

LBS BENEFIT EVENING HONOURS ANTHONY MINGHELLA Sir DAVID TANG presents "Cigarettes and Chocolate"

"Cigarettes and Chocolate" - not a remedy for recession blues, but an award winning¹ one-act play by the late Anthony Minghella that was re-imagined for a special one-off performance presented by LBS President Sir David Tang and directed by Tom Edmunds at St. Martin-in-the-Fields last December. Generously supported by Aspinalls and Dame Vivien Duffield, it was a public event and attended by a distinguished array of guests. The proceeds will benefit the London Bach Society.

Anthony Minghella² was an avid Bach devotee and his play requires movements from Bach's St. Matthew Passion to be performed throughout. Prefacing the performance actor and friend **Jude Law**, who had starred in some of Minghella's major films (inc. "Cold Mountain" and "Breaking and Entering"), paid warm tribute to the much-loved director before an audience that included Minghella's widow, the Hong Kong born choreographer Carolyn Choa, and members of the family. Here is a brief synopsis of the Play: -

"Gemma has given up speaking for Lent. She sits in her flat and listens to Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Her decision provokes consternation from her friends, each imagining it is the

result of something one of them has done. Unable to effectively communicate their feelings, they fill the void created by Gemma's silence, each trying, in their own way, to make sense of their lives - just as Gemma is doing." *Director Tom Edmunds.*



Anthony Minghella

Written in 1988, the theme has particular resonance today. Edmunds chose specific solo movements from the St. Matthew for performance, with **Steinitz Bach Players** directed by **Anthony Robson** emulating JSB's original at Leipzig's Thomaskirche by performing these in the Gallery at St. Martin's. The audience enjoyed some truly stellar acting, singing and playing too...

The cast

Alice Patten as *Gemma*, Dylan Charles as *Rob*, Elisabeth Dermot Walsh as *Lorna*, Georgia Mackenzie as *Gail*, Sam Spruell as *Alistair*.



Steinitz Bach Players – Leader Rodolfo Richter

Rachel Beckett & Christine Garratt *flutes*, Richard Earle & Catherine Latham *oboes & oboes da caccia*, Rodolfo Richter *violin*, Richard Tunnicliffe *viola da gamba*, Claire Holden *violin*, Henrietta Wayne *violin*, Nicholas Logie *viola*, Jennifer Morsches *'cello*, Amanda Macnamara *double bass*, Mark Williams *organ*, Orchestral manager Philippa Brownsword, Malcolm Greenhalgh generously supplied the organ.

Soloists

Grace Davidson *sop*, Alexandra Gibson *alto*, Simon Berridge *tenor* Giles Underwood *bass*

A HUGE THANK YOU to David, to everyone who performed, attended and donated. **MS**

Photo Credit Alan Davidson
(l to r)

The Duchess of York, Sir Michael Caine, Carolyn Choa, Jude Law and LBS President Sir David Tang support LBS Benefit

¹Giles Cooper and Sony awards

²Died 18 March 2008

"If BACH HAD MET..."

Fanciful 'encounters' with Purcell & Handel Part 1

This year the creative genius of four major composers - Purcell, Handel, Haydn and Mendelssohn - will be celebrated. All have left us a musical legacy beyond price. Their lives were packed with activity and they each left an indelible mark on the musical landscape. Two died comparatively young, while two lived into their seventies. What is common to them all is that they neither knew nor met Bach, although three would have been at least acquainted with his music. With the aid of a time bicycle, if Bach had met them what musical environment would he have discovered? What else was going on at the time? Who were the movers and shakers? Just for fun let's find out. In this issue we focus on Purcell and Handel; for our next in September, Haydn and Mendelssohn ...and in the process perhaps we shall identify the common ground and, through the passage of time, the musical ties that actually bind them.

Henry Purcell (c. 1659-1695)

Purcell's England was all about the Restoration of the Monarchy and the country's emergence from the austerity of Cromwell's 'republic'. During his formative years Purcell was a chorister at the Chapel Royal and studied with John Blow, the musician he was eventually to succeed at Westminster Abbey in 1679. In his short life Purcell served no less than three kings. The longest reigning, Charles II (1660-1685), was an extensive Patron of the Arts and whose Court was glittering if not just a touch licentious. Politically astute though the King was, the open, relaxed and comparatively 'racey' life at the Court proved to be a popular contrast to the Puritanism of the Lord Protector. It was this King who purchased for the Royal Collection 700 drawings by Leonardo da Vinci, thus laying the foundations for what it has become today. It was the time of Sir Christopher Wren and the rebuilding of St. Paul's Cathedral³, Wren's pupil Nicholas Hawksmoor, Sir Isaac Newton, the Great Plague (1665) and the Great Fire of London (1666). From February 1689 onwards the joint monarchy of William III and Mary II bore witness to the building by Wren of the Fountain Court at Hampton Court Palace for example.



Henry Purcell

On the Continent we meet up with composers Corelli, Alessandro Scarlatti, François Couperin and Albinoni. In Germany, Purcell's early life coincides with the latter years of another towering 17th century musical figure, the Dresden Court composer Heinrich Schütz⁴, whose folio of compositions includes three Passions (1665-66), St. Luke, St. John and St. Matthew, better known nowadays as precursors of Bach's than seemingly worthy of performance in their own right. We also meet hymn writer Paul Gerhardt⁵, regarded as Germany's greatest, whose Passiontide hymns "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" and "Befiehl du deine Wege"⁶ Bach sets so magically in his St. Matthew Passion.

Comparing Notes

In 1670s London, public concerts had begun to emerge on the scene and if they had ever met no doubt Purcell and Bach could have attended some of them together, with JSB comparing them to evenings at Leipzig's Zimmermann's Coffee House perhaps, and their discussing this 'new art of continuo playing' or the ups and downs of life as a church musician. Both were providers of music for their respective patrons or employers and also for those with whom they either became or wanted to become associated too; Purcell, with his Funeral and Birthday Odes, and his three Odes for the Festival of St. Cecilia⁷ for example, and Bach with his cantatas, or the Goldbergs, Musical Offering⁸ and Canonic Variations⁹. Oh yes! If Bach had met Purcell one wonders whether either would have got a word in edgeways!

Georg Friedrich Handel (1685-1759)

When Georg Friedrich Handel was born in Halle on 23 February 1685, Purcell was a young man of 26. Handel's music has enjoyed an unprecedented revival in the last fifty years. In England, the preconception that he only wrote one oratorio is long gone. British musicians and audiences alike are well now acquainted with his oratorios and operas, thanks to organisations like Handel Opera Society¹⁰/Farncombe and the London Handel Festival. In Germany too, the annual festivals at Halle¹¹ and Göttingen continue to draw Handel devotees from across the world.

³Completed in 1708

⁴1585-1672

⁵1607-1676

⁶Also BWV 153

⁷Festival of St. Cecilia of the Musical Society of London c.1680s

⁸Frederick the Great of Prussia

⁹For Mitzler Society, c.1747

¹⁰1955-1985

¹¹Handel's birthplace

Georg Friedrich Handel (1685-1759)

The Early Years

Born in the same year and within travelling distance of each other, the assumption has often been that Bach and Handel knew each other! There has been a 'horse and carriage' attitude as well - in the words of the old song "you can't have one without the other". But the truth is that, while they knew of each other, any plans for them to meet were never fulfilled and their careers followed completely different paths. Handel travelled abroad, finally settling in London; Bach confined his journeying to neighbouring German states. How might it have been if they had met?

Halle is more than a cart ride from Eisenach, but their friendship and common interests could have been established early on from 1685-1704 had the occasion arose. Both lost fathers early and each was showing a prodigious talent. Both could have compared notes on keyboard technique and fugues. If Bach had then travelled to Italy with Handel¹² in between working at Mühlhausen and Weimar, they could have discussed together the art of composing cantatas. Handel's were dramatic and small scale, with many composed for occasions at Cardinal Ottoboni's palace; Bach's were mostly sacred, required both small and sometimes more lavish musical forces, with the church works composed for weekly services. The experience of hearing Handel's opera *Agrippina* (Venice, 1709) for example just might have changed the course of Bach's composing life ...but probably not.



Georg Friedrich Handel

from the leading architects, painters and sculptors of the day. Combined with royal patronage of music¹⁵, and the music and operas by Handel in particular, this all inspired a golden era that also attracted musicians from the continent to London - undoubtedly an atmosphere that the gregarious Bach would have greatly enjoyed had he been one of them. Bach's provision of the secular cantatas for the Royal House of Saxony, each referred to as a 'dramma per musica', is a comparison here¹⁶ and, with others similarly composed for special personages, they were probably the nearest he got to writing an opera - *unless the Passions are considered sacred dramas*.

Handel outlived Bach by nine years, had an eye for the commercial, enjoyed immense patronage, was considered wealthy at his death and never married. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. Bach was not wealthy, kept a careful watch on his income and was driven by priorities that sprang from the Lutheran theology and tradition into which he was born. He was laid to rest in the graveyard of the Johanniskirche where people of his 'station' were buried, with his supposed remains finally moved to the chancel of the Thomaskirche in 1950, the Johanniskirche having been bombed in WWII. After Bach's death, his wife Anna Magdalena was forced to give up some of his manuscripts in order to survive. She died in penury. Handel bequeathed his wealth to a relative, with money to spare to make generous charitable donations. If Bach had met Handel, who knows what would have transpired. When Handel died on 14 April 1759, Haydn was 17 years old. ©MS

Part II to follow with Haydn and Mendelssohn...

A Royal Patron and on to London

Handel arrived in London in 1712 via the Hanoverian Court to which the Elector had appointed him Court Musician in 1710. Handel's Elector patron became George I of Great Britain and Ireland in 1714 and he inherited a tired and divided country¹³. It was a turbulent time politically and financially too - the time of the South Sea Bubble¹⁴, requiring a sureness of touch and great diplomatic skill in order to survive and move forward. This King, and later George II, was aided in his task to provide stability for the country by Sir Robert Walpole, Prime Minister from 1721-1742. Not only did Walpole possess substantial political know-how, but also a dedication to the Arts, commissioning

**Royal Academy of Music Bach Cantata Series
Presented through the generosity and vision of
The Kohn Foundation
www.ram.ac.uk/bach**

Ten years ago the LBS began a five-year collaboration with the Royal Academy of Music to provide an education programme within the annual Bachfest that created study and performing experience for the students. Lectures, recitals and workshops surrounded a major Bach concert, with the cantatas taking centre stage. LBS brought leading Bach scholars to the Academy including Professor Christoph Wolff (Harvard and the Leipzig Bach-Archiv)¹⁷, Professor John Butt and the late Malcolm Boyd. It was a very happy and productive collaboration.

¹²From 1706-9

¹³See Chapter 4 - The Hanoverians "Royal Heritage, The story of Britain's Builders and Collectors" by J H Plumb, pub. BBC, 1977

¹⁴Credit crunch?!

¹⁵George I and George II

¹⁶BWV Nos. 206, 213, 214, 215

¹⁷For the Bach 250th in 2000

Through the generosity and vision of Dr. Ralph Kohn and his Foundation, combined with the drive and passion for the cantatas of RAM Principal Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, the next logical step has now been taken. The RAM has embarked upon its own monthly series of Bach Cantata concerts that aims to perform all the extant church and secular works over the next ten years.

The series is emboldened by the Royal Academy of Music's Bach tradition that stems from the 19th century and it numbers some key Bach scholars and performers who have either taught or studied there. Among the RAM Alumni is Dr. Paul Steinitz, the London Bach Society's founder and a key figure in the British Bach revival of the last century, whose unique and historic cantata cycle¹⁸ was complete and the first to be presented in public in this country. The Academy's ambitious project will ultimately be included on the growing list of organisations and institutions that have presented complete cantata cycles.

William Sterndale Bennett
19th Century Founder of English Bach Society and RAM Principal (from 1866)



Study and performance

The dimension that will give the RAM cycle a 'unique' quality of its own is that the Sunday performances are the result of *study*, as well as rehearsal. The RAM is an educational institution. Its principal activity¹⁹ is "to provide pre-professional, undergraduate and postgraduate musical training of the highest national and international standards". Bach's cantatas provide us with real musical challenges to be met when preparing for performances. These include the German text and pronunciation, knowledge of period style - both in singing and playing, mastering the art of performing the recitatives, the difficult obbligatos and the arias, of playing continuo, use of vibrato and ornamentation, and, regardless of personal religious beliefs, reflection upon the Gospel for the Day that is the inspiration for each church cantata. By working with experienced professional specialists and studying all these aspects several generations of students will receive a 'benefit for life'. Furthermore, so shall all of us in the future as the students take their place on the concert platform, in the classroom and in the community.

Robert Schumann, the 19th century romantic composer and journalist, was also co-founder of the Bach Gesellschaft

Robert Schumann
Bi-centenary in 2010



at Leipzig in 1850, a Society set up to publish a complete edition of Bach's works. Schumann wrote, "Let the Well-Tempered Klavier be your daily bread. Then you will certainly become a solid musician."²⁰ This could be applied equally to Bach's cantatas © **Margaret Steinitz**

INTRODUCING JOLA...

Polish soprano wins 2nd LBS Bach Singers' Prize

Jolanta Kowalska (25) from Cracow, Poland won the 2nd LBS Bach Singers' Prize last November with her beautifully presented mixed Bach programme that included arias from Mass in B minor, Magnificat, Cantatas BWV 127 and Cantata BWV 211 (Coffee Cantata). Each finalist was also required to include a recitative and Jolanta chose hers from Cantata BWV 199. The Matthiesen Foundation donated Jolanta's Prize worth £2,000 and The Fenton Arts Trust, The Lynn Foundation and donors to Lord Avebury's 80th Birthday supported the competition itself.

Chosen as a Polish Ministry of Culture scholar from 2004-2008, Jolanta Kowalska graduated with distinction from the Academy of Music in Cracow and, as a "Młoda Polska scholar, is now studying with Ameral Gunson at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She has taken part in Master Classes with Paul Esswood and Barbara Schlick and in July 2008 won the Christa Bach Foundation award at the XVI Internationaler Johann-Sebastian-Bach Wettbewerb in Leipzig.

In a closely contested competition that drew 45 singers from the UK, USA, Canada and most EU states to the first round, ten progressed to the Semi-Final, with four reaching The Final. The singers submitted their chosen programmes at entry for each stage of the competition and they were encouraged to delve deep into the Bach vocal repertoire, with credit given for imaginative programming. For Round One the programme had to include one of the prescribed recitatives and for the Semi-Final a recitative and aria from a Bach Passion.

The Jury throughout was **Peter Harvey, Patrizia Kwella, Ian Partridge (Chair) and Anthony Robson**, with The Final given before a distinguished audience in St. George's Church, Hanover Square, including a private party of guests to Lord Avebury's 80th Birthday.

Continued overleaf

¹⁸1958-1987

¹⁹See entry on Charity Commission Register

²⁰The New Bach Reader Part VII published WW Norton & Co 1998

LBS BACH SINGERS' PRIZE ...

The four finalists were the bass **Hugo Oliveira** (Portugal), the counter tenor **Christopher Lowrey** (USA), the soprano **Jolanta Kowalska** (Poland) and the bass-baritone **Jonathan Sells** (UK) who were joined by **Steinitz Bach Players** directed by **Anthony Robson**.

Jury Chairman Ian Partridge paid warm tribute to all the singers who had entered only the 2nd, and therefore still new, competition. He thanked Lord Avebury and Patrick Matthiesen for supporting the Prize and hoped that more support would be forthcoming so that the competition's development plans within the LBS Bachfest could be realised at the 3rd competition in 2010. He added "All of us involved are very excited by the founding of this Prize and we want to see it grow and to develop." Finally, and before announcing the name of the winner, Ian Partridge thanked Margaret Steinitz, whose idea and planning it is. "Congratulations to all the Finalists tonight and to our winner. Ladies and Gentlemen, our winner is Jolanta Kowalska."

LBS Bach Library

The London Bach Society's Bach Library supplied all the orchestral material for the competition. After each submitted programme for The Final had been individually logged, up to 70 sets had to be earmarked and ready for use from Day One. This is an opportunity to thank all those, past and present, who have enabled the Society to assemble its Library and to maintain it.

From Leipzig's Bach-Archiv: New Discoveries & Bachfest Leipzig 2009

Three Bach autographs from the years 1743, 1745 and 1748 were recently discovered in the archives of the University of Leipzig by Dr. Andreas Glöckner from the Bach-Archiv Leipzig.

The documents are letters of recommendation written in Johann Sebastian Bach's own hand for three of his pupils. The pupils applied for a scholarship endowed to the University of Leipzig by the physician Mathern Hammer in order to support gifted but needy pupils of the Thomasschule. Neither the existence of the Hammerische Stipendium scholarship, nor Bach's role in its distribution has been known to Bach researchers so far.

Among the university documents there is also a protocol containing new information on Bach's last year. According to this document, one of Bach's students, Johann Adam Franck, had to step in for his teacher, because the Thomaskantor had fallen seriously ill on Pentecost in 1750. Franck probably arranged the music for Bach's funeral on July 30 or 31, 1750. It can also be assumed that he fulfilled Bach's duties in office on behalf of his widow Anna Magdalena until Bach's successor Gottlob Harrer took over the post.

Dr. Andreas Glöckner will present more details on the new sources recently discovered in the university archives in his lecture "**Music at the University of Leipzig during Bach's time - new documents and findings**" at the Bachfest Leipzig 2009. The lectures will be translated complete into English. Entrance free.

Bach Books & Music Titles Received

From Bärenreiter www.baerenreiter.com

Bach organ Chorales - Organ Chorales from Miscellaneous Sources

ISMN M-006-53753-2 BA 5251 £20

Attributed to J S Bach - Keyboard works attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach

ISMN M-006 53581-1 £21

From Continuum www.continuumbooks.com

Bach's St. Matthew Passion: A Closer Look (Magnum Opus series)/Victor Lederer

ISBN 9780826429407 PB £9.99

- Review in *Bach Notes/September edition*

From Oxford University Press

Bach's Oratorios/Michael Marissen

ISBN 978-0-19-536717-1 HB £13.99

- Review in *Bach Notes/September edition*

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Lots to hear, lots to see...
just a great place to be in June.

N.B. London Bach Society is unable to obtain complimentary tickets for any event or arrange flights/hotels

For Organ Buffs – Bach in a country church – Summer Organ Recitals at St. Peter's Limpsfield, Surrey

St. Peter's Church lies at the heart of the parish in the village of Limpsfield, deep in the Surrey countryside and dates from 1180. Its history and work in the Parish is described on its welcoming website www.parishoflimpsfield.org.uk that includes the history of the organ and links to the specifications of current and past instruments. The present organ was refurbished and installed in 2002 by Peter Collins.

The churchyard provides a lasting peaceful resting place for some very distinguished musicians of character and influence, of national and international repute. The conductors **Sir Thomas Beecham** and **Norman Del Mar**, pianist **Eileen Joyce**, clarinettist **Jack Brymer** and the composer **Frederick Delius** and his wife **Jelka** are all buried here.

The summer series of privately sponsored Friday evening **Organ Recitals** at St. Peter's is planned by the organist **Graham Powell** and these attract leading organists presenting imaginative programmes where fine examples from the Bach organ repertory sit comfortably alongside works from the 17th century to the present day. The music

is preceded by appropriate narrative and wine is served during the interval to a friendly and supportive audience. This summer will be no exception.

Friday 8th May 2009 at 7.30pm

Tim Harper (St Paul's Cathedral) Programme includes Mendelssohn's Organ Sonata No 1 and Bach's Chorale Prelude "Jesus Christus unser Heiland" BWV 688 and 689 from Clavierübung III.

Tim writes " I very much look forward to being part of the distinguished recital series at St Peter's Limpsfield, and hope that Delius is not overly disturbed by this particular offering. It is an honour to be asked to play at St Peter's, and I hope that the recital contains something for everyone."

Friday 17th July 2009 at 7.30pm

Gerard Brooks (Methodist Central Hall, Westminster)

Friday 18th September at 7.30pm

Geoffrey Morgan (Christchurch Priory)

Tickets £8.00 at the door -

Further details call 07790 156780

BECOME AN LBS SUPPORTER - LBS MEMBERS' CIRCLE

LBS welcomes new Members at all times. From as little as £25 per year, Members enjoy supporting an active and influential organisation in touch with what's going on in the Bach world. The President is Sir David Tang KBE, and HE The German Ambassador joins a distinguished array of musicians as a Patron of the Society.

The **London Bach Society** is the UK's premier Bach Society and is part of the global Bach community. It builds on the musical legacy bequeathed by its eminent late founder, Paul Steinitz (1909-1988) and private patronage enables the various projects and development programmes to be realised.

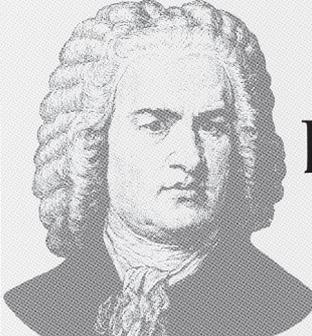
The Society has forged friendly, cultural links with the Bach community in Leipzig, including the world's pre-eminent centre for Bach scholarship - the *Bach-Archiv* - and the world famous *Thomanerchor*. At Bachfest in 2005 it was LBS that presented the UK 'live' première of the newly discovered Bach Aria "Alles mit Gott" BWV 1127.

The Members Circle helps to sustain the Society and its well-being, **Steinitz Bach Players**, the annual **Bachfest**, the publication of '**Bach Notes**', the maintenance of the **LBS Bach Library** and day-to-day services. Priority booking for Festival events, copies of the twice-yearly Journal, regular news via **e-Bach Notes** are just some of the benefits. Others are offered from time to time and currently there are special discounts for the RAM Bach Cantata series. There is a wide choice of subscription, each with a Bach connection.

- **The Cöthen Circle £500** • **The Weimar Circle £250**
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LBS, 73 High Street, Old Oxted, Surrey RH8 9LN Telephone: +44 (0)1883 717372 Fax: +44 (0)1883 715851
E-Mail: lbs@lonbachsoc.demon.co.uk Website: www.bachlive.co.uk