

CAMPUS CANTAT 2008 - CREATION AND THE FALL

The limits of growth, the threatening catastrophe of global warming, the environmental disaster, in brief, our thoughtless treatment of creation - all of this is being discussed everywhere. Whoever intends to present the oratorio "The Creation" of Joseph Haydn, which toward the end of the 18th century set out to praise God's creative deeds, will have to address these issues through the medium of the art of music.

For CAMPUS CANTAT 2008 its musical director Reinhard Fehling therefore plans the performance of his modified version of Haydn's great work.

The two first parts, in which the six days of the creation are presented in music, will remain nearly unchanged. The third part, in the original, deals only with the life of Adam and Eve in Paradise. Fehling replaces it by a new part called "The Fall and the Expulsion from Paradise"

The musical material for this part is taken from bars 34 to 59 of the tercet No 29 near the end of part two. It is the .only moment in the whole work when anxiety about the future of creation is expressed. These bars being removed, the bars 33 and 60 will appear consecutively without further changes in the sequence of part two.

The 26 bars, cut from the original corpus of the music, like Eve from the body of Adam, form the base for the compact rewriting of part three. This is done by using variative techniques in the manner of Haydn and will contain recitatives as well as parts for solo singers and choir.

The words are taken from John Milton's "Paradise Lost", the same text which the librettists of Haydn used. Thus the story of the Fall and the /expulsion/ is presented in compact form

One could call this somewhat daring undertaking "Creation - revisited", knowing that it takes a topical turn: Just before the final choir of part three there are inserted critical texts concerning present-day threats to the environment, a second Fall as it were. The recited passages are taken from the book "Tränen der Schöpfung" (tears of Creation) by theologian Dorothee Sölle.

The insertion is suggested by the short recitative which Haydn wanted to precede the final choir. Only here does he express a warning about delusions of grandeur and the destructive use of human reason: "Oh men, ever happy unless false delusions seduce you to wish for more than you have, and to know more than you should!"

The wars and catastrophes of the 20th century are abundant evidence to which destructive consequences unbounded and unscrupulous use of human intelligence can lead. Haydn who lived at the time of burgeoning Enlightenment could not yet realise these dimensions. After those inserted passages one will, listening to the final choir "Sing to the Lord with all your voices", feel with regret the loss of Haydn's undoubting confidence.

CAMPUS CANTAT 2008 (as in 2006 with "dona nobis pacem") thus continues its tradition of integrating problems and issues of our time into the music.

The global character of such themes makes them eminently suitable for this international week of music. It is the twelfth time that the Technical University Dortmund organises this event, which will unite students from many countries in a common musical endeavor. . .