

Program Notes & Texts/Translations

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), the Austrian composer, performer, conductor, and opera impresario, was the first of the three Viennese Classical composers with Mozart and Beethoven. Haydn's musical career started as a court musician, including Esterházy in Hungary, and he finished as a freelance musician. Haydn composed almost every genre, balancing both vocal and instrumental works. Although he is known as the father of the symphony and string quartet with over 170 works, his oratorios, such as *Die Schöpfung* (*The Creation*, 1798) and *The Seasons* (1801), were hugely successful in public performances.

Haydn visited London in 1791–92, and he listened to Handel's oratorios *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*. On his second trip to London during 1794–95, Haydn received the English libretto of *The Creation*, whose text combines Biblical passages from Genesis and the related Psalms from John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). Haydn set the libretto in a German version by his Viennese collaborator, Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733–1803), in 1797. Both English and German versions existed in Haydn's lifetime; however, Haydn originally set the German text first. *Die Schöpfung* consists of three parts: four days of creation in Part 1, the fifth and sixth days of creation in Part 2, and Adam and Eve's joy in the Eden Garden in Part 3. The oratorio includes arias sung by three angels: Raphael (bass), Uriel (tenor), and Gabriel (soprano), who sing the praises of God and tell of the creation of the world during the first six days. **Gabriel's recitative and aria** are about the third day God created plants, fruit, and flowers. The text of the recitative comes from Genesis. The text for the aria comes from *Paradise Lost*. The entire aria is written in *da capo* form, so the performer is expected to ornament some embellishments in the returned section.

(Recitativ)

Und Gott sprach: Es bringe die Erde Gras
hervor, Kräuter, die Samen geben,
und Obstbäume, die Früchte bringen ihrer Art
gemäß, die ihren Samen in sich selbst haben auf
der Erde: und es ward so.

(Arie) Gabriel

Nun beut die Flur das frische Grün
Dem Auge zur Ergötzung dar.
Den anmutsvollen Blick
Erhöht der Blumen sanfter Schmuck.
Hier duften Kräuter Balsam aus;
Hier sproßt den Wunden Heil.
Die Zweige krümmt der goldnen Früchte Last;
Hier wölbt der Hain zum kühlen Schirme sich,
Den steilen Berg bekrönt ein dichter Wald.

(Text by Baron Gottfried van Swieten)

(Recitative)

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)

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.

(Translated by Robert Shaw and Alice Parker)

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) composed every musical genre, including operas, cantatas, oratorios, songs, concertos, and keyboard music. His Italian operas were popular until 1737, and later, he composed more English oratorios, which Handel invented and fully staged like his operas. During Lent, operas were not allowed to be performed; therefore, Handel needed

to find another source of income to satisfy his audiences as he had done with his Italian operas. Handel composed more than 20 English oratorios, and his *Messiah* (1741) is the most famous of all oratorios. His English oratorios resembled his Italian operas in terms of style and structure. His *Messiah* is atypical because it has no characters and is not staged, although it follows the operatic structure in three parts (acts), including the overture.

Charles Jennens (c. 1700–1773) took the text of *Messiah* from the Bible in 1739, and Handel composed this oratorio in 1741. *Messiah* consists of three parts: the Messiah’s birth in Part 1, the passion of Jesus in Part 2, and the resurrection of the dead and redemption through Christ in Part 3. Handel revised this oratorio many times. In the *Bärenreiter* edition, the soprano soloist performs seven musical numbers, including one duet with an alto soloist. Most arias are written in *da capo* form, which resembles his Italian operas. **“Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion”** is the soprano’s first solo aria, where she tells the daughter of Zion to rejoice with God. The series of the 16th note melisma represents word-painting of rejoicing. **“How Beautiful Are the Feet”** exists in three versions, sung by two altos and chorus, an alto, and a soprano. This lilting aria is pastoral in mood in 12/8 meter. Handel wrote the soprano version of this aria in 1749. **“I Know That My Redeemer Liveth”** appears after the “Hallelujah” chorus and at the beginning of Part 3. This aria focuses on faith in redemption.

Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion

shout, O daughter of Jerusalem,
 behold, thy King cometh unto thee.
 He is the righteous Saviour,
 and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

How Beautiful Are the Feet

of them that preach the gospel of peace,
 and bring glad tidings of good things.
 Their sound is gone out into all lands,
 and their words unto the ends of the world.

I Know That My Redeemer Liveth,

And that He shall stand at the latter day upon the
 earth. And though worms destroy this body
 Yet in my flesh shall I see God.
 I know that my Redeemer liveth,
 And though worms destroy this body,
 Yet in my flesh shall I see God.
 I know that my Redeemer liveth:
 For now is Chris risen from the dead,
 The first fruits of them that sleep.

(Texts by Charles Jennens)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) composed not only operas but also church music, including masses, vespers, requiem masses, and short sacred works in Latin. During 1779–80, Mozart served as a court organist in Salzburg, and he had to serve the court and church by composing new music. Mozart composed *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (Solemn Vespers for a Confessor) for an evening mass on the liturgical calendar of saints in the Salzburg Cathedral in 1780. It was the final choral work that Mozart composed for the cathedral. Vespers is the seventh canonical office in the Roman Catholic liturgy. *Vesperae solennes de confessore* consists of six movements with texts from Psalms except for the last movement, “Magnificat.” The fifth movement, **“Laudate Dominum omnes gentes,”** sung by a soprano soloist and four-part choir, is the most famous and often performed in the Vespers. The text is taken from Psalm 117 in the Vulgate (the 4th-century Roman Catholic Latin translation of the Bible). The choir comes quietly toward the end of the aria; however, it is omitted for tonight’s performance.

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes,
laudate eum omnes populi
quoniam confirmata est supernos misericordia
ejus, et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

Praise the Lord all nations,
praise Him all ye people
for his merciful kindness is great toward us,
and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

(Translation from The Oratorio Anthology)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) was an Italian composer and violin virtuoso and most well known as the master of the Baroque concerto. He composed not only many instrumental concertos but also sacred choral works and operas, and cantatas. Vivaldi composed three *Glorias*, and *Gloria*, RV 589 is the second of the two D major *Glorias* he composed. The text is taken from the traditional Gloria section of the Latin Mass of the Roman Catholic liturgy. This *Gloria* is the most popular work among his sacred choral works. His choral works include many female solos because he composed for a female music ensemble of the Ospedale della Pietà, one of four Venetian institutions devoted to caring for orphaned children. *Gloria* consists of 12 movements, including “**Domine Deus**,” a soprano solo aria. In this aria, the soprano sings with an oboe instrument as a duet in parallel thirds occasionally; however, the oboe obligato is omitted for tonight’s performance. The pastoral mood is represented in 12/8 meter.

(Notes by Youngmi Kim)

Domine Deus, rex cœlestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Lord God, heavenly king,
God the Father almighty.

(Translation from The Oratorio Anthology)

Tres canciones sobre poemas de Manuel Acuña (2021) is a set of three simple art songs for soprano and piano, composed by David Johnson. The poems are selected from Manuel Acuña’s *Hojas secas*. Each song has a contrasting character: “**Las lágrimas**” is empty and desolate in its lyricism; “**El beso de la aurora**” is playful with melismatic flourishes that compliment a lighter woman’s voice type; and “**El perdón y el olvido**” is dark and passionate.

Manuel Acuña (1849–1873) was a Mexican writer who, as a young man, saw the overthrow of Maximilian’s rule and the Mexican Restored Republic. His poems, essays, and other works began to be published when he was only twenty years old, but tragically, he committed suicide at the young age of 24. The three poems used in this set are chosen not just for their emotion and beauty, but also as an opportunity to call attention to those with depression and in need of help.

Las lágrimas del niño

La madre enjuga,
las lágrimas del hombre
las seca la mujer...
¡Qué tristes las que brotan
y bajan por la arruga,
del hombre que está solo,
del hijo que está ausente,
del ser abandonado
que llora y que no siente
ni el beso de la cuna,
ni el beso del placer!

The child’s tears

the mother wipes away,
the man’s tears
the woman dries...
How sad those that appear
and trickle down a wrinkle,
of the man who is alone,
of the son who is absent,
of the abandoned
who cry and feel
neither the cradle’s kiss
nor the kiss of pleasure.

El beso de la aurora

Mañana a la misma hora
en que el sol te besó por vez primera,
sobre tu frente pura y hechicera
caerá otra vez el beso de la aurora;
pero ese beso que en aquel oriente
cayó sobre tu frente solo y frío,
mañana bajará dulce y ardiente,
porque el beso del sol sobre tu frente
bajará acompañado con el mío.

El perdón y el olvido

¡Cómo quieres que tan pronto
olvide el mal que me has hecho,
si cuando me toco el pecho
la herida me duele más!
Entre el perdón y el olvido
hay una distancia inmensa;
yo perdonaré la ofensa;
pero olvidarla... ¡jamás!

(Text by Manuel Acuña)

The Kiss of Dawn

Tomorrow at the same time
when the sun first kissed you,
on your pure and bewitching forehead
dawn's kiss will fall again;
but that kiss which from the east
fell on your forehead alone and cold,
tomorrow will descend sweet and burning
because the kiss of the sun on your forehead
will descend accompanied with mine.

Forgive and Forget

How is it you so quickly want
to forget the wrong you've done to me,
when I touch my chest
the wound hurts even more!
Between forgive and forget
there is an immense distance;
I will forgive the offense;
but forget it...never!

(Notes and Translations by David Johnson)

Margaret Bonds (1913–1972) was an African American composer, pianist, and teacher. She was the first African American piano soloist to appear with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933. Bonds mainly composed vocal music, and her spirituals are especially well known. She composed over 100 solo vocal works. She also composed musical theater pieces, including *Shakespeare in Harlem* and *Romey and Julie*, and other popular songs.

The text for both “April Rain Song” and “Poème d’Automne” was written by the Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes (1901–1967), who inspired more than half of her solo vocal works. Bonds composed the accompaniment based on Toy Harper’s melody in “**April Rain Song.**” The accompaniment imitates raindrops over the simple vocal line. This sweet song depicts how rain replenishes us and makes us feel comfortable. “**Poème d’Automne**” is the first piece of Bond’s song cycle *Songs of the Seasons*, composed in 1934. The song cycle contains four songs, with each piece representing one of the four seasons. Bonds used blues notes in the vocal line and jazzy swing rhythms throughout the piece. The poetry expresses that there will be nothing that touches the trees aside from the cold once the trees lose their leaves.

Bonds played a key role in developing the concert setting of the African American spiritual by composing or arranging songs. She composed the arrangement of “**He’s Got the Whole World**” for Marian Anderson in 1935 and orchestrated it for Leontyne Price in 1962. The pop version of this piece became famous in 1957 due to Laurie London’s recording. Bonds used the D major key, symbolizing triumph, victory, and rejoicing. This piece shows God’s control over all of His creation. Bonds also arranged “**This Little Light of Mine**” for Leontyne Price in 1962. Edward G. Ivins published this poetry in 1925. Bonds used the syncopated rhythm throughout the song. The modified three-verse strophic song shows gentle and peaceful feelings for God in the G major key. “Let it shine” is repeated 19 times in the song.

(Notes by Youngmi Kim)

April Rain Song

Let the rain kiss you.
Let the rain beat upon your brow
with silver liquid drops.
Let the rain sing you a lullaby.
The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.
The rain makes running pools in the gutter.
The rain plays a little sleep song
on your roof at night
And you love the rain.

(Text by Langston Hughes)

Poème d'Automne

The autumn leaves are too heavy with color.
The slender trees on the Vulcan Road
Are dressed in scarlet and gold
Like young courtesans waiting for their lovers.
But soon the winter
wind will strip their bodies bare.
And then the sharp,
sleet-stung Caresses of the cold
Will be their only Love.

(Text by Langston Hughes)

He's Got the Whole World in His Hand.

He's got the woods and the waters in His hand.
He's got the sun and the moon right in His hand,
He's got the whole world in His hand.
He's got the birds and the bees right in His hand,
He's got the beasts of the field right in His hand.
He's got the whole world in His hand.
He's got you and me right in His hand,
He's got everybody in His hand,
He's got the whole world in His hand.

This Little Light of Mine,

I am gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
All through the nighttime,
I am gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
When I get to Heaven,
I am gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

(Text by Edward G. Ivins)