Leopold Koželuch (1747–1818)

Symphonies

As early as 1772 the English musician and music historian Dr Charles Burney described Vienna as "the imperial seat of music as well as of power", drawing his readers' attention to the presence there of a number of gifted and highly productive composers. Its rise in importance as a musical centre was due largely to a decision made in the late sixteenth century to transfer the court from Prague to Vienna. Where the court went the nobility followed, and Vienna soon eclipsed Prague as the greatest city in the far-flung Habsburg dominions. Like any imperial city, Vienna was a magnet for talented and ambitious artists and musicians from all over Europe, but one group in particular was unusually successful: the Bohemians. In the middle decades of the eighteenth century, some of the leading musical figures in Vienna were Bohemians, among them Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787), Florian Leopold Gassmann (1729–1774), Johann Baptist Vaňhal (Wanhal) (1739–1813) and Leopold Koželuch, while in other European centres composers such as Josef Mysliveček (1737–1781) and Antonio Rosetti (c. 1750–1792) enjoyed deserved fame as composers of international stature.

Visitors to Bohemia were universally impressed by the high quality of the musicians there. Burney observed that he "had frequently been told that the Bohemians were the most musical people of Germany, or, perhaps, of all Europe", but on visiting there he realised that this apparent musicality was firmly rooted in excellent teaching.

"I found at length, that, not only in every large town, but in all villages, where there is a reading and writing school, children of both sexes are taught music… I went into the school [in Čáslav], which was full of little children of both sexes, from six to ten or eleven years old, who were reading, writing, playing on violins, hautbois, bassoons, and other instruments. The organist had in a small room of his house four clavichords, with little boys practicing on them all: his son of nine years old, was a very good performer."

Koželuch, born in Velvary, a small town northwest of Prague, may have begun his musical training in just this kind of environment, but his advanced education took place in Prague where he studied counterpoint and vocal writing with his cousin, Jan Antonín Koželuch (1738–1814) and piano and instrumental composition with F.X. Dussek (Dušek) (1731–1799). Dussek, a former pupil of Georg Christoph Wagenseil in Vienna, was the leading keyboard teacher in Prague and a highly accomplished composer of instrumental music. Under his guidance Koželuch [who changed his name to Leopold to avoid confusion with his cousin] developed into an exceptional pianist and a composer of great promise. A flirtation with studying law was abandoned after the successful performance of his first ballets and pantomimes in Prague, and in 1778 he moved to Vienna to pursue a career as a professional musician. Koželuch's reputation as a pianist, teacher and composer was sufficiently well established by 1781 for him to decline the position as court organist to the Archbishop of Salzburg made vacant by Mozart's dismissal. He began publishing his own works by 1784 and in 1785 he founded a music publishing house (the *Musikaliches Magazin*) which was later managed by his younger brother, Antonín Tomáš Koželuch (1752–1805). Koželuch also cultivated publishers elsewhere in Europe and his works seem to have been particularly successful in London. It is testimony to Koželuch's reputation that the Bohemian Estates commissioned him to compose a cantata for the coronation in Prague of Leopold II as King of Bohemia. The success of this work almost certainly played a part in Koželuch's appointment in June 1792 as *Kammer Kapellmeister* and *Hofmusik Compositor* at the court of Leopold's successor, Emperor Franz II.

In 1797 Koželuch received a letter from the Scottish song collector and publisher George Thomson inviting him to take over from Ignaz Pleyel the task of arranging the songs he had selected for inclusion in his ambitious *A Select Collection of Scotish* [sic] *National Airs*. Having agreed on the terms, which also included a commission to write a series of accompanied sonatas incorporating Scots airs, Koželuch set to work with a purpose and proved in short order to be an excellent if at times rather testy collaborator. The scope of the project, which expanded to include Welsh and Irish folk-songs, and Koželuch's teaching and duties connected with his court position inevitably had an impact on his own work and from around 1804 his productivity as a composer declined.

Koželuch was an influential figure as a pianist and contemporary writers credited him with playing an important rôle in the development of an idiomatic style of piano playing at a time when the harpsichord was still widely played. Like his compatriot Vaňhal – and to a certain extent Mozart – Koželuch derived a significant proportion of his income from teaching. It was important therefore that his output as a composer reinforced his reputation as a leading exponent of his instrument. Unsurprisingly, he wrote a significant body of works for the piano including sonatas, piano trios and concertos, but he also composed in other instrumental genres. Some of this music has not survived which makes it difficult to assess whether the progressive tendencies seen in some of Koželuch's piano music and chamber works extended to his operas, only one of which has survived.

Koželuch's output of symphonies is relatively modest by the standards of the time. Recent research suggests that he composed seventeen symphonies, one of which has not survived, and two symphonies concertantes. All of these works appear to have been composed between c. 1779 and 1787 and therefore belong to the period after the composer's move to Vienna. These years represent something of a flat period in the history of the symphony in Vienna. Owing to the declining demand for new works due in part to economic factors, a number of composers in Vienna curtailed their output around this time. The most important of these figures was Vaňhal who seems to have ceased composing symphonies by about 1778, focusing his efforts instead on chamber works and keyboard music. Even Mozart was not immune from this trend. During the ten years he lived in Vienna he composed only a handful of works: a symphony written in Linz, a symphony for Prague and the final three symphonies which may have been intended for a tour to England that did not take place. Mozart had other priorities as a composer and was content to neglect the symphony until such time that a work was required.

With the retirement of Wanhal from the field, Koželuch became for a time his successor as Vienna's pre-eminent Bohemian symphonist. His works bear a resemblance to those of the elder composer, sometimes strikingly so, but they differ significantly in many crucial stylistic details. Some of these reflect the influence of Koželuch's teacher, Dušek, whose works were widely performed in Prague but do not appear to have been well known in Vienna. Koželuch's later symphonies, however, surpass those of Dušek in scale and complexity and are as technically impressive as the finest of Wanhal's works. Even Johann Ferdinand von Schönfeld, who described Koželuch in his Jahrbuch der Tonkunst in Wien und Prag (1796) as being 'too pleased with himself [and] repeats himself or dwells too long in one place' nonetheless praised his 'very beautiful symphonies'.

Symphony in A major, P. I:7

1. Allegro moderato
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Allegretto
4. Finale: Prestissimo

Symphony in C major, P. I:6

1. Adagio – Allegro
2. Poco Adagio
3. Menuetto: Vivace
4. Presto con fuoco

Symphony in D major, P. I:3

1. Poco adagio – Allegro
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Vivace
4. Presto con fuoco

Symphony in G minor, P. I:5

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Presto

Koželuch's symphonies are fluent, attractive works; they are well conceived and show an impressive command of the symphonic medium. Koželuch is adept at using small motivic figures to unify larger musical structures. The sonata-form movements have comparatively lengthy development sections but their primary function is to delay the triumphant return of the principal theme in the tonic after various tonal adventures, teasings and misunderstandings. Koželuch does not interrogate his thematic material in the concentrated manner of a Haydn or Vaňhal, but the music in these sections is often dramatic and always well paced. Koželuch delights in wrong-footing his listeners in the recapitulation sections by manipulating the melodic line, introducing new harmonic inflections and subtle changes to the orchestration.

The lyricism that is apparent in Koželuch's piano writing is also to be heard in the slow movements of these works. One of the most pleasing features of these movements is the skilful way in which the composer varies the theme on each repetition through elegant harmonic changes and the restrained use of embellishment. This ability to reinterpret themes stands Koželuch in good stead in sonata-rondo movements; each return of the theme is invested with its own distinctive character which contributes to the sense of a movement evolving rather than one which is simply constructed out of blocks of complementary musical material.

While there is little in these four symphonies that is not encountered elsewhere, their freshness, verve and technical finish surely won them many admirers in their time and marked their composer as an artist to watch.

Symphony in F major, P. I:4

1. Allegro molto
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Allegretto
4. Presto

Symphony in D major, P. I:1

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Rondo: Andantino

Symphony in G major, P. I:8

1. Allegro molto
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Allegretto
4. Presto con fuoco

Symphony in D major, P. I:D3

1. Allegro con brio
2. Andante
3. Allegro

As the four works on this recording demonstrate, Koželuch's symphonies are fluent, attractive works; they are well conceived and show an impressive command of the symphonic medium. This is particularly evident in first movements which show great adeptness at using small motivic figures to unify larger musical structures through creating links between thematic ideas. The first movement of the *Sinfonia in F major, PosK I:4* is most impressive in this respect; its opening section contains two distinct themes, both of which generate new thematic material that shapes the remainder of the exposition. Though the far-ranging development section displays the composer's fertile imagination to very good effect, his real flair for invention is seen in the recapitulation which reverses the order in which the primary themes appear and is extensively recomposed throughout. His handling of the orchestra in all four works is also impressive. The addition of a single bassoon in three of the works and a pair in the *Sinfonia in F major*, make a telling difference to the instrumental colour. In the *Trio* of the *Sinfonia in F major*, the first bassoon doubles the unison violins an octave lower, adding an element of warmth to the mellifluous theme that contrasts strongly with the vigorous, and rather angular *Minuet*. Koželuch's deftness in writing for wind instruments is also in evidence at times. In the *Rondo* finale of the *Sinfonia in D major, PosK I:1*, he scores the second episode for winds alone as if to remind audiences that like the greatest wind virtuosi of his time, Koželuch too was a proud Bohemian.

Echos of a number of composers can be heard in Koželuch's symphonies, including Domenico Cimarosa, in the scoring of secondary themes for strings alone and the occasional use of the viola to double the first violin at the octave; indeed, the bustling finale of the *Sinfonia in D major, PosK I:D3*, which also includes trumpets and timpani, could have come straight out of one of the Neapolitan master's opera overtures. There are moments that are reminiscent of Dittersdorf's style, including the development section of the first movement of the *Sinfonia in D major, PosK I:1*, with its extended use of syncopation. Haydn, the greatest symphonist of them all, also lurks in the background of these works as he does in virtually every symphony of the period. But Koželuch's symphonies are no pale imitations of anybody else's works: their freshness, verve and impressive technical finish show him to be a gifted composer whose contemporary reputation was well deserved.

Symphony in C major, P. I:2

1. Allegro con brio
2. Andante
3. Menuetto: Allegretto
4. Allegro ma non presto

Unusually for Koželuch, who took a keen interest in the publication of his instrumental works, only one of the symphonies on this recording appeared in print: the *Sinfonia in C PosK I:2*. Although it was published in Paris by Sieber in 1786, there are reasonable stylistic grounds to believe that the work is one of Koželuch's earliest symphonies. The instrumentation of the work includes trumpets and

timpani in addition to the customary pairs of oboes and horns and the composer handles these with consummate mastery. The addition of a solo flute to double the first violin line in the elegant, flowing second movement is a lovely touch after the brilliance of the opening *Allegro con brio* and demonstrates a sensitivity to orchestral colour that is a hallmark of his symphonies. Early though this work may well be, it has moments of great originality. The development section in the first movement appears on first hearing to be rather brief, but the early reappearance of the opening theme in the tonic launches another phase of development before the recapitulation proper begins; the opening material reappears yet again just before the close of the movement allowing Koželuch to make striking use of his enlarged musical forces. Such is the quality of this symphony it is hardly surprising that at least one manuscript copy survives in an attribution to Haydn.

Symphony in A major, P. I:10, "À la française"

1. Allegro di molto
2. Poco adagio ma più andante
3. Menuetto
4. Presto con fuoco

The *Sinfonia in A, PosK. I:10* is one of two works on this recording to have a title – *À la Française* – but whether this originated with Koželuch is unknown. There is nothing obviously French about the work. It is certainly no parody in the manner of Dittersdorf's *Sinfonia Nazionale* which contains a *Menuet* in the French style signalled by extensive use of dotted rhythms. Koželuch's use of imitative string passages over pedal points in setting up important structural cadences, however, perhaps has a whiff of the exotic about it and may have been the unlikely inspiration for the title. In comparison with the *Sinfonia in C, PosK I:2*, the present work is unusually rich in thematic material and highly sophisticated in the way this material is linked and manipulated. The first-movement recapitulation is atypical of Viennese symphonies in avoiding a statement of the opening theme with the return of the tonic. The development section is vigorous and highly enterprising. More surprises await the listener in the second movement which substitutes flutes for oboes and includes a pair of horns in the scoring. The movement is cast as a kind of rondo but the two episodes are disproportionately long in comparison with the theme and are also tonally unstable. There are moments of fleeting dissonance which give the music great piquancy. After a lively *Menuetto* and delicate *Trio*, the symphony ends with a bustling finale in which brief imitative passages over pedal points once again serve to animate the musical texture.

Symphony in B flat major, P. I:11, "L'irresolu"

1. Allegro ma più presto
2. Adagio
3. Menuetto: Vivace
4. Allegro molto poco presto

Koželuch's *Sinfonia in B flat, PosK I:11* is without the question the most unusual of his extant symphonies. Titled *L'Irrésolu* (or *L'Irresoluto*) in two of the known sources, this work belongs to the subgenre of characteristic symphonies. These works typically evoke extra-musical images such as war, tempests or the countryside, and employ a range of well-recognised musical devices that act as signifiers. Characteristic symphonies differ from programmatic symphonies in that they do not attempt to sustain a narrative. At first glance, Koželuch's *L'Irrésolu* appears to be a characteristic symphony. None of the individual movements carries any kind of extra-musical text that suggests the existence of a wider narrative framework. However, the varied depiction of irresolution in the individual movements suggests that such a narrative might once have existed in one form or another. The linking

of the second and third movements and the third and fourth movements possibly indicates some kind of narrative trajectory. The use of recitativo-style writing towards the end of the first movement is not in itself original – Haydn uses the technique in his three 'programmatic' symphonies *Le Matin*, *Le Midi* and *Le Soir* composed in 1761 – but the return of the same material at the end of the *Finale* is noteworthy and surely has some kind of narrative significance. Koželuch uses a variety of musical techniques to depict irresolution: the music is at times disjointed; there are angry, agitated outbursts and unexpected introductions of new ideas. The musical structures are also singular at times even although they conform at a fundamental level with the conventions of the period. Whatever the underlying idea of the work might be, Koželuch's boldness as a composer certainly gives no impression that he is the irresolute one. It is possible that this symphony once served another purpose, perhaps accompanying a pantomime or some other kind of theatrical work and as such it might be considered alongside works such as Haydn's *Symphony No. 60 in C, 'Il distratto'*.

Symphony in C major, P. I:9

1. Allegro molto
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Allegretto
4. Presto con fuoco

Sinfonia in C, PosK I:9 represents Koželuch's symphonic writing at its most developed and was probably composed in the late 1780s. Why it was not published is a mystery since it is an impressive work, harmonically and tonally rich, masterful in structural thinking and abounding in attractive melodic ideas. A copy of the work, transposed into B flat, survives in an attribution to his compatriot Antonio Rosetti, Kapellmeister at the Oettingen-Wallerstein court, but there is little reason to doubt Koželuch's authorship. Like all of Koželuch's mature symphonies, *PosK I:9* exhibits the freshness, verve and impressive technical finish that is characteristic of this immensely gifted composer.

Allan Badley

Symphonies

Leopold Kozeluch was born on 20 June 1747 at Velvary in Bohemia, some twenty miles north-west of Prague (and no distance from the hamlet of Nelahozeves, where Antonín Dvořák was born nearly a century later). He was baptised as Jan Antonín, but about 1773 adopted the name of Leopold to distinguish himself from his cousin and teacher Jan Antonín Kozeluch, who was born in Velvary in 1738 and was Kapellmeister of St Vitus's Cathedral in Prague from 1784 until his death in 1814. After receiving his basic musical training at school in his native village he read law at the university in Prague, bur continued his musical studies with his cousin and with Mozart's friend, the composer and pianist František Dušek (1731–1799). Several of his ballets and pantomimes were successfully performed in Prague between 1771 and 1778, in which year he moved to Vienna, where he quickly established himself as a composer, pianist and teacher, numbering among his pupils the blind pianist Maria Theresia von Paradis, Archduchess Elisabeth of Württemberg (later the first wife of Emperor Franz II) and the Emperor's daughter Marie-Louise, who was to be Napoleon's second wife. By 1781 he had sufficient repute in the Imperial capital to be able to decline the invitation to succeed Mozart as court organist to the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, and in 1792 he was appointed Imperial Chamber Conductor and Court Composer. In 1784 he founded his own publishing house, the *Musikalisches Magazin*, later to be managed by his younger brother Antonín Tomáš. His compositions were also published more or less simultaneously by other houses, and Kozeluch's business contacts included English publishers such as John Bland, Robert Birchall, and Lewis, Houston & Hyde; he also worked

closely with George Thomson of Edinburgh on arrangements of Scottish, Welsh and Irish folksongs. He died in Vienna on 7 May 1818.

In the fourth and last volume of his *General History of Music*, published in 1789, Dr Charles Burney described Kozeluch as

> an admirable young composer of Vienna, whose works were first made known in England by the neat and accurate execution of Mademoiselle Paradis... in 1785. And his productions have since greatly increased in number and in favour. They are in general excellent, abounding with solidity, good taste, correct harmony; and the imitations of Haydn are less frequent than in any other master of that school.

Apart from an early oratorio, *Moisè in Egitto*, most of Kozeluch's works for church and stage (which include six operas) have not survived, and his achievement must be judged by his purely instrumental compositions: symphonies, concertos; chamber music (duos, trios, quartets); and piano pieces (including some fifty sonatas). Of the eleven symphonies now authentically ascribed to him are the three recorded here (all scored for strings and pairs of oboes, bassoons and horns), of which the autograph scores are lost but which were first published under the composer's own imprint in Vienna and therefore obviously with his authority and blessing, early in 1787 – the year of *Don Giovanni* – and soon after in Leipzig and Paris.

Symphony in D major

1. Adagio – Allegro
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto & Trio: Vivace
4. Presto con fuoco

The **Symphony in D** is the one of only two symphonies by Kozeluch to begin with a slow introduction, in this case a short but arresting *Adagio*. It prefaces a sonata-form *Allegro* in lively 6/8 metre with, exceptionally, no repeat of the exposition, whose second subject, presented by the strings alone, encloses an episode in F(!); there is a vigorous development section based on the first subject. The second movement, in A, is a slow rondo, with a shapely refrain and two contrasting episodes that venture into minor keys. A strapping Minuet frames a Trio in which the horns are silent and the first oboe doubles the first violins, and the bassoons double the cellos and basses. In the spirited sonata-form finale the second subject is virtually an extension of the first, the dramatic development, based on the first subject, leads into the recapitulation via a succession of Haydnesque pauses.

Symphony in G minor

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Presto

The key of **G minor** produced a handful of remarkable symphonies in the second half of the eighteenth century, at least partly under the influence of the pre-Romantic *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) movement in German literature: by Haydn (No. 39, c. 1776–77), J.C. Bach (Op. 6 No. 6, 1770), two by J.B. Vanhal (1771 and after), Mozart (No. 25, 1773 and No. 40, 1788); and, yes, Kozeluch (1787) – his only one in a minor key. It has no minuet, and in the outer movements the two horns are crooked in G and B flat, in order to provide wider harmonic scope. The two themes of the opening *Allegro* are closely related in shape but contrasted in mood: one nervous, the other (in B flat in the exposition but in G minor in the recapitulation) lyrical. The soft sustained line for the violas in bars 14–15 and 115–19 and for the bassoons in bars 41–50 and 147–57 suggest the influence of Mozart. The development is unusual in making use of both subjects, and as in the Symphony in F there is a substantial coda. The eloquent *Adagio* in E flat major is in condensed and modified sonata

form, with a central ‘episode’ rather than a development section as such, but with a sonata-form key-scheme (tonic-dominant in the exposition, tonic in the recapitulation). The concluding *Presto*, again in sonata form, has the tense, agitated spirit of the first movement, but is shorter, and sparer in texture.

Symphony in F major

1. Allegro molto
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto & Trio: Allegretto
4. Presto

The **Symphony in F** begins with a substantial *Allegro molto* in sonata form and with two very similar themes, both of which are derived from the broad eight-bar ‘introduction’ in octaves (not repeated literally in the recapitulation which follows the widely modulating development). The movement ends with a coda that brings the wind instruments into unexpected prominence. Next comes an ornate, delicately scored *Poco adagio* in B flat and in sonata form but with no repeat of the exposition; a varied recapitulation follows a development that separates the various components of the main theme. A stately Minuet encloses a gentle Trio, in which the winds are silent, except for the first bassoon, which doubles the violins an octave lower. The busy sonata-form finale has an unusually appealing second subject, which, however, plays no part in the largely contrapuntal development.

Robin Golding

“Liveliness and grace, the noblest melodies with the purest harmonies …”

Leopold Kozeluch was born in 1747 in the town of Welwarn (now Velvary) to the north of Prague. One of sixteen children of a shoemaker, he was baptised Ioannes Antonius, but later adopted the name Leopold in order to differentiate himself from his cousin Johann Anton Kozeluch, who was *cappellae magister* at St Vitus’s Cathedral in Prague and who taught him keyboard and composition. He made such good progress that he was also given lessons with a friend of Mozart’s, Franz Xaver Dušek. Alter a number of early successes in Prague, he moved to Vienna in 1778 and quickly made a name for himself as a composer, keyboard virtuoso and teacher. So successful was he that his works soon became known all over Europe and for a number of years he was one of the most sought-after of all composers. In 1781, for example, he could even afford to turn down an invitation to succeed Mozart in Salzburg. Instead, he became music teacher at the imperial court in Vienna, where he built up a number of excellent contacts and connections. Among his pupils were many leading members of the Viennese aristocracy, thereby adding further to his reputation. He also organised private academies or concerts at his own house, where the performers included local composers of the stature of Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf and Johann Vanhal.

Kozeluch’s good relations with the imperial court in Vienna finally led to his appointment as imperial *Kammer Kapellmeister* and *Hofmusik Compositor* in 1792. A life appointment, this was a highly respected and powerful position, but also one that involved its incumbent in a heavy burden of responsibilities. He had to compose at least one opera or oratorio a year, and might additionally be required to write two further operas for the court. Unfortunately almost all these works have been lost in the course of the intervening centuries.

Kozeluch’s contemporaries praised his music for its “liveliness and grace, its ability to combine the noblest melodies with the purest harmonies and the most pleasing sense of order in terms of rhythm and modulation”. His oft-cited conflicts with Vienna’s three leading composers, Mozart,

Haydn and Beethoven, are almost certainly the result of the rivalries directly bound up with this situation, rather than of his advantageous position at court, a position which, within the *ancien régime* of Viennese society, placed him far above other composers and musicians in the social hierarchy of the time. When one of Haydn's works was performed in the city, Mozart is said to have told Kozeluch: "Sir, even if the two of us were put together, we still wouldn't produce a Haydn." When Kozeluch responded to this by remarking that he himself would not have written a particular passage in the way that Haydn has written it, Mozart retorted: "Nor would I, and do you know why? Because neither you nor I would have hit on this idea."

Kozeluch cannot be accused of any lack of ideas. Through his keyboard trios, quartets, keyboard sonatas and songs and also, of course, through his numerous keyboard concertos and symphonies, he left his mark on the work of all the other composers who were active in Vienna. His keyboard trios and sonatas, for example, are believed to have influenced Beethoven. Writing in 1789, Charles Burney summed up his contemporaries' admiration for Kozeluch in the final volume of his *General History of Music*: "His productions [...] are in general excellent, abounding with solidity, good taste, correct harmony; and the imitations of Haydn are less frequent than in any other master of that school." Was it this that so enraged Mozart? Whatever the answer to this question, Kozeluch was clearly a composer who was held in high regard in his own lifetime, but whose reputation has now been eclipsed.

Symphony in C major Postolka I:6)

1. Poco adagio – Allegro
2. Poco adagio
3. Menuetto: Vivace – Trio
4. Presto con fuoco

Symphony in A major "à la française" (Postolka I:10)

1. Allegro molto
2. Poco adagio ma più andante
3. Menuetto – Trio
4. Finale: Presto con fuoco

Symphony in D major (Postolka I:1)

Simphonie periodique à Deux violons, deux Hautbois, Deux Cors, Alto et Basse No. 1
1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Rondo: Allegro moderato [Andantino]

Symphony in B flat major "L'irresoluto" (Postolka I:11)

1. Allegro ma più presto 7'26"
2. Adagio 7'05"
3. Menuetto: Vivace – Trio 3'50"
4. Allegro molto poco presto 5'24"

Kozeluch was a highly efficient businessman and, together with his brother, founded his own music publishing house in Vienna that also sold music. Here he published not only pieces by other composers but also his own compositions, including the present **Symphony in C major**. One of a set of three symphonies that Kozeluch published in 1787 as his "Volume II", it compels admiration for its splendidly festive language and, as such, represents a high point in Kozeluch's work as a symphonist. His works were published not only by his own firm but by all of Europe's leading publishers, who

almost literally fought over his compositions. In 1786 his **Symphony in D** major was published by the famous Paris firm of Jean-Georges Sieber. Its opening movement derives from a *ballet-pantomime* first performed in Prague in 1776. His first symphony to appear in print, it reflects the French taste of the period with its three-movement structure and rondo finale. The two other symphonies included in the present release are both unpublished. Both have programmatical titles. The **Symphony in A major** "à la française" was written between 1779 and 1784 and once again points in the direction of French taste, but its four-movement form clearly recalls the Viennese symphonic tradition. Both its opening movement's markedly lyrical and almost wistful second subject and the whole of its second movement are so emotional and sentimental in tone as to stand out as something special within the context of the music of this period. The **Symphony in B flat major** was written at a slightly later date, between 1780 and 1790. In keeping with its title, "L'irresoluto", it is an unusual piece, in which Kozeluch is sufficiently bold as to fly in the face of convention, confronting his listeners with a deeply divided symphonic character study in irresolution, a state of indecision that remains unresolved to the very last bar of the work.

Olaf Krone
Translation: Stewart Spencer