

30 April 2012  
Edition 1

## B-A-C-H - STAGE NEWS & SOUNDS

*Dear friends and Bach enthusiasts,*

It is my great pleasure to present the first edition of our newsletter '**B-a-c-h-Stage News & Sounds**' of the recently formed Australian Bach Society. Our aim is to keep you informed about the various events of Bach@Trinity 2012, our current International Bach Festival.

The response to our first concerts at the German Church was very positive. We were delighted to see a growing network develop between various musicians, ensembles and choirs in Melbourne all sharing the same enthusiasm for Johann Sebastian Bach. We will keep you posted about other interesting events in Melbourne – and of course include news from Bach's mother country, in particular from Leipzig.

As authors of this first newsletter, Silke, Hendrik and myself we'd love to hear what you are interested in and would welcome constructive feedback.

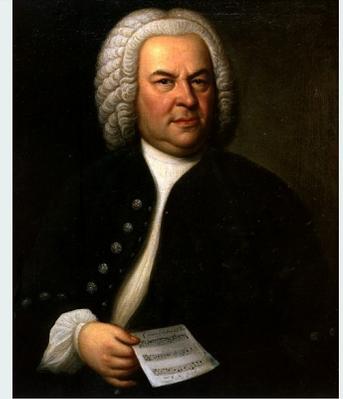
Enjoy the reading and we hope to meet you again at one of the upcoming events.

*Hans Schroeder*

President Australian Bach Society Inc.

### **BACH@TRINITY 2012- THE AUSTRALIAN BACH SOCIETY INC.**

The Australian Bach Society (ABS) was established in October 2011 as an initiative by the German Lutheran Church East Melbourne. It aims at promoting the performance of J. S. Bach's works and at increasing the knowledge about his life by organising concerts, talks, movies and more.



#### **THIS NEWSLETTER AND WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?**

CONCERTS, OTHER EVENTS &  
NEWS FROM BACH AND HIS  
MOTHER COUNTRY

#### **WHO IS INVITED?**

EVERYONE: NEWCOMERS &  
BACH ENTHUSIASTS

#### **WHY SHOULD YOU COME?**

LISTEN TO THE GENIUS' MU-  
SIC, NETWORK, LEARN AND  
HAVE FUN

#### **WHERE?**

NEXT EVENT WITH ANTHONY  
HALLIDAY ON **2 MAY** AT  
GERMAN TRINITY CHURCH,  
22 PARLIAMENT PLACE, EAST  
MELBOURNE

#### **RECENT EVENTS/ HIGH- LIGHTS:**

ROLAND VOIT VISITS MEL-  
BOURNE AND CANBERRA

THOMANA YEAR 2012,  
LEIPZIG

#### **DID YOU KNOW??**

FACTS ABOUT BACH...

## 21 MARCH 2012 BACH'S 327 TH BIRTHDAY



For the special occasion of J.S. Bach's 327<sup>th</sup> birthday, on 21 March 2012, the Australian Premiere of the movie 'Die Thomaner', was shown at the German Church East Melbourne; this documentary was produced for the celebration of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the world renowned St. Thomas Church Boys' Choir from Leipzig.

© S. Zurlinden

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*,World renowned St. Thomas Boys' Choir was founded in 1212 and out-lived political, municipal, religious, and educational controversy while 800 years of 'musica sacra' have determined the choir's mission .'*

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### HARPSICHORD AND VIOLIN -

#### THE PASSION OF BRIAR GOESSI / RACHAEL BEESLEY AND ELIZABETH ANDERSON



For this year, ABS organized Bach@Trinity2012, an 'International Bach Festival', presenting music, movies and more.

In February and March 2012, ABS started its public appearance with Briar Goessi, Rachael Beesley (violin) and Elizabeth Anderson (harpsichord), some of Australia's finest musicians

(Okay, okay... Briar is actually a Kiwi). In three concerts, they performed a range of J.S. Bach's sonatas for violin and harpsichord.





## THOMANA

2012 marks the 800th anniversary of St. Thomas Church, Boys' Choir and School – three Leipzig institutions called THOMANA. Martin Luther and Johann Sebastian Bach are inseparably linked to THOMANA. The triad of 'believing, singing and learning' forms the foundations for a religiously inspired, culturally educated and social community.

© www.bundespraesident.de/ 22.04.2012

Newly elected German president Joachim Gauck (middle) in Leipzig on 20 March 2012

## THOMANA 2012 - 800 YEARS ST. THOMAS CHURCH, BOYS' CHOIR AND SCHOOL

On 20 March 2012, the recently elected German president Joachim Gauck, made his first official appearance during the ceremonial act to commemorate this anniversary. Throughout this year, a large variety of sacred music will be performed at St. Thomas Church.

During his first years in Leipzig, Johann Sebastian Bach composed and performed a new cantata for almost every Sunday (in total about 300). Besides, many of his predecessors and successors - as cantor - created works for the famous boys' choir. Following this tradition, the Bach Archive in Leipzig, decided to partner with THOMANA 2012 and commissioned five contemporary festive compositions, which will premiere on religious holidays in 2012/2013 and thus tie into the musical tradition of THOMANA.

The series of performances started with the Christmas Oratorio, Cantata 6: Lord, when our arrogant enemies snort with rage (Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben) BWV 248/6 composed by the genius loci himself.

The second festive musical piece was the first premiere and composed by the incumbent Thomas Cantor, Georg Christoph Biller. His opus for soli, choir and orchestra including 19 wind instruments, percussion and double bass, contains a fusion of formal chorales, bible quotes and free lyrics. The opus comprises 7 musical movements and includes many choral quotes while using traditional and contemporary composition techniques. The two performances at Easter received enthusiastic applause and will become a 'fixed feature' of the Thomaners' repertoire.

The formal set-up and length of the new compositions follows Bach cantatas that were performed at ecclesiastic ceremonies: the Thomaner boys' choir and up to 4 soloists are a standard component but the composers are free to decide about instrumentation and lyrics as long as they emphasize the liturgical context appropriately.

THOMANA 2012 also expresses its high esteem of sophisticated musical skills from down-under by engaging an Australian to create the fifth festive composition: Brett Dean was born in Brisbane in 1961 and won several international prizes. He played as violist for the world renowned Berliner Philharmonic (until 1999) and has been a sought-after composer since 1995. His composition will premiere in Leipzig at Christmas 2012.

## RECENT PERFORMANCE AT ABS BACH EVENT OF ROLAND VOIT —

### SOUGHT-AFTER ORGANIST AND MUSIC LECTURER IN TOWN WHILE TOURING AUSTRALIA

ABS invited the German organist and cantor Roland Voit to perform a range of J.S. Bach's organ compositions on Easter Sunday at the German Church. The recital showed his diverse and highly professional skills in terms of organ music. Roland provided an introductory speech telling the audience a range of interesting facts about Bach as well as some background information and anecdotes.



© S. Zurlinden

The most impressive part of Roland's presentation highlighted the complexity of organ playing, in particular in Bach's compositions. The organ is often called the "queen of instruments" as it is such a large instrument and no other instrument could produce so many sounds and voices simultaneously: polyphonic as it is called in Greek. The technical abilities of the player are

tested to the limit, in terms of his mobility in fingers and feet as well as in the amount of concentration and coordination needed.

Polyphony – which is otherwise achieved by several instruments or by a choir with four or five voices – is produced by only one person.

After his introduction Roland demonstrated in an impressive way that besides being able to talk extensively and passionately about Bach, he confidently withstands the challenge of playing

the organ with full use of his body. This is almost unbelievable to watch: As an occasional cello player, I already struggle to coordinate my two hands when practicing some of the Bach Cello Suites. The highlight of Roland's recital certainly was the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565, which filled even the remotest corner of our church with the sounds of Bach's most popular masterpiece.

### VISUAL SYMBOLISATION—ONE OF BACH'S TOOLS TO ILLUSTRATE THE ECCLESIASTIC CONTEXT OF HIS COMPOSITIONS

In several compositions such as in the St Matthew's Passion or the St John's Passion for example, Bach uses the crucifixion symbol in his notes to refer to the sufferings of Jesus

Christ by means of visual symbols. A four-note motif is used, in which the first and the fourth note are the same or almost the same, whereas one of the two notes in between is higher, the other lower ; thus he reminds of the crucifix.



## CATHEDRAL OF PASSAU

*“One of the most impressive and largest church organs of the world .”*



© Presentation R. Voit, Melbourne 08.04.2012

### NEXT ABS EVENT – BACH AND B-A-C-H

On Wednesday 2 May 2012 at 7 PM in the German Church, Anthony Halliday will play Prelude and Fugue of Bach’s first published work for organ, called the **(German) Organ Mass**. This will be followed by two of the well-known **Schübler Chorales** before exploring the **Bach motif**, a musical cryptogram written by Robert Schumann, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Franz Liszt. Anthony will conclude with Bach’s Toccata and fugue in D-minor (BWV 565) in his own interpretation.

After initial studies at The University of Melbourne, Anthony Halliday continued at The Royal College of Music and The Royal College of Organists in London. He received many awards and prizes and gave numerous international piano and organ recitals and concerto performances throughout Europe and Australasia. Some of his performances were attended by Pope John Paul II, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and other dignitaries.

Anthony is in high demand as a pianist and an organist both in Australia and in Europe. He gave many recitals at the German Lutheran Trinity Church, notably the eight-part series “Beethoven and Friends” in 2007/08. Most recently Anthony released a CD (Lobe den Herren) containing German Protestant music that was played on the heritage-listed organ of our church.

**Please join us at our reception after the concert for wine, canapés and networking.**  
For bookings: [www.trybooking.com/BARI](http://www.trybooking.com/BARI)

### MORE EVENTS:

#### Wednesday, May 16 Hall - 7:00 PM

Fireside Chat: Chat about ‘Luther on Music / Bach on theology’ (in German)

Our popular series “Fireside Chat” continues with a focus on Martin Luther and J.S.Bach as the two pillars of the Protestant Church. As introduction the 2004-movie “Johann Sebastian Bach – Der liebe Gott der Musik” (starring Thomaskantor Georg Christoph Biller) will be shown, followed by a chat about “Luther on Music” with renowned Bach scholar and Chaplain of Trinity College, University of Melbourne, Dr. Andreas Löwe.

Free admission – Donations welcome – Please register at [www.trybooking.com/BARJ](http://www.trybooking.com/BARJ)



#### (Whit)Sunday, May 27 Church - 2:00 PM

J.S. Bach “Mass in B Minor” – A Summation of Sacred Music. This video was recorded in July 2000 at the Thomaskirche Leipzig with the St. Thomas Boys Choir and the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, conducted by Thomasorganist Georg Christoph Biller. It is a unique occasion to experience in the historic German Lutheran Trinity Church Bach’s momentous work serving a single purpose only: that of praising God and of imparting to the listener a sense of the harmonious order of the world.

Free admission – Donations welcome – Please register at [www.trybooking.com/BARK](http://www.trybooking.com/BARK)

## NEXT EVENTS CONTINUED

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**Sunday 1 July – 3:00 pm.**

JS Bach's – Arias

Julia Nafisi (alto), Anne Gilby (oboe, oboe d'amore, cor anglais), Fiona Piggott (cello) and David Macfarlane (harpsichord) will perform arias from various cantatas for contralto, solo instrument and continuo. Admission: \$35 (concession \$25)

For more information and bookings: [www.kirche.org/de/music/bachtrinity-2012.html](http://www.kirche.org/de/music/bachtrinity-2012.html)

## DID YOU KNOW?



### BACH PORTRAIT BY ELIAS GOTTLOB HAUSSMANN 1746



If you have a closer look at the above painting (the only true portrait), you discover that Bach is holding the sheet of music upside down. Bach had a very good sense of humour and liked surprising his audience which we can see in this painting: the canon on the sheet of music doesn't show only three but six voices. As a beholder we can see three voices (at least the more experienced ones amongst us) and from Bach's perspective, he can see another three.

## WHAT'S UP IN MELBOURNE?

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- **6 May —6:30 PM:** Madeleine Centre, Genazzano FCJ College, Melbourne : Younger members of the Team of Pianists with the Chamber Strings of Melbourne & James de Rozario (conductor) - Two concerto items (Bach—Victor Hu (piano), Chopin—Kevin Kanisius Suherman (piano)) and an orchestral work
- **17 May—7:30 PM , 3 June, 26 August (tbc), 9 September (all starting at 9:00 AM):** St Johns Southgate: Bach Cantata Services ([www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au](http://www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au))
- **22 June, 7.30 PM:** Town Hall Proms, Melbourne: Organ Classics at Town Hall - The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra with Andrew Davis (conductor) and Cameron Carpenter (organ) - The concert opens in Sir Andrew Davis' own transcription of Bach's Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, for orchestra. This is followed by Poulenc's organ concerto - a work well suited to show off the mighty Town Hall Organ - before finishing with Brahms second symphony.
- **14 October, 4.30 PM:** Glenfern (417 Inkerman Street, East St Kilda), Melbourne, Bach Mini-Series —Recital, 2 . Bach -Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Book 1-Robert Chamberlain (piano).

.....more to come.....

### INTERESTED IN AUSTRALIAN BACH SOCIETY, THE GERMAN CHURCH, BACH, LEIPZIG AND MORE....?

.....Then the following links might be useful? (information available in German and English

[www.kirche.org.au](http://www.kirche.org.au) :

Information about the German Lutheran Trinity Church East Melbourne including Australian Bach Society Inc.

[www.bach-leipzig.de](http://www.bach-leipzig.de) :

Bach Archive Leipzig

[www.thomaskirche.org](http://www.thomaskirche.org):

St Thomas Church, links to St. Thomas Boys' Choir, 'Thomasshop' etcetera

[www.rondeau.de](http://www.rondeau.de)

Online ordering of CDs. The largest selection of 'Thomaner recordings' and sacred music by Germany's leading ensembles.

[www.bachhaus.de](http://www.bachhaus.de)

[www.bachstiftung.ch](http://www.bachstiftung.ch)

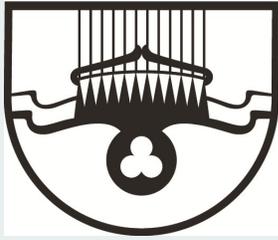
[www.thomana2012.com](http://www.thomana2012.com)

[www.auschoir.org](http://www.auschoir.org)

[www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au](http://www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au)

[www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/about/flagship-programs/choir.html](http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/about/flagship-programs/choir.html)

**BACH @ TRINITY 2012**



### **Australian Bach Society**

Australian Bach Society was officially founded during an inaugural meeting at the German Lutheran Church East Melbourne on 8 November 2011. Board Committee members were appointed as follows:

President:

Hans Schroeder

Vice President:

Frauke Tyrrell

Treasurer:

Peter Wabenhorst

Secretary:

Regina Gramer

Other Board Members:

Pastor Matthias Kunze

Silke Zurlinden

Dr. Hendrik Zurlinden

### **Address & Contact data**

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Melbourne, VIC 3002  
[www.kirche.org.au](http://www.kirche.org.au)  
ph. 03 9654 5743

## **PURPOSES OF AUSTRALIAN BACH SOCIETY ARE:**

- to increase the appreciation and knowledge of J.S. Bach and his music
- to arrange performances, concerts, lectures, or other activities to promote an interest and appreciation in J.S. Bach, other classical composers and organ and sacred music in Australia
- to encourage young musicians and young people with an interest in classical music without limitation, arranging of performance opportunities, assisting in musical education, and providing tickets for events and scholarships

## **INTERESTED?**

**PLEASE CONTACT HANS SCHROEDER:**

**[bachnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bachnewsletter@gmail.com)**

**or mob. 04 2580 2046**

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