WHAT MAKES IT GREAT?®

HAYDN LONDON SYMPHONY
CONCERT PROGRAM

Louis Babin
*Retrouvailles: Sesquie for Canada’s 150th*
(TSO PREMIÈRE/TSO CO-COMMISSION)

Rob Kapilow
What Makes It Great®
Haydn London Symphony

Intermission

Franz Joseph Haydn
Symphony No. 104 in D Major “London”
I. Adagio – Allegro
II. Andante
III. Menuet: Allegro
IV. Allegro spiritoso

Audience Q&A with Rob Kapilow and Orchestra

Please note that Louis Babin’s Retrouvailles is being recorded for online release at TSO.CA/CanadaMosaic.

“Tonight’s What Makes It Great® program is all about listening. Paying attention. Noticing all the fantastic things in great music that race by at lightning speed, note by note, and measure by measure. Listening to a piece of music from the composer’s point of view—from the inside out. During the first half of the concert, we will look at selected passages from Franz Joseph Haydn’s Symphony No. 104 (“London”) and I will do everything in my power to get you inside the piece to hear what makes it tick and what makes it great. Then, after intermission, we will perform the piece in its entirety, and you will hopefully listen to it with a whole new pair of ears. I am thrilled to be sharing this great music with you tonight. All you have to do is listen.”
After his royal employer, Prince Nicolaus Esterházy, died in 1791, Haydn remained officially on the payroll but became a free agent in all but name. He had several excellent job offers from which to choose. The one he settled upon came from a forthright individual who turned up on his doorstep in Vienna. Johann Peter Salomon was a successful German-born impresario and violinist based in England. “I am Salomon of London and have come to fetch you,” he said. “Tomorrow we will arrange an accord.” It was that simple.

Haydn made two trips to England, in 1791–1792 and 1794–1795. For them, he composed twelve new symphonies, Nos. 93 through 104. They were his final works in this form. No special reason has survived to explain why No. 104 has come to be known as the “London” Symphony. The first performance probably took place on April 13, 1795. What is certain is that Haydn chose it to be played at his farewell London concert three weeks later.

The commanding introduction, in slow tempo and the key of D minor, contains the seeds of much that will follow. Haydn launched the movement proper with a switch to allegro and the home key of D major. He treated the materials, as appealing as always, with the confident mastery that unfailing ingenuity and decades of experience had earned him.

From the simplest of ideas, he constructed one of his most fetching slow movements. An opening and closing, characterized by relaxed confidence, envelope a somewhat agitated, occasionally poignant middle section. The slyly pompous minuet that follows sports a relaxed, sparingly scored country dance as its central trio.

Recent research has identified the joyful (and sole) theme of the finale as a folk melody. It has been heard in several lands, including Croatia, where Haydn had once lived. This same tune was also used as two London street peddlers’ cries at the time of his visits: “Hot cross buns!” and “Live cod!” Perhaps the shouts that he heard as he walked the bustling streets awakened his memories of the days he had spent in southeast Europe.

Program note by Don Anderson
Rob Kapilow
conductor & host

Rob Kapilow made his TSO début in November 2001.

For over 20 years, Rob Kapilow has brought the joy and wonder of classical music—and unravelled some of its mysteries—to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Characterized by his unique ability to create an “aha” moment for his audiences and collaborators, whatever their level of musical sophistication or naïveté, Kapilow’s work brings music into people’s lives: opening new ears to musical experiences and helping people to listen actively rather than just hear. As The Boston Globe said, “It’s a cheering thought that this kind of missionary enterprise did not pass from this earth with Leonard Bernstein. Rob Kapilow is awfully good at what he does. We need him.”

Kapilow’s range of activities is astonishingly broad, including his What Makes It Great?® presentations (now for over 20 seasons in New York and Boston), his family compositions and Family Musik® events, his Citypieces, and residencies with institutions as diverse as the National Gallery of Canada and Stanford University. The reach of his interactive events and activities is wide, both geographically and culturally: from Native American tribal communities in Montana and inner-city high school students in Louisiana to audiences in Kyoto and Kuala Lumpur, and from tots barely out of diapers to musicologists in Ivy League programs, his audiences are diverse and unexpected, but invariably rapt and keen to come back for more.

Kapilow’s popularity and appeal are reflected in notable invitations and achievements: this past season he appeared six times on the PBS NewsHour with segments ranging from “Somewhere Over The Rainbow” to Brahms and Mozart. He appeared on NBC’s Today Show in conversation with Katie Couric; he presented a special What Makes It Great?® event for broadcast on PBS’s Live From Lincoln Center; and he has written two highly popular books published by Wiley/Lincoln Center: All You Have To Do Is Listen, which won the PSP Prose Award for Best Book in Music and the Performing Arts, and What Makes It Great (2011), the first book of its kind to be especially designed for the iPad with embedded musical examples.