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Editor's Introduction

The Creation: Perspectives on Perception and Performance

by Michael E. Ruhling

Welcome to the Spring 2013 issue of *HAYDN: Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America*. This is the first of several issues dedicated to a single topic that will appear the next few years. Each of these topical issues will include not only the latest in Haydn musicological research, but also items that teachers, performers, scholars from other fields, and admirers of Haydn's music will find interesting and informative. As part of this new format, you will notice modifications to some of our submission categories, and the addition of a "Research Tools" area. The Haydn Biographical Outline that occupied this spot on the home page has been moved there, and we will continue to add additional items to it apropos to the topics at hand. We hope these Research Tools will prove helpful to teachers and scholars of all levels.

Given its historical significance, reception history, literary connections, and subject matter, Haydn's great oratorio *The Creation* is a fitting topic with which to begin our new format. Two of our articles come from presentations given as part of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music's "*The Creation in Context*," a symposium examining the musical, liturgical, and literary aspects of *The Creation* held at Yale on 28 April 2012. We thank Markus Rathey for organizing the symposium, and for his help in getting the articles published in this journal. The keynote address of the symposium was Melanie Lowe's "Creating Chaos in Haydn's *Creation*." Prof. Lowe (Vanderbilt University) reviews recent scholarship regarding sublime and pastoral aspects of *The Creation*, as well as the historical position of the work at the end of the Enlightenment. From these she formulates a pathway by which one can approach an informed understanding of the music and the message of the oratorio. In "Begin at

the Beginning': Haydn, Milton, and the Competitive Drama of *The Creation*," Milton scholar John Rogers (Yale University) suggests that Haydn made a keen decision in accepting to set this particular libretto, filled with passages from *Paradise Lost*, for his first English-style oratorio. Prof. Rogers draws parallels between Milton's attempt to pre-empt or outdo Homer and Virgil with *Paradise Lost*, and Haydn's need to, in effect, render Handel's popular oratorio *Messiah* historically unnecessary or irrelevant, in order to loosen up the iron grip on the genre Handel enjoyed.

Haydn famously conducted a performance of *The Creation* at the Royal Castle in Buda on 8 March 1800. Using newspaper reports and other documents, János Malina (Hungarian Haydn Society) examines the events surrounding this performance in "Haydn and *The Creation* in Buda, March 1800." His article includes previously unknown information, the correction of an often-repeated biographical mistake, a contemporary epigram, and a beautiful color drawing of the Palatine's ballroom ca. 1795, where the performance took place (kindly provided by the Szépművészeti Múzeum). Anyone who has conducted *The Creation* in recent years can testify to the confusion surrounding the various modern editions of the work. Noted choral conductor William Weinert (Eastman School of Music) reviews current vocal-piano editions, full scores, and performance parts of *The Creation* in the Reviews and Reaction section. Prof. Weinert's includes discussions of text and translations, rehearsal matters, and the role of research and scholarship in performance, which can be most valuable to performers. Finally, in our new Research Tools area, I have compiled an annotated bibliography of materials dealing with *The Creation* published in English since 1982. I hope younger scholars, teachers, and performers will find it useful. (If I neglected to include an item, it was not intentional, and I apologize for its omission.)

I wish to thank the editorial board and the officers, directors, and members of the Haydn Society of North America for their support of this journal, and for their fine ideas about its direction. And as always, I am most grateful to the staff of the RIT Press, in particular Molly Cort, for their collaborative spirit, and their willingness to continue to strive to make this a useful and attractive publication.

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