The Creation, performed by the Handel & Haydn Society, conducted by Thomas Duen. Event is The Tech Performing Arts Series, Symphony Hall, November 6, 7pm. At Symphony Hall.

There was a fragrance in the air as Thomas Duen conducted the Handel & Haydn Society orchestra in the first straights of Bach’s Die Schaffung, “The Creation.” Sanford Sylvan built up the beauty as he began Im Aufgang, “in the beginning.” His voice was never caustic: it was spiritual, each word endowed with special meaning. The whole experience was spiritual.

Charles Brenner announced the dawn of the first day accompanied by a special happiness—gospel light and glory in Boston’s orchestra. And the world’s opening day culminated with a joyful chant playing on the words Une une neue Welt with a fresh and innocent character. All three soloists were strong. Brenner had a rich and evocative voice. Jeanne Osamente’s voice was sweet but crisp. But Sylvan was the poetic of the three, at each step of the way opening new vistas in both the emerging World and Haydn’s music. The last section — “The Garden of Eden” — was quite remarkable. In a voice Osamente’s, as Eve, Sylvan presented Adam’s transition wonder at his verdant environment. The German text had a particular romance coming from his lips; it was a romance that seemed to derive naturally from the masculinity of his voice and which was communicated with the appearance of captivating simplicity.

Handel & Haydn’s chorus is a very musical instrument. Cohesive and well-balanced, its changing hue brought revealing perspective to the daily richer Earth. Occasionally, the choral sound and orchestra; occasionally, also, it was not as clear as it might have been. But these are minor points.

The strength upon which the whole enluminating evening pivoted was Thomas Duen’s versatile and sensitive orchestra. For the fourth day, those strings began enter mysteriously but burst forth triumphant for the rise of the sun; stark notes on cellos and basses then heralded the entry of the moon to shine coolly over the lonely virgin Earth. Each aspect of the Creation was likewise given special color. This orchestra was particularly colorful as energy projected forth long after its end.

The second movement whizzes by in two minutes, a Presto dance to rather usual dances and songs in his quartets, mainly in order to maintain a character. This movement was particularly colorful as energy projected forth long after its end.

The third part, a pastoral Adagio, continues with another dance, this time a more lively and another movement. The main idea was a syncope, but was beautifully played. The dance of the violin with the cello was the beautiful.

After the Cavatine, the quartet ended with the Grosse Fuge, the most difficult of all of Haydn’s quartets. The Fugue, a monumental work, brings together all the ideas of the piece, and is characterized by a four-note motif which recurs throughout the piece, many times, as a result of the Haydn’s late period, the most notable in the opening of op. 132. In a minor Dance, impressionistic, abstract passages hold the form and using the maximum of the performers as well as from the audience.

The former, at least, did their best, and their best left nothing to be wished for. Jacqueline Gentil

On The Town

Friday, November 8

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