

HEAVENLY CREATION

Haydn unites musicians from England and Dresden in the Frauenkirche

Uwe Schneider [translation by Rachel Green]

It is a long time since we have experienced in Dresden a performance of Haydn's Creation which was so jaunty and light, rhythmically vibrant and vigorous. The renowned Bach Choir, the Dresden Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, three superbly sure-footed soloists and the energetic David Hill, skilfully shaping the voices, were rewarded on Saturday evening with storms of enthusiasm.

Every gesture was apt. David Hill, Musical Director of The Bach Choir since 1998, laid out the original English version of Haydn's oratorio with theatrical vividness, brought excitement to the melodic line and breathed life into the orchestral counterpoint of the Dresden orchestra, which played with rarely heard lightness. The wind playing was wonderfully relaxed, crescendos reached their climax with beautifully developed phrases. The voice groups of the choir were also splendid. With clear leads they were compact in the tutti passages, transparent in the fugal parts, effective in their dynamic shading – every choral movement became a new experience in tonal colour and musical excitement.

Voices in Mozart's style

Sarah Fox, whose soprano voice was consistent in all registers, belongs to the great up and coming talents of the international classic scene. Her top notes shone with silver brightness, technical perfection combined with an easy fluidity, just as Mozart dreamed of. What was most striking about all the singers, alongside their obvious joy in the music-making, was their clear articulation, their vivid interpretation and the seemingly endless colouration of sound. Both Ed Lyon, his clear lyrical tenor, projecting strongly into the body of the church and Christopher Purves - with his outstanding, noble baritone - were operating on a level which set new standards in Dresden too.

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