

## BACH



## NOTES

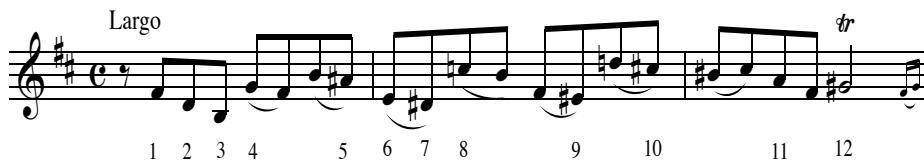
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN BACH SOCIETY

## BACH AND CHROMATIC COMPLETION:

A NEW FIELD FOR ANALYTIC RESEARCH

EDWARD GREEN

There were advocates of dodecaphonic serialism, Schönberg and Webern most clearly, who wished to present Bach as a musical John the Baptist, announcing (centuries in advance) the advent of a new tonal dispensation.<sup>1</sup> No longer would diatonicism rule, but chromaticism—moreover, a chromaticism of great density. Consider the subject of the Fugue in B Minor from the first book of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, which is given in Example 1 below. In the course of a mere twenty notes, and in a completely linear manner, all twelve members of the chromatic aggregate present themselves, as indicated below.



Example 1: Fugue in B Minor, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I, mm. 1-3.

There has been speculation that Bach designed this subject as a subtle reassertion of the principal idea behind the collection: the relative equality of all twelve key centers. The subject of this fugue states this idea in terms of individual pitches—although from a twentieth-century point of view, and in consideration of the “rule of non-repetition of pitch-class” that orthodox serialism imposes on a composer, Bach would have to edit out the eight extra tones.

However one chooses to regard this remarkable fugue subject relative to the musical procedures of the Second Viennese School, it is clear that a correspondence exists between a formal musical unit—the subject—and the completion of the chromatic aggregate. The question arises, is this correspondence merely fortuitous? Or, if intended, is it to be considered *sui*

*generis*, a unique technical response appropriate for the symbolism of a fugue that stands at the completion of a set honoring the chromatic universe—a technique, therefore, that one would not expect to encounter elsewhere in Bach’s work.

Either explanation seems plausible enough. Yet, surprisingly, the truth seems to lie elsewhere. Bach quite often organized his music so that crucial points of structural articulation correspond to points at which the final constituent of the chromatic aggregate appears. As is now increasingly well known, primarily through the work of James M. Baker and Henry Burnett<sup>2</sup> (and I have also published on the subject<sup>3</sup>), composers of the Classical period, especially Haydn and Mozart, were adept at creating structures of this type. What has not been considered ade-

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gate is completed with the arrival of B $\flat$  in m. 24, but there is an F $\sharp$  in m. 25.

A third, more subtle, example is found in the opening chorale of the cantata *Schau, lieber Gott, wie meine Feind*, BWV 153. However one ponders the tonal orientation of this movement (and Eric Chafe gives a very interesting account of its modal colorations in *Analyzing Bach's Cantatas*<sup>4</sup>), it is apparent that its fourteenth and final measure is cadential in E (again with a Picardie third), making the movement “modally diatonic” (see Example 4). Where, then, do we encounter the twelfth and completing tone of the chromatic aggregate? Exactly one-half beat earlier, with the arrival of C $\sharp$  at the end of m. 13.

### Evidence from the Recitatives and an Aria

Many of Bach's recitatives display similar features of chromatic completion. Consider, for example, “Er kommt, er kommt, der Bräutigam kommt,” the first recitative of *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, BWV 140, which is in C minor and thirteen measures long (see Example 5). The last constituent of the chromatic aggregate, D $\flat$ , appears

Example 4: “Schau, lieber Gott, wie meine Feind,” BWV 153/1; keyboard reduction—text and basso continuo have been omitted.

on the downbeat of m. 11, and the concluding two measures are diatonic (where the B $\natural$  is indicative of the harmonic minor scale).

It is also fascinating to observe that later in this cantata, in the fourth-movement chorale setting for tenor, “Zion hört die Wächter singen,” there is a similar single unfolding of the aggregate. The final chromatic tone to appear in this E $\flat$ -major movement is D $\flat$  in m. 71. The remaining three measures, again, are diatonic.<sup>5</sup>

Example 5: “Er kommt, er kommt, der Bräutigam kommt,” BWV 140/2.

In the *St. Matthew Passion*, several of the recitatives display features congruent with the idea that Bach, however consciously or sub-consciously, associated the completion of a musical form with the completion of the chromatic aggregate. Consider the work's first recitative, "Da Jesus diese Rede vollendet hatte," which is eight measures long and travels tonally from G major to B minor. As may be seen in Example 6, the first chromatic tone to arrive is C#, which is heard in measure five. Two measures later—the penultimate measure—we hear the remaining chromatic tones: D# on the downbeat, A# half a beat later, and then, simultaneously on the fourth beat, E# and G#—thus

Example 6: "Da Jesus diese Rede vollendet hatte," BWV 244/2; vn I, vn II, and va constitute the "strings" of the upper staff.

completing the aggregate immediately in time for the eighth measure's perfect cadence in the new tonality.

Another very interesting example can be found in the third movement of the "Coffee" Cantata, BWV 211. In the double recitative "Du böses Kind"/"Herr Vater," Schlendrian completes his portion of the recitative within the first four measures of the movement. But this is not all he completes; his music also presents all twelve tones, as seen in Example 7.

The idea of an "introduction" presenting all twelve tones—an idea already somewhat illustrated through the previous two examples—can be seen vividly in the next. This example does not involve a recitative, however, but rather the orchestral introduction to the aria "Nimm mich dir zu eigen hin" from the cantata *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen*, BWV 65. Thirty-two measures long, this introduction presents the eleventh and twelfth members of the aggregate, A $\flat$  and E $\flat$ , in m. 29. The final three measures are diatonic.

### Evidence from the Solo Keyboard Music

Chromatic completion is also present in Bach's instrumental music. In the twenty-eight-measure Sarabande

Example 7: "Du böses Kind"/"Herr Vater," BWV 211/3, mm. 1-5.

from the Partita in B $\flat$  Major, BWV 825, the twelfth note of the aggregate, D $\flat$ , appears in m. 26. With the exception of an E $\natural$  in the bass that functions as the leading tone to the dominant F, the remainder of the movement is entirely diatonic.

The opening movement of the Partita in C Minor, BWV 826, is tripartite in structure—Grave, Andante, Allegro. Chromatic completion is observed in the seven-measure Grave, where the final member of the aggregate, F $\sharp$ , is reached in the concluding measure. Further scrutiny of this introductory section reveals another very interesting compositional feature. Since the minor mode nearly always makes use of both the lowered and the raised sixth and seventh scale degrees, the three most “chromatically sensitive” tones—the ones that truly stand out to the ear—are the lowered second and the raised third and fourth scale degrees. In the Grave, the pitches corresponding to these scale degrees appear in the order E $\natural$  (m. 3), D $\flat$  (m. 3), and F $\sharp$  (m. 7), and this is precisely the order in which they are presented in the ensuing Andante and Allegro. Perhaps, just perhaps, this ever-so-subtle touch of “serialization” helps to unify the three sections.

If we turn to the first of the English Suites, BWV 806 in A major, we observe another aspect of chromatic completion that can be called “linkage.” By this term, I wish to draw attention to a particular design feature in which the twelfth tone of the aggregate occurs so as to connect two otherwise separate musical units—the first unit being fulfilled exactly at the arrival of the second. Linkage occurs in this work between Bourrées I and II. Bourrée I makes use of all the notes of the chromatic aggregate except C $\sharp$ , and the very first note of Bourrée II is that missing C $\sharp$ .

### Further Instances of Linkage

A very similar structure, but with an extra and fascinatingly subtle feature, may be seen in the two Menuets of the Suite for Solo Cello in G Major, BWV 1007. As in the English Suite, the G-Major first Menuet contains an unfolding of the entire aggregate, except for the lowered third scale degree, B $\flat$ , as seen in Example 8a. This missing note is supplied by the first note of the following Menuet in G minor (see Example 8b), which itself, in its own manner, likewise presents just eleven tones: C $\sharp$  is now the missing note. In performance, of course, the G-Major Menuet would return da capo, and its final chromatic pitch, C $\sharp$  in m. 19, would complete the unfinished cycle of the G-Minor Menuet.<sup>6</sup>

Since Bach’s output is not only vast but also vastly subtle and ingenious, one hesitates to point to any particular compositional design and call it especially remarkable. So I hesitate—but then go ahead; for to my knowledge,

nowhere else in Bach’s music is there a structure just like this one—linking two units of a large-scale ternary structure so closely by means of cycles of chromatic completion.

Yet it is equally clear that Bach found other opportunities to employ linkage—and with striking effect. Consider the motet *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*, BWV 190,

Menuet I

7

First cycle begins. (G $\sharp$ )

13

(D $\sharp$ ) (F $\sharp$ )

19

\*\* = End of second cycle. (This cycle begins in Menuet II).

Example 8a: Menuet I, BWV 1007/5

Menuet II

(B $\flat$ ) Second cycle begins. (F $\sharp$ )

7

(E $\flat$ )

13

(B $\flat$ ) (A $\flat$ )

19

Menuet I da capo

\* = End of first cycle.

Example 8b: Menuet II, BWV 1007/6



whose four sections make use of structures in which all twelve tones unfold, as well as cycles in which only eleven unfold. In the first section, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, two complete unfoldings of the aggregate are followed by an incomplete unfolding that lacks only  $D\flat$ , the lowered third scale degree of the principal key of the motet,  $B\flat$ . It is notable that the earlier, complete unfoldings conclude precisely on the later-missing  $D\flat$ —though in the first instance the enharmonic equivalent,  $C\sharp$ , is used.

The second section, in common time, is similar. In this instance, however, a single complete unfolding, which ends with the arrival of  $C\sharp$ , is followed by an incomplete unfolding in which  $D\flat$ , once again, is the missing pitch.

The third section, by contrast, contains no incomplete unfoldings and displays a perfect equation of form and content: the complete unfolding is followed by a short diatonic coda. Since the tonality appears to focus on  $E\flat$  (albeit with strong Mixolydian coloration), the completion of the cycle on  $F\sharp$  appears to maintain the general design: emphasis on the raised second/lowered third scale degree.

The first three sections may be seen as variations on a basic “design concept” and the fourth and concluding section (in  $\frac{3}{8}$  time) may be seen in a similar light. After the single complete cycle of section three, a single incomplete cycle is seen in section four. What is lacking?  $D\flat$ .

Again, there are grounds for wonder at Bach’s extraordinary architectonic sense. A study of his compositions in terms of chromatic completion merely confirms what we already knew—only, I believe, from a surprisingly fresh perspective.

### Point-of-Furthest-Remove

Students of music of the Classical period are familiar with Leonard Ratner’s concept of the “point-of-furthest-remove”—that point in a sonata-form movement where the tonality is farthest from the home key, and where the music begins arching back toward the re-establishment of the original tonality. Although the sonata form of Haydn or Beethoven did not exist for Bach, a point-of-furthest-remove may nevertheless be identified, and it is often associated with the completion of the chromatic aggregate. Take, for example, the aria “Seht, was die Liebe tut” from the cantata *Ich bin ein guter Hirt*, BWV 85, which is in  $E\flat$  major and ternary in form. The opening and closing A sections are almost totally diatonic (there is a single  $A\sharp$  in the second A section in m. 59). The B section cadences in G minor in m. 49, just before the return of the concluding A section, making these cadential measures the point-of-furthest-remove—both harmonically and

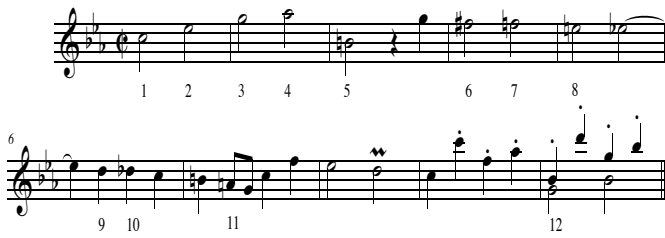
structurally. The completion of the chromatic aggregate also occurs at this point, as the cycle is completed by the  $C\sharp$  that appears in m. 47.

Perhaps even clearer is the design of the Sarabande from the Orchestral Suite in B Minor, BWV 1067. The opening section of this binary-form movement cadences naturally enough in the dominant, and midway in the B section the music returns to the tonality of B, though at first with a touch of the parallel major. At the point-of-furthest-remove, just before the tonality begins its return to B minor, the final member of the chromatic aggregate,  $C\sharp$ , appears in m. 24.

### Concluding Remarks

I end this essay with two remarks. The first is philosophic. The great American philosopher Eli Siegel, the founder of Aesthetic Realism, wrote extensively about the interaction of art and life. “The world, art, and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites,” he stated.<sup>7</sup> And the work of Bach surely provides evidence for the truth of this philosophic idea. We know that Bach had a tremendous interest in the concept of completeness. It is reflected in *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, in the design of the *Goldberg Variations*, in the plan for *The Art of the Fugue*, and many other works. At the same time, Bach was an intensely dramatic composer—and drama, with its requisite suspense, relies upon the incomplete. As all the examples cited here indicate, chromatic completion depends upon the dynamic interaction of these very opposites: one yearns, however subconsciously, for that completing tone; one is palpably aware of incompleteness.<sup>8</sup> And when chromatic completion takes the form of “linkage,” as we observed in the Suite for Solo Cello and in the motet, not only are the opposites of the complete and the incomplete strongly present, but so too are the opposites of separation and junction. These two pairs of opposites—ontologically present in all reality—are also primal in the experience of music.

The second remark concerns a possible attribution. Much thought has been spent, and much ink spilled, on the subject of who, precisely, wrote the royal theme of the *Musical Offering*. Whoever it was thought in terms of chromatic completion—or, at the very least, designed a structure that fairly cries out for the use of linkage, since this theme takes a melodic path that gradually reveals eleven of the twelve chromatic pitches. In the Ricercar *a 3*, for example, chromatic completion clearly coincides with the formal structure: the remaining pitch,  $B\flat$ , arrives precisely as the second voice enters the musical texture, as may be seen in m. 10 of Example 9.



Example 9: Ricercar *a* 3 from BWV 1079, mm. 1-10.

The situation is similar in the Ricercar *a* 6, only the B $\flat$  now arrives slightly later, as the second pitch in the answering voice. In many other portions of this extraordinary contrapuntal collection, the principle of chromatic completion is equally evident. I give just one further instance. In the Canon *a* 4 the twelfth (and completing) tone once again is the flatted seventh scale degree, in this case F $\sharp$ . This “missing pitch” arrives just as the second voice enters; it is the sixteenth note in the counterpoint to the newly added voice.

Who, at Frederick’s court, was most likely to have had an awareness of the technique of chromatic completion? The answer, one imagines, is C. P. E. Bach. And there are pieces by him that also illustrate chromatic completion. But—ah—that is an entirely different essay.

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Anton Webern, “The Path to the New Music” and “The Path to Twelve-Note Composition” in *The Path to the New Music*, ed. Willi Reich, tr. Leo Black (Bryn Mawr, PA: Theodore Presser Co., 1963), 9-41 and 42-56.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Baker’s “Chromaticism in Classical Music,” in *Music Theory and the Exploration of the Past*, ed. Christopher Hatch and David M. Bernstein (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 233-307, and Burnett and Shaugh O’Donnell, “Linear Ordering of the Chromatic Aggregate in Classical Symphonic Music,” in *Music Theory Spectrum* 18, no. 1 (Spring, 1996): 22-50.

<sup>3</sup>See Green, “Chromatic Completion in the Late Vocal Music of Haydn and Mozart—A Technical, Philosophic, and Historical Study” Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2008. Among my earlier writings on the subject are “The Principle of Chromatic Saturation in the Late Choral Music of Mozart and Haydn,” *Choral Journal* 46, no. 12 (June 2006): 35-50, and “Donald Francis Tovey, Aesthetic Realism, and the Need for a Philosophic Musicology,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 36, no. 2 (December 2005): 227-248. My essay “Haydn’s Secret *Dodecaphonic* Art” is forthcoming in *Goldberg* in 2009.

<sup>4</sup>(New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 111-117.

<sup>5</sup>My analysis is in keeping with that of the many scholars who

read the bass line of m. 56 as having first an E $\sharp$ , and then an E $\flat$ , rather than two diatonic tones. See, for example, Johann Sebastian Bach, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, ed. Günter Raphael (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, c. 1963).

<sup>6</sup>Also of interest from Bach’s music for strings is the opening Adagio of the Violin Sonata in G Major, BWV 1021. In this movement, every member of the chromatic aggregate is presented except B $\flat$ . The “upbeat” second movement complements the first in tempo and completes the aggregate, as B $\flat$ , presented two measures from the end, is its last chromatic pitch.

<sup>7</sup>Cited in my essay “A Note on Two Conceptions of Aesthetic Realism,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 45, no. 4 (October 2005): 439.

<sup>8</sup>Chromatic circulation, as defined earlier, does not provide a sense of structural closure. As employed by Bach, however, it often juxtaposes opposites of another kind—diatonic and chromatic.

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

### *Bach Perspectives* 8

### “Bach and the Oratorio Tradition”

Daniel R. Melamed, editor

The American Bach Society invites the submission of essays for consideration for publication in *Bach Perspectives* 8, whose topic will be “Bach and the Oratorio Tradition.”

Essays on all aspects of the subject, including Bach’s oratorios, their connection to earlier and later repertoires, performance, context, and interpretation, are welcome.

Papers should be approximately 6000 words in length and should be sent in electronic form to Daniel R. Melamed by 1 September 2008 at the e-mail address [dmelamed@indiana.edu](mailto:dmelamed@indiana.edu). If necessary materials may be sent in both paper and electronic form to D. Melamed, School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405 USA.

## Book Review

*Die Orgeln Johann Sebastian Bachs. Ein Handbuch*, by Christoph Wolff and Markus Zepf. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006. 192pp. Euro 16.80 (softcover).

If asked to name the instrument most closely associated with Johann Sebastian Bach, chances are most Bach enthusiasts and scholars would immediately choose the organ. If pressed to describe in detail any one organ that Bach might have known or played, most respondents would probably be stumped. Readers may now fill the gaps in their organological knowledge with *Die Orgeln Johann Sebastian Bachs*, the recently published handbook by Christoph Wolff and Markus Zepf. The last book to appear on the topic of Bach and the organ was Werner David's *Johann Sebastian Bach's Orgeln* (Berlin: [Brüder Hartmann], 1951), and a new contribution had been long overdue. The present book should not, however, be considered merely an updated version of David's study. The older study was more or less biographical, designed to identify the most important organs with which Bach had been associated during the several stages of his career. Wolff and Zepf, on the other hand, focus on the organs themselves. The book discusses, systematically and comprehensively, all the organs that are demonstrably connected to Bach. The treatment of the individual instruments serves to illuminate Bach's interest in the organ, not only as a composer and performer but also as an expert in its design, construction, maintenance, and restoration. The study might even be considered a supplement or an extensive appendix to Wolff's magisterial Bach biography, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (Norton, 2000), in which the organ is presented as central to understanding Bach's development as a performer and composer.

The book is clearly laid out. The front matter consists of a foreword that serves as a basic statement of purpose, an introductory sketch of Bach the organist, organ composer, and organ expert, a chronological table of important dates concerning Bach's involvement with the organ, and two pages of maps indicating the cities in which Bach lived, the places he visited, and places associated with the Bach family. The introductory sketch is really the only essay in this book that otherwise contains mostly informational tables and charts.

The authors make the bold claim that Bach's knowledge of individual timbres and sound combinations—acquired through his activities as organist and organ expert—contributed to his ability to “draw stops” as a composer of vocal and instrumental music. Only as an organist could Bach have had the imagination to come up with the instrumentation found in the cantatas *Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee vom Himmel fällt* (BWV 18, 4 viols) and *Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn* (BWV 152, recorder, oboe, viola d'amore, viola da gamba), or in the “Quoniam” of the Mass in B Minor (horn and 2 bassoons) (p. 13). While Bach's ear for affective if unusual instrumental combinations may well have developed as a result of his time spent on the organ

bench, I would add that he may also have been influenced in this respect by his boyhood performances of concerted works scored for a variety of instruments as a member of the *chorus musicus* directed by his father Ambrosius, the Eisenach town musician.<sup>1</sup>

The bulk of the material is contained in part I, “Die Orgeln Johann Sebastian Bachs,” which is divided into two sections. The first of these concerns the organs demonstrably connected to Bach and is arranged alphabetically by geographical location, from Altenburg to Zschortau. Under each entry detailed information is provided concerning the general and architectural history of the church, construction history of the organ, disposition of the organ as Bach would have known it (list of stops and other pertinent data), the pitch at which the organ was tuned (*Kammerton*, *Chorton*, or variants of these), temperament of the organ, if known (typically some type of modified meantone in accordance with the writings of Andreas Werckmeister), wind pressure if identifiable, and references to source materials and literature.

The second section presents data on fourteen reference instruments in places Bach is known to have visited. While no documentation connects Bach directly to any of these instruments (located in places such as Berlin, Erfurt, Gotha, Lübeck, and Potsdam), the instruments are included here to provide a comprehensive survey of the organ culture of central and northern Germany.

One of the most revealing sections is the overview of the seventy-five organs surveyed in the book (pp. 139–41). Of these instruments, only eight of the organs that Bach knew and six of the reference organs are fully extant. Partially extant are fourteen organs that Bach knew and four reference instruments. Because it is possible to see and hear only a few of the instruments known to Bach, this thoroughly researched and clearly organized book is an especially valuable resource and guide to the instruments that engaged Bach regularly and deeply throughout his career. The book is also beautifully appointed with photographs and historical illustrations, many of which provide tantalizing glimpses of existing organs and wistful remembrances of lost ones.

The second part of the book deals with organs Bach examined and reviewed, whether new installations or reconstructions of existing instruments. While Bach is known to have been involved with about twenty such projects (the actual number may well be much higher), only seven of his reports (*Orgelgutachten*) survive. All seven *Orgelgutachten*, though previously published elsewhere, are conveniently reproduced here. Appended to this part of the book is a reproduction of a mid-eighteenth-century guide for examining organs (“Anweisung zum Orgelexamen”) attributed to Gottfried Silbermann. Although this document is in no way connected to Bach, it nevertheless provides an idea of what Bach would have been looking for when he examined a new or rebuilt organ.



The third part of the book provides an annotated list of organ builders known personally by Bach, other builders from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries associated with the organs Bach knew, and selected builders from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, several of whom were involved with rebuilding or restoring instruments known by Bach.

Although Bach never again had a full-time organ position after his Weimar years, his interest in and engagement with the instrument continued in earnest, whether he was composing new works, submitting specifications for new instruments, recommending action on a repair or restoration project, examining an organ, or giving a dedicatory recital. The organ, perhaps more than any other instrument, held a central position for Bach at all stages of his career. For their efforts to provide “modern interpreters, listeners, and organ enthusiasts, at a glance, knowledge of the spectrum of organs known to Bach, in all their breadth and variety” (p. 15), Wolff and Zepf are to be commended. Bach scholars and enthusiasts, especially those with an interest in the organ, would do well to become acquainted with this book.

Jason B. Grant

<sup>1</sup> For more on Bach and the *chorus musicus*, see Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 21–25.

### The Society to Award William H. Scheide Research Grants

The William H. Scheide Research Grant, a stipend ordinarily ranging from \$500 to \$4000, is awarded biennially to a member of the Society to support a research project on Bach or figures in his circle. This grant is ordinarily available to Ph.D. candidates as well as those who have held the doctorate for no longer than seven years. Awards will normally go to citizens or permanent residents of the United States or Canada.

Applications should include a research proposal of no more than three double-spaced pages, along with a curriculum vitae and a budget, all in English. The committee will favor proposals that include concrete statements of (1) the materials to be consulted (specific scores, books, instruments, etc.) if research in libraries or archives is proposed, and why it is necessary to examine them on-site; (2) a clear itinerary if travel is involved; and (3) the nature of the ultimate outcome of the research (book, article, edition, etc.).

Grants will be awarded in odd-numbered years, with applications due in the fall of the preceding year. To apply, please send the application materials requested above and a budget by 15 October 2008 to [awards@americanbachsociety.org](mailto:awards@americanbachsociety.org).

## Tanya Kevorkian Awarded the 2008 William H. Scheide Prize

Every two years, the Society honors a publication or publications of exceptional merit on Bach or figures in his circle by a Society member in the early stages of his or her career. The William H. Scheide Prize, awarded for an outstanding book, article, or edition that appeared in the previous two calendar years, is possible because of the generosity of William Scheide.

This year’s committee, which consisted of Mary Dalton Greer, Robin Leaver, and Jeanne Swack, awarded the prize to Tanya Kevorian for her book *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig 1650-1750* (Ashgate, 2007).



Tanya Kevorkian is an associate professor of history at Millersville University (Millersville, PA). Her main research interests are the social history of music and the social history of religion in Germany during the Baroque era. She is currently working on her second book, *The Social History of Music in Germany during the Baroque Era*.

## A Parting Message from Gregory Butler Society President, 2004-2008

At the business meeting in Bethlehem I gave my final address as president to the membership of the Society and I want to summarize here the points I made for those who were not present.

During the past four years, the executive has brought to completion (or very nearly) initiatives of the previous executive. The long overdue revision of the constitution and by-laws of the Society have been carried out and the membership will receive a copy in due course. The Society has been reincorporated in the state of Ohio with its address at the Riemenschneider Bach Institute in Berea, the home of its archives. In addition the format of the revamped newsletter of the Society, *Bach Notes*, has been extended and enhanced so that under the editorship of Reggie Sanders it is now one of the finest of its kind anywhere.

When I came into office my priority was the yearbook of the Society, *Bach Perspectives*, and I set as my goal the publication of volumes 6 and 7 by 2007. As volume editor of both volumes and with the hard work of the staff of the University of Illinois Press led by William Regier, I achieved that goal. In order to assure the timely publication of *Bach Perspectives* and act as liaison with the press, during the publication of volume 7 George Stauffer was elected to the newly-created executive position of general editor. In addition, a gift of \$25,000 from an anonymous donor allowed us to set up a publications fund that has put the production of *Bach Perspectives* on a more stable financial footing. More recently we have received a generous gift of \$100,000 from another anonymous donor to be invested as an

endowment allowing us to reach out to the public and fund Bach-related educational projects.

During my tenure as president the Society held two notable biennial conferences. The first, in 2006, took place in Leipzig with the Bach Archiv Leipzig taking care of local arrangements. This, the first conference of the Society held outside of the United States, with “Crossing Borders” as a most fitting focus, was an unqualified success and served to establish our presence internationally while at the same time strengthening our relationship with Bach scholars and scholarly institutions in Germany. The second meeting, this spring in Bethlehem (where the Society first met), was a “going back to our roots” meeting with “Bach and the Oratorio Tradition” as its subject, again a most fitting one in light of the presence of The Bethlehem Bach Choir, whose director, Greg Funfgeld, and his staff welcomed us.

The Society faces important challenges. Most important perhaps is the overhaul of our website to bring it into line with those of other scholarly societies and make it a vital source of communication and research for those interested in Bach, and for the wider public thirsty for knowledge. At the same time we must build on our base and attract new members who will sustain the Society and carry on its mission.

I wish to thank my executive, Mary Dalton Greer, Matthew Dirst, and George Stauffer for their hard work and support. My thanks go as well to the members of the Advisory Board and Editorial Board.

## Newly-Elected Officers of the Society

**Mary Dalton Greer, president,** is active as a musicologist and conductor. She is the artistic director of both “Cantatas in Context,” a Bach cantata series she founded in collaboration with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s in New York City, and “The Bach Experience,” a joint production with the Handel and Haydn Society in Boston. She has held faculty positions at Yale University and Montclair State University (NJ) and her publications include “From the House of Aaron to the House of Johann Sebastian: Old Testament Roots for the Bach Family Tree”



in *About Bach* (Univ. of Illinois Press, 2008), “Embracing Faith: The Duet as Metaphor in Selected Sacred Cantatas by J. S. Bach,” and a study of nineteenth-century performances of Bach’s music in New York City, which appeared in *Bach Perspectives* 5. She is currently writing a book on the annotations in J. S. Bach’s personal copy of the Calov Bible commentary. For the Society, Greer edited the Newsletter from 1996 to 2000, served as secretary-treasurer from 2001 to 2004, and as vice president from 2004 to 2008.

**Lynn Edwards Butler, vice-president,** is an organist specializing in the music of the North German Baroque and J. S. Bach. Her recording “Festival Chorales of J.S. Bach” appears on the Loft Recordings label. Butler is also active as an organologist and her articles on Bach’s organ music and Central German organ building have appeared in Festschriften honoring Barbara Owen, Harald Vogel, and Peter Williams, and in *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*, the *Organ Yearbook*, and the *Bach-Jahrbuch* (forthcoming). She



is co-founder of the Westfield Center, a non-profit organization recognized internationally for its advocacy on behalf of classical keyboard instruments —organ, harpsichord, clavichord, fortepiano—and for outstanding workshops and symposia, publications, and international tours to historic instruments. Butler served as director of the Center from 1979 to 1999.

**Mark Peters, secretary-treasurer,** earned his Ph.D. in historical musicology at the University of Pittsburgh in 2003 with a dissertation on Mariane 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 the monograph *A Woman’s Voice in Baroque Music: Mariane von Ziegler and J. S. Bach* (Ashgate, 2008) and articles in *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*. In 2006 he



was the recipient of the Society’s William H. Scheide Prize and he is currently associate professor of music at Trinity Christian College (Palos Heights, IL).



## News From Members

**Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity** capped its 40th season with Bach SommerFest NYC, “Bach on Central Park” (July 17-20), featuring Cantor Georg Christoph Biller of St. Thomas Church, Leipzig, and noted Bach scholar **Michael Marissen** of Swarthmore College. The series featured workshops in performance, lectures by Biller and Marissen, open rehearsals conducted by Biller, as well as worship services rendered as they would have been in Bach’s day. Bach’s annotated copy of the Calov Bible commentary was also on display in connection with an exhibit at the American Bible Society on “Martin Luther and the Bible of the Reformation.” During its 40th season Bach Vespers, under the artistic direction of Cantor Rick Erickson, presented twenty-four Vespers that included fifteen Bach cantatas, all the motets, the Magnificat, BWV 243a, the *Easter Oratorio*, BWV 249, and two performances of the *St. Matthew Passion*. For more information, visit [www.bachvespersnyc.org](http://www.bachvespersnyc.org).

**Richard Benedum**, professor emeritus, University of Dayton (OH), will present his paper “What did Bach learn from Buxtehude?” at the College Music Society Conference in Atlanta in Fall 2008.

As contributions to *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: The Complete Works*, **Darrell Berg** recently edited two parts of a volume containing keyboard sonatas by Bach that he published in anthologies during his lifetime (Series I, 5.1 and 5.2: *Sonatas Published Individually*), and as part of the same project she will edit a volume of Bach’s Lieder (Series VI/1.1: *Gellert Lieder and Anhang to the Gellert Lieder*). Berg has also been busy serving as translator and annotator of a bilingual edition of the letters of Christian Gottfried Krause, author of *Von der musikalischen Poesie* (1752) and co-editor with Karl Wilhelm Ramler of *Oden mit Melodien* (1753, 1755). The monograph, to be published by Ashgate, will be entitled *The Correspondence of Christian Gottfried Krause: A Music Lover in the Age of Sensibility*.

The Louisville Bach Society, now in its 45th season and conducted by founder **Melvin Dickinson**, held the First Annual Gerhard Herz Young Artists’ Competition in Vocal Performance on May 17. The prize money, which totaled \$7,000, was awarded to Angela Smucker, first place, Evan Boyer, second place, and Colleen Hughes, third place. For information on the upcoming season, which begins August 24 with a special concert and commences with the subscription series on October 12, visit [louisvillebachsociety.org](http://louisvillebachsociety.org).

In May **Matthew Dirst** conducted a performance of Bach’s secular cantata *Der Streit zwischen Phoebus and Pan*, BWV 201, at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts in Houston. The program, which concluded the 2007-08

Ars Lyrica Houston season, was entitled “Duelling Divas” and included Händel’s dramatic cantata *Il duello amoroso*, HWV 82, plus the first local performance of Bach’s Second Brandenburg Concerto on period instruments, featuring Nathaniel Mayfield on Baroque trumpet. For more information, visit [www.arslyricahouston.org](http://www.arslyricahouston.org)

**Raymond Erickson** has been busy enlightening audiences on two of Bach’s masterpieces. In March he lectured on the *St. John Passion* at the 71st Whittier College Bach Festival in California, and in June, under the sponsorship of Early Music America, he lectured on the Ciaccona from the Partita for Solo Violin, BWV 1004, at the National Performing Arts Convention in Denver, where he was assisted by violinist Ellie Kang.

**Quentin Faulkner’s** book *The Registration of J.S. Bach’s Organ Works* was recently published by Wayne Leupold Editions, Inc. Faulkner and Mary Murrell Faulkner will be busy from October 6 through 17 leading a tour, “Bach’s Organ World,” in which participants will have the opportunity to visit, hear, and play central German organs of particular significance. For more information visit [www.concept-tours.com](http://www.concept-tours.com)

The “Salisbury Bach and Handel Festival,” under the direction of **Dale Higbee**, begins its 21<sup>st</sup> season with a concert on October 10 of Bach cantatas including *Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir*, BWV 131, and *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61. For more information, visit [www.carolinabaroque.org](http://www.carolinabaroque.org).

**Jan-Piet Knijff** read a paper entitled “Bach’s Prelude in E-flat Major (BWV 552<sup>1</sup>): Analysis, Performance, Teaching” at the Tenth Conference of the Dutch-Flemish Society for Music Theory in March in Maastricht. This paper is forthcoming in the *Dutch Journal of Music Theory*. And in June the American Guild of Organists named Knijff a Fellow, the highest level of the Guild’s professional certification program. In the process of attaining this status, Knijff won the FAGO Prize for the highest overall score on the Fellowship exam, as well as the S. Lewis Elmer Award for the highest overall score on any of the upper-level exams.

**Mark Peters** took his expertise to South America in June, lecturing in Ecuador on Bach’s cantatas within the context of the Leipzig liturgy. His particular focus was “Bach and the feast of St. John the Baptist (BWV 167).”

*Music for a Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann’s Instrumental Works* is the title of **Steven Zohn’s** book recently published by Oxford University Press. In September, Zohn will perform works by C.P.E. Bach for flute and keyboard with David Yearsley, fortepiano, at Cornell University and Temple University.



**The American Bach Society's  
15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Meeting,  
"Bach and the Oratorio Tradition,"  
was held May 8-11, 2008, at  
Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA**

The varied program included a keynote address, four paper sessions, a roundtable discussion, performances and lectures offered as part of the 101<sup>st</sup> Bethlehem Bach Festival, an excursion to the harpsichord workshop of Willard Martin, as well as plenty of opportunities to visit with colleagues at the coffee breaks, receptions, and luncheon. The complete conference program may be found in *Bach Notes*, no. 8, Fall '07.

A highlight of every American Bach Society conference is the keynote address, and 2008 was no exception. As part of his ongoing study of structural procedures in the Passion music of J.S. Bach, Don Franklin extended his study of Bach's use of "Actus structure" to the libretto of the *Christmas Oratorio*, BWV 248. (Actus structure is an organization of a libretto that corresponds to Lutheranism's traditional division of the Passion story into six "acts" or events.) Franklin was convincing in his demonstration of how fundamental this approach was for Bach and his librettist.

Kerala Snyder started the first session off by linking Bach's five-part *Christmas Oratorio*, BWV 248, to Buxtehude's tradition in Lübeck of presenting an oratorio on five afternoons. Daniel Melamed discussed Bach's encounters with the so-called "Brockes-Passion" text, which he sees as the most significant textual influence on Bach's passion repertory. Stephen Crist looked carefully at Bach's use of the biblical text in his *St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244, and explicated ways in which Bach's unique division or sub-division of the text allowed for "some of Bach's most profound musical utterances." Mark Peters concluded the session by examining textual and musical features of *Meine Seel erhebt den Herren*, BWV 10, a cantata based on a chorale melody but whose libretto is based on prose biblical text.

In the second session, David Schulenberg proposed applying the term "through-composed da capo form" to what have traditionally been called modified da capo arias

(Stephen Crist offered a rebuttal), and Markus Rathey looked at the structural and dramatic function of Bach's large-scale chorale movements that also include biblical or madrigal poetry, observing that the chorale serves as a tropus for the other text.

In other sessions, Tanya Kevorkian reported on her traversal of Johann Adam Hiller's *Wöchentliche Nachrichten* (published 1766-70) for "echoes of J.S. Bach's Leipzig"; Jeffrey Sposato discussed Mendelssohn's *Paulus* and *Elias* (*Elijah*) oratorios and the ways in which Mendelssohn adjusted his approach in order to make the genre more comprehensible to his English public; Ruth Tatlow explicated her recent work on Bach's parallel proportions as illustrated in the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin, BWV 1001-1006, the so-called "Leipzig" Organ Chorales, BWV 651-668, and the *Musical Offering*, BWV 1079; and Szymon Paczkowski unlocked the hidden allusions and metaphors embedded in the libretto of *Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet, Trompeten!*, BWV 214. The abstracts to all the papers are provided in the following pages.

Interspersed throughout the conference were concerts presented under the auspices of the Bethlehem Bach Festival. Under the leadership of Greg Funfgeld, artistic director and conductor, the 100-member volunteer choir and festival orchestra presented Jan Dismas Zelenka's *Miserere* as well as *O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht* (BWV 118), the *Trauer Ode* (BWV 198), *Wer mich liebet, der wird mein Wort halten* (BWV 74), the *Ascension Oratorio* (BWV 11), and the Mass in B Minor (BWV 232). The Festival also presented solo concerts by violinist Simon Standage (in the historic *Saal* of the Moravian Museum) and guitarist Eliot Fisk, as well as a lecture for the general public by Christoph Wolff, who answered in the affirmative the long-debated question "Are Bach's Oratorios Sacred Operas?"

Thanks to all the participants and to the program committee—Mary Dalton Greer, Mel Unger, and Greg Funfgeld (who also served as local arrangements chair)—for a stimulating meeting, and to Funfgeld and Executive Director Bridget George of The Bethlehem Bach Choir for so many enjoyable performances.

Lynn Edwards Butler

Paper Abstracts from the  
15<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL MEETING OF  
THE AMERICAN BACH SOCIETY

“BACH AND THE  
ORATORIO TRADITION”

May 8-11, 2008, Lehigh University,  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

“Oratorio on Five Afternoons: From the Lübeck  
*Abendmusiken* to Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*”

Kerala J. Snyder  
(University of Rochester/Eastman School of Music)

Johann Sebastian Bach timed his trip to Lübeck in the fall and winter of 1705 to coincide with the *Abendmusik* season, when Dieterich Buxtehude normally produced an oratorio in five parts, performed on the afternoons of the last two Sundays of Trinity and the second, third, and fourth Sundays of Advent. We do not know whether he presented his ordinary series that year, but Bach was certainly present for two extraordinary concerts on December 2 and 3, for which we have the librettos, in which Buxtehude presented two ceremonial oratorios, *Castrum doloris*, commemorating the recent death of the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, and *Templum honoris*, honoring his successor, Joseph I. The one other extant libretto, *Die Hochzeit des Lamms*, from 1678, represents his more typical dramatic *Abendmusik* based on a biblical story, in this case the parable of the wise and foolish virgins recounted in Matthew 15:1-13.

Although the music for all Buxtehude’s known *Abendmusiken* is lost, it is possible to extract examples from his extant vocal music to illustrate the musical components of his *Abendmusiken* and to show that in many cases they reflect his familiarity with the Hamburg opera, which opened in 1678. In a similar manner, Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*, in which he drew upon works entitled *dramma per musica*, reflects his growing interest during the early 1730s in the electoral court at Dresden and the opera there. And he employed many of the same musical components that Buxtehude had, including the aria, the love duet, chorale settings intermingled with arioso, and the use of trumpets in connection with the nobility. The musical style

has of course been updated, but Bach’s presentation of a dramatic oratorio stretching over six separate days during the Christmas season may have its roots in his experience of Buxtehude’s Lübeck *Abendmusiken* twenty-nine years earlier.

“Johann Sebastian Bach and  
Barthold Heinrich Brockes”

Daniel R. Melamed (Indiana University)

Barthold Heinrich Brockes’s *Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesus* (the “Brockes-Passion”) was the source of many free texts in the *St. John Passion*, BWV 245; was the model for the poetry on which Picander drew in compiling the libretto for the *St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244; and formed the text of G.F. Händel’s composition that Bach mined for his late 1740s performance of an anonymous *St. Mark Passion*.

In fact, Brockes’s text, a poetic oratorio, was probably the most significant textual influence on Bach’s Passion repertory even though the Leipzig liturgy admitted only Gospel settings. It is possible to view the 1724 *St. John Passion* as a kind of Brockes-Passion adapted to the biblical oratorio tradition, particularly because the work draws on the poetry at many of the most important points in the narrative. The *St. Matthew Passion* finds further ways to incorporate features of the Brockes model into a biblical oratorio. And Bach’s pastiching of the anonymous *St. Mark Passion* (using Händel’s music) can be seen as fundamentally a presentation of Brockes’s texts.

In light of Bach’s apparently close connections to Hamburg (evident not least in his use in BWV 245 of Passion poetry possibly by Christian Heinrich Postel) it is worth asking what he knew of settings of Brockes’s text by other composers, particularly because he was acquainted with at least two—Keiser and Telemann—who set it there. Much of Keiser’s music was available in a widely circulated print, and it has been demonstrated that Bach had access to two distinct sources of Händel’s work. Overall, it appears Bach took a particular interest in Brockes’s Passion poetry and that to examine his encounters with it is to get to the root of his composition of Passion music.

## “The Narrative Structure of J. S. Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*”

Stephen A. Crist (Emory University)

The libretto of J. S. Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244, includes material from three sources: the Bible, Lutheran chorales of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and poetry by the Leipzig poet known as Picander. Its backbone is the narrative of Jesus’ Passion from the Gospel of Matthew. All seventy-five verses of chapter 26, and all sixty-six verses of chapter 27—a total of 141 verses—are set to music in Bach’s composition. This long passage of Scripture is not presented without interruption, however, as it had been in some of the earlier *St. Matthew Passions*, such as those by Vulpius or Schütz in the seventeenth century. Rather, the narrative is punctuated at various points by stanzas from chorales, and by musical settings of Picander’s poetry (mostly recitatives and arias, and the occasional chorus). These movements serve as moments of reflection, which emphasize certain events in the biblical narrative.

This paper considers the precise placement of the reflective movements in Bach’s *Passion*, as well as their meaning. Bach’s approach shares some features in common with other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century settings of this biblical text by composers such as Sebastiani, Flor, Funcke, Theile, Kühnhausen, Meder, Clajus, Gerstenbützel, and Brauns. What is surprising, however, is the extent to which Bach and his librettist pursued unusual ways of subdividing the text. By sometimes going “against the grain” of the narrative, Bach’s setting emphasizes moments and develops ideas that are glossed over in other *St. Matthew Passions*. These novel approaches to the subdivision of the biblical text, in turn, paved the way for some of Bach’s most profound musical utterances.

## “Considerations of Genre in J. S. Bach’s BWV 10, *Meine Seel erhebt den Herren*”

Mark A. Peters (Trinity Christian College)

In *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, Alfred Dürr describes the unique nature of BWV 10, *Meine Seel erhebt den Herren*, thus: “It is not based on a Protestant hymn, and yet if ever a work deserved the description ‘chorale cantata’ it is this, for it is based on a genuine (Gregorian) chorale melody, that of the ninth psalm-tone” (p. 678). Indeed, it is dif-

ficult to know how to consider BWV 10: it is one of the best known of Bach’s chorale cantatas, but one whose text is based not on a chorale but a canticle and whose music is related not only to Bach’s chorale settings but also to his settings of biblical quotation in his non-chorale-based cantatas and to his Latin *Magnificat*, BWV 243. This paper argues that an exploration of BWV 10 from these various perspectives reveals new insights into the work’s textual and musical features.

The paper begins with an overview of Bach’s treatment of biblical quotation and strict paraphrase in the chorale cantatas. While only one movement outside of BWV 10 contains strict biblical quotation, BWV 7/5, several other cantatas are based on chorales of Martin Luther that are themselves strict paraphrases of biblical texts, both Psalms (BWV 2, 38, 14) and canticles (BWV 10, 125). The paper then examines the unique textual nature of BWV 10, particularly as it relates to the surrounding chorale cantatas. Not only is BWV 10 based on prose biblical text rather than a chorale, but it includes only biblical quotation and strict paraphrase (together with a final doxology), with none of the reflective movements common in the cantata libretti set by Bach. The paper concludes with a consideration of the musical significance of Bach’s setting of the Magnificat text and the paraphrases thereof in BWV 10, particularly in relation to his treatment of biblical quotation in the cantatas of the first *Jahrgang* and to his other psalmtone settings, BWV 83/2 and 243/10.

## “Modifying the Da Capo? Through-Composed Arias in Vocal Works by Bach and Other Composers”

David Schulenberg (Wagner College, New York)

The expression “modified da capo aria” refers to arias in which the first A section ends in the dominant and the second A section is written out in “modified” form so as to end in the tonic. It seems not to be generally known among Bach scholars that the same term occurs in writings about Händel’s music to describe a type of aria that appears, at least superficially, to be similar.

Händel produced several such arias by literally modifying what was originally a conventional da capo form. In “O sacred oracles” from *Belshazzar* and “Rejoice greatly” from *Messiah*, Händel deleted the “da capo” and moved the B section from its usual place after the A section to the center of the A section. In both cases the original A

section comprised two complete statements of the text, the first ending in the dominant. Händel's modification yielded a form identical to Bach's modified da capo aria; in particular, as Stephen Crist has noted, the first A section in Bach's modified da capo forms typically states its text only once, as with Händel.

Yet Händel employed the procedure only in a few late works; Bach wrote such arias throughout his career. Händel's modifications have been explained as abbreviations of a form that had grown excessively lengthy; no such intent is evident with Bach. Bach's regular use of the form suggests that for him it was one of several equally normative aria designs (whether or not derived from similar forms in older works by Scarlatti and Pallavicino). For this reason, and because there is no evidence such arias arose as actual modifications of existing ones, I propose the alternate term "through-composed da capo form." To reconsider why Bach cultivated this form, the paper examines instances in his oratorios and serenatas, dramatic works in which use of the form was theoretically subject to the same considerations that occurred to Händel.

### **"Chorale-Tropus and Dramatic Coherence in Bach's Oratorios"**

**Markus Rathey (Yale University)**

Hymn settings are an integral part of Johann Sebastian Bach's oratorios, as they were in the oratorios of his predecessors in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The majority of the hymn settings are simple four-part settings with the melody in the upper voice. In the narrative framework of the oratorios the settings mostly represent the perspective of the congregation. The simple texture of the settings underscores the identification with the congregation and congregational singing (even though the hymns in Bach's oratorios were probably not sung by the actual congregation).

Bach's oratorios contain only a small number of larger-scaled, more elaborate hymn settings. Expanded four-part settings with instrumental pre- and interludes, for instance, appear in the *Christmas Oratorio*, and the second version of the *St. John Passion* from 1725 is framed by two large-scale chorale settings, the first of which was later integrated into the *St. Matthew Passion* (1736). All of these larger-scaled chorale settings stand out in the narrative flow of the oratorios, frequently marking the beginning and end of a section.

A closer integration between the narrative of the oratorio and the chorale can be observed in those movements in which Bach combines biblical or madrigal poetry with a chorale and where the chorale serves as a tropus for the other text. Both Passions and the *Christmas Oratorio* contain several movements of this type. This paper will explore the compositional techniques employed in these tropus-movements (in the context of Bach's chorale tropuses in general) and the dramatic function of these movements in the narrative of the specific oratorio.

### **"Thematic Transformation and the Design of Bach's D-Minor Ciaccona, BWV 1004/5"**

**Fred Fehleisen  
(Mannes College The New School for Music and  
The Juilliard School)**

Although Helge Thoene's widely popularized "secret codes" theory about the D-minor Ciaccona has largely been rejected, many questions still remain unanswered concerning the work's musical language and the larger levels of design that articulate its structure. Rather than being a piece driven by hidden chorale phrases and encoded numbers, the musical language and design of the Ciaccona are articulated by what appears to be an unfolding process of thematic transformation that is both affective and rhetorical. This process—which concerns interactions between the various forms of the bass line and thematic material found in the middle-ground of the upper voices—gives rise to larger units of design that sometimes span two or more statements of the bass. In addition, this process leads to the articulation of larger formal symmetries that suggest Bach may have intended the Ciaccona to be an abstract musical argument—an argument that has no actual extra-musical subtext but may possess certain affective and rhetorical qualities that make it fit for use in certain extra-musical situations, including liturgical ones.

### **"Jonathan Miller's Production of the *St. Matthew Passion* and the Limits of Representation"**

**Benjamin Binder (Lawrence University)**

The promotional materials for Jonathan Miller's 1994 staging of the *St. Matthew Passion* claimed that Miller "peels away the passive performance traditions of [the work], allowing us to confront the emotion and humanity



at the heart of [the] *Passion*.” But as anyone who has been persuaded by Daniel Melamed’s *Hearing Bach’s Passions* will recognize, an active performance approach actually takes us further away from the work’s original conditions. As Melamed asserts, it is “the setting, not the performers, [that told] the story” in Bach’s Passions. As with Italian oratorio of the early eighteenth century and Händel’s English oratorios, Bach’s Passions employ purely musical resources to stage a drama in the mind’s eye of the listener. Moreover, Bach’s congregation would not have seen the performers *at all*. Today, of course, the performers of a Bach Passion are virtually always in full view of the audience, and all roles are assigned to individual singers to satisfy our need for dramatic consistency. As a result, Bach’s music is much less likely to inspire the kind of reflection upon and identification with the Passion narrative that an eighteenth-century congregation might have experienced.

Miller’s solution is to indulge the habits of our visual culture, often making explicit what the music of the oratorio would have implied to its eighteenth-century hearers. But it does so in a particular way, inviting the audience to become more immediately and personally involved in the subjective moments of the *Passion* when they might otherwise have simply observed a performance. Singers and instrumentalists are gathered in the round and wear casual clothing, indistinguishable from the audience that encircles them. Starting from this basic premise, and without trampling on the inherent values of Bach’s original (with one telling exception), Miller’s production attempts to draw its audience members into their own ruminative experience of the *Passion* in a modern analogue to an eighteenth-century musical and spiritual experience we can never recover.

*Unfortunately, Mr. Binder was unable to deliver this paper due to illness. Many thanks to Howard Cox and Robin Leaver for substituting on short notice and presenting on Bach’s annotations in his copy of the Calov Bible commentary.*

“Echoes of J. S. Bach’s Leipzig in  
Johann Adam Hiller’s  
*Wöchentliche Nachrichten und Anmerkungen  
die Musik betreffend*”

Tanya Kevorkian (Millersville University)

Last summer I had the pleasure of reading through Johann Adam Hiller’s *Wöchentliche Nachrichten*. This Journal,

published weekly in Leipzig from 1766 to 1770, includes numerous specific references to J. S. Bach that are reproduced in *Bach Dokumente*, vol. III. Beyond these references, though, is much more material that gives insight into broader continuities and shifts from high-Baroque Leipzig musical culture to the post Seven Years’ War era. The Journal both documented and was part of a time of major transition. Continuities include many references to old hymns and their settings for organ, along with discussions of new hymns. There are even useful descriptions of congregational singing practice that can be applied to the pre-1750 era. Hiller described pre-1750 secular vocal performances in Leipzig in a tone similar to that of his reviews of contemporary concerts. Particularly with reference to sacred music, though, there was more change than continuity. While Hiller and other contributing writers praised the cantatas of J. S. Bach and his contemporaries, Hiller noted that “taste in [cantata] poetry has changed a lot since that time.”<sup>1</sup> By 1769 he stated outright that “in many places,” cantatas “frequently awaken the most negative feelings of boredom, *des Ekels*, or even anger.”<sup>2</sup> One running theme of the Journal was the search for a new style of church music, and younger composers such as Doles, C. P. E. Bach, and Homilius were praised. Further, the bulk of the Journal, increasingly so with each volume, was devoted to secular music, with opera and figures such as Haydn, Rousseau, and Benjamin Franklin and his glass harmonica highlighted.

<sup>1</sup>*Wöchentliche Nachrichten* 1, no. 51 (15 June 1767): 398.

<sup>2</sup>*Wöchentliche Nachrichten* 3, Anhang, no. 17 (October 23 1769): 134.

### “Mendelssohn’s Oratorios and the Bach Tradition”

Jeffrey S. Sposato (University of Houston)

Even as Felix Mendelssohn rushed to complete his first oratorio, *Paulus*, in time for its May 1836 premiere in Düsseldorf, he was already making arrangements with Simrock for its publication. But while dissemination in Germany was assumed, Mendelssohn hesitated to make the work available in England. Encouraged by German enthusiasm over the newly revived *St. Matthew Passion* (a work that tapped into familiar Lutheran liturgical traditions), Mendelssohn had modeled *Paulus* after Bach’s masterwork by incorporating chorales and reflective arias. Indeed, so central was the Passion model to the construction of *Paulus* that Mendelssohn may have feared that the

work would be inaccessible in England, a country where the Bach revival had not yet taken hold.

The German *Paulus* premiere was a triumph, and demand for the work in England soon became too great to ignore. Despite the hastily-written English translation, *St. Paul* was likewise a tremendous success, resulting in lavish praise in the popular press. Nonetheless, even these glowing reviews reveal that, as Mendelssohn had perhaps anticipated, *St. Paul* was a work the English public did not fully understand. In particular, those elements that derived from the Bach Passion tradition (such as chorales) were often described as foreign (albeit beautiful), or were wrongly attributed to the dramatic narrative.

In composing his next oratorio, *Elias (Elijah)*, Mendelssohn took to heart German and English reactions to *Paulus* by creating a work that both audiences could appreciate and understand. Since German excitement regarding *Paulus* stemmed in part from its Bachian (and therefore Lutheran) overtones, Mendelssohn endeavored to retain such elements in *Elias*. In deference to his English public, however, he disguised these elements in a manner that made the work comprehensible to those unfamiliar with the Bach tradition.

**“Sound-Encoded Politics: J. S. Bach’s Cantata  
*Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet Trompeten!* (BWV 214)”**

**Szymon Paczkowski  
(Institute of Musicology, Warsaw University)**

In *Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet Trompeten!* (BWV 214), Bach set to music a libretto by an unknown poet in order to celebrate the birthday on 8 December 1733 of Maria Josepha, Queen of Poland, Electress of Saxony, and wife of August III. In Bach scholarship this occasional piece has mainly been considered from the viewpoint of its subsequent parody in the *Weihnachts-Oratorium*. In his monograph on Bach’s cantatas, Alfred Dürr goes so far as to suggest that, despite its subtitle, “drama per musica,” dramatic action is absent from the piece. In his reading, the only action involves four goddesses, distributed among the four vocal parts—Bellona, the goddess of war (soprano); Pallas, the goddess of the muses and scholarship (alto); Irene, the goddess of peace (tenor), and Fama, the goddess of fame (bass)—who praise the queen for accomplishments in their respective domains. To Dürr, in fact, it is a comment on the magnificence of Bach’s mu-

sic that his future *Weihnachts-Oratorium* can already be heard despite the disproportionately trifling character of the original libretto.<sup>1</sup>

Dürr’s appraisal is surprising in its superficiality. After all, the splendid music of *Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet Trompeten!* could not have been subsequently adapted for the purposes of a religious piece had it not been for some kind of match between the oratorio text and the supposedly trifling lines of the cantata—not only in terms of poetic meter or rhythms, but more importantly of affect. Contrary to received opinion, there is a great deal more hidden meaning in the libretto of BWV 214 than its critics have been willing to concede. The text carries certain allusions and metaphors that, once properly unlocked, make it possible to recognize a latent political program and better understand the sound code that Bach chose to employ in this piece. The political program would have been virtually unrecognizable to anyone except members of the original 1733 Saxon audience, and it would seem that the libretto, no less than the magnificent music, pays a skillful tribute to the contemporary propagandist project of the Dresden court during a period in which the War of Polish Succession was being fought in Europe. This paper seeks to analyze the political circumstances surrounding the cantata’s composition and to highlight their relevance to its interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Dürr, *Die Kantaten von Johann Sebastian Bach* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985), 906.

**“Bach’s parallel proportions and their implications, illustrated by the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin, the Leipzig Organ Chorales, and the *Musical Offering*”**

**Ruth Tatlow (Stockholm University)**

Proportional parallelism is a newly-formulated term that describes a numerical characteristic present in every collection or multi-movement work that Johann Sebastian Bach published or copied in fair hand. When preparing a collection for publication Bach frequently added a few bars or a new movement to a previously-composed collection that would otherwise have been considered polished. These changes often lack a musical explanation and are a perennial puzzle for the editor. Proportional parallelism provides a new explanation for these changes: Bach manipulated the number of bars in order to create perfect proportions at several levels across and within a collection.

Knowing the number of bars was essential for the copyist, engraver, and composer in Bach's time to ensure accuracy and economy of layout on valuable paper. Knowing the number of bars was also a useful, albeit blunt, tool with which the composer could assess the duration of a movement or a work, as Michael Praetorius (1619) and Lorenz Mizler (1754) testify. The cumulative bar totals Bach occasionally wrote at the end of pages and movements in his manuscripts show that he knew how many bars he composed and that he could have used the bar as a means to create perfect proportions if he so wished.

The theory of proportional parallelism has nothing to do with the over-interpretation and historical flaws that are all too frequently a characteristic of so-called "numerology" in Bach studies. At every stage of its formulation, the theory has been based on documentary evidence, and the startling results are valid for all of Bach's collections. Principles from the theory can be used to demonstrate if and at which point a multi-movement work received its final revision, and can also aid in reconstructing the order in which Bach pieced together a collection. This paper will describe the new theory in full, using as examples the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin (BWV 1001-1006), the Leipzig Organ Chorales (BWV 651-668) and the *Musical Offering* (BWV 1079).

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## Bach Vocal Competition for Young American Singers



### Joshua Copeland, First Prize

Joshua Copeland, baritone, was awarded first prize in the Fifth Biennial Bach Vocal Competition for Young American Singers, co-sponsored by the American Bach Society and The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, PA. The prize includes a career development grant of \$3,000, and as the winner Copeland will be featured at the Bethlehem Bach Festival, May 1-2 and 7-9, 2009. Honorable mention and a cash award of \$500 were awarded to Matthew Anderson, tenor, from Massachusetts, a graduate of Harvard University and the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

Copeland, a native of Tennessee, received his bachelor of music from Furman University (SC) and his master of music from Yale University, where he was a student of James Taylor as well as Richard Cross in the Yale Opera Program. Copeland was the second-place finalist in the American Bach Soloists International Young Artist Competition in June 2006 and a finalist in the Oratorio Society of New York Lyndon Woodside Competition in 2007. He has appeared as soloist in the Brahms *Requiem* with the Hendersonville (NC) Symphony Orchestra and Miami's Seraphic Fire; in the Duruflé *Requiem* with the Yale Institute of Sacred Music; in Bach cantatas with Yale Schola Cantorum and Helmuth Rilling, in the *St. John Passion* with Belle Meade Baroque, and in the *Christmas Oratorio* with the American Bach Soloists. Recent performances also include a recital of songs by Charles Ives in Weill Hall and the roles of Falke in *Die Fledermaus* and Ramiro in Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* with Yale Opera.

Ten finalists were selected from more than sixty applicants (30 years of age or younger) by David Gordon, education director, vocal coordinator and master class director of the Carmel Bach Festival. The finals were judged by Greg Funfgeld, artistic director and conductor of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem; Mary Dalton Greer, newly elected president of the American Bach Society; Melvin Unger, director of the Reimenschneider Bach Institute; and Kendra Colton and Rosa Lamoreaux, soprano soloists at the 101st Bethlehem Bach Festival.



## Directions to Contributors

*Bach Notes* is published twice yearly (Fall and Spring) and mailed to all members and subscribers. Submissions for the Fall 2008 issue are due by 30 September 2008, 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](mailto:bachnotes@americanbachsociety.org) and submissions on compact disc (CD), with hard copy, may be mailed to Reginald L. Sanders, Department of Music, Kenyon College, Storer Hall, Gambier, OH 43022.

## Contributors to this Issue

**Jason B. Grant** is a staff editor for *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: The Complete Works* in Cambridge, MA. He is a former visiting assistant professor of music at the University of Pittsburgh, where he completed a dissertation on the late liturgical Passions of Georg Philipp Telemann in 2005. During 1994-95 he studied organ with Harald Vogel at the North German Organ Academy in Bunderhee, Lower Saxony, Germany. He has served as organist and music director at several parish churches in Maine and Pennsylvania.

Scholar, composer, and pianist **Edward Green** teaches at both the Manhattan School of Music and the Aesthetic Realism Foundation. Composer-in-residence at both Imagery Films, Ltd. and the Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company, his compositions have appeared on such labels as Albany Records and AUR Recordings. As a pianist, he is well known in the New York area for an on-going series of lecture/performances with flutist Barbara Allen on the flute music of Bach, Händel, Telemann, and Mozart. Green, who earned his doctorate from New York University with a dissertation on the late vocal music of Haydn and Mozart, is editor of the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Duke Ellington*, and he was editor of the Fall 2007 double issue of *Contemporary Music Review* entitled "China and the West: the Birth of a New Music." His scholarly articles have dealt with such topics as the music of the early troubadour Marcabru, the rhythms of Sir Edward Elgar, the attitude of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europeans to music from non-Western cultures, the microtonalism of Harry Partch, and the motivic skill of Richard Rodgers as evinced in the opening scene of *South Pacific*. His scholarship has appeared in such journals as *Choral Music*, the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, the *British Journal of Aesthetics*, the *Journal of Drama and Theatrical Criticism*, the *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, and *Ongakugaku*—the Journal of the Musicological Society of Japan. In honor of the upcoming Haydn bicentennial in 2009, the early music magazine *Goldberg* will publish his essay "Haydn's Secret *Dodecaphonic Art*."

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