

SOLACE – A Sunday of Bach Cantatas

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2004 – 3:00 PM
TOWN HALL

Julie Finch, soprano
Catherine Haight, soprano
Kathryn Weld, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Rumph, tenor
Brian Box, baritone
ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata BWV 147, “Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben”

Chorus
Tenor Recitative
Alto Aria
Bass Recitative
Soprano Aria
Choral
Tenor Aria
Alto Recitative
Bass Aria
Choral

Cantata BWV 51, “Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen”

Aria
Recitative
Aria
Choral
Aria

Julie Finch, soprano
David Cole, trumpet

– Intermission –

Cantata BWV 177, “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ”

Chorus
Alto Aria
Soprano Aria
Tenor Aria
Choral

Cantata BWV 99, “Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan”

Chorus
Bass Recitative
Tenor Aria
Alto Recitative
Soprano –Alto Duet
Choral

Cantata BWV 147, "Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben"

Erster Teil

1. Chor

Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben
Muß von Christo Zeugnis geben
Ohne Furcht und Heuchelei,
Daß er Gott und Heiland sei.

2. Rezitativ T

Gebenedeiter Mund!
Maria macht ihr Innerstes der Seelen
Durch Dank und Rühmen kund;
Sie fängt bei sich an,
Des Heilands Wunder zu erzählen,
Was er an ihr als seiner Magd getan.
O menschliches Geschlecht,
Des Satans und der Sünden Knecht,
Du bist befreit
Durch Christi tröstendes Erscheinen
Von dieser Last und Dienstbarkeit!
Jedoch dein Mund und dein verstockt Gemüte
Verwuschweigt, verleugnet solche Güte;
Doch wisse, daß dich nach der Schrift
Ein allzuscharfes Urteil trifft!

3. Arie A

Schäme dich, o Seele nicht,
Deinen Heiland zu bekennen,
Soll er dich die seine nennen
Vor des Vaters Angesicht!
Doch wer ihn auf dieser Erden
Zu verleugnen sich nicht scheut,
Soll von ihm verleugnet werden,
Wenn er kommt zur Herrlichkeit.

4. Rezitativ B

Verstockung kann Gewaltige veblenden,
Bis sie des Höchsten Arm vom Stuhle stößt;
Doch dieser Arm erhebt,
Obschon vor ihm der Erde Kreis erbebt,
Hingegen die Elenden,
So er erlöst.
O hochbeglückte Christen,
Auf, machet euch bereit,
Itzt ist die angenehme Zeit,
Itzt ist der Tag des Heils: der Heiland heißt
Euch Leib und Geist
Mit Glaubensgaben rüsten,
Auf, ruft zu ihm in brünstigem Verlangen,
Um ihn im Glauben zu empfangen!

5. Arie S

Bereite dir, Jesu, noch itzo die Bahn,
Mein Heiland, erwähle
Die gläubende Seele
Und siehe mit Augen der Gnade mich an!

Part One

1. Chorus

Heart and mouth and deed and life
must give testimony of Christ
without fear or hypocrisy,
that He is God and Savior.

2. Recitative T

Blessed mouth!
Mary makes the inmost part of her soul
known through thanks and praise;
she beginsto narrate to herself
the miracle of the Savior,
which He has worked in her as His handmaiden.
O human race,
slave to Satan and to sin,
you are freed
through Christ's reassuring appearance
from this burden and servitude!
However your mouth and your stubborn spirit
supresses, denies such goodness;
yet know, that according to the scripture,
an all-too-harsh judgment will be yours!

3. Aria A

Do not be ashamed, o soul,
to acknowledge your Savior,
so shall He name His own
before His Father's face!
Yet whoever, on this earth,
is not shy to deny Him,
shall be denied by Him
when he approaches glory.

4. Recitative B

Astonishment might dazzle the mighty,
until the arm of the Highest throws them down from
their thrones;
yet this arm uplifts,
although the orb of the earth trembles before it,
the wretched, on the other hand,
which He has redeemed.
O most delighted Christians,
arise, make yourselves ready,
now the pleasant time is here,
now is the day of salvation: the Savior calls
you to arm body and soul
with the gifts of faith,
arise, call to Him in fervent longing,
in order to embrace Him in faith!

5. Aria S

Prepare, Jesus, even now the path for Yourself,
my Savior, select
the faithful souls
and look upon me with eyes of mercy!

6. Choral

Wohl mir, daß ich Jesum habe,
O wie feste halt ich ihn,
Daß er mir mein Herze labe,
Wenn ich krank und traurig bin.
Jesum hab ich, der mich liebet
Und sich mir zu eigen gibet;
Ach drum laß ich Jesum nicht,
Wenn mir gleich mein Herze bricht.
("Jesu, meiner Seelen Wonne," verse 6)

Zweiter Teil

7. Arie T

Hilf, Jesu, hilf, daß ich auch dich bekenne
In Wohl und Weh, in Freud und Leid,
Daß ich dich meinen Heiland nenne
Im Glauben und Gelassenheit,
Daß stets mein Herz von deiner Liebe brenne.

8. Rezitativ A

Der höchsten Allmacht Wunderhand
Wirkt im Verborgenen der Erden.
Johannes muß mit Geist erfüllet werden,
Ihn zieht der Liebe Band
Bereits in seiner Mutter Leibe,
Daß er den Heiland kennt,
Ob er ihn gleich noch nicht
Mit seinem Mund nennt,
Er wird bewegt, er hüpfet und springet,
Indem Elisabeth das Wunderwerk ausspricht,
Indem Mariae Mund der Lippen Opfer bringet.
Wenn ihr, o Gläubige, des Fleisches Schwachheit
merkt,
Wenn euer Herz in Liebe brennet,
Und doch der Mund den Heiland nicht bekennet,
Gott ist es, der euch kräftig stärkt,
Er will in euch des Geistes Kraft erregen,
Ja Dank und Preis auf eure Zunge legen.

9. Arie B

Ich will von Jesu Wundern singen
Und ihm der Lippen Opfer bringen,
Er wird nach seiner Liebe Bund
Das schwache Fleisch, den irdschen Mund
Durch heiliges Feuer kräftig zwingen.

10. Choral

Jesus bleibt meine Freude,
Meines Herzens Trost und Saft,
Jesus wehret allem Leide,
Er ist meines Lebens Kraft,
Meiner Augen Lust und Sonne,
Meiner Seele Schatz und Wonne;
Darum laß ich Jesum nicht
Aus dem Herzen und Gesicht.
("Jesu, meiner Seelen Wonne," verse 16)

6. Chorale

Happy I, who has Jesus,
o how tightly I cling to Him,
so that He delights my heart
when I am sick and sad.
I have Jesus, who loves me
and gives Himself to me as my own;
ah, therefore I will not let go of Jesus,
even if my heart is breaking.

Part Two

7. Aria T

Help, Jesus, help that I may also acknowledge You
in prosperity and in woe, in joy and in sorrow,
so that I may call You my Savior
in faith and calmness,
that my heart may always burn with Your love.

8. Recitative A

The wondrous hand of the exalted Almighty
is active in the mysteries of the earth.
John must have been filled with the Spirit,
the bond of love drew him
already in his mother's body,
so that he knew the Savior,
even though he could not yet
name Him with his mouth,
he became lively, he leapt and stirred,
while Elizabeth expressed the miracle,
while Mary's mouth made her lip's offering.
If you, o believers, note the weakness of the flesh,
if your hearts burn in love,
and yet your mouths do not acknowledge the
Savior,
then it is God who will powerfully strengthen you,
He will stir up the power of the spirit in you,
indeed lay thanks and praise upon your tongues.

9. Aria B

I will sing of Jesus' wonders
and bring my lip's offering to Him,
He will compel weak flesh, the earthly mouth
powerfully, through the holy fire,
towards the bond of His love.

10. Chorale

Jesus shall remain my joy,
my heart's comfort and sap,
Jesus shall fend off all sorrow,
He is the strength of my life,
the delight and sun of my eyes,
the treasure and wonder of my soul;
therefore I will not let Jesus go
out of my heart and sight.

Cantata BWV 51, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"

1. Arie S

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!
Was der Himmel und die Welt
An Geschöpfen in sich hält,
Müssen dessen Ruhm erhöhen,
Und wir wollen unserm Gott
Gleichfalls itzt ein Opfer bringen,
Daß er uns in Kreuz und Not
Allezeit hat beigestanden.

2. Rezitativ S

Wir beten zu dem Tempel an,
Da Gottes Ehre wohnt,
Da dessen Treu,
So täglich neu,
Mit lauter Segen lohnet.
Wir preisen, was er an uns hat getan.
Muß gleich der schwache Mund von seinen
Wundern lallen,
So kann ein schlechtes Lob ihm dennoch
wohlgefallen.

3. Arie S

Höchster, mache deine Güte
Ferner alle Morgen neu.
So soll vor die Vätertreu
Auch ein dankbares Gemüte
Durch ein frommes Leben weisen,
Daß wir deine Kinder heißen.

4. Choral S

Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren
Gott Vater, Sohn, Heiligem Geist!
Der woll in uns vermehren,
Was er uns aus Gnaden verheißt,
Daß wir ihm fest vertrauen,
Gänzlich uns lass'n auf ihn,
Von Herzen auf ihn bauen,
Daß uns'r Herz, Mut und Sinn
Ihm festiglich anhangen;
Drauf singen wir zur Stund:
Amen, wir werd'n's erlangen, Glaub'n wir aus
Herzensgrund.
("Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren," verse 5)

5. Arie S Alleluja!

1. Aria S

Exult in God in every land!
Whatever creatures are contained
by heaven and earth
must raise up this praise,
and now we shall likewise
bring an offering to our God,
since He has stood with us
at all times during suffering and necessity.

2. Recitative S

We pray at your temple,
where God's honor dwells,
where this faithfulness,
daily renewed,
is rewarded with pure blessing.
We praise what He has done for us.
Even though our weak mouth must gape before
His wonders,
our meager praise is still pleasing to Him.

3. Aria S

Highest, renew Your goodness
every morning from now on.
Thus, before this fatherly love,
a thankful conscience shall display,
though a virtuous life,
that we are called Your children.

4. Chorale S

Glory, and praise with honor
be to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!
He will increase in us
what He has promised us out of grace,
so that we trust fast in Him,
abandon ourselves completely to Him,
rely on Him within our hearts,
so that our heart, will, and mind
depend strongly on Him;
therefore we sing at this time:
Amen, we shall succeed,
if we believe from the depths of our hearts.

5. Aria S Alleluia!

"Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren," verse 5: Johann Gramann 1549 (mov't. 4)

Cantata BWV 177, "Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ"

1. Chor

Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,
Ich bitt, erhör mein Klagen,
Verleih mir Gnad zu dieser Frist,
Laß mich doch nicht verzagen;

1. Chorus

I call to You, Lord Jesus Christ,
I beg You, hear my cries,
grant me mercy at this time,
do not let me despair;

Den rechten Glauben, Herr, ich mein,
Den wollest du mir geben,
Dir zu leben,
Meinm Nächsten nützlich zu sein,
Dein Wort zu halten eben.

the true faith, Lord, I mean
that You would give me,
to live for You,
to be of use to my neighbor,
to keep Your word faithfully.

2. Arie A

Ich bitt noch mehr, o Herre Gott,
Du kannst es mir wohl geben:
Daß ich werd nimmermehr zu Spott,
Die Hoffnung gib darneben,
Voraus, wenn ich muß hier davon,
Daß ich dir mög vertrauen
Und nicht bauen
Auf alles mein Tun,
Sonst wird mich's ewig reuen.

2. Aria A

I ask yet more, o Lord God,
You can surely give it to me:
that I will never more be put to scorn
give me hope as well;
and later, when I must be gone from here,
that I might trust in You
and not rely
on all my own deeds,
otherwise I would eternally regret it.

3. Arie S

Verleih, daß ich aus Herzensgrund
Mein' Feinden mög vergeben,
Verzeih mir auch zu dieser Stund,
Gib mir ein neues Leben;
Dein Wort mein Speis laß allweg sein,
Damit mein Seel zu nähren,
Mich zu wehren,
Wenn Unglück geht daher,
Das mich bald möcht abkehren.

3. Aria S

Grant, that from the bottom of my heart
I might forgive my enemies,
pardon me also at this time,
give me a new life;
may Your word always be my food,
to nourish my soul,
to protect me,
when misfortune approaches,
that might quickly turn me aside.

4. Arie T

Laß mich kein Lust noch Furcht von dir
In dieser Welt abwenden.
Beständigsein ans End gib mir,
Du hast's allein in Händen;
Und wem du's gibst, der hat's umsonst:
Es kann niemand ererben
Noch erwerben
Durch Werke deine Gnad,
Die uns errett' vom Sterben.

4. Aria T

Let no pleasure or fear
turn me away from You in this world.
Give me eternity at the end,
it is in Your hands alone;
and to whom You give it, has it freely:
no one can inherit
or earn
through works Your grace,
that saves us from dying.

5. Choral

Ich lieg im Streit und widerstreb,
Hilf, o Herr Christ, dem Schwachen!
An deiner Gnad allein ich kleb,
Du kannst mich stärker machen.
Kömmt nun Anfechtung, Herr, so wehr,
Daß sie mich nicht umstoßen.
Du kannst maßen,
Daß mir's nicht bring Gefahr;
Ich weiß, du wirst's nicht lassen.

5. Chorale

I lie in battle and struggle,
help, o Lord Christ, the weak!
I cling to Your mercy alone,
You can make me stronger.
If temptation comes now, Lord, be careful
that it does not overthrow me.
You can moderate it,
so that it does not bring me danger;
I know You will not allow it.

"Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ," Johann Agricola 1529?/31

Cantata BWV 99, "Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan"

1. Chor

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan,
Es bleibt gerecht sein Wille;
Wie er fängt meine Sachen an,
Will ich ihm halten stille.
Er ist mein Gott,

1. Chorale

What God does is well done,
His will remains righteous;
However he begins my affairs,
I will silently keep to Him.
He is my God,

Der in der Not
Mich wohl weiß zu erhalten;
Drum laß ich ihn nur walten.
("Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan," verse 1)

2. Rezitativ B
Sein Wort der Wahrheit stehet fest
Und wird mich nicht betrügen,
Weil es die Gläubigen nicht fallen noch verderben läßt.
Ja, weil es mich den Weg zum Leben führet,
So faßt mein Herze sich und lasset sich begnügen
An Gottes Vätertreu und Huld
Und hat Geduld,
Wenn mich ein Unfall rühret.
Gott kann mit seinen Allmachtshänden
Mein Unglück wenden.
("Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan," verse 2)

3. Arie T
Erschüttere dich nur nicht, verzagte Seele,
Wenn dir der Kreuzeskelch so bitter schmeckt!
Gott ist dein weiser Arzt und Wundermann,
So dir kein tödlich Gift einschenken kann,
Obgleich die Süßigkeit verborgen steckt.

4. Rezitativ A
Nun, der von Ewigkeit geschloß'ne Bund
Bleibt meines Glaubens Grund.
Er spricht mit Zuversicht
Im Tod und Leben:
Gott ist mein Licht,
Ihm will ich mich ergeben.
Und haben alle Tage
Gleich ihre eigne Plage,
Doch auf das überstandne Leid,
Wenn man genug geweinet,
Kommt endlich die Errettungszeit,
Da Gottes treuer Sinn erscheint.
("Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan," verse 4)

5. Arie (Duett) S A
Wenn des Kreuzes Bitterkeiten
Mit des Fleisches Schwachheit streiten,
Ist es dennoch wohlgetan.
Wer das Kreuz durch falschen Wahn
Sich vor unerträglich schätzt,
Wird auch künftig nicht ergötzet.

6. Choral
Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan,
Dabei will ich verbleiben.
Es mag mich auf die rauhe Bahn
Not, Tod und Elend treiben,
So wird Gott mich
Ganz väterlich
In seinen Armen halten;
Drum laß ich ihn nur walten.
("Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan," verse 6)

who in need
knows well how to sustain me;
therefore I let Him alone rule.

2. Recitative B
His word of truth stands fast
and will not betray me,
since it will not let the faithful fall or be destroyed.
Indeed, since he leads me on the path of life,
my heart shall take hold of itself and be content
in God's fatherly love and mercy
and shall have patience,
when a mishap disturbs me.
God, with His almighty hands,
can turn aside my misfortune.

3. Aria T
Do not shudder, despairing soul,
when the cup of suffering tastes so bitter!
God is your wise doctor and miracle-worker,
therefore He cannot offer you deadly poison,
although its sweetness might be concealed.

4. Recitative A
Now, the covenant sealed from eternity
shall remain the foundation of my faith.
It speaks with confidence
in death and life:
God is my light,
I will give myself to Him.
Even if every day
has its particular trouble,
yet after the sorrow withstood,
when one has wept enough,
the time of redemption comes at last,
when God's loyal intention is made clear.

5. Aria (Duet) S A
When the bitterness of the cross
struggles with the weakness of the flesh,
nevertheless it is well done.
Whoever, through misapprehension,
considers the cross unbearable,
will also in the future never share delight.

6. Chorale
What God does, is well done,
I will cling to this.
Along the harsh path
trouble, death and misery may drive me.
Yet God will,
just like a father,
hold me in His arms:
therefore I let Him alone rule.

Julie Finch has appeared as a soprano soloist with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, the Bellevue Chamber Singers and Ballet Bellevue, The Seattle Mandolin Orchestra, and has been heard live on Classic KING FM Radio. In 2002 she played Pristine in a summer stock production of *"The Pinch Penny Phantom of the Opera"* for the Merc Playhouse in Twisp, WA. Ms. Finch is also a frequent recitalist throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Ms. Finch has been selected as a participant of various intensive vocal study programs including "Songfest" with Martin Katz, Bel Canto Northwest Institute, and The Vancouver Early Music Vocal Programme in B.C., Canada with renowned early music soprano Ellen Hargis. She is a Singers Artist Award (NATSAA) competition held in New Orleans where she received the Karl Trump Award. Julie studies in Seattle with Marianne Weltmann and Geoffrey Boers.


Soprano Catherine Haight is a favorite of Seattle audiences, having performed with a variety of Northwest musical groups over the past fifteen years. In June of 2003 she was privileged to appear as a soloist along with Jane Eaglen and Vinson Cole as a part of the gala program that officially opened McCaw Hall, Seattle's new opera house. Ms. Haight has been a featured soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet in their productions of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* for over ten years and these performances have taken her to the Kennedy Center and Melbourne, Australia, where she received glowing reviews. Ms. Haight is especially familiar with the Baroque repertoire, having performed most of the major works of Bach and Handel, but she is equally at home with the composers of the Classical and Romantic eras. A frequent performer with OSSCS, her most recent collaboration with the ensembles was a performance of Kia Sams' *Earthmakers* in February of this year. She has made three recordings, including *Messiah*, with OSSCS and conductor George Shangrow. Ms. Haight is a member of the voice faculty at Seattle Pacific University.

Mezzo-soprano Kathryn Weld has made a name for herself as a gifted and versatile concert singer. As an early music specialist, she has been a featured soloist with such ensembles as the Philharmonia Baroque, under the direction of Nicholas McGegan, Music at St. John's in New York, the Magnificat Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco, and the Portland Baroque Orchestra. Ms. Weld made her Carnegie Hall debut to critical acclaim in a performance of Bach's Mass in B minor. She has also made two solo appearances with the New York Philharmonic, with Charles Dutoit and Kurt Masur. She has appeared as a soloist with the Bayerischen Rundfunkchor, Consortium Musicum of Munich, Munich Baroque Orchestra, Oregon Symphony, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Pro Musica, as well as numerous performances with OSSCS.


Stephen Rumph, recently arrived in Seattle, has already established himself as a leading tenor in both opera and oratorio. Solo engagements this year include Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* with Tacoma Symphony, Distler's *Weihnachtsoratorium* with Northwest Chamber Chorus, Aeneas with Whitman College, and Tamino with

Chorus, Aeneas with Whitman College, Tamino and with Skagit Opera. Previous engagements include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Tacoma Symphony, Bach's St. John Passion with Seattle Choral Company, and Haydn's "Nelson" Mass with Cascadian Chorale. A Bay Area native, Stephen has performed with regional companies through the San Francisco area, singing Rodolfo, Tamino, Hoffmann, Duca, Lenski, Ramiro, Lindoro, Alfred, and Eisenstein. He has created leading roles in several new operas. Stephen is a professor of music history at the University of Washington.

A native of Washington, baritone Brian Box received his Master's degree in vocal performance from Western Washington University in 1985. Mr. Box performs frequently with many Northwest ensembles, including OSSCS, Seattle Choral Company, Seattle Pro Musica, Bellevue Chamber Chorus, and Choir of the Sound. He has also performed with Rudolf Nureyev, singing Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* to Mr. Nureyev's dance. Mr. Box has collaborated with OSSCS in such works as Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, and Christmas Oratorio, the world premieres of Huntley Beyer's *St. Mark Passion* and *The Mass of Life and Death*, and is featured on their recording of Handel's *Messiah*. The regional winner of San Francisco Opera's 1988 Merola Opera Program, he made his Seattle Opera debut as the Corporal in Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment*. For Tacoma Opera, Mr. Box created the role of Franz in the world premiere of Carol Sams' *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. He has also performed extensively with Seattle Opera's Education Program and Northwest Operas in the Schools. Later this season Mr. Box will join OSSCS for performances of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*.



KIRKLAND
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Bach
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Motet BWV 230
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Four Bach Cantatas

Notes by Lorelette Knowles

Twenty-seven years ago, a gold-plated record was sent into space aboard the Voyager spacecraft. If that record should ever be played by extraterrestrials, the first communication representing humans to them will be the Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, by Johann Sebastian Bach, four of whose wonderful church cantatas make up this concert.

A little more than a month after the birth of George Frederick Handel in Halle in February 1685, in the Thuringian town of Eisenach (about 30 miles from Halle, and near Wartburg Castle, Martin Luther's hiding place), Johann Ambrosius Bach and his wife, Elisabeth, welcomed both spring and their eighth child, Johann Sebastian. Ambrosius, like most of the other members of the extended Bach family, was a skilled and successful professional musician, who performed ceremonial music at the Eisenach town hall, and who later accepted a second position as court musician for the local duke. He was an accomplished singer and player of the violin and viola, and the young Sebastian may have learned those instruments from him, and the organ from Ambrosius' cousin, "the profound composer" Johann Christoph Bach, organist at St. George's Church, where Sebastian soon became an experienced chorister.

The eight-year-old Sebastian attended the local Latin School, where Luther had studied, and did very well, but in May of 1694, his mother died; his father remarried the following January, but himself died the next month, leaving his widow with probably five children. Sebastian and his brother Johann Jakob were taken into the home of their oldest brother, Johann Christoph, newly married, and organist at Ohrdruf. In his new environment, the knowledge-hungry Sebastian continued to excel in his musical and academic studies. A famous, but possibly apocryphal, story from this period has the 12-year-old Sebastian secretly removing a manuscript of clavier compositions by such accomplished composers as Böhm, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, and Fosberger from a forbidden bookcase in his older brother's home, copying the music by moonlight to avoid detection, and stealthily replacing the original. Johann Christoph, however, discovered the painstaking copy, and confiscated it, having denied his brother access to the manuscript because he believed the music too difficult!

By 1700, Johann Christoph Bach had two children of his own, and was unable to support Sebastian any longer. So the fifteen-year-old musician left Ohrdruf to finish his education in the town of Lüneburg, some 200 miles to the north, where he had won a scholarship to the choir school of St. Michael's Church, which provided him with room, board, and instruction. During the next three years, Sebastian sang in the choir, played the violin in the orchestra, studied the music of past composers and traditional composition methods, and improved his organ-playing by studying with the famous organist, Georg Böhm. When he had completed his academic studies at St. Michael's, however, Sebastian found himself unable to attend a university because he lacked the necessary funds, and he therefore returned to Thuringia and found a post in 1703 as organist at the New Church in Arnstadt.

In his new position, the eighteen-year-old Sebastian was paid well, but his compositional and technical brilliance as an organist caused him trouble with his employers, because his

creative improvisations on and accompaniments to hymn tunes proved confusing to the congregation. The unruly behavior of his choristers and instrumentalists, many of whom were older than he, irritated the rather hot-tempered and perfectionistic young musician; at one point, he engaged in a street-brawl with a bassoon player named Geyersbach, whom Sebastian had called a "nanny-goat bassonist." The situation deteriorated further when Sebastian took four months off to visit the celebrated organist-composer, Dietrich Buxtehude, in the distant town of Lübeck (according to tradition, he made the 400-mile round-trip on foot!), when he had originally arranged for an absence of only four weeks. Upon his return in January of 1706, he found himself facing a furious town council complaining that he had been away from his post too long, his playing was becoming even more complex and confusing than ever, and worse yet, he had been heard accompanying the singing of a "strange maiden" in the organ loft! The impatient young genius realized that he would have to find a work setting in which he would have more freedom to explore his musical ideas and to compose and perform more challenging music.

The young singer in the organ gallery was probably Maria Barbara Bach, one of Sebastian's second cousins, and, like the rest of the Bach family, a good musician. Both she and Sebastian were not only musicians and cousins, but were also orphans, and both lived for a time with their mutual relative, the Mayor of Arnstadt. They were married in the fall of 1707, after Sebastian had found a new position as organist at the Church of St. Blaise in Mühlhausen. But he left this post within a year, having found that the Pietist pastor of the church really preferred church music to be very simple, and that the musical freedom he so greatly desired was not to be found at St. Blaise's.

In July of 1708, Bach was appointed court organist and chamber musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, a fervent Lutheran and an enthusiastic musical patron, and the first of Bach's twenty children was born soon after his arrival in Weimar. Here at last, Bach obtained the freedom to compose for which he had longed. Most of his great organ works were written during his nine years at Weimar, and he also composed many cantatas for the duke's chapel and for various secular occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and special events at the University of Leipzig. By this time, his superlative skills as an organist and his expertise in the construction of pipe organs had earned him considerable celebrity, and his fame brought him many pupils and numerous opportunities to perform on organs in neighboring cities. In addition, he was later promoted to the newly created post of Concertmaster.

When Duke Wilhelm Ernst's Kapellmeister died in 1716, Bach expected to be given his post, but when it was given to the old Kapellmeister's relatively untalented son for various political reasons, Bach resigned. The duke angrily refused to let his renowned concertmaster take an appointment as Prince Leopold's court conductor at Anhalt-Cöthen, which he was offered in August 1717, and had him imprisoned for a month; eventually, the headstrong composer was released, discharged in disgrace, and allowed to leave Weimar with his young family.

As Kapellmeister at Anhalt-Cöthen, Bach began to produce an amazing abundance of instrumental works for Prince Leopold (most of which have been lost). The Prince treated Bach with respect and affection. Sonatas and concertos for the violin

and the flute, and the justly famous Brandenburg Concertos, were written during Bach's years at Cöthen. For a time, Bach's situation seemed ideal, but in July of 1720, he returned from a trip with his patron to domestic devastation: his beloved wife, Maria Barbara, had suddenly taken ill, died, and been buried, leaving him with his four surviving children (three had died in infancy) to care for. Seventeen months later, the 36-year-old Sebastian Bach married Anna Magdalena Wilcken, a 20-year-old soprano also employed by the Cöthen court; she not only became stepmother to Bach's first family, but went on to bear her husband thirteen children, of whom only six survived infancy (of the composer's ten surviving offspring, one son died of a sudden fever in his early twenties, while another was mentally deficient).

In December 1721, a week after the marriage of Bach and Anna Magdalena, Bach's employer, Prince Leopold married his cousin, and soon the musical life of the court was threatened, since the young princess appears to have been totally devoid of musical interests or appreciation, and began to persuade Leopold to spend less time with his musicians. Bach soon began to feel somewhat unneeded and neglected, and, after the death of his first wife, and fifteen years of making music in noblemen's courts, he felt an urge to write religious music again. He also wanted his musically gifted children to be near a good university. So the Bach family prepared for another move.

In 1723, Leipzig was an important trading center in Saxony that was governed by a town council; in May, they offered Sebastian Bach the highly influential position of cantor at the venerable St. Thomas's Church, though he was their third choice after the famous and extremely prolific composer, Georg Philipp Telemann, refused the council's offer, as did the renowned Darmstadt court conductor, Christoph Graupner, for financial reasons. Bach, however, accepted this prestigious post, which made him musical director of Leipzig's churches, and soon found himself with a very heavy workload indeed. He was required to write and perform music weekly for the town's two main churches, St. Thomas's and St. Nicholas's, to look after the boys at St. Thomas's School and teach them music and Latin, and to compose works for town events. He had little rehearsal time, and his performers were largely schoolboys, some of whom were allowed into the choir by the council despite their inability to read music! In addition, he had ever more children of his own to instruct in music.

Though his working conditions were very difficult, his conflicts with those in authority over him were frequent and sometimes bitter, his compensation was barely adequate, and he often considered leaving Leipzig. Bach remained at St. Thomas's for 27 years, until the end of his life. Here he did have, however, the opportunity to compose and perform very large-scale works for choirs, orchestra, soloists, keyboard players, and visiting instrumental virtuosos. He wrote nearly 300 cantatas, and such magnificent works as the St. John Passion, the St. Matthew Passion, the Christmas Oratorio, the Magnificat, and six German motets for special occasions.

In 1729 Bach took over as director of a group, founded by Telemann, known as the "Collegium Musicum," which was composed largely of music students from the university who met to perform on Friday evenings at a local coffeehouse; for this group, he wrote, among other works, the light-hearted Coffee

Cantata, which is perhaps the most opera-like of his compositions. He was also appointed part-time court composer to the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, Augustus III, in 1736 and dedicated to him the first two sections of the Mass in B Minor, one of the greatest religious works ever composed.

By 1750, Bach had begun to work less, partly because his constant struggles with his employers had reduced his interest in his duties as cantor, and also because his health was failing (he may have suffered a stroke by mid-1749). Weak-sighted for years due to heredity, overwork, and poor lighting, Bach was nearly blind by 1749. He agreed to have two painful eye operations in the spring of 1750, but they were failures, and his health rapidly worsened. After suffering a second stroke that was rapidly followed by a fierce fever, Bach died on July 28, 1750, just ten days after his sight was suddenly but only briefly restored. He left only a small estate, and his long-suffering widow, Anna Magdalena, became and remained an almshouse resident until her death ten years later.

Almost before he died, Bach's music was considered outmoded and unfashionable, even by his own talented sons, who helped to shape the new music of their own generation. For some 70 years after his death, Bach's music was all but forgotten, and it took musicians to rediscover this musical master. Mozart apparently heard Bach's motet, *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*, with a shock: "What is this? Now there is something we can learn from!" he said, and it was Beethoven's brilliant playing of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier" that first gained him a reputation as a virtuoso performer in Vienna. But it was under Felix Mendelssohn in 1829 that the great St. Matthew Passion was performed for the first time since its composer's death, and thereafter, interest in and publication, study, and performance of Bach's works began to flourish worldwide.

Bach lived in a world where musicians were servant-craftsmen, and he wrote music for his masters in the churches, palaces, and town councils of 18th-century Germany. He dedicated much of his music, however, to "the glory of God alone;" and indeed, the glory of his music, some of the greatest of all time, brings us joy in the performing and in the hearing this afternoon. It may someday bring joy even to far-away beings of which we cannot now conceive!

A cantata is a composite form of vocal music normally consisting, in Bach's time, of four to six or more separate movements, including solo arias and recitatives, duets, and choruses, most frequently accompanied by an orchestra featuring a variety of instruments. Bach, the greatest master of the cantata form, composed over 300 of these works of which only about two hundred thirty have been preserved. No general description can begin to suggest the infinite variety and the indescribable wealth of musical creativity, technical expertise, and passionate spirituality found in these marvelous works, which constitute the core of Bach's vocal output.

Cantata 177, Ich ruf zu dir, Her Jesu Christ (I call to you, Lord Jesus Christ)

This chorale cantata for the fourth Sunday after Trinity (early summer) is based on the hymn *Ich ruf zu dir*, whose verses reflect the Gospel reading appointed for the Sunday. In the first section, a chorale fantasia in triple meter, the original tune appears in long notes in the soprano part of the chorus, and in the closing section the melody is presented in a simple

four-part choral harmonization. Between these choral sections appear three arias, the first for alto and continuo (a bass instrument and keyboard), the second for soprano and oboe da caccia (played on the English horn) with continuo, and the third for tenor with violin, oboe da caccia or bassoon, and continuo accompaniment. The cantata thus proceeds musically and emotionally in a very satisfying motion from the highly elaborate to the comparatively simple, and then through increasing complexity of texture, to pure simplicity at the close.

Cantata 99, Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan (What God does is surely right)

A very virtuosic flute part is the outstanding feature of this cantata for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, probably written around 1724. The hymn melody appears in long notes in the soprano part in the opening chorale fantasia, in which the rhythmic figure of a longer note followed by two short notes is prominent. The flute and romantic oboe d'amore lend this movement special beauty. A bass recitative is followed by a tenor aria in which the highly florid flute part is the focus of attention. An alto recitative then leads to a dual duet for soprano and alto voices and flute and oboe d'amore. The cantata closes with a straightforward harmonization of the chorale melody with orchestral accompaniment.

Cantata 147, Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben (Heart and mouth and deed and life)

This two-part cantata, composed for the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, dates from 1723, and is probably best-known for the famous setting of the tune, *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*, with which both of its parts conclude. The tripartite opening chorus features fugal outer sections, and is framed by a fanfare-like instrumental section that is repeated at the end. The trumpet lends a particularly festive brilliance to this section. After a tender tenor recitative, a beautiful, plangent oboe d'amore accompanies an aria for alto (*Mary*) that is

characterized by fluidly shifting rhythms. A lovely aria for soprano and solo violin follows a bass recitative. The chorale that ends the first part of the cantata introduces the four-part vocal setting of the hymn melody, reinforced by the trumpet, for the first time. The dotted notes and triplet figures of the orchestra's independent countermelody, which are frequently featured in organ chorales that symbolize the joy of Christmas, here form the link with the birth of Christ. Part II of the cantata begins with a relatively simple tenor aria in which the cello plays a decorated line rather than remaining in unison with the string bass as is usual in continuo parts. An alto recitative, accompanied by two oboes da caccia, is then followed by a coloratura aria for bass accompanied by the full orchestra, including oboes and trumpets. The cantata closes with another chorale verse, whose setting is identical with that which concluded the first part of the cantata.

Cantata 51, Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen! (Praise God in all lands!)

Composed in Leipzig around 1730 for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday in the Church Year (an early autumn Sunday), this virtuoso solo cantata for soprano, trumpet, strings, and continuo begins with a spectacular aria in which the soprano duels with the glittering trumpet. The following recitative/arioso consists of two sections. The prayerful first features a pulsating string accompaniment; in the second, halting vocal phrases accompanied by continuo alone depict the mouth's feeble babbling in its attempts at praise. Next comes a continuo-accompanied aria in a comforting, pastoral 12/8 meter. In the cantata's closing section, the soprano, accompanied by the strings, sings the fifth verse of the chorale, *Nun Lob, mein Seel, den Herren* (Now praise the Lord, my soul) to its 1540 melody. The voice is accompanied by two violins and bass, and thus forms part of a texture reminiscent of Bach's organ chorale preludes. The cantata closes jubilantly with a sparkling trumpet-spangled fugal "Alleluia."

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