

Some people think that if you live in the middle of nowhere, you cannot get anything important done. That was not the case for our new composer Franz Joseph Haydn (Hi-den), although he preferred to go by his middle name Joseph. For most of his adult life, he worked as a court musician for a very wealthy family in their palace in far-off Hungary. In spite of the distance, he managed to create two important forms of music and became known as the father of the symphony and the father of the string quartet. He explained that he was "forced to become original" because of the isolation. His music was widely played throughout Europe and, when he finally moved to Austria late in his life, he became the mentor of Mozart and the tutor of Beethoven.

Joseph Haydn was an honest man and a devout Catholic who turned to his rosary when he hit a sticky spot while composing. Success did not go to his head for he remained a humble man and his court musicians called him Papa Haydn. He kept a cheerful working atmosphere and he could not resist pranks.

(Farewell) Symphony No. 45 (1772) - Haydn and the musicians had spent a long hot summer at the palace, a day's journey from home. They missed their families. But, how does one tell a wealthy prince that it is time to say farewell. Haydn decided to say it through music and, during this symphony that lasts only a half hour, one musician after another slips away during the fourth movement until only two violinists and the conductor remain. The prince got the message and the musicians journeyed home the following day.

symphony - a long orchestral composition with four movements
string quartet - music for four string (viola, cello, two violins)

Young Joseph Haydn was born in a country village in Austria on its border with Hungary. His father was a wheelwright who was a self-taught harpist. Joseph only held vague memories of his family and neighbors singing together. For he left home at age six. Why, you ask? His family noticed his musical talent and they knew it would come to nothing in their little village. They apprenticed him to a relative who was a choirmaster in a much larger town. Life was not easy for he was often hungry and embarrassed by his dirty clothing. He did learn to play the violin and harpsichord and he sang in the choir. He must have sang well. The musical director of a cathedral in Vienna was touring the countryside to find new choirboys. He passed the audition and moved to the musical capital of Europe at the age of eight.

(Surprise) Symphony No. 94 (1791) - Over fifty years later, Haydn traveled far from the little village on the border of Hungary. During his visit to London, he wrote six symphonies that are now called the London symphonies. He returned to Vienna and wrote six more symphonies in preparation for his second visit.

The surprise symphony is only twenty-three minutes long. He hid musical pranks, and today we will hear one. The second movement starts off with a simple melody and suddenly a loud chord, called fortissimo, blasts the audience, which usually signals a dramatic change. Instead, the music goes back to the quiet melody as if nothing happened. He did this because his rival had premiered a piece the week before and Haydn felt he had to grab his listeners' attention. They bravoed the first movement and, at the end, they yelled, "Encore! Encore!"

forte - loud
piano - soft

fortissimo - very loud
pianissimo - very soft

What happened to Haydn in Vienna? He and four other choirboys, including his younger brother Michael who also became a composer, lived with the choirmaster's family. They learned Latin, voice, violin, and keyboard. Even in the musical capital of Europe, choir boys were not well-fed so he sang his best in hopes of being invited to perform for wealthy audiences and fill up on refreshments afterwards. After nine years of this life, his voice matured and Empress Maria Theresa complained of his "crowing" but that is not what got him canned. The prankster snipped off the pigtail of a fellow choirboy and was sent to the streets! A friend took him in and began his career as a freelance musician, seeking whatever gig he could find.

Trumpet Concerto in E-flat major (1796) - This trumpet concerto is Haydn's most popular concertos, and it lasts fifteen minutes. Because concertos require a soloist that shows off, Haydn did not write many of them. A good friend was a trumpeter who begged him to write something special to celebrate the addition of valves to the trumpet. The concerto follows the fast-slow-fast pattern with a trumpet solo. In the festive opening allegro, the orchestra introduce the main themes before the trumpet soloist picks them up. Haydn included challenging jumps and key changes. At the end of the first movement, the trumpeter plays a flashy fanfare. The second movement opens a lyrical melody that quietly and gently dances a sweet lullaby. The brisk, joyful third movement shows off the flexibility of the trumpet with trills, arpeggios, and octave leaps. The spirited music celebrates the newfound power of the trumpet, which dominates the end of the piece.

trill - a quivering effect that quickly alternates between two notes
arpeggio - a broken chord in which notes are played in succession
octave - an eight-note interval so that notes have the same letter

Joseph Haydn visited London for two lengthy trips and he did more than impress audiences with his music. He attended many concerts and he marveled at oratorios composed by Georg Frederich Handel—*Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*. He did not meet the composer who had died forty years earlier. Before he left England, he grabbed a libretto focused on the Book of Genesis. A libretto is the text that a composer uses for the words sung by soloists and choirs. This one was so long it would have lasted four hours! When he returned to Vienna, he reflected on all he had heard in London and began to compose something of equal weight. *The Creation* is seen as his masterpiece.

The Creation (1800) - This week focuses on the first part of three, addressing the defeat of Satan in heaven and four days of creation. First, we will hear the angel Raphael, the bass soloist, tell of God separating the waters and the heavens. Swirling violins begin immediately as the angel sings about the weather and the violins act out the weather musically: pounding drums for thunder, sawing violins for rain, and staccato pulses for hail. A soprano steps as Gabriel to sing of the marvelous works of God and a chorus joins her. Then Raphael sings of the gathering of land and creation of plants on the third day and Gabriel describes in detail the different kinds of plants that grow. A tenor angel Uriel arrives to sing of the lights in the heavens on the fourth day and the violin slowly grow and swell in a way that you can see the first rosy fingers of the dawn. He sings more gently and softly to usher in the moon. He is joined by the chorus. Then the three angels sing about the glory of God and the heavenly chorus adds to the power of the music.

oratorio - a religious piece performed without costumes or props
libretto - the text of an opera or sacred oratorio

How did Haydn go from street performer to court composer? Haydn became the king of odd jobs—music teacher, street serenader, valet, organist, musician for Carnival Week, singer in the royal chapel, and singing and keyboard teacher for a countess. He had never received systematic training in music theory and composition so he studied a book about counterpoint and studied the work of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach for ideas. He composed operas and one was popular but was closed for having “offensive remarks.” He grew frustrated because music shops would publish his music and not give him any share of their profit. For eight years, he barely got by but managed to build a reputation as a composer. Then one day, he got a full-time job as the music director for a rich count.

The Creation (1800) - Part II is dominated by the angels Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel describing the creation of animals above and under the water. Raphael kicks off a trio about the wonders of the fifth day sun by speaking of angles striking their immortal harps. A soprano (high female) sings of high hills; a tenor (high male), of birds; and a base (low male), of creeping insects? His voice is especially deep with the word *leviathan*. Haydn shapes notes and uses instruments to imitate words like hills, crystal drops, rainbows, and swarms of bugs. Every time a prayerful “O God” is sung the music slows down to show respect. When Raphael sings of land creatures, the music roars, leaps, and moves in a sinuous wormlike wake. Raphael bleats like a sheep. The music sweetens when he sings of the love between man and woman. The highest and longest note emphasizes *joy*.

soprano - high female voice
tenor - high male voice
bass - low male voice

Haydn put his freelance life behind him and became a *kapellmeister*, which means music director for a wealthy count. He led a small orchestra and composed his first symphonies. Steady income allowed him to marry Maria Anna. A year later he lost that “secure” job because the count had a financial setback. A far wealthier prince hired Haydn to take the place of his aging kapellmeister. Haydn was second in charge until the elderly man died. He wore a fancy uniform and followed the family in their travels. This exhausting job of composition, running the orchestra, playing chamber music for and with his patrons, and staging operas lasted for thirty years.

The Creation (1800) - This week we will conclude Part II with the creation of man and woman. The upbeat music signifies the king of creation, man. Trumpets point to the majesty of mankind. Raphael recaps many events of Day 6 and states that God’s work is not complete. Important words are enunciated and lingers with the help of a *fermata* (bird’s eye): *wanted yet, being, power, admire, and voice* (God’s instrument of creation). Then the heavenly choirs of angels praise God with immense joy. A gentle song address our relationship with God. Gabriel and Raphael, the soprano and tenor, sings in her sweetest voice. Then, Uriel, the bass with a deep, dark voice, reminds us of God’s great power and ability to strike fear in the hearts of his enemies and ominous violins pulse. The music brightens and the trio sing of new delights. They all linger on a new delights and crescendo.

fermata - a bird’s-eye-like symbol that means to hold a note
trio - a group of three singers

Music-loving nobles paid Hayden well to stage *The Creation's* premiere. He finished writing the parts on Good Friday and rehearsed it before a large audience in less than a month. The first performance was held at the palace for wealthy and powerful people. The common folks crowded the nearby streets and thirty police officers controlled the crowd. One listener wrote, "Already three days have passed since that happy evening, and it still sounds in my ears and heart." The first public performance was sold out far in advance. Haydn heard or conducted the oratorio forty times. A year before he died, Haydn attended his last performance. The aged and ill composer was carried, with great honor, into the concert hall on an armchair. When the light came, the audience erupted with thundering applause. Haydn mustered all his strength and pointed upward and said, "Not from me—everything comes from up there!"

The Creation (1800) - Part III is about Adam and Eve before the Fall. Adam, a tenor, tells of their duty to God. When Adam sings "every step," the notes look like steps. High notes are for happy words like *high*, *bliss*, *celebrate*. Eve sings of Adam in graceful notes, but, when she shifts to obedience to God three times, four heavy chords emphasize *duty*. *Happiness* flows out of *obedience*—the notes become light and airy. The oratorio concludes with a duet sung by the lovebirds. The first half has long, slow, gentle, graceful notes. Adam sings of his graceful consort and notes soar and float down for *high* and *rapture*. He sings of *rest* three times, followed by a musical rest. Eve follows her guide's lead and sings of her spouse adored. They sing repeat lines sung previously and their music weaves together. The pace quickens as they sing of paradise and the instruments respond in a lively dance.

rest - a symbol which tells the singer or musician to stop