

BACH



NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN BACH SOCIETY

DID BACH PERFORM SACRED MUSIC BY JOHANN MATTHESON IN LEIPZIG?

STEFFEN VOSS

Unlike Bach's first two Leipzig cantata cycles, of 1723-24 and 1724-25, which include a sacred cantata for almost every occasion of the liturgical year, the third cycle, of 1725-27, contains numerous, substantial breaks in the continuity.¹ The first of these breaks occurs at the very beginning of the cycle, between the concluding work of the second cycle, the 1725 Trinity cantata *Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding*, BWV 176, to a text by Mariane von Ziegler, and the first known work of this cycle, *Tue Rechnung! Donnerwort*, BWV 168, for the ninth Sunday after Trinity. Some light was shed on the identity of the cantatas that preceded *Tue Rechnung! Donnerwort* by Wolf Hobohm's

discovery in the Saltykov-Shtshedrin Library in Leningrad (today, the Russian National Library, St. Petersburg) of a 1725 *Texte zur Leipziger Kirchen-Music* for the third, fifth, and sixth Sundays after Trinity and for the feasts of St. John's and Visitation.² These five texts represent the complete repertory of church cantatas performed by Bach during the period from June 17 to July 8 of that year, though only the first, "Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ," to a chorale cantata *per omnes versus* performed on the third Sunday after Trinity, has a possible, though tenuous, connection to a known sacred work by Bach. This text may indicate the performance of the homonymous BWV 177, although the autograph score to this work dates from 1732. Three of the four remaining texts are from the third cycle of Erdmann Neumeister's *Fünffache Kirchenandachten*, which was set by Telemann for his 1710/11 Eisenach cycle *Geistliches Singen und Spielen*. Because Bach's estate contained one cantata from this cycle, *Gesegnet ist die Zuversicht*, TVWV 1: 616,³ he probably had access to the others and likely performed Telemann's settings of these texts—specifically, TVWV 1: 596, TVWV 1: 310, and TVWV 1: 1600.

The remaining text from this printed collection, for Visitation, is an anonymous poetic paraphrase of the Magnificat, the Virgin Mary's hymn of praise to God from Luke 1: 46-55, which forms the central part of the Gospel associated with this feast.⁴ Because the paraphrase preserves the original Lutheran translation in the framing verses, it is textually very similar to the homonymous Visitation cantata *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren*, BWV 10, of the previous year's chorale cantata cycle. The similarity of the texts may be seen as evidence that Bach is not the author of the 1725 piece: would he have composed two works on such similar texts for the same liturgical occasion within the span of one year? Casting even greater doubt on Bach's authorship of the 1725 *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren*, however, is the fact that a setting of this text had been performed in 1718 in one of eighteenth-century Germany's most important musical centers, though in an unexpected venue.

Musical performances at the Hamburg Cathedral became the responsibility of Johann Mattheson in 1715, after he became the substitute cantor, filling in for the aging

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official Cathedral cantor Friedrich Nikolaus Brauns.⁵ As had been previously agreed, Mattheson became the official cantor at the Cathedral following Brauns's death in 1718. While substituting for Brauns, Mattheson primarily performed his own works, although a St. John Passion by Brauns was heard in 1717.⁶ Presumably influenced by Brauns's Passions, Mattheson established a tradition at

the Cathedral of regular oratorio performances, choosing this genre because it best fit his ambitious plans to establish a modern church music in the “theatrical style.” His oratorios are typically in two parts—for performance before and after the sermon—and were heard at the Cathedral, in coordination with the Hamburg music director's performances at the five principal churches, on six annual occasions: the third day of each of the high feasts of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, the Sunday before St. John's, the Sunday before St. Michael's, and a Sunday during Lent (Judica, Laetare, or Palm Sunday, for the Passion performance).⁷

In only one known instance did Mattheson abandon his practice of composing oratorios in two parts. On the third day of Christmas in 1718, as announced in the *Hamburger Relations-Courier*, Mattheson performed his one-part oratorio *Der verlangte und erlangte Heiland* before the sermon and his sumptuous “Magnificat a due cori” after.⁸ An undated printed libretto indicating the performance of these two pieces during the Christmas season (in 1718? or in at least one other year?) is partly reproduced in figure 1. The text to this Magnificat is a poetic paraphrase of the Virgin Mary's canticle that preserves Luther's translation in the first and last verses, which are sung by the chorus, and paraphrases the inner verses, which are divided alternately between recitatives and arias. The text to Mattheson's Magnificat is identical to that of the piece Bach performed on Visitation in Leipzig in 1725. The connection between these two works extends beyond the common text to the indications concerning the repetition of the opening chorus found in both

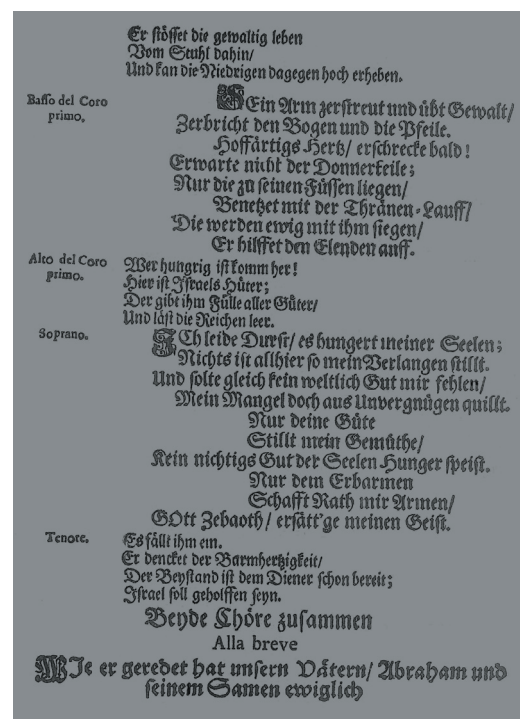
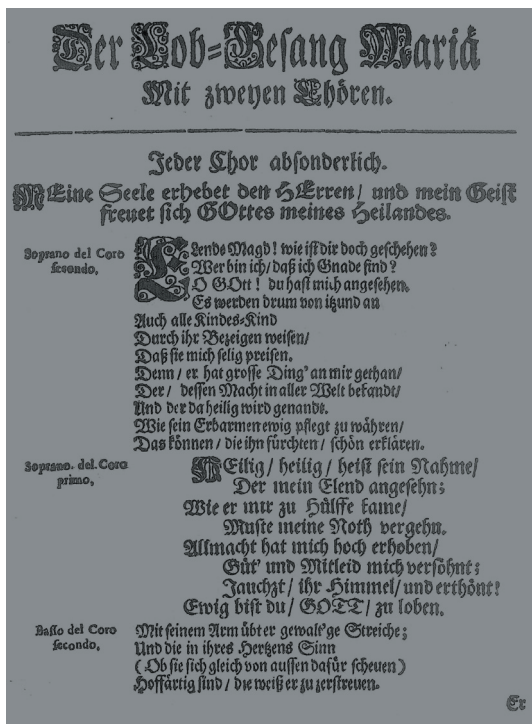


Figure 1. Undated Hamburg libretto: title page and text to Mattheson's Magnificat. NL-DHnmi, 2 - I - 125, reproduced with the permission of the Nederlands Muziek Instituut, Den Haag (former music collection of the Gemeentemuseum, collection Daniel F. Scheuerleer).

Mattheson's autograph score (figures 2.1-2.3, pages 4 and 5) and the printed Leipzig text. In Mattheson's score the repetition is optional (the composer supplied a transitional eight-measure adagio in F-sharp minor for those choosing to repeat the opening D-major chorus), though both sources employ the usual Latin instruction "repetatur ab initio." These two sources stand in contrast to the printed Hamburg libretto, however, in which the opening chorus is not repeated. For the Hamburg performance, Mattheson may have chosen the shorter version of the work since it was the second of two pieces performed on that day.

The opening double-chorus movement of Mattheson's Magnificat begins with an alternating soloistic exchange between the two sopranos in which divided strings accompany each choir, and trumpets and drums underscore the festive nature of the work. The subsequent solo movements—three arias framed by secco recitatives—are assigned to various soloists from the two choirs. The final chorus is a four-part, alla breve fugue with colla parte string writing and obbligato unison trumpets. An overview of this work is provided in table 1.

What, then, are the possible connections between the piece performed during Christmas in Hamburg in 1718 and the piece performed on Visitation in Leipzig in 1725? Could Bach have owned a copy of Mattheson's piece? The Visitation cantata from the Neumeister/Telemann cycle is a rather simple work that would not have satisfied the Leipzig requirement of a festive composition, such as *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, BWV 147. Bach may have chosen to insert Mattheson's Magnificat into a series of Telemann cantata performances not only because of the work's festive scoring, but also because of its other appealing features, such as the double chorus, which Bach used in his motets and later, of course, in the *St. Matthew Passion*. Bach may have also been drawn to Mattheson's composition by its quotation of the *tonus peregrinus*

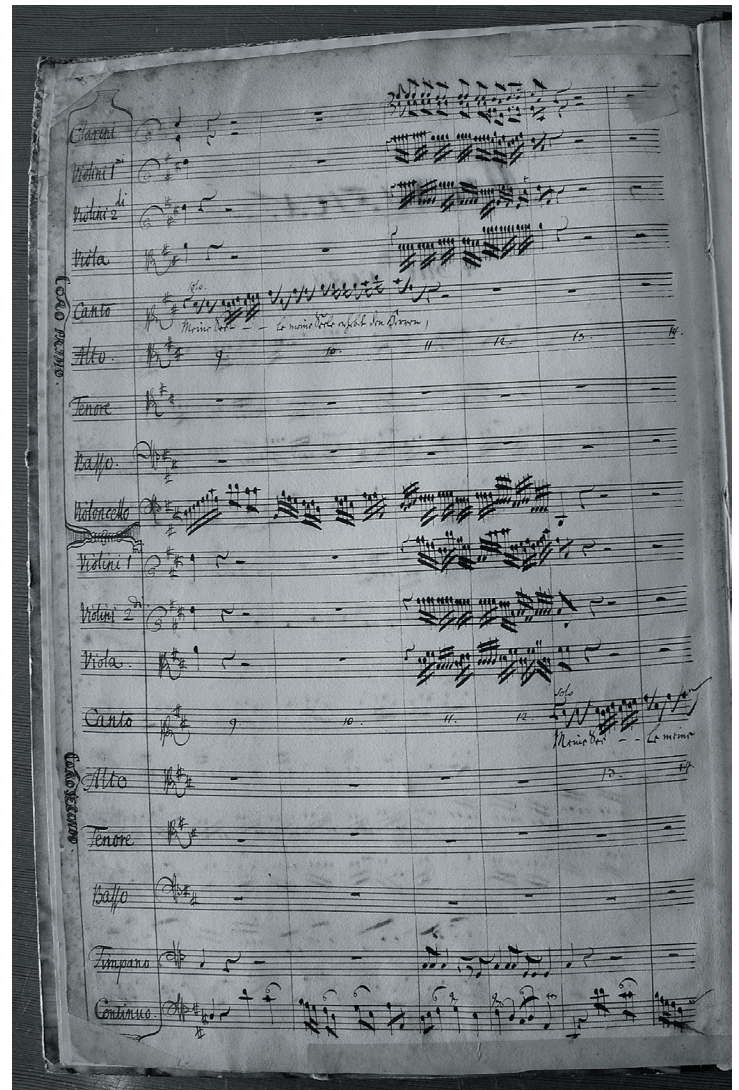
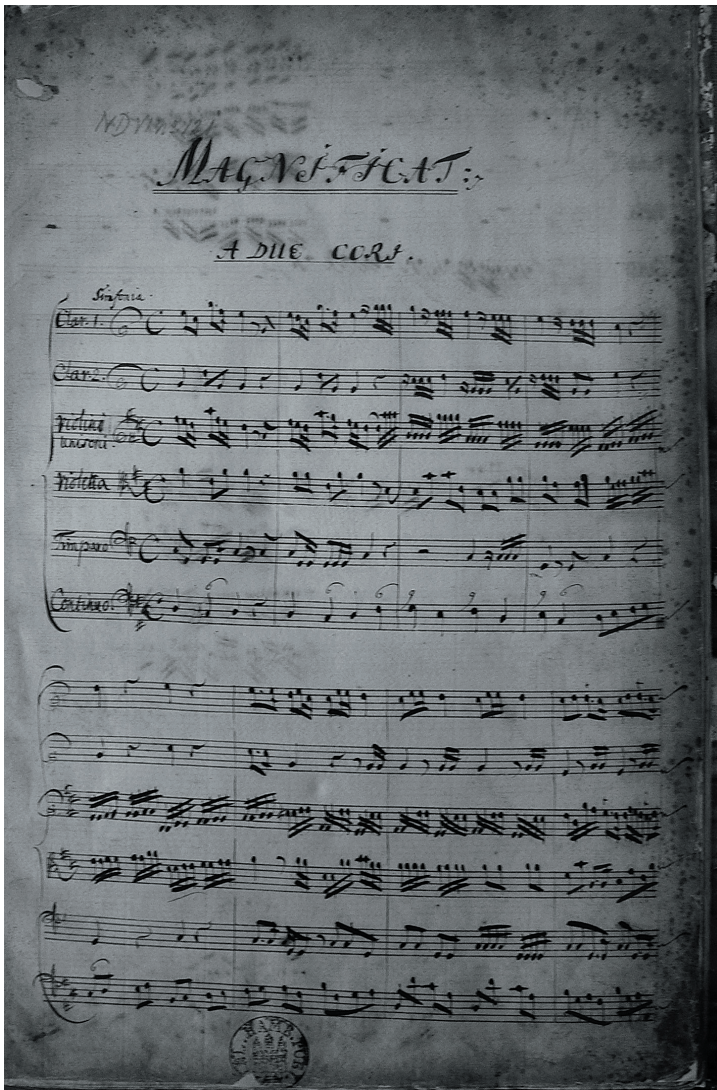
in the trumpets at two points in the opening movement, hinting at the liturgical tradition of the Magnificat. Bach employed this same melody as a cantus firmus in the "Et misericordias" of the Magnificat in E-flat Major, BWV 243a, where it is also found in the trumpets, and in the already mentioned Visitation chorale cantata *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren*, BWV 10, where it dominates the first chorus.

If Bach had acquired a copy of Mattheson's Magnificat, it could have taken its place along side other Hamburg compositions in his possession, such as the Keiser/Brauns *St. Mark Passion*, Händel's *Der für die Sünde der Welt gemartete und sterbende Jesus* (Brockses Passion)—both also composed for the Cathedral—and Telemann's *Seliges Erwägen*. All three of these works were performed by Bach in Leipzig. Bach may have acquired Mattheson's Magnificat during his 1720 visit to Hamburg, when he performed on the organ at St. Catherine's in the presence of Johann Adam Reinken. Mattheson had been very impressed with Bach's organ playing and might have exchanged music manuscripts with him on this occasion.

On the other hand, one must consider that Mattheson often used texts that had already been set by other composers. His Christmas oratorio *Das Größte Kind* (1720) has the same libretto as Reinhard Keiser's *Dialogus von der Geburt Christi* (1707),⁹ his Brockses Passion (1718) was preceded by settings by Keiser, Telemann, and Händel, and his Passion oratorio *Das Lied des Lammes* (1723) is based on the same text as an earlier St. John Passion often falsely attributed to Händel. Perhaps the work Bach performed on Visitation in 1725 was a setting of the paraphrased text even older than Mattheson's. If this was the case, the unknown composer is more likely to be found in the region around Hamburg—the place of origin of both Mattheson's composition and one of the two surviving printed text sources—than in Saxony or Thuringia. It is nevertheless possible, however, despite the various scenarios presented

Table 1. Overview of Joahnn Mattheson's Magnificat

Mvmt. Type	Text Incipit	Scoring
1. Chorus	"Meine Seele erhebt den Herren"	Coro 1: SATB, Vl 1, 2, Va, Vc; Coro 2: SATB, Vl 1, 2, Va; Trp 1, 2, Timp, Bc
2. Recitative	"Elende Magd"	S Coro 2, Bc
3. Aria	"Heilig, heilig heißt sein Name"	S Coro 1, Vl solo, Bc
4. Recitative	"Mit seinem Arm übt er gewalt'ge Streiche"	B Coro 2, Bc
5. Aria	"Sein Arm zerstreut und übt Gewalt"	B Coro 1, Vl 1, 2, Va, Bc
6. Recitative	"Wer hungrig ist, komm her"	A Coro 1, Bc
7. Aria	"Ich leide Durst"	S Coro 2, Fl trav, Bc
8. Recitative	"Es fällt ihm ein"	T Coro 1, Bc
9. Chorus	"Wie er geredet hat unsern Vätern"	SATB, Trp 1, 2 (unis.), Timp, Vl 1, 2, Va, Bc
10. Optional Repetition of Opening Chorus		



Figures 2.1 and 2.2. Autograph score to Mattheson's Magnificat: first two pages of the opening double chorus. Photographs in figures 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 (page 5) are from D-Hs, ND VI 121 and reproduced with the permission of the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Carl von Ossietzky.

here, that Bach, having discovered the paraphrased text among printed librettos from the Hamburg Cathedral, is the composer of the work after all.

Although the authorship of the *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren* performed in Leipzig on Visitation in 1725 remains uncertain, we find here, in any case, more evidence of the many close connections Bach maintained with the rich musical life of the Hanseatic city that had fascinated and influenced him since his early years in Lüneburg.

¹The first cantata cycle, in fact, contains two cantatas for some occasions because it may have been originally conceived as a "Doppeljahrgang." Bach attempted to complete the second (chorale) cantata cycle with the composition of supplemental works in the late 1720s and in the 1730s. Concerning the breaks in the third cycle, we know, for example, that eighteen cantatas by Johann Ludwig Bach were per-

formed beginning with Purification in 1726. See Christoph Wolff, "Bachs Leipziger Kirchenkantaten: Repertoire und Kontext," in *Die Welt der Bach-Kantaten*, edited by Christoph Wolff (Stuttgart/Kassel, 1996-99), 3: 21-30.

²*Texte zur Leipziger Kirchen-Music, Auf den Dritten Sonntag nach Trinitatis, Das Fest Johannis des Täuffers, Ingleichen Den fünfften Sonntag Trinitatis, Das Fest der Heimsuchung Mariä, Und den sechsten Sonntag nach Trinitatis, 1725 / Leipzig, Gedruckt bey Immanuel Tietzen, RUS-SPsc, 6.34.3.208.* See Wolf Hohohm, "Neue Textfunde zur deutschen Musikgeschichte der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts. Ein Bericht über Bibliotheksstudien in Leningrad," *Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft* 15 (1971): 263-267 and "Neue 'Texte zur Leipziger Kirchen-Music,'" *Bach-Jahrbuch* 59 (1973): 5-32.

³Hohohm, "Leipziger Kirchen-Music," 31.

⁴Edited text: Hohohm, "Leipziger Kirchen-Music," 18-19; facsimile editions: Werner Neumann, ed., *Sämtliche von Johann Sebastian Bach vertonte Texte* (Leipzig, 1974), 435-436 and Martin Petzold, ed., *Texthefte zur Kirchenmusik aus Bachs Leipziger Zeit. Die 7 erhaltenen Drucke der Jahre 1724-1749 in faksimilierter Wiedergabe* (Stuttgart, 2000), Heft 3, fol. 5^v-7^r.

⁵For more on Brauns and his work as cantor at the Hamburg Cathedral, see Daniel R. Melamed and Reginald L. Sanders, "Zum Text und Kontext der 'Kaiser'-

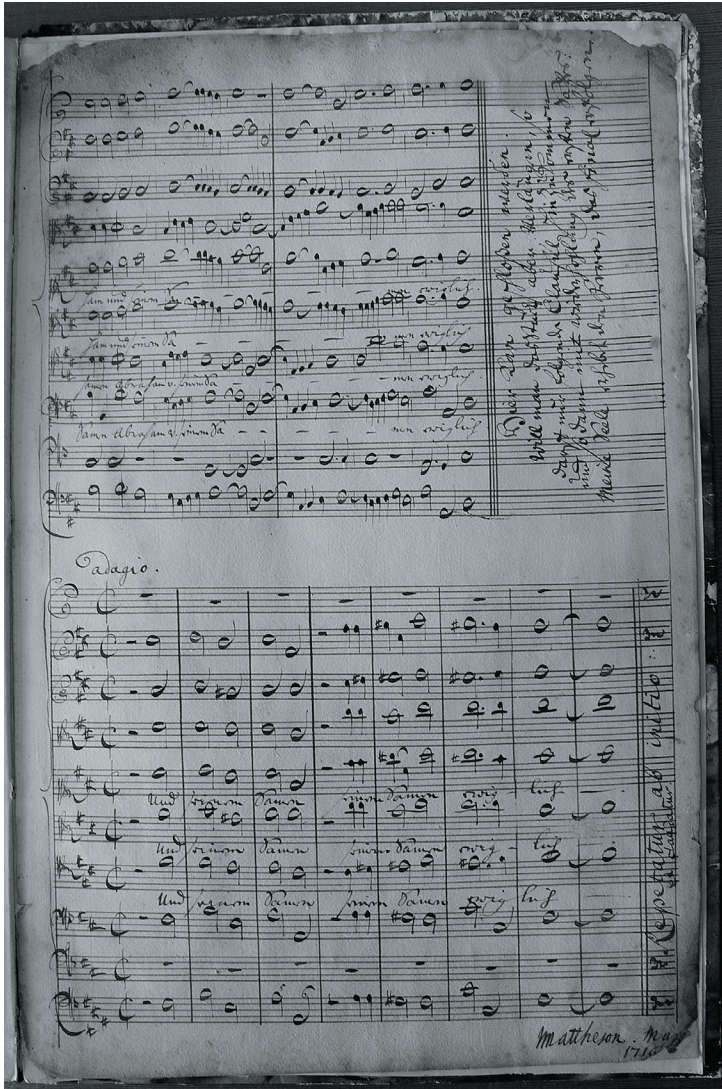


Figure 2.3. Autograph score to Mattheson's Magnificat: last page, which contains the date, transitional adagio, and comments concerning the repetition of the opening chorus.

Markuspassion," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 85 (1999): 35-50.

⁶Printed text in D-Hs, A/70002.

⁷During the tenure of Mattheson's successor, Reinhard Keiser, the performances associated with Pentecost, St. John's and St. Michael's were eliminated for financial reasons, though the three remaining performances were continued until musical life at the Cathedral ceased with the departure of its last cantor, Johann David Holland, in 1782.

⁸"Der Secretaire Mattheson wird geliebts Gott instehenden dritten Weynacht-Feyertag ein neues Oratorium, genandt: Der verlangte und erlangte Heiland / vor der Predigt; nach derselben aber ein zwey-chörichtes Magnificat im hiesigem Dom aufführen." *Hamburger Relations-Courier*, No. 202, Friday, December 23, 1718. For the autograph score to the Magnificat, dated 1716, see D-Hs, ND VI 121 (partly reproduced in figures 2.1-2.3). The date of the autograph may have led Beekman Cannon to indicate this work was performed in 1716, though no evidence to this effect is known. See Beekman C. Cannon, *Johann Mattheson. Spectator in Music* (Hamden, CT, 1968), 163. A new performance edition of the work by Norbert Klose (Haale, 2001) contains some editorial inaccuracies.

⁹See Christine Blanken, "Der 'Dialogus von der Geburt Christi': Ein wieder entdecktes Werk von Reinhard Keiser," *Musik und Kirche* 5 (2001): 300-05.

Report from Scheide Research Grant Recipient Tanya Kevorkian (Millersville University)

A William H. Scheide Research grant from the Society enabled me to conduct preliminary research for my second book during the fall of 2004. The book, a social history of music in Germany during the baroque era, will focus on audience composition and reception, performance venues, the roles of musicians, and the role of music in the rapidly changing society and economy of the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries. The perspective and many of the sources will be those of a social historian, and during this initial phase of my research I considered laws that governed public musical performances and investigated vocal music enjoyed by various social groups.

I began in October by examining seventeenth- and eighteenth-century legal sources from the Rare Books Collection of the Harvard University Law School Library. These sources included legal codes and commentaries from Brandenburg, Electoral Saxony, and smaller Saxon and Thuringian territories. During the baroque era, rulers and their jurist officials attempted to regulate every conceivable social activity of their subjects, although often without success. The regulations attached to these activities nevertheless provide detailed descriptions of occasions such as weddings, dances, and other festivities at which music was made. Some of the laws reveal, for example, that the number of musicians allowed to perform at a wedding was determined by the family's social status; that dances could only be held at certain places and times; and that taverns had specific hours of business. The decrees often mentioned specific transgressions of the law, and many were issued numerous times, revealing the attitude of a public that widely and repeatedly ignored them.

In late November and early December, I examined baroque and rococo vocal music in the Performing Arts Reading Room of the Library of Congress. I considered sources containing secular songs, opera arias, and hymns, and also reviewed composers' prefaces and treatises. The music and lyrics, as well as the written commentary, indicate some music was sung by all, while other music was more the domain of educated townspeople and noble families. Gender also played a roll, as some types of secular song were increasingly taken up by female singers, even though their lyrics were often more representative of a male than female perspective. The sources also provide insight into performance venues, the production and demand for hymnals and published song collections, and musical style (composers and editors aimed for variety, but common practices are observed).

The continuation of my research will involve a more extensive reading of the published primary and secondary source literature on travel, education, and gender, as they relate to music, and I will develop chapters on these themes. I will then move on to archival research, especially in smaller Saxon and Thuringian town and territorial archives. In a time of global conflict, constrained institutional budgets, and talk of "relevance" and "applicability" in the college curriculum, it seems more important than ever to pursue basic scholarly research. For the opportunity to complete this phase of my project, I wish to express my appreciation to both the Society and William H. Scheide.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint, by David Yearsley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. xvi, 257 pp. \$75

Counterpoint would not seem to be the most obvious topic for a book devoted to music criticism. While much attention has been directed in the last two decades toward such subjects as opera, with its obvious gender issues, music with text (for instance, popular song), and various recent musics with implications relevant to today's political landscape, the abstractness of counterpoint has made it seem relatively impervious, for better or worse, to the current political winds. And surely no counterpoint could be more timeless, more "classic," less susceptible to those political winds, than that of its all-time greatest master, Johann Sebastian Bach. It is perhaps not merely chance that the book that initially posed the great challenge to "positivist" musicology and more than any other helped usher in the age of "new musicology," Joseph Kerman's *Contemplating Music* of 1985, offered as one of very few examples of admirable positivist scholarship Alfred Dürr's work on the Bach cantata chronology. In the ensuing two decades, Bach scholarship and new musicology have indeed had relatively little to do with each other, and Bach research has seemed to many, perhaps, as a safe haven, where handwriting and paper studies and abstract musical analysis could still find an enthusiastic reception and where gender studies scarcely made an appearance.

A reader, then, who picks up a copy of David Yearsley's *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* may at first see chapter titles such as "The Autocratic Regimes of *A Musical Offering*" or "The Alchemy of Bach's Canons" and wonder whether the book represents yet another attempt to strike a critical blow at a revered figure of the Western musical canon. But Yearsley's agenda, although revisionist, is far subtler. The book's topic is Bach's most contrapuntally complex works, written during the last decade or so of his life, in particular, *Musical Offering*, *The Art of Fugue*, *Goldberg Variations*, the duets from *Clavierübung* III, *Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel hoch,"* and the canon portrayed in the famous Hausmann portrait. The generally accepted view of these late works mirrors that of Beethoven's; that is, they are seen as the products of a musical genius turning inward at the end of his life and breathing extremely rarefied air beyond the reach of all of his contemporaries. Yearsley disagrees and argues instead for "bring[ing] Bach and his counterpoint down from the lofty summit on which they have been so safely ensconced with the help of generations of Bach's admirers." (p. 237) Bach, as Yearsley so persuasively argues, was manifestly not removing himself from the world in his last years, but actively engaging with it, just at the time when so many of the traditional ways of thinking and acting were being challenged and revised by that intellectual movement known as the Enlightenment.

The book proceeds as a series of six chapters that reads, until the last one, like separate if related essays. The titles are intentionally provocative. In addition to the two mentioned above, they include, "*Vor deinen Thron tret ich* and the Art of Dying," "Bach's Taste for

Pork or Canary" (which I might have renamed "Bach's taste for Cabbage and Beets"), "Bach the Machine," and "Physiognomies of Bach's Counterpoint." To this reader, at least, each initially evoked both curiosity and more than a little skepticism, but essay after essay reads like a good short story that by its concluding paragraphs ties up the various plot lines into a convincing argument, and in each case another bit of received wisdom stands exposed as simplistic or inaccurate. In "The Art of Dying" we see Bach's final composition to be "not the grand, spontaneous creation claimed by his heirs, but a small, meaningful gesture of faith." (p. 40) "The Alchemy of Bach's Canons"¹ explores at length the roots of Bach's strictest counterpoint in the compositions and writings of his German predecessors and contemporaries, with particular attention on the public argument between Mattheson and Bokemeyer concerning the usefulness of canon. The word alchemy, which may at first seem far-fetched in a musical context, draws on images of magic and points us toward the seventeenth-century idea of counterpoint as something vaguely mysterious and even mystical, an idea that Johann Mattheson, Johann Adolph Scheibe, and other Enlightenment thinkers were keen to debunk. Bach's position in this argument is, in Yearsley's estimation, "complex, conflicted, and perhaps contradictory" (p. 92), and the author explores the many facets of that position especially through the various isolated canons written in the last years of his life.

In "Pork or Canary," we are shown Bach demonstrating, in the F-Major Duetto from *Clavierübung* III, how to bring strict counterpoint into the galant style and, in the closing quodlibet of the *Goldberg Variations*, how to bring the most common of musical materials—the tune known in Germany as "Kraut und Rüben" ("herbage and beets")—into the most sophisticated contrapuntal web. The author's conclusion is even broader: "Instead of marking a withdrawal, strict counterpoint was one of the most trenchant means by which Bach's music engaged with the theoretical concerns of his day." (p. 126) "The Autocratic Regimes of *A Musical Offering*" takes us deeply into political ideals of the day and Bach's standing with respect to them. That is, not only is the moment of Bach's meeting with Frederick the Great ripe with political meaning, but the piece itself is also "profoundly shaped by the composer's politics." (p. 130) "Bach the Machine" similarly introduces us to contemporary scientific thought and to such curiosities as an automaton in the form of a human who can play in a musical manner any flute put into its hands. Here again, Yearsley's conclusions are thought-provoking:

in these pieces [the canons from *Musical Offering*] I hear Bach playing at fabricating mechanistic composition, producing not so much music as meta-music, not so much compositional thought as a picture of the objects of compositional thought and how they might be automatically strung together, yet still grammatically coherent. (p. 207)

Finally, the concluding chapter, “Physiognomies of Bach’s Counterpoint,” sums up Yearsley’s thesis by taking us through aspects of Bach reception in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this case, we see counterpoint primarily as metaphor, and Yearsley shows us how remarkably similar today’s arguments about counterpoint and its use in music are to those of Bach’s time. Indeed, the questions remain the same:

Is counterpoint an absolute whose precepts remain unaltered by the ceaseless change in musical style? Or, as Mattheson argued, are these rules merely human constructs, and as such of no particular epistemological value? (p. 237)

Yearsley’s writing is engaging and, best of all, supported by a knowledge of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources, both musical and non-musical, that is as deep as it is wide. That the author knows and loves this music is evident on every page, and his analyses are well conceived and full of insight. But the book’s greatest strength may be that the voices of Bach’s own time are given center stage and are not drowned out by the voices of our own. Yearsley takes this stance very deliberately:

This project was motivated by a belief that Bach’s most complex music might be better understood by trying to grapple with it as one of his contemporaries might have done, that is, as someone for whom Bach’s contrapuntal insights retained a very real currency and vivid significance. (p. 237)

Naturally, attempts to get at the motivations of a composer who revealed little about those motivations will involve speculation, and not all of Yearsley’s conclusions and inferences will meet with universal agreement. Nevertheless, they are always well argued and supported by thoughtfully gathered evidence, and I found myself more and more convinced the further I read. In my judgment *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* stands as a model of how to think and write critically about music from former times, and I recommend it without reservation to anyone interested in those magnificent contrapuntal works of Bach’s last years.

Paul M. Walker

¹This chapter is a later version of “Alchemy and Counterpoint in an Age of Reason” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51, no. 2 (1998): 201-243.

The Life of Bach, by Peter Williams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. viii, 219 pp. \$65 (hardback), \$22.99 (paperback)

“[P]rogress . . . comes from questions rather than answers,” Peter Williams wrote in his triple review of Christoph Wolff’s *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, Davitt Moroney’s *Bach: An Extraordinary Life*, and Eric Chafe’s *Analyzing Bach Cantatas*.¹ Williams’s main problem with these “three brave attempts at the well-nigh-impossible” is, “it is answers that these authors give.” In other words, he takes issue with the positivistic rather than critical approach that (in his eyes) the three authors have in common. Anyone familiar with Williams’s scholarly work—most notably, I think, his monumental *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*—knows that he is extremely good at asking questions, often without even attempting to answer them. His questions may be provocative, funny, or irritating, but they are usually stimulating in one way or another. It is hardly surprising, then, that Williams’s own attempt at the “well-nigh-impossible”—a Bach biography four years after Wolff’s—comes, essentially, in the form of questions. Williams’s attitude may be further illustrated by another citation from the aforementioned review:

If one is also tempted to a little iconoclasm at times—I groan inwardly when Bach the Pedant persists in inverting some harmless little theme, and wonder what kind of person writes a prelude and fugue in every key (twice!)—is that a bad thing? (p. 15)

Williams chooses an approach that seems so natural one wonders why no one (at least to my knowledge) has used it before: he cites, bit-by-bit, the main “statements” from the Obituary (written by C. P. E. Bach and J. F. Agricola, probably within six months of the composer’s death, though not published until four years later), explains them, adds to them, and—most importantly—questions them. This is not to say that Williams puts in doubt every single fact in the Obituary, but he maintains,

the Obituary had an agenda of its own, relaying what its period and its university-educated authors . . . found important to say about a period and a man they understood only in part. (p. 2)

After citing, for example, the Obituary’s account of the famous anecdote concerning Bach copying music from a forbidden manuscript by moonlight and being found out by his brother Johann Christoph after six months of hard work, Williams comments,

how far . . . [t]he original narrator of the story . . . meant to malign the elder brother is uncertain . . . [and] one could read either personal envy or genuine solicitude in the anecdote. Either way,

unauthorized copying of . . . hard-won professional materials was improper . . . (Was the boy presuming to play them in his brother's church?) Equally improper was defiance of a guardian *in loco parentis*, one solicitous . . . for a younger brother's eyesight. (p. 16)

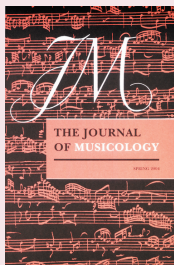
Williams goes on to ask whether Johann Christoph might not have wanted Sebastian to use his time practicing the violin, rather than copying keyboard music. After all, as a string player

he might become capellmeister to a great king or, better still, opera and music director of an important city. Too single-minded a pursuit of keyboard music would lead at best only to the cantorate of a major church. . . . (p. 16)

This is highly speculative, of course: who could ever know what went on in Johann Christoph's mind? Yet to me, these are fascinating considerations that—one way or another—shed important light on Bach and the world around him. More importantly, Williams points out that “moonlight” anecdotes are a recurring theme in musical and non-musical biography. A similar episode, for example, is to be found in the biography of the German theologian and reformer Philipp Melancthon (who, incidentally, was orphaned at age eleven).

Although *The Life of Bach* is very different in scope and style from *The Learned Musician* (and only about a third its length), it is hard not to notice the anxiety of influence, as Williams frequently seems to have a deliberately different opinion from Wolff. While the latter finds the *Capriccio in honorem Job: Christoph Bachii*, BWV 993, “more condensed, musically more abstract, and somewhat more sophisticated [than the *Capriccio on the Departure of the Beloved Brother*, BWV 992],”² Williams notes the “turgid formlessness and harmonic poverty” of the work.³ One of Wolff's most convincing revisions of a century of Bach scholarship concerns the identity of the “Beloved Brother” of the aforementioned *Capriccio* BWV 992.⁴ Williams knows this, of course, yet he simply refers to the work as

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“picturing . . . *someone* [italics mine] departing on a journey.” (p. 29) Someone? Johann Jacob Bach? Georg Erdmann?

Williams seems to hold firmly to what is perhaps the most influential question of authenticity he has raised: the authorship of the Toccata in D Minor, BWV 565, though only in a footnote. Expanding on Bach's hypothetical interest in playing “the large viola or violoncello piccolo,” the footnote suggests the work “could well have originated as a piece for violoncello piccolo solo, arranged for organ.” (p. 161) This sounds terribly suggestive—but then what? Are we to think Bach *was* the composer after all, but that he originally wrote the piece for five-string cello? If not, who on earth could have been the composer? And does Williams still believe the work to be late rather than early?

Perhaps the funniest new theory in the book concerns the Geyersbach incident and the translation of the (in)famous “Zippel Fagottist.” Robert Marshall has shown that “Zippel” was a colloquial term for penis,⁵ which means Bach was a bit rude to refer to the poor bassoonist in this way. Williams adds to Marshall's theory in two ways: first, he suggests that “Zippel” could have been dialect for “discipulus,” and thus have meant “student”; second, he notes that “Fagott” might have circulated *sub rosa* to mean homosexual,⁶ and usage in this sense would have constituted a far worse offense on Bach's part. Both of Williams's theories sound a little far-fetched to me, but it would be interesting to know if there is supporting evidence for either of them.

As Williams's background as a performer comes to the fore, he sometimes suggests options that seem to go against mainstream historically-informed performance practice:

[Bach] may have deliberately planned the organ toccata in C major [BWV 564] to show off different ways of optionally using two manuals. . . . The first movement uses them antiphonally . . . the third for subject and episodes in a long fugue. (pp. 57–8)

On a practical level, I welcome the option of changing manuals in many situations, but it seems to me a bit of a stretch to suggest the toccata was “deliberately planned” that way. And when Williams goes on to say “very few players today . . . seem to be aware that it can be interpreted this way,” he all too easily ignores the work of people such as George Stauffer, who has convincingly shown that manual changes in the free organ works were apparently not intended by Bach unless explicitly indicated, as in the “Dorian” Toccata and the Prelude in E-flat Major.⁶

The most fascinating part of the book is found in Appendix 1, “A Sample Hypothesis.” Williams lists an impressive number of keyboard compositions—from those of the 1720 *Clavierbüchlein* to the “Schübler” Chorales—that were or could well have been written with Wilhelm Friedemann in mind, thus suggesting a “special relationship” (as Williams calls it) between Bach and his eldest son.

It seems to me that Williams hits the nail right on the head as he goes on to say,

[i]t is tempting to find in all this an explanation for Friedemann's relative failure in life after 1750. . . . Had he been over-encouraged by a driven and driving father, overburdened by living up to expectations, over-dependent on him, and over-afflicted by his death? . . . Was it a case of special love for a first son, recognition of an unusual talent, a keen desire to discern one? (pp. 201–2)

It is in this combination of musicology, common-sense psychology, and an almost Shakespearean sense of drama that I find Williams at his best. His book is fascinating reading for anyone who likes to question what we think we know about Bach. Rather than replacing Wolff—who would want to dispense with such an excellent and beautiful book as *The Learned Musician*—Williams is a welcome addition to it. More than Wolff's book, *The Life of Bach* could, I believe, also serve very well as an academic textbook (although some instructors may prefer Moroney's even more concise and—OK—more positivistic introduction for undergraduate classes⁷).

It is unfortunate that the index of Bach's works is by BWV number only. Although series titles (official or unofficial) are indicated, it is impossible to find, say, the *Capriccio sopra la lontananza* using the index if you do not have the Schmieder index or Wolff's biography at hand (assuming you are a mere mortal who does not know the BWV number of every single Bach work from memory!). If I may finish, à la Williams, with a question, is "continuo" really always a "simple [italics mine] accompaniment," as Williams defines it in his Appendix 2, "Some Terms"? Was it for Bach? C. P. E. Bach? J. P. Kirnberger? If the keyboard part of the middle movement of the Flute Sonata in B Minor, BWV 1030, is *de facto* a continuo realization, can it be called simple? Or is the definition prescriptive rather than descriptive on the author's part?

Jan-Piet Knijff

¹Peter Williams, "Decoding Bach 2: Clouds of Witness," *The Musical Times* 141 (Autumn 2000), 15.

²Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Norton, 2000), 75.

³In his 2000 review, Williams called the Capriccio "dreadful" ("Clouds of Witness," 14).

⁴Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 74–5.

⁵Robert Marshall, "In Search of Bach," *The New York Review of Books* 47, No. 10 (15 June 2000): 47–51.

⁶George Stauffer, "Bach's Organ Registration Reconsidered," in *J. S. Bach as Organist*, ed. George Stauffer and Ernest May (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 193–211.

⁷Davitt Moroney, *Bach: An Extraordinary Life* (London: The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2000).

"Bach Vespers and the Future" Holy Trinity Lutheran Church New York City July 8-10, 2005

The Bach Foundation of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York City will sponsor and host a symposium titled "Bach Vespers and the Future" from July 8-10, 2005. Bach Vespers is a ministry of Holy Trinity—featuring the Bach Choir and Bach Players, led by Cantor **Rick Erickson**—that presents Bach's works in the early eighteenth-century Leipzig Lutheran tradition. This symposium is for those who present performances of Bach's music or would like to—and for those who simply love Bach! The symposium features guest speaker and Society member **Michael Marissen** and performances of *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, BWV 147, and *Es wartet alles auf dich*, BWV 187. Workshops will include sessions on public relations, fundraising, board development, playing continuo, singing Bach, liturgical issues, period/modern instruments, and improvisation. Members of the Bach Choir, Bach Players, and Bach Foundation board members will be involved throughout the symposium. For further information and registration, visit or call

www.bachvespersnyc.org
212-877-6815

Follow in Bach's Footsteps from Arnstadt to Lünebeck August 31-September 4, 2005

The newly founded Internationale Dieterich-Buxtehude-Gesellschaft (IDBG) will sponsor a celebration of the 300th anniversary of Johann Sebastian Bach's historic walk from Arnstadt to Lünebeck this fall, featuring lectures and concerts in Arnstadt (August 31), Lüneburg (September 1), and Lünebeck (September 2-4). Most participants will travel by bus in considerably less time than it took Bach, but on September 2, if there is sufficient interest, Kerala Snyder will lead a group of walkers on a short portion of the road Bach walked between Hornbek and Mölln that remains in its original state. Snyder first followed Bach's path from the banks of the Elbe north of Lüneburg to Lünebeck in 1985 and wrote about it in the December 1986 issue of the *Musical Times*: "To Lünebeck in the Steps of J. S. Bach." The article contains a map of the route. Further details concerning this event will be posted on the IDBG website at www.dieterich-buxtehude.org. If you would like to support the IDBG's activities by becoming an active member, or would like to subscribe to the electronic newsletter, which is available in both German and English, you may do so at the website. Society members **Christoph Wolff** and **Kerala Snyder** are members, respectively, of the IDBG honorary advisory board and governing board.

Internationale Dieterich-Buxtehude-Gesellschaft (IDBG)
www.dieterich-buxtehude.org

James A. Brokaw, II, and Russell T. Stinson Awarded William H. Scheide Research Grants

Brokaw, of Portage, Indiana, and Stinson, professor of music and college organist at Lyon College, Batesville, Arkansas, will each receive \$1000 to support their joint research project titled "Brahms reading Bach: Brahms's Annotations to the Organ and Harpsichord Works in his Library." Their project will examine Brahms's handwritten annotations in his personal editions and manuscript copies of organ and harpsichord works by J.S. Bach. While several significant studies have relied heavily upon the Brahms *Nachlass*, and have described some of the annotations in general terms, none has focused on the annotations themselves. Through systematic study of the annotations, Brokaw and Stinson hope to refine our understanding of Brahms's reception of Bach as a composer, arranger, and informal scholar.

News from Members

On May 1, 2005, Bach Vespers of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York City presented a concert titled "The Leipzig Mass" that included the hemisphere premiere of Johann Kuhnau's recently rediscovered Mass in F for bass soloist and strings. Music historian Evangeline Rimbach, who located and edited the work for performance by bass Joe Damon Chappel and the Holy Trinity Bach Players, led by **Rick Erickson**, gave a pre-concert talk.

Anne Leahy (Dublin) and **Yo Tomita** (Queens University, Belfast) recently edited *Bach Studies from Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), which contains selected papers from the Tenth International Biennial Conference on Baroque Music (Trinity College, Dublin, July 2000). This volume contains articles by the editors as well as Society members **Gregory Butler**, **Don Franklin**, and **Robin Leaver**,

Steven Plank, professor and chair of the musicology department at Oberlin College, is the author of a new book titled *Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice* (Scarecrow Press, 2004).

Zephyrus, **Paul M. Walker's** early music vocal ensemble at the University of Virginia, just released its third CD, *Flemish Masters* (Virginia Arts Recordings) and will be choir-in-residence for one week this summer at Ely Cathedral (Ely, England).

Channan Willner recently completed his dissertation titled "Durational Pacing in Händel's Instrumental Works: The Nature of Temporality in the Music of the High Baroque" (CUNY Graduate Center, 2005). Although specifically devoted to Händel's music, Willner's study attempts to define a general theory of phrase rhythm for the high instrumental style of the late baroque.

Arthur Hartmann on Johann Sebastian Bach: "The Bach Bogey"

Mark A. Peters

Born in Philadelphia to Jewish-Hungarian parents, Arthur Hartmann (1881-1956) was recognized during the first quarter of the twentieth century as one of the world's leading violinists. A child prodigy, he made his first European concert tour at age eleven, and by the time he retired from the concert stage in 1929, he had performed over one thousand recitals throughout Europe and the United States. He served as one of the founding faculty members of the Eastman School of Music and was also well known for more than two hundred transcriptions for piano and violin, of works ranging from folk songs to compositions by Corelli, Mozart, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy, and others, that were regularly programmed by such performers as Fritz Kreisler, Jascha Heifetz, and Mischa Elman. Hartmann was famous in musical circles as much for his animated personality and storytelling abilities as for his violin playing, and during the early years of the twentieth century, he gained the admiration and friendship of such figures as Béla Bartók, Claude Debussy, Edvard Grieg, Charles Martin Loeffler, Marian MacDowell, Joseph Szigeti, and Eugène Ysaÿe.¹

Throughout his professional career, Hartmann was particularly noted for his performances of, and writings about, Johann Sebastian Bach's violin compositions. His recital programs regularly included Bach's Chaconne in D Minor, BWV 1004, and often the Violin Concerto in E Major, BWV 1042. In 1904 he published an article on the Chaconne that was later translated into German, French, and Dutch,² and he was understandably proud of the praise this article received from Grieg and Debussy. In a letter dated November 17, 1905, Grieg stated, "I realize now the full meaning of the Bach Chaconne and why you play it so wonderfully." And upon reading the article in 1910, Debussy wrote to Hartmann, "It is regretful that J. S. Bach is definitely dead, because he would have thanked you for defending his 'Chaconne' against the interpretations of certain great masters of the violin!"³ Hartmann later revised the Chaconne article and re-published it in the *Musical Courier* (August-September 1922) as part of a series of six essays on Bach's works for solo violin.

Hartmann's insight into the works of Bach is further illuminated in his brief unpublished essay "The Bach Bogey," a portion of which appears below.⁴ In this essay, he rails against Romanticized renditions of Bach's solo violin works and also against those who would play them at a rapid tempo with no regard for the music's construction. He argues instead for careful study of Bach's notation, and consideration of each work in terms of its polyphonic nature, underlying harmonies, inherent dance form, and embedded tempi. "The Bach Bogey" gives us a glimpse of Hartmann's careful reasoning and insightful musicianship, as well as his spirited humor.



Arthur Hartmann in 1916. Hartmann Collection, Music Department, The Free Library of Philadelphia through the generous donation of the ASCAP Foundation.

“The Bach Bogey” by Arthur Hartmann⁵

To be called a great Bach-player has always stood for an extraordinary achievement. Yet, why should this be so? Is Bach’s music harder to understand than that of Vivaldi or Corelli or Mozart or Debussy? That its execution, we refer specifically to the unaccompanied violin works, poses problems of some instrumental difficulty, chiefly through polyphony, we grant; yet surely not of the kind to merit extolling the executant into the extraordinary.

To this writer, it has in many cases appeared that the lauded “Bach interpreter” was performing in a tempo which was exasperatingly slow, and doubtlessly these enervating executants believed this constituted “depth of feeling” and true “classicism.” Be it said, once for all, that the tempo or movement, in other words the true proportion of any work, is IN the work itself, in its character, motifs, and phrases. If the twentieth century is incomparably more nervous than the eighteenth century of Bach’s time, it is, on the other hand, unforgivable for certain performers of some of these works to show their utter ignorance of the construction of old dance forms (as also of the complicated and contradictory questions of music ornamentation and the many ingenious “tricks” of inversions, diminutions, and another dozen contrapuntal devices) and play them in, shall we call it, a streamlined tempo? Or to make of a trill a copy of a rapid-firing machine-gun or modern electric alarm-clock?

Why these works have been upheld as so difficult of execution can be explained only on the grounds that violinists, generally speaking, are extremely limited mentalities, usually lacking in musicianship,

and like the instrument itself (being monophonic or single-voiced) are single-tracked and fail to see, hear, and understand the harmonies underlying these compositions.

Added to this is the fetish of fear in approaching Bach, than whom, in some instances, it would be hard to find examples of greater modernity, and whose music (again at times) combines deep and religious fervor with gigantic structure. On the other hand, we have a Bach of great simplicity and also lyricism. Furthermore, he was a man with no fewer than twenty children, and this point, we think, is well worth bearing in mind. For it is certain that no man is a “classic” to either his wife and children or to his friends and contemporaries, and, least of all, to himself. . . . Yet with what effort, physical and mental, with what visible strain of profundity the performer attacks these pleasant little, and quite unproblematic, dances!

¹See Samuel Hsu, Sidney Grolnic, and Mark A. Peters, eds., *Claude Debussy As I Knew Him* and *Other Writings of Arthur Hartmann* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003). This volume contains a biographical sketch of Hartmann; his informative and entertaining accounts of his relationships with Claude Debussy, Edvard Grieg, Joseph Joachim, Charles Martin Loeffler, and Eugène Ysaÿe; and the twenty-two letters from Claude Debussy and thirty-nine letters from Emma Debussy written to Hartmann during the years of their friendship. The book is based largely on Hartmann’s unpublished writings, which are held in the Hartmann Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

²Arthur Hartmann, “The ‘Ciaccona’ of Bach,” *Musical Courier*, 21 (September 1904): 14-15.

³The Grieg and Debussy letters are both part of the Hartmann Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia. Translation from Hsu, Grolnic, and Peters, *Claude Debussy As I Knew Him*, 12.

⁴Hartmann’s annotated typescript of “The Bach Bogey” is part of the Hartmann Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The typescript is not dated, but appears to have been written some time after his *Musical Courier* articles of 1922.

⁵Hartmann Collection, Music Department, The Free Library of Philadelphia through the generous donation of the ASCAP Foundation.

DIRECTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS

Bach Notes is published twice yearly (spring and fall) and mailed to all members and subscribers. Submissions for the Fall 2005 issue are due by July 31, 2005, and should be in Microsoft Word, employ endnotes, and follow the stylistic guidelines of *The Chicago Manual of Style (15th ed.)*. Email submissions (much preferred) should be sent to bachnotes@americanbachsociety.org and submissions on compact disc (CD), with hard copy, may be mailed to Reginald L. Sanders, Department of Music, Kenyon College, Gambier, OH 43022.

CALL FOR PAPERS
American Bach Society's Fourteenth Biennial Meeting
Bach-Archiv Leipzig, Germany
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The theme of the meeting will be "Bach Crossing Borders." The conference will include lectures and performances, an exhibition of Bach manuscripts and other Bachiana, as well as excursions to points of interest around Leipzig. Proposals for papers on all aspects of Bach research are invited, but of particular interest are those that focus on the conference theme, whose figurative meaning offers various paths of inquiry. A one-page, double-spaced abstract should be submitted, preferably as an e-mail attachment, by September 1, 2005, to:

Mary Dalton Greer
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Mark A. Peters earned his Ph.D. in historical musicology at the University of Pittsburgh (2003) with a dissertation on Mariana von Ziegler's sacred cantata texts and their settings by J. S. Bach. He has presented conference papers on Bach, Ziegler, and Johannes Brahms, and his publications include articles in *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute* and the monograph *Claude Debussy As I Knew Him and Other Writings of Arthur Hartmann* (University of Rochester Press, 2003), with Samuel Hsu and Sidney Grolnic. Peters is currently assistant professor of music at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL.

Steffen Voss studied musicology and Italian literature at the University of Bologna and is currently a doctoral candidate in musicology at the University of Hamburg, where he is writing a dissertation on the oratorios of Johann Mattheson. His master's thesis on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music collection of the village of Udestedt, Thuringia, will be published later this year. He is currently on staff at the east German division of RISM and is also preparing an edition of the surviving fragment of Vivaldi's opera *Moteczuma* for the Italian Vivaldi Institute. An accomplished performing artist, Voss also plays bassoon and curtal in various early music ensembles.

Paul M. Walker is associate professor of music at the University of Virginia, where he directs the early music performance activities and teaches courses in music before 1750. He is the author of the articles on "Fugue" and related topics in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001) and was awarded the Society's William H. Scheide Prize (2002) for his book *Theories of Fugue from the Age of Josquin to the Age of Bach* (University of Rochester Press, 2000). Walker is currently editing volume 11 (sacred vocal works for five and six voices) of *The Collected Works of Buxtehude* (Broude Trust).

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