Recordings of recent performances by OS&SCS are available for sale. They include three of our 1996 premieres. You can also purchase our first CD, a tribute to Shostakovich, recorded in late 1995. Our second CD includes music from the films of Sean Connery, Our newest disc includes our Spring 1997 performance of JS Bach's Cantata No. 4 (Christ lag in Todes Banden). CDs are $10 for each CD, or $30 for all three. Special thanks to Dr. Ben M. Greenfield for his role in this project.

Upcoming

Haydn: The Seasons
First United Methodist Church
Sunday, May 11, 1997, 7:00pm

Beyer: The Passion According to St. Mark
Good Friday, March 28, 1997, 8:30pm
First United Methodist Church
Orchestra Seattle

Violins
Leah Bartell
Stephen Hegg
Susan Herring
Dajana Akrapovic Hobson
Maria Hunt
Deb Kirkland, co-concertmaster
Fritz Klein, co-concertmaster
Avron Maletzky
Sondra Nelson
Janet Showalter

Cello
Julie Reed, principal
Valerie Ross

String Bass
Allan Goldman

Oboes
Geoff Grushong, principal
Susan Worden
Steve Cortelyou

English Horn
Steve Cortelyou

Bassoon
Jeff Eldridge

Trumpets
Matt Dalton, principal
Gordon Ullmann
Craig Penrose

Timpani
Dan Oie

Harpsichord
Robert Keckley
George Shangrow

Seattle Chamber Singers

Soprano
Paula Rimmer
Lisa van Cleef

Alto
Ladita Adams
Sharon Agnew
Margaret Alsop
Cheryl Blackburn
Jane Blackwell
Wendy Borton
Penny Deputy

Suzi Means
Laurie Medill
Veronica Parniske
Nedra Slauson
Adrienne Thomas

Tenor
Alex Chu
Ralph Cobb
John Lange
Timothy Lunde

Tom Neibitt
Jerry Sams
David Zapolsky

Bass
Andrew Danilichik
Douglas Durasoff
Dick Rhelington
Peter Henry
Rob Kline
John Stenseth

OS * SCS
Orchestra Seattle  Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, Founder and Music Director
28th Season

PROGRAM
Sunday, March 9, 1997, 3:00pm
University Christian Church
Seattle, Washington

J.S. Bach Birthday Celebration

Suite No. 4 in D Major, BWV 1069
Overture
Bourée I & II
Gavotte
Menuet I & II
Réjouissance

 Cantata No. 56 “Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen”

 aria
Recitative
aria
Recitative
Choral

Motet No. 1 in B-flat for Double Chorus, “Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied”, BWV 225

Chorus
aria
Lobet den Herrn
Hallelujah

INTERMISSION

Concerto for Two Violins in d minor, BWV 1043
Vivace
Largo ma non tanto
Allegro

Deb Kirkland and Fritz Klein, violins

 Cantata No. 140 “Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme”

Choral
Recitative, tenor
Aria duetto
Choral
Recitative, bass
Aria duetto
Choral

Kia Sams, soprano, Brian Box, baritone, Jerry Sams, tenor

OS * SCS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Washington State Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Seattle Arts Commission, Corporate Council for the Arts, SoundBank, the Boeing Company, Microsoft Corporation, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and Classic KING-FM 98.1.
Orchestra Seattle

Violins
- Leah Bartell
- Stephen Hegg
- Susan Herring
- Dajana Akrapovic Hobson
- Maria Hunt
- Deb Kirkland, co-concertmaster
- Fritz Klein, co-concertmaster
- Avron Maletzky
- Sondra Nelson
- Janet Showalter

Cello
- Julie Reed, principal
- Valerie Ross

String Bass
- Allan Goldman

Oboes
- Geoff Groshong, principal
- Susan Worden
- Steve Cortelyou

English Horn
- Steve Cortelyou

Bassoon
- Jeff Eldridge

Trumpets
- Matt Dalton, principal
- Gordon Ullmann
- Craig Penrose

Timpani
- Dan Oie

Harpsichord
- Robert Keckley
- George Shangrow

Seattle Chamber Singers

Soprano
- Paula Rimmer
- Lielah van Cleef
- Jennifer Adams
- Barbara Anderson
- Sue Cobb
- Cristina Cogier
- Kyla DeRomer
- Dana Durasoff
- Cinda Freece
- Lordette Knowles
- Nancy Lewis
- Andrea Milletta

Alto
- Lisa Adams
- Sharon Agnew
- Margaret Alsop
- Cheryl Blackburn
- Jane Blackwell
- Wendy Borton
- Penny Deputy

Mezzo Soprano
- Suzi Means
- Laurie Medill
- Veronica Parmiter
- Nedra Snead
- Adrienne Thomas

Tenor
- Tom Neibitt
- Jerry Sams
- David Zapolsky
- Alex Chun
- Ralph Cobb
- John Lange
- Timothy Lunde

Bass
- Andrew Danilichik
- Douglas Durasoff
- Dick Ehrington
- Peter Henry
- Rob Kline
- John Stenseth

J.S. Bach Birthday Celebration

Suite No. 4 in D Major, BWV 1069
- Ouverture
- Bourrée I & II
- Gavotte
- Menuet I & II
- Réjouissance

Gesualdo Cantata No. 56 “Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen”
- Aria
- Recitativo
- Aria
- Recitativo
- Choral
- Brian Box, baritone

Bach Motet No. 1 in B-flat for Double Chorus, “Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied”, BWV 225
- Chorus
- Aria
- Lobet den Herrn
- Halleluja

INTERMISSION

Concerto for Two Violins in d minor, BWV 1043
- Vivace
- Largo ma non tanto
- Allegro
- Deb Kirkland and Fritz Klein, violins

Gesualdo Cantata No. 140 “Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme”
- Choral
- Recitativo, tenor
- Aria duetto
- Choral
- Recitativo, bass
- Aria duetto
- Choral
- Kia Sams, soprano, Brian Box, baritone, Jerry Sams, tenor

OS SCS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Washington State Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Seattle Arts Commission, Corporate Council for the Arts, SeattleFirst Bank, the Boeing Company, Microsoft Corporation, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and Classic KING-FM 98.1.
Singet dem Herrn
Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied,
Die Gemeine der Heiligen sollen ihn loben,
Israel freute sich, der ihn gemacht hat,
Der Kinder Zion seht ihr frohlich über ihren Konige,
Sie sollen loben seinen Namen im Reigen,
Mit Pauken und mit Harfen sollen sie ihm spielen.
Wich wie ein Vater erhaben
Ohr seine junge Kinderlein,
So statt der Herr uns allen,
So wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.
Er kennt das arm’s Gemächte,
Gott weiss, wir sind nur Staub,
Gott, nimm dich ferner unser an
Denne ohne dich ich nicht gethan,
Mit allen unsern Sachen.
Gleich wie das Gras vom Rechen,
Ein Blum und fallend Laub!
Der Wind nur drüber wehet,
So ist es nicht mehr da.
Drum sei du unser Schirm und Licht,
Und trügt uns unzure Hoffnung nicht,
So wirst du ferner machen.
Also Menschen vergehet,
Sein End das ist ihm nahh.
Wohl dem, der sich nur steif und fest
Auf dich und deine Huld verlässt.
Lobet dem Herrn in seinen Thaten,
Lobet ihn in seiner grossen Herrlichkeit,
Alles, was Odem hat, loben den Herrn,
Hallelujah!

Cantata 148: Wacht auf, ruft uns die Stimme

1. Coro
Wacht auf! Ruft uns die Stimme,
Der Wächter sehr hoch auf der Zinne,
Wenn’s auf, du Stadt Jerusalem!
Mitternacht heisst diese Stunde;
Sie rufen uns mit hellem Munde:
Wo seid ihr ehren- und frauen?
Wohl auf! Der Bräutigam kommt,
Steh auf! Die Lampen nehmst.
Alleshut!
Macht euch bereit
Zu der Hochzeit,
Ihr müsset ihn entgegen gehen.

2. Recitativo
Er kommt, er kommt,
Der Bräutigam kommt!
Ihr Töchter Zion, kommt heraus,
Sein Ausgang zuletzt aus der Höhe
In eurer Mutter Haus.
Der Bräutigam kommt, der einem Rehe
Und jungen Hirsche gleich
Auf denen Hügeln springt
Und euch das Mahl der Hochzeit bringt.
Wacht auf, ermuntert euch!
Der Bräutigam zu empfangen!

Cantata 56: Ich will den Kreuzstab gern tragen

1. Aria
Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen,
Er komint von Gottes lieber Hand,
Denn erhebt mich nach meinen Plagen
Zu Gott, in das gelobte Land.
Da leg ich den Kummer auf einmal ins Grab,
Da wüscht nur den Tränen mein Heiland selbst ab.

2. Recitativo
Mein Welde auf der Welt
Ist einer Schiffsart gleich:
Betrothe, Kreuz und Not
Sind Walen, welche mich bedecken
Und auf dem Tod
Mich täglich schrecken;
Mein Arker ab, der mich hält,
Ist die Barmherzigkeit.
Womit mein Gott mich oft erfreut.
Der rufet so zu mir:
Ich bin bei dir,
Ich will dich nicht verlassen noch versuchen
Und wenn das wittvollen Schutzen
Sein Ende hat,
So tret ich aus dem Schiff in meine Stadt,
Dass ist das Himmelreich,
Wothin ich mit dem Pronem
Aus vier Trubel werde kommen.

3. Aria
Endlich, endlich wird mein Joch
Wieder von mir weichen müssen.
Da kriegt ich in dem Herren Kraft,
Da hab ich Alders Eigenschaff,
Da fahr ich von dieser Erden
Und laufe sonder matt zu werden.
O geschah es heute noch!

4. Recitativo ed Arioso
Ich stehe fettig und bereit,
Das Erbe meiner Seligkeit
Mit Schnee und Verlangen
Von Jesus Händen zu empfangen.
Wie wohl wird mir geschehen,
Wenn ich den Port der Ruhe werde sehn.
Da leg ich den Kummer auf einmal ins Grab,
Da wüscht mir die Tränen mein Heiland selbst ab.

5. Choral
Komm, o Tod, du Schlafes Bruder,
Komm und führe mich nur fort;
Losse meinen Schatten Ruder,
Bringe mich an sichern Port.
Es mag, wer da will, dich scheuen,
Du kannst mich vielmehr erfreuen;
Denn durch dich kom ich herein
Zu dem schönsten Jesulein.

I will the cross-staff gladly carry
I will the cross-staff gladly carry,
It comes from God’s beloved hand,
It leadeth me on the land.
When I lay in the grave all my trouble once lay,
Himself shall my Savior my tears wipe away.

My sojourn in the world
Is like a voyage at sea:
The sadness, cross and woe
Are billows which have overwhelmed me
And unto death
Each day appale me;
My anchor, though, which me doth hold,
Is that compassion of the heart.
With which my God oft makes me glad.
He calleth thus to me:
I am with thee,
I will not’er abandon or forsake thee!
And when the raging ocean’s shaking
Comes to an end,
Into my city from the ship I’ll go
It is the heav’ly realm
Which I with all the righteous
From deepest sadness will have entered.

One day, one day shall my yoke
Once again be lifted from me.
Then shall I in the Lord find pow’r,
And with the eagle’s features rare,
There rise above this earthily bound’ry
And sorrow without becoming weary.
This I would today invoke!

I stand here ready and prepared,
My legacy of lasting bliss
With yearning and with capture
From Jesus’ hands at last to capture.
How well for me that day
When I in the port of rest shall come to see.
When I in the grave all my trouble once lay,
Himself shall my Savior my tears wipe away.

Come you death, brother of sleep
Come and just lead me away;
Let go of my ship’s rudder
And take me to a secure haven.
It may, that some of you have fear,
You are the one that I rejoice in;
With you I enter
And find the most beautiful Jesus.

Sing ye to the Lord
Sing ye to the Lord a new song,
Let all the saints in congregation sing and praise Him,
Israel rejoice in Him that made thee,
Let Zion’s children be joyful in their King,
And let them praise His holy name in their dances,
With timbrel and with harp united sing His praises.
Like as a father benthed
In pity of his infant race;
So God the Lord befriendeth
The meek and lowly heirs of grace.
That we are frail He knoweth,
Like sheep we go astray;
Almighty God preserve us still
Teach us to heed thy will,
In all we do direct us;
Like grass the reaper moweth,
We fall and fade away;
Like wind that ever flieth,
We are but passing breath;
Be Thou our shield by day and night,
Make hope our staff and faith our light,
In all our ways protect us.
Thus man each moment dieth,
For life must yield to death.
How blessed and secure is he,
Who placeth all his trust in Thee.
Praise ye the Lord, His acts are mighty,
Praise Him greatly for his excellence is great,
All breathing life, sing and praise ye the Lord,
Hallelujah!

Wake, arise, the voices call us
Wake, arise, the voices call us
Of watchmen from the lofty tower;
Arise, thou town Jerusalem!
Midnight’s hour doth give its summons;
They call to us with ringings voice;
Where are ye prudent virgins now?
Make haste, the bridegroom comes,
Rise up and take your lamps!
Alleluia!
Prepare to join
The wedding feast,
Go forth to meet him as he comes.

He comes, he comes,
The bridegroom comes!
O Zion’s daughters, come ye forth,
His journey is brought into the heavens
Into your mother’s house.
The bridegroom comes, who to a ropeback
And youthful stag is like,
Which on the hill doth leap;
To you the marriage meal he brings.
Rise up, be lively now
The bridegroom here to welcome!
Singet dem Herrn
Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, Die Gemeine der Heiligen sollen ihn loben, Israel freue sich, der ihn gemacht hat, Die Kinder Zion seid frohlich über ihren Könige, Sie sollen loben seinen Namen im Reigen, Mit Pauken und mit Harfen sollen sie ihm spielen.

Wie sich ein Vat’ e räubert
Oh, seine junge Kinderlein, So thut der Herr uns allen, So wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.

Er kennt das arm’ Gemächte, Gott weise, wir sind nur Staub, Gott, nimm dich ferner unser an, Denn ohne dich ich nicht genan, Mit allen unsern Sachen.

Gleich wie das Gras vom Rechen, Ein Blum’ und fallend Laub! Der Wind nur drüber wehet, So ist nicht mehr da.

Drum sei du unser Schirm und Licht, Und trügt uns unrate Hoffnung nicht, So wirst du ferner machen.

Auch Mensch vergehet, Sein End dir ist ich nahr.

Wohl dem, der sich nur steif und fest Auf dich und deine Huld verlass.

Lobet dem Herrn in seinen Thaten, Lobet ihn in seiner grossen Herrlichkeit, Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn, Hallelujah.

Cantata 160: Wacht auf, ruft uns die Stimme

1. Coro
Wacht auf! Ruft uns die Stimme, Der Wächter sehr hoch auf der Zinne; Wacht auf, du Stadt Jerusalem!

Mitternacht heisst diese Stunde; Sie rufen uns mit hellem Munde: Wo seid ihr, ihr Jungfrauen? Wohl auf! Der Bräutigam kommt, Steht auf! Die Lampen nehm’t.

A bills! Macht euch bereit, Zu der Hochzeit, Ihr müsset ihn entgegen gehn.

2. Recitativo
Er kommt, er kommt, Der Bräutigam kommt! Ihn Töchter Zion, kommt herauf, Sein Aussang eilet aus der Höhe In eurer Mutter Haus.

Der Bräutigam kommt, der einem Rehe Und jungen Hirsche gleich Auf denen Hügeln springt Und euch das Mahl der Hochzeit bringt. Wacht auf, ermutzt euch! Den Bräutigam zu empfangen!

Wake, arise, the voices call us

Wake, arise, the voices call us Of watchmen from the lofty tower; Arise, thou town Jerusalem! Midnight’s hour doth give its summons; They call to us with ringing voice: Where are ye, ye prudent virgins now? Make haste, the bridegroom comes, Rise up and take your lamps! Alleluia! Prepare to join The wedding feast, Go forth to meet him as he comes.

He comes, he comes, The bridegroom comes! O Zion’s daughters, come ye forth, Her journey is through the heavens Into your mother’s house. The bridegroom comes, who to a roebuck And youthful stag is like, Which on the hills doth leap; To you the marriage meal he brings. Rise up, be lively now! The bridegroom here to welcome!
Dort, sehet, kommt er hergegangen.
3. Aria
Wenn kommst du, mein Heil?
Ich komme, dein Teil.
Ich warte mit brennendem Oel.
Eröffne den Sal
Ich öffne den Sal
Zum himmlischen Mahl
Komm, Jesu!
Ich komme; komm, liebe Seele!
4. Choral
Zion hört die Wächter singen.
Das Herz tut vor Freuden springen.
Sie wachtet und steht ellend auf.
Ihr Freund kommt von Himmlle prächtig.
Von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit maächtig.
Ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.
Nun komm, du werte Kron,
Herr Jesu, Cottes Sohn!
Herr Jesu!
Wir folgen all
Zum Freudentaual
Und halten mit das Abendmahl.
5. Recitativo
So geht herein zu mir,
Denn du erwähle Braut!
Ich habe mich mit dir,
Von Ewigkeit vertraut.
Dich will ich auf mein Herz,
Auf meinen Arm gleich wie ein Siegel setzen
Und dein betrügeltes Auge ergöttzet.
Vergiss, o Seele, nun
Die Angst, den Schmerz,
Den du erdulden müßten;
Auch der Herr schenkt solche ruh,
Und meine Rechte soll dich küszen.
6. Aria
Mein Freund ist mein,
Und ich bin sein.
Die Liebe soll nicht scheiden.
Ich will mit dir in Himmels Rosen weiden,
Du sollst mit mir in Himmels Rosen weiden,
Da Freude die Pille, da Wonne wird sein.
7. Choral
Gloria sei dir gesungen
Mit Menschen- und englischen Zungen,
Mit Harfen und Klängen
Von zwolf Perlen sind die Pförten
A deiner Stadt sind wir Konsorten
Der Engel hoch um deinen Thron
Komm, Jesu, hast du gespürt,
Kein Ohr hat je gehört
Solche Freude.
Dies sind mir froh,
io, io
Ewig in dulci jubilo.

There, look now, thence he comes to meet you.
When com'st thou, my Savior?
I'm coming, thy share.
I'm waiting with my burning oil.
Now open the hall
I open the hall
For heaven's rich meal.
Come, Jesu!
Come, O lovely soul!
Zion hears the watchmen singing,
Her heart within for joy is dancing.
She watches and makes haste to rise.
Her friend comes from heaven glorious,
In mercy strong, in truth most mightly,
Her light is bright, her star doth rise.
Now come, thou precious crown.
Jesus Lord, God's own Son!
Hosannah!
We follow all
To thy glad hall
And join therein the evening meal.
So come within to me,
Thou mine elected bride.
I have myself to thee
Eternally betrothed.
I will upon my heart,
Upon my arm like as a seal engrave thee
And to thy troubled eye bring pleasure.
Forget, O spirit, now
The fear, the pain
Which thou hast had to suffer.
Upon my left hand shalt thou have,
And this my right hand shall embrace thee.
My friend is mine,
And I am thine.
Let love bring no division.
I will with thee on heaven's roses pasture
Thou shalt with me on heaven's roses pasture
Where pleasure in fullness, where joy will abound.
Gloria to thee be sung now
With mortal and angelic voices.
With harps and with the symbols, too.
Of twelve pearls are made the portals;
Amidst thy city we are consorts
Of angels high around thy throne.
No ear hath yet perceived
No ear hath e'er heard
Such great gladness.
Thus may we find joy,
io, io
Ever in dulci jubilo.

Twelve years ago, a gold-plated record was sent into space aboard the Voyager spacecraft. If that record should ever be played by extraterrestrials, the first communication representing humans to them will be the "Grandenburg Concerto No. 2, by Johann Sebastian Bach, whose 312th birthday on March 21 we celebrate this evening by performing five of his works."

A little more than a month after the birth of George Frederic Handel in Halle in February 1685, in the Thuringian town of Eisenach (about 30 miles from Halle, and near Warburg Castle, Martin Luther's hiding place), Johann and Ambarraus, a student in the extended Bach family, was a skilled and successful professional musician, who performed ceremonial music at the Eisenach town hall, and who later accepted a second position as court musician for the local duke. He was an accomplished singer and player of the violin and viola, and the young Sebastian may have learned those instruments from him, and the organ from Ambarraus' cousin, "the profound composer" Johann Christoph Bach, organist at St. George's Church, where Sebastian soon became an experienced chorister.

The eight-year-old Sebastian attended the local Latin School, where Luther had studied, and did very well, but in May of 1694, his mother died; his father remarried the following January, but died himself the next month, leaving his widow with probably five children. Sebastian and his brother Johann Jakob were taken into the home of their oldest brother, Johann Christoph, newly married, and organist at Ohrdruf. In his new environment, the knowledge-hungry Sebastian continued to excel in his musical and academic studies. A famous, but possibly apocryphal, story from this period has the 12-year-old Sebastian secretly removing a manuscript of clavier compositions by such accomplished compositors as Böhm, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, and Fresenberger from a forbidden bookcase in his older brother's home, copying the music by moonlight to avoid detection, and stealthily replacing the original. However, he discovered the painstaking copy, and confiscated it, having denied his brother access to the manuscript because he believed the music was too difficult.

By 1700, Johann Christoph Bach had two children of his own, and was unable to support Sebastian any longer. So the fifteen-year-old musician left Ohrdruf to finish his education in the town of Lüneburg, some 200 miles to the north. Johann took a scholarship to the choir school of St. Michael's Church, which provided him with room, board, and instruction. During the next three years, Sebastian sang in the choir, played the violin in the orchestra, studied the music of past composers and traditional composition methods, and improved his organ-playing by studying with the famous organist, Georg Böhm. When he had completed his academic studies at St. Michael's, however, Sebastian found himself unable to attend a university because he lacked the necessary funds, and he therefore returned to Thuringia, and found a post in 1703 as organist at the New Church in Arnstadt.

In his new position, the eighteen-year-old Sebastian was paid well, but his compositional and technical brilliance as an organist caused him trouble with his employers, because his creative improvisations on and accompaniments to hymn tunes proved confusing to the congregation. The unruly behavior of the congregation, many of whom were older than he, irritated the rather hot-tempered and perfectionistic young musician; at one point, he engaged in a street brawl with a bassoon player named Geyerbach, whom Sebastian had called a "nanny-goat bassoonist." The situation deteriorated further when Sebastian took four months off to visit the celebrated organist-composer Dietrich Buxtehude in the distant town of Lübeck (according to tradition, he made the 400-mile round-trip on foot), when he had originally arranged for an absence of only four weeks. Upon his return in January of 1706, he found himself facing a furious town council complaining that he had been away from his post too long, his playing was becoming even more complex and confusing than ever, and worse yet, he had been heard accompanying the singing of a "strange maiden" in the organ loft! The impatient young genius realized that he would have to find a way, setting in which he could gain the freedom to explore his musical ideas and to compose and perform more challenging music.

The young singer in the organ gallery was probably Maria Barbara Bach, one of Sebastian's second cousins, and, like the rest of the Bach family, a good musician. Both she and Sebastian were not only musicians and cousins, but were also orphans, and both lived for a time with their mutual relative, the Mayor of Arnstadt. They were married in the fall of 1707, after Sebastian had found a new position as organist at the Church of St. Blaise in Abbasburg. But he left this post within a year, having found that the Pietist pastor of the church really preferred church music to be very simple, and that the musical freedom he so greatly desired was not to be found at St. Blaise's.

In July 1708, Bach was appointed court organist and chamber musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, a fervent Lutheran and an enthusiastic musical patron, and the first of Bach's twenty children was born soon after his arrival in Weimar. Here at last, Bach obtained the freedom to compose for which he had longed. Most of his great organ works were written during his nine years at Weimar, and he composed many cantatas for the duke's chapel and for various secular occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and special events at the University of Leipzig. By this time, his speculative skills as an organist and his expertise in Program Notes by Lorelette Knowles
3. Arias
Wenn kommst du, mein Held?
Ich komme, dein Teil.
Ich warte mit brennendem Oel.
Erbőne den Sal
Ich öffne den Sal
Zum himmlischen Mahl
Komme, Jesu!
Ich komme, komm, liebliche Seele!

4. Choral
Zion hört die Wilhelmssingen,
Das Herz tut vor Freuden springen,
Sie wachtet und steht eilend auf.
Ihr Freund kommt von Himmel prächtig,
Von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit machtig,
Ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.
Nun komm, du werte Kron,
Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn!
Herr Jesus! Wir folgen all
Zum Freudenraus
Und halten mit das Abendmahl.

5. Recitativo
So geht herein zu mir,
Du mir erwählte Braut!
Ich habe mich mit dir,
Von Ewigkeit vertraut.
Dich will ich auf mein Herz,
Auf meinen Arm gleich wie ein Siegel setzen
Und dein betrübtes Ziel
Vergiss, o Seele, nun
Die Angst, den Schmerz,
Den da erdenken müssen;
Auf meiner Linken sollst du ruhn,
Und meine Rechte soll dich küssen.

6. Arias
Mein Freund ist mein,
Und ich bin sein.
Die Liebe soll nicht scheiden.
Ich will mit dir in Himmels Rosen weiden,
Du sollst mit mir in Himmels Rosen weiden,
Da Freude die Fülle, da Wonne wird sein.

7. Choral
Gloria sei dir gesungen
Mit Menschen- und englischen Zungen,
Mit Harfen und mit Flöhen.

Von zwölf Perlen sind die Pförtner
A deiner Stadt sind wir Konsorten.

Der Engel hoch um deinen Thron,
Komm, soll ich ihn empflagen,
Kein Ohr hat je gehört
Solche Freude.
Dies sind wir froh,
jo, jo,
Ewig in dulci jubilo.

There, look now, thence he comes to meet you.

When com'st thou, my Savior?
I'm coming, thy share.
I'm waiting with my burning oil.
Now open the hall
I open the hall
For heaven's rich meal.
Come, Jesu!
Come, O lovely soul!

Zion hears the watchmen singing,
Her heart within for joy is dancing.
She watches and makes haste to rise.
Her friend comes from heaven glorious,
In mercy strong, in truth most mighty,
Her light is bright, her star doth rise.
Now come, thou precious crown.
Jesus Lord, God's own Son!
Hosanna! We follow all
To joy's glad hall
And join therein the evening meal.

So come within to me,
Thou mine elected bride.
I have myself to thee
Eternally betrothed.
I will upon my heart,
Upon my arm like as a seal engrave thee.
And to thy tired eye bring pleasure.
Forget, O spirit, now
The fear, the pain
Which thou hast had to suffer;
Upon my left hand shalt thou,
And this my right hand shall embrace thee.

My friend is mine,
And I am thine.
Let love bring no division.
I will with thee on heaven's rose pastures
Thou shalt with me on heaven's rose pastures.
Where pleasure in fullness, where joy will abound.

Gloria to thee be sung now
With mortal and angelic voices,
With harps and with the cymbals, too.
Of twelve pearls are made the portals;
Amidst thy city we are consorts
Of angels high around thy throne.
No eye hath yet perceived
No ear hath e'er heard
Such great gladness.
Thus is the joy, thy, jo,
Ever in dulci jubilo.

Twenty years ago, a gold-plated record was sent into space aboard the Voyager spacecraft. If that record should ever be played by extraterrestrials, the first communication representing humans to them will be the Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, by Johann Sebastian Bach, whose 312th birthday on March 21 we celebrate this evening by performing five of his works.

A little more than a month after the birth of George Frederick Handel in Halle in February 1685, in the Thuringian town of Eisenach (about 30 miles from Halle, and near Warburg Castle, Martin Luther's hiding place), Johann and Ambrandis, welcomed both spring and their eighth child, Johann Sebastian. Ambrosius, like most of the other members of the extended Bach family, was a skilled and successful professional musician, who performed ceremonial music at the Eisenach town hall, and who later accepted a second position as court musician for the local duke. He was an accomplished singer and player of the violin and viola, and the young Sebastian may have learned those instruments from him, and the organ from Ambrosius' cousin, "the profound composer" Johann Christoph Bach, organist at St. George's Church, where Sebastian soon became an experienced chorister.

The eight-year-old Sebastian attended the local Latin School, where Luther had studied, and did very well, but in May of 1694, his mother died; his father remarried the following January, but himself died the next month, leaving his widow with probably five children. Sebastian and his brother Johann Jakob were taken into the home of their oldest brother, Johann Christoph, newly married, and organist at Ohrdruf. In his new environment, the knowledge-hungry Sebastian continued to excel in his musical and academic studies. A famous, but possibly apocryphal, story from this period has the 12-year-old Sebastian secretly removing a manuscript of clavier compositions by such accomplished composers as Böhm, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, and Froberger from a forbidden bookcase in his older brother's home, copying the music by moonlight to avoid detection, and stealthily replacing the originals. Johann Christoph, however, discovered the painstaking copying, and confiscated it, having denied his brother access to the manuscript because he believed the music too difficult.

By 1700, Johann Christoph Bach had two children of his own, and was unable to support Sebastian any longer. So the fifteen-year-old musician left Ohrdruf to finish his education in the town of Lüneburg, some 200 miles to the north. Johann, his Aug hat je gesprügt, was born soon after his arrival in Weimar. Here at last, Bach obtained the freedom to compose for which he had longed. Most of his great organ works were written during his nine years at Weimar, and he composed many cantatas for the duke's chapel and for various secular occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and special events at the University of Leipzig. By this time, his superlative skills as an organist and his expertise in studies at St. Michael's, however, Sebastian found himself unable to attend a university because he lacked the necessary funds, and he therefore returned to Thomasschule and found a post in 1703 as organist at the New Church in Arnstadt.

In his new position, the eighteen-year-old Sebastian was paid well, but his compositional and technical brilliance as an organist caused him trouble with his employers, because his creative improvisations on and accompaniments to hymn tunes proved confusing to the congregation. The unruly behavior of his performing groups, many of whom were older than he, irritated the rather hot-tempered and perfectionistic young musician; at one point, he engaged in a street brawl with a bassoon player named Geyerbach, whom Sebastian had called a "nanny-goat bassoonist." The situation deteriorated further when Sebastian took four months off to visit the celebrated organist-composer Dietrich Buxtehude in the distant town of Lübeck (according to tradition, he made the 400-mile round-trip on foot!), when he had originally arranged for an absence of only four weeks. Upon his return in January of 1706, he found himself facing a furious town council complaining that he had been away from his post too long, his playing was becoming even more complex and confusing than ever, and worse yet, he had been heard accompanying the singing of a "strange maiden" in the organ loft! The impatient young genius realized that he would have to find a new work, setting in which he had the chance to find the freedom to explore his musical ideas and to compose and perform more challenging music.

The young singer in the organ gallery was probably Maria Barbara Bach, one of Sebastian's second cousins, and, like the rest of the Bach family, a good musician. Both she and Sebastian were not only musicians and cousins, but were also orphans, and both lived for a time with their mutual relative, the Mayor of Arnstadt. They were married in the fall of 1707, after Sebastian had found a new position as organist at the Church of St. Blaise in Mühlhausen. But he left this post within a year, having found that the Pietist pastor of the church really preferred church music to be very simple, and that the musical freedom he so greatly desired was not to be found at St. Blaise's.

In July 1708, Bach was appointed court organist and chamber musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, a fervent Lutheran and an enthusiastic musical patron, and the first of Bach's twenty-five children was born soon after his arrival in Weimar. Here at last, Bach obtained the freedom to compose for which he had longed. Most of his great organ works were written during his nine years at Weimar, and he composed many cantatas for the duke's chapel and for various secular occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and special events at the University of Leipzig. By this time, his superlative skills as an organist and his expertise in
Bach’s manner, Siegent herr ein musik lied, which we perform this evening, with a shock: “What is this? Now there is something we can learn from!” he said, and it was Beethoven’s brilliant playing of Bach’s ‘Well-Tempered Clavier’ that made the most impression on the solemn mood returns. Bach uses for this movement’s theme a dance (a gigue), such as often appears as the finale of the dance suites of Bach’s day. After the overture come five movements based on dance forms (two bourrees, distinguished by “contentment and an amiable character,” according to J. Matheson, commenting on the character of Prince Leopold, who expresses “exultant joy” and two minuets that express “moderate merriment”) and a closing movement in a “free” style (a gigue). The overture was defined in 1732 by J. G. Walther as “joy, gaiety” that “occurs in overtures, as certain cheerful pieces are so entitled.” In this orchestral suite, as in the other three, Bach never overbalances his listeners with his stupendous musical mastery, but captivates them with delightful charm, wit, and grace.

Cantata No. 56, Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen

This heartfelt cantata, Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen (“I will my cross-staff gladly bear”), for bass solo, string orchestra, and continuo, is one of Bach’s most beautiful compositions for a single voice in which vocal virtuosity is prominent. It is a work of intimate chamber character, interrupted by brief ensembles and a hymn on Trinity Sunday (October 27 in 1726). The poetically significant text of an unknown writer inspired Bach to compose an unusual work full of contrasts and details. The cantata has no introduction, but opens with a broadly-conceived aria in the somewhat unconventional “bar” (a-b-c) form. In the aria’s “b” section, the solo voice is accompanied by a baritone in the style of a rhythmical accompaniment. The accompanying instruments maintain their former movement in eighth-notes; this combination of different rhythms expresses the passionate yearning in the words “Da – lich will ich den Kranzstab tragen / Ich will entomb all my sorrows and sighs.” In the moving recitative that follows (‘My life in the world is like a journey that has no destination’), the single voice of the cello’s rocking motif; this accomplishment ceases suddenly as the weary pilgrim reaches heaven and leaves the ship. The certainty of faith and the joy of believing are depicted in the chorale aria, which is composed as a logical counterpart to the first aria through the use of regular da capo (a-b-a) structure, dance rhythm, and solo violin figuration. The following recitative that expresses the soul’s readiness to receive its Lord’s reward; Bach here accompanies the voice with sustained strings, as he accompanies the utterances of Church and world. As the second half concludes, this recitative, Bach brings back the rocking melody of the “b” section of the first aria, and thus links the first and last sections of this cantata through the little-suited to the inclusion of a hymn, Bach concludes it with a four-part choral which, in its richly-graduated
The fourth orchestral Suite is scored for three oboes, bassoon, three trumpets, timpani, strings, and continuo. The overture begins with a stately introduction employing dotted rhythms; this is followed by a fugal section that suggests the solemn mood. After this, a free and allegro movement begins with the timpani and strings. Bach uses for this movement’s theme a dance (a gigue), such as often appeared as the finale of the dance suites of Bach’s day. After the overture come five movements based on dance forms (two bourrees, distinguished by “contentment” and an amiable character, according to J. Matheson, commenting on the character of Prince Leopold). There are alsoexpresses “exultant joy” and two minutes that express “moderate merriment” and a closing movement in a “free” or “agile” style (a “gigue”).

Bach lived in a world where musicians were servants—craftsmen and teachers; he wrote music for his masters in the churches, palaces, and town councils of 18th-century Germany. He dedicated much of his music, however, to “the glory of God alone” and indeed, the glory of his music, some of the greatest of all time, brings us joy in the performing and in the hearing this evening. It may someday bring joy even to far-away beings of which we cannot now conceive!

Oratorio Suite for Orchestra, No. 4, in D Major, BWV 1069

The terms “oratorio suite” and “overture” denote the same works by Bach; they are called “suites” because they consist mainly of shorter movements in various dance forms. They are also referred to as “concertos” because their opening movements (“overture” is a French word which comes from “ouvrire,” “to open”) are extensive and substantial enough to overshadow the other movements. It has not been possible to determine when Bach’s orchestral suites were written, and the compositional history of the Suite in D major is especially obscure. The chorale, or hymn, which is the first and only chorale version in which we know this work is probably the third in its history. The first has disappeared, and can be only partially reconstructed, but it contained no trumpets or timpani. The Minuet movement that appears in the present version contains.

By 1750, Bach had begun to work less, partly because his constant struggles with his employers had reduced his income. But also because his health was failing (he may have suffered a stroke by mid-1749). Weak-eyed for years due to heredity, overwork, and poor lighting, Bach was nearly blind by 1749. He agreed to have two painful eye operations in the spring of 1750, but they were failures, and his health rapidly declined. He died on July 28, 1750, rapidly followed by a fierce fever. Bach died on July 28, 1750, just ten days after his sight was suddenly but only briefly restored. He left only a small estate, and his long-suffering wife finally obtained a divorce. The circumstances of his death have been lost, but Bach remained an almshouse resident until her death ten years later.

Almost before he died, Bach’s music was considered outmoded and unfashionable, even by his contemporaries. This attitude prevailed long after his death and in the coming generations. It was not until the 20th century that his music was rediscovered and enjoyed. Through the efforts of such musicologists as Hugo Riemann and others, Bach’s music has been restored to the appreciation of the public.

The construction of pipe organs had earned him considerable celebrity, and his fame brought him many pupils and requests for performances from composers and musicians in neighboring cities. In addition, he was later promoted to the newly-created post of Concertmaster.

When Duke Wilhelm Ernst’s Kapellmeister died in 1716, Bach expected to be given his post, but when it was given to another Kapellmeister, Bach decided to return to his native town and enter the service of the new Kapellmeister. He was required to write and perform music weekly for the town’s two main churches, St. Thomas’s and St. Nicholas’s. He also directed the church choirs and conducted music at court. He was interested in music and Latin, and to compose works for town events. He had little rehearsal time, and his performances were largely schoolboys, some of whom were allowed to choose their choir music. Despite their inability to read music! In addition, he had ever more children of his own to instruct in music.

Though his working conditions were very difficult, his conflicts with those in authority over him were frequent and sometimes extreme. He believed that even his greatest and most magnificent works as the St. John Passion, St. Matthew Passion, the Christmas Oratorio, the Magnificat, and six German motets for special occasions.

In 1729 Bach took over as director of a group, founded by Telemann, known as the “Collegium Musicum.” The group was largely an educational tool for music students from the university who met to perform on Friday evenings at a local coffeehouse; for this group, he wrote several works. The group disbanded in 1730. Bach went to the court of Anna Maria Vasa, who ruled as regent for her brother, the future King of Sweden. This was the first of a series of court appointments, beginning with the court of Anna Magdalena, who ruled as regent for her brother, the future King of Sweden. This was the first of a series of court appointments, beginning with the court of Anna Magdalena, who became his wife in 1721.

In December 1721, a week after the marriage of Bach and Anna Magdalena, Bach’s employer, Prince Leopold, married his cousin, and the musical life of the court was threatened. Since the young princess appears to have been totally devoid of musical interest or appreciation, and began to have a penchant for Court music, he felt an urge to write religious music again. He also wanted his musically-gifted children to be near a good university. So the Bach family prepared for another move.

In 1723, Leipzig was an important trading center in Saxony that was governed by a town council; in May, they offered Sebastian Bach the highly influential position of Kapellmeister. Although it was a difficult position, Bach was his third choice after the famous and extremely prolific composer Georg Philipp Telemann refused the council’s offer, as did the renowned Darmstadt court conductor, Christoph Graupner, for financial reasons. When Duke Wilhelm Ernst’s Kapellmeister died in 1716, Bach expected to be given his post, but when it was given to another Kapellmeister, Bach decided to return to his native town and enter the service of the new Kapellmeister. He was required to write and perform music weekly for the town’s two main churches, St. Thomas’s and St. Nicholas’s. He also directed the church choirs and conducted music at court. He was interested in music and Latin, and to compose works for town events. He had little rehearsal time, and his performances were largely schoolboys, some of whom were allowed to choose their choir music. Despite their inability to read music! In addition, he had ever more children of his own to instruct in music.

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harmony, and in such touches as the emphatic syncopation of the opening, again displays the careful attention to the smallest musical details which has endeared this cantata to church congregations and concert audiences alike.

Slaget dem Herrn ein neues Lied, BWV 225

During the first decade of his service as Thomas Cantor, Bach wrote five of his six German motets for special occasions (mostly funerals). In them, Bach used the same kinds of texts, derived from chorales and from the Bible, that he used in his early cantatas, which served as his main models for these compositions. The melodic and harmonic treatment of the voices, the rich polyphonic texture, and, most importantly, the prominence of the chorale melodies, can be found in the motets as well as in the cantatas. The motets were almost the only vocal compositions by Bach that were never completely forgotten. C. F. Zelter reports in a letter to Goethe how his singers loved to perform the motet Slaget dem Herrn ein neues Lied, and when Mozart heard that work in 1789 in Leipzig, "his whole soul seemed to be in his ears" (Rochlitz). This was due not only to the superb musical qualities of the motets, in which Bach presents, through his masterful musical treatments, both the biblical messages and their interpretive commentaries with unparalleled power, but also to the deep, unshakable faith shining from them that brought to later generations a spiritual sustenance badly needed in perilous times.

Slaget dem Herrn ein neues Lied ("Sing to the Lord a new song"), for eight-part double chorus, was written no earlier than 1726, and was probably performed on May 12, 1727, as part of a birthday celebration for the Elector Friedrich August "The Strong" of Saxony. Unlike earlier composers, Bach does not employ a chorus of higher voices contrasted with one of lower voices, but uses two evenly-balanced mixed vocal ensembles, probably made up originally of only one to three singers per part.

The motet's extensive first movement, a song of thanksgiving based on the first three verses of Psalm 149, takes the form of a free-style vocal prelude followed by a fugue. In the free section (Slaget dem Herrn), the two choirs engage in a dialogue in which the second choir begins by urging, with monosyllabic exclamations, the first choir to sing the first chorale respond with florid musical anacrases of rejoicing. These exhortations continue into the beginning of the fugue subject, Die Kinder Zion ("Let the children of Zion"), presented by the first choir. The middle movement, which also takes the form of a dialogue, features the third stanza of the chorale, Nun lob' mein Seel ("Now bless my soul"), which is based on Psalm 103. The individual hymn lines, sung by the second chorus, are interrupted by the first chorus, which quotes the first movement and comments on the chorale text. The third movement again employs a psalm text (Psalm 150). At the end, the two choirs join into one four-part ensemble for a jubilant four-voice fugue presentation of the psalm's sixth verse. This fugue is based on an unusually long theme in sprightly 3/8 time, and bears a resemblance to the Praeludium section of the Mass in B Minor composition of the same year. The fugue is clearly divided into 32 + 4 + 40 + 4 + 32 measures, thus creating the symmetrical structure, 8-8-8-8, within which "everything that hath breath" praises the Lord in D minor for Two Violins, BWV 1043

Bach's violin concertos are not virtuosic display pieces. Instead, inspired by the solo concertos of the admired Venetian composer, Antonio Vivaldi, they explore the interplay between different sound elements: the "fluid, harmonic instrumental group, and counterpoint, or solo instruments. Though technical brilliance is not absent in Bach's concertos, it is often avoided in order to maintain balance in the composer's game of contrasting effects.

In Bach's concerto for two solo violins accompanied by strings and continuo, which was probably written in Cöthen, a dialogue takes place not between the two solo violins, but between both solo instruments and the orchestra. In order to make the instruments "speak" (the famous flautist, J. Quantz, stated in 1752 that "Music is nothing else but an artificial language.") the articulation of the sixteenth-notes in the rapidly-moving first movement is constantly varied. This Vianez opens with a fugal tutti section, a feature unusual at the beginning of a Bach concerto. In the slower middle movement, which is one of the most intimate and heart-stirring of Bach's cantatas, the orchestra functions solely as an accompaniment while the two solo violins compete in one another in singing their exquisite melody. Extreme contrasts are the outstanding feature of the closing Allegro movement, a remarkable example of the inversion of the traditional binary scheme by which contrast is produced between the two solo violins; their speaking unison strings that is of a sweetness found rarely in Bach's cantatas; it may depict the graceful procession of the maidens going out to meet Jesus, the bridegroom, in the fifth movement, a bass recitative accompanied by violino piccolo, strings, and continuo, the bridegroom, Jesus, is described as taking his bride to himself. Unusual harmonies introduce a sixth movement, a second soprano-bass duet, accompanied by oboe and continuo, in which heavenly and earthly love merge into one, like the third movement, this is of the most beautiful love duets ever composed, but it is almost ardent, though in a rather relaxed and dance-like way, while the earlier duet is yearning and mystical. In the seventh and final movement, the chorus sings the final verse of the chorale in four-part harmony, while the violino piccolo added to the horns, oboe, and strings lends a special splendor to this "sacred bridal song" (Nicolai's title).
harmony, and in such touches as the emphatic syncopation of the opening, again displays the careful attention to the smallest musical details which has endeared this cantata to church congregations and concert audiences alike.

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, BWV 225

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The motet's extensive first movement, a song of thanksgiving based on the first three verses of Psalm 49, takes the form of a free-style vocal prelude followed by a fugue. In the free section (Singet dem Herrn), the two choirs engage in a dialogue in which the second choir begins by urging, with monosyllabic exclamations, the first choir to sing. The first choir responds with florid musical garlands of rejoicing. These exhortations continue into the beginning of the fugue subject, Die Kinder Zion ("Let the children of Zion"), presented by the first choir. The middle movement, which also takes the form of a dialogue, features the third stanza of the chorale, Nun lob’ ich Gott ("Now bless my soul"), which is based on Psalm 103. The individual hymn lines, sung by the second chorus, are interrupted by the first chorus, which quotes the first movement and comments on the chorale text. The third movement again employs a psalm text (Psalm 150). At the end, the two choirs join into one four-part ensemble for a jubilant four-voice fugue presentation of the psalm's sixth verse. This fugue is based on an unusually long theme in sprightly 3/8 time, and bears a resemblance to the Plant mit cohti section of the Mass in B Minor composed a year earlier. The fugue is clearly divided into 32 + 4 + 40 + 4 + 32 measures, thus creating the symmetrical structure, a-b-c-b-a, within which "everything that breath" praises the Lord.

Concert D minor for Two Violins, BWV 1043

Bach's violin concertos are not virtuoso display pieces. Instead, inspired by the solo concertos of the admired Venetian composer, Antonio Vivaldi, they explore the interplay between different sound elements: the "solo" and harmonic instrumental group, and the more or less solo instruments. Though technical brilliance is not absent in Bach's concertos, it is often avoided in order to maintain balance in the composer's game of contrasting effects.

In Bach's concerto for two solo violins accompanied by strings and continuo, which was probably written in Cöthen, a dialogue takes place, not between the two solo violins, but between both solo instruments and the orchestra. In order to make the instruments "speak" (the famous flautist, J. Quantz, stated in 1752 that "Music is nothing else but an artificial language.") the articulation of the sixteen-note in the rapidly-moving first movement is constantly varied. This Vivaldi opens with a fugal tutti section, a feature unusual at the beginning of a Bach concerto. In the slower middle movement, which is one of the most intimate and heart-stirring of Bach's cantatas, the orchestra functions solely as an accompaniment while the two solo violins compete in one another in singing their exquisite melody. Extreme contrasts are the outstanding feature of the closing Allegro movement, a remarkable example of the inversion of the traditional word-painting between the voices and orchestra: The solo violins are given broad organic chords, while the melody is played in energetic unison by the orchestra. In this finale, the musical requirements of the Baroque era that every measure should express a definite emotion is clearly met. In the middle of the hectic chase of the opening section, there appear two beseeching interjections, which are roughly rejected by the orchestra; the main motif of the solo instruments is shaped from these interjections. The orchestra maintains the impassioned opening motif throughout the movement, while the emotions evinced by the solo violins are ever-changing. Especially noteworthy are the springing types of bowing, specifically prescribed by Bach, that produce jazz-like slights of accent.

Cantata No. 140, Wachtet auf, ruft uns die Stimme

The cantata Wachtet auf ("Sleepers wake"), based on a hymn by Philipp Nicolai, was written in 1731 for the 27th Sunday after Trinity Sunday (November 25th of that year). The hymn is based on the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, and later turns to a description of the heavenly city of Zion. The hymn's three long stanzas and expansive melodic line, combined with the concept of Jesus' love for the soul as his bride, inspired a grand musical design: The three hymns form the cantata's beginning (for chorus and orchestra), middle (for tenor solo), and end (again for chorus and orchestra), while a recitative (first for tenor, then for bass) precedes the final set (for soprano and bass) are placed between the stanzas, producing an a-b-c'-a'-b'-c" structure (an anonymous librettist made extensive use of Bible quotations, particularly from the Song of Solomon, in composing the texts for the recitatives and duets).

In the extensive opening chorus, accompanied by oboes, horns, and strings, the chorale melody is presented in long notes by the sopranos, beneath which the lower voices weave a rich contrapuntal fabric inspired by the words, rather than by the hymn's tune. The lines of text and the orchestral interludes are arranged somewhat in the manner of a chorale prelude. The twelve repeated dotted notes in the first four measures perhaps symbolize the chiming of the midnight bell. The orchestra then proceeds to add an independent accompaniment to the chorus, possibly imitating the approach of the heavenly bridegroom and the maidens' eager anticipation of his arrival. Out of these elements blossoms a sound combination of overpowering sensuous beauty. The tenor recitative that forms the second movement is followed by a soprano-basso duet in which Jesus appears as the bridegroom of the soul, presented as one of the "wise virgins.") The accompanying violino piccolo (a small violin, tuned a minor third higher than the regular violin) gives this duet a special glittering brilliance. In the magnificent second chorale arrangement (the fourth movement), which is actually a three-part chorale concerto, the hymn tune sung by the tenor is interwoven by line with a (now famous) moving bass line and unison strings that is of a sweetness found rarely in Bach's cantatas; it may depict the graceful procession of the maidens going out to meet Jesus, the Heavenly Bridegroom. In the fifth movement, a bass recitative accompanied by violino piccolo, strings, and continuo, the bridegroom, Jesus, is described as taking his bride to himself. Unusual harmonies introduce the sixth movement, a second soprano-basso duet, accompanied by oboe and continuo, in which heavenly and earthly love merge into one. Like the third movement, this is one of the most beautiful love duets ever composed, but it is almost ardent, though in a rather relaxed and dance-like way, while the earlier duet is yearning and mystical. In the seventh and final movement, the orchestra sings the final verse of the chorale in four-part harmony, while the violino piccolo added to the horns, oboe, and strings lends a special splendor to this "sacred bridal song" (Nicolai's title).
Upcoming

**Beyer: The Passion According to St. Mark**
Good Friday, March 28, 1997, 8:00pm
First United Methodist Church

**Haydn: The Seasons**
Sunday, May 11, 1997, 7:00pm
First United Methodist Church

Recordings

Recordings of recent performances by OSA-SCS are available for sale. They include tapes of our 1994 performance of Handel’s Messiah and our 1996 performance of the Bach b minor Mass. We are also pleased to offer three compact discs. Our first CD, A Tribute to Sean Connery, was produced by edel America, and includes music from the films of Sean Connery. We have also produced a CD of our Christmas 1995 performance of the Vaughan Williams Hodie. Our newest disc includes our Spring 1996 performances of J.S. Bach’s Cantatas Nos. 4 (Christ lag in Todesbanden), 21 (Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis), and 159 (Geset, wir gehen hin auf gen Jerusalem). Prices are $15 for each CD, $20 for the Bach b minor Mass and the Messiah (two cassettes for each performance).