

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
VASSAR COLLEGE

BACHFEST

CHORUS & ORCHESTRA

Christine Howlett, *conductor*

Presented by:

*Vassar College Music Department
Vassar College Ford Scholars Program
Hudson Valley Society for Music*

Sunday, June 26, 2022 · 2:00 PM
Skinner Recital Hall



Please silence all cell phones or other personal electronic devices and refrain from texting. Use of these instruments will disturb other audience members and may cause interference with in-house recording and webcasting.

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Skinner Recital Hall is equipped with a LOOP Hearing System. The loop will offer improved clarity for persons with hearing loss who wear telecoil —or T-coil—equipped hearing aids.

If you would like to receive the Music Department's e-newsletter, *This Weekend in Skinner*, please contact the Concerts Administrator at concerts@vassar.edu.

Thank you for adhering to our current health and safety protocols. At this time we require masks to be worn at all times while inside the Recital Hall. We are happy to provide you with one if you haven't forgotten yours!



BACHFEST PROGRAM

Christ lag in Todes Banden

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)

Heut' triumphieret Gottes Sohn | BWV 630

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

James Fitzwilliam, *organ*

From *Cantiones Sacrae*

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

Heu mihi, Domine | SWV 65

Cantate Domino | SWV 81

Bachfest Chamber Choir

Der Herr denket an uns | BWV 196

J.S. Bach

Sinfonia

Chorus: Der Herr denket an uns

Lucelly Orrego, *soprano*, Madeleine Donat, *alto*,
Benjamin Prud'homme, *tenor*, Rafi Ettinger-Finley, *bass*

Aria: Er segnet, die den Herrn fürchten

Lucelly Orrego, *soprano*

Duet: Der Herr segne euch

Benedikt Kellner, *tenor*, Michael Saunders, *bass*

Chorus: Ihr seid die Gesegneten des Herrn

'Brandenburg' Concerto No. 5 in D major | BWV 1050

J.S. Bach

Allegro

Affettuoso

Allegro

Rachel Handman, *violin*, Marcia Gates, *flute*,
James Fitzwilliam, *harpsichord*

INTERMISSION

BIOGRAPHIES

After begging to play the cello for two years, **Rachel Crozier** began playing the violin at the age of eight and quickly fell in love with the instrument. Rachel is a member of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, where she also serves on the Orchestra Committee. She is concertmaster of The Hudson Opera Theatre and assistant concertmaster of Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra. She performs regularly with The Orchestra Now and New Haven Symphony Orchestra. Rachel lives in Stone Ridge, NY. When not playing or teaching the violin, she can be found in her vegetable garden or hiking with her family.

James M. Fitzwilliam earned a Bachelor's and Master of Music in piano from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. He frequently performs as a pianist, organist, and composer throughout the Hudson Valley area. He regularly appears with Cappella Festiva and the Bard College Community Chorus and is a collaborative pianist at Vassar College. As an organist, he has served at several area churches and currently works at Christ Episcopal Church in Poughkeepsie. As a composer, he has had works commissioned and/or performed by members of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the SUNY New Paltz College Chorale, the Chancel Choir of First Presbyterian Church in Poughkeepsie, and Cappella Festiva.

Marcia Gates, principal flutist with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, studied music at Eastman and Ithaca College. An active chamber musician in the Hudson Valley, she is a member of the Pone Ensemble for New Music and Hudson Valley BachFest since its inaugural year. Marcia recorded on the Soundspells and Parnassus record labels. In addition, she recorded a CD of music for flute and harp entitled "Angel's Serenade." Marcia was selected by the renowned flutist Julius Baker as a soloist and first prize winner in his master classes.

Violinist **Rachel Handman** is originally from Hyde Park, NY. Her virtuosity and improvisational ability appear in classical, bluegrass, Irish, pop, and folk forms. Broadway credits include *Dr. Zhivago*, *Something Rotten!*, *Miss Saigon*, *Carousel*, and *West Side Story*. Rachel is a long-standing Hudson Valley Philharmonic member and Associate Concert Master of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. While living in La Paz, Bolivia, she was in the National Symphony of Bolivia and joined a Salsa band named Guapacha! Rachel has also performed with Natalie Merchant, Norm Lewis, Jennifer Hudson, Roberta Flack, Bette Midler, and the legendary Ray Charles. Rachel performs regularly at Michael Feinstein's 54 Below with oboist Keve Wilson. She is thrilled to be part of this year's Bachfest and hopes that the Hudson Valley Philharmonic will continue and thrive in this community!

Christine Howlett is Associate Professor, Director of Choral Activities, and Chair of the Music Department at Vassar College, where she has taught since 2003. She is the Artistic Director of Cappella Festiva, a community choral organization that supports four choirs of all ages. Her choirs have toured internationally and have sung at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center.

The Hudson Valley Society for Music is dedicated to the promotion of music at a community level to promote the enjoyment of live classical music among the general public, to support local professional performing musicians, to develop community support among area musicians, and to provide enrichment for local schools. The HVSM has supported BachFest since 2000. For more information visit:

<https://www.hvsocietyformusic.org/>.

BachFest Chorus 2022

Soprano

Kyle Adamcik
Fern Ashworth
Jocelyn Bergen
Susanna Gilgert
Andrew Griesman
Ann Lawson
Kathy Maxcy
Jan Meltzer
Lucelly Orrego
Jo Salas
Nancy Vanderlee

Alto

Shanna Andrawis
Catherine E. Baer
Debra Bucher
Madeleine Donat
Sheri Errickson
Susan Guse
Thayer Lehman-Borer
Patricia Marquez
Kirsten Menking
Sara Rothman
Laura Ramsey Russell
Celine Sigmen
Lois Skelly
Rae Slingerland
Barbara Wild

Tenor

John Bassler
John Hupcey
Benedikt Kellner
John McCleary
Michael Nelson
Benjamin Prud'homme
Leonard Versola
Chris Warren
Henry H. Westmoreland
Sheldon Tianchen Zhou

Bass

Andy Crispell
Rafi Ettinger-Finley
Matthew Guse
Steven Herschbein
George Jahn
Kelly-Ray Meritt
Robert Renbeck
Michael Saunders
Paul Stoddard

BachFest Chamber Choir

Soprano

Kyle Adamcik
Fern Ashworth
Jocelyn Bergen
Lucelly Orrego
Nancy Vanderlee

Alto

Debra Bucher
Madeleine Donat
Andrew Griesman
Patricia Marquez
Celine Sigmen

Tenor

Benedikt Kellner
Benjamin Prud'homme
Sheldon Tianchen Zhou

Bass

Andy Crispell
Rafi Ettinger-Finley
Kelly-Ray Meritt
Michael Saunders

BachFest Orchestra

Violin I

Rachel Crozier
Heather Vogel
Rachel Handman
Anna Ostrofsky

Viola

Elizabeth Handman
Kathy Bosman
Christiana Fortune-Reader
Cassity Warnecke

Flute

Marcia Gates

Harpsichord/Organ

James Fitzwilliam

Violin II

Francie Mann
Kathleen Thomson
Marisa Bettina
Larissa Blitz

Cello

Samuel Quiggins
Theo Zimmerman

Cornetto

Judy Gaunt

Bass

Phil Helm

Trombone

Paul Bellino
Benjamin Herrington
Dan Vaitkus

Program Notes

By Madeleine Donat '23, Ford Scholar 2022

Christ lag in Todes Banden

Samuel Scheidt was a German composer and organist who worked with many famous early Baroque musicians throughout his lifetime, including Jan Sweelinck, Michael Praetorius, and Heinrich Schütz. He is most notable for effusing traditional counterpoint methods with the newer Italian concerto style. “Christ Lag in Todes Banden” was published in 1624 in the second volume of a three-volume work for organ entitled “Tabulatura nova,” which included over 50 organ preludes, both sacred and secular. Scheidt seemed to consider these pieces as teaching aids or intellectual exercises. He strove to make the main chorale melody as clear as possible and follow a deliberate structure, while also allowing embellishment in the counterpoint. These works were published in a period of immense creative output for Scheidt from 1620 until the outbreak of the Thirty Years’ war in 1625.

Heut' triumphieret Gottes Sohn | BWV 630

“Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn” (“This Day in Triumph God the Son”) is a Lutheran Easter hymn believed to have been written by Kaspar Stolzhausen in 1591. Bach set this hymn when he was at Weimar, between 1708 and 1717, alongside 44 other chorale preludes together known as the “Orgelbüchlein” (“Little Organ Book”), organized for the liturgical year. This manuscript was never fully completed, but all of the pieces are well known for their short, concise weaving of melodies without much embellishment, which would have been a good way to introduce these chorale melodies to the congregation before they would have had to sing them in the service. The skill of these settings proves that Bach was expertly matching the words of the hymn to his melodies and harmonies even when composing for a solo instrument.

Cantiones Sacrae

Schütz’s *Cantiones Sacrae* is a set of 40 pieces published in 1625, before Bach’s time. Bach was likely familiar with these works and their expert polyphony, beautiful text-setting, and sense of identity and personality. “**Heu mihi, Domine**” is a desperate plea for forgiveness. It is likely one of the older of the *Cantiones* that Schütz wrote, and you will hear his talent for tight traditional polyphony as the parts hand off lines to each other throughout. The somber tone of the piece adds to its beauty, as Schütz overlays long-held notes with faster bursts of melody.

Heu mihi, Domine, quia peccavi nimis in vita
mea:
quid faciam miser, ubi fugiam, nisi ad te,
Deus meus?

*Alas, Lord, I have sinned greatly in the course
of my life:
What should I, poor wretch, do? In whom
should I find refuge if not in you, my God?*

Miserere mei, dum veneris
in novissimo die.

*Have mercy on me when Thou shalt come
at the last judgment.*

The text for “**Cantate Domino**” comes from Psalm 149. Schütz brings out the joyful, dance-like quality of words such as “cantate” and “psalant” (both of which mean “let us sing”). He evokes

the character of such instruments as the “timbrel” (tambourine) and “psaltery” (a strummed, dulcimer-like instrument). This popular text has been set by an array of composers from the Renaissance up to the present day.

Cantate Domino canticum novum;
laus ejus in ecclesia sanctorum.

*Sing ye to the Lord a new song;
let his praise be in the church of the saints.*

Laetetur Israël in eo qui fecit eum,
et filiae Sion exsultent in rege suo.

*Let Israel rejoice in him that made him:
and let the children of Sion be joyful in their
king.*

Laudent nomen ejus in choro;
in tympano et psalterio psallant ei.

*Let them praise his name in choir:
let them sing to him with the timbrel and the
psaltery.*

Der Herr denket an uns | BWV 196

“Der Herr denket an uns” is considered to be one of Bach’s very first cantatas, probably written between 1706 and 1707. It is largely believed to have been written for the wedding of Johann Lorenz Stauber, the pastor at Bach’s church in Arnstadt during his post there. Stauber, who had married Bach and his first wife the year prior, were married on June 5, 1708, where this piece likely premiered.

Because “Der Herr denket an uns” was written for a clergy member’s wedding, it is a cantata full of joy and praise, emphasizing the bond of people and the Lord, Heaven and Earth, and family members to each other. The cantata uses text from Psalm 115, verses 12-15. One such line in the fourth movement, “Der Herr segne euch je mehr und mehr, euch und eure Kinder” (“May the Lord bless you more and more, you and your children”), emphasizes the love between these two individuals and their future family. The reference to the House of Aaron in the second movement is another clue that this was likely written for a clergy member, as Aaron and his descendents were called on by God to minister the people in the Old Testament.

The music of “Der Herr denket an uns” seems to have been inspired by Dieterich Buxtehude, who primarily wrote pieces for organ. This is more proof of its early origin. When Bach was working at Arnstadt, he was primarily an organist and was not writing many pieces for choir and ensemble. If this piece was in fact written for the wedding of someone Bach knew well, then it was likely performed at its premiere by friends and colleagues of his, which adds to the joy and unity emphasized in the cantata.

Sinfonia

Sinfonia

Chorus: Der Herr denket an uns und segnet
uns.

The Lord cares for us and blesses us.

Er segnet das Haus Israel,
Er segnet das Haus Aaron.

*He blesses the house of Israel;
He blesses the house of Aaron.*

Aria: Er segnet, die den Herrn fürchten,
Beide, Kleine und Grosse.

*He blesses those who fear the Lord,
both the humble and mighty.*

Duet: Der Herr segne euch je mehr und mehr,
euch und eure Kinder.

*The Lord bless you more and more,
you and your children.*

Chorus: Ihr seid die Gesegneten des Herrn,
Der Himmel und Erde gemacht hat. Amen

*You are the anointed ones of God,
who created heaven and earth. Amen.*

- Translated by Benedikt Kellner

‘Brandenburg’ Concerto No. 5 in D Major | BWV 1050

The fifth of Bach’s collection of six concertos written for the Margrave of Brandenburg, this piece was likely composed in the spring of 1719. During these months, Bach took a visit to Berlin to pick up a new harpsichord made by the instrument maker Michael Mietke. While written for a chamber group, Bach specifically wrote this piece to show off this new harpsichord’s potential. This concerto breaks many of the formal conventions of concertos at the time, and emphasizes the back-and-forth between a small group of instrumental soloists with the rest of the orchestra (referred to as a ‘concerto grosso’).

About halfway through the first movement, you will hear our soloists slowly begin to overtake the rest of the ensemble, until eventually the rest of the ensemble bows out and gives way to an incredible harpsichord solo, performed by the wonderful James Fitzwilliam. This was Bach’s way of not only showing off his brand new instrument but also his own talents as a keyboardist!

The second movement is a wonderful trio for flute, violin, and harpsichord, its more languid style bringing forth the more reserved qualities of the instruments. The dance-like final movement is a return to the faster, more virtuosic elements of the first movement, with frequent hand-offs between parts and more small passages which highlight the capabilities of the harpsichord.

Christ lag in Todes Banden | BWV 4

“Christ lag in Todes Banden” (Christ lay in death’s bonds) may be Bach’s earliest surviving cantata, and is by far one of his most famous. It was written for Easter Sunday and is one of the only Easter Sunday works Bach wrote—at the time, much more focus was placed on Good Friday in the Liturgical calendar. The work was inspired by the organ settings of Johann Pachelbel, Buxtehude, and Kuhnau. One mark of Pachelbel’s work that Bach utilized in the composition of this cantata was using a single chorale melody as a chant throughout (described as a ‘chorale cantata’), which can be heard in different parts in every movement. The chorale was based on the Catholic chant “Victimae paschali laudes.”

Most scholars believe that “Christ lag in Todes Banden” was first performed as part of an audition for the organist position at St. Blasius’s Church in Mühlhausen, Germany on April 24, 1707, suggesting the cantata was probably written between 1706 and 1707. However, other scholars believe it was composed during Bach’s early Weimar years, between 1708 and 1713.

The chorale in the seventh movement is written in a very similar manner to other chorales from these later years. The rest of the movements, considered to be written in an earlier style, could have been composed at or before Mühlhausen, and at the time would have been performed with a different last movement. If this is the case, however, no such first draft survives.

Bach appears to showcase many facets of his craft in this cantata, specifically his ability to connect the text of the piece to its overall musical structure. If a large portion of this piece was in fact written as part of his audition for Mühlhausen, his ability to weave text and music would be necessary at such a prestigious audition. Bach's genius text painting can be seen in many aspects of the cantata: The spirited rhythms on "fröhlich" ("joyful") and the entry into double-time for the large "Hallelujah" section in the first movement are great examples. The march-like fugue written for the fifth movement, about the "great war in which life and death struggled," also highlights his ability to weave the text into the music.

If this cantata was truly one of the first Bach wrote, it is incredible how well he had already honed his craft and ability to tie text and music together so seamlessly through the starting point of one simple melody and lean into the emotional core of this work. Preparing this piece truly made me appreciate this most famous of Bach's works, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I loved putting it together. - MD

Chorus: Christ lag in Todes Banden
Für unsre Sünd gegeben,
Er ist wieder erstanden
Und hat uns bracht das Leben;
Des wir sollen fröhlich sein,
Gott loben und ihm dankbar sein,
Und singen Halleluja,
Halleluja!

*Christ lay in death's bonds,
sacrificed for our sins.
He has risen again
and brought us life;
therefore we shall be joyful,
praise God, and be thankful to him,
and sing Hallelujah.
Hallelujah!*

Duet: Den Tod niemand zwingen kunnt
Bei allen Menschenkindern,
Das macht' alles unsre Sünd
Kein Unschuld war zu finden.
Davon kam der Tod so bald
Und nahm über uns Gewalt,
Hielt uns in seinem Reich gefangen.
Halleluja!

*No one among all mortals
could conquer death.
Our sin causes all this;
no innocence was to be found.
Therefore death came so soon,
seized power over us, and
held us captive in his realm.
Hallelujah!*

Tenor Aria: Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn,
An unser Statt ist kommen
Und hat die Sünde weggetan,
Damit dem Tod genommen
All sein Recht und sein' Gewalt,
Da bliebet nichts denn Tod's Gestalt,
Den Stach'l hat er verloren.
Halleluja!

*Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
has come in our stead
and taken away our sin.
Thereby he has taken from death
all its dominion and power.
Nothing remains but death's mere form;
it has lost its sting.
Hallelujah!*

Chorus: Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg,
Da Tod und Leben rungen,
Das Leben behielt den Sieg,
Es hat den Tod verschlungen.
Die Schrift hat verkündigt das,
Wie ein Tod den andern fraß,
Ein Spott aus dem Tod ist worden.
Halleluja!

*It was a strange war
when life and death struggled:
life retained the victory;
it has devoured death.
The scripture has proclaimed it this,
how one death consumed the other;
death has become a mockery.
Hallelujah!*

Bass Aria: Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm,
Davon Gott hat geboten,
Das ist hoch an des Kreuzes Stamm
In heißer Lieb gebraten,
Das Blut zeichnet unser Tür
Das hält der Glaub dem Tode für,
Der Würger kann uns nicht mehr schaden.
Halleluja!

*Here is the true Paschal Lamb
whom God has offered:
He is high on the stem of the cross,
roasted in burning love.
His blood marks our door, and
faith holds this up before death;
the slayer can harm us no more.
Hallelujah!*

Duet: So feiern wir das hohe Fest
Mit Herzensfreud und Wonne,
Das uns der Herr erscheinen läßt,
Er ist selber die Sonne,
Der durch seiner Gnaden Glanz
Erleuchtet unsre Herzen ganz,
Der Sünden Nacht ist verschwunden.
Halleluja!

*Therefore we celebrate the high feast
with a joyous heart and great delight
that the Lord allows to shine upon us.
He is himself the sun,
who through the splendor of his grace
wholly illuminates our hearts;
The night of sin has vanished.
Hallelujah!*

Chorale: Wir essen und wir leben wohl
In rechten Osterfladen,
Der alte Sauerteig nicht soll
Sein bei dem Wort der Gnaden,
Christus will die Koste sein
Und speisen die Seel allein,
Der Glaub will keins andern leben.
Halleluja!

*We eat and live well
on the true Passover bread;
The old leaven shall not exist
beside the word of grace.
Christ desires to be the food
that alone will feed the soul;
faith wants to live on no other.
Hallelujah!*

- Translation by Ron Jeffers (1943-2017)

As we emerge from the pandemic, our local musicians are in need of your support. The last few years have created great upheaval in the arts with substantial funding losses, especially in Dutchess County. We are blessed with a vibrant and talented group of local musicians — please support them to keep orchestral and choral music alive in the Hudson Valley.

Skinner Hall of Music

Summer 2022

~ Upcoming Events ~

Currently in-person and open to the public ~ No reservations.
Masks must be worn inside the Recital Hall at ALL times.



Sunday, July 10 · 3pm

Faculty Recital: An Afternoon of Organ Music

Gail Archer plays a program of contemporary Polish organ literature from her new CD, *Cantius*, including works by the influential woman composer Grazyna Bacewicz and scholar/composer Pawel Lukazewski.

Saturday, July 23 · 3pm

Faculty & Guest Concert: Music for Five Trombones

Works by Mahler, Wagner, Bruckner, Creston, and Tommy Peterson. Featuring Brad Ward, Tom Hutchinson, and Paul Bellino, *tenor trombone*, and Jack Schatz and Cameron Owen, *bass trombone*.

Sunday, July 24 · 3pm

An Afternoon of Chamber Music

Joseph Genualdi, *violin*, and Richard Wilson, *piano*, return to Skinner Hall with a program to include Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata.



The Fall Concert Series Begins on
Sunday, August 28 with the annual Welcome Concert

Visit online for more information: vassar.edu/music/concerts-events

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