

## BACH

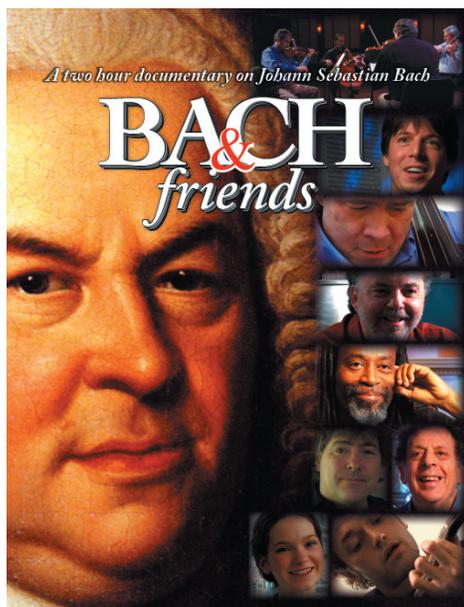


## NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN BACH SOCIETY

## BACH &amp; FRIENDS

## THREE REVIEWS OF MICHAEL LAWRENCE'S NEW FILM



With considerable fanfare, the two-DVD set *Bach & Friends* (Michael Lawrence Films, 2010) has been launched in major cities around the country. The focus is not on Bach's life and works, but rather how some eminent musicians (and a few non-musicians) feel about Bach's music. (Those feelings, unsurprisingly, are very positive.) Moreover, the universality of Bach's appeal is made manifest by examples of how his music finds expression through the widest possible range of performance media.

Readers of *Bach Notes* do not need to be persuaded about the importance or communicative power of Bach's music, and *Bach & Friends* is really not aimed at us.

Nonetheless, all can appreciate the extraordinary quality of some of the performances excerpted (along with spoken commentary) on disc 1 and given in full on disc 2: the 23-year-old organist Felix Hell's blazing rendition of the D-major organ Fugue; clarinetist Richard Stolzman's wrenching conclusion of the Chromatic Fantasy (which caused me to recall the hypothesis that the work might be an expression of Bach's grief over the death of Maria Barbara); duo pianists John Bayless ("Bach Meets the Beatles") and Anatoly Larkin's brilliant improvising together on "Wachet auf" and other well-known Bach themes; and Robert Tiso's spectacular performance of the D-minor Toccata for organ on glass harp. Furthermore, Simone Dinnerstein, following her own muse as did her inspiration Glenn Gould (who receives considerable attention from Tim Page and others), takes the Aria and several sections of the Goldberg Variations out of the baroque world and fashions them into something quite her own.

There are many other unorthodox (and often successful) renditions of Bach's music, including Bobby McFerrin's pitch-perfect scat singing and the Swingle Singers's less pitch-perfect rehearsing of the Badinerie of the B-minor Orchestral Suite. Folk

instruments are also represented, exemplified by the violin Partita I (Presto) on banjo (Bela Fleck), the D-minor Two-Part Invention on ukelele (Jake Shimabukuro), and Violin Partita III (Prelude) on mandolin (Chris Thile, who talks about the success of programming Bach in folk-music concerts and adds that "all the folk players... now play a little bit of Bach"). Supporting this (unintentionally) are Peter Schickele's straight-faced remarks on how P. D. Q. Bach

## IN THIS ISSUE:

## PAGE

1. **Three Reviews of *Bach & Friends***  
by Raymond Erickson, Ruth Tatlow,  
and Daniel R. Melamed
4. **Conference Reports on the Biennial Meetings of the American Bach Society and the International Conference on Baroque Music**  
by Andrew Talle and Robin Leaver
10. **A Review of Jürgen Neubacher's Book on Telemann in Hamburg**  
by Reginald Sanders
11. **Steven Zohn, Winner of the 2010 William H. Scheide Prize**
12. **News from Members; Officers, Advisory Board, & Membership Information**

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(“the twenty-first of Bach’s twenty children” and “a pimple on the history of music”) invented the bluegrass idiom. Other composers, such as Uri Caine and Philip Glass, offer assessments of a deeper sort.

But, of course, not only musicians find Bach compelling. We also meet a brain scientist studying how improvisation (an art that receives a lot of attention in the first quarter of the film) influences cerebral activity; the author of a computer program that composes in the style of Bach; a mathematician who relates the field of fractal geometry to Bach’s oeuvre; and the inventor of a system that enables recorded performances to be reproduced live on a Yamaha Disk Clavier.

To hear these and others express verbally and demonstrate musically how Bach genuinely touches them has a cumulative effect that could very well serve to open up minds and ears unaccustomed to listening to Bach. And this, of course, is all to the good.

Nonetheless, there are problems. First of all, none of the performers (and I have not listed them all) are Bach scholars, with the consequence that their comments are often uninformed. The pianist Mike Hawley, the most frequently appearing commentator, speaks with conviction and empathy, but not necessarily accuracy. Thus, we learn from him that Bach got the job in Arnstadt because he needed to support a new wife and children; that Maria Barbara Bach died while Bach was on a business trip to check out an organ; and that Bach composed the keyboard partitas in Cöthen. Hawley also cannot bring himself to say outright that Bach was a deeply religious man, only that his music “was in the service of a better life and a better purpose.” He also holds, as does Eugene Drucker – who performs excerpts from the Art of Fugue as a member of the Emerson Quartet – the old view of how Bach died before completing the Art of Fugue and that Bach’s last composition was “Vor deinem Thron.” (Drucker, however, makes some of the most eloquent remarks of all in *Bach & Friends*.) Moreover, John Bayless does not have his facts completely straight in the matters of the aborted Bach-Marchand “duel” and the authorship of the little G-major minuet now rejected as Bach’s.

Second, judging from *Bach & Friends*, one would never know that there is such a thing as an early music movement. With the exception of the organ (a modern tracker-action instrument), not a single instrument typical of Bach’s time is represented. Instead we hear modern violins (Joshua Bell playing the Ciaccona in the standard, tradition-burdened way and Hilary Hahn playing the Grave of Sonata II without lifting the bow from the strings once during the entire movement);

modern cello (Matt Haimovitch, playing the Prelude of the first cello suite, and Zaill Bailey, playing the “Courant” of the sixth suite, written for 5-string cello, on a standard 4-string instrument); and modern concert grand piano. Completely absent are harpsichord, clavichord, traverso, oboe, viola da gamba, trumpet, and horn, and even the voice. Indeed, an uninformed viewer of *Bach & Friends* could come away thinking that Bach did not write any vocal music.

In short, despite the nod to science and technology, the biographical and musical aspects of this production are both incomplete and dated. The approach is the old-fashioned “Bach as hero.” The “straight” performances, although technically excellent, represent the standard style of the mid-twentieth century and the factual information does not take into account important scholarship of the last thirty years or so. This is a pity, because two Bach experts, Christoph Wolff and Andrew Talle, do appear, but their comments are all too brief. Had Michael Lawrence – who bills himself as the film’s writer, editor, and producer – engaged them or another Bach scholar to review the content systematically, the factual inaccuracies, at least, might have been avoided.

*Bach & Friends* has its “baroque moments” of astonishment and delight, and certainly will give great pleasure to many. It is very effectively photographed and edited, and I certainly will make a point of playing some of the material dealing with improvisation in my performance practice classes to both inspire and challenge my students. But this is not a place to go to learn Bach’s biography or how his musical legacy is being reinterpreted throughout the world today in a radically new but more historically-informed fashion.

Raymond Erickson  
CUNY Graduate Center

The word “documentary” implies that its subject will be covered factually, or at least systematically. Michael Lawrence’s *Bach & Friends* does neither. Facts are scarce in this DVD, and any system in the coverage is hard to detect. The potpourri of interviews and music are loosely organised around the themes of improvisation, instrumentalists arranging Bach’s works, and Bach’s universal appeal. But since many of the musicians name with awe the construction of Bach’s music, it seems bizarre that the film itself should lack a clear structure. I enjoyed the bits of science and many of the performances. The interviews I particularly appreciated were with the improviser John Bayless, pianist Joao Carlos Martins,

and most of all, violinist Hilary Hahn, whose thoughtful and intelligent reflection was a redeeming feature of the film. However, the majority of the interviews show instrumentalists struggling, with limited degrees of success, to express the experience of performing Bach's music. There is a proliferation of superlatives parading as substance, and a recurrence of spiritual words such as "transcendent," "redemption," "cosmic," and "genius," mirrored in camera shots of church interiors and studios, conveying a familiar message of Bach reverence and worship, not to mention thinly-veiled idolatry.

At the end of two hours I was left with questions, and an overwhelmingly hollow sense of anxiety. Are these vague and often anti-intellectual comments typical of the thought-world of "today's finest musicians"? Has Bach scholarship failed "world-class musicians" by not articulating the experience of Bach's music better? How is it possible for an eminent Bach-lover still to teach that the unfinished fugue was Bach's final work? And the subliminal message is deafening: how in this day and age can "world-class musicians" be represented by twenty-seven men and just two women (Dinnerstein and Hahn)? The statistics speak for themselves: of the 42 Bach friends in the documentary, 35 are men, 6 women, 1 a girl; 3 are of Asian, 1 of African and the remainder of European descent. In spite of policies to the contrary in music education and in the profession, the under-text is clear: "Bach and Friends" is a community still dominated, as it has been from the beginning, by the Caucasian male.

Bach scholars should use this DVD as a wake-up call. It is high time to leave behind the conservatism of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Bach studies. However groundbreaking and full of intellectual rigor and integrity our scholarship may be, it misses the mark entirely if it is not communicated effectively. Let us dare to go beyond the limited influence of the conventional conference, journal, and website, and find twenty-first-century means to impact and enrich the experience of the next, hopefully more diverse generation of Bach friends.

Ruth Tatlow  
Stockholm University

The selectively wide range of musicians who perform and speak in this film leave a mixed impression. The music-making and cinematography are compelling and worth your time; the talking is exasperating and unintentionally revealing about the state of music today.

On the positive side, this documentary is beautifully filmed and recorded. Each performer and commentator is shot in a distinct location, and every setting is interesting to look at. Even the talking heads who occupy the screen much of the time are visually striking. Almost all of the musical performances are filmed for the camera, with no audience. Sometimes the filmmakers go out of their way to show an empty hall to emphasize the point, and several of the locations suggest splendid isolation. The Swingle Singers and Hilary Hahn, for example, are filmed on high floors of tall buildings with panoramic views – this is Bach performed in the clouds.

The absence of audiences, essentially the opposite of the rock-documentary convention of live performance for a crowd, gives the film an effective intimacy. It strikes a casual tone as well, evidently to make the music accessible, and suggests direct and personal contact with the performers and their "innermost thoughts" (according to the distinctly Family-of-Man style DVD box). Some of the segments go further into a (tasteful) eroticizing of the musicians. For example, the young, attractive and photogenic Swingle Singers are filmed in a mixture of full-body shots and intimate closeups, particularly the beautiful soprano who so effortlessly sings the *Badinerie* from BWV 1067.

The other thing going for the film is the quality of the musical performances, each at a high technical level and musically compelling in its own way. Most every kind of modern performance is reflected, including ever-popular crossover renditions by Béla Fleck (banjo), Chris Thile (mandolin), and performers on ukulele and glass harmonica. Also represented are composers, improvisers, and cognitive scientists along with mainstream classical performers.

There are some distinct limitations of repertory and medium. Historically informed performances and those on instruments of Bach's time are strikingly absent, with the accidental exception of Felix Hell's performance on a tracker organ (incidentally the best rendition of BWV 532 you are ever likely to hear). The film, though called a "documentary on J. S. Bach," is really about the modern reception and transformation of Bach's music. I wish the filmmakers and performers admitted this explicitly. Vocal music is entirely absent unless you count the Swingle Singers' arrangement of an instrumental work and Bobby McFerrin's solo performances based on instrumental pieces. This film is about Bach's instrumental music in modern performance; that's one view but not a complete one by any means.

Overall this film is worth seeing and hearing on the strength of the performances, but it also proves that

performers should perform rather than talk. For one thing, the extensive interviews are full of legends, half-truths, myths, free associations, and half-baked opinions about Bach. Why perpetuate this stuff when we know so many interesting and verifiable things about the man and his music?

What is more, many of the performers harbor strong certainty about what Bach intended, apparently content to remain unaware that they are simply projecting their own ideas and finding in Bach what they wish to see. They justify their views by implicitly claiming the composer's authority. This kind of thinking (that Bach is what 21st-century performers assert he is) ends up being the principal message of this film, though this is probably unintended. The various musical visions of Bach recorded here are interesting and compelling. Why is there a need to project them back onto the composer?

More importantly, it's astounding how uniformly the subjects agree on one particular idea about music. Every performer, almost without exception, eventually talks about emotion. Sometimes it's the performer's feelings and sometimes it's Bach's, but this element is always present. This film could be the basis of a great drinking game—you'd watch with friends and whenever an interviewee mentions "feelings" you have to do a shot. You'd be plastered in no time because this is nearly the only thing anyone can think to say about Bach and his music. The attitude is regrettable if only because it's so deeply prescriptive of what it means to play or listen to any kind of music, and painfully limiting.

In the end this is not the fault of the film; it's symptomatic of the way music is taught today, both in the retention of a 19th-century view of the relation between feelings and music, and in the certitude of gifted performers that they know what a composer is about because they can play the notes. Their feelings evidently make them experts, especially on feeling itself ("Today's finest musicians share their innermost thoughts," the DVD box breathlessly advertises.). After all, the film's title tells us that these performers are Bach's friends, and they must know, right?

Still, on the strength of the filming and particularly of the performances this is well worth seeing and hearing. It might even be more satisfying simply to watch the second DVD, which presents complete performances with no talking. Paradoxically, the performers' ideas about Bach come across much more effectively there.

Daniel R. Melamed  
Indiana University

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### "Bach and His German Contemporaries" – Biennial Meeting of the American Bach Society University of Wisconsin, Madison May 7-9, 2010

The Biennial Meeting of the American Bach Society at the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison was an overwhelming success, thanks to the participation of 51 scholars from all over the United States, Canada, England, Switzerland, Poland, and Germany. Much credit must also go to the organizers — Jeanne Swack, Steven Zohn, and especially Lynn Edwards Butler — whose tireless efforts made the entire event possible. Interspersed between the fifteen scholarly presentations were exceptional musical offerings from the American Bach Society's own Steven Zohn, Mary Oleskiewicz, and David Schulenberg, as well as the Baroque Band—an ensemble from Chicago led by Gerry Clarke—and a number of very talented students from the University of Wisconsin's School of Music. The events were also supplemented by Uwe Wolf's introduction of an exciting new project called "Bach Digital," which aims to put high quality images of most if not all of the Bach sources in Berlin, Leipzig, and Dresden online.

In his lucid keynote address, Wolfgang Hirschmann of Martin-Luther Universität argued that understanding J. S. Bach as a lone genius, apart from his contemporaries, is a "lose-lose" proposition: it both discourages us from examining Bach's limitations as a composer and blinds us to the unique innovations of his contemporaries, particularly when those innovations were not incorporated into Bach's style. Hirschmann's call for a greater appreciation of the work of G. P. Telemann found a sympathetic echo in Steven Zohn's presentation, which brought to light a collection of six recently discovered orchestral *Overtures*, in which Telemann combined different stylistic currents of his time with abandon. Where Bach liked to blend his stylistic influences into a seamless whole, Telemann often preferred to juxtapose them in a manner Zohn described as "delightfully disorienting." Jeanne Swack also profitably compared the styles of Bach and Telemann on the basis of their vocal works, highlighting the fact that Telemann's settings employ interesting innovations which are foreign to Bach's style.

A number of presentations sought to illuminate the work of J. S. Bach with in-depth studies of the lives of

specific contemporaries. Joyce Irwin compared Bach's theological views with those of Johann Mattheson, who was less shy about expressing his positions in prose. She argued that scholars should be more careful with the term "theologian," as it has in the past been carelessly applied to Bach. In "Old Debts from Leipzig – New Insight on Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688-1758)," Barbara Reul of Luther College at the University of Regina offered a fascinating tour through the tragic biography of the Zerbst *Hofkapellmeister*, providing insight into the priorities of one of Bach's most successful, but financially destitute contemporaries. Szymon Paczkowski of the University of Warsaw introduced his research on "The Musical Interests and Patronage of Jakob Heinrich Flemming," the alleged sponsor of the famous 1717 duel between J. S. Bach and Louis Marchand. Paczkowski has spent a great deal of time in archives in Vilnius, Dresden, and Warsaw, and has certainly quadrupled the world's knowledge about Flemming's vivacious musical life and possible contacts with J. S. Bach. My own presentation dealt with popular music during Bach's time with a specific focus on Johann Sigismund Scholze, producer of Leipzig's most successful song collection of the 1730s and 40s, *Sperontes' Singende Muse an der Pleiße*.

Several speakers dealt with the influence of J. S. Bach on the generation that followed him. Anselm Hartinger of the Schola Cantorum in Basel presented work on the impact of J. S. Bach's trios on the chamber music of his student, Johann Gottlieb Goldberg. In her presentation, Mary Oleskiewicz argued against the view that the music of the Bach family was poorly received by the Prussian court of Frederick II. She demonstrated that Quantz taught his students the works of J. S., C. P. E., and W. F. Bach, and also that he himself had a profound influence on the development of C. P. E. Bach's *empfindsamer* style. David Schulenberg's presentation dealt primarily with two works by Friedemann Bach: the G-minor keyboard concerto (which Schulenberg believes to be authentic, despite the doubts of earlier scholars) and the orchestral overture (BWV 1070) attributed in a 1753 source to "Sig. Bach" (which Schulenberg argued may be an early effort by Friedemann, but is more likely the work of another J. S. Bach student or follower). Paul Corneilson shed new light on the biography—and in particular the extensive singing career—of Johann Heinrich Michel, an assistant to C. P. E. Bach whom modern scholars have to thank for the production of many important Bach-family sources.

Finally, three presentations sought to illuminate hitherto unknown aspects of J. S. Bach's biography. Mary Greer introduced her theory, based in part upon a close reading

of the title of Bach's *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del fratello diletissimo* (BWV 992), that Bach's Calov Bible had previous owners, perhaps including the Bohemian Count Franz Anton von Sporck. Peter Wollny's presentation dealt with a newly discovered cantata by C. P. E. Bach, "Ich bin vergnügt in meinem Stande," which was also performed for the occasion by a student ensemble. This piece is the earliest known vocal composition by C. P. E. Bach, who was 19 or 20 when it was premiered, and bears many resemblances to the cantatas of his father. Wollny believes that J. S. Bach arranged for its performance in one or more of Leipzig's main churches around 1733/34. The text is taken from a 1728 publication by Christian Friedrich Henrici (a. k. a. *Picander*) from which J. S. Bach himself drew the nine cantata texts that constitute the apparently fragmentary *Picander-Jahrgang*. He argued persuasively that the newly discovered C. P. E. Bach cantata can be understood as a part of the *Picander-Jahrgang*. Indeed, it seems entirely plausible that J. S. Bach—in part for pedagogical reasons—would have offered his sons and gifted students opportunities to present their own works in the context of Leipzig's liturgical life, reserving his own compositions for the larger feast days. Michael Maul's presentation revisited Johann Scheibe's 1737 criticism of Bach's "turgid" style in light of a newly discovered document, which names for the first time nine other musicians who were criticized by Scheibe in the same issue of his *Critischer Musicus*. We have Johann Gottfried Walther to thank for these identifications, as he scrawled them into the margins of a copy of the criticism he sent to Johann Matthias Gesner, the one-time rector of the St. Thomas School in Leipzig. The criticism Scheibe leveled at Bach was mild compared with the rather more personal invective he hurled so liberally at the other 18th-century musicians, including Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, Johann Schneider, Johann Gottlieb Görner, and Carl Gotthelf Gerlach. Indeed, Maul observed that Scheibe was probably shocked when Bach was so offended by his remarks, and had no expectation that the controversy would spin out in print for nearly a decade. The new document provides a much richer context for Scheibe's criticism than has ever been known before. Even Scheibe's original readers would not have been able to divine the names of all the victims without the type of insider knowledge available to Walther.

Together the papers constituted a productive effort to expand the focus of Bach studies well beyond the composer himself. I myself was particularly gratified to see that source studies are increasingly employed

not just to make editions but also to address questions about Bach's social and musical environment. The next Biennial Meeting of the Society will take place from September 27-30, 2012 at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. The timing is designed to coincide with the Eastman-Rochester Organ Initiative (EROI) Festival 2012. Further information on upcoming events can be found at [www.americanbachsociety.org](http://www.americanbachsociety.org).

Andrew Talle  
Peabody Conservatory  
The Johns Hopkins University

**“Bach in Belfast” –  
Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music  
Queen’s University, Belfast  
July 1-3, 2010**

The Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music [BICBM] is unusual in its organization. It is not the conference of a society; it has no officers (elected or otherwise); and there is no bureaucracy, sub-committees, or annual dues. It is essentially a meeting-point for scholars, students and enthusiasts who, at the end of one conference, decide where the next one will be and which person at which institution will organize and host the next conference in two year's time. Begun in the 1980s, the BICBM has grown in stature to become one of the largest and most important musicological meetings in the academic calendar. Established and up-and-coming scholars meet together to share their research. Recent conferences have been held in Dublin, Logroño, Manchester, Warsaw, and Leeds. This year it was the turn of the School of Music and Sonic Arts of Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland. But support was also forthcoming from the Bach Network UK, the Bach Archiv Leipzig, the Society for Musicology in Ireland, and the Royal Music Association. Since Bach scholar Professor Yo Tomita was the primary organizer, and the conference was the 14th to be held, it was inevitable that Bach should be the primary theme of the three full days of paper sessions. All told around 150 presentations (individual papers and round-table discussions) were planned by the ad hoc Scientific Committee (Yo Tomita, Peter Holman, Berta Joncus, Jan Smaczny, and Michael Talbot). These were distributed in four parallel strands, one of which was specifically given over to presentations relating to Bach, plus papers in other strands with strong Bachian connections, including, for example, Syzmon Paczkowski's paper on Count Flemming that he gave at

the American Bach Society's meeting. In all there were almost forty Bach presentations! Here an attempt will be made to present an overview of these papers, which differed in style and content, some being partial findings of continuing research, others excerpts from completed dissertations or forthcoming books.

In the first of the relevant sessions three papers were given under the title “Around Bach,” contextual studies concerning the background to Bach's music. Markus Rathey explored “traditions and transformations of Christmas [in Leipzig] before Bach's Christmas Oratorio.” Significantly, Schelle's *Actus Musicus auff die Weyhnacht* (ca. 1683) post-dates the 1680 town council prohibition of the hitherto long-standing custom of the boys of the St. Thomas School enacting nativity plays. Rathey revealed the recent discovery of a 1685 libretto of a musical Christmas drama that was more circumspect than the earlier plays. Although no composer is named, Johann Kuhnau (then the organist of the Thomaskirche) seems the most likely candidate. Themes in the 1685 libretto foreshadow ideas in the much later Christmas Oratorio. Eva Kuhn investigated the background of Bach's violoncello suites in Italy, especially the court of Francesco II d'Este of Modena, where such unaccompanied suites appear to have originated. Ursula Kramer presented the fruits of recent research into Graupner's involvement in the copying of works by a significant number of his contemporaries, especially Telemann, with whom Graupner had been a student in Leipzig. Only a small amount of Bach's music was copied, but perhaps not too much should be read into this since the documentary sources are incomplete. However, the new evidence provides new perspectives on Bach's own copying of the works of his contemporaries.

“Bach and Improvisation” was the next session. Luciana Camara explored the notions of subjectivity, individuality and self-assertion in the seventeenth century, and identified possible connections between these concepts and keyboard repertory, emphasizing the combination of authorship and transiency, composition and improvisation. Dominik Sackmann gave a paper “On the Aesthetics of Perfidia,”—that is, improvisational inserts. After defining perfidia with reference to the works of Torelli, Corelli, Reinken, Böhm, Kuhnau, *et al*, Sackmann argued that in Bach's early works perfidia appear in sharp contrast to contrapuntal structures but in later works he increasingly integrated these improvisational devices into the compositional design. In a careful, concise and clear presentation David Ledbetter discussed “Improvisation Practices in J. S.

Bach's Instrumental Music." With reference to canonic descending scalar motives, illustrated by examples from movements by Bach and other composers, he drew attention to the way in which these appear to have originated in improvisation. He stressed that it is an artificial construct to separate improvisation from composition: Bach constantly made revisions that suggest an improvisational background. On the basis of his research Ledbetter argued that concepts of improvisation in the Baroque period are more pervasive than has hitherto been realized.

In the session "Bach and His World (1) Theoretical Arguments," the papers charted some of the changes occurring in the eighteenth century. Mihaela Corduban used rhetorical categories, as expounded in Mattheson's *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (1739), as a key to understand the compositional structures of the preludes and fugues of the first 24 of WTC: "Bach as a Master of the Musica Poetica. A Rhetorical approach to the Well-Tempered Clavier (Book I): Proposition of a Formal Model." Corduban argued that if Mattheson's treatise is the theoretical reference, then Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier (Book I) is the practical illustration *par excellence*. John Lutterman revisited one aspect of the Scheibe-Birnbaum controversy: "Alles, was man unter der Methode zu spielen versteht, druckt er mit eigentlichen Noten aus": Changing Attitudes Toward Notation in the Eighteenth Century: The Scheibe-Birnbaum Controversy and Bach's Notational Practice." Luttermann put forward the view that Scheibe misunderstood Bach's detailed ornamentation which was not intended as prescriptive for virtuosi but rather as pedagogical guidance for the inexperienced. Peter Hauge reported on fruits of the research being undertaken at the newly-established Danish Centre for Music Publication (The Royal Library, Copenhagen) with regard to J. A. Scheibe who was active in and around Copenhagen from 1740, eventually becoming composer to the Royal court in 1766. The research includes the preparation of a catalog of Scheibe's extant works.

"Bach and His World (2) Theology" had the usual three papers. Elizabeth Joyce's "The Baroque and Lutheran Views of the World Embodied in Bach's Cantata *Was frag ich nach der Welt* (BWV 94)," an excerpt from her recent Brandeis University dissertation which investigates many of Bach's cantatas that deal with the concept of "the world," utilizing Eric Chafe's "tonal allegory" methodology. In his "eine cantabile Art im Spielen zu erlangen": Some Considerations on Spiritual Praxis in J. S. Bach's Pedagogical Collections" Erasmo Estrada

presented the case for taking into account the context of Lutheran confessional theology when coming to terms with Bach's pedagogical collections of keyboard music. The title pages of the *Auffrichtige Anleitung*, the *Orgelbüchlein*, and the *Well-Tempered Clavier* were examined for intentional implications in his music and its performance in relation to spiritual praxis within the Lutheran context. Michael Dodds considered the significance of Bach's choice of a somewhat extended permutation fugue for the chorus "Lasset uns nicht zerteilen" in the St. John Passion (BWV 245/27b) with a presentation entitled "Ars combinatoria in a Bach Passion Chorus." He drew attention to the phenomenon of musical games in which the sequence of fragments of music were determined by the throw of dice—exactly what the soldiers were doing at this juncture of the narrative. Further, the combination of musical fragments in musical games were designed to work in counterpoint with each other, in a similar way to the elements of a permutation fugue, Bach's choice for setting these particular words.

It seemed appropriate for the next session in this strand to continue on from Michael Dodds' paper: "Bach and Counterpoint." However at the same time in another strand papers on Bach performances were given: Sarah Meyer "Chorton and Kammerton in the Actus Tragicus: A Performance Practice Perspective"; Uri Golomb and Dalia Cohen "The Crucifixus from Bach's B-minor Mass: the Reflection of the Work in Performance"; and Idith Segev and Dalia Cohen, "Significant Occurrence in Even Musical Texture in Bach's Preludes: A Study Using Mathematical Tools." In the counterpoint session Matthias Röder began with "The Permutation Fugue and Johann Sebastian Bach's Compositional Development." In what is the beginning of more extensive research, Röder examined the early examples of Bach's permutation fugues, and did so with a superlative Power Point presentation! The aim of the research is to shed new light on Bach's compositional development and the chronology and authenticity of pre-Weimar and Weimar cantatas. Atte Tenkanen, in "The Quantitative Properties of Invertible Counterpoint in Compositions by Johann Sebastian Bach," presented what was essentially a report of the incomplete beginnings of a research project utilizing advanced computer analysis. Gergely Fazekas's paper, "Inner Time, Outer Time and 'da capo' Form: Structure and Meaning in J. S. Bach's E-major Violin Concerto (BWV 1042)," presented an analysis of the first movement of the concerto suggesting that the A and B sections of the da capo form represent two

different concepts of time, the inner and outer time (innerliche Zeit, ausserliche Zeit), as it is described in the article 'Zeit' in J. H. Zedler's *Universal-Lexikon* (Leipzig, 1732-1754).

The first two sessions of the following day were sponsored by the Bach Network UK: "Bach Source Studies 1-2." In a presentation entitled "Coffee, Courtship and Counterpoint in Bach's Leipzig: the Goldberg Variations and Women's Clavier Books," Burkhard Schwalbach examined the connection between keyboard culture and women, especially dance music and strophic songs found in clavier books, such as Anna Magdalena Bach's. As a foretaste of her forthcoming dissertation, Elise Crean examined the canons discovered in the 1980s: "The Fourteen Canons: Foundation or Culmination? A Re-evaluation of their Position amongst Bach's Late Works." She suggested that it is more likely that these canons point forward to the canons of the Canonic Variations (BWV 769), Musical Offering (BWV 1079), and Art of Fugue (1080), rather than back to those of the Goldberg Variations (BWV 988). Stephen Rose's paper, "Virtuosos or Charlatans? Musical Talent and Social Mobility in the German Baroque," was a delightful, amusing, and informative taster for his forthcoming book. Music was a way for members of the lower classes to rise within society, but the possibility for upward mobility for the authentic musician could also be used by the inept charlatan, as the novels of Johann Beer and Johann Kuhnau warn. Yo Tomita gave an update on his continuing research into Book II of WTC: "The Well-Tempered Clavier in pre-Classical Vienna: A New Source and its Implication." Most of the surviving sources of the Well-Tempered Clavier from the Viennese region suggest that only fugue collections were transmitted. But a newly-discovered manuscript, which originated in Vienna around 1800, has been located in the Czech Republic, and includes fifteen preludes from Book II. Thus Vienna Bach reception is more complex than was previously thought. In "Off the Beaten Track: An Exploration of Bach Reception in Catholic Central Europe," Tanja Kovacevic reported on recent research that is being undertaken in hitherto neglected areas with regard to Bach scholarship in central Europe (Slovenia, Bohemia, Croatia). Since the Catholic Church predominates in this area, it was mostly Bach's secular music, rather than his Protestant church music, that circulated in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, manuscripts have been located containing organ pieces by Bach, fugues from WTC, often transposed into common keys suggesting their use by organists in the Catholic Mass.

The afternoon continued with "Bach Source Studies 3-4." In "Some Observations on Bach's Organ Sonatas" Pieter Dirksen argued against a common view that all eighteen movements are transcriptions of previously-composed instrumental pieces. Around 1729-30 Bach was searching for a way to expand his free organ music, for example by a trio movement in between a prelude and fugue (e.g. BWV 545b). Sometime around 1731 Bach had developed the trio sonata form with movements specifically written for the organ, to which he added transcriptions of instrumental trio movements to create the six sonatas. Nobuaki Ebata offered an extremely detailed discussion of the interrelationships of the various sources of the extant Bach chorales, exploring the possibility of establishing connections with no longer extant cantatas: "Four-part Chorales of Johann Sebastian Bach's Lost Sacred Cantatas from the Picander Jahrgang." In a particularly significant paper, "Blinding Us with Science? Man, Machine, and the Mass in B Minor," Joshua Rifkin called in question not so much the recent X-ray examination of the manuscript score of the B minor Mass as the conclusions that have been drawn from it. He suggested that the scientific evidence is not as unambiguous as some would have us believe: What happens when technological evidence runs counter to obvious intuitive interpretation? Another question he raised was why was this method chosen over the proven technique developed by IBM with regard to the recovery the earliest layers of palimpsests that have led to the spectacular recovery of fourteenth-century polyphony. Given that the B minor Mass manuscript has similar layers of the handwriting of J. S. Bach and C. P. E. Bach, this IBM technique seems eminently suitable for distinguishing between the two in P180. David Black drew attention to two 18th-century references to Bach: "Some 'New' Bach Documents in Eighteenth-century Printed Sources." In 1740 schoolmaster and poet Daniel Stoppe (1697-1747), one of Telemann's librettists, published the second part of his *Neue Fabeln oder moralische Gedichte*. In one of the fables there is a reference to J. S. Bach as "the Amphion of the Pleiße," which was also addressed by Markus Rathey in a recent article (*Ars Organi* 56, 2009). Black then turned to the 1792 *Versuch einer systematischen Entwicklung der Tactarten und Vorschläge zu neuen Tactzeichen* of the Danish teacher and composer Peter Grönland (1761-1825), who commented on Bach's use of alto and tenor clefs and the problems they cause for performers in the later eighteenth century. With Kirill Diskin's paper, "The Copies of the Well-Tempered Clavier by J. G. Albrechtsberger: To His Bachiana,"

there was a return to the Viennese reception of WTC. The two manuscripts, one in Stockholm and the other in Vienna, were discussed with regard to their practical and pedagogical use. Tatiana Shabalina continues to make significant discoveries in the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg, not only for Bach but for other composers, as her paper made clear: “Texte zur Music by J. S. Bach and his Contemporaries: J. A. Załuski and His Role in their Preservation.” That these sources, *Texte zur Music* (libretti booklets), were preserved was due to the collecting and preserving zeal of Jozef Andrzej Załuski. Although a Catholic, Załuski accumulated printed texts from many churches throughout Protestant Germany, including the cantata cycles of Bach’s time.

There was no Bach session on the morning of July 3, it being usurped by “Introducing Music and Emblematics Research,” with papers from myself, Joel Speerstra, and Ruth Tatlow. It was followed by a session organized by the Bach-Archiv Leipzig, reporting on its ongoing research into the archives and libraries in central Germany: “Bach and Musical Life in Leipzig between ca. 1730-1750: New Research and Findings.” Versions of the first two papers, Peter Wollny, “Bach’s Cantata Performances in the 1730s: New Findings, New Perspectives,” and Michael Maul’s “New Light on the Controversy between Bach and Scheibe and Music Life in Leipzig during the Late 1730s,” were heard at the American Bach Society’s meeting. Manuel Bärwald, the latest scholar to join the Bach-Archiv team, has been investigating the Collegia Musica of the 1740s and 1750s: “New Light on Performances of Secular Music in Leipzig from the 1740s to the Seven Years War.” During this period there was a shift from *dramma per musica* towards *Singspiele* (musical comedies) and large-scale oratorios. Advertisements and reports in newspapers reveal the titles of the works performed, which can then be found in library catalogues. Thus a growing picture of these performances is beginning to emerge.

The afternoon began with another session sponsored by the Bach Network UK: “Women’s Contributions to Bach’s Musical World.” Yael Sela’s paper, “Anna Magdalena Bach’s Clavier-Büchlein and Early Modern Women’s Musical Training” (read by Reinhard Strohm in her absence), revisited the phenomenon of women and domestic music, the genre of feminine keyboard collections and the two music notebooks of Anna Magdalena Bach (1722, 1725). In her paper, “‘Buß und Reu’: a Symbol of Female Sinfulness in Bach’s St Matthew Passion?” Corrina Herr raised the question: Can we identify a concept of “gendered voices” in Bach’s music and its reception? If Mary Magdalene was

intended as the female protagonist in the Bethany scene of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, then the alto aria “Buß und Reu” would be an image of her (female) sinfulness. Starting from Robert Marshall’s seminal essay of thirty years ago, “Bach the Progressive,” Suzanne Aspden’s paper “‘Dresden Ditties’ and the Feminised Galant,” explored the complex social associations of the “new” style, especially its problematic overtones and links with the burgeoning “polite” sphere of the public concert and the feminised world of opera.

The final Bach session of the conference was “Exploring the World of Bach’s Sons.” Two papers were presented—David Schulenberg, “An Enigmatic Legacy: the Music of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and Its Relationship to other Bach-family Works,” and Mary Oleskiewicz, “The Bachs in Berlin: the Courts of Brandenburg-Prussia as a Background to Instrumental Works of J. S., W. F., and C. P. E. Bach”—which were similar in content to the papers given at the American Bach Society meeting. The conference keynote address, given by Peter Wollny, was also devoted to the theme of Bach’s sons: “‘Meticulous fine work’ or ‘Reflection of a great school’?: Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and the Protestant Church Cantata after 1750,” a comprehensive survey of the vocal works of W. F. Bach, especially those composed in Halle.

At a business meeting on the final day of the weekend Southampton University (UK) was chosen as the host for the 15th conference, which will take place from 11-15 July, 2012—the week following the International Musicological Society meeting in Rome. Participants also took the opportunity to express their appreciation and thanks to the principal organizers of the 14th conference at Queen’s University: Yo Tomita (Chair), Alison Dunlop, Tanja Kovacevic (Coordinators), Elise Crean (Secretary), and Ian Mills (Artistic Director).

There were of course concerts of appropriate music but, instead of bringing in particular groups, participants were enlisted to play. This was a creative solution in that the concerts were extensions of paper presentations. As important and informative as the paper sessions were, the social side of the conference—the coffee, tea, and lunch breaks, Giant’s Causeway tour, and the conference banquet—were equally fruitful, as always, when contacts were made and much informal discussion took place. At the banquet tribute was paid to the late Jerome Roche, whose vision created BICBM, and to the late Anne Leahy whose vision for Bach studies in Ireland inspired this second Irish venue of BICBM.

Before returning to the USA I spent some time in Dublin and was able to visit the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, where Anne Leahy taught. The library has

created the “Anne Leahy Collection: J. S. Bach,” which is also a study area for graduate and doctoral students. The nucleus of the collection is Dr. Leahy’s own library of books, scores, and papers. But the intention is to continue to add to the collection so that it becomes the primary resource for Bach studies in Ireland. Books, offprints, etc. can be sent to Ann McSweeney, Sub-Librarian, Conservatory of Music and Drama, Dublin Institute of Technology, Rathmines Road, Dublin 6, Ireland; marked “Anne Leahy Bach Collection.”

Robin A. Leaver  
Yale University

### BOOK REVIEW

**Jürgen Neubacher.** *Georg Philipp Telemanns Hamburger Kirchenmusik und ihre Aufführungsbedingungen (1721-1767): Organisationsstrukturen, Musiker, Besetzungspraktiken. Mit einer umfangreichen Quellendokumentation.* Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2009.

For those of us interested in church music in Hamburg during the cantorates of Telemann and his successor, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1768 to 1788), this volume, which combines the fruits of recent scholarship with a wealth of new information, is an indispensable addition to the literature. This study is as useful to Bach scholars as to Telemann scholars because the rather complex apparatus that supported Hamburg church music performances, established in the 1640s under Cantor Thomas Selle, was essentially the same under both Telemann and Bach. The particulars varied—there were different occasions, pieces and, to a large extent, different musicians—but the basic framework, which was coordinated and financed by the city and the five principal churches, remained largely the same. The various elements of this tradition are discussed clearly and thoroughly in Neubacher’s study, which is divided into three large chapters—organizational structure, musicians, and scoring and instrumentation—plus extensive appendices. As an added benefit, throughout Neubacher provides a broad perspective by examining music making not only at the five principal churches, for which the cantor was directly responsible, but also at the cathedral (“Dom”) and the smaller churches (“Nebenkirchen”).

The first chapter of the book establishes the context in which the music making took place. Topics covered

include the administrative structure of the city and the churches; the cantors responsibilities at the Latin school, the Johanneum; the *Ordnung der Musik* and the intricate scheduling of performances; the placement of music within the services as specified in the 1699 *Vesperordnung* (the entire document is transcribed in an appendix); and the financial arrangements that made the performances possible. Particularly significant is Neubacher’s establishment of the fact that the cantor’s ensemble, the *Chorus musicus*, performed from its own *Chorempore* located in the *Mittelschiff* of the principal churches. Diagrams and illustrations of the *Emporen* are included.

The musicians themselves are the subject of the second chapter. The discussion of the instrumentalists active in and around Hamburg includes not only the better-understood town musicians but also the church trumpeters, *Rollbrüder*, *Grünrollmusikanten*, musicians in the military organizations, and guest virtuosi. The discussion of the singers is equally thorough, including consideration of the opera since some of Telemann’s church singers were also active there. Each vocal range is fully explored in its own section, where individual singers are identified and discussed. One of the many strengths of the volume is the compendium of short but very detailed biographies of all the musicians active in Hamburg during Telemann’s time, which is included as an appendix.

The third chapter of the book concerns what the surviving documents and performing materials reveal about the nature of Telemann’s ensemble and issues of performance practice. The instrumental families are considered individually, and the extensive examination of the vocal parts reveals, among other things, that certain movements were sometimes sung by singers in different vocal ranges and that, in some cases, more than one singer sang from a single part. Neubacher ultimately finds that Telemann’s ensemble for regular Sundays involved four singers (or five, with the additional singer strengthening the bass) and fourteen instrumentalists (three first and three second violinists, two violists, two cellists, one double bassist, two oboists or flutists, and one bassoonist). On more festive occasions, the number of vocalists was doubled to eight (or nine, with the additional singer again strengthening the bass) and the fourteen instrumentalists indicated above were joined by three trumpeters and one drummer (with additional instrumentalists, as necessary).

Particularly noteworthy among the items of the appendices, in addition to those mentioned above, are 1) a chronological transcription of eighty-eight payment records from performances on special occasions, each including the names of the musicians and the amount

they were paid, and 2) an alphabetical listing of Telemann's compositions for the church and special occasions for which at least one original vocal part survives, where each listing includes year, surviving vocal parts, copyist, source and, in many cases, notes on the source. The bibliography includes an extensive list of primary sources from various archives and libraries. Identification of those housed at the *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* and the *Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg* will be particularly helpful to future researchers.

In summary, this book will serve as the basis for future scholarship in this area for a very long time.

Reginald Sanders  
Kenyon College

### STEVEN ZOHN

#### Winner of the 2010 William H. Scheide Prize

The William H. Scheide Prize, in the amount of \$1,000, honors a publication of exceptional merit on Bach or figures in his circle by a member of the Society in the early stages of his or her career. The following citation was read at the 2010 American Bach Society's Biennial Meeting by Daniel R. Melamed in honor of Steven Zohn, Associate Professor of Music Studies in the Boyer College of Music and Dance of Temple University.

"The work we honor today is particularly appropriate to this meeting of the American Bach Society. We have learned to admire Bach's music on its own but also to appreciate Bach's place in the musical world of his time. The scholarly work for which the Scheide prize is awarded goes a long way in the investigation of a contemporary musician and of stylistic and practical conventions that governed musical life.

The study we honor examines arguably the most famous, successful and versatile musician of his day in a comprehensive way and with a particular eye towards the use of musical style as an expressive device in his compositions. The study emphasizes this figure's versatility and his work in every kind of vocal and instrumental music; his adoption, manipulation, and combination of national styles; his interest in the compositional possibilities of forms and genres, especially the sonata and the concerto; his cultivation both of professional musicians and amateur performers; and his work as an independent musical entrepreneur, particularly in the realm of printing and publishing.



These are all areas in which we have come to appreciate J. S. Bach's accomplishments, but this work goes further than any before in letting us see the depth of musical thought behind a contemporary composer's work. The author paints a picture of a figure arguably as interesting as Bach and one who has much to teach about the 18th-century musical world in which he operated.

The volume we honor reflects the broad scope of the author's knowledge of the subject and his music; of the sources that transmit the works; and of their artistic and commercial contexts. The book is a major contribution to 18th-century studies as well as to the literature on the individual at its center.

The American Bach Society is pleased to present the William H. Scheide Prize for 2010 to Steven Zohn for *Music for a Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann's Instrumental Works* published by Oxford University Press."

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS

After two years of renovation, the **Bach-Archiv Leipzig** has moved back into the Bose house on the *Thomaskirchhof*. The house was originally built in the 16th century but renovated in 1711 by J. S. Bach's neighbor, Georg Heinrich Bose, who lived there with his wife and their many musically inclined children. The Bach-Archiv, which was renovated and expanded under the auspices of its Director, Christoph Wolff, now boasts even better research facilities for visiting and resident scholars. The library has been redesigned so that the stacks are much more accessible. The museum, which opened on Bach's 325th birthday (March 21, 2010) has also been greatly improved and reconceived as a "Exhibition for Research." Visitors can compare films about Bach made over the course of the last century, examine a large model of the St. Thomas School, explore the daily lives of 18th-century Germans, and study autograph manuscripts of J. S. Bach. The current special exhibition deals with Bach's first few years in Leipzig (1723-25), during which he composed most of his surviving sacred cantatas. Upcoming special exhibitions this year and next will focus on Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and Baroque opera in Leipzig. More information about the move back to the Bose house will be available in the next issue of *Bach Notes*.

The **Bach Competition 2010** brought 125 participants from 33 different countries to Leipzig between July 7 and 17. The categories this year were piano, harpsichord, and violin/baroque violin. President Robert Levin assembled juries of Bach specialists which sought to identify musicians who were inspired innovators rather than merely technicians. The winners this year were: for piano (1) Ilya Poletaev, (2) Stepan Simonian, and (3) Ekaterina Richter; for harpsichord (1) Maria

Uspenskaya, (2) Magdalena Malec, and (3) Nadja Lesaulnier; and for violin/baroque violin (1) Evgeny Sviridov, (2) Shunsuke Sato, and (3) Friederike Starkloff. The next competition, for cello/baroque cello, organ, and voice will take place in July 2012.

A boxed set containing a 2-CD recording by organist George Ritchie of **J. S. Bach's complete Art of Fugue** plus two films on DVD—a full-length documentary film about the Art of Fugue and a filmed lecture-demonstration by George Ritchie on the 17 individual pieces—has been released by Fugue State Films of Great Britain. In the documentary *Desert Fugue* (90 minutes) George Ritchie is joined by scholar Christoph Wolff and organ builders Ralph Richards and Bruce Fowkes in discussing the history and performance of the Art of Fugue. In his Introduction to the Art of Fugue (100 minutes) George Ritchie presents each of the individual pieces, illustrating points with dozens of musical examples from the score, and discusses the full range of fugal techniques used in the work. A booklet contains extensive notes by Ritchie about the music, specifications of the recently built organ in 18th-century central-German style by Richards and Fowkes in Pinnacle Presbyterian Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, and a list of all registrations used. The CD plus DVD boxed set is available in the U.S. from [www.ohscatalog.org](http://www.ohscatalog.org) and [www.RavenCD.com](http://www.RavenCD.com) and from Fugue State Films at [www.fuguestatefilms.co.uk/shop](http://www.fuguestatefilms.co.uk/shop).

The **Bach Festival Society of Winter Park** is pleased to announce its 2010–2011 Season. Join the Society for a full season of events. Flex packages and subscriptions are on sale now. More information on all programs can be found at [www.BachFestivalFlorida.org](http://www.BachFestivalFlorida.org).

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