



THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHORAL SOCIETY AND ORCHESTRA
PRESENTS HAYDN'S

THE CREATION



FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 1996, 8 P.M.
TURNER ASHBY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Gretchen W. Welch, conductor
Kathryn Gardner, soprano
Les Helmuth, tenor
Lawrence Evans, baritone

Franz Joseph Haydn made two extended visits to London between 1791 and 1795. During his stays in England he composed and conducted a number of outstanding new works, among them the twelve London symphonies. The rich musical life of London, in public concerts, clubs and private circles, and the fine large orchestras, served to refresh and inspire him. No single event impressed him more deeply than the great Handel Commemoration of 1791, at which he heard *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*. Thus inspired to compose an oratorio after the style of Handel, he returned to Vienna with a libretto based on Milton's *Paradise Lost* and passages from the Bible. From its first public performance in Vienna on March 19, 1799, *The Creation* enjoyed immediate and universal acceptance. It is a masterpiece written near the end of Haydn's long, distinguished career.

The oratorio begins with *The Representation of Chaos*, an orchestral depiction of the creation of order from primordial darkness to God's command "Let there be light" and the choir's response "And there was LIGHT". The narrative then follows the biblical account of the six days of creation, each beginning with the appropriate verses from Genesis, followed by relevant solo passages, and concluding with choral praise for the successful completion of each day.

Fresh and charming to the ear, the music often describes the words; thus we hear "the crashing thunder", "the all-refreshing rain", and "the light and flaky snow" in the orchestra before the soloist utters the words. Likewise, the music draws a picture of the roaring lion, grazing cattle, and all other creatures including the famous passage "in long dimension, creeps, with sinuous trace, the worm".

The work contains much familiar and well-loved music: among the choruses, "The Heavens Are Telling", "Awake the Harp" and "Fulfilled At Last the Glorious Work" are perhaps best known. The music for the soloists provides them ample opportunity to express joy and exhilaration over God's creation.

PART I

1. Introduction

The Representation of Chaos (Orchestra)

2. Recitative: Raphael (Bass)

In the beginning, God made Heaven and 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 (Tenor)

And God saw the light, that it was good;
and God divided the light from the darkness.

3. Aria with Chorus

Uriel

Now vanished by the holy beams
the ancient, ghostly, shuddering darkness;
the First of Days appears.
Confusion yields, and order shines most fair.
Aghast, the fiends of hell confounded fly;
down they sink in the deep abyss to endless night.

Chorus

Convulsion, rage and terror
engulf their monstrous fall,
A new created world springs forth
at God's command.

4. 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.

Then howling raged the blast of the tempest.
The clouds then were driven like chaff in the wind,
the lightnings slashed the heavens asunder,
and crashing thunder resounded on high.

From waters rose at his command
the all-refreshing rain,
the devastating hail, the light and flaky snow.

5. Solo and Chorus

Gabriel (Soprano)

What wonder doth his work reveal
to heaven's host in joyful throng,
and loud resounds throughout the skies
the praise of God and of the Second Day.

Chorus

And loud resounds throughout the skies
the praise of God and of the Second Day.

6. Recitative

Raphael

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

7. Aria

Raphael

Rolling in foaming billows,
tumultuous swells the raging sea.
Highland and headland uplifted
through clouds their towering summits rise.
Through broad and ample plains
full flows the gathering stream
and winding wanders.
Lightly murmuring, gently glides
through silent glade the crystal brook.

8. Recitative

Gabriel

And God said:
Let all 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.

9. Aria

Gabriel

Now robed in cool refreshing green,
the fields their new enchantment wear;
and more to charm the sight arise the flowers
in bright array.

Here herbs of every leaf abound;
here dwells a healing grace.

The burdened boughs their golden fruit afford;
here arbors spread their vaulted, restful shade,
and lofty hills are crowned with kingly groves.

10. Recitative

Uriel

And the heavenly host proclaimed
the Third Day,
praising God and saying:

11. Chorus

Awake the harp; ye choirs awaken.
Loud let the praise of God be sounded,
Rejoice in the Lord, the mighty God.

Surely the heavens and earth
has he girded with splendor and light.

12. Recitative

Uriel

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

13. Recitative

Uriel

In shining splendor, radiant now the sun
bestrides the sky;
a wondrous, joyful bridegroom,
a giant proud and glad,
he runs his ordered course.

With softer steps and wistful shimmer,
steals the moon through still enshadowed night.

The boundless vaults of heaven's domain
shine with unnumbered magnitude of stars.
And the sons of God rejoiced in the Fourth Day
in chorus divine,
praising God's great might, and saying:

14. Chorus with Trio

Chorus

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
with wonders of his work resounds the firmament.

Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael

Revealed are his ways by day unto day,
by night that is gone to following night.

Chorus

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
With wonders of his work resounds the firmament.

Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael

In every land abounds the word.
Every ear will hearken; never tongue be dumb.

Chorus

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
with wonders of his work resounds the firmament.

INTERMISSION (10 minutes)

PART II

15. Recitative

Gabriel

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

16. Aria

Gabriel

On mighty wings
now circling soars the eagle proud
and cleaves the air with swift exulting flight
to greet the sun.

At morn the lark his cheerful welcome sings;
adoring coos the tender turtle dove.

From every bush and grove
pours now the nightingale her sweetest carol;
no grief has ruffled yet her breast,
nor yet to sorrow been tuned
her charming rondelay.

17. Recitative

Raphael

And God created great whales,
and every living creature that moveth;
and God blessed them, saying:
Be fruitful all and multiply,
ye creatures of the sky;
be multiplied, and fill the air with singing!
Multiply, ye creatures of the waters,
and fill each watery deep!
Be fruitful, grow and multiply!
Rejoice in the Lord your God!

18. Recitative

Raphael

And the angels struck their immortal harps
and sang the wonders of the Fifth Day.

19. Trio

Gabriel

In fairest raiment now,
with virgin green adorned,
the rolling hills appear.
From deep and secret springs,
in fleeting crystal flow,
the cooling brook doth pour.

Uriel

In joyful garlands borne on wheeling tides of air,
upwings the feathered host.
The myriad feathers' gleam
reflects in shimmering flight
the golden sun's pure light.

Raphael

From sparkling waters leap the fish
and twisting flash in ceaseless motion round.
From deepest ocean home waltzes up leviathan,
in foaming waves to play.

Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael

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

Chorus with Trio

The Lord is great, and great his might,
and ever stands his name.

20. Recitative

Raphael

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

21. Recitative

Raphael

Straight opening her fertile womb,
the earth brings forth at God's command
unnumbered living creatures, in perfect forms
and fully grown.

Triumphant, roaring stands the lion there.
With a lightning leap, the tiger appears.
Bounding with branching head, the nimble stag.
With snorting and stamping, flying mane,
uprears in might the noble steed.
In pleasant pastures,
quietly the cattle graze on meadows green.
And o'er the ground, as growing there,
abide the fleecy, gentle sheep.
As clouds of dust arise, in swarms assembled
the host of insects.
In long dimension creeps, with sinuous trace,
the worm.

22. Aria

Raphael

Now shines the brightest glory of heaven;
now spreads the lavish attire of earth.
The air is filled with soaring processions,
the water swelled by swarming legions;
the ground is trod by ponderous beasts.

But all the work was not complete;
there wanted yet that wondrous being,
that God's design might thankful see
and grant his goodness joyful praise.

23. Recitative

Uriel

And God created Man in his own image;
in the image of God created he him:
male and female, created he them.
And God breathed into his nostrils
the breath of life,
and Man became a living soul.

24. Aria

Uriel

In native worth and honor clad,
with beauty, strength and courage formed,
toward heaven raised uprightly.
stands a man, the lord and king of nature all.
His broad and arching, noble brow
proclaims of wisdom's deep abode,
and in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,
the breath and image of his God.

And to his breast he softly holds
one of and for him formed,
his other self, his pure delight.
With virgin grace so sweetly given
as springtime's charms bestowed,
she loves him, yields her joy and bliss.

25. Recitative

Raphael

And God saw everything that he had made,
and behold, it was very good,
and the heavenly choir loud rejoicing
raised their song of praise
and hailed the Sixth Day.

26. Chorus

Fulfilled at last the glorious work;
the Maker sees with sure delight.
Let all our joy resound aloud;
eternal praise to him accord.

Trio

Gabriel, Uriel

From thee, O Lord, doth all proceed;
all nature must thy bounty wait.
If open be thy hand, its fullness feedeth all.

Raphael

But if thy face be turned away,
a ghostly terror fills the night,
and dust returns to dust,
the living breath is gone.

Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael

Thy breath, O Lord, is felt again,
and life awakes with sweet surprise.
Renewed is all the earth,
refreshed its charm and might.

Chorus

Fulfilled at last the glorious work.
Eternal praise to him accord.
For he alone doth reign exalted. Alleluia.
Glorious be his name forever. Alleluia.

INTERMISSION (10 minutes)

PART III

27. Recitative

Uriel

In rosy mantle, bright awaked by sweetest tones,
the morning young and fair.
From heaven's vaulted realm
streams purest harmony to earth below.
Behold the happy pair as hand in hand they go:
as from their eyes radiant shines
the thanks they owe.
Full soon their tongues shall tell
the louder praise of God.
Let then our voices ring united with their song!

28. Hymn

Eve (Soprano), Adam (Baritone)

By thee with grace, O bounteous Lord,
are earth and heaven stored.
This world, so great, so wonderful,

thy mighty hand has framed.

Chorus

O blessed be his holy might;
his praise we sing eternally.

Adam

Thou star of morning,
O how fair thy tidings of the day;
What radiance rare, O sun, is thine,
thou eye and soul of all!

Chorus

Proclaim, in your extended course,
your maker's power and glory bright!

Eve

And thou, the tender queen of night,
and all ye starry host,
proclaim in every land
his praise in heaven's harmonies!

Adam

Ye mighty elements,
by his power your endless changes make;
ye misty vapors,
which the wind doth spin and roll through air,

Eve, Adam, Chorus

O sing the praise of God the Lord.
Great is his name, and great his might.

Eve

Soft flowing fountains,
tune his praise, and trees adoring bow.
Ye fragrant plants, ye flowers fair,
with sweetness fill the air!

Adam

Ye that on highest mountains climb,
and ye that lowly creep,
ye whose flight doth cleave the skies,
and ye that swim the deep,

Eve, Adam, Chorus

Ye, ye creatures of our God and King,
praise, praise him, all ye breathing life!

Eve, Adam

Ye shadowed woods, ye hills and vales,
your thanks with ours unite

and echo loud from morn to eve
our joyful hymn of praise.

Chorus

Hail, mighty God, Creator, hail!
The world springs forth at thy command.
Adoring earth and heaven stand.
We praise thy name for evermore.

29. Recitative

Adam

Now is our duty well fulfilled;
our maker have we duly thanked.
Now follow me, companion of my life!
Thy guide I'll be, and every step
wakes new delight within my breast,
shows wonders everywhere.
Then surely thou shalt know
what boundless realms of joy
the Lord hath given us.
Him praise we evermore,
him serve with heart and mind.
Come, follow me! Thy guide I'll be.

Eve

O thou for whom I live!
My arm, my shield, my all!
Thy will is duty's blessing.
So doth our Lord ordain;
That I should heed thee and bring you comfort
is my joy and glory.

30. Duet

Adam

Sweet companion! here beside thee
softly fly the golden hours.
Every moment is rapture;
naught of sadness lingers near.

Eve

Dearest husband! here beside thee
floods of joy o'erflow my heart.
That thou love me is my blessing;
thine forever is my life.

Adam

The dew-freshened morning, O bright awakening!

Eve
The coolness of evening, sweetly restoring!

Adam
How rich the taste of round and ripened fruit!

Eve
How charming the scent
of gay and fragrant flower!

Eve, Adam
But without thee, what is to me:
the morning dew?
the evening cool?
the ripened fruit?
the fragrant flower?

With thee is every joy exalted;
with thee, delight is ever new,

with thee is rapture everlasting.
Thine be my love and life.

31. Recitative

Uriel
O happy pair! and happy evermore
if false conceit betray ye not,
the more to covet than ye have
and more to know than ye should.

32. Chorus with Soloists (*with Beth Harter, alto*)

Sing to God, ye hosts unnumbered!
Thanks, all thanks for wonders new created!
Praise his name in song unending,
loud in festival rejoicing!

The Lord is great; he reigns forevermore.
Amen.

Translation by Robert Shaw and Alice Parker

Thank you for attending tonight's concert.

We cordially invite you to attend our next performance:

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With the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Band
Wednesday, July 3, 1996 at 8:00 p.m.
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