



DIRECTOR'S SERIES

Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248

Saturday, December 9, 2023
The Music Center at Strathmore
5301 Tuckerman Lane
North Bethesda, Maryland

WASHINGTON BACH CONSORT
Dana Marsh, Artistic Director



PROGRAM

Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Part I. On the First Day of Christmas

Chorus
Evangelist
Recitative (alto)
Aria (alto)
Chorale
Evangelist
Chorale & Recitative (bass)
Aria (bass)
Chorale

Part II. On the Second Day of Christmas

Sinfonia
Evangelist
Chorale
Evangelist/Angel
Recitative (bass)
Aria (tenor)
Evangelist
Chorale
Recitative (bass)
Aria (alto)
Evangelist & Chorus of Angels
Recitative (bass)
Chorale

— *Intermission* —

Part V. On the Sunday after New Year's Day

Chorus
Evangelist/Chorus
Recitative (alto)
Chorus
Recitativa
Chorale
Aria (bass)
Evangelist
Recitative (alto)
Evangelist
Aria (soprano, alto, tenor)
Recitative (alto)
Chorale

Part VI. On Epiphany

Chorus
Evangelist/Herod
Recitative (soprano)
Aria (soprano)
Evangelist
Chorale
Evangelist
Recitative (tenor)
Aria (tenor)
Recitative (soprano, alto, tenor, bass)
Chorale

Amy Broadbent, *soprano*

Sylvia Leith, *alto*

Thomas Cooley, *tenor & Evangelist*

Dashon Burton, *bass*

Dana Marsh, *conductor*

Mary Ann Gardner, Sally Wells,
and **National Endowment for the Arts**, *underwriters*





MUSICIANS

Soprano

Amy Broadbent, soloist
Kate Vetter Cain
Alicia DePaolo
Susan Kavinski
Margot Rood
Jaely Turner

Alto

Sylvia Leith, soloist
Hannah Baslee
Derek Greten-Harrison
Crossley Danielle Hawn
Barbara Hollinshead
Clifton Massey

Tenor

Thomas Cooley,
Evangelist/soloist
Ryan Connelly
Patrick Kilbride
Rob Petillo
Andrew Sauvageau
Matthew Smith
Gregório Taniguchi

Bass

Dashon Burton, soloist
Joshua Brown
Mark Duer
Karl Hempel
Ian Pomerantz
David Rugger

Violin I

Tatiana Chulochnikova,
concertmaster
Marlisa del Cid Woods
Gail Hernández Rosa
Jude Ziliak
Caroline Levy

Violin II

Freya Creech
Gersh Chervinsky
Jeremy Rhizor
Jimena Burga Lopera

Viola

Marika Holmqvist
Scott McCormick
Isaiah Chapman

Violoncello

John Moran
Wade Davis

Violone

Patricia Ann Neely
John Stajduhar

Flute

Colin St-Martin
Kathryn Roth

Oboe

Geoffrey Burgess
Gaia Saetermoe-Howard
Sarah Schilling
Andrew Blanke

Bassoon

Anna Marsh

Trumpet

Josh Cohen
Dillon Parker
Doug Wilson

Timpani

Michelle Humphreys

Harpsichord

Adam Pearl

Organ

Leon Schelhase

Rehearsal Pianist

Wei-Han Wu

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

PART I

ORATORIUM welches die heilige Weyhnacht über in beyden Haupt-Kirchen zu Leipzig musiciret wurde. Anno 1734.

Am 1sten Heil. Weyhnacht-Feyertage, frühe zu St. Nicolai und nachmittage zu St. Thomæ.

Coro – Tutti

Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf, preiset die Tage,
Rühmet, was heute der Höchste getan!
Lasset das Zagen, verbannet die Klage,
Stimmet voll Jauchzen und Fröhlichkeit an!
Dienet dem Höchsten mit herrlichen Chören,
Laßt uns den Namen des Herrschers verehren!

Evangelist

Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit, daß ein Gebot von dem Kaiser Augusto ausging, daß alle Welt geschätzt würde. Und jedermann ging, daß er sich schätzen ließe, ein jeglicher in seine Stadt. Da machte sich auch auf Joseph aus Galiläa, aus der Stadt Nazareth, in das jüdische Land zur Stadt David, die da heißet Bethlehem; darum, daß er von dem Hause und Geschlechte David war, auf daß er sich schätzen ließe mit Maria, seinem vertrauten Weibe, die war schwanger. Und als sie daselbst waren, kam die Zeit, daß sie gebären sollte.

Recitativ

Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam,
Nun wird der Held aus Davids Stamm
Zum Trost, zum Heil der Erden
Einmal geboren werden.
Nun wird der Stern aus Jakob scheinen,
Sein Strahl bricht schon hervor.
Auf, Zion, und verlasse nun das Weinen,
Dein Wohl steigt hoch empör!

Aria

Bereite dich, Zion, mit zärtlichen Trieben,
Den Schönsten, den Liebsten bald bei dir zu sehn!
Deine Wangen
Müssen heut viel schöner prangen,
Eile, den Bräutigam sehnlichst zu lieben!

Choral

Wie soll ich dich empfangen
Und wie begegn' ich dir,
O aller Welt Verlangen,
O meiner Seelen Zier?
O Jesu, Jesu, setze
Mir selbst die Fackel bei,
Damit, was dich ergötze,
Mir kund und wissend sei.

ORATORIO that was performed musically over the Christmas season in the two principal churches in Leipzig, 1734.

On the first day of Christmas, early at St. Nicholas and in the afternoon at St. Thomas.

Chorus – All

Shout, exult, arise, praise the days [of Christmas],
Glorify what the Most High this day has done!
Leave off faintheartedness, ban lamenting;
Break forth into song, full of shouting and rejoicing!
Serve the Most High with glorious choirs;
Let us revere the ruler's name!

Evangelist

But it happened at that time that a commandment went out from the emperor Augustus that all the [Roman] world be appraised. And everyone [from Judea] went, that he might have himself appraised, each one to his [ancestral] city. Then Joseph too made out to go up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, into the Jewish region to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, this, because he was of the house and lineage of David, so that he might have himself appraised with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was pregnant. And while they were there, the time came that she should give birth.

Recitative (alto)

Now will my most beloved bridegroom,
Now will the champion from the tribe of David—
For the consolation, for the salvation of the earth—
At last be born.
Now will the star out of Jacob shine;
Its stream of light is already breaking forth.
Arise, Zion, and forsake weeping now;
Your well-being lifts on high!

Aria (alto)

Make yourself ready, Zion, with tender desires,
To see the Most Handsome, the Most Beloved,
Soon at your side! This day your cheeks
Must sparkle much lovelier;
Hurry on, to love the Bridegroom most ardently!

Chorale

How shall I receive you,
And how shall I meet you,
O desire of all the world,
O decoration of my soul?
O Jesus; Jesus, set
The torch next to me yourself,
So that whatever brings you enjoyment
May be manifest and known to me.

Standard type: free poetry or chorale text
Italic type: scriptural text

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS *(continued)*

Evangelist

Und sie gebar ihren ersten Sohn und wickelte ihn in Windeln und legte ihn in eine Krippe, denn sie hatten sonst keinen Raum in der Herberge.

Choral und Recitativ

Er ist auf Erden kommen arm,
Wer will die Liebe recht erhöh'n,
Die unser Heiland vor uns hegt?
Daß er unser sich erbarm,
Ja, wer vermag es einzusehen,
Wie ihn der Menschen Leid bewegt?
Und in dem Himmel mache reich,
Des Höchsten Sohn kömmt in die Welt,
Weil ihm ihr Heil so wohl gefällt,
Und seinen lieben Engeln gleich.
So will er selbst als Mensch geboren werden.
Kyrieleis.

Aria

Großer Herr, o starker König,
Liebster Heiland, o wie wenig
Achtest du der Erden Pracht!
Der die ganze Welt erhält,
Ihre Pracht und Zier erschaffen,
Muß in harten Krippen schlafen.

Choral

Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein,
Mach dir ein rein sanft Bettelein,
Zu ruhn in meines Herzens Schrein,
Daß ich nimmer vergesse dein!

Evangelist

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, for they otherwise had no space in the lodgings.

Chorale & Recitative (bass)

He has come on earth poor,
Who will properly extol the love
That our Savior feels for us?
That he might have mercy on us,
Indeed, who is capable of perceiving it,
How human suffering moves him?
And might make [us] rich, in heaven,
The Son of the Most High comes into the world
Because its salvation pleases him so well
And [might make us] equal to his dear angels.
That he himself wants to be born as man.
Lord have mercy.

Aria (bass)

Great Lord, o mighty King,
Most beloved Savior, o how little
Do you regard the earth's splendor!
He, who upholds the entire world,
[Who] has created its splendor and decoration,
Must sleep in harsh mangers.

Chorale

Oh my beloved little Jesus,
Make for yourself a perfectly soft little bed,
To rest in the shrine of my heart,
That I may never forget you!

PART II

Am 2. Heil. Weyhnachts-Feyertage.

Frühe zu St. Thomæ. Nachmittage zu St. Nicolai.

Sinfonia

Evangelist

Und es waren Hirten in derselben Gegend auf dem Felde bei den Hürden, die hüteten des Nachts ihre Herde. Und siehe, des Herren Engel trat zu ihnen, und die Klarheit des Herren leuchtet' um sie, und sie furchten sich sehr.

Choral

Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht,
Und laß den Himmel tagen!
Du Hirtenvolk, erschrecke nicht,
Weil dir die Engel sagen,
Daß dieses schwache Knäbelein
Soll unser Trost und Freude sein,
Dazu den Satan zwingen
Und letztlich Friede bringen!

On the second day of Christmas.

Early at St. Thomas. In the afternoon at St. Nicholas.

Sinfonia

Evangelist

And there were in the same vicinity shepherds in the field, by the live-stock pens; they guarded their flocks by night. And look, the Angel of the Lord approached them, and the radiance of the Lord lit up around them, and they were very afraid.

Chorale

Break out, o lovely morning light,
And let heaven dawn!
You shepherd folk, do not be alarmed;
For the angels tell you
That this weak little boy
Shall be our comfort and joy,
[Shall] vanquish Satan, too,
And finally bring peace!

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS (*continued*)

Evangelist

Und der Engel sprach zu ihnen

Engel: *Fürchtet euch nicht! Siehe, ich verkündige euch große Freude, die allem Volke widerfahren wird; denn euch ist heute der Heiland geboren, welcher ist Christus, der Herr, in der Stadt David.*

Recitativ

Was Gott dem Abraham verheißen,
Das läßt er nun dem Hirtenchor
Erfüllt erweisen.
Ein Hirt hat alles das zuvor
Von Gott erfahren müssen;
Und nun muß auch ein Hirt die Tat,
Was er damals versprochen hat,
Zuerst erfüllet wissen.

Aria

Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet,
Eh ihr euch zu lang verweilet,
Eilt, das holde Kind zu sehn!
Geht, die Freude heißt zu schön,
Sucht die Anmut zu gewinnen,
Geht und labet Herz und Sinnen!

Evangelist

Und das habt zum Zeichen: Ihr werdet finden das Kind in Windeln gewickelt und in einer Krippe liegen.

Choral

Schaut hin, dort liegt im finstern Stall,
Des Herrschaft gehet überall.
Da Speise vormals sucht ein Rind,
Da ruhet itzt der Jungfrau'n Kind.

Recitativ

So geht denn hin, ihr Hirten, geht,
Daß ihr das Wunder seht!
Und findet ihr des Höchsten Sohn
In einer harten Krippe liegen,
So singet ihm bei seiner Wiegen
Aus einem süßen Ton
Und mit gesamtem Chor
Dies Lied zur Ruhe vor:

Aria

Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh,
Wache nach diesem vor aller Gedeihen!
Labe die Brust,
Empfinde die Lust,
Wo wir unser Herz erfreuen!

Evangelist

Und alsobald war da bei dem Engel die Menge der himmlischen Heerscharen, die lobten Gott und sprachen:

Chor der Engel

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe und Friede auf Erden und den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen.

Evangelist

And the angel said to them:

Angel: *Fear not! Look, I announce to you great joy, which will come to all people; for to you this day is born in the city of David the Savior, who is Christ, the Lord.*

Recitative (bass)

What God had pledged to Abraham,
He now lets be shown to the chorus of shepherds
As fulfilled.
About all of this a shepherd [Abraham]
Had to hear from God beforehand; and now also a
Shepherd has to be the first to come to know the deed—
What he [God] at that time had promised—
As fulfilled.

Aria (tenor)

Joyful shepherds, hurry, oh hurry,
Before you tarry too long;
Hurry, to see the pleasing child!
Go, the joy is all too lovely;
Seek to gain the refinement [of this child];
Go and refresh your hearts and minds!

Evangelist

And take this for a sign: you will find the child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.

Chorale

Look there, yonder in the dark stall lies he whose
Lordship ranges all over [to the ends of the earth].
Where once an ox sought food,
There now rests the Virgin's child.

Recitative (bass)

So go forth, then, you shepherds; go,
That you may see the marvel!
And should you find the Son of the Most High
Lying in a harsh manger,
Then sing for him by his cradle
—In a sweet tone
And with united choir—
This lullaby:

Aria (alto)

Sleep, my Most Beloved, enjoy your rest,
Awake after this for the flourishing of all!
Refresh your breast,
Feel the delight
[There, in your rest], where we gladden our hearts!

Evangelist

And immediately there was with the angel the multitude of the heavenly legions, lauding God and saying:

Chorus of Angels

May honor be to God on high, and peace on earth, and to humankind [God's] great pleasure.

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS (*continued*)

Recitativ

So recht, ihr Engel, jauchzt und singet,
Daß es uns heut so schön gelinget!
Auf denn! Wir stimmen mit euch ein;
Uns kann es so wie euch erfreun.

Choral

Wir singen dir in deinem Heer
Aus aller Kraft Lob, Preis und Ehr,
Daß du, o lang gewünschter Gast,
Dich nunmehr eingestellt hast.

Recitative (bass)

Quite right, you angels: shout and sing
That for us this day has prospered so beautifully!
Arise then! We will join with you in song;
It can gladden us just like you.

Chorale

We sing to you, amid your host,
With all our power, "laud, praise, and honor,"
That you, o long desired guest,
Have now presented yourself.

PART V

Am Sonntage nach dem Neuen Jahr. In der Kirche zu St. Nicolai.

Coro – Tutti

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen,
Dir sei Lob und Dank bereit'.
Dich erhebet alle Welt,
Weil dir unser Wohl gefällt,
Weil anheut
Unser aller Wunsch gelungen,
Weil uns dein Segen so herrlich erfreut.

Evangelist

Da Jesus geboren war zu Bethlehem im jüdischen Lande zur Zeit des Königes Herodis, siehe, da kamen die Weisen vom Morgenlande gen Jerusalem und sprachen:

Chorus und Recitativ

Wo ist der neugeborne König der Jüden?
Sucht ihn in meiner Brust,
Hier wohnt er, mir und ihm zur Lust!
Wir haben seinen Stern gesehen im Morgenlande und sind kommen, ihn anzubeten.
Wohl euch, die ihr dies Licht gesehen,
Es ist zu eurem Heil geschehen!
Mein Heiland, du, du bist das Licht,
Das auch den Heiden scheinen sollen,
Und sie, sie kennen dich noch nicht,
Als sie dich schon verehren wollen.
Wie hell, wie klar muß nicht dein Schein,
Geliebter Jesu, sein!

Choral

Dein Glanz all Finsternis verzehrt,
Die trübe Nacht in Licht verkehrt.
Leit uns auf deinen Wegen,
Daß dein Gesicht
Und herrlichs Licht
Wir ewig schauen mögen!

On the Sunday after New Year's. At St. Nicholas Church.

Chorus – All

May honor, God, be sung to you,
May laud and thanks be extended to you.
All the world exalts you,
Because our well-being pleases you,
Because today
The wish of all of us has come true,
Because your blessing gladdens us so splendidly.

Evangelist

When Jesus was born at Bethlehem in the Jewish region at the time of King Herod, look: there came the wisemen of the Orient to Jerusalem, saying:

Chorus & Recitative (alto)

Where is the newborn King of the Jews?
Seek him in my breast;
Here he dwells, to my and his delight!
We have seen his star in the Orient and have come to worship him.
Well for you, you who have seen this light;
It has taken place for your salvation!
You, my Savior, you are the light
That shall shine also to the gentiles, and they
[These gentiles, the wisemen], they do not know you
Yet, [even now] as they already want to revere you.
How bright, how clear must not your luminosity be,
Beloved Jesus!

Chorale

Your luster consumes all darkness,
Turns the murky night into light.
Lead us along your pathways,
That we may see your face
And glorious light
Eternally!

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS (*continued*)

Aria

Erleucht auch meine finstre Sinnen,
Erleuchte mein Herze
Durch der Strahlen klaren Schein!
Dein Wort soll mir die hellste Kerze
In allen meinen Werken sein;
Dies lasset die Seele nichts Böses beginnen.

Evangelist

Da das der König Herodes hörte, erschrak er und mit ihm das ganze Jerusalem.

Recitativ

Warum wollt ihr erschrecken?
Kann meines Jesu Gegenwart
euch solche Furcht erwecken?
O! solltet ihr euch nicht
Vielmehr darüber freuen,
Weil er dadurch verspricht,
Der Menschen Wohlfahrt zu verneuen.

Evangelist

Und ließ versammeln alle Hohepriester und Schriftgelehrten unter dem Volk und erforschte von ihnen, wo Christus sollte geboren werden. Und sie sagten ihm: Zu Bethlehem im jüdischen Lande; denn also stehet geschrieben durch den Propheten: Und du Bethlehem im jüdischen Lande bist mitnichten die kleinst unter den Fürsten Juda; denn aus dir soll mir kommen der Herzog, der über mein Volk Israel ein Herr sei.

Aria Terzetto

Ach, wenn wird die Zeit erscheinen?
Ach, wenn kömmt der Trost
der Seinen?
Schweigt, er ist schon würrklich hier!
Jesu, ach so komm zu mir!

Recitativ

Mein Liebster herrschet schon.
Ein Herz, das seine Herrschaft liebet
Und sich ihm ganz zu eigen gibet,
Ist meines Jesu Thron.

Choral

Zwar ist solche Herzensstube
Wohl kein schöner Fürstensaal,
Sondern eine finstre Grube;
Doch, sobald dein Gnadenstrahl
In derselben nur wird blinken,
Wird es voller Sonnen dünken.

Aria (bass)

Light up, too, my dark inclinations,
Light up my heart
With the clear luminosity of your streams of light!
Your word shall be the brightest candle to me
In all my works;
This will let the soul embark on nothing evil.

Evangelist

When Herod the King heard that, he was alarmed, and with him all of Jerusalem.

Recitative (alto) & Evangelist

Why would you all want to be alarmed?
Can the presence of my Jesus
Arouse such fear in you?
O! Shouldn't you
Rather be glad about that,
Because he promises through it
To renew the welfare of humankind.

Evangelist

And [Herod] had all the chief priests and scripture experts among the people gather, and inquired of them, where [the] Christ was expected to be born. And they told him: "at Bethlehem in the Jewish region; for so it stands written by the prophet, 'And you Bethlehem in the Jewish region are by no means the smallest among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come to me the leader who would be a ruler over my people Israel.'"

Trio Aria (soprano, alto, tenor)

Oh, when will the time appear?
Oh, when shall the consolation of
His own [saved people] come?
Silence!—he really is already here!
Jesus, oh then come to me!

Recitative

My Most Beloved already rules.
A heart that loves his Lordship,
And gives itself to him completely for his own,
Is [to be] my Jesus' throne.

Chorale

True, such a heart-cellar [for Jesus to dwell in] is
Certainly no choice hall of princes,
But rather a dark pit;
Yet, as soon as your grace-filled stream of light
Flashes in this same [pit],
It will seem full of sunlight.

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS *(continued)*

PART VI

Am Feste der Offenbarung Christi.

Frühe zu St. Thomæ. Nachmittag zu St. Nicolai.

Coro – Tutti

Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben,
So gib, daß wir im festen Glauben
Nach deiner Macht und Hülfe sehn!
Wir wollen dir allein vertrauen,
So können wir den scharfen Klauen
Des Feindes unversehrt entgehn.

Evangelist

Da berief Herodes die Weisen heimlich und erlernet mit Fleiß von ihnen, wenn der Stern erschienen wäre. Und weiset sie gen Bethlehem und sprach:

Herodes: *Ziehet hin und forschet fleißig nach dem Kindlein, und wenn ihr's findet, sagt mir's wieder, daß ich auch komme und es anbete.*

Recitativ

Du Falscher, suche nur den Herrn zu fällen,
Nimm alle falsche List,
Dem Heiland nachzustellen;
Der, dessen Kraft kein Mensch ermißt,
Bleibt doch in sichrer Hand.
Dein Herz, dein falsches Herz ist schon,
Nebst aller seiner List, des Höchsten Sohn,
Den du zu stürzen suchst, sehr wohl bekannt.

Aria

Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen
Stürzt ohnmächtger Menschen Macht.
Hier wird alle Kraft verlacht!
Spricht der Höchste nur ein Wort,
Seiner Feinde Stolz zu enden,
O, so müssen sich sofort
Sterblicher Gedanken wenden.

Evangelist

Als sie nun den König gehöret hatten, zogen sie hin. Und siehe, der Stern, den sie im Morgenlande gesehen hatten, ging für ihnen hin, bis daß er kam und stund oben über, da das Kindlein war. Da sie den Stern sahen, wurden sie hoch erfreuet und gingen in das Haus und funden das Kindlein mit Maria, seiner Mutter, und fielen nieder und beteten es an und täten ihre Schätze auf und schenkten ihm Gold, Weihrauch und Myrrhen.

Choral

Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier,
O Jesulein, mein Leben;
Ich komme, bring und schenke dir,
Was du mir hast gegeben.
Nimm hin, es ist mein Geist und Sinn,
Herz, Seel und Mut, nimm alles hin,
Und laß dir's wohlgefallen!

On Epiphany.

Early at St. Thomas. In the afternoon at St. Nicholas.

Chorus – All

Lord, when our insolent enemies snort,
Then grant that we in steadfast faith
Will look to your strength and salvation!
We want to put our trust in you alone,
So that we can escape
The enemy's sharp claws unharmed.

Evangelist

Then Herod convened the wisemen secretly and sought with diligence to learn from them when the star might have appeared. And directed them to Bethlehem, saying:

Herod: *Set out and search diligently for the little child, and when you find it, report this to me, so that I, too, may come and worship it.*

Recitative (soprano)

You deceitful one, just try to bring down the Lord;
Use all your deceitful cunning
To have it in for the Savior;
He, whose power no human comprehends,
Remains nonetheless in safe hands.
Your heart, your deceitful heart,
With all its cunning, is already very well known
To the Son of the Most High, whom you seek to overthrow.

Aria (soprano)

Just one signal from his hands
Overthrows the feeble strength of humankind.
Here all power is mocked!
The Most High has to utter just one word
To put a stop to the insolence of his enemies.
O, then the plans of mortals
Will have to be immediately cut short.

Evangelist

Having heard the king, then, they set out. And look: the star that they had seen in the Orient went forth before them, until, having come [to Bethlehem], it settled over [the place] where the little child was. When they saw the star, they became exceedingly glad and went into the house and found the little child with Mary its mother, and bowed down and worshiped it, and opened their treasures, giving it gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Chorale

Here I stand at your manger,
O little Jesus, my Life;
I come to bring and give to you
What you have granted me.
Take this, it is my spirit and inclination,
Heart, soul and courage; take this all,
And let it please you greatly!

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS (continued)

Evangelist

Und Gott befahl ihnen im Traum, daß sie sich nicht sollten wieder zu Herodes lenken, und zogen durch einen andern Weg wieder in ihr Land.

Recitativ

So geht! Genug, mein Schatz geht nicht von hier,
Er bleibt da bei mir;
Ich will ihn auch nicht von mir lassen.
Sein Arm wird mich aus Lieb
Mit sanftmutsvollem Trieb
Und größter Zärtlichkeit umfassen;
Er soll mein Bräutigam verbleiben,
Ich will ihm Brust und Herz verschreiben.
Ich weiß gewiß, er liebet mich,
Mein Herz liebt ihn auch inniglich
Und wird ihn ewig ehren.
Was könnte mich nun für ein Feind
Bei solchem Glück versehren!
Du, Jesu, bist und bleibst mein Freund;
Und werd ich ängstlich zu dir flehn:
Herr, hilf!, so laß mich Hülfe sehn!

Aria

Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken;
Was könnt ihr mir für Furcht erwecken?
Mein Schatz, mein Hort ist hier bei mir!
Ihr mögt euch noch so grimmig stellen,
Droht nur, mich ganz und gar zu fällen,
Doch seht! mein Heiland wohnt hier.

Recitativ

Was will der Höllen Schrecken nun,
Was will uns Welt und Sünde tun,
Da wir in Jesu Händen ruhn!

Choral

Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen
An eurer Feinde Schar,
Denn Christus hat zerbrochen,
Was euch zuwider war.
Tod, Teufel, Sünd und Hölle
Sind ganz und gar geschwächt;
Bei Gott hat seine Stelle
Das menschliche Geschlecht.

Evangelist

And God commanded them in a dream that they should not direct themselves back to Herod, and [they] set off by another way back to their country.

Recitative (tenor)

So go! [It is] enough that my Treasure will not go
From here; he stays with me;
I will also not let him [free] from me.
His arm will embrace me out of love
With gentle desire
And greatest tenderness;
He shall remain my bridegroom;
I will entrust breast and heart to him.
I know for certain that he loves me;
My heart also loves him deeply
And will honor him eternally.
Now, at such good fortune, how could any enemy
Harm me!
You, Jesus, are and remain my friend;
And if I anxiously beseech you:
"Lord, save [me]!," then let me see salvation!

Aria (tenor)

Now you insolent enemies might horrify;
[Yet] how could you arouse any fear in me?
My Treasure, my Refuge is here with me!
You do still so like to feign being fierce;
Just [go ahead and] threaten to bring me down
Completely; but look! My Savior dwells here.

Recitative à 4 (soprano, alto, tenor bass)

What will the horrors of hell intend now,
What will World and Sin intend to do to us,
Since we rest in Jesus' hands!

Chorale

Now you all are well avenged
Of your band of enemies,
For Christ has broken apart
What was against you.
Death, devil, sin, and hell
Are completely diminished;
The human family
Has its place by God.

transl. by Michael Marissen

How Shall I Receive You?

Daniel R. Melamed

Modern interest in J. S. Bach as a composer of church music owes a great deal to one celebrated moment: the Berlin performance of a version of his St. Matthew Passion in 1829 under the musical direction of Felix Mendelssohn. The context was a concert, not a liturgy; and the performing organization was the Berlin Sing-Akademie, a bourgeois amateur society that had been founded in the late eighteenth century to promote the private study of great music from the past for the artistic and moral edification of its middle-class members. The effect was sensational, beginning the restoration of Bach's large-scale concerted vocal music to the repertory.

To the concert repertory, that is; this music had become largely unsuited to its original liturgical purposes not long after Bach's death. This was only partly a matter of the notes; it was the text that created problems. Tastes in religious poetry changed rapidly, making the wild and graphic imagery of the Passion's recitatives and arias dated and perhaps tasteless. Even the chorales became outdated; the second half of the eighteenth century saw almost every hymn text revised to suit modern, more rationalistic tastes.

By the 1820s, Bach's passions and other concerted church music was historical, and it is no accident that its revival was in concert performances connected with cultural edification, with reverence for the past, and with a sense of that past as a foundation of German nationhood. The passions came to stand alongside the preludes and fugues of the Well-Tempered Clavier and a few organ works in representing Bach. They were regarded as serious and weighty, full of labyrinthine harmonies and contrapuntal complexities, tragic, lamenting, dramatic and morally uplifting.

Against this background, the Christmas Oratorio was the last of Bach's major vocal-instrumental works to be rediscovered. As writers on Bach's music encountered the Christmas Oratorio they found it difficult to square with the music of the passions and with the style they expected from their composer. The oratorio, in contrast to the passions, was sunny and smiling, simple, and galant—even to the point of suggesting of doubt about Bach's authorship. (Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach was suggested as a possible compiler, for example.) Its lighter style, aligning better with secular music, was a source of puzzlement.

And then they discovered the parody origin of much of the Christmas Oratorio in actual secular compositions—that Bach had reused music composed for other non-liturgical purposes, fitted with new texts. This created multiple problems, if not a crisis. Not only was there the musical

style of the oratorio to deal with, there was also the issue of originality, closely associated in the nineteenth century with the concept of genius; and the apparent clash of the solemn purpose of Bach's sacred music with its frivolous secular origins.

The complete edition of Bach's works begun in 1850 was forced to confront this in the preface to its 1856 publication of the Christmas Oratorio. The strategy of the editor, Wilhelm Rust, was to emphasize the role of chorales, which were both sacred and original to the composition, and to declare that the apparent secular origin of the music was essentially a red herring. Bach knew all along, he suggested, that the music he composed for those secular occasions would find use in sacred works. Several problems disappeared with this assertion because the notes became sacred by their nature, conceived that way from the start and remaining so whether used in a secular work or a sacred one. The originality problem was inherently solved, too, because this explanation let Bach off the hook; if he had been planning all along then there was no lack of imaginative genius anywhere in the process.

For commentators there remained the fundamental problem of the Christmas Oratorio's apparent lack of seriousness and weight compared to Bach's passions, and for this there was an interpretive solution that dated from the earliest critical writings on the work in the 1840s. The musical antiquarian Carl von Winterfeld argued that Bach's use of certain chorale melodies deepened the theological seriousness of the Christmas Oratorio, in particular by drawing the work closer to his passion settings.

His principal example is the first chorale in the work, "Wie soll ich dich empfangen?" The text is a verse of an Advent hymn that asks of Jesus "How shall I receive you?" Bach set this chorale stanza to a melody that students of his music will certainly recognize, but the way Winterfeld identified it was essential. He called the melody "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden," familiar to many today in its English-language version "O sacred head now wounded." This text is closely associated with the passion story and indeed is a chorale for Holy Week; it was part of a series of hymns that each reflected on a body part of Jesus.

This was Winterfeld's opening and he charged through it, expressing wonder at the sounding of the notes of a passion chorale in a Christmas oratorio. He then argued for the close theological relationship between Christmas and Palm Sunday, and by extension to the passion story itself. He suggested that Bach anticipated the passion (and the Passions) by juxtaposing Christmas hymns like "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ" and "Vom Himmel hoch, da

How Shall I Receive You? (continued)



komm ich her” (both heard in the Christmas Oratorio) with a chorale melody associated with the crucifixion narrative.

This interpretation accomplished several things. For one it made Bach into a deep and serious thinker about the nature of the Christmas story. For another, it tempered the joyous exuberance of the Christmas Oratorio with something somber and presumably more fitting. And most importantly it tied the Christmas Oratorio, with its suspect lightness and connections to secular music, firmly to Bach’s passions. This was particularly true because the St. Matthew Passion’s interpolated texts include no fewer than five verses of “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden” and one verse of another hymn that uses the same melody; in many ways this chorale tune stood for that passion setting. And of course the St. Matthew Passion encapsulated everything that was valued about Bach.

This claim persists today—one runs across it again and again in popular and critical writings alike. There is just one problem: In eighteenth-century terms it is almost certainly wrong. It is true that the melody Bach used for “Wie soll ich dich empfangen?” is today known as a passion chorale; in fact it is often called The Passion Chorale, as

if there were only one. But this is a modern designation, and in fact one that almost certainly comes from the very centrality of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion in the repertory. In Bach’s time the melody was used for numerous different texts for different seasons, and tended to be identified as “Herzlich tut mich verlangen nach einem seel’gen End” (I long in my heart for a blessed end).

The Christmas Oratorio stanza “Wie soll ich dich empfangen?” is the first of an Advent hymn. It was not in the Leipzig hymnal, but there was an option open to Bach in setting it to music. Because hymn poetry was regular and limited to a relatively small number of metrical patterns and stanza lengths, a hymn text could be sung to a variety of melodies. And in fact a 1736 hymnal published in Leipzig in which Bach had a hand suggests a tune for “Wie soll ich dich empfangen”: “Herzlich tut mich verlangen,” the melody Bach used in the Christmas Oratorio. But it is worth noting that the tune is not called “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden” there, and that the hymnal also suggests the tune for texts variously assigned to the evening, penitence, communion, Advent, the passion, divine sovereignty and providence, temporal suffering, praise and thanks, death, and the feast of the Purification. Each time it is identified not as “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden” (the passion text) but as “Herzlich tut mich verlangen,” a meditation on the believer’s wish for death and eternal joy. To Leipzig listeners, this was not exclusively or even primarily a passion melody

Winterfeld made the same argument about the final chorale of part VI of the Christmas Oratorio, which uses the same tune, this time splendidly set with trumpets and drums. The text, “Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen,” is a verse of the Christmas hymn “Ihr Christen auserkoren.” Like the first chorale in the oratorio it was not in the regular Leipzig hymnal, and its melody was probably not well known there. And as with the first chorale, Bach chose a tune that fit the meter—the same one as he used for “Wie soll ich dich empfangen.” Once again we are on shaky ground in claiming that his listeners would have heard a reference to the passion. We need to recognize that this was an argument with a purpose: drawing the Christmas Oratorio closer to the Bach passions with which it was implicitly and explicitly compared, and against which it had a hard time making a case for itself as a piece worthy of a devout composer.

The Berlin Sing-Akademie did not perform the Christmas Oratorio until 1857, the work’s first complete performance—Bach almost certainly never performed the whole himself at one stretch, but rather on six days spanning nearly two weeks. This performance was not so complete, though. It traversed all six parts of the oratorio

How Shall I Receive You? (continued)

but cut 17 numbers. A few of the eliminated movements were chorale settings (but not the “passion chorale”!) and one was a passage of gospel narrative, but most of the cuts were in solo music: eight of the work’s 13 arias and four of its 10 instrumentally accompanied recitatives.

This tipped the balance in the work towards the gospel narrative and to the framing choruses and chorales. It inverts the emphasis of the original, in which commentary in the form of poetic movements and chorales dominates. And with 200 chorus members and 50 instrumentalists, the Sing-Akademie’s performance of this version emphasized the powerful presentation of fully scored movements performed by large forces. The result resembled the cut-down versions of the St. Matthew Passion presented by the organization; those performances also eliminated most of the work’s arias, and their overall effect was dominated by movements like the opening chorus and by the gospel narrative. The elimination of so many of the Christmas Oratorio’s arias helped temper aspects of the work that seemed problematic (poetic texts and settings that called for solo vocal virtuosity) and drew the work closer to the form in which the St. Matthew Passion was known.

The reception of the Christmas Oratorio has continued to be influenced by that 1829 performance of the St. Matthew Passion, which set the tone for the understanding of all of Bach’s sacred music. The various strategies that appeared to bring the Christmas Oratorio closer to Bach’s passions succeeded in explaining a puzzling work, but they established a particular perspective, inviting its interpretation in relation to the passions. The question posed in the Christmas Oratorio’s first chorale, “How shall I receive you?” is worth asking about the work itself. One answer is that we can try to listen to it for its own merits; we do not have to make Bach’s passion settings our first point of engagement with this matchless music.

Daniel R. Melamed is a professor of musicology at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, and serves as president of the American Bach Society and director of the Bloomington Bach Cantata Project. His books *Hearing Bach’s Passions* and *Listening to Bach: the Mass in B Minor and Christmas Oratorio*, for general readers, are available from Oxford University Press.

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DANA MARSH, *Artistic Director*



Dana Marsh's musical training began as a boy chorister at St. Thomas Choir School in New York and at Salisbury Cathedral in England. He earned his undergraduate degree in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music, with later masters and doctoral degrees in historical musicology from the University of Oxford.

Commended as "an energetic and persuasive conductor" (*Los Angeles Times*), and as "a superb choral conductor, energetic and precise" (*The Washington Post*), Marsh has enjoyed fruitful collaborations with the London Mozart Players, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, the Lamèque International Baroque Music Festival, Cappella Romana, the choirs of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue and Trinity Wall Street with Trinity Baroque and New York Baroque Incorporated, Magnificat (UK), Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, among others. While living, studying, and working in the UK (1999–2010), he founded the British ensemble

Musica Humana Oxford (2001–2008), which toured the US to enthusiastic praise: "... pleasing to the ear and satisfying to the soul" (*LA Times*).

Working as a vocal soloist and consort singer in the U.S. and the U.K. for 16 years (1992–2008), he received critical acclaim: "Marsh gave object lessons in vocal ornamentation as a graceful countertenor" (*LA Times*), with further plaudits as "a powerful and expressive countertenor" (*New York Times*). He undertook Bach aria study with the Dutch bass-baritone Max Van Egmond in Amsterdam. He performed with the American Bach Soloists, Concert Royal, New York Collegium (under Gustav Leonhardt), Seattle Baroque Orchestra, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, A Cappella Portuguesa, and the Brabant Ensemble. While pursuing doctoral research in the U.K., Marsh sang for seven years as a soloist and regular member of the Choir of New College Oxford, joining in numerous collaborations with the Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the European Union Baroque Orchestra; involved in some 25 concert tours, recording fifteen discs with New College Choir, one of which won the Gramophone Award for Early Music in 2008.

Marsh is Professor of Music and Director of the Historical Performance Institute at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Previously, he taught early music history at both Oxford and Cambridge universities, additionally publishing original research and review articles through the scholarly presses of both institutions. Marsh is general editor of the Indiana University Press book series, *Historical Performance*, as well as an annual academic journal under the same name. He has written research and review articles for *Early Music* (OUP), *Early Music History* and the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (CUP). He served as Assistant Director of Music and Director of Chapel Music at Girton College Cambridge, and more recently was Canon Organist and Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis.

Marsh has also prepared ensembles of young singers for concert and recording engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Esa-Pekka Salonen and Antonio Pappano. He has recorded in various capacities for Sony, Universal, Avie, Decca, Erato, Koch International Classics, Signum and Public Radio International.



MEET THE ARTISTS



“With consummate poise, limpid clarity, and faultless intonation” (Washington Classical Review), soprano **Amy Nicole Broadbent** has garnered recognition as a vibrant and versatile musical force. Acclaimed for dynamic performances of oratorio, art song, opera, and chamber music, Amy has performed as a soloist for the Oregon Bach Festival, Staunton Music Festival, Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Washington National Cathedral, Washington Bach Consort, The Thirteen, Folger Consort, Reading Choral Society, Washington Master Chorale, and New Dominion Chorale. Amy won first-place in the Audrey Rooney Bach Competition (Kentucky Bach Choir) and the National Society of Arts and Letters’ Winston Voice Competition, and was a prizewinner for the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-

Solo Competition (New York Oratorio Society) at Carnegie Hall, the Annapolis Opera Competition, the Bach Vocal Competition for American Singers (Bach Choir of Bethlehem), and the Franco-American Grand Concours Vocal Competition. Using her Arts and Letters award, she studied in Weimar, Germany, appearing as Pamina in Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*. Other operatic credits include: Sebastian (*The Outer Edge of Youth* - Scott Ordway - world premiere), Papagena (*Die Zauberflöte*), Josephine (*H.M.S. Pinafore*), Elsie (*The Yeomen of the Guard*), Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*), and Ms. Jessel (*The Turn of the Screw*). Amy is a founding member of vocal quartet *The Polyphonists*, and has lent her voice to award-winning ensembles including *The Crossing*, *True Concord*, *The Choir of Trinity Wall Street*, *Santa Fe Desert Chorale*, *The Thirteen*, and the *Choir of the Basilica*. She is the Assistant Conductor of the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters, the official chorus of the U.S. Navy. Amy holds degrees in both voice and conducting from the University of Maryland, and her teachers include Elizabeth Daniels, Gran Wilson, Carmen Balthrop, and Edward Maclary.



Sylvia Leith, mezzo-soprano, is a soloist and consort singer praised for her “captivating” presence, “plangent” and “creamy” tone, and “stirring recitative” (Portland Arts Watch, Washington Classical Review, Cultural Voice of North Carolina). She has appeared as a soloist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Oregon Bach Festival, *Tempesta di Mare*, American Classical Orchestra, Bach Akademie Charlotte, Emmanuel Music Baltimore, the IN Series, Florilegium Chamber Choir, and Washington Young Sinfonia, in repertoire ranging from Bach, Handel, and Purcell to Mahler, Elgar, and Copland. Solo highlights of her 2023–24 season include *Messiah* with the Choir of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue and New York Baroque Incorporated, Mozart’s *Requiem* with Princeton Pro Musica, Duruflé’s

Requiem at St. John’s Tulsa and Christ Church Wilmington, and Bach cantatas with Cantata Collective and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity. Sylvia’s diverse operatic roles range from Nerone in Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea* to Nancy in Britten’s *Albert Herring*. Her ensemble credits include TENET, *Lorelei*, Bach Collegium San Diego, *Ekmeles*, the Oregon Bach Festival Chorus, Ensemble Altera, and the Choir of Trinity Wall Street. With a special interest in one-per-part chamber singing, she is a founding member of the vocal quartets of the *Polyphonists* and the *Uncommon Music Festival*.

Sylvia earned a bachelor’s in German from Yale University, where extracurricularly she performed seven principal opera roles, the *Sprechgesang* in Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire*, and a touring concert of the motets and *lais* of Philippe de Vitry. She then earned a master’s in Voice from Boston University. She was a finalist in the 2021 Bethlehem Bach Aria Competition, a semifinalist in the 2022 New York Oratorio Society Competition, and a Mid-Atlantic Regional Finalist in the 2019 NATS Artist Awards competition. She lives in New York City.



Praised by the New York Times for his “sweet, penetrating lyric tenor with aching sensitivity,” and by San Francisco Classical Voice as “an indomitable musical force,” **Thomas Cooley** is a singer of great versatility, expressiveness, and virtuosity. Internationally in demand for a wide range of repertoire in concert, opera, and chamber music, Cooley performs regularly with major orchestras and Baroque ensembles worldwide.

Mr. Cooley is known particularly as an interpreter of the works of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven and Britten. He returns as the tenor soloist at the Carmel Bach Festival for his twelfth season in 2023, and was Artist-in-Residence for Music of the Baroque from 2015 to 2016. Of his Evangelist with Jane Glover, the Chicago Tribune wrote that he was “an ideal Evangelist, firm of voice and commanding of expression.”

Important recent engagements include the role of Gimoaldo in Rodelinda at the Göttingen Handel Festspiele, Telemann’s Der Tag des Gerichts in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam; a recording of the Evangelist in the Johannes-Passion with Nicholas McGegan and the Cantata Collective; Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with the New York Philharmonic and Phoenix Symphony; Handel’s Theodora with Philharmonia Baroque; Britten’s War Requiem in Carnegie Hall and portraying Acis in Acis and Galatea with the Mark Morris Dance Group. A program of Handel arias and duets entitled “As Steals the Morn” with San Francisco’s Voices of Music was selected as the best Early/Baroque performance in the Bay Area in 2019, a selection from which has received nearly two million views on YouTube.



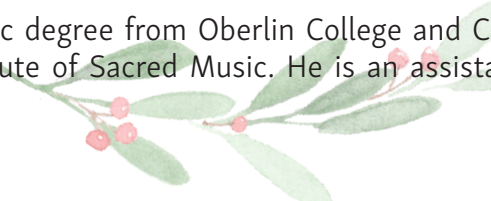
Hailed as an artist “alight with the spirit of the music” (Boston Globe), **Dashon Burton** has established a vibrant career appearing regularly throughout the US and Europe. Highlights of his 2023/24 season include multiple appearances with Michael Tilson Thomas, including a performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the San Francisco Symphony; Copland’s Old American Songs with the New World Symphony; and selections from Tilson Thomas’s own Meditations on Rilke with the San Diego Symphony. Burton also performs Bach’s Christmas Oratorio with the Washington Bach Consort, sings Handel’s Messiah with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and performs the title role in Sweeney Todd at Vanderbilt University. With the Cleveland Orchestra, Burton

participates in a semi-staged version of Mozart’s The Magic Flute, and he joins the Milwaukee Symphony and Ken-David Masur for three subscription weeks as their Artist in Residence.

A multiple award-winning singer, Dashon Burton won his second Grammy Award in March 2021 for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album with his performance featured in Dame Ethyl Smyth’s masterwork The Prison with The Experiential Orchestra (Chandos). As an original member of the groundbreaking vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, he won his first Grammy Award for their inaugural recording of all new commissions.

His other recordings include Songs of Struggle & Redemption: We Shall Overcome (Acis), the Grammy-nominated recording of Paul Moravec’s Sanctuary Road (Naxos); Holocaust, 1944 by Lori Laitman (Acis); and Caroline Shaw’s The Listeners with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. His album of spirituals garnered high praise and was singled out by the New York Times as “profoundly moving...a beautiful and lovable disc.”

Burton received a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin College and Conservatory, and a Master of Music degree from Yale University’s Institute of Sacred Music. He is an assistant professor of voice at Vanderbilt University’s Blair School of Music.





Michael Marissen (*Talking Bach*) is Daniel Underhill Professor Emeritus of Music at Swarthmore College and holds a BA from Calvin College and PhD from Brandeis University. He has taught courses on Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical European music; Bach; a conceptual introduction to the music of various cultures; and Mozart and the string quartet. His research has been supported by fellowships from agencies in Canada (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), England (Woolf Institute), Germany (DAAD and Humboldt Foundation), and the US (National Endowment for the Humanities and American Council of Learned Societies).

He has written several books on Bach and Handel, including *Bach & God* (Oxford University Press, 2016); *Tainted Glory in Handel's Messiah* (Yale University Press, 2014); *Bach's Oratorios — The Parallel German-English Texts, with Annotations* (Oxford University Press, 2008); *Creative Responses to Bach from Mozart to Hindemith* (University of Nebraska Press, 1998), editor; *Lutheranism, Anti-Judaism, and Bach's St. John Passion* (Oxford University Press, 1998); *An Introduction to Bach Studies* (Oxford University Press, 1998), co-authored with Daniel R. Melamed; and *The Social and Religious Designs of J. S. Bach's Brandenburg Concertos* (Princeton University Press, 1995). Other publications include articles in *Early Music*, *Harvard Theological Review*, *Lutheran Quarterly*, *Music and Letters*, *Musical Quarterly*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The New York Times*.

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