

AMERICAN
BACH
SOLOISTS



JEFFREY THOMAS
music director

support materials for our recording of

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809): MASSES
Tamara Matthews *soprano* - Zoila Muñoz *alto*
Benjamin Butterfield *tenor* - David Arnold *bass*
AMERICAN BACH SOLOISTS
AMERICAN BACH CHOIR • PACIFIC MOZART ENSEMBLE
Jeffrey Thomas, conductor

Missa in Angustiis — “Lord Nelson Mass”

Following the extraordinary success of his two sojourns in London, Haydn returned in 1795 to his work as Kapellmeister for Prince Nikolas Esterházy the younger. The Prince wanted Haydn to re-establish the Esterházy orchestra, disbanded by his unmusical father, Prince Anton. Haydn’s return to active duty for the Esterházy family did not, however, signify a return to the isolated and static atmosphere of the relatively remote Esterházy palace, which had been given up after the elder Prince Nikolas’s death in 1790. Haydn was now able to work at the Prince’s residence in Vienna for most of the year, retiring to the courtly lodgings at Eisenstadt during the summer. His duties were light, the most important being the composition of a new mass each year in honor of Princess Marie Hermenegild’s name day (8 September) for performance at Eisenstadt. Of the resultant Masses, the Nelson Mass (1798) is perhaps the most popular. Written during an especially intense moment of the Napoleonic Wars—namely the battle of the Nile—the piece is listed in Haydn’s own catalogue as *Missa in angustiis* (“Mass in Time of Distress”); news of Lord Nelson’s victory over Napoleon, however, was electrifying Allied Europe, and from its first performance, the piece came to be known by its present title. In his biography of the composer, Karl Geiringer notes that a chart of the battle of the Nile was found among Haydn’s papers. Legend has further strengthened the connection: upon meeting Haydn in 1800, Admiral Nelson is said to have asked for the pen with which the composer wrote the Mass in exchange for a gold watch.

Written in dark D minor (it is Haydn’s only extant Mass in a minor key), the work displays an intensity reminiscent of Haydn’s *Sturm und Drang* works partnered with the technical brilliance of the London symphonies. The opening forgoes the Adagio introduction so common in the symphonies and several other Masses and launches directly into the Allegro tempo with a fierceness well meriting the choral invocation, “*Kyrie eleison*” (“Lord have mercy”). Indeed this movement is infused with a sense of desperation: the growing intensity of the descending chromatics “sighs” in the second Kyrie culminates with the return of the original Kyrie music, now made more heartrending by the soprano soloist’s florid cries. Following the true spirit of the text, painfully relevant in a time of war, Haydn infuses the music here with a prayerful urgency. The sounds of entreaty, both individual and congregational, pervade the Mass; they are united with stunning perfection in the “*Qui tollis*” section of the Gloria, where the

soprano soloist’s petition “*Suscipe*” (“Receive”) is followed by the unison choral response “*deprecationem nostram*” (“our prayer”).

Even in the traditionally upbeat sections of the liturgy, the frequent turns to minor harmonies invoke the upheaval wrought by war and disallow a sense of emotional—and auditory—complacency. After the optimistic D-major opening of the Gloria, for example, the music slips into E minor at the words “*et in terra pax hominibus*” (“and peace to His people on earth”); throughout the section, D-minor inflections cloud the laudatory mood of the first theme and the text in general. The Benedictus is even more startling. Rejecting the serene musical language commonly associated with this text, Haydn returns to D minor and the martial character of the Kyrie in a lengthy instrumental introduction complete with trumpets and timpani. Yet however overwhelming the brutalities and despair of war, the final section of the Mass focuses on peace. As entreaty is intrinsically an act of hope, the “*Dona nobis pacem*” (“Grant us peace”) shines bright with possibility. Reaffirming again and again the final key of D major, the music sweeps past any lingering chromatic passages, invigorated to the end by the shifting dynamics, broad choral lines, and energetic, even merry, violin accompaniment.

Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo — “Little Organ-Mass”

Haydn composed this “*Kleine Orgelmesse*” (“Little Organ-Mass”) for the Eisenstadt house of the Order of the Brothers of Mercy, with whom he had an abiding friendly relationship. (One of his first jobs as a musician was playing first violin for the Brothers of Mercy at Leopoldstadt near Vienna) Indeed, Haydn dedicated a number of small sacred pieces to Saint John of God, a sixteenth-century Portuguese monk and the founder of the Order. Although the exact date of this Mass is unknown, it is generally thought to have been written in the mid-1770s.

The *missa brevis*, with its compact form and smaller performing forces, was especially popular in mid-eighteenth century Austria. As in his short Masses, Haydn employs here an orchestra of two violins and continuo and a four-voice chorus. (The addition of the obbligato organ and soprano solo in the Benedictus endow the movement with a welcome luxuriance and mark it as the musical highlight of the work; such broad treatment of this particular movement is not uncommon in the *missa brevis* settings.) The abbreviated musical

forms and polytextual settings in the *missa brevis* format allow for a relatively expedient presentation of the liturgical text. In the Gloria, for example, each vocal part sings simultaneously a different part of the text, coming together only at the final “*cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen*” (“with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen”).

While the conventions of the *missa brevis* undoubtedly placed limits on dramatic possibilities, Haydn nevertheless treats us in this Mass to moments of the keenest expression. Following the allegro opening of the Credo, with its chaotic jumble of texts, the music slows to an adagio tempo and lingers on the words so central to the belief of the faithful: “*Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est*” (“By the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man”). The simple, chordal style of

the choral writing allows for the most eloquent declamation of the text, culminating in the sublime unison at “*et homo factus est.*” The subsequent C-minor Crucifixus also displays this expressive simplicity. The mysteries of birth and death form the dramatic focus of this section. Haydn makes clear their inextricable relationship, recalling—at the words “*et sepultus est*” (“and was buried”)—the oscillating violin accompaniment which first appeared at “*et homo factus est.*” The solemn, earnest mood and musical language of the “*Et incarnatus*” return with the Agnus Dei. In the final “*Dona nobis pacem*” (“grant us peace”), Haydn eschews the traditional exuberance of this section and indicates instead a gradual dying away, an ethereal conclusion to the final request for peace.

- Kristi Brown-Montesano

Missa in Angustiis
(Lord Nelson Mass)

1 Kyrie
Allegro Moderato
Soprano solo, solo quartet, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani

2 Gloria
Allegro
Solo quartet, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani

3 Qui tollis
Adagio
Bass solo, soprano solo, chorus / organ, strings

4 Quoniam tu solus
Allegro
Solo quartet, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani

5 Credo
Allegro con spirito
Chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani

Missa Stⁱ Joannis de Deo
(Little Organ-Mass)

12 Kyrie
Adagio
Chorus / strings, continuo

13 Gloria
Allegro (di molto)
Chorus / strings, continuo

14 Credo
Allegro
Chorus / strings, continuo

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe altissime: Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris:
Glory be to God in the highest. And in earth peace to men of good will. We praise thee; we bless thee, we worship thee; we glorify thee. We give thanks to thee for thy great glory. Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ most high: Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father:

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis: Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram: Qui sedes ad dextram Patris, miserere nobis:
Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us: Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer: Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us:

Quoniam tu solus sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe: Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.
For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only art the most high, Jesus Christ: With the Holy Ghost in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Credo in unum Deum. Patrem omnipotentem, Creator coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium: Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula: Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt: Qui Propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis:
I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds: God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten not made; being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made: who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven:

<p>6 <i>Et incarnatus</i> Largo Solo quartet, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>	<p>Adagio Chorus / strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est.</i> And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried.</p>
<p>7 <i>Et resurrexit</i> Vivace Soprano solo, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>	<p>Allegro Chorus / strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum scripturas: Et ascendit in coelum. Sedet ad dextram Dei Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit: Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.</i></p>
<p>8 <i>Sanctus</i> Adagio - (Allegro) Chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>	<p>15 <i>Sanctus</i> Allegro Chorus / strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria ejus. Osanna in excelsis.</i> Holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of his glory. Hosanna in the highest.</p>
<p>9 <i>Benedictus</i> Allegretto Solo quartet, chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>	<p>16 <i>Benedictus</i> Moderato Soprano aria / organ solo, strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.</i> Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.</p>
<p><i>Osanna</i> Allegro chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>	<p>Allegro Chorus / strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Osanna in excelsis.</i> Hosanna in the highest.</p>
<p>10 <i>Agnus Dei</i> Adagio solo quartet / organ, strings</p>	<p>17 <i>Agnus Dei</i> Adagio chorus / strings, continuo</p>	<p><i>Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.</i> Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.</p>
<p>11 <i>Dona nobis</i> Vivace chorus / organ, strings, trumpets, timpani</p>		<p><i>Dona nobis pacem.</i> Grant us peace.</p>

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

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