

Humanities Seminars Program
Haydn's CREATION: Which Libretto, Which Language

Dates and Time:

February 1, 8, 15, 22 (four Wednesdays)

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Optional: Truce Concord rehearsal, Tuesday, February 21, 7:00 pm venue TBD

Instructor:

Bruce Chamberlain

Professor Emeritus of Music

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Course Description:

Haydn's CREATION is considered one of his greatest achievements and is certainly a masterwork of the choral/orchestral oratorio tradition. Since the original English libretto was shrouded in mystery and Hayden needed it translated into German for his purposes, performances of this wonderful music have to deal with using Haydn's German libretto the original English libretto that does not work so well with Haydn's music, or using one of now several newly formulated English translations.

Course participants will be "enlightened" about the origins of the genre oratorio and its development through the end of the 18th century, culminating in a detailed exploration of the music and a newly formulated libretto in modern English of Haydn's CREATION. Local arts producer, True Concord Voices and Orchestra, is mounting a production of CREATION in late February, 2023 and has agreed to invite course participants to a rehearsal with discussion about what it takes to mount an oratorio of this magnitude.

Required text:

Nicholas Temperley, *Hayden The Creation*, Cambridge University Press

Other Useful Resources:

Peter Brown, *Performing Haydn's The Creation*, Indiana University Press

Philip Moody, *A New English Libretto for Haydn's The Creation*, The University of Arizona Doctor of Music Arts Dissertation

Die Schöpfung, Archiv Production, Compact Disc, John Elliot Gardiner, conductor

The Creation, Telarc Production, Compact Disc, Robert shaw, conductor

Session One (February 1, 2023): Overview of the development of Oratorio

Required Reading: *Haydn The Creation*, pages 1-18

Topics to be discussed:

- Origins/meaning of the word Oratorio
- Florentine Camerata
- Basso continuo
- 18th century major composer comparisons
- Religion in Vienna and England

Session Two (February 8, 2023): Genesis of *The Creation*

Required Reading: *Haydn The Creation*, pages 31-46

- Original libretto
- Issues of translation
- Early performances
- Structure of the work

Session Three (February 15, 2023): Musical Analysis

Required Reading: *Haydn The Creation*, pages 47-84

- Design, Plan and Structure of *The Creation*
- Orchestration
- Musical numbers: Recitative, Aria, Chorus
- Insights for True Concord's Performance by Eric Holtan, conductor

Session Four (February 22, 2023): The libretto

Required Reading: *Haydn The Creation*, pages 19-30

- Authorship
- Baron Von Swieten
- Historic Translations
- Twenty-first century translation, discussion with Philip Moody