An Afternoon of BACH CANTATAS
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2006 – 3:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH

Catherine Haight, soprano
Melissa Plagemann, alto
Stephen Wall, tenor
Brian Box, baritone

PROGRAM
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Choirs
Alto Recitative
Tenor Aria
Soprano Recitative
Terzetto
Choral

Cantata BWV 29, “Wir danken dir Gott, wir danken dir”
Sinfonia

Cantata BWV 98, “Aus tiefer Not schreit ich zu dir”
Bass Aria with Chorale in Soprano Alto
Chorus with Chorale in Alto

Cantata BWV 131, “Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir”

Cantata BWV 150, “Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich”
Sinfonia
Chorus
Soprano Aria
Chorus
Terzetto (Alto)
Chorus
Chorus: Caccacca

Cantata BWV 80, “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott”
Bass Aria with Chorale in Soprano Alto

TERZETTO

Alto Tenor Recitative
Alto and Tenor Duet
Chorale

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An Afternoon of BACH CANTATAS

"The aim and final end of all music," declared Johann Sebastian Bach, "should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul." This afternoon, you are to experience, through the incomparable compositions of Bach, the achievement of this purpose. Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, on March 21, 1685, as his family's eighth child. In 1723, at the age of 38, after working in various capacities as a musician in Lüneburg, Amstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, and Köthen, he assumed the duties of Cantor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, one of the most important musical posts in Germany. He taught at the choir school, which trained the choristers of the city's chief churches (he had to teach non-musical subjects as well); he also served as music director, composer, choirmaster, and organist of St. Thomas' Church. In this post, which he held for the rest of his life, Bach produced monumental musical masterworks, including the Christmas Oratorio, the St. Matthew Passion (which we will be performing on Good Friday of 2007), the Mass in B Minor, The Musical Offering, and The Art of the Fugue, though he was occupied by the cares of his large family, his circle of friends, the tasks of a very busy professional life, and ceaseless struggles with the officials of town, school, and church who never recognized that they were dealing with perhaps the greatest musical genius ever born. He died July 28, 1750, leaving a modest worldly estate, but an incalculable wealth of musical treasures to succeeding generations, among which his incredible cantatas shine especially brilliantly.

A cantata (from the Italian word, "cantare," "to sing"), is a composite form of vocal music typically consisting, in Bach's time, of four to six or more separate movements, including solo arias and recitatives, duets, and choruses, most frequently accompanied by an orchestra featuring a variety of instruments. Cantatas were based on a dramatic or lyric poetic narrative, either religious or secular. In Germany, the cantata developed into the most significant type of Lutheran sacred music, its various elements unified by the all-encompassing presence of the Lutheran chorale, or hymn. The sacred cantata was an integral part of Lutheran worship, being related, along with the sermon and its associated prayers, to the Gospel reading for the day. Cantors of Lutheran churches were required to furnish cycles of about sixty cantatas per year—one for each Sunday and additional works for holy days and special occasions. Bach, the greatest master of the cantata form, seems to have composed five cycles of cantatas, but out of more than 300 works, only about two hundred have been preserved. No general description can begin to suggest the infinite variety and the indescribable wealth of musical creativity, technical expertise, and passionate spirituality found in these marvelous works, which constitute the core of Bach's vocal output, and which will "refresh your soul" as you listen.

Sinfonia to Cantata 29: Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir
(Our Saviour, thank thee, ye heavenly Hosts)

This cantata was composed in Leipzig in 1731 for the installation of the new Town Council on August 27 of that year. With the first verse of Psalm 75 as its theme, it is scored for 4-part chorus, soloists, 3 trumpets, timpani, 2 oboes, strings, and basso continuo, and provided music suitable for glorifying God and asking for his blessing upon and protection of the "town and the palaces" and the people.

The splendid opening Sinfonia in the triumphal key of D Major is an energetic and extensive concert movement for organ and orchestra, a moto perpetuo that finds no rest until the final note of the piece. The music played by the organist's right hand also appears as the prelude of Bach's Partita (a suite of contrasting pieces) in E Major for solo violin; the organist's left hand completes the new basso continuo part. The orchestra provides a highly festive accompaniment for and accentuation of the organ part, which often features a "pedal point" (a long-sustained tone, typically in the bass, above which the other parts are played). This same organ part with a simpler orchestral accompaniment also serves as the opening movement of the second part of Cantata 120a, "The Wedding Cantata," Herr Gott, Beherberger aller Dinge ("Lord God, Ruler of all Things"), and sometimes serves as the processional or recessional at weddings to this day.

Cantata 38: Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir
(From the depths of woe I cry to Thee)

This six-movement cantata for the 21st Sunday after Trinity (October 29, 1724, when the work was first performed) is based on a 1524 chorale setting by Martin Luther of his German translation of Psalm 130. The work is scored for 4-part chorus, soloists, 2 oboes, strings, basso continuo (a combination of a low melodic instrument, such as a cello or a bassoon, which plays the bass line, and a keyboard instrument, such as a harpsichord or organ, which plays the harmonies on which the music is based), and 4 trombones in the outer movements.

The anonymous poet/librettist references the Gospel of the day, which tells the story of Jesus' healing of a nobleman's son, in the fourth movement, and quotes the first and the fifth stanzas of Luther's hymn for
the opening chorus and for the closing choralie. All of the other stanzas of the hymn are paraphrased.

Bach begins the cantata with a somber choral fugue in the strict "old-fashioned style," with Luther's choralie tune, introduced by the tenors, as its subject. Each line of the melody is treated as it would be in a chorale prelude for organ; the accompanying vocal parts first present each line of the chorale individually in imitation and build on the previous lines, and then the sopranos sing the cantus firmus (the choralie tune) in augmentation (notes of double length) while the music of the accompanying parts interprets the texts of the sopranos' lines. For example, "ehrōn mein Rufen" ("hear my call") is illustrated with a rising interval, and "neig her zu mir" ("inclined you to me") is set to a descending motif. "Sünd und Unrecht" ("sin and unrighteousness") is accompanied by a chromatic figure which appears first at the beginning of the fugue in the basso continuo part, where it moves upward and then downward. The figure then reappears "in reverse" when "Sünd und Unrecht" is sung for the first time, moving first downward and then upward, perhaps suggesting that Christ descends to us through the pain of sin and injustice, and then rises to meet us after conquering chaos in response to our call to him.

The second movement, an alto recitative, leads to an elaborate tenor aria with a lovely melody that is decorated by a pair of oboes. The recitative for soprano that follows is accompanied by the chorale melody played by the continuo "a battuta" ("in tempo"); this device, which appears only here in Bach's works, forces the recitative to be sung in strict time, and ties to the hymn this movement, which textually most distant from it.

The fifth movement is another beautifully-constructed fugue, this time for soprano, alto, and bass soloists. The cantata ends with a straightforward 4-part choral setting of the chorale melody for chorus and orchestra that begins with a surprising dissonance and ends with an expression of trust in the redeeming power of God.

A note of numerical interest: If one assigns numerical values to the letters of the alphabet (A=1, B=2, C=3, etc.), the number 14 becomes significant as the value of the name of BACH (2+1+1+8+2). The first movement of this cantata contains 140 measures (so x 14), and the number of melodic lines that appear in the contrapuntal voices is 29, the value of "JSB", Bach's monogram, assuming that J=1 (9+18+2). Bach seems to have delighted in employing such musical numerology throughout his compositional life.

Cantata 131: Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir ("Out the Deep, Lord, I cried to You")

The score of this solemn work, based like Cantata 38 on Psalm 130, is one of the few surviving autographs of Bach's cantatas, perhaps even the earliest one. The score includes the note that the text was "set to music at the request of Herrn D. Georg: Christ: Elinar." This friend of Bach's was archdeacon of St. Mary's in Mühlhausen, later became godfather to the composer's oldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, and was probably responsible for the choice of the cantata. The Christina is the legend of the fire that had destroyed a large portion of the town of Mühlhausen in May 1707, not long before Bach arrived there to take up an organist's post, and he might have composed the cantata soon after for a penitential service held as a result of this disaster. The eight verses of the psalm are distributed through the five movements of the cantata, and two verses of Bartholomäus Ringwald's 1588 chorale, "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut," ("Lord Jesus Christ, the highest good") are sung along with the psalm verses in the bass and tenor arias. The two choruses, soloists, violins, viols, oboe, bassoon, and basso continuo. This cantata consists of three choral movements separated by two solos that are based on Ringwald's chorale melody. A melancholy oboe figure decorates the short sinfonia, which leads at once into the first choral movement. Here, a slow section, in which descending figures and sepulchral bass notes depict "the deep," introduces a faster section featuring fugal elements. This movement is followed immediately by a bass arià with oboe counter-melody; in the background of the melody is the distributed chorale tune. The soprano sings the chorale tune in long notes. The third movement, a harmonically lush chorus, is the core of the cantata. It consists of a brief "prelude" leading to a fugue based on a descending theme that depicts with aching beauty the pain of the soul's seemingly endless suffering. After the hopeful major chord that concludes the fugue, the tenor sings an arià in a gently swaying 12/8 meter that is analogous in structure to the bass arià, in that it is accompanied by a chorale verse sung in long notes by the alto. An arresting threefold declamation of the word "Israel" opens the final chorus, which features several dramatic tempo changes and a fine fugue based on several contrasting subjects, the last of which illustrates the word "erlösren" ("redeem or deliver") with an ornamental figure of rapidly-running notes that brings to mind the unrolling of a binding-rope: the Lord has freed us from all our sins!

Cantata 150: Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich ("To Thee, Lord, I lift up my soul")

This seven-movement cantata, scored for 4 soloists, 4-part chorus, and a 4-part instrumental ensemble of two violins, bassoon, and basso continuo, is based mainly on the 25th Psalm (the three choral
5. Chorus
Israel hoffe auf den Herrn; denn bei dem Herrn ist die Gnade und viel Erleidung bei ihm.
Und er wird Israel erlösren aus allen seinen Stürmen.

5. Chorus
Israel hopes in the Lord; for mercy is with the Lord and much redemption.
And He will redeem Israel from all its sins.

6. BWV 150 "Nach dir, Herr, verlangt mich"
Cantata for various Church Occasions

1. Sinfonia

2. Chorus

2. Sinfonia
Lord, I long for you. My God, I hope in you. Let me not be put to shame, so that my enemies will not rejoice over me.

3. Aria S
Doch bin ich bleibe ich vergnügt,Ohne mich hier zeitleben Kreuz, Sturm und andre Proben, Tod, Hölle, und was sich fügt. Ob Unfall schlägt den treuen Knecht, Recht ist und bleibet ewig Recht.

3. Aria S
Yet I am and remain content, although at the moment here may rage cross, storm and other trials, Death, Hell, and what is theirs. Though misfortune strike the true servant, Right is and remains eternally right.

4. Chorus
Leite mich in deiner Wahrheit und lehre mich; denn du bist der Gott, der mir hilft, täglich harr ich den.

4. Chorus
Lead me in Your Truth and teach me; for you are the God, who helps me, I await you daily.

5. Terzett A T B
Zedern müssen von den Winden oft viel Umarmen empfinden, Oftwerden sie verkehrt. Rat und Tat auf Gott gestellt, Achtet nicht, was widerbietet, Denn sein Wort ganz anders lehrt.

5. Terzett A T B
Cedars must, before the winds, often feel much hardship, often they will be destroyed. Place your words and deeds before God, Heed not what howls against you, Since His Word teaches otherwise.

6. Chorus
Meine Augen sehen stets zu dem Herrn; denn er wird meinen Fuß aus dem Netz ziehen.

6. Chorus
My eyes gaze continually at the Lord; For He will draw my foot out of the net.

7. Chor
Meine Tage in den Leiden
Endet Gott dennoch zur Freuden; Christen auf den Domwegen
Führen Himmels Kraft und Segen.
Bleibet Gott mein treuer Schatz, Achte ich nicht Menschenkreuz; Christus, der uns steht zur Selten. Hilf mir täglich sieghaft streiten.

7. Chorus
My days in suffering
God will nevertheless end in joy; Christians upon the thorny pathwaies are led by Heaven's power and blessing. If God remains my dearest treasure, I need not heed mankind's cruelty; Christ, who stands by our side, Helps me daily fight to victory.

movements are settings of verses 1-2, 5, and 13,) with the addition of freely-composed verses by an unknown author for the solo movements (the third and fifth) and the concluding chaconne (a slow, stately dance in triple meter and minor mode featuring a repeated progression of harmonies above which move ever-varying musical lines). Possibly written before 1707 when Bach was in his early twenties and employed in Magdeburg, and perhaps the earliest Bach cantata in existence, the work demonstrates the compositional mastery of the young musician.

The cantata opens with a short string sinfonia in which upward leaps leading to descending lines are used by Bach to remind his hearers of a famous chorale, "Herzlich tut mich verlangen" ("I do very sincerely desire"), that relates to the cantata's biblical text. This sinfonia introduces an opening chorus in which the voices enter imitatively, each with an upward leap followed by a chromatically descending line, the most significant motif in the cantata; in this movement, the motif appears 14 times in the first major section, and can thus be seen as Bach's "personal numerological signature" worked into the music (see the notes on Cantata 38). In contrast to the longed illustrated by the vocal lines' falling fugal entrances, humanity's desire to be united with God on high is expressed by the basso continuo's rising scale passages. Some shorter sections of music contrasting in texture and temp lead to the introduction of the cantata's chromatically descending scale motif in an altered form, now presented as the theme of a fugue. The drops of a fifth to which the words "über mich" are set illustrate the idea of enemies lording it "over me," while the laughing 16th-notes on "freuen" paint the "rejoicing" of those enemies. A brief soprano aria (filled with such tone-pictures as the deep intervallic descent from "death" to "hell") is followed by a chorus that contains a particularly striking example of text-painting. The words "Leite mich" ("Lead me") sound very much like the word "Leiter" ("ladder"), and Bach's melodic line climbs from the depths of the basses to the heights of the violins, leading the listener upward toward the Truth. In the remaining sections of the movement, word-painting also abounds: as an example, the bass voices "wait" (Harren-hang on) for ten beats while the other voices complete their own waiting on the Lord at the end of the movement.

The fifth movement is a trio for alto, tenor, and bass accompanied by a billowing bass line of wind-tossed 16th-notes. Bach binds the voices' first phrase, "how the cedars are buffeted by the winds," with a triple-meter rhythmic tether and then loosens it, and his listeners' metrical yearnings as well, by means of accent regroupings. Next comes a chorus composed of a chordal prelude and a fugue. Prominent among this movement's many examples of tone-painting is the treatment of the word "ziehen" ("pull"): the rhythmic "fugue" theme is brought out the "pulling" of the sudden leaps in the vocal lines. The cantata's final movement is a choral chaconne built upon a repeated ascending bass figure presented as the ground of hope. The motif rises repeatedly toward the heavens and counteracts the chromatic descending motifs characteristic of the earlier movements that express the sadness and struggles of daily life. Thus the cantata closes with the assurance of God's abiding presence with humanity through Christ.

A point of interest: Johannes Brahms was one of the few subscribers to the complete edition of Bach's works in which this cantata appeared for the first time in 1884. Bach's chaconne theme seems so deeply to have impressed Brahms that he based the closing movement of his Fourth Symphony (1888), also a chaconne, upon it.

Cantata 80: Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott
("A mighty fortress is our God")
This well-known chorale cantata, consisting of eight movements that fall into two parts, is based on the powerful Lutheran hymn describing the Christian believer's struggle with, and ultimate victory over, the Devil, through the power of Christ. The Weimar poet Salomo Franck based the original libretto on the Gospel for the Sunday Third in Lent (movements 3, 4, 6, and 7) and four verses from Martin Luther's famous fight song, Ein feste Burg, for which he wrote both words and music (movements 1, 2, 5, and 9). Scored for 4-part chorus, soloists, 3 trumpets, timpani, 2 cobbos, English horn, 2 violins, viola, cello, violone (double-bass), and continuo (the trumpets and timpani parts are thought to be later additions by Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann), it is the enlargement of a Lenten cantata composed and performed in 1715 or 1716 in Weimar. A version of this cantata may have been performed in 1724 at the Reformation Festival in Leipzig, which was celebrated on October 31, and which was one of the major yearly events in the Lutheran calendar. But perhaps it was not until the mid-1730s that Bach composed the work's monumental opening movement.

This opening chorus, a mighty contrapuntal "fortress" built on the first verse of the hymn, is "probably the climax of Bach's vocal choral creative work," according to Alfred Ditt. It displays Bach's unsurpassed mastery of contrapuntal construction and aural effect. The individual lines of the chorale melody are in turn treated fugally against the backdrop of an instrumental canon (a musical form in which one voice follows another exactly—a musical "weapon" deployed frequently throughout the work) that presents the hymn
tune's phrases in long notes, first in the highest instruments, and immediately thereafter in the lowest. In the second movement, a duet for soprano and bass, the strings play a martial motif, while the soprano, accompanied by the oboes, sings the chorale's second verse to the lightly-ornamented hymn tune, and the bass presents in virtuosic lines the commenting text by Salomon Franck. A bass recitative leads into an arisoso in which the voice and continuo begin their phrases in canon. In the pastoral soprano aria that follows, Jesus is invited into the cleansed heart in ecstatically soaring lines. Warfare resumes in the fifth movement: the chorale presents a united front as it declaims the lines of the chorale's third verse in unison, while the orchestra, which begins the movement with the first phrase of the hymn melody played in dance-like eighth notes in the

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Timothy Lunde
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Vic Roey
Brian Russell
Jerry Sams
David Zdaponsky

BASS
Stephen Brady
Greg Canova
Andrew Danilich
Douglas Durasoff
Maic Fitchett
Larry Maloney
Paddy McDonald
Dennis Moore
Michael Scanlon
Jeff Thirloway
Richard Wyckoff

5. Arie (Terzett) S A B
Wenn meine Träbsal als mit Ketten
Ein Unglück an dem andern hält,
So kann ich doch mein Heil erretten,
Daß alles plötzlich von mir fällt.
Wie bald erscheint der Trostes Morgen
Auf diese Nacht der Not und Sorgen!

6. Choral
Ob bei uns ist der Ständen viel,
Bei Gott ist viel mehr Gnade;
Sein Hand zu helfen hat kein Ziel,
Wie groß auch sei der Schad
Er ist allein der gute Hirt,
Der Israel erlösen wird
Aus seinen Ständen allen.

5. Aria (Trios) S A B
Wenn my troubles like chains
link one misfortune to another,
then my Savior will rescue me
so that it all suddenly falls from me.
How soon the morning of comfort appears
after this night of anguish and wory!

6. Choral
Although the sins among us are many,
God has even more mercy;
there is no end to His hand's assistance,
however great our guilt might be.
He alone is the good Shepherd,
that will rescue Israel
from all its sins.

MWV 131 "Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir" Chorale for Various Church Occasions

1. Chor
Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir.
Herr, höre meine Stimme, laß deine Ohren
merken auf die Stimme meines Flehes!

2. Ariosos B und Choral S
So du willst, Herr, Sünde zurechnen, Herr, wer
wird bestehen?
Erbarm dich mein in solcher Last,
Nimm sie aus meinem Herzen,
Die weiß du sie gießest hast
Am Holz mit Todesscherzen,
Denn bei dir ist die Vergebung, daß man dich
Auf daß ich nicht mit großem Weh
In meinen Ständen untergehe,
Noch ewiglich verza

3. Chor
Ich harte des Himmels, meine Seele harte, und ich
hoffe auf sein Wort.

4. Arie und Choral A
Meine Seele wartet auf den Herrn von einer
Morgenwache bis zu der andern.
Und weil ich daff in meinem Sinn,
Wie ich zuvor geklaget,
Auch ein betrüber Ständer bin,
Den sein Gewissen naget,
Und wollte gern im Blute dein
Von Ständen abgewaschen sein
Wie David und Manasse.

4. Aria T und Choral A
My soul waits for the Lord from one morning watch to the other.
And since in my mind,
as I lamented before,
I am also a troubled sinner,
whose conscience grieves him,
and would gladly, in your blood
be washed clean of sin,
like David and Manassah.

We wish to thank our co-producers of the 2006-2007 season:
1. Choral
Out of deep anguish I call to You, Lord, hear my cries; bow down Your gracious ear to me and open it to my plea! Since You behold, according to Your will, what sin and injustice is done, who can stand, Lord, before You?

2. Recitative A
In Jesus’ grace alone is our comfort and forgiveness, since through the deceit and trickery of Satan the entire life of humanity is a sinful abomination before God. What could give spiritual joy to our prayers now, if Jesus’ spirit and word did not work new wonders?

3. Aria T
I hear, in the midst of my sorrows, a word of comfort spoken by my Jesus. Therefore, o troubled conscience, trust in Your God’s goodness. His word lasts and does not fail, His comfort will never depart from you!

4. Recitative (with instrumental Choral) S
Alas! That my faith is yet so weak, and that my trust must be founded upon such moist ground! How often must I witness new signs weaken my heart! What? do you not know your Helper, who speaks only a single comforting word; and immediately there appears, before your weakness can perceive it, the hour of redemption. Trust only in the Almighty’s hand and His truthful mouth!

(Instrumental Choral:)
Darum auf Gott will hoffen ich, Auf mein Verdienst nicht bauen, Auf ihm mein Herz soll lassen sich Und seiner Güte trauen.
Denn zu seinen Wortswerten, Das ist mein Trost und treuer Hort, Des will ich allzeit harren.

(BIOGRAPHIES)
Soprano CATHERINE HAIGHT is a favorite of Seattle audiences, having performed with a variety of Northwest musical groups over the past fifteen years. In June of 2003 she was privileged to appear as a soloist along with Jane Eaglen and Vinson Cole as a part of the gala program that officially opened McCaw Hall, Seattle’s new opera house. Ms. Haight has been a featured soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet in their productions of Carl Orff’s Carmina Burana for over ten years and these performances have taken her to the Kennedy Center, and Melbourne, Australia, where she received glowing reviews. Ms. Haight is especially familiar with the Baroque repertoire, having performed most of the major works of Bach and Handel, but she is equally at home with the composers of the Classical and Romantic era. A frequent performer with OSSCS, her most recent collaboration with the ensembles was a performance of Messiah last year. She has made three recordings, including Messiah, with OSSCS and conductor George Shangrow. Ms. Haight is a member of the voice faculty at Seattle Pacific University.

MELISSA PLAGEMANN, mezzo-soprano, performs frequently throughout the Pacific Northwest, and has appeared with some of the area’s finest ensembles, including the Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Opera, Skagit Opera, the Seattle Choral Company, Kitap Opera, and NOISE, among others. Highlights of the 2005-2006 season for Ms. Plagemann included Harns in Humperdinck’s Hansel and Gretel with Kitap Opera, and Penelope in scenes from Monteverdi’s Il ritorno d’Ulisse with the Seattle Early Music Guild’s Accademia d’Amore (led by acclaimed lutenist Stephen Stubbs). Operatic repertoire in recent seasons includes both 2nd and 3rd Ladies in Mozart’s Magic Flute, the title role in Carmen, and the Marquise in Donizetti’s Daughter of the Regiment.

Ms. Plagemann is also an enthusiastic and sought-after performer of new music, and has performed with several ensembles dedicated to performing the works of living composers, including Sonic Lab, 16 visions/Fisher Ensemble, and the Esoteics vocal ensemble. She is a founding member of the Seattle New Music Ensemble, and with them has had the opportunity to perform several staples of 20th century repertoire, including Schönböck’s Pierrot Lunaire and John Cage’s Aria.

For Ms. Plagemann include first prizes in the 2004 Seattle Ladies’ Musical Club competition/tour and the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society’s annual competition. She holds degrees in music from the University of Victoria, Canada, and Indiana University in Bloomington.

Tener STEPHEN WALL has appeared frequently with Seattle Opera and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1995. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has solowed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel’s Messiah and sang the role of Joe in Seattle Opera’s heralded production of La Fanciulla del West.

A native of Washington, baritone BRIAN BOX received his Master’s degree in vocal performance from Western Washington University in 1985. Mr. Box performs frequently with many Northwest ensembles, including OSSCS, Seattle Choral Company, Seattle Pro Musica, Bellevue Chamber Chorus, and Choir of the Sound, and has performed with Rudolf Nureyev, singing Malavoglia’s Songs of a Wayfarer for Mr. Nureyev’s dance. He has collaborated with OSSCS in such works as Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, St. John Passion, and Christmas Oratorio, the world premieres of Hunterley Beyer’s St. Mark Passion and The Mass of Life and Death, and is featured on the OSSCS recording of Handel’s Messiah. The regional winner of San Francisco Opera’s 1988 Merola Opera Program, he made his Seattle Opera debut as the Corporal in Donizetti’s Daughter of the Regiment. For Tacoma Opera, Mr. Box created the role of Franz in ‘Peter and the Wolf’.

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1. Chorale
Out of deep anguish I call to You, Lord, hear my cries; bow down Your gracious ear to me and open it to my plea!
Since You behold, according to Your will, what sin and injustice is done, who can stand, Lord, before You? 1, 2.

2. Recitative A
In Jesus’ grace alone is our comfort and forgiveness, since through the deceit and trickery of Satan the whole life of humanity is a sordid abomination before God.
What could give spiritual joy to our prayers now, if Jesus’ spirit and word did not work new wonders?

3. Aria T
I hear, in the midst of my sorrows, a word of comfort spoken by Your Jesus. Therefore, o troubled conscience, trust in Your God’s goodness; His word lasts and does not fail, His comfort will never depart from you!

4. Recitative (with instrumental Chorale) S
Alas! That my faith is yet so weak, and that my trust must be founded upon such moist ground! How often must new signs weaken my heart!
What? do you not know your Helper, who speaks only a single comforting word, and immediately there appears, before your weakness can perceive it, the hour of redemption.
Trust only in the Almighty’s hand and His truthful mouth!

(Instrumental Chorale: Darum auf Gott will hoffen ich, Auf mein Verdienst nicht bauen, Auf mein Herz soll lassen sich Und seiner Güte trauen. Die mir zusagt sein wertes Wort, Das ist mein Trost und treuer Hort, Des will ich allzeit halten.)

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tune's phrases in long notes, first in the highest instruments, and immediately thereafter in the lowest. In the second movement, a duet for soprano and bass, the strings play a martial motif, while the soprano, accompanied by the oboes, sings the chorale's second verse to the lightly ornamented hymn tune, and the bass presents in virtuosic lines the commenting text by Salomon Franck. A bass recitative leads into anarios in which the voice and continuo begin their phrases in canon. In the pastoral soprano aria that follows, Jesus is invited into the cleansed heart in ecstatically soaring lines. Warfare resumes in the fifth movement: the chorale presents a unfigured front as it declaims the lines of the chorale's third verse in unison, while the orchestra, which begins the movement with the first phrase of the hymn melody played in dance-like eighth notes in the

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Stacey Dye
Stephanie Endy
Manchung Ho
Fritz Klein**
Pam Kummer
Mark Lutz
Gregor Nitsche
Stephen Provine**
Thoe Schaed
Janet Showalter
Nicole TSONG

VIOLA
Beatrice Dolf
Dawn Juliano
Jim Lute
Katherine McWilliams*
Andrew Schirmer
CELLO
Julie Reed*
Valerie Ross
Katie Sauter Messick
STRING BASS
Jo Hansen*

OBEO, OBOE D'AMORE
Brent Haga*
David Barnes

ENGLISH HORN
Taina Karr

BASSOON
Jeff Eldridge*

TRUMPET
Ansgar Duenchen*  
Rabi Lahini
Janet Young

TIMPANI
Dan Dee

TROMBONE
David Brewer

HARP/PIANO/ORGAN
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*principal
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Melissa Thrilway

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Susan Dier
Dana Dursoff
Cinda Freece
Lisa Hoffmann
Kikki Hood
Lorelletem Knowles
Kay Kooff
Jill Kraakmo
Peggy Kurtz
Jana Marlow
Lila Woodrufl May
Linda Mendez
Robyn Pruitt-Hamm

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We wish to thank our co-producers of the 2006-2007 season:
5. Chor
Israel hoffe auf den Herrn; denn bei dem Herrn ist die Gnade und viel Erlösung bei ihm.
Und er wird Israel erlösen aus allen seinen Sünden.

5. Chorus
Israel hopes in the Lord; for mercy is with the Lord and much redemption.
And he will redeem Israel from all its sins.

BWV 150 "Nach dir, Herr, verlangt mich"
Cantata for various Church Occasions

1. Sinfonia

1. Sinfonia

2. Chorus
Lord, I long for you. My God, I hope in you.
Let me not be put to shame, so that my enemies will not rejoice over me.

2. Chorus
Lord, I long for you. My God, I hope in you.
Let me not be put to shame, so that my enemies will not rejoice over me.

3. Aria S
Doch bin und bleibe ich vernügt, obgleich hier zeitlich toben.
Tod, Sterb, und was sich fäg.
Ob Unfall schlägt den treuen Knecht,
Recht ist und bleibt ewig Recht.

3. Aria S
Yet am and remain content, although at the moment here may rage
cross, storm and other trials,
Death, Hell, and what is theirs.
Though misfortune strike the true servant,
Right is and remains eternally right.

4. Chorus
Lead me in your Truth and teach me; for you are the God, who helps me, I await you daily.

4. Chorus
Lead me in your Truth and teach me; for you are the God, who helps me, I await you daily.

5. Trio A T B
Zedern müssen von den Winden oft viel Ungemach empfinden,
Oftwem sind sie verkehrt.
Rat und Tat auf Gott gestellt,
Achtet nicht, was widerbietet,
Denn sein Wort ganz anders lehrt.

5. Trio A T B
Cedars must, before the winds,
often feel much hardship,
often they will be destroyed.
Place your words and deeds before God,
Heed not what howls against you,
Since his Word teaches otherwise.

6. Chorus
My eyes gaze continually at the Lord;
For he will draw my foot out of the net.

6. Chorus
My eyes gaze continually at the Lord;
For he will draw my foot out of the net.

7. Chor
Meine Tage in den Leiden
Endet Gott dennoch zur Freuden;
Christen auf den Domwegen
Führen Himmels Kraft und Segen.

7. Chorus
My days in suffering
God will nevertheless end in joy;
Christians upon the thorny pathways are led by Heaven's power and blessing.
If God remains my dearest treasure,
I need not heed mankind's cruelty;
Christ, who stands by our side,
Helps me daily fight to victory.

7. Chor
Meine Tage in den Leiden
Endet Gott dennoch zur Freuden;
Christen auf den Domwegen
Führen Himmels Kraft und Segen.

7. Chorus
My days in suffering
God will nevertheless end in joy;
Christians upon the thorny pathways are led by Heaven's power and blessing.
If God remains my dearest treasure,
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Christ, who stands by our side,
Helps me daily fight to victory.

movements are settings of verses 1-2, 5, and 15), with the
addition of freely-composed verses by an unknown
author for the solo movements (the third and fifth)
and the concluding chaconne (a slow, stately dance in triple
meter and minor mode featuring a repeated progression
of harmonies above which move ever-varying musical
lines). Possibly written before 1707 when Bach was in his
early twenties and employed in Amsterdam, and perhaps
the earliest Bach cantata in existence, the work
reflects the compositional mastery of the young
musician.

The cantata opens with a short string sinfonia in
which upward leaps leading to descending lines are
used by Bach to remind his hearers of a famous chorale,"Herzlich tut mich verlangen"("I do very sincerely desire"), that relates to the cantata's biblical text. This
sinfonia introduces an opening chorus in which
the voices enter imitatively, each with an upward leap
followed by a chromatically descending line, the most
significant motif in the cantata; in this movement, the
motif appears 14 times in the first major section, and can
thus be seen as Bach's "personal numerological signature" worked into the music (see the notes on
Cantata 38). In contrast to the longing illustrated by the
vocal lines falling fugal entries, humanity's desire to be
united with God on high is expressed by the basso
continuo's rising scale passages. Some shorter sections
of music contrasting in texture and tempo lead to the
introduction of the cantata's chromatically descending
scale motif in an altered form, now presented as the
theme of a fugue. The drops of a fifth to which the words
"über mich" are set illustrate the idea of enemies lording
it "over me," while the laughing 16th-notes on "feuren"
paint the "rejoicing" of those enemies.

A brief soprano aria (filled with such tone-
pictures as the deep intervallic descent from "death" to
"hell") is followed by a chorus that contains a
particularly striking example of text-painting. The
words "Leite mich" ("Lead me") sound very much like the
word "Leiter" ("ladder"), and Bach's melodic line climbs from
the depths of the basses to the heights of the violins,
leading the listener upward toward the Truth. In the
remaining sections of the movement, word-painting also
abounds: as an example, the bass voices "wait" (harre-
hang on) for ten beats while the other voices complete
their own waiting on the Lord at the end of the
movement.

The fifth movement is a trio for alto, tenor, and
bass accompanied by a billowing bass line of wind-
tossed 16th-notes. Bach binds the voices' first phrase,
"how the cedars are buffeted by the winds," with a triple-
meter rhythmic tither and then loosens it, and his
listeners' metrical moorings as well, by means of accent
regroupings. Next comes a chorus composed of a
chordal prelude and a fugue. Prominent among this
movement's many examples of tone-painting is the
introduction of the word "ziehen"("pull"); the rhythmic
"hugs" of the bass line bring out the "pulling" of the sudden leaps in the vocal lines.

The cantata's final movement is a chorale
chaconne built upon a repeated ascending bass figure
presented as the ground of hope. The motif rises
repeatedly toward the heavens and counteracts the
chromatic descending motifs characteristic of the earlier
movements that express the sadness and struggles of
daily life. Thus the cantata closes with the assurance of
God's abiding presence with humanity through Christ.

A point of interest: Johannes Brahms was one of
the few subscribers to the complete edition of Bach's
works in which this cantata appeared for the first time in
1884. Bach's chaconne theme seems so deeply to have
impressed Brahms that he based the closing movement
of his Fourth Symphony (1886), also a chaconne, upon it.

Cantata 80: Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott
(’A mighty fortress is our God’) This well-known chorale cantata, consisting of
eight movements that fall into two parts, is based on the
powerful Lutheran hymn describing the Christian
believer's struggle with, and ultimate victory over, the
devil, through the power of Christ. The Weimar poet
Salomon Franck based the original libretto on the Gospel
for the Third Sunday in Lent (movements 3, 4, 6, and 7)
and four verses from Martin Luther's famous fight song,
Ein feste Burg, for which he wrote both words and music
(movements 1, 2, 5, and 9). Scored for 4-part chorus,
soloists, 3 trumpets, timpani, 2 oboes, English horn, 2
violins, viola, cello, violoncelle (double-bass), and continuo
(the trumpets and timpani parts are thought to be later
additions by Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann), it is the
enlargement of a Lenten cantata composed and
performed in 1715 or 1716 in Weimar. A version of this
cantata may have been performed in 1724 at the
Reformation Festival in Leipzig, which was celebrated on
October 31, and which was one of the major yearly
events in the Lutheran calendar. But perhaps it was not
until the mid-1730s that Bach composed the work's
monumental opening movement.

This opening chorus, a mighty contrapuntal
"fortress" built on the first verse of the hymn, is
"probably the climax of Bach's vocal chorale creative
work," according to Alfred Ditt. It displays Bach's
unsurpassed mastery of contrapuntal construction and
aural effect. The individual lines of the chorale melody
are in turn treated fugally against the backdrop of an
instrumental canon (a musical form in which one voice
follows another exactly—a musical "weapon" deployed
frequently throughout the work) that presents the hymn
The score of this solemn work, based like Cantata 38 on Psalm 130, is one of the few surviving autographs of Bach's cantatas, perhaps even the earliest one. The score includes the note that the text was "set to music at the request of Herrn D. Georg: Christ: Elimar." This friend of Bach's was archdeacon of St. Mary's in Mühlhausen, later became godfather to the composer's oldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, and was probably responsible for the choice of Psalm 130 as the text. A devastating fire had destroyed a large portion of the town of Mühlhausen in May 1707, not long before Bach arrived there to take up an organist's post, and he might have composed the cantata soon after for a penitential service held as a result of this disaster. The eight verses of the psalm are divided through the five movements of the cantata, and two verses of Bartholomäus Ringwald's 1588 chorale, "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut," ("Lord Jesus Christ, the highest good") are sung along with the psalm verses in the bass and tenor arias. The woman's soprano, soloists, violins, violas, oboe, bassoon, and basso continuo.

This cantata consists of three chorale movements separated by two solos that are based on Ringwald's chorale melody. A melancholy oboe figure decorates the short sinfonia, which leads at once into the first chorale movement. Here, a slow section, in which descending figures and sepulchral bass notes depict "the deep," introduces a faster section featuring fugal elements. This movement is followed immediately by a bass aria with oboe counter-melody; in the background of the melody is given to solo alto, the soprano sings the chorale tune in long notes. The third movement, a harmonically lush chorus, is the core of the cantata. It consists of a brief "prelude" leading to a fuge based on a descending theme that depicts with aching beauty the pain of the soul's seemingly endless suffering. After the hopeful major chord that concludes the fuge, the tenor sings an aria in a gently swaying 12/8 meter that is analogous in structure to the bass aria, in that it is accompanied by a chorale verse sung in long notes by the alto. An arresting threefold declamation of the word "Israel" opens the final chorus, which features several dramatic tempo changes and a fine fuge based on several contrasting subjects, the last of which illustrates the word "erlös'en" ("redeem or deliver") with an ornamental figure of rapidly-running notes that brings to mind the unrolling of a binding rope: the Lord has freed us from all our sins!

Cantata 150: Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich ("To Thee, Lord, I lift up my soul")

This seven-movement cantata, scored for 4 soloists, 4-part chorus, and 4-part instrumental ensemble of two violins, bassoon, and basso continuo, is based mainly on the 29th Psalm (the three chorals of BWV 80 "Ein feste Burg ist unser gott"

"Ein feste Burg ist unser gott"

1. Chor
Ein feste Burg ist unser gott,
Ein gute Wehr und Waffen;
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
Die uns Izt hat betroffen.
Der alte böse Feind,
Mitt Ernst's ist jetzt meint,
Groß Macht und viel List
Sein grausam Rüstung ist,
Auf Erd ist Nicht seinsgleichen.

2. Aria B und Choral S
Alles, was von Gott geboren,
Ist zum Siegen ausgerufen.
Mit unserer Macht ist nichts getan,
Wir sind gar bald verloren.
Es streit'/ vor uns der rechte Mann,
Den Gott selbst hat erkoren.

3. Rezitativ B
Erwäge doch, Kind Gottes, die so große Liebe,
Da Jesus sich
Mit seinem Blute dir versichere,
Womit er dich
Zum Kriege wider Satans Heer und wider Welt, und Sünde
Geworben hat!

4. Aria S
Komm in mein Herzenshaus,
Herr Jesu, mein Verlangen!
Treib Welt und Satan aus,
Und laß dein Bild in mir erneuert prangen!
Weg, schnöder Sündengraus!
An Afternoon of BACH CANTATAS

"The aim and final end of all music," declared Johann Sebastian Bach, "should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul." This afternoon, you are to experience, through the incomparable compositions of Bach, the achievement of this purpose. Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, on March 21, 1685, as his family's eighth child. In 1723, at the age of 38, after working in various capacities as a musician in Lüneburg, Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, and Köthen, he assumed the duties of Cantor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, one of the most important musical posts in Germany. He taught at the choir school, which trained the choristers of the city's chief churches (he had to teach non-musical subjects as well); he also served as music director, composer, choirmaster, and organist of St. Thomas' Church. In this post, which he held for the rest of his life, Bach produced monumental musical masterworks, including the Christmas Oratorio, the St. Matthew Passion (which we will be performing on Good Friday of 2007), the Mass in B Minor, The Musical Offering, and The Art of the Fugue, though he was occupied by the cares of his large family, his circle of friends, the tasks of a very busy professional life, and ceaseless struggles with the officials of town, school, and church who never recognized that they were dealing with perhaps the greatest musical genius ever born. He died July 28, 1750, leaving a very modest worldly estate, but an incalculable wealth of musical treasures to succeeding generations, among which his incredible cantatas shine especially brilliantly.

A cantata (from the Italian word, "cantare," "to sing"), is a composite form of vocal music typically consisting, in Bach's time, of four to six or more separate movements, including solo arias and recitatives, duets, and choruses, most frequently accompanied by an orchestra featuring a variety of instruments. Cantatas were based on a dramatic or lyric poetic narrative, either religious or secular. In Germany, the cantata developed into the most significant type of Lutheran sacred music, its various elements unified by the all-encompassing presence of the Lutheran chorale, or hymn. The sacred cantata was an integral part of Lutheran worship, being related, along with the sermon and its associated prayers, to the Gospel reading for the day. Cantors of Lutheran churches were required to furnish cycles of about sixty cantatas per year—one for each Sunday and additional works for holy days and special occasions. Bach, the greatest master of the cantata form, seems to have composed five cycles of cantatas, but out of more than 300 extant, only about two hundred have been preserved. No general description can begin to suggest the infinite variety and the indescribable wealth of musical creativity, technical expertise, and passionate spirituality found in these marvelous works, which constitute the core of Bach's vocal output, and which will "refresh your soul" as you listen.

Sinfonia to Cantata 29: Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir
(We thank You, Lord, we thank You!)

This cantata was composed in Leipzig in 1731 for the installation of the new Town Council on August 27 of that year. With the first verse of Psalm 75 as its theme, it is scored for 4-part chorus, soloists, 3 trumpets, timpani, 2 oboes, strings, and basso continuo, and provided music suitable for glorifying God and asking for his blessing upon and protection of the "town and the palaces" and the people.

The splendid opening Sinfonia in the triumphal key of D Major is an energetic and extensive concert movement for organ and orchestra, a moto perpetuo that finds no rest until the final note of the piece. The music played by the organist's right hand also appears as the prelude of Bach's Partita (a suite of contrasting pieces) in E Major for solo violin; the organist's left hand completes the new basso continuo part. The orchestra provides a highly festive accompaniment for and accentuation of the organ part, which often features a "pedal point" (a long-sustained tone, typically in the bass, above which the other parts are played). This same organ part with a simpler orchestral accompaniment also serves as the opening movement of the second part of Cantata 120, "The Wedding Cantata," Herr Gott, Sebewahker aller Dinge ("Lord God, Ruler of all Things"), and sometimes serves as the processional or recessional at weddings to this day.

Cantata 38: Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir
(From the depths of woe I cry to Thee)

This six-movement cantata for the 21st Sunday after Trinity (October 29, 1724, when the work was first performed) is based on a 1524 chorale setting by Martin Luther of his German translation of Psalm 130. The work is scored for 4-part chorus, soloists, 2 oboes, strings, basso continuo (a combination of a low melodic instrument, such as a cello or a bassoon, which plays the bass line, and a keyboard instrument, such as a harpsichord or organ, which plays the harmonies on which the music is based), and 4 trombones in the outer movements.

The anonymous poet/librettist references the Gospel of the day, which tells the story of Jesus' healing of a nobleman's son, in the fourth movement, and quotes the first and the fifth stanzas of Luther's hymn for
An Afternoon of BACH CANTATAS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2006 – 3:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH

Catherine Haight, soprano
Melissa Plagemann, alto
Stephen Wall, tenor
Brian Box, baritone

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE – SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

George Shangrow, conductor

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata BWV 29, "Wir danken dir Gott, wir danken dir"
Sinfonia

Cantata BWV 98, "Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir"
Chorus
Alto Recitative
Tenor Aria
Soprano Recitative
Terzetto
Choral

Cantata BWV 131, "Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, herr, zu dir"
Chorus
Bass Aria with Chorale in Soprano Alto Chorus

Cantata BWV 150, "Nacht dir, Herr, verlangen mich"
Sinfonia
Chorus
Soprano Aria
Chorus
Terzetto (Aria)
Chorus
Choruses: Clacciona

Cantata BWV 80, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott"
Chorus
Bass Aria with Chorale in Soprano Chorus
Soprano Aria
Chorus: Ein feste Burg
Tenor Recitative
Alto and Tenor Duet
Chorale

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