

The Bach Society Houston was founded in 1982, and its principal mission is to present exemplary, historically-informed professional performances of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors who were influenced by Bach and constitute his legacy. It has a unique position among Houston's musical organizations, maintaining its own professional performing ensemble (the Bach Choir), but also presenting performances by guest ensembles and soloists. The Bach Society is also the only professional arts organization in Houston to offer most of its performances without admission charge, making them accessible to the entire community.

The Bach Society was founded at Christ the King Lutheran Church under the initial leadership of Carroll and Dorry Shaddock, inspired by the example of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan, which presented cantatas on a weekly basis at Sunday evening vespers services. A series of Bach Vespers was the Society's first offering; the response of the public was overwhelming, and attendance remained at capacity over the years as the number of presentations steadily increased.

An important impetus came in 1995 with the installation of a new organ at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston. The "Bach Organ" was built by Fritz Noack in the style of 18th century Saxon organ builder Zacharias Hildebrandt, and was hailed as one of the most important instruments of its kind on the North American continent. Ideally suited for the performance of Bach's organ music, the instrument became the centerpiece of a series of organ recitals featuring dozens of distinguished organists from around the world.

In the ensuing years, the Bach Society Houston evolved into a fully independent 501(c)(3) organization while maintaining a close affiliation with its founding congregation. Further growth of the presentation schedule of the Society includes the addition of a Chamber Music series and Abendmusik Concerts. The most significant development has been the shift to the use of period instruments — reconstructions of instruments from the baroque period. The Bach Choir is joined by Mercury - The Orchestra Redefined, Houston's period-instrument orchestra, for many of its concerts.

The Bach Society has been described as a "jewel of the Houston arts and music scene." It has built an international reputation as a cultural organization and has served as a musical ambassador of Houston and the United States through cooperation with the German, Swedish, and Danish consulates, the Czech Cultural Center, and the Houston-Leipzig Sister City Association. The Bach Society Houston records in high resolution Surround Sound for the HDTT label, www.highdefatapetransfers.com.

The Bach Society Houston

presents

Choral Music of C.P.E. Bach and J.S. Bach

in Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston


BACH
SOCIETY
HOUSTON



Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach (1714 – 1788) was the second surviving son of J. S. Bach and his first wife, Maria Barbara Bach. C. P. E. Bach was an influential composer working at a time of transition between his father's High Baroque musical style and the Classical and Romantic styles that followed. His distinctive approach, an expressive and often turbulent one known as *empfindsamer Stil* or "sensitive style", applied the principles of rhetoric and drama to musical structures. Bach's dynamism stands in deliberate contrast to the more mannered galant style also then in vogue in the transitional period between Baroque and Classical music. The composer who most influenced Bach's maturing style was unquestionably his father, while he drew creative inspiration from his godfather Georg Philipp Telemann and from contemporaries like George Frideric Handel and Joseph Haydn. Bach's music itself influenced the work of, among others, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Felix Mendelssohn.

Bach's *Magnificat* in D, Wq. 215, was composed in Berlin in 1749 and is one of the composer's most significant and well-known works. In Leipzig, where the composer grew up, the *Magnificat* was regularly part of Sunday services, sung in German on ordinary Sundays but more elaborately and in Latin on the high holidays (Christmas, Easter and Pentecost) and on the three Marian feasts Annunciation, Visitation and Purification. When J. S. Bach's setting of the *Magnificat* was first performed on the 2nd of July in 1723, young Carl was nine years old. Ten years later his father transposed the work from E-flat to D-major and performed it again. Then in 1749, when Carl was Court Harpsichordist for Frederick the Great, he composed his own setting in the same key as his father's final version. Although the *Magnificat* is without question a masterpiece in its own right, it is easy to hear the son's admiration and emulation for the father in this work. The scoring is appropriately festive, for soprano, alto, tenor and bass soloists; SATB choir; and a large Baroque orchestra of flutes, oboes, bassoons, two horns, three trumpets, and timpani plus strings. It is in nine movements, seven of which comprise the Song of Mary as recorded in St Luke and the final two a concluding Doxology and Amen, which includes a brilliantly florid fugue as a concluding "tip of the hat" to that undisputed Master of Fugue, J. S. Bach. Renée Rybolt, soprano; Sarah Brindley, alto; Rebecca Seekatz, alto; Patrick Perez, tenor; Alexander Scheuermann, tenor; Christopher Besch, bass.

Cantata 131, *Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir* ("Out of the Depths I call to Thee, O Lord"), is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750), composed in Mühlhausen in either 1707 or 1708, which makes it one of Bach's earliest surviving cantatas. The text is based on the penitential Psalm 130, the incipit of which, "Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir", titles the opening chorus thus giving the cantata its name. Two of the choral movements include a fugue, a style of composition in which Bach excelled. Also, the two movements for soloists are developed as a type of chorale fantasia with the soloist singing the psalm text and an upper voice singing the chorale in long notes as a *cantus firmus*. Cantata 131 is scored for tenor and bass soloists, SATB choir, and an instrumental ensemble of oboe, bassoon, violin, viola, and basso continuo. It is unknown for what occasion Bach wrote the work. Jack Swanson, tenor; Elliott Carlton Hines, bass

Cantata 147, *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* ("Heart and Mouth and Deed and Life") by J. S. Bach was completed in his first year as Cantor of the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig for the Marian Feast of the Visitation, "Mariae Heimsuchung," where it was first performed on the 2nd of July in 1723. In writing this Visitation cantata, Bach reused an earlier cantata in six movements composed in Weimar for the fourth Sunday in Advent. As Leipzig churches observed a "time of silence" from Advent II to Advent IV, Bach could not perform the cantata for that occasion and thus rewrote it for the Feast of the Visitation. It is scored for four soloists, SATB choir, oboe d'amore, oboe da caccia, bassoon, trumpet, violin, viola, and basso continuo.

Renée Rybolt, soprano; Jennifer Lane, alto; Alexander Scheuermann, tenor; Patrick Perez, tenor; Jackson Felder, bass; Christopher Besch, bass

Cantata 35, *Geist und Seele wird verwirret* ("Spirit and Soul Become Confused") by J. S. Bach is a solo cantata for alto voice and ensemble written in Leipzig for the twelfth Sunday after Trinity and first performed on 8 September 1726. Bach composed the cantata in his fourth year as Cantor of the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, with a text based on the Bible readings for the day from the Gospel of Mark about Jesus healing a deaf mute man. The text makes the analogy that as the tongue of the deaf mute man was opened, the believer should be open to admire God's miraculous deeds. This work is unusual in that Bach includes a major part for solo organ, with instruments, in several movements. The alto singer performs a sequence of alternating arias and recitatives, accompanied in all three arias by the organ as an equal partner. Bach led the first performance on the 8th of September in 1726, and probably played the organ part himself.

Jennifer Lane, alto; Sigurd Øgaard, obbligato organ

The Prelude in C-minor, BWV 546/1, by J. S. Bach, is an important organ work from the composer's Leipzig years, written in 1723 or later. Its companion Fugue (not performed in this instance) is probably from the period 1707 – 1717 while Bach was working in Weimar. The Prelude spans a full 144 bars, encompassing some of the most dramatically imposing, minor-key musical rhetoric ever to spring from Bach's pen. In this recording, we hear Bach's profound thoughts rendered on a late-Baroque replica pipe organ similar to those instruments known and played by the composer himself – in this case, American pipe organ builder Fritz Noack has patterned his "Bach Organ" after a similar instrument by one of Bach's favorite Saxon builders, Zacharias Hildebrandt.

Michael Ging, performing on the Bach Organ of Christ the King Lutheran Church



Rick Erickson is the Director of Bach Society Houston and Church Choir Director at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston. He is also a rostered Associate in Ministry in the ELCA. Prior to coming to Houston, Erickson served for 22 years as Cantor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York, where he directed the Bach Vespers series, as well as overseeing the musical life of the parish. Prior to that, he served as Director of Music at Incarnate Word Church in Rochester, NY. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Superior, from which he also received the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2009, Erickson holds a Master's in Organ Performance and Literature and the Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, where he also served for four years on the faculty of Improvfest. His organ teachers include Lucile Hammill Webb, Russell Saunders, David

Craighead, and Gerre Hancock in improvisation. He also studied conducting at UWS and the Eastman School. Erickson has appeared as recitalist, lecturer, conductor, and hymn festival leader throughout the United States, and in Germany, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand. A noted hymn improviser, he has recorded for Naxos, JV Recording, Deux-Elles, and Augsburg Fortress. The New Yorker hailed his playing as exhibiting "exemplary Bach." Erickson has also served as a Dean and Regional Councilor of the American Guild of Organists.

American mezzo-soprano Jennifer Lane is "a singer whose dark, bottomless voice is matched by her expressiveness and intelligence." The press has described her singing as "clear, rich, plangent," "compelling and dramatic," and possessing "agility and charisma." She has appeared with New York City Opera, Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Aix-en-Provence, Théâtre du Champs Elysées, Opera du Caen, and symphony orchestras worldwide, with such noted conductors as Michael Tilson Thomas, Mstislav Rostropovich, William Christie, Nicholas McGegan, Andrew Parrott, Christopher Hogwood, Marc Minkowski, Helmut Rilling, and Robert Shaw. Ms. Lane is currently associate professor of voice at the University of North Texas.





The Bach Choir Houston
Mercury: The Orchestra Redefined (Antoine Plante, artistic director)
Rick Erickson, conductor
Sigurd Melvaer Øgaard, organ continuo

Producer & Recording Engineer – John Gladney Proffitt
Master Recording in High Resolution 5.0 Channel Surround Sound

C. P. E. Bach***Magnificat, Wq. 215***

1	Magnificat anima mea	4:03
2	Quia respexit	5:48
3	Quia fecit	4:16
4	Et misericordia	6:43
5	Fecit potentiam	4:41
6	Deposuit potentes	6:15
7	Suscepit Israel	4:16
8	Gloria patri	8:20
9	<i>applause</i>	:10

J. S. Bach***Cantata 131, Aus der Tiefe***

10	Sinfonia; Chorus, Aus der Tiefen	4:41
11	Arioso, So du willst, Herr	4:21
12	Chorus, Ich harre des Herrn	3:14
13	Aria, Meine Seele wartet auf den Herrn	7:04
14	Chorus, Israel hoffe auf den Herrn	4:10

J. S. Bach***Cantata 147, Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben***

15	Chorus, Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben	4:36
16	Recitative, Gebenedeiter Mund!	1:45
17	Aria, Schame dich, o Seele nicht	3:39
18	Recitative, Verstockung kann Gewaltige verblenden	1:35
19	Aria, Bereite dir, Jesu	4:40
20	Chorale, Wohl mir, da ich Jesum habe	2:29
21	Aria, Hilf, Jesu, hilf	3:11
22	Recitative, Der hochsten Allmacht	2:21
23	Aria, Ich will von Jesu Wundern singen	2:49
24	Chorale, Jesus bleibt meine Freude	2:02

J. S. Bach***Cantata 35, Geist und Seele wird verwirret***

25	Sinfonia I	5:55
26	Aria, Geist und Seele wird verwirret	8:23
27	Recitative, Ich wundre mich	1:26
28	Aria, Gott hat alles wohlgemacht	3:14
29	Sinfonia II	2:53
30	Recitative, Ach, starker Gott	1:08
31	Aria, Ich wunsche nur bei Gott zu leben	3:00

J. S. Bach

32	Prelude in C minor, BWV 546/I	6:20
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