

**CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR**

Owen Rees - *director*

**J. S. BACH – THE MOTETS**

**Concert III**

**John Butt - *guest conductor***

*with*

**Paul Nicholson - *organ***

**Melanie Woodcock – *baroque cello***

**Christine Garratt – *baroque flute***

**Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 1999**

**8.15 pm**

# PROGRAMME

Fürchte dich nicht	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Fantasia in E minor no. 8 <i>Largo – spiritoso – allegro</i>	Georg Philip Telemann
Methodical sonata in A <i>Adagio – Vivace – cortese mente - vivace</i>	Georg Philip Telemann
Ich bin ein rechtes Weinstock	Heinrich Schütz
Selig sind die Toten	Heinrich Schütz
Fürchte dich nicht	Johann Christoph Bach

## INTERVAL

Singet dem Herrn	Heinrich Schütz
Fantasia in D major no. 7 <i>Alla Francese - Presto</i>	Georg Philip Telemann
Singet dem Herrn	Johann Sebastian Bach

### **The Cambridge Taverner Choir**

*Guest Conductor - John Butt*

*Sopranos* – Tanya Wicks, Andrea Cockerton, Josie Dixon, Caroline Preston Bell  
Bryony Fisher, Helen Garrison, Rachel Godsill, Sally Terris  
*Altos* - Ally Barrett, Simon Godsill, Rupert Preston Bell, Jenny Cassidy  
*Tenors* - Finlay Lockie, Tom Salmon, Joss Sanders, Edwin Simpson  
*Basses* - James Durran, Frank Salmon, Gary Snapper, Michael Surcombe, Sam Barrett

The Cambridge Taverner Choir performs in Jesus College Chapel  
by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of the College.

## NOTES

### ✓ J.S. Bach: *Fürchte dich nicht*

This is probably one of Bach's earliest motets, closely following models from his Thuringian environment. The two passages from Isaiah (both beginning with the line 'Be not afraid') were quite popular in motet writing and the incorporation of a Lutheran chorale in the final section is also typical of the genre. Bach adopts the rhetorical style of his elder contemporaries where the music seems both to speak and express the text, but the harmony and intervals are far bolder. Indeed, this is perhaps the most tonally-colourful of Bach's motets. The closing fugal section provides not only an invertible counterpoint of two musical lines but also of two lines of the Isaiah text which suggest that Redemption through Christ is intertwined with his personal calling of one's name. Just as in J.C. Bach's motet on partly the same text, this is coupled with a chorale melody and text addressed to Christ as the fount of all joy. Thus musical counterpoint depicts several ideas simultaneously, together with the intimacy between Christ and the believer: in this way music can make a theological point that cannot be so directly made by words alone.

### J.C. Bach: *Fürchte dich nicht*

Johann Christoph Bach was Sebastian's second cousin (and also the brother of his father-in-law) and, as organist of the St George Church in Eisenach, he was possibly the first organist Bach encountered. He is undoubtedly the most talented composer in the Bach family before Sebastian and this work is one of his most expressive and haunting works. The text is drawn both from Isaiah and Luke with the interpolation of a chorale text. The dialogue between Old and New Testaments (and the Lutheran chorale repertory) is paralleled by a dialogue between the lower voices (together representing Christ) and the sopranos' chorale (depicting the believer's cry for Christ's help). As in so many of Sebastian Bach's later dialogues, the musical setting creates an almost amorous affect, a proto-Romanticism that is one of the few interesting musical legacies of Lutheran Pietism.

### Bach: *Singet dem Herrn*

- ✓ Although this motet represents some of Bach's most spectacular vocal writing we still do not really know for what occasion it was written. The text – on the one hand celebratory (extracts from Psalm 149 and 150) and, on the other, concerned with mortality (a Lutheran chorale) - would be appropriate both for joyous occasions and for funerals. The work certainly comes from the period of Bach's zenith as a church composer (c. 1726-7) when he had already composed over two cycles of cantatas. Gone are the awkward intervals and pungent chords of *Fürchte dich nicht* but Bach's mature control of large vocal textures and ease of part-writing are readily apparent. The opening movement presents a kaleidoscopic alternation of forces and texture not unlike that of the Third Brandenburg concerto; it develops into a four-part fugue, the most dazzling section of the piece. The central dialogue between chorale (choir 2) and 'aria' (choir 1) creates a more meditative atmosphere before the return of the opening mood of praise. In all, Bach tries to sum up the entire praise of the cosmos as depicted in the last two psalms, by pushing the potentials of an eight-voice choir to their very limit.

### ✓ Schütz: *Singet dem Herrn*

Tonight's selection represents two areas of Schütz's output. The setting of *Singet dem Herrn* comes from the early publication of polychoral psalms (1619), closely following the pattern of Schütz's teacher, Gabrieli. It aims at expansive choral effects which depict the whole of creation worshipping God. There are many passages that imitate aspects of natural and mankind, including interesting impersonations of harps, trumpets and trombones. The two shorter motets come from Schütz's *Geistliche Chormusik* of 1648. This publication Schütz intended as a demonstration of an older style of composition, one in which the voices were so written that they did not require the support of instruments. However, rather than returning to the church style of Palestrina or Lassus the music is highly expressive with many changes of texture and affect. In some ways it represents a very late arrival of the madrigal style in a church context, that of the Lutheran confession which put the text and its presentation in pride of place.

Telemann's 12 fantasias for solo flute are thought to have been composed around 1727-8, and the Methodical Sonatas published between 1728 - 32. Both collections explore the tonal variety of a wide range of keys from the gentle sweet-sounding A major to the robust and brilliant D major, and exploit the technical capabilities of the Baroque flute.

We are very pleased to welcome **Christine Garratt** for this concert. Christine studied music at Edinburgh University, and Baroque flute with Lisa Beznosiuk at the Royal College of Music. She now works regularly on Baroque and Classical flute, Renaissance and Baroque recorder with most of the leading UK period instrument orchestras. Her solo performances have included concertos by Bach, Vivaldi and Telemann and recitals with harpsichordist Gary Cooper. She has recently appeared on recordings of Rameau cantatas with The Band of Instruments/New Chamber Opera and Campra motets with Canzona.

*Our next concert...*

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July, 8.15 pm  
Jesus College Chapel

**Tierra de Maria Santisima**  
**Music in honour of Mary, from the Golden Age of Seville**

Works by Penalosa, Alonso Lobo, Victoria and  
Guerrero (marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death)

**Conducted by Owen Rees**

Tickets £8 (concessions £6) on sale soon from  
The Cambridge Corn Exchange Box Office

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