

Bach AT THE SEM

2010-2011 Series

Concordia Seminary
The Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus

February 13, 2011, 3:00 p.m.



Schedule of Concerts

Bach at the Sem 2010-2011

- Sunday, October 10
3:00 p.m. The American Kantorei performs the Kyrie and Gloria in excelsis from the *Mass in B Minor* of Johann Sebastian Bach.
- Sunday, December 5
3:00 p.m. The American Kantorei performs the Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei from the *Mass in B Minor*.
- Sunday, February 13
3:00 p.m. Organist Dennis Bergin performs Bach's transcriptions of concerti by his contemporaries. Antonio Vivaldi: Concerto in C Major, Allegro; Concerti in A Minor and D Minor. Johann Ernst: G Major. The American Kantorei performs motets by Johann Pachelbel and Andreas Hammerschmidt.
- Sunday, April 17
3:00 p.m. Cantata 4, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, J. S. Bach. *Magnificat* with Bach's short motets sung by guest choir from Greenville, Illinois; guest conductor, Jeffrey Wilson, with the Greenville Illinois College Choir.

The Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus
Concordia Seminary, 801 Seminary Place, St. Louis, MO 63105
www.csl.edu

We are grateful to Richard and Phyllis Duesenberg and to Robert and Lori Duesenberg for their generous gifts, which make the *Bach at the Sem* series possible. Concordia Seminary is privileged to make Johann Sebastian's music available to the St. Louis community and invites your generosity in support of this important series. If you have not received mailings from *Bach at the Sem* in the past and would like to be placed on the mailing list, please call 314-505-7362 or e-mail bach@csl.edu.

Bach at the Sem
February 13, 2011, 3:00 p.m.
The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Organ Recital
Dennis Bergin, *Bach at the Sem* Organist
The American Kantorei
Robert Bergt, Music Director and Conductor

In Nomine Jesu

Concerto in C Major (after Vivaldi), BWV 594

Johann Sebastian Bach

I. Allegro

Concerto in G Major (after Johann Ernst), BWV 592

J. S. Bach

- I. Allegro
- II. Grave
- III. Presto

Motet for Two Choirs, *Nun danket alle Gott*
(Now Thank We All Our God)

Johann Pachelbel

The offerings are received in support of the Bach at the Sem concert series.

Organ Chorale, *Nun danket alle Gott*, BWV 657
(From the Eighteen Leipzig Chorales)

J. S. Bach

Hymn, "Now Thank We All Our God"

The assembly sings the hymn provided on page 5. Please stand for stanza 3.

Concerto in A Minor (after Vivaldi), BWV 593

J. S. Bach

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro

Motet for Two Choirs, Alleluia! Oh, Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly

Andreas Hammerschmidt

Concerto in D Minor (after Vivaldi), BWV 596

J. S. Bach

- I. Introduzione-Grave-Fuga
- II. Largo e spiccato
- III. Allegro

Soli Deo Gloria



Program Notes

Organ Works

Johann Sebastian Bach's years as Capellmeister of the court of Weimar and organist of the court chapel (1708-1717) witnessed the creation of many of Bach's masterpieces for solo organ. Included among this output were Bach's transcriptions for clavier and organ of the string concerti of Antonio Vivaldi and his contemporaries, which were enjoying popularity in Germany at this time.

Bach and his Weimar colleague, organist Johann Gottfried Walther, transcribed over thirty of these Italian concerti for organ and clavier, including four works heard today. Bach's organ transcriptions of these concerti by Antonio Vivaldi and the young Prince Johann Ernst of the Weimar court were evidently made for Bach's own performance at the organ as well as his musical study. Altogether, we have sixteen of these concerti transcriptions for clavier and five for organ that bear J. S. Bach's authorship.

Today's opening work, the Allegro first movement of Vivaldi's Concerto in D Major for violin, Op. 7, No. 5, serves as the original of Bach's **Concerto in C Major**, BWV 594, in three movements. This movement stands well alone and features the driving motor-rhythms that characterize Vivaldi's musical style. Regretfully, this Bach transcription is rarely performed in concert, as its energy and buoyancy are quite musically appealing.

The original of the **Concerto in G Major**, BWV 592, was composed by the young Prince Johann Ernst, a student of Walther's in Weimar. Bach has preserved the work of the talented young Johann Ernst in this transcription for organ, as well as one movement of the Concerto in C Major, BWV 595. Sadly, the young Ernst died at the age of nineteen in 1715.

The opening Allegro is musically engaging with the soli and tutti sections nicely delineated between two manuals. The tutti passages are in duple metric subdivision with the contrasting soli passages being in triple subdivision. The Grave

second movement is somewhat perfunctory but not without musical interest. The exciting Presto third movement is an energetic whirlwind of sound, characterized by German organist and Bach scholar Hermann Keller as a "joyful noise!"

The organ chorale **Nun danket alle Gott**, BWV 657, is from the Eighteen Chorales of 1750 dating from Bach's final years in Leipzig. This chorale is less often performed than other organ chorales from the "Great Eighteen" but is a sturdy and masterly setting of the beloved hymn tune by Johann Crüger. Bach emulates the compositional style of Johann Pachelbel's chorale preludes, with close imitative settings of each chorale phrase in the alto, tenor, and bass lines, forming the contrapuntal foundation for the statement in long notes of the chorale melody in the soprano line. A brilliant solo trumpet stop is employed today for the chorale melody in the soprano line.

The **Concerto in A Minor**, BWV 593, is from Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Violins, Op. 3, No. 8, of *L'estro Armonico*. This work is the most frequently performed of Bach's organ transcriptions with two driving Allegro movements framing a beautiful Adagio duet for two solo lines over a descending ostinato in the bass.

The final work, **Concerto in D Minor**, BWV 596, is also from Vivaldi's *L'estro Armonico*, Op. 3, No. 11, for strings. After Bach's death, this work was mistakenly attributed to Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. Finally, in 1910, the true authorship of Johann Sebastian Bach was established for this transcription. Musically, this transcription is one of Bach's finest and features an opening "Introduzione," with a dialogue between the two solo violins reproduced on the organ manuals on 4' stops. A splendid Fuga follows showing Vivaldi's contrapuntal mastery, which no doubt inspired Bach in his own compositional practice. The second movement, Largo e spiccato, is musically haunting and a central island of repose before the final exuberant and scintillating Allegro that concludes the work.

Notes by Dennis Bergin

Choral Works

Motet for Two Choirs, *Nun danket alle Gott*, Johann Pachelbel (Now Thank We All Our God)

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706), a laudable Lutheran composer and organist who was deeply rooted in excellent church music practice, served most of his life as a church musician in Lutheran churches at Nuremberg and Erfurt. It was at Erfurt that Johann Sebastian Bach's older brother studied organ and composition with Pachelbel and, through his guardian brother, ten-year-old Johann Sebastian learned many of the basics in composition.

Central in Pachelbel's writings is the Lutheran chorale, exemplified by the work heard today. Pachelbel's *Nun danket alle Gott*, a chorale-motet (or short cantata), possesses three distinct sections within its format, which is typical of many of his chorale-based compositions:

1. In the first section, two choirs of equal SATB forces imitate one another excitedly, abounding in the main themes and rhythmic features of the hymn.
2. The second section is based on free textual material, with entirely new musical ideas in a new rhythm. The text of this section in *Nun danket alle Gott* is from the Apocryphal book, *Jesus of Sirach*, 50:23, 24. The two choirs resound back and forth in counter play, emphasizing the prayer that God will make us ever joyful and grant us lasting peace. The German word for peace, "*Friede*," is poetic and lends itself here for extensive and warm musical exploration.

3. In the final section, the chorale melody is typically sung by the sopranos of both choirs in unison. Quiet chant-like interplays of ideas gently jostle back and forth between the ATB sections, emphasizing spiritual values expressed within the hymn structure.

Motet for Two Choirs, *Alleluia! Oh, Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly*, Andreas Hammerschmidt

Alleluia! Oh, Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly is a festive chorale-motet for two choirs by Andreas Hammerschmidt (c. 1612-1675). The text is by Christian Keimann (1666); the melody and musical treatments are by Hammerschmidt (1666). This is the only hymn preserved in modern hymnals by Keimann and Hammerschmidt. The year 1666 is also noted for the completion of the St. Matthew Passion by Heinrich Schütz.

Hammerschmidt, a contemporary of Heinrich Schütz, is regarded as a master-composer within the middle Baroque Period. The chief center for his accomplishments was St. Johannes Church in Zittau where he spent thirty-six years of his life.

The four stanzas of Keimann's hymn are sung by a small three-part men's solo ensemble, with a larger SSATB choir singing the four refrains with an extended *alleluia*. In addition, the larger choir engages in a jubilant dialogue with the solo ensemble on the individual lines of the literary text of stanzas three and four. The entire composition is set within the framework of twenty-four *alleluias*, sung simultaneously by the two choirs. The extended *alleluias* remind us of the ancient practice of cantors improvising extensively over the word, "*alleluia*."

Notes by Robert Bergt

Text and Translation

Motet for Two Choirs, *Nun danket alle Gott*, Johann Pachelbel

(Now Thank We All Our God) The English version is a choral translation provided in the score.

*Nun danket alle Gott,
der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;
der uns von Mutter Leibe an
lebendig erhält,
und tut uns alles Guts.*

Now thank we all our God,
who wondrous things hath done for all men living;
who from our mothers' arms
hath blessed us richly alway,
and still is ours today.

*Er gebe uns ein fröhlich Herz
und verleihe immerdar Friede,
Friede zu unsern Zeiten in Israel,
und daß seine Gnade stets bei uns bleibe,
löse uns, solange wir leben.*

God make our hearts e'er joyful,
send us lasting peace alway,
peace, yea, lasting peace to His people
and grant that His rich grace with us abideth.
Lord, redeem Thou us while here we do sojourn.

*Nun danket alle Gott,
mit Herzen, Mund, und Händen,
der große Dinge tut
an uns und allen Enden,
der uns von Mutterlieb
und Kindesbeinen an
unzählig viel zugut
und noch jetzund getan.*

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

The Hymn, “Now Thank We All Our God”

Nun danket alle Gott

1. Now thank we all our God
With hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms
Has blest us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today.

2. Oh, may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us
And keep us in His grace
And guide us when perplexed
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next!

All stand

3. All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heav'n adore;
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

Text: Martin Rinckart, 1586-1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941

Text and music: Public domain

Lutheran Service Book, 895; *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 36.

Motet for Two Choirs, Alleluia! Oh, Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly, Andreas Hammerschmidt

Alleluia.

1. Oh, rejoice, ye Christians, loudly,
For our joy hath now begun;
Wondrous things our God hath done.
Tell abroad His goodness proudly
Who our race hath honored thus
That He deigns to dwell with us.

Refrain:

Joy, oh, joy, beyond all gladness,
Christ hath done away with sadness!
Hence, all sorrow and repining,
For the Sun of Grace is shining!

2. See, my soul, thy Savior chooses
Weakness here and poverty;
In such love He comes to thee,
Nor the hardest couch refuses;
All He suffers for thy good,
To redeem thee by His blood. *Refrain.*

3. Lord, how shall I thank Thee rightly?
I acknowledge that by Thee
I am saved eternally.
Let me not forget it lightly,
But to Thee at all times cleave
And my heart true peace receive. *Refrain.*

4. Jesus, guard and guide Thy members,
Fill Thy brethren with Thy grace,
Hear their prayers in ev'ry place.
Quicken now life's faintest embers;
Grant all Christians, far and near,
Holy peace, a glad new year! *Refrain.*

Alleluia.

The American Kantorei

Robert Bergt, Music Director and Conductor
Jeral Becker, Assistant Conductor and Chorus Personnel Director
Wanda Becker, Concertmaster and Orchestra Personnel Director

Chorus

Soprano 1

Emily Truckenbrod,
Principal
Jean Baue, Co-Principal
Kathryn Crumrine
Camille Marolf
Marita Hollander
Halle Warmbier

Soprano 2

Joy Boland,
Principal
Heather Schwan
Sylvia White
Lynn D. Morrissey
Gretchen Weber

Alto

Katharine Lawton Brown,
Principal
Jane Robinson, Assistant
Principal
Donita Obermann
Miriam Anwand
Loretta Ceasar-Striplin
Mona Houser

Tenor

Jeral Becker, Principal
Greg Gastler
Terrince Tackett
Ben Smith
Joshua Grote
Steve Paquette
Jason Swan
Grayson Albers

Bass-baritone

David Berger, Principal
Jay Willoughby
*Dallas Dubke
Matthew Meyer
*Matthew Warmbier
Paul Mueller
*Martin Dressler
Earl Birkicht

* Solo singers

Continuo

Cello

Kenneth Kulosa

String Bass

Donald Martin

Harpsichord

Joan Bergt

Rehearsal Accompanist

Mieko Hironaka Bergt
Joan Bergt

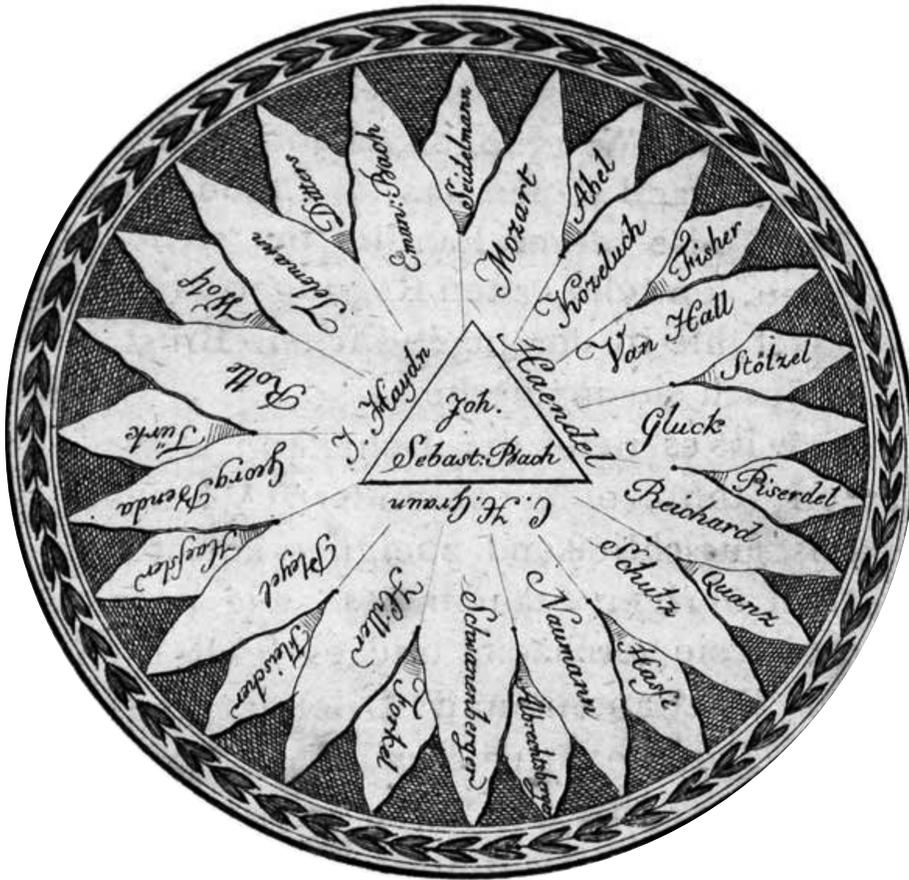
Welcome to *Bach at the Sem!* Once again I am pleased to express our deep gratitude to Director Robert Bergt and the American Kantorei for the breadth and depth of blessing they bring to us with every concert.

A billboard posted in London in 1881 invited passers-by to come to church: “There is a poem on ‘The Buried Life’ of which I am often reminded. Your lives are busy, useful, honest; but your faces are anxious and you are not all you want to be. There is within you another life, a buried life, which does not get free. In old days it got free through old forms of religion, and then men had peace and were not afraid of anybody or anything. We cannot go back to the old forms—they are gone with the old times and in the presence of the new learning of our days. Many therefore have given up religion altogether and carry about a buried life. It is buried but it is not dead. When it really hears God’s voice it will rise. Men will live spiritual as well as honest lives. They will rest on Some One greater than themselves and have peace. I don’t think this life will be stirred by excitement or by irrational preaching—and not always by rational preaching; I believe that in the quiet of a place full of good memories, in the sound of fine music, in the sympathy of fellow seekers, we may better wait God’s call.... Will you come and give yourself even ten minutes? It may be that as you listen to the silence, to the music, or to the worship of others, God will speak and that the buried life will arise and that you will have peace.”
(*For All the Saints*, I, 200)

That is my hope and prayer for us all.

Dale A. Meyer
President

Sun of Composers



The above diagram, "Sun of Composers," was designed by Augustus Frederick Christopher Kollmann, in an engraving in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, vol. 1, 1799.

Christoph Wolff says in his monumental book, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, pp. 9 and 10, in the Prologue, "There, at the center, appears the name of Johann Sebastian Bach, surrounded in various layers by the names of other composers, the first layer comprising George Frideric Handel, Carl Heinrich Graun, and Franz Joseph Haydn. And Haydn, whose reputation by that time as Europe's premier composer was beyond question, is said to have been 'not unfavorably impressed by it [the diagram], nor minded the proximity to Handel and Graun, nor considered it at all wrong that Johann Sebastian Bach was the center of the sun and hence the man from whom all true musical wisdom proceeded.'"