

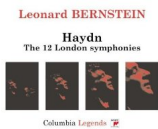
## Haydn - The 12 London Symphonies (Bernstein) CD1 [2003]

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 08 June 2016 11:40 -

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Symphony in D major, Hob.I No.93 1. *Adagio, Allegro assai* 2. *Largo cantabile* 3. *Menuetto. Allegro, Trio* 4. *Finale, Presto ma non troppo* Symphony  
in G major, Hob.I No.94 "Surprise"  
5. *Adagio. Vivace assai* 6. *Andante* 7. *Menuetto. Allegro molto, trio* 8. *Finale, Allegro di molto*

Symphony in C minor, Hob.I No.95

9. *Allegro moderato* 10. *Andante* 11. *Menuet, Trio* 12. *Finale, Vivace*  
New York Philharmonic Leonard Bernstein – conductor

This five-disc French Import from the "Columbia Legends" series collects all of Leonard Bernstein's performances of Haydn's 12 "London" Symphonies, originally recorded between 1958 and 1975. This music was most recently available in Sony's "Royal Edition" series as two separate volumes. In case you missed one or both of those aforementioned titles (I only previously owned 100-104), this set is the one to get now as the "Royals" have been out-of-print for a few years. Bernstein's accounts of Symphonies Nos. 100-104 were my first, so they will always hold a special place in my heart. But even as I have expanded my collection to include acclaimed performances by Dorati, Davis, Jochum and Beecham among others, the Bernsteins still stand out for their power and precision. For Symphonies 93-99 I was reared on George Szell, but Bernstein's renditions are every bit as good. Even though I should have gotten all these Symphonies years ago, they were certainly worth the wait. --- Michael Brad Richman, amazon.com

Joseph Haydn's last 12 symphonies, commissioned by the London impresario Johann Peter Saloman and composed between 1791 and 1795, are known as the London Symphonies, and

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are considered the composer's supreme achievements in the form.

These are the grandest of Haydn's symphonies, in both proportion and orchestration. Haydn here offers a compendium of late-18th-century symphonic thought, embracing the full range of style and topics found in the music of the classical period. While the ideas themselves aren't new, they are expressed with a new directness and a heightened sense of profile. Most remarkable of all, perhaps, is how each of these works exhibits its own character while remaining unmistakably the work of one mind.

The last of Haydn's London Symphonies is a work of summation whose nickname ("London") attests to its pride of place in the group. It begins with a weighty introduction in the style of a French overture, full of pathos. In the Andante, a theme-and-variations movement, there's a strong sense of fantasy. The minuet is a brilliant country dance with a hint of the hurdy-gurdy. And the finale opens with an exuberant treatment of a Croatian folk tune over a musette-style drone base. At the end of the movement, in the score he wrote, "Fine Laus Deo" ("The End, Praise God") provides a wonderful ending to this glorious set of 12 symphonies. --- npr.org

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