



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir
Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?
Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen?

BWV 130

BWV 138

BWV 81

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 130-138 & 81

Cantata 130 'Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir' is a chorale cantata written for Michaelmas, 29 September 1724. This feast commemorates the archangel Michael's fight with the dragon, the spectacular story recorded in the book of Revelation 12: 7-12. Several decades before, around 1680, Bach's favourite uncle, the 'profound composer' Johann Christoph of Eisenach, had already written a gripping work on this subject, 'Es erhuh sich ein Streit': Bach was familiar with this piece and performed it later in Leipzig. The two works display certain similarities, including the large-scale instrumentation with trumpets, oboes and timpani, the so-called military instruments, and their typical fanfare-like signals with fifth and fourth intervals and triad motifs. In the opening chorus the trumpets and drums make their presence felt. Here the militant angels are heard: they have triumphed over the devil and offer protection to God. But Bach reserved the greatest musical effect for the depiction of the actual fight in the bass aria (no. 3). The three trumpets blare, and the first plays a most virtuosic part as if involved in a real fight with the equally agile vocal part ('the old dragon flares with anger...'), or possibly with his own slightly less agile instrument...

A very special and exceptional work is Cantata 138 'Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?', written for the 15th Sunday after Trinity, 5 September 1723. The structure in particular is most unusual. The first three movements offer a continuous and free alternation of chorale lines and recitatives. In the first movement, for instance, the first verse of the chorale is suddenly interrupted after three lines by an alto solo 'Ach, ich bin arm, mich drücken schwere Sorgen'. The third movement begins with a chorale verse which is cut off half way by two recitatives, one for the soprano and one for the alto, after which the verse is completed. The cantata does not conclude with the customary simple chorale, but with a movement in which the chorale lines alternate with instrumental phrases for two oboes and two virtuosic violins.

In Cantata 81 'Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen' for the 4th Sunday after Trinity, 30 January 1724, the role of the choir is much more modest: the final, simple chorale 'Unter deinen Schirmen' is the only choral movement. The work is based on the well-known episode from St Matthew 8: 23-27 about Jesus sleeping on a boat, being woken by his fearful disciples, and calming the storm on the lake. The cantata opens with an alto aria in E minor, scored for the mild flute and violin as a sort of slumber song for Jesus. In the succeeding tenor recitative and aria the storm on the lake is more realistically portrayed in panicky melodic leaps in the vocal part and a restless violin part: 'die schäumenden Wellen ... verdoppeln die Wut'.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg in den Hütten der Gerechten BWV 149
Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele BWV 69
Gott soll allein mein Herze haben BWV 169

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 149-69 & 169

Cantata 149 'Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg', like Cantata 130 'Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir' on the previous cd, was written for Michaelmas 29 September, the feast of the archangel Michael, when his fight with the dragon is commemorated. Cantata 149 was composed for the 1728 or 1729 cycle. The subject of this work is the triumph of the angels over Satan rather than the fight between Michael and the dragon. Thus the generally festive character of the work. The jubilant opening chorus in 3/8 time is an arrangement of the final chorus of the hunt cantata BWV 208, a most appropriate association. The two horns in the original scoring are replaced here by three trumpets and timpani. In the following bass aria in B minor God's strength resounds in a most agile vocal part. After two recitatives and two arias the work concludes with a simple chorale.

Cantata BWV 69 "Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele" is a so-called Ratswechselkantate, written for the election of a new town council in Leipzig. Bach created a parody of an existing cantata, BWV 69a, composing two new recitatives and a final chorale.

The work opens with a recitative for soprano, followed by a wonderfully expressive alto aria, "Meine Seele, auf, erzähle". The simple final chorale "Es danke, Gott, und lobe dich" is given an extra dimension by the accents of the three trumpets and timpani and the dynamic development in the closing words of thanksgiving.

Cantata 169 'Gott soll allein mein Herze haben' for the 18th Sunday after Trinity, 20 October 1726, is a special work in view of its instrumentation and parodic origin. The work requires just one solo voice (alto), a four-part choir, two oboes d'amore, oboe da caccia and obbligato organ. The latter is explained by the work upon which parts of the cantata are based, the Harpsichord Concerto in E major BWV 1053, which is probably based in turn on a lost oboe concerto. The first part of this concerto was arranged by Bach as the introductory sinfonia to the cantata. He transposed the work from E major to D major, replaced the harpsichord by the organ and added three oboes. The middle movement of the concerto became the second aria (no. 5) 'Stirb in mir, Welt', in which Bach added the alto part alongside the obbligato organ and thus considerably intensified its expressive power.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut is
Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich
Das neugeborne Kindelein

BWV 45
BWV 150
BWV 122

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 45-150 & 122

Cantata 45 'Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist' was written for the 8th Sunday after Trinity, 11 August 1726. The theme of the cantata is man's obedience to God's will. The believer is summoned to humility in word and deed, and to subordination as a servant of his master. In reward the obedient Christian is offered divine protection. In this context a threat is appropriate, and the tenor aria (no. 3) includes the words 'Qual und Hohn drohet deinem Übertreten!', while in the next aria (no. 5) the alto sings 'Denn der muss ewig brennen, der einzig mit dem Mund Ihn Herren nennt.' The tenor sings his words to a restless coloratura while the continuo plays a most fidgety bass line.

We do not know whether Bach really composed Cantata 150 'Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich', and, if so, when and for what occasion. It is possibly an early work, and the Bach scholar Alfred Dürr has estimated that it was written around 1708-1709. Unusual for Bach is the sequence of no less than four choral movements without a chorale, and the simplicity of the instrumentation and structure. The work thanks its fame to Johannes Brahms, who borrowed and adapted the chaconne theme from the final chorus (no. 7) in the last movement of his 4th Symphony.

Cantata 122 'Das neugeborne Kindelein' for the Sunday after Christmas already looks forward to the new year. This is hardly surprising since the cantata is based on the chorale 'Das neugeborne Kindelein' by Cyriacus Schneegass (1597), written in the old tradition in which Christmas and New Year were a single feast. The opening chorus introduces without delay the joyful theme of the approaching good year, expressed by a dance-like 3/8 movement with the chorale melody in the soprano. The short instrumental ritornellos include fine echo effects. The bass aria (no. 2) 'O Menschen, die ihr täglich sündigt' is somewhat laboured and somber, with chromaticism and whimsical coloraturas to underline the text. The following soprano recitative (no. 3) suddenly seems to turn from darkness to light. The high voice and instrumentation with no less than three flutes is entirely in keeping with the text 'Die Engel ... erfüllen nun die Luft im höhern Chor'. No. 4 is a trio for the soprano, alto and tenor soloists, in which the chorale melody is heard in the alto part.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ
Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen
Nimm, was dein ist, und gehe hin

BWV 116
BWV 13
BWV 144

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 116-13 & 144

Cantata 116 'Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ' was written for the 25th Sunday after Trinity, 26 November 1724. The opening movement is composed in Bach's favourite manner: an independent instrumental section in which the chorale melody is interwoven line by line. A poignant aria in F sharp minor follows (no. 2), the alto and oboe d'amore complaining at the text 'Ach, unaussprechlich ist die Not...'. In the subsequent recitative Bach makes subtle reference to the chorale melody in the introductory bass line. The work closes with a simple, accompanied chorale.

Bach composed Cantata 13 'Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen' for the 2nd Sunday after Epiphany, 20 January 1726. The main theme is the disconsolateness and despair of those who have abandoned God and do not believe. The character of the work is therefore mainly poignant, plaintive and melancholic. Only towards the end, when the believer recovers from despair and seeks comfort in God, does the music cheer up and conclude with a calm and serene chorale. The poignant and abandoned mood of the text naturally provided Bach with every opportunity to create expressive Baroque affects. In the alto recitative (no. 2), where the mortal weeps in vain and cries out for God's help, we hear an impressive musical translation of the word plead ('flehen'). Here Bach makes use of the melancholic minor second (a sighing effect or 'seufzer') and its inversion, large descending intervals, the diminished fifth, rhythmic ties and chromaticism. The latter four elements are most suitable for the evocation of an unstable, uncertain and desperate mood. In no. 3 we hear the chorale melody in the soprano, supported by two recorders and the hauntingly beautiful oboe da caccia. There are two arias for male voices. The cantata begins with a tenor aria full of expressive moments at the words 'Seufzer', 'Tränen', 'Jammer' and 'den Weg zum Tode'. The bass aria (no. 5) gives expression to other affects too, providing contrast within extremes such as 'Ächzen und erbärmlich Weinen' and 'Freudenlicht'.

Cantata 144 'Nimm, was dein ist, und gehe hin' was composed for Sunday Septuagesima, 6 February 1724, and therefore belongs to Bach's first cycle of cantatas for Leipzig. Despite the fact that the surviving manuscript is unquestionably in Bach's hand, doubt has been cast on the authorship of the work by reason of the nature of the first movement. This opening chorus, in which independent instrumental phrases are absent, is a strict choral fugue in motet style in which the instruments double the voices. In the following alto aria (no. 2) man is summoned to accept his existence as it is. Rebellious grumbling is illustrated by obstinate, repeated quavers: 'Murre nicht, lieber Christ'. In the expressive duet between soprano and oboe d'amore (no. 5) the virtues of sobriety and modesty are praised in the words 'Genügsamkeit ist ein Schatz in diesem Leben'.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Herr, deine Augen sehen nach dem Glauben
Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam
Der Herr denket an uns

BWV 102
BWV 7
BWV 196



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 102-7 & 169

Cantata 102 'Herr, deine Augen sehen nach dem Glauben' was composed for the 10th Sunday after Trinity, 25 August 1726. It consists of two sections and seven movements, four in the first section and three in the second. The work opens with one of Bach's very finest choral movements, choir and orchestra alternating in a most ingenious manner: the orchestra introduces and rounds off the phrases sung by the choir, while the two oboes go their own way. Note the realistic staccato notes in the choir at the words 'Du schlägest sie...'. After a bass recitative a moving alto aria in F minor (no. 3) follows, 'Weh der Seele, die den Schaden nicht mehr kennt', a slow and sorrowful dialogue between the voice and a concertato oboe, full of sighing motifs and poignant dissonances. A greater contrast with the succeeding bass aria is hardly conceivable: here a most lively and dance-like 3/8 movement (Vivace) concludes the first section of the cantata before the sermon. A disquieting tenor aria (no. 5) follows after the sermon, 'Erschrecke doch, du allzu sichere Seele', where shock is expressed in a panicky and difficult tenor part and a similarly agile flute part.

The seven-movement chorale cantata BWV 7 'Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam' was composed for the feast of John the Baptist on 24 June 1724. The text deals with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the waters of the river Jordan. Bach succeeded in symbolising in musical figures the Jordan, the water and the baptism. The broken triads in the bass part of the opening chorus, for instance, present an audio-visual image of the waves. The semiquavers in the concertato violin part conjure up the same picture. The striking continuo line in the bass aria (no. 2) depicts the plunging baptism water.

Cantata 196 'Der Herr denket an uns' is one of Bach's early cantatas, probably written around 1708 during his Mühlhausen period. According to the Bach biographer Spitta it was a wedding cantata for the marriage of the aunt of Maria Barbara, Bach's first wife, to pastor Johann Lorenz Stauber, who had consecrated Bach's own marriage shortly before. Certain features also indicate that this is an early work: the conciseness of the individual movements, the absence of recitatives and the use of psalm texts to the exclusion of free poetry.

Clemens Romijn



Ruth Holton, soprano

studied at Clare College, Cambridge. With John Eliot Gardiner, she made CD recordings of Bach's St. John Passion. As a soloist, she has sung at major European festivals, including those of Flanders, Cheltenham and Bath. Ruth Holton has performed with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Gustav Leonardt in Rome and Vienna, and with Fretwork in Finland and Germany.

Marjon Strijk, soprano

studied with Jeanne Compagnen and Eugene Diteweg. As a soloist, she has contributed to famous oratorios. Besides she has appeared in many concerts and has made several CD-and TV-recordings. Accompanied by Ineke Sweers on the piano, Marjon Strijk has given various recitals of songs and lieder. With Pieter Jan Leusink she recorded Willem de Fesch's Missa Paschalis as well as the Mozart Requiem.



Sytse Buwalda, countertenor / alto

studied at the Sweelinck School of Music in Amsterdam. He has made musical appearances all over Europe and worked with conductors such as Frans Brügggen, Gustav Leonhardt, Sigiswald Kuijken and Sir David Willcocks. With Max van Egmond, he made a tour of Japan, singing Bach solocantatas in Tokyo under the famous Japanese conductors Maasaki Suzuki and Yoshio Watanabe.



Marcel Beekman, tenor

The Dutch tenor Marcel Beekman studied singing at the Conservatory in Zwolle, The Netherlands. He developed into a much sought after soloist, particularly in the concert and oratorio repertoire. Marcel Beekman worked with the Berliner Symphoniker, the Orchestra of the 18th Century and Musica Antiqua Köln. Moreover Marcel Beekman gives recitals especially of contemporary music.



Nico van der Meel, tenor

studied at the Rotterdam Conservatory. He made two CD recordings of Bach's St. John Passion, one conducted by Sigiswald Kuijken and the other with the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, conducted by Frans Brügggen. With the latter, he also recorded Bach's St. Matthew Passion, singing the Evangelist. He has worked with distinguished conductors such as Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Gustav Leonhardt and John Eliot Gardiner.





Knuth Schoch, tenor

studied at the Musikhochschule in Hamburg and received the prestigious Masefeld Stipendium. He has performed throughout Europe and Japan with Sigiswald Kuijken and Ivor Bolton. Knut Schoch was invited to renowned music festivals like the Händelfestspiele in Göttingen, Les Fêtes d' Automne in Paris and the Wiener Festwochen. One of his many CD recordings is the Mozart Requiem, in which he appears as a soloist under Pieter Jan Leusink.

Bas Ramselaar, bass

studied at the Utrecht Conservatory. He has developed into an often invited soloist in the Netherlands and on the European stages, among which the Festivals of Berlin and Bruges. He also gave performances in San Antonio, Texas and worked with such conductors as Roy Goodman, Uwe Gronostay, Reinbert de Leeuw and Robert King. Bas Ramselaar has contributed to many CD recordings. With Pieter Jan Leusink he recorded the Mozart and the Fauré Requiem.



Netherlands Bach Collegium

consists of the finest baroque specialists in Europe. With Pieter Jan Leusink conducting, the orchestra made many CD recordings, which got favourable reviews by both national and international music critics. The long experience in concert and recording practice of the various musicians with regard to baroque music, in particular Bach's compositions, guarantee a characteristic performance, marked by a great sense of authenticity. This performance of the Bach Cantatas gets an extra dimension by the integral use of period instruments.

Pieter Jan Leusink

studied at the Zwolle Conservatory and followed masterclasses with Sir David Willcocks. With Holland Boys Choir he built up an international reputation, partly on account of many CD recordings, like St. Matthew Passion - J.S. Bach, Messiah - G.F. Handel, Requiem - W.A. Mozart, Requiem - G. Fauré, Gloria - A. Vivaldi and Stabat Mater - G.B. Pergolesi. As a live conductor he created great enthusiasm at festivals in Wales, Italy, Latvia, England and France. His predilection for J.S. Bach's compositions also originates from the frequent performances of the St. Matthew Passion under his baton. His unique approach of recording CD's warrants a bright, dynamic interpretation of Bach's Cantatas.



NETHERLANDS BACH COLLEGIUM

VIOLIN John Wilson Meyer (concertmaster), Laura Johnson, Eva Scheytt, Pieter Affourtit, Elin Eriksson, Mimi Mitchel, Fiorenza De Donatis, Josef Tan, David Rabinowitz

VIOLA Jan Willem Vis, Simon Murphy, Örsze Adam

VIOLONCELLO Frank Wakelkamp

DOUBLE-BAS Maggie Urquhart, Robert Franenberg

OBOE Peter Frankenberg, Ofer Frenkel, Eduard Wesley, Christin Linde, Nico de Gier

BASSOON Trudy van der Wulp

TRAVERSO Kate Clark, Marion Moonen, Frederique Chauvet

RECORDER Anneke Boeke, Katherin Steddon, Fumitako Saito

NATURAL TRUMPET Susan Williams, Maarten van Weverswijk, Frank Anepool, Will Wroth Hendrik Jan Houtsma, Geerten Rooze

TIMPANI Frank Aarnink, Maarten Smit

ORGAN Vaughan Schlepp, Rien Voskuilen

HOLLAND BOYS CHOIR

TREBLE Anne Jan Leusink, Herjan Pullen, Hans van Roest, Aalt Jan van Roest, Jelle Stoker, Gerwin Zwep, Claude Paelinck, Gerrit van der Hoorn, Evert Baarssen, Erik Guldenaar

COUNTERTENOR Arjan Dokter, Gerald Engeltjes, Maarten Engeltjes, Vincent Groeneveld, Edwin Smit, Jan Willem Prins, Arjen Nap

TENOR Martinus Leusink, Frans Benschop, Jan Pullen, Marijn Takken, Frank Tros, Peter Bloemendaal, Cor van Twillert

BASS Jeroen Assink, Jim Groeneveld, Sebastian Holz, Huib van Hinsbergen, Klaas Alberts, Richard Guldenaar, Willem van der Hoorn, Piet Schuyn



Holland Boys Choir was founded in 1984 by Pieter Jan Leusink, who has been its conductor ever since. For its musical home the choir has the medieval St. Nicholaschurch in the almost eight centuries old little city of Elburg. Thanks to the intensity of the rehearsals and the numerous concerts, Holland Boys Choir has acquired a unique status, both nationally and internationally. Besides making concert trips, among others to England (Great Cathedrals Tour and St. Martin-in-the-Fields), France (Paris, Notre Dame) and Latvia (Riga Dom), the choir was also given the honour to perform for Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. The many integral performances of Bach's St. Matthew Passion and the CD recordings of this majestic works resulted in a strong affinity with the great composer, which has led up to the largest and indeed greatest project in the history of this unique choir, the integral recordings of all the Sacred Cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Recording Location	St. Nicolaschurch, Elburg
Recording	Oktober - November 1999
Production	Amsterdam Classics B.V.
Production manager	Christine Schreuder
Holland Boys Choir	tel. 0031 (0) 525-684819 fax. 0031 (0) 525-680618

Artistic director	Pieter Jan Leusink
Recording	Clavigram, Leerdam
Producer / editing	Jean van Vugt
Balance & recording engineer	Louis van Emmerik
Editing	Louis van Emmerik
Organ	J. Elbertsen, Soest