

Hungarian Stamps 2009

HAYDN MEMORIAL YEAR 2009

Magyar Posta is commemorating the birth of the Austrian composer **Joseph Haydn** (Rohrau, 31 March 1732 – Vienna, 31 May 1809), the first great master of Viennese classical music, by issuing a special stamp.

Haydn's musical talent became apparent very early in music-making within the family. His parents, at no little financial sacrifice, had the six-year old boy take music lessons, so he learnt how to write and read music, played on instruments, and his singing improved. His chance came when the choirmaster of Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, who was looking for new choirboys, visited. Hearing the eight-year old child sing, he accepted Haydn as a Cathedral chorister. His career there came to an end when Haydn's voice started to break. He then made a living from copying scores, organ playing and teaching before turning to composing.

Before long, Haydn went to Baron Fürnberg's country home, Weinzierl, where he composed his first string quartets. In 1759 he took a position at Count Morzin's estate in Bohemia, where his first symphony was written. The young musician caught the attention of Prince Paul Esterházy and he was appointed vice-Kapellmeister of the Eisenstadt orchestra in 1761. The Prince died a year later and was followed by his brother, Nikolaus Esterházy the Magnificent, who continued Haydn's employment. The composer wrote 170 pieces for the Prince, as well as composing for others. When the Kapellmeister died, Haydn succeeded him to the post. By 1766 the Esterházy palace in Fertőd was completed together with the theatre and Music House, where the musicians lodged. Their family members, however, remained in Eisenstadt, which probably led to composing the well-known Farewell Symphony in 1722. In 1790 Nikolaus Esterházy died. His successor dismissed the orchestra and theatre, but continued to pay the composer's salary.

Haydn's reputation spread throughout Europe, and a few of his symphonies were even performed in America. In 1791 he travelled to London, where he composed new works. The concerts brought him enormous success and he received an honorary doctorate in Oxford. Meanwhile Nikolaus Esterházy II became the master at Eszterháza, who reorganised musical life on the estate. Haydn was also given a role in this but this connection only extended to writing a few new pieces. He died in 1809, and his ashes were laid to rest in the former chapel of the Esterházy family, in the Haydn Mausoleum in Eisenstadt's Bergkirche. (Source: http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Haydn)

The stamp design is a witty graphic composition using artistic licence to give a new function to the keys of a piano and the notes, thus raising a memorial in an individual visual message on the 200th anniversary of the death of Joseph Haydn (1732-1809). An unusual feature of the stamp issue is that every other row of stamps in the sheet is inverted. The first day cover for the stamp depicts the lines of the staff and the special postmark shows Joseph Haydn's name and the years of his birth and death.



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Printed by Állami Nyomda

Designed by Orsolya Kármán

Perforated size of stamps: 40 x 30 mm. There are 50 stamps in each sheet.

300,000 copies issued.

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