

Johann Sebastian Bach 1685 -1750
Cantatas Vol 27: Blythburgh/Kirkwall

CD 1 50:01 For Whit Tuesday

Brandenburg Concerto No.3 BWV 1048
Erwünschtes Freudenlicht BWV 184
Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen BWV 175
Lisa Larsson *soprano*, Nathalie Stutzmann *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Stephen Loges *bass*

CD 2 61:26 For Trinity Sunday

Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest BWV 194
Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding BWV 176
O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad BWV 165
Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott BWV 129
Ruth Holton *soprano*, Daniel Taylor *alto*
Paul Agnew *tenor*, Peter Harvey *bass*

The Monteverdi Choir
The English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner

Live recordings from the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage
Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, 13 June 2000
St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, 18 June 2000



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SDG 138

27

Bach Cantatas Gardiner

Bach Cantatas
Gardiner



The Bach Cantata Pilgrimage

On Christmas Day 1999 a unique celebration of the new Millennium began in the Herderkirche in Weimar, Germany: the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists under the direction of Sir John Eliot Gardiner set out to perform all Johann Sebastian Bach's surviving church cantatas in the course of the year 2000, the 250th anniversary of Bach's death.

The cantatas were performed on the liturgical feasts for which they were composed, in a year-long musical pilgrimage encompassing some of the most beautiful churches throughout Europe (including many where Bach himself performed) and culminating in three concerts in New York over the Christmas festivities at the end of the millennial year. These recordings were made during the course of the Pilgrimage.

CD 1	50:01	For Whit Tuesday
1-3	12:07	Brandenburg Concerto No.3 BWV 1048 in G major / G-dur
4-9	21:47	Erwünschtes Freudenlicht BWV 184
10-16	15:51	Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen BWV 175

Lisa Larsson *soprano*, Nathalie Stutzmann *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Stephen Loges *bass*

The Monteverdi Choir
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Live recording from the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage
Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, 13 June 2000

The Monteverdi Choir

Sopranos

Suzanne Flowers
Gillian Keith
Emma Preston-Dunlop
Katharine Fuge
Elisabeth Priday
Rachel Wheatley
Joanne Lunn

Altos

Elinor Carter
Mark Chambers
Angus Davidson
Charles Humphries

Tenors

Peter Butterfield
Rory O'Connor
Paul Tindall
Nicolas Robertson

Basses

Julian Clarkson
Charles Pott
Robert Evans
Michael McCarthy

The English

Baroque Soloists

First Violins

Kati Debretzeni
Penelope Spencer
Sarah Bealby-Wright
Matthew Truscott
Deirdre Ward

Second Violins

Lucy Howard
Rebecca Livermore
Desmond Heath
Steven Jones

Violas

Annette Isserlis
Katie Heller
Penny Veryard
Pamela Cresswell

Cellos

David Watkin
Ruth Alford
Lynden Cranham

Double Bass

Cecelia Bruggemeyer

Flutes

Marten Root
Rachel Beckett

Recorders

Rachel Beckett
Marion Scott
Catherine Latham

Trumpets

Mark Bennett
Mike Harrison

Harpsichord

Silas John Standage

Organ

Howard Moody

Bach Cantatas
Gardiner



Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750
Cantatas Vol 27: Blythburgh/Kirkwall

CD 1 50:01 For Whit Tuesday

12:07 Brandenburg Concerto No.3 bwv 1048

in G major / G-dur

- 1 (5:35) 1. Allegro
- 2 (1:33) 2. Adagio
- 3 (4:59) 3. Allegro

21:47 Erwünschtes Freudenlicht bwv 184

- 4 (3:24) 1. *Recitativo: Tenor* Erwünschtes Freudenlicht
- 5 (8:17) 2. *Aria (Duetto): Sopran, Alt* Gesegnete Christen, glückselige Herde
- 6 (1:56) 3. *Recitativo: Tenor* So freuet euch, ihr auserwählten Seelen!
- 7 (4:36) 4. *Aria: Tenor* Glück und Segen sind bereit
- 8 (1:17) 5. *Choral* Herr, ich hoff je
- 9 (2:16) 6. *Coro* Guter Hirte, Trost der Deinen

15:51 Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen bwv 175

- 10 (0:26) 1. *Recitativo: Tenor* Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen
- 11 (4:35) 2. *Aria: Alt* Komm, leite mich
- 12 (0:27) 3. *Recitativo: Tenor* Wo find ich dich?
- 13 (3:07) 4. *Aria: Tenor* Es dünket mich, ich seh dich kommen
- 14 (1:05) 5. *Recitativo: Alt, Bass* Sie vernahmen aber nicht
- 15 (4:18) 6. *Aria: Bass* Öffnet euch, ihr beiden Ohren
- 16 (1:51) 7. *Choral* Nun, werter Geist, ich folg dir

CD 2 61:26 For Trinity Sunday

18:49 Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest BWV 194

- 1 (4:26) 1. *Coro* Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest
- 2 (1:06) 2. *Recitativo: Bass* Unendlich großer Gott
- 3 (4:19) 3. *Aria: Bass* Was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt
- 4 (1:26) 4. *Recitativo: Sopran* Wie könnte dir, du höchstes Angesicht
- 5 (5:33) 5. *Aria: Sopran* Hilf, Gott, dass es uns gelingt
- 6 (1:58) 6. *Choral* Heil'ger Geist ins Himmels Throne

10:29 Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding BWV 176

- 7 (1:54) 1. *Coro* Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding
- 8 (0:43) 2. *Recitativo: Alt* Ich meine, recht verzagt
- 9 (2:58) 3. *Aria: Sopran* Dein sonst hell beliebter Schein
- 10 (1:27) 4. *Recitativo: Bass* So wundre dich, o Meister, nicht
- 11 (2:21) 5. *Aria: Alt* Ermuntert euch, furchtsam und schüchterne Sinne
- 12 (1:05) 6. *Choral* Auf dass wir also allzugleich

12:54 O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad BWV 165

- 13 (3:32) 1. *Aria: Sopran* O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad
- 14 (1:17) 2. *Recitativo: Bass* Die sündige Geburt verdammter Adamserben
- 15 (2:29) 3. *Aria: Alt* Jesu, der aus großer Liebe
- 16 (2:03) 4. *Recitativo: Bass* Ich habe ja, mein Seelenbräutigam
- 17 (2:58) 5. *Aria: Tenor* Jesu, meines Todes Tod
- 18 (0:34) 6. *Choral* Sein Wort, sein Tauf, sein Nachtmahl

18:52 Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott BWV 129

- 19 (3:48) 1. *Coro (Choral)* Gelobet sei der Herr
- 20 (3:37) 2. *Aria: Bass* Gelobet sei der Herr
- 21 (4:56) 3. *Aria: Sopran* Gelobet sei der Herr
- 22 (4:53) 4. *Aria: Alt* Gelobet sei der Herr
- 23 (1:38) 5. *Choral* Dem wir das Heilig itzt



Introduction
John Eliot Gardiner

When we embarked on the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage in Weimar on Christmas Day 1999 we had no real sense of how the project would turn out. There were no precedents, no earlier attempts to perform all Bach's surviving church cantatas on the appointed feast day and all within a single year, for us to draw on or to guide us. Just as in planning to scale a mountain or cross an ocean, you can make meticulous provision, calculate your route and get all the equipment in order, in the end you have to deal with whatever the elements – both human and physical – throw at you at any given moment.

With weekly preparations leading to the performance of these extraordinary works, a working rhythm we sustained throughout a whole year, our approach was influenced by several factors: time (never enough), geography (the initial retracing of Bach's footsteps in Thuringia and Saxony), architecture (the churches both great and small where we performed), the impact of one week's music on the next and on the different permutations of players and singers joining and rejoining the pilgrimage, and, inevitably, the hazards of weather, travel and fatigue. Compromises were sometimes needed to accommodate the quirks of the liturgical year (Easter falling exceptionally late in 2000 meant that we ran out of liturgical slots for the late Trinity season cantatas, so that they needed to be redistributed among other programmes). Then to fit into a single evening cantatas for the same day composed by Bach over a forty-year

span meant deciding on a single pitch (A = 415) for each programme, so that the early Weimar cantatas written at high organ pitch needed to be performed in the transposed version Bach adopted for their revival, real or putative, in Leipzig. Although we had commissioned a new edition of the cantatas by Reinhold Kubik, incorporating the latest source findings, we were still left with many practical decisions to make over instrumentation, pitch, bass figuration, voice types, underlay and so on. Nor did we have the luxury of repeated performances in which to try out various solutions: at the end of each feast-day we had to put the outgoing trio or quartet of cantatas to the back of our minds and move on to the next clutch – which came at us thick and fast at peak periods such as Whitsun, Christmas and Easter.

The recordings which make up this series were a corollary of the concerts, not their *raison d'être*. They are a faithful document of the pilgrimage, though never intended to be a definitive stylistic or musicological statement. Each of the concerts which we recorded was preceded by a 'take' of the final rehearsal in the empty church as a safety net against outside noise, loud coughs, accidents or meteorological disturbance during the performance. But the music on these recordings is very much 'live' in the sense that it is a true reflection of what happened on the night, of how the performers reacted to the music (often brand new to them), and of how the church locations and the audiences affected our response. This series is a tribute to the astonishing musicality and talent of all the performers who took part, as well as, of course, to the genius of J.S. Bach.



Holy Trinity, Blythburgh

For the third day of Pentecost we crossed Suffolk diagonally northeast from Long Melford and fetched up in Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, the 'Cathedral of the Marshes' on the estuary of the river Blyth. I remember coming here in the 1960s with my parents to hear concerts at the Aldeburgh Festival, including a magical performance of Schumann's *Scenes from Faust* conducted by Benjamin Britten. Quite how he managed to squish in a whole symphony orchestra, plus soloists and chorus, is utterly baffling, given that there is less than three and a half metres between the rood screen and the front pews. Even with our far more modest forces we had difficulty fitting everyone in for our concert.

With only two cantatas to have survived for Whit Tuesday, we decided to open our programme with Brandenburg Concerto No.3, the original of the opening sinfonia of BWV 174 which we performed the day before in Melford (see SDG Vol.26). At some stage, though not necessarily at the point of its inception, it is clear that Bach saw Trinitarian associations with this magnificent concerto composed on unusually democratic lines for a trinity of trinities: three violins, three violas and three cellos, giving each of them the chance to share the limelight.

Pressed for time at the end of a busy Whit weekend during his first year in Leipzig, Bach based BWV 184 **Erwünschtes Freudenlicht** on a hasty revision of a lost Cöthen secular cantata, of which only a few instrumental parts survive from the new (1724) Leipzig material, scored for two transverse flutes and strings. Bach and his anonymous librettist neatly combine ideas from the Epistle – the visitation of the Holy Spirit in Samaria (Acts 8:14-17) – and the Gospel – Jesus as the good shepherd (John 10:1-10). The long opening *accompaniato* for tenor has paired flutes playing an enchanting lilting triplet rhythm in thirds over the simple basso continuo. The string band joins the two flutes for a soprano/alto duet, 'Gesegnete Christen', cast as a pastoral minuet (and very possibly danced to when first given in secular form in Cöthen) despite scurrying, demisemiquaver scales (gambolling lambs or blessed spirits?) in which the two voices are fused in euphonious thirds and sixths. One might momentarily mistake it as the origin of the celebrated duet from *Lakmé*, before considering the long odds of Delibes ever having clapped eyes on this obscure piece. The extended

secco recitative (No.3) for tenor, after drawing a parallel with the hero of Judah (King David) and the effective way he deals with the enemy, culminates in an *arioso* twinning of voice and continuo to portray the 'perfect joy of heaven' ('vollkommne Himmelsfreude') that is available even to sinners. It is appropriate that the tenor should then develop the theme of Jesus as bringer of the 'golden age' in the ensuing aria (No.4), in minuet form with violin obbligato. Coming at this point the four-part chorale 'Herr, ich hoff je' (No.5) gives us a brief reminder that this is after all a church cantata, before it reverts for its final movement to a deliciously bucolic gavotte, a soprano/bass duet expanded to include the chorus in its rondo-like refrains:

The pastoral mood continues a year later in BWV 175 **Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen** (1725), this time three recorders displacing the flutes. This is a more elaborate work, the eighth of the nine consecutive texts Bach set by Christiane Mariane von Ziegler, the foremost bluestocking in Leipzig who, aged twenty-nine, had recently opened a literary salon which Bach is said to have frequented. She cast this cantata as a mini-oratorio, spreading the Gospel words through all seven of its movements and deriving her poetic commentary from the parable of the sheep called by name but fleeing from the stranger. The trio of recorders establish a stylised pastoral setting and a mood of benign trust both in the four introductory bars that set the scene (No.1) and in the alto aria (No.2) which describes a yearning for green pastures ('Komm, leite mich, es sehnet sich mein Geist auf grüner Weide!'). The mood remains personal and intimate throughout this portrait of

ovine contentment (in E minor and with continuous 12/8 figuration). From time to time anguished expressive gestures conveyed by means of chromatic sighing figures depict the believer's (or the sheep's) need for reassurance from the good shepherd.

This anguish comes to the surface in the dramatic six-bar recitative for tenor (No.3): 'Where can I find Thee? Ah, where art Thou hidden?' Six of the ten chords Bach uses here are dissonant. Now to convey the joyful anticipation of the shepherd's return Bach calls for a five-string violoncello piccolo to accompany the tenor aria (No.4). As with BWV 173 the previous day Bach rifles through the Cöthen birthday cantata he wrote a few years back for Duke Leopold (BWV 173a), with music far too good to be heard only once. Here he extracts an extended *da capo* bourrée, with the ordinary cello part now transposed up a minor third for the piccolo model. He takes the unusual step of fitting lines 3 and 4 of the new text to a repetition of the first section of the original aria, which entailed making several changes to the original, but no great harm is done in the process. As Dürr drily observes, evidently Bach's decision to parody an existing secular movement had not been discussed with Frau von Ziegler in advance.

A second narrative recitative (No.5) opens this time with the alto as evangelist ('But they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them'); the bass then presents Ziegler's commentary accompanied by strings, with paired semiquaver movement in the violins (who have hardly figured till now) in the same idiom as the pastoral recorders to indicate the gentle voice of Christ. In this unusual dual recitative Ziegler and Bach conspire to give a topical

gloss to the incomprehension of Jesus's listeners, both in his day and in theirs, one that is only tangentially implied in the Gospel. It is 'deluded reason' that makes us deaf to Jesus's words. As in other instances this year where we have come across pejorative references to 'reason', this is one way (Dürr calls it the contemporary Lutheran way) to 'ward off the incipient Age of Enlightenment and the atheism that followed in its train.'

Unusual in the extreme is the bass aria with two D trumpets (No.6) which follows: 'Öffnet euch, ihr beiden Ohren', in 6/8. How are we supposed to react to these majestic instruments in the context of a gentle pastoral cantata? The answer must surely lie in the text: 'dass er Teufel, Tod erlegt' ('that He hath laid low death and the devil'); in other words, a celebration of Christ's descent into hell and his victory over the grave which calls for heroic and martial instruments. The trumpet writing is peculiar, the second player sometimes acting almost as continuo to his colleague and section principal, and their joined fanfare motif sounding strangely bare without the expected drums. Finally, a G major presentation of the Pentecostal hymn we've heard a total of four times in the past three days, which with the return of the three recorders re-establishes the pastoral atmosphere of the opening two movements uniting in one person the shepherd (Gospel) and the Holy Spirit (Epistle).

Just before the concert I climbed up the five ladders that lead onto the roof of the church tower. Spectacular views opened up to the east over the Blyth estuary, to Southwold and the sea, and to the west over idyllic, pastoral landscapes with unnumbered sheep grazing green pastures in

typically English June weather. Several writers have tried to describe the particular atmosphere and beauty of this church. There is something dignified and satisfying in the simple proportions of the nave with its seven regular Gothic arches, the openness of the space, the whitewashed clerestory walls and the light streaming through the clear glass of its windows. Then there is the great span of the tie-beam wooden roof, unbroken from nave to chancel by any arch, with its back-to-back angels, once gaudily painted in red, green, gold and white, now elegantly faded and fashionably 'distressed'. These wooden angels seem to have faced many trials. Apparently the church was struck by lightning in 1577 when the spire collapsed, and legend has it that the angels were shot at by Puritan soldiers in 1644; or were they simply peppered with grapeshot in attempts to get rid of jackdaws in the roof? Most of them (the angels, that is) have survived and are partly responsible for the air of peace and solemnity you experience as soon as you enter this beautiful church.

Cantatas for Trinity Sunday



St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall
Trinity Sunday does not register today as one of the more exciting of the church's festivals. Yet in Bach's day, it had a climactic importance: it marked the end of the *Temporale*, the first half of the liturgical year which celebrates the events in the life of Jesus. For Bach personally it signified the completion of the annual cantata cycles he composed in Leipzig (his first official cantata as Thomascantor in 1723 happening to be the first Sunday after Trinity), and not surprisingly drew from him works of summary significance: cantatas that were challenging even by his standards. For us in 2000 it was a half-way point, and thus a milestone to look forward to, especially as we were due to travel to the most northerly point on our pilgrimage route, to Kirkwall in Orkney.

June 17 was the only really hot day of summer and we spent it, all fifty of us, not as planned, travelling to Orkney, nor rehearsing productively in a cool studio, but kicking our heels at Stansted. The air traffic controllers' central computer near Heathrow had crashed, effectively paralysing all of London's airports. After a six-hour wait, it seemed as though we might finally be off. We hurried to board our charter plane and buckled up, only to be told that Kirkwall airport would close for the night at 7pm – ten minutes before we were due to land. Disconsolately we dispersed, some trekking back to London, others in pursuit of a dwindling number of local B&Bs. Not only had we lost a vital rehearsal for our concert programme the next day, but gone was any realistic chance for us to get properly acquainted with Orkney.

At 7am the next day we reconvened and boarded the charter, an old propellor craft known in the trade as a crop-sprayer. Arriving travel-stained at Kirkwall three hours later we were given a welcome buzz by the bracing air and crystal-clear light, and made straight for the cathedral. The pink and ochre sandstone put me in mind of Durham. With its disproportionately chunky pillars and narrow nave, it gives the impression of having been carved rather than built. I was relieved to find that for all its beauty and historical importance as a shrine, tourism had not flattened its batteries: it seemed to me a magical uncluttered place, well suited to meditation and worship – and, hopefully, to music.

We rehearsed for four hours in the cathedral, being obliged to concertina a normal rehearsal on the day in a brand-new venue with the forfeited

'tutti' rehearsal from the day before. There were four cantatas to prepare. Trinity Sunday is a watershed in the Lutheran liturgical year, a time when the 'themes of the week' shift to the several concerns of Christian life and conduct. Taking his cue from the set readings, Bach confronts the listener (and the performer!) with a range of knotty subjects, questions of doctrine and faith, challenging enough in themselves, but doubly so in his hands, though beautified by extraordinary multi-layered music.

His first cantata for Trinity Sunday, BWV 165 **O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad**, was composed in 1715 in Weimar, to a text by Salomo Franck. It is a true sermon-in-music, based on the Gospel account of Jesus' night-time conversation with Nicodemus on the subject of 'new life', emphasising the spiritual importance of baptism. The plentiful references to water in this cantata seemed wonderfully apt to our geographical situation – 'except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God'. Even on the briefest visit to Orkney you cannot escape the sense of layered history in this sea-dominated archipelago – Neolithic, Pictish and Norse – clear to the few of us who had made a rushed visit, sandwich in hand, to the Ring of Brodgar. The thing that struck me most about the opening aria for soprano entitled 'Concerto' was the 'impossibility' of some of its harmonies: there is a passage in the fugal play-out which, if you play it below a certain speed, sounds plain wrong – like Stravinsky in neo-baroque style, or even Webern. Those incongruities simply disappear when played at the 'correct' faster tempo, flowing by like stream water across and around rocks.

Another striking feature is the dramatic fade-out at the end of the long, impressive bass *accompagnato* (No.4), in which two types of serpent are contrasted: the 'ancient' serpent of sin, and the 'fiery' or blood-red serpent raised on a pole by Moses and later 'exalted on the cross'. For the words 'wenn alle Kraft vergehet' ('when all my strength has faded') Bach weaves contrary-motion lines in the upper strings played *pianissimo*, soft to the point of extinction, leaving the final G to the bassoon and bass line 'senza accomp.' – bleak and alone. Bach's imagination, stirred here by the dual image of the serpent, prompts shock tactics, forcing his listeners into a realisation that they daily break the pledge made on their behalf at baptism and therefore constantly need renewed forgiveness. To clinch the argument he follows this with an aria for tenor in which Christ is again referred to as the serpent. As Whittaker describes it, 'the whole of the obbligato for violins in unison is constructed out of the image of the bending, writhing, twisting reptile, usually a symbol of horror, but in Bach's musical speech a thing of pellucid beauty'. The closing chorale is a setting of Ludwig Helmbold's 'Nun lasst uns Gott, dem Herren'.

A grand French-style overture heralds the start of BWV 194 **Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest**. The cantata seems to have begun life as a secular Cöthen piece some time between 1717 and 1723, and was then adapted for the dedication of the new organ at Störmthal (2 November 1723) and revived the following summer for Trinity Sunday as the culmination of Bach's first Leipzig cycle (it was revived again for two further Trinity Sundays in 1726 and 1731). There is one huge problem: that of pitch.

Evidently the Störmthal organ must have been tuned to 'tiefer Cammerton' (A= +/-390), considerably lower than that of the Leipzig organs. How else would the trebles have coped with the top Cs in the opening chorus (unique in Bach) or the bass soloist with the multiple F sharp and Gs in his opening recitative? But then, why did Bach not transpose it down for his Leipzig revivals, as we were obliged to do? All he seems to have done is to transpose a few of the bass soloist's highest notes downwards, thereby sidestepping the overall problem.

Of its original twelve movements Bach retained just the first six for use on Trinity Sunday. Just as in his adaptation of the overture to the Orchestral Suite No.4 for the Christmas cantata BWV 110, Bach holds back the entry of the chorus until the quick triple-time middle section. Then, instead of repeating the festive *entrée* – reeds first (three oboes and bassoon), strings next – he reverses the process, assigning the cascade of semiquavers to the oboe band before bringing the chorus back for a festive concluding flourish. Of the two arias, the first is for bass, one of those spacious, pastoral 12/8 movements (for oboe and strings) which Bach devised from time to time to convey the reassurance of God's protective care (here it is his 'light'); the other for soprano, a spirited gavotte for strings to celebrate the purifying effects of Pentecostal fire.

Bach's second Leipzig cantata cycle culminates with the last in the mini-cycle of nine cantatas to texts by Christiane Mariane von Ziegler, BWV 176 **Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding**. This translates as 'There is something stubborn (or defiant or wilful) and fainthearted (or disheartened or despairing) about

the human heart'. Each permutation of these variant adjectives applies to Bach's setting. By interpreting the story of Nicodemus' furtive night-time visit as a general human tendency (hence the quote from Jeremiah) Ziegler had given Bach a chance to set up a dramatic antithesis between headstrong aggression and lily-livered frailty. Bach opens with a defiant, indignant presentation of this *Spruch*, a terse, four-part choral fugue set against a string fanfare reminiscent of Brandenburg No.5. That applies to the first half only, with a rushing melisma up to the minor ninth on 'trotzig' and then, at its peak, a melting and sighing figure over sustained strings to underscore the 'verzagt' side of things. This ascending and descending contour persists throughout the fugue, two and a half expositions without ritornellos, the voices doubled by the three oboes while the strings alternate between the vigorous Brandenburg 5 motif and plaintive, sustained counterpoint. I wonder whether this arresting comment on the human condition reflected Bach's own views, particularly as regards the intractable attitude of the Leipzig Consistory? As with his other collaborations with Ziegler there is evidence of a productive dialogue between him and his librettist (often sadly lacking when he was confronted with a set text). Her printed versions differ sometimes in details, sometimes quite strikingly from those that Bach actually set to music.

The exploration of these twin facets of human behaviour continues all the way through this cantata: the juxtaposition of Nicodemus (night) and Jesus (day) presented in the alto recitative (No.2) is implied in the soprano aria-as-gavotte in B flat (No.3), in which the timid, hesitant yet happy believer is singled out

in contrast to the rebellious mind portrayed in the opening chorus. Nicodemus is personified in the bass recitative (No.4), to which Bach adds the words 'for whosoever believes in Thee, shall not perish' to Ziegler's text and sets them as an extended arioso to underline their significance. A trinity of oboes in symbolic unison accompany the alto in the final aria 'Ermuntert euch, furchtsam und schüchterne Sinne' ('Have courage, fearful, timorous spirits'). The ascent/descent shaping persists even in the final chorale, with a melodic curve over the first four of its five phrases. Just when the unwary might imagine Bach is going to end right there on the subdominant, he breaks the symmetry by adding two more bars. With this dénouement at a far higher pitch, he asserts the essence of the Trinity, 'ein Wesen, drei Personen', and the remoteness of God from his relationship to humankind. He signs off his second Leipzig cycle with this cantata crammed with provocative thoughts and musical exegesis.

A year later, Bach's preference for Trinity Sunday was for an uncomplicatedly jubilant text. For BWV 129 **Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott** he chose five strophes from Johann Olearius' chorale of 1665, four of the five beginning with the title words. There are no recitatives or da capo arias; yet there is a plenty of variety, from the stirring chorale fantasia that opens the work, with flute, two oboes, three trumpets and drums added to the string band, to the three arias: one ritornello aria for bass with continuo in praise of the Son, a soprano aria with flute and low-lying violin obbligati addressed to the Holy Spirit and, the pick of the bunch, a pastoral dance for alto and oboe d'amore, inspired, perhaps in its imagery, by the

concept of 'den alles lobet, was in allen Lüften schwebet' ('praised by all things that move in the air'). No composer ever got more out of a tune than Bach when he chose, and this is one of the most glorious melodies he ever wrote (and one that has been a life-long companion ever since I first heard my mother sing it during my childhood). The cantata ends with a chorale setting such as the one that closes the *Christmas Oratorio*, punctuated by brass and orchestral fanfares.

It is a genial, uplifting work, and our performance of it was spirited. Yet the St Magnus Festival audience – and even the cathedral choir who joined with us in the chorales – seemed a little resistant to the music's charms, or even to those of our sopranos, deployed in a single row right in front of the orchestra in order to project their low-lying cantus firmus in the final work. Perhaps the fault lay with us travel-affected pilgrims, or perhaps with those blessed ATC computers in London, but certainly not with Bach.

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From a journal written in the course of the
Bach Cantata Pilgrimage

Angel roof, Holy Trinity, Blythburgh



For Whit Tuesday

CD 1

Epistle Acts 8:14-17
Gospel John 10:1-10

BWV 1048

Brandenburg Concerto No.3

- 1 **1. Allegro**
- 2 **2. Adagio**
- 3 **3. Allegro**

BWV 184

Erwünschtes Freudenlicht (1724)

4 **1. Recitativo: Tenor**

Erwünschtes Freudenlicht,
das mit dem neuen Bund anbricht
durch Jesum, unsern Hirten!
Wir, die wir sonst in Todes Tälern irrten,
empfinden reichlich nun,

BWV 184

Longed-for light of joy

1. Recitative

Longed-for light of joy
which dawns with the new covenant
through Jesus, our Shepherd!
We, who were wont to wander in the valleys of death,
perceive fully now

wie Gott zu uns
den längst erwünschten Hirten sendet,
der unsre Seele speist
und unsern Gang durch Wort und Geist
zum rechten Wege wendet.
Wir, sein erwähltes Volk, empfinden seine Kraft;
in seiner Hand allein ist, was uns Labsal schafft,
was unser Herze kräftig stärket.
Er liebt uns, seine Herde,
die seinen Trost und Beistand merket.
Er ziehet sie vom Eitlen, von der Erde,
auf ihn zu schauen
und jederzeit auf seine Huld zu trauen.
O Hirte, so sich vor die Herde gibt,
der bis ins Grab und bis in Tod sie liebt!
Sein Arm kann denen Feinden wehren,
sein Sorgen kann uns Schafe geistlich nähren,
ja, kömmt die Zeit,
durchs finstre Tal zu gehen,
so hilft und tröstet uns sein sanfter Stab.
Drum folgen wir mit Freuden bis ins Grab.
Auf! Eilt zu ihm, verklärt vor ihm zu stehen.

2. Aria (Duetto): Sopran, Alt

Gesegnete Christen, glückselige Herde,
komm, stell dich bei Jesu mit Dankbarkeit ein!
Verachtet das Locken der schmeichlenden Erde,
dass euer Vergnügen vollkommen kann sein!

how God sends to us
the long-awaited shepherd,
who shall feed our souls
and guide our steps through Word and spirit
along the right path.
We, His chosen people, are conscious of His might;
in His hand alone is that which restores us
and strengthens mightily our hearts.
He loves us, His flock,
who heed His comfort and support.
He draws His flock away from earth's vanities,
to gaze upon Him
and rely on His favour always.
O shepherd, who gives Himself for His flock
and loves them unto the grave and death!
His arm can ward off the foe,
his caring can nurture us sheep in spirit,
yea, when the time comes
to walk through the dark valley,
His gentle staff shall help and comfort us.
We'll follow, then, with gladness to the grave.
Rise! Hasten, to stand transfigured before Him.

2. Aria (Duet)

Blessed Christians, O happy flock,
come, draw nigh to Jesus with gratitude!
Despise the lure of flattering earth,
that your pleasure might be complete!

6 3. Recitativo: Tenor

So freuet euch, ihr auserwählten Seelen!
Die Freude gründet sich in Jesu Herz.
Dies Labsal kann kein Mensch erzählen.
Die Freude steigt auch unterwärts
zu denen, die in Sündenbanden lagen,
die hat der Held aus Juda schon zuschlagen.
Ein David steht uns bei.
Ein Heldenarm macht uns von Feinden frei.
Wenn Gott mit Kraft die Herde schützt,
wenn er im Zorn auf ihre Feinde blitzt,
wenn er den bittern Kreuzestod
vor sie nicht scheuet,
so trifft sie ferner keine Not,
so lebet sie in ihrem Gott erfreuet.
Hier schmecket sie die edle Weide
und hoffet dort vollkommne Himmelsfreude.

7 4. Aria: Tenor

Glück und Segen sind bereit,
die geweihte Schar zu krönen.
Jesus bringt die güldne Zeit,
welche sich zu ihm gewöhnen.

8 5. Choral

Herr, ich hoff je, du werdest die
in keiner Not verlassen,
die dein Wort recht als treue Knecht
im Herzn und Glauben fassen;
gibst ihn' bereit die Seligkeit
und lässt sie nicht verderben.
O Herr, durch dich bitt ich, lass mich
fröhlich und willig sterben.

3. Recitative

Rejoice, then, you chosen souls!
Your joy is founded in Jesus' heart.
No mortal can describe this comfort.
This joy even reaches those below,
who were lying in the bonds of sin,
which the hero of Judah has now burst asunder.
A David stands by us;
a hero's arm frees us from the foe.
If God shields the flock with might,
if He hurls in wrath His bolt at the foe,
if for them He does not shirk
the bitter cross's death,
no further woe can strike the flock,
which shall live gladly in their God.
Here it tastes the noble pasture
and hopes up there for the perfect joy of heaven.

4. Aria

Fortune and joy are ready
to crown the consecrated host.
Jesus brings the golden age,
once we come to know Him.

5. Chorale

Lord, I ever hope that Thou
shalt not leave those in distress,
who grasp Thy Word as true servants
in heart and faith;
Thou dost give them Thy bliss even now
and keepest them from ruin.
O Lord, through Thee I pray, let me
die gladly and willingly.

6. Coro

Guter Hirte, Trost der Deinen,
lass uns nur dein heilsam Wort!
Lass dein gnädig Antlitz scheinen,
bleibe unser Gott und Hort,
der durch allmachtvolle Hände
unsern Gang zum Leben wende!

Text: Anarg von Wildenfels (5); anon. (1-4, 6)

BWV 175

Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen (1725)

1. Recitativo: Tenor

Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen und führet sie
hinaus.

2. Aria: Alt

Komm, leite mich,
es sehnet sich
mein Geist auf grüner Weide!
Mein Herze schmacht,
ächzt Tag und Nacht,
mein Hirte, meine Freude.

3. Recitativo: Tenor

Wo find ich dich?
Ach, wo bist du verborgen?
Oh! Zeige dich mir bald!
Ich sehne mich.
Brich an, erwünschter Morgen!

6. Chorus

Good shepherd, comfort of Thy people,
grant us only Thy life-giving word!
Let Thy gracious countenance shine brightly,
remain our God and refuge,
who through almighty hands
shall guide our steps to life!

BWV 175

He calleth His own sheep by name

1. Recitative

He calleth His own sheep by name, and He leadeth
them out.

2. Aria

Come, lead me,
my spirit longs
for green pastures.
My heart languishes,
groans day and night,
my shepherd, my joy.

3. Recitative

Where can I find Thee?
Ah, where are Thou hidden?
O, show Thyself soon to me!
I long for Thee.
Dawn, O long-awaited morning!

13 4. Aria: Tenor

Es dünket mich, ich seh dich kommen,
du gehst zur rechten Türe ein.
Du wirst im Glauben aufgenommen
und musst der wahre Hirte sein.
Ich kenne deine holde Stimme,
die voller Lieb und Sanftmut ist,
dass ich im Geist darob ergrimme,
wer zweifelt, dass du Heiland seist.

14 5. Recitativo: Alt, Bass

Alt

Sie vernahmen aber nicht, was es war, das er zu ihnen
gesaget hatte.

Bass

Ach ja! Wir Menschen sind oftmals den Tauben zu
vergleichen: Wenn die verblendete Vernunft nicht
weiß, was er gesaget hatte.
O! Törin, merke doch, wenn Jesus mit dir spricht,
dass es zu deinem Heil geschicht.

15 6. Aria: Bass

Öffnet euch, ihr beiden Ohren,
Jesus hat euch zugeschworen,
dass er Teufel, Tod erlegt.
Gnade, G'nüge, volles Leben
will er allen Christen geben,
wer ihm folgt, sein Kreuz nachträgt.

4. Aria

It seems to me, I see Thee coming,
Thou goest in by the right door.
Thou art received in faith,
and must be the true Shepherd.
I recognise Thy gracious voice,
so full of love and gentleness,
that I grow angry in my spirit
with whoever doubts Thou art the Saviour.

5. Recitative

Alto

But they understood not what things they were
which he spake unto them.

Bass

Ah, indeed! We mortals are often likened to the deaf:
when our deluded reason does not understand what
he has said.
O foolish one, mark well that, when Jesus speaks
to you, it is for your salvation.

6. Aria

Open both your ears,
Jesus has sworn to you
that He hath laid low death and the devil.
Grace, sufficiency, abundant life
will He give to all Christians
who follow Him and bear His cross.

7. Choral

Nun, werter Geist, ich folg dir;
hilf, dass ich suche für und für
nach deinem Wort ein ander Leben,
das du mir willst aus Gnaden geben.
Dein Wort ist ja der Morgenstern,
der herrlich leuchtet nah und fern.
Drum will ich, die mich anders lehren,
in Ewigkeit, mein Gott, nicht hören.
Halleluja, halleluja!

*Text: Christiane Mariane von Ziegler (2-6);
Johann Rist (7); John 10:3 (1); John 10:6 (5)*

7. Chorale

Now, worthy spirit, I follow Thee;
help me ever to seek
a new life, according to Thy Word,
that Thou wilt graciously give me.
Thy Word is truly the morning star,
whose glory shines near and far.
Therefore shall I ignore for ever
those, my God, who teach me other doctrines.
Alleluia, alleluia!

For Trinity Sunday

CD 2

Epistle Romans 11:33-36

Gospel John 3:1-15

BWV 194

Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest (1723)

1. Coro

Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest,
das der Herr zu seinem Ruhme
im erbauten Heiligtume
uns vergnügt begehen lässt.
Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest!

2. Recitativo: Bass

Unendlich großer Gott, ach, wende dich
zu uns, zu dem erwählten Geschlechte,
und zum Gebete deiner Knechte!
Ach, lass vor dich
durch ein inbrünstig Singen
der Lippen Opfer bringen!

BWV 194

O greatly longed-for feast of joy

1. Chorus

O greatly longed-for feast of joy,
that the Lord lets us happily celebrate
for His glory
in the sacred edifice.
O greatly longed-for feast of joy!

2. Recitativo

Endlessly mighty God, ah! turn
to us, to Thine elected people,
and to the prayers of Thy servants!
Ah! let us offer Thee
through our fervent singing
our lips' oblation!

Wir weihen unsre Brust dir offenbar
zum Dankaltar.
Du, den kein Haus, kein Tempel fasst,
da du kein Ziel noch Grenzen hast,
lass dir dies Haus gefällig sein,
es sei dein Angesicht
ein wahrer Gnadenstuhl, ein Freudenlicht.

3. Aria: Bass

Was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt,
wird in keine Nacht verhüllt,
was des Höchsten heil'ges Wesen
sich zur Wohnung auserlesen,
wird in keine Nacht verhüllt,
was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt.

4. Recitativo: Sopran

Wie könnte dir, du höchstes Angesicht,
da dein unendlich helles Licht
bis in verborgne Gründe siehet,
ein Haus gefällig sein?
Es schleicht sich Eitelkeit allhie an allen Enden ein.
Wo deine Herrlichkeit einziehet,
da muss die Wohnung rein
und dieses Gastes würdig sein.
Hier wirkt nichts Menschenkraft,
drum lass dein Auge offenstehen
und gnädig auf uns gehen;
so legen wir in heil'ger Freude dir
die Farren und die Opfer unsrer Lieder
vor deinem Throne nieder
und tragen dir den Wunsch in Andacht für.

We openly dedicate our hearts to Thee
as thanksgiving.
Thou, whom no house, no temple can contain,
since Thou hast no end nor limit,
may this house find favour with Thee,
may Thy countenance
be a true throne of grace, a light of joy.

3. Aria

What the Highest's light has filled
shall never be veiled in night,
what the Highest's holy nature
has chosen for His dwelling
shall never be veiled in night,
what the Highest's light has filled.

4. Recitativo

How could a house find favour with Thee,
o highest countenance,
when Thine unending, brilliant light
doth penetrate dark corners?
For vanity here steals up on us from all sides.
Wherever Thy majesty doth enter,
that dwelling must be pure
and worthy of this guest.
All human power is here in vain,
may Thine eyes therefore be open
toward this house, and full of grace;
and we shall then with holy joy
render before Thy throne
the bullocks of our lips
and in devotion raise our hopes to Thee.

5 5. Aria: Sopran

Hilf, Gott, dass es uns gelingt
und dein Feuer in uns dringt,
dass es auch in dieser Stunde
wie in Esaias Munde
seiner Wirkung Kraft erhält
und uns heilig vor dich stellt.

6 6. Choral

Heil'ger Geist ins Himmels Throne,
gleicher Gott von Ewigkeit
mit dem Vater und dem Sohne,
der Betrübten Trost und Freud!
Allen Glauben, den ich find,
hast du in mir angezündt,
über mir in Gnaden walte,
ferner deine Gnad erhalte.

Deine Hilfe zu mir sende,
o du edler Herzensgast!
Und das gute Werk vollende,
das du angefangen hast.
Blas in mir das Fünklein auf,
bis dass nach vollbrachtem Lauf
ich den Auserwählten gleiche
und des Glaubens Ziel erreiche.

Text: Johann Heermann (6); anon. (1-5)

5. Aria

Grant, O God, that we succeed,
and that Thy fire shall pierce us
and that it preserves at this hour,
as once in Isaiah's mouth,
its effective power,
and bring us purged before Thee.

6. Choral

Holy Ghost enthroned in heaven,
as God of eternity
with the Father and the Son,
the joy and comfort of the distressed!
All the faith that I possess
hast Thou kindled in me;
govern over me with mercy
and never let Thy mercy falter.

Send down Thy help to me,
o noble guest of my heart!
And complete the good work
that Thou hast begun.
Fan to flame the spark in me,
till, when my course is run,
I may resemble the chosen
and attain the goal of faith.

BWV 176**Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding (1725)****7 1. Coro**

Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding um aller Menschen
Herze.

8 2. Recitativo: Alt

Ich meine, recht verzagt,
dass Nikodemus sich bei Tage nicht,
bei Nacht zu Jesu wagt.
Die Sonne musste dort bei Josua so lange stille stehn,
so lange bis der Sieg vollkommen war geschehn;
hier aber wünschet Nikodem:
O säh ich sie zu Rüste gehn!

9 3. Aria: Sopran

Dein sonst hell beliebter Schein
soll vor mich umnebelt sein,
weil ich nach dem Meister frage,
denn ich scheue mich bei Tage.
Niemand kann die Wunder tun,
denn sein Allmacht und sein Wesen,
scheint, ist göttlich auserlesen,
Gottes Geist muss auf ihm ruhn.

10 4. Recitativo: Bass

So wundre dich, o Meister, nicht,
warum ich dich bei Nacht ausfrage!
Ich fürchte, dass bei Tage
mein Ohnmacht nicht bestehen kann.
Doch tröst ich mich, du nimmst mein Herz und Geist
zum Leben auf und an,
weil alle, die nur an dich glauben,
nicht verloren werden.

BWV 176**There is something stubborn and fainthearted****1. Chorus**

There is something stubborn and fainthearted about
the human heart.

2. Recitative

Truly fainthearted, I mean,
that Nicodemus did not dare by day,
but by night, to approach Jesus.
The sun had to stand still for Joshua
until the victory was fully won;
here, though, Nicodemus wished:
O could I see it set!

3. Aria

Thy dear light, usually so bright,
shall be clouded over for me,
when I go to seek the Master,
for I am too fearful by day.
No one can do these miracles,
for His omnipotence and His being,
it seems, are chosen by God,
God's spirit must rest on Him.

4. Recitative

So do not marvel then, O Master,
that I should question Thee by night!
I fear that by day
my weakness would not stand the test.
Yet I comfort myself: Thou shalt accept
and exalt my heart and spirit,
for whosoever believes in Thee,
shall not perish.

11 5. Aria: Alt

Ermuntert euch, furchtsam und schüchterne Sinne,
erholet euch, höret, was Jesus verspricht:
Dass ich durch den Glauben den Himmel gewinne.
Wenn die Verheißung erfüllend geschicht,
werd ich dort oben
mit Danken und Loben
Vater, Sohn und Heil'gen Geist
preisen, der dreieinig heißt.

12 6. Choral

Auf dass wir also allzugleich
zur Himmelsporten dringen
und dermaleinst in deinem Reich
ohn alles Ende singen,
dass du alleine König seist,
hoch über alle Götter,
Gott Vater, Sohn und Heil'ger Geist,
der Frommen Schutz und Retter,
ein Wesen drei Personen.

*Text: after Jeremiah 17:9 (1); Paul Gerhardt (6);
Christiane Mariane von Ziegler (2-5)*

BWV 165

O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad (1715/6)

13 1. Aria: Sopran

O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad,
das Gottes Reich uns einverleibet
und uns ins Buch des Lebens schreibet!
O Flut, die alle Missetat

5. Aria

Have courage, fearful, timorous spirits,
recover, hear what Jesus promises:
that I through faith shall inherit heaven.
When this promise is fulfilled,
I shall up there in heaven,
with thanks and praise,
glorify the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
that is named the Trinity.

6. Chorale

Glorify him, that we may immediately
enter heaven's gates in a throng,
and one day in Thy realm
sing for ever more,
that Thou alone art King
excelling all other gods,
God Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
shield and Saviour of the devout,
one being, but three persons.

BWV 165

O sacred spring of water and the spirit

1. Aria

O sacred spring of water and the spirit,
which admits us to God's Kingdom
and inscribes us in the book of life!
O stream that drowns all evil deeds

durch ihre Wunderkraft ertränket
und uns das neue Leben schenket!
O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad!

14 2. Recitativo: Bass

Die sündige Geburt verdammter Adamserben
gebietet Gottes Zorn, den Tod und das Verderben.
Denn was vom Fleisch geboren ist,
ist nichts als Fleisch, von Sünden angestecket,
vergiftet und beflecket.
Wie selig ist ein Christ!
Er wird im Geist- und Wasserbade
ein Kind der Seligkeit und Gnade.
Er ziehet Christum an
und seiner Unschuld weiße Seide,
er wird mit Christi Blut, der Ehren Purpurkleide,
im Taufbad angetan.

15 3. Aria: Alt

Jesu, der aus großer Liebe
in der Taufe mir verschriebe
Leben, Heil und Seligkeit,
hilf, dass ich mich dessen freue
und den Gnadenbund erneue
in der ganzen Lebenszeit.

16 4. Recitativo: Bass

Ich habe ja, mein Seelenbräutigam,
da du mich neu geboren,
dir ewig treu zu sein geschworen,
hochheil'ges Gotteslamm;
doch hab ich, ach! den Taufbund oft gebrochen
und nicht erfüllt, was ich versprochen,

through its wondrous power
and bestows on us the new life!
O sacred spring of water and the spirit!

2. Recitativo

The sinful birth of Adam's cursed offspring
spawns the wrath of God, death and ruin.
For that which is born of the flesh
is naught but flesh, infected by sin,
poisoned and contaminated.
How blest is a Christian!
In the sacred spring of water and the spirit
he becomes a child of grace and bliss.
He clads himself in Christ
and the white silk of innocence,
he is dressed in Christ's blood,
the purple robe of glory, when baptised.

3. Aria

Jesus, who out of great love
hath assigned me in baptism
life, salvation and true happiness,
grant, that I be joyful
and renew this bond of mercy
in the whole of my life's span.

4. Recitativo

For I have, O bridegroom of my soul,
now that Thou hast born me anew,
sworn to be ever faithful to Thee,
most holy lamb of God;
yet I have, alas, often broken the bond of baptism
and have not fulfilled what I promised;

erbarme, Jesu, dich
aus Gnaden über mich!
Vergib mir die begangne Sünde,
du weißt, mein Gott, wie schmerzlich ich empfinde
der alten Schlangen Stich;
das Sündengift verderbt mir Leib und Seele,
hilf, dass ich gläubig dich erwähle,
blutrotes Schlangenbild,
das an dem Kreuz erhöht,
das alle Schmerzen stillt
und mich erquickt, wenn alle Kraft vergehet.

17 5. Aria: Tenor

Jesu, meines Todes Tod,
lass in meinem Leben
und in meiner letzten Not
mir für Augen schweben,
dass du mein Heilschlänglein seist
vor das Gift der Sünde.
Heile, Jesu, Seel und Geist,
dass ich Leben finde!

18 6. Choral

Sein Wort, sein Tauf, sein Nachtmahl
dient wider allen Unfall,
der Heil'ge Geist im Glauben
lehrt uns darauf vertrauen.

Text: Salomo Franck (1-5); Ludwig Helmbold (6)

have mercy, Jesus,
be gracious to me!
Forgive me the sins I have committed.
Thou dost know, my God, how painfully I feel
the ancient serpent's sting;
sin's poison corrupts my body and soul.
Grant that I, faithful, choose Thee,
o blood-red serpent's form,
now exalted on the cross,
which assuages every pain
and restores me, when all my strength has faded.

5. Aria

Jesus, death of my own death,
let me in my life
and in my final agony
realise
that Thou art my little serpent of healing
against the poison of sin.
Heal, O Jesus, my soul and spirit,
that I may discover life!

6. Chorale

His Word, His baptism, His supper
help to thwart every disaster,
the Holy Spirit in our belief
teaches us to trust therein.

BWV 129

Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott (1726)

19 1. Coro (Choral)

Gelobet sei der Herr,
mein Gott, mein Licht, mein Leben,
mein Schöpfer, der mir hat
mein Leib und Seel gegeben,
mein Vater, der mich schützt
von Mutterleibe an,
der alle Augenblick
viel Guts an mir getan.

20 2. Aria: Bass

Gelobet sei der Herr,
mein Gott, mein Heil, mein Leben,
des Vaters liebster Sohn,
der sich für mich gegeben,
der mich erlöset hat
mit seinem teuren Blut,
der mir im Glauben schenkt
sich selbst, das höchste Gut.

21 3. Aria: Sopran

Gelobet sei der Herr,
mein Gott, mein Trost, mein Leben,
des Vaters werter Geist,
den mir der Sohn gegeben,
der mir mein Herz erquickt,
der mir gibt neue Kraft,
der mir in aller Not
Rat, Trost und Hülfe schafft.

BWV 129

Praised be the Lord, my God

1. Chorus (Chorale)

Praised be the Lord,
my God, my light, my life,
my Creator, who has given me
my body and my soul,
my Father, who has protected me
since my mother's womb,
who has always done
such good for me.

2. Aria

Praised be the Lord,
my God, my salvation, my life,
the Father's dearest Son,
who gave Himself for me,
who has redeemed me
with His precious blood,
and who gives me in faith
Himself, the greatest good.

3. Aria

Praised be the Lord,
my God, my comfort, my life,
the Father's priceless Spirit,
given me by the Son,
who quickens my heart
and gives me new strength,
who, when I am in distress,
counsels me, comforts and helps me.

22 4. Aria: Alt

Gelobet sei der Herr,
mein Gott, der ewig lebet,
den alles lobet, was
in allen Lüften schwebet;
gelobet sei der Herr,
des Name heilig heißt,
Gott Vater, Gott der Sohn
und Gott der Heil'ge Geist.

23 5. Choral

Dem wir das Heilig itzt
mit Freuden lassen klingen
und mit der Engel Schar
das Heilig, Heilig singen,
den herzlich lobt und preist
die ganze Christenheit:
Gelobet sei mein Gott
in alle Ewigkeit!

Text: Johann Olearius

4. Aria

Praised be the Lord,
my God, who lives for ever,
praised be all things
that move in the air;
praised be the Lord,
whose name is holy,
God the Father, God the Son
and God the Holy Ghost.

5. Chorale

To Him, for whom we now
joyously sing the Sanctus,
and join the angelic host
in singing Holy, Holy,
He, to whom all Christendom
offers heartfelt laud and praise:
praised be my God
in all eternity!

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BWV 61 / 62 / 36
For the Fourth Sunday in Advent
BWV 70 / 132 / 147

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For New Year's Day
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For the Sunday after New Year
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Cantatas Vol 18: Leipzig/Hamburg

For Epiphany
BWV 123 / 65 / 63
For the First Sunday after Epiphany
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For the Fifth Sunday after Easter
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For the Sunday after Ascension Day
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BWV 155 / 3 / 13
For the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
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BWV 4 / 31
For Easter Monday
BWV 66 / 6
For Easter Tuesday
BWV 134 / 145

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For the First Sunday after Easter
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For the Second Sunday after Easter
BWV 104 / 85 / 112

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For the Third Sunday after Easter
BWV 12 / 103 / 146
For the Fourth Sunday after Easter
BWV 166 / 108 / 117

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For Whit Sunday
BWV 172 / 59 / 74 / 34
For Whit Monday
BWV 173 / 68 / 174

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Paul Agnew *tenor*

During my teens my father spotted me reading *Middlemarch*. He said how lucky I was to be reading it for the first time. You can only have the excitement of reading it for the very first time once, with wide eyes. For me it was a similar experience with the Cantata Pilgrimage. Cantata after astonishing cantata. Can you have wide ears?

I would have thought I knew Bach quite well. I can almost sing the Passions from memory, and I can hum the concertos and even play some of the slower preludes and fugues on the piano if I am sure no-one can hear. I like listening to the partitas in the car and I once conducted the Brandenburg Concertos at college. All that was missing from my knowledge was... well, nearly everything. The most important body of Bach's works. The compositions that define him and that occupied him throughout his life.

Who really *knows* the cantatas? A few scholars, a couple of harpsichordists, and some bearded Bach extremists with towering CD collections? It is certainly impossible to get to know them from live performances since there are so very few. Working with a music that has lost its context, like so much of 'early music', it is sometimes a philosophical battle between being the bearers of a sacred flame and the peddlers of an historic anachronism. Some music looks so wonderful on the page but crumbles to a dusty pile as the notes are played. The cantatas, without exception for me, held a truth and a knowledge that informed as much our burgeoning twenty-first century as I imagine they did Leipzig's original congregation.

I think everyone involved in the Cantata Pilgrimage came to know a new Bach. A composer as dramatic as any opera composer, as melodic as any song composer and a man of an imagination for colour and orchestration to match anyone before or since. I will be 86 years old in 2050 if I am lucky enough still to be here. If I am I will most certainly be on a Bach Pilgrimage, again to appreciate Bach's dramatic life though his most dramatic music and to get to know him a little better; to contemplate the passing feasts of the church and the passing seasons and to see them, if ever so obliquely, through the eyes of one of the world's most extraordinary men.

The Monteverdi Choir

Sopranos

Suzanne Flowers
Gillian Keith
Emma Preston-Dunlop
Katharine Fuge
Elisabeth Priday
Joanne Lunn

Altos

Elinor Carter
Mark Chambers
Angus Davidson
Charles Humphries

Tenors

Rory O'Connor
Paul Tindall
Peter Butterfield
Nicolas Robertson

Basses

Julian Clarkson
Charles Pott
Robert Evans
Michael McCarthy

The English
Baroque Soloists

First Violins

Alison Bury
Penelope Spencer
Catherine Martin
Debbie Diamond
Jane Gillie

Second Violins

Lucy Howard
Matthew Truscott
Silvia Schweinberger
Desmond Heath

Violas

Annette Isserlis
Katherine McGillivray
Colin Kitching

Cellos

Melanie Beck
Helen Verney

Double Bass

Valerie Botwright

Flute

Rachel Beckett

Oboes

Edouard Wesley
Mark Baigent
Jasu Moisio

Bassoon

Philip Turbett

Trumpets

Mark Bennett
Mike Harrison
Paul Sharp

Timpani

John Chimes

Harpsichord

Howard Moody

Organ

Robert Quinney

CD 2	61:26	For Trinity Sunday
1-6	18:49	Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest BWV 194
7-12	10:29	Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding BWV 176
13-18	12:54	O heil'ges Geist- und Wasserbad BWV 165
19-23	18:52	Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott BWV 129

Ruth Holton *soprano*, Daniel Taylor *alto*
Paul Agnew *tenor*, Peter Harvey *bass*

The Monteverdi Choir
The English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner

Live recording from the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage
St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, 18 June 2000

The Bach Cantata Pilgrimage

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The harpsichord used for the project, made by Andrew Wooderson, and the organ, made by Robin Jennings, were bought and generously made available to the Monteverdi by Sir David and Lady Walker (harpsichord) and Lord and Lady Burns (organ).

Our thanks go to the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage committee, who worked tirelessly to raise enough money to allow us to complete the project, to the Monteverdi staff, Polyhymnia's staff and, above all, to all the singers and players who took part in the project.

The Recordings

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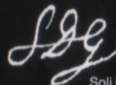
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Soli Deo Gloria

Bach Cantatas Gardiner

CD 1 50:01
Vol 27: Holy Trinity, Blythburgh
For Whit Tuesday
BWV 1048 / 184 / 175

See booklet for information

SDG

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Bach Cantatas Gardiner

CD 2 61:26
Vol 27: St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall
For Trinity Sunday
BWV 194 / 176 / 165 / 129

See booklet for information

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