music, which, in Haydn's hands especially, often emerged as wit, and the mixture of this intellectualism with performative display.

A survey of Haydn's quartet oeuvre suggests that other genres – the *quatuor concertant* and the *quatuor brillant*, the concerto, the solo sonata, as well as aria, recitative, hymn, fugue, and various versions of minuet – all fed into Haydn's emerging sense of the string quartet. Often in his earlier quartets these other genres function as models that pervade most or all of a movement. For example, concerto-like opening movements, in common or cut time, beginning with a single clear melodic line that articulates a strongly periodic melody over a steady accompaniment can be found in Op. 9 no. 3, Op. 9 no. 1, and Op. 17 no. 2; these movements tend to continue in a concerto-like mode, with the three lower parts in largely accompanimental, filler, or rather mechanically concertante roles. Although first-violin virtuosity is a feature of almost all the quartets from earliest to latest, in the later works concerto-like moments (especially "brilliant-style" cadences) tend to be sutured to non-concerto-like material. Similarly, the famous finales of Op. 20 nos. 2, 5 and 6 are thoroughgoing fugues; in later quartets fugato passages tend to occur either in development sections, or in finales as a kind

Example 8.1a Op. 74, no. 1, first movement, mm. 3–6

The musical score for Example 8.1a consists of four staves. The top staff is Violin I, the second is Violin II, the third is Viola, and the bottom is Cello/Double Bass. The tempo is 'Allegro moderato'. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score shows a crescendo from piano (*p*) to fortissimo (*ff*). The Cello/Double Bass part features a prominent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is marked with *cresc.* and *[p]*.

of foil to the strikingly light or jolly opening material. This general chronological trend notwithstanding, already in the finale of Op. 9 no. 4 we see Haydn enjoying the comic possibilities of juxtaposing a fugal texture with lighter material.

Vocal models also abound throughout the quartets, especially in the slow movements, but the earlier quartets are more likely than the later ones to retain the model throughout a movement. The slow movement of Op. 17 no. 5 consists entirely in an alternation of *arioso* and recitative. While the recitative is a literal copy of the vocal model, the *arioso*, like most such moments in Haydn, evokes song in a more generalized way, using the full range of the instrument and idiomatically instrumental figuration. Other vocal models invoked include full aria, chorale or hymn, and even in one instance (Op. 64 no. 2) a quasi-sacred cantus firmus.<sup>23</sup> In the later quartets Haydn is more likely to invoke a vocal genre and then transform it into something purely instrumental: the slow movement of Op. 76 no. 1, for example, starts out as a hymn, but juxtaposes this with quintessentially quartet-like conversation between cello and first violin around a pulsating accompaniment in the inner parts.

By the later quartets, not only had Haydn absorbed elements from a host of different genres into his string quartets, and not only was he quite accustomed to juxtaposing and interweaving them, but the quartets' "ownership" of these different idioms and textures could become a topic in itself. The first movement of Op. 74 no. 1 is a wonderful example of genre as the topic of a movement.<sup>24</sup> It begins almost symphonically, after the characteristic "noise-killer" introduction of this public opus, with the three upper parts in slow motion over a Trommel (or drum) bass in the cello (see Ex. 8.1a). The transition is much more conversational, or "truly" quartet-like, with material passed among all the parts, but subtly altered each time (see Ex. 8.1b). A concerto *topos* emerges to clinch the modulation to the dominant and the exposition closes with a *quatuor concertant*-like passing around of unremarkable passage work (see Ex. 8.1c). A fugato appears in the recapitulation,

Example 8.1b Op. 74, no. 1, first movement, mm. 18–29

Musical score for Example 8.1b, Op. 74, no. 1, first movement, measures 18–29. The score is written for four staves: Treble Clef (top), Treble Clef (second), Bass Clef (third), and Bass Clef (bottom). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is 3/4. The tempo/mood is marked *dolce*. The score begins at measure 18. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second and third staves have accompaniment with slurs and ties. The fourth staff has a bass line with slurs and ties. The score ends at measure 29. Dynamics include *p* (piano) in measures 24 and 25.

Example 8.1c Op. 74, no. 1, first movement, mm. 49–54

Musical score for Example 8.1c, Op. 74, no. 1, first movement, measures 49–54. The score is written for four staves: Treble Clef (top), Treble Clef (second), Bass Clef (third), and Bass Clef (bottom). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 49. The first staff has a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second staff has accompaniment with slurs and ties. The third and fourth staves have accompaniment with slurs and ties. The score ends at measure 54. Dynamics include *tr* (trill) in measure 49.

and the movement ends with a symphonic unison version of the opening material and a repeat of the concertante codetta. It may be no accident that this display of generic inclusiveness – with all genre-markers discrete and unmistakable – occurs in the set written specifically for public performance in London; it is in its way an assertion of the by then well-understood power of the quartet.

Even in the earliest quartets the minuet was a genre sufficiently well established that it could immediately be played with. The compositional issue in this case seems to have been not so much “how do the relevant characteristics of this genre translate to the string quartet,” but “what is a minuet anyway?” Gretchen Wheelock has argued that it was both an easily recognized dance and the classic composition-teaching medium, both of which “templates” Haydn used with endless invention.<sup>25</sup> Wheelock points out the ways in which Haydn plays with the expected regularities of dance meters and phrases: hemiolas and uneven phrase lengths are rife. In addition, the courtly minuet, with its more or less equal three beats, turns easily into the country dance *Ländler*, with its waltz-like emphasis on the first beat, and its characteristic slurring of the first two beats. Haydn often exploits this slippage, either in the contrast between Minuet and Trio, or within the minuet itself. The minuet’s role as teaching tool is often invoked in its use of canon (the majority of Trios have at least one canonic moment), and its direct use or suggestion of a two-voice texture, which can be as obvious as the famous canonic movement in the “Quinten” quartet, Op. 76 no. 2 or as subtle as the beginning second strain of the minuet in Op. 17 no. 3, which starts with a brief two-voice imitative entry for the two violins, seems to be going to bloom into four parts, then tightens back into two parts again, this time with each part played by two instruments in octaves.

## Conversation

The metaphor of the quartet as a conversation “among four reasonable people,” as Goethe famously put it,<sup>26</sup> was in the air as Haydn was writing his quartets. It had been used for various kinds of chamber music throughout the eighteenth century, but between the 1770s and the early nineteenth century it became particularly attached to the string quartet.<sup>27</sup> And indeed, the quartet as a genre, certainly, if not exclusively in Haydn’s hands, was in part “about” the conversations possible when four people play music together in a given situation; primarily among the four parts (and secondarily among the players of those parts), but also between the players and the audience, and between the composer as represented in the “work itself” and the listeners. “Conversation” in the quartet is often taken to imply a kind



of textural democracy; that is, the four parts having comparably important roles in the presentation of the musical material, and taking turns, at least to some extent, in leading the discussion.<sup>28</sup> But eighteenth-century descriptions of the quartet as conversation suggest that the metaphor was also useful because it invoked an ideal of clarity or rationality in the disposition of roles, as much as, if not more than, democracy. Some writers took the idea of roles to the logical extreme, assigning the four instruments dramatic characters. Giuseppe Carpani, an early Haydn biographer, heard in his quartets a first violin who was a spirited and likable middle-aged man; a second violin who was his friend and whose main function was to keep the conversation going, rarely drawing attention to himself; a learned and sententious cello who often lent gravity to the utterances of the first violin; and a viola figured as a charming but chattering woman with nothing important to say, who could at least occasionally let the others draw breath.<sup>29</sup> Other writers relied less extravagantly on the metaphor. Music theorist Heinrich Christoph Koch described the galant style of quartet writing as follows: “While one voice takes the leading melody, the two others [aside from the voice serving as a bass] must continue with complementary melodic material that will reinforce the expression without beclouding the leading melody.”<sup>30</sup> One could imagine the real-life conversational equivalent of Koch’s “complementary melodic material” as the body language of an interlocutor, subtly shaping the main speaker’s utterance. But whether or not there is an exact parallel in verbal communication, the picture that Koch paints here is of a discourse where all the participants know their roles and where those roles collaborate in clarifying the current hierarchy of events.

The ending of the first movement of Op. 64 no. 2 in b minor is a case where Haydn achieves both “democracy” and “clarity,” and uses the variety of textures at his disposal to articulate the structural function of his material (see Ex. 8.2). The excerpt begins with the tonally stable version of the first theme (as in Op. 33 no. 1, the earlier b minor quartet, this one begins as though it could be in D, b minor’s relative major); the unison emphasizes the “grounding” function of this material. No sooner has Haydn established this idea, though, than the texture changes [at (1)] to first-violin domination with corroborating pairs of notes in the two inner parts. This phrase elides at (2) to what sounds like pre-cadential wind-up. The first violin repeats a motive derived from the opening of the movement, and the cello both provides a steady rhythmic drive and articulates the dominant pedal – a classic “supporting” role. The viola at (3) joins the cello in pushing, staccato, to the third beat – a support to the support, perhaps bringing out something latent in the lowest line. The second violin starts this phrase [at (2)] by seeming to stick obstinately, if subsidiarily, to the slurs from the previous measure, perhaps “agreeing” to be supportive, but demurring enough not to

Example 8.2 Op. 64, no. 2, first movement, mm. 92–104

The musical score consists of three systems of four staves each. The first system (measures 92-95) shows the first violin and second violin playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the viola and cello provide harmonic support. The second system (measures 96-98) features a more complex texture with the first violin and cello playing long notes, and the second violin and viola playing shorter figures. The third system (measures 99-101) continues the dialogue between the first violin and cello, with the second violin and viola providing accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and articulation marks.

want to join the staccato bandwagon. At (4) the second violin's independence turns out to have been prescient, as its three-note figure, fitted with a turn, converses directly and relevantly with the first violin. The second has thus transformed itself from mere sidekick to the supporters into the co-leader of the conversation. However that moment in the sun is (as always) short-lived, as the first violin and cello together push the argument off its dominant pedal and towards an extended cadence in which the first violin takes on a kind of diva role. The cello here keeps the rhythm going, lending life to the first violin's long notes, and the two inner parts provide "mere" harmonic

filler – inglorious but essential. At (6), the beginning of the series of short cadences that end the movement, the viola resumes (though in a different rhythm) its staccato accompaniment from (3), but since there is no cello line, this motive takes on the “first-supporter” role that the cello had before. But the line is a little more mobile than the cello’s at (2), and the new timbre of the viola as bass line lends it a level of independence (perhaps akin to an addition to the argument rather than a simple agreement). The second violin takes over this role briefly, “chattering” in the background with the viola, but as the cadence looms, the cello takes over the role of bass line, and all the lower parts line up to accompany the first violin (see Ex. 8.2).

Words do not adequately capture the subtlety of the discourse in this excerpt, but among its miracles is that the thread of the argument is never in doubt despite the complexity of the texture. The movement as a whole is constructed from only a couple of motives, and this passage very clearly explicates, diverges from, and then returns to those motives; in addition, the first violin is clearly the part that carries the discursive thread, despite the activity in the other parts. These measures constitute only one example among many such moments of compositional virtuosity in this oeuvre.

### **Wit and humor**

However confined the immediately imagined performance venues for most of Haydn’s quartets, it is clear that they are directed not only to the players but also to non-playing listeners. Gretchen Wheelock has noted of the last movement of Op. 33 no. 2, the “Joke,” that the famous undercutting of the ending by fragmentation of the theme, general pause, and use of the opening motive as a cadence directly invokes the idea of an audience, since the players, even if sightreading, would be able to see the full workings of the music at this point.<sup>31</sup> This famous joke is all about expectation – when will the piece end, and how can the listeners tell when to clap or otherwise indicate their acknowledgment of the end? Many, if not most, of Haydn’s witticisms in the quartets play on the listeners’ (and often also the players’) expectations, though most do not do so as baldly as the end of Op. 33 no. 2. General pauses of a measure or more (particularly in evidence in Op. 71/74) are obvious examples of such play.<sup>32</sup> More subtle play on expectations can involve the function of a phrase: the “how do you do” beginning of Op. 33 no. 5, for example, is a classic cadential motive; such “beginning/ending” jokes are quite prevalent in the earlier quartets. The play on expectations can also be about the genre: the dissolution of the strenuous contrapuntal beginning to the finale of Op. 9 no. 4 into something much lighter (see above) plays on the listeners’ expectations of the aesthetic and social level

Example 8.3 Op. 71, no. 3, second movement, mm. 1–8

Andante con moto

The musical score consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) contains the melody, marked with *[mezza voce]*, *licenza*, and *fz*. The second staff (treble clef) is marked with *[mezza voce]* and *(ten.)*. The third staff (bass clef) is marked with *[mezza voce]* and *[ten.]*. The fourth staff (bass clef) is marked with *[mezza voce]*. The tempo is *Andante con moto*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

both of this movement in particular and of finales in general. Witticisms that play on the listeners' expectations can also involve structural stereotypes: the first movements of the quartets (especially those before Op. 50) are full of false or otherwise ambiguous or elided moments of recapitulation. And in the *grazioso* binary theme of the slow movement in Op. 71 no. 3, the first strain, which "should" go to the dominant, F major – and even does, briefly, at the beginning of m. 7, gets diverted to d minor – a very peculiar ending for a theme that started out so innocuously (see Ex. 8.3). Because jokes such as these rely on the listeners' (and players') structural and generic expectations for their appreciation; because, in other words, the recipients of the works need to contribute something quite specific in order "properly" to receive them, many of the witticisms in these quartets can be said to contribute to their overall ethic of conversation, with the interchange here occurring between the composer on the one side and all qualified players and listeners on the other. The subtle and technical nature of many of these witticisms also demarcates an "inner circle" of aficionados perhaps analogous to the ideally exclusive circles in which "true" conversation took place.

Some jokes in the quartets, however, address a less exclusive audience. There are many moments when the sound alone is the humor. Sound *qua* sound is a preoccupation throughout these works: they are carefully marked with dynamics and articulation, and Haydn uses double stops, open strings, and "una corda" designations (i.e., playing high on a low string). He also plays with the sonic qualities of the relations among the parts: close harmonies, high instruments playing a bass line, "too many" instruments playing a busy accompaniment, drones, octave and at-pitch doublings, and different instruments playing the tune. Even in this astonishingly varied palette, some sounds stand out as humorous. The obsessively gurgling bariolage (alternation of an open string with regularly stopped notes, often on lower strings) in the finale to the "Frog" quartet, Op. 50 no. 6, is one such example;

the extraordinary high and homophonic staccato passage for the three upper parts towards the end of the slow movement of Op. 71 no. 3 is another. Haydn sometimes uses pizzicato to provoke a laugh: the completely plucked end of the already flamboyantly rambunctious finale to Op. 33 no. 4 is funny partly because it reintroduces from the first four beats of the work the question of beginnings that sound like endings and vice versa, but partly also because ensemble pizzicato is in this context an astonishing sound.

## Performativity

If the witticisms in the quartets play up the relation between the composer and his audience, the sonic humor draws some attention to the material qualities of the instruments for which these works were written. But Haydn's quartets also make performance unusually prominent, both as a physical act and as a more abstract *topos*. Concerto-like moments occur in most of these works at one point or another, as they do in Mozart's quartets. These moments raise the *topos* of performance by evoking what we might think of as the typical concert violinist. Haydn also evokes the Hungarian Gypsy fiddler<sup>33</sup> in a number of places: among which are the development section of the opening movement of the "Kaiser" quartet, op. 76 no. 3, where the Hungarian melody<sup>34</sup> is emphasized by crude drones in the lower parts, and the finale of Op. 20 no. 4, where the second violin adds the obligatory tinkling grace notes to the exotically repetitive sixteenths of the first violin.<sup>35</sup> In addition to depicting different "ideal types" of performers, however, Haydn also writes passages that draw attention to the players' manual efforts. These include extreme and speedy string crossings and bariolage, which draw attention to the player's bow arm, often in ways disproportionate to the compositional interest of the passage. In addition, Haydn occasionally specifies fingerings that highlight the player's left-hand technique – again often in ways that exceed the structural or melodic needs of the passage. Examples include the conspicuous slides in the trio of the "Joke" quartet, and a number of passages that use the higher reaches of low strings in surprising or conspicuous ways – as in the closing group of the first movement of Op. 64 no. 4.

Attention to performers and performance is not incommensurate with wit. In a number of instances Haydn plays with the disjunction between sight and sound, or between what the audience might assume the composer wrote, and what the performers must actually do. For example, the Trio of Op. 9 no. 4 is in three independent parts (itself a pun), but is played by only the two violins (the first violin plays in double stops throughout). And in the middle (G $\flat$  major) section of the slow movement of Op. 74 no. 2,

the second violin has the tune, in a relatively high register, with the first playing not filigree decorations on top, but rather a typical second violin part: long notes in the middle register. These kinds of witticisms about performance roles and expectations are completely absent from Mozart's and largely absent from Beethoven's quartets, and suggest the extent to which Haydn was concerned not only with humor, nor, indeed, only with art in the abstract, but also with the variety of interactions possible in a fully composed work played by four people with three different instruments and an undetermined number of attentive listeners.