



Jos van Immerseel  
*fortepiano*

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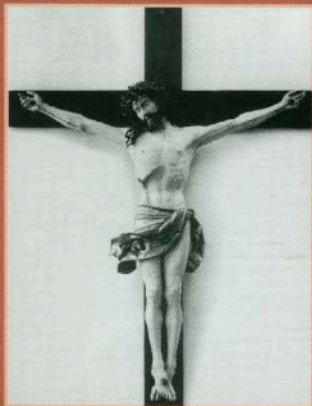
# Haydn

*Les Sept Paroles Du Christ*

*Die Sieben Letzten Worte*

*The Seven Last Words*





*Les Sept Paroles Du Christ  
Die Sieben Letzten Worte  
The Seven Last Words*

**JOSEPH HAYDN**  
(1732 - 1809)

**Jos van Immerseel**  
*fortepiano*

*Instrument:*

Fortepiano Christopher Clarke, 1988  
Cluny after Anton Walter, Vienna

Recording dates: 17-18 May 1994

SETTE SONATE CON UN INTRODUZIONE ED AL FINE  
UN TEREMOTO SOPRA LE SETTE ULTIME PAROLE  
DEL NOSTRO REDENTORE IN CROCE.

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. L'introduzione<br>(Maestoso e Adagio)  | 06.50 |
| 2. Sonata I: Largo: Pater, Pater<br>dimitte illis quia nesciunt<br>quid faciunt | 07.45 |
| 3. Sonata II: Grave e Cantabile: Hodie<br>mecum eris in Paradiso                | 06.17 |
| 4. Sonate III: Grave: Ecce<br>Mulier Filius tuus                                | 06.53 |
| 5. Sonate IV: Largo: Deus meus,<br>Deus meus et quid dereliquisti me            | 05.55 |
| 6. Sonate V: Adagio: Sitio  | 07.23 |
| 7. Sonate VI: Lento:<br>Consummatum est   | 05.43 |
| 8. Sonate VII: Largo: In manus<br>tuas Domine, commendo<br>Spiritus meum        | 06.08 |
| 9. Il terremoto: Presto   | 02.04 |
| Total time  | 56.40 |



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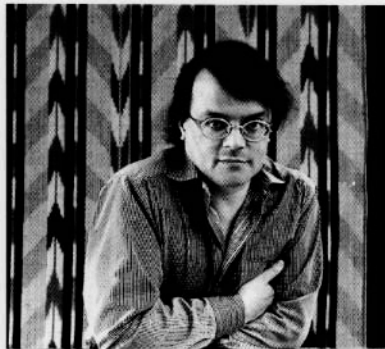
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(C) 4481



**ROYALE  
BELGE**



Jos van Immerseel - fortepiano  
 Instrument:  
 Fortepiano Christopher Clarke, 1988  
 Cluny after Anton Walter, Vienna

**SETTE SONATE CON UN INTRODUZIONE ED AL FINE UN TEREMOTO SOPRA LE SETTE ULTIME  
 PAROLE DEL NOSTRO REDENTORE IN CROCE.**

1. L'introduzione (Maestoso e Adagio)	06.50	6. Sonate V: Adagio: Sitio	07.23
2. Sonata I: Largo: Pater, Pater dimitte illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt	07.45	7. Sonate VI: Lento: Consummatum est	05.43
3. Sonata II: Grave e Cantabile: Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso	06.17	8. Sonate VII: Largo: In manus tuas Domine, commendo Spiritus meum	06.08
4. Sonate III: Grave: Ecce Mulier Filius tuus	06.53	9. Il terremoto: Presto	02.04
5. Sonate IV: Largo: Deus meus, Deus meus et quid dereliquisti me	05.55	Total time	56.40

*Recording dates: 17/18 May 1994*

## JOS VAN IMMERSEEL

Jos van Immerseel, the well-known harpsichordist and pianist, is appreciated all over the world for his 'authentic' interpretations based on a balanced combination of technique, improvisational talent, and theoretical background.

Over sixty recordings give evidence of the importance of primary source investigation in the shaping of a performance. For Jos van Immerseel, terms like 'rhetoric' and 'stylistic approach' are no longer sterile words. On the contrary, he has an unmatched ability to demonstrate that these elements, combined with pronounced and original musicality, can lead repeatedly to ground-breaking, unique interpretations.

In 1985, after having conducted numerous ad hoc and guest ensembles for many years, Jos van Immerseel founded a permanent ensemble which was better suited to the realization of his musical ideas and the results of his research; at the same time it was an experimental medium for the testing of his theories in practice: Anima Eterna.

Nine years later, the orchestra has recorded 15 CDs including an unsurpassed complete recording of Mozart's piano concerti, performed on the same instrument (Christopher Clarke) as this Haydn recording.

## HAYDN: THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

For a number of reasons, Haydn's composition is a fascinating work.

1. All of the other compositions written on the Seven Last Words (before and after Haydn), as well as all of the settings of the Passion which include the Seven Last Words, are vocal settings, and the words are spoken by 'characters'.

Haydn's version is purely *instrumental*; the music is the only speaker.

2. There had never been a commission as difficult as the one which Haydn received from Cadix, i.e. the composition of seven *slow* pieces corresponding to each of the Seven Last Words. This was apparently a considerable challenge for Haydn, but the result was stunning. But Haydn actually took it one step further, adding an eighth slow movement, the 'Introduzione'.

3. Haydn's Seven Last Words added very considerably to the composer's fame at the end of the 18th century. The work circulated in numerous copies, it was printed in all of the major cities, and it was performed in many places. In the early 19th century, the Seven Last Words were often considered Haydn's most important composition, or, in any case, as equal in importance to 'The Creation'. Nowadays, however the latter work has come to overshadow and nearly eclipse the former.

4. This composition has come down to us in no fewer than five versions, all of which were produced over a period of some 10 years:

a) the 'original' version for orchestra, frequently dated 1785, in other sources 1787, but according to Hubert Unverricht (1961), completed in the winter of 1786-87.

b) the version for string quartet, completed before 21 June 1787, and made under Haydn's supervision.

c) the version for 'Clavicembalo o Fortepiano', also referred to Haydn as a 'Piano Score' (in his letter of 21-6-1787, vide infra) "selbst übersehen und corrigirt", i.e. also created under his supervision.

d) a version (perhaps even two) as oratorio for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, made by Joseph Friebert, music director of the Cathedral of Passau, 1792(?).

e) an oratorio version made by Haydn himself, probably dating from 1795/96, published 1801 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig.

In this 1801 version we find a foreword 'signed' by Haydn, which tells us something of the events leading up to the composition of this work: "*Es sind ungefähr fünfzehn Jahre, dass ich von einem Domherrn in Cadix ersucht wurde, eine Instrumentalmusik auf die sieben Worte Jesu am Kreuze zu verfertigen.*" The composition (in its orchestral version) was performed in the subterranean church 'Santa Cueva' in Cadix in April 1787 as part of the liturgy for Holy Week.

According to the 1801 foreword: "*Die Wände, Fenster und Pfeiler der Kirche waren .... mit schwarzem Tuche überzogen, und nur eine, in der Mitte hängende große Lampe erleuchtete das heilige Dunkel. Zur Mittagstunde wurden alle Thüren geschlossen; jetzt begann die Musik. Nach einem zweckmässigen Vorspiele bestieg der Bischof die Kanzel, sprach eines der sieben Worte aus, und fiel knieend vor dem Altare nieder. Diese Pause wurde von der Musik ausgefüllt. Der Bischof betrat und verliess zum zweyten, drittenmale usw. die Kanzel, und jedesmal fiel das Orchester nach dem Schlusse der Rede wieder ein. Dieser Darstellung musste meine Composition angemessen seyn. Die Aufgabe, sieben Adagio's wovon jedes gegen zehn Minuten dauern sollte, aufeinander folgen zu lassen, ohne den Zuhörer zu ermüden, war keine von den leichtesten; und ich fand bald, dass ich mich an den vorgeschriebenen Zeitraum nicht binden konnte. Die Musik war ursprünglich ohne Text, und in dieser Gestalt ist sie auch gedruckt worden.*"

This was not the first time that Haydn's tour de force in keeping the interest level high for the duration of seven adagio movements had aroused admiration, for the piece had already been performed several days previously in places including Bonn. On 8 April 1787, Christian Gottlob Neefe wrote as follows to C. Fr. Cramer's *Magazin der Musik*:

*"Am 30sten März ward hier bey Hofe eine neue Composition von Joseph Hayden mit vielem Ausdruck unter der Leitung des Hrn. Concertmeisters Reicha aufgeführt. Sie besteht aus sieben*

*Adagios über die sieben Worte Christi am Kreuz, und schließt mit einem Presto, welches das Erdbeben bey dem Tode des Erlösers vorstellt. Der Gedanke, diese Gegenstände durch bloße Instrumentalmusik auszudrücken, ist sonderbar und kühn, und nur ein Genius Hayden darf ihn wagen. Ich will nicht untersuchen, ob einem einzigen Zuhörer beym fünften Adagio das Wort: Sitio, (mich dürstet), einfallen kann und wird. Allein jeder Satz ist, auch ohne Hinsicht auf die darüber geschriebenen lateinischen Wörter, äußerst interessant und eines Haydn vollkommen würdig.*" (quoted from Schiedermaier: Der junge Beethoven, Leipzig, 1925, pp. 82 and 83).

Haydn was well aware of the high quality of his work, as can be seen from the letter of 8 April 1787 to the London publisher and instrument-maker William Forster: "*Jedweder Sonate, oder Jedweder Text ist bloß durch die Instrumental Music dergestalten ausgedruckt, daß es den Unerfahrensten den tiefsten Eindruck in Seine Seele Erwecket.*" (quoted from C. Pohl: Mozart und Haydn in Londen, Vienna 1867, vol. II, pp. 355-56).

Haydn was concerned that his work be published promptly, and that is what happened:

- a) the orchestral version, by Artaria, Vienna; "*Musica Instrumentale sopra le sette ultime Parole del nostro Redentore in Croce*" opera 47, as advertised in the Wiener Zeitung on 7 July 1787.
- b) the quartet version, from the same publisher, under the same title: "*ridotte in quartetti*" opera 48, which probably appeared in August 1787.
- c) the keyboard version, from the same publisher, under the title: "*Composizioni del Sig. Giuseppe Haydn/Sopra le sette ultime Parole del nostro Redentore in Croce*", "*ridotte Per il Clavicembalo o Forte Piano*" opera 49, which probably appeared in late August or early September 1787.

In addition to the Artaria print, the keyboard version was also issued by Schmitt, Marescalchi, Longman & Broderip, Hummel, Hofmeister, Pleyel, Imbault, Birchall, Green, Mollo, and Richomme. In other words, the keyboard version was especially popular both before and after 1800 (not to be confused with the piano score of the oratorio version

which, moreover, was issued in 1801 by Breitkopf, and still later by other publishers ....). And yet the keyboard version was not included in the new critical version of the 'Complete Works' of Haydn, and there is not even a practical edition available today. Why not? Because it is generally assumed that the keyboard version was not made by Haydn, and therefore does not belong in Haydn's catalogue, in contrast to the quartet version, which is accredited to Haydn himself. I would prefer to modify this hypothesis, and I suggest rather that both the quartet and keyboard versions were probably not written by Haydn himself, but that he supervised and approved both arrangements. Since little variation is possible between an orchestral and a quartet version of this music, as is the case with the keyboard version which is essentially a transcription of the quartet version, the question of Haydn's authorship for these 'transcriptions' is no longer relevant. Whether he wrote them out himself or whether he corrected and passed for publication the version which we now have (written out by someone else) makes no difference in practical terms. It is true that the newspaper announcement of July 1787 has led to some confusion, suggesting in the first instance that the quartet version is by Haydn and the keyboard version is not: "*Musica Instrumentale sopra le sette ultime Parole del nostro Redentore in croce o sieno sette Sonate con un Introduzione ed al fine un terremoto, per due Violini, Viola, Violoncello, Flauti, Oboe, Corni, Clarini, Timpani, Fagotti e Contrabasso composte dal Sig. Giuseppe Haydn, Preis 5 fl.*" "*Dieses nämliche Werk ist auch von dem Meister selbst in Quartetten gesetzt worden, nämlich auf 2 Violin, Viola und Violoncello sie sind bereits in der Arbeit und werden bis künftigen August schön gestochen fertig seyn. Indessen wird darauf Pränumeration mit 2 fl. angenommen, nach verflorbenen Termin aber sie nicht anders als für 3 fl. zu haben seyn.*" N.B. "*Die Herren Pränumerationen werden die Exemplare 10 Tage vor den anderen erhalten. Da der Autor selbst die Mühe dieser Übersetzung auf sich genommen hat, kann sich Jedermann die Vollkommenheit davon selbst vorstellen.*" "*Um auch den schätzbaren Liebhabern des Forte-Piano ein Genüge zu leisten wird auch ein Auszug aufs Clavier von diesem Werke gestochen und vom 20. August an um 1 fl. 30 verkauft werden bis dahin aber nehmen wir mit 1 fl. Pränumerationen an.*" (quoted from Fr. Artaria and H. Botstiber: J. Haydn und das Verlagshaus Artaria, Vienna 1909, pp. 35 and 36).



This announcement was clearly made for publicity purposes, and a newspaper is only a newspaper; for in the letter of 14 February 1787, Haydn writes:

*"Mon tres cher Amj!*

*Übersende hiermit alle vier abgeänderte stimmen, in Hoffnung, dass der Copist mich gut verstehen, und jede stim ins besondere in die gehörige Ordnung, folglich Tauglich zu quartetten bringen wird, sollte aber an einigen orthen ein Zweifl entstehen, so wird mir solchen alsogleich der abschreiber zu wissen machen, damit bey zeiten kan abgeholfen werden, alle 4 stimmen, das ist, Jede Sonate, wo die abänderung geschiehet, muss neu abgeschrieben werden: sobald die Sonaten sowohl als quartetten, als auch mit allen Instrumenten unter die Presse kommen sollte, so bitte, mir den Ersten abdruck einzuschicken, damit ich Sie in die Correctur nehmen könne. Den Inhalt der Sonaten in Notten ausgedruckt welche ich zugleich mit einschicke, muss auch in den quartetten beygedruckt werden, das quartett wird bald nachfolgen. Die Dermahlige opern Proben halten mich auf, übrigens bin ich mit aller Hochachtung."* (quoted from Artaria and Botstiber: op.cit. p. 37)

It is clear from this letter that the material which Haydn sent to Artaria was *not* ready for publication, but rather that it consisted of orchestral parts with instructions for the copyist. Haydn's fears about mistakes are also evident in his request for a copy of the first print for corrections. In other words, this brief does not undermine the case for Haydn's authorship of the quartet version, but rather modifies it (even if the result is identical). The newspaper announcement in no way modifies, indeed it reinforces the case for Haydn's authorship.

On 21 June 1787, Haydn subsequently writes to Artaria: *"Ich habe die 7 Wort sowohl im ganzen, als auch in quartet und den Clavier Auszug selbst übersehen, corgirt (etc.)"* (op. cit. p. 40)

Here Haydn does not distinguish between the orchestral, quartet and keyboard versions: he has *personally* overseen every detail in order to guarantee the correctness of all the different versions.

On 23 June 1787 he wrote again:

*"Liebster Freund!*

*Übersende die Correctur der 7 woth in allen 3 gattungen, unter anderen belobe ich den Clavierauszug, welcher sehr gut und mit besonderem Fleiss abgefasst ist."* (op. cit. p. 41)

Again, Haydn made no distinction, or did he? He actually singles out the keyboard version for special praise. I cannot understand why this version has never been published, at the same time that numerous works whose authorship is not even established have been thus acknowledged. It is too bad, since this very same keyboard version is perhaps the least 'fancy', and thus the simplest. And this very simplicity and lack of complication allows the interior life of this masterly music to speak most clearly to us. Its rhetorical power is incomparable. But in order to do such music justice, we need an instrument of a quality which is in every respect commensurate with that of the music. In my opinion, the five-octave fortepiano by Chr. Clarke is amply qualified for that task.

**Jos van Immerseel**

**Translation: David Shapero**

**Colophon**  
Production: Channel Classics Studio B.V.  
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Recording engineer/editing: Bert van der Wolf  
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Cover design: Charlotte Boersma  
Liner notes: Jos van Immerseel  
Executive producer: C. Jared Sacks

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