



THE LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE
AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA
ROGER WAGNER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 12, 1982 AT 7:30 PM
PREVIEW AT 6:30 PM BY JEANNINE WAGNER

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION

3 CANTATAS BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
1685-1750

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Gerard Schwarz, *Music Director*

HELMUTH RILLING, *Guest Conductor*
JEANNINE WAGNER, *Assistant Conductor*
INGA NIELSEN, *Soprano*
GABRIELE SCHRECKENBACH, *Contralto*
JONATHAN MACK, *Tenor*
DOUGLAS LAWRENCE, *Bass*

CANTATA FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, BWV 36
"Schwingt freudig euch empor"

CANTATA FOR CHRISTMAS DAY, BWV 63
"Christen, atzet diesen Tag!"

CANTATA FOR CHRISTMAS DAY, BWV 110
"Unser Mund sei voll Lachens"

This performance has been made possible, in part, through the sponsorship of the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, the Los Angeles County Music and Performing Arts Commission, the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Latecomers will not be seated until the first convenient pause in the performance. / Invited guests are welcome backstage after the performance; use performers' entrances: Grand Ave. side of Plaza for Pavilion, corner of Temple & Grand for Ahmanson, and rear of theatre for Forum. / Use of tape recorders and/or cameras prohibited in auditorium. / Your use of a ticket constitutes acknowledgement of willingness to appear in photographs taken in public areas of The Music Center and releases The Music Center Operating Co., its lessees and all others from liability resulting from use of such photographs. / Program and artists subject to change. / Patrons cannot be paged during a performance. Individuals expecting emergency calls must leave their seat numbers with the House Manager.

PROGRAM NOTES

by

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Probably in no other area of his artistic production did Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) display the diversity of his talent and compositional skills so broadly as in his 206 surviving sacred cantatas. This genre of his works demonstrates most decisively his outstanding capabilities as a practical working musician called upon constantly to produce masterly crafted music demanded by the exigencies of his times, place, and position.

The prevailing liturgical cycle of the Lutheran Church at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig ultimately exacted from his pen five cycles of cantatas, each to the number of 59, for a total including works written prior to the Leipzig period of at least 295.

The cantata as developed by Bach evolved from prototypes of the Seventeenth Century or from the newly created form by Erdmann Neumeister, a clergyman-poet in 1700. Bach's specimens exhibit unlimited imaginative inventiveness in each of the several categories he adapted, refined and brought to perfection. This evening's program of three quite different Cantatas will demonstrate his compositional virtuosity.

Bach called the cantata a "concerto" because according to the common nomenclature of his day it combined vocal and instrumental music. Indeed these cantatas often embrace a sequence of movements similar to his orchestral suites and concertos. Moreover, as will become evident, for example, in the opening chorus of Cantata #110, Bach, clearly understanding the capabilities of the human voice, scores his vocal lines in an almost identical approach to his instrumental scoring. Voices and instruments are perfectly integrated to achieve completely harmonious balance and effect.

The church simply referred to the cantata as "the music", implying that it was the principal service music employing instrumentalists.

We must here note that the customary numerical designation of the Cantatas assigned them by the Nineteenth-century editors of Bach's works bears no relation to the correct order of their composition. Dating them has proved laborious and somewhat precarious. Of this evening's three Cantatas, the earliest composed, #63, *Christen, atzet diesen Tag*, was produced for his first Christmas, 1723, at Leipzig. Bach, anticipating his move to Leipzig derived it possibly while at Coethen (1717-1723) from an earlier Christmas Cantata composed before 1716 while employed at Weimar. Second in order of composition is #110, *Unser Mund sei voll lachens*, written for Christmas, 1725 with possible subsequent reworking after 1734. The Cantata #36, *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, appeared for the first Sunday of Advent, December 2, 1731. It stems from a reworking of a secular cantata produced in November, 1726, to celebrate the birthday of the Princess of Anhalt-

Coethen. Later between 1730 and 1734 Bach transformed it back into a secular cantata honoring the Rector of the Thomasschule, Johann Gessner. Cantata #36 thus falls among those several borrowing materials from secular sources. Bach, indeed, as is well known, habitually borrowed materials from his previous works, often transforming them brilliantly.

The three Cantatas on this evening's program furnish us with a pleasing demonstration in their structure and orchestrations of Bach's unendingly fresh musical sensitivity toward the liturgical occasion and the sacred text.



Johann Sebastian Bach

The text of Cantata #36 *Schwingt... Bach* derived possibly from his frequently employed librettist Picander, though he may have as was often his custom here written his own text. No passage from Sacred Scripture appears. After the opening chorus accompanied by the small orchestras of two oboe d'amore, strings and organ (indicative of the restrained liturgical season) the Cantata's movements alternate between chorales and arias for a duet of soprano and alto and for soprano, tenor, and bass soloists. Each is cunningly scored with its own telling instrumental combination. The Cantata concludes with one verse of the chorale *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*, a melody used elsewhere in the work along with the famed chorale tune *Wie schoen leuchtet der Morgenstern*. It is still a matter of dispute whether these concluding chorale movements were sung also by the congregation.

Cantata #63, *Christen...* contains neither quotation from the Bible nor from any chorale. The wholly original libretto is Bach's. The Cantata frames with two impressive choruses three recitatives two of which are followed by duets, the first for soprano and bass, the second for alto and tenor. Here the orchestra is considerably enlarged to fit the festive Christmas spirit in calling for four trumpets, three oboes, bassoon, timpani,

strings and organ. Some consider that Bach may have intended this cantata as a companion piece to the great Latin *Magnificat in D*.

The listener's attention is again directed toward the exceedingly subtle nuances in the various movements especially of the recitatives, and to the variety of accompaniment. That of the Bass recitative particularly in the sixth movement is noteworthy.

Cantata #110, *Unser Mund...* falls again among those cantatas utilizing borrowed materials. Apart from the three biblical quotations from Psalm 126 (Then our mouth filled with laughter and all our tongues with loud singing for the Lord hath compassed such things) in the opening chorus, from Jeremiah 10/6 (O Lord, there is none like thee) in the recitative of the third movement, and from Luke 2/14 (Glory to God in the highest) in the duet for soprano and tenor in the fifth movement, Bach again provides the poetic libretto.

The most significant aspect of this Cantata is Bach's reworking of the Overture to the Orchestral Suite #4 in D as the Cantata's majestic and brilliant opening chorus. W. Gilles Whittaker has observed in his monumental study, *The Cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach* "There are three most successful adaptations from purely orchestral sources to vocal and instrumental in the cantatas... The most extraordinary of the three is #1 in 'Unser Mund sei voll lachens' for Christmas day. The initial number of the fourth orchestral suite in D is commandeered in its entirety." Whittaker delineates the slight differences of the cantata's movement from the orchestral original stressing especially the superimposition of a choir on the Allegro section of the overture. Whittaker further describes this exhilaratingly merry music as follows: "The appropriateness of the Psalm verse to the music is quite startling; had the suite disappeared no one would ever have guessed that the setting was not wholly original." Indeed he feels that it is better than the original.

The soprano-tenor duet in the fifth movement is derived from the *Virga Jesse floruit* (a branch shall spring from Jesse) of the *magnificat in E Flat*.

This Cantata boasts the most elaborate orchestra of the three heard on the program. Festive celebration transfixes the listener with the sounds of three trumpets in D, two transverse flutes, three oboes, bassoon, strings and organ. In addition throughout the Cantata's various movements he employs with sovereign skill the particular tonal qualities of the mellow newly invented oboe d'amore matched to the alto's aria in the fourth movement and of the even more deep-throated oboe da caccia (English Horn) in the tenor aria summoning the soul to awake to the praises of the Lord. awake to the praises of the lord.

The Cantata's final Alleluia chorale derived from the Fugers' *Wir Christenleut* of 1593, jubilantly sums up the performance of three marvelous Cantatas so vividly demonstrating the art of this great master and so fittingly in auguring for us Christmastide.

SCHWINGT FREUDIG EUCH EMPOR

Part I

1. Chorus... *Schwingt freudig euch empor.*
(S.A.T.B. Ob. d'am. i. ii. (unis.), Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
Come, joyful voices raise to where the stars are shining,
All ye whose hearts rejoice in Zion's mighty Lord!
But stay your notes, to fear and silent awe declining;
For lo, God's Son from heaven, to be by men adored!
[Bar 31 T. die ihr = rejoice.]
2. Choral... *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland.*
(S.A. Ob. d'am. i. ii. col S.A.; Org. and Cont.)
O come, Thou longed-for Saviour,
Whom a virgin mother bore!
Filled with wonder's all the earth
At Christ the Lord of heaven's birth.
[Throughout alle alle = all the.]
1. Aria... *Die Liebe zieht mit sanften Schritten.*
(T. Ob. d'am. Solo, Org. and Cont.)
With eager steps, yet shy and faltering,
The faithful lover seeks his love.
As doth a bride, with heart enraptured,
Behold him whom her charm hath captured,
So longs my soul for God above.
4. Choral... *Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara.*
(S.A.T.B. Ob. d'am. i. ii., Vn. i. ii., Va., col S.A.T.; Org. and Cont.)
The strings attune, the organs sound,
Be all our joy with music crowned,
With gladness voices blending!
Lord Jesus deigns with us to mate,
A heavenly Bridegroom passing sweet,
In union never ending!
Sing ye!
Speed ye!
Joyful be ye!
Triumph sound ye!
Tell the story:
Great is He, the King of Glory!

PART II

5. Aria... *Willkommen, werther Schatz.*
(B. Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
Now welcome, precious Joy!
Within my heart's a home for Thee.
In love, in faith of Thee I'm part:
Come to my heart!
[Bars 25, 26, 40, 41, 47 Glaube = heart.]
6. Choral... *Der du bist dem Vater gleich.*
(T. Ob. d'am. i. ii., Org. and Cont.)
To the Father equal, Thou
Canst our bodies frail endow
With Thy grace in plenteous store,
Flesh of our flesh evermore.
7. Aria... *Auch mit gedampften schwachen Stimmen.*
(S. Vn. Solo, Org. and Cont.)
With voices low and awesome rising
Is God's high majesty adored:
Our joyous notes to heaven shall roll
If but His fear inspire the soul,
And will by all His host be heard.
[Bar 50 selber = host.]
8. Choral... *Lob sei Gott dem Vater g'than.*
(S.A.T.B. As No. 4)
Praise to God the Father be,
Glory, Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Praise and honour to the Son,
While eternal ages run!

1. ADVENT

Circa 1730. The opening Chorus and the three Arias (Nos. 3, 5, 7) are adaptations, probably by Bach, of Picander's secular libretto "Steigt freudig in die Luft" (*infra* p. 619). The music of those movements is derived from the same source. The four Chorals replace the Recitatives of the secular work, whose music Bach again employed in the secular Cantatas "Die Freude reget sich" (*infra* p. 580), and "Schwingt freudig euch empor" (*infra* p. 616).

References. BG. VII, No. 36 (p. 223); Pa. 396; Sch. ii. 265; Sp. (Eng. Edn.) ii. 471; Sp. (Germ. Edn.) ii. 301; TBC. ii. 208; W. 2.

Original Score and Parts (Score autograph) in PSB. (45 adn. 1; and 82). The autograph Score of the secular Cantata is also there (43 adn. 1). Copy of the Score (comprising Nos. 3, 3, 5, 7 and a different concluding Choral), formerly W. Rust's, in possession of Dr. E. Bucken, Nordstrasse 27, Koln.

CHRISTEN, ATZET DIESEN TAG

1. Chorus... *Christen, dtzet diesen Tag!*
(S.A.T.B. Tr. i. iii. iv., Timps., Ob. i. ii. iii., Fag., Vn. i. ii., Va., Org and Cont.)
Christians all, this happy day,
Raise aloft your adoration!
Haste to greet the Infant holy,
Sing to Him your praises lowly,
All your loyal homage pay!
See descend from heaven a ray
Sent to lighten every nation!
2. Recit... *O sel'ger Tag!*
(A. Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
O sacred day! O day of wondrous glory! Today the world is healed! Our Helper, Whom God erst in Paradise did promise to the human race, at length is in the flesh to man revealed, and cometh Israel to save from Satan's lure and prison-fetters, which sorely here beset us. O Lord our God, what are we in Thy sight? A faithless, stubborn folk who have forgot Thee! And yet, Thou lov'st us still with pity. For, rather than condemn, as our offence hath well deserved, the Godhead's self descends from heaven, the form of mortal man content to put on; e'en in a manger to-day is born, and comes to earth a stranger. O wondrous act of grace! O blessed dispensation!
3. Duett... *Gott, du hast es wohl gefuget.*
(S.B. Ob. Solo, Org. and Cont.)
Lord, Thou'st shown us bounteous favour
On this day thus fair begun.
So, behold us, firmly trusting
In Thy grace to win a blessing;
For Thou'st given us in Thy Son
That which shall delight us ever.
4. Recit... *So kehret sich nun heut' das bange Leid.*
(T. Org. and Cont.)
Dispelled and gone to-day's the awful curse that Israel of old till now so sorely burdened. To happiness 'tis turned. The Lion of David's stem hath come among us. His bow is ready stretched, His sword is in His hand;
He with it will our liberty command.
5. Duett... *Ruft und fleht den Himmeln an.*
(A.T. Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
To the heavens your voices raise!
Come, good Christians, swift come flocking,
Hearts all thankful and rejoicing
At God's work this day of days!
'Tis His providence selects us,
'Tis His saving grace protects us;
Then give forth your grateful praise!
6. Recit... *Verdoppelt euch demnach.*
(B. ob. i. ii. iii., Vr. i. ii., Va., Fag., Org. and Cont.)
Yourselves swift multiply, bright flames of adoration!
Pulsate in union, flashing your devotion! Rise boldly to the sun,
and thank Hight God for all that He hath done!
7. Chorus... *Hochster, schau' in Gnaden an.*
(S.A.T.B. As No. 1)
Holiest, look with favour now
On our love and homage lowly!
Let the praise to Thee we're bringing
Sweetly in Thine ears by ringing.
Ever hold us in Thy care;
Grant us Thy protection rare
'Gainst fell Satan's power and fury!
[Bar 43 B. in Segen = Grant us.]

The original has "In Metall und Marmorsteine," a line, perhaps, suggested by a poem in Joh. Jakob Rambach's "Geistliche Poesien" (Halle, 1720), a work in Bach's possession:

"Erwunschter Tag,
Den man in Marmor graben
Und in Metallen atzen mag."

1723. Libretto, perhaps, by Bach. Sp. supposes Picander's authorship, which, however, his suggested date forbids.

CHRISTMAS DAY

References. BG. XVI, No. 63 (p. 53); PA. 218; Pi. 116; Sch. ii. 153; Sp. (Eng. Edn.) ii. 346, 367; Sp. (Germ. Edn.) ii. 177, 197; V. 131; W. 7. Original Parts in PSB. (9), where also is a copy of the Score (443 adn. 4).

UNSER MUND SEI VOLL LACHENS

1. Chorus... *Unser Mund sei voll Lachens.*
(S.A.T.B. tr. i. ii. iii., Timp., Fl. trav. i. ii., Ob. i. ii. iii., Fag., Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
"Let our hearts e'er be joyful, and ev'ry tongue sing loud praises. For the Lord hath great things for us performed."
2. Aria... *Ihr Gedanken und ihr Sinnen.*
(T. Fl. trav. i. ii., Fag., Org. and Cont.)
Turn your ardent thoughts to heaven
From earth's stale unwholesome leaven,
This day let them God-ward run!
E'er reflect what He hath done —
Son of Man, He bids us be
Sons of God eternally!
[Bar 48 wir = sons. Bar 49 dass wir Gottes, Got- = Sons of God.]
3. Recit... *Dir, Herr, ist Niemand gleich.*
(B. Vn. i. ii., Va., Org. and Cont.)
"O Lord, there's none like Thee. Thou art great, and Thy name too is great. Great art Thou in might and power."
4. Aria... *Ach Herr! was ist ein Menschenkind?*
(A. Ob. d'am. Solo, Org. and Cont.)
Ah, Lord, what is a child of man
That Thou in love to save him seekest?
A worm whom once Thou cursed'st,
Whom hell and Satan held in ban!
Now he's God's son, whom Thy dear love
Maketh an heir of heaven above.
[Bar 69 aus Lie- = doth make.]
5. Duett... *Ehre sei Gott in der Hohe.*
(S.T. Org. and Cont.)
"Glory to God in the highest, and peace be to mortals here on earth in goodwill dwelling."
[Bar 36 and throughout, the second syllable of Menschen is silent.]
6. Aria... *Wacht auf, ihr Adern und ihr Glieder!*
(B. Tr. i., Ob. i. ii. col Vn. i. ii., Ob. da cacc. col Va.; Org. and Cont.)
Awake, my soul, thy Maker praising,
Glad songs to heaven joyous raising
Which to our God shall pleasant be!
Ye strings, well tuned to sing devotion,
Your praise up-roll ye as an ocean
To God e'er throned in power on high!
[Bar 31 the German line is
Und ihr, ihr Andachtsvollen Saiten.
Bar 49 sollt ihm ein = your praise sound.]

CHRISTMAS DAY

7. Choral... *Alleluja! Alleluja!*
(S.A.T.B. Tr. i., Fl. trav. i. ii., Ob. i. ii., Ob. da cacc., Vn. i. ii., and Va., all con voci; Org. and Cont.)
Alleluja! Alleluja!
Praise be to God!
Sing out with heart and voice all people living!
For God's dear Son
Salvation's won:
For evermore to Him be praise unceasing!
- Psalms cxvi. 2. The Chorus is an adaptation of the first movement of the Overture in D ma. BG. XXXI (1) p. 66.
2 Jer. x. 6.
3St. Luke ii. 14. The movement is an adaption of the *Virga Jesse floruit* in the E flat "Magnificat." Cf. BG. XI (1) p. 110.
4 Stanza v of Caspar Fuger's *Wiv Christenleut* (1592). The melody is attributed to his son (1593).
- Post 1734.
Post 1734.
References. BG. XXIII, No. 110 (p. 265); Pa. 448; Pi. 164; Sch. ii. 345; Sp. (Eng. Edn.) iii. 78; Sp. (Germ. Edn.) ii. 558; TBC. ii. 349; V. 142; W. 8.
Original Score (autograph) and Parts (partly autograph) in PSB. (153; and 92).

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