
MISO

HAYDN'S CREATION

15-17 JUNE 2017

LIBRETTO



Principal Partner

This edition of The Creation is used with kind permission of the Gabrieli Consort and Players.

A NOTE ON THE TEXT FOR THIS PERFORMANCE

As your notes in the Concert Program explain, Haydn composed *The Creation* to a bilingual text. The English text sung by the soloists and MSO Chorus in this concert, while based on Swieten's English libretto, has been revised by English conductor Paul McCreesh. This revised version seeks to redress instances of mistranslation, garbled grammar and syntax, and imperfect word order, whilst retaining certain phrases that have become part of our language through our familiarity with this work.

In addition, the recitatives have been rewritten as Haydn might have done had he been composing them for the English text. The recitatives still follow Haydn's harmonies and melodic contour, but now obey the fundamental musical and rhetorical principles of English word-setting.

PART ONE

Overture – *The Representation of Chaos*

The First Day

Recitative and chorus

RAPHAEL

In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth;
and the earth was without form, and void;
and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

CHORUS

And the Spirit of God
moved upon the face of the waters;
and God said: Let there be Light,
and there was Light.

Recitative

URIEL

And God saw the Light, that it was good:
and God divided the Light from the darkness.

Aria and chorus

URIEL

Now vanish before the holy beams
the gloomy, dismal shades of darkness;
the first of days appears!
Disorder yields and order fair prevails.
Affrighted fly hell's spirits, black in throngs;
down they sink in the deepest abyss to endless night.

CHORUS

Despairing, cursing rage
attends their rapid fall.
A new-created world
springs up at God's command.

The Second Day

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And God made the firmament,
and divided the waters
which were under the firmament
from the waters which were above the firmament,
and it was so.

Outrageous, dreadful storms now arise;
as chaff by the winds impell'd are the clouds.
By heaven's fire the sky is enflamed
and awful roll the thunders on high.
At his command, rise from the floods,
reviving showers of rain,
the dreary wasteful hail, the light and flaky snow.

Aria and chorus

GABRIEL

The glorious heav'nly hierarchy,
the marvellous work beholds amaz'd.
And to the ethereal vaults resounds
the praise of God, and of the second day.

CHORUS

And to the ethereal vaults resounds
the praise of God, and of the second day.

The Third Day

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And God said: Let the waters under the heaven
be gathered together unto one place,
and let the dry land appear;
and it was so.
And God called the dry land: earth,
and the gath'ring of waters called he seas;
and God saw that it was good.

Aria

RAPHAEL

Rolling in foaming billows
uplifted roars the boisterous sea.
Mountains and rocks now emerge;
into the clouds their tops ascend.
Through verdant plains, outstretching wide
the rivers flow in serpent error.
Softly purling, glideth on
through silent vales the limpid brook.

Recitative

GABRIEL

And God said: Let the earth bring forth grass,
the herb yielding seed,
and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind,
whose seed is in itself upon the earth;
and it was so.

Aria

GABRIEL

With verdure clad the fields appear
delightful to the ravish'd sense;
by flowers sweet and gay
adorned is the charming sight.
The fragrant herbs give forth their scent,
here shoots the healing plant.
With copious fruit the spreading boughs are hung;
in leafy arches twine the shady groves;
o'er lofty hills majestic forests rise.

Recitative

URIEL

And the heavenly host the third day proclaimed,
praising God and saying:

Chorus

CHORUS

Awake the harp, the lyre awake!
With shouts of joy your voices raise!
In triumph proclaim the might of the Lord!
For all the heav'ns and the earth
has he clothed in glorious attire.

The Fourth Day

Recitative

URIEL

And God said:

Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven
to divide the day from the night,
and to give light upon the earth;
and let them be for signs and for seasons,
and for days, and for years.
He made the stars also.

Recitative

URIEL

In brightest splendour
rises now the sun, and darts his rays;
an eager, joyful bridegroom,
a giant glad and proud
to run his measured course.
With gentle steps and softer silv'ry beams
steals the moon through still and silent night.
The boundless span of heaven's vault
is now adorn'd with numberless golden stars,
and the sons of God announced the fourth day thus,
in song divine,
with joy proclaiming his might:

Trio and chorus

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God.
The firmament displays the wonder of his works.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

As day after day his power declares;
And night after night his honour affirms.

CHORUS

The heavens are telling...

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

In all the lands resounds the word,
never unperceived, ever understood.

CHORUS

The heavens are telling...

PART TWO

The Fifth Day

Recitative

GABRIEL

And God said: Let the waters bring forth abundantly
the moving creature that hath life,
and fowl that may fly above the earth
in the open firmament of heaven.

Aria

GABRIEL

On mighty pens uplifted soars the eagle aloft,
and cleaves the sky in swiftest flight to the blazing sun.
The merry lark bids welcome to the morn,
And cooing, calls the tender dove his mate.
From every bush and grove
resound the nightingale's delightful, liquid notes.
No grief affected yet her breast,
nor to a mournful tale were tun'd
her soft enchanting lays.

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And God created great whales,
and every living creature that moveth,
and God blessed them, saying:

Be fruitful all, multiply!
Ye wing'd and feather'd tribes, multiply,
and sing from ev'ry tree!
Multiply, ye finny tribes,
and fill each wat'ry deep!
Be fruitful, grow, and multiply!
Rejoice in him your Lord and God!

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And the angels struck their immortal harps,
and the wonders of the fifth day sang.

Trio and chorus

GABRIEL

Most beautiful appear, with verdure young adorn'd
the gently sloping hills.

Their narrow, sinuous veins distil in crystal drops
the fountain fresh and bright.

URIEL

In lofty circles play
and flutter through the sky
the cheerful flocks of birds.
And in the flying whirl their glittering plumes
are dyed like rainbows by the sun.

RAPHAEL

See flashing midst the waters bright
a thousand fry that dart through rolling waves.
Upheaved from the deep, see the immense Leviathan
sports on the foaming spray.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

How many are thy works, O God!
Who may their numbers tell?

GABRIEL, URIEL, RAPHAEL and CHORUS

The Lord is great, and great his might;
his glory lasts for ever and for evermore.

The Sixth Day

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And God said: Let the earth bring forth
the living creature after his kind;
cattle and creeping thing,
and beast of the earth after his kind.

Recitative

RAPHAEL

Straight opening her fertile womb,
the earth obeys the word,
and teems with creatures numberless,
in perfect forms and fully grown.
Cheerfully roaring, stands the tawny lion.
With sudden leaps the flexible tiger appears.
The nimble stag rears up his branching head.
With flying mane, the noble steed
springs up and neighs, with spirit proud.
The cattle in herds peacefully graze
on fields and meadows green.
And o'er the leas are scattered flocks
of fleecy, meek and bleating sheep.

Unnumber'd as the sands,
in swarms arise great swarms of insects.
In long dimension creeps
with sinuous trace the worm.

Aria

RAPHAEL

Now heaven in fullest glory shines;
earth smiles in all her rich attire.
The air is fill'd with feather'd fowl;
the water swells with shoals of fish;
by heavy beasts the ground is trod.
But all the work was not complete,
there wanted yet that wondrous being
that God's creation should admire
and praise his works with heart and voice.

Recitative

URIEL

And God created man in his own image.
In the image of God created he him.
Male and female created he them.
He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,
and man became a living soul.

Aria

URIEL

In native worth and honour clad,
with beauty, strength and courage bless'd,
to heav'n erect and tall he stands,
a man, the lord and king of nature all.

His noble gen'rous brow sublime
declares a wisdom deep within,
and in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,
the breath and image of his God.

With fondness leans upon his breast
the partner for him form'd,
a woman fair, a graceful spouse.
Her softly smiling virgin looks,
of flow'ry spring a mirror,
speak love, delight, and bliss.

Recitative

RAPHAEL

And God saw everything that he had made;
and behold, it was very good;
and the heavenly choir
thus closed the sixth day in song divine.

Trio and chorus

CHORUS

Achieved is the glorious work;
the Lord delights in all he sees.
In lofty strains let us rejoice,
our song shall be the praise of God!

GABRIEL AND URIEL

On thee each living soul awaits;
from thee, O Lord, they beg their meat.
Thou openest thy hand, and sated are they all.

RAPHAEL

But when, O Lord, thy face is hid,
with sudden terror they are struck.
Thou tak'st their breath away; they vanish into dust.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

Thou sendest forth thy breath again,
and life with vigour fresh returns.
Revived earth unfolds new force and new delights.

CHORUS

Achieved is the glorious work,
our song shall be the praise of God!
Glorious be his name for ever;
he sole on high, exalted, reigns.
Alleluia.

PART THREE

Adam and Eve in Eden

Recitative

URIEL

In rosy mantle now appears,
by sweetest sounds awak'd,
the morning, young and fair.
From heav'n's eternal realm
pure harmony descends on ravish'd earth.
Behold the blissful pair,
as hand in hand they go!
Their radiant eyes
shine with heartfelt joy and thanks.
And so with cheerful noise
their God they soon will praise.
Then let our voices ring, united with their song!

Duet and chorus

EVE and ADAM

By thee with bliss, O bounteous Lord,
the heav'n and earth are fill'd.
This world, so great, so wonderful,
thy mighty hand has fram'd.

CHORUS

For ever blessed be his pow'r!
His name be ever magnified!

ADAM

Of stars the fairest, O how sweetly
thou crown'st the smiling dawn.
How brighten'st thou, O sun, the day,
thou eye and soul of all!

CHORUS

Proclaim in your extended course
the glorious pow'r and might of God!

EVE

And thou that rul'st the silent night,
and all ye starry host,
spread wide and everywhere his praise
in joyful songs around!

ADAM

Ye mighty elements by whose pow'r,
are ceaseless changes made,

ye misty vapours and dewy steams,
that rise and fall thro' th'air:

EVE, ADAM and CHORUS
Acclaim and praise our God and Lord!
Great is his name, and great his might.

EVE
Ye purling fountains, tune his praise,
and wave your tops, ye pines!
Ye plants exhale, ye flowers breathe
on him your balmy scent!

ADAM
Ye that on lofty mountains tread,
and ye that lowly creep,
ye birds that sing at heaven's gate,
and ye that swim the deep,

EVE, ADAM and CHORUS
Ye living creatures, praise the Lord!
All with life and breath!

EVE and ADAM
Ye valleys, hills, and shady woods,
bear witness to our song;
from morn to eve shall you repeat
our grateful hymn of praise.

CHORUS
Hail, bounteous Lord! Creator, hail!
Thy word call'd forth this wond'rous frame.
The heav'ns and the earth thy pow'r proclaim;
we praise thee now and evermore.

Recitative

ADAM
Our duty have we now perform'd,
in off'ring up to God our thanks.
Now follow me, dear partner of my life!
Thy guide I'll be,
and every step wakes new delights within our breast,
at the wonders all around.
Then may'st thou know
The high degree of bliss the Lord has granted us,
and with devoted heart confess his boundless love.
Come, follow me! Thy guide I'll be.

EVE
O thou, for whom I am!

My help, my shield, my all!
Thy will is law to me;
so God, our Lord ordains.
For such obedience
brings me joy, contentment and honour.

Duet

ADAM

Graceful consort!
At thy side softly fly the golden hours.
Every moment brings new rapture,
Every care is put to rest.

EVE

Spouse adored!
At thy side purest joys o'erflow the heart.
Life and all I am is thine;
my reward shall be thy love.

EVE and ADAM

The dew-dropping morning,
O how she gladdens all!
The cool breezy evening,
O how she quickens all!
How pleasing is the savour of the fruit!
How charming is the smell of fragrant blooms!
But without thee, what is to me
the morning dew, the evening breeze
the sav'ry fruit, the fragrant bloom?
With thee is every joy enhanced,
with thee delight is ever new;
with thee is life incessant bliss;
thine it all shall be.

Recitative

URIEL

O happy pair, and always happy yet,
unless, by false conceit misled
ye strive for more than granted is,
and more would know, than know ye should!

CHORUS

Praise the Lord, uplift your voices!
Utter ceaseless thanks, all ye his creatures!
Celebrate his power and glory!
Let his name resound on high!
The Lord is great; his praise shall last for aye.
Amen.