

J. S. Bach

1-3 **Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, BWV 1049** 14:19

Margaret Batjer leader & violin

David Shostac flute

Brook Ellen Schoenwald flute

1 Allegro 6:28

2 Andante 3:25

3 Presto 4:26

J. S. Bach

4 **Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut, BWV 199** 27:46

Jeffrey Kahane conductor

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson mezzo-soprano

Recitative *Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut*

Aria and Recitative *Stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen*

Allan Vogel oboe d'amore

Recitative *Doch Gott muss mir genädig sein*

Aria *Tief gebückt und voller Reue*

Recitative *Auf diese Schmerzensreue*

Chorale *Ich, dein betrübtes Kind*

Roland Kato viola

Recitative *Ich lege mich in diese Wunden*

Aria *Wie freudig ist mein Herz*



Lorraine

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson

mezzo-soprano

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

Jeffrey Kahane music director

with support from
Los Angeles Philanthropic
Committee for the Arts

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson

How does one begin to write about such a human being? Great singers have the ability to communicate deep layers of meaning in a text, teasing out ever more nuanced understandings of the composer's intentions. But Lorraine Hunt Lieberson took this a step further. She made it seem as if she wrote the poetry herself. And Lorraine made it seem as if she were singing this music directly to you and to you alone in the theater. Lorraine addressed the importance of this direct communication in her appreciation of other singers as well. "I like to listen to singers," she said, "where I feel the direct openness of the heart in the voice."¹ Lorraine acted through the sound and the music, often standing quietly and intensely, while weaving emotional tapestries with the text and delivering vocal lines of glory.

Other musicians loved working with Lorraine. She arrived superbly prepared and she required little rehearsal to sync with

¹ *Chicago Tribune*, July 9, 2006



Lorraine Hunt Lieberson

an orchestra, conductor and any other members of the cast. I remember when Lorraine sang through the opening recitative of *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut* BWV 199 during the first rehearsal for the performance with Jeffrey Kahane and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra on this recording. The musicians sat in silence after the movement ended. At first, the musicians wiped tears from their eyes while some clapped timidly. Then followed uproarious applause from the Orchestra and the few lucky guests. That first run-through was good enough for the final performance.

Lorraine took her musical preparation seriously and demanded, subtly and quietly, that all the other musicians in the production do the same. The conductor Harry Bicket worked with Lorraine on a number of occasions both in live performances and in recordings. "Lorraine gave everything," Harry said, "with every fiber of her being. But if you were not fully prepared yourself, or if one of the musicians lost focus, she would quietly withdraw into herself, continuing the rehearsal without complaint, but no longer engaged. It was scary when this happened," Harry said, "because it would be difficult to earn back her trust. She demanded perfection in herself and in everyone around her. When one had the privilege of conducting Lorraine, the entire orchestra learned to pay attention." Judging by the



photo © Bill Jorrett

Jeffrey Kahane

Allan Vogel



results of Harry's recordings with Lorraine, and by this Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra performance with Jeffrey Kahane, these were mutual love affairs.

I will never forget (nor quite recover from) the performance given by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson in September, 2003. Jeffrey Kahane led Lorraine and principal oboe Allan Vogel in this rich, introspective performance of Bach's cantata *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*. This work, written for solo voice and orchestra, proves one of Bach's more difficult cantatas, not only vocally, but thematically. The cantata addresses the depths of the human condition as we struggle with the soul-wrenching pain we experience in life and death. After presenting our human predicament, Bach then reveals the

transcendence, redemption and catharsis available to all of us. The text is dense, evocative and highly symbolic. This cantata describes triumph over Death, to be sure, but it also describes triumph through death, joyously and calmly, in ways that give us additional pause in Lorraine's performance.

Less than three years after our LACO recording of *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, cancer claimed Lorraine as it had her mother and sister. She died on July 3rd, 2006. I mention this because Lorraine knew she needed to value every moment of life. Her personal situation and determination shine forth in this music; she does indeed communicate directly and openly, from her heart. She chose to make something magical and beautiful, for herself and for all of us, out of her physical vulnerability and the precariousness she felt in life.²

² Lorraine was in remission during this LACO performance, yet she must have known her odds of long-term survival were low. Harry Bicket remembers her tremendous courage during her performances in Peter Sellars' semi-staged *Ich habe genug*. "The cantata [in Peter's hands] is about the last 20 minutes of someone's life; but someone who is totally at peace with the idea of death. Lorraine was dressed in hospital garb, and I remember laughing with her about how horrible the little socks were that they gave you in hospital. Strange to find humour in this, but it somehow summed up Lorraine's calmness in the face of death."

Two memorable Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra performances of *Ich habe genug* (without hospital setting) took place on opposite coasts, both with German bass-baritone Thomas Questoff in his prime. The first took place in Carnegie Hall in New York on April 26th, 2002 and the second took place in Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles on November 16th, 2004.

After celebrating 44 years of dynamic concerts, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra is very much alive, holding its own with loyal audience support, thanks to great music, strong creative programming and a talented staff. In 2012, the Orchestra celebrated its 15th season with music director Jeffrey Kahane. The Orchestra was founded in 1968 by the 'cellist Jim Arkatov, joined in short order by his friends Buddy Sperry, Joan Palevsky, Richard Colburn and Joseph Troy. They created a nimble orchestra of 40 musicians which soon became world famous under the direction of the young Neville Marriner. Marriner inaugurated a tradition of excellence that continues today with exciting concert seasons, multiple tours in Europe and Asia and more than 30 recordings.



LACO violinists
backstage

"The orchestra's reputation for subtlety and precision, which had preceded it, came through in its elegant and clear phrasing. The sensitive paraphrasing of the themes and the transparency...along with its warm tone, gave the orchestra's sound an unexpected fullness...The woodwinds...displayed exemplary virtuosity and musicality (flute, oboe, trumpet...), and the violins were perfect."

Resmusica, Paris

"In Germany, one rarely encounters an orchestra whose members take the stage smiling happily, almost radiantly. Not only did the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra do just that at its appearance on Monday, it worked itself up into even higher spirits with every measure...."

Die Welt, Hamburg

Sir Neville Marriner returned to Los Angeles to conduct the orchestra for its 40th Anniversary opening night concert in 2008. Yarlung Records released a recording of Beethoven's piano concerto No. 1 from this historic event, Sir Neville conducting with Jeffrey Kahane at the keyboard. The Orchestra's music directors from its inception through 2013 include Sir Neville Marriner, Gerard Schwarz, Iona Brown, Christof Perick and Jeffrey Kahane.

This album opens with a sprightly live recording of J. S. Bach's **Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G Major, BWV 1049** from November, 2011. Concertmaster Margaret Batjer led from the first chair. David Shostac and Brook Ellen Schoenwald played the flute solos. This concerto is the composition about which I wrote my first essay on music, which I will spare you; I was in the seventh grade. I have loved the Brandenburg Concertos since I first heard them. At the time, I believed the legend surrounding the Margrave of Brandenburg, which claims that Bach wrote the six masterpieces "on spec." In truth, Bach most probably wrote these concertos prior to his meeting with the Margrave.³

The fourth concerto, like all six written in the Italian style

³ Bach did send the concertos to the Margrave in hopes he would be offered a job. Bach worried his current post in Köthen was becoming less secure. A copy of the full scores plus Bach's "letter of application" were indeed discovered in Brandenburg (the area surrounding Berlin) a century later.



Jeffrey Kahane & concertmaster Margaret Batjer backstage at the Alex Theatre

(three movements: fast/slow/fast), is a work which sounds magnificent whether performed by a period orchestra, one on a part, or by modern chamber orchestra of 15 or 20 musicians. Other than the performance on this album, one of my favorite memories of this concerto comes from October, 2004. Again it was the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra led by Margaret Batjer, but this time it was one on a part. Margaret led on violin, with two flutes, two violins, one viola, one cello, one bass and harpsi-

chord making up her orchestra. After the performance Margaret told me it felt as though she had been driving a well-tuned Italian sports car. Agile, sensitive and responsive. To my ear, she and LACO manage to capture a similar transparency and frolicsomeness in this recording, albeit with larger forces.

The first performance of *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut* BWV 199 took place on August 12th, 1714.⁴ The work was part of a monthly cantata cycle Bach wrote as one of his regular job requirements as *Konzertmeister* for Johann Ernst von Sachsen-Weimar. Bach originally wrote this cantata in the key of C Minor (the Weimar version) and subsequently revised the score and changed the key to D Minor (this is known as the Leipzig version). Lorraine chose the Weimar version for the LACO concert, transposed down a half step to the key of B Minor. Bach probably tuned his Weimar orchestra to A412 or A415. LACO tunes higher (LACO's A is 440 Hz). This concert and recording uses a transposition from the C Minor version down one half step to the key of B Minor. This means that the actual pitches heard in this performance are very close to the original Weimar performance in 1714. This Weimar version includes a beautiful viola solo in the Chorale, which is scored for a small 'cello (violoncello piccolo)

⁴ Some sources suggest the first performance took place in 1713, but this is less likely.

in the Leipzig version. In this recording, the Chorale has been transposed from F Major down half a step to E Major; principal viola Roland Kato plays the solo line.

Bach wrote his cantatas to complement specific Bible passages read during Sunday church services. Understanding the cantata is easier if we look briefly at the two readings assigned for that auspicious Sunday 300 years ago. At first glance the two readings appear incompatible with each other.

Most scholars agree Paul wrote his First Letter to the Corinthians when living in Ephesus between 53 and 57 AD. Verses 15:1-10 seem arrogant and exclusionary at first, repeating the requirement that his readers believe exactly what Paul has taught them "or else." Paul tells us the Gospel message can only save us if we view it through the lens provided by Paul, who reminds us he is essentially Christ's 13th apostle. Enmeshed in this language is a deeper and far humbler admission, however. After building himself up, Paul tells his readers that he, who had been a persecutor of the early church and a highly respected Pharisee, remains the worst of the worst, and that God's grace saved even him. God's mercy trumps all. Paul hints at one of his central messages. He rejects ritual purity (a Pharisee strong suit) in favor of submission to God and supplication for his grace, no matter our state and no matter how grievous our sins. So what

might look like a rather severe passage actually reveals a deeper all-inclusive reassuring message.

The second reading comes from Luke 18:9-14, written between 85 and 120 AD, though most scholars favor a date between 85 and 90 AD. In direct contrast to the seemingly exclusionary message in Paul's letter 30 years earlier, these verses stress inclusiveness. This is the famous parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector praying nearby each other. The Pharisee thanks God for making him "pure," unlike the money-grubbing, unjust, adulterous tax collector, from whom the Pharisee wants to distance himself in his mind and in God's. In juxtaposition to this, the tax collector is too ashamed of his human condition even to lift his gaze to the heavens as he prays, asking for forgiveness of his sins, knowing he is unworthy of this forgiveness. In my view, this parable celebrates the natural state of man, as a "sinner," not as someone who lives in ritual purity, consumed by neurotic perfectionism. Instead, forgiveness is for all people. As the writer of Luke presents Him, Jesus sees purity in terms of interpersonal relationships, not purity in terms of cleanliness and ritual. The tax collector lives as and for himself, a child of God, whereas the Pharisee in this story has sold out to Rome, betraying his true nature while outwardly following all the rules.

So while the two Bible readings for August 12th, 1714, may

look radically different at first glance, their central message is the same: human beings are by nature imperfect and will always be imperfect. We come closer to God through supplication for grace and forgiveness.

For his cantata Bach adapted a text written mostly by Georg Christian Lehms, published as a part of *Gottgefälliges Kirchen-Opfer* in 1711. Bach's message clearly supports the deeper messages in the two Bible readings. Our human state has filled us with pain and embarrassment, making us unworthy of God and clearly denying us closeness with Him based on our own merits. Because of our natures there is no hope for us (remember our tax collector?) We deserve to be shut out and abandoned. After wallowing in this misery in some of the most beautiful music imaginable, the prostrate singer begs for God's patience and mercy, reminding Him of the promise made to humankind through Christ's wounds on the cross, the symbol of God's identification with and understanding of us as people made of flesh and blood. Remembering God's promise and intimate connection with us, the singer rejoices in this connection, this promise and this succor, celebrating this reconciliation with God and the place we have in His heart forever.

Johann Sebastian Bach, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Allan Vogel, Jeffrey Kahane and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra commu-

nicate this darkness followed by rapture; one can sense this evolution even if one doesn't understand the individual words. But given the beauty of this text, I wanted to offer the original German verses as well as my translation into English.

I want to thank Debbie Gastler who worked so hard to make this recording possible, Peter Lieberon who gave me the rights to release *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut* after Lorraine's death, Rinchen Lhamo who gave me the photographs of Lorraine from Peter's personal collection in Santa Fe, and of course Jeffrey Kahane and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. Most of all, I would like to thank glorious Lorraine herself, who gave so much to the world, and to whom we would like to dedicate this album. Mag sie in ewigen Frieden ruhen.

Bob Attiyeh
producer



Lorraine Hunt Lieberson

Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut

1. Recitative

Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut,
Weil mich der Sünden Brut
In Gottes heiligen Augen
Zum Ungeheuer macht.
Und mein Gewissen fühlet Pein,
Weil mir die Sünden nichts Als
Höllenhener sein.
Verhaßte Lastemacht!
Du, du allein
Hast mich in solche Not gebracht;
Und du, du böser Adamssamen,
Raubst meiner Seele alle Ruh
Und schließest ihr den Himmel zu!
Ach! unerhörter Schmerz!
Mein ausgedorrtes Herz
Will ferner mehr kein Trost befeuchten,
Und ich muss mich vor dem verstecken,
Vor dem die Engel selbst ihr Angesicht
verdecken.

My heart swims in blood;
The results of my sins
Transform me into a monster
In God's holy eyes.
My conscience feels pain,
Because my sins are nothing other than
Hell's executioner.
Hated Evil Behavior,
You, you alone
Have brought me into this state of misery;
And you, you nasty spawn of Adam,
Completely rob my soul of peace
And slam shut the door of heaven.
Ah, you unbelievable ache.
Never again will comfort reconstitute
My dead and dehydrated heart.
I must hide before Him
Before whom even angels hide their faces.

2. Aria and Recitative

Stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen,
Ihr mögt meine Schmerzen sagen,
Weil der Mund geschlossen ist.
Und ihr nassen Tränenquellen
Könnt ein sichres Zeugnis stellen,
Wie mein sündlich Herz gebüßt.
Mein Herz ist itzt ein Tränenbrunn,
Die Augen heiße Quellen,
Ach Gott! wer wird dich doch
zufriedenstellen?

Since my mouth is closed,
My silent sighs and mute complaints
Will have to express my sorrow.
And you, my deep wells of tears,
Bear witness
To my sinful heart's repentance.
My heart bleeds oceans of tears
And my eyes stream hot fountains.
Oh God, what will satisfy You? What can
I do for You to accept me?

3. Recitative

Doch Gott muss mir gnädig sein,
Weil ich das Haupt mit Asche,
Das Angesicht mit Tränen wasche,
Mein Herz in Reu und Leid zerschlage
Und voller Wehmut sage:
Gott sei mir Sünder gnädig!
Ach ja! sein Herze bricht,
Und meine Seele spricht:

But God will be gracious to me
For I cover my head with ashes,
Wash my face with tears,
Beat my heart with pain and grief,
And full of sorrow beg God to
Grant this sinner His grace and mercy.
Yes! His heart will soften
And my soul will respond:

4. Aria

Tief gebückt und voller Reue
Lieg ich, liebster Gott, vor dir.
Ich bekenne meine Schuld,
Aber habe doch Geduld,
Habe doch Geduld mit mir!

I lie, prostrate and filled with regret
Before You, dear God.
I acknowledge my faults.
Please have patience with me.

5. Recitative

Auf diese Schmerzensreu
Fällt mir alsdenn dies Trostwort bei:

Upon my painful repentance
These hopeful words come to me:

6. Chorale

Ich, dein betrübtes Kind,
Werf alle meine Sünd,
So viel ihr in mir stecken
Und mich so heftig schrecken,
In deine tiefen Wunden,
Da ich stets Heil gefunden.

I am your troubled child, oh Lord.
I toss all my sins,
All that hide within me and
All of them which terrify me,
I throw them into Your immortal wounds
Where I have always found salvation.

7. Recitative

Ich lege mich in diese Wunden
Als in den rechten Felsenstein;
Die sollen meine Ruhstatt sein.
In diese will ich mich im Glauben
schwingen
Und drauf vergnügt und fröhlich
singen:

I submerge myself into these wounds
As I would stand on a holy Rock
Which shall be my safe retreat.
In them I will anchor my faith
And reassuredly and happily sing:

8. Aria

Wie freudig ist mein Herz,
Da Gott versöhnet ist
Und mir auf Reu und Leid
Nicht mehr die Seligkeit
Noch auch sein Herz verschließt.

My heart is so happy
Now that God has reconciled me.
And through my grief and pain
No longer am I excluded
From His bliss or from His heart.

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

Jeffrey Kahane music director

violin I

Margaret Batjer

concertmaster

Tereza Stanislav *

assistant concertmaster

Jennifer Munday

acting assistant concertmaster **

Jacqueline Brand

Richard Altenbach **

Tamara Hatwan **

Susan Rishik

Connie Kupka **

Jennifer Gordon Levin **

violin II

Josefina Vergara

principal

Sarah Thornblade

associate principal

Connie Kupka *

Katia Popov

Searmi Park **

Henry Gronnier **

Christine Frank **

Agnes Gottshewski **

viola

Roland Kato **

principal

Victoria Miskolczy *

acting principal

Robert Brophy *

acting associate principal

Samuel Formicola **

acting associate principal

Carole Castillo

Karen van Sant

cello

Douglas Davis **

principal

Andrew Shulman *

principal

Armen Ksajikian **

associate principal

Trevor Handy

acting associate principal *

Giovanna M. Clayton *

Christina Soule **

bass

Nico Abondolo *

principal

Susan Ranney **

principal

Oscar Hidalgo **

associate principal

oboe

Allan Vogel **

principal

bassoon

Kenneth Munday **

principal

theorbo

John Schneiderman *

principal

harpsichord

Patricia Mabee

principal

personnel manager

Steve Scharf

librarian/stage manager

Robert Dolan