

Matthias Weichert, Jesus – Tony Boutté, Evangelist

Bach Choir and Orchestra Houston

Choir 1

Soprano: Renée Rybolt*, Elizabeth Lutz, Amber Jamison
Alto: Sarah Brindley, Rebecca Seekatz*, Amanda Watson
Tenor: Patrick Perez*, Jack Swanson
Bass: Christopher Besch*, Benjamin Hall

Violin: Oleg Sulyga (concertmaster), Laura Cividino, Alana Youssefian
Viola: Erika Lawson
Violoncello: Barrett Sills
Violone: Deborah Dunham
Flute: Colin St. Martin, Ysmael Reyes
Oboe: Curtis Foster, Sarah Heusch

Choir 2

Soprano: Veronique Eberhard, Kyla Knox*, Kaci Timmons
Alto: Rebecca Castillo, Vicki Gorman, Teresa Procter*
Tenor: Corey Estelle, Alexander Scheuermann*
Bass: Jackson Felder*

Violin: Brandi Berry, Nadia Lesinska
Viola: Alicia Marie Valoti
Cello: Jane Leggiero
Flute: Sang Joon Park, Ann Fairfield
Oboe: Maryanna Bryant, Cameron Kirkpatrick
Viola da gamba: Mary Springfels

* Aria soloist

Houston Boychoir, soprano in ripieno, movements 1 and 29

The Blu-ray Disc cover features a photograph of the Bach Choir and Orchestra Houston performing in a church. The title 'The Passion of Our Lord according to St Matthew, BWV 244' is written in a stylized font across the top. The Blu-ray Disc logo and 'Audio Only Blu-ray Disc' are in the top right corner. At the bottom, it says 'The Bach Society Houston presents Johann Sebastian Bach' and 'The Bach Choir and Orchestra Houston Rick Erickson, director in Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston'. The bottom right corner lists audio specifications: 5.0 DTS HD MA 24/96kHz and 2.0 DTS HD MA 24/96kHz. The HDTT logo is in the bottom left corner.



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■ 2.0 DTS HD MA 24/96kHz



NOTES ON THE MUSIC

In 1829, composer Felix Mendelssohn conducted the Passion According to St. Matthew in Berlin after the work had lain dormant for nearly a century, thereby inaugurating widespread and lasting interest in both J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750) and the massive and weighty Passion itself. Written in 1727 during Bach's prolific tenure as music director of Leipzig's churches, St. Matthew was first performed on Good Friday 1727 in the city's Thomaskirche. It was one of two Passion settings to survive intact from the five that Bach apparently wrote, according to his 1754 obituary. Out of Bach's Passion settings, St. Matthew seems to have been a favorite; he conducted it more than once and revised it in 1736. Even his family considered it the "groß Passion" ("great Passion").

Organized into two enormous parts, with a lengthy Good Friday sermon preached in-between, the work calls for two choirs in eight parts, two instrumental ensembles, and soloists. The libretto by the poet Picander, whose texts Bach frequently set, drew primarily from the Gospel of Matthew with interspersed poetic meditations and pre-existing chorale texts. Conductor John Eliot Gardiner observes that Bach's scoring and pacing of Picander's libretto creates multiple "subjectivities," as choirs, soloists, and instrumental obbligatos explore a vast range of emotional responses to the Passion from different vantage points. Central themes include the collective and individual guilt, repentance, and judgment of the characters in Matthew's narrative, along with the correlating response of penitent listeners in the present.

The work's sixty-eight movements include choruses and arias on Picander's poetry, recitatives on the gospel texts, and chorales. The eight chorale tunes, some used more than once,

About the Artists

Baritone **Matthias Weichert** (Jesus) was born in 1955 in Frankenberg, Saxony, and received his first musical education as a member of the world-renown St. Thomas Boys Choir (Thomanerchor) of Leipzig from 1965 to 1974. Afterwards he studied voice at the Conservatory of Music Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden and received diplomas in opera and vocal pedagogy in 1981. Later professional engagements brought him to several theaters in Saxony, to the National Opera Brussels and to the Komische Oper Berlin, the Staatsoper Berlin and the Oper Leipzig. Weichert is a winner of the Robert-Schumann Prize (1981), the Hugo-Wolf Prize (1987) and was awarded a scholarship by the Bayreuth Festival in 1988. He retired from a 20-year career on the opera stage in summer 2000, and since then he has been active as a freelance concert and oratorio singer. Since 1997 Weichert has taught at the Conservatory of Church Music in Dresden and has been Professor of Voice at the University of Music Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden since 2002. In keeping with a longstanding tradition among singers of the role of Jesus in Bach's Passion, Weichert sings from memory.

Tenor **Tony Boutté** (the Evangelist, St. Matthew) made his professional debut as Orfeo in the Monteverdi Cycle with Skylight Opera of Milwaukee. Since then he has appeared in a wide range of roles, including Ottavio in Don Giovanni, Acis in Handel's Acis & Galatea, and Ghandi in the Philip Glass opera Satyagraha. As an oratorio and concert singer, Boutté has performed with such ensembles as Les Arts Florissants, Tafelmusik, Washington Bach Consort, New York Collegium, Boston Baroque, Violons du Roy, Orchestra of St. Luke's and Musica Angelica. He has performed numerous premieres, including John Eaton's Benjamin Button, Douglas Cuomo's Arjuna's Dilemma, Michael Gordon's Chaos, Betsy Jolas's Motet III, Philip Glass's In the Penal Colony and Bang on Can's Carbon Copy Building. His festival performances include Salzburg, Aspen, Bard, Schleswig-Holstein, Settembre, Aldeburgh, Versailles Autumn Festival and Tage Alte Musik Regensburg. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2006 in Handel's Messiah with Masterworks Chorus. Boutté is currently on the voice faculty of the University of Miami's Frost School of Music and co-directs ARCANUM, a Baroque ensemble based in Miami.

The Bach Society Houston
presents
Johann Sebastian Bach
The Passion of Our Lord according to St Matthew, BWV 244
in 5.0 High-Resolution Surround Sound
in Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston

The Bach Choir and Orchestra Houston
Rick Erickson, director

Matthias Weichert, Jesus – Tony Boutté, Evangelist
Jackson Felder, Judas – Christopher Besch, Peter & Pilate
Sigurd Melvaer Øgaard, organ continuo
Renée Rybolt, Kyla Knox – soprano soloists
Rebecca Seekatz, Teresa Procter – alto soloists
Patrick Perez, Alexander Scheuermann – tenor soloists
Christopher Besch, Jackson Felder – bass soloists
The Houston Boychoir - Carole Nelson, artistic director

Recorded 29 March & 3 April 2015 in Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston
Producer & Recording Engineer – John Gladney Proffitt

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would have been well-known in Leipzig. The sternly dramatic opening chorus of Part I, in the relentless tread of its 6/8 time signature and tension between E minor and G major, announces the work's intent to wade into the deep theological waters of Christianity's central paradox: the life-giving death of Christ. According to Bach scholar Christoph Wolff, this early "...tension between major and minor modes is never resolved..." – not even in the closing chorus. Instead, this fundamental harmonic unease escalates throughout the work, and in Wolff's analysis, achieves catharsis only in the triumphant trumpet fanfares and major mode of the Easter Sunday cantata that would have occurred two days later in the Thomaskirche.

After the Reformation, many Roman Catholic churches reaffirmed the doctrinal and liturgical centrality of the Passion through enormous altarpieces displaying Christ's crucifixion, installed above the Eucharistic table. In the relative absence of such artwork in German Lutheran churches, the Passion settings of composers such as Bach, Kuhnau, and Telemann provided their congregations with an aesthetic aid to devotional meditation on Good Friday. Thanks to these Passion soundscapes, listeners could imaginatively identify with the Gospel accounts of Christ's Passion and perhaps more effectively personalize Christ's atonement. In its cosmic theological scope and grand sonic architecture, Bach's Passion According to St. Matthew surely stands as the most potent and cinematic of the surviving baroque Passion settings in its ability to immerse the listener in the profound mysteries of Good Friday.

Carrie Allen Tipton

Part One

1	Chorus - Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen	7:06
2	Evangelist, Jesus - Da Jesus diese Rede vollendet hatte	:39
3	Chorale - Herzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrochen	:43
4	Evangelist, Jesus, Chorus - Da versammelten sich die Hohenpriester	3:08
5	Recitative - Du lieber Heiland du	:55
6	Aria - Buß und Reu	4:00
7	Evangelist, Judas - Da ging hin der Zwölfen einer	:41
8	Aria - Blute nur, du liebes Herz	4:39
9	Evangelist, Jesus, Chorus - Aber am ersten Tag der süßen Brot	2:09
10	Chorale - Ich bin's, ich sollte büßen	:47
11	Evangelist, Jesus, Judas - Er antwortete und sprach	3:07
12	Recitative - Wiewohl mein Herz in Tränen schwimmt	1:32
13	Aria - Ich will dir mein Herze schenken	3:26
14	Evangelist, Jesus - Und da sie den Lobgesang gesprochen hatten	1:08
15	Chorale - Erkenne mich, mein Hüter	:54
16	Evangelist, Jesus, Peter - Petrus aber antwortete und sprach zu ihm	1:03
17	Chorale - Ich will hier bei dir stehen	:53
18	Evangelist, Jesus - Da kam Jesus mit ihnen	1:33
19	Recitative with Chorus - O Schmerz! Hier zittert das gequälte Herz	2:13
20	Tenor Aria with Chorus - Ich will bei meinem Jesum wachen	5:16
21	Evangelist, Jesus - Und ging hin ein wenig	:47
22	Recitative - Der Heiland fällt vor seinem Vater nieder	1:08
23	Bass Aria - Gerne will ich mich bequemen	4:09
24	Evangelist, Jesus - Und er kam zu seinen Jüngern	1:18
25	Chorale - Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit	:54
26	Evangelist, Jesus, Judas - Und er kam und fand sie aber schlafend	2:32
27	Duet with Chorus - So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen	5:14
28	Evangelist, Jesus - Und siehe, einer aus denen, die mit Jesu waren	2:22
29	Chorus - O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde groß	7:06

Part Two

30	Alto Aria with Chorus - Ach, nun ist mein Jesus hin	3:57
31	Evangelist - Die aber Jesum gegriffen hatten	1:08
32	Chorale - Mir hat die Welt trüglich gericht't	:40
33	Evangelist, Witnesses, High Priest - Und wiewohl viel falsche Zeugen	1:15
34	Recitative - Mein Jesus schweigt zu falschen Lügen stille	:57
35	Tenor Aria - Gedult, Gedult!	3:51
36	Evangelist, Jesus, High Priest, the Crowd - Und der Hohenpriester	2:12
37	Chorale - Wer hat dich so geschlagen?	:44
38	Evangelist, Peter, Maids, Chorus - Petrus aber saß draußen	2:27
39	Alto Aria - Erbarme dich, mein Gott	6:27
40	Chorale - Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen	:59
41	Evangelist, Judas, High Priests, Chorus - Des Morgens aber	2:01
42	Bass Aria - Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder	3:02
43	Evangelist, Jesus, Pilate - Sie hielten aber einen Rat	2:17
44	Chorale - Befiehl du deine Wege	:51
45	Evangelist, Pilate, Pilate's wife, Chorus - Auf das Fest	2:36
46	Chorale - Wie wunderbarlich ist doch diese Strafe	:44
47	Evangelist, Pilate - Der Landpfleger sagte	:13
48	Recitative - Er hat uns allen wohlgetan	1:12
49	Soprano Aria - Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben	4:49
50	Evangelist, Pilate, Chorus - Sie schrieeen aber noch mehr	2:09
51	Recitative - Erbarme es, Gott	1:10
52	Alto Aria - Können Tränen meiner Wangen	8:10
53	Evangelist, Chorus - Da nahmen die Kriegsknechte	1:08
54	Chorale, with the Congregation - O Haupt, voll Blut und Wunden	1:52
55	Evangelist - Und da sie ihn verspottet hatten	:51
56	Recitative - Ja, freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut	:37
57	Bass Aria - Komm, süßes Kreuz	5:49
58	Evangelist, Chorus - Und da sie an die Stätte kamen	3:54
59	Recitative - Ach Golgatha, unselges Golgatha	1:24
60	Alto Aria with Chorus - Sehet, Jesus hat die Hand	3:17
61	Evangelist, Jesus, Chorus - Und von der sechsten Stunde	2:48
62	Chorale - Wenn ich einmal soll scheiden	1:07
63	Evangelist - Und siehe da	2:38
64	Recitative - Am Abend, da es kühle war	2:35
65	Bass Aria - Mache dich, mein Herze, rein	6:41
66	Evangelist, Pilate, Chorus - Und Joseph nahm den Leib	3:01
67	Recitative with Chorus - Nun ist der Herr zur Ruh gebracht	1:47
68	Chorus - Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder	5:42