



BACH EDITION



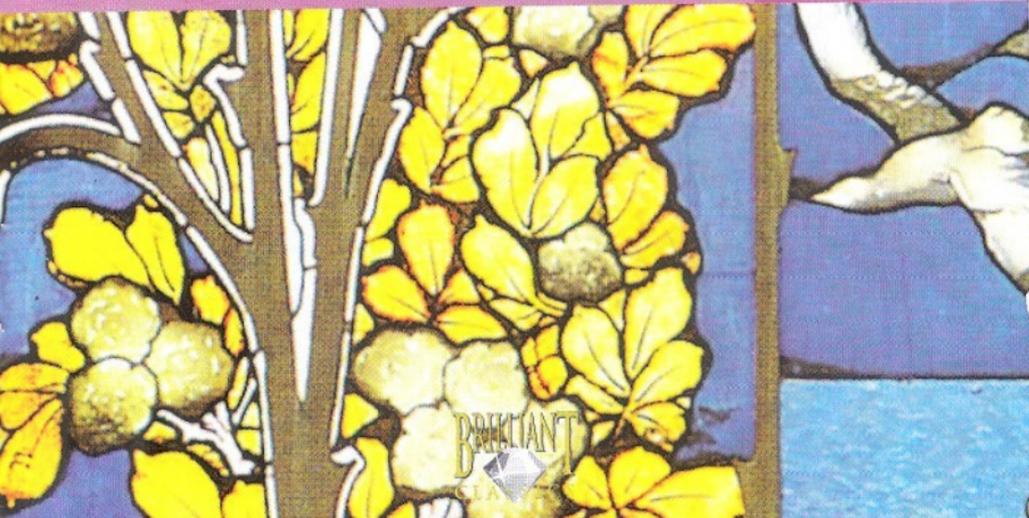
CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Erschallet, ihr Lieder, erklinget, ihr Saiten
Himmelskönig, sei willkommen
Es reißet euch ein schrecklich Ende

BWV 172

BWV 182

BWV 90



BREILANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 172-182 & 90

The Pentecost Cantata 172 'Erschallet, ihr Lieder' is a fine example of the economical and painstaking manner in which Bach borrowed his own music. This is one of the cantatas composed after his appointment as concertmaster in Weimar, with the obligation to produce a church composition every month. The work dates from 20 May 1714; Bach was to repeat it several times in Leipzig, though in a somewhat more extensive form in which the opening chorus was repeated at the end, as an extra seventh movement after the original final chorale. Moreover, the entire work was transposed from C major to D major. The radiant and dance-like opening chorus to the text 'Erschallet, ihr Lieder' is reinforced by three trumpets (and timpani), seeming to compete with the strings. The mood of the music reminds one of the opening of the Christmas Oratorio. In the more subdued middle section the trumpets are silent, only to claim a leading role once more in the bass aria 'Heiligste Dreieinigkeit', where their triad patterns symbolise the Holy Trinity. In terms of dynamics the succeeding tenor aria is more modest; it is really a menuet for a trio consisting of tenor, high strings and basso continuo. In the following duet (no. 5), a chorale-based movement, we hear a dialogue between the soul (soprano) and the holy spirit (alto), while the oboe and organ perform an ornamented version of the chorale melody.

Cantata 182 'Himmelskönig, sei willkommen' dates from approximately the same period. It was written for Palm Sunday 25 March 1714, and Bach repeated it at least twice in Leipzig in 1724 and 1728. In view of the text it is understandable that Bach used the work in Leipzig on the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (25 March); indeed, in 1714 Palm Sunday and the Annunciation fell on the same day. In the dignified opening movement (Sonata) the 'king of heaven' is welcomed by recorders, solo violin and plucked (later bowed) strings. The cantata boasts no less than three choral movements: one after the Sonata, and two to conclude the work. In between are three arias: one for the bass, a wonderfully expressive movement for the alto, and a calm and sometimes richly ornamented aria for the tenor.

In Cantata 90 'Es reisset euch ein schrecklich Ende' the role of the choir is limited to the final chorale, the other movements being solos (recitatives and arias) for the tenor, alto, bass, and again tenor. The work was written for the 25th Sunday after Trinity (14 November 1723). Apart from the high solo trumpet part in the third movement the instrumentation is uncertain. Bach probably had a string ensemble in mind, strengthened by an oboe and supported by the continuo. The text refers to the Day of Judgement, illustrated by the somewhat threatening embellishments in the solo violin part and the trumpet warnings in the third movement.



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit (Actus Tragicus) BWV 106

Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut

BWV 199

Komm, du süße Todesstunde

BWV 161



BRILLIANT
CDs

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 106-199 & 161

Cantata 106 *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*, also referred to as the 'Actus tragicus', is Bach's well-known funeral cantata. It is a brilliant early work from the Mühlhausen period, probably written in 1707 when Bach was only 22 years of age. Although the occasion for which the work was composed remains uncertain, it is assumed that this was the death of Bach's uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt (on his mother's side of the family) who died on 10 August 1707. It is a very special cantata, the music expressive and profound, the mood most sorrowful. With this piece alone the young Bach excelled beyond his examples and beyond all comparable works by his predecessors. Nevertheless, the instrumentation is quite modest, comprising four soloists, two recorders, two viols, a small choir and continuo, while the music is generally soft and slow – hardly a showy spectacle! Perhaps Bach even had a solo vocal ensemble in mind, reflecting the subdued mood. The work is based on various bible passages concerning death and man's encounter with Christ in paradise. There are wonderfully moving moments for the recorders and viols as they entwine with the singers, sharing their sorrow.

Even more subdued is the instrumentation of the solo cantata 199 'Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut'. Written for the 11th Sunday after Trinity, 12 August 1714, the work requires only a solo soprano, oboe, strings and basso continuo. The cantata comprises eight movements, featuring recitatives and arias in alternation. The absence of a choir seems to have prompted Bach to give the soprano and oboe parts an extra dimension. In the wonderful slow and elegiac first aria (no. 2), for instance, the oboe indulges in expressive embellishments and 'seufzer' (sighing) motifs which underline the text 'stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen' (speechless sighs, silent laments). In the last recitative (no. 7) the soprano expresses an entirely different mood with lively coloraturas to the words 'fröhlich singen' (sing joyfully).

Cantata 161 'Komm, du süsse Todesstunde', composed for the 16th Sunday after Trinity, is one of Bach's most impressive cantatas. As far as we know it was written in Weimar in 1715 but not performed completely until 27 September 1716. The six-movement work requires two soloists (alto and tenor), four-part choir, two recorders, obbligato organ and basso continuo. The cantata begins with a chorale-based movement for alto soloist, recorders, organ and continuo, in which the final chorale 'Herzlich tut mich verlangen' is anticipated. The 'sobbing' motifs are remarkable, permeating even the basso continuo. According to the great Bach scholar Alfred Dürr each movement has its origin in the final chorale melody. In the last alto recitative (no. 4) the recorders and strings accompany the mortal soul realistically to its 'sanften Schlaf' (soft sleep).



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan II

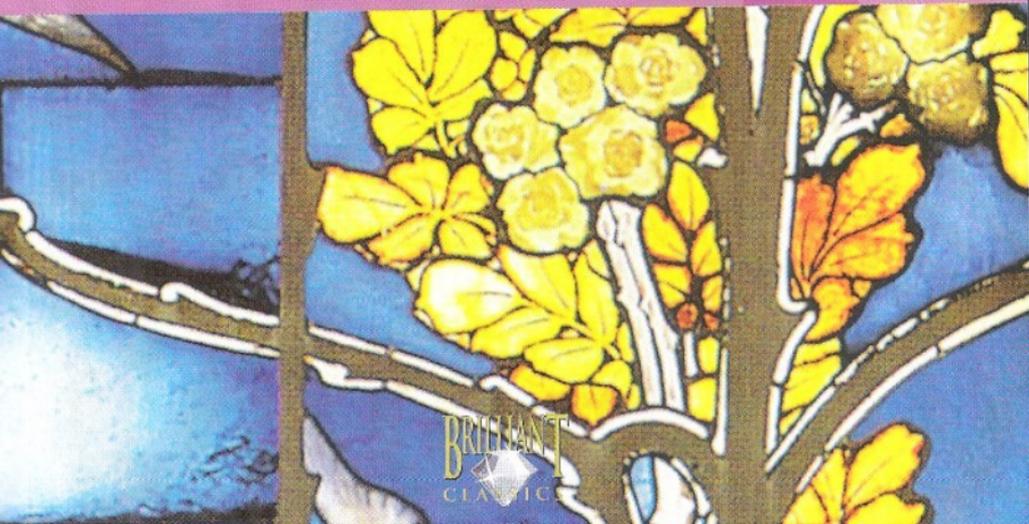
Geist und Seele wird verwirret

Wer Dank opfert, der preiset mich

BWV 99

BWV 35

BWV 17



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 99-35 & 17

Cantata 99 'Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan' is based on the same opening text and chorale melody as cantatas 98 and 100. Bach wrote the work in Leipzig for the 15th Sunday after Trinity, 17 September 1724, during his second year as cantor at the Thomaskirche. The cantata opens with an extensive choral movement in which the orchestra plays a substantial role. The horn doubles the sopranos, who sing the chorale melody from bar 20/21 onwards. In addition to the customary strings, the flauto traverso and oboe d'amore make their appearance as a duo. A secco recitative for the bass leads to a tenor aria (no. 3) in the appropriate key of E minor. The flute and voice illustrate the text most imaginatively at words such as 'erschüttere dich nur nicht' (do not be shaken), where Bach indeed gives the notes a shaking. The fifth movement, entitled aria, really comprises two duets, one between the soprano and alto and the other between the flute and oboe d'amore. The work concludes with a simple chorale.

In contrast to the previous work, Cantata 35 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret' does not require a choir. It is a solo cantata for soprano, two oboes, oboe da caccia, organ obbligato, strings and continuo, written for the 12 Sunday after Trinity, 8 September 1726. The absence of a choir seems to be compensated by a more prominent role for the orchestra and in particular the obbligato organ. Here, as in some other cantatas from the same year, Bach borrowed an earlier instrumental work which has since been lost: the Harpsichord Concerto BWV 1059, of which only a fragment survives, or an earlier version of the same work for oboe or violin. Bach arranged the first movement of the concerto as the introduction to this cantata, and the last movement as the introduction to the second part. The Bach scholar Alfred Dürr has even suggested that the aria 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret' is an arrangement of the slow middle movement of the concerto. One is struck by the somewhat worldly mood of the music and the absence of biblical texts.

For two weeks later in the same year, the 14th Sunday after Trinity, 22 September 1726, Bach wrote the Cantata 17 'Wer Dank opfert, der preiset mich'. Like the previous work, this cantata has a first and second part, relating to the liturgical practice of Bach's time in which part of the cantata was performed before, and part after the sermon. This cantata provides an example of borrowing in reverse. Part of the impressive, grandiose opening chorus was used later as the final chorus of the Mass in G major BWV 236. Many of the cantatas in two parts employ a New Testament text at the beginning of the second part, often in the form of a bass solo suggesting the role of Christ. Here, however, one associates the recitative and aria for the tenor with the evangelist.

Clemens Romijn



BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen

BWV 123

Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen

BWV 87

Erhöhtes Fleisch und Blut

BWV 173



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 123-87 & 173

Bach composed Cantata 123 'Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen' for 6 January 1725, Epiphany Sunday. This feast commemorates both the manifestation of Christ to the three kings, and his later appearance at the wedding at Cana where he turned water into wine. 'Epiphancia' is the Greek word for appearance, and in the first verse of the text, sung by the choir, this appearance is anticipated: 'Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen, Du meiner Seelen Heil, komm nur bald!'. This opening chorus is dominated by the orchestra, the choir beginning (with the chorale melody in the soprano part) after an instrumental introduction of no less than 20 bars. The choral writing is simple and homophonic, contrasting with the polyphonic texture of the instrumental parts. The orchestral introduction is repeated as a final ritornello. Two recitative-aria pairs follow, after which the work ends with a mildly rocking chorale in 3/2 time. Of great beauty is the slow, somewhat chromatic tenor aria in F sharp minor, in which the tenor intermingles with the two oboe d'amore parts to form an expressive trio.

The seven-movement Cantata 87 'Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen' was written for Rogation Sunday, 6 May 1725. The text by Mariane von Ziegler is based on St John's gospel (Joh. 16: 24, 33) and would appear to have been adapted by Bach himself. In the first two movements we hear the words of Christ, first in an aria in D minor with the title text, and thereafter in a contemplative recitative. In the third movement, an alto aria, we hear a confession and a prayer for perseverance. The mood of prayer and adjuration is most convincingly portrayed in parallel *seufzer* (sighing) motifs in the two oboe da caccia parts and the pleading, upward gestures in the basso continuo. The final chorale 'Muss ich sein betrübet?' employs the melody of 'Jesu, meine Freude'.

Cantata 173 'Erhöhtes Fleisch und Blut' is a work for the second day of Pentecost, probably 29 May 1724; there is also evidence of later performances. The cantata is really a remodelled version of the earlier Cantata BWV 173a 'Durchlauchtster Leopold', written for the birthday of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen on 10 December 1717 or 1722. The six-movement work includes two recitatives, three arias and a final chorus; a chorale is omitted, and it is therefore two movements shorter than the original version. Bach has occasionally adapted the texture and distribution of parts. In BWV 173 the first recitative 'Erhöhtes Fleisch und Blut' is sung by the tenor, while in the birthday cantata BWV 173a it is for the soprano. Remarkable is the apparent ease with which Bach replaced the final chorus text 'Nimm auch, grosser Fürst, uns auf' in the birthday cantata by the sacred text 'Rühre, Höchster, unser Geist'. Listening to the music rather than the text, one hears in both cases a light, dance-like piece in the form of a polonaise.



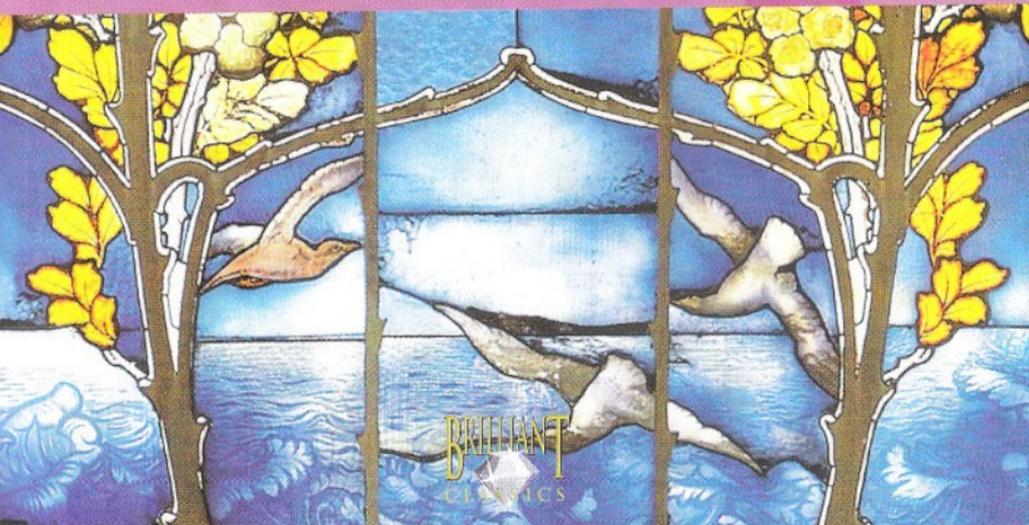
BACH EDITION



CANTATAS/KANTATEN

Sei Lob und Ehr' dem höchsten Gut
Schau, lieber Gott, wie meine Feind
Tue Rechnung! Donnerwort

BWV 117
BWV 153
BWV 168



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

CANTATAS BWV 117-153 & 168

We do not know when and for which Sunday Cantata 117 'Sei Lob und Ehr dem höchsten Gut' was composed. The structure of the nine-movement cantata runs entirely parallel to the chorale text by Johann Jacob Schütz, also consisting of nine verses all ending with the words 'Gebt unserm Gott die Ehre'. The work commences with a chorus (the choir and orchestra alternating in blocks) based on the text and melody of the chorale. After a bass recitative and tenor aria accompanied by two oboes d'amore another chorale-like chorus follows, possibly forming the conclusion to the first part before the sermon. The sixth movement suggests a rather darkly coloured trio sonata in which the bass voice and solo violin perform a dialogue.

Cantata 153 'Schau, lieber Gott, wie meine Feind' was written for the Sunday after the feast of the circumcision of Christ, the Sunday after new year's day, 2 January 1724. At least, this is the only date upon which a performance of this cantata is recorded. The nine-movement work has no large-scale choral sections, but it does have three simple chorales (nos. 1, 5 and 9), and three recitatives and three arias. The tenor aria in A minor (no. 6) deserves special mention: here, a restless and virtuosic violin part and a somewhat jerky and jumpy tenor part illustrate the text 'Stürmt nur, ihr Trübsalswetter'.

Bach probably composed the small-scale and sparingly orchestrated Cantata 168 'Tue Rechnung! Donnerwort' for the 9th Sunday after Trinity, 29 July 1725. The six-movement work requires four soloists, choir, two oboes d'amore, strings and continuo. Special moments of typical Baroque text depiction include the opening aria for the bass, with dotted rhythms and long strings of triplets to the text 'Tue Rechnung', and the aria for soprano and alto (no. 5: 'Herz, zerreiß' des Mammons Kette'), where 'Mammon's chain' is portrayed by brusque scale passages in the bass, while the voices make tearing movements in garlands of notes.

Clemens Romijn

BWV 117 **Sei Lob und Ehr dem höchsten Gut**

1. Coro

Sei Lob und Ehr dem höchsten Gut,
Dem Vater aller Güte,
Dem Gott, der alle Wunder tut,
Dem Gott, der mein Gemüte
Mit seinem reichen Trost erfüllt,
Dem Gott, der allen Jammer stillt.
Gebt unserm Gott die Ehre!

2. Recitativo Basso

Es danken dir die Himmelsheer,
O Herrscher aller Thronen,
Und die auf Erden, Luft und Meer
In deinem Schatten wohnen,
Die preisen deine Schöpfermacht,
Die alles also wohl bedacht.
Gebt unserm Gott die Ehre!

3. Aria Tenore

Was unser Gott geschaffen hat,
Das will er auch erhalten;

Darüber will er früh und spat
Mit seiner Gnade walten.
In seinem ganzen Königreich
Ist alles recht und alles gleich.
Gebt unserm Gott die Ehre!

4. Choral

Ich rief dem Herrn in meiner Not:
Ach Gott, vernimm mein Schreien!
Da half mein Helfer mir vom Tod
Und ließ mir Trost gedenken.



Ruth Holton, soprano

studied at Clare College, Cambridge. With John Eliot Gardiner she made CD recordings of Bach's St. John Passion. As a soloist, she has sung at major European festivals, including those of Flanders, Cheltenham and Bath. Ruth Holton has performed with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Gustav Leonardt in Rome and Vienna, and with Fretwork in Finland and Germany.

Sytse Buwalda, countertenor / alto

studied at the Sweelinck School of Music in Amsterdam. He has made appearances all over Europe and worked with conductors such as

Frans Brüggen, Gustav Leonhardt, Sigiswald Kuijken and Sir David Willcocks. With Max van Egmond, he made a tour in Japan, singing Bach solo cantatas in Tokyo under the famous Japanese conductors Maasaki Suzuki and Yoshio Watanabe.



Nico van der Meel, tenor

studied at the Rotterdam Conservatory. He made two CD recordings of Bach's St. John Passion, one conducted by Sigiswald Kuijken and the other with the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, conducted by Frans Brüggen. With the latter, he also recorded Bach's St. Matthew Passion, singing the Evangelist. He has worked with distinguished conductors such as Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Gustav Leonhardt and John Eliot Gardiner.

Knut Schoch, tenor

studied at the Musikhochschule in Hamburg and received the prestigious Maselfeld Stipendium. He has performed throughout Europe and Japan with Sigiswald Kuijken and Ivor Bolton. Knut Schoch was invited to renowned music festivals like the Händelfestspiele in Göttingen, Les Fêtes d'Automne in Paris and the Wiener Festwochen. One of his many CD recordings is the Mozart Requiem, in which he appears as a soloist under Pieter Jan Leusink.





Bas Ramselaar, bass

studied at the Utrecht Conservatory. He has developed into an often invited soloist in the Netherlands and on the European stages, among which the Festivals of Berlin and Bruges. He also gave performances in San Antonio, Texas and worked with such conductors as Roy Goodman, Uwe Gronostay, Reinbert de Leeuw and Robert King. Bas Ramselaar has contributed to many CD recordings. With Pieter Jan Leusink he recorded the Mozart and the Fauré Requiem.

Netherlands Bach Collegium

consists of the finest baroque specialists in Europe. With Pieter Jan Leusink conducting, the orchestra made many CD recordings, which got favourable reviews by both national and international music critics. The long experience in concert and recording practice of the various musicians with regard to baroque music, in particular Bach's compositions, guarantee a characteristic performance, marked by a great sense of authenticity. This performance of the Bach Cantatas gets an extra dimension by the integral use of period instruments.

Pieter Jan Leusink

studied at the Zwolle Conservatory and followed masterclasses with Sir David Willcocks. With Holland Boys Choir he built up an international reputation, partly on account of many CD recordings, like St. Matthew Passion - J.S. Bach, Messiah - G.F. Handel, Requiem - W.A. Mozart, Requiem - G. Fauré, Gloria - A. Vivaldi and Stabat Mater - G.B. Pergolesi. As a live conductor he created great enthusiasm at festivals in Wales, Italy, Latvia, England and France. His predilection for J.S. Bach's compositions also originates from the frequent performances of the St. Matthew Passion under his baton. His unique approach of recording CD's warrants a bright, dynamic interpretation of Bach's Cantatas.



NETHERLANDS BACH COLLEGIUM

VOLIN John Wilson Meyer (concertmaster), Laura Johnson, Alida Schat, Annelies van der Vegt, Mimi Mitchel, Elin Eriksson, Judith Steenbrink, Rachael Beesley, Wanda Visser.

VIOLA Jan Willem Vis, Simon Murphy, Örzse Adam

VIOLONCELLO Frank Wakelkamp

DOUBLE-BASS Robert Franenberg, Maggie Urquhart, Jan Hollestelle

OBOE Peter Frankenberg, Ofer Frenkel, Eduard Wesley, Nico de Gier

BASSOON Trudy van der Wulp, Henriëtte Bakker

NATURAL TRUMPET Susan Williams

NATURAL HORN Teunis de Zwart

TRAVERSO Kate Clark, Marion Moonen

ORGAN Rien Voskuilen, Vaughan Schlepp, Bert Mooiman

CHURCH ORGAN Martin Mans

HOLLAND BOYS CHOIR

TREBLE Anne Jan Leusink, Hans van Roest, Aalt Jan van Roest, Jelle Stoker, Gerwin Zwep, Herjan Pullen, Gerrit van der Hoorn, Evert Baarssen, Evert Jan Engeltjes

COUNTERTENOR Arjan Dokter, Gerald Engeltjes, Maarten Engeltjes, Arjen Nap, Edwin Smit, Fre Dirk van Roest, Vincent Groeneveld, Jan Zwerver

TENOR Frans Benschop, Martinus Leusink, Cor van Twillert, Peter Bloemendaal, Marijn Takken

BASS Jeroen Assink, Jim Groeneveld, Richard Guldenaar, Willem van de Hoorn, Sebastian Holz, Toon van Wezep



Holland Boys Choir was founded in 1984 by Pieter Jan Leusink, who has been its conductor ever since. For its musical home the choir has the medieval St. Nicholaschurch in the almost eight centuries old little city of Elburg. Thanks to the intensity of the rehearsals and the numerous concerts, Holland Boys Choir has acquired a unique status, both nationally and internationally. Besides making concert trips, among others to England (Great Cathedrals Tour and St. Martin-in-the-Fields), France (Paris, Notre Dame) and Latvia (Riga Dom), the choir was also given the honour to perform for Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. The many integral performances of Bach's St. Matthew Passion and the CD recordings of this majestic work resulted in a strong affinity with the great composer, which has led up to the largest and indeed greatest project in the history of this unique choir, the integral recordings of all Sacred Cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Recording Location	St. Nicolaschurch, Elburg
Recording date	Oktober - November 1999
Production	Amsterdam Classics B.V.
Production manager	Christine Schreuder
Holland Boys Choir	tel. 0031 (0) 525-684819 fax. 0031 (0) 525-680618

Artistic director	Pieter Jan Leusink
Recording	Clavigram, Leerdam
Producer / editing	Jean van Vugt
Balance engineer	Louis van Emmerik
Recording engineer	Louis van Emmerik