



Orchestra of the  
Age of Enlightenment

# Patrons' Trip: Antwerp

Friday 22 May - Sunday 24 May



Hans Memling, *God the Father with Singing and Music-making Angels*, c.  
1483-1494.

This painting is on show at Antwerp's Royal Museum of Fine Art (KMSKA)

# Introduction

Although Joseph Haydn never visited Antwerp in person, his music most certainly did.

When *The Creation* was first published in 1800, Haydn took the rare step of overseeing the publication himself to avoid the transmission errors that were common in printed scores. He selected a specific printing technique, engraving. This technique allowed for greater accuracy and detail of the musical notations, the perfect choice for Haydn to ensure his music would be translated onto the manuscript without error.

230 years prior, this laborious printing technique was being trained in the schools of Antwerp. A most notable user of this technique was Antwerp printer Hieronymus Cock. Following his trip to Rome in 1546, he returned to Antwerp versed in the skill and set up his printing house, In the Four Winds, and subsequently Antwerp became a world-wide hub of printing, with names such as the Plantin-Moretus family.

So whilst Haydn never set foot in the city of Antwerp, it seems that Antwerp's global position during the Age of Enlightenment, most certainly imprinted in the publications of his music, including *The Creation*.

Antwerp was not only a printing capital but also a lively musical centre. From the 16th Century onward, the city nurtured influential composers, performers, and instrument makers. The Franco-Flemish school, which dominated European music for generations, had deep roots in the Low Countries, and Antwerp's churches and civic institutions regularly employed skilled musicians. Instrument building also flourished: Antwerp harpsichords and viols were highly prized across Europe.

By the 18th Century—the era of Haydn—Antwerp's concert life was vibrant. Public salons, guild chambers, and church performances brought international music to local audiences, and travelling ensembles often included works by Haydn, Mozart, and other luminaries of the Classical period. Even without hosting Haydn himself, Antwerp played an active role in the dissemination and performance of his music.



## DRAFT ITINERARY OVERVIEW

### Friday 22 May

2.30pm	Private tour of the AMUZ*
6.30pm-7.50pm	Dinner at the Queen Elisabeth Hall*
8.00pm	OAE Concert: <i>The Creation</i> *
10.00pm	Post-Concert Reception*

### Saturday 23 May

10.00am-11.00am	Tour of the Snijders&Rockox House Museum*
12.00am-1.30pm	Private Recital by OAE*
6.00pm	Aperitif at Borze Cafe
7.30pm	Dinner at Fiera*

### Sunday 24 May

10.00am-11.30am	Tour of Plantin-Moretus*
12.30pm-3.00pm	Lunch at RAS*

\*Denotes activities included in the cost of a ticket

Please note that this itinerary is draft, a final itinerary will be provided closer to the event.

## RECOMMENDED HOTELS

### 5★ Hotels

- Botanic Sanctuary
- Hotel Flora
- August
- De Witte Lelie

### 3–4★ Hotels

- Hotel 't Sandt
- NH Collection Antwerp Centre
- Hilton Antwerp Old Town

## TRAVEL

Reaching Antwerp is simple by train or car.

After taking the Eurostar to Brussels, Antwerp is just one hour away by direct train from Brussels Central Station. Please do let us know if you require any further assistance when booking your travel.

## FURTHER READING

For more inspiration and insights on Antwerp:

- The Guardian – "[10 Best Things to Do in Antwerp](#)"
- The Observer – "[Exploring Antwerp](#)"

## Friday 22 May

### **2.30pm: Private tour of AMUZ**

Begin the trip in the pearl of early Baroque architecture. Built between 1615 and 1618 by the royal architect Wenzel Coebergher, St Augustine's church was the home to the Augustinian monks. Today, it is a concert hall hosting the renowned Laus Polyphoniae Festival. The fascinating story of the renovated church, the realisation of the new infrastructure, artworks by Jan Fabre and a behind-the-scenes look form the basis for the guided tour. Fascinate in a behind-the-scenes guide tour of AMUZ as a concert hall and organiser.



*AMUZ, Kammenstraat 81, 2000 Antwerp*

### **6.30pm-7.50pm: Dinner at the Queen Elisabeth Hall**

Enjoy a light bowl-food supper, specially prepared at the Queen Elisabeth Hall before the concert. Your meal will be served alongside an open bar for you to enjoy throughout the evening. The Queen Elisabeth Hall, opened in 2016, was designed by the Manchester-based architectural firm Ian Simpson in collaboration with Kirkegaard Associates (Chicago) and Bureau Bouwtechniek.



*Queen Elisabeth Hall, Koningin Astridplein 20-26, 2018 Antwerp*

## **8.00pm: OAE Concert - *The Creation***

For Haydn, *The Creation* represented the pinnacle of his career. A monumental work that simultaneously articulates his profound faith in God and his peerless craftsmanship. From the startling moment in which light is created, through playful word-painting, to the romantic glow as the soloists transform from Archangels to the first humans, in *The Creation* we see Haydn finessing the full range of his artistry and ingenuity.

The OAE welcomes back Václav Luks following his critically acclaimed debut with them in Bach's Mass in B Minor in 2023.

**Samantha Clarke, soprano**  
**Nick Pritchard, tenor**  
**Krešimir Stražanac, bass**  
**Choir of the Age of Enlightenment**

## **10.00pm: Post-concert party**

Join the Orchestra, soloists and Václav Luks for our private drinks reception following the concert in the concert hall's exclusive Business Lounge.

## **Saturday 23 May**

### **10.00am-11.00am: Tour of the Snijders&Rockox House**

Begin the day with a guided tour around the Snijders&Rockox House, focusing on the Gaspar Duarte collection of instruments. The son of Portuguese merchant Diego Duarte, Gaspar was a dealer in jewels and gems. Duarte housed his family within a house filled with instruments, including at least five harpsichords and virginals and a close friendship with harpsichord maker Joannes Ruckers.



*Snijders&Rockox House, Keizerstraat 12, 2000 Antwerpen*

## **12.00pm-1.00pm: Private recital by OAE**

Enjoy an intimate midday recital led by Huw Daniel. Set within the elegant 18th-century French Salons, your experience begins with a light bite, followed by a beautifully curated performance of music.



*French Salons, Venusstraat 19, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium*

## **1.30pm: Free time**

Explore Antwerp at your own pace. Perhaps visit the collection of Reubens housed in De Kathdraal, or see the artistic delights at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts and a quiet lunch at Privéprivée next door.

## **5.30pm: Handelsbeurs & Borze Cafe**

Reconvene at the renowned Antwerp Stock Exchange. Built in 1531, this Stock Exchange was the very first of its kind, built solely for the stock exchange. This building has gone on to influence all other stock exchanges constructed across the world. Despite being built for trade, the architects retained the Baroque charm prevalent in Antwerp at the time.

Afterwards, we head to the Borze Cafe, a cozy hidden gem tucked away, often referred to as a “beer lover’s paradise,” praising its extensive Belgian beer selection.



*Handelsbeurs, Koningin Astridplein 20-26, 2018 Antwerpen*

## 7.00pm: Dinner at Fiera

We will dine in the adjoining Schippersbeurs. Today the home of fine dining, enjoy cuisine which reflects Antwerp's historic and global character. Explore metropolitan dishes from across the world such as *Ottowa Lobster* (Ravioli with burrata, lime, fennel and lobster espuma) and *Venice tiramisu*.



Fiera, Lange Nieuwstraat 14

## Sunday 24 May

### 10.00am-11.30am: Guided Tour of Plantin-Moretus

Discover Antwerp's printing past and the history of the Plantin-Moretus family at the Plantin. Still in the original house and workshops, and home to the first musical work printed by Officina Plantiniana, *Octo Missae* (printed in 1578), this museum is a must-see of Antwerp's rich history.



Plantin-Moretus, Vrijdagmarkt 22, 2000 Antwerpen

## **12.30pm-3.30pm: Lunch at RAS**

One of Antwerp's finest restaurants, RAS. A favourite of the Orchestra and Sir Andrés Schiff on last season's tour, RAS offers refined dishes served against a stunning waterfront backdrop—an unforgettable finale to your visit.



*RAS, Ernest Van Dijckkaai 37, 2000 Antwerpen*