



J. S. BACH

Sacred Cantatas for Bass

Nos. 56, 82 and 158

Hanno Müller-
Brachmann, Bass

Cologne Chamber
Orchestra

Helmut Müller-Brühl

Deutschlandfunk

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sacred Cantatas for Bass

Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen, BWV 56 18:25

for the 19th Sunday after Trinity

Anonymous Text

Scored for Bass-Baritone, Four-part Chorus (Schlußchoral)

2 Oboes, Oboe da caccia, Strings and Continuo

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 1 | Aria: Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen | 6:51 |
| 2 | Recitative: Mein Wandel auf der Welt | 1:56 |
| 3 | Aria: Endlich wird mein Joch | 6:35 |
| 4 | Recitative: Ich stehe fertig und bereit | 1:38 |
| 5 | Chorale: Komm, O Tod, du Schlafes Bruder | 1:25 |

Ich habe genug, BWV 82

for the feast of the Purification of Our Lady

Anonymous Text

Scored for Bass-Baritone, Oboe, Strings and Continuo

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|----|--|------|
| 6 | Aria: Ich habe genug | 6:58 |
| 7 | Recitative: Ich habe genug | 1:11 |
| 8 | Aria: Schlummert ein | 9:06 |
| 9 | Recitative: Mein Gott! | 0:51 |
| 10 | Aria: Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod | 3:36 |

Der Friede sei mit dir, BWV 158

for the feast of the Purification of Our Lady

and for the third day of Easter

Anonymous Text

Scored for Bass-Baritone, Cantus firmus (soprano)

Four-part Chorus (Schlußchoral)

Flute, Oboe, Strings and Continuo

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|----|--|------|
| 11 | Recitative: Der Friede sei mit dir | 1:42 |
| 12 | Aria with Chorale: Welt, ade | 6:01 |
| 13 | Recitative: Nun Herr, regiere meinen Sinn | 1:16 |
| 14 | Chorale: Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm | 1:10 |

21:42

Hanno Müller-Brachmann, Bass-Baritone

Collegium Vocale Siegen

Cologne Chamber Orchestra

Helmut Müller-Brühl

Tina Scherer, Soprano (Cantus firmus BWV 158)

Daniel Rothert, Flute (BWV 158)

Christian Hommel Oboe

Gerhard Anders, Cello Continuo

Thomas Flake, Continuo

Harald Hoeren, Organ

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sacred Cantatas for Bass

Bach's cantatas comprise the largest category in his oeuvre, but they have also suffered the most in their transmission to posterity. That is part of the reason for their relatively late appearance in the public eye. Numbering roughly two hundred authenticated sacred and secular works composed for specific occasions (approximately two thirds of his total production in this field), they were created by Bach over a period of more than four decades.

As far as the church cantatas are concerned, their occasional character is determined by the integration of Sunday and Feast-day scriptural readings from the unchanging course of the liturgical year, but their true usefulness follows from a central tenet of Lutheran theology: the vivid preaching of the Gospel. It is all about God's Word - that it remain present in the listener's mind, to refresh and restore the soul. Luther would use any means to this end. With a view to simple folk and the young especially, he writes in 1526, "one must read, sing, preach, write and indite, and if it should help and be necessary, I would ring every bell and blow every organ pipe and let every thing sound that has sound." This was the immediate source of music's legitimacy in the Protestant rite, precisely in the immediate vicinity of the all-important sermon. As an art with the power to move the spirit, it was predestined to "drive the Word into the heart", as Luther demanded, and she did so over the centuries in various guises as "figural music", alongside the requisite congregational singing.

Motet forms, those of the "sacred concerto", Protestant song and operatic influences interpenetrated, textually and musically, with great complexity until about 1700, when, as the musicologist Konrad Köster observes, an area of boundless possibilities had been reached into which Bach strode with his unparalleled creative powers, and brought forth an entire cosmos of overwhelming variety. This far-reaching freedom from the ties of one-sided genre traditions in music for the church service, generally felt by Bach's contemporaries

and explored by them with varying degrees of experimental elation, is mirrored in Bach's choice of titles. Insofar as he designates his sacred works by anything more than the number of their Sunday in the church-year, he prefers to call them "concertos". The word "cantata" is seldom encountered, and when it is, it will usually be no coincidence to find it at the head of a solo cantata (e.g. BWV 54, 56, 82, 170). In these, too, Bach avoids any hint of the schematic, but the use of a single voice alternating between recitative and aria, the integration of *concertante* elements, and the elimination of the chorus (or its restriction to a final chorale, "merely" for the practical use of the congregation) all point to the Italian chamber cantata, with which the word *Kantate* was then still associated.

Of the three works recorded here, two (BWV 56 and 82) were part of the third Leipzig cantata-cycle, which Bach built up between 1725 and 1727. The dating of BWV 158 is uncertain, but it has one striking stylistic device in common with the other two, which has led some researchers to assign it to the same period: the linking of two movements through repetition of a line of text. The librettists for all three works are anonymous.

Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen, BWV 56, was composed in 1729 for the Nineteenth Sunday of Trinity, the relationship to the day's text established through the repeated use of the metaphor of life as a voyage over troubled waters. St Matthew (9, verse 1) opens his story of the miraculous healing of the lame man with the words, "And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city." Both recitatives, as well as the third and fourth lines of the final chorale (the sixth strophe of Johann Franck's "Du, o schönes Weltgebäude" (1653) on a melody by Johann Krüger from 1649) transfer this image to the eloquent first person of the cantata text, a subtle interpretation, one might say, of human existence as following in Jesus' footsteps. The reverse situation is found in the opening aria: there, the palpable, earthly suffering of the palsied man is replaced, with clear Christ-symbolism, by the

yoke of the cross. The compositional mastery of this aria deserves special attention and admiration. The opening ritornello is a “literal” anticipation of the textual setting, and the “*Kreuzstab*” motif receives a strict canonic development after the vocal entrance. Together these elements contribute to the intense feeling of long-suffering which characterizes the aria, almost as if it were being stamped into the listener’s memory; by power of contrast, they reinforce the feeling of relaxation that comes with the words, “*Er kommt von Gottes lieber Hand*”, and in the following recitative, the sudden halt in the cello’s flowing movement means more than just the stasis of death, marking the arrival in “the city”. By dropping the *accompagnato* exactly at that point and returning to *secco*, the “usual” accompaniment for the ears of Bach’s time, Bach “shows in concrete form the return, through death, to a state of normality”, as Köster again insightfully points out.

Bach originally composed the cantata *Ich habe genug*, BWV 82, scored for solo bass voice, oboe, strings and continuo, for the Feast of the Purification of Our Lady (St Luke 2, verses 22-32) in 1727, and later arranged it for other scorings. The longing for death, so pronounced in both text and music, and which in the third aria becomes almost euphoric, is inspired by the spiritual state of Simeon, who after seeing the baby Jesus in the temple can finally die happy. This work, undoubtedly one of Bach’s most beloved, understandably owes its popularity to the second aria, “*Schlummert ein*”. The composer’s wife, Anna Magdalena, showed her esteem by transcribing it, around 1730, together with the preceding recitative, into her *Klavierbüchlein*. This centrepiece of the cantata soars, in its major key, spreading consolation and a deeply moving expression of inner peace, over its minor-key surroundings: the opening aria is in three

parts with ritornelli, and the cantata closes with dance-like liveliness in a free *da capo* form.

Not only the dating of *Der Friede sei mit dir*, BWV 158, is uncertain, its liturgical intent is as well. It is assumed that the central aria and the following recitative represent an earlier torso, which was re-used with the addition of the flanking movements. While the middle movements point to the Purification feast in their emphasis on withdrawal from the world and desire for death, the outer ones touch twice upon the main Easter motif, the (sacrificed) Lamb of God. Especially the choice of the fifth strophe of Luther’s “*Christ lag in Todesbanden*” (1524) for the closing chorale would seem to point to Easter as the point of motivation. A weak thematic link can be established only through the idea of the achievement of spiritual peace, to be found in the Gospel readings for the Purification and the third day of Easter. The heart of the cantata is the masterfully constructed *Aria con corale* “*Welt ade, ich bin dir müde*”, into which Bach has fused the first verse of the chorale of that title by Johann Georg Albinus (1649, to a melody by Johann Rosenmüller). The question, whether the chorale was originally to be performed by soprano and oboe, or by one of the two solistically, can be no more definitively answered now than that of the original scoring of the obbligato instrument. Much of the violin’s range remains strangely unutilised - the part never descends below d’. Performance by a transverse flute seems the obvious solution, but the decision will have to be left to performers, since the autograph of the work is lost.

Peter Reichelt

English version: Glen Wilson

*Sung texts and translations for this release are available as PDF files online at
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Hanno Müller-Brachmann

The bass-baritone Hanno Müller-Brachmann was born in 1970 and began his musical training at the Basel Knabenkantorei. He studied with Ingeborg Most in Freiburg and, with the support of government awards, attended Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's Lieder class in Berlin. He completed his studies in Mannheim with Rudolf Piernay. Following his success in several international competitions, Hanno Müller-Brachmann has performed in concert halls throughout Europe, and in Japan, collaborating with leading conductors and orchestras and with a repertoire ranging from Bach to Schoenberg. Hanno Müller-Brachmann made his début in 1996 in Telemann's *Orpheus* under René Jacobs at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, where he has been a member of the ensemble since 1998. His rôles there include Mozart's Papageno, Guglielmo, Figaro and Leporello, with Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Orest in *Elektra*, the Count in *Der ferne Klang*, Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades*, Escamillo, and Amfortas in *Parsifal*. He has made guest appearances at opera houses in Basel, Madrid, Paris, and San Francisco, and at the Bavarian State Opera, where he made his début in 1999 under Zubin Mehta. In addition to opera and oratorio, Hanno Müller-Brachmann also has a distinguished reputation as a Lieder singer, with recitals at the Staatsoper in Berlin, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Bonn Oper, the Musikhalle in Hamburg, and in Paris and Tokyo. His many festival appearances include his début at the Schubertiade in Schwarzenberg in 2003 and appearances at festivals in Berlin, Edinburgh and Schleswig-Holstein. He teaches singing at the Berlin University of the Arts.

Cologne Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Helmut Müller-Brühl

The Cologne Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1923 by Hermann Abendroth and gave its first concerts in the Rhine Chamber Music Festival under the direction of Hermann Abendroth and Otto Klemperer in the concert-hall of Brühl Castle. Three years later the ensemble was taken over by Erich Kraack, a pupil of Abendroth, and moved to Leverkusen. In 1964 he handed over the direction of the Cologne Chamber Orchestra to Helmut Müller-Brühl, who, through the study of philosophy and Catholic theology, as well as art and musicology, had acquired a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the interpretation of Baroque and Classical music, complemented through the early study of conducting and of the violin under his mentor Wolfgang Schneiderhahn. In the autumn of 1964 the orchestra, under Helmut Müller-Brühl, embarked on a concert tour of Switzerland with the great pianist Wilhelm Kempff, the start of collaboration with international soloists. Since then there have been guest appearances throughout Europe, North and South America and Asia, with numerous recordings, broadcasts and television appearances.

From 1976 until 1987 the ensemble played on period instruments under the name Capella Clementina. With this Baroque formation Helmut Müller-Brühl, in numerous concerts and opera and oratorio performances, set a standard for historical performance-practice and the revival of Baroque music-theatre. Since 1987 the orchestra, as the Cologne Chamber Orchestra, has played according to the principles of historical performance-practice on modern instruments and so can meet the needs of modern concert halls. The presentation of the rising generation of young musicians has always been a particular concern of Helmut Müller-Brühl and many now well-known soloists enjoyed their first success with the Cologne Chamber Orchestra. In 2001 the Cologne Chamber Orchestra won a Cannes Classical Award for its recording of Telemann's *Darmstadt Overtures* (Naxos 8.554244), one of a number of acclaimed recordings made in association with Naxos.



Helmut Müller-Brühl



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Playing Time
50:33

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Intimately bound up with the Lutheran tradition, Bach's sacred cantatas are among his greatest, most heart-felt and life-affirming works. *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen* (I will gladly carry the suffering cross), with its repeated use of the metaphor of life as a voyage over troubled waters, depicts man's suffering and the joyful expectation of redemption. *Ich habe genug* (I have enough!), while expressing contempt for earthly suffering, includes one of Bach's most popular arias, the deeply moving *Schlummert ein* (Close now, ye tired and weary eyelids), with its fervent expression of the hope of 'blessed rest and perfect peace' in the afterlife.

Johann Sebastian
BACH
(1685-1750)

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|--------------|--|--------------|
| 1-5 | Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen, BWV 56 * | 18:25 |
| 6-10 | Ich habe genug, BWV 82 | 21:42 |
| 11-14 | Der Friede sei mit dir, BWV 158 * | 10:09 |

Hanno Müller-Brachmann, Bass-Baritone
Collegium Vocale Siegen * • Cologne Chamber Orchestra
Helmut Müller-Brühl
Deutschlandfunk

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Producer: Ludwig Rink • Engineers: Stephan Schmidt and Hans Martin Renz • Booklet Notes: Peter Reichelt
A co-production with DeutschlandRadio • Please see the booklet for a complete track list
Cover Picture: *Madonna and Child* by Kaspar Memberger (d. 1626)
(Salzburg Residenzgalerie / AKG Images)