Numerous Bach experts beginning with Philipp Spitta until the present day have commented specifically on Bach’s musical representation of bells in his figural sacred and even secular vocal compositions and have determined that Bach almost exclusively relates bells to the activities and rites surrounding death. The trigger is found in the sung text and is then musically illustrated by various methods and techniques which generally evoke symbolically or metaphorically the notion of bells, although in a few rare instances certain bells are naturalistically imitated.1

An etymological excursion or digression is necessary here in order to discover and relate apparently disparate elements in the discussion of particular interpretations given below. Specifically this amounts to connecting ‘bells’ with ‘clocks’, an association that is much closer than might be expected: According to various dictionaries which supply rather detailed etymologies, bells were introduced from North Africa into Europe (to Italy, specifically, where the Romance languages have based their term for ‘bell’ on the Latin word campana) in the 6th century CE and they [the bells] spread from there (Rome?) to the British Isles where the Celtic and Old Irish languages have the word cloc to indicate ‘bell’. After the end of the 7th century (the earliest documented use in 692 CE), it also begins to turn up in Medieval Latin as clocca, cloca, glogga, gloccus (Bonifatius has cloccum, glocum). While this word was later adopted into English (into Anglo Saxon and Middle English with various forms and spellings of ‘clock’ — or, as the OED would have it, much later into Middle English via Old Dutch clocke in which instance the term traveled with Dutch chiming clocks that were imported to England), Irish missionaries

traveling to the continent spread this word to continental Europe where it then soon entered the German and French languages as *glocke* (Old High German: *glocka*, *clocka*, *glogga*) and *cloche/cloque*. The origin of the English word ‘bell’ is in any case unclear and uncertain (possibly from the Low German *belle(n)* connected with the meaning: ‘to make a loud noise, to roar’. In any case, its early existence in Old English seems to have prevented the root *cloc* = ‘bell’ from entering directly into English at a very early stage in its dissemination into other European languages.

Whatever the various origins of German *Glocke* (meaning ‘bell’) and English (*clock* meaning a device to tell time), both languages soon developed a secondary connection between bell and keeping time in that one important function of striking/sounding the bell (*Glocke*) generally indicated the beginning of a new hour of the day or night, the number of strikes revealing the specific hour involved. This was true whether a large bell in a church tower or a small chime in a ticking clock was involved in telling time; in each instance, they generally announced only the hours of the day. While creating a compounds like *clock-bell* in English or *Glockenuhr*² (documented only in the 17th and 18th century) in German might seem to be a bit redundant on the surface, it does point out what is missing in each language due to the semantic changes that have occurred. And yet, in certain parts of Germany, the word *Glock* can mean *clock* as in “es ist glock sieben” = “it’s 7 o’clock” because of the important function that the bell has in telling time. The *OED* lists an antiquated, now obsolete, use of *clock* meaning *bell*: “The clockes of Saynt Steuen...had a merueylous swetenes in theyr sowne” (a quote from 1483) or “The clocks of St. Steven...had a marvelous sweetness in their sound.” From the above it should be clear that clocks and bells are inextricably linked, but it is important also to note that there are clocks without bells and that bells exist in many different sizes, shapes and materials and have served and still do serve many other functions other than announcing the time of day or night. To summarize the main points of the etymology of *Glocke/clock/cloche*: the German as well as the French language has retained the original meaning of this word root meaning *bell*, the sounding object that can be heard at some distance, while English over time has focused more narrowly upon one of the important functions it had: to tell time by announcing the hours. This change was aided

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² There is even a German compound *Uhrglocke*, the German word *Uhr*, by the way, came from the Latin *hora* [= hour] or from the Late Latin form *ora* and was first documented along the Rhein during the 14th century CE (1348) after which the form vacillated between *ore* and *ure.*
by invention of various mechanical clocks which were able to chime the hours the same way that the bells in church steeples did.

Before, however, examining the existing evidence in Bach’s compositions, an attempt should be made to ascertain what types of bells existed in Leipzig, particularly those that were rung for the dying, for the immediately deceased and at funeral rites and services. From Bach’s musical ‘descriptions’ of these bells (this will be treated in greater detail below), it becomes evident that the auditory experience that the people of Leipzig were exposed to covered a very wide range from the very loud, slow ‘booming’ of the largest bells in the church towers to the smallest very shrill bells which were struck at a relatively fast rate. Unfortunately, no direct, physical evidence of the bells used in Bach’s time is available for inspection today. The reason for this is that church bells often cracked and, although a few attempts at repairing them might have been considered acceptable, most of these bells would have been removed and recast or used for making cannons. Even the smaller bells no longer exist nor is there a detailed description of where, when and how they were struck. Only the following bits of information can hint at some possibilities that might be considered.

According to Arnold Schering [died in 1941] there was a Sterbegeläut der Stadtkirchen [literally the ‘dying-ringing’ or ‘ringing out for the dying’] of the city churches in Leipzig which consisted of five bells being sounded [not necessarily being rung simultaneously] when a death was imminent or had just taken place. The highest-pitched bell, may have been sounded alone. This high-pitched bell rang out with a very rapid, regular repetition and was called das Totenglöcklein [the ‘little bell for the dead’]. It was described as a fast, shrill ringing, but with an even pulsation. This is directly the opposite of what a Death Knell implies in the English language: a slow, solemn ringing of a bell for a death or a funeral. This latter type of knell would then be found among the much larger, lower-pitched bells which would peal with a slow rhythm.

In contrast to this Totenglöcklein or Sterbeglöckchen [little bell for the dying], there were also the larger bells which could be called either die Begräbnisglocken [burial or funeral bells] or das Begräbnisgeläute [same notion]. In Bach’s time these two types of bells or bell-ringing were associated with separate functions: to announce 1. the time

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3 Schering, 3rd edition, p. 127.
4 There is a distinct possibility that there may have been two of these bells, perhaps one in each of the towers of the two main churches.
immediately preceding actual death as well as the moment of death (das Sterbe- or Totenglöcklein); and 2. the burial and funeral rites (die Begräbnisglocken).

If Bach’s representations of these Sterbe- or Totenglöcklein can be trusted to be literally what they sounded like, then we have a possible conflict between a single high-pitched flauto piccolo playing 24⁵ semiquavers (16th notes) in a row at the same pitch in the opening chorus/chorale of the early, original version of BWV 8 (“Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben”) and BWV 198 (“Laß, Fürstin, laß noch einen Strahl”) mvt. 4, Recitativo: “Der Glocken beendes Getön” which adds a flauto traverso II playing a third below the flauto traverso I, both of which are playing repeated semiquavers (16th notes) at the same pitch.

The former (BWV 8/1) would then imply a single, high-pitched bell, while the latter (BWV 198/4) could indicate that there were two high-pitched bells (possibly one in the tower of St. Thomas Church, the other at a slightly different high pitch at the St. Nicholas Church).⁶

However, numerous articles on this matter refer back to Arnold Schering’s statement already alluded to above:

“The ringing of bells emanating from the city churches...consisted of five bells, the highest-pitched bell, the little ‘funeral’ bell [dedicated primarily for ringing when someone dies] has a shrill sound and rang at a fast regular rate.”⁷

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⁵ The same note repeated for a total of 24 times appears to be a deliberate reference to the total number of hours in a single day. While it might have been extremely difficult to count each note as a member of the congregation, this could easily be considered an instance of Augenmusik (‘music for the eyes’) that might have been understood as another level of interpretation by the flauto piccolo player reading his part and the conductor/composer who was reading the score.

⁶ Originally I had imagined a small, high-pitched bell was somehow carried as a hand-bell or attached to the vehicle transporting the corpse and rung by someone accompanying the corpse from the house to the burial site. The speed of repetitions of the semiquavers at a constantly fast rate would be practically impossible to execute on such hand-bells.

This definitely, if we can assume the veracity and reliability of Schering's undocumented statement, places the Sterbe- or Totenglöcklein into the tower of the Thomaskirche where it appears to have fulfilled a very special function.\(^8\)

Another possibility that has frequently been hinted at in scholarly discussions but without any evidence to back it up is that there may have been for the funereal purposes outlined above a very limited number of carillon bells, probably controlled somehow by the organist or one of the calcants (bellows-treaders). Following this line of thinking, I believe I have found some slight supporting evidence in the following quotation from Anton Weiß' book on Leipzig dated 1728:

\[\text{Außer dieser befindet sich bei jedweder von beiden Hauptkirchen, ein Organist, nebst} \]
\[\text{Calcanten, ein Künstler, welcher einen Famulum hält, ein Thürmer, der das Geläute in acht nimmt,}\]
\[\text{und etliche Glockentreter unter sich hat, auch früh, zu Mittage und Abends, mit der Trommete ein}\]
\[\text{geistlich Lied bläst, und Tag und Nacht nebst seinem Haus-Gefinde, wegen Feuers- oder anderer}\]
\[\text{Gefahr, auch was auf dem Lande passirt, fleißig Wache hält.}\]

Besides the aforementioned positions there are also in each of the two main churches [of Leipzig] an organist with his two calcants [bellows-treaders], a sacristan/sexton, each having his personal assistant, a tower-keeper who is in charge of the ringing of the bells \((\text{Geläute} = \text{a collective noun ambiguously indicating a collection of all bells being sounded simultaneously and possibly implying all the different types and variations of ringing the bells})\), supervises several bell-ringers \((\text{Glockentreter}, \text{a term first used in the 18th century})\), plays a chorale on the trumpet \((\text{Trommete})\), and he, along with his assistants, will be on watch diligently to detect fires or any other dangers and to observe what is happening in the countryside [outside the city walls].\(^9\)

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\(^8\) The belfry of the Thomaskirche was located in the highest church steeple in Leipzig.

\(^9\) Anton Weiß: Verbessertes Leipzig (Leipzig 1728) pp. 8-9. The reader is also directed to the Appendix: Partial Translation of Anton Weiss: Chapter 2 (About the St. Nicholas and St. Thomas Churches) located at:

http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Articles/Ordnung1733Translation.pdf

This is from that translation:

Both churches are richly decorated inside with organs, pulpits, and altars along with splendid bells....In addition to the latter, each of the main churches has an organist along with two bellows assistants, a sexton with his assistant, a tower-keeper [one who keeps watch and warns the populace below with a trumpet or horn] who is responsible for the ringing of the bells and has several Glockentreter [bell-ringers: this term was first used in the 18th century] as his subordinates. His duties include (aside from his family duties [his subordinates were also called upon for watch duties]) playing a chorale on his trumpet every morning, noon and evening and watching very carefully for any possible dangers like fire and to observe what is happening in the countryside outside the city walls.
The word that needs to be examined more closely is Glockentreter which is a typical German compound noun consisting of two parts: die Glocke = ‘bell’ and Treter from treten – ‘to step’ with the ‘–er’ suffix meaning ‘the one who does the stepping’ (not pulling, although that might have been accomplished by attaching a rope to the end of the pedal). The first documented use of this word, according to the DWB (the equivalent to the full version of the OED), is in Johann Leonhard Frisch’s *Nouveau Dictionnaire des Passagers François-Allemand et Allemand-François*... published by Joh. Friedrich Gleditschens³⁰ sel. Sohn, Leipzig, 1730. The 1737 edition has the following entry:

_Glockentreter, m. carillonneur._¹¹

The term carillonneur is variously translated today as ‘bell-ringer’, or, more specifically, ‘one who plays a carillon’.

What is remarkable here is the appearance of an entirely new term for bell-ringer in the German language which certainly had a long tradition of bell-ringers who were called variously Glöckner (the bell person), Glockenläuter (the one who rings the bell), Glockenzieher (the one who pulls the bell) and even later (1732) in Johann Gottfried Walther’s *Musicalisches Lexicon: Glockenist*. The latter term never caught on and was most likely intended for carillon players only.

The term Glöckner can be traced back to Glogner. Its first, documented use goes back to 1360 CE. Somehow the term Glöckner began to assume some negative connotations; for instance, that, except for short spurts of energy, bell-ringers were considered lazy

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³⁰ Some of the more astute readers will instantly recognize the family name Gleditsch and its relationship to J. S. Bach. In the 1730 *Entwurff*, Bach lists the city piper and principal oboist in the orchestra accompanying Bach’s sacred works as Mr. Gleditsch. This was Johann Caspar Gleditsch who had been a Leipzig city piper since 1719 and died there in 1747. A closer connection still is found in the baptismal church register for the *Thomaskirche* 1725-1730: at the baptism of Bach’s infant on January 1, 1730, among those godmothers and a godfather present was Ms. Catharina Louisa Gleditsch, wife of the book dealer and publisher Johann Gottlieb Gleditsch. This would be the Gleditsch referred to on the book’s title page as ‘the son of the late Johann Friedrich Gleditsch’. Bach’s child died only a few days later on January 4. It is very likely that the book seller and publisher was somehow related to Bach’s principal oboist Johann Caspar Gleditsch. Found in item 22 in the *Bach-Dokumente I* (Bärenreiter, 1963) and items 273 and 274 in the *Bach-Dokumente II*, (Bärenreiter, 1969).

¹¹ found in col. 285.
compared to most people and the question remained in the minds of some: “What are they really doing up there in the church tower when the bells are not being rung?”

Here is a typical, but very confusing definition from the 17th century:

Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664) from his Lustspiele (undated):

\[\text{Glockenspieler: Glockenzieher beim Glockenspiel: carillonneur}\]

Explanation/translation:

Glockenspieler: Glocken (bells) + Spieler (one who plays) Glockenzieher: Glocken + Zieher (one who pulls) beim Glockenspiel: (‘while playing the bells’ or ‘in using the Glockenspiel’) and Glockenspiel: (‘the mechanism used in playing the set of bells devoted to this purpose’): carillonneur.

The emphasis in Gryphius’ definition is upon the ‘pulling’ which is closely identified with the Glockenspiel. What type of Glockenspiel was he referring to? Certainly not to the regular ringing of the large, rope-drawn bells which swung back and forth not more than 180° and rarely, if ever, were struck at the same time. Most continental European bells were operated in this fashion in contrast to the English type of bells which rotated through all 360° and could be controlled by the ringers (‘change ringing’). And just how does Glockenspiel relate to the term ‘carillon’? The OED uses the Grove Music Dictionary to define ‘carillon’ as ‘a set of bells so hung and arranged as to be capable of being played upon either by manual actions or by machinery’ and Glockenspiel as 1. an organ stop composed of bells, comprising the upper half of the keyboard (earliest instance: 1825) and 2. a musical instrument consisting of a series of small bells or metal bars which are struck with a hammer, or by levers acted upon by a keyboard (earliest quote from 1833). What this means is that an English-speaking person will probably have difficulties in understanding the German term because of some of the preconceptions these words bring with them. Many have seen and heard a Glockenspiel used and played on in a marching band or have heard music emanating from a carillon tower and perhaps have even observed a carillonneur playing music on an odd-looking, organ-like instrument, but this conception of bell music may be a far cry from what was experienced in Germany up to the middle of the 18th century.
The *MGGI* informs us of a tradition from the late Middle Ages when the hour was sounded on one of the large bells in a church tower. In order to turn the attention of those below toward the striking of the bell, the *Türmer* [tower-keeper], using a hammer would play a short melody shortly beforehand on 4 [Latin *quadrillionem*, French *carillon*] (later on 6 or 8) smaller bells to announce the beginning of the next full hour.\(^{12}\)

In the monasteries of Europe in the 12\(^{th}\) century, the monks had already determined that, in making their *cymbala* bells, the relation of thickness to pitch had to be maintained. This meant that the thicker the bell, the higher the pitch would be. This might help to explain the use of the hammer by the tower-keeper while the bell remained stationary and that such a bell could clearly be heard by those below. Possibly this would later allow a *Glockentreter* to strike these small bells by stepping on a pedal with a rope attached to the bell clapper in the tower, thus moving the clapper easily to strike the bell which did not move at all, while, on the other hand, the large, swinging bells required great effort often by several people in pulling the rope to move it.

Johann Mattheson (1681-1764): *Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte* (1740) under Kirsten:

\[\text{Abbildung der großen Orgel, welche in der Kaiserl. und Königl. Stadt Breslau, in der Kirche bey St. Maria Magdalena, durch Johann Röder, berühmten Orgelmacher, An. 1725, erbaut worden, und beherbergt die 56. klangbaren Stimmen: 4. Principalen, als eines a 32., eines a 16., und zwey a 8. Fuss; einem Glockenspiel, welches durch die in der Gloria sich bewegende Engel, mit ihren in Händen habenden Hämern, mit Hilfe des Pedals tracteret wird; wie auch einem Paar kupferner sichtbarer Pauken, worauf gleichfalls zwey Engel alles, was man auf natürlichen Pauken haben kann, mit ihren Schlägeln vollkommen prästiren, und mit dem Trompeten-Zuge so wohl Intraden, als Aufzüge, dazu gespielt werden können.}\]

\[\text{Im musikal. Lexico behet, daß unter Kirsten nicht nur das Orgelwerk mit disponieren, und die Pauken vornehmlich mit angeben helfen; sondern auch im Manual das Glockenspiel selbst gemacht habe, welches wegen der Dämpfung zu bewundern fey.}\]

An illustration of the great organ was constructed [and completed after 5 years of work] by the famous organ builder Johann Röder in St. Maria Magdalena Church in the Royal City of Breslau in 1725. It has 56 sounding stops including 4 Principal stops with one 32\text{'}, another 16\text{'} and two 8\text{'} stops, a *Glockenspiel* which is played on the pedals and has angels that move in a 'Glory' circle and have hammers in their hands, as well as a pair of copper timpani also played by two angels that can play completely perfectly with the sticks anything that can be

\(^{12}\) *MGGI*. Vol. 5, P. 294, (Bärenreiter, 1985)
played on normal timpani, and with the trumpet stop you can even play Intradas and processionals [along with the Glockenspiel and timpani].

In the Music Lexicon you can read that our Kirsten [Mattheson’s article was about him] not only helped in determining the proper disposition of the organ, by suggesting the timpani, but also made the Glockenspiel for the manual himself, the latter to be admired on account of its muted effect.13

“Bells were first used in orchestral music in the cantata BWV 53 “Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde” [Trauermusik] for alto, campanella in B and E, strings, basso continuo (formerly attributed to Bach, now tentatively attributed to Melchior Hoffmann †1715)14 they were probably small and operated from the organ manual.”15

Another type of bell which was heard in many German churches in Bach’s time was the Zimbelstern or Cimbelstern which was played by the organist and normally had eight or more bells at different pitches. These bells were rotated in a circular arrangement. There was no way to control when each bell might be struck. The Zimbelstern was used for festive occasions. There is no record of any Zimbelstern as part of any organ in Leipzig, although Bach would have experienced them in Lübeck (a Cimbel-Stern with two drums), Hamburg (Cimbel mit Sternen) and Lüneburg (Cimbel-Glocken) as well as in Mühlhausen and Weimar where he was personally involved in establishing the specifications for organs that included a ‘Cymbelstern’. The Mühlhausen organ almost had a Glockenspiel:

Das von denen Herrn Eingepfarten begehrte neüe Glockenspiel ins Pedal, bestehend in 26 Glocken à 4 Fuß-thon; Welche Glocken die Herrn Eingepfarten auff ihre kosten schon anschaffen werden, und der Orgelmacher solche hernachmahls gangbahr machen wird.16

The new chimes [Glockenspiel] desired by the parishioners to be added to the Pedal, consisting of 26 bells of 4-foot tone; which bells the parishioners will acquire at their own expense, and the organ builder will then install them.17

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13 Johann Mattheson (1681-1764): Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte (1740) under the entry: ‘Kirsten’.
14 see for further information on M. Hoffmann: http://bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Hoffmann.htm
16 Bach-Dokumente I (Bärenreiter, 1963), item 83, pp. 152-155.
Bach experts have suggested some of the musical techniques Bach employed in representing bells in his compositions. They include the following:

1. the fast, high-pitched repeated notes played on a recorder with the highest range of notes (sopranino = flauto piccolo) and the most piercing sound.

2. repeated, slow notes interrupted by rests played on the lowest instruments.

3. various intervals repeated many times or varied only slightly.

4. string instruments playing pizzicato sempre.

5. use of the muted sound, col sordino, on string instruments.

6. staccato for all instruments including even the voice.

7. exact repetition of certain two- or three-note patterns.

8. long, sustained notes at the same, usually low, pitch.

9. bariolage passages for solo violin.

10. repeated circular figures.
List of Works Possibly Containing Representations of Bells

**Mors certa, hora incerta**

**BWV 8/1,2 Liestre Gott, wenn werd ich sterben** 1. Choral; 2. Aria “Was wilt du dich, mein Geist, entsetzen” (Sep 24, 1724)

1. (Coro) 
_Corno col Soprano, Flauto traverso, Oboe d’amore I/II, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo_

Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?
Meine Zeit läuft immer hin,
Und des alten Adams Erben,
Unter denen ich auch bin,
Haben dies zum Vaterteil,
Dass sie eine kleine Weil
Arm und elend sein auf Erden
Und denn selber Erde werden.

Philipp Spitta describes this movement as follows: “Dieses Stück [der erste Chor] ist sehr merkwürdig: ein Tonbild wie aus Glockenklang und Blumenduft gewoben.” [“This composition {the first chorus} is very unusual: a tone poem woven as it were from the sound of bells and the aroma of flowers.”]

Regarding the entrances of the flauto piccolo, Arnold Schering stated:

„Ein Zittern mag jedesmal durch Bachs Gemeinde gelaufen sein, wenn immer wieder unvermutet und nach sekundenlangem Stillschweigen dieses seelenlose Gebimmel sich hören ließ”

“Bach’s congregation must have felt a trembling every time when, unexpectedly and repeatedly after several seconds of silence, this soulless ting-a-linging could be heard.”

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18 Der Tod ist gewiß, die Stunde ungewiß [Death is certain, the hour is uncertain].
20 ibid. A. Schering.
The repeated figures of the strings resemble the tolling of the church bells in the medium pitch range:

while the lowest bell tolls very slowly at the lowest pitch:

this dropping interval figure foreshadows the motive used extensively in the following movement 2:
2. Aria T
_Oboe d’amore, Continuo_

Was willst du dich, mein Geist, entsetzen,
Wenn meine letzte Stunde schlägt?
Mein Leib neigt täglich sich zur Erden,
Und da muss seine Ruhstatt werden,
Wohin man so viel tausend trägt.

This circulating figure emphasizing the same two notes repeatedly also appears to be a ‘bell’ imitation:

It is remarkable here that even the voice imitates the hard, striking sound of a church bell:

“...there are repeated notes—the strokes of a single bell....”

It is the repetition, not the size of the interval, that creates the bell-ringing effect that Bach seems to want to create here:

Philipp Spitta comments as follows: “Der Glockenklang [in dem Eingangschor] hallt in den Bässen der empfindungsreichen Tenorarie weiter, dringt hier sogar einmal bis in die Singstimme hinein (Takt 29-31).” (“The sound of bells (in the introductory chorus) continues to find an echo in the continuo part of the intensely emotional tenor aria and even appears once in the vocal part {mm 29-31}”).

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21 Whittaker, vol 1, p. 491.
BWV 27/3,5 Wer weiß, wie nahe mir mein Ende  5. Aria “Gute Nacht, du Weltgetümmel” (Oct 6, 1726)

3. Aria A  
_Oboe da caccia, Organo obligato, Continuo_

Willkommen! will ich sagen,  
_Wenn der Tod ans Bette tritt._  
Fröhlich will ich folgen, wenn er ruft,  
_In die Gruft,_  
Alle meine Plagen  
Nehm ich mit.

5. Aria B  
_Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo_

_Gute Nacht, du Weltgetümmel!_  
_Jetzt mach ich mit dir Beschluss;_  
_Ich steh schon mit einem Fuß_  
_Bei dem lieben Gott im Himmel._
**BWV 53 Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde (Trauermusik) (not Bach, possibly by Melchior Hoffmann)**

"Ein schwieriges Problem bietet für eine Aufführung die 'Campanella' (in h, c), die im Baßschlüssel verzeichnet ist. Mir ist unbekannt, ob eine Hypothese darüber vorliegt, was für ein Instrument der Komponist sich dabei gedacht haben mag. (Sollten zufällig zwei kleinere Kirchenglocken in dieser Stimmung vorhanden gewesen und mit einem leichten Hammer angeschlagen sein? Oder besaß eine in Betracht kommende Orgel ein Campanella-Register." [“A difficult problem that needs to be resolved for a performance is that these bells are scored in a bass clef. I have no idea if anyone has a hypothesis about the type of instrument the composer may have had in mind. (Could it be there just happened to be two smaller church bells with these pitches which would have been struck with a light hammer? Or did the organ on which this was to be played have a campanella stop?)”]

**BWV 73/4 Herr, wie du willt, so schicks mit mir 4. Aria “Herr, so du willt” (Jan 23,1724)**

**Aria B**
*Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo*

Herr, so du willt,
So preßt, ihr Todesschmerzen,
Die Seufzer aus dem Herzen,
Wenn mein Gebet nur vor dir gilt.

Herr, so du willt,
So lege meine Glieder
In Staub und Asche nieder,
Dies höchst verderbte Sündenbild,

Herr, so du willt,
So schlage, ihr Leichenglocken,
Ich folge unerschrocken,
Mein Jammer ist nunmehr gestillt.

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BWV 83/1 Erfreute Zeit im neuen Bunde 1. Aria (Feb 2, 1724)

1. Aria A
Corno I/II, Oboe I/II, Violino solo, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo

Erfreute Zeit im neuen Bunde,
Da unser Glaube Jesum hält.
Wie freudig wird zur letzten Stunde
Die Ruhestatt, das Grab bestellt!
5. Aria T
_Oboe d’amore I/II, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo_

_Ach, schlage doch bald, selge Stunde,_
_Den allerletzten Glockenschlag!_

_Komm, komm, ich reiche dir die Hände,_
_Komm, mache meiner Not ein Ende,_
_Du längst erseufzter Sterbenstag!_

"Many composers of modern times have tried to imitate the strange combinations of notes heard from bells, but Bach anticipated them by more than a hundred years."24

24 Whittaker I, p. 544.
BWV 105/4 *Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht* (July 25, 1723)

4. *Recitativo B*

*Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo*

Wohl aber dem, der seinen Bürgen weiß,
Der alle Schuld ersetzet,
So wird die Handschrift ausgetan,
Wenn Jesus sie mit Blute netzet.  
Er heftet sie ans Kreuze selber an,
Er wird von deinen Gütern, Leib und Leben,
Wenn deine Sterbestunde schlägt,
Dem Vater selbst die Rechnung übergeben.  
**So mag man deinen Leib, den man zum Grabe tragt.**
Mit Sand und Staub beschütten,
Dein Heiland öffnet dir die ewgen Hütten.

BWV 114/5 *Ach, lieben Christen, seid getrost* 5. Aria “Du machst, o Tod, mir nun nicht bange” (Oct 1, 1724)

5. *Aria A*

*Oboe I, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo*

**Du machst, o Tod, mir nun nicht ferner bange,**
Wenn ich durch dich die Freiheit nur erlange,
Es muss ja so einmal gestorben sein.

**Mit Simeon will ich in Friede fahren,**
Mein Heiland will mich in der Gruft bewahren
Und ruft mich einst zu sich verklärt und rein.
BWV 127/3 Herr Jesu Christ, wahr’ Mensch und Gott 3. Aria: “Die Seele ruht in Jesu Händen” (Feb 11, 1725)

Aria S
Flauto I/II, Oboe I, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo

Die Seele ruht in Jesu Händen,
Wenn Erde diesen Leib bedeckt.
Ach ruft mich bald, ihr Sterbeglocken,
Ich bin zum Sterben unerschrocken,
Weil mich mein Jesus wieder weckt.

“On ‘–glocken’ the upper strings awaken from their long silence and enter with semiquaver pizzicato chords, continuing for four bars, below this ringing of small bells the bassi toll a heavier peal in octaves....”

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25 Whittaker II, p. 454.
Wie lieblich klingt es in den Ohren,
Dies Wort: mein Jesus ist geboren,
Wie dringt es in das Herz hinein!
Wer Jesu Namen nicht versteht
Und wem es nicht durchs Herz geht,
Der muss ein harter Felsen sein.

“...violin I realistically depicts ‘ringing’ by alternate open and stopped strings—a charming device...supported by repeated viola notes, the tolling of a small bell....The D string is now brought into action for the idea, and the bassi toll a larger bell.”26

BWV 161/4 Komm, du süße Todesstunde 4. Recit. “Der Schluß ist schon gemacht” (Sep 27, 1716)

4. Recitativo A
Flauto dolce I/II, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo

Der Schluß ist schon gemacht:
Welt, gute Nacht!
Und kann ich nur den Trost erwerben,
In Jesu Armen bald zu sterben:
Er ist mein sanfter Schlaf!
Das kühle Grab wird mich mit Rosen decken,
Bis Jesus mich wird auferwecken,
Bis er sein Schaf
Führt auf die süße Himmelsweide,
Dass mich der Tod von ihm nicht scheide!
So brich herein, du froher Todestag!
So schlage doch, du letzter Stundenschlag!

**Recitativo A**  
*Flauto traverso I/II, Oboe d’amore I/II, Viola da gamba I/II, Liuto I/II, Violino I/II, Viola, Continuo*

**Der Glocken bebendes Getön**  
Soll unserer trüben Seelen Schrecken  
Durch ihr geschwungnes Erze wecken  
Und uns durch Mark und Adern gehn.  
O, könnte nur dies bange Kling'en,  
Davon das Ohr uns täglich gellt,  
Der ganzen Europäerwelt  
Ein Zeugnis unsres Jammers bringen!

This is perhaps the most remarkable example illustrating the manner and sequence according to which the bells begin tolling; the highest, smallest and easiest bells begin first with the middle-range bells entering later and the lowest, largest bells coming in last: