



Royal
Academy
of
Music

J. S. Bach.

The Cantatas

A major new series celebrating Bach's magnificent works in concert and on historical instruments

www.ram.ac.uk/bach

25th January

'Freue dich, erlöste Schar' (BWV 30)
'Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein'
(BWV 128)

22nd February

'Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest'
(BWV 194)
'Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht'
(BWV 124)

29th March

'In allen meinen Taten' (BWV 97)
'Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht'
(BWV 105)

26th April

'Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr
dahin' (BWV 125)
'Liebster Gott, wann werd ich
sterben' (BWV 8)
'Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen
Jerusalem' (BWV 159)

10th May

'Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis'
(BWV 21)
'Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott'
(BWV 129)

7th June

'Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe'
(BWV 22)
'Barmherziges Herze der ewigen
Liebe' (BWV 185)
'Du wahrer Gott und Davids
Sohn' (BWV 23)

27th September

'Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!'
(BWV 51)
'Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren,
lieben' (BWV 77)
'Wie schön leuchtet der
Morgenstern' (BWV 1)

25th October

'Jesu, der du meine Seele' (BWV 78)
'Ich elender Mensch, wer wird
mich erlösen' (BWV 48)
'Es ist euch gut, dass ich
hingehe' (BWV 108)

29th November

'Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt
walten' (BWV 93)
'Du Hirte Israel, höre' (BWV 104)
'Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der
Frommen' (BWV 123)



An introduction by Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, Principal

Whether you're a long-standing Bach lover or are just beginning to explore his extraordinary music, our major new series in the splendour of the Duke's Hall promises to become a regular fixture in your diary. In each hour-long concert, talented Academy students will take the stage side-by-side with distinguished artists in a happy blend of youth and experience. We can look forward to thrilling and moving performances, from an orchestra and choir under Iain Ledingham's inspirational direction, of some of the most challenging masterpieces in Western music.

There are many reasons why Bach's cantatas resonate beyond their historical and liturgical context to

establish themselves as dazzling concert pieces. First and foremost—and this is the *raison d'être* of the Kohn Foundation's enlightened sponsorship—is that Bach's supreme imagination and creative invention can be understood on their own terms.

No-one baulks as we marvel upon a great religious Renaissance painting outside the context of the Duomo. So in the concert hall, Bach's cantatas become equally relevant for the joy of discovery and the affirmation of life they bring to audiences of all ages, backgrounds and creeds.

No other institution in the country is as steeped in Bach as the Royal Academy of Music. Soon after Mendelssohn reintroduced Bach's masterworks to Berlin and Leipzig, passionate Bach advocates from the Academy presented his music for the first time to the English-speaking world. Our alumni now count amongst some of the greatest Bach interpreters of the 19th and 20th centuries. We look forward to welcoming you to the Academy for the next chapter of this great story...

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Freeman-Attwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J'.

Royal Academy of Music / Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series

Presented through the generosity and vision of the Kohn Foundation



'The Bach Cantata series at the Royal Academy of Music offers London audiences a marvellous new opportunity to hear such masterpieces, many of them rarely heard. I know from my recent experience at the Academy that these talented singers and instrumentalists will produce outstanding results'

Sir John Eliot Gardiner

(pictured above working with Academy students)

In these concerts, you can hear some of the Academy's most talented students performing alongside respected professional performers.

The highly regarded violinists Rachel Podger and Madeleine Easton will share leadership of the orchestra, who will play 'period' instruments of the type used in Bach's time.

Iain Ledingham will direct all the performances, in the role which Bach fulfilled when the cantatas were first performed. Iain studied piano, harpsichord and conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, where he has coached singers and pianists for many years. In 2001, as Director of Opera, he was responsible for creating the Academy's specialist Royal Academy Opera course. As continuo player and chorus master he has worked with some of the world's leading conductors.

'The performances were excellent'

Sunday Times, February 2008

'A magnificent performance'

Gramophone, January 2008

'Freue dich, erlöste Schar' BWV 30

(Rejoice, O ransomed throng)

'Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein' BWV 128

(On Christ's ascent to heaven alone)



'Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein' is an exuberant celebration for Ascension Day, complete with stratospherically high horn parts in the opening chorus and a dazzling trumpet solo in the ensuing bass aria.

The original autograph manuscript for BWV 128 will be on display at this performance. One of only two or three major Bach manuscripts remaining in private hands, its presence will create a truly exceptional launch to this concert series. The many deletions and alterations throughout the score provide a fascinating insight into Bach's dynamic composition process.

*Tickets £8 (concessions £5),
season discounts available.
Box Office: 020 7873 7300.*

We begin the series with two profoundly joyful works.

'Freue dich erlöste Schar' looks forward eagerly to the joys of heaven. First performed between 1738 and 1742, this is one of the latest surviving cantatas by Bach. Much of the music is based on a secular cantata which he wrote earlier, and it contains several irresistible dance-inspired movements.

'Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest' BWV 194

(O gently longed-for feast of joy)

'Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht' BWV 124

(I shall not forsake my Jesus)



The Calvinist beliefs at Cöthen ensured that Bach's music was often conceived within the secular expectations of the court. As a result, this work is derived from the concert world of the orchestral suite. Four of the arias are inspired by elegant instrumental dances.

Today's concert opens with a work from the first of the four great annual cycles of cantatas which Bach wrote in Leipzig between 1723 and 1727.

'Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest' was written to celebrate a new organ in Leipzig's Störmthal. Much of the music comes from an earlier cantata which Bach wrote in the employment of Prince Leopold of Cöthen.

'Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht', a predominantly optimistic work written in 1725, contains a remarkably graphic expression of the terrors of death in the central tenor aria. The opening chorus is notable for the magical weaving lines of its solo oboe d'amore around the chorale melody.

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'In allen meinen Taten' BWV 97

(In all my undertakings)

'Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht' BWV 105

(Enter not into judgement with Thy servant, O Lord)



'In allen meinen Taten' is one of Bach's final cantatas and was composed in 1734, probably for a wedding. In this buoyant and optimistic work the writer describes some of the occasions when he puts his trust in God. The work opens with a splendid French Overture.

'Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht' has been described as 'among the most sublime descriptions of the

soul in baroque and Christian art'. The opening numbers are deeply penitential in mood and the aria for soprano and oboe 'Wie zittern,' depicting the tormented and guilty soul, is one of Bach's most haunting creations. The text and music reach a point of outstanding synergy in the subsequent movements, not least in the final chorale where the music seems to assuage all guilt with mesmerising pathos.

The images throughout this publication are taken from a private collection, and include the painting on this page which many experts believe portrays members of the Bach family.

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'Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin' BWV 125

(In peace and joy I now depart)

'Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem' BWV 159

(Behold! We go up to Jerusalem)

'Liebster Gott, wann werd ich sterben' BWV 8

(Dearest God, when shall I die?)



'Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin' is based on Luther's translation of the Nunc Dimittis. Its graphic opening chorus recalls the start of Bach's great St Matthew Passion—a work which was championed by former Academy Principal William Sterndale Bennett, who conducted its British première in 1854.

'Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem' can be regarded as a prelude to Bach's settings of the Passion, with its dramatic dialogue between Christ and the faithful soul, and the exquisite bass aria 'Es ist vollbracht.'

In 'Liebster Gott, wann werd ich sterben?' Bach, in his fortieth year, looks forward to release from the cares of the world. A sublime opening chorus which contemplates the hour of death is resolved by a radiant bass aria, which embraces the prospect with a joyful gigue rhythm.

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'Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis' BWV 21

(My heart was deeply troubled)

'Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott' BWV 129

(Praised be the Lord, my God)



'Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis' is an early masterpiece which Bach originally wrote in 1713 and subsequently revised and expanded in his Leipzig years. The final result is one of Bach's most substantial and richly endowed cantatas, created in the year in which he saw his third and fourth children born and then die within weeks. The music takes us on a journey which travels from despair

through consolation to jubilant triumph. The music culminates in Bach's glorious setting of 'Worthy is the Lamb,' for which trumpets and timpani are introduced.

'Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott' is a celebratory cantata for Trinity Sunday, set to a five-verse chorale text which Johannes Olearius wrote in 1665. The opening and closing movements are dominated by joyful splendour, and the fourth is a delightful pastoral exchange between alto and oboe d'amore.

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'Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe' BWV 22

(Jesus took unto Him the twelve)

'Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe' BWV 185

(Merciful heart of love everlasting)

'Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn' BWV 23

(Thou very God and David's son)



'Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe' and 'Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn' were the two works which Bach presented as his application for the post of Thomascantor at St Thomas' Church in Leipzig on 7th February 1723. These two 'Probestücke' (audition pieces) clearly made a considerable

impression; a Leipzig newspaper lauded 'the Hon. Capell-meister of Cöthen, Mr Bach... the music of the same having been amply praised on that occasion by all knowledgeable persons.' Bach remained in the post until his death in 1750.

'Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe' is a tender, intimate work which Bach composed in 1715 for the Weimar court.

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'Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!' BWV 51

(Rejoice unto God in all lands!)

'Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben' BWV 77

(Thou shalt love the Lord thy God)

'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern' BWV 1

(How beautifully gleams the morning star)



'Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen' features the most virtuosic soprano part in all of the cantatas and a splendidly festive solo trumpet obligato. Bach originally designated the work as being suitable for performance 'in ogni tempo' — at any time. One of Bach's most versatile cantatas, it requires small but expert forces.

'Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren lieben' sets forth the injunction that 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself' in music of great eloquence and ingenuity.

'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern' contains one of Bach's most magnificent chorale-based opening movements, in which the radiant melody soars above the jubilant, richly orchestrated texture of the music.

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'Jesu, der du meine Seele' BWV 78

(Jesus, who hast wrested my soul)

'Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen' BWV 48

(O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me)

'Es ist euch gut, dass ich hingehe' BWV 108

(It is expedient for you that I go away)



'Jesu, der du meine Seele' opens with a choral movement of tragic grandeur, composed in the form of a French passacaglia of remarkable expressive power. It is followed by one of Bach's most celebrated duets, in which soprano and alto dance above a lilting pizzicato bass in almost operatic gait.

'Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen' opens in a stark, penitential frame of mind in the first chorus. The arias which follow progress from tender pleading to a bold affirmation of trust.

'Es ist euch gut, dass ich hingehe' is a joyful, radiant work for the period after Easter, with exceptionally beautiful writing for the oboe d'amore.

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'Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten' BWV 93

(If you but permit God to prevail)

'Du Hirte Israel, höre' BWV 104

(Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel)

'Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen' BWV 123

(Dearest Emmanuel, Lord of the righteous)



'Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten' and 'Liebster Immanuel' are both chorale cantatas, permeated by the melodies of Lutheran hymn tunes. As Thomaskantor in Leipzig, Bach was following a musical tradition for this job when he undertook to 'set each hymn in a charming piece of music, and to let it be

heard before the sermon.' The first is a thoughtful reflection on life's journey; the second, a lyrical, mystical celebration for Epiphany.

'Du Hirte Israel, höre' is a pastoral, almost Arcadian play on Christ the Good Shepherd. The opening chorus is an exceptional movement of glorious lyricism and textural warmth.

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Sundays in Marylebone

'we've had plenty of opportunities to be dazzled this past month... from student performers of the Royal Academy of Music'
Daily Telegraph, February 2008



The Academy's building is just across Marylebone Road from Marylebone Village.

As well as being inspired by Bach's immortal music, why not spend more of your Sunday enjoying the many other sights and sounds of Marylebone?

The Academy's restaurant will be open from 11.00am to 2.00pm for light refreshments.



The restaurants, bars and cafés in Marylebone Village offer perfect meeting points from coffee catch-ups to the important lunchtime or evening rendezvous.

Marylebone Farmers' Market takes place on Sundays from 10am to 2pm. Fresh seasonal flowers, fruits and foods are the order of the day.

Marylebone Village is also the perfect place to spend time exploring its unique collection of shops. Treats for the home, designer-wear fashions and presents for friends can all be found as you weave your way through the Village.

www.marylebonevillage.com

How to book

Box Office telephone 020 7873 7300

Tickets for each concert are £8 (concessions £5)

Book now for season discounts:

book for all nine concerts and save 30%

book for at least six concerts and save 20%

book for at least four concerts and save 10%

Each cantata concert begins at midday and lasts around one hour. The Academy's restaurant will be open from 11.00am to 2.00pm for light refreshments.

Box Office

The Academy's Box Office is open for telephone and personal bookings from Monday to Friday, 10am–12 noon and 2–4pm.

Answering service at all other times. Credit cards are accepted with a small booking fee.

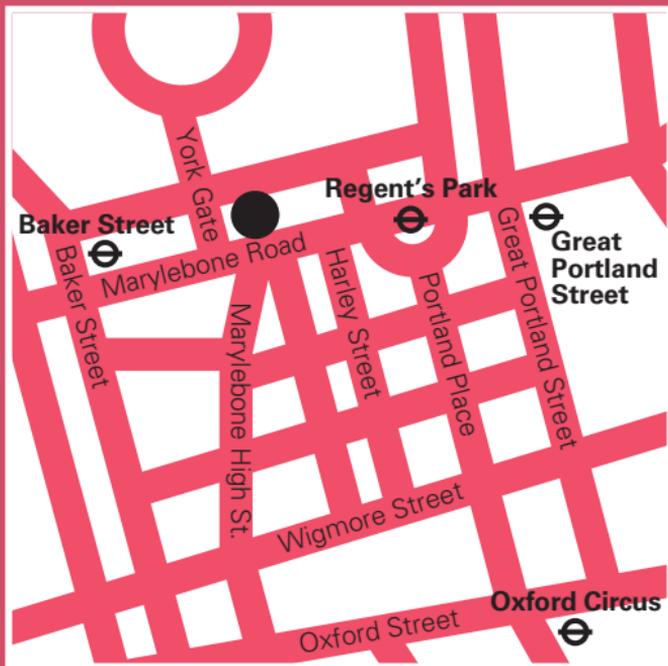
The Box Office will be closed between 22nd December 2008 and 5th January 2009.

Discover more

The book 'JS Bach: The Complete Cantatas' by Richard Stokes will be available at each concert for the special price of £25. You can find more about the Academy's history of Bach performances at www.ram.ac.uk/bach

The Royal Academy of Music is where many leading musicians learn their trade. Our student community is truly international, representing more than fifty countries. The Academy's wide range of concerts and events includes jazz, opera, musical theatre, twenty-first-century music and 'period' performance.

Royal Academy of Music



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President: **HRH The Duchess of Gloucester GCVO**
Principal: **Jonathan Freeman-Attwood**

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J. S. Bach.