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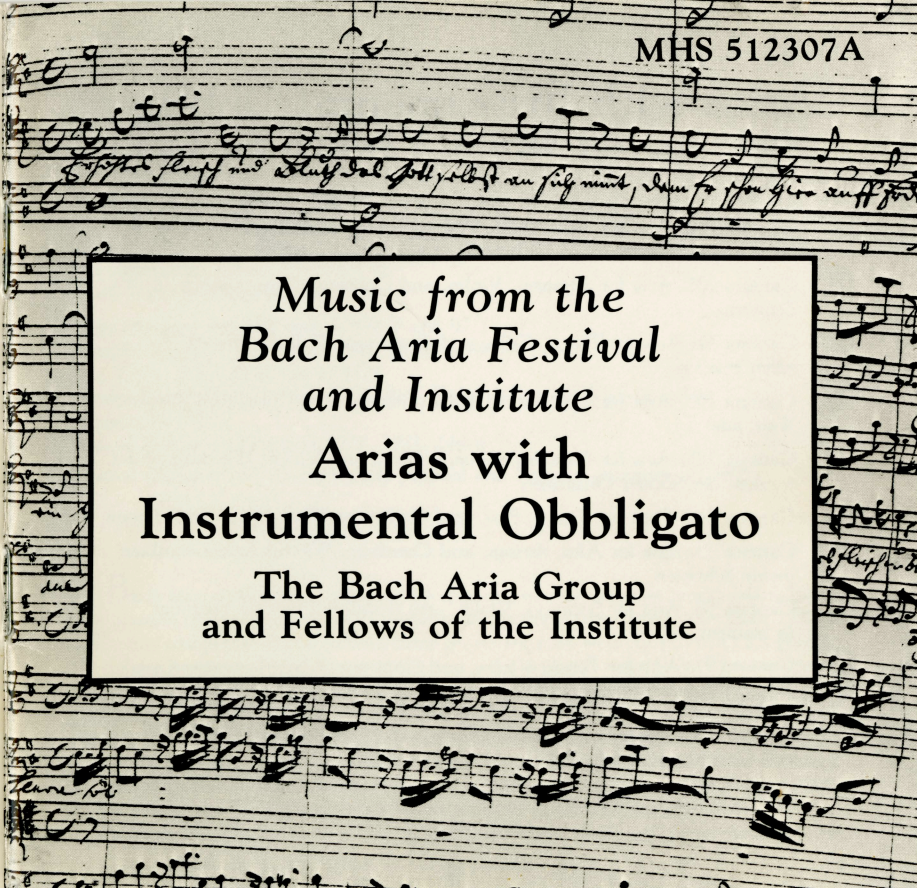
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MHS 512307A

The background of the entire page is filled with musical notation, including staves with notes, clefs, and some handwritten lyrics. A white rectangular box with a black border is centered on the page, containing the title and artist information.

**Music from the
Bach Aria Festival
and Institute
Arias with
Instrumental Obligato**

**The Bach Aria Group
and Fellows of the Institute**

Arias with Instrumental Obligato

Music from the Bach Aria Festival and Institute

- 1 Cantata 30a: Aria for Alto, Flute, Violin, Strings, and Continuo: Was die Seele kann ergötzen
- 2 Cantata 205: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo: Angenehmer Zephyrus
- 3 Cantata 41: Aria for Tenor, Cello, and Continuo: Woferne du den edlen Frieden
- 4 Cantata 158: Aria for Bass, Flute, and Continuo, with Chorale in Soprano: Welt, ade!
- 5 Cantata 105: Aria for Soprano, Oboe, Violins, and Violas: Wie zittern und wanken der Sünder Gedanken
- 6 Cantata 146: Duet for Tenor, Bass, and Orchestra: Wie will ich mich freuen
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- 8 Cantata 58: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo: Ich bin vergnügt in meinem Leiden
- 9 Cantata 97: Aria for Tenor, Violin, and Continuo: Ich traue seiner Gnaden
- 10 Cantata 140: Duet for Soprano, Bass, Oboe, and Continuo: Mein freund ist mein
- 11 Cantata 83: Aria for Alto, Violin, Strings, Two Oboes, Two Horns, and Continuo: Erfreute Zeit!

The Bach Aria Group

Samuel Baron, *Flute, Music Director*

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Ronald Roseman, *Oboe*

Timothy Eddy, *Cello*

Yehudi Wyner, *Organ, harpsichord*

Carol Webber, *Soprano*

D'Anna Fortunato, *Alto*

Jon Humphrey, *Tenor*

Ruud Van der Meer, *Bass-baritone*

Paige Morgan, *Assisting oboe in 146/6 and 83/1*

Douglas Myers, *Franz Streitwieser, Horns in 83/1*

Lisa Terry, *Viola da gamba in 41/4*

Sandra Boysen-Freese, *Virginia Sublett, Roberta Veazey, Melissa Baber, Sopranos in 158/2*

Samuel Baron, *Conductor in 83/1, 33/3, 146/6*

Festival Orchestra of the Bach Aria Festival and Institute (summer of 1987)

Bach arias constitute a unique portion of our treasury of great music. Many baroque masters composed cantatas (Telemann, for example, composed more than 1,000), and many composed operas. In both these genres the arias were the musical high points, the moments when the emotions of the text were explored most fully. The arias were also the moments when the singers had their greatest opportunity for display. But no baroque master, not even the great Handel, achieved the concentrated intensity and imagination that Johann Sebastian Bach did in his arias. Indeed, the Bach arias stand out even against all other music by Bach as a special blend of vocal and instrumental display—texted music and untexted obbligato playing combining to expound words and concrete verbal ideas (mostly religious concepts) in a highly developed concerto form.

The Bach Aria Group is an ensemble dedicated to the study and performance of the

Bach arias. It has been pursuing its goal since 1947 and has, through its concertizing and recording, done much to broaden the music lovers' view of Bach's work. The Bach Aria Group was founded by William H. Scheide, a Bach scholar and philanthropist, who directed the group until his retirement in 1980. The current music director is Samuel Baron, who initiated a highly successful institute program at which the artists of the Bach Aria Group work with gifted performers, both vocalists and instrumentalists, to study the repertoire in its broadest aspects and to join in concert performances on a collegial basis. The Institute program meets in June of every year at the Staller Center for the Fine Arts on the campus of the State University of New York at Stony Brook on Long Island. The performances on this recording were made at the Institute session of 1987.

One of the astonishing features of Bach arias is the way in which Bach converts the texts into musical images. Many people have said that the texts are not worthy of the music, that they are made up of routinely dogmatic Lutheran theology, that Bach's function as cantor was simply to underline the same basic concepts week after week to his fellow congregants, that he was in effect a preacher in music. But these viewpoints do not come close to explaining the glorious colors of Bach's music, they give no clue to the tremendous emotional power of the compositions, and they certainly do not account for the broad, one might say universalist, appeal of this music.

It is our position in the Bach Aria Group that the texts are indeed important to the study of Bach's music and that Bach developed a musical language to represent, depict, describe, allegorize, and symbolize the texts. Sometimes Bach takes his cue from a single word in the text, sometimes from the generalized emotion of the text.

The Bach arias deal in extremes of joy and sorrow; but the sorrow is always connected with life here on earth, and joy almost always with the hereafter. So, for example, in the duet from Cantata 146, the joy is set in the future: "How will I rejoice...when all transient troubles are past....*There* (in heaven) I shine like the stars...*there*, there is no disturbing the heavenly rapture with mourning, howling or outcry." But notice how Bach sets the words *mourning, howling, outcry (Trauern, Heulen, Geschrei)*. Disregarding the negative sense of the text (there won't be any such disturbances in heaven), he gives us a twinge of those dissonant, painful sounds in the midst of an ecstatically joyous aria.

In the alto aria from Cantata 33, the key word seems to be *Schritte* (footsteps) modified by *furchtsam* (fearful); the sound of those fearful and wavering footsteps is heard throughout the piece in the pizzicato bass line. As the singer concludes a journey from anxiety to solace, we never lose touch with the fearfulness of her situation.

Similarly, in the soprano aria with oboe from Cantata 105, the key word is *zittern* (tremble). The upper strings start at bar one with a trembling figure (repeated tones) and do not stop until the end of the aria. But what goes on over the trembling! The text speaks of the thoughts of sinners: how they vacillate, how they turn on themselves, how they try to justify themselves, how they try to excuse themselves. The soprano voice and the oboe line actually act out all of this in close, spectacular, imitative counterpoint. But possibly the most astonishing piece of tone painting in this aria comes from something that is not there: the bass line. There is no basso continuo (and no keyboard realization) in this work. Why? Because the bass line represents God and faith in God in Bach's vocabulary. When that is absent, there is only anxiety and inquietude.

Sometimes Bach's preoccupation with a word surprises us with its obsessiveness. In the tenor aria with violin from Cantata 97, which has a text proclaiming great faith ("Ich traue seiner Gnaden"), the word *nichts* (nothing) stirs the texture up considerably. "Leb' ich nach seinen Gesetzen, so wird mich nichts verletzen, nichts fehlen was mir nützt" (If I live according to his laws, then will nothing hurt me, nothing be lacking that I need.) The outcries on *nichts* touch a deep nerve. They are a protestation of faith but in their very vehemence they reveal a doubt. Is it humanly possible to be totally full of confident faith, to be totally free of anxiety? Bach's singer's belief in God's grace is touched with an almost desperate wish that this grace really be there and never fail. This creates an unforgettable moment.

Bach is anything but smug in his faith. "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief" is Bach's most moving scriptural sentence, to which he returns in many works. However, consider the text of the tenor aria from Cantata 41—a more smug statement can hardly be imagined: "Since you have provided me with noble peace and such standing here on earth, give my soul your blessing and then I will be blessed here and among the elect in the world to come as well." Bach's librettist must have written this text with the wealthiest member of the congregation in mind. However, in Bach's setting of this self-centered text, there is no trace of smugness; there is a profound eloquence in the tenor line and an utterly hypnotizing cello line which ranges both above and below the voice line as a frame to this eloquence.

The music of the alto aria from Cantata 31 exists in two versions with two different texts. These versions are known as Cantata 30 and Cantata 30a. It would appear that Bach recycled a secular cantata (30a) by having his librettist put a religious text to the music so that he could use it later in a church service. On this recording we have chosen

to use the text of the original secular cantata for the alto aria.

The occasion of Cantata 30a was the installation of a certain Christoph Johann Christian von Hennike, who was appointed to be the lord of the manor at Wiederau in Saxony. The alto aria, in keeping with this kind of occasion, speaks of Wiederau offering to Hennike "all that can delight the soul, and all that pleases and is highly to be prized." The link between text and music is to be found in the delightful and dancelike syncopations which are found so abundantly, syncopations being one of Bach's musical symbols for pleasure. (By contrast, the alto aria in Cantata 30, the church cantata, exhorts "errant sinners...to heed the voice of the savior," a more or less routine bit of doctrinal boiler plate.)

In the alto aria from Cantata 30a, we have chosen to use the words from this secular version of Cantata 30. It is our belief that this form was the original form that Bach set and that the link between the words and the music comes from the references to pleasure and enjoyment in the text, which Bach often represents by delightful syncopations which are found in such abundance in this music.

We in the Bach Aria Group have found and continue to find in this repertoire an endless source of musical inspiration. It creates for us a chamber music atmosphere of equality between the vocalists and the instrumentalists in which the text, its meanings and symbols, are our common concern, and in which the lines of music, so full of variety, color, and expression, are our common challenge.

This recording was made, in part, with a grant from the Natural Heritage Trust in connection with the program "The Bach Aria Institute in the Schools."

Cantata 30a: Aria for Alto, Flute, Violin, Strings, and Continuo

Was die Seele kann ergötzen,
was vergnügt und hoch zu schätzen,
soll dir lehn und erblich sein.
Meine Fülle soll nichts sparen,
und dir reichlich offenbaren,
dass mein ganzer Vorrath dein.

Whatever the soul can enjoy,
what gives pleasure and is highly valued
shall be yours as your right and inheritance.
My fullness will spare nothing
and to you royally disclose
that my entire stock is yours.

Cantata 205: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo

Angenehmer Zephyrus,
dein von Bisam reicher Kuss
und dein lauschend Kühlen
soll auf meinen Höhen spielen.
Grosser König Aeolus!
sage doch dem Zephyrus
dass sein Bisamreicher Kuss
und sein lauschend Kühlen,
soll auf meinen Höhen spielen.

Pleasant Zephyr,
your kiss rich in musk
and your refreshing coolness
will play on my heights.
Great King Aeolus
Tell Zephyr then,
that his musk-rich kiss
and his refreshing coolness
will play upon my heights.

Cantata 41: Aria for Tenor, Cello, and Continuo

Woferne du den edlen Frieden
für unserm Leib und Stand beschieden,
so lass der Seele doch
dein selig machend Wort.
Wenn uns dies Heil begegnet,
so sind wir hier gesegnet,
und Auserwählte dort!

Inasmuch as you have noble peace
for our person and standing set aside,
so let our soul as well
(have) your blessed-making word.
When this healing meets us,
so we are here blessed,
and there among the elect.

Cantata 158: Aria for Bass, Flute, and Continuo, with Chorale in Soprano

Welt, ade! Ich bin dein müde,
Saems Hütten steh'n mir an,
wo ich Gott in Ruh' und Friede
ewig selig schauen kann.
Da bleib ich, da hab' ich,
Vergnügen zu wohnen.
Da prang' ich geziert
mit himmlischen Kronen.

World, farewell! I am tired of you.
Heaven's towers stand before me,
where I God in peace and joy
eternally blessed can look upon.
There I remain, there have I
pleasure to abide.
There am I resplendent, adorned
with heavenly crowns.

Chorale

Welt, ade! Ich bin dein müde,
ich will nach dem Himmel zu.
Da wird sein die rechte Friede,
und die ewige Seelenruh'.
Welt, bei dir ist Krieg und Streit;
in dem Himmel allezeit
Friede, Ruh' und Seligkeit.

World, farewell! I am tired of you.
I would go to heaven.
There will be the true peace,
and the eternal rest of the soul.
World, with you is war and struggle;
in Heaven always
peace, tranquility and blessedness.

Cantata 105: Aria for Soprano, Oboe, and Strings

Wie zittern und wanken
der Sünder Gedanken,
indem sie sich
unter einander verklagen,
und wiederum sich
zu entschuldigen wagen.
So wird ein geänstigt Gewissen,
durch eigene Folter zerissen.

How (they) tremble and vacillate
the thoughts of sinners,
in that they themselves
one another accuse,
and in turn
attempt to justify themselves.
So becomes an anxious conscience
through its own torment torn apart.

Cantata 146: Duet for Tenor, Bass, and Orchestra

Wie will ich mich freuen,
wie will ich mich laben,
wenn alle vergängliche Trübsal vorbei.
Da glänz' ich wie Sterne,
und leuchte wie Sonne,
da störet die himmlische selige Wonne
kein Trauern, Heulen und Geschrei.

How will I rejoice,
how I will refresh myself,
when all the transient troubles are past.
There I shine like the stars,
and light like the sun,
there trouble the heavenly blessed rapture
no mourning, howling, or outcry.

Cantata 33: Aria for Alto, Strings, and Continuo

Wie furchtsam wankten
meine Schritte,
doch Jesus hört
auf meine Bitte,
und zeigt mich
seinem Vater an.
Mich drückten
Sündenlasten nieder,
doch hilft mir
Jesu Trostwort wieder:
dass er für mich
genug getan.

How fearfully wavered
my footsteps.
Yet Jesus hears
my prayers
and shows me
to his father.
The burdens of sin
pressed me down,
yet Jesus' word of comfort
helps me afresh:
that he for me
has done enough.

Cantata 58: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo

Ich bin vergnügt in meinem Leiden
denn Gott ist meine Zuversicht.
Ich habe sichern Brief und Siegel,
und dieses ist die feste Riegel,
denn bricht auch selbst die Hölle nicht.

I am content in my suffering,
for (on) God is my reliance.
I have a secure document and seal,
and this is the firm rule,
that even Hell itself does not break.

Cantata 97: Aria for Tenor, Violin, and Continuo

Ich traue seiner Gnaden
die mich vor allem Schaden,
vor allem übel schützt.
Leb' ich nach seinen Gesetzen,
so wird mich nichts verletzen,
nichts fehlen was mir nützt.

I trust his favors
that me from all harm,
and from all evil protect.
(If) I live according to his laws,
then will nothing hurt me,
nothing (be) lacking that I need.

Cantata 140: Duet for Soprano, Bass, Oboe, and Continuo

Mein Freund ist mein (soprano)
und ich bin dein (bass)
die Liebe soll nichts scheiden (both)
Ich will mit dir (soprano)
du sollst mit mir (bass)
in Himmels Rosen weiden, (both)
da Freude die Fülle,
da Wonne wird sein.

My friend is mine
and I am yours
nothing will separate love.
I want with you
you shall with me
to delight in heaven's roses,
where the joy of fulfillment,
where rapture will be.

Cantata 83: Aria for Alto, Violin, Strings, Two Oboes, Two Horns, and Continuo

Erfreute Zeit im neuen Bunde
da unser Glaube Jesum hält.
Wie freudig wird zur letzten Stunde
die Ruhestatt das Grab bestellt!

Joyous time in a new covenant
that our faith is held in Jesus.
How joyous will it be at the last hour
(when) the abode of peace, the grave is made ready!



Arias with Instrumental Obligato

Music from the Bach Aria Festival and Institute

- 1 Cantata 30a: Aria for Alto, Flute, Violin, Strings, and Continuo: Was die Seele kann ergötzen (5:35)
- 2 Cantata 205: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo: Angenehmer Zephyrus (3:26)
- 3 Cantata 41: Aria for Tenor, Cello, and Continuo: Woferne du den edlen Frieden (9:21)
- 4 Cantata 158: Aria for Bass, Flute, and Continuo, with Chorale in Soprano: Welt, ade! (5:32)
- 5 Cantata 105: Aria for Soprano, Oboe, Violins, and Violas: Wie zittern und wanken der Sünder Gedanken (6:17)
- 6 Cantata 146: Duet for Tenor, Bass, and Orchestra: Wie will ich mich freuen (5:35)
- 7 Cantata 33: Aria for Alto, Strings, and Continuo: Wie furchtsam wankten meine Schritten (10:17)
- 8 Cantata 58: Aria for Soprano, Violin, and Continuo: Ich bin vergnügt in meinem Leiden (4:52)
- 9 Cantata 97: Aria for Tenor, Violin, and Continuo: Ich traue seiner Gnaden (8:41)
- 10 Cantata 140: Duet for Soprano, Bass, Oboe, and Continuo: Mein freund ist mein (5:35)
- 11 Cantata 83: Aria for Alto, Violin, Strings, Two Oboes, Two Horns, and Continuo: Erfreute Zeit! (6:21)

The Bach Aria Group and Fellows of the Institute