

The Creation: Die Schöpfung at the Concertgebouw Brugge

2015/09/27 · by [operatraveller](#) · in [Live Reviews](#) ·

Haydn – *Die Schöpfung*

Gabriel, Eva – Sophie Karthäuser

Uriel – Maximilian Schmit

Raphael, Adam – Johannes Weisser

Collegium Vocale Gent, B'Rock Orchestra / René Jacobs.

Concert performance.

Concertgebouw, Bruges. Saturday, September 26th, 2015.

This was something very special. As with his *Don Giovanni* in [Paris back in June](#) (<http://operatraveller.com/2015/06/08/viva-la-liberta-don-giovanni-at-the-philharmonie-de-paris/>), tonight René Jacobs gave us a performance that was less like listening to a group of performers reading a piece from a page and more like listening to a real-time recreation of a masterpiece. The assembled forces tonight brought Haydn's creation to life right in front of our eyes and ears. In a way, it genuinely felt as if Haydn was right there in the room.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/06>

[/jacobs-renc3a9-2009-marco-borggreve.jpg](#))

Rene Jacobs. Photo: © Marco Borggreve

This was also my first visit to the Concertgebouw in Bruges. It's a handsome building and the Concertaal itself is relatively intimate in size with just under 1300 seats. The seating is comfortable and it has good resonance although paradoxically from my seat it felt a little on the dry side. Programming is interesting with a wide range of visiting performers and combined with the beauty of the city itself, it certainly makes for an attractive way to spend an evening during an overnight visit to the city.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/09>

[/brock_official_groupphoto_c_jens_mollenvanger.jpg](#))

The B'Rock Orchestra © Jens Mollenvanger

As in that Paris *Don Giovanni*, what struck me tonight in Jacobs' approach was how so absolutely right everything he did felt. Every tempo, every sforzando, every diminuendo, everything was put to the service of the music and bringing this 'große Werk' to life. The B'Rock Orchestra, founded in 2005, played with supreme virtuosity with an apparently limitless palette of tone colours. Indeed, as the fabulously raspy brass entered in on 'und es ward Licht' it was clear that we were in for a very special evening. It seemed that every single wind or brass soloist had their own individual personality and their contributions to the orchestral textures were aided by having the strings on the left of the stage and the wind and brass on the right with the trombones at the back. The orchestra also benefited in the tutti from Andreas Küppers' fortepiano which complimented and supplemented the textures wonderfully. He also added a few brief and eloquent improvisations between numbers.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/09>

[/cvg-big-color-by-michiel-hendrickx.jpg](#))

Collegium Vocale Gent © Michiel Hendrickx

The Collegium Vocale Gent sang with outstanding discipline – the unanimity of tone was stunning, the accuracy of their singing in the fugues was irreproachable. The sheer responsiveness of their approach was awe-inspiring – every single individual singer combined as one to produce every single effect asked of them. The quality of the individual voices within the chorus was also evident when Jacobs invited members of the chorus to provide the solo parts in the final chorus. This was choral singing and orchestral playing of the very highest distinction.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/weisser2012020photo20by20yann20bougaran.jpg>)

Johannes Weisser. Photo: © Yann Bougaran

Johannes Weisser was a truly outstanding baritone soloist. He brought his customary handsome tone to the part but what he also demonstrated was a fine bottom register that was wonderfully rich in 'nun scheint in vollem Glanze der Himmel'. Weisser is such a natural singer – everything he does feels absolutely right, the line is easy and his diction absolutely impeccable. He truly managed to fulfil all the facets of the part from the declamatory to the lyrical yet at no point did he ever compromise the handsomeness of the tone. An outstanding achievement.



(https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/sophie_karthäuser_photo_molinavisuals_7.jpg)

Sophie Karthäuser @ Molina Visuals

Sophie Karthäuser brought her limpid and creamy soprano to her parts. She sang her numbers with sparkling tone, adding some highly tasteful embellishments as in 'mit Staunen seht das Wunderwerk'. There is a smile in the voice that is absolutely beguiling to listen to. Maximilian Schmitz was the mellifluous tenor soloist. The voice was nicely produced with an eager pointing of the text that was wonderfully effective. All three soloists blended splendidly with each other and with the orchestra.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/09>

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Maximilian Schmit © Christian Kagl

As the chorus launched into 'singt dem Herren alle Stimmen' I was left with the very real sense of having witnessed the recreation of a masterpiece right there and then. In a way, it's a sign of the ephemeral nature of music that the experience of being in the hall lasted only a couple of hours but the memory of the privilege of such an experience is one that will stay with me for a very long time. A truly unforgettable evening.



(<https://operatraveller.files.wordpress.com/2015/09>

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The Concertgebouw in Bruges © Concertgebouw Brugge

Tags: [B'Rock Orchestra](#), [Collegium Vocale Gent](#), [Die Schöpfung](#), [Haydn](#), [Johannes Weisser](#), [Maximilian Schmit](#), [René Jacobs](#), [Sophie Karthäuser](#)