

## Joseph Haydn – Die Schöpfung (The Creation) – Karajan (1998)

Written by bluesever

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Haydn: Die Schöpfung Hob. XXI:2 / Erster Teil 1. 1a. *Einleitung. Die Vorstellung des Chaos (Largo) Berliner Philharmoniker 7:05* 2. 1b. *Rezitativ mit Chor: Im Anfange schuf Gott Himmel und Erde Walter Berry 2:58* 3. 2. *Arie mit Chor: Nun schwanden vor dem heiligen Strahle Fritz Wunderlich 4:01* 4. 3. *Rezitativ: Und Gott machte das Firmament Walter Berry 1:50* 5. 4. *Chor mit Sopransolo: Mit Staunen sieht das Wunderwerk Gundula Janowitz 2:00* 6. 5. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sprach: Es sammle sich das Wasser Walter Berry 0:44* 7. 6. *Arie: Rollend in schäumenden Wellen Walter Berry 4:12* 8. 7. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sprach: Es bringe die Erde Gras hervor Gundula Janowitz 0:37* 9. 8. *Arie: Nun beut die Flur das frische Grün Gundula Janowitz 5:34* 10. 9. *Rezitativ: Und die Himmlischen Heerscharen Werner Krenn 0:14* 11. 10. *Chor: Stimmt an die Saiten Berliner Philharmoniker 1:58* 12. 11. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sprach: Es sei'n Lichter an der Feste des Himmels Werner Krenn 0:41* 13. 12. *Rezitativ: Im vollen Glanze steigt jetzt Fritz Wunderlich 2:55* 14. 13. *Chor mit Soli: Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes Gundula Janowitz 4:02*

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15. 14. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sprach: Es bringe das Wasser Gundula Janowitz 0:22* 16. 15. *Arie: Auf starkem Fittiche schwinget sich der Adler stolz Gundula Janowitz 7:38* 17. 16. *Rezitativ: Und Gott schuf große Walfische Walter Berry 2:39* 18. 17. *Rezitativ: Und die Engel rührten ihr' unsterblichen Harfen Walter Berry 0:27* 19. 18. *Terzett: In holder Anmut stehn Gundula Janowitz 4:53* 20. 19. *Chor mit Soli: Der Herr ist groß in seiner Macht Gundula Janowitz 2:46* 21. 20. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sprach: Es bringe die Erde hervor lebende Geschöpfe Walter Berry 0:30* 22. 21. *Rezitativ: "Gleich öffnet sich der Erde Schoß" (Raphael) Walter Berry 3:01* 23. 22. *Arie: "Nun scheint in vollem Glanze der Himmel" (Raphael) Walter Berry 3:45* 24. 23. *Rezitativ: "Und Gott schuf den Menschen" (Uriel) Werner Krenn 0:48* 25. 24. *Arie: Mit Würd' und Hoheit angetan Fritz Wunderlich 3:58* 26. 25. *Rezitativ: Und Gott sah jedes Ding Walter Berry 0:27* 27. 26. *Chor: Vollendet ist das große Werk - 27. Terzett: Zu dir, o Herr - 28. Chor: Vollendet ist das große Werk Gundula Janowitz 9:06* 28. 29. *Orchestereinleitung und Rezitativ: Aus Rosenwolken bricht Werner Krenn 4:51* 29. 30. *Duett mit Chor: Von deiner Güt', o Herr und Gott - Der Sterne hellster, o wie schön Gundula Janowitz 10:00* 30. 31. *Rezitativ: Nun ist die erste Pflicht erfüllt Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau 2:50* 31. 32. *Duett: Holde Gattin, dir zur Seite - Der tauende Morgen Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau 7:04* 32. 33. *Rezitativ: O glücklich Paar Werner Krenn 0:27* 33. 34. *Schlußchor mit Soli: Singt dem Herren alle Stimmen Gundula Janowitz 4:03*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Baritone) Gundula Janowitz (Soprano) Fritz Wunderlich (Tenor), Christa Ludwig (Mezzo Soprano) Walter Berry (Bass Baritone) Werner Krenn (Tenor)

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Wiener Singverein Berliner Philharmoniker Herbert von Karajan - conductor

This classic performance of Haydn's greatest choral masterpiece was beloved tenor Fritz Wunderlich's last recording. He sings all of the arias, but he died before finishing the recitatives, which are here taken by Werner Krenn. The recording is, in addition, one of Herbert von Karajan's finest, vastly better than his later digital remake. His interpretation is straightforward and impressively large in scale, but never pompous or sanctimonious (which was Karajan's big problem in music of a religious character). The truth is, Haydn's consistently fresh and unpretentious invention acts as a positive anesthetic against bombast, and the composer himself once said that thinking of the Creator always made him irresistibly cheerful. With *The Creation*, Haydn returned the favor. --David Hurwitz, amazon.com

This, at last, is Karajan's great 1966-9 *Schopfung*, robustly remastered, and differing obviously from the live 1982 DG Salzburg recording in the presence of the Berlin rather than the Vienna Philharmonic. The change is all-important. The revelatory later version, consistently praised in these columns, here meets its real match. While the glory of the 1982 paradise garden was primarily the obvious beauty of its strings, the BPO brings its entire forces palpably to bear, horns far from diffident, woodwind soloists radiating bright and unexpected shafts of light.

In the Eden of 1982, it seems, all manner of things will be well: in 1969 there is still a sense of threat lurking in the Chaos, a sharper, harder edge to its chords, real teeth in its leonine attack. This is Karajan at his most inspired: I challenge anyone to find a more literally breathtaking No. 27 Trio, where the particular character of the woodwind, the dry, skeletal strings and the blend of voices convey so eloquently the withdrawal and subsequent replenishing of the Divine Spirit.

As for the voices themselves: well, this is the Creation of Fritz Wunderlich, of Gundula Janowitz and of Fischer-Dieskau. Wunderlich's unique sensitivity to the dramatic energy of each vowel and consonant within an effortlessly lyrical line creates unforgettable moments like the shift from sun to moonlight, and the first image of created Man. Wunderlich's death, in mid-recording, means that, here and there, Walter Krenn is a substitute Uriel, cunningly matched in weight and timbre, though expressively distant. Here, the more overtly heroic Francisco Araiza (1982) has the edge.

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Where Edith Mathis (1982) is both corporeal woman and archangel, Janowitz, younger and with her characteristic bloom untarnished, brings a truly other-worldly aura to Gabriel. Indeed, she scarcely touches down in the somewhat blurred fioritura passages. The sense of wonder, though, in her steady, eloquent recitatives, the truly healing properties of her rhapsodic "Heil", to say nothing of her deliquescent ode to the nightingale, are incomparable contributions to this performance.

Walter Berry's true bass Raphael (he descends to the lowest earth for his "Gewurm", as does Kurt Moll for Levine—also DG) is a sober presence in contrast to Jose van Dam's later (1982) and livelier verbal responses and his unique Cousteau-eye view of the deeps. Berry's earthly counterpart is Fischer-Dieskau's Adam. Whereas van Dam focuses on the humility of the Creature, Fischer-Dieskau glories in Adam as Hero, triumphant in his leading forth of Eve, rhetorical in the solemnity of his vow-taking.-- Hilary Finch, Gramophone [12/1991]

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