



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Schauet doch und sehet, ob irgendein Schmerz sei BWV 46
Was willst du dich betrüben BWV 107
Siehe zu, daß deine Gottesfurcht nicht Heuchelei sei BWV 179



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 46-107 & 179

The three cantatas on this CD date from the beginning of Bach's stay in Leipzig.

BWV 46 was written for 1 August 1723. The beautiful opening chorus (later used in the Mass in F Minor) uses a text from Lamentations well known from Handel's Messiah: 'Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.' The structure of the chorus is that of a prelude and fugue. Words of sorrow like Schmerz are highlighted by chromatic lines. A tenor recitative follows in which the recurring recorder figure could be seen either to illustrate the water-billows of which the text speaks, or the weeping over Jerusalem. That judgement is not reserved for Jerusalem alone is made clear by the furious bass aria in which the breaking of a thunderstorm is vividly painted. After a warning sung by the alto, one of Bach's most remarkable arias follows, in which two oboe da caccia in combination with the recorders create a unique and lovely sound illustrating the mother chicke gathering her K chlein. The final chorale is enhanced by the sonorous recorders soaring above the chorale melody like 'doves of mercy' (Whittaker).

BWV 107 was written for 23 July 1724. The whole work is based on one chorale, and the text of the different verses is used unchanged. The opening chorus has the chorale melody in the sopranos. The instrument opening loosely refers to the chorale melody, the chorale lines are woven into the musical structure in a beautiful way the name Immanuel ('God with us') at the end of line 4 being singled out for special treatment. The bass recitative shows Bach's ingenuity in transforming the tight structure of a chorale verse into a recitative. Four arias follow, a without da capo, treating the chorale text in different ways. The bass aria, an encouragement to doubting believer is an exciting dance introduced by a fascinating little theme in the continuo. After a tenor aria with continuo, and soprano aria in which the last line of the chorale melody is heard, another tenor aria is again a joyful dance, with low notes illustrating the words warte and feste. Trust in God is also the theme of the richly illustrative chorale, a siciliana of great beauty.

BWV 179 was written for 8 August 1723. A severe fugue (re-used by Bach in the Missa in G) preach against hypocrisy, with dramatic half-tones on falsche and Heuchelei. The opening phrase of the fugue is answered by its inversion, possibly suggesting the duplicity of hypocrites. An emotional tenor recitative is followed by a joyful as emotional aria, also later re-used by Bach. A bass recitative puts the publican from the gospel reading as an example before us. Then two oboes da caccia play an extremely moving melody while the soprano pleads for mercy. Again Bach used the music later, this time for the Missa in A. A remarkable chorale closes the piece, with a final line full of dissonance.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden

Nur jedem das Seine!

Herr Christ, der einge Gottessohn

BWV 6

BWV 163

BWV 96



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 6-163 & 96

BWV 6, a cantata written for Easter Monday 1725, refers to the story of two disciples, on their way Emmaus after Christ's resurrection, being met by Christ himself (unbeknown) and asking him to stay with them. Their call *Bleib bei uns* runs through the opening chorus, both in the choir and, high up, in the viol and oboe. The word *bleib* (stay) gets a long, 'staying' note, once again both in choir and orchestra. The atmosphere of a falling night is evoked beautifully. An alto aria follows in dark colours, the word 'darkness' illustrated in semitones. The bass recitative picks up the idea of darkness, the voice sinking to its lowest point for *Dunkelheit*. In between, the chorale 'Ach bleib bei uns' is sung in a lovely and moving setting (well known as one of the Schübler organ chorale preludes). In the following tenor aria the prayer to be kept from sin (illustrated by a striking dissonance on *Sünden* and the heavy steps of the weary traveller on the *Sündenwegen*) combines with lovely flourishes on words like 'light' and 'shine'. A simple chorale concludes one of Bach's best-loved cantatas.

BWV 163, written for 24 November 1715, deals with the unlikely theme of taxation. The words 'each one his due' determine the opening tenor aria, echoing through continuo, violins and then the voice, a harmonically interesting bass recitative leads to a truly astounding bass aria, with unforgettable patterns and rhythms for the two cellos. The whole number uses low instruments and a low voice, yet everything glitters and shines like the coins that we pay to Jesus: our hearts. A duet recitative, an interesting experiment of the young Bach, leads on to a just as interesting duet in which the two voices first compete and then get into the chorale 'Meinem Jesum lass ich nicht' being played by the violins. The choir finally enters with a simple chorale.

BWV 96 was written for 8 October 1724, the year in which Bach wrote mainly chorale cantatas. The beautiful chorale 'Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottessohn' is sung in the opening chorus by the altos (sustain by a trombone). The musical material of the other voices is based on the instrumental opening, which consists of figures for oboes and violins, with a hauntingly beautiful line for the discant recorder soaring above them. Line 5 of the chorale reveals the meaning of this: Christ is the morning star glittering on the horizon. After a simple alto recitative a tenor aria gives the flute player something to do: the cantatas from this period have many flute passages, suggesting there was a good flautist in Leipzig at the time. Another recitative illustrating the prayer to heaven with an upward line, leads towards a brief but exciting bass aria. The bass sings of the many words to the left and the right that we so often take. The orchestra shows this: the instruments seem not to know where they are going, turning left and right, and playing 'false' notes on *verirrter Schritt*. After very low notes on *senken* the way to heaven's gate is opened. In the final chorale the transition from the old man to a new life is made once more, clearly illustrated in the basses.



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält
Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe
Wer weiß, wie nahe mir mein Ende?

BWV 178
BWV 156
BWV 27



BRILLIANT
★

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 178-156 & 27

BWV 178 was written for 30 July 1724. The opening chorus treats the opening verse of the chorale 'Wo Gott der Herr' in a militant fashion: the struggle against false prophets is a hard one. The first line is homophonic, dealing with the safe keeping of God and ending on a tremendous unisono long note on hält. The second line about the raging enemies has raging music. Strangely enough the same notes are repeated for line 3 and 4 with completely different text. In the remarkable recitative the alto sings the chorale melody; the same melody is played in a different tempo in the continuo. The idea for the bass aria is derived from the wild sea waves. The following tenor aria gives us the chorale again, as does the next number for the choir, with recitative interruptions; a fascinating detail is the way the alto stürzen in the bass part. The last aria before the two closing chorale verses is given to the tenor, a diatribe against Vernunft. Human reason is literally silenced.

It is hard to see why BWV 156 (23 January 1729) should not hold the same position among Bach's love songs as BWV 106, the Actus Tragicus. The less appealing title might explain this. The theme is the same: the Christian's hope in the face of death. The opening sinfonia must surely rank among Bach's most beautiful melodies, the strings and accompanying violins creating a fitting atmosphere for the rest of the cantata. The opening aria with chorale stays on the same high level. The beautiful melodic line both in the violins and in the tenor voice, with a long 'standing' note on steh, is set off by a tottering syncopic bass line indicating that the other foot is already in the grave. In the bass recitative resignation sets in after a hard struggle. In the alto aria words like Leiden, Sterben, Bitten und Flehen are clearly illustrated, as is Freude. After a second recitative the closing chorale on the words 'Herr wie du willst' stress the leading thought of this wonderful work.

In BWV 27 (6 October 1726) the theme of death returns. The opening chorale, interspersed with recitative, is quite solemn, with its pendulum-like continuo, and an impressive long, pleading note on bet. After an interesting recitative (all's well that ends well) the alto sings a welcome to death. The text is illustrated impressively in many ways: 'following' music at the word folgen, chromatic lines on Plagen and Tod. A soprano recitative with a high note on Himmel and an upward surge on 'fly away' leads to a vigorous bass aria with a vivid contrast between the quiet 'good night' and the raging confusion of the world. Here the believer is not with one foot in his grave, but in heaven! The beautiful final chorale is unique in the cantatas. It is the only five-part chorale, and the only one by Bach; Bach uses a setting by Johann Rosenmüller.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Mache dich, mein Geist, bereit

BWV 115

Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht

BWV 55

Was frag ich nach der Welt

BWV 94



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 115-55 & 94

BWV 115, written for 5 November 1724, is called 'One of the most perfect of all' by Whittaker, and rightly so. This lovely, lovely opening chorale, with flute, oboe d'amore and violin in unison creating a wonderful sound, uses this melody also known as 'Straf mich nicht in deinem Zorn', a very apposite association which the congregation would not have missed. Bach's joy rhythm which permeates the music stresses confidence in the face of judgement. The alto aria is an impressive siciliano; the solemn, quiet melody evokes the idea of sleep in a superb way, a sleep out of which we may, however, be painfully woken up. A bass recitative follows, and then another miraculous and truly lovely number follows, with a duet between flute and violoncello piccolo. A delightful grace note and a little high jump in the melody could be illustrations of our prayers going upwards, while the downward lines illustrate our bending our knee in prayer. As with the alto aria our heart rejoices that there is a full da capo. A recitative and simple chorale end this gem.

BWV 55 is a solo cantata for tenor, the only one Bach wrote (17 November 1726). An expressive alto opens the work, in which flute and oboe play a wailing line, whilst the unjust sinner wrings his hands before a just God. The words just and unjust always go opposite ways: when the one goes up, the other goes down. A recitative in which, in truly baroque rhetoric style, the Allerhöchste gets the highest note, while a sustained note in the continuo illustrates the persistence of sin, is followed by an aria with beautiful flute runs full of pleading motives. A recitative with violin accompaniment leads to the chorale 'Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen', well known from the Mattheus Passion.

BWV 94 is a lively chorale cantata (6 August 1724) in which the leading idea, 'Was frag ich nach der Welt', is illuminated from many sides. In the opening chorus the sopranos sing the chorale melody, the other voices following their lead. The key to the joyful musical material is the word Wollust. The fact that the world which is being denounced is at the same time painted so wonderfully is the central paradox of this cantata. The tenor aria further on in the work, with its celebration of the Lust und Freud which the text denounces as Eitelkeit, is another example. Before that the bass has sung about how this world vanishes like a vapour (lovely fleeting motive on Rauch), ending in the repeated taunting question: why should I look to the world? This is followed by a recitative plus chorale: an aria for alto in which the flute jumps up and down to illustrate the stupidity of this world. Another recitative with chorale and the tenor aria already referred to lead to a final aria, this time for soprano, rather stern with a lovely middle part. Two verses of the chorale end the work.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig
Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet
Wohl dem, der sich auf seinen Gott

BWV 26

BWV 164

BWV 139



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

BWV 26

Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig

1. Coro

Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig
Ist der Menschen Leben!
Wie ein Nebel bald entsteht
Und auch wieder bald vergehet,
So ist unser Leben, sehet!

2. Aria Tenore

So schnell ein rauschend Wasser
schießt,
So eilen unser Lebenstage.
Die Zeit vergeht, die Stunden
eilen,
Wie sich die Tropfen plötzlich
teilen,
Wenn alles in den Abgrund
schießt.

3. Recitativo Alto

Die Freude wird zur Traurigkeit,
Die Schönheit fällt als eine
Blume,
Die größte Stärke wird
geschwächt,
Es ändert sich das Glück mit der
Zeit,
Bald ist es aus mit Ehr und
Ruhme,
Die Wissenschaft und was ein
Mensch dichtet,
Wird endlich durch das Grab
vernichtet.

4. Aria Basso

An irdische Schätze das Herze zu
hängen,
Ist eine Verführung der törichten

Welt.

Wie leichtlich entstehen
verzehrende Gluten,
Wie rauschen und reißen die
wallenden Fluten,
Bis alles zerschnett in
Trümmern zerfällt.

5. Recitativo Soprano

Die höchste Herrlichkeit und
Pracht
Umhüllt zuletzt des Todes Nacht.
Wer gleichsam als ein Gott
gesessen,
Entgeht dem Staub und Asche
nicht,
Und wenn die letzte Stunde
schläget,
Daß man ihn zu der Erde träget,
Und seiner Hoheit Grund
zerbricht,
Wird seiner ganz vergessen.

6. Choral

Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig
Sind der Menschen Sachen!
Alles, alles, was wir sehen,
Das muß fallen und vergehen.
Wer Gott fürcht', bleibt ewig
stehen.

BWV 164

Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet

1. Aria Tenore

Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo
nennet,
Wo bleibet die Barmherzigkeit,
Daran man Christi Glieder

kennet?

Sie ist von euch, ach, allzu weit.
Die Herzen sollten lieblich sein,
So sind sie härter als ein Stein.

2. Recitativo Basso

Wir hören zwar, was selbst die
Liebe spricht:
Die mit Barmherzigkeit den
Nächsten hier umfassen
Die sollen vor Gericht
Barmherzigkeit erlangen.
Jedoch, wir achten solches nicht!
Wir hören noch des Nächsten
Seufzer an!
Er klopft an unser Herz; doch
wird nicht aufgetan!
Wir sehen zwar sein Händeringer
Sein Auge, das von Tränen fließt
Doch läßt das Herz sich nicht zur
Liebe zwingen.
Der Priester und Levit,
Der hier zur Seite tritt,
Sind ja ein Bild liebloser Christen
Sie tun, als wenn sie nichts von
fremdem Elend wüßten,
Sie gießen weder Öl noch Wein
Ins Nächsten Wunden ein.

3. Aria Alto

Nur durch Lieb und durch
Erbarmen
Werden wir Gott selber gleich.
Samaritergleiche Herzen
Lassen fremden Schmerz sich
schmerzen
Und sind an Erbarmung reich.



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 Brügger, 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 Brügger. 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.



Knut Schoch, tenor

studied at the Musikhochschule in Hamburg and received the prestigious Maselfeld 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 intelligent 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, Antoinette Lohmann, Eva Scheytt, Elin Eriksson, Mimi Mitchel, Fanny Pestalozzi, Josef Tan, David Rabinowitz

VIOLA Jan Willem Vis, Simon Murphy, Marten Boeken

VIOLONCELLO Frank Wakelkamp, Thom Pitt

DOUBLE-BAS Maggie Urquhart, Robert Franenberg, Jan Hollestelle, Ties Marang, Joshua Cheatam

OBOE Peter Frankenberg, Ofer Frenkel, Christin Linde, Vincent van Ballegooien, Eduard Wesley, Fernando Souza, Nico de Gier

BASSOON Trudy van der Wulp

TRAVERSO Kate Clark, Marion Moonen, Doretthe Janssens, Brian Berryman

RECORDER Anneke Boeke, Katherin Steddon

NATURAL TRUMPET Susan Williams

ORGAN Rien Voskuilen, Vaughan Schlepp

HOLLAND BOYS CHOIR

TREBLE Anne Jan Leusink, Herjan Pullen, Hans van Roest, Aalt Jan van Roest, Jelle Stoker, Gerwin Zwep, Tanny Koomen, Gerrit van der Hoorn, Erik Guldenaar, Peter van de Kolk, Nicky Westerink

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

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

BASS Jeroen Assink, Jim Groeneveld, Sebastian Holz, Willem van der Hoorn, Huib van Hinsbergen, Klaas Alberts, Richard Guldenaar, 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. Nicolaaschurch, Elburg
Recording	November - December 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